

EXCAVATIONS AT JUBILEE SQUARE, READING

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SUMMARY

Excavations at the site of Jubilee Square in Reading revealed the remains of a medieval tilery which was composed of a kiln, well, floors and extraction pits. The last firing of the kiln dates to 1365 and 1400 after which the site was abandoned. Subsequent activity is indicated by the presence of a section of the 1642-1644 Civil War ditch and by 16th to 19th century pitting and drainage activity.

INTRODUCTION

Jubilee Square lies just south of London Road at its junction with Silver Street. As the limits of medieval Reading remain unclear due to the relatively small amount of medieval archaeology uncovered on sites, especially those located south of the River Kennet, the Jubilee Square tilery is an important addition to the growing knowledge of medieval Reading. It was in use in the 14th century and ceased production in the last half of that century.

During the early part of the English Civil War, Reading was under royalist control and defensive earthworks were constructed around the town some of which ran across Silver Street. Evidence of this ditch was found on this site.

Later in the 17th century pits and drains indicate that buildings were beginning to be constructed on the site. By the end of the 19th century the area was occupied by St Giles School. This was demolished in the mid 20th century and replaced by a mix of commercial and domestic buildings, which in their turn were being demolished and replaced by new housing.

BACKGROUND

The site investigation at Jubilee Square, Reading was conducted by AOC Archaeology Group in advance of

the redevelopment of the site by Bellway Homes. The investigation area is located to the south of Reading town centre at National Grid Reference (NGR) SU 7194 7285 (Figure 1).

An evaluation, comprising six machine excavated trenches, was carried out in July 2001 (AOC 2002). The evaluation identified the potential for the survival of archaeological remains dating to the medieval period onwards. Of particular interest was what appeared to be the remains of a kiln within Trench 1. The kiln could not be investigated in its entirety within the confines of the trench and consequently an area covering 900²m underwent full excavation.

The archaeological fieldwork was completed in August 2001. All of the work was recorded using the site code ISQ 01. The archive for this site will be deposited and available for consultation upon request at Reading museum.

GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site lies 430m to the south of the River Kennet. The underlying geology is the First River Terrace gravel overlying London clay. The excavation identified deposits of brickearth overlying gravel in some areas of the site.

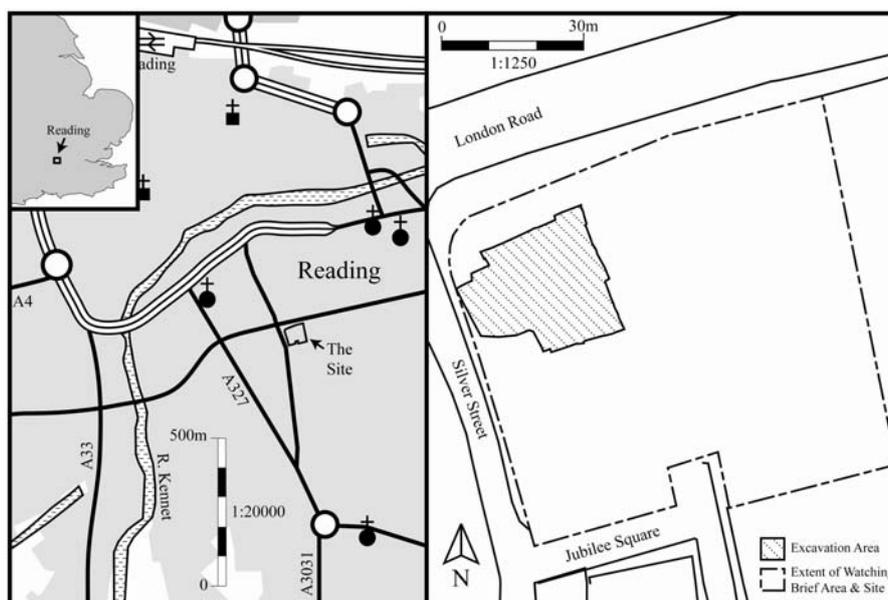


Figure 1. Location of Site

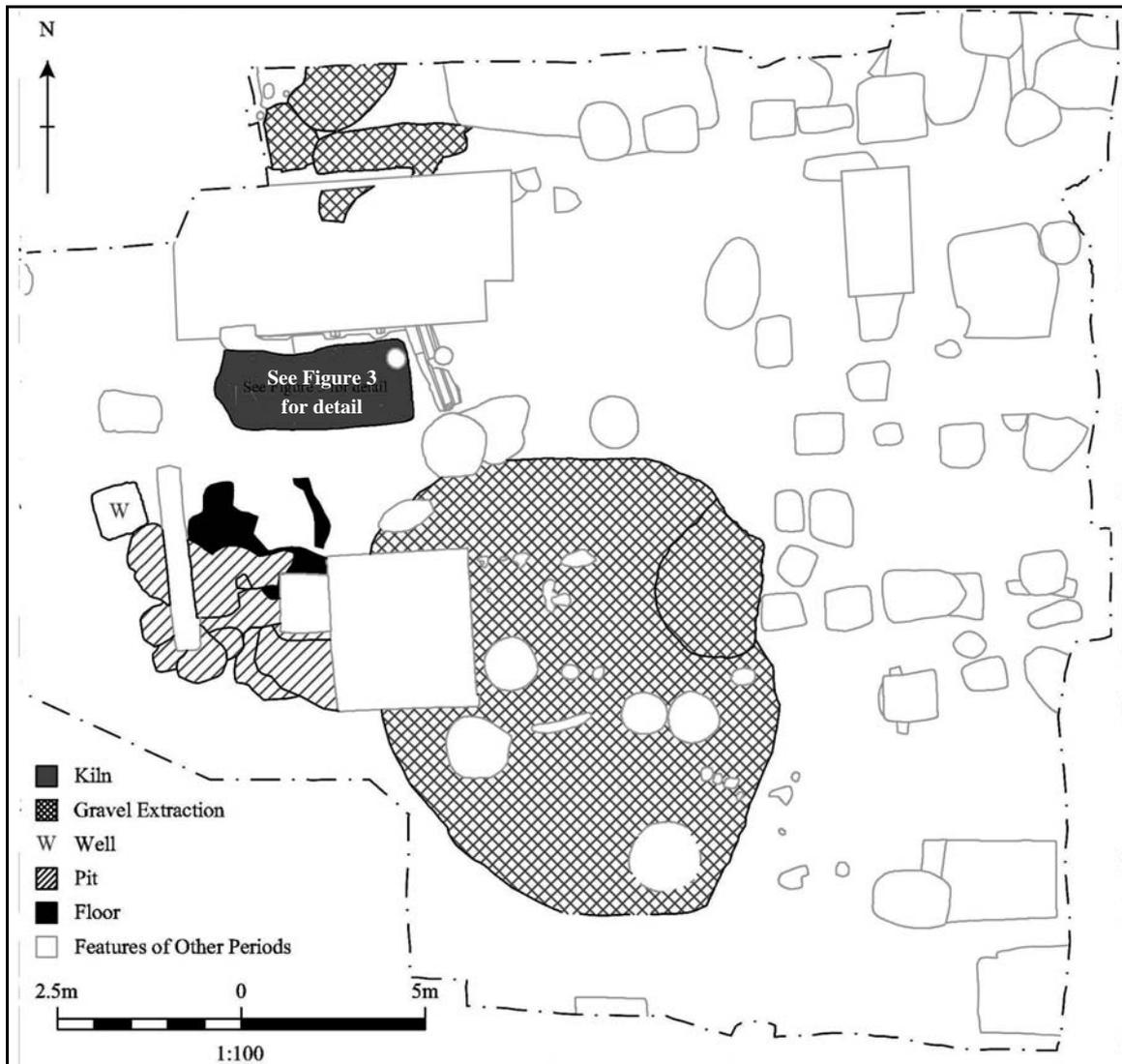


Figure 2. Plan of medieval features

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The name Reading is derived from the Saxon place name *Readingas* the followers of a man called *Reada* ('The Red'). The Saxon settlement is thought to have been located within the environs of the current town of Reading from possibly as early as the 6th century. The exact location of the Saxon town remains unclear though it is likely to have been located near the River Kennet and within close proximity to the Minster: now the Reading Minster of St Mary the Virgin. The town grew in importance during the Saxon period as it was located at the meeting point of two long-distance routes: London to the West Country and Oxford to Southampton. Few Saxon finds have been recovered from the Reading area. Those known were found on the north side of the Holy Brook. "During the medieval period Reading developed rapidly as a marketing and manufacturing centre," (Phillips 1999). Reading Abbey was founded in 1121, and this was a contributing factor for this expansion. The abbey was

constructed on the northern side of the River Kennet, northeast of the site, across the river. The first abbot was appointed in 1123 and in 1164 the church was consecrated. The abbey consisted of various buildings including the church, cloisters, the inner court containing the abbot's lodging, outer court, leper hospital, stables, slaughter house and gardens.

The demolition of the abbey began after the Dissolution in 1539 and continued in a piecemeal fashion until the 20th century. During the Elizabethan period Reading "was small and compact extending from the line along Friar Street in the north to the junction of Silver Street and Southampton Street in the south" (Phillips 1999). The site at Jubilee Square was therefore close to the southern extent of the town and within its boundaries. A greater density of the population lived on the north side of the River Kennet. The John Speed map of 1610 (not reproduced) shows the site as fields edged with houses on the north side (London Road) and on the west side (Silver Street).

The land to the rear of these houses appeared to be pasture bound to the east and south by hedges. Many of the London Street homes had spacious gardens (Phillips 1999).

During the early part of the English Civil War, Reading was under royalist control. In November 1642 Sir Arthur Aston was made governor of Reading. During his governorship defensive earthworks were constructed around the town with the exception of the areas adequately protected by the River Kennet. The area at the top of Silver Street was amongst those in which such fortifications were constructed. In April 1643, despite these fortifications, Reading was attacked and surrendered to the Parliamentarians; thereby ending Sir Aston's role in governing the town (Phillips 1999). In 1644 the King ordered the Civil War defences in Reading to be demolished. The Parliamentarians later attempted to reconstruct the defences but did not complete the task.

Cartographic evidence suggests that from the 17th century onwards the area surrounding the Jubilee Square site became more developed with occasional properties and associated backyards. This continued and developed until the site was occupied by St. Giles' School, which is shown on the 1877 Ordnance Survey map and livery stables. Sometime between 1932 and 1957 the school was demolished. The eastern half of the site was occupied by a garage with terrace housing in the west and an open space in the north-western corner. Until recently the site was occupied by a shop and offices.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

The earliest activity recorded on site dated to the medieval period in the form of a medieval tiler.

Jubilee Square Medieval Tiler

The main components of a medieval tiler were recorded at the site (Figure 2). These included a solitary kiln, well, possible clay floors and extraction

and rubbish pits. The most prominent and well known element of a tiler's workshop is the kiln, which is also generally the best preserved component due to the subterranean nature of the kiln's construction.

The kiln was rectangular in shape and measured 5.30m long x 2.10m wide and was divided into two chambers; a firing chamber located in the east and a stokepit located in the west (Figure 3). Only the firing chamber was walled measuring 2.04m east-west x 2.00m north-south internally. The walls were composed of mortared peg tiles with the occasional floor tile (Figure 4a). All of the walls appeared to have been bonded together. Only a 0.50m length of the southern wall remained *in situ* due to demolition and subsequent damage. The height of the kiln remains varied from between 0.45m to 1.30m with the best preserved section in the north-western corner. The north, east and south walls were built directly against the sides of the vertical construction cut. The only free standing wall was the western wall which acted as the spine wall dividing the firing chamber from the western stokepit. The wall also contained two identical arches that formed the firing tunnels/flues which linked the stokepit to the firing chamber (Figure 5a). The arches were constructed of peg and ridge tiles, measured 1.34m wide x 0.36m thick with an interior depth of 0.70m deep. The gap between the two tunnels measured 0.58m wide.

The northern wall contained the remains of five 0.40m wide recesses (Figure 5b). Within the recesses were the remaining courses of mortared tiles which, when complete, would have formed the tiled arches that would have supported the kiln floor (Figure 3). No *in situ* evidence of the kiln floor was present on site. The only remains recovered were four flat tiles (Fabric 3; Table 1) in the demolition layers dumped into the firing chamber. The remainder of the floor, which would have been composed of a layer of tiles with brickearth/clay, and the supporting arches,

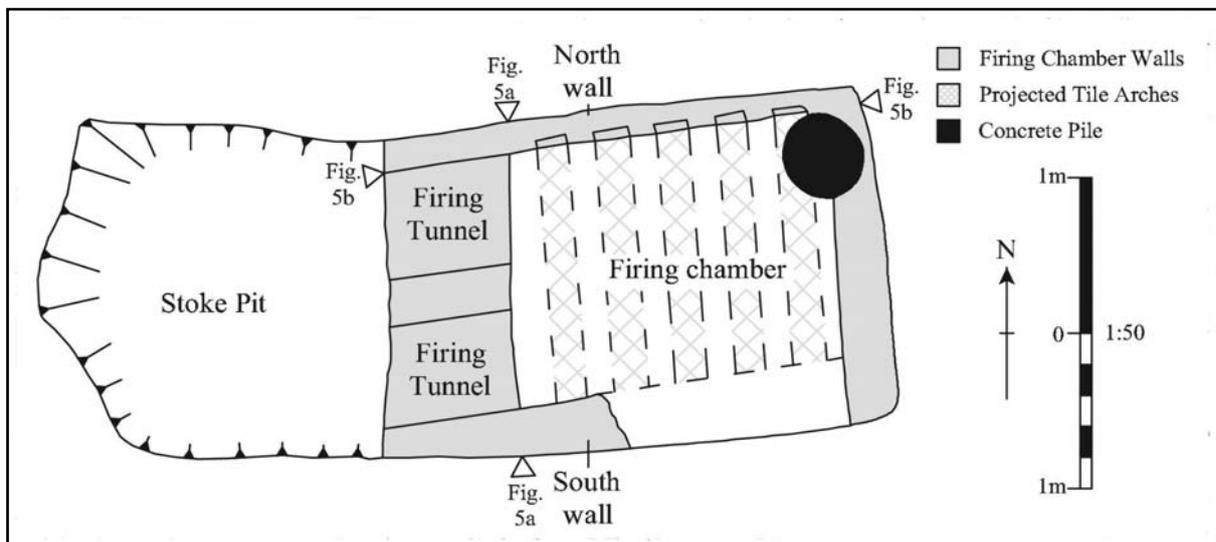


Figure 3. Kiln plan

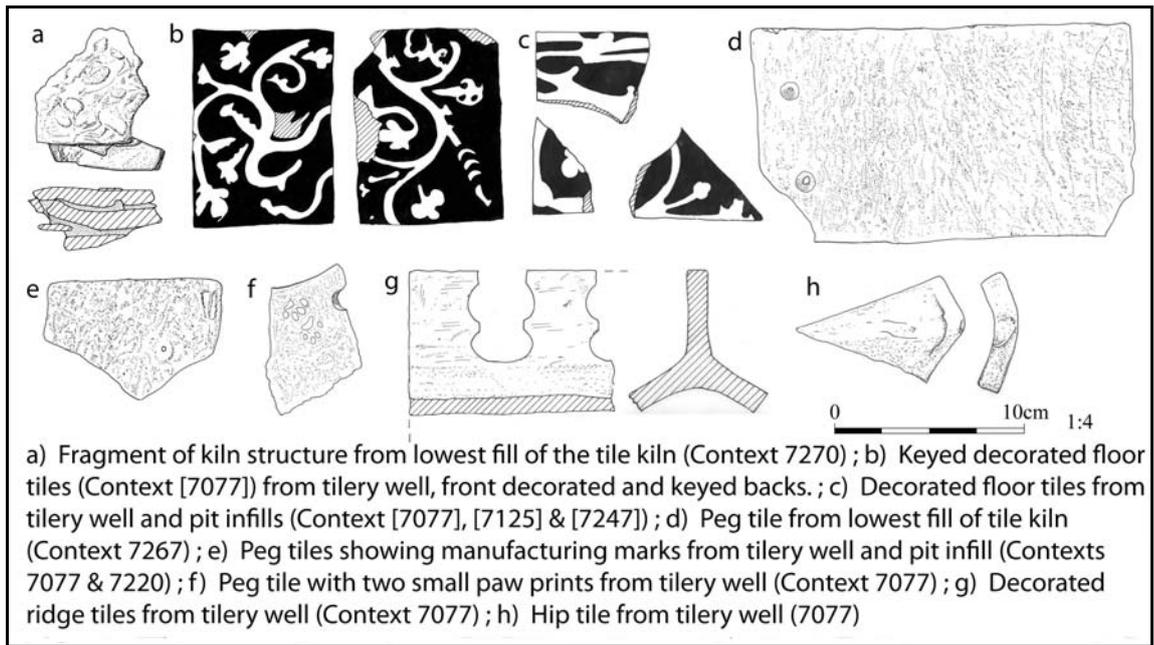


Figure 4. Medieval tiles

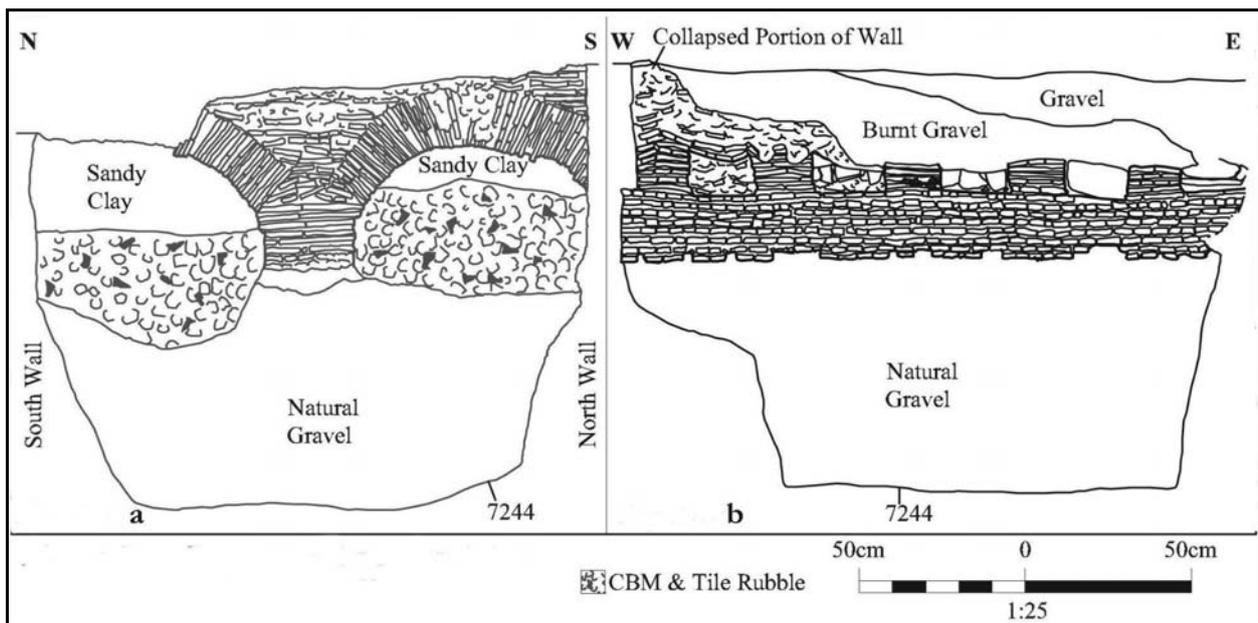


Figure 5. West (a) and northern (b) walls of the firing chamber

Fabric 2	Fairly sandy with moderate quartz (up to 1 mm) and dark red and black iron oxide and/or clay inclusions (up to 0.8 mm).
Fabric 3	Coarser version of fabric 2 with frequent large quartz (up to 1 mm) with a scatter of larger quartzite (up to 3 mm).
Fabric 4	Sandier version of fabric 2 with frequent quartz (up to 0.6 mm) and dark red and black iron oxide and/or clay inclusions (up to 1 mm). Occasional cream silty streaks.
Fabric 9	Fairly sandy fabric with moderate quartz (up to 0.8 mm) in silty background clay matrix with very small black iron oxide. Scatter of larger black iron oxide (up to 1 mm).

Table 1. Roof and Floor Tile fabrics

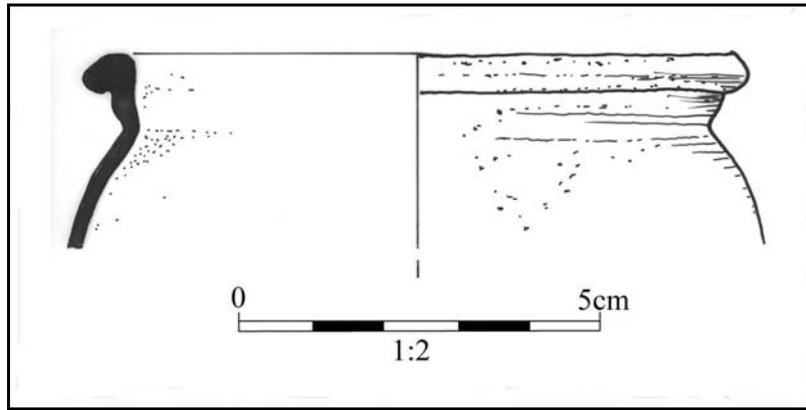


Figure 6. Newbury 'B' Early to Late Medieval East Wiltshire Ware (COXAQ) Cooking Pot with Lid Seated Rim Form

had been removed from the kiln probably for use elsewhere either as flooring or as hardcore (Betts *pers comm.*).

To the west of the spine wall was the stokepit which measured 2.60m long x 2.20m wide. The pit was cut directly into the gravel and was roughly D-shaped in plan. The north and south sides of the stokepit cut were vertical whereas the western edge was gradually sloped. This may have had some functional purpose. The stokepit was not walled like the firing chamber. It is possible that it was timber lined, the remains of which were removed during the partial demolition of the kiln structure. Around the edge of the stokepit were several small cuts or depressions, in the natural gravel. These may relate to the re-cutting of the stokepit edge perhaps repairing damage or creating extra space needed.

The stokepit was filled with burnt deposits of sand, clay and gravel containing charcoal flecks, red-fired clay and fire cracked flints. These deposits are likely to be by-products relating to the firing of the kiln rather than later dump deposits as they contained fragments of glazed tile known to have been fired in the kiln during previous sessions (not during the final firing). According to the results of archaeomagnetic dating the last firing in this kiln was carried out between 1365 and 1400; 200 years after the consecration of the abbey church and approximately 150 years prior to the dissolution of the monasteries. The form of the kiln is a typical medieval type corresponding with English Heritage Tillery Type C (English Heritage 1990).

Tillery Well

To the south-west of the kiln was a square well measuring 1.30m wide x 3.10m deep. The well was cut deep into the natural gravel and would have provided the water necessary for tillery. The well backfill contained inclusions of peg, hip and ridge tile wasters (Figures 4d-h), produced in the kiln, as well as fragments of the kiln structure and floor (Figure 4a). One example of peg tile had two small paw prints (Figure 4f). Three decorated and one plain glazed floor tile were of particular interest (Figures 4b and

4c). The date of these decorated tiles suggests that the material does not originate from the adjacent tile kiln. The decorated tiles are distinctive in having circular keying holes scooped out of the back as an aid to keying. Very similar tiles are known from Reading Abbey where those paving the cloister floor are dated to the period 1270-1320 (Fasham and Stewart 1986-90). The thick depth of the slip inlay also suggests they are unlikely to date beyond the early 13th century. By the mid 14th century small, thinner decorated floor tiles, with a much reduced layer of white slip, were being used extensively in the Thames Valley. Many of these were made at Penn in Buckinghamshire during the period 1350-1390 (Eames 1992). Penn tiles were used at Reading Abbey (Slade 1969) where they clearly superseded the thicker keyed tiles.

The date for the last firing of the Jubilee Square kiln was 1365-1400 whilst the decorated tiles have been dated to 1270-1320, which leaves approximately 45 years gap. It is unlikely that such a small kiln would have lasted such a long period and no obvious repairs were noted on the kiln structure. Eames (1980) believes that one kiln would not have lasted more than about four years, even if subject to regular repairs. As such it is therefore most likely that the tiles were produced at an earlier kiln very close by. Evidence for earlier tile production on the site would not be unexpected as there is clear evidence that medieval tile production is nucleated. This is where tile kilns of various dates are clustered together over a relatively small geographical area. In south-east England medieval nucleated production sites have been found at Tyler Hill, 1.5 km north of Canterbury (Cotter 1991) and in the Penn / Tylers Green area of Buckinghamshire (Green 2005). Both these areas made both flooring and roofing tile.

Other finds recovered from the excavation of the well included fragments of jars, jugs and cooking pots in Abingdon Ware and Coarse Surrey Hampshire Border Ware fabrics dated to 1340-1400. The animal bone remains from the tillery well reflected most of the main domestic species including cattle, sheep/goat and pig. The well was the only feature on site that had varying

ages for pig remains which might suggest that there was a small associated industry of pig breeding and rearing which might also account for some of the evidence of butchery seen on some of the bones.

Tile Production

Evidence recovered from the site demonstrates that the kiln was producing roof tiles. From the demolition layers in the kiln came a number of partly complete peg tiles, as well as a few fragments of curved ridge tile (Fabric 2; Table 2). The peg tiles seem to be a mixture of collapsed kiln structure and waste material from roof tile manufacture. Peg and ridge tiles would have been in common use on buildings in Reading by the second half of the 14th century.

Further peg and ridge tiles of identical type to those found infilling the kiln were found in the stokepit area. A number of the stokepit peg tiles are glazed, whilst none of those found in the kiln itself had glaze present. This suggests that the glazed examples may be from earlier firings of the kiln and that the last firing could have contained only unglazed tiles.

Associated Remains

Occupational remains on the site were sparse; three clay layers indicated the possible location of structures. The deposits measured 1.80m x 1.80m, 3.0m x 1.50m and 1.90m x 0.40m respectively and consisted of a thin layer of grey clay with inclusions of chalk. No datable evidence was recovered from the layers.

Gravel or clay extraction appeared to have been conducted on site during the medieval period and during the production period of the kiln, and was abandoned shortly after the tilery became disused. One such pit which measured 15.0m in diameter was located in the centre of the excavation (Figure 2). The size of the pit and its proximity to the kiln might suggest clay/brickearth extraction for use in the tilery. Tilery sites would have been located in areas with easy access to raw materials. The pit contained a sherd of medieval pottery and several sherds of later pottery dating to 1580-1700. This may suggest that the backfill was conducted over a lengthy time period. A cluster of extraction pits in the north of the site were dated to 1100-1350 by the inclusion of 30 sherds of Newbury 'B' Type Ware/Early to Late Medieval East Wiltshire Ware, Abingdon Type Ware and London Type Ware. The pottery was a small domestic assemblage consisting of jugs, jars and cooking pots. An unusual Newbury 'B'/Early to Late Medieval East Wiltshire ware example is a rounded rim on a short everted neck forming a lid seating (Figure 6).

Disuse and Abandonment

Destruction and demolition of the kiln structure was recorded mainly in the form of demolition dumps within the firing chamber, stokepit and tilery well. The dumps were generally formed by gravels, clay and fired clays with inclusions of mortar and tile fragments. The demolition dumps contained a high quantity of tiles including examples of waster, glazed

and fused tile fragments as well as pottery dated to 1270-1500.

The occurrence of horticultural or agricultural (garden) soils on the site suggests a change of activity or inactivity on the site following the abandonment of the tilery. Dating evidence from these 'garden' soils includes pottery dated to 1080-1200 and 1200-1500 along with peg tiles dated 1080-1200.

Civil War ditch

Excavations conducted during the watching brief revealed a 77m long by 2.51m curvilinear ditch (Figures 7 and 8). The ditch was excavated in three intermittent slots to establish any variation in the construction or backfill. The profile of the ditch was roughly V-shaped with sloped sides approximately 45° to the base, with the profile getting wider towards the northeast corner.

The ditch was identified as the remains of the ditch defences indicated on the 1643 Civil War Defence Map of Reading (not reproduced). These were part of the Royalist Civil War fortifications constructed during the governorship of Sir Arthur Aston at the request of Charles I. Excavations at 32-38 Silver Street also recorded the remains of the Civil War ditch (Archaeological Solutions 2002) which was similar to that at Jubilee Square (Figure 7). No remains of the earthbank/rampart were identified. This is probably due to the order given by Charles I in 1644, for the demolition of Reading's fortifications (Slade 2001).

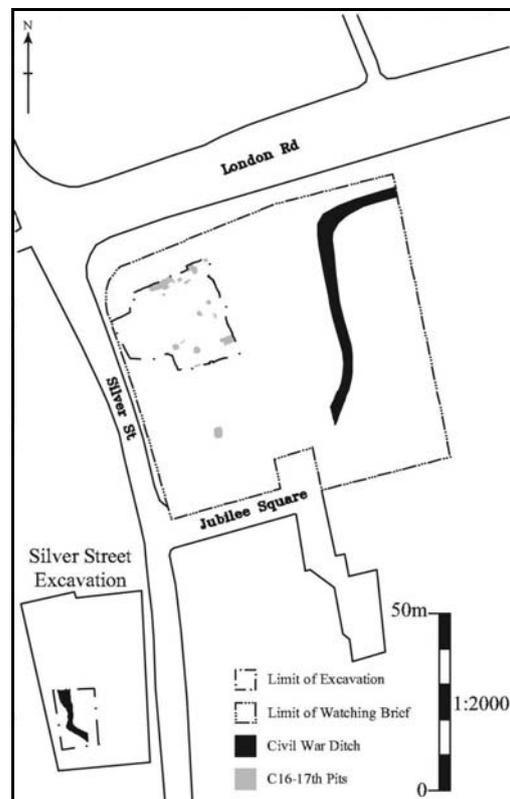


Figure 7. Plan of Civil War ditch and associated features

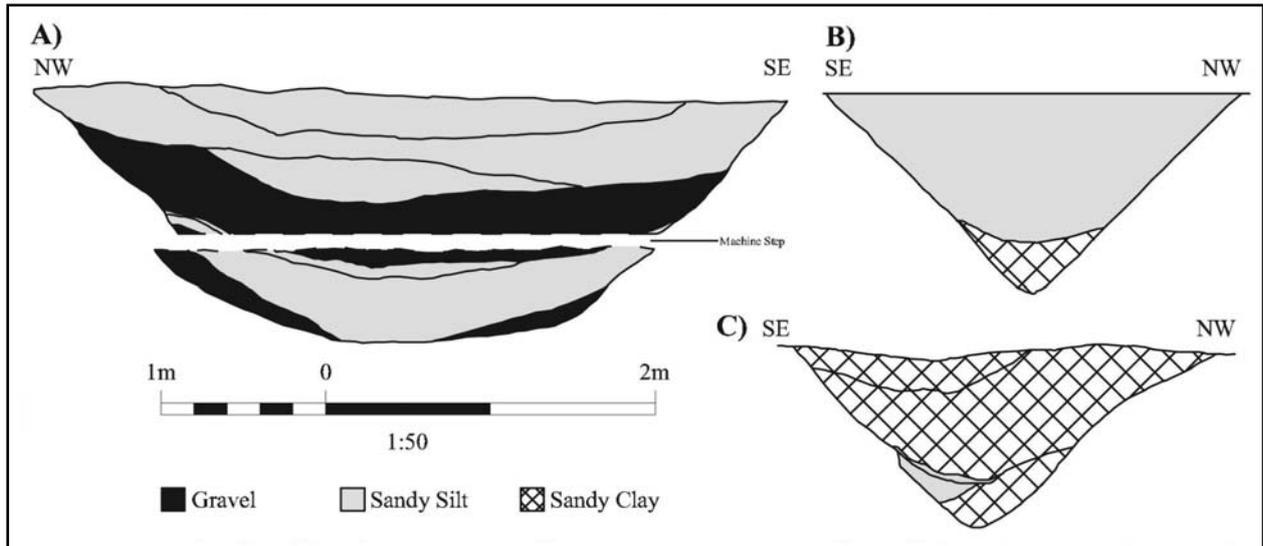


Figure 8. sections through the Civil War ditch

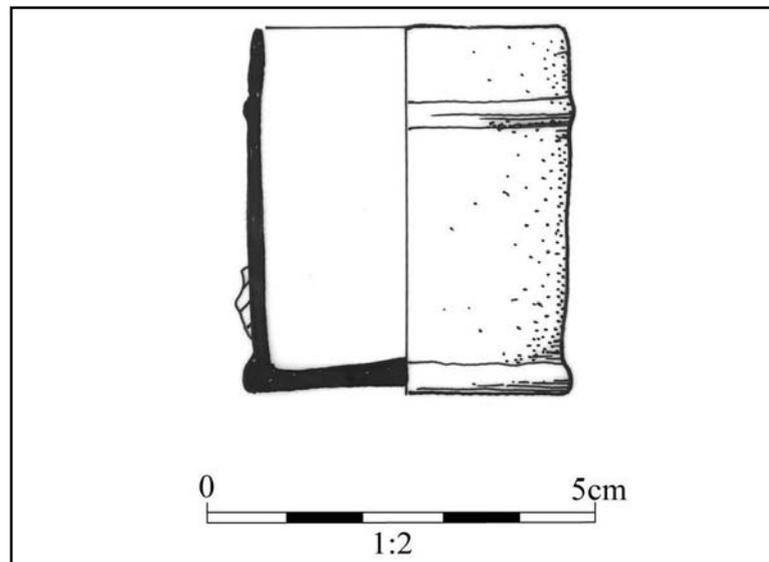


Figure 9. Fragment of Surrey-Hampshire Border Redware Tankard

Dating evidence for the ditch included fragments of pottery dating from 1270-1500. Other finds included fragments of butchered and unbutchered animal bone, including cow, sheep, and single bones of horse and dog. Fragments of roof tile unrelated to the tiling (Fabrics 4 and 9) suggest an expansion in the use of ceramic roof material on buildings in the Reading area.

Other activity on site for this period was focused around the small-scale deposition of waste of both cess and domestic refuse. These features contained a pottery assemblage characterised as typical 16th to 17th century wares dating from *c.* 1550-1700. These included examples of Surrey Hampshire Borderware (Figure 9), fine wares, coarse wares, tin-glazed earthenware, post-medieval red earthenware and Cistercian-type ware as well as imported Rhenish

stoneware. The assemblage was identified as domestic vessels including jugs, pipkins, a dish, plate, tankard, chamber pots, handled bowls and flanged dishes.

18th to 19th century

The use of the site varied little in the later periods with the continued small-scale deposition of domestic refuse and the construction of wells/soakaways. These deposits produced various forms of domestic vessels primarily in Surrey-Hampshire Border Redware (RBOR) (Figures 10a-g) and Verwood (Figures 10h, 10i and 11c) with a small percentage of possible London area red earthenwares. A small group of 18th century tablewares was identified within the assemblage including examples of Staffordshire white salt glazed stoneware tankards (Figure 10j) and an earthenware tea bowl painted with dark blue floral

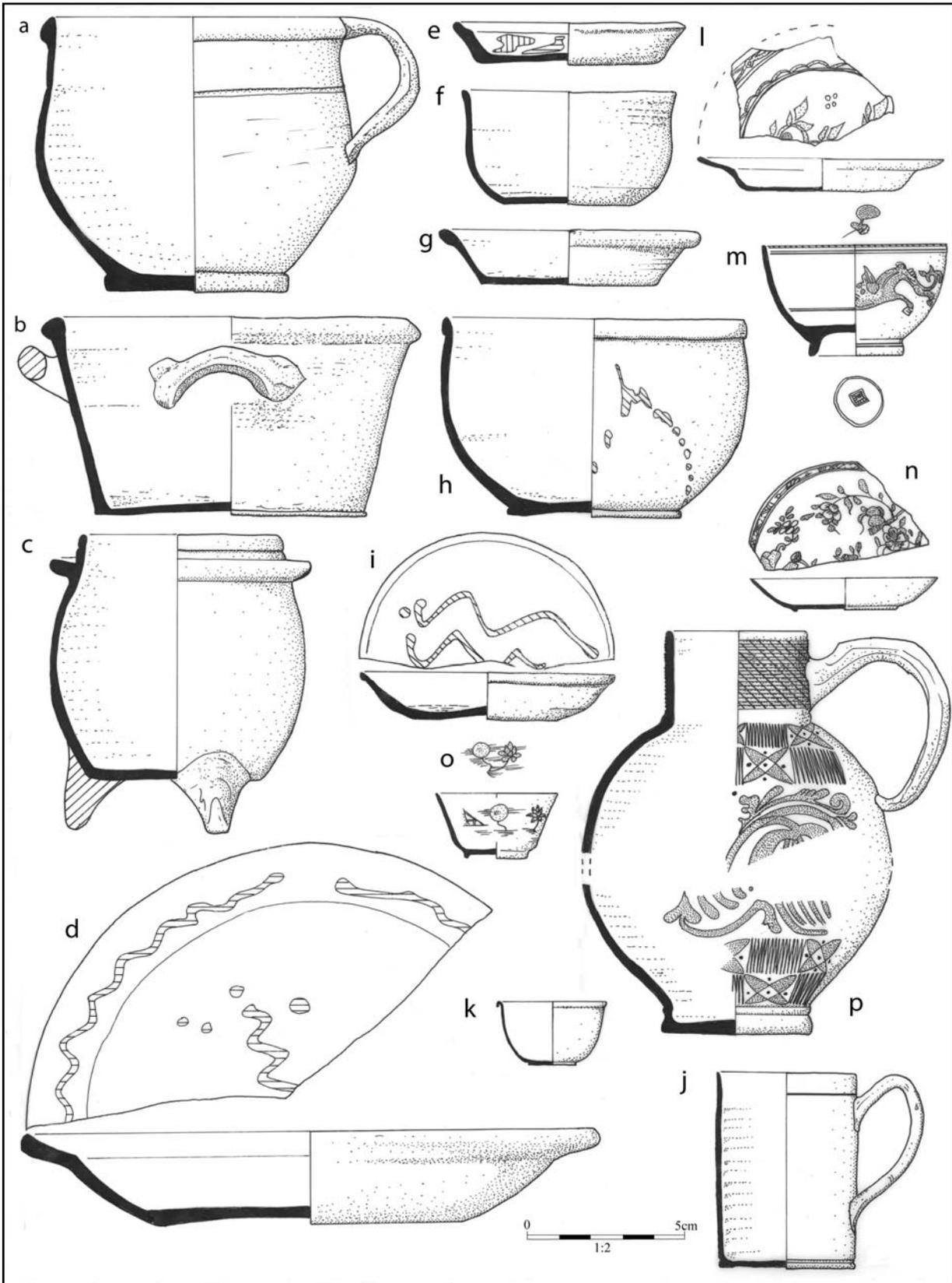


Figure 10. Post-medieval pottery

Key to Figure 10

- A** Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR) chamber pot type 1 with rounded rim. Context 7034.
B Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR) handled bowl with loop handle. Context 7163.
C Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR) tripod pipkin with external flange as lid seating and lead glaze on the interior, Context 7163.
D Surrey-Hampshire border redware with slip-trailed decoration (RBORSL) flanged dish with white slip trail and dot decoration on the interior, Context 7062.
E Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR) small flanged dish, decorated crudely on the interior with white slip and copper glazed patches. Context 7040.
F Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR) porringer with lead glaze on the interior, Context 7163
G Surrey-Hampshire border redware (RBOR) shallow dish with lead glaze on the interior, Context 7163
H Verwood earthenware (VERW) chamber pot with rounded rim. Accidental droplets of red slip can be seen on the interior Context 7082
I Verwood earthenware (VERW) dish with simple plain rim. Decorated on the interior with slip-trail lines. Context 7034
J Staffordshire white salt-glazed stoneware (SWSG) tankard, Context 7082.
K Staffordshire white salt-glazed stoneware (SWSG) teabowl, Context 7082.
L Tin-glazed ware with 'Orton type H' decoration (TGW H) flanged plate, Context 7082.
M Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW) bowl with dragon motif on exterior. Context 7082.
N Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW) saucer with floral design in a vase on the interior, Context 7082.
O Chinese blue and white porcelain (CHPO BW) teabowl with lotus flower motifs, Context 7082.
P Westerwald stoneware (WEST) jug with cobalt blue geometric and machine-tooled pattern above the turned base. On the front of the jug is a panel containing a scrolling floral design. The neck is rilled and painted manganese purple, Context 7082.

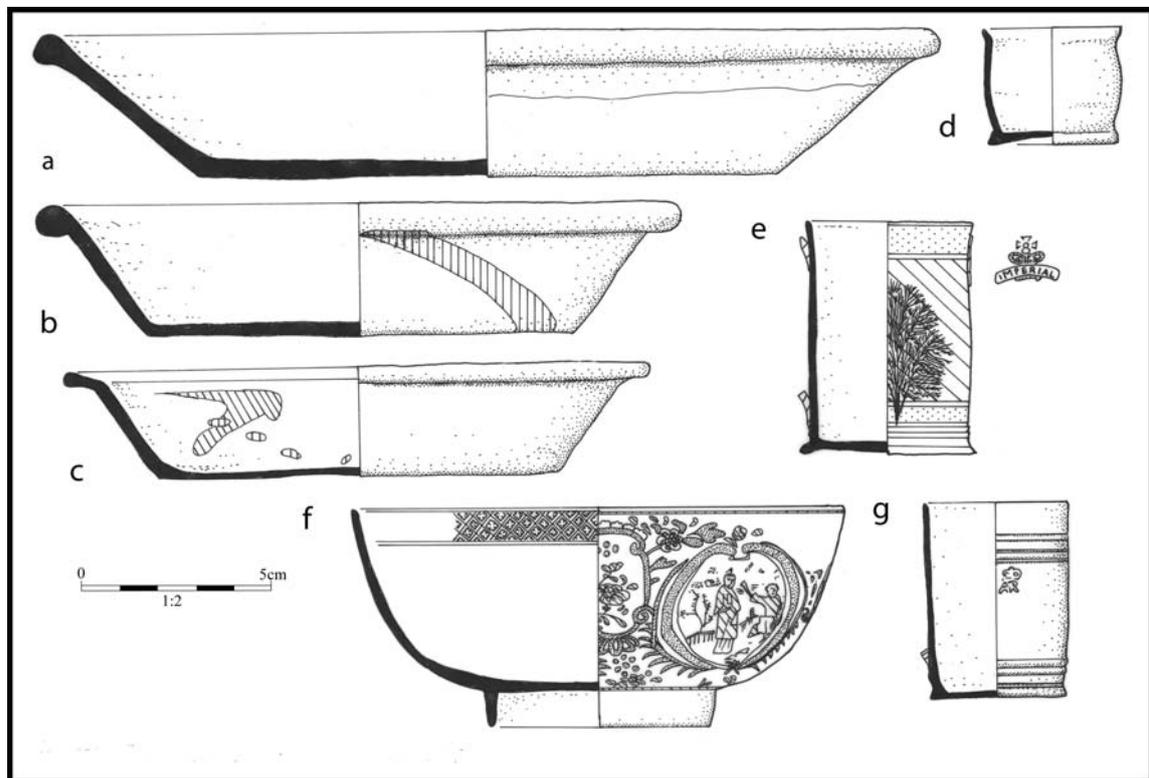


Figure 11. Post-medieval pottery

Key to Figure 11

- A** Post-medieval fine redware (PMFR) large flanged dish, Context 1024.
B Post-medieval fine redware (PMFR) shallow dish with lead-glazed interior, Context 7163.
C Verwood earthenware (VERW) dish with flanged rim. Accidental red slip can be seen on the interior. Context 7082.
D Tin-glazed ware with 'Orton type C' decoration (TGW C) ointment pot, Context 7068.
E A refined whiteware (REFW) tankard with coloured panels and dendritic mocha decoration. Note the applied ale measure mark stamped 'imperial', Context 7033.
F Chinese porcelain round bowl with famille rose decoration (CHPO ROSE) depicting figures, Context 7033.
G London stoneware (LONS) tankard with an excise duty stamp of 'AR' dating from c.1702, Context 7068.

designs (Figure 10k) along with tin-glazed earthenware painted with dark blue floral designs (Figure 10l). A particularly well preserved group of Chinese blue and white export porcelain vessels was recovered from one cess pit. These include a rounded bowl with brown rim edge decorated with a dragon motif (Figure 10m), a saucer with floral arrangements in a vase (Figure 10n) and two teabowls with floral patterns, one representing lotus flowers (Figure 10o). Other imported vessels included a Westerwald jug elaborately decorated with a machine tooled blue geometric pattern (Figure 10p). Vessels such as these could have been imported at anytime between 1590 and 1900 but their association with other fabric types dates them to the mid 18th century.

A large amount of pottery was produced from a number of the pits on site which were complete or near complete examples of basic utilitarian domestic wares such as lead glazed coarsewares, post-medieval coarse and fine redware, black glazed redware, lead glazed Verwood products, tin glazed ware and whiteslipped Sunderland type coarseware. Forms of domestic vessels identified were chamber pots, dishes, flanged dishes (Figure 11a), shallow dishes (Figure 11b) bowls, jars, plates, jugs and porringers. Larger vessels included a rounded bowl, large pancheon and a graffito decorated dish. Black-glazed vessels (PMBL type) were restricted to several examples of tankard.

White glazed wares were represented by plates and an ointment pot (Figure 11d). Later 18th to 19th century fabrics and forms described as industrial finewares were also identified including examples of pearl and cream wares in the form of cups, saucers and bowls. One example of a whiteware tankard had an applied ale measure mark stamped 'imperial' (Figure 11e). Late 18th to 19th century imports are represented by Rhenish Westerwald ware and Chinese porcelain (Figure 11f). One of the stoneware tankards was stamped with an ale measure mark which dates to the reign of Queen Anne (1702) (Figure 11g).

A small assemblage of domestic animal bone was identified. Butchery evidence was noted in four of five contexts and dog gnawing in one cess pit. Two fragments of red deer antler had been sawn and shaped, indicating that antler working was occurring near to the site. Pig again displays a range of age groups. It is possible that some level of pig rearing was occurring on or near the site. Although it must be remembered that many pork products are obtained from the slaughter of juvenile and sub-adult animals.

DISCUSSION

No earlier activity prior to the medieval period was recorded on site. The focus of Saxon Reading, for which there is little evidence, is thought to have been located closer to the River Kennet or the location of the first Minister (north of the River Kennet). A shift in location for medieval Reading has been theorised when the abbey was established in 1121 (Preston 2005). The abbey would have exercised considerable

authority in the town and the siting of the abbey would have influenced its development.

Only one site excavated in close proximity to the Jubilee Square site uncovered medieval archaeology. The site at 67-73 London Road revealed medieval cess and rubbish pits with some pits possibly being used for gravel extraction pits prior to the deposition of rubbish. It is clear that there has been significantly less archaeological investigation in the southern central areas of Reading in comparison to the investigations in the area of the River Kennet or within the abbey precinct. The lack of corroborating evidence makes it difficult to establish the medieval archaeological sequence at Jubilee Square within its correct setting. According to the current theory on the layout of medieval Reading, the location of the site would have been towards the southern extent, if not just outside the town limits.

Medieval Tillery

The only archaeological remains present on site dating to the medieval period were those of the tillery. There is no available dating evidence for when the tillery began its production. The earliest dates observed from the tiles were 1075-1250 but the majority date to 1270-1500. Pottery recovered during the excavations ranges from 1270/1350 to 1400. Archaeomagnetic testing conducted on site dated the last firing of the kiln to 1365 and 1400 which correlates with the dates for both the tiles and the pottery.

The tillery recorded on site fits into the profile of tillery Type C as established by English Heritage criteria as part of their Monuments Protection Programme Scheme (English Heritage 1990). The remains of the tillery itself are dominated by the structural remains of the kiln which formed a rectangular two chambered structure similar to those excavated at Danbury, Essex (Drury and Pratt 1975). Despite the level of damage and the fragile nature of the remains the main characteristics of the kiln were still present such as the notches for the arched kiln floor supports. The kiln would have produced roof and possibly floor tiles. It is also likely that the tillery was producing tiles for the abbey and abbey-owned buildings as medieval tileries are known to have produced roof and/or floor tiles mainly for use in ecclesiastical and higher status secular buildings.

The lack of any other medieval features on site suggest that the site and the immediate area was in use purely as an industrial site and not co-occupied by domestic households or other small industries.

Tillery Production

The tillery on site produced both peg and ridge tiles. Wasters of both types were recovered from the partially demolished kiln and tillery well. Many of the fragments were overfired, burnt or cracked which obviously led to them being discarded. A number of the peg tiles recovered from the stoekpit are glazed. The most interesting tillery remains were recovered from the tillery well. The recovery of decorated floor tiles that pre-date the tillery kiln suggests that there

was an earlier phase of production on the site or close by. The same may also apply to some of the associated glazed roofing tile. Extensive areas of decorated tile with keyed bases have been found *in situ* at Reading Abbey. This includes a number of tiles with the same design as on the triangular tile from Jubilee Square tile (Figures. 4b and 4c). This suggests the tiling may have been in the ownership of Reading Abbey. The kiln may have been operated directly or leased out to a civilian tilemaker (both practices are known in the medieval period). Many monastic institutions are known to have been involved with floor and roofing manufacture, most notably Chertsey Abbey, Surrey which made floor tiles of exceptional quality during the mid-late 13th century (Eames 1980). There are many similarities between the tiles recorded from the Jubilee Square site and tiles that have been recovered from the abbey site. Both sets of tiles displayed the same keying marks, the same white sandy slip, similar decorated design, and both sets were made of the same fabric (Fabrics 2 and 4). There is little doubt, based on fabric and other evidence, that a tile kiln situated somewhere in the vicinity of Jubilee Square supplied paving tiles to Reading Abbey.

16th to 17th century

The site appears to have been abandoned once the tiling fell out of use. Several layers of 'garden' soil which might represent agricultural or horticultural soil were recorded on site. These layers signify the transition of the site from industrial to a more rural setting possibly occupied by farmland or burgage plots.

During the 16th to 17th century the site was reoccupied. A large ditch was constructed across the site, which has been interpreted as the remains of the Civil War ditch erected in the 1640's to help defend Reading. A similar ditch was also recorded on the 32-38 Silver Street excavations opposite the Jubilee Square site suggesting that the ditch covered a large amount of the local area. Other features on site can be linked to either the extraction of gravel or clay, the deposition of cess, or drainage. The lack of structural remains on site suggests that the local area remained undeveloped and that its sole purpose was for pitting. The features dating to this period were focused on the centre or far eastern limits of the site which may indicate a deliberate layout or plan. It is unclear whether the pits mentioned above have any relationship with the Civil War ditch or the preparation of the ditch, which was excavated to the east of the excavation. The dates for both sets of features (the pits and the ditch) are not defined enough to establish a chronology. It is possible that the men hired to construct the ditch would have been housed locally, as such some of the activity on the site maybe linked to that period.

18th to 19th century

The use of the site in the 18th to 19th century varied little as the site appears to have remained relatively

undeveloped. The 18th century brought further cess pits, soakaways and pits; again solely focused on the eastern side of the site. The lack of development in the 18th century and the lack a growth or intensity of the deposition of cess and rubbish on site suggests that this area was still not heavily occupied.

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