



Trial Trench No.1 - as excavated



Trial Hole No.1 - as excavated



Trial Hole No.2 - as excavated

PLATE 3

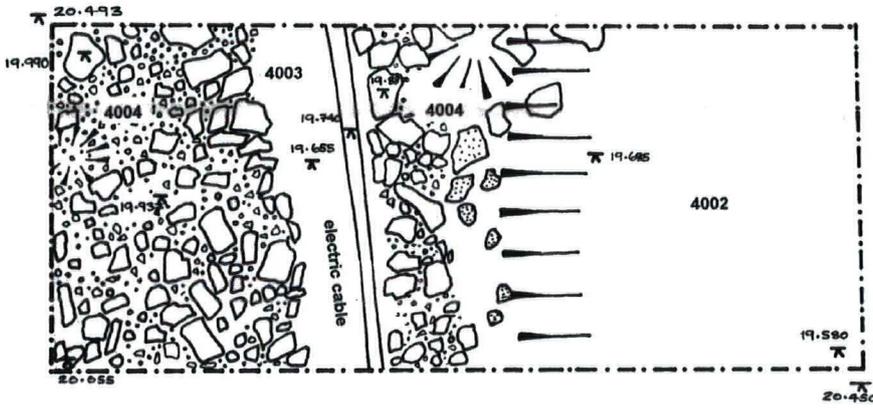


Trial Trench No.2 - Roman Road



Roman Road - detail - vertical 16

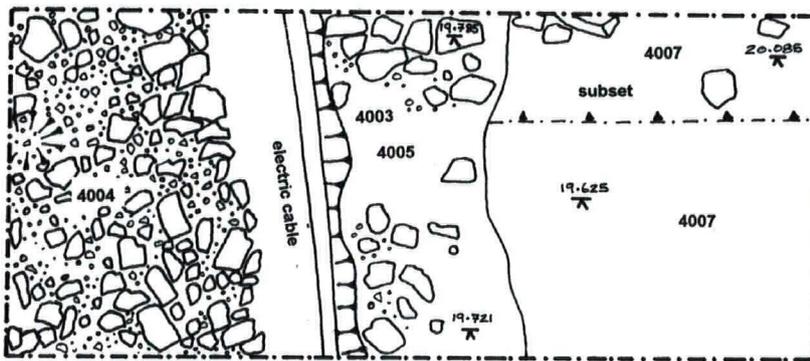
Plan A



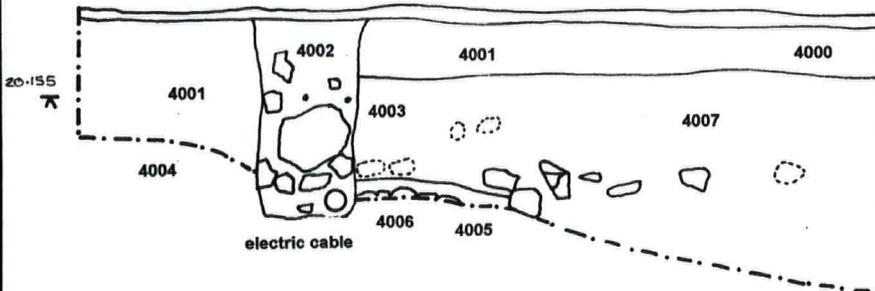
Key

-  Red Sandstone
-  Water Worn Cobble
-  Water Worn Cobble (removed)

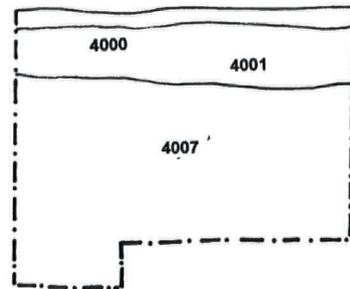
Plan B



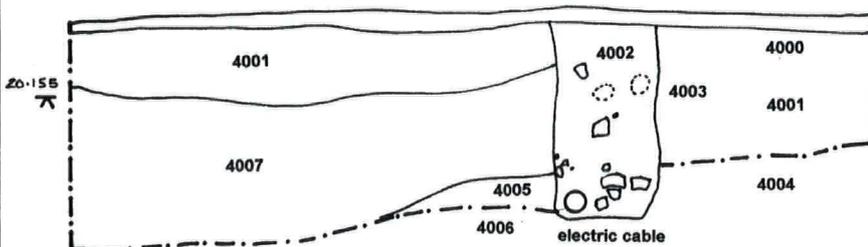
South South West Facing Section



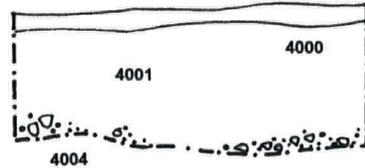
West North West Facing Section



North North East Facing Section



East South East Facing Section



East South East Facing Profile of Roman Road



All heights are given in metres AOD

The surface had been cut and disturbed by the excavation of a service trench associated with the installation of a low voltage electricity cable. This recent disturbance provided a useful opportunity to observe the nature and the depth of the surface, it was noted that the cobbles measured up to 0.30 metres deep and consisted of a series of laminations. It would appear that these were the remains of successive road surfaces and did not reflect one phase of construction. The date of these surfaces was not accurately established but the form, nature and levels are comparable with those similar surfaces identified within Trial Trench's 3 and 4 as Late Roman.

The layer of loamy sand (context 4005) that was identified within the eastern two thirds of the excavation post dated the adjacent cobble surface and contained a moderate quantity of Late Roman pottery. The layer was identified within the base of the excavation and appears to increase in depth towards the east.

Trial Trench No.3

Type: Exploratory Excavation: hand and machine
N.G.R: 440634 466482

Length: 2.50 metres
Width: 1 metre
Depth: 1.10 metres

Planform: Rectangular
Aligned: east south east
Area: 2.50 square metres

Context No's: 5000 - 5008
Plate No: 4, 5
Fig. No: 1, 3

The trial trench was excavated so as to ascertain the nature of the buried ground levels beneath the proposed driveway that runs parallel and adjacent to the eastern boundary of the study area. The trial trench was excavated into the north eastern corner of the car parking area that is surfaced with tarmac.

The existing ground levels slope downwards very gently towards the west at 20.755 metres AOD.

Due to the close proximity of the adjacent buildings of the neighbouring property, The Castle, to the trial trench and to ensure the structural stability of same the trench was excavated 1.0 metre distant from the western elevation of this building.

The tarmac (context 5000) and sub-bases (context 5001/2) of the existing car park were excavated by machine.

A layer of made up ground (context 5003) was identified beneath the sub base, this layer was well compacted and contained a moderate quantity of inclusions that included brick fragments and metalwork that is suggestive of demolition material. This layer was excavated exposing 19th century construction levels (context 5005), the inclusions within which would suggest that this material is associated with building works to The Castle.

The construction material was removed down onto a cobble surface (context 5006), this feature was identified within the western extent of the trench at 20.147 metres AOD. The cobbles were loosely bedded and intermittently concentrated, the upper surface of the cobbles sloped downward to the east on a moderate gradient. The feature appeared to continue beyond the edge of excavation to the west, the eastern extent of the feature was identified within the central area of the excavation. The surface was imbedded with a small quantity of 12/13th century pottery. This would suggest that the cobbles were exposed during the medieval period and may well have formed part of a yard or road surface dating to this period.

The medieval surface was excavated to reveal a well constructed cobble surface (context 5008) at 19.937 metres AOD, the feature had a similar profile to the camber of the medieval surface, the eastern extent of the cobbles were identified within the central area of excavation at 19.720 metres AOD. The cobbles and pebbles measured less than 0.13 metres in size and were extremely well compacted and tightly grouped with no apparent arrangement or pattern noted within the upper surface, the narrow fissures between the cobbles were filled with fine grained pea grit. The western extent of the surface would appear to be relatively level on a north / south axis. The full extent of the surface was not exposed as it continues beyond the western excavation edge. The feature was not excavated but was left in situ, however, it was confirmed that this surface predates the medieval cobble layer and from it's relationship with the adjacent layer of loamy sand (context 5007), a deposit rich in Late Roman pottery it is suspected that the cobbles are part of a Late Roman surface.

The cobble surface is comparable with those similar features identified within Trial Trench's 2 and 4 as Late Roman and their location is consistent with the previously unproven line of the Roman road leading from the centre of Isurium towards the north gate of the town and beyond to the River Ure.

PLATE 4

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Trial Trench No.3 - Roman Road



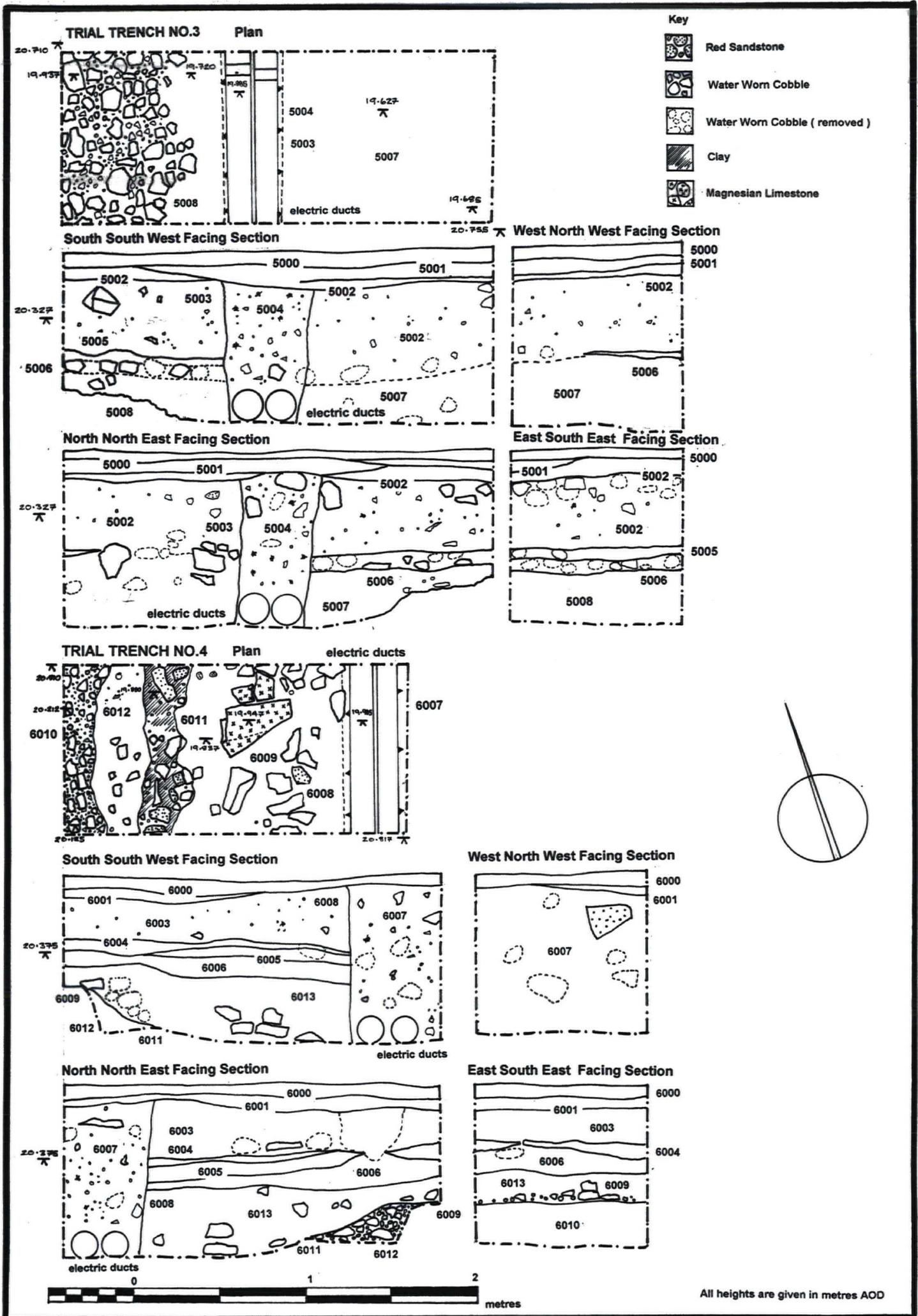
Roman Road - detail - oblique

PLATE 5



Trial Trench No.3 - Roman Road - detail - vertical

FIGURE 3 TRIAL TRENCH NO.3 & 4



The surface of the layer of loamy sand (context 5007) that was located within the eastern area of the trench was identified at 20.047 metres AOD, the layer appeared to increase in depth towards the east. The layer had been cut by the electricity service trench, towards the base of this service trench at 19.885 metres AOD two 0.15 m diameter electricity ducts were arranged side by side.

Trial Trench No.4

Type: Exploratory Excavation: hand and machine
N.G.R: 440630 466470

Length: 2.0 metres
Width: 1.0 metre
Depth: 1.0 metre

Planform: Rectangular
Aligned: east south east
Area: 2.0 square metres

Context No's: 6000 - 6013
Plate No: 4, 7
Fig. No: 1, 3

The trial trench was excavated so as to ascertain the nature of the buried ground levels beneath the proposed driveway that runs parallel and adjacent to the eastern boundary of the study area. The trial trench was excavated into the centre eastern area of the car park that is surfaced with tarmac.

The existing ground levels slope downwards very gently towards the west at 20.817 metres AOD.

Due to the close proximity of the adjacent buildings of the neighbouring property, The Castle, to the trial trench and to ensure the structural stability of same the trench was excavated 1.0 metre distant from the western elevation of this building.

The tarmac (context 6000) and sub-bases (context 6001/6002) of the existing car park were excavated by machine.

A layer of made up ground (context 6003) was identified beneath the sub base, this layer of clayey sandy loam was well compacted and contained a moderate quantity of inclusions that included brick fragments and modern metalwork that is suggestive of demolition material. It is suspected that this layer was deposited shortly after the demolition of the terrace cottages that occupied the street frontage up to the 1950's. This layer was excavated exposing a layer of demolition rubble (context 6004) this layer consisted of mortar, lime and crushed magnesian limestone and contained a small quantity of modern finds, this context has been interpreted as demolition rubble associated with the removal of the terrace cottages.

These 20th century deposits were overlying a horizon of well compacted sand (context 6005), this layer had the appearance and quality of a bedding sand for paving stones (now removed). Should this be the case it would suggest a paved area to the rear of the former terrace and may have functioned as a yard or footway.

These deposits were reduced down onto a layer of sandy clay (context 6006) the surface of which was identified at 20.375 metres AOD. This well compacted layer contained a single sherd of late medieval pottery and has been interpreted as a 17th century trampled earthen floor. The context was excavated to reveal that it had accumulated on the upper surface of a cobble surface (context 6009), this feature was identified within the western extent of the trench at 20.212 metres AOD. The cobbles were loosely bedded and intermittently concentrated, the upper surface of the cobbles sloped downward to the east on a moderate gradient, at which point the surface was sealed by a layer of loamy sand (context 6013). The feature appeared to continue beyond the edge of excavation to the west, the eastern extent of the feature was identified within the central area of the excavation. The surface was imbedded with a small quantity of 12/13th century pottery. The feature, therefore, shared similar characteristics to the cobble surface (context 5006) identified within Trial Trench No.3 and it is suggested that they both form part of the same medieval surface.

The medieval surface was excavated to reveal a well constructed cobble surface (context 6010) at 20.125 metres AOD, the feature had a similar camber to the medieval surface, the eastern extent of the cobbles were identified within the central area of excavation at 19.880 metres AOD. The cobbles and pebbles measured less than 0.10 metres in size and were extremely well compacted and tightly grouped with no apparent arrangement or pattern noted within the upper surface, the narrow fissures between the cobbles were filled with fine grained pea grit. The full extent of the surface was not exposed as it continues beyond the western excavation edge. The feature was partially excavated and it was confirmed that this surface predates the medieval cobble layer and from it's relationship with the adjacent layer of loamy sand (context 6013), a deposit rich in Late Roman pottery it is suspected that the cobbles are part of a Late Roman surface.

The eastern extent of the cobble surface was bedded within a layer of highly plastic clay (context 6011), this layer was identified in a narrow strip running parallel and adjacent to the edge of the cobbles, it was confirmed that this clay was contemporary with the construction of the cobble road and would appear to have functioned as an adhesive strip to retain and support the camber of the Roman road.

From the limited excavation of this road it was also confirmed that the earliest lamination of cobbles were bedded on a layer of clayey sand (context 6012), this layer was highly compacted and was butted by the clay kerb like margin to east, the surface had a slight camber rising gradually to the west to 19.866 metres AOD. It would appear that the layer functioned as a sub base for the cobble surface.

The cobble surface is comparable with those similar features identified within Trial Trench's 2 and 3 as Late Roman and their location is consistent with the previously unproven line of the Roman road leading from the centre of Isurium towards the north gate of the town and beyond to the River Ure.

The surface of the layer of loamy sand (context 6013) that was located within the eastern area of the trench was identified at 20.285 metres AOD, the layer appeared to increase in depth towards the east. The layer was found to contain a number of large fragments of broken sandstone masonry, these were suspended within the soil matrix. The upper surface of this layer was partially overlying a cobble surface dating to the Late Medieval period (context 6009). This evidence would suggest a 17th century date of deposition for this layer, this is of particular interest given that it is comparable both in nature and stratigraphically with a similar deposit, context's 4005 and 5004 within Trial Trench's 2 and 3. The layer had been cut by the electricity service trench, towards the base of this service trench at 19.985 metres AOD two 0.15 m diameter electricity ducts were arranged side by side.

Trial Hole No.1

Type: Exploratory Excavation: hand and machine
N.G.R: 440638 466524

Length: 2.0 metres
Width: 2.0 metre
Depth: 0.54 metres

Planform: square
Aligned: north north east
Area: 4.0 square metres

Context No's: 1000 - 1002
Plate No: 2
Fig. No: 1

The trial hole was excavated so as to ascertain the nature of the buried ground levels within the north western extent of the footprint of the proposed building. The trial hole was excavated into an area of grassed lawn.

The existing ground levels were generally level at 20.740 metres AOD.

The turf (context 1000) and topsoil (context 1001) was machine excavated, beneath which a buried top soil (context 1002) was exposed across the entire trial hole. The layer contained a small quantity of 19th century, 12/13th century and Roman pottery. The layer was devoid of Archaeological features, up to 0.38 metres of this layer was excavated before the required depth of excavation was reached.

No archaeological features were identified within Trial Hole No.1



Trial Trench No.4 - Roman Road



Roman Road - detail - oblique 24

PLATE 7



Trial Trench No.4 Roman Road - sub-base and clay kerb - vertical

Trial Hole No.2

Type: Exploratory Excavation: hand and machine
N.G.R: 440645 466510

Length: 2.0 metres
Width: 2.0 metre
Depth: 0.55 metres

Planform: square
Aligned: north north east
Area: 4.0 square metres

Context No's: 2000 - 2002
Plate No: 2
Fig. No: 1

The trial hole was excavated so as to ascertain the nature of the buried ground levels within the north eastern extent of the footprint of the proposed building. The trial hole was excavated into an area of grassed lawn.

The existing ground levels slope on a very gentle gradient down to the west at 20.575 metres AOD.

The turf (context 2000) and topsoil (context 2001) was machine excavated, beneath which a buried top soil (context 2002) was exposed across the entire trial hole. The layer contained a small quantity of 19th century, 12/13th century and Roman pottery. The layer was devoid of Archaeological features, up to 0.38 metres of this layer was excavated before the required depth of excavation was reached. The layer contained a relatively high quantity of water worn pebbles and cobbles these were well mixed throughout the layer and increased in quantity toward the western excavation edge. It was subsequently confirmed by a C.A.T Scan of the site that this concentration of lithic material was the fill of the electricity service trench.

No archaeological features were identified within Trial Hole No.1

The Site Archive and Finds will be deposited at the English Heritage Storage Facilities, Helmsley, North Yorkshire.