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The cheval-de-frise barrier is the goal of the next excavation works in Vilars d'Arbeca

■ Works will be carried out in summer and will also examine the moat's escarp

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The cheval-de-frise barrier

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] / *Research Group in Prehistory at UdL* will coordinate an excavation campaign in the [poblat iber dels Vilars d'Arbeca](#) [<http://www.vilars2000.com/catala/index.htm>] / Iberian village of Vilars d'Arbeca that will allow uncovering the western and southern sides of the cheval-de-frise stone wall, traces of which had already been found in the archaeological site. This is the first to be discovered in Catalonia and the Ebro river Valley and the most ancient one found in the Iberian Peninsula.

Works will develop between June and August 2009 and will also concentrate on the restoration of the upper face of the moat's escarp. A budget of 120,000 Euros has been granted by the Ministry of Town and Country Planning and Public Works of the Generalitat government, together with the sponsorship of the Arbeca Town Council and the Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs.

The cheval-de-frise is a defensive obstacle made up of vertical stone slabs measuring between 80 centimetres and one meter, which completely surrounded the walled precinct. It protected the most ancient fortress, which

dates from the pre-Iberian period (700 to 800 BC) and which was later on substituted by the floodable moat. The findings of UdL archaeologists have compelled experts to reassess chronologies and theories about the origin of this defensive system.

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