

NORTH SLIPPERFIELD ESTATE

DATA STRUCTURE REPORT

PROJECT 2891

carried out
on behalf of
North Slipperfield Estate

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NORTH SLIPPERFIELD ESTATE

DATA STRUCTURE REPORT

PROJECT 2886

by

Edouard Masson-Maclean

This document has been prepared in accordance with GUARD standard operating procedures.

Approved by: Date: 19 June 2009
Dr Iain Banks



Project 2891
North Slipperfield Estate
 Archaeological Watching Brief

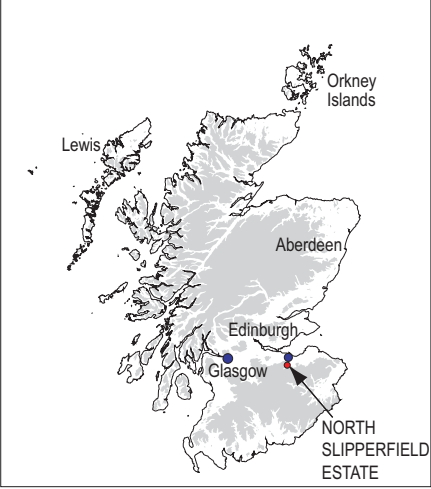


Figure 1:
 Site Location

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1.0 Executive Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a new access road through North Slipperfield Estate. The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent due to the proximity of North Slipperfield Roman Temporary Camp (NMRS NT15SW 45), which lay to the north of the new access route. No significant archaeological remains were encountered.

2.0 Introduction

An archaeological watching brief was carried out in June 2009 by the Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) during the construction of a new access road to North Slipperfield Farm. The watching brief was undertaken on behalf of North Slipperfield Estate and in response to a condition of planning consent (Condition 16; Planning Application No 08/01082/FUL) stipulated by Scottish Borders Council.

3.0 Site Location, Topography and Geology

The access road runs through North Slipperfield Estate, which is situated to the west of West Linton and lies within the local authority area of Scottish Borders Council. That part of the new access road subject to the archaeological watching brief, some 210 m north-east of North Slipperfield farmhouse, was located between the west edge of Lucky Dip Wood (NGR: NT 131 521) and the west side of a small plantation (NGR: NT 129 520) in the middle of the field to the west of Lucky Dip Wood and north of West Linton Golf Course (Figure 1). The watching brief area, located at 300 m altitude, lies on ground that gradually slopes in a southerly direction towards North Slipperfield Farmhouse and West Linton Golf Course. The underlying geology consists of glaciofluvial deposits, while the solid geology comprises the Biggar Volcanic Formation and Auchtitench Sandstone Formation (British Geological Survey Digimap www.edina.ac.uk).

4.0 Archaeological Background

Monument records for the area surrounding the new access road, reveals a number of archaeological sites (Figure 1):

- Site 1: North Slipperfield Enclosures (NMRS NT15SW 31; SMR 4060056) at NGR NT 127 522;
- Site 2: North Slipperfield Farmhouse (NMRS NT15SW 73; SMR 4060099) at NGR NT 12765 51758;
- Site 3: North Slipperfield Roman Temporary Camp (NMRS NT15SW 45; SMR 4060053) centred at NGR NT 1300 5200;
- Site 4: North Slipperfield to Medwinbank Road (SMR 4060061, running between NGR NT 312740 651730 and NT 310030 649690);
- Site 5: North Slipperfield Carved Stone (SMR 4060044), at NGR NT 31270 65170

Aerial reconnaissance by RCAHMS in 1995 revealed two enclosures (Site 1) and a Roman marching camp (Site 3) about 500 m north of the course of the Roman Road (NT15SW 34) that runs to the south of South Slipperfield Farm. The marching camp lies on sloping ground some 300 m north-east of North Slipperfield farmhouse. The rounded north corner-angle together with approximately 120 m of the north-west side and 70 m of the north-east side survive as upstanding remains, preserved by a later plantation boundary. Parchmarks indicate the rest of the north-west side (measuring approximately 150 m), the corner-angle, and at least 400 m of the south-west side. The south-west side bends out at the gate to meet a titulum, suggesting a rectangular temporary camp of at least 11 ha (27 acres). The rounded north corner is depicted on current OS maps as a field boundary.

A settlement, called 'Slipperfield' (Site 2), is apparent on maps from as early as the 17th century, such as Gordon's map of 1636-52. There is a small dormer-pediment of red sandstone (Site 5), initialed WB and with the date 1652 reset into one of the farm buildings at North Slipperfield. Blaeu's map of 1654 depicts two separate settlements, one on either side of the West Water Burn, while Edgar's map of 1741 depicts the northern settlement as 'King's Seat', and the southern simply as 'Slipperfield'. In Roy's map of c 1750 both settlements are again called 'Slipperfield', a road (Site 4) apparent for the first time through the

northern settlement, but Armstrong's map of 1775, while depicting the same road, again calls the northern settlement 'King Seat'. It is in Thomson and Johnson's map of 1820 that the northern settlement is named 'North Slipperfield' for the first time, though Ainslie's map of 1821 reverts again to 'Kings Seat'. However, the Ordnance Survey maps from 1858 onwards all depict the northern settlement as 'North Slipperfield'.

The watching brief thus had the potential to encounter archaeological remains related to the Roman Marching Camp and to North Slipperfield.

5.0 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the watching brief was:

- to ensure that any surviving archaeological remains encountered during ground-breaking works required for the construction of the new access road, were recorded to an appropriate level.

The objectives were therefore to

- Conduct an archaeological watching brief during the ground-breaking works from the southern part of Lucky Dip Wood (Figure 1), given the proximity of known archaeological remains, to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains, and their character, date and extent if surviving; determine the character, extent and significance of any archaeological deposits encountered; and excavate and salvage any information possible from any significant features encountered.
- On completion of the watching brief, and any resulting excavation works if archaeology was encountered, a report to data structure level to be submitted for agreement to Scottish Borders Council.

If excavation works were required, an accompanying post-excavation research design (PERD) and costing was to be submitted alongside the data structure report, and which will outline arrangements for final publication.

6.0 Methodology

The area subject to the archaeological watching brief measured 270 m in length and 2 m in width and comprised the northern half of the new access road. This was first photographed and a brief written description made prior to the commencement of ground-breaking works. The hardcore material was to be removed using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed 2 m wide ditching bucket; this would help to expose the underlying deposits and enable observation of any possible archaeological remains. This was all to be carried out under close archaeological supervision. The hardcore material was to be removed to the surface of the natural subsoil underlying the topsoil and hardcore material. Exposed surfaces were to be cleaned first by hoe and then by trowel. Potential archaeological features were to be tested through hand-excavated sondages, measured and sketched in the field book and sections were to be recorded by photograph. Conditions for the excavation were predominantly good with dry conditions, light winds and a slightly overcast sky.

7.0 Results

On 22 May 2009, GUARD Project Manager Ronan Toolis inspected that part of the new access route subject to watching brief to observe that this had already been stripped of topsoil. Only in the field to the west of Lucky Dip Wood were some potential archaeological features observed but due to plant tracks and weathering, these were obscure and required further exposure by hand. Due to the change of scope of work required, a site meeting was then arranged with the Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Officer to agree a revised scope of work.

On 29 May 2009 Ronan Toolis and the Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Officer visited the site but could not observe the potential archaeological features as new hardcore material had been laid upon the new access route. The hardcore material consisted of pink gravel approximately 0.3 m thick (Plate 1).

On 4 June 2009, a watching brief was carried out to establish with certainty the presence or absence of any archaeological features. The watching brief monitored the removal by machine of hardcore material from

the northern half of the new access road only (Plate 2), due to the presence of a water mains pipe located beneath and along the same course as the southern part of the new access road.



*Plate 1:
New access road looking east from Lucky Dip Wood.*



*Plate 2:
Underlying subsoil exposed within northern half of new access road.*

The 270 m length part of the new access road subject to the watching brief was divided into 10 m long segments for recording purposes (Figure 2). Each segment was recorded by photography after the removal of the hardcore material.

All distances mentioned in the following text were measured from the eastern limit of the watching brief area.

The topsoil (001) observed in the north section of the excavated track consisted of light brown sand silt approximately 0.3-0.4m thick. The subsoil (002) consisted of light brown/orange sand clay with the content of sand varying along the 270 m area.

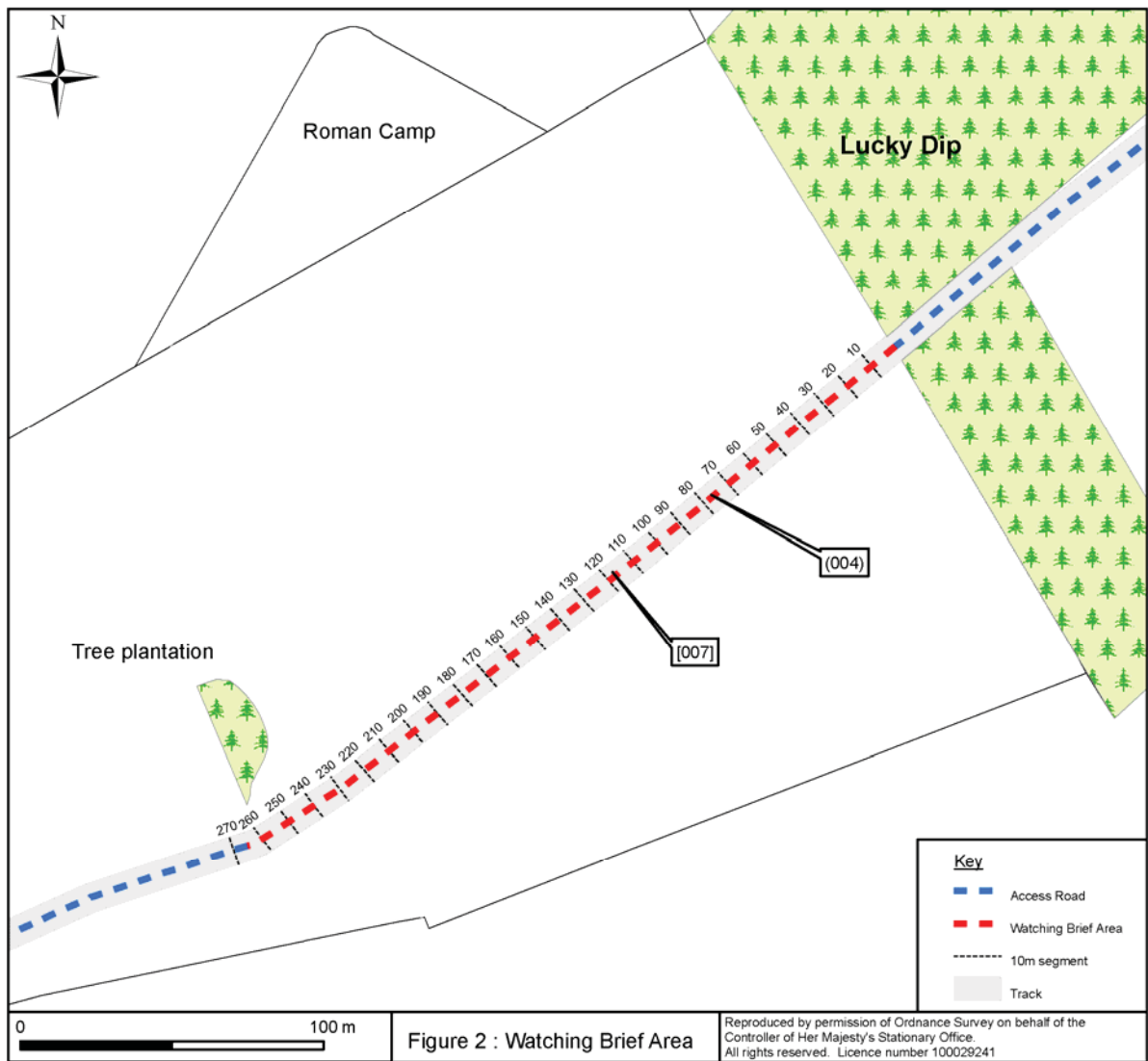


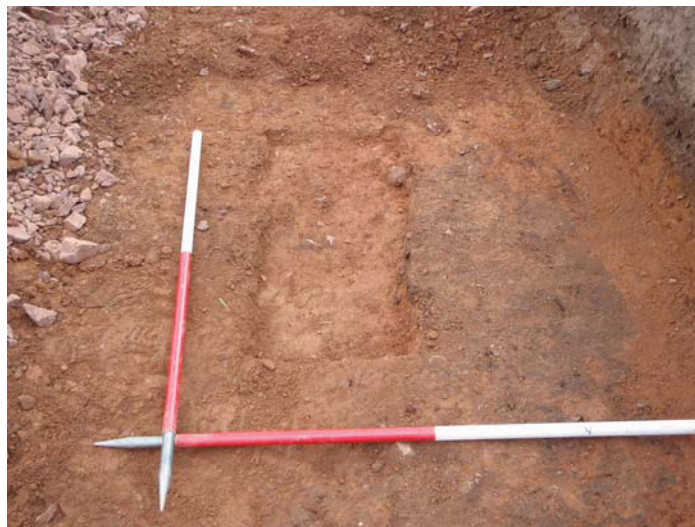
Plate 3:
Modern field drain.

Between 0-50 m, a modern water pipe trench, leading to an animal drinking trough in the field, was visible in the subsoil, orientated ESE-WNW and measuring 0.6 m wide (Plate 3).

In the segment 70 m-80 m, a deposit of mixed subsoil and dark earth (004) was visible measuring 1.80 m long (E-W) and at least 1.20 m wide (N-S). This deposit was investigated by the hand excavation of a small sondage (0.7 m x 0.3 m) which revealed that this deposit was only 0.02-0.03 m thick and likely to be modern (Plates 4-5).



*Plate 4:
004 before excavation.*



*Plate 5:
Hand-excavated sondage through 004.*

In the section 110-120 m, at 115 m from the western edge of Lucky Dip Wood, a cut feature was encountered [007]. The fill (005) was slightly darker than the topsoil and had higher content of silt with a layer of medium/large size rounded stones (006). A hand-excavated sondage through this feature revealed it to be 0.3 m deep and 2 m wide shallow u-shaped ditch, orientated NNE-SSW (Plates 6-7). No finds were associated with this feature and no date could be established, but given its form and the nature of its fill, it is likely that this was a field drain.

Between 190 and 200 m, a very low possible bank 2.5 m wide and orientated N-S was observed in the north section of the watching brief area (Plate 8). This appeared to accord with the old field boundary that previously bisected the field.

In the segments 180-220 m a modern water pipe trench was visible, orientated E-W, and 0.5 m wide (Plate 9).

At the west end of the stripped area (265 m from the western edge of Lucky Dip Wood), the bank running adjacent to the west side of the small tree plantation to the north of the new access road, and believed to be possibly the return of the Roman marching camp bank, was almost imperceptible in the section. There was no evidence of associated features such as an outer ditch associated with this bank (Plates 10-11).



Plate 6:

North section of fills 005 & 006.



Plate 7:

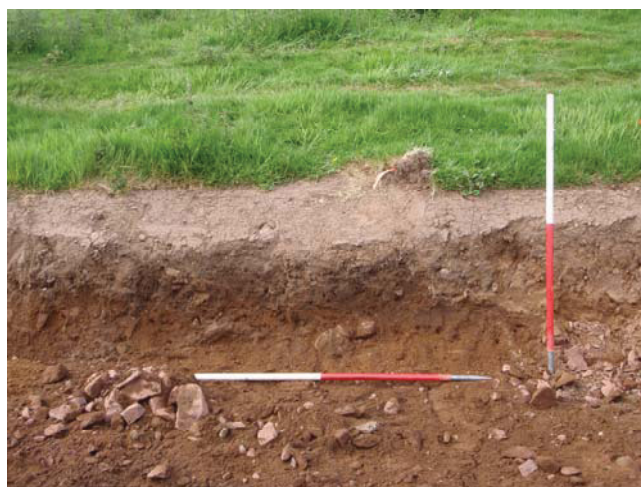
Cut 007 from the west.



*Plate 8:
Old field boundary.*



*Plate 9:
Modern water pipe trench.*



*Plate 10:
North Section detail of bank.*



*Plate 11:
North section of bank.*

8.0 Conclusion

No significant archaeological deposits or features were encountered during the watching brief and no finds were recovered.

9.0 Acknowledgements

GUARD thanks John Coyle, Richard Ward and Jonathan England for their assistance during the project. GUARD also thanks Dr Christopher Bowles, Scottish Borders Council Archaeology Officer for his advice during the project. Ronan Toolis provided project management while Aileen Maule, John Keily and Jen Cochrane provided technical assistance. Fiona Jackson and Edouard Masson-MacLean provided the illustrations.

10.0 Bibliography

British Geological Survey Geology Digimap www.digimap.edina.ac.uk

11.0 Appendices

11.1 *List of Photographs*

<i>No</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initials</i>
1			ID Shot	S	04/06/09	EMM
2	Pt Y	003	General shot of track (Luck Dip woods)	W	04/06/09	EMM
3	Pt Y	003	General shot of track pre-ex	E	04/06/09	EMM
4		003	General shot of track pre-ex	W	04/06/09	EMM
5		003	General shot of track pre-ex	E	04/06/09	EMM
6	Pt X	003	General shot of track pre-ex	W	04/06/09	EMM
7	Pt X	003	General shot of track	E	04/06/09	EMM
8	Pt X	003	General shot of track	W	04/06/09	EMM
9		003	General shot of track	E	04/06/09	EMM
10	190-200		North Section of possible low bank	S	04/06/09	EMM
11	Pt X		Very low bank (return)	S	04/06/09	EMM
12	0-5	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
13	5-10	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
14	10-15	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
15	15-20	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
16	20-30	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
17	30-40	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
18	40-45	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
19	45-50	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
20	50-55	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
21	55-60	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
22	60-65	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
23	65-70	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
24	80-90	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
25	70-80	004	Pre-ex moulted deposit	E	04/06/09	EMM
26	70-80	002/004	Post-ex sondage	E	04/06/09	EMM
27	70-80	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	W	04/06/09	EMM
28	90-100	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
29	100-110	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
30	110-120	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
31	120-130	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
32	130-140	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
33	140-150	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM

<i>No</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Context</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>From</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Initials</i>
34	150-160	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
35	160-170	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
36	170-180	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
37	180-190	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
38	190-200	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
39	200-220	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
40	220-240	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
41	240-260	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
42	260-265	002	Post-ex - After removal of hardcore material (003)	E	04/06/09	EMM
43	260-265	001/002	Post-ex - North facing of bank	S	04/06/09	EMM
44	260-265	001/002	Post-ex - North facing of bank	S	04/06/09	EMM
45	115	005-007	Post-ex - North facing of field drain [007]	S	04/06/09	EMM
46	115	002-3/ 005-7	Post-ex - Field drain [007]	S	04/06/09	EMM
47	115	002-3/ 005-7	Post-ex - Field drain [007]	S	04/06/09	EMM

11.2 Context Register

<i>Context No</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
001	-	Light brown sand silt	Topsoil
002	-	Light brown/orange sand clay	Subsoil
003	-	Hardcode material	-
004	70-80	Mixed moulted deposit subsoil/dark soil	Modern deposit
005	110-120	Dark brown sand silt	Fill of drain cut [007]
006	110-120	Layer of rounded stones	Field drain stones in (005)
007	110-120	Linear cut	Field drain cut

11.3 DES

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Scottish Borders Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	North Slipperfield Estate
PROJECT CODE:	GUARD 2891
PARISH:	West Linton
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S):	Edouard Masson-MacLean
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	GUARD
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Archaeological watching brief
NMRS NO(S):	NT15SW 45
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Roman Temporary Camp
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR (2 letters, 8 or 10 figures)	NT 130 521
START DATE (this season)	4 June 2009
END DATE (this season)	4 June 2009
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	DES 1995, 115
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of a new access road through North Slipperfield Estate. The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent due to the proximity of North Slipperfield Roman Temporary Camp, of which the visible remains of its northern corner lay to the north of the new access route. No significant archaeological remains were encountered.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	Unknown
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS Report lodged with SMR, CECAS SMR and NMRS
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	North Slipperfield Estate
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	-
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