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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION
AT
91-93 PARNELL ROAD
OLD FORD, E3
AN INTERIM REPORT



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

T. H.
LAG 30/0150

**Interim Report on an
Archaeological Excavation at 91-93 Parnell Road, Bow,
London Borough of Tower Hamlets, E3.**

Central National Grid Reference: TQ 3692 8356

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1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1.1 This report describes the interim results of an archaeological excavation undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology in advance of a large scale re-development project at 91-93 Parnell Road, Bow, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, E3. The central National Grid Reference for this site is TQ 3692 8356. The excavation took place between the 24th of August and the 9th of October 1995. The commissioning client was Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust.

1.2 The site was investigated in two overlapping parts - a schedule necessitated by the general nature and sheer volume of overburden which had to be removed by earth-moving machinery in order to reveal the underlying archaeological deposits. Between the 24th of August and the 15th of September an area measuring 14.4 m (north-south) by 12.2m (east-west) at the western end of the site was investigated. During this period the eastern part of the site was utilised for the mounding of spoil. The western area was then back-filled and an area measuring 10.3m (north-south) by 16.2m (east-west) at the eastern end of the site was investigated until the conclusion of the fieldwork.

1.3 All deposits and features were recorded onto *pro-forma* context sheets, drawn in plan at a scale of 1:20 and/or section at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Where appropriate features were photographed in black and white, colour transparency or colour print formats.

1.4 The investigations demonstrated that the site is located on relatively level natural brickearth (capping drift deposits which are part of the Thames Terrace Gravel sequence) some 0.6km to the west of the present course of the River Lea. Features from the Late Bronze Age were recorded cutting into the natural brickearth in the south-western corner of the site.

1.5 Sealing the prehistoric features and some features apparently dating to the Roman period was a thin horizon representing a buried soil. Cutting into this horizon was substantial activity relating to settlement, in the form of pits and ditches, dating to the mid to late Roman period.

1.6 Little or no evidence was recovered for occupation of the site between the end of the Roman period and the mid 19th century. It is likely that during this time the majority of the area around Old Ford remained exclusively in agricultural use. A series of enigmatic features, probably relating to horticultural activity undertaken on the site during the late post-Medieval period, were investigated. Evidence of 19th century gravel quarrying was also recorded.

1.7 Cartographic evidence demonstrates that by the end of the 19th century the residential pattern of the area was well established by a grid-like network of residential terraced houses. Small-scale pitting activity, probably associated with the back-gardens of the late and post Victorian housing, was encountered. Extensive remains of brick buildings (with concrete-slab footings) were exposed, and where possible removed, during the removal of the overburden.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 General Introduction

2.1.1 An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology, between the 24th of August and the 9th of October 1995, in advance of redevelopment at 91-93 Parnell Road, Bow, London E3 (Figure 1). Prior to the excavation no standing structures remained on the site, which fronts onto Parnell Road.

2.1.2 Previous structures on the site, which covers c. 0.18 acres (c. 0.0735 hectares) had been demolished down to their concrete slabs at c. 11.90-12.2m OD and, generally, the site was covered by c. 0.2-0.9m of demolition rubble prior to the excavation. Street level in Parnell Road is at 12.6m OD.

2.1.3 The excavation, essentially a mitigatory response to development proposals, was undertaken as a planning requirement in accordance with the recommendations of the archaeological Curator (Ms Sue Cole, Planning Archaeologist at English Heritage, London Region). A previous archaeological excavation conducted on the site, in 1990, by the North London Unit of the Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology and an archaeological Evaluation conducted on the site, in 1995, by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS), had established the presence of significant sub-surface archaeological deposits dating from occupation of the site during the Roman period.

2.1.4 The commissioning Client was the Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust. Pre-Construct Archaeology was awarded the contract to undertake the excavation after submitting a tender in response to a specification document¹ prepared by Archaeological Aspects, the archaeological consultancy acting for the Client. Groundworks were undertaken by T.F.Sammon Ltd. and Newham Plant Hire Ltd. The excavation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology under the direction of Robin Taylor-Wilson.

2.1.5 Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust had previously commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology to compile an archaeological Desk Top Assessment (DTA) in advance of proposed redevelopment of land at four sites in the Bow Neighbourhood of Tower Hamlets. This DTA² was prepared by Pre-Construct Archaeology in June 1994.

2.1.6 The excavation was directed by Robin Taylor-Wilson. Staff of Pre-Construct Archaeology who assisted during the project were: Barry Bishop, Gary Brown, Timothy Carew, Judith Connall, Keith Cooper, Strephon Duckering, Ronald Howard, Susan Leaver, David Marino, Simon

¹ Maloney, 1995

² Brown 1994

Pennington, Jennifer Proctor, Victoria Ridgeway and Thomas Shaw. All photography was undertaken by Robin Taylor-Wilson.

2.2 Location - Figures 1 and 2

2.2.1 The site fronts onto Parnell Road to the east and to the west are located the offices of Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust . To the south the site is backed onto by houses that front onto Roman Road and to the north there is an access road between the site and an adjacent terrace of houses. Access from Parnell Road was provided by double gates at the north-east corner of the site. The site National Grid Reference is TQ 3692 8356.



Figure 1. The Site Location.



Figure 2. The Trench Location Plan.

3. GENERAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Planning

3.1.2 The archaeological excavation was required in order to discharge fully a condition attached to a planning permission for a proposed scheme of redevelopment at 91-93 Parnell Road. The proposed scheme is for low-rise/density social housing (four units, each three storeys high) with gardens, parking and an access road.

3.1.2 The proposed redevelopment is located within an archaeological priority area as defined within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Unitary Development Plan (UDP). As such, and in accordance with the Borough's archaeological policies, extensive archaeological (open-area) excavation was deemed necessary at the site following the conclusions and recommendations of an earlier archaeological Evaluation.³

3.1.3 Prior to the excavation it was assumed that the proposed development scheme would necessitate extensive site clearance to effect the complete removal of concrete slabs from previous buildings and the rubble/demolition debris which covered the site.⁴ The archaeological Evaluation revealed that the base of one concrete slab was only 120-240mm above archaeological deposits. Clearly these remains were highly vulnerable. Unless the ground level were to be raised and the rubble/demolition debris largely covered over, excavations for foundations, service runs and other groundworks would inevitably have an impact on the underlying archaeological deposits. Even if the removal of the rubble/demolition debris and the breaking out of the concrete slabs were quite carefully controlled, as a prelude to infilling the site to raise the ground level, the archaeological remains would be so near the temporarily exposed surface that there would be a strong possibility that the movements of earth-moving machinery on the site would disturb the upper archaeological levels.

3.1.4 The excavation was preceded by the aforementioned archaeological Evaluation and Desk Top Assessment. In addition, an earlier archaeological excavation, of rather limited scope, was undertaken on the site in 1990.⁵

3.2 Archaeology In Tower Hamlets and the Unitary Development Plan

3.2.1 The site at 91-93 Parnell Road lies in an Archaeological Priority Area defined as 'A Roman settlement and road at Old Ford' in the UDP of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.⁶

³ Pitt, 1995

⁴ Maloney, 1995. p3

⁵ Pitt, 1990. Area V

⁶ London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 1992

3.2.2 Tower Hamlets has clearly made strong commitments to its archaeological heritage in its UDP. For example, Policy 5.59 states,

"Tower Hamlets has a long and rich history. Archaeological remains are an important source of evidence for this history from Roman times to the recent industrial past. One of the principal sources of archaeological evidence is the development of sites, but this evidence is easily destroyed in the development process".

In addition, Policy 5.60 states,

"The Neighbourhoods are concerned to see that sites which are of interest are properly investigated and records made of any finds before development takes place".

3.2.3 It is clear that the Tower Hamlets UDP mirrors advice outlined by the Department of the Environment.⁷ Their guidelines identify the need for early consultation in the planning process in order to mitigate the impact of proposed development schemes upon the archaeological resource. Once the results of a Desk Top Assessment and, where necessary, a follow-up Evaluation are known, an informed decision may be taken on the necessity, or otherwise, for further archaeological strategies. These strategies may include preservation *in situ*, a Watching Brief during groundworks in the initial stages of redevelopment or, in this case, full open area excavation of the site prior to redevelopment.

3.3 Contamination

3.3.1 Prior to the excavation, in May 1995, contamination tests were carried out upon soil samples obtained from three mechanically excavated trial pits and a fourth shallow trial pit on the site at 91-93 Parnell Road. This work was undertaken by the civil and geotechnical engineers Murray Rix Geotechnical.⁸ Data on the results of the tests indicated levels of toxicity below the recommended trigger values, with the exception of slightly elevated levels of Mercury in the sample from one trial pit and Toluene Extractable Matter from another. Further testing indicated that the latter substances were in the form of non-hazardous mineral oils.

3.4 Archive

3.4.1 The complete archive comprising written, drawn and photographic records and artefacts will be deposited at the Museum of London, London Wall, London, EC2Y 5HN. The 91-93 Parnell

⁷ DoE, 1990

⁸ Murray Rix Geotechnical, 1995

Road archive is registered under the site code PRB 95.

4. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Geology

4.1.1 The *British Geological Survey of England and Wales - Sheet 256: North London* (at 1:50,000) indicates that the solid geology of the area in which the site at 91-93 Parnell Road is located is London Clay and strata of the Lambeth Group (formerly known as the Woolwich and Reading Beds). The upper part of the sequence is composed of drift deposits of Kempton Park and Taplow gravels, both part of the River Thames Terrace Gravel sequence.

4.1.2 The geotechnical survey described above (see 3.3.1) indicated that brickearth capped the River Terrace gravels although OD correlations were not provided. During the most recent archaeological Evaluation to be undertaken at the site natural brickearth was recorded capping the gravels at a maximum height of c. +11.47m OD - this deposit being at least 0.50m thick.⁹

4.1.3 During the excavation described in this report natural brickearth was encountered across the entire area of investigation. The top of the brickearth was recorded at a maximum height of 11.45m OD. The thickness of the brickearth was not determined precisely but was observed to be at least c. 0.50m thick.

4.2 Topography

4.2.1 The ground surface in the immediate vicinity of the site is basically level, with the street surface on Parnell Road at c. 12.6m OD.

4.2.2 To the east of the site flows, historically at least, the principal water course in the proximity of Old Ford, the River Lea (or Lee). The Lea rises in Bedfordshire, flows through Hertfordshire and meets the Thames approximately three miles south of Old Ford. In an area south of Clapton the river opens into a wide flood plain known in the north as Hackney Marsh and towards the south as Stratford Marsh. The river in this area contained a number of braided channels rather than a single course. Such braiding may be seen on historical maps.¹⁰ In more recent times a number of man-made watercourses have been cut and other control mechanisms have been instituted. One example of such canalisation is the Hackney Cut which lies c. 0.6km to the east of the site.

⁹ Pitt, 1995, p.7

¹⁰ For example, those reproduced in Brown, 1994. Figures 4 & 10

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The previously mentioned Desk Top Assessment (see 2.1.5) contains the results of an examination of all reported finds, within the proposed Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust areas of redevelopment, entered upon the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). In addition this information was supplemented by evidence from historical and documentary sources and also from archaeological investigations undertaken in the Old Ford area of Bow. A summary of these findings, highlighting evidence recovered in the immediate vicinity of the site at 91-93 Parnell Road is included here.

5.2 Pre-Roman Activity

5.2.1 Little evidence of pre-Roman land-use has been recovered in the vicinity of Bow despite the fact that extensive archaeological fieldwork has taken place in the area. This is in marked contrast to the area to the north, especially Hackney/Stoke Newington where a large Palaeolithic landscape has been recognised. This could be partly due to the level of destruction that has occurred in the Bow area, partly due to lack of recognition of prehistoric features (it is fair to say that the majority of previous investigations were aimed at interpreting Roman land-use) and partly due to the relatively low level of utilisation of this part of the landscape throughout the prehistoric eras.

5.2.2 Nevertheless, a handful of pre-Roman artefacts have been recovered in the area around 91-93 Parnell Road. A Paleolithic axe and unretouched flint flake was discovered in Victoria Park c. 750m to the north-west.¹¹ A Mesolithic tranchet axe was recovered c. 925m to the north.¹² A fragment of a Bronze Age Barrel beaker was found c. 1.15km to the north-west.¹³ Two Iron Age coins were reputedly recovered, c. 125m to the east, in the vicinity of the Lefevre Walk Estate¹⁴ and a gold coin inscribed '*Tascio*', from the same period, was found in Victoria Park c. 800m to the north-west.¹⁵ A ceramic vessel of late Iron Age or early Romano-British date was also found in Victoria Park, in the same area as the Palaeolithic tools.¹⁶

5.2.3 Two recent archaeological Evaluations undertaken in the vicinity of 91-93 Parnell Road have recovered struck flint artefacts, both *ex situ*. At Empire Wharf, c. 550m to the west, the artefact was found within a post-Medieval plough soil¹⁷ while at Armagh Road (Ranwell East Estate), c. 250m to the south-west, the artefact was recovered from the back-fill of a Roman grave.¹⁸

¹¹ SMR 080060

¹² SMR 080080

¹³ SMR 080015

¹⁴ SMR 080825

¹⁵ SMR 080723

¹⁶ SMR 080162

¹⁷ Sankey, 1993. p.11 & p.13

¹⁸ Pitt, 1991. p.13

5.3 Introduction to Roman Evidence

5.3.1 More evidence exists for Roman occupation in the vicinity of Old Ford than for any other period before the post-Medieval. Initially these were chance finds, mainly burials associated with 19th century building developments, but also, since 1969, the result of planned archaeological investigation.

5.3.2 In a basic form the nature of the evidence may be broken into five main categories:

- the London to Colchester (Londinium to Camulodunum) road.
- Settlement and other occupation evidence.
- Agriculture/horticulture.
- Burials.
- Other artefactual evidence of occupation.

5.4 Roman Activity

5.4.1 *Londinium to Camulodunum Road*

5.4.1.1 As the first decade of the 20th century closed antiquarians voiced their concern over the threat posed by urban growth in Bow to the suspected Roman road which linked *Londinium* and *Camulodunum*.¹⁹ Almost sixty years later, in 1969, the road was first positively identified during archaeological excavations at Lefevre Road.²⁰ The road was also located during subsequent archaeological excavations, in 1970-71, at Parnell Road and Appian Road²¹ and again at Roman Road/Parnell Road in 1980.²² All of these sites were located to the east/south-east of 91-93 Parnell Road and within a radius of c. 200m. The postulated line of the *Londinium* to *Camulodunum* road lies less than 25m to the south of the site.

5.4.1.2 It is likely that the raw material for the road, *i.e.* gravels, was quarried from extensive pits located close to the line of the road. Quarry pits were investigated by Sheldon at Lefevre Road and were also noted, but not examined, during fieldwork undertaken by the Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology at 72a Armagh Road²³ and Armagh Road (Ranwell East Estate).²⁴ The latter two excavations were located to the south-west of 91-93 Parnell Road and within a radius of c. 200m.

¹⁹ Smith, 1910

²⁰ Sheldon, 1971

²¹ Sheldon 1972

²² Mills, 1984

²³ Pitt, 1990. p.5

²⁴ Pitt, 1991. p.8

5.4.1.3 Ceramic evidence indicates that the road was founded in the early years of the Roman occupation, *i.e.* c. 50 AD., which is what one might expect for a road which connected the early capital, *Camulodunum*, with the principal port, *Londinium*.

5.4.1.4 Evidence from excavations suggests that the form of the road was substantially modified throughout the Roman period. Coin and ceramic evidence indicates that the road remained in use until at least the end of the 4th century, albeit in an unmaintained state.

5.4.2 Settlement and Occupation Evidence

5.4.2.1 Despite the intensity of fieldwork in the Bow area there has been very little evidence recovered for structural remains dated to the Roman period. The reasons for this may be numerous, for example, an actual lack of substantial Roman settlement in the area, the robbing of masonry walls in the post-Roman eras, destruction by post-Medieval ploughing or other widespread activity, *e.g.* gravel extraction, or the inability of 19th century observers to recognise and/or record ephemeral building remains.

5.4.2.2 In 1910 the antiquarian Reginald Smith reported an earlier discovery, in the vicinity of Iceland Wharf, c. 550m to the east of 91-93 Parnell Road, fragments of a herring bone pavement (*opus spicatum*) which were recovered during dredging operations.²⁵ The assumption that this pavement formed part of a durable surface for the ford across the Lea, or one of its channels, remained unchallenged until a recent re-appraisal suggested that the surface could represent the site of a building, possibly a farm dwelling.²⁶

5.4.2.3 Numerous pits, containing domestic refuse, excavated at Lefevre Road in 1969 testify to habitation in the area. The pottery obtained from the pits suggests a 4th century date for the occupation of this part of the settlement.²⁷ Also recorded during the 1969 excavations were loosely compacted gravel surfaces, ditches of undetermined function (both parallel to and tangential with the road), and two industrial structures which may have been related.²⁸ In addition, an isolated curvi-linear ditch which contained 2nd century material was located some distance to the south of the road on this site.

5.4.2.4 At Appian Road, general domestic refuse, waste ceramic building materials and coins dated to the late 3rd to late 4th centuries indicate as yet undefined Roman occupation. Rather ephemeral structural evidence, in the form of a possible beam slot and a post pit, were also

²⁵ Smith, 1910. p.236

²⁶ Brown, 1994. p.21

²⁷ Sheldon, 1971. p.42

²⁸ Sheldon & Schaaf, 1978. p.69

found in close proximity to the southern edge of the road.²⁹

5.4.2.5 Excavations in 1974-75 at Usher Road, only c. 50m to the north-west of 91-93 Parnell Road, located evidence of Roman field systems and, towards the south of the excavation area, a concentration of pits which were apparently back-filled with occupation debris after the mid-3rd century.³⁰

5.4.2.6 In 1990 five areas (I-V) were investigated during excavations at 72a Armagh Road/91-93 Parnell Road.³¹ At least two phases of probable structural activity were identified. In the westernmost area (Area I), close to Armagh Road, a number of stake and post-holes were recorded, either cutting into natural brickearth or the back-fills of earlier pits, possibly small quarries (the purpose of the quarrying may have been gravel extraction associated with road construction). No structural arrangement was discernible but may have been present.

5.4.2.7 The latter phase of activity was sealed by a slab of re-deposited brickearth through which (in the east of Area I) a ditch was cut, oriented roughly north-south. To the west of, and probably contemporary with this feature, were further post-holes and stakeholes, a patch of floor and roof tiles and ragstone fragments possibly representing a pathway or post-pad. Further to the north-east (Area III) and contemporary with the latter activity were the remains of a post-secured structure. All associated features such as floors and walls had been destroyed or removed. Further north-east still (Area IV) a number of small pits were observed to be the only features cutting through the re-deposited brickearth - suggesting that the structure recorded in Area III did not extend into this area. Area IV was located immediately to the west of the western limit of the excavation described in this report.

5.4.2.8 In the succeeding phase of activity an extensive layer of homogeneous soil, possibly plough-soil, was recorded. Following this deposition, a further structural phase was represented (in Area III) by a roughly north-south construction trench, set approximately at right angles to the road. This feature contained burnt wattle and daub which may have been the debris of a wall originally set in the trench. This could represent the remains of a large structure, possibly an open-ended strip building or barn, fronting onto the road (again no associated floor surfaces survived). Recorded to the south-west of the trench, and back-filled with similar material, was a large group of intercutting pits. A clay and tile hearth, apparently rebuilt on three occasions, was also recorded cutting into the 'plough-soil' (in Area I). Coin evidence from the site generally suggests activity from the 3rd century.³²

²⁹ Sheldon, 1972. p.127

³⁰ McIsaac & Schwab, 1979. pp.53-55

³¹ Pitt, 1990

³² Hammerson in Pitt, 1990. pp. 26-27

5.4.2.9 An archaeological Watching Brief in 1992 at 566 Roman Road located various pits and a probable ditch, but no structural remains were identified.³³

5.4.2.10 The two previous archaeological investigations to have been carried out at 91-93 Parnell Road (*i.e.* actually within the limits of the site described in this report) revealed rather ephemeral evidence of settlement. In 1990, towards the western end of Area V, a pit and a stakehole were both cut by a shallow, north-south oriented, linear feature whose original function is uncertain. Another cut feature, probably a ditch oriented east-west, was recorded in the north-west corner of Area V.³⁴ Deposits revealed in 1995, during the Evaluation³⁵ undertaken in advance of the excavation described in this report, were interpreted as a ditch or gully, which may have defined a property boundary. This feature was sealed by a surface and a later phase of building which had been destroyed and subsequently levelled. Outside this 'building' there may have been another surface.

5.4.3 Evidence for Agriculture/Horticulture

5.4.3.1 A number of excavations in the vicinity of 91-93 Parnell Road have revealed ditches laid out at right angles to one another, often re-cut on more than occasion. These ditches have often been interpreted as representing field/property boundaries, although it is likely that they also performed a drainage function by carrying excess water away from the field which they delineated. The evidence for farm dwellings, such as it exists, has been described above (see 5.4.2.1 and 5.4.2.7).

5.4.3.2 Excavations at Usher Road in 1974-75, where approximately 900 square metres were available for investigation, revealed many ditches which all appeared to have belonged to the same field system. The ditches were set on two main alignments (east-west and north-south), and appear to have formed rectilinear fields or paddocks which probably decreased in size towards the road.³⁶

5.4.3.3 Two large ditches, oriented roughly north-south, recorded during excavations in 1990 at 72a Armagh Road/91-93 Parnell Road³⁷ were almost certainly part of the same system recorded at Usher Road, as probably were three ditches recorded three years later during an archaeological Watching Brief at Parnell Road/Usher Road.³⁸ One of the ditches located in 1990 was equated by the excavator with a ditch found c. 30m to the north at Usher Road.³⁹

³³ Pitt, 1995. pp. 93-94

³⁴ Pitt, 1990, p.19

³⁵ Pitt, 1995. pp. 7-8

³⁶ McIsaac & Schwab, 1979. pp. 93-94

³⁷ Pitt, 1990. Areas I & V, pp.5-9 and pp.16-18

³⁸ Richardson, 1977. p.39

³⁹ Pitt, 1990. Area IV, p.16

5.4.3.4 During the Lefevre Road excavations of 1969-70 short lengths of ditches were investigated, to the south of the Roman road, which contained 4th century material. Ceramic evidence recovered from the ditch fills suggests that the features were established by the mid 3rd century and continued in use to at least the end of the 4th century.⁴⁰

5.4.3.5 Parts of a rather earlier field system were recorded, c. 400m to the south of 91-93 Parnell Road, during archaeological excavations undertaken at Morville Street in 1972 and 1973. Here, the ditches again probably delineated rectilinear fields or paddocks located at some distance south of the known road and these appear to have been established by the mid 1st century and to have continued in use throughout the 2nd century.⁴¹

5.4.3.6 The function of the field systems described in the previous paragraphs has not been established, but at 72a Armagh Road narrow vertical columns within the soil profile were interpreted as being formed by rookworms, the larvae, which feed on grass and cereal roots, of the Cockchafer beetle (*Melolontha melolontha*), an insect which typically inhabits pasture land.⁴²

5.4.3.7 Analysis of animal bones from the Lefevre Road excavations revealed that pig, caprovid and cattle were represented in the local diet, with the latter being predominant. The analysis also indicated that the animals were slaughtered, butchered and probably consumed on or near the site (i.e. in the vicinity of Old Ford).⁴³

5.4.4 Burials

5.4.4.1 Roman burials, many of which had stone or lead 'caskets' have been recorded since the early 19th century in the vicinity of Old Ford. These types of burial appear to be a tradition of the 3rd and 4th centuries and were preceded by the practice of cremating the bodies and placing the remains in a ceramic vessel.

5.4.4.2 An antiquarian account records the apparent discovery of a cremation cemetery in the centre of Old Ford Road, c. 400m to the north-east of 91-93 Parnell Road.⁴⁴ In addition, two cremation burials were discovered in the vicinity of Saxon Road, c. 500m to the south-west of 91-93 Parnell Road.⁴⁵ During the construction of the Lefevre Walk Estate, c. 150m to the north-east of 91-93 Parnell Road, what was probably an extensive cremation cemetery was disturbed by contractors and one urn containing cremated remains, along with a flagon, was recovered.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Sheldon, 1971. p.64

⁴¹ Schwab, 1979

⁴² Pitt, 1990. p.5

⁴³ Rixon in Sheldon, 1971. p.72

⁴⁴ Roach-Smith, 1846. p.310

⁴⁵ RCHM, 1923. p.164

⁴⁶ Cresswell & Sheldon, 1979

5.4.4.3 Although a number of stone or lead coffins has been found in the vicinity of 91-93 Parnell Road there is no evidence as to the limit of any individual cemetery or indeed if they were contained within a cemetery rather than, for instance, a family plot.

5.4.4.4 A stone sarcophagus containing a single skeleton was found in 1870, c. 200m to the north-east of 91-93 Parnell Road, close to the former Old Ford Station.⁴⁷

5.4.4.5 Three lead coffins and a single stone coffin, all oriented north-south, were found in 1844 in Much Lane, c. 400m to the east of 91-93 Parnell Road. Two wooden coffins were found close by and it appears that a small cemetery group existed here.⁴⁸

5.4.4.6 During the late 19th century stone coffins were discovered on more than one occasion in the vicinity of Saxon Road, c. 500m to the south-west of 91-93 Parnell Road.⁴⁹

5.4.4.7 At Morville Street, c.400m to the south of 91-93 Parnell Road, two stone coffins were discovered in 1868. One contained three skeletons (a male and two females) and the other a single female skeleton. Two skeletons were also found, close to the coffins, within an amphora which apparently served as a coffin. Two coins of Probus (A.D. 276-282) were found nearby and these may be indicative of the date of the internments.⁵⁰

5.4.4.8 More recently, in 1969, a single stone coffin, oriented east-west, was located opposite 85 Parnell Road.⁵¹

5.4.4.9 Groundworks conducted in 1972 outside 114 Armagh Road, c. 100m to the north-west of 91-93 Parnell Road, revealed a stone sarcophagus containing the remains of a female skeleton. Later that year a second stone coffin was discovered c. 25m to the south-west. This, in contrast to the first, was oriented north-south and contained two skeletons. Adjacent to the stone coffin was a second burial, which had probably been in a wooden coffin, as indicated by iron nails.⁵²

5.4.4.10 Perhaps the most conclusive evidence recovered so far for an actual cemetery, as opposed to isolated groups of burials possibly indicating family plots, was recovered during excavations in 1991 to the west of Armagh Road and north of Centurion Lane, c.200m to the west of 91-93 Parnell Road. Here 78 grave cuts were recorded, the majority oriented east-west, all of

⁴⁷ Smith, 1910. p.235

⁴⁸ RCHM, 1923. p.164

⁴⁹ SMR 080793, 080794, & 080798

⁵⁰ PRICE, 1868.

⁵¹ SMR 080796

⁵² Owen *et al.*, 1973

which were apparently in wooden coffins. Local soil conditions at the site were so acidic as to remove all traces of the skeletal material, or to leave only skull and teeth enamel *in situ* in places. There was no definite evidence for the limits of the cemetery, although to the south it must have been bounded by the road, or roadside ditch.⁵³

5.4.4.11 A similar cemetery may have existed in the vicinity of the Lefevre Road excavations, where up to 6 inhumation burials were recorded, some of which were accompanied by ceramic vessels. A north-south oriented ditch may have formed a boundary to the cemetery. Both the vessels accompanying the burials and waste from the ditch indicate use in the 3rd and 4th centuries.⁵⁴

5.4.4.12 A grave shaped feature was also revealed during excavations in 1972-73 at 12-14 Morville Street, c. 400m to the south of 91-93 Parnell Road. Although no skeletal remains were found, iron nails, possibly from a wooden coffin, were found. Again highly acidic soil conditions may have been responsible for the complete decay of skeletal remains.⁵⁵

5.4.5 Other Artefactual Evidence of Roman Occupation

5.4.5.1 A number of casual finds, many of them prior to organised archaeological fieldwork, has been entered onto the SMR and this further reinforce the evidence of Roman occupation in the Old Ford area. This evidence is summarised elsewhere.⁵⁶

5.4.6 Summary of Evidence for Roman Activity

5.4.6.1 A road connecting the principal port at *Londinium* with the early provincial capital in *Camulodunum* was established in the early years of the Roman occupation (by A.D. 50) and continued in use to at least the end of the 4th century. Evidence of settlement is scant, though some structural remains were found at 72a Armagh Road, to the west of 91-93 Parnell Road. It is possible that a nucleated settlement area did not exist in the vicinity of Old Ford, but rather there was a number of small farmsteads. These may be indicated by the discrete groups of burials in the area. However, the large cemetery group found near Armagh Road (Ranwell East Estate) and possibly also at Lefevre Road does suggest a moderately populated settlement. Analysis of food waste, in particular bones, indicate locally butchered and consumed foods. This also is indicative that a static population was established in the vicinity.

5.4.6.2 Field systems have been recognised over a wide area. These may have been used as pasture land but the well drained soils would also have been appropriate for cereal

⁵³ Pitt, 1991

⁵⁴ Sheldon, 1972. pp.127-129

⁵⁵ Schwab, 1979. p.43

⁵⁶ Brown, 1994. pp.22-23

production.

5.4.6.3 Small fields or land divisions were apparent adjacent to the road. Contemporaneous use of these areas may have included horticulture, buildings or cemeteries. This type of land division has been noted elsewhere, for example, Bishopsgate, City of London and Bridport Road, Dorset.⁵⁷

5.5 Saxon and Medieval Activity

5.5.1 There is very little evidence for sub-Roman occupation (5th century) in the vicinity of 91-93 Parnell Road, with the possible exception of a fragment of a glass jar found at Lefevre Road in 1969.⁵⁸

5.5.2 Much of the land around Old Ford was probably heavily wooded, forming part of an extensive forest extending from Hertfordshire towards the River Thames. There would have been extensive areas of marshland associated with the Lea Valley.

5.5.3 There is no separate entry for Old Ford in the Domesday Book but it appears to have been part of the Manor of Stepney. The Manor consisted of nearly all of present day Tower Hamlets and Hackney and was held by the Bishop of London until the 16th century.

5.5.4 While the main London to Colchester road may have remained in use throughout the early Medieval period it was certainly supplemented by several other highways.⁵⁹

5.5.5 On current evidence it seems that Old Ford was re-established by the late 11th century. The earliest known reference to Old Ford (1293) is in relationship to a fulling mill owned by St Helen's Priory in the City of London.⁶⁰ This mill was located on the River Lea, c. 650m to the east of 91-93 Parnell Road, and was probably referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086 as the mill of Algot. It was again noted in deeds dated to 1355 when it was known as *Algoldesmille*.⁶¹

5.5.6 Little is known of the size and shape of the Medieval settlement at Old Ford. It is probable that the land surrounding the settlement was agriculturally worked. Certainly two of the excavations mentioned above, at Morville Street⁶² and Armagh Road (Ranwell East Estate)⁶³ revealed field boundary ditches containing Medieval material culture. These excavations were located c. 400m to the south and c. 200m to the south-west of 91-93 Parnell Road respectively.

⁵⁷ Brown, 1993. p.11

⁵⁸ Sheldon, 1971. p.74; Sheldon & Schaaf, 1978. p.73

⁵⁹ Brown, 1994. Map 4.

⁶⁰ SMR 080971

⁶¹ SMR 080969

⁶² Schwab, 1979

⁶³ Pitt, 1991

5.6 Post-Medieval Activity

5.6.1 It can be assumed that the Old Ford area remained partly heavily wooded and partly under cultivation during the 17th and 18th centuries. In a letter from Henry Heynes to Viscount Cranbourne, dated 30th October 1604, the former recounts how through his own hard work he has overseen the King's game,

"within Walthamstow, Hackney, Old Ford and Stratford Langton marshes, near London"
and in those places had *"made the game there very plentiful, for his Highness's better sport"*.⁶⁴

5.6.2 John Jennings' map of 1655⁶⁵ confirms the rural nature of the landscape. It shows cattle grazing on pasture land to the east of Old Ford, with the braided, meandering nature of the Lea (then called the River Bow) clearly evident. Joel Gascoigne's map of 1703⁶⁶ and John Rocque's map of 1746 underline the undeveloped nature of the landscape in the first half of the 18th century. Cardwell's plan, drawn in 1768, and showing the parish of St. Mary, Bow, indicates that rather than being solely agricultural land, some to the north of Old Ford Lane (Road) was being utilised for market gardening.

5.6.3 Archaeological excavations during 1971-72 at 16-20 Autumn Street and Maverton Road, c. 400 and c. 250m to the west of 91-93 Parnell Road respectively, indicated that gravel extraction was occurring, probably associated with the expansion of housing in the East End of London, but not, at this date, actually in the Old Ford area.⁶⁷

5.6.4 Maps by Laurie and Whittle (1809 and 1819) and Greenwood's map of 1824 show what is still an essentially rural landscape. A slight increase in north-south field divisions evident on these maps was reflected in many cases by the street pattern which emerged later that century.

5.6.5 The Hertford Union Canal, linking the River Lea to the Regent's Canal, was opened in 1830 and is represented on Cruchley's 1839 'New Plan of London', along with the earliest planned streets in the Old Ford area associated with the expanding Victorian city.

5.6.6 From the middle of the 19th century Old Ford changed rapidly. By 1847 railways were constructed, both north-south and east-west across the area. By 1868 the grid road system, effectively that which existed up to the post Second World War developments, was in place but properties were not necessarily built along all of them. Between Usher Road and the north-south

⁶⁴ Historical Manuscripts Commission

⁶⁵ Reproduced in Brown, 1994. Fig. 10

⁶⁶ Reproduced in Brown, 1994. Fig. 4

⁶⁷ Hammerson & Sheldon, 1979

railway line, c. 200m to the east, many of the plots appear to have been utilised for market gardening. Industrial premises were established, particularly in the immediate vicinity of the canal.

5.6.7 The 1894 Ordnance Survey map (Godfrey edition) shows that the residential pattern was fully established in the Old Ford area. Rows of terraced houses fronted onto a grid-like network of streets. Industry was concentrated to the north, along the canal, and in the south close to the east-west railway line. The properties which stood at 91-93 Parnell Road can be clearly determined on this map.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Reproduced in Brown, 1994. Fig.11

6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

6.1 General

6.1.1 Prior to the archaeological excavation described in this report an archaeological Desk Top Assessment was undertaken, in 1994, by Pre-Construct Archaeology.⁶⁹ The DTA was commissioned by Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust in advance of an application for outline planning permission to redevelop three existing housing estates and adjacent sites (including 91-93 Parnell Road) in the Bow Neighbourhood, London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

6.1.2 The broad conclusion of the DTA was that the area proposed for redevelopment is one of high archaeological potential with artefactual evidence dating from the Palaeolithic to the post-Medieval periods. More specifically, the greatest potential exists for landscape, infrastructure and structural remains belonging to the Roman period.⁷⁰

6.1.3 In May 1995 Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust entered into a Consultancy Agreement with Archaeological Aspects for the provision of specifications for archaeological investigations on the sites which they proposed for redevelopment, including 91-93 Parnell Road.

6.1.4 Following the recommendations of the DTA an archaeological Evaluation was commissioned by Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust. This work was undertaken by the Museum of London Archaeological Service, in June 1995, at the eastern end of the site at 91-93 Parnell Road. In the report which described the results of the Evaluation it was recommended that,

*"...an archaeological excavation is carried out in the areas of greatest potential disturbance to archaeological deposits, particularly in the vicinity of the proposed building".*⁷¹

6.1.5 Following the recommendations of the archaeological Evaluation discussions between the Archaeological Curator (Sue Cole of English Heritage - London Region), and John Maloney, of Archaeological Aspects, confirmed that the site at 91-93 Parnell Road would need to be excavated wherever archaeological deposits existed.⁷² In the evaluation trench relatively shallow archaeological deposits were encountered immediately beneath the concrete slab of a previous building. These remains, which appeared to relate to settlement activity during the Roman period, were clearly liable to disturbance/destruction by heavy plant during the proposed redevelopment. As there were no specific proposals or guarantees that any area of the site would be retained undisturbed, preservation of the remains *in situ* was not at issue in this instance.

⁶⁹ Brown, 1994

⁷⁰ Brown, 1994. p.39

⁷¹ Pitt, 1995. p.13

⁷² Maloney, 1995. p.1

6.1.6 Broadly, the research agenda for the site can be summarised thus:

- * to determine the date and nature of any utilisation of the site which may have occurred during the prehistoric eras.
- * to gain an understanding of how the site developed throughout the Roman period by unravelling the stratigraphic sequence suggested by the results of the archaeological Evaluation.
- * to identify and investigate any features, deposits or structures derived from phases of the site's utilisation since the Roman period.
- * to recover material culture in order to gain information about a variety of agricultural, commercial, industrial or domestic activities which may have been undertaken on or around the site.
- * to undertake detailed analysis of the relative quantities and characteristics of ceramics retrieved in order to establish date ranges for distinct phases of the site's occupation.
- * to analyse sediment samples collected from well-dated deposits to provide detailed information on a variety of social, economic and environmental factors.

6.2 Methodology

6.2.1 The excavation was undertaken following the recommendations of an earlier archaeological Evaluation. The work was commissioned by Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust who have submitted a planning application seeking permission to redevelop the site. A representative of English Heritage (London Region) required that one of the conditions for planning permission should be a full consideration of the archaeological potential. This is in accordance with the Tower Hamlets UDP and D.o.E. guidelines.

6.2.2 In a document which outlined their specifications for tenders in respect of the project, Archaeological Aspects, the archaeological consultancy acting for Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust, stated that excavation and recording should be undertaken, by an approved professional archaeological organisation, in all areas of the site where archaeological deposits survive.⁷³

6.2.3 The site was investigated in two overlapping parts - a schedule necessitated by the general nature and sheer volume of overburden which had to be removed by earth-moving machinery in order to reveal the underlying archaeological deposits. Initially, an area measuring 14.4m (north-

⁷³ Maloney, 1995. p.5

south) by 12.2m (east-west) at the western end of the site was investigated. During this period the eastern part of the site was utilised for the mounding of spoil. The western area was then back-filled and an area measuring 16.2m (east-west) by 10.3m (north-south) at the eastern end of the site was investigated until the conclusion of the fieldwork.

6.2.4 Ground reduction in the western part of the site was undertaken by a JCB mechanical excavator. In the eastern part of the site ground reduction was undertaken by a Daewoo 360 degree mechanical excavator. In both cases a wide, non-toothed bucket was utilised and the work took place under the direct guidance of the supervising archaeologist. The ground surface was reduced up to a maximum of 1.20m across the site. Where possible concrete slabs from previous buildings were removed to reveal the underlying archaeological deposits. Demolition/rubble debris was removed by machine from several extensive, clearly recent, intrusive features on the site in order to remove the risk of contamination to surrounding archaeological strata.

6.2.5 Excavation and recording were undertaken in accordance with guidelines laid down by English Heritage.⁷⁴ On reaching the archaeological deposits all exposed surfaces were surveyed and scale plans were compiled (at 1:20) of all features. All features and deposits observed were recorded onto pro forma context record sheets. Photographic coverage employed black and white, colour print and colour transparency formats.

6.2.6 All levels relate to the Ordnance Datum level at Newlyn, Cornwall. Temporary Bench Marks were established on the site from a Bench Mark (+13.23m OD) located on a public house, The Ranelagh Arms, on the corner of Armagh Road and Roman Road.

⁷⁴ English Heritage, 1992

7. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

7.1 General

7.1.1 This report outlines the preliminary results of an archaeological excavation undertaken at 91-93 Parnell Road, Bow, London E3. During the field work, discrete stratigraphic entities (*e.g.* a cut, a fill) were assigned individual context numbers and these are indicated in the following text as [*]. Within this report archaeological features and deposits have been organised into broad stratigraphic groups and these and their sub-division into sub-groups/text-sections are indicated in the following way, *e.g.* 5.2.

7.1.2 This report has been compiled in advance of the main post-excavation analysis therefore, all interpretations suggested in the following text remain provisional.

7.2 Natural Deposits (Group 1)

7.2.1 Group 1.1

7.2.1.1 Natural brickearth [223] was recorded at a relatively even level across the entire area of excavation. In the south-eastern corner of the excavation the top of the brickearth was recorded at a maximum height of c. 11.45m OD, in the north-western corner at a maximum height of c. 11.33m OD and towards the eastern end of the excavation at a maximum height of c. 11.35m OD. The upper interface of the brickearth was generally not easily defined. Brickearth can be described as a firm yellowish brown and orange brown slightly silty, very sandy clay. The brickearth was pockmarked by frequent small circular patches of mid grey silty clay which represent the action of roots and insects within the subsoil over the centuries. Where deeply cut archaeological features were excavated through the brickearth it was observed to become increasingly sandy with depth. Data from geotechnical trial pits indicated that the brickearth was c. 1.5m thick.⁷⁵

7.2.2 Group 1.2

7.2.2.1 Two arbitrary spits [477] and [434] were excavated in one area of the site, towards the southern limit of excavation, at the upper surface of the brickearth in an attempt to determine the possible presence of cut features. Both spits were 50mm thick. In the event no such features were located by this action.

⁷⁵ Murray Rix Geotechnical, 1995

7.3 Prehistoric Activity (Group 2) - Figure 3

7.3.1 Group 2.1

7.3.1.1 A circular stakehole [208] was recorded cutting into natural brickearth, at c. 11.40m OD, in the south-west corner of the site. It was 0.16m in diameter and was 0.23m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a concave base gradually. It was filled by [209] a sticky dark greyish brown clayey silt which contained occasional small rounded pebbles.

7.3.1.2 [208] was revealed within the base of a sub-circular post-hole [206] which cut into [223] at a height of c. 11.44m OD. It measured 0.34m by 0.22m and was 0.22m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply on the south side, and more gradually on the north side, to fall with steep sides (steeper on the north side) to meet a concave base gradually. It was filled by [207] a friable dark reddish brown clayey sandy silt which contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles, occasional small and medium angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. It was truncated to the east by a later feature [62]. The function of [208] and [206] was clearly as a stake and post-hole and the features may well have been associated with post-pit [178] to the west (see Group 2.2).

7.3.2 Group 2.2

7.3.2.1 A sub-rectangular post-pit [178] cut into the natural brickearth, at c. 11.43m OD, c. 0.40m to the west of [206]. It measured 0.60m by 0.66m and was 0.39m deep. The feature was truncated to the west by a later feature [79]. At the top its edges broke sharply on the north side, and more gradually on the south and east sides, to fall with steep sides (steeper on the north side than on the east and south-east sides) to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [179] a friable dark reddish brown clayey sandy silt which contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles, occasional small and medium angular flints, occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Recovered from the deposit were two fragments of crude ceramic, several struck flints and several burnt flints. The pottery has been provisionally dated to the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200-700 BC.).

7.3.2.2 Cutting into the centre of the fill of [178], at a maximum height of 11.43m OD, was a circular post-pipe [85]. The diameter of the post-pipe was c. 0.22m and it was 0.35m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [86] a firm mid cream brown sandy silt which contained occasional small rounded pebbles. Recovered from the deposit were several burnt flints. [178] and [85] clearly represent the position of a post-pit and its associated post and could well have been associated, along with post-hole [206] (see Group 2.1) with the gully [144] to the south (see Group 2.3)

7.3.3 Group 2.3

7.3.3.1 A short length of a slightly curvilinear gully [144], cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.34m OD, was recorded c. 0.60m to the north of post features [178] and [206]. The feature, which was oriented NW-SE, was 1.22m long, 0.54m wide and 0.20m deep. It was truncated by later features at either end; by [119] to the north-west and by [81] to the south-east. The feature was filled by [145] a firm mid cream brown sandy silt which contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles, occasional patches of light greyish green clay, occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional small, medium and large sub-angular flints. Recovered from the deposit were several struck flints, burnt flints and a fragment of crude ceramic. From the limited extent observed it was not possible to determine the function of the feature. It could represent part of a drip-gully associated with a possible structure represented by the two post-holes [206] and [178] to the south (see Group 2.1 and 2.2). The pottery has been provisionally dated to the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200-700 BC.).

7.3.4 Group 2.4

7.3.4.1 A thin spread of firm dark cream brown sandy silt [135] was recorded, at a maximum height of 11.38m OD, in the south-west corner of the site. It measured c. 1.68m east-west by c. 1.40m north-south. Its thickness varied from 10 to 30mm. The deposit contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles, occasional small, medium and large flints and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Struck flints were recovered from the deposit. It is possible that this spread represents trampled brickearth deposited during the original cutting of the features now described.

7.3.4.2 Three features were recorded cutting into [135]. To the north-west, and meeting the limit of excavation, was a sub-circular post-pit [119]. It measured 0.58m east-west by 0.54m north-south and was 0.68m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep, slightly concave, sides to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. Cut into the base of the post-pit was a circular post-hole, c. 0.22m in diameter and 0.18m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell with vertical sides to meet a flat base, at 10.70m OD, with a sharp break of slope. The fill [120] of both the post-pit and post-hole was a firm mid greyish brown silty sand which contained occasional large sub-angular flints and frequent small and medium sub-angular flints, occasional small and medium rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt flint. Struck flints were recovered from the deposit.

7.3.4.3 Approximately 0.25m to the south of [119] was a sub-oval post-pit [102] cutting into [135]. It measured 0.64m by 0.48m and was 0.66m deep. Part of the upper edge of the feature had been truncated by a later feature [69] to the west. At the top its edges broke sharply to

fall with generally steep (although less steep on the south-west side) slightly stepped sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [103] a firm mid cream brown sandy silt which included occasional small and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles, and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Recovered from the deposit were several burnt flints and several struck flints. Cutting into the northern part of the fill of [102], at a maximum height of 11.39m OD, was a circular post-hole [60]. Its diameter was c. 0.22m and it was 0.10m deep. It was filled by [61] a firm dark orange brown sandy silt which contained occasional small sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub.

7.3.4.4 Less than 0.20m to the south of [102] was an irregularly shaped (almost sub-rectangular) pit [79]. The feature measured c. 1.06m east-west by c. 0.62m north-south and was 0.50m deep. To the south it met the limit of excavation in the south-west corner of the site. Part of the upper edge of the feature had been truncated by a later feature [69] to the west. At its top the northern edge broke gradually to fall with a stepped, rather concave, side to meet a sub-oval, concave base with an imperceptible break of slope. At its top the eastern edge broke sharply to fall with a vertical side to meet the base with a sharp break of slope. The pit was filled by [80] a firm mid cream brown sandy silt which contained occasional small rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Recovered from the deposit were several worked flints, burnt flints and several fragments of crude ceramic. The pottery has been provisionally dated to the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200-700 BC.). This feature could have been a post-pit and its rather irregular shape could represent the action of the removal of the original post. Clearly the post was not left to decay *in situ*. The feature could be associated with [102] and [119] to the north, and together they could represent part of a post built structure.

7.3.5 Group 2.5

7.3.5.1 Approximately 2.5m to the north east of the Group 2.4 features was a sub-oval post-pit [214] cutting into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.33m OD. The feature was sealed by [193] (see Group 2.6). It measured 0.40m east-west by 0.25m north-south and was 0.15m deep. At the top its edges broke generally sharply to fall, with the exception of the western end, with gently sloping sides which met a narrow flattish base with a gradual break of slope. At the western end of the feature the edge fell vertically into a small circular cut, c. 170mm in diameter and 70mm deep, within the base of the feature. The feature was filled by [215] a soft mid orange brown, with mid greyish brown mottling, slightly silty clayey sand which contained occasional small sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The function of [214] was clearly as a post-pit, with the circular cut in the western end representing the original position of the upright inserted into it. The feature may well have been associated with the postulated structure represented by the two post-holes [206] and [178] to the south (see Group 2.1 and 2.2).

7.3.6 Group 2.6

7.3.6.1 An arbitrary spit (at a maximum height of 11.42m OD) of firm mid brown, with mid yellowish brown mottling, clayey sandy silt [193] was excavated towards the south-west corner of the site in order to facilitate the location of cut features in the upper surface of the natural brickearth. The deposit contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The dimensions of the area covered by the spit were c. 1.90m east-west by c. 3.0m north-south. Its thickness was, on average, 30mm. To the north the spit was truncated by a modern intrusion, to the west it met the limit of excavation, to the east it was truncated by a later feature [81] and to the south it was defined arbitrarily.

7.3.6.2 Two features were recorded cutting into the north-eastern corner of [193]. The first [152] was an oval post-hole which measured 0.30m by 0.20m and was 0.14m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep, slightly concave, sides which tapered to a pointed base. The fill [151] was a soft mid orange brown silty clayey sand which contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The second [154], which was located less than 0.20m to the west of [152], was a narrow linear stakehole with rounded ends. Oriented north-south, it measured 0.41m by 0.10m and was 0.11m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with generally steep (although less steep at each end), slightly concave, sides to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. A small circular cut, 70mm in diameter and 90mm deep, in the middle of the base could represent the original position of the stake. The stakehole fill [153] was a friable mid orange brown, with brownish red mottling, clayey silty sand which contained occasional small and medium rounded pebbles and frequent flecks of charcoal. Features [152] and [154] may represent part of a post-built structure, and could be associated with those of Group 2.4.

7.3.7 Group 2.7

7.3.7.1 In the south-western part of the site and meeting the southern limit of excavation was a slightly curvilinear gully [123]. This feature, oriented SW-NE, was located c. 3-4m to the east of the elements of Group 2 which have been described above. The feature was excavated in sections, with separate context numbers being assigned to the cut and fill of each section. From the south these sections were (cut/fill): [125]/[124]; [213]/[212]; [111]/[110]; [183]/[182]. In total a length of c. 6.85m was revealed of the gully which was truncated to the north by a modern intrusion [71]. The width of the gully varied between 0.70m and 0.90m and its maximum depth was 0.40m. At the top its edges generally broke sharply to fall with generally steep straight sides to meet a narrow, slightly concave, base with a gradual break of slope.

7.3.7.2 Gully [123] cut into natural brickearth at a maximum height, recorded c. 4.20m from its southern extent, of 11.31m OD. At its northern extent, where later features had truncated the upper parts of the gully's edge, it was recorded cutting into natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.05m OD. Two of the excavated sections, [111] and [183], revealed that the

feature had been re-cut in the form of butt-ended terminals. It is unlikely that this re-cutting would have formed a terminally-defined entrance, perhaps to an enclosure delineated by the gully, since the butt-ends were only c. 0.25m apart. The base of the gully was relatively level, recorded at c. 10.85m OD at both the northern and southern extent, with a slight rise, at c. 11.03m OD, towards the middle of the excavated length (in the area of the re-cutting). The gully was filled by a firm light greyish brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and pea-grit. Several struck flints, burnt flints and several substantial sherds of crude ceramic were recovered from the fills of the gully. This pottery has been provisionally dated to the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200-700 BC.).

7.3.7.3 Two stakeholes [186] and [188] were recorded cutting into the eastern edge of [123], close to its northern extent. Both were oval in shape, measuring c.120mm by c. 60mm, and both were c.140mm deep. At the top their edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet slightly concave bases with a sharp break of slope. Both were filled, [185] and [187] respectively, by a loose mid grey silty clay which contained occasional pea-grit and flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. These stakeholes may represent uprights which formed part of a simple palisade erected along the side of gully [123].

7.3.7.4 The precise function of the gully [123] is difficult to interpret. However, the feature clearly indicates that a significant degree of land management was being undertaken on the site prior to the Roman era. It is more likely that the feature formed part of an extensive ditch/gully-defined enclosure or field which may have been part of a domestic or agricultural complex, possibly associated with a small farming hamlet. It may have also performed a drainage function, although this is likely to have been of secondary importance. The feature may have been associated with other Group 2 elements further to the west, in particular the various postulated post-built structures.

7.3.8 Group 2.8

7.3.8.1 Approximately 2.6m to the north-east of [123] a short length, c. 1.20m, of a linear gully [399] was revealed cutting into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.12m OD. It was truncated to the north-east by a later feature [392] and to the south by a modern intrusion. A length of approximately 0.40m of the feature was excavated. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell with steep, slightly concave, sides to meet an undulating base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [398] a soft mid yellowish brown sandy silty clay which contained occasional flecks of charcoal. Given its alignment and general form this feature can be interpreted as a continuation of [123] (see Group 2.7).

7.3.9 Group 2 Discussion

7.3.9.1 The activity represented by Group 2 is of regional if not national significance. The features assigned to Group 2 represent the first *in situ* prehistoric remains to be

encountered in the Bow area. They have been provisionally dated to the Late Bronze Age (c. 1200-700 BC.). Although some of the features did not contain material culture they were assigned to Group 2 (rather than the probable early Roman activity of Group 3) by association with features containing cultural remains. Such associations were formed by consideration of stratigraphic evidence, the similarity of fills or general form or by their proximity to other features.

7.3.9.2 In the London area the Late Bronze Age was noted for increasing numbers of people concentrating in fertile river valleys. Parallels exist at Heathrow, Beddington and Runnymede, where a waterside settlement developed on a small island at a point where a tributary met the Thames. The damper grasslands nearer the rivers were utilised for grazing cattle while fields of cereals were cultivated on drier ground associated with the slightly more elevated gravel terraces. Small farming hamlets developed and these usually consisted of a cluster of post-built houses, probably thatched with straw. It is likely that such a structure is represented by the Group 2 activity (Group 2.1-6). Field boundaries were dug to mark out territories held by particular groups and the substantial gully represented by Group 2.7 and 2.8 can be interpreted as such a land division, albeit in a truncated form.

7.4 The Earliest Roman Activity (Group 3) - Figure 4

7.4.1 Group 3.1

7.4.1.1 Towards the north-western corner of the site was a sub-circular post-pit [230] that cut into the natural brickearth at a height of 11.25m OD. The feature measured 0.57m by 0.50m and was c. 80mm deep. To the north it was truncated by a later feature [226]. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep, slightly concave, sides to meet a flattish base with an imperceptible break of slope. The feature was filled by [229] a soft mid brownish grey clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles, and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub.

7.4.1.2 Cutting into the fill of [230] was a square post-pipe [228] which was 0.12m wide and 0.21m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell with vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [227] a soft mid greyish brown clayey silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. This feature represents the position of an upright timber inserted into the post-pit [230]. Recorded in isolation (there were no similar, stratigraphically related, features in its immediate vicinity) it is rather difficult to suggest a wider interpretation for such a feature unless it was associated with the putative beam-slot [226] described below (see Group 3.2).

7.4.2 Group 3.2

7.4.2.1 A linear gully [226], oriented east-west, was recorded towards the north-western corner of the site sealed below a later deposit [107]. The feature cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.32m OD. It was c. 3.80m in length, having been truncated to the east by a later feature [147] and was defined by an arbitrary limit of excavation to the west. The feature was 0.45m wide and of maximum depth 0.17m. The base of the feature was relatively level at c. 11.14m OD. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell, in the east, with straight steep sides to meet a narrow concave base with a sharp break of slope and, in the west, with shallower concave sides to meet a wider concave base with a gradual break of slope.

7.4.2.2 The lower part of the feature was filled by [225] a firm mid yellowish brown sandy clay which contained occasional sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and flints. The upper part of the feature was filled by [224] a firm mid greyish brown silty sandy clay which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional to moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded flints and pebbles. Several burnt flints and sherds of Roman ceramic were recovered from the deposit.

7.4.2.3 This feature could represent the construction cut for a timber frame wall (a beam slot). The primary fill [225] may have been deliberately laid within the base of the slot in order

to provide a level bedding for a substantial timber beam into which upright elements would have been set. Despite the presence of some charcoal and burnt daub within the back-fill of the feature, indicating its abandonment, it is highly unlikely that the beam was burnt *in situ* as there was no evidence of scorching in the surrounding brickearth or indeed in the primary fill. Alternatively the feature may represent part of a field system defined by shallow gullies and ditches which may have served a secondary drainage function.

7.4.3 Group 3.3

7.4.3.1 Approximately 1.30m to the north of [226] (see Group 3.2) the remains of a sub-rectangular pit [222] were revealed beneath a later deposit [107]. Truncated to the north and west by later features [54] and [78] respectively, the feature measured c. 1.50m north-south by c. 0.60m east-west and its maximum depth was 0.21m. The feature cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of c. 11.28m OD. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell, in the south, with shallow concave sides to meet a sloping (to the north) base with an imperceptible break of slope. Along the eastern edge the sides were straight and steep and met the base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [221] a firm mid greyish brown silty sandy clay which contained occasional fine and medium rounded and sub-angular pebbles and flints. Several burnt flints and sherds of Roman ceramic were recovered from the deposit. The function of this pit is difficult to establish given the extent of its truncation. It may have been a post-pit associated with [230] to the south.

7.4.4 Group 3.4

7.4.4.1 Towards the north-eastern corner of the site a group of twelve stakeholes [328], [330], [332], [334], [336], [338], [340], [342], [344], [346], [348], [350] were revealed, beneath a later deposit [107], and cut into the underlying natural brickearth at c. 11.30m OD. The stakeholes were generally oval or sub-circular in shape and they were typically 50-80mm wide and 100mm deep. They were filled with a soft mid greyish brown clayey silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and fine sub-rounded pebbles. Interpretation of what appears to be a rather irregular group of stakeholes is difficult. However, five of the stakeholes appeared to form a semi-circle, c. 1.90m wide, and they may represent the position of a simple pen (*e.g.* for holding fowl) or frame (*e.g.* for hanging hides) constructed from sharpened branches.

7.4.5 Group 3.5

7.4.5.1 Towards the centre of the site an irregular shallow pit [156] was revealed beneath the later deposit [95] cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.24m OD. To the north the feature rather petered out apparently as a result of horizontal truncation. It measured c. 1.55m east-west by c. 1.20m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.20m. Along the feature's southern side its edge broke imperceptibly and fell with a gently sloping rather concave side to meet the flat base with a gradual break of slope. To the east and north-east a curving edge fell with a steep but

very shallow side to meet the base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [155] a loose mid to dark grey silty clay which contained occasional pea-grit. Sherds of Roman ceramic, and an iron object were recovered from the deposit. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret although it could represent a post-pit and may have been associated with [139] slightly to the west (see Group 3.6).

7.4.6 Group 3.6

7.4.6.1 Towards the centre of the site an irregular shallow pit [139] was revealed, probably beneath the later deposit [95] cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.26m OD. It measured c. 1.05m east-west by c. 1.20m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.15m. At the top the edges broke gradually and fell with a gently sloping, rather concave, sides to meet an undulating base, to the north and south with a gradual break of slope, and to the west with an imperceptible break of slope. In the northern and eastern parts of the feature sub-circular depressions, c. 0.30m in diameter, had been cut into the base. The eastern end of the feature was excavated out of sequence. The feature was filled by a firm light grey, with reddish mottling, sandy silt [138] which contained occasional pea-grit and fine and medium sub-angular pebbles. Sherds of ceramic were recovered from the deposit. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret although the depressions within the base could represent the positions of upright posts inserted into the pit. It may have been associated with [156] slightly to the east (see Group 3.5).

7.4.7 Group 3.7

7.4.7.1 Towards the centre of the site a linear, north-south oriented, gully [98] was revealed beneath the later deposit [95] cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.19m OD. It had been truncated by modern intrusions to both the north [71] and south. The feature was c.1.60m in length, c. 0.60m wide and had a maximum depth of c. 0.20m. At the top its edges broke gradually and fell with gently sloping, slightly concave, sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [99] a firm light grey sandy silt which contained occasional pea-grit and fine sub-angular pebbles. Sherds of ceramic were recovered from the deposit. Given the limited extent to which this feature was revealed a convincing interpretation remains problematic. It appears rather wide to have served as a beam slot for a timber framed building, as suggested for a similar gully [226] (see Group 3.2). Equally it could have served a drainage function although the presence of the post-pit [100] (see 7.4.7.2) within its base suggests that it may have been a shallow palisade trench, perhaps delineating fields or paddocks in an essentially rural landscape.

7.4.7.2 Revealed within the base of [98] was a sub-square post-pit [100]. It measured 0.48m north-south by 0.56m east-west and had a maximum depth of c. 0.12m. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell with vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [101] a firm light grey sandy silt which contained occasional pea-grit and fine sub-angular pebbles. Cut into the base of [98], slightly off centre, was a sub-circular depression, c.

0.20m in diameter and c. 0.19m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply and fell with steep straight sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. This depression represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into the pit [98]. The post may have been one of a number inserted into the putative palisade trench defined by [98] (see 7.4.7.1).

7.4.8 Group 3.8

7.4.8.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation a sub-square pit [234] was revealed, beneath a later deposit [199], and cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.31m OD. It measured c. 0.60m east-west by c. 0.48m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 90mm. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with straight, almost vertical, sides to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [233] a firm mid yellowish brown, with light grey to greyish brown mottling, silty sand with no inclusions. The south-western quadrant of the feature was not excavated. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret although it may represent a post-pit and could feasibly be associated with a feature similarly interpreted to the east (see Group 3.10).

7.4.9 Group 3.9

7.4.9.1 Approximately 2.20m to the west of [234] (see Group 3.8) was a feature [217] which may have been part of a sub-rectangular pit or the butt-end of a gully. It was revealed beneath a later deposit [198] and cut into the natural brickearth at c. 11.34m OD. It measured c. 0.78m east-west by c. 0.54m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.29m. To the west it was truncated by a modern intrusion. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with almost vertical, slightly concave, sides to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [218] a firm mid orange grey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret although it may represent either a post-pit - in which case it could be associated with features similarly interpreted to the east (see Group 3.8 and 3.10) or the butt-end of gully [226] which was located c. 3.0m to the west (see Group 3.3).

7.4.10 Group 3.10

7.4.10.1 Approximately 1.0m to the east of [234] (see Group 3.8) was part of a sub-oval post-pit [232] revealed beneath a later deposit [199] and cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.31m OD. It measured c. 0.66m east-west by c. 0.61m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.30m. To the north it was truncated by a later feature [113]. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with almost vertical, slightly concave, sides to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [231] a firm mid to dark grey silty sand which contained occasional medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal. This feature probably represents a post-pit and could feasibly be associated with [234] (Group 3.8).

7.4.11 Group 3.11

7.4.11.1 Towards the southern limit of excavation of the site was part of a sub-oval post-pit [578] revealed beneath a later deposit [574] and cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.38m OD. It measured c. 1.08m north-south by c. 0.55m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.18m. To the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with gently sloping (although steeper on the south side), slightly concave, sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. To the south a sub-circular depression had been cut into the base, hard against the pit's edge. This measured c. 0.52m east-west by c. 0.42m north-south and was 0.21m deep. The feature was filled by [577] a friable light greyish brown, with dark brown mottling, clayey silty sand which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. The depression in the base of the pit represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into [578]. Although the feature was almost certainly a post-pit it is difficult to postulate exactly what kind of structure it was associated with, given that there were no stratigraphically related post-pits in its immediate vicinity.

7.4.12 Group 3.12

7.4.12.1 Towards the eastern limit of excavation of the site was a sub-circular post-pit [605] cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.34m OD. Its maximum diameter was 0.63m and its maximum depth was 0.17m. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with steep straight sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [604] a soft light-mid grey, with mid yellowish brown mottling, sandy clayey silt which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. Cut through the fill of [605] was a circular post-pipe [603] of diameter 0.19m and maximum depth 0.21m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet a flat circular base with a sharp break of slope. The post-pipe was filled by [602] a firm light-mid grey clayey sand which contained occasional pea-grit and occasional flecks of charcoal. This post-pipe represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into [605]. Although the feature was clearly a post-pit it is difficult to postulate exactly what kind of structure it was associated with, given that there were no stratigraphically related post-pits in its immediate vicinity.

7.4.13 Group 3.13

7.4.13.1 Towards the site's eastern limit of excavation was part of a sub-rectangular pit [607] cutting into the natural brickearth at c. 11.36m OD. It measured 0.85m NW-SE by 0.88m NE-SW and its maximum depth was 0.10m. To the north-west it was truncated by a later pit [609]. At the top the edges broke gradually to fall with gently sloping concave sides to meet a flat base, generally with an imperceptible break of slope. The feature was filled by [606] a soft light-mid brownish grey, with mid yellowish brown mottling, silty clay which contained occasional flecks of burnt daub, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and moderate flecks and small fragments of

charcoal. An oval depression, measuring c. 0.55m by c. 0.35m, was cut into the base, hard against the edge, in the pit's southern corner. Part of an articulated animal skeleton was revealed within this depression which indicates that the feature may well have been dug specifically for the purpose of burial.

7.4.14 Group 3.14

7.4.14.1 Revealed beneath a later deposit [573] and cutting through the north-western end of [607] (see Group 3.13) was a sub-oval pit [609]. The feature cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.35m OD. It measured c. 1.36m NW-SE by c. 0.88m NE-SW and its maximum depth was 0.28m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with generally steep (although more gently sloping at the northern end), slightly concave, sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The upper c. 0.10m of the feature was filled by [608] a soft light-mid brownish grey, with mid yellowish brown mottling, silty clay which contained occasional flecks of burnt daub, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and moderate flecks and small fragments of charcoal. The lower part of the pit was filled by a mid-dark grey clayey silt which contained frequent crushed and fragmented charcoal. In addition there was some evidence of *in situ* burning of the underlying natural brickearth within the base of the pit. The feature could either represent a simple cooking pit or a crude hearth or it may simply have been dug in order to dispose of fire debris - which retained sufficient heat to slightly burn the underlying strata.

7.4.15 Group 3.15

7.4.15.1 Towards the site's southern limit of excavation was a sub-square stakehole [431]. The feature, revealed beneath the later deposit [422], cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.39m OD. Its maximum width was 100mm and it was 110mm deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep sides which tapered to a rounded base. The feature was filled by [432] a loose dark yellowish brown clayey sand with no inclusions. As there were no similar, stratigraphically related, features in the immediate vicinity it is difficult to suggest quite what element of land-use this stakehole could be associated with.

7.4.16 Group 3 Discussion

7.4.16.1 Little can be said, even in broad terms, concerning the specific function of many of the features which have been assigned to this phase of activity. All these features appeared to have been sealed by a buried soil (see Group 4). The majority, if not all, of the features probably derive from the first two centuries of the Roman period. The numerous small pits and/or post-pits may represent fence lines which, along with the shallow gullies investigated, may have delineated the boundaries of small fields or paddocks set out alongside the *Londinium* to *Camulodunum* road. The gullies themselves may have been from the same field system but such short lengths were revealed that this is impossible to prove. Certainly two alignments are suggested, east-west and

north-south, and this supports the findings of earlier excavations at sites close to 91-93 Parnell Road. For example, ditches and gullies demarcating rectangular fields investigated at Usher Road in 1974-75, c. 50m to the north, were on similar alignments.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ McIsaac & Schwab, 1979

7.5 Hiatus During the Roman Period (Group 4) - Figure 5

7.5.1 Group 4.1

7.5.1.1 In the south-western corner of the site a distinct horizon [106]/[143] was revealed at the upper interface of the natural brickearth. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.58m OD. To the south and west the deposit met the limit of excavation while to the north and east it was largely truncated by modern intrusions or a later feature [97]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 5.25m east-west by c. 5.50m north-south. The deposit was a firm but slightly sticky dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from the deposit included several sherds of Roman ceramic, several iron objects, pieces of industrial waste material/slag, struck flints and burnt flints. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.19m.

7.5.2 Group 4.2

7.5.2.1 In the north-western corner of the site a distinct horizon [107] was revealed at the upper interface of the natural brickearth. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.56m OD. To the north and west parts of the deposit met the limit of excavation, while to the south it was truncated by a modern intrusion and to the east by later features [97] and [128]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.60m east-west by c. 6.50m north-south. The deposit was a soft mid-dark brownish grey clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Several sherds of Roman ceramic were recovered from the deposit. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.20m.

7.5.3 Group 4.3

7.5.3.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation a distinct horizon [198]/[199] was revealed at the upper interface of the natural brickearth. [198] and [199] were physically separated by the cut for a modern drain. The horizon was recorded at a maximum height of 11.53m OD. To the south, west and east the deposit was truncated by modern intrusions and to the north by a later feature [113]. Its maximum dimensions were 5.20m east-west by c. 1.45m north-south. The deposit was a firm mid to dark orange brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles, occasional sub-angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Several sherds of Roman ceramic were recovered from the deposit. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.15m.

7.5.4 Group 4.4

7.5.4.1 Towards the site's southern limit of excavation a distinct horizon [422]/[574]

was revealed at the upper interface of the natural brickearth. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.46m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 3.95m north-south by c. 4.90m east-west. To the north and west it was truncated by modern intrusions and to the east by a later feature [530], while to the south it met the limit of excavation or petered out over natural brickearth - probably truncated by machining. The deposit was a firm mid brown clayey sandy silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and frequent medium sub-rounded pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included several sherds of Roman ceramic, iron objects, struck flints and burnt flints. The average depth of the deposit was c. 80mm.

7.5.5 Group 4.5

7.5.5.1 In the south and eastern parts of the site was an extensive distinct horizon [406/573] revealed at the upper interface of the natural brickearth. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.49m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 7.40m north-south by c. 6.80m east-west. To the north it was truncated by a later feature [538], to the west by a later feature [611] and by a modern intrusion [427] and to the south and east it met the limit of excavation. The deposit was a firm mid-dark orange brown sandy silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional fine and medium rounded, sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Several sherds of Roman ceramic, struck flints and burnt flints were recovered from the deposit. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.15m.

7.5.6 Group 4.6

7.5.6.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation survived a narrow strip of a distinct horizon [548]. It was revealed at the upper interface of the natural brickearth and was recorded at a maximum height of 11.36m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.15m north-south by c. 1.75m east-west. To the south it was truncated by a later feature [534], to the west by [532] and to the east by [585]. To the north it met the limit of excavation. The deposit was a firm mid-dark orange brown clayey silty sand which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.15m.

7.5.7 Group 4 Discussion

7.5.7.1 The Group 4 deposits represent what can be described as a 'buried soil'. They represent a distinct horizon which developed primarily by the natural processes of soil formation (including chemical weathering, leaching and bioturbation) upon the exposed upper surface of the natural brickearth. The fact that the deposit appeared to seal features apparently dating to the Roman period (Group 3) suggests that it was formed during the Roman period and that there was an hiatus between the earlier activity and the more extensive Roman activity described below (Group 5). During this time the area under investigation may have been under pasture or

crop, forming part of an extensive agricultural landscape to the east of *Londinium*, or it may simply not have been utilised to any great degree. The sample area was too limited to determine whether such a land-use was localised or extended beyond the immediate site boundaries.

7.6 Later Roman Activity (Group 5) - Figure 6

7.6.1 Group 5.1

7.6.1.1 A sub-rectangular post-pit [197]/[192] was recorded towards the site's south-western corner cutting into the buried soil [143] at a maximum height of 11.38m OD. The feature, which measured c. 1.18m north-south by c. 0.58m east-west, was truncated to the east by a later feature [81]. Its maximum depth was 0.18m. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with generally steep concave sides to meet a slightly concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [196]/[191] a soft mid orange brown, with mid brownish grey mottling, silty clayey sand which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Cut into the fill was a sub-rectangular post-pipe [127] which measured c. 0.28m north-south by c. 0.25m east-west and was 0.44m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with almost vertical sides to the south and east and more gently sloping sides to the north and west which tapered to a pointed base. The post-pipe was filled by [126] a friable mid orange brown silty clayey sand which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. This post-pipe represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into [197]/[192]. The upright was re-set, as represented by the following activity.

7.6.1.2 A sub-circular post-pit [122]/[142] cut into the southern part of the previously described feature (see 7.6.1.1) and the buried soil [143] at a maximum height of 11.49m OD. The feature, which measured c. 0.86m north-south by c. 0.78m east-west, was truncated to the east by a later feature [81]. Its maximum depth was 0.22m. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with generally steep concave sides to meet a sloping, slightly concave, base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [121]/[141] a friable mid yellowish brown sandy clayey silt which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and sub-angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Several sherds of Roman ceramic and a struck flint were recovered from the deposit.

7.6.1.3 Cut into the fill of post-pit [122]/[142] was a sub-rectangular post-pipe [115] which measured c. 0.30m north-south by c. 0.22m east-west and was 0.24m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with generally almost vertical sides, although less steep to the south, which tapered to a narrow rounded base. The post-pipe was filled by [114] a friable dark brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. This post-pipe represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into [122]/[142]. The upright was clearly a re-setting of the earlier post described above (see 7.6.1.1) thereby indicating that the structure with which the post was associated may have been in use for some time.

7.6.2 Group 5.2

7.6.2.1 Less than 1.0m to the north of the activity described above (see Group 5.1) part of a sub-circular post-pit [94] was recorded cutting into the buried soil [106] at a maximum height of 11.58m OD. The feature, which measured c. 0.62m north-south by c. 1.20m east-west, was truncated to the north by a modern intrusion. Its maximum depth was 0.30m. At the top the edges broke sharply and fell with generally steep, slightly concave, sides to meet a slightly concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by a firm mid greyish brown sandy clayey silt [93] which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Sherds of Roman ceramic were recovered from the deposit, in addition to several burnt flints.

7.6.2.2 Cut into the fill of this feature, at c. 11.35m OD, was a sub-rectangular post-pipe [92] which measured c. 0.16m north-south by c. 0.19m east-west and was 0.14m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with generally almost vertical sides (although less steep to the north) which tapered to a rounded base. The post-pipe was filled by [91] a friable dark brown clayey silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal. This post-pipe represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into [94] and could well have been associated with the feature described above (see Group 5.1) forming part of a post-built structure.

7.6.2.3 Subsequently, the upright represented by [92] was removed as indicated by a triangular shaped pit [90] which was recorded cutting into the fill of [94], at c. 11.58m OD, and truncating the upper part of [92]. The feature measured c. 0.80m east-west by c. 0.51m north-south (although it was truncated to the north by a modern intrusion) and it was c. 0.27m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with a steep straight side to the east and a less steep rather concave side to the west. Both sides met an undulating base with gradual breaks of slope. The pit was filled by [89] a firm mid brown sandy clayey silt which contained frequent fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Several sherds of Roman ceramic, pieces of industrial waste/slag and burnt flints were recovered from the deposit.

7.6.2.4 Less than 0.50m to west of the post-pit described above (see 7.6.2.1) part of a further possible post-pit [109] was revealed cutting into the buried soil horizon [106] at c. 11.57m OD. The feature, roughly a quarter of a circle in shape, measured 0.60m east-west by 0.62m north to south and it was 0.17m deep. It was truncated to the north by a modern intrusion and met the limit of excavation to the west. At the top the surviving edge broke sharply to fall with concave, gently sloping, sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The pit was filled by [105] a firm mid greyish brown sandy clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Several sherds of ceramic and angular burnt flints were recovered from the deposit.

7.6.3 Group 5.3

7.6.3.1 Towards the site's western limit of excavation and cut through by a modern

intrusion was a sub-rectangular pit [205]/[220]. The feature, probably truncated horizontally by later feature [149], cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.05m OD. [205] and [220] were physically separated by a modern intrusion. The pit's maximum dimensions were c. 2.08m north-south by c. 1.38m east-west and it was c. 0.24m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight, almost vertical, sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The pit was filled by [204]/[219] a soft dark brownish grey clayey silt which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of chalk, occasional fine and medium sub-angular pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional flecks and small and medium fragments of burnt daub. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, a copper alloy coin and degraded animal bones.

7.6.3.2 Two sub-circular stakeholes [376] and [378] were recorded cutting into the base of the pit, towards its south-eastern corner. Both were c. 60mm in diameter and c. 70mm deep. In both, the edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. Both were filled, [375] and [377] respectively, by a soft dark brownish grey clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium angular and sub-angular pebbles, and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub.

7.6.3.3 The original function of the pit described above is difficult to interpret. It may have been dug for the purpose of domestic refuse disposal having subsequently been truncated by the cutting of the later feature [149]. Alternatively, it may have been in use contemporaneously with that feature - *i.e.* it may have formed a lower level within the more extensive [149]. The latter theory is supported by the coincidence of both the northern and southern edges of the two features. The possible function of [149] is discussed below (see Group 5.4).

7.6.4 Group 5.4

7.6.4.1 Towards the site's western limit of excavation was part of a sub-rectangular pit [149]. The feature cut into the buried soil horizon [107] at a maximum height of 11.38m OD. To the east the pit was truncated by a modern intrusion, and another such intrusion had removed its south-western corner. The pit's maximum dimensions were c. 2.42m north-south by c. 2.58m east-west and it was c. 0.42m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight, almost vertical, sides to meet a generally flat base with a sharp break of slope. Filling part of the pit's southern edge and part of the pit's base (in the south-western corner) was a primary fill [184] consisting of a soft light-mid greyish yellow clayey silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. The remainder of the feature was filled by [148] a soft dark greyish brown clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal, moderate flecks and small fragments of burnt daub, occasional pockets of mid yellowish brown silty sandy clay (re-deposited natural brickearth) and occasional patches of

crushed and fragmented chalk. Material culture recovered from the deposit included several sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, fragments of vessel glass, burnt flints, pieces of industrial waste/slag, metal objects and degraded animal bones.

7.6.4.2 Revealed within the base of [149] was a group of 12 stakeholes [352], [354], [356], [358], [360], [362], [364], [366], [368], [370], [372] and [374]. Generally these features were sub-circular, of diameter c. 50-55mm, and of maximum depth 60mm. At the top the edges generally broke sharply into steep straight sides tapering to a rounded point. The fills, [351], [353], [355], [357], [359], [361], [363], [365], [367], [369], [371] and [373] respectively, generally comprised a soft dark brownish grey silty clay which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The stakeholes were generally concentrated within the north-western corner of the pit. Although no distinct pattern can be ascertained several can be postulated. They represent the positions of timber uprights which may have formed part of a simple timber structure - for example a loom or a frame to hang hides.

7.6.5 Group 5.5

7.6.5.1 Immediately to the north of [149] (see Group 5.4) was part of a sub-rectangular pit [147]. The feature cut into the buried soil horizon [107] at a maximum height of 11.35m OD. To the east the pit was truncated by a modern intrusion and later features [87] and [128] had removed its north eastern corner and most of its upper edge to the north. The pit's maximum dimensions were c. 1.80m north-south by c. 2.25m east-west and it was c. 0.22m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with slightly concave sides, steep to the north and south but very gently sloping to the west, to meet a generally flat base with a sharp break of slope to the north and south and an imperceptible break of slope to the west. The feature was filled by [146] a friable dark greyish brown clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal, moderate flecks and small fragments of burnt daub and occasional medium sub-angular flints. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron objects, burnt flints and degraded animal bones.

7.6.5.2 Revealed within the base of [147], or cutting into its edges, was a group of 53 stakeholes [157], [159], [161], [163], [165], [167], [169], [171], [235], [237], [239], [241], [243], [245], [247], [249], [251], [253], [255], [257], [259], [261], [263], [265], [267], [269], [271], [273], [275], [277], [279], [281], [283], [285], [287], [289], [291], [293], [295], [297], [299], [301], [303], [305], [307], [309], [311], [315], [317], [319], [321], [323] and [325]. These features were sub-circular (maximum diameter c. 70mm), sub-square (maximum width c. 80mm) or sub-rectangular (maximum dimensions c. 110mm by 70mm) and they were generally 50-100mm deep. At the top the edges of the vast majority of the stakeholes broke sharply into straight, almost vertical, sides tapering to a rounded or sharp point. The fills of the stakeholes, [158], [160], [162], [164], [166],

[168], [170], [173], [236], [238], [240], [242], [244], [246], [248], [250], [252], [254], [256], [258], [260], [262], [264], [266], [268], [270], [272], [274], [276], [278], [280], [282], [284], [286], [288], [292], [294], [296], [298], [300], [302], [304], [306], [308], [310], [312], [316], [318], [320], [322], [324] and [326] respectively, generally comprised a soft dark grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The stakeholes were generally scattered across the entire area of the pit, with the exception of the north-west corner, with the result that no distinct pattern can be ascertained, although several can be postulated. They represent the positions of timber uprights which may have formed simple timber structures - such as looms or perhaps frames used to hang hides.

7.6.5.3 The similarity of form and relative locations of [147] and [149] (see 7.6.5.1/2 and Group 5.4) indicate that the features were not only contemporary but also probably served similar functions. Precisely what that was remains to be determined.

7.6.6 Group 5.6

7.6.6.1 Towards the north-western corner of the site the eastern edge of a north-south oriented ditch [78] was recorded. To the south and west it met the limit of excavation and to the north it was truncated by a later feature [54]. A length of c. 2.85m of the ditch was revealed, cutting into the buried soil horizon, [107] at a maximum height of 11.42m OD. Its maximum depth was 0.67m. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with a steep deliberately stepped side (indicative of re-cutting) to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. Filling the lower part of the feature along its entire length as well as the upper part of its edge towards the south was a primary fill [108]. This consisted of a soft mid greyish brown, with light brownish yellow mottling, clayey silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional fine sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. The upper part of the feature was filled by [77] a soft dark greyish brown clayey silt which contained moderate flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional fine sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. The maximum depth of this deposit was c. 0.35m. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, burnt flints and industrial waste material/slag. Given its apparent extent this ditch may well have formed a property boundary or defined the edge of an enclosure or paddock. Re-cutting suggests that any such boundary was relatively long established.

7.6.7 Group 5.7

7.6.7.1 Towards the centre of the site was part of a large shallow circular pit [396] cutting into the buried soil horizon (here with no context number assigned) at a maximum height of 11.38m OD. The feature was heavily truncated to both the north and south by modern intrusions. Its maximum diameter was c. 2.85m and its maximum depth was c. 0.23m. At the top the edges broke sharply to the east and gradually to the west to fall with gently sloping slightly concave sides to meet

an undulating base with a gradual break of slope. The pit was filled by [95]/[395] a friable light greyish brown silty sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. An arbitrary spit [82], up to 100mm thick, which overlay [396] was probably the upper part of its fill. Material culture recovered from the deposit included several sherds of Roman ceramic, burnt flints and an iron object. The form of this feature is not suggestive of a refuse pit, rather it may have been dug in order to remove brickearth, *e.g.*, for the construction of floors or external surfaces. It may have been associated with a similar feature [181] c. 2.80m to the north-west (see Group 5.10).

7.6.8 Group 5.8

7.6.8.1 Towards the centre of the site was a sub-rectangular post-pit [84], slightly truncated to the west by a modern intrusion, and recorded cutting into an arbitrary spit [82] (see Group 5.7) at a maximum height of 11.40m OD. The feature measured c. 0.90m north-south by c. 0.65m east-west and its maximum depth was 0.37m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight, almost vertical, sides to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. The pit was filled by [83] a loose mid greyish brown, with mid orange brown mottling, sandy silt which contained occasional medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, struck flints, burnt flints and industrial waste/slag.

7.6.8.2 Cut into the fill of [84], at a maximum height of 11.37m OD, was a circular post-hole [73]. It was c. 0.18m in diameter and was 0.24m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [74] a friable dark grey sandy silt which contained occasional pea-grit and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. This post-hole represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into [84]. It may have been associated with another post [75], located c. 1.0m to the south, in a post-built structure of some description.

7.6.8.3 Approximately 1.0m to the south of [73] (see 7.6.8.2) and recorded cutting into an arbitrary spit [82] (see Group 5.7), at a maximum height of 11.40m OD, was a sub-circular post-hole [75]. It measured c. 0.35m north-south by c. 0.28m east-west had a maximum depth of c. 0.22m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight, almost vertical, sides to meet to a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [76] a loose light to mid brownish grey sandy silt which contained occasional pea-grit, occasional medium sub-angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal. This post-hole represents the original position of an upright which may have been associated with another post [75], located c. 1.0m to the north, in a post-built structure of some description. In this case there was no evidence of a post-pit dug to house the upright.

7.6.9 Group 5.9

7.6.9.1 In the north-western part of the site was one surviving edge of a possibly sub-rectangular pit [211], heavily truncated to the west by a modern intrusion, and recorded cutting into natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.29m OD. The feature measured c. 1.0m north-south by c. 0.20m east-west and its maximum depth was 0.29m. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with a slightly concave almost vertical side towards the base where a gradual break of slope was just visible. The pit was filled by [210] a firm dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Recovered from the deposit were several fragments of ceramic building material. Given its position this feature can be equated with [149] (see Group 5.4) with some certainty. In this case the complete feature would have been a sub-rectangular pit, c. 3.80m in length, probably with a sub-rectangular lower area (see Group 5.3) located roughly centrally within its base.

7.6.10 Group 5.10

7.6.10.1 In the north-western part of the site was one surviving edge of a shallow pit [181], heavily truncated to the south, west and east by modern intrusions, and recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [198] at a maximum height of 11.53 m OD. The feature measured c. 1.10m north-south by c. 1.80m east-west and its maximum depth was 0.20m. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with a straight almost vertical side to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [180] a firm dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Cultural recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material and waste industrial material/slag. The original purpose of this feature may have been as a shallow quarry for brickearth and it could be associated with a similar feature [396] c. 2.80m to the south-east (see Group 5.7).

7.6.11 Group 5.11

7.6.11.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation an oval post-hole [201] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [199] at a maximum height of 11.47m OD. To the south it was slightly truncated by a modern intrusion. It measured c. 0.20m north-south by c. 0.30m east-west and had a maximum depth of c. 0.20m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides which tapered to meet to a rounded base. It was filled by [200] a friable dark brown clayey silt which contained occasional pea-grit, occasional flecks of charcoal and moderate medium sub-angular flints. This post-hole represents the original position of an upright which may have been associated with other posts [73] and [75] (see Group 5.8) located c. 2.40m to the south, in a post-built structure, such as a palisade. In this case there was no evidence of a post-pit dug to house the upright.

7.6.12 Group 5.12

7.6.12.1 Towards the centre of the site part of a possible pit [529] was recorded cutting into natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.36m OD. To the south and east it was truncated by modern intrusions and to the north by a later feature [392]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.82m north-south by c. 2.20m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.20m. At the top the surviving western edge broke sharply to fall with a steep straight side to meet a generally flat base with a gradual break of slope. The lower c. 70mm of the feature was filled by [525] a loose mixture of dark grey brown clayey sand (c. 60%) with crushed and fragmented charcoal (c. 40%). Included throughout were occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Several sherds of Roman ceramic were recovered from the deposit along with industrial waste material/slag and iron and copper alloy objects. [529] contained a secondary fill [521] which consisted of a loose mid greyish yellow clayey sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal. The deposit was generally c. 70mm thick. Several sherds of ceramic were recovered from the deposit along with a metal object.

7.6.12.2 Revealed within the base of [529] was a group of 15 stakeholes [622], [624], [626], [628], [630], [632], [634], [636], [638], [640], [642], [644], [646], [648] and [650]. Generally these features were sub-circular, of diameter c. 50-80mm, and of maximum depth 100mm. At the top the edges generally broke sharply into straight steep sides tapering to a rounded point. The fills [542], [623], [625], [627], [629], [631], [633], [635], [637], [639], [641], [643], [645], [647], and [649] generally comprised a loose mid greyish brown clayey sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. No distinct pattern for the stakeholes can be ascertained. They represent the positions of timber uprights which may have formed part of a simple timber structure - such as a loom or perhaps a frame used to hang hides.

7.6.12.3 Cut into the secondary fill of [529], at a maximum height of 11.37m OD, was an irregular post-pit [519]. The feature was truncated to the north by a later feature [392]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.30m north-south by c. 0.56m east-west and maximum depth was 0.15m. At the top the surviving edge broke sharply to fall with steep concave sides to meet an undulating base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [520] a loose dark greyish brown clayey sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and frequent medium and large sub-angular flints. Although proposed as a post-pit such an interpretation for this amorphous cut is rather unconvincing.

7.6.12.4 The upper c. 60mm of [529] was filled by [507] a stiff dark greyish brown clayey sand which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional fine and medium sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments

of ceramic building material and pieces of waste industrial material/slag. Although this feature was extensively truncated there are certain similarities with two features [149] and [147] further to the west (see Group 5.4 and 5.5).

7.6.13 Group 5.13

7.6.13.1 Adjacent to the site's northern limit of excavation an extensive sub-rectangular pit [595] was revealed cutting into natural brickearth, although heavily truncated horizontally, at a maximum height of 11.25m OD. To the north it met the limit of excavation and to the south it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.70m east-west by 3.30m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.90m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep generally straight sides to meet, generally with a sharp break of slope, a flat base. In the south-western corner the side fell to a distinct step, c. 0.60m wide, at c. 10.66m OD. From this step an edge fell, with a gradual break of slope at the top, with a gently sloping side towards the base. The base, at c. 10.36m OD, was revealed only within a 1.0m wide investigatory east-west slot excavated through the lower part of the fill [594]. At the south-eastern corner of the feature there appeared to be a linear, north-south oriented, extension which was truncated by a modern intrusion to the south. The maximum dimensions of this extension were c. 0.70m north-south by c. 1.90m east-west.

7.6.13.2 The fill(s) of the feature described above were assigned a single context number [594] although a series of deposits, revealed in the section of the investigatory slot, were responsible for its in-filling. The primary fill, revealed only against the lower part of the western edge, was a relatively sterile soft mid brownish grey sandy clay of maximum thickness c. 0.25m. This was overlain by a soft light grey, mottled with light-mid greyish green, sandy clay which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. The maximum thickness of the latter deposit was c. 0.30m and it was overlain by a lens, up to 0.10m thick, of fine, medium and large angular, sub-angular and sub-rounded gravels. To the west this lens was overlain by a friable light yellowish brown silty sand, of maximum thickness c. 0.12m, which contained occasional flecks of charcoal. To the east the lens of gravels was overlain by a soft mid grey clayey sand, of maximum thickness c. 0.27m, which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, animal bones, industrial waste/slag and iron and copper alloy objects.

7.6.13.3 The feature described above can provisionally be interpreted as a cess-pit - on the basis of its form, dimensions and the general nature of its fills. Results of the analysis of the sediments samples collected may confirm this interpretation. The linear extension to the south could well have been a ditch designed to drain effluence into the pit. This ditch can be equated with a further length of ditch [530] revealed, c. 2.20 m to the south (see Group 5.19).

7.6.14 Group 5.14

7.6.14.1 Cut into the fill of [595] (see Group 5.13) was a sub-circular pit [596] which met the limit of excavation to the north. Heavily truncated horizontally by a later feature [582] the feature was recorded at a maximum height of 10.70m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.70m east-west by c. 0.65m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.63m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep concave sides to meet what was revealed of a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [597] a friable mid brown clayey silt which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional patches of loose dark grey humic silt and occasional flecks and small fragments of oyster shell. Material culture recovered from the deposit included several sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material and a copper alloy coin.

7.6.14.2 Also cut into the fill of [595] (see Group 5.13) was a small sub-oval pit [580] truncated by a later feature [582] to the west. The feature was recorded at a maximum height of 11.03m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.20m east-west by c. 0.16m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.23m. At the top the surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a steep straight side to meet what remained of a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [581] a soft light brownish grey, mottled with light grey, silty clay which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Part of a large ceramic cooking vessel was recovered from the deposit.

7.6.14.3 The Group 5.14 features represent small scale pitting undertaken in the area following the silting up of the putative cess pit [595] (see Group 5.13). The limited amount revealed of both features makes an interpretation of their original function difficult although it is likely, given the nature of their back-fills and the material contained within them, that they may have been dug for the disposal of domestic refuse.

7.6.15 Group 5.15

7.6.15.1 Following the silting up of the putative cess pit [595] (see Group 5.13) and the small scale activity represented by Group 5.14 a linear, north-south oriented, ditch [582] was cut through the northern part of the site. To the north it met the limit of excavation and to the south it was truncated by a modern intrusion. A length of c. 4.0m was revealed, of maximum width c. 2.10m and maximum depth c. 0.73m. The upper part of the feature was truncated by a later pit [563]. The feature cut into the fill of pit [595] at a maximum height of 11.23m OD. Along both sides the break of slope at the top of [582] was gradual, into a steep straight side to the east and a less steep, slightly concave, side to the west. On both sides the break of slope at the base was sharp. The base, which was c. 0.46m wide, sloped down to the north from 10.59m OD to 10.40m OD. The ditch was filled by

[583] a soft mid-dark brown, with patches of mid brownish grey, silty clay. Included throughout were occasional fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub, occasional crushed and fragmented oyster shell and occasional thin lenses of coarse mid brownish yellow sand. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron objects, a copper alloy coin and degraded animal bones. This ditch probably represents a field or property boundary of some importance, given its overall dimensions. The fact that it was cut directly along the line of an earlier ditch (postulated as 'draining into' [595] from the south) indicates continuity of land use.

7.6.15.3 Cut into the fill of [582] were two features [575] and [576] which probably represent re-cutting of the ditch. [575] was the northern end of a butt-ended ditch terminal. To the south the feature was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.50m east-west by c. 0.75m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.52m. Truncated horizontally by a later pit [563] the feature cut into the fill of [582] at a maximum height of 11.19m OD. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with straight steep sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The ditch terminal was filled by [567] a soft mid to dark greyish brown clayey silt. Included throughout were occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron objects and three copper alloy coins.

7.6.15.4 Approximately 0.40m to the north of [575] was [576] - also interpreted as a butt-ended ditch terminal. To the north the feature met the limit of excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.25m east-west by c. 2.40m north-south and its average depth was c. 0.43m. Heavily truncated horizontally, primarily by a later pit [563], the feature cut into the fill of ditch [582] at a maximum height of 11.15m OD. At the top the edge broke sharply in the south, more gradually in the west, to fall with generally steep straight sides to meet a gently sloping concave base with a gradual break of slope. The ditch terminal was filled by [566] a friable mid to dark brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and flints and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, degraded animal bones, iron objects and a copper alloy coin.

7.6.15.5 The two features [575] and [576] described above probably represent re-cutting of the postulated field boundary ditch [582]. Both were cut in the form of butt-ended terminals and may have been dug in order to create a terminally-defined entrance, albeit of rather narrow width.

7.6.16 Group 5.16

7.6.16.1 The eastern edge of a north-south oriented linear gully [611] was recorded to the

east of the Group 5.15 activity. Truncated to the north and west by later pit [563] and by a modern intrusion to the south, the feature was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [573] at a maximum height of 11.36m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.55m north-south by c. 0.41m east-west and its maximum depth was 0.17m. At the top the surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a steep concave side to meet a flat gently sloping (down to the north) base with an imperceptible break of slope. The gully was filled by [610] a friable mid to dark greyish brown clayey silt which contained frequent patches of mid yellowish brown sandy clay (re-deposited brickearth), occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The function of this feature can be interpreted as a 'marking-out' gully dug in advance of the putative boundary ditch [582] (see Group 5.15). There was no direct stratigraphic relationship between the two features due to the later intrusive feature [563]. The feature can be equated with a similar feature [587] to the south (see Group 5.18).

7.6.17 Group 5.17

7.6.17.1 A small portion of the curving edge of a feature [569] was recorded cutting into the fill of linear gully [611] at a maximum height of 11.35m OD. Truncated to the east by a modern intrusion and to the north by a later pit [563] the feature's surviving dimensions were c. 0.60m north-south by c. 0.36m east-west. Its maximum depth was 0.23m. At the top its edge broke sharply to fall with a steep concave side. No base survived. It was filled by [568] a loose dark brown sandy clayey silt which contained occasional medium sub-rounded pebbles. An iron object was recovered from its fill. The function of this feature, given its limited survival, cannot be determined. It may have been associated with the gully [611].

7.6.18 Group 5.18

7.6.18.1 Towards the site's southern limit of excavation a small portion of a possible linear feature [587] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [406] at a maximum height of 11.33m OD. The feature met the limit of excavation to the south and was truncated to the north by a modern intrusion [427] and to the west by a later ditch [530]. Its surviving dimensions were c. 0.40m north-south by c. 0.68m east-west and its maximum depth was 0.15m. At the top its edge broke sharply to fall with a gently sloping concave side to meet a flat base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [586] a firm mid brownish orange silty clayey sand which contained occasional small sub-rounded pebbles. This feature, probably part of a linear gully, was probably a continuation of [611] located c. 2.40m to the north (see Group 5.16). The feature can be interpreted as a 'marking out' gully dug in advance of the excavation of a substantial boundary ditch [582] (see Group 5.15). Therefore, a similar function may have been served by [587] - although in this case the ditch concerned [530] (see Group 5.19) truncated the earlier gully.

7.6.19 Group 5.19

7.6.19.1 In the southern part of the site was a linear, north-south oriented, ditch [530] cut through the buried soil horizon [574] to the west at a maximum height of 11.39m OD. To the south it met the limit of excavation and to the north it was truncated by a modern intrusion. To the east another modern intrusion [71] had almost completely truncated the ditch with the exception of a short length, c. 0.25m, of the eastern edge which survived immediately adjacent to the southern limit of excavation. In total a length of c. 3.68m was revealed, of maximum width c. 1.48m and maximum depth c. 0.47m. Along both sides the break of slope at the top of [530] was sharp into steep concave sides which fell to meet a concave base, of width c. 0.30m, with a gradual break of slope. The base of the ditch was probably level, at c. 10.88m OD, although this is by no means certain given the relatively small area of base which survived.

7.6.19.2 The primary fill [526] of the ditch was a firm mid greenish grey, with brownish orange mottling, clayey silty sand, of maximum thickness c. 0.60m. Included throughout were occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Towards the north extent of ditch [530] and overlying [526] was a small area of a possible secondary fill [524]. This comprised a firm mid greyish brown, with mid green mottling, clayey sandy silt of maximum thickness 40mm. It contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles. Material culture recovered from both deposits included sherds of ceramic and pieces of industrial waste material/slag. This ditch could be equated with the short length of ditch which appeared to extend to the south from putative cess pit [595] (see Group 5.16) and its purpose may well have been to carry effluence in to the pit. However, this supposition is not supported by the fact that the base of the ditch appears to have been level.

7.6.19.3 Cut into the primary fill [526] of ditch [530] were a group of 8 stakeholes [481], [493], [508], [510], [512], [514], [516], and [523]. Generally these features were sub-circular or sub-oval, and varied in diameter/width from 70mm to 130mm and in depth from 70mm to 210mm. At the top the edges generally broke sharply into straight steep sides tapering to a rounded point. The fills, [480], [494], [509], [511], [513], [515], [517] and [522] respectively, generally comprised a sticky dark greyish brown clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The stakeholes were arranged in an irregular line along the western side of the ditch. They represent the positions of timber uprights which may have formed part of a palisade erected following some initial silting-up of the ditch - perhaps associated with the postulated 'drainage' function. They may have been associated with two other groups of stakeholes (see 7.6.19.4 and 7.6.19.5)

7.6.19.4 Cut into the buried soil horizon [574] to the south and west of the stakeholes described above was a group of 6 stakeholes [450], [452], [454], [495], [497] and [572]. Three of these features [450], [452] and [454] were circular, c. 80-100mm in diameter, and up to 70mm deep. The other three [495], [497] and [572] were sub-circular between 0.19m and 0.26m wide, and up to 0.19m deep. At the top the edges of all 6 generally broke sharply into straight steep sides

tapering to a rounded point. The fills, [449], [451], [453], [496], [498], and [571] respectively, generally comprised a firm or sticky dark brownish grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The upright timbers represented by these stakeholes may have formed part of a palisade along with similar groups of stakeholes to the north and south (see 7.6.19.3 and 7.6.19.5).

7.6.19.5 Cut into the surface of the natural brickearth to the south of the stakeholes described above was a group of 10 stakeholes [456], [458], [460], [462], [464], [466], [468], [470], [499] and [503]. These stakeholes were generally circular or sub-circular and varied in diameter/width from 60mm to 100mm and in depth from 60mm to 130mm. At the top the edges of all 10 generally broke sharply into straight steep sides tapering to a rounded or sharp point. The fills, [455], [457], [459], [461], [463], [465], [467], [469], [500], and [504] respectively, generally comprised a firm or sticky dark brownish grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The upright timbers represented by these stakeholes may have formed part of a palisade fence along with two similar groups of stakeholes to the north (see 7.6.19.3 and 7.6.19.4). The general clustering of the stakeholes in the group just described may be indicative of re-setting of the uprights, possibly following collapse of the putative palisade.

7.6.19.6 Ditch [530] had clearly been subject to re-cutting in the form of a linear, north-south oriented, ditch [518] cut through its fills at a maximum height of 11.38m OD. To the south [518] met the limit of excavation and to the north it was truncated by a modern intrusion. To the east another modern intrusion [71] had almost completely truncated the ditch with the exception of a short length, c. 0.25m, of the eastern edge which survived immediately adjacent to the southern limit of excavation. In total a length of c. 3.64m was revealed, of maximum width c. 1.35m and maximum depth c. 0.48m. Along both sides the break of slope at the top of [518] was sharp into steep straight sides which fell to meet a concave base, of width c. 0.20m, with a gradual break of slope. The base of the ditch appeared to slope downwards to the south - it was recorded at a height of 10.91m OD adjacent to the southern limit of excavation and a height of 10.78m OD at its northern extent, although this is by no means certain given the relatively small amount of the base which survived.

7.6.19.7 The primary fill [501] of ditch [518] was a soft light greyish brown, with dark brown mottling, clayey silty sand which contained moderate fine and medium, and frequent large, sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Its maximum thickness was c. 0.50m. Towards the southern extent of ditch [518] and overlying [501] was a small area of a possible secondary fill [492] of maximum thickness 0.12m. In addition, a small area of a similar deposit [491], of maximum thickness 0.40m, was recorded towards the northern extent of the ditch, again overlying [501]. Both deposits comprised a soft light greyish brown, with dark green mottling, clayey silty sand which contained frequent fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional large sub-rounded and rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. [492] and [491] were both

overlain by small areas of a possible tertiary fill, [416] and [486] respectively. These deposits, between 0.26m and 0.40m thick, comprised a firm mid greenish brown, with mid to dark greyish brown mottling, clayey silty sand which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub.

7.6.19.8 Overlying [486] were the remains of two further fills [428] and [426]. The former was a soft dark greenish brown, with black mottling, silty clayey sand, which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub, occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional fragments of oyster shell. Its maximum thickness was c. 0.30m. [426] was a firm mid greyish brown, with mid green mottling, silty clayey sand which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub and frequent fine rounded and sub-rounded pebbles. Its maximum thickness was 0.40m. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, pieces of industrial waste material/slag, burnt flints, fragments of ceramic building material and degraded animal bones. The upper and final fill [565] of ditch [518] was revealed in section only at the site's southern limit of excavation. Its maximum thickness was 0.15m and its upper surface was recorded, in section, at a maximum height of 11.54m OD. It comprised a firm dark brownish grey, with light yellowish brown mottling, clayey sandy silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and frequent medium sub-rounded and rounded pebbles. Ditch [518] can possibly be equated with ditch [582] to the north (see Group 5.15). If this were the case, levels recorded along the base of this ditch indicate that it sloped downwards to the north from 10.91m OD to 10.40m OD over a length of c. 10m.

7.6.19.9 Cut into the primary fill [501] of ditch [518] was a group of 6 stakeholes [438], [440], [442], [444], [446] and [448]. These stakeholes were generally sub-circular and varied in diameter from 70mm to 110mm and in depth from 40mm to 110mm. At the top the edges of all 6 generally broke sharply into straight steep sides tapering to a rounded or sharp point. The fills, [437], [439], [441], [443], [445] and [447] respectively, generally comprised a firm dark brownish grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. A further stakehole [436], was located, to the south of the group just described, cutting into the tertiary fill [416] of the ditch. It was oval in shape, measuring 70mm by 90mm, and was 100mm deep. Its form and the nature of its fill [435] were similar to those of the stakeholes just described. This group of stakeholes formed an irregular line along the top of the western edge of ditch [518]. It can be associated with a further group of three stakeholes to the north (see 7.6.19.8). The upright timbers represented by these stakeholes may have formed part of a palisade associated with the ditch.

7.6.19.10 Cutting into one of the upper fills [486] of ditch [518] was a group of three stakeholes [479], [483] and [485]. Generally sub-circular in shape they varied in diameter from 50mm to 200mm and in depth from 40mm to 180mm. At the top the edges of all 3 generally broke sharply into straight steep sides tapering to a rounded or sharp point. The fills, [478], [482] and

[484] respectively, generally comprised a firm dark brownish grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Along with a group of 6 stakeholes to the south (see 7.6.19.7) this group of stakeholes forms an irregular line along the top of the western edge of ditch [518]. The upright timbers represented by these stakeholes may have formed part of a palisade associated with the ditch.

7.6.20 Group 5.20

7.6.20.1 Cut into the tertiary fill(s) [416]/[486] of ditch [518], at a maximum height of 11.36m OD, was part of a sub-rectangular pit [415]. Although the entire western edge and parts of the southern and northern edges survived it was truncated to the east by modern intrusion [71]. Part of the feature's upper edge to the north was truncated by a later feature [405]. It measured c. 1.80m north-south by c. 0.26m east-west and was 0.38m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep, slightly concave, sides towards the base which did not survive at all. It was filled by [413] a soft mid greyish brown, with light yellowish brown mottling, silty clayey sand which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional fine and medium rounded and sub-rounded pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic and struck flints. The original function of this pit, which can be associated with another pit [412] (see 7.6.20.2) to the north, was probably for the disposal of domestic refuse.

7.6.20.2 Cut into one of the upper fills [426] of ditch [518], at a maximum height of 11.19m OD, was part of a sub-circular pit [412]. The feature was heavily truncated to the south and east by a modern intrusion [71] and to the north by another modern intrusion. It measured c. 0.96m north-south by c. 0.98m east-west and was 0.31m deep. At the top the edges broke gradually to fall with steep, slightly concave, sides towards the base which did not survive at all. It was filled by a soft mid greenish brown clayey sand silt [410] which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and occasional crushed and fragmented oyster shells. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic and degraded animal bones. The original function of this pit, which can be associated with another pit [415] (see 7.6.20.1) to the south, was probably for the disposal of domestic refuse.

7.6.20.3 Cut into the fill of [415], at a height of 11.28m OD, was an oval stakehole [408] which measured 70mm by 60mm and was 50mm deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides which tapered to a pointed base. It was filled by [407] a stiff dark brownish grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles.

7.6.21 Group 5.21

7.6.21.1 Part of a sinuous, north-south oriented, gully [405] was recorded cutting into the fills of earlier features [415] and [412] (see Group 5.20) towards the site's southern limit of excavation. Heavily truncated to the south and east by modern intrusion [427] and by another

modern intrusion to the north it was recorded at a maximum height of 11.41m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.05m north-south by 0.64m east-west and it was c. 0.33m deep. At the top the edges generally broke sharply to fall with a steep straight side to the west and a more gently sloping straight side to the east to meet a concave base with an imperceptible break of slope on both sides. Although only a relatively short length of the feature was recorded its base appeared to slope downwards to the north from 11.20 m OD to 11.07m OD. The feature was filled by a friable dark greyish brown sandy clayey silt [404] which contained frequent fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional small fragments of oyster shell and flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, and degraded animal bones. Although it was clearly back-filled with domestic waste the form of the feature does not indicate that it was intended as a refuse pit. However, given its limited survival the original function of this feature can only be guessed at. It may have served a simple drainage function - a theory supported by its sinuous form which may indicate that it was naturally formed by running water. Alternatively, it may have been a simple palisade trench, although no stakeholes were revealed along its length. Certainly its alignment suggests that the long established land division recorded in this part of the site (see Group 5.19) was being maintained - albeit to a rather more limited degree.

7.6.22 Group 5.22

7.6.22.1 To the east of the land division described above (see Group 5.19) two oval post-holes [420] and [424] were recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [406] at maximum heights of 11.42m OD and 11.44m OD respectively. In both cases there was a sharp break of slope at the top edge into steep concave sides which met a slightly concave base with a gradual break of slope. [420] measured c. 0.40m by c. 0.24m and was 0.16m deep while [424] measured c. 0.42m by c. 0.28m and was 0.28m deep. The latter post-hole was truncated to the west by modern intrusion [427]. The fills, [421] and [425] respectively, comprised a friable dark orange brown sandy silt which contained occasional fine rounded pebbles, occasional medium sub-angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of Roman ceramic and struck flints. These features appear rather isolated - no other post-holes, with which they could be associated, were located in their immediate vicinity.

7.6.23 Group 5.23

7.6.23.1 A group of 7 stakeholes [652], [654], [656], [658], [660], [662] and [664] was recorded, cutting into the buried soil horizon [406], between heights of 11.37m OD and 11.49m OD, close to the site's eastern limit of excavation. These stakeholes were generally sub-circular and varied in diameter from c. 80mm to c. 210mm and in depth from c. 50mm to c. 100mm. At the top the edges of all 7 generally broke sharply into straight steep sides tapering to a rounded or sharp point. The fills, [651], [653], [655], [657], [659], [661] and [663] respectively, generally comprised a soft mid brownish grey clayey silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional fine

and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. No distinct pattern is formed by this cluster of stakeholes. The upright timbers represented by these stakeholes may have formed part of a simple framed structure such as a fowl pen.

7.6.24 Group 5.24

7.6.24.1 Part of a possibly circular pit [585] was recorded in the extreme north-eastern corner of the site cutting into the buried soil horizon [548] at a maximum height of 11.36m OD. The maximum dimensions of the feature, which met the limit of excavation to the north and east, were c. 1.30m east-west by c. 0.85m north-south and it was up to 0.41m deep. To the south the upper part of the feature was heavily truncated by later features [534] and [547]. A short section, c. 0.20m long, of the upper edge survived and at this there was a sharp break of slope into a concave gently sloping side which met a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by a firm light greyish brown silty sandy clay [584] which contained moderate flecks and small fragments of charcoal and occasional flecks and small fragments of burnt daub. Given the limited extent to which it was revealed the function of this pit cannot be interpreted with any degree of certainty. It may have been associated with a series of similar relatively shallow pits to the south (see Group 5.26 and 5.27).

7.6.25 Group 5.25

7.6.25.1 Part of a square or rectangular pit [532] was recorded towards the north-eastern corner of the site cutting into the buried soil horizon [548] at a maximum height of 11.36m OD. The maximum dimensions of the feature, which met the limit of excavation to the north were c. 1.35m east-west by c. 1.25m north-south and it was up to 1.21m deep. Although much of the upper part of the feature was heavily truncated by later features [419], [528] and [534] on the southern side there was far greater survival of the upper part of the edge. At the top there was a sharp break of slope into straight, almost vertical, sides which met a flat base with a generally sharp break of slope. The primary fill [579] of the feature, which varied in thickness from 30mm in the centre of the feature to c. 0.50m against the edges, was a mixture of a firm mid orange brown sandy clay and a light grey silty sandy clay, both of which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and flecks of charcoal. The secondary fill [570] of the feature which varied in thickness from 30mm in the centre of the feature to c. 1.0m against the edges, was a firm mid brownish grey sandy clay which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The tertiary fill [531] of the feature, which was up to c. 1.09m thick, was a firm mid brown sandy silty clay which contained frequent crushed and fragmented burnt daub (fragments up to c. 0.20m wide were recovered) and occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron objects, degraded animal bone and a worked bone pin. Given its dimensions the original function of this feature may well have been as a cess-pit. The nature of the primary and secondary fills [579] and [570] certainly supports this conjecture. Clearly the back-fill of the pit, following disuse and

abandonment, utilised the remains of a burnt/demolished clay and timber building indicating the proximity of such a structure to the site.

7.6.26 Group 5.26

Part of a possibly circular pit [601] was recorded towards the north-eastern corner of the site cutting into the buried soil horizon [406] at a maximum height of 11.42m OD. The maximum dimensions of the feature were c. 0.70m east-west by c. 1.65m north-south and it was up to 0.30m deep. To the south and east part of the feature was truncated by a modern intrusion and to the east it also met the limit of excavation. Part of the upper edge to the north was truncated by a later feature [538]. On the western side part of the upper edge survived and at this there was a sharp break of slope into a steep concave side which met what survived of a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [600] a friable light to mid greyish brown silty sand which contained occasional fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from these deposits included ceramic sherds. Given the limited extent to which it was revealed the function of this pit cannot be interpreted with any degree of certainty. It may have been associated with a series of similar relatively shallow pits to the north, west and south (see Group 5.24, 5.27 and 5.28).

7.6.27 Group 5.27

7.6.27.1 Towards the site's eastern limit of excavation was a sub-rectangular pit [545] recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [406] at a maximum height of 11.45m OD. The maximum dimensions of the feature were c. 1.18m east-west by c. 0.74m north-south and it was up to 0.45m deep. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with straight almost vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by a loose mid brownish grey clayey sand [544] which contained occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small and medium sub-rounded pebbles. Cultural detritus recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material and iron objects. This pit may have been associated with a series of similar relatively shallow pits to the north and south (see Group 5.24, 5.26 and 5.28).

7.6.28 Group 5.28

7.6.28.1 Towards the site's eastern limit of excavation was a sub-rectangular pit [599] recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [406] at a maximum height of 11.45m OD. The maximum dimensions of the feature were c. 1.68m east-west by c. 1.0m north-south and it was up to 0.30m deep. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with generally straight, (although slightly stepped in the north-western corner), steep sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [598] a friable mid grey sandy silt mixed with a soft mid yellowish brown sandy clay (re-deposited brickearth) which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional small and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered

from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic and a copper alloy coin. The presence of this coin could indicate that the feature was a grave, although it was rather short for such a purpose - unless it were that of a child. The absence of human bone, given the acidity of the subsoil, would not necessarily preclude such an interpretation. This pit may have been associated with a series of similar relatively shallow pits to the north, south and east (see Group 5.24, 5.26 and 5.27).

7.6.29 Group 5.29

7.6.29.1 Across parts of the eastern end of the site was a dumped spread [502] of moderately well compacted dark greyish brown slightly organic silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub, occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional thin lenses of mid brownish yellow sandy clay (re-deposited brickearth). The surface of the deposit was rather undulating and was recorded at a maximum height of 11.53m OD. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, an iron object, a copper alloy coin, and degraded animal bone. This deposit can be interpreted as the debris from a burnt, and subsequently demolished, clay and timber building. Clearly the actual building was not located within the limits of the excavation described in this report but it may have been in the immediate vicinity of the site.

7.6.30 Group 5.30

7.6.30.1 Towards the south-eastern corner of the site a sub-rectangular pit [433] was cut into the buried soil horizon at a maximum height of 11.43m OD. The feature's maximum dimensions were c. 0.92 m north-south by 0.53m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.34m. At the top the edge broke sharply to fall with a straight vertical side to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. On its western and southern side the edge was coincident with that of a later, but probably intimately related, feature [429]. The feature was filled by a loose mid to dark grey sandy silt [430] which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered from this deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, fragments of vessel glass, and numerous iron objects - probably nails. In addition, a small folded lead sheet was recovered from the lower part of the pit. Revealed within the base of [433] was a circular stakehole [475] of diameter c. 90mm and of unknown depth. It was filled by [474] an unrecorded deposit.

7.6.30.2 A shallow sub-rectangular pit [429] may have truncated the top of [433], although the exact coincidence of their southern and western edges suggests that they were intimately related. [429] measured c. 1.29m OD north-south by 0.60m east-west and was up to c. 0.10m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by a firm mid to dark grey silty sand, [423] up to c. 0.10m thick, which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular pebbles and flints. Again, a relatively large amount of material culture was recovered from this deposit, including sherds of ceramic, fragments

of ceramic building material, fragments of vessel glass and metallic objects, of iron and copper alloy.

7.6.30.3 Given the quantity and, more significantly, the nature of the material culture recovered from the fills of both [429] and [433] it is likely that these features, which were probably contemporaneous, may have had some ritual significance. The presence, close to the base of [433], of a folded lead sheet, possibly a *defixio* (curse) strongly supports this notion.

7.6.31 Group 5.31

7.6.31.1 Revealed close to the site's southern limit of excavation was part of a sub-circular post-pit [379] cut into the buried soil horizon [422] at a maximum height of 11.49m OD. Truncated to the north and west by a modern intrusion its maximum dimensions were c. 1.40m north-south by c. 1.15m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.36m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a steep concave side to meet a slightly concave base with a gradual break of slope. The pit was filled by [380] a loose dark yellowish brown clayey sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles, occasional medium sub-angular flints and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from this deposit, included sherds of Roman ceramic and degraded animal bone.

7.6.31.2 Cut into the base of post-pit [379] at a maximum height of 11.11m OD. was part of a circular post-hole [381]. Truncated to the north and west by a modern intrusion its diameter was c. 0.50m and its maximum depth was c. 0.27m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a straight vertical side to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The post-pit was filled by [382] a loose dark yellowish brown clayey sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles, occasional medium sub-angular flints and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from this deposit included sherds of Roman ceramic and degraded animal bones. This feature represents the original position of an upright which had been inserted into post-pit [379]. The upright was clearly removed following abandonment of the structure with which it was associated. Precisely what that structure was is difficult to determine given the lack of similar features in its immediate vicinity.

7.6.32 Group 5 Discussion

7.6.32.1 The elements of Group 5 provide substantial evidence for Roman settlement/land utilisation in the vicinity of 91-93 Parnell Road. While this evidence, primarily in the form of pits and ditches, is indicative of activity associated with roadside occupation, no direct structural evidence for the location of actual buildings was recovered. Many of the features investigated contained pottery, fragmentary building material, metal objects and degraded animal bone - much of which is likely to derive from general domestic refuse. Two deeply cut cess-pits (see Group 5.13 and 5.25) were located. Some iron slag was recovered but there was no indication that metal working had taken place on the site.

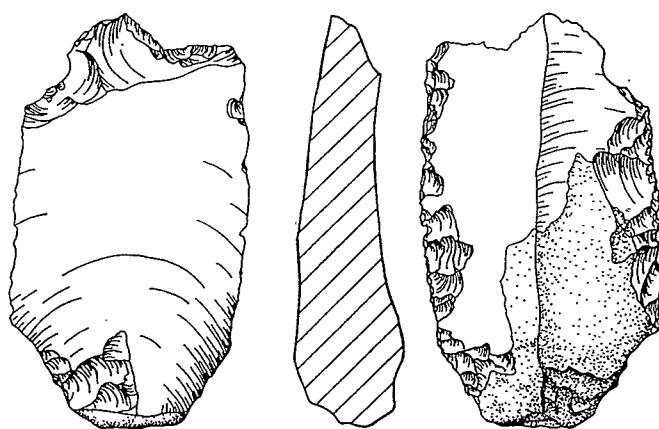
7.6.32.2 The ditches, dug on a north-south alignment at right angles to the line of the road, were the most extensive features to be investigated. Given their dimensions and the evidence of re-cutting, they must have served to define land boundaries of some longevity. In addition, they may have served as drainage channels although this was probably a secondary consideration. Whether the enclosures or fields which they served to demarcate were associated with general ribbon development alongside the road or with an isolated farmstead or small hamlet remains to be determined. Two main boundary lines were recorded and these demarcated a corridor c. 17.5m wide. It is likely that the westernmost of these ditches [78] (see Group 5.6) was also investigated in 1990 in an excavation to the west of this site.⁷⁷ Furthermore, at the time that feature was equated with a ditch recorded to the north during excavations undertaken in 1974-75.⁷⁸

7.6.32.3 Within the area delineated by the two ditches, parts of three similar sub-rectangular pits were investigated (see Group 5.4, 5.5 and 5.12). It is postulated that these may represent proto-industrial activity, perhaps associated with weaving or even the curing of animal hides. In addition, small-scale brickearth quarrying may have been undertaken within this area (see Group 5.7 and 5.10).

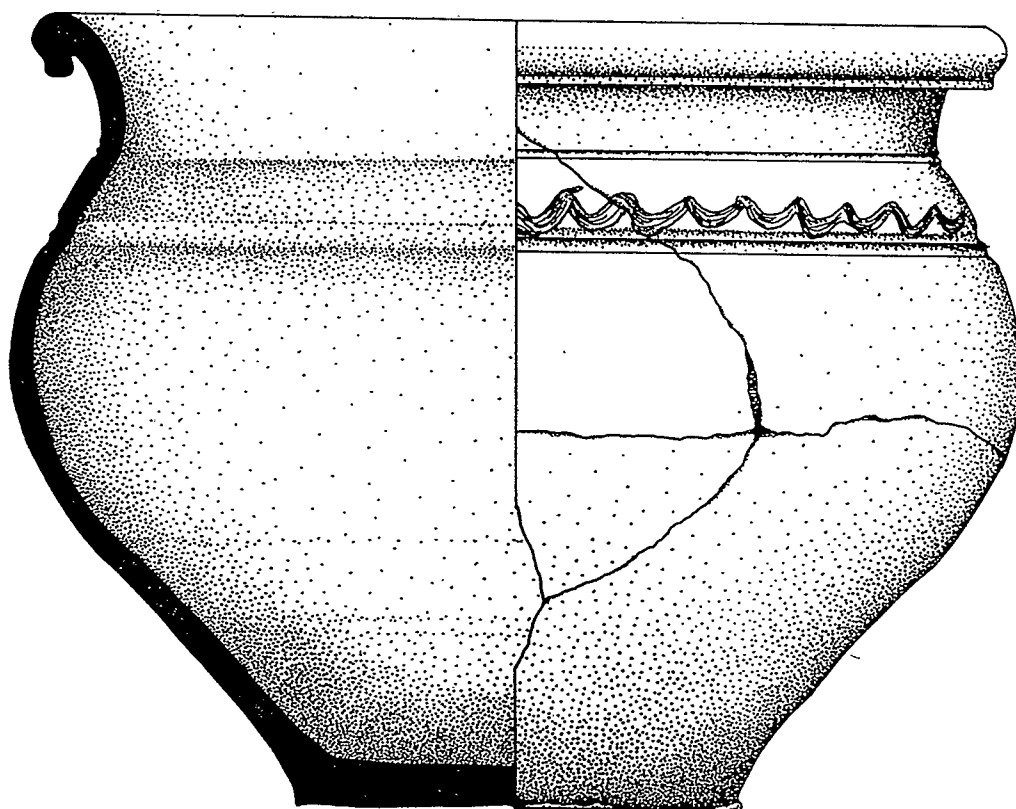
7.6.32.3 To the east of the corridor defined by the two ditches were numerous shallow pits mostly of rather indeterminate function. They may have been graves although there was little symmetry about their arrangement and they are generally not of sufficient dimension. Roman cemeteries are typically located alongside roads as, under Roman law, burial within the boundaries of defined habitation was prohibited. One of these pits clearly had some ritual significance (see Group 5.30).

⁷⁷ Pitt, 1990

⁷⁸ McIsaac & Schwab, 1979



0 3cm



0 10cm

Finds from the excavation. Top: Flint blade. Bottom: Roman ceramic jar.

7.7 Activity Between the Roman and Post-Medieval Periods (Group 6) - Figure 7

7.7.1 Group 6.1

7.7.1.1 An arbitrary spit [417], which sealed the earlier pit [429] (see Group 5.30), was recorded in the southern part of the narrow strip of archaeological deposits investigated in the 'extension' of the site's eastern limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated during machine clearance in advance of the excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.20m east-west by c. 2.20m north-south and it was recorded at a maximum height of 11.59m OD. It consisted of a loose mid brownish grey silty sand which contained occasional medium sub-angular pebbles. Burnt flints and sherds of ceramic were recovered from the deposit. It represents the lower part of a relatively sterile sequence of deposits which appeared to seal the earlier activity in this part of the site. Generally this sequence, described below, can be interpreted as the surviving part of a developed soil profile which accumulated upon the site between the end of the Roman period and the post-Medieval period.

7.7.1.2 Filling an irregular and undulating shallow depression within part of the upper surface of [417] was a dumped deposit [414] consisting of a firm mid to dark grey silty sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. To the west it was truncated during machine clearance in advance of the excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.65m east-west by c. 1.80m north-south and it was recorded at a maximum height of 11.56m OD. A substantial amount of material culture was recovered from this deposit, including sherds of ceramic, burnt flints, several iron objects, a copper alloy coin and fragments of vessel glass. As the deposit generally overlay the putative ritual pit [429]/[433] (see Group 5.30) it is likely that it represents the 'ploughed-out' upper part of that feature.

7.7.1.3 An arbitrary spit [411], which overlay the deposit [414] described above was recorded within the narrow strip of archaeological deposits investigated in the 'extension' of the site's eastern limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated during machine clearance in advance of the excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.20m east-west by c. 3.80m north-south and it was recorded at a maximum height of 11.65m OD. It consisted of a loose light to mid grey silty sand which contained occasional medium sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from this deposit included sherds of ceramic and a zoomorphic copper alloy plate brooch (which again probably derived from the earlier (Roman) feature [429]/[433] (see Group 5.30). The deposit represents part of a relatively sterile sequence of deposits which appeared to seal the earlier activity in the eastern part of the site.

7.7.1.4 An irregular and rather patchy 'dumped' deposit [409] upon the upper surface of [411] consisted of a firm mid brownish orange silty sandy clay which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. The deposit was recorded at a

maximum height of 11.67m OD. To the west it was truncated during machine clearance in advance of the excavation. It was revealed beneath geotextile laid within the base of an earlier archaeological investigation (undertaken by MoLAS in 1995).⁷⁹

7.7.2 Group 6.2

7.7.2.1 In the north-western part of the site a distinct horizon [150] was revealed. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.68m OD. and its maximum dimensions were c. 2.64m north-south by c. 2.0m east-west. To the west, east and south it was truncated by modern intrusions and to the north by a later feature [113]. The deposit was a moderately well compacted dark brownish grey clayey sandy silt which contained moderate flecks and small fragments of burnt daub, moderate fine and medium sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, degraded animal bones, fragments of ceramic building material and a copper alloy pin. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.15m. This deposit, which for convenience can be termed 'plough soil', represents a developed soil horizon which accumulated across the site between the end of the Roman period and the late post-Medieval period. Since the site probably remained exclusively either under pasture or crop during this time it is likely that the deposit was formed by a combination of factors including ploughing, manuring and general bioturbation.

7.7.2.2 Approximately 1.20m to the east of [150], and divided from it by the cut of a modern drain, part of a similar horizon [172] was revealed. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.68m OD and its maximum dimensions were c. 0.90m north-south by c. 2.8m east-west. To the west and south it was truncated by modern intrusions and to the north and east by later features [113] and [392] respectively. The deposit was a friable dark brown clayey sandy humic silt which contained moderate flecks and small fragments of burnt daub, moderate fine and medium sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of pipe clay and fragments of ceramic building material. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.40m. This deposit can, to all intents and purposes, be equated with [150].

7.7.3 Group 6.3

Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of a soil horizon [560] was revealed. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.60m OD and its maximum dimensions were c. 0.40m north-south by c. 0.37m east-west. To the south and east it was truncated by modern intrusions and to the north and west by later features [559] and [392] respectively. The deposit was a soft mid greyish brown sandy silt which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and ceramic building material and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. The maximum depth of the deposit was c. 0.30m. This deposit, like [150] and [172] further to the west

⁷⁹ Pitt, 1995

(see Group 6.2), can be termed 'plough soil' and again it is likely that it was formed over several hundred years by a combination of ploughing, manuring and general bioturbation.

7.7.4 Group 6.4

7.7.4.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of a soil horizon [561] was revealed. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.71m OD and its maximum dimensions were c. 0.90m north-south by c. 1.26m east-west. To the south and east it was truncated by machine clearance in advance of the excavation and to the north and west by later features [538] and [563] respectively. The deposit was a friable mid brownish grey sandy silt which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and ceramic building material and occasional medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. The average depth of the deposit was c. 0.10m. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic and industrial waste material. This deposit, like [150], [172] and [560] further to the west, can be termed 'plough soil' and again it is likely that it was formed over several hundred years by a combination of ploughing, manuring and general bioturbation.

7.7.5 Group 6 Discussion

7.7.5.1 Documentary and cartographic evidence indicates that between the end of the Roman period and the post-Medieval period there was little or no activity in the Bow area. The evidence recovered from this excavation strongly supports this notion. It seems likely that the area formed part of an extensive rural landscape which remained relatively unaltered for almost 1500 years. The site at 91-93 Parnell Road probably remained under pasture or crop for much of this time. Certainly there was no indication of occupation of the site by Anglo-Saxon or Medieval communities.

7.8 Late Post-Medieval Agricultural/Horticultural Activity (Group 7) - Figure 8

7.8.1 Group 7.1

7.8.1.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of a sub-circular pit [190] was recorded cutting into the earlier soil horizon [150] (see Group 6.2) at a maximum height of 11.64m OD. To the north it was truncated by a later feature [113] and to the west by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.50m east-west by c. 0.50m north-south. and its maximum depth was c. 0.26m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a steep concave side to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [189] a friable mid greenish brown, with black and red mottling, sandy silt which contained frequent crushed and fragmented burnt daub, frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and occasional fine sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included an iron object. Although the inclusions within the fill of this feature would suggest a Roman date for its back-filling, it is more likely, given its stratigraphic position, that the material is residual and that this feature originates from the post-Medieval period.

7.8.2 Group 7.2

7.8.2.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of a sub-circular pit [563] was recorded cutting into the earlier soil horizon [561] (see Group 6.4) at a maximum height of 11.71m OD. To the north the feature was truncated by later features [383], [538] (see Group 7.7) and [476], and to the south it was truncated by a modern intrusion. To the west the upper part of the edge was truncated by the cut for a modern drain. Its maximum dimensions were c. 3.20m east-west by c. 1.84m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.67m. To the south-east, where the upper part of the edge survived, there was a sharp break of slope and the concave sides generally sloped gently down to meet a concave, slightly sloping, base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by a moderately well compacted dark brown clayey silty sand [555] which contained occasional thin lenses of fine grey sand, occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, burnt stone, fragments of building material and metallic objects. This feature, probably dug for the disposal of domestic refuse, predated the main elements of post-Medieval land-use covered by Group 7 but is included since it is likely to be post-Medieval in origin.

7.8.3 Group 7.3

7.8.3.1 A rectilinear cut [132] was excavated adjacent to the site's northern limit of excavation. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of c. 11.28m OD. To the west it terminated in a square butt-end and to the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.80m east-west by c. 0.65m north-south and generally it was c. 0.20m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to

meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled generally by sterile brickearth [116] throughout which were occasional thin lenses of dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. A single sherd of ceramic was recovered from the deposit. This feature, and the remainder of Group 7.3 (along with those comprising Group 7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7), comprised a distinct element of post-Medieval land-use whose interpretation is discussed below in the general summary of Group 7 (see 7.8.13).

7.8.3.2 Approximately 0.10m to the south of [132] and separated from it by a thin baulk of natural, undisturbed brickearth was a similar rectilinear cut [133]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.28m OD. To the west it terminated in a square butt-end and to the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.80m east-west by c. 0.58m north-south and it was generally c. 0.19m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by sterile brickearth [134].

7.8.3.3 Approximately 0.12m to the south of [133] and separated from it by a thin baulk of natural, undisturbed, brickearth was a similar rectilinear cut [564]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth to the north at a maximum height of 11.14m OD. To the west it terminated in a square butt-end and to the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.85m east-west by c. 0.57m north-south and generally it was c. 0.15m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [562] sterile brickearth. [564] probably continued c. 1.40m to the east as [177] (see Group 7.4). The two features were physically separated by the cut for a modern wall foundation.

7.8.3.4 Immediately to the south of [564], and truncated by that feature, was a similar rectilinear cut [136]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth to the south at a maximum height of 11.14m OD. To the west it terminated in a rounded butt-end and to the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.54m east-west by c. 0.56m north-south and generally it was c. 0.20m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was generally filled by [137] sterile brickearth throughout which were occasional thin lenses of dark grey silty sand. A single sherd of ceramic was recovered from the deposit. [136] probably continued c. 1.40m to the east as [175] (see Group 7.4). The two features were physically separated by the cut for a modern wall foundation.

7.8.3.5 Immediately to the south of [136] and separated from it by a thin baulk of natural, undisturbed brickearth was a similar rectilinear cut [130]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.32m OD. To the west it terminated in a rounded butt-end and to the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions

were c. 1.69m east-west by c. 0.5m north-south and generally it was c. 0.20m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was generally filled by [129] sterile brickearth throughout which were occasional thin lenses of dark greyish brown silty sand which contained occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. A copper alloy object was recovered from the lower part of the deposit.

7.8.3.6 Cut into the base of [130] at a maximum height of 11.01m OD was a sub-square spade cut [216]. It measured c. 0.24m by c. 0.22m and it was c. 0.37m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall, with steep straight sides to the east and west and vertical sides to the north and south, to meet a narrow base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by a soft dark grey sandy silt [131] which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of burnt daub and occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles. This cut was probably associated with the (original) excavation of [130].

7.8.3.7 Cut into the upper edge of [130] at a maximum height of 11.19m OD was a sub-circular stakehole [400]. Its maximum diameter was c. 140mm and its maximum depth was c. 90mm. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides which tapered to a rounded point. It was filled by [401] a soft dark grey sandy silt which contained occasional flecks of burnt daub and occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles.

7.8.4 Group 7.4

7.8.4.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation was a sub-rectangular pit [203]. The feature was recorded as one feature although it had been physically separated into two distinct parts by a later feature [177] (see 7.8.4.2). The feature cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.18m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.80m east-west by c. 0.67m north-south and it was c. 0.13m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled [202] generally by sterile brickearth throughout which were frequent thin lenses of dark mid greyish orange sandy silt, which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. Fragments of degraded animal bone were recovered from the deposit. The feature was probably associated with the excavation of a series of rectilinear cut features (e.g. [177] and [175] below) - an interpretation of which forms part of the general discussion for Group 7.

7.8.4.2 Cutting through [203] was a rectilinear cut [177]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.20m OD. To the west it was truncated by a modern intrusion and to the east it met the limit of excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.28m east-west by c. 0.53m north-south and it was c. 0.26m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical side to the north and a straight vertical or undercutting side to the south. On both sides there was a sharp break of slope at the base, which was generally undulating. The upper part of the feature was filled by a moderately well compacted

mid grey sandy silt [176] which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. This deposit merged into brickearth, throughout which were occasional thin lenses of mid grey sandy silt, which in turn merged into the underlying undisturbed brickearth. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, and fragments of clay pipe.

7.8.4.3 Immediately to the south of [177] and separated from it by a thin baulk, c. 80mm thick, of natural undisturbed brickearth was a similar rectilinear cut [175]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.22m OD. To the west it was truncated by a modern intrusion and to the east it terminated in a rounded butt-end. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.67m east-west by c. 0.69m north-south and generally it was c. 0.30m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was generally filled by [174] sterile brickearth throughout which were frequent thin lenses of mid grey sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt coal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material and industrial waste material/slag.

7.8.5 Group 7.5

7.8.5.1 Part of a rectilinear cut [537] was excavated adjacent to the site's northern limit of excavation. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of c. 11.09m OD. To the west the feature was not excavated, to the east it was truncated by a later feature [392] and to the north it met the limit of excavation. A length of c. 0.25m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.48m. Generally it was c. 0.28m deep. At the top the one edge to be revealed broke sharply to fall with a straight vertical side to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The lower part of the feature was filled by [536] brickearth contaminated with frequent thin lenses of mid to dark grey clayey silt which contained occasional pea-grit and fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. The upper part of the feature was filled by [535] a mixture of firm mid to dark brownish grey silty clay (50%) with brickearth (50%). Included throughout were occasional pea-grit and fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. A single sherd of ceramic and small fragments of ceramic building material were recovered from the deposit. This feature was one of a series of such features excavated within the northern half of the site (see Group 7.3, 7.4, 7.6 and 7.7). An interpretation of these features forms part of the general discussion for Group 7 (see 7.8.13).

7.8.5.2 Immediately to the south of [537] and separated from it by a thin baulk, c. 30mm thick, of natural undisturbed brickearth was part of a similar rectilinear cut [591]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.05m OD. To the west it was not excavated and to the east and south it was truncated by later features [392] and [541]

respectively. A length of c. 0.25m was revealed and its truncated width was c. 0.25m. Generally it was c. 0.15m deep. At the top the one edge to be revealed broke sharply to fall with a straight vertical side to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [590] sterile brickearth, distinguished from the surrounding undisturbed natural strata by a slight colour variation - the fill being slightly greyer.

7.8.5.3 To the south [537] was truncated by a similar, east-west oriented rectilinear feature [541] which was recorded cutting into the natural brickearth to the south at a maximum height of c. 11.07m OD. A length of c. 0.15m of the feature was revealed. To the west it was not excavated and to the east it was truncated by a later feature [392]. Its maximum width was c. 0.63m and generally it was c. 0.19m deep. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet an undulating base sharply. The feature was filled by [540] brickearth contaminated with frequent thin lenses of mid to dark grey clayey silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional pea-grit.

7.8.6 Group 7.6

7.8.6.1 Part of a rectilinear cut [619] was revealed adjacent to the site's northern limit of excavation. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into natural brickearth and, to the east, into the unexcavated fill of an earlier feature [595] at a maximum height of c. 10.89m OD. To the west the feature terminated in rounded butt-end. Although it was not traced to the east it is likely that it was truncated by a later feature [476]. To the north it met the limit of excavation. A length of c. 0.50m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.35m. The feature was filled by [618] the slightly disturbed fill of [595] (see Group 5.13). This feature was one of a series of such features excavated within the northern half of the site (see Group 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.7). An interpretation of these features forms part of the general discussion for Group 7 (see 7.8.13).

7.8.6.2 It is likely that [619] was the lower part of a rectilinear feature [592], oriented east-west, and recorded cutting into the fill of an earlier feature [576] at a maximum height of 11.00m OD. A length of c. 1.55m was revealed. To the north it met the limit of excavation, to the west it terminated in a square butt-end and to the east it was truncated by a later feature [476]. Its maximum width was c. 0.30m and its maximum depth was c. 0.47m. To the south-west the upper part of the edge was truncated by a later feature [589] (see 7.8.6.4). The remaining part of this edge had steep straight sides falling towards a base which was not satisfactorily determined (principally because of the proximity of the feature to the site's northern limit of excavation). Later it became apparent that the real lower edge of the feature had not been located *i.e.* it was [619]. The feature was filled by [593] a well compacted dark grey, mottled with mid brown, clayey sandy silt which contained frequent flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional fine sub-angular pebbles.

7.8.6.3 Part of a rectilinear cut [621] was revealed, but not excavated, adjacent to the site's northern limit of excavation. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into natural brickearth at a

maximum height of c. 10.89m OD. To the east the feature terminated in rounded butt-end - located c. 50mm to the west of the butt-end of [619]. To the west it was truncated by a later feature [392]. A length of c. 0.50m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.28m. The feature was filled by [620] sterile brickearth and, to the east by the slightly disturbed fill of [595] (see Group 5.13) through which it had been cut.

7.8.6.4 Immediately to the south of [619] and [621] was a rectilinear cut [589]. To the north this feature truncated the upper part of the edge of [592]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into natural brickearth to the south at a maximum height of c. 11.16m OD. To the east the feature was truncated by the cut for a modern drain and to the west by a later feature [392]. A length of c. 0.75m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.55m. The feature was filled by [588] a soft mid grey clayey silt which contained frequent patches of brickearth, occasional fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic and fragments of ceramic building material.

7.8.6.5 Immediately to the south of [589], and separated from it by a thin baulk, c. 80mm thick, of natural brickearth, was a rectilinear cut [617]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into natural brickearth at a maximum height of c. 11.10m OD. To the east the feature was truncated by a later feature [615] (see 7.8.6.6) and to the west by a later feature [392]. A length of c. 0.24m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.36m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet an undulating base sharply. The feature was filled by sterile brickearth [616], distinguished from the surrounding undisturbed strata by a slight colour variation - the fill was greyer. This feature was one of a series of such features excavated within the northern half of the site.

7.8.6.6 A rectilinear feature [615] truncated the eastern end of [617]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into natural brickearth at a maximum height of c. 11.18m OD. To the east the feature was truncated by the cut for a modern drain and to the west by a later feature [392]. A length of c. 0.39m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.39m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet an undulating base sharply. The feature was filled by brickearth [614] mixed with the fill of an earlier feature [595] (see Group 5.13) through which it cut to the east.

7.8.6.7 Approximately 70mm to the south of [615] and [617], and separated from them by a narrow baulk of natural brickearth was a rectilinear cut [613]. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into natural brickearth at a maximum height of c. 11.17m OD. To the east the feature terminated in a square butt-end and to the west was truncated by a later feature [392]. A length of c. 0.40m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.36m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet an undulating base sharply. The feature was filled by [612] a mixture of brickearth (70%) with a friable mid to dark grey sandy silt (30%) which contained

occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. This feature was one of a series of such features excavated within the northern half of the site.

7.8.7 Group 7.7

7.8.7.1 Part of a rectilinear cut [534] was excavated adjacent to the site's northern limit of excavation. The feature, oriented east-west, cut into the fill [547] (see 5.8.7.2) of a similar feature to the north at a maximum height of c. 11.48m OD. To the east, and partially to the north, the feature met the limit of excavation. To the south and west it was truncated by later features [528] (see 7.8.7.3) and [476] respectively. A length of c. 7.40m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.36m. Its maximum depth was c. 0.46m. At the top the one edge to be revealed broke sharply to fall with a straight vertical side to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The lower part of the feature, c. 0.10m, was filled by [546] brickearth contaminated with frequent patches of dark brown silty clayey sand which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub. The upper part of the feature was filled by a moderately compacted dark brown silty clayey sand [533] which contained moderate flecks of burnt daub, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and coal. Material culture recovered from the deposits included sherds of ceramic and fragmentary ceramic building material. This feature was one of a series of such features excavated within the northern half of the site (see Group 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6). An interpretation of these features forms part of the general discussion for Group 7 (see 7.8.13).

7.8.7.2 To the north of [534] and truncated by it was a deposit [547] interpreted as the fill of a similar rectilinear cut. No edges of this feature were revealed due to the truncatory effect of [574] to the south and the fact that it met the limit of excavation to the north and east. Its maximum dimensions were c. 3.2m east-west by c. 0.18m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.10m. It was recorded at a maximum height of 11.45m OD. The deposit was a moderately well compacted mid to dark brown silty clayey sand which contained occasional pockets of brickearth, occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub.

7.8.7.3 To the south of [534] and truncating the upper part of its southern edge was a rectilinear cut [528]. The feature, oriented east-west, was recorded at a maximum height of c. 11.58m OD. To the east the feature met the limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated by a later feature [476] and to the south parts of its upper edge were truncated by another later but intimately related feature [419] (see 7.8.7.4). A length of c. 7.30m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.40m. Its maximum depth was c. 0.50m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by [527] a moderately well compacted mid brown silty sandy clay which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal, coal and burnt

daub and occasional thin lenses of brickearth. In addition, there was a concentration of friable dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of burnt daub towards the eastern end of the feature. Material culture recovered from the deposits included sherds of ceramic and fragmentary ceramic building material.

7.8.7.4 South of [528] and truncating part of its upper edge was a rectilinear cut [419]. The feature, oriented east-west, was recorded at a maximum height of c. 11.58m OD. To the east the feature met the limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated by a later feature [476]. A length of c. 7.50m was revealed its maximum width was c. 0.55m and its maximum depth was c. 0.70m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The lower c. 0.20m of the feature was filled by [389] a moderately well compacted mixture of brickearth and dark brown clayey sandy silt. Included throughout were frequent fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal. In addition, there was a concentration of friable dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of burnt daub towards the eastern end of the feature. The upper c. 0.50m of the feature was filled by [418] a moderately well compacted dark brown sandy silt which contained moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal, coal and burnt daub and occasional thin lenses of brickearth, especially towards the interface with [389]. Material culture recovered from the deposits included sherds of ceramic, fragmentary ceramic building material, metallic objects and fragments of clay pipe.

7.8.7.5 South of [419] and partially truncated by it was a rectilinear cut [393]. The feature, oriented east-west, was recorded at a maximum height of c. 11.57m OD. To the east the feature met the limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated by a later feature [476]. A length of c. 7.50m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.76m. Its maximum depth was c. 0.57m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The lower c. 0.30m of the feature was filled by [397] brickearth which was contaminated with moderate thin lenses of dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. The upper c. 0.25m of the feature was filled by a friable dark brown sandy silt [394] which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional thin lenses of brickearth, especially along the southern edge of the feature. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic.

7.8.7.6 To the south of [393] and partially truncated by it was a rectilinear cut [538]. The feature, oriented east-west, was recorded at a maximum height of c. 11.69m OD. To the east the feature met the limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated by a later feature [476]. A length of c. 6.80m was revealed and its maximum width was c. 0.70m. Its maximum depth was c. 0.55m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a

sharp break of slope. The lower c. 0.10m of the feature was filled by [543] brickearth which was contaminated with moderate thin lenses of dark grey sandy silt which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. The upper c. 0.40m of the feature was filled by a friable mid brown sandy silt [539] which contained occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub and occasional thin lenses of mid grey fine sand, especially along the southern edge of the feature. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron and copper alloy objects, fragments of pipe clay, industrial waste material/slag and degraded animal bones.

7.8.8 Group 7.8

7.8.8.1 Towards the western end of the site part of an extensive probably rectangular feature [97] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [106] and [107] at a maximum height of 11.56m OD. To the east, and also partially to the south-west, it was truncated by modern intrusions and to the north it was truncated by a later, but probably intimately related, feature [128]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 4.0m north-south by c. 2.60m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.40m. At the two surviving edges, to the west and south, there was a sharp break of slope into steep straight sides which met an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. Within parts of the features base was a primary fill [140] consisting of a mixture of soft dark brownish grey sandy silt (50%) with crushed and fragmented burnt daub (50%). Included throughout were frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal, occasional patches of brickearth, and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. The deposit was c. 80mm thick. The remainder of the feature was filled by [96] a soft dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of burnt daub, moderate flecks and small fragments of charcoal and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron and copper objects, burnt flints, industrial waste material/slag and degraded animal bones. This feature probably represents the effects of 'digging over' the ground during small-scale post-Medieval agricultural or horticultural activity.

7.8.9 Group 7.9

7.8.9.1 Close to north-western corner of the site, part of a extensive probably rectangular feature [128] was recorded. It cut into the buried soil horizon [107] to the west and an intimately related feature [97] (see Group 7.8) to the south at a maximum height of 11.49m OD. To the east it was truncated by a modern intrusion and to the north it met the limit of excavation. Part of the southern edge was cut through by a later feature [87] and part of the western edge by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 4.20m north-south by c. 2.05m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.50m. Along the two surviving edges, to the west and south, there was a sharp break of slope into straight, almost vertical, sides which met an undulating base with a sharp

break of slope. The feature was filled by [104] a moderately compact mixture of dark brown sandy silt (60%) with brickearth (40%). Included throughout were moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, iron and copper alloy objects, fragments of clay pipe, industrial waste material/slag and degraded animal bones. Like [97] (see Group 7.8) this feature probably represented the effects of 'digging over' the ground during small scale agricultural or horticultural activity. This feature was responsible for the horizontal truncation of a series of rectilinear features described above (see Group 7.3). It can be equated with a similar feature [113] (see Group 7.10) to the east - the two were divided by a modern intrusion, c. 1.25m wide.

7.8.10 Group 7.10

7.8.10.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of an extensive probably rectilinear feature [113] was recorded cutting into the soil horizon [150]/[172] (see Group 6.2) to the south, at a maximum height of 11.75m OD. To the west it was truncated by a modern intrusion, to the east by a later feature [392] and to the north it met the limit of excavation. Part of the southern edge was cut through by a modern drain cut. Its maximum dimensions were c. 5.45m east-west by c. 3.80m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.60m. Along the surviving southern edges there was a sharp break of slope into a straight steep side which met an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The feature was filled by a friable mixture of brickearth (50%) with dark brown sandy silt (50%) [112], which contained moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and burnt daub. Material culture recovered from this deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material, fragments of clay pipe and industrial waste material/slag. This feature was responsible for the horizontal truncation of a series of rectilinear features described above (see Group 7.4). This feature can be equated with [128] (see - Group 7.9) located c. 1.25m to the west, and separated from it by a modern intrusion.

7.8.11 Group 7.11

7.8.11.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of a linear, east-west oriented, cut [559] was recorded cutting into the soil horizon [560] (see Group 6.3) to the south at a maximum height of 11.60m OD. To the east it was truncated by the cut for a modern drain, and to the west and north by later features [392] and [554] respectively. The latter feature (see 7.8.11.3) can be interpreted as a secondary 're-cut' of [559]. To the north a similar feature [557] (see 7.8.11.2), the primary 're-cut', cut into its fill. A length of c. 0.48m east-west survived and its maximum depth was c. 0.45m. Along the surviving edge there was a sharp break of slope into a steep straight side which fell to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [558] a friable mixture of brickearth (60%) with mid to dark brownish grey sandy silt (40%). Included throughout were moderate fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and ceramic building material and occasional small fragments of chalk. Material culture recovered from the

deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of ceramic building material and degraded animal bones. This feature probably represents the effects of 'digging over' the ground during small scale agricultural or horticultural activity undertaken during the post-Medieval period.

7.8.11.2 Cutting into the fill of [559], at a maximum height of 11.61m OD, was part of a similar, east-west oriented, linear cut [557]. It can be interpreted as a primary re-cut of [559]. To the east it was truncated by the cut for a modern drain, and to the west and north by later features [392] and [554] respectively. The latter feature (see 7.8.11.3) can be interpreted as a secondary 're-cut' of [559]. A length of c. 0.49m east-west survived and its maximum depth was c. 0.34m. Along the surviving edge there was a sharp break of slope into a steep straight side which fell to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [556] a friable mixture of mid greyish brown sandy silt (70%) with brickearth (30%). Included throughout were moderate fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and ceramic building material. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic and fragments of clay pipe. The feature represents further 'digging-over' of the subsoil, subsequent to that represented by [559].

7.8.11.3 Truncating both [557] and [559] was part of a similar, east-west oriented, linear cut [554]. It can be interpreted as a secondary re-cut of [559]. To the east it was truncated by the cut for a modern drain, and to the west by a later feature [392]. To the north it met the limit of excavation. A length of c. 0.58m east-west survived and its maximum depth was c. 0.54m. Along the surviving edge there was a sharp break of slope into a steep straight side which fell to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [553] a friable mid to dark brownish grey sandy silt which contained occasional pea-grit and fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and mid grey chalky mortar. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of clay pipe and fragments of vessel glass. The feature represents further 'digging-over' of the ground, subsequent to those represented by [559] and [557]. This feature was responsible for the horizontal truncation of the series of rectilinear features described above (see Group 7.6).

7.8.12 Group 7.12

7.8.12.1 Towards the northern limit of excavation in the eastern part of the site a dumped deposit [489] was recorded, at a maximum height of 11.68m OD, partially overlying the series of rectilinear trenches described previously (see Group 7.7). To the north it met the limit of excavation, to the east had been truncated by machine clearance in advance of the excavation and to the west it had been truncated by a later feature [476]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.80m east-west by c. 2.0m north south and it was up to 100mm thick. This deposit consisted of a friable dark brown sandy silt which contained frequent small fragments of coal, occasional medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of burnt daub and charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included

sherds of ceramic, fragments of clay pipe and fragments of ceramic building material. To the south the deposit filled a shallow depression - probably the surviving part of a cut feature similar to [128], [113] and [559] (see Groups 7.9-7.11 inclusive). It can therefore be interpreted as the effects of 'digging-over' the subsoil during agricultural or horticultural activity.

7.8.13 Group 7 Discussion

7.8.13.1 The elements of Group 7 represent the first significant human activity upon the site since the late Roman period. This activity, which probably occurred during the late 18th or early 19th centuries, seems to have been undertaken as part of a small scale agricultural or horticultural occupation. Initial ground preparation involved the digging of a series of narrow, parallel linear trenches in order to facilitate drainage (see Group 7.3-7.7). Although there was evidence of re-digging within some of these features, this action would probably not have been undertaken more than once - at least to such a depth. This is supported by the fact that most of the trenches were separated by extremely thin baulks of undisturbed material - clearly these would not have survived continual re-digging. The trenches were probably not emptied out, rather the subsoil was merely 'turned over' within them. The presence of spade marks was noted within the bases of virtually all of these trenches. Some contamination of the deposits undoubtedly occurred and it is only by the presence of a small quantity of intrusive cultural debris within the fills of the trenches that we can establish that this activity was indeed undertaken during the post-Medieval period. Clearly, where the trenches cut through subsoil which primarily consisted of Roman deposits, then the vast majority of the materials recovered from them was residual and Roman in date.

7.8.13.2 The precise nature of the activity for which the subsoil was so intensively prepared remains elusive. The crop was cultivated in an horizon which consisted of churned up Roman deposits incorporated into the extensive 'plough-soil' which had developed upon the site (see Group 7.8-7.11). The extent of the activity (in total c. 20m of trenches were encountered) represented by the elements of Group 7 suggests that it was the horticultural/agricultural endeavours of more than one person/household. This would indicate that it predated the establishment of terraced housing upon the site during the mid to late 19th century. There is cartographic evidence for post-Medieval market gardening in the Bow area.

7.9 Later Post-Medieval Activity (Group 8) - Figure 9

7.9.1 Group 8.1

7.9.1.1 In the south-western corner of the site, part of a sub-circular pit [62] was recorded cutting into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.46m OD. To the south it met the limit of excavation and its maximum dimensions were c. 0.82m east-west by c. 0.70m north-south. It was excavated to a depth of c. 0.20m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides. It was filled by [63] a moderately well compacted dark brownish orange sandy silt which contained frequent dark purplish grey ash and occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of vessel glass, fragments of ceramic building material and metallic objects. This feature can be interpreted as a refuse pit. It is likely that it was dug, probably within the last century in the back garden of a house, in order to dispose of fire debris.

7.9.2 Group 8.2

7.9.2.1 In the south-western corner of the site part of a sub-rectangular pit [69] was recorded cutting into the natural brickearth at a maximum height of 11.47m OD. To the south and west it met the limit of excavation and its maximum dimensions were c. 0.56m east-west by c. 1.50m north-south. It was excavated to a depth of c. 0.26m. Along the north edge there was an imperceptible break of slope at the top into a gently sloping concave side which met a flat base again imperceptibly. Along the eastern side there was a sharp break of slope at the top into a steep concave side which fell to meet the base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [70] a loose mid yellowish brown sandy silt which contained frequent crushed and fragmented chalky mortar, occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, degraded animal bones, fragments of vessel glass, fragments of ceramic building material and metallic objects. This feature can also be interpreted as a refuse pit, probably associated with the Victorian and post-Victorian housing on the site.

7.9.3 Group 8.3

7.9.3.1 Towards the site's south-western corner a large rectangular (with a sub-square extension to the north-east) pit [81] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [106] at a maximum height of 11.52m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 4.16m north-south by c. 2.36m east-west and it was hand excavated to a maximum depth of c. 0.25m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides. Two arbitrary spits were excavated through the fill of this feature. The lowermost [64] was c. 100mm thick and the uppermost [52] was c. 50mm thick. Both consisted of a well compacted mixture of mid grey silty clay (70%) and crushed and fragmented building debris (30%). Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, fragments of

vessel glass, fragments of clay pipe, fragments of ceramic building material and metallic objects. Given its size this feature could be interpreted as a quarry pit excavated for the purpose of brickearth or gravel extraction. Alternatively it may have functioned as a cess pit associated with the Victorian and post-Victorian housing on the site - prior to organised sewerage disposal.

7.9.4 Group 8.4

7.9.4.1 Cut through the fill of [81], at a maximum height of 11.49m OD, was a sub-square pit [51]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.18m east-west by c. 1.22m north-south and it was excavated to a depth of c. 0.54m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides. It was filled by [50] a moderately well compacted dark greyish brown silty clay which contained frequent lenses of dark grey ash and frequent fine sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of vessel glass and fragments of ceramic building material. This feature can be interpreted either as a general refuse pit or a back-filled cess pit, probably associated with the Victorian and post-Victorian housing on the site. The latter interpretation may be supported by the fact that the feature was partially sealed by a rectangular brick and concrete 'pad' [48]. The maximum dimensions of this structure were c. 1.90m east-west by c. 1.34m north-south and it was recorded at a maximum height of 11.50m OD. To the east the structure consisted of a single mortared course of bricks (223mm by 100mm by 60mm). To the west it consisted of a layer of concrete, c. 35mm deep, consolidated by a layer of broken tiles. The north-western corner of the structure was truncated by machine clearance in advance of the excavation. Excavation of the structure left a rectangular cut [49] up to 80mm deep within the underlying strata.

7.9.5 Group 8.5

7.9.5.1 Towards the north-western corner of the site a rectangular pit [87] was recorded, at a maximum height of 11.53m OD, cutting into the fill of an earlier feature [128] to the south. The feature's maximum dimensions were c. 1.60m north-south by c. 0.84m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.53m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight, almost vertical sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. The feature was filled by [88] a loose mixture of dark purplish black ash/cinders (80%) and coarse sand (20%). Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of vessel glass, and animal bones. This feature can also be interpreted as a refuse pit, probably associated with the Victorian and post-Victorian housing on the site.

7.9.5.2 Cut into the base of the pit was a sub-circular stakehole [313] of maximum width 80mm and maximum depth 110mm. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep concave sides which tapered to a sharp point. It was filled by [314] a soft dark grey clayey sandy silt which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of burnt daub.

7.9.6 Group 8.6

7.9.6.1 Towards the north-western corner of the site part of an irregular shaped pit [37] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon to the east at a maximum height of 11.56 m OD. To the west it met the limit of excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.65m north-south by c. 0.50m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.35m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall, along the eastern and southern sides, with generally steep concave sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope and, along the northern side, with an almost vertical side to meet the base with an imperceptible break of slope. The primary fill [43], which was c. 100mm thick, consisted of a moderately compacted mid greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal, occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional small fragments of roofing slate. The secondary fill [41] was c. 150mm thick, consisted of a moderately well compacted dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Overlying the latter deposit was a further fill [42], up to 90mm thick, which consisted of a well compacted mid greyish brown, with mid brownish orange mottling, sandy silt which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of charcoal, occasional flecks and small fragments of oyster shell, occasional small fragments of roofing slate and occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. The upper fill [38], up to c. 150mm thick, consisted of a loose mixture of dark greyish brown sandy silt (50%) with crushed and fragmented charcoal (50%). Included throughout were occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks and small fragments of oyster shell and occasional small fragments of chalk. Material culture recovered from all these deposits included sherds of ceramic, metallic objects, fragments of ceramic building material and degraded animal bone. Pit [37] can be interpreted as a refuse pit, probably associated with the Victorian and post-Victorian housing on the site.

7.9.6.2 Cut into the base of [37], at a maximum height of 11.24m OD, was a sub-circular post-hole [40]. Its maximum diameter was c. 0.25m and its maximum depth was c. 0.25m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight, almost vertical, sides which tapered to rounded point. It was filled by [47] a firm mid greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of burnt daub.

7.9.7 Group 8.7

7.9.7.1 In the extreme north-western corner of the site part of a probably rectangular pit [54] was recorded at a maximum height of 11.45m OD. To the north and east it met the limit of excavation. Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.12m east-west by c. 1.05m north-south and it was excavated to a depth of c. 0.90m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with straight vertical sides. The feature contained a series of fills. The lowermost to be excavated [68] was a soft

dark greyish brown sandy silt (maximum thickness c. 0.30m) which contained frequent medium sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks of ceramic building material. Overlying this (in sequence) were: [59] a loose mixture of grey sandy silt (50%) with crushed and fragmented mortar (50%) (maximum thickness c. 0.40m) which contained occasional flecks and small fragments of brick; [53] a soft dark greyish brown sandy silt (of maximum thickness c. 0.44m) which contained moderate fine sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material; [44] a moderately well compacted dark brownish grey, mottled with light brownish yellow silty sandy clay (of maximum thickness c. 120mm) which contained frequent fine sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material; [46] a highly compacted dark orange, with light yellow mottling, silty sand (of maximum thickness c. 70mm) which contained occasional fine sub-rounded pebbles, occasional flecks of charcoal and chalk and occasional flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material; [45] a highly compacted mid orange yellow sandy clay (re-deposited brickearth) of maximum thickness c. 120mm. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, iron and copper objects, fragments of vessel glass, industrial waste material/slag, fragments of ceramic building material and degraded animal bones. Given its depth it is likely that this feature was originally dug either for the purpose of brickearth or gravel extraction (prior to the establishment of housing upon the site) or it may have served as a cess pit associated with the late Victorian housing.

7.9.7.2 Adjacent to the limit of excavation in the north-western corner of the site and cutting into the upper fill of [54] (see 7.9.7.1), at a maximum height of 11.66m OD, was part of an L-shaped cut [35] for a 20th century drain. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.90m north-south by c. 0.7m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.60m. The lower part of the feature was filled by [39] grey concrete mixed with fragmented brick. The upper part of the feature was filled by [36] a loose dark grey sandy silt which contained frequent crushed and fragmented concrete and occasional patches of brickearth. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic, vessel glass and fragmented ceramic building material. During the excavation of this feature part of a ceramic drain pipe was revealed in the site's western section indicating that the deposits described were the packing and back-fill of a drain trench.

7.9.8 Group 8.8

7.9.8.1 Towards the site's north-western corner a rectangular pit [55] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [107] at a maximum height of 11.48m OD. The feature measured c. 1.38m east-west by c. 0.72m north-south and it was excavated to a depth of c. 0.40m. Its north-eastern corner was truncated by a modern intrusion. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides. It was filled by [56] a moderately well compacted mid brown, with light yellow mottling, sandy clay which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal. The edge of the cut was 'lined' with a thin deposit consisting of crushed charcoal, grey ash and pea-grit. Several sherds of ceramic were recovered from the deposit.

7.9.9 Group 8.9

7.9.9.1 Towards the site's north-western corner a square post-pit [58] was recorded cutting into the buried soil horizon [107] at a maximum height of 11.51m OD. It measured c. 0.64m by c. 0.52m and its maximum depth was c. 0.20m. At the top the edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. The lower part of the feature was filled by [67] a well compacted mid greyish brown sandy silt, up to c. 0.14m thick, which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and ceramic building material. Cut into the latter deposit was a sub-circular post-hole [66] of maximum diameter c. 0.14m and maximum depth c. 0.14m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [65] a loose dark greyish brown sandy silt which contained frequent fine sub-angular flints and occasional flecks and fragments of chalk and ceramic building material. Sealing this feature was a deposit [57] seemingly identical to [67] and of maximum thickness c. 50mm. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic, fragments of vessel glass and fragments of clay pipe. This post-hole may have held a substantial upright, possibly in the back garden of a late or post-Victorian house.

7.9.10 Group 8.10

7.9.10.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation was a square post-hole [195] recorded cutting into the soil horizon [172] at a maximum height of 11.68m OD. The feature measured c. 0.30m square and was c. 0.45m deep. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [194] a friable dark brown humic sandy silt which contained moderate medium sub-rounded and sub-angular pebbles. Two house bricks were laid within the base of the feature. This post-hole may have housed a substantial upright, possibly in the back garden of a late or post-Victorian house.

7.9.11 Group 8.11

7.9.11.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation a sub-rectangular pit [117] was recorded cutting into the fill of feature [113] at a maximum height of 11.56m OD. The feature measured c. 0.66m east-west by c. 0.95m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.85m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [118] a loose mixture of dark grey to black ash/cinders (75%) with coarse sand (25%). Included throughout were occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional medium and large fragments of ceramic building material. This feature can be interpreted as a refuse pit. It is likely that it was dug, probably within the last century in the back garden of a house, in order to dispose of fire debris.

7.9.12 Group 8.12

7.9.12.1 In the centre of the site was a vast sub-rectangular pit [392] recorded at a maximum height of 11.65m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 5.30m north-south (to the north it met the limit of excavation) by c. 4.90m east-west. It was excavated to a depth of c. 0.85m (at 10.84m OD). At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides. It was filled by a series of distinct fills. The lowermost fill [388] to be excavated was soft brickearth with frequent thin lenses of mid to dark grey silty clay throughout. Overlying this, in sequence, were: [387] a friable mixture of brickearth (50%) with mid to dark grey silty clay (50%) which contained frequent fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal, ceramic building material and oyster shell; [386] a soft dark greyish brown clayey silt with inclusions similar to those of [387]; [385] a loose mixture of mid grey ash (60%) with crushed and fragmented chalky mortar (40%) which contained frequent fragmented roofing tiles and occasional flecks of charcoal; [384] a firm mid to dark yellowish brown clayey silt with inclusions similar to those of [387]; [383] a firm mixture of dark greyish brown sandy silt (75%) with fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles (25%) which contained frequent flecks and small fragments of grey chalky mortar and occasional flecks of charcoal. Material culture recovered from these deposits included sherds of ceramic and fragments of pipe clay. Given its extent and depth it is likely that this feature was originally dug for the purpose of brickearth or gravel extraction.

7.9.13 Group 8.13

7.9.13.1 Towards the centre of the site a sub-rectangular pit [391] was recorded cutting into the western edge of an earlier feature [392] at a maximum height of 11.24m OD. It measured c. 1.0m east-west by c. 0.56m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.24m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet an undulating base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [390] a loose mixture of mid to dark greyish purple ash and crushed and fragmented cinders. Included throughout were occasional fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles. Sherds of ceramic, fragments of vessel glass and fragments of pipe clay were recovered from the deposit. This feature can be interpreted as a refuse pit. It is likely that it was dug, probably within the last century in the back garden of a house, in order to dispose of fire debris.

7.9.14 Group 8.14

7.9.14.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation was part of a sub-circular pit [550] recorded cutting into the fill of an earlier feature [554] at a maximum height of 11.59m OD. To the north it met the limit of excavation and to the east it was truncated by the cut for a modern drain. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.40m north-south by c. 0.57m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.50m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a steep concave side to meet what

survived of a concave base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [549] a firm mid to dark brownish grey sandy silt which contained frequent patches of brickearth, moderate fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and mid yellowish white chalky mortar. Several sherds of ceramic were recovered from the deposit. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret. It may have been associated with gravel or brickearth quarrying on the site during the post-Medieval period or it may have been dug in preparation for the insertion of a series of drains which were removed from this part of the site prior to careful excavation. This feature could be equated with a number of similar features to the east (see 7.9.15-18 - Groups 8.15-18).

7.9.15 Group 8.15

7.9.15.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of a sub-circular pit [551] was recorded at a maximum height of 11.69m OD. To the north it was excavated out of sequence, to the west it was truncated by a later features [476] and to the south it was truncated by a modern intrusion. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.70m north-south by c. 2.80m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.45m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a gently sloping concave side to meet what survived of a concave base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [552] a friable dark brown sandy silt which contained frequent fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles, moderate flecks and small fragments of ceramic building material and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and coal. Several sherds of ceramic and fragments of clay pipe were recovered from the deposit. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret. It may have been dug in preparation for the insertion of a series of ceramic drains which were removed from this part of the site prior to careful excavation. This feature could be equated with a similar feature [550] to the west (see Group 8.14).

7.9.16 Group 8.16

7.9.16.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation, part of cut feature [506] was recorded at a maximum height of 11.62m OD. To the north, and partially to the east, it was truncated by later features [476] and [488]. To the west and south it was truncated by modern intrusions. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.10m north-south by c. 0.62m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.47m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with a gently sloping concave side. It was filled by [505] a moderately well compacted friable mid to dark brown clayey silty sand which contained frequent fine, medium and large sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal, coal and ceramic building material. Several sherds of ceramic and fragments of vessel glass were recovered from the deposit. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret. It may have been dug in preparation for the insertion of a series of ceramic drains which were removed from this part of the site. This feature could be equated with feature [550] to the west (see Group 8.14).

7.9.17 Group 8.17

7.9.17.1 Towards the site's northern limit of excavation part of sub-circular pit [476] was recorded at a maximum height of 11.64m OD. To the north it met the limit of excavation. To the west it was truncated by the cut for a modern drain - however, it could be equated with a similar feature [550] to the west of the drain cut (see 7.9.14 - Group 8.14). Its maximum dimensions were c. 2.0m north-south by c. 2.28m east-west and its maximum depth was c. 0.69m. At the top its surviving edge broke sharply to fall with gently sloping concave sides to meet a concave base with a gradual break of slope. It was filled by [473] a moderately well compacted friable mid to dark brown silty sandy clay which contained moderate fine and medium sub-angular and sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and ceramic building material. Several sherds of ceramic and metallic objects were recovered from the deposit. The original function of this feature is difficult to interpret. It may have been dug in preparation for the insertion of a series of ceramic drains which were removed from this part of the site prior to careful excavation.

7.9.17.2 Cut into the base of [476], at a maximum height of 11.09m OD, was a sub-rectangular pit [488]. Its maximum dimensions were c. 1.20m east-west by c. 0.68m north-south and its maximum depth was c. 0.94m. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with steep straight sides to meet a stepped base, the lower part of which tapered to a rounded point. It was filled by [487] a generally soft mixture of dark brown sandy silty clay (50%) with light brown clayey sandy silt (50%) which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks of charcoal and ceramic building material. Material culture recovered from this deposit included sherds of ceramic, fragments of vessel glass and fragments of ceramic building material. This feature can be interpreted as an exploratory pit excavated within the base of [476] (prior to the back-filling of [476]) - possibly in order to investigate the deposits revealed within the base of that pit. In effect the feature is cut through the fills of a series of earlier (Roman) features, most notably [595] (see Group 5.13). An alternative interpretation, that [488] is merely an earlier feature truncated by [476], is less likely given the relative positions of the two features.

7.9.18 Group 8.18

7.9.18.1 Cut through part of the southern edge of [476] (see Group 8.17) was a rectangular pit [472] recorded at a maximum height of 11.61m OD. Its maximum dimensions were c. 0.88m north-south by c. 0.71m east-west and it was c. 0.44m deep. To the north it was excavated out of sequence and to the south it was truncated by the cut for a modern drain. At the top its edges broke sharply to fall with vertical sides to meet a flat base with a sharp break of slope. It was filled by [471] a moderately well compacted mid brown sandy silty clay which contained occasional fine and medium sub-rounded pebbles and occasional flecks and small fragments of charcoal and ceramic building material. Material culture recovered from the deposit included sherds of ceramic and fragments of vessel glass. This feature represents ground preparation undertaken prior to the insertion of a

series of ceramic drains - these being removed from this part of the site prior to detailed excavation.

7.9.19 Group 8 Discussion

7.9.19.1 The Group 8 features represent activity undertaken on the site since the mid 19th century. Prior to the construction of terraced brick housing gravel quarrying may have been undertaken on the site (see Group 8.3, 8.7 and 8.12). The remainder of the Group 8 features were probably associated with the houses themselves. The vast majority represent pits dug in the back gardens of the houses in order to dispose of fire debris.

7.10 Modern Activity (Group 9) - Figure 9.

7.10.1 Group 9.1

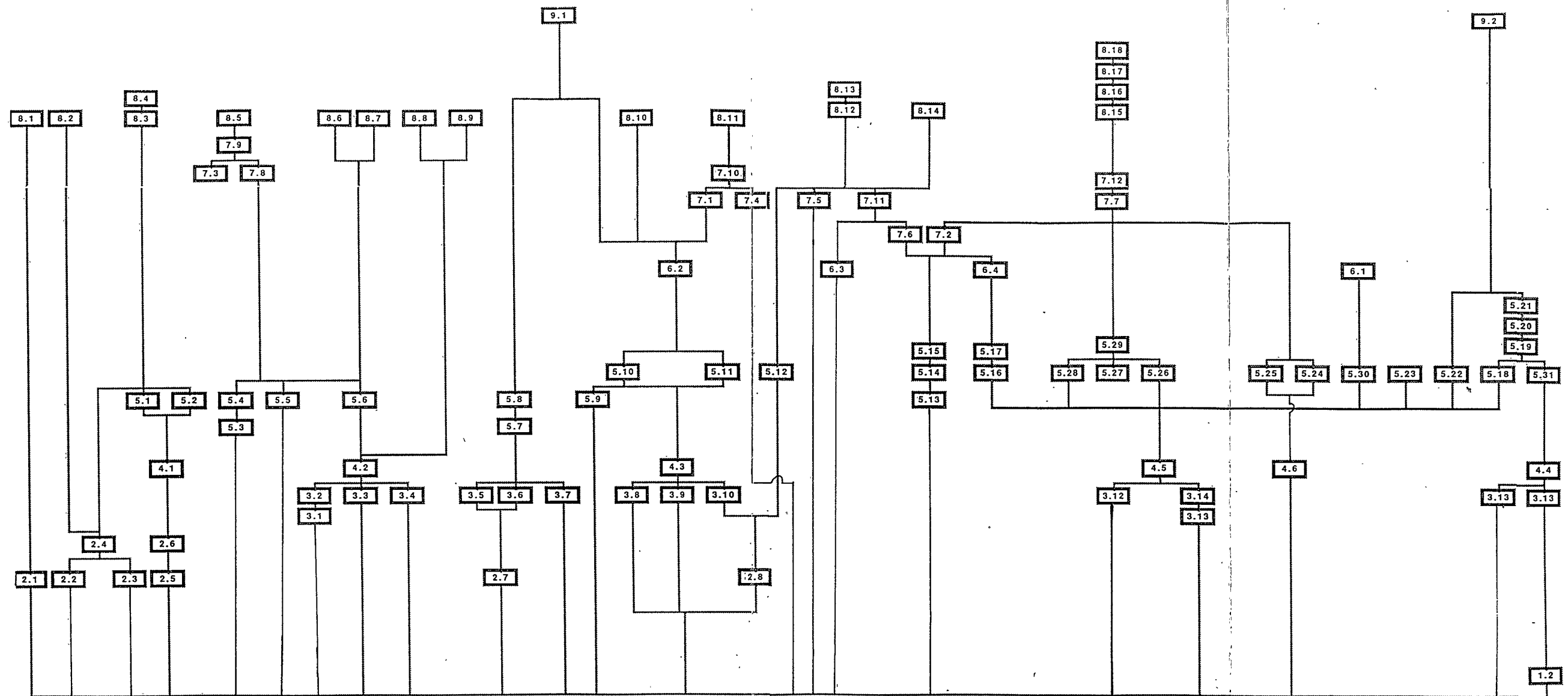
7.10.1.1 Towards the centre of the site was an extensive sub-rectangular intrusion [71], probably dug as part of a programme of geotechnical trial pits in advance of the excavations. It measured c. 4.0m east-west by c. 2.50m north-south and its full depth was not ascertained. It was filled by [72] a dark grey silty clay mixed with building rubble.

7.10.2 Group 9.2

7.10.2.1 Towards the site's southern limit of excavation was a large sub-rectangular intrusion [427], probably dug as part of a programme of geotechnical trial pits in advance of the excavations. It measured c. 2.0m east-west by c. 2.80m north-south and its full depth was not ascertained. It was generally filled by building rubble.

7.10.3 Group 9 Discussion

7.10.3.1 In addition to the two machine excavated pits described above (see Group 9.1 and 9.2) several other similar intrusions were located during the excavation. Furthermore, several deep intrusions through the archaeological deposits were the result of the removal of concrete slab foundations and drains associated with the late and post Victorian housing on the site (see Figure 9).



91-93 PARNELL ROAD
SUB-GROUP MATRIX

8. SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

8.1 The proposed developments at 91-93 Parnell Road offered an opportunity to investigate a relatively large site in Tower Hamlets close to the line of the main Roman road between *Londinium* and *Camulodunum*. The research objectives of the excavation emphasised Roman land-uses, based on the results of earlier investigations. However, the excavation provided the first *in situ* remains of prehistoric settlement to be recovered from Old Ford. The significance of these remains, representing possibly two phases of a substantial post-built structure and a major land boundary of the Late Bronze Age, cannot be overstated. These remains are as exciting as they were unexpected.

8.2 Although no structural remains of the Roman period were discovered *in situ* during the excavation it is fair to say that, in broad terms, the nature and density of the features, and the material culture contained within them, certainly attest to the proximity of Roman settlement to 91-93 Parnell Road. In particular, substantial quantities of fragmented daub (brickearth/clay), essentially the demolition rubble from Roman buildings, had been utilised to back-fill abandoned features. The attributes of Romanisation are very apparent, as one might expect, in the types of finds recovered during the excavation of many of the features (for example, cosmetic items, technologically advanced ironwork and fine table wares within the ceramic assemblage).

8.3 The precise nature and extent of Roman settlement in the Bow area remains elusive. It may have been a substantial roadside ribbon development, a small hamlet or merely a series of isolated farmsteads. However, it is almost certain that the economics of that settlement were directly influenced by its proximity to *Londinium*. Ditch-defined land boundaries investigated during the excavation almost certainly formed part of an extensive roadside field system which has been recorded at several other sites around 91-93 Parnell Road. Whether the fields or enclosures delineated by these ditches were utilised for crops or for corralling livestock is unclear. Small scale proto-industrial activity may have taken place in a series of enigmatic 'pits' close to the road. These may have been associated with 'strip buildings' set constructed alongside the road. Other pitting on the site was probably associated with the disposal of domestic refuse - although some evidence of ritual activity was also encountered.

8.4 Not entirely unexpected was the apparent hiatus between the Roman and the late post-Medieval period. Given the cartographic and documentary evidence, in conjunction with the findings of previous excavations in the vicinity of the site, any evidence of Saxon or Medieval occupation of the site would have been a major surprise. It is almost certain that the area remained under pasture or crop for over 1000 years.

8.5 Late post-Medieval market gardening and gravel quarrying may have preceded the

establishment of terraced housing upon the site during the late 19th century. The effect of this development upon the archaeological deposits was certainly not as harmful as it might have been, with the result that the archaeological evidence recovered during the excavation will form an important contribution to the Sites and Monuments Record for London.

8.6 This Interim Report (first draft) on the excavation undertaken at 91-93 Parnell Road has been compiled in advance of the project's Post-Excavation Assessment Report. As analysis is undertaken of the ceramics, small finds and sediment samples which were collected during the fieldwork, and additional information becomes available, further interim reports will be compiled. Eventually the entire corpus of information will be synthesised into a Final Excavation Report. It is envisaged that this document will be completed before the end of 1996. It is intended to publish the results of the excavation in a future volume of the Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society.

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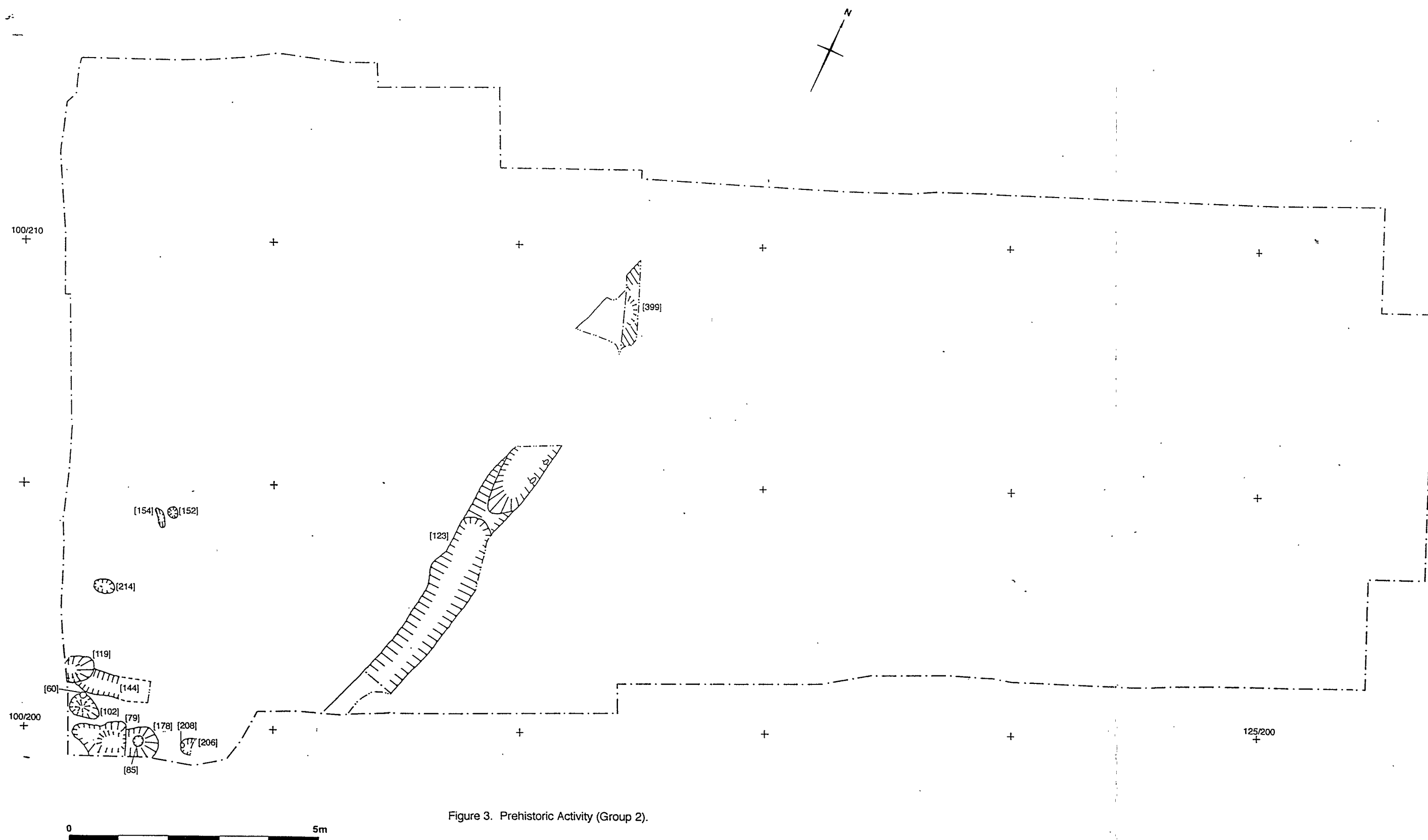
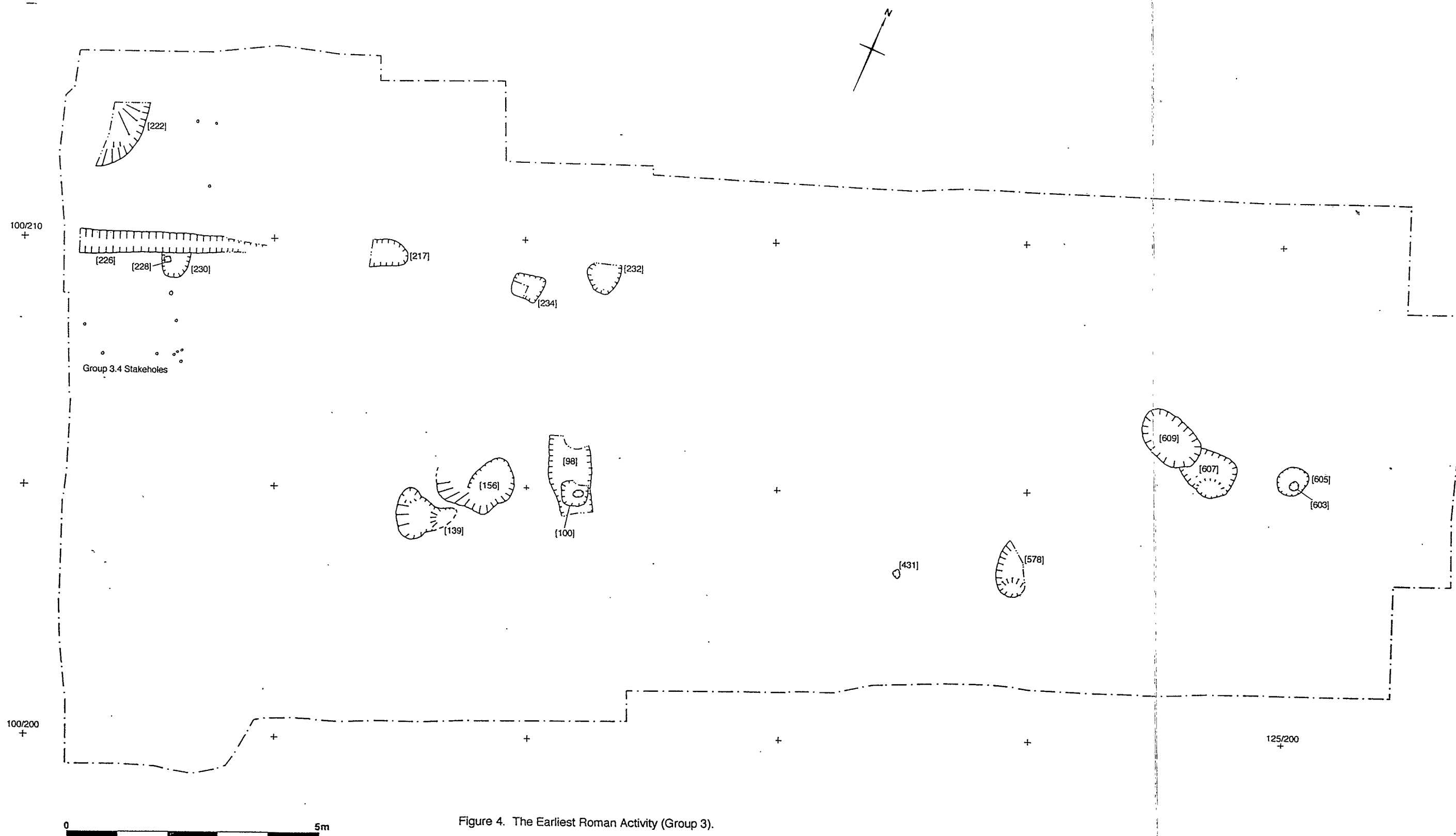


Figure 3. Prehistoric Activity (Group 2).



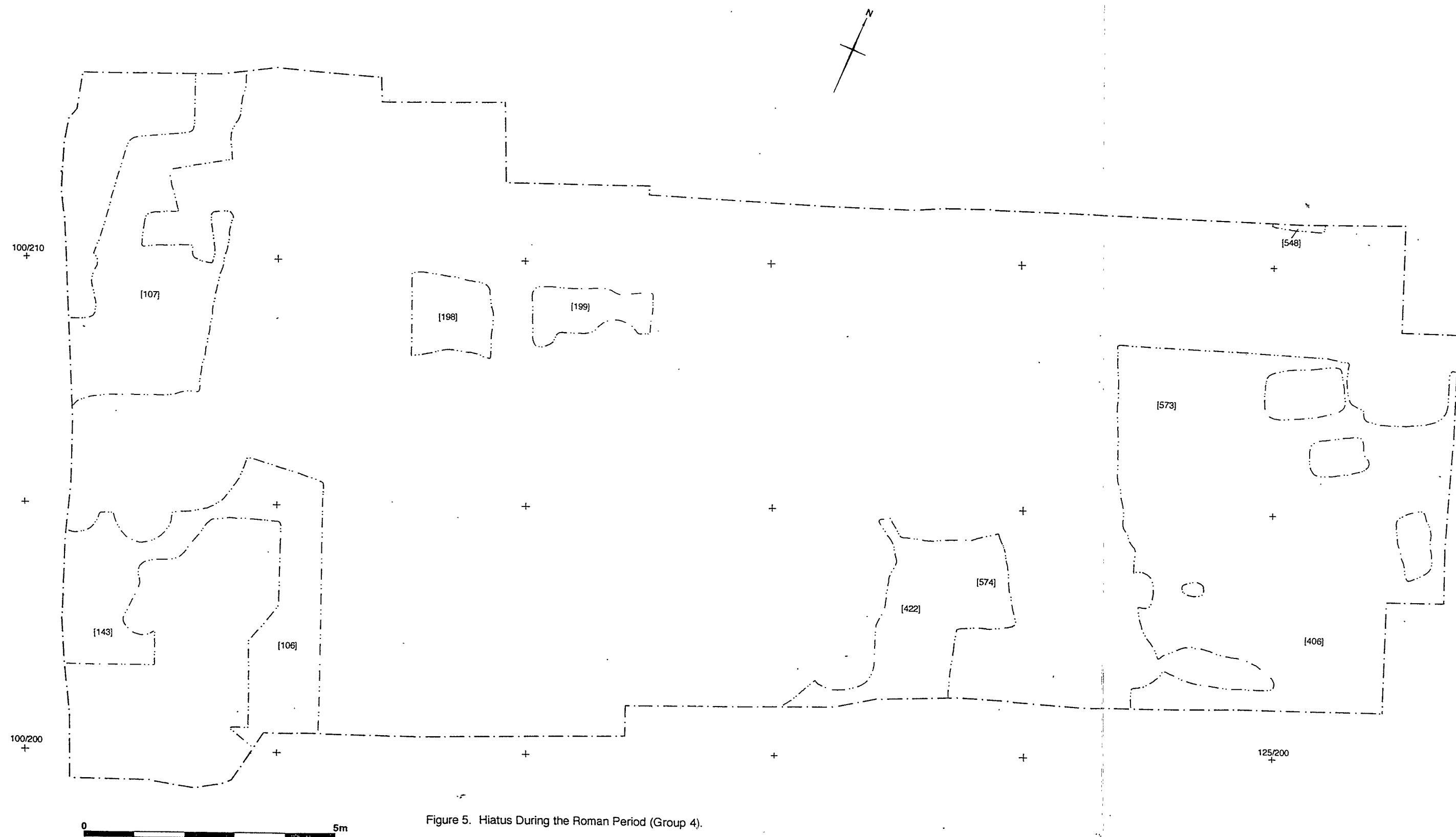


Figure 5. Hiatus During the Roman Period (Group 4).

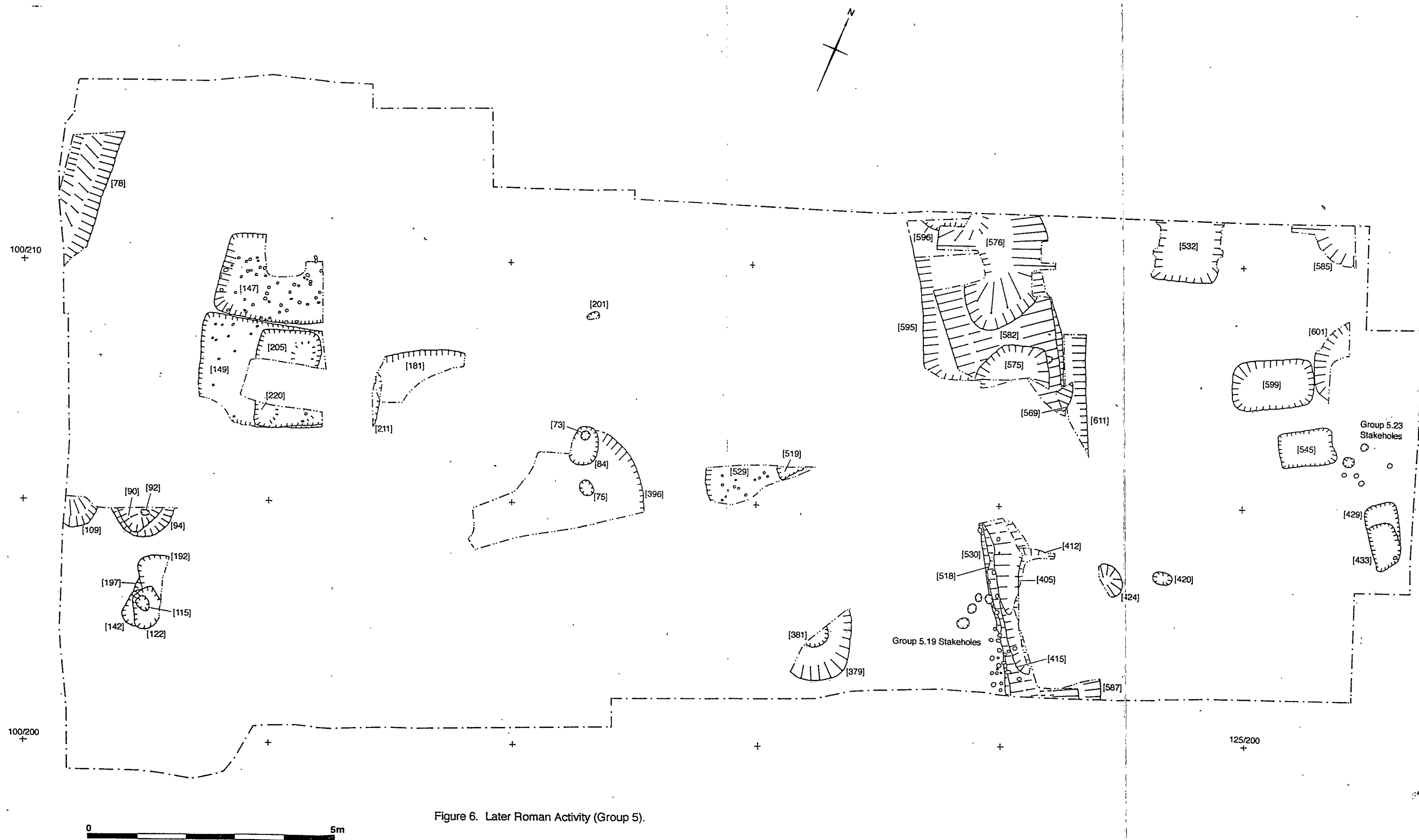


Figure 6. Later Roman Activity (Group 5).

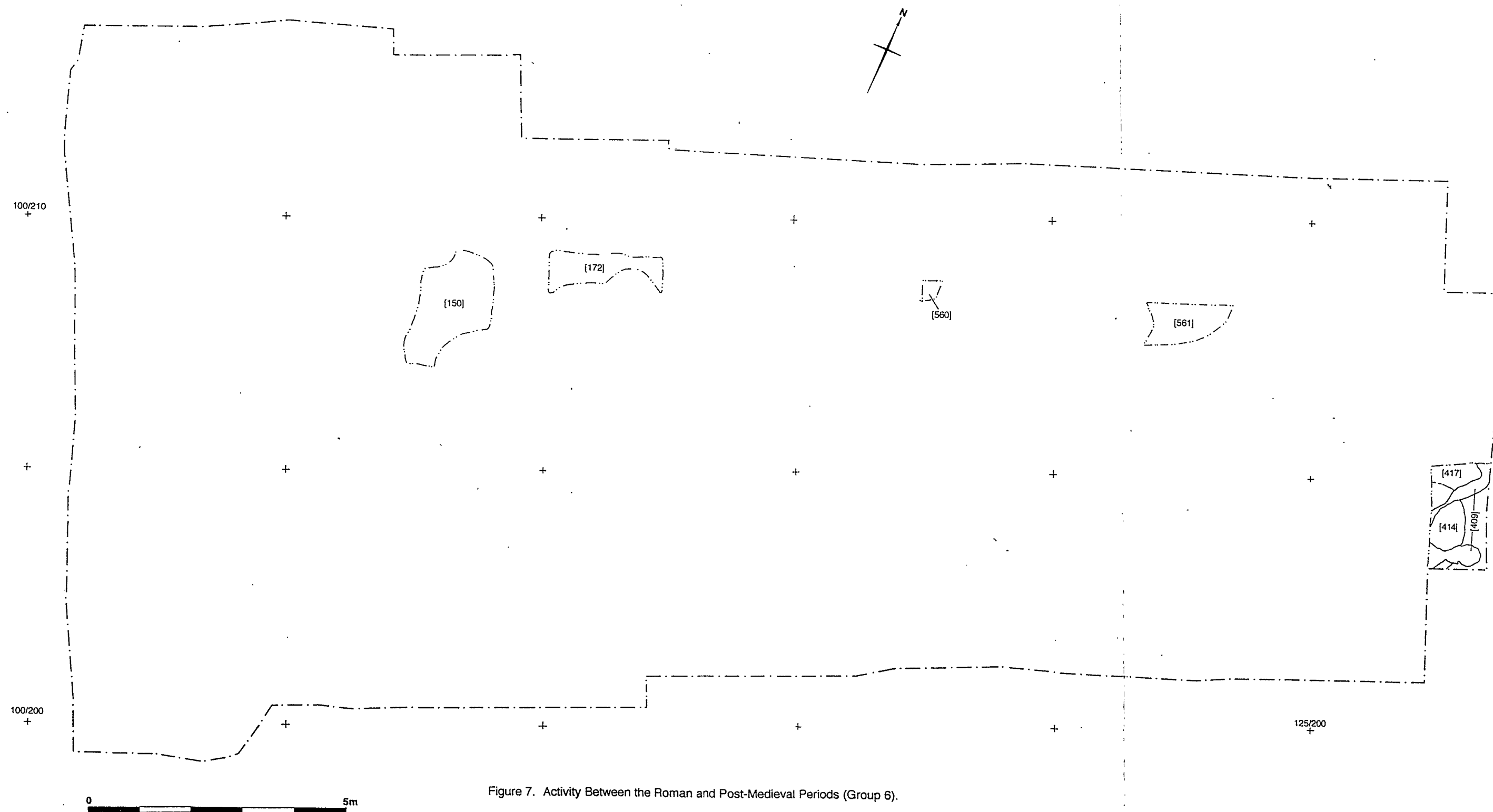


Figure 7. Activity Between the Roman and Post-Medieval Periods (Group 6).

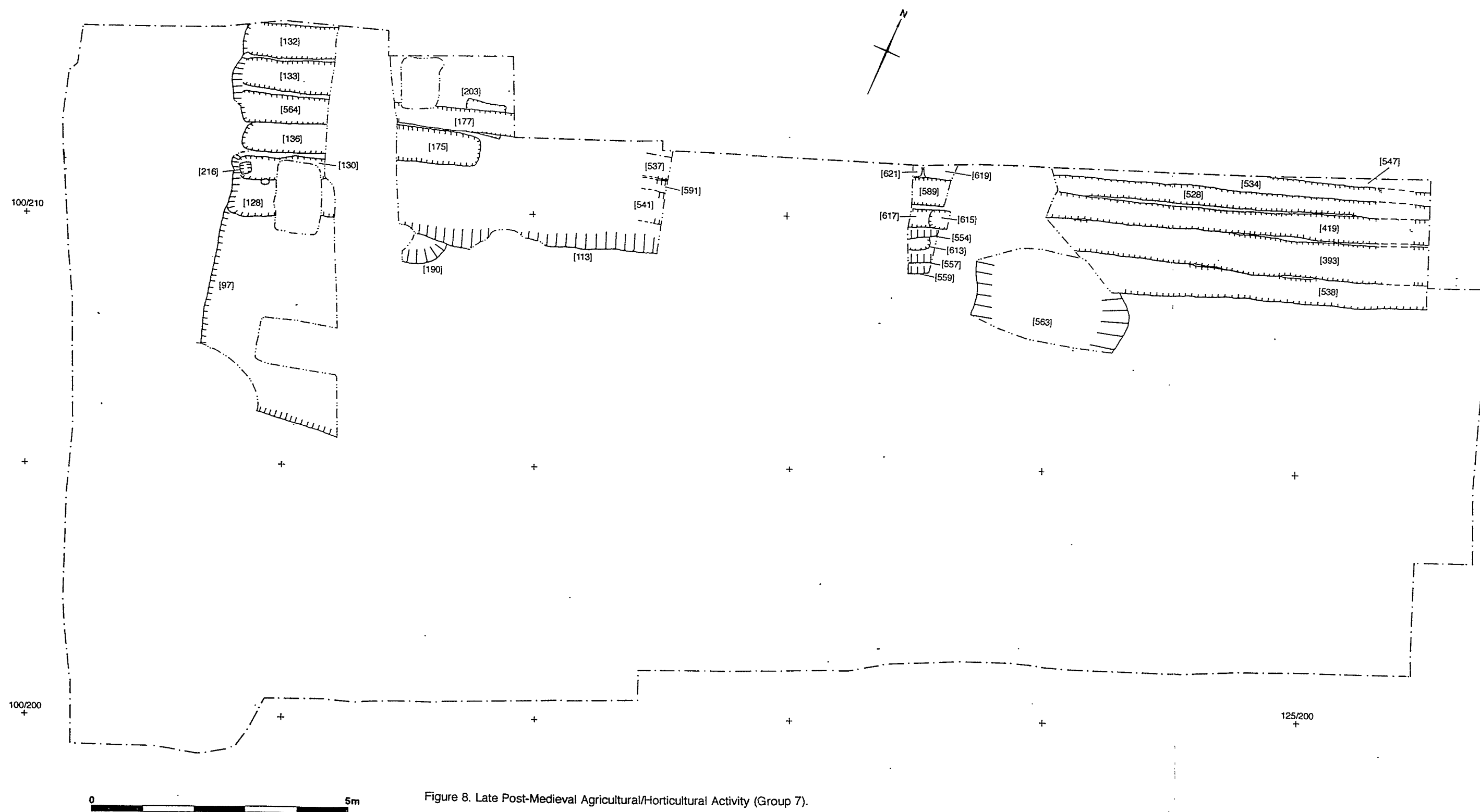


Figure 8. Late Post-Medieval Agricultural/Horticultural Activity (Group 7).

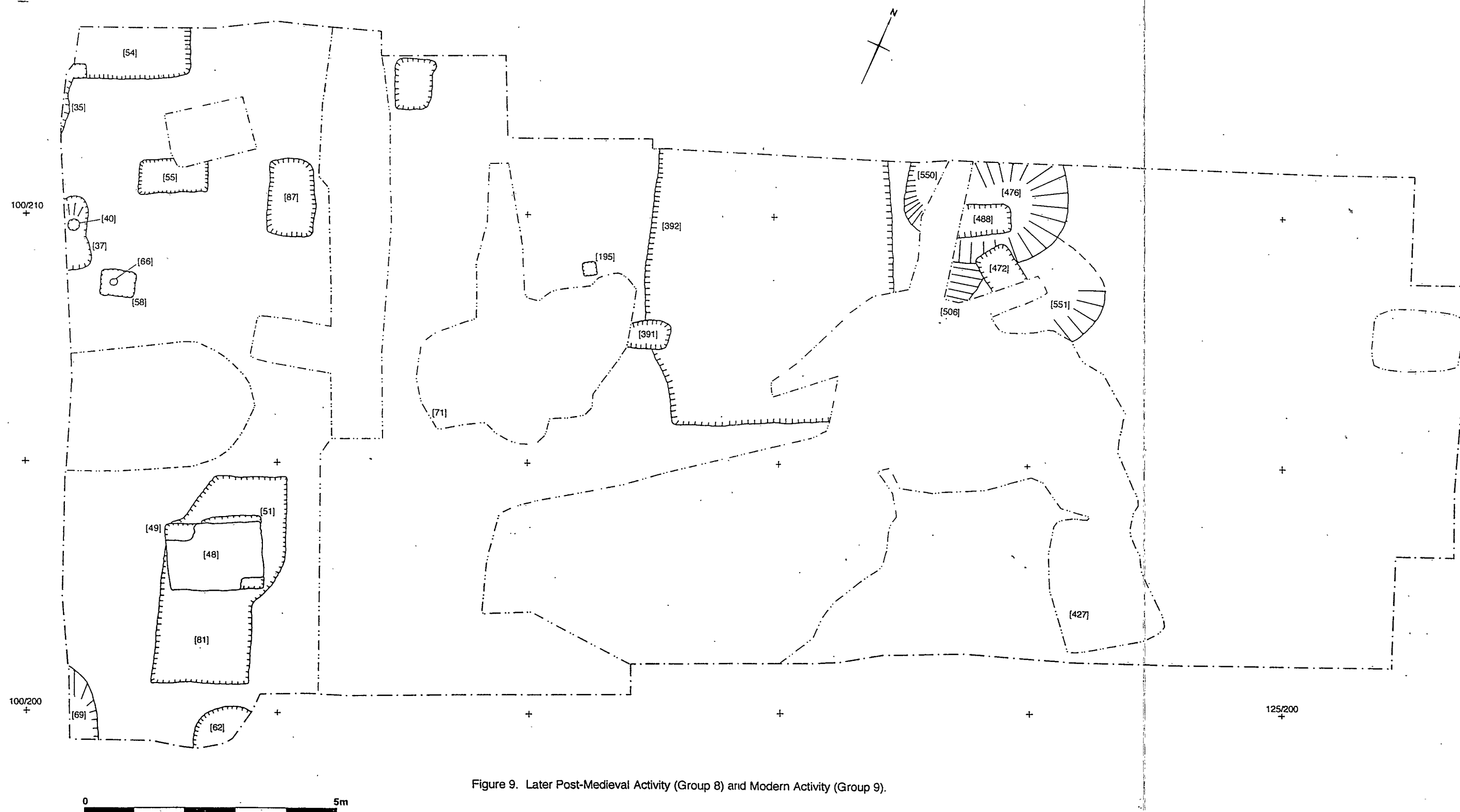


Figure 9. Later Post-Medieval Activity (Group 8) and Modern Activity (Group 9).