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**FORMER RANK AUDIO VISUAL
& TRICO-FOLBERTH SITE,**

Great West Road,

Brentford

London TW8

London Borough of Hounslow

An Archaeological Evaluation



Museum of London Archaeology Service

October 1998

**FORMER RANK AUDIO VISUAL & TRICO-FOLBERTH SITE,
Great West Road,
Brentford,
London TW8**

London Borough of Hounslow

An Archaeological Evaluation

**NGR : TQ 1700 7794
SITE CODE : FTR 98**

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ABSTRACT

This report relates to the archaeological evaluation in the form of trial trenches which was carried out on the site of the proposed development at the former Rank Audio Visual and Trico-Folberth sites, Great West Road, Brentford TW8. The site is located in the London Borough of Hounslow (NGR: TQ 1700 7794) and work took place during September 1998.

The Roman settlement at Brentford has been established by previous excavations and is located along the London-Silchester Roman road (now Brentford High Street) approximately 650 metres to the south of the site.

Much of the site showed evidence of modern truncation and did not produce any archaeological evidence. However, several phases of ditches were found during the evaluation of the site in an area of high land overlooking the River Brent. Roman pottery from the area around the ditches was mainly dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries. The ditches can be interpreted as field boundaries and (in conjunction with heavily abraded potsherds) show that this region was an open area used for agriculture, very likely growing produce for consumption in the city of Londinium.

Using information gained in the evaluation the archaeological potential of the areas of the site can be revised. It is suggested that this warrants further investigation in respect of the proposed redevelopment, in the area where features and finds were recorded. A project design for this work is included within the report.

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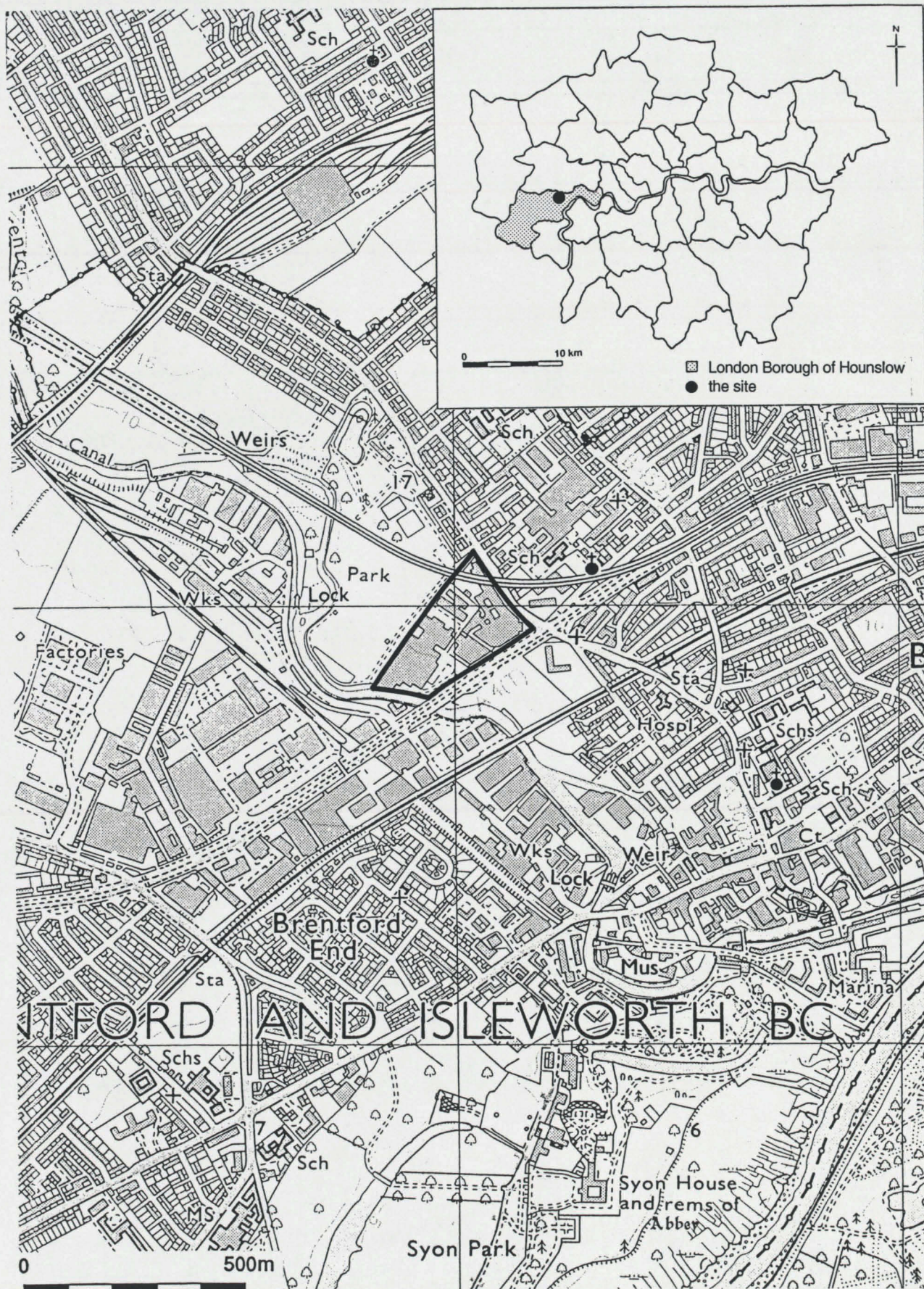


Figure 1 Site location

INTRODUCTION

Site Location (figure 1)

This evaluation report has been carried out in relation to land at the former Rank Audio Visual and Trico sites, Great West Road, Brentford TW8. The site is located on the northern side of Brentford in the London Borough of Hounslow, and is bounded on the north-eastern side by Boston Manor Road, on the south-eastern side by the Great West Road and on the south by the Grand Union Canal. To the north-west lies Boston Manor Park. The Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference is TQ 1700 7794 (fig. 1).

The Trico Works was demolished in 1993 and the Rank Audio buildings in 1997 and the area was levelled with crushed rubble from the former works. It is now open land and is partly overgrown with vegetation.

The proposed redevelopment involves the construction of 750,000 sq ft of offices and a 1000 space car park at ground and basement levels. Surrounding the offices and car park will be landscaped areas.

Archaeology and Planning

The Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 16) on Archaeology and Planning, issued by the Department of Environment in November 1990, identifies the need for early archaeological consultation to determine the impact of construction schemes upon buried archaeological heritage.

The Borough of Hounslow recognises that archaeology is a finite and fragile resource and that adequate safeguarding of ancient monuments and archaeological remains contribute to a better understanding of the past.

The planning guide-lines are focused by the Borough's policy on its archaeological heritage as set out in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in December 1996. The UDP acts as the basis for planning decisions within the borough and replaces the existing statutory and non-statutory local plans.

An archaeological evaluation was commissioned in advance of the redevelopment by Jones Lang Wootton on behalf of their client SmithKline Beecham. This followed a desk-based archaeological assessment of the site (Askew 1998) which was carried out in order to assess the potential archaeological survival and any perceived impact upon that resource from the current development proposals.

The desk-based survey established that the development site was within an area of archaeological potential for all periods from the prehistoric to the post-medieval. Particular potential was identified for remains relating to agrarian land use (eg, field and boundary ditches), and, in the southern part of the site, for evidence for the past management and/or exploitation of the River Brent (such as fisheries).

The potential for archaeological remains has been significantly reduced or removed in specific areas by the construction of the previous factories, including the initial terracing of the site and basement/foundation formation. Outside the footprint of the former buildings archaeological stratigraphy is likely to survive.

In order to test the potential of the site further archaeological work consisting of an evaluation (trial trenching) was carried out. The objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to identify any areas of surviving stratigraphy and to assess their extent and significance, so as to provide material information for the planning process, upon which an informed decision regarding any need for further archaeological safeguards in respect of the proposed scheme could be based. The archaeological evaluation of the site consisted of a number of trenches located within areas of significant potential survival, where these were threatened by proposed redevelopment.

This report has been prepared immediately after completion of the site investigation and therefore represents a summary of the data available at the present time. The Museum of London site code allocated for the evaluation was FTR98 and the site records that form the site archive (see Appendix 1) are currently held by the Museum of London Archaeology Service.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

In accordance with the planning requirements, a prior written scheme of investigation comprising a Method Statement and Project Design for an archaeological evaluation was produced by Geoff Potter of MoLAS and approved by English Heritage (Potter 1998). A number of specific objectives within the research framework were detailed as follows:

- What evidence is there for the past topography of the area, in particular that related to the past regime of the Brent (*eg*, floodplain, infilled channels, *etc*)?
- What does the alluvial sequence reveal about the changes in the local environment? This may relate to flood episodes and organic horizons; potential strategies include environmental/sedimentological sampling and radiocarbon dating.
- Is there any evidence for prehistoric activity? Does this include *in situ* features or deposits, and can the nature/date range of these be defined? If finds occur residually can these be linked to specific events such as flooding?
- How does the prehistoric evidence compare with or complement other finds in the area (*eg*, field/boundary ditches, settlement enclosures)?
- Is there any evidence for Roman or Saxon activity, and what is the stratigraphic context?
- Is there any evidence for medieval or earlier post-medieval activity? Within the southern part of the site can this be related to the management or exploitation of the Brent (*eg*, timber revetting, landing stages, fishtraps)?
- What evidence is there for later post-medieval development/landuse, to supplement cartographic evidence?

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction: Geology and Topography

The drift geology of the area comprises a gravel terrace formed by the Thames during the glacial period, overlain by a deposit of brickearth (a mixture of sand, silt and clay) laid down as an alluvium and/or wind blown deposits during the last glaciation around 26,000 to 13,000 BC.

The modern surface of the site slopes down from the north at a height of *c* 11.50m OD to the south at a height of *c* 5.30m OD, down to the floodplain of the River Brent which has been greatly modified by canalisation. The southern boundary of the site is formed by the River Brent, now the Grand Union Canal, and in the adjacent area the brickearth is replaced by alluvial deposits laid down within the floodplain of the Brent; which range from *c* 0.8m to at least 3.7m thick.

Archaeological and Historical Background

The archaeological and historical background to the site has already been discussed in detail in the desk-based assessment (Askew 1998) and only a summary is presented here.

The following approximate timescales are used in this report:

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Prehistoric</i> | | |
| Palaeolithic | (Old Stone Age) | <i>c.</i> 500,000 - 11,000 BP |
| Mesolithic | (Middle Stone Age) | <i>c.</i> 9,000 - 4,300 BC |
| Neolithic | (New Stone Age) | 4,300 - 2,000 BC |
| Bronze Age | | 2,000 - 600 BC |
| Iron Age | | 600 BC - AD 43 |
| <i>Roman</i> | | AD 43 - AD 410 |
| <i>Saxon</i> | | AD 410 - AD 1066 |
| <i>Medieval</i> | | AD 1066 - AD 1500 |
| <i>Post-medieval</i> | | AD 1500 - Present |

Prehistoric

Occasional prehistoric discoveries have been made in the vicinity of the site dating from the Palaeolithic period, and Mesolithic finds of antler 'picks' and hammerheads have been found in Windmill Road to the west of the site.

A considerable number of Bronze Age tools and weapons have been found in the Hounslow area, suggesting that it was a trading or manufacturing centre. Although no excavation has been carried out, it is now thought that a significant waterside settlement existed close to the where the River Brent joins the Thames¹.

Increasing technological sophistication led to greater wealth and social stratification in the later prehistoric period. This, coupled with a probable population growth, led to an upsurge of warfare and to the development of defended sites. Such settlements took the form of hilltop enclosures and by their nature are most often found on the higher ground some distance from the river. The nearest examples are to be found at Chertsey and Wimbledon, although a ditched enclosure of Late Bronze Age (1200-700 BC) is known from Heathrow.

The Roman period

The Roman conquest in the 1st century AD saw for the first time the establishment of truly urban settlements and their supporting infrastructure. From the newly founded town of Londinium (the modern City of London) ran a network of roads along which a number of towns and villages became established. One such road ran from London to Silchester² along the north bank of the Thames and crossed the Brent near to its former confluence with the River Thames. Part of this London-Silchester Roman road has been located approximately 650 metres to the south of the site (Canham 1978, 17-30).

The presence of a river crossing equidistant between the City and the next principal settlement along the road, Staines, seems to have stimulated the growth of a small settlement at Brentford. This may originally have been established as a *mutatio* or posting station, a stop-over for travellers journeying to the west (Clegg 1991, 33).

Excavations have shown that Brentford was a ribbon development flanking the road. Clay and timber buildings have been found together with finds of Roman coins, pottery, bracelets, beads and brooches.

The Saxon period

After the 4th century the urban settlements and infrastructure that the Romans had established became redundant. The discovery of a sunken floored hut (*grubenhäus*) dated to the 5th century (Canham 1978, 30-1), plus the existence of a letter dated AD 705 naming a place called *Breguntford*, suggest that a settlement may have existed at Brentford from quite early in the Saxon period. The nature and extent of the settlement is

¹ Numerous implements from this period have been found on the foreshore between Isleworth and Brentford.

² Designated Route 4a in I D Margary, 1973, *Roman Roads in Britain*, it became known as Akeman Street in Saxon times

unknown but its use as a location for royal gatherings in the reign of Offa suggests that it may have been of a reasonable size³.

Brentford may have been an important as it lay on the border between the East and West Saxon kingdoms and at fording points for both the Thames and the Brent. There was a ford across the Thames at this point, as is made clear by the account of the Battle of Brentford in AD 1016.

The medieval period

No mention of Brentford is made in the Domesday survey of 1086. Later evidence suggests that the administrative pattern of Brentford had already been settled by the time of the Conquest. Present-day Brentford was split between the parishes of Ealing, Hanwell and Isleworth. The site lies in the parish of Ealing and formed part of the Bishop of London's manor of Fulham.

The old Roman road at this time regained some of its importance, as is shown by the construction of a wooden bridge over the Brent in 1224. This was repaired on several times until it was replaced by a stone bridge in the 15th century. The produce of the fisheries and regular markets and fairs, along with its position at a junction of land and river routes, favoured the growth of Brentford. By the 15th century the settlement possessed a church and chapel, two charitable hospitals and a number of inns.

Archaeological evidence in the vicinity of the site is scarce. To the north lies Boston Manor House, first mentioned in the 14th century when it belonged to the nuns of St Helen Bishopsgate. A small excavation was carried out just to the east of the present-day 17th century building which revealed several pits containing glazed floor tile and pottery dating to the 13th and 14th centuries (Steele 1992).

The post-medieval period

The prosperity of Brentford continued in the 16th and 17th centuries as trade increased. The present Boston Manor House was built in 1662. The site at this time lay within an open area spanning two fields, with its south-western edge butting the River Brent (fig.2).

The turn of the 19th century saw considerable industrialisation in Brentford, with improvements to main roads and the construction of the Grand Junction Canal completed in 1800. The site area was still open pasture with the northern edge originally forming part of the park land associated with Boston Manor.

³ A royal council was held at *Bregentforda* in AD780, and a synod in AD781 to settle a dispute between Offa and the Bishop of Worcester.

A considerable change has occurred by the time of the production of the 1935 Ordnance Survey map (fig. 3). The Trico-Folberth Windscreen Wiper Manufactory was built in 1931 and to the north, a year later in 1932, Macleans established their factory, which expanded further northwards over the following decades. On the southwest side of the site Thompson and Norris constructed their Corrugated Case Manufactory. In the late 1950s Thompson and Norris moved their factory and Trico were able to acquire the canalside factory, as seen on the Ordnance Survey maps of 1959-70s (figs. 4 and 5). Occupancy continued until the demolition of both factories in the 1990s.



Figure 2 Detail from the parish of Ealing map of 1777

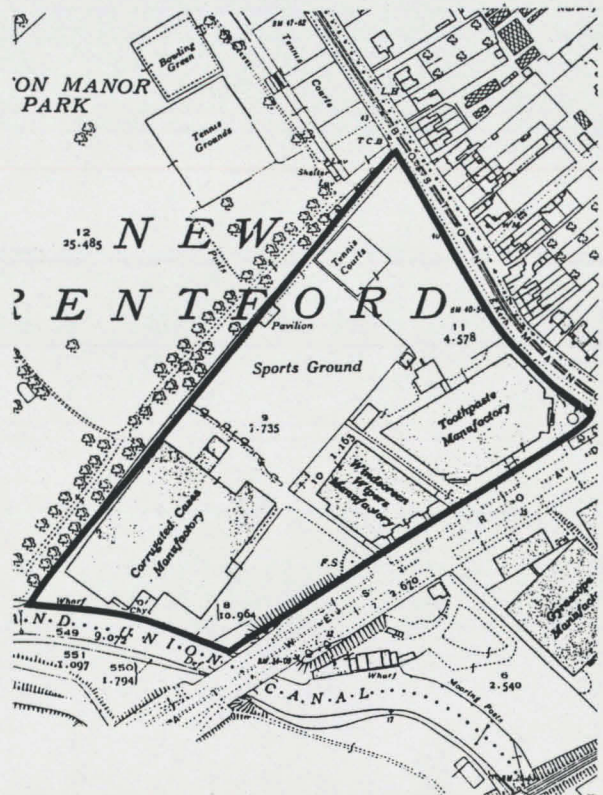


Figure 3 1935 OS map

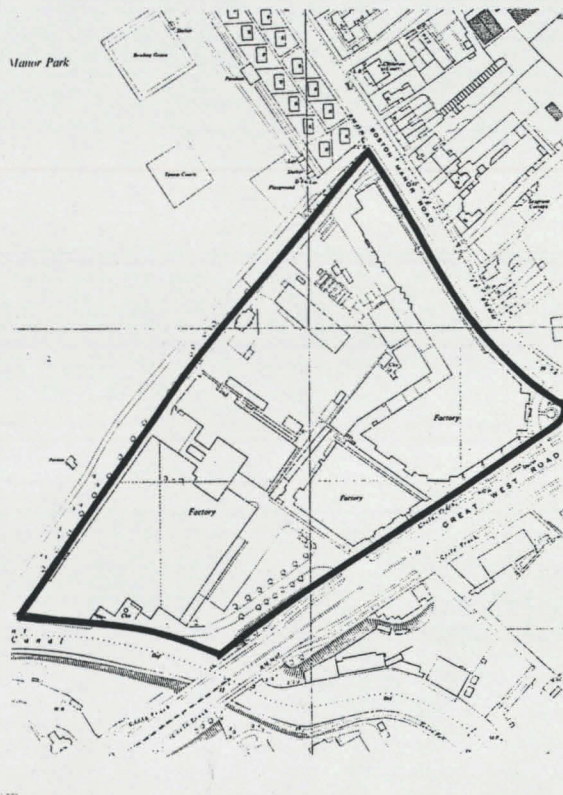


Figure 4 1959-60 OS map

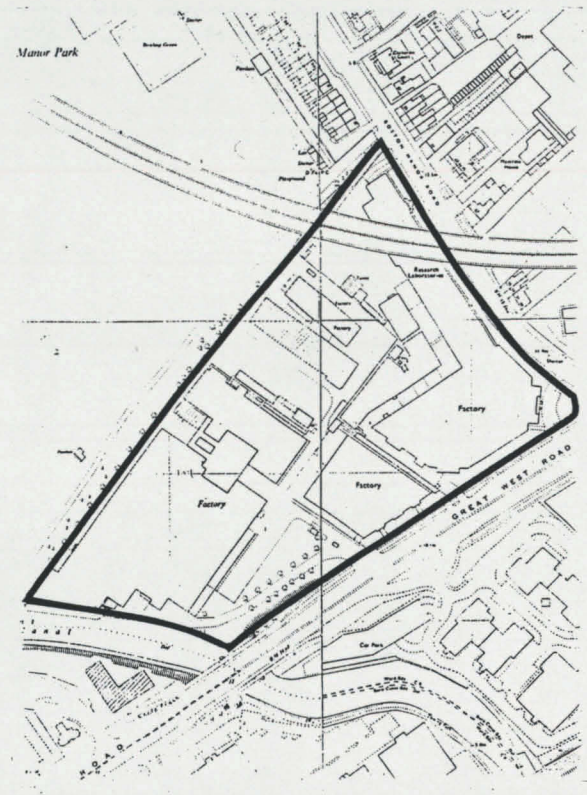


Figure 5 1960/70s OS map



Figure 6 Site outline and trench locations

SITE CONDITIONS AND METHOD OF WORK

Between the 9th and 29th September 1998 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by the Museum of London Archaeology Service to evaluate the land at the former Rank Audio Visual and Trico-Folberth site. The evaluation consisted of 27 trenches and the following is a brief summary of the methodology employed.

The trench layout detailed for the evaluation was designed to effect a representative sample of areas of archaeological potential within the proposed building area, based on the information available.

The trenches were cleared of hardstanding and modern rubble by machine under the supervision of the archaeologist. They were then graded down in horizontal spits (approximately 0.10m in depth) to avoid damaging possible archaeological remains and to expose any archaeological features. The trenches were cleaned by hand at suitable intervals in order to check for any plan evidence for archaeological features, which were then excavated and recorded.

The trenches were progressively excavated in this manner until archaeological features were encountered. In some trenches where deposits were deeper than safety considerations would allow the sides were stepped. The uppermost deposits of brick rubble and crushed tarmac was removed in the area around the trenches to allow safe access.

Some trenches were moved from their original positions in agreement with the site contractors.

The recording systems used were taken from the Museum of London Archaeological Site Manual (Third Edition 1994).

Representative sections of the trenches were drawn and descriptions were made of each deposit. Levels of deposits were recorded to allow comparisons between deposits on site and any previous or future archaeological investigations in the vicinity. The trenches were subsequently surveyed and tied in to the Ordnance Survey national grid (fig. 6).

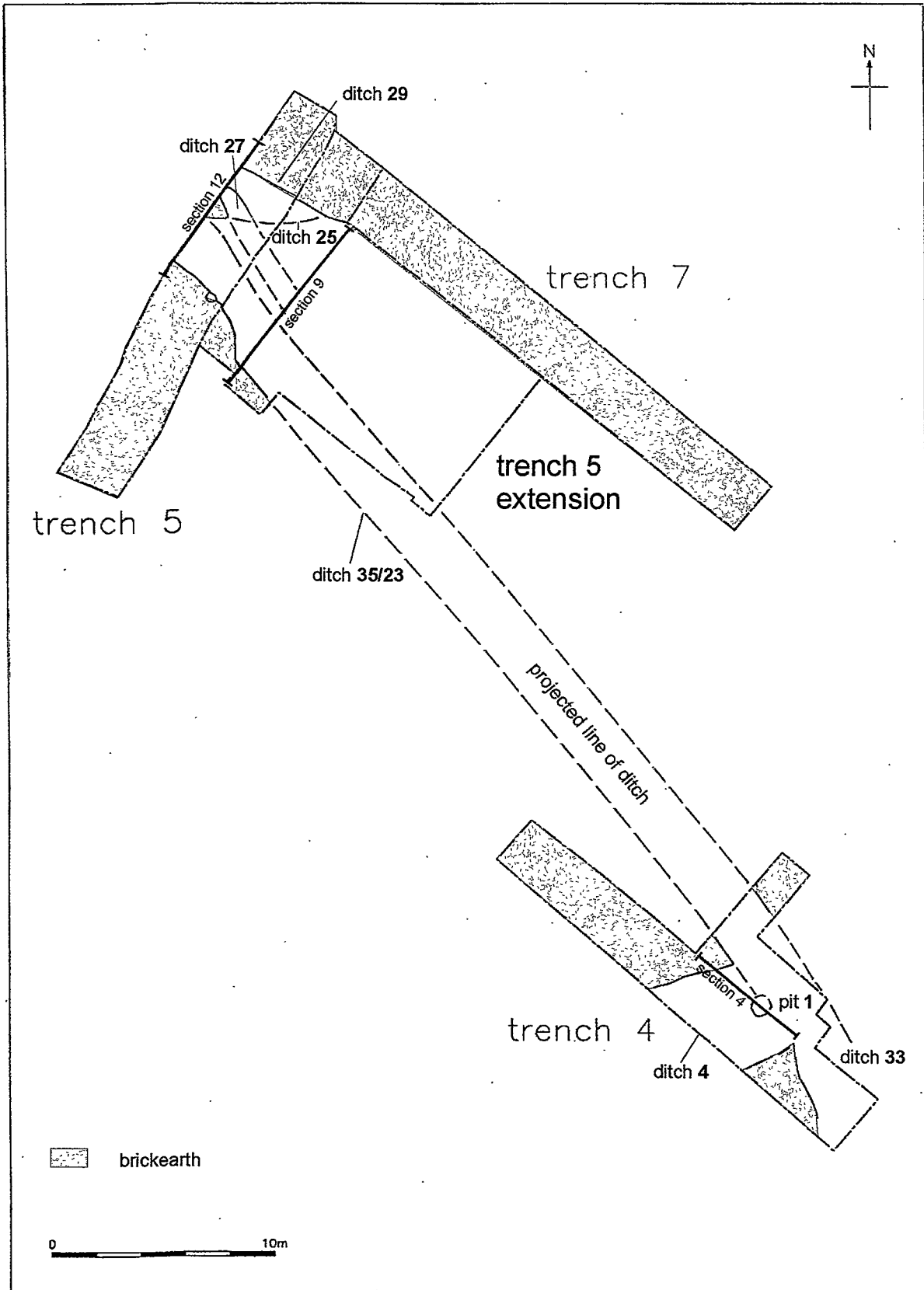
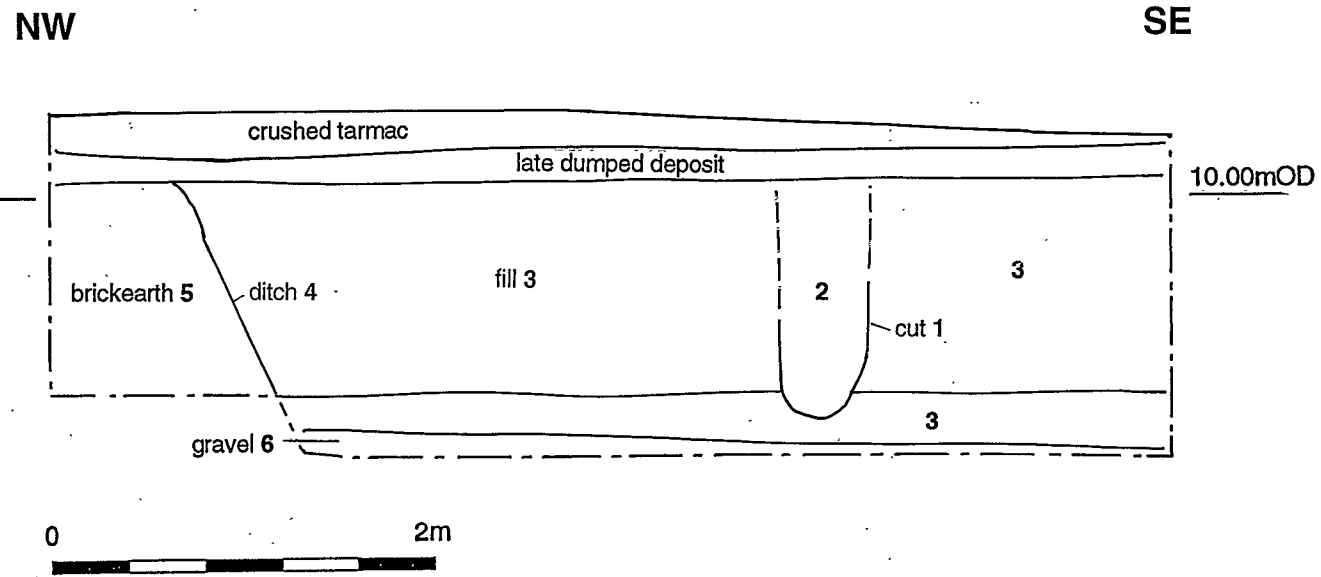


Figure 7 Plan of features in trenches 4 and 5



17

Figure 8 Section 4 through deposits in trench 4

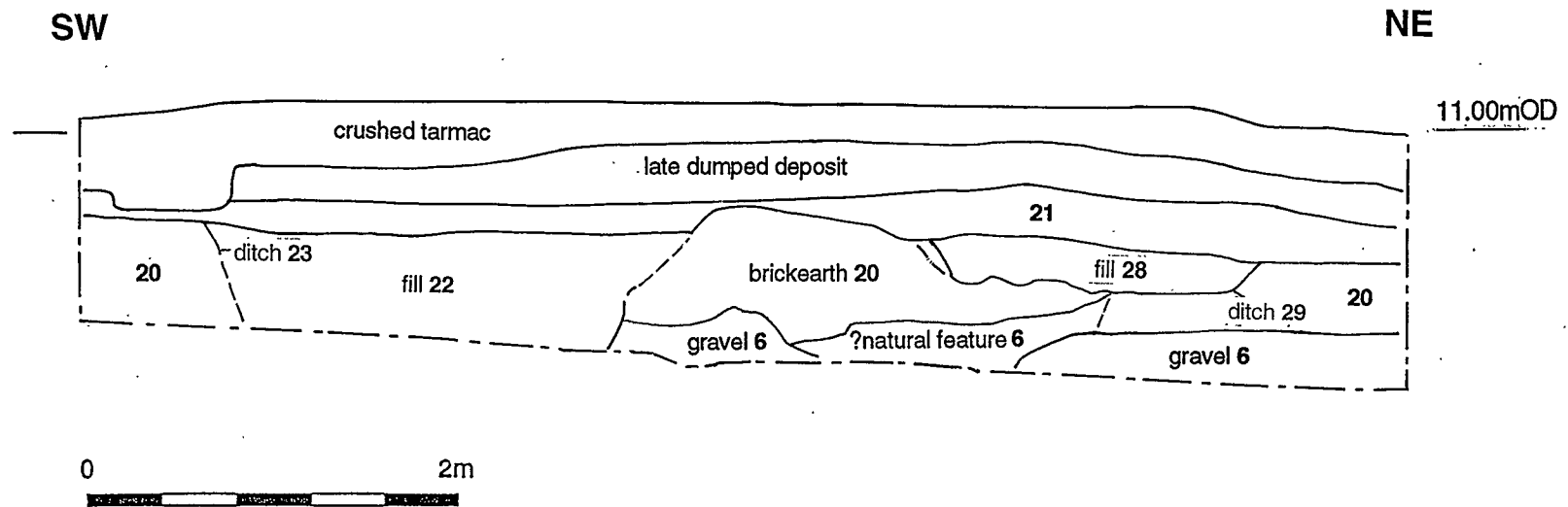
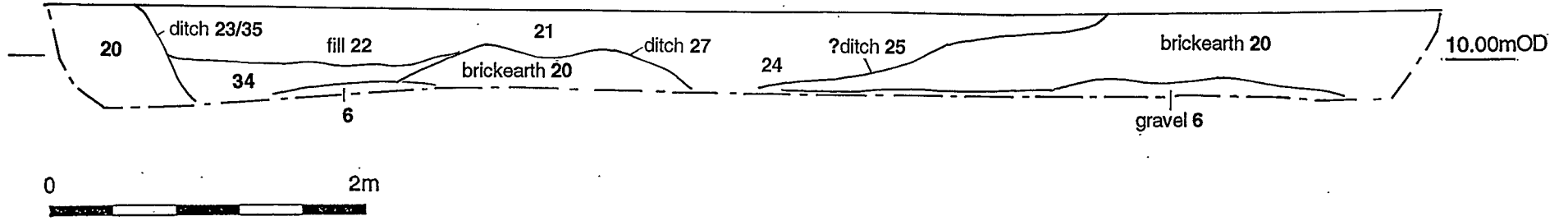


Figure 9 Section 12 through deposits in trench 5

SW

NE



19

Figure 10 Section 9 through deposits in trench 5 extension

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE - RESULTS

The numbers in brackets refer to the context numbers.

Trenches 4 and 5 contained archaeological features (fig. 7). Trench 4 measured 20m by 2.5m and was excavated to a depth of 1.25m, down to 9.35m OD. A slot 0.50m wide was then dug through the centre of the trench down a further 0.50m in depth to reveal the natural gravel.

The natural gravel was an orange-brown clayey sandy gravel (6), at a height of 8.88m OD. Overlaying this was natural orange-brown brickearth with root disturbance (5). The upper part of this, above a height of 9.87m OD, was more silty and contained roots and had probably been disturbed by ploughing and cultivation. The surface of (5) was at 10.05m OD.

Cut into the brickearth (5) was a large feature interpreted as a ditch (4), apparently running east-west (fig. 8). It was nearly 5m wide and 1.3m deep; its base was at the level of the natural gravel (6). Its sides sloped sharply and the base was flat. It contained a fill (3), the lower 0.20m of which was a brown discoloured redeposited natural gravel, but the main fill was a brown-green brickearth. At the edge of the ditch on the surface of the brickearth (5) were five sherds of Roman pottery dated AD 50-160.

Cutting into ditch (4) was a later ditch (33) (fig. 7). This ditch was assumed to form a continuation of that excavated in trench 5, and numbered both (23) and (35) there. Ditch (33) was nearly 3m wide and at least 0.80m deep, but it was not bottomed as the excavation of an extension to trench 4 was halted at 9.02m OD. The west side of (33) was sharply sloping whilst the east side was much more gradual. It contained a fill of brown-orange brickearth which was virtually indistinguishable from the surrounding natural material (5) and so the course of the ditch within trench 4 was not always entirely clear. The upper fill was more easily seen and was a grey-green brickearth (32).

Cutting into ditch (33) was an oval pit (1) 0.50m diameter and over 1.2m deep (fig. 8). Its fill (2) was black-brown silty clay; the black colour may have derived from decayed organic matter. A sample was taken of this for environmental analysis. The sides of the pit were quite vertical and it may have originally functioned as a well. Unfortunately there was no direct dating evidence for the pit.

Sealing the features and the brickearth (5) was a modern dumped deposit with brick rubble and tarmac up to a height of 10.45m OD.

Trench 5 measured 20m by 2.5m and was excavated to a depth of 0.7m, down to 10.42m OD, and a slot 0.50m wide was dug through the centre of the trench down a further 0.50m in depth to reveal the natural gravel.

The natural gravel (6) was recorded at a height of 9.92m OD. Within it was what appeared to be a ditch or pit cut, but this may have been a geological feature as it was apparently sealed by natural brickearth (20) (fig. 9). This deposit also overlay the gravel and was an orange-brown brickearth with root disturbance, which can be equated to (5) in trench 4. The top of (20) was at 10.62m OD.

Cut into the brickearth (20) were several ditches. They were filled with very similar material so it was difficult to separate them in the evaluation.

Ditch (23/35) was the largest feature and may have been a continuation of that found in trench 4, ditch (33). Its sides were sharply sloping and its base was flat and bottomed out on the gravel at 9.88m OD. It was nearly 3m wide and was 0.60m deep. The lower part of the fill (34) was 0.30m deep, a brown-orange clayey brickearth over which was another fill (22) which was a grey-green brickearth. Fill (22) contained three sherds of Roman pottery dating AD 270-400 and one sherd of medieval pottery, possibly intrusive, dated AD 1150-1300.

The relationship of (23/35) to the other ditches was not clear. Ditch (27) was largely cut away by ditches (25) and (29) but it appeared to butt end close to the north-west edge of the trench. It was 0.60m wide and 0.20m deep with its base at 10.22m OD, and was filled with (28) a light grey brickearth. A cut can be seen on figure 10 which may be part of ditch (27), largely truncated by ditch (25). The base of the cut on figure 10 was much lower than that recorded in figure 9 for (27); here being at 9.79m OD.

Ditch (29) was 1.8m wide and 0.20m deep with its base at 10.10m OD (fig.9). Its sides sloped gradually and its base was flat. It contained a fill (28) of grey brickearth. It is possible that ditch (29) was cut by ditch (25).

There was very little of ditch (25) that could be distinguished with any certainty. Its relationship to ditch (29) was not clear, and only one edge of the feature could be postulated in plan where it cut the brickearth (20). Part of its edge may also appear on figure 10 truncating ditch (27), with its fill (24) over.

The relationships between ditches (23/35), (25) and (29) were difficult to ascertain. This was largely because ploughing and cultivation had reworked the tops of the fills into a homogenous deposit of grey-green brickearth (21). This was 0.20m in depth at a height of 10.20m OD. The ploughing action had truncated all of the tops of the ditches, which were probably originally much deeper. Ploughmarks (11) were seen in the top of fill (28), although the date of these is unknown. Ploughing was probably also responsible for the truncation of a small posthole (31) on the side of the ditch (23/35). This was 0.30m diameter and was situated at a height of 10.43m OD. It was no more than 0.07m deep and was filled with (30), an orange-brown brickearth.

Sealing deposit (21) was a modern dumped deposit with brick rubble and tarmac up to a height of 11.12m OD.

During machine clearance several sherds of pottery were collected but could not be assigned to any specific feature. In trench 4 eight sherds of Roman pottery dating AD 250-400 were found and in trench 5, four sherds of pottery dating from AD 50-400; whilst in trench 5/7 extension six sherds of pottery dated AD 250-400 were recovered. There were also four sherds of pottery dating to the post-medieval period, from AD 1580-1700, from clearance in trench 5.

To summarise; the natural gravel was recorded at 9.92m OD in trench 5 and 9.80m OD in trench 5 extension, sloping down to trench 4 where it was at 8.88m OD. The gravel was capped with a brickearth deposit with a height of 10.62m OD in trench 5 sloping down to 10.05m OD in trench 4. Similarly the ditch features sloped from the higher ground down to the south. The base of ditch (27) apparently sloped from 10.22m OD in trench 5 to 9.79m OD in section 9 in trench 5 extension, although possibly truncated by (25).

The probable continuous ditch (23/35) and (33) also demonstrated a slope from north to south: the base was at 9.88m OD in trench 5 and not bottomed at 9.02m OD in trench 4. This was a large ditch, the purpose of which was unclear. Although the slope of the base suggests that it could have been used for drainage, it did not contain alluvial fills and therefore may not have carried water. It was on a quite different alignment to ditch (4) and was cutting through it, clearly indicating a later phase of activity.

The many phases and recuts of the smaller ditches together with the appearance of ploughmarks suggest agricultural activity, and these ditches probably were once field boundaries.

Trenches 9-12

Trenches 9-12 were excavated on the northern edge of the former River Brent, now the Grand Union Canal. They measured 12m to 22m in length by up to 5m wide and were excavated to a depth of 0.80-1.2m. A slot 1.8m wide was dug through the centre of the trenches a further 1.20m in depth in order to reveal the natural gravel.

The natural gravel was reached in all the trenches except trench 11, which had been truncated by modern intrusions which were not removed. The gravel (18) was an orange-brown clayey sandy gravel at a height of 5.50m OD in trench 9, sloping down to the south-west where the lowest recorded point was 3.50m OD in trench 12. This gravel slope represents part of the former foreshore of the River Brent.

The gravel was overlain by alluvial deposits of clays and silts (16 and 17). These were of beige or blue-grey colour and were over 1m in depth, reaching a maximum height of 6.20m OD in trench 9.

The alluvial deposits were overlain by modern dumped deposits or redeposited clays up to a maximum height of 6.76m OD in trench 9.

Unfortunately these trenches were sterile of archaeological remains and no dating evidence was retrieved for the alluvial deposits, and thus they could not be assigned to a particular period. A few flecks of yellow stock brick from context (19) might mean that these deposits were of relatively recent origin, although the flecks cannot be considered as secure dating evidence as they may have been washed or worked in by natural processes.

Natural gravel was much lower in trenches 9 to 12 (at a height between 3.50-5.50m OD) than that recorded in trenches 4 and 5 (where it was at 8.80-9.92m OD). The ditches in trenches 4 and 5 were therefore situated on a much higher piece of land overlooking the lower levels of the former River Brent.

Trenches 1-3, 6, 8, 13-16

These trenches measured 20m by 2.5m and were 1m deep.

This group of trenches lay between trenches 4 and 5 on the higher land to the north of the site and in trenches 9 to 12 on the lower land to the south. The land sloped from trench 16 down to trench 2 but much of the area had been terraced and the natural gravel was truncated. None of these trenches contained any archaeological features, and although a few finds of pottery were collected during cleaning these could not be related to any activity. Three sherds of post-medieval pottery dated AD 1600-1800 were collected from trench 2 and one sherd of medieval pottery dated AD 1230-1400 was found in trench 3. Some small areas of subsoil existed in trenches 1-3 and so showed that these areas of natural at least had not been truncated. Enough remained to allow the natural ground surface to be reconstructed. The level of gravel was at 7.04m OD in trench 2 and 8.04m OD in trench 3.

In all of the other trenches in this area there was no surviving subsoil but natural gravel was recorded at 7.85m OD in trench 8 and 8.95m OD in trench 14. These heights indicate that extensive terracing had not taken place in these areas.

Modern intrusions and safety considerations in trenches 6, 15 and 16 meant that natural deposits were not reached, although these trenches appeared to be considerably truncated.

Trenches 17, 18 and 19

These trenches measured 20m by 2.5m and were up to 1.20m deep. They lay north of trenches 4 and 5 on high land where the present day ground level was at around 11.50m OD. The natural gravel was not reached and the natural here was an orange brickearth with a height of 10.80m OD. In trench 18 it was overlain by a deposit of 0.30m thickness of brown silty sand with many roots, which may have been a dumped deposit rather than a subsoil. In trench 17 the brickearth was truncated at 10.49m OD and overlain by concrete rubble.

In trench 19 the natural brickearth was at a height of 10.37m OD. This was not thought to be truncated as an overlying brownish-green silty clay was seen, which was interpreted as a subsoil with a height of 10.66m OD.

Although there was no extensive truncation in these trenches the deposits were sterile of archaeological finds and features.

Trenches 20 and 21

These trenches measured up to 20m by 2.5m and were up to 1.20m deep, with a central slot a further 1.20m deep dug down to 9m OD, but no natural deposits were revealed. Extensive modern truncation had clearly taken place here as the deposits in these trenches consisted largely of rubble and concrete.

Trenches 22-27

These trenches measured 20m by 2.5m and were up to 1.20m deep with a central slot excavated a further 1.20m in depth.

Trench 27 was excavated with a central slot down to 9.56m OD and no gravel was seen. However, there was a clean natural orange brickearth which was situated at a height of 10.79m OD, not far below the present ground surface at 11.30m OD. The level of brickearth in trench 24 was recorded at 10.93m OD.

In the rest of the trenches much disturbance had taken place, with accompanying modern fill. Natural brickearth was recorded at around 9.96m OD in trenches 22 and 25, but no subsoil was seen here which probably indicates that the natural had been truncated.

In trench 23 natural gravel was reached at 8.90m OD, overlain by brickearth at 10.20m OD but only in one small area. Similarly in trench 26 gravel was at 9.27m OD, overlain by brickearth at 9.87m OD again in one small surviving area.

In the area of these trenches no archaeological features or finds were seen but most of the deposits were much truncated. However, the trenches revealed that there was a higher level of natural in the northern part of the site.

CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological evaluation was successfully completed within the agreed period and a detailed record of archaeological deposits and features was made. The research questions outlined in the specification have been addressed as follows.

The levels of natural deposits were recorded in most of the trenches; the highest surviving area was in the northern part of the site, recorded in trench 24 at 10.93m OD. There was a gradual slope down to trenches 4 and 5 where the height of natural was at 10.62m OD. Below this area of high land the brickearth capping lensed out down towards the south where the river lay. The level of natural gravel was at 7.04m OD in trench 2. The gravel was at a height of 5.50m OD in trench 9, sloping down to the south-west where the lowest recorded point was 3.50m OD in trench 12. This gravel slope represents part of the former foreshore of the River Brent.

There was no evidence for buried channels or organic deposits within the alluvial clays and it is possible that these were deposited fairly recently.

There was no evidence for prehistoric activity.

There was positive evidence for Roman activity. Several phases of ditches had been cut into the higher land overlooking the River Brent, including one ditch projected over a distance of about 50m. Twenty-seven sherds of Roman pottery were found, mostly dating to the 3rd/4th centuries. Although these were mainly found in the ploughsoils above ditch fills they served to indicate the date of the features. There were a few sherds of post-Roman pottery in trench 5 and a sherd of medieval pottery from the fill (22) of the largest ditch. These indicate activity of later periods and may even mean that the ditches were not all of one period.

The relationships between the ditches had largely been removed by ploughing and cultivation, which had reworked the tops of the fills into a homogenous deposit of grey-green brickearth. The ploughing action had truncated all of the tops of the ditches which were probably originally much deeper. The ditches can be interpreted as field boundaries, and may also have acted as drainage ditches to remove the run off from the fields although no alluvial deposits were seen within their fills.

The Roman settlement at Brentford appears to have flanked the main Roman road to Silchester, and perhaps developed from an overnight stop for travellers. It does not appear to have spread far from the road and certainly not as far as the region of the present site. It can now be demonstrated that this latter formed an open area for agriculture, very likely growing produce for consumption in the city of *Londinium*.

There was surprisingly little evidence for medieval and post-medieval land use, except for a few sherds of abraded pottery. There was no evidence for extensive cultivation or other activity in the 17th and 18th centuries to supplement cartographic evidence (see for example fig.2).

METHOD STATEMENT & PROJECT DESIGN FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Introduction

Based on the results of the archaeological evaluation English Heritage have recommended that further investigation should take place, in advance of redevelopment.

The proposed investigation will be located within the area of archaeological potential, as defined by evaluation trenches 4 and 5 and their subsequent extensions. The archaeological investigation will consist of excavation and recording of the buried remains, with appropriate arrangements for post-excavation work and publication of results.

Aims and Objectives

The results of the evaluation have enabled the original research questions to be refined. The principal objectives for the excavation are defined as follows:

- How accurately can the ditches and other cut features be dated, and how many phases of activity are represented? The excavation strategy should seek to maximise artefact recovery, particularly in well-stratified sequences.
- What evidence is there for the function of the ditches as field/boundary divisions, and can more extensive examination of the fills, *etc*, indicate other uses (such as drainage)?
- What mechanisms resulted in infilling of the ditches? These may include deliberate backfilling, hillwash and alluviation; potential strategies include environmental analysis (*eg*, for molluscs) and sedimentological sampling.
- Is there any environmental evidence (*eg*, carbonised plant remains) for contemporary landuse and/or changes in the local environment? What other evidence is there outside the cut features; for example, further ploughmarks?
- What evidence is there for other activity on the site, including agricultural structures and associated settlement? Some activity is indicated by the one posthole and possible well revealed in evaluation.
- Given that existing evidence relates primarily to the later Roman period, is there any evidence for subsequent Saxon/early medieval activity, or for continuity of landuse into these periods?
- Is there any conclusive evidence for later medieval/post-medieval landuse or other activity, beyond the stray finds already made?

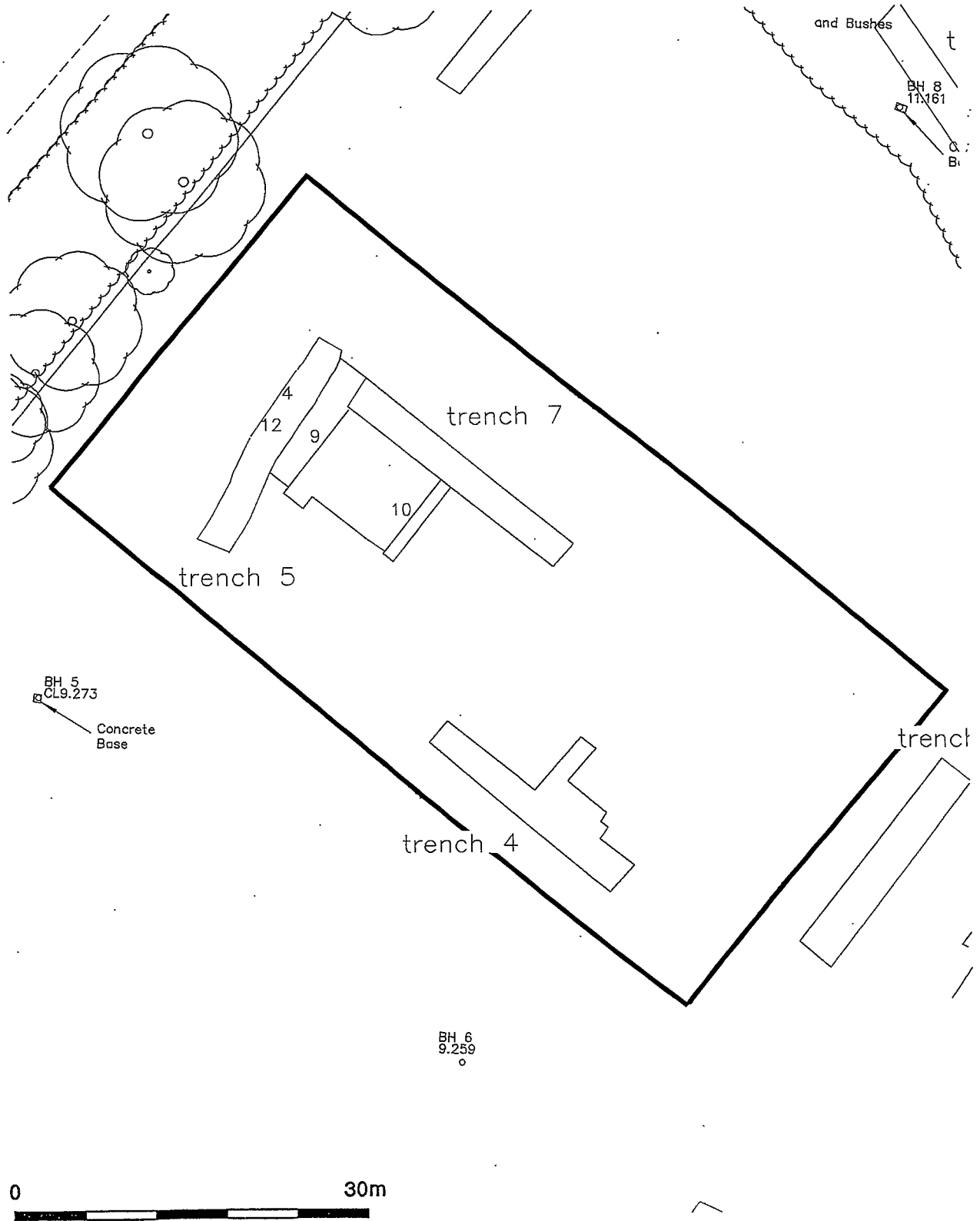


Figure 11 Plan showing approximate area of proposed further investigation

Excavation Project Design

The field and post-excavation work will be carried out in accordance with English Heritage guidelines, in particular those laid down in *Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork* (Guidance Paper 3).

Works will also conform to the standards established by the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Overall management of the project will be the responsibility of a MoLAS Project Manager, who will be a full Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. On-site work will be supervised by a Senior Archaeologist, who will also act as principal author of the post-excavation report.

The on-site excavation will be concluded within a period of fifteen working days. The fieldwork will be followed by a programme of post-excavation processing, and by compilation of an assessment report to be produced within four weeks of the conclusion of fieldwork. Details of the excavation and post-excavation programme are given below.

Excavation proposals

It is proposed that the archaeological excavation should take place within a single area of cleared ground, measuring about 70m by 35m in plan (including previous evaluation trenches). The approximate location and extent of the excavation area is shown on fig. 11.

The excavation proposal is based on the archaeological finds made in evaluation, as described above, and also on the potential of the adjacent areas as established by the preliminary desktop assessment. The excavation area is heavily cut away to the west and elsewhere is bordered by former buildings and (to the north) by the site boundary.

No significant variation in excavation size/location will be made without reference to English Heritage.

Methodology

The trench will be excavated by machine under archaeological supervision to the latest significant archaeological horizon. Machining will be with a 20 ton 360° tracked excavator, equipped as appropriate with a toothed or ditching bucket or breaker. A dumper will be utilised to mound spoil beyond the perimeter of the excavation, at a safe distance and clear of areas of archaeology. Exposed surfaces should not be tracked or driven over by plant.

Following machine clearance archaeological deposits and features will be selectively excavated by hand and recorded in stratigraphic sequence by the on-site archaeologists, and a series of plans and sections drawn. Additional techniques will be applied where appropriate; these include sampling for artefactual and environmental remains and for dating evidence (eg, radiocarbon analysis).

More extensive and homogeneous deposits such as buried soils may be excavated in selected areas, and in arbitrary spits (c 0.05 to 0.10m) unless otherwise defined.

The objective will be to define the character, extent, date and significance of archaeological remains, to maximise artefact recovery and to recover environmental evidence.

Health and Safety

The excavation will be carried out in accordance with the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1996. The MoLAS Health and Safety Advisor will visit the site during the course of the fieldwork to ensure compliance with the appropriate regulations.

Where appropriate the sides of excavation will be stepped or battered back into the adjacent ground, dependent upon the depth of deposits.

Specialist support

The field team will be supported by specialist staff who will visit the site as required. These include surveyors, environmentalists and a photographer.

Reinstatement

No provision is included for backfilling of the trench or other reinstatement at the conclusion of the archaeological excavation.

Post-excavation work and report procedure

On the completion of the fieldwork a programme of off-site work (processing and assessment) will be prepared.

The results of this process will be compiled within an assessment report, which will give details of methodology and archaeological findings, including the work previously undertaken in evaluation. Recommendations will be made as appropriate for further analysis and publication. It is envisaged that publication will concentrate on the archaeological evidence for and dating/interpretation of landscape features, although remains and artefacts of intrinsic interest may merit separate publication.

A short summary of the results of the fieldwork will also be submitted to the Greater London SMR (using the appropriate archaeological report forms), and for publication in the appropriate academic journal (including the 'excavation round-up' of *The London Archaeologist*).

Proposed excavation timetable and resource allocation

The figures given below relate to an excavation programme of three weeks on site, followed by post-excavation assessment and analysis/publication. The assessment report will be produced within four weeks of the conclusion of fieldwork; in view of this timescale the report will not include results of any radiocarbon dating (c 8-10 weeks).

The allocation of resources given below represents the best estimate of what is likely to be required, within the budgetary limit. Expenditure and time are estimated for each element of the programme, and may be reallocated within the budget.

Field excavation: up to 15 days

week 1: two/three archaeologists on site
weeks 2 & 3: up to six archaeologists on site

Specialist input during fieldwork

Surveying: two days have been allocated for the MoLAS professional surveyor/assistant to visit the site.

Environmental sampling: an environmentalist will visit the site as required to undertake sampling and/or give specialist advice (three visits of 0.5 days).

Archaeological photography: cameras will be available for use on site; the costing also allows for two visits by the MoLAS professional photographer.

Attendances, etc, during fieldwork

excavation: 20 ton 360° tracked excavator with toothed/ditching buckets and breaker large dumper (both to be provided by the client)

facilities: secure site office/tool store (to be hired by MoLAS)
w.c & washing facilities understood to be available on site

Off site: post-excavation processing and assessment

The proposed stages (with some overlap) are as follows:

| | <i>days</i> |
|--|-------------|
| preparation of stratigraphic archive & assessment report | 7 |
| project management | 5.5 |
| drawing office/CAD | 3 |
| finds processing & assessment | 3.5 |
| conservation & accessioning | 1.5 |
| environmental processing & assessment | 3.5 |
| photographic | 0.5 |
| radiocarbon dating | — |
| report production | — |

further analysis and publication

| | |
|--|-----|
| finds analysis & reports | 2 |
| environmental analysis & reports | 2 |
| drawing office | 4 |
| photographic | 0.5 |
| stratigraphic analysis & preparation of publication text | 6.5 |
| archive deposition | 0.5 |
| project management/editorial | 4 |
| publication costs | — |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank SmithKline Beecham who funded the field evaluation and report, and Ian Blacker of Jones Lang Wootton for organising and commissioning the work on behalf of the client. Special thanks also go to Sam Sayer, Rob Darrow and David Entwistle of Mace Construction for on site assistance.

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Appendix 1 Site Archive

The site archive is held by MoLAS under the Museum of London site code FTR98.

The written archive consists of:

Written records:

- 35 context sheets
- Deposit survival form
- GLSMR form
- 'London Archaeologist' summary
- Survey/levels data
- Evaluation report
- Project design
- Context register
- Section register
- Environmental register
- 2 environmental sheets

Drawings:

- 1 site location plan showing evaluation trenches (scale 1:200)
- 12 trench sections (1:20)
- 3 plans (1:20)

Photographs:

- 5 colour 35mm transparencies
- 5 black and white negatives & photographs

054661

Appendix 2 GLSMR/RCHME NAR Archaeological Report Form

1) TYPE OF RECORDING

Evaluation

2) LOCATION

Borough: Hounslow

Site address: Great West Road, Brentford, TW8

Site name: Former Rank AudioVisual and Trico-Folberth Site

Site code: FTR98

Nat. Grid Refs: Centre of site: TQ 1700 7794

3) ORGANISATION

Museum of London Archaeology Service
Walker House
87 Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4V 4AB

Site director/supervisor: Carrie Cowan

Project Manager: Geoff Potter

Funded by: SmithKline Beecham

4) DURATION

Date fieldwork started: 9/9/98

Date finished: 29/9/98

Fieldwork previously notified?

YES/NO

Fieldwork will continue?

YES/NO/NOT KNOWN

5) PERIODS REPRESENTED

Palaeolithic

Roman

Mesolithic

Saxon (pre-AD 1066)

Neolithic

Medieval (AD 1066-1485)

Bronze Age

Post-Medieval

Iron Age

Unknown

Prehistoric

- 6) **PERIOD SUMMARIES** Use headings for each period (ROMAN; MEDIEVAL; etc.), and additional sheets if necessary.

Roman: Several phases of Roman ditches were found during the evaluation on the site in an area of high land overlooking the River Brent. The ditches can be interpreted as field boundaries and show that this region was an open area for agriculture away from the main Roman settlement of Brentford.

Post-medieval: Much of the site was truncated by recent development and contained no evidence for earlier post-medieval activity.

- 7) **NATURAL** (state if not observed; please DO NOT LEAVE BLANK)

Type: Clayey gravel topped with brickearth

Height above Ordnance Datum: 10.93m OD (max)

8) **LOCATION OF ARCHIVES**

- a) Please provide an estimate of the quantity of material in your possession for the following categories:

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------|--------|
| NOTes | 35 context sheets | PLans | 3 context plans 12 section drawings 1 site plan | Photos | Ngatives | 5 negs |
| SLides | 5 colour | Correspondence | - | Scripts (unpin reports, etc.) | Archive report | |
| Bulk finds | 12 bags pot | Small finds | - | Soil samples | 1 10! | |

Other (please specify)

- b) The archive has been prepared and stored in accordance with MSc standards and has been deposited in the following location:

Museum of London Archaeology Service

- c) Has a security copy of the archive been made? YES/NO

Have you arranged for RUCHE microfilming? YES/NO

9) **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

See report.

SIGNED: C. Cowan

DATE: 19/10/98

Appendix 3 List of Contexts

A concise list of contexts (recording units) used during the archaeological investigation is presented below. This single sequence of numbers with site code provides a unique reference for each recorded archaeological feature on the site.

Site Code: FTR98

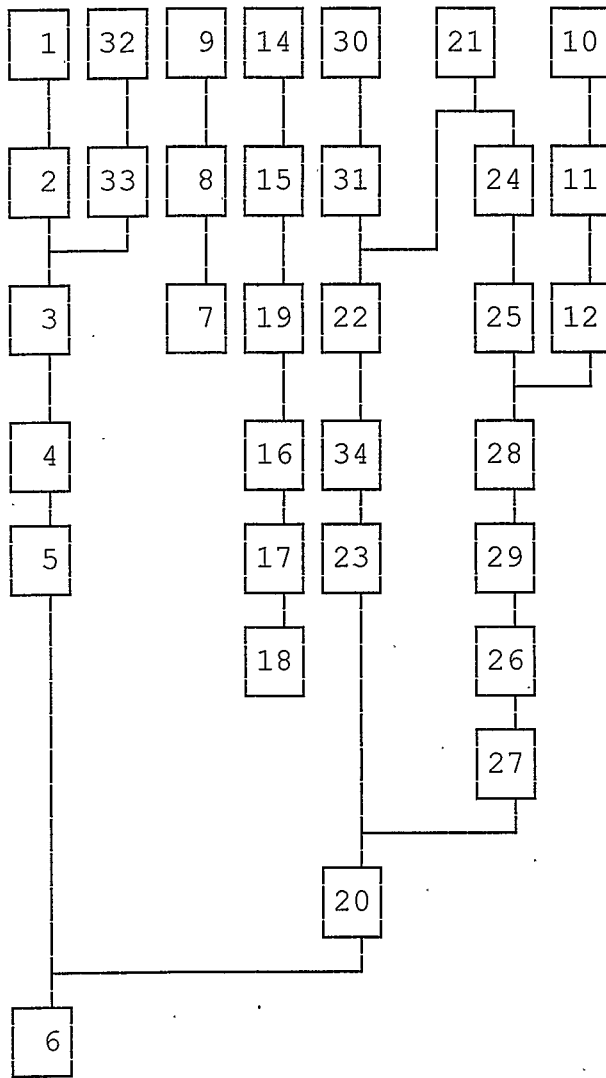
Index of Contexts

| Context | Description/Type | Trench | Section | Plan |
|---------|------------------|----------|---------|------|
| 1 | cut | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| 2 | fill | 4 | 3 | |
| 3 | fill | 4 | 3 | |
| 4 | cut | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | depo | 4 | 3,11 | 4 |
| 6 | depo | 4,5, 5/7 | 9,10,12 | |
| 7 | depo | 1,2 | 1,2 | |
| 8 | depo | 1,2 | 1,2 | |
| 9 | depo | 1,2 | 1,2 | |
| 10 | fill | 5 | | |
| 11 | ploughmarks | 5 | | 5 |
| 12 | depo | 5 | | |
| 13 | clearance | 2 | | |
| 14 | depo | 10 | 7 | |
| 15 | depo | 9 | 5 | |
| 16 | depo | 9,10 | 5 | |
| 17 | depo | 9-12 | 5,7,8 | |
| 18 | depo | 9,10,12 | 5,7,8 | |
| 19 | depo | 9 | 5 | |
| 20 | depo | 5,5/7 | 9,10,12 | 5 |
| 21 | depo | 5,5/7 | 4,10,12 | |
| 22 | fill | 5,5/7 | 4,9,12 | |
| 23 | ditch cut | 5,5/7 | 9,12 | 5 |
| 24 | fill | 5 | | |
| 25 | ditch cut | 5 | | 5 |
| 26 | fill | 5 | | |
| 27 | ditch cut | 5 | 12 | 5 |
| 28 | fill | 5,5/7 | 4,9,12 | |
| 29 | ditch cut | 5,5/7 | 4,9,12 | 5 |
| 30 | fill | 5 | | |
| 31 | posthole | 5 | | |
| 32 | fill | 4 | 11 | |
| 33 | ditch cut | 4 | 11 | |
| 34 | fill | 5/7 | 12 | |
| 35 | ditch cut | 5/7 | 12 | |

Index of Contexts (cont)

| Context | Description/Type | Trench | Section | Plan |
|---------|------------------|--------|---------|------|
| 36 | clearance | 3 | | |
| 37 | clearance | 4 | | |
| 38 | clearance | 5 | | |
| 39 | clearance | 5/7 | | |
| 40 | clearance | 8 | | |

Appendix 4 Stratigraphic matrix of contexts from FTR98



Appendix 5 Assessment of the pottery

A total of thirty-six sherds were examined and recorded on paper and on the Oracle database using standard MoLAS/MoLSS fabric codes.

Roman Pottery

by Louise Rayner

The small assemblage spot-dated consisted of 27 Roman sherds, recovered from six contexts. The sherds are in very poor condition with very abraded surfaces, which in some cases has resulted in the total removal of the coloured slip from the surfaces. The majority of the sherds are body sherds and have few diagnostic features. This, coupled with the poor condition and small size of the group, has resulted in poorly dated contexts.

The majority of the sherds were recovered with later post-Roman material and are therefore residual. The only contexts with solely Roman pottery are: 5, 37 and 39. The sherds that are identifiable and assigned dates are mainly later Roman and given date-ranges in the mid 3rd - 4th century. Fabrics that have been identified are Alice Holt/Farnham (AHFA), Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware (OXRC), Verulamium white ware (VRW), and the sole imported ware, central Gaulish samian (SAMCG). The remainder of the sherds are unidentifiable sand and oxidised wares.

The only rim sherd present is from a plain rimmed dish in AHFA.

The assemblage at present requires no further work and is of little potential. However, the presence of the later Roman material does indicate activity of this date and should be considered in relation to any further work in this area.

Post-Roman pottery

by Lyn Blackmore

A total of nine sherds were examined and recorded on paper and Oracle database. All pieces were small and in very poor condition.

Two sherds are of medieval date; one, from [22], is of South Herts/Limpsfield greyware, dated to 1150-1300. The other, found in [36] (trench 3), is from a Kingston ware jug, although the fragment is so small that only the broadest dating is possible (1230-1400).

The finds from trench 2 ([13]) and trench 5 ([38]) all date to after 1580, and those from [13] probably date to the later 17th century, as a fragment of clay pipe stem was also found in this context. The latter comprise a tiny sherd of tin-glazed ware and two laminated body sherds of nondescript redware. The finds from [38] comprise four battered sherds, two of redwares and two in Border ware, one of which is from the rim of a bowl.

The medieval sherds are of interest in that little is known of this period in Hounslow, but they are so small that they cannot be taken as indicative of occupation near the present site. They may, however, may be related to the source of finds from earlier excavations at St Johns Primary School, just to the east of Boston Manor House, where 13th and 14th-century material was found (Steele 1992). Nothing can usefully be said of the post-medieval assemblage at this stage, other than that it would appear to reflect secondary or later rubbish disposal, probably scattered over the fields and abraded during cultivation.

To conclude, these sherds are of importance in that they indicate some activity in the area, but this cannot be related to any specific location or purpose. No further work is required at this stage.