

LATE SAXON AND MEDIEVAL DERBY: EXCAVATIONS AT KING STREET DERBY, 2004

By KATE BAIN (Birmingham Archaeology, The University of Birmingham,
Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT)

With contributions from

JAMES GREIG

STEPHANIE RÁTKAI (c/o Birmingham Archaeology, The University of
Birmingham, Birmingham B15 2TT)

SUMMARY

Archaeological investigations were undertaken during 2003–2004 at King Street, Derby (centred on SK 352367) by Birmingham Archaeology on behalf of Birchover Properties through Faithful and Gould Consultants, in advance of a residential development. The investigations involved trial-trenching and excavation.

The earliest Phase 1 activity pre-dated 1150. It comprised a group of pits, a post-hole alignment and a cluster of hearths. It is possible that these features were associated with clothmaking undertaken adjoining the church of St Alkmund. In the medieval/early post-medieval period the area was mainly given over to cultivation, although traces of a single north-south boundary, and adjoining pitting survive. Industrial activity only resumed on site in the 17th or 18th century, when a group of pits were excavated. One of this pit group contained fragments of spun fibres and hops. In the 19th century the area contained a brick outbuilding, mapped in 1852, used for an industrial purpose.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The site investigated presently comprises an ‘island’ created by the layout of St Alkmund’s Way to the north, and King Street to the south, located on the west bank of the River Derwent (Figs 1 and 2). At the time of the investigations the site comprised an area of overgrown land, formerly the site of a demolished car showroom.

In the 8th century the modern city of Derby was part of a Mercian Royal estate called Northworthy (Craven 1989, 2), meaning ‘north enclosure’ (Gelling *et al.* 1970, 82), signifying a place of some importance surrounded by a defensive earthwork. It is believed that the northern line of the defences ran along the former Bridgegate, in the area of the present St Alkmund’s Way, in which case the site would have laid just within the northern edge of the suggested enclosure, and adjoining the postulated location of the north gate. The main feature of the Saxon topography of this northern part of the enclosure was a possible Minster church, dedicated to St Alkmund, established by AD 800 (Raleigh Radford 1976, 56). Excavation in the 1970s revealed a sequence of churches dating from the 9th to the 15th centuries, together with several carved cross-shafts and grave covers dating to the pre-Conquest period. The church probably formed the focus of a high status settlement, benefiting from pilgrims visiting the saint’s remains (Craven 1989, 22–3). Hall (1974, 17) suggests that settlement around St

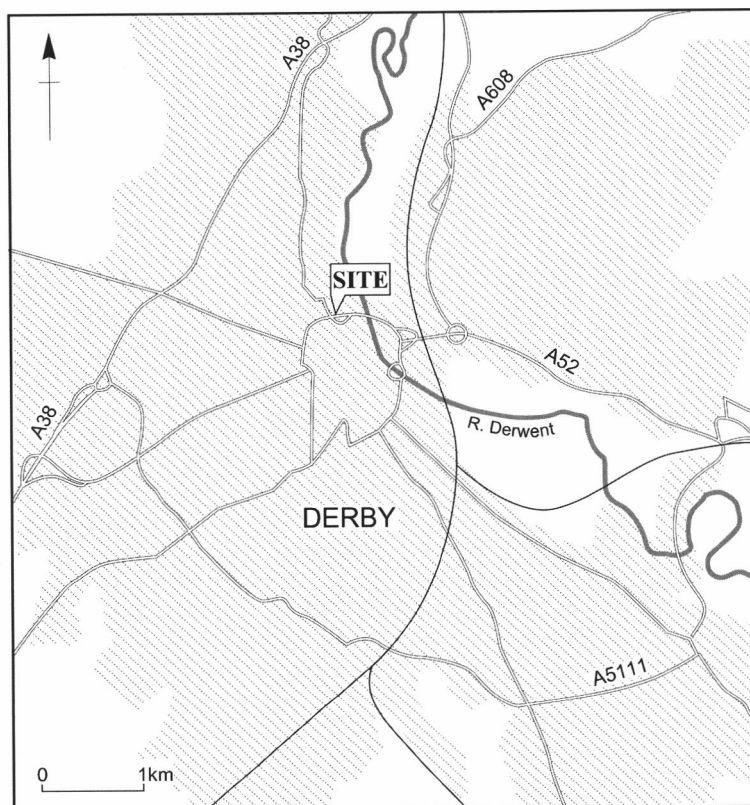


Fig. 1: Derby, King Street: location of excavation.

Alkmund's could have resulted from a migration from the Little Chester area, or have pre-dated the church. A second focus of Saxon activity lay around St Werburgh, in the area of Wardwick.

In the medieval period the site would have contained a number of burgage plots. The Bridgegate frontage lay to the north of the area excavated, and a lane (later called St Alkmund's Churchyard) was to the west, and which also formed the eastern edge of the churchyard. The area of the medieval Bridgegate frontage was taken for the construction of St Alkmund's Way in the 1960s, so traces of the buildings along this frontage have been lost. The area investigated 2003–4 lay to the rear of the plots fronting onto Bridgegate where evidence of domestic or industrial activity may be anticipated. Speeds's map of 1610 (Fig. 3) shows terraces of houses along the frontages of Bridgegate and the lane to the east of the churchyard, with open land to their rear. By the end of the 18th century most of the area excavated may have comprised the rearward ends of back-plots fronting onto Bridgegate (Fig. 4). Only the extreme western edge of the area excavated lay within the terrace built on the St Alkmund's Churchyard frontage, of which no physical trace survived later demolition. By the mid 19th century the area excavated mainly comprised a rectangular outbuilding, built in the angle between Bridgegate and St Alkmund's Churchyard.

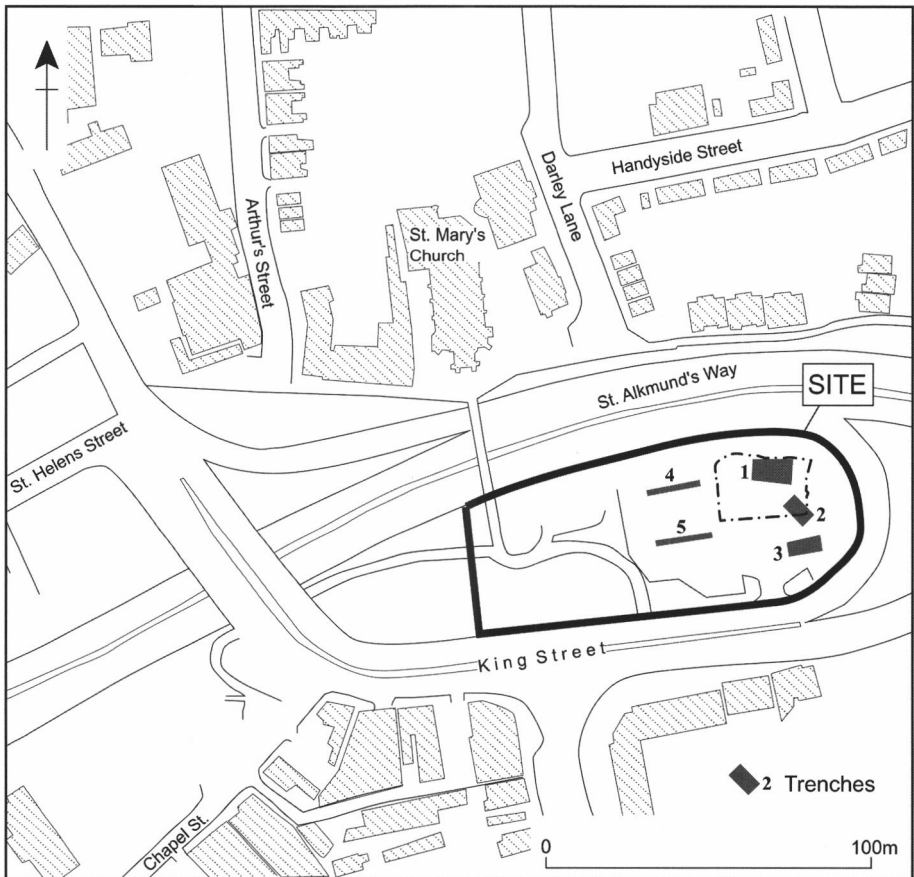


Fig. 2: Derby, King Street: St Alkmund's Way and the site: location of trial-trenches and area excavation.

St Alkmunds Church stood just to the west of the site boundary and was demolished in 1967–68 in advance of the construction of the modern road. The church attracted pilgrims throughout the medieval period. Documentary evidence shows that burials continued to be made in the churchyard throughout the 16th and 17th centuries (Conway 2002). Several inns adjoined the churchyard in the late 19th century and it is possible these may have had their origins in the pilgrim traffic of the medieval period.

Fieldwork at King Street was intended to provide information concerning the eastern extent of the church boundary and associated churchyard, possible evidence of activity in the Saxo-Norman period and evidence for medieval/post-medieval activity in the backplots to the rear of Bridgegate. The first stage of trial-trenching revealed two undated post-holes under a deep build up of overburden at the extreme east end of the site (Bain 2003). The second stage of trial-trenching in the centre of the site indicated that all remains of the former churchyard had been cleared (Ramsey 2004). Trial-trenching and geotechnical boreholes indicated that the natural subsoil sloped downwards from west to east, towards the River Derwent. Overall, the trial trenching

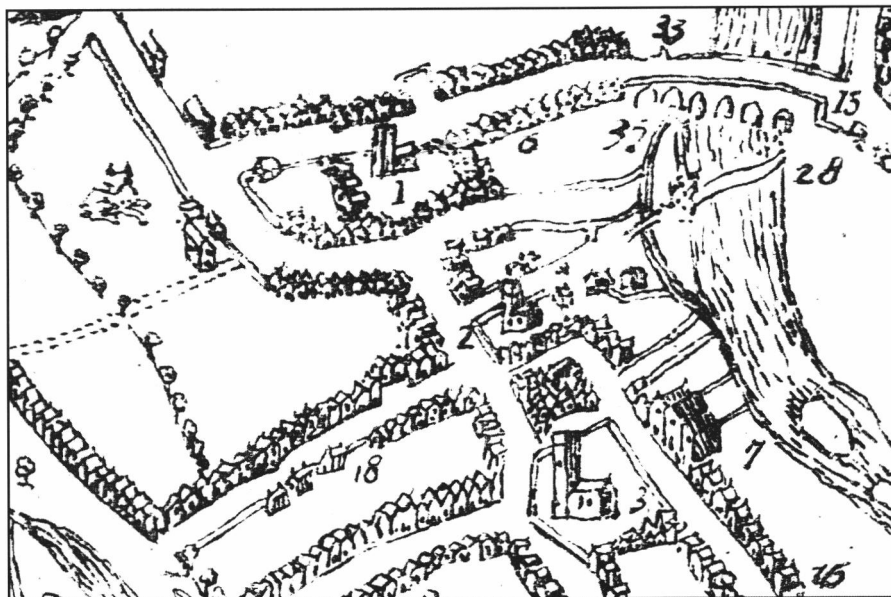


Fig. 3: Derby 1610: Speed map.

indicated that ground level had been lowered in the west of the site, and raised in the east. The purpose of the excavation was to examine the medieval/post-medieval backplot areas in the vicinity of the undated post-holes identified by trial trenching.

METHODOLOGY

A 360 degree, tracked, mechanical excavator was used to remove the overburden within the area designated for excavation, which was selected to include that part of Trench 1 which contained two undated post-holes, and an adjoining area. A maximum area of 18m by 23m was excavated. Allowing for stepping-in of the excavation sides for safety, an area measuring 10m by 15m was exposed at the lowest archaeological horizon. Recording was by means of pre-printed pro-formas for contexts and features, supplemented by scale plans, sections and monochrome, colour print and colour slide photography.

RESULTS

Four main phases of activity were identified (Fig. 5; Pl. 1):

- Phase 1: Late Saxon to 1150 activity*
- Phase 2: Medieval-early post medieval pitting*
- Phase 3: 17th and 18th century activity*
- Phase 4: Later post-medieval industry*

The natural subsoil in the west of the excavated area was a mottled clay, becoming much sandier in composition towards the east, along the western edge of the east-facing natural slope towards the River Derwent further to the east.

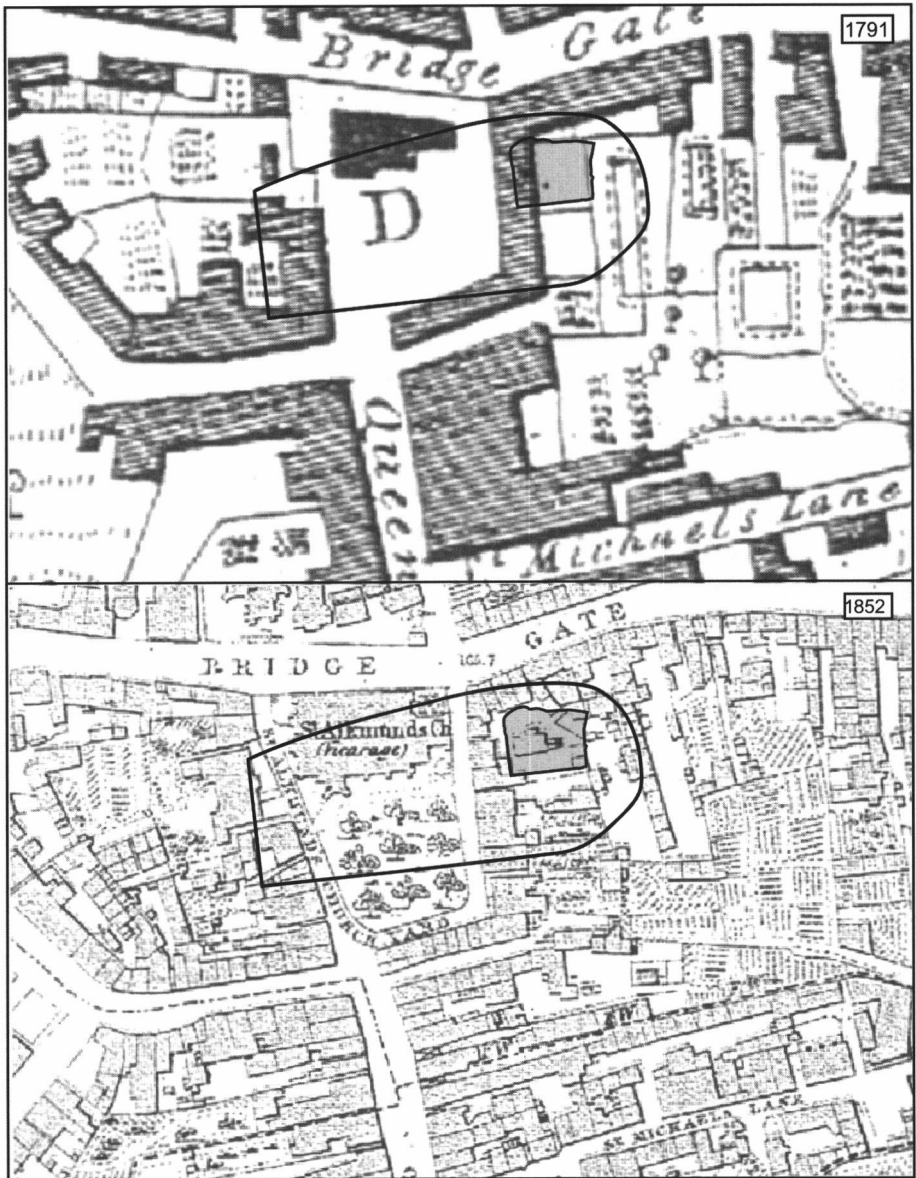


Fig. 4: Derby 1791 and 1852 maps with approximate location of site and area excavated.

Phase 1: Late Saxon to 1150 activity

The earliest, Phase 1, activity was represented by a pebble surface and pits occupying the plateau in the west and centre of the excavated area, with a cluster of post-holes and associated features along the east-facing slope to the east (Figs 5 and 6).

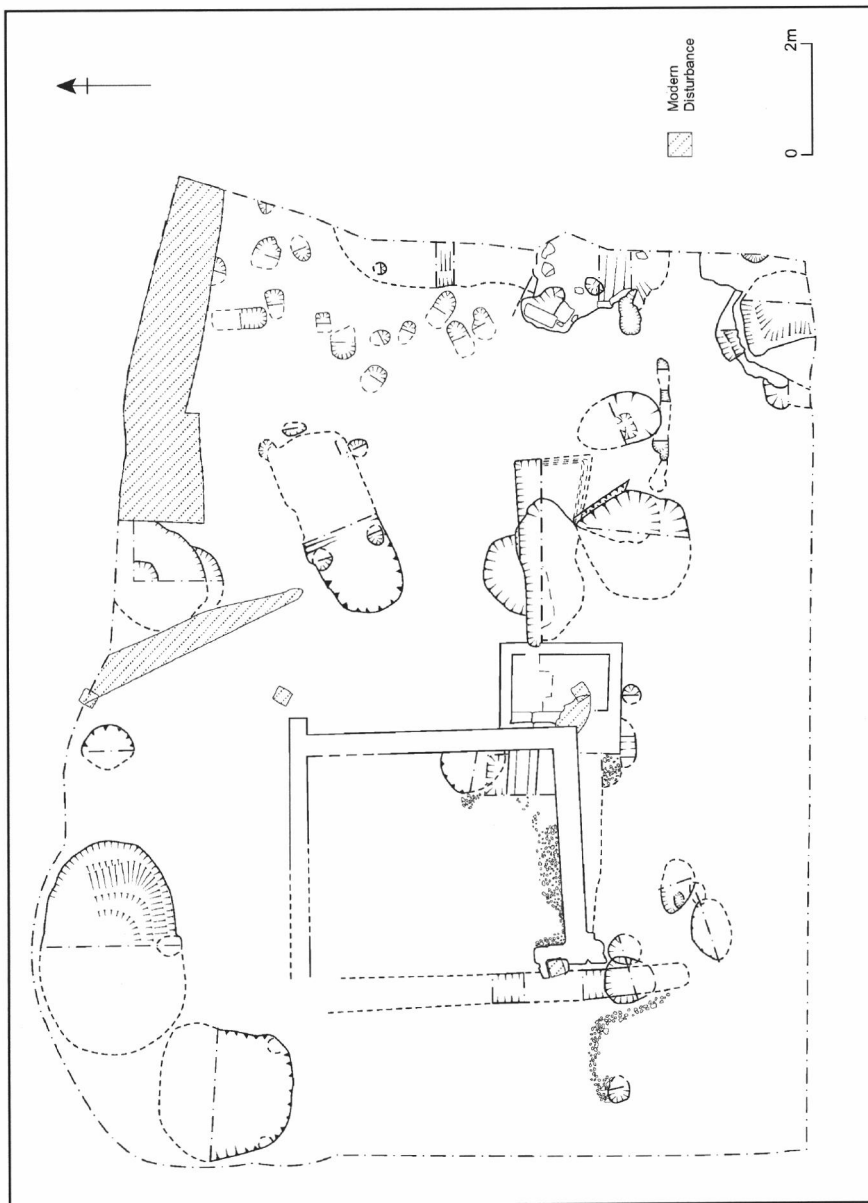


Fig. 5: Derby, King Street: plan of all features excavated (Scale 1:125).

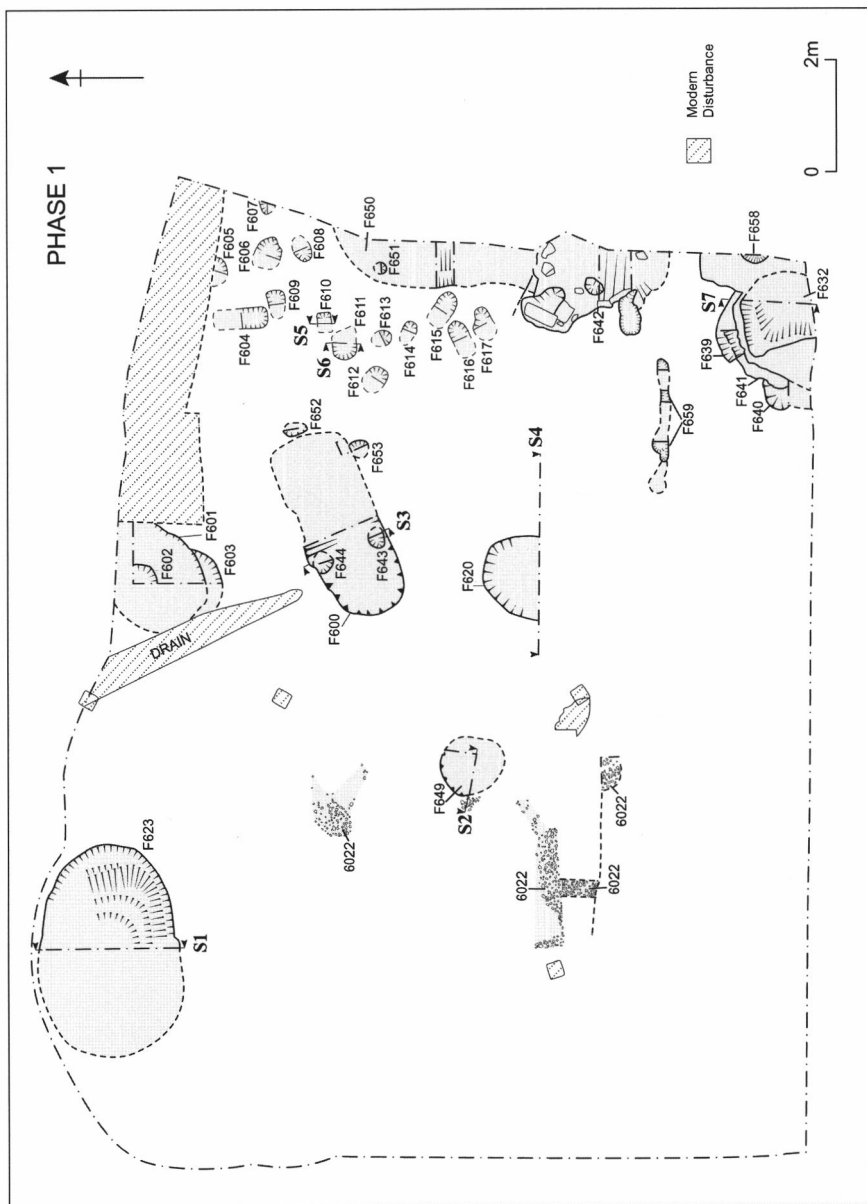


Fig. 6: Derby, King Street: Phase 1 feature plan (Scale 1:125).

Small areas of compacted pebble surfacing (6022) probably represent parts of a larger surface, partially scoured-out by later activity. This surfacing survived mainly in areas where a later building (Structure 2, see below) had provided protection from later truncation.

The pitting was largely concentrated on the higher ground. A large pit (F623; Fig. 7, S1) was located in the northeast of the excavated area, notably undisturbed by later activity. It was oval, measuring 3.6m by 2.5m in plan, and 1.9m in depth. The primary backfill of pit F623 was a mid brown-orange silty sand (6076), sealed by a layer of dark

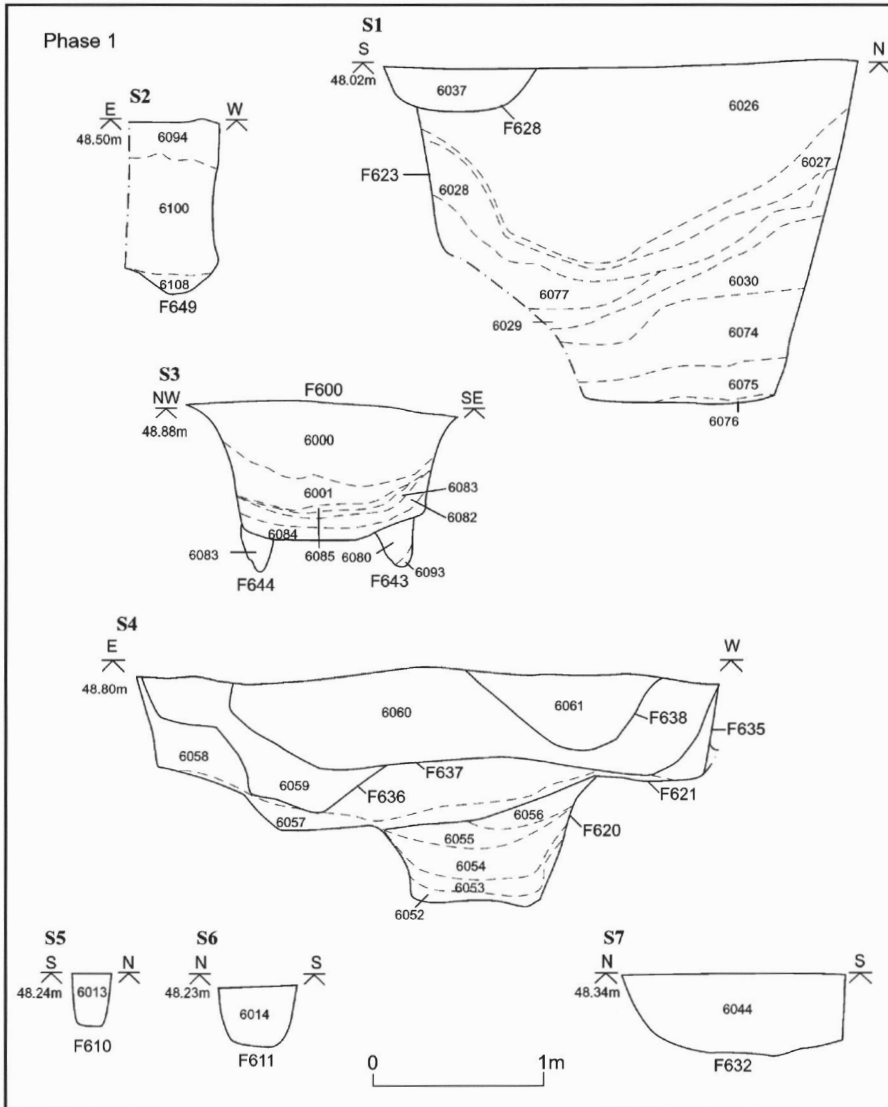


Fig. 7: Derby, King Street: Phase 1 sections (S.1-S.7, Scale 1:40).

grey-brown sandy silt (6075). Both layers were flecked with charcoal. Above layer 6075 was a band of redeposited clay (6074) which deepened towards the outer edge of the pit, and represents an episode of careful backfilling. This was overlain by a further mid-brown clay layer (6030), mixed with silt and charcoal. Above was a layer of redeposited natural clay (6029), similar to layer 6074, and which also may represent a careful backfilling of the pit. Later Phase 1 backfills (6077, 6028, 6027) comprised alternating bands of mixed dark silts and clays. The pit backfills contained fragments of clay lining.

A further pit, roughly circular in plan (F649; Fig. 7, S2), cut through the pebble surface, was located further to the southeast. The Phase 1 backfills of this pit comprised brown silty sand (6108) flecked with charcoal, sealed by a mid brown clay-sand (6100) including some animal bone fragments, and a single small horn core.

Further pitting (F600, F601–F603, and F620) and associated post-holes were located on the eastern edge of the natural plateau. The best preserved of this feature group was pit F600 (Fig. 7, S3), which was rectangular in plan, with rounded corners, its long axis aligned northeast-southwest. It measured 3.5m by 1.5m in plan, and 0.8m in depth. Its sides were near vertical, and its base was mostly flat. Two post-holes (F643–F644), both cut to a U-shaped profile were dug into its base, adjoining the long sides of the pit. The post-holes were backfilled with grey-brown mixed silt and clay (6080 and 6083, respectively). The base of the pit and the backfilled post-holes were sealed by a layer of red-brown clay (6084) which formed a lining, inserted after the post-holes went out of use. This lining was sealed by a thin lens of very charcoal-rich material (6082), in turn overlain by a lens of orange brown sand (6083). Above was a further band of charcoal rich silty-sand (6085), sealed by a thick layer of brownish red clay (6001). The uppermost backfill of the pit comprised a dark brown-grey silt sand (6000). Two post-holes (F652–F653) cut just outside the pit were probably associated with its use.

Other nearby pits (F601–F603, F620) were heavily truncated by later activity. Features F602 and F603 were cut by pit F601. The three pits were backfilled with orange-brown silt-clay, the latest feature (F601) also containing fragments of burnt clay (6002). Circular pit F620 (Fig. 7, S4) had near vertical sides and a flat base with a width of 1.5m and a depth of 1.36m. Its primary backfill comprised a layer of dark grey silt-sand (6052), sealed by a deposit of yellow-green silt-sand (6053). Above were layers of brown-yellow silt-sand (6054–6055), flecked with charcoal.

A cluster of 15 small, roughly circular post-holes (F604–F617 and F651)(F610; Fig. 7, S5)(F611; Fig. 7, S6) were identified at the eastern end of the excavated area (Pl. 2). The post-holes ranged from between 0.22m and 0.46m in width and 0.25m and 0.3m in depth. It was not possible to identify any related structures, although post-holes F609 to F612, positioned at a roughly regular spacing may have defined a southwest-northeast aligned fence whose line was continued to the northwest of an entry-gap by post-hole F605. If this interpretation was correct, the remaining post-holes of this group, except feature F604, may have been cut between this putative fence-line and a gully (F650) further to the east. Within the elongated post-holes a number of orientations may be identified, including roughly north-south (F604); southwest-northeast (F616–F617), and northwest-southeast (F615). These different alignments, as well as the apparently random distribution overall of the post-holes could imply their cutting over a period of time.



Plate 1: Derby, King Street: general shot, view west.

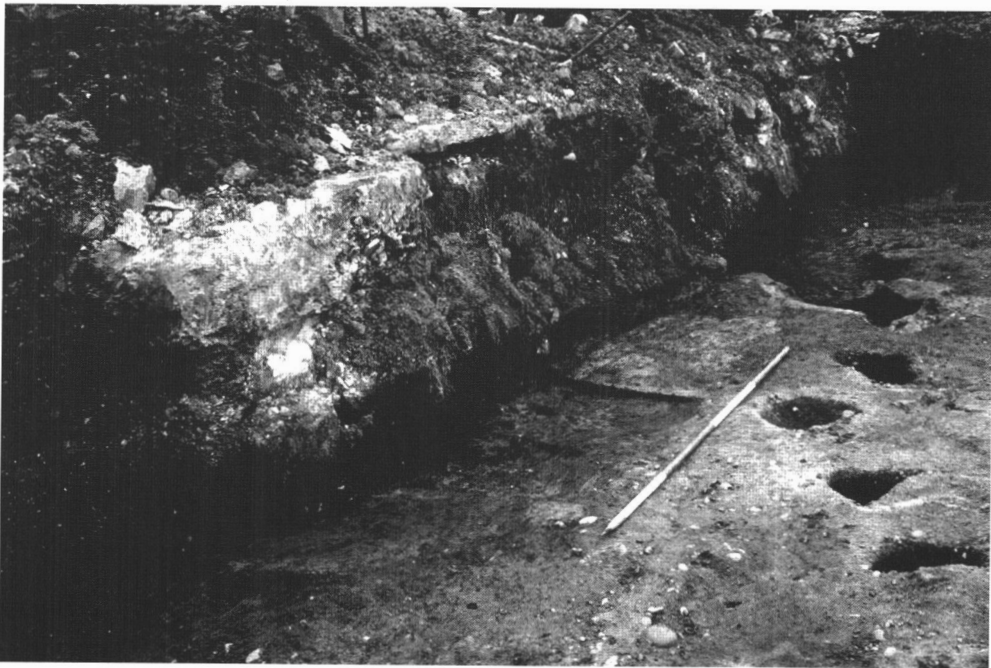


Plate 2: Derby, King Street: eastern Phase 1 post-hole group, view south.

To the southeast of the post-holes was a north-south aligned gully (F650), backfilled with burnt clay. It was cut by post-hole F651. To the south was a hearth (F642) lined with red-orange clay, burnt *in situ*. Its backfills comprised black silt-clay-sand, flecked with charcoal. Further to the west was an east-west aligned gully (F659). A further hearth (F632; Fig. 7, S7) was located in the southeastern corner of the site. It was sub-rectangular in plan and measured 1.8m in diameter and 0.51m in depth. Traces of stone lining, burnt *in situ*, were recorded along its western, and part of its southern edge. It was backfilled with mixed silt-sand with small stone and charcoal inclusions. This group of high temperature features could have been contemporary, although only feature F632 contained any dating evidence (see below). Adjoining features comprised a curvilinear gully (F639–F641), and a post-hole (F658).

Finds, dating and environmental evidence

Pebble surface 6022 contained 20 sherds of Stamford ware, for which a date pre-1150 may be suggested, or even possibly before the conquest; and two sherds of Late Saxon Derby ware. Pit F632 (6044) contained Stamford ware. Pit F620 contained sherds of possible Lincoln Saxo-Norman shelly ware (6055). Pit F600 also contained Saxo-Norman pottery (6000). The same context contained a total of 3.8kg of clay lining fragments. These contained large pebble inclusions which would make them unsuitable for high temperature firing, such as for church bell casting (Dr D. Dungworth *pers. comm.*). Finally, pit F649 (6100) contained Saxo-Norman shelly ware sherds.

The Phase 1 features sampled for charred plant remains contained mainly charcoal, with small quantities of charred grains and weed seeds, originating as food preparation waste which was burnt. The cereals included wheat, barley and oats. Feature F632 contained a large quantity of elder seeds.

Interpretation

Interpretation of the function of pits F600 and F623 is particularly difficult. All the pits contained traces of lining material, and their relatively unweathered profiles also suggests that a lining was originally applied. Although charcoal was noted in the backfills of pit F600, there was no evidence that any of the features may have been burnt *in situ* in association with an industrial process. Pit F600 in particular was largely flat-based and the lining may have formed a re-use of the feature, after post-holes F643–F644 were backfilled and went out of use.

It is possible that the large, lined pits were used in a process associated with processing of flax, hemp (although only one fragment of hemp was found in the samples processed for charred plant remains), or clothmaking. Flax retting was undertaken to soften the stems (Walton 1991, 324) and may have required large, lined pits similar to those excavated. Flax was grown mainly for fibre in the Anglo-Saxon period (Campbell 1994, 76; Robinson 2003, 141), cultivated either in gardens, or in small plots. In the Anglo-Saxon period retting was undertaken in tanks or channels (Robinson 2003, 141). Similarly after weaving, cloth would have required fulling, washing in a tub of water by trampling it underfoot, and using fullers' earth, a clay-like material used to remove grease and assist in matting of the cloth (Walton 1991, 330). To combat shrinkage during fulling the cloth would then be stretched on wooden fences with iron hooks. If the large pits may be correctly identified as associated with clothmaking, then the

post-hole group (F604–F617) could possibly be associated with this process of ‘tentering’, recorded at Bristol and Winchester (Clarke 1984, 134). Equally, since hearths were required to heat dye solutions (Walton 1991, 336), it is possible that features F632 and F639–F641 have been used for such an associated purpose, although this cannot be proven. It is also possible to interpret the post-holes, particularly features F609–F612, as forming a windbreak, located at, or close to, the natural break of slope.

Phase 2: Medieval-early post-medieval cultivation and boundary

Description

The Phase 2 features were cut through the backfilled Phase 1 features and deposits, and into the subsoil (Figs 8 and 9).

During Phase 2 some of the Phase 1 features were finally backfilled. Other Phase 2 activity comprised the accumulation of a possible garden or cultivation soil, and the layout of a boundary, with adjoining pitting. Overall, activity in this phase was very limited.

A layer of grey-brown silt-clay (6023, not illustrated) measuring up to 0.15m in depth was recorded sealing Phase 1 pebble surface 6022. Layer 6023 may be interpreted as a garden or cultivation soil. It only survived beneath a later building (Structure 2, see below) which had provided protection from later disturbance, although it is likely formerly to have been more extensive. Also in Phase 2, the final hollows remaining within some Phase 1 pits — F623 (6026; Fig. 7, S1), F620 (6056; Fig. 7, S4) and F649 (6094; Fig. 7, S2) — were finally infilled.

Pit F629 (Fig. 9, S8)(Pl. 3) was roughly square in plan, with rounded corners, and a flat base. It measured approximately 2.5m across, and 0.98m in depth. It was finally backfilled with alternating layers of silt-sand and clay. Within these backfills layer 6038 represents deliberate infilling with rubbish.

One of the earliest Phase 2 features may have been a pit (F626; Fig. 9, S9). It had steep sides and a flat base. It was backfilled with mid grey-brown silty-clay (6035). Later in Phase 2, the area investigated was sub-divided by a shallow, north-south aligned gully (F622, F625; Fig. 9, S9), recorded for a length of 7m, heavily truncated by later activity. Its rounded southern terminal was recorded just inside the excavated area. Gully F625 was cut into the backfills of pit F626. A post-hole (F628; Fig. 7, S1) cut flush with the gully alignment may have marked the northward continuation of the boundary by a fence. The gully and post-hole together probably defined a plot boundary cut to the west of the natural break of slope.

A circular pit (F624; Fig. 9, S9) was cut through the backfills of earlier pit F626, just on the eastern edge of the gully (F625). Pit F624 measured 0.5m in diameter. Two further pits (F654, F656; Fig. 9, S10) were recorded just to the east of the boundary. Pit F654 was steep-sided, and backfilled with dark brown silt-clay (6101). It was cut by pit F656, dug to a similar profile, and backfilled with similar material (6103).

An oval pit (F627) was the only Phase 2 feature recorded further to the east of the boundary, possibly because of later truncation.

Finds, dating and environmental evidence

The uppermost, Phase 2 backfill of Phase 1 pit F623 (6026) contained residual Saxo-Norman pottery, along with medieval material. The uppermost, Phase 2 backfill of

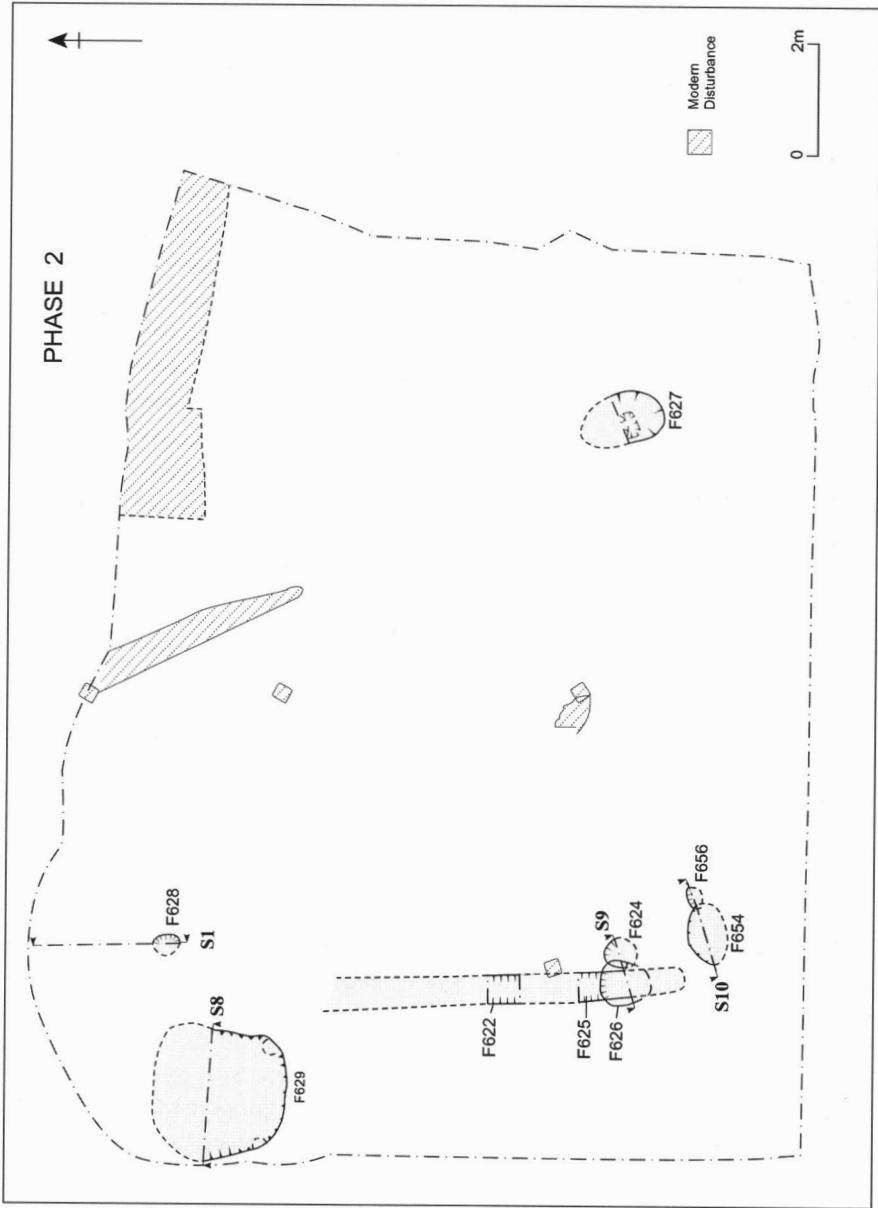


Fig. 8: Derby, King Street: Phase 2 plan (Scale 1:125). Earlier features backfilled in this phase not shown on plan.

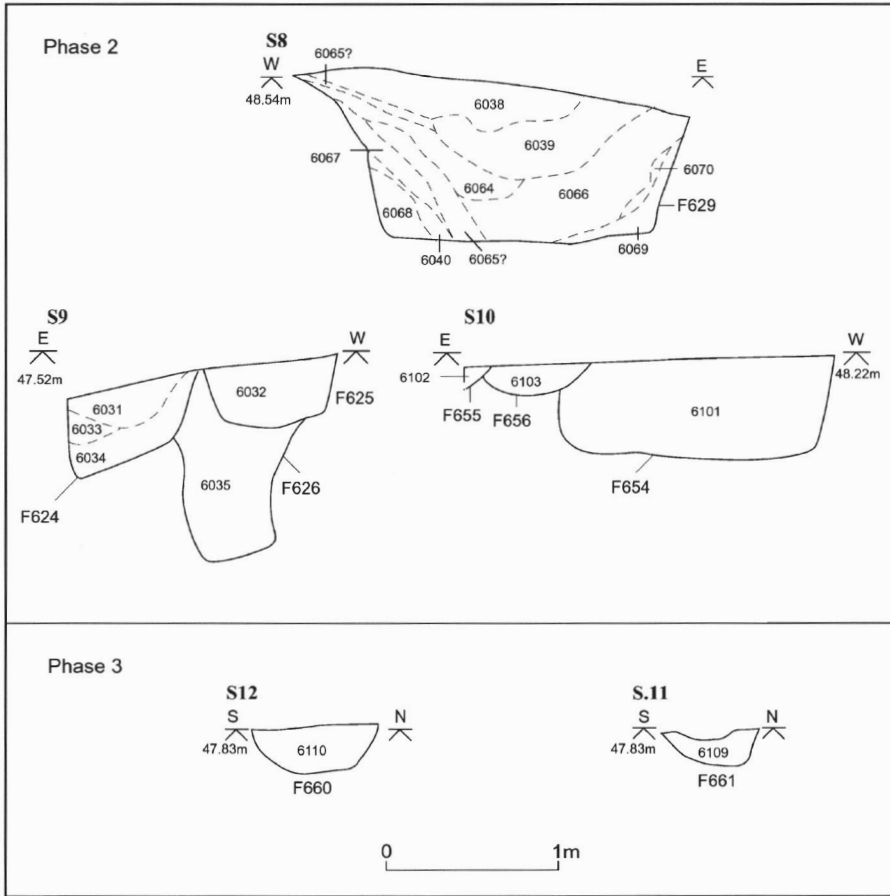


Fig. 9: Derby, King Street: Phase 2–3 sections (S.8–S.12, Scale 1:40).

Phase 1 pit F649 contained Midlands Purple ware (6094), along with fragments of bloomery slag. The uppermost backfill of Phase 1 pit F620 (6056) contained 15th–16th century and later pottery, which may be intrusive.

The backfills of Phase 2 pit F629 contained pottery dating to the second half of the 13th or 14th centuries, although some residual Saxo-Norman wares were also represented. Post-hole F628 contained medieval, and residual Late Saxon Derby ware pottery. Phase 2 pit F624 contained sherds of late medieval or early post-medieval pottery. Pit F654 contained pottery dating in the 15th or 16th centuries. Post-hole F628 was cut through the upper backfills of Phase 1 pit F623 which contained pottery of Saxo-Norman, medieval and early post-medieval date. Layer 6023 contained late medieval and early post-medieval pottery. Feature F627 contained late 15th or 16th century pottery.

The Phase 2 backfills of features F623 and F642 contained cereal remains which Greig (below) notes are similar to the Phase 1 remains, and may therefore be residual.



Plate 3: Derby, King Street:
Phase 2 pit F629, detail.



Plate 4: Derby, King Street:
junction between Phase 4
Structures 1 and 2, view
west.

Interpretation

Pit F629 is a difficult feature to interpret. It immediately adjoins Phase 1 pit F623, but must have been used when the latter had gone out of use. The 13th or 14th century pottery in its backfills suggest that this was the earliest medieval feature excavated in this phase. Later medieval material dated from the 15th century onwards. Overall, activity was limited. The character of the pottery from the Phase 2 backfills is not generally consistent with domestic rubbish, but is composed of material incorporated into soils dumped into open features during levelling episodes. Located to the rear of plots fronting Bridgeway, or on land to the east of the churchyard, this area may have been cultivated (soil 6023). A possible north-south aligned burgage plot boundary, represented by gullies F622/F625 was laid out, along with associated pits, which may have re-defined the boundary during this phase. Away from the boundary only one Phase 2 feature, a pit (F627) was located, which underlines the limited surviving evidence for this phase.

Phase 3: 17th and 18th century activity

Description

This phase marks the disuse of the Phase 2 north-south burgage plot boundary (F622, F625), and resumption of industrial activity within the site. The main Phase 3 features comprised a group of intercutting pits, mainly clustered in the southeast of the area excavated (Figs 9 and 10).

The main features of this phase were a group of intercutting pits, cut through back-filled Phase 1 pit F620 and into the subsoil. The earliest of these Phase 3 pits (F621; Fig. 7, S4) was probably roughly rectangular in plan, although its western side was cut away by later disturbances (see below). It was vertically-sided, with a flat base, measuring a maximum of 3.2m in length and 0.8m in depth. It was cut by feature F636 (Fig. 7, S4), of which only the eastern end survived later re-cutting. This feature survived to a maximum of 1m in depth, and was more irregular in profile than feature F621. Feature F636 was in turn cut by feature F637 (Fig. 7, S4) which was cut with a roughly flat base, and measured 2.9m in length and 0.5m in depth. These features were backfilled with very dark silt-sands containing clinker, ash and charcoal. A large, roughly circular pit (F645) was also cut to the south of this Phase 3 pit group. It measured 2.5m in diameter, and 0.25m in depth.

To the west was a short length of a truncated slot (F660; Fig. 9, S12) and an adjoining post-hole (F661; Fig. 9, S11). Further to the north was an oval pit (F646), measuring a maximum of 1m in diameter.

Finds, dating and environmental evidence

The backfill of pit F621 contained 18th century pottery, and the backfill of feature F637 contained 17th century pottery. In each case the sherds were small and were probably residual. The backfill of feature F637 also contained a heavily degraded coin thought to be of the Georgian period (Dr Roger White *pers. comm.*).

In addition to spun fibres, wheat and weed seeds, Phase 3 feature F621 (6057) also contained hops, figs, cabbage/mustard, celery, onion and various fruits.

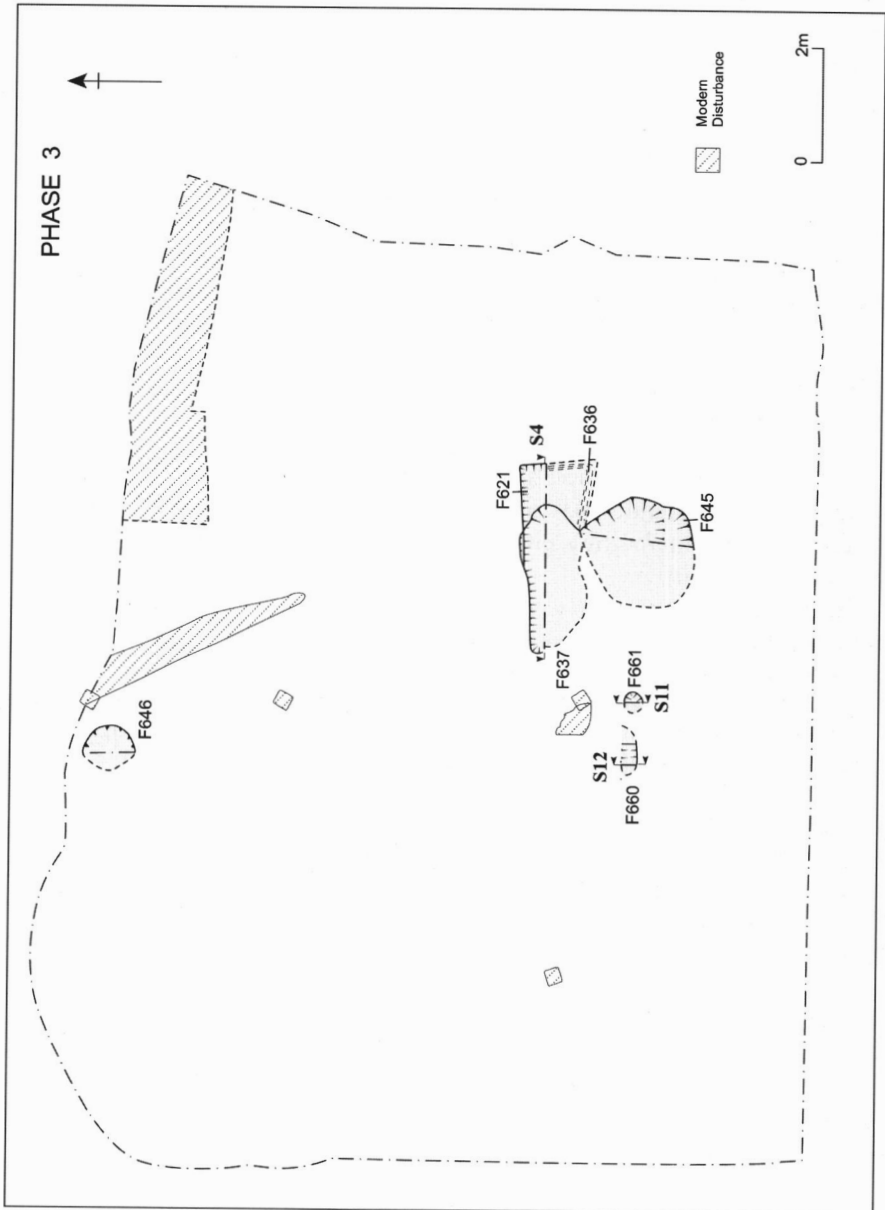


Fig. 10: Derby, King Street: Phase 3 plan (Scale 1:125).

Interpretation

Phase 3 activity was characterised by the pit group in the southeast of the area excavated. The sequence here began with the backfilling of Phase 1 pit F620. Later, a succession of pits were excavated. Pits F621 and F637 were steep-sided and flat based, perhaps suggesting that they were formerly lined. The finds of hops from pit F621 suggest that small-scale brewing may have been undertaken on site.

Phase 4: Later post-medieval industry

In Phase 4 a small rectangular chamber (Structure 1; Fig. 11; Fig. 12, S13–14), measuring 2.2m by 1.5m, was laid out to the west of the backfilled Phase 3 feature group. This structure (F635) mainly comprised rectangular sandstone blocks each measuring 0.03m by 0.2m, including material presumably derived from a rebuilding of the adjoining church. This structure also contained bricks of 17th century date (Dr M. Hislop *pers comm*). The chamber had a brick floor. The brick walls alternated courses of stretchers and headers, within the latter a gap of 6–8 cm being allowed horizontally between each brick, presumably for ventilation or expansion. The upper part of the surviving build was constructed in English bond, and was bonded into the eastern end of an east-west aligned brick-lined channel (F634) which had been re-built (F630). Both the channel and its re-build broadened at its eastern end, adjoining the chamber.

Following the completion of Structure 1 and rebuilding of the associated channel, a much larger three-sided brick building (Structure 2; Fig. 12, S15–16) was laid out to its west. Structure 2 was rectangular in plan, and measured 5.2m by 4.5m. The western ends of the north and south walls (F633 and F619) respected the position of the back-filled, and apparently disused, Phase 2 north-south boundary (F622, F625; Fig. 8). No trace of its western wall could be found. The north (F633) and south (F619) walls of the structure were set within a shallow foundation trench. This was filled with rubble over which the first brick course was laid. The Structure 2 walls incorporated bricks of mainly 17th and 18th century date. The bricks were placed primarily on end with the header facing outward and were bonded with broad courses of lime mortar. Only two courses of bricks survived. The northern wall (F633) was extended slightly to the east of the eastern wall (F631). A buttress positioned at the western end of the southern wall incorporated mainly sandstone blocks, probably originally derived from the adjoining church of St Alkmund. A corresponding buttress at the western end of the north wall may be suggested, but not proven, because this part of the structure was heavily disturbed by later activity.

An arched opening was retained in the eastern wall of the structure presumably to facilitate the pouring of molten metal between the channel and Structure 1 (Pl. 4), which remained in use, and was finally backfilled with possible casting sand. The arched opening was later blocked with brick when Structure 1 went out of use, but the later Structure 2 remained active.

Other contemporary features comprised a small surviving fragment of a Phase 4 pebble surface (6105), and post-holes (F618, F657), together with two pits (F638, F648), and a narrow gully (F647), all recorded outside Structure 2.

Structure 1 was backfilled with casting sand, and may have been used for casting metal. Structure 2, which was built later, but incorporating the earlier build, could have been an associated temporary structure, perhaps used mainly for storage.

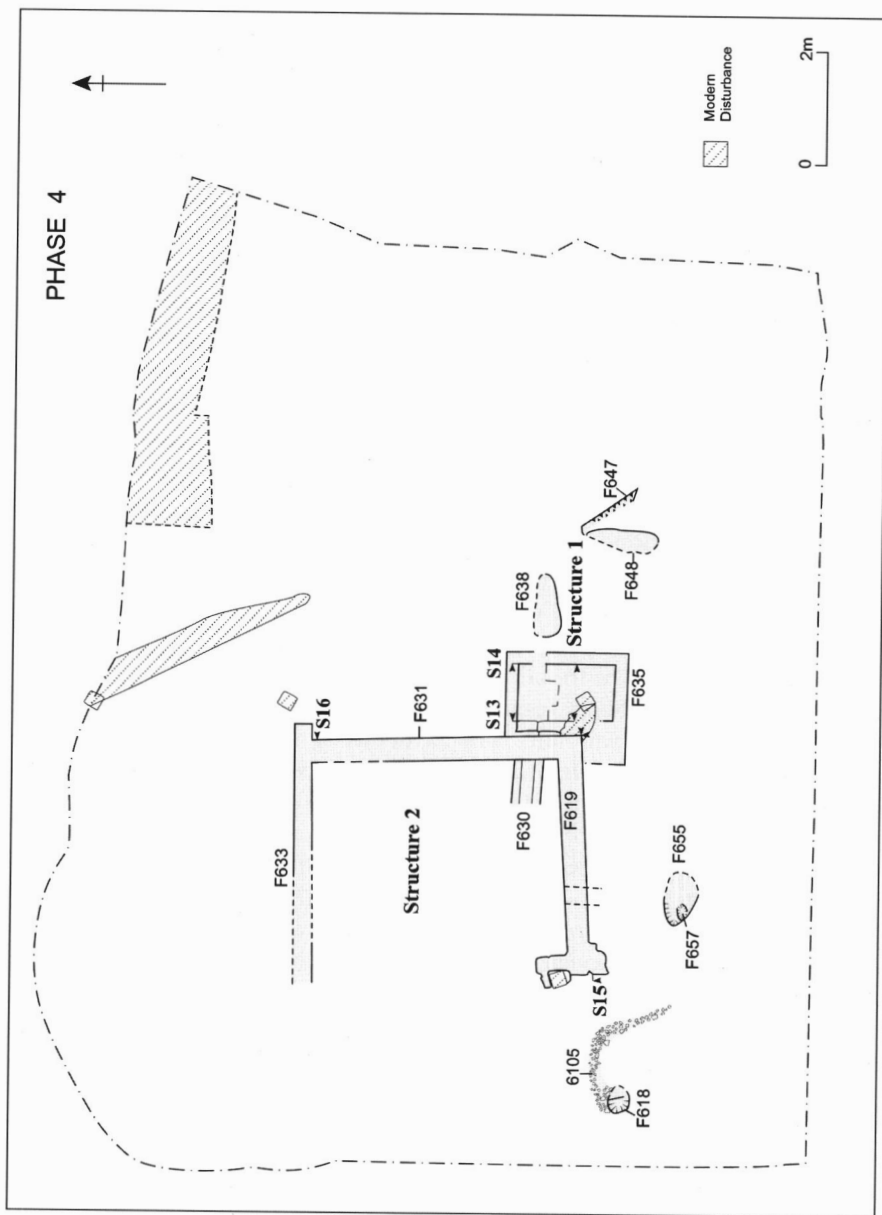


Fig. 11: Derby, King Street: Phase 4 plan (Scale 1:125).

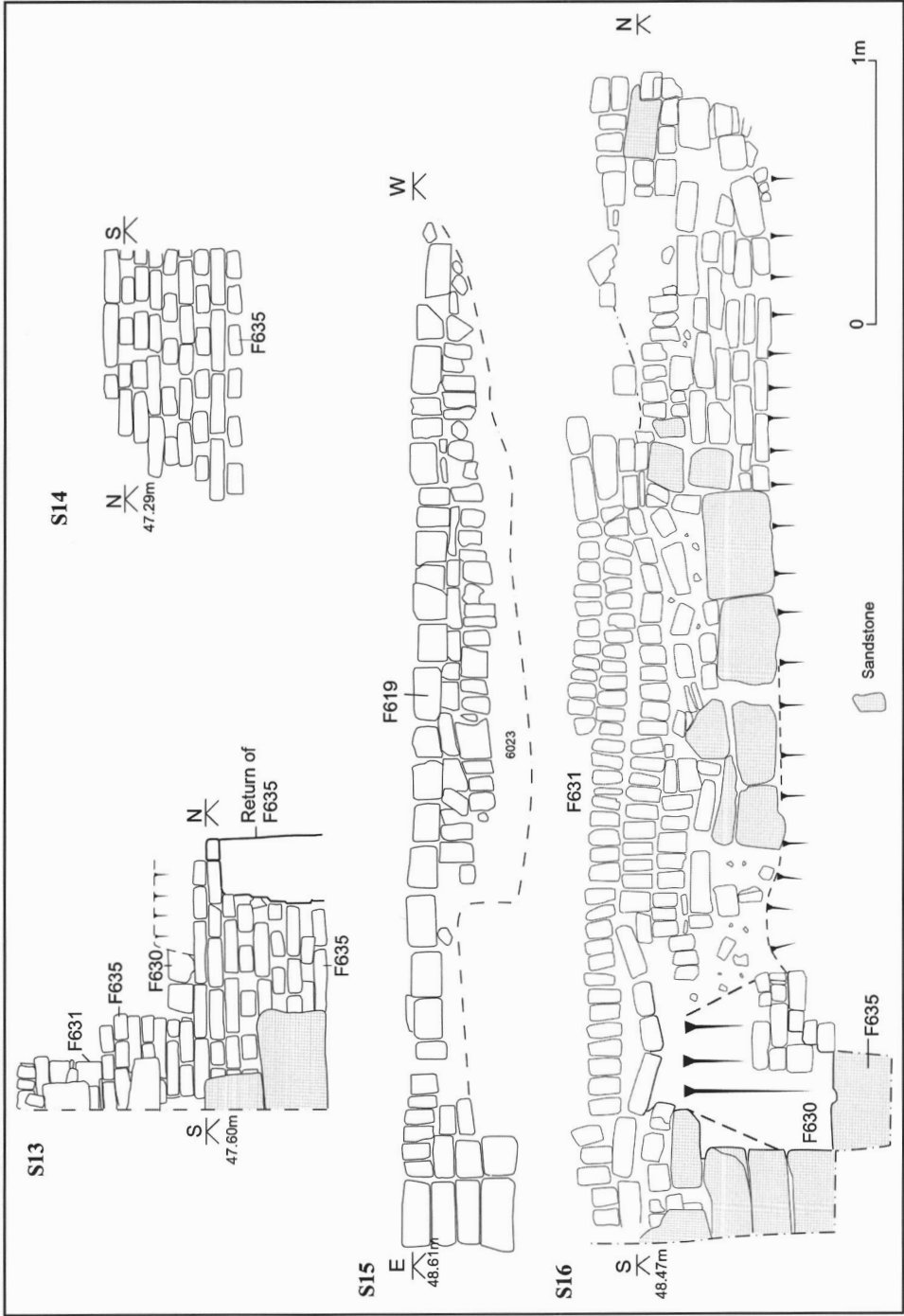


Fig. 12: Derby, King Street: Phase 3 building elevations (Scale 1:40).

Pottery

By Stephanie Rátkai (Fig. 13)

Introduction

A total of 147 sherds of post-Roman pottery was recovered from all investigations, weighing a total of 2324g. The best group came from the Saxo-Norman period, later pottery showing all the hallmarks of much disturbance and residuality. In addition there were very few form sherds, particularly amongst the medieval material. All the Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery was examined under x 20 magnification and divided into fabrics. However, under the circumstances it was felt that detailed work on the pottery fabrics was inappropriate. Accordingly, broad ware definitions have been used throughout the report such as buff sandy ware, gritty ware, splash glazed ware etc. Further details of some of the fabrics can be found in the phase discussions. The Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery was quantified by sherd count and weight, minimum

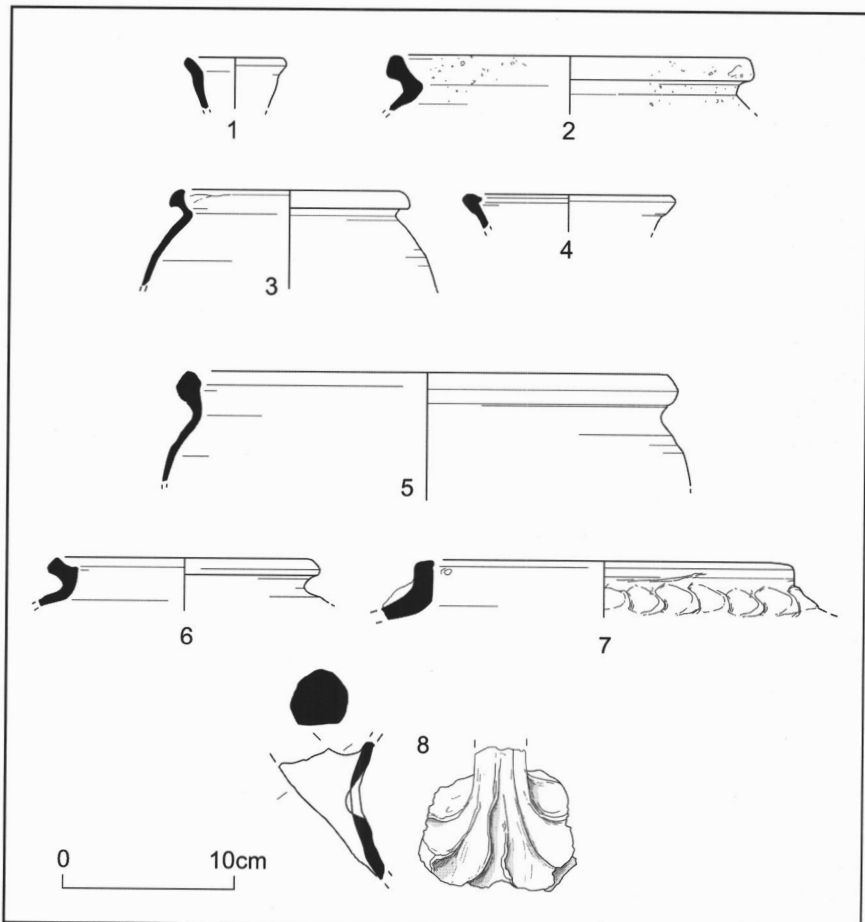


Fig. 13: Derby, King Street: Pottery (nos 1-8, Scale 1:4).

rim, base and handle count and rim percentage (eves). Vessel form where recognisable was recorded, as were details of decoration, glaze sooting and wear. All data were recorded on an Excel worksheet. The post-medieval pottery was assigned to ware group e.g. coarseware, tin-glazed earthenware, brown salt-glazed stoneware and was recorded in the same way as the earlier pottery with the exception of rim percentages which were not recorded.

Phases 1–2

The pebble surface (6022) contained 25 sherds in total. Twenty of these were Stamford ware sherds, two were late Saxon Derby ware and three were Midlands Purple ware. The Midlands Purple ware sherds were almost certainly intrusive. Just under half of the Stamford ware sherds were glazed, glaze colours varying from pale yellow to pale olive (Kilmurry 1980, Glaze 1) and grey-green (*ibid.*, Glaze 2). One glazed sherd with a slightly amber tone to the glaze may have been Kilmurry's Glaze 6. All but one of the unglazed Stamford ware sherds were sooted. The Stamford ware was made up of body sherds only, and with the exception of a sherd with a thumbled neck cordon from a spouted pitcher, the sherds were not assignable to form. All the fabrics were finely sandy and there were no examples of Kilmurry's smooth-textured Fabric B.

The absence of Developed Stamford ware (normally associated with Fabric B) with its distinctive bright green glaze suggests a date before *c.* 1150 for the Stamford ware sherds. Fabric B begins in the third quarter of 11th century so its absence from this group may suggest a predominantly pre-Conquest group, although this is by no means certain. The two late Saxon Derby ware sherds may strengthen the case for a pre-Conquest date. Post-hole F660 and slot F661 associated with the pebble surface contained no pottery within their fills.

Fill 6044 of pit F632 in the southeastern corner of the site contained two unglazed sooted Stamford ware sherds and may therefore be contemporary with the pebble surface (6022).

Two further pits (F620 and F649), in the centre of the site, were phased to the Saxo-Norman period. Pit F620 contained no pottery in its lower fills (6052–6054). The fill (6055) above these contained two shelly ware sherds from a very abraded socketed bowl, possibly Lincoln Saxo-Norman shelly ware (*cf.* McCarthy and Brooks 1985, fig. 72.54) and a small, 3g, fragment of fired clay or daub. The fill above this (6056) contained a gritty ware bottle rim sherd (Fig. 13.1) and a Midlands Purple ware sherd, both likely to date to the 15th–16th centuries, and a brown salt-glazed stoneware sherd and a light-bodied coarseware sherd both likely to date to the 18th century. An unglazed medieval sherd also found in layer 6056 was not closely datable. Fill 6058 of pit F621 which truncated pit F620 contained 18th century blackware and coarseware sherds. The dating of pit F620 is therefore somewhat equivocal.

Pit F649 had three fills. The earliest produced no pottery. The middle fill (6100) contained two Saxo-Norman shelly ware sherds, one of which was a cooking pot rim sherd (Fig. 13.2). The latest fill (6094) contained a Midlands Purple ware sherd and a small abraded amber glazed jug sherd. These sherds could represent trample into the final fill of the pit, or later material which has 'slumped' into the top of the pit.

Three large lined pits (F600, F623 and F629) were also ascribed to this Phase 1. Fill 6000 of pit F600 contained three Stamford ware sherds and a whiteware flat base sherd.

The base sherd was wheel-thrown and knife trimmed on the exterior. The exterior, apart from the base was heavily sooted. The fabric was less well-made than the usual Stamford ware fabrics and contained sparse ill-sorted, sub-rounded, often red stained quartz up to 0.7mm in a smooth-textured matrix. Sparse glittering flecks were visible both on the surface and in the clay body. The method of manufacture, flat base and knife-trimming suggest that this sherd may in fact be Saxo-Norman, possibly a Stamford ware variant.

The fill of pit F623 (6026) contained a mixed pottery group. Stamford wares were again well represented and formed over half the group (Fig. 13.3-4). The remaining pottery comprised late medieval or post-medieval material. The former comprised a gritty ware bowl or jar base sherd with interior limescale and heavy external soot, three Midlands Purple ware sherds and a Cistercian ware cup sherd. The later material was made up of four sherds of yellow ware and single sherds of tin-glazed earthenware, black basalt ware, pearlware and utilitarian whiteware.

Fill 6026 was the latest in a series of nine fills within feature F623. It really is almost impossible to date feature F623 with any certainty from the pottery alone, particularly since the latest fill (6026) is cut by feature F628, the fill of which contained what must be residual pottery consisting of a late medieval or early post-medieval jar sherd and an early medieval glazed pitcher sherd.

Three of the fills of pit F629 contained pottery. The earliest of these (6040) contained a medieval sandy buff ware cooking pot rim sherd (Fig. 13.5). A second, later fill in the sequence (6066) contained mainly medieval sandy buff ware sherds from a pipkin which had olive glaze spots on the exterior and was heavily sooted externally, and a jug with a bright green copper coloured glaze. There was also a possible late Saxon Derby ware sherd and a piece of slag. Fills 6040 and 6066 would seem to date to the second half of the 13th or 14th centuries. The latest fill (6038) produced a very mixed group of pottery with Saxo-Norman Stamford ware, shelly ware and Derby ware (Fig. 13.6), medieval splash glazed ware, sandy buff ware and gritty ware. The latest sherd was a Midlands Purple ware in a fabric which resembled a highly — or over-fired gritty ware. The absence of any Saxo-Norman material in the lower fills is puzzling if this pit belongs in Phase 1 and it has therefore been ascribed to Phase 2.

Fill 6031 of pit F624 contained a Midlands Purple handle sherd from a jug or cistern and a late medieval or early post-medieval redware jar or bowl body-base sherd with heavy external sooting above the base angle. Both sherds were large, weighing 86g and 124g respectively and probably date to the 15th or 16th centuries.

The Phase 2 cultivation layer (6023) which sealed the Saxo-Norman surface (6022) contained a late medieval or early post-medieval jar rim sherd with a thumbled cordon around the neck (Fig. 13.7). It also contained a jug sherd with a section of a rod handle, with heavy thumbing radiating from the handle at its junction with the body (Fig. 13.8). This is probably a Nottingham product and despite its weight (150g) would seem to be residual.

Of the various small Phase 2 post-medieval pits only features F654 and F624 contained pottery. Four sherds were present in the fill of feature F654 (6101). One of these was a bowl sherd in an oxidised pinkish-orange fabric with white streaks within the matrix. The bowl had an internal brownish-olive glaze and was sooted externally. There was one small gritty ware sherd and two joining sherds in a fine buff fabric containing

mainly sparse deep purplish red iron ore fragments up to 5mm. The sherds had a tan glaze stained dark brown in places with iron-impurities. There was some glaze on the interior and a vertical applied thumbed strip. The curvature on the sherds suggested that they had come from a large vessel such as a cistern (bung-hole jar) and the suggested date for the backfill of the pit is in the 15th or 16th centuries.

Fill 6037 of pit F628 contained a sherd from a late medieval or early post-medieval jar with an internal tan glaze and an olive glazed early medieval pitcher sherd. Fill 6038 of pit F628 contained a gritty ware jug and cooking pot sherd, a Cistercian ware cup sherd and a residual late Saxon Derby ware sherd.

Fill 6036 of pit F627, on the evidence of a Cistercian ware sherd, probably dates to the late 15th or 16th centuries.

Phase 3

Fill 6058 of pit F621 which truncated pit F620 contained 18th century blackware and coarseware sherds. The fill of feature F621 contained three 18th century mug fragments and a small coarseware sherd. The fill of feature F637, which post-dated feature F621, produced two sherds each weighing 8g, one probably from a 17th century Midlands Purple vessel and the other from a coarseware jar or bowl, with an internal mid-brown glaze and an external reddish thin slip or wash. The latter is also likely to be of 17th century date. However the sherds from these features were not only very small but also very infrequent and they must represent residual material incorporated into the clinkery charcoal fills and hence can only give a very broad *terminus post quem* for their backfilling.

Fill 6086 of feature F645 contained three black-glazed coarseware sherds, one from a flange rim bowl, the second from a collar-rim pan. All three sherds are likely to date to the 18th century. Fill 6102 of pit F655 contained a small fragment of a decorated Victorian hearth tile.

Phase 4

Two fills which were associated with Structure 1 F635 (6043, 6051) contained pottery. All of the pottery with the exception of a small blackware sherd and a bead-rim brown salt-glazed stoneware bowl, dated to the 19th century. The pottery therefore reflects the disuse of this structure, probably no earlier than the mid 19th century. The map evidence (Fig. 4, 1852 map) shows it remained in use in the mid 19th century.

A number of sherds came from a layer around F631. The group contained a mixture of gritty ware, some very hard-fired and Midlands Purple-like, and splash glazed ware, cistercian ware and blackware, post-medieval black-glazed coarseware, brown salt-glazed stoneware and creamware. The range of pottery is earlier than that recovered from Structure 1 but it seems likely that both structures were probably redundant at the same time.

Discussion

Despite the size and location of the area excavated there was comparatively little pottery recovered. Of this the greater part of the assemblage was made up of either Saxo-Norman or post-medieval pottery. The Phase 1 pottery is, however, consistent with domestic occupation in the Saxo-Norman period.

The putative early pits fall into two groups; those associated with some fire-based process mainly to the east of the site, e.g. features F632, F642 and F650, with an outlier in pit complex F601–F603. It is unfortunate that only one feature (F632) contained pottery. This was Saxo-Norman in date and it is probable that these eastern features were more or less contemporary with the cobbled surface 6022. If we view this eastern block of features as connected with a fire-based industry then the post-holes a little to the west, could perhaps be the remains of a wind-break, rather than just a fence, particularly since the prevailing winds blow from the west or southwest.

The second group of putative early pits (F600, F623 and F629), which appeared to have had a lining, were presumably connected with a water or liquid-based industry or craft. The dating of these pits is problematic. Pit F600 only contained Saxo-Norman pottery and quite happily fits into Phase 1. Pits F620 and F649 also appear to be Saxo-Norman and to have gone out of use in this period also. The later material in the uppermost fills is almost certainly the result of trample or slumping of later layers or disturbance. There is no reason to believe that any of these features remained partially open and that they were finally backfilled at a much later date. Thus, the site in the Saxo-Norman period could be construed as consisting of a cobbled 'working surface' to the west with a series of industrial features to the east, although there is no way of telling whether lined pit F600 was contemporary with pits F632, F642 and F650.

The two remaining lined pits F623 and F629 initially appear from their proximity to be related. However, the lower fills of F623 consist of a series of roughly horizontal aceramic layers. This is mirrored by the lower fill sequences of F620 and F600. The upper fill of feature F623 (6026) contains a truly bizarre mix of pottery. Over half the sherds are Stamford ware but these are mixed with 15th–16th century pottery types (eg Cistercian ware) and single sherds of tin-glazed earthenware, black basalt ware, pearlware and 19th century utilitarian whiteware. Either this pit was a very late feature indeed or it has been contaminated. Post-hole F628 which cut fill 6026 (F623) contained two splash-glazed ware sherds, an early medieval glazed ware sherd and a 15th–16th century jar sherd with internal tan glaze. On balance therefore, pit F623 does seem to have been in use in the Saxo-Norman period and also mostly backfilled in the same period.

The steeply raked fills of feature F629 are very different from those found in features F623, F600 and F620. A large sandy buff ware cooking pot sherd from the earliest fill (6040) is unlikely to pre-date the 13th century and a substantial part of a sandy buff ware pipkin (Fig. 13.3) was found in fill 6040. This tends to suggest that the pit cannot have been backfilled until the later 13th or 14th centuries. Also this is one of the few examples of what looks like primary or near primary rubbish disposal on the site. Pit F629, unlike pit F623, also seems to respect the Phase 2 gully or property boundary F622. All-in-all it seems that F629 is a later feature than, and even possibly replacement for, feature F623, although the extended timescale between their backfilling needs to be considered.

The paucity of pottery in the large pits (F600, F623 and F629) is particularly striking. This is in marked contrast to many urban sites. At St Peter's School, Gaol Street, Hereford, for example (Rátkai in preparation), a number of large pits, some clay lined, contained hundreds of sherds and a bell-founding pit at Deansway, Worcester (Dalwood and Jackson 2004), similarly contained large amounts of pottery. In both cases the

taphonomy much more closely resembled the pattern for domestic rubbish disposal into pre-existing pits, whose primary use was now redundant. The taphonomy of many of the King Street pits, particularly the Phase 1 pits, appears somewhat different. In short these pit fills do not suggest backfilling with domestic rubbish, but rather deliberate backfilling episodes with material which contained a small admixture of discarded pottery, the one possible exception being fill 6066 of F629. If the pits had an industrial function then it is not inconceivable that once the industrial activity had ceased the pits were quickly backfilled. Such an interpretation is not inconsistent with the pottery evidence.

Only five fabrics had a higher than average sherd weight and the data were examined to see where large sherds (over 20g), a possible indicator of primary rubbish disposal, in these fabrics occurred. Large vessel fragments of gritty ware (cooking pot) and sandy buff ware (cooking pot and pipkin) were found in the fills of feature F629. The possible boundary (F628, F624 and F654) also contained comparatively large sherds. Feature F624 contained a late medieval/early post medieval jar or bowl base and a Midlands Purple handle from a jug or cistern. Post-hole F628 contained a late medieval/early post-medieval jar sherd with an internal tan glaze and pit F654 contained a late medieval/early post-medieval jug or cistern sherd. The evidence suggests that these pits probably went out of use about the same time possibly in the later 15th or 16th centuries.

The absence of pottery from the fill of gully F622 is notable, as is the absence of feature fills which can be dated to the later 12th–14th centuries, with the exception of feature F629. What few Phase 2 features there are have fills which date to the 15th or 16th centuries, although pits F627 and F654 and post-hole F628 all contain residual medieval pottery.

The Phase 3 and Phase 4 pottery contains residual Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery in addition to pottery of the 16th–19th centuries. There is no very clear picture here and truncation, and building and demolition work in the 18th–20th centuries have clearly affected the ceramic record.

Charred plant remains

By James Greig

Summary

The Saxo-Norman (Phase 1) samples contained mainly charcoal, together with small collections of charred grains and weed seeds probably derived from food preparation waste that became charred on domestic firesides. The post-medieval (Phase 3) sample contained charcoal and weed seeds as well, but also remains of a range of uncharred fruit, vegetables and other useful plants including hops, the cabbage family, celery and onion.

Introduction

Plant remains were investigated to contribute towards interpretation of the site and its contemporary environs. Samples were collected during the excavations, and a number of these were wet sieved and floated, and 13 of the dried flots (Table 1) were selected for detailed study. The flots were examined under a stereo microscope and the plant and other remains identified and checked with the writer's own reference collections. The results are listed in taxonomic order (Kent 1992) in Table 2.

Results

Most of the samples contained charcoal, along with some charred grain, vetches and a very few charred weed seeds. This looks like remains of domestic waste, resulting from small amounts of grain cleaned ready for consumption and possible waste from final cleaning being burnt on a domestic fire. Some grains had been exposed to rapid heating and became puffed up and were recognisable mainly as probable wheat, while others had been heated more gently, perhaps at the edge of the fire, and were well preserved, including wheat, oats and rye. Barley is only represented as some tentatively identified grains. There were also vetch seeds and those of other weeds such as stinking mayweed which was a typical cornfield weed, accidentally incorporated with the grain. These few weed seeds could be from grain well-cleaned ready for consumption, or from weed seeds sorted and discarded from grain as part of its final preparation. The cleaned grain could then have been used directly in pottage or for malting, or then ground into meal for making into bread. There were also seeds of elder in almost all the samples; these are quite tough and resistant to decay, and probably represent part of the urban background flora, although they can also be eaten.

Such signs of domestic life could support the interpretation of the backfilling of some of the pits with waste, of which the more durable kinds in a non-waterlogged environment would have been the bones and household ashes produced by the people living in the surroundings. The interpretation of pit fills is problematic, as the final fill may have had a different purpose than that for which the pit was dug.

The post-medieval sample from Phase 3 pit F621 had much the richest flora of all the material from the site. It consisted of wood charcoal with a little coal, but also uncharred wood fragments, seeds, fly pupae, beetle remains and spun fibres. This therefore represents more than the 'fireside' remains of the other samples, but probably other domestic waste as well, even including spun fibres, preserved by rather more waterlogged or anoxic surroundings. This kind of material would probably have been present when the other, charred, material was originally deposited, but would have long since decayed away.

As well as some charred wheat and weed seeds, there were non-charred remains of a range of useful plants including *Humulus lupulus* (hop), *Ficus carica* (fig), *Brassica* sp. (cabbages, mustard) *Rubus* sp. (bramble or raspberry), *Fragaria vesca* (strawberry), *Prunus avium/cerasus* (cherry), *Prunus spinosa* (sloe), *Allium cepa* (onion), *Vitis vinifera* (grape) and *Apium graveolens* (celery) and *Piper nigrum* (black pepper). Fish scale was another possible sign of domestic refuse or food remains.

The remains of fruits such as strawberries, brambles or raspberries, sloes, cherries, figs and grapes are not uncommon in urban deposits with suitable conditions for their preservation and dating from the later middle ages onwards (Greig 1996), representing the sweet foods that were available before sugar became widely affordable.

Brassica includes mustard as well as the cabbage family of garden plants, which cannot generally be identified more exactly from their seeds. Celery seed is a spice in its own right which could explain its presence, but onion seed is a very rare find, although there is plenty of documentary evidence that onions were used (Dyer 1994, 128). A likely explanation could be that in addition to possible use of some of these seeds themselves such as mustard and celery, seeds of these and perhaps of cabbages and onions would have been saved from year to year in order to sow the next season's crop.

Context	Feature	Phase	Description	Content
6044	F632	1	Saxo-Norman hearth, burnt stone lining	wood charcoal, coal, fibre, bone fragment. 25 plant remains
6026	F623	2	Saxo-Norman pit	charcoal, 84 charred grain, 444 uncharred elder seeds
6028	F623	1	Saxo-Norman pit, Phase 1 backfills	charcoal, 22 charred grains and some weed seeds; fresh birch seed
6075	F623	1	Saxo-Norman pit dark grey brown sand-silt	charcoal, 29 charred grain and some other seeds
6076	F623	1	Saxo-Norman pit, orange brown silty sand	small amount of charcoal, mouse/shrew femur, amphibian bone, 3 cereal grains
6082	F600	1	Saxo-Norman pit, charcoal rich material	charcoal, 72 charred cereal and weed seeds
6084	F600	1	"	charcoal, burnt clay, grey silt; 22 cereal and other charred seeds
6001	F600	1	"	charcoal, 103 cereal and other charred seeds
6079	F642	1	Furnace pit, red orange clay	charcoal, coal, 24 cereal and other charred seeds
6100	F649	1	Pit, mid brown clay sand animal bone	charcoal, 51 cereal and other charred seeds
6096	F650	1	Gully, burnt clay	charcoal, bone fragments, 19 cereal and other charred seeds
6101	F654	2?	Medieval pit	charcoal, burnt clay, coal, 8 cereal and other charred seeds
6057	F621	3	Pit 18th century backfill	partially charred and partly waterlogged remains including charcoal, wood fragments, spun fibre, coal, fly pupae, insect remains and fish scale. Numerous charred and waterlogged plant remains

Table 1: Derby, King Street: charred plant remains.

<i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L.	1																			fool's parsley
<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	2																			celery
<i>Verbena officinalis</i> L.	1																			vervain
<i>Lamium</i> sp.	3																			dead-nettle
<i>Galeopsis</i> sp.	1																			hemp-nettle
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.	26	444	2	2	1	4, *1	1	7	7											elder
<i>Sonchus asper</i> (L.) Hill	3																			prickly sow- thistle
<i>Taraxacum</i> sp.	1																			dandelion
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.																				stinking mayweed
<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i> L.	1																			hemp agrimony
<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	1																			onion
<i>Carex</i> subg <i>Vignea</i>	*1																			sedg
<i>Carex</i> subg <i>Carex</i>	1																			sedg
<i>Triticum</i> sp.	*3	*1	*8	*12	*20	*2	*14	*5	*9	*3	*14	*5	*9	*3	*2					wheat
? <i>Triticum</i> sp.	*8	*19	*68	*19	*21	*3	*10	*6	*6	*10	*73	*16	*32	*7	*5					probable wheat
<i>Secale cereale</i> L.																				rye
? <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.																				barley?
<i>Avena</i> sp.	*1	*1	*7	*1	*2															oats
Small <i>Avena</i> sp.		*3																		wild oats
Poaceae nfi	*3																			grasses
<i>Bromus</i> sp.																				brome-grass
<i>Piper nigrum</i> L.	4																			Black pepper

Names and order according to Kent (1992). * are charred remains

Table 2: Derby, King Street: list of plants.

Accordingly, surplus or old seed could have been discarded together with domestic waste. Hops are known to have been used for brewing from the late middle ages onwards, but few finds have been recorded, probably because they were not actually eaten and rarely became included in domestic waste. Brewing waste may have been fed to pigs, for example. Peppercorns, which come from the tropics, were originally an expensive luxury which became more affordable by the post-medieval period, hence the expression 'peppercorn rent', and there are scattered finds from this time (Greig 1996).

There was also a large weed flora which included annual weeds of disturbed ground which might therefore have grown in a garden, such as *Chenopodium* sp. (fat hen), *Atriplex* sp. (orache), *Stellaria media* (chickweed), *Euphorbia helioscopia* and *E. peplus* (sun and petty spurges), *Aethusa cynapium* (fool's parsley) and *Galeopsis* sp. (hemp-nettle). Other plants represent a range of weedy or grassland habitats such as *Ranunculus* (buttercup), *Taraxacum* (dandelion) and *Verbena officinalis* (vervain), and so do not help much with interpretation.

There were a few signs of plants that would have grown in other, probably out of town, habitats such as *Carex* (sedge) and *Pteridium* (bracken), which could represent material brought in for particular purposes. However there was no sign of hay or straw, which is often found in other such deposits and possibly represents dung.

A slight question concerns the likelihood of residuality; since the charred remains in Phase 2 feature F654 are so similar to those found in the Saxo-Norman deposits, it is just possible that they are residual material, and that just the non charred remains date from the later deposits in this pit.

Correlation with other sites

The Saxo-Norman material can be compared with the results from Saxon Stafford (Moffett 1987) or from medieval Coventry at Upper Well Street (Greig 2004). The deposits at Stafford are rather enigmatic as they consist of huge amounts of charred grain, such as bread wheat and rye, with barley and oats, but at least establish that these were the grains grown there at the time, and the fairly limited range of food plants. The Coventry material is the medieval fireside remains of charcoal and small amounts of food grains and peas together with a few weed seeds from domestic food-stuffs, a similar, although later find to the Saxo-Norman material from Derby. These allow us to piece together a picture of the domestic economy to compare with what is known from other sources (Dyer 1994). Saxon finds, by their very rarity, are important for this.

The later sample from feature F621 provides a rare glimpse of the use of hops, perhaps for domestic brewing, and at the other end of the time scale post-medieval remains are important because they are also rarely studied, yet this was a time of great change in the plants available.

Very few remains seem to have been studied from Derby so far, so this is a useful set of results for the area.

DISCUSSION

Phase 1: Saxo-Norman pre-1150

Ratkai (above) suggests the Phase 1 industrial activity ended around 1150, based on the absence of Developed Stamford ware (usually Type B). Since Fabric B was absent it

is even possible that the activity was predominantly pre-conquest in date, as is also suggested by the sherds of late Saxon Derby ware, although this cannot be proven. This earliest suite of features from King Street are of particular importance because only limited information is available concerning the 9th to 11th century occupation outside the Peak District (Barrett 2004, 5). He also notes (*ibid*, 2) that there is presently little archaeological evidence for the burh at Derby or its Anglo-Saxon predecessor — most evidence for this early period being documentary.

The Phase 1 feature group lay in the north of the Northworthy settlement, which probably had its northern limit along the former Bridgegate. It is likely that the Phase 1 feature group post-dated AD 800, the earliest date for the foundation of the adjoining St Alkmund's church. Historically, the Phase 1 occupation may have coincided with several major upheavals, including the period of Danish control from the 870s, the recovery of control by the Saxon Kingdom of Wessex in the 920s, and the brief recovery by the Danes in the 940s (Lewis 2004, 1).

Phase 1 activity was mainly represented by a pebble surface and large pits. The east-facing slope contained a cluster of post-holes, a hearth and a gully. The pits were comparatively unweathered in profile, and contained fragments of coarse clay lining. One pit (F600) contained two post-holes in its base (F643–F644), and was probably associated with two adjoining post-holes (F652–F653). The pits, hearth and post-hole group may be attributed to clothmaking, although this cannot be proven. Writing in 1984, Clarke (1984, 130) noted that this industry was almost totally neglected by archaeologists. This industry was undertaken in a domestic context until 11th century when the treadle-operated loom, which could produce cloth at a faster speed, started cloth manufacture in the professional weaver's workshop (Walton 1991, 346).

Because of their regular morphology it is unlikely that the Phase 1 pits (or pit F629 from Phase 2) were gravel pits; nor was it possible that they were wells, or rubbish pits. The Phase 1 pottery was probably associated with domestic occupation. Ratkai highlights the relative paucity of pottery from within the backfills of the large pits (e.g., F600, F623). This may suggest that the pits were quickly backfilled when the industrial complex went out of use. There is no evidence to suggest that the Phase 1 pits were used for rubbish disposal when their primary function had come to an end. At Worcester (Dalwood and Bryant 2004, 86) it was suggested that domestic waste in the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods was dumped onto middens, only part of which material was incidentally incorporated into pit fills. The same interpretation may be suggested for the King Street site.

The charred plant remains from Phase 1 backfills are consistent with domestic waste, deriving from grain being cleaned before consumption, and waste from a final cleaning of the grain being burnt on a domestic fire. The cleaned grain could have been used for pottage, malting, or breadmaking. Weed seeds were also present, along with sedge and bracken, presumably brought from outside the town.

Adjoining excavations in the 1970s revealed that the 9th century possible minster church of St Alkmund was rebuilt in the late 10th or early 11th century, after the Saxon reconquest (Raleigh Radford 1978, 57). The Domesday survey of 1086 includes the possible Minster of St Alkmund as well as the Royal Free Chapel (secular college) of All Saints; the latter being the church of the borough after the re-conquest, as well as the principal medieval church in Derby. All Saints was the wealthier institution of the

two, fitting its royal foundation, certainly by the 16th century, because of its central position. Land attributed to St Alkmund lay closer to the northern edge of the town, and may not have enjoyed the best agricultural yields.

In the early 12th century the churches of Derby and Wirksworth were granted by Henry I to the Dean of the recently built cathedral church of Lincoln, although St Alkmund may have been the subject of a separate award before 1163. Thus, by the later 12th century, if not earlier, St Alkmund ceased to be a minster, and the number of priests was reduced from 13 to six and a sub-dean. Few priests will have continued to reside at St Alkmund's because there was no dwelling house for such noted in 1549 (J. D'Arcy *pers. comm.*). The transfer of clergy to All Saints would fit well with the abandonment of possible clothmaking by the later 11th century, if not earlier, particularly if the industry was dependant upon pilgrim traffic. Thus, the diminished status of St Alkmund's could have had a direct effect on the economy of the surrounding area. Even in the absence of such a direct nexus between clothmaking and the church, it is possible that the reduced status of St Alkmund's could have had led to a more gradual decline in economic activity within the surrounding area. As noted by Ratkai (above) the possibility should be considered that the Phase 1 ceramic sequence largely ended around the time of the Conquest, in which case the abandonment of the possible clothmaking could be seen as part of the broader changes flowing from the conquest.

Phase 2: medieval and early post-medieval cultivation and boundary

The large Phase 2 pit (F629) contained rubbish deposits, although rubbish disposal may not have been its primary purpose. The pit, which contained later 13th and 14th century pottery was the earliest Phase 2 feature excavated. Although Phase 2 pit F629 immediately adjoined Phase 1 pit F623, it is difficult to see the former as continuation of the clothmaking industry possibly represented by the latter, principally because of the long time-span between their abandonment, and the lack of evidence for clothmaking in the intervening period.

To the east lay a boundary, defined by pitting and a gully. This feature group contained 15th and 16th century pottery. Only one pit (F627) lay to the east of the boundary. Clearly therefore the area excavated had ceased to be a focus of industrial activity after pit F629 was abandoned. The excavated area was cultivated in Phase 2, with soils infilling the remaining hollows within some Phase 1 features.

It is not clear if the excavated cultivated back-plot area belonged to the properties fronting onto Bridgegate, or with the terrace adjoining the eastern side of the churchyard (later known as St Alkmund's Churchyard, Fig. 4, 1852 map), in which case it could have been a rearward boundary. Alternatively the excavated area could have partly belonged to both. Speed's schematic map of 1610 (Fig. 3) shows buildings on both frontages, but no details of the complimentary plot boundary arrangement. Although the built-up area on the map of 1791 (Fig. 4) is also schematic, it is notable that the eastern boundary of this terrace coincides approximately with the excavated Phase 2 boundary. It is therefore possible that the area to the west of the Phase 2 boundary belonged to the later St Alkmund's Churchyard, and the land to the east to Bridgegate, although this cannot be proven.

It is clear that by the end of the 12th century all industrial activity on site had ceased (with the exception of pit F629); this activity may even have ceased earlier, around the

time of the conquest. This abandonment may reflect the reduction in status of St Alkmund's church, as discussed above. From that point onwards the site may have become incorporated within the back plot area of dwellings on the Bridgegate or St Alkmund's Churchyard frontages. It is possible that the medieval abandonment of this back-plot area was due to other, wider factors, such as the run of poor harvests in the early 14th century and the Black Death in the middle years of that century (Clarke 1984). Moreover, urban cloth production was in decline generally in 14th century (Walton 1991, 351), as a result of the rise of clothmaking in the countryside (Clarke 1984, 130).

Phase 3: 17th and 18th century activity

Phase 3 marks a resumption in activity. By the end of the 18th century (Fig. 4, 1791 map), the area lay to the rear of the Bridgegate frontage, and to the east of a terrace of north-south aligned terrace of houses to the east of the churchyard. The Phase 3 features mainly comprised pits. Notable among this feature group was pit F621 which contained fragments of spun fibre and hops, indicating brewing, perhaps undertaken on a domestic scale. It also contained the remains of fruit and vegetables, weeds, as well as hops, the cabbage family, celery and onion. These indicate that the area formed part of a cultivated garden or allotment during the 17th or 18th century.

Phase 3 features included 17th and 18th century pottery.

Phase 4: later post-medieval activity

The archaeological and cartographic evidence for this period happily coincide. The main excavated feature was a three-sided building, also shown on the map of 1852 (Fig. 4). It is not clear from the mapping if this structure lay within the backplots of properties fronting Bridgegate, or those adjoining the north-south terrace to the east of the churchyard. Mapping indicates extensions to this building on its southeastern corner (identified at excavation), and also midway along its northern side, not recorded by excavation presumably because of later truncation. The western side of this building was not found. A buttress at the western end of its southern wall (F619) indicates that this side of the building was flush with the Phase 2 north-south gully (F622, F625), which formed the rearward limit of plots fronting onto St Alkmund's Churchyard. Structure 1, which contained casting sand was probably used for ironworking, as may be suggested by the sloping channel. Later disturbance may have removed all trace of ironworking residues which could have provided a further basis for this interpretation.

Kelly's Directory of 1888 shows that the surrounding area contained a variety of tradesmen, including a confectioner, picture framer, baker and plumber, but the only industrial premises were of the Standard Manufacturing Washing Machine Company. It is not clear from the directory where those premises were situated.

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