Bradley Street, Castleford
(SE 42752589)

Archaeological Evaluation of
Former Iron Foundry Site

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West Yorkshire
Archaeology Service

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1. Summary

1.1 Client

Bernard Thorpe Independent Property Advisors, 12 St Paul's Street, Leeds LS1 2LE.

1.2 Introduction

The redevelopment of the site of the former iron foundry at the northern end of Bradley Street holds implications for the Roman archaeology of the town.

1.3 The Background

The proposed development site lies in an area judged to be of crucial importance for establishing the positions of the eastern defences of both the Roman fort annexe and the later Roman town.

1.4 Method of Evaluation

Six trial trenches were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision and recorded where possible. Trenches were positioned such that they would: i) cut the predicted Roman ditch alignments at right angles; and ii) comprehensively sample the archaeology of the site.

1.5 Results

A sequence of four north-south ditches were observed in the eastern side of the site. A large north-south Roman wall foundation was encountered in the western side. Deep Roman and post-Roman deposits were encountered in the north-western quarter of the site.

1.6 Interpretation

One of the ditches found possibly represents the eastern side of the Roman fort annexe. The remaining ditches are typical of late 4th-century defensive ditches and are possibly contemporary with the wall. Together the ditches and wall are thought to represent the

eastern defences of the late Roman town. A very large feature, observed in the north-western part of the site, could represent a Roman inlet or mooring channel from the river.

1.7 Discussion

Taking into account the results from excavations in other parts of the town, it is now possible to propose a less speculative outline model of the development from the Roman fort to the medieval village.

1.8 Requirement for Further Work

The evaluation has identified the presence of features and deposits that could significantly advance our knowledge about the nature, layout, environment and economy of the former Roman and possibly medieval settlements. The site is a key area in our understanding of the town's history and would benefit from comprehensive archaeological investigation prior to its redevelopment.

2. Introduction

2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site of the old ironworks, on land between Bank Street and Back Wesley Street, at the northern end of Bradley Street, Castleford. The work was carried out on behalf of Bernard Thorpe Independent Property Advisors by three officers of the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, between the 11th-15th November 1991.

2.2 The site (Fig. 1) was threatened by the proposed expansion of the Employment Service offices from their existing site in Bradley Street. On the basis of the known archaeology of the town (see below) it was thought likely that important archaeological features and deposits would be encountered on the site.

3. The Background

3.1 From as early as the 16th century antiquarians had speculated on the curious earthworks and artefacts to be found at Castleford. It was generally agreed by the more learned visitors to the town that these were the material remains of the Roman 'castrum', centred upon the church; a theory supported by the '*low ground of the ditch that encompassed it* [the church]', recorded by William Stukeley in 1724. The following 250 years saw Castleford evolve into a thriving industrial town. The development of the town resulted in many Roman discoveries. However, it was not until very recent times that anything meaningful about the nature and sequence of the Roman occupation at Castleford was established.

3.2 From the early 1970s the gradual process of redevelopment created opportunities for archaeological excavations and observations. Together these provided coherent and tangible proof of Castleford's earliest Roman origins. Details of these findings are published elsewhere (Sumpter, Abramson and Tomson 1984; Abramson 1988; Abramson 1990) and are briefly summarised below. Elements of the main archaeological phases are shown in Figure 1.

3.3 The First Roman Fort

The Romans established their first fort at Castleford (*Lagentium*) in *c.* AD 70. A civilian settlement (*vicus*), outside the fort, also dates from the same period. The layout of this earliest fort remains unclear, though it would seem to have been partly to the west of, and partly beneath the second fort.

3.4 The Second Roman Fort

3.4.1 The new Roman fort was constructed around AD 86. Excavations have established the positions of the northern, western and (perhaps) southern ditch and rampart defences. Also found have been remains of some of the principal structures and buildings. Apart from the *vicus*, which continued to the south-west of the fort, another element of the Roman settlement may have existed in the form of a military annexe. This was attached to the north side of the fort, between it and the river. The ditch and rampart of the western side of the annexe is well attested by excavation. Excavations within the annexe have revealed the well-preserved remains of a stone-built bath house and parts of other substantial stone-built structures on either side of the road leading to the north gate of the fort.

3.4.2 There remain a number of important questions to be answered with regard to the second fort's internal layout. However, more fundamentally, it is still not certain where the eastern line of the defences lay, for both the fort and the annexe. A recent watching brief at the southern end of Bradley Street (Eyre-Morgan and Roberts 1991) indicated that the eastern side of the fort may well have run roughly parallel to the east side of Bradley Street. It is therefore speculated that the eastern side of the annexe probably ran north from this projected alignment towards Aire Street, similar to the arrangement observed on the western side.

3.5 The Late Roman Town

3.5.1 The second fort was abandoned around AD 100. However, the *vicus* settlement seems to have continued into the late 2nd century, as a small but flourishing trading community. By the mid-3rd century AD the site was refortified. Three vast parallel ditches were found cutting through earlier fort buildings. The largest (outer) ditch was over 4m deep, at least 13m wide, and was traced for almost 90m east to west in a straight line. The Ordnance Survey map of 1888 shows the continuation of an extant remnant of this earthwork around the churchyard; presumably the 'castrum' noted by Stukeley in 1724 (Fig. 1). The innermost ditch was eventually backfilled and replaced by a wall, as evidenced by the remains of a rubble and clay foundation.

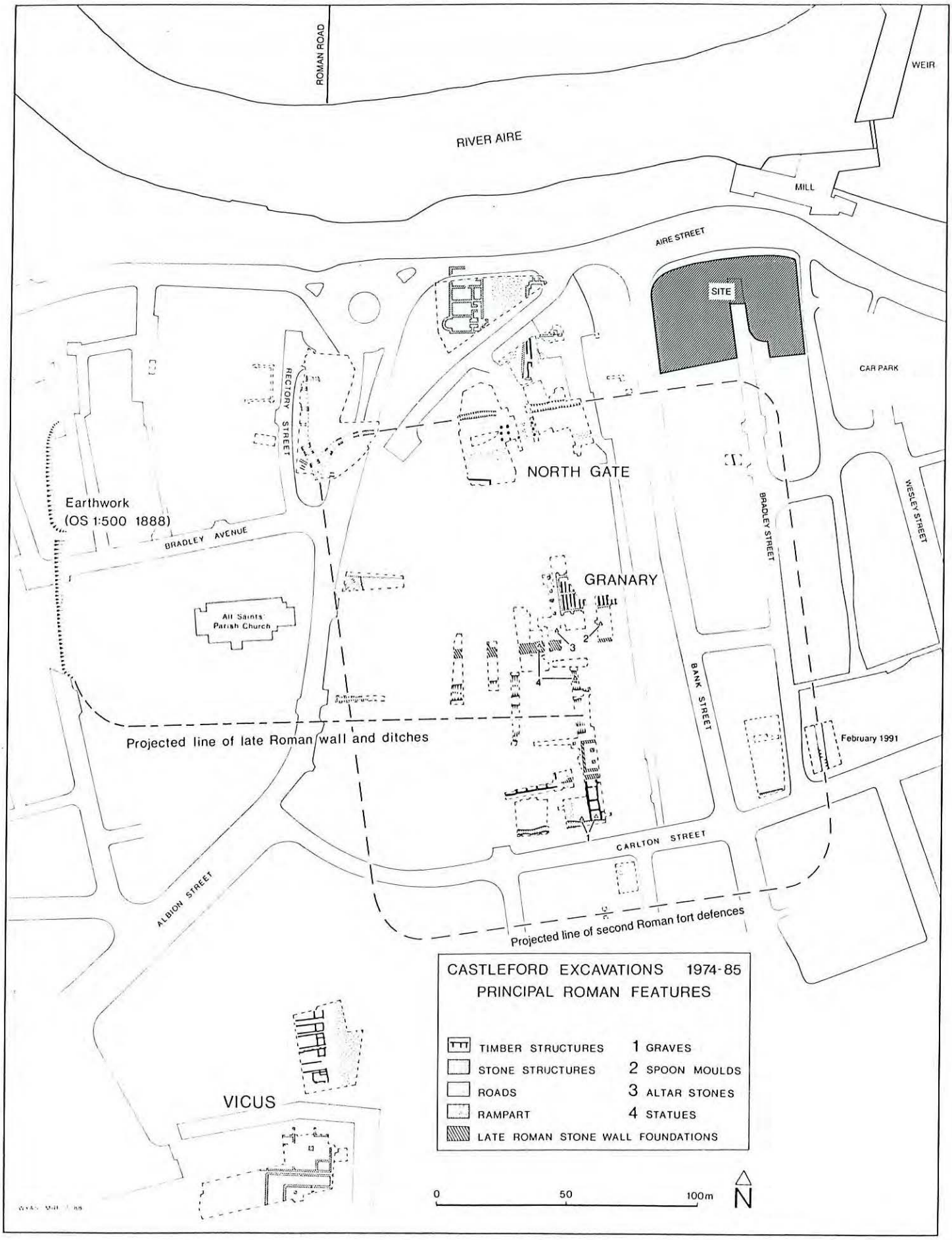

Fig. 1. Location of the site with respect to the principal Roman discoveries made between 1974-85 (adapted after Abramson 1988).

3.5.2 To the south of the later town defences a number of late Roman burials have been found. Within the defended area evidence for both industrial and 'religious' activity has been discovered. There remain aspects of this era in Castleford's Roman history which are obviously interesting and very important, and not clearly understood. The internal and defensive layout of the town is unknown, though it is possible that the river formed the northern boundary of the town. Moreover, although the southern side of this defended area has been found and the western side can be conjectured from old maps, the eastern side has yet to be determined.

3.6 The Medieval Period

3.6.1 The late Roman town continued into the 4th century AD. Beyond this the centre of power seems to have switched to Pontefract and there is no evidence for Saxon occupation at Castleford. However, there is evidence for occupation following the Norman Conquest.

3.6.2 The size and nature of the settlement at Castleford in this period is unknown. Castleford does not receive an entry in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as it was probably a hamlet included under the entry for *Houghton* (now Glass Houghton), then the principal settlement of the parish. In archaeological terms very little evidence exists to substantiate the existence of the medieval settlement referred to in documentary records. Some structural contexts have been discovered during excavations close to the church, presumed to be on the same site as its 12th-century precursor, given to the hospital of St Lazarus of Jerusalem by Henry de Lacy (Farrer 1916). Apart from a few late medieval references to tenements and demesne meadows, Castleford is generally only mentioned with respect to the crossing point over the river, the trade by it, and the mills powered by it. Grants of the 12th-14th centuries refer to the demesne mills of the Honour of Pontefract being located at Castleford. In 1327 there were two mills and a fulling mill recorded there (Michelmore 1981).

3.6.3 What evidence exists for the medieval period points to a small village community possessing a church, up to three mills and an unknown number of tenements. It is possible that the layout of medieval Castleford was little different to that shown on the earliest plans of the 18th and 19th centuries (Fig. 6).

4. Method of Evaluation

4.1 The evaluation was carried out by inserting a series of trial trenches (Fig. 2; T1-T6). These were excavated by mechanical means, under archaeological supervision, with additional manual excavation being undertaken as required. The resultant trench sections were cleaned manually before being fully recorded (where it remained safe and practical to do so).

4.2 The placement of Trenches T1 and T2 was determined by the anticipated position of the eastern defences of the Roman military annexe. The trenches to the west of Bradley Street (T3-T5) were positioned to sample the deposits within the annexe. In addition, Trenches T3 and T5 were particularly positioned in order to accommodate the possibility

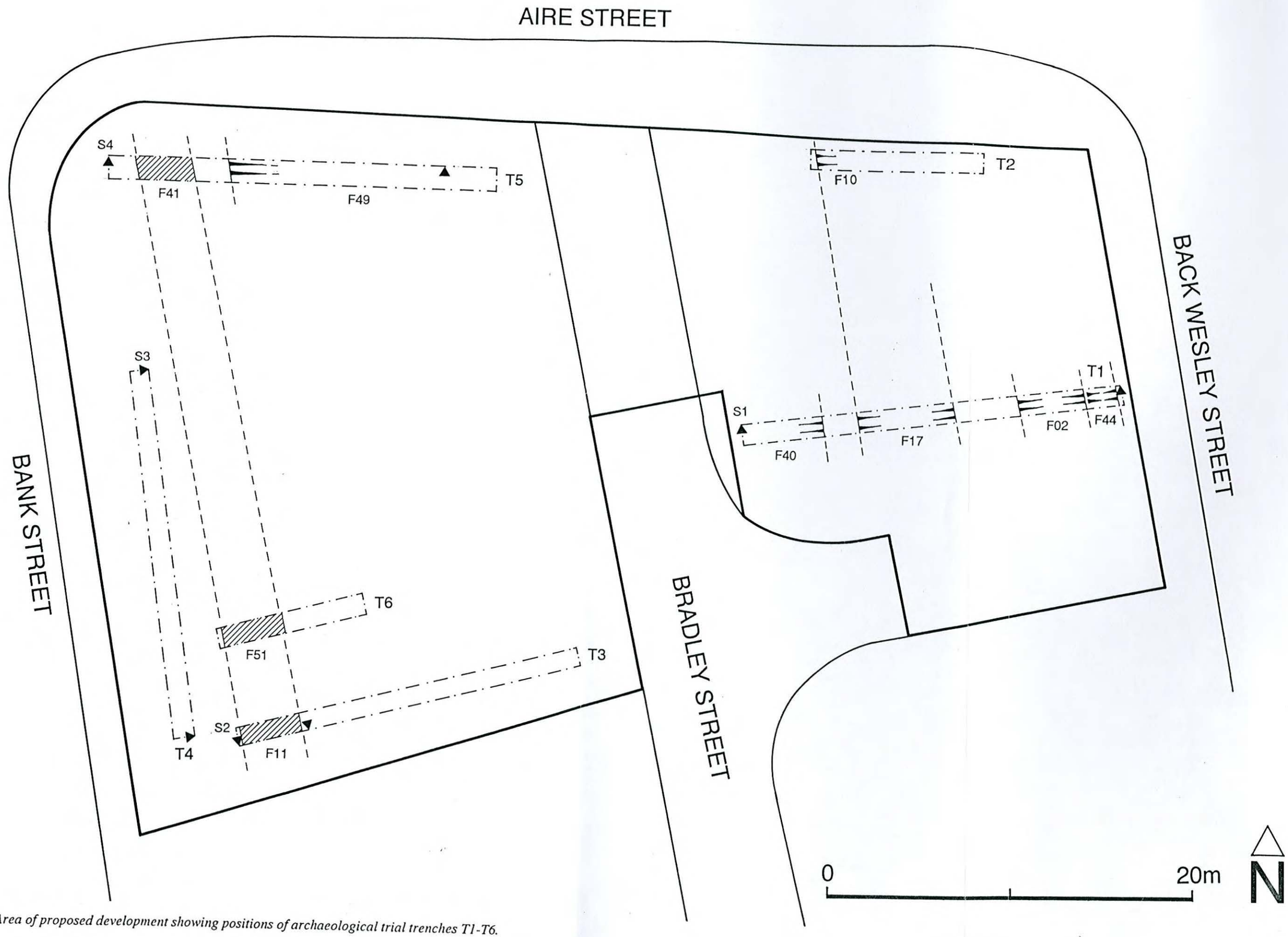

Fig. 2. Area of proposed development showing positions of archaeological trial trenches T1-T6.

that the eastern defences of the annexe were further west than anticipated. Moreover, Trenches T1, T2, T3 and T5 could together be expected to detect the presence of the late Roman town's eastern defences if they passed through the proposed development area.

4.3 An additional trench (T6) was excavated in order to confirm the continuity and alignment of a linear feature observed in trenches T3 and T5.

5. Results

5.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, S.1)

Evidence of four ditches was revealed in this trench. The westernmost three of these were very wide and relatively shallow features (F02, F17, F40). The easternmost feature (F44) was apparently narrower and shallower than the others. All the ditches and their fills had been truncated by later activity and none of them yielded any datable material.
[***Note:*** *Archaeological context numbers prefixed with 'F' denote features, e.g. walls, ditches, pits. Numbers prefixed 'L' indicate a layer, and numbers with no prefixes are feature fills.*]

5.1.1 Ditch F02

This was found to be approximately 4m wide and 1.5m deep, cut into natural clay deposits. It was not possible to determine the relationship with ditch F44 immediately to the east. Five principal ditch fills were identified (03, 04, 05, 06 and 16), all brown sandy clay loams. A thin primary deposit of blue-grey clay (07) was observed in the bottom of the ditch.

5.1.2 Ditch F17

Ditch F17 was observed 3.5m to the west of ditch F02 and possessed the same basic morphology (a wide U-shaped profile). It was about 5m wide and was in excess of 1m in depth. Five discrete ditch fills were identified (18, 21, 20, 22 and 19). The upper three were brownish silty clay loams, whereas the lowest observed (18 and 21) were blue-grey clays. This ditch was not bottomed.

5.1.3 Ditch F40

This ditch was situated about 2m to the west of ditch F17. It displayed similar physical characteristics to F02 and F17, being at least 4m wide and approximately 1m deep, somewhat shallower than the other large ditches. The principal fill (29) was a mottled brown sandy clay loam. This had been deposited over primary ditch fills of blue-grey clay (25 and 26). The ditch was cut into a mottled orange-brown sandy clay loam natural. Fill 29 had subsequently been cut on its western side by a feature filled with a blue-grey silty clay loam (27). The cut of the feature seemed to correspond exactly with an overlying deposit of black ash (28) and was possibly related.

5.1.4 Ditch F44

This ditch had a slightly more pronounced V-shaped profile than the others in this trench. It measured 3m in width and less than 1m in depth. It was filled by a series of brown sandy

clay loams (46). A stratigraphic relationship with F02, immediately to the west, could not be ascertained.

5.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 2)

Problems were encountered due to cellaring in the eastern half of this trench, and by 1.2m of recent rubble overlying the archaeology in the western half. Consequently, the eventual depth and instability of this trench meant that close recording could not be carried out. The western part of the trench revealed a ditch-like feature (F10) in section. It appeared to have a wide U-shaped profile and was filled with a dark grey-brown silty clay loam (09). The ditch cut what appeared to be natural deposits.

5.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, S.2)

The easternmost 14m of this trench had been severely disturbed by the former iron foundry. However, at its western extremity it cut through a substantial structural feature, believed to be a wall foundation. The foundation comprised an almost vertically sided trench (F11), up to 3.5m wide, which became progressively deeper on its western side, giving the overall impression of a tilted foundation trench. The overall depth of the foundation material was 0.7m, becoming as deep as 1m at the western side. The foundation itself was comprised of large irregular pieces of limestone (12) packed roughly in layers within a matrix of yellow-grey plastic clay (13). The limestone seemed to have been employed most intensively in the deeper western side of the trench. Two pieces of Roman pottery were found within the clay packing of the foundation.

5.4 Trench 4 (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, S.3)

5.4.1 An area of reinforced concrete prevented any further northward extension of this trench. The stratigraphy was disturbed at the northern end of the trench by cuts for a service trench and a large deposit of iron slag, presumed to be associated with the former foundry. Due to the disturbances there was little archaeological survival in the sections of the northern third of the trench. However, one feature (F33), with a dark brown sandy loam fill (34), yielded several pieces of post-medieval pottery.

5.4.2 Approximately 6m from the northern end of the trench disturbances were essentially restricted to the surface levels and it was possible to discern a quite complex stratigraphic sequence for the full depth of the trench (*c.* 1m). It was evident that the deposits and natural were inclined; becoming deeper to the north, towards the river, and shallower to the south. At the southern end of the trench deposits thought to be natural were less than 0.25m below the surface.

5.4.3 Within the general stratigraphic sequence several notable features were observed. An early activity horizon in the southern end of the trench was evidenced by an extensive charcoal layer (L48). This may well have been contemporary with activity associated with the deposition of fill 32 slightly to the north. Both these deposits were detected in both the opposing trench section faces. The deposit of dark brown sandy silty loam 32 appears to have been associated with a cut or terrace feature (F31) at its southern extent. However, it

extended a considerable distance to the north, seemingly diving to greater depth out of range of further evaluation. Several sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from fill 32 in the area of the feature (F31).

5.4.4 At the southern end of the trench a later phase of activity was indicated by features that cut through the charcoal layer (L48). A cut with a rectangular profile (F35), 0.6m wide by 0.3m deep, was filled by a burnt reddened sandy material (36). Within this were fragments of fired clay or brick, carbonised wood, undated pottery and several fragments of irregular baked clay. About 3m further north a further feature (F45) was observed to cut the charcoal layer (L48), though no diagnostic or datable material was recovered from its fill (47). This feature was observed in both section faces and was evidently linear in nature rather than being a pit or post-hole.

5.5 Trench 5 (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, S.4)

5.5.1 In the western end of the trench, at a depth of 2.2m, the remains of a foundation trench (F41) were encountered. The trench appeared to have a wide shallow profile, though close investigation was not possible due to the depth and instability of the trench. Nevertheless, it was possible to discern that the trench was deeper on the western side and that the foundation material was composed of irregular lumps of limestone (43) in a matrix of yellow-grey plastic clay (42). Directly above the clay (42) was observed an area of mortared stonework. This stonework was only observed in the north facing section of the trench and appeared to have a separate, though curiously coincidental, later cut to that of F41.

5.5.2 The cut for F41 was clearly visible in both section faces and was seen to cut through a series of earlier layers to the east. One of these (L38), a brown-grey loam, produced four pieces of Roman pottery, one distinctly of 4th-century date.

5.5.3 The eastern part of the trench was almost entirely taken up by one extremely large feature (F49) which also cut the stratigraphic sequence containing layer L38. Only the western side of the feature was observed. It proved to be very steep and in excess of 3m deep and at least 14.5m wide. The safety considerations, due to the depth of the feature and water seepage, prevented it being fully explored. The fill (39) was a grey-brown silty clay loam, seemingly siltier at lower levels. One piece of ?Roman tile was derived from deep within the deposit. The upper part of this fill yielded several sherds of 12th/13th century medieval pottery.

5.6 Trench 6 (Fig. 2)

This trench was excavated in order to ascertain the continuation and orientation of F11 and F41. A 3.5m wide foundation trench (F51), containing yellow-grey clay and limestone rubble (50), was uncovered and recorded. Excavation was only carried out to the top of the feature fill as this was commensurate with that observed within F11 and F41 in Trenches T3 and T5 respectively.

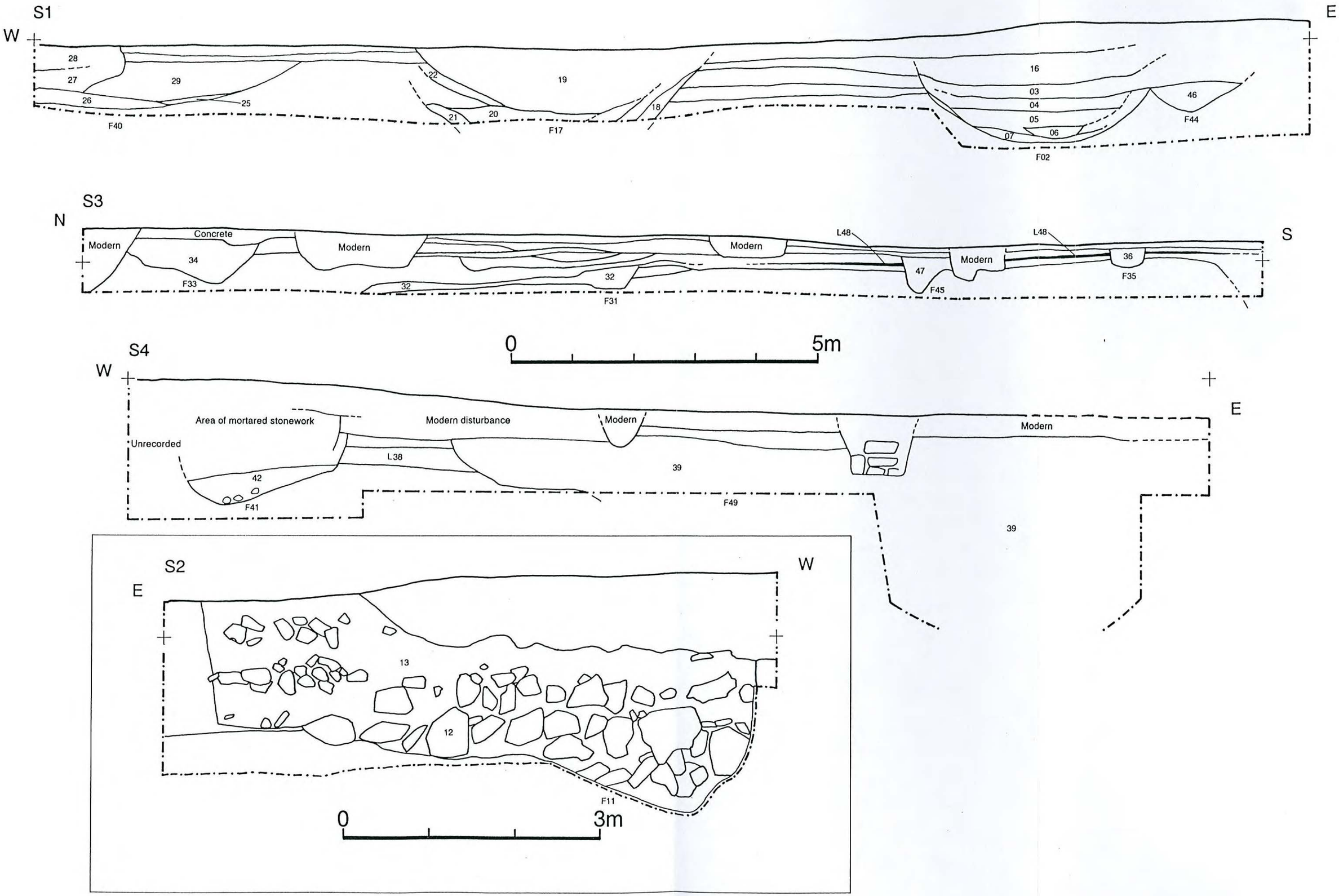

Fig. 3. Detail of the features and stratigraphy observed in the vertical sections S1-S4 in trial trenches T1, T3, T4 and T5 respectively (see Fig. 2 for exact positions and orientations).

6. Interpretation

6.1 Eastern Side of Site (Trenches T1 and T2)

6.1.1 Truncation and disturbance of the upper stratigraphy on the site, coupled with the lack of finds from any context, made it impossible to phase the ditches found in Trench T1. On the basis of their size, profile and spatial arrangement it is conceivable that the three large ditches (F02, F17 and F40) were contemporary. Ditch F44 may represent the bottom of a somewhat larger ditch that was cut from a higher level. Although a stratigraphic relationship between F44 and F02 could not be ascertained, their juxtaposition and apparent difference in profile suggests that they are unlikely to have been contemporary.

6.1.2 The nature of the ditch fills, certainly those of F02, F17 and F40, might suggest an initial slow accumulation of silt (represented by the blue-grey gleyed lower fills (07, 18, 21, 25 and 26)) followed by a deliberate act of backfilling (represented by the homogeneous upper fills of brown loamy soil (03-06, 16, 19 and 29)). However, it could also signify the recutting of the ditches and subsequent infilling under a different depositional regime.

6.1.3 For Trench T2 it is very difficult to make meaningful interpretations as the deposits were not examined closely. The assumption that both Trenches T1 and T2 cut the ditches at approximately 90° was borne out by the symmetry of the opposing section faces in Trench T1. Hence, the orientation of the ditches, together with the similarities in size, profile and fill, combine to suggest that ditches F10 and F17 are possibly one and the same feature.

6.2 Western Side of Site (Trenches T3, T4, T5 and T6)

6.2.1 The linear features encountered in Trenches T3, T5 and T6 (F11, F41 and F51), and their fills (12, 13, 42, 43 and 50), are consistent with wall foundations and are almost certainly part of the same foundation provision for a large and extensive north-south wall (or rampart). The deeper nature of these cuts on the western side could simply indicate that this was intended as the principal load-bearing side of the foundation. Alternatively it could signify that the foundation trench was a reuse of an earlier feature.

6.2.2 No vestiges of stone walling or corework were found above the foundation. This could have been due to initial cannibalisation and later truncation of levels above foundation level. However, consideration might be given to the possibility of a well-founded clay rampart, in the absence of any material remnants of a wall. Mortared stonework was observed above the foundation in the north-facing section of Trench T5 (5.5.1), though this seemed to have been facilitated by a secondary cut (albeit directly over the Roman clay and rubble foundation material) and is therefore probably not the original wall fabric *in situ*. It is possible that this mortared stone may relate to later (?medieval) structures or boundaries perpetuating the former Roman boundary line - and possibly utilising robbed Roman stone.

6.2.3 Apart from revealing potential features and archaeological deposits, the Trench T4 section (Fig. 3; S.3) helped reveal the gradual deepening of deposits towards the river. In Trench T3 at the southern end of the trench the Roman wall foundation clay (13) was located just a few centimetres below the surface. Travelling northwards the strata, best represented

by the charcoal layer (L48) and the surface of natural, dipped gradually over a distance of about 10m. Beyond this there seems to have been a change in levels and fill 32, which produced Roman pottery, had a gradient of 1:8 when it disappeared below the section face 5m before the northern end of the trench. Significantly, if the gradient of layer 32 is extrapolated northwards it eventually correlates with the depth of the Roman wall foundation (F41) in Trench T5. A schematic representation of this is shown in Figure 4. This derived extrapolation demonstrates that the Roman levels possibly lie well preserved and intact in the north-western part of the site.

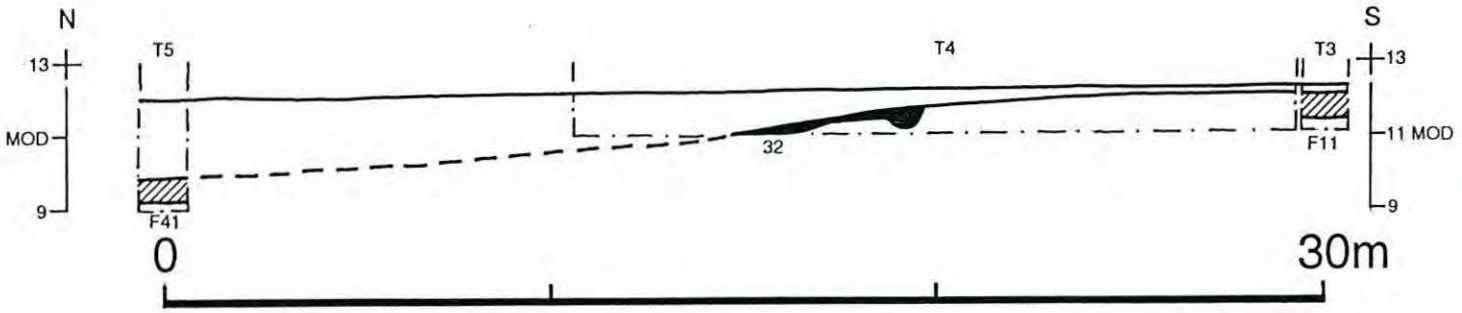

Fig. 4. Composite section demostrating the increasing depth of Roman deposits south-north (towards the river), using information derived from trial trenches T3, T4 and T5.

6.2.4 Perhaps the most enigmatic feature encountered was F49 in the western part of Trench T5. In excess of 14.5m wide and over 3m deep it might be considered to be too large for a defensive ditch. Significantly, similar ditches were not observed situated to the west of the Roman wall foundation in Trenches T5 and T6. A possible interpretation of such a large, and apparently discontinuous feature, close to the river, is a former channel or inlet for mooring river boats, or even larger vessels.

6.2.5 Apart from the excessive depth of feature F49, standing water in the trench also prohibited detailed inspection of its fill. Therefore, whatever the function of feature F49, there is a strong likelihood that its lower fills contain well-preserved organic and environmental remains by virtue of their waterlogged contexts. The date of F49 is unknown, though its upper fill (39) contained several fragments of 12th/13th century pottery suggesting that the use of F49 is most likely pre-medieval. The occurrence of early medieval pottery, coupled with the possibility of a medieval stone structure immediately to the west (6.2.2) also bodes well for the preservation of considerable evidence of medieval Castleford in the north-western part of the site.

7. Discussion

7.1 The results of the evaluation present several points for consideration in the wider context of the layout and development of the Roman and medieval settlements.

7.2 The Roman Fort Annexe

The lack of stratigraphic resolution and dating evidence on the eastern side of the Bradley Street site, and the fact that the full profile of ditch F17 was not ascertained, means that any attribution to the eastern side of the annexe is somewhat speculative. However, if the proposed line of the eastern defences of the second fort is correct (Fig. 1), and the annexe is indeed a symmetrical enclosure; then, purely on the basis of situation, ditches F02 and/or F44 would seem the most likely candidates to represent the eastern side of the annexe. Of these two ditches perhaps F44 displays the more likely characteristics of a 2nd century defensive ditch; F02 being more typical of later Roman defences (see below 7.3.3).

7.3 The Late Roman Town

7.3.1 Observations in Trenches T3, T5 and T6 have traced the Roman wall foundation (F11/F41) for a distance of over 30m. The size and length of the wall is perhaps not so well investigated that the possibility of it relating to a building within the annexe can be totally dismissed. However, the morphology of this feature has much in common with the wall foundation thought to represent the southern defences of the late Roman town (Fig. 1). In both instances there appears to be a case for the foundation reusing a former ditch and their orientations, at right angles, presents a very strong case for them being part of the same defensive circuit.

7.3.2 Late Roman wall thicknesses were fairly standard. Walls supported by ramparts were usually 1-2m thick, whilst the taller free-standing walls of the 3rd-4th century Saxon Shore forts were about 3.5m wide (Frere 1974; Johnson 1980). The late Roman foundations found at Castleford were probably just wide enough to have taken either wall thickness. However, evidence for a supporting rampart was not found on the southern or eastern circuit. Such evidence as there is might point to the later Roman town being enclosed by a substantial and high free-standing wall; a likelihood testified to by the form and spatial arrangement of the circumvallating ditches.

7.3.3 The problem of which ditches found during the evaluation relate to the 2nd-century fort annexe, and which relate to the purported later town wall, has been partly addressed above (7.2). Defensive ditches typical of the mid-4th century are wide, shallow affairs at greater distance from the walls than the close V-shaped variety of earlier Roman periods. This was by virtue of the introduction of stronger walls and high externally projecting towers able to accommodate heavy artillery with a greater field of fire (Johnson 1980). Essentially all the ditches observed in Trenches 1 and 2 fit the criteria for late Roman ditches, though that is not to say that one of them cannot relate to the earlier fort annexe.

7.3.4 In an attempt to further understand the Trench T1 ditches, their profiles and spatial intervals with respect to the wall has been compared (by way of schematic sections) to that of the similar ditches excavated between 1974-85 (Fig. 5). On the southern circuit the first ditched defences occur some 10m from the wall, while at 24m from the wall there occurred a 13m wide ditch which had possibly been created out of two smaller ones (Abramson, in prep.). By comparison there appears to be little correlation with the spatial sequence of ditches on the Bradley Street site. However, a defensive ditch 10m from the wall here would not have been located in the evaluation as it would lie below the metalled surface of Bradley

Street itself - an area not trenched. One might find some accord between ditches F17 and F40 and with the very wide ditch at 24m from the wall, but really there is no good spatial correlation. One possible reason for this is the possibility of an interruption in the eastern defensive circuit by a road, with different priorities prevailing towards the river.

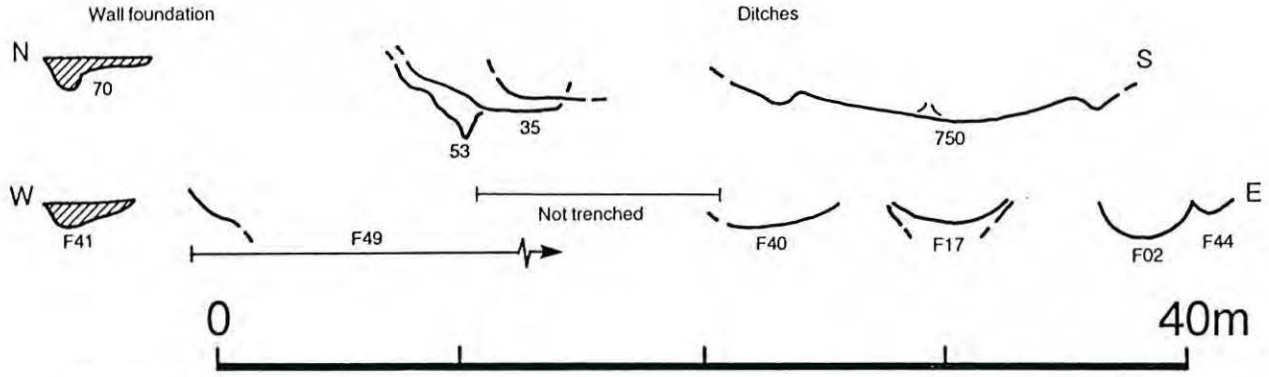

Fig. 5. A comparison of the profiles and spatial intervals of the ditches with respect to the wall foundation of the putative late Roman defences across the southern circuit, as found up to 1985 (upper N-S); and across the eastern circuit, as found in November 1991 (lower W-E). The ditch and foundation profiles are not resolved in the vertical plane.

7.3.5 One noteworthy point that is brought out by comparing the spatial intervals of the ditches is that on the southern circuit there does not seem to have been anything as large as feature F49 within 2m of the wall. This would seem to confirm that F49 is not a defensive feature. It would certainly not be in keeping with the defensive rationale of the 4th century and is perhaps more reasonably interpreted as an inlet from the river at this stage. With regard to this interpretation and the presence of a weir in the past; one might envisage the past requirement for a cargo transfer, or even portage, from one level of the river to the other. In such a scenario an inlet or channel for mooring or docking would be logical.

7.4 The Medieval Settlement

It is perhaps significant that the medieval (and post-medieval) finds lie at the north-western part of the Bradley Street site. This is where the 18th-century maps show buildings and tenements at the eastern end of the village nucleus, to the south of the mill. Apart from this one may assume that the medieval archaeology of Castleford almost certainly survives in this area for the very same reason the Roman levels do. That is the increasing depth of later levelling deposits towards the river.

7.5 The conjectured areas of the second Roman fort, the late Roman town and the medieval/post-medieval settlement are superimposed on Figure 6. If the hypotheses are correct they would seem to show that the size of the defended area may not have changed radically from the 2nd-4th centuries, though perhaps by the 4th century AD it was the townspeople, with an onus on river trade, who were defended (and defending) as opposed to the Roman army. It is possible that the 18th-century village area was confined almost entirely to the defended area of the late Roman town. This might imply both continuity and/or physical containment of any post-Roman settlement. Originally perhaps it was more than just the medieval church that was encompassed by the Roman 'castrum'.

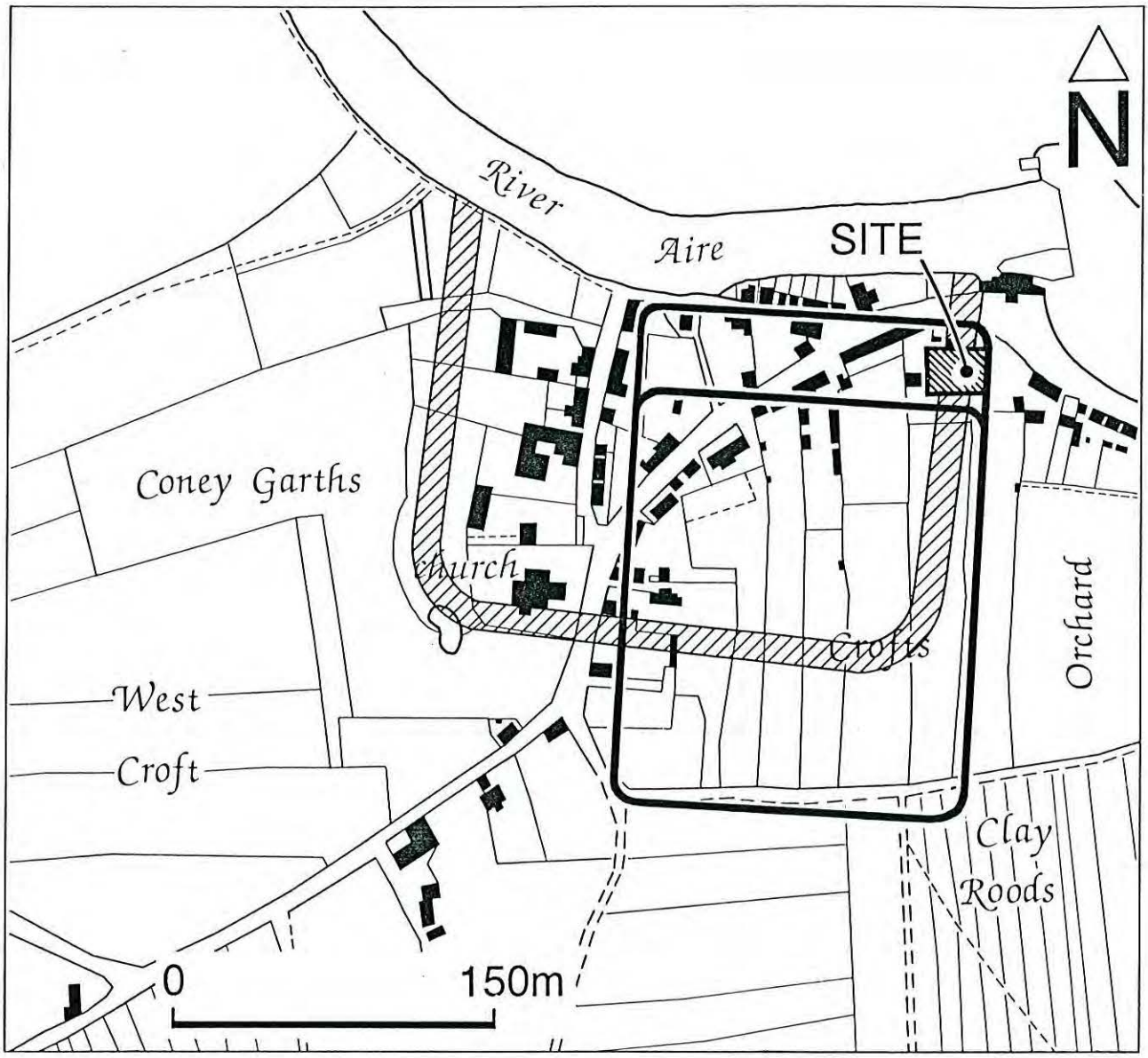

Fig. 6. The site and the conjectured defensive circuits of the second Roman fort (black line) and the late Roman town (hatched band) superimposed upon the 18th-century map of Castleford.

8. Requirement for Further Work

8.1 Despite all that is known about Roman Castleford, small evaluations are still able to fuel much reasoned speculation and put new perspectives on the existing evidence. The combined, though fragmentary, evidence from Bradley Street and other sites in the town has produced data that is consistent with late Roman town defences and perhaps a river inlet for mooring vessels. However, much of what is suggested by way of discussion is simplified hypothesis based on just a small percentage of the information that could be obtained. The reality of the town's past will almost certainly be more complex, and will only be realised and more fully understood by full and detailed archaeological examination of key areas of the town.

8.2 The area of the proposed development on Bradley Street covers a part of the town where many questions about the sequence and nature of the Roman military and civil

settlements could be answered, as well as much needed evidence of the medieval settlement. The evaluation exercise has proved that the site could probably answer many major outstanding questions. Moreover, it has shown that the site possesses greater potential in the form of possible waterlogged deposits. Such deposits could contain well-preserved organic and environmental remains that do not survive under normal conditions. This could present a rare opportunity to gain important information about the Roman way of life in the context of their immediate environment and prevailing climate. As such the Bradley Street site offers great archaeological potential. It should be considered a key area in our understanding of the town's past.

9. References

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