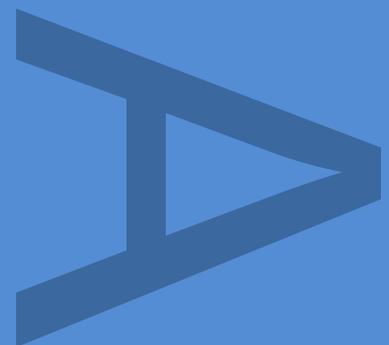


**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON BRIGNALL LANE, GRETA BRIDGE,
COUNTY DURHAM**

APRIL 2013



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON
BRIGNALL LANE, GRETA BRIDGE, COUNTY DURHAM**

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Quality Control	
<i>Project Number</i>	K2936
<i>Site Code</i>	GRB 12
<i>Report Number</i>	RN11014

<i>Task</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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<i>Revision No.</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Checked by</i>	<i>Approved by</i>
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**An Archaeological Watching Brief on Brignall Lane, Greta Bridge,
County Durham**

National Grid Reference: NZ 0841 1329

Site Code: GRB 12

Commissioning Client: (on behalf of Northern Powergrid (Northeast))

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April 2013**

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1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 An archaeological monitoring and recording exercise was conducted in association with a new electricity supply connection for the Morritt Arms Hotel, Brignall Lane, Greta Bridge, County Durham. The site lies at central National Grid Reference NZ 0841 1329, adjacent to a Scheduled Monument comprising the site of Greta Bridge Roman fort, part of the associated civilian settlement and a section of Roman road.
- 1.2 The archaeological investigation was commissioned by ADAS on behalf of Northern Powergrid and was undertaken in November 2012 by Pre-Construct Archaeology. The work was undertaken on the recommendation of Durham County Council Archaeology Section and was required because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site.
- 1.3 Groundworks for the electricity supply connection involved mechanical excavation of an open trench in a field on the west side of Brignall Lane, opposite Burns Cottage, to the south of the Morritt Arms Hotel. The trench, to house a cable connecting to the existing overhead line supply, lay in close proximity to the western boundary of the scheduled area. The archaeological work involved monitoring all invasive groundworks for the supply connection. The SW-NE aligned cable trench was c. 50m in length, c. 0.45m wide and was excavated to a depth of c. 0.65m.
- 1.4 The investigation recorded geological deposits as well as Roman period, undated and modern era archaeological remains. The Roman period remains comprised a stone surface, either a yard or road, along with a probably associated NW-SE aligned cobble stone wall, of which only the lowermost foundation course survived. These remains would have lain in close proximity to the north-western corner of the fort defences and would have been associated with the external civilian settlement.

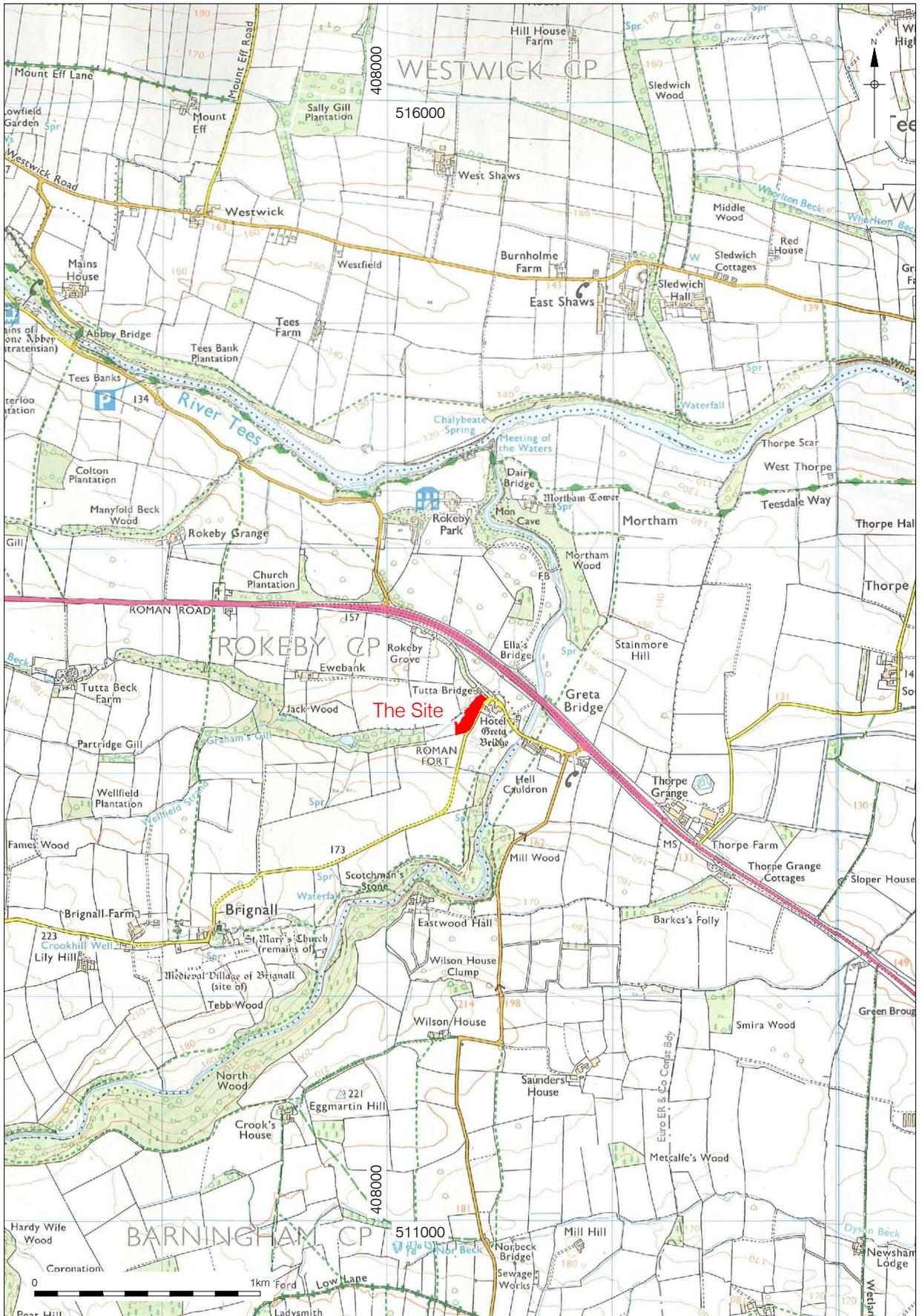
2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 General Background

- 2.1.1 A programme of archaeological work was undertaken in association with the upgrade of the electricity supply for the Morritt Arms Hotel, Greta Bridge, County Durham. The final stage of archaeological work was associated with the connection of the supply to the existing overhead line supply (OHL) by new underground cabling. The work was commissioned by ADAS on behalf of Northern Powergrid and undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) in November 2012.
- 2.1.2 The Morritt Arms lies immediately adjacent to a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No. 32721) that takes in Greta Bridge Roman fort, part of the associated *vicus* and a section of Roman road. Monuments which are scheduled under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979* as amended, are considered to be of national importance. The archaeological work associated with the new supply connection was required by Durham County Council, on the recommendation of its Archaeology Section (DCCAS). Although the work was to take place outside the scheduled area, the location is archaeologically sensitivity nevertheless.
- 2.1.3 The archaeological work was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation, (WSI) prepared by PCA (PCA 2012; included as Appendix C to this report) and approved by DCCAS. The work involved observation and recording (a 'watching brief') during invasive groundworks for the supply connection, which involved excavation of a trench to house new underground cabling. The cable trench was located immediately to the west of the boundary of the scheduled area.
- 2.1.4 The completed Site Archive, comprising written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited at the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham, within six months of the completion of fieldwork at the site, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with DCCAS. The site code is GRB 12. The Online 'Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations' (OASIS) reference number for the project is: preconst1-138452.

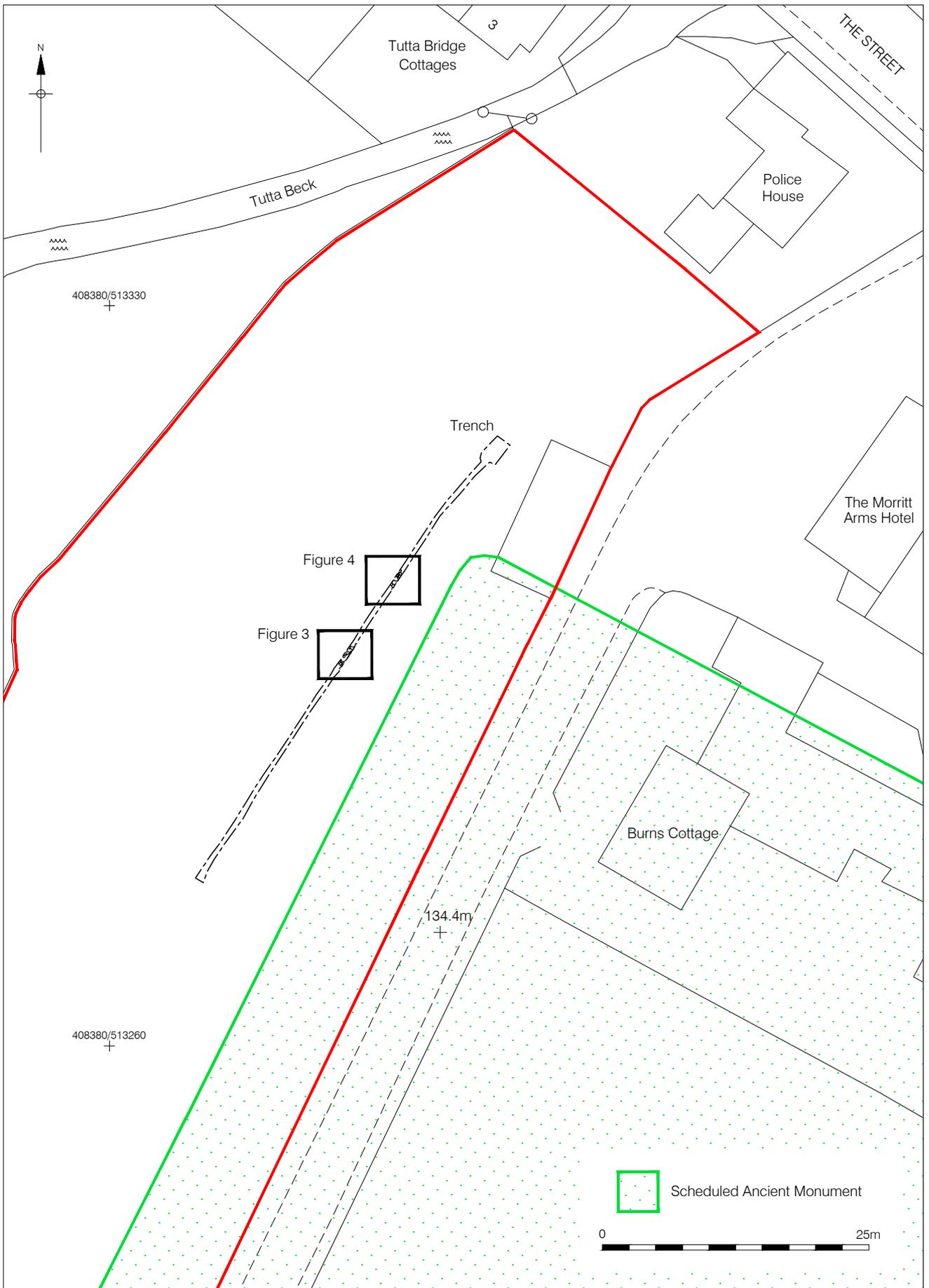
2.2 Site Location and Description

- 2.2.1 The Morritt Arms lies in the western part of the village of Greta Bridge, at the junction of The Street, and its north-westwards continuation Greta Bridge Bank, and Brignall Lane, which runs roughly south-westwards from the road junction.
- 2.2.2 The site of the new electricity supply connection lies at central National Grid Reference NZ 0841 1329 (Figure 1). It comprised a pasture field on the west side of Brignall Lane, opposite Burns Cottage, which lies immediately to the south of the Morritt Arms (Figure 2). The new cable trench ran SW-NE across the field between an existing OHL 'H-pole' and an existing kiosk at the field entrance on Brignall Lane.



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:25,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Site Location Detail
 1:500 at A4

2.3 Geology and Topography

- 2.3.1 The solid geology of the Greta Bridge area is the Alston Formation, consisting of limestone, sandstone, siltstone and mudstone, of Carboniferous age, whilst the superficial geology is Devensian glaciofluvial sand and gravel (data from the British Geological Survey website).
- 2.3.2 Greta Bridge lies within the Pennine hills, c. 5km south-east of Barnard Castle. The village lies west of the River Greta, c. 1.2km south of its confluence with the River Tees. To the west of the site herein described, Tutta Beck meanders roughly SW-NE to meet the River Greta. The site lies at an elevation of c. 135m OD.

2.4 Planning Background

- 2.4.1 The Morritt Arms at Greta Bridge lies immediately to the north of the scheduled area covering the Roman fort at Greta Bridge. The cable trench for the new electricity supply connection was excavated in a field, west of Brignall Lane, opposite Burns Cottage and just beyond the western boundary of the scheduled area (Figure 2).
- 2.4.2 Previous intrusive groundworks associated with the Morritt Arms electricity supply upgrade scheme were undertaken within the scheduled area and therefore required Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) prior to their undertaking. Land within any scheduled area has statutory protection under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979* as amended, as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance.
- 2.4.3 Although the new cable trench for the Morritt Arms supply connection lay outside the scheduled area, DCCAS advised that the groundworks were sufficiently close to it to require archaeological monitoring. At a national level, justification for the work lies within guidance on the historic environment now contained within Section 12, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012). Previously, *Planning Policy Statement 5: 'Planning for the Historic Environment'* (PPS5) (Department of Communities and Local Government, 2010) set out the guidance.
- 2.4.4 At a local level, justification for the archaeological work lies within Policy BENV 11 'Archaeological Interest Sites' of the *Teesdale District Council Local Plan (2002)*, one of a number of policies 'saved' until the emerging *County Durham Core Strategy* is finalised. This policy includes the following:
- Developments which affect sites of regional or local importance will only be approved where the applicant has secured a scheme of works which will in the first instance preserve archaeological remains in situ or where this is not possible by excavation and record.*
- 2.4.5 Therefore, DCCAS determined that the appropriate mitigation strategy for the excavation of the underground cable trench for the new supply connection for the Morritt Arms was a programme of archaeological watching brief, to preserve archaeological remains by excavation and record with all necessary subsequent reporting.
- 2.4.6 No Specification for the archaeological work was produced by DCCAS; instead the aforementioned WSI was compiled by PCA and approved by DCCAS prior to work commencing.

2.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The majority of the information used for the following summary has been taken from 'Keys to the Past', the online County Durham Historic Environment Record (HER) and the English Heritage list entry for Greta Bridge Roman fort. The research and writing of those responsible is gratefully acknowledged.

- 2.5.1 The only evidence of prehistoric activity in the near vicinity of the site is in the form of a large stone with cup and ring markings (HER 10325) recovered during roadworks in 1966. At the time, the object was being used as the lid of a Roman stone-lined grave that contained skeletal remains and associated objects; its exact location remains unknown.
- 2.5.2 It is for the Roman period that the site has particular archaeological potential. Greta Bridge is the site of a Roman fort, as well as its associated *vicus* and road (HER 1927, Ancient Monument List Entry Number: 1019074). As part of a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No.: 32721), these remains represent 'designated heritage assets' as introduced by PPS5. The fort stood on a raised terrace on the left bank of the River Greta, defended by a single bank and ditch with the exception of the southern side where there was a stone-faced rampart stood. The fort measured up to 140m by 95m within its defensive ramparts and ditches. The northern part of the fort lies within the grounds of the Morrill Arms and Burns Cottage, where it survives as buried archaeological features. Developments at Burns Cottage in 1994 and 1996 (HER 5160), revealed the presence of Roman deposits dated by pottery and coin evidence to the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The remains were interpreted as part of the earthen ramparts in the north-western corner of the fort and parts of a stone building.
- 2.5.3 Like many Roman forts, Greta Bridge had an associated external civilian settlement, a *vicus*. As a rare monument type with fewer than 60 recorded examples, all *vici* exhibiting significant surviving archaeological remains are considered of national importance. In advance of the re-alignment of the A66 road, two areas of the Greta Bridge *vicus* were subject to archaeological excavation in the 1970s (HER 5567 and 5745). At the first, located c. 200m north-west of the fort on the west bank of Tutta Beck, stone buildings were revealed which were thought to represent the western limit of the *vicus*. At the second, c. 200m north-east of the fort, a series of stone buildings were recorded, linked together with paved and cobbled areas; with pottery and coins suggesting that occupation began in the mid to late 2nd century and continued into the 4th century. A watching brief undertaken to the east of the *vicus* produced evidence of cremation burials.
- 2.5.4 The 1970s excavations also revealed that the Roman road survives to the north of the fort as a cambered gravel surface, 6m wide, later resurfaced with stone and flanked by stone lined drains. The road within this site forms part of the road that linked Dere Street at Scotch Corner to Carlisle across the Stainmore Pass.
- 2.5.5 Due to the proximity of the site to the scheduled area and the general wealth of previous Roman period findings in the area, the potential for the new electricity supply connection groundworks to disturb archaeological remains of Roman date was considered high.

- 2.5.6 Activity is not noted again in this area until the medieval period. The Deserted Medieval Villages of Mortham and Rokeby (HER 1930 and 1965) are situated c. 1km to the north of the site, with the only evidence of activity in the near vicinity being ridge and furrow exposed during trial trenching in 1972 (HER 5745) and documentary evidence of an earlier bridge being in poor condition by 1587 and later destroyed by floods (HER 1954). The current bridge near the site (HER 13356), along with numerous listed buildings (HER 13073, 13095, 13387 and 13864) are the only features of note for the post-medieval period.
- 2.5.7 It was therefore considered that the potential for disturbing post-Roman archaeological remains of importance was low.

3. PROJECT AIMS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Aims

3.1.1 The overarching aim of the archaeological project was to fulfil the requirements of DCCAS by undertaking an appropriately specified scheme of archaeological work in association with invasive groundworks for the new electricity supply connection for the Morrith Arms. Any archaeological remains encountered were to be identified, investigated and recorded.

3.2 Research Objectives

3.2.1 In view of the known Roman occupation of the area in which the site lies, the investigation was carried out with reference to *Shared Visions: the North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (NERRF) (Petts and Gerrard, 2006), specifically the following research priorities, as set out in the NERRF Research Agenda:

- Rii. Roads and communication
- Riii. The Roman military presence
- Riv. Native and civilian life
- Rviii. Burial

3.2.2 An appropriate level of reporting on the work was required, including, if necessary, full analysis and publication of any notable archaeological findings upon completion of the project. Thus the results of the work will constitute the preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered and subsequently removed during the course of works.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 Fieldwork

- 4.1.1. The watching brief was undertaken 8-9 November 2012. The work was undertaken in compliance with the relevant guidance document of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) (IfA, 2008a); PCA is an IfA-Registered Organisation. The PCA WSI (see Appendix C), approved by DCCAS, should be consulted for full details of the methodologies that were to be employed regarding archaeological recording, sampling, *etc.*
- 4.1.2. Groundworks for the new electricity supply connection for the Morrill Arms involved machine excavation of an open trench c. 50m in length to house underground cabling. The trench ran SW-NE through a pasture field on the west side of Brignall Lane, opposite Burns Cottage, and ran between an existing OHL 'H-pole' and an existing kiosk at the field entrance on Brignall Lane.
- 4.1.3. The cable trench was excavated to an average depth of 0.60m (0.78m maximum), an average width of 0.45m and an overall length of 50.72m (Figure 2). Excavation was subject to continuous archaeological monitoring. The trench excavation was undertaken mechanically, using a tracked digger of c. 5-tonne size.
- 4.1.4. Deposits and structures were recorded using the PCA *pro forma* 'Context Recording Sheet' and 'Masonry Recording Sheet'. A photographic record of the work was compiled. The trench was located using a Leica VIVA GNSS Smart Rover, which gives corrected Ordnance Survey co-ordinates and elevation data to an accuracy of 1 cm.

4.2 Post-excavation

- 4.2.1. The stratigraphic data for the project comprises written, drawn and photographic records. A total of six archaeological contexts were defined (Appendix B). Post-excavation work involved checking and collating site records, and phasing the stratigraphic data (Appendix A). A written summary of the archaeological sequence was then compiled, as described in Section 5.
- 4.2.2. A total of five sherds of pottery and two fragments of ceramic building material were recovered during the fieldwork. The five sherds of pottery were recovered in association with a stone surface, providing dating evidence. No suitable archaeological deposits were encountered to warrant the recovery of bulk samples for palaeoenvironmental material.
- 4.2.3. The complete Site Archive will be packaged for long-term curation. In preparing the Site Archive for deposition, all relevant standards and guidelines documents referenced in the Archaeological Archives Forum guidelines document (Brown, 2007) will be adhered to, in particular a well-established United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) document (Walker, UKIC, 1990) and a more recent IfA publication (IfA 2008b). The depositional requirements of the receiving body, in this case the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham, will be met in full.

5. RESULTS: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

During the watching brief, separate stratigraphic entities were assigned unique and individual 'context' numbers, which are indicated in the following text as, for example [123]. The archaeological sequence has been assigned to broad phases on a site-wide basis.

5.1 Phase 1: Natural Sub-stratum

5.1.1 A layer, [6], comprising soft, light yellowish brown silty sand was exposed as the basal deposit along the length of the cable trench (Figures 3 and 4). This deposit first occurred at a depth, c. 0.65m below existing ground level. The layer was recorded at a maximum height of c. 132.99m OD. The deposit is of glaciofluvial origin, representing the superficial geology of the area.

5.2 Phase 2: Undated (Roman or earlier)

5.2.1 Phase 2 is represented by a layer, [5], comprising soft, dark greyish brown clayey silt. The deposit was exposed along the length of the trench (Figures 3 and 4). The layer was recorded at a maximum height of 133.51mOD and had a maximum thickness of 0.18m. No finds were recovered from the deposit, although it is considered likely to be Roman or earlier in date as it directly underlay both surface [3] (Figure 3, Section 1) and wall [4] (Figure 4, Section 2).

5.3 Phase 3: Roman

5.3.1 Phase 3 represents Roman period activity. A stone surface, [3], comprising thin 'slabs' of sandstone (the largest measuring 300 x 200 x 70mm, the smallest 110 x110 x 40mm) was recorded at roughly the mid-point of the cable trench, directly overlying layer [5]. The full NE-SW extent of the surface as exposed was c. 2.50m and it extended the full c. 0.50m width of the trench (Figures 3 & 5). Its highest point was 133.49m OD, this c. 0.45m below the existing ground level. The surface appeared to have been disturbed as it was not continuous and several slabs similar to those in the surface were observed within the overlying layer, [2] (Figure 3, Section 1). The surface likely represents a yard area or possibly a road or pathway.

5.3.2 Five sherds of heavily abraded pottery were recovered during cleaning of surface [3]. Two of the sherds have been identified as samian, with a third most likely samian although too degraded to be certain (see Appendix D). The sherds are most probably Central Gaulish. The two remaining sherds are likely Romano-British coarse ware, although the degree of abrasion again makes identification uncertain.

5.3.3 Approximately 7m to the north-east of surface [3] were what appeared to be the remains of a NE-SW aligned stone wall, [4]. Formed from sub-angular sandstone cobbles (up to 300mm across), only one course survived, therefore this was evidently the lowermost foundation course of the wall of a building (Figures 4 & 6). The cobbles were bonded with soft, dark brownish grey clayey silt and the structure was c. 1.50m wide, crossing the c. 0.50m width of the cable trench. Its highest point was 133.37m OD, this c. 0.40m below the existing ground surface. No artefactual material was recovered in association with the structure, although like surface [3] it directly overlay layer [5] and is therefore assumed to be contemporary with those remains.

- 5.3.4 The stone surface and wall foundation are presumed to have been associated with the *vicus*. The remains would have lain in close proximity to the north-western corner of the fort defences.

5.5 Phase 4: Undated (Roman or later)

- 5.5.1 Phase 4 is represented by a developed soil, layer [2], comprising soft, dark reddish brown clayey silt. Recorded along the full extent of the cable trench, the maximum thickness of this deposit was 0.22m. It was recorded at a maximum a height of 133.67m OD, at a depth of 0.24m below existing ground level.

- 5.5.2 Two abraded fragments of ceramic building material were recovered from layer [2]. Both were Romano-British, the first a curved piece of *imbrex*, the second a fragment of *tegula* (see Appendix D).

5.6 Phase 5: Modern

- 5.6.1 Phase 5 is represented by a layer of topsoil, [1], comprising soft, dark brownish grey sandy silt, up to 0.38m thick. The developed turf of this layer formed the existing ground surface.

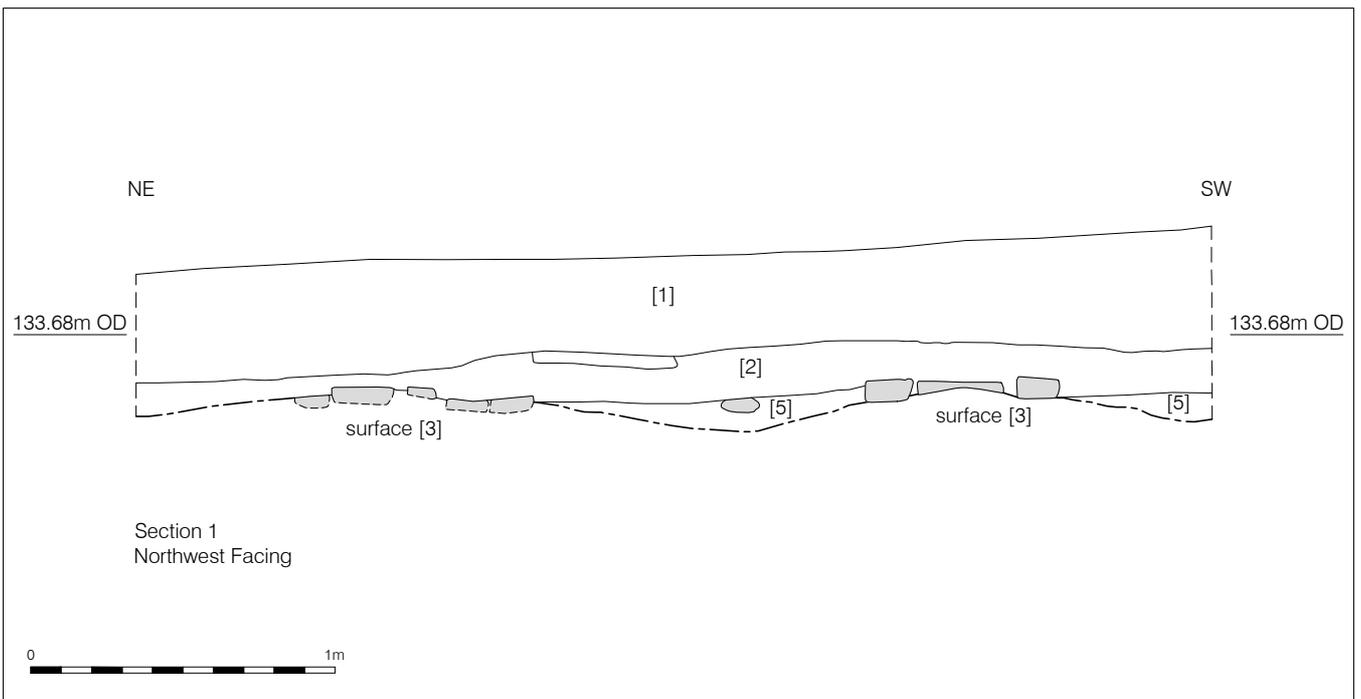
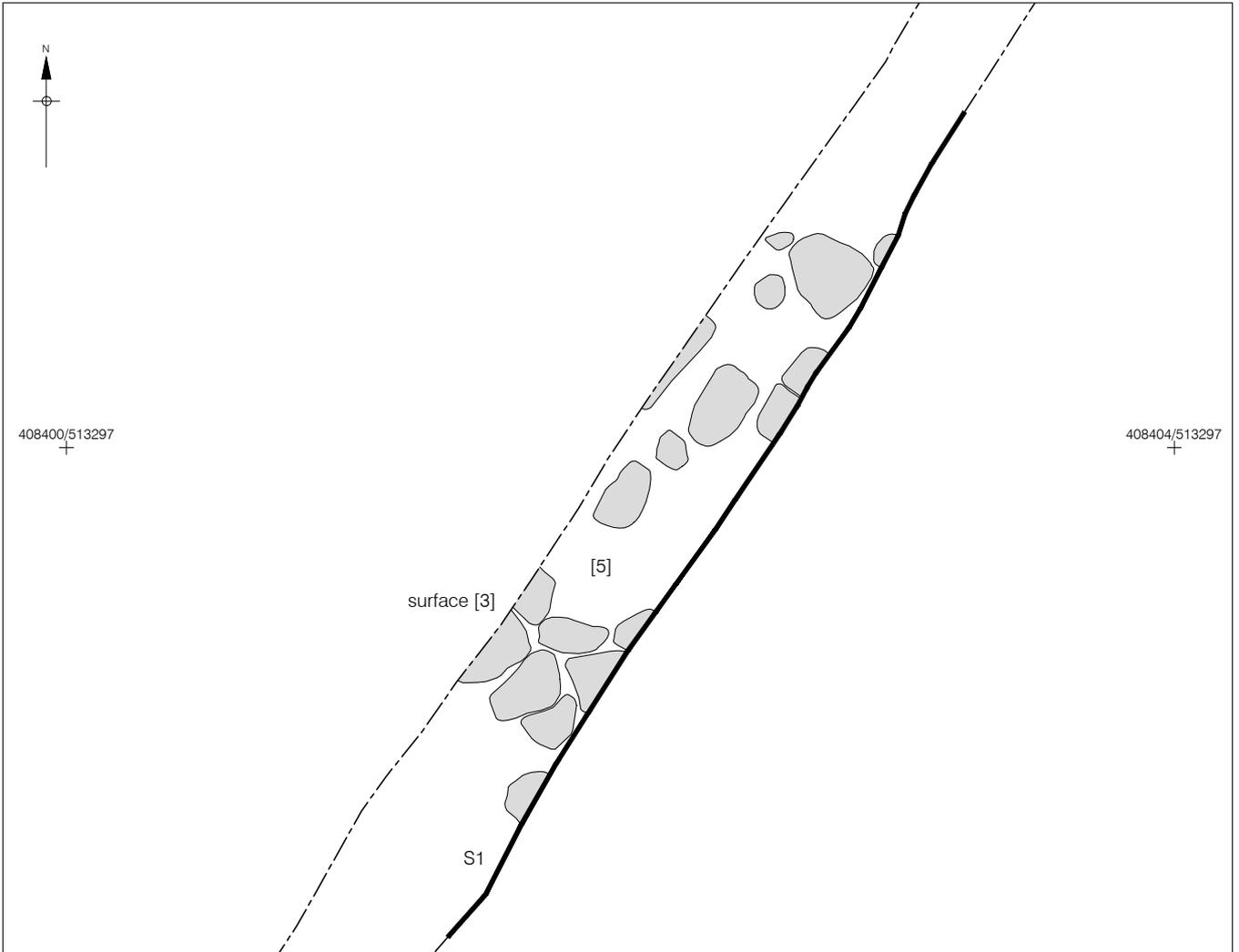


Figure 3
Plan and section, surface [3]
1:25 at A4

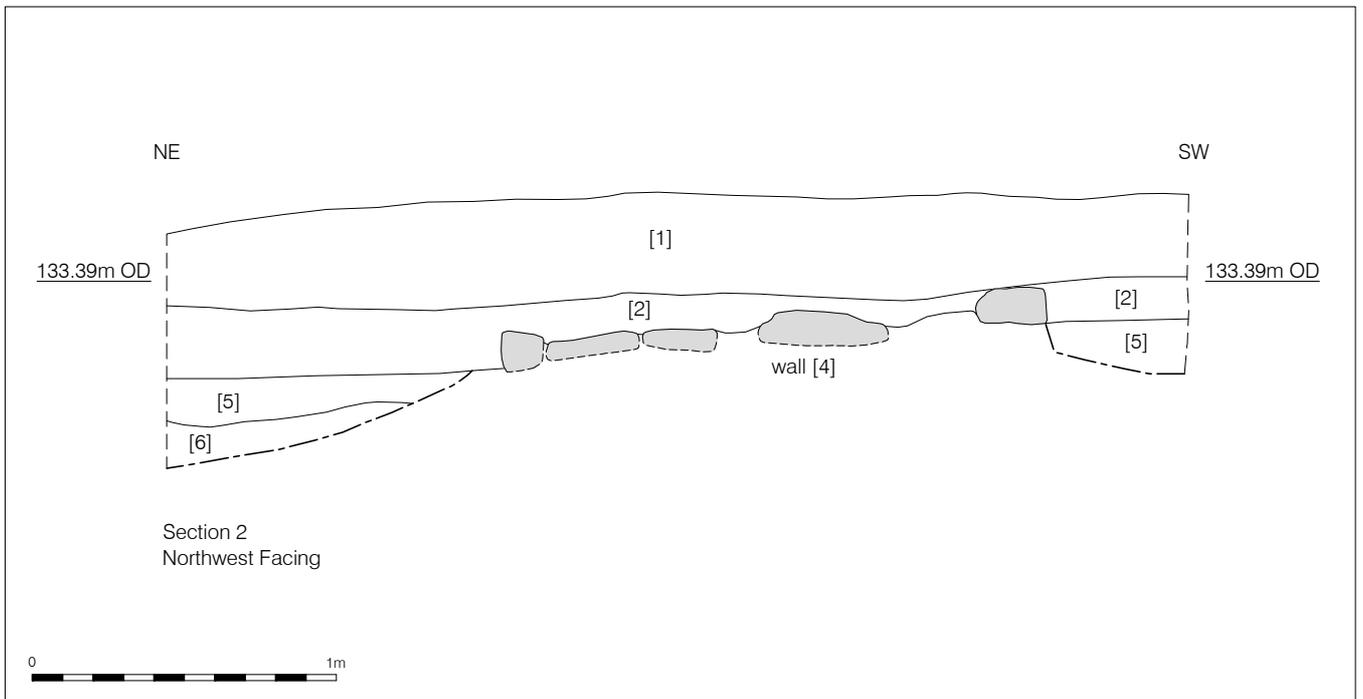




Figure 5. Stone surface [3], looking north-east (scale 0.5m)



Figure 6: Stone wall [4], looking south-west (scale 1m)

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 Geological and archaeological deposits encountered during the watching brief have been assigned to five phases of activity:

- Phase 1, represents the natural geology of the area, a silty sand deposit recorded within the base of the trench.
- Phase 2 is represented by a developed soil of Roman or earlier date.
- Phase 3 comprises Roman period remains. A disturbed stone slab surface was exposed, probably a yard area or road, and, to the north-east, the lowermost foundation course of what appeared to be a NW-SE aligned cobbled wall, presumably part of a building. Five sherds of Roman pottery were recovered during the cleaning of the surface. These remains would have lain in close proximity to the north-western corner of the fort defences and would have been associated with the *vicus*.
- Phase 4 is represented by a developed soil which overlay structures [3] and [4] and which therefore accumulated after they were abandoned; it is thus of Roman or later date.
- Phase 5 represents the modern ground surface, formed by a developed topsoil and turf.

6.1.2 Important remains of the Roman period were recorded during the watching brief, namely part of yard or road surface and the foundation of a wall. These remains are likely to be elements of the *vicus* lying beyond the north-western corner of the fort at Greta Bridge; excavations in the *vicus* in the 1970s revealed a series of buildings with paved and cobbled areas between.

6.1.3 Despite the limited nature of the investigation, the work undertaken in association with the new electricity supply connection for the Morrith Arms Hotel has provided important further knowledge of the extent of the *vicus* at Greta Bridge.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 The archaeological remains recorded in the field off Brignall Lane are of significance at a local and regional level. Dissemination of the archaeological evidence through publication would contribute important new information to current understanding of the spatial limit of the *vicus* at Greta Bridge. Although important, the limited nature of the findings indicates that appropriate dissemination should be inclusion of a summary of the results within *Archaeology County Durham*. This is an annual magazine compiled by DCCAS to provide an overview of recent archaeological discoveries in County Durham.

6.2.2 Academic justification for the proposed dissemination is provided by the NERFF key research priority for the Roman period, previously mentioned in Section 3, that is 'Riv. Native and civilian life', which states: '*Although vici developed around many Roman forts in the region, they are still poorly understood. Despite extensive recent geophysical work on many sites, their precise spatial limits are still little known*'.

7. REFERENCES

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Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2012. *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief on an Underground Electricity Supply Installation for the Morritt Arms Hotel, Brignall Lane, Greta Bridge, County Durham*, PCA unpublished.

Petts, D. and Gerrard, C., 2006. *Shared Visions: North East Regional Research Framework for the Historical Environment*, English Heritage, Durham County Council and Durham University.

Walker, K., 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage*, Archaeology Section, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation.

Online Sources

British Geological Survey website: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk>; for geological information.

English Heritage website for the list entry for Greta Bridge Roman fort: <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1019074>.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

Acknowledgements

PCA would like to thank ADAS for commissioning the project herein described on behalf of Northern Powergrid. The liaison role of Michael Chambers, ADAS Wayleave Officer, is acknowledged.

The curatorial role of Clare Henderson, Senior Archaeologist, DCCAS, is acknowledged.

PCA Credits

Fieldwork and Report: Scott Vance

Project Manager: Robin Taylor-Wilson

CAD: Jennifer Simonson

Other Credits

Ceramic Report: Dr James Gerrard (Newcastle University)

APPENDIX A
STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX

GRB 12: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX

Phase 5: Modern

1

Phase 4: Undated (Roman or later)

2

Phase 3: Roman

3

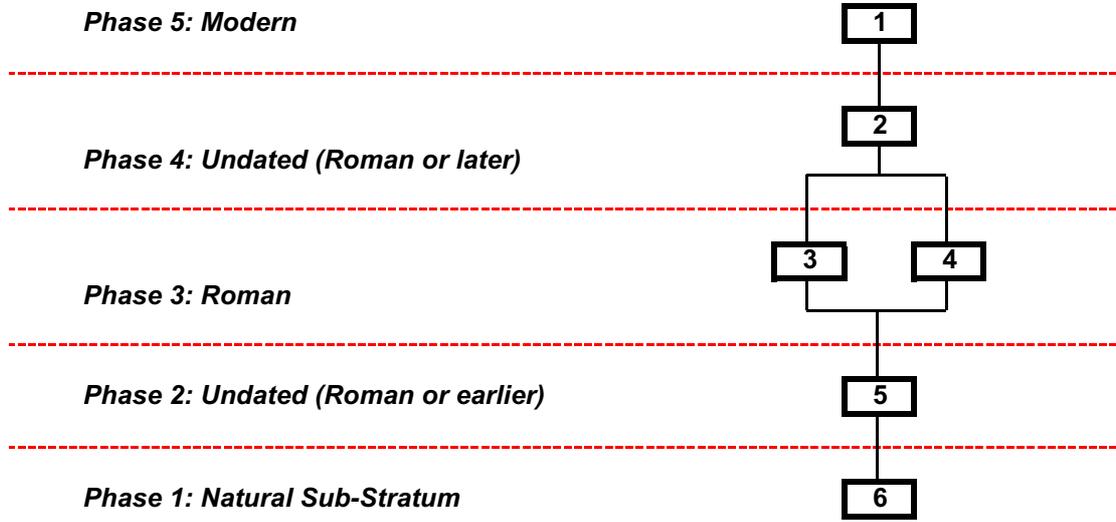
4

Phase 2: Undated (Roman or earlier)

5

Phase 1: Natural Sub-Stratum

6



**APPENDIX B
CONTEXT INDEX**

GRB 12: CONTEXT INDEX

<i>Context</i>	<i>Phase</i>	<i>Type 1</i>	<i>Type 2</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
1	5	Deposit	Layer	Topsoil
2	4	Deposit	Layer	Developed soil
3	3	Masonry	Floor	Stone surface
4	3	Masonry	Wall	Stone wall
5	2	Deposit	Layer	Developed soil, underlying structures [3] & [4]
6	1	Deposit	Layer	Natural

APPENDIX C
WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief on an Underground Electricity Supply Installation for the Morritt Arms Hotel, Brignall Lane, Greta Bridge, County Durham

Prepared on behalf of ADAS UK Limited by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

7 November 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 The Morritt Arms Hotel, Greta Bridge, County Durham, is having its electricity supply upgraded. An appropriately specified programme of archaeological work is to be undertaken in association with the part of the upgrade scheme which involves connection to the existing overhead line (OHL) supply off Brignall Lane. The work – to be undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) - will involve: archaeological observation and recording – a ‘watching brief’ – during invasive groundworks; excavation and recording of any archaeological remains of interest exposed; reporting on the work, including publication of any significant findings, as appropriate. The work has been commissioned by ADAS UK Limited on behalf of Northern Powergrid.

1.1.2 The site is of archaeological interest because of its proximity to the Scheduled Monument (National Monument No. 32721) which takes in Greta Bridge Roman fort, part of the associated *vicus* and a section of Roman road. As part of the electricity supply upgrade, a trench for an underground cable is to be excavated in a field off Brignall Lane, immediately adjacent to the scheduled area, so that the supply can be connected to the existing OHL supply. This work is to be archaeologically monitored, as determined by the Durham County Council Archaeology Section (DCCAS) because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site.

1.1.3 Any groundworks inside the scheduled area require archaeological monitoring as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC), on the advice of English Heritage to the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). SMC was previously granted for an earlier phase of work within the scheduled area at the Morritt Arms Hotel.

1.2 Site Location and Description

1.2.1 The site lies at central National Grid Reference NZ 0841 1329. The proposed groundworks involve excavation of a new cable trench, across a field on the west side of Brignall Lane, opposite Burns Cottage. The existing OHL supply route with which the new installation is to connect runs across this field and the new supply will run roughly north-eastwards from an existing OHL pole (behind an existing ‘H-pole’) to meet an existing kiosk adjacent to Brignall Lane. The new cable trench will run close to the boundary of the scheduled area, which lies to the east, running parallel with Brignall Lane at this location.

- 1.2.2 Greta Bridge lies within the Pennine hills, c. 5km south-east of Barnard Castle. The site lies to the west of the River Greta c. 1.2km south of its confluence with the River Tees. To the west of the site, Tutta Beck meanders roughly SW-NE to meet the River Greta. The solid geology of the area is of the Alston Formation, consisting of limestone, sandstone, siltstone and mudstone, of Carboniferous age, whilst the superficial geology is Devensian glaciofluvial sand and gravel.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

Much of the information used for the following summary has been taken from 'Keys to the Past', the online County Durham Historic Environment Record (HER), with other sources used as appropriate. The research and writing of those responsible is gratefully acknowledged.

- 1.3.1 The only evidence of prehistoric activity in the near vicinity of the site is in the form of a large stone with cup and ring markings (HER 10325), recovered during roadworks in 1966. At the time it was being used as the lid of a Roman stone-lined grave that contained skeletal remains and associated objects; its exact location remains unknown.
- 1.3.2 It is for the Roman period that the site has particular archaeological potential. Greta Bridge is the site of a Roman fort, as well as its associated vicus and road (Durham County HER 1927, Ancient Monument List Entry Number: 1019074). As part of a Scheduled Monument (National Monument No.: 32721), these remains fall within the category of 'designated heritage assets' as originally defined by *Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment'* (PPS5). Although PPS5 was replaced on March 27 2012 by Section 12, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), the concept of heritage assets, both designated and undesignated, continues in the new document.
- 1.3.3 The fort stood on a raised terrace on the left bank of the River Greta, defended by a single bank and ditch with the exception of the southern side where there was a stone-faced rampart stood. The fort measured up to 140m by 95m within its defensive ramparts and ditches. Archaeological excavation within the north-western corner of the fort during the 1990s (HER 5160), revealed Roman deposits and part of a stone building dated to the 2nd and 3rd centuries by pottery and coins. The northern part of the fort lies within the grounds of the Morrill Arms and Burns Cottage, where it survives as buried archaeological features. Developments at Burns Cottage in 1994 and 1996 revealed the presence of Roman deposits dated by pottery and coin evidence to the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The remains were interpreted as part of the earthen ramparts in the north-western corner of the fort and parts of a stone building.
- 1.3.4 Like many Roman forts, Greta Bridge had an associated external civilian settlement, a vicus. As a rare monument type with fewer than 60 recorded examples, all vici exhibiting significant surviving archaeological remains are considered of national importance. In advance of the re-alignment of the A66 road, two areas of the Greta Bridge vicus were subject to archaeological excavation in the 1970s (HER 5567 and 5745).

- 1.3.5 At the first area, located c. 200m north-west of the fort on the west bank of Tutta Beck, stone buildings were revealed which were thought to represent the western limit of the vicus. At the second, c. 200m north-east of the fort, a series of stone buildings were recorded, linked together with paved and cobbled areas; with pottery and coins suggesting that occupation began in the mid to late 2nd century and continued into the 4th century. A watching brief undertaken to the east of the vicus produced evidence of cremation burials.
- 1.3.6 The 1970s excavations also revealed that the Roman road survives at Greta Bridge as a cambered gravel surface, 6m wide, later resurfaced with stone and flanked by stone lined drains. The Roman road within this site forms part of the road that linked Dere Street at Scotch Corner to Carlisle across the Stainmore Pass.
- 1.3.7 Due to the wealth of previous findings in the area of the site at Great Bridge, the potential for groundworks associated with the scheme to disturb archaeological remains of Roman date is considered high.
- 1.3.8 Activity is not noted again in this area until the medieval period. The Deserted Medieval Villages of Mortham and Rokeby (HER 1930 & 1965) are situated c. 1km to the north of the site, with the only evidence of activity in the vicinity of the site being ridge and furrow exposed during trial trenching in 1972 (HER 5745) and documentary evidence of an earlier bridge being in poor condition by 1587 and later destroyed by floods (HER 1954). The current bridge near the site (HER 13356), along with numerous listed buildings (HER 13073, 13095, 13387 & 13864) are the only features of note for the post-medieval period.
- 1.3.9 It is therefore considered that the potential for disturbing archaeological remains of importance later than Roman date is low.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Morritt Arms Hotel occupies the north-eastern end of the Roman fort footprint, although only its south-westernmost element lies within the scheduled area at Greta Bridge. The underground cable trench for the new supply connection is to be excavated on land immediately to the west of Brignall Lane, just beyond and to the west of the scheduled area.
- 2.2 Previous intrusive groundworks for the supply upgrade scheme within the scheduled area required SMC from DCMS prior to their undertaking, since land within the scheduled area has statutory protection under *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*. In accordance with the 1979 Act, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport always consults with English Heritage before deciding whether or not to grant SMC. A condition of SMC specified that no groundworks could take place until the applicant confirmed in writing the commissioning of a programme of archaeological work before and/or during the development in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State advised by English Heritage. SMC also required that a report on the findings of the archaeological monitoring and recording exercise (watching brief) is submitted to DCCAS for inclusion in the County Durham HER and a copy is sent to English Heritage on completion of the fieldwork.

- 2.3 Although the new underground cable trench for the Morritt Arms supply connection is to be excavated outwith the scheduled area, the required intrusive groundworks lie sufficiently close to the scheduled area to require an archaeological watching brief.
- 2.4 At a national level, justification for the work lies within guidance on the historic environment now contained within the NPPF. At a local level, justification for the archaeological work lies within Policy BENV 11 'Archaeological Interest Sites' of the *Teesdale District Council Local Plan (2002)*, one of a number of policies 'saved' until the emerging *County Durham Core Strategy* is finalised. This policy includes the following:
- Developments which affect sites of regional or local importance will only be approved where the applicant has secured a scheme of works which will in the first instance preserve archaeological remains in situ or where this is not possible by excavation and record.*
- 2.5 Therefore, in sum, DCCAS determined that the appropriate mitigation strategy for the excavation of the underground cable trench for the new supply connection for the Morritt Arms comprises a programme of archaeological watching brief to preserve archaeological remains by excavation and record, with all necessary subsequent reporting.
- 2.6 No Specification for the archaeological work has been produced by DCCAS; instead this document comprises the written scheme of investigation (WSI) to be submitted for approval by DCCAS prior to work commencing.

3. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The project aims to fulfil the specific requirements of DCCAS by undertaking an appropriately specified scheme of archaeological fieldwork in association with the excavation of the underground cable trench for the new supply connection for the Morritt Arms, with subsequent reporting on the findings, as described in this document.
- 3.2 The archaeological work will aim to identify, investigate and record any archaeological remains through a programme of observation and recording - watching brief - conducted in association with the excavation of the underground cable trench for the new supply connection for the Morritt Arms.
- 3.3 In view of the known Roman occupation of the area in which the site lies, the investigation will be carried out with reference to *Shared Visions: the North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (NERRF)* (Petts and Gerrard, 2006), specifically the following research priorities, as set out in the NERRF Research Agenda:
- Rii. Roads and communication
 - Riii. The Roman military presence
 - Riv. Native and civilian life
 - Rviii. Burial

- 3.4 An appropriate level of reporting on the work is required, including, if necessary, full analysis and publication of any notable archaeological findings upon completion of the project. Thus the results of the work will constitute the preservation by record of any archaeological remains thus encountered and subsequently removed during the course of works. The full scheme of archaeological work required is described in the following section.

4. METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 General Standards

- 4.1.1 All archaeological work will be carried out in compliance with the codes and practice of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and will follow the relevant IfA standard and guidance document. PCA is an IfA 'Registered Organisation'.
- 4.1.2 All archaeological staff involved in the project will be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. The project will be overseen for PCA by a Member (at MIfA level) of the IfA
- 4.1.3 All archaeological staff involved in the project will be aware of the work required, as detailed in this document, and will understand the aims and methodologies of the project.
- 4.1.4 All relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice will be respected. For Health and Safety purposes, PCA is a sub-contractor and will have no responsibilities as a Principal/Main Contractor. Site welfare will be provided for PCA personnel. All PCA personnel will attend site inductions as required. All archaeological personnel will use PPE.

4.2 Archaeological Methodology - Fieldwork

- 4.2.1 Continuous archaeological monitoring and observation will be carried out during invasive groundworks, namely mechanical excavation of the underground cable trench for the new supply connection for the Morritt Arms. Work at the following location is to be monitored, as advised by DCCAS:
- The underground cable trench for the new supply connection. The trench will run roughly SW-NE through a field on the west side of Brignall Lane. It will house a cable connecting the existing OHL supply (on a single pole, beside an 'H-pole') with an existing kiosk adjacent to Brignall Lane. The new cable trench will run close to the boundary of the scheduled area, which lies to the east, running parallel with Brignall Lane at this location.
- 4.2.2 All monitoring and observation will be carried out by one (or more if required) suitably experienced professional archaeologist(s). The watching brief will continue until such time as invasive groundworks are completed or until it becomes obvious that no additional archaeological information of note will be forthcoming, this to be agreed with DCCAS.
- 4.2.3 Any archaeological remains of possible significance exposed during groundworks are to be immediately examined, hand cleaned, excavated and recorded, to an appropriate level and in accordance with the methodology set out in *Fieldwork Induction Manual. Operations Manual I* (PCA 2009) and *Archaeological Site Manual, Third Edition* (Museum of London 1994).

- 4.2.4 Within the scope of the watching brief, adequate time is to be afforded for archaeological work to take place to the satisfaction of the attendant archaeologist(s). Depending upon the significance of any archaeological remains preservation *in situ* may be required, although it is envisaged that for most remains preservation by record will be suitable mitigation.
- 4.2.5 All archaeological remains - structures, features and deposits - encountered at the site will be excavated and recorded to the necessary extent to achieve as full an understanding as possible of the past activity that those remains represent. All archaeological features (layers, cuts, fills, structures) that do not merit preservation *in situ* will be excavated by hand tools and recorded in plan and/or section. Archaeological recording will be carried out by means of unique numeric based context records and will be written, drawn and photographic (and any other appropriate means). All archaeological exposures (layers, cuts, fills, structures) will be recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets. Where stratified deposits are encountered, a 'Harris' matrix will be compiled.
- 4.2.6 The area of investigation will be located by appropriate means to ensure its accurate location relative to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Drawn records of archaeological features and deposits will normally be at a scale of 1:10 (sections) or 1:20 (plans) and will be prepared in a suitable form of digitisation. Where possible, archaeological features and deposits will be logged relative to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.2.7 Archaeological excavation may require work by pick/mattock and shovel. Such techniques will be used only for the removal of homogeneous and 'low grade' layers, where it can be reasonably argued, firstly, that more detailed attention would not produce information of value and, secondly, that their removal provides a window onto the underlying archaeological levels. Such tools will not be employed on complex stratigraphy, and where deposits are removed in this manner they will have been properly recorded first.
- 4.2.8 Photography will be undertaken in 35mm film and digital format. Graduated metric scales will appear in all photographic frames and, in addition, general 'working shots' will be taken to show the overall scale of the archaeological operation mounted. A register of all photographs will be kept.
- 4.2.9 During the archaeological work, a high priority will be given to dating any archaeological remains. Therefore, all relevant artefacts and finds would be retained. Consideration would also be given to the recovery of specialist samples for scientific analysis, particularly samples of structural materials, samples for absolute dating and bulk or column samples of deposits for palaeoenvironmental evidence. Different sampling strategies may be employed according to established research targets and the perceived importance of the strata under investigation.
- 4.2.10 The overall aim of the fieldwork with respect to archaeological science is to determine the types of material preserved and in what quantity and condition, thus enabling the aims and objectives of the project as a whole to be addressed. The advice of English Heritage's Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science (RAAS) will be sought, as appropriate.
- 4.2.11 Deposits would be assessed for their potential for absolute dating by radiocarbon, archaeomagnetism or by any other means and, if appropriate, samples would be recovered for these purposes. Specialist analysis of the recovered material would be a requirement.

- 4.2.12 Appropriate procedures involving human remains and discoveries classed as 'treasure' under *The Treasure Act 1996* (and its 2003 revision) will be followed, as appropriate. In the event of human burials being discovered, PCA will procure and comply with all statutory consents and licences. If human burials are encountered, they would be recorded by photography and the use of *pro forma* recording sheets. Where any part of a human burial is disturbed, the whole burial would be archaeologically excavated as far as possible, but always with Health and Safety considerations in mind.
- 4.2.13 Waterlogged organic materials are possible at this site and, in the event that such materials are encountered, they would be dealt with according to guidelines set out in the English Heritage documents *Waterlogged Organic Artefacts. Guidelines on their recovery, analysis and conservation* (2012) and *Waterlogged Wood. Guidelines on the recording, sampling, conservation and curation of waterlogged wood* (2010).
- 4.2.14 All processing of artefacts and ecofacts would be undertaken away from the site. All finds would be treated in a proper manner and would be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with recognised guidelines.

4.3 Archaeological Methodology – Post-Excavation

- 4.3.1 Irrespective of whether or not any archaeological remains of note are encountered during the watching brief fieldwork, the archaeological investigation will be summarised in a report. The report will include the following information specific to the work:
- a summary statement of the results of the investigations;
 - the aims and methods adopted in the course of the work;
 - illustrative material (cross-referenced within the text) including an overall site location plan and a plan showing the location all areas of investigation, both tied into the Ordnance Survey grid and at recognisable scales, plans and sections of archaeological deposits at recognisable scales, and photographs, as appropriate;
 - text detailing the nature, extent, date, condition and significance of any archaeological remains.
- 4.3.2 The report will detail the dates when the fieldwork was undertaken.
- 4.3.3 All recovered artefacts (e.g. ceramic, metallic) and samples (e.g. bulk soil samples for biological remains) would be examined off-site by appropriate specialists. For each category of artefact and ecofact, an assessment report would be produced, that would include a basic quantification of the material, a statement of its potential for further analysis and recommendations for such work. The results of all specialist assessment reports would be incorporated into the overall report on the watching brief.
- 4.3.4 PCA's ceramic specialist for Roman pottery is Alex Croom (Tyne and wear Museums). PCA's ceramic specialist for medieval and post-medieval pottery is Jenny Vaughan (Northern Counties Archaeological Services).
- 4.3.5 PCA's palaeoenvironmental consultant is Dr. Charlotte O'Brien (Archaeological Services Durham University). Human remains and animal bone would be examined by James Langhorne and Kevin Rielly, respectively (both PCA).

- 4.3.6 PCA's conservation specialist is Karen Barker, a freelance archaeological conservator.
- 4.3.7 Where one or more elements of the recovered data-set from the watching brief is identified as having potential for further analysis (irrespective of whether or not extensive, significant and/or unexpectedly complex archaeological remains are discovered), an 'Updated Project Design' would be produced to accompany the report on the watching brief and this would detail any requirements for further analysis of material, the results of which would likely require reporting on in a subsequent published paper or report. Costs for any such further analysis and publication can only be established after an initial assessment of the material. The scope of any such further analysis and publication would be agreed with the commissioning client before being undertaken. The 'Updated Project Design' would detail the post-excavation methodologies to be employed, as well as outlining the likely form of a publication paper.
- 4.3.8 Copies of all reports will be sent to relevant organisations in hardcopy and electronic format, as required. The requirements of DCCAS with regard to report format and number of copies will be followed. At the time of writing, DCCAS require 1 no. hardcopy and 1 no. pdf (on CD) for inclusion into the County Durham HER. PCA grant licence to the County Durham HER to use the report and its content.
- 4.3.9 DCCAS supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) Project. PCA will complete an OASIS form for the project during the compilation of the report on the work. The OASIS reference number will be included in the report. When the report has become a public document by incorporation into the HER, DCCAS will validate the OASIS form, thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website.

4.4 Site Archive

- 4.4.1 The data collected during the programme of archaeological work, including all paper and photographic records, as well as all artefacts and ecofacts recovered, will comprise the Site Archive. The Site Archive will be prepared to recognised standards.
- 4.4.2 The Site Archive will be deposited at the County Durham Archaeological Archive, Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, within six months of the completion of fieldwork at the site, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with DCCAS. Deposition will be in accordance with the County Durham Archaeological Archive policies.

**APPENDIX D
CERAMIC REPORT**

Ceramic Report (*James Gerrard*)

Introduction

The watching brief produced five sherds of Roman pottery and two fragments of ceramic building material.

Catalogue

Context [2]

1 curved *imbrex* fragment, grey core, orange surfaces with moulding sand on the interior, AD 43-400.

1 fragment of *tegula*, abraded, AD 43-400.

Context [3]

1 sherd, abraded samian, some surface surviving, probably Central Gaulish, possibly a fragment of a Dr31, c. AD 150-200.

1 sherd, very abraded, fine orange fabric, surfaces lost, likely that this is a Central Gaulish samian sherd c. AD 120-200.

1 sherd, very abraded, fine orange fabric, possibly samian, AD 43-200.

2 sherds, coarse orange fabric, very abraded, possibly Romano-British coarse ware, AD 43-400+

Discussion

The assemblage is in a very poor state of preservation. The pottery is heavily abraded with rounded corners and lacking surfaces. There are two, possibly three, samian sherds. These are most probably Central Gaulish and one may be from a Dr31. The pottery and building material is indicative of Romano-British activity nearby.

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