

YORK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TRUST2 CLIFFORD STREET,
YORKREPORT ON AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF
AND EXCAVATION1999 FIELD REPORT
NUMBER 24

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**REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF AND EXCAVATION**

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ABSTRACT

On 15th March and 23rd April 1999 York Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological watching brief and between 28th April – 11th May 1999, a small scale excavation within a cellar at 2 Clifford Street York.

Although the archaeological deposits at the site had been truncated by recent building works an interesting sequence was revealed.

The earliest deposits reached (Phase 1) are likely to have related to dumping or collapse/accumulation in the late or immediate post-Roman period. A metalled surface of Phase 2 may also be of late or post-Roman date as its alignment was contrary to that of the medieval (and assumed Anglo-Scandinavian) street pattern.

Phase 3 deposits were composed of partially preserved Anglo-Scandinavian wattle fences aligned parallel and at 90 degrees to King Street. These were sealed by a series of dumped, slightly organic deposits of Phase 4. Further indications of fence-lines (Phase 5), again parallel and at 90 degrees to King Street (medieval Cargate) were observed cutting the Phase 4 deposits. The latest archaeological deposits preserved at the site were of further dumped domestic refuse of Anglo-Scandinavian date.

1. INTRODUCTION

On 15th March 1999 York Archaeological Trust monitored the digging of an engineering test pit, followed by the commencement of site reduction for building works on 23rd April 1999, within a cellar at 2 Clifford Street, York (NGR SE 6033 5164) (Figure 1, Site location plan). All works were carried out on behalf of F.W.Ward Florists, the owners of the building. The object of the building operations was to lower the cellar floor by approximately 0.90m below the existing cellar floor level. This work was projected to entail the breaking up of the existing floor, followed by the reduction of underlying deposits by building contractors, down to the required building formation level at approximately 11.10m AOD. Shortly after the removal of sub-floor deposits began it became apparent that significant, intact archaeological deposits were present from a high level and that a watching brief was an insufficient response to the quality of the archaeological remains present. The City of York Archaeologist, John Oxley, required that hand excavation of the archaeological deposits by a professional archaeological team was required. Regrettably, by the time a small scale excavation was implemented a proportion of the deposits had already been removed.

The excavation itself spanned 28th April – 11th May and had the simple primary objective of excavating, under controlled conditions, two isolated islands of intact stratified archaeological deposits that had not already been reduced to formation level.

The drift geology of the area is of Warp and Lacustrine clay with sand and gravel above a solid geology of Bunter and Keuper sandstone (Geol. Surv. 1967).

2. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The area under consideration lies approximately 200m south of the southern angle of the Roman legionary fortress, within an area of Roman civilian occupation sometimes known as a *cannabae* (RCHM 1962). The course of a Roman road is presumed to have run some 25m to the north-east of the site and the position of parts of a number of nearby Roman buildings are also known, (O.S. 1988). Little is known of Anglian activity in this part of the city though the church of St Mary, Castlegate has produced pieces of "Anglo-Saxon" architectural stonework that pre-date Viking age York (Wenham et. al. 1987). During the Anglo-Scandinavian period much of the existing street layout in this part of the city was established. This is likely to have incorporated the lanes (including King Street, formerly Kergate/Cargate) that run down to the east bank of the River Ouse. The area of the site lies only just peripheral to the heart of the Anglo-Scandinavian city. Throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods the site lay close to the core of the city of York. The thoroughfare of Clifford Street is an entirely 19th century creation associated with late Victorian redevelopment. Prior to the creation of Clifford Street the north-eastern end of all of the lanes that run to the river was the extant street of Castlegate.

The earliest recorded archaeological observations in the area were made in the 19th and early 20th centuries during redevelopment works. Antiquarians such as the architect George Benson recorded remains including substantial timber structures of the Anglo-Scandinavian period between Coppergate and High Ousegate. Quantities of finds, again many of them Anglo-Scandinavian and some from Clifford Street, were also recovered during these development works (Hall 1994).

The expansion of professional archaeology in the later 20th century has led to a number of excavations, of various sizes, and an even greater number of watching briefs, being carried out in this part of the city. By far the most extensive of these works has been the excavations at 16-22 Coppergate which revealed deep complex deposits that spanned the Roman to medieval periods. Particularly important at this site were the extensive Anglo-Scandinavian deposits which have provided a wealth of detailed information (Hall 1984). All other archaeological investigations in the vicinity that have been carried out to depth (in areas of archaeological survival) have served to confirm the area as containing deeply stratified, well preserved and often waterlogged, multi period deposits, see especially YAT Gazetteer sites 360, 191, 91, 194, 154, 155 and 192 (YAT Gazetteer 1997).

3. METHODOLOGY

The watching brief involved the monitoring of the breaking out of the original 19th century cellar floor and its hardcore make-up, followed by the removal of parts of the underlying archaeological deposits. Records made of these works were in notebook form. In the early stages of sub-floor deposit removal it became apparent that this material was of some archaeological significance.

By the time the archaeological excavation commenced considerable parts of the sub-floor archaeological deposits had been removed down to the level required for new floor formation. Deposits left for excavation consisted of two isolated islands of intact stratigraphy (Figure 2). Fortunately, cleaning and recording of the top of the truncated deposits permitted some links to

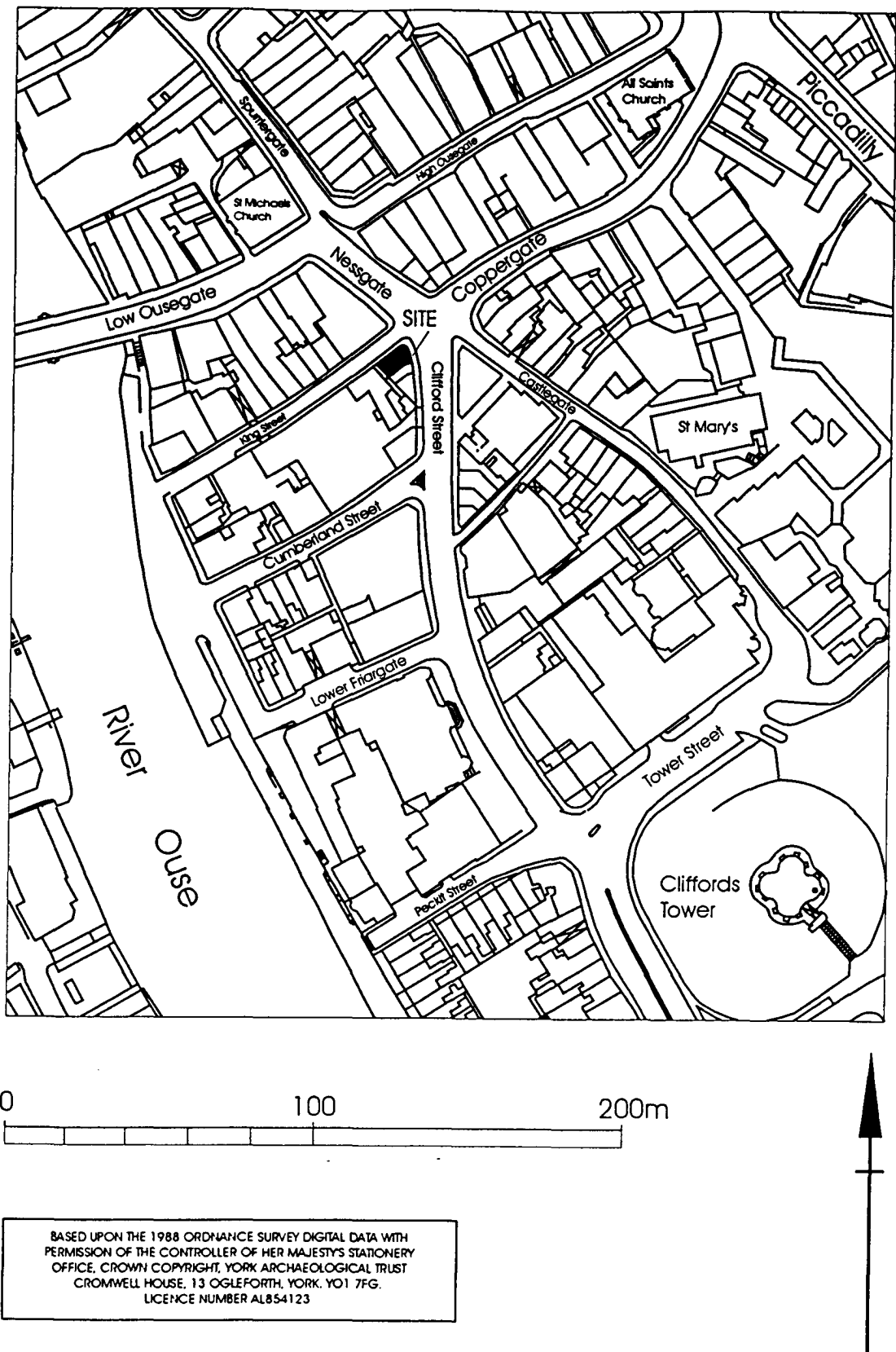


Figure 1, Site location plan

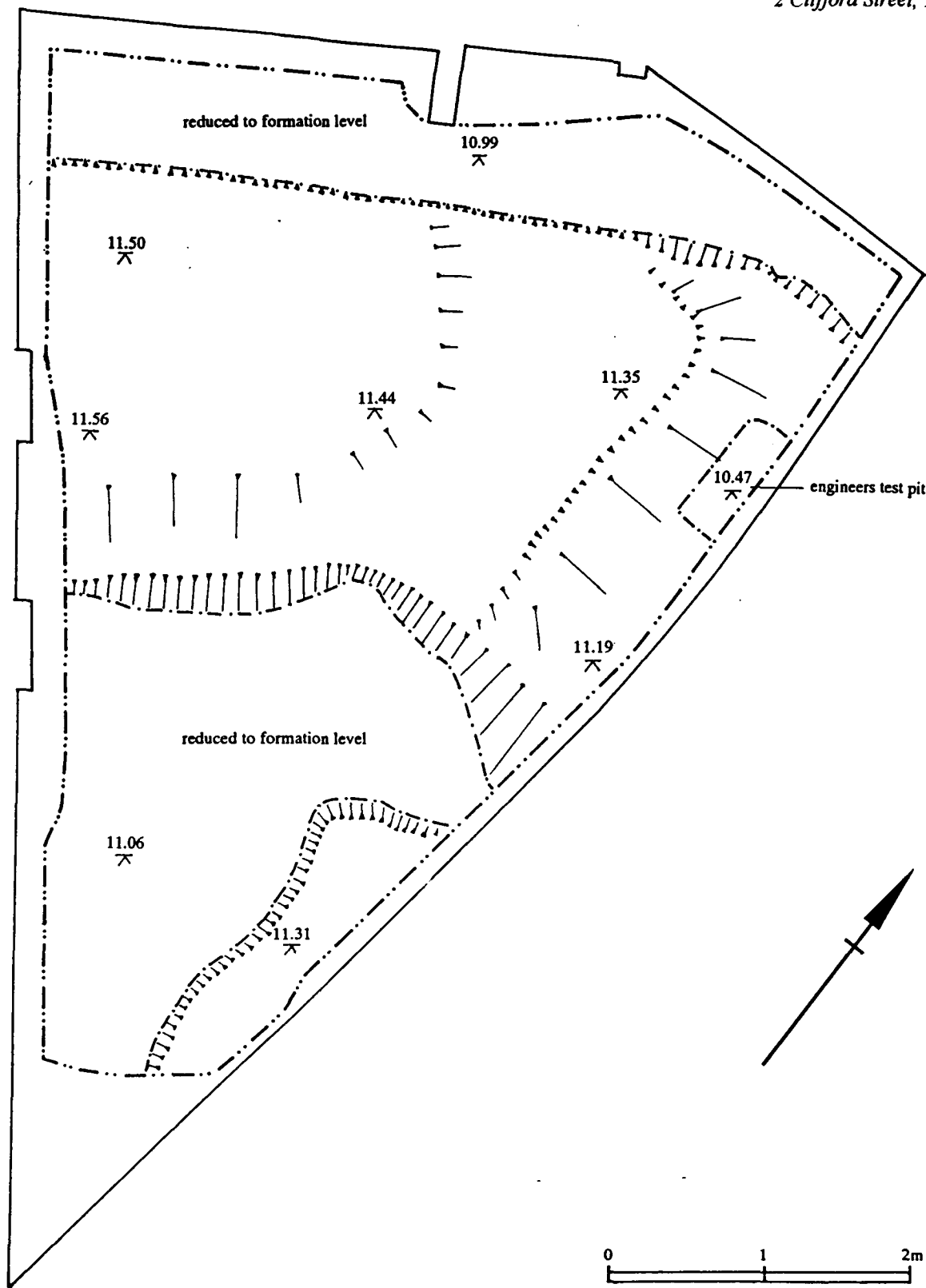


Figure 2, Plan showing intact islands of stratified deposits at beginning of excavation

be made between these islands. Each deposit that was archaeologically excavated was individually recorded on a separate pro-forma record sheet and drawn as a single entity at a scale of 1:20. A series of colour and monochrome print photographs were taken during the course of the excavations.

All finds and site records are currently stored by York Archaeological Trust under the Yorkshire Museum accession code YORYM: 1999.256

4. WATCHING BRIEF

The first part of the watching brief entailed observation of the excavation of an engineering test pit measuring approximately 0.90m x 0.60m x 0.90m deep against the eastern wall of the cellar. This demonstrated the presence of intact archaeological deposits.

The second part of the watching brief commenced with the monitoring of the breaking up, by building contractors, of the old concrete cellar floor and its brick and rubble make-up. Once this had been achieved work started on the removal of underlying deposits. It quickly became apparent that these underlying deposits were of some archaeological significance and steps were then taken to attempt to up-grade the watching brief to an excavation. By the time the excavation commenced a portion of the archaeological deposits had already been removed.

5. EXCAVATION

5.1 Phase 1 (Figure 3)

The earliest deposits observed were those within a small engineering test pit in the eastern part of the site hard against the cellar foundation walls. This pit measured some 0.90 x 0.38m and extended to a depth of 0.33m below the base of the excavation (11.10m AOD) to 10.77m AOD. As all of these deposits lay below the required level of formation they were not available for archaeological excavation. The few finds recovered were those extracted from the section faces.

Three deposits, each of horizontal profile, were seen in this pit. The lowest, context 1046, was a pale greyish brown, plastic, clayey silt that contained occasional small lumps of creamy mortar, occasional rounded pebbles together with lesser quantities of charcoal flecks. This deposit continued below the base of the pit. Context 1045, a light yellowish brown, fairly soft, clayey silt, again containing occasional lumps of cream mortar and pebbles, though also some small fragments of brick/tile, sealed 1046. The uppermost of the three deposits, context 1044, was a mixture of light brownish grey, moist, sandy silt, and yellowish brown clayey sand that tended to occur in large clumps up to 0.14m in diameter. These constituent materials occurred in roughly equal proportion. Occasional rounded pebbles, charcoal flecks and oyster shells were present in this deposit as were lesser quantities of creamy coloured mortar flecks.

Certain attributes of these three contexts serve to indicate common properties. All were pale coloured (in contrast to later deposits on the site), clay formed a significant part within the matrix of each context and all contained a similar range of inclusions. The origin of the deposits

Figure 3, East facing section through phase 1 deposits

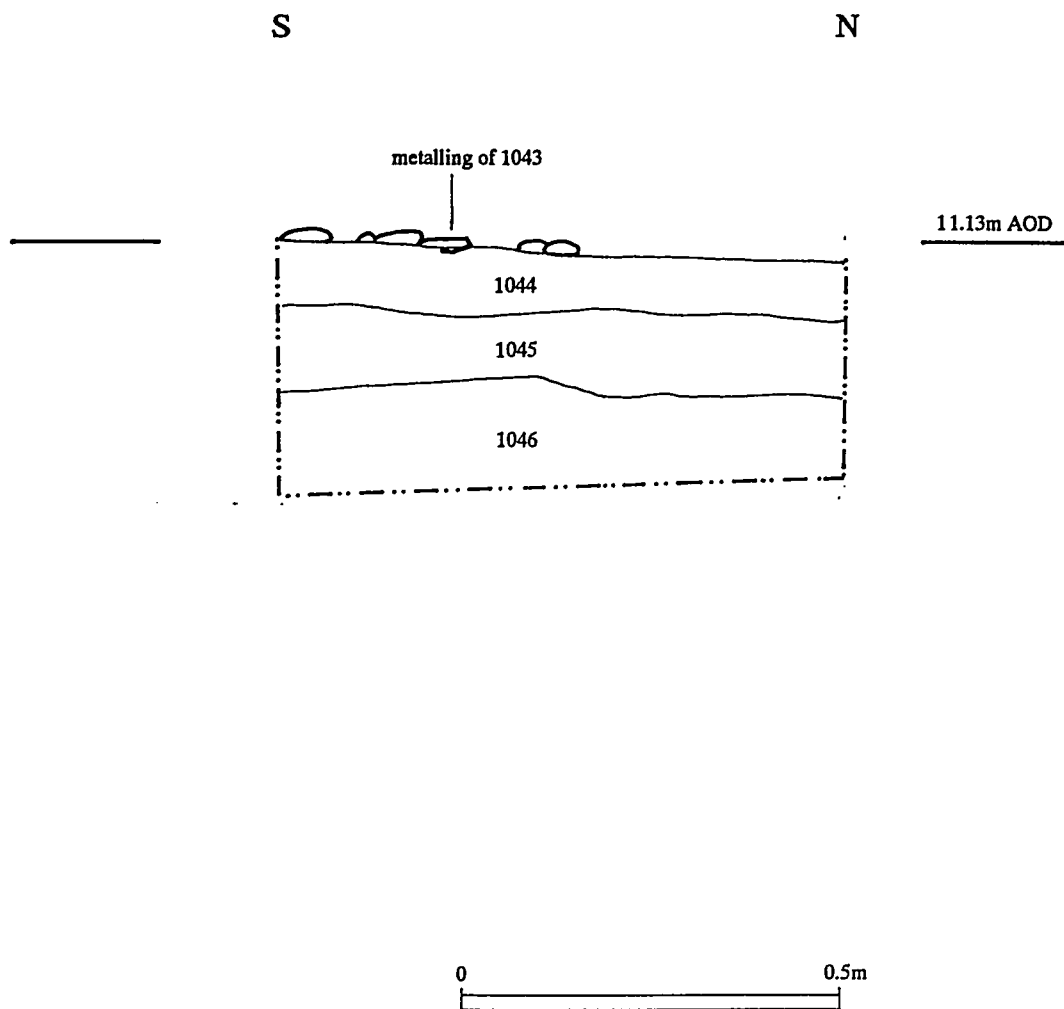


Figure 3, East facing section through phase 1 deposits

is not certain and their observation within a small pit must caution against excessive interpretation. That said, the mixed range of inclusions together with the presence of brick/tile at acute angles within the deposits, goes some way to suggest their deposition via a process of dumping. An origin through accumulation of structural collapse/demolition within the remnants of a much depopulated and partially ruinous Roman town in the post-Roman period cannot be ruled out however. Retrieved dating evidence from this group of deposits was scant, though that which was recovered, ceramic building material and one sherd of pottery, was exclusively Roman. It should be noted at this stage however that most of the Anglo-Scandinavian deposits, that stratigraphically lay only a short distance above the Phase 1 deposits, tended to contain many more residual Roman finds than they did Anglo-Scandinavian ones. The presence of an exclusively Roman finds assemblage cannot therefore be deemed proof of a Roman date. Notwithstanding this, the Anglo-Scandinavian deposits cited above do appear to be early within the period and given the distinct, clean, pale, clayey character of the Phase 1 group, a late Roman date must be considered a real possibility.

5.2 Phase 2 (Figure 4)

Sealing the Phase 1 deposits was a linear spread of metalling, context 1043. This layer occurred in the eastern part of the site and had been truncated to both north and south by the contractors ground reduction works prior to the excavation commencing. Whilst the western limits of the surviving part of the metalling were fully revealed it continued beneath the cellar foundation wall to the east. The context was composed of three components, each thoroughly intermixed with the others. The largest, accounting for approximately 80% of the deposit, was cobbles, 0.05-0.14m in size, that occurred up to two cobbles deep. Sub-angular fragments of creamy white limestone up to 0.12m in size formed around 10% of the metalling. The remainder of the context was formed of somewhat abraded fragments of Roman brick and tile up to 0.14m in size. The only other material within this deposit was a small quantity of mid greyish brown sandy silt that was present between the cobbles and other constituent parts. On a north – south axis the metalling displayed a fairly level profile but from west – east a gentle slope down to the west was apparent.

The metalling 1043 clearly represents a surface of some sort. As its north, south and eastern limits are not known this does hamper interpretation somewhat. The most obvious functions are perhaps a road/path, or yard type surface. The slight east down to west slope may be evidence for a camber on a path/road. From this evidence it is assumed, on the basis of the known western limits and possible camber, that the surface was aligned north – south. If such a function is correct, then the thin, insubstantial nature of the context would suggest it to have been a minor route-way. It will be noted below however, that most of the deposits present at the site show a distinct slope to both south-west and south-east (following the natural topography of the area) and that as some sort of yard surface rather than as a route-way the metalling may be doing no more than reflecting this slope.

Eighteen sherds of pottery, together with large amounts of brick and tile were recovered from the metalling, all of which were of 1st – 3rd century Roman date. The same dating arguments as in Phase 1 apply to Phase 2 and a late Roman date rather than Anglian – Anglo-Scandinavian cannot be ruled out.

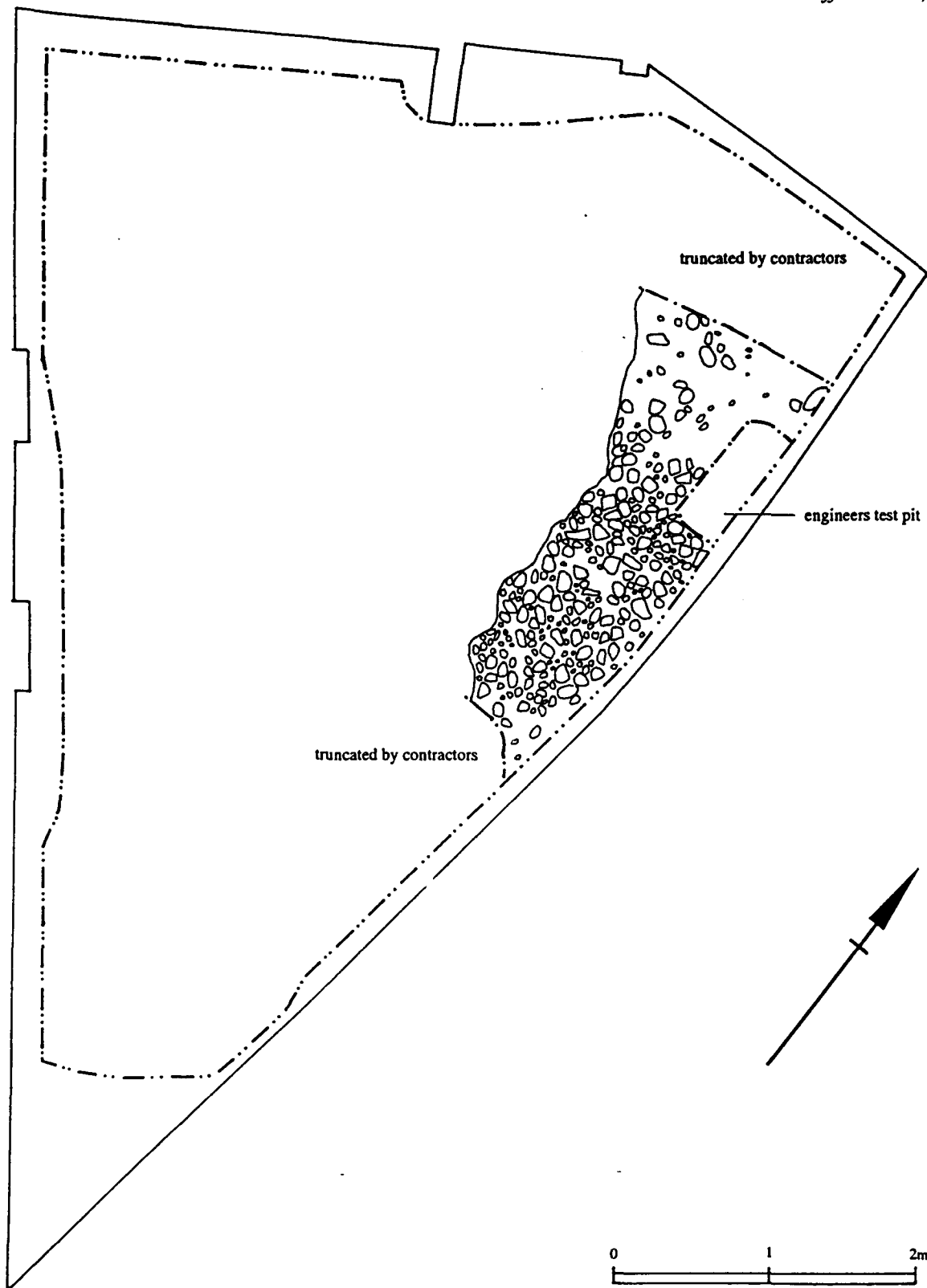


Figure 4, Phase 2 plan, metal surface 1043

5.3 Phase 3 (Figure 5)

All of the contexts that form part of Phase 3 were of wattle, contexts 1030, 1031, 1041, 1052, 1053, 1050, 1051, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1059, 1060, 1061, 1062, 1063, 1064, 1065, 1066, 1067, 1072 and 1073. Collectively, these contexts formed a "T" shaped arrangement, of which the long axis was aligned at approximately 90 degrees to the King Street (not Clifford Street) frontage. The central portion of this wattle arrangement had been heavily truncated before the excavation started, leaving the north-western and south-eastern ends only, above required formation level. Fortunately, the depth of the wattle was such that cleaning between the two islands permitted the recording of the lower pieces of this central part. Of the Phase 3 contexts, 1030, 1031 and 1041 relate primarily to stretches of horizontal wattle, though they include a small number of near vertically set pieces (sails). The remaining contexts within this group relate exclusively to individual vertical or near vertically set pieces or sails. The majority of the wattling survived rather poorly, for the most part being partially decayed and in some cases surviving as little more than soft reddish brown stains. The diameter of the wattle sails was fairly constant, always between 0.04m-0.09m, with a tendency towards the smaller size. Somewhat smaller diameters, generally around 0.02m, were noted for those pieces of wattle (rods) that lay, or are believed to have originally lain, horizontally. In very few cases were the lower parts of the sails reached as these extended below the required level of excavation. In those instances where individual rods were excavated, however, their basal parts, which were invariably pointed, extended to depths of 0.08m-0.25m below the required excavation level.

The arrangement of the wattling in an approximate "T" shape is suggestive of a fencing arrangement that had subsequently collapsed. The restricted area for inspection precludes an understanding of the fuller layout of the fencing and so whether this represents significant land/plot boundaries or merely for example livestock pens, cannot be ascertained with confidence. The quantity and somewhat irregular arrangement of vertical sails may indicate either wholesale replacement, or partial replacement/repair to the fencing arrangement over a period of time. Whilst this indicates that the fencing had a degree of permanence, the scale of this cannot be reliably determined given the organic nature and limited life span of the materials and type of construction.

No finds were recovered from the wattle fencing and so the attribution of dating for Phase 3 must be determined from the nature of the construction and with reference to the dating provided by the overlying Phase 4 deposits. The use of wattle fencing within an urban context is particularly common throughout the Anglo-Scandinavian period, but its use also extends into the medieval period. Phase 4 deposits contain a mixture of Roman and Anglo-Scandinavian pot sherds in which the Roman predominate. Excavations in the city in which Viking age layers have been reached indicate that this is a characteristic of the early parts of this period. It must be concluded therefore that the Phase 3 wattle fences have an origin fairly early within the Anglo-Scandinavian period.

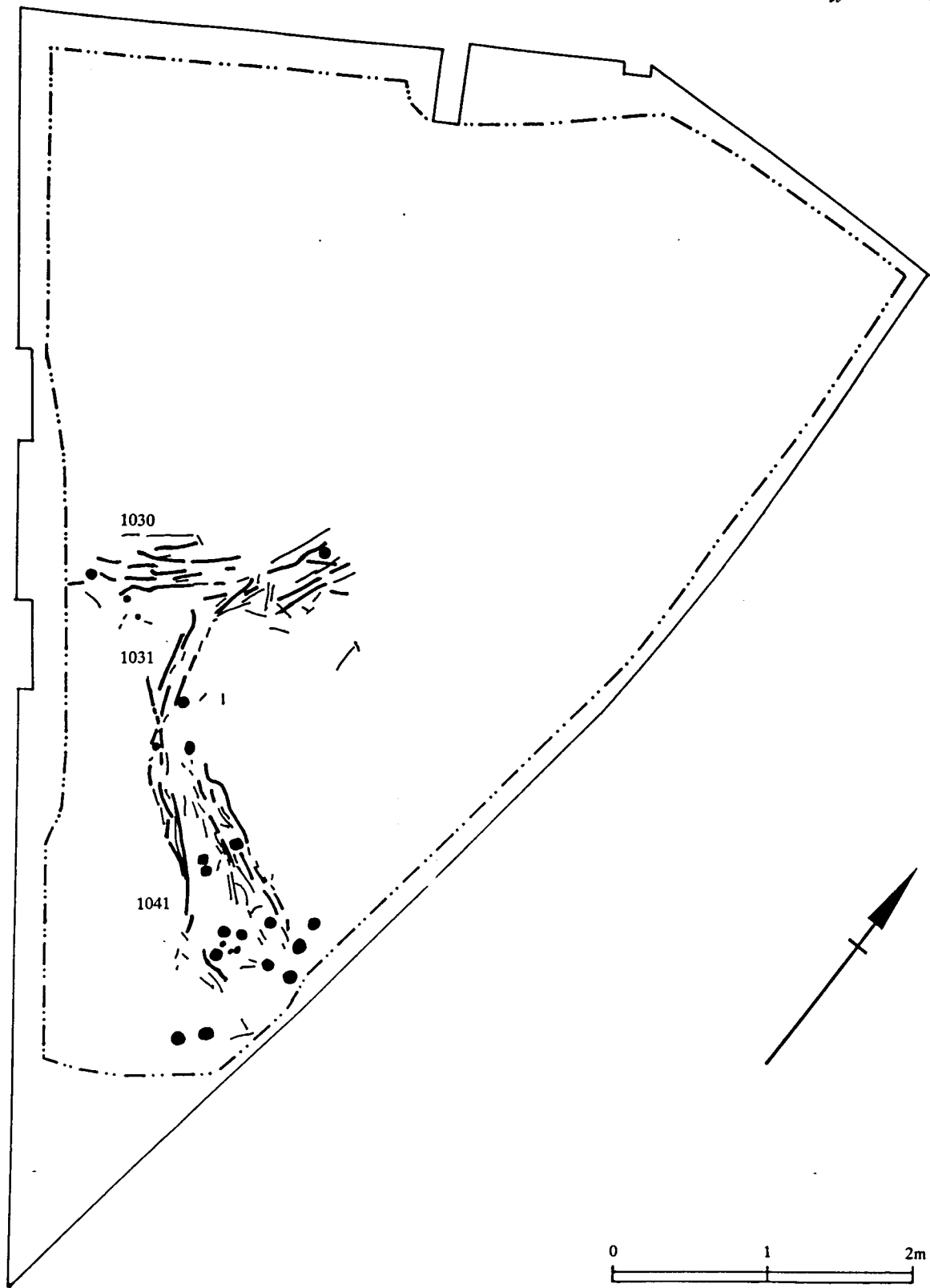


Figure 5, Phase 3 plan, wattlework remnants

5.4 Phase 4 (Figure 6)

At the time of excavation Phase 4 deposits above formation level were restricted to the two islands of archaeology left intact by the contractors. It is clear, however, that prior to these works the deposits attributed to this phase extended not only over the Phase 1 and 2 deposits, but also across the full area of the cellar. Such deposits, as were seen between the islands of archaeology, were recorded and planned.

A total of 14 individually excavated and recorded contexts comprised the Phase 4 deposits, contexts 1071, 1070, 1042, 1040, 1048, 1049, 1037, 1032, 1034, 1033, 1029, 1038, 1039 and 1028. Collectively these deposits were in excess of 0.50m deep and across much of the eastern and central parts of the site were not fully bottomed. Although variation was apparent throughout this sequence the texture of most contexts was of slightly organic clayey silts in which the relative proportions of each constituent varied. Small quantities of sand were also present in certain of the deposits. Colour variation was also apparent, this ranging from mid greyish brown to dark greyish brown with a few of the contexts being somewhat lighter. Some colour variation was also apparent within individual contexts. The range of inclusions present was extensive and included decayed wood, charcoal flecks and small fragments, animal bone, oyster shells, cobbles, fragments of limestone, fragments of Roman brick and tile, clumps of clay and flecks and fragments of mortar. In many instances individual contexts contained all of the above principal inclusions. A tendency common to the majority of the Phase 4 deposits was a gently sloping profile to both north-west and south-east. This slope is thought likely to reflect the influence of the natural topography of the area. A single stake-hole context 1034, which survived merely as a 0.08m diameter void containing a few fragments of decayed wood (1033) represents an isolated and presumably short lived feature encapsulated within this sequence. One deposit, context 1032, warrants individual discussion. Context 1032 was comprised of a series of four interleaved thin layers or lenses of material, all of which were characterised by having been burnt, that measured in excess of 3.0m x 2.80m. The lowest of these was composed of greyish brown silty clay and charcoal and underlay a lens of ash and charcoal together with patches of white sand. This was sealed by a thin layer of charcoal and ash, that was in turn overlain by a spread of burnt clay. Although partially truncated by the contractors to both the sides and top, this context survived to a thickness of nearly 0.18m and displayed a distinct slope down to the west. The sloping profile of the deposit together with the nature of the over and under-lying deposits (see discussion below) argue the case for 1032 being re-deposited and not in-situ.

The Phase 4 deposits were composed largely of domestic debris that included fragments of leather shoes, a stone disc, iron slag, a piece of sheet lead and fragments of worked and un-worked antler. In addition to residual Roman brick and tile, two iron objects, a key and a hinge strap were also recovered from these deposits. It is suggested that these contexts represent the dumping of domestic refuse. The case for this rests principally on the textural nature of the deposits that contain much organic and waste material, together with the uneven sloping nature of their profiles. The pottery assemblage from this group was composed of residual Roman and Anglo-Scandinavian wares that suggest a later 9th – early 10th century date for deposition. This accords well with the suggested dates for the antler and iron objects.

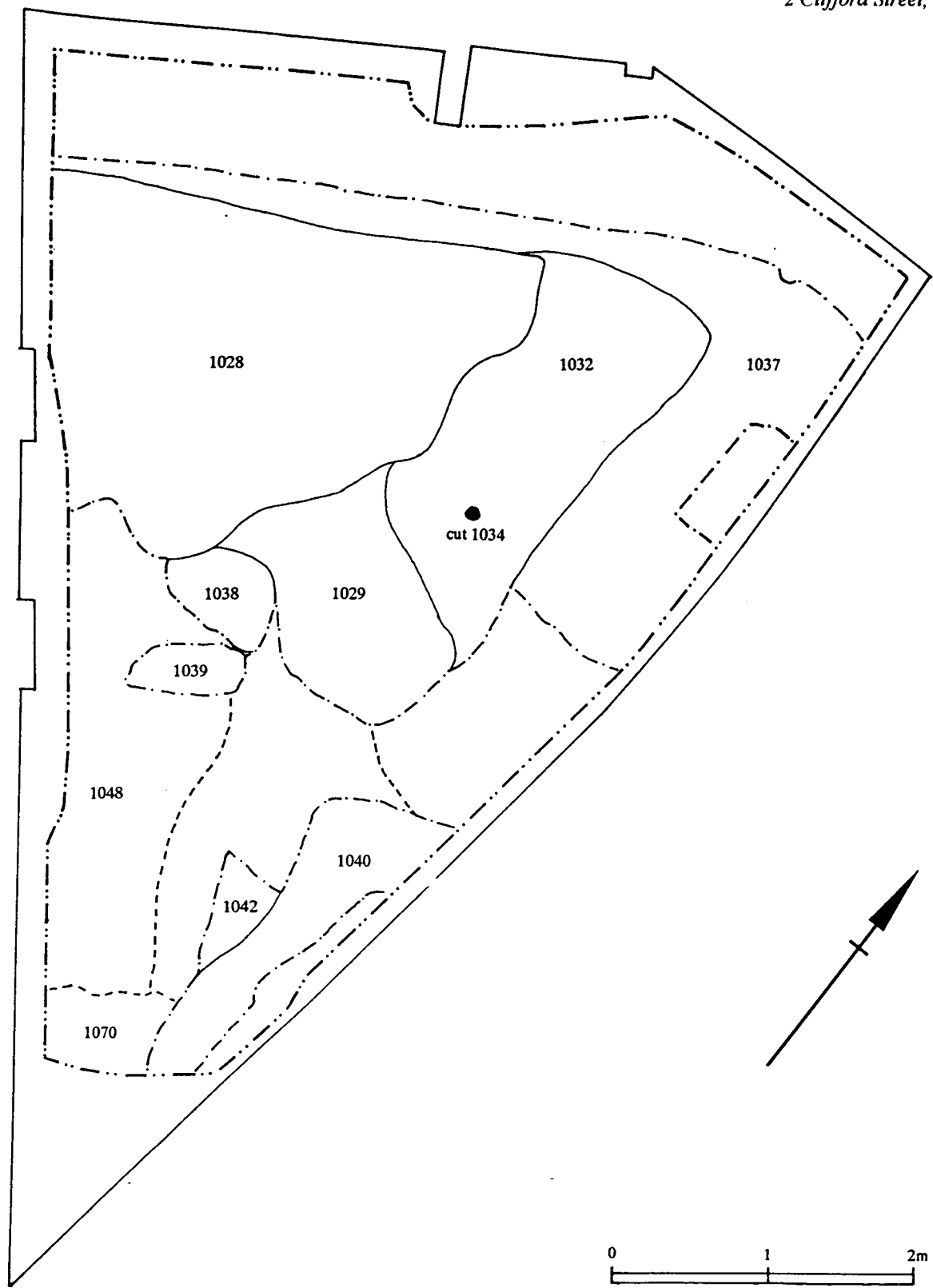


Figure 6, Composite plan of phase 4 dump deposits

5.5 Phase 5 (Figure 7)

Cutting into the Phase 4 “dump” deposits was a series of ten stake-holes which followed principal north–south and east–west axes, contexts 1010/1011, 1012/1013, 1014/1015, 1016/1017, 1018/1019, 1020/1021, 1022/1023, 1024/1025, 1026/1027 and 1035/1036. The majority of the stake-holes had a diameter of 0.05m – 0.10m, only three being in excess of this. Depth variation was generally between 0.17m – 0.30m, just the south-west most stake-hole, 1027, being in excess of this at 0.40m deep. Eight of the ten features had pointed bases that must have been reflective of the stake points that were originally held therein. A curious characteristic of seven of the same eight postholes was that they sloped down to the north-east at angles of between (approximately) 2–8 degrees. The eighth stake-hole, 1027, sloped at approximately 10 degrees to the south-east. This angling may relate to the collapse of the stake structure(s). The stake-hole attributes described above serve to single out three stake-holes from the others, namely 1027, 1017 and 1036. This separation serves to create a group of seven small stake-holes arranged in a right angle, and the remaining three large examples in a rough south-west-north-east alignment. The fills of all of the stake-holes was broadly similar, being either voids with a loose/soft decayed wood fill or dark slightly reddish brown fine silts.

The significance of the two stake-hole groupings is not clear as both share the same stratigraphic position and are likely therefore to be either contemporary or very closely spaced in time. It is probable that these Phase 5 stake alignments mark the positions of what were once fence-lines. This is especially the case with the group of smaller stakes that had the appearance of the sails of a wattle fence. The alignments displayed are broadly similar to those of the better preserved Phase 3 wattle fences though the south-west – north-east line was some 2.0m north of that of the earlier example and the north-west – south-east line some 1.0m to the east. This may suggest that the south-west - north-east lines in particular, of both the Phase 3 and Phase 5 fences, do not demarcate significant plot boundaries. The only dating evidence for Phase 5 is provided by the pottery assemblages from the phases immediately above and below, these point towards a likely date in the very early 10th century.

5.6 Phase 6 (Figure 8)

At the time the excavation commenced, little remained of the Phase 6 deposits, save a small island in the north-western part of the site. Contractors works had removed associated deposits on the north, east and south sides whilst the construction of the cellar in the 19th century had served to truncate them from above.

The scale of truncation of these deposits was such that only two contexts survived, 1009 and 1008. The earliest of these, 1009, was a mid grey, clayey silt that contained a number of soft organic lenses, fragments of decayed wood and produced five pieces of antler. Other inclusions were comprised of oyster shells, charcoal flecks, animal bone, fragments of brick and tile, a few mortar flecks and the occasional small stone. Sealing 1009 was context 1008, a somewhat mixed deposit composed of two interleaved materials, namely, a greyish brown clayey silt and a light-mid brown, compact and finely laminated, organic material. Inclusions were limited to charcoal flecks, a few oyster shells and occasional small pebbles. Both of these contexts displayed profiles that sloped gently from the east down to the west.

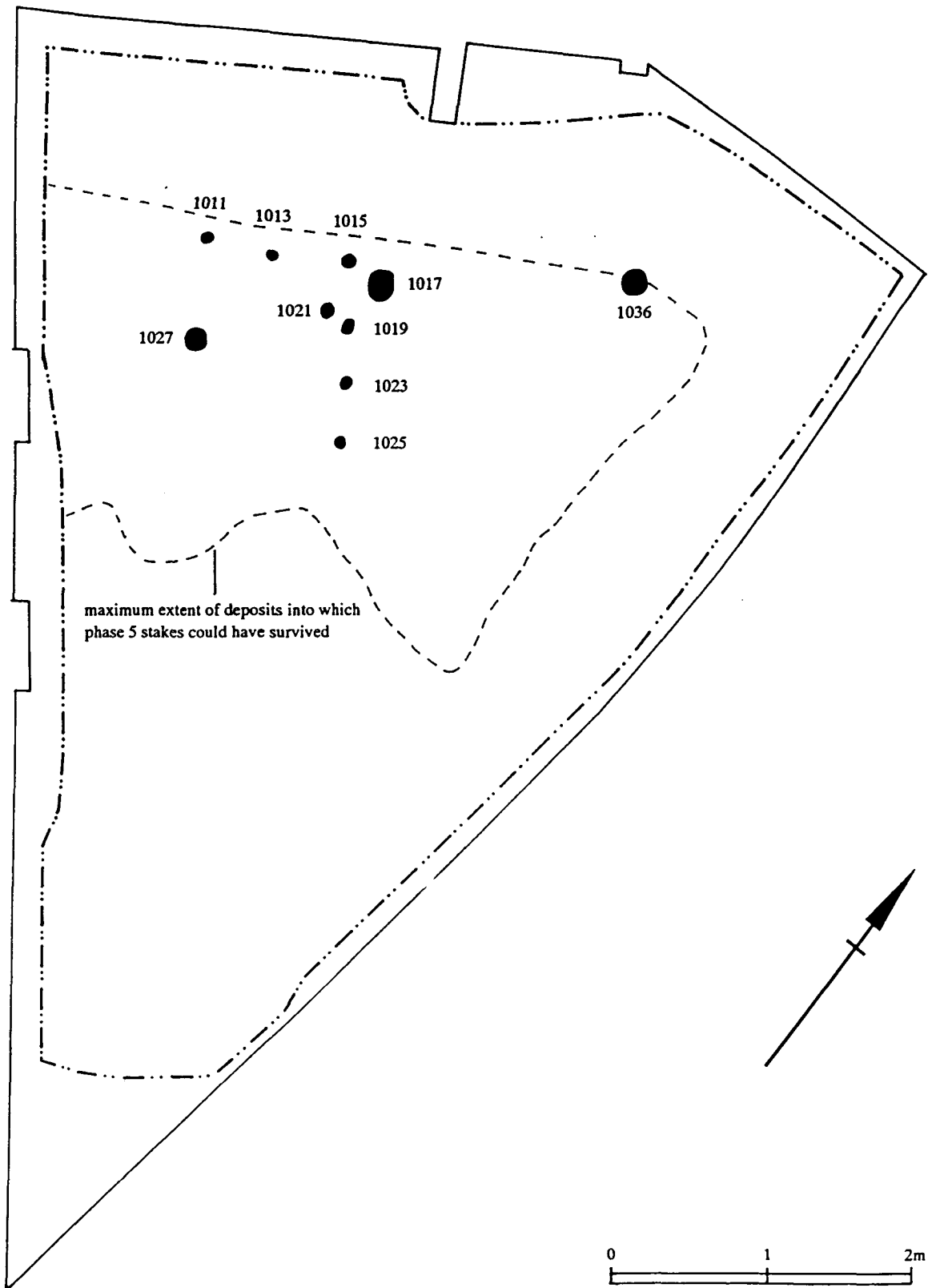


Figure 7, Phase 5 plan, stake alignments

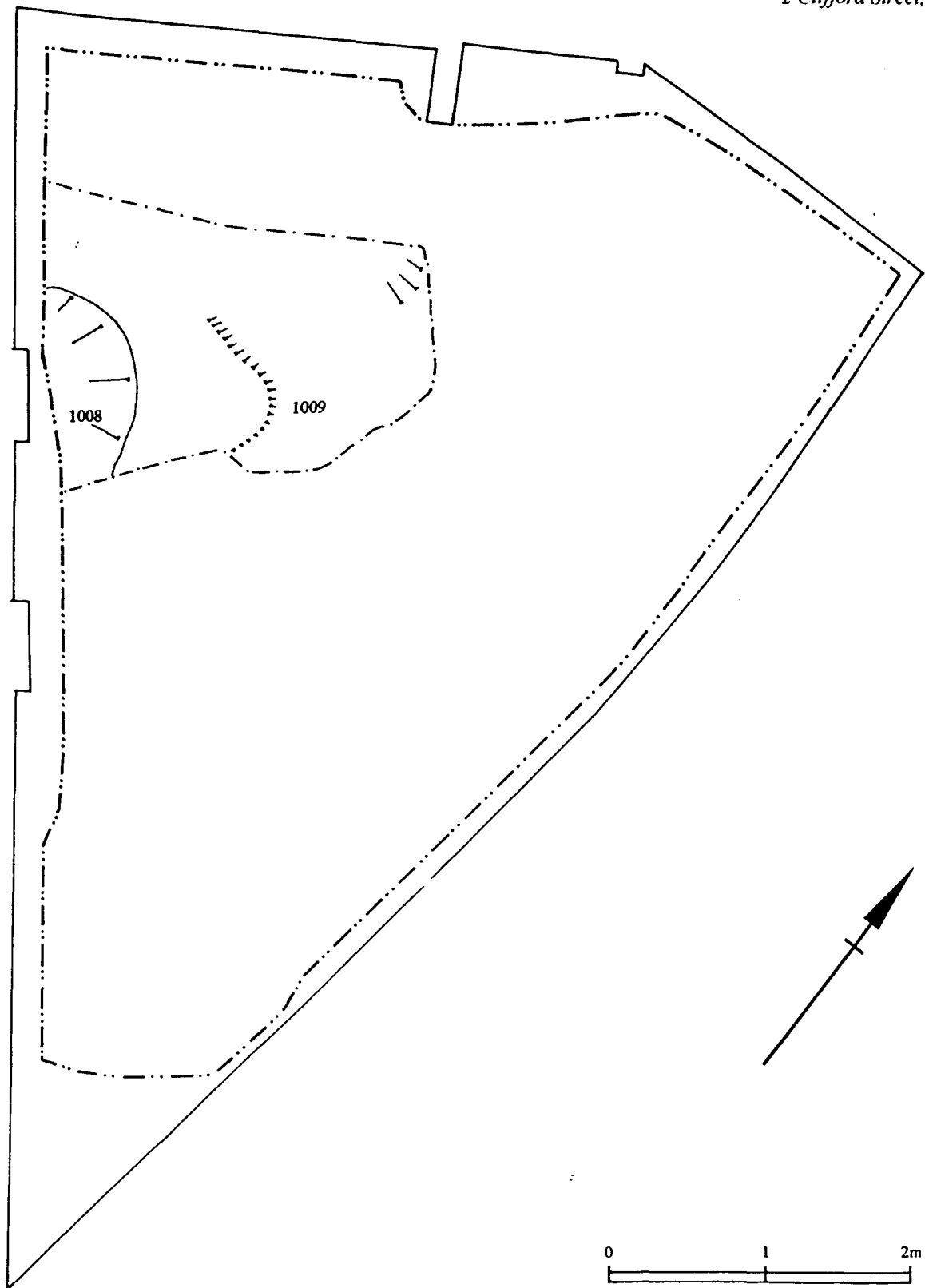


Figure 8, Plan showing extent of surviving phase 6 dump deposits

The composition, sloping profile and nature of inclusions suggest that both deposits are best interpreted as the dumping of domestic type debris. Pottery recovered from these deposits was of Roman and Anglo-Scandinavian date, just over half being of the latter. This is a point of some note as it will be recalled that the earlier Phase 4 dump type deposits produced much greater amounts of residual Roman pottery than they did Anglo-Scandinavian. The date of the Phase 6 deposits is likely to be around the mid 10th century.

5.7 Phase 7

Phase 7 deposits relate to those works associated with the construction of the 2 Clifford Street cellar in the later 19th century when much of this part of the city was redeveloped. These include the extant cellar walls 1007 and related backfill 1004 in their construction cut 1005. Traces of an original internal wall 1002, the late 19th century cellar floor 1006 and its makeup 1003 also form part of Phase 7.

The latest works by the contractors left a small amount of loose and unstratified material, contexts 1001 and 1047.

6. FINDS ASSESSMENT

6.1 Recorded Finds

6.1.1 Antler

Several tines and antler fragments, both worked and unworked were recovered. These include sf6, sfs19-21, sf23, sf 28, sf31 from contexts 1009 (5 pieces), 1040 (1) and 1001(1). The pottery assemblage from 1009 dates this group to the first half of the 10th century which would be entirely consistent with the bone and antler working evidence recovered from 16-22 Coppergate. Two of the recognisable objects were antler points or wedges (sf6 (1009) and sf31 (1001)) which had been simply fashioned from antler tines.

6.1.2 Stone

A single stone disc roughly chipped from a sandstone slab (sf 7) was recovered from context 1029. Its function is unclear as it appears to be too large for a counter and too small for a potlid. Several similar items have been recovered from Anglo-Scandinavian sites in the city.

6.1.3 Leather

Fragments of leather were recovered (sf12 and sf13) from contexts 1048 and 1049, the latter dated by pottery to the late 9th century. Both appeared to be shoe fragments; sf 12 may be part of an upper.

6.1.4 Glass

A single small sherd of Roman vessel glass was recovered from context 1029 where it is likely to be residual.

6.1.5 Slag

Iron-making slag was recovered from context 1029 (sfs 3 and 4) and 1040 (sf 29).

6.1.6 Lead alloy

A flat sheet of lead, possibly part of a vessel base (sf 27), was recovered from context 1037.

6.1.7 Iron

Sf1 and sf 10 from context 1029 are probably Anglo-Scandinavian in date. The former is a key, the latter a hinge strap. Sf11 from the same context may be a punch. The remaining fourteen iron artefacts are nails and nail fragments with the exception of sf32 which is an unidentified object.

6.1.8 Wood

Fragments of wood survived due to the wet conditions. These included the following:

Context 1030

Timber 1, very fragmentary and too decayed for species identification.

Timber 2: roundwood, both ends broken, *Salix sp.*

Timber 3 : compressed roundwood, mineralised. *Quercus sp.*

Timber 4: split roundwood, no features, both ends broken, *Salix sp.*

Context 1009

Two slivers of decayed wood attached to animal bones. No species identification was possible as the wood was very decayed. Also seven fragments of mineralised wood, of which one is roundwood, no other features visible.

Context 1028

Two fragments of *Quercus sp.* and one of *Corylus sp.* No evidence of working.

Context 1029

All wood totally or partially mineralised. Includes bark and two worked fragments of roundwood, one piece having a cut end and the other having its twigs cut off. No species identification possible.

Context 1032 :Charcoal fragment

Context 1038 : Twigs.

No further work required on this group. Recommended for discard.

6.2 Pottery

context	no of sherds	Spot date	Comment
1001	8	AD 900-950	7R; 1 TW
1008	2	?10/11 th	1 R; 1 YW/GW
1009	27	AD 900-950	12R; 7YW; 4 AScan shelly; 2 TW; 2 YW/GW
1028	12	AD 850-900	11R; 1 YW
1029	4	AD850-900	3 R; 1 YW
1037	28	AD900-950	26 R; 2 TW
1038	7	AD850-900	6R; 1 YW
1040	12	late 1st-3rd	12 R (includes frag of face pot)
1043	18	late 1st -3rd	18 R
1044	1	?R	
1049	6	AD850-900	5 R; 1 YW
US	20	R;late 9th	19 R; 1 YW

The pottery assemblage from this site is closely comparable with that recovered from the nearby site at 16-22 Coppergate where there was a high proportion of residual Roman wares in the earliest Anglo-Scandinavian deposits. Only three contexts (1040, 1043 and 1044) produced exclusively Roman pottery and that covered a wide date range from late 1st century to the 3rd century; there were no obvious hallmarks of the 4th century present at the site.

The Anglo-Scandinavian pottery is represented by York ware (YW), Anglo-Scandinavian shelly wares and Torksey-type wares (TW). There were one or two sherds which were categorised as York ware or Gritty ware (YW/GW) as small sherds are often difficult to identify with confidence. The absence of other wares typical of the 11th century (eg. Stamford ware) tends to indicate that these sherds are more likely to be York wares than Gritty wares. The evidence from Coppergate places the currency of York wares in the later 9th and very early 10th century with Torksey-type wares occupying the first half of the 10th century. This is the equivalent of Periods 3, 4A and 4B at Coppergate, periods when the proportion of residual Roman pottery was at its greatest.

6.3 Ceramic Building Materials

6.3.1 Introduction

There are approximately 150 fragments of ceramic building material and stone from this site. The material is primarily Roman in date, with only one fragment of post medieval material.

6.3.2 Roman material

The Roman material is represented by roof tile, flue tile and unidentifiable fragments of brick that may have been fragments of tegula (roof tile) or could come from brick used in hypocausts or walls. The roof tile, imbrex and tegula, comes in a variety of thicknesses which probably indicates different dates. A few of the brick and tegula fragments show signs of a cat paw print,

and a couple of arc and loop signatures. There are also a couple of fragments of flue tile. One fragment is incised (or scored) which is associated with a 1st to early 2nd century date. The other type of keying present, finger smoothed (or impressed) is currently undated, but may be a later type, i.e. 2nd century or later.

There is one fragment of opus signinum, which was Roman concrete used in walling, flooring and bathhouses.

In addition, there is one definite fragment of stone roof tile (context 1043). There is also a good amount of other stone which could be roof tile, however, these do not have nail holes, and may have been used in walling. These are generally associated with other Roman building materials so are assumed to be Roman in date.

6.3.3 Possible Anglo-Scandinavian

There is one fragment of daub, which may not be Roman in date considering the remains of Anglo-Scandinavian wattle on the site.

6.3.4 Post medieval material

Post medieval material is presented by a single piece of unstratified pantile.

6.3.5 Conclusions

The material is a mixture of early and later Roman ceramic building material. This sample does not show the usual signs of re-use (such as mortar along a broken edge). The lack of any early medieval forms in the sample points strongly to an 11th century (or later) date for the advent of post-Roman ceramic building material in York.

It is evident that much of this material is residual. It should be retained for further study, and after it has been thoroughly recorded by a ceramic building material specialist much of the sample could be discarded.

6.3.6 Context Listing

Context	Form	T(mm)	Comments	Date range	Spot date
0	IMBREX	17		Roman	18-19th
	PAN	0		17-19th	
	TEGULA	22		2-4th	
1001	TEGULA	0		Roman	
1008	STONE	0	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?	
1009	RBRICK	0	X11 FRAGS	Roman	2-4th
	RBRICK	34	X2 FRAGS	Roman	
	RBRICK	22		2-4th	
	RBRICK	23	REUSED	2-4th	
	STONE	0	OOOLITIC LIMESTONE	?	
	STONE	0	LIMESTONE	?	
1028	IMBREX	17		2-4th	13-16th
	PLAIN	0		13-16th	
	RBRICK	0		Roman	
	RBRICK	34		Roman	
	TEGULA	33	FLANGE HEIGHT 66MM, SOOTED	1-2nd	
1029	DAUB	0		?	2-4th
	IMBREX	28		Roman	
	IMBREX	16		2-4th	
	IMBREX	18		2-4th	
	RBRICK	24		Roman	
	RBRICK	32	UPTURNED ARC SIGNATURE	Roman	
	RBRICK	0	X24 FRAGS	Roman	
	RBRICK	33		Roman	
	RBRICK	31		Roman	
	RBRICK	26		Roman	
	STONE	0	OOOLITIC LIMESTONE X2 FRAGS	?	
	STONE	0	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?	
	STONE	16	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?	
	STONE	21	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?	
	TEGULA	32	OVERFIRED, LOOP SIGNATURE	Roman	
	TEGULA	0	UPPER CUTAWAY	?	
	TEGULA	0	FLANGE HEIGHT 60MM	1-2nd	
	TEGULA	0	X3 FRAGS	Roman	
1032	RBRICK	0	FE ATTACHED	Roman	Roman
1037	FLUE	21		Roman	2-4th
	FLUE	15		Roman	
	IMBREX	20		Roman	
	IMBREX	14		2-4th	
	IMBREX	23		Roman	
	IMBREX	16		2-4th	
	IMBREX	21		Roman	
	IMBREX	13		2-4th	
	IMBREX	15		2-4th	
	IMBREX	21		Roman	
	RBRICK	41		Roman	
	RBRICK	17		2-4th	
	RBRICK	25		Roman	
	RBRICK	37		Roman	
	RBRICK	22	X2 FRAGS	Roman	
	RBRICK	45		Roman	
	RBRICK	30		Roman	
	RBRICK	26		Roman	
	RBRICK	0	X10 FRAGS	Roman	
	RBRICK	33		Roman	
	RBRICK	17	CAT PAWPRINT	2-4th	
	RBRICK	21		Roman	

	RBRICK	32	Roman	
	RBRICK	42	Roman	
	RBRICK	22	2-4th	
	RBRICK	34	Roman	
	STONE	16	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?
	STONE	13	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?
	STONE	8	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?
	STONE	14	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?
	STONE	17	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	?
	TEGULA	25	FLANGE HEIGHT 36MM	Roman
	TEGULA	0	FLANGE ONLY	Roman
	TEGULA	31		Roman
	TEGULA	33	FLANGE HEIGHT 45MM, UPPER CUTAWAY	Roman
	TEGULA	23	SIGNATURE	Roman
	TEGULA	16	FLANGE HEIGHT 45 MM	2-4th
1038	RBRICK	34	Roman	Roman
	RBRICK	40	Roman	
1039	RBRICK	0	X 3 FRAGS	Roman
	TEGULA	31	FLANGE HEIGHT 67MM	1-2nd
1040	FLUE	19	INCISED KEYING	1-e2nd
	RBRICK	39		Roman
	RBRICK	34	X 2 FRAGS	Roman
	RBRICK	0	X 6 FRAGS	Roman
	STONE	0	FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE X 3 FRAGS	?
1043	FLUE	18	FINGER SMOOTHED	Roman
	IMBREX	20		Roman
	OP SIG	0		Roman
	RBRICK	29		Roman
	RBRICK	28		Roman
	RBRICK	26		Roman
	RBRICK	0	REUSED	Roman
	RBRICK	55		Roman
	RBRICK	0	X 5 FRAGS	Roman
	RBRICK	56		Roman
	RBRICK	19		2-4th
	RBRICK	36		Roman
	RBRICK	34	X 3 FRAGS	Roman
	RBRICK	33		Roman
	RBRICK	27		Roman
	RBRICK	0	X 10 FRAGS	Roman
	RBRICK	28		Roman
	RBRICK	21		Roman
	RBRICK	52		Roman
	RBRICK	42		Roman
	RBRICK	0		Roman
	ROOF	0	WITH NAILHOLE, FINE GRAINED SANDSTONE	Roman
	TEGULA	0	LARGE, ABRADED	1-2nd
	TEGULA	0	LARGE FLANGE	1-2nd
1044	IMBREX	20		Roman
	IMBREX	21		Roman
	RBRICK	51		Roman
	TEGULA	0		Roman
1049	RBRICK	59		Roman
	RBRICK	21		Roman

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The excavations in the cellar of 2 Clifford Street provided a rare opportunity to examine a sequence of deposits that spans the probable Roman to Anglo-Scandinavian periods that can be summarised thus:

7.1 Prehistoric and Roman (up to 5th century AD)

The Phase 1 deposits, only observed in the engineering test pit beneath the metallised surface, may be of Roman date. The origin of these deposits is uncertain though they may relate to either dumping within the late Roman period, or accumulation through collapse within what is likely to have been the remains of the largely derelict Roman town possibly in the early post-Roman period.

The metallised surface of Phase 2 is of uncertain date. Whilst it may relate to late Roman work it could also be of Anglo-Scandinavian origin. Although a date within the Anglian period cannot be conclusively excluded, the known foci of activity within this period have tended to concentrate elsewhere in the city. It should be noted that the apparent alignment of the north-western edge of the metallised surface is at odds with the medieval (and probably Anglo-Scandinavian) street alignment as well as that of the Phase 3 and 5 fence-lines.

7.2 Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian (5th – 11th centuries)

An extensive series of deposits incorporating Phases 3, 4, 5 and 6 relate to the Anglo-Scandinavian period. These deposits relate to episodes of the construction of wattle fences and dumping. The fences of Phases 3 and 5 are likely to have served as boundaries internal to a backyard area of a property. The suggestion of a single plot is based on the observation of the same dumped deposits occurring to either side of the fences. These fence-lines were aligned parallel and at right angles to what is now King Street. This street may have formed the frontage to the property plot. The presence of quantities of both worked and un-worked antler within the dumped deposits is of some note and seems likely to relate the practice of this craft close to the vicinity. Both the wattle fences and the organic dumped deposits are characteristic of Anglo-Scandinavian York.

7.3 Medieval (11th – 15th centuries)

Any deposits relating to this period had been removed at the time of cellar construction in the later 19th century.

7.4 Post-Medieval (16th – 18th centuries)

Any deposits relating to this period had been removed at the time of cellar construction in the later 19th century.

7.5 Modern (19th – 20th centuries)

Deposits of this period relate to the fabric of the later 19th century cellar in which the excavation took place.

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1st October 1999

Dear John,

Archaeological Investigations at 2 Clifford Street, York

I enclose three copies of our report on the above investigations. I can provide further copies if necessary. We have already sent a copy to Melanie Baldwin at the Yorkshire Museum.

If you have any queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

David Brinklow

Excavations co-ordinator