

LAND OFF STOCKHAM WAY/DENCHWORTH RD,
WANTAGE, OXFORDSHIRE

POST-EXCAVATION ASSESSMENT
AND
UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

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Figure 2 Composite plan showing archaeological features (all periods)

SUMMARY

In October and November 1998 Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) carried out a programme of excavation in advance of residential development on land off Stockham Way/Denchworth Road, Wantage, Oxfordshire.

Fieldwork revealed ditched boundaries and other settlement-related features dating from the late first or early second century through to the late fourth century AD. The remains of a Romano-British villa were also encountered, thought to have been occupied from approximately the mid third century AD. The villa building appears to have gone out of use during or soon after the last quarter of the fourth century AD, and was then comprehensively dismantled and robbed of building materials.

Limited evidence of post-Romano-British activity was encountered, with a single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery having been recovered from the backfill of a robber trench. No medieval occupation or activity was recorded on the site.

This document presents an assessment of the evidence recovered from the excavation and an updated project design, which proposes a programme of post-excavation analysis to bring the results to publication.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 During October and November 1998 Cotswold Archaeological Trust (CAT) carried out an excavation on former allotment ground lying between Denchworth Road and Stockham Way, Wantage, Oxfordshire.
- 1.2 The excavation followed an earlier field evaluation by CAT in 1996, which identified the presence of Romano-British features within the development area (Bateman 1996). As these remains were vulnerable to damage from the construction of a new housing development a programme of archaeological recording was commissioned by The Vale Housing Association Ltd, in accordance with conditions attached to a planning permission (ref. WAN/14220/X) granted by the Vale of White Horse District Council.
- 1.3 During the course of the excavations significant and unexpected discoveries were made and limited additional emergency funding was secured from The Vale Housing Association Ltd and English Heritage. This permitted activity to be concentrated on recovering a partial plan of a villa-like building. However, these works were conducted under 'rescue' conditions and tensions arose between fieldwork imperatives and resources previously allocated for post-excavation analysis.
- 1.4 This document is intended as a summary statement on the results of fieldwork and an assessment of the evidence recovered. It presents an updated project design that proposes a programme of post-excavation analysis to bring the results to publication.

2. LOCATION

- 2.1 The study area is located within the Belmont area of Wantage, approximately 800m NW of the town centre. The development area consists of a plot of land approximately 0.32 hectares in size lying immediately west of Denchworth Road and south of the junction of Stockham Way and St. Mary's Way (centred on NGR: SU 394 883). The site lies at between 97.50m and 98.25m O. D, overlooking the valley of the Letcombe Brook, and was formerly under allotment cultivation.
- 2.2 The surface geology of the study area is mapped as Pleistocene Upper Greensand, consisting of stiff clays and marl with pockets of green grey silty clay underlain by a stiff sandy silty clay (British Geological Survey 1971).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The development site lies in an area of considerable archaeological interest, as highlighted by archaeological findspots and observations made in the locality over many years.
- 3.2 No prehistoric occupation has been identified from the site vicinity. However residual worked flint and middle Iron Age pottery was recovered during excavations prior to construction of Rolls Court in nearby Mill Street (Holbrook, Thomas *et al* 1996) but no foci for such occupation has yet been identified in the site locality.
- 3.3 Evidence of Romano-British occupation is known from the study area vicinity, with a scatter of stray finds and observations covering most of the area now known as Belmont. This spread of pottery and coin findspots, together with

discoveries of wells and ditches, gives some impression of the extent of the settlement.

- 3.4 The nearest Romano-British findspots to the study area lie within the adjoining grounds of St. Mary's Convent, where coins and potsherds have been found. Sightings of Romano-British road metalling have also been made during excavations around Denchworth Road in the 1960s (Coddington, *pers.comm*; Oxon SMR nos. 7541, 7941) and a number of Romano-British burials, some containing fourth century pottery, have been recorded from the Barwell Road area (SMR no. 7940).
- 3.5 These burials have been considered to possibly represent small private cemeteries to the rear of individual houseplots associated with roadside settlement (the Romano-British occupation at Wantage lying at the junction of the Alchester to Mildenhall Romano-British road with a pre-Romano-British trackway known as Icknield Way). The excavations at Rolls Court in Mill Street examined a tract of agricultural land, speculated to adjoin roadside plots although evidence for field systems of this type is not particularly common elsewhere (Holbrook, Thomas *et al* 1996). Slightly further south of Mill Street an evaluation in 1995 did reveal several ditched boundaries, containing second to third century AD pottery, suggesting agricultural activity (Bateman 1996).
- 3.6 In 1996 CAT was commissioned to carry out archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area itself. This established that archaeological deposits survived across much of the proposed development area (Bateman 1996). The initial phase of activity appeared to date to the late first/early second century AD, consistent with the results from the nearby excavations at Mill Street (Holbrook, Thomas *et al* 1996). The majority of features identified, however, appeared to date from the second to early third century AD and by the late third/early fourth century activity appeared to cease, based upon the fact that features located in the southern part of the site were apparently sealed by a midden-like deposit which produced artefactual material of late third to fourth century date.

3.7 No Anglo-Saxon occupation evidence was known from the study area itself although early Saxon (fifth-seventh century) activity was noted during the nearby excavation at Mill Street, in the form of pottery and loom-weight scatters (Holbrook, Thomas *et al* 1996).

4. ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES

4.1 A brief for archaeological recording issued by the Archaeology Section, Oxfordshire County Council (Smith 1997) listed a series of excavation aims, namely:

i) dating and phasing the main site features and contexts.

ii) defining the function areas within the limits of the excavation and obtaining evidence on the settlement history (e.g. shifting or static) and the occupation history (e.g. continuous or sporadic).

iii) determining the nature of the various periods of occupation.

iv) determining the relationship, character and extent between the various features within the excavation area.

v) obtaining information on the economy and the environment during the various phases of settlement.

vi) recovering artefactual, environmental and stratigraphic information that might lead to a better understanding of the area in the Romano-British period.

4.2 The subsequent project design (CAT 1998) stated the following excavation objectives:

i) to seek to establish and record fully the character and date of all archaeological deposits present on the site.

ii) to establish and record the degree of complexity with regard to the horizontal/vertical stratigraphy, as well as the range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence.

iii) to study any well-dated deposits providing good palaeo-environmental data.

4.3 Following the unexpected discovery of the footings of a Romano-British structure within the south-east corner of Area A the excavations were extended (to encompass Area A+) so as to more fully reveal the building and compile a detailed plan.

This additional fieldwork, although conducted under rescue conditions, sought to:-

i) establish the sequence of construction.

ii) characterise the nature of the rooms within.

iii) seek dating evidence for its construction and abandonment.

iv) seek clarification of a post-abandonment pit group and stone robbing (i.e. whether it was sub Romano-British or of much later origin).

v) examine sample areas beneath the building for earlier structures.

5. EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 Archaeological excavation was initially undertaken across two areas of the development site (Areas A and B), positioned within those parts of the site most affected by the foundations of the new buildings. Area A was centred on trench 1 of the original evaluation and covered 22m by 12m whilst Area B, centred on evaluation trench 2, covered 43m by 10m. A subsequent extension to excavation area A (coded as Area A+) measured approximately 10m by 30m.
- 5.2 A tracked excavator, utilising a toothless ditching bucket, was used to remove topsoil under archaeological supervision. Machine excavation ceased when the first significant archaeological horizon was reached. All spoil was subsequently scanned for artefacts and any material of archaeological significance retained.
- 5.3 The machine removal of allotment soil (1209) in Area A revealed a subsoil horizon (1122/1162), which represents the putative midden deposit encountered in evaluation trench 1. It became clear that rather than sealing all archaeological remains, as speculated during evaluation, this deposit was actually cut by a number of Romano-British features. Following examination of the cut features, five 1m square test pits were then dug through the subsoil (equating to an approximately 2% sample). The rest of the deposit was then carefully machine removed in spits until underlying archaeological features were exposed.
- 5.4 During the excavation all pits and postholes were half-sectioned and all linear features as a minimum sectioned once by hand. A full written, drawn and photographic record was made in accordance with CAT Technical Manual 1: *Site Recording Manual* (1996).
- 5.5 All artefacts were processed and analysed in accordance with CAT Technical Manual 3: *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation* (1995).

- 5.6 All environmental samples were taken in accordance with CAT Technical Manual 2: *The Taking of Samples for Palaeoenvironmental and Palaeoeconomic Analysis from Archaeological Sites* (1994).
- 5.7 Following the discovery of human remains a licence for their removal was obtained from the Home Office

6. POST-EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

- 6.1 Following the completion of the excavation an ordered, indexed and internally consistent site archive was compiled in accordance with specifications presented in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991) issued by English Heritage.
- 6.2 The survival and intelligibility of the site stratigraphy across excavation areas A/A+ and B is assessed as being relatively good, with archaeological remains having survived both as negative features and as upstanding building remains and debris spreads. Excavation has revealed only localised puncturing, by post-medieval and modern service runs and other intrusions, of Romano-British and post-Romano-British levels. Interpretation of, and the assignment of phases to, recorded features has been possible in most cases.
- 6.3 The finds from the excavation were assessed by a team of specialists. The pottery was assessed by Jane Timby (external consultant), the fired clay, brick and tile, mortar, plaster and glass by Emma Harrison (CAT), the worked stone by Ruth Saunders (external consultant), the stone ?figurine, metalwork and worked bone by Jane Bircher (external consultant), the worked flint by Graeme Walker (CAT), the coins by Peter Guest (external consultant), the animal bone by Mark Maltby (external consultant), the human bone by Tony Waldron (external consultant) and the charred plant remains by Andy Fairbain (external consultant).

7. EXCAVATION RESULTS

7.1 General

7.1.1 On the basis of a preliminary analysis of the records and artefacts the site has been phased into the following provisional periods. Six broad periods of activity were identified through stratigraphic relationships, orientation and a consideration of the dating evidence. The periods are:-

Period 0: residual prehistoric artefacts

Period 1: Romano-British (?late first to second centuries AD)

Period 2: Romano-British (second to ?mid third centuries AD)

Period 3: Romano-British (?mid third to late fourth centuries AD)

Period 4: Late/Post-Romano-British (undated)

Period 5: Post-medieval/modern (nineteenth to twentieth centuries AD)

7.1.2 No direct stratigraphic relationship existed between deposits recorded within areas A/A+ and B. Those features assigned to period 1 within area A, and its extension A+, were sealed by a period 2 soil horizon (1122), whilst all features assigned to period 1 within area B were solely sealed by a homogenous post-medieval/modern (period 5) subsoil (2001).

7.2 *Period 0: residual prehistoric artefacts*

7.2.1 This material is assessed in the relevant sections of the artefactual assessment, i.e. ceramics, worked flint.

7.3 *Period 1: Romano-British (?late first to second century AD)*

Areas A and A+

Introduction

7.3.1 A number of early Romano-British features were noted cutting the natural greensands (1004) during the stripping of sample areas of the later (period 2) soil horizon (1122) which underlay the period 3 villa building. The extent and character of these early Romano-British features could not easily be determined under rescue conditions. Several were extremely shallow, suggesting that truncation had occurred. There was no evidence that any of the features had been dug through the overlying soil horizon (1122), although edges to such features may have been lost if the deposit had been periodically cultivated/reworked.

Pits

7.3.2 The earliest Romano-British activity identified within area A+ included dispersed pits [1234], [1236], [1238] and [1241], together with pit cluster [1132], [1212], [1216], and [1218]. One pit, [1096], was also recorded within adjoining area A whilst pits [108], [117], [130], [132], [134] and [140] were encountered within evaluation trench 1.

7.3.3 Most period 1 pits had gently curving edges and broadly flat bases. Pottery of second century, or conceivably late first century AD, date was recovered from pits [1234] and [1241] whilst pits [1132], [1236] and [1238] yielded pottery

with a *terminus post quem* in the second century AD. Several other pits were either devoid of pottery or otherwise yielded undiagnostic sherds. These pits have been assigned to period 1 as a result of common fill characteristics (many being charcoal-rich), form and association with other dated examples.

Ditch and gully

7.3.4 A curvilinear ditch [1214], aligned broadly NW-SE, was partially exposed. It was at least 2.8m in length and 0.80m in width, with gently sloping sides dropping to a broadly flat base at a depth of 0.03-0.15m. Its silty-clay fill (1215) yielded 76 sherds of second century, or conceivably first century AD, date. The ditch became extremely shallow where it ran to the SW under a retained bank, where it is assumed to terminate.

7.3.5 A linear gully [1220] was also noted. It ran for at least 5m on a NE-SW alignment before turning sharply on a more NW-SE orientation for at least a further 4.2m. The feature averaged 0.45m in width and 0.15m in depth, with steeply-sloping sides and a narrow, slightly concave, base. Fill (1221) yielded no dating evidence.

Area B

7.3.6 Among the earliest definable Romano-British activity within area B was NW-SE aligned linear ditch [2010], which was 1.1m wide with steep sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.50m. It was subsequently cut by NNE-SSW aligned ditch [2012], 1.3m wide and 0.55m deep. Fill (2013) yielded seven sherds of second century AD or later pottery. Ditch [2012] was in turn recut, as [2049], on a slightly more N-S alignment.

7.3.7 An irregularly shaped, but broadly linear, depression [2020] was also noted. The character of this shallow feature, approximately 1.85m wide and 0.15m deep, is uncertain since it was partially removed by later features. Three second century AD sherds were recovered from fill (2021).

Ditch-flanked trackway

- 7.3.8 A NW-SE aligned trackway (2041), bounded on its NE and SW sides by ditches [2036] and [2037], cut across earlier ditch [2049] and shallow cut [2020]. Primary trackway surface (2041) was approximately 2.5m wide and 0.15m thick and was constructed using compacted redeposited greensand, presumably from the excavation of the ditches, together with chalk and flint fragments. Adjacent ditch [2036] was at least 0.80m wide, with a gentle v-shaped profile and a concave base at a depth of 0.60m. Five second century AD sherds were recovered from fill (2033). Ditch [2037] was at least 0.50m wide and 0.40m deep with a similar profile.
- 7.3.9 The primary trackway surface (2041) was subsequently resurfaced with a more durable flint metalling (2032) utilising flint pebbles firmly set in a silty-clay. This compact surface was approximately 3.6m wide and 0.12m thick. It had been deliberately built out over the ?infilled or silted primary ditch [2036] and also partially covered ditch [2037]. The silted primary ditches were later recut as [2038] and [2039]. To the SW ditch recut [2038] was approximately 0.80m wide, with a steep U-shaped profile dropping to a concave base at a depth of 0.50m. Fill (2052) yielded 25 late first or second century AD sherds. Ditch recut [2039] was at least 1.2m wide and 0.40m deep, with a gentler profile and flat base. Five second century AD sherds were recovered from fill (2034).

Ditched boundaries

- 7.3.10 NE of trackway (2032) a series of ditched boundaries were recorded on NW-SE and NE-SW alignments.
- 7.3.11 To the NE of the ditched trackway a NW-SE aligned ditch [2027] ran parallel with the trackway. It was in excess of 1.7m wide, with its one surviving side dropping steeply to a flat base at a depth of 0.80m. Primary fill (2028) yielded three sherds of probable second century AD pottery and secondary fill (2044) nine sherds of early second century AD date. Ditch [2027] was subsequently

recut as [2054], 2.3m in width, with steep sides and a more concave base at a depth of 0.80m.

7.3.12 At the N end of area B a small ditch [2078] was encountered on the same NW-SE orientation as ditch [2027]. It was approximately 0.60m wide and 0.15m deep with gently-sloping sides and a concave base. Fill (2079) produced three sherds of second century AD pottery.

7.3.13 Ditch [2024], 2.2m wide and 0.65m deep, was noted running on a NNE-SSW alignment perpendicular with [2027]. Primary fill (2026) contained 45 sherds of second century AD pottery.

7.3.14 Ditch [2003] ran on a NNE-SSW alignment immediately alongside and parallel with earlier ditch [2024]. It was 1.2m wide and 0.65m deep. Fill (2005) produced five sherds of second century AD pottery with a further sherd of the same date from secondary fill (2004).

7.3.15 Ditch [2006] also ran on a NNE-SSW alignment, cutting across earlier NNW-SSE ditch [2078]. It was 0.85m wide and 0.30m deep. Three sherds of second century AD pottery were recovered from fill (2007).

Period 1 Discussion

Area A/A+

7.3.16 No intercutting relationships existed between ditch [1214], gully [1236] and the various pits to indicate whether all were contemporary or represented several phases of pre-villa activity. The function of these pits is unclear. Their generally charcoal-rich fills, and the presence of charred plant remains, might suggest they were dug to dispose of material from the cleaning of ovens or threshing floors. The function of ditch [1214] and gully [1220] also remains uncertain from the limited view afforded. Feature [1220], given its irregular shape in plan and the absence of any associated postholes, did not appear to

represent a beam slot. Although structural associations cannot be entirely discounted for features [1214] and [1220] both may instead represent simpler agricultural or domestic enclosures, perhaps associated with an as yet unidentified first or second century AD building.

Area B

- 7.3.17 The ditches and ditch-flanked trackway represent the earliest recognisable Romano-British activity within area B, with pottery evidence indicating that they date from the second century AD. The ditched boundaries appear to represent an early setting out of small plots but it is unclear whether these are agricultural or domestic in character, although the dimensions of ditch [2027] do suggest a stock control function.
- 7.3.18 The double-ditched trackway appears rather elaborate for an access route between a second century settlement focus and outlying fields, particularly given the labour investment in its rebuild using durable, flint metalling. It appears more likely to represent an access spur running from the main Alchester to Mildenhall Romano-British road (conjectured to cross through the pasture field immediately west of the study area) to link with early Romano-British settlement in the Belmont area. Chance sightings of the Romano-British road have previously been made in the Denchworth Road area, and it is notable that both the road and ditched trackway were metalled in flint cobbles.
- 7.3.19 No period 1 structural remains or building materials were found by which to identify the focus of early Romano-British settlement associated with the second century ditched boundaries and trackway. The shallow sub-circular pits, containing charred plant-remains, noted in areas A/A+ (sealed beneath a period 2 soil horizon and the period 3 villa) and the relatively unabraded pottery and bone recovered from ditch fills in area B do however allude to probable late first or early second century occupation in the immediate site vicinity. The two shallow ditches/gullies [1214] and [1220] in area A+ have no

clear structural associations, but even representing simple enclosures would suggest that early (pre-villa) buildings lay nearby, close to the second-century trackway. The latter presumably ends before the break of slope that leads down to the Letcombe Brook.

7.4 Period 2: Romano-British (second to ?mid third centuries AD)

Areas A and A+

Artefact-rich 'dark earth'

7.4.1 Overlying all period 1 features within areas A/A+ an artefact-rich 'dark earth' was noted. This soil horizon was recorded as (1122) where it lay beneath the period 3 villa, and as (1162) where it surrounded it. Equivalent context numbers (1175), (1179) and (1186) have also been used for soil (1122) whilst contexts (1003), (1043), (1045), (1074), (1080), (1127), (1135) and (1193) are equivalent to soil (1162) across various parts of the site.

7.4.2 This artefact-rich deposit was sampled by means of hand-dug test-pits prior to its machine removal in area A. Soil (1122)/(1162) was found to consist of a moderately-compact dark brown silty-clay, with some charcoal flecking and frequent greensand inclusions. The layer averaged 0.50m in thickness, but its horizon clarity was poor against subsoil (1002)/(1209), overlying allotment soil (1001) and an underlying remnant ploughsoil (1050) recognisable in the NW corner of area A.

7.4.3 Deposit (1122)/(1162) contained predominantly second and third century AD pottery in its lower levels but late fourth century AD pottery on its surface, suggesting that the deposit may have accumulated gradually and apparently without extensive reworking.

Area B

- 7.4.4 Within area B activity dating to the later second to third century AD was harder to define, although pottery spanning this period was recovered from several features.
- 7.4.5 Following disuse, the double-ditched trackway (2032) and associated ditches [2038] and [2039] was sealed by a series of infilling layers (2040), (2030) and (2029). The latter, loam-rich, deposit (2029) contained seven sherds of second century AD pottery. The absence of stratigraphically later features, cutting the infilled trackway, makes close dating of its disuse uncertain. However a date during or soon after the late second century AD appears likely, given the absence of diagnostically third century AD pottery from its upper levels.
- 7.4.6 A cessation in the function of period 1 ditches [2003] and [2024] is clear from the subsequent cutting of several pits, postholes and a well shaft through fills (2004) and (2025).
- 7.4.7 Three postholes [2056], [2058] and [2100] were also noted cutting through ditch fill (2025). These averaged 0.45m in diameter and 0.25m in depth, and all contained dark brown silty-clay-loam fills with charcoal flecking. Two mid-third century AD or later sherds were noted within fill (2059). Pit [2042] (also cutting period 1 ditch fill (2025)) and pits [2064], [2066] and [2094] were also recorded. Fills (2043) and (2067) both yielded residual late first and second century AD pottery. An inverted cow skull had deliberately been set directly upon the floor of pit [2042].
- 7.4.8 A broadly square well shaft [2068], 1.40m by 1.25m in size, was also encountered, cutting earlier pit [2064]. Augering established that the well was approximately 2m deep, and contained silty clay fills (2071), (2070) and (2069). One sherd of second to third century pottery was retrieved from basal fill (271). No stone lining was present and an organic wicker lining may have been used, although if so all traces had perished. Pit [2092] was also noted, cutting across one corner of the infilled well shaft.

7.4.9 Ditch [2015] was noted running on a broadly NE-SW alignment. The ditch was approximately 2.4m wide and 0.75m deep, with quite steeply sloping sides and a concave base. Seventeen sherds of mid third century AD or later pottery were found in its uppermost fill (2016).

Period 2 Discussion

Area A/A+

7.4.10 The full extent of soil accumulation (1122)/(1162) is uncertain, although it could only be recognised within Areas A/A+. The subsoil (2001) which sealed all features within area B appears to have been subjected to post-Romano-British reworking and no comparable underlying artefact-rich layer was present. It is conceivable that the double-ditched trackway (2041)/(2032) in area B actually defines the northern extent of soil (1122)/(1162).

7.4.11 During the 1996 evaluation this 'dark earth' layer (1122/1162) was interpreted as a late Romano-British midden deposit sealing earlier features. However it is now clear from more extensive excavation that the deposit is not associated with a cessation of activity on the site, since all period 3 features are cut into it and it is sealed by debris from dismantling of the villa during period 4.

7.4.12 Soil (1122/1162) appears not to represent a deliberate raising of ground levels associated with construction of the period 3 villa since no tip lines were recognisable within it. Its artefact-rich nature and homogenous, well-mixed, texture, together with the presence of second and third century AD pottery in its lower levels and fourth century AD material higher in its profile, rather suggests a more gradual accumulation. It perhaps represents a garden soil, or manured ploughsoil, following the earlier pitting activity and preceding subsequent villa occupation, which has been subjected to periodic reworking/cultivation (such a garden or manured ploughsoil apparently being connected with as yet unidentified earlier Romano-British settlement). Given

the significant downward slope SE of the study area, towards the Letcombe Brook, it seems likely that deposit (1122)/(1162) must have accumulated against a major feature, possibly a retaining bank or an earlier, as yet unlocated, building.

Area B

7.4.13 Across area B activity appears rather less intensive during period 2 than during period 1 with the disuse of several period 1 ditched boundaries being followed by the cutting of several pits, postholes and a well. There is no discernible early (pre mid-third-century AD) Romano-British settlement focus for these features although they could be associated with an earlier undetected structure, once reached via the period 1 trackway, within or close to the site.

7.4.14 It is uncertain whether any new ditched boundaries date to period 2, although ditch [2015] contained pottery with a *terminus post quem* in the mid third century in its upper fill. It is conceivable that some period 2 boundaries may have been defined by post-built fencelines, rather than ditches, the ephemeral evidence for which may have been lost by subsequent ditch cutting in period 3.

7.5 *Period 3: Romano-British (?mid third to late fourth centuries AD)*

Area A/A+

Villa construction

7.5.1 During period 3 a villa-style building was constructed on a NE-SW axis within the south-eastern corner of the site. Only part of the villa lay within the excavation area. That part examined comprised a rectangular range in excess of 17m long and at least 13m wide. Given the presence of contemporary ditches immediately adjacent to the villa on its NW side it appears that this was the back of the building, with its location above the western slope of the

Letcombe Brook suggesting that it was sited to afford a frontal, easterly, view over the expanse of the valley.

- 7.5.2 The building contained at least three rooms up to 4m wide and 6.5m long that were accessed from a full length, 3m wide, corridor on the NW side. A possible through corridor, 2m wide, gave access to both sides of the building.. The NE, NW and SW walls of the building were revealed during the excavation, whilst a robber trench partly exposed along the SE baulk could conceivably mark the front wall of the building. Alternatively the building might have continued further along the level plateau to the SE, perhaps with a second full-length corridor mirroring that to the NW. Limited augering undertaken in neighbouring gardens to the east revealed stone at similar depths to that encountered in area A+, suggesting that further rooms or another corridor lay at the front, extending at least 10m east of the study area.
- 7.5.3 The sequence of building construction began with the excavation of footing trenches [1106], [1123], [1168], [1176]/[1145], [1182] and [1203]. Footing trench [1106] for the NW wall of the building was 18m long, 0.95m wide and 0.75m deep. All of the footing trenches were cut through soil horizon (1122) into the natural greensands (1004) and contained a compact backfill of large sub-angular 'clunch' (chalkstone fragments) and compact green clay. A thin mortared gravel capping to form a level base for the subsequent construction of above-ground walling then sealed all footing lines.
- 7.5.4 Little of the villa structure survived at ground level, the building having been systematically stripped of all reusable materials. A 2.2m length of 0.80m wide mortared stone wall (1200), on its NW side survived as a single course, whilst a 4.3m length (1128) of the NE wall, 0.75m in width, also survived as a single course. An 8.1m length of upstanding internal wall (1142) also remained, 0.55m in width and surviving up to two courses in height.
- 7.5.5 Whilst no floor levels within the building survived entirely intact it is possible to identify the types of flooring used in all of the rooms. The 17m long and 3m

wide main corridor on the NW side (Corridor 1) contained a thin surviving bedding layer (1210) of mortary sandy-gravel, some 0.01-0.05m thick. This appears to have supported large sandstone floor-slabs (a single intact slab from this area, measuring 0.75m by 0.40m by 0.03m thick, was found *in-situ*). Room 1 contained a partially surviving greensand/clay foundation (1121), 0.10m in thickness. As this was an unsuitable floor surface in its own right it presumably supported a stone slab floor in the manner of the corridor (the clay bedding layer having been extensively disturbed when these floor slabs were robbed). Room 2 possessed the best quality flooring, a 0.10m thick foundation of mortary-sand (1187)/(1154) capped with a skim of *opus signinum* (1153) approximately 0.02m thick. Within the possible through corridor between rooms 2 and 3 (Corridor 2) a rough stone make-up layer (1158) was noted, which may have supported similar slabbing. Room 3 contained a clay and stone bedding layer (1211), 0.10m thick, for a gravelly-mortar surface (1157) and a similar bedding (1137), some 0.20m thick, for a fine gravelly-mortar surface (1138).

- 7.5.6 Evidence was also noted to suggest that additional rooms of a more elaborate nature (or, conceivably, additional buildings) might lie close by. Fragments of box flue tile and brick suggest an unlocated room or rooms with underfloor heating, whilst a quarter-round moulded *opus signinum* fragment was of particular note, having perhaps come from an important lined feature such as a bath.
- 7.5.7 Further evidence for the building's construction comes from the period 4 post-abandonment debris, with discarded stone dumped over and around the villa. Building materials recovered included fragments of *tegulae* and *imbrex* roof tile, stone roof and floor tile, painted and plain wall plaster fragments and iron nail concentrations (the latter presumably from stripped and discarded structural timbers).

Foundation burial

7.5.8 Set beneath the floor of Room 1, and cut into pre-villa soil horizon (1122), was an infant foundation burial (1131) within a grave cut [1129]. There were no associated grave goods.

External ?yard surfaces

7.5.9 Immediately SW of, and abutting the villa a thin mortar-gravel surface (1136), 0.04m thick, was noted overlying a clay bedding layer (1110) above external soil (1162). The gravel surface extended back at least 5m from the building but its full extent is uncertain. A single reused stone roof tile (1240), set flush with the base course of wall (1200), also suggested the former presence of external surfacing immediately NW of the villa.

Ditched boundaries

7.5.10 Several phases of ditched boundaries were associated with the villa occupation. Ditches [1012]=[1076]/[1014]/[1039], [1085]/[1087]/[1091] and [1098]=[1226] all lay broadly parallel with the villa building. Establishing the sequence of ditch construction remains difficult, given the broad third to fourth century chronological span of the pottery recovered from their fills.

7.5.11 Ditch [1098] ran parallel with, and approximately 1.5m W of, the NW ('back') wall of the villa. During the sample stripping of soil (1162) north of the villa building a continuation of this ditch was detected (recorded as [1226]) cutting the pre-villa soil. The ditch turned around the NW corner of the building and respected the line of its NE wall. Ditch [1098]/[1226] presumably continues to the E under the adjoining modern gardens beyond the excavation area. Fill (1226) yielded 15 sherds of mid third to late fourth century pottery.

7.5.12 Two sequences of recut ditches were noted to the NW of ditch [1098], but their order of cutting is uncertain. NE-SW aligned ditch [1012] was approximately 0.80m wide, with very gently sloping sides running to a flat base at a depth of 0.20m. Fill (1013) yielded six second to third century pot

sherds and a late third to fourth century coin. A perpendicular spur [1101], 0.40m wide and 0.12m deep ran on a NW-SE orientation from ditch [1012]. A series of postholes in this area may have formed a perpendicular, NW-SE aligned, fence line associated with ditch [1012]. No further postholes could be discerned cutting into nearby ditch fills.

7.5.13 A parallel ditch [1039] was noted, at least 1.5 m wide and 1.1m deep, with steeply sloping sides dropping to a concave base.

7.5.14 A central ditch [1014] cut ditches [1012] and [1039] either side of it. Ditch [1014] was approximately 2.5m wide with a steeply sloping SE side and a gentler, more irregular, NW side, running to a flat base at a depth of 0.95m. Its main fill (1016) contained 57 pot sherds dating to the last quarter of the fourth century, and was overlain by thin layers of clunch (1017) and clay soil (1015) also containing late fourth century pottery.

7.5.15 Approximately 0.50m SE of ditch [1039] lay a second line of multiple ditches on the same NE-SW alignment. Ditch [1085] was in excess of 1m wide, with one steeply sloping side surviving and a concave base at a depth of 0.45m. Fill (1086) contained pottery of AD 360 or later date, other fills containing residual second century pottery.

7.5.16 Ditch [1085] was cut by ditch [1087], 3.7m in width with steep sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.90m. Fill (1095) yielded residual third century pottery.

7.5.17 Ditch [1087] was in turn recut by a narrower ditch [1091], 2.5m wide with sloping sides running to a flat base at the same depth. Fill (1092) yielded ten sherds of third century pottery, and a final mortar fill (1043) 15 sherds including fabrics of AD 360 or later date. The latter ditch could be traced back through the otherwise homogenous soil (1122) to the villa as a thin mortar spread, apparently derived from the demolition phase. Ditch [1091] appears to be one of the latest ditches in this area, having been partially open at the time of the villa's abandonment.

Area B

- 7.5.18 Ditch [2008], aligned NNE-SSW, cut across earlier ditches [2054] and clipped ditch [2024]. Its primary fill (2046) yielded 25 sherds of second to third century AD pottery and secondary fill (2023) nine sherds of the same date. Upper fill (2022) however produced three sherds of AD 360 or later date.
- 7.5.19 Also cutting the upper fill (2045) of ditch recut [2054] a series of shallow circular postholes were noted. Postholes [2060], [2076], [2086], [2088] and [2091] followed a broadly NW-SE alignment, and conceivably represent a meandering fenceline on the line of earlier ditched boundary [2054]. The postholes appeared to stop short of ditch [2008], and may respect it. A single undiagnostic Romano-British sherd was recovered from fill (2077).

Period 3 Discussion

Area A/A+

- 7.5.20 The unexpected identification of a villa-style building, apparently occupied between the mid third and late fourth centuries AD, is of considerable interest. Although comprehensively stripped of reusable building materials and robbed during period 4 the building was clearly well-constructed and finely appointed with *opus signinum*, flagstone and mortar flooring. Painted wall plaster and hypocaust tile fragments recovered from debris layers suggests the possible presence of other, fine, rooms adjacent to those recorded. The villa building in area A+ provides a clear focus for the associated period 3 activity recorded within areas A and B.
- 7.5.21 The period 3 field boundaries lie on NE-SW alignments broadly parallel with that of the villa, an orientation varying only slightly from that of the period 1 ditched boundaries. Ditches cut through the period 2 dark earth (1162) were discernible with varying levels of difficulty, such that whilst ditches

[1012]/[1014]/[1039] were seen at the level of (1162), ditches [1085]/[1087]/[1091] and [1098] were only recognisable at the level of the natural substrate (but could then be traced back in section as cutting soil (1162)). The shared alignment of the ditches and their repeated recutting suggests the maintenance, but minor migration, of a major boundary immediately to the back of the villa (perhaps keeping stock away from the building) over a long period.

Area B

7.5.22 Late Romano-British activity is reflected in the presence of late fourth century AD pottery within ditch [2015], and it appears that during period 3 area B again formed part of a regular pattern of ditched enclosures, presumably of domestic or agricultural function.

7.6 *Period 4: Late/Post Romano-British (undated)*

Area A/A+

Villa abandonment/dismantling.

7.6.1 The absence of accumulated occupation layers or significant quantities of finds over the villa floors suggests that the building was kept clean and therefore occupied right up until its dismantlement. No evidence of sub-Romano-British 'squatter' occupation or dereliction was encountered, the building apparently having been systematically stripped of all reusable building materials, including roof tiles, floor slabs, wall stone and even stone rubble from footing trenches, during the later Romano-British period. Careful dismantling is indicated both by the absence of significant amounts of fragmentary tile and rubble either immediately above the building or in the overlying allotment soil, and by a series of robber trenches [1111], [1151], [1160]=[1180], [1165=1118] and [1171] noted together with robber pits [1184], [1194] and [1196]. The robber

trenches appear to have been dug from SE to NW until sufficient stone had been obtained to meet requirements.

- 7.6.2 Waste materials from the dismantling/robbing of the villa building were encountered, consisting of a compact stone/clay deposit (1120) within Room 1, and similar deposits (1103) and (1208) across the other rooms and corridors. A clay-rich subsoil (1103)/(1209) in turn covered this debris. Further rubble spreads, including (1126), were encountered immediately outside the building. Some of this waste stone and mortar, such as spreads (1139), (1140) and (1141) and (1078)/(1084), had been tipped into the top of silting ditches immediately behind and alongside the villa. Thin mortar spread (1043), running between the villa and the period 3 ditches, represented either a general debris trail or a plough-spread layer. This mortar lens defined the interface between the late Romano-British soil (1162) and a post-villa soil (1002)/(1209) which continued to accumulate over the villa and across area A/A+. The formation process of this deposit is unclear but conceivably the soil represents a further accumulation of garden soil or manured plough soil in the post-Romano-British period.

Undated intrusions

- 7.6.3 A number of undated features were encountered within areas A/A+, cutting through post-abandonment/robbing waste and the external soil horizon (1162).
- 7.6.4 A series of shallow sub-circular scoops were encountered within Area A, consisting of pits [1037], [1067], [1024], [1028], [1010], [1048] and [1026]. Whilst some could conceivably be late or immediately post Romano-British all remain undated. Several tree boles were also noted, comprising [1198], [1116], and [1065], and further scoops/pits [1022], [1018], [1063], [1035], [1033], [1006] and [1008] were also found.

Period 4 Discussion

Areas A/A+ and B

7.6.5 Despite the proximity of the site to early Anglo-Saxon activity identified at Rolls Court, Mill Street, no dated Saxon features were recorded and only one Anglo-Saxon sherd was encountered. It seems probable that dismantling and robbing of the building occurred during the late Romano-British period, immediately following disuse of the villa. However the recovery of a single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery from fill (1174) of robber trench [1118] suggests that ongoing robbing occurred during the post-Romano-British period, with periodic revisiting of an already dismantled and partially robbed structure. Similarly, no immediately post-Romano-British/Anglo-Saxon finds or features were encountered within area B, such activity apparently being focused on the former villa building in area A+.

7.7 *Period 5: Post-medieval and modern (nineteenth-twentieth centuries)*

Areas A/A+

7.7.1 Several post-medieval and modern intrusions were noted within area A+. These consisted of two linear cuts [1146] and [1148], intrusions [1114] and [1163] and a modern cable line [1205]/(1206).

7.7.2 Overlying the Romano-British building debris and soil horizon (1162) in area A/A+ was a 0.20m thick subsoil accumulation (1002)/(1209), and 0.40m thick modern allotment soil (1001).

Area B

7.7.3 A modern drain line [2084] was also recorded crossing area B. Within area B a 0.40m thick subsoil (2001) was overlain by 0.25m of allotment soil (2000).

Period 5 Discussion

7.7.4 Modern disturbance within areas A/A+ and B was relatively limited, although some puncturing of surviving villa walls and floors had occurred. Post-medieval and modern finds were noted throughout the overlying subsoil and topsoil layers, reflecting a long history of allotment cultivation on the site.

8. THE ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

A wide range of artefacts were recovered from the excavation. These have been cleaned, quantified and catalogued. The following section summarises the results of preliminary assessment of the artefacts and proposes requirements for further work.

8.1 The Pottery (by Jane Timby)(Appendix 1)

8.1.1 The pottery assemblage from the site was subjected to post-excavation assessment to establish the chronological range and to date individual contexts, as well as to assess the potential for further work and the time required to prepare a full illustrated report.

8.1.2 The excavations at Denchworth Road, Wantage yielded an assemblage totaling 1342 sherds (19.5 kg) to add to the 184 sherds (3.7 kg) recovered from the preceding evaluation. Most of the pottery dates to the Romano-British period but the assemblage includes a few pieces of prehistoric, Anglo-Saxon and modern currency. Medieval material was conspicuously absent.

8.1.3 For the purposes of this assessment the material was broadly sorted into fabric classes and quantified by sherd count and weight for each excavated context. The assessment was carried out blind, i.e. without assessing the vertical or horizontal relationships of the individual contexts being considered. Thus any conclusions at this stage must be regarded as provisional.

Condition

- 8.1.4 The material was generally very well-preserved, with at least two reconstructible vessels amongst the Romano-British material. The average sherd size of 15g is quite high and suggests that the material has not been subjected to intense or ongoing disturbance.
- 8.1.5 The pottery was recovered from a total of 129 contexts, with an additional 59 unstratified sherds. Only 22 contexts (17%) yielded 20 sherds or more, whilst 14% produced between 10 and 20 sherds. It should be remembered when considering the dating that a lower level of confidence should be assigned to those 89 contexts with less than 10 sherds.
- 8.1.6 Despite the relatively good condition of the material a certain degree of residuality is evident where early material has been redeposited in later levels. This is particularly evident with the prehistoric sherds, which all occur in Romano-British contexts, but is also present amongst the Romano-British material.

Prehistoric

- 8.1.7 At least 18 sherds of prehistoric pottery were present amongst the Romano-British material. A calcined flint-tempered sherd from (1133) which shows the possible edge of a cordon could suggest a Bronze Age date. A variety of fabrics were observed including sandy glauconitic types, a shell-tempered ware and several calcined flint fabrics. Although featured sherds were rare most of the material would be compatible with a middle Iron Age date.
- 8.1.8 Residual middle Iron Age pottery has previously been observed in the general vicinity at Mill Street (Timby 1996) but to date no foci for such Iron Age occupation has been identified in the immediate area.

Romano-British

- 8.1.9 The bulk of the pottery dates to the Romano-British period. Although there could potentially be a few pieces of late first century AD date most of the wares appear to span the second to fourth centuries. The presence of several late Romano-British shell-tempered wares suggests that material was still accumulating in the area in the late fourth century.
- 8.1.10 The majority of the pottery comprises locally made grey sandy wares which span the occupation period. Grog-tempered storage jars, another relatively long-lived type, are also well represented.
- 8.1.11 Potentially early groups come from ditch [1214], pit [1234], pit [2042] and ditch [2027].
- 8.1.12 Late Romano-British material, i.e. dating to the last quarter of the fourth century AD or later, came from the subsoil, ditches [1014] and [2008], soil (1043), posthole [1063], soils (1105) and (1141) and rubble spread (1139).
- 8.1.13 A number of continental imports are present including South and Central Gaulish samian tableware, Spanish olive oil amphora (Dressel 20), Gallic wine amphora and beakers from Cologne and the Moselle. One of the samian vessels has a lead rivet repair.
- 8.1.14 British regional imports include colour-coated beakers from the Lower Nene Valley and New Forest industries. Amongst the coarse wares are storage jars from the Savernake Forest, Wiltshire, black burnished wares from Poole Harbour, Dorset; and shelly wares and pink grog-tempered wares from the Midlands.
- 8.1.15 Local products are those well-documented from the Oxfordshire industries with a diverse range of plain oxidised and reduced wares, white wares, and

colour-coated wares, the latter more typical of the later Romano-British period.

- 8.1.16 Overall the assemblage is quite a diverse one. The presence of imports, although not in large quantities, raises the status of the group as a whole and suggests an establishment of modest standing. The high proportion of storage jars is very typical of rural settlements and is presumably related to the storage or processing of raw materials such as agricultural produce. Such vessels do not tend to be so common in urban assemblages.

Anglo-Saxon

- 8.1.17 A single organic-tempered handmade sherd from robber trench [1165] is likely to be of Anglo-Saxon date. The ware is probably contemporary with material excavated from the nearby Mill Street (Holbrook, Thomas *et al* 1996).

Post-medieval/modern

- 8.1.18 A very small number of modern sherds were present including china, flower-pot and glazed earthenwares. These were largely recovered from topsoil and subsoil horizons, reflecting mixing of material during the former allotment usage of the site.

8.2 *Fired clay (by Emma Harrison) (Appendix 2)*

8.2.1 Fired clay was recovered in small quantities from a number of period 1-5 features, with the largest assemblage being recovered from period 1 ditch fill (2045). Many of the fired clay fragments have a flat surface with numerous organic impressions, whilst some have a smooth flat surface on the opposite or an adjoining face. The material appears to come from a pit lining, as it appears insufficiently highly fired to be from an oven lining. Two fabrics are present, one of which has chalk, flint and rounded quartz inclusions whilst the other is a finer fabric with fewer, smaller quartz inclusions and mica. Both also contain an abundant black, rounded, inclusion.

8.3 *Brick and tile (by Emma Harrison)(Appendix 3)*

8.3.1 Brick and tile was recovered from 41 excavation and two evaluation contexts. Many of the fragments are small and thus unidentifiable to type. The table in Appendix 3 lists the quantity of the various types of tile recovered. Almost half of the *tegula* and *imbrex* fragments were recovered from villa debris layer (1120), including several large *tegula* fragments. One *tegula* fragment from fill (1166) of robber trench [1165] had a nail hole. A number of the box tile fragments were recovered from fill (1015) of ditch [1014], villa debris layer (1103) and fill (1172) of robber trench [1171]. These pieces had deep and wide diagonal combed patterns.

8.4 *Mortar and plaster (by Emma Harrison) (Appendix 4)*

8.4.1 Plaster was recovered from only two contexts, (1017) and fill ?(1087) of ditch [1087], while pink mortar was recovered from seven contexts. Much of the pink mortar has a red painted surface, as does one of the plaster fragments. A small quantity of grey mortar/concrete was also recovered. The presence of

several large, thick, and in one case moulded, painted mortar fragments suggests the presence of an important lined feature such as a bath.

8.5 *The worked stone (by Ruth Saunders)*

8.5.1 The two rotary quern fragments are both of the same lithogy, a variety of Millstone grit, and may be fragments from the same artefact. Their thickness suggests that they may be from a mechanically operated millstone, rather than a hand operated quern and further measurement may support this.

8.5.2 Several roof stones were recovered with a single suspension hole, and floor stones of similar limestones were also found. Most of the building stone found at the site is Corallian limestone, although from varying facies.

8.6 *Stone ?figurine (by Jane Bircher)*

8.6.1 A possible crude figurine of a schematically depicted seated person, with head missing, was recovered from period 1 ditch fill (2032). Chalk figurines are known in the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods.

8.7 *Worked flint (by Graeme Walker) (Appendix 5)*

8.7.1 Thirty four pieces of flint were recovered from Romano-British and unstratified contexts during the excavation and identified (Appendix 6).

8.7.2 Most of the assemblage consists of trimming waste, largely secondary and tertiary flakes and some blades. There are few primary flakes and no cores. There are also no implements, although six pieces show signs of slight retouch and/or utilisation.

8.7.3 Where cortex is visible this indicates that flint nodules from the nearby chalk and derived nodules (with smoothed cortex) were used. There also appears to be some utilisation of derived flint pebbles.

8.7.4 The material was widely distributed across the site without any obvious spatial significance.

8.7.5 The assemblage appears largely undatable, although some of the blades are quite finely manufactured and small in proportions, and therefore a Mesolithic date might be expected for at least part of the assemblage. A possible Bronze Age scraper was noted on the nearby Mill Street site, but there too the broader assemblage was undated.

8.8 *Coins (by Pete Guest) (Appendix 6)*

8.8.1. 23 coins were recovered from the excavations, the majority from supervised metal-detecting of the site. All but four of the coins date from the Romano-British period. Those Romano-British coins recovered from stratified contexts will provide close dating evidence for the occupation phases on the site. Soil horizon (1162) immediately outside of the villa was particularly rich with finds, producing seven coins in total.

8.9 *The metalwork (by Jane Bircher)*

8.9.1 Copper alloy

8.9.1.1 A total of seven copper alloy objects/fragments were recovered during the excavation, with identifiable objects including items of jewellery and possible dress fastening fragments. The following catalogue details recommended further analysis and conservation requirements.

Catalogue

(1003) SF134. Complete but distorted bracelet of D-shaped section, apparently undecorated. Late Romano-British (3rd and 4th centuries A.D.).

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further discussion needed.

Conservation: Cleaning and stabilising essential.

(1193) SF175. Approximately half of a penannular bracelet of flattened oval section, the surviving terminal decorated with notches. Late Romano-British (late 3rd -4th centuries A.D.).

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further discussion needed.

Conservation: Cleaning and stabilising essential.

(1139) SF141. From the x-ray this appears to be part of a hollow object with two decoratively moulded solid sections or rivets. It could be some sort of fitting or just possibly a fragment of a hollow torc of Romano-British date.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research and discussion after cleaning.

Conservation: Cleaning and stabilising essential.

(1092) SF135. Curved fragment of thin sheet metal, possibly part of the domed head of a stud. Romano-British or later.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: None.

Conservation: Cleaning and stabilising desirable. Although nothing is visible, this sort of stud is occasionally gilded.

(1017) SF184. Annular object. The x-ray suggests a small lug on the outer edge as if a further component is broken off (*i.e.* it is part of a larger object such as a dress fastener) but examination of the object as it is suggests that it is actually penannular with overlapping ends.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research after cleaning.

Conservation: Cleaning and stabilising essential.

(1162) SF160. Droplet, possibly suggestive of on-site metal-working.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Possibly worth showing to metal-working specialist but only if there is other evidence of copper alloy working from the site.

Conservation: None.

(1122) <15>. Speck.

Recommendations for further work: none.

8.9.1.2 Where particularly diagnostic the copper alloy objects detailed above may assist closer dating of the Romano-British occupation within periods 1-3.

8.9.2 Iron Objects

8.9.2.1 A total of ten iron objects/fragments were recovered during the excavation, with identifiable objects including horseshoes, iron plate and fittings, and a length of chain. The following catalogue details recommended further analysis and conservation requirements.

Catalogue

U/S Area A+. Tapering bar, broken at both ends, probably a chisel or gouge. Due to the utilitarian nature of tools it is very difficult to assign a date on their intrinsic design without contextual dating but this could be Romano-British.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research after cleaning.

Conservation: Selective cleaning essential.

(1038) SF101. Small tool with one straight edge and the other curving to form a point. The terminal is broken but may be part of a tang. The tool is certainly not a blade but could be a file, chisel or even a drill bit. For dating see comments above

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research after cleaning.

Conservation: Selective cleaning essential.

Evaluation trench 1, (103). Chain. One complete and two incomplete elongated figure-of-eight chain links of a type widely used in the Iron Age and Romano-British periods but it could be later.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: None.

Conservation: None.

(1115). Complete horseshoe with 7 nail holes of probable post-medieval date.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: No further research.

Conservation: None.

(1147). Fragment of horseshoe of post-medieval date and an unassociated bar.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: No further research.

Conservation: None.

(1210) SF173. Roughly rectangular plate with a central hole. If Romano-British, it could be part of a hinge or binding strip for a door.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research.

Conservation: The darker patches on the x-ray look like white metal plating.

(1078) SF108. Flat plate with curved edges.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research.

Conservation: The darker patches on the x-ray look like white metal plating.

(1208) SF178. X-ray 1022. Large flat-headed stud, possibly a decorative coffin fitting.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further research required.

Conservation: None.

(2052) SF127. X-ray 1021. Small curved fragment of a larger object.

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: None.

Conservation: None.

(1122) <15>. Three very corroded and encrusted lumps (the smallest of which might be stone) and one piece of ?hammerscale (now bagged separately).

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Show ?hammerscale to a metal-working specialist.

Conservation: None.

8.9.2.2 Further analysis of the iron objects may add to a developing understanding of the status of the settlement and economic activity within it.

8.9.3 Iron Nails (by Jane Bircher)

8.9.3.1 A total of 91 nails or nails fragments were recorded from the site. well over two-thirds of these appear to be from Romano-British contexts. The nails should be quantified by context, Manning's type, size and completeness. It may be possible to comment on their use once their spatial distribution is known.

8.9.3.2 In addition, hobnails were found in three contexts. Although the hobnails are incomplete and corroded it should be possible to describe the shapes and sizes and comment on whether the groups represent whole shoes or not.

8.9.4 Lead objects

8.9.4.1 A total of seven lead droplets/fragments were recovered during the excavation. The following catalogue details recommended further analysis and conservation requirements.

Catalogue

U/S Area A+ SF151. Flat, almost round droplet.

(1113) SF 167. Sheet fragment with moulding on one face, possibly part of a larger object.

(1210) SF171. Thin sheet fragment with one rounded end and folded over on two edges.

(1210) SF172. Cut segment of a round lump scored by a cut mark.

(1122) SF174. Small, flat, irregularly-shaped splash.

(1208) SF179. L-shaped splash.

U/S over (1140) SF181. Splash

Recommendations for further work for all lead objects:

Finds specialist: None.

Conservation: None.

8.9.4.2 The presence of lead droplets/splashes within period 4 debris layers is noteworthy, perhaps indicating disturbance of metal-working waste from another part of the settlement or, more simply, of molten objects or fittings.

8.10 *Worked bone (by Jane Bircher)*

8.10.1 A single fragment of worked bone was recovered during the excavation.

Catalogue

(1054) SF185. Long tapering bone object, complete but now broken into two pieces, probably an unfinished pin of Crummy type 1 (pins with a plain conical head of 1st – 2nd century A.D. date).

Recommendations for further work:

Finds specialist: Further discussion required.

Conservation: None.

8.11 *Glass (by Emma Harrison) (Appendix 7)*

8.11.1 Four sherds of glass were recovered, three of which are Romano-British.

8.12 *The animal bone (by Mark Maltby) (Appendix 8)*

Methodology

8.12.1 All animal bones recovered from stratified contexts were scanned. The following data were recorded for each context:

- i) context number
- ii) feature number
- iii) feature type
- iv) period
- v) approximate number of fragments provisionally identified to each species
- vi) approximate number of unidentified fragments
- vii) approximate total number of fragments

- viii) assessment of the state of preservation of the assemblage
- ix) number of mandibles with surviving teeth for each species
- x) number of limb bones with epiphysial fusion data
- xi) number of measurable bones for each species
- xii) other comments

8.12.2 These details were recorded on to a spreadsheet and are stored with the site archive. Records of anatomies represented, fragmentation, gnawing, butchery marks, pathology, ageing and metrical data were not made. Bones from unstratified contexts and from sieved samples were scanned but not quantified.

Results

8.12.3 Animal bones were recorded from 101 stratified contexts. These were provisionally assigned to the following periods.

Period 1: Romano-British (first-second century AD)

Period 2: Romano-British (second to third centuries AD)

Period 3: Romano-British (mid third-late fourth century AD)

Period 4: Post-Roman/undated.

Period 5: Post-medieval and modern (eighteenth-nineteenth centuries AD)

Preservation

8.12.4 Bone assemblages from most contexts were well preserved, although many bones were damaged by gnawing. Period 4 contexts tended to produce the best preserved assemblages, whereas the assemblages from period 3 contexts were generally slightly less well preserved than other groups.

Period 1

- 8.12.5 Seventeen contexts produced animal bones. Cattle bones were by far the most commonly identified, followed by sheep/goat and horse. Pig and dog bones were found in small numbers.
- 8.12.6 Ditch [2024] produced the largest number of bones, several cattle bones from which were complete. These could have belonged to the same adult animal, although at least two cattle are represented.
- 8.12.7 The horse assemblage included a pair of mandibles and five cervical vertebrae of an immature animal found in ditch [2012].
- 8.12.8 Bones of other species included 14 bones of a rabbit in [2024]. The latter bones look more modern than the rest and are clearly intrusive.
- 8.12.9 Pit contexts excavated during the 1996 evaluation were also examined. Sixteen contexts produced 221 bones. Again, cattle bones dominated the assemblage, which also included sheep/goat, pig, horse, dog and red deer bones. Chopped cattle bones were noted in contexts (103), (124) and (125).

Period 2

- 8.12.10 Nineteen contexts produced animal bone. Species representation included cattle, sheep/goat, pig, horse, dog and, possibly, roe deer. Ditch [2015] produced the largest number of bones, including a tibia of a dog with knife cuts on it.

Period 3

- 8.12.11 Twenty contexts produced animal bone. Ditch [1014] produced over 150 fragments. This and other assemblages in this period were dominated by cattle bones, with sheep/goat, horse, pig and dog also represented again. The group appears to have slightly greater species diversity than the earlier groups,

however, with hare, red deer, domestic fowl, and possibly raven and fish represented.

8.12.12 Ditch [1014] contained a substantial group of bones, mainly of cattle, several of which bore clear signs of chop marks. A fairly complete skull and both mandibles of an adult horse were found in the same context. Another substantial portion of a horse skull was found in ditch [1085]. A cattle skull was found at the base of pit [2042]. Ditch [2008] produced the largest number of bones, including the front half of a cow skull as well as those of an amphibian and a rodent.

Period 4

8.12.13 Twenty eight contexts produced animal bones, including material recovered from several sections of robber trench (Table 1). Most of the bones identified belonged to cattle and sheep/goat, with small numbers of pig, horse and bird bones also represented (Table 3). Two of the bird bones probably belonged to domestic fowl; a third belonged to a larger species. All of the horse bones were found in pit [1024] and consisted of parts of both halves of the pelvis, the sacrum and three of the lumbar vertebrae.

8.12.14 Villa debris layer (1120) included eight bones from the hind feet of a sheep. No other associated groups of bones were noted.

Period 5

8.12.15 Five contexts produced animal bone (Tables 1-2). Cattle, horse, sheep/goat and dog were the only species identified (Table 3). A very large sheep humerus from intrusion [1146] and the back half of a cattle skull with a pronounced ridge between the horn cores from cut [1148] are indicative of animals that have been selectively bred since the Agricultural Revolution (eighteenth-century)

Sieved Samples

8.12.16 A small number of bones were recovered from the sieved sampling programme. These have not been quantified in this scan. Only a few bones, mainly of domestic mammals, appear to be identifiable.

Ageing Data

8.12.17 Modest amounts of ageing data are available in the form of mandibles with surviving teeth and bones with surviving epiphyses. Thirty-three mandibles are available for study, with sheep/goat (12) and cattle (8) the most common. More ageing evidence can be obtained from epiphysial fusion data (125 bones), particularly for cattle (71).

Metrical Data

8.12.18 Only 57 bones are measurable. Cattle bones provide the majority (32) of these and several complete limb bones are available to obtain withers height estimates. A number of the cattle bones from Romano-British contexts appear to be from large animals, indicating the presence of improved stock or male animals or both. Very limited metrical data are available for other species.

8.13 *Shell (by Emma Harrison)*

8.13.1 A small quantity of shell was recovered from 2 evaluation and 23 excavation contexts. All of it is oyster (70 fragments, 1669g) except for one mussel shell (1078) and one snail (1117). A catalogue record has been compiled.

8.14 *The human bone (by Tony Waldron)*

8.14.1 The infant inhumation burial cut into the pre-villa soil beneath room 1 of the building was assessed as being approximately 50% complete. Surviving, fragmentary, bones of the skull, ribs, arms and legs could be identified.

8.15 *Charred plant remains (by A.S. Fairbairn) (Appendix 9)*

8.15.1 Charred plant remains collected from 10 palaeo-environmental samples have been assessed. Sampling during the excavation was advised on the basis of the post-evaluation assessment that established the presence of charred plant remains throughout the excavated ditch and pit fills (Keith Wilkinson in Bateman 1996). Identified remains included cereal grain, chaff, weed seeds, fruit seeds and wood charcoals. Although of low abundance and diversity the plant remain assemblages provided the potential to investigate agricultural practice on valley-side Romano-British settlements in the Upper Thames, information that is currently unknown (*ibid*).

8.15.2 Assessment of the samples from the site aimed to describe the abundance and diversity of charred plant remains in the excavated deposits and evaluate the potential of the assemblages to provide:

i) economic information including the range of plant resources used at the site, methods of agriculture employed and the presence of any imported plant resources.

ii) information about the environment of the settlement.

iii) information about the function of features within the excavated area and contribute to an understanding of the site as a whole.

METHODOLOGY

- 8.15.3 Samples were collected following the guidelines laid out in the Cotswold Archaeological Trust Technical Manual 2. 10 samples were collected from ditches and pits, all being of 20 litres or more in volume.
- 8.15.4 10 litre sub-samples were processed using the flotation technique, the floating fraction and residues both being collected in 0.5mm mesh sieves.
- 8.15.5 The residues contained no environmental remains and only the floating fractions (flots) provided the potential to contain any useful environmental remains.
- 8.15.6 Plant remain diversity and abundance were established by scanning the flots using a low power (x4 - x50) binocular dissecting microscope. The abundance and diversity of generalised categories of plant remains were recorded using abundance and diversity indices. Abundance was recorded for whole specimens or whole specimen equivalents.
- 8.15.7 Although no systematic identification of the seeds, fruits and cereal remains was attempted the more abundant and easily identified taxa were recorded and the scanning procedure provided a basis for evaluation of species diversity.
- 8.15.8 Only the abundance of wood charcoal fragments could be recorded as diversity estimates were not practicable. Estimates of total fragment abundance and the abundance of fragments above 2mm and 4mm in size were recorded. 2mm is the minimum size of charcoal fragments required for identification and above 4mm most fragments are identifiable. Therefore these size fractions provide a basis for determining the usefulness of the preserved wood charcoal assemblages as a basis for species identification for environmental reconstruction.
- 8.15.9 The presence of fragments of vegetative plant tissues ('parenchyma' and 'tuber' categories) was also recorded.

RESULTS.

- 8.15.10 The results of the assessment are shown in Tables 8-13. All of the samples contained charcoal fragments and charred seeds and fruits, including domestic cereals, pulses and weed seeds. Preservation of most types of charred remains was usually good, although cereal grains were often vesicular and unidentifiable.
- 8.15.11 Most charcoal assemblages consisted mainly of tiny fragments below the size suitable for taxonomic identification. Only the assemblage in sample 15 contained enough suitable fragments of wood charcoal for full analysis.
- 8.15.12 Domestic cereal remains were preserved in all assessed samples including grains, rachis segments, awn fragments and spikelet forks. Cereal grains were present only in small numbers throughout the samples, mostly from barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat species, including spelt (*Triticum spelta*). Cereal chaff assemblages were dominated by wheat spikelet forks. Samples also included a few remains of oats (*Avena* sp.) included grains and awn fragments. The largest single assemblage of chaff remains was from sample 12.
- 8.15.13 Domestic pulses were present in small quantities in samples 9, 11 and 15. All of the specimens were domestic pea (*Pisum sativum*).
- 8.15.14 Weed seeds were present in all samples, often in substantial quantities. Diversity was high in all except samples 8 and 13. Weed taxa included goosefoot (*Chenopodium* sp.), docks (*Rumex* sp.), knotweeds (*Polygonum* sp.), mayweed (*Anthemis* sp.), poppy (*Papaver* sp.) small-seeded grasses (*Poaceae*) and small seeded legumes (*Trifoleae*). The taxa may have derived from crop weeds or the burning of hay used as fodder.
- 8.15.15 Fruit remains were only identified in sample 16, where a single poorly preserved fig seed (*Ficus carica*) was identified. Identification is less than certain as the specimen was badly damaged. If verified this specimen would suggest trade in exotic plant products to the site. A single fragment of

vegetative tissue (parenchyma) was identified in sample 7, although it was glassy and vesicular and is unlikely to be identifiable.

DISCUSSION.

- 8.15.16 Plant remains in most of the samples probably derive from agricultural-based activities and the results presented here are consistent with the post-evaluation assessment. The low numbers of cereal grains and pulses and large quantities of weed seeds and chaff suggest that the plant remains may have derived from the burning of crop processing residues. The small quantity and size of charcoal fragments and the contexts from which the remains were recovered suggest that the remains became incorporated in the site deposits as the result of cleaning hearths, ovens or threshing floors.
- 8.15.17 Samples with large assemblages of cereal grain, chaff and weed seed remains were identified in all three site areas (A, A+ and B), providing the potential to investigate plant use at the site in deposits contemporary with and pre-dating villa construction. Preservation of large assemblages of weed seeds along with chaff and grain provides the potential to investigate crop conditions (e.g. prevalence of weeds) and crop husbandry as well as the range of crops grown. The preservation of possible fodder and pasturage plants also provides the potential to reconstruct elements of the local grassland flora.
- 8.15.18 The presence of agricultural debris across the site suggests the extensive dumping of agricultural debris and may indicate long-term and extensive agricultural activity during the Romano-British occupation.
- 8.15.19 Only sample 15 had a different composition and contained large quantities of wood charcoal. This may reflect a different source, such as industrial instead of agricultural activities, or may simply reflect taphonomic factors. The assemblage in sample 15 was from a charcoal lens sealed beneath the villa. Unlike the other assemblages, which may have accumulated gradually in

ditches and pits, that in sample 15 may have derived from a single episode of dumping rapidly sealed and protected from post-depositional damage by the villa above.

8.15.20 The charcoal assemblage in sample 15 is large enough to be used as a basis for investigation of the fuel-woods used at the site, which may in turn provide information about the local environment of the site as well as the range of wood resources utilised.

9. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE AND ARCHIVE

- 9.1 The archaeological evaluation and excavation of land off Stockham Way/Denchworth Road, Wantage in 1996 and 1999 have together successfully countered the potential loss of archaeological information resulting from the development programme. The site is identified as being of clear local and regional importance for the following reasons.
- 9.2 The excavations have demonstrated a long sequence of Romano-British activity and occupation across the site, in the form of pits, a well, a ditch-flanked trackway, a series of ditched boundaries and structural remains, dating between the late first or early second and late fourth centuries AD.
- 9.3 Of particular importance has been the exceptional discovery, and subsequent recording under rescue conditions, of a previously unknown villa with pottery and coin evidence suggesting occupation between the mid third and late fourth centuries AD. Although comprehensively dismantled and stripped of most reusable material during the late and/or post-Romano-British period the surviving footings, floors and wall courses have been subject to little post-medieval or modern disturbance.
- 9.4 The identification of the villa building raises several new research questions. It presents an opportunity to establish the date and sequence of the building's construction and to characterise the nature of the rooms within. The location of earlier Roman settlement, associated with the ?late first and second century AD activity on the site, is also of interest given the absence of evidence for any earlier structures beneath the villa. Other research questions include seeking to determine the nature of the pre-villa artefact-rich soil, as well as dating the disuse of the villa (given the absence of evidence of subsequent dereliction) and its subsequent dismantling and robbing.

- 9.5 There is a relative paucity of known villa sites within south-west Oxfordshire but where present such villas have been seen as indicators of economic activity, with villas at Abingdon and Frilford suggesting potential market centres (Miles (ed) 1986, Young 1986, Scott 1993). The identification of a villa building at Wantage raises important questions regarding the relationship of the villa to its immediate environs and about the overall settlement status of Wantage during the Romano-British period. A wide range of artefactual and ecofactual remains have been recovered from Romano-British contexts across the site, with very little post-depositional disturbance. The material includes pottery, building materials, metalwork, worked bone, animal bone, human bone and charred plant remains.
- 9.6 The pottery assemblage contains residual prehistoric material, one of the largest recorded Romano-British assemblages from Wantage, and a single Anglo-Saxon sherd. Detailed quantification and analysis will allow comparison with published and future sites from Wantage and the surrounding region, and will contribute to an understanding of the development and status of the site and its relationship to other sites in the immediate locality.
- 9.7 A number of Romano-British coins recovered during the excavation will, following cleaning, provide close dating evidence for the occupation phases on the site.
- 9.8 The faunal assemblage is generally well-preserved and if further analysis were to be undertaken this might allow investigation of possible developments in animal exploitation during the Romano-British occupation of the site, identification of specialist butchery activity and a study of changes in species representation and animal size associated with occupation of the villa-style building. Comparison with the data collected from Rolls Court, Mill Street, might enhance the value of the data.
- 9.9 The palaeo-environmental assessment indicates good preservation of charred plant remains, and has identified probable crop processing waste and charcoal

possibly from the cleaning of hearths, ovens or threshing floors. If detailed analysis were to be undertaken this would identify the range of plant resources used at the site, methods of agriculture employed and the presence of any imported plant resources, both contemporary with and pre-dating the villa construction, as well as providing environmental information about the settlement and the possible function of excavated features. The palaeo-environmental analysis carried out at Mill Street largely concentrated on sediments and molluscs, and so the Stockham Way material could provide some enhancement to environmental studies for the immediate locality.

- 9.10 The excavations have served to reinforce the known archaeological potential of the site vicinity as identified from previous discoveries of Romano-British burials and other findspots, including fourth century AD pottery, within the Belmont area of Wantage and from investigations in 1993-4 at Rolls Court, Mill Street. The site thus forms part of a larger area of Romano-British occupation, on the western side of the Letcombe Brook, and studied in conjunction with the material recovered from Mill Street the excavation results should make an import contribution to the understanding of the nature of Romano-British occupation at Wantage.
- 9.11 The single Anglo-Saxon sherd from a villa robber trench alludes to post-Romano-British activity in the area. The absence of discernible Saxon and medieval features is particularly noteworthy, and surprising given the short distance between the site and the late Saxon/medieval urban core which developed on the opposite side of the Letcombe Brook (Blair 1994). The process of post-villa soil accumulation is also noteworthy as the origins of this material and the agencies of its deposition are not clearly understood.
- 9.12 Of secondary importance, but still worthy of note, is that a small assemblage of flint artefacts together with possible Bronze Age and probable Iron Age pottery were recovered from the excavation. Although all the material was from residual contexts, it nonetheless adds to the growing corpus of information suggesting prehistoric activity in this part of Wantage. Middle Iron

Age pottery has been recovered from Mill Street (Holbrook, Thomas *et al* 1996) but no structural evidence has yet come to light for any pre-Roman settlement around the town. The apparent absence of late Iron Age material on site which has both middle Iron Age and Romano-British occupation has also been noted at the nearby religious centre of Frilford 9km to the NE.

- 9.13 A fuller understanding of the results of the 1999 excavations at Stockham Way and the material from the immediate surroundings at Mill Street will inform future decisions by local authority archaeological curators and allow them to refine predictive mitigation strategies to address the archaeological implications of development proposals within Wantage.
- 9.14 Considered in the context of the excavation results summarised above the results of fieldwork clearly justify the implementation of a post-excavation programme. The proposed analysis will lead to the fulfilment of the objectives set out in the Oxfordshire County Council brief and CAT project design.
- 9.15 The evidence recovered is manifestly of a quality to require publication. Summary reports on the results will be published in *Oxoniensia* and *Britannia* subject to Editors approval, and in the Cotswold Archaeological Trust Annual Review. The next section presents the proposed policy of CAT in achieving:
- i) the deposition of an ordered and internally consistent archive with Oxfordshire Museums Service.
 - ii) the publication of a coherent synthesised report for dissemination in an academically recognised outlet.

10. UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN SPECIFICATION

10.1 Background

10.1.1 The original project objectives have previously been summarised in Section 4 of this report and the results of the excavation presented in Section 7. These are accompanied by results of analysis of the artefacts and environmental data in Section 8, and the significance of the site is summarised in Section 9. These preceding sections should be referred to as necessary with reference to discussion below.

10.2 Summary statement of potential

10.2.1 The following material elements of the assessment have been identified as critical to the understanding of the site, and should receive further analysis:-

- the stratigraphic sequence
- the pottery assemblage
- the coins

10.2.2 Additional significant information may also be obtained from the following categories listed below. Due to project budget constraints it is not envisaged that further analysis can be undertaken on these categories, but that the results of assessment will provide a contribution to the published report. :-

- the animal bone
- the charred plant remains

10.2.3 In addition, artefact categories listed below also have a lesser contribution to make to the published report. All have intrinsic value inasmuch that they add some small detail about the customs and beliefs, and economic and social

status of the inhabitants, and may therefore help broaden understanding of the nature of occupation. With the exception of necessary conservation of specified artefacts, and analysis of the infant burial (which is being provided free of charge), it is not proposed that any further work be undertaken due to project budget constraints. The results of assessment will provide a contribution to the published report.

- metal small finds
- worked bone
- a stone figurine
- human remains (infant burial)

10.2.4 Finally, remaining artefact categories not mentioned above have limited potential for further enhancing understanding of the site. The information provided in the assessment reports will be sufficient to provide contributions to the publication report.

10.2.5 The perceived academic potential of the critical elements outlined above lies with their contribution to comprehension of the 'site', and the contribution this in turn adds to the currently small body of evidence for Romano-British Wantage, and Romano-British settlement in south Oxfordshire. The stratigraphic sequence is largely well understood, although it is unfortunate that Areas A and B were not physically linked in order to provide direct relationships. As it currently stands, the information gleaned within the context of the excavation has met and/or contributed to meeting all aims listed in Section 4.1 and 4.2 of this report. Equally, with regard to the aims listed in Section 4.3, these have all been met, with the exception of aim 'ii', which was largely prohibited by the extensive robbing of the building materials.

10.2.6 The pottery for example, although an unremarkable assemblage in itself, is the second largest Romano-British stratified assemblage from the town and is sufficient in quantity, condition and range to provide reasonable dating

evidence to complement and enhance the stratigraphic record. It also adds a little to understanding of the economic function and social status of the villa and its inhabitants. These aspects are also enhanced by the evidence provided by coins.

10.2.7 Although not selected for further analysis on grounds of cost and their perceived importance as ranked above, the faunal remains have the potential to provide some enhancement to understanding site specific husbandry and economic aspects before and during the periods of villa occupation. The agricultural background to the site and the nature of the immediate environment could in part be reconstructed by reference to the charred plant remains. These also have the potential to enhance the breadth of environmental data available for Wantage if they were to be viewed in conjunction with the Mill Street publication.

10.3 Aims and Objectives

10.3.1 The specific research aims of the remaining analyses are:

- to quantify the pottery assemblage in detail in order to firmly establish intra-site dating and present a format suitable for comparison with other sites.
- to further analyse the coins by comparison with Mill Street, and more widely afield from similar sites in order to set the economic fortunes of the site in context and aid specific dating of contexts.
- to integrate this information with the stratigraphic record to provide as full a picture as possible of the site, in particular the villa-like building, where it will be feasible to suggest its plan, size, materials of construction, and some indication of interior appointment.

- to set the site within the context of Romano-British evidence at Wantage, and to examine the existing dataset in an attempt to determine the nature of this settlement, i.e., how does the combined evidence support the existing perception of Roman Wantage as linear roadside settlement, and how does the presence of a villa-like building alter this perception?
- With the preceding questions in mind, to compare and contrast the known evidence with other local villa sites such as, but not exclusively, West Challow (Scott, 1993) and small roadside settlements such as Asthall (Booth, 1997).

10.3.2 In summary, much of the importance of this site can be defined at two levels. Firstly, until this recent work was undertaken the site at Rolls Court, Mill Street, stood in isolation as the largest single body of published evidence for Romano-British occupation at Wantage. Understanding and interpretation of the Mill Street site will now be greatly enhanced by the addition of the findings from the Stockham Way excavation. Jointly the reports will provide a clearer picture of the Romano-British settlement at Wantage than has been previously available.

10.3.3 Secondly, publication of the results of the Stockham Way excavation will, in association with the Mill Street site, provide a context to aid interpretation of any further work in the future. As a great deal of the immediate surroundings have already been developed for residential use (with the exception of the nearby convent grounds and neighbouring paddocks) it is likely that future archaeological work will be of a small-scale nature related to minor alterations to existing buildings. Results from such work are often extremely difficult to interpret when found in isolation. However, the combined published results of the Mill Street and Stockham Way sites will ensure that a sound interpretative framework is available for future researchers.

- 10.3.4 It is important therefore that this site report is published in a form which uses the recovered dataset to best advantage within the parameters imposed by the remaining project budget, and which complements and enhances that already published.
- 10.3.5 Finally, within any consideration of aims and objectives of further work it is important to note where limitations exist, if only to clarify and focus the research aims outlined above. It should be noted therefore that the incomplete nature of the dataset recovered from the excavations diminishes somewhat the overall potential for full interpretation of the site and environs. It is clear for instance that the ditched boundaries are a 'snapshot' of regularly ordered, but clearly more extensive, environs of the settlement, the extent and layout of which can only be presently guessed at. Similarly, the villa-like building unfortunately cannot support a full architectural reconstruction due to extensive post-occupation dismantling, clearance, and robbing although it should be possible to indicate its basic size and an outline of its form and construction.

10.4 *Methods statement*

10.4.1 The following procedures are presented as defining the requirements and methods of further analysis by CAT staff and specialists for all categories of material examined at assessment stage. However, it should be noted that these proposals for methods of further analysis represent the ‘ideal’ situation pertaining to a fully resourced and funded project. As previously stated, in the case of this project it has been necessary to prioritise critical elements for further analysis to make best use of the remaining project resources, and therefore it is not proposed to undertake analysis on all these categories. Further clarification of this position is outlined in section 13.3.

10.4.2 Listed below are the proposed method statements for critical elements of the project.

10.4.3 Stratigraphic analysis

10.4.3.1 **Further analysis:** The site matrix will be reviewed in the light of the artefactual analysis and subsequent concordance of artefact classes. Specific updated information will be input from the pottery and coin evidence, supplemented by existing assessment reports for other artefact classes. This will inform the final phasing of the site and subsequent narrative.

10.4.4 Pottery

10.4.4.1 **Further analysis:** Its main interest lies in the contribution it makes to understanding the development of the site and its relationship to other sites in the immediate locality, and thus to the development of Wantage in prehistoric, Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon times.

10.4.4.2 It is recommended that the assemblage is quantified in detail (including estimated vessel equivalents) in order to provide a firm basis for comparison

with published and future sites from Wantage and the surrounding region. A short summary publication report with supporting illustrations is proposed.

10.4.4.3 Tasks

1. Quantify additional data.
2. Computerise pottery data along with site phasing.
3. Check pottery dates against site stratigraphy and other dateable items, such as coins and metal small-finds.
4. Select sherds for illustration by illustrator. Approximately 12-15 items.
5. Check drawings.
6. Sort data to produce phase/fabric/form tables.
7. Produce a short report with a catalogue of drawn items.

10.4.5 The coins

10.4.5.1 **Further analysis:** The coin assemblage will be compared with the 65 coins found during the C.A.T. excavations at Mill Street in Wantage (Guest 1996). From initial analysis both groups share certain key similarities, most notably the absence of coins from the last quarter of the fourth century AD. The material from Stockham Way will be used to refine our understanding of the economic fortunes of the settlement during the Romano-British period, in particular by comparing the coins with assemblages from other sites in the south-west of Romano-British Britain. Post-excavation analysis will include:

- i) full identification of the coins leading to a catalogue record;
- ii) stratigraphic discussion of the coins where feasible;
- iii) comparison of the Stockham Way coins with those from Mill Street;
- iii) comparison of the Wantage coins with those from other 'villa' sites in the region.

10.5 Methods statements for those categories of material where further analysis has been recommended by specialists but where resources are unavailable for such analysis are listed below. This section has been provided in order that

independent assessment can be made of the priority selection above. In both cases below it is anticipated that the assessment reports will contribute to the publication report.

10.5.1 The Animal bone

10.5.1.1 **Further analysis:** The assemblage is well preserved but fairly small, which limits the range of questions that can be expected to be answered by its study. No further work on the post-Romano-British material from period 4 is proposed. Further analysis of the identified bones from periods 1-3 is recommended, to investigate possible developments in animal exploitation during the Romano-British occupation of the site. Although species representation appears to be quite consistent in these periods, there are possible changes that are worthy of further analysis. Butchery marks on some cattle bones from period 3 bear comparisons with the type of butchery observed in major Romano-British settlements such as Cirencester. Such butchery was not noted in the assemblage from Mill Street (Maltby in Holbrook et al. 1996). These excavations may therefore have revealed the presence of a specialist butcher, who deposited small amounts of waste in this area of the settlement. Similar butchery marks was noted on some cattle bones from the evaluation excavations on the site. When these contexts are incorporated into the analysis, they will provide useful further information into this topic.

10.5.1.2 There are suggestions of other changes in the animal bones, which coincide with the construction of the villa-style building. For example, the deposition of domestic fowl bones and the possibility of the presence of some larger cattle. In general, the assemblage can be compared with the data from Mill Street, to provide a comparison of assemblages within the roadside settlement.

10.5.1.3 To record all the bones from Periods 1-3 will provide a sample of about 500 bones. Details of species, anatomy, fragmentation and, where possible, ageing, butchery and metrical data should be recorded. Comparisons with the faunal

data from Mill Street, Wantage should be made together with comparisons with other contemporary sites where appropriate.

10.5.2 The charred plant remains

10.5.2.1 **Further analysis:** Charred plant remains were preserved throughout the samples from the site and merit further analysis to provide economic and environmental information. This information would contribute towards an understanding of the sites economy and the range of activities carried out there, and assist in reconstruction of the environment of the area during the Romano-British period.

10.5.2.2 Samples 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15 and 16 include large enough assemblages of cereal and other plant remains to investigate agricultural practices and activities at the site. These samples are from all three excavation areas and bracket the villa's construction. All remaining unprocessed soil from these samples should be subject to flotation and wet-sieving. Analysis of remains recovered by these processes should include full identification and interpretation of cereal grains, chaff, pulses, weed seeds and any fruit remains. Analysis of parenchyma would not be necessary.

10.5.2.3 Charcoal analysis is only advised for sample 15.

10.5.2.4 No further work is advised on charred plant remain assemblages from samples 8, 11 and 13 as they contained few remains and other samples were taken from the same excavation areas.

10.6 Those categories of material not identified in this report as critical elements to the understanding of the site, but where their intrinsic value might ideally benefit from further analysis, are listed below with statements by specialists recommending possible further work. It is anticipated that the assessment reports will contribute to the publication report.

10.6.1 The metalwork

10.6.1.1 In addition to the recommendations specific to each object or group of objects in section 8, it is envisaged that a final report would include an accurate description of each object with measurements, dating where possible, comment on context if significant and comparison with similar objects from other sites as appropriate. There could also be a discussion of the assemblage as a whole referring to its implications for the status of the site and range of actual contexts. Items identified in the assessment catalogue as requiring conservation will be despatched to the Institute of Archaeology laboratory in Oxford for treatment.

10.6.2 Worked bone

10.6.2.1 **Further analysis:** Further discussion to enhance type description and understanding of use would be informative.

10.6.3 Stone ?figurine

10.6.3.1 **Further analysis:** Further research into comparatives and a discussion of these would benefit understanding of the object.

10.6.4 The human bone

10.6.4.1 **Further analysis:** The skeletal remains will be examined by a human bone specialist in order to identify the surviving fragments, trauma and pathology where present. The results will be incorporated within the final publication report.

10.6.5 Catalogue records have been compiled for the following artefact categories and no further analysis is required, although the assessment reports are expected to contribute to the publication report.

Shell

Fired Clay

Brick and tile

Mortar and plaster

The worked stone

Worked flint

Glass

Lead objects

11. PUBLICATION

- 11.1 As the excavations are of local and regional importance it is proposed that the full report be published as an article in *Oxoniensia*. The format for this is outlined below.

Synopsis of Proposed Report

Title

A Romano-British villa site
on land off Stockham Way/Denchworth Road, Wantage.

Excavations in 1998.

by

Alistair Barber and Graeme Walker

Report structure

Abstract

Brief summary of principle periods and features

Introduction

Project and archaeological backgrounds

Site history

The Excavations

Methodology

Stratigraphic Sequence

- Prehistoric
- Romano-British
- Post-Romano-British
- Post-medieval and modern

Finds Reports

- Pottery (J.Timby)
- Coins (P.Guest)
- Human bone (T.Waldron)

Discussion

Bibliography

Illustrations

The following illustrations are proposed:

- 1 Location of study area
- 2 Period 1 activity
- 4 Period 2 activity
- 5 Period 3 activity
- 6 Plan of villa building
- 7 Plan of find-spots in study area vicinity
- 8 Illustrative sections
- 9 Pottery

Total length of text: approximately 30 pages.

Total length of illustrations: approximately 7 pages.

Total report length: approximately 37 pages.

12. STORAGE AND CURATION

12.1 The site archive and artefactual collection will, with the agreement of the legal landowner, be deposited with Oxfordshire Museums Service under accession number 1996. 1

12.2 The stratigraphic record for the evaluation and excavation consists of the following elements:

Context register sheets	9
Context sheets	389
Plans	14
Sections	89
Drawing register sheets	3
Levels register sheets	6

Black & white photos	368
Colour slides	423
Photographic registers	22
Small finds register	1
Environmental sample registers	2
Environmental sample sheets	16
Monolith sample sheets	1

13. RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

13.1 Staffing

13.1.1 The post-excavation and publication programme will be under the management of Graeme Walker (Project Manager) who will co-ordinate the work of the following CAT personnel:

Neil Holbrook (Archaeological Director)
Niall Oakey (Post-Excavation Manager)
Alistair Barber (Project Officer)
Emma Harrison (Finds Officer)
Richard Morton (Illustrator)

13.1.2 The Project Manager will also manage contributions by the following external consultants:

Peter Guest (consultant)	Coins
Jane Timby (consultant)	Pottery
Tony Waldron (consultant)	Human bone

- 13.1.3 The stratigraphic account will be written by Alistair Barber and the discussion co-authored by Alistair Barber and Graeme Walker.
- 13.1.4 The report will be internally refereed by Graeme Walker, Niall Oakey and Neil Holbrook, with external referees being drawn from the Board of Directors of Cotswold Archaeological Trust.

13.2 Timetable

- 13.2.1 See Appendix 11 for projected timetable.

13.3 Budget

- 13.3.1 Due to the imperative of ensuring adequate data recovery in the field prior to imminent destruction, redirection to fieldwork of financial resources within the small 'rescue' project budget has inevitably constrained the extent of potential post-excavation analysis. It is therefore outlined in the updated budget costings below that funding is reserved for the critical elements of further analysis and that categories not highlighted below for further analysis will be archived, and existing assessment results used to inform the publication report. The following allocation of resources is proposed:

Period: April 1999-March 2000

<i>CAT GRADE</i>	<i>PERSON</i>	<i>PER DAY</i>	<i>DAYS</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
Archaeological Director	NH	£224	1	£224
Project Manager	GTW	£168	5	£840
PX Manager	NJO	£142	3	£426
Project Officer	AJB	£120	7	£840
Finds Officer	EH	£108	2	£216
Illustrator	RJM	£99	7	£693
TOTAL PROJECT SALARY COST				£3,239
SPECIALIST FEES				
	Ceramics @ £110 p.d.			£550
	Coins @ £100 p.d.			£50
NON-STAFF COSTS				
	Conservation			£180
	Transport			£35
	NMR microfilm copy			£150
SUB-TOTAL				£4,204
OVERHEAD COSTS @ 25%				£1,051
GROSS TOTAL FOR PROJECT				£5,255

13.3.2 The gross total for project matches the remaining available funds for the project including the previously agreed sum of £3,575 to be received from English Heritage.

14. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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15. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPENDIX 1

Table 1: Finds concordance and pottery catalogue

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
			No	Wgt	No	Wgt	No	Wgt	Type		
unstrat	Tr A	360+	20	548g	14	374g	1	27g	op sig	151+181: Pb frags	1 Fe nail
unstrat	Tr A									152-157, 161:7 Cu alloy	3 oyster (76g)
unstrat	Tr A									182: Pb token	
unstrat	Tr B	2nd-3rd	2	122g			1	823g	tile	129: struck flint	
unstrat							1	39g	op sig		
unstrat							4	122g	fired clay		
unstrat	Corridor 2						1	550g	tegula		
unstrat	Room 3	360+	37	206g	6	162g					
1001	Topsoil	modern	68	881g	11	190g	1	84g	teg/box?		1 burnt flint
1001	Topsoil						1	203g	imbrex		

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1001	Topsoil						1	82g	<i>tegula</i>		
1001	Topsoil						2	189g	tile		13 oyster (292g)
1002	Subsoil	360+	54	543g	56	758g	1	349g	<i>tegula</i>		2 iron pyrites? (52g)
1002	Subsoil						1	39g	<i>imbrex</i>		
1002	Subsoil						2	139g	box		
1002	Subsoil						4	140g	tile		
1003	Soil	180-240	2	16g	8	526g				109: Fe nail	
1003	Soil									134: Cu alloy bracelet	
1007	Posthole 1006										1 Fe nail
1011	Pit 1010	240-400	10	38g	17	225g					
1012	Ditch cut	240-400	13	112g	48	581g					2 oyster (103g)
1012	Ditch cut										1 Fe object
1013	Ditch 1012	2nd-3rd	6	106g	21	318g	1	102g	<i>imbrex</i>	100: Cu alloy coin	1 oyster (7g)
1013	Ditch 1012						1	29g	tile		
1013	Ditch 1012						1	6g	fired clay		
1015	Ditch 1014	240-400	43	485g	57	1007g	1	30g	<i>tegula</i>	110: struck flint	8 oyster (140g)
1015	Ditch 1014						1	56g	hypocaust		
1015	Ditch 1014						4	171g	tile		

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1016	Ditch 1014	360+	57	1175	127	6554g	2	224g	tile		3 oyster (73g)
1016	Ditch 1014										3 Fe nails, 2 frags
1016	sample 6					4g					
1017	Ditch 1014	360+	12	245g	18	360g	2	259g	tile	184: Cu alloy ring	
1017	Ditch 1014								plaster		
1023	Posthole 1022	Romano-British	1	10g	4	56g					
1025	Pit 1024	2nd+	7	39g	53	1818g	1	22g	fired clay		3 slag/cinder (31g)
1027	Posthole 1026	2nd-3rd	1	20g	6	35g					
1031	Cut 1030	2nd+	3	24g	1	1g					1 Fe nail
1032	Cut 1030	3rd	5	18g	1	3g					
1034	Pit 1033		y				1	29g	tile		
1036	Pit 1035	2nd-3rd	1	4g	3	3g	1	11g	tile		
1038	Pit 1037	2nd-3rd	5	12g						101: Fe object	
1040	Ditch 1039	240-400	10	193g	2	16g					
1040	sample 7					<1g					
1043	Layer TP1	360+	15	152g	9	163g	3	335g	roof	105: Cu alloy coin	2 oyster (24g)
1043	Layer TP1						4	88g	tile	130: samian	1 Fe nail

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1043	Layer TP1						4	215g	<i>op sig</i>		
1044	Layer TP1	240-400	16	128g	4	17g					1 burnt flint (3g)
1044	Layer TP1										1 Fe ?nail
1045	Layer TP1	2nd-3rd	11	73g	6	17g	1	7g	tile		1 burnt flint (8g)
1049	Pit 1048	2nd?	2	2g	1	13g					
1052	Pit 1051	Roman	1	4g	1	9g				102: Fe nail	
1054	Pit 1053	3rd+	2	271g						185: worked bone	
1056	Pit 1055	240-400	1	13g	2	13g					
1064	Posthole 1063	360+	3	11g	1	1g	1	1g	tile		
1066	Treebole 1065	Roman	3	13g	2	9g					
1073	Layer TP4	360+	9	129g	10	288g	1	393g	roof		1 oyster (7g)
1073	Layer TP4						10	774g	tile		
1073	Layer TP4						1	17g	<i>op sig</i>		
1074	Layer TP4	2nd-3rd	23	215g	25	468g	1	991g	stone		2 burnt flint (21g)
1074	Layer TP4						2	97g	tile		
1076	Ditch 1075	240-400	2	30g	3	86g	1	434g	<i>op sig</i>	103: Fe nail	
1078	Pit 1077	240-300	13	602g	14	183g	3	158g	tile	106-7: 2 Fe nails	1 mussel (5g)
1078	Pit 1077									108: Fe object	1 Fe object

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1079	Layer TP5	3rd	5	62g	6	73g	1	175g	stone		
1079	Layer TP5						2	607g	box		
1080	Layer TP5	240-400	24	245g	25	211g	4	74g	tile		4 oyster (40g)
1080	Layer TP5						2	92g	fired clay		1 chalk frag (16g)
1080	Layer TP5										1 Fe nail
1084	Layer						10	283g	fired clay		
1086	Ditch 1085	2nd	4	51g	81	624g					1 oyster (6g)
1087	Re-cut 1035	2nd-3rd	4	15g	15	130g	3	16g	tile		
1087	Re-cut 1035						1	10g	plaster		
1089	sample 8					<1g					
1092	Re-cut 1087	3rd	10	91g	1	52g	2	14g	tile	121: Fe hobnails	
1092	Re-cut 1087									135: Cu alloy frag	
1092	Re-cut 1087									137: quern (1393g)	
1092	Re-cut 1087									138: quern (2054g)	
1092	sample 9					12g					salg (<1g), Fe nail
1095	Re-cut 1087	3rd?	6	27g	5	50g	1	9g	tile		
1097	Pit 1096	240-400	1	38g							
1099	Ditch 1098	2nd+	64	803g	3	40g	1	30g	fired clay		

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1103	Layer	modern	91	1680	35	989g	5	526g	<i>tegula</i>		15 Fe nails
1103	Layer						7	891g	<i>imbrex</i>		2 stone (505g)
1103	Layer						9	1821g	box		
1103	Layer						41	2399g	tile		
1103	Layer						1	3000g	floor tile?		
1103	Layer						11	4794g	stone		
1103	Layer						19	624g	<i>op sig</i>		
1105	Layer	360+	25	282g	3						
1110	Layer	Roman	1	2g	1	4g					
1112	Robber tr 1111	240-400	14	742g	6	20g	1	215g	?box		2 Fe nails
1112	Robber tr 1111						3	48g	tile		
1113	Robber tr 1111	Roman	1	3g	1	1g				167: Pb frag	
1115	Pit 1114						1	133g	brick		1 Fe horseshoe
1117	Pit 1116	?IA	1	13g	5	77g	3	20g	tile		1 oyster (13g)
1117	Pit 1116						1	168g	brick		1 snail
1119	Robber tr 1118	Roman	1	2g			1	99g	box		
1120	Layer	19th+	32	783g	17	158g	15	20279	<i>tegula</i>	139: glass frag	2 oyster (132g)

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1120	Layer						12	5000g	<i>imbrex</i>	146: glass frag	1 slag (295g)
1120	Layer						6	2211g	box		3 building stone (2033g)
1120	Layer						3	2262g	brick		9 Fe nails + 18 frags
1120	Layer						9	568g	tile		
1120	Layer						17	4036g	<i>op sig</i>		
1120	Layer						28	18817	stone		
1122	Layer	2nd-3rd	27	261g	37	419g				174: Pb frag	4 Fe frags
1122	sample 15		2	2g		1g					shell (1g), slag (<1g)
1122	sample 15										Cu alloy frag, 4 Fe frags
1124	Cut 1123	2nd+	8	41g	4	19g					
1126	Layer									166: Cu alloy coin	
1127	Layer	2nd-3rd	16	472g	1	1g					
1131	Burial 1										
1133	Pit 1132	2nd	9	62g							
1133	sample 16		2	6g		2g					
1135	Layer	2nd	10	75g						142: glass frag	

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1139	Rubble	270-360	35	574g	11	208g	2	571g	box	141: Cu alloy object	7 oyster (142g)
1139	Rubble						5	666g	tile	143: Cu alloy coin	4 Fe nails, 1 frag
1139	Rubble						1	442g	<i>tegula</i>		
1141	Layer	360+	37	789g	13	346g	3	1580g	<i>tegula</i>	140: op sig (914g)	4 oyster (75g)
1141	Layer						1	149g	<i>imbrex</i>	145: pottery (106g)	2 slag (15g)
1141	Layer						1	90g	tile	147: op sig (4000g)	1 Fe nail, 1 object
1141	Layer						2	498g	stone	148: stone (5000g)	
1141	Layer									149: stone (1301g)	
1147	Cut 1146	modern	2	24g	4	213g	4	93g	roof	162: Cu alloy coin	
1147	Cut 1146						2	71g	tile		1 glass slag (7g)
1147	Cut 1146						1	19g	brick		1 mod bottle glass
1147	Cut 1146										2 Fe object
1149	Cut 1148	modern	4	20g	2	51g	4	205g	roof		1 Fe ?nail
1149	Cut 1148					skull	6	118g	tile		
1149	Cut 1148						1	16g	drain		
1152	Robber tr 1151	240-400	3	13g	11	383g	4	359g	tile		
1156	Stone setting	240-400	4	79g	4	23g	3	1734g	tile		1 oyster (30g)

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1158	Floor corridor 1				2	30g					
1161	Robber tr 1160	240-400	3	19g	2	8g	1	44g	<i>tegula</i>		
1161	Robber tr 1160						3	48g	tile		
1162	Layer									144: Cu alloy coin	
1162	Layer									158-9,164-5, 180,183:	
1162	Layer									160: Cu alloy frag	
1164	Treebole 1163	240-400	3	45g			1	101	brick		
1166	Robber tr 1165	240-400	10	25g	8	85g	10	416g	tile		1 slag (6g)
1167	Robber tr 1165	2nd-3rd	9	52g	5	75g	1	45g	box		1 oyster (12g)
1167	Robber tr 1165						5	424g	tile		
1172	Robber tr 1171	Roman	2	7g			1	67g	<i>tegula</i>		
1172	Robber tr 1171						2	135g	box		
1172	Robber tr 1171						9	420g	tile		
1174	Robber tr 1165	Saxon	2	10g	1	119g					
1178	Robber tr 1151	4th	5	46g	5	28g	5	218g	tile	168: Cu alloy coin	
1178	Robber tr 1151						4	66g	mortar		
1179	Layer	240-400	8	54g	2	10g				169: Cu alloy coin	

1185	Pit 1184	2nd-4th	3	35g	2	3g	1	164g	stone		1 oyster (23g)
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Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1186	Layer									163: floor slab	
1193	Layer	Roman	3	7g						175: Cu alloy bracelet	1 ?worked stone (688g)
1193	Layer									176: glass slag	
1193	Layer									177: Fe slag	
1208	Layer						1	264g	stone	170: Cu alloy coin	
1208	Layer						1	481g	tile	178: Fe object	
1208	Layer						2	597g	<i>op sig</i>	179: Pb frag	
1210	Layer	3rd-4th	8	157g	1	9g				171+172: Pb frags	4 Fe nails
1210	Layer									173: Fe frag	
1211	Floor Room 3									150: 2 glass slag frag	
1213	Pit 1212	3rd+	7	214g	1	1g					
1215	Ditch 1214	1st-2nd	76	23g	23	208g	2	16g	fired clay		
1217	Pit 1216	Roman	3	15g	8	208g	1	3g	fired clay		
1219	Pit 1218	Roman	4	25g	1	1g					
1226	Ditch 1225	240-400	15	244g	2	181g					1 oyster (22g)

1235	Pit 1234	1st-2nd	20	491g							
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Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
1237	Pit 1236	2nd	1	3g	1	5g					1 Fe frag; charcoal
1239	Pit 1238	2nd	2	27g							
1240	Layer						1	2259g	stone		
2000	Topsoil	modern	33	383g	15	168g	3	48g	roof		1 clay pipe stem
2000	Topsoil						2	24g	fired clay		1 burnt flint (8g)
2000	Topsoil										6 oyster (113g)
2004	Ditch 2003	2nd+	1	47g							
2005	Ditch 2003	2nd	5	54g	4	277g				104: Fe frags	2 burnt stone (47g)
2007	Ditch 2006	2nd	3	114g	5	52g					1 struck flint (1g)
2007	Ditch 2006										1 oyster (54g)
2009	Ditch 2008	180-240	25	764g	25	1566g	2	53g	fired clay		2 oyster (37g)
2009	Ditch 2008										2 Fe frags
2011	Ditch 2010	IA	1	5g	2	48g					
2013	Ditch 2012	2nd+	7	56g	87	920g	1	8g	tile		
2013	Ditch 2012						1	7g	fired clay		
2016	Ditch 2015	240-400	17	208g	31	273g	7	253g	tile	112: struck flint	

2016	Ditch 2015						1	3g	fired clay		
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Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
2017	Ditch 2015	Roman	6	21g	7	54g				111 + 113: struck flint	
2017										114: Fe nail	
2018	Ditch 2015				1	1g					
2019	Ditch 2015	2nd	1	3g	5	27g					
2021	Ditch? 2020	2nd	3	13g	9	33g				122: struck flint	
2022	Ditch 2008	2nd	6	81g	21	303g				124+125: struck flint	
2022										126: Fe hobnails	
2023	Ditch 2008	2nd-3rd	9	288g	?	3087g				120: struck flint	1 burnt stone (445g)
2025	Ditch 2024	2nd	45	752g	54	224g					
2026	Ditch 2024	2nd	5	21g	30	339g					
2028	Ditch 2027	2nd?	3	8g							
2029	Layer	2nd	7	124g	28	847g					1 fe nail
2032	Layer	mid-late 2nd	1	16g	4	45g				115: chalk object	

2033	Ditch 2036	2nd	5	67g	4	348g				
2033	sample 10		2	1g		7g				
2034	Ditch 2039	2nd	2	61g	1	39g	3	395g	bmats	2 oyster (113g)

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
2035	Ditch 2037									116: struck flint	
2043	Pit 2042	early 2nd	8	24g	7	145g					1 oyster (6g)
2043											1 stone (45g)
2043	sample 11					2g					
2044	Ditch 2027	early 2nd	9	75g							
2045	Re-cut 2054						33	919g	fired clay	123: Fe object	
2045/55	Re-cut 2054	late 1st-2nd	6	45g	4	35g					
2046	Ditch 2008	360+	3	31g							
2052	Re-cut 2038	?late 1st-2nd	25	571g	16	461g				127: Fe frag	
2052										128: pottery	
2059	Posthole 2058	240-400	2	7g	1	1g				117: struck flint	
2059	sample 12					4g					Fe hobnail
2061	Posthole 2060				1	1g					
2063	Pit 2062	2nd	6	70g							1 struck flint (5g)

2067	Pit 2066	late 1st-2nd	4	51g			1	7g	fired clay		
2069	Pit 2068	2nd	6	42g	10	382g				131: struck flint	2 Fe frags
2070	Pit 2068	Roman	2	47g	1	270g				132+133: struck flint	

Context	Description	Spot Date	Pottery		Bone		Bmats			Small Finds	Other
2071	Pit 2068	2nd-3rd	1	27g							charcoal
2071	sample 13					2g					
2072	Ditch 2020	Roman	2	15g	5	66g					
2075	Re-cut 2039	240+	5	50g							1 Fe nail
2077	Posthole 2076	Roman	1	10g	1	2g					
2081	Pit 2042	Roman	1	2g							
2095	Pit 2094	late 1st-2nd	1	80g							

APPENDIX 2

Table 2: Fired clay catalogue

Context	No	Wgt	Description
215	1	3	
u/s TrB	3	122g	One surface of two of the fragments is greyish white in colour with numerous cut organic impressions One fragment has a smooth exterior edge adjacent to the white surface
u/s TrB	1	823	Large thick fragment (40mm) with smooth surface
1013	1	6g	no surfaces, buff colour
1017	2	259g	1 with greyish white surface
1025	1	22g	1 surface with organic impressions, mica, fewer and smaller grains, brown surface, interior red
1080	2	92g	
1099	1	30g	Fragment with one flat surface with occasional organic impressions. Fabric: chalk, flint quartz, dark grains, light orange/brown colour
1215	2	16g	One surface with organic impressions. orange brown
1217	1	3g	Small area of impressed surface present
2000	1	12g	greyish white surface on 1 fragment
2000	1	11g	no surface
2009	1	20g	impressed surface, purplish brown colour, opposite surface smooth
2009	1	33g	fragment with chalk
2013	1	8g	burnt impressed surface
2013	1	5g	burnt surface, chalk
2016	1	3g	
2045	33	919g	7 fragments join, greyish white impressed surface 5 fragments join, greyish white surface, adjoining smooth edge
2067	1	7g	smooth surface, lots of inclusions

APPENDIX 3

Table 3: Brick and tile catalogue

Type	No	Wgt
tegula	33	25030g
imbrex	28	7163g
box	22	4901g
brick	14	6209g
unidentified tile	160	8987g
roof tile (modern)	11	346g
drain	1	16g
Total	269	52652g

APPENDIX 4

Table 4: Mortar and plaster catalogue

Context	No	Wgt	Description
u/s, TrA	1	27g	pink mortar with red painted surface
u/s, TrB	1	39g	pink mortar with red painted surface
1017	68	1844g	plaster, no painted surfaces
1043	1	88g	pink mortar with red painted surface
1043	3	121g	pink mortar
1073	1	17g	pink mortar
1076	1	434g	pink mortar, 1 smooth unpainted surface
1087	1	10g	white plaster with flaking red painted surface
1103	2	40g	pink mortar with painted surface
1103	1	11g	pink mortar with smooth unpainted surface
1103	16	464g	pink mortar
1112	8	533g	concrete/grey mortar
1120	2	1120g	painted (30-35mm thick) pink mortar with thin layer of concrete on opposite face
1120	1	1290	pink mortar with red painted surface adhering to the painted surface
1120	9	1771	adhering to the painted surface
1120	4	510g	pink mortar
1120	1	290g	?mortared stone
1141	1	914g	red painted surface and two other smoothed surfaces
1141			at right angle, triangular cross section
1141	1	4000g	Small find 147: large, thick (60-70mm) red painted pink mortar fragment
1178	4	66g	mortar
1193	1	688g	roughly spherical, mortared stone?
1208	2	590g	pink mortar
2034	3	395g	mortar

APPENDIX 5

Table 5: Worked flint catalogue

Flakes	16
Flakes/blades	2
Blades	6
Burnt	6
Natural	4
Total	34

APPENDIX 6

Table 6 Preliminary coin identifications

SF No	Context	Date		
[100]	(1013)	late 3rd-4thC	AE3/4	
[105]	(1043)	?		AE2
[143]	(1139)	mid 1st-2ndC	AE1	
[144]	(1162)	69-79		Dup./as - Vespasian
[152]	(u/s)	364-78		AE-H. of Valentinian
[153]	(u/s)	mid 4thC	AE - 2 victories?	
[154]	(u/s)	330-35		AE - GE2
[155]	(u/s)	335-40		AE - Theodora
[156]	(u/s)	330-35		AE - GE2
[157]	(u/s)	late 3rdC?	AE minim	
[158]	(1162)	mid 3rd-4thC	AE2	
[159]	(1162)	364-78		AE - H. of Valentinian
[161]	(u/s)	modern		halfpenny
[162]	(1147)	Roman?	AE3	
[164]	(1162)	260-90		Radiate
[165]	(1162)	348-52		AE - phoenix
[166]	(1126)	364-78		AE - H. of Valentinian
[168]	(1178)	3rd-mid 4thC	AE2	
[169]	(1174)	late 3rd-4thC	AE4	
[170]	(1208)	4thC		AE3/4
[180]	(1162)	260-90?		Radiate?
[182]	(u/s)	16/17thC?	lead token	
[183]	(1162)	335-48		AE copy - GE2

APPENDIX 7

Table 7: Glass

Context	Description
(1120)	Colourless body sherd, moderate bubbles, 5 ?incised parallel lines with breaks at two of the edges following a line of incision. Villa debris layer (1120) small find 139.
(1120)	Colourless, flat sherd, cloudy surface. Villa debris layer (1120), small find 146.
(1135)	Colourless body sherd, cloudy surface with a sheen, surface starting to flake. Soil horizon (1135) adjacent to villa, small find 142
(1147)	Green bottle glass, modern. modern intrusion [1146]

APPENDIX 8

Table 8: Preservation and Location of Animal Bone Assemblages by Assemblage Group and Context Type

Period	Gd	QGd	Mod	Total	Pit	Ditch	Layer	PH	Robb	Other	Unknown
1	7	14	4	25	4	19		1		1	
2	1	11		12			12				
3	11	8	1	20	1	13	1			5	
4	8	11	5	24	6		3	3	8	4	
5	1	2	1	4			2			2	
evaluation	5	7	4	16			2			3	11
Total	33	53	15	101	11	32	20	4	8	15	11

Gd =good; QG = quite good; Mod = moderate; PH = post hole; Robber = robber trench.

Table 9: Approximate Number of Bone Fragments by Context Type

Period	Pit	Ditch	Layer	PH	Robber	Other	Unknown	Total
1	8	217		1		3		229
2			126					126
3	5	225	1			18		249
4	54		57	8	36	15		170
5			24			6		30
evaluation			56			3	162	221
Total	67	442	264	9	36	45	162	1025

Table 10: Animal Bone Fragments Identified by Assemblage Group

Period	Cow	S/G	Pig	Horse	Dog	Red	Roe	Hare	Bird	Other	Unid	Total
1	64	27	5	16	2					16	99	229
2	23	18	8	7	1		1				68	126
3	76	26	6	19	3	1		5	3		110	249
4	47	25	2	8	1				3		84	168
5	7	5		4	1						13	30
evaluation	72	20	7	8	3	2					109	221
Total	289	121	28	62	11	3	1	5	6	16	483	1025

Cow = cattle; S/G = sheep/goat; Red = red deer; Roe = roe deer; Unid. = unidentified.

Table 11: Numbers of Mandibles with Surviving Teeth

Period	Cow	S/G	Pig	Horse	Dog	Red	Total
1	1	5		2	1		9
2	2	1	1				4
3	2	2	1	2	1		8
4		2					2
5	1						1
evaluation	2	2	1	1	1	2	9
Total	8	12	3	5	3	2	33

Table 12: Numbers of Limb Bones with Epiphysial Fusion Evidence

Group	Cow	S/G	Pig	Horse	Dog	Total
1	23	14		4	1	42
2	5			1	1	7
3	19	3	1	4		27
4	7	7	1	2		17
5	4			1		5
6		2				2
7	13	5	2	4	1	25
Total	71	31	4	16	3	125

Table 13: Numbers of Measurable Bones

Group	Cow	S/G	Pig	Horse	Dog	Bird	Total
1	11	5		2			18
2	1						1
3	7	3		2		1	13
4	1	1		1		1	4
5	1						1
6	2	1					3
7	9	2	1	4	1		17
Total	32	12	1	9	1	2	57

APPENDIX 9

Table 14. Charred plant remain assessment data

(Conventions for abundance and diversity data recording are shown below the table)

Area	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	A+	A+
Sample	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	15	16
Context	1016	1040	1089	1092	2033	2043	2059	2071	1122	1133
Sample Size	20 l	20 l	20 l	20 l	20 l	30 l	20 l	30 l	40 l	30 l
Description	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Pit	Posthole	Well	Lens	Pit Fill
Total Charcoal	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	6	4
Charcoal >2mm	2	3	2	3	-	2	3	3	4	3
Charcoal >4mm	2	2	-	3	-	-	-	1	3	2
Cereal Grain	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	3	2
Cereal Chaff	3	3	1	3	3	1	5	2	3	3
Domestic Pulses	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	2	-
Seeds	2/C	3/C	1/A	4/C	2/B	2/B	3/C	2/A	3/B	3/C
Parenchyma	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nutshell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tubers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fruit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1?

KEY: Plant Remains Assessment Conventions

Abundance Index	Quantity (Whole/Frags)	Diversity Index	No. Species
1	1	A	1
2	2-10	B	2 to 5
3	10 to 50	C	6 to 10
4	50 to 100	D	11 to 15
5	100 to 200	E	15+
6	200 to 500		
7	500 to 1000		
8	1000+		

APPENDIX 10

Table 15: Coin conservation requirements

SF No	Context	X-ray:	Cleaning :
[100]	(1013)	Y	Y
[105]	(1043)	Y	Y
[143]	(1139)	Y	Y
[144]	(1162)	-	Y
[152]	(u/s)	-	-
[153]	(u/s)	Y	Y
[154]	(u/s)	-	-
[155]	(u/s)	-	Y
[156]	(u/s)	-	-
[157]	(u/s)	-	Y
[158]	(1162)	Y	Y
[159]	(1162)	-	-
[161]	(u/s)	-	Y
[162]	(1147)	Y	Y
[164]	(1162)	-	Y
[165]	(1162)	-	Y
[166]	(1126)	-	Y
[168]	(1178)	Y	Y
[169]	(1174)	Y	Y
[170]	(1208)	Y	Y
[180]	(1162)	Y	Y
[182]	(u/s)	-	-
[183]	(1162)	-	Y

APPENDIX 11

Gantt Chart

APPENDIX 12

Site plans

APPENDIX 13

Plate 1: view of villa, looking south.