

Newcastle Area Command Headquarters

Forth Banks, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Archaeological Monitoring Work: 2nd and 8th September 2010

for

Wilmott Dixon Construction - November 2010



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Data Structure Report for the archaeological monitoring of the Soil Investigation Works

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Data Structure Report

for the archaeological monitoring of the Soil Investigation Works at Forth Banks, Newcastle-upon-Tyne

1. Introduction

This Data Structure Report presents the findings of archaeological monitoring works undertaken for William Dixon Construction on behalf of Northumbria Police Authority for the archaeological monitoring of Soil Investigation works at the site proposed for the development of the new Newcastle Area Command Headquarters (NACHQ).

The proposed development site lies within the Newcastle Central Conservation Area (HER 11378). The site is located to the southwest of Central Station and is centred on NZ 2452 6356. The site is triangular in shape and comprises an area of 74 hectares (Figure 1). It is bounded by Forth Banks to the east, Pottery Lane to the south and the King Edward VII Rail Viaduct to the north and west.

The Soil Investigation Works comprised a number of boreholes and test pits which were located across the development site. However, as these openings would only have been of limited usefulness for ascertaining any archaeological remains it was deemed desirable to open an additional five larger trial pits 1.2m by 4m in length. To minimise disturbance the location of these pits was roughly tied in with the locations already planned for the Soil Investigation works. Two of the test pits that were being excavated as part of the Soil Investigation works were also archaeologically monitored (Figure 2).

These investigative works were being undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application for the proposed development. The main objective of the archaeological monitoring works therefore was to inform on any archaeological hazard within the proposed development area and the appropriateness of any subsequent works if requires.

2. Background

As discussed at length in the Desk Based Assessment (Addyman Archaeology, 2009) it can be seen that the development site appears to have remained largely undeveloped until the industrial period (later half of the 18th century). Immediately before this the area appears to have served largely as communal grazing / recreational ground outwith the town walls. Although there have been no finds of prehistoric-medieval date within the development site, evidence from the surrounding area indicates there is potential for archaeologically significant material to be located within the development site. However, due to the amount of development from the industrial period onward the pre-existing ground would more than likely be heavily disturbed.

3. Project Works

The works, consisting of five machine cut trial pits, measuring roughly 4m by 1.2m and two smaller test pits took place on the 2nd and 8th September 2010. The works were undertaken as detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation which was agreed with the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer. All works complied with the Institute of Field Archaeology's Standards and Policy Statements and Code of Conduct.

4. Findings

The locations of the five trial pits and two test pits trenches are shown in Figure 2 and the findings are detailed below:

Trial Pit 8

This pit measured 4.60m by 1.20m and was aligned north / south. The upper surface was concrete (120mm in depth) below which was a black silt [101] (80mm in depth) which lay above a surface comprising red brick fragments mixed with concrete [102] (located at 200mm in depth). Below deposit [102] was an infill layer comprising a black slightly clayey silt containing large stones, bricks, modern china and glass [103] (600mm in depth). At roughly 1.25m in depth there was what appeared to be a wooden beam (sleeper) visible in the section. Beneath deposit [103] was a dirty brown clay [104] (1.3m in depth – at most). At 2.10m in depth there was a sandstone wall [105] aligned north northwest / south southeast. At 2.5m in depth there was an orangey brown slightly gritty / gravelly clay [106]. The trial pit was excavated to a total depth of roughly 2.7m (Plate 2).

Trial Pit 10

This pit measured 4.20m by 1.20m and was aligned north / south. The upper surface was concrete (180mm in depth) below which was a greyish black gravelly silt [107] containing a moderate amount of small stones (300mm in depth), Below this was another concrete surface mixed with red brick fragments [102] (120mm in depth). Below deposit [102] was an infill layer comprising a greyish brown gravelly silt containing fairly large sandstone blocks as well as smaller fragments of concrete and red bricks [108] (300mm in depth). At a depth of 900mm there was a brownish black gravelly deposit of clinker type material (industrial waste) including slag and coke / ash debris [109]. The trial pit was excavated to a total depth of roughly 3.1m (Front Cover).

Trial Pit 17

This pit measured 5m by 1.20m and was aligned northeast / southwest. The upper surface comprised large rectangular cobbles [110] bedded in a dark brownish black sandy gravel [111] containing frequent stones (300mm in depth). Below [111] there was a concrete surface that averaged 220mm in depth and had two metal posts set within it. Below the concrete was an infill material comprising a greyish brown slightly clayey sandy gravel [112] containing brick fragments and occasional 19th and 20th century ceramics with pockets of a dirty orangey brown sand [113] (excavated to a depth of 1.2m from upper surface). A dirty brown clay [114] with numerous small stones, red brick fragments and further 19th and 20th century ceramics was beneath deposit [113]. At 2m in depth (and 2.8m from the northeastern end of the trial pit) were the remains of a sandstone wall aligned roughly east / west [115]. Deposit [115] was visible either side of the wall and continued to a depth of 3m on the northeastern side (excavations were halted on the southwestern side of the wall to avoid damaging the wall further). The trial pit was stopped at a depth of 3m (Plate 1) as the material was unstable and causing the sides to collapse.

Trial Pit 19

This pit measured 4m by 1.20m and was aligned northeast / southwest. The upper surface comprised of large rectangular cobbles [110] which were set both within and above a black gravelly silt [116] (250mm in depth). Below [116] was a concrete surface mixed with red brick fragments.

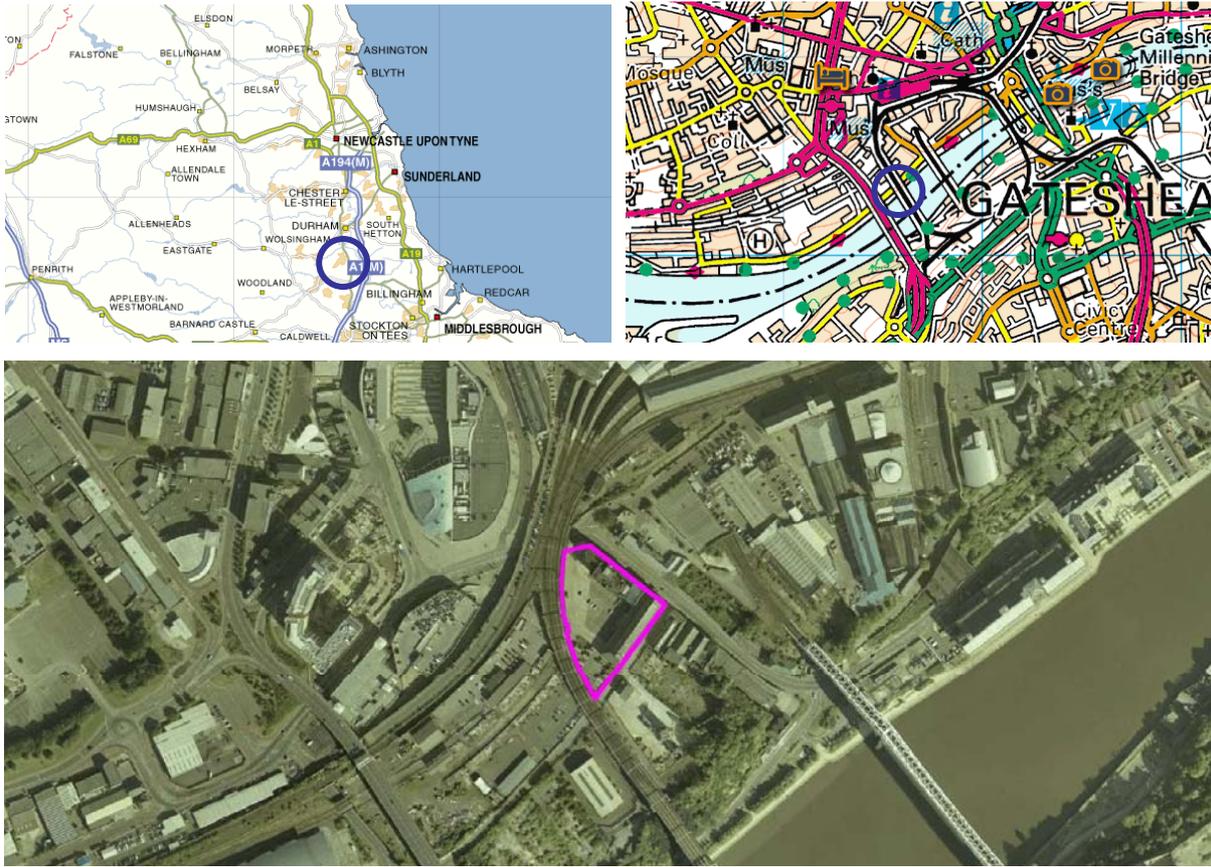


Figure 1 – Development Area location map. Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2012. All Rights Reserved. Licence Number 1000 06772



Figure 2 – Locations of trial pits and test pit 2



Plate 1 – Trial Pit 17



Plate 2 – Trial Pit 8



Plate 3 – Trial Pit 20



Plate 4 – Trial Pit 19



Plate 5 - Trial Pit 17 (walling)



Plate 6 – Test Pit 2

[102] (120mm in depth) beneath which was a very dirty brown silty clay [117]. At between roughly 1.20m and 1.60m in depth (at the southwestern end of the trench) there were some very large sandstone blocks which possibly formed part of a wall [118] (Plate 5). Below the wall and to the northeast was a very dirty greyish clayey gravel [119] containing bricks, 19th and 20th century ceramics and glass. The trial pit was stopped at a depth of 2.7m (Plate 4) as the material was unstable and causing the sides to collapse.

Trial Pit 20

This pit measured 4m by 1.20m and was aligned northwest / southeast. The upper surface comprised large rectangular cobbles [110] bedded in a brownish black (slightly gravelly) fine silt [120] with occasional coal fragments (200mm in depth). Below [120] was a thin layer of sandy clay [121] which came down onto a pale grey ashy material containing red brick fragments [122]. Beneath [122] was an infill material comprising a very dark brown dirty gravelly clay [123] containing brick and tile fragments. There was then a fairly clean orangey brown sandy clay deposit [124] which sloped in depth from the northwest to the southeast. The base of the trench contained a dirty brown and orange clay [125]. The trial pit was stopped at a depth of 3.10m (Plate 3) as the material was unstable and causing the sides to collapse.

Test Pit 1

This pit was excavated and backfilled prior to the agreed dates that the archaeologist was asked to attend site.

Test Pit 2

This pit measured 1.35m by 0.75m (at most) and was aligned northwest / southeast and was excavated immediately adjacent to the Kings House building. The upper concrete surface came down onto a very dirty brown gravelly silt [126] with occasional brick fragments (and complete bricks), small stones and clay pipe fragments. A redundant lead pipe was located at 300mm in depth and a disused saltglaze pipe was located at 460mm in depth. Below [126] at a depth of 1.45m was a light brown sandy clay mixed with gravel [127]. The test pit was excavated to a total depth of 1.8m – red brick from the basement level of the Kings House was visible in the southeast section (Plate 6).

5. Discussion

No pre-19th century archaeological features were identified during the course of the monitoring works. However, with the exception of trial pit 10, which possibly had *in-situ* subsoil at the base, the trial pits and test pit 2 all exhibited made-up ground upto a depth of 3m. As the works were only halted at this level, the maximum depth of general proposed ground reduction, due to the unsafe nature of the ground (which was liable to collapse), the actual depth of the made-up ground, or if archaeology survived, could not be generally established.

The walling that was revealed in trial pits 8 and 17, and possibly in trial pit 19, must relate to the one of the numerous structures depicted on 19th century cartographic sources (see DBA). But given that at least the foundations of some of these 19th century buildings survive - rather than them all having being cleared away to a natural level – there is the potential for earlier remains to still exist and have remained protected by the made-up ground.

6. *Recommendations*

In summary archaeological monitoring works were undertaken at the site proposed for the development of the new Newcastle Area Command Headquarters (NACHQ) on the 2nd and 8th September 2010. The works, which comprised the excavation of five trial pits and one test pit, mostly revealed a depth of made-up ground.

The actual depth of the made-up ground, below about 3m was not ascertained during the archaeological monitoring works. However, relatively little was found above this level apart from the 19th century walling remains in trial pits 8, 17, and possibly 19 (at 2.1m, 2m and 1.2-1.6m respectively). Since the proposed development will not impact below 3m (apart from the necessary piling), ***on the basis of the areas subject to evaluation***, it would seem that relatively few significant features or deposits will be disturbed.

On the basis of the results of the evaluation there would seem to be relatively little benefit in a more extensive archaeological presence during the general proposed ground reduction exercise. However the appropriateness and acceptability of this recommendation rests with Tyne and Wear Council and the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer (Jennifer Morrison).

References

Addyman Archaeology 2009 *Newcastle Area Command Headquarters, Forth Banks, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Desk Based Assessment.*

Addyman Archaeology 2010 *Newcastle Area Command Headquarters, Forth Banks, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Building Recording.*

Addyman Archaeology 2010 *Newcastle Area Command Headquarters, Forth Banks, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Written Scheme of Investigation.*

Appendix A:

Context Register

No.	Interpretation	Description
101	Bedding deposit for concrete	Black silt 80mm in depth
102	Surface	Concrete mixed with red brick fragments – located at a depth of 200mm
103	Infill / Made Ground	Black slightly clayey silt containing large stones, bricks, modern china and glass, 600mm in depth
104	Infill / Made Ground	Dirty brown clay
105	Wall	Sandstone wall located at 2.10m on depth and aligned north northwest / south southeast
106	Subsoil	Orangey brown slightly gritty / gravelly clay (200mm)
107	Bedding deposit for concrete	Greyish black gravelly silt containing a moderate amount of small stones (300mm in depth)
108	Infill / Made Ground	Greyish brown gravelly silt containing fairly large sandstone blocks as smaller fragments of concrete and red brick (300mm in depth)
109	Infill / Made Ground	Brownish black clinker type material (industrial waste) including slag, coke and ash debris – located at a depth of 900mm
110	Cobbles	Large rectangular whinstone cobbles
111	Bedding deposit for cobbles	Dark brownish black sandy gravel containing frequent stones (300mm in depth)
112	Infill / Made Ground	Greyish brown slightly clayey sandy gravel containing brick fragments and occasional 19 th and 20 th century ceramics
113	Deposit	Dirty orangey brown sand (pockets within [112])
114	Infill / Made Ground	Dirty brown clay with numerous small stones, red brick fragments and 19 th and 20 th century ceramics (excavated to a depth of 1.2m from the upper surface)
115	Wall	
116	Bedding deposit for cobbles	Black gravelly silt (250mm in depth)
117	Infill / Made Ground	Very dirty brown silty clay
118	Possible wall	Large sandstone blocks located at the southwestern end – possibly remnants of a wall
119	Infill / Made Ground	Very very dirty greyish clayey gravel containing bricks, 19 th and 20 th century ceramics and glass.
120	Bedding deposit for Cobbles	a brownish black (slightly gravelly) fine silt with occasional coal fragments (200mm in depth)
121	Deposit	Thin layer of sandy clay
122	Infill / Made Ground	Pale grey ashy material containing red brick fragments
123	Infill / Made Ground	Infill material comprising a very dark brown dirty

		gravelly clay containing brick and tile fragments
124	Deposit	Fairly clean orangey brown sandy clay deposit which sloped in depth from the northwest to the southeast
125	Infill / Made Ground	Dirty brown and orange clay
126	Infill / Made Ground	Very dirty brown gravelly silt with occasional brick fragments (and complete bricks), small stones and clay pipe fragments
127	Infill / Made Ground	Light brown sandy clay mixed with gravel – located at a depth of 1.45m

Appendix B:

Photographic Record

No.	Film No.	B/W Negative No.	Disc No.	Digital No.	Description	From	Date
1	-	-	1	1	Trench 17 pre-ex	NE	02/09/10
2	-	-	1	2	Trench 8 pre-ex	N	02/09/10
3	1	36	1	3	Trench 17 walling	NE	02/09/10
4	1	35	1	4	Trench 17 walling (close-up)	NE	02/09/10
5	1	34	1	5	Trench 17 walling	NE	02/09/10
6	1	33	1	6	Trench 17 general of SE section	N	02/09/10
7	1	32	1	7	Trench 8 SE section	S	02/09/10
8	-	-	1	8	Trench 20 pre-ex	NW	08/09/10
9	1	31	1	9	Trench 20 post-ex	NW	08/09/10
10	-	-	1	10	Trench 20 post-ex	NW	08/09/10
11	-	-	1	11	Trench 20 post-ex	NW	08/09/10
12	-	-	1	12	Trench 19 pre-ex	SW	08/09/10
13	1	30	1	13	Trench 19 post-ex	SW	08/09/10
14	-	-	1	14	Trench 19 post-ex	SW	08/09/10
15	1	29	1	15	Trench 10 post-ex	S	08/09/10
16	1	28	1	16	Trench 10 post-ex	S	08/09/10
17	1	27	1	17	Test Pit (1) Post-ex	NW	08/09/10
18	1	26	1	18	Test Pit (2) Post-ex	NW	08/09/10

ADDENDUM

Notes on the clay pipe stems by Rebecca Shaw, June 2011.

The remains of two straight clay pipes stems were located in test pit 2. Both stems were plain with no diagnostic makers mark or design. Both stems were only fragments rather than complete and therefore the actual length of the stems is unknown. However, the bore diameter in each stem is fairly small (roughly 1.6mm) which indicates that they are later rather than earlier in date, probably dating to the second half of the 19th century.