

6.4 TP9

6.4.1 Excavation Method

The top metre of TP9 was machine excavated. Various modern disturbances meant that little more than half of the trench contained archaeology. A brick lined, stone topped culvert occupied the western half of the trench, while a gas main ran along the southern side (Photo 5). In the remaining area, levels below one metre were archaeologically excavated down to the level required of 1.7m below the surface. This was still within archaeological levels but was not further excavated. The trench was approximately 1.9m by 2m at the surface, but the archaeologically excavated area was 1.9m by 1.2m. The culvert was removed by machine.

6.4.2. First phase

The earliest excavated phase, at 4.76m OD, was a mottled brown woody silt containing a quantity of medieval leather including turnshoes, as well as some slag and a nail. A quantity of 15th-16th century pottery was also assigned to this context, but may have been mis-labelled. A soil sample contained some wood, and the remains of insects associated with wood, and also some blackberry seeds (Appendix 1, context 3639). There was much unidentifiable organic matter and a mixed range of invertebrate fauna. The layer was sealed by two more layers of silt, one of which contained tile, leather and pottery of the 14th to 15th century.



Plate 8 – TP9 from west

6.4.3 Second Phase

Above the silt layers on the eastern edge of the trench were successive very thin layers of wood shavings, ashy clinker and white limestone chips in brown silt

containing a high proportion of wood fragments (contexts 3682, 3681 and 3638). In the north east corner above the limestone chips was a small deposit of fine silt with many wood fragments. Sealing all these layers was a thick wedge of silt containing a large proportion of stones, cobbles and tile fragments, as well as 14th-15th century pottery, medieval leather, slag, nuts, shell, bone, two pins, timber nails, horseshoe nails, an iron masonry fixing and an iron circular buckle (Appendix 7). Another similar jumbled silt layer above contained pottery ranging from the 12th to the 16th century, together with more cobbles and tile, bone, slag, timber nails, several pins and a 16th century bronze jetton (Appendix 8), and 15th century leather. Cut into both layers at the southern end of the trench was a concentration of stones with bone, a nail and leather with 15th – 16th century pottery. The upper surface of the layers was very uneven, sloping down to the south overall.

6.4.4 Third Phase

Above these layers was a paler, sandier silt with far fewer inclusions either natural or man-made, but very variable in texture with both sandy and woody patches. The pottery was again very mixed, from 12th to 16th century, and other finds included tile, bone, timber nails and a horseshoe nail, a copper alloy pin and post-medieval leather. The top of the layer was at 5.25m OD, and it formed a wedge between the uneven surface below and the more level layers above. It was sealed by a thin layer of dark brown gritty silt containing many very small fragments of brick/tile, as well as early 16th century pottery.

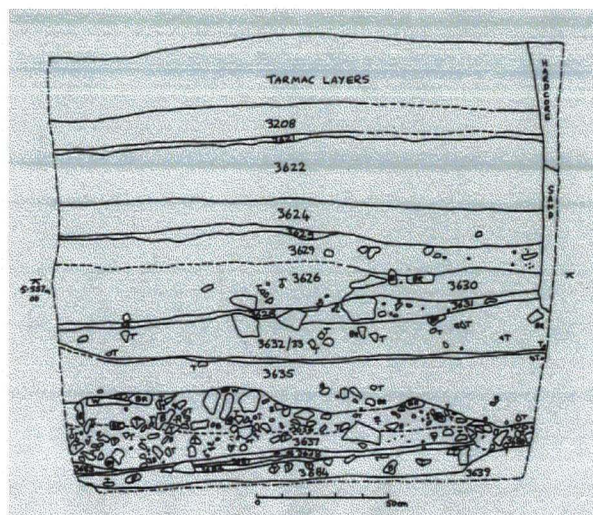
6.4.5 Fourth Phase

Layers of silts and sands covered the trench above this level, from 5.27m OD up to 5.73m OD (Photo 6). The layers contained post-medieval pottery and tile with occasional brick fragments, the tile becoming less frequent away from the lower levels. A thin line of white lime mortar covered the northern half of the trench at the top of this layer, above which the silts, sands and occasional clay layers continued up to a layer of brick rubble. This was again sealed by more sand that lay beneath the brick paving.

6.4.6 Interpretation

The earliest levels of occupation in this trench were not explored, and the dating of the lowest layer excavated is unfortunately confused by the uncertain labelling of a bag of pottery. It seems most likely that the bag has been wrongly assigned, and that the context is more accurately dated by the purely medieval shoe leather firmly associated with it. In this case, the layer is no later than 14th to 15th century, as suggested by the layers above that seal it, and represents an accumulation of organic material similar to others across Micklegate. The silty layers above are similar.

The succession of thin, varied layers above has the appearance of either working surfaces or possibly demolition debris, of late medieval date. Certainly the much jumbled and archaeologically rich layers above them seem to represent demolition, with their mixture of artefacts and cobbles, wood, tiles and nails. The upper surface of the upper layer was very uneven, suggesting a tumble of material from the north, thinning out towards the south of the trench. The presence of slag, in these and other contexts in the trench, including hearth bottom and smithing slag indicates the proximity of smithing processes (Appendix 6).



Plan 9 - TP9 - west-facing section

There was a greater quantity and weight of slag from TP9 than any of the other trenches, apart from TP11, which contained an equal weight, but fewer pieces. The number of iron objects, mainly timber nails, from the trench also significantly exceeded every other area (Appendix 7).

The layers above were less rich in artefacts, and were more level, but contained a mixture of pottery from 12th to 16th century. This may indicate secondary deposition of material that had accumulated elsewhere and was dumped here, possibly to build up ground levels to lessen the risk of flooding. A thin layer sealing these and containing numerous small tile fragments suggests more demolition or an attempt to provide a dry surface, dating to the early 16th century.

Further build-up of ground levels occurred subsequently, either deliberately or as a result of flooding, until some time in the 18th century when there appears to have been a building on part of the site with a lime floor. This must have disappeared by the time the 1808 enclosure map was made, as there is no sign of a building then nor in subsequent maps throughout the 19th century. More deposition of sands and clay followed, with a layer of brick rubble beneath the brick paving again suggesting either demolition or the creation of a firm surface in an area almost certainly subject to flooding.

6.5 TP7

6.5.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac and brick paving were removed by machine. The trench was then half sectioned from east to west, and the southern half archaeologically excavated first. A maximum depth of 1.76m. below the ground level was reached. The northern half was then excavated, to a maximum depth of 1.4m. below the surface. The dimensions of the trench were 2.3m. by 2.5m. at the surface.

6.5.2 First Phase

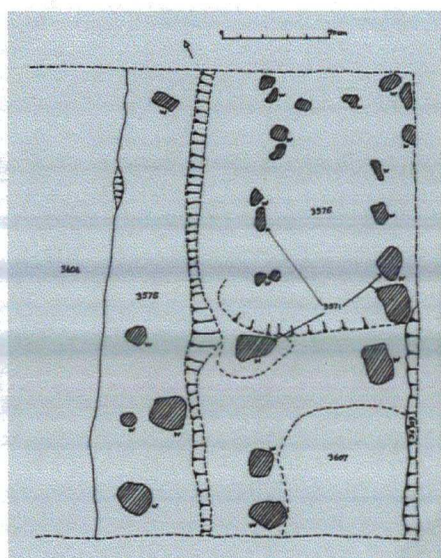
The undisturbed natural was light blue-grey clay and yellow-grey compacted sandy silty clay, visible over the eastern half of the trench at a height of 4.73m OD. Above these was a 20mm layer of grey-brown silty sand containing 12th century pottery, bone and leather, the earliest evidence of occupation in this trench.

6.5.3 Second Phase

The sandy clay natural was cut away to east and west, forming a north-south bank (context 3575, Plate 9) in the centre of the trench at a height of 4.75m OD, narrowing to the north. To the west it was cut vertically by a large feature occupying the western third of the trench. The base of this feature was not reached, though it was excavated to a depth of 1.75m below the surface (c. 4.39m OD) in the south-west quadrant. The fill was grey-brown clayey silt containing wood fragments, bone, a piece of metal



Plate 9 – TP7 from south, showing sump 3606, clay bank 3575 and wooden stakes 3571 (phase 2 & 3)



Plan 9 - TP7 – pattern of wooden stakes 3571

from a horse harness, a iron staple, a metal taper holder, medieval leather and 11th to 14th century pottery (context 3606). There was a large limestone block in the south-west corner of the trench, but no in situ structural features. A secondary fill was a darker grey silt with stones and sandy patches, containing bone, 12th century pottery and medieval leather. The feature was topped to the south with a spread of cobbles, not forming a solid surface but possibly the remains of one at a height of 4.78m OD.

To the east, the bank of natural had a sloping side, slightly undercut in places. A layer of grey brown clayey silt extended over the eastern third of the trench. It was highly organic, with wood, charcoal flecks and charred barley, oats and lentils among the seeds (Appendix 1, context 3579). Other inclusions were insects, coal, clinker, a timber nail, fish bones, pottery ranging from 11th to 14th century, and leather, some of which could be dated to the early 13th –early 15th century range.

6.5.4 Third Phase

To the east of the area of the ?sump, the silt was cut by a number of post pits still containing substantial wooden posts (context 3571, Plate 9, Plan 10). The cuts for the posts extended in some cases into the natural at the base of the trench (Photo 7), and a few only became visible at a greater depth. One group was concentrated on the sandy clay natural bank, forming a ragged line that was almost entirely within the southern half of the trench. They may have been positioned to hold horizontal planks.

The posts to the east of the clay bank formed an irregular double row running north-south (Plate 10, Photo 8), with two near the northern end forming an east-west line within the structure. Several of the posts were positioned in pairs, and the survival of three planks laid horizontally between the posts indicated the construction method of the structure (Plate 11). Some of the posts were entire roundwood, while others had been split and roughly shaped. The fill of the cuts into which they were placed contained mid-13th to mid-14th century pottery as well as bone and medieval leather. One of the planks was fairly well cut and shaped, but the other two were simply split and of irregular shape.



Plate 10– TP7, wooden stakes 3571 from south



Plate 11 – TP7, wooden structure 3571 and clay bank 3575 emerging, from west

6.5.5 Fourth Phase

To the west of the wooden structure, above the cobbles, there was a build up of soft sandy loamy silt containing occasional cobbles, wood fragments, tile, bone, nails, 14th – 15th century pottery and leather, some of which was dateable to the 14th – 15th century.

Layers of silts overlay the remains of the wooden structure. A layer of grey compacted silt, with 12th to 15th century pottery as well as bone, slag and medieval leather, overlay the entire trench, thicker to the east than in the west. Towards the west was dark grey soft organic silt with slag, bone, medieval leather and mixed pottery dating from the 12th to the 16th century. Over it was a more compacted silt with charcoal flecks and containing leather, bone and 14th – 15th century pottery. Both of these layers partially overlay the wooden structure, while to the east the grey compacted silt around the wooden posts continued to build up, with charcoal lenses appearing within it. To the north was grey clayey silt with 14th – 15th century pottery, while to the south was grey loamy silt containing pottery from 13th to 15th century in date (the single 19th century sherd assigned to this context is almost certainly a mistake), as well as slag, coal, a scrap of textile and medieval leather.

6.5.6 Fifth Phase

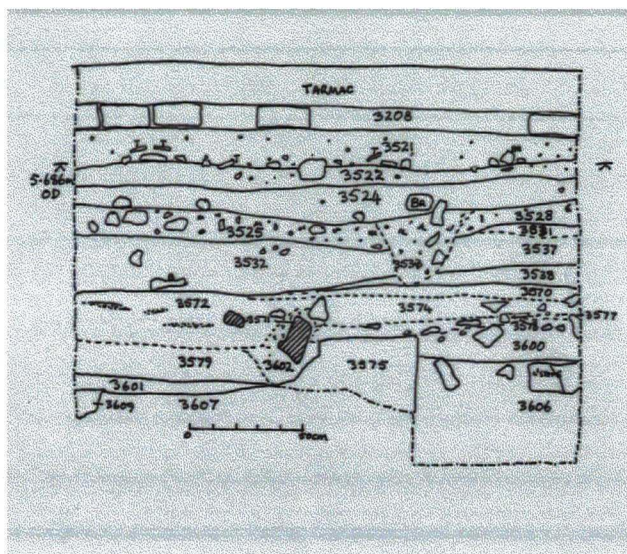
Above this was grey brown silt with sandy, clayey and woody patches, containing small stones, shell, tile fragments, bone, coal, slag, medieval leather and pottery ranging from 13th to 17th century (context 3525). More silt in the south west of the trench was soft and clayey with 12th to 16th century pottery. The upper surface of this layer was cut by several small pits or large postholes.

An intermittent slot filled with loose brown loam and stones ran centrally north-south across the southern two-thirds of the trench at this level, separating grey silt with 15th to 16th century pottery to the west from dark grey-brown compacted silty sand to the east. This contained medium to large stones, tile, bone, glass and 12th to 17th century pottery. To the north-west of the trench was a large concentration of tile in white lime mortar. This had within it a very narrow layer of grey clay that dipped sharply at the eastern end where the deposit ended. Further post holes or slots cut the surface of the silt to the south-west of the trench.

The layers continued to be divided between east and west, with brown sandy clay to the west and compacted sand below brown silty loam to the east. Finds were largely 19th century. The whole trench was then covered with a layer of rubble including bricks, tile and mortar, thinning to the south. Brown sandy loam with many stones and tile fragments lay beneath the brick paving which covered the trench below the tarmac surface.

6.5.7 Interpretation

The earliest pottery in TP7 may be Torksey type, generally dated from the 10th to the late 11th century (but see Appendix 4a). The examples in the trench however came from contexts in which later pottery was also present, and the earliest context, directly above the natural, was 12th century. The cut into natural to the east of the bank may represent a northern continuation of a ditch observed in TP3 and TP2, which was later altered. The ditch may have been a drainage feature to channel water through the market area towards the River Ouse. Accumulations of silt in this area contain material from the 11th



Plan 11 - TP7, north facing section

to the 15th century, possibly the result of a gradual silting up of the ditch. From the quantities of leather, including primary and secondary waste, it would seem that leather working was taking place in the vicinity, and the ditch may have been used as a dump for unwanted material. The silt contained a higher proportion of charred seeds than other soil samples from the site, possibly denoting a domestic element to the refuse.

The cut feature to the west of the natural bank is harder to interpret. Its base was not reached, but it was at least 600mm deep, with a sheer vertical edge to the east. It may have been a rubbish pit, sump or midden, and contained a wide range of material, including several pieces of metalwork, ranging from the 11th to the 14th century. This indicates that it was infilled over a long period of time.

When the fill of this feature reached the level of the bank, it was topped with cobbles, probably in an attempt to create a firm surface. To the east of the bank, again when the ditch had almost filled to the level of the bank, post pits were cut into the silt, mostly reaching down into the natural clay. These formed a wooden structure aligned north-south, apparently of rough cut planks laid horizontally and held in place by wooden posts. Such a structure could probably not have achieved any great height, and was most probably a stall or pen for animals. There was some evidence of alterations during the lifetime of the structure, with additional posts appearing at higher levels. Its date is probably 14th to 15th century.

The structure was probably out of use by the end of the 15th century, as 15th century pottery occurs in the layers covering its remains. The silts that built up subsequently contained a wide range of material, including slag of a type indicating smithing activity nearby (Appendix 6). The presence of coal is of interest as it might imply an early use of coal in the smithing process. There were also large quantities of medieval leather indicating leather working, probably including shoe making and repair.

Early post-medieval layers also indicate some industrial activity as charcoal and coal are frequent. The small pits, slots and random post-holes dating to the 17th or 18th century all suggest small scale activity, but its precise nature is unclear. The concentration of tile and lime mortar, and the rubble spread above, indicates a building in the vicinity that was demolished some time in the 19th century prior to the laying of the brick paving. This may have been one of the buildings along the border of Micklegate or, less likely, the building at the northern end of Micklegate recorded in the late 18th century. It is clear that material continued to accumulate in the vicinity until well into the 19th or even the 20th century, until the laying of the brick paving and subsequently the tarmac road surface.

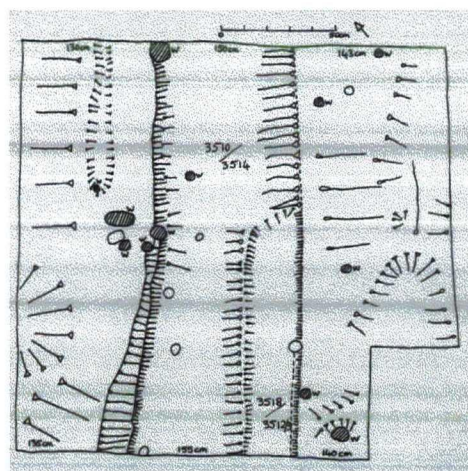
6.6 TP3

6.6.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac and brick paving were removed by machine. The trench was then half sectioned from east to west. The northern half was archaeologically excavated first, then the southern half. A maximum depth of 1.55 m. below the surface was reached, which involved the removal of all the archaeological deposits down to undisturbed natural apart from a small step in the south-east corner which was left to provide access. The dimensions of the trench at the base were 2 m. by 1.8 m.

6.6.2 First Phase

The surface of the natural pale grey clay at the base of the trench, at a height of approximately 4.8m OD, was cut by a shallow ditch or gully



Plan 12 - TP3 - base showing north-south gully

running north-south across the centre (Plan 12, Plate 12).

It was an average of 350mm wide, was cut a maximum of 150mm into the natural, and it had been recut at least once. A narrower subsidiary channel within the main ditch ran from the southern end of the trench for just over a metre on its eastern side. It had vertical sides and a rounded base. A further, very shallow, narrow channel began just under a metre from the northern edge of the trench, to the west of the main ditch and running parallel to it. To the east of the main ditch were deposits of disturbed natural clay, probably the upcast from the digging of the ditch. It contained pottery of 12th to 14th century date and late 14th century shoe leather. Both the surface of the undisturbed and the redeposited natural sloped down to the east to a maximum 4.7m OD. The primary, clayey silt fill (context 3514) of the main ditch contained pottery from the 12th to the 15th century, as well as leather scraps, and a soil sample contained abundant seeds from a wide range of habitats as well as wood and shell fragments.



Plate 12 - TP3 base from north

6.6.3 Second Phase

To the west of the ditch, disturbed redeposited natural overlay the primary ditch fill, and contained animal bone, medieval leather and pottery dating from the 11th to the 15th century. Occasional cobbles pressed into the surface of the redeposited clay, and its mottled appearance, suggest that it was an occupation surface. This clay filled the narrow gully to the west of the main ditch. Above this surface, the secondary fill of the main ditch was dark brown clayey silt with stones, containing bone, medieval shoe leather and pottery of 12th to 15th century date. The primary fill of the narrow cut within the main ditch overlay the primary fill of the main ditch, and cut through its secondary fill. It was a dark brown woody silt and contained 14th-15th century pottery.

6.6.4 Third Phase

Both the ditches seem to have been filled in by the 15th century, and spread over all the eastern half of the trench was a 150mm thick, very mixed layer of black clayey silt (context 3455) that had numerous wooden stakes driven into it. The bases of these stakes were driven into the natural clay at the bottom of the trench, where there were also holes filled with silt presumably from similar stakes. No discernible pattern was visible, though there was a concentration of stakes immediately to the west of the main ditch in the centre of the trench. The pottery in this layer ranged from Romano-British to 15th century, and bone, nails and slag were also present along with medieval shoe leather fragments and a leather wrist guard.

6.6.5 Fourth Phase

Several more layers of silt, some sandy, some organic, lay above the stakes, and these contained bone, slag, coal, tile and cobbles, medieval leather and wood, and pottery ranging from 12th to 17th century. These silty deposits lay between 5.07m and 5.36m OD. A soil sample showed the presence of fly puparia and fish scale fragments among the straw and bracken, and large amounts of flax, probably used as bedding (Appendix 1, context 3517). Above these were the remains of a brushwood fence, consisting of twigs and small branches laid horizontally and twisted round small wooden uprights (Plate 13). This lay across the northern half of the trench, running from east to west, and was surrounded and covered by clayey sandy silt containing a similar range of finds to those in the layers below. The insect assemblage suggested that muddy conditions may have prevailed (Appendix 2, context 3452). Elsewhere in the trench at this level was dark brown loamy silt with some sand and clay patches, and a possible stake hole in the north-west corner. Above the fence and its surrounding soils were mixed loamy clays in the western half of the trench, and stony silt to the east. These soils contained cobbles (more to the west than in the east), brick and tile fragments and pottery ranging from 12th to 17th century.



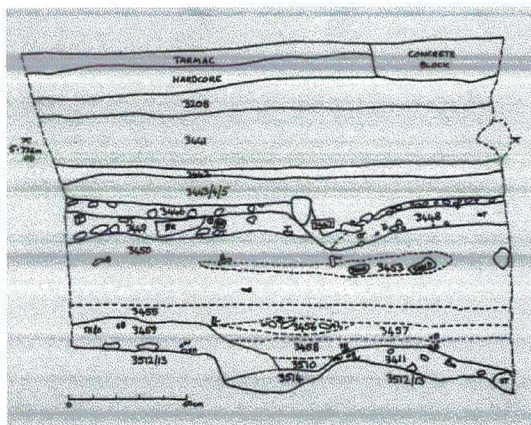
Plate 13 – TP3, brushwood
Fence 3452 from west

6.6.6 Fifth Phase

Cut into these clays and silts were two features. The first was a small pit containing sandy loam with a high percentage of brick and tile fragments, emerging from the east-facing section of the trench, 100mm. deep. The other was a larger pit visible in the south facing section of the trench (see section drawing). The lower part of the pit was filled with white, very stony mortar containing brick and tile fragments and pottery from the 15th to the 17th century. This fill extended across the whole trench above the clays and silts, dipping down into the base of the pit. It was covered by brown loamy sand that contained some cobbles and dated to the 19th century though with earlier pottery mixed in. In the north-eastern part of the trench this sand was paler and contained 16th to late 17th century pottery. Both were overlaid by a thin layer of black compacted cinder at a depth of approximately 5.65m OD, above which was a layer of brown loamy sand beneath the brick paving.

6.6.7 Interpretation

The earliest phase of occupation at this location appears to have consisted of a channel or ditch running towards the river in the north. This was cut into the natural possibly as early as the 12th century, presumably to aid drainage in this easily flooded area. The ditch was recut at least once, and the primary ditch fill was overlain by what appeared to be an occupation surface, with cobbles pressed into the compacted surface of redeposited clay. The pottery associated with this surface was



Plan 13 TP3 – south-facing section

very mixed, from 11th to 15th century, as was the case with most of the layers in the trench, but must be assumed to be 15th century. The ditch was subsequently recut, but filled in again fairly rapidly.

The area was then covered in organic silt, again with widely varying pottery dates. It is possible that this silt originated from a flood, or from a deliberate attempt to build up the ground. Some of the pottery was Romano-British, considerably earlier than that in underlying layers in the ditch, so must have been brought in from elsewhere in a secondary deposition. There was no direct evidence of Roman period occupation in the trenches excavated, but work nearby to the rear of Gowthorpe did reveal the first evidence of Roman occupation of the area (Gez Moody, pers. comm.). The upper surface of the silt was studded with stakes and stake holes, many of which extended down into the natural clay at the base of the trench. These formed no discernible pattern, but may have supported ephemeral structures in what was by the 15th century a known market area.

More silts accumulated above this surface, from the natural build up of material in an area used for a variety of purposes including the stalling of animals. Bracken, straw and flax identified in the soils suggest animal bedding, and large quantities of slag, much of it identifiable as smithing slag, indicate a smithy nearby. Leather scraps as well as identifiable shoe pieces might indicate leather working, perhaps shoe repairing, in the vicinity. The brushwood fence remains indicate some kind of light structure, possibly an animal pen or the lower course of a market stall. The alignment may be significant as, in common with virtually all the structural linear features in the whole of Micklegate, it is aligned with the current property boundaries. Dating evidence within the silts is mixed; the leather where dateable is all medieval, but the pottery ranges up to the 17th century. An unstable muddy ground surface subject to a great degree of churning may account for this. The cobbles found near the top of the silts may represent an attempt to stabilise and improve the ground surface.

The upper layers of the trench dated from the 16th century onwards, and represent some further build up of material together with a possible floor surface of white mortar or lime, probably of 17th century date. The black cinder layer may represent a ground surface or a spread of cinder from elsewhere. The soils above it were common to much of the area, and may be the result of levelling of the ground prior to the laying of the brick paving.

6.7 TP2

6.7.1 Excavation method

The tarmac and brick paving were removed by machine. The trench was then half sectioned from east to west. The southern half was archaeologically excavated first, then the northern half. An approximate depth of 1.5m was reached: this was the depth required for the tree planting and was below the level of the lowest archaeological deposits. The dimensions of the trench were 2.04m by 2.03m by 2.02m by 2.16m at the surface.

6.7.2 First Phase

The grey clay natural at the base of the trench was cut by a shallow ditch running north-south, between 450 and 600mm wide, with an uneven profile, shallow to the east and steep to the west (Plate 14, Photo 9). Another very shallow cut ran parallel to and west of the first. The base of the larger ditch was at 4.76m OD, and the smaller was at 4.82m OD. Both were filled with organic brown silt that contained wood and



Plate 14 – TP2 base from south

pottery from the 12th to the 15th centuries. Other finds included bone, tile, slag and medieval leather.

6.7.3 Second Phase

Lying above the fill of the larger ditch and onto the natural clay was a deposit of dark brown organic silt around a large branch lying east-west across the trench (Photo 10), and containing frequent wood fragments. This was covered by a thick layer of brown organic silt, containing occasional cobbles, bone, slag, wood, medieval leather (including an almost complete shoe with a pewter buckle) and pottery of 12th to 17th century date, though the majority was medieval. A soil sample contained shell and nut fragments (Appendix 1, context 3431), with large amounts of fly and insect remains as well as abundant seeds. A rather foul environment is suggested.

6.7.4 Third Phase

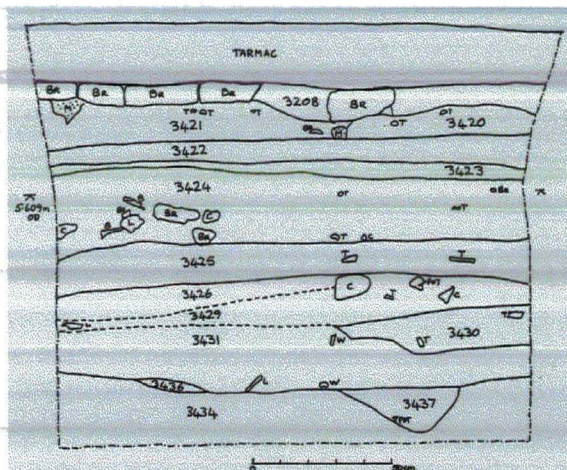
Cut into the surface of the brown silt layer were two substantial wooden post stumps, one in the south-west corner and one near the centre of the western side of the trench (Photo 11, 12). To the south-east was a deposit, 150mm thick, of black organic silt cutting into the lower silt and containing tile, bone, iron objects and leather fragments. Overlying all of these was a further layer of silt that contained 12th to 16th century pottery as well as bone, slag and medieval leather, with a single post hole cut into its surface.

6.7.5 Fourth Phase

Further layers of mixed silts and silty clays covered the entire trench above 5.31m OD. These contained pottery, still very mixed, but gradually including later types with height, up to 5.89m OD. At this depth, 19th century pottery dominated the assemblages, though still intermixed with types as early as 16th century. Other finds included straw, wood, brick and tile fragments, charcoal, mortar, animal bone, slag, iron nails and leather fragments (of post medieval types where ascertainable). Brick paving covered the whole trench beneath the tarmac.

6.7.6 Interpretation

The gully or ditch at the base of the trench is in line with that in TP3, and at a similar depth, c.4.7m OD. Its alignment, running towards the River Ouse, suggests that it was a drainage ditch cut into the natural clay, some time prior to the 15th century. The smaller cut to the west is probably a recut or subsidiary drain. Both appear to have been filled in by the 15th century, possibly with rubbish that had accumulated elsewhere as the finds were very mixed in date.



Plan 14 – TP2, north facing section

An accumulation of silt covering the ditches was similarly mixed, possibly as a result of churning of the deposited material in the damp and muddy conditions suggested by the soil analysis. A fence or other structure is suggested by the branch and frequent wood fragments near the base of the silt deposit. Two large wooden post stumps cut into the top of the deposit also suggest a structure. The most likely types of structure in the market place would be a stall or pen for animals, both of which would have been ephemeral.

There does not seem to have been any significant change in the use of the area between the 15th and 19th centuries, as further accumulations of silt rich in pottery, animal bone, leather and other material continued to 5.89m OD. Leather working (possibly shoe repair) and smithing are indicated in the vicinity, and the keeping of stalled animals for butchery or sale seems to have been the main activity here. The 19th century saw the levelling of the ground and the introduction of solid brick paving throughout Micklegate, later covered in tarmac in the 20th century.

6.8 TP1

6.8.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac and brick paving were removed by machine, and the whole trench then hand excavated to a depth of .55m below the surface. At this depth the trench was half sectioned and the northern half archaeologically excavated first, then the southern half. A spit was dug in the north-eastern quadrant, which identified the eastern half of the trench as containing a large sewer trench, dating to the mid-19th century. Consequently, the eastern half of the trench was not excavated further, resulting in an excavated area approximately 2m by 1m. The maximum depth of the trench was 1.5m, and its dimensions at the surface were 2m by 2m.

6.8.2 First Phase

The natural clay at the base of the trench was partially covered in disturbed sand that contained pottery of 13th to 15th century date in the upper fill. A layer of barren grey silty sand overlay both, and was cut by a ditch running south-north across the centre of the excavated half of the trench (Photo 13). This was 350mm wide, at least 120mm deep and with a base at 4.77m OD. A thin layer of patchy black, sandy silt with a high percentage of wood fragments formed the primary fill of the ditch on the western side, and contained 13th to 14th century pottery along with a sherd of Romano-British calcite gritted ware. The main fill of the ditch was a dark brown very organic silt. To the east of the ditch was a thin layer of grey-brown silty sand with 15th century pottery.

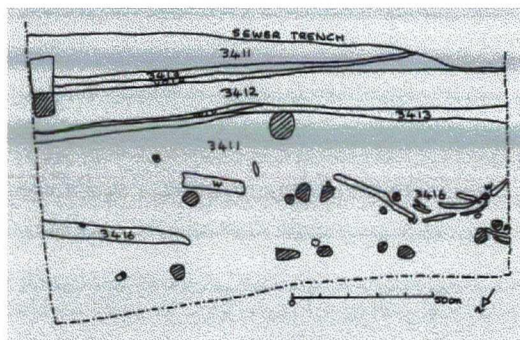
6.8.3 Second Phase

Above the relatively level surface of the infilled ditch, at a depth of approximately 4.9m OD, was a cluster of twigs and small branches laid horizontally in a line amidst small upright wooden stakes (context 3416), running north-south (Plate 15, Plan 15). It was approximately 16 cm high and contained, in the soil around it, leather, animal bone and 14th to 15th century pottery as well as a further sherd of Romano-British calcite gritted ware. The soil to the east was a soft brown woody silt with pottery and leather dating to the 14th and 15th centuries, while to the west was an extensive layer of black organic silt.



Plate 15 – TP1, showing fence 3416 and beam 3412, from north-east

6.8.4 Third Phase



Plan 15 - TP1 – beam 3412 and fence 3416

The woody deposit to the east contained towards the top a horizontal beam of decaying softwood (?pine, context 3412), running north-south, and parallel to the fence, which lay below it and to the west at 5.16m OD (Plate 15). This beam was surrounded by bright orange-brown soil containing 14th to 16th century pottery (Photo 14). A vertical stake was driven into the soil beside the beam at the northern end of the trench (Photo 15). The surrounding soil was highly organic with strong indications of wet ground in both the plant and insect remains. An element of rubbish was reflected

in the quantity of bone and shell remains. The black organic silt to the west continued above both the fence and the beam, and contained some large stones and cobbles as well as tile,

animal bone, wood, slag, charcoal, pottery from 14th to 16th century, and shoe leather of both medieval and post-medieval types. An analysis of the soil showed some straw and bracken, with indications of composting and trample prior to its burial (Appendix 1, context 3415).

6.8.5 Fourth Phase

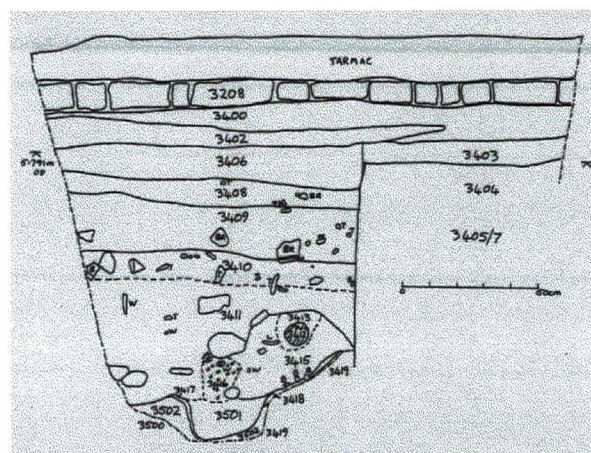
The black silt merged into a further layer of black silt that covered the entire excavated half of the trench. The finds from this layer, which included leather, pottery, slag, bone and a woven fragment, were dated from the 13th to the 19th century, indicating a high degree of mixing. The top of the deposit was irregular and 'pock-marked', with a clear interface with the layer above. This was a pale grey-brown silty sand with post-medieval finds and a high proportion of brick/tile fragments and the suggestion of a cobbled surface at a height of approximately 5.6m OD. Layers above this included a cindery black loam and brown loam.

6.8.6 Fifth Phase

The cut of the main sewer trench was visible from a height of 5.71m OD, and the fill of mixed sands, silts, clays and loams was visible on the eastern side to the base of the trench, though it was not excavated below .55m. Above the level of the sewer trench were silty clays and sands beneath stony sandy loam, underlying the brick paving.

6.8.6 Interpretation

The ditch at the base of the trench corresponds in alignment and depth with that seen in TP3 and TP2. Like them, it seems to have been for drainage, and was filled in by the 15th century. In this trench there are indications of activity prior to the cutting of the drain, in the form of the disturbed sand below it. Two sherds of Roman pottery in the trench show, as in TP3, the presence of background activity in the Roman period, though the absence of features implies that it was not centred here.



Plan 16 - TP1 - South facing section

The brushwood or wattle fence, of probable 15th century date, is a clear structural feature, probably associated with a stall or animal pen. The surrounding black silt had probably been composted and trampled, and could well be the accumulated remains of animal waste and bedding. Leather working may well have been a local activity as frequent leather scraps and some repaired shoe fragments were found.

The horizontal beam, of 16th century date, appears to be the remains of a more substantial structure, possibly a sill beam. It is of interest that both features are on the same alignment, and that this is the same alignment as the existing properties on the north side of Micklegate.

Accumulations of organic silt seem to have continued from the late medieval to the 18th or 19th century without interruption. There are indications that a cobbled surface was attempted some time in the 19th century, before the insertion of the sewer which was laid in 1855. The black cindery loam was also visible in TP2 and TP3. The ground may have been deliberately built up subsequent to the cutting of the sewer trench, and a permanent hard surface was provided with the laying of the brick paving.

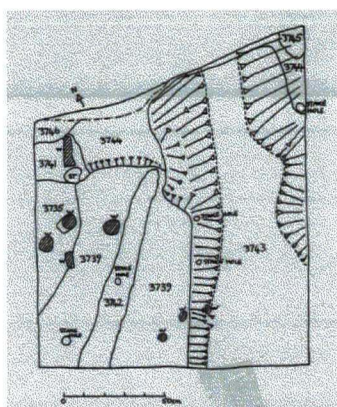
6.9 TP4

6.9.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac and brick paving were removed by machine. This revealed disturbed sands and silts that were removed by machine to a depth of approximately .5m below the surface. At this point the sewer trench was visible on the eastern side, occupying approximately one third of the trench, and this was not further excavated. On the northern side of the trench a further modern trench was identified. This was apparently a branch drain to the main sewer, and ran towards it from west-south-west to east-north-east. The remainder was archaeologically excavated to a maximum depth of 1.75m below the surface (4.59m OD). The dimensions of the trench at the base formed a trapezoid with maximum dimensions of 1.7m by 1.35m. The undisturbed natural was only reached in part of the trench.

6.9.2 First Phase (Plan 17)

The undisturbed natural, consisting of silty sands and clays, was reached over the eastern half of the trench at a depth of 4.78m OD, and in the north-west corner. The hard clayey sand of the eastern side of the trench formed a ridge running north-south and sloping down steeply to the east, alongside the sewer trench, and to the west where it disappeared beneath unexcavated



Plan 17 - TP4 - Base as excavated - phase 1



Plate 16 - TP4 base from east

layers (Plate 16). There were several stakes and stake holes cut into the natural throughout the trench, though most of these were associated with later activity. To the north end of the trench orange clay natural appeared in the western corner, and disturbed natural orange sand containing some 12th to 13th century pottery sloped down from the branch drain towards the centre of the trench (Photo 16). This also occurred in the north-east corner where the ridge of hard sand sloped down.

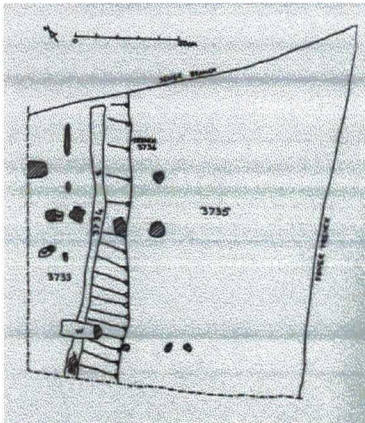
6.9.3 Second Phase

The clay of the eastern half of the trench was covered by a layer of fine grey sand, up to 100mm thick on the top of the ridge but thinner on the west facing slope. To the north-east, the orange sand was overlaid by brown silty clay. A further layer of grey silty sand lay above the first, and contained 11th to 15th century pottery and medieval shoe leather. These layers may be flood deposits covering the natural. Cutting across the centre of the trench from south to north, but truncated by the disturbed natural sand at the northern end, was a deposit of dark silty clay with patches of pink clay within it. This contained some bone, slag and a nail, and appeared to be the fill of a small ditch. It was not fully excavated.

6.9.4 Third Phase

Above the grey silts and the central ditch was a widespread layer of grey-brown silt with a high proportion of wood, both twigs and chips and flakes, mainly oak. The layer dipped down to the west to below the excavated level, and contained pottery of 11th to 15th century date with animal bone, nails and medieval shoe leather. Analysis of a soil sample showed moss and insect fragments and an abundant mix of seeds among which hemp and flax were frequent (Appendix 1, context 3735). The layer was largely sealed by a layer of brown silt with a high percentage of wood fragments and containing 12th to 16th century pottery. On the eastern side of the trench a shallow deposit of brown clayey silt contained streaks of orange decayed wood.

6.9.5 Fourth Phase



TP4 -horizontal timber 3734 and posts – phase 4

Cutting through the layers on the western side of the trench was a cut or trench filled with woody silty clay below and dark brown silt with clay and sand patches above. The latter contained pottery of 12th to 16th century date. A large horizontal timber (context 3734) ran north-south near the top of the layer, extending from near the northern edge of the trench into the north-facing section (Photo 17). To either side of and extending beyond the cut were several upright posts and stakes. Two lines of four of these crossed the horizontal beam approximately .55m apart, but they were irregularly spaced and others formed no discernible pattern. At the southern end the feature was sealed by a layer of pale grey sticky clay that looked like natural but contained pottery of 14th – 15th century date.

Above the orange streaked clay to the east was a cobbled surface (context 3728) covering the south-eastern quadrant of the trench at a height of 5.09m OD. The large cobbles were well set in to clayey silt, which contained 12th to 13th century pottery and animal bone. A layer of grey silty sand extended west from the cobbles, containing late 13th-early 14th century shoe leather and tile, and to the north was a deposit of black clayey silt around a horizontal timber beam lying north-south. The silt contained 12th – 13th century pottery.



Plate 17 – TP4, cobbles 3728 and wooden stakes, from north



Plate 18 – TP4, wall 3720 to right, fence 3719

6.9.6 Fifth Phase

Lying immediately above the cobbles and extending across the entire length of the trench on the eastern side were the remains of a wall (context 3720, Plate 18, Plan 19), .5m wide and possibly wider as its eastern edge was cut by the main sewer trench. It stood nearly 200mm high, and was composed of angular weathered limestone set in thick grey clay with some sandy patches. The stones varied considerably in size.

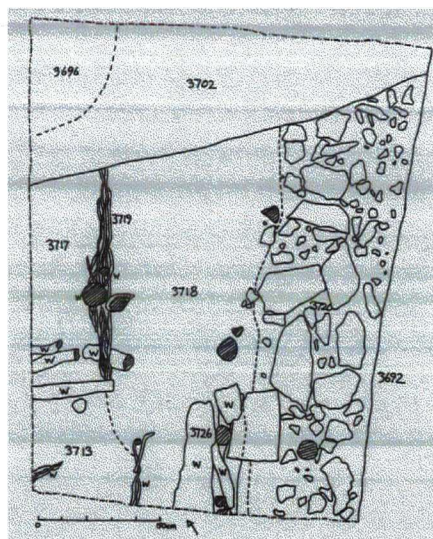
To the west of the wall lay a thin layer of fine grey sand, possibly a flood deposit, containing 14th – 15th century pottery.

Above this were deposits of brown and black organic silt up to 200mm thick, of variable consistency and with mixed pottery from the 12th to the early 16th century, as well as bone and medieval shoe leather. Much wood was mixed with the silts, and several large wooden stakes were embedded in them as well as a large horizontal timber, 150mm wide, emerging from the north facing section at a height of 5.17m OD (context 3726, Photo 18, 19).

In the north-west corner of the trench, an area of very loose brown silt, containing many wood fragments, and sand was cut by the sewer branch to the north, continuing beyond the edge of the trench to the west. This loose soil continued down for approximately .45m, and beneath it was a silty clay, still very uncompacted and full of small wood fragments, that continued to the natural sand at the base of the trench. Some large cobbles and 14th to 15th century pottery, medieval shoe leather and a brass or bronze strap-end were in the upper fill, and the lower fill contained pottery as early as 12th century. The feature was separated from the denser silts to the east by a ridge of hard sand that ran under the silts.

6.9.7 Sixth Phase

The division of the trench into distinct areas continued, with the wall protruding through into another set of features to its west. Above the dense silts in the centre of the trench was a layer of finer silt with sandy streaks, containing 14th to 15th century pottery and medieval shoe leather. It was separated laterally from softer more organic silt by



Plan 19 -TP4 – wall 3720 and fence 3719 – phase 6

the remains of a fence consisting of small twigs and branches twisted around sloping stakes, running north-south across the trench (Plan 19, Photo 20). Pottery associated with the sandy silt was 13th to 14th century, and the leather was medieval. To the south-west corner of the trench, divided from the organic silt by several sloping or horizontal timbers (Photo 21), was an area of very woody, organic hard clayey silt with 12th to 15th century pottery.

6.9.8 Seventh Phase

The wall was covered by several fairly thin layers of sands and mixed clay and sand containing 12th to 15th century pottery in the lower layers and 14th to 16th pottery above. These were topped with a layer of clayey silt with patches of pale clay within it. The layer also contained 14th –15th century pottery, bone and tile (Photo 22). To the west, organic silts with many wood fragments predominated, varying in texture but mainly hard and clayey and 14th to 15th century in date. In the north-west corner of the trench an area of pale silty clay ran into the east-facing section and contained a high percentage of tile and 12th to 13th century pottery, possibly dumped from elsewhere.

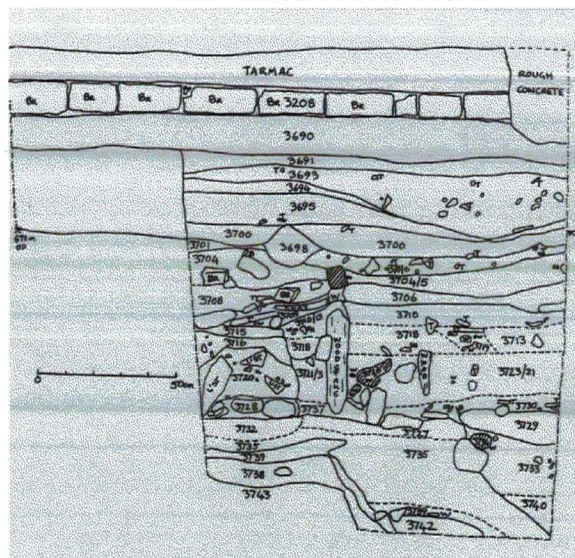
Layers of silt continued across the trench, some soft with a high percentage of wood fragments, some stony, some clayey and some gritty, and interspersed with a layer of sand. The silts all contained pottery predominantly of 14th –15th century date, though one area also contained a single Romano-British (Samian) sherd, and animal bone, medieval shoe leather, tile, slag, nails and a bronze pin were also found. A soil sample from one of the silt layers revealed large quantities of wood and bracken, and abundant cereal straw (Appendix 1, context 3703). Fig and blackberry pips were present as well as flax seeds. Numerous beetles, mites and fly puparia were also present, and several invertebrates indicative of stable manure (Appendix 2, context 3703).

6.9.9 Eighth Phase

Above the silts, at a height of 5.52m OD, was a layer of brown sandy silt covering the whole trench apart from the nineteenth century drains. This layer contained brick and tile fragments, pottery of the 12th to 15th century, animal bone, nails and leather. It was partially cut by a channel forming a straight north-south line a little to the west of the main drain trench, filled with compacted mixed clay and stony sand containing some tile fragments. A similar channel also ran directly adjacent to the branch drain at the northern end of the trench. Both of these and the sandy silt were covered by a layer of variable coloured soft sand containing post-medieval (17th – 18th century) pottery. Above were successive layers of sands to a depth of 5.96m OD. It was at this level that the drain trench was cut, and above it the sand covered the entire trench beneath the brick paving.

6.9.10 Interpretation

The ditch at the base of TP4, which was not fully excavated, seems to have been larger as well as deeper than that in TP1, TP2 and TP3. The trench appears to have revealed long-lasting divisions or boundaries in terms of the use of the area, as features repeatedly fell into an eastern group or a western group, several times divided by wooden fences.



Plan 20 - TP4 - north facing section

The earliest levels excavated in TP4 could be dated to the 12th-13th century, although as natural was not reached throughout the trench, there could have been earlier activity. Two contexts near the base of the trench contained Torksey type pottery, which dates to between the tenth and the late eleventh century (but see Appendix 4a).

The cut or trench at the base of TP4 cannot be dated with certainty, but the what appears to be the primary fill is 12th-13th century. The main fill, which extended to the east of the cut itself, contained a wide range of pottery, the majority of which was also 12th-13th century, but also included Humber Ware, which was most common in the 15th century. The deposit is thick, and may have accumulated over a long period.

The cobble spread in the south-east corner may originally have spread beyond its surviving boundaries, where it was protected by the wall built on top of it. If this were the case, it could predate the ditch. Pottery associated with it dated to the 12th-13th century. The cobbles were well laid, forming a solid and regular surface.

The wall running across the eastern edge of the trench could also have been 13th century, from its associated finds, but its vertical position makes it more likely to be somewhat later. It more probably dates to some time in the 15th century, when the ditch or cut had been filled in. It was a substantial wall, the most substantial and permanent feature on the whole site, but its function in the market place is unknown.

The dating of most of the layers of silt and cut features to the west of and above the wall is difficult. Indications of mixing are frequent, with pottery ranges of several hundred years, and later pottery sealed by layers containing only earlier pottery. It is clear however that to the west

later pottery sealed by layers containing only earlier pottery. It is clear however that to the west of the wall was some sort of structure, probably late 15th or early 16th century, involving fairly substantial timbers both horizontal and vertical. This may have been a building set against the wall, or may post-date the decay of the wall and merely be perpetuating the boundary marked by the wall. Organic silt continued to build up around the wooden structure, and subsequently a wattle or brushwood fence or wall was constructed approximately 300mm further west. All of these features were on the same alignment, that is, parallel with the existing street frontage of Micklegate.

The soils continued to vary to either side of the trench, even when no physical dividing structure remained, indicating that there was some variation in the local activity within the area of the trench. Dating however continues to be confused up until the 17th century, implying that the ground was being churned up in wet and muddy conditions. This picture is reinforced by the analysis of the plant and insect remains, which indicate animal bedding and stable manure. The wooden structures are therefore most likely to be associated with animal stalls, and some smithing in the vicinity is indicated by the presence of smithing slag in the upper layers. The presence of both primary and secondary waste among the frequent leather remains would indicate leather working in the vicinity.

By the 17th century the accumulations of organic silt had largely ceased, and further build-up of soil was mainly of sand or clay. This may have been deliberate infilling of the land to raise levels in order to minimise flooding. By the 19th century when the drain was cut, the ground level was only 350mm below the modern road surface, and the tarmac and brick paving accounted for all but 100mm of that.

6.10 TP5

6.10.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac road surface and brick paving were removed by machine, and the trench was then hand excavated to a maximum depth of 1.75m. below the surface. The main sewer trench ran centrally through the trench from north to south, and this was left unexcavated, resulting in two separate narrow trenches on either side. The eastern was .6cm wide and approximately 2m long, and the western was .5m wide and approximately 2m long. The sequence of soils in each side was quite different, so they will be described separately, with an attempt at an integrated interpretation.

Eastern side

6.10.2 First Phase

The base of the trench here was at 4.86m OD, at which level the natural sandy clay was visible throughout, with a small patch of stony orange sand on the western edge abutting the sewer trench (Plate 19). Above this was a 90mm layer of compacted fine grey sand containing some cobbles as well as tile, slag, medieval shoe leather and pottery from the 12th-13th century. A thin layer of black sand that overlaid this was sealed by a surface of cobbles set in a brown sandy matrix



Plate 19 – TP5 east side base from north, with stones 3546 showing to left

containing 12th-13th century pottery. The surface of the cobbles was falling towards the west, from 5.06m to 5.02m OD.

6.10.3 Second Phase

Above the cobbles was layer of soft silty clay that contained pottery of 13th to 14th century date but including a single sherd of Romano-British Samian ware. On the western side of the trench above it was a deposit of hard orange stony sand, possibly slumped out from the sewer trench, or part of a larger feature truncated by the sewer trench. To its east were apparently the remains of a wall (context 3546, Plate 19)) running the length of the trench, composed of angular stones in a white mortary matrix, associated with 12th-13th century pottery. The remains were at 5.12m OD and up to 110mm thick. They were thinner to east and west and butted up in the west to the orange sand.

6.10.4 Third Phase

The wall was covered in a thin layer of grey-brown sandy silt or silty clay, containing 14th –15th century pottery, and subsequently by successive layers of fine sands and silts of similar date, extending to within nearly a metre of the surface. The layers were increasingly sloped towards the west, the uppermost sloping from 5.7m to 5.39m OD.

6.10.5 Fourth Phase

Above the silts was a thick layer of hard orange sand interleaved with occasional patches of black sand containing twigs, cobbles, bone, leather and mixed 12th to 15th century pottery. These layers also sloped down to the west, but not so steeply as those below. Above was pale grey soft sand that formed a level upper surface roughly at the height of the top of the sewer trench.

Further layers of sand, predominantly yellow, made up the ground below the brick paving that covered the area of the trench.

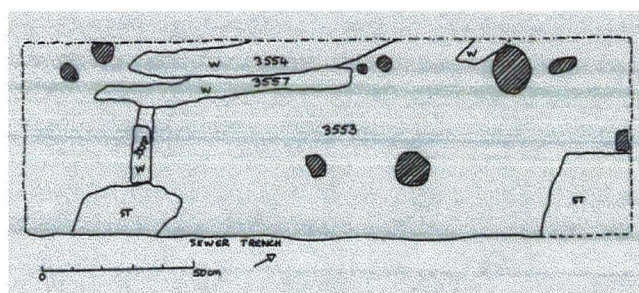
West side

6.10.6 First Phase

The level of the natural in the western third of TP5 was 200mm lower than on the east side (4.66m OD). The succession of layers and features was also entirely different. Above the silty natural sand was a thin layer of disturbed sandy silt containing 12th-13th century pottery. This was sealed by a thick deposit of organic silt (context 3556) covering most of the trench and also associated with 12th-13th century pottery. Other finds included animal bone, leather and a stone loom-weight. Along the western edge of the trench the silt was lighter and more sandy.

6.10.7 Second Phase

The layer above consisted of dark brown organic silt (context 3553) approximately 180mm thick, and was visually barely distinguishable from the organic silty layers both below and above it. Several large wooden beams (contexts 3554, 3557 and 3558) were associated with these layers, the majority running north-south, but one lying east-west, and a number of wooden stakes (Plan 21). Some of the stakes were closely associated with the beams, but

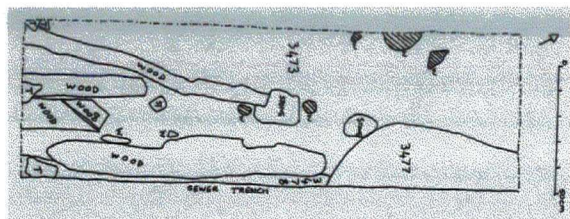


Plan 21 – TP5 west side, timbers 3554, 3557 and 3558 in silt 3553

some were detached towards the northern end of the trench, and most were driven through into the natural (Photo 23, 24). The timbers were only roughly shaped into thick planks. The layer contained several large stones, wood, bone, medieval leather and pottery from the 12th to 15th century. Above it was a succession of silty layers varying from brown to black and with varying amounts of sand within them. All contained leather, some of which was identifiable as 15th century, and the pottery dates ranged from 12th to early 16th century. A lens of brown silty sand appeared between two of the layers adjacent to the sewer trench. Within the topmost of these layers were wooden stakes and small branches and twigs among them aligned north-south, forming the remains of a brushwood fence. Grey sand surrounded them. Some large cobbles and other stones also appeared in this layer.

6.10.8 Third Phase

More dark organic silt overlay the fence. Immediately above it, and intruding into the grey-brown silty sand above, was a further collection of timbers laid horizontally, all aligned north-south at a height of 5.39m OD (context 3476, Plan 22). Two of these had more evidence of shaping than the others.



Plan 22 -TP5 west side – timbers 3476 at south end

One was an irregular plank, but the other, slightly higher and extending into the north-

facing section, was square in section with an angular jointing cut-out and a hole for a peg at the end (Plate 20). The timber was concentrated at the southern end of the trench, but several

stakes of differing sizes were grouped near the northern end. There was a spread of fine yellow sand on the north-eastern quadrant of the trench, and a lens of pale grey sand within the silt, to the east of the timbers. The sandy silt covering the timbers was grey-brown, up to 350mm thick, and the upper surface sloped towards the west from 5.69m to 5.54m OD. Associated finds included tile, animal bone and leather, and pottery from 12th to 19th century date.

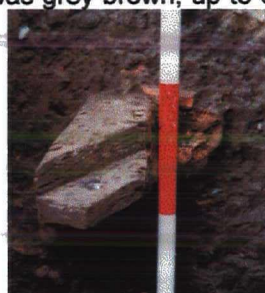


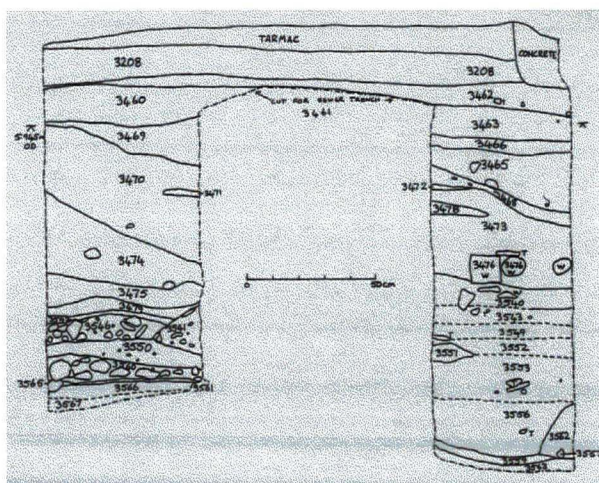
Plate 20 – TP5 west side, cut beam emerging from north facing section

6.10.9 Fourth Phase

Variegated sands containing very mixed assemblages of pottery, dating from the 14th to the 19th century, occupied most of the remaining build-up of soils. A shallow ditch or cut was discernible running north-south and sloping down away from the sewer trench, and this was filled with clayey sand above black silty clay. Associated leather was post-medieval. As with the eastern side of the trench, the cut for the sewer trench appeared at approximately 5.8m OD, not far beneath the brick paving that covered the entire trench.

6.10.10 Interpretation

Despite the differences in depth, the earliest activity in TP5 seems to have been in the 12th-13th century on both sides of the sewer trench. On the eastern side, the cobbled surface lies almost directly on the natural, whereas to the west some kind of timber structure was erected, at a lower level but also just above the natural. It is not clear whether the difference in depth was natural or man-made. The only slag from TP5, which was of a sort identified with smithing, was from below the cobbled surface, indicating some early medieval smithing in this area.



Plan 23 – TP5 – north facing section

The western side of the trench contained a succession of wooden features or structures, separated by thick deposits of organic silt, which mainly dated to the 15th century. These were probably the remains of market stalls or animal pens in the market place, and their concentration in this location suggests a continuity of use over several hundred years. The similar alignment of the main timbers and the brushwood fence reinforce this impression.

On the eastern side, the cobbles were replaced by a wall, probably in the 14th century, and the build-up of organic silts to the west is matched by an accumulation of silts and sands dating to the 15th century. The wall marked a division of some sort, though it is not clear whether it was part of a structure or a boundary marker. It would seem that differential use of the area was maintained even when the wall was no longer extant. The wall was at the same

height as that in TP4, and although less clearly defined would appear to be a continuation of the same structure.

In both the eastern and the western parts of the trench, several of the layers and surfaces sloped down from east to west. This tendency may indicate a natural drop in the ground surface towards the west, though it may also be a factor of the difference in land use across the area.

The post-medieval deposits are largely very mixed, containing earlier pottery as well as later, and may indicate a deliberate build-up of the ground level in order to minimise flooding or create a more level ground surface. There was little accumulation of material above the level of the sewer drain trench.

6.11 TP8

6.11.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac surface and the underlying brick paving and concrete block were removed by machine. Below this the cut for the main sewer trench was visible in the western half of the trench while modern sands filled the eastern half. A machine continued to excavate under archaeological supervision to a depth of approximately .9cm below the surface. An electricity main ducted cable was discovered running east-west across the northern end of the trench, so it was shifted south by 1.5 metres to avoid this. The rest of the trench apart from the sewer trench was then archaeologically excavated to a maximum depth of 1.75m below the surface. The dimensions of the excavated trench were approximately 2m from north to south and 1m from east to west. The undisturbed natural was only reached in part of the trench.

6.11.2 First Phase

The undisturbed natural subsoil, a pinkish grey sandy clay, appeared only in one part of the trench, at the north-west corner at a height of 4.55m OD. Here it sloped steeply down to the south-east, and was covered by redeposited natural containing cobbles and angular stones. This was also visible in the north-east corner. Both of these were overlaid by a layer of brown silty clay with occasional cobbles, which spread over the whole trench (Photo 25). The layer was of uneven thickness, and sloped down from east to west and from north to south. It was more stony and contained a higher proportion of wood fragments towards the eastern side, and contained bone, medieval shoe leather and pottery of 11th-early 13th century date. A soil sample revealed heather, bracken and cereal straw, together with flax fragments and fly puparia (Appendix 1, context 3647). Bedding for animals is suggested as the origin of the material, with rather wet conditions (Plate 22).

This layer was similar to the one above, which however had fewer stones and was more sandy. It occurred in the centre of the trench and also contained medieval leather and 11th-early 13th century pottery. Some of the pottery may have been of Torksey type, which has a date range of 10th to late 11th century. Both deposits were sealed by a cobbled surface (context 3644) that covered the whole trench, sloping down to the south from 4.93m to 4.75m OD (Plate 22). The cobbles were close laid in a pale compacted sandy clay with mottled brown and black silt patches and were associated with 11th to early 13th century pottery.



Plate 21 – TP8, cobbles 3644 from north, continuing beneath wall 3594

6.11.3 Second Phase

Above and around the cobbles was a thin layer of grey sand, covered by up to 200mm of compacted dark brown silt containing a high percentage of wood fragments. The wood fragments were more concentrated in the southern half of the trench, and an analysis of the soil suggested an environment with intermittent standing water (Appendix 1, context 3643). Finds

included bone and 12th century pottery. Further layers of silt, some compacted and some loose and sandy, lay above this and contained 12th to 13th century pottery.

6.11.4 Third Phase

On the western side of the trench, adjacent to the sewer trench, were the substantial foundations of a stone wall (context 3594) running north-south (Plates 21 and 22). It was composed of irregular limestone blocks and chips forming a solid layer at a height of approximately 4.97m OD, 200mm deep. As it appeared to extend into or beneath the sewer trench and only emerged for between 200 and 400 mm into the excavated area of the trench, it was not fully excavated, but its base was visible, with layers, including the cobbles, extending beneath it.

Alongside the wall, a band of pale yellow-brown silty sand separated the silts below the wall from those above. These were variable in their consistency, being compacted in some places and open textured in others, and also in their stone content (Photo 26). In the centre and west of the trench the clayey silt had small concentrations of angular limestone chips, while a broad strip of compacted silt from the north end to the south-east corner contained numerous water worn stones (possibly from a former cobbled surface), and to the east softer loamy silt had more angular stones. All were associated with pottery ranging from 12th to 15th century in date, and were sealed by a layer of compacted grey silt.

6.11.5 Fourth Phase

At about the same level as the surviving top of the wall was another cobbled surface covering the majority of the trench (Plate 22). This was not so fine as the earlier one, and was composed of stones of varying sizes forming a rather uneven surface. 12th century pottery was associated with the stones, but as later pottery was found beneath them this must have been residual.

Above the cobbles was a very stony layer of limestone chips and blocks in sand and grey silt, sloping down and thinning to the north and east. At the southern end of the trench was a small patch of dark organic silt containing many small water worn stones and cobbles, possibly a disturbance of the cobbles below.

6.11.6 Fifth Phase

The stony layers were covered by a thin layer of dark brown silt with frequent wood fragments and then a layer of reddish brown organic silt. This contained some wood, insect fragments, fish bone and weed seeds (Appendix 1, context 3589). The pottery ranged from 12th to 15th century, but some of the leather could be dated more precisely to the early



Plate 22 – TP8, north facing section

15th century (Appendix 3). On the western edge of the trench these layers were cut by a deposit of very soft loose textured brown silty clay which spread along almost the entire length of the trench and extended as low as the stony spread above the cobbles. It contained 14th-15th century pottery, bone and medieval leather. This loose silty clay was indistinguishable during excavation from a thick deposit which formed part of a modern disturbance, and which must have redeposited some of it as part of the backfill.

A further deposit of soft grey sandy silt with wood and charcoal flecks then covered the whole trench. The base was at a height of between 5.1 and 5.3m OD and was approximately 300mm

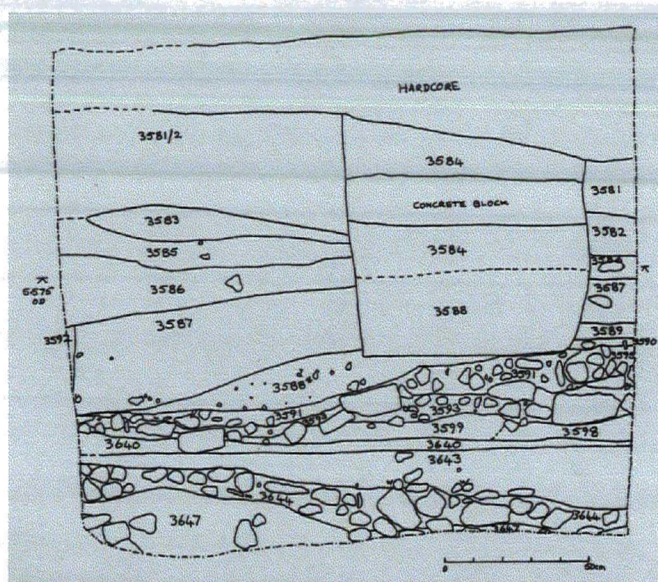
thick, sloping down and thickening from south to north. It therefore formed a relatively level upper surface, as the layers below had dipped somewhat in the other direction. The upper surface contained several possible stake holes, and the layer was associated with 14th–15th century pottery, animal bone and leather.

6.11.7 Sixth Phase

All the soils above 5.51m OD were barren sands and silty sands of varying colours. These were largely machine excavated. The cut for the sewer trench was visible from approximately .5m below the surface. On the eastern side of the trench the edge of an inspection box for telecommunications was visible, consisting of a hardcore spread above stone and mortar fill with a large concrete block at a depth of 5.89m OD protruding slightly into the trench, and stony sand below to a depth of 5.27m OD. The northern edge of the trench was cut by the trench for a main electricity cable in ducts, which extended to 1m below the surface. Tarmac covered the whole area of the trench.

6.11.8 Interpretation

The earliest excavated activity in the area of TP8 is probably of 12th century date. Undisturbed natural was not reached throughout so earlier activity cannot be ruled out, but seems unlikely. The sloping layers at the base of the trench suggest a ditch similar to that in TP4. The very fine cobbles above the lowest layers (at a slightly deeper level than those in TP4 and TP5) also dated to the 12th century, as did further layers of silt above them. It would seem that there was more intensive occupation here in the 12th and 13th centuries than elsewhere, possibly connected with an early market. The soil analysis



Plan 24 – TP8, west facing section

suggests animal bedding material as an important component of the soil, and there were indications in soils both below and above the cobbles of standing water. The height of the ground in this early period is somewhat lower here than further north, so that standing water would clearly be a problem, but this does not explain why there should be particularly early occupation here.

The wall was also probably 12th or 13th century, although no artefacts were directly associated with it. It was extremely substantial, but no other structural elements were associated with it, though it was at a similar height and on the same alignment to that in TP4 and TP5. Silty deposits built up to the side of the wall from the 12th–13th century into the 15th century, and these were interleaved with sandy layers probably resulting from flooding episodes. A second cobbled surface was much less fine than the earlier one, and was probably damaged by a layer of angular limestone pieces, almost certainly representing tumble from the wall. This destruction of the wall seems to have taken place in the 15th century but, as elsewhere, the pottery dates are very broad and mixed, ranging from 12th to 15th century around the level of the second cobbled

surface. Moderate amounts of leather waste and repaired shoe fragments indicate leather working, perhaps shoe repair, in the vicinity.

More mixed silts with numerous wood fragments continued to accumulate without any further visible structures throughout the 15th century. Some possible stake-holes in the upper surface of the top layer of silt indicate some activity here, but the evidence was slight and may have been of natural origin. Beyond the 15th century there was no dated evidence of occupation, with barren sands occupying the remainder of the stratigraphy. It would seem that deliberate infill of the area took place, probably preceded by clearance of the ground, truncating the post-medieval levels. There was also a high degree of modern disturbance, which further lessened the chances of recovering evidence from the post-medieval period.

6.12 TP6

6.12.1 Excavation Method

The tarmac and brick paving were removed by machine, as was a layer of concrete between .45m and .54m below the surface. The original dimensions of the trench were 2m by 2m, and of this the northern half was archaeologically excavated by hand to a depth of approximately 1.45m below the surface. The southern half was then archaeologically excavated. At this stage it was discovered that the trench had been wrongly sited, and it was therefore extended to the north and east by machine and hand to create a trench of 2.5m by 2.3m. At the same time the trench was deepened to 1.65m below the surface (4.77m OD). The undisturbed natural was only reached in part of the trench.

6.12.2 First Phase

The earliest deposits in TP6 were probably 14th or 15th century, although the earliest pottery was 12th century. The earliest feature was a ridge of orange silty clay running from south-west to north-east across the trench (not visible in the section drawing). It contained 13th to 15th century pottery, bone and medieval shoe leather fragments, as well as frequent wood fragments. To the south and east of this ridge was black clayey silt containing bone, medieval leather and pottery from the 12th to the 16th century. To the north was brown silt, again with leather and bone, and containing iron nails and 12th to 15th century pottery. All of these layers were sealed by a thin layer of brown clayey silt with 14th-15th century pottery, wood, bone and leather.

6.12.3 Second Phase

Above this was 50mm of dark brown silt with black streaks and clay patches, and some large cobbles and limestone blocks. Into it were set three large posts, in a line in the north-east corner of the trench, and several very large limestone slabs (Plate 23, Photo 27). The stones were in a discontinuous line running east-west across the northern half of the trench, and extended as far as the excavated base. Associated finds included leather, bone and 13th-15th century pottery.



Plate 23 – TP6, large limestone blocks in NE corner

Another thin layer of woody black silt covered the west side of the trench, containing 14th-15th century pottery.

6.12.4 Third Phase

The major part of the fill of the trench was above the stones and posts, and was composed of brown and black organic silt with frequent wood, occasional cobbles and tile fragments. The pottery was 14th to 16th century, and iron nails, bone and leather were also among the finds. Some of the leather dated to the late 14th to early 15th century. The soil was only marginally different from that below it, but contained fewer stones. An analysis of the soil showed it to contain some tree buds and a general spread of arable weeds with a little charcoal, but no food debris (Appendix 1, context 3486). It extended from 5.52m to 4.93m OD.

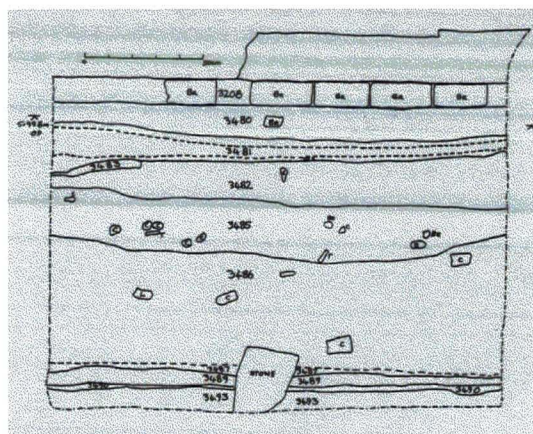
Fourth Phase

Nearer to the surface the silt became peaty and spongy with a high percentage of tile and brick fragments. Shell, bone and nails were also present, with pottery ranging from 14th to 19th century. Above this was a layer of loose stony loam, which was partially overlaid, by a layer of blue-grey sand on the western side. Both of these contained mixed pottery. A small pit was cut into the spongy silt at the southern end of the west side, filled with hard grey sand containing 15th century pottery. A layer of concrete 90mm thick then sealed the entire trench, above which was a layer of sandy loam beneath the brick paving.

Interpretation

The earliest pottery in TP6 was 12th century, but it occurred only in contexts with later, 15th century, pottery. As the natural was not reached anywhere in the trench, there may well have been activity earlier than the 14th-15th century. The posts and possible wall alignment were the only structural elements. The posts were on a different alignment from almost all other structures on the site (though the alignment of the stones was not very clear), and this could reflect the position of TP6 away from the established plots on the edge of Micklegate.

The build-up of undifferentiated silts was great, and a high degree of mixing seems to have occurred, evidenced by the widely varying pottery dates within each context. There are fewer signs of industrial activity here than elsewhere on the site, for both the medieval and the post-medieval periods. A build-up of material seems to have continued right up to the 19th century without any major change. A mid-19th century map of Selby (Plan 4) appears to show some enclosures on the south-east side of Micklegate, which might include the



Plan 25 – TP6, south facing section

area of TP6. This could indicate that the area was not being used as part of the market, but was enclosed as a garden. The reason for the slab of concrete is unknown.

7 DISCUSSION

The earliest traces of human activity revealed by the excavation were 5 sherds of Romano-British pottery. Although these were not accompanied by any features and were all in contexts mixed with later material, it does show that there was Romano-British period activity in the vicinity. More residual Romano-British pottery in Selby has recently been discovered in other excavations (Antoni 1998, Gez Moody pers. comm.), confirming a Roman presence in the area.

The existence of a pre-Conquest settlement remains uncertain. Four sherds of pottery were identified as Torksey type, dated to the 10th to 11th century (Appendix 4), but this has been called into question (Appendix 4a), and other early pottery types (York Early Glazed Ware and Early Stamford Ware) are also questionable (Appendix 4a). No certain pre-Conquest features were identified, and no other dateable pre-Conquest material was found.

There was however undoubted evidence of a 12th-13th century phase of activity. All of the TP trenches except for the group at the north-eastern (site north) end of Micklegate (TP9, 10 and 11) contained 12th-13th century pottery, and in TP4, TP5, TP7 and TP8 there were deposits containing 12th-13th century material resting directly on the undisturbed natural. In TP8, at the southern end of Micklegate, some of the material may have been 11th century, but the deposit overall was not earlier than 13th century.

A ditch cut into the natural, observed in TP4, 1, 2, 3 and 7, and running up the western side of Micklegate towards the Ouse, might be contemporary with the 12th-13th century material. This was probably an early attempt to channel excess water towards the river, though it may also have functioned as a boundary marker. It ran parallel to the modern north-western edge of Micklegate (Plan 7).

Another early feature was a very finely cobbled area in TP8, on the corner of Micklegate and Finkle Street. It was associated with 13th century pottery, as were some more scattered cobbles in TP5. TP5 also contained a stone loom-weight near the base, possibly indicative of a house interior (although, as with much of the material, it could be redeposited from a different context). Both TP5 and TP8 are towards the south-western end of Micklegate and seem to indicate a concentration of 12th-13th century activity in this area, which might be evidence of expanding urban activity associated with the Abbey.

The ditch appears generally to have been filled in by the 15th century, and it is to the 14th and 15th centuries that most of the material and features from Micklegate and Finkle Street date. One of the most prominent features was a stone wall that ran south-west to north-east, parallel to the existing edge of Micklegate, appearing in TP8, 5 and 4, all at the southern end. It was fragmentary in TP5, but substantial in the other two trenches, constructed of a mix of unshaped limestone and sandstone slabs. A number of wooden structures were also recorded, from TP5, TP4, TP1, TP2, TP3 and TP7. These formed a line running up the north-western side of Micklegate, again parallel with the modern edge of the market area. The structures varied from brushwood fences held up with wooden stakes, to more substantial buildings of post and plank construction. The planks were sometimes unshaped, and otherwise roughly split. All were characterised by vertical posts, frequently driven into the natural. These may have been temporary animal or other market stalls, or more permanent buildings.

Organic silts were widespread in both Finkle Street and Micklegate, and soil samples were frequently interpreted as animal bedding or indicative of wet and muddy conditions. Occasional thin layers of sand probably represent flooding episodes, but these could not be related to any known floods because of a combination of lack of records and the limited nature of the excavations. More detailed excavation in Micklegate might be able to build up a picture of flooding episodes in the medieval period.

The organic silts were rich in archaeological material. Apart from pottery and comparatively infrequent metal, the richest collections were of slag and leather. The slag (Appendix 6) formed an interesting collection that indicated the presence of smithing near to all the TP trenches except for 6, 8 and 10, and in T3 and T4 in Micklegate. The total quantities varied from quite small amounts in TP1, 2, 4 and 5, to very much larger amounts in TP3, 7, 9 and 11 (all towards the north-eastern end of Micklegate). Unfortunately, there was no corresponding evidence in the metalwork assemblage from the site (unfinished articles, blank bars etc) to back up the slag evidence. The largest concentration of iron objects was in TP9, which did have large quantities of slag, but it was mainly timber nails and was more probably associated with tumble from the demolition of a building. It is possible that much of it was dumped from elsewhere, although the concentration in one area might suggest that the origin is not too far away. The date of the slag seems to be largely late medieval to early post-medieval (15th-16th century), and its association with coal in a number of contexts would indicate an early use of this fuel.

The leather assemblage is large (Appendix 3). It consists almost exclusively of shoes and shoe parts and includes both primary and secondary waste (indicative of leatherworking and repair). The distribution of the leather in both Micklegate and Finkle Street is revealing. The vast majority of primary waste came from one area in the south-west corner of Micklegate (T5 AD Connection), with smaller amounts from T3 and TP4, both on the north-west side of Micklegate. The T5 leather included a sample of a large deposit of waste that has been interpreted as currying waste (Appendix 3), an intermediate process between tanning and making finished goods. Even if the process was not carried out in this precise location (the deposit was in a shallow pit), it would seem that it was taking place nearby, and that leather working was an important activity here in the late medieval period. The secondary and trimming waste was more evenly spread, but with a concentration in TP8 at the corner of Micklegate and Finkle Street. It seems likely that a shoe repair business was operating close by.

The distribution of finished pieces of shoes, many repaired, is somewhat different. TP3, in the centre of the north-western side of Micklegate, had by far the largest number of medieval shoe pieces (139), twice as many as the next most prolific area. TP7, the adjacent trench, had the next highest number, and TP4, further to the south, had nearly as many. All the trenches apart from TP10 and 11 contained some medieval leather, though in T2, T3 and TP9 it was comparatively scarce. The leather from T4 was almost all concentrated at the southern end, and that in T1 near the Micklegate end. The resulting picture is of a major leather workshop in the vicinity of TP3/TP7, with possibly another near TP4/Finkle Street end of Micklegate. The curriers in the south-western corner of Micklegate may also have produced finished goods.

The distribution of post-medieval shoe types indicates a continuing concentration in TP3, but on a much smaller scale. T3, TP1 and TP7 are the only other trenches to produce more than a couple of pieces. This may indicate that manufacture was no longer so important, or that survival rates decreased. The latter is a likely explanation, as the build-up of anaerobic deposits favouring the survival of organic material dropped off significantly by the 17th century, but a decline in the importance of local industry in Selby is also a probability.

The evidence of the animal bones can also be used to suggest different areas of activity within Micklegate (Appendix 5). TP8, at the corner of Micklegate and Finkle Street, is suggested as a primary butchery area, and the removal of cattle horn cores from skulls was widespread. This suggests horn working in the vicinity, and there was evidence of this in excavations to the rear of Gowthorpe (Jez Moody, pers. comm.). To the north, in TP9, there was evidence of food debris and domestic butchery, indicative of a nearby dwelling or dwellings.

The 14th and 15th centuries in Micklegate seem overall to have been ones of intense activity. The majority of the wooden structures, the pottery, slag and leather date from this late medieval period. There were attempts to stabilise the surface with occasional cobble spreads, but the

black silts continued to build up. A cattle market with on-site butchery was accompanied by workshops producing various goods, some associated with animal by-products such as leather and horn-working. Sheep and, to a lesser degree, pigs were also butchered, and sheep became more common in the post-medieval period.

In the 16th century there appears to have been some major rebuilding, with many very mixed deposits dating to this period. TP9 contained strong indications of the demolition of a building that probably stood to the north-east of the trench (towards the River Ouse and Abbot's Staith). In TP2, TP3, TP4, TP5 and TP7 there were deposits containing pottery with a date range of four centuries, implying extensive reworking of deposits. Structural elements appear in TP1, TP2, TP3, TP4 and TP5, but are generally less substantial than earlier structures. These changes may be due to the historical disruption caused by the dissolution of the monasteries in the mid-16th century. The Abbey was a major landowner in the town, and the removal of its influence is likely to have initiated changes in both land-use and market activity. A flurry of activity seems to have occurred, followed by a slow-down by the 17th century.

Selby is known to have declined in importance in the post-medieval period, and this is reflected in the relative paucity of material from later than the 16th century. However, part of the decline in archaeological material arises from the stabilisation of the ground surface from the 18th century onwards, when in most areas of Micklegate the organic silts stop accumulating and are replaced with layers of redeposited sands, silts and clays. These were probably deliberately laid to raise the ground surface and mitigate the effects of flooding. At the north-eastern end of Micklegate there is evidence of another building in TP9 and TP10, and in TP1, TP2 and TP3 a thin layer of compacted black cinder might indicate spread from a nearby domestic or industrial coal store. Mixing of the material continues up to the 19th century, but the deposits are generally less archaeologically rich. By the mid 19th century, when the sewer running south-west to north-east up Micklegate was inserted, the ground level was largely stabilised and little more accumulated. The brick paving that covered the whole area by the early 20th century fully sealed the ground.

The depth of deposits in Micklegate and Finkle Street is considerable, and raises questions about the configuration of the ground in medieval times. The extant medieval building of Abbot's Staith establishes the ground level there at around 6 m OD. Only a few metres to the south-west, and further away from the River Ouse, there are medieval deposits up to 1.5 metres below this height. In terms of the general topography of Selby, this is a considerable difference in height, and raises the question of whether the ground alongside the river, on which the Abbot's Staith is built, was artificially raised, or whether it lay on a natural spit of higher ground. Observations in a watching brief on machine cut holes in Ousegate in 1995 (Clarke 1996) found disturbed clays and silts to depths of up to 1.7 metres, but these were in the vicinity of modern water services and not necessarily diagnostic of the soils elsewhere.

There is evidence from these and earlier excavations that the Market Place and the southern end of Finkle Street were in fact wetter environments than Micklegate. There was certainly at one time a stream running across Finkle Street to join Selby Dam, and drainage in this whole area was far from simple. It would seem that the topography of early medieval Selby was considerably steeper than it is today (though this is relative as the whole area is low-lying), and that height differentials have been gradually diminished by the building up of the lower ground. This might be relevant to early land-use and development patterns.

Further work is certainly required to investigate the topography of medieval Selby, preferably in open area excavation, which could establish relationships between the various areas identified in the 1997 watching brief, and tie these in with surrounding areas including the Abbot's Staith.

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