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# **Northern Archaeological Associates**

**BOLTON BRIDGE BYPASS**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING**

**UNDERTAKEN ON BEHALF OF**

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**NAA 94/13**

**February 1994**

**15 Redwell Court, Harmire Road, Barnard Castle, Co. Durham DL12 8BN**

## **BOLTON BRIDGE BYPASS**

*A limited programme of archaeological recording was undertaken during construction of a new bypass on the A59 at Bolton Bridge in North Yorkshire. Four trenches were excavated across earthworks identified during the previous desk-top assessment, confirming the presence and nature of a series of trackways and field boundaries. A watching brief was also undertaken in the area of the new River Wharfe crossing, which located a previously undetected ditch and the base of a field wall. No evidence was seen for the presence of possible wharves associated with nearby Bolton Abbey.*

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report presents the results of monitoring and recording works undertaken by Northern Archaeological Associates for North Yorkshire County Council on the route of a new bypass on the A59 at Bolton Bridge in North Yorkshire, to the east of Skipton (fig. 1). The road corridor was located in the parishes of Bolton Abbey, Draughton and Beamsley. The portion to the east of the River Wharfe was within the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

The background to the project and the results of an earthwork survey and another trial trench have already been described in two previous reports [1 and 2]. This report describes the results of four trenches excavated, and a watching brief conducted, in the area of the River Wharfe during construction work.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

A desktop assessment and rapid field survey of the proposed route for the Bolton Bridge Bypass was carried out by Northern Archaeological Associates as part of an environmental assessment undertaken by the Planning Department, North Yorkshire County Council in October 1991. The initial report identified two areas within the route corridor where further work was required prior to the commencement of construction work [1]. In response to this report, an area of possible earthworks adjacent to Ferry House in OS fields 0885, 0973, 1179 and 1282 were surveyed, and a small mound in OS field 6223 was trial trenched, during spring and summer 1992, and a report of the results produced [2]. In addition, it was recommended that a group of linear earthworks in OS fields 0071 and 2446 at the western end of the bypass route should be investigated by excavation and that a watching brief should be conducted during works adjacent to the River Wharfe relating to the new river crossing.

### **3.0 EXCAVATION RESULTS**

This work was carried out during March 1993 (fig. 2). Trenches were excavated across a sunken linear feature in OS field 0071 (trench 1); across the extant boundary between the

two fields, extending to include two adjacent possible archaeological features (trench 2); and transecting two linear earthworks in OS field 2446 (trenches 3 and 4). Two potential archaeological features which were probably field boundaries, identified in the desktop study [1] in OS field 2446 as features 8 and 9, were not recorded as those elements within the road corridor were destroyed when an initial access route was inserted.

### **3.1 Trench 1 (fig. 3)**

Trench 1 was located so as to transect feature 2 in OS Field 0071 [1]. It was positioned at right-angles to the existing southern field boundary 14.4m west of the south-eastern corner of the field. The trench measured 1m wide and 4.1m long. It showed that a linear depression running parallel to the existing hedge was an infilled ditch (101/102) which measured c.1.2m wide and extended for at least 90m along the southern field boundary. No dating evidence was recovered for this feature. A linear band of pea-grit (104) running parallel to the ditch on its northern edge possibly represented the base of an earlier hedgebank.

### **3.2 Trench 2 (fig. 3)**

This trench was located 5.7m from the southern end of wall 203 which separated OS Fields 0071 and 2446. It was 1m wide and 14.8m long, and was orientated at right angles to the field wall (203) in order to transect possible boundary feature 3 in Field 0071 and hollow way 1 in Field 2446 [1]. The field wall had very recently been demolished to turf level. It measured 0.9m wide at the base, and extended for c.50m. It had been constructed directly upon the upper surface of the subsoil (201), within a shallow construction trench cut through the shallow topsoil (200) and backfilled with construction debris (202,204). To the west of the wall, no evidence was observed to support the presence of feature 3 in OS Field 0071 [1], the topsoil (200) being directly above a clean subsoil (201). To the east of the wall, Hollow Way 1 [1] was observed as a linear hollow (209) c.6m wide, 0.4m deep and extending for at least 200m. It cut through clean subsoil (201, 208), and the base was roughly metalled with limestone fragments (206). Two deposits of limestone (205, 210) between its western edge and the field wall either represented the robbed remains of an earlier wall or were fragments of further metalling. No dating evidence was recovered from any of these features.

### **3.3 Trench 3 (fig. 3)**

Located so as to transect a wide, low linear bank (feature 6) in OS Field 2446 [1], this trench measured 1m by 4.6m. It was located 9.3m north of the southern field boundary. 0.15m of topsoil (300) was removed to reveal a linear metalled surface (301) which was 3.3m wide and up to 0.18m thick in the centre, tailing off to each side with a shallow convex profile. It was formed of a single dump of angular limestone fragments laid directly on the surface of the underlying subsoil (302). The feature extended for c.60m north-south, and the northern end approached the entrance to a disused limestone quarry (OS plot 2055). It is interpreted as a trackway providing access to the quarry from the A59.

**3.4 Trench 4 (fig. 3)** This trench was located 25.3m from of the southern end of feature 7 in OS Field 2446 [1]. It measured 1m wide and 4.6m long. Feature 7 was c.75m long, orientated roughly north-south parallel to the surviving adjacent traces of ridge-and-furrow agriculture, and consisted of a low bank with a shallow linear depression along its eastern side. 0.15m of topsoil (400) was removed, revealing that the bank was the robbed footings of a drystone field wall (401), 0.6m wide and surviving to a height of 0.15m. It had been built directly on the surface of the subsoil (405). A ditch (404) was located 1.1m east of, and parallel to, the wall. It was 0.95m wide and was cut 0.33m into the subsoil. Two distinct fills were recognised (402, 403). The profile of the ditch suggested that it was contemporary with the wall, which had discouraged erosion on that side. No dating evidence was recovered to suggest a date for these features.

#### **4.0 WATCHING BRIEF**

A watching brief was carried out during the machine stripping of topsoil on the section of the corridor between the B6160 and the River Wharfe and on the section between the River Wharfe and Beamsley Lane. With the exception of a stone wall, no features were recorded in these areas as they were topsoiled using a bulldozer, however, a section through the triangle of land between the Hambleton Beck and the River Wharfe was recorded during the excavation of a channel to temporarily divert the Hambleton Beck during construction work (fig. 4).

Within the section from the Hambleton Beck to the River Wharfe the basal layer exposed was a brown alluvial silty gravel deposit which lay up to 0.7m below ground level. A U-shaped ditch feature (50) was cut into the gravel approximately 13m west of the Hambleton Beck. The ditch measured approximately 2.9m wide by 0.7m deep and contained three distinct fill layers. The primary fill was a firmly compacted brown grey clay (6) containing patches of charcoal, which was overlain by a firmly compacted clay silt (7), which was overlain by a firmly compacted grey brown sandy silt (8), which formed the final fill of the ditch. The ditch was sealed beneath a turf and topsoil deposit (1) which varied between 0.4-0.6m in depth.

The lower course of a dry stone wall was exposed at two points sealed beneath the topsoil. It was constructed of irregular cut sandstone blocks and river cobbles of up to 200mm by 300mm by 100mm, although only one course survived. The structure was exposed in section in the temporary channel and in plan in the adjacent field to the south. It was located 5m from the break of slope to the River Wharfe and ran parallel to the river. It may have been the remains of a stock enclosure wall for the field. There was no associated dating evidence.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The four trenches excavated confirmed the presence of archaeological features initially identified by the desk-top assessment. These included an infilled ditch (trench 1), a hollow-way (trench 2) and a wall-and-ditch field boundary (trench 4). One possible boundary feature was not confirmed (trench 2), and another proved to be a trackway. No

dating evidence was recovered from any of these features. The walls and ditches were all likely to have been late medieval or post-medieval in date, while the trackway to the quarry is probably relatively modern.

The contour survey carried out in the triangle of land between the Hambleton Beck and the Wharfe suggested that a number of possible earthworks were natural in origin. This was confirmed by the section revealed in the side of the drain cut to divert the beck. Only two archaeological features were identified in the section and these were probably agricultural in origin. The recovery of post-medieval finds from the bank of the beck during the survey suggested that the stream had modified the adjacent ground extensively over the last 100 to 200 years. No evidence was found to suggest the presence of wharves or other medieval features adjacent to the River Wharfe crossing.

Northern Archaeological Associates

February 1994

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Text: R. Fraser, G. Speed, G Young

Illustrations: D. Ronan

## **REFERENCES**

[1] Fraser, R., Maxwell, R., Simpson, R., 'Bolton Bridge Bypass: An Archaeological Evaluation' (NAA October 1991)

[2] Fraser, R., 'Bolton Bridge Bypass: Survey and Trial Excavation' (NAA 92/11 August 1992)

## APPENDIX I

### Trial Trench Context Descriptions

#### Trench 1

**Topsoil 100:-** This deposit was a fairly compact, dark brown sandy clayey silt. No finds were recovered. It occurred throughout the area of the trench (4.1m N-S by 1m E-W), continuing in all directions, and was on average 0.15m thick. It had an undulating profile. 100 sealed ditch fill 102 and layer 104. It was the turf and topsoil above trench 1.

**Ditch 101:-** This linear feature equated to Field 0071 Feature 2 [1]. It ran E-W parallel to and north of the extant S field boundary, between SE 0601 5352 and SE 0609 5349, for a total visible length of c.90m. A 1m segment was partially excavated within trench 1, where it was 1.2m wide. Only the top 0.1m was excavated due to difficulties experienced in distinguishing the fill 102 from the similar surrounding subsoil 103 under conditions of extremely bright sunshine. Colour enhancement effect in the photographs taken demonstrated subsequently that the feature was genuine and deeper than excavated. Ditch 101 cut subsoil 103 and was filled by 102. It either formed part of a boundary with the extant field hedge, or with a possible disappeared hedge represented by 104.

**Ditch fill 102:-** This deposit was located within ditch 101, and was excavated under the parameters noted under 101. It was a fairly compact, mid brown sandy clay, with occasional stones (<100mm) and frequent roots (from the adjacent hedge). No finds were recovered. 102 was the fill of ditch 101 and was sealed by subsoil 100.

**Subsoil 103:-** This deposit was a compact yellowish brown sandy clay, with occasional rounded pebbles (<15mm) and subangular limestone fragments (<200mm). It was not excavated. It was cut by ditch 101 and was below layer 104.

**Layer 104:-** Located running parallel to ditch 101, c.1.2m upslope of it to the N, this was a band of fairly loose pea-grit and small stones 0.56m wide lying on the surface of subsoil 103. It was not excavated. It was above 103 and sealed by topsoil 100. It possibly represented material worm-sorted to the base of a disappeared hedgebank.

#### Trench 2

**Topsoil 200:-** Located throughout the trench to either side of wall 203, and continuing in all directions, this deposit was a fairly compact, dark brown, sandy clayey silt. It was on average 0.15m thick. It sealed deposits 202 and 210. It was the turf and topsoil above trench 2.

**Subsoil 201:-** Observed at the W end of the trench, this deposit was a light-mid orange brown fine sandy clay, with <5% small sub-angular and rounded pebbles (<15mm) and occasional larger sub-angular limestone fragments (<180mm). No finds were recovered. Its observed dimensions were 1m N-S by 5.9m E-W, but it continued in all directions. It was not excavated. This deposit was sealed by wall 203, which was built directly on its upper surface. 201 was the natural clean subsoil, seen again further to the E as 208.

**Rubble 202:-** Located against the W side of the base of wall 203, this deposit consisted of c.70% angular limestone fragments (<220mm) in a matrix of dark brown silt. No finds were recovered. It occurred in a band c.0.54m wide, observed over a length of 1m and continuing to the N and S. It was not recorded in section but was c.0.2m thick. It butted to the W face of wall 203, and was sealed by topsoil 200. It probably represented construction debris derived from wall 203, possibly within an unrecognised construction trench. It was paralleled on the E side of the wall by 204.

**Wall 203:-** This wall formed the boundary between OS Fields 0071 and 2446 to the S of disused quarry 2055, and then continued N for several hundred metres up the hillside forming the E side of Field 0071. The stretch to the S of the quarry boundary had very recently (several days) been demolished to turf level by machine. It was 50m long N-S, 0.9m wide, and where sectioned only survived to a height of 0.3m (1 or 2 courses) below turf level. It was constructed of unworked angular limestone blocks (<0.4m) as facing stones, with a core of smaller limestone rubble in a matrix of dark orange-brown silty sandy clay with >10% pea grit (2-10mm). No finds were recovered. Wall 203 was constructed on the upper surface of subsoil 201, and was butted to the W by rubble 202 and to the E by rubble 204, which probably represented the fills of an unrecognised construction trench.

**Rubble 204:-** Located adjacent to the E face of wall 203, this deposit was similar to 202. No finds were recovered. It was 0.50m wide E-W, and was observed over a length of 1m. Its thickness was not recorded, but was probably c.0.2m. 204 butted to the E face of wall 203, and was probably sealed by layer 205. It had a similar interpretation to 202.

**Layer 205:-** Located to the W of hollow way 209, this deposit was a mid brown very gritty silt, with c.70% grit and small angular limestone fragments, and occasional larger limestone fragments <70mm. It measured 1m N-S, continuing to the N and S, and was 1.00m wide. It was not excavated and no finds were recovered. 205 sealed rubble 204 and was sealed by rubble 210. It possibly represented a surface relating to the trackway immediately to the E.

**Surface 206:-** This deposit was located in the base of hollow way 209. It consisted of c.50% large sub-angular and rounded stones (80-200mm) and c.30% smaller sub-angular and rounded stones (10-50mm), in a matrix of dark brown humic silt (similar to topsoil 200). The stones were randomly distributed and had not been laid. No finds were recovered. A 1m segment of the deposit was observed. It measured 3.9m E-W, and generally sloped down to the E except for 1m at the E end which sloped up to the E. It was c.0.10m thick. 206 was a fill of hollow way 209, sealed layer 207 and was below layer 210. It was a metalled surface within hollow-way 209.

**Layer 207:-** Located against the E side of hollow way 209, this deposit was a mid-dark brown fine humic silt with 8-10% small sub-angular stones (3-8mm). It measured 0.4m E-W and was observed in a 1m segment. It was not excavated and no finds were recovered. It was a fill of hollow way 209 and was partly sealed by surface 206. It possibly represented a surviving fragment of agricultural soil relating to arable farming associated with the ridge and furrow in the field.

**Subsoil 208:-** Observed at the E end of the trench, this was a slightly orangey brown sandy clay with <20% grit, 20-25% angular, subangular and rounded small stones (2-20mm) and occasional larger limestone fragments (<100mm). Its observed dimensions were 1m N-S by 2.4m E-W, and it continued in all directions. The observed profile was convex, sloping down to the W into hollow way 209. It was not excavated and no finds were recovered. It was cut by hollow way 209 and was probably the same layer as 201 to the W. It was interpreted as a natural subsoil.

**Hollow Way 209:-** This feature was Field 2446 Feature 1 [1]. It ran NE from SE 06110 53480, at the SW corner of the field, to SE 06125 53507, then E to SE 06285 53517. It was linear, with a rounded NW corner. It had a total length of c.200m. A 1m segment was excavated within trench 2. At this point it was c.6m wide and c.0.4m deep. It had gradual breaks of slope at the top, gently sloping sides and gradual breaks of slope to a concave base. It was cut into subsoil 208 and was filled by layer 207 and surface 206. The feature was a hollow-way, with a metalled surface in the base. No indication was recovered to suggest a date.

Layer 210:- Located over the W break of slope of hollow way 209, this deposit was c.90% angular and subangular limestone fragments (4-180mm) in a matrix of dark brown silt. It measured 0.9m E-W, and was observed in a 1m segment. It was not excavated, and no finds were recovered. It was above rubble 205 and trackway surface 206, and was sealed by topsoil 200. This dump of rubble was either part of the surfacing within hollow-way 209 or was the footing for a disappeared wall.

### **Trench 3**

Topsoil 300:- Located throughout the area of trench 3, and continuing in all directions, this deposit was a fairly compact, dark brown, sandy clayey silt. It was on average 0.15m thick, and had a convex profile (over 301). It sealed trackway 301. 300 was the turf and topsoil over trench 3.

Trackway 301:- This feature equated to Field 2446 Feature 6 [1], and could be observed as an upstanding earthwork running for c.60m N-S between SE 0614 5345 and SE 0614 5351. It consisted of a layer of compacted angular limestone fragments (50-200mm), 3.3m wide and up to 0.18m thick where sectioned in a 1m segment. It had a slightly convex profile. No finds were recovered. 301 was pushed into the upper surface of subsoil 302, and was sealed by topsoil 300. It represented a roughly metalled trackway, probably utilising quarry debris, running from the disused quarry immediately to the N (OS block 2055) southwards to the extant A59 roadway. It possibly re-utilised a ridge from the ridge and furrow system within the field in order to achieve additional drainage. No dating evidence was recovered, but it was presumably contemporary with the quarry.

Subsoil 302:- This deposit, observed throughout the trench, was a compact, yellowish brown, sandy clay, with a moderate grit content. It was not excavated. 302 was below trackway 301, and was the subsoil within trench 3.

### **Trench 4**

Topsoil 400:- Covering the whole of the trench, and continuing in all directions, this deposit was a fairly compact, dark brown sandy clayey silt. It was on average 0.15m thick and had an undulating profile following the underlying features. It was above 401 and 402. 400 was the turf and topsoil over trench 4.

Wall 401:- This feature, which equated to Field 2446 Feature 7 [1], was observable as a raised linear earthwork running c.75m N-S between SE 0618 5343 and SE 0617 5351. Where sectioned, it was 0.6m wide and 0.15m thick, and consisted of c.70% subangular and subrounded limestone fragments (<150mm) and frequent small limestone fragments (<20mm) in a matrix similar to 400. It had a convex upper profile and a flat lower profile. 401 was above subsoil 405 and was sealed by topsoil 400. No dating evidence was recovered for this feature which apparently represented the robbed-out base of a field wall. It was probably contemporary with adjacent ditch 404 (see 404 for comment) and was parallel to the adjacent traces of ridge and furrow.

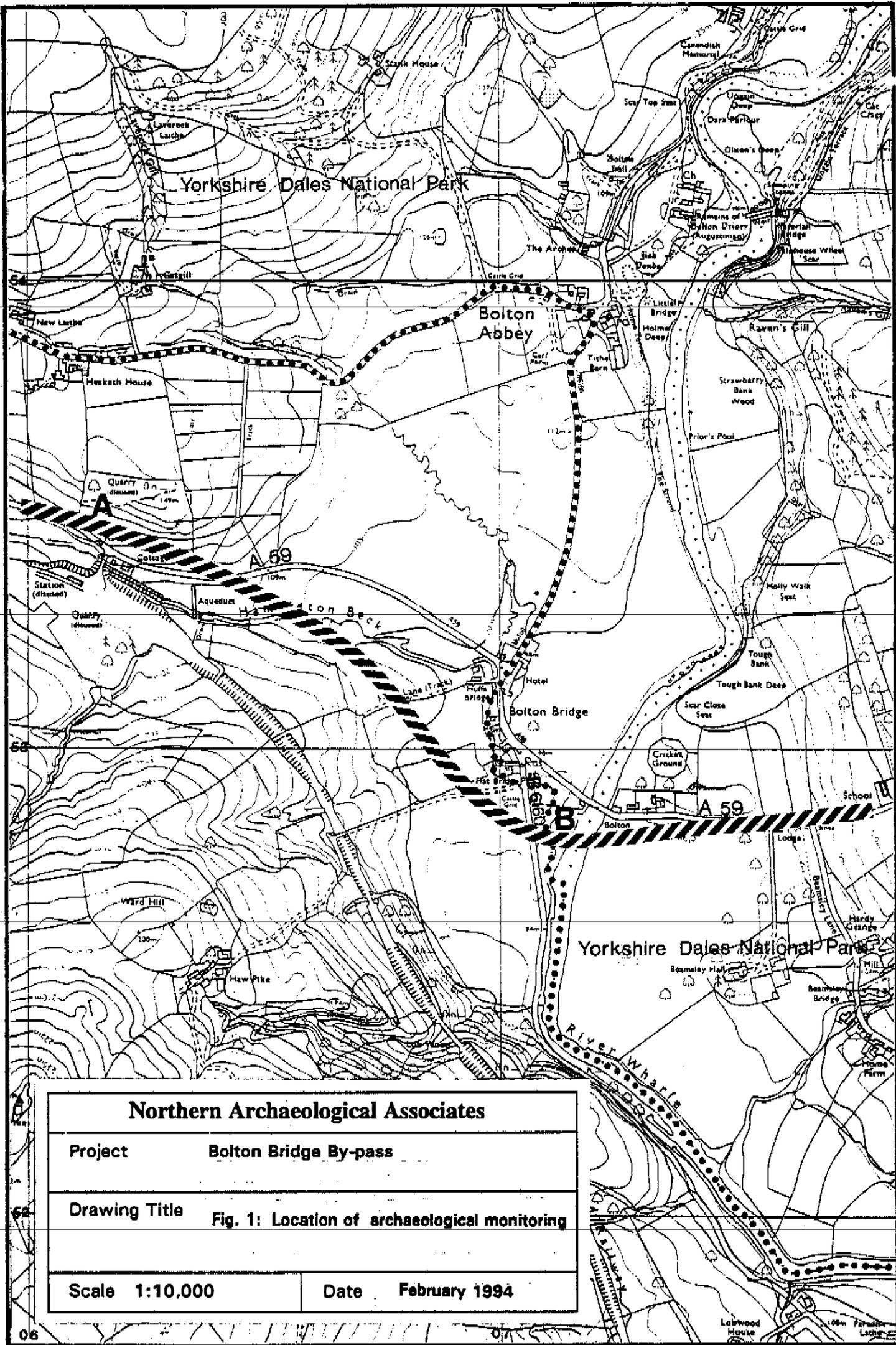
Ditch fill 402:- This deposit was a dark brown, slightly sandy slightly clayey silt with 10-15% small rounded pebbles (5-30mm) and limestone fragments. It measured 0.4m E-W by 0.25m thick. A 1m segment was excavated. No finds were recovered. It had a slightly concave upper profile. It was the upper fill of ditch 404, above fill 403, and was sealed by topsoil 400.

Ditch fill 403:- Located in the base of ditch 404, and extending up the full height of both sides, this deposit was an orange-brown, slightly silty sandy clay, with <10% small rounded pebbles (2-10mm) and moderate rounded limestone fragments (<100mm). No finds were recovered. It measured 0.95m wide E-W by 0.33m thick, and had a steeply concave upper profile. Only a 1m segment was excavated. This deposit was the primary

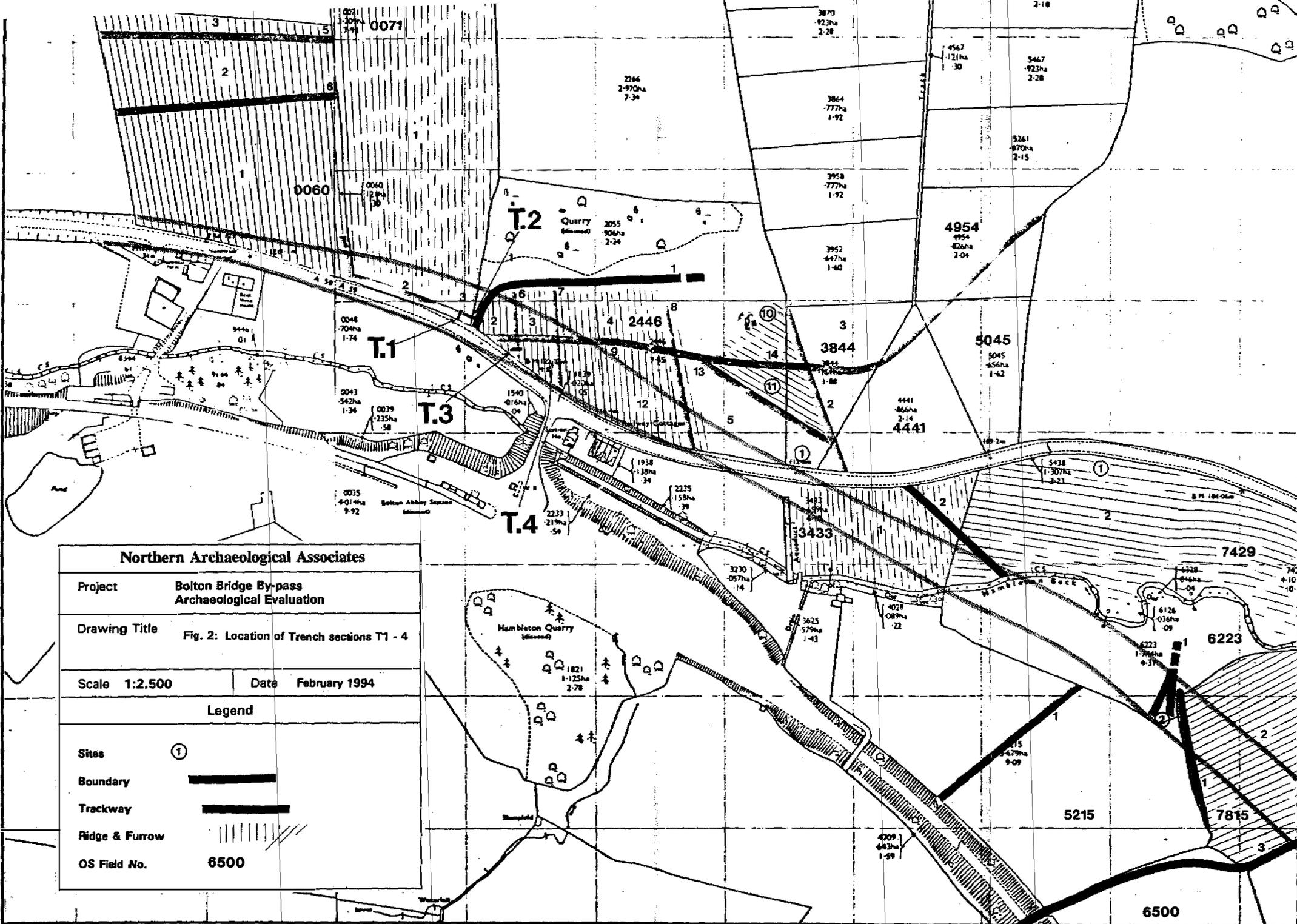
fill of ditch 404, below fill 402, and apparently consisted of slightly dirty re-deposited subsoil 405.

Ditch 404:- This linear feature was located parallel to, and c.1.1m east of, wall 401. It measured 0.95m wide E-W by 0.33m deep. Only a 1m segment was excavated, but the feature probably extended the full length of wall 401. 404 had sharp upper breaks of slope, the W side being very steep and fairly straight-sloping, whilst the E side was fairly gently sloping and slightly concave. There were rounded breaks of slope to a fairly flat linear base. Ditch 404 cut subsoil 405 and was filled by fills 403 and 402. Its N-S orientation and position suggested contemporaneity with wall 401, as did the profile, which suggested that the W side had been protected from erosion by the presence of the wall.

Subsoil 405:- Observed throughout the trench, this deposit was a compact, orange-brown sandy clay, with occasional small rounded stones (5-20mm) and rounded and sub-angular limestone fragments (20-200mm), becoming more frequent further down. Its observed dimensions were 4.6m E-W by 1m N-S by >0.65m thick, continuing in all directions. 405 was below wall 401 and was cut by ditch 404. It was the subsoil in trench 4.

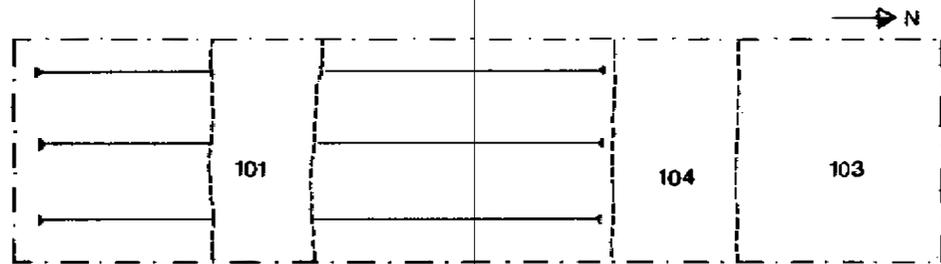


<b>Northern Archaeological Associates</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Bolton Bridge By-pass</b>
<b>Drawing Title</b>	<b>Fig. 1: Location of archaeological monitoring</b>
<b>Scale</b> 1:10,000	<b>Date</b> February 1994



<b>Northern Archaeological Associates</b>	
Project	Bolton Bridge By-pass Archaeological Evaluation
Drawing Title	Fig. 2: Location of Trench sections T1 - 4
Scale 1:2,500	Date February 1994
<b>Legend</b>	
Sites	①
Boundary	—————
Trackway	—————
Ridge & Furrow	
OS Field No.	6500

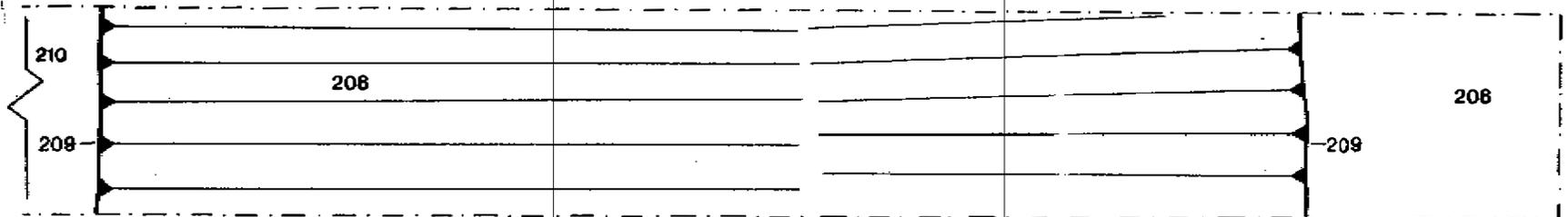
TRENCH 1



TRENCH 2



TRENCH 2 Cntd.



TRENCH 3



TRENCH 4

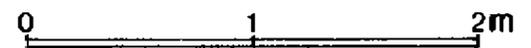
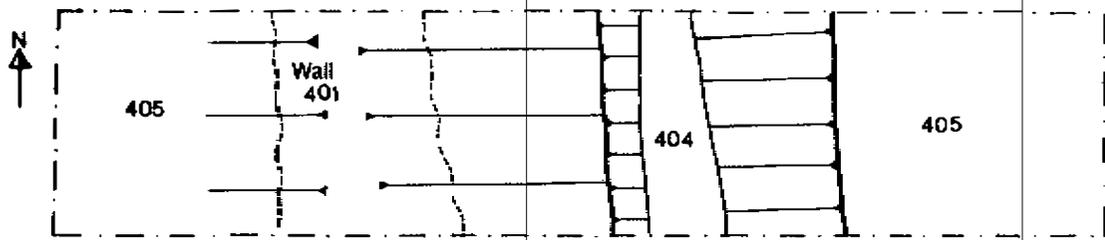
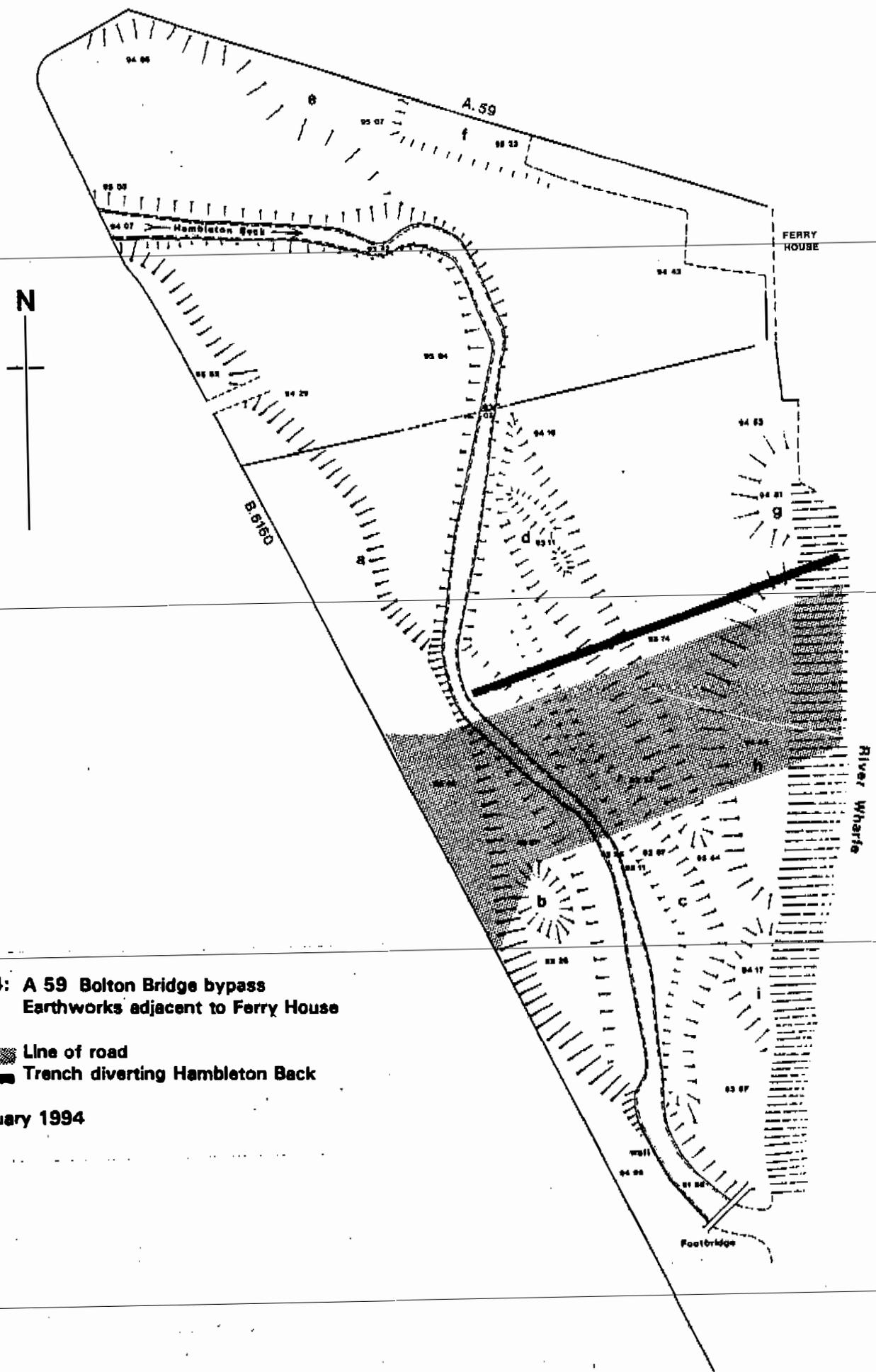
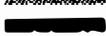


Fig. 3: Plans of Trenches 1 - 4



**Fig. 4: A 59 Bolton Bridge bypass  
Earthworks adjacent to Ferry House**

-  Line of road
-  Trench diverting Hambleton Beck

**February 1994**

