

1.2 Building 2: The villa house

List of constituent features and layers

The structure

- F726 Robber trench of west wall
- F727 Robber trench of west corridor wall
- F728 Robber trench of east corridor wall
- F733 Robber trench of internal cross wall
- F729 Footing of west wall
- F730 Footing of internal wall of west corridor
- F731 Footing of internal wall of east corridor
- F732 East wall

Layers in trench 2 relating to the villa

- L416 Plough soil
- L417 Base of plough soil
- F420 Mortar/building rubble
- L422 Soil and occupation
- F423 Chalk foundation of floor in east corridor
- L424 Chalk foundation of floor in central room
- L425 Chalk foundation of floor in west corridor
- L426 Chalk spread outside west wall
- L427 Thin discontinuous lens of charcoal and ash
- L428 Flat foundation make-up
- L429 Mortar lens
- L431 Chalky clay

Catalogue of structural features

The walls

F729 Tr 2 F200410 Foundation trench for outer west wall

Width: 0.68 m Depth: >0.12 m Aligned NW–SE

Cut layers 431, 427. Below layer 425.

Form: Straight linear trench with vertical sides; floor not exposed.

Fill: (1) Wall foundation constructed on a base of large flint nodules, 60–150 mm, just visible protruding through overlying chalk blocks 50–100 mm compacted hard in a mass of puddled chalk mixed with small rounded chalk pieces. Most of the surface was flat and smooth, but at the edges the surface curves up and the surface is more irregular with individual chalk blocks visible. The smooth surface is about 0.55 m wide and possibly represents the narrower width

of the actual wall.

(2) Overlying the chalk footing was a layer of brownish-yellow crumbly mortar containing chalk and flint grit and very rare larger flint fragments *c.*20 mm. This lens only survived at the north end, elsewhere being removed by the robber trench.

F726 Width: 0.54 m Depth: 0.1 m

The robber trench cut through layers 425–427 and 431, largely removing direct evidence of the relationships between these and the original wall trench F729, except at the north end, where the robber trench followed the line of the wall rather than the foundation trench.

The robber trench was filled with brown clayey soil containing amorphous light brown mortar fragments and lenses mixed with scattered small rounded chalk and occasional angular flints up to 30 mm, plus flecks of charcoal and burnt clay.

F730 F235410 Foundation trench for west corridor inner wall

Width: 0.9–1.0 m Depth: >0.25 m Aligned: NW–SE

Cut layers 427, 431; below layers 425, 424. Cut by F727.

Form: Base of foundation trench not exposed; sides sloping.

Fill: (1) In the base of the trench were rounded chalk blocks *c.*60 mm very hard packed in puddled chalk. A few flints protruding through the chalk suggests there may have been a layer of flints forming the foundation below the chalk footing. The surface of the chalk was very smooth and flat in the centre, below the line of the wall, but towards the edges the surface curves up slightly and the surface of the chalk is more rubbly. The smooth surface is about 0.66 m wide.

(2) Over the chalk was a thin (70 mm) skim of pinkish-brown mortar with scattered chalk grit. At the sides of the trench this mortar became thicker, up to 0.22 m, where it was preserved to its full depth below the floor surfaces (424, 425). At the edges it consisted of lumps of mortar mixed with small chalk and grit and fairly frequent small angular flints 40–70 mm with some brown clay soil matrix.

F727 Robber trench

Width: 0.58 m Depth: 0.28

This was filled with a mass of crumbly yellow–pale brown mortar fragments, mixed with a few small chalk lumps and grit and angular grit compacted with a little brown soil matrix. The width of the robber trench probably follows closely the width of the original wall.

F731 F305410 Foundation trench for internal wall of east corridor

Width: 0.88 m Depth: >0.18 m Aligned: NW–SE

Below layers 420, 423, 424. Cut by F728.

Form: The trench had straight cut vertical sides; the base was not exposed.

Fill: (1) Exposed in the base was a layer of subangular–subrounded chalk blocks 50–100 mm plus rare flints *c.*80 mm packed around with small chalk fragments and crushed puddled chalk matrix rammed hard around them. The surface was extremely smooth and compacted puddled chalk, except at the side of the trench, where the surface is more rubbly and slopes up to the edges.

(2) Over the surface of the chalk was a thin layer of brownish-yellow crumbly mortar containing small chalk grit. This continued up the sides of the foundation trench sealed below layers 423 and 424, where it was 80–120 mm thick.

F728 Robber trench

Width: 0.68 m Depth: 0.25 m

At the north end there was a solid fill of compacted amorphous pinkish-brown mortar mixed with chalk grit and occasional small fragments of chalk and flint 20–40 mm. Towards the south end the fill was more mixed with brown clayey soil and small chalk forming a substantial proportion of the fill. Some tesserae were observed.

F732 F336410 East wall

Width: 0.58 m Height surviving: 0.26 m Aligned: NW–SE

Butted by layers 420, 423, 429 and ?422.

The foundations of the wall were not exposed. The wall was constructed of flint nodules with some shaping in the form of flat knapped faces selected for the wall face. They measured 120–200 mm long and were close set in a matrix of brownish-yellow mortar, which contained much chalk grit and a scatter of angular flint gravel 20–30 mm. The flints used in the top course visible in the wall face have been laid at a diagonal, possibly forming a herringbone pattern. This was more obvious on the outside face than the inner face, where the lower course of flints was mostly obscured by mortar. The top of the wall had been destroyed by modern plough marks.

F733 F235149 Foundation trench for internal cross wall

Length: >0.4 m Width: >0.3 m Aligned: NE–SW

The corner of one of the internal cross walls was exposed joining at right angles with F730. The construction was identical and continuous from one to the other. The fill of the robber trench was distinctly different, having been backfilled with dark brown clayey soil containing scattered small chalk, flints and mortar lumps, all 10–50 mm.