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Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society
41 Long Street, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1NS

Archaeology Field Group

Excavations at Cumberwell, Wiltshire
Part II
Finds Report

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Authors L.Amadio MSc, B.Clarke MSc and R.Holley BA

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Summary
Excavations prior to the development of a Golf Course at Cumberwell, near Bradford-On-Avon, Wiltshire produced an assemblage with a bias to the Romano-British period, although, finds included a small amount of pottery from the Iron Age, pottery and metal work from the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods.
The finds indicate an agricultural settlement which continued through the entire period, the assemblage demonstrates that the settlement was not of high status.

Background
In 2008 Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society's (WANHS) Archaeological Field Group (AFG) was asked to investigate a site at Cumberwell, Wiltshire prior to the development of the land into a golf course. The initial investigation consisted of a programme of field walking (Amadio 2011). The assemblage from the field walking indicated a bias to the Romano-British period and consequently the AFG undertook a programme of excavations, 2008-2010. This report concerns the finds assemblage.

Location
The site is located 1 km north west of Bradford-On-Avon, Wiltshire (figs. 1 and 2).

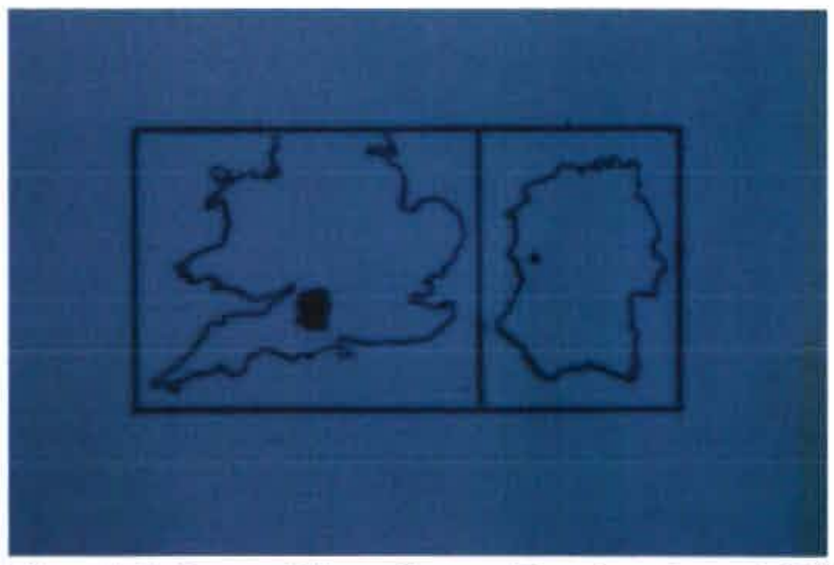


Fig. 1 Map of Southern England and Wiltshire

Fig. 2 Location of the site

Geology
The geology consists of Wealden Purbeck and Portland Beds, silty/sandy clays, limestones; sands and sandstones (Geddes 2000).

THE FINDS

The finds come from 120 contexts of these 15 (SU03, SU11, SU14, SU31, SU33, SU36, SU43, SU45, SU53, SU99, SU107, AA801, AA802, AA900 SU45 and AA900 SU85) were contaminated with Medieval, Post Medieval and modern finds.
A number of bulk finds bags (11) had no clear markings on them, 3 of these were contaminated, having Medieval and Post-Medieval finds as well as Romano-British and these finds have all been disregarded here. The finds were in a muddled state when handed to the author.

Stone

The building stone consisted of local limestone; there were also finds of dressed pennant (12 pieces from 8 contexts), the pennant was mostly small pieces, for example 110mm x 48mm x 15mm.
Parts from two quern stones, a loom weight and one honing stone (fig. 3) were also found. 2 round stones recovered may have been sling shot (SU89 and SU151).

Fig. 3 Honing stone

Flint

All the flint found on site will have been imported as it is not part of the natural geology, probably coming from the Marlborough Downs (c25 km to the north east) or Salisbury Plain (c12 km to the south east). 19 pieces were collected; of these most are debitage from flint working, the tools consisting of broken blades (3 from SU33, SU42 and SU137) and a thumb scrapper from SU3.

CBM

530 pieces of daub were recovered from 38 contexts, clearly there was a structure built from wood with daub walls. There were a few pieces of CBM (from 9 contexts) some of this was modern.

Pottery

Romano-British

3,271 sherds of pottery were recovered from 101 contexts. 2% of the pottery was Pre Historic (Iron Age), Medieval and Post-Medieval, the rest being Romano-British. Of the Romano-British pottery 43% is Black Burnished Ware, 27% Grey Ware, 9% Severn Valley, 5% Short Street, 4% Oxford Ware, 4% Local/Other Wares, 4% Savernake, 4% Samian, 0.1% New Forest Ware and 0.03% Nene Valley (fig. 10).

Some of the Samian is decorated wares (figs. 4-9), forms 22 from SU 151 and an unknown context (Laing 2003), form 31 AD139-230 (Bedoyere 2004 and Laing

2003), form 33 from SU47 dating from AD50-230 (Bedoyere 2004 and Laing 2003) and form 40 (context unknown) dating from AD150+ (Bedoyere 2004).

Fig. 4 Decorated Samian SU46

Fig. 5 SU160

Fig. 6 SU30

Fig. 7 AA801

Fig. 8 SU89 AD80-120 (Davenport 1999)

Fig. 9 Marked "SINES?III"

Fig. 10 Nene Valley (SU3)

Fig. 11 decorated Grey Ware

Some of the pottery, presumably when broken had been recycled and re used for other purposes, fig. 12 a toggle with 2 holes drilled into it and fig. 13 a spindle whorl. Other pottery has been repaired (fig. 14).

Fig.12 sf22

Fig. 13 spindle whorl (SU128)

Fig. 14 Pot mend (SU11 AA901)

Iron Age
16 sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered from 12 contexts.

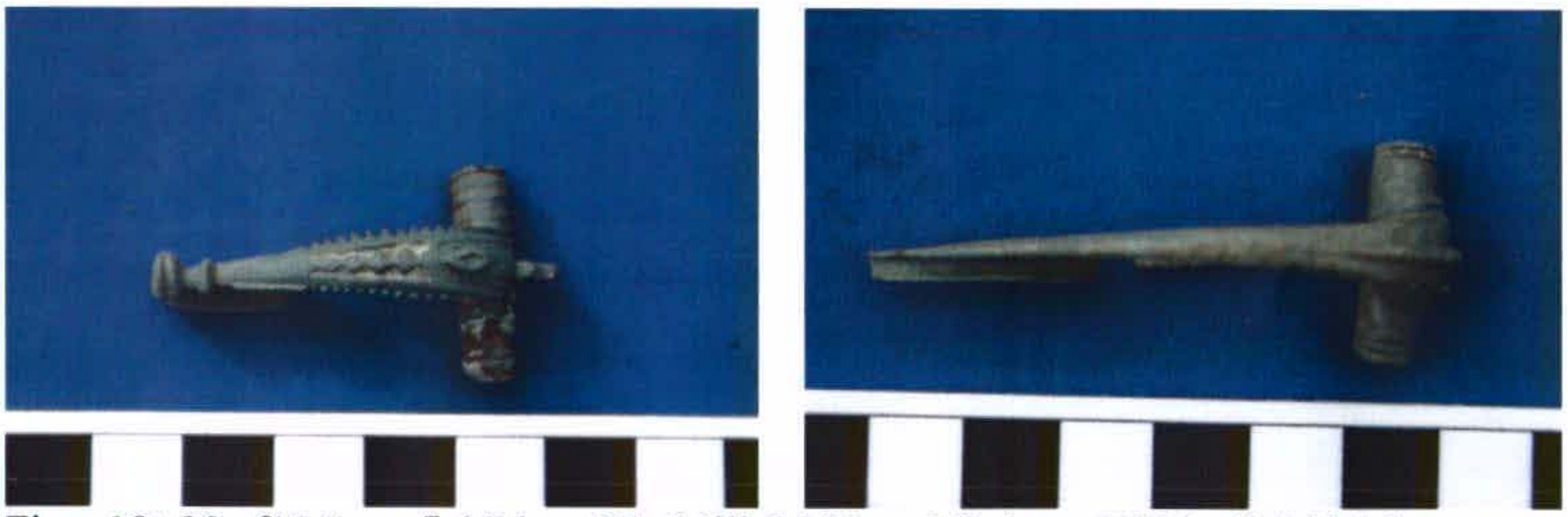
Medieval
17 contexts produced a total of 33 sherds, these were mostly Minety pottery with 1 sherd of Laverstock and another of Nash Hill pottery.

Post Medieval
Local wares (Ashton Keynes and Bromham area) were the main constituent of this period, 23 sherds from 7 contexts.

Metal finds
Copper Alloy (CuA)
The site produced 8 almost whole brooches and 2 parts, all are dated to the Early Romano-British period, AD43 to Early 2nd century.

Figs. 15 +16 sf39 Polden Hill Late C1 (Mills 2000) sf12Dolphin brooch C1 (Oxbow 2007)

Figs. 17+18 sf13 Colchester AD43-80 (Mills 2000) sf14 enamelled 'T' shape AD50-100 (Bayley 2004. Mills 2000. Oxbow 2007)



Figs. 19+20 sf15 "sawfish" late C1 (Mills2000 and Oxbow 2007) sf27 Colchester AD43-80 (Mills 2000)

Figs. 21+22 sf30 "T" shaped enamelled AD50-100 sf30dpl Polden Hill late C1(Mills 2000. Oxbow 2007)

Figs. 23+24 sf8 head, wings fibula late C1 AD43-80 (Crummy 1983)

sf6 Nauheim derivative wire brooch

Figs. 25+26 sf4 tweezers C3 (Anderson 2001)

sf5 small pewter bowl, 80mm dia, cast in one piece, late Roman (Anderson 2001)

Three CuA buckles were found, all Medieval.

Figs. 27+28 sf1 single looped oval buckle with two barrel mouldings creating a notch for the pin and with a narrowed offset strap bar c1250-1400AD and sf40 kidney shaped buckle with concave front, decorated edge to strap end and triangular pin c1450-1550 (Whitehead 2003)

Fig. 29 sf41 rectangular single loop, with roller c1300-1500 (Whitehead 2003)

Ferrous (fe)
The majority of the metal finds are iron, much of it is corroded and fragmentary, some of the assemblage is unidentifiable, and there are nails (both Romano-British and Medieval), chains and handles.

Lead (pb)
Beside the pot mend a piece of lead smelting (sf28) was recovered.

Coins
Two coins were found during the excavation, from SU3 and SU152. The first, sf 7 a coin of the House of Constantine with two soldiers, one standard and GLORIA EXERCITVS on the reverse, AD335-341 (Reece 1986 no. 337). The second, a coin of Constantine II with diademed head facing left, with CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C and two turreted camp gates with PRIVIDENTIAE CAESS on the reverse, date AD317-337 (Sear 1981, no. 3848).

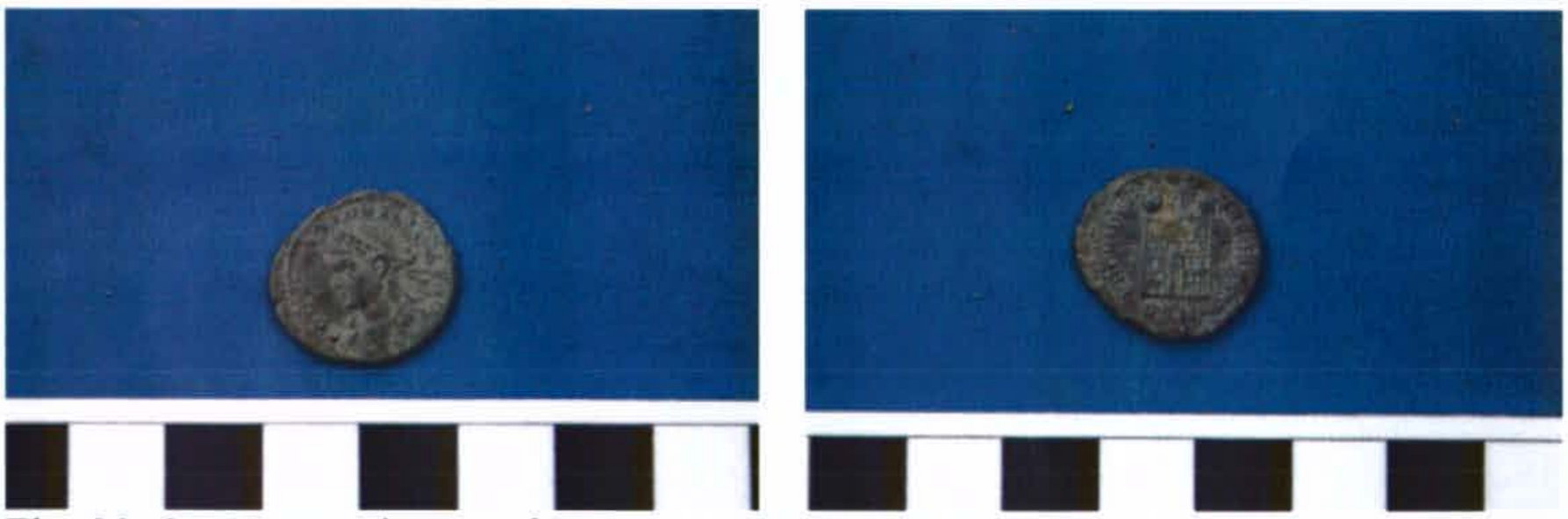


Fig. 30+31 Constantine II (sf 38) (sear 1981)

Fig. 32 Coin of the House of Constantine (sf7) (Reece 1986)

Glass
37 fragments of glass were recovered from 12 contexts, some of this comes from contaminated contexts, but some are clearly Romano-British.

Fig. 33 sf29 half of a turquoise frit melon bead C1/C2 (Crummy 1983)

Slag and Clinker
The site produced quite a few pieces of clinker c 80 pieces from 8 contexts and only 9 pieces of slag from 4 contexts.

Bone Artefacts
Five worked bone artefacts form part of the assemblage, one appears to be like a tally bone, or possibly a practice piece for carving, two could be whistles having a single hole drilled in them and the remaining two are broken pins.

Figs. 34+35 sf19 and sf 23

Fig. 36 sf25

Animal Bone
1,624 fragments of bone, 65% of that recovered, were too small to be identified. The remaining 35% was identified, 53% of which were cattle, 25.5% sheep, 14% pig, 3% horse, 2% deer, 1.5% dog and 1% bird. Animal bone came from 105 of the contexts. Most of the carcass was represented in the cattle, sheep and pig bones.

Very few of the bones showed butchery marks, and none had gnaw marks, indicating they were disposed of quickly and efficiently.

A partial Ox skull was discovered in a ditch. This consisted of some of the cranial frontal bone (right side) including part of a horn core. The caudal aspect is less well represented and possibly includes fragments of cervical vertebrae. The metopic suture indicates Bovid and to the base of the horn core it measures 7cm. The surviving part of the horn core is 5.5cm long and its ventral surface has 3 cuts of 2.5cm, 3.5cm and 3cm, there is a possible 4th cut. The skull was very fragile and encrusted with soil, careful brushing and wet sieving revealed a further 39 fragments all >10mm. The bone appears to have been intact at deposition with fracturing post deposition and particularly at time of excavation. It is unlikely that the remains lay in the open for long as there are no sign of gnawing. Apart from the cut marks on the horn core only one fragment showed a cut mark, this was on the edge of a fragment and only 3mm long.

Identification was made using Hillson (2005).

Oyster Shell
Only 2 oyster shells were found.

Coprolite
Dog coprolite was found in two contexts, SU122 and SU160, surviving because the dog had been fed bone.

Fig. 37 Dog coprolite

ENVIRONMENTAL

Two samples were taken, each of approximately 1 litre, no reason was given for the collection of these, the samples came from 'bottom of ditch' and SU151. A 1 litre sample, which unless it is a large percentage of the context brings into question the validity of the results.

Methodology

The samples were soaked, the flot removed and sieved to >10mm, 10-5mm, 5-2mm and 2mm-0.5mm fractions. The fractions examined and recorded.
The matrices for both samples were clay.

Results

Sample 1 – 'bottom of ditch'.
Fractions >10mm, 10-5mm and 5-2mm contained only stone.
2mm- 0.5mm and the flot contained small amounts of charcoal dust.

Sample 2 – SU151
The flot had very small pieces of charcoal and 2 carbonised cereal seeds.
The >10mm fraction contained small amounts of daub, charcoal and 1 sherd of pottery.
10-5mm and 5-2mm fractions contained small amounts of charcoal and oyster shell.

DISCUSSION

In terms of wealth the site was at its zenith during the 1st and Early 2nd Century, this was indicated by the 10 brooches (8 whole brooches and 2 parts from different brooches). There were no metal finds dating to the Late 2nd Century, only 1 metal find from the 3rd Century (tweezers) and 3 metal artefacts dating to the 4th Century, 2 coins and the pewter bowl. This relatively small assemblage with its largely intact brooches and lack of coins precludes an interpretation of a shrine or temple site, these are not votive deposits, but point towards a small settlement.

The pottery assemblage, in terms of wealth mirrors the metal work, only 4% being higher status wares. The majority of the pottery is local and regional wares.

There is no evidence for industrial processes, no pottery wasters, no crucibles and only a very small amount of slag (10 pieces).

The animal bone assemblage would appear to be large, 2,462 bones, however, well over half of this was small and fragmentary, not enough to support a large number of individuals and this therefore, again indicates a settlement of one or two families.

The amount of daub found and the paucity of CBM again leads to a conclusion of a settlement which is not high status.

The assemblage indicates a site in use from later Prehistory, through the Romano-British, into the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. Whilst the bias is to the Romano-British it is all of a similar nature, changing very little overtime, containing mainly local and regional wares, with very little high status wares. The conclusion is that this is the site of an agricultural settlement.

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Appendix I Small Finds Register

Small finds no.	Context	Material	Description
1	SU31	CuA	Buckle, single looped oval buckle with two barrel mouldings creating a notch for the pin and with a narrow offset bar c1250-1400AD (Whitehead 2003, no.80)
?			
3	SU30	CuA	Nail
4	SU39	CuA	Tweezers C3 (Anderson 2001 no.232)
5	SU37	Pewter	Small pewter bowl 80mm dia. Cast in one piece, late Roman (Anderson 2001 fig. 49.1)
6	SU45	CuA	Nauheim derivative wire brooch with a three turn spring AD43-80 (Crummy 1983 fig.2.9)
7	SU3		Coin of House of Constantine with two soldiers, one standard GLORIA EXERCITVS reverse AD335-341 (Reece 1986 no. 337)
8	SU14	CuA	Part of brooch, head, wings and remains of spring from Roman CuA fibula brooch late C1
9	SU62	CuA	Very small sheet
10	SU47	CuA	Stud head
11	SU9	Bone	Pin
12	SU77	CuA	Brooch CuA dolphin brooch C1 (Oxbow 2007 fig. 157.13900)
13	SU77	CuA	Brooch, Colchester type complete with pin, catch plate and broken spring AD43-80 (Mills 2000 RB68)
14	SU107	CuA	Brooch CuA T-shaped tapering enamelled hinged AD50-100 (Bayley 2004 T106/6. Mills 2000 RB82. Oxbow 2007 fig. 162.908/386)
15	SU107	CuA	Brooch "sawfish" late C1- earlyC2 (Mills 2000 RB78. Oxbow 2007 fig. 163.933)
16	SU107	fe	Nails
17	SU107	fe	Very corroded sheet
18	SU107	Stone	Loom weight
19	SU107	Bone	Carved
20	SU107	fe	Nails
21	SU107	Stone	Worked stone
22	SU107	Ceramics	Sherd with 2 pierced holes
23	SU107	Bone	Pierced with 1 hole
24	SU107	Glass	4 fragments
25	SU107	Bone	Carved and pierced
26	SU6	fe	Nails
27	SU120	CuA	Brooch, Colchester complete with pin, catch plate and broken spring AD43-80 (Mills 2000 RB68)
28	SU118	pb	Mend
29	SU137	Glass	Half melon bead, turquoise C1/C2 (Crummy

			1983 fig. 32 ½
30	?	CuA	Brooch T-shaped tapering enamelled hinged brooch AD50-100 (Bayley 2004 T106/6. Mills 2000 RB82. Oxbow 2007 fig. 162.908/386)
30dpl	SU137	CuA	Brooch Polden Hill late C1 (Mills 2000 RB69. Oxbow 2007 fig. 159.896)
31	SU137	fe	V. corroded possibly blade tip
32	SU151	glass	Blue glass
33	SU137	Glass	Amber glass
?			
?			
36	SU151	pb	Sheet, mend?
37	SU151	Glass	Blue glass
38 originally numbered 36 by excavator (a double no.)	SU152		Coin – Constantine II with diademed head left CONSTANTINVS IVN NOB C and two turreted camp gates reverse PRIVIDENTIAE CAESS AD317-337 (Sear 1981 no. 3848)
39	?	CuA	Brooch - Polden Hill late C1 (Mills 2000 RB69. Oxbow 2007 fig. 159.896)
40	?	CuA	Buckle and strap end, kidney shaped buckle with concave front, decorated edge to strap end and triangular pin c 1450-1550 (Whitehead 2003 no 118/119)
41	?	CuA	Buckle rectangular single loop with sheet roller c 1300-1500 (Whitehead 2003 no. 129)
42	?	CuA	Button
43	?	Brass	C20 stamped harness mount
44	?	fe	Nail
45	?	fe	Chain

Appendix II Bulk Finds Summary Sheets

Abbreviation
BB = Black Burnish Ware
G = Grey Ware
L = Local or other
SV = Severn Valley
Sav = Savernake
S = Samian
Ox = Oxford
NF = New Forest
SS = Short Street
* = finds bags have same SU but different years

CONTEXT	FLINT	STONE	CBM	PREHISTOIC	R-B	MEDIEVAL	POSTMEDIVAL	METAL	ANIMAL BONE	GLASS	DAUB	DESCRIPTION OTHER
2008												
SU2	x				x				x		x	L BB SV Ox G
SU03	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	NF BB Ox S SV G clinker coke plastic oyster sf7
SU4					x				x			BB G
SU5					x				x	x	x	BB Sav G Ox SV
SU6												sf6
SU7					x				x		x	G L/O Ox BB
SU9					x				x		x	Pottery too small for identification sf11
SU14	x			x	x	x	x	x	x			S BB G Ox SV
SU21					x			x	x			Ox BB G L/O
SU22				x	x			x	x			S BB G L/O clinker
SU26					x				x		x	BB Ox G
SU28			x		x			x	x		x	BB SV G Ox S
SU31					x	x			x			sf1 L/O G BB Ox
SU32									x			
SU33	x		x		x	x			x			SV G BB
SU34					x			x	x		x	Ox BB G SV S Sav
SU35					x				x			SV

SU36					x	x		x	x			G BB SV
SU37				x				x	x		x	sf5 S SV Ox BB Sav G
SU39					x				x			BB sf4
SU42	x				x				x			S SS G L/O
SU45					x				x			SV BB G Sav
SU46					x				x		x	BB S L/O
SU47					x			x	x		x	G NF Ox SV BB S L/O
SU50				x	x				x		x	SV BB G
SU53	x				x	x			x	x	x	BB Ox SV Sav G L/O
SU54	x				x				x			SV G BB L/O coal
SU55					x				x			L/O BB G SV
SU57	x				x			x	x		x	Ox BB
SU59					x				x			BB G Ox SV
SU60					x					x		SS G BB
SU62					x			x	x	x		S BB G Ox SV Sav sf9 slag
SU64					x				x		x	Ox S BB G Sav
SU66					x				x		x	Ox BB clinker
SU67					x				x		x	BB G
SU69					x							G S SV
SU70	x				x				x			BB G SV charcoal
SU74									x			
SU76	x			x	x				x		x	SV S BB G Ox Sav
SU77					x				x		x	sf12 sf13 Sav SV G Ox L/O BB
SU78					x				x		x	S BB G SV Sav
SU79		x			x			x	x			L/O SV BB G oyster clinker
SU80	x		x	x	x				x			S BB Sav
SU83					x				x			G SV
AA801		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	S BB G SV tobacco pipe
AA802			x		x	x	x	x	x			G BB Ox SV
2009												
SU11					x			x	x	x		G BB L/O SV
SU26					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	BB G L/O SV Sav
SU43	x	x	x		x	x		x	x		x	BB G Ox SV L/O
SU45	x		x		x	x		x	x		x	G BB SV Sav Ox S L/O
SU46					x				x			
SU88			x		x				x			Modern land

												drain clinker BB G Sav Ox SV
SU89					x				x			BB Sav Ox SV
SU95					x				x			G
SU96					x				x	x		BB G Sav S L/O
SU99						x			0			
SU107	x				x	x		x	x			11xsf clinker BB G Ox SV Sav
SU108									x			
SU109					x				x		x	SS BB L/O Sav SV S G slag
SU110									0			
SU115					x				x			BB
SU118					x			x	x			NF S BB G SV sf28
SU119					x				x			S BB G SV
SU120					x				x			S Sav BB L/O Ox
SU122		x			x				x		x	BB SV coprolite
SU124	x				x				x			SV G L/O BB S Sav
SU125				x	x							BB S
SU128					x			x	x		x	Sav G BB
SU138				x	x				x		x	SS BB G
AA900 SU45					x	x			x			G Ox SV BB
AA 900SU85					x	x	x		x			G BB
AA900 SU86					x				x			G BB
AA900SU90					x			x	x	x		Ox SV BB glass modern
AA900SU91					x				x		x	G BB Ox
AA900SU98					x				x			BB G Sav
AA901SU2					x				x			G BB Ox
AA901SU3					x				x			G BB Ox
AA901SU4			x		x				x			G BB Ox L/O
AA901SU6					x							L/O
AA901SU9					x				x			G BB L/O
AA901SU10					x				x		x	BB SV Sav
AA901SU11				x	x			x	x	x		G Ox SS BB Sav SV glass modern
AA901SU14									0			
AA901SU73									x			
AA906SU123					x				x			SV Ox BB Sav G L/O
SU88*					x							BB G Ox
SU89*					x				x			BB Ox SV S L/O
SU94					x				x			BB
SU103					x				x			S BB
SU112					x				x			SV BB

SU116					x			x	x		x	SV BB G slag
SU117	x	x			x			x	x		x	BB G SV Ox Sav
SU120*					x			x	x		x	S SV BB G Sav
SU122*		x			x			x	x			S Ox BB G SV
SU123					x				x			BB SV
SU125*		x			x				x			BB G Ox Sav
SU131					x				x			G BB SV
SU134					x							BB
SU137	x				x			x	x		x	BB SV Sav G Ox S L/O SS sfx6 charcoal
SU138*					x				x			S Sav BB SV G Ox
SU145					x							BB
SU149					x				x			BB SV Sav L/O
SU150				x	x				x			BB SV G S Ox
SU151	x				x			x	x	x	x	BB S SV Ox G clinker
SU152				x	x				x		x	Sav G BB SV
SU153					x				x			BB G
SU157					x				x			BB G SV
SU160					x				x		x	Sav S BB G SV slag coprolite mortar
Surface					x		x	x	x			G SV
FW Site											x	
Clay floor					x			x	x	x	x	S NF G BB SV Sav
					x							S
09 top of walkway		x			x			x	x	x		BB SV G modern glass
SU52					x	x			x			Ox G BB S L/O
SU147					x	x						BB slag
SU154				x	x				x		x	Ox Sav BB G SV charcoal
		x										Sandstone quern
					x				x		x	G BB Spanish dressel 20?
09					x				x		x	BB G S SS Ox