Wessex Archaeology

Friars Wash, Redbourn
Hertfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

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Friars Wash, Redbourn, Hertfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to carry out archaeological recording and post-excavation analysis on an archaeological evaluation by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at Friars Wash, Hertfordshire, centred on NGR 510100 214580. The Site lies in the hinterland of the important Romano-British town of *Verulamium* (St. Albans) and is located close to the assumed line of Watling Street, an important road running from London to Wroxeter.

The presence of archaeological remains on the Site was first noted in 1965 when building foundations were ploughed up. An aerial photograph taken in 1976 shows an apparently multi-period site including ditched enclosures. A large triple ditch/dyke system is also apparent, next to two rectangular structures which were considered to be Romano-British temples, and other possible features.

The fieldwork comprised geophysical survey and four evaluation trenches. Geophysical survey identified several anomalies that coincided with the features visible on the aerial photograph, and the four evaluation trenches were targeted on the various possible masonry structures and ditches identified.

The earliest deposits encountered comprise possible buried soils recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, both of which pre-dated the construction of the masonry structures. Although no dating evidence was recovered from either of these deposits, finds recovered from the metalled surface (108) directly overlying the possible buried soil in Trench 1 suggest a late 1st or 2nd century AD construction date for structure (109), and presumably also the surrounding ambulatory walls, with activity on the site continuing into the late 4th century AD.

The ground plans of the two structures in Trench 1 identifies them as a pair of Romano-British temples of quite an unusual form, the two central *cellae* (square buildings) being surrounded in each case by an outer ambulatory wall, with the ambulatories separated by a common dividing wall. The small, approximately square building recorded in Trench 3 could represent a third temple *cella*, but its small size is perhaps more suggestive of an ancillary building. The circular structure in Trench 2 is similar in form to other known Romano-British religious buildings and may be either a temple or a shrine. The approximately square flint and chalk footing in the centre of the circular building was probably for a plinth, which, from the presence of a small slot around two of its sides, may have been clad in higher quality stone or timber.

The evaluation trenching demonstrated that, although to an extent plough-damaged, the sub-surface archaeological remains were generally well-preserved.

The confirmation of the ground plan and date of the temple structures first observed on an aerial photograph is significant, although only a small part of the Site was investigated, and dating evidence was largely confined to post-demolition contexts. A short summary of the results will be submitted to the *Hertfordshire Archaeological Journal* for inclusion in the annual round-up of archaeology in the county, possibly accompanied by a site plan.

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This programme of post-excavation and assessment work was commissioned and funded by Videotext Communications Ltd, and Wessex Archaeology would like to thank the staff at Videotext, and in particular Michael Douglas (Series Editor), Jane Hammond (Production Manager), Ben Knappett (Assistant Producer), Louise Ord (Researcher) and Joanna Gatcum (Production Coordinator) for their considerable help during the recording and post-excavation work.

The geophysical survey was undertaken by John Gater, Jon Tanner and Emma Wood of GSB Prospection Ltd, and the field survey by Henry Chapman (University of Birmingham). The on-site recording and finds processing was undertaken by Vaughan Birbeck and Megan Stoakley respectively (Wessex Archaeology).

The excavations were undertaken by Time Team's retained archaeologists, Phil Harding (of Wessex Archaeology), Kerry Ely, Brigid Gallagher, Matt Williams, Faye Simpson, Tracey Smith and Ian Powlesland of Time Team and local diggers Chris Turner, Geoff Saunders, Alison Hudson, Andy Fawcett, Katie Watkins and Terry Dear who were assisted by local metal detectorists Clive Reader and David Mance.

The archive was collated and all post-excavation assessment and analysis undertaken by Wessex Archaeology. This report was compiled by Vaughan Birbeck with specialist reports prepared by Rob Perrin (finds), Nicholas Cooke (coins), Jörn Schuster (copper alloy brooch), Jessica Grimm (animal bone) and Ruth Pelling (palaeoenvironmental assessment). The illustrations were prepared by Kenneth Lymer. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Lorraine Mepham.

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Simon West of Hertfordshire County Council Archaeological Department for his help and advice. Thanks are also due to Ian Piggott who owns the land and who allowed access to the Site for the evaluation.

Friars Wash, Redbourn, Hertfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to carry out archaeological recording and post-excavation analysis on an archaeological evaluation by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at Friars Wash, Hertfordshire, centred on NGR 510100 214580 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 This report documents the results of archaeological survey and evaluation undertaken by Time Team, and presents an assessment of the results of these works.

1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The Site lies in a gently undulating valley base at a height of approximately 105m aOD and the underlying geology is chalk and clay with flints (BGS sheet 238D), overlain locally by river gravels.

1.2.2 The area under investigation, known as Friars Wash, is located approximately 8km north-west of St. Albans, the Romano-British city of *Verulamium*, and approximately 2.5km south-west of Harpenden. The Site is owned by Mr Ian Piggott of Thrales End Farm, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, and the land is currently under grass. The site was selected for archaeological evaluation and filming as a result of an invitation from the Hertfordshire County Council Principal Archaeologist, Simon West. Mr. West identified Friars Wash as a site where a number of research questions could be addressed through a small scale, carefully targeted evaluation.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

1.3.1 The earliest reported discovery that suggested the presence of archaeological remains on the Site was in 1965 when building foundations were ploughed up.

1.3.2 In the summer of 1976 archaeologists in Hertfordshire took full advantage of the hot, dry conditions by sending up a plane to take photos of sites of archaeological significance, which show up particularly well in these conditions. At Friars Wash, just to the east of the Roman Road of Watling Street, one aerial photograph, now held by the Hertfordshire HER, showed what appeared to be two rectangular structures, possibly Romano-British temples, side-by-side (**Figure 2, Plate 1**), within an apparently multi-period site including possible Late Iron Age ditched enclosures; a large triple ditch/dyke system is also apparent.

1.3.3 A few years later Harpenden and District Local History Society recovered a small assemblage of Romano-British material during fieldwalking over the site. The site lies in the hinterland of the important Romano-British town of *Verulamium* (St. Albans) and is located approximately 400m to the east of

the assumed line of Watling Street, an important road running between London and Wroxeter.

1.3.4 In the latter part of the 1st century, following the Roman conquest of AD 43, the first Romano-Celtic religious centres in the area appeared, with origins firmly placed in the pre-Roman Iron Age. The *Catuvellauni*, the local Celtic tribe, worshipped a number of gods, one of which appears on brooches as a warrior or horseman. During the Roman period many gods became 'romanised', with warrior types depicted as Mars *Toutatis*, a combination of a native and Roman deity. *Toutatis* seems to have been the tribal god of the *Catuvellauni*.

1.3.5 The Roman conquest brought with it a state religion. This included the introduction of Jupiter, Minerva and Mercury. Temples were constructed for worship and were built during the Roman period for the first time, with many occupying sites formerly sacred in the pre-Roman era. The majority of temples consisted of a square or rectangular building, the *cella*, surrounded by an ambulatory, or corridor. The *cella* was a shrine housing the cult object, probably a statue of the god, while the ambulatory was used to display curses or inscriptions recording offerings. A number of Romano-Celtic temples have been found across Hertfordshire, both in towns and the countryside, while classical temples (dedicated solely to Roman deities) were usually found only in towns.

1.3.6 In the near vicinity of the site, evidence for Romano-British settlement was recorded during the widening of the M1 motorway at Junction 9, approximately 900m to the west (OAU 2008).

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 A project design was prepared for the Site, in which the aims and objectives of the project were presented (Videotext Communications 2008). These can be summarised here:

- to determine the date sequence of sub-surface archaeological remains within the area of the Site;
- to establish the condition of sub-surface archaeological remains within the area of the Site;
- to determine, as far as possible, the extent of sub-surface archaeological remains within the area of the Site.

3 METHODS

3.1 Geophysical Survey

3.1.1 Prior to the excavation of evaluation trenches, a geophysical survey was carried out across the Site using a combination of resistance survey (Geoscan RM15 resistance meter) and magnetic survey (Bartington Grad 601-2 fluxgate gradiometer) (**Figure 1**). The results were analysed using a mixture of GSB and commercial software. The survey grid was set out by Dr Henry Chapman and tied in to the Ordnance Survey grid using a Trimble Real Time Differential GPS system.

3.2 Evaluation Trenches

3.2.1 Four trenches were excavated, targeted on the cropmarks and geophysical anomalies identified by earlier aerial photography and survey (**Figure 1**).

3.2.2 A mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket was used to remove the overburden from all trenches. All machine work was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological deposits. All trenches were then cleaned by hand and archaeological deposits were excavated. All spoil arising from the excavations was scanned with a metal-detector by experienced metal detectorists.

3.2.3 The standard Wessex Archaeology recording systems were used and all contexts and features were recorded using standard pro-forma record sheets. A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered was made, usually at a scale of 1:20; sections were drawn as appropriate. The OD height of all principal strata and features was indicated on appropriate plans and sections. A photographic record of the investigations and individual features was also prepared. All trenches were related to the National Grid/Ordnance Datum by local control.

3.2.4 At the completion of the work, all trenches were reinstated using the excavated soil.

3.2.5 A unique Site code (FRW 08) was issued prior to the commencement of works. The work was carried out on the 10th – 12th June 2008. The archive and all artefacts were subsequently transported to the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury where they were processed and assessed for this report.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Details of individual excavated contexts and features, the full geophysical report (GSB 2008) and detailed results of artefact and environmental assessments are retained in the project archive. Brief context descriptions are presented in **Appendix 1**. A summary of the results is presented here.

4.2 Geophysical Survey

4.2.1 Conditions for survey were good as the ground cover consisted of short pasture with no obstructions. Gaps within the resistance data are due to spoil heaps and trenches. A mains gas pipe can clearly be seen in the magnetic data, which will have masked any archaeology present within this area.

Gradiometer survey (**Figure 3A**)

4.2.2 Several linear positive and negative responses and trends (A) were detected, on a south-west – north-east alignment, and these broadly corresponded with the triple ditch system, although in places only two linears rather than three are visible.

4.2.3 A group of ditch-like anomalies (B) to the south-east and at a slight angle to the above group corresponds with part of the surrounding enclosure ditch.

4.2.4 Several areas of increased magnetic response are visible in the data. Those at (C) coincide with the location of the temples, and are likely to result from structural remains or rubble. Anomaly (D) coincides with the foundations seen in the resistance data (see below).

4.2.5 Another area of increased response at (E) may also indicate structural remains, but as it aligns with an old field boundary (F) it may be connected with this feature.

4.2.6 A number of trends are visible throughout the survey area. Generally, if not natural, these are likely to represent past agricultural activity. A number of potential natural anomalies are visible in the north of the dataset. These broad, strong responses are most likely to be due to variations in the pedology and/or geology.

Resistance survey (**Figure 3B**)

4.2.7 A rectangular, 'cellular', high resistance anomaly (1) approximately 6m by 6m was detected, as well as two 'L'-shaped high resistance anomalies concentric to the cellular anomaly. This group of anomalies corresponds directly with the position of the northern temple on the aerial photographs, the cellular feature and 'L'-shaped anomalies representing the remains of the *cella* and the ambulatory respectively, with rubble causing an adjacent small area of high resistance. This interpretation was confirmed by subsequent excavation. Similar responses at (2) are the remains of the southern temple.

4.2.8 Two linear high resistance anomalies (3) extend south-east from the vicinity of the temples; the shorter southern linear terminates in an area of high resistance. These responses are typical of those from the remains of building foundations, or perhaps pathways, and a rubble spread. Subsequent excavation exposed the remains of another possible shrine or temple in this area.

4.2.9 An annular high resistance anomaly (4), approximately 10m in diameter, extending beyond the edge of the survey area, is visible immediately to the north-east of the temples. This anomaly corresponds with the circular parchmark visible on the aerial photograph, and an interpretation as foundation remains was confirmed by excavation. An internal anomaly can also be seen in the data which was revealed to be a chalk floor.

4.2.10 Two linear anomalies of low resistance can be seen adjacent to the north-west extent of the survey area. These anomalies correspond with the outermost components of the triple ditch system that is visible on the aerial photograph.

4.2.11 Several sub-circular low resistance anomalies such as those at (5) are visible in the south of the dataset, and are likely to represent pits. Due to the curving alignment of these it is possible that they coincide with an element of the enclosure ditch (B) seen in the magnetic data and therefore may represent a stake aligned boundary. This interpretation is hypothetical and must be viewed with care, particularly as nothing is apparent in this location on the aerial photographs. Furthermore, the southern boundary of the

enclosure clearly visible on the aerial photograph (see **Figure 2**) lies south-west of the resistance survey area, and is obscured by a ferrous disturbance resulting from the presence of a gas pipe in the south-west part of the gradiometer survey.

4.2.12 A number of high resistance trends can be seen in the data. Most could be of natural or relatively recent, perhaps agricultural origin, but one group immediately south of the 'temple group' has a rectilinear form and could represent the remains of a fourth temple. A corresponding, though indistinct feature is visible on the aerial photograph.

4.2.13 Large areas of both high and low resistance dominating the dataset are caused by pedological and geological variation and are categorised as 'natural'.

4.3 Evaluation trenches (Figure 4)

4.3.1 The largest trench, Trench 1, was targeted on the two adjacent rectilinear cropmarks, both of which were also represented in the geophysical survey. The trench was subsequently extended to the north-west to investigate the possible triple-ditch feature (also visible both in the geophysical survey and as cropmarks on the aerial photograph). Trench 2 was excavated to investigate the circular feature visible on aerial photographs and geophysical survey. Trench 3 investigated an area of high resistance recorded in the geophysical survey, and corresponding to a structure clearly visible on the aerial photograph, set between a pair of parallel features that are much less clear. Trench 4 was positioned above the possible enclosure ditch, again visible in aerial photographs and in the geophysical survey.

Deposits pre-dating the masonry structures

4.3.2 The earliest deposits encountered were possible buried soils recorded in Trenches 1 and 2 (115 and 218/219). These comprised greyish-brown, silty clay deposits, between 0.20m and 0.40m thick, with common flint and chalk inclusions. Both deposits were cut by the foundations of later masonry structures and overlay the natural river gravel substrata. No closely datable finds were recovered from either deposit; a single iron nail and a few fragments of animal bone were recovered from deposit (115), together with a single flint waste flake of probable Bronze Age date and a complete pig metatarsus, possibly that of a wild boar, from deposit (219/219). Environmental samples recovered from these deposits produced charred plant remains in small numbers; cereal grain was identified in both, including *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat) and a glume base of *Triticum spelta/dicoccum* (spelt/emmer wheat) type. Small quantities of wood charcoal were also present.

4.3.3 In Trench 1, deposit (115) was sealed below a clay and gravel deposit (108 and 117) which appeared to be contemporary with the construction of the earliest masonry features, and was cut by the construction trenches of structures (109) and (103).

The masonry structures in Trenches 1 and 3

4.3.4 The masonry structures exposed in Trench 1 comprised the flint and mortar foundations of two approximately square structures (109 and 111), the north-western part of a presumed boundary wall (110) and a wall separating the two square structures (103). On the basis of the form of these structures

they are interpreted as two Romano-Celtic temples surrounded by a boundary or ambulatory wall.

4.3.5 Structure (109) (**Figure 5, Plate 2**) was almost completely revealed within Trench 1; it comprised the rectangular foundations of a presumed *cella*, constructed of flint nodules bonded with pale grey sandy mortar. Above the level of the buried soil (115) externally, and the level of the presumed floor internally, the walls were regularly coursed and neatly finished, while below this level they were randomly coursed and many voids were present. They were approximately 0.80m wide and over 1m deep and survived up to 0.30m above the contemporary ground surface. Within structure (109) was a deposit of silty clay with abundant chalk inclusions (116), interpreted as a clay and chalk floor. The small area of floor exposed was cut by two possible post-holes or small pits (119 and 131); both were slightly irregularly shaped and were filled with similar clay and flint deposits, which produced no finds; their function is uncertain. A short length of a possible beam slot (214) was recorded along the external face of the north-eastern wall, hinting at some form of external structure or cladding; this was not investigated further.

4.3.6 Externally, structure (109) was surrounded by a clay and gravel surface (108), from which a small assemblage of late 1st or early 2nd century AD pottery was recovered, along with relatively large quantities of animal bone, including at least seven fragmented pig mandibles. The deposition of the remains of so many pigs in one small part of an extensive deposit (all the finds from (108) were recovered from a 2m by 0.5m sondage) might indicate mass slaughter and feasting.

4.3.7 Only a very small part of the second rectangular structure in Trench 1 (111) was exposed. This was of similar construction to (109), had an internal clay and chalk floor (113), and is likely to be of similar dimensions (approximately 7m square externally). It probably also represents a *cella*. This was partially exposed and cleaned for recording but was not further investigated.

4.3.8 The two rectangular structures were separated by an approximately 0.75m wide wall footing (103) aligned approximately north-west to south-east, parallel with the probable *cella* walls. This wall was constructed of flint and puddingstone bonded by pale grey sandy mortar. It abutted the presumed boundary wall (110), which was of a very similar build. It was noted, however, that to the west of its junction with wall (103), wall (110) was regularly coursed and neatly finished while to the east it was randomly coursed and rather crudely finished, suggesting two separate episodes of construction.

4.3.9 Immediately to the north-west of wall (110) was a *c*. 9m wide metalled clay and gravel surface (127/130) which was overlain by a possible occupation deposit (129) and a thin layer of mortar (128). These deposits, together with the wall footings and internal and external metalled surfaces, were all sealed below extensive deposits of probable demolition rubble from which large quantities of tile fragments were recovered.

4.3.10 A third rectangular structure (302) (**Figure 6, Plate 4**) was recorded in Trench 3, approximately 13m to the south-east of structure (109). This comprised rectangular wall footings, constructed of flint nodules bonded by yellowish brown sandy mortar. This was smaller than the other rectangular structures, measuring approximately 4.9m by 4.7m externally and only 2.9m

by 2.2m internally. It may represent some form of ancillary building rather than a third *cella*. This was associated with an approximately north-west to south-east aligned flint and clay wall footing (305), which may represent a boundary or ambulatory wall enclosing structure (302). However, the geophysical survey suggests that this may extend from the ambulatory wall around structure (109), assumed to lie approximately 10m to the north-west, and may continue for at least a further 20m to the south-east; a parallel wall foundation, 4m to the south-west, was not confirmed in the evaluation. Structure (302) was surrounded by a roughly metalled surface (309) that abutted wall (305) and was also metalled with clay and flints internally (307); all deposits and structures were again overlain by probable demolition deposits.

The possible shrine/temple in Trench 2

4.3.11 Trench 2 (**Figure 5, Plate 3**) was excavated to investigate the possible circular structure visible in the aerial photograph and in the geophysical survey. Cutting the possible buried soil (218/219) was the construction cut for a circular wall footing (212) with an internal diameter of approximately 9m and an external diameter of 11m. This footing comprised alternating layers of carefully packed flint nodules and rammed chalk within a vertical-sided, flat bottomed trench. Inside the circular building was a sub-square feature (206). This was 1.90m long and 1.80m wide and of similar construction to wall footing (212). The possible remains of a beam slot were noted around the north-western and south-western sides of this feature, suggesting some form of associated structure. The position of this feature, in the approximate centre of the building, indicates that (206) was probably the focus of activity (possibly an altar base) within the circular structure, which is interpreted as a shrine or temple.

4.3.12 Also within the circular building were the patchy remains of a probable rammed chalk floor (204/205), while a little to the north-east of structure (206) were the plough damaged remains of a tessellated floor (207) set into an opus signinum base (208). As this was not excavated, it is uncertain whether this tessellated floor represents a second phase of floor above (204/205) or whether it was contemporaneous with them. Unlike the other structures on the site, the features and deposits in Trench 2 were sealed directly below the topsoil rather than below demolition deposits, perhaps indicating either that structure (212) was less substantial than the rectangular structures, or that the foundations supported a timber superstructure.

The triple ditches

4.3.13 Trench 1 also investigated the possible triple ditch boundary to the north-west of the probable temple complex. Only two ditches were visible on the geophysical survey (see **Figure 3A**). Two substantial ditches (125 and 138) were revealed within the north-western extension of Trench 1; the third and most northerly would have lain outside the boundaries of the trench. Both ditches were aligned approximately parallel to the north-western ambulatory wall (110). Ditch (125), which was investigated by machine excavation, was 8.5m wide and 1.6m deep with a V-shaped profile; no closely datable finds were recovered from the fills of this feature, but a small assemblage of Romano-British tile fragments recovered from the secondary fill suggest that it was broadly contemporaneous with the temple complex. A parallel ditch (138) was located approximately 1m to the south-east. This was not excavated but was some 5m wide and contained at least two fills.

The enclosure ditch in Trench 4

4.3.14 Trench 4 (**Figure 6, Plate 5**) was excavated to investigate the possible enclosure ditch visible in the aerial photograph and in the geophysical survey. A north-east to south-west aligned ditch (403) was excavated and a small assemblage of finds, including a single undiagnostic sherd of Romano-British pottery, was recovered. No trace of a north-eastern continuation of this ditch was located in Trench 1. It is possible that this may have continued below the metalled surface (127/130), which was not excavated, or it may be that the unexcavated feature (126) that cut surface 127/130 represents a terminal of the enclosure ditch, as the fills of these features were very similar in both colour and texture.

Deposits post-dating the masonry structures

4.3.15 All of the rectangular masonry structures and the areas immediately surrounding them were sealed below extensive demolition deposits, all quite heavily plough disturbed, from which large quantities of ceramic tile fragments were recovered. As the majority of these were removed by machine, many of the finds associated with the topsoil are likely to have originated from these deposits.

4.3.16 Notable finds recovered from the topsoil and demolition deposits include an unusually coloured non-local stone, possibly a glacial erratic, recovered from the deposits overlying structure (109). Although unworked, this object does bare a passing resemblance to a human head and it has been suggested that this may have been some form of cult object, but this is purely speculative. It should be noted, however, that pebbles from south coast beaches and further afield have been found in association with two Romano-British temples at Wanborough, Surrey, and at other sites in that county (Williams 2008, 92).

4.3.17 A relatively large number of coins were recovered from the topsoil in Trench 4. Whilst it is possible that this represents a dispersed hoard, the fairly wide date range of these coins suggests that other factors may have influenced this apparent concentration; despite careful scanning of the hand excavated spoil from the single feature recorded in this Trench (ditch 403) and the surrounding area, the exact origin of the coins is uncertain. A silver siliqua of the Emperor Eugenius (AD 392-394) was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 1 and its presence in the assemblage confirms activity on the site into the late 4th century AD, and possibly into the early 5th century, although the condition of the buildings at this time is uncertain.

5 FINDS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Finds were recovered from all of the four trenches excavated. All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and totals by material type and by trench are presented in **Table 1**. Subsequent to quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned in order to gain an overall idea of the range of types present, their condition, and their potential date range. Spot dates have been recorded for selected material types as appropriate (pottery, ceramic building material). All finds data are currently held on an Access database.

5.1.2 This section presents an overview of the finds assemblage, on which is based an assessment of the potential of this assemblage to contribute to an understanding of the site in its local and regional context, with particular reference to the character and development of the Late Iron Age enclosures and the Romano-British religious complex.

5.2 Pottery

5.2.1 The pottery was recorded using simple fabric classifications, based on principal inclusion (e.g. shell-gritted ware), firing technique (e.g. grey ware) or known traded ware types (e.g. Oxfordshire and Nene Valley wares). In an attempt to be consistent with other local sites, the fabric classifications, where possible, follow those used to record the pottery from the excavations at Folly Lane, St Albans (Lyne in Niblett 1999). Simple form codes were also used. All data are held in the project archive.

5.2.2 The small pottery assemblage is principally of Roman date, but also contains pottery of probable late Iron Age to early Roman date and a few post-medieval and modern sherds. Most of the probable late Iron Age to early Roman pottery was recovered from Trench 1. The average sherd weight was around 8.5g, reflecting the disturbed nature of many of the deposits excavated. **Table 2** shows the pottery assemblage by ware type.

Late Iron Age/Early Roman

5.2.3 The pottery identified as probable late Iron Age to early Roman had fabrics containing shell or grog. These comprised 3% of the assemblage by count and 5% by weight. Only body sherds were represented and none came from any discrete features.

Roman

5.2.4 The only imported wares were South Gaulish and Central Gaulish samian ware; no amphora sherds were recovered. Identifiable samian ware forms were a 27 of South Gaulish origin and forms 18/31 and 33 from Central Gaul. Other non-local wares comprised vessels from the Nene Valley and Oxfordshire production sites, BB1 and, possibly, BB2. A sherd from a vessel in soft pink grogged ware probably originated in the Towcester/Milton Keynes area. The vessels in the fine grey ware with a white slip and barbotine dot decoration may have come from the Highgate kilns in London, although kilns producing similar products are known in the Gerrards Cross area.

5.2.5 Perhaps not surprisingly, products of the *Verulamium* kilns dominate the assemblage, accounting for 53% by count and 55% by weight. The mica-dusted ware may also have been produced at *Verulamium*. Grey wares and BB1 each represented another 6% each by sherd count (4.5% by weight), while the fine grey ware totalled 13% by count and 11% by weight. Most of the recognisable *Verulamium* ware forms were jars with various rim types, though bowls and dishes were also represented and two mortaria occurred.

5.2.6 The mica-dusted sherds and those in the fine grey ware with a white slip and barbotine dot decoration were probably from beakers or small jars. The BB1 included a flanged bowl and some of the probable BB2 sherds were from dishes with beaded and grooved rims. The Nene Valley sherds all came from beakers, including a folded type. Jars in grey ware also occurred.

Post-medieval/modern

5.2.7 The post-medieval/modern pottery comprised sherds in a reddish-orange fabric with a thick brown glaze, a sherd in cream ware with a white glaze and a sherd of salt-glazed ware.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM)

5.3.1 Around 38 kilos of CBM was recovered and all bar two glazed fragments are of Roman date. The CBM comprises fragments of *imbrex* and *tegula* roof tiles, brick and tesserae; there is no box flue tile and no complete items. All bar two pieces in a shell-gritted fabric are in a reddish-orange coloured sandy fabric. The CBM appears poorly made and fired with friable and uneven surfaces, many warped pieces and, occasionally, large inclusions visible in the fabric. It is probable that the CBM was produced locally as a number of tileries are known in the *Verulamium* area.

5.3.2 CBM was recovered from all four trenches, though there was only a small amount in Trench 4. Trench 1 produced the most tile (43% by weight) followed by Trench 2 (30%) and Trench 3 (24%). Around 34% of the CBM by weight was from topsoil layers.

5.3.3 Only two *tegulae* have a cutaway sufficiently complete to allow categorisation according to Warry's typology (Warry 2006). One conforms to type C (*c*. 160-260 AD) and the other to type C4 (*c*. 160-260 AD). Nearly 400 tesserae were recovered of which 30 were in a slightly paler colour to the predominant reddish-yellow. Many other pieces of *tegula* were roughly squared and it is possible that these represent 'blanks' for, or waste from, tessera production, suggesting that some may have been manufactured on or near the site.

5.4 Stone

5.4.1 One large piece of stone was recovered from topsoil in Trench 1. This piece stood out because of its unusual shape and colouring, and on site was initially considered to resemble a human head, perhaps utilised on the site as a cult object.

5.4.2 The object is in a fine, red, extremely hard rock with banding, quartz-rich and extremely dense. The rock type is very old and is unlikely to outcrop in the district of Hertfordshire where the oldest sediments are Jurassic. It could, however, be an erratic brought into the district or near to it by glaciation. If so it could possibly be a Norwegian metamorphic or igneous rock.

5.5 Flint

5.5.1 The flint comprises debitage and fortuitous flake fragments and the degree of damage suggests that most are redeposited. The majority of the pieces are of Bronze Age date, including a broken blade core, though there are some which could be Neolithic.

5.6 Coins

5.6.1 Forty-five copper alloy and three silver coins were recovered. All but one of these are Roman coins, and range in date from the late 1st to the 4th centuries AD. In general the coins are in fair condition, although a small

number show signs of corrosion. Some also show signs of pre-depositional wear. The only non-Roman coin is a farthing of William IV, minted in 1835.

5.6.2 The breakdown of coins by period from the Site can be seen in **Figure 7**. This clearly shows that the main peaks of coin loss occur in the late 3rd and 4th centuries AD, with a small 'tail' of earlier coins. Interestingly, there are only a few coins post-dating the peak of coin loss in Period 17, despite the presence of a late 4th century coin from the Site. Normally, a site which continued in use into the late 4th century AD would produce a larger peak of Valentinianic (period 19) coins than is the case here, despite the small size of the assemblage. This may reflect on the history of the site, or may be skewed by the possible presence of a dispersed hoard in the vicinity of Trench 4 (see below).

5.6.3 Nine of the coins were recovered from Trench 1, including the farthing of William IV. All were recovered from the topsoil, with recovery enhanced by the use of metal detectors. All of the Roman coins from the trench date to the late 3rd and 4th centuries, with two being too badly corroded to date closely. The earliest coins are radiate *antoniniani* of the late 3rd century AD. Of these, the first two are contemporary copies (Barbarous Radiates), whilst the latter is an antoninianus of Carausius (AD 286 – 293). Contemporary copies such as these are common site finds, and were probably struck to compensate for gaps in supply of coinage to Britain and to supply sufficient small change for the provinces needs throughout the late 3rd and 4th centuries. It is unclear whether these copies were officially sanctioned or not, but they seem to have circulated in the same fashion as officially struck coins. The remaining three coins all date to the 4th century AD. The first two – *nummi* of Constantine I and the house of Valentinian respectively - are unremarkable, and are common site finds. The third, however is much more unusual. This is a silver siliqua of the Emperor Eugenius. Eugenius only ruled between AD 392 and his death after the battle of Frigidus in AD 394, and his coins are rare finds in Britain. Its presence in the assemblage confirms activity on the site into the late 4th century, and possibly into the early 5th century.

5.6.4 Three coins were recovered from Trench 2, all from the topsoil (201) or subsoil (202). The earliest of these is a silver denarius of Trajan. This coin is only slightly worn, and is unlikely to have been in circulation for long prior to its deposition. The two remaining coins are radiate *antoniniani* of the late 3rd century AD; one is likely to be a contemporary copy.

5.6.5 Thirteen Roman coins were recovered from Trench 3. The earliest of these is a worn commemorative silver denarius issued for Faustina I after her death in AD 141. The wear on this coin suggests that it had been in circulation for some time. The remaining coins all date to the late 3rd or 4th centuries AD. Eight are radiate antoniniani of the late 3rd century AD, and include six which are likely to be irregular radiate copies. The remaining two 'official' issues were minted by Gallienus and Tetricus II respectively. The four 4th century coins from this trench were all struck in the first half of the century, and include a nummus of Constantine I (dated to AD 319). The remaining three are common issues of the House of Constantine and include an issue struck for the Empress Theodora. Three coins were recovered from stratified layers. The single coin recovered from layer (303), a possible demolition deposit, was a radiate copy, probably struck between AD 270 and 296. Two coins were recovered from layer (304), thought to be

the result of ploughing – a radiate copy and a nummus of the House of Constantine, struck between AD 330 and 335.

5.6.6 Twenty-two coins came from Trench 4, which in addition to being the smallest trench excavated, only contained a single ditch. All 22 of the coins were recovered from the topsoil – none were recovered from the ditch, despite intensive detecting. This led to the suggestion, during excavation, that the coins may represent part of a dispersed hoard.

5.6.7 The earliest coin from this trench is a *sestertius* of Antoninus Pius, struck between AD 138 and 161. This is heavily worn, and may have been deposited or lost a considerable time after its minting. An *as* of Caracalla was also recovered. Apart from these two coins, the remainder of the assemblage dates to the late 3rd or 4th centuries AD, and includes one 4th century coin which could not be closely dated. Ten are radiate antoniniani of the late 3rd century AD. Seven of these were radiate copies or probable radiate copies. The remaining three coins were issues of Claudius II, Allectus and Diocletian respectively. The remaining nine coins all date to the 4th century. Two are *nummi* of Constantine I, minted between AD 313 and 318. Most, however, are coins of the House of Constantine, struck between AD 330 and 345. Only one coin post-dates this group – a *nummus* of the House of Valentinian, struck between AD 364 and 378. There is little in this group of coins, other than the quantity of coins recovered from so small an area, which would support the presence of a hoard. The pattern of coin loss in this group closely mirrors that for the site as a whole, and whilst it is not impossible that within this group are a number of coins which came from a dispersed hoard, it is not possible to isolate these, and such an interpretation should be regarded as tentative.

5.6.8 In summary, although the assemblage of coins from Friar's Wash largely comprises unstratified coins, it is useful in providing evidence of activity on the site from the late 1st or early 2nd century AD into the late 4th century AD, with a possible decline in activity in the second half of the 4th century. The number of coins recovered from Trench 4 is surprising, and whilst this may be the result of a dispersed hoard, there is insufficient difference between this group of coins and the assemblage from the site as a whole to strongly support such an interpretation.

5.7 Metalwork

5.7.1 As well as coins, objects of copper alloy, iron and lead were recovered. All iron and copper alloy objects have been X-radiographed, as an aid to identification, and also to act as a basic record.

Copper alloy

5.7.2 The Roman objects of copper alloy included an unusual enamelled brooch, a pin, a small ring and a small tack. The pin has incised lattice decoration at the top of the shank which places it in Cool Group 5, sub-group C (Cool 1990).

5.7.3 The brooch combines three elements – crescentic head, barrel-shaped bowl and circular foot – in a manner apparently without direct parallel, although all three elements do occur in Riha's type 7.18, sometimes with combinations of at least two of the elements found in the Friars Wash brooch. Combinations of crescent head and square bow are known from Augst,

Switzerland (Riha 1979, Taf. 75, 1686–7), square bows with circular feet with roundels from Lanslevillard, France (Feugère 1985, pl. 152, 1904). The type, which includes combinations with other elements such as triangles as bow or crenellated rings at the head, has a wide distribution in the north-western provinces, especially in the Rhineland and north-west Gaul. The sparse use of enamel would suggest a date in the first half of the 2nd century AD.

5.7.4 Two post-medieval buttons were also retrieved. Eight other objects are currently unidentified; these include sheet and possible vessel fragments. Most of these objects came from topsoil contexts and are not, therefore, securely dated.

Iron

5.7.5 The ironwork consists largely of nails and other structural items (including a double-spiked loop and a possible washer). There is also a post-medieval rectangular buckle. All objects are heavily corroded and some remain unidentified. Most of the ironwork came from topsoil contexts, and are thus insecurely dated. However, most came from Trenches 1-3, some from demolition deposits, and the likelihood is that these objects originally derived from the Roman structures in these trenches.

Lead

5.7.6 The lead includes waste fragments (mostly from topsoil in Trench 3). There are also three objects comprising rolled lead sheet. On site, these were provisionally identified as 'curses', but subsequent examination revealed that morphologically they are not comparable with other such objects known from temple sites. They are more likely to have functioned as weights, perhaps fishing weights. All three came from Trench 3, two from topsoil and one from layer (304), thought to be the result of post-demolition ploughing.

5.8 Animal Bone

Introduction

5.8.1 A total of 277 bones of mammals and birds was hand-recovered at the site. Most bone fragments are in fair condition, but some contexts are in poor condition; a total of 49% of the assemblage could be identified to species. At 2%, the number of loose teeth is low and thus re-working minimal. Gnawing marks made by dog were seen on only one bone. As the bone surface of most bones is damaged by root-etching and other erosion marks, the actual figure of gnawed bones is probably higher. Only one bone shows signs of contact with fire and the burning of bone waste or their use as fuel can largely be excluded.

Animal husbandry

5.8.2 The material includes horse (n=1), cattle (7%), sheep/goat (42%), pig (46%) and bird (4%). The bird bones probably all derive from domestic fowl. Although the assemblage is small, it seems that the diet of pork and mutton was supplemented by small proportions of beef and poultry. The high proportion of pig remains indicates a 'Romanised' diet (King 1991).

5.8.3 In total, 11 bones could be aged and provide an insight into the population structure of the animals. A total of five bones could be measured to provide information on the phenotype of the Friar's Wash animals during the Roman period. Layer 218 (a possible buried soil pre-dating the construction of the

shrine) contained a complete pig metatarsus IV with a GL of 103 mm, giving a withers height of 97 cm (May *et al*. 1996). It is possible that this is in fact a wild boar.

Consumption and deposition

5.8.4 Although the assemblage is only small, the presence of elements of all parts of the animal body makes it likely that the animals were butchered locally. The only butchery marks seen were horizontal knife cuts on the distal part of the metacarpus IV of pig/wild boar. It is likely that these cuts are the result of skinning.

5.8.5 Layer 108 (a possible metalled surface) contained at least seven fragmented pig mandibles; five male, two female. Five out of these could be aged as follows: female older than two years, male older than two years and unsexed pigs of 16-24 months, 12-16 months and 10-12 months. The majority of the pig bones come from this context and thus might bias species proportions. As the post-cranial bones of pig are less resilient deposits tend to be biased towards jaws. The deposition of the remains of so many pigs in one deposit (all from within a single 2m x 0.5m sondage) might, however, indicate mass slaughter and feasting.

5.9 Other Finds

5.9.1 Other finds comprise small quantities of glass (modern) and wall plaster (red painted surfaces).

5.10 Potential and Recommendations

5.10.1 This is a relatively small finds assemblage, in which only pottery, ceramic building material and animal bone occurred in any significant quantity. Much of the assemblage came from topsoil or otherwise insecurely dated contexts. The finds have already been recorded to a minimum archive level, and no further analysis is recommended.

6 PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Five bulk samples were taken from two of the trenches (Trenches 1 and 2). One sample was taken from the pre-temple deposits in each trench believed to be possible buried soils. From Trench 2, two samples were taken from deposits or layers relating to the use of the temple, while a final sample was taken from a possible demolition layer.

6.1.2 Bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified (**Table 3**) to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997). The flots were generally small with significant quantities of roots. Preservation of charred seeds and chaff was moderate.

6.2 Charred Plant Remains

6.2.1 Charred plant remains were present in small numbers in three samples including both pre-temple deposits. Cereal grain was identified in two of these including a grain of *Triticum spelta* (spelt wheat) in context (209) which had clearly germinated. Germination may have been deliberate, for example in the production of malt for brewing purposes, or may have simply occurred naturally, particularly if grain was stored damp. A glume base of *Triticum spelta/dicoccum* (spelt/emmer wheat) type was identified in (115), a pre-temple deposit in Trench 1. Two weed seeds were identified: *Rumex* sp. (docks) and *Vicia/Lathyrus* sp. (vetch, vetchling, tare, etc). Wood charcoal dominated by *Quercus* sp. (oak) was present in three samples (see **Table 3**) with flecks of indeterminate charcoal in the remaining two.

6.3 Land Snails

6.3.1 Samples of 1500g were processed by standard methods (Evans 1972) for land snails from five deposits in Trenches 1 and 2. The flots (0.5mm) were rapidly assessed by scanning under a x 10 – x 40 stereo-binocular microscope to provide some information about shell preservation and species representation. The numbers of shells and the presence of taxonomic groups were quantified (**Table 4**). Nomenclature is according to Kerney (1999).

6.3.2 The shell numbers retrieved were very low, with the exception of *Cecilioides acicula*, a burrowing snail of medieval introduction. The other molluscs observed were the open country species *Vallonia costata* and *Vallonia excentrica* and a single specimen of *Aegopinella* sp., and one of the *Zonitidae* family which favour ground litter and long moist grassland.

6.4 Conclusions

6.4.1 While a limited range of plant remains were recovered from the samples, the species identified are typical of the Late Iron Age and Romano-British period. Spelt wheat tends to be the cereal most usually associated with the Roman period forming the basis of the cereal diet, as well as being used for the production of malt for brewing purposes (Greig 1991). The weed species present are typical of disturbed habitats and may have derived from arable fields or waste places. The low number of cereal remains and weed seeds is perhaps to be expected for a temple structure where it would not normally be expected to find evidence for cereal processing on any scale. The seeds that are present are likely to have derived from background scatters of cereal processing waste elsewhere in the vicinity which have become incorporated in the backfill of deposits and soils. Temple sites elsewhere in the country have produced plant remains more indicative of offerings. The seeds and kernels of stone pine (*Pinus pinea*) in particular appear to be closely associated with Roman temple sites where they were probably burnt for their perfume (Kislev 1998; Robinson 2002).

6.5 Potential and Recommendations

6.5.1 The low level of preservation of charred plant remains, charcoal and mollusca means that the recovered assemblages are not able to provide any detailed information about the local vegetation and land-use. No further work is recommended for any of these categories.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The evaluation trenching demonstrated that, although to an extent plough damaged, the sub-surface archaeological remains were generally well-preserved. Time constraints and the complex nature of the archaeological sequence exposed did not permit the investigation of the full extent of the remains, but sufficient was uncovered to confirm the existence of a large and significant group of small temples and shrines in a rural context.

7.2 The Temples

7.2.1 The earliest deposits encountered comprise the possible buried soils recorded in Trenches 1 and 2, which both pre-dated the construction of the masonry structures. Although no dating evidence was recovered from either of these deposits, finds recovered from the metalled surface (108) directly overlying the possible buried soil in Trench 1 suggest a late 1st or 2nd century AD construction date for structure (109), and presumably the surrounding ambulatory walls. However, the few datable fragments of roof tile recovered from the later demolition deposits suggest a slightly later, mid to late 2nd century date for the building's construction. Residual finds of possible Late Iron Age or early Romano-British pottery from later deposits indicate activity on the site prior to the construction of the buildings.

7.2.2 The ground plans of the two structures in Trench 1 identifies them as a pair of Romano-Celtic temples (Wilson 1980, 7-8) of quite an unusual form, which is perhaps best paralleled by temples A and B at Mont de Sène, Burgundy (Wilson 1980, fig. 1.1), the two central *cellae* being surrounded by an outer ambulatory wall with the *cellae* separated by a dividing wall. The small, approximately square building recorded in Trench 3 could represent a third temple *cella*, but its small size is perhaps more suggestive of an ancillary building. The circular structure in Trench 2 is similar in form to other known Romano-British religious buildings, for example at Wanborough, Surrey (Williams 2008, 87-93), Hayling Island, Hampshire and Frilford, Berkshire (Drury 1980, 68-69), and is likely to be a temple or a shrine. The approximately square flint and chalk footing in the centre of the circular building was probably for a plinth, perhaps an alter base. which, from the presence of a small slot around two of its sides, may have been clad in higher quality stone or timber.

7.2.3 The rectangular structures appear to have been masonry buildings with tiled roofs while the circular structure is more likely to have supported a timber-framed building. There were relatively few finds, but the buildings appear to have been in use throughout the majority of the Romano-British period, beginning perhaps in the late 1st century though more probably in the 2nd century AD, possibly in the latter half of that century. The recovery of a coin of Eugenius indicates activity at the site as late as the very late 4th or early 5th century and provides a *terminus post quem* for the site, although the condition of the buildings at this time is uncertain.

7.2.4 The large number of pig bones, possibly indicating mass slaughter and feasting, recovered from the small sondage excavated through the metalled surface surrounding structure (109) could indicate ritual activity pre-dating or contemporary with the construction of this building. The large number of

skulls in this pig bone assemblage may also be significant; large numbers of pig skull fragments, interpreted as votive deposits rather than a domestic assemblage, were associated with the polygonal temple at Chanctonbury Ring, Sussex (Rudling 2008, 115).

7.3 The Temple Complex

7.3.1 The aerial photograph and geophysical survey indicate that all the buildings were probably enclosed by a shallow curvilinear ditch, similar to the temple and *temenos* gully at Lancing Down, Sussex (Rudling 2008, fig. 6.6). This large (approximately 100m from north-west to south-east) sub-circular or oval enclosure is bounded to the south-west by the River Ver (see **Figure 2**). The extent to the north-east is unclear. As at Lancing Down, the enclosure is likely to represent a *temenos*, with the temples/shrines on the north-west side. The temple complex comprised a pair of temples (in Trench 1) flanked by a circular temple/shrine to the north-east (in Trench 2) and probably by another, rectangular temple to the south-west (not investigated during the evaluation).

7.3.2 The cropmarks seen on the aerial photograph indicate an 'approach' from the south-east to the pair of temples in Trench 1, and this was partly confirmed by the evidence from Trench 3, although the precise arrangement and sequence remains unclear.

7.3.3 To the north-west of the ambulatory wall in Trench 1 was a metalled surface extending as far as the most southerly of the triple ditches. This surface was possibly cut by, or respected, the smaller *temenos* ditch, but did not extend as far as Trench 4 to the west or to the circular structure in Trench 2 to the east. The relatively large assemblage of coins recovered from the topsoil in Trench 4, close to, but beyond this metalled surface could suggest that this area was used to approach an area where votive deposits could be made. However, it could be that this represents a trackway running along the south-eastern side of ditch (138).

7.4 The Triple Ditches

7.4.1 The relationship between the triple ditches and the temple complex remains unclear. Two of the three ditches within the triple ditch system were investigated in Trench 1, running roughly parallel to the north-western ambulatory wall. The dating evidence is inconclusive, but Romano-British tile fragments from the secondary fill of one of the ditches suggest that the ditches were broadly contemporaneous with the temple complex. Certainly the *temenos* ditch respects (or is respected by) the triple ditches.

7.4.2 From the aerial photographic evidence, the triple ditches extend over a distance of at least 100m, and lie at an angle of 90° to Watling Street, which lies approximately 400m to the south-west. The possibility of a trackway running alongside the southernmost ditch has already been mentioned (see above), and it is possible that the triple ditches define some kind of approach or access to the temple complex from Watling Street. It is equally possible, however, that the ditches continued to the north-east, beyond the temple complex.

7.4.3 The location of the Site in relation to the stream (River Ver) is also of interest and may be significant, given the religious nature of the later structures. The

triple ditches appear, from the aerial photograph, to be cut by the stream (see **Figure 2**), while the *temenos* ditch appears to respect both the ditches and also the stream which bounds it to the south-west.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1.1 The confirmation of the ground plan and date of the temple structures first observed on an aerial photograph is significant, although only a small part of the Site was investigated, and dating evidence was largely confined to post-demolition contexts. A short summary of the results will be submitted to the *Hertfordshire Archaeological Journal* for inclusion in the annual round-up of archaeology in the county, possibly accompanied by a site plan.

9 ARCHIVE

9.1.1 The archive, which includes all artefacts, written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigation undertaken, is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology under the site code FRW 08 and Wessex Archaeology project no. 68735. The paper archive is contained in one lever arch file. In due course, the archive will be transferred to Verulamium Museum, St. Albans.

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Table 1: All finds by material type and by trench (number / weight in grammes)

Material	Tr. 1	Tr. 2	Tr. 3	Tr. 4	Unstrat	TOTAL
Pottery	84/697	162/1088	81/1045	2/53	-	329/2883
Late Iron Age	*5/34*	*3/16*	*3/45*	-	-	*11/195*
Roman	*69/595*	*157/1062*	*78/1000*	*1/37*	-	*305/2594*
Post-Medieval	*10/68*	*2/10*	-	*1/16*	-	*13/94*
Ceramic Building Material	399/16617	247/10979	210/9504	6/476	7/731	869/38307
Mortar	5/236	-	-	-	-	5/236
Wall Plaster	6/179	3/11	-	-	-	9/190
Fired Clay	-	2/2	-	-	-	2/2
Clay Pipe	1/1	-	-	-	-	1/1
Stone	1/6400	-	-	-	-	1/6400
Flint	49/362	8/115	2/300	6/111	1/3	66/891
Burnt Flint	1/25	2/30	-	3/79	-	6/134
Glass	2/41	-	-	-	-	2/41
Slag	1/9	-	1/1	-	-	2/10
Metalwork	199	14	101	30	-	344
Coins	10	3	12	23	-	*48*
Copper Alloy	6	2	5	-	-	*13*
Iron	182	9	51	7	-	*249*
Lead	1	-	33	-	-	*34*
Other Metal	-	-	1/1	-	-	1/1
Animal Bone	176/806	96/237	4/28	1/20	-	277/1091
Shell	6/81	17/215	-	-	-	23/296

Table 2: Pottery totals by ware type

Broad period	Ware	No. sherds	Weight (g)
LIA/EARLY ROMAN	Shell-gritted	1	2
	Misc grog-tempered ware	10	193
ROMAN	South Gaulish samian	3	7
	Central Gaulish samian	14	62
	Verulamium oxidised	102	849
	Verulamium greyware	47	324
	Verulamium mortaria	23	377
	Nene Valley colour-coat	6	20
	Oxfordshire colour-coat	1	32
	BB1	20	128
	BB2	3	42
	Fine grey ware	43	305
	Mica-dusted ware	10	37
	Oxidised ware	7	46
	Grey ware	20	124
	Shell-gritted ware	2	88
	Soft pink grog	1	30
	Vesicular	3	123
POST-MEDIEVAL	All wares	13	94
	TOTAL	**329**	**2883**

Table 3: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Context	Sample	Size litres	Flot size	% Roots	Grain	Chaff	Weeds	Comments	Charcoal 4/2mm	Notes
LIA/ERB Buried Soils?										
115	5	10	20	90	-	C*	-	Triticum spelta/dicoccum	1/<1	Moll t-C; Ceciloides C
218	2	10	70	20	C*	-	C	Triticum sp. Rumex sp.	10/15	burnt bone, Moll t-B, ceciloides
Romano-British deposits/layers										
209	3	10	50	80	C	-	C*	T. spelta, germinated Vicia/Lathyrus	5/3	Moll t- B, ceciloides
211	1	10	80	20	-	-	-		10/15	Moll t-C; Ceciloides C
215	4	10	30	95	-	-	-		-/1	Moll t-C, Ceciloides, recent Atriplex

KEY: * - items noted in the mollusc sample.
A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30- 99, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, sab/f = small animal/fish bones; Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs Moll-f = freshwater molluscs;

Table 4: Land snail assessment

SITE PHASE	LIA/ERB	LIA/ERB	RB	RB	RB
TRENCH	1	2	2	2	2
FEATURE TYPE	?Buried soil	?Buried soil	Layer	Layer	Layer
CONTEXT	115	218	209	211	215
SAMPLE	5	2	3	1	4
DEPTH (m)	spot	spot	spot	spot	spot
WEIGHT (g)	1500g	1500g	1500g	1500g	1500g
Open country species					
Vallonia spp.	C	-	C	C	-
Shade-loving specis					
Aegopinella sp.	-	C	-	-	-
Burrowing species					
Cecilioides acicula	B	A	A	A	C
Approx **totals**	1	1	3	1	0

APPENDIX 1: Catalogue of Trench Descriptions

TRENCH 1			**NGR:** 510080 214580
Dimensions – 39.50m x 15.50m			**Ground Level –** 103.55m OD
Context No.		**Description**	**Depth**
101	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid-dark greyish brown silty clay loam with common sub-angular flint and CBM inclusions.	0-0.30m
102	*Layer*	Mid reddish brown silty clay with moderate small flint inclusions. Deposit between walls (103)/(110) and eastern *cella* (109). Overlies deposit (108), sealed below (101). Probable demolition deposit.	0.30-0.42m
103	*Structure*	North-south aligned flint and puddingstone wall bonded with pale grey sandy mortar, between eastern and western walkways or pronaos. Trench built within construction cut (133); 5.2m+ long and 0.75m wide. Sealed below topsoil, abutted by (102) and (112).	0.30-0.50m+
104	*Layer*	Number allocated to finds recovered while cleaning over the eastern *cella* and walls (103) and (110). Same as (102), probable demolition deposit.	0.30m
105	*Layer*	Mid brown silty clay with moderate flint and chalk inclusions. Deposit within eastern *cella* (109). Post-dates construction of *cella*, but it is uncertain whether this represents a demolition/abandonment deposit or a later phase of clay floor, although the former is more likely. Partly overlies possible demolition deposit (134).	0.30-0.45m
106	*Layer*	Sub-division of deposit (102) in small exploratory sondage alongside wall (110). Probable demolition deposit.	0.30-0.40m
107	*Layer*	Mid – dark greyish brown silty clay with common flint and chalk inclusions. Possible demolition/abandonment deposit to the north of wall (110) etc. Overlies possible metalled surface (127).	0.30-0.40m+
108	*Layer*	Mid yellowish brown sandy clay with *c*. 60% small gravel inclusions. Only seen in small sondage in the south of the trench. Overlies possible buried soil deposit (115), appears to post-date construction of eastern *cella* (109). Possible metalled surface, same as (117).	0.42-0.55m
109	*Structure*	Rectangular *cella* wall constructed of flint nodules bonded by pale yellowish brown sandy mortar, internally 4.80m by 4.65m. The upper surviving parts of the walls (above the level of possible buried soil horizon (115) externally and possible floor (134) internally) are regularly coursed and neatly finished, below this level, within construction cut (133) the foundations are randomly coursed and many voids are present.	0.30-1.35m+
110	*Structure*	East-west aligned flint wall bonded with pale grey sandy mortar, 8.70m+ long, 0.75m wide; bonded to north-south wall (103) and constructed within cut (135). To the west of its junction with wall (103) this wall is regularly coursed and neatly finished while to the east it is randomly coursed and rather crudely finished, suggesting two separate episodes of construction.	0.30-0.70m
111	*Structure*	Rectangular *cella* wall constructed of flint nodules bonded with pale grey sandy mortar, internally 2.20m+ by 1.10m+. Not excavated.	0.30m+
112	*Layer*	Dark greyish-brown silty clay loam with very abundant small flint inclusions. Deposit between walls (103(/(110) and western *cella* (111). Sealed below (101), deposit/concentration of large flint nodules noted towards centre. Probable demolition deposit. Not excavated.	0.30m+
113	*Layer*	Mid reddish-brown silty clay with sparse small flint inclusions. Possible clay floor within western *cella* (111). Overlain by (114). Not excavated.	0.30m+
114	*Layer*	Mid greyish brown silty clay with common flint and CBM inclusions. Possible demolition deposit within western *cella* (111), overlies (113), sealed below (101).	0.30m+
115	*Layer*	Dark greyish-brown slightly silty clay with common flint and chalk	0.55-0.95m

		inclusions. Possible buried soil horizon; sealed below gravel deposit (108) and overlies natural river gravels (136). Sampled (sample 5) for plant macrofossils and charcoal.	
116	*Layer*	Mid greyish brown silty clay with abundant chalk inclusions. Possible clay and chalk floor within eastern *cella* (109). Cut by post-holes (119) and (131), overlain by possible demolition deposit (134).	0.45m+
117	*Layer*	Mid yellowish brown sandy clay with *c*. 60% small gravel inclusions. Possible metalled surface below (118)/(106)/(102). Same as (108).	0.40m+
118	*Layer*	Sub-division of deposit (102) in small exploratory sondage in centre of walkway. Probable demolition deposit.	0.30-0.40m
119	*Layer*	Post-hole or small pit, *c*. 0.70m in diameter and 0.35m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. Filled with (120), cuts (116).	0.45-0.80m
120	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with common flint inclusions. Fill of post-hole/pit (119). Sealed below (105).	0.45-0.80m
121	*Layer*	Mid reddish-brown silty clay with very abundant small flint inclusions. Uppermost fill of ditch (125).	0.30-0.55m
122	*Layer*	Mid brown silty clay with very abundant small flint inclusions. Fill of ditch (125).	0.55-0.95m
123	*Layer*	Mid-dark grey silty clay with abundant flint and sparse CBM inclusions. Secondary fill of ditch (125).	0.95-1.65m
124	*Layer*	Pale grey silty clay with very sparse gravel inclusions. Basal fill of ditch (125).	1.65-1.90m
125	*Feature*	Large approximately east-west aligned ditch some 25m to the north of the temple complex. Filled with (121), (122), (123) and (124); 8.50m wide and 1.60m deep with moderately steep, straight sides and a concave base.	0.30-1.90m
126	*Layer*	Dark greyish-brown silty clay with abundant small gravel inclusions. Fill of feature (137). Not excavated.	0.30m+
127	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with abundant gravel inclusions. Possible metalled surface to the north of mortar deposit (128). Cut by large sub-rectangular feature (137).	0.30m+
128	*Layer*	Pale grey mortar deposit with common gravel inclusions. Thin (0.02m), 0.60m wide mortar deposit, approximately 2m north of wall (110). Partly overlain by (107), overlies (129).	0.40-0.42m
129	*Layer*	Pale greyish brown silty clay with *c*. 70% flint inclusions. Loose clay and flint deposit above metalled surface (130) and below mortar deposit (128).	0.42-0.52m
130	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with abundant gravel inclusions. Possible metalled surface, sealed below deposit (129). Probably the same as (127).	0.52m+
131	*Feature*	Post-hole or small pit, *c*. 0.50m in diameter and 0.55m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. Filled with (132), cuts (116).	0.45-1.00m
132	*Layer*	Mid greyish brown silty clay with common flint inclusions. Fill of post-hole/pit (131). Sealed below (105).	0.45-1.00m
133	*Feature*	Construction cut for *cella* wall (109), 0.95m+ deep. Cuts through possible buried soil deposit (115), appears to be abutted by possible clay and chalk floor (134).	0.55m-1.45m+
134	*Layer*	Deposit of large flint and puddingstone nodules in a pale grey silty clay matrix. Lies directly above possible floor (116), partly sealed below deposit (105). Possible demolition deposit.	0.35-0.45m
135	*Feature*	Construction cut for wall (110), 0.20m deep with vertical sides and a flat base, cut into natural gravels.	0.50-0.70m
136	*Natural*	Mid-dark yellowish brown sandy gravel. Natural river gravels.	0.95m+
137	*Feature*	Large sub-rectangular feature, 2.50m+ long and 1.40m+ wide. Cuts through possible metalled surface (127), filled with (126). Not excavated.	0.30m+
138	*Feature*	Possible east-west aligned ditch, approximately 5.5m wide and filled with (129) and (130). Located approximately 7m to the north of wall (110). Not excavated.	0.30m+

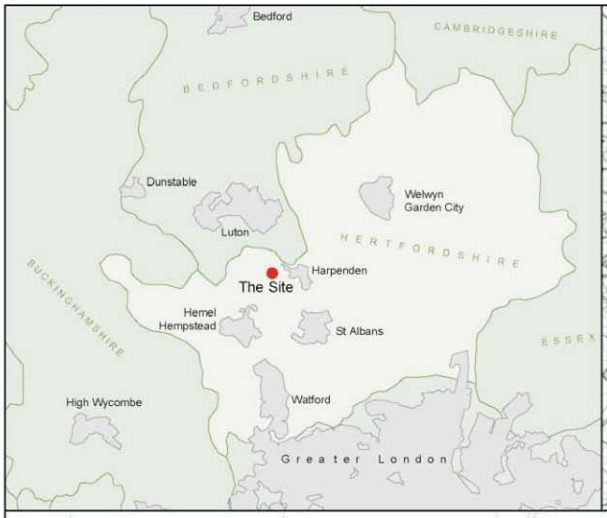
139	*Layer*	Dark greyish-brown silty clay with abundant flint inclusions. Lower fill of possible ditch (138).	0.30m+
140	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown very silty clay with very sparse gravel inclusions. Upper fill of possible ditch (138).	0.30m+

TRENCH 2		**NGR:** 510100 214590	
Dimensions – 9.10m x 5.50m		**Ground Level –** 103.45m OD	
Context No.		**Description**	**Depth**
201	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid-dark greyish brown silty clay loam with common sub-angular flint and CBM inclusions.	0-0.30m
202	*Layer*	Number allocated to finds recovered from topsoil immediately above tessellated floor (207).	0.25-0.32m
203	*Layer*	Number allocated to finds recovered from topsoil to the west of wall (212) (external)	0-0.30m
204	*Floor Surface*	Very pale grey, heavily plough damaged and patchy remains of a rammed chalk floor within the building represented by wall (212), to the west of structure (206). Overlies (209).	0.30-0.38m
205	*Floor surface*	Very pale grey, heavily plough damaged and patchy remains of a rammed chalk floor within the building represented by wall (212), to the east of structure (206). Unexcavated	0.30m+
206	*Structure*	Sub-square structure, possibly an altar base, 1.90m by 1.80m, constructed within cut (217). Structure comprises alternating layers of rammed chalk and closely packed flint nodules. Not fully excavated due to lack of time.	0.30-0.65m+
207	*Floor surface*	Small remnant of tessellated floor, immediately to the east of possible altar base (206), surviving where it has slumped into an earlier feature. Floor comprises small, roughly square, tesserae made from re-used tiles, set in a layer of opus signinum (208). It is uncertain whether this floor represents a second phase of floor above (204)/(205) or whether it is contemporary. Not excavated	0.32m+
208	*Layer*	Pale pinkish grey opus signinum. Bedding layer for tessellated floor (207).	0.32m+
209	*Layer*	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common gravel and sparse CBM and charcoal inclusions immediately to the east of wall (212). Overlies (210). Sampled for charcoal and plant macrofossils (sample 3).	0.30-0.32m
210	*Layer*	Thin deposit of loose, pale yellowish brown gravel; overlies burnt deposit (211), partly overlain by (209).	0.32-0.35m
211	*Layer*	Thin, localised burnt deposit between (210) and (218). Not *in situ*, but probably represents an episode of dumping. Sampled for charcoal and plant macrofossils (sample 1).	0.35-0.37m
212	*Structure*	Probable penannular wall, comprising alternating layers of rammed chalk and closely packed flint nodules, constructed within cut (220); 3.5m+ long and 0.90m wide.	0.30-0.80m
213	*Layer*	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common chalk and CBM inclusions. Fill of possible beamslot (214).	0.30-0.44m
214	*Feature*	Possible beam slot, 0.20m wide and 0.14m deep with steep, straight sides and a flat base. Clearly seen around the northern and western sides of altar base (206), but not distinguished to the south and east, probably due to plough damage in this area. Filled with (213), cuts (204).	0.30-0.44m
215	*Layer*	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common flint and chalk and rare CBM inclusions. Possible demolition/destruction deposit abutting the western side of wall (212). Sampled for charcoal and plant macrofossils (sample 4).	0.30-0.40m

216	*Layer*	Mid-light pale yellowish-brown flint gravel. Overlain by chalk floor (204)/(205). Possibly the same as (210), but is more compacted. Not excavated.	0.30m+
217	*Feature*	Sub-square construction cut for possible altar base (206); 1.90m by 1.80m and over 0.35m deep (not fully excavated).	0.30-0.65m+
218	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with common flint inclusions. Possible levelling deposit or buried soil horizon, cut by construction cut (220). Sealed below (211). Same as (219).	0.40-0.62m
219	*Layer*	Mid greyish brown silty clay with common flint inclusions. Possible levelling deposit or buried soil horizon, cut by construction cut 220. Sealed below 215. Same as 218.	0.40-0.60m+
220	*Feature*	Construction cut for wall (212), 3.50m+ long and 0.90m wide. Cuts deposits (218) and (219).	0.30-0.80m
221	*Layer*	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common flint and chalk and rare CBM inclusions. Exposed by plough damage to the overlying floor (204)/(205) to the south of altar base (206).	0.30m+

TRENCH 3		**NGR:** 510100 214570	
Dimensions – 12.50m x 5.20m		**Ground Level –** 103m OD	
Context No.		**Description**	**Depth**
301	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid-dark greyish brown silty clay loam with common sub-angular flint and CBM inclusions.	0-0.30m
302	*Structure*	Rectangular *cella* wall constructed of flint nodules bonded with yellowish brown sandy mortar, internally 2.90m by 2.20m, externally 4.90m by 4.70m. Gaps in the three exposed corners, along with broken tile fragments within the wall fabric in the north-east corner suggest tile-built quoins. Not excavated.	0.30m+
303	*Layer*	Dark greyish brown silty clay with very abundant flint and CBM inclusions. Possible demolition deposit within *cella* (302). Overlies (307).	0.30-0.60m
304	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with common flint inclusions. Abutts deposit (308) and overlies the remains of wall (305). Possibly caused by ploughing following the demolition of the temple. Overlies surface (309).	0.30-0.40m
305	*Structure*	Possible north-south aligned wall, comprising flint nodules bonded with dark brown silty clay. Although rather more crude than other walls recorded on the site, this could represent a small wall defining the walkway around *cella* (302).	0.30-0.55m+
306	*Natural*	Pale grey sandy gravel. Natural river gravels.	0.55m+
307	*Layer*	Mid brown silty clay with *c*. 75% small flint inclusions. Very compacted. Underlies possible demolition deposit (303). Probably a metalled surface within cella (302). Not excavated.	0.60m+
308	*Layer*	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with very abundant flint and CBM inclusions. Probable demolition deposit; external to *cella* (302).	0.30m+
309	*Layer*	Pale greyish brown silty clay with very abundant (*c*. 80%) small gravel inclusions. Probable metalled surface within the walkway around *cella* (302). Overlain by (304), and probably (308). Not excavated.	0.40m+

TRENCH 4			**NGR:** 51070 214580
Dimensions – 8.0m x 1.80m			**Ground Level –** 103.25m OD
Context No.		**Description**	**Depth**
401	*Layer*	Topsoil. Mid-dark greyish brown silty clay loam with common sub-angular flint and CBM inclusions.	0-0.35
402	*Layer*	Dark greyish brown silty clay loam with common flint inclusions. Only fill of ditch (403).	0.35-0.80m
403	*Feature*	Approximately east-west aligned ditch, 1.20m wide and 0.45m deep with steep, concave sides and a concave base.	0.35-0.80m
404	*Natural*	Mid greyish brown sandy gravel. Natural river gravels.	0.35m+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The Site
Hemel
Hempstead
St Albans
ESSEX
High Wycombe
Watford
Greater London

The Site
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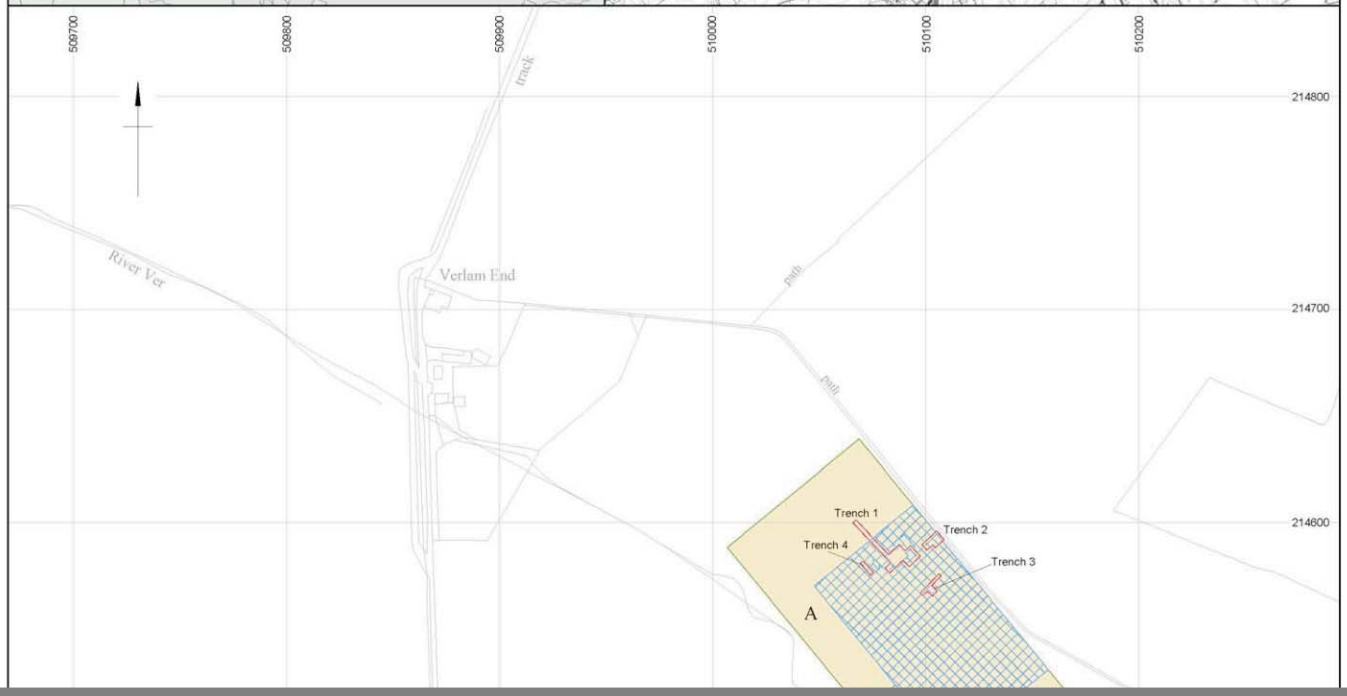
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Geophysical data courtesy of GSB Prospection Ltd

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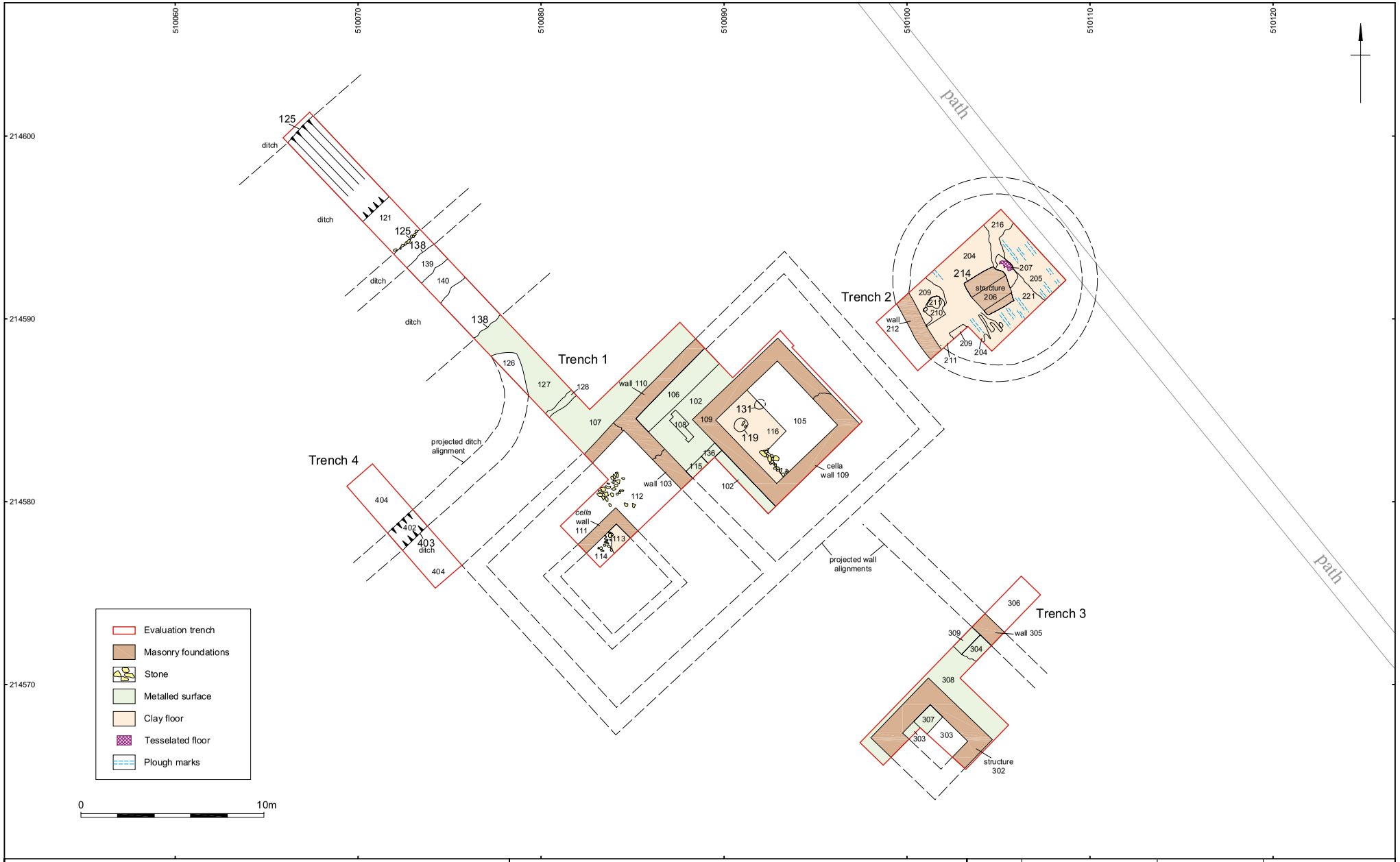

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All features plan

Figure 4

Plate 2: Trench 1, Structure 109 view from south-east

Plate 3: Trench 2 view from south-east

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Plate 4: Trench 3, Structure 302 view from north-east

Plate 5: Trench 4

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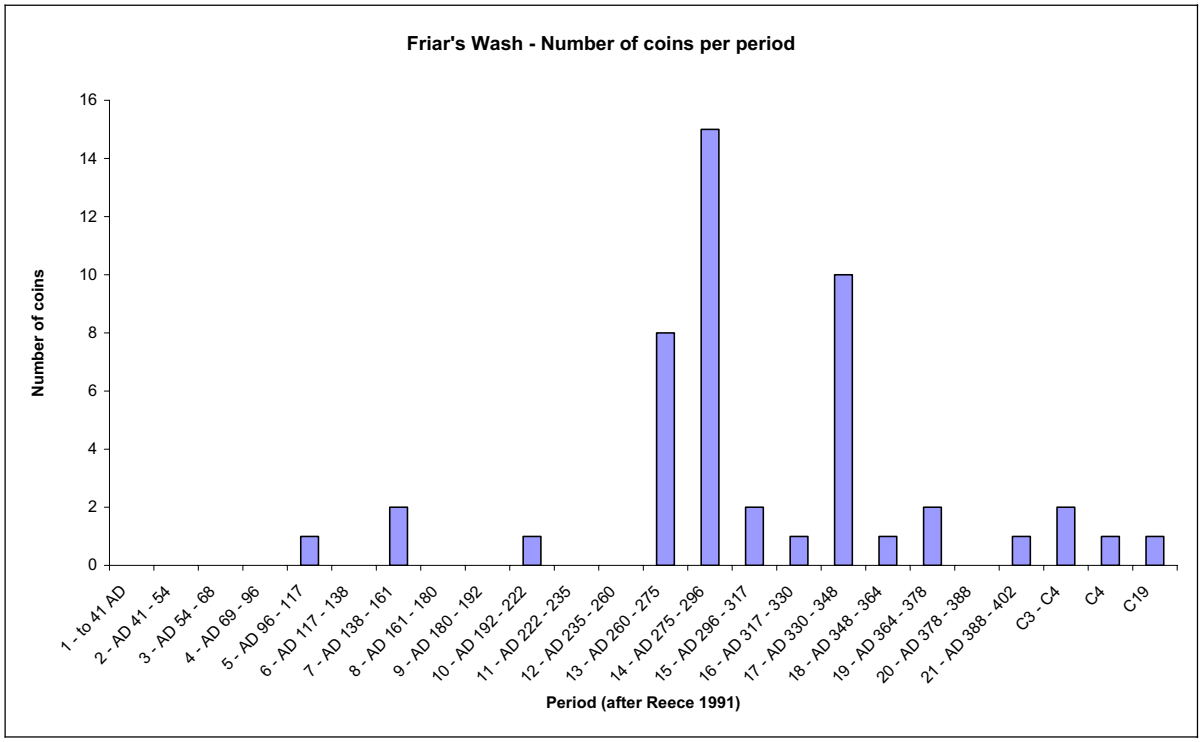

Figure 7: Coins by period

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