

recorded, and so all numbers beginning with a '1' relate to section 1, all numbers beginning with a '2' relate to section 2, etc.

Natural deposits across the site, were seen to be comprised predominantly of bright yellow clayey sands, contexts 1007, 2007, 3002, 3003, 4006, 5005, 6005. The clay content was varied across the site whilst medium sized gravel was also present within this material (in certain areas and in variable quantities), particularly in the uppermost parts. The only other deposits believed to be of natural origin were located in the north-west part of the footings in section 1 and are comprised of contexts 1006, 1004, 1005, 1003. These materials ranged from dull red sands with gravel to brown silty sands and mid brown sandy silts. Each of these deposits was exceptionally 'clean' and markedly different from all deposits of human origin at the site. It is possible that the contrast between these deposits and the bright yellow 'natural' may relate to their forming a part of a peri-glacial feature? Contexts 1003 - 1006 were sealed by garden type soils, contexts 1002, 1001. Across the site the upper horizon of natural deposits was seen to vary, generally between 55.74m – 55.85m OD. The exception to this was in the south-western part of the footings where natural was seen to tail-off downwards towards the west to a height a little above 55.20m OD. This slight anomaly may relate to the putative peri-glacial feature detailed above. Sections 1 and 3 are representative areas where only natural deposits and garden soils were observed.

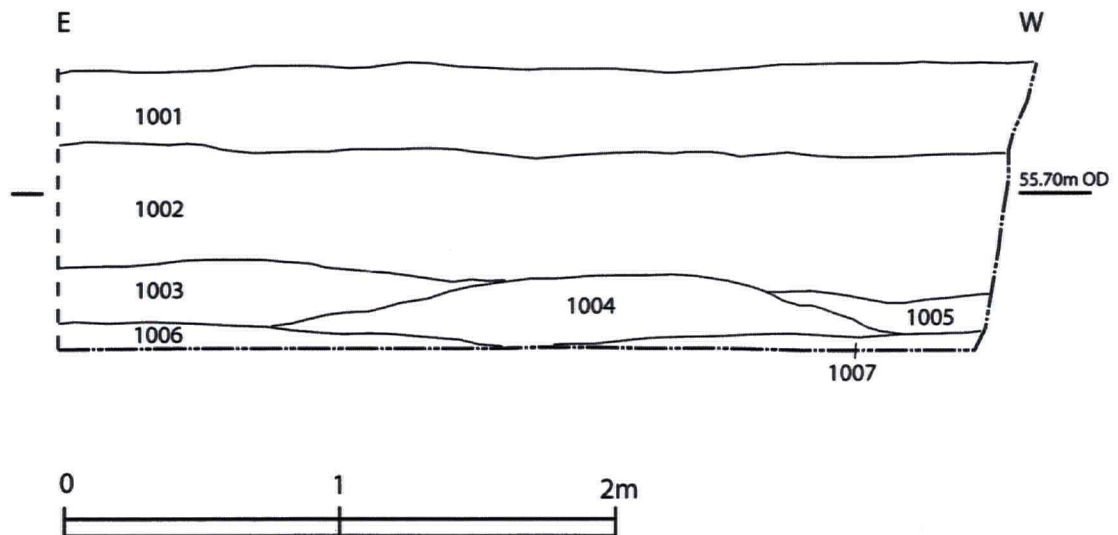


Figure 4 Section 1, north facing

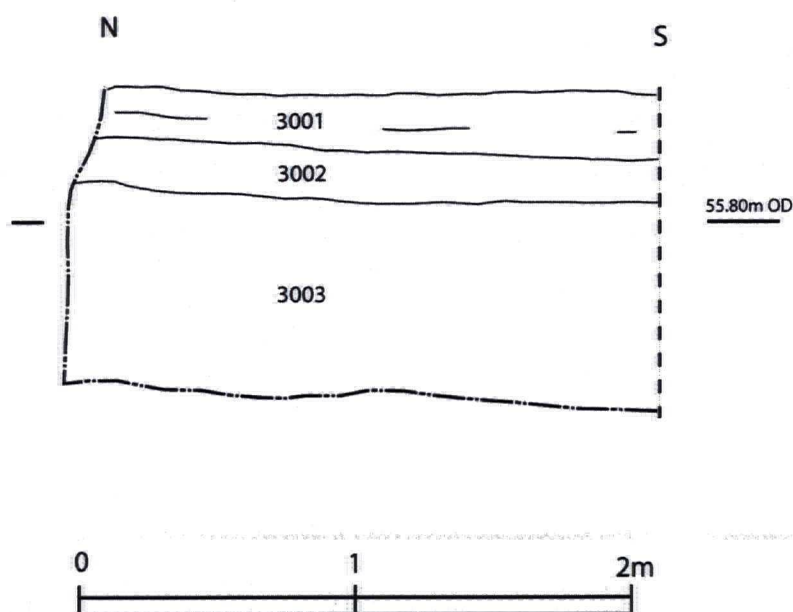


Figure 5 Section 3, west facing

A number of cut, and probably cut, features were observed in the areas of sections 2, 4, 5 and 6. Those in sections 5 and 6 could only be seen as cutting directly into natural deposits.

In section 5 a flat-based cut with moderately steep sides, context 5004, was observed. This feature, which was up to 1.52m in width and 0.31m in depth, did not extend as far as the opposite side of the footing trench and appeared to be of sub-circular – ovate plan-form. A single fill was noted in this cut, context 5003, a mid brown, clayey sandy silt containing occasional pebbles and fragments of charcoal. A single sherd of glazed later medieval pottery was recovered from this fill. Fill 5003 appeared to extend beyond the limits of cut 5004. If this was not the case it must be assumed that the fill was indistinguishable from adjacent deposits. Feature 5003/4 appears to have formed a pit, dug either for the extraction of the gravelly sand natural deposits in this area or for the disposal of unwanted materials. Deposits overlaying this feature were comprised of soils 5002 and 5001, both of which represent garden type soils.

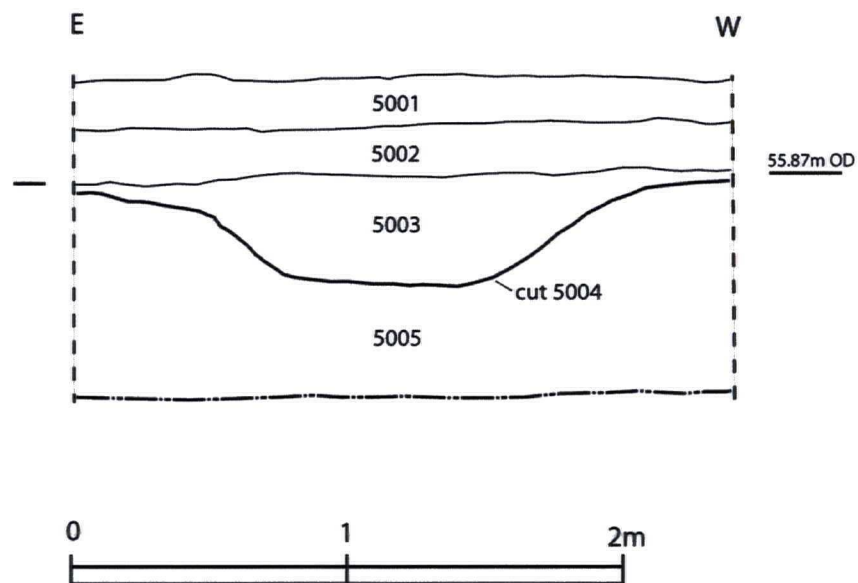


Figure 6 Section 5, north facing

In section 6 parts of a large steep-sided, flat-based cut measuring some 2.30m across and around 0.60m deep, context 6004, was observed cutting directly into natural deposits. Only the north, south and east sides of this feature, which may be sub-circular in plan-form, were seen. Two fills occupied this cut. The lower of these, context 6003, was a dark greyish brown, sandy silt containing occasional fragments of charcoal, pebbles, and clumps of re-deposited natural clayey sandy. A sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from this fill. The upper fill, context 6002, was a dark brown, clayey silt of clean appearance. Feature 6004/3/2 would appear to have formed a pit, whether this was dug primarily for the extraction of natural deposits or for the disposal of unwanted debris is uncertain.



Plate 2 Pit 6004 in section 6, looking NW

The features in sections 2 and 4 both cut through earlier deposits. In section 2 a deposit of soil up to 0.37m deep, context 2006, was seen to overlay natural deposits. This material was a mid brown sandy silt containing small quantities of pebbles, charcoal and fragments of animal bone and contained 5 sherds of 14th century pottery. This was in turn overlain by a thin deposit comprised largely of flecks of lime mortar and fine sand, context 2003. Overlaying this was a more extensive deposit of mid greyish brown sandy silt containing occasional pebbles and charcoal, context 2002 which contained sherds of pottery dating from the later medieval to 19th centuries. A deposit composed of lime mortar fragments and silty sand, context 2005, overlay the southern part of 2002 and was noted as having a distinct slope down to the west. It is probable, from the arrangement of these deposits, that 2005 occupied a shallow scooped area. A dark greyish brown sandy silt, context 2004, directly overlay 2005 and was in turn sealed by the basal remnants of the extant topsoil context 2001. This sequence of deposits is of some interest in so far as it demonstrates a build-up of deposits over time. Some of these, such as 2006 and 2001, appear to represent what were once garden type soils with the former likely to have been in active use within the medieval period. Others, particularly 2003 and 2005, are best interpreted as spreads of discarded materials with the upper components of the depositional sequence relating to the early modern period.



Plate 3 Part of section 2, looking SW

In section 4 a deposit of greyish brown sandy silt containing small amounts of charcoal, lime mortar and pebbles, context 4004, is likely to represent a relict garden type soil. This was truncated on its western side by a cut feature with moderately steep sides and a flattish base, context 4007. This measured in excess of 2.3m across and was up to 0.51m deep. Only the north and parts of the east and west sides of this feature were seen and its true shape could not be determined. The lowest fill of this cut was context 4005, a thin spread composed predominantly of charcoal with lesser amounts of dark greyish brown clayey silt that adhered to the edges of 4007. Fill 4005 was overlain by context 4003, a mid brownish grey clayey silt containing an amount of charcoal. This fill was in turn overlain by the uppermost fill, context 4002. This material was light greyish brown clayey silt containing flecks of lime mortar and charcoal together with a quantity of pebbles. This feature is interpreted as a pit, though again, it is not entirely certain whether it was dug primarily for the extraction of materials or for the disposal of detritus. That this feature extends only some little way into natural deposits may argue the case for the latter. The extant topsoil, context 4001, overlay pit 4007.

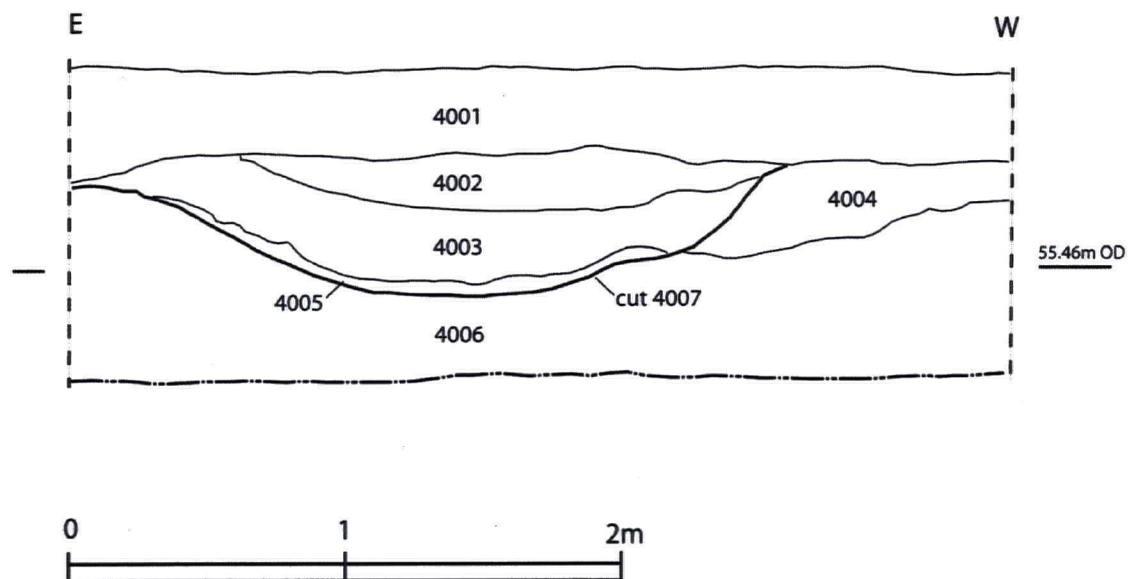


Figure 7 Section 4, north facing

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The watching brief has provided information regarding the height of natural deposits and of the date, character and significance of later, human derived, deposits. These latter deposits were comprised of a number of garden type soils – seemingly dating in active use from the medieval to modern periods together with a number of pits and shallow scoops and dumped deposits. It cannot be stated with any certainty whether or not the pits were excavated primarily for the extraction of materials or for the disposal of waste; or possibly even for both. Of the three pits, two provided finds of medieval date whilst the third contained no firm dating evidence. The probable dumped deposits containing fragments and flecks of lime mortar (presumably discarded demolition or building debris) and the deposits occupying the scoop in section 2 are securely dated within the post-medieval period.

Such a mixture of multi-period deposits and cut features is characteristic of many 'backland' areas within tenement plots. The absence of medieval and post-medieval structural features in this location need engender little surprise given the distance of the stripped area, around 50m, from the Bridge Street frontage, and an even greater distance from the Pottergate frontage. In this respect the results mirror those of recent observations at the Arts Centre a short distance to the south.

7. POTTERY REPORT

The pottery assemblage from this site was very limited both in scale and potential. A total of thirteen sherds were recovered, many of them abraded or un-diagnostic. The date range covered broadly the medieval and post-medieval periods but few sherds could be assigned to known wares.

The assemblage has no potential for further research and it is not recommended for retention.

Context	Find	Quantity	Spotdate	Details
2002	BF00004	3	19th c.	1 fragment of stoneware bottle 2 late med/early post-med body sherds
2006	BF00006	5	? 14th c.	3 Brandsby-type ware sherds 2 undiagnostic glazed body sherds
3001	Bf00005	2	16th c.	1 late medieval green glazed (probably Ryedale ware) 1 undiagnostic late medieval oxidised ware
5002	BF00009	1	Medieval	1 abraded glazed grey ware - medieval
5003	BF00007	1	? 15TH c.	1 late medieval glazed buff ware
6003	BF00008	1	Medieval	1 unglazed grey gritty fabric with oxidised surfaces - medieval?

Table 1 Recovered pottery by context

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Illustrations

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Pottery

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Martin Stockwell

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