

**Gungate Shopping Centre Redevelopment
Tamworth, Staffordshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report
Henry Boot Developments Ltd**

Henry Boot
DEVELOPMENTS



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report relates to a programme of archaeological evaluation undertaken by SLR Consulting on behalf of Henry Boot Developments Ltd (hereafter the Client). The work was carried out between 15th October and 23rd November 2007 on land within and surrounding the Gungate Precinct, Tamworth centred on NGR SK 420932, 304185.

The evaluation was undertaken in order to determine the below-ground archaeological potential of the area in advance of an application for planning permission to redevelop the area for mixed-use purposes.

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed project design (SLR Consulting, 2007) which had been approved in advance by the Archaeological Planning Officer for Staffordshire County Council. Advantage was also taken of a complementary programme of test-pitting and boreholes for geotechnical investigations to supplement the details on sub-surface deposits obtained from archaeological trial trenching. The results of previous archaeological investigations have been incorporated as necessary to help with interpretation and deposit modelling.

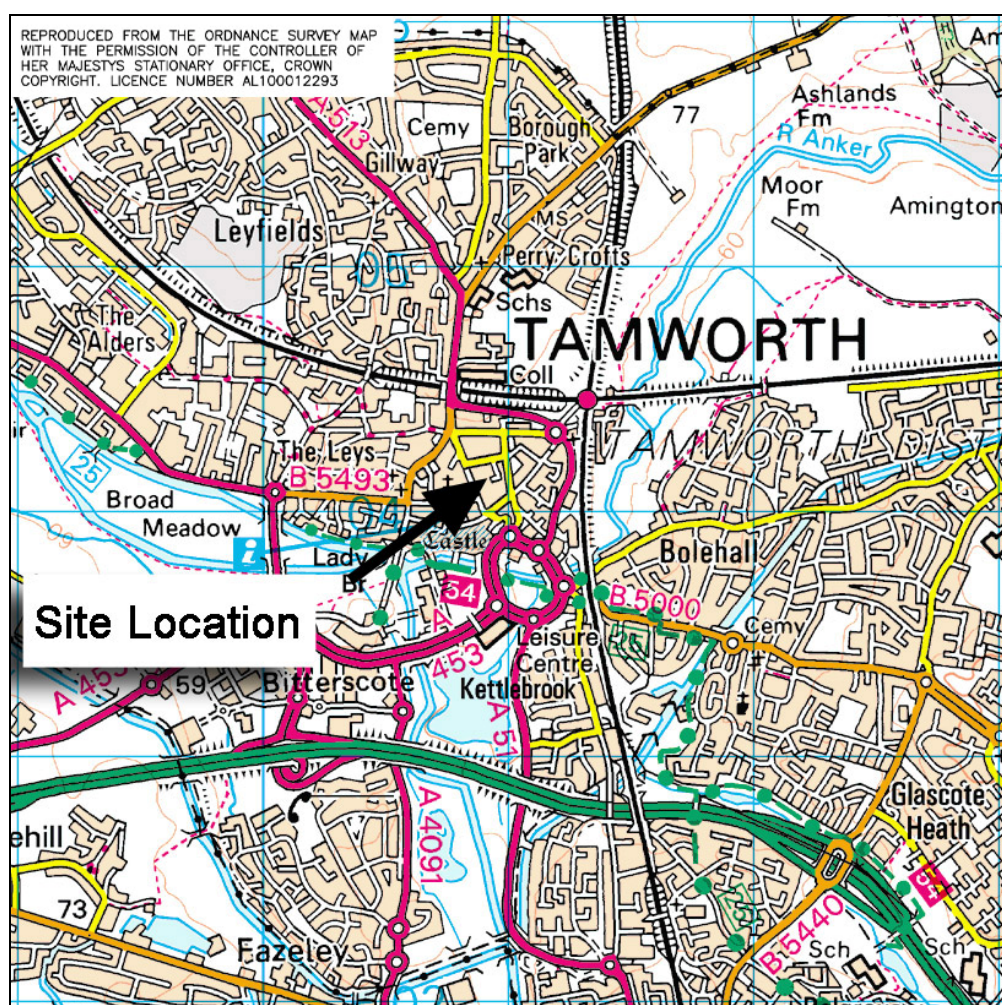
The results have revealed evidence for the bank and ditch defences of the Anglo Saxon burh and medieval town along the eastern side of the development, bordering Marmion Street. A complex series of ditch cuts, bank deposits, palisade structures and soil accumulations have been recorded along a north-south zone 20m wide, with a maximum depth of 3.5m. Within the southern half of the site evidence for burgage plots and backyard activities include boundary ditches, pits, lynchet formation, and cultivated soil over 1m in depth, with features containing 11th – 14th century pottery and animal bone. The northern half of the application site revealed extensive post-medieval pitting and deep cultivated soils, as well as some very minimal evidence for Victorian terraced housing. Beneath the Gungate Precinct, however, there was no indication of archaeological survival due to ground reduction during its construction in the 1960s.

Based on these results five zones of archaeological potential are identified and an outline mitigation strategy proposed.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located in the centre of Tamworth, Staffordshire at NGR SK 420932, 304185 (Figure 1). It can broadly be divided into five separate areas based on the current land use; the Gungate shopping precinct and service areas fronting onto Gungate to the west; Spinning School Lane car park to the east, bounded by Spinning School Lane to the north and properties on Marmion Street to the east; a car sales yard on the corner of Marmion Street and Spinning School Lane; a former Co-Op depot on Marmion Street; and a car park to the west of the depot owned by Pickerings Solicitors.

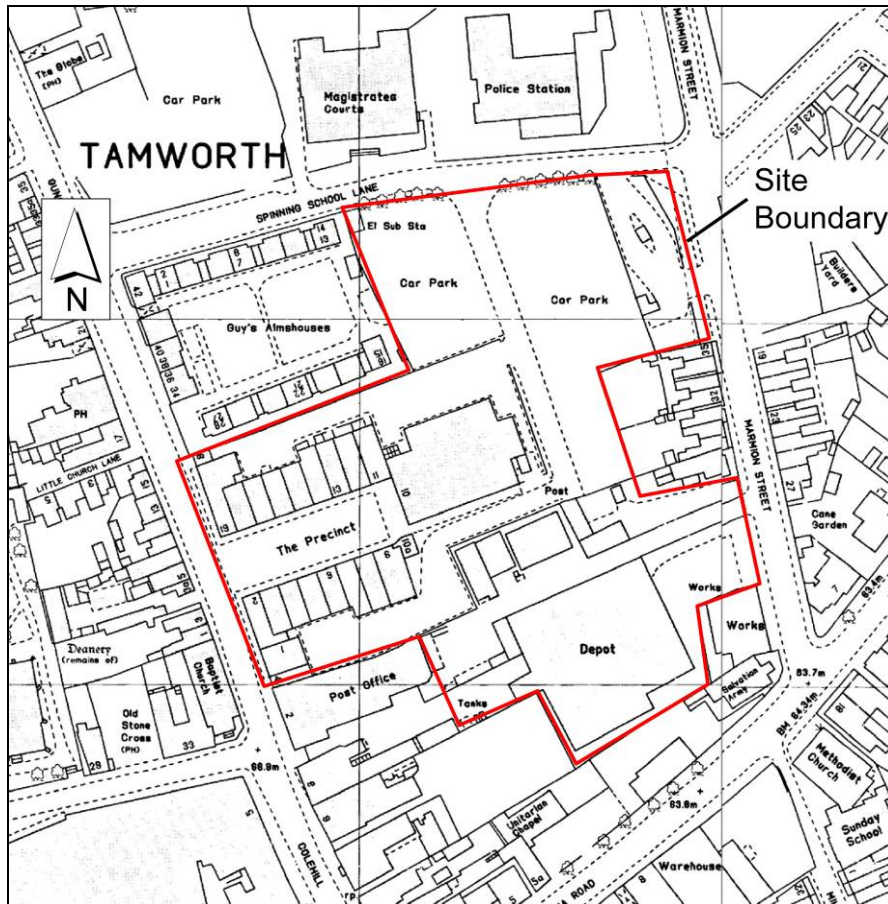
Figure 1a: Site location



The historic centre of Tamworth lies to the north of a meander in the river Anker, and the general topography slopes down from around 85m AOD at Gillway Cemetery north of the town centre to 60m AOD along the course of the river. This is reflected within the evaluation area, the topography generally sloping down to the south and east towards the river. Subsequent developments have masked this; a series of terraces have been created at the property boundaries between the car park, shopping precinct and Co-Op depot building, with made ground along the southern portion of each to level the ground surface.

The solid geology of the local area comprises Mercia Mudstone of the Rhaetian-Scythian period. The overlying drift geology comprises Quaternary River Terrace 2 deposits adjacent to the River Anker (BGS Geindex).

Figure 1b: Site Location (detail)



3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Tamworth is an ancient borough and was surrounded by a defensive circuit of a bank and ditch from around 800 AD, which continued to be maintained into later medieval times. Tamworth was the royal capital of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia in the 9th and 10th centuries. A palace was built by King Offa in the area of St Edith's Church, west of Gungate, but the town was sacked by the Danes in 874 AD. When it was retaken in 913 a defended town, or *burh*, was established consisting of a grid pattern of streets with a banked and ditched enclosure, revetted by stones and timber palisades. It was an important town in Norman times and developed as an economic centre during the medieval period when burgage plots were laid out and the town defences widened and deepened. Economic growth was slow and Tamworth appears to have developed medieval urban characteristics relatively late in the period. The application area lies within the ancient burh and butts up to the eastern defences which run beneath Marmion Street.

Historic maps suggest that the development area remained undeveloped until the late 19th century. Prior to this there were only four plots that formed an east-west aligned band across the southern end of the site, between Marmion Street (shown on a plan of 1810 as 'Kings Ditch'; estate plan of the Marquis of Townshend) and Gungate.

In the late 19th century, OS maps indicate that terraced housing had been constructed over the north-eastern part of the site in what is now the Spinning School Lane car park, centred on a short road named Spring Gardens. These buildings had been demolished prior to the construction of the Gungate precinct in 1964.

Parts of the town's defensive circuit have been afforded statutory protection as scheduled ancient monuments, and the Deanery opposite Gungate is also scheduled. Situated within the north-eastern corner of the burh defences, the significance of potential below-ground archaeological remains within the current development site is considered to be high, with a strong probability of deeply stratified remains from the burh defences and burgage plot activities.

Previous archaeological investigations have been carried out at the site and in the general vicinity. The presence of the Saxon burh ditch has been demonstrated at Albert Road to the north of Spinning School Lane, and a large hoard of Saxo-Norman coins was discovered in the 19th century immediately to the north of the present site in the location of the police station. An excavation was carried out on the eastern edge of the current development area (now occupied by the car sales yard) during the 1960s which revealed surviving remains of the burh's defensive ditch and bank running along the western side of Marmion Street.

An archaeological desk-based assessment was prepared by CgMs providing background information and historic mapping (CgMs 2005). In summary this concludes that until the 19th century the area was predominantly given over to back yards and horticulture, with the exception of the Gungate street frontage. In the late Victorian period however much of the area was developed for terraced housing.

In 2006 a Ground Penetrating Radar survey was undertaken by Stratascan across the development area, however this failed to reveal definitive evidence for the presence or absence of archaeological features beneath the existing hard surfaces. Subsequently Gifford undertook a programme of test-pitting, with five pits excavated in the service area to the north of the precinct, two within a shop unit on the southern side, and a further eight hand-augered boreholes within soft landscaping along the northern and eastern boundaries of Spinning School Lane car park. This programme demonstrated that although ground

reduction had taken place within the footprint of the shopping precinct in the 1960s, there was variable preservation of deep archaeological deposits across the rest of the area, including a 14th-15th century ditch and pits to the north of the precinct (Gifford 2006).

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the current phase of evaluation has been to identify what the archaeological potential of the site is, and whether it falls into discrete zones so that a design solution or appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy can be planned in advance of development. The evaluation forms part of a staged approach to define the extent and significance of any surviving archaeology, providing the Client with information for budgetary and planning purposes. This report is designed also as a supporting statement for the planning application

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Strategy

The archaeological evaluation has been designed to sample 5% of the total development area, equating to approximately 805 m² of the total 1.6ha. Through the use of both linear and test-area excavations (the design included double-width trenches to detect ephemeral remains such as Anglo-Saxon timber-framed buildings), alongside monitoring of a grid of geotechnical test pits, the evaluation targeted the following areas:

- The eastern edge of the area adjacent to Marmion Street to determine the condition and extent of any surviving evidence for the town defences
- The western edge of the site within a shop unit fronting onto Gungate to assess the survival of medieval properties, and in the southern service area to investigate medieval back ranges
- Around the Spinning School Lane frontage to find the foundations of Victorian housing and any earlier deposits that may survive
- A series of locations within the central and southern portions of the development area (including within the Co-Op depot building) to investigate the build-up of deposits, and to pick up features associated with burgage plots.

The monitoring of the geotechnical investigations was carried out in order to extend the range of below-ground deposit mapping.

The project design for the evaluation outlines an iterative approach, using the results from a primary phase of trenching to determine the requirement for additional works. This report relates to the first phase, comprising eleven trenches spread across the development area. Final trench locations are indicated in Figure 2.

5.2 Excavation

The trenches were excavated by machine, breaking out hard surfaces and removing the overburden to the top of archaeological remains or undisturbed natural using a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. The mechanical excavator was used under the supervision of an archaeologist at all times.

Part of the site was situated in a functioning car park; the trenches in this area could only be opened and backfilled consecutively.

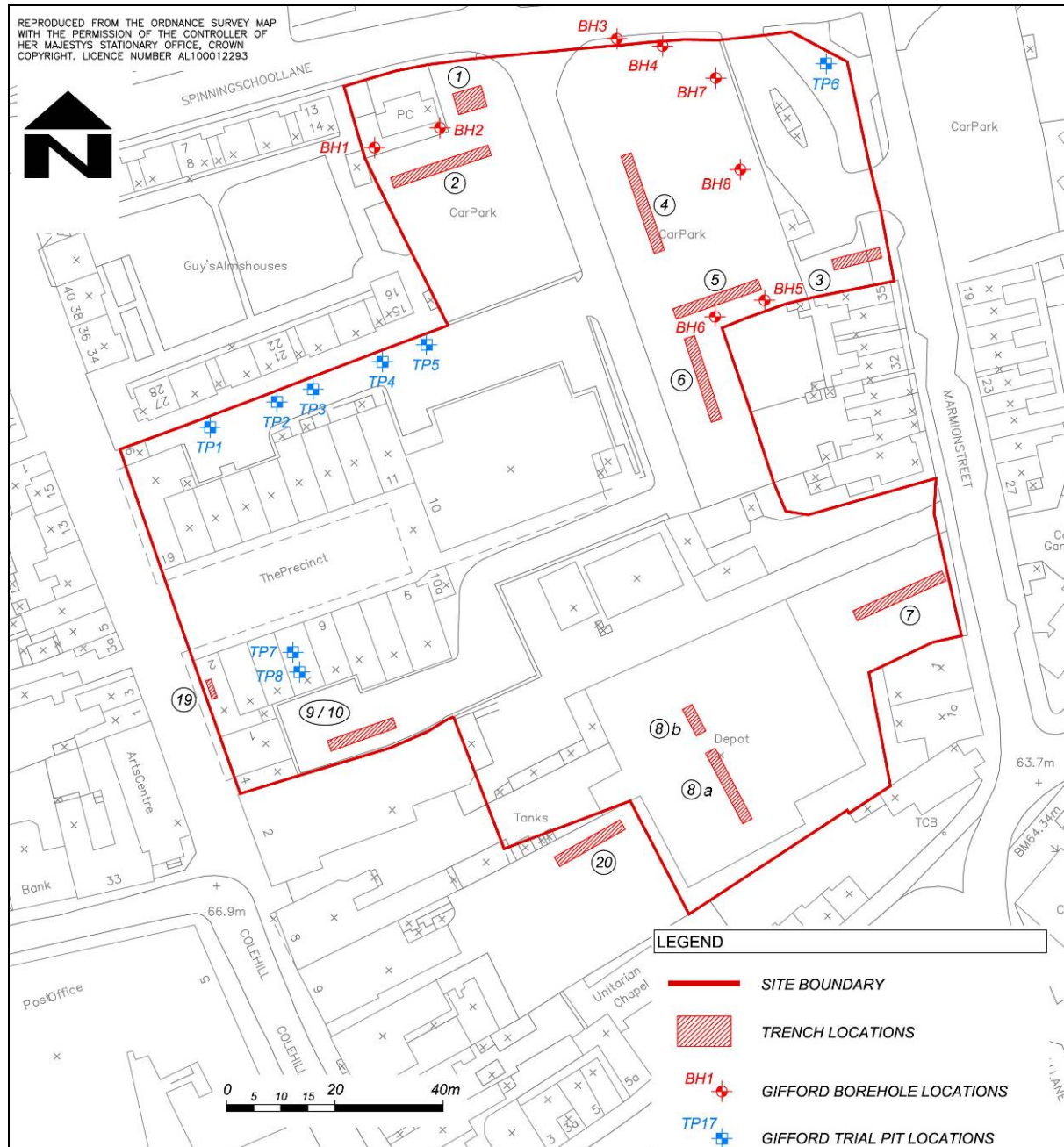
The open trenches were hand cleaned, recorded and excavated by qualified archaeologists. The trenches were excavated to safe working depth only (c. 1.5m). Beyond this the trenches were either stepped or recorded in section from ground level.

5.3 Recording

The evaluation trenches were recorded using text and drawings on *proforma* sheets according to the SLR Consulting single-context recording system. Plans and sections were

hand-drawn at scales of 1:20 / 1:50 and 1:10 respectively. A photographic record supported by an index was also maintained in digital, monochrome print and colour slide formats. Palaeoenvironmental remains were collected from suitable sealed archaeological deposits in line with standard archaeological practice, for possible future assessment.

Figure 2: Archaeological Trial Trenches 2008; Test-Pits and boreholes 2006



5.4 Reinstatement

All trenches were backfilled with the arisings, and trenches within public spaces reinstated to their original surface condition.

5.5 Monitoring

The site works were monitored by Staffordshire County Council's Archaeological Planning Officer, with on-site meetings arranged at strategic intervals.

6.0 RESULTS

6.1 Trench 1 (Figures 2, 3)

The trench was located close to Spinning School Lane at the northern limit of the car park to test for the backs of medieval properties fronting onto Spinning School Lane and for any Anglo-Saxon timber-framed structures. The trench measured 5.5m x 4m, oriented east-west. This was smaller than the proposed trench, the dimensions constrained by live services, an adjacent mobile health screening clinic and a geotechnical standpipe.

The trench was initially excavated to a depth of 0.85m below the current ground surface at which a layer of mixed clay and sand was observed. This was assumed to be the natural drift geology, but after subsequent cleaning the layer was shown to be the fill of a large post medieval feature which had been cut by two smaller post medieval pits.

The trench was machined a second time and a narrow sondage excavated along its northern edge in order to confirm the depth of the natural geology- c. 66.18m AOD. The natural comprised compact clean sand and red boulder clay. No earlier features were evident in this trench.

Figure 3: Trench 1 facing north



The post-medieval features were sealed by a buried cultivation soil varying in depth between 0.10m at the western end of the trench and 0.40m at the eastern end. This was in turn sealed by a layer of hardcore 0.13m deep and a layer of tarmac 0.12m thick.

No datable artefacts were recovered from the features in Trench 1.

Table 1: Summary of deposits in Trench 1

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	c. 66.89
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.3
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.3-0.6
Depth to Natural (m)	0.9
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	1.2

6.2 Trench 2 (Figures 2, 4, 5)

Trench 2 was located in the north-western corner of Spinning School Lane car park to test for the Victorian structures associated with Spring Gardens, the backs of medieval properties fronting onto Spinning School Lane and for any Anglo-Saxon timber-framed structures. The trench was oriented east-west running parallel to Spinning School Lane, measuring 20m long x 2.2m wide. This trench was designed as a double width trench, but due to the presence of live electricity cabling the width was limited to 2.2m.

The natural geology (200) was observed at depths of between 0.72m (eastern end) and 1.47m (western end) below the existing ground surface, indicating a gentle rise to the east. This is equal to a range of between 65.93 and 66.58m AOD respectively. A sondage was excavated by machine at the eastern end of the trench to confirm the natural; it comprised a mixture of light orange/brown sand and seams of reddish/brown sandy clay.

Eleven 17th- 18th century pits were identified and recorded in this trench in addition to modern drains and services. These are summarised in stratigraphic order (earliest first) in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Trench 2 Features

Cut	Fill	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Shape (Plan)	Shape (Section)	Fill description	Finds
220	219	1.52	2	0.24	sub-rectangular	vertical sides, flat base	mid- dark brown sandy clay with very occasional small rounded pebbles	no datable artefacts
218	217	2.2	2	0.32	sub-rectangular	vertical sides, flat base on western side with a rise to shallow ledge along eastern edge	mid- dark orange/brown sandy silt with small to medium pebbles	residual worked flint
212	211	2.2	2	0.32	sub-rectangular	vertical sides, flat base	mid- dark orange/brown sandy silt, small and medium rounded pebbles	residual med. rim sherd (Late 12 th -14 th century)
214	213	2.05	1.2	0.91	sub-rectangular	vertical slightly sides, rounded	mid- dark brown sandy silt with medium sub-rounded pebbles	Building material,

						base		clay pipe, 17 th -18 th century pottery
210	209	2	1.1	0.43	sub- rectangular	near vertical sides at the top becoming uneven towards the uneven base	orange/brown silty sand, occasional small rounded pebbles and charcoal flecks	1680+ ceramic
222	221	1.2	1.09	0.55	sub- rectangular	vertical sides, uneven base	dark brown sandy clay, very occasional small stones	no datable artefacts
216	215	2.0	0.8	0.2	sub- rectangular	vertical sides, flat base	dark reddish brown silty sand with occasional inclusions of rounded and sub- rounded gravels	no datable artefacts
206	205	-	0.63	0.15	- (truncated)	rounded base	greyish brown silty sand	no datable artefacts
204	203	1.78	1.0	0.27	sub- rectangular	shallow rounded sides with a flat base	mid brown loose silty sand with occasional inclusions of rounded pebbles	17 th /18 th century pottery
202	201	1.68	1.0	0.22	sub- rectangular	rounded sides with a flat base	mid brown loose silty sand with lenses of re-deposited reddish brown sandy clay	no datable artefacts
208	207	1.25	1.0	0.3 0	sub- rectangular	Steep sides, concave base	dark brown sandy silt with pebble inclusions	1680+ ceramic

Figure 4: Pre-excitation shot of Trench 2 facing north



The features were sealed by a cultivation horizon 0.95m deep which was in turn overlain by a layer of hardcore 0.13m deep and a layer of tarmac 0.12m deep.

The existing ground surface stood at between 67.52 m AOD at the western end of the trench and 66.66m AOD at the eastern end, a gradual slope down to the east.

Figure 5: Post-excavation shot of pit [216], Trench 2**Table 3: Summary of deposits in Trench 2**

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	66.66 - 67.52 east-west
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.25
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.25-1.2
Depth to Natural (m)	0.72 - 1.47 east-west
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	2.15

6.3 Trench 3 (Figures 2, 6, 7, 8)

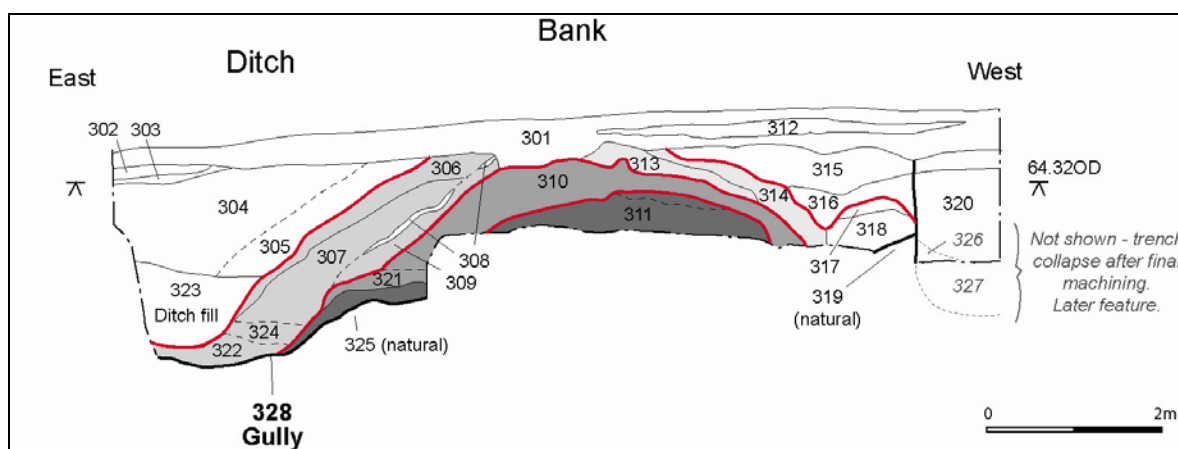
Trench 3 was excavated within the car sales yard on the corner of Marmion Street and Spinning School Lane, designed to bisect the Anglo Saxon burh defences. Due to the presence of buried petrol tanks and associated pipework, the trench was relocated southward to the area of proposed Phase 2 Trench 18. It was located at the eastern limit of the site, perpendicular to Marmion Street.

Trench 3 was 15m long x 2m wide aligned east-west. This partially coincided with an earlier trench excavated in the 1960's; the north-facing section from this investigation was re-exposed, cleaned and recorded, then extended eastward.

The upper surface of the natural geology (319), a yellow/orange sand, was exposed at the western end of the trench at a depth of approximately 63.07m AOD, 2m below the existing

ground surface.

Figure 6: North-facing section, Trench 3



6.3.1 Bank construction

In the centre of the trench the earliest feature observed was a raised bank, 2.5m from the eastern end. The 'core' of the bank comprised a linear mound of redeposited sand and gravel 5.2m wide and 1.3 m deep (322)=(311), aligned roughly north-south. The upper surface of this deposit stood at 64.27m AOD. The core was sealed by a deposit of mid-grey silty clay (310)=(321) up to 0.5m deep along the top of the bank, and increasing the total width of the bank to 5.5m.

On its western face deposit (310) was sealed by two further layers: (313), a layer of yellow-brown silty sand up to 0.3m thick, and (314), a grey brown silty clay up to 0.4m thick.

6.3.2 Accumulated deposits to west of bank

To the west of the bank a series of accumulated cultivation deposits were observed. These were only partially visible, having been truncated to the west by a later feature [320], filled by 326 & 327, but trench collapse precluded recording in section (see also 8.4.1 below).

At the base of the trench overlying the natural sand and butting up against (314), context (318) was a layer of dark brown sandy clay 0.45m thick, interpreted as a cultivation soil. It was sealed by (317) - a layer of mid-grey/brown sandy clay 0.15m thick.

Above layer (317), an irregular deposit of dark brown sandy clay (316) butted up against the bank. This appeared to fill two cuts, around 0.3m deep protruding into the underlying layers (see Figure 6), one against the bank itself and the other 0.7m to the west. As these were only partially seen in section it was not possible to determine their true nature, and whether these were linear or isolated features.

Layer (316) was sealed by layer (315), a yellow-brown sandy clay up to 0.6m deep, which had been truncated to the west by the cut of a large rectilinear feature dominating the western end of the trench.

Figure 7: Trench 3 facing southwest**Figure 8: Trench 3 facing south showing ditch profile**

6.3.3 Bank consolidation

At the eastern end of the trench, and to the east of the existing bank, the natural sand had been cut by a gully 0.4m deep [328]. The cut was north-south aligned, running parallel with Marmion Street, and at least 2.5m wide. At its deepest point gully [328] was 2.3m below the

existing ground surface, equating to 62.47m AOD.

The eastern face of the bank was sealed by a layer of medium grey/brown sandy clay 0.25m thick (309), which was in turn sealed by a thin lens of compact orange/brown silty sand (308), 50mm thick.

Layer (308) was overlain by layer (307)=(324), comprising a medium grey/brown sandy clay up to 0.5m thick at the base. It became more silty towards the base (see 8.4.1 below).

Layer (307) was then covered with a firmly compacted layer of stone (306), possibly a revetment. The angular stones varied in size from 50mm to 150mm.

6.3.4 Ditch infill

Although not seen within this trench, it is postulated that the town's medieval defensive ditch lay just beyond the trench's eastern end, beneath Marmion Street. The upper fills of the ditch were observed, however, accumulated against the eastern face of the bank.

The lower fill, (323), was 0.70m thick and comprised a reddish-brown silty sand. This was overlain by two further fills (305) and (304) of orange/brown sandy clay totalling 1.25m in depth.

In the eastern corner of the trench the final ditch fill was overlain by a thin lens of very dark brown silty sand 0.1m thick (303), which in turn was sealed by (302), a grey-brown lens of silty sand 0.12m thick.

6.3.5 Modern Surfaces

All of the deposits in Trench 3 were sealed by layer (301), topsoil containing quantities of post-medieval building material. The ground surface was covered with gravel and used for car storage.

Table 4: Summary of deposits in Trench 3

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	64.72-65.28 (west-east)
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0-0.3
Depth to Natural (m)	1.95
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	2.5

6.4 Trench 4 (Figures 2, 9, 10, 11)

This trench was located in the middle of Spinning School Lane car park, aligned north-south to the east of the main car-park access. The trench was 19m long and 2m wide.

The natural geology (yellow sand) was encountered in the base of the trench at a depth of 65.07m AOD (northern end of trench) and 64.93m AOD (southern end) indicating a gentle gradient down to the south.

The archaeology in this trench comprised a series of twenty one inter-cutting pits, two drains and a brick-lined well, forming two disconnected stratigraphic sequences at the northern and southern ends of the trench. These are described in stratigraphic order in Tables 5 and 6 below.

Table 5: Trench 4 Features (Northern End)

Cut	Fill	Type	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Shape (Plan)	Shape (Section)	Fill description	Finds
-	435	Pit	1.4	0.4	0.61	Unkonwn (truncated)	Unknown	Mid-grey/brown sandy silt, lenses of clean sand	None
434	433	Pit	1.3	0.7	0.15	Sub-rectangular	concave sides, flat base	Redeposited natural with mottled silty clay	None
432	431	Pit	2.1	1.0	0.37	Rectangular	concave sides, uneven base	Orange-brown sand and mixed dark grey silt	None
436	437	Pit	3.7	1.5	0.57	Rectangular	steep-vertical sides, flat base	Mid-brown silty sand with mottled re-deposited natural	brick rubble
443	442	Pit	0.9	0.4	0.34	Sub-rectangular	Steep sided, base not excavated	mid-dark brown compact sandy silt	None
441	440	Pit	1.4	0.5	0.48	Sub-rectangular	Steep sided, base not excavated	Mid-grey/brown sandy silt, lenses of clean sand	None
439	438	Drain	2	0.7	1.2	Linear	Vertical sides, flat base	Black redeposited asphalt	None
430	429	Pit	2.1	0.6	0.4	Sub-rectangular	Concave sides, flat base	Orange-brown sand and mixed dark grey silt	none
425	424	Pit	1.2	0.2	0.17	Oval? Very truncated	Steep sides, no base	Mid-grey sandy silt	None
420	421	Pit	4.7	>2	c 0.7	Rectangular	Concave sides and base	Loose, dark grey silt	Modern building material
423	422	Drain	2.5	0.6	0.3	Linear	concave	Grey-brown sandy silt and mottled natural	None

Table 6: Trench 4 Features (Southern End)

Cut	Fill	Type	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Shape (Plan)	Shape (Section)	Fill description	Finds
415	414	Pit	0.8	0.7	-	Sub-oval	Not excavated	Orange-brown sand and mixed dark grey silt	None
419	418	Pit	>2	1.8	-	Rectilinear?	Rounded base	Waterlogged grey silty clay	None
417	416	Pit	1.3	0.8	-	Rectilinear	Not excavated	Orange-brown sand and mixed dark grey silt	None
456	455	Pit	>0.2	-	0.2	Unknown-seen in section	Vertical sides, flat base	Grey silty clay and mottled sand	None

410	409	Pit	1.55	0.6	-	Sub-rectangular	Not excavated	Firm grey sandy silt	None
408	407	Pit	1.5	0.7	-	Sub-rectangular	Not excavated	Loose, dark grey silt	None
403	402	Pit	1.4	1.1	0.22	Sub-oval	Vertical sides, flat base	Loose, dark grey silt	None
406	405 404 457	Pit	2.7	>1	0.65	Sub-rectangular	Irregular sides, flat base	Grey silty clay with lenses of sand towards the base	None
401	400	Pit	1	0.4	0.15	Rectangular	Vertical sides, flat base	Firm grey sandy silt	None
413	412 411 458	Pit	1.9	1.3	0.75	Sub-rectangular	Vertical sides, flat base	Dark to mid-grey/brown silty clay with lenses of brick rubble and mortar	BM
451	450 452	Pit	1.6	-	0.7	Unknown-seen in section	Irregular sides, flat base	Dark grey silty clay with lenses of sand	None
454	453	Pit	>1.5	-	0.4	Unknown-seen in section	Shallow sides to concave base	Ash and building rubble with sand lenses	BM

(BM= Building Material)

All of the deposits encountered were sealed by up to 0.55m of mid-brown cultivation soil, in turn sealed by a buried tarmac surface around 50mm thick.

Six metres from the northern end of the trench a well/cistern had been cut through the tarmac surface. The cut (426) was oval with a long axis of 1.6m. The well diameter was 1.1m, constructed from dry bonded brick (428). A backfill between the cut and the brick lining comprised redeposited natural and mottled grey silty sand (427). The feature was 3.5m deep.

The surface had been overlaid with modern hardcore to a depth of 0.45m before laying the existing tarmac car park surface, 0.1m thick. The modern ground surface was roughly level at 66.3m AOD.

The pits in this trench probably relate to the use of the land as an area for the disposal of waste between the 17th and 19th centuries prior to the construction of housing centred on Spring Gardens and Victoria Crescent in the late 19th century. The fills of these pits lacked artefacts such as pottery or food waste typical of domestic refuse, but did not contain evidence for industrial activities either.

It is likely that the buried tarmac surface, drains and brick-lined well belong to the construction and use of the area for housing; the historic mapping suggests that Trench 2 was situated in the rear yards of Victoria Crescent (see Figure 28). The well may have been for communal use.

Figure 9: Pre-excitation shot of Trench 4 facing north



Figure 10: Trench 4- east facing section at southern end



Figure 11: Post-excavation of Trench 4 facing south



Table 7: Summary of deposits in Trench 4

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	66.3
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0 - 0.6
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.6 -1.15
Depth to Natural (m)	1.2
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	2.1 - 4

6.5 Trench 5 (Figures 2, 12)

Trench 5 was located in the eastern half of the Spinning School Lane car park, aligned east-west and immediately to the north of gardens belonging to houses on Marmion Street. The trench measured 18.5m long x 2m wide, designed to investigate an area of potentially deep deposits shown by previous augering and Ground Penetrating Radar (Gifford 2006).

The natural geology, comprising orange iron-rich sand and gravel, was identified in the base of the trench at a depth of between 65.22 and 64.99m AOD, a gradual slope down from west to east.

The base of the trench was cut by a series of twenty inter-cutting post-medieval pits and a single linear feature, described in stratigraphic order in Table 8 below (earliest first). Each feature was given a single number for its cut and fill.

Table 8: Trench 5 Features

Feature	Type	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Shape (Plan)	Shape (Section)	Fill description	Finds
518	Pit	1.8	0.95	-	Irregular	Not excavated	Mid-dark grey brown silty sand, occasional small pebbles and charcoal flecks	-
514	Linear	>2	>0.4	>0.7	Linear	Steep sided, not bottomed	Dark grey-brown silty sand, rare inclusions	Brick, slag
512	Pit	6.2	1	0.6	Rectangular	Steep sided	Dark grey-brown silty sand, frequent charcoal	Clay pipe, bottle glass
511	Pit	>0.8	>0.7	0.1	Irregular	Rounded base	Dark grey-brown silty sand, frequent charcoal, rounded pebbles and unworked flint	-
510	Pit	2	>1.2	>0.4	Irregular	Rounded base	Light orange-brown silty sand, frequent rounded pebbles, occ. charcoal frags concentration of irregular limestone frags	Modern floor tile
513	Pit	2.8	>1.1	>0.4	Irregular	Steep, straight-sided cut	Light orange-brown silty sand, frequent rounded pebbles, occ. charcoal frags	Dark-glazed earthenw

								are
515	Pit	2	>1.1	>0.8	Rounded, partly truncated	-	Light orange-brown silty sand, frequent rounded pebbles, occ. charcoal frags	-
517	Pit	1.6	>1	-	Irregular (truncated)	Unexcavated	Mid-dark grey brown silty sand, frequent small pebbles and charcoal flecks	-
520	Pit	2.4	2	>0.8	undefined	Steep sides, not bottomed	V. dark brown silty sand with occasional pebbles	-
519	Pit	0.9	0.9	-	Oval	Not excavated	V. dark grey-brown silty sand with frequent charcoal inclusions	-
509	Pit	>0.8	>0.4	>0.8	Unclear-truncated	-	Mid grey-brown silty sand, frequent rounded pebbles	-
505	Pit	1.18	0.86	0.86	Rectangular	Vertical sides, flat base	Upper fill mid brown clayey sand, waterlogged dark grey silty sand below	-
506	Pit	1.14	>0.8	0.35	Sub-circular	Concave sides and base	Mid brown silty sand with lenses of orange sand	-
504	Pit	1.51	0.76	0.74	Sub-rectangular	Vertical sides, flat base	Upper fill mid-brown clayey silt, middle fill dark blue/grey clayey silt, Lower fill light brown/grey silty sand	-
503	Pit	1.41	1.12	0.54	Oval	Uneven sides to a flat base	Upper fill brown sandy silt, Lower fill dark blue/grey clayey silt	-
502	Pit	>0.4	>0.4	0.37	Heavily truncated	-	Grey/brown silty sand	-
500	Pit	>1.3	0.91	0.54	Oval	Steep concave sides, base not excavated	Upper fill mid grey/brown sandy silt, Lower fill dark grey clayey silt	Building material
521	Pit	1.16	0.51	-	Sub-rectangular	-	Mid-brown silty sand	-
501 522 523	Pit?	>1.9 1	0.96	0.51	Poss. oval	Vertical sides to flat base	Mid-dark grey sandy silt	-

The pits within this trench were sealed by a cultivation soil up to 0.51m thick, which had been cut by a wall foundation (524). This extended into the middle of the trench from the southern baulk on an east/northeast-west/southwest alignment for 1.8m. Three courses of brickwork survived, set on a base of rubble and mortar.

The cultivation soil and wall foundation were sealed by a buried tarmac surface 0.12m thick, above which 0.52m of hardcore had been laid. This was sealed by the modern tarmac car park surface which was 80mm thick. The existing ground surface stood at between 66.43 and 66.21m AOD, a gradual slope down from west to east.

Figure 12: Post-excavation shot of Trench 5 facing east**Table 9: Summary of deposits in Trench 5**

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	66.43-66.21 west-east
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.72
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.72-1.23
Depth to Natural (m)	1.21
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	>1.96

6.6 Trench 6 (Figures 2, 13)

Trench 6 was located in Spinning School Lane car park, to the east of the Gungate Precinct and to the west of gardens belonging to houses on Marmion Street. The trench measured 19m long and 2m wide, aligned north-south and designed to investigate an area of potentially deep deposits shown by previous augering and Ground Penetrating Radar (Gifford 2006).

Natural sand and gravel was encountered in the base of the trench at a depth of 0.7m below existing ground level (65.79m AOD), falling to a depth of around 1.25m below existing ground level (65.37 AOD) at the southern end. This drop in level appears to reflect the natural slope down towards the River Anker. The exact transition to natural was blurred by

heavy root and burrow action (bioturbation).

A cultivation deposit comprising soft clayey loam overlay the natural sand, 0.15m deep across the majority of the trench, increasing to a depth of c. 0.7m at the southern end of the trench. The shallow depth at the northern end may be attributable to levelling for the construction of the existing car park. This buried soil contained no artefacts.

Four pits dating to between the 17th and 19th centuries were identified cut through the buried soil. The largest (circular pit [611]) was 3.2m in diameter and 1.6m deep with vertical sides giving way to a concave base. The pit contained five fills; slumped natural in the base (610), a deposit of compacted dark brown clayey silt containing large stones up to 0.3m across (609) which was sealed by two layers of sand eroded into the pit from the sides (607) and (608), a deep deposit of dark brown sandy silt 0.7m deep which contained 17th-19th century pottery, clay tobacco pipe and fragments of brick (606), and finally a deposit of sand interspersed with dark loam (612).

To the northwest of pit [611] was a second smaller pit [613]. This was roughly rectangular in plan, though only the eastern limit was seen as it ran into the western edge of the trench. The exposed width was 1.35m north-south. The pit had vertical sides and a flat base, 0.63m deep. It contained a single fill (614) which comprised soft, dark grey-brown silty sand with frequent flecks of charcoal and gravel. The majority of the artefactual material recovered from this fill was animal bone, though it also contained some 18th-19th century pottery, glass and clay tobacco pipe.

Two further pits were identified at the northern end of Trench 6. Pits [600] and [602] were both oval in plan; [600] was 0.75m long and [602] was 0.6m long, though both had been truncated to the north by the cut for a modern drain. The fill of [600] was a dark brown silty sand (601), containing brick, sandstone fragments and sub-rounded pebbles, as well as small sherds of 17th and 18th century pottery. Pit [602] was filled with a similar deposit of dark brown silty sand (603) which was found to contain fragments of brick and tile.

The modern drain to the north of these two pits comprised a ceramic pipe set in a linear trench [604] at least 0.7m wide, which had been backfilled with dark greyish-brown sandy silt 0.5m deep (605). Finds from this deposit included pieces of charcoal, small pebbles, oyster shell and 18th/19th century pottery.

All cut features in the trench were sealed by a thin layer of black silty clay 80mm thick, above which was a buried tarmac surface (0.1m thick). The surface was in turn sealed by up to 0.25m of angular stone hardcore which formed the make-up for the existing tarmac car park surface which stood at c. 66.55m AOD.

A central baulk in Trench 6 was not excavated due to the presence of a live electricity cable.

Figure 13: Post-excitation shot of Trench 6 facing north**Table 10: Summary of deposits in Trench 6**

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	66.55
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.5
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.5 - 0.7 (north) 0.5-1.15 (south)
Depth to Natural (m)	0.7 - 1.25 north-south
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	2.18

6.7 Trench 7 (Figures 2, 14-18)

Trench 7 was located at the entrance to the Co-Op depot on Marmion Street. Oriented east-west, the trench measured 18m long and 2m wide and was designed to investigate the Anglo Saxon burh defences. An existing concrete surface was broken out before the trench was excavated by machine.

Due to the depth of the trench, the sides were stepped and a narrow sondage excavated along its length allowing deposits to be recorded in section. At the eastern end of the trench deposits were recorded from the trench edge as the sides were unstable.

Natural geology, comprising orange sand and gravel, was encountered in the base of the trench at a depth of 1m below existing ground level at the western end (63.60m AOD), falling to 1.5m below ground level at the midpoint of the trench (63.26m AOD). At the eastern end the natural had been truncated down to a depth of 61.09m AOD (3.15m below existing ground level).

6.7.1 *Palisade Ditch and Bank*

The earliest identified features comprised a ditch and a small gully at the western end of the trench, bounded to the east by a bank. Ditch [717] (Figure 15) was situated 1.7m from the western end of the trench and had been cut through the natural sand and gravel. It was 2.6m wide and 0.95m deep with a 'V' shaped profile. Although only a short section of the ditch was observed in the base of the trench, it appeared to follow a north-south alignment approximately 10m to the west of Marmion Street.

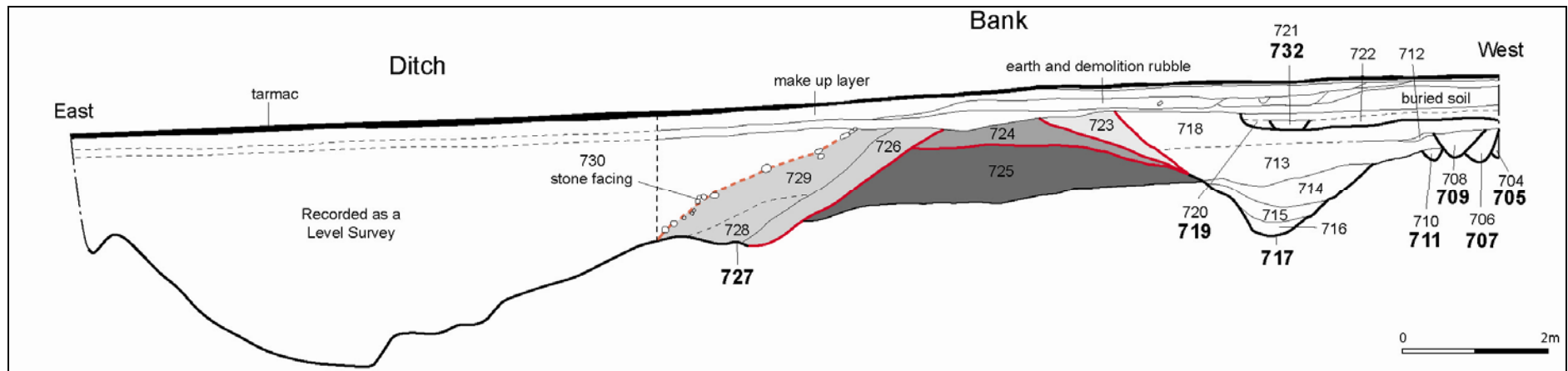
The upcast from the excavation of the ditch had been piled to the east to form a bank of redeposited sand 5.5m wide and 0.75m high (725) (Figure 16). The sand was noted to contain lenses of heavy iron-panning throughout, and two vertical columns of leached sand, possibly marking the position of removed posts. The sand 'core' of the bank was sealed by a deposit of grey silty sand (724), which was up to 0.3m thick on the upper surface, tapering away on the western side of the bank to coincide with the eastern edge of ditch [717]. Context (724) was in turn sealed by a deposit of red/brown sand and gravel forming the uppermost surface of the bank on its western side (723). This deposit also coincided with the eastern edge of ditch [717], becoming deeper towards the centre of the bank. The upper part of the bank had been truncated however, and its maximum recorded depth was 1.09m.

A shallow gully was recorded 0.7m to the west of ditch [717]. The cut, context [711] had a shallow 'U'-shaped profile 0.27m wide and 0.17m deep, running parallel to ditch [717]. It was filled with a clean brown earth (710).

6.7.2 *Infill of early ditch*

Ditch [717] appeared to have fallen into disuse and to have been backfilled, either deliberately or through gradual accumulation. The basal fill (716) comprised clean dark grey silty clay 0.2m deep. This contained occasional fragments of animal bone in very poor condition, but no datable artefacts. A sample was taken for flotation and palaeoenvironmental assessment, but mineral content only was recovered (see 8.4.2 below). A paler grey silty sand with frequent small stones (715) sealed the lower fill and was 0.25m deep in the centre of the ditch. A subsequent deposit of red sand and gravel (714) sealed the earlier fills; this was 0.5m deep on the ditch's western side, becoming shallower to the east. This material may have been deposited in the ditch in a single episode, possibly derived from the levelling of the bank to the east.

Figure 14: North-facing section, Trench 7



6.7.3 Accumulation of cultivation deposits and boundary ditches to the west of the bank

The fills of ditch [717] and the western face of the bank were sealed by a grey/brown loam cultivation deposit (713) which was 0.55m thick at its deepest point.

At the western end of the trench the layer had been cut by a series of three 'V'-shaped gullies on a north-south alignment. The earliest [705] was only partially observed in section, at least 0.2m wide and 0.4m deep, filled with clean grey silty clay (704). This had been cut to the east by gully [707], 0.5m wide and 0.45m deep, also filled with clean grey silty clay (706). Finally gully [707] had been cut by [709] to the east, 0.7m wide and 0.4m deep and filled with a mid-brown sandy loam (708). It seems probable that these three gullies represent repeated attempts to demarcate a single boundary.

The gullies were sealed by a further cultivation deposit of mid-brown loam (718) 0.5m deep.

6.7.4 Possible rampart

At the western end of the trench the upper cultivation deposit (718) contained a shallow cut 3.5m wide and up to 0.2m deep. This was filled by a deposit of clean pale grey silty sand with parallel lenses of iron panning, possibly representing layers of turf (720)=(722). At its eastern end this deposit had been cut by a straight-sided gully [732] 0.55m wide and 0.12m deep, aligned north-south (Figure 17). The fill comprised red sandy gravel (721). It is possible that this feature represents the base of a beam slot for the support of a structure to the west of the bank.

6.7.5 Medieval ditch and consolidation of bank

At the eastern end of Trench 7 a ditch was identified, the base of which was 3.15m below existing ground level. Due to the depth this could not be investigated by hand, but a machine sondage was excavated and level survey taken to obtain the basal profile (Figure 18). The cut [701] was c. 4.2m wide and oriented north-south. The eastern side of the ditch was steep sided (around 40° to vertical), leading to a slightly uneven base 0.8m wide. The western side was stepped, with a ledge 0.8m wide some 0.45m above the base of the ditch.

To the west of the ditch the pre-existing bank had undergone alterations to reinforce its eastern face. A shallow gully [727], 1.6m wide by 0.35m deep, had been cut into the underlying natural sand to the east of the earlier bank, and from its western edge the face of the bank had been cut back at a 35° angle. The bank was then faced with clean red/brown silty sand 0.25m thick (726) which extended into, and was retained by, gully [727]. Two layers of grey/brown silty sand (728)/(729) sealed (726); the outer face of (729) was covered with a layer of angular stones up to 150mm in diameter (730) (see also 8.4.2 below).

6.7.6 Ditch infill

The basal fill of ditch [701] comprised a waterlogged grey/black silty clay (702) sealed by a later deposit of mid-brown sandy silt (703) (see 8.4.2 below). Neither fill could be excavated by hand, but preserved fragments of timber were recovered from the spoil of (702).

6.7.7 Modern surfaces

All of the earlier deposits in Trench 7 had been truncated at a depth of between 0.4 and

0.45m below the existing ground surface. Layers of grey/brown silty clay containing brick rubble sealed the archaeology, varying in thickness from 0.12 to 0.3m. A clayey make-up layer overlay this, onto which a thin layer of hardcore and tarmac had been laid.

The existing ground surface was recorded at a height of 62.24m AOD at the eastern end of the trench, rising to 65.04m at the western end.

Figure 15: Trench 7- ditch [717] facing south



Figure 16: Trench 7- bank (724), (725) facing south



Figure 17: Trench 7- beam slot [732] facing south

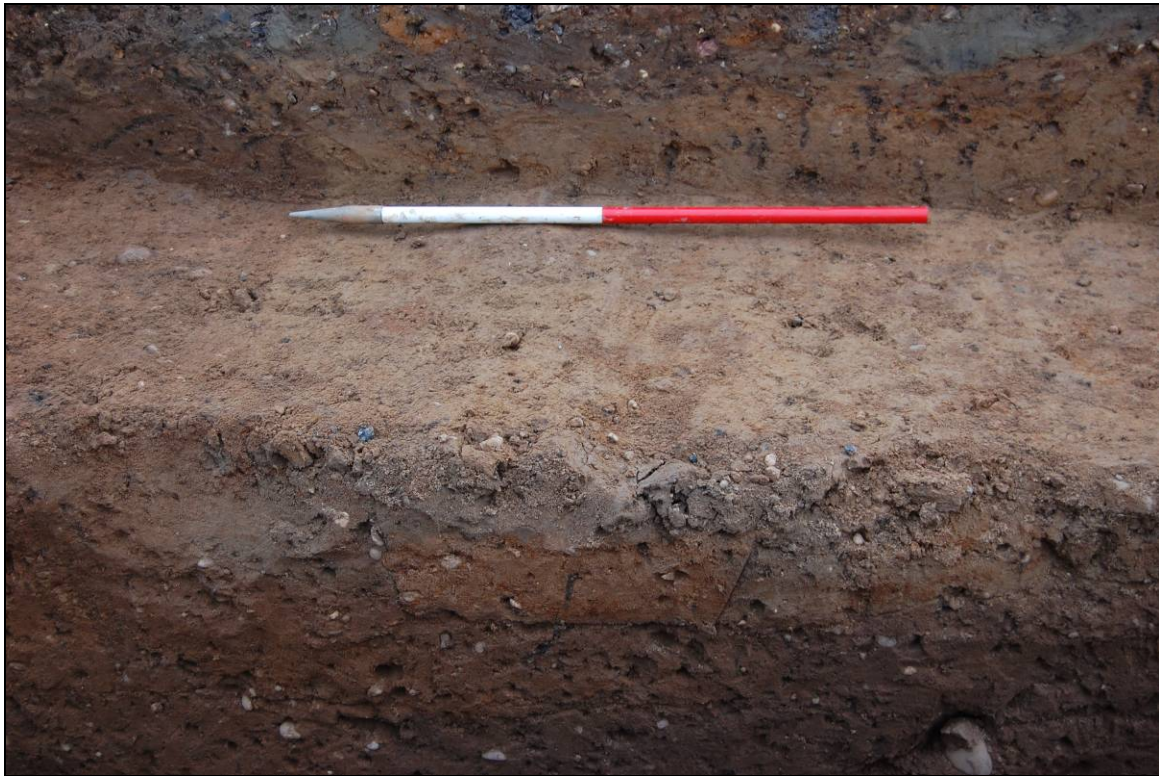


Figure 18: Trench 7- ditch [701] facing northwest



Table 11: Summary of deposits in Trench 7

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	62.24 - 65.04 (east-west)
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.4
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	-
Depth to Natural (m)	1.4
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	3.15m

6.8 Trench 8

Trench 8 was excavated by machine within the Co-Op depot which fronts onto Marmion Street. Aligned north-south, Trench 8 was broken-out as two separate areas labelled 'A' and 'B' due to the presence of a major live electricity cable.

Area A was located to the south, and measured 14.7m long x 2m wide. Area B was situated to the north, measuring 5.55m long x 2m wide. The two areas are described separately below:

6.8.1 Trench 8 A (Figures 2, 19)

The natural geology, comprising clean orange sand, was encountered at the northern end of the trench at a depth of 1.81m below the existing concrete slab (63.95m AOD), falling to 2.07m at the southern end (63.69m AOD). No cut features were observed.

Figure 19: Trench 8A- west-facing section, southern end



The natural sand was sealed by up to 0.42m of grey mottled sandy silt, in turn sealed by a cultivation deposit 1.02m deep. At the northern end of the area a series of modern rubbish pits were observed cut into the cultivation layer, and a rectilinear cut in the east-facing section contained an infilled brick-lined chamber, sealed by a brick floor. This is associated with a smaller depot building which was present on the site prior to 1938.

Layers of ash and brick make-up had been laid above the demolished brick structure and cultivation deposit, varying in depth from 0.55m at the southern end to 0.16m at the northern end, which had then been sealed by the existing concrete slab c. 0.2m thick. The existing ground surface stood at 65.73m AOD.

6.8.2 Trench 8 B (Figures 2, 20-22)

Natural geology was observed 1.2m below the existing ground level (64.53m AOD), comprising a light brown coarse sand and mixed gravels.

Three linear gullies were identified cutting into the upper surface of the natural. The first, [801], was aligned northwest to southeast crossing the southern end of Trench 8B. This was 0.85m wide and greater than 2m in length, with a shallow 'U'-shaped profile 0.5m deep. The fill (800) comprised light grey, firm silty sand with inclusions of moderately sized rounded and sub rounded stones. No artefacts were recovered.

Two further gullies were located 1.8m to the north, aligned roughly east-west. The earliest, [803], was 0.9m wide (though it had been truncated on its northern side) and greater than 2m in length. The profile was steep sided with a rounded base 0.65m deep. The fill (802) comprised mid-grey/brown silty sand, and was found to contain fragments of animal bone.

Gully [803] was cut by [805] to the north. This had a similar alignment and profile, and the fill (804) was similar in appearance to (802). More fragments of animal bone were recovered from this fill, alongside a single unabraded sherd of 11th-14th century Staffordshire pottery.

The cut features were sealed by up to 0.8m of clean cultivation soil in which the remains of a modern wall foundation was noted. The wall and soil had been levelled and overlain with a layer of hardcore 0.15m thick. This supported the existing concrete surface which was 0.1m thick. The existing ground surface was level at a height of 65.73m AOD.

The gullies in this trench can be interpreted as medieval property boundaries or internal divisions within a single plot. Only those portions of the features below the surface of the natural geology had survived, the overlying cultivation deposit being homogenous in appearance. This can be attributed to repeated turnover of the soil after the boundaries had fallen out of use.

Table 12: Summary of deposits in Trench 8

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	65.73
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.25 (north) / 0-0.55 (south)
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.25-1.05 (north) / 0.55-1.57 (south)
Depth to Natural (m)	1.20 (north) / 2.07 (south)
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	1.65m (northern end)

Figure 20: Plan of Trench 8B

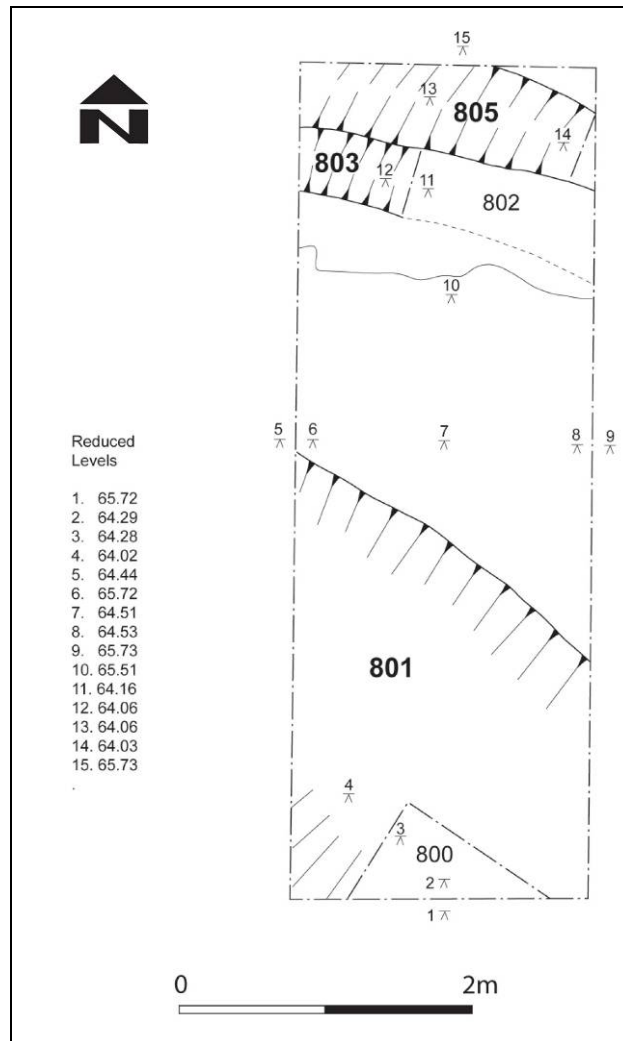


Figure 21: East-facing section, Trench 8B

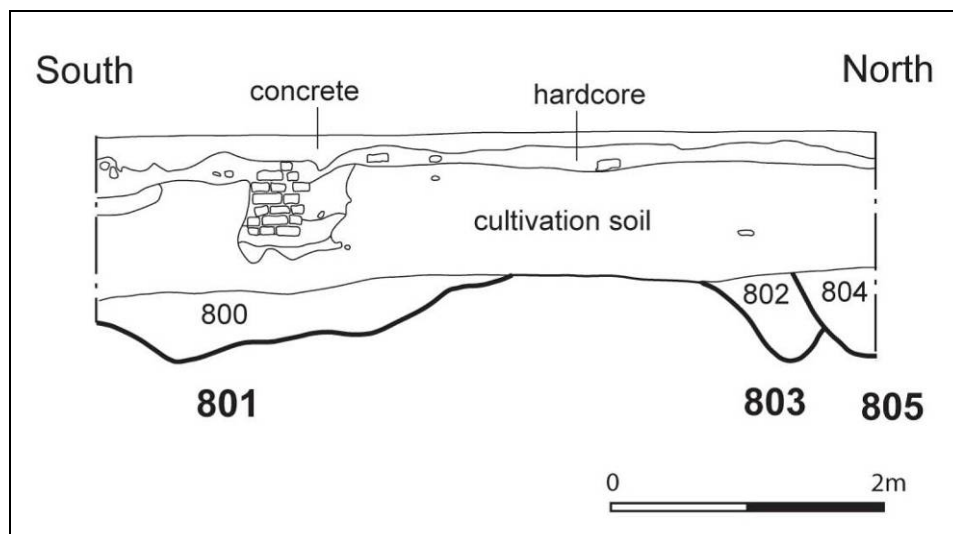


Figure 22: East-facing section through gullies [803] and [805], trench 8B

6.9 Trench 9/10 (Figures 2, 23)

Trench 9/10 was excavated as a single trench 10m long and 2m wide aligned east-west to the rear of shops on the southern side of the Gungate Precinct. Although originally designed as a 'T'-shaped trench to investigate the backplots of medieval properties fronting onto Gungate, live drains and electricity cabling prevented excavation of the cross trench.

The natural geology was encountered in the base of the trench at a depth of 0.7m below existing ground level (equating to 66.5m AOD). It comprised orange boulder clay with seams and lenses of light brown sand and gravel. A sondage was excavated into the clay at the eastern end of the trench to a depth of 0.5m (65.81m AOD) which confirmed that this was natural.

There was a very faint trace of a possible cultivation soil appearing intermittently above the clay in the north-facing section up to 20mm thick, but this had been heavily truncated and was not apparent in the base of the trench. No artefacts were recovered from this deposit.

A modern make-up layer of brick rubble, concrete and sand sealed the natural clay, forming a surface onto which two successive layers of tarmac had been laid. The make-up was between 0.33m and 0.39m thick, with an additional layer of broken brick 0.24m thick at the eastern end of the trench. The tarmac layers totalled 0.2m in thickness, the existing ground level recorded at a height of c. 67.2m AOD.

A modern drain encased in concrete crossed the northwest corner of the trench connecting a down-pipe in the corner of the service area to the main drain system.

No artefacts were found in this trench. It appears that the ground was either levelled or

reduced in height when the precinct was built in order to accommodate the loading/service entry to the rear of the precinct shops. No cut features were noted, and all pre-20th century deposits had been truncated.

Figure 23: Trench 9/10 facing east



Table 13: Summary of deposits in Trench 9/10

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	67.2
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.83
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.83-0.85
Depth to Natural (m)	0.85
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	-

6.10 Trench 19 (Figures 2, 24)

Trench 19 was excavated by hand within Unit 2 of the Gungate Precinct, fronting onto Gungate to the west. Because of the restricted access, the existing reinforced concrete was broken out with a pneumatic drill and all remaining deposits removed by hand. The trench was 3.1m long and 2m wide, oriented north-south, and was designed to investigate the survival of deposits associated with the Gungate street frontage.

The upper surface of clean sand natural was recorded at a depth of 66.70m AOD, 1.75m below the surface of the existing concrete slab. This was sealed by 0.65m depth of redeposited natural sand containing brick fragments, onto which a concrete lined service had been set. A layer of brick-rich rubble 0.6m deep overlay this, sealed by two layers of ashy make-up 0.2m thick. The concrete slab surface had been poured in two layers to a total thickness of 0.3m.

The contemporary ground surface stood at a height of 67.87m AOD.

Figure 24: Trench 19 facing south



Table 14: Summary of deposits in Trench 19

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	67.87
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-1.75
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	-
Depth to Natural (m)	1.75
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	-

6.11 Trench 20 (Figures 2, 25, 26)

Trench 20 was situated in the northeast corner of Pickering's Solicitors car park to the west of the Co-Op depot. This was aligned northeast-southwest and measured 18m long x 2m wide. It was designed to investigate the backplots of medieval properties fronting onto Colehill to the west.

Natural sand and gravel was encountered in the base of the trench at a depth of 1.13m below the existing ground level at the western end of the trench (64.67m AOD), and 1.37m at the eastern end (64.28m AOD), indicating a gradual downward slope to the east. A sondage excavated by machine at the western end of the trench demonstrated that *in-situ* boulder clay was sealed below alluvial sand and gravel at a further depth of between 0.3 and 0.5m. Four archaeological features were identified in the base of the trench; three pits and a single linear gully. There was no stratigraphic relationship between any of the features.

Pit [2004] was located 3.8m to the west of the trench's eastern end. This was oval in plan, 1.85m in diameter and greater than 0.8m deep, though the southern half was not seen as it ran beneath the southern trench edge. The sides of the pit were near vertical with a step 0.3m below the surface of the natural sand. Fill (2005) comprised dark grey clayey silt similar in appearance to an overlying cultivation deposit. Animal bone and sherds of unabraded medieval pottery of 11th-14th century date were recovered during its excavation.

Two metres to the east was a second pit, [2006], which was also oval in plan. This was 1.14m in diameter with a shallow concave profile 0.3m deep. Fill (2007) was a light grey/brown silty clay containing rounded pebbles up to 70mm in diameter. There were no finds within the pit.

A third sub-oval pit was identified 2.6m from the western end of the trench. The cut, [2000], was 1.2m in diameter and 0.8m deep and contained light grey/brown silty sand (2001). No finds were recovered.

Finally a gully crossed the base of the trench on a northeast-southwest alignment, entering the trench from the south 2.45m from the western end of the trench. The cut [2002] was 0.74m wide and 0.3m deep with a shallow concave profile. The fill (2003) was a grey sandy clay containing fragments of charcoal. No finds were recovered from the fill.

The features were sealed by up to 1.16m of homogenous grey/brown cultivation soil over which 0.11m of hardcore had been laid. The existing surface comprised loose gravel, recorded at a height of 65.65m AOD at the eastern end of the trench and 65.80m AOD at the western end.

Figure 25: Plan of Trench 20

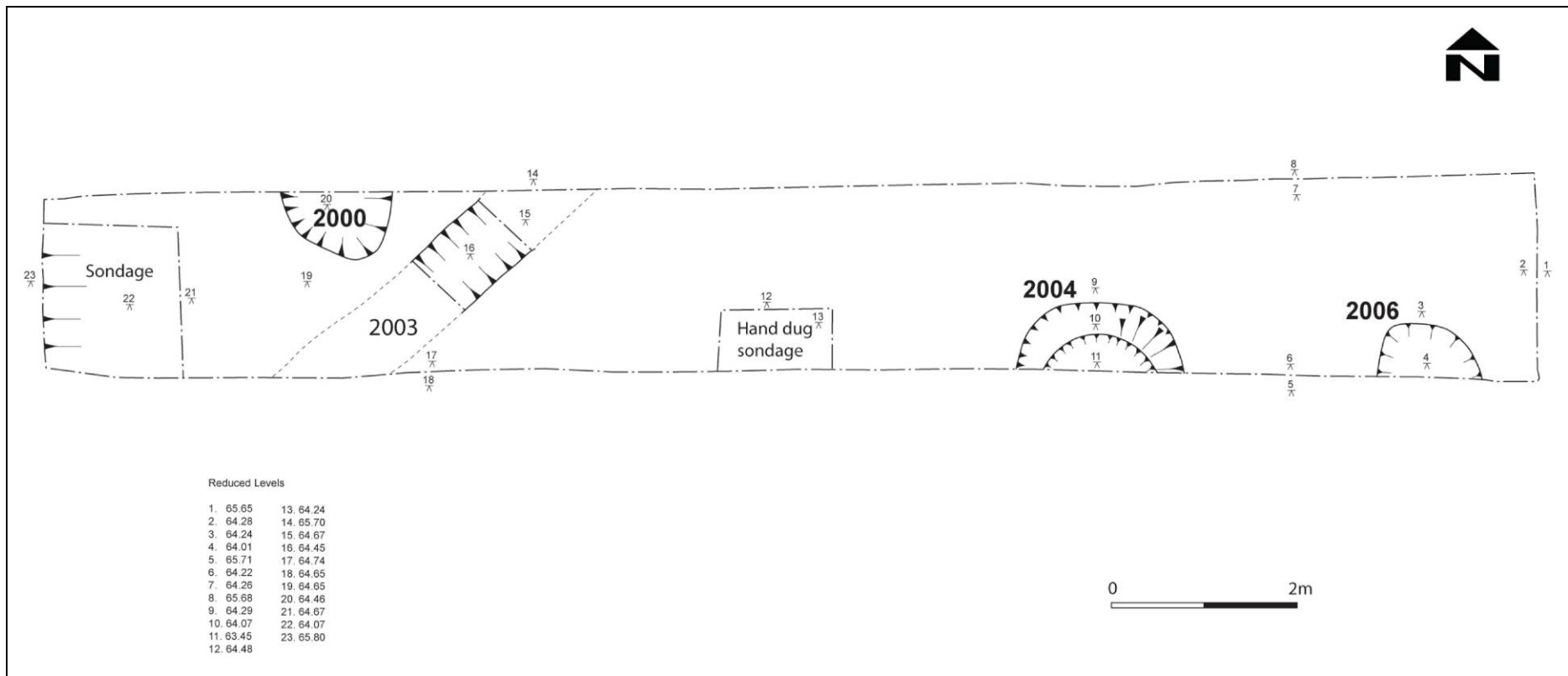


Figure 26: Post-excavation shot of Trench 20 facing west**Table 15: Summary of deposits in Trench 20**

Existing Ground Level (m AOD)	65.65- 65.80 (east-west)
Depth of Made Ground (m)	0-0.11
Depth of Cultivation Deposits (m)	0.11-1.16
Depth to Natural (m)	0.98 (west), 1.16 (east)
Max Depth of Archaeology (m)	2.15

7.0 THE FINDS (*DAN GARNER*)

7.1 POTTERY

All of the pottery recovered from the evaluation is detailed by context on ceramic record forms reproduced in Appendix A. Post-medieval and medieval pottery was identified within the finds assemblage.

7.1.1 *Medieval*

A total of 18 sherds of medieval pottery weighing 148g were recovered from the evaluation and are summarised below in Table 16.

Table 16: Medieval pottery by fabric

Fabric	Date Range	No. of Sherds	Weight
Iron rich sandy ware - Utilitarian (171)	11 th - 14 th C	12	112g
Iron rich sandy ware - Tableware (172)	11 th - 14 th C	5	30g
Midlands white ware (186)	11 th - 14 th C	1	6g
Total		18	148g

The medieval pottery assemblage is largely derived from evaluation Trench 20 and, with the exception of a sherd from context (804) in Trench 8 B and a single unstratified sherd, it is all assigned to context (2005). The assemblage comprises almost entirely of iron-rich sandy wares dating to between the 11th and 14th centuries, thought to be derived from several different production centres within Staffordshire. Five of the sherds have splashes of glaze on their external surface marking them out as probable tableware vessels such as jugs or pitchers. The remainder are plain sherds including two diagnostic rim sherds derived from cooking jar forms; some sherds still have evidence for sooting on their exterior surface. One base sherd has evidence for decoration in the form of impressed thumb prints along its circumference.

A single sherd of midlands white ware was recovered from trench 2 context (211). The sherd is unglazed but the circumference of the rim would suggest that it is derived from a jug form.

In general the medieval assemblage consists of small unabraded sherds suggesting that the material is derived from an undisturbed context which might yield a larger and more meaningful assemblage of pottery if revisited at a later stage of work. As it stands the assemblage has low potential for further study.

7.1.2 *Post-medieval*

A total of 42 sherds of post-medieval pottery weighing 784g were recovered from the evaluation and are summarised below in Table 17.

Table 17: Post-medieval pottery by fabric

Fabric	Date Range	No. of Sherds	Weight
Black & brown glazed earthenware (201)	17 th -18 th C	7	330g
Cream ware (206)	1760+	1	1g
Pearl-glazed earthenware (207)	1780+	5	42g
Cane Coloured Ware (208)	1780+	1	12g
Mottled ware (210)	1680+	5	30g
White salt-glazed stoneware (211)	1720+	1	1g
Brown salt-glazed stoneware (212)	19 th C	14	342g
Stoneware (215)	1790+	4	4g
Unglazed Red Earthenware (216)	Post medieval	1	6g
Porcelain (218)	18 th - 19 th C	2	2g
Jackfield ware (225)	1740-80	1	14g
Total		42	784g

This assemblage is relatively small and quite diverse in the range of fabrics represented, and as such is really only informative in its ability to provide dating for the contexts from which the material is derived. It is interesting to note that the bulk of the assemblage by sherd count and weight is made up of utilitarian vessels in black and brown glazed earthenware and brown stoneware. However, there is also a good variety of 18th century fine wares represented in the assemblage, suggesting a certain level of status on the site during this period. There is an apparent lack of earlier 17th century pottery in the assemblage and given the presence of medieval material on the site (see below) this may be an interesting trend to consider if further work is undertaken. Much of this material comprised small sherds scattered through many contexts and warrants little further study.

7.2 CLAY TOBACCO PIPE

Table 18: Clay tobacco pipe by context

Context	Stem	Bowl	Mouthpiece	Stamp	Comments
209	2	-	-	-	
213	1	-	-	-	
606	2	-	-	-	
614	2	-	-	-	

Totals	7	-	-	-	
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A total of 7 fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from the evaluation and are summarised in Table 18 (above). No bowl fragments were recovered. No further work is warranted on this group.

7.3 GLASS

Table 19: The glass by context

Context	Colour	Vessel	Window	Date	Comment
209	Green	-	2mm thick	P-med	
606	Green	Bottle (x2)		P-med	
614	Green	-	2mm thick	P-med	

A total of 2 fragments of window glass and two fragments of bottle glass were recovered from the evaluation and are summarised in Table 19. No further analysis is suggested for this material.

7.4 BUILDING MATERIAL

7.4.1 Brick

One fragment of handmade brick was recovered from context [213]. No further analysis is recommended.

7.4.2 Tile

One corner fragment of flat roof tile was recovered from context [213]. No further analysis is recommended.

7.5 METALWORK

7.5.1 Iron

An iron object was recovered from evaluation Trench 20 context (2005). The object was identifiable as a nail and given its association with an assemblage of medieval pottery it is likely to be medieval in origin. No further analysis is recommended.

7.6 ANIMAL BONE

Animal bone was retained from three contexts securely dated to the medieval period. These are summarised in Table 20 below.

Table 20: Animal bone by context

Context	number	Weight (g)	Types	Comment
703	6	1,200	Cattle, Indeterminate	2 large cattle tibia, four indeterminate fragments
802	5	50	Cattle	All fragments from a single young cattle leg bone- poor condition
2005	9	170	sheep/goat	jaw and phalanx, unidentified rib and leg bone fragments

The animal bone was generally in poor condition with the exception of those fragments recovered from context 703. In this instance the conditions appear to have been suitable for good organic preservation (deep and waterlogged). The group is too small to warrant further analysis, though it can be taken as an indicator that animal bone does survive within medieval contexts, and any further site work may yield assemblages from which meaningful conclusions can be drawn relating to land use and diet.

8.0 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (ALEXANDRA SCHMIDL AND JOHN CARROTT)

8.1 Summary

Environmental samples have been assessed from the following contexts:

Table 21: Sample List

Sample No	Context	Description	Volume (litres)	Type
1	703	Medieval ditch fill	40	Bulk
2	327	Medieval (?) ditch fill	10	Bulk
3	324	Medieval bank revetment	10	Bulk
4	716	Saxon ditch fill	20	Bulk
5	728	Medieval bank revetment	20	Bulk

Five sediment samples recovered from deposits encountered during excavations on land within and surrounding the Gungate Precinct, Tamworth, Staffordshire, were submitted for an assessment of their bioarchaeological potential. The works encountered features associated with the bank and ditch defences of the Anglo-Saxon burh, medieval burgage plots and backyards, and extensive post-medieval pitting.

Ancient biological remains recovered from four of the deposits were largely restricted to very small quantities of unidentified charcoal. The fifth subsample, from a medieval ditch fill, gave a small assemblage of decayed waterlogged plant remains which reflected the local vegetation prevailing at the time of deposition. The assemblage was dominated by wild plant taxa of wet areas and rough ground and it would seem that human impact on the vegetation was very low. The only evidence for possible human activity from the organic remains was a single unidentified charred ?cereal grain recovered from another medieval ditch fill.

Small numbers of invertebrate macrofossils were also present in Context 703. The vast majority of the remains were of unidentified fragments but there were a few much better preserved beetle sclerites. Given the disparity in preservation between these small numbers of remains and the majority of the insect fragments and the decayed plant remains, it is possible that they derived from later post-depositional invaders of the deposit or contaminants of the sample.

The waterlogged seeds and fruits and charred ?cereal grain could provide suitable material for radiocarbon dating, if required.

No further study of the biological remains recovered from these deposits is warranted and, on the current evidence, further excavations in the area are unlikely to encounter deposits with interpretatively valuable concentrations of biological remains, although the possibility of the presence of more valuable assemblages of waterlogged organic preservation should not be wholly discounted.

8.2 Introduction

Archaeological excavations were undertaken by SLR Consulting Ltd on land within and surrounding the Gungate Precinct, Tamworth, Staffordshire (centred on NGR SK 420932 304185), between the 15th of October and the 23rd of November 2007, on behalf of Henry Boot Developments Ltd. The works were undertaken ahead of a proposed mixed-purpose redevelopment of the area.

Eleven trenches were excavated and encountered features associated with the bank and ditch defences of the Anglo-Saxon burh, medieval burgrave plots and backyards (in the southern half of the site), and extensive post-medieval pitting (in the northern half of the site).

Five bulk sediment samples ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al.* 1992) were submitted to Palaeoecology Research Services Limited (PRS), County Durham, for an assessment of their bioarchaeological potential.

8.3 Methods

The lithologies of the samples were recorded using a standard *pro forma*. Subsamples from each were processed for the recovery of plant and invertebrate macrofossils, broadly following the techniques of Kenward *et al.* (1980). Prior to processing, the subsamples were disaggregated in water for 24 hours or more and their volumes recorded in a waterlogged state.

Plant and invertebrate remains in the processed subsample fractions (residues and washovers) were recorded briefly by 'scanning' using a low-power microscope (where necessary), identifiable taxa and other components being listed on paper. One of the sample washovers contained appreciable quantities of waterlogged plant remains and was examined wet. All five of the residues and the four other washovers were primarily mineral in nature and were dried and weighed prior to recording.

Nomenclature for plant taxa follows Stace (1997).

During recording, consideration was given to the suitability of the remains for submission for radiocarbon dating by standard radiometric technique or accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS).

8.4 Results

The results are presented in context number order by trench. Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is given in square brackets. A brief summary of the processing method and an estimate of the remaining volume of unprocessed sediment follows (in round brackets) after the sample numbers.

8.4.1 Trench 3

Context 324 [possible medieval bank revetment underlying compacted stone layer 306]

Sample 3/T (3 kg/1.75 litres sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 25 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Moist, mid grey-brown, crumbly to slightly sticky (working soft), clay sand, with stones (6 to 60 mm) present.

The small washover (25 g, dried) consisted almost entirely of sand and mineral concretions, with a few stones (to 6 mm) and traces of charcoal (to 9 mm). Identifiable botanical remains were restricted to some waterlogged seed of elder (*Sambucus nigra* L.) all of which were probably modern contaminants.

The large residue (dry weight 1.2 kg) consisted mainly of stones (to 35 mm) and sand, with a few mineral concretions (orange-coloured, 'iron-rich'; to 20 mm).

Context 327 [medieval ditch fill]

Sample 2/T (2 kg/1 litre sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 2 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Moist, mid brown to mid grey, stiff to crumbly (working soft and more or less plastic), sandy clay. Stones (6 to over 60 mm) were present

The small washover (21 g, dried) was mostly of sand, stones (to 10 mm) and coal (to 13 mm), with some charcoal (to 6 mm), a little cinder and waterlogged modern roots/rootlets. Likely ancient botanical remains were restricted to a single poorly preserved (puffed and eroded) unidentified charred cereal grain.

The moderate-sized residue (dry weight 0.58 kg) was mostly sand, with some stones (to 40 mm).

8.4.2 Trench 7

Context 703 [secondary fill of medieval ditch 701]

Sample 1/T (3 kg/2 litres sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 25 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Moist, mid to dark grey-brown (with some areas of mid orange-brown and patches of mid to dark grey), brittle and stiff to crumbly (working soft and somewhat plastic), sandy clay. Stones (6 to over 60 mm) were present

The small wet washover (~100 ml) consisted almost entirely of decayed plant material (roots/rootlets, wood fragments, unidentifiable plant fibres), with a little sand, stones (to 10 mm) and a few invertebrate remains (earthworm egg capsules, beetle sclerites). The deposit produced a small number of identifiable botanical remains preserved by anoxic waterlogging but showing a significant degree of decay. Most of the recorded taxa were wild plants of waste ground and wet places, with occasional hints of hedgerow – buttercup (*Ranunculus* subg. *Ranunculus*), celery-leaved buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus* L.), common nettle (*Urtica dioica* L.), dock (*Rumex*), elder (*Sambucus nigra* L.), hedge-parsley (*Torilis*), lesser hawkbit (*Leontodon saxatilis* Lam.), lesser marshwort/fool's-water-cress (*Apium inundatum* (L.) Rchb.f./A.

nodiflorum (L.) Lag.), thistle (*Carduus/Cirsium*) and white/red dead-nettle (*Lamium album* L./*L. purpureum* L.).

Insect remains were relatively few and mostly consisted of small unidentified fragments and 'scraps' of cuticle, including pieces of beetle sclerites, with occasional much better preserved remains. The latter included largely intact beetle elytra, pronota and heads which showed only light chemical erosion and represented at least four distinct species (although none could be identified within the constraints of this assessment). However, given the disparity in preservation between these small numbers of remains and the majority of the insect fragments and the decayed plant remains, it is possible that they derived from later post-depositional invaders of the deposit or contaminants of the sample; there were certainly other intrusive remains present (roots/rootlets and earthworm egg capsules, for example).

The large residue (dry weight 1.4 kg) was of stones (to 55 mm) and sand, with a few mineral concretions (orange-coloured, ?'iron-rich'; to 15 mm).

Context 716 [basal fill of ?Anglo-Saxon ditch 717]

Sample 4/T (3 kg/1.75 litre sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 25 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Moist, mid grey-brown, crumbly to slightly sticky (working soft and slightly sticky), clay sand, with stones (6 to 60 mm) were present.

The small washover (35 g, dried) was almost entirely of sand and 'mineral' concretions (to 10 mm), with some stones (to 10 mm) and traces of silt encrusted charcoal (to 5 mm).

The large residue (dry weight 1.3 kg) was of stones (to 35 mm) and sand, with some mineral concretions (orange-coloured, ?'iron-rich'; to 30 mm).

Context 728 [medieval bank revetment underlying layer of angular stones 730]

Sample 5/T (3 kg/1.75 litre sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 25 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Just moist, light to mid brown to mid grey-brown, stiff to crumbly and slightly sticky (working soft and somewhat plastic), sandy clay. Stones (6 to 60 mm) were present.

There was a small washover (21 g, dried) which was mostly of sand and sediment concretions (to 10 mm), with a few fragments of charcoal (to 3 mm), some small stones (to 10 mm), coal (to 3 mm) and unidentified bone (to 15 mm). There were also a few seeds of elder and orache/goosefoot (*Atriplex/Chenopodium*) but these were probably modern contaminants of the deposit or sample.

The medium-sized residue (dry weight 1.2 kg) was mainly of stones (to 50 mm) and sand, with some mineral concretions (orange-coloured, ?'iron-rich'; to 30 mm).

8.5 Discussion and statement of potential

Ancient biological remains recovered from the sediment samples were largely restricted to traces of unidentified charcoal and a single poorly preserved charred ?cereal grain from Context 327 (medieval ?ditch fill) of no real interpretative value; this ?grain provides a slight

hint that crop processing activities may have been taking place in the vicinity at the time of the formation of this deposit but was of no further interpretative value in isolation.

Context 703 (a medieval ditch fill) was the only deposit in which waterlogged preservation occurred. The processed subsample gave a small assemblage of quite strongly decayed waterlogged seeds and fruits. Overall, the identifiable component of this plant assemblage was dominated by remains of wild plant taxa representing natural habitats (e.g. wetland areas, grassland) and those disturbed by human activity (waste/rough ground). However, it would seem that, at the time of the formation of this deposit, human impact on the nearby vegetation was low, and the plant remains provided no real evidence of domestic or other human activity in the immediate vicinity.

Small numbers of invertebrate macrofossils were also present in Context 703. The vast majority of the remains were of unidentified fragments but there were a few much better preserved beetle sclerites. However, this marked variation in preservation within the invertebrate assemblage, and between the better preserved remains and the generally poor condition of the plant material, was rather suspicious – the well preserved beetle sclerites may well derive from post-depositional invaders of the deposit or modern contaminants of the sample. Even if ancient, the small number of identifiable remains would be too few for detailed interpretation (even if all of the remaining 25 litres of sediment were processed). However, a full analysis of these remains might provide a definitive answer to the question of whether or not they are contemporaneous with the deposit's formation should this be considered of value.

The charred ?cereal grain recovered from Context 327 and the waterlogged remains from Context 703 would provide sufficient suitable material for radiocarbon dating (via AMS), if required.

8.6 Recommendations

No further study of the biological remains recovered from these deposits is warranted.

On the evidence of the current samples, further excavations in this area are unlikely to encounter deposits with interpretatively valuable concentrations of biological remains, although the possibility of the presence of more interpretatively valuable assemblages of waterlogged organic preservation should not be wholly discounted.

8.7 Retention and disposal

Unless required for purposes other than the study of biological remains, all of the current material may be discarded.

8.8 Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham), along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

9.0 MONITORING OF GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATIONS

A geotechnical site investigation was carried out by Integra Consulting in tandem with the archaeological evaluation. This site investigation included the drilling of 15 boreholes (by percussion rig) and the excavation of 14 trial pits across the site (their locations are given in Figure 31).

In order to develop a detailed deposit model for the site, the excavation of all trial pits was monitored by an archaeologist on site, and the results of these investigations have been considered in this report (see Section 10).

The borehole and trial pit logs are included for reference in Appendix B.

No archaeological deposits were observed in any of the test pits, though the depth of made ground and the surface of the underlying natural was recorded in each. It was noted that visibility of the deposits in section was poor; the use of a toothed machine bucket to excavate coupled with the small pit dimensions meant that finer archaeological detail was obscured.

10.0 DISCUSSION

10.1 The Town Defences

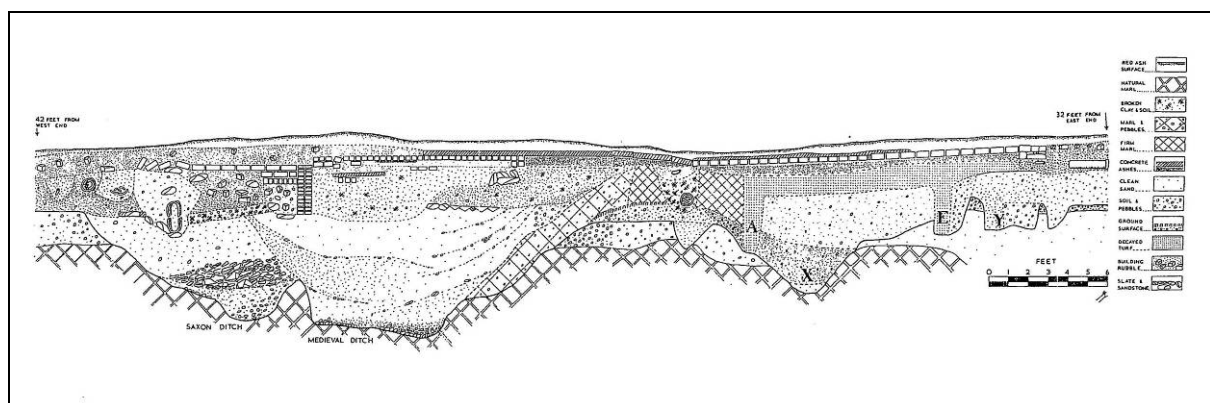
The evidence for the town defences from other excavations in Tamworth shows that there are broadly three distinct phases of construction. These are:

- A pre-913 AD 'V'-shaped ditch and outer bank
- A turf and timber-laced rampart constructed over the line of the earlier ditch in 913 AD, as part of Æthelflaed's burh. The front of the rampart was divided from an extra-mural ditch by a berm (ledge) 6.1m wide.
- A medieval (Norman) ditch excavated along the line of the earlier Saxon ditch/berm.

The earliest deposits encountered during the evaluation were the western ditch in Trench 7 (717), the bank to the east and associated shallow features to the west in both Trenches 3 and 7. It is clear that the sections obtained in Trenches 3 and 7 are very similar to other sections excavated at Lichfield Street on the western side of the Saxon burh in 1967 (reproduced here as Figure 27) and along Albert Street to the north between 1960 and 2001.

The Lichfield Street excavation demonstrated that the 913 AD rampart had been erected over the line of an earlier ditch and bank, the latter possibly associated with a pre-Viking invasion Mercian Royal House (Gould 1968, 18). It also showed that the 10th century Saxon ditch was separated from the front of the rampart by a berm 20ft (or 6.1m) wide. Assuming that the burh defence construction was uniform around the perimeter of the town, this would place the Saxon ditch beneath Marmion Street beyond the eastern end of Trenches 3 and 7. The timber and turf rampart (possibly identified in Trench 7) was approximately 5m wide, which might indicate that deposits associated with this structure extend a further 2m to the west of Trench 7. This feature (contexts 722/732) overlay a build-up of earth which in turn sealed the early ditch, suggesting that Anglo Saxon deposits are preserved in this location.

Figure 27: 1967 Lichfield Street Excavation- south-facing section (reproduced from Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society Transactions Vol IX, 1967-8)



The excavations on the northern defences along Albert Street have exposed very similar sections, though these have varied somewhat in their interpretation. Sheridan's excavation at the site of the police station (1972-3, 39), and his interpretation of work carried out by F T Wainwright prior to his death in 1961, has suggested that an intervallum perimeter road ran

behind the rampart, approximately 6m from the internal edge of the earliest Saxon ditch. Wainwright's excavation yielded a single coin from the metalled surface of this road (a Torksey half penny struck in 975 AD). If this feature extends into the development area, it would be situated approximately 3m to the west of Trench 7, and may be around 5m wide. This would suggest that the overall width of features associated with the town defences could extend some 26m into the development area from the Marmion Street frontage.

Plans of the town in the medieval period (c.f. Gould 1972, 18) indicate that Spinning School Lane formed a major route leading through the eastern town defences at 'Perrycroft Gate'. An excavation at the western entrance to the burh on Lichfield Street in 1968 (Gould 1969, 31) has demonstrated that the 913 AD turf rampart bridged the entrance with a gateway of timber posts. The construction of the gateway was such that its overall width was 28 ft (8.5m), the outer face of the entrance overlying the earlier ditch. If the eastern entrance to the town was constructed in the same way at the junction of Spinning School Lane and Marmion Street, there is a possibility that similar deposits could extend into the northeast corner of the development area.

In Trenches 3 and 7 stabilisation of the bank with a stone revetment possibly occurred in the medieval period, and is associated with the excavation of a new town ditch following the Norman Conquest; this feature was observed at the eastern end of Trench 7 (context 701). Again, the lack of datable artefacts precludes definite dating of this feature. Meeson (1979, 114) suggests that this stonework, seen in many other sections through the ditch across the town, is indicative of the collapse or deliberate destruction of a stone revetment for the 10th century turf rampart.

10.2 Medieval Burgage Plots and Cultivation

A deep build-up of cultivation deposits to the west of Trench 7 sealed medieval features in Trenches 8B and 20. On the basis of pottery recovered from the fills of these features they can be tentatively dated to between the 11th and 14th centuries though the assemblage is not large enough to tie down a definite date. The historic mapping indicates that until the 20th century this area was given over to cultivation (post-14th century indicated by the pottery) in linear burgage plots extending west-to-east behind properties fronting onto Colehill and Gungate. In Trench 8B the linear gullies identified at the northern end probably represent the boundary between two of these plots which had been repeatedly recut over time. In Trench 20 the pits and gully are likely to represent activity within a single plot, presumably for rubbish disposal and a possible internal plot boundary.

The location of these plots is significant; Gould (1972, 19) notes that from at least the time of the Norman Conquest, and probably earlier, the county line between Staffordshire and Warwickshire passed straight through the centre of Tamworth. Gungate and Church Street define this line, and mark an unseen boundary in the historical development of the two halves of the town. Both sides passed into different ownership throughout the medieval period, were administered by different courts and held separate markets.

The central thoroughfare was lined by shops and timber-framed houses, with gardens to the rear. The size of these plots varied, with records indicating house sizes of between 12 and 18 feet (Gould 1972, 39), and gardens are recorded to the rear. The custom for division of these plots of land was 'by hedge and dyke', though there is also reference to one divided by paling and growing trees. Agricultural practices were also common within the town, both animal husbandry and the growing of grain for bread, and it is probable that structures for the housing of livestock were commonplace within the gardens.

Figure 28 shows the location of the evaluation trenches overlaid onto the Ordnance Survey

1:500 town plan produced in 1884; the remnant burgage plot boundaries can be seen crossing the area, with two small structures occupying two of the plots within what is now the Co-Op depot. Many of the buildings shown on this map fronting onto Gungate may have had medieval origins, however the trenches that have been excavated in this location (9/10 and 19) suggest that the ground was comprehensively cleared prior to construction of the shopping precinct in the 1960s. Indeed, Figure 28 clearly shows that Trench 9/10 was situated directly above a range of buildings, of which no trace was seen.

Figure 28: 1884 Ordnance Survey Town Plan (1:500)



10.3 Post-Medieval Pitting and Cultivation

The excavated evidence for activity within the Spinning School Lane car park was overwhelmingly dominated by pits for the disposal of refuse. Dating from between the late 17th and 19th centuries, the considerable depth and frequency of these pits in Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5, had completely removed any trace of earlier activity. It is interesting to note that the pits in these trenches were sealed by a disturbed cultivation horizon, in places up to 1m deep; this would tend to suggest that the land within the northern half of the car park area was continually reworked until the late 19th century, with intermittent pitting.

Such an extensive and tightly dated group of features indicates that from around the middle of the 17th century this area saw a distinct change in use compared with its surroundings. This is made clearly apparent by the deposits in Trench 6; situated only 3m to the south of Trench 5, the cultivation soil here was noticeably cleaner with less disturbance, and only four

isolated pits were seen. On the basis of the artefacts these pits were dated to the 17th and 18th century, and were visibly cut *through* the cultivation soil, indicating both that there had been minimal soil turnover after the backfilling of the pits, and that the soil itself is relatively early in date, possibly a relict medieval soil. The increasing depth of the cultivation soil to the south (from 0.15m at the northern end of the trench to 0.7m at the southern end) corresponds with a gradual slope of the underlying natural sand down to the south; this may indicate a kind of soil movement by cultivation leading to creation of lynchet-type boundaries for each plot, resulting in a series of level terraces stepping down across the site from north-south (note the plot boundaries indicated in Figure 28). This plot was situated immediately to the north of an east-west aligned strip of small enclosures shown on the 1810 Marquis of Townshend Estate Map (Figure 29). The subdivisions of the small plots are also indicated the Town Plan of 1884 (Figure 28). Lynchet-type activity at the boundary may also be inferred by the deepening cultivation soils towards the southern end of trench 8A.

Figure 29: 1810 Marquis of Townshend Estate Map (extract)



10.4 Victorian Housing

Evidence of the housing constructed in this location towards the end of the 19th century was also observed, with a wall foundation seen in Trench 5, and a well and disused drainage pipes in Trench 4. Disturbed cultivation deposits in Trenches 4, 5 and 6 were sealed by a loose tarmac layer which may represent yard and road surfaces associated with the housing on Spring Gardens and Victoria Crescent. The well in Trench 4 seems to have been a communal water source at the rear of Victoria Crescent.

Despite this, it is worthy of note how little evidence survives of the Victorian housing in the car park. Figure 28 indicates that the western end of Trench 2 was situated directly across a row of terraced housing, yet no structural remains were seen in the trench. This would suggest either that the foundations were very shallow, or that the demolition was comprehensive.

10.5 Research Questions

In compliance with PPG16 an assessment of the potential significance of archaeological remains at national, regional and local level is required. The following section addresses this.

Gaining an understanding of Pre-Conquest urbanism is identified as a research priority in the West Midlands Regional Research Framework because ‘...as yet, so little is known and because the archaeological resource is slight, fragile and vulnerable’ (www.arch-ant.bham.ac.uk/research/fieldwork_research_themes; accessed 20.02.08). Specific questions identified include;

- what were the origins of the region’s urban places? (the Church? Other pre-existing centres of authority? Commerce and communications? Military necessity?)
- over what period of time did the Domesday Boroughs acquire their populations?
- how did they grow: To what extent is organised growth (town-planning) evident?
- was growth continuous or interrupted? What was its actual, precise, chronology?
- where and when did continuously built-up street frontages first appear? Over what sort of time-span and where did the familiar medieval urban settlement pattern of contiguous strip-plots, or burgages, appear?
- how extensive was organised community or lordly involvement in infrastructure, particularly in terms of the provision of metalled streets, bridge-work and reclamation and drainage projects?

The framework also identifies key areas of research for medieval towns in the west midlands, including gaining a greater understanding of towns in their landscapes, notions of medieval town planning and evidence for buildings, craft and trade. The current site is situated across an area of burgage plots dating to the medieval period; evidence for boundary ditches dividing these plots was seen in Trench 8B, dated to between the 11th and 14th centuries on the basis of recovered pottery. Further plot boundaries may survive across the southern half of the development area, which could characterise more fully the layout and method of division of these backplots, including land-use zoning and evidence for changing use through time.

The current site has the potential to address several research questions which arise from both the work carried out as part of this evaluation, and from previous archaeological investigations undertaken across the town. Fundamentally, the site is located adjacent to the eastern Anglo-Saxon and medieval town defences, near to the eastern town entrance, and deposits associated with this multi-phase structure survive to considerable depth (2.5m - 3m) below the existing ground level. The precise dating of these phases has been difficult to establish in the past due to the poor recovery of material culture, and only short sections have been excavated. Dating the sequence of construction and the layout of the defences would provide a dataset which can be applied to sequences observed around the town, establishing a definitive chronology of the late-Saxon development of the burh and its subsequent fate. The site may also contain important structural remains associated with the internal layout of the burh, which could yield information relating to land use, zoning of activities and the status and welfare of the inhabitants.

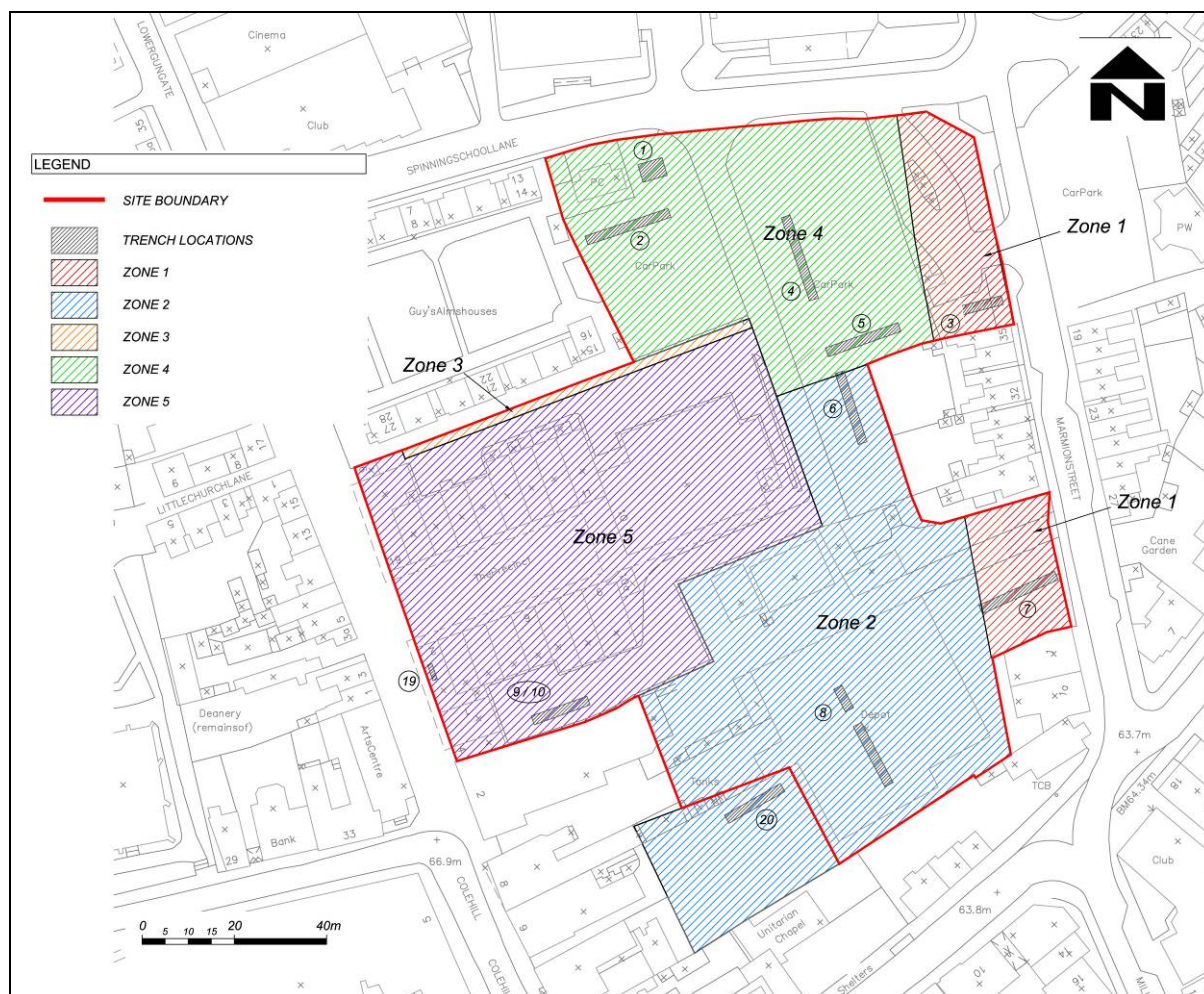
Following the Norman Conquest the town defences in Tamworth were reinforced with a larger ditch, though reputedly this fell into disrepair with burgesses being fined for allowing trees and hedges to grow in the ditch in the early 14th century, and allowing people to live in the ditch rent-free in the early 15th century (Gould 1969, 41). Sections of the ditch at Marmion Street may yield evidence for the rate at which the defences were allowed to fall into disrepair, and any evidence for attempts to re-establish the feature.

Finally the extensive area of post-medieval pitting seen in the car park area suggests that land use in this location changed from the late 17th century onwards. The reason for the hiatus in activity between the 14th and 17th centuries in this location is unclear, but evidence relating to the extent of the disturbance and the nature of the overlying cultivation horizon may help to establish this.

11.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The results of the evaluation, earlier site investigations and a concurrent geotechnical site investigation have demonstrated that the archaeological potential of the development site can be broadly subdivided into five discrete zones. These are indicated in Figure 30.

Figure 30: Zones of archaeological potential

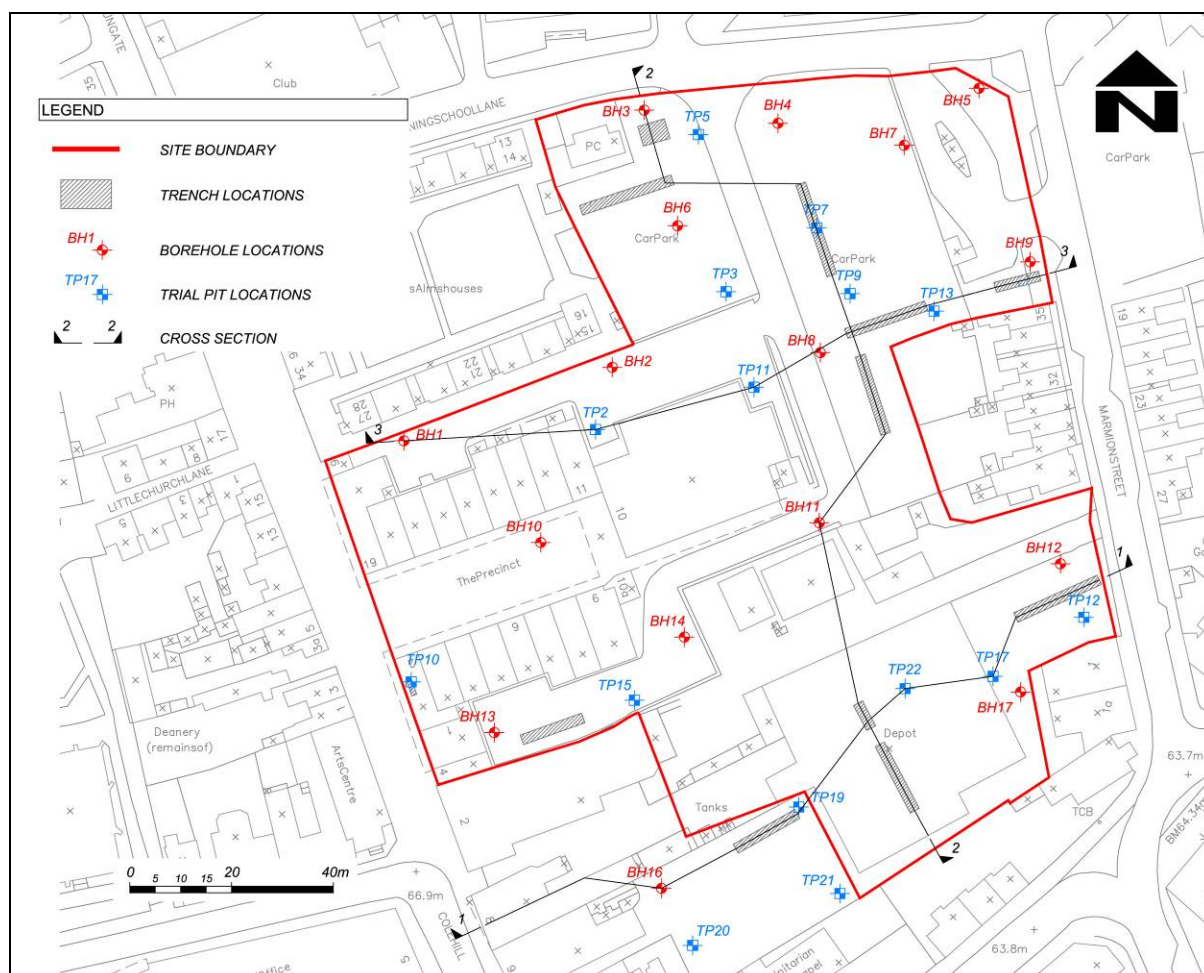


11.1 Zone 1: The town defences

This area fronts onto Marmion Street and extends at least 18 - 20m westward into the development site (There may be a degree of overlap into Zone 2, but the extent of this is unknown). In Trench 7 conjectural evidence for the Saxon rampart was identified at the western end of the trench, and this may extend further still into the development area sealing a deep build-up of pre-913 AD deposits (c. 1m depth). In the vicinity of Trench 3 the archaeological potential is restricted to a 10m wide strip of land fronting onto Marmion Street; however this is likely to diminish in the north-eastern corner of the site due to the presence of underground tanks and services for a former petrol filling station. Remains associated with an entranceway through the defences may extend further westwards into the development area. Both trenches have shown that significant archaeological remains survive around 0.4m below the existing ground surface, and that deeply stratified remains can be expected at depths of up to 3.2m below the existing ground level.

Boreholes 5 and 9 were excavated near to the line of the defences by Integra Consulting; Borehole 5 was situated slightly to the west of the line of the bank in the northeast corner of the site and recorded a 1.1m depth of 'soil, stone and brick fill', while Borehole 9 recorded up to 2.1m of 'brown sandy soil, stone and brick' immediately adjacent to the eastern end of Trench 3 (the location of the Integra Consulting site investigations are shown in Figure 31).

Figure 31: Borehole, trial pit and cross-section locations



11.2 Zone 2: Medieval cultivation

Corresponding with the deposits identified in Trenches 6, 8 and 20, this zone comprises land to the south of both the Gungate Precinct and Spinning School Lane car park, bounded to the east by the defensive earthworks adjacent to Marmion Street (Zone 1). The evaluation has shown that cut features of medieval date survive to a depth of around 2m below existing ground level, sealed by homogenous cultivation deposits up to 1.2m thick. These features are probably associated with the division and maintenance of land as early as the 11th century. In Trenches 6 and 8A there is a suggestion that lynchet-type activity has created a series of terraces leading down-slope towards the river.

The extent of the cultivation deposits in this area has been further demonstrated by test pits excavated by Integra Consulting; Test Pits 17 and 19-22 have shown that generally between 0.8 and 1.4m of cultivation soil survives across the area. Test Pit 19 near to the eastern end of Trench 20 notably recorded 1.3m of topsoil over 0.6m of grey silty sand, which may indicate the presence of a buried archaeological feature. Test Pit 21 in the south-western

corner of the site recorded a depth of 2.6m of topsoil which corresponds with the depth of overburden noted at the southern end of Trench 8A.

11.3 Zone 3: Medieval boundary ditch

This zone has been determined on the basis of Test Pits 1-5 excavated by Gifford in 2006. This demonstrated the presence of an east-west aligned ditch dating to the 15th century running along the line of the existing boundary wall between the Gungate Precinct and Guy's Almshouses. This is a narrow strip of land extending less than 2m into the development site. The ditch was cut to a depth of around 1m below the existing tarmac surface of the precinct's northern service yard.

11.4 Zone 4: Post-medieval pitting and Victorian construction

This extensive area within the northern half of Spinning School Lane car park has been determined from the remains identified in Trenches 1, 2, 4 and 5. Intensive pitting between the late 17th and early 19th centuries appears to have truncated any earlier remains, typically to a depth of around 2m below the existing ground level. Subsequent construction of terraced housing and the 20th century car park has sealed these remains beneath successive layers of tarmac and hardcore. The intensity of these activities abruptly stops between Trenches 5 and 6.

Integra Consulting conducted Boreholes 3, 6, 7 and 8 and Test Pits 3, 5, 7, 9 and 13 in this area with the result that between 0.8 and 1.2m of made ground was present across the car park, generally decreasing toward the centre of the area. Test Pit 3 suggests that adjacent to the northern edge of the precinct the overlying cultivation deposits had been truncated down to the surface of the natural clay/sand.

11.5 Zone 5: Truncated deposits within the Gungate Precinct and service areas

Trenches 9/10 and 19 have shown that within the southern half of the precinct there has been a considerable degree of truncation, with only shallow remains of earlier cultivation deposits overlying the natural geology. This reinforces the sequence of deposits recorded by Gifford in Test Pits 7 and 8 within unit 5 of the precinct.

This pattern is echoed by the Integra investigations, with a total of nine test pits and boreholes excavated around the precinct. In general the depth of made ground varies from 0.4 - 0.7m across the majority of the area, with no recorded topsoil. Boreholes 11 and 14 suggest that in the southeast corner the depth of deposits begins to increase to between 0.9 and 1.7m reflecting the drop in level of the underlying natural towards the east.

No evidence for deep archaeological remains was discovered in any of the trenches within the precinct, though this cannot exclude the possibility of isolated features surviving elsewhere, as illustrated by the survival of a medieval ditch along the northern edge of the precinct (Zone 3). Figure 28 shows that numerous outbuildings extended eastward into this part of the site in the 19th century; deep-cut remains associated with these may still survive.

The data from the archaeological evaluation and other site investigations has been combined to create schematic cross-sections across the development area. These highlight the depths of any archaeological remains, cultivation soils and made ground, and are shown in Figure 32 overleaf (It should be noted that the vertical scale has been exaggerated x5).

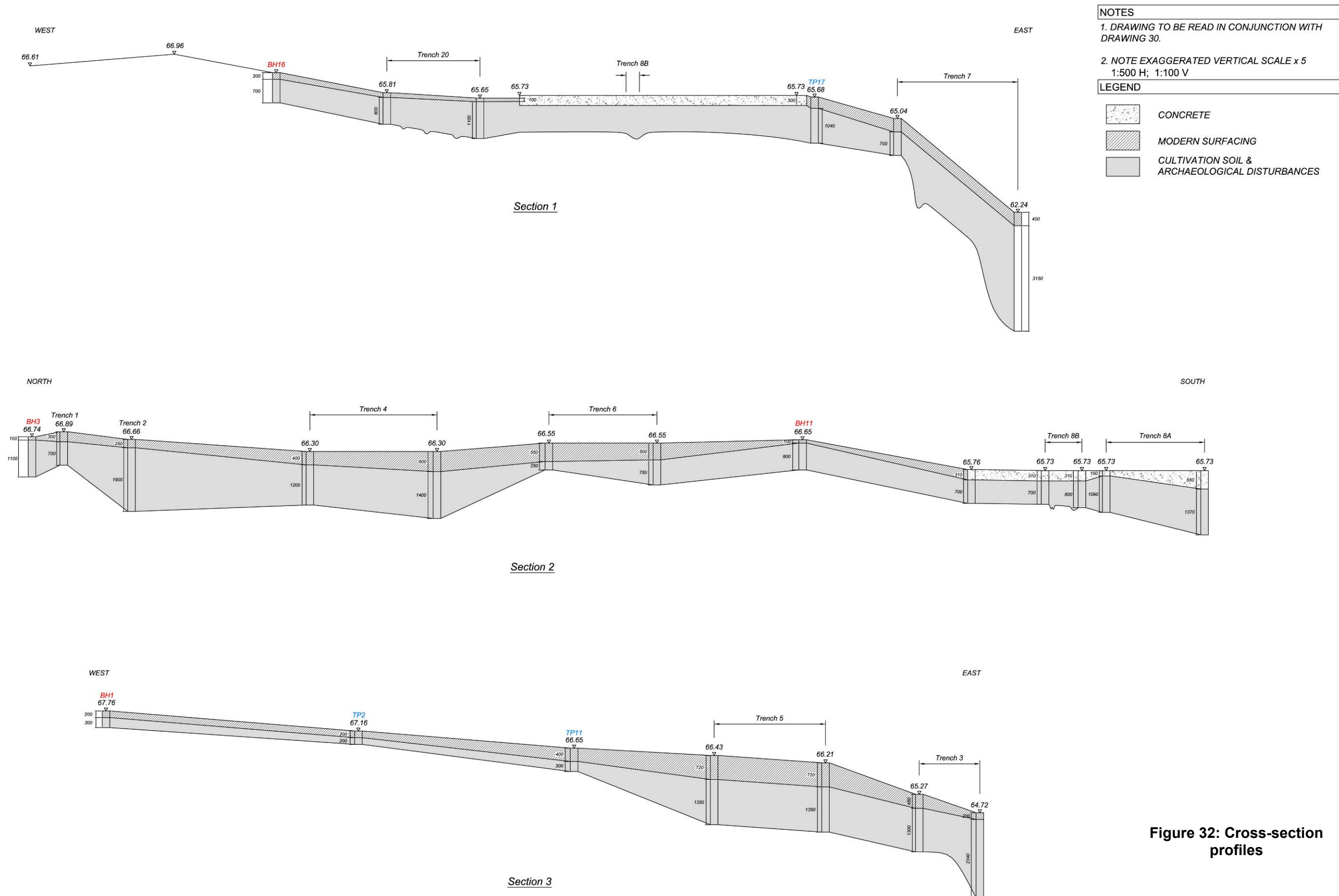


Figure 32: Cross-section profiles

12.0 CONCLUSION

12.1 Archaeological potential

The evaluation has enabled the archaeological potential of the site to be established, with five discrete zones determined on the basis of the type of archaeological remains present, and their degree of preservation despite damage from later activities at the site.

In broad summary these zones consist of:

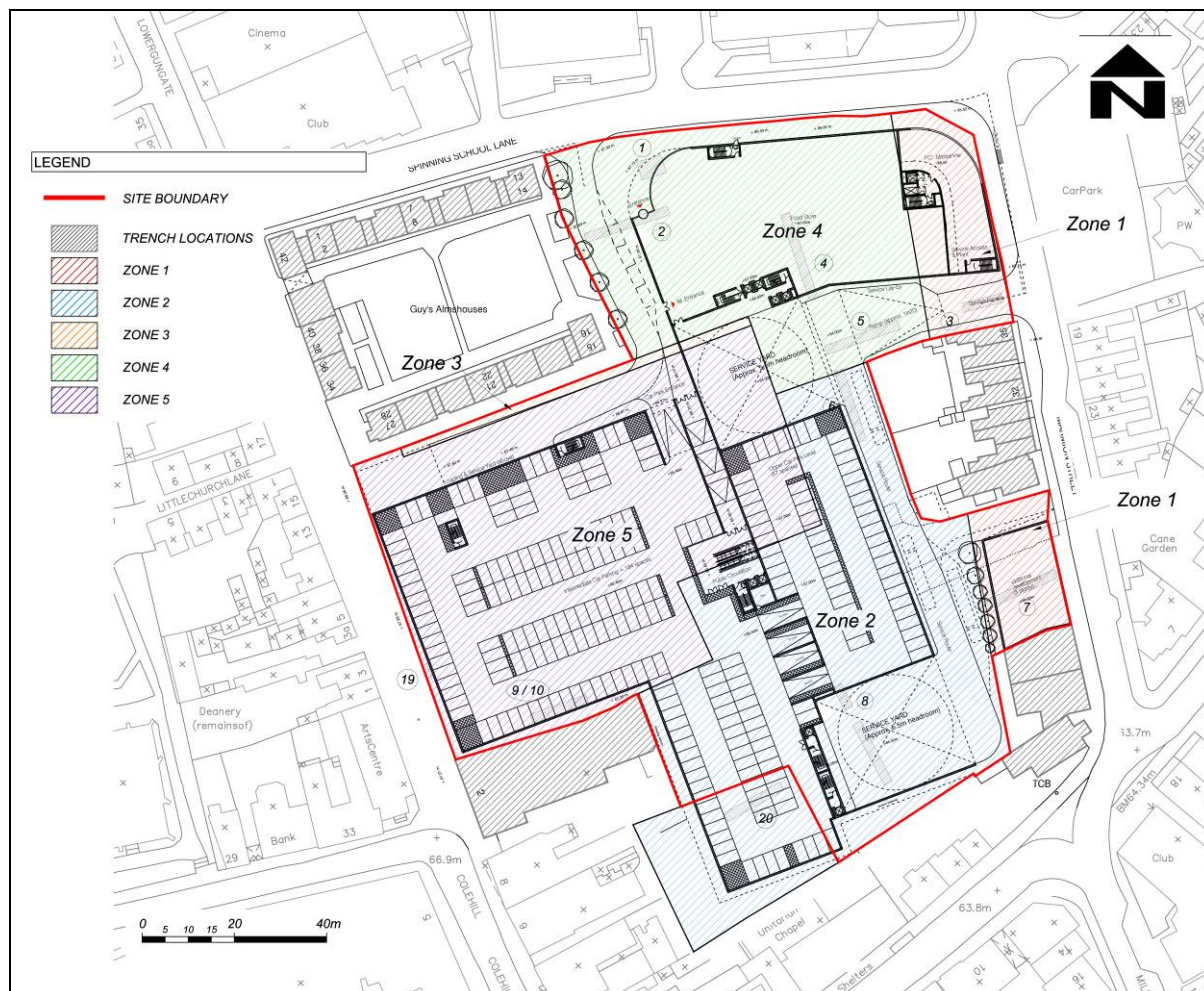
- Zone 1 eastern site boundary where deeply stratified remains associated with the Saxon and medieval town defences survive, with possible evidence for a rampart structure overlying deep Saxon cultivation deposits;
- Zone 2 the southern half of the site which is characterised by clean, medieval cultivation soils containing cut features dated to between the 11th and 14th centuries; these are associated with the medieval division of land into burgage plots in which craft activities, animal and crop husbandry may have taken place. There appears to have been little disturbance to these deposits in subsequent periods;
- Zone 3 within the area of the Gungate shopping precinct and frontage the land appears to have been cleared prior to construction, removing any depth of cultivation soils. No archaeological features were noted here during the evaluation;
- Zone 4 along the northern edge of the Precinct the presence of a medieval ditch and pit alignment marks the boundary of Guy's Almshouses demonstrating that deeply cut features may survive in this area
- Zone 5 Land within the northern half of the development site (in the Spinning School Lane car park) was extensively pitted between the 17th and early 19th centuries, perhaps removing traces of any earlier features, and in the late Victorian period housing was constructed which overlay these earlier post-medieval features.

12.2 Outline design and impact assessment

The outline design for mixed use development has been overlaid with the zones of archaeological potential and location of trial trenches in Figure 33. In summary an underground car park will reduce the ground level by approximately 2m within the central and southern areas of the site. This ground reduction exercise will be more extensive at the north end, requiring a cut approximately 3m in depth to obtain a level for the underground car park and associated infrastructure. In the northeastern part of the site a foodstore will also require ground reduction to the same degree, with service access in the area of Trenches 3 and 7.

The design would involve complete removal of archaeological remains within the majority of the site, although the Zone 4 Precinct boundary with the Almshouses might survive. The assessment of archaeological potential has not identified any remains that warrant preservation in situ, although the burh defences along the eastern boundary are of regional importance as outlined in the West Midlands research priorities. Of more local importance are the backplots of burgage properties in the southern half of the site to assist with the investigation of urbanisation during the Middle Ages, whereas the post-medieval land-use evidence and associated activities found in the northern half is also of local interest.

Figure 33: Outline design for mixed-use development overlaid with zones of archaeological potential



12.3 Outline mitigation strategy

It is recommended that a programme of archaeological works is implemented as parts of enabling works prior to construction. This work will consist of four main elements:

- Eastern boundary (Zone 1). Archaeological excavation and detailed recording of the lengths of the burh defences which will be impacted upon running parallel to Marmion Street. It is expected that this zone will extend at least 20m into the site, and one of the main priorities of this investigation will be to recover samples for scientific dating in order to establish the date and phasing of the various bank and ditch features and any related structures and deposits. This will help to inform knowledge about Mercian royal estates, the concept and design of Mercian burh defences, and the later alteration of them during the medieval period.
- Southern half of site and east of Precinct (Zone 2): Archaeological direction of ground reduction with a strip, map and record response and archaeological excavation of any features, deposits and structures revealed during this process. Sampling of cultivation deposits to understand their pedogenesis will also form part of this work to help in understanding land-use and urbanization within burgage plots.

- Northern part of the site (Zone 4). An archaeological monitoring exercise including a strip, map and record approach to rapid planning of post-medieval features, and associated sampling. In the event that discrete earlier features are detected during this exercise these will be investigated in a more detailed manner as identified in Zone 2 above.
- Boundary between Precinct and Alms Houses (Zone 3). If any construction works are planned for this strip then an archaeological excavation of the medieval boundary (pits and ditch) will be undertaken. It is presumed on existing information, however, that this zone will not be impacted on, and that preservation in situ would be an option in accordance with PPG16 advice.
- The Precinct (Zone 5). Although potential for encountering archaeological remains in this area is likely to be restricted to isolated/truncated deposits, its position along the medieval street frontage means that any remains would be of high importance. It would therefore be appropriate to carry out an archaeological watching brief during surface clearance within the precinct.

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The assessment of the finds was carried out by Dan Garner (AOC Archaeology Group)

Illustrations in this report have been prepared by Caroline Malim and Johann Chauveau of SLR Consulting.

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15.0 CLOSURE

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