

No: 136/15

Date: 30/11/2015

To: Permanent Delegation of Iraq to UNESCO

UNESCO House

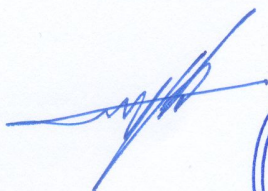
Subject: Erbil Citadel- Report on implementation of the World Heritage Committee Recommendations – Decision -38COM 8B.20

Dear Ambassador,

With reference to your letter no. 228/2014, dated 24/7/2014, referring to the letter from the World Heritage Centre, no. CLT/HER/WHC/PSM/14/LJ/386 dated 22/7/2014, please find enclosed a report by the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR) on the implementation of the World Heritage Committee recommendations in accordance with Decision 38COM 8B.20 adopted by the 38TH session of the World Heritage Committee in Doha, 2014.

Please let us know of any further queries that may arise.

Kindly accept our deep appreciation for your co-operation and support.

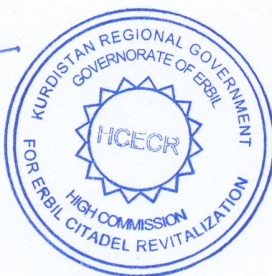


Dara Al-Yaqoobi

Head

High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR)

30/11/2015





Erbil Citadel
Inscribed on the
World Heritage
List in 2014

Erbil Citadel

Report on Implementation of Recommendations Outlined in Decision 38COM 8B.20, by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th.session in Doha, 2014

Prepared by:

Dara al Yaqoobi,

Head of the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization(HCECR)



High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR)

Introduction

Since the inscription of Erbil Citadel on the World Heritage List in 2014, a number of actions have been carried out with regards to the conservation, rehabilitation and management of the site. The HCECR has conducted periodical maintenance and repair works at around 120 buildings, it has proceeded with the archaeological excavation , and has conducted several initiatives aimed at involving the community in the revitalization of the Citadel.

Additionally, within the framework of the memorandum of understanding with UNESCO, the design of the interpretation center, the study for the main circulation visitor paths, and the conservation of four buildings have been completed.

On the other hand, with the deterioration of the security situation in Iraq, as well the financial constraints that have impacted the whole country in general, and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in particular, several plans that were in the pipeline were interrupted. Nevertheless, the HCECR has addressed the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee in its 38th session (Doha 2014) and worked towards implementing them.

What follow is a one page exclusive summary and a detailed report on the implementation of those recommendations presented according to their sequence in Decision 38 COM 8B.20.

Dara Al Yaqoobi,

Head of HCECR

High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR)

November 2015

Summary on implementation of recommendations outlined in Decision 38COM 8B.20

Since the inscription of Erbil Citadel on the World Heritage List in 2014, the HCECR proceeded with the implementation of the recommendations outlined in Decision 38 COM 8B.20.

- a) With regards to **surveying, documenting and mapping of buried archaeological remains**, investigation, documentation and analysis of the buried remains have been carried out systematically and have accompanied ongoing archaeological activities. An archaeological excavation was initially designed in order to explore evidence for the historic fortification walls of the citadel. This took place at the north-west and south-east perimeter of the Citadel in 2013-2015. The recent excavation has revealed that the fortification dates back to at least 2000 years, and it is expected that further excavations planned in other areas of the mound may reveal evidence of older layers.
- b) Within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the UNESCO Office for Iraq and HCECR, a comprehensive study entitled "**Studies for the Stabilization of the Erbil Citadel Slope and Perimeter Façades**" was carried out in 2011-2013 through an expert team contracted by UNESCO. With the aggravated financial crisis in Iraq in general, and the Kurdistan Region in particular, the project has been postponed. Nevertheless, in order to address the most pressing needs associated with the vulnerable structures located around the perimeter of the slope, UNESCO has executed conservation projects for twelve houses along the perimeter of the Citadel, while the HCECR have continued implementing an emergency repair campaign of consolidation, stabilization and maintenance for facades and foundations of houses along the perimeter of the Citadel.
- c) With regards to the recommendation on **Kurdistan National Museum**, the implementation of the project is halted, and the subject is under study in order to take the appropriate decision.
- d) With the increased instability and the ensuing financial crisis, efforts for **attracting private investors and building solid public/private partnerships** has been put on hold. Nevertheless, the HCECR, in collaboration with UNESCO has begun exploring options for establishing a road map for the strategy, which would be ready whenever the general environment will be suitable for facilitating its implementation.
- e) With regards to the recommendation for **improving the existing legal framework** and working on the strategy for attracting private investors, this was already initiated within the framework of the activity for the Establishment of Procedures for the Management Plan of Erbil Citadel, implemented through the cooperation with UNESCO, as well as in establishing the related Future Vision for the Legislative and Organizational Status. The necessity of introducing mechanisms that would allow the establishment of public/private partnerships was addressed at the time.
- f) Within the framework of **strengthening the involvement of the local community and encouraging its participation in revitalizing the Citadel**, the HCECR has allocated a number of houses in the Citadel for local NGO's in order to encourage multicultural activities and functions by adapting heritage buildings to functions that are compatible with the Citadel's values, and in line with community needs and aspirations. Moreover, work is in progress in establishing the Erbil Citadel Friendship Association with the aim of raising awareness, and strengthening community participation. Additionally, HCECR inaugurated Erbil Citadel Cultural Centre, and established a joint committee of HCECR and Erbil civil society for managing the activities of the Centre. The Centre plays a major role in promotion, raising public awareness, and sharing knowledge and education, by acting as a venue for multicultural activities and events that are organized periodically throughout the year.

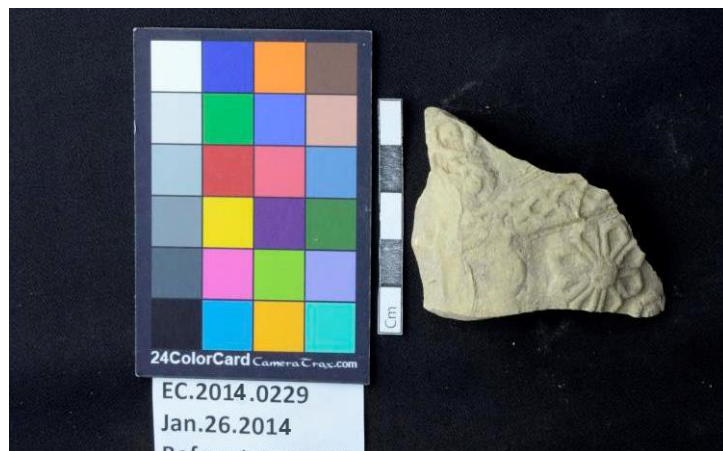
a) Surveying, documenting and mapping surviving surface buried archaeological remains of all types and establishing mechanisms to document and protect buried archaeological remains in order to enable justification in future of criteria (iii) and (v),

- Surveying, documenting and mapping of buried archaeological remains has been carried out systematically, accompanying ongoing archaeological activities. Most significantly, this has been in relation to the implementation of the archaeological investigations and excavation program that was initiated by the HCECR in 2013.
- Investigation, documentation and analysis of the buried remains at Erbil Citadel have combined traditional methods and modern technology.
- In terms of investigation methodology, and as a first step, geophysical prospections were carried out using a range of techniques - electrical resistivity tomography, ground penetrating radar, micro-gravimetry and shallow refraction seismology. These both confirmed the depth of cultural deposits (in the order of 22 m thick at the lowest point) as well as suggesting the presence of some major subsurface structures. These activities have been followed up by the inauguration of actual excavations.
- The first excavations were designed in order to look for evidence of the historic fortification walls, and took place at the north - west and south-east perimeter of the Citadel in 2013-2015. Evidence was found for two major layers of fortifications.
- A section of the brickwork in the upper fortification dated by optical luminescence demonstrates that the earlier part of these walls must date to well before 1000 AD. The lower layer was in use in the time of the Assyrian empire in the ninth to seventh centuries BC: once again, though, the origins are probably considerably older as some of the associated ceramics can be dated to the Late Bronze Age (1500-1000 BC). Separating these two major layers of fortifications is a destruction layer dated by radiocarbon dating to the early second century AD: very likely this represents a sacking of the city carried out by the Roman emperor Trajan when he attacked Erbil in 115 AD.
- In conclusion, the recent excavation revealed that the fortification dates back to at least 2000 years, and has demonstrated beyond doubt the deep antiquity of the citadel mound of Erbil and revealed exceptional evidence for the sequence of fortifications which encompassed the city. Further excavations that are planned for other areas of the mound can be expected to yield results and evidence of older layers with equal importance to the history of the site.
- Survey and documentation was carried out by a team comprising an architect and archaeologist, and was carried out by the use of a high accuracy total station combined with the traditional archaeological documentation methods to ensure the integration of all details.
- Moreover, a simple shelter structure has been installed, with a drainage system to protect excavated remains and allow further deeper excavations.
- A related paper was submitted to Vienna Conference (International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East) planned to be held in April 2016.

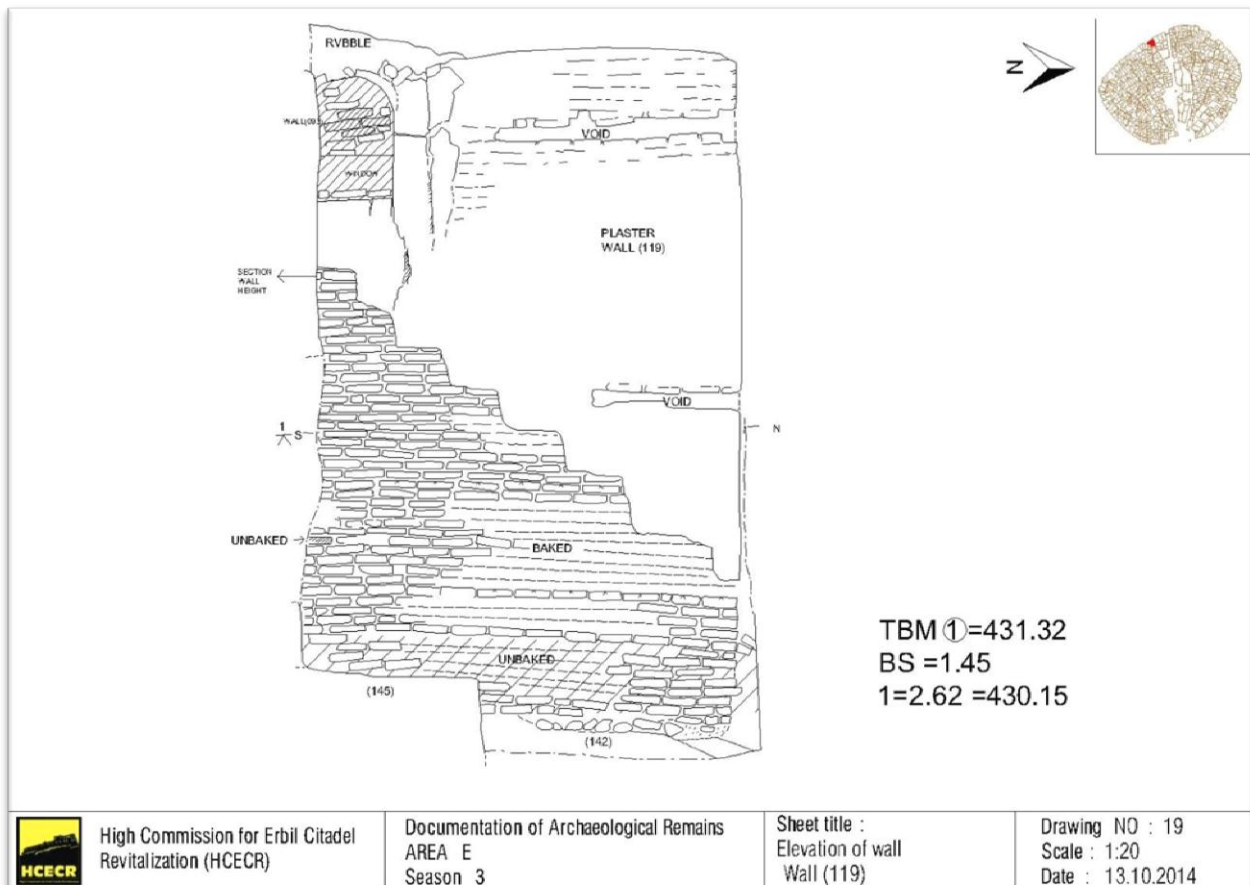
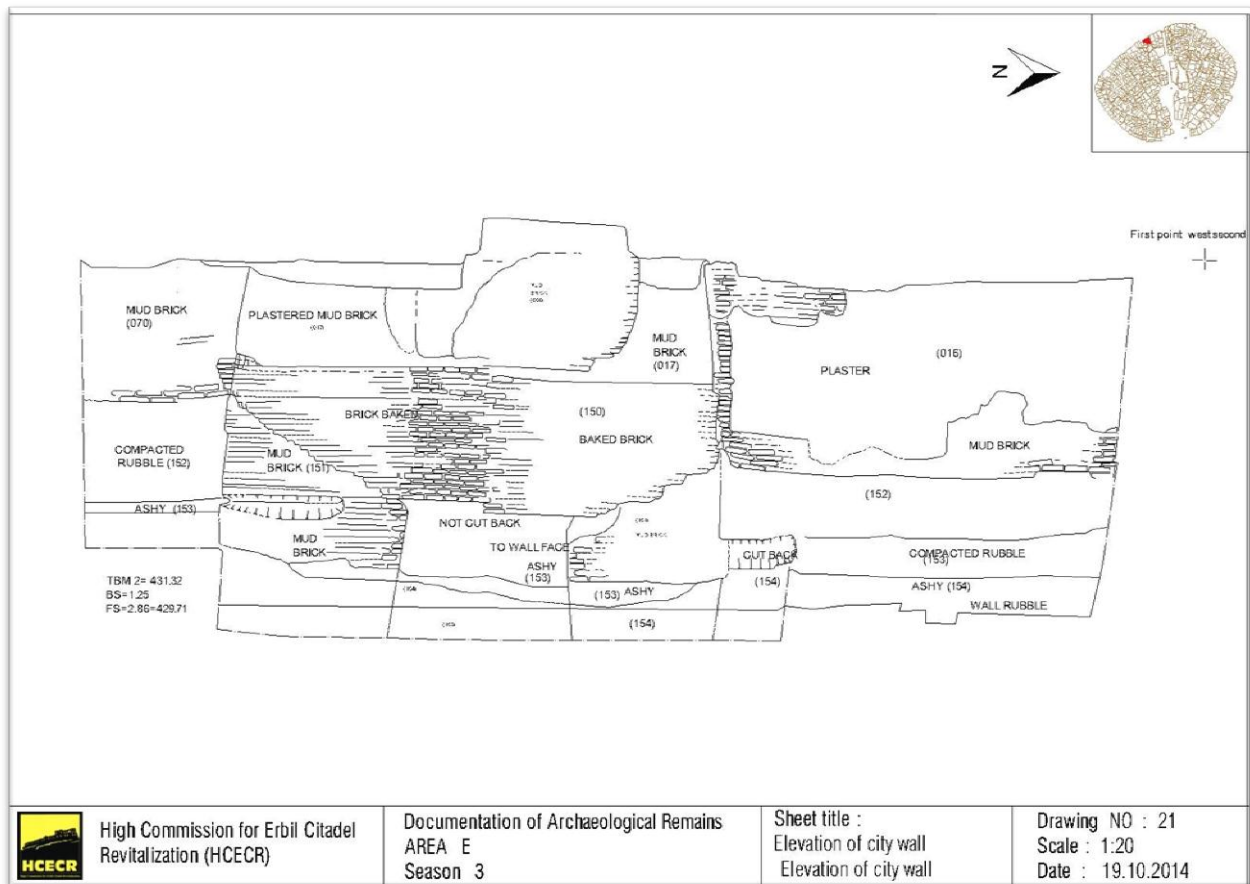
Archaeological Excavations showing the fortification walls and the surroundings

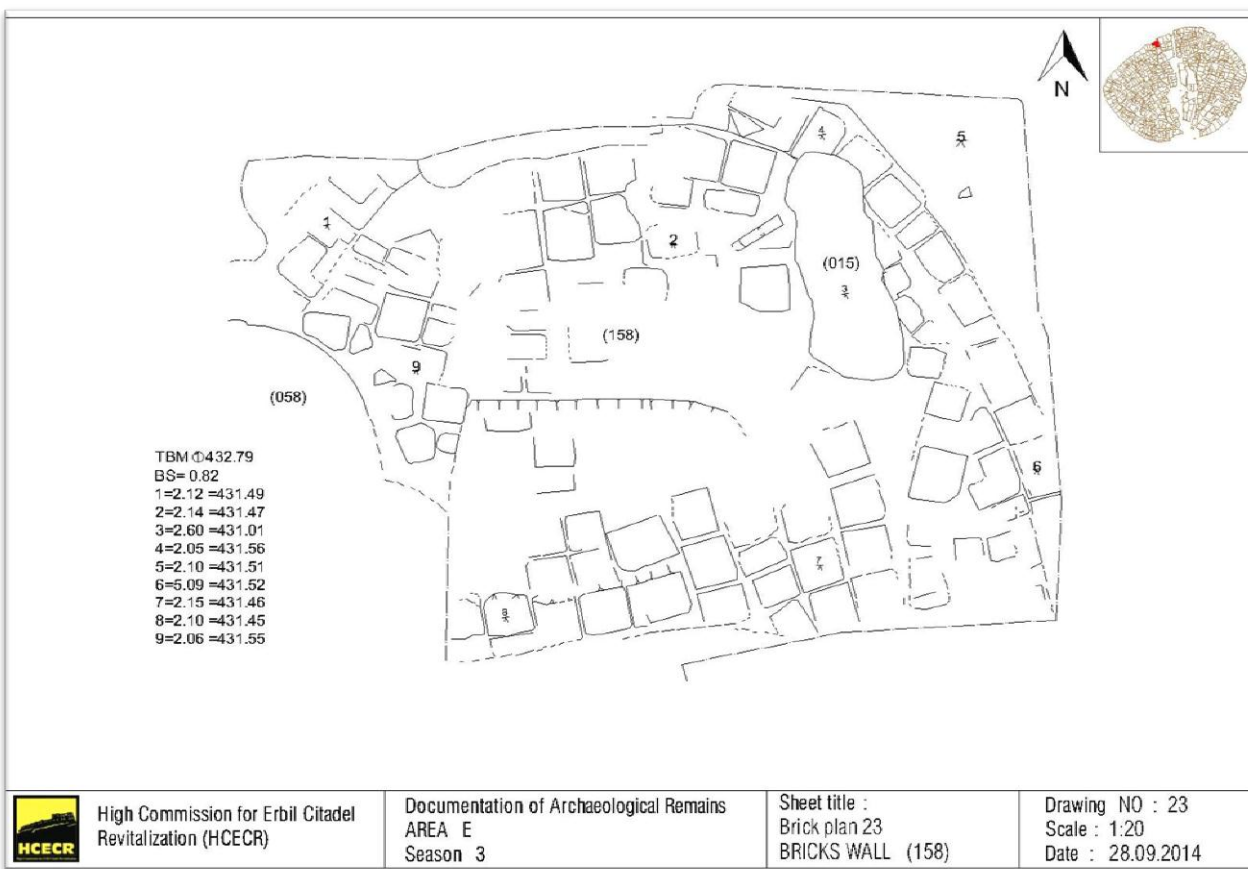
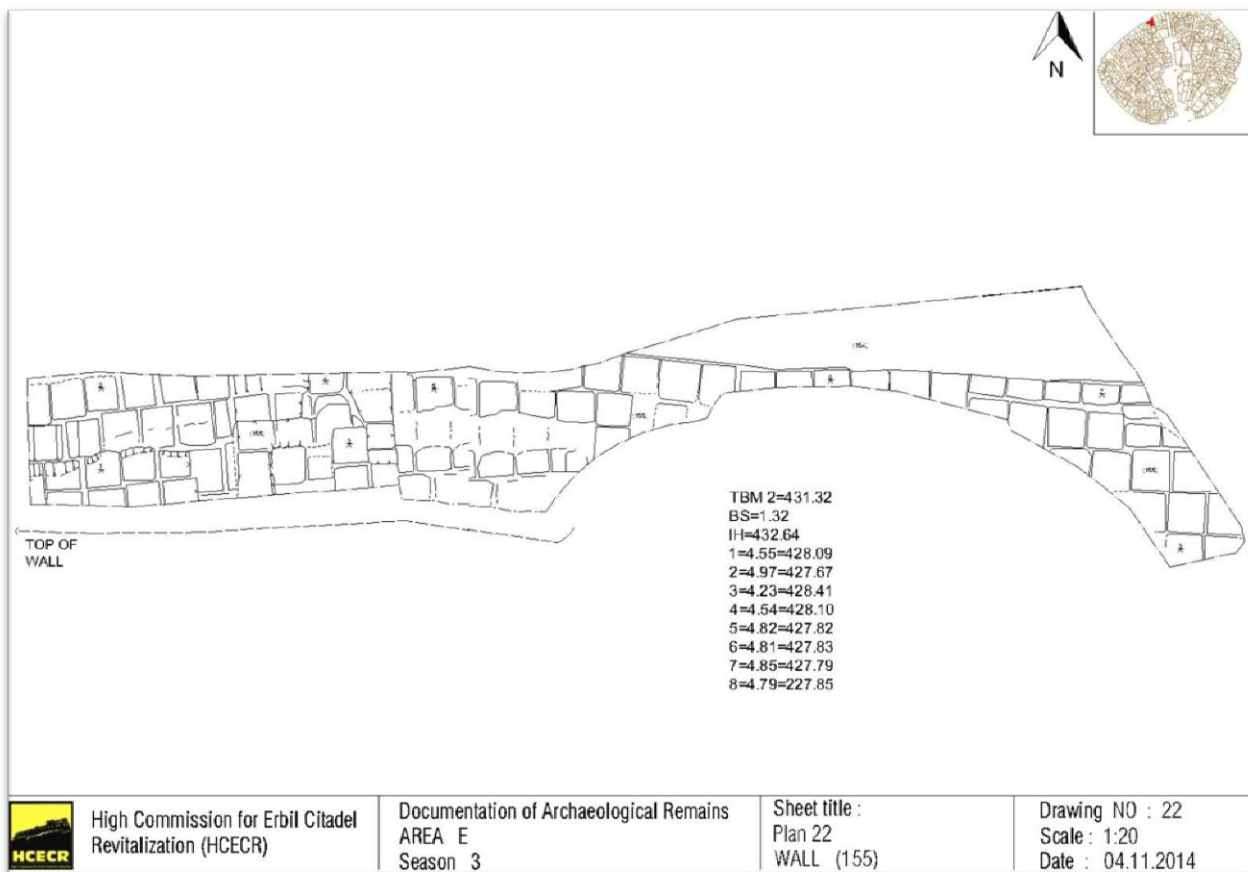


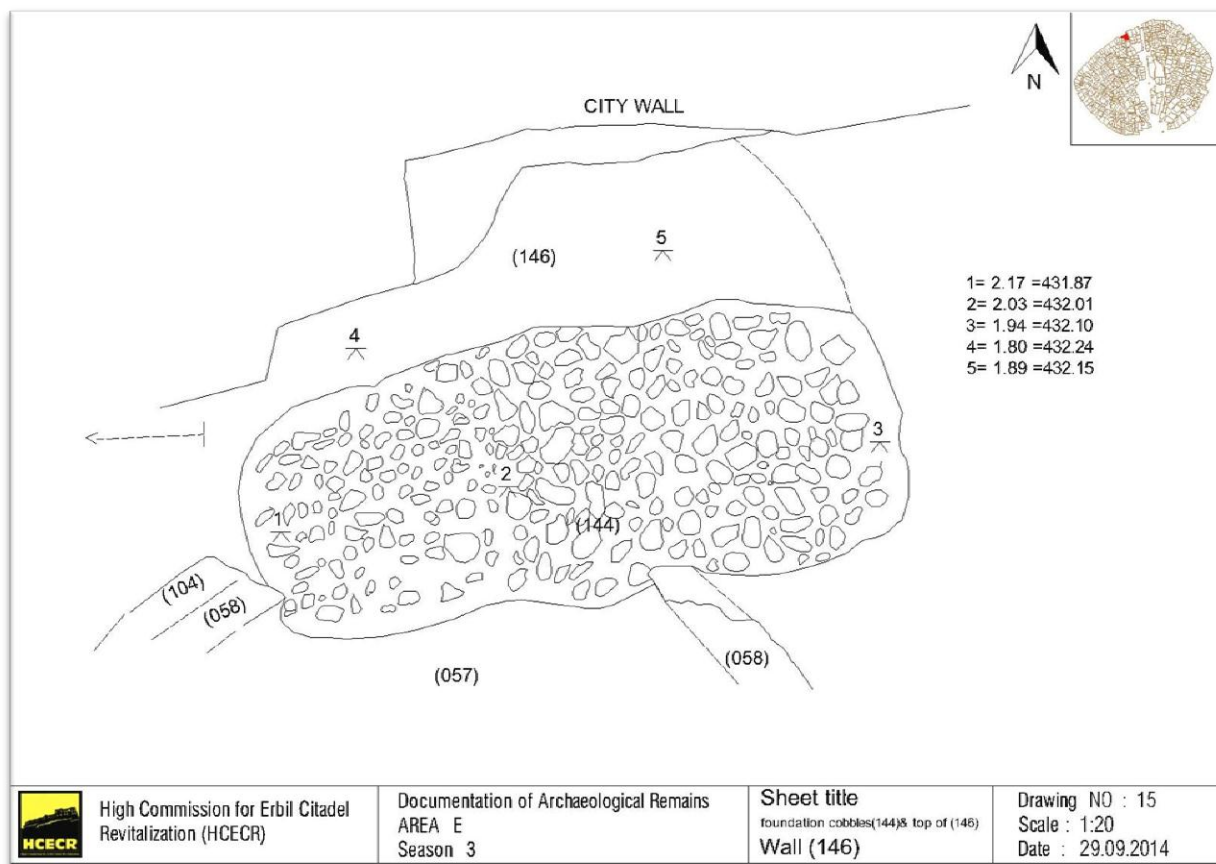
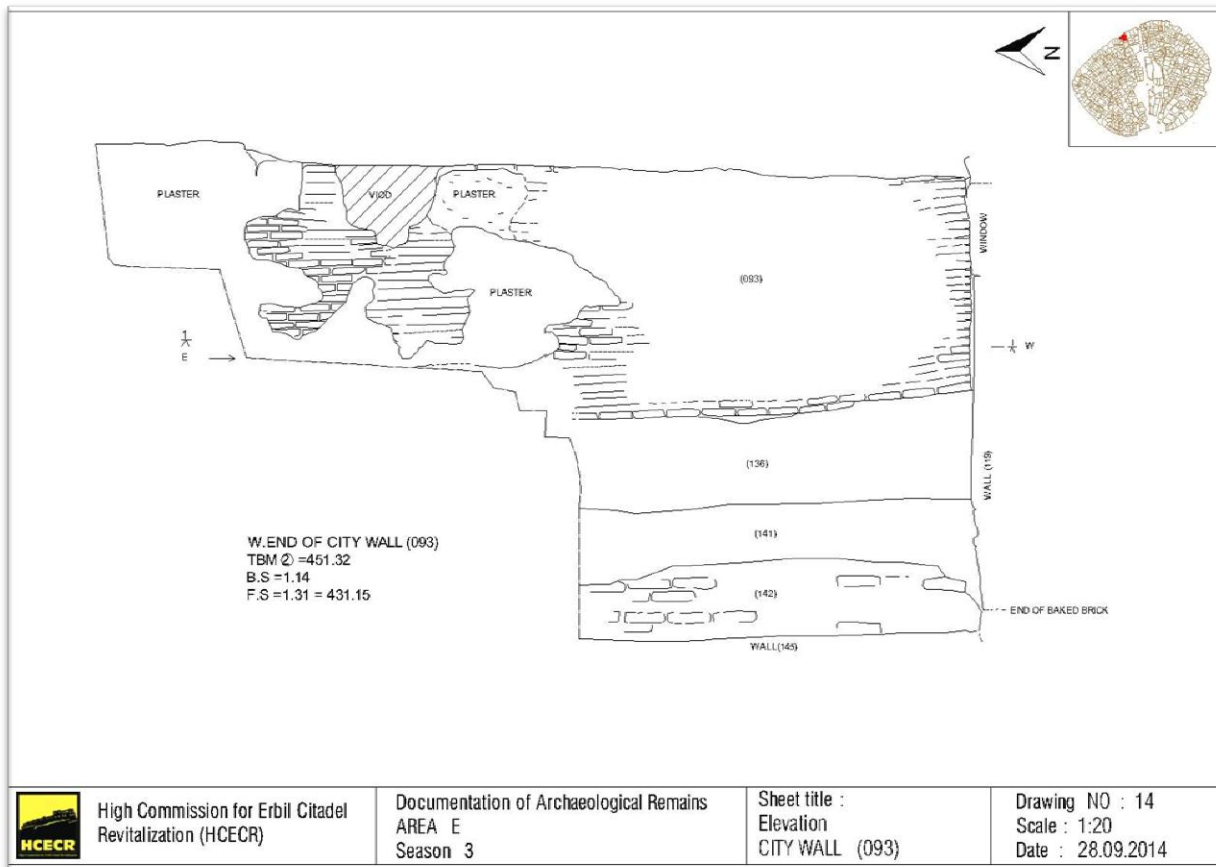
Archaeological Finds



Samples of mapping surviving surface buried archaeological remains







Radiocarbon Results

Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit

10/06/2015 16:02



Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit

14C Results > Explanation of results



[Home](#) [Research](#) [OxCal](#) [Services](#) [14C Results](#) [NERC_RF](#) [14C Information](#)

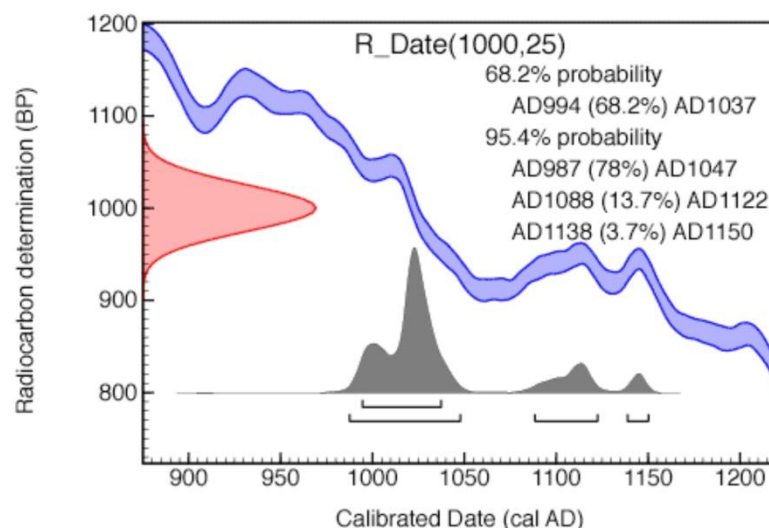
Explanation of results
Online database
OxA number reference

Explanation of radiocarbon results

A radiocarbon determination is a measure of the amount of radiocarbon in a sample. While any organism is alive it continues to incorporate radiocarbon from the atmosphere. Once it has died the amount gradually declines because of radioactive decay.

Measurements of radiocarbon concentration are usually expressed in terms of a notional age, in numbers of years before 1950. For example, the radiocarbon result $1000 \pm 25\text{BP}$ indicates that the notional age is 1000 years with a standard uncertainty of 25 years. This notional age is calculated on the simplistic assumption that the amount of radiocarbon in the atmosphere has always been the same. This is not quite the case and so for anything other than a very rough indication of age the measurement must be calibrated.

Calibration is performed by comparing the radiocarbon measurements on the sample to those made on material (usually tree rings) of known age. This comparison allows one to determine the possible calendar age of the sample. An example calibration is shown here:



The main elements of this plot are:

- the radiocarbon determination itself shown on the left hand axis
- the measurements on known age material shown as the uneven double line
- the likelihood of different possible ages of the sample shown as the solid grey distribution - from this you can see that the most likely date is just after AD1000

The range of possible ages is also shown for two different levels of confidence. We can be 68% sure that the sample dates to between cal AD 994 and cal AD 1037 but there is a reasonable chance (32%) that it is older or younger than this. However we can be 95% certain that it dates to the period cal AD 987 to AD1047, the period cal AD 1088 to cal AD1122 or the period cal AD 1138 to cal AD 1150. The values given within the brackets give the relative likelihood of the individual ranges.

See also [Explanation of radiocarbon results from the modern period](#).

QAP 14/3 Version 4 Issued 22/10/2012

Explanation of Radiocarbon Results

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Dr John MacGinnis
McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research
Downing St
Cambridge
CB2 3ER

8th Jun, 2015

Our ref: **C14/4462**

Dear John

The following radiocarbon measurements have been made on samples from this project.

OxA	Sample	Material (species)	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$	Date
Erbil citadel, Iraq				
OxA-31856	Sample 1	charcoal	-24.91	1847 \pm 24
OxA-31857	Sample 2	charcoal	-25.18	1859 \pm 25

The dates are uncalibrated in radiocarbon years BP (Before Present - AD 1950) using the half life of 5568 years. Isotopic fractionation has been corrected for using the measured $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values measured on the AMS. The quoted $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values are measured independently on a stable isotope mass spectrometer (to ± 0.3 per mil relative to VPDB). For details of the chemical pretreatment, target preparation and AMS measurement see *Radiocarbon* **46** (1) 17-24, **46** (1): 155-63, and *Archaeometry* **44** (3 Supplement 1): 1-149. The attached calibration plots, showing the calendar age ranges, have been generated using the Oxcal computer program (v4.2) of C. Bronk Ramsey, using the 'IntCal13' dataset (*Radiocarbon* **55** (4), 2013).

As you may know we publish all dates measured at Oxford in a datelist which appears in the journal *Archaeometry*. When you have had the chance to consider the implications of the results I wonder if you would be kind enough to send your brief comments to me.

Yours sincerely

Hayley Sula

b) Proceeding with the implementation of the stabilization of the slopes of the archaeological mound.

- A comprehensive study for the Consolidation of Slope and the Perimeter Facades of the Citadel was carried out within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between the UNESCO Office for Iraq and HCECR, through an expert team contracted by UNESCO. Thus, the study entitled "Studies for the Stabilization of the Erbil Citadel Slope and Perimeter Façades" was finalized in 2012.
- The project outputs included the provision of practical, applicable solutions for the remediation of the drawings, specifications and bill of quantities for executing the works on the slope, in addition to typical cross sections showing the details of the needed work to address structural problems of the buildings/façades along the edge of the slope. The study concluded by outlining the series of steps to be undertaken in order to address prevailing issues in a holistic manner. These include carrying out safety measures, strengthening of masonry façades, regularization of the slope, protection of the tip of the slope, protection of the bottom of the slope, surface rainwater regularization, and the final protection of the slope with vegetation.

A complementary project was carried out in 2013 that included foundation studies for a group of façades along the perimeter of the Citadel, comprising about a quarter of its circumference. This included inspecting each building and surveying basic data to apply the decision tree that was established previously by the project. It also comprised integration of bill of quantities and the technical specifications required for the consolidation of the façades. The estimated cost of executing works on the slope and the façade foundation interventions is in the range of USD 11 million.

- As it became crucial that slope stabilization should be carried out in a holistic manner, discussion with the UNESCO of Iraq was initiated in 2013 for the establishment of an agreement for executing the project through funding from the Kurdistan Regional Government. The possibility of implementation in 2014/2015 was in the pipeline. However, with the sudden escalation of the conflict in Iraq in the summer of 2014, in addition to the rise of the financial crisis in Iraq in general, and the Kurdistan Regional in particular, the project was postponed.
- Nevertheless, and in order to address the most pressing needs associated with the vulnerable structures located around the perimeter of the slope, UNESCO executed urgent preventive and conservation projects for twelve houses along the perimeter of the Citadel. These were selected on the basis of their high vulnerability with respect to their architectural significance. In addition, the HCECR have continued with implementing an emergency repair campaign of consolidation, stabilization and maintenance works for the facades and the foundations of houses at the perimeter of the Citadel. Around 20 houses along the perimeter of the citadel, suffering from deterioration and unstable conditions have undergone repair and consolidation works.

Consolidating the facades and the foundations of the houses along the perimeter of the Citadel mound



- c) Reconsidering the location of the Kurdistan National Museum or substantially revising the architectural design of the current project to harmonise with the Citadel and its relationship with its setting,**
- The subject was reviewed and discussed thoroughly within the HCECR board meetings, and it was agreed to contact the Governorate of Erbil, as the related authority of the project, for exploring and studying the alternatives for dealing with the subject, such as canceling the project, postponing the project, reconsidering its location or revising its architectural design.
 - Several meetings were conducted between the HCECR and the Governorate of Erbil, and it was agreed that the project is halted for the meanwhile and for the near future, and to consider revising the architectural design of the project whenever there would be a possibility of starting the implementation in order to guarantee the harmonization among the project, the Citadel and its surroundings. However, the project is not included in any upcoming budget plans, and the implementation is not decided yet.
- d) Elaborating a strategy to attract private investors and to build a solid public/private partnership to implement the conservation and revitalization programme,**
- e) Undertaking juridical studies with a view to improving the existing legal framework by introducing mechanisms to support private investment,**
- Within the framework of the activity for the Establishment of Procedures for the Management of Erbil Citadel, implemented through the cooperation with UNESCO, Erbil Citadel's Management Plan and Future Vision for the Legislative and Organizational Status of Erbil Citadel Revitalization Project, have both addressed the necessity of introducing mechanisms that would allow the establishment of public/private partnerships.
 - One of the policies outlined in the management plan deals with investment, marketing and funding, stating that "investment in the Citadel will be encouraged through financial incentives and administrative measures, but closely monitored to avoid activities that are incompatible". The legal and institutional framework of the HCECR provides the basis for establishing a department that deals with external relations, promotion, investment and tourism.
 - Additionally, the issue of improving the existing legal framework through which mechanisms to support private investment could be introduced was also addressed at the time. Hence, The Erbil Citadel (Area) Protection, Conservation, Revitalization and Management Law was proposed on the basis of the "importance of the area and the requirement to work for development and revitalization of Erbil Citadel, to stimulate investments in the area, to develop and promote the services as well as the touristic, cultural, archaeological, and entertainment utilities serving citizens, and to direct these activities in accordance with the public policy of Kurdistan Region and the State."
 - However, since 2014, with the increased unstable condition in Iraq in general, and in the Kurdistan Region in particular, together with the consequential financial crisis, all of this has contributed to the creation of an environment that is not attractive to private investors or to building solid public/private partnerships. Nevertheless, and in line with the necessity of addressing this very important recommendation, the HCECR, together with UNESCO has begun exploring the options for establishing a road map for the strategy, which would be ready whenever the general environment will be suitable for facilitating the implementation of the strategy.

f) Strengthening involvement of former inhabitants and of Erbil's Civil Society at large in the revitalization of the Citadel.

- Within the framework of strengthening the involvement of the local community and encouraging them to contribute in revitalizing the Citadel, allocation of a number of houses in the Citadel for local NGO's was initiated for regenerating multicultural activities and functions by adapting them to functions that are compatible with the Citadel's values, and in line with community needs and aspirations. These include uses such as the Kurdish Traditional Costumes Museum run by Kurdistan Women Union, the Kurdistan Tourism Association, the Museum of Kurdish Press Archives managed by the Kurdistan Foundation at the Grand Gate of the Citadel, the Stone and Gemstone Museum run by the Stone and Gemstone Institute, the "Antique" Shop, and, Traditional crafts souvenir shops.
It is worth mentioning that several buildings that were allocated for these activities were rehabilitated with the financial contribution of the related partners.
- Work is in progress in establishing the **Erbil Citadel Friendship Association** that serves as a link between the Citadel and its former inhabitants, Erbil's civil society and the wider local community as well. The bylaw of the association is under preparation.
The Association aims at strengthening community participation, raising awareness, facilitating the collaboration and exchange of information, and holding periodic meetings and public lectures on topics concerning cultural and social aspects related to the citadel. It also aims at encouraging participation of the local community in programs of research, documentation and oral history, in addition to ensuring continuous contact with former inhabitants, coordinating with academic institutions, cultural foundations and tourism organizations, creating funding opportunities, etc.
- HCECR carried out the restoration and rehabilitation of a highly significant and distinctive house at the Citadel, namely the Salih Chalabi house that now functions as **Erbil Citadel Cultural Centre**. A committee was established comprising members from the HCECR staff and Erbil Civil Society as well, to manage the activities of the Centre. The Centre plays a major role in promotion, raising public awareness, and sharing knowledge and education, by acting as a venue for multicultural activities and events that are organized periodically throughout the year. Activities that have been organized include seminars, lectures, art galleries, photographic exhibitions, music concerts, public events, etc. Therefore, extensive opportunities have been provided for a wide range of audiences in various fields, contributing to revitalizing the Citadel. Target groups have included university students, school children, artists, photographers, professors, intellectuals, writers, musicians, former inhabitants, officials, etc.

Multicultural activities and events at Erbil Citadel Cultural Centre

