

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**AT**

**8 MALTHOUSE LANE, DORCHESTER-ON-THAMES**

**OXFORDSHIRE**

**NGR SU 5771 9425**

*On behalf of*

*Mr M Elias*

**JULY 2015**

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<b>REPORT FOR</b>	Mr M Elias Bradley House 8 Malthouse Lane Dorchester-on-Tames Oxfordshire OX10 7LG
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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological field evaluation at 8 Malthouse Lane in Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. The aims of investigation were to establish if features related to the nearby Roman and medieval activities are present in this area. Two trenches were excavated across the footprints of the proposed extension to the existing dwelling (Fig. 1). In Trench 1 were encountered a occupation layer and remains of a wall foundation dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. The upper deposit within the trench was a homogenous layer representing modern disturbance.*

*In Trench 2, were identified three layers and one pit. The two lower layers were related with 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman occupation and the upper layer was identical with the upper layer in the Trench 1. The cut feature partially exposed within the trench, represents a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pit or soakaway. The finds recovered during the evaluation shows intensive Roman occupation of the site up to late 4<sup>th</sup> century, some limited activities during the Saxon and medieval period and increasing of activities from the late post-medieval up to present days.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The application site is located at 8 Malthouse Lane in Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 5771 9425) and lies within the Scheduled Monument (SM OX 116) of the Roman Town. Topographically the site is reasonably level and lies at an approximate height of 48m OD. The underlying geology is Thames Valley Gravels overlain by well-drained loamy soils. The site is in residential use.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

A planning application has been made to South Oxfordshire District Council for the erection of a two storey side extension to 8 Malthouse Lane, Dorchester-on-Thames (P15/S0569/HH).

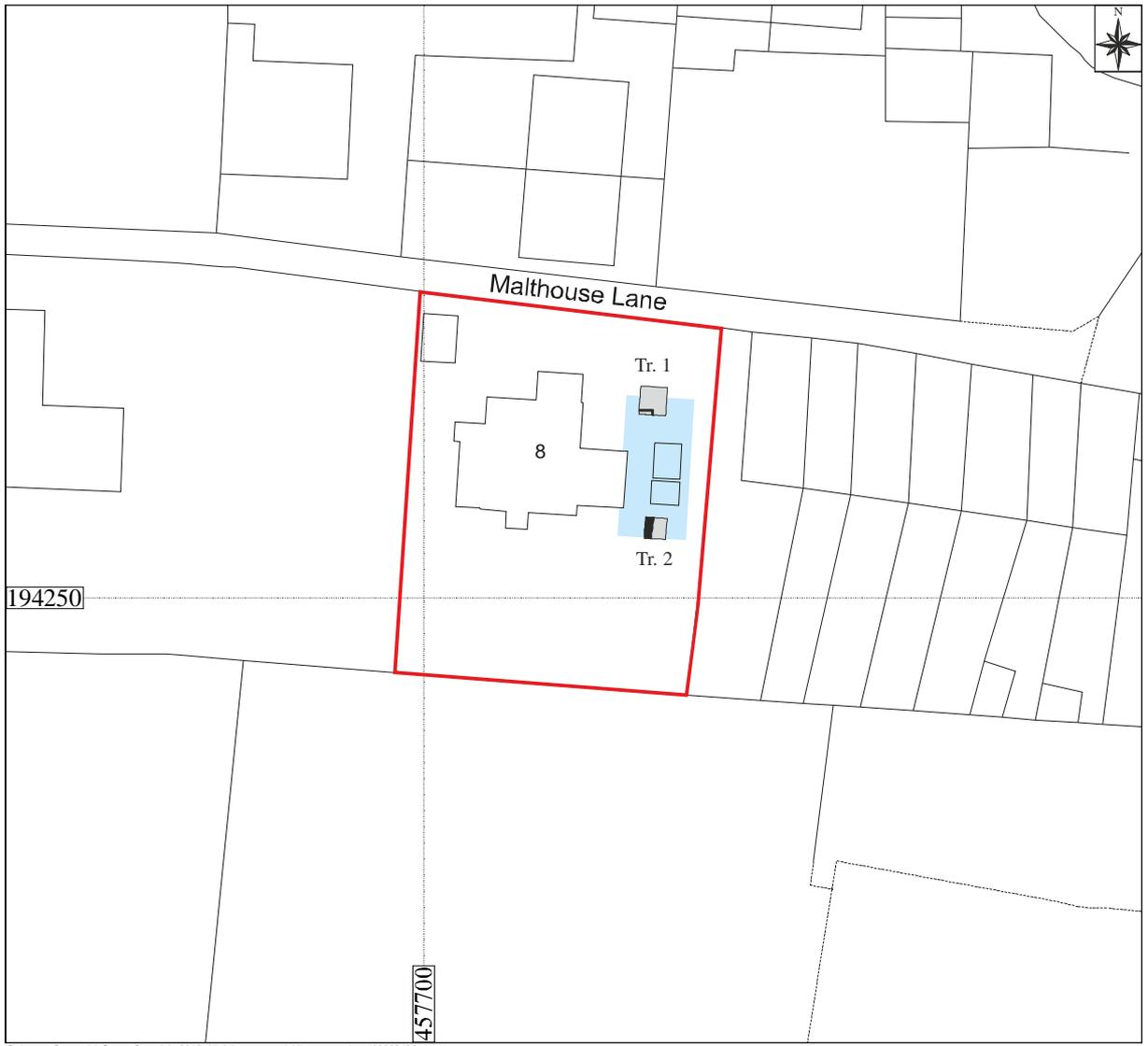
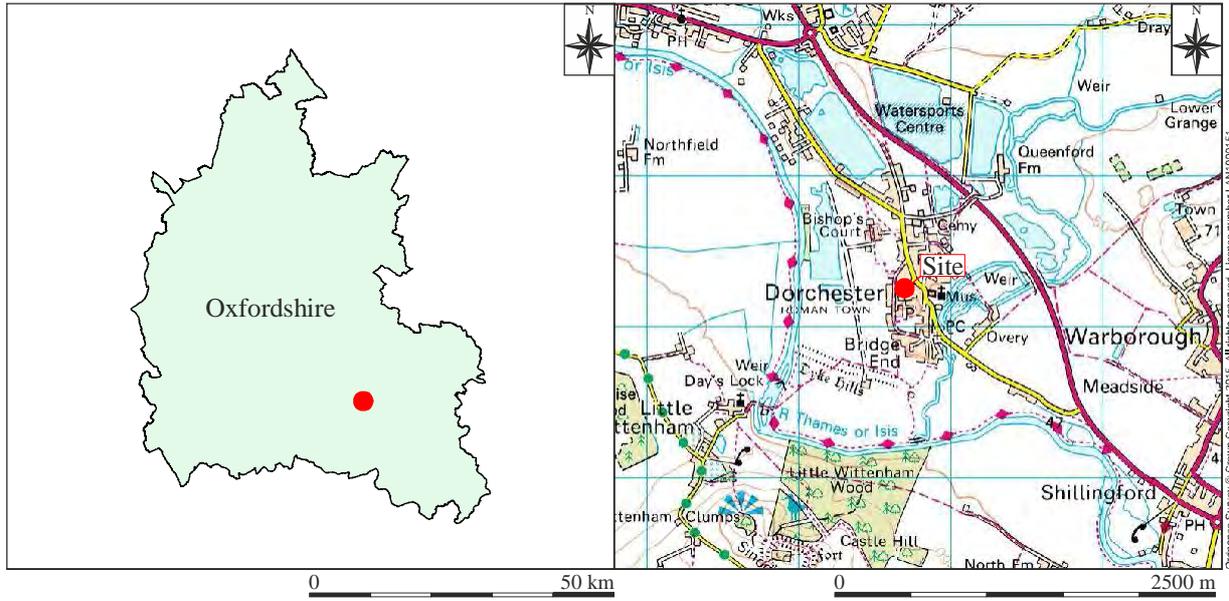
Due to the potential presence of below ground archaeological features within the application site, Historic England required a pre-determination archaeological field evaluation. The Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments of Historic England issued Scheduled Monument Consent (ref: S00110498) for the evaluation.

John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) was commissioned to undertake this work, and a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2015) was prepared to satisfy the requirements of Historic England.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

Dorchester-on-Thames is situated over the site of a small Roman town, which consisted of roughly rectangular defences enclosing a civil settlement of about 13.5 ha. It is generally thought to have been established in the Flavian period and the unusual increase in Late Roman (Theodosian) coinage implies a thriving occupation throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> century and until the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Henig & Booth 2000, 47). Early theories about the line of the eastern defences of the Roman town suggested that it ran northwards between Bridge End and Rotten Row, crossing the High Street and the western approach to Dorchester Abbey Church, passing through the grounds of 12 High Street before turning west near the junction of Manor Farm Road with Queen Street. Aston (1974) however suggested that the line of the eastern defences might have incorporated the area later covered by the Saxon Cathedral and Medieval Abbey with the River Thame forming the eastern boundary of the town (but see Henig & Booth *ibid*, 59-61). A watching brief at 12 High Street found a large Roman ditch, which is probably the eastern boundary of the town defences. The position of the Roman ditch at this location would dispense with the theory that the River Thame formed the eastern boundary to the town (JMHS 2002).

No public buildings of any kind have been found but a number of fairly modest domestic buildings have been excavated in various parts of the town. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century buildings so far excavated have all been of timber construction with clay floors. A 3<sup>rd</sup> century stone courtyard house was excavated in the north of the town and a small three-roomed rectangular building was constructed in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century



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**Key**  Site boundary  Evaluation trench  Archaeological feature  
 Footprint of proposed extension

Figure 1: Site location

in the southwest corner of the town. A Roman building lies beneath the abbey and a tessellated pavement was observed in a cellar on the west side of High Street in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Rodwell 1975).

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) were:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.

In particular:

- To establish if features related to the nearby Roman and medieval activity are present in this area.

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

JMHS carried out the archaeological field evaluation in accordance with the WSI (JMHS 2015). Fieldwork comprised a scheme for the mechanical and hand excavation of two trial trenches within the footprint of the proposed extension. Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the WSI (Sections 3.1 – 3.21).

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) and the principles of MoRPHE (Historic England 2015).

### **3.2 Methodology**

A one and half tonne excavator fitted with a toothless 0.6m wide ditching bucket was used to excavate the two trenches. Due to the fact, that the footprint of the proposed extension had been changed from the original proposal and now covers a larger area, the trenches were relocated and their dimensions were adjusted to cover a sufficient area of evaluation. All changes were asked for by David Wilkinson, Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments. The ground in both trenches was reduced down to approximately 1m using the excavator and rest of the trenches were excavated by hand. Small sondages were excavated by hand within both trenches in order to obtain as much information as possible.

Archaeological deposits and features revealed were cleaned by hand and recorded at an appropriate level. Archaeological features had written, drawn and photographic records made of them, and all deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. All artefacts were collected, analysed and retained.

## 4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

### 4.1 Field Results

All features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers with no brackets indicate feature cuts, numbers in round brackets ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material and numbers in bold indicate any form of masonry.

#### 4.1.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 2m long and 1.90m wide orientated north to south, located at the north end of the proposed extension (Fig. 1 & 2: Tr. 1). That trench reached the maximum safe working depth of 1.20m with in addition a small sondage (0.60×0.60m, 0.30m deep) excavated in the centre of the trench.

In Trench 1 two successive deposits and the remains of a wall foundation were investigated (Appendix 1).

The lowest deposit (1/02) was a mid brown sandy silt with moderate gravel inclusions and charcoal that was encountered at the bottom of sondage, 1.45m (48.49m OD) below present ground surface (Fig. 2: Tr.1; Pl. 1). From deposit (1/02) were recovered fragments of Roman pottery dating from 4<sup>th</sup> century (see 5.1, Appendix 2) along with animal bones (see 5.3). Carbonised grains (see 5.6) were recovered from a palaeo-environmental sample <3>, which was taken from this deposit. Deposit (1/02) was interpreted as a late Roman occupation layer.

Overlaying deposit (1/01) was 1.41m thick layer of dark brownish grey silty loam (1/01), contained moderate charcoal and small well-rounded stones, and occasional medium size sub-angular stones (Fig. 2: Tr. 1 & S. 1.1; Pl. 1). The major assemblage of Roman pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) dating from 4<sup>th</sup> century was recovered from deposit (1/01), along with two Saxon, one medieval and nine post-medieval pottery sherds and CBM ( see 5.1 & 5.10), animal bone (5.3), iron nail and fragment of copper alloy (5.7), oyster shells (5.5) and glass (5.9). The composition of deposit (1/01) appeared very homogeneous although closely inspected for any differences within it. The finds recovered from this deposit suggest that it must be a recent disturbance of successive layers of occupation resulting in the mixed composition of the finds from the late Roman to post-medieval periods.

Seven sub-angular pieces of sandstone of maximum dimensions 127×212×140mm, which represent the probable remains of a wall foundation **1/03** were unearthed within deposit (1/01) (Fig. 2: Tr. 1 & S. 1.1; Pl. 1; Appendix 1). The wall foundation **1/03** was encountered 1.07m (48.87m OD) below the present ground surface, located at the southwest corner of the trench. The foundation may have been set within a construction cut 1/04 which was not visible. The wall foundation possibly represents a

northeast corner of a Roman timber building. The deposit enclosed by the wall foundation **1/03** was of same composition as (1/01), however only Roman pottery and occasional fragments fired clay were present. Carbonized grains were recovered from the palaeo-environmental sample <2> (see 5.6) which was taken from deposit (1/01) next to the wall foundation outside it.

The uppermost deposit in the Trench 1 was a layer of gravel which is the modern yard surface.



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking south

#### 4.1.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 which was of square shape in plan measured 1.50×1.50m orientated north to south and located at the south edge of the footprint of the proposed extension (Fig. 1 & 2: Tr. 2). The trench was in general excavated down to the 1.25m below present ground surface.

Within Trench 2 the general deposits and stratigraphic relationships were almost the identical with Trench 1.

The lowest deposit reached was mid brown sandy silt (2/05) with frequent small well-rounded stones and occasional charcoal (Fig. 2: Tr. 2, S. 2.1; Pl. 2; Appendix 1). From the deposit (2/05) were recovered fragments of Roman pottery dated into 4<sup>th</sup> century (5.1, Appendix 2). Palaeo-environmental sample <1>, taken from this deposit produced carbonized grains the same as within samples <2> and <3> (see 5.6). Deposit (2/05) represents a late Roman occupation layer the same as deposit (1/02).

Deposit (2/05) was overlain by a layer of dark brownish grey silty loam (2/04), with moderate small well-rounded stones and occasional charcoal (Fig. 2: S. 2.1; Pl. 2; Appendix 1). From the deposit were recovered Roman pottery sherds dated to 4<sup>th</sup> century (5.1; Appendix 2) and animal bones (5.3). Layer (2/04) was not very distinguishable from the above deposit (2/01); the major difference was indicated by cut 2/03 and finds dated into Roman period. Again it was interpreted as a late Roman occupation layer.

Cut into layer (2/04) was presumably sub-oval or sub-rectangular cut feature 2/03 with moderate concave sides. Fill (2/02) was a loose dark grey silt mixed with sand, ash and occasional charcoal (Fig. 2: Tr. 2, S. 2.1; Appendix 1). From the pit were recovered mainly early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds, glass, CBM, animal bones, buckle, horseshoe, two spoons, plastic, residual Roman and CBM, and post-medieval pottery (5.1-5.10; Appendix 2). The feature 2/03 was interpreted as mid 20<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pit or soakaway. Although the sides of the trench were closely examined there was no indication that feature 2/03 was visible cut from higher up in section.

The major deposit within Trench 2 was 1m thick dark brownish grey silty loam with occasional small well-rounded stones (2/01) (Fig. 2: S. 2.1; Pl. 2). From the deposit were recovered fragments of Roman pottery (5.1; Appendix 2), animal bones (5.3), Copper alloy serving vessel and unidentified object (5.7), modern glass (5.9) and modern pottery (5.10). Context (1/01) represents the same seemingly homogeneous deposit as deposit (2/01). Once more, the finds recovered from this deposit suggest that it is a mixed deposit with disturbed material from 4<sup>th</sup> century up to present days – see discussion.



Plate 2: Trench 2, looking west. Feature 2/03 is visible at the top of the photograph.

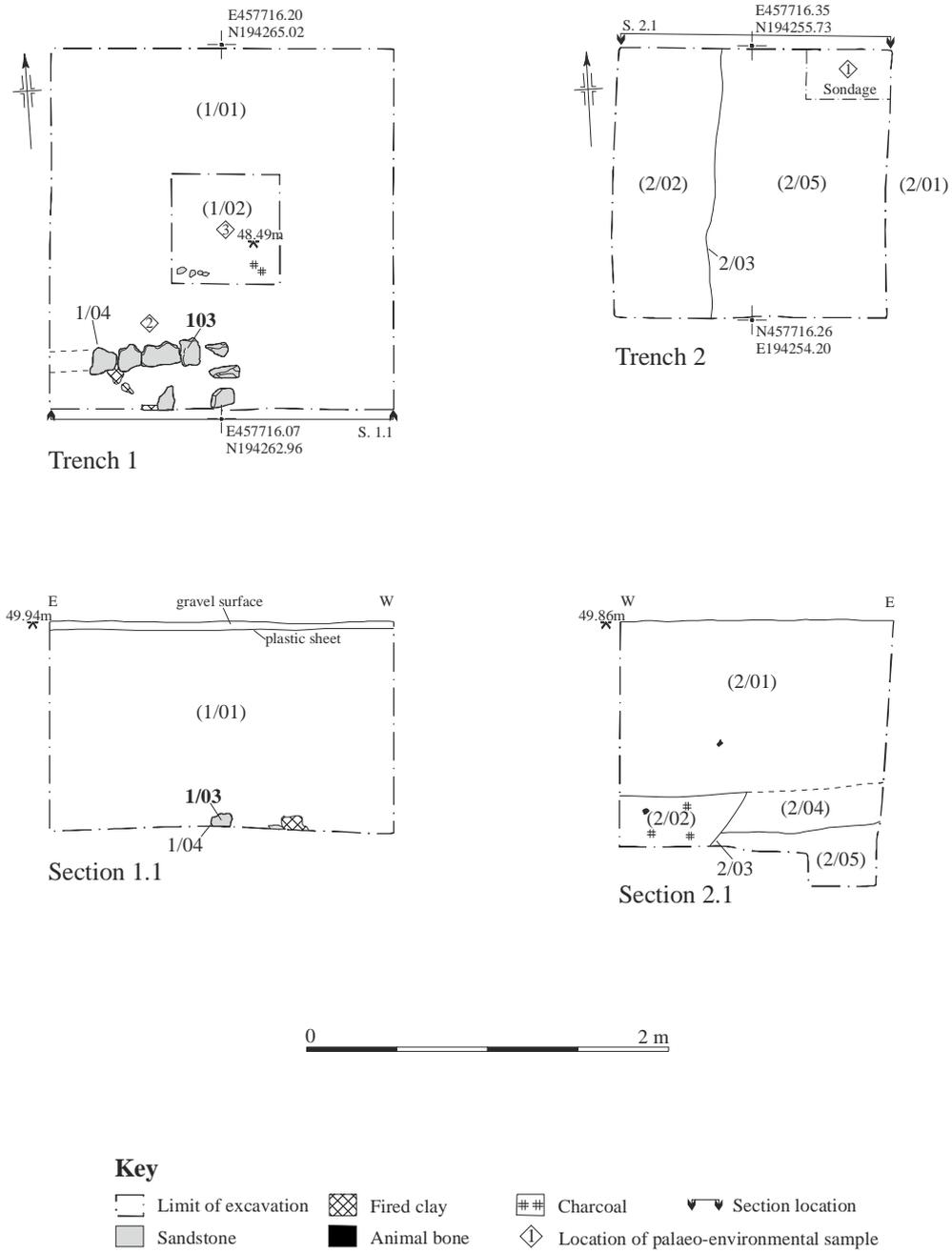


Figure 2: Trenches 1 and 2 - plans and sections

## 4.2 Reliability of Results

The reliability of results is considered to be relatively good. The archaeological field evaluation took place in very good weather conditions with excellent light and visibility. The fieldwork was monitored by David Wilkinson Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments, who visited the site on two occasions. Excellent cooperation from the landowners ensured sufficient time to investigate and record the archaeological deposits to the appropriate standards.

Although the top 1m+ of soils was very dry close examination of deposits (1/01) and (2/01) did not suggest any variation in composition within them.

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Roman and Post-Roman Pottery (Appendix 2) by Jane Timby

#### Introduction and methodology

The archaeological work resulted in a moderately small assemblage of 388 sherds of pottery, weighing *c* 5.2 kg, accompanied by 49 pieces (3.2 kg) of ceramic building material (CBM).

Most of the pottery dates to the Roman period but there are two Saxon, one medieval and nine post-medieval sherds also present.

In general terms the sherds are quite well preserved. The group has an overall average sherd weight of 13.5 g reflecting this condition, typical of rubbish material that has undergone a certain level of disturbance.

Pottery was recovered from just six defined contexts all of which, with one exception, are interpreted as occupation layers. The exception, context 2/02, is the fill of a modern pit.

For the purposes of this assessment the material was scanned macroscopically and sorted into fabrics based on firing colour and inclusions (type, size and frequency) in the clay. The sorted fabrics were quantified by sherd count and weight and a note made of the forms present from the rim sherds. Known named traded Roman wares were coded using the National Roman fabric reference collection codes (codes in brackets) (Tomber and Dore 1998). Table 1 summarises the data for each context with a provisional spot date for the group.

The pottery has been rebagged into broad fabric groups and non-pottery items removed.

#### Description of Roman wares

Most of the assemblage comprises wares from local sources. Continental imports are limited to two sherds of Central Gaulish samian (LEX SA), one sherd of Gallo-Belgic *terra nigra* platter (GAB TN) and five sherds of amphorae. The latter comprise four

sherds of Baetican type (BAT AM) used to transport olive oil from southern Spain and one sherd of a Cadiz fish-sauce amphora (CAD AM).

Regional traded imports include nine sherds of Dorset black burnished ware (DOR BB1); six sherds of Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware (LNV CC) and nine sherds of late Roman shelly ware (ROB SH).

The remaining assemblage comprises products of the well-known Oxfordshire industries with grey sandy wares and finer grey wares dominating accounting for 43.5 % by count of the total recovered assemblage and colour-coated wares (OXF RS) for a further 34%. Also present are white-slipped mortaria (OXF WS); burnt white ware (OXF BWH) and white-wares (OXF WH).

Within the Oxfordshire repertoire examples of Young (1977) mortaria WC7; M22 and C100; bowls C51, C81, C75; dishes C48 and beaker are present.

There are also a few sherds of Oxfordshire grog-tempered handmade storage jar and a sherd of shelly ware present.

In terms of date the emphasis is very much towards the late Roman period but there are a few earlier pieces dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, and in the case of the *terra nigra* sherd to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

### **Post-Roman**

Two bodysherds of likely Saxon date are present; both from (1/01). One sherd has an organic-tempered fabric; the other an oolitic limestone tempered fabric. The latter sherd also has a burnished interior surface.

A single pod from a tripod vessel from (1/01) is of medieval date whilst the nine sherds of post-medieval date include glazed and unglazed red earthenware, amongst which are 20<sup>th</sup> century flower-pot fragments, English stoneware, and industrial white earthenware (china).

### **Site chronology**

Whilst the pottery contains at least one or more sherds of pre-Flavian date the bulk of the material dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Contexts (1/01), (2/01) and (2/02) contained small quantities of post-medieval/modern pottery alongside the Roman wares. This either suggests some level of contamination of the deposits or that all the Roman is re-deposited. The Roman wares from (1/02), (2/04) and (2/05) have a *terminus post quem* in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The presence of some late Roman shelly ware (ROB SH) from (1/01) and (2/01) suggests occupation up to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century or beyond.

### **Ceramic building material (CBM)**

The CBM contains both Roman and post-Roman pieces. Roman fragments include one piece of box-flue with a relief pattern in the form of chevrons (Pl. 3) from (2/02) and three further fragments of box-flue from (1/01) and *pilae* indicating a building

with a hypocaust system in the area. There are also fragments of roof tile with at least one example of a *tegula*.

There are a number of post-Roman fragments present, mainly unglazed roof tile; one with a nail hole and brick fragments. There is also a piece of modern glazed foul pipe from (2/02).

### **Potential and further work**

The Roman assemblage broadly conforms to the range of material to be expected from Dorchester with an overlap with, for example, material from the excavations to the north within the defences in the 1960's (Frere 1964; 1984) where the pottery included late Roman and Saxon material. There is a very low incidence of higher status traded wares such as samian, and a dominance of local wares, particularly the grey wares, which is a reflection of the late date of most of the material.

The assemblage is small and does not warrant further work at this stage unless additional work is undertaken at the location at which point the material should be included in any published overview.



Plate 3: Roller stamped flue tile (2/02). Scale in cm.

### **5.2 Post-medieval Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn**

The pottery assemblage comprised 6 sherds with a total weight of 281g. It all came from a single context, [2/02], which was of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century date, but produced a range of wares dating from the 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was recorded using the conventions of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

<b>OXDR:</b>	<b>Red Earthenwares</b> , 1550+. 3 sherds, 163g.
<b>OXNOTTS:</b>	<b>Nottingham/Derby Stoneware</b> , 1700-1900. 1 sherd, 19g
<b>OXST:</b>	<b>Rhenish Stoneware</b> , AD1480 – 1700. 1 sherd, 7g
<b>WHEW:</b>	<b>Mass-produced Earthenwares</b> , 19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 92g.

All the wares are common in the region. Two of the sherds of OXDR have manganese streaks in their glazes, and are likely to be of 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> century date. The sherd of OXST is a Frechen/Cologne type (Gaimster 1997). It is part of a bottle, a typical product of the tradition, probably of the mid 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> century, and is slightly abraded.

### 5.3 Animal Bone *by Simona Denis*

A total of 479 animal bone fragments, of a combined weight of 8580 gr, was recovered during the excavations from 6 different contexts. The vast majority (62.8%) of the assemblage was recovered from context (1/01), by far the richest of the contexts yielding animal bones; an additional 11% was found in context (1/02). The four contexts observed in Trench 2 combined produced only 25.2% of the assemblage, including the small amount (34 gr) from (2/05) recovered entirely through flotation.

#### Species Identification

212 of the remains were identified on the basis of the observation of *Genus*-specific characteristics; 208 other fragments were recognised as belonging to mammals of undetermined species. The remaining part of the assemblage remains unidentified due to its fragmentary nature.

Cow and sheep/goat bones represent the vast majority of the collection (91.4% of the identified fragments); pig and chicken constitute a minor part of the assemblage, with 4.7% and 3.7% respectively.

Due to the variable sizes and robustness of animal bones taphonomic factors may favour preservation of certain species, resulting in the under-representation of other, smaller animals (Kasumally 2002).

#### Butchering Marks

76 fragments, or 15.8% of the assemblage, showed clear butchering evidence, including impact marks, cut marks and fracture patterns relative to both primary and secondary butchering. Primary butchering consists of hide removal, joint dismemberment and meat removal, whereas secondary butchering involves detailed meat and smashing the bone into smaller portions for marrow extraction and grease rendering (Watts 2004).

Since the portioning of a carcass involves so much work, butchers prefer to disjoint the articulations rather than cut through bones, resulting in a larger amount of chop marks on the epiphysis and metaphysis of the bones compared to evidence of sawing (Colley 2006), although sawing marks are considered by some authors as indicative of bone working rather than butchering (Seetah 2009). The pattern is confirmed by the evidence collected at Dorchester-on-Thames, where over 55% of the observed butchering marks consist of chop or deep chop marks often associated with

blade or point insertions, while only 23% of the fragments showed sawing. In many cases a combination of deep chop and finer marks was observed, the result of the disarticulation and then the portioning of the meat, with a concentration of the marks produced by finer tools around the epiphysis of the bones.

Context	Genus	No. of Items	Weight (gr)	Type	Butchering Marks	Identification
2/01	Unidentified Mammal	1	17	Cranium	None	Unidentified
2/01	Unidentified Mammal	6	61	Costal groove	None	Unidentified
2/01	Ovis	1	22	Proximal metacarpal	None	Goat/Sheep
2/01	Ovis	1	15	Tibia metaphysis	None	Goat/Sheep
2/01	Unidentified Mammal	4	49	Unidentified	None	Unidentified
2/01	Unidentified Mammal	1	26	Unidentified long bone	?Scoop	Unidentified
2/01	Ovis	1	17	1st phalanx	None	Goat
2/01	?Ovis	1	53	Cornual process	Saw on both ends	?Sheep/Goat
2/01	Bos	1	155	Proximal metacarpal	Shallow chop diagonal to shaft, fine slices perpendicular to shaft near proximal	Cow
2/01	Bos	1	46	Infraspinous fossa	Saw on both ends	Cow
2/01	?Bos	5	151	Vertebrae	None	?Cow
2/01	?Ovis	1	12	Vertebrae	None	?Sheep/Goat
2/01	Bos	1	39	Radius-ulna capitular fossa	None	Cow
2/01	?Bos	1	18	Molar	None	?Cow
2/01	?Bos	1	27	Premolar	?Chop diagonal	?Cow
2/01	Bos	1	101	Left femur proximal epiphysis	None	Cow
2/01	Bos	1	113	Right femur eproximal piphysis	?Dee chop perpendicular to shaft, exit towards proximal	Cow
2/01	Unidentified Mammal	3	58	Unidentified	None	Unidentified
2/01	?Bos	1	27	Cranium	None	Cow
2/01	?Ovis	1	16	?Scapula	None	?Sheep/Goat
2/01	?Ovis	1	4	Unidentified long bone	Deep chop along shaft, ?fine slice diagonal to shaft	?Sheep/Goat
2/02	Unidentified Mammal	10	53	Unidentified	None	Unidentified
2/02	?Bos	3	68	Vertebrae	None	?Cow
2/02	?Bos	1	15	Vertebrae	Saw along centre	?Cow
2/02	?Bos	1	26	Vertebrae	Saw along centre, burnt	?Cow
2/02	Ovis	1	13	Innominate	Saw	Goat
2/02	?Bos	3	59	Costal groove	Saw, deep chop	?Cow
2/02	?Bos	2	48	Costal groove	None	?Cow
2/02	?Ovis	3	21	Costal groove	Saw on both ends	?Sheep/Goat
2/02	?Ovis	5	14	Costal groove	None	?Sheep/Goat
2/02	?Ovis	1	2	Costal groove	Fine slice	?Sheep/Goat
2/02	?Avis	2	7	Costal groove with tuberculus	Deep chop	?Chicken
2/02	?Avis	1	3	Costal groove with tuberculus	None	?Chicken
2/02	Ovis	1	23	Costal groove with tuberculus	None	Sheeo/Goat
2/02	Unidentified Mammal	2	56	Unidentified long bone	None	Unidentified
2/02	?Bos	1	60	Unidentified long bone	Deep chop diagonal to shaft	?Cow
2/02	Bos	2	62	1st phalanx	None	Cow
2/02	Ovis	1	23	1st phalanx	None	Goat
2/02	Bos	1	20	2nd phalanx	None	Cow
2/02	Avis	1	2	Tarsometatarsus	None	?Chicken
2/02	Avis	1	2	Left ulna	None	?Chicken
2/02	Avis	1	<2	Left ulna	None	?Chicken, young individual

2/02	Sus	1	45	Right humerus distal epiphysis	None	?Pig, young individual
2/02	Sus	1	36	Right humerus distal epiphysis	Saw	Pig
2/02	Bos	1	41	Astragalus	None	Cow
2/02	Avis	1	5	Innominate	None	?Chicken
2/02	Ovis	1	31	Proximal metacarpal	None	Sheep/Goat
2/02	Bos	1	84	Femur head	Deep Chop, Blade insertion on head	Cow
2/02	Bos	1	78	Proximal metacarpal	Deep chop diagonal to shaft	Cow
2/02	Unidentified Mammal	11	114	Unidentified	None	Unidentified
2/02	Ovis	2	21	Scapula	None	Sheep/Goat
2/02	Bos	1	103	Scapula	Deep chop diagonal to bone axis	Cow
2/02	Bos	1	64	Radius-ulna olecranon	None	Cow
2/02	Ovis	1	17	Mandible with molars	None	Sheep/Goat, young individual
2/02	Ovis	1	31	Acetabulum	Saw	Sheep/Goat, young individual
2/02	Ovis	1	21	Proximal radius	None	Goat
2/02	Unidentified Mammal	4	41	Unidentified long bone	None	Unidentified
2/02	Bos	1	33	Femur head	None	Cow
2/02	Ovis	1	5	Femur head	None	Sheep/Goat, young individual
2/02	Ovis	1	12	Scapula	Saw	Sheep/Goat
2/02	Ovis	1	7	Proximal radius-ulna	Saw	Sheep/Goat
2/02	Ovis	1	22	Premolar	None	Sheep/Goat
2/04	Ovis	3	31	Unidentified long bone	None	Sheep/Goat
2/04	Ovis	1	2	Costal groove	Saw	Sheep/Goat
2/04	Bos	1	45	Unidentified	None	Cow
2/04	Unidentified Mammal	2	29	Vertebrae	None	Unidentified
2/04	Bos	1	8	Costal groove	None	Cow
2/04	?Bos	1	30	Unidentified long bone	Deep chop	?Cow
	<b>Total</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>8580</b>			

#### 5.4 Bone Spoons

Two carved bone spoons were recovered from context (2/02). The objects, possibly part of a set, show an identical plain, simple design with no decorations or marks, and are similar to examples dated to the Victorian period. One of the items is complete, with a clear green stain typically caused by the contact with degraded copper or bronze.

#### 5.5 Oyster Shells

A small assemblage of 8 oyster shell fragments, of a combined weight of 79 gr, was recovered from context (1/01). 3 of the examples were identified as left or lower valve and 3 as right or upper valve based on the aspect of the surfaces; the lower tends to be shallowly concave, while the upper valve is usually flat (Winder 2011). The two remaining fragments were not positively identified.

It is not recommended to retain the fragments.

## 5.6 Carbonised Plant Remains

During the excavation, soil samples were taken from three contexts. Each sample had an original capacity of 22 litres and was floated onto a 0.25mm mesh and dried. The heavy residues were sieved over a 1.0 or 2.0mm mesh and quickly checked for any remains which had not floated.

Carbonised grains of undetermined cereals were recovered from three different contexts, for a combined weight of 8 gr.

Context	Sample No.	Weight (gr)
1/01	<2>	2
1/02	<1>	<2
2/05	<3>	4

## 5.7 Metal Objects by Simona Denis

Iron and copper alloy objects were recovered from three different contexts. All of the items are very poorly preserved and show advanced corrosion.

### Iron objects

#### Nails

A small assemblage of 5 iron nails was recovered during the excavation. All of the items are very poorly preserved and show advanced corrosion. With the exception of a single hand-wrought and one unidentified example, the nails were identified as being machine-cut, and dated to the late 18<sup>th</sup> - early 19<sup>th</sup> C.

Context	Type	Manufacture details	Comments	Date Range
1/01	General purpose nail	Hand-wrought square section with handmade irregular round flat head	Point not preserved. ?Clog nail	L17th- E19th C
		Machine made with wire shank		L19th C
	Unidentified	Unknown		Undated
2/02	General purpose nail	Machine-cut square section with hand-hammered, side-pinched head	Point not preserved	L18th C
		Machine-cut square section with hand-hammered, T-head	?Chamfer head	19 <sup>th</sup> C

#### Buckle – 14<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> C

A single framed, rectangular cast buckle was found in context (2/02); the cast object, complete with stud hook, was identified as utilitarian/harness buckle. Medium-sized plain rectangular buckles are the most common type produced between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Whitehead 2003).

### **Horseshoe – Post-Medieval**

A small (70 mm wide), cast iron horseshoe was collected from context (2/02). The object was tentatively dated to the post-medieval period based on the presence of drilled rather than punched nail holes.

### **Unidentified Object**

One unidentified, possibly cast triangular fragment of iron of unknown function was collected from context (2/02).

### **Copper Alloy**

#### **Serving Vessel – Undated**

Four fragments belonging to a possible serving vessel were recovered from context (2/01). The very thin object is heavily corroded and flattened. No decoration was observed.

### **Unidentified Objects**

A thin, possibly rounded flat sheet of copper alloy was found in context (2/01). Function and date of the object remain undetermined.

Soil sample <2> from context (1/01) revealed a small fragment of copper alloy of unidentified function.

It is not recommended to retain unidentified and severely corroded fragments.

### **5.8 Clay Tobacco Pipe by Simona Denis**

A total of 6 clay tobacco pipe stem fragments were recovered from three different contexts. All of the examples are unmarked and undecorated, and do not show any diagnostic feature; therefore, only a general dating to the mid-late 18<sup>th</sup> C is proposed.

It is not recommended to retain the fragments.

### **5.9 Glass by Simona Denis**

A total of 11 glass fragments were collected from contexts (2/01) and (2/02). The assemblage comprises flat glass and bottles, including a single example of complete small 'poison' bottle.

#### **Flat glass**

Contexts (2/01) and (2/02) held 4 fragments of clear, flat glass. The manufacturing technique was identified as float glass, typically used in the production of modern window glass.

## Bottles

Five fragmentary and one complete glass bottles were recovered during the excavation. The assemblage was dated to the late 19<sup>th</sup> C – early 20<sup>th</sup> C based on manufacturing details.

Context	Type	Colour	Bore Diameter (mm)	Manufacturing technique	Date Range
2/01	Bottle Finish	Clear	75, complete	Non-Owen machine made, with embossed letters 'SA' on base	L19th-E20th C
	Complete Poison Bottle	Dark Amber	23, complete	Machine made, parison moulded line, with embossed 'MILTON 5' on base	1940s
2/02	Bottle Base	Aqua	N/A	Machine made, square ?milk bottle	?Modern
	Food Bottle Neck	Aqua	?45, reconstructed	Machine made	L19th-E20th C
	Food Bottle/Fruit Jar Finish	Aqua	42, complete	Machine made. Complete tooled finish with laid on rim and wavy collar decoration	L19th-E20th C
			53, complete	Machine made. Complete applied finish with laid on rim	L19th-E20th C

### Poison Bottle – 1940s

The complete, octagonal brown glass bottle recovered from context (2/01) was positively identified as a poison bottle produced for the 'Milton' pharmaceutical company to contain antiseptic (<http://www.thegarret.org.uk/collectionbottles.html>) used as a disinfectant to treat burns and the effects of gas and chemical attacks. The machine-made bottle shows embossed 'MILTON 5' on the base and a parison moulded line, formed on the surface of the bottle by the mould part joints of a semi or fully-automatic machine (<http://www.sha.org/bottle/glossary.htm#Parison%20Mold>).

### Food Bottle or Fruit Jars – L19th-E20th C

The earliest semi-automatic machines put into production in the mid-1890s could only make wide-mouthed containers like fruit jars and food bottles. The fragments found in context (2/02), although showing extreme patination, clearly show the original aqua colour, very common in containers produced before the 1920s, and completely replaced by colourless glass by the 1930s (<http://www.sha.org/bottle/colors.htm#Aqua>). The two finish fragments have a tooled finish with side mould seam, a manufacturing detail suggesting a dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup>- early 20<sup>th</sup> C (<http://www.sha.org/bottle/finishes.htm#Molded%20&%20Tooled%20finish>).

It is not recommended to retain flat glass and non-diagnostic fragments.

### **5.10 Other Modern Materials** by *Simona Denis*

#### **Pottery**

A total of 39 shards of modern pottery, for a combined weight of 739 gr, were found in contexts (2/01) and (2/02). The fragments belong to 20<sup>th</sup> century plates, tea cups and pots, and include decorated examples.

#### **Brick**

A fragment of modern frogged brick preserving a partial moulded 'C' was recovered from context (1/01). The fragment of CBM, possibly a brick, found in context (2/01) shows an impressed 'R'.

#### **Plastic**

A single moulded plastic item, possibly part of a garden pot, was also found in context (2/02).

It is not recommended to retain the modern materials.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The archaeological field evaluation was successful and meets the aims of the investigations, which were laid out in the WSI.

The majority of finds recovered during the evaluation indicates intensive Roman occupation of the site of during the 4<sup>th</sup> century at the level reached. The lowest deposit encountered in both trenches (1/02) and (2/05), represents Roman occupation of the site presumably during in first half of 4th century. Deposit (2/04) and the wall foundation **1/03** seem to be contemporary, and represent domestic activities presumably during the second half of 4<sup>th</sup> century. The sandstone rubble foundation **1/03** may possible represent the foundation of a timber building. Similar structures were investigated during the archaeological excavation at the allotments in 2008-2010 (Booth et al. 2012, 17-21), which lies 150m to the south. Processing of cereal grains was being carried out in this area as seen in the Roman occupation layer (1/02) and (2/05), and within the mixed deposits in the upper part of Trench 1.

Roman ceramic building material recovered during the evaluation, had a residual character and it is highly likely that it comes from some nearby substantial building.

The two sherds of Saxon pottery and limited medieval pottery suggest some limited activity during these periods in the area.

Cut feature 2/03 is interpreted as mid 20<sup>th</sup> century rubbish pit or soakaway that produced a relatively large amount of domestic rubbish. This included two spoons made of bone.

Deposits (1/01) and (2/01) appear to be the result of disturbance of the upper part of the site in modern times, perhaps during the building of the present dwelling.

## 7 ARCHIVE

### Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

#### Paper record

The project brief  
Written scheme of investigation  
The project report  
The primary site record

#### Physical record

Finds  
Carbonised remains

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Oxfordshire Resource Centre under accession number: awaited.

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**Appendix 1: Trench Context Inventory\***

ID	Type	Description	Depth	Length	Width	Finds	Interpretation	Date
<b>Trench 1</b>								
1/01	Deposit	Soft dark brownish grey silty loam with moderate charcoal and small well-rounded stones and occasional medium size sub-angular stones.	1.41m	2m	1.90m	Pottery, animal bone, Fe-nail, CBM	Successive occupation layers	4 <sup>th</sup> c. to modern
1/02	Deposit	Soft mid brown sandy silt with frequent small well-rounded stones and occasional charcoal.	> 0.30m	0.60m	0.60m	Pottery, animal bone	Occupation layer	Roman, 4 <sup>th</sup> c.
1/03	Masonry	Seven sub-angular sandstone of max. dimensions 127×212×140mm., aligned N-S and E-W. No bonding material.	0.14m	1.08m (total)	0.40m	-	Foundation of a possible timber building	Roman, 4 <sup>th</sup> c. (?)
1/04	Cut	Not-perceptible	0.14m (?)	1.08m (?)	0.40m	n/a	Construction cut of wall 1/03	Roman, 4 <sup>th</sup> c. (?)
<b>Trench 2</b>								
2/01	Deposit	Soft dark brownish grey silty loam with occasional small well-rounded stones .	1m	1.50m	1.50m	Pottery, animal bone, fragments of glass bottles, cu-alloy vessel, CBM	Successive occupation layers	4 <sup>th</sup> c. to modern
2/02	Fill	Loose dark grey silt mixed with sand, ash and occasional charcoal.	0.25m	1.50m	0.80m	Pottery, animal bone, glass, CBM	Fill of rubbish pit/soakaway 2/03	Mid 20 <sup>th</sup> century
2/03	Cut	Presumably sub-oval or sub-rectangular cut with moderate concave sides. Only east edge of cut exposed in the trench.	0.25m	1.50m	0.80m	n/a	Rubbish pit/soakaway	Mid 20 <sup>th</sup> century
2/04	Deposit	Soft dark brownish grey silty loam with moderate small well-rounded stones and occasional charcoal. Very similar to deposit 2/01.	0.22m	1.50m	0.86m	Pottery, animal bone	Occupation layer	Roman, 4 <sup>th</sup> c.
2/05	Deposit	Soft mid brown sandy silt with frequent small well-rounded stones and occasional charcoal.	0.32m	1.50m	0.91m	pottery	Occupation layer	Roman, 4 <sup>th</sup> c.

\* – All dimensions of context are given as excavated

**Appendix 2: Roman and Post-Roman Pottery**

Cxt	Sample	Grog	OXFRS	OXFWS	OXFWH	OXFRE/GY	BB1	Sam	amp	ROBSH	other	Sx	Med	Pm	Tot no	Tot wt	cbm no	cbm wt	Date
1/01		3	113	10	3	75	3	0	4	7	13	2	1	5	239	3501.5	29	1613	Ro/Sx/Pm
1/01	<2>	2	5	1	0	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	17	113	0	0	C4
1/02		1	1	0	0	26	5	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	38	330	0	0	C4
2/01		2	1	2	0	8	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	18	294	13	986	Ro/Pm
2/02		1	3	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	168	6	535	C4/Pm
2/04		4	7	0	0	33	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	46	708	0	0	C4
2/05		1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	22	0	0	C2/C3
2/05	<1>	0	1	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	11	32	0	0	C1-C4
U/S		0	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	69	1	38	Ro/Pm
<b>TOT</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>5237.5</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>3172</b>	