Towns in Transition in the First Millennium AD: York as a Case Study

FIGURES Chapters 3 & 4

All images © York Archaeological Trust unless otherwise stated

Please note that some images were discarded during production of the draft manuscript, but the figure numbers have not been revised to reflect this. Thus there are some figures numbers without images, listed as 'discarded' or 'not required'. The numbering is consistent with references in the text.

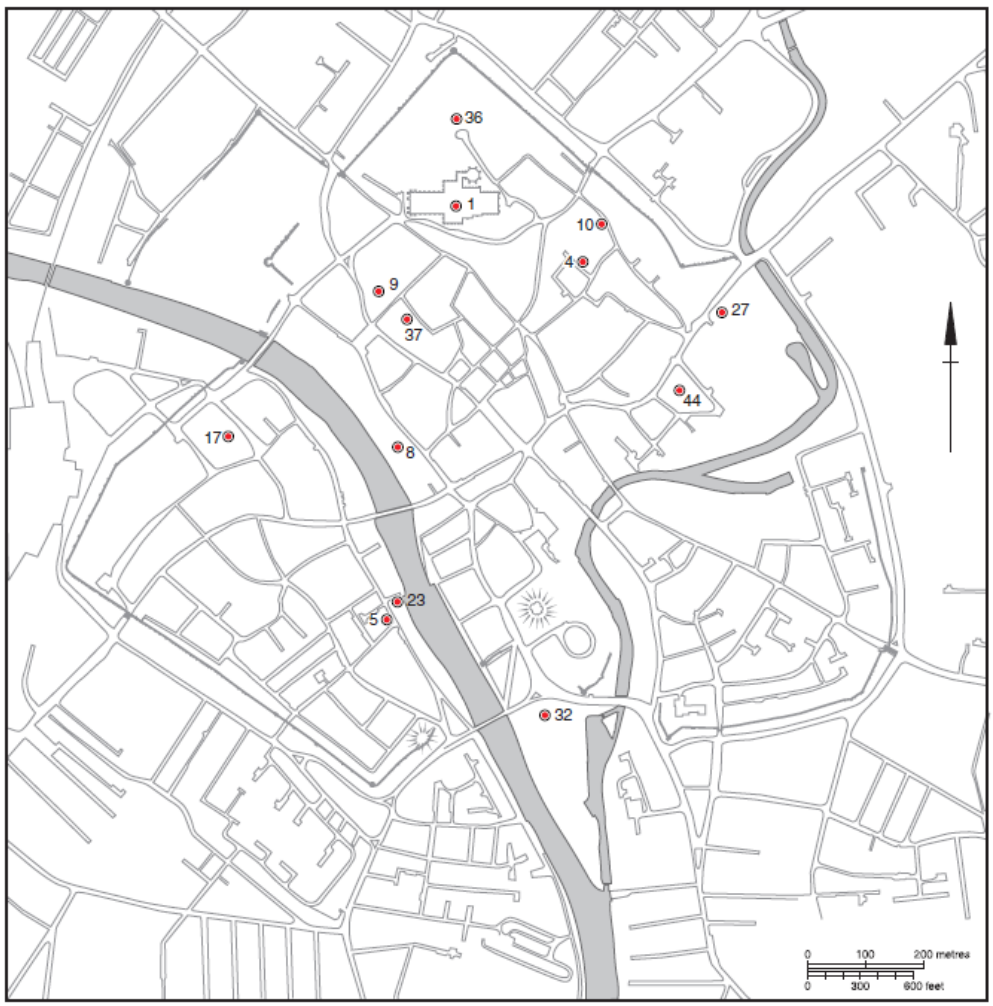

Fig.3.A

Locations of excavated sites in York relevant to the areas of research considered in Chapter 3. Sites listed alphabetically.

Site #	*Site name*	*Site #*	*Site name*
27	Adams' Hydraulics, Layerthorpe	32	St George's Field
10	Bedern NE	23	23-28 Skeldergate, Albion Wharf
4	Bedern SW	5	58-9 Skeldergate
9	9 Blake St	17	24-30 Tanner Row
8	39-41 Coney St	1	York Minster
44	Hungate	36	York Minster Library
37	3 Little Stonegate		

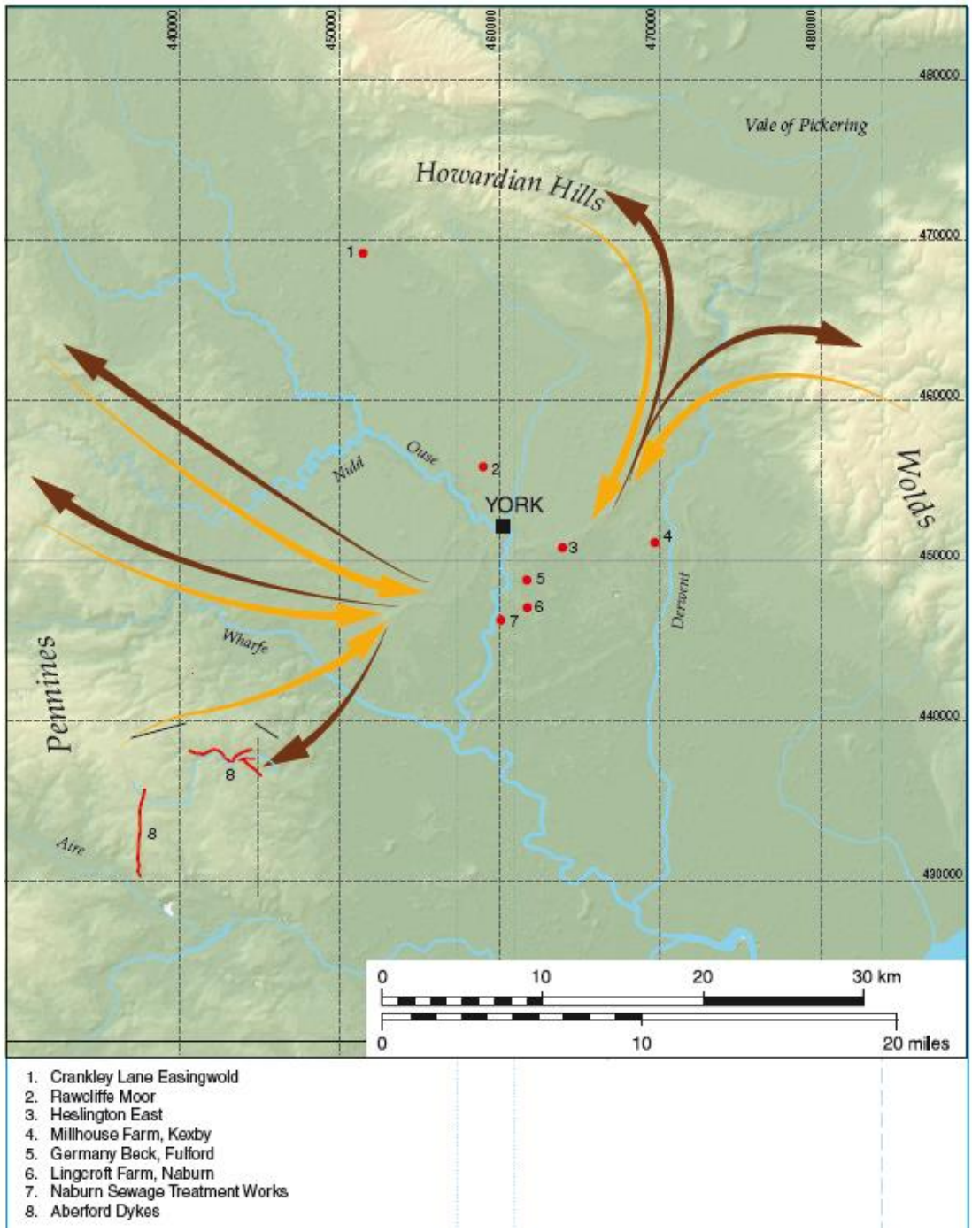

Fig.3.B

Distribution of excavated LpRIA sites around York and in the Vale; 1, *Crankley Lane, Easingwold*; 2, *Rawcliffe Moor*; 3, *Heslington East*; 4, *Mill House Farm, Kexby*; 5, *Germany Beck, Fulford*; 6, *Lingcroft Farm, Naburn*; 7, *Naburn Sewage Treatment Works*. The orange and brown arrows indicate suggested routes into and out of the Vale along the York moraine, from and to the surrounding uplands, for the transhumant movement of livestock in summer and autumn (3.5.4-6). The extensive, landscape-scale system of massive ditches and embankments around Aberford in the lower Pennines - the 'Aberford Dykes' (3.10.2-3) – is located at 8.

Fig.3.C and 3.D– DISCARDED

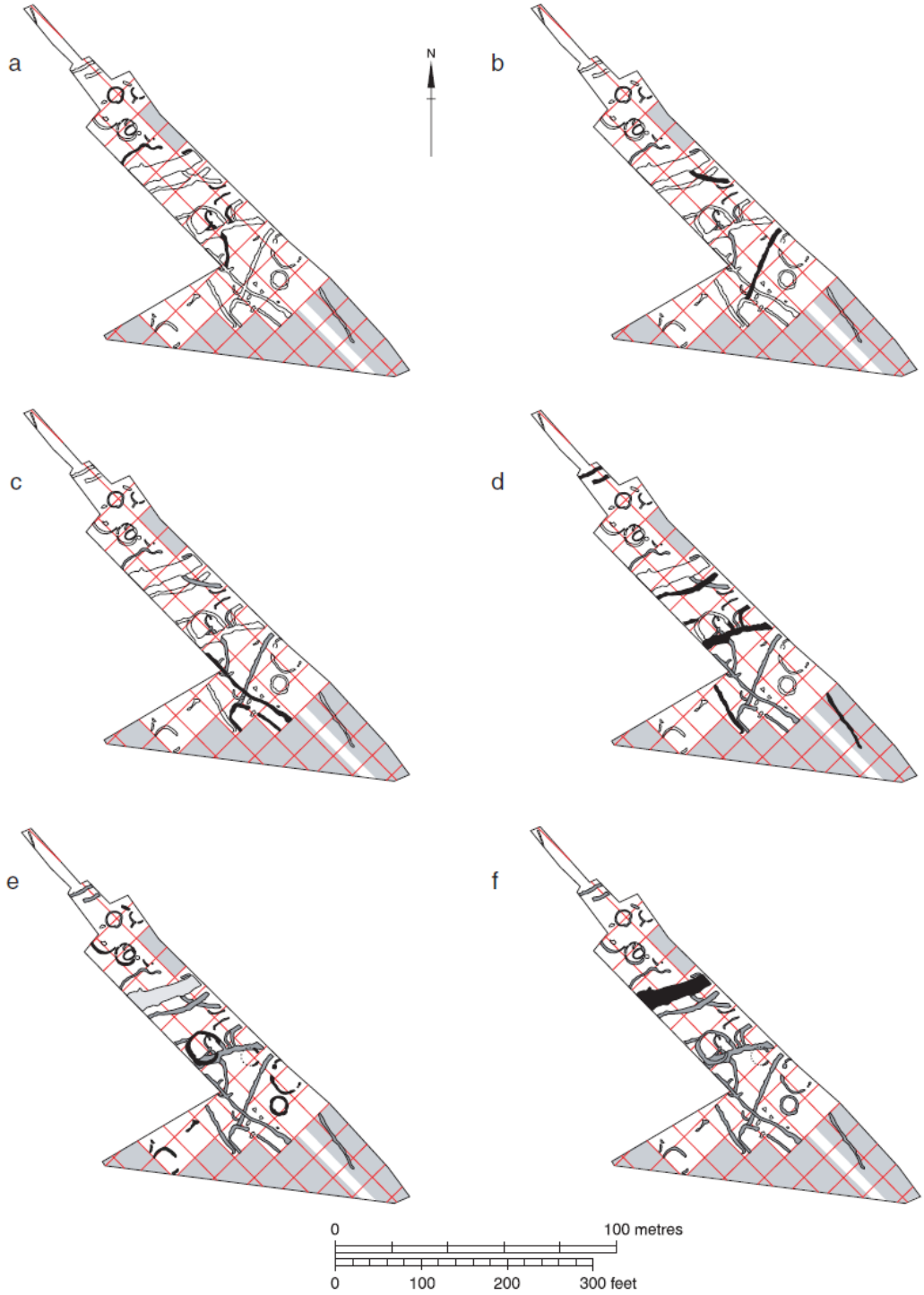

Fig. 3.E

Sequence of land enclosure and habitation at Crankley Lane, Easingwold, North Yorkshire, indicating progressively increasing extent of land enclosure through fences, palisades and ditched embankments. Contemporary features are depicted in black, earlier features in grey, later features in outline. The only chronological 'peg' for this sequence is provided by a radiocarbon date obtained from elderberry seeds found in association with potsherds in a regional LpRIA tradition in phase E, when domestic buildings in the form of roundhouses were constructed on the site for the first time. This dated this phase of activity to the 1st or 2nd century AD, the absence of Roman pottery from the site suggesting, though not conclusively determining, a date earlier in this time period. The earlier

phases could extend back into the earlier Iron Age, the Bronze Age or beyond. It is suggested that the probable context for these successive episodes of enclosure in this low-lying landscape relates to seasonal visitations for the grazing of livestock on summer pasture (3.5.4-6). The phase f ditch appears most likely to be of Roman date, a part of the complex of field boundaries visible as cropmarks in adjacent fields (Fig.3.F), perhaps indicating the end of the phase e settlement, although this is not certain.

Fig. 3.F

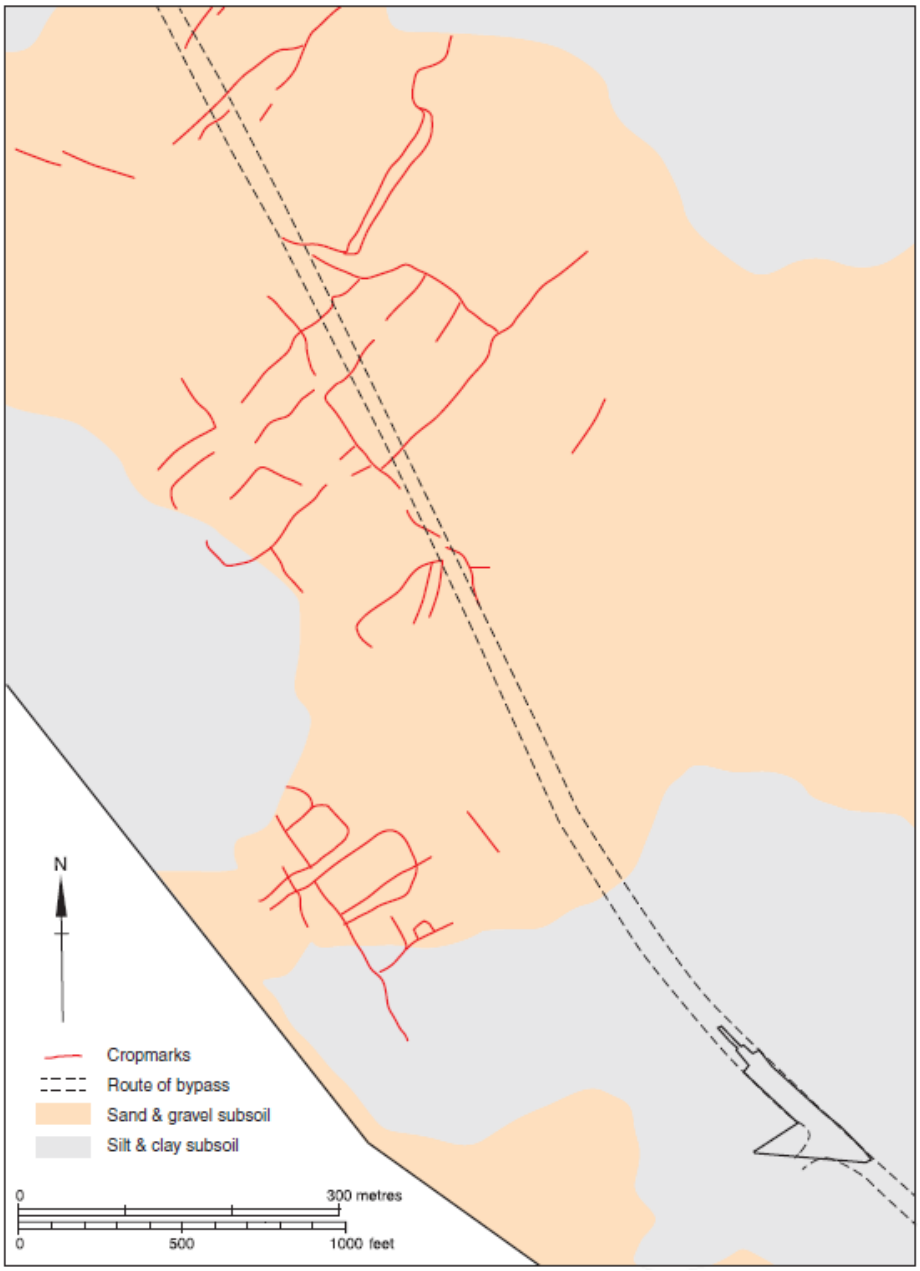

Fig. 3.F

Crankley Lane, Easingwold, North Yorkshire; location of the excavated site in relation to cropmarks and drift geology. The site can be seen to be located on silt and clay subsoils, which equate with marginally lower-lying ground than their sand and gravel counterparts, reflecting the relief created by glacial melt in the early Holocene (3.3.1-3). Evidence of alluvial sediments in the upper fills of some of the excavated features indicate that the site was subject to inundation at least after its abandonment, and this may also have occurred seasonally during the period over which the site saw successive episodes of enclosure in phases a-d. The correspondence of cropmark visibility – a probably Romano-British field system and settlement complex, although this date is as yet unconfirmed – with the subsoils classified as 'sand & gravel' is very apparent. The slight overlaps of cropmarks into areas of silt and clay subsoil may result from minor inaccuracies in their plotting at a small scale, incompleteness of the subsoil mapping, or a combination of the two.

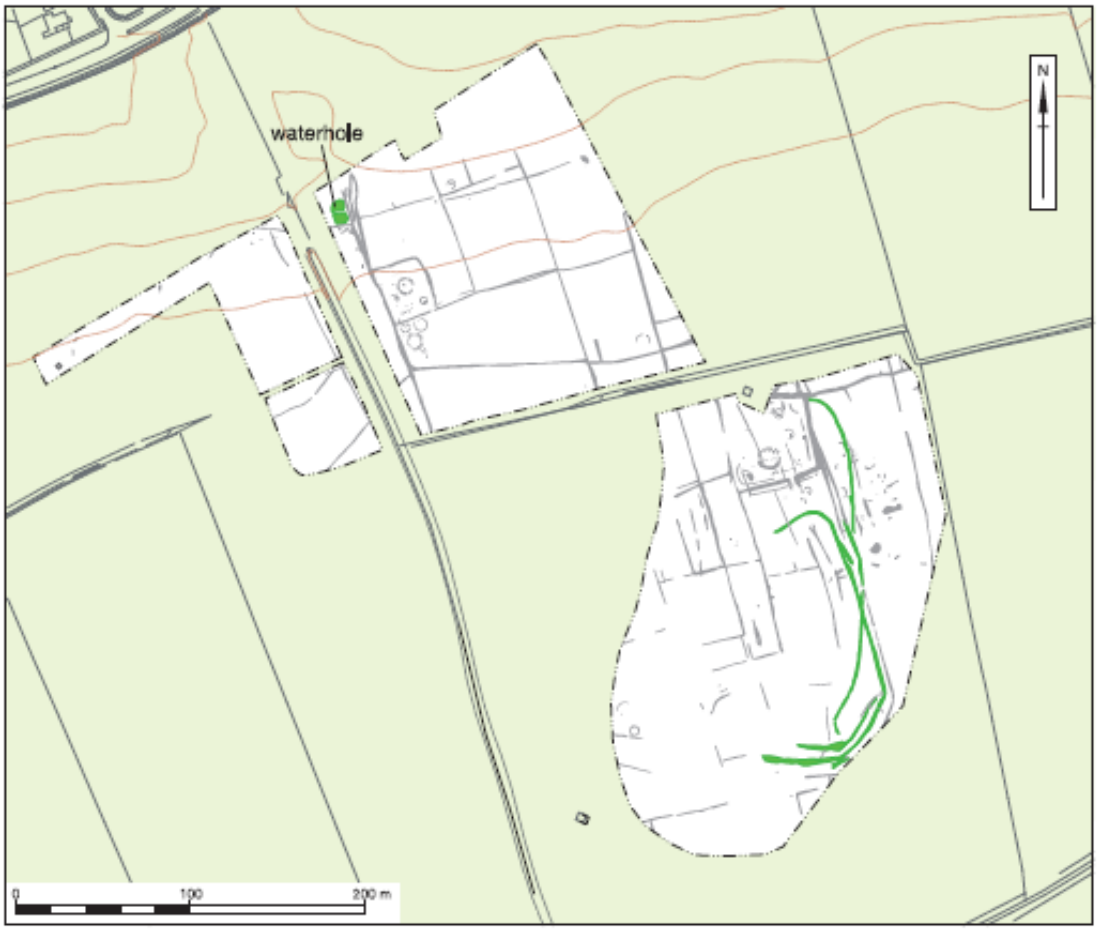

Fig. 3-G

Fig. 3.G

Heslington East, York, plan of Iron Age settlement and land enclosure. The structures and extensive enclosures in light grey are of LpRIA date; the curvilinear features in green are from an earlier, less extensive and less regular episode of enclosure, including a waterhole, heavily trodden by livestock, which appears to have been in use from the Bronze Age. Parallels with the sequence at Crankley Lane, Easingwold are evident. Located on and immediately below the southern slope of the glacial moraine, some 4 kms south-east of the centre of York, the site is located immediately to the south of one of the 'kettlehole' meres suggested on Fig.2.D (2.6.3.3), and sediments from what appears to have been a palaeochannel which had seemingly flowed out of the putative mere were encountered.

Fig. 3.H - DISCARDED

Fig. 3.J

Fig. 3J: York with henge-sized monument

Fig. 3.J

A possible prehistoric focus at York ? The outline of a henge monument, based on the middle henge at Thornborough, North Yorkshire has been – tentatively ! – located on the plateau on which the Roman legionary fortress is sited in response to the arguments presented in 3.6.1-6, and the fact that pre-Roman levels within and around the fortress remain, in effect, *terra incognita* (3.6.8; 3.6.9-10). The largest areas excavated to the pre-Roman ground surface are at 9 Blake St, where these levels were exposed over an area of *c.*270m^2 (Fig.3.A, 9), a comparable area at York Minster Library (36), and c.100m^2 at 12-18 Swinegate (25). Other than these, exposures have been no more than a few square metres. The legionary fortress covers an area of c.192,000m^2, the plateau on which it is sited covering a further *c.*80,000 m^2. The position in which the henge outline has been located reflects the fact that engineering excavations and boreholing have encountered apparently deep declensions in the peri-glacial sediments underlying the fortress, in the areas of St Saviourgate / Spen Lane and Swinegate (Fig.2.A), though whether these reflect geomorphological landforms or human activity is unknown.

Fig.3.K.i

Fig.3.K.ii

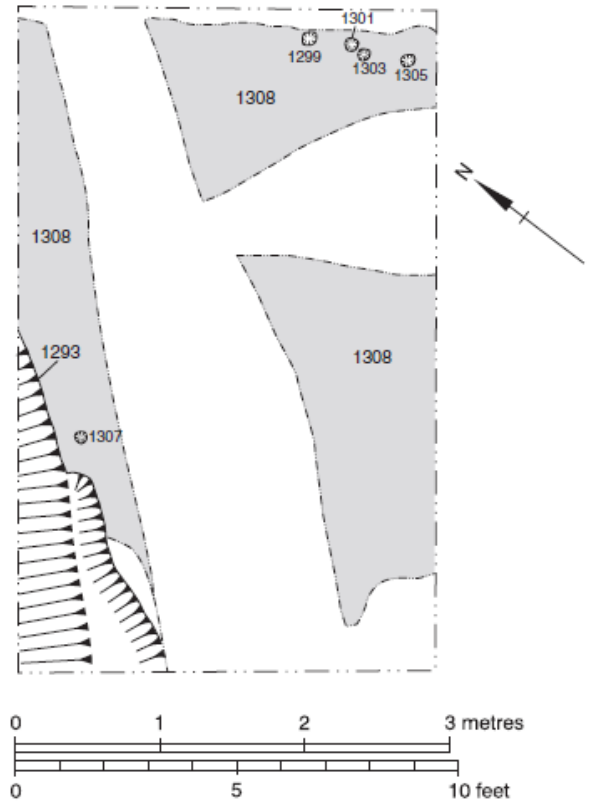

Fig.3.K.iii

Fig.3.K.i-iii

Earliest (Period 1) features from 9 Blake St, cut into the 'natural', peri-glacial sands and clays of the 'plateau' on which the Roman legionary fortress is sited (see Figs 2.D and 2.E.i). The foreground of 3.K.i shows a large pit (3892), *c.*1.10 m deep, and apparently associated linear feature(1393), described in the excavation report as a 'ditch' but perhaps more probably a palisade slot, on an alignment at *c.*45° to that of the earliest phase of Roman timber barracks which succeeded it. At the far end of 3.K.i, and in the foreground of 3.K.ii, the linear feature is described as having been cut by a sub-rectangular pit (1408), apparently of similar depth to previous one. Attributed to the succeeding Period 2, but cut from the same stratigraphic level as these features, a pit 8056, of comparable dimensions to 3892, was excavated some ten metres to the south-west. (See Hall 1997, figs 193-195, pp.308-11 for the relevant 9 Blake St plans). The fills of all of these features were of fairly clean sands and clays, containing few artefacts, none of which need be later in date than *c.*AD 70-80. A possible interpretation is that the three 'pits' actually represent the voids left by the removal of large stone orthostats, present on the site before the foundation of the legionary fortress and removed in advance of its construction. They are comparable, for example, to the voids left by the removal of bluestones from Stonehenge (Parker-Pearson 2012, 221) This interpretation clearly has great significance for the origins of urban settlement at York (see 3.6.1-6 and Figs.3.B and 3.J). In a later context the same interpretative principle has important implications for, indeed is a central component of, the research issues addressed in Chapter 7. Other interpretations of the 9 Blake St features are of course possible. 3.K.iii, from 3 Little Stonegate, shows a more typical extent of exposure of probable pre-Roman features in excavations within the area of the legionary fortress.

Fig.4.A

Locations of excavated sites in York relevant to the areas of research considered in Chapter 4. Those represented by red dots feature prominently in the discussion in this chapter; those located by grey dots are not referred to in the text, but are considered to be potentially relevant to the research under discussion. Sites listed alphabetically.

Site #	*Site name*	*Site #*	*Site name*	*Site #*	*Site name*
6	37 Bishophill Snr	51	Barbican Leisure Centre	37	3 Little Stonegate
9	9 Blake St	10	Bedern NE	57	26-28 Marygate
24	35-41 Blossom St	4	Bedern SW	64	Ks' Garage Micklegate
8	39-41 Coney St	67	House & Son, Blake St	46	Museum St / Lendal
13	16-22 Coppergate	54	14-20 Blossom St	34	North St Pumping Stn
44	Hungate	2	4-6 Church St	59	41 Piccadilly
22	1-9 Micklegate	63	Fetter Lane sub-stn	70	St Leonard's Hospital

16	5 Rougier St	26	Foss Islands Rd / Lawrence St	47	St Maurice's/Newbg'n
17	24-30 Tanner Row	49	Friends' Burial Ground	58	2, St Maurice's Rd
28	Wellington Row	45	31-7 Gillygate	5	58-9 Skeldergate
		48	Interval Tower SW5	25	12-18 Swinegate
19	7-9 Aldwark	61	Layerthorpe Bridge	66	37 Tanner Row
7	21-33 Aldwark	31	__, Piccadilly	1	York Minster
11	1-5 Aldwark	50	Purey Cust Hospital		

Fig.4.B.i

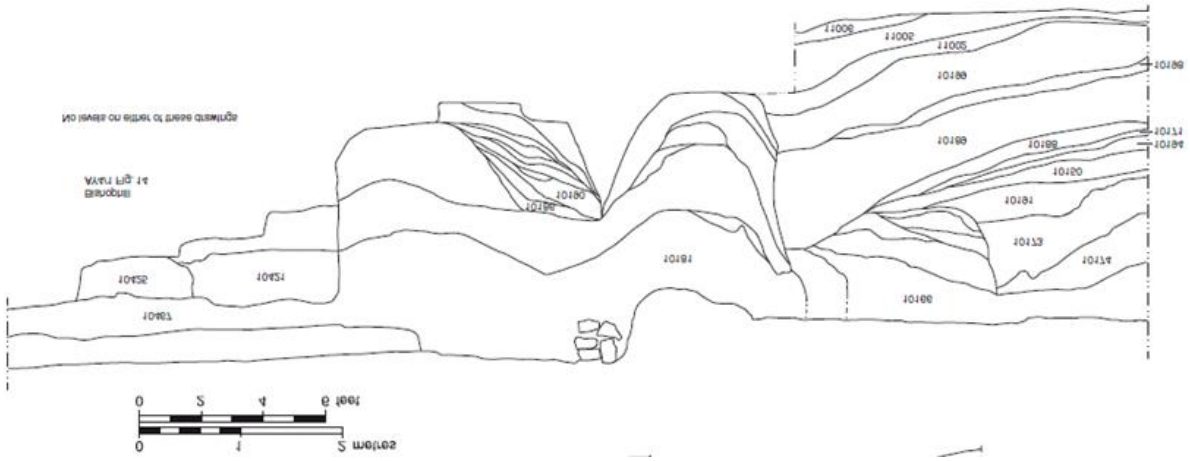

Fig.4.B.ii

Fig.4.B

37 Bishophill Senior, Roman-period terracing on the south-west bank of the river Ouse. 4.B.i illustrates the north-west facing section, 4.B.ii the opposite, south-east facing soil profile exposed on the other side of the narrow excavated trench. The extent and depth of dumped deposits towards the north-eastern end of the trench is very evident, and it is amongst these layers that the interleaving of dumps of re-deposited 'natural' sediments with apparently 'primary' deposits containing large sherds of broken but near-complete ceramic vessels (4.3.4) was encountered. It seems probable that this dumping episode involved the levelling of the original 'crown' of the 'plateau' of peri-glacial sediments in this area on the southwest bank of the Ouse (see Fig.2.E) to create a level terrace through truncation and the dumping of the resulting sediments towards the river. It seems extremely likely that this would have been undertaken as part of the episode of land reclamation within the floodplain of the Ouse (see 2.6.5; Fig.2.E.ii), and the available evidence for the dating of these episodes needs to be re-examined and critically assessed as argued for in 4.7.

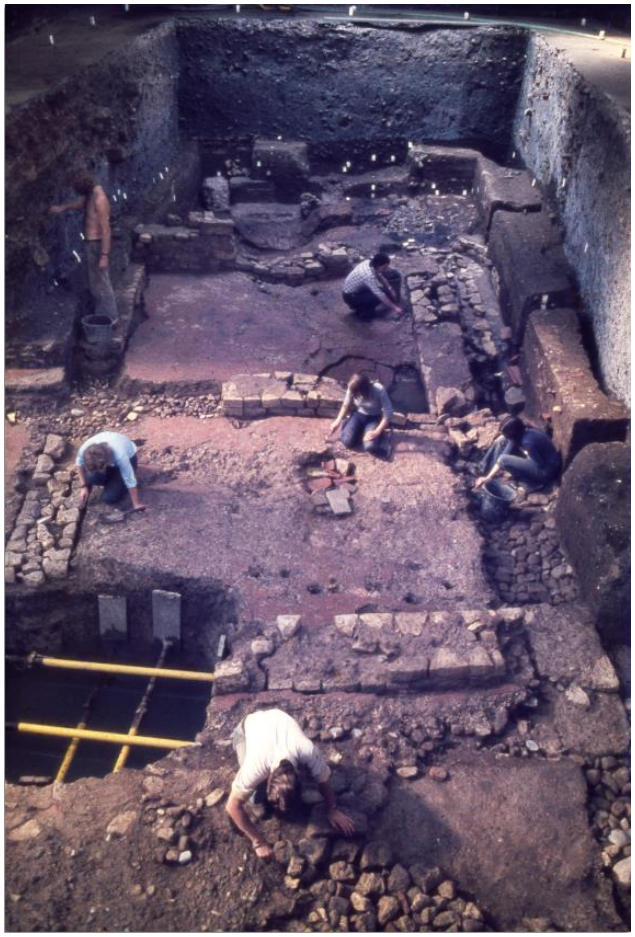

Fig.4.C.i

Fig.4.C.ii

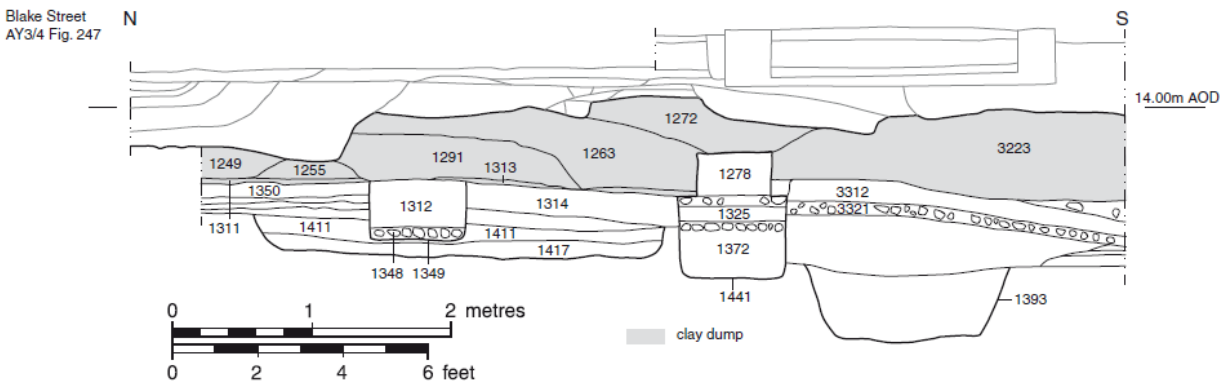

Fig.4.C.iii

Fig.4.C

9 Blake Street. 4.C.i shows the northern end of the stone-founded barrack block, apparently constructed in the second half of the 2nd century, looking towards the north-west. 4.C.ii, from approximately the same viewpoint, shows the same area following the dumping of an extensive layer of clay, which again seems most likely to have been dug out from the 'natural' sediments of the 'plateau' on this side of the river (Hall 1997, 349). 4.C.iii illustrates a section through these sediments (ibid., fig.247, p.348). The published discussion (ibid., 349) notes that the bulk of the pottery from these sediments dates from *c.*AD 200-225 (CP3a), but that in some layers within this sequence sherds of CP4a (*c.*AD 280-360) were encountered. The likely explanation for this seems to be the interpolation of 'primary' discard into what are otherwise primarily re-worked and re-deposited sediments, as seems clearly to have been the case at 37 Bishophill Senior and is argued to have been a widespread occurrence in Roman levels at deeply-stratified sites in York, particularly those sited on the Ouse floodplain (4.3.3-4).