Trench MF18 narrative

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Summary
Trench 18 was situated over the remains of a cluster of anomalies, including possible walls, visible on the geophysical survey outside the eastern side of the temple *temenos* wall. Exploratory excavations in 2002 revealed the remains of two stone-built structures. The trench was excavated over the course of four field seasons (2002=2005), with its dimensions adjusted each season to explore underlying archaeological features (Figures 1 and 2). Full details of excavation layout, methods, and all the raw data used to prepare this summary report are provided in the accompanying appendix [please note that the appendix is a crude archive, not a polished excavation report]. The excavations revealed the wall foundations of two large Roman structures (the South Building and the North Building), running parallel east-west, that backed onto the *temenos* wall of the temple. Analysis of the stratigraphy and material culture indicate that both buildings were constructed and used in the late Roman period – most likely starting in the first half of the 4th century CE. Multiple layers of constructed floor surfaces within and outside both buildings suggest an extended period of use and maintenance in the early to mid-4th century. Furthermore, extensive quantities of late Roman Oxfordshire fine-ware food serving and consumption vessels suggest that both sites were involved in food preparation with limited metalworking also occurred in the North Building based on copper content in soil samples and at least two robust hearths/furnaces. This supports our interpretation that both buildings, positioned right outside the temple entrance, serviced visitors to the temple during the 4th century CE.

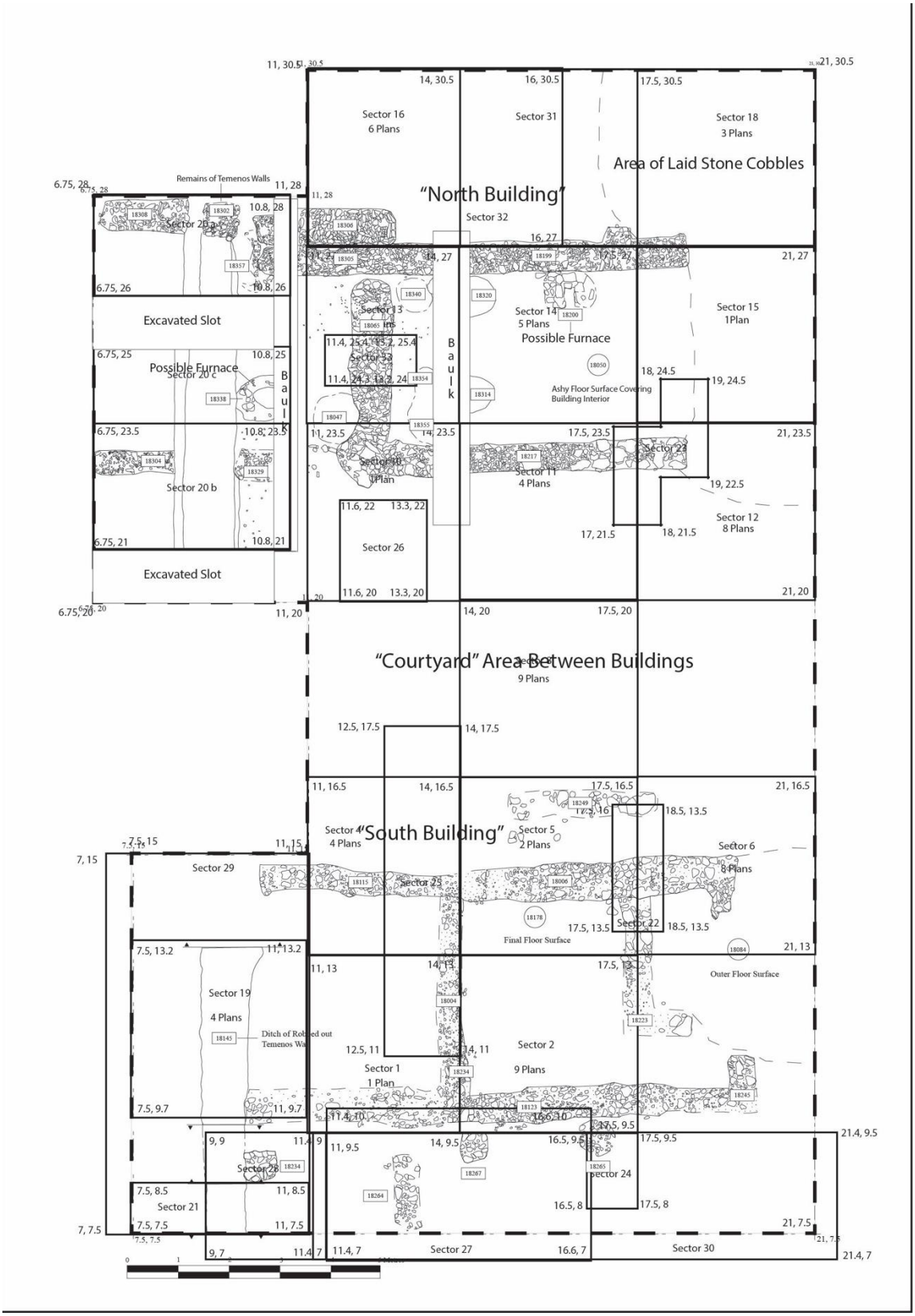


Figure 1. Composition plan of Trench 18. The trench was excavated over four field seasons. During MF02, four small exploratory slots were cleared (Sectors 23, 25, 26, and 33). The trench was then gridded into 3 x 3 metre sectors, which were alternately cleared and excavated in a checkerboard pattern during MF03, MF04, and MF05 to expose the upper levels of all substantial features while cross sectioning the core areas of both buildings and the 'courtyard' space in between them down to natural bedrock.

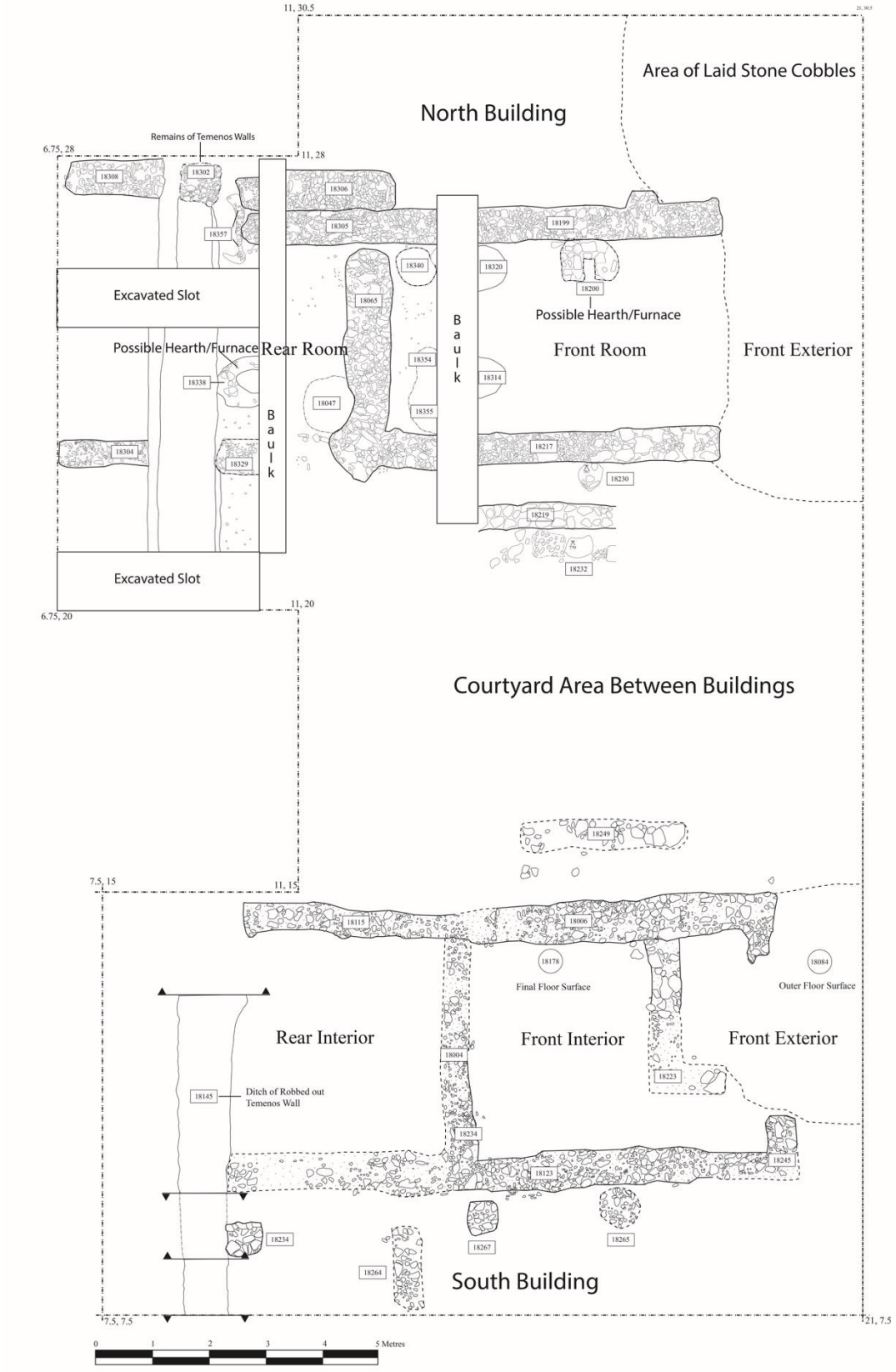


Figure 2: Trench 18 showing the North and South buildings and their relationship to the temple temenos wall.

Overview of Trench 18 Excavations
Given the complexity of Trench 18, this summary report is presented in four segments: 1) The South Building; 2) The North Building; 3) The 'Courtyard' between the two buildings; and 4) The temple *temenos* wall.

1 The South Building

1.1 Building Layout
Excavations started on the South Building in MF02 and continued through MF04, with the trench extended several times to uncover the full layout of the building and its intersection with the *temenos* wall. The building was covered by a layer of debris, including limestone blocks, large amounts of roof tile, and a rich assortment of Roman material culture (pottery, metal work, animal bone, etc.). The removal of the topsoil and debris exposed two main walls running east-west for approximately 7 m. (Figure 3). The northern wall was recorded as two segments [18006] and [18115] but was all part of the same phase of construction. The southern wall was recorded as [18123]. Both walls consisted of mid to large angular limestone blocks packed into a foundation trench. The walls were mainly survived by the lower foundations. In several places, parts of the upper wall were found. These were built of courses of angular (but not clearly faced) limestone blocks held together with lime mortar. In some instances with decaying pieces of painted wall plaster.

The back of the building butts right up against the foundation ditch of the temple *temenos* wall. It is possible that the South Building used the standing *temenos* wall as its rear wall implying that the *temenos* wall was a robust feature for the duration of use of the South Building. The *temenos* wall was largely robbed out, likely during the late to post-Roman period, disturbing the interface between the South Building and *temenos* wall. The South Building is approximately 3.3m wide and has clear evidence for at least two internal divisions (Front and Rear Interior rooms). A narrow wall built with limestone blocks [18004] bisects the building, creating at least two defined interior spaces/rooms. There is no indication of an opening in that interior wall, but as it was only survived by the foundation, it is possible that there was an interior door that left no archaeological trace. There is no clearly defined eastern wall, with both main walls of the structure turning inwards at right angles at the eastern side of the structure. Approximately two metres in from the eastern edge, there is a wall segment [18223] several metres inside the building that butts the northern wall and extends two thirds of the way to the southern wall, where it turns at a right angle toward the eastern side of the building. This forms a partially enclosed atrium at the eastern end of the building. It is likely that the structure did not have a substantial eastern face but rather had a working surface on the outside to the east of the building that was directly associated with its function, perhaps covered by a more ephemeral structure, such as an awning or wooden wall. This is further supported by the fact that there was a thick sandy-gravel floor surface extending from the interior wall [18223] outside the structure.

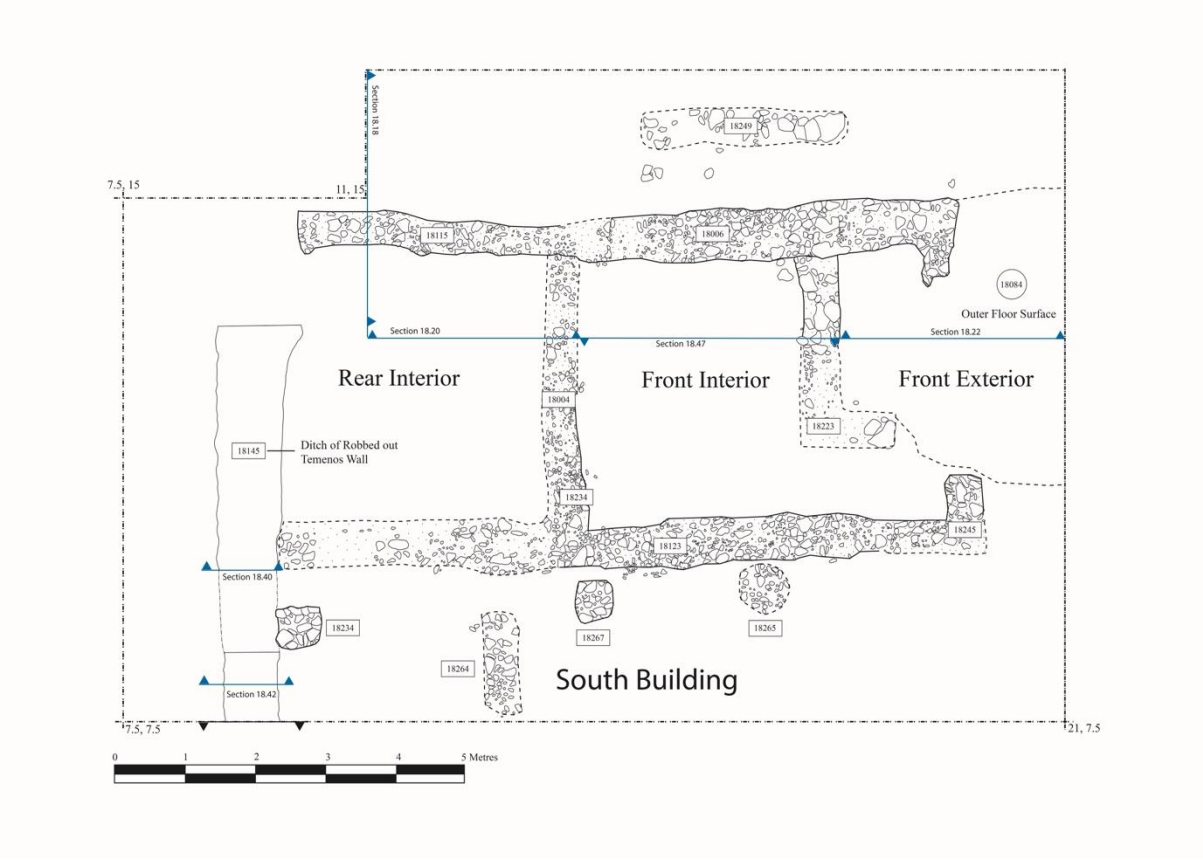


Figure 3: Plan of the South Building, showing location of selected stratigraphic sections presented in this report.

Excavation immediately to the north and south of the building exposed several stone features were probably part of the South Building. There are three well-defined, tightly packed, and clearly constructed semi-circular clusters of limestone blocks [18234], [18267], and [18265] to the south of the building, along with a segment of wall running north-south [18264] and [18264]. It is possible that the clusters of stone were post-pads to support upright timbers or plinths. There is a wall segment immediately north of the building, running parallel to the north wall [18249], similar to that found immediately south of the North Building. These features, along with the floor surfaces in front (east) of both buildings suggests that the relative activities of each building extended outside their structures.

1.2 Interior and Front/Entrance of the South Building

There are three distinct spaces of the South Building, the Front Exterior Space, Front Interior Space, and Rear Interior Space. We present a probable phasing of these three spaces based upon stratigraphy, an overview of material culture recovered, and an interpretation of function each space.

1.2.1 Front Exterior

The Front Exterior was exposed within pilot Sector 22, unexcavated (but cleared) in Sector 3, and fully excavated down to the underlying natural sediment in Sector 6. Section Drawing 18.22 shows an east – west cross section of the stratigraphy across the centre of the Front Exterior (Figure 4). The front of the building, as excavated in Sector 6 and exposed in Sector 3, is shaped by clearly defined north [18006] and south [18123] walls, both of which turn in at right angles for about 1 metre to form what seems to be an open front structure, serving as the entrance to the front of the South Building. It is possible that the front included wooden

doors/walls, but we found no evidence to support this. A partial interior wall [18223] extended south from the northern wall, approximately 4 metres inside the building. It ended with a right turn pointing to the exterior of the front of the structure and left an opening into the Front Interior room.

There are four possible phases of activity within the Front Exterior Space, based on evidence from Sectors 22 and 6, laid out here from earliest to latest:

Phase 1: There are two soil layers that pre-dated the construction of the wall. The lowest, (18124) goes down to bedrock and contains a mix of Roman and Iron Age material culture. This is most likely the same layer as (18251), the lowest layer found within the Front Interior Space. This is covered in another soil layer (18109) that contains 371 sherds of mainly Roman but also Iron Age pottery, as well as several metal small finds, including pieces of jewelry. Note that (18109) could be the same as layer (18228/18182), the second Roman soil within the Front Interior Space. They have slightly different sediment profiles, but similar composition of ceramics, and (18109) produced notably more metal small finds. The presence of 53 sherds of Oxfordshire white-slipped ware suggests the layer was collecting discarded material from the late 3rd century to mid/late 4th century CE. The heavy presence of Roman white wares points to a combination of mortaria and/or flagons, suggesting food preparation and consumption at this area during at least the early 4th century CE, prior to the construction of the South Building.

Phase 2: The second phase culminates in the construction of the South Building. There are some pre-wall units of an undetermined nature [18038] and (18141). Section drawings in Sector 22 indicates that at least the north wall [18006] was constructed within a slot dug down to bedrock which was filled by courses of stacked limestone blocks and dumps of soil (18036) and (18037). These two deposits go down to bedrock and include 49 and 85 sherds of Roman pottery (with no Iron Age material) respectively. The ceramics are broadly similar in chronology and function to the assemblage from (18109), with later material from the 4th century. It could not be determined if the interior wall [18223] was part of the same phase of construction but is likely to be part of the initial design given the separation of floor surfaces between the Front Exterior and Front Interior spaces.

Phase 3: There are two distinct activity surfaces in the Front Exterior space. The first (18084), is a thin spread of cream-coloured cobbled limestone with sandy mortar. This surface does not extend north of the north wall, suggesting that it comes out from the interior of the open front. A total of 195 sherds of mostly Roman ceramics were recovered from this layer, along with a brooch and a Roman coin (Constantinus Pius Felix Augustus, with a Ticinum mint mark, which dates *c.* 318 – 319 CE). The ceramics provide a possible range of 260 to 400, with a mixture of Oxfordshire fine-ware vessels used for both food preparation and serving. This is covered by a thick layer of soil (18079) that contained 285 sherds of Roman pottery and a few metal and glass small finds, including pieces of jewelry. The ceramics present a similar profile in terms of chronology and function as found within (18084). Both surfaces were associated with activities that occurred while the structure was in use but note that (18079) extends to the north of the north wall and so represents a less discrete use of space in front of the building.

Phase 4: The final phase consists of what seems to be a mix of post-structure processes. There is a small cut [18225] with a single fill (18078) of an undetermined purpose down through both activity surfaces. This is followed by three spreads of material all of which are

debris from the destruction or decay of the building. There are two similar deposits of silty loam with extensive limestone and mortar inclusions on either side of the north wall: (18021) inside the structure contained 129 sherds of Roman pottery and a coin dated to the 4th century CE and (18022) directly outside the north wall, contained 683 sherds of Roman pottery, and a Roman coin, a Constantinopolis commemorative coin (clipped) made in the Trier mint to mark the founding of Constantinople, dated between *c.* 333 and 334/346 CE. It is not clear if these layers are a later structural component or part of the debris from the building. The material in these deposits speaks to a slightly later date than what was recovered from the previous three phases, and it is plausible that these two deposits date from the mid to late 4th century. These are covered by a few deposits that post-date the structure and interface with the overlying plough soil, with the most prominent being (18013) which contains a range of material culture spanning from the early to late Roman period.

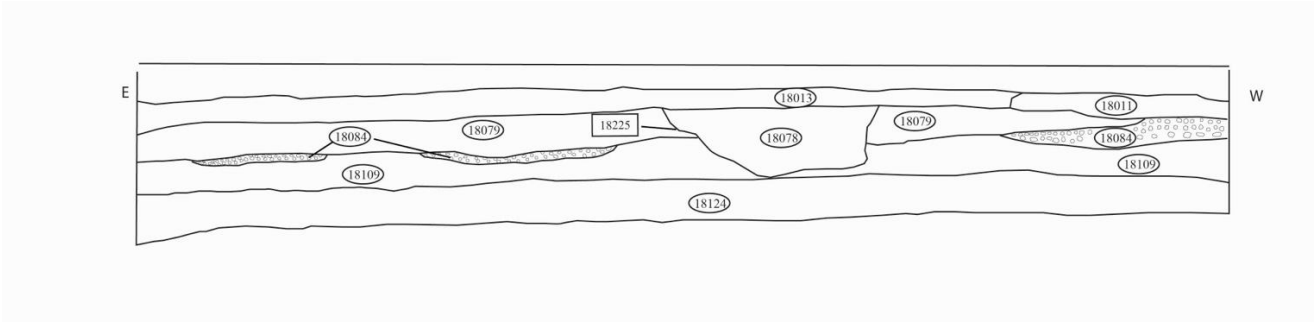


Figure 4. Section 18.22, running east-west through the middle of the Front Exterior. The section is c. 3 metres across.

1.2.2 Front Interior Space

The Front Interior Space was excavated in Sector 2 which covered nearly the entire room. Section Drawing 18.47 shows an east – west cross section of the stratigraphy across the centre of the Front Interior (Figure 5). The Front Interior Space is defined by the northern [18006] and southern [18123] walls of the South Building, a partial wall [18223] with a likely entrance on the east side, and a north/south running interior wall [18004] that completely divides the interior of the building into two internal compartments. This area was completely excavated in Sector 2, with the upper deposits and features partially exposed in Sector 5.

There are six possible phases within the Front Interior Space, laid out here from earliest to latest:

Phase 1: The initial phase is the pre-Roman construction soil (18251) right above the limestone bedrock which contained no material culture. This is most likely the same as (18124), the lowest layer within the Front Interior space of the South Building.

Phase 2: The second phase possibly starts with the construction of the walls [18006, 18123, 18223, and 18004], but this is difficult to determine given they seem to have been cut into slots. This initial phase of construction-related activity includes a cluster of packed limestone blocks [18257] and a cohesive packed limestone cobble surface [18250].

Phase 3: The third phase consists of a thick soil accumulation (18182/18228) that contains over 700 sherds of mainly Roman with some Iron Age pottery. The pottery suggests a 4th century assemblage, with some residual material, with a high ratio of Roman White Wares. The assemblage is consistent with food preparation and storage, with the relatively fewer

Oxfordshire fine wares (as compared with the front exterior space) suggesting less serving and consumption within this space. This fills most of the Front Interior Space and is bounded by the four walls, probably the initial activity surface within this room. There are several discrete patches of intense burnt material (18255 and 18256) on the surface of 18182/18228, that reflect the final stage of activity before the construction of a sequence of floor surfaces in Phases 4 and 5.

Phase 4: There are three different discrete patches of lime mortar, sand, and gravel (18222, 18223, and 18241) immediately on top of (18182/18228). Their exact function is uncertain, but they contain small quantities of Roman pottery. It is possible they were patches laid to even out the underlying surface (18182/18228) and/or thin foundations for activity that occurred before the sequence of floors were constructed in Phase 5.

Phase 5: There are at least three thin constructed/laid sand and lime mortar floor surfaces. The first (earliest) surface (18181) contained 48 sherds of Roman pottery and 1 sherd of Iron Age pottery. The second (18179) contained 20 sherds of Roman and 1 sherd of Iron Age pottery. The final surface contained 2 sherds of Roman pottery. These thin layers covered most of the interior of this room. They were laid on top of each other, with no indication of sediment accumulation suggesting a hiatus in the sequence. The ceramics within Context (18181) are broadly attributable to the 4th century CE. The lesser quantity of coarse cooking and storage wares distinguishes it from the underlying occupation surface (18182), suggesting activity primarily related to serving and consuming food and drink. It is possible that Phase 4 represented episodes of floor repair/resurfacing, while Phase 5 was a renewed use of the room, represented by more fine-ware associated principally with serving and consumption.

Phase 6: There is a small pit [18229] with a single fill (18180) that cuts through these floors into the underlying layers. (18180) contained 54 sherds of Roman pottery of a similar 4th century range as the previous phases, but with a slightly higher concentration of coarse ware than found in Phase 5. This is covered with a few deposits that post-date the structure, with the most prominent being (18013), which interface with the overlying plough soil and contain a mix of early to late Roman material culture.

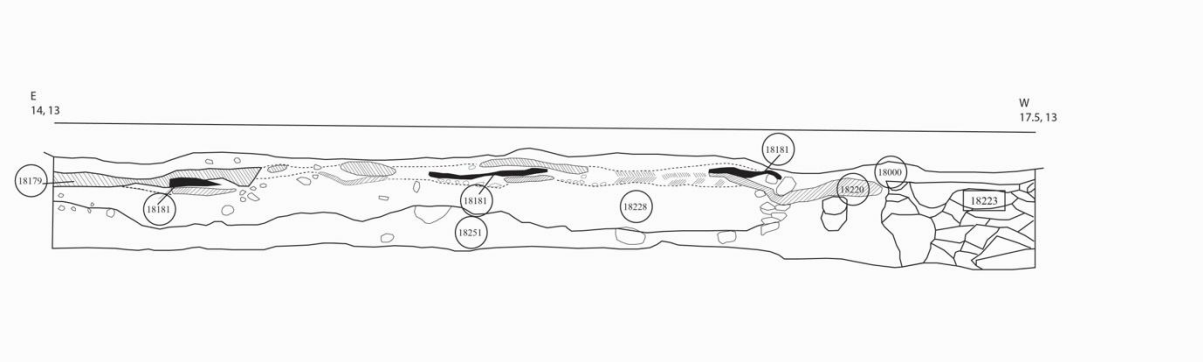


Figure 5. Section 18.47, running east-west through the middle of the Front Interior of the South Building, showing patches of mortar and sand floor surfaces (18179) and (18181). The section is c. 3 metres across.

1.2.3 Rear Interior Space

The Rear Interior Space is defined by the northern [18115/18006] and southern [18123] walls of the South Building, and a north/south running internal wall [18004] that completely divides the interior of the building into two internal compartments. The upper layers of the Rear Interior Space were cleared in Sectors 25 and 1 and excavated most of the way down to

underlying bedrock in Sector 4. Section Drawing 18.20 shows an east – west cross section of the stratigraphy across most of the centre of the Rear Interior (Figure 6). Section Drawing 18.18 shows north – south cross section of the stratigraphy extending from the centre of the Rear Interior to the exterior of the building outside the north wall (Figure 7).

There are four possible phases of activity within the Rear Interior Space, laid out here from earliest to latest:

Phase 1: The initial phase contains two layers of pre-construction soil (18120) and (18233) that underlie both the Front and Rear Interior rooms and extend north into the courtyard space between the South and North Building.

Phase 2: The construction phase was possibly done in the following sequence: A cut (not named on the section drawings) was made down to the bedrock. Wall [18006/18115] was laid in courses. This was immediately followed by two deposits, on each side of the wall within the cut: (18045) outside the wall to the north, and (18104) inside the building, both of which contained small quantities of Roman pottery. A solidly built and tightly packed surface of small, cobbled limestones [18085] is the only floor surface inside the Rear Interior Room. The relatively small number of Roman ceramics associated with the deposits in this phase contain mainly fine wares (associated with food service).

Phase 3: There are a few features situated on floor surface [18085] that could be part of a later period of use, or more probably resulted from the decay/destruction of the building. (18086) is a thin deposit of sandy silt that contained 31 sherds of Roman pottery, as well as 1 sherd of Iron Age coarse ware. This material contains 13 sherds of Oxfordshire Red-Slipped ware – providing a 4th century date, and suggesting a focus on table and serving wares. There was a small cluster of shaped limestone blocks [18074], of an unknown purpose, sitting on floor surface [18085]. There is a small discrete patch of grey silt spread over the area, which contained one heavily corroded 4th century CE coin. All this material was covered by a thin layer of soil, mortar and debris (18075) that covers both the interior of the building and extends north into the courtyard area and contains 34 sherds of mostly fine table ware pottery, with a late Roman date. This is capped by (18013), which is one of the main layers that sits immediately below the plough surface.

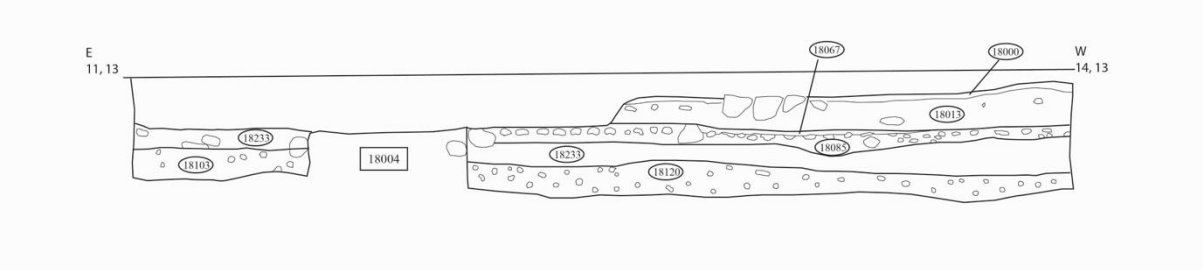


Figure 6. Section 18.20, running east-west through the middle of the Rear Interior of the South Building, showing the main cobbled floor surface (18085) in the rear room. The section is c. 3 metres across.

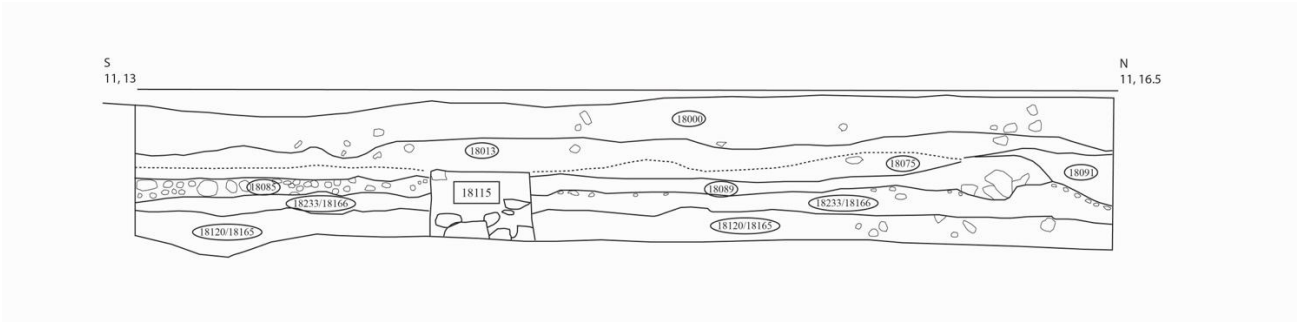


Figure 7. Section 18.18, running north – south from the middle of the Rear Interior of the South Building across the northern wall into the exterior Courtyard space, showing the main cobbled floor surface (18085) in the rear room. The section is c. 3 metres across.

1.3 South Building Summary

The stratigraphy and material culture suggest that the South Building was constructed in the early 4th century CE (probably in one primary phase of construction) on a surface outside the temple wall that had indications of mid-to late-Roman activity. The building contained two interior spaces and a partially opened eastern end with accompanying floor/activity surface that extended out in front of the building. Large amounts of ceramics, tile, building material, ceramic tesserae, shell and animal bone were found within all three of these spaces. In addition, many small finds, such as coins, finely crafted metal tools and jewelry, the remains of delicate ceramic and glass drinking vessels, multi-coloured painted wall plaster, and a very well-preserved intaglio depicting Achilles were recovered. The concentration of fine and table wear beakers and cups, flagons, and handled glass vessels together with the bones of young pig, lamb, chicken, wild birds, calf or veal and many oysters, suggest that the South Building was associated with food production and consumption. The building was an ancillary structure just outside the temple *temenos* wall that served food and drink to temple victors.

The dating of the material culture ranges from late first/early second century to late third/early fourth century CE, approximately contemporary with the temple. However, the phases related to the construction and use of the South Building fall firmly within the 4th century. Pre-construction deposits contain similar date and types of pottery suggesting the area was used for food and drink consumption prior to the construction of the South Building. The building was most likely constructed in the early 4th century, with material culture supporting a broadly consistent picture of intensive food preparation and consumption from the mid-to late 4th century. It is likely that the building stopped being used in the mid to later 4th century, but there is no clear evidence for a sudden destruction event (as seen in the North Building).

2 The "Courtyard"

There is a *c.* 9-metre space between the South and North Buildings. Sectors 4, 5, and 6 (over the northern part of the South Building) extend *c.* 2 metres into this space. Sector 8, excavated down to natural, is in the middle of the space between the two buildings. Sectors 10, 11, and 12 extend down from the south wall of the North Building into this space. This provides evidence for activity within this space, as well as a profile stitching together the west face of Sector 12, the east face of Sector 8, and the west face of Sector 6 that connect the South and North Buildings stratigraphically.

There are five possible phases of deposition and activity within Sector 8:

Phase 1: The initial phase contains two layers (18165) and (18166). (18165) is a soil layer mixed with limestone inclusions sitting directly on the limestone bedrock. This layer contained 1 sherd of Iron Age pottery and 26 sherds of Roman pottery, with no small finds. This contains a small number of fine ware sherds (Oxfordshire Red-Slipped Ware and Oxfordshire White-Slipped Ware) that suggest a later Roman date of 3rd – 4th century CE, as well as some earlier Roman material, which is probably residual. This is covered entirely by (18166), a brown soil with a smaller quantity of limestone inclusions, 2 sherds of Iron Age pottery, 4 sherds of Roman pottery, and no small finds. These are Roman sub-soils both of which predated the construction of both buildings but clearly demonstrate traces of activity by the early 4th century.

Phase 2: A sequence of thin layers which did not cover the entire surface of the sector. The sequence of the earliest two is not clear, (18130) and (18143) and so are treated as broadly contemporary. (18130) is a partial layer of compacted brown soil, with limited limestone inclusions, 34 sherds of Roman pottery (including some later Roman wares), and fragments of a copper nail cleaner and a small glass vessel. The composition of the ceramics is a broader mixture of fine and coarse ware than found in the underlying deposit. Deposit (18143) is a thin compact silt layer that contained 27 sherds of middle-to late Roman pottery, a fragment of a glass vessel, and a fragment of an iron implement. These were followed by a sequence of thin layers. Context (18132) is a brown loam containing 55 sherds of Roman pottery, dominated by coarse wares, with a lesser quantity of fine wares, including some Oxfordshire wares that most likely date to the 4th century CE. Context (18127) is a compacted brown silt with 46 sherds of Roman pottery, including material that most likely dates to the 4th century CE and two Roman coins: Gallienus Aug Dina Cons Aug, part of the 'zoo series' of Emperor Gallienus (AD 253 – 268), most likely struck near the end of his reign, *c.* 267 – 268 CE and an Elagabalus silver denarius (Marcus Aurelius Antoninous), *c.* 222-235 CE. The coins pre-date the 4th century pottery. Context (18126) is a thin ashy patch with 3 sherds of Roman pottery. This horizon was cut by a small irregular scoop [18211] of an unknown function that contained three fills: (18136), (18133), and (18128). Fill (18136) contained 40 sherds of Roman pottery; (18133) contained no material culture; and (18128) contained 1 sherd of Iron Age coarse ware and 7 sherds of Roman pottery.

The presence of Roman material culture suggests that these patches of materials represented activity surfaces in this space, most likely dating from the late 3rd through 4th century CE. The ceramics recovered from this phase are largely consistent with the dated materials recovered from within both the North and South Building, suggesting that much of the focused activity within the Courtyard space, and the construction of both of the North and South Buildings is at the earliest late 3rd century, but most likely within the 4th century CE.

Phase 3: This was followed by two substantial layers that contain more fragments of limestone and higher quantities of material culture than the underlying contexts. The exact relationship between them is unclear and so are treated as broadly contemporary. (18070) was a harder clay/silt layer that contained 168 sherds of Roman pottery, traces of painted wall plaster, fragments of underdetermined copper objects, and two coins. The pottery is a mix of wares containing late Roman material that reflects a full domestic ceramic assemblage (as opposed to one dominated by fine tableware as seen in parts of the South and North Building). One coin is a Crispus non caes – 'Soli Invicto Comiti', for Crispus (reign 317 – 326 CE), most likely struck between AD 317 and 326. Layer (18092) was a grey silty soil that contained 143 sherds of Roman pottery and a quantity of glass fragments and metal objects, including two coins. The pottery is similar in dating and composition to (18070),

suggesting that these two deposits are part of a similar process of steady accumulation. A large bronze Trajan sestertius (reigned 98 – 117 CE), that contains the title Parthico, which dates the coin to the final years of his reign, *c.* 112 – 117. The other coin is Imp Constantin VS, Emperor Constantine the Great, from the Ticinum mint, which was struck between 318 – 319 CE. The earlier coin is clearly residual, while the second coin places this activity at least to the early – mid 4th century. Both deposits seem to come slightly later than the underlying phase with the pottery and especially the coins suggesting active deposition in the second quarter of the 4th century. This seems to represent a period of substantial use of this space. One hypothesis is that these deposits occur soon after the construction of the North and South Buildings, placing construction sometime in the early 4th century.

Phase 4: This phase consists of a series of thin layers that contain a mix of soil and fragments of limestone and mortar. There is a small patch of ashy material (18121) on top of (18092) that contained 31 sherds of Roman pottery (including late Roman material) and three fragments of glass. Brown soil layer (18096) contained 59 sherds of Roman pottery and two fragments from iron tools. This deposit contained late Roman material but lacked the concentration of coarse wares found in the underlying deposits making this a distinctly fine-ware deposit, similar in composition to what was recovered from some of the activity surfaces and destruction layers within the North and South buildings. Layer (18096) was cut by a small scoop, of an undetermined function that contained two fills: (18129) with five sherds of Roman pottery and (18097) with 26 sherds of largely fine-ware Roman pottery with late Roman material. Context (18096) was covered by two thin layers consisting of soil and loosely sorted limestone gravel and mortar. Context (18095) contained 17 sherds of Roman pottery and (18098) had 10 sherds of Roman pottery. It is possible that this phase represents later use of the site possibly around the time or after the active use of the South and North buildings. It is also possible that the Phase 4 layers are associated with the decay/destruction of one or both near-by buildings.

Phase 5: All this material was covered by a few deposits that seem to represent the interface between underlying archaeological deposits and the plough soil with all these deposits disturbed by ploughing. This includes: (18080) with 2 sherds of Iron Age coarse ware and 163 sherds of Roman pottery (including Samian ware); (18071); (18081) with eight sherds of Roman pottery and one fragment of an iron object; (18015) with two copper objects and a fragment of glass; (18014) with 361 sherds of Roman pottery, glass fragments, and a composite 2nd century CE disk brooch with relief design of Adlocitio type; (18016) with fragments of glass and metal and a Constantius coin, *c.* 324 – 337 CE. This phase was most likely post-use of the structures and contained a similar mix of deposits that were found over the destruction layers of the South and North buildings.

3 The North Building

3.1 Building Layout

Excavations started on the North Building in MF02 and continued through MF05, with the trench extended several times to uncover the full layout of the building and its intersection with the *temenos* wall (Figure 1). The building was covered by a layer of debris, including limestone blocks, large amounts of roof tile, and a rich assortment of Roman material culture (pottery, metal work, animal bone, etc.).

The excavations revealed the entire floor plan of the North Building, running east/west, the same alignment and roughly the same size as the South Building (Figure 8). It consists of two

parallel walls roughly 8m in length and a little over 3m apart [18199 and 18217]. While extensively damaged, the walls survive as up to three courses of mortared limestone blocks on top of pitched stones in a foundation trench, capped by a layer of flat stones. There is a smaller wall [18065] which runs north/south and divides the building into two sections. This wall is built into [18217] but ends about 15cm from [18199]. Like the southern building, there is no wall at the eastern side, suggesting that it was an open-fronted structure, possibly originally with a wooden screen or wall, although no evidence survives for this in either building. There was a large area of tightly packed small stone cobbled extending to the north and east outside of the eastern entrance of the North Building. This is likely to have been an activity surface associated with the front of the building. The main walls of the North Building seem to run back to the *temenos* wall, and there is evidence that for a mortar and gravel 'filler' within the small gap between the walls and the temenos wall (as seen with the South Building). Of particular interest is a small wall segment [18306] built parallel to and overlapping slightly [18199/18305]. This is constructed with well packed pitched stones and is rounded at both the northern and southern ends.

Excavation immediately to the south of the North Building exposed several stone features possibly associated with the North Building. There is a well-defined wall [18219] running parallel to the southern wall [18217], creating a *c.* 1 metre space between it and the building. Within this space was at least one well-defined and clearly constructed semi-circular cluster of limestone blocks [18230] which was possibly a post-pad to support an upright timber or plinth. These features, along with the floor surfaces in front (east) suggests an extension of activity outside of the building.

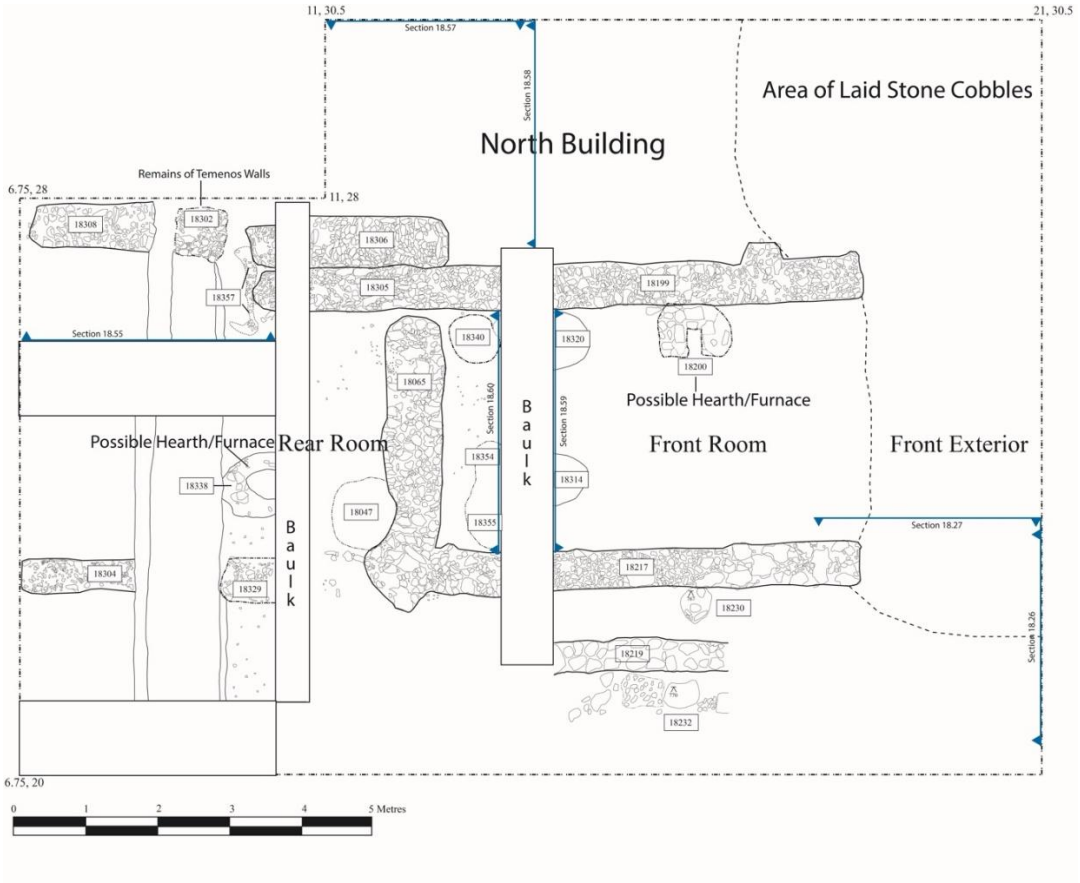


Figure 8. Plan of the North Building, showing location of selected stratigraphic sections presented in this summary report.

3.2 North Building Front Exterior

Sectors 12, 15, 18, and 23 expose the immediate exterior areas to the east (front) and north of the North Building.

Sector 12: Sector 12 covers the exterior to the southeast of the eastern entrance to the North Building. It was excavated down to bedrock. Section Drawing 18.27 shows an east – west cross section of the stratigraphy extending from the Front Room to the Front Exterior just north of the southern wall (Figure 9). Section Drawing 18.26 shows north – south cross section of the stratigraphy along the eastern edge of Trench 18, extending from the Front Interior into the Courtyard space south of the North Building (Figure 10).

There are six possible phases of deposits, presented from the earliest to the latest:

Phase 1: The initial phase is the lower pre-Roman soil found throughout the trench, (18034). This consists of a mix of loam and limestone fragments, which gets increasingly clayish down to natural limestone bedrock. It contained 17 sherds of undated Roman pottery and 5 sherds of Iron Age pottery. One sherd of Oxfordshire White-Slipped Wear in this layer suggests a late Roman date, but the field notes indicate that material from this context might have come from another similar context above it (18033).

Phase 2: The second phase consisted of 3 thin layers of sediment mixed with mortar and gravel (18114), (18111/18110), and a small stone feature made from limestone blocks [18112] of an unknown nature. A total of 112 and 47 sherds of Roman pottery was recovered from (18110) and (18111) respectively. There are several fabrics (Samian, IMPCC, DOR) that date from the early to mid-Roman period, but the presence of Oxfordshire White-Slipped Wares suggests a late 3rd through 4th century date range for both contexts. This is probably an activity surface, likely pre-dating the construction of the North Building in the final stone form.

Phase 3: The third phase consists of a substantial layer of sediment (18055) that contained 435 sherds of Roman pottery and 15 glass, metal, bone, and shell small finds, including pieces of jewelry and an Iron Age coin (Cynobelinvs Rex TASC, *c.* 20 – 43 CE). Context (18055) contained a substantial assemblage of pottery, largely reduced coarse wares but with a diverse range of fine wares, including Samian, imported continental colour-coated wear, and Oxfordshire products. This material provides a late Roman date (late 3rd through 4th century) but contained a substantial component of earlier material that suggests either longer duration of accumulation, or (most likely) reworking of earlier deposits. It is likely that this phase represented a period of substantial activity outside in the area around the North Building. It is possible that this phase pre-dated the North Building, but if so, it most likely would have only been by several decades (based on overlap of late Roman ceramics).

Phase 4: Layer (18055) is partially covered in two thinner layers of mixed loam and yellowish clay (18082) and (18083). These two contexts contained an assortment of Roman pottery, which presents a very wide date range from *c.* 100 – 300+ CE, but is most likely a late 3rd through 4th century deposit with some residual material. It is possible that these layers were part of the construction of the cobbled stone surface [18025/18062] in Phase 5.

Phase 5: The fifth phase is a substantial constructed surface of small, tightly packed, rounded stones that are embedded into the underlying layer (18025) and (18062) which are the same layer. This cobbled surface extends out from the east entrance of the North Building, going a

little north and south of the layout of the building. It is clearly orientated around the entrance of the North Building and is part of the frontage/activity surface of the building. These two cobbled surfaces were embedded with extensive material culture, including oyster shells, animal bones, Roman pottery ((18025) had 38 sherds and (18062) had 387 sherds), and 15 metal, glass, and bone small finds. The small finds were mainly bits of jewelry or coins, which could have been votive objects associated with the temple. The combined pottery from contexts (18025) and (18062) contains earlier Roman material, most notably Samian, which could date up to the mid-3rd century. However, the presence of Midlands Late Roman Shelly Ware and Nene Valley colour-coated wares suggest the deposit most likely occurred after the early 4th century and more likely mid- to late 4th century. This aligns with a Constantine Commemorative coin (330 – 346 CE), and Gratian coin DN Gratianvs PR AVE (367 – 383 CE). The relatively large quantity of Samian sherds raises some questions about the chronology of the deposit. It is possible that the earlier Roman material was residual and impacted into cracks in the stone cobbles indicating that the floor surface was in active use from at least the mid-2nd century CE. This is unlikely however and this material probably resulted from the disturbance of a midden or deposit containing 2nd century material, possibly mined for the sediment base that the stone cobbles were packed into.

Phase 6: The final phase consists of a couple of deposits of disturbed sediment and rubble that interface with the overlying plough soil (18018 and 18077).

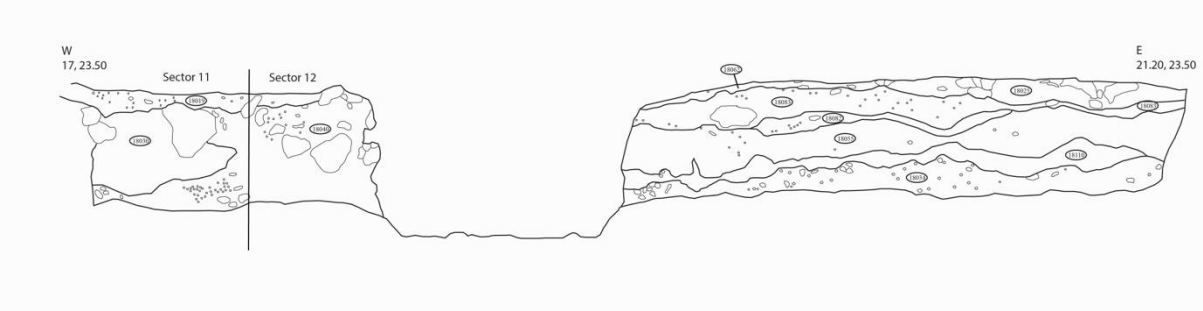


Figure 9. Section 18.27, running east – west from the Front Room to the Front Interior of the North Building. The gap in the section is test Sector 22 Trench, which was excavated in MF02.

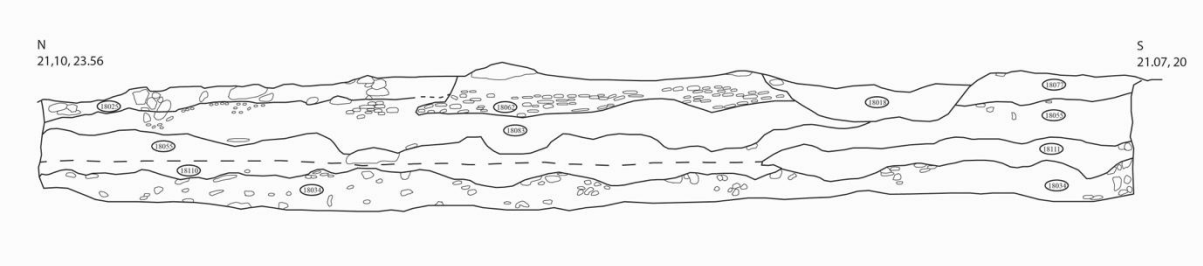


Figure 10. Section 18.26, running north – south from the Front Exterior North Building down into the Courtyard space. The section is 3 metres long.

Sector 15: Sector 15 covers the exterior directly outside of the eastern entrance to the North Building. It was cleared of topsoil and a metre-wide slot the length of the Sector was quickly dug at the end of the 2005 field season to better understand the stratigraphic underlying cobbled surface [18025].

There are five possible phases of deposits, presented from the earliest to the latest:

Phase 1: The earliest phase consists of (18367), a soil just above the bedrock found throughout the trench. In other Sectors, this unit (under different numbers) contained a mix of Roman and Iron Age pottery.

Phase 2: This is followed by (18275), a layer consistently found under the North Building and identified as pre-structure ground surface. This layer contained 35 sherds of Roman pottery, with a likely date range from the mid-3rd to mid-4th century. This context contained a small number of glass and metal small finds, including an Antoninus coin (161-180 CE). This layer is probably the same as (18034) as identified in Sector 12 immediately to the south.

Phase 3: Layer (18275) is covered by a thin but consistent and deliberately constructed mortar surface (18369) that extends out to the east and north from the North Building. This layer did not produce any material culture, but seems to follow the sequence of (18114, 18110, and 18111) in Sector 12 which contained pottery suggesting a late 3rd through 4th century date range.

Phase 4: This surface is covered by a substantial layer of mid-brown silty loam (18157) with 286 sherds of Roman pottery and four small finds. The pottery provides a date range from 270 – 350/400 CE, which strongly suggests a mid to late 4th century date. This is most likely the same layer as (18055) in Sector 12 both of which contain a similar ceramics assemblage. This seems to be an activity surface that accumulated outside of the North Building and contains large, diverse ceramic assemblages with abundant coarse wares but notable collection of fine wares, especially Oxfordshire products. This assemblage is appropriate for a place just outside the temple precinct where food was prepared, served, and consumed by visitors.

Phase 5: The final phase is the well-constructed surface of tightly cobbled rounded stones [18025].

Sector 18: Sector 18 covered the exterior directly northeast of the entrance of the North Building. It was cleared of topsoil, and then a few additional layers were removed to track the extent of the cobbled stone surface in front of the North Building. This surface extended almost to the north edge of the sector, with parts labelled (18156) and (18159), both of which contain late Roman material, as well as residual ceramics from the 2nd – 3rd centuries.

3.3 Front Room

The Front Room was excavated in Sectors 11, 13, and 14 (Figure 1). Section Drawing 18.59 shows a north south cross section of the stratigraphy across the western baulk of the Front Room (Figure 11). The Front Room is defined by northern [18199] and southern [18217] walls running east-west, and an interior wall [18065] running north/south. This area was almost completely excavated in Sector 14 and partially excavated in Sectors 11 and 13. Material from all three sectors is used to interpret the phasing of activity in the Front Room, noting that some of the same contexts were recorded using different context numbers in the three sectors.

There are nine possible phases of deposition and construction within the Front Room, which represent at least four distinct periods of activity in the area covered by the North Building, laid out here from earliest to latest:

Phase 1: The earliest phase is represented by a thick deposit of sediment above the natural limestone bedrock (18197/18275/18296/18339) that contained a mix of Roman and Iron Age pottery, as well as glass fragments, iron slag, iron tools, and a copper coin (Antoninus 161 – 180 CE). This is the pre-construction ground surface. Interestingly, (18197) produced an assemblage of 85 sherds with a strong late Roman character, with Oxfordshire Red-Slipped and White-Slipped wares well represented, together with a broad range of reduced, oxidized, dark-slipped and white fine wares. This context contained a high proportion of fine and table wares, suggesting food serving and consumption. Notably, there was only a single sherd of Samian, unlike the later Roman deposits associated with activity and floor surfaces directly outside of the North Building. This suggests possible discard of 4th century material on this space, most likely prior to the construction of the North Building.

Phase 2: The second phase consists of two deep and steep-sided pits/large post-holes that punch down through the underlying soil and limestone bedrock, Figure 11. Pit [18314/18355], is filled by three deposits. The initial fill (18318/18356) consisted of light brown clay and sand, with small flecks of limestone and 9 sherds of Roman pottery, with several Oxfordshire sherds indicating a late Roman date (*c.* 270 – 400 CE). The middle fill (18317/18344) consisted of large limestone blocks with a sandy matrix, laid in courses on top of each other in a deliberate manner. This was covered by (18268/18163), a loosely sorted mix of sandy clay with limestone inclusions, and 17 sherds of Roman pottery. Two metres directly north was another cut of a similar size and shape [18340/18320]. This cut contained one main fill (18319/18341), which consisted of a mixed matrix of large limestone blocks laid in courses (some burnt), sandy loam, oyster shells, animal bones, and Roman pottery. The pottery contains late Roman Oxfordshire wares, but significant earlier material, suggesting late Roman date with a large residual component. These are the same context, but it is worth noting that (18319) contained a higher percentage of coarse ware material than (18341). The deposition in both pits suggests that they were deliberately infilled, but most likely for practical rather than votive reasons probably as part of the preparation for the construction of the North Building. The original purpose of these pits or postholes is unknown, some of them are nearly 2m deep and appear to have been re-cut and all were eventually filled with material containing Roman artefacts and tightly packed limestone blocks. The stratigraphic relationship between the pits/postholes and the walls of the North Building as well as circumstantial evidence suggest that the pits were filled in with stones to consolidate the ground for the construction of the building itself.

Phase 3: The third phase is the construction of the main walls of the North Building [18199, 18217, and 18065]. The foundations of all three walls were dug down through the Roman activity soil (18197/18275/18296/18339) and there is no direct stratigraphic relationship between the walls and the two pits in Phase 2. Therefore, the proposed sequence is speculative but informed by the interpretation that the large pits seem to have been filled in rapidly and capped with limestone gravel and blocks suggesting an effort to stabilize the area prior to the construction of the building.

Phase 4: The fourth phase, probably the first phase of activity within the North Building consists of a small limestone feature [18371] of undetermined function extending from the south wall into the centre of the room, building on a foundation of (18270 and 18271), thin layers of silty clay with some white ashy material and thirteen sherds of undiagnostic Roman pottery that could range from middle to late Roman. There is a long, shallow slot [18315] filled with one deposit (18316), a possible beam slot which extends east/west within the Interior Room. There are two shallow cuts which are probably small hearths/furnaces.

Context [18332] is a shallow U-shaped cut that contains two fills. The first is a thin deposit at the bottom of the hearth (18362/18343), overlain by (18276), which contains charred materials and stone and surrounding sediment stained red by exposure to intense heat. Content [18374] is a larger cut that contains three fills. The lowest fill (18353) is a deposit of fire-stained sediment. This is covered by a cluster of large limestone blocks with clay fill and indications of burning (18352/18282). The final deposit (18345) is a thin layer of heat-stained reddish brown sandy soil capping the small hearth. None of these deposits contained material culture able to refine the chronology beyond mid-late Roman.

Phase 5: The fifth phase consists of several patches/dumps of ash and burnt material probably produced by the hearths [18332] and [18374]. The earliest of these deposits are a dump of ash (18323/18298) and a thin silt lens (18281). These are followed by a thin lens of clay and gravel (18278), which contained 22 sherds of Roman pottery with a late Roman signature, and two thin lenses of white and grey ash (18288) and (18266). Most of the surface of the Front Room is then covered by a patchwork of thin sandy/clay deposits (18289), (18267), and (18274), which might be the earliest indication of a constructed or accumulated floor surface. None of these layers contain any datable material culture. This is followed by larger spreads of thin dark sediment with charcoal (18273) and (18051), a thin spread of charcoal rich sediment that seems to have been an ephemeral floor surface directly underlying the main floor (18050 – Phase 7) in the Front Room. (18051) contains some Roman pottery that dates between late 3rd through 4th century CE.

Phase 6: The sixth phase (the second major phase of activity within the Front Room of the North Building) is associated with the construction of a well-built and robust hearth or small furnace constructed from a semi-circle of large limestone blocks [18200] and associated with five deposits (18297), (18299), (18168), (18227), and (18213). This feature was dug down to bedrock, and all associated deposits and features have clear indications of intense burning (charcoal, ash, burnt animal bone, sherds of Roman pottery, and fire-stained soil and limestone blocks). The ceramics in (18227) and (18213) present a 4th century date range.

Phase 7: The seventh phase consists of a compacted floor surface (18050), which detailed micro-morphological analysis revealed consist of sediments with significant ash and charcoal content and possible heavy metal residue suggestive of metal working specifically copper smelting. This layer contained 217 sherds of Roman pottery. The pottery assemblage is dominated by late Roman fine wares, particularly Oxfordshire White-Slipped Ware, with reduced and white fine wares, Black Burnished Ware, and shell-tempered wares. These fabrics indicate a date within the 4th century and possibly mid- to late 4th century. The abundance of fine and table wares suggests the room was used for food preparation and serving. It covered almost the entire interior of the Front room, suggesting it was the main activity surface when the hearth/furnace [18200] was in use. There is a small patch of material (18196) withing what seems to have been a hole in (18050). Although the hearth was probably primarily used for metal working it may also have been used for food preparation based on the associated fine-ware ceramics.

Phase 8: This phase consists of several deposits that contain rubble, gravel, mortar, and limestone blocks that are probably from the walls of the North Building, a destruction layer. Two deposits (18198) and (18183) lie directly over the remains of the north wall [18199]. The ceramics in (18183) suggest a 4th century date and are similar in composition to the material recovered within (18050). A large spread of building debris (18167) covers much of the floor surface (18050), the principal destruction layer associated with the collapse of the

building. This context contained 260 sherds of pottery, dominated by late Roman fine wares, including Oxfordshire Red-Slipped and White-Slipped wares, together with reduced and white fine wares. A small quantity of Samian and grog-tempered wares represent residual material. The ceramic composition, especially the high proportion of fine and table wares, closely resembles what was recovered from underlying floor (18050). Both (18050) and (18167) are covered by patches of debris (18169), (18170), (18171), (18172), (18173), (18163), and (18184). (18171) contained 47 sherds of late Roman pottery, with Oxfordshire Red-Slipped and White-Slipped wares providing a 4th century date. Almost all the ceramics are fine ware. Similarly, (18173) contained 152 sherds of Roman pottery, with diagnostic indicators providing a 4th century date. This assemblage is largely fine ware, and very similar to what was recovered from (18167). It is important to note that the destruction layer was directly on top of and impacted into the main floor (18050), suggesting collapse of the structure onto the floor surface without an extensive period of abandonment.

Phase 9: The destruction layer is covered by several deposits that are the interface between the overlying plough soil and the destruction layer (18019) and (18026). Both deposits contained a wide mix of material culture, including ceramics dating from the mid to late Roman period (including fine and coarse wares) and a number of Roman coins dating from the early/mid second to the 4th century.

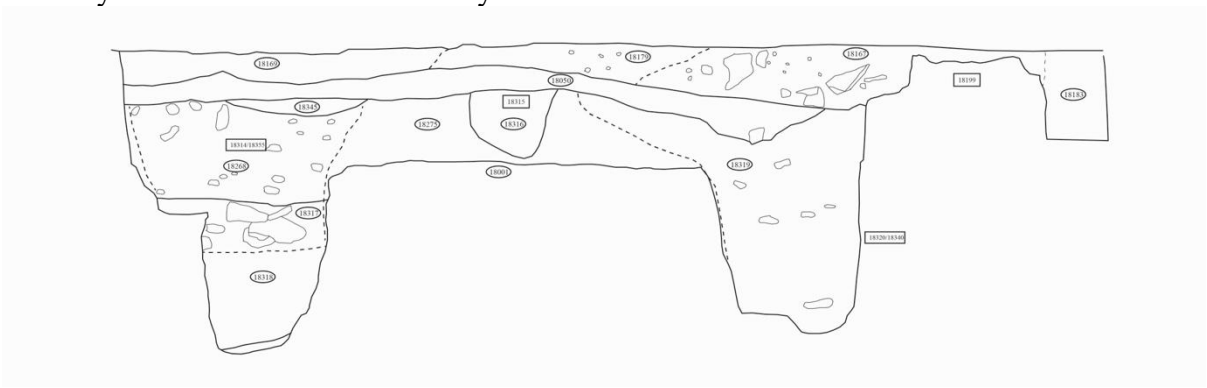


Figure 11. Section 18.59, running north – south along the western baulk of the Front Room, showing two large late Roman pits [18314/18355] and [18320/18340] that seemingly pre-date the construction of the North Building, and the mainly charcoal-rich floor surface (18050) that is associated with hearth/furnace [18200]. Note that we believe the pits are the same features visible in Section 18.60 on the other side of the unexcavated baulk. The section is c. 3 metres across.

3.4 The Rear Room

There is a partially enclosed space between the back wall of Front Room [18065], the north wall of the building [18305/18199] and the temple *temenos* wall – which we call the Rear Room. The Rear Room was partially excavated in Sectors 13, 20, and 33, with most of the data described here coming from Sector 13. Section Drawing 18.60 shows a north south cross section of the stratigraphy across the eastern baulk of the Rear Room (Figure 12). It is not clear if this room was fully enclosed, with the possibility that it was open on the southwest corner.

There are five possible phases of deposition and construction in the Rear Room, laid out here from earliest to latest:

Phase 1: The earliest deposit (18057) is most likely the pre-building Roman activity surface, identified as (18197/18339/18275/etc.) in other Sectors. It seems to pre-date the construction of the North Building, but it contains late Roman ceramics, with Oxfordshire White-Slipped and Red-Slipped wares providing a 4th century date.

Phase 2: There is a large pit with steep sides and a flat bottom [18047] that cuts through (18057) and into the underlying limestone bedrock. The rear wall of the North Building [18065] was constructed over the filled in pit. The pit contained four substantial fills. The earliest (18066) was a sandy layer with minimal inclusions and one sherd of Roman pottery. This was overlain by (18063), which contained large blocks of building material, fragments of roof tile, and burnt material. This was overlain by (18048), a similar dump of burnt building material. This was overlain by (18039), a charcoal-rich deposit with reddish staining from intense heat. This was capped by (18029), a substantial dump of burnt building material. The presence of building material in the two upper fills complicated the interpretation of this feature. While the cut and initial feel almost certainly pre-date the construction of wall [18065], it is possible that the upper fills are later – and contain debris that might come from the destruction phase of the North Building. The ceramic assemblage recovered from the pit fills lack clearly diagnostic material and can only be dated crudely as ranging between middle to late Roman period.

Phase 3: Just north of the pit was a hearth [18294] and associated deposits. The hearth consists of three elements. There is a shallow U-shaped scoop [18293], cutting down into (18057). This is lined by a thin layer of compact whitish-yellow clay, which formed the setting for several large angular limestone blocks that are the main structure of the hearth. This is overlain by a soft ashy layer with charcoal inclusions and sherds of Roman pottery that accumulated within the hearth. The hearth is covered in two thin charcoal-rich deposits (18028) and (18202), both of which contained a small amount of Roman pottery, with (18028) containing one sherd that is convincingly late Roman, possibly end of the 3rd through 4th century.

Phase 4: There are two patches of material, heavy with mortar and limestone fragments that seem to be related to the decay of the North Building, (18027) and (18185). Several sherds most likely dating to the 4th century were recovered from (18185).

Phase 5: All the archeological deposits are covered by (18026), which is the disturbed interface between the building debris and the overlying plough soil.

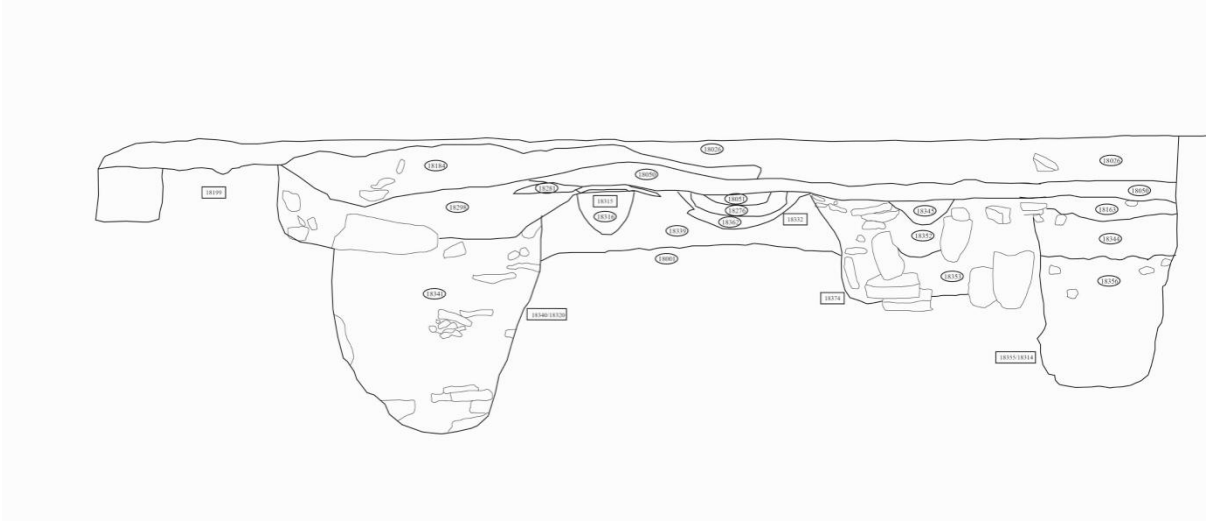


Figure 12. Section 18.60, running north – south along the eastern baulk of the Front Room, showing two large late Roman pits [18314/18355] and [18320/18340] that seemingly pre-date the construction of the North Building, and the mainly charcoal-rich floor surface (18050) that is associated with hearth/furnace [18200]. Note that we believe the pits are the same features visible in Section 18.59 on the other side of the unexcavated baulk. The section is c. 3 metres across.

3.5 Exterior Space North of the North Building

Sector 16 extended into the area to the north of the North Building to investigate part of the space between the North Building and the eastern entrance through the Temple *temenos* wall. Section Drawing 18.58 shows a north south cross section of the stratigraphy extending north from the wall of the building (Figure 13) and Section Drawing 18.57 shows an east west cross section of the stratigraphy across the northern edge of Trench 18 (Figure 14).

There are four possible phases of deposition and construction in Sector 16, presented here from earliest to latest:

Phase 1a: The earliest deposit above the bedrock is (18349), which is the same as that found across most of the sectors in Trench 18 under different labels. This layer does not contain any datable material culture.

Phase 1b: This is overlain by a layer that was recorded as two different contexts (18149) and (18279), the earliest activity surface which pre-dates the North Building. Context (18149) contained a substantial assemblage of Roman sherds, including Oxfordshire White-Slipped ware, that suggest a 4th century date. However, the deposit had a large quantity of grog-tempered ware, along with a few sherds of Samian, suggesting it contains a significant component of earlier Roman material. The assemblage contains mostly fine and table wares, suggesting food serving and consumption.

Phase 2: The construction of wall segment [18292/19306] built of courses of limestone blocks in a herringbone pattern that runs parallel and butts against the north wall of the North Building [18305]. It is most likely that this wall was built in a slot trench and therefore dates later in the sequence. A wall of similar alignment [18308] extends from the western side of the *temenos* wall. It is not clear if this is part of the same feature or just two structural components which closely align.

Phase 3: This phase consists of at least 5 layers of thin floor or activity surfaces.

- Phase 3a is the earliest two surfaces, which are contemporary. Context (18151/18203) is a large spread of gravel, mortar and white sand with small pebble inclusions, which produced 4 sherds of Roman pottery and a copper stylus. Content (18291/18322) is a spread of mid-yellowish sandy clay with limestone gravel. It produced 36 sherds of Roman pottery of a mixed domestic assemblage. Notably, in contrast to the deposits within and in front of the North Building, this material does not contain late Roman Oxfordshire ware and is not dominated by fine ware vessels. This could point to a phase of deposition from the mid – late Roman period near the temple gate that pre-dated the construction of the North Building and which does not reflect close proximity to a food preparation/serving facility.

- Phase 3b consists of a patch of white mortar with tightly packed limestone flecks and no material culture (18205) that covered much of the Sector.

- Phase 3c consists of two thin patches of white/yellow sandy mortar with small limestone flecks (18289) and (18290) that are parts of a laid floor. Layer (18290) contained 9 sherds of Roman pottery, including 5 sherds of Oxfordshire Red-Slipped Ware, suggesting a 4th century date. This is covered by a thin dump of ashy material (18280).

- Phase 3d consists of a thick layer of brown sandy loam (18191), which was some sort of accumulated activity surface (rather than constructed floor). This layer contained a significant amount of material culture. We recovered 186 sherds of Roman pottery, with 4th century material, and a relatively large amount of metal small finds, including pieces of jewelry, small copper sheeting, toilet implements, and a notable D-shaped bezel type finger ring (type III) with molded oval intaglio depicting a satyr with a bunch of grapes in its right hand. The large Late Roman pottery assemblage (with residual earlier material), together with an unusually rich assemblage of small metal finds, including copper-alloy jewelry, indicates a trampled occupation horizon formed through repeated pedestrian activity, with a gradual incorporation of lost/discarded objects between periods of constructed floor/activity surfaces.

- Phase 3e is the final floor surface (18201) that overlies (18191) made from limestone rubble with clay and mortar, with only five sherds of pottery.

Phase 4: This phase consists of three deposits (18164), (18154), and (18152). Context (18154) produced 54 sherds of Roman pottery, with some clear 4th century material as well as several small finds, including a well-preserved finger ring made from jet. Context (18164) was a spread of limestone blocks laid down over a thick yellow clay that was possibly part of a laid floor/activity surface. This layer contained over 200 sherds of Roman pottery, including a substantial quantity of 4th century material, with a large percentage of fine and table wares. The pottery assemblage resembles the composition found within the North Building, including the main floor surface (18050). Coupled with many delicate glass, metal, and bone small finds, including hair pins, toiletry items, and bits of jewelry, this was a heavily trafficked metalled surface outside the temple entrance. It is possible that this surface was in use while the North Building was also in use (based on similar composition of fine wares recovered from both).

Interestingly, the area immediately to the northwest of the North Building contains significant evidence for constructed activity surfaces, including a sequence of what seems to be constructed/laid mortar exterior floors. Furthermore, these surfaces extend north away from the building and toward the front gate of the temple suggesting that these surfaces were not directly related to the North Building, but rather activity surfaces associated with the *temenos* entrance.

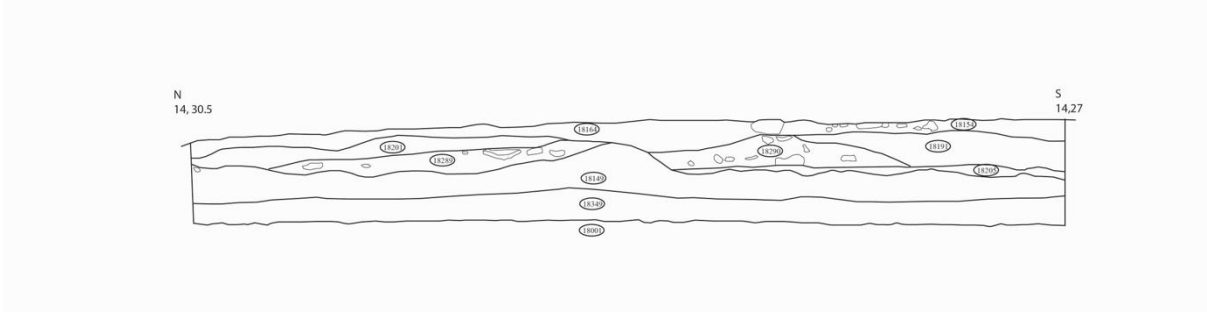


Figure 13. Section 18.58, running north – south into the Courtyard from the north wall of the North Building showing activity and floor surfaces (18151), (18201), and (18191) that may have been associated with the entrance into the temple precinct. The section is c. 3 metres across.

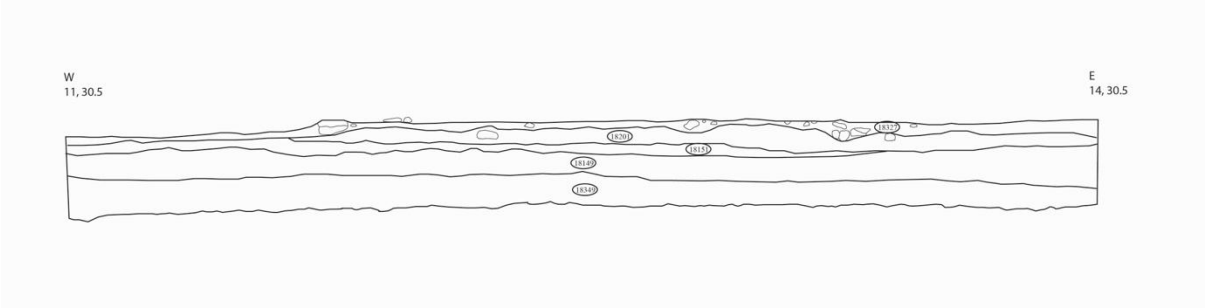


Figure 14. Section 18.57, running east west across the northern edge of Trench 18 showing activity and floor surfaces (18151) and (18201) that may have been associated with the entrance into the temple precinct. The section is c. 3 metres across.

North Building Summary: There was probably four phases of activity on the space occupied by the North Building. The lowest soil contained a large amount of Roman and Iron Age material culture suggesting Roman activity dating into the early 4th century in the area prior to the construction of the North Building. This was followed by several deep pits and/or large post-holes from the Roman period that appear to have been deliberately filled in and packed down, perhaps in preparation for the construction of the North Building. Once the building was constructed, the deposits indicate two periods of use. The first is associated with several small fire pits/hearths that produced a scattering of small patches of burnt material and ash. Then a more robust hearth or furnace made from large limestone blocks with clay lining was constructed up against the north wall of the building. This is associated with a thick accumulated floor surface that seems to represent the main period of activity within the Front Room. Following this is the destruction of the building, with no indication of a long hiatus or period of abandonment before the structure collapsed. The deposits in and immediately around the North Building produced a great deal of worked copper-alloy artefacts, ranging from coins, medical implements, and jewelery. Furthermore, when samples from the interior floor surfaces were analysed, small fragments of copper were recovered from the heavy residue indicating metal working.

The *Temenos* Wall

The 2005 western extension revealed the remains of the *temenos* wall. Like elsewhere, it is largely robbed out [18307] with some traces of rubble in the backfill. Fortunately, a small section of the original wall was discovered [18302], which consists of large and well-formed limestone blocks mortared together. It is unclear as to why this small section of the wall was not robbed out. The walls of both the South and North buildings were butted up against the *temenos* wall, however the robber trench truncated the point of physical contact, and so it can only be stated based on circumstantial evidence. Interestingly, the remains of two additional walls [18308 and 18304] were found running from the *temenos* wall inside the temple precinct. These walls are closely aligned with the main walls of the North Building, and [18308] had evidence of a mortar 'filler' between it and the *temenos* wall. The deposits on the inside of the *temenos* wall contained relatively little material culture in comparison with those on the outside, except for a well-preserved late 1st century coin. This suggests that there was some structural component extending off the *temenos* wall inside the temple precinct, which clearly had some relationship (at least in terms of alignment) with the North Building.

Two areas exposed the interface between the North and South buildings and the *temenos* wall. The area to the rear of the North Building was cleared in Sectors 20a, b, and c. This included one excavated slot that bisected the remains of the *temenos* wall. The area to the rear

of the South Building was cleared in Sectors 19, 21, 28, and 29. This included 2 excavated slots that bisected the remains of the *temenos* wall.

The excavated sections across the ditch in both areas show a similar sequence of deposition. Sections 18.39 and 18.40, behind the South Building, show a *c.* 1 metre deep U-shaped cut [18210] that seems to have been the slot where the foundation of the *temenos* wall was constructed (Figures 15 and 16). The lower deposit (18145) is a mix of limestone blocks, rubble, and mortar with some of the blocks still stuck together. It produced 135 sherds, with 3 Iron Age and 132 Roman. The Roman ceramics are a broad mix of coarse and fine wares with some 4th century material as well as earlier Roman material. This is covered by deposit (18190), which contains more sediment and less large limestones. This sequence is largely mirrored in the excavated slots across the ditch behind the North Building (Figure 17). This shows the same sequence of a cut [18307] with a basal fill containing a high ratio of limestone and a very similar quantity and assortment of Roman ceramics as found in (18145). This is covered by the upper fill of the ditch (18286), which contains less Roman pottery – but of a similar composition.

It is probable that the robber trench contains debris from the *temenos* wall as well as material that was dumped in from surrounding deposits to level the surface. The lower fill, which contains wall material, also contained 4th century Roman pottery, so clearly the robbing occurred after this period but it is not possible with the available evidence in Trench 18 to provide a more accurate date for when the temple wall was robbed out.

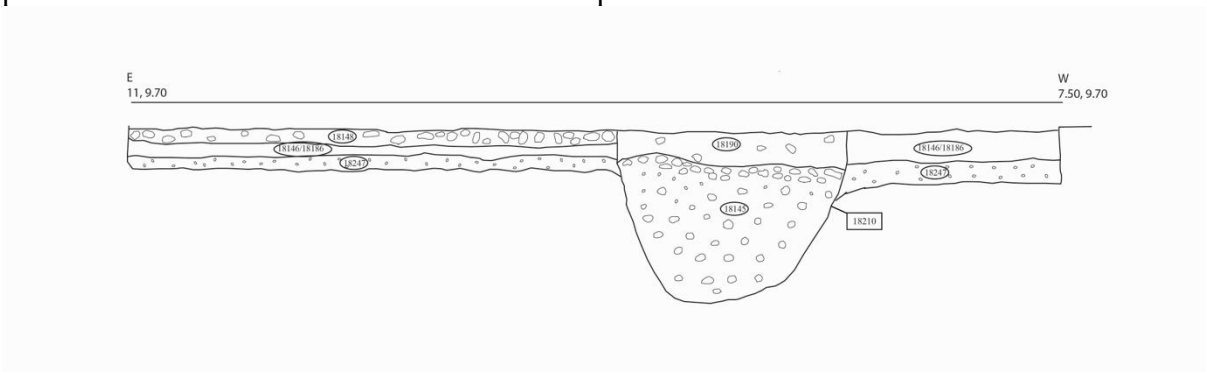


Figure 15. Section 18.40, running east to west across the ditch of the robbed-out temple temenos wall behind the South Building.

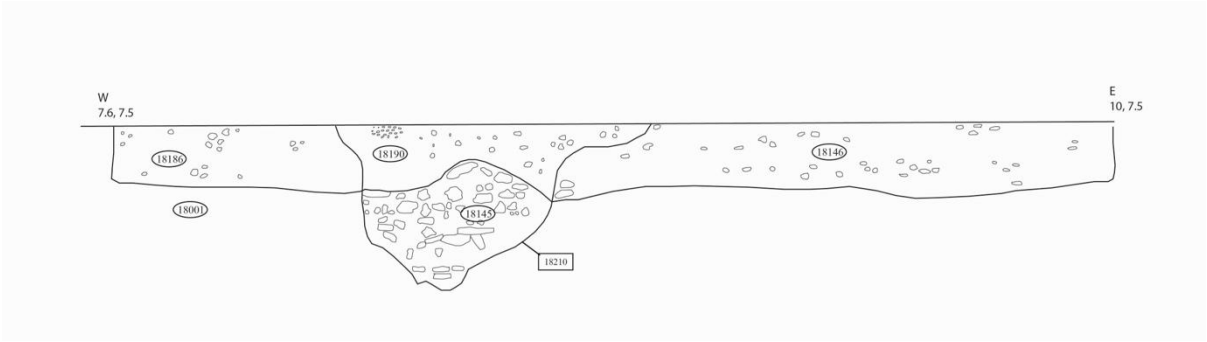


Figure 16. Section 18.42, running west to east across the ditch of the robbed-out temple temenos wall behind the South Building.

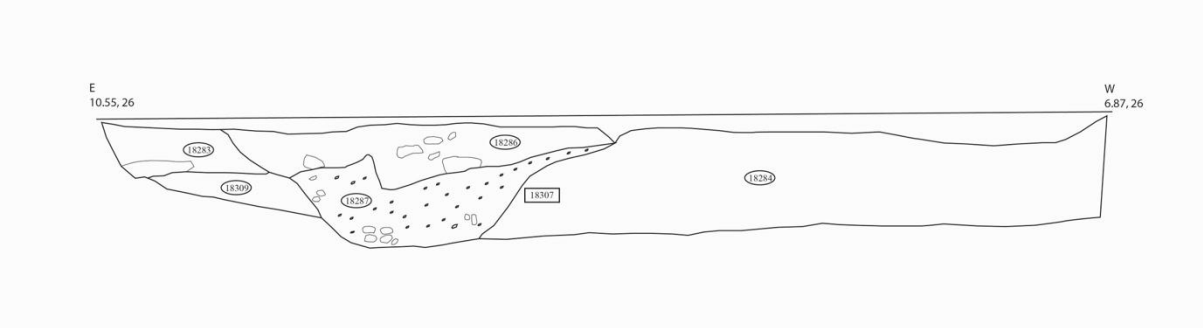


Figure 17. Section 18.55, running east to west across the ditch of the robbed-out temple temenos wall behind the North Building.

Conclusion

Both buildings in Trench 18 were located near the entrance of the temple complex and abutted to the *temenos* wall. They were probably ancillary buildings close to the entrance into the temple's temenos that existed to serve the needs of visitors to the temple, and to facilitate the activities carried out therein. Both buildings contained several laid floor surfaces and had activity surfaces that extended outside the buildings on the front (east) side. Ceramic evidence, reinforced by some dated coins, suggests that both buildings were constructed around the same time in the early 4th century CE. The South Building contained several fine floor surfaces and a large assemblage of late Roman pottery, with high ratios of fine ware eating and drinking vessels. The North Building had several large fire features, which were either hearths or small furnaces. The ceramics show a roughly similar range of 4th century fine wares as was recovered from the South Building. However, the high charcoal and ash, as well as metal finds and metal content in the main floor surface inside the North Building supports small-scale metal working. Both functions align with support buildings directly outside the temple boundary that provided visitors with a combination of food, drink, and small metal votive objects.