

BROADMEAD EXPANSION ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS - Update 5



Excavations in trenches 1 and 2 are now complete. These again revealed buildings possibly as early as 12th-century in date extending back from Broad Weir to the former course of the River Frome. Within trench 1 several stone hearths were found which might have served a number of uses, including heating vats for dyeing cloth, baking, and metalworking.



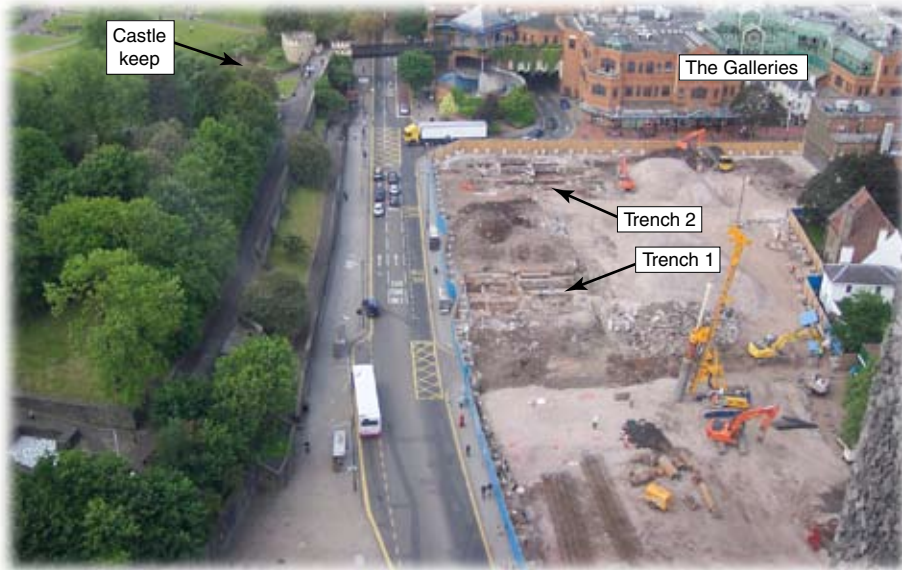
stone hearth in Trench 1



Towards the end of the trench 1 excavations an impressive timber trough was revealed. This had been pegged into place with wooden uprights and was set behind a wicker fence running parallel with the edge of the River Frome. The archaeologists and timber experts have had fun pondering its possible uses, which include dugout canoe and trough for collecting water for rope making. In reality it may have been re-used for a number of different purposes during its lifetime, but traces of mortar on the inside of it suggest it was used at some stage for mixing mortar for building.



The timber trough from trench 1 after removal



timber trough in Trench 1



The trough was lifted as carefully as possible from the trench at the end of the excavation, although ancient fractures in the wood caused it to break into several large pieces. These have now been wrapped in plastic to prevent the waterlogged timbers from drying out, and will be drawn and photographed before going through a lengthy conservation and reassembly process. Ultimately it will be put on display at Bristol Museum.



pumping mechanism in Trench 2



As well as long-standing boundary walls between buildings established in the 12th/13th century, Trench 2 revealed lots of stone drains between the properties that would have carried rainwater away into the River Frome. Also found was an intriguing 19th-century pumping mechanism for raising water from a well, and the edge of the culvert through which the River Frome passed until the middle of the 20th-century. The new drainage trench around the north side of Quakers Friars has revealed the remains of tiled floor surfaces of the church belonging to the Dominican Friary.



recording tile impressions in the friary church

Follow the progress of the excavation through our regular updates, which will be posted both on the hoarding along Broad Weir and on the Cotswold Archaeology website www.cotswoldarch.org.uk

For further details on the Broadmead Expansion development please visit: www.bristolcitycentre.com