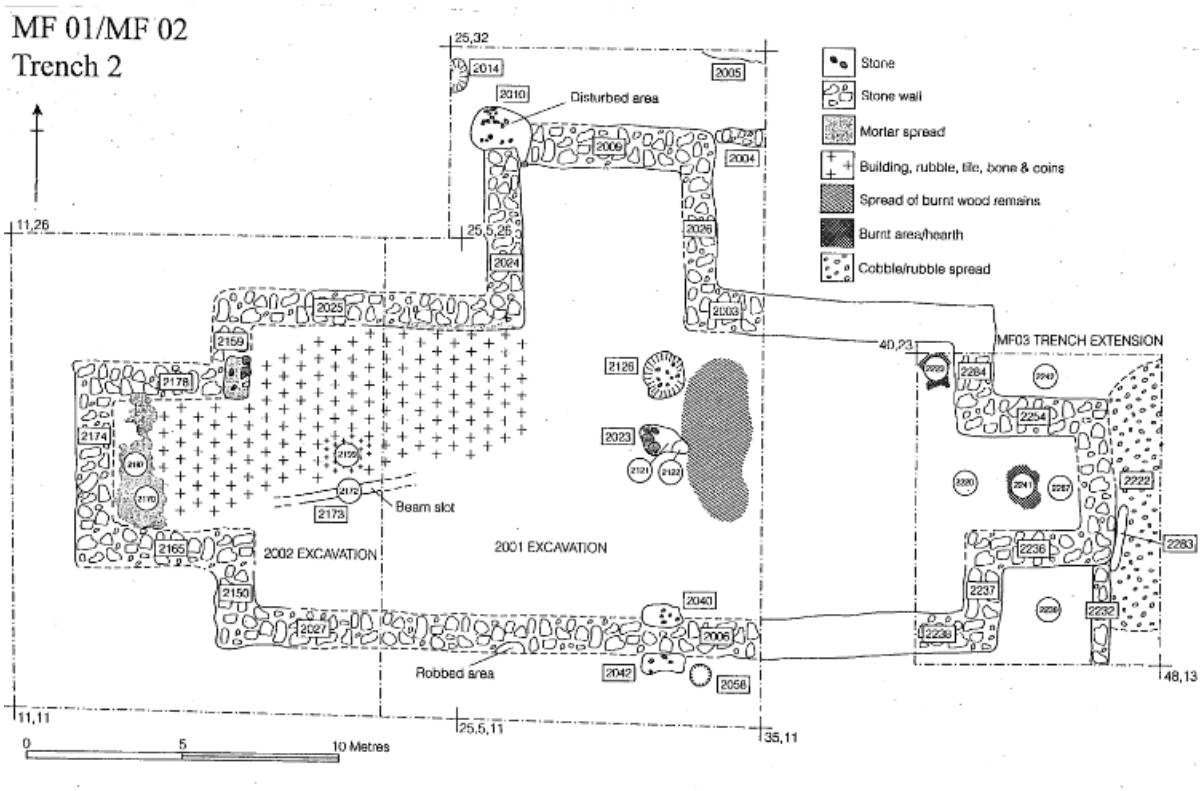
Trench MF2 narrative

Sheila Raven

Introduction

This trench was opened to investigate a rectilinear magnetic anomaly which seemed to represent a large stone building, *c.* 34m by 17m, of rectangular form with small square extensions or 'side-chambers' on the west, north, and east sides (known as BU.9 in this publication). This structure was in the centre of the temple complex, to the east of the main temple within the temenos and to the south-west of the large arena. The building was orientated on an E-W axis. The unusual three lobed shape and the E-W axis suggested the possibility that it might be some form of early Christian church. The first trench investigating this building in 2001 measured 21m x 12m and was located over the central part of the structure, including the northern extension or chamber. In 2002 the trench was extended to the west by another 12m to cover the whole of the western end of the structure including the western extension or chamber. In 2003/2004 a 10m x 8m extension of the trench was explored at the east end which included the east chamber, with a 5m gap between the east edge of the 2001 trench and this new trench. In 2004 a small extension even further eastwards was made in order to explore the extent and direction of the eastern extra-mural cobbled area. This trench measured 2m x 2m at the westerly end, with a narrow 1m strip running a further 8m eastwards from the north-east corner of the main 2003 trench with a 2m gap between them.



Trench MF2

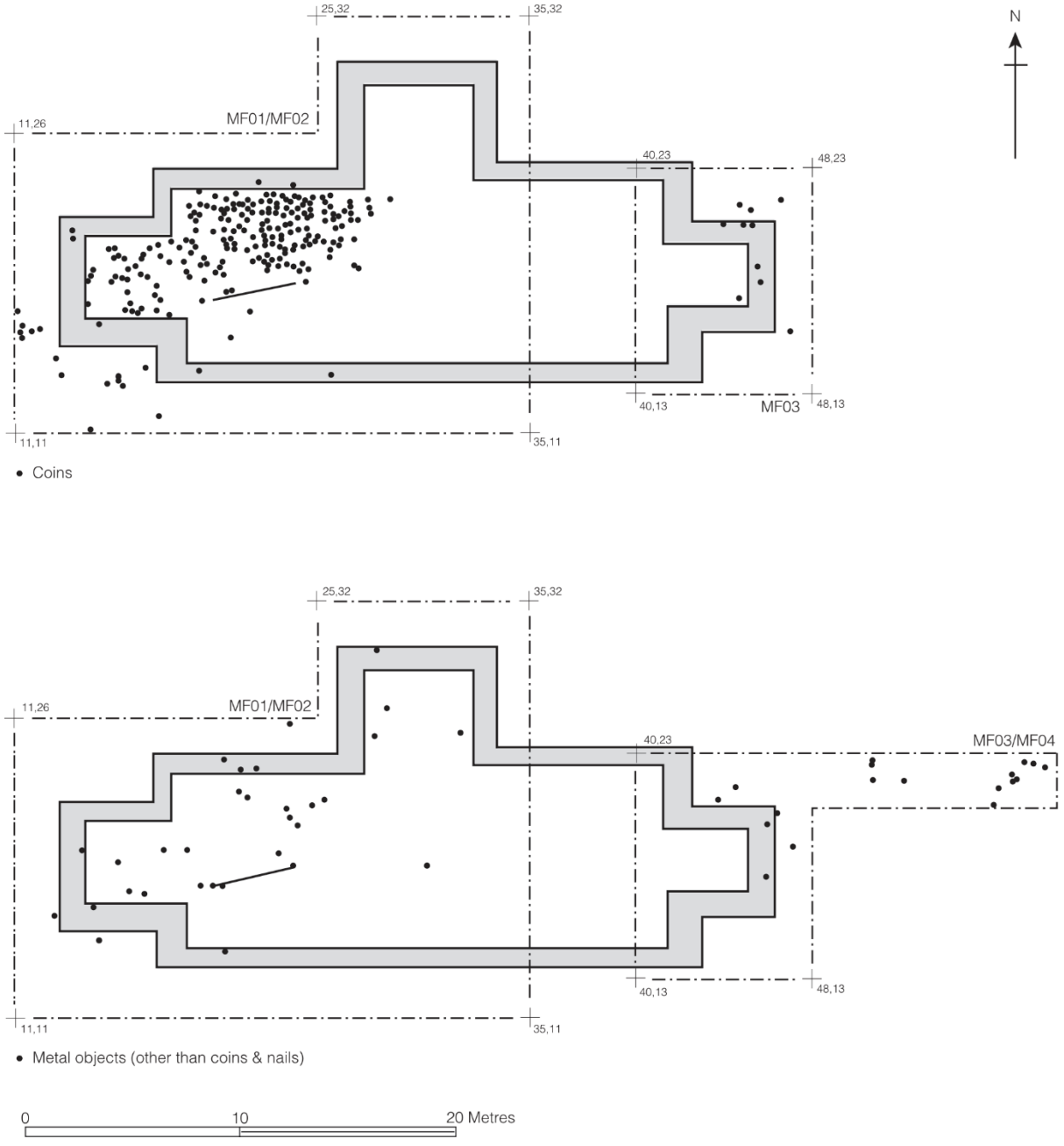
The main features of this trench were the shallow stone foundations of the various walls, which showed great similarity in their dimensions and depth. Although initially it was thought this sizeable building might have been a largely stone-built structure, after a couple of seasons, it

seemed more likely that this may have been a large timber building set on sill beams that were supported by shallow stone foundations set in narrow foundation cuts. Further work on the walls in 2002 (walls [2025], [2159], [2178], [2174], [2165], and [2150]) revealed little variation in dimension or depth of the wall foundations. Within these walls there were very few substantial features, apart from three small pits, several postholes and stake-holes, and a narrow beam slot. Besides this, there was a large spread of building rubble and finds concentrations (including many coins) in the western section of the structure (layers (2070) and (2195) in particular), and a large patch of burnt material including burnt wood, in the centre of the structure (2033). An opposed pair of mortar and stone sills or thresholds [2040] and [2042] on either side of the southern wall [2006] probably define the sides of a southern entrance. Other features like hearths [2023] and a possible post pad [2199] were also discovered. There was also a substantial area of extra mural cobbling adjacent to the east extension.

In the first season it became clear that the deposits in this area, including the bulk of the stone walls, were extensively robbed and plough damaged. The main southern wall [2006/2027] and the walls making up the square northern extension [2017/2024], [2009], and [2026], survived as very shallow features consisting of small limestone rubble. These features can be interpreted as wall foundations set in shallow flat-bottomed cuts, cut into the underlying Iron Age soil. Plough marks on the top of the surviving stone wall foundations, prove that their upper surface defines the base of the post Roman 'plough soil', though in the centre of the structure modern plough damage had cut even deeper. All evidence points to the fact that the wall bases were originally intended to support very substantial upper works of timber for a building on a monumental scale. Some dense concentrations of large stones and mortar, (e.g context (2199) found inside the building may have been post-pads for roof timber supports. However, they were inconsistent in form so we cannot be certain of this. There were no postholes big enough to indicate roof supports either, so it is possible the original roof was supported by rafters resting on the walls. Evidence that this original structure suffered extensive damage from a major fire became increasingly clear in subsequent seasons. The large quantity of roof tile found spread across this trench, some 250 kilos, may point to this structure originally having a tiled roof. Only the MFNA trenches in the area of the main temple within the temenos, produced equal or larger quantities of roof tile than this. However, the tile profile here shows a mixture of dates for the tile production, so much of this tile may well have been brought in as 'make up' for secondary floors after the building was damaged by fire, rather than being part of an original roof.

In 2002 the finds rich rubble spreads (2070) and (2195) were revealed across the western part of the trench. This extensive spread of Roman tile rubble dispersed with many other finds, may represent a secondary floor surface topped with a loose mortar screed (2197) and (2198), laid down after the first largely timber structure burnt down. The pottery from this layer has been dated to the mid to late 4th century AD, so this activity clearly took place towards the end of the life of the Roman temple site. The patchy mortar screed sometimes went over the primary wall foundations in the western and central areas, so may well be a post-burning floor surface. This rubble layer (2070) was remarkably rich in late Roman pottery, animal bone, and large quantities of late Roman coins and hobnails. Some 109 4th century coins and 422 Roman hobnails were found in context (2070) alone. The 2002 excavations revealed that this tile rubble spread was bounded by a long beam slot [2173] in a SW-NE alignment and not aligned with the original structure's E-W axis. There seems to be a northern edge to this boundary in the

corner between walls [2159] and [2025], thus suggesting a secondary more ephemeral rectangular timber structure was built inside the NW sector of the original more monumental building, possibly floored with the Roman tile rubble deposit. The extensive tile/rubble layer must have been imported as a sump of secondary material to level up the interior for a new mortar floor after the burning episode. This is supported by the varied nature of the tile in this rubble spread, suggesting it did not come from a single *in situ* collapsed roof. The evidence of repositioned stonework and mortar additions in places suggests the limestone walls were repaired at some stage.



The distribution of coins and metal objects in trench MF2

Under the late Roman rubble spreads (2070) and (2195) in the west sector was a thin spread of crushed limestone (2217) above the reddish-orange Iron Age soil surface (2068). Also found in this season was a *c*. 2m crushed limestone and mortar spread containing large pieces of

limestone with some stones set in mortar, context (2199). This was also below the later tile rubble and its position in the exact centre of the western section of the building suggests it may have been an internal post support in the primary phase. Another crushed limestone spread (2217) may also be part of the primary phase. To the east of feature (2199) and in the centre of the building, a low platform of burnt clay and mortar [2023] was also found in the 2002 season. This may represent a hearth or perhaps a burnt post-pad of some sort. Closer examination of the original wall structures in the 2003 season showed that they were securely founded on the limestone bedrock, which had been levelled out with rough masonry in some places to form a flatter building platform.

The 2003 extension trench explored the eastern end of the structure, including the eastern extension, which was a symmetrical counterpart to the square extension at the west end. The walls in the eastern end, identical in shape and depth to those in the rest of the structure, were more heavily robbed and plough-damaged than elsewhere. As in the western end, in this eastern sector there was also evidence of mortar spreads partially overlying the inner edges of the walls. Despite the robbing, enough remained of walls [2236] and [2237] to reveal that the inner faces of the walls were plastered. Immediately adjacent to the wall [2266], the eastern wall of the annexe, was a cobbled surface [2222] of medium to large limestone underlaid by pea gravel. The pottery in this layer has been dated to the 4th century. This may suggest there was an eastern entrance at some point in this eastern annex. Whether this was an original entrance or a later 'post-fire' entrance is difficult to say. The internal deposits in the eastern end of the building superficially resembled some of the spreads in the western end, with a mix of tile and other finds, but these finds were in much smaller quantities in this area and the deposits were less well preserved and more discontinuous. This may suggest greater plough damage in this area or a less intensive occupation here.

The 2004 excavations at the E end of the structure, included a narrow trench extending *c.* 13m to the E of the east annexe aimed at exploring the extra mural cobbling here. There was a narrow gully [2283] separating the extra-mural cobbling from the east wall of the building. Excavation of this extra-mural cobbling revealed at least three phases and this might represent a path There was a lower layer with small limestone fragments peppered with tile and bone (2315) overlain by larger limestone blocks (2325) similar to [2222]. The date of this more easterly cobbling is not clear, though some late 4th century coins were found in the upper levels. Perhaps the path was linked to the cobbling just outside the east wall of the annex and the potential entrance through wall [2266].

Also found in this eastern end of the building was a hearth feature (2241), sited centrally within the eastern extension. This is probably a later 'post-fire' or even post Roman feature. Another structural feature explored in the 2003 and 2004 excavations was the thin wall [2232] running north/south in a line with eastern extension east wall [2266], it was found to be abutting but entirely separate from the main building, but it is impossible to tell whether it was an attached contemporary ancillary building or something from a separate later building phase. The eastern end of the structure produced far fewer finds than the north-west sector and it also lacked evidence of the extensive burning episode seen in the central/western sector of the building.

The work in 2003 below the lowest mortar 'floor' spread (2170) in the central and W part of the building, revealed that there was considerable evidence for burning in the Roman period in this area. There were fire-reddened and black soil lenses with charcoal inclusions, burnt wall

plaster, and deep pink 'burn' marks on the actual limestone foundation walls, such as wall [2025]. When the larger 'pit-like' anomalies seen on the geophysical plot and situated around the inside of the walls were studied, it was concluded that these were probably reflections of dense concentrations of burning. This burning evidence and the relative lack of finds in the central, northern and eastern parts of the original structure, suggests the original building probably had a raised wooden floor, burnt in situ. Any burnt structural timbers, had probably been all but erased by ploughing. The evidence for the primary structure being burnt down and the later extensive ploughing explains why there is so little evidence of primary floor deposits. It seems likely that the initial timber building may not have lasted long before it was destroyed by fire.

During the second and third excavation seasons, it became clear that centuries before the Roman structure was built, there had been considerable Iron Age activity in the area, characterised by numerous small pits and by large quantities of Iron Age pottery. The orange sub-soil beneath the ploughed out internal deposits within the building, contained considerable Iron Age evidence including pits with Iron Age pottery. Also, the spread of burnt timber in context (2033) in the central area of the building, initially thought to be associated with the burning of the Roman building, was later found to be Iron Age. The radiocarbon date of some charred timber from this context supplied an early to middle IA date for the IA activity in this area[1]. This is largely supported by the pottery evidence. There was clearly a substantial phase of Iron Age activity in this part of Trench 2, particularly in the central area.

The trench as a whole produced 11,357 pottery sherds, of which 55% were Roman and the remainder Iron Age. The Iron Age assemblage appears to be largely Early Iron Age or Early to Middle Iron Age. A total of 1,261 fragments of animal bone were found, and in terms of the species which were recognisable from the fragments, the largest proportion were of sheep/goat (744 fragments), which is not unusual on a Roman site. Some of the bone rich deposits like (2070), (2145), (2195), and (2230) featured a large number of mandibles in the high sheep/goat assemblages. As discussed later, rams or sheep are the favoured animal of the god Mercury and the high number of sheep/goat mandibles might be of significance in the theory that this building was linked to Mercury worship. Cockerels are also associated with Mercury, so again the presence of 85 bird bones in certain deposits might be significant. Though the species of bird is not always identifiable in these fragments, most are probably from domesticated fowl rather than wild birds. The next largest numbers of recognisable species were cattle and pig (193 cattle fragments; 118 pig fragments), followed by bird (86 fragments) and medium mammal (51 fragments). There were also tiny amounts of dog and possibly cat bones and also rodents, voles, and a frog. There were small amounts of disarticulated human bone in this trench, mostly in Roman layers such as (2000), (2056), (2067), (2070), (2171), (2267), (2303) and (2310). A fragment of adult human skull was also found in top fill (2048) of Iron Age posthole [2047] and a human molar in the single fill (2106) of stake hole [2105], but there were no articulated human bones or burials in this trench.

[1] Oxford Research Laboratory for Archaeology produced a radiocarbon accelerator date – OxA-12608, wood charcoal, (uncal) date 2141 +/-32 BP = 71% (cal) probability of 550BC -390BC.

Considering the large size of this Roman building there were surprisingly small amounts of Roman building material such as tesserae and painted plaster. In fact, no pieces of painted plaster were found at all and only 20 pieces of tesserae, (mostly the reused ceramic tile type). Most of the other trenches on site near the main Romano-Celtic temple itself or just outside the temenos enclosure, produced many more tesserae. There was a lot of roof tile *c.* 250kilos, but as explained earlier in this report, much of this may have been brought in as make-up for secondary floors, rather than being the remnant of an original roof. Some 233 Roman structural nails were found, but this is not a huge amount for such a large building. It may be that after the devastation of the fire, there was an extensive clear-up of all the damage, which swept away things like burnt painted plaster that might have been in the original interior. Or perhaps the fire happened soon after the outer structure was completed, but before interior decoration like plaster or tessellated flooring had been installed? Unfortunately, we can never really know the answer to this. As discussed later in this report, a huge number of hobnails were found in this trench, some 3,099 in total, representing *c*. 92% of all the hobnails found across the entire site. All of the other trenches that produced hobnails had less than 100 per trench, so the assemblage in Trench 2 is significant. The possible reasons for this high percentage are dealt with in the discussion below.

Looking at the small find assemblage from the trench - the Roman coins assemblage at 717 coins is also bigger than any other found in any trench across the whole site, including those in the vicinity of the main Roman temple within the temenos, where you might expect the highest percentage. Even in the trenches that are relatively coin rich, none produced more than 200 coins per trench. The 717 Roman coins found in the building are largely late Roman, as you might expect in a late Roman building. A total of 1,319 small finds of all artefact types were found in this trench, but when you take out the Roman coins and small nails and hobnails from this number, it leaves a very modest number for all the remaining types of small find. For instance, only 33 glass fragments were found, only 36 worked bone finds (mostly hair pins and needles), and very few iron finds outside of the different types of Roman nail. So, the very confined focus of Roman metalwork found in this building, specifically coins and hobnails, is unlike the pattern seen in any of the other trenches and does seem to point to a very particular form of votive deposition. As discussed later in this report, a strong hypothesis is that this pattern of votive deposition is often seen in late Roman temple offerings but in particular on sites with evidence of a Mercury shrine.

Iron Age Phase - discussion

Though this was clearly a Roman structure, excavation both inside and outside BU.9 produced a surprisingly large number of prehistoric sherds, even though only three pits ([2010], [2014] and [2126]) and a handful of postholes are most likely to be Iron Age. The total assemblage of Iron Age pottery was 4,856 sherds, and the Roman pottery assemblage was 6,501 sherds. So surprisingly, some 45%. of the pottery assemblage in this trench was prehistoric. The prehistoric pottery that has been looked at from this trench is mostly Early Iron Age or Early Iron Age to Middle Iron Age. The bulk of the Iron Age sherds came from topsoil and subsoil layers across most of the trench, including eight layers that each contained at least 100+ and in most cases 300+ Iron Age sherds. Most of these layers also contained Roman material, so clearly many areas of prehistoric activity have been disturbed either by later Roman activity or post Roman ploughing. The nature of the prehistoric activity in this area is unclear, but the

proximity to Trench 36 features such as the Iron Age burial pit and the central and flanking Iron Age pits linked to the Roman square shrine, may be significant.

CUTS:

Pit [2010] Large pit, *c.* 0.75m x 0.45m, in NW corner of the northern annexe of structure BU.9. Underlies Roman walls [2009] and [2017]. The two fills (2011) and (2142) contained no dating evidence, but this is probably an Iron Age feature.

Pit [2014] Small oval pit, outside of BU.9 and situated just to the NW of the northern annexe. The upper fill (2015) contained 62 Iron Age sherds, no dating material in lower fill (2057). Probably Iron Age.

Posthole [2047] Large posthole, *c* 0.45m in diameter, situated to the north of BU.9 and above the northern annexe on the trench edge. Burnt limestone packing (2048) contained 26 Iron Age sherds and one fragment of human adult skull. Lower fill (2140) contained no dating evidence.

Posthole [2058] Small round straight-sided posthole, situated just to the south of southern wall [2006] of BU.9, and in close proximity to the potential threshold features [2040] and [2042]. Diameter *c.* 0.57m, depth *c.* 0.23m. Single fill (2059) contained 18 prehistoric sherds and 2 Roman sherds. Possibly Iron Age?

Posthole [2073] Small straight-sided posthole, diam. *c.* 0.6m, depth *c.* 0.35m, situated just within structure BU.9, just to the north of southern wall [2006] and close to threshold feature [2040.]. It cuts EIA-MIA layer (2068) and is overlain by (2008). Single fill (2074) contained 47 EIA-MIA, so this is an Iron Age feature.

Posthole [2077] Small straight-sided posthole, diameter *c.* 0.60m, depth *c*. 0.48m, situated inside BU.9, just to NW of posthole [2073]. Top fill (2078) contained ten prehistoric sherds and bottom fill (2103) contained five prehistoric sherds. Probably Iron Age.

Posthole [2091] Not completely excavated, situated inside central part of structure BU.9, just south of northern wall [2003] and cuts layer (2068). Diam. 0.30m, depth 0.41m. Filled by (2092) containing only seven prehistoric sherds, and limestone packing fill (2104). Possibly Iron Age?

Posthole [2096]? Small straight-sided posthole, *c.* 0.27m dimeter and *c.* 0.30m deep, cut down to bedrock and situated near the centre of structure BU.9, close to postholes [2073] and [2077]. Single fill contained large stones around the top and three prehistoric sherds. Possibly Iron Age?

Posthole [2098] Small straight-side posthole, diameter *c.* 0.15m and depth *c.* 0.30m. Situated close to and north of posthole [2096] inside structure BU.9. Single fill (2083) contained only five prehistoric sherds. Possibly Iron Age?

Posthole [2100] Small posthole. 0.60m wide and 0.25m deep, situated on edge of the robber trench [2064] for southern wall [2027], relationship to robber trench unclear. Possibly predates it and the Roman wall. Single fill (2101) contained 50 prehistoric sherds. Possibly Iron Age?

Pit [2126] Deep pit, diameter *c.* 0.5m and depth *c.* 1.42m, cut into bedrock and situated inside the centre of structure BU.9, below the northern annexe. The pit contained three fills and top fill (2093) contained 472 EIA sherds and nine intrusive Roman sherds. Middle fill (2207) consisted of assorted limestone stones and no dating evidence and bottom fill (2215) also contained one prehistoric sherd. This is an Early Iron Age feature.

MAIN LAYERS:

Layer 2033 This large patch of burnt material is situated in the centre of BU.9 at the west edge of the eastern extension. It extends *c.* 5m N-S and *c.* 3m E-W and contained charcoal and burnt daub fragments. Originally it was thought this burnt area was associated with the late Roman destruction of the building by fire, but radiocarbon dating of these charred timber fragments revealed an early to middle Iron Age date, so instead this may represent remains of a destroyed prehistoric building or possibly a hearth.

Layer (2068) Subsoil below topsoil (2000) in the western sector of BU.9 and overlies layer (2102). It is probably the same as layers (2196) and (2208) The layer is cut by postholes [2073] and [2091] and contained 366 EIA-MIA prehistoric sherds and 78 Roman sherds. An area of original prehistoric activity, probably disturbed by ploughing.

Roman Phase - discussion

The finds and structural relationships within the building all point to this being a late Roman monumental structure, probably designed for a high-status ceremonial or religious function. The consistency and massiveness of the lower stone foundations onto bedrock supports the argument that this was an important building. Burnt deposits, including on the stone walls, suggest this late Roman structure was damaged by fire, probably not too long after its construction in the 4th century AD. The lack of any quantity of finds in the central, northern and southern sectors of the building first suggested a hypothesis that the original building had a suspended floor, thus preventing many finds from dropping to the ground. The lack of evidence for any substantial primary floor deposits was also originally seen as supporting this. All the floor layers we have in the form of mortar spreads etc seem to be secondary features created after the first building was impacted by fire. But if a large part of the structure was burnt down and then repurposed in some way, an alternative theory explaining the lack of primary floor could simply be that after the fire, there was a major clearing of burnt debris including the primary floor deposits. In order to re-use part of this building, removing internal burnt debris would have been essential.

The lack of primary floor deposits also creates a problem in establishing the original construction date of this building. However, at the base of wall foundations at the western end at the lowest stratified level of the foundation cut, there was one 4th century shelly ware sherd. This discovery, plus the overwhelmingly late Roman coin assemblage from this trench, strongly suggests this structure was constructed from new in the late Roman period and that its secondary use and abandonment probably happened in the 4th to 5th centuries. After it was severely damaged by fire, the structure seems to have been partially rebuilt and repurposed. This secondary post-fire stage is represented by the striking concentration of coins, nails and other metal finds, plus much redeposited tile and 4th century pottery, in the north-western sector of the building's interior in layers (2070) and (2195) in particular. None of the contexts sampled for pottery dates in this trench produced any early Roman pottery. Apart from a few 3rd century

types, the pottery was overwhelmingly mid to late 4th century. This supports the theory that this building was not only partly destroyed in the late Roman period but that it was also only built in the late Roman period.

This concentration of late Roman finds is contained both within the walls in this sector and also behind the beam slot [2173]. This extensive spread of finds is in great contrast with the paucity of finds in the rest of the building and probably implies the secondary use of this damaged building was mostly confined to this north-west sector. The beam slot may define a new smaller 'sacred' area, demarcated by a simple timber wall on one side and what was left of the wall foundations on the other sides. There are precedents on other temple sites like Uley, Gloucestershire (Woodward and Leach 1993; 316), where temple buildings that are no longer completely fit for purpose are either used simply as an area to deposit votive offerings (possibly originating from a shrine in another part of the complex), or a smaller part of a damaged building is repurposed for secondary use. It may be that only the western part of the damaged structure was fit to be re-used. Some have suggested the secondary use may have been utilitarian, perhaps a space to confine animals. But the richness of coins and other Roman material inside the west end of the structure, all post-fire, makes this very unlikely and suggests votive deposition activity or a secondary deposition of votive material from elsewhere.

The big question is of course 'what was the original purpose of this building and what was it used for subsequently after the fire'? In its first construction, as one of the largest buildings on site, this was clearly an important building. Our early speculation that this may have been a late Roman church looked less and less likely as the excavations progressed. Partly because it does not fit with the simple rectangular design (sometimes with an apse at the east end) that early rural Christian churches tend to have in Roman Britain. There are simply no parallels for the three annexed layout in early churches in this country. But pagan temples sometimes do have more unusual designs, with additional chambers or niches for priestly activities or for housing cult statues. The fact that many of the coins are post 391-2 (after Theodosius's edicts closing pagan temples) and that a few happen to have the Chi-Rho symbol on them, really proves nothing except that as we know this structure, and whatever activity happened in it, is Late Roman. However, the fact that there are more coins in this one structure than anywhere else on this large site (at *c.* 30% of the total assemblage from all the MF trenches) suggests votive offerings rather than a church environment, where pagan offerings would not be welcome.

There has been much speculation about the nature of this structure including the suggestion that the three side 'chambers' were structures to contain flights of steps up into the building with a raised floor, in the manner of Romano-Celtic temple structures such as Caerwent, Monmouthshire (Ashby *et al.,* 1910). However, closer post-excavation analysis of the structural evidence makes this extremely unlikely for two reasons. Firstly, the outer width of these three possible 'staircases' would be massive at a 6-7m width for each one. This is not only far larger than the 4m width of temple entrances like Caerwent, but is also much wider even the main entrance to the arena on the site of Marcham itself in Trench 1. Such monumental staircases might be found in a Roman city temple or on in an important military complex but are unlikely in a rural shrine like Marcham. Secondly, the footprint for such temple external staircases is simple, just two short walls flanking either side of the entrance, and not two flanking walls joined by a third wall across where the steps should be constructed, as seen in the Trench 2 building at Marcham. It is possible that the smallest of these side chambers at the

east end may have been an entrance of some sort, as the extra mural cobbling in this area may suggest. The eastern end of this east chamber seems to have been robbed more extensively of stone than other walls but there were remnants of an original foundation wall here. It may be that this area was later cleared of original stonework foundations to make a secondary entrance at this point. If so, it would match the pattern for eastern entrances seen across the site, e.g. in the Iron Age barrel-shaped enclosure, the main Romano-Celtic temple within the temenos, and finally in the Roman arena. Excavation also highlighted a possible entrance through the southern wall [2006], as defined by two mortared lintels or threshold areas [2040] and [2042]. Whether this entrance was part of the original structure or a post-fire adaption is impossible to say. A southern entrance may suggest a close relationship to the small square shrine in Trench 36, sited about 10m to the south of the Trench 2 structure, and in alignment with it.

The relationship between the main Romano-Celtic temple building to the west (BU. 9) and this Trench 36 square shrine with its ritual shaft, is of great importance to our understanding of the whole religious complex, and also perhaps the Trench 2 building. The Trench 2 building is both close to and in the same alignment as the square shrine in Trench 36. The significance of the placing of the square Roman shrine and its relationship to the existing three Iron Age pits close to it, is dealt with in the Trench 36 narrative. The square shrine is further totally aligned to the main temple within its temenos to the west. The important point is that this area in Trench 36 seems to have already been a sacred area in the prehistoric period, which went on to influence the siting of the main temple to the west and probably also, much later, the large structure in Trench 2. The ritual shaft within the square shrine produced 110 late Roman coins, very much in line with the large quantity of late Roman coins found in secondary deposits (2070) and (2195) in the Trench 2 structure. These two neighbouring and similarly E-W aligned structures were clearly in use at the same time. It is hard to pin down when the square shrine and its ritual shaft were actually constructed, but it seems likely that the square shrine itself was created at the same time or not long after the main temple in its temenos to the west. However, the date at which the central ritual shaft was constructed within the earlier pit is not clear, as the lower fills of the shaft were sterile, so they could have been silting up for some time before the late Roman coins were put in the top. The close proximity to the Trench 2 building, the sharing of a strict E-W alignment, and the fact that both the top of the ritual shaft and the west end of the Trench 2 building contained late Roman coins of the same date – suggests a relationship between the two structures/shrines. Perhaps, one deity was worshipped inside the square shrine earlier in the Roman period, then at some point in the 4th century there was a move to a different kind of worship and perhaps a different deity. Perhaps both the Trench 2 building and the ritual shaft inside the pit within the square structure were created to worship a new deity? Whether one came before the other or both were constructed around the same time is difficult to say.

Though there is no specific evidence in the form of altars, dedications, or miniature figurines to indicate what god, if any, the Trench 2 structure and the nearby square shrine and ritual shaft, were dedicated to, there may be some clues in the type of small finds recovered. If we look at the Late Roman period in Britain, one of the most popular gods was Mercury, the god of travel and commerce. Favoured objects for offerings to Mercury were coins (for commerce) and also sometimes hobnails (representing shoes and travel), plus specific items like slipper brooches and miniature figures of rams and cockerels, his associated animals. In the light of this, the dense concentration of 717 late Roman coins and a massive 3,099 hobnails in Trench 2,

mirrored by the occurrence of 110 late Roman coins in the ritual shaft in Trench 36, looks significant. At Uley in Gloucestershire, where there is clear evidence for Mercury worship in the form of altars and figurines, the presence of large quantities of hobnails in certain areas has promoted the suggestion that (either as actual shoes or loose hobnails), these may have been deposited as votive offerings to Mercury in his guise of messenger and traveller – rather than being just a dumping of old shoes (Woodward and Leach, 1993; 184). The same argument could be applied to the hobnails found in Trench 2. Further weight might be lent to a theory that the building is linked to Mercury worship in the very high numbers of sheep/goat bones in the Trench 2 assemblage, particularly in certain finds rich and coin rich deposits like layers (2070), (2145), (2195) and (2230), where the numbers of sheep/goat mandibles seems unusually high. These four contexts all contained a small amount of bird bones (21 fragments in total), most probably fowl in most cases. Do they represent ritual feasting or votive deposits in the name of Mercury?

The occurrence of a three cockerel spurs and chicken bones in the upper fills of the ritual shaft, may also hint at Mercury worhship. It is possible that the capped ritual shaft in nearby Trench 36 was topped by a statue of Mercury or an altar to Mercury and that the damaged and repurposed structure in Trench 2, was used to deposit the many offerings given to the god. Whether the original purpose of the large structure in Trench 2 was originally as a temple to Mercury we will never know, but there is evidence to support the theory that in its damaged post-fire state, offerings to Mercury ended up being deposited there.

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CUTS:

Robber cut [2064] Small robber cut between the two possible door sill features [2040] and [2042], in the area of the main southern wall of the structure, to the west of wall [2006] and to the east of wall [2027]. The top fill (2039) contained 28 prehistoric sherds and 47 Roman sherds, plus 2kg of Roman tile. Bottom fill (2065) contained 18 prehistoric sherds and 11 Roman sherds and a 4th century Roman coin. The fact that so much Roman material was present in this robber cut may suggest the robbing occurred in the late Roman period, rather than the post Roman era. Or perhaps this represented a clearing of the original wall foundations in this spot on the southern wall, maybe after the destructive fire, to create a southern entrance to the damaged building?

Beam slot [2173] Long linear cut running roughly SW-NE in centre of eastern extension of BU.9, but not aligned with the structure's E-W axis. The width is *c.* 0.25m and surviving length is *c*. 3.5m. It is filled with (2172) which contained five prehistoric sherds and 17 3rd century Roman sherds, plus three 4th century Roman coins. As it is out of alignment with the original structure of BU.9, it is possible this beam slot represents a secondary use of the building after it burnt down, possibly sectioning off an area for use. The fact that it seems to demarcate the southern extent of a finds rich and extensive tile and building rubble spread

(2070) may suggest it was a timber structure or wall set up in the destroyed remains of the BU.9, demarcating an area for first stage or secondary stage votive deposition.

Small pit or posthole [2269] This possible pit, diam. *c.* 0.45m, is situated in the NE corner of the eastern extension of BU.9 between walls [2174] and [2178]. It is below clay floor layer (2250) and cuts (2171) and (2208). Single fill (2230) contained no pottery but did produce 3kg. of Roman tile and 4th century Roman coins.

Gully [2283] A small narrow gully is situated next to wall [2266] of the eastern extension of BU.9. Single fill (2253/2312) contained 42 prehistoric sherds, 22 Roman sherds and 2kg of Roman tile. Function and dating unknown but it probably postdates the original construction of the building as it is filled by demolition rubble.

STRUCTURES:

Wall [2003] Eastern stretch of main northern wall of building BU.9, running in W-E direction. Made of limestone rubble, overlain by (2000), abutted by wall [2026]. All the walls of structure BU.9 are made of limestone rubble, are of similar dimensions, *c.* 1m wide, and are overlain by (2000).

Wall [2004] Small, poorly built W-E extension wall added to NE corner of N chamber, made of limestone rubble. Abuts northern wall [2009]. Probably a later addition to BU.9.

Wall [2006] Part of southern wall of main building, running in W-E direction. Abuts features [2040] and [2042] and robbed area of wall [2064].

Wall [2009] Northern wall of north extension of building BU.9. Abuts walls [2024] and [2026] and overlies pit [2010], where the wall foundation seems to have disappeared.

Wall [2017]/[2024] Western wall of the northern extension of BU.9, running N-S. Same wall as [2024] and disappears over pit [2010].

Structure [2023] Linear cut filled by burnt limestone, burnt sand, and charcoal, measuring *c.* 1.7m x 0.9m. Originally thought to be the base of a possible pillar. Mortar layer (2121) and red sand layers (2122) and layers (2124/2125) appear to be part of it. Possibly a post pad, or perhaps a small hearth?

Wall [2024] – see wall [2017]

Wall [2025] The western section of the main north wall of building BU.9 and its turn to the south, running E-W and the turn running N-S. Made of limestone rubble and mortar, burnt on the inner southern edge. This particular wall had a slot cut through it to look at the construction. It seemed to consist of a largely drystone construction within a foundation trench, the lower layer made of larger slabs set slantwise against each other, with a large rubble course over them. See associated 'structure' [2159] for evidence of repairing this wall.

Wall [2026] The east wall of north extension, running N-S, abuts walls [2003] and [2009]. Made of the usual limestone rubble.

Wall [2027] The main south wall of building BU.9, orientated E-W and abutting walls [2150]and robbed area [2064]. Same as wall [2006], just the western part of it.

Structure [2040] Rectangular patch of mortar and limestone rubble, on the inner edge of robbed southern wall [2006], measuring 1.1m x 0.6m. Layer (2041) is part of/same as [2040], a mix of stone, gravel and some mortar. Most probably a door sill or packed stone threshold of some type, denoting a southern entrance to the BU.9 structure here. Overlain by (2000). A similar feature, [2042], sits in the same position on the outer edge of the wall position here. Adjacent to and between structures [2040] and matching feature [2042], in the area where the original southern wall should run through, is a potential robber cut [2064]. It is worth considering whether this robber cuts marks a later clearing of the original wall foundations here (after the fire?) in order to create a new southern entrance?

Structure [2042] A second rectangular patch of mortar and limestone rubble on the outer edge of robbed southern wall [2006], opposite the matching feature [2040]. This patch of stone, mortar and gravel measures *c.* 1.4m x 0.6m. Layer (2043) is same as/part of feature [2042], a mix of stone, gravel and some mortar. As with [2040] this is most likely to be a door sill or packed stone threshold, denoting a southern entrance to the building here.

?Structure [2141] Small limestone structure or wall tumble, south of southern wall of BU.9. Not excavated, so function unknown.

Wall [2150] N-S short stretch of wall, representing the turn into the eastern extension. Abuts annexe southern wall [2165] and also main southern wall [2027] of building BU.9.

Wall Repair [2159] Appears to be a repair of wall [2025] on its inner face as it turns the corner into the western extension. There are four large flat blocks set into mortar on the inner wall face, which do not resemble the small limestone rubble construction of the rest of the original wall. Three of these stones are unburnt, but the burnt one is in unburnt mortar, so has probably been reused. It seems likely that these blocks are a later repair to the wall after the whole building was fire damaged. This is because as well as the difference in construction style from the rest of the wall, these three of the large blocks and all of the mortar are unburnt. This is further proof that this western end of the damaged structure seems to have been repurposed in some way after the fire.

Wall [2165] South wall of western extension, only dense rubble remains. Abuts walls [2150] and [2174]. Soil matrix (2181) is part of the wall and contained Roman pottery and 4th century and Roman coins.

Wall [2174]/[2213] west wall of western extension. [2213] was assigned to the NW corner and north part of the wall, as it seemed less compact and stones mostly robbed out here. Layer (2214) was the looser ‘soil matrix’ of the wall in this area, and ‘soil matrix’ (2182) was given to the looser soil within wall [2174]. It contained 123 Roman sherds and 4th century Roman coins.

Wall [2178] North wall of western extension, abutting walls [2025] and [2174] and wall repair [2159]. Soil matrix (2183) is part of the wall and contained 4th century Roman coins.

Wall foundation [2231] Lower foundation of wall 2236, the E-W southern wall of the eastern extension. Irregular blocks of limestone placed in rough herringbone faction directly on bedrock. Part of wall [2236].

Wall [2232] narrow N-S stone wall, external to main structure BU.9, and appears to be later. It abuts the SE corner of the eastern extension, being connected to wall [2236]. The wall at *c.* 0.50m width is much narrower than the walls of the main structure.

Wall [2236] E-W short stretch of wall, representing the south wall of the eastern extension. Abuts walls [2266] and [2237]. Abutted by external narrow wall [2232]. Limestone rubble construction with what seems to be a small rectangular slot within it (for a drain or a post?).

Wall [2237] N-S short stretch of wall, representing part of the eastern end of the building, leading into the eastern extension. Abuts wall [2236] and southern wall [2238]. Limestone rubble construction.

Wall [2238] E-W short stretch of southern wall, representing the eastern end of the wall attached to the eastern extension. The western end and main number for this southern wall is [2027]. Abuts wall [2237]. Limestone rubble construction with some mortar remains.

?Hearth [2241] Spread of burnt limestone rubble in centre of eastern extension. Might be a hearth but given the demise of the structure by fire, it might just represent a spread of burnt material. Contained 40 prehistoric sherds and 63 Roman sherds, plus a 4th century Roman coin.

?Structure [2244] Line of limestone blocks with some mortar, running in a roughly N-S direction, situated at the western end of BU.9 to south of wall [2025]. Probably not an internal wall as originally thought. Function unclear.

Wall [2254]/[2268]]/[2271]/[2272] E-W short stretch of wall, representing the north wall of the eastern extension. Abuts walls [2284] and [2266]. 'Fill' (2242) is part of the wall. Much of this wall is robbed out and some of the structure numbers represent rubble spread from the original wall. Overlain by layer (2221). Limestone rubble construction.

Wall [2266] Probably the rubble wall foundation for an original N-S eastern wall of the eastern extension. Only small rubble limestone and mortar patches left, so this area may have been severely robbed out at some point. Overlain by late Roman layer (2221) and abutting walls [2254] and [2236]. Initially it was thought there was an entrance to the main building through this eastern extension, but this was before remnants of a wall foundation was found here in 2004. However, the extensive robbing here, accompanied by the position of cobbled area just outside the building at this point, may suggest an original wall was cleared at a later date to make a secondary entrance. Possibly post-fire?

Wall [2284] N-S orientated wall at east end of building BU.9, leading into eastern extension. Abuts wall [2254]. No finds.

Structure [2331] Irregular limestone blocks laid in herringbone pattern, underlying south wall [2236] of eastern extension and laid directly on bedrock. Probably the lowest foundation course of this wall and the bedrock may have been cut slightly here to make a more level foundation.

MAIN LAYERS:

Layer (2066) Mortar face on the inside of the southern wall [2027] of building BU.9. Overlain by (2000).

Layer (2069) Limestone rubble spread inside north-western sector of the building. Situated south of wall [2025] and internal layer (2024). Contained 25 prehistoric sherds, 83 Roman sherds and 4kg of Roman tile.

Layer (2070)/(2070A) Compacted finds rich mortar and gravel layer in the north-west sector of the building, seen as a possible secondary floor surface. Partly overlain by layer (2024) and overlies layers (2094), (2145) and (2196). Same as layers (2195) and (2205). This layer was very finds rich and contained 86 prehistoric sherds and 212 late Roman sherds of the 4th century plus a very large dump of tile, some 27kg. There were 90 animal bone fragments, with particularly large numbers of sheep/goat and sheep/goat mandibles. This layer also contained 100 late Roman coins, 35 hobnails, 16 nails and a few personal items like tweezers, a hair pin and a bracelet fragment.

Layer (2145) Stone rubble layer inside the building in the north-west sector, spreading *c.* 3.8m from N-S. Overlain by layers (2070) and (2195) and overlies layers (2208) and (2217). Same as layers (2196) and (2205). Some of the limestone fragments were burnt, so this may have been another post fire layer. As with (2070)/(2196) this was a very finds rich layer containing 82 prehistoric sherds and 202 4th century Roman sherds, plus a large quantity of Roman tile *c*. 49kg and oyster shell. The finds included a large number of animal bones, some 105, particularly sheep and cattle and a large number of sheep/goat mandibles. Also found in this layer was 21 Roman coins, mostly 4th century, 11 other small finds, and a large mass of 1,106 hobnails.

Layer (2148) – see (2199), same as.

Layer [2149] Limestone rubble and mortar layer inside the building in the western sector. Same as layers (2024) and (2198) and overlies tile rich layers (2070) and (2195). Possibly a floor surface. This layer contained 11 Roman sherds and 4th century Roman coins.

Layer (2155) Area of subsoil within central area of BU.9. Stony with mortar fragments. Overlain by (2000), overlies walls of building, probably same as (2189). Contained 45 prehistoric sherds and 75 Roman sherds, plus three Roman coins of the 4th century.

Layer (2156) Subsoil to the south of the building with many limestone fragments. Overlain by (2000) and overlies (2190). Contained 395 EIA-MIA sherds, and 159 Roman coins, plus seven 4th century Roman coins. This is a Roman period layer but with much residual Iron Age material.

Layer (2157) Subsoil in central eastern area of BU.9. Overlain by (2024). Contained four prehistoric sherds and 146 Roman sherds, plus 7kg of Roman tile and 30 4th century Roman coins

Layer (2166) see layer (2199).

Layer (2167) possible thin layer of extra mural cobbling to the west of western annex and wall [2174], but it may just be a spread of loose stone.

Layer (2168) Dark soil containing charred grain just to the west of the building. Overlain by (2155) and overlies (2204), possibly part of (2167). Contained five prehistoric sherds and 97 Roman sherds, plus six 4th century Roman coins.

Layer (2169) Limestone and mortar rubble floor with evidence of burning, in the western annexe near wall [2174]. Th burning of the upper surface of the mortar area seems to be later than the main burning episode of the structure. Possibly the remnants of a hearth. Contained 12 Roman sherds and a 4th century coin.

Layer (2170) Dense yellow mortar spread in the western part of the western extension of BU.9. Composed of 90% mortar with some limestone rubble and one piece of opus signinum. This layer overlay burnt soil (2235). Might be same as layer (2169) and layer (2234) or alternatively a layer between them. Strong possibility it might also be the same layer and phase as (2197) just to the north of it. Whatever the exact relationship between all these adjoining layers is, it seems (2170) and the other mortar spreads could represent a secondary floor layer in this western extension, post fire. Contained only three Roman sherds.

Layer (2171) Brown loam with mortar inclusions in the southern central interior of BU.9 to the south of beam slot [2173]. Contained 287 prehistoric sherds which are probably EIA and 28 Roman sherds, plus three 4th century Roman coins. The amount of residual prehistoric pottery suggests there had been extensive Iron Age activity in this area.

Layer (2179) Mortar layer on top of wall repair [2159] in the NW corner of structure BU.9. Overlain by (2157) and (2188). Possibly a consolidation of wall section [2159].

Layer (2188) Stony layer or spread in NW sector of building BU.9 in area of wall [2025]. Overlain by (2157). Contained 259 4th century Roman pottery sherds and 23 4th century Roman coins.

Layer (2195) Large finds rich spread in the north-west sector of BU.9 to the south of wall [2025] containing limestone rubble and some mortar plus quantities of Roman tile, pottery, animal bone and coins. Overlies mortar floor layer (2199)/(2166) and (2196) and is overlain by layer (2188). Probably same as the other finds rich layer (2070). As with this layer it was seen as a possible later floor surface, though this extensive amount of coins and other finds here may suggest alternatively this area was used for dumping votive material collected from a nearby shrine or shrines. Contains 365 4th century Roman sherds (and 17 residual prehistoric sherds) and a large quantity of tile, some 38kg. The large bone assemblage (118 fragments) included high numbers of sheep/goat and many mandibles. The deposit also contained 90 4th century Roman coins, plus 13 other Roman small finds of copper-alloy, iron, and glass.

Layer [2197] Mortar spread in the western part of the west extension of BU.9. This mortar spread with charcoal flecks in it extends to the north of mortar spread (2170) and might well be the same layer. If so, it might also be part of a secondary phase floor layer, post fire. Contained only three Roman sherds.

Layer [2196] – see [2145]

Layer (2198) Mortar rich soil containing 106 4th century Roman sherds and *c.* 2kg of Roman tile. Two Roman coins one of 3rd century date and one of 4th century date were also found.

Layer (2199) Mortar and limestone rubble spread with some large flat stones set in mortar. Below topsoil layers (2000) and (2002) and also below finds rich spread (2195). This spread extends from the beam slot [2173] northwards for *c.* 4m. Possible floor scree or simple mortar floor. Mortar rich layers (2166), (2148) and (2200) are now seen to be part of this

same scree or floor deposit. Contained seven prehistoric sherds, 58 Roman sherds, *c*. 2kg of Roman tile and a 4th century Roman coin

Layer [2205] – see [2145]

Layer (2221) Loam with limestone fragments and burnt stone below topsoil and above layer (2220) inside building. Contained 35 prehistoric sherds, 374 4th century Roman sherds, 4kg of Roman tile and 3rd and 4th century Roman coins.

Cobbled surface [2222] Densely packed layer of limestone slabs or cobbles, lying directly to the east of the eastern extension of BU.9 Plough damaged. Probably an external floor surface outside a possible entrance through the east extension or a path leading to other parts of the site to the east, like the shrine in Trench 24. Contained 13 prehistoric sherds and 71 4th century Roman sherds and a 4th century Roman coin.

Layer (2230) Rubble spread to the south of wall [2025] in the western part of the building. Possibly same as layers (2195) and (2205). Contained much tile and bone, plus 64 late Roman coins, but no pottery. There was however a large animal bone assemblage (145 fragments), with a high percentage of sheep/goat and including both sheep/goat and cattle mandibles.

Layer [2234] Mortar rich layer with limestone fragments in the centre of the western annex. It is overlain by (2195) and (2230) and overlies (2235). Seems to be a rubble spread in a slight hollow, so may represent packing to level a secondary floor. Contained 2kg of Roman tile, 21 4th century Roman coins, but no pottery.

Layer (2267) Silty loam layer in eastern extension of BU.9, overlain by (2221) and (2240). Contained 237 EIA sherds and 57 Roman sherds, plus one 4th century Roman coin. This is probably an area of Roman activity but with much residual Iron Age material, suggesting it was also originally an area of prehistoric activity.

Cobbled surface [2315] Small limestone blocks, with a flat worn surface, underlying extra-mural limestone cobbling area (2222) outside the eastern annex of the building. Represents an earlier surface or path in this area.

Layer (2325) Layer of flat small irregular cobbles outside the eastern annex, beneath the cobbled layer (2315), containing eight Roman sherds. Probably represents an early extra mural surface in the area.

Layer (2326) Larger limestone cobbles with mortar outside eastern annexe at the west end of the MF04 trench. Sits below cobbled layer (2325), so also represents an earlier extra mural cobbled surface.

Unphased Features

CUTS

Small pit? [2034] This may be a later pit that removes the corner wall, in the SW corner of the northern annexe where it meets main north wall [2025]. Cut not visible when excavated, so it might be just part of a robbing procedure? Single fill (2035) contained a mix of eight prehistoric and 12 Roman sherds.

Posthole [2058] Small posthole situated just outside the southern wall [2006] of the building very close to the possible south entrance and its stone thresholds. Cuts layer (2044). Single fill (2059) contained 18 prehistoric and two Roman sherds. It might be a prehistoric feature or it could be Roman and connected to the entrance into the Roman building.

Pit [2084] Small posthole in the southern central area of the building, just to the north of the possible southern entrance. Seems to be part of a cluster of postholes in this area e.g. cuts [2073], [2096] etc. Single fill (20850 contained no dating evidence.

Posthole [2086] Small posthole in the southern central area of the building, just to the north of the possible southern entrance. Measures *c.* 0.9m diameter and 0.10m deep. Seems to be part of a cluster of post holes in this area e.g. cuts [2073], [2084] etc. Single fill (2087) contained no dating evidence

Posthole [2097] Small posthole in the southern central area of the building, just to the north of the possible southern entrance. Measures *c.* 0.38m diameter. Seems to be part of a cluster of postholes in this area e.g. cuts [2073], [2084] etc. The two fills (2082) and (2099) contained no dating evidence.

Pit [2134] Small shallow pit with sloping sides and flat bottom, situated on the north baulk to NE of northern annexe. Measures *c*. 0.30m diam. and *c.* 0.15m deep. Single fill (2135) contained only three prehistoric sherds.

Stakehole [2105] Stakehole situated outside the building, to north of the northern annex. Single fill (2106) contained only one Roman sherd and one worn adult human molar. This appears to be part of a cluster of five postholes in this area (cuts 2107, 2109, 2111, 2113)

Stakehole [2107] Stakehole situated outside the building, to north of the northern annex. Single fill (2108) contained no dating evidence.

Stakehole [2109] Stakehole situated outside the building, to north of the northern annex. Single fill (2110) contained no dating evidence.

Stakehole [2111] Stakehole situated outside the building, to north of the northern annex. Single fill (2112) contained no dating evidence

Stakehole [2113] Stakehole situated outside the building, to north of the northern annex. Single fill (2114) contained no dating evidence.

Posthole [2129] Small posthole, *c.* 0.27 wide and 0.14 deep, situated outside the building, to the north of the north annex. Single fill (2130) contained no dating evidence.

Posthole 2131 Small posthole situated outside the building, to the north of the north annex. Single fill (2132) contained no dating evidence.

Small Pit or Posthole [2134] Small pit or posthole, *c*. 0.30 wide and 0.15 deep, situated to the north of the north annex. Single fill (2135) contained only three prehistoric sherds and one Roman sherd.

?Ditch [2136]/[2138] Possible V- shaped ditch cut in the central area of the building, cutting IA pit [2126]. Single fill (2137)/(2139) contained no dating evidence. Not on any plan, so its dimensions and categorization are unclear.

Shallow scoop [2175] Small scoop, *c.* 0.30m x 0.40m with several large stones and tile in the fill, situated outside wall [2174] on western edge of trench. Overlain by (2156). Single f ill (21565) contained limestone, tile, six prehistoric sherds and eight Roman sherds.

Posthole [2190]. Possible small posthole or natural dip in bedrock, *c.* 0.03m in diameter, Single fill (2191) contained no dating evidence.

Stakehole [2260]? Possible stakehole near wall [2027], overlain by (2171), *c.* 0.60m wide, depth 0.20m. Single fill (2261) contained no dating evidence.

Stakehole [2262] Small stakehole, *c.* 0.065m in diameter situated inside the building in the south-east corner. Contained no dating evidence

Stakehole [2274] Small irregular stakehole, *c*. 0.14m in diameter and *c*. 0.12m deep. Situated inside the building in the north-west sector. Possibly a construction scaffolding pole cavity? Contained no dating evidence

Stakehole [2277] Small irregular stakehole, *c.* 0.06m in diameter and *c*. 0.07m deep. Situated inside the building in the north-west sector. May have same function as nearby stakehole [2274]. Contained no dating evidence.

Stakehole [2280] Small irregular posthole, similar size and location to [2274] and [2277], so one of three in a N-S orientation in the NW sector of the building. Contained no dating evidence.

Gully [2283] Possible small oval gully situated right next to east wall [2266] and abutting extra mural wall [2232]in area of extra mural cobbled layer (2222). Length *c.* 1.8m, width *c.* 0.35m. Single fill (2253) contained 27 Iron Age sherds and 19 Roman sherds so the dating is uncertain, as is the function.

Gully [2342] Another small gully cut, this one is next to and aligned with wall [2232], just to the south of gully [2283]. As these two small gullies are aligned and abutting, it is likely they are part of the same longer gully. Single fill (2341) contained 14 prehistoric sherds and nine Roman sherds. Dating and function uncertain as with [2283] but their close proximity to the eastern walls of the structure suggest they have something to do with the Roman building.

STRUCTURES:

Wall [2005] A line of limestone rubble discovered at the edge of the trench to the north of the northern extension of BU.9. As only a small part of this potential wall was uncovered, its function is unknown. As it lay between the topsoil and subsoil layers, it was probably a later and post-Roman feature. No dating evidence

Structure [2036] Four aligned stones, set on edge in northern extension. No signs of a cut, so probably just wall tumble.

Structure [2051]? Limestone rubble seen in northern baulk, outside of the building and N of northern extension. Possible wall remains or just limestone rubble?

Structure [2345] Three limestone blocks to the west of eastern extension wall [2254]/[2268], inside the building and abutting the wall, *c*. 0.40m x 0.30m. Possibly an internal drain? Overlain by (2267).

MAIN LAYERS:

Layer (2012) Large spread of oyster shells, below subsoil layer (2002), situated in the central part of the building, just to the SE of beam slot [2173] and to the finds-rich and tile-rich rubble spreads like (2070). Probably a late Roman deposit, possibly as part of a make up for secondary floor levels or possibly a dump of oysters used in religious feasting.

Layer (2016) Subsoil in northern extension of BU.9, overlies (2008) and (2037) and is overlain by topsoil (2000). Contained 215 prehistoric sherds and 62 Roman sherds, as well as other Roman finds like coins and hobnails. Clearly there had been prehistoric activity in this area, but it seems likely, given the closeness to topsoil, that the Iron Age pottery was dragged up to the surface by ploughing, so the dating is uncertain.

Layer (2032) Subsoil to the NW of north extension, same as layer (2002) and below topsoil (2000). Contained 117 prehistoric sherds and 17 Roman sherds. Probably a disturbed area above prehistoric layers, so dating is uncertain.

Layer (2037) Subsoil layer with 118 prehistoric sherds and 14 Roman sherds in the centre of the trench. Probably an area disturbed by ploughing over earlier prehistoric deposits. Dating uncertain.

Layer (2153) Burnt limestone rubble, part of internal floor deposit layer (2148)? Contained 40 prehistoric sherds and 21 Roman sherds.

Layer (2154) General subsoil layer in the northern sector of the trench outside the building and north of north chamber. Contained 68 prehistoric sherds and 47 Roman sherds and coins of the 3rd and 4th century. Probably represents Iron Age soil disturbed by later Roman and later activity.

Layer (2156) Subsoil in southern part of trench, outside BU.9, overlain by topsoil (2000). Contained 395 prehistoric sherds, 159 Roman sherds and seven 4th century. Roman coins. Probably plough disturbed, so dating uncertain but demonstrates that there was substantial Iron Age activity in this area before the late Roman structure was built.

Layer (2167) Patchy cobbled surface abutting and to the west of the western chamber and wall [2174]. Could be extra mural cobbling at the west end of the building, disturbed by later activity. Overlies (2204) and overlain by layer (2155). No dating evidence.

Layer 2171 Loam layer with some mortar inside BU.9 in the south-eastern corner of the building. Contained 287 prehistoric sherds, 28 Roman sherds, and 3rd and 4th century Roman coins. Below finds rich layers (2199) and (2170). Cut by a linear anomaly [2173] tracking NE-SW. Probably plough disturbed, so dating uncertain.

Layer [2248] Possible clay floor surface layer with signs of burning in western extension of building. Overlies burnt layer (2246) and overlain by (2218) No dating evidence.

Layer (2249) Red burnt soil, south of wall [2178]. Possibly part of same burning event as (2247)? No dating evidence.