

St John's Triangle, Cambridge

An Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief

VOLUME I: Main Text



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SUMMARY

Following on from two earlier phases of investigation at the St. John's Triangle site, nine trenches, covering a combined total of 41m², were excavated within a 0.3 hectare area of land located in the centre of the historic core of Cambridge. In addition, a further ten areas of watching brief, covering a combined total of 147.44m², were also monitored. These investigations primarily targeted backyard areas situated to the rear of the main frontage properties. The site – which is situated upon the northern tip of a gravel spur, immediately adjacent to the floodplain of the river Cam – contained the deepest stratigraphic sequence yet encountered within the city (at around 4.2m), and a significant history of occupation was revealed. Following probable agricultural usage in the Late Prehistoric period, evidence of a small extra-mural suburb (or 'ribbon settlement') was identified that had been established to the south of the main Roman town during the 2nd century AD. Numerous traces of domestic occupation were encountered, situated alongside the contemporary Colchester to Godmanchester road, beneath which lay a series of gravel quarries that had most probably been utilised during the initial construction of the roadway. This settlement appears to have been abandoned by the close of the 3rd century, when the area most probably returned to its former agricultural use. Subsequently, the promontory was reoccupied around the mid 10th century (thus disproving the existence of a putative late 9th to early 10th century Danelaw settlement in this location) and up to six long narrow properties were established, closely resembling the field strips from which they had most probably originated. The new settlement appears to have expanded rapidly, and by the late 11th century it extended at least 600m to the south along the spine of the gravel ridge.

Then, between c.1140 and 1275, the Triangle site became incorporated into the heart of the Medieval Jewry and a number of stone buildings are known to have been constructed. Following the expulsion of the Jewish community in the late 13th century, the area continued to develop as a successful mercantile quarter and the original Saxo-Norman properties became increasingly subdivided, with at least eleven separate property plots in existence by the end of the Medieval period. A fine quality late 13th or early 14th century anthropomorphic walrus ivory knife handle is associated with this phase. The nearby Hospital of St John had also established a cemetery in the centre of the Triangle site by c.1250, and the disarticulated remains of at least 132 individuals – recovered from the backfill of a 19th century construction trench – most probably originated from here. The density of occupation, along with the associated expansion of commercial premises, then continued to increase throughout the succeeding Post-Medieval and Modern periods. Three metalworking workshops of 15th to 16th century date have been identified, along with a large pit containing late 16th/early 17th century tavern waste and several thousand fish bones derived from imported, processed cod. An early 18th century tavern deposit was also encountered, which was potentially derived from the same establishment. Most important of all, however, is the large clearance deposit that was recovered from a backfilled cellar; this represents the contents of a late 18th century coffee-house and at least 288 ceramic and 68 glass vessels are represented, along with a variety of other artefacts. The continuing development of both domestic and commercial interests within the site over the past four hundred years is underlined by the existence of at least 23 separate properties by the end of the 19th century.

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Introduction

The Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) undertook excavations on a 0.3 hectare area of land at St. John's Triangle, Cambridge, between the 15th of January and the 29th of October 2007; occasional periods of watching brief continued at the site until the 18th of September 2008. The development area, which is centred on TL 445 585, is located in the heart of the historic core of the town. It is bounded to the northeast by Bridge Street, to the northwest by St. John's Street and to the southeast and southwest by All Saint's Passage (see Figure 1). Within this area nine trenches, covering a total of 41m², were excavated; in addition, a further ten areas of watching brief, covering a total of 147.44m², were also monitored (a combined total of 188.44m² investigated, see Figure 2). The project followed the specification issued by the CAU (Dickens 2007) and approved by Kasia Gdaniec, Development Control Archaeologist at Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA). The work was commissioned by Van Heyningen and Hayward, architects for St. John's College, in advance of extensive redevelopment.

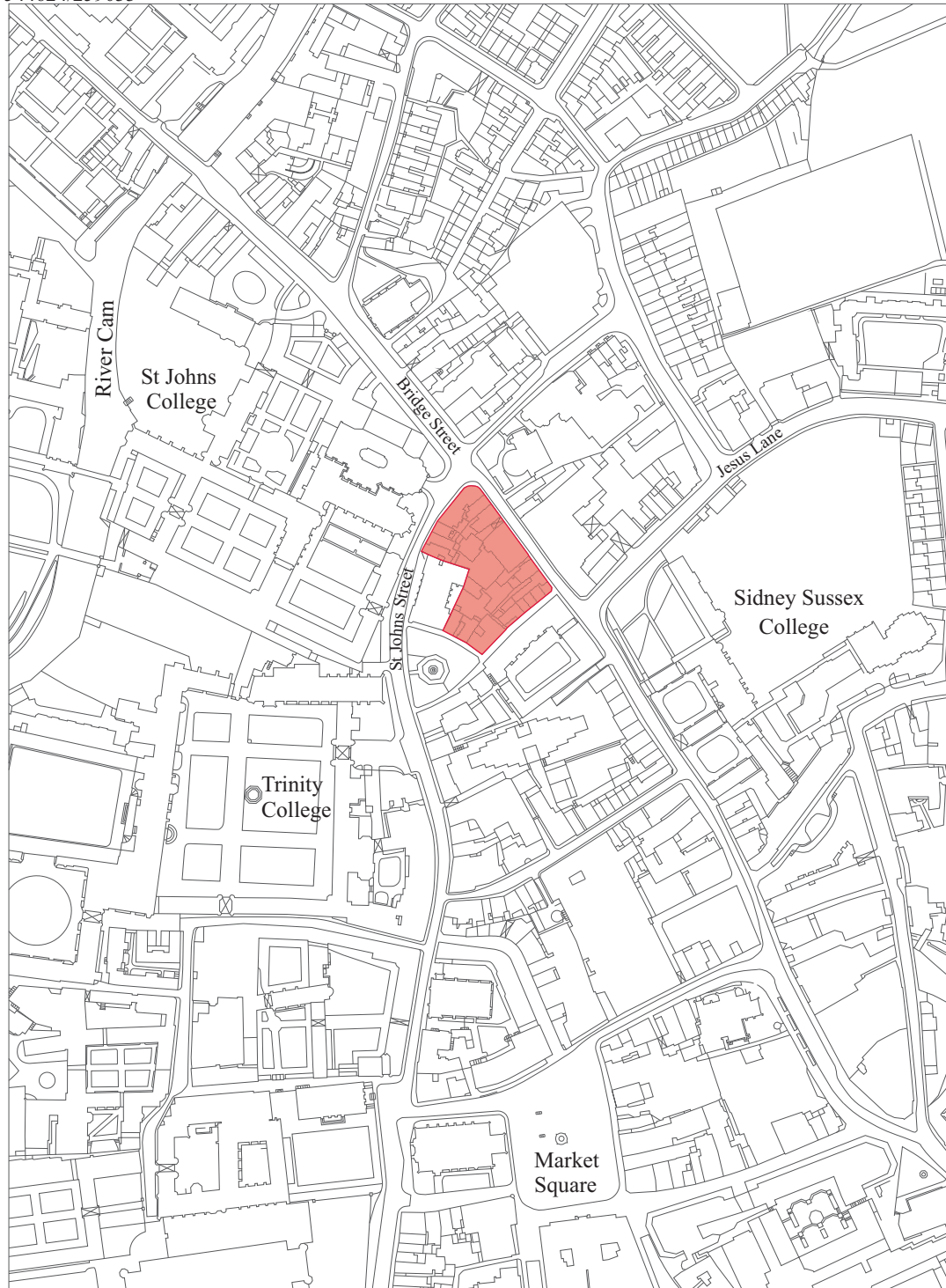
Landscape and geology

The St. John's Triangle site comprises a densely built-up street block (*cf.* Conzen 1960) with some limited open area yard spaces located within its interior. Geologically, the site is situated upon the northern tip of a slightly raised spur of second terrace river gravels overlying Gault clay; this ridge is surrounded to the north and west by the former alluvial floodplain of the River Cam (British Geological Survey, sheet 188). The present surface height ranges between 8.9m and 10.2m OD, although this variation appears to be primarily the result of modern building activity and disturbance. Natural gravels were encountered at between 6.25m+ and 6.55m+ OD, but the deposits had been at least partially truncated in every instance; the original ground surface most probably lay between *c.*6.8m to *c.*7.2m+ OD, and may potentially have sloped slightly to the southwest.

Methodology

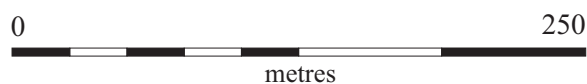
Modern deposits and overburden, including layers of concrete and tarmac, were broken out and removed by a 360° mechanical excavator with a 1.5m toothless bucket. All archaeological features were then excavated by hand and recorded using the CAU modified version of the MoLAS system (Spence 1994); base plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, whilst sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. The photographic archive for this site consists of a series of digital images. Once an appropriate depth had been reached shoring was installed by the principal contractor, Morgan Ashurst. Context numbers are indicated within the text by square brackets (e.g. [001]), and feature numbers are denoted by the prefix F. (e.g. F.03); all stratified contexts have been assigned feature numbers, with the exception of those seen only during phases of watching brief. Assessment reports of the finds assemblages, along with those of the bulk environmental sample data, are presented in Appendix 1. Detailed feature descriptions, along with more detailed summaries of the watching brief results, are provided in Appendix 2.

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 Development Area

Figure 1: Site location.

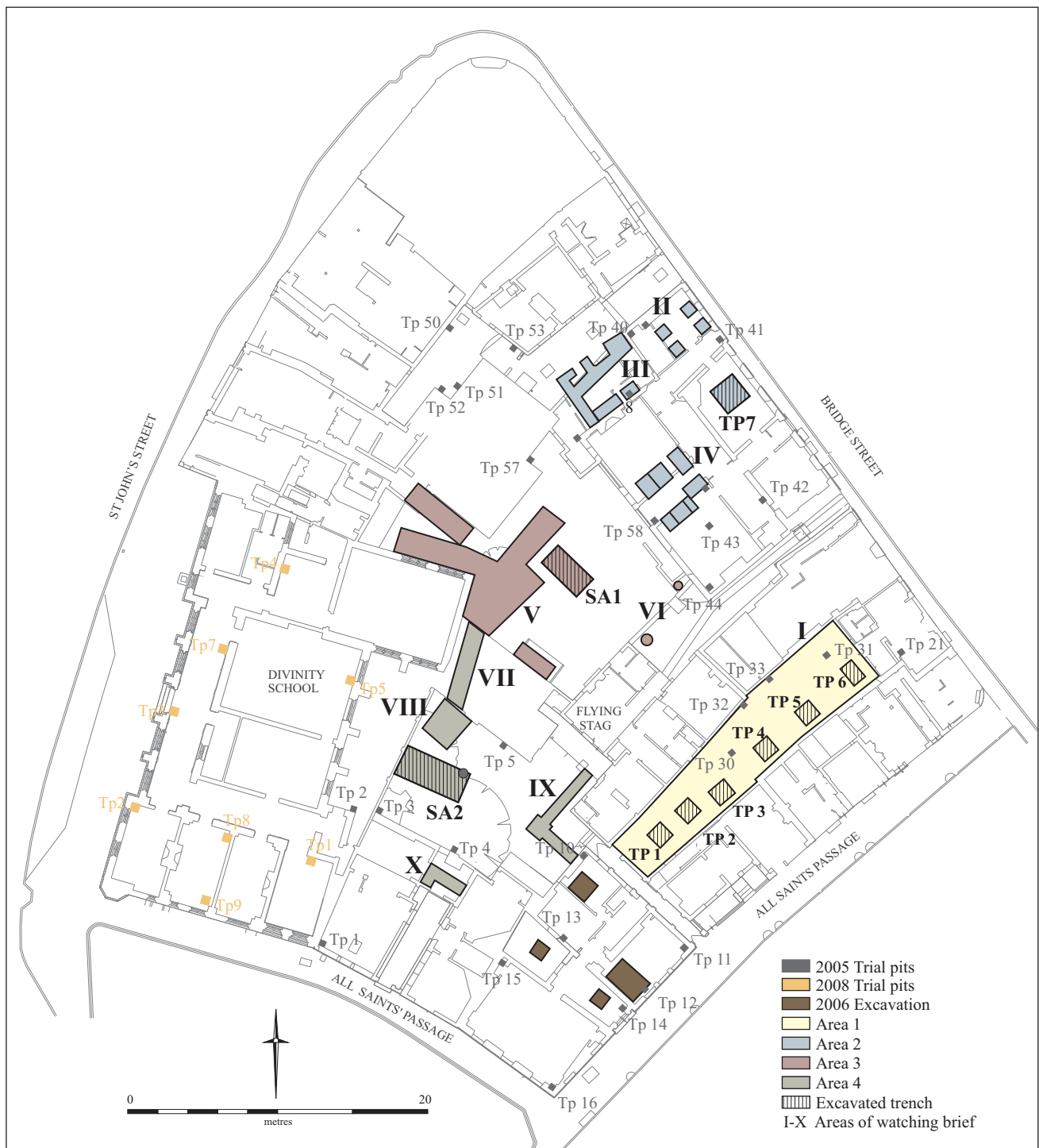


Figure 2: Trench location plan.

The excavated areas

The excavated trenches and associated areas of watching brief were widely dispersed across the site, according to the dictates of the zones at greatest archaeological risk, but can be grouped into four broad areas (see Figure 2). The first of these consists of Test Pits 1 to 6, which were located within a single property and extend from around 6m back from the frontage (Test Pit 6) to around 24m back (Test Pit 1). They were each 1.5m by 1.5m in extent and were also limited to a depth of between 1.5m and 2.1m due to the risk of destabilising the surrounding buildings; for this reason, less than half of the archaeological sequence in each test pit was excavated. The second area comprises Test Pit 7 – which was excavated in the cellar of a separate frontage property, and was 2m by 2m in extent – along with a number of nearby foundation trenches in both this and an adjacent property that were monitored by archaeological watching brief. The third area, primarily consisting of Soakaway 1, was 4m by 2m in extent and was the only area to be 100% excavated to natural. It is situated to the south of Area 2, within the rear portion of the same two properties, but falls partially across their boundary. The final area, primarily comprising Soakaway 2, was 4.4m by 2.3m in extent although it was excavated in two halves, of which only the first was fully bottomed. It is situated within a separate property that is sited somewhat further back from the main frontage than those explored in the other three areas. Additional areas of watching brief, often undertaken in close proximity to the excavated trenches, have also been incorporated into each of these four areas as appropriate (see Figure 2).

The structure of the report

The body of this report has been divided into two principal sections, one detailing the excavation results obtained from each area and a second discussing the wider implications of this information as regards the development of the site as a whole. In the first section, each excavated area has been individually phased according to the specific nature of the archaeological sequence that was encountered within it. This ‘individualised’ model, which is based principally upon feature types and stratigraphy, has been adopted because of the widely dispersed nature of the excavations and the fact that each of the properties investigated appears to have developed along its own individual trajectory. However it must be noted that although this approach allows the results of excavation in each trench to be presented in the clearest manner possible, it also imposes limits on the scope for later comparison between the different areas. Therefore, in order to facilitate greater intra-site comparability, these *phases* (which are identified by trench and by number, *e.g.* TP1/3) have also been sub-grouped into more general *periods* (comprising Roman, Saxon, Saxo-Norman, Medieval, Post-Medieval and Modern; see further Figure 3). This ‘secondary phasing’ allows the subsequent discussion to explore not only the development of individual properties, but also to establish their wider context within both the history of the site itself and the broader landscape of the Medieval town as a whole.

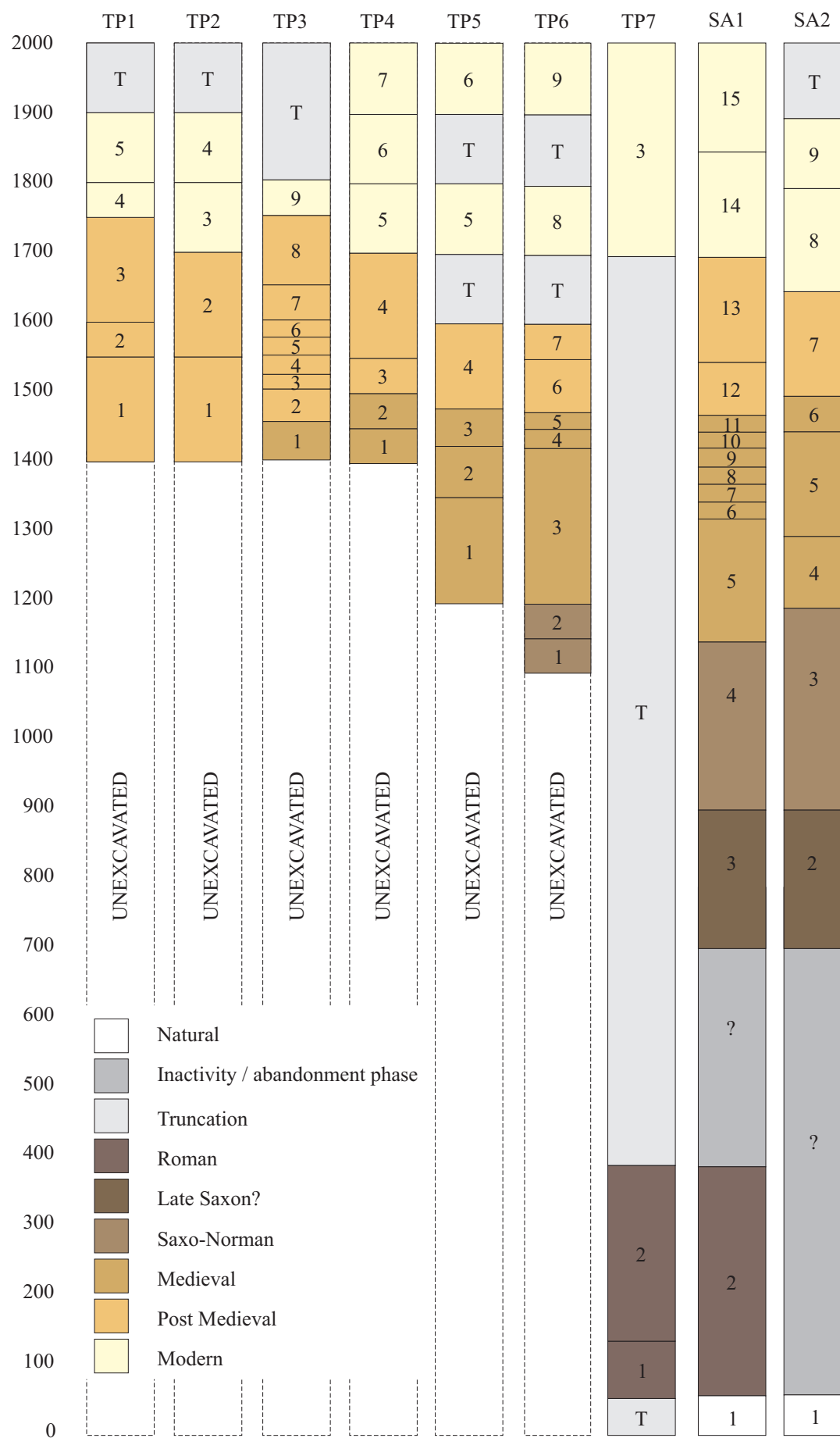


Figure 3: Phasing diagram.

Historical and archaeological background

The historical and archaeological background of the development area is covered in depth in the recent desktop assessment (Herring & Slatcher 2003) and the wider background of Cambridge itself is reviewed in several published sources (*e.g.* Cam 1959; Lobel 1975; Bryan 1999; Taylor 1999). Neither is therefore reproduced here in full. Nevertheless, it is necessary to briefly outline the background of the town in order to place the site securely within its wider context; further details on specific sites directly related to its development are discussed in the relevant sections of the main report below.

Little is known of the earliest inhabitants of the area. Although there is diffuse evidence of Prehistoric occupation and activity, most notably of Iron Age date, located to the west of the town (*e.g.* Evans 1996; Mortimer & Evans 1997; Newman 2008b) no definite or intensive large-scale settlement has yet been identified. Occupation appears instead to have begun in earnest shortly after the Roman invasion in AD43, with the accepted picture of Cambridge during this period being one of a settlement centred almost exclusively upon the Castle Hill area (*e.g.* Alexander & Pullinger 2000). Recent fieldwork, however, is demonstrating that this interpretation is somewhat limited, with significant settlement having been detected to the west of the presumed centre (Lucas & Whittaker 2001). Finds from this period have also been made to the southeast and there is certainly evidence of Roman activity on the riverfront (Dickens 1996) and the Park Street/Jesus Lane area (Alexander *et al* 2004), as well as further to the south of the town (Dickens 1999). It is therefore clear that the extent of Roman settlement on the southern bank of the Cam was greater than has generally been supposed and that the southern hinterland of the town, within which the current site lies, was extensive although it remains poorly understood.

Following the decline of Roman town during the 5th century the level of occupation in the area appears to have temporarily decreased, as the evidence for Early Saxon (*c.*410-700) activity in and around Cambridge primarily comprises material recovered during the 19th century from pagan cemeteries on the outskirts of the city (*cf.* Dodwell *et al* 2004; Cessford with Dickens 2005a). Very little occupational evidence from this period has yet been identified, with the exception of a small 6th to 7th century settlement that was recently excavated on the western bank of the Cam around a kilometre to the south of the former Roman town (Dodwell *et al* 2004). Middle to Late Saxon (*c.*700-900) activity, in contrast, appears to have been primarily refocused upon the Castle Hill area, where a 7th to 9th century execution cemetery has recently been investigated (Cessford with Dickens 2005a; Cessford *et al* 2007). By the mid 9th century it is clear that some form of settlement had been re-established in the area, as this was occupied by the Viking Great Army in 875, and the region was incorporated into the Danelaw from *c.*886 until its conquest by Edward the Elder in *c.*917 (Cam 1934, 39; Lobel 1975, 3). Although it has been suggested that occupation extended across both the northern and southern banks of the Cam at this time (*e.g.* Gray 1905, 21-3; Cam 1934, 39; Haslam 1984, 19; Hines 1999, 136; Taylor 1999, 44-50), there has as yet been little opportunity to test this theory archaeologically. Nevertheless, regardless of the settlement's precise extent, it certainly remained only an "economically viable backwater" up until the mid 10th century (Hines 1999, 136); following this date, however, it emerged as a significant urban centre. By the late 10th century a mint had been established (Lobel 1975, 3) and the town was being linked to

a group of important trading centres including Norwich, Thetford and Ipswich (*cf.* Fairweather 2005), thereby emphasising the central role played by river trade in its rapid economic growth. Indeed by the beginning of the 13th century Cambridge acted as the leading inland port in the county, through which goods and services were disseminated to many of the surrounding regional towns (Cam 1934, 43).

By this time the town was fully established on the eastern side of the river, and was probably already enclosed by an extensive boundary work that later became known as the King's Ditch. Although the eponymous 'king' is usually interpreted as being either John (1167-1216), who repaid the bailiffs of Cambridge the costs of enclosing of the city in 1215, or Henry III (1207-72), who paid for its refortification in 1267 (Cooper 1842-53), a recent radio-carbon determination derived from the basal fill of the ditch at the Grand Arcade site indicates that the boundary was at least partially extant by the late 11th or early 12th century (Craig Cessford, *pers comm*). By the early 17th century, however, the ditch had largely silted up beyond practical use (Atkinson 1907) – despite numerous edicts having been passed for its cleaning and maintenance – and Cambridge's role as a dominant port was similarly long since over (Bryan 1999, 97). At this stage the economic wealth of the town was no longer based upon river-borne trade, as it had been throughout the Medieval period, but was instead largely centred around the University (first founded in 1209). The expansion of this institution had greatly benefited from royal investment, especially from the 15th century onwards (*ibid.*, 94-6), and its growth was also given significant impetus by the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536-40 since many of the disbanded religious houses were subsequently converted into Colleges (*cf.* Willis & Clark 1886). Indeed the influence of these Colleges has been one of the primary factors in shaping the landscape of Cambridge ever since, with the central riverside area (once the heartland of Medieval river trade activity) having been increasingly encroached upon from the 15th century onwards (Bryan 1999, 95).

Summary of previous archaeological work

Aside from the somewhat limited desktop assessment and standing building reports (Herring & Slatcher 2003; Dixon & Herring 2003), three previous physical investigations are known to have taken place within the St. John's Triangle site. The first of these consisted of observations made during construction work undertaken in the late 19th century, whilst the remainder comprise trial pit- and trench-based excavations conducted within the past three years as part of the ongoing programme of redevelopment. Summaries of the results of all three projects are presented below; where pertinent, further details of these investigations will also be included within the relevant sections of the excavation results.

Observations made in 1878-9

Archaeological observations were made by Professor Thomas McKenny Hughes during the construction of the Selwyn Divinity School (Hughes 1898, 378; Hughes 1907, 411), which was completed in the autumn of 1879 (Willis & Clark 1886 III, 229-40; Rupp 1981, 424). During the course of this building's construction a 'deep ditch' was exposed. Although the precise size and location of this feature were not recorded, it was presumably situated towards the southern boundary of the site as it appeared "to have formed the northern boundary of All Saints' Church-yard, and was

full of human bones” (Hughes 1907, 411). Unfortunately, however, beyond the fact that the ditch seemed to continue beneath St. John’s College to the west, no other details of the site were recorded at this time.

Trial Pit investigation undertaken in 2005

During August and September 2005 a series of 27 trial pits were excavated across the St. John’s Triangle site (see Figure 2). These pits, which were 0.5m by 0.5m in extent and up to 3m deep, were inserted in order to assess the nature and condition of the standing buildings’ foundations; their excavation was monitored by the CAU (Hall & Dickens 2005). Although many of the trial pits were located entirely within relatively modern foundation trenches, in certain instances a significant depth of archaeological strata was revealed. Where encountered such deposits were recorded in section and, utilising similar information garnered from across the site, a predictive deposit model was constructed (*ibid*, 12-15). Despite the very limited scale of each individual trial pit, therefore, the cumulative value of the information recovered is of relevance to the present investigation.

Trenches excavated in 2006

In January 2006, a series of four small trenches were excavated within the property at N^o. 2 All Saint’s Passage (see Figure 2). Three of these trenches were located within the cellar of the standing structure (Areas 1, 2 and 4), whilst one was situated within a yard to its rear (Area 3); in total they covered an area of 13.45m² (Cessford 2006). As a result of this work, four phases of activity were identified. The earliest of these, Phase 1, consisted of pre Saxo-Norman activity and was represented solely by residual Roman material (*ibid*, 5). Phase 2 comprised the excavation of a series of pits and the creation of a homogenous ‘garden soil’ horizon, elements of which were identified in all four areas; this phase commenced at some time during the 10th to 12th centuries, when a sequence of large gravel quarries were excavated, and continued until the late 16th century, by which time a number of smaller pits and postholes had been inserted through the accrued horticultural deposit (*ibid*, 6-12). Phase 3 commenced at some time between 1592 and 1688 when a building was constructed that sealed, and partially truncated, the deposits located within Areas 1, 2 and 4. Finally, in 1833-4, this building was replaced by the present Grade II listed four-storey structure (*ibid*, 17). Thus, in summary, the excavations conducted in 2006 were undertaken on a limited scale and encountered deposits that had, in the majority of cases, been heavily truncated. Despite these limitations, however, the results obtained from these trenches are of relevance to the present study because they were situated within part of the same Medieval property from which an extensive and well-stratified sequence has now been recovered (see below, Area 4). Further details of this work will therefore be integrated into the appropriate section of the excavation results.

Excavation results

Introduction

Due to the dispersed nature of the excavated areas, a by-product of their having targeted the locations of the development's greatest archaeological impact, each area has been examined separately with reference to the specific sequence of deposits that was encountered within it. A number of individual 'phases' have thus been identified, each of which is unique to its own particular area; for this reason, these phases have also been assigned to one of a range of broader 'periods' that remain consistent across the entire site. These periods have been defined as follows (see also Figure 3):

Period 1: *Roman* (spanning the 1st to 4th centuries).

Period 2: *Saxon* (spanning the 5th to 9th centuries).

Period 3: *Saxo-Norman* (spanning the 10th to 12th centuries).

Period 4: *Medieval* (spanning the 13th to 15th centuries).

Period 5: *Post-Medieval* (spanning the 16th to 17th centuries).

Period 6: *Modern* (spanning the 18th century to the present).

Where relevant, the results of the concurrent phases of watching brief – along with those of preceding phases of work undertaken in 2005 and 2006 – have also been incorporated into each section.

Working conditions

It is important to note that the depth of stratigraphy at the St. John's Triangle site, in conjunction with the limited size of many of the trenches, often resulted in very cramped and difficult working conditions (see Figures 4 and 5). Sections frequently had to be recorded in incremental stages in advance of additional shoring, meaning that the entire sequence was never fully revealed, and the potential for photography within the dark confines of many of the excavations was often very limited. Despite these limitations, however, substantial bodies of information and artefactual materials were successfully recovered from the site.

The natural

Where encountered, the natural – which is comprised of second terrace river gravels overlying Gault clay (British Geological Survey, sheet 188) – consisted of pale brownish yellow sandy gravels. Although firmly compacted orangey brown sandy gravel deposits were also identified in several trenches (including those situated in Areas 2, 3 and 4), this material appears to represent the weathered backfill of early quarry features as opposed to naturally occurring material; its compaction most probably resulted from gradual processes of exposure and mineralisation. Very little surviving subsoil was encountered (due to the extent of later truncation), and the original ground height – which may well have undulated somewhat across the site, between c.6.8m and c.7.2m+ OD – could not therefore be determined with certainty.



Figure 4: Site working conditions: Clockwise from top left - Soakaway 1, Test Pit 1, Soakaway 2 (1) and Soakaway 2.



Figure 5: Site working conditions: Clockwise from top left - Test Pit 4, Soakaway 1, Test Pits 1 to 3 and Soakaway 2.

Area 1

This area consists of Test Pits 1 to 6, which were located within a single property at N^o. 72 Bridge Street and extended from around 6m back from the frontage (Test Pit 6) to around 24m back (Test Pit 1); see Figure 2 for locations. They were each 1.5m by 1.5m in extent and were limited to between 1.5m and 2.1m in depth due to the risk of destabilising the surrounding buildings. Test Pits 4 to 6 were excavated from within a standing structure, prior to this building's demolition. In addition, a watching brief was also undertaken during stripping of this area to establish a pile mat; the results of this work are included below.

Test Pit 1 (Figure 6)

This test pit, which was excavated from a height of 9.92m OD, was limited to a depth of 2.1m. As natural gravels were encountered at 6.42m OD via augering, it was thus not possible to investigate the lower 1.4m of the sequence in this location.

Phases 1 to 3 (Post-Medieval)

The earliest feature to be encountered in this test pit consisted of garden soil layer **F.504**, which was overlain by possible exterior surface **F.503** during the 16th century. The former deposit, which extended below the limit of excavation, represents the potentially somewhat limited usage of the rear of this property plot during the Late Medieval period. Succeeding surface **F.503**, in contrast, indicates the increasing use of the space from the 16th century onwards. This is confirmed by the nature of the subsequent phase of activity (Phase 2), which commenced with the creation of 16th century refuse pit **F.112** – from which an iron key and spur fragment were recovered, along with a worked bone pin – and continued with the addition of very similar pit **F.111**. In the late 17th or early 18th century, however, the preceding features were truncated by pit **F.502** (which comprises Phase 3). Although the precise function of this feature remains unclear, as it extended beyond the limits of the test pit in every direction, it most probably reflects the continued usage of this area as an open space into which occasional deposits of refuse material were inserted.

Phases 4 and 5 (Modern)

This pattern also continued into the 18th century, with the insertion of refuse pit **F.101** marking the commencement of Phase 4. Following the sealing of this feature beneath external surface **F.501** later in the century, however, the rear section of the property plot appears to have been subdivided via the insertion of north-northeast to south-southwest oriented post alignment **F.100** (which is also 18th century in date). An additional posthole that was later added to this alignment, **F.114**, most probably formed part of this same phase of activity, although it could not be securely dated. Finally, during Phase 5, the area was partially 'scalped' by the insertion of 19th century drainage system **F.500** into the open yard.

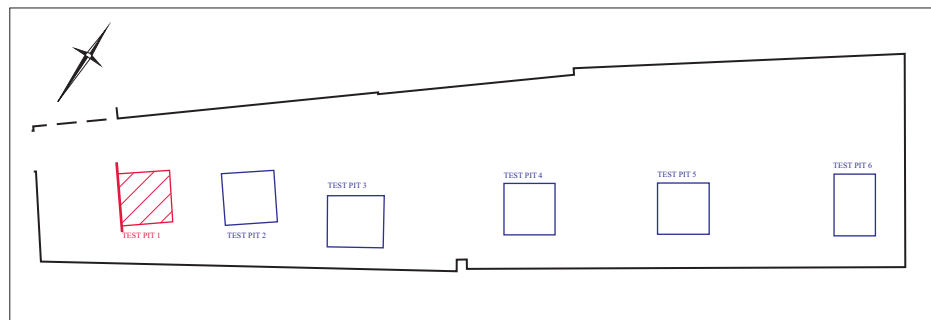
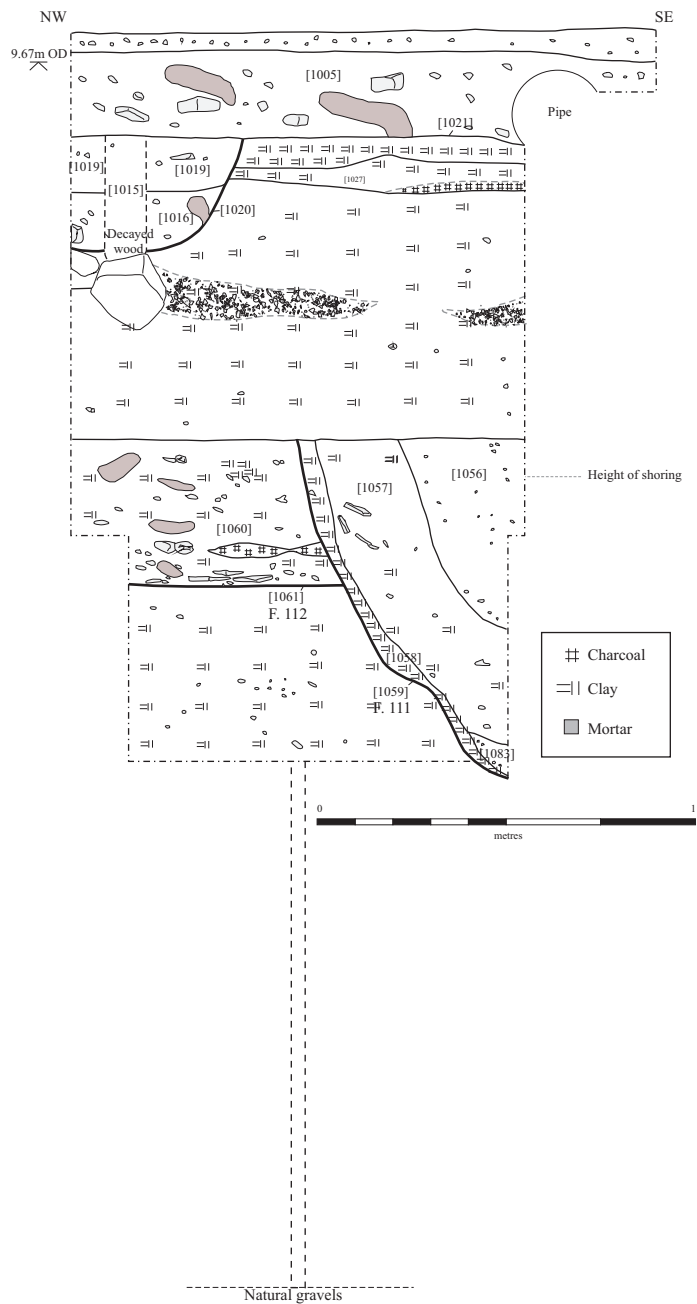


Figure 6: Test Pit 1 section and photograph.

Test Pit 2 (Figure 7)

This test pit, which was excavated from a height of 9.74m OD, was limited to a depth of 1.6m. As natural gravels were encountered at 6.67m OD via augering, it was thus not possible to investigate the lower 1.47m of the sequence in this location.

Phases 1 and 2 (Post-Medieval)

The earliest feature to be encountered in this test pit consisted of pit **F.511**, which was most probably 15th or 16th century in date (although it extended below the limit of excavation and could not therefore be fully investigated). It was subsequently overlain by upcast/trample layer **F.510**, which was in turn truncated by posthole **F.142** in the early 16th century; a further upcast/trample deposit, **F.509**, then accrued. Later in the 16th century, however, a rapid sequence consisting of fourteen intercutting pits – comprising, in broadly stratigraphic order, **F.141**, **F.140**, **F.139**, **F.138**, **F.144**, **F.119**, **F.127**, **F.143**, **F.126**, **F.125**, **F.118**, **F.117**, **F.115** and **F.116** – was excavated in the area (thus marking the commencement of Phase 2). The various features in this group, which ranged between 0.36m+ to 1.1m+ in diameter and 0.16m+ to 0.88m+ in depth, appear to have been predominately utilised for the disposal of domestic rubbish; indeed **F.126**, **F.138**, **F.139**, **F.140** and **F.141**, in particular, contained significant quantities of refuse material. In addition, three further features were also created during this phase, two of which – posthole **F.137** and nearby wall **F.124** – were potentially structural in origin. The most significant of these is wall **F.124**, which was linear in form and orientated northeast to southwest. It consisted of a trench-built wall footing, composed of a single course of unfrogged red bricks that were overlain by successive courses of red and black flat-laid tiles surmounted by a single surviving course of roughly squared clunch blocks, and most probably formed part of the southwestern wall of a contemporary 16th century building that was also identified within the adjacent Test Pit 3 (see further below). Finally, during the late 16th or early 17th century, oven **F.113** was created. This feature, which measured 0.83m by 0.42m in extent, consisted of an oven bowl with a concave profile to the northwest and a flue with moderately sloping sides and a relatively flat base to the southeast. The oven contained a number of heat-affected fills and appears to have been re-lined on at least one occasion.

Phases 3 and 4 (Modern)

During the mid to late 18th century (Phase 3), the area appears to have been transformed into a well-maintained open yard; the preceding horizon of activity was sealed beneath clay surface and associated make-up deposit **F.508**, which was in turn overlain by further yard surfaces **F.507**. Later in the century, however, three further pits of indeterminate function – consisting of **F.109**, **F.110** and **F.108** – were again inserted into this space. Yet the ‘open’ nature of the area only came to an end in the mid 19th century, when building **F.506** was constructed. The erection of this structure, which appears to have formed a southwesterly extension of the standing building from within which Test Pits 4 to 6 were excavated, marks the commencement of Phase 4. Although only the partial remnants of its wall foundations survived, two additional features – comprising lead water pipe **F.107** and small cellar/coal store **F.505** – were encountered within the structure that represent mid to late 19th century modifications of its layout. The building was eventually demolished partway through the 20th century, at which time the area reverted to its former use as an open yard.

Test Pit 3 (Figures 8 and 9)

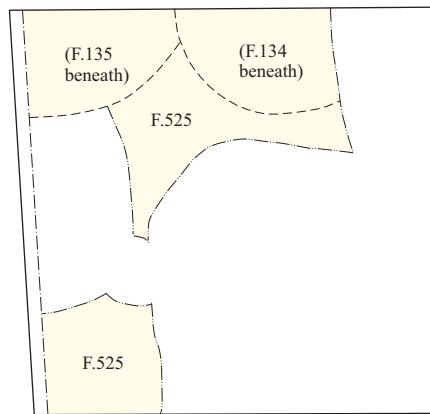
This test pit, which was excavated from a height of 9.78m OD, was limited to a depth of 1.5m. As natural gravels were encountered at 5.71m OD via augering, it was thus not possible to investigate the lower 2.57m of the sequence in this location.

Phases 1 and 2 (Medieval)

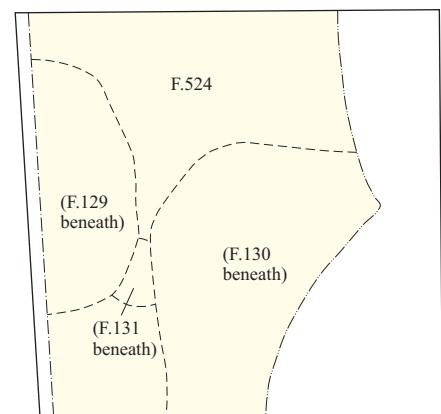
The earliest feature to be encountered in this test pit consisted of rubbish pit **F.135**, which was most probably 15th century in date (although it extended below the limit of excavation and could not therefore be fully investigated). This was subsequently truncated by probable cess pit **F.134**, which was in turn overlain by layer **F.525**; the latter deposit, which appears to have consisted of upcast material generated via the preceding horizon of activity, contained a decorated sideplate derived from a composite bone comb. Then, during the late 15th or early 16th century, a second phase of activity commenced (Phase 2). At this time, the preceding layer was truncated by posthole **F.131**, which was in turn truncated by rubbish pits **F.129** and **F.130** (the latter of which contained a worked ivory bead); these features were then overlain by further upcast/trample layer **F.524**. The sequence of Medieval activity encountered within this test pit indicates that the area comprised part of an intensively used open yard during this period.

Phases 3 to 8 (Post-Medieval)

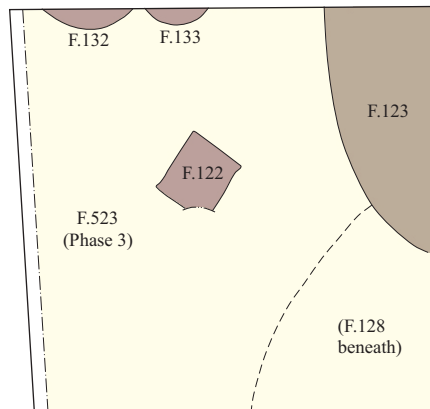
Phase 3 commenced during the early 16th century, when posthole **F.133** and pit **F.128** were inserted into the still open yard area; these features were then overlain by layer **F.523**, which most probably represents a deliberate ground raising event. This was subsequently truncated later in the 16th century (Phase 4) by rubbish pit **F.123** and postholes **F.122** and **F.132**, the latter of which may have comprised a replacement for **F.133**. It therefore appears that an ephemeral timber structure was constructed during this phase, although any further trace of its existence has been removed by the subsequent erection of a more permanent (but again most probably timber-framed) structure during Phase 5. This building – whose southwestern wall appears to have comprised that previously encountered within Test Pit 2 – was also 16th century in date and was constructed upon initial foundation layer **F.522**, which was in turn overlain by make-up deposit **F.520**. A small posthole, **F.136**, was then created within it (most probably as part of a system of scaffolding utilised during the construction process) prior to the insertion of clay floor surfaces **F.519** and **F.521**. Notably, both of these deposits incorporated substantial foundation layers – consisting of flat-laid peg tile fragments beneath the former, and mortared clunch fragments beneath the latter – whilst **F.519** also demonstrated evidence of intense *in-situ* heating. Subsequently, following the insertion of pit **F.121** (which may have comprised part of a phase of internal remodelling), deposit **F.518** accrued within the structure. This material – which consisted of numerous lenses of pale grey to black ash and charcoal, along with frequent inclusions of hammerscale and metalworking debris – indicates that the building functioned as a metalworking workshop during this period. Such an interpretation is also supported by the presence of small heptagonal brick structure **F.120**, which appears to have comprised a vertical ‘pit bosch’ (or quenching pit) located in the workshop’s floor. This phase of the structure has therefore been defined as *Workshop 3*.



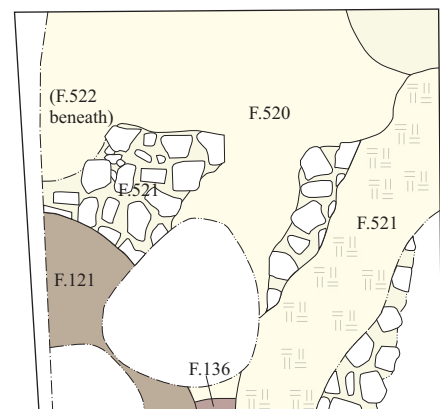
Phase 1.



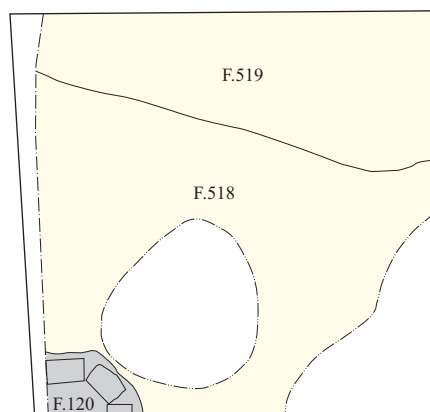
Phase 2



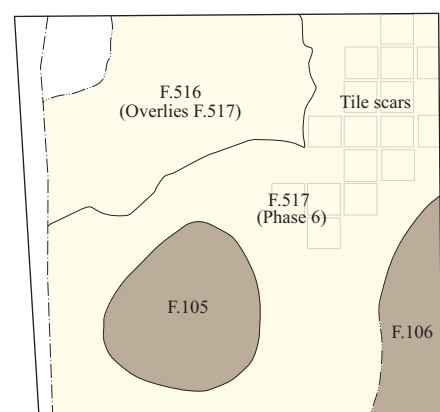
Phase 3 and 4



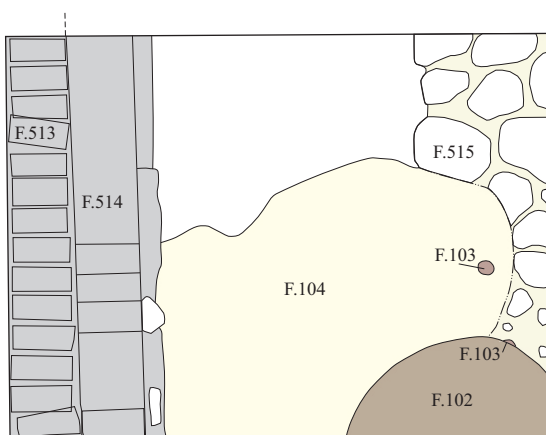
Phase 5a



Phase 5b



Phase 6 and 7



Phase 8

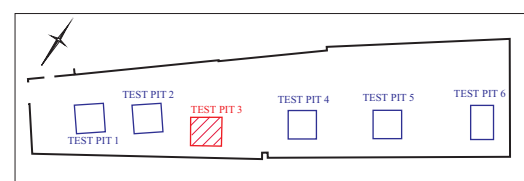
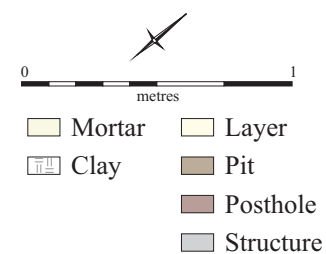


Figure 8: Test Pit 3 phase plans.

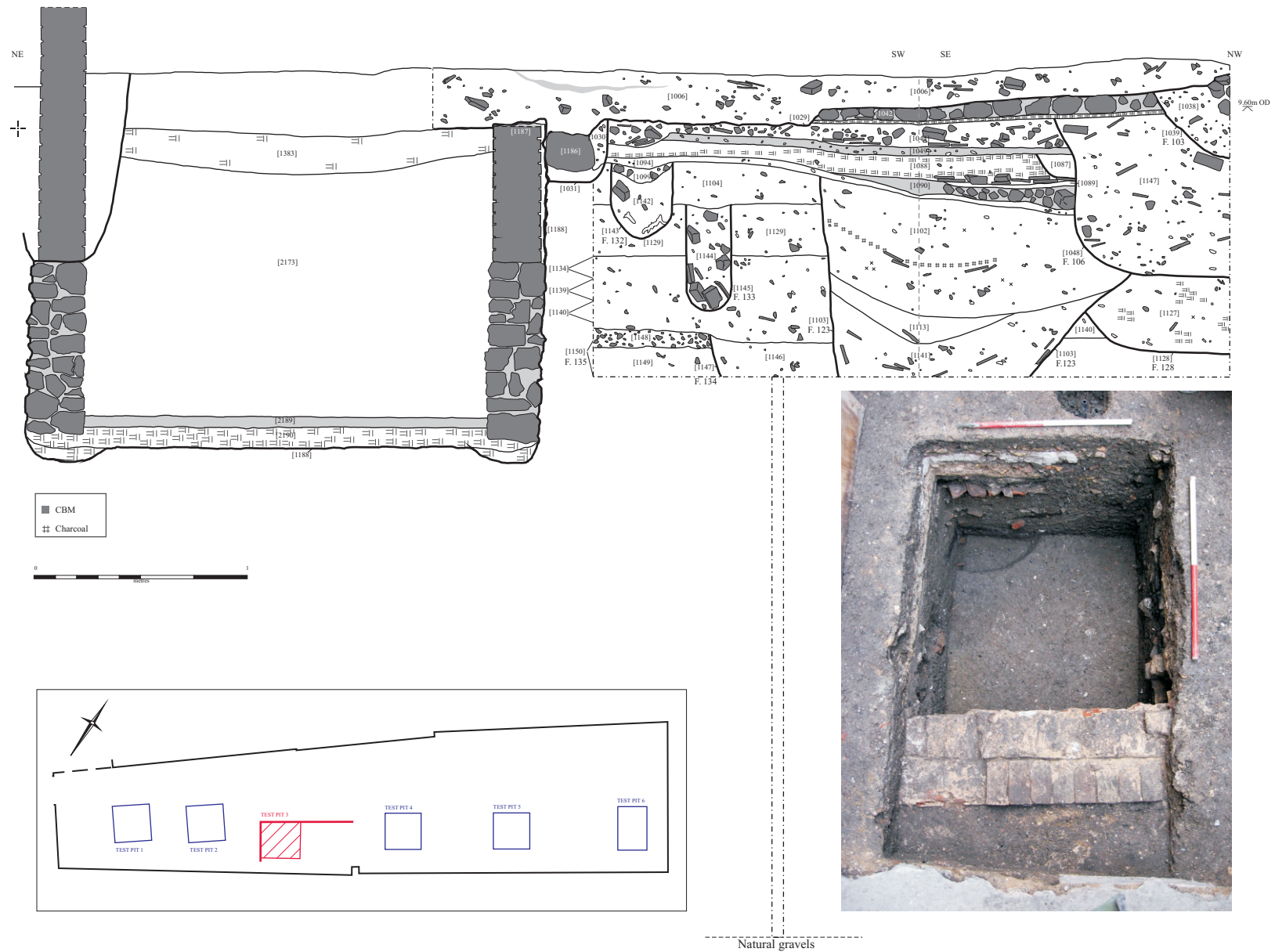


Figure 9: Test Pit 3 section and photograph.

At some time during the late 16th or early 17th century, however, the use of the building appears to have changed (Phase 6). The preceding industrial horizon was overlain by mortar deposit **F.517**, which retained the scars of numerous square-laid floor tiles, and no evidence of heat related activities was encountered. Yet this new (potentially domestic) usage of the structure was itself relatively short-lived, as robber cuts **F.105** and **F.106** were soon introduced – marking the commencement of Phase 7 – and the area then became sealed beneath demolition horizon **F.516**. Subsequently, during the later 17th century, a second, rather more ephemeral, building appears to have been re-established above the remains of *Workshop 3* (Phase 8). This is represented by northwest to southeast aligned mortared clunch foundation/post-pad **F.515**, which was later partially robbed by **F.104**; at this time, a foundation layer consisting of flat-laid peg tiles was also introduced, which was in turn partially truncated by stakeholes **F.103**. More significantly, however, northwest to southeast aligned wall **F.514** was constructed during the late 17th or early 18th century. Although clearly representing the footing of a third successive structure, which appears to have been somewhat more substantial than either of its predecessors, it is not entirely clear whether this foundation related to an internal or external wall (although, given its size, the latter appears the most likely). As with the two preceding buildings, this new structure most probably fronted onto nearby All Saints Passage, with only its rearmost section extending into Area 1. Contemporary with establishment of this building, or following very soon after it, cellar **F.513** was constructed immediately adjacent to **F.514** on its northeastern (internal) side. This cellar – which lay outside the boundary of Test Pit 3, and was investigated during a subsequent phase of watching brief – was rectangular in form, measuring 2.75m by 2.25m in extent, and was trench-built above an initial clay foundation deposit. The walls were constructed in two portions, with a lower clunch foundation being surmounted by at least ten courses of brickwork, whilst the floor was composed of crushed and compacted pale grey mortar. The precise function of this space is difficult to determine, however; given its unusually limited size, it may perhaps have been utilised as a storage space or larder.

Phase 9 (Modern)

During the late 18th century, cellar **F.513** went out of use and was backfilled with deposit **F.553**. This material – which consisted of mixed dumps of dark greyish brown silty sand with numerous lenses and tips ranging in colour from dark greyish black to dark red, sealed beneath a final capping layer of relatively sterile clay – was 1.31m deep and contained very large quantities of pottery, glass and CBM fragments. Although it also lay outside the boundary of Test Pit 3, and was again encountered during a later phase of watching brief, the deposit can be directly incorporated into the excavated sequence. Both the form and composition of **F.553**, within which certain types of material were often found to occur together in relatively discrete ‘clumps’, implies that it was created via the rapid insertion of a great number of individual dumping events (perhaps of the order of an ‘armload’ or ‘bucketload’ at a time). Furthermore, the nature and quantity of the material recovered implies that the cellar was associated with a commercial property of some kind at this time. Indeed, a minimum of at least 288 ceramic vessels have been identified, primarily consisting of service wares such as teapots, teabowls, coffee cans and side plates. In addition, a minimum of 68 glass vessels were also recovered; these were again primarily service-related and include drinking glasses, utility bottles, liqueur bottles, jars/containers and

phials. Finally, a range of other artefact types were also present. Backfilling event **F.553** thus clearly represents a significant clearance episode; it may perhaps have been related to a change in the use or design of the structure to which the cellar was associated, or might alternatively have represented an element within a phase of broader restructuring or demolition of the surrounding buildings. Notably, for example, at around the same time that cellar **F.513** was backfilled, pit/robbing feature **F.102** was also created within Test Pit 3; this may therefore have been associated with just such an episode of wider remodelling.

Subsequently, during the mid 19th century, the surrounding area was again partially truncated by levelling event **F.512**; this appears to have been related to the establishment of the same brick-built structure as was previously encountered in Test Pit 2. The area then reverted to its present use as an open yard following the demolition of this building partway through the 20th century.

Test Pit 4 (Figure 10)

This test pit, which was excavated from a height of 9.70m OD, was limited to a depth of 1.75m. As natural gravels were encountered at 5.99m OD via augering, it was thus not possible to investigate the lower 1.96m of the sequence in this location.

Phases 1 and 2 (Medieval)

The earliest feature to be encountered in this test pit consisted of rubbish pit **F.168**, which was most probably 15th century in date (although it extended below the limit of excavation and could not therefore be fully investigated). This was then truncated by pit **F.167**, which was in turn overlain by layer **F.533**. The latter deposit comprised a mixed dump of upcast and refuse material, potentially introduced in order to raise the surrounding surface level, which contained an animal bone assemblage that is characteristic of tanning or tawing waste (*cf.* Serjeantson 1989). Subsequently, **F.533** was overlain by further dump/trample layer **F.532**. Then, later in the 15th century, a second phase commenced in which many of the same activities were repeated (Phase 2). At this time, for example, rubbish pit **F.158** was inserted before being succeeded by pit **F.157**; the area was then sealed beneath layer **F.531**, which was most probably created from the upcast material generated by the preceding horizon of activity. This sequence therefore indicates that Test Pit 4 was situated within the same (or possibly an adjacent) yard area as the nearby Test Pit 3 during this period.

Phases 3 and 4 (Post-Medieval)

During Phase 3, which commenced during the early 16th century, the area appears to have remained part of an open, yard-type space. Additional rubbish pit **F.156** was created, and was then subsequently truncated by pit **F.155**; the latter feature contained successive deposits of cess-rich and hearth waste material. Posthole **F.148** was also inserted during this phase, as were further undiagnostic pits **F.153** and **F.152**. Later in the 16th century, however, the use of the area altered and a building was constructed (thereby marking the beginning of Phase 4). Thus, following the introduction of levelling/foundation layer **F.551**, brick-built wall **F.147** was erected; this was aligned northwest to southeast, and survived to a height of three courses. Make-up layer **F.530**

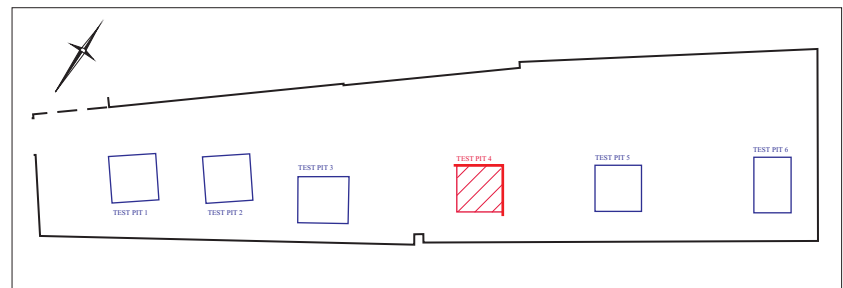
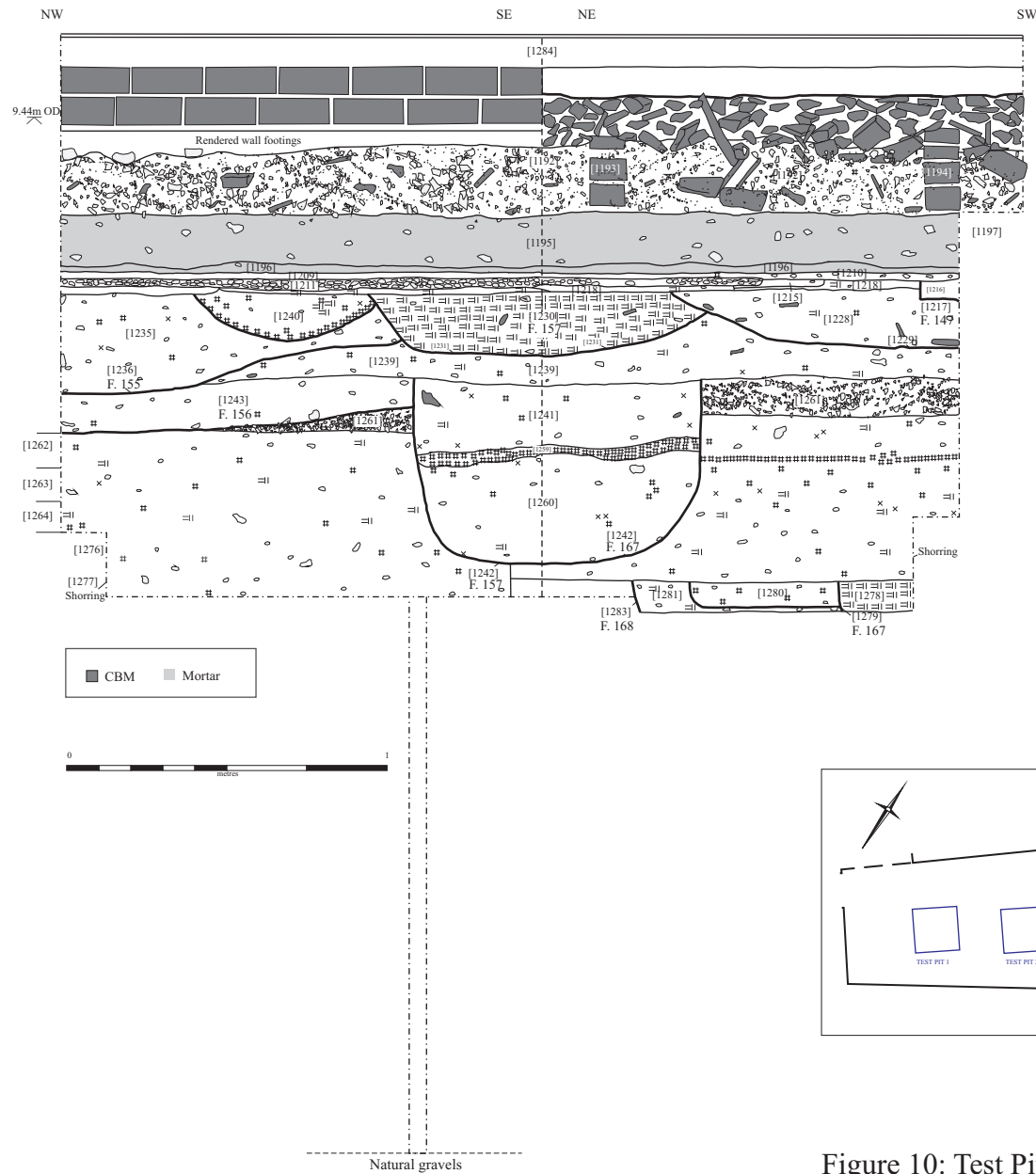


Figure 10: Test Pit 4 section and photograph.

was also deposited within the interior of the structure at this time, and was overlain by further make-up deposits **F.528** and **F.529**; these layers provided a stable foundation for succeeding floor surface **F.552**, a mortar deposit that retained the scars of numerous square-laid tiles. Although this building therefore has clear parallels with the adjacent structure encountered in Test Pit 3 – within which a tiled floor surface of similar late 16th/early 17th century date was also identified – it does not appear to have been directly associated with it. No evidence of a preceding phase of industrial activity was present in this location, for example, and the subsequent history of the building was also quite notably distinct. In fact, this structure most probably represents the rear portion of a separate (although broadly contemporary) building, which again appears to have belonged to a property fronting onto All Saints Passage.

Phases 5 to 7 (Modern)

During the 18th century, the preceding Phase 4 structure was levelled and a new brick-built building was erected above its remains (comprising Phase 5). However, due to the extent of the truncation engendered by this event, it is not entirely clear whether the earlier structure remained in constant use up until this time, or had instead been abandoned prior to its redevelopment. Nevertheless, what is clear is that the new building, **F.527**, respected both the layout and alignment of its predecessor. A series of red brick walls were established, oriented northwest to southeast, including several potentially representing the base of a staircase or other architectural feature. Subsequently, during the early 19th century, the form of the structure was modified via the introduction of two parallel dwarf walls, which most probably represent the insertion of a raised floor. Yet, by the mid 19th century, the building had been demolished (as represented by backfilling event **F.526**) and the recently demolished structure was established above its remains; this comprises Phase 6. The final event in this area (Phase 7) represents the restructuring of the building's floor by **F.192** during the mid to late 20th century.

Test Pit 5 (Figure 11)

This test pit, which was excavated from a height of 9.47m OD, was limited to a depth of 1.8m. As natural gravels were encountered at 6.5m OD via augering, it was thus not possible to investigate the lower 1.17m of the sequence in this location.

Phases 1 to 3 (Medieval)

The earliest feature to be encountered in this test pit consisted of layer **F.199**, which was most probably 12th or 13th century in date (although it extended below the limit of excavation and could not therefore be fully investigated); this deposit, which contained a Niedermendig Mülstein lava quern fragment, was subsequently overlain by layer **F.198**. The latter deposit appears to have gradually accrued throughout the 13th and 14th centuries, and most probably represents the usage of the area for small-scale horticultural activities during this period. At some time in the late 14th or early 15th century, however, the level of activity undertaken in this location increased (thus marking the commencement of Phase 2). Pit **F.178** was created, before being subsequently truncated by pit **F.176**; this was then cut in turn by pit/posthole **F.177**, prior to the area becoming sealed beneath probable upcast/trample layer **F.197** during

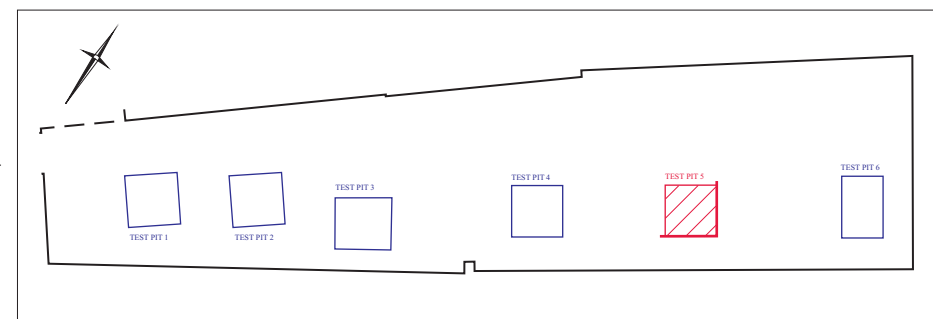
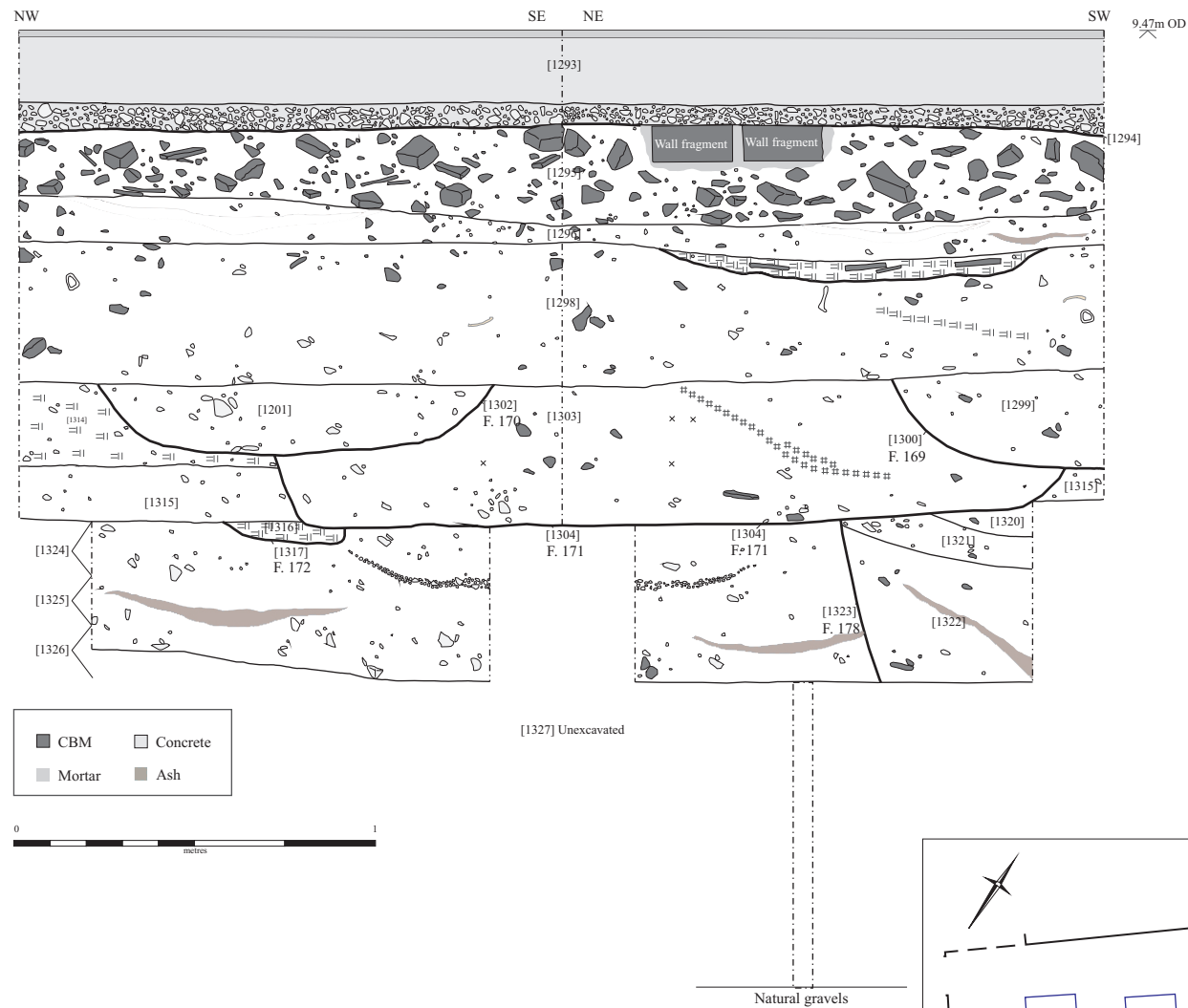


Figure 11: Test pit 5 section and photograph.

the early 15th century. Then, later in that same century, a third phase began with the insertion of rubbish pit **F.171**, which was succeeded by further rubbish pits **F.169** and **F.170**. This horizon then became sealed beneath additional upcast/trample layer **F.196**, which contained an iron key and an iron horseshoe fragment. The nature of this sequence, which is directly comparable to that encountered within Test Pits 3 and 4 at this time, suggests that the area had become incorporated (or perhaps been transformed) into an open yard in which rapidly occurring episodes of domestic activity were undertaken.

Phase 4 (Post-Medieval)

This pattern of yard-type activity also appears to have continued into the succeeding period. During the early 16th century, for example (Phase 4), the area was sealed beneath layer **F.195**, a trample deposit which contained evidence of intense *in-situ* scorching; this was subsequently overlain by make-up/levelling layer **F.194** later in the century. Therefore – although the Post-Medieval deposits in this area were heavily truncated by the succeeding phase of Modern activity, and much of the sequence appears to have been lost – it seems likely that the area remained part of an open yard or exterior working space during this period.

Phases 5 and 6 (Modern)

Phase 5 commenced at some time during the 18th century, when foundation deposit **F.193** was introduced across the area. This material, which was deposited within a cut that effectively ‘scalped’ the preceding horizon of activity, was most probably related to the construction of an otherwise unrepresented structure of some kind; indeed, any further trace of this building appears to have been removed when the recently demolished structure was established on the site in the mid 19th century. The sequence in this test pit then culminated with the restructuring of the latter building’s floor by **F.192** during the mid to late 20th century (Phase 6).

Test Pit 6 (Figure 12)

This test pit, which was excavated from a height of 9.45m OD, was limited to a depth of 1.75m. As natural gravels were encountered at 6.53m OD via augering, it was thus not possible to investigate the lower 1.22m of the sequence in this location.

Phases 1 and 2 (Saxo-Norman)

The earliest feature to be encountered in this test pit consisted of 12th century or earlier clay floor layer **F.550**. This was comprised of numerous off-white clay surfaces, each of which was around 1mm thick and had been overlain by a discrete trample horizon; it is therefore clear that the floor was relaid on a number of occasions. Overlying the uppermost surface of the deposit was central clay-lined hearth **F.549**, which was ‘bowl-shaped’ in form and measured at least 0.74m+ by 0.47m+ in extent. This was constructed from off-white heat affected clay, and contained a well-defined external lip. It was surrounded by stakeholes **F.172**, **F.173**, **F.174** and **F.175** – which most probably represent associated supports for trivets, or similar ‘kitchen furniture’ – whilst the presence of additional layers **F.548** demonstrate that the hearth was relined on at least three occasions. Notably, a quantity

of charred grain was recovered from the trample horizons within floor **F.550**, indicating that the hearth was most probably domestic in function. Following the final relining event, however, further clay floor surface **F.547** was introduced into the structure, thus sealing the preceding sequence; this deposit was itself relaid at least twice, prior to the introduction of final clay floor **F.546**. Although the central hearth does not appear to have been re-established during these later phases, the limited scale of the investigation precludes the certain identification of a wider change in use. The structure – which appears to have comprised an ancillary building, situated to the rear of the main frontage property – was finally demolished during the 12th or early 13th century (Phase 2) when the preceding horizon was overlain by demolition deposit **F.545**. Subsequently, temporary external surface **F.544** was established above the building's remains, indicating that the area was most probably employed as a yard-type space at this time.

Phases 3 to 5 (Medieval)

This pattern of use also appears to have continued into the Early Medieval period, since, when Phase 3 commenced during the 14th or possibly early 15th century, it began with the introduction of undiagnostic pit **F.166**. This was subsequently overlain by upcast or levelling layer **F.543**, thus closely mirroring the sequence previously identified further to the southwest at this time. During the early 15th century, however, the usage of the space intensified (Phase 4); a temporary ancillary structure – represented by posthole **F.165** and poor quality trampled surface **F.541** – was established, notably occupying much the same location as the preceding Saxo-Norman building. To this was then added discrete clunch foundation/post-pad **F.542** and further poor quality floor surface **F.540**. Later in the 15th century (Phase 5), clay layer **F.539** was also introduced; this demonstrated evidence of intense *in-situ* burning, and was surrounded by stakeholes **F.162**, **F.163** and **F.164**. It therefore most probably represents a small domestic hearth, which was later augmented by the addition of further stakeholes **F.160** and **F.161**. Towards the end of this period, however, the hearth went out of use and was overlain by additional foundation pad **F.159**.

Phases 6 and 7 (Post-Medieval)

During the early 16th century, the development of this building continued; Phase 6 commenced with the introduction of floor surface **F.538**, the limits of which were defined by associated postholes **F.151** and **F.150**. Subsequently, rubbish pit **F.154** (which contained a redeposited Medieval mortar fragment) was inserted into the structure, prior to the addition of mortared brick fragment foundation **F.149**. Despite these various modifications, however, the building appears to have gone out of use partway through the century. At this time, levelling deposit **F.537** was introduced across the area, which was subsequently truncated pit **F.146**; this was then overlain in turn by upcast/trample layer **F.536**. Yet, later in the 16th century (Phase 7), the introduction of mortared brick fragment foundation **F.145** and trample horizon/surface **F.535** indicate that the structure was re-established. Unfortunately, its subsequent history throughout the remainder of the Post-Medieval period was obscured by the extent of later truncation.

Phases 8 and 9 (Modern)

Phases 8 and 9 relate to the same structural sequence as was previously identified in the adjacent Test Pit 5. Thus, 18th century foundation deposit **F.534** – the direct equivalent of **F.193** – effectively ‘scalped’ the preceding horizon of activity (removing any evidence relating to the continuity of the structural sequence between the 17th and 18th centuries), and was then succeeded by a second brick-built structure during the mid 19th century (Phase 8). Similarly, the floor of this building was also restructured by **F.192** during the mid to late 20th century (Phase 9).

Summary of watching brief results (Figure 13)

A single area of watching brief, referred to as Area I, was undertaken in close proximity to Test Pits 1 to 6 during the establishment of a pile mat prior to the next phase of construction work. Following the demolition of the former standing structure, from within which Test Pits 4 to 6 had been excavated, the ground height of the property was lowered to between 8.84m to 9.22m OD (a maximum reduction of 0.92m) and a number of hitherto undetected wall foundations were revealed (see Figure 13). The most significant of these comprised small cellar/cold store **F.513**, which has previously been discussed in association with Test Pit 3, above. In addition, however, an 18th century brick-built well was also uncovered in close proximity to Test Pit 2; this had been capped with a ‘beehive’-type structure during the mid to late 19th century. Further to the northeast, two parallel wall foundations – of brick and clunch-built construction respectively – were encountered; these clearly related to the structure (or structures) which had preceded the recently demolished 19th century building on this spot. Three ‘test holes’, ranging in depth to between 7.75m and 7.67m OD, were also excavated towards the northeastern end of the property by the principal contractor in order to assess the solidity of the ground prior to the commencement of piling. Although no significant information was uncovered within them, beyond that which had already been revealed within the adjacent test pits, between Test Pits 5 and 6 a 16th century pit containing a number of complete and near-complete glazed red earthenware vessels was encountered. Overall, therefore, the watching brief undertaken in this area confirmed the broader pattern revealed during the preceding excavation phase.

Summary of results of previous work

Five of the trial pits that were monitored during the 2005 evaluation phase at the site – comprising numbers 21 and 30 to 33, respectively – lay within the bounds of Area 1. Although the most northeasterly of these – Trial Pit 21, which was situated in the basement of the standing building at N^o. 72 Bridge Street – was very shallow in depth, it did reveal the presence of at least one feature at c.7.2m OD (Hall & Dickens 2005, 8). Given the height at which this material was encountered, it may possibly be Roman in date (although no definite dating evidence was recovered). Further to the southwest, in the main yard area, no result was obtained from Trial Pit 30 due to the extent of modern disturbance. Within Trial Pit 31, however, a sequence of at least four Post-Medieval to Modern deposits were identified, abutting a wall foundation that was no earlier than 16th century in date; these extended to a depth of at least 8.5m OD (*ibid*, 9). Similarly, Trial Pits 32 and 33 – which were also excavated directly against a Post-Medieval wall foundation, but on the opposite side of the yard – revealed contemporary deposits extending to a similar depth (*ibid*).



Figure 13: Area 1 watching brief results.

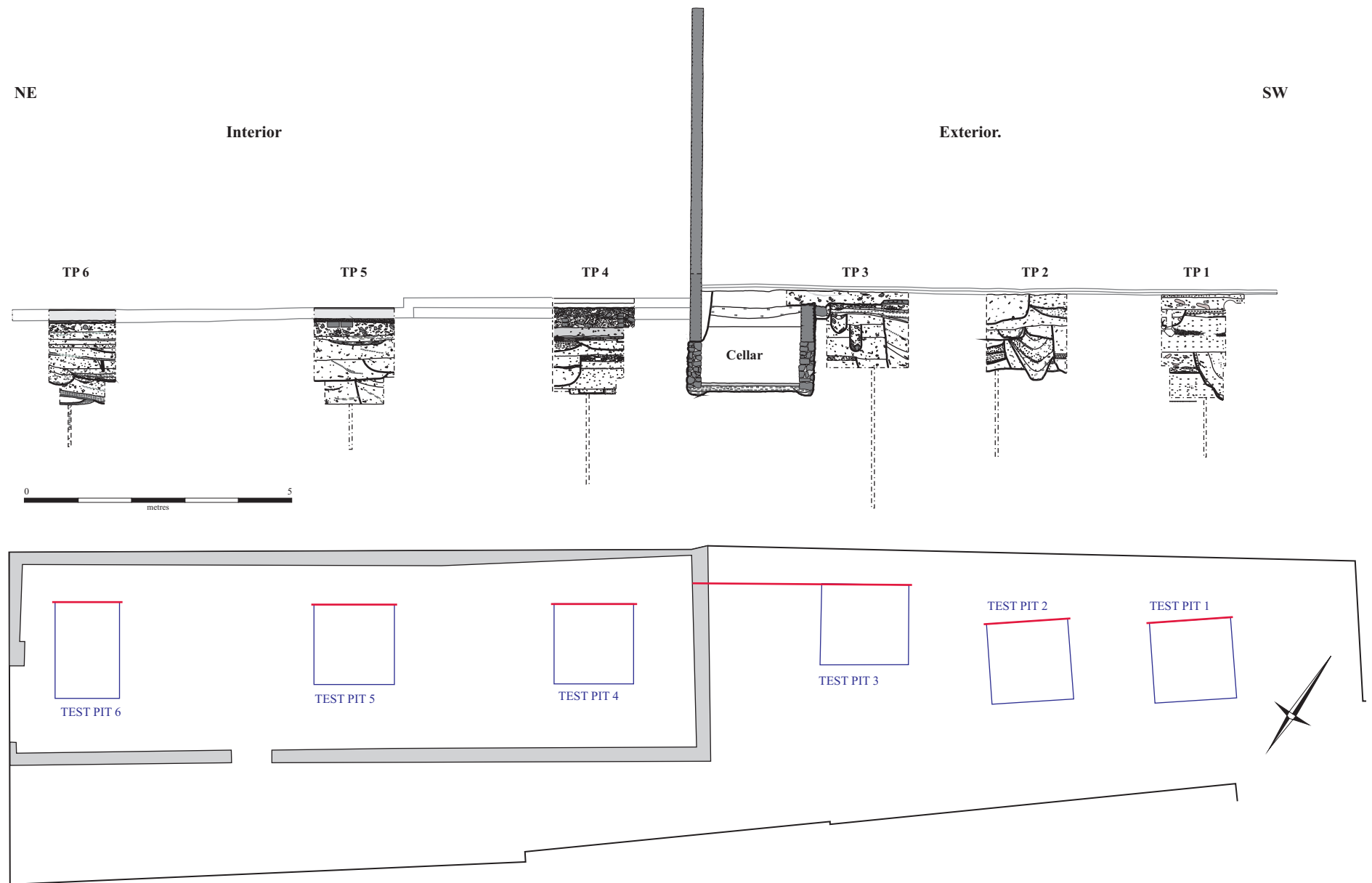


Figure 14: Composite Area 1 section.

Area 1 summary

Area 1 represents the most thorough investigation of a single property to have been conducted at the St. John's Triangle site (see Figure 14). Furthermore, as the area of investigation extended back along almost the entire length of the plot, it has provided an overview of several different 'zones' within the property over time; as such, it comprises perhaps the most varied and possibly also the most cohesive of the four areas. Unfortunately, however, the restrictions placed upon the depth of the excavations have severely limited the extent to which the early history of the property could be investigated. Indeed, no deposits earlier than the 12th century were encountered (with in excess of 1.5m of stratigraphy, most probably representing several centuries of activity, remaining unexcavated beneath), and within the majority of test pits the sequence terminated partway through the Medieval or even Post-Medieval periods; and yet, despite this difficulty, the information recovered is nevertheless of significance. Structural sequences of both Saxo-Norman and Post-Medieval date have been identified, the latter notably comprising part of a metalworking workshop from which significant quantities of material were recovered, and the development of the plot over the past five centuries can now be traced with some confidence. Perhaps most importantly of all, the large assemblage of material recovered from **F.553** in Test Pit 3 – which is most probably commercial in nature, and contained a wide range of both material and vessel types – is potentially of national significance.

Area 2

This area comprises Test Pit 7 – which was excavated within the cellar of the frontage property at N^o. 68 Bridge Street, and was 2.0m by 2.0m in extent – along with three additional areas, located in both this and the adjacent property at N^o. 69 Bridge Street, which were monitored by archaeological watching brief (see Figure 2 for locations).

Test Pit 7 (Figure 15)

Natural gravels were encountered at 6.51m OD, although they had clearly been heavily truncated across the entire area; indeed, given the absence of vertical stratigraphy within the test pit, it is probable that the original ground surface lay in excess of 7.1m OD.

Phases 1 and 2 (Roman)

The earliest features to be encountered in this area consisted of a series of six gravel quarries – comprising, in broadly stratigraphic order, **F.186**, **F.187**, **F.185**, **F.183**, **F.184** and **F.190** – which ranged between 0.65m+ to 2.0m+ in diameter and 0.37m+ to 0.81m+ in depth. Each shared a characteristic fill, consisting of a firmly concreted mid orangey brown sandy silt deposit with very frequent gravel inclusions, which demonstrates evidence of mineralisation associated with natural weathering. They thus appear to have been left open to silt up naturally, although their close proximity and partial intercutting does suggest that at least some of the material encountered within them may have been derived from upcast created by adjacent quarrying activity. Unfortunately, aside from three residual Late Prehistoric worked flints, no dating material was recovered. During the 2nd century AD, however, a second and

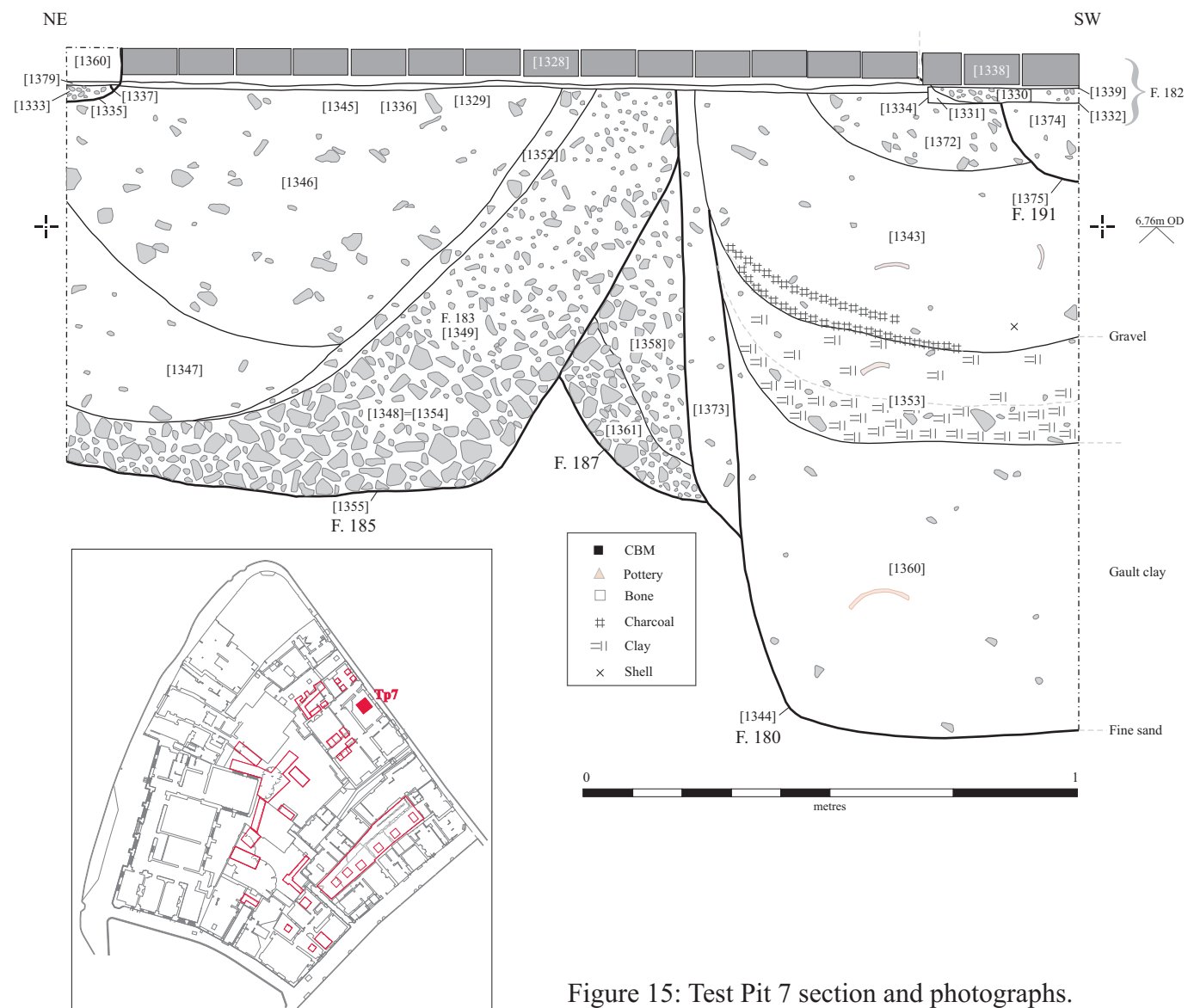


Figure 15: Test Pit 7 section and photographs.

much more datable phase of activity began (Phase 2), which sealed the preceding features within the southwestern half of the test pit. This activity commenced with the creation of northeast-to-southwest oriented posthole alignment **F.189**, which ran perpendicular to the nearby Colchester to Godmanchester road; although only three postholes (up to 0.45m+ deep) were identified, the alignment clearly continued to the southwest. The boundary that was thus defined was also relatively long-lived, as the fenceline was subsequently replaced by gully **F.179**, which – following the insertion of numerous dumps of ash and domestic refuse – was in turn replaced by gully **F.188**. Also contemporary with this phase was refuse pit **F.180**, which was sub-circular in form and at least 1.34m+ deep. The fill sequence of this feature indicates that it was originally revetted (most probably with wicker), allowing repeated dumps of domestic rubbish material to be deposited – and perhaps also occasionally cleared out – on an episodic basis. Although only c.25% of the pit fell within the limits of the excavation over one hundred sherds of 2nd/3rd century pottery were recovered, along with an Old Red Sandstone quernstone fragment and two off-cuts from bone working; this clearly indicates the domestic nature of Roman occupation at the site. The final feature in the sequence, prior to Modern truncation, comprised undiagnostic Roman pit **F.191**.

Phase 3 (Modern)

During the late 18th century, the area was very heavily truncated by the construction of a cellar associated with the present standing Grade II listed structure (*cf.* Dixon & Herring 2003, 30-44; RCHM(E) 1959 Vol. II, 336-7). This event (Phase 3), which effectively ‘scalped’ the area to below the original undisturbed ground level, is represented archaeologically by brick floor surface **F.181**. Subsequently, during the 19th century, this floor was itself partially remodelled via the addition of at least one internal subdivision (represented by **F.182**).

Summary of watching brief results

Three areas of watching brief – comprising Areas II, III and IV – were located in close proximity to Test Pit 7. The most relevant of these is Area II, which consisted of four small trial holes (each measuring 0.8 by 0.8m in extent) that were situated in an adjacent cellar room to Test Pit 7, within the same property at N^o 68 Bridge Street. The two holes located closest to the frontage revealed firm mid orangey brown gravel deposits (most probably denoting quarry pits similar to those identified above), whilst the two rearmost holes contained cut features similar to those seen in roughly the same location within Test Pit 7. This clearly follows a similar pattern of ‘areas of absence’ situated close to street frontage, in which no cut features were created from the 2nd century onwards. The two remaining areas, Areas III and IV, were situated somewhat further back from the Bridge Street frontage – outside the area of Modern cellaring activity – and were thus restricted to observing the uppermost part of the sequence only. Therefore, although of relevance in terms of identifying the nature of the later phases of activity undertaken in this area (which appears to have broadly mirrored the contemporary sequence encountered in Area 1), the results of these works do not contribute to an understanding of the early development of the site.

Summary of results of previous work

Five of the trial pits that were monitored during the 2005 evaluation phase at the site – comprising numbers 40 to 44, respectively – lay within close proximity of Area 2; Trial Pits 40 and 41 were situated within the cellar of N^o 68 Bridge Street, whilst Trial Pits 42 to 44 were situated within the cellar of N^o 69 Bridge Street. Of these five, four – numbers 40 and 42 to 44 – contained definite archaeological features (Hall & Dickens 2005, 9-10), although only one of these contained dating evidence (consisting of two sherds of 1st to 2nd century AD Roman pottery, which were recovered from a gravel layer within Trial Pit 40). Notably, the deepest features were all encountered at the furthest distance from the frontage, in Trial Pits 44 (where gravel was encountered at 6.35m OD) and 43 (where the feature continued below 6.32m OD). In greater proximity to Bridge Street, within Trial Pits 40 to 42, gravels were encountered between 6.5m and 7.0m OD (*ibid*). However, the firmly compacted nature of these deposits – which prompted the suggestion that they may represent part of a Roman road or pathway (*ibid*, 11) – is in fact likely to have resulted from their comprising the weathered backfill of quarry pits similar to those encountered in Test Pit 7. The recovery of 1st or 2nd century pottery from one of these features is also consistent with such an interpretation, as is the continuation of the distinct spatial relationship between quarry pits and refuse pits previously noted above.

Area 2 summary

The excavations undertaken within Area 2, although severely limited by the extent of later cellaring and other disturbances, provide the clearest demonstration of the early archaeological sequence to be recovered from any part of the site; in addition, Area 2 also represents the most northeasterly portion of the site to be investigated, and is thus situated in closest proximity to the main Bridge Street frontage. Despite the degree of later truncation, therefore, the results of this work are of some significance. In the first instance, an early phase of intensive quarrying activity has been identified that is most probably 1st to 2nd century in date. This appears likely to relate to the establishment (and potentially also the upkeep) of the adjacent Colchester to Godmanchester road, now commonly referred to as the *Via Devana*. During the 2nd century, however, these quarries became sealed beneath a series of features relating to the establishment of a number of domestic properties at the site. These properties – which appear to have contained small, potentially quite ephemeral frontage buildings (primarily denoted by the ‘areas of absence’ identified above, in which the footprint of the buildings had precluded the insertion of additional cut features) with well-defined yard spaces extending to their rear – remained occupied until at least the 3rd century AD. As a coda, it is interesting to note that the absence of Saxo-Norman or later cut features, which are commonly encountered at such depth in other parts of the site, indicates that this area probably remained sealed beneath buildings throughout much of its Post-Roman history.

Area 3

This area primarily consists of Soakaway 1, which measured 4.0m by 2.0m in extent and was the only area to be 100% excavated. It is situated to the south of Area 2 and falls within the rear portions of both N^os 68 and 69 Bridge Street, although it is located partially across their boundary (see Figure 2). In addition, two areas of associated watching brief were undertaken within Area 3, and the results of this work are also included below. (Notably, however, no work was undertaken in this area during the evaluation conducted in 2005-6).

Soakaway 1 (Figures 16 to 22)

Phase 1 (Natural)

Natural gravels were encountered at 6.53m OD, and were overlain by pale brown sandy silt subsoil layer **F.447**. Although only surviving in patches, this material – which is up to 0.12m+ thick and contained occasional to frequent small gravel inclusions – most probably represents vestiges of Late Prehistoric or Roman horticultural activity at the site; unfortunately, no dating evidence was recovered from the deposit.

Phase 2 (Roman)

The earliest discrete features to be encountered in this area consisted of a series of five gravel quarries – comprising, in broadly stratigraphic order, **F.258**, **F.259**, **F.242**, **F.256** and **F.257** – which ranged between 0.5m+ to 1.05m+ in diameter and 0.28m+ to 0.57m+ in depth. The remnants of two further quarries, **F.260** and **F.261**, also appear to have been contemporary with this phase, although they were separated from the former group by extensive later truncation (thus raising the possibility that a number of additional features may have been removed entirely). Notably, each of seven surviving pits shared a characteristic fill, consisting of a pale reddish orange brown silty sand deposit with very frequent gravel inclusions, which appears to have primarily accrued via natural weathering. However, these features – although very similar to the 1st/2nd century quarry pits previously identified in Area 2 – are distinguished from their counterparts by the occasional insertion of opportunistic refuse deposits (that is, discrete episodes of dumping associated with the secondary reuse of a feature). The presence of such material, which contained pottery dating principally to the 2nd/3rd centuries AD, indicates that these pits were most probably associated with the contemporary phase of domestic occupation at the site. Yet, by the early 4th century, it appears that the use of the area had changed, as the earlier features became sealed beneath layer **F.286**. Due to the extent of later truncation, however, the precise origin of this deposit is not certain; indeed, although containing exclusively Roman material culture, it is possible that the layer resulted at least in part from the disturbance of the underlying deposits by later horticultural activities conducted during the 5th to 9th centuries.

Phase 3 (Late Saxon or early Saxo-Norman)

Following on from the potential horticultural usage of the site during Saxon times, archaeological activity recommenced in the late 9th or more probably early to mid 10th century with the creation of ditch **F.255** (thus marking the beginning of Phase 3). This

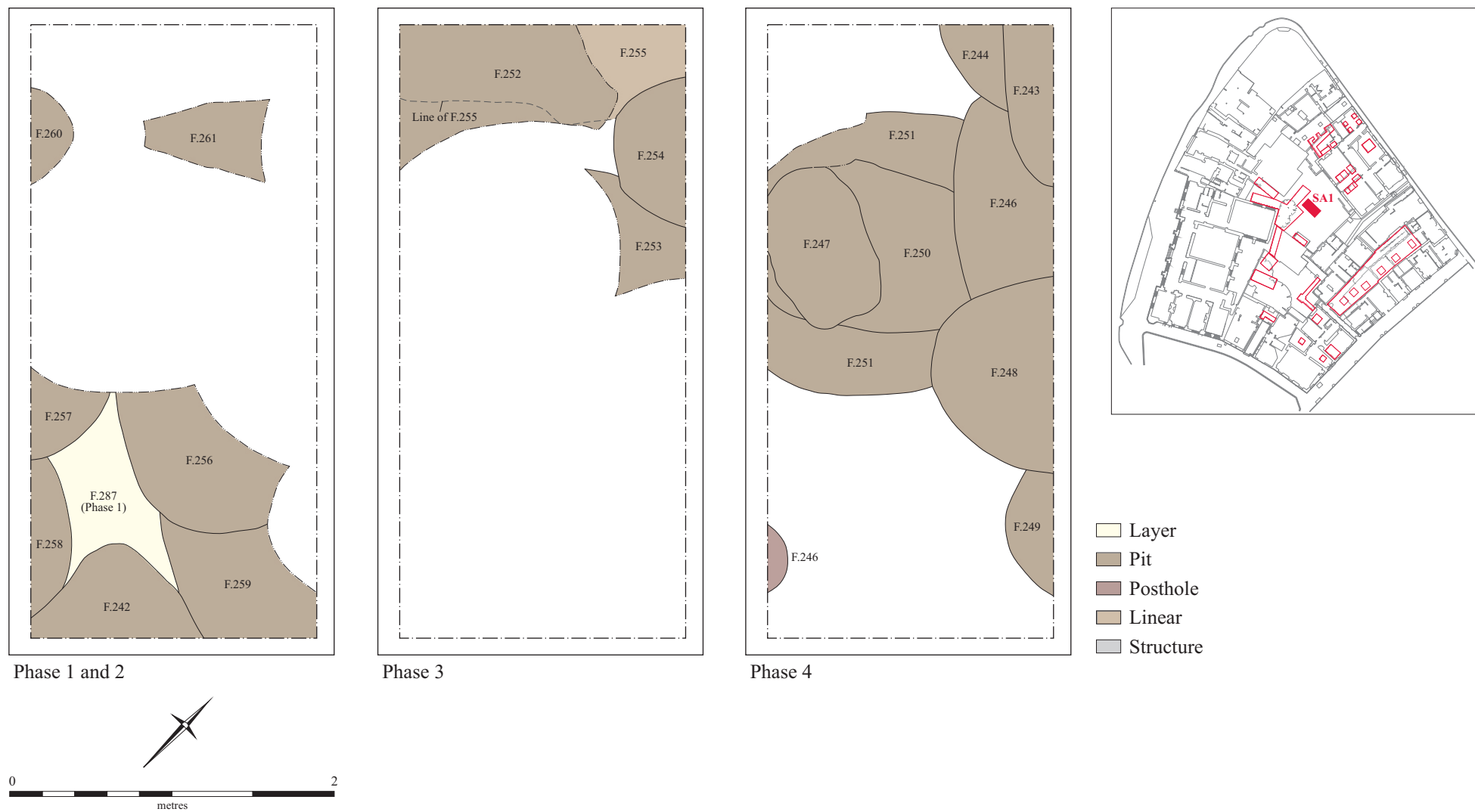


Figure 16: Soakaway 1, Phases 1 to 4.

feature – which measured 1.64m+ by 0.60m+ in extent and 0.84m+ deep with steeply sloping sides and a sharp, ‘V’ shaped base – represents the establishment of a very long-lived northeast to southwest aligned boundary at the northwestern end of the trench. It is not entirely clear, however, whether it demarcated a division between open agricultural fields or defined the limit of a newly laid out domestic property (or group of properties) although, given its longevity, the latter option appears the most likely. Having been left open to silt up naturally, the ditch was then succeeded by a series of quarry pits – comprising **F.252**, **F.253** and **F.254** – which ranged between 0.81m+ to 1.3m+ in diameter and 0.42m+ to 0.89m+ in depth. Notably, each of these features contained a very similar deposit of mid to dark brown sandy clay with occasional to frequent gravel and rare charcoal inclusions, which indicates that they were deliberately backfilled. Yet, whilst this clearly demonstrates an increase in the levels of activity being undertaken in the area, no evidence of contemporary occupation was recovered. Indeed, the date of this phase was only revealed by the fact that the final feature in this sequence, **F.254**, contained a single sherd of Thetford-type ware.

Phase 4 (Saxo-Norman)

Between the mid 10th and early 13th centuries, seven further pits – comprising, in broadly stratigraphic order, **F.251**, **F.250**, **F.247**, **F.246**, **F.244**, **F.248**, **F.249** and **F.243** – were excavated in this area. All of these features appear to have been situated within a single property plot, with no apparent divisions between them, implying that the earlier boundary had shifted a little further to the northwest at this time. The various pits in this group, which ranged between 0.78m+ to 1.42m+ in diameter and 0.26m+ to 1.01m+ in depth, are clearly distinguished from their predecessors by the nature of the material that was deposited into them. For – unlike the earlier Phase 3 quarries – the features created during Phase 4 were predominately backfilled with domestic refuse material. This included numerous dumps of cess material within **F.246**, **F.247**, **F.248** and **F.251**, as well as relatively large assemblages of Thetford-type and St Neots-type wares; in addition, a near complete cast copper alloy ‘T’ shaped combined pin and bar from a small buckle, along with a possible iron fishhook and a square sectioned iron nail, were also recovered from **F.251**. It therefore appears that these pits, although potentially similar in initial function to the earlier quarry features, post-dated the establishment of domestic occupation at the site and were utilised on a secondary basis for the opportunistic disposal of general household refuse. Indeed, the very latest features in the sequence (such as **F.248**, **F.249** and **F.243**) were perhaps primarily intended to act as receptacles for rubbish, since the majority of the gravel already appears to have been extracted by the time of their creation. Furthermore, the increasing range and scale of activity in the area during the Saxo-Norman period is demonstrated by the presence of contemporary posthole **F.245**; this feature, which is at least 0.4m+ in diameter, may have comprised part of a small ancillary building or other temporary structure. Despite (or perhaps because of) the increasing levels of activity, however, during the early part of the 13th century the area became sealed beneath layer **F.285**; this deposit appears to have been predominately formed from the upcast material generated by the preceding horizon of activity.



Figure 17: Soakaway 1, Phases 5 to 8.

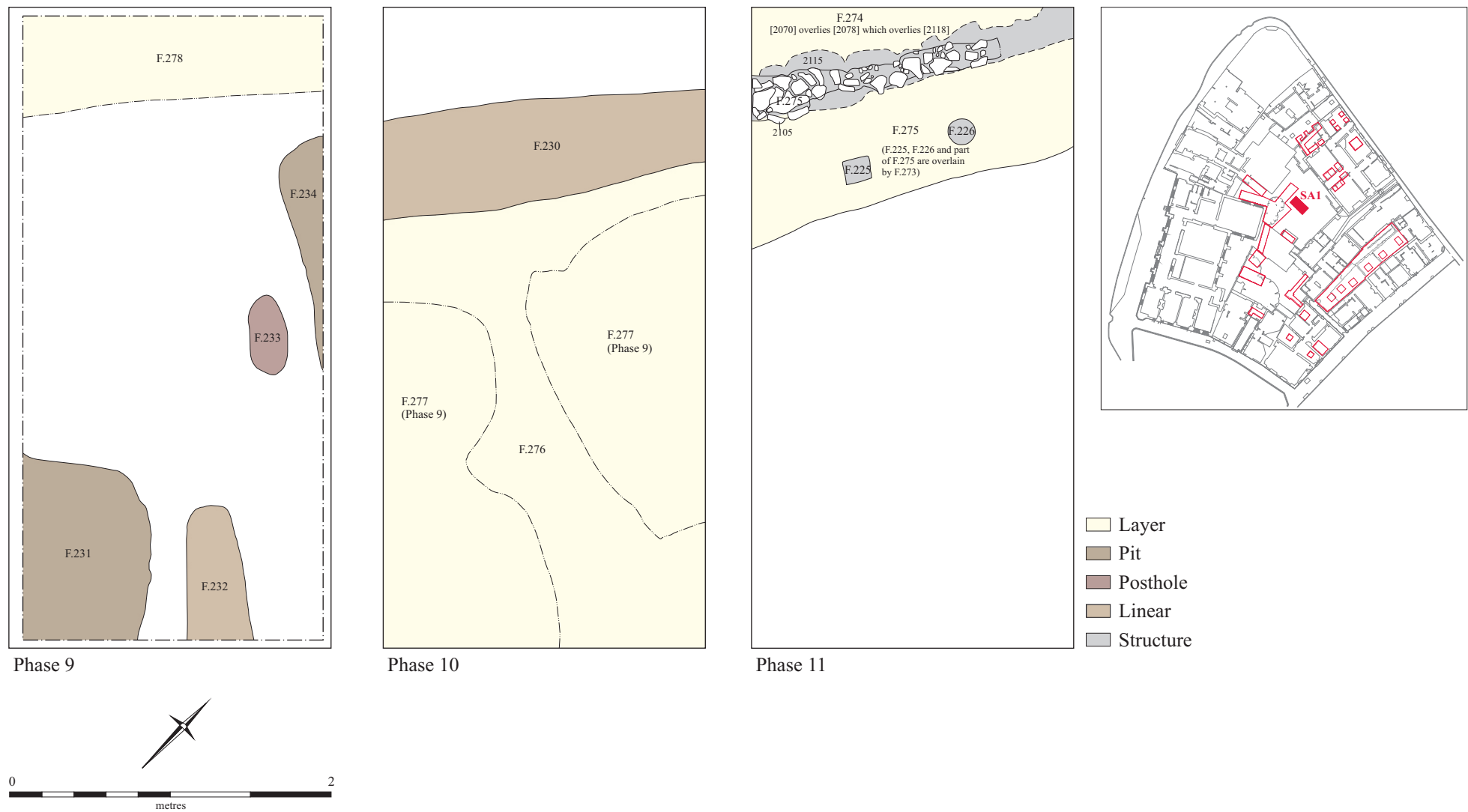


Figure 18: Soakaway 1, Phases 9 to 11.



Figure 19: Workshop 2, Phase 1 (left) and Workshop 2, Phase 2 (right).

Phases 5 to 10 (Medieval)

During the later part of the 13th century, layer **F.284** was also deposited across the area (comprising Phase 5). This represents the first in a sequence of six relatively rapid episodes of activity that occurred during the Medieval period, each of which appears to have been sealed in turn beneath a layer of upcast/trampled material. Thus, during the early 14th century, **F.284** was truncated by pit **F.241** (marking the commencement of Phase 6) and this feature was then itself overlain by upcast/trample layer **F.283**. Subsequently, in the mid 14th century (Phase 7), the latter deposit was truncated by pits **F.237** and **F.238**, which were themselves overlain by layer **F.282**. A further pit, **F.236**, was then excavated that was overlain by near identical deposit **F.280**. Although no clear boundary division was apparent at this time (most probably as a result of later truncation), it does appear that the alignment had shifted further back to the southeast during this phase. A small portion of the northwestern property was again present, therefore, and in this area pits **F.240** and **F.239** were overlain by layer **F.281**, which appears to have been directly contemporary with **F.280** to the southeast. Phase 8 then commenced during the late 14th century when layer **F.280** was overlain by layer **F.279**, a very similar deposit that contained a small iron barrel padlock; in the adjacent property, meanwhile, **F.281** was truncated by ditch/gully **F.235**. The latter feature – which was aligned northeast to southwest, and had near vertical sides leading to a relatively flat base – measured 0.66m wide by 0.35m deep. It clearly represents the re-establishment of the long-lived property boundary first demarcated by **F.255** some four hundred years before, and may well have been partially responsible for the truncation of the preceding Phase 7 boundary. During the late 14th or early 15th century, the boundary was again re-established (by near identical gully **F.232**) and pits **F.231** and **F.234** – plus posthole **F.233** – were inserted into the southeastern property; this marks the beginning of Phase 9. These features were subsequently overlain by layer **F.277**, which is likely to have been contemporary with near-identical layer **F.278** that was deposited in the adjacent northwestern property. Finally, later in the 15th century (Phase 10), a further replacement boundary gully was inserted (**F.230**), whilst **F.277** was overlain by near identical deposit **F.276**.

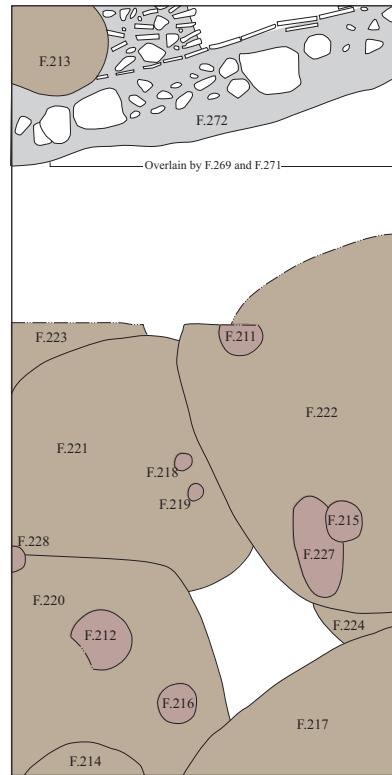
Phases 11 to 13 (Post-Medieval)

During the early 16th century, a timber-framed ancillary building was constructed in the northwestern property that sealed and partially truncated the preceding horizon of activity. This building, whose construction marked the commencement of Phase 11, appears to have functioned as a metalworking workshop in which both black- and potentially also white-smithing activities were undertaken; it has therefore been defined as ‘*Workshop 2*’. The structure, which was partially sunken to a depth of around 0.40m, was very well constructed. Wall foundation **F.275**, for example, consisted of an initial course of squared clunch and limestone blocks (measuring 340mm by 240mm by 240mm on average) that were bonded with a concreted dark yellow mortar. This was then overlain by a second course of smaller, well-faced clunch blocks (measuring 120mm by 110mm by 100mm on average) and flat-laid whole and broken tiles that were bonded with a firm pale brownish pink mortar (see Figure 19). Overall, therefore, the sill wall measured 0.38m wide and 0.39m deep and clearly represented a significant investment of both time and resources. Against the external, southeastern face of the sill wall a clay ‘damp-proofing’ layer was also inserted. This deposit was subsequently truncated by postholes **F.225** and **F.226**,

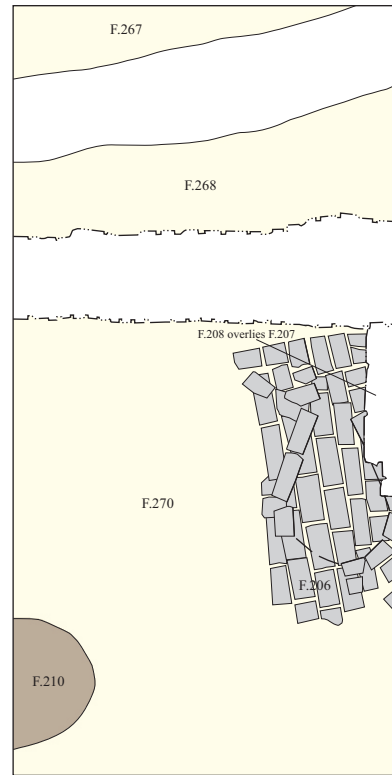
which most probably represent traces of scaffolding employed during the erection of the main timber structure. Internally, banded foundation layers **F.274** (which contained a small near complete iron rake) were then deposited, whilst externally pathway **F.273** was established immediately adjacent to the building, following the alignment of the earlier property boundary; this latter deposit sealed and partially infilled the earlier postholes.

Later in the 16th century, following a period of extended use, *Workshop 2* was extensively remodelled; this action marks the beginning of Phase 12. As part of the remodelling process, the entire structure was levelled and the former clunch-built sill wall was reconstructed. All traces of the preceding floor surfaces were removed and a general clay foundation/levelling layer was introduced. A new sill wall, **F.272**, was then constructed above this deposit using firm 'off-white' clay with mottled patches of mid to dark brown silty clay and angular clunch fragment inclusions; this followed the same northeast to southwest alignment as its predecessor, and its internal face was carefully lined with on-edge red and yellow tiles (see Figure 19). Although less solidly constructed than the preceding foundation, **F.272** was still substantial in scale and measured 0.40m wide by 0.30m thick. An internal subdivision – which was constructed from the same materials, and was aligned at right angles to the main external wall – was also inserted. A series of make-up and possible floor layers, **F.271**, were then deposited within the structure, but were partially truncated by robbing event **F.213**. This latter feature – which may have targeted a specific element within the building, or alternatively represented a more general modification of structure's layout – was in turn overlain by compacted clay floor surface **F.269**. Meanwhile, in the adjacent, southeastern property at this time, a sequence of eight pits – comprising, in broadly stratigraphic order, **F.223**, **F.224**, **F.222**, **F.220**, **F.221**, **F.214**, **F.217** and **F.227** – were inserted into the open backyard area. These features, which ranged between 0.48m+ to 1.97m+ in diameter and 0.29m+ to 0.67m+ in depth, appear to have primarily consisted of refuse disposal pits. Along with the range of materials typically associated with domestic refuse, however, many of these pits also contained quantities of slag and metalworking debris indicative of a semi-industrial association. In addition, a series of seven post- and stakeholes – including, in broadly stratigraphic order, **F.211**, **F.212**, **F.215**, **F.216**, **F.218**, **F.219** and **F.228** – were also created at this time, although no distinct patterns or alignments were discernable in their distribution.

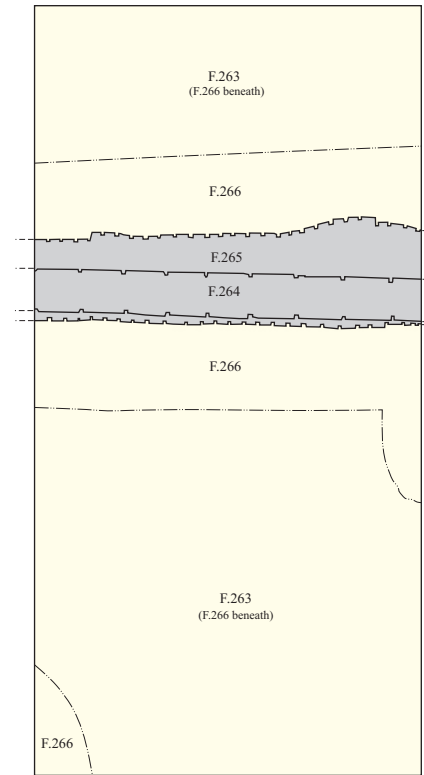
Towards the end of the 16th century, *Workshop 2* went out of use and was finally demolished (thus marking the beginning of Phase 13). Two layers that were deposited in the northwestern property at this time – consisting of **F.267**, which was encountered inside the structure, and **F.268**, which was encountered outside of it – appear to have been directly associated with demolition of the building. Notably, the former deposit contained a number of iron artefacts – including a complete axe head, a hammered ingot, a large strap hinge and a bi-lobed buckle, along with a considerable quantity of slag and metalworking debris – that are likely to have been associated with the structure's former use. The horizon of pitting in the adjoining property also appears to have become sealed at this time; the features in this area were overlain by trample layer **F.270**, which – as it is extremely similar to contemporary layer **F.268** to the northwest – may also have been associated with demolition of the adjacent workshop structure. This deposit was subsequently truncated by pit **F.210** (which again contained quantities of slag and metalworking debris) and posthole



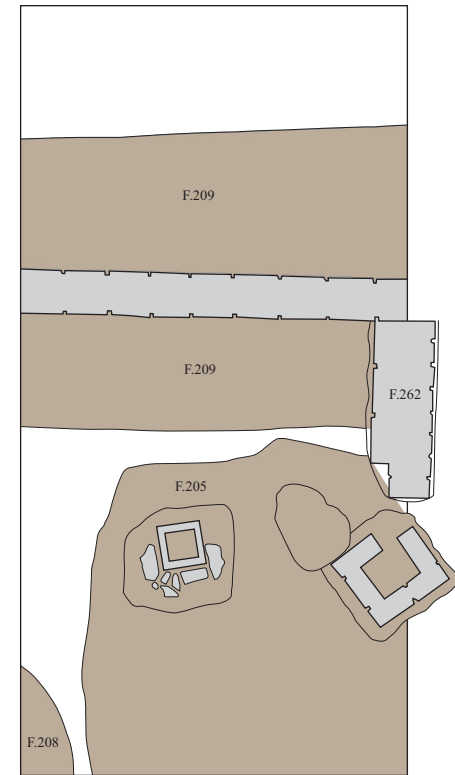
Phase 12



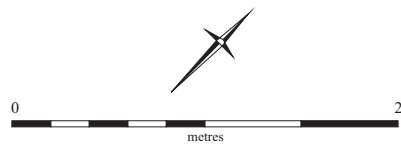
Phase 13



Phase 14



Phase 15



- Layer
- Pit
- Posthole
- Linear
- Structure



Figure 20: Soakaway 1, Phases 12 to 15.



Figure 21: Soakaway 1, Phase 13, showing detail of oven F.206.

F.207. Finally, the latter feature was in turn succeeded by brick-built oven **F.206** in the 17th century (see Figure 21). One again, however, the backfill of this oven, following its disuse later in the century, contained metalworking slag along with a complete iron crowbar or jemmy. This indicates that metalworking activity continued to be undertaken in the near vicinity at this time, despite the demolition of *Workshop 2* several decades before.

Phases 14 and 15 (Modern)

At some time during the 18th century, the rear portions of both properties were transformed from working areas into well-kept formal gardens. This transformation, which marks the commencement of Phase 14, most probably occurred towards the end of the century when the present standing building at N^o. 68/69 Bridge Street was constructed (*cf.* Herring & Slatcher 2003, 15-16; Dixon & Herring 2003, 30-44). At this time, the two properties appear to have been largely amalgamated and the preceding horizons of activity became sealed beneath introduced garden soil deposit **F.266**, which was subsequently overlain by free draining gravel bedding layer **F.263**; this was in turn truncated by wall **F.265**. The latter – which was aligned northeast to southwest, and perpetuated the boundary previously identified in this area during earlier phases – was constructed from reused, unfrogged hand-made red bricks that were laid in a random ‘best-fit’ manner and bonded with a very hard light grey lime mortar. In the early to mid 19th century, it was partially rebuilt on the same alignment by **F.264**. Subsequently, during the 20th century (Phase 15), the usage of the combined space as a garden continued. A small ancillary structure, possibly a greenhouse, was constructed (as represented by foundation **F.262**) and a series of drains were also inserted, **F.205**, along with two planting beds (**F.209**) that abutted either face of wall **F.264**. Finally, pit **F.208** – which, although of indeterminate function, was again most probably garden-related – was also created. Indeed, formal planting beds were still in evidence when the area was stripped prior to excavation in 2007.

Summary of watching brief results (Figures 23 and 24)

Two areas of watching brief, consisting of Areas V and VI, were undertaken in close proximity to Soakaway 1. Much the most significant of these is Area V, which was specifically targeted in order to define the form and extent of *Workshop 2*. This work revealed that the building was multi-cellular in construction (see Figure 23), consisting of a minimum of two (and probably at least three) separate rooms, and that it measured 4.7m wide by at least 9.1m long. Each of the walls was constructed in an identical fashion to that encountered in Soakaway 1 (including both a clunch-built and clay-built phase) apart from the rearmost, located at the southwestern end of the structure, which – whilst still comprising a foundation for an overarching timber structure – was constructed in brick. It is not entirely clear whether this represented an original feature of the building, however, or instead formed part a separate episode of remodelling unassociated with the wider reconstruction phase previously outlined above. Overall, the form of this structure represents a very common building-type within Medieval and Post-Medieval British towns (Schofield & Vince 2003, 86-91). It is, for example, closely comparable in both size and design to a group of buildings excavated at Church Close, Hartlepool; indeed, one of the structures at this site, Building II, had also been employed for a similar industrial usage (*cf.* Daniels 1990). Beneath *Workshop 2* the remains of a second, earlier building were encountered.

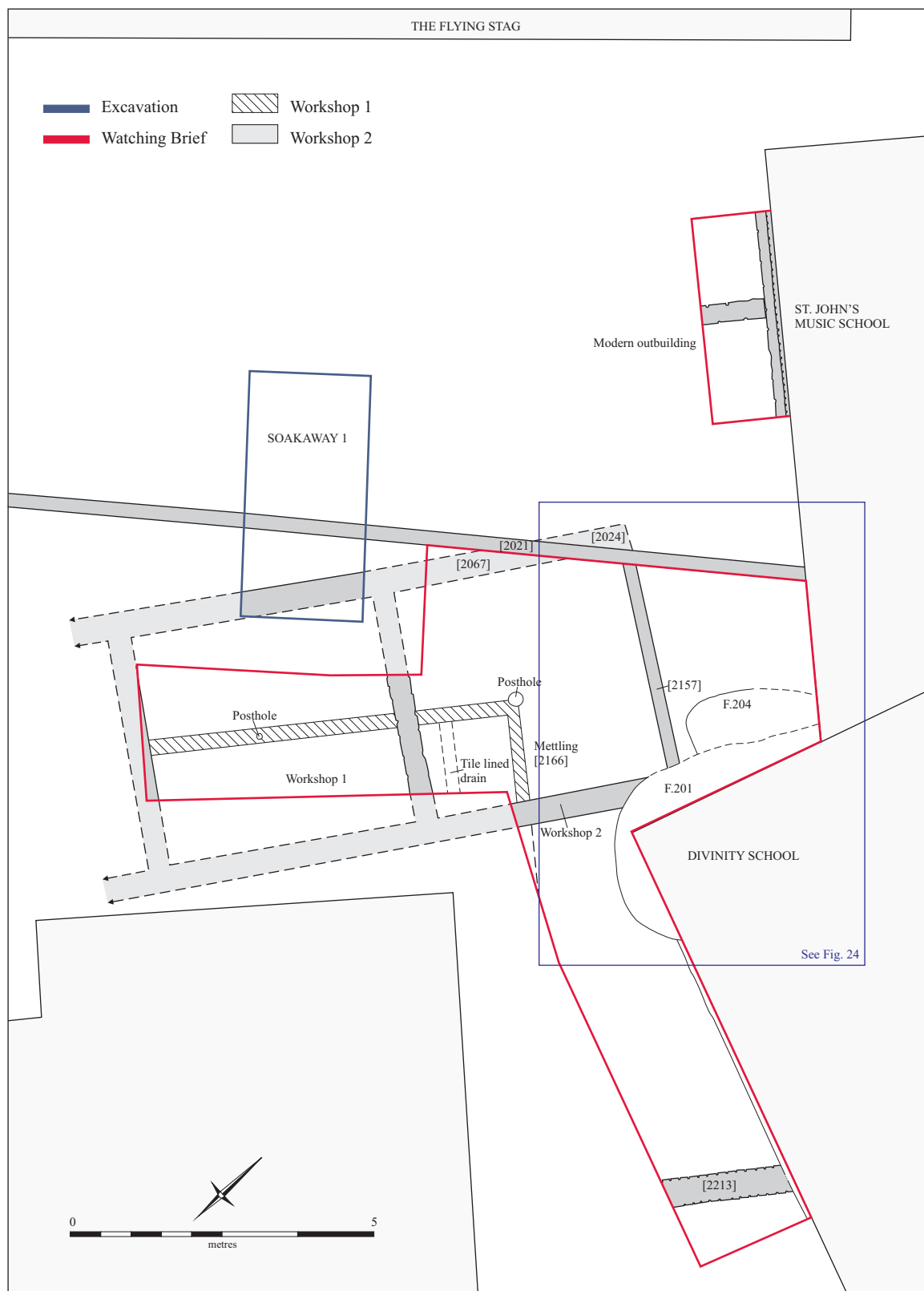


Figure 23: Area 3, watching brief results.

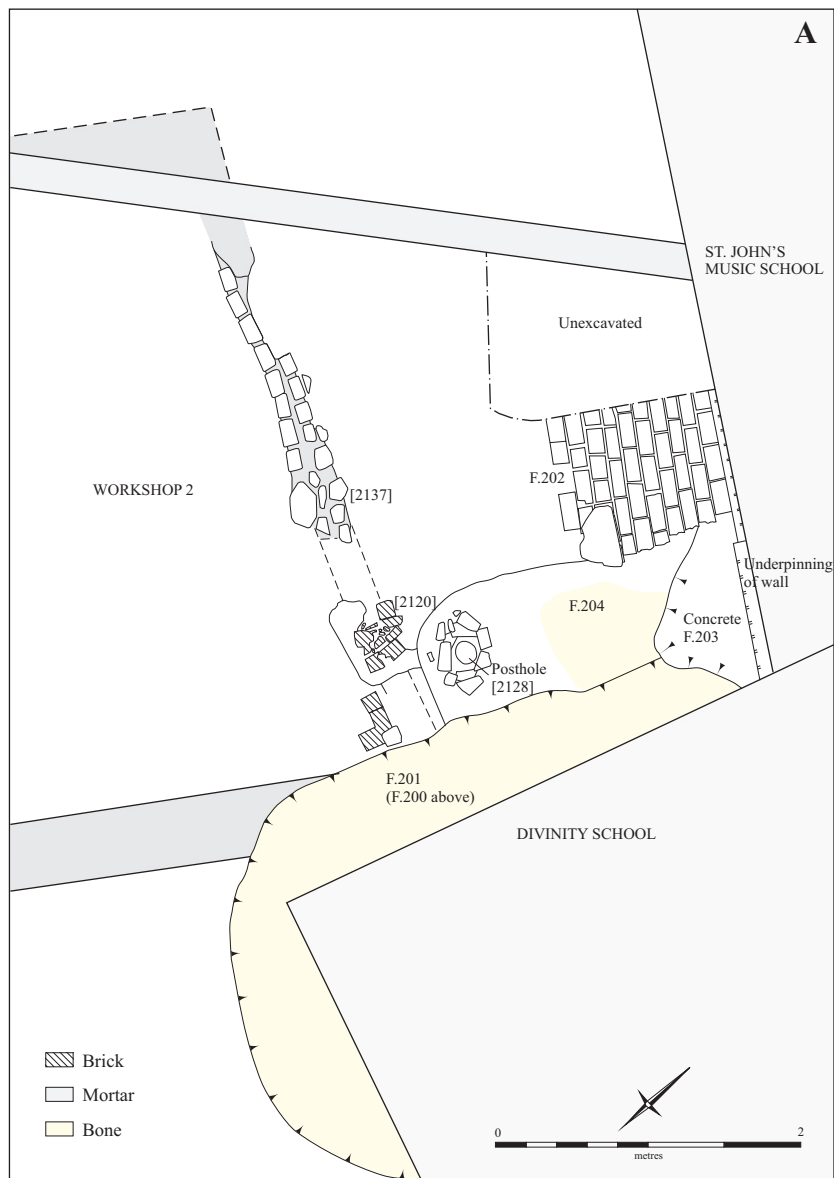


Figure 24: Detail of Area 3 watching brief results (A) and F.201 looking north (B).

Whilst oriented on a similar alignment to its successor, this latter structure was situated several metres further to the northeast. However, quantities of slag and metalworking debris were recovered from the demolition horizon beneath which it as sealed, along with fragments of 16th century pottery, indicating that it had directly preceded the construction of *Workshop 2*; it has therefore been defined as *Workshop 1*.

Although fewer details of the form and layout of this earlier structure were recovered, it is clear that it was also very well constructed. Once again, the principal foundation consisted of a clunch-built sill wall, which in this instance contained evidence for associated upright timbers (most especially at the southeastern corner). Furthermore, inside the building itself a gently pitched clay floor had been laid, into which was set an off-centre tile-lined drain (see Figure 23); this clearly demonstrates the industrial nature of the function for which it was employed. In addition, as *Workshop 1* was demolished in the early 16th century, immediately prior to the erection of its successor, it had most probably been constructed at some time during the preceding century. This indicates that industrial activities were being conducted within the northwestern property from at least the 15th century onwards. A number of further discoveries were also made to the southwest of *Workshops 1* and *2* in Area V. Immediately to the rear of *Workshop 2*, for example, in the late 16th or early 17th century (and therefore most probably post-dating the final disuse of the structure) pit **F.204** was created. Along with at least three pieces of moulded stone and a fragment of stucco depicting a decorative Gothic tracery, this feature contained 241 fragments of human bone representing a minimum of eight individuals. The origin of these remains is unclear, however, although – given the nature of the material with which they were associated – they are perhaps most likely to have been derived from a nearby ecclesiastical context. A left femur recovered from this feature was submitted for radiocarbon dating; the determination Beta-240952 produced a result of 900 to 1212 cal AD (3 s.d. 99.7% probability), and Bayesian analysis indicates that this femur derives from an individual who died in the 11th century (58.6% probability) or 12th century (35.7% probability). The likelihood that the individual died before the Norman Conquest of 1066 AD is 48.1%.

In addition to the material encountered within **F.204**, a much larger quantity of human remains – totalling 3287 fragments representing a minimum of 125 individuals – was also recovered from adjacent foundation trench **F.201** and associated features (see Figure 24). This material can be directly linked with the construction of the Selwyn Divinity School in 1879, although once again its original provenance remains unclear. Indeed, whilst the area is known to have comprised part of the cemetery of the Hospital of St. John the Evangelist between c.1250 and 1500, and it is possible that foundations of the Divinity School disturbed a number of these interments, it is also located in close proximity to the cemetery of the Church of All Saints; the precise source of the remains is therefore difficult to determine. Notably, some of this material had also become incorporated into early 20th century bedding feature **F.200**, which contained – in addition to the human remains – a minimum of 29 ceramic vessels. Although rather limited in size, this group is of particular significance as a considerable number of the vessels are marked with the names of Colleges and/or mid 19th century College cooks; indeed, whilst dominated by material derived from a single service associated with the Hudson family at Trinity College, the marked wares in fact relate to a number of different cooks working at a range of Colleges. Finally, in

Area VI, which is located a little way to the northwest of Area V, two wells (of 17th/18th and 18th/19th century date respectively) were encountered. Both had been partially backfilled, but traces of lower ‘chambers’ somewhat broader than the main well shafts remained visible in each. This unusual form of construction indicates that they may have been intended for intensive use, a notion supported by the fact that the earlier of the two was directly associated with The Flying Stag, a former public house.

Area 3 summary

Despite Soakaway 1 being situated partially across the boundary of two separate properties, the results recovered from Area 3 represent the most complete archaeological sequence to have been excavated anywhere at the site. Indeed, a pattern of almost two thousand years of activity of varying intensity has been revealed. Following on from the probable yard-type activities that were conducted during the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD, it appears that the area may then have reverted to agricultural use until the early to mid 10th century. At this time, however, a long-lived boundary was established – thereby subdividing the area into two respective property plots – and there is evidence of nearby domestic occupation from around the mid 10th century onwards. The scale of this activity continued to increase throughout the Saxo-Norman period and during Medieval times both properties were intensively used, with numerous sub-phases having been identified in each. Perhaps most notable of all, however, was the establishment of a series of metalworking workshops in the northwestern property during the Late Medieval and Early Post-Medieval periods; as significant quantities of material were recovered from these structures, it will be possible to analyse the practices that were conducted within them in some detail. Finally, from around the late 18th century onwards, the rear portions of both properties were transformed into well-kept gardens that survived largely unchanged until the current phase of redevelopment commenced.

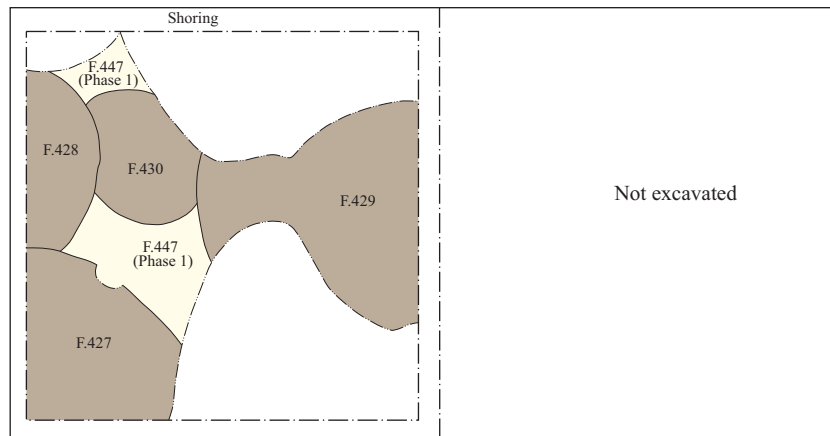
Area 4

This area primarily consists of Soakaway 2, which measured 4.4m by 2.3m in extent and was excavated in two halves (of which only the first was fully bottomed, as the impact of the soakaway was relatively minimal). It is situated within an open yard area that is sited somewhat further back from the main frontage than the locations explored in the three preceding areas; this yard has been attached to numerous different properties at different times, but appears to have been primarily associated with N^o. 70 Bridge Street from the late 16th to the early 20th centuries. The results recovered from four areas of watching brief that occurred in close association with this trench, within the bounds of the same open yard, are also included below.

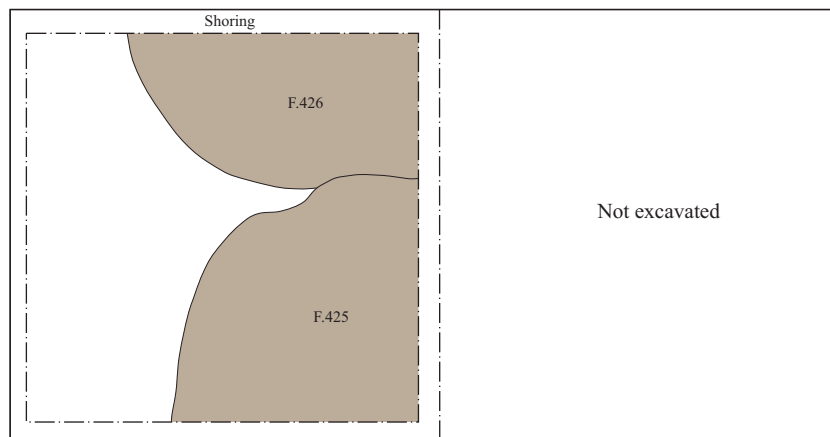
Soakaway 2 (Figures 25 to 28)

Phase 1 (Natural)

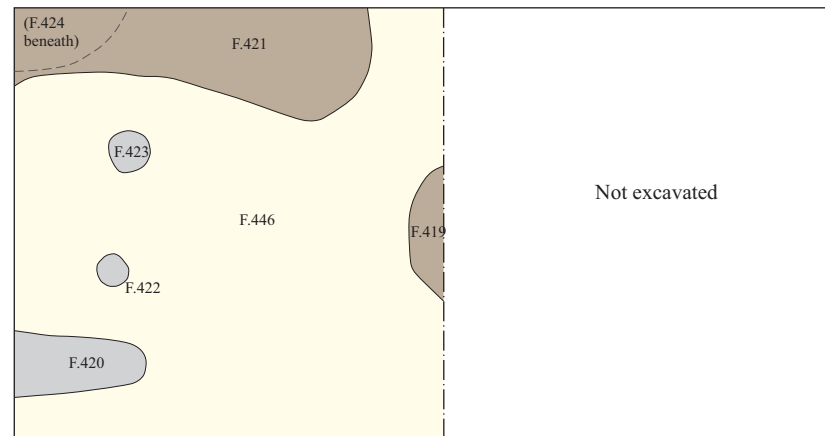
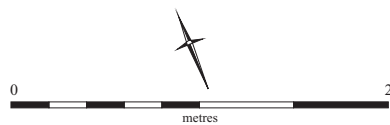
Natural gravels were encountered at 6.73m OD, and were overlain by mid orangey to reddish brown sandy gravel subsoil layer **F.447**. Although only surviving in patches, this material – which is up to 0.30m thick – most probably represents vestiges of Late Prehistoric or Roman horticultural activity at the site; unfortunately, no dating evidence was recovered from the deposit.



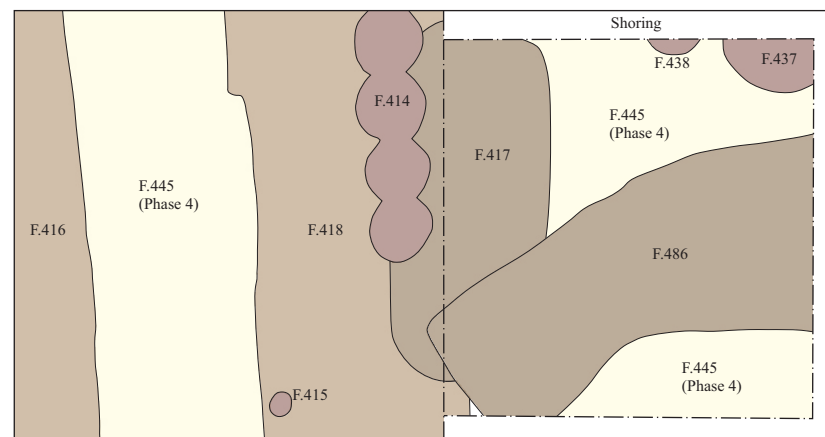
Phase 1 and 2



Phase 3



Phase 4



Phase 5

- Layer
- Pit
- Posthole
- Linear
- Structure



Figure 25: Soakaway 2, Phases 1 to 5.



Figure 26: Soakaway 2, Phase 5 prior to (top) and during (bottom) excavation.

Phase 2 (Late Saxon or early Saxo-Norman)

The subsoil was later truncated during the late 9th or early to mid 10th century by the insertion of four gravel quarries – comprising, in stratigraphic order, **F.430**, **F.429**, **F.428** and **F.427** – which ranged between 0.7m+ to 1.3m+ in diameter and 0.25m+ to 0.92m+ in depth. Each shared a characteristic fill, consisting of a firmly concreted mid orangey brown sandy silt deposit with very frequent gravel inclusions, which demonstrates evidence of mineralisation associated with natural weathering. They thus appear to have been left open to silt up naturally, although their close proximity and partial intercutting does suggest that at least some of the material encountered within them may have been derived from upcast created by adjacent quarrying activity. Although these features are almost identical to the Roman quarry pits previously identified above (in Areas 2 and 3), the recovery of two sherds of early Thetford-type ware from **F.429** demonstrates that they belong to a later phase of activity at the site. It thus appears that the ‘working face’ of gravel extraction had gradually extended from northeast to southwest across St. John’s Triangle, as the raw material was slowly depleted over time. Indeed, by the 12th to 13th centuries the supply of gravel within the town generally appears to have been exhausted, and the focus of quarrying activity switched instead to the outer rural hinterland (*cf.* Hall & Ravensdale 1976).

Phase 3 (Saxo-Norman)

At some time during the mid 10th to 12th centuries, two further quarry pits (comprising **F.426** and **F.425**) were excavated in this area. These features are clearly distinguished from their predecessors, however, on account of both their size – as they are, on average, at least twice as large – and the nature of their fills. Unlike the earlier Phase 2 quarries, for example, those created during Phase 3 were predominately backfilled with domestic refuse material; this included cess material within **F.425**, which also contained a reasonably sized assemblage of Thetford-type and St. Neots-type wares, and a worked bone toggle within **F.426**. It therefore appears that these pits, although similar in initial function to the earlier quarry features, post-dated the establishment of domestic occupation at the site and were thus utilised on a secondary basis for the opportunistic disposal of general household refuse.

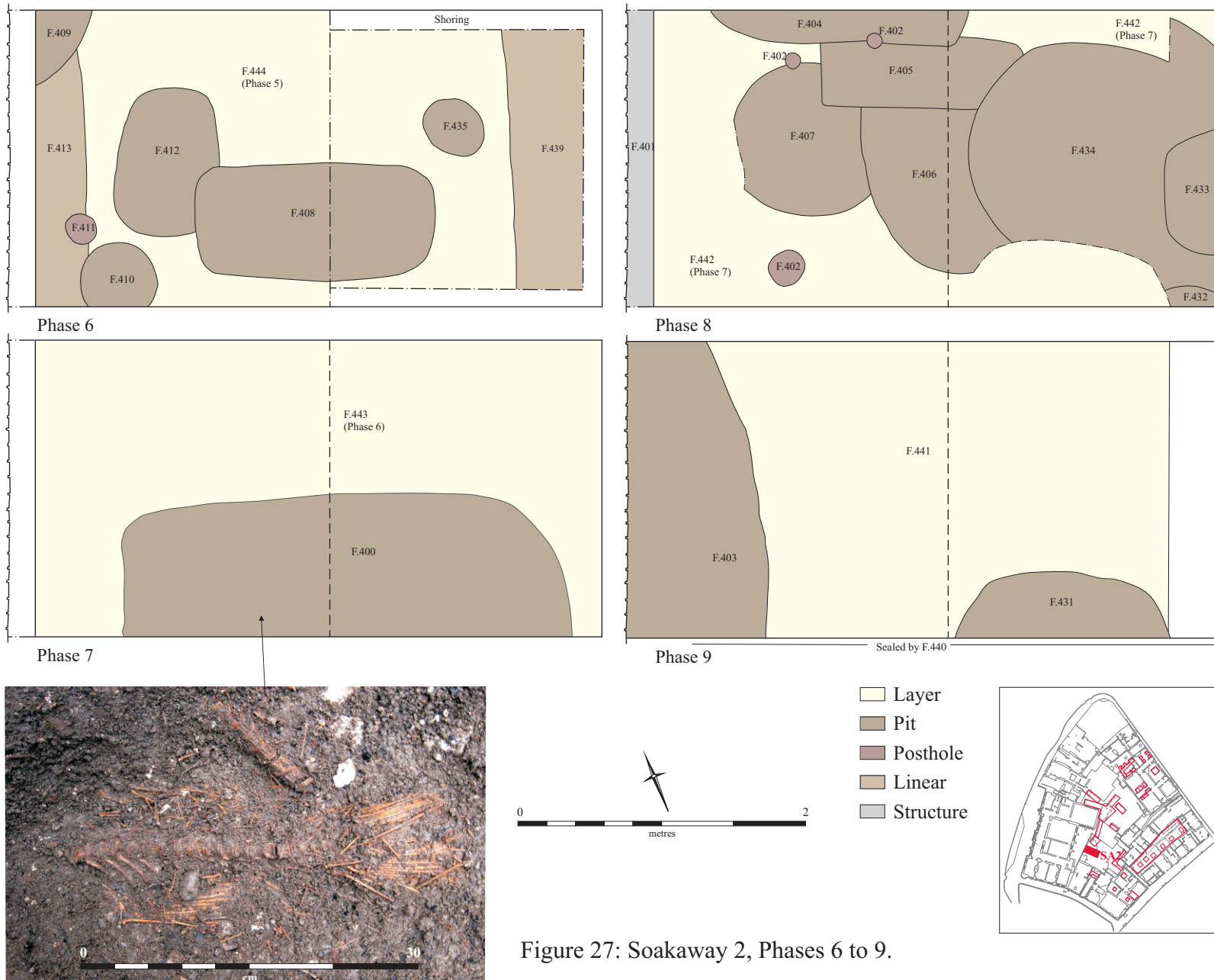
Phases 4 to 6 (Medieval)

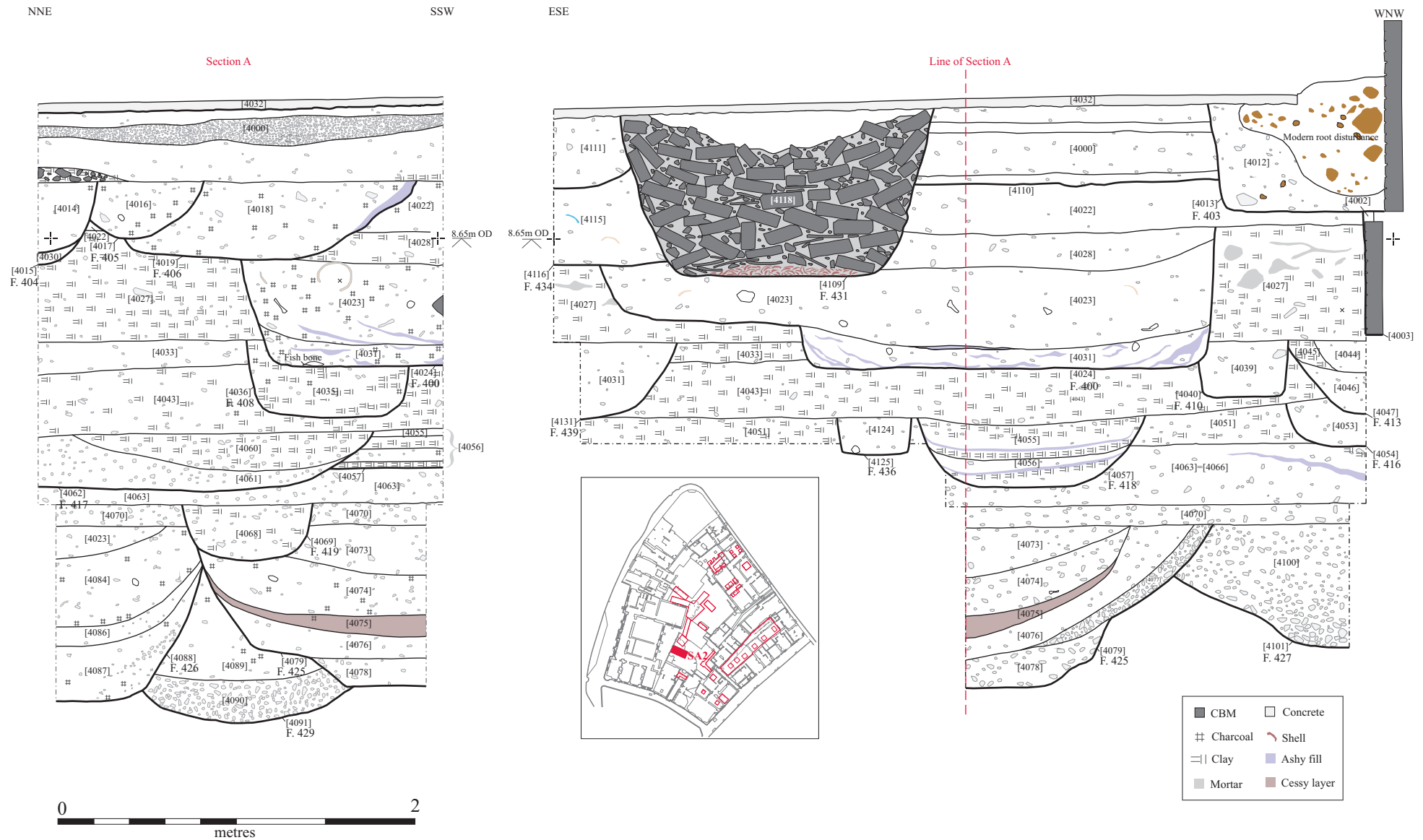
Phase 4 commenced during the 12th or possibly early 13th century with the creation of layer **F.446**, which appears to have primarily consisted of upcast material generated by the preceding horizon of quarrying activity. Shortly after its creation, a small ancillary structure was constructed – represented by beamslot **F.420** and postholes **F.422** and **F.423** – which sealed this deposit. Interestingly, the eastern wall of this building closely respected the western limits of earlier quarry pits **F.425** and **F.426** (which had since become sealed beneath **F.446**) indicating that the division may represent the line of an otherwise unmarked north-northeast to south-southwest aligned boundary. Despite this fact, however, the usage of the structure appears to have been relatively short-lived as it was succeeded during the 13th century by pits **F.419**, **F.421**, and **F.424**. Of these three, only **F.421** was significantly present within the area of excavation. This feature, which was linear in form and aligned east-southeast to west-northwest, contained a sequence of ten banded, heat-affected fills.

Above an initial off-white clay lining (which demonstrated evidence of *in-situ* burning), a number of ash and charcoal lenses had accrued; the feature was then relined via a second deposit of off-white clay, which was again heavily burnt, prior to being backfilled with dumps of pale pinkish brown heat-affected clay and silt. The function of **F.421** remains enigmatic, however. Its linear form precludes usage as an oven, although the presence of a clay lining does indicate that it may have held water; it was therefore most probably employed in a semi-industrial or craft-related process of some kind. Following its abandonment the area became sealed beneath layer **F.445**, which appears likely to represent a further example of redistributed upcast similar to preceding horizon **F.446**.

Nevertheless, during the 14th century a second, near identical feature was established in close proximity to **F.421** (thus marking the commencement of Phase 5). **F.418**, which is also linear in form but was aligned north-northeast to south-southwest, contained seven banded fills, including two near identical off-white heat-affected clay linings. Although oriented at right angles to its predecessor – being, quite notably, situated in the same position and on the same alignment as the probable Phase 4 boundary – **F.418** clearly demonstrates the resumption of the same industrial or craft-related activities during the succeeding century. As Phase 5 continued, however, the use of the area appears to have changed. Later in the 14th century, for example, **F.418** was truncated by rectangular pit **F.417**; the latter, although oriented on the same alignment as **F.418**, demonstrates no association with heat-related practices. Subsequently, **F.417** was itself truncated by post alignment **F.414**, which consisted of a series of at least four conjoined sub-oval cuts. Whilst this post alignment appears most likely to have re-established the earlier north-northeast to south-southwest oriented boundary, it may alternatively have formed part of a small ephemeral structure in association with adjacent postholes **F.437** and **F.438**. This latter possibility is reinforced by the presence of a second, potentially contemporary boundary feature – ditch **F.416**, which is oriented on the same alignment as **F.414** – only a short distance to the west. A further pit, **F.436**, was also inserted during this phase, prior to the area becoming sealed beneath layer **F.444** (which appears to have been near identical in origin to Phase 4 layer **F.445**).

During Phase 6, however, which commenced at some time during the 15th century, the north-northeast to south-southwest boundary was once again reinstated by the creation of ditch **F.413**. This was in turn succeeded by posthole **F.411**, which most probably represents an element within a replacement fenceline. Also belonging to this phase are four pits – which comprise, in stratigraphic order **F.409**, **F.410**, **F.412** and **F.408** – that vary between 0.56m+ to 1.86m+ in diameter and 0.3m+ to 0.54m+ in depth; although containing moderate amounts of domestic refuse material, the precise function of these features remains unclear. Similarly, the role played by additional posthole **F.435** is also uncertain. Yet most enigmatic of all during this phase is the relationship of ditch **F.439** – which is also 15th century in date, and contained a finely carved late 13th/early 14th century anthropomorphic worked bone knife handle – to the parallel boundary defined by **F.413/F.411** that lies only around 4m to the west. For whilst **F.439** may have been directly contemporary with **F.413/F.411**, and could thus represent the sub-division of a large open ‘yard-type’ area, these features might alternatively have been consecutive; they could therefore have been associated with the rearward expansion (or possibly contraction) of an adjacent property fronting onto the St. John’s Street. Indeed, the number and variety of boundaries identifiable during





the Medieval period in this location implies that, as well as being quite heavily used, the area was also potentially quite fluid in terms of its ownership. As it lies close to the geographic centre of the Triangle site, it was essentially situated to the rear of a number of different properties and may perhaps have been transferred between them on a number of occasions. 15th century activity in the area finally concluded with the creation of layer **F.443**, which represents a further example of a horizon of probable upcast and disturbance similar to those which sealed Phases 4 and 5.

Phase 7 (Post-Medieval)

During the late 16th century, refuse pit **F.400** was created; this measured 3.46m by 1.10m+ in extent and 0.75m deep, and had a partially stepped base. The vertical nature of the feature's sides indicates that it may well have been revetted, and the dating evidence recovered from its two lower fills also supports this interpretation. For whilst the lowest fill contained exclusively late 16th century material (including two clay pipe bowls dated c.1580-1610), the middle fill contained finds of probable early 17th century date (including three clay pipe bowls dated c.1600-40). This suggests that the pit was kept open for several years, and was potentially 'cleared-out' on at least one occasion; it may therefore have comprised only a temporary refuse solution, perhaps similar in nature to a 'garderobe-type' pit. Notably, it contained a large number of fish bones that in many instances represented articulated skeletons with their heads removed; these were primarily situated on the feature's base, but also occurred sporadically throughout the two main deposits (see Figure 27). The third, uppermost fill represents a sterile 'capping' deposit that was inserted once the pit had finally gone out of use. The amount of refuse material present in the two lower fills was striking, especially in light of the fact that probably only around half of the feature was present within the area of excavation. Excluding residual material, a minimum of 46 ceramic vessels were recovered, and a minimum of 16 clay tobacco pipes were also present. Other finds included glass fragments representing a minimum of three vessels, a worked bone knife handle fragment, part of the decorated sideplate of a composite bone comb and a large quantity of metal work (including 47 nail fragments, which may have been derived from the decayed timber lining). Both the nature and quantity of material recovered from this feature indicate that it was most probably associated with a commercial establishment of some kind as opposed to a domestic household. By the mid 17th century, however, it had been fully backfilled and became sealed beneath layer **F.442**. The latter, which effectively concluded Phase 7, most probably represents yet another example of upcast material similar in nature to those previously identified during the Medieval period.

Phases 8 and 9 (Modern)

In the early 18th century, a series of six intercutting pits – which comprise, in stratigraphic order, **F.407**, **F.406**, **F.405**, **F.434**, **F.432** and **F.433** – were excavated into the surface of the preceding layer. These features, which ranged between 0.96m+ to 2.22m+ in diameter and 0.32m+ to 0.91m in depth, contained near identical deposits of ash-rich mixed and mottled dark brown to black silt and mark the beginning of Phase 8. They most probably represent bedding features, located within an open 'garden-type' area, into which deposits of refuse material had been inserted to act as free-draining hardcore. Overall, some 71 ceramic vessels (primarily consisting of tankards and other 'service-type' wares) were recovered from this group, along

with at least 25 clay tobacco pipes; in addition, a minimum of 21 glass vessels (primarily consisting of wine and liquor bottles) were also present. As with the preceding Phase 7 deposits, the majority of this material appears to have been commercial as opposed to domestic in nature; indeed, the nature of its composition suggests that it may well have been derived from a nearby inn or tavern. At around the same time that these planting beds were being established, brick-built boundary wall **F.401** was also erected on a north-northeast to south-southwest alignment at the western end of the trench. This wall, which defines the boundary that has since remained consistent right up until the present day, appears to have formalised the somewhat more fluid boundary-line previously identified in this area during Phases 4 to 6. Subsequently, within this newly defined space, undiagnostic pit **F.404** and postholes **F.402** were created. The latter group, which consists of three irregularly spaced posts with no discernable alignment, may comprise the remnants of an ephemeral ancillary structure, although it is perhaps most likely to represent traces of continued occasional usage of the open yard space.

By the mid to late 19th century, however, the yard appears to have become relatively cluttered and Phase 9 commenced with clearing out and re-establishment of the area via the introduction of levelling event **F.441**. Boundary wall **F.401** was also partially rebuilt (as **F.403**), and pit **F.431** was inserted. The nature of the material encountered within this latter feature, which included a significant quantity of demolition debris, indicates that these activities coincided with the wider remodelling of a structure (or structures) in the near vicinity. Finally, during the early 20th century, the yard was resurfaced with concrete layer **F.440**.

Summary of watching brief results

Four areas of watching brief – consisting of Areas VII, VIII, IX and X – were undertaken in close proximity to Soakaway 2. Although each of these areas was limited in depth, and was thus restricted to examining deposits of exclusively Post-Medieval and Modern date, a consistent pattern can be identified that strongly compliments the results obtained from Soakaway 2. The northernmost of the four areas, Area VII, was located beneath the floor of the St. John's College Music School, which had been constructed on the site in 1874 (Dixon & Herring 2003, 37). A garden soil-type deposit of 16th/17th century date – which potentially represents deliberate ground raising activity, and contained vessels similar to those recovered from **F.400** – was encountered in this location. This deposit, which parallels the contemporary phase of activity identified in Soakaway 2, was subsequently sealed beneath a sequence of structures that spanned the 17th to 19th centuries and eventually culminated in the present standing structure. In Area VIII, which was situated immediately to the south of the Music School, a further sub-rectangular brick foundation was encountered that was most probably associated with the construction of the adjacent school building. A minimum of 83 ceramic vessels were recovered from the backfill of the foundation's construction trench, and this group appears to represent a medium-scale clearance deposit of mid to late 19th century date. The bulk of the vessels were related to dining and food storage/preparation activities, whilst there was also a smaller amount of material related to tea drinking, gardening, domestic activities and writing. Therefore, given both its date and the nature of its composition – as well as its close physical proximity – this assemblage is most likely to have been directly associated with the adjacent Music School. Further to the east, in

Area IX, a second Post-Medieval made-ground deposit was encountered that strongly resembled the sequence previously identified in Area VII. In addition, a very similar sequence was again identified in Area X, where a small pit containing a minimum of six 17th century bellarmine jugs was also encountered; a 19th century ‘beehive’-type well was also present in this location.

Summary of results of previous work

Trial pits observed in 2005

Four of the trial pits that were monitored during the 2005 evaluation phase at the site – comprising numbers 2 to 5, respectively – lay within the bounds of Area 4. The first of these, Trial Pit 2, was excavated against the rear, easternmost wall of the Selwyn Divinity School. A deep archaeological sequence was revealed in this location, extending down some 3.1m to c.6.0m OD, in which cut features of probable Saxo-Norman date were sealed beneath a sequence of Medieval and Post-Medieval layers (Hall & Dickens 2005, 4). Unfortunately, however, the upper part of the sequence was disturbed by Modern activity, whilst the scale of the evaluation precluded the precise identification and dating of the various deposits encountered. A little further to the east, very few results were recovered from Trial Pit 3 due to the extent of later disturbance (*ibid*, 5). Trial Pits 4 and 5, in contrast – which were situated within the open yard area, in close proximity to Soakaway 2 – both encountered refuse deposits containing 17th to 18th century ‘tavern-type’ waste, including “Westervald-type German stoneware, ‘onion’ wine bottles and Bellarmine fragments” (*ibid*, 5-6). This material, which was identified at c.9.1m OD, closely parallels the contemporary deposits that were recovered from Soakaway 2 and the adjacent watching brief areas VII and X.

Excavation undertaken in 2006

In January 2006, a series of four trenches were excavated within the property at N^o. 2 All Saint’s Passage (see Figure 2). Although located some distance to the southeast of Soakaway 2, these excavations were most probably situated within the bounds of the same Medieval property. Three of the trenches were located within the cellars of the standing structure, whilst one was situated within a yard area to its rear; in total they covered an area of 13.45m² (Cessford 2006). In Areas 2 and 3 a subsoil layer consisting of firm mid to light brown sandy silt was encountered, with its upper surface lying at c.7.25m OD, although no dating evidence was recovered from this material.

Area 1, which was located within the cellar of N^o. 2 All Saint’s’ Passage, measured 1.8m northwest-southeast by 1.8m southwest-northeast. Within this trench, the highest surviving natural deposit was encountered at 7.23m OD whilst the earliest surviving feature comprised a single pit of Saxo-Norman date. This may have acted as a small gravel quarry, although its precise function remains unclear as it was subsequently truncated by five large pits (themselves most probably gravel quarries) of 13th to 15th century date. At least one of the latter was also overlain by a layer of contemporary garden soil, which was then overlain in turn by a series of floor deposits associated with a 17th century structure. Although this building appears to have been temporarily abandoned during the 18th or early 19th centuries, when a layer of redeposited garden soil was introduced above its remains, it was re-established by

the present standing structure in 1833-34. Area 2, which was also located within the cellar of N^o. 2 All Saint's' Passage, measured 3.0m northwest-southeast by 2.0m southwest-northeast. Within this trench, the highest surviving natural deposit was encountered at 7.25m OD whilst the earliest surviving feature comprised a large Saxo-Norman gravel quarry pit. This was later sealed beneath a layer of garden soil, which was in turn truncated by a pit or ditch of 13th to 14th century date. Overlying the latter was a uniform layer that potentially represents a make-up deposit or dump, which was introduced prior to the laying of a series of floors in the late 16th or 17th century; the structure within which these floors were created may therefore have been associated with that encountered in Area 1. Subsequently, these remains were heavily truncated by the construction of the present standing building.

Area 3, which was located within a small yard to the rear of N^o. 2 All Saint's' Passage, measured 1.8m northwest-southeast by 1.4m southwest-northeast. Within this trench, the highest surviving natural deposit was encountered at 6.87m OD. A series of four cut features of probable Saxo-Norman date were identified; these comprised three gravel quarry pits and a posthole, and represent the earliest activity undertaken in this area. They were subsequently sealed beneath a layer of garden soil that was in turn truncated by a large pit and a ditch, both of which contained 13th or 14th century material. Above these, a range of features relating to the usage of the area as a yard during the 18th and 19th centuries were present, although they had been severely impacted by a range of Modern services. Finally, Area 4, which was located within the coal cellar of N^o. 2 All Saint's' Passage, measured 1.3m northwest-southeast by 1.3m southwest-northeast. Within this trench, the highest surviving natural deposit was encountered at 7.03m OD and only a single feature was present; this comprised a probable ditch, of Saxo-Norman date, that was aligned northwest to southeast. The remainder of the sequence was heavily truncated by the construction of the present standing building in 1833-34.

Although the upper part of the sequence in all four of these trenches was heavily truncated, a number of general conclusions may still be drawn. Firstly, activity in this area during the Saxo-Norman period was clearly much less intensive than in the vicinity of the Bridge Street frontage to the northeast; a small number of gravel quarries were created, which contained very little domestic refuse in their fills, and a garden soil-type horizon appears to have formed. This implies that the rear of the properties remained a relatively marginal space at this time. Secondly, the very limited amount of Medieval activity that was encountered suggests that the area may have become sealed beneath a structure or structures during this period. This would account for the marked absence of Late Medieval and Early Post-Medieval cut features, and indicates that the horizontal stratigraphy created during this period has since been truncated by the ongoing structural sequence (which is represented archaeologically by the remains of a 17th century cellared building, as well as the present standing structure).

Area 4 summary

Area 4 represents perhaps the most marginal of the four areas to be examined at the St. John's Triangle site. It is situated at the greatest remove from the main Bridge Street frontage, and appears to have primarily comprised an open yard-type area (which was probably situated to the rear of buildings fronting onto All Saints Passage)

throughout much of its history. Its distance from the principal locus of occupation during the earliest periods of activity at the site is underlined by the absence of any identifiable Roman presence in this location, in contrast to the contemporary sequences observed in Areas 2 and 3 further to the northeast. Instead, activity first appears to have begun in this area during the late 9th or early 10th century, with evidence of associated occupation occurring from around the mid 10th century or later. From the Medieval period onwards, however, the use of the area increased markedly; at least three distinct horizons of activity have been identified from this phase, each of which was subsequently sealed beneath a layer of trampled upcast material. In addition, the property boundary identified within Soakaway 2 was reorganised and replaced at least twice per century between the 13th and 15th centuries, thus clearly demonstrating the growing importance that was attached to this space. Indeed, by the late 16th century a potential commercial focus is identifiable in the usage of the area; this appears to relate to the adoption of the space as a yard or garden associated with a nearby inn/tavern.

Discussion

Introduction

In this section, the various features discussed above are placed into their wider context on a period-by-period basis. A summary of the activities undertaken during each period is presented, including evidence of the prevalent material culture and economy along with an analysis of any surviving documentary and/or cartographic evidence; specific details of the historical and archaeological background of the area are also discussed. Where given, documentary references cite both the archive in which the item is held – including those of Jesus College (*JC*), St. John's College (*SJC*) and Corpus Christi College (*CCC*) – and the individual reference number that has been assigned within that archive (e.g. *SJC D 19.6*).

The Roman period (1st to 4th centuries)

Summary of archaeological activity

No definite evidence of pre-Roman activity was encountered at the site, although a total of four unburnt worked flints were recovered as residual material within Roman contexts. These comprised three secondary flakes and a single platform core, and – as they were all expediently manufactured – it is likely that they are of later Prehistoric origin. Given the proximity of the Iron Age settlement and fieldsystem recently excavated at Jesus College (Evans & Williams 2004), along with the presence of an Iron Age field boundary identified at the Grand Arcade site some way further to the south (Cessford 2007, 27), it seems probable that St. John's Triangle lay within an agricultural hinterland at this time.

During the 1st century AD, however, a series of large intercutting quarry pits were excavated in Area 2; these features were left open to silt up naturally, and contained little or no evidence of associated occupational activity. Given the nature of both their date and location, therefore, these quarries most probably represent the extraction of material utilised in the construction of the nearby Colchester to Godmanchester road (or *Via Devana*). This routeway, which appears to have been deliberately situated in order to take advantage of the gravel spur upon which the site is located (*cf.* Hughes 1907, 410), was to play an important role in the subsequent development of the area. During the 2nd century AD, for example, the earlier quarrying horizon in Area 2 became sealed beneath a series of features that appear to represent the establishment of a small settlement, directly flanking the by now well-established road. Long-lived property boundaries were created (and repeatedly maintained), whilst 'areas of absence' were identified close to the frontage that most probably demonstrate the presence of buildings. Indeed, activity extended back within these plots at least 20m from the road, as contemporary pits and a possible horticultural deposit were encountered in Area 3. The pottery associated with Roman occupation at the St. John's Triangle site spans the 2nd to 4th centuries, with an apparent peak between the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Only a small number of sherds can be confidently dated to the Late Roman period, and – since these were almost entirely derived from residual contexts – they may well represent material deposited during a secondary phase of agricultural activity.

The ground height at the end of this period varied between 7.17m OD in Area 3 and 7.03m OD in Area 4, although it was potentially somewhat higher in close proximity to the street frontage. Whilst the original height of the natural ground surface is unclear due to the extent of later truncation, it appears likely that vertical stratigraphy at the site increased by at least 0.2m during the Roman period (and potentially rather more in discrete areas).

Material culture and economy

Although only a relatively small amount of Roman pottery was recovered (510 sherds, weighing 6.44kg), this group was densely stratified; in Soakaway 1, for example – which was situated at some distance from the main concentration of settlement activity – 38.3 sherds per m² were encountered. In terms of its typological composition, the assemblage represents a relatively typical domestic group of this period from the south Cambridgeshire region. A range of fabrics were present – including both finewares and coarsewares, derived from local, national and international sources – and a variety of vessel forms were also identified, the most common being jars, bowls and dishes. Although similar to assemblages recovered from more ‘rural’ sites in the Cambridge region, such as those derived from the Addenbrokes and Longstanton sites (*cf.* Evans *et al* 2004; Evans & Mackay 2005, Evans *et al* 2006; Evans *et al* 2007), the group is rendered distinct by the increased presence of imported Samian wares, which constitute c.5% of the total group. This potentially indicates that the site had access to wider trading networks (perhaps associated with the nearby town to the north). Other artefacts include a Roman copper alloy *sestertius* dating to the 2nd century AD and a probable Roman copper alloy *radiate* dating to the 3rd century AD, both of which were recovered from residual contexts. Seven iron artefacts of Roman date were also encountered within stratified features; the identified items include a corroded object that appears to have formed part of the head of a hafted tool and a number of nails. In addition, an Old Red Limestone quern fragment (derived from a flat-topped upper stone with a slightly flared rim) was recovered, along with at least one off-cut from bone working. The largest single group of material was recovered from revetted rubbish pit **F.180** in Area 2.

Only limited evidence of the diet prevalent during this period was recovered; this is due to the high degree of later truncation, allied with the absence of waterlogged deposits (a recurring problem during all periods). Small quantities of animal bone food waste were recovered from stratified Roman contexts located in Areas 2 and 3, with identified bones including those of both cattle and sheep. Environmental samples taken from features in both areas proved to be relatively barren, however, with only a few cereal grains and wild plant seeds and a little charcoal being present. These remains probably represent residual waste derived primarily from the processing and eating of grain.

Historical and archaeological background

Until relatively recently, excavations of Roman Cambridge were focused almost exclusively upon the main area of settlement on Castle Hill (which is thought to have comprised the small town of *Duroliponte*). Between 1958 and 1988 a series of excavations were undertaken in this area, often in advance of small-scale

redevelopment (Alexander & Pullinger 1999). This work revealed that a small Late Iron Age settlement on the summit of the hill had been reorganised following the Roman conquest in 43AD, when a series of enclosures were constructed. These were succeeded in turn by a single rectangular enclosure, constructed in c.70AD, which may have comprised a small fort. Surrounding this was a contemporary settlement of limited size (*ibid*, 27-34). Early in the 2nd century, however, the town appears to have expanded somewhat; the fort went out of use and single room wattle and daub houses with yards, along with a small number of more substantial structures of potentially civil function, were built along newly laid-out streets whilst a large shrine associated with a number of ‘ritual shafts’ was constructed (*ibid*, 35-58). Yet by the mid 4th century the town had contracted markedly, shrinking to c.8.6 hectares in size, and was confined within a series of newly built defences including a 12m wide ditch and a 2m to 3m wide stone wall with an internal rampart bank (*ibid*, 59-74). More recently, significant evidence of contemporary settlement activity spanning the late 1st to 4th centuries has also been identified to the northwest of the town, particularly at the New Hall and Vicar’s Farm sites (*cf.* Evans 1996; Lucas & Whittaker 2001).

Yet it is also notable that within the area immediately surrounding the St. John’s Triangle site a number of apparently stratified finds of Roman date have previously been recorded, primarily by 19th century antiquarians observing large-scale building works. In addition, over the past two decades a small number of evaluations and excavations have been conducted in the near vicinity that also encountered material of a similar origin. As Figure 29 demonstrates, the locations of these discoveries form a relatively discrete cluster that is concentrated towards the northern tip of the underlying gravel spur and extends to either side of the contemporary road. Furthest to the west of the current site, excavations were undertaken in the Chapel Court and Master’s Garden of St. John’s College in advance of the construction of a new library (Dickens 1996). Although several phases of work were conducted here between 1990 and 1993 of greatest relevance to the present project were two trenches, referred to as Areas 1 and 2, that were both excavated during the summer of 1992. These trenches, each measuring around 13.5m by 6.5m in extent, were located approximately 70m and 50m back from the edge of the river respectively (see Figure 29, 1). In Area 1 the earliest surviving deposit comprised a dark grey sandy clay alluvial layer that was truncated by at least ten intercutting quarry pits, which ranged from 0.90m to 3.75m in diameter. In contrast, the earliest soil horizon in Area 2 was a sandy clay loam that contained evidence of “expos[ure] after deforestation and ploughing/human activities” (*ibid*, 8).

This was subsequently sealed beneath a deliberately introduced deposit of dark grey fine to medium sandy silt with frequent poorly sorted gravel inclusions, which was in turn cut by eleven stakeholes with no discernable pattern that were between 0.08m to 0.10m in diameter. It thus appears likely that at least some of the material extracted from the quarry pits in Area 1 was used to create the gravel surface in Area 2, and the pottery recovered in both areas indicates that this activity probably occurred during the 4th century AD. Although the exact purpose behind the creation of these features remains somewhat unclear, the presence of two probable Roman quarry pits located further to the south at the Bateman Building, Gonville and Caius College (Alexander 1995) – along with an antiquarian note of ‘Roman pits’ existing beneath Trinity College, close to Garret Hostel Lane (Evans in Alexander & Pullinger 1999, 259) – implies that similar quarrying-type activity may also have been undertaken during this

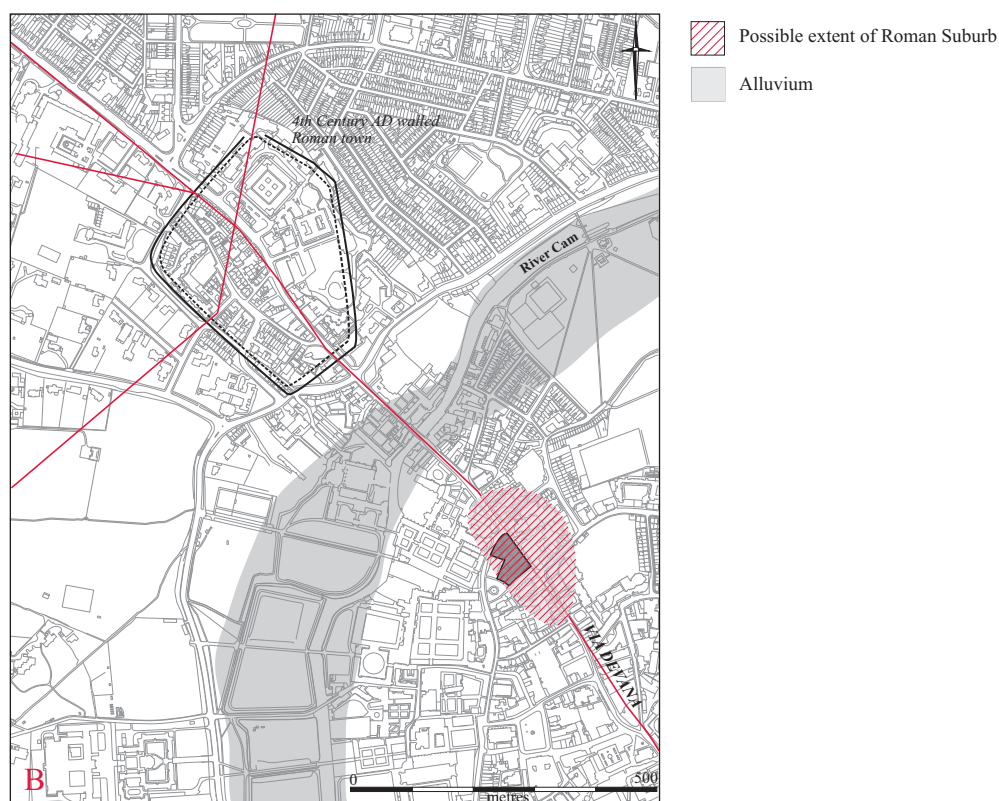
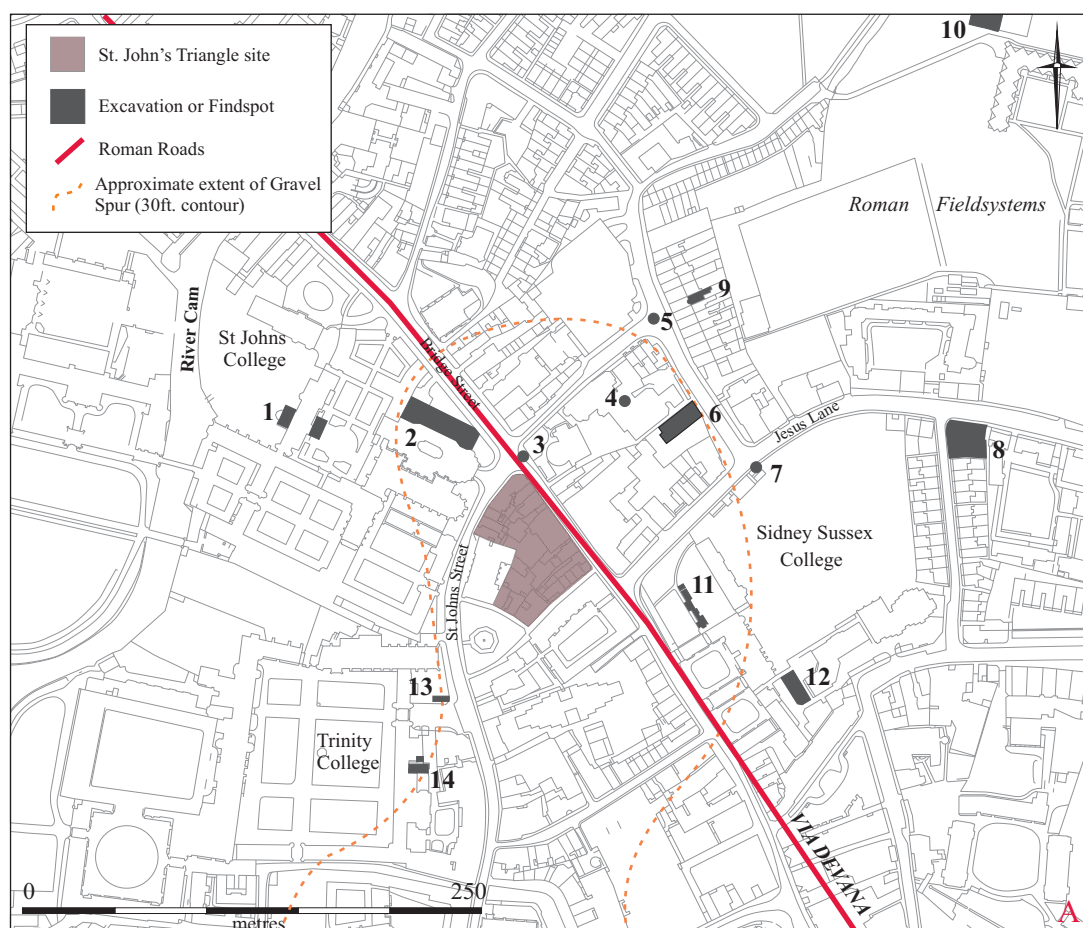


Figure 29: Other excavations undertaken in the near vicinity (A), and the possible extent of the Roman suburb (B).

period at various locations along the eastern bank of the Cam. Finally, towards the end of Roman period, both Areas 1 and 2 became sealed beneath a deposit of dark greenish brown humic silty clay, subsequent to which a raised east to west orientated gravel pathway was created (*ibid*, 10). It therefore appears that the surrounding area had reverted back to its former wetland state at this time – a pattern that was also mirrored during the same period at the 24 Thompson's Lane to the northeast (Newman 2008a, 6-10) – but that access continued to be maintained across the site. However, the pathway soon became sealed beneath further alluvial deposits as inundation continued throughout the succeeding Saxon period.

Further to the east (see Figure 29, 2) – much closer to the *Via Devana*, whose route is now followed by present day Bridge Street – a “large quantity” of Roman pottery was recovered during building work undertaken at St. John's College in 1938-9 (Daniel 1939, 146). This material was found “all over the site from the north wall of Second Court right out to Bridge Street – the most prolific areas being those where deep excavations were made for the basement rooms of the new buildings” (*ibid*). The material recovered consisted of “Castor ware beakers and platters of various kinds; painted wares; mortaria; Greyware ollae and lids; fragments of large stone jars made at the well-known kilns at Horningsea; and fragments of Samian ware of the 2nd century AD imported from Gaul. The Roman sherds included a lid ... painted with an orange slip, and the base of a Samian dish cut down and bored to form a spindle-whorl” (*ibid*). A number of Roman coins were also recovered from the site at this time (Browne 1974, 19). On the opposite side of Bridge Street, immediately in front of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (see Figure 29, 3), a quern stone and other objects were found during draining operations in 1895 (Hughes 1898, 375; Hughes 1907, 409-11). Slightly further to the west (see Figure 29, 4) a “large quantity of Roman pottery, bones, etc.” had also been discovered during the construction of Union Building in c.1893 (Hughes 1898, 375; Hughes 1907, 410) whilst further Roman pottery had been recovered ‘at depth’ during a sewer excavation on Park Street in 1848 (see Figure 29, 5; Babington 1883). This clustering of find spots, situated immediately opposite the St. John's Triangle site, led Hughes to conclude that the tip of the gravel spur represented “the only place where we have evidence of Roman occupation of any importance within the limits of the ancient town” (1907, 410).

More recently, further discoveries have been made in this area which appear to confirm Hughes's theory. “Large Roman rubbish pits were found in 1973 [by Clive Partridge] in the area of the Round Church” (Lobel 1975, 3), although unfortunately no other details of this work have yet been published. Perhaps more significant, therefore, are the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken during August 2002 in advance of an extension to the north side of the ADC Theatre (see Figure 29, 6). At this time two trenches, each measuring 4m by 2m in extent, were excavated within an open yard area adjacent to the theatre, although due to the depth of the deposits encountered the base of the sequence was not reached (Whittaker 2003, 3-6). The earliest feature to be identified comprised a large Roman ditch of 2nd/3rd century date, situated in Trench 2, which contained significant quantities of pottery, animal bone and CBM. This ditch was at least 0.85m wide, whilst augering indicated that it was also at least 0.75m deep; its base lay at 5.82m OD (*ibid*, 9). Overlying the ditch, and partially truncating its uppermost horizon, were at least three later gullies, all of which contained exclusively Roman material. It is not clear, however, whether these represent *in-situ* features or simply the redeposition of Roman material during later

Medieval disturbance (*ibid*). Despite the limited scale of the investigation, the excavator noted that “the quantity of Roman finds and the complexity of strata within Trench 2 would be comparable with sequences in the upper Castle Hill-top settlement” (*ibid*, 10). Nearby to this site, at the junction of Park Street and Jesus Lane (see Figure 29, 7), a pottery production site of probable 3rd century date has also been identified via the recovery of a concentration of pottery wasters (*cf.* Hughes 1903; Hartley 1960).

A little further to the east, additional evidence of contemporary 2nd/3rd century activity was also uncovered during excavations undertaken during Summer 2001 in the basements of properties at 35-37 Jesus Lane (see Figure 29, 8). At this site, two converging (though not contemporary) ditches were encountered. Each was around a metre wide, with moderately to steeply sloping sides, and survived to a depth of c.0.5m; they may thus originally have been considerably larger prior to their truncation (Dodwell *et al* 2004, 67-8). These features – which contained moderate quantities of 2nd/3rd century pottery, animal bone and charcoal fragments, along with further pottery waster fragments – most probably comprise elements of a field system or paddock network situated adjacent to the main area of occupation, and were oriented on a northwest to southeast axis. They went out of use during the late 3rd or early 4th century and were succeeded by at least 32 inhumations (seventeen males, nine females and two juveniles), a number of which were inserted into their upper fills (*ibid*, 68-81). A very similar pattern was also encountered some 170m to the northwest during excavations undertaken in Autumn 2001 within the basement of No. 11 Park Street (see Figure 29, 9). Here, again, a ditch of near identical form and orientation – also containing domestic waste of a similar 2nd/3rd century date – was succeeded by a number of burials. In this instance, the graves of two adults (one buried with a neonate), plus the disarticulated remains of a sub-adult and five further neonates, were recovered (*ibid*, 91). These are also likely to have been of 4th century date, and it is possible that they comprise part of the same large cemetery as the Jesus Lane interments (although the two sites may equally well represent elements of two separate and much smaller burial grounds).

During excavations undertaken at the maintenance workshop and gardener’s compound site at Jesus College in February to April 2004 (see Figure 29, 10), further elements of the Jesus Lane field system were encountered (Evans & Williams 2004). At this site six Roman ditches, measuring between 0.9m to 2.6m in width and 0.3m to 1m in depth, were revealed that were oriented on the same northwest to southeast alignment as the Jesus Lane and Park Street field boundaries. As they contained only a small quantity of pottery and domestic waste of mid 2nd to 3rd century date, they most probably formed part of the outlying agricultural hinterland of the southern settlement (*ibid*, 24-5). Unstratified Roman pottery, potentially consistent with contemporary manuring activity associated with arable cultivation, was also identified during earlier fieldwork conducted within the grounds of Jesus College (Evans *et al* 1997; Whittaker 1999). Furthermore, similarly small quantities of unstratified Roman pottery have also been recorded to the south at King’s College Lawn (Evans in Alexander & Pullinger 1999, 259), Bradwell’s Court (Newman 2007) and Grand Arcade (Cessford 2008). Although no field boundaries or other associated features were identified at these sites, it appears likely that they were all situated within the limits of the ‘agricultural fringe’ of the town.

The southern limit of the extra-mural settlement itself, however, is much harder to define. Although a Roman drinking vessel was found immediately to the south of St. John's Triangle during building work at the Whewell's Court site in 1857 (Hughes 1907, 410), and nearby "various Roman coins were found by the workmen removing the earth adjoining Trinity Street, Cambridge, in the year 1859, in order to make the foundations of the new buildings opposite Trinity College" (C. Babington 1864, 1), there is no evidence that these discoveries represent the recovery of stratified material. More promisingly, to the south of Jesus Lane (see Figure 29, **11**) an unspecified number of pits containing supposedly *in-situ* Roman material were found cut into the natural gravel during excavations undertaken within the grounds of Sidney Sussex College in 1958 (Salway 1996, 23). This work was very limited in scale, however, and a more recent investigation within the College grounds – sited somewhat further back from the main frontage (see Figure 29, **12**) – revealed no trace of Roman activity (Hind *et al* 1994). Similarly, no stratified Roman material was encountered during excavations undertaken at Trinity Gateway (Evans 1991) or Angel Court (Addyman & Biddle 1965, 76-7; Regan 1996; Regan 1997), despite these sites being situated on the western margin of the occupied gravel ridge (see Figure 29, **13** and **14**). Nevertheless, it is important to note that, with the sole exception of the 1958 investigation, no work has yet been conducted to the south of the Triangle site in close proximity to the Bridge Street frontage and therefore further settlement evidence in this vicinity (stretching out along the gravel spur beside the main southern approach to the town) may very well remain undiscovered.

Discussion

Despite the primary focus of investigations into Roman Cambridge having been centred upon the Castle Hill area, the presence of an extra-mural suburb to the south of the river Cam has long been postulated (*e.g.* Smith 1987, 169; Burnham & Wachter 1990, 246; Evans in Alexander & Pullinger 1999, 259-60). Because this theory has primarily been based upon Hughes' 19th century findings from Union Building site, however – of which very few details survive – it has also been noted that "little is known about the character of the occupation southeast of the river" (Burnham & Wachter 1990, 246). The results of the excavations at the St. John's Triangle site, in association with the other small-scale investigations discussed above, can now go some way towards clarifying this issue. The presence of domestic properties fronting onto the *Via Devana* can be demonstrated, behind which activities such as gravel extraction and pottery production were undertaken. A strong agrarian focus can also be observed, with field systems stretching to the south and east of the settlement, whilst occupation itself appears to have been largely restricted to the highest part of the ridge. Indeed, current evidence indicates that the settlement may well have been primarily concentrated within the bounds of the 30ft contour (see Figure 29). (Although this measurement relates to the present-day topography of the area, it also serves to reflect the underlying contours of the gravel ridge as well as the most intensive areas of made-ground; it thus suggests that the area immediately surrounding the St. John's Triangle site comprised perhaps the driest and most attractive location for a settlement on the southern side of the Cam).

Judging by the date of the material recovered from the St. John's Triangle excavation, the suburb was most probably established during the early to mid 2nd century and flourished into the 3rd century (see further the Roman pottery assessment report); this

also tallies with the evidence from the ADC Theatre evaluation (Whittaker 2003, 9) and the Park Street, Jesus Lane and Jesus College field systems (Alexander *et al* 2004, 68 and 91; Evans & Williams 2004, 24), as well as the St. John's College material (Daniel 1939) and the Jesus Lane pottery production site (Hartley 1960). It is therefore tempting to link the settlement's emergence with the marked 2nd century expansion of the hilltop town to the north, and similarly to connect its apparent abandonment in the late 3rd or early 4th century with the contemporary contraction and fortification of this same settlement. However, it must also be noted that it was during the late 3rd and early 4th centuries that occupation at the nearby Vicar's Farm site reached its apogee (*cf.* Lucas & Whittaker 2001); the withdrawal of settlement from the southern suburb, and the contemporary conversion of at least one of its former fields into a cemetery, may thus represent a shift in focus as opposed to a true diminution of activity. Indeed, the worsening environmental conditions prevalent along the eastern bank of the Cam during the later Roman period – identified during both the St. John's College and 24 Thompson's Lane excavations (Dickens 1996; Newman 2008a) – may indicate that settlement in the suburb became increasingly untenable at this time. Whether the decline of the river channel resulted purely from environmental change, however, or was in part the result of decreasing maintenance, remains unclear.

In terms of comparison, the most thoroughly investigated contemporary suburb is that at Lincoln (or *Lindum*), a *colonia* which comprised one of the largest and most important towns in Roman Britain (Wacher 1975, 120-34; Jones 1999, 107-9). Here, within an extensive development situated immediately to the south of the walled town that stretched *c.* 1km along the principal approach road, around 20 houses have so far been investigated (Jones 1999, 107). The majority of these buildings appear to have been commercial in nature and were established towards the close of the 2nd century AD; they included a tavern (identified via its concentration of drinking vessels), a smithy (identified via the presence of 'smith-god' pots) and a probable shop (identified via the presence of an inset storage vessel and a stone slab containing two hollows for standard measures) (*ibid.*, 109). It is significant that no such commercial focus is identifiable at the Cambridge suburb. However, it has also been noted that in Lincoln "evidence is gradually accumulating for an urban fringe, where stone and gravel quarrying, pottery manufacture and perhaps ironworking were carried out" (*ibid.*, 109). The nature of the extra-mural settlement at Cambridge – where both gravel quarrying and pottery production were also conducted, and which had additionally a strong agrarian focus – implies that at this much smaller town the roles of urban fringe, suburb and small roadside settlement may well have been amalgamated (as also appears to have been the case in the northern suburb of the similarly-sized settlement of *Durobrivae*, near Peterborough; *cf.* Fincham 2004, 28-32). Indeed the planned layout of the Lincoln suburb, in which part of the riverside area was reclaimed prior to its construction (*ibid.*, 107-8), contrasts markedly with the occupation of a small natural promontory at Cambridge, and highlights the differing scale and focus of the activities that were undertaken at these two sites.

Summary

Although limited in scale, the excavations at the St. John's Triangle site represent one of the most significant investigations of the southern suburb of Roman Cambridge yet undertaken. Based upon this work, it is clear that a small ribbon or roadside settlement

was established alongside the contemporary Colchester to Godmanchester road during the 2nd century AD; this was located upon the northern tip of a gravel ridge, and was surrounded by agricultural land to the south and east. As well as domestic occupation, evidence also survives for a number of other activities undertaken in the general area, including gravel quarrying and pottery production. Towards the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century, however, the settlement appears to have been abandoned and at least one of its former fields was converted into a cemetery (which potentially comprised the main cemetery for the small town to the north). Therefore, although further excavation of the gravel spur is clearly required in order to determine the precise form and extent of the suburb – and to establish the full range of activities that were undertaken within it – a basic outline of the pattern of extra-mural Roman occupation to the south of the Cam has now begun to emerge.

The Saxon period (5th to 9th centuries)

Summary of archaeological activity

Very little, if any, archaeological activity of Saxon date has been positively identified at the St. John's Triangle site; indeed, only two sherds of Middle Saxon pottery were recovered, both of which were derived from residual contexts. Despite such a paucity of material remains, however, it is notable that distinct aceramic 'horizons' of activity were encountered in both Areas 3 and 4 that postdated the Roman period but predated the re-establishment of domestic occupation in Saxo-Norman times. The existence of such horizons indicates that very occasional or sporadic activities may well have been undertaken at the site during the intervening phase. These activities appear to have taken two principal forms. On the one hand, small-scale gravel quarrying may have been undertaken, predating the reoccupation of the gravel spur in around the mid 10th century; on the other, it is also possible that the area was subject to at least partial agricultural use between the 5th to 9th centuries. Such a pattern has been tentatively identified at other Cambridge sites – such as Bradwell's Court (Newman 2007) and Grand Arcade (Cessford 2007), from which comparable amounts of Saxon material were recovered – and there is no reason to suppose that horticultural deposits such as **F.286** in Area 3 may not have at least partly accrued during Saxon times.

The ground height at the end of this period most probably varied between 7.17m OD in Area 3 and 7.03m OD in Area 4 (much as it had done at the close of the preceding Roman period). However, because it is unclear to what extent the horticultural activities that were potentially being undertaken in Saxon times contributed to the formation of those garden soil deposits which, containing solely Roman material culture, have been assigned to the earlier period, it is possible that part of this build-up had actually occurred as a result of Saxon as opposed to Roman activities at the site.

Material culture and economy

Beyond the two residual sherds of Middle Saxon pottery referred to above, no evidence relating to the material culture and economy prevalent during this period was recovered.

Historical and archaeological background

The location and extent of settlement activity in the Cambridge area during the 5th to 9th centuries has long been a subject of academic debate (*cf.* Maitland 1898; Gray 1905; Stephenson 1933; Cam 1934; Addyman & Biddle 1965; Lobel 1975; Haslam 1984; Taylor 1999; Cessford with Dickens 2005a). Over the course of the past century a number of theories have been propounded, although the majority of these have been based upon limited and/or ambiguous evidence; one of the earliest, and most important, has been termed the ‘dual origin theory’ (*cf.* Maitland 1898; Gray 1905). In this it was proposed that post-Roman settlements developed contemporaneously on both the north and south banks of the Cam, and that the southern settlement was already well established by the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066 (Maitland 1898, 99-100; Gray 1905, 25-7). Such a view was challenged in 1933 when Stephenson attempted to apply an alternative ‘continental’ model of town development to Cambridge, asserting that intensive occupation to the south of the river was a primarily 11th century and later phenomenon (Stephenson 1933, 200-202). However the latter interpretation was firmly rejected in a paper presented to the Cambridge Antiquarian Society one year later (Cam 1934), and the ‘dual origin’ theory has remained largely unchallenged ever since (*cf.* Addyman & Biddle 1965, 90-103; Lobel 1975, 2-5; Haslam 1984; Hines 1999, 136; Taylor 1999, 44-50).

The evidence adduced in support of a dual origin for the town has taken two principal forms, one historical and the other physical. The historical evidence (which, because many of the arguments have centred around extrapolations derived from later historical documents, reviews evidence extending into the early 11th century) can be summarised as follows:

- I. The earliest documentary reference to the town relates to the recovery of a Roman sarcophagus from “a ruined little city called Grantacaestir” in 695 (Bede IV, 19). This presumably represents the remains of ‘Duroliponte’ on Castle Hill.
- II. By 875, the name of the settlement had changed to Grantabrycge (although whether an actual bridge existed at this date remains conjectural) when “three kings, Guthrum, Oskytel and Anwind, went from Repton to Cambridge with a vast army, and sat there one year” (Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 81). This implies that by the late 9th century the town had developed significantly from its ruined state in 695, and it has been suggested that a new settlement had been founded by this date spanning both sides of the river (*e.g.* Gray 1905, 21-3; Cam 1934, 39). Alternatively, others have proposed that the Danish army themselves constructed a new settlement in this location (*e.g.* Haslam 1984, 19; Hines 1999, 136; Taylor 1999, 44-50).
- III. Grantabrycge became part of the Danelaw in c.886, following a treaty between King Alfred and King Guthrum, but was conquered by Edward the Elder of Wessex in c.917. By the late 10th century it apparently comprised “a fortified burh with a court of the same standing as a hundred court” and contained both a market and a mint (Lobel 1975, 3). This again implies a phase of development and expansion, potentially occurring on both sides of the river.
- IV. Domesday Book records that the town was divided into ten wards in 1066, with each ward containing c.30-50 houses. This equates to a population of around two thousand inhabitants in total, a number which is potentially too great to have been restricted to one side of the river alone (*cf.* Cam 1934, 35-7; Lobel 1975, 4; Haslam 1984, 18).

The physical evidence that has been employed in support of a dual origin for the town is extremely limited, primarily as a result of the paucity of excavated sites (especially prior to the advent of PPG 16 in 1991). Three principal arguments have been cited, which are centred upon:

- I. The existence of a number of Early Saxon cemeteries, many of which are scattered around the margins of the Medieval town on the eastern bank of the Cam (*cf.* Fox 1923; Dodwell *et al* 2004; Cessford with Dickens 2005a). No evidence of contemporary settlement activity has yet been identified in this area, however.
- II. The existence of a number of early ditched boundaries of potentially Early Medieval origin within the town. Prime amongst these is the King's Ditch, whilst others include the so-called Jesus, Cambridge and St. John's Ditches. Until very recently, however, little or no systematic excavation of these features had been undertaken (*cf.* Cessford 2007, 69-73).
- III. The existence of a series of early churches situated along the length of the Medieval High Street. At least five of these are late 11th century or earlier in origin on documentary grounds – St Mary the Less, All Saints, St George, St Botolph and St Edward (Cam 1959, 123-32) – whilst St Benet's contains standing elements dating to c.1040 (*ibid.*, 122). It has been argued that several of the other 11th century churches may be similarly pre-Conquest in origin (*e.g.* Addyman & Biddle 1965, 94-6; Lobel 1975, 4), although there is currently no firm evidence to support this view.

Discussion

Of particular relevance to the St. John's Triangle site is the debate surrounding the origin and function of the 'St. John's Ditch'. This feature, which is widely held to have comprised the boundary of a settlement of c.8th or 9th century date (*cf.* Gray 1905, 21-3; Cam 1934, 39 and 42; Haslam 1984, 19; Hines 1999, 136; Taylor 1999, 44-50), supposedly ran in close proximity to the current area of excavation (which is consequently presumed to have lain within the enclosure's bounds). Despite having been assigned such an important role, however, relatively little is known with certainty about this enigmatic feature. It was first noted during the construction of the Selwyn Divinity School in 1879, when Professor Hughes observed the presence of a 'deep ditch' that he regarded as "suggestive of original low ground" (Hughes 1907, 411). He recorded that "where first seen [this feature] was full of human bones, but as these were all scattered and fragmentary it is probable that they were only the bones dug up in making new graves in that overcrowded ground which were disposed of by throwing them into the deep ditch that bounded the churchyard on the north side" (Hughes 1898, 378). Unfortunately, no dating evidence was recovered and no other details of the size, profile or location of the ditch were recorded, although the apparent depth of overlying material does imply a relatively early date as the 'made-ground' deposits in this vicinity primarily accrued during the 13th to 18th centuries (see above, Area 4).

Subsequently, in October 1893, Hughes observed "the cutting of a deep drain ... along the south-west side of the first court of St. John's College. A ditch with black silt was crossed under the highest part of the new buildings in front of the kitchens, and this may have been an old boundary" (Hughes 1907, 421-2). Once again neither dating evidence nor a more detailed physical description were obtained, although "from the bottom of the made ground, where it rested on the gravel at the depth of some 13 or 14 feet [c.4m], several fragments of the old black cooking vessels and of

dark green glazed vessels were procured” (Hughes 1907, 422). The latter material is likely to be 13th century or later in origin (such as Medieval Ely ware, for example), although it must be noted that the presence of such pottery at this depth may be attributable to the existence of previously unidentified cut features. Despite these limitations, however, this second observation appears to comprise the sole basis of Hughes’ assertion that the Divinity School ditch “crossed the street and passed away under St. John’s College” (*ibid*, 411). In fact, no direct correlation can reasonably be drawn between two features of such uncertain date, dimensions and alignment, especially when it is noted that they were observed some fourteen years apart.

Yet this very ambiguity in both the precise date and location of the ditch apparently contributed to its suitability for inclusion into theories about the early development of the town. The earliest such usage occurred in 1905, when Arthur Gray proposed that it had comprised part of a ‘border moat’ constructed in the 8th century as part of the division between two opposing upper and lower Saxon towns, one of Anglian and one of Mercian origin respectively (Gray 1905, 21-3). In defining the boundaries of this enclosure, Gray extended the line of an old watercourse he had previously identified in St. John’s Meadow (Gray 1898, 67-70) to connect with Hughes’ ditch at All Saint’s Passage and thence with the known route of the King’s Ditch; unfortunately, this necessitated the introduction of an awkward right-angle kink in the ditch’s course in the centre of the Triangle site. Although Gray’s theory was broadly accepted at first (*e.g.* Cam 1934, 39) it has since been heavily criticised, especially on the grounds that no evidence of Saxon occupation has yet been identified within the proposed enclosure’s bounds (*e.g.* Lobel 1975, 3; Haslam 1984, 17; Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 85-6). Despite such objections, however, the underlying belief in the existence of an early ditched enclosure has remained largely unquestioned; more recently, for example, it has been suggested that the ditch formed the southern half of an enclosure which “appear[s] to have had a Danish origin” (Haslam 1984, 19). This attribution is primarily based upon the dedication of a nearby church to Saint Clement, who was widely venerated during the Viking period (although it must be noted that there is no definite evidence, physical or documentary, of this building’s existence prior to the early 13th century: Cam 1959, 127; RCHM(E) 1959 II, 269-71). In addition, Medieval documents referring to the area as the ‘Holm’ or ‘Hulmum’ – a term supposedly deriving from the Danish word *homr*, which describes an area of higher ground amongst marshes – have also been cited as evidence of 9th century activity in the area (Haslam 1984, 18; Taylor 1999, 44).

Although many of the objections that were raised against Gray’s theory are equally applicable to that of Haslam (most notably the complete absence of corroborative archaeological material), the existence of a 9th century enclosure on the eastern bank of the Cam has become widely accepted (*e.g.* Hines 1999, 136; Taylor 1999, 44-50). The results of the St. John’s Triangle excavations, however, argue firmly against the existence of such a feature. Although supposedly situated within an extensive settlement at this time, no evidence of 9th century activity of any kind was identified at the site, nor was any contemporary material culture present (even in a residual context). In addition, recent excavations in the riverside area have indicated that around a third of the space within the southern half of the proposed enclosure comprised flood-prone marshland that was not reclaimed or occupied until at least the 11th or 12th century (*cf.* Dickens 1996; Baker & Kenny 2004; Newman 2008a). Furthermore, if, as proposed, the St. John’s Ditch had defined “the entire area of St

Clements' and St Sepulchre's parishes" (Haslam 1984, 19) it would thus have enclosed an area measuring at least 270m by 210m in extent (or c.5.6 hectares). Yet excavations at Repton – the site which was occupied by the Viking Great Army during the winter of 873-4, prior to their advance to Cambridge – have demonstrated that here a 'D' shaped enclosure measuring approximately 85m by 60m (or c.0.51 hectares, less than a tenth of that size) was sufficient to house the same army for a comparable period (Biddle & Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 36). It is also notable that the Repton site incorporated a natural promontory upon which a monastery had been established with a fine church and a crypt (*ibid*, 36); a Middle Saxon sunken stone building was even reused as a burial chamber during the Viking occupation, from which the remains of 249 individuals were recovered (*ibid*, 38). It therefore appears far more probable that the Great Army, upon reaching Cambridge, would have reoccupied at least part of the former Roman town – whose "walls were probably still standing in the 11th century" (Alexander & Pullinger 1999, 8) – as opposed to establishing a new settlement in the marshland on the opposite side of the river.

This view is supported by the (admittedly limited) archaeological evidence of Middle to Late Saxon activity that has so far been recovered archaeologically from Cambridge, primarily from within the area of the former Roman town itself. For although a small 6th to 7th century settlement has recently been excavated at the Criminology site, situated on the western bank of the Cam around a kilometre to the south of the earlier settlement (Dodwell *et al* 2004), by the 8th century the focus appears to have returned to the Castle Hill area. At the foot of the hill, for example, an 8th century execution cemetery has been identified at Chesterton Lane Corner that was succeeded by a possible ecclesiastical structure (*cf.* Cessford with Dickens 2005a; Cessford *et al* 2007). This latter was constructed in c.850 and in its initial phase contained a northwest to southeast aligned inhumation whose head was later carefully removed (Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 81-3). Furthermore, 8th or 9th century pottery was recovered from excavations at 18/18a St Peter's Street and 19-37 Castle Street (the former in association with stratified features), whilst two enclosures at the Ridgeons Garden site are most probably Middle Saxon in origin (Alexander *et al* 1994; Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 78-9).

Given the almost total absence of contemporary Middle Saxon activity at St. John's Triangle, therefore, by far the most likely origin of the St. John's Ditch is that it demarcated the 11th century boundary of All Saints Churchyard – as indeed was originally suggested by Hughes (1898, 378; 1907, 411) – as opposed to an 8th or 9th century enclosure. *Contra* Hughes, however, it almost certainly did not extend to the west of the Triangle site. Such an interpretation clearly accounts for the presence of disarticulated human remains within the ditch's fills, and also agrees with the broader pattern of early ecclesiastical boundaries that have so far been identified archaeologically in the town. The original ditched boundary of St Benet's church, for example – which was founded c.1040 (Cam 1959, 122) – was identified during a watching brief in 2006 (Cessford & Fallon 2006, 30), whilst it has long been noted that the so-called 'Jesus Ditch' closely defines the boundary of the former Benedictine nunnery of St. Mary and St. Radegund that was founded in 1133 (Willis & Clark 1886, 117).

Summary

The most important result of the investigation of the Saxon period at St. John's Triangle is the identification of its absence; although doubt has been cast on the theory of an 8th/9th century southern settlement in the past (*e.g.* Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 85-6) this excavation represents the first real opportunity to test its existence archaeologically, in close proximity to where it was supposedly first identified. It is now clear that the theory can be fully discounted. In its place, it would appear that the gravel spur upon which the former Roman suburb had been situated formed part of the agricultural hinterland of the main Castle Hill settlement by the Middle to Late Saxon period. Arable cultivation was undertaken (the small amount of Middle Saxon pottery perhaps deriving from manuring activity) and small-scale gravel quarrying may also have occurred. It is even possible that some trace of the original strip field system became 'fossilised' within the early property boundary divisions (see further the Saxo-Norman discussion, below).

The Saxo-Norman period (10th to 12th centuries)

Summary of archaeological activity

Following the potentially quite limited usage of the area in Saxon times, during the early Saxo-Norman period (from approximately *c.*950 AD) a number of domestic properties appear to have been created at the St. John's Triangle site. The archaeological evidence of their establishment is two-fold. Firstly, a sizable ditch – at least 1m+ wide and 1m+ deep, with a sharp, 'V' shaped base – was created in Area 3. This feature, **F.255**, represents the earliest demarcation of what was to become a very long-lived boundary line (although it is not entirely clear whether it marks the limit of an individual property *per se*, or simply part of a larger 'block' of land made up of a number of separate plots). Secondly, following the establishment of the various properties, a large number of pits were inserted into the areas that were thus defined. Although the majority of these features appear to have functioned as quarry pits in the first instance, many of them were subsequently reused for the opportunistic secondary disposal of refuse and cess-rich deposits. The presence of such waste material – which included burnt daub and quernstone fragments, both of which are indicative of 10th/11th century activity, along with a relatively sizable ceramic assemblage of comparable date – indicates that they were situated in close proximity to contemporary domestic settlement.

In addition, two structures of probable Saxo-Norman date were also identified at the site; judging by their probable size and location, both appear to have been ancillary in nature. The first of these was encountered at the base of Test Pit 6 in Area 1, although – due to health and safety restrictions – only the latest (most probably 11th to 12th century) phase of the building was examined. This appears to have been domestic in function. Environmental samples taken from floor surface **F.550** revealed a diverse range of charred cereal grains, including barley, free-threshing wheat, rye and oat (although the latter may have been a crop contaminant rather than a cultivar). As very little chaff was encountered, these grains probably represent accidental charring during cooking at the nearby central hearth (**F.549**). However, the surface also produced a large number of non-edible wild plant seeds, such as water-plantain and duckweeds, the majority of which were preserved through mineralisation. As no

evidence of cess was encountered, it is likely that a medium conducive to mineralisation had developed naturally through the decomposition of organic matter; this most probably comprised flooring material, such as rushes, although it is also possible that roofing material and/or fuel from the hearth were also incorporated into the deposit. Unfortunately, no evidence of the form or construction of this building could be determined as it extended beyond the limits of the test pit in every direction; auger samples indicate that it had been remodelled at least once, however, and it is clear that the floor surface had been relayed on numerous occasions. The structure is most likely to have comprised part of a kitchen block, or other domestic service-related building, situated to the rear of a main dwelling.

In contrast, the second Saxo-Norman building at the site – which was situated much further back from the main Bridge Street frontage, in Area 4 – appears to have been non-domestic in origin. Although no associated floor surfaces (and thus no direct evidence of its contemporary usage) have survived, a number of elements associated with its construction were revealed. These demonstrate that the structure consisted of a combination of earth-fast post and beamslot techniques, with one of the postholes – **F.423** – containing a reused 10th/11th century quern stone as a post-pad (although the building itself is likely to be of 12th century date on stratigraphic grounds). However, the limited scale of the excavation resulted in the only partial uncovering of this structure; indeed, only its southeastern corner was available for investigation within Soakaway 2. Yet, despite this obvious limitation – and the degree of disturbance caused by later horticultural activity – the size of the structural elements used, allied with distance of the building from the main frontage zone, both indicate that it comprised a small non-domestic structure. It may therefore have functioned as a storage area or workshop, which, given the nature of its construction and the absence of any apparent remodelling, was relatively short-lived in usage. The presence of burnt daub in other Saxo-Norman features (such as **F.251** and **F.285**) indicates that this building, and perhaps also the probable kitchen block to the north, was of wattle-and-daub construction. In addition, the concentration of daub encountered in Area 3 suggests that a third such building was also potentially situated in the near vicinity of Soakaway 1 at this time.

The ground height at the end of this period varied between 8.19m OD in Area 1 and 7.28m OD in Area 3. This disparity primarily reflects the distinction between a structural sequence occurring in close proximity to the street frontage on the one hand and a backyard area lying to the rear of a property on the other (although it may partially result from variations in the height of the underlying natural). Notably, however, a very similar pattern of dispersed activity – principally concentrated in the Bridge Street area – also appears to have occurred during the Roman period, thus potentially exacerbating the variations present in Saxo-Norman times.

Material culture and economy

A moderately sized assemblage of Saxo-Norman pottery (consisting of 956 sherds, weighing 13.17kg) was recovered from the St. John's Triangle site; this material is exclusively comprised of the triumvirate of fabrics – consisting of St Neots-type, Thetford-type and Stamford wares – that are found ubiquitously on sites of this period throughout southern Cambridgeshire. Notably, however, the extensive and well-preserved stratigraphic sequence that was encountered has permitted an unusually

fine-grained chronological analysis of the assemblage. This bears very close comparison to the sequence previously identified at Chesterton Lane Corner (Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 83-4), the only other Cambridge site to have produced an equally dense and well-stratified ceramic assemblage of comparable date. In both locations, Thetford-type ware represents the first Saxo-Norman fabric to have appeared in the archaeological record, although this was very swiftly joined by St Neots-type ware. However, whilst Thetford-type ware first appeared at Chesterton Lane Corner in the mid to late 9th century in association with Middle Saxon fabrics such as Ipswich ware and Maxey-type ware (*ibid*, 83), the absence of such material from the St. John's Triangle site indicates that activity most probably began here slightly later, between c.900 and c.950 AD. This is supported by the presence of a number of stratified features – including **F.243**, **F.250**, **F.251** and **F.426** – which contained diagnostically early sherds of St Neots-type ware, as well as by the density of the assemblage as a whole (which averages 53.7 sherds p/m² in Soakaway 1). Although this is somewhat less than the density of 97.8 sherds p/m² present at Chesterton Lane Corner, it is at least five times higher than at any other Cambridge site yet known. Therefore, given the absence of large individual groups of Saxo-Norman wares, it is clear that around three centuries worth of gradual deposition is represented.

In the St. John's Triangle group, as is typical of assemblages across the southern Cambridgeshire region, St Neots-type ware is the most common fabric by count and Thetford-type ware is a substantial component of the assemblage, whilst Stamford ware – the highest quality ceramic of the triumvirate – is only a relatively minor element. By weight, however, the position of the St Neots-type and Thetford-type wares is reversed, this disparity being primarily a result of latter fabric's suitability for the production of large, thick-walled storage jars. Although Stamford ware only accounts for a small percentage of the group (some 5.2%), Cambridge lies at the southeastern limit of this fabric's distribution network and on such distant sites Stamford ware rarely exceeds 5% of an assemblage, and is often less than 1% (Kilmurry 1980, 162). The relatively high percentage of material present at St. John's Triangle, therefore, may potentially indicate the increased status of this area during the *floruit* of this ware in the late 11th and 12th centuries (a pattern which is also appears to continue with the relatively high frequency of 12th to 13th century Developed Stamford ware). Vessel forms in use at the site during the Saxo-Norman period include jugs, bowls, jars, large storage vessels and spouted bowls.

In terms of metalwork, one copper-alloy artefact of Saxo-Norman date was recovered; this consists of the combined pin and bar from a simple buckle. A single lead/lead-alloy artefact (consisting of a strip fragment) was also present, along with ten iron artefacts. These consist almost entirely of nail fragments, although a possible fishhook was also identified. Both this and the copper-alloy buckle pin were recovered from **F.251**, which also contained a worked bone toggle. In addition, four quern fragments of Saxo-Norman date were recovered from the site, all of which appear to be composed of fine-grained bluish grey vesicular stone that is identifiable as Niedermendig Mülstein lava (also known as Rhenish or Mayen lava) from the Eifel region in Germany (Kars 1983). As the use of rotary querns was probably controlled in Cambridge following the Norman Conquest in 1066 (Cessford with Dickens 2005b, 64-5), these fragments are highly likely to be of 10th or early 11th century origin (although most were redeposited in later contexts). Similarly, two fragments of probable Saxo-Norman building stone were also recovered from secondary Medieval

contexts. The most significant of these was derived from **F.445** in Area 4 and consists of an ashlar block bearing numerous tool marks, which illustrate that it was originally trimmed into shape with an adze (thus dating it to c.1070-1200). It was subsequently adapted into a post pad via the addition of a shallow sub-circular depression to its upper surface.

The Saxo-Norman animal bone assemblage represents the third largest stratified group to be recovered from the site, and relatively large quantities of bone were present within **F.246**, **F.248**, **F.251** and **F.285** in Area 3. The bone groups from these features appear to be fairly mixed, comprising both butchery waste and meat joints. Overall, sheep bones were marginally more abundant than cattle bones and pig bones were also fairly common. This pattern of relative frequency is characteristic of other early Medieval assemblages, particularly those from high-status sites where rates of meat consumption are generally greater than at other locations (*cf.* Grant 1988; Albarella & Davis 1996, 20; Albarella *et al* 1997, 17). Less common mammals present during this phase include horse, cat, roe deer, rabbit and house mouse. Bird bones were more abundant, and chicken is by far the most common bird species; the majority of individuals were adult birds, most probably hens culled after loss of production as egg-layers. Goose bones are also relatively common, but all other species are represented by only one fragment each; these include duck, pigeon, crow and a small species of wader.

Three cess pits – **F.248** and **F.251** in Area 3, and **F.425** in Area 4 – produced environmental evidence relating to the diet of Saxo-Norman inhabitants at the Triangle site. All three contained numerous mineralised free-threshing wheat and rye grains, along with smaller amounts of barley and oats; this is consistent with the wider pattern of contemporary agrarian practice witnessed both locally and nationally. In addition, other identified food plants include poppy, strawberry, apple or pear, lentil and elder, along with mineralised cess particles, mineralised fly pupae and digested fragments of bone. However, a fourth pit – **F.247** in Area 3 – contained very different sorts of material; within this feature, a large quantity of carbonised plant macro-remains had been deposited. This assemblage was dominated by free-threshing wheat, and both hexaploid and tetraploid chaff were found to outnumber grain counts whilst straw and awn fragments were also present. This indicates that the remains are associated with crop processing, with the cereal being reaped at the base of the straw prior to the sheaves being threshed and further processed. Although such activities appear to have taken place within the backyards of properties situated on the suburban outskirts of the city at this time (*cf.* de Vareilles in Cessford 2007), it is probable that in the much more densely ‘urban’ context of St. John’s Triangle there was insufficient space to allow threshing to take place. The remains are therefore likely to represent waste derived from domestic fuel.

Historical and archaeological background

Although it is likely that the main focus of activity remained centred upon the Castle Hill area during at least the very earliest part of this period – as is demonstrated by the later establishment of a motte and bailey castle in this location in 1086, the construction of which necessitated the demolition of twenty-seven houses (*cf.* Cessford with Dickens 2005a, 81-5) – it is highly significant that domestic occupation also appears to have become established at the Triangle site by around the middle of

the 10th century. This most probably demonstrates the expansion of the suburban hinterland of *Grantabrycge* following its conquest by the kingdom of Wessex in c.917, and at last provides a firm context for the subsequent ‘dual development’ of the town. Furthermore, it is intriguing to note that the initial 10th century settlement appears to have been established in much the same location as the former Roman suburb. This indicates that a similar process of development may have taken place as had occurred eight centuries before, with prime agricultural land to the south of the expanding town being sacrificed for the creation of a suburban settlement situated alongside the principal approach road. Indeed, excellent parallels to this pattern of development exist in the contemporary sequence of village expansion at a number of locations in the Cambridgeshire region.

Perhaps the clearest example of the process occurred at Cottenham, where the original Saxon settlement expanded during the 10th to 12th centuries to both the north and south of its former core; a series of strip fields were occupied at this time, each of which was then developed as a separate property fronting onto the High Street (Ravensdale 1974, 122-3). The pattern of the former field systems thus became enshrined within the layout of the Medieval property boundaries, and remains widely visible to this day. Although intensive urban development during the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods has largely obliterated the early property divisions at the St. John’s Triangle site, some trace of them remains visible within the resultant palimpsest (as is discussed further below) and the original putative layout of long narrow strips fronting onto Bridge Street strongly indicates a similarly ‘agricultural’ origin for these early property plots. That this area had been entirely given over to occupational use by the mid to late 11th century is demonstrated by the positioning of All Saints church – which was in existence by 1093 at the latest (Cam 1959, 124) – upon less well developed land to the rear of the Triangle block.

Of equal significance to the early history of the area, however, is the fact that towards the end of the Saxo-Norman period the site became incorporated into the centre of the *vicus Judeorum* (or Jewry) that was established in Cambridge at some time between c.1135 and 1144. The first Jews to settle in England are believed to have travelled from Rouen following the Norman Conquest in 1066 and, although the community was initially restricted to London, a number of provincial Jewries (including that at Cambridge) appear to have been established during the Anarchy that followed the death of Henry I in 1135 (*cf.* Hillaby 2003).

The history of the Cambridge Jewry

The Medieval Jewish community in Cambridge, although by no means the smallest or least significant such community in contemporary England, remains amongst the least studied. Aside from an early documentary consideration (Stokes 1913), little direct synthesis or interpretation has been attempted, with the sole exception of R. B. Dobson’s important investigation that was published in 1993. This dearth is due in no small part to the peculiar difficulties which the history of this particular community presents; indeed, it has been noted that “it is one of the paradoxes of the history of the Cambridge Jewry that it should be worth our attention precisely because it is so exceptionally difficult to write” (Dobson 1993, 3). These difficulties stem from two principal sources: firstly, the community appears to have been at its wealthiest and most extensive during the later 12th century, a period from which few documentary

sources have survived; and secondly, during the 13th century – when a more complete documentary record was maintained – the Jewry appears to have undergone a rapid decline, so that fewer individuals (and, consequently, fewer financial transactions) existed to be documented. Nevertheless, a significant body of information has survived which greatly assists in establishing the context of the site during this period.

The earliest documentary reference to the Cambridge Jewry dates from 1144, when one Theobaldus of Cambridge gave evidence at a murder trial in Norwich. During his testimony Theobaldus stated that, prior to becoming a monk, he had been “at Cambridge, a Jew among Jews” (Dobson 1993, 6). This implies that the community was already well established by this date and the close proximity of the town to London, initially the sole residence of the English Jewish community, suggests that Cambridge may have been amongst the very earliest provincial Jewries to be founded. This view is certainly supported by the returns of the tax (or *donum*) raised by Henry II in 1159, to which Cambridge contributed 50 marks (£33 6s 8d); this sum was only surpassed by the major centres of Lincoln (60 marks), Norwich (72½ marks) and London (200 marks) (Stokes 1913, 248). By this date, therefore, the Cambridge Jewry was clearly well established as one of East Anglia’s leading purveyors of credit. In addition, the town appears to have remained largely unaffected by the wave of violent persecution that engulfed the Jewries at Dunstable, Bury St Edmunds, Norwich, King’s Lynn, Stamford and York in 1189-90, again implying that the community was already well-established and had become at least partially integrated with the local gentile population (Dobson 1993, 10). It is also notable that Cambridge contributed £98 10s to the *donum* of Richard I in 1194, which comprised the sixth largest contribution in the country behind Lincoln, Canterbury, Northampton, Gloucester and London (Stokes 1913, 250-1; Dobson 1993, 9). The largest individual assessment at this time – which comprised over a third of the total amount paid by the town (£34 10s) – was that of Benjamin of Cambridge, one of the key figures in the history of the Cambridge community.

In addition to being a wealthy and important member of the Cambridge Jewry, Benjamin was also a significant scholar, “a learned and influential exegetist, a commentator on *halakhah*, grammar and other texts” (Dobson 1993, 9). Yet he is also important to the history of the Cambridge community for a very different reason, as much of the debate surrounding the position of the Jewry within the Medieval town has centred around the precise location of his house. This is because, in 1224, ‘the House of Benjamin the Jew’ is known to have been converted into the town gaol (Cooper 1842, Volume I, 39-40; Ellis & Salzman 1948, 276) and when, in or just after 1226, the chronicler Thomas de Eccleston recorded the arrival of the first Franciscans to Cambridge he noted that “the brethren were at first received by the burgesses who made over to them an old synagogue near the prison” (Little 1951, 22). Soon after, in 1238, the monks expanded their premises into the gaol itself and a new prison was constructed (Ellis & Salzman 1948, 276); this second structure stood in the marketplace area (Lobel 1975, 10). A number of writers, however – beginning with the 18th century antiquarian William Cole – appear to have conflated the original prison building with its replacement and therefore believed that the Medieval Jewry was also situated in and around the central marketplace (*e.g.* Cooper 1842, Volume I, 40; Stokes 1913, 113-4; Moorman 1952, 17; Brooke 1985, 73). Yet by the time of the Dissolution the Franciscan Friary was clearly located somewhat further to the northeast on Bridge Street, occupying the site which was later to become that of

Sidney Sussex College (Willis & Clark 1886, 274-6). Although it has been suggested that the brethren moved to this new location from their former residence during the late 13th century (Moorman 1952, 17), it is far more plausible to suggest that Benjamin's house had itself been situated in this same area and that the site of the Friary remained constant until the time of its dissolution (*cf.* Ellis & Salzman 1948, 276-8; Lobel 1975, 10; Haigh 1988, 14; Salway 1996, 5).

This would agree closely with a growing body of evidence, discussed further below, which indicates that the Jewry itself was situated along Bridge Street, in much the same location as the former Roman suburb (see Figure 30, below). It thus fell almost entirely within the parishes of All Saints, also known as 'All Saints in the Jewry', and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (as has previously been suggested by Atkinson & Clark 1897, 10; Lobel 1975, 10; Rubin 1987, 108; Dobson 1993, 12). Such a location would therefore have been entirely suitable for Benjamin's residence, for whilst it is by no means unknown for a wealthy Jewish businessman to have owned, or even resided in, a property situated outside the official bounds of a Jewry, it is very unlikely that a synagogue would have been tolerated in such a prominent market-side location. The apportioning of the property of a significant member of the community such as Benjamin for conversion into the town gaol, and later into a Christian religious house, also serves as an indication of the wider decline in the status of the Cambridge Jewry as a whole from the beginning of the 13th century onwards. In the *donum* of Henry III, for example – which was collected in 1221 – Cambridge's position as a contributor had fallen from sixth to twelfth (Dobson 1993, 9) and this sharp decline was to continue throughout the century. The values of financial transactions recorded in the town's *archa* – or 'chirograph chest', a chirograph being an obligation or bond given in one's own handwriting – during the second half of the 13th century show a marked discrepancy from those of Lincoln (see Table 1), which in terms of wealth had been perhaps the most comparable community to Cambridge during the preceding century (in the *donum* of Henry II in 1159, for example, the ratio between the payments made by Cambridge and Lincoln was 1:1.2).

	Cambridge	Lincoln	Ratio
1240	£1,833 6s 8d	£4,000 0s 0d	1:2.2
1262	£156 18s 0d	£405 14s 2d	1:2.6
1290	£283 6s 8d	£2,600 0s 0d	1:9.2

Table 1: the value of surviving Jewish financial transactions in the Cambridge and Lincoln *archae* during the 13th century (data from Mundill 1998).

Part of the reason for this decline may well be related to the contemporary establishment of a number of Christian religious houses in the immediate vicinity. For whilst the Church of All Saints (first documented in 1077-1093), the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (first documented in 1114-1130) and the Benedictine nunnery of St Mary and St Radegund (which was founded in 1133) predated the establishment of the *vicus Judeorum* (Cam 1959, 124; Willis & Clark 1886, 117) – as most probably did the Church of St Clement, although the first documented reference to this church's existence only occurred in 1218 (Cam 1959, 127-8) – two other nearby religious houses did not. Both the Hospital of St John the Evangelist (founded c.1200; Rubin 1987, 101-4) and the Franciscan Friary discussed above (founded c.1227) were constructed either within or immediately adjacent to the pre-existing Jewry (see

Figure 30, 1 to 6). This is especially notable because “the placing of religious and charitable houses in the midst of or beside the Jewish quarter was conceived as an assertion of Christian faith” (Rubin 1987, 108). Indeed, it was common practice for religious houses to assist in freeing members of their community from indebtedness, for “by helping Christians to redeem their pledges religious houses were freeing them from the Jewish moneylenders through acts of mercy. Thus, the location of the Hospital of St John the Evangelist so close to the moneylending centre of Cambridge posed a religious and economic challenge” to the resident Jewish community (*ibid*, 109). Perhaps the most physical manifestation of this challenge is represented by the establishment of the Hospital cemetery in the centre of the Triangle site around c.1250 (see further the Medieval section, below). Such anti-Semitic ‘statements’ are by no means unique, however; in 1231, for example, the Hospital of St John the Evangelist in Oxford was transferred to a new site that had previously comprised the town’s Jewish cemetery (Roth 1951, 108-9).

Later in the 13th century, wider political troubles also contributed to the Cambridge community’s misfortunes. The ‘Baronial Wars’ of the 1260’s led to a wave of anti-Jewish demonstrations across the country, from which the town no longer proved exempt (Mundill 1998, 266-8). Indeed, although the earliest recorded violent death in the community had occurred in 1155 – when a payment of 20s was made ‘for a slain Jew’ (Stokes 1913, 126) – the most destructive episode occurred on the 12th of August 1266 when a band of the ‘Disinherited’ led by Robert Pecche and David de Offinton held a number of Cambridge Jews to ransom. Several members of the community were killed at this time, including Saulot Mutun, the head of one of the wealthiest dynasties in the town (Darby & Miller 1948, 392; Dobson 1993, 13). Furthermore, the rebels also “seized the town’s *archa* – in some ways an even more aggressive act – and removed it to Ely” (Dobson 1993, 16). The chirograph chest was not recovered until July 1267, meaning that all legal money lending activity had to be suspended during this period, a crippling financial restriction. However, the most catastrophic event of all occurred on the 16th of January 1275. On this day Edward I granted the wish of his mother, Queen Eleanor of Provence, to expel all Jewish residents from the dower towns – which, besides Cambridge, included Marlborough, Worcester, Bath, Gloucester, Andover and Guildford – that had been bestowed upon her following her marriage to Henry III in 1236 (Mundill 2003, 57-8).

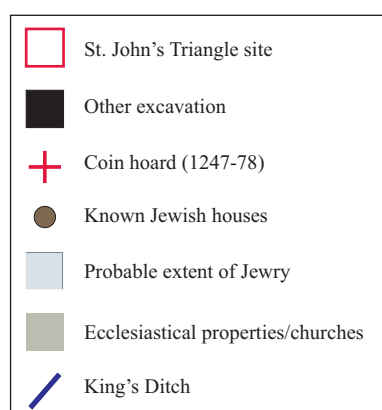
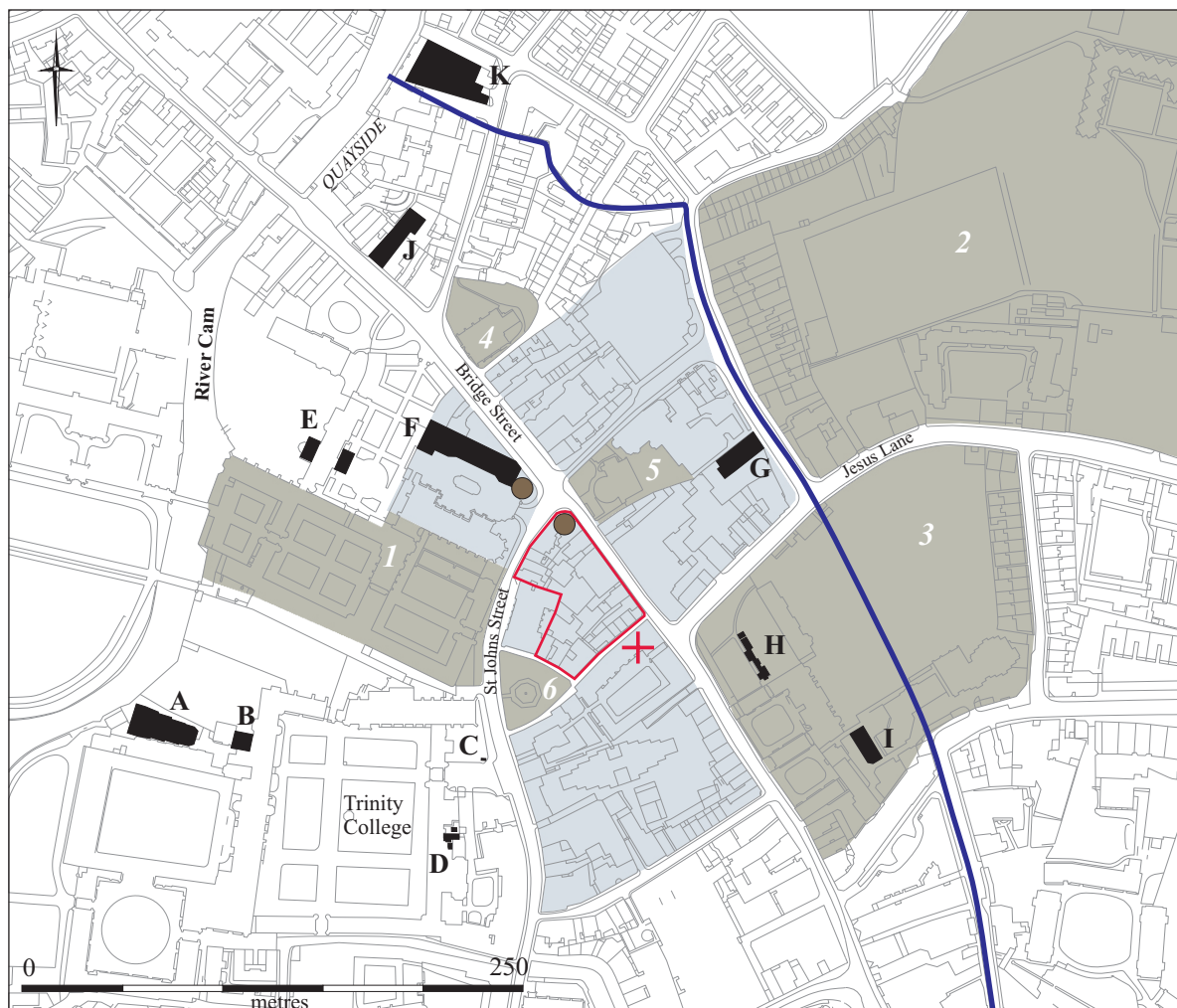
This event, although undertaken on a previously unprecedented scale, was by no means unique; a number of individual towns had already expelled their Jewish inhabitants, beginning with Leicester in 1231, and Jewish residence in general had been restricted by royal decree from 1245 (Mundill 1998, 265). Under the terms of the 1275 expulsion the Jews of Cambridge were officially banished to Norwich, although the majority appear to have resettled in Huntingdon (situated only 16 miles to the south) and for a time their business activities in Cambridge continued. Josce son of Saulot, for example, who is recorded as being a ‘Jew of Bridge Street in the parish of Holy Sepulchre’, was granted permission in 1277 to reside with his household in Chesterton “in order to conduct his business [in Cambridge] and to repair the houses that he has in the same town” (Dobson 1993, 20). Josce finally lost his property in 1290, however, when Edward I expelled all Jews from England (*cf.* Mundill 1998; Mundill 2003). At this time his houses in Bridge Street passed into the ownership of the town mayor, John But, and it is an interesting postscript to the history of the community that many of the “ex-Jewish tenements and messuages (and in particular

the rents therefrom) were to play a not unimportant part in the complicated property transactions which underpinned the first colleges of the University” (Dobson 1993, 20).

The form and extent of the Cambridge Jewry

As has been noted above, the early documentary record is extremely fragmentary and any discussion of tenurial holdings during the Saxo-Norman period must therefore remain largely conjectural. A small number of early 13th century documents have survived, however; these were primarily derived from the archive of the Benedictine nunnery of St. Mary and St. Radegund, and are now held by Jesus College. Although few can be assigned with certainty to specific property locations (or even, at a more general level, be determined to have lain within the bounds of the Triangle site itself) an overall view of the form and extent of the Jewry at this time can be discerned (see Figure 30). As a number of these sources reveal, the central locus of the *vicus Judeorum* was the main Bridge Street thoroughfare – indeed, right up until the time of their expulsion in 1275 members of the community were primarily identified as being ‘Jews of Bridge Street’ – whilst there may also have been a secondary axis along present day St. John’s Road/Trinity Street (the northern end of the Medieval High Street). Together, these roads comprised the main arterial routeways of the town throughout the Medieval period (Bryan 1999, 42-3), and the Jewry was thus ideally situated to take advantage of the flow of traffic in both directions.

It is clear that individual properties within the Jewry extended to both the northeast and southwest of the central Bridge Street axis, although the majority of the surviving evidence relates to properties located on the southwestern side. It is also clear that a number of these properties were quite substantial in size, such as early 13th century “*messuage* in the Jewry” that extended “from the highway [Bridge Street] to the King’s Ditch” (JC 89), a distance of at least one hundred metres. In addition, a separate though near contemporary document records one owners gift of “lands formerly held of him by Brito the Jew”, which measured 47ft (14.4m) wide on the street front and 204ft (62.2m) in length (JC 83). Unfortunately, no firm location may be ascertained for either of these properties. It is notable, however, that in the last example the land appears to have been sub-let to a Jewish tenant as opposed to having been owned by him outright; since the surviving documents are almost entirely comprised of deeds of ownership, the wider presence of such tenants is likely to be highly underrepresented. A further feature of interest is that the size of these holdings falls comfortably within the parameters of properties situated on the more expansive suburban outskirts of the town at this time (*cf.* Cessford 2007). As well as providing further support for the potentially ‘agricultural’ origin of the early property divisions, therefore, this also indicates that the marked density of occupation present in this area during the succeeding Medieval period had not yet been established in the early 13th century. Finally, it may also be significant that the extent of the Jewry appears to closely mirror that of the preceding Roman suburb, being almost entirely restricted to the limits of the same gravel spur. Indeed, although it has been suggested that the Jewish community settled in this area because it comprised “a semi-deserted wasteland, liable to river floods and generally undeveloped” (Atkinson & Clark 1897, 10), this is in fact most probably the opposite of the truth. The location chosen, situated as it is athwart the main road just to the south of the Norman castle, comprised an island of dry land with a long history of settlement that offered a



- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| A. Trinity Bookstore | 1. Hospital of St. John the Evangelist (c.1200) |
| B. Trinity Master's Lodge | 2. Nunnery of St. Mary and St. Radegund (1133) |
| C. Trinity Gateway | 3. Franciscan Friary (c.1227) (formerly the site of 'Benjamin the Jew's' house and Synagogue?) |
| D. Angel Court | 4. Church of St. Clements |
| E. St. John's College | 5. Church of the Holy Sepulchre |
| F. St. John's College New Court | 6. Church of All Saints in the Jewry |
| G. ADC Theatre | |
| H. Sidney Sussex, 1958 | |
| I. Sidney Sussex, 1994 | |
| J. 28 Bridge Street | |
| K. 24 Thompson's Lane | |

Figure 30: The Cambridge Jewry and other nearby excavations.

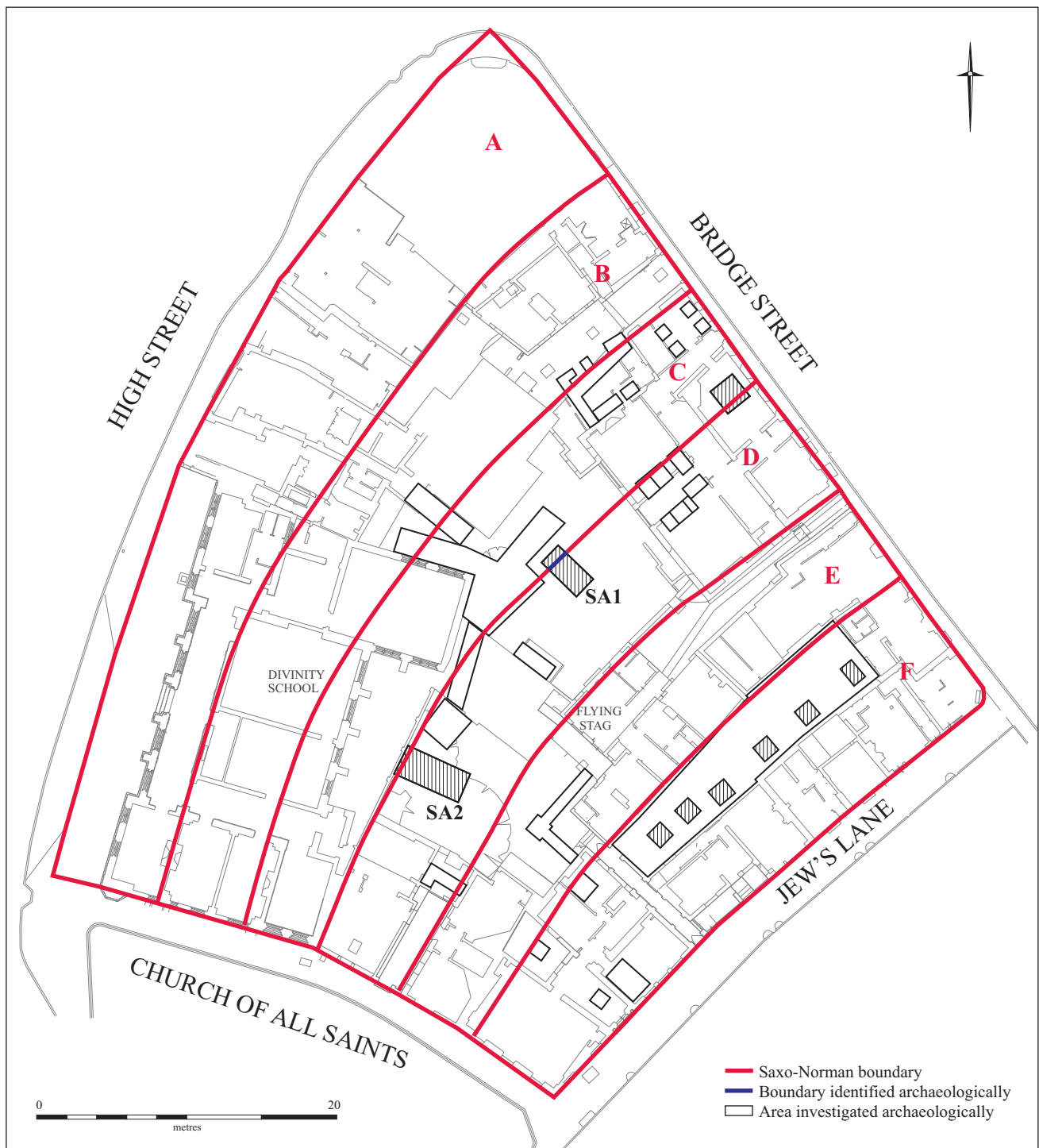


Figure 31: Provisional model of Saxo-Norman properties at St. John's Triangle.

measure of security as well as access to the growing mercantile district beside the river to the west.

Within the area of St. John's Triangle itself it is likely that up to six individual properties were present (see Figure 31), although some of these may already have been amalgamated into larger holdings by the time the Jewry was established. The principal frontage of the block appears to have remained focused along Bridge Street until well into the 13th century, despite the presence of All Saints church (along with at least five other 11th century churches) demonstrating the growing importance of High Street from at least the early 11th century onwards (Cam 1959, 124). This strongly implies that the layout of these properties predates the later dominance of this second routeway, as too does the positioning of the church to the rear of the occupied space (in much the same way that the Hospital of St John was established in a similar location, on the opposite side of the road, around a century later). An access route along the southeastern side of the Triangle also clearly existed from an early date, as early 13th century documents record the presence of "a tenement in Jew's Lane, extending from the Highway [Bridge Street] to the cemetery of All Saints", which was rented by one Fulk Crocheman for the sum of 29 ½d (*JC* 88). This most probably equates to **Property F**, although it is also possible that it refers to a property situated immediately to the south of Jew's Lane. A second document, dated the 12th of November 1267, relates to the donation of "the land with stone houses and buildings which Isaac son of Samuel the Jew once held" to Barnwell Priory by Bartholomew, son of John de Cambridge, goldsmith (*SJC D 19.6*). These houses can be linked with some certainty to **Property A**, which appears to have been amalgamated with **Property B** by 1267. However, two generations separate the date of this document from the end of Isaac's tenancy, and the original form of the plot remains unknown.

In addition to Isaac's house, there has long been little doubt that the 'Stone Hostel' situated immediately opposite the Triangle, on the other side of St. John's Road, also initially comprised a Jewish residence (*e.g.* Stokes 1924, 63; Dobson 1993, 12). This building, which later formed a hostel for students at St. John's College, was owned by John Porthors in 1295, although no documents firmly connecting it to a Jewish occupant have survived (Rosemary Horrox *pers comm*). Considering its location, however, the attribution appears likely and, given the scarcity of stone as a building material within the Cambridgeshire region, it is surely no coincidence that two such imposing buildings were situated to either side of the confluence of the town's most important thoroughfares. Finally, records also exist documenting the sale of "the house formerly of Koc the Jew", which abutted "on the highway [Bridge Street] to the east and the lane towards St. John's Hospital to the west" (*JC 245a*, dated 18th September 1286). These abutments are ambiguous, however, and whilst the building may have been situated within the Triangle's bounds (little is known of the history of **Property C**, for example, especially at this early date), it is perhaps more likely to have been similarly located on the opposite side of St. John's Road. Whilst further documentary research would undoubtedly be able to tie more properties within the Jewry to individual Jewish owners, and define the limits of the community more closely, there is one area in which it is unlikely to prove helpful. Although a Jewry of the size of Cambridge's almost certainly maintained an associated cemetery, it has been noted that "only a most courageous documentary historian would dare to suggest where archaeologists may one day disinter the mortal remains of the Jews of Medieval Cambridge" (Dobson 1993, 11).

Despite such a warning, however, various suggestions as to the location of this cemetery have been made. The first such proposal was that it was situated in the marketplace area, and was based on the antiquarian observation that “upon digging the foundation of the present guildhall in 1782, several grave-stones were recovered, among them one with an imperfect Hebrew inscription to this effect; ‘The sepulchral stone of Israel ... who died ...’” (Cooper 1842, Volume I, 40). However, the inscription recorded on this stone has since been regarded as “highly suspect” (Dobson 1993, 11) and the item itself has long been lost. Subsequently, Canon Stokes suggested that the Jewish cemetery was located beneath the Selwyn Divinity School (Stokes 1913, 120-21), most probably on the basis of the bones encountered by Hughes in the ‘St. John’s Ditch’ (although in fact these were almost certainly derived from nearby All Saints’ churchyard). A very large pit containing disarticulated human remains was also encountered during the construction work undertaken at St. John’s College in 1938 (Daniel 1939, 144-6), which could potentially represent the clearance of a cemetery prior to the Hospital’s foundation. The pit was situated in close proximity to the Medieval chapel, however, and the possibility of a plague pit also cannot be ruled out. In fact, Anglo-Jewish cemeteries were almost invariably situated outside the town boundary, usually in the vicinity of one of the main gates (*cf.* Honeybourne 1964, 157-8; Hillaby 1990, 97; Gilchrist & Sloane 2005, 46); the primary excavated example is that at Jewbury, York (Lilley *et al* 1994), whilst small portions of the Jewish cemeteries at Winchester and London have also been examined (Gilchrist & Sloane 2005, 70-1; Grimes 1968, 180-1). By far the closest such location to the Cambridge Jewry comprises the area around Jesus Lane. Unstratified human bone has previously been recorded in this vicinity, immediately outside the King’s Ditch (Alexander *et al* 2004, 91-2), although (as previously noted above) there is also likely to be a sizable Roman cemetery in much the same location.

A wider context: other nearby excavations

A small number of excavations have previously been conducted in the vicinity of the Triangle site (see Figure 30) and Saxo-Norman deposits were encountered at several of these sites. In general, the pattern of contemporary activity that has been revealed by this work indicates that occupation became established alongside the High Street somewhat later than at the St. John’s Triangle site (perhaps in the 11th or even 12th centuries). Furthermore, the nearby riverside area appears to have remained part of the alluvial floodplain until the 12th century at the earliest; indeed, reclamation work began as late as the 14th century at 24 Thompson’s Lane (*cf.* Newman 2008a). Yet by the 13th century, when it appears that the density of occupation in the area surrounding the current site was increasing rapidly, the number of features occurring in close proximity to the High Street apparently decreased. Paradoxically, however, this diminution of visible archaeological activity may well have resulted from the establishment of an increasing number of buildings over much of the area, which ‘sealed’ the horizon and thus prevented the digging of further pits. The most relevant of the various excavations are considered in detail below.

During the 10th to 12th centuries waterlain deposits continued to form at the St. John’s College Chapel Court and Master’s Garden site (see Figure 30, E), although a line of stakeholes 1.15m apart was uncovered that ran in a northwest to southeast alignment perpendicular to the main Bridge Street frontage (Dickens 1996, 14). This indicates that the floodplain was subject to at least seasonal usage at this time, and had probably

been incorporated into the rear portion of properties extending back from the Bridge Street thoroughfare. Indeed, a relatively large assemblage of Saxo-Norman pottery was recovered from the site, which may possibly have been associated with contemporary attempts at ground consolidation or reclamation. The mollusc assemblage recovered from the silty clay alluvial deposits which accrued during this period suggests a mixed environment, with periods of inundation alternating with episodes of damp tussocky grassland (*ibid*, 15). Following on from this phase, three drainage ditches were inserted at the site during the 12th to 13th centuries. The most significant of these was around 4.5m wide by 0.5m deep and orientated east-southeast to west-northwest; it had steeply sloping sides leading to a flat base and an associated bank to the northwest that was 2.0m wide and at least 0.6m high (*ibid*, 18). This feature was thus large enough to have accommodated shallow-draughted vessels and may well have acted a minor channel or barge pull. The two remaining ditches were much smaller, being only between 1.2m to 1.5m in width, and appear to have silted up by the end of the 13th century whilst the larger channel was recut and maintained in use until the 15th or 16th centuries (*ibid*, 23). At some time during the 13th century, the reclamation work evidently having been completed, a series of timber buildings were established to the north of the channel (again, at the rear of the Bridge Street properties).

A little way to the southeast of St. John's College, a small evaluation trench – measuring 0.8m by 1.55m in extent – was excavated at the Trinity Gateway site in August 1991 (see Figure 30, C). The profile of the natural gravels that were encountered at the base of this trench (at around 7.65m OD) “suggests that this sondage lay along the edge of a natural terrace scarp, from where the ground falls away to the northwest floodplain of the river Cam” (Evans 1991, 5). The earliest archaeological activity to be identified consisted of a large posthole, measuring 0.9m by 0.26m in extent and 0.4m deep, which was situated in the base of an apparent foundation trench; this was 0.45m wide and aligned roughly perpendicular to Trinity Street (the Medieval High Street). Within the interior of this structure, successive bands of gravel make-up had been set down, each band being overlain in turn by a dense grey trampled silty clay deposit containing frequent charcoal inclusions (*ibid*, 2-4). The building therefore appears to have been domestic in nature. Its exact date is unclear, however, for although both Thetford-type and St Neots-type wares were recovered, no precise dating could be established (*ibid*, 3). Subsequently, during the 13th century, the building was succeeded by a relatively sterile ‘garden soil’ type deposit (although this may alternatively represent a replacement structure).

Nearby to Trinity Gateway, at the Angel Court site (see Figure 30, D), three phases of archaeological work were undertaken between 1958 and 1997 (*cf.* Addyman & Biddle 1965; Regan 1996; 1997). During the earliest of these phases at least one pit of Saxo-Norman date was observed, although no further details of its form or extent were recorded (Addyman & Biddle 1965, 76-7). Further information was subsequently revealed by the insertion of a small evaluation trench, measuring 2m by 2m in extent, which was excavated in May 1996. Natural gravels were encountered at 6.81m OD at this time, and appeared to be sloping down to the west (Regan 1996, 3-4); this closely parallels the edge of the gravel escarpment previously identified at the Trinity Gateway site to the north. Although a small amount of Saxo-Norman pottery (consisting solely of St Neots-type ware) was recovered from the trench, no cut

features of this date were identified (*ibid*). Immediately to the south of the evaluation trench, however, a larger excavation (measuring some 8m by 10m in extent) was conducted between December 1996 and January 1997. Three features of Saxo-Norman date were identified during the course of this work; they most probably comprised quarry pits, which had latterly been reused for the disposal of domestic refuse during the 12th or 13th centuries (Regan 1997, 4-7). A worked bone pin beater and needle fragment were recovered from these features, and a worked bone spindle whorl – which was redeposited in a 17th century context – may also have been similarly early in origin (*ibid*, 29). The concentration of such artefacts in this area implies that craft (or possibly textile) related activities may have been undertaken at the site. Unfortunately, however, the precise nature of these activities remains unclear as the Saxo-Norman horizon was heavily truncated by later activity, to the extent that all contemporary vertical stratigraphy was lost (*ibid*, 7).

To the west of the High Street, between the road and the River Cam, activity appears to have begun somewhat later than at the frontage. This was certainly the case at the Trinity Master's Lodge site (see Figure 30, **B**), which was excavated during the summer of 1997 within four small adjoining basement rooms. Here, a series of shallow linear features were uncovered, each aligned west-northwest to east-southeast. These linears apparently comprised wheel-ruts that had formed in the surface of a gravel laneway. The lane was some 9m wide and had a shallow 2m wide ditch to the north of it; a second, smaller, 1.1m wide ditch was also situated on its southern side (Alexander 1998, 5-6). This feature therefore appears to have comprised the "road to Dame Nichol's Hythe" that is known from contemporary documentary sources, and was most probably established at some time during the 12th century. During the 13th century the 'road' continued to be well maintained, with the roadside ditches being cleared out and the gravel surface being patched; the ditch fills at this time contained snails indicative of slow flowing or stagnant water, along with charred cereal remains (Alexander 1998, 8). A little further to the west, excavations conducted at the Trinity Bookstore site (see Figure 30, **A**) in October and November 1990 also revealed a picture of limited Saxo-Norman activity. During the 11th century, the area closest to the river remained subject to frequent inundation and numerous waterlain silt deposits accrued. The lack of artefacts in these silts confirms that the main locus of occupation was still situated some distance to the east at this time (Cessford *in prep*). This pattern also continued into the 12th century, although the greater quantities of material found near to the river indicate that some limited activities were now being undertaken in the close vicinity. The majority of features at the site were created from the 13th century onwards (*ibid*).

Other excavations undertaken within the Jewry area

A small number of excavations and evaluations have also been undertaken within the former Jewry area, with the largest amount of work having occurred in the grounds of Sidney Sussex College. Here, during the relaying of a path running northwest to southeast across Cloister Court in 1958 (see Figure 30, **H**), the opportunity was taken to investigate the degree of archaeological survival in this area, the primary objective being to clarify the location and extent of the monastic buildings belonging to the former Franciscan Friary (Salway 1996, 4-5). To this end, a trench 29m in length and 1.22m in width (although at least double this in places) was excavated. This revealed that the sequence was generally well preserved and up to 3.2m deep, although the

majority of the trench could not be bottomed for health and safety reasons (*ibid*). Overlying the earliest Roman features (previously discussed above), the excavator noted a substantial deposit of 'dark earth' into which the later ecclesiastical structures and associated graves had been cut. Indeed, during the creation of one such burial "the original gravedigger had encountered a very large Saxo-Norman Thetford Ware storage jar lodged in the dark soil" (*ibid*, 21). However, the presence of a near-complete vessel such as this implies the existence of a series of cut features, potentially backfilled with refuse, as opposed to the more homogeneous cultivated soil-type deposit that is implied by the term 'dark earth'. Unfortunately, the majority of the lower strata were not investigated (*ibid*, 14-15) and thus no firm conclusions may be drawn. The earliest structural element encountered during the excavation comprised the remnant of a dressed limestone wall situated in close proximity to the southern wall of the Medieval church (*ibid*, 23). Whilst this could possibly have comprised an element of a pre-monastic (and therefore potentially Jewish) structure, given the limited scale of the investigation – and the lack of associated datable material – such an attribution cannot be determined with certainty.

Subsequently, a geophysical survey of this area was undertaken in 1984. Although the results were unclear, primarily due to the limitations in the technology available at this early date, the general pattern of monastic buildings observed by Salway was broadly represented. In addition, at least one potential stone structure was identified – situated to one side of the main monastic complex, but oriented on a different alignment – which may have predated the Friary's establishment (Dark 1984, 81-2). In 1994, a 5m by 3m trench was excavated within the grounds of Sidney Sussex College some way to the southeast of the 1958 investigation (see Figure 30, **I**). The earliest activity revealed in this location comprised a uniform layer of reddish brown sandy silt, identified as a horticultural soil, which contained Medieval coarseware of 13th to 15th century date (Hind *et al* 1994, 14-5). No earlier features, or residual material, were present, and the site most probably lay outside the Jewry area. In contrast, a quantity of both Thetford-type and St Neots-type wares was recovered 'at depth' during the construction of St. John's College New Court in 1938-9 (Daniel 1939, 145-6), a site which almost certainly did lie within the Jewry's bounds (see Figure 30, **F**). Unfortunately, however, due to the sporadic nature of the observations that were undertaken during this work, no record of discrete features or associated structural remains was maintained. Finally, a third area that may potentially have been associated with the Jewish community, at the ADC Theatre site, was evaluated in August 2002 (see Figure 30, **G**). No definite Saxo-Norman deposits were encountered, but an 'intermediate horizon' was identified – lying between the Roman and Medieval layers – which contained exclusively redeposited Roman material. In Trench 2, these 'intermediate' features consisted of a series of three gullies that overlay and partially truncated the uppermost horizon of a large 2nd/3rd century boundary ditch (Whittaker 2002, 9). The gullies may therefore represent Late Roman alterations to the line of this boundary, or may alternatively relate to the later redemarcation of the area during Saxo-Norman times.

In addition to the above sites, excavations conducted by Clive Partridge in 1973 at N^o. 28 Bridge Street (see Figure 30, **J**) revealed a 13th century stone structure that incorporated imported Hainault marble, Purbeck marble and Northamptonshire limestone (CHER 04582; Webster & Cherry 1974, 199). Although potentially contemporary with the Medieval Jewry, this building does not appear to have been

situated within its bounds (*contra* Dixon & Herring 2003, 11); indeed, as numerous stained glass fragments were also recovered, it is perhaps most likely to have been ecclesiastical as opposed to domestic in function.

Discussion

The identification of 10th century occupation at the St. John's Triangle site is of great importance in understanding the growth and development of early Cambridge, a subject that has previously been almost entirely restricted to theoretical debate (see further the Saxon period, above). Identifying the precise nature and extent of the 10th and 11th century activity at the site, however, is extremely difficult. This is in part a result of the uniformity of the dominant ceramic traditions which span the period, as diagnostically early material is often extremely difficult to identify within the amassed assemblage; the earliest phases of activity have therefore been defined principally on stratigraphic grounds. This difficulty is exacerbated by the limited exposure of the earliest deposits at the site (largely a consequence of their depth), which greatly inhibits the degree to which general patterns of activity may be observed. For these reasons, therefore, absolute confirmation of the postulated model for this period – in which a former fieldsystem was converted into a small suburban settlement – will not be possible without the investigation of a larger physical area. One of the earliest actions which can be positively identified from the current excavation consists of the creation of ditch **F.255** in Area 3; this feature, in which both cultural and environmental material were markedly absent, most probably predates the establishment of intensive occupation at the site. Notably, a number of very similar boundaries of probable 11th century date have previously been discovered within the town; significant features have been observed at Free School Lane (Hunter 1991, 4-5), Christ's Lane (Addyman & Biddle 1965, 80-82) and Grand Arcade (Cessford 2007, 34-6), in each case apparently defining the initial layout of either one or a number of individual property plots.

It therefore appears that, at the St. John's Triangle site, a very similar pattern of property development first occurred during the 10th century. Ditch **F.255** may thus represent the subdivision of the site into two main 'blocks', as occurred at Grand Arcade (*ibid*), or might alternatively represent part of the establishment of up to six individual properties. The initial occupants of these new plots, who most probably formed part a small 'village-like' community that was potentially comparable in scale and function to the former Roman suburb, may well have raised animals and practised subsistence horticulture in their extensive backyards; thus, in many ways, this phase can be paralleled with the 11th century suburban development which has recently been investigated at the Grand Arcade site (*cf.* Cessford 2007). In terms of the Triangle's broader context, it is notable that Cambridge appears to have remained only an "economically viable backwater" up until the mid 10th century (Hines 1999, 136). It was only then – with the establishment of a mint during the 970's under Edgar (Hill 1981, 126-32), and the granting of the same trading rights to the town as the important centres of Thetford, Ipswich and Norwich in the 980's (as recorded in the 12th century *Liber Eliensis*; *cf.* Fairweather 2005) – that Cambridge definitely emerged as a significant urban centre. It is most likely to have been at this time, therefore, that the marked expansion of the southern settlement began. As has previously been noted above (see the Saxon period discussion), the earliest non-archaeological evidence of occupation to the south of the Cam consists of a series of 11th century churches

scattered along the length of the High Street (Cam 1959, 123-32; Addyman & Biddle 1965, 94-6; Lobel 1975, 4). This routeway, which branches off from Bridge Street immediately adjacent the St. John's Triangle site, follows the spine of the gravel ridge to the south and indicates the primary direction in which the new settlement was to expand.

Archaeological evidence recovered from sites in the southern part of the town demonstrates that this expansion was relatively sporadic in nature, however, and comprised a largely 11th century phenomenon. No identifiable trace of settlement activity prior to the 11th century was discovered during excavations undertaken at Hostel Yard, Corpus Christi (Cessford 2004, 7), for example, and a very similar pattern was also identified during nearby investigations at No.7 St Edward's Passage (Mortimer 1995), Bene't Court (Edwards 1996a), Corpus Christi Master's Garden (Edwards 1996b), 52 to 54 Trumpington Street (Whittaker 2001a) and Free School Lane (Hunter 1991). Yet by the close of the 11th century occupation appears to have stretched for some distance along both the High Street and Bridge Street axes, even extending out beyond the limits of the town 'proper' that was subsequently to be enclosed by the King's Ditch in the late 11th or early 12th century (*cf.* Whittaker 2001b; Cessford 2007; Newman 2007). Thus, although the earliest Saxo-Norman activity at the site remains somewhat difficult to characterise archaeologically, it can be seen to have occurred at the start of a very rapid and dramatic period of growth during which the landscape of Cambridge was irrevocably altered.

Similarly, whilst a later Jewish presence at the St. John's Triangle site can certainly be demonstrated on documentary grounds, it is also difficult to identify archaeologically. This is by no means an isolated phenomenon, however, and has been widely noted during excavations undertaken at a number of other Anglo-Jewish sites (*cf.* Isserlin 1996; Hinton 2003). The reasons for this difficulty are twofold; on the one hand, defining material that is explicitly 'Jewish' in origin is extremely problematic, whilst on the other, the relatively short temporal span of Medieval Jewish occupation resulted in the accumulation of only limited associated deposits. An excellent demonstration of the problems inherent in identifying such occupation archaeologically is presented by the fact that, despite widespread misconception, "not all Jews were rich or lived in stone houses; nor were all those people who lived in stone houses, or were rich, Jews" (Isserlin 1996, 40). Indeed, even the material culture commonly used by contemporary Jews and gentiles is likely to have been largely indistinguishable (Hinton 2003, 98). This has led to a number of misidentifications in the past, a pertinent example being Canon Stokes' belief, in 1914, that he had identified part of the synagogue associated with the 'House of Benjamin the Jew' that was subsequently occupied by the Franciscan Friars in c.1227 (Stokes 1918, 89). His attribution was primarily based upon the discovery of a large stone vault of Medieval date in the marketplace area, in close proximity to the present guildhall, although no firm evidence of Jewish association was identified. The presence of a substantial stone structure in such a location is in no way unusual, however, and the documentary grounds for equating this building with the synagogue are extremely thin (as has previously been discussed above).

The clearest possible indication of Jewish occupation is represented by the presence of artefacts bearing Hebrew inscriptions, or connoting explicit (often ritual) associations. Unfortunately, the majority of such definitively Jewish Medieval

artefacts that are known from Britain are either unprovenanced or had already been removed from their original context prior to their discovery; a typical example of this is the beautifully inscribed 12th/13th century 'Bodleian Bowl' that was discovered in a Suffolk stream during the 17th century (cf. Katz 1990; Hinton 2003, 99). At the St. John's Triangle site, in common with almost every other archaeological investigation that has so far been undertaken within an English Jewry, no such artefacts were identified. Therefore, in the absence of concrete artefactual evidence, a Jewish presence has usually been inferred by the recovery of 'high-status' material culture. In London, for example, it has been noted that certain artefacts – namely counters, scales and lead tokens, lamps and louvres (which are primarily associated with the chimneys of stone buildings) – occur with greater frequency on sites within the known Jewish Quarter, and that the same pattern may also occur at Bristol and Hereford (Pepper 1992, 5-6). However, this statistical analysis is only effective when the large quantity of these artefact-types dumped as midden material at waterfront sites is excluded, and introduces a clear risk of confusing certain activities/housing types with a preconceived notion of 'Jewishness'. In addition, the approach relies upon the existence of large excavated assemblages, deriving from long-term occupation, and cannot readily be applied to smaller excavations – such as that at St. John's Triangle – which are restricted to individual properties that may only have been occupied for a short period of time.

A second approach that has been attempted, based upon the known dietary requirements of the community, involves the mapping of prohibited food residues within an excavated area. Yet once again this relies upon the presence of long-term Jewish occupation, sufficient to have generated a consistently identifiable pattern of deposition; the recovery of shellfish from a known Jewish property at Milk Street, London, for example, along with the pig bones identified at a Jewish property in Colchester, Essex (Isserlin 1996, 37-40), demonstrate the difficulties of applying this approach to shorter-term tenants. (The high percentage of pig bones identified within the Saxo-Norman deposits at the present site provides a further example). Perhaps rather more promising, therefore, is the recent suggestion of mapping the residues of identifiably kosher butchery practice (cf. Cope 2004). At least one animal bone fragment bearing such marks has been identified at the present site (see the animal bone assessment report), and it is hoped that further analysis of the material may be able to help elucidate the extent of Jewish occupation at the various properties investigated.

Finally, a third approach has also been adopted, based upon the close connection between the Medieval Jewish community and moneylending activity (usury having been illegal for Christians until the time of Henry VIII). This has been predicated upon the association of coin hoards to known Jewish properties. In Cologne, for example – where a much greater degree of survival has meant that the Medieval synagogue, *mikveh* and *rathaus* have all been excavated – nine coin hoards have been identified to the rear of several properties situated in the heart of the Jewry (cf. Asaria 1959; Isserlin 1996, 38-40). Three separate coin hoards have also been discovered in close proximity in Colchester, located within either the same, or two closely adjacent, Medieval properties. Each of these hoards was contained within a lead canister of very similar form; the first (consisting of 11-12,000 silver pennies, with a closing date of c.1237) was discovered in 1902, the second (consisting of 14,065 silver coins and 11 laminated forgeries, with a closing date of 1256) in 1969 whilst the third canister,

discovered in 2000, was empty (Archibald & Crook 2001, 67-142; Brooks *et al* 2004, 132). A link between these hoards and contemporary Jewish occupation at the site has been established via documentary records (Stephenson 1985, 50). It is therefore notable that a hoard of very similar date was also discovered in close proximity to the Triangle site in 1817 (see Figure 30):

“On Saturday August 23rd, as some workmen were digging for the foundation of a building in the cellar of the old Dolphin Inn, below the spot once occupied by the late Alderman Newling’s coal-yard, about four feet from the surface they struck into a soil of black mould above which the ground had been artificially raised, probably when the Dolphin Inn was erected. Here they found the mouldered remains of a leather bag, out of which there fell, jingling, a parcel of gold rings containing precious stones in very ancient setting; also some old silver coins and other articles of value, the whole of which will probably never be known” (Anon 1817, 463).

Only part of the assemblage was recovered by the owner of the estate; this portion consisted of five gold rings set with gemstones (two amethysts, a sapphire, a ruby and an unidentified stone), five plain gold rings, a gold brooch mounted in silver and studded with rubies, a gold *fleur de lys* that had been broken off from a larger object, a piece of coral set in silver and three further items of jewellery (*ibid*). Accompanying these objects were an unspecified number of silver pennies of Henry III (who reigned from 1216 to 1272) and “upon these pennies the head of the king appears in full face, in front, with the legend *Henricus Rex III* or *TERCI*. The reverse has a double cross extending to the edge of the coin, and three *pellets* in each quarter” (*ibid*). These coins therefore belonged to the Long Cross coinage of 1247-78, indicating that the hoard was probably deposited no later than the introduction of the Edwardian currency in 1279 (Martin Allen *pers comm*). Significantly, this date range encompasses the two most significant periods of turmoil within the history of the Cambridge Jewry; the Baronial revolt of the mid 1260’s and the expulsion of 1275. In addition, it has long been noted that “pawnbroking ... probably always remained one of the most important (but least well documented) activities of the Cambridge Jewry” (Dobson 1993, 6). Thus, although as yet no firm documentary evidence has been discovered linking this property to a Jewish occupant, the attribution of the hoard to a member of the Cambridge Jewry appears to be a strong possibility.

Summary

The evidence recovered from the St. John’s Triangle site indicates that occupation was re-established upon the gravel spur by around the middle of the 10th century. Initially, this new settlement was probably quite ‘village-like’ in scale and may well have comprised only a small suburb of the main town, which was still situated on the opposite side of the river at this time. During the 11th century, however, following a period of marked economic expansion, occupational activity to the south of the Cam appears to have proliferated rapidly. Additional settlement spread southwards along two principal axes – Bridge Street (the former Roman road) and the newly emerging High Street – and the Triangle site was thus ideally situated to take advantage of traffic flowing in both directions. In addition, the status and development of the area was furthered by the establishment of the Cambridge Jewry in this location during the third quarter of the 12th century; a number of prestigious stone structures are known to have existed during this period, and archaeological evidence of the prevalent material culture and diet indicates a pattern of relatively high-status consumption. However,

during the 13th century the fortunes of the Jewry declined sharply. The reasons for this decline are not entirely clear, for – although the area was gradually impinged upon by a number of religious houses at this time – such a situation was by no means unique to the Cambridge community. It may therefore be significant that a number of additional Jewries had also been established in East Anglia during later 12th century (such as those at Huntingdon, Bedford, Stamford, Sudbury and Thetford, for example, plus the major centre at Norwich), and that several of these foundations went on to eclipse their predecessor. The decline of the Cambridge Jewry may thus have been associated with the growth of an increasingly competitive financial market.

The Medieval period (13th to 15th centuries)

Summary of archaeological activity

It is notable that a much wider variety of archaeological feature-types were present during the Medieval period than have previously been identified during any of the preceding phases at the site. Although it must be remembered that a greater number of Medieval deposits were examined in comparison to those of earlier periods (due to the restrictions placed upon the depth of excavations in certain areas), this disparity is unlikely to have resulted simply from variations in sample size. Instead, it appears that an increasing number of Medieval features were created specifically in order to fulfil a single purpose, in contrast to the emphasis upon secondary and possibly even tertiary reuse witnessed during the preceding Saxo-Norman period. Therefore, whilst far fewer gravel quarries were encountered (presumably as a result of the marked depletion of this natural resource by the beginning of the 13th century), an increasing number of refuse and cess pits were identified, the majority of which demonstrated evidence of ‘organised’ as opposed to ‘opportunistic’ disposal activity. In addition, a new feature-type was also encountered; this consisted of certain ‘specialised features’, such as **F.421** and **F.418** in Area 4, which appear to have played a specific role within semi-industrial or craft-based processes. Furthermore, a number of fence-lines were also identified, located adjacent to, and at times directly replacing, the numerous boundary ditches that continued to define the limits of the majority of properties at the site. Unfortunately, however, aside from a possible (although relatively ephemeral) ancillary structure in Area 4, no associated buildings of Medieval date were encountered within these plots. Therefore, although it has been postulated that urban housing became increasingly specialised during this period (*cf.* Pearson 2005) – perhaps in parallel with the wider specialisation of feature-types outlined above – it has not been possible to test the theory at this particular site.

The ground height at the end of the Medieval period varied between 8.61m OD in Area 3 and 8.42m+ OD in Area 4. The dramatic variation observed between the level at the front and rear of a plot during the Saxo-Norman period is no longer apparent, most probably as a consequence of the subdivision of many of the properties allied with the increasing density of their occupation. Almost all parts of the site thus appear to have been intensively used during Medieval times, with at least 1.4m of material (primarily associated with refuse disposal) having been deposited in backyard areas.

Material culture and economy

A relatively large assemblage of Medieval pottery (consisting of 2,334 sherds, weighing 28.40kg) was recovered from the site; this material consists of the usual range of coarsewares, finewares and material that is intermediate between the two which is common on sites of this date across Cambridge (*cf.* Edwards and Hall 1997; Cessford 2005; Newman 2007; Cessford 2007). The majority of the coarsewares consist of utilitarian brown, buff, grey, pink, and red fabrics, of which the most common is grey coarseware; a significant proportion of the material was also produced at Ely. In addition, at least eleven Medieval finewares have been identified from the St. John's Triangle site, including material imported from Essex, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Surrey, Yorkshire and Seigburg in Germany. Finally, the intermediate fabrics consist of Grimston ware, Ely-Grimston ware, pink shelly ware and Developed Stamford ware. Overall, therefore, the group is typical of Medieval assemblages recovered from other urban sites in southern Cambridgeshire (*e.g.* Ely; Cessford *et al* 2006). Vessel forms in use at the site during this period include cooking pots, bowls, jars, jugs, cisterns and drinking vessels. Although none of the material is of particular significance on an individual basis, the detailed stratigraphic sequence that was encountered during its excavation (most especially in Soakaways 1 and 2) provides scope for a fine-grained chronological analysis of the assemblage, which would greatly aid in clarifying the general ceramic sequence of Medieval Cambridge.

Also dating to this period is one of the most significant individual artefacts to be recovered from the site, an anthropomorphically decorated knife-handle fragment that was derived from 15th century ditch/gully **F.439** in Area 4. This piece, which is exquisitely carved, depicts a probably female figure, although it survives only from the chest up and is heavily worn (see Figure 32). From this remnant, however, it is clear that the figure is wearing a large headscarf or hood that is held in place by a decorative headband; to either side of her head, stylised ears of corn are depicted. Based upon the handle's dense structure, 'buttery cream' colour and smooth texture, it is possible that it is composed of walrus ivory (*cf.* Rosedahl 1995). This striking artefact clearly belongs to a small though widely dispersed group of Medieval secular anthropomorphic bone and ivory handles, which was first identified by M. Bencard in 1975. This group, which including the St. John's Triangle find consists of 33 known examples, is broadly characterised by the portrayal of figures that correspond to the archetype of an "ideal aristocrat" (Bencard 1975, 59). Including the present example, eight such anthropomorphic handles are known from British sites. Much the closest parallel to the St. John's Triangle find is the so-called 'Green Man' handle that was recovered from an early 14th century context during the Perth High Street excavation undertaken in 1975-7 (Hall 2001). In terms of its proportion, execution, material and theme – save for the probable reversal of gender – this handle bears a very marked resemblance to the Cambridge example, and both it and the St. John's Triangle find may perhaps be associated with aspects of seasonal or fertility symbolism (*cf.* Hutton 1996). The Cambridge handle was most probably manufactured during the late 13th or early 14th centuries (see further the worked bone, antler and ivory assessment report), and its presence at the site is potentially reflective of the trade in high-status commodities that may well have been undertaken in this area during the Medieval period.



Figure 32: Late 13th/early 14th century anthropomorphic knife handle fragment from F.439.

In addition, twenty copper-alloy artefacts of Medieval date were also recovered. The identified items include a buckle, three plates and a bar/ingot. One lead/lead-alloy artefact (consisting of a curvilinear strip) was also recovered, along with forty-nine iron artefacts. These include a barrel padlock, a key, a horseshoe fragment and a socketed tool. A Medieval stone mortar fragment was also recovered, although it occurred residually within a Post-Medieval rubbish pit.

In terms of diet, bones from livestock species dominate the Medieval animal bone assemblage; sheep is the most common livestock species, followed by cattle and then pig. Less common mammals include horse, dog, cat, fallow deer (and possibly red deer), hare and rabbit. Cat bones are relatively more abundant than the other species, and both adults and kittens are represented; this implies that cats were being kept at the site during this period. Bird bones also account for a significant proportion of the identified material, and chicken is the most common species whilst goose is also fairly frequent. Less common avian species include duck, pigeon, teal, plover, crane, lapwing and passerine; interestingly, crane and lapwing are considered to be high-status food items, and both were identified from Medieval deposits within Area 1. Other food items – including figs, hazel nuts, brambles, peas and pulses, in addition to charred free-threshing wheat, rye, barley and oat grains – were also identified in an environmental sample recovered from pit [2194] in Area 1. In addition, this feature contained a large and diverse number of both carbonised and mineralised wild plant seeds, including some crop-weeds as well as other backyard species that probably grew in close proximity to the pit and great-fen sedge straw and seeds, which probably represent the remains of domestic fuel.

Historical and archaeological background

Documentary sources (with Rosemary Horrox)

A number of Medieval documents relating to the properties at St. John's Triangle have survived; they demonstrate that during the 13th century the area became increasingly densely occupied, so that the total number of properties increased from six to at least eleven by c.1350 (see Figure 33). The numerous plots were subdivided between two principal 'blocks', which contained six and four properties respectively.

The first of these blocks consisted of **Properties A, B, I, J, K and L**, and occupied the eastern half of the Triangle site. It was dominated by **Property A**, which was referred to as *The Stonehostel*. As was discussed in the preceding Saxo-Norman section, this property "with stone houses and buildings" was originally held by Isaac, son of Samuel the Jew, and was gifted to Barnwell Priory on the 12th of November 1267 by Bartholomew, son of John de Cambridge, goldsmith (*SJC D 19.6*). By this date, *The Stonehostel* probably also included **Property B**, although no definite reference to this property has survived. The plot was referred to in the records of Barnwell Priory in 1279 (*Rot. Hund.*, 357), but there then follows a significant break in the sequence until the 5th of March 1535 when *Le Stonehostell* (which was still in the possession of Barnwell Priory) was leased to "Christopher Franke, burgess" (*SJC D 19.99*). The rear half of these two properties had a very varied history, however; it was subdivided into four small plots – **Properties I, J, K and L** – by the mid 13th century, all of which were owned by the Hospital of St John. These appear to have been gradually 'carved out' from the much larger frontage property. **Property L**, for example, was described in 1250 as "formerly the site of the mill of Adam Weriel", who was

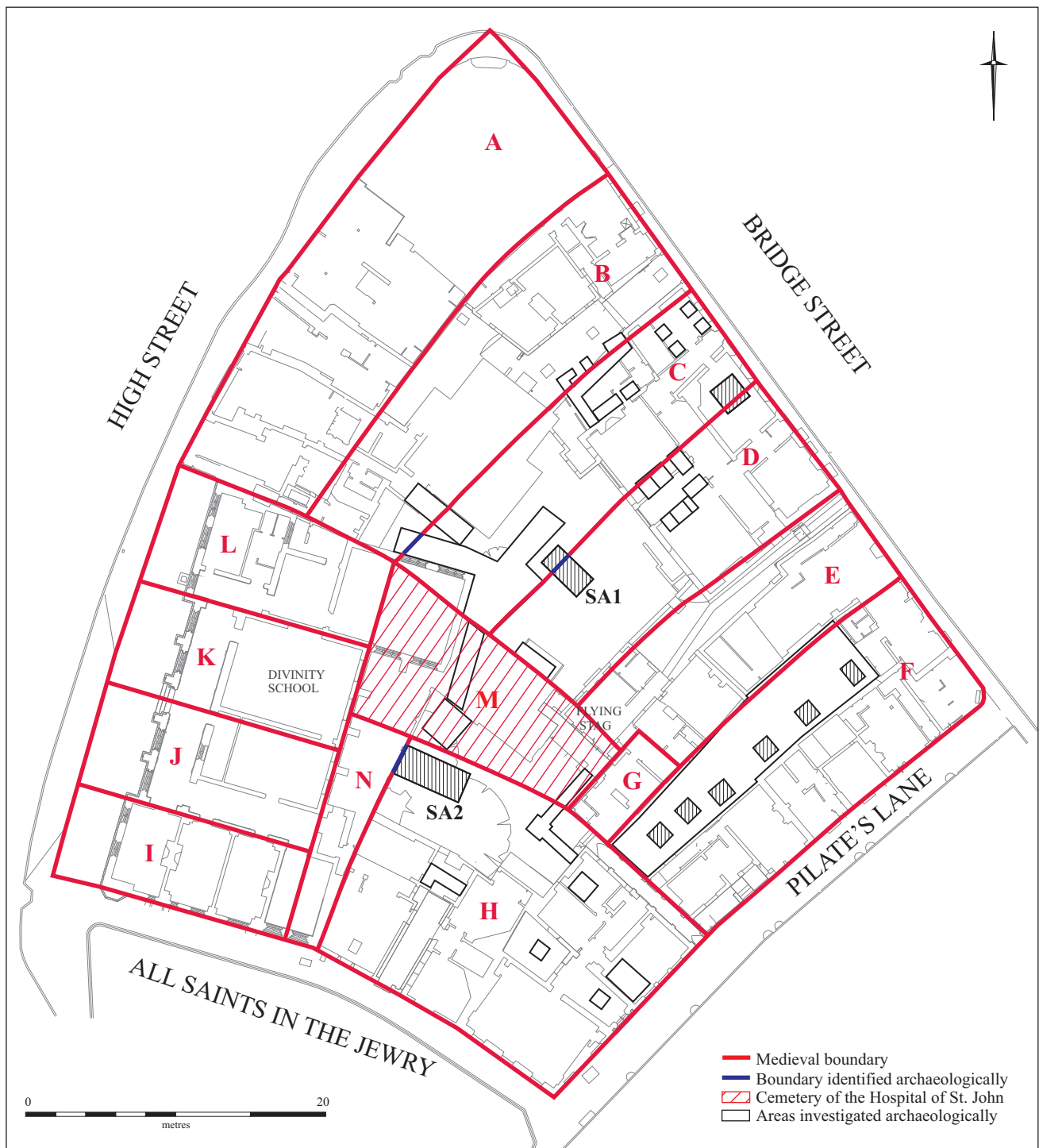


Figure 33: Medieval properties at St. John's Triangle.

Bartholomew de Cambridge's grandfather (*SJC Cart. f.18*); the mill itself appears to have remained in use until at least 1267, as the "hospital's horse mill" is referred to on the site shortly after this date (*SJC D 24.46*). Unfortunately, the majority of the documents associated with these properties are undated and their sequence cannot be clearly established, although it is known that in 1249 a small area of land "12 feet wide" (labelled **N** in Figure 33) was transferred from the rear of **Properties I** and **J** and attached to **Property H** (*SJC D 17.3*; enrolled *SJH C 7.1 fo's 4v-5*). By the 15th century, this land appears to have been reappropriated by the High Street properties, which were then up to "4½ perch long and 1½ perch wide" (22.65m by 7.55m) in size (*SJC D 31.3*). The majority of this block appears to have been either retained by, or returned into the ownership of, Barnwell Priory during the Medieval period.

The second block of land consisted of **Properties D, E, F, and H**. The most significant of these is **Property F**, which comprised a messuage named *Rokeleshalle*. By the mid 13th century at the latest, this messuage also incorporated **Properties E** and **D**, although **Property H** (which lies to the rear of the group) appears to have been annexed as a separate property in the early 13th century and was only reincorporated into the block in 1294. The first documentary reference to **Property F** is undated, and relates to the sale of the messuage by "Nicholas, son of Michael Malherbe, to Henry son of Ivo of Cambridge [Henry de Breton], for 100 shillings" (*CCC C.B. fo.15*). The land then passed from Henry to his daughter Joan, and was leased from her by one Pagan de Docking in 1279 (*Rot. Hund., 273*). Towards the end of the 13th century, *Rokeleshalle in Judasimo* was owned by "Symon [de Breton], vicar of St John" (*CCC C.B. Fo.15-v*) before passing into the possession of the de Cambridge family by 1325. **Property E** was also owned by Nicholas Malherbe and sold to Henry de Breton in the mid 13th century; at this time, the property measured 36 feet wide on the street frontage and 32 feet wide at the back and was 80 feet long on the northern boundary and 73 feet long on the south (*CCC C.B. fo.15*). This discrepancy in the length of the property indicates that a small parcel of land (labelled **G** in Figure 33) was transferred between **Properties F** and **E** in the later part of the century. The subsequent descent of **Property E** followed that of **Property F**. Similarly, **Property D** – which is known primarily through abutments with the adjacent **Property E** – also came into the possession of Simon de Breton in the late 13th century and followed the descent of the two preceding properties.

The final property in this block, **Property H**, was most probably subdivided from the three frontage properties during the early 13th century, or possibly before. Unfortunately, the earliest reference to the plot is undated, but it does reveal that the property was initially held by "Eustace, son of William Barun of Newnham" from "John Runwald and Martin Toston" (*JC 94*). By 1249, however, **Property H** was owned by one William Pilate (*SJC D 17.3*), after whom 'Pilate's Lane' (formerly Jew's Lane) appears to have been named. On the 19th of June 1294, the land passed in the possession of Simon de Breton (*SJC D 17.4*), meaning that the whole of the western half of the Triangle site was then owned by a single individual. It subsequently followed the same descent as the remainder of de Breton's lands, and passed to the de Cambridge family in the early 14th century. Indeed, in the de Cambridge rental of 1325-6, the combined **Properties D, E, F and H** appear to have comprised a large messuage 'with fourteen associated shops' (Rosemary Horrox *pers comm*), a number of which may well have been located along Pilate's Lane. The de

Cambridge lands eventually came into the possession of Corpus Christi College in the 15th century.

Between the two large blocks on the east and west sides of the site, two small parcels of land – **Property C** and area **M** – remain so far unaccounted for. Although no documents relating to **Property C** have survived, it is very likely that this plot was also attached to one of the larger blocks, that of Barnwell Priory being the most probable. Area **M**, on the other hand, is known to have comprised the cemetery of the Hospital of St John by 1294 (*SJC D 17.4*). Although the right to bury was originally conferred upon the Hospital in the early 13th century, and was reconfirmed by a papal bull in 1250 (*cf.* Rubin 1987, 100-110), it is not known precisely when burial began at this specific site. (A radiocarbon determination derived from a human femur recovered from a Post-Medieval pit in Area 3, which directly overlay the cemetery, indicates that this particular individual died during the 11th or early 12th centuries – see further the radiocarbon assessment report – although it is unclear where precisely these remains originated from, a number of other Medieval cemeteries also having existed in this area). The land which later comprised **Properties L** and **K** appears to have been set aside for use as the Hospital cemetery in 1250 (*SJC Cart. f.18*), but it is clear that only the irregular space in the centre of the Triangle was actually so employed. Furthermore, it is also uncertain whether this comprised the principal cemetery of the Hospital, or was subject to only occasional or infrequent usage. However, the recovery of disarticulated human remains from 15th century features **F.412** and **F.444** in Area 4 indicates that the Triangle cemetery may still have been in use by this date, and it seems probable that at least part of the large amount of skeletal material recovered from building foundation **F.201** in Area 3 had also been disturbed from this source, indicating that a relatively large number burials may have been present.

A wider context: other nearby excavations

A small amount of Medieval pottery was recovered during the construction of Whewell's Court, immediately to the southeast of the Triangle site, in 1857. This material included "two jugs, with thumb-pinched bases..., a drinking cup..., an ornamental square floor tile, and a plate showing the earliest stage of Italian ware" (White 1897, 299), although no other information was recorded. To the northwest of St. John's Triangle, however, archaeological observations were also undertaken during the construction of St. John's College New Court in 1938-9. Notably, at this time "a very large amount of Medieval pottery was found, including many types of pitcher, bowls and pipkins ... yielding many examples of glazes" (Daniel 1939, 146). Amongst this material was a sherd bearing "a delightful green glaze and an amusing representation of a human face" (*ibid*); this is most probably a fragment of Grimston ware, which had its *floruit* during the 14th century. The assemblage that was recovered from the site, much of which now appears to be held by the Fitzwilliam Museum, was most probably derived from a number of properties fronting onto Bridge Street. As such, it is likely to be directly comparable to the St. John's Triangle material (although the method of its recovery would preclude any in-depth analysis or interpretation). Also of significance in this area is a narrow trench that was excavated in the front lawn of St. John's College, in close proximity to St. John's Street, during November 1991 (see Figure 34). This trench, which was 10.0m long by 0.6m wide and 0.8m deep, was excavated by machine, although part of it (measuring 1.8m by

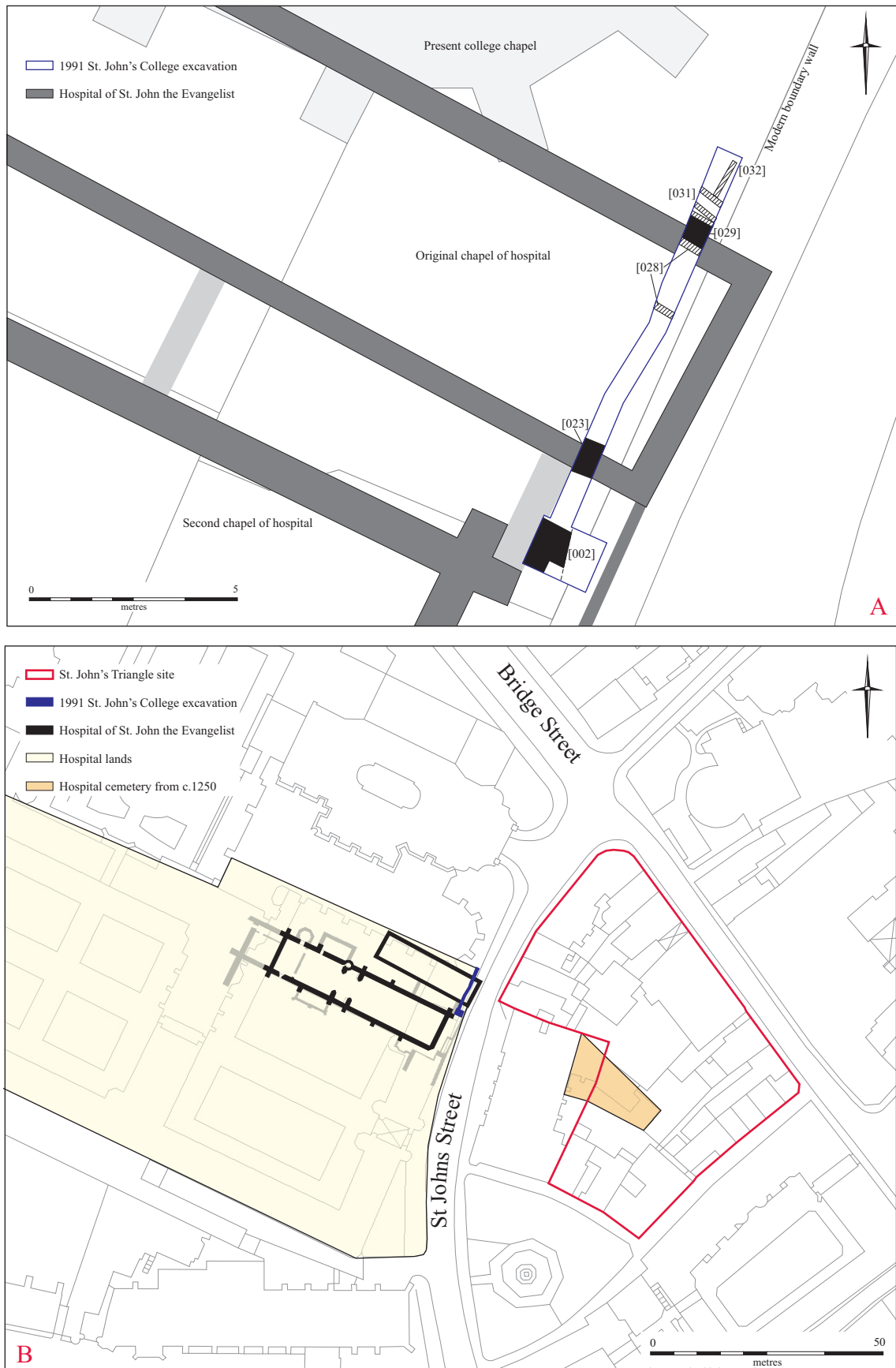


Figure 34: Location of the 1991 St. John's College front excavation (A) and the proximity of the Hospital of St. John the Evangelist to St. John's Triangle.

1.5m in extent and 0.9m deep) was hand dug (Miller 1991, 1-2); given the shallow depth of the excavation, only the uppermost part of the sequence was investigated. The earliest features that were encountered at the site comprised two west-east aligned uncoursed limestone and clunch walls, which represent elements of a major structure. These walls were 0.6m wide and the building had an internal width of 5.4m, with traces of clay floors inside (*ibid*, 2-4); it thus corresponds very closely with the 13th century infirmary building of the Hospital of St John the Evangelist that was recorded as having stood in this location up until the late 19th century (*cf.* Willis & Clark 1886 II, 296-302; C. C. Babington 1864).

This institution – the history which is reviewed in detail in various sources (*e.g.* Haigh 1988, 9-10; Rubin 1987; see also Sweetinburgh 2004) – owned a number of properties at the St. John's Triangle site, including a horse mill, and played a significant role in the development of the area (see further the documentary sources, above). In addition, the establishment of the Hospital cemetery in the centre of the Triangle in the mid 13th century clearly influenced the landscape of the site throughout the Medieval period. During the 1991 evaluation, to the north of the infirmary building a probable laneway or open area was identified, whilst, beyond this, the remains of a second stone-built structure were encountered (Miller 1991, 4). Although a number of ancillary buildings are known to have existed within the Hospital during the Medieval period, this structure does not correspond to any of the historically documented examples. However, as it is clearly broadly contemporary with the infirmary, it probably represents a previously unknown building that was demolished at a relatively early date. Although well-built, this ancillary structure appears to have been relatively small and was separated from the Infirmary by a gap of 1.0m; its function remains unclear. Subsequently, during the 16th century, the interior of the infirmary itself was modified via the insertion of two parallel unfrogged red brick walls (*ibid*, 8-9). One of these walls was built directly against the northern face of the main building, and together they formed a small structure approximately 2.0m wide within which an *in-situ* burnt layer appears to have accrued (although the walls themselves were not heat affected). These modifications probably date to the later 16th century, when the infirmary was converted into stabling and a storehouse (*c.*1561) and then later into student rooms (*c.*1584). Indeed, the building was only destroyed in 1863 when the construction of the present College Chapel commenced (RCHM(E) 1959 II, 187-8).

A little way to the northwest of the Hospital, at the St. John's College Chapel Court and Master's Garden site (which was excavated in 1992), reclamation of the flood-prone alluvial marshland appears to have been completed by the early 13th century (Dickens 1996, 24-5). At least five timber structures were then constructed in this location, and – as they were situated at the rear of their respective property plots, in close proximity to the probable 12th century barge channel – they are most likely to have been commercial in nature. Yet, although the majority of them went through numerous phases of use and rebuilding, they appear to have been largely demolished by the end of the 14th century (*ibid*, 28). Despite this change in usage, however, a number of activities continued to be undertaken in the area; the pre-existing barge channel remained open, and a number of clay lined pits or tanks were created (*ibid*, 31-3). These were not backfilled until the 16th century, when the channel appears to have finally been abandoned and the area given over to horticultural use. In contrast to this complex sequence, less intensive Medieval activity appears to have occurred to the rear of the properties situated on the opposite, northeastern side of Bridge Street at

this time. The evaluation undertaken at the ADC Theatre site in 2002, for example, revealed only a single contemporary pit, with the dominant features at this time consisting of a series of ditches aligned both northwest to southeast and northeast to southwest (Whittaker 2002, 5-9). Although it was suggested that one of the largest of these features may equate to the King's Ditch itself (*ibid*, 10), which is known to have lain in close proximity to the site, this is in fact likely to have been located somewhat further to the northeast. The ditches may thus represent subdivisions of a large yard area situated some way to the rear of the main frontage property.

Unfortunately, even less information relating to the activities undertaken during the Medieval period was recovered from the various excavations conducted within the grounds of Trinity College (a situation which is probably attributable, at least in part, to the fact that the predecessors of this institution – King's Hall and Michael House – had been founded on the site in early 14th century; *cf.* Willis & Clark 1886 II, 389-462). At the Trinity Master's Lodge site, for example, basmenting had almost entirely removed any post-14th century deposits, although substantial clunch and mortar foundations of 16th century date were observed. These most probably relate to the initial construction of the Master's Lodge, which was built in 1550-54 (Alexander 1998, 11). To the east, during the Trinity Gateway excavation, several temporary gravel yard surfaces of 13th to 15th century date were identified, although it appeared that no other activities had been undertaken. Subsequently, in 16th or 17th century, this area became sealed beneath the bank of formal College garden (Evans 1991, 3-4). Finally, a somewhat more detailed sequence was recovered during work undertaken at the Angel Court site. "Large amounts" of 14th and 15th century pottery – plus two worked bone pins – were recovered from 'garden soil' deposits encountered in the 1996 evaluation trench (Regan 1996, 5-6). However, during the 16th century an ancillary structure was constructed in this location (as represented by a floor surface and a posthole), which sealed and partially truncated the preceding layers (*ibid*). During the subsequent excavation phase at this site, a very similar sequence was also encountered. A 14th to 15th century 'horticultural soil' deposit was identified, which contained a number of shallow trenches that may have comprised bedding features (Regan 1997, 4). Yet this was truncated in the 16th century by the construction of a large, square, vertically-sided timber-lined pit which measured 2.1m wide by 2.16m deep. Although the precise function of this latter feature is unclear, the presence of an inner clay lining (*ibid*, 6-8) indicates that it was intended to hold water, and it may thus have been employed in soaking or retting activities.

Discussion

It is clear that the St. John's Triangle site comprised an area of some status during the Medieval period; indeed, by the late 13th century the majority of the properties at the site had been incorporated into two main 'blocks', which were possessed by members of some of the wealthiest families in the town. The evident prestige of the area at this time may in part be attributable to the status of many of its former residents; the eponymous stone buildings which gave rise to the name of the 'Stone Hostel' property, for example, are very likely to have been those originally inhabited by Isaac and his son Samuel when the area lay at the heart of the late 12th to early 13th century Jewry (see further the Saxo-Norman discussion, above). But by the late 13th century, it would appear that Triangle represented a prime piece of urban 'real estate', which – far from being occupied by one or two prestigious households – was subdivided and

sublet to an ever increasing number of tenants. Many of these latter individuals were probably themselves relatively wealthy, as both the artefactual and animal bone assemblages recovered from Medieval deposits indicate that relatively high status consumption patterns continued throughout the period. The economy of the area appears to have been predominately mercantile at this time, as fourteen shops are known to have existed within the 'Rokeleshalle' property alone in 1325; unfortunately, however, the precise nature and variety of commercial activities that were undertaken at the site remains unclear. Although some of these numerous shops could have been craft-related, no direct evidence for this was recovered. Many may of course have been principally distribution-based, involving no direct on-site production (and thus leaving little archaeological trace). In this context, it is certainly notable that by the beginning of the 13th century Cambridge acted as the leading inland port in the county, through which goods and services were disseminated to many of the surrounding regional towns (Cam 1934, 43). Such flourishing trade was made possible because, during the Medieval period, tidal waters flowed across the Wash as far as Waterbeach, allowing sea-going vessels passage along the Ouse and then the Cam all the way into the town itself (Taylor 1999, 136; Chisholm 2007, 175-8).

During this period, therefore, Cambridge comprised an economically thriving regional market town, whose wealth attracted a number of religious houses to the area; these establishments in turn stimulated the foundation of the university in the early 13th century. In common with the majority of Medieval market towns, a large number of properties in the centre of Cambridge are likely to have been associated with commercial activities, including both the production and distribution of a wide range of goods and services (*cf.* Schofield & Vince 2003, 151-74). In addition, organised trading activity almost certainly took place at the main dockside areas, such as the Quayside to the north and the numerous hythes along the river to the west, as well as at the two 'official' market areas that are known to have existed within the town during this period; the main marketplace, situated some 400m to the south of St. John's Triangle, was established by the mid 12th century at the latest, whilst a second (potentially much older) marketplace also existed at Ashwykeston, on Castle Hill, during at least the earliest part of this period (Bryan & Wise 2002, 73-4). Despite the existence of such areas, however, the current site – being almost equidistant between the two formal marketplaces, and able to take advantage of traffic flowing along both of the major roads of the period – was ideally situated to have formed a third 'node' of intensive mercantile activity. Thus, whilst in no way comparable in scale to the official retail spaces, the St. John's Triangle area may well have comprised a rather more 'exclusive' mercantile district, perhaps associated with the trade in higher status materials. This is potentially reflected in the rents that were charged on certain of the properties at the site, which included a pound of cumin in 1279 (*Rot. Hund.*, 390-1) and cloves in 1294 (*SJC D17.4*), as well as by the presence of the anthropomorphic knife handle in **F.439**; the recovery of a pepper corn from a 12th or 13th century context during the 2006 excavation at the site (Cessford 2006, 24) also supports this interpretation.

Summary

Following (and potentially preceding) the expulsion of the Jewish community from Cambridge in 1275, the Triangle site appears to have become the focus of relatively high-status mercantile activity. Indeed, from the early 13th century onwards, wealthy

gentile landowners had gradually acquired the majority of properties at the site; by the beginning of the 14th century these had largely been incorporated into two principal ‘blocks’, which consisted of ‘The Stone Hostel’ to the east and ‘Rokeleshalle’ to the west. Notably, in 1325, the latter block contained fourteen associated shops, thus demonstrating the central role played by trade and commerce in the economic prosperity of the area. In addition, however, it is also clear that relatively high-status domestic occupation also continued at the site at this time, as is indicated by both the material culture and diet of the inhabitants (although it is unlikely that the wealthy landowners were themselves residents). This mixture of commercial and domestic activity, along with the increasing density of occupation and the resultant subdivision of the area, was to establish a pattern that has continued right up until the present day.

The Post-Medieval period (16th and 17th centuries)

Summary of archaeological activity

Two key themes can be identified within the Post-Medieval pattern of archaeological activity at the site. The first theme relates to a change in the dominant method of demarcating the boundaries between different properties, as these were increasingly defined by walls as opposed to ditches or fences during the 16th and especially 17th centuries. This change is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the construction of wall [2213] in Area 3, which defined the boundary between N^o.s 67 and 68 Bridge Street. [2213] comprises the most closely datable wall on the site, as a copper-alloy rose farthing token of Charles I (dated 1636–44) was embedded within its mortar. The deposition of such a coin, which is most likely to have been deliberately ‘placed’, serves not only to refine the chronology of the associated brick fabric (TZ15), but also to indicate the growing importance attached to the erection of more solid and impermeable boundaries during this period. The second theme is associated with the general decline of pit digging activity during Post-Medieval times. Although there are notable exceptions to this pattern (such as F.400 in Area 4, for example), in general fewer pits were inserted in the 16th and 17th centuries than had been created during earlier periods at the site. This decline was probably the result of a number of interdependent causes; the intensive nature of earlier gravel extraction, for example, combined with the increasingly raised ground level by the beginning of the 16th century, would have effectively precluded further quarrying activity. In addition, changing methods of depositional practice – such as the removal of a certain amount of refuse for disposal elsewhere, outside the boundary of the town – may also have contributed to a reduction in the necessity for further rubbish pits at the site.

It is also notable that more extensive building remains were encountered during this period than in any of the preceding phases at the site, although these primarily remained limited to ancillary structures (examples of which were investigated in Areas 1, 2 and 3). These buildings, all of which appear to have been timber-framed in nature, were identified via the presence of remnant clunch or brick-built sill walls. Significantly, the structural evidence recovered from the St. John’s Triangle site closely parallels the much more extensive building sequence that was encountered during recent excavations undertaken at Bradwell’s Court, which is situated further to the south on the suburban outskirts of Cambridge (*cf.* Newman 2007). The earliest structures to be identified at this latter site, which are likely to have been 11th or 12th century in origin, appear to have been constructed from rows of simple earth-fast

posts (and are thus directly comparable to the Saxo-Norman building previously identified above in Area 4). By the 14th century, however, new structures were being erected that employed post-in-trench and earth-fast sill beam techniques. These were then superseded in the 15th century when stone-built sill walls were first introduced, in some cases replacing the earlier structural form. Finally, many of the structures were rebuilt in brick from the 16th century onwards (*ibid*, 63-5). This represents a very common sequence that has also been identified in other towns and cities across Britain, such as Norwich, Kings Lynn, Taunton and Exeter (Schofield & Vince 2003, 104-9).

In Cambridge, however, this was found to have been by no means a strictly unilinear progression. At Bradwell's Court, for example, more than one building technique had been used contemporaneously within a single structure, whilst supposedly 'outdated' techniques had also been employed well outside of their nominal position in the sequence. This general pattern also seems to have been strongly paralleled at St. John's Triangle (although it must be noted that fewer structures were investigated at this site, and that the structural sequence was thus less well represented). Nevertheless, all of the 16th century buildings that were encountered contained either brick or clunch-built sill walls; furthermore, both materials had been employed contemporaneously within different walls of 16th century *Workshop 2* in Area 3. In fact, the clearest distinction that can be drawn between the various structures whose remains encountered in these two locations concerns their use. For whilst the function of many of the structures at Bradwell's Court could not be accurately determined (Newman 2007, 64), many of those investigated at St. John's Triangle appear to have been strongly commercial in nature.

Perhaps most significant, in this respect, is the identification of three small-scale Post-Medieval metalworking workshops at the site; these consist of *Workshop 1* (of 15th to 16th century date) in Area 3, which was directly succeeded by *Workshop 2* (of 16th century date), and *Workshop 3* (of 16th to 17th century date), which was situated in Area 1. The relative proportions of the secondary iron smithing products recovered from these workshops reveal that small-scale specialist blacksmithing activities were being undertaken; there are indications of fairly high-temperature smithing procedures (in the form of melted hearth bases) and the use of sand as a flux during iron forging and welding operations (suggested by the presence of silicate slag droplets), whilst the dominance of spheroidal slag droplets – especially within the part-melted agglomeratic hearth bases – is suggestive of the high-temperature forging and welding of iron (see further the metalworking debris assessment report). It is also clear that very similar products were being produced contemporaneously in at least two separate parts of the site. These workshops may therefore represent part of a distinct 'Metalworking Quarter' where specialist as well as general blacksmithing, involving the production of both forged and welded iron products, was taking place. Indeed, further evidence of specialist artefact production is represented by the presence of what appears to be a vertical 'pit bosch' or quenching pit (**F.120**) located within the floor of *Workshop 3*, which is likely to have been situated in close proximity to the original hearth; a large amount of hammer-scale was encountered within an environmental sample taken from the floor deposits surrounding this feature.

The ground height at the end of this period varied between 9.6m+ OD in Area 1 and 8.92m+ OD in Area 4. This represents an increase of up to 1.1m in certain areas (most

especially Area 3), primarily as a result of the increasing prevalence and complexity of the structural sequence at the site.

Material culture and economy

A reasonably sized assemblage of Post-Medieval pottery (consisting of 1,281 sherds, weighing 38.32kg) was recovered from the site. This material primarily consists of local products, the majority of which were manufactured at Ely, along with imported German stonewares that are mainly 16th century in date, but continued in production into the 17th century. There are also small quantities of tin-glazed earthenware and glazed red earthenware that may have been imported from the Low Countries, along with more numerous domestic imitations of these fabrics, as well as several Staffordshire-type slipware vessels of types that originated during the 17th century although they had their *floruit* in the 18th century. This period therefore saw a major transition in the nature of the pottery in use at the site, although some wares (primarily those of a utilitarian nature) remained relatively unchanged. In fact, such a pattern appears to have been replicated on a national scale at this time, thus prompting allusions to a Post-Medieval ‘ceramic revolution’ (*cf.* Gaimster 1994; Gaimster & Neck 1997). This revolution is also reflected in the much wider variety of vessel forms that were in use at the site during this period, which included – alongside the continuing prevalence of jugs, bowls and jars – skillets, cisterns, pancheons, chaffing dishes, basting dishes, lids, ‘chicken feeders’, cups and tygs.

By far the largest and most significant group of Post-Medieval material was recovered from **F.400** in Area 4, which comprised a late 16th/early 17th century timber-lined refuse pit that was probably associated with a nearby inn or tavern:

Excluding residual material, a minimum of 46 ceramic vessels were recovered from this feature of which at least 15 consist of drinking vessels. A minimum of 16 late 16th and early 17th century clay tobacco pipes were also identified, including one stem fragment bearing ornate decoration in the form of a recurring diamond mark. As the earliest documentary evidence for clay pipe making in Cambridge does not occur until the mid 17th century, these items were most probably imported from London (see further the clay tobacco pipe assessment report). Furthermore, a minimum of three glass drinking vessels were also recovered, along with a worked bone knife handle and comb plate. A relatively large metalwork assemblage was also present: copper alloy items include a circular brooch or button, a probable book clasp, a decorated lace aiglet, a badly corroded buckle, six undiagnostic plate fragments and six pin fragments; iron artefacts include a complete tenter peg or latch rest, a pointed sheath chape, a mineralised knife handle, five blade fragments and 47 nails (which may have been derived from the decayed timber lining). In addition, 1663 animal bone fragments were present, along with several thousand fish bones; whilst the former assemblage is dominated by sheep, and accounts for 60% of all such bones recovered from Post-Medieval contexts, the latter is dominated by cod. Indeed, although a small number of eel and herring remains were identified, the emphasis within this group upon prepared, imported cod is almost without parallel nationally, barring the specialised examples of prepared cod found on the Mary Rose shipwreck of 1545. A considerable number of butchery marks were also observed upon these bones, which will greatly aid in the interpretation of contemporary processing methods. Therefore, although only *c.*50% of the feature was available for excavation, the assemblage recovered is of great importance in establishing the diet and material culture employed in a late 16th/early 17th century Cambridge tavern.

Also of interest are a group of at least six early 17th century Frechen jugs, five of which were bellarmines, which were recovered from [3064]/[3065] during a watching brief undertaken in Area 4. Remnants of at least three seals were present, including one marked with the initials NR and the date 1616 and a second bearing the coat of arms of the City of Amsterdam (*cf.* Gaimster 1997; see also Figure 36, below). These vessels almost certainly originated from the same establishment as the material deposited into near contemporary pit **F.400**.

In terms of metalwork, three illegible coins or jettons of probable 16th/17th century date and a copper-alloy rose farthing token of Charles I (dated 1636-44) were recovered from Post-Medieval contexts, along with 77 further copper-alloy artefacts. The identified items include three buckles, four plates, a brooch/buckle, a bookclasp and the remains of at least three lace aiglets and ten pins. Two lead/lead-alloy artefacts were also recovered, comprising a plate fragment and an irregular strip fragment. Finally, 178 iron artefacts were also retrieved. The identified items include an axe head, a crowbar, a hoe/rake, a strap hinge, a buckle, a tenter peg, a hoop, a key, a spur, a sheath chape, a socketed tool, two tubes/fittings, two knife handles and four knife blades. Important groups include tools and other artefacts associated with *Workshop 2* (represented by material derived from **F.267** and **F.274**) and the group inserted into 16th/17th century rubbish pit **F.400**.

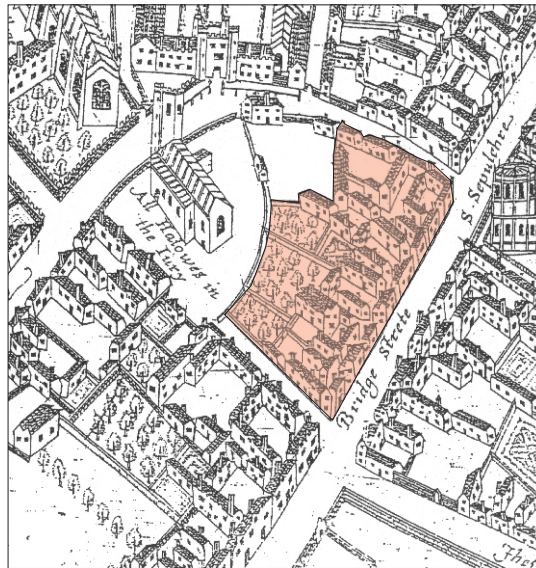
The Post-Medieval animal bone assemblage comprises the second largest stratified group from the site, and represents a mixture of bone waste from different stages of carcass processing. Bones from livestock species dominate the group; in terms of relative frequency, sheep is the most common species, followed by cattle and then pig. The basic pattern of relative importance is therefore similar to that recorded for the Medieval period, although the relative proportion of both cattle and pig is greater in this instance. Dog, cat, fallow deer, rabbit and brown rat have also been identified from the Post-Medieval assemblage, but together account for only a small proportion of the group. By way of contrast, bird bones are relatively common and account for a much larger percentage. Once again chicken is the most common avian species, and 17% of such bones are derived from immature birds; these probably represent capons fattened specifically for eating. Goose and duck are also fairly common, whilst less common bird species include pigeon, teal, partridge, small wader and passerine. A small number of sawn cattle metapodia were also recovered; these probably represent off-cuts from small-scale bone working activity, and were concentrated in Area 1.

Environmental evidence recovered from **F.400** reveals that cess material had been incorporated into this feature. Along with digested-looking bone fragments, numerous mineralised and un-transformed seeds from edible plants were identified; these include fig, raspberry and elder. Two further Post-Medieval features – **F.130**, which is located in Area 1, and **F.222**, which is located in Area 3 – also contained much smaller quantities of the same sort of materials, but appear to have been primarily utilised for the disposal non-organic refuse and hearth rake-out material. Indeed, some of the latter may perhaps have been derived from small domestic ovens such as **F.113** in Area 1 and **F.206** in Area 3. Although the precise function of these features remains unclear, the recovery of great-fen sedge straw from the latter suggests that it may have been utilised for bread making; during the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods East Anglia was the main producer of great fen-sedge, a favoured fuel in local bread ovens as it burns very quickly and intensively (*cf.* Rowel 1986).

Lyne 1574



Hamond 1592



Loggan 1688

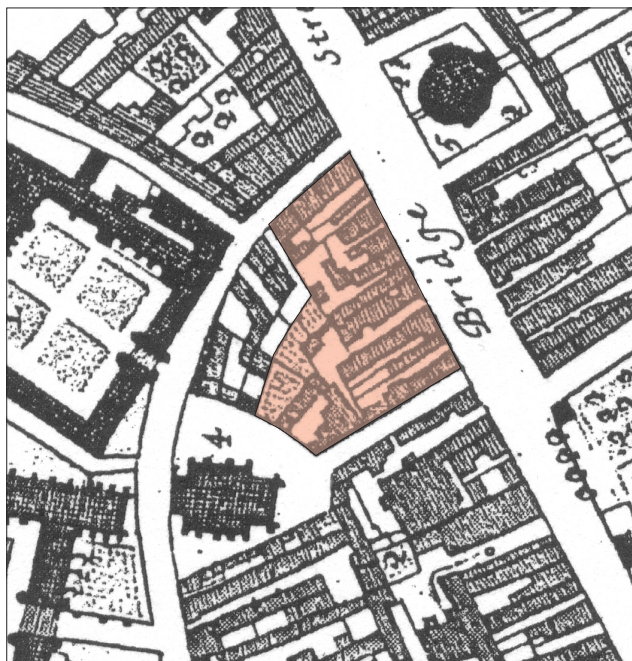


Figure 35: Post-Medieval historic map sequence.

Historical and archaeological background

Cartographic evidence

It is during the Post-Medieval period that cartographic information first becomes available as a viable resource, scaled plans of Cambridge only having been compiled from the late 16th century onwards (*cf.* Baggs & Bryan 2002). The earliest extant plan to depict the site is that of Lyne, which was drawn in 1574 (see Figure 35). Unfortunately, this is highly stylised in design and – although it clearly shows a number of buildings clustered along the two principal frontages – is not sufficiently detailed for any reliable conclusions to be drawn. Two subsequent plans, those of Braun in 1575 and Smith in 1588, are even more formulaic, and also contribute no useful information. The earliest map to depict the site in sufficient, as well as reliable, detail is therefore that of Hammond in 1592 (see Figure 35). His plan shows that each of the frontage properties situated along Bridge Street contained a number of individual buildings at this time, most probably corresponding to the mixture of domestic and commercial occupancy that has been identified archaeologically during this same period. Indeed, the smaller structures situated to the rear of these properties may well relate to workshops, or other craft-related buildings, such as those encountered in Areas 1 and 3 (which are themselves likely to have still been in existence when the plan was drawn). Aside from the various yard areas, some of which appear to have been exaggerated in size due to the perspective of the drawing, the area most notably lacking in occupation is the southwestern corner of the site. Although numerous tenants are known to have occupied this plot during the Medieval period (see further above), no buildings were depicted here in 1592.

Whilst this may perhaps represent an omission or simplification on the behalf of the cartographer, it is also possible that the function of the area had changed by the late 16th century; the plot may have become annexed as the garden of one or more frontage properties, for example. By 1688, however, when Loggan drew his plan (see Figure 35), the space had clearly been reoccupied. Indeed, a much more even spread of structures was depicted across the entire site at this time, with at least ten separate buildings fronting onto Bridge Street. This represents an average of around two large structures per property, and indicates the increasing density of occupation at the site during the Post-Medieval period. Notably, a number of small free-standing structures were again depicted to the rear of several properties, in much the same way as they had been in 1592; this indicates the continuation of the practice of undertaking craft-related activities in backyard areas during the 17th century. In addition, the vertical perspective that Loggan employed in his plan greatly aids in distinguishing the layout of the various plots he depicted; it is thus possible to distinguish the broad layout of the preceding Medieval properties within the palimpsest, although it would appear that these had become increasingly subdivided by 1688. (Indeed, it is notable that numerous complaints are known to have been made during this period with regard to the increasing subdivision of plots in the centre of the town). Whilst it may prove possible to reconstruct the complex histories of these various properties via documentary sources – the majority of the eastern ‘block’ is known to have passed into the ownership of St. John’s College during this period, for example, whilst that to the west was primarily owned by Corpus Christi College – such an extensive undertaking lies beyond the scope of the present report. It is notable, however, that the rather ‘void-like’ triangle in the centre of the site – which appears to have been

primarily occupied by gardens in 1688 – most probably corresponds to the location of the former cemetery of the Hospital of St John.

A wider context: other comparable Cambridge excavations

Few parallels to the rich Post-Medieval archaeology of the St. John's Triangle site have been encountered in the area immediately surrounding the present excavation. This dearth is at least in part attributable to the fact that many of the sites previously discussed in relation to the Saxo-Norman and Medieval development of the area – such as those located at St. John's College Chapel Court and Master's Garden, Trinity Master's Lodge, Trinity Gateway and Angel Court, for example – became fully incorporated into larger collegiate developments during this period, and were thus the focus of relatively little contemporary domestic or craft-related activity. The closest parallels are therefore to be found some way to the south of the current site, towards the opposite end of the High Street (the majority of which had been renamed Trumpington Street by this date).

The most directly comparable site is situated around 500m to the south of St. John's Triangle, at Hostel Yard, Corpus Christi College. Here, an archaeological excavation – consisting of three trenches, covering a combined total of $c.46\text{m}^2$ – was undertaken between August and November 2004 (Cessford 2004). This work revealed that, following on from limited activity during the 11th/12th to 14th centuries, the site became increasingly densely occupied from the late 14th century onwards. Activity eventually reached a peak during the 16th and early 17th centuries, when a number of large refuse pits were created; these were backfilled with substantial assemblages of domestic material. A minimum of eight such pits have been identified, ranging in size from 0.6m+ to 2.55m in diameter, and at least two appear to have been revetted (*ibid*, 18). As these features were primarily concentrated in Area 3, which appears to have formed the yard area of a relatively high-status property at this time, they potentially represent waste derived from a single Post-Medieval household. Alongside a wide range of organic remains, numerous near complete ceramic and glass vessels were also deposited, with the latter group including beakers, goblets, tankards/jugs and flasks (*ibid*, 49). The large assemblages that were recovered thus provide a valuable insight into the material culture of a 16th century Cambridge household. Furthermore, in addition to the disposal of domestic refuse at the site, contemporary industrial or craft-related activities also appear to have been undertaken. In Area 2, for example, at least six intercutting 16th century pits were identified that contained characteristic pale off-white clay linings; many of these linings were scorched, and primary deposits of ash were also encountered (*ibid*, 17-8). It therefore appears that some small-scale industrial process was being undertaken (possibly involving the heating of water), in which both the burnt shell and the three near complete jugs and cups that were recovered from these features were potentially involved. Although very similar pits of 15th and 16th century date were also encountered at the Bradwell's Court site (*cf.* Newman 2007, 36-7), no firm usage has yet been ascertained for the 'industrial' features identified at either of these sites.

Located some 60m to the north of the Hostel Yard site (and thus around 440m to the south of St. John's Triangle), excavations were also undertaken at Benet's Court in 1994-5 (*cf.* Edwards & Hall 1997). Although much less comparable to the former sites in terms of the range and scale of the activities that were being undertaken

during the Post-Medieval period (at which time Benet's Court appears to have remained a largely open-area 'yard' type space, situated to the rear of a small number of King's Street properties), at least one substantial group of early/mid 16th century pottery – consisting of a minimum of 26 complete or near complete vessels – was recovered from the site. This assemblage, which was deposited into a probable ditch/gully, may possibly have originated from the nearby Eagle Inn (*ibid*, 166-7). However, given the 'open' nature of both the site in general, and the specific feature into which the material was deposited in particular, the precise provenance of this assemblage is in no way clear; it is thus at least equally possible that the group represents a 'clearance' of domestic material derived from one of the adjacent King's Street properties.

Discussion

The Post-Medieval period represents the earliest phase from which standing buildings remain present at the St. John's Triangle site; 16th century elements survive within N^o. 69 Bridge Street, 17th century timber-framed elements are present within N^o. 70 Bridge Street and 17th century elements have also been identified within N^o. 1 All Saint's Passage (RCHM(E) 1959 II, 335-6). Of greatest relevance to the present report is the second of these structures, that at N^o. 70 Bridge Street, which is known to have functioned as an inn or tavern throughout most (if not all) of its early existence (*ibid*, 336; Daniel 1984, 185). The late 16th century to early 17th century material recovered from **F.400** in Area 4, along with the discrete dump of early 17th century bellarmines in **[3064]** and **[3065]** that was discovered nearby, are most likely to have originated from here (yet it is important to note that at least one other tavern – 'The Dolphin Inn', which was located on the opposite side of All Saint's Passage – is also known to have existed in the near vicinity at this time, whilst the bake-house and fish-house of St. John's College had been established in close proximity at the 'Pentionary of St. John's' by 1581; Willis & Clark 1886 II, 247-8). By far the most probable source remains the Bridge Street establishment, however, early names for which included 'The Wild Man' and 'The Flying Stag' (Daniel 1984, 185). This would indicate that the standing structure is most probably late 16th as opposed to 17th century in origin, an idea which is supported both by the nature of its construction (Alison Dickens *pers comm*) and by its probable depiction in Hammond's plan of 1592 (see Figure 35). Furthermore, the area from which these deposits were recovered is known to have comprised the 'garden' of this same tavern by 1817 (*SJC D 136.1.37*), and is likely to have been attached to the establishment from the time of its initial foundation (see Figure 36). Notably, this space also appears to have included the former cemetery of the Hospital of St John, which must have gone out of use at some time prior to the foundation of St. John's College in 1511.

Although very little work has yet been undertaken on the history of inns and taverns in Cambridge – unlike in nearby Ely, for example (*cf.* Ashton 2007) – a number of documents connected with this property are known to survive within the St. John's College archives, and would permit a more thorough analysis of its history to be attempted. Such an undertaking would be worthwhile because of the quantity and quality of Post-Medieval tavern waste that was recovered from the site. In general, this material is typical of that recovered from other contemporary English establishments; the pottery assemblage is dominated by drinking and serving vessels, for example, whilst a small number of drinking glasses and clay tobacco pipes are

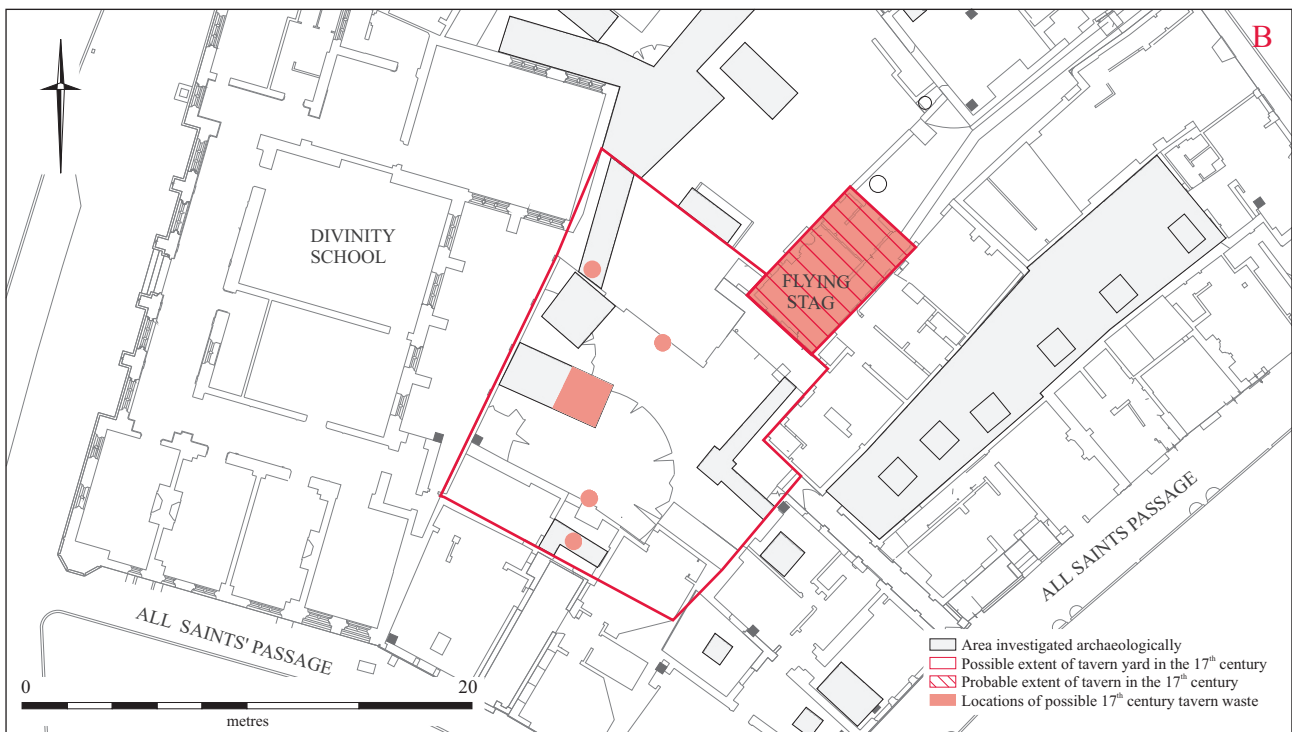


Figure 36: Two of the Bellarmines recovered from [3064]/[3065] (A) and the distribution of 17th century tavern-type waste within Area 4 (B).

also present. This is strikingly similar to the early 17th century tavern deposit that was recovered from a stone-lined cess pit at N^{o.}'s 7-8 Broad Street Reading in 2002, which contained a group of near complete ceramic serving vessels, four glass drinking vessels and a small group of clay pipes (Scott & Hardy 2007, 8-10). Yet the St. John's Triangle material is rendered distinct by the large amount of food waste, most especially fish bones, which accompanied the deposit inserted into **F.400**. This group thus provides a valuable insight into the diet of the tavern's customers, and – in the case of the large cod assemblage, in particular – provides an excellent opportunity to examine the nature and extent of contemporary importation networks (see further the fish bone assessment report). Therefore, given the almost unparalleled size of the latter assemblage, along with the well-dated nature of its context, this material is potentially of national significance.

Overall during this period, a marked economic shift towards a semi-industrial/craft-based focus appears to have occurred at the site (as is most clearly exemplified by the presence of at least three Post-Medieval metalworking workshops). It is important to note, however, that such craft-based activities – which typically generate a large number of highly distinctive associated deposits – are amongst the easiest to identify archaeologically, and that other forms of commercial activity may thus be under-represented. Furthermore, it was only during the Post-Medieval period that ancillary structures such as these workshops were first constructed within the areas investigated, meaning that if similar practices had been undertaken in different locations during earlier periods they may well have escaped detection. Nevertheless, the scale and extent of the craft-based activities encountered during this period demonstrates that they played a significant role in the economic life of the Triangle at this time. Additionally, in association with this apparent shift in focus, it is interesting to note the absence of identifiably high-status material culture and dietary remains within contemporary refuse deposits, in contrast to the pattern established during preceding periods. Given the limited scale of the investigations, however, no concrete conclusions may be drawn from these observations; for example, whilst the decreased density of refuse material encountered during this period could perhaps be attributable to an increase in the number of commercial as opposed to domestic tenants at the site, it may alternatively reflect a wider change in depositional practice such as the beginnings of organised rubbish collection within town.

If a broad shift in economic focus did occur at the site at this time, however, it would certainly fit well within the contemporary pattern of the town as a whole, as it has been observed that during the Post-Medieval period the economic prosperity of Cambridge largely shifted away from the preceding Medieval focus upon river-borne trade (*e.g.* Bryan 1999, 93; Taylor 1999, 136). This was at least in part a result of the gradual silting-up of the river channel, which – combined with large-scale drainage of the surrounding fenland – meant that by the 17th century larger sea-going vessels were prevented from making the journey down the Cam and loads had instead to be transported via barges from King's Lynn (*cf.* Chisholm 2003; Chisholm 2007). It is therefore possible that the earlier focus upon mercantile (and thus probably trade-based) activity at the St. John's Triangle site during the Medieval period gave way to a more 'service-based' economy during Post-Medieval times, although the extent to which this change was reflected in the broader status of the area remains unclear.

Summary

Broadly speaking, the Post-Medieval period at St. John's Triangle represents a continuation of the preceding Medieval pattern of mixed commercial and domestic occupation at the site. A potential shift in economic focus appears to have occurred at this time, however, leading to a new emphasis upon semi-industrial/craft-based activities. Thus, in addition to numerous domestic refuse deposits, three metalworking workshops have been identified, along with evidence of bone-working activity and – most significantly of all – dumps of refuse material derived from a contemporary inn or tavern. In particular, the fish bone assemblage that was recovered from pit **F.400** in Area 4, which was most probably associated with this establishment, is potentially of national importance. It is also during this period that contemporary cartographic sources first become available as a viable resource. The historic map sequence demonstrates that the Triangle site became increasingly densely occupied during the 16th and 17th centuries, with most properties containing a variety of structures of differing sizes. These buildings appear to have been utilised for both domestic and commercial purposes, and surviving remnants indicate that some (especially those located along the principal Bridge Street frontage) were of relatively high-status construction.

The Modern period (18th century to present)

Summary of archaeological activity

The changing patterns of archaeological activity that were first noted during the Post-Medieval period – such as the widespread replacement of boundary ditches with walls, and a general reduction in pit digging activity – can be seen to have continued, if not increased, over the course of the succeeding two centuries. Indeed, not a single ditch or fenceline of 18th to 20th century date was encountered (in contrast to an ever increasing number of boundary walls), and very few pits were found to be present. Furthermore, when such features were encountered they often appeared to have been created for a very specific (and often readily identifiable) purpose, unlike the frequently 'undiagnostic' pits of earlier periods. Finally, it is also important to note that, with very few exceptions, the majority of standing buildings at the site were constructed during this period; this means that the Modern structural sequence can also be understood in much greater detail than that of any other period.

The ground height at the end of this period varied between 10.12m OD in Area 3 and 9.56m+ OD in Area 4. This represents an increase of up to 1.07m from Post-Medieval times although, in contrast to earlier periods, the build-up primarily consisted of deliberately introduced levelling/ground raising deposits (many associated with garden-related activity) as opposed to discarded refuse material or abandoned structural remains.

Material culture and economy

Although a relatively large amount of Modern material was recovered from the St. John's Triangle site (including 3,653 sherds of pottery, weighing 113.5kg) this was almost entirely derived from a small number of features, the majority of which appear to have been associated with commercial as opposed to domestic premises. Indeed, by



Figure 37: Elements of the assemblages derived from early 18th century F.434 (A) and late 18th century F.553 (B).

the beginning of the 18th century almost all of the domestic waste generated at the site appears to have been removed for disposal elsewhere, and those assemblages that were encountered consist either of material that was reused for a secondary purpose (such as providing drainage in the base of a planting bed) or was disposed of opportunistically (such as the backfill inserted into a cellar or foundation trench). The main groups consist of:

Firstly, a moderately sized group of material was recovered from bedding features **F.405**, **F.407**, **F.433** and **F.434** in Area 4, which appears to have been deposited in *c.*1730. These beds contained some 71 ceramic vessels, which primarily consisted tankards and other service wares (see Figure 37, **A**), along with at least 25 clay tobacco pipes. In addition, a minimum of 21 glass vessels were also recovered. Of particular interest within this latter assemblage is an otherwise complete early 18th century onion/mallet bottle from which the seal has been deliberately removed; this may represent an attempt to conceal the provenance of an illegally obtained bottle, although – since the bottle would have been rendered useless by this action – it is perhaps more likely that the seal was ‘collected’ after the bottle’s active use had ended. Part of a double sided antler comb and an ivory book pointer were also present, along with a copper alloy plate fragment, a possible iron barrel padlock and a hooked iron object. The animal bone assemblage recovered from this feature primarily consisted of sheep bones and was thus very similar in constitution to the earlier assemblage derived from Post-Medieval pit **F.400**, which stratigraphically preceded it. Indeed, it is highly likely that both groups are comprised of tavern waste discarded from the same (or possibly a succeeding) establishment.

Of much greater significance, however, is the very large assemblage of material that was incorporated into cellar backfill deposit **F.553** in *c.*1775. This included at least 288 ceramic vessels (a number of which bore either names or initials on their bases, which will greatly aid in establishing the provenance of this material), at least 68 glass vessels (including 22 drinking glasses) and a minimum of six clay tobacco pipes, one bearing the previously unrecognised slogan *PARKER / for ever, / Huzzah* (see further the Modern pottery, glass and clay tobacco pipe assessment reports). In addition, a worked bone button, ten glass beads and four fragments of mineralised textile were identified, along with seven copper alloy vessel fragments, a minimum of five copper alloy pins, two fragments of lead window came, four fragments from a probable iron fire surround and an iron blade fragment. A relatively large animal bone assemblage was also recovered from this feature, which is characterised by a large number of cattle foot bones (84% of the total for this period), a reasonable number of sheep bones and a small number of chicken, goose, duck, rabbit and hare bones. This deposit therefore contains a mixture of both table waste and either butchery or tanning waste, along with what appears to be the clearance of a very large number of glass and ceramic vessels. The initial assessment of these latter groups – which are primarily comprised of serving wares and drinking vessels (see Figure 37, **B**) – indicates that the assemblage as a whole most probably originated from a nearby coffee-house (see further the Modern pottery and glass assessment reports).

A moderately sized group of material was also recovered from **[3063]**, the backfill of the construction cut for a small secondary structure that abutted the St. John’s College Music School, during a watching brief undertaken in Area 4. The deposit principally consisted of pottery, with only a small amount of additional clay pipe, glass and animal bone, and was most probably deposited when the schoolroom was constructed in 1874. In total a minimum of 83 ceramic vessels were recovered, the bulk of which relate to dining and food storage/preparation. There is also a smaller amount of material related to tea drinking, gardening, domestic activities and writing. Distinctive elements of the assemblage include a plate bearing the name of Eton College, an imported jar of French mustard and a large number of Willow pattern vessels; notably, no materials relating to alcohol consumption, medicine or personal hygiene – which commonly occur in

assemblages of this date – were present. Given both its location and the nature of its composition, therefore, it appears likely that the group represents an opportunistic medium-scale clearance of material linked to the St. John's College Music School.

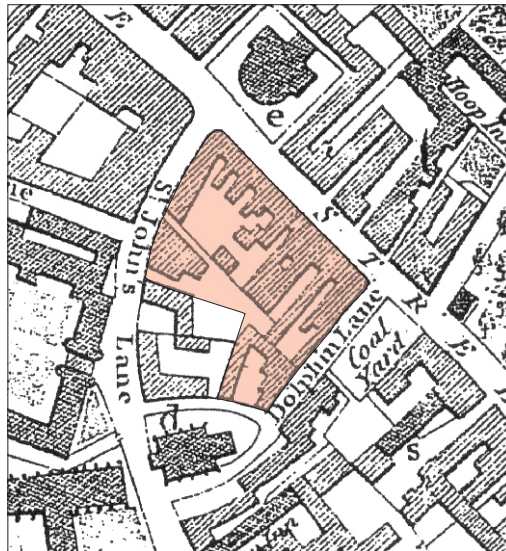
Finally, a much smaller group of material was recovered from **F.200** (a late 19th/early 20th century bedding trench) and **[2047]** (a contemporary garden soil deposit) in Area 3. A minimum of 29 ceramic vessels were recovered. Although rather limited in size, this group is of particular significance as a considerable number of the vessels are marked with the names of Colleges and/or mid 19th century College cooks; indeed, whilst dominated by material derived from a single service associated with the Hudson family at Trinity College, the marked wares in fact relate to a number of different cooks working at a range of Colleges. Eleven complete or near complete glass bottles were also recovered from these deposits; these are late 19th and early 20th century in date, and indicate that the associated ceramic vessels may well have been retained for several decades prior to their deposition. The animal bone recovered from these features is characterised by a large number of bird bones and a small number of sheep, rabbit, hare and fish bones. The general character of this material suggests that it represents table waste, and it is unlikely to have travelled very far from the point of consumption. This group therefore appears to represent a dump of domestic material, in contrast to the commercial nature of the two preceding assemblages.

A preliminary comparison between the animal bone assemblages associated with the early 18th century inn or tavern (**F.434**, etc) and the late 18th century coffee-house (**F.553**) suggests that meat and fish consumption was quite similar at both establishments, and the organic remains recovered from these features are also highly comparable. Figs, raspberries, strawberries, elder and grapes were identified in the environmental residues from both establishments, although the latter were markedly more common in **F.553**, which also contained a number of rose seeds that may possibly have been derived from rose-hip jam or preserve. In general, the animal bone groups recovered from stratified Modern contexts were dominated by livestock species; cattle and sheep bones are equally dominant, whilst pig is present in much lower frequencies. Less common mammals include dog, hare and rabbit. Bird bones are dominated by chicken (which comprises 66% of the identified material), whilst less common birds included goose, duck, pheasant, pigeon and partridge.

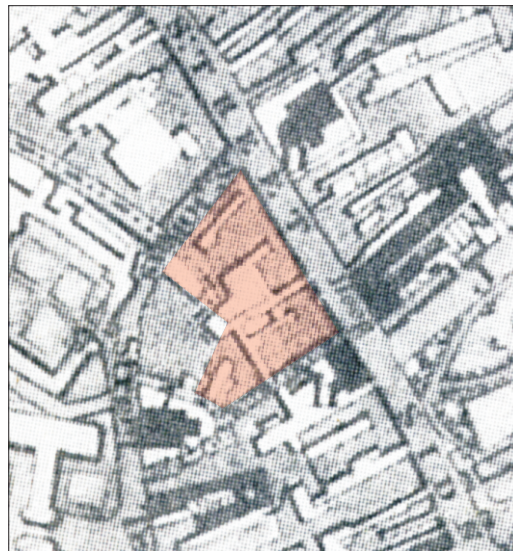
Historical and cartographical background

Following on from Loggan's plan of 1688, three historic maps – those of Custance in 1798, Baker in 1830 and the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, which was surveyed in 1885 – chart the continuing development of St. John's Triangle during the Modern period, which has culminated in the 23 separate properties that exist at the site today (see Figures 38 and 39). The earliest of the three maps, that of Custance, shows few notable differences from the plan which Loggan had compiled over a hundred years earlier (see further above). Although there are no longer any gaps depicted between the buildings situated along the Bridge Street frontage, and fewer subdivisions exist within the interior space of the site, it is not clear whether these differences reflect true developments in the architectural form of the area or simply result from stylistic differences in the manner of its representation. By 1830, however, it is clear that a number of significant developments had taken place (see Figure 38). Baker's map reveals that many of the 18th century yard areas had been infilled by this date, with large 'blocks' of buildings essentially separating the site into four densely built-up quarters. Whilst his depiction is also highly stylised, and does not differentiate

Custance 1798



Baker 1830



1st Edition OS 1886

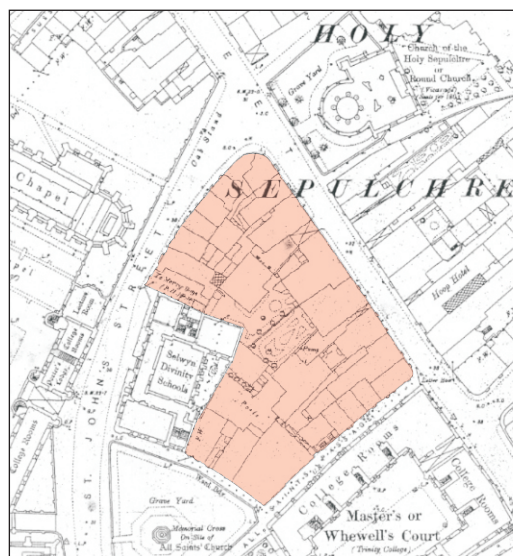


Figure 38: Modern historic map sequence.



Figure 39: Modern properties at St. John's Triangle.

individual buildings or property plots, it does indicate that the late 18th and early 19th centuries were witness to an important period of change.

This is confirmed by the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885, which for the first time accurately represented every building and property division at the site (see Figure 38). Although some important additions and extensions had been inserted by this date – the most significant being the Selwyn Divinity School, situated in the southeast corner of the site – the essential layout closely mirrors that depicted in 1830. One of the most notable features of the properties that are thus revealed is the marked spatial separation between the largest and most prestigious buildings – most of which are located along the Bridge Street frontage – and the smallest and most subdivided plots, the majority of which are likely to have contained shops or other commercial premises. The latter are primarily sited along All Saint's Passage and St. John's Street, and their positions may well represent the formalisation of a pattern of mercantile activity which stretches back into the Medieval period.

Usefully, a large number of the structures that were depicted in these historic maps remain standing at the site, and information regarding both their nature and their date is contained within the desktop assessment and standing buildings report that were compiled prior to the area's redevelopment (Herring & Slatcher 2003; Dixon & Herring 2003). These studies reveal that almost all of the standing buildings in the Triangle were constructed during the late 18th or early 19th centuries, thus corroborating the changing form of the area depicted in the cartographic sources at this time. Many were of sufficient quality that they have since been Grade II listed, denoting their local and occasionally national significance; this includes all of the buildings situated along All Saint's passage – comprising N^o's 1 and 2, plus N^o's 4 to 7, the latter five of which are of early 19th century construction – as well as those located on St. John's Road – comprising N^o's 11 to 17, all of which are 18th century in origin with the exception of N^o 12, which was constructed during the 19th century. In addition, N^o's 66 to 69 and N^o's 71 to 73 Bridge Street are also listed; each of these structures was initially built during the late 18th century with the exception of N^o 69, which contains Post-Medieval elements, and N^o 73, which was constructed during the early 19th century (Herring & Slatcher 2003, 15-16; Dixon & Herring 2003, 30-44). A small but significant number of structures at the site have not been listed, however.

Prime amongst these is the tavern at N^o 70 Bridge Street, the Post-Medieval elements of which (previously discussed above) were rebuilt and extended during the 18th and 19th centuries (RCHM 1959 II, 336). By the mid 18th century this establishment was known as 'The Royal Oak' and by the mid 19th century it became 'The Freemason's Arms', although by the end of that century it had been transformed into a private residence and was renamed 'Lindum House' (RCHM(E) 1959 II, 336; Daniel 1984, 185). As has previously been noted above, Area 4 comprised the garden of this tavern by 1817 (*SJC D 136.1.37*), and had probably done so throughout the full period of its existence; the early 18th century tavern waste recovered from **F.405**, **F.407**, **F.433** and **F.434** in Area 4 is therefore very likely to have been derived from this source. The commercial life of N^o 70 Bridge Street may well have ended when the St. John's College Music School was established immediately beside it in 1874, as Lindum House appears to have become the schoolmaster's residence at this time (Dixon & Herring 2003, 37). Although the College had been educating choristers since the 16th

century, the 'Old Schoolroom' (which is un-numbered, as well as unlisted) represents the earliest trace of the school's presence within the Triangle site itself. However, soon after its construction – with which the group of material recovered from [3063] appears to have been associated – the schoolroom was partially truncated by the erection of the Selwyn Divinity School.

This latter building was constructed to a revived 'Queen Anne' design by the architect Basil Champneys, and was completed in 1879 (*cf.* Willis & Clark 1886 III, 229-40; Rupp 1981, 424). Prior to its erection, in the area "between All Saints Passage and the new Whewell's Court of Trinity College on the other side, and a hostelry known as the 'Merry Boys Inn', were a group of buildings known as the Pentionary of St. John's: a bakery, stables and dwelling houses" (Rupp 1981, 422). These structures had served as additional accommodation for students studying at St. John's College, and were first documented in the late 16th century (Willis & Clark 1886 II, 247-8). Originally meaning "a place of penitential discipline or punishment for ecclesiastical offences" (Oxford English Dictionary), the term 'pentionary' may well have been employed ironically to this area by its residents. Despite the demolition of these buildings in the late 19th century, however, the Triangle continued to provide housing for members of the College throughout the Modern period; indeed, by the close of the 19th century St. John's had purchased the majority of the site (*cf.* HMSO 1874 III). In this regard, one of the most significant residents of the area during the 20th century was Glyn Daniel, who became Disney Professor of Archaeology between 1974 and 1981. In 1945, when Daniel was a junior lecturer at St. John's College, he took up residence above the Merryboys' Inn and in 1955 he moved into Lindum House (which he renamed 'The Flying Stag') when the Music School was transferred to new premises on Grange Road (Daniel 1984, 185). The former schoolroom became his office, from which he edited the journal *Antiquity* for many years, and he died at the house in 1986 (*cf.* Renfrew 2004). The upper garden soil deposits encountered in Area 3 primarily relate to Daniel's tenure at the site.

Overall, it is clear that the pattern of joint commercial and domestic occupation – which had probably first been established at the site during the Saxo-Norman period – continued throughout the 18th to 20th centuries, although the focus upon industrial and craft-based activities prevalent during Post-Medieval times appears to have abated. Known commercial tenants at the site in 1873, for example, included a robemaker at N^o. 3 All Saint's Passage and a printseller at N^o. 4, whilst N^o. 66 Bridge Street contained both a bakery and a watchmaker's establishment, N^o. 67 Bridge Street contained a livery stable and N^o. 68 Bridge Street a further shop; the domestic residence at N^o. 1 All Saints Passage was occupied by the Fellow's Butler of St. John's College at this time (HMSO 1874 III, 371). The presence of such tenants indicates that the Triangle remained a relatively genteel area during this period and, as a significant number of documents relating to these properties have been preserved within the St. John's College archives, it would be possible to reconstruct in some detail the history of the site between c.1700 and the present day (although such an undertaking clearly lies beyond the scope of the present report).

Discussion

As has been noted above, the archaeology of the Modern period at St. John's Triangle is dominated by the recovery of several discrete assemblages that were associated

with a small number of primarily commercial establishments. These groups thus provide information regarding some of the specific types of activities that were being undertaken in certain properties at this time, as well as indications of the status of the participants, the extent of contemporary trade networks and the nature of Modern depositional practices. The material recovered from bedding features **F.405**, **F.407**, **F.433** and **F.434**, for example, provides insights into the material culture employed within an 18th century tavern, whilst that recovered from foundation trench [3063] illustrates elements of the material potentially associated with a 19th century music school. By far the most important such group, however, is the assemblage that was derived from late 18th century cellar backfilling event **F.553**. This is associated with a coffee-house, one of the most significant types of establishment of the period, and is notable for the quantity, quality and range of material that was recovered; the group therefore forms the basis of a small case study, below.

The St. John's Triangle coffee-house (Richard Newman & Andrew Hall)

The important role played coffee-houses in the social, political and economic life of the 17th and 18th centuries has been increasingly recognized by historians over the past fifty years (*e.g.* Ellis 1956; Lillywhite 1963; Ellis 2004; Cowan 2005; Ellis 2006). Following the introduction of coffee to England in the mid 17th century, such establishments proliferated rapidly and soon became strongly associated with the dissemination of literature in both newspaper and pamphlet form, the latter often covering a wide range of academic and political subjects (Ellis 2004, 68-74; Cowan 2005, 172-3; Ellis 2006, xv-xxx). Indeed, so close was this association that in the mid 18th century Dr Johnson defined the coffee-house as “a place of entertainment where coffee is sold, and the guests are supplied with news-papers” (Johnson 1755). In London, especially, certain houses also became the venues from which specific types of business (such as stock-trading) were developed, arranged and conducted. Although coffee-houses were established in towns across England during the later 17th century (*cf.* Ellis 2004, 75-84), outside London the two places most strongly associated with these establishments were the university towns of Oxford and Cambridge (although this may be due at least in part to the greater survival of contemporary documents within the universities archives). However, whilst brief summaries of the history of Cambridge coffee-houses have been attempted in the past (*cf.* Johnson 1928; Reeve 1935; Porter 1968), the subject has received nothing like the degree of attention that it has in either London (Lillywhite 1963) or Oxford (Aubertin-Potter & Bennett 1987). Indeed, the primary source for Cambridge establishments remains Aytoun Ellis’s brief account (1956, 185-9), which is now over fifty years old.

A total of fifteen coffee-houses are known to have existed in Cambridge during the period c.1664 to 1815 (see Table 2, below). In addition to the formal coffee-houses, there were also several ‘coffee-rooms’ set up within existing inns and taverns; these included Sun’s (run by Jacob Brittain until 1783), The Rose, The Cardinal’s Cap and The Mitre (*ibid.*, 188). Although single items derived from two of these latter establishments – Sun’s and The Rose, both of which were situated in close proximity to the Triangle site – were present within the cellar assemblage the majority of the marked vessels relate either to *WC* (nine vessels) or *Jane Clapham* (three vessels), with *WC* most probably corresponding to Jane’s husband William Clapham (see Figure 40). The group can therefore be linked with some confidence to ‘Clapham’s’

coffee-house, the first known reference to which occurred in the Student Magazine in 1751:

*I rise about nine, get to breakfast by ten,
Blow a tune on my Flute, or perhaps make a Bow;
Read a play till eleven, or cock my lac'd hat,
Then step to my Neighb'rs till Dinner to chat.
Dinner over, to Tom's or to **Clapham's** I go
The news of the town so impatient to know...
(as quoted in Ellis 1956, 189).*

Coffee-house name	Location	Known dates
Kirk's	?	1664+
Greek's	?	c.1700+
The Loyal Old Coffee House	Great St. Mary's parish	1730+
The Johnian	All Saints Yard	1740+
Tom's	?	1740's-50's
The Theatre Coffee House	Trinity Street	1750+
<i>Clapham's</i>	<i>All Saints Passage</i>	<i>c.1745-1775</i>
Delaport's	St Andrew's Street	1763+
Dockerell's	Trumpington Street	c.1760-1775
Jude's	?	1775-1780's
The Union	Bridge Street	c.1782-1815
The Turk's Head	Trinity Street	c.1780-1804
The Cocoa Tree	?	1780+
The Tower	?	?
The Master of Arts	?	?

Table 2: Summary of known coffee-houses in Cambridge.

Two William Clapham's are known to have been resident in Cambridge during the appropriate period, although neither appears to have been born in the area. Interestingly, both worked in related fields in close physical proximity to one another, and it is possible that they shared a familial and/or business association. The owner of Clapham's coffee-house was almost certainly the "William Clapham of Chesterton, in the county of Cambridge, Gentleman," who was buried in Chesterton on the 10th of November 1765, as opposed to the "William Clapham of Cambridge, brewer" whose will was witnessed on the 18th of August 1762 (*Prob 11/1015*). The former's will, which was witnessed on the 21st of October 1765 and was proved in Canterbury on the 5th of December that year (*Prob 11/914*), stated that "I give and bequeath unto my said wife, Jane Clapham, all my money, plate, goods, chattels, stock, effects and personal estate", with the exception of £310 which was to be paid to various relatives and friends. The sale of his property in Chesterton alone was expected to raise in excess of £750, with the latter sum to be held in trust for his widow. The value of his estate, at well over £1000, was thus considerably above the average for that of a coffee-man, which in early 18th century London was frequently valued at less than £200 (Cowan 2005, 161-4); indeed, it is notable that the majority of coffee-men of comparable financial standing were also distributors to other establishments. It is also clear that Jane continued to run the coffee-house after her husband's death, as she is



A



B



C



D



E

Figure 40: Coffee dishes (A) and named vessels (B to D) from Clapham's Coffee-house, along with William Hogarth's 'A midnight modern conversation' of 1733 (E) which depicts a scene set in St. John's coffee-house, London.

known to have still been the proprietor in 1769 (*SJC D 137.33.1*). How long she continued in this role is uncertain, however; she was buried in Chesterton on the 2nd of February 1779, but may possibly have retired some years earlier.

A possible predecessor to Clapham's coffee-house was 'The Johnian', which is known to have been located within All Saints Yard (most probably a reference to All Saints Passage) in c.1740 (Ellis 1956, 188); the playwright Mary Davys has been tentatively linked to this house, as the celebrated author of *The Northern Heiress* retired to Cambridge to open a coffee-house in c.1718 (*cf.* McBurney 1959). Given that no reference to this coffee-house post-dates the later emergence of Clapham's, which was also situated in All Saints Passage, it is reasonable to assume that the latter establishment may well have succeeded the former. Indeed, several such 'reincarnations' – where an existing house was renamed, and brought under new management – appear to have occurred in the town, a further example being 'Jude's' which succeeded 'Dockrell's' in 1775 (Ellis 1956, 187-8). This pattern was also widely repeated in Oxford, where twenty-nine coffee-houses are known to have existed during the second half of the 18th century (Aubertin-Potter & Bennett 1987, 14). Whilst this number is significantly greater than the eight houses that are known to have been present in Cambridge during the same period (see Table 2), the difference is likely to be at least in part a result of the more intensive analysis that has been conducted in the former town. Yet, in both locations, it is clear that the clientele was almost exclusively male (comprising both students and townspeople) and that many Colleges appear to have formed a specific association with one or two establishments (Ellis 1956, 182-3; Aubertin-Potter & Bennett 1987, 14). This relationship was not entirely approved of, however, and from as early as 1664 Cambridge University issued statutes against 'haunters of coffee-houses', whilst in 1750 it was decreed that "every person found at any Coffeehouse or other place of public diversion betwixt the hours of nine and twelve in the morning shall forfeit a sum of ten shillings" (Cooper 1852). The nature of the establishments in which such clients 'idled away their time' – as well as reading newspapers, coffee-houses also offered an opportunity to gamble, play chess, tell tall stories and humorous tales or, occasionally, learn a foreign language (*cf.* Halliwell-Phillips 1841; Ellis 1956, 187-8) – also varied quite widely.

The majority of 17th and 18th century coffee-houses were relatively small in scale and, as the "proprietors tended to live on the premises with the rest of their family, ... the 'coffee-house' proper was really little more than a room within the larger domicile" (Cowan 2005, 80). Larger or more affluent houses, however, where the proprietor was not in residence, might well have consisted of a number of rooms and were often capable of seating forty or more customers at a time. In one of the few known instances where a coffee-man's property was inventoried, Samuel North (who died in 1693) is recorded as having possessed "enough coffee dishes, mugs and glasses to serve ninety customers" (*ibid.*, 84). William Clapham, who, at least towards the end of his life, resided in Chesterton, was clearly a relatively wealthy man when he died and – although no doubt representing only a selective part of his establishment's stock – the ceramic assemblage that was deposited into the St. John's Triangle cellar some ten years later was certainly sufficient to have served a good many customers, and contained a high proportion of quality porcelain vessels. These factors all indicate that Clapham's coffee-house was probably situated towards the larger and more prestigious end of the spectrum (*cf.* Ellis 2004, 127-9; Cowan 2005, 79-88). Therefore, although it was no doubt less extensive than the major London houses, it

may well have been relatively comparable with Short's coffee-house in Oxford, which comprises one of the best documented establishments in the country. This house, which operated during the late 17th century, contained seating for between fifty and sixty customers divided across four separate rooms (Aubertin-Potter & Bennett 1987, 27). These comprised the Master's room, the Long room, the Bachelor's room and 'the shop', and were organized on a sliding social scale; the Master's Room, for example, contained fine Chippendale furniture and pewter serving ware, whilst 'the shop' provided only simple wooden benches and presumably utilitarian ceramic vessels (*ibid*).

Despite the recent surge of interest in the social and literary histories of 17th and 18th century coffee-houses, however (see especially Cowan 2005; Ellis 2006), very little attention has yet been directed towards the material aspect of these establishments. This dearth is at least in part attributable to the fact that, due to their fragility and semi-disposable nature, very few of the vessels that were employed for coffee-consumption (or, indeed, were utilised within the coffee-house generally) have survived to be represented in museum collections (Ellis 2004, 129). Discussions of the material culture of such establishments have thus been primarily restricted to reviewing contemporary pictorial representations (*e.g.* Richards 1999, 133-7; Cowan 2005, 78-86). The assemblage of material recovered from the St. John's Triangle site is therefore of considerable significance, as it comprises the first known archaeologically recovered group that can be definitively linked to such an establishment; it is also amongst the largest single groups of 18th century glass and ceramics yet encountered archaeologically in Britain (*cf.* Vince & Egan 1981; Gooder 1984; Fryer & Shelley 1997; Pearce 2000). In addition, it is important to note that the group comprises a classic 'clearance deposit', in that a substantial number of complete or near-complete vessels appear to have been deposited as part of a single event (*cf.* Pearce 2000). For these reasons, although interpretations of assemblage must avoid the naivety of the 'Pompeii Premise' – in which the material is presumed to provide a complete and unbiased 'snapshot' of the moment of deposition (see, for example, Binford 1981; Schaffer 1984) – the group has the potential to contribute significantly towards an understanding of the material culture of an 18th century coffee-house. The relative proportions of the various wares and vessel forms present (which are discussed further in the Modern pottery assessment report) will provide valuable insights into the types of activities that were undertaken within such an establishment, and may also furnish indications of the range and status of its clientele.

Furthermore, the material recovered from **F.553** is also important because of its date, as the later 18th century comprised a period of great change and uncertainty across the coffee-house industry. This was due at least in part to the increasing prevalence of tea, which had gradually eclipsed coffee as the high-status drink of choice (*cf.* Pettigrew 2001). Indeed, it has been noted that "the relative decline of coffee, and the unprecedented rise of tea drinking, reflects macro-economic changes in the global economy of luxury beverages" (Ellis 2006, xxx). As the scale of coffee production increased, taxes and tariffs appear to have been widely manipulated so as to make the trade less profitable. A vicious spiral then ensued, with low prices leading to a drop in revenue; growers responded to this by using high-yield/low-cost cultivation techniques, thus further lowering the quality of the available product (*cf.* Smith 1994). As a result of this decline, allied with the wider fragmentation of coffee-house society on the grounds of class or specific business interest, the majority of establishments

appear to have gone out of business by the close of the 18th century (Ellis 2004, 207-15). The St. John's Triangle assemblage therefore represents a selection of the material culture in use within an English coffee-house towards the end of the 'golden age' of such establishments.

Summary

In many ways, the Modern period at St. John's Triangle saw a continuation of the patterns activity – such as the mixture of commercial and domestic occupation, as well as the relatively high-status of many of the tenants – which have previously been noted during earlier periods at the site. It is rendered distinct, however, by the much larger assemblages of material that were deposited (although such actions occurred only on a very infrequent basis, as opposed to the gradual process of deposition witnessed during earlier periods) as well as by the more substantial survival of associated documentary and cartographic sources. Taken in combination, these factors will permit a very detailed examination of the various groups to be undertaken. In particular, the large assemblage of material that was recovered from cellar backfill **F.553** clearly merits further analysis; indeed, such work – undertaken in conjunction with a more thorough documentary investigation – would potentially lead to a publication of national importance.

Conclusion

The pattern of archaeological survival

Excluding its role as part of the southern suburb of the Roman town, the history of the St. John's Triangle site is one of increasingly intensive occupation from the mid 10th century onwards. Whilst this has resulted in the generation of deeply stratified refuse deposits on the one hand (see Figure 41), it has also precipitated their truncation by an ever expanding succession of structures on the other. Yet, even though many of these later buildings were cellared, the results of the excavations undertaken in Area 2 (along with those of the work conducted in 2006) demonstrate that at least a metre of early deposits may survive beneath the cellar floors; furthermore, the results recovered from Area 1 clearly show that beneath uncellared structures the majority of the sequence often survives. Most notably of all, in areas without a significant structural history, such as Areas 3 and 4, the site has produced the greatest depth of stratigraphy yet observed within the precincts of the town (see Tables 2 and 3).

St. John's Triangle	Angel Court	Chesterton Lane Corner	Folk Museum	Hostel Yard	Bradwell's Court
4.19m	3.02m+	4.00m	2.67m	3.71m	2.76m

Table 3: Total depth of deposits at well stratified Cambridge sites.

Period	St. John's Triangle				Angel Court	Chesterton Lane Corner	Folk Museum	Hostel Yard	Bradwell's Court
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4					
Natural	-	6.25m+	6.53m+	6.73m+	6.81m+	5.98m+	7.50m-7.80m	7.55m+	7.81m-8.71m
Roman	-	7.01m+	7.17m	7.03m?	/	6.77m	8.14m+	/	/
Saxon	-	*	7.17m?	7.03m?	/	7.2m	/	/	/
Saxo-Norman	8.19m	*	7.28m	7.03m	7.5m	8.11m	8.47m+	7.95m-8.2m+	8.02m-8.93m+
Medieval	8.51m	*	8.61m	8.42m+	8.8m	8.34m	9.28m	8.75m-9.4m+	8.76m-9.20m
Post-Medieval	9.6m+	*	9.05m	8.92m+	8.8m+	9.2m+	9.53m	9.2m-9.4m+	9.31m-9.85m
Modern	9.73m+	7.12m+	10.12m	9.56m+	9.4m+	9.2m+	10.06m	9.99m+	10.35m

Table 4: Relative heights O.D. at St. John's Triangle and other Cambridge sites through time (Key: - = unexcavated, / = not present and * = truncated).

Despite the widespread survival of archaeological deposits across the site, however – which was also observed during the trial pit investigation undertaken in 2005 (*cf.* Hall and Dickens 2005) – two important limitations must be noted. Firstly, the numerous phases of watching brief have demonstrated that, in many open areas, modern activity has disturbed or truncated the upper 0.5m to 1.0m of the sequence. This means that in future only observations conducted at depth will be capable of revealing further



Figure 41: Phased sections of Soakaway 1 (above) and Soakaway 2 (below).

information on the developmental history of the site. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the majority of the area remains sealed beneath standing buildings (many of them of listed status); therefore, although a significant number of deposits may survive beneath them, it is highly unlikely that any other significant or large-scale investigation of the current development area will be possible in the short or medium term.

The ‘character’ of the site

Given that a number of excavations, employing very similar techniques, have now been undertaken in various locations across Cambridge over the past fifteen years, some attempt may be made to establish the ‘character’ of the different areas investigated (that is, the nature of the occupational history revealed by the archaeological deposits encountered at them, as opposed to simply their geographical position within the town). A general model can thus be proposed, based upon the density of pottery fragments recovered, in which ‘urban’ sites – with typically very dense occupational histories – contain an average of around 30 sherds p/m² or greater, ‘suburban’ sites – where settlement may still be dense, but where property expansion is usually less restricted – contain between 1 to 10 sherds p/m² and ‘rural’ or ‘greenfield’ settlements – which are typically the most open, and thus the most widely dispersed – have generally <1 sherd p/m² (see Table 4). From this, it can clearly be observed that the St. John’s Triangle site contains one of the densest urban sequences yet recorded in the city, as well as one of the longest-lived.

Site	Roman	Saxo-Norman	Medieval	Post-Medieval	Ratio of Saxo-Norman to Medieval density	Ratio of Medieval to Post-Medieval density	Character
Chesterton Lane Corner	146.9	97.8	/	/	?	?	‘Urban’
<i>St. John’s Triangle</i> (SA1, SA2 + TP1-6)	38.3	53.7	64	35.5	1: 1.19	1: 0.55	
Hostel Yard (Areas 2 and 3)	<0.1	8.2	80.9	40.2	1: 9.86	1: 0.50	
Folk Museum	82.4	9.25	31.1	53.5	1:3.36	1:1.72	
18/18a St Peter’s Street	23.9	4.5	7.4	9.6	1: 1.95	1: 1.30	‘Suburban’
Bradwell’s Court (Areas 6-7, 9-12 + 14-15)	<0.1	3.1	11.6	5.9	1: 3.74	1: 0.51	
Grand Arcade (Areas 3, 4 and 5)	<0.1	0.5	2.7	1.0	1: 3.58	1: 0.36	
Cow and Calf	104.2*	1.9	3.7	1.6	1: 1.95	1: 0.43	
Cherry Hinton (combined sites)	<0.1	0.74	0.1	<0.1	1: 0.14	1: 0.1	‘Rural’
West Fen Road, Ely (all phases)	<0.1	0.2	0.3	/	1: 1.5	?	

Table 5: Sherd counts p/m² during the Roman, Saxo-Norman, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods at Cambridge sites (Key: / = not recorded, * = primarily residual).

However, any such model of occupational character must also acknowledge a number of inherent differences within both the quantity and the quality of the evidence that is recovered from the different types of site. Firstly, rural areas are typically excavated on a much larger scale than is possible in the other two locations, primarily as a result of their ‘open’ nature, whilst any residual material that may present in overlying layers is often removed prior to recording; both of these approaches thus serve to reduce the apparent density of the recovered assemblage. Secondly, suburban sites are frequently situated in areas of intensive modern development, and are therefore likely to be subject to extensive truncation caused by the introduction of cellars and other related features. Finally, urban excavations are commonly restricted to a limited number of small, targeted trenches due to the presence of numerous standing buildings; different ‘spatial zones’ may thus be encountered at different sites, meaning that very different activities or depositional practices may be represented. Yet it is also important to note that to a large extent these limitations are determined by the very nature of the environment being investigated; a rural excavation methodology cannot effectively be employed on an urban site, for example, nor will cellaring necessarily be as devastating in an urban context as it would be in a suburban one, given the greater depth of material that is likely to have accumulated. Therefore, whilst variations in practice and survival may perhaps serve to exaggerate distinctions observable *between* the different categories, they remain relatively consistent *within* each particular environment.

Summary

Although restricted in scale, the excavations undertaken at the St. John’s Triangle site have afforded one of the most important opportunities so far to explore archaeologically the urban core of historic Cambridge. A large amount of material (spanning a wide range of periods) has been recovered, which was primarily derived from deep, well-stratified deposits. A significant body of information has thus been revealed, which has provided:

- Evidence indicating the nature, date and possible extent of the southern Roman suburb.
- A marked absence of Saxon or Viking activity, thus disproving the existence of a putative 8th or 9th century settlement in this location.
- Evidence of occupation from around the mid 10th century onwards, demonstrating the rapid expansion of *Grantabrycge* following its conquest by Edward the Elder in c.917.
- Evidence relating to the Medieval Jewry (c.1140-1275), which has previously been the subject of only very limited investigation.
- Evidence of subsequent high-status Medieval activity, both commercial and domestic.
- Significant Post-Medieval and Modern finds assemblages. These were primarily derived from commercial contexts, and can be closely dated due to the number and variety of artefacts contained within them; in particular, the cod bones from **F.400** and the coffee-house material from **F.553** are potentially of national importance.

As a result, the northern tip of the 2nd terrace gravel spur – upon which the site is situated – can be identified as one of the most significant areas of archaeological potential in Cambridge (along with Castle Hill to the north, and the waterfront area to

the west) and should certainly be considered a priority location during any future research undertaken on the urban origins of the town.

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Oasis Form

OASIS ID: cambridg3-52775

Project details	
Project name	St. John's Triangle, Cambridge
Short description of the project	Following on from two earlier phases of investigation at the St. John's Triangle site, nine trenches, covering a combined total of 35.6m2, were excavated within a 0.3 hectare area of land located in the centre of the historic core of Cambridge. In addition, a further ten areas of watching brief, covering a combined total of c.70m2, were also monitored. These investigations primarily targeted backyard areas situated to the rear of the main frontage properties. The site - which is situated upon the northern tip of a gravel spur, immediately adjacent to the floodplain of the river Cam - contained the deepest stratigraphic sequence yet encountered within the city (at around 4.2m), and a significant history of occupation was revealed. Evidence of 2nd/3rd century settlement was uncovered, which was succeeded by the re-establishment of occupation during the 10th century. The area was then incorporated into the Saxo-Norman Jewry, prior to becoming a thriving mercantile quarter from the Medieval period onwards.
Project dates	Start: 15-01-2007 End: 18-09-2008
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SJT 07 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 2 - Institutional and communal accommodation
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	PITS Roman
Monument type	PITS Early Medieval
Monument type	PITS Medieval
Monument type	PITS Post Medieval
Monument type	DITCHES Roman
Monument type	DITCHES Early Medieval
Monument type	DITCHES Medieval
Monument type	BUILDINGS Medieval
Monument type	BUILDINGS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern

Significant Finds	WORKED BONE Medieval
Investigation type	'Part Excavation', 'Test-Pit Survey', 'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE St. John's Triangle
Postcode	CB2 1TW
Study area	c.100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 445 585 52.2053297748 0.114875705784 52 12 19 N 000 06 53 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 5.82m Max: 10.12m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Alison Dickens
Project director/manager	Alison Dickens
Project supervisor	Richard Newman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	St. John's College
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	SJT 07
Physical Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Human Bones','Industrial','Metal','Textiles','Worked bone','Worked stone/lithics'
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	SJT 07
Digital Contents	'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Human Bones','Industrial','Metal','Textiles','Worked bone','Worked stone/lithics'

Digital Media available	'Spreadsheets','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	SJT 07
Paper Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Drawing','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	St John's Triangle, Cambridge: an archaeological excavation and watching brief
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Newman, R.
Other bibliographic details	CAU Report No. 851
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