# **Metchley Roman Forts**

Post-Excavation Assessment 2003

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# Metchley Roman Forts, Birmingham Excavations in the Praetentura

## **Post-Excavation Assessment 2003**

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## METCHLEY ROMAN FORTS EXCAVATIONS IN THE PRAETENTURA

### **Post-Excavation Assessment 2003**

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## METCHLEY ROMAN FORT EXCAVATIONS IN THE PRAETENTURA

#### Post-Excavation Assessment 2003

### 1.0: SUMMARY

This report summarises the results of an evaluation (1999) and excavation (2003) within part of the southern interior of Metchley Roman fort, and provides proposals to bring the fieldwork results to publication in accordance with the Management of Archaeology Projects 2 (English Heritage). The fieldwork was undertaken by Birmingham Archaeology on instruction from the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust, in advance of a new hospital development.

The excavation provided the first opportunity to investigate a large area within the fort interior since 1969, enabling comparisons to be made with the building sequences identified in the *retentura* and *praetentura* during the 1967-9 excavations. By contrast, most of the recent fieldwork at the Roman military complex has concentrated upon investigation of the defences, outer annexes and the civilian settlement. The structural sequence was unusually well-preserved.

The area investigated lay mainly in the right *praetentura* of the fort. The earliest Phase 1 features were ovens and hearths. Later, two timber-framed buildings (Structures 1-2) were laid out, on either side of the *Via Praetoria*. Structure 1 may be interpreted as a workshop. The *Via Praetoria* with associated flanking ditches continued in use until Phase 3 when it was resurfaced. Structures 1-2 were demolished in Phase 2B. The earliest Phase 2B building (Structure 4) was represented by clay floors. Later in this phase was laid out a timber-framed building (Structure 3a/b) with two distinct structural units. In Phase 3 Structure 3a/b was demolished, and replaced with a granary (Structure 5) with associated possible loading-platforms. In the post-Roman period (Phase 5) a yard surface probably associated with a hunting lodge, itself located outside the area excavated, was laid over the Roman military remains. Other post-medieval activity comprised the cutting of ditches tangential to the Roman road, during its continued use.

### 2.0: INTRODUCTION

### 2.1: Background to the excavation

The fieldwork described in this assessment was commissioned by University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust and was undertaken by Birmingham Archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken in advance of a new hospital development. The evaluation (A Jones 1999) and excavation investigated part of the southern interior of Metchley Roman fort (centred on NGR SP 04483, Birmingham SMR No. 2005, A Jones 2002, Figs. 1-2). The area investigated was located to the northwest of the railway cutting, to the south of

University Road West, and to the southeast of a demolished former hospital laundry (Plates 1-2). The area investigated had not been previously disturbed, with the exception of some modern service trenches, few of which had penetrated the Roman military levels, because of the depth of dumped deposits here. The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, and Policy 8.36 of Birmingham Unitary Development Plan.

Because of the proximity of live services the evaluation (A Jones 1999) was limited to the excavation of two test-pits, each measuring 1m square, dug by machine and handcleaned. In Test-pit 1 a layer of grey-black silt (1004), possibly a destruction deposit, overlay the gravel subsoil, but no features were found. In Test-pit 2 a north-south aligned beam-slot (F1) was sealed by a pebble surface (F2), interpreted as part of the *Via Praetoria*. Other areas adjoining the Laundry were also test-pitted, but were found to have been heavily truncated, as would any archaeological features within the cellared part of this former building.

A total area of approximately 250 square metres was investigated. The excavation was undertaken in two stages. Initially an area measuring 6m by 35m was opened. This was extended by a further 7m to the northeast when excavation revealed well-preserved archaeological features continuing under the southeastern extension of the former laundry, which was not cellared (Plate 2). The strategy for excavation was set down in a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Birmingham Archaeology (Birmingham Archaeology 2003), and approved by Birmingham City Council. The excavation provided the first opportunity to investigate part of the fort's *praetentura* since 1967, and was the first large-scale investigation in the fort interior since 1969 (A Jones 2002).

## 2.2: Aims

The objective of the archaeological excavation was to preserve the archaeological remains - comprising internal buildings, deposits and surfaces, by record. In particular, it was intended to contribute towards an understanding of the layout of buildings within the right *praetentura*, and more generally to assist in the understanding of the development of the fort, its layout, differing functions through its occupation, and the evidence for changes in garrison.

## 2.3: Methodology

The area excavated was stripped of overburden by a 360 degree mechanical excavator working under archaeological supervision. The width of the excavation area was restricted by the requirement to maintain a minimum stand-off of 3m from the edge of the railway cutting to the southeast, and not to disturb an existing surface water drain to the southwest.

A minimum of 50% of linear and discrete features was excavated. Some additional machine excavation was undertaken using a mini-digger to remove the lower horizons of post-Roman deposits, working under archaeological supervision.

Recording was by means of pro-formas for contexts and features, plans (at 1:20 and 1:50), sections (1:10 and 1:20) and monochrome print and colour slide photography. Features were numbered in a single sequence of three digit numbers, prefixed 'F'. Contexts were numbered in a sequence of four digit numbers. Some re-numbering has been necessary for simplification. Samples for general biological analysis were taken from datable features.

Subject to permission from the landowner, it is intended to deposit the finds and paper archive with Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

For simplicity, in the following account it will be assumed that the forts are orientated north-south, although the drawings remain labelled with compass north. The results of the evaluation and excavation have been conflated below.

## 3.0: RESULTS (Figs. 2-5)

### 3.1: Phasing

Phase 1: First, square, double-ditched fort, enclosing approximately 4 ha., AD 40s-50s. Contemporary with <u>vicus</u> on western side of fort (Phase A, A Jones in preparation).

Phase 2: Represented by two possibly overlapping sub-phases (2A and 2B: AD 50s-60s), not necessarily in that order, functionally, rather than chronologically, or stratigraphically-defined. Both post-date the initial construction of the fort, and pre-date the layout of the Phase 3 fort. Phase 2A is defined to include the construction and use of the northern, eastern and southern annexes, and may be contemporary with the later reuse of the Phase 1 fort, and adaptation of the original buildings. Phase 2B comprises the clearance of the Phase 1 military buildings, followed by the layout of temporary structures associated with a military stores depot.

Phase 3: Smaller, rectangular fort, enclosing 2.6ha (AD 60s-80s) built within the Phase 1-2 fort interior, with some re-cutting of the Phase 1 defences to provide additional defence. Continued use of the eastern annexe.

Phase 4: Later Roman military or civilian activity (post AD 80s to late 2nd century). Includes the irregular re-cutting of the Phase 1 fort and eastern annexe ditches, and other, external defences, mostly off-alignment with the earlier military features. May be civilian, military, or both. Possibly associated with the use of the site as part of the <u>cursus publicus</u>.

Phase 5: Post-Roman activity. Includes all activity at the site post-dating the Roman abandonment up to the present. For simplicity, this phase is not sub-divided. It includes post-Roman deposits identified from the pollen evidence.

## 3.2: Phase 1 (Fig. 3)

Description of Phase 1 features

The Phase 1-3 features were cut into the orange sand-gravel subsoil (1008), which had a higher silt content towards the northwestern end of the excavation.

The earliest Roman military activity was represented by a group of hearths or ovens, by parts of two timber-framed buildings (Structures 1-2) represented by beam-slots, and by a length of the contemporary *Via Praetoria*, and associated flanking ditches which belong to Phases 1-2.

Seven hearths or ovens were possibly the earliest Phase 1 features recorded (F103, F112, F115, F120-2, F150). All cut the natural gravel subsoil and were located towards the centre of the excavated area. The largest of this feature group was hearth or oven F103, roughly rectangular in plan with rounded corners, measuring a maximum of 1.7m in length and 1m in width. It joined a narrow possible flue which lcd to the northwest. The hearth was cut to a near vertical profile, and had a flat base. It was backfilled with lenses of grey-brown silt (1009-1010) containing fragments of charcoal and burnt clay. Contemporary roughly circular hearths or ovens (F121, F112, F115) was located to the north or northeast of the former. Feature F112 cut feature F115. Both were backfilled with brown sand flecked with charcoal. Oval hearth or oven F120 lay to the east of feature F103. Feature F120 measured 1.5m in length and 0.7m in width. It was cut to a Ushaped profile and was backfilled with mottled grey-brown silt-sand (1029) containing fragments of burnt clay and charcoal. Possible feature F122 was U-shaped in plan, its irregular shape and shallow depth perhaps suggesting disturbance from adjoining later Phase 1 Structure 1 (see below). This possible feature was backfilled with charcoal-rich soil (1032-3). Nearby was an oval hearth or oven (F150), backfilled with charcoal-rich silt (1072).

Structures 1-2 were the main Phase 1 features identified. The southern end of Structure 1 (Plate 3) was identified to the east of the *Via Praetoria* (see below). The ground-plan of this building was represented by beam-slots defining the outer walls and internal partitions, all cutting the natural gravel (1008). The southern side of the building (F111) was also cut into backfilled Phase 1 hearths or ovens F103, F120 and F122. Beam-slot F113, defining an internal division within the building was cut into backfilled Phase 1 hearths or ovens F103, F120 and F122. Beam-slot F113, defining an internal division within the building was cut into backfilled Phase 1 hearths or ovens F112 and F115. The main axis of Structure 1 was north-south, following the alignment of the *Via Praetoria*. Measuring from the outer edges of the beam-slots, this building was a maximum of 6.5m in width (measured cast-west). The full length of the southern side of this building (F111) was identified. Only the southern ends of the eastern (F188) and western (F197) sides were recorded within the excavated area. The western (F197) and southern (F110) sides overlapped by 2m at the southwestern corner of the building. The external Structure 1 beam-slots measured an average of 0.3m in width and 0.05m in depth, and were cut to a flat-based profile. The beam-slot backfills comprised grey-brown silt, flecked with charcoal and containing fragments of burnt clay.

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The eastern side of the building (F197), and its southward continuation (F110) were notably less substantial than the other sides of the building.

The southern end of the interior of this building was divided into four rooms (R1-R4) by three roughly equidistant, north-south-aligned beam-slots (F130, F124, F125). The outermost pair of rooms (R1, R4) measured 1m in width, and the innermost pair (R2-R3) were 0.8m in width. All four rooms probably measured approximately 1.5m in length (north-south). The central of these north-south internal dividing walls (F124), measuring 1.5m in length, was sited medially along the outer southern wall. A post-hole (F123) was cut at the junction between the external wall and this internal beam-slot, while a gap 0.2m wide was retained between the southern ends of the other internal divisions of this group (F130, F125) and the southern side of the building (F111). A stake-hole (F109) cut the northern terminal of feature F130. Internal dividing walls F125 and F130 measured 1.5m and 1m respectively in length. The northern sides of these rooms were not recognised at excavation, and could have been open.

To the north of these rooms was an area measuring 2m north-south, not sub-divided, and may have functioned as a corridor. Further to the north, an east-west-aligned beam-slot (F113) terminated in a rounded butt-end, 0.8m inside the eastern side of the building. This gap may have formed an entrance. A similarly-aligned beam-slot 1m in length (F211) joining the eastern side of the building, located 0.5m to the north of the former feature and may have together formed an offset entrance, if contemporary. Beam-slot F113 had been carefully packed with turf, suggesting that this internal division had been dismantled, and a similar interpretation may be suggested for beam-slot F211. To its north was a further, east-west-aligned internal dividing wall (F204), the northernmost internal division recorded. It is difficult to see beam-slots F211 and F204 as contemporary, although no relationship between the two could be defined. No floor surfaces or other contemporary features could be identified within the interior of this building. Pit F144 to the south of the building could have been associated. No associated internal floor surfaces could be identified.

Approximately 1.5m to the east of Structure 1 was a ditch (F169, Plate 4), recorded for a length of 9.5m. The building and ditch were probably contemporary, although slightly misaligned. The ditch was cut to a U-shaped profile, and measured a maximum of 0.6m in width and 0.4m in depth. It was backfilled with grey-brown clay-sand-silt. No Phase 1 features could be identified to the east of the ditch, possibly because of intense later Roman military activity.

The extreme eastern edge of a further timber-framed building (Structure 2) was located adjoining the western edge of the *Via Praetoria*. The eastern side of this building (F183, Plate 5) was represented by a north-south-aligned beam-slot, recorded for a length of approximately 7.5m. This beam-slot was joined by an east-west aligned beam-slot (F184), forming part of an internal division, recorded for a length of 1m. No further details of the arrangement of this building could be identified.

The Phase 1-2 *Via Praetoria* was represented by a slightly cambered gravelled surface (F214, Plate 6) aligned north-south. This road measured a maximum of 6m in width. It had been severely truncated by post-medieval ditches (see below). The road was flanked by north-south-aligned ditches on both sides, probably cut and cleaned-out throughout Phases 1-2. The eastern ditch (F108, F133-4) was cut to a U-shaped profile, and measured an average of 0.5m in width and depth. It was backfilled with grey-brown sand-silt (1016), incorporating lenses of coarser sand. The western ditch (F132, F138), was 0.7m in width and depth. It was backfilled with red-brown silt (1054) containing a large quantity of gravel and small pebbles. Both ditches were backfilled with material originally derived from the road surface.

Dating evidence from Phase 1 features

Features F103, F109, F111, F124 contained late 1st century pottery. Phase 1-2 features F133, F138 contained late 1st century pottery. Other pottery recovered from Phase 1 features could only be dated as 'Roman'.

Interpretation of Phase 1 features

The hearths or ovens form the earliest suite of Roman military activity, in particular features F103, F112, F115, F122 cut by Phase 1 beam-slots. It is possible that features F112 and F115 could be contemporary with the earlier use of Structure 1, in which case beam-slot F113 could form part of a later re-modelling of the building. Hearths or ovens F150, F144 and F121 could also possibly be contemporary with the use of Structure 1.

Structure 1 was located in the right praetentura, immediately adjoining the Via Praetoria, a location where barrack-blocks or workshops would be anticipated. The internal arrangement of Structure 1 does not conform to the usual internal arrangement of individual contubernia within a barrack-block. The continuation of the southern side (F111) beyond the west side (F179) could suggest a verandah, a feature common along barrack-blocks, although a similar 'crossover' was also recorded in Phase 1 Structure 2.1 in the right praetentura at Metchley (A Jones 2001, fig. 140), interpreted as a workshop. The internal divisions (F130, F124, F125) define rooms 1.5m by 1m square (less than four squarc metres), smaller than the average size of armae and papiliones (average 14-29 square metres, Davison 1989, 97). The arrangement of the southern side of this building could perhaps suggest divisions for the stabling of horses. Davison (1989, 160) suggests a width allowance of 1.16m per horse, with a length of 2m. More usually, horses are arranged along the long axis of a military stables (e.g. Johnson 1975, figs. 134 and 136). The location of Structure 1 could suggest that it was a workshop, and some similarities may be noted with the internal arrangement of workshop Structure 2.1 at Metchley, principally the internal divisions noted within both buildings. The arrangement of internal beam-slots F130 and F125 which were not continued up to the southern side of the building may have been adopted for stability, to ensure that the beam-slot ends did not break down (Davison 1989, 217, figs. 4-5; A Jones 2001, 38). Details of the layout in the northern excavated part of the building may have been complicated by rearrangement (e.g. F113, F211, F204 in particular). No trace of Phase 1 activity could be

identified to the east of ditch F169 because of the intensity of later Roman military activity.

Too little of the ground-plan of Structure 2 could be identified to suggest a function for the building. The dating evidence is perhaps a little late in the 1st century for Phase 1 features, although detailed analysis of the coarsewares, and dating of the samian and mortaria will no doubt refine the dating evidence.

3.3: Phase 2B (Fig. 4)

Description of Phase 2B features

Phase 2B features were cut through the backfilled Phase 1-2 features and deposits, and into the subsoil (1008).

The earliest Phase 2B activity is represented by the demolition and clearance of the Phase 1 timber-framed buildings, and by the deposition of a destruction deposit comprising dark brown silt-sand (1094, not illustrated), flecked with charcoal. Later in Phase 2B was laid out a clay-floored building (Structure 4), and an irregularly-shaped timber-framed building, with two main ranges of rooms (Structures 3a/b). Pits, some with a probable industrial function were cut alongside the *Via Praetoria*, which continued in use.

Structure 4 was defined by a roughly rectangular red silt-clay-sand floor (1092, Plate 7), measuring a maximum of 6m by 4.5m in plan, with its long axis aligned north-south. In places the clay surface overlay backfilled Phase 1 ditch F169, and the Phase 2B destruction deposit (1094). No associated features could be identified, although further areas of red silt-clay floor material (1024) were also recorded to the south, overlying the subsoil (1008).

Structure 3a/b was the main Phase 2B structure identified, although its full ground-plan could not be identified within the excavated area. It comprised two separate structural units - western and eastern, here termed Structures 3a and 3b respectively, divided by a corridor. Beam-slots F114 and F195 cut clay floor 1024 belonging to Structure 4. The western unit (Structure 3a) immediately adjoined the eastern frontage of the *Via Praetoria*, and was recorded for a length of 3mThe southern side of the western unit was represented by two east-west-aligned beam-slots (F105, F104), joined by north-south beam-slot F197, which measured 1.5m in length. The enlarged western terminal of beam-slot F105 was truncated by a Phase 3 roadside ditch (see below). The western unit beam-slots were vertically-sided and flat-based in profile. They were backfilled with dark brown silt, flecked with charcoal. Two features (F126, F176) were recorded within the interior of this unit, both cutting Phase 1 beam-slot F179. Feature F126 was a roughly circular spread of charcoal (1038), infilling a slight hollow. Adjoining feature F176 was an oval pit measuring a maximum of 1.5m in length and 0.4m in diameter. It was backfilled with brown silt-clay-sand (1129), flecked with charcoal.

A number of features located to the south of this structural unit could have been associated. A Phase 1 post-hole (F144) was re-cut (F145) to the south of beam-slot F105. Post-hole F119 was positioned in line with the eastern terminal of beam-slot F104, and was approximately flush with the projected alignment of beam-slot F105. Further to the east, the northern terminal of beam-slot F136 was also flush with the projected alignment of beam-slot F105, and could also have been associated. Also recorded was a northwest-southeast-aligned beam-slot (F137), adjoining the former feature.

The castern structural unit (Structure 3b) was separated from the western unit by a gap measuring 1m in width, presumably forming a corridor. Beam-slot F156 cut clay floor 1092 of Structure 4. The eastern structural unit was recorded for a maximum length of 15m (measured east-west), and for a width of 10m (north-south). The eastern end of the building lay outside the area excavated. Much of the eastern excavated part of the building had been removed by modern disturbance, and a full ground-plan could not be recovered. The southern side of the eastern unit was L-shaped in plan, continuing the stepped arrangement of the same side of the western unit. The western end of the southern side of the castern unit was aligned north-south (F129). Its southern terminal was flush with the inside edge of beam-slot F104 to the west. The east-west-aligned section of the southern side of the unit, measuring 7.5m in length (F114, F195) curved slightly inwards in plan. An unusual feature was that beam-slots F129 and F114 narrowed at their junction. The backfill of beam-slot F129 suggested that the beam had rotted in situ, while the east-west-aligned beam-slot (F114, F195) was backfilled with brown siltsand, presumably after removal of the ground-beam. The northern side of the building was defined by two slightly mis-aligned beam-slots (F152, F153) which presumably joined at a right-angled intersection outside the area excavated. Neither alignment was parallel with the southern side of the building, although this alignment was admittedly difficult to define because beam-slot F114 curved slightly inwards. Beam-slot F153.02 contained traces of stake-holes cut along its length. Beam-slot F153 adjoined a small circular pit (F163) which could have been associated.

A number of north-south and cast-west-aligned beam-slots were also recorded within the interior of the eastern structural unit, possibly defining up to four rooms. The internal arrangements are described from north to south. To the south of the northern beam-slot (F152) was a parallel, cast-west-aligned beam-slot (F210), defining the southern side of a room or corridor (R1) measuring 1.2m wide (north-south). To the south was a further room (R2) measuring a minimum of 2.8m wide (north-south). The southern side of this room was defined by two parallel, east-west-aligned beam-slots (F208, F156), offset by their width. An entrance measuring 2.2m in width was recorded between the rounded terminals of these beam-slots. Two stake-holes (F212-3) were recorded in the northwestern corner of the excavated part of this room, and two further stake-holes were found in the opposing southeastern angle (F205-6). A post-hole (F174) adjoined the western side of this entrance.

The southern end of the eastern unit was sub-divided into two rooms (R3-R4) by a northsouth-aligned beam-slot (F209), measuring a total of 2.5m in length. An entry-gap measuring 1m in width was retained to its north. Pit F209 was located just to the south of

the beam-slot. Beam-slot F209 contained a number of stakcholes cut along its length (the larger comprising F193, F140, F170). Beam-slot F209 was notably irregular in profile, although the majority of the other internal beam-slots within this building were regular in profile, with a flat base. Most were backfilled with grey silt-clay-sand flecked with charcoal. No contemporary internal features could be defined to the west of internal wall F209. To its east were two post-holes (F171, F157) each inset from the beam-slot ends defining the entrance to the room to the north. Outside the southern side of the building was hearth F151 which was backfilled with lenses of charcoal and burnt clay (1073-7).

The Phase 1 Via Praetoria (F214) continued in use and the roadside ditches were cleaned-out during Phase 2B. During Phase 2B pits were cut on the eastern (F142-3) and western roadside (F190) areas.

The latest Phase 2B event was the demolition and levelling of the Phase 2 structures before the site was first abandoned by the military.

Dating evidence from Phase 2B

Features F114, F126, F136, F143, F157, F153, contained pottery of late 1st century date. Other Phase 2B coarsewares could only be dated as 'Roman'.

Interpretation of Phase 2B features

The Phase 2B destruction deposit (1092) was also recognised elsewhere in the fort interior (A Jones 2002, 44). Excavation in the left *retentura* (A Jones 2002, fig. 17, 42), confirmed that the clearance of the Phase 1 structures and the layout of Phase 2B buildings was conducted as part of one operation.

Structure 4 comprised two areas of clay flooring (1024, 1092), both sealing backfilled Phase 1 features, and the latter also sealed Phase 1 destruction deposit (1094), laid down in early Phase 2B. It was not possible to establish the ground-plan of this structure because of intense later Roman military activity. One contemporary clay-floored building (Structure 3.4) was recorded in the left *retentura* (A Jones 2002, fig. 17, 44).

The external and internal layouts of Structure 3a/b were irregular in plan. Slightly different alignments were recorded, and the south side (F114) was slightly curvilinear in plan. The profiles of the individual beam-slots were also irregular. The stepped arrangement of the southern, and presumably also the northern side of this building was similar in plan to the layout of the eastern side of contemporary Structure 3.5 (A Jones 2001, 51), interpreted as a military store building. In the absence of evidence of internal dividing walls supporting a raised floor the same interpretation cannot be suggested for Structure 3a/b. It is difficult to interpret the structures belonging to the military stores depot because of the irregularity of their overall arrangement, and individual ground-plans. A notable feature of beam-slots F129/F114 was the evidence for the deliberate narrowing of both beam-slots at their junction, presumably to prevent the beam-slot edges collapsing. A similar arrangement was recorded at The Lunt (Hobley 1969, 77, fig. 5,

Phase I (a) building fronting rampart). Evidence from the 2003 excavation has confirmed that the *Via Praetoria* continued in use, although other internal roads (e.g. *Via Qunitana*) went out of use as a result of encroachment by buildings.

Although only part of Structure 3a/b was excavated its irregular arrangement, and location adjoining the *Via Praetoria* suggests comparison with the possible Phase 2 *Praetorium* excavated at The Lunt (Hobley 1975). It has to be admitted that this building was suggested to fulfill an admittedly highly specialist function - as the quarters of a high ranking officer commanding the suggested cavalry training centre at the site, for which there is no present parallel at Metchley. Two of the beam-slots within this structure (F153 and F209) contained traces of post-in-beam construction which may represent individual wattle uprights.

An alternative interpretation of Structure 4 is that it formed a clay floor associated with Structure 3a/b, although continuing beyond the southern side of that building. Clay floor 1024 was cut by beam-slot F129 which contained the *in situ* remains of a timber beam. This clay floor was also cut by beam-slot F114, which did not contain the *in situ* remains of the ground beam, and the cut feature may therefore have been a trench dug for the recovery of the beam, rather than being related to its original construction.

Phase 2A relates to the outer annexes which lay outside the area investigated in 2003.

3.4: Phase 3 (Fig. 5)

Description of Phase 3 features

The Phase 3 features were cut through the backfilled Phase 1-2 features and deposits and into the subsoil (1008).

The main Phase 3 features comprised a timber-framed building defined by five roughly parallel, east-west-aligned beam-slots (Structure 5), the resurfacing of the *Via Decumana* (F215), the cutting of new roadside ditches, and other roadside activity.

Structure 5 comprised five parallel, irregularly-spaced beam-slots (F118, F158, F165, F162, F168), aligned east-west. This building was cut through the backfilled beam-slots of Phase 2B Structures 3b and 4, and Phase 1 ditch F169, into the subsoil. Only the western part of the Phase 3 building could be identified within the excavated area. The western beam-slot terminals were approximately flush, although beam-slot F162, cut slightly to the east of the others, may have been a later strengthening. The eastern terminals of beam-slots F165 and F168 were flush, whilst beam-slots F162 and F158 (Plate 8) were continued further to the east. The northern (F168) and southern (F118) excavated beam-slots were separated by a distance of 7.5m. The inner pair of beam-slots (F165, F158) were located 2.5m apart (measured centre-to-centre), the same separation as recorded between beam-slots F168, F162 and F165 were sited just 0.6m apart. Beam-slot F164 terminated in a post-pit (F164), and the western terminal of beam-slot F158

contained a stake-hole (F175). The beam-slots were cut with near-vertical sides, and a flat base. The beam-slots of this structure measured an average of 0.4m in width, and 0.35m in depth, with the exception of feature F162 which was only 0.12m in depth, perhaps supporting its interpretation as a later addition to the structure. The beam-slots were backfilled with grey-brown silt-clay, with the exception of northernmost beam-slot F168 which was backfilled with charcoal, perhaps suggesting burning of the beam *in situ*.

To the west of Structure 5 was a parallel, north-south-aligned ditch (F102), cut following the outer edge of the eastern side of Phase 1 Structure 1. Ditch F102 was recorded for a length of 9m, and measured a maximum of 0.9m in width, and 0.7m in depth. It was backfilled with light brown silt-sand containing fragments of burnt clay and charcoal flecks.

Further to the west were located two parallel, east-west aligned palisade trenches (F146, F178), cut 0.5m apart. These features were dug to a V-shaped profile, and measured an average of 0.6m in width, and 0.35m in depth. They were both backfilled with greybrown sand. The western terminals of features F146 and F178 were cut by a north-southaligned drainage gully (F173, F107), dug along the eastern margin of the *Via Praetoria* which was resurfaced with gravel (F215) in this phase. Ditch F173, F107 was cut to a U-shaped profile, and measured an average of 0.6m wide, and 0.3m in depth. It was backfilled with grey-brown sand-silt. The parallel ditch (F180) cut on the western margin of the road, at a separation of 7m from the former, was cut to a similar profile, and was backfilled with similar material. Four roughly circular pits (F186, F181, F190, F198) were cut on the western edge of the road. Pit F181 was cut into roadside gully F180, after its disuse.

Dating evidence from Phase 3 features

Features F118, F146, F158, F162, and F198 contained late 1st century pottery. Other pottery from Phase 3 features could only be classified as 'Roman'.

### Interpretation of Phase 3 features

The parallel beam-slots forming Structure 5 defined the foundations of a granary whose floor would have been raised above ground level in an attempt to exclude vermin or mould. Only part of the western side of the building was excavated. Generally, granary beam-slots were aligned across the short axis of the building, here aligned east-west (Johnson 1975, fig. 105), although Claudian examples with lengthwise beam-slots are also noted. Most usually, the parallel granary beam-slots were regularly spaced, as were features F118, F158 and F164. The slightly mis-aligned, and shallower, beam-slot to the north (F162) may have been a later addition to support a loading platform. The continuation of beam-slots F162 and F158 beyond the eastern limits of features F168 and F165 could also suggest a loading-platform at the eastern end of the building, although such an L-shaped arrangement of loading-platforms, if contemporary would have been a highly unusual feature. Other granaries with loading, or possible loading-platforms have

been recognised at Metchley (A Jones 2002, fig. 11, Phase 1, Structures 3.2-3; A Jones forthcoming, Phase 2, fig. 34).

A Phase 3 granary (Structure 4.3, A Jones 2002, fig. 19) was excavated in the *retentura* at Metchley. More usually, granaries would have been located in the central range (e.g. the two Phase 1 granaries in the left central range, A Jones 2002, fig. 11 and A Jones forthcoming, Trench B2), although examples located in the *praetentura* do occur at Hod Hill and in Germany (Johnson 1975, 152). These examples may have been subsidiary to granaries located in the central range at the other sites, but no trace of Phase 3 granaries has been found in the central range to date at Metchley.

## 3.5: Phase 4

No features or deposits could be related to Phase 4, attributed elsewhere to post-Phase 3 defenses. No Phase 4 internal features have previously been identified. It is possible that future refinement of the pottery dating could suggest that features may require to be phased later in the overall Metchley sequence, in which case some features may be re-attributed to Phase 4.

## 3.6: Phase 5 (Fig. 5)

Description and interpretation

Only a summary of the post-Roman features, comprising a cobble surface, post-medieval ditches and modern disturbances, is provided.

The main post-medieval feature encountered was a cobble surface (1005), overlying the backfilled Phase 3 features and deposits. This cobble surface could have been associated with the hunting lodge located to the north, mapped by Sparry in 1718, itself located outside the excavated area. Map evidence also indicates that the line of the *Via Praetoria* (and the *Via Decumana* in the north of the fort, outside the excavated area), remained in use until at least the end of the 19th century. During this post-medieval re-use of the Roman road a number of ditches were cut through the Roman road metal. These ditches (F160, F139, F159, F131) were cut at a slightly oblique angle to the Roman alignment, and were backfilled with soil containing 18th-19th century pottery. More recent Phase 5 features relate to service and foundation trenches, mainly cut across the short axis of the excavation, and not numbered on the plans. These trenches were cut in the late 1930s during the construction of the adjoining Hospital Laundry, now demolished.

# 4.0: ASSESSMENTS

## 4.1: Quantifications

Tables 1 and 2 quantify the paper and finds archives.

## TABLE 1: Paper archive

Item	Quantity	
Features *	116	
Contexts *	185	
Drawings *	89	
Monochrome prints *	130	
Colour slides	120	
Administration files	1	

\* includes the 1999 evaluation

# **TABLE 2: Finds archive**

Item	Quantity
Coarse pottery	317
Amphora	42
Samian	4
Mortaria	7
Glass objects/ slag	20
Stone objects	2
Iron objects	23
Slag (not inc. hammerscale)	34
Copper alloy objects	1
Fired clay fragments	83

Post-Roman pottery not included. No finds were recovered from the 1999 evaluation

## 4.2: Stratigraphic data

As first suggested by the limited test-pitting (A Jones 1999) the excavation identified a well-preserved sequence of Roman military activity. Comparatively little disturbance had been caused by post-Roman activity. Indeed, the Roman features and deposits were protected from later disturbance by a post-medieval cobble yard surface, and by overburden, which deepened to the west. The extent of the excavation was constrained by deep disturbances caused by the former Hospital Laundry, associated basements and a live service to the northwest, and by the requirement to maintain a safe stand-off between the edge of the excavation and the railway cutting which remained in use to the southeast.

The Roman features and deposits identified mainly comprised cut features, such as beamslots, post-holes, pits and small ditches, although horizontal deposits, such as clay floors, gravelled road surfaces and *in situ* destruction deposits, were also identified. The Roman structural features were in the main well-preserved, although disturbance by later Roman military activity was, of course, recorded. Evidence of industrial activity, principally hearths or ovens was in the main confined to Phase 1. Only a relatively small quantity of pottery was recorded.

The results are of particular importance given the well-preserved structural sequences identified, and the limited opportunities provided for investigation within the fort interior

since the 1960s. The results can provide valuable data for cross-comparison with the results of the extensive Rowley excavations within the fort interior (A Jones 2002).

### 4.2: Finds and environmental evidence

4.2.1: Small finds by Erica Macey

#### Glass objects

The glass assemblage consisted of 19 fragments from glass vessels and one possible fragment of glass slag. The assemblage was quantified by count and weight (g.) and was examined macroscopically for the purposes of assessment. The assemblage was fragmentary, with no complete vessels noted, although individual fragments were largely unabraded.

Several contexts produced diagnostic fragments of glass. This included a base with complete footring (layer 1094), seven fragments of blue-green vessel glass (layer 1098 x 2, F169.01/1102 x 4, layer 1142 x 1) and a fragment of a dark blue Hofheim cup (F112/1020). Several small, undiagnostic pieces of possible Roman date were also recovered (layer 1007 x 1, F127/1039 x 1, layer 1052 x 1), as was a glass counter (F114/1022) and a small piece of glass slag (layer 1007).

The footring, the most complete fragment in the assemblage, has a pad base – the term for a footring created by the application and manipulation of a disc of glass on the underside of the base (Price and Cottam 1998, 29, fig. 3.12). This fragment is coloured very dark green, suggesting a 1st to early 2nd century date. Strongly-coloured glass is most frequently recovered from sites occupied between the Claudian conquest and the early Flavian period, and becomes unusual after this time (Price and Cottam 1998, *ibid.*).

The most distinctive fragment in the assemblage was a base fragment from a dark blue Hofheim cup (layer 1020). Vessels of this type are commonly found on sites in southern Britain, although less frequently on Flavian sites in northern Britain (Price and Cottam *ibid.*, 72, fig. 21). This fragment has a high-kicked base, dating it to the second half of the 1st century, probably between AD 43-75.

Five of the fragments of blue-green glass were identified as handle fragments (Dr. Roger White, pers. comm). Four fragments (F169.01/1102) were possibly from the same vessel, probably a large square storage jar of pre-Flavian date (Price and Cottam *ibid.*, figs. 65-6). Another handle fragment (layer 1098) and a rib (layer 1098) were from a pillar-moulded bowl of Flavian or Trajanic date (Price and Cottam, *ibid.*, fig. 14). A body sherd (layer 1142) comes from a shallow dish or platter was also noted.

Statement of potential

There was a high percentage of datable diagnostic fragments. The assemblage should be fully cataloged and reported. Further analysis will contribute useful dating evidence, and details of trading contacts. A selection of the fragments will be illustrated. In comparison to the glass finds from other excavations at Metchley the quantity, and possibly also the quality of the glass assemblage from the 2003 excavation is particularly notable.

Stone

Two quern fragments were recovered from feature F198 (1158). A brief catalogue will be prepared.

Iron

Iron objects: F125/1036 x2; F136/1055 x1; F199/1159 x2. Iron nails (F101/1004 x2); 1011 x1; 1024 x1; 1026 x1; F124/1035 x2; F132/1041 x1; 1052 x1; 1064 x1; F156.01/1083 x1; F153/1091 x3; F171/1109 x1; F178/1131 x2; F199/1159 x1.

One possible iron knife will be x-rayed. The object will be cataloged and illustrated if this interpretation is confirmed. No further analysis is required in respect of the other iron objects.

Slag and fired clay

Slag (F101/1004); 1011 x1; F116/1025 x1; F118/1027 x1; F133/1049 x2; F142/1063 x4; F158.01/1085 x10; 1092 x1; F168/1100 x1; F153.02/1105 x1; F142/000 x3; F199/1159 x8. No further analysis is appropriate.

Copper alloy objects

One unidentified fragment was recovered from feature F162 (1093). No further analysis is appropriate.

Fired clay

F103/1010 x24; layer 1011 x7; 1024 x1; F138/1060 x1; F146/1067 x1; F147/1069 x12; F152/1078 x1; F170/1103 x5; F153.02/1105 x6; F158.03/1126 x3; F176/1129 x3; F146/1146 x2; F162.02/1156 x2; F198/1158 x15. This group of material does not require further analysis.

4.2.2: Pottery by Annette Hancocks

The ceramics were all hand collected, rapidly-scanned, spot-dated and quantified by count and weight (g.) A *terminus post quem* was assigned. A total of 370 sherds weighing

5546g were recovered from 50 contexts. Seven deposits (layers 1002, 1007, F127/1039, F139/1057, F154/1058, F149/1071 and layer 1094) were of post-medieval date (18th–19th century), or contained intrusive material of this period. These should not be considered in any further detailed analytical work that might be recommended. No ceramics of 17th century date were identified.

Range and variety

There is a bias in the overall weight of the assemblage as there is a medium sized collection of amphorae (42 sherds), all of Dressel 20 type, which has been recovered. In addition, there are seven sherds of mortaria, possibly imported from the Rhône Valley. Four sherds of samian were also recovered. The remainder of the assemblage comprised locally and regionally traded coarsewares, such as oxidised and reduced organic Severn Valley Ware, Malvernian tempered wares, rusticated greywares of Flavian/Trajanic date. On visual inspection, much of the ceramics were poorly weathered and abraded, especially the samian. The overall assemblage will add greatly to our knowledge and understanding of this particular area of the site, which has remained remarkably well-preserved. A total of seven diagnostic rim forms were identified. These included a couple of rusticated jar rim forms, a large Malvernian storage jar and an interesting Gallo-Belgic derived platter.

### Statement of potential

Some of the pottery will provide, upon detailed analysis, an excellent chronological framework for phasing and interpretation of the excavation results, in conjunction with the other Roman find types recovered, such as vessel glass. This is one of the principal research aims. The ceramic assemblage can usefully be compared with published assemblages from Metchley fort. Its study may contribute useful data concerning the function of the *praetentura*, and pottery supply in general.

### Statement of potential

It is recommended that the Romano-British assemblage is fully analysed, with the exception of material from post-medieval deposits, and a report produced for publication. Specialist reports should be commissioned for amphorae (David Williams), samian (Steve Willis) and mortaria (Kay Hartley). A number of diagnostic sherds will require illustration.

### Storage and curation

The pottery will remain stable through time and poses no long-term storage problems.

Feature	Deposit	No. of	Wt (g)	Spot date
_	1001	27	603	Late 1st century AD
	1007	25	355	Late 1st century AD with 1 intrusive 18th–19th
	100,			century AD sherd
F103	1009	24	147	Late 1st century AD
	1011	39	270	Late 1st century AD
F104	1012	5	21	Roman
F109	1017	2	17	Late 1st century AD
F111	1019	1	20	Late 1st century AD
F114	1022	2	45	Late 1st century AD
-	1024	1	5	Late 1st century AD
F118	1027	4	8	Late 1st century AD
F124	1035	2	13	Late 1st century AD
F126	1038	3	13	Late 1st century AD
F128	1040	1	1	Roman
F133	1042	7	26	Roman
-	1043	2	263	Late 1st century AD
-	1048	1	2	Roman
F133.01	1049	4	13	Late 1st century AD
F134	1050	1	9	Roman
F136	1055	8	61	Late 1st century AD
F138	1060	12	14	Late 1st century AD
F143	1064	7	95	Late 1st century AD
F145	1066	3	2	Roman
F146	1067	12	438	Late 1st century AD
F152	1078	2	9	Roman
F156.01	1083	3	14	Roman
F157	1084	14	234	Late 1st century AD
F158.01	1085	3	45	Late 1st century AD
F159	1088	1	56	Late 1st century AD
F153	1090	16	584	Late 1st century AD
F153	1091	4	11	Late 1st century AD
-	1092	4	92	Late 1st century AD
F162.01	1093	9	98	Late 1st century AD
	1094	8	52	Late 1 <sup>st</sup> century AD
F165	1097	1	86	Roman
F168	1100	1	1	Roman
F169.02	1104	1	11	Roman
F153.02	1105	1	16	Roman
F173	1114	1	3	Roman
F176	1129	1	11	Roman
F180	1137	4	49	Roman
F186	1141	12	293	Roman
F111.02	1142	2	2	Roman
F173.02	1149	2	113	Roman
F198	1158	26	748	Late 1st century AD
F183.02	1162	8	41	Roman

# **TABLE 3: Summary of the pottery**

## 4.3: Charred plant remains by Marina Ciaraldi

A programme of soil sampling was implemented during the excavation, under the supervision of the author. Standard 20-litre soil samples were collected from various features. The sampling strategy adopted aimed at assessing the degree of preservation and the potential of the biological remains for the reconstruction of:

- Human activities undertaken on site (food storage, crafts, etc.).
- Human dict, particularly in comparison with evidence from elsewhere within the fort complex (Monckton 2002, Ciaraldi forthcoming) and within the associated civilian settlement (Ciaraldi in preparation).
- The environment surrounding the military complex.

### Methodology

The soil samples had a sandy matrix and could be easily processed by manual flotation. The flot (light fraction) was recovered on a 0.5mm sieve and the residue (heavy fraction) on a 1mm mesh. The residue was sorted by eye and scanned with a magnet in order to recover hammerscale. Sub-samples of the flots were scanned under a low power stereomicroscope.

### Range and variety

Organic material is preserved mainly as charred items. Most of the samples observed were charcoal-rich and large pieces of charcoal were often well-preserved (Table 4). Seeds, on the contrary, were very scarce and limited only to a few cereal grains and fragments of hazelnuts. Most of the cereal grains were found in features associated with the Phase 3 granary (Structure 5).

The abundance of charcoal in almost all the samples suggests that this might be related to overall destruction deposits, rather then just discarded fuel. Only in a few cases may the charcoal have been related to craft activities undertaken on site, in particular those samples which contained slags and hammerscale (Table 4). It is possible that the abundance of charcoal in such different feature types could be due to episodes of the clearance of internal buildings by deliberate burning. Elsewhere in the fort interior discrete charcoal-rich horizons have been identified as destruction deposits.

No animal bones were observed in the residues. The total absence of bones, even of calcined fragments, suggests that none of the deposits included discarded food refuse.

Small fragments of coal were observed in all of the samples, as elsewhere at Metchley (Areas 7-8, Ciaraldi forthcoming and in preparation).

#### Statement of potential

Although charred seeds are scarce, it is quite important to proceed with their identification, particularly those associated with the granary (Structure 5) which presumably represent stored cereals. They can provide an important parallel with which compare the plant assemblage from the 'granary pits' found at Vincent Drive (Ciaraldi in preparation). Identification of selected charcoal deposits (by Rowena Gale) is also recommended, particularly with the aim of differentiating deposits associated with built structures from those where wood was used as fuel.

Feature/	Vol.	Feature	Spot date	Vol.		Notes	
Context	Proc	type	1 -	flot	a'		
	. (L.)			(cc)	rco		
					ha		
, I							
F138/1060	10	Ditch	Late 1st	130	x	Cereals (1), hazelnut (1).	
			century			Periods of waterlogged	
8147/1060	10	Dit	N/A	100	v	Correls? (1) Reddened soil	
F147/1009	10	<u>FIL</u>		100	+ <u>*</u> ··	Enclet huged wheet (2)	
L129/1092	10	Granary D2	Late 1st	150	x	Spen/ bread wheat (2),	
E168/1100		rs Comment	D	150		nulleu barley (1) roaceae (1)	
F108/1100		P3	Koman	150	XX		
F110/1018	0,5	Layer?	N/A	350	XX	-	
F126/1038	3	Charcoal	Late 1st	300	XX	Extremely charcoal-rich	
		spread	century			deposit	
F103/1009	10		Late 1st	200	XX	Spelt/ bread wheat (1), hulled	
	1		century			barley (1), Poaceae (1)	
L/1092	10	Floor	Late 1st	200	XX	Hulled barley (6). Reddened	
			century _			soil	
F183/1138	10	Τ	N/A	150	x	Poaceae (1), Carex (1),	
						Chenopodium album (1).	
	ł					Glassy slags. Burnt hearth?	
F165/1097	8	Granary	Late 1st	420		Hulled barley (1),	
		P3	century	ļ		Chenopodium album (1)	
F169.01/	10	Gully	N/A	150	XX	Small slags or hammerscales.	
1102						Glass fragment	
F122/1033	4	Oven	N/A	300	x	-	
F198/1158	10	Pit	Late 1st	60	x	Hulled bartey (2), Poaceae	
			century			(1), hazelnut (1). Small slags	
						or hammerscales	
F199/1159	10	Oven	N/A	150	x	Hazelnut (1)	
L/1128	10	Charcoal	N/A	100	X	Hulled barley (3), cereal (1),	
		spread				buttercup (waterlogged - 1)	
F183.02/	8		N/A	80	XX	Rubus (waterlogged -1),	
1165		]				hazelnut (1). Burnt hearth	
F171/1109	10	Pit	N/A	220	x	Spelt/bread wheat (1), hulled	
	:					barley (3). Burnt hearth	

#### TABLE 4: Plant remains

Samples highlighted in bold arc recommended for full analysis. Numbers in parenthesis indicate a rough estimate of the seed number. L-- layer; P3 = Phase 3

## 5.0: UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

### 5.1: General

The following research themes may be highlighted:

- 1) <u>Structures, function and arrangement</u>. The structural sequence was particularly wellpreserved. Potential exists for cross-comparison with the results of the 1967-9 investigations within the fort interior. The 2003 excavations can be most directly compared with the 1967 excavation (Area 2, A Jones 2002), which also investigated the right *praetentura*. It is important to determine the function of the individual buildings.
- 2) Sequence of Phase 1 features. The sequence of Phase 1 features is perhaps unusual. The earliest suite of Roman features are hearths or ovens. Although some of this feature group could be contemporary with the use of Structure 1, other examples are clearly earlier than the building. Two alternative interpretations are possible. Firstly, do the hearths or ovens belong to a construction camp, in which case the building would belong to the earliest layout of the Phase 1 garrison fort. Secondly, could the hearths or ovens belong to the first Phase 1 military layout, and the building to a later re-planning. In either case excavation will have provided important evidence for replanning of the Phase 1 fort, and further parallels should be sought. The first alternative is the more likely, since it would be unusual for a potential building plot immediately adjoining the *Via Praetoria*. Given the preliminary Phase 1 dating evidence, in the later 1st century, some revision in the phased sequence may be required after final spot-dating.
- 3) <u>Function of hearths or ovens</u>. Study of the charred plant remains, and charcoal identification will contribute to an understanding of the industrial functions carried out in this part of the fort.
- 4) <u>Phase 2B features</u>. In the report on the 1967-9 excavations (A Jones 2002) the features associated with the military stores depot were highlighted as being of particular importance, because of their rarity, level of survival, and as evidence to one of the most important changes in military use of the complex. Further comparative structural data from other military stores depots should be sought. Although only limited evidence may exist, it may be useful to consider the relationship between the location of military stores depots, the road communications and the locally-available raw materials.
- 5) <u>Possible re-interpretation of Phase 2B features</u>. In the report on the Phase 2B features excavated 1967-9 (A Jones 2002) it was argued that while the features associated with the stores depot appear to be morphologically-similar temporary structures to those found within a civilian context, it was not plausible to argue for a civilian occupation of a military site because of the 'scparateness' of the military and civilian, and the

exclusion of civilians from areas subject to military law. Recently, it has been suggested that the separation between military and civilian may be no more than a modern 'construct' (James 2001). In which case the Phase 2B features within the fort, and the extensive remains of livestock enclosures outside the fort could evidence civilian occupation in the core military zone. Following this argument, these features could document a military withdrawl, and perhaps more importantly, evidence an early civilian shift in settlement, datable to the mid 1st century. The evidence underpinning this new reinterpretation should be studied in detail, because a proper understanding of the function and context of Phase 2B is critical to a full understanding of the military complex, as an integrated whole.

- 6) <u>Phase 3 structural evidence</u>. Given the paucity of Phase 3 structures from Metchley, the evidence from the 2003 excavation is of particular importance. The identification of a granary within the *praetentura* is unexpected, although the Phase 3 fort plan does contain a number of unusual elements, most notably including a dearth of identifiable structures. Study of the charcoal samples and charced plant remains may assist in interpreting the structure. Further understanding of the layout of the Phase 3 fort may contribute towards an appreciation of later 1st century military deployment within the broader region.
- 7) <u>Plan of the *praetentura*</u>. Although only small parts of the *praetentura* has been investigated in 1967 and 2003, an attempt should be made to consider how typical is the structural evidence from Metchley when compared to other excavated 1st century military complexes.
- 8) <u>Dating evidence</u>. Although the pottery assemblage is small overall, the majority derives from well-stratified contexts and could help to date the sequence. A surprising feature of the preliminary spot-dating is the 'later' dating of the Phase 1 features. Full specialist analysis will be required to refine the dating sequence.
- 9) Post-Roman history of Metchley. The post-Roman use of the site is well documented from maps and antiquarian descriptions. The post-medieval cobble surface may be associated with the documented hunting lodge nearby. The archaeological evidence for post-medieval re-use of the *Via Praetoria* is useful evidence in supporting the map and antiquarian descriptions of the post-medieval character of the site and its surrounding landscape, which should be considered further.

# 5.2: Updated project design

The project design can be re-focussed, as follows:

- 1) Comparison of the structural evidence and evidence for building function.
- 2) Evidence of the sequence of Phase 1 features.
- 3) Evidence of the function of hearths or ovens and the industrial 'zoning' of the fort, including analysis of the environmental data.
- 4) Interpretation of the Phase 2B features in a military (stores depot) context.

- 5) Alternative interpretation of the Phase 2B features as evidence of civilian occupation or activity.
- 6) Detailed consideration of the Phase 3 structural evidence.
- 7) Consideration of Roman military planning of the praetentura.
- 8) Refinement of the dating evidence.
- 9) Further contribution to understanding of the post-Roman landscape.

## 6.0: PUBLICATION SYNOPSIS

It is proposed to publish the results of the excavation as an article in the *Transactions of* the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society.

The provisional title of the excavation report will be:

Roman Birmingham III, Metchley Roman fort, excavations in the Praetentura, 2003

The layout of the text and the lengths of the individual contributions will be as follows:

Text

Summary (500 words) Introduction and methodology, the site, phasing and context (1,000 words) Results (8,000 words) Description and interpretation of the evidence by phase

Finds Small finds (1,000 words) The pottery, coarse and fine wares (3,000 words)

Environmental Charred plant remains (1,000 words) Charcoal identification (750 words)

Discussion (4,000 words) Integrated discussion of the 2003 excavation results, and review of the structural sequence from earlier excavations at the site

Conclusion (250 words)

## TOTAL 19,500 words

Illustrations

2 Metchley forts phasing

3	Plan of all features
4	Phase 1 plan of features
5	Phase 1 sections
6	Phase 2 plan of features
7	Phase 2-3 sections
8	Phase 3 plan of features
9	Small finds
10	Pottery

10 plates and 12 tables

(In total approximately 35 full pages)

## 7.0: TASK LIST

The task numbers below give the initials of the individual responsible for the completion of the task, and the number of days allotted.

Task	Details	Initials	No. of days
1	Stratigraphic analysis	AEJ	0.5
2	Coarse ware pottery recording	PS	2.5
3	Samian spot-dating/report	SW	0.5
4	Amphora spot-dating/report	DW	0.5
5	Mortaria spot-dating/report	KH	0.5
6	Small finds catalogues/report	EM	2
7	Charred plant remains/report	MC	4
8	Charcoal identification/report	RG	1
9	Coarse ware pottery report	PS	2.5
10	Draft section roughouts	AEJ	0.5
11	Sections/small finds/ pottery drawings	ND	3
12	Write revised narrative/discussion	AEJ	2.5
13	Edit/integrate specialist texts	AEJ	0.5
14	Correct drawings	ND	0.5
15	Edit	RW	0.5
16	Liaison with Bham Warws AS	AEJ	1
17	Prepare/deposit archive	-	-

### Completion date: 31 December 2003 for first draft

#### <u>KEY:</u>

AEJ = Alex Jones, auhtor/editor; PS = pottery specialist (to be advised); SW = Steven Willis, samian; DW = David Williams, amphora; KH = Kay Hartley, mortaria; EM = Erica Macey, small finds; MC = Marina Ciaraldi, charred plant remains; RG = Rowena Gale, charcoal identification; ND = Nigel Dodds, illustrator; RW - Roger White, editor.

## 8.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork was sponsored by the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust, and we are particularly grateful to Alf Towers, as well as Peter Barker and Graham Hackett of the Trust for their assistance. The fieldwork was monitored by Dr. Mike Hodder for Birmingham City Council. The assistance of Railtrack in giving permission for works adjoining railway property is acknowledged. The evaluation was undertaken by Roy Krakowicz. The excavation was supervised by Bob Burrows, assisted by Helen Martin, Eleanor Ramsey, Bob Bracken, Paul Harris, Sally Radford, Derek Moscrop and Ianni Alsitoglou. The finds were processed by Erica Macey.

### 9.0: REFERENCES

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Fig.2

