



Fig. 5: evidence from Trench 1 for the management of the east bank of the Waterworks River

1190/1. This style of weatherboarding is familiar from Saxon and Saxo-Norman contexts in the City of London.

Once again, the environmental samples from this period indicated a marshy environment and the presence of *Characeae oogonia* indicates that the water was fresh and unpolluted. One sample contained such a concentration of willow (*Salix* sp.) buds and capsules that it is likely that there was a willow tree overhanging the stream very near here.¹⁵ Willow trees tolerate wet and waterlogged conditions well.

Conclusions

Evidence for activity earlier than the late 15th century was concentrated in the part of the site to the north of the known position of the medieval and later mill. Here, there was evidence for a wattle building or structure having

been built beside the Waterworks River in the sub-Roman or early Saxon period (AD 410–650). Activity that can be so clearly attributed to this period is not common in London and its hinterland and this structure is of some significance. Consistent attempts to manage the river bank in the 10th–12th centuries can also be identified, though whether this is in any way associated with the construction of a late Saxon or Norman mill on the site can only be conjectured.

Elsewhere on the site this period was only represented by truncated alluvial silts in the river channel and no direct archaeological evidence for an early mill survived beneath the extensive post-medieval landscaping and construction work for the 18th-century buildings. Notwithstanding this, the evidence confirms that the Bow

Back Rivers were being managed in the centuries immediately before and after the *Domesday* survey.

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