Trench MF16 narrative

Trevor Greer

Introduction

Trench 16 was located to investigate the *temenos* wall of the temple precinct which showed in places on the geophysics. This part of the temenos wall represented the northeast corner, the wall running east to west and turning through a right angle heading south. The foundation trench of the wall was all that survived, being 0.7m wide and cut into subsoil to a depth approximately 0.3m. It was packed with mortared limestone rubble and would have been possible of supporting a substantial wall.

Overall, Trench 16 was 5m x 5m square and with the wall being in the southwest corner of the trench. The corner section of wall [16014] measured 2.4m east to west in length and turned at a sharp right angle and measured 2.2m north to south. The east/west section was uniform at 0.7m in width whilst the north/south section expanded to approximately 1.2m. Along the east outer side of the north/south wall were three large patches of trampled mortar (16003). Close to the northeastern corner of the trench, away from the wall, a circle of burnt limestone pieces was located, that measured 0.2m x 0.4m and was recorded as a hearth [16006]. There were no other significant features in the trench. Two elongated scrapes. [16007] and [16009] just east of the north/south section of the wall were recorded as features at the time of excavation but proved to be plough furrows.

A small amount of mixed Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered. Small finds consisted of three pieces of flint in the top soil and two 3rd/4th century Copper-alloy Roman coins in the immediate subsoil.

Cuts and structures

[16006] Hearth. A number of pieces of limestone showing signs of having been burned forming a hearth measuring 0.2m x 0.4m.

(16002) Fill. Single fill of hearth. Compact layer of light black loam with stone and charcoal.

[16007] Cut. Shallow oval cut with gently sloping sides, 0.05m deep and thought to be a plough cut.

(16008) Fill. Single fill of [16007]. Sandy loam and small stones.

[16009] Cut. Shallow cut 0.6m long and 0.05m deep, thought to be a plough cut.

(16010) Fill. Single fill of [16009]. Sandy loam and small stones.

[16014] Wall. Cut for the *temenos* wall trench. 'U' shaped linear trench aligned east/west with a right-angle bend aligned north/south and heading southward. The trench had a sharp break of slope at the top with near vertical sides.

(16015) Fill. Destruction layer on top of the north/south temenos wall. Compact black/ brown loam/mortar mix 0.05 to 0.1m thick.

(16016) Fill. Back fill at bottom of the trench forming the foundation for the wall. Black/brown loam with inclusions of various sized stone and mortar.

(16004) Fill. Main fill of the trench, made up of rubble stone and mortar.

Layers

(16001) Layer. Compact elongated patch of mortar situated alongside the east/west wall on the outer northern side of the wall. Thought to have fallen from the wall.

(16003) Layer. Three patches of trampled mortar and fine stones situated on the east side of the north-south wall. These are possibly scatters of material dumped when the wall was robbed out.

Pottery Analysis

Iron Age pottery: 23 sherds were recovered, made up of 21 sherds of Iron Age Coarse Ware and two sherds of Fine Ware.

Roman Pottery: In total 83 sherds were recovered, with six types predominating:

Roman Coarse Ware Oxidised (orange/red).	7 sherds
Roman Fine Ware Oxidised (orange/red).	4 sherds
Roman Coarse Ware Reduced (grey/black).	37 sherds
Roman White Ware.	9 sherds
Oxford Red Slip Ware (orange fabric)	8 sherds
DOR(BB1 Black Burnished Ware)	7 sherds

16 sherds of Iron Age pottery and 62 sherds of the Roman pottery were recovered from context (16000) top soil. Other contexts yielding Roman pottery were context (16005) 10 sherds and context (16015) nine sherds. Context (16003) yielded six sherds of Iron Age Coarse Ware.