

Archaeological Watching Brief at Leckhampton Industrial Estate, 205, Leckhampton Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire



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Worcestershire Archaeology
Archive and Archaeology Service
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,
The Butts, Worcester
WR1 3PD

Status:
Date: 19 August 2015
Author: Graham Arnold – garnold@worcestershire.gov.uk
Contributors: Robert Hedge
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt
Project reference: P4383
Report reference: 2238

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Graham Arnold

With contributions by Rob Hedge and Tom Vaughan

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Leckhampton Industrial Estate, 205, Leckhampton Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire (NGR SO 94827 19466). It was undertaken on behalf of Brodie Manning Ltd, acting for Speller Metcalfe, who are carrying out the demolition of existing buildings and a residential development comprising the construction of 28 dwellings following the submission of a planning application to Cheltenham Borough Council.

A complex of two brick-lined limekiln pots, surrounded by a series of north to south and east to west brick and stone walls were recorded in the north-west side of the site. These were overlain by a series of late 19th and 20th century dump deposits. Deposits of waste from the limekilns were also found to the west and north of the limekiln complex.

A number of artefacts recovered from made ground overlying the backfilled limekilns were retained for analysis. These comprised domestic pottery and glass of mid-19th to mid-20th century date, indicating a *terminus post quem* date range of 1853-1950 for the deposit, and a likely date within the middle of that range (late 19th or early 20th century) for abandonment and backfilling of the limekilns.

No further *in situ* evidence survived of the former Leckhampton Quarries, such as the brickworks, stables and tramway, survived on site, other than a single railway track which was probably from the tramway, which was recovered from the dump deposits overlying the limekilns. There were no other foundations encountered, with modern made ground throughout the site overlying the natural substrate, indicating that the former foundations of all but the World War two Air Raid Shelter (previously reported on) and the limekilns, had apparently been grubbed out, and the site landscaped and levelled prior to the establishment of the industrial estate in the latter half of the 20th century.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Leckhampton Industrial Estate, 205, Leckhampton Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire (NGR SO 94827 19466). It was commissioned by Brodie Manning Ltd, acting for Speller Metcalfe, who are carrying out the demolition of existing buildings and a residential development comprising the construction of 28 dwellings following the submission of a planning application to Cheltenham Borough Council (13/00756).

The proposed development site is considered by the Curator to have the potential to affect heritage assets with archaeological interest (HER ref. 11284).

The project conforms to the requirements of Gloucestershire County Council Archaeologist (the Curator; dated 23 May 2013). No brief has been prepared by the Curator but the project conforms to the generality of briefs which have been previously issued. A project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2014).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014b), and the generic Gloucestershire County Council standard of work.

The specific project reference number given by Worcestershire Archaeology for this project is P4383.

2 Aims

The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to record and characterise archaeological features and deposits which survive within the site, as far as possible within the constraints of the contractor's groundworks.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Graham Arnold (BA (hons.); MSc) who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2009 and has been practicing archaeology since 2002. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan, (BA (hons.); MA; ACIfA). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA). Robert Hedge (MA Cantab) contributed the finds report.

3.2 Documentary research

An archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken prior to the development (CgMs 2012) and building recording of a World War Two Air Raid Shelter was undertaken on the site prior to demolition works (Cornah and Vaughan 2014) as part of the agreed archaeological programme of works.

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2014).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 13 April and 1 July 2015. The project reference given by WA is P4383.

The contractors groundworks were monitored, following the progress of the construction team, using a 360° tracked excavator to undertake all groundworks. These involved general ground

reduction across the entire site (Trench 1), followed by deeper trenching in specific areas (Trenches 2-7). The location of the trenches is indicated in Figure 2. Trenches 3 and 5, toward the north-west side of the site contained a limekiln complex and was monitored in two stages. Following discussions with Gloucestershire County Council Archaeologist, a basic record only of the limekilns and associated structures was undertaken, during the groundworks.

Artefactual material was retrieved whilst groundworks were undertaken and no deposits were deemed suitable for environmental sampling. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012).

3.4 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

3.5 Artefact methodology, by Rob Hedge

3.5.1 Recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to the relevant sections of the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a) and the *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b). Deposits of 20th century building material were noted but not recovered. A representative sample of the finds within the made ground overlying the infilled limekilns were recovered for analysis.

3.5.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on *pro forma* sheets.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and www.worcestershireceramics.org).

3.5.3 Discard policy

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of 6 months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- where unstratified;
- post-medieval material; and
- generally where material has been specifically assessed by a suitable specialist as having no obvious grounds for retention.

3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

4 The application site

4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

The site area covered 0.9ha. The topographical, historical and geological background to the site can be found in the DBA and is summarised. Cartographic evidence confirmed that the site was

utilised by the Leckhampton Quarries throughout the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. This included a brick works, tram road, terminus and depot, a limekiln and horse stables (HER 11284). A World War Two structure was also recorded on the west side of the site.

The DBA described the topography as:

'... lying on a north facing slope on the southern edge of Cheltenham. It lies immediately to the north, but outside, of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. While the natural topography of the study site has been altered to accommodate the existing structures within the site, the indication of a north facing slope is still visible. The southern end of the study site lies at 115m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), falling to around 105m AOD along its northern boundary.' (CgMs 2012, 8)

The geology is described as comprising mudstones of the Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (Undifferentiated) interbedded limestone, argillaceous rocks and subordinate sandstone of the Lias Group and Inferior Oolite Group (Undifferentiated) elsewhere (BGS 2015).

4.2 Current land-use

The site was formerly an industrial estate on the southern edge of Leckhampton, with a number of buildings, including a carpet factory. Upon the start of the watching brief the buildings had been demolished and most hardstanding had been broken up. A World War Two structure thought to be an Air Raid Shelter was recorded by WA prior to its demolition (Cornah and Vaughan 2014).

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figures 2 and 3. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The natural deposits consisted of firm yellow and blue clays overlying mudstone at a depth of between 114.60m and 103.50m AOD, with the ground sloping from south to north. The natural gradient sloped from south to north following the slope of the hill to the south of the development. The natural ground was often found to be overlain directly by modern made ground, which contained 20th century rubble and debris.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Post-medieval / 19th century deposits – the limekiln complex

An industrial complex consisting of two limekiln pots surrounded by a series of brick walls and a possible chimney stack base were recorded toward the north-west side of the site in Trench 5. The machine made bricks measured 9" x 4 ½ " x 3" and included red bricks and blue engineering bricks. Limekiln [501] was backfilled with waste rubble, ash and bricks (508) infilling the pot. Limekiln [502] was filled with waste lime (509). The structures were recorded in plan with a NetRover GPS and photographed as they were uncovered and removed from site. A collection of finds were recovered from the made ground used to backfill the structures, and brick samples were recovered from the structures, but no in situ finds were observed or recovered during their excavation.

5.1.3 Phase 3: modern deposits

A modern breeze block retaining wall (601) was observed in Trench 6 in the south-west of the site. A series of modern made ground dumps containing modern rubble and debris was observed over the whole site (Trench 1 soil strip and in deeper Trenches 2-7), including the footings of the demolished buildings and hardstanding areas of the former industrial estate. Large quantities of waste lime were also recorded to the north-east and west of the limekiln complex (Trenches 1 and 3), used to build up the northern edge of the site. A number of modern services also cut through this material.

5.2 Artefact analysis, by Rob Hedge

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 2. The pottery assemblage retrieved from the excavated area consisted of seven sherds and two complete vessels, weighing 1941g in total. A partial glass vessel and complete brick were also recovered. The group came from a single deposit and could be dated from the mid-19th century onwards. Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally good with the majority of sherds displaying low levels of abrasion, and the average sherd size being above average.

period	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)
modern	ceramic	brick	1	2550
modern	ceramic	pot	9	1941
modern	glass	vessel	1	439
Totals			11	4930

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

5.2.1 Discussion

Pottery

The most notable items were two complete plain late stoneware (fabric 81.4) 19th or early 20th century jars and glazed earthenware and stone china, the latter including:

- A large fragment of a semi-porcelain cup of 'Blenheim' design by T & R Boote of the Waterloo Potteries, Burslem, with a date range of 1850 – 1906 (Coysh and Henrywood 1982, 47). On stylistic grounds, a date towards the end of this range is probable.
- A lid fragment from a pot of Cherry Tooth Paste marketed by Henry Hodder, Chemist, of 11 Broad Street, Bristol, with a date range of 1853-1903.

Broad period	fabric code	Fabric common name	count	weight(g)
Modern	81.4	Miscellaneous late stoneware	2	1246
Modern	85	Modern china	1	52
Modern	101	Miscellaneous modern wares	6	643
Totals			9	1941

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by period and fabric-type

Other Finds

A brick sample from the kiln structures in a hard-fired, orange-red fabric containing occasional small ironstone or slag inclusions, 9" long x 4 3/8" wide, tapering in thickness slightly from 2 7/8" to 2 3/4", is likely to be 19th century in date, and an abraded partially clear glass 'torpedo' carbonated drinks bottle is (later 19th century).

5.2.2 Site dating

context	material class	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ Date range
500	ceramic	pot	1	135	1850	1906	1853 - 1950
	ceramic	pot	2	251	1850	1950	
	ceramic	pot	1	52	1850	1950	
	ceramic	pot	1	37	1853	1903	
	ceramic	pot	1	75	1800	1950	
	ceramic	pot	1	145	1850	1950	
	glass	vessel	1	439	1814	1920	
	ceramic	pot	1	540	1800	1950	
	ceramic	pot	1	706	1800	1950	
	ceramic	brick	1	2550	1800	1900	

Table 3 Summary of context dating based on artefacts

6 Synthesis, by Graham Arnold, Rob Hedge and Tom Vaughan

The investigations partially confirmed the cartographic evidence of industrial activity on the site through the 19th and the first half of the 20th century (Leckhampton Quarries HER 11284). Evidence of lime production was found with the foundations of an industrial complex including two limekilns survived in the north-west of the site, as is indicated on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887.

The finds recovered are typical of a domestic assemblage, and indicate a *terminus post quem* date range of 1853-1950 for the deposits. On stylistic grounds, a likely date within the middle of that range (late 19th to early 20th century) is suggested. All of the finds from the area were recovered from material overlying the limekilns and infilling the pots, so relate to its demolition and disuse.

The only evidence of the tramway in the area was one rail track noted within the demolition and backfilling material. The metalwork is likely to have been lifted and reused when the works went out of use. No evidence of the tramway was found *in situ* over the area. There was also no evidence of the brickworks or any other industrial works related to Leckhampton Quarries over the rest of the site.

The whole area was covered with modern made ground directly over the natural which sloped from south to north. It is considered that the construction of the industrial estate buildings in the latter half of the 20th century involved the grubbing out of the foundations of most of the previous buildings and levelling up of the ground to the north, which may be the reason why the World War Two Air Raid Shelter and limekilns were not similarly removed.

7 Publication summary, by Graham Arnold, Rob Hedge and Tom Vaughan

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Brodie Manning Ltd, acting for Speller Metcalfe, at Leckhampton Industrial Estate, 205, Leckhampton Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire (NGR SO 94827 19466).

A complex of two brick-lined limekiln pots, surrounded by a series of north to south and east to west brick and stone walls were recorded in the north-west side of the site. These were overlain by

a series of late 19th and 20th century dump deposits. Deposits of waste from the limekilns were also found to the west and north of the limekiln complex.

A number of artefacts recovered from made ground overlying the backfilled limekilns were retained for analysis. These comprised domestic pottery and glass of mid-19th to mid-20th century date, indicating a terminus post quem date range of 1853-1950 for the deposit, and a likely date within the middle of that range (late 19th or early 20th century) for abandonment and backfilling of the limekilns.

No further *in situ* evidence survived of the former Leckhampton Quarries, such as the brickworks, stables and tramway, survived on site, other than a single railway track which was probably from the tramway, which was recovered from the dump deposits overlying the limekilns. There were no other foundations encountered, with modern made ground throughout the site overlying the natural substrate, indicating that the former foundations of all but the World War two Air Raid Shelter (previously reported on) and the limekilns, had apparently been grubbed out, and the site landscaped and levelled prior to the establishment of the industrial estate in the latter half of the 20th century.

8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Neil Birmingham (NGB), Lee Holmes (Speller Metcalfe), Wendy Hopkins (Brodie Manning Ltd) and Charles Parry (Archaeologist, Gloucestershire County Council).

9 Bibliography

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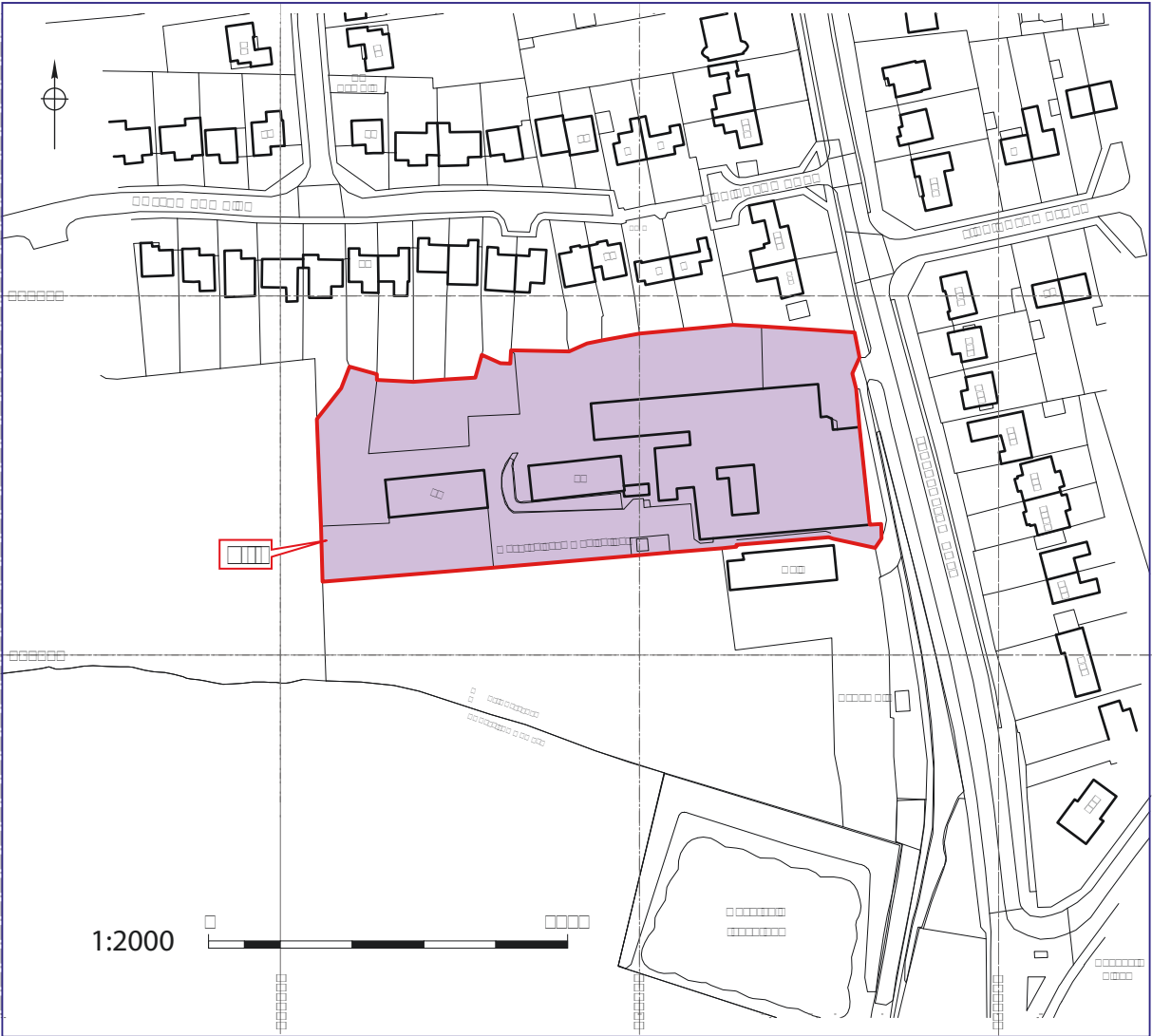
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WA 2014 Proposal for an archaeological watching brief and building recording at Leckhampton Industrial Estate, 205, Leckhampton Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 3 October 2014, **P4383**

Figures



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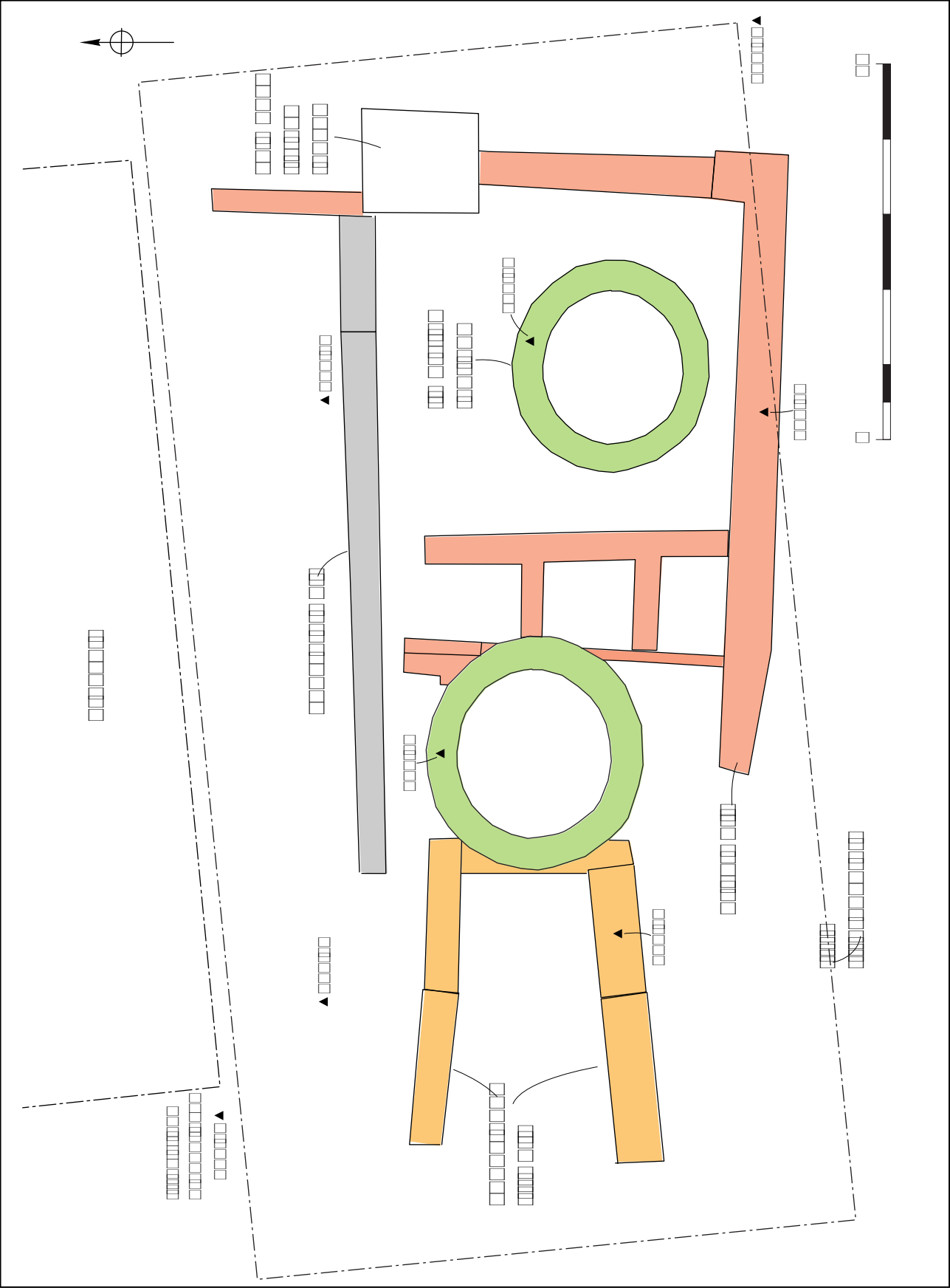


Figure 1. Architectural floor plan of the temple complex showing the central courtyard, circular structures, and various halls and corridors.

Figure 2. Architectural floor plan of the temple complex showing the central courtyard, circular structures, and various halls and corridors.

Plates



Plate 1 General view west of ground reduction (Trench 1), demonstrating the depth of modern made ground



Plate 2 Trench 7 through modern made ground; view north



Plate 3 A dump of lime material on the north side of Trench 7; view north-east



Plate 4 Sample section of made ground and natural clays in the south-eastern side of the site (Trench 2)



Plate 5 Top of limekiln pot [502] after initial ground reduction; view west



Plate 6 The two limekilns in Trench 5 after reducing to the depth of the required footings; view west



Plate 7 The limekiln pot [502] during ground reductions; view west



Plate 8 One of the brick walls dividing the two limekilns, in section; view west



Plate 9 View of the limekiln complex in Trench 5; view east



Plate 10 Brick and limestone walls on east side of limekiln [502]; view west

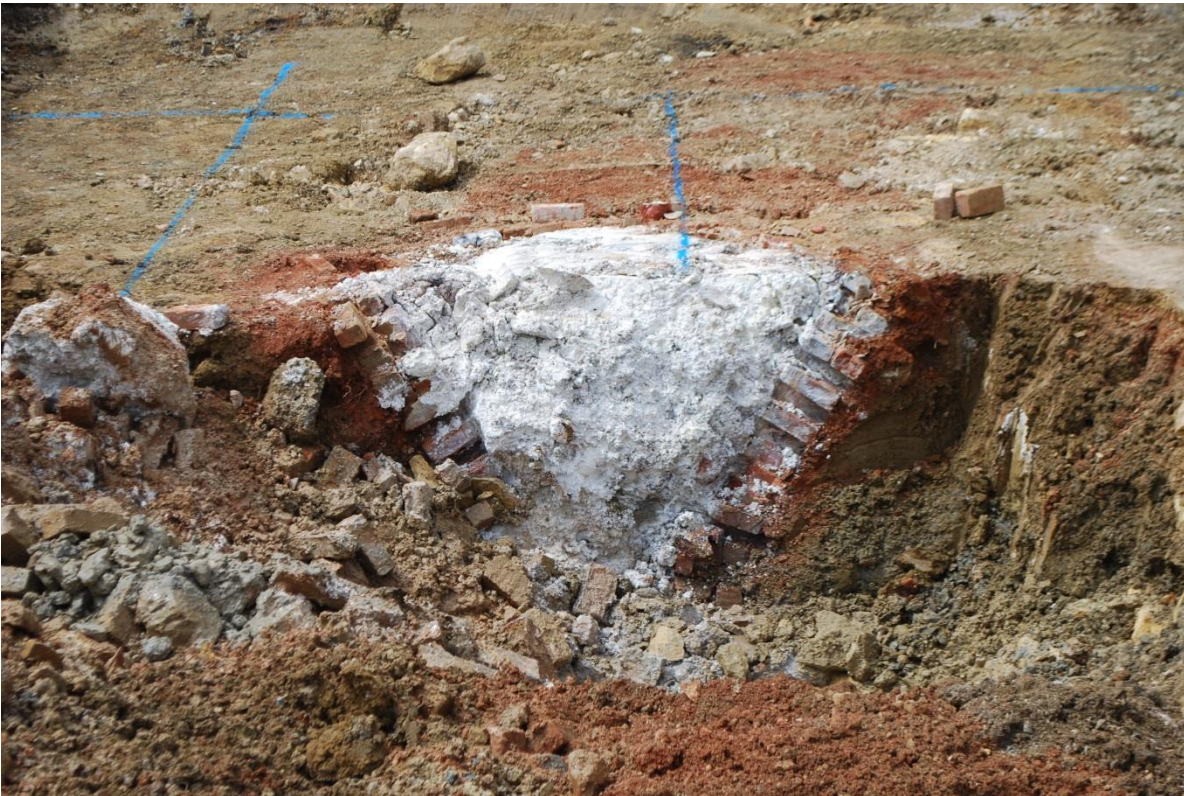


Plate 11 Section through the limekiln pot [502]; view west



Plate 12 Trench 5 after removing the limekiln pot foundations and surrounding walls; view west

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Main deposit descriptions

Trench 1

Ground reduction over whole site

Maximum dimensions: Length: 150m Width: 62.50m Depth: 1.00m

Orientation: approx east to west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Tarmac	Medium orange/brown fine soft sandy silt with frequent root action and worm sorting. Contains occasional medium flecks of charcoal, rare tile and rare clay pipe. Cut by one modern water pipe trench.	0 – 0.10m
102	Made ground	Mixed compact brown clay with brick, rubble, tar and rooting	0.10 – 0.70m
103	Made ground	Light grey and yellow ash with roots, brick and metalwork.	0.70 – 1.00m
104	Lime waste dumped material	Area of Lime waste a maximum of 2.5m deep	0.10 – 1.00m+
105	Natural	Compact mottled mid yellowish brown clay	1.00m +

Trench 2

Plot 2-5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 16.00 m Width: 8.00m Depth: 1.80 – 2.00m

Orientation: approx north to south

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Modern made ground	Concrete footings, hardcore and mixed silty clay with frequent brick rubble and concrete, metalwork and asbestos	0.00 – 0.60m
201	Natural	Cohesive compact mid yellowish brown sandy clay with occasional gravels	0.60 – 1.50m
202	Natural	Compact mid greyish blue clay with frequent rounded cobbles and subangular stone. Waterlogged in places.	1.50-2.00m

Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 12.00m Width: 12.00m Depth: 1.80m

Plot 18 -19 footings and 20 ground reduction

Orientation: approx east to west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Hardcore	Mixed brick concrete and rubble hardcore, laid down to create level, firm surface.	0.00-0.20m
301	Made ground	Soft, cohesive grey brown clay with frequent modern brick, gravel and concrete inclusions.	0.20 – 1.00m
303	unassigned		
304	unassigned		
305	Lime dump deposit	Compact white lime dump deposit	0.60 – 1.60m
306	Natural	Compact mid greyish blue clay. Waterlogged in places. Frequent large sub-angular stone.	1.50 – 1.80m+

Trench 4

Plots 2 - 5

Maximum dimensions: Length: 25.00m Width: 10.00m Depth: 1.20m

Orientation: approx east to west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Made ground	Compact mixed silty clay with frequent brick rubble and concrete, metalwork and asbestos	0 – 0.30m
401	Natural	Compact orangey yellow clay / marl / mudstone	0.30 – 1.20m

Trench 5

Plot 20 ground reduction and Lime kiln removal

Maximum dimensions: Length: 16.00m Width: 8.00m Depth: 1.50m

Orientation: approx east to west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s; 154.04m AOD) – top and bottom of deposits
500	Made ground	A series of loose dumped rubble and silty clay material containing some ceramics.	(154.00 – 152.80m AOD)
501	Limekiln pot #1	2.5m diameter lime kiln pot structure constructed of yellow and red bricks with lime mortar bonding. Backfilled with rubble and tile	0.10 – 1.30m (153.95-152.80m)
502	Limekiln Pot #2	Brick lined Kiln pot filled with lime. 3.00m in diameter.	0.50 – 1.50m
503	Brick walls	Series of north-south and east-west walls surrounding Lime Kilns.	1.00m – 2.00m (153.00-152.00m AOD)
504	Sandstone Walls	Running east to west on west side of limekiln pot 502	0.70m – 1.45m (153.30m AOD)
505	Possible base of chimney stack	Brick built square platform	0.80 – 1.20 (153.20 - 152.80m AOD)
506	Concrete wall	Aligned east west to north of the two lime kilns	1.10 – 2.00m (152.90m AOD)
507	Natural	Compact mid yellowy brown clay with frequent gravels	1.20m (152.80m AOD)
508	Infill of limekiln pot #1	Mixed grey brown clay with rubble backfill, of 501.	0.10 – 1.30m (153.95-152.80m)
509	Infill of limekiln pot #2	Soft white lime; infill of 502.	0.50 – 1.50m

Trench 6

Plots in south-east and east of site

Maximum dimensions: Length: 100.00m Width: 50.00m Depth: 0.50m

Orientation: east to west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
600	Natural	Compact orangey yellow clay / marl / mudstone (modern overburden removed during decontamination works).	0.00 – 0.50m +
601	Modern structure	Modern breeze block and concrete retaining wall, aligned approx east to west, in south-east corner of site.	1.00m in height

Trench 7

Plot 18

Maximum dimensions: Length: 10.00m Width: 10.00m Depth: 2.50m

Orientation: L-shaped; north to south and east to west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
700	Tarmac	Medium orange/brown fine soft sandy silt with frequent root action and worm sorting. Contains occasional medium flecks of charcoal, rare tile and rare clay pipe. Cut by one modern water pipe trench.	0 – 0.10m
702	Made ground	Mixed compact brown clay with brick, rubble, tar and rooting	0.10 – 0.70m
703	Made ground	Light grey and yellow ash with roots, brick and metalwork.	0.70 – 1.00m
704	Lime waste dumped material	Area of Lime waste a maximum of 2.5m deep	0 – 2.50m
705	Natural	Underneath the lime deposit	2.50m +

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive

The archive consists of:

- 6 Context records AS1
- 4 Field progress reports AS2
- 4 Photographic records AS3
- 131 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 1 Scale drawings
- 1 Context number catalogues AS5
- 7 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum
Clarence Street
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 3JT

Tel. Cheltenham (01242) 237431
