

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF:  
HEADLAND FIRE STATION, DURHAM STREET,  
HARTLEPOOL**

**JULY 2014**

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**PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY**

**DOCUMENT VERIFICATION**

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HEADLAND FIRE STATION, DURHAM STREET,  
HARTLEPOOL**

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief:  
Headland Fire Station, Durham Street,  
Hartlepool**

***National Grid Reference: NZ 52370 34220***

***Site Code: DSH14***

***Commissioning Client: Bradshaw Gass & Hope LLP (on behalf of Cleveland Fire Authority)***

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## **1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY**

- 1.1 An archaeological monitoring and recording exercise was conducted in association with the construction of a new fire station on the site of Headlands Fire Station on Durham Street, Hartlepool, situated at National Grid Reference NZ 52370 34220. The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Bradshaw Gass & Hope LLP on behalf of Cleveland Fire Authority and was undertaken in March 2014 by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited. The site is located within an area of residential development in Hartlepool Headland and comprises a roughly rectangular block of land bounded by Durham Street to the north, Corporation Road to the west, Warren Street to the south and a business unit to the east.
- 1.2 The work was undertaken on the recommendation of Tees Archaeology, who advised the Local Planning Authority on the scale of archaeological work required. The site is of archaeological interest as it is located within the vicinity of St Helen's Chapel and Well; the chapel is thought to have been founded in 1200 and had fallen out of use by the post-medieval period. There was also considered to be a low potential for human remains being present at the site as eight burials of potential early medieval or Anglo-Saxon date were discovered to the east in 1968 and 1972 on the northern side of Durham Street. A desk-based assessment compiled in 2009 was followed by a trial trenching evaluation which did not uncover any remains associated with the chapel, well or graveyard. Archaeological deposits that were encountered included a garden soil of possible medieval date and a boundary ditch of possible post-medieval date along with a cellar which formed part of a demolished 19th-century terrace of houses which lined Durham Street. In 2013 a watching brief was carried out during the installation of a service trench adjacent to the south-western boundary of the site, parallel to Warren Street. This revealed part of a possible brick-lined well.
- 1.3 The 2014 watching brief was undertaken in association with a new planning application to demolish the old fire station and construct a new building. Four areas were monitored during this work; Areas 1 and 2 comprised two rectangular areas adjacent to the eastern and western boundaries of the site, respectively, where ground reduction was carried out. The removal of an inspection pit a short distance to the west of Area 1 was also monitored (Area 3) and Area 4 comprised the foundation trenches for the new building which was to be constructed across the centre of the site.
- 1.4 Levelling deposits associated with the construction of 19th-century housing on the site were recorded in Area 1. These had been truncated by a brick water cistern which had a waterproof bitumen lining, this was presumably situated in the backyard area of a house fronting Durham Street and backing onto Farwell Place, a former street which crossed the site running parallel to Durham Street. The cistern had been infilled with quantities of domestic debris and rubble before a brick surface was built over it, this predating the concrete surface current at the time of the investigations.
- 1.5 Nineteenth-century levelling deposits were also encountered in Area 2. Elements of a cellar comprising a NW-SE aligned brick wall with fireplace and external drainage feature were recorded in this trench. Another segment of wall to the north comprising a limestone wall with a brick-built segment at its south-eastern end may represent an internal partition within the

cellar. It is possible that the stone element of this wall may represent part of an earlier structure later incorporated into the cellar. These structural remains formed part of the cellar of a late Victorian building which stood on the corner of Durham Street and Corporation Road, backing onto Farwell Place. The cellar had been backfilled with demolition debris.

- 1.6 Limestone bedrock was encountered within Areas 3 and 4 and the depth at which this was recorded sloped down from 1m below present ground level in the north-east to 2.20m in the south-west, reflecting the natural topography of this part of the Hartlepool Headland. The bedrock was overlain by a thin deposit of boulder clay, the drift glacial deposit in this area. In Area 3, a deposit of sand of uncertain period of origin was overlain by levelling deposits associated with the construction of late 19th-century housing. In Area 4 the boulder clay was overlain by a developed soil of uncertain period of origin. A short segment of the south-western terminal of a stone wall revealed within the central northern part of Area 4 truncating the developed soil may represent part of a medieval wall foundation, however no artefactual material was recovered to confirm the date of this structure. The wall was overlain by 19th-century levelling deposits.
- 1.7 No remains associated with the medieval St Helen's Chapel and Well were identified during the watching brief and no human remains were uncovered.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 General Background**

- 2.1.1 A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording ('watching brief') was undertaken in association with the construction of a new fire station on the site of Headlands Fire Station on Durham Street, Hartlepool (Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Bradshaw Gass & Hope LLP on behalf of Cleveland Fire Authority and undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) in March 2014.
- 2.1.2 The archaeological work was required by Tees Archaeology who provide advice to the local planning authority (LPA). Foundation trenches for the construction of the new building and associated groundworks had the potential to disturb archaeological features. Although the site on Hartlepool Headland lies outside Hartlepool town walls, the site is of archaeological interest as it lies within the vicinity of the medieval St. Helen's Chapel and Well. In addition, eight burials which may have been of early medieval or Anglo-Saxon date were discovered close to the site in the 1960s and 1970s.
- 2.1.3 A desk-based assessment (DBA) to assess the archaeological potential of the site was followed by a trial trenching evaluation (NPA 2009a and 2009b). The evaluation did not uncover any evidence for the chapel, well or graveyard or any associated medieval settlement activity. The work did however indicate the potential survival of remains of archaeological interest and a programme of archaeological recording during subsequent works was required by the LPA as a condition of planning approval. It was determined that any groundworks at the site should be subject to archaeological monitoring and Tees Archaeology produced a brief for this work (Tees Archaeology 2013). In 2013 a watching brief was undertaken during the installation of a service along the south-western boundary of the site (Sherlock 2013).
- 2.1.4 In October 2013 a new planning application was submitted for the demolition and clearance of the old fire station building, and the construction of a new building. This was accompanied by a Heritage Statement (Ecus 2013). Tees Archaeology required archaeological monitoring to be undertaken in association with groundworks during this redevelopment and the brief produced for the previous phase of watching brief remained valid. The 2014 watching brief was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Ecus Ltd. (Ecus 2014) and approved by Tees Archaeology. The work involved observation and recording during groundworks for the excavation of foundation trenches, ground reduction and removal of an inspection pit (Figure 2).
- 2.1.5 At the time of writing, the Site Archive, comprising written, drawn and photographic records, is housed at the Northern Office of PCA, Unit N19a Tursdale Business Park, Durham, DH6 5PG. When complete, the Site Archive will be deposited with Tees Archaeology under the site code DSH14. The Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) reference number for the project is: preconst1-237752.

## **2.2 Site Location and Description**

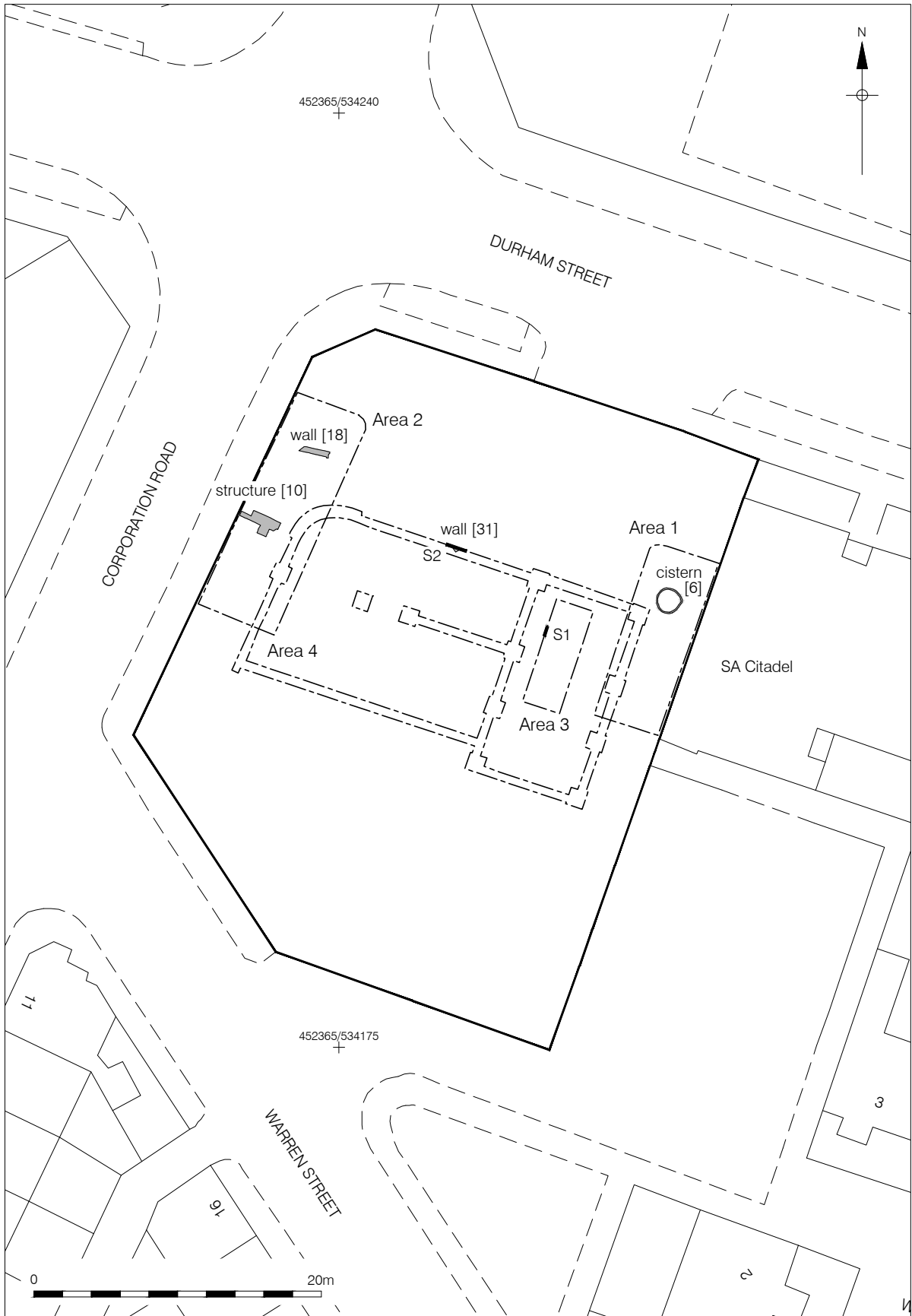
- 2.2.1 The site lies on the western side of Hartlepool Headland at central National Grid Reference NZ 52370 34220, roughly in the centre of the narrow strip of land which forms the headland in this area (Figure 1). It comprises a roughly rectangular block of land which measures a maximum of 44m NE-SW by 34m NW-SE and covers c. 0.14 hectares. The site is situated within an area of residential urban development and is bounded by Durham Street to the north, Corporation Road to the west, Warren Street to the south and a business unit to the east.
- 2.2.2 By the time of the 1897 Ordnance Survey map the site was occupied by a row of large terraces fronting Durham Street, with rear wings and small yards backing onto the narrow land of Farwell Place. Within the southern half of the site there were small terraces fronting onto Farwell Place, which ran NW-SE through the centre of the site, and Warren Street forming a small yard between known as Warren Place. A group of three larger properties stood at the corner of Corporation Road and Warren Street. This housing was demolished in the mid-20th century when the original fire station was built in the centre of the site. It was demolished in 2013 to make way for the construction of the new fire station.





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Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:1,000,000 & 25,000 at A4



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Figure 2  
 Areas Monitored  
 1:400 at A4

## 2.3 Geology and Topography

2.3.1 Hartlepool Headland comprises a ridge of magnesium limestone which juts out into the North Sea. High sand dunes and a landscape of deeply incised valleys lie to the north of the headland and the limestone cliffs (Daniels 2010, 3). The limestone is overlain in places by glacial drift, including the area in which the site lies (*British Geological Survey*). There are extensive peat deposits around Hartlepool Headland representing ancient marshes which formed from the Mesolithic through to the Romano-British period (Waugham 2005). In the prehistoric period the headland would certainly have been cut off from the mainland at high tide and the Anglo-Saxon name 'Heruteu' (island of the hart) suggests that this was also the case during more recent times (Daniels 2010, 4).

2.3.2 The site lies towards the centre of the western part of the headland which in this area is a narrow strip of land the highest point of which lies at around 12.80m OD (Daniels 2010, figure 1.4). Present ground level at the site lies at around 10m OD.

## 2.4 Planning Background

2.4.1 The archaeological watching brief was required by Tees Archaeology during all ground disturbance associated with the construction of the new fire station due to the archaeological sensitivity of the area.

2.4.2 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.

2.4.3 The Hartlepool Local Plan sets out the Borough Council's current planning policy including management of the historic environment. Those policies relevant to the site are outlined below.

*3.6.4 Policy HE4 (Other Heritage Assets) states that the Borough Council will seek to protect and enhance important heritage assets including Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wrecks, sites of archaeological interest and Historic Landscapes. Development affecting the site or setting of these assets is required to demonstrate how it would conserve or enhance the site or demonstrate that any harm to or loss of significance would result in a public benefit which outweighs that harm or loss.*

*3.6.5 Policy HE4 goes on to state that where development proposals affect the sites of known or possible archaeological interest, the Borough Council will require that an archaeological assessment/evaluation is carried out prior to any planning application being determined. This is intended to indicate whether there will be a requirement for further site investigation, archaeological recording or preservation in situ of important remains.*

2.4.4 Planning permission was originally granted in 2009 for the demolition of the fire station and construction of a new fire station (planning ref: H/2009/0216), and for the erection of temporary structures (H/2009/0608). Although the development was not initiated at the time,

a programme of archaeological investigation was undertaken as part of the 2009 application, comprising a desk-based assessment and subsequent evaluation (NPA 2009a and 2009b).

- 2.4.5 The results of the work indicated the potential survival of remains of archaeological interest, and a programme of archaeological recording during subsequent works was required by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as a condition of planning approval (condition 8 of H/2009/0216):

*No development shall take place within the application site until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has completed the implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted by the application and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Where important archaeological remains exist provision can be made for their preservation in situ.*

- 2.4.6 In February 2013 a second application was made for the erection of temporary buildings (planning ref: H/2013/0105). This was approved, and the work undertaken, with the provision of an archaeological watching brief secured by a planning condition and in line with a Brief for Archaeological Monitoring prepared by Tees Archaeology on behalf of the LPA (Tees Archaeology 2013). A watching brief was undertaken in May 2013 during installation of services (Sherlock 2013). This was followed later in 2013 by a new application for the demolition and clearance of the building, and the construction of a new fire station which was accompanied by a Heritage Statement (Ecus 2013). Tees Archaeology required archaeological monitoring to be undertaken in association with groundworks during this redevelopment and the brief produced for the previous phase of watching brief remained valid. A WSI for the 2014 watching brief was produced by Ecus and approved by Tees Archaeology (Ecus 2014).

## 2.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

*Full details of the archaeological and historical background of the site are provided in the 2009 DBA and 2013 Heritage Statement. The key points are described below, the writing of the authors responsible is acknowledged.*

- 2.5.1 A monastery was founded in Hartlepool c. AD 640 and excavation at the eastern end of the Headland has identified elements of an Anglo-Saxon settlement (Daniels 2007). By the 8th century the monastery had disappeared (Page 1928).
- 2.5.2 The precise date at which the medieval town was founded is unknown, but it was in existence by the third quarter of the 12th century (Daniels 2010, 22). The town developed around St Hilda's Church and was set out along the western edge of the headland scarp with Durham Street/Fisher Row extending north-south with the church at the head at the southern end. The town walls were constructed during the 14th century and the site lay a short distance to the north-west of the wall circuit.
- 2.5.3 It is for the medieval period that the site was considered to have particular archaeological potential due to the proximity of St Helen's Chapel and Well. The chapel was founded by 1200 adjacent to an existing well. During the medieval period the chapel would have formed a major feature of the area, lying in the common grazing land of Farwell Field beside the main road leading into Hartlepool. The chapel is documented throughout the 13th and 14th century in charters and was still functioning in the 16th century. A Plan of Hartlepool, surveyed in 1583 illustrates the extent of the settlement at the end of the medieval period with St Helen's Chapel and Well illustrated within a circular walled enclosure outside of the town. The site of the chapel was investigated in 1845 and was described as a 'T' shaped plan comprising two transepts and a nave (Sharp 1851; Reed 1970). The 1845 excavations recorded a burial within the chapel comprising a solid stone coffin with a stone lid. Traces of the foundations were encountered again in 1968, during excavations north of Durham Street. Whilst pottery within the building was dated to the mid-14th century the presence of possibly reused Romanesque architectural fragments suggested there may have been an earlier structure on the site.
- 2.5.4 Seven cist burials were also discovered during the excavations to the north of Durham Street in 1968 and these are of a type commonly associated with early medieval burials (Daniels 2007, 28). A second excavation in the vicinity of the chapel in 1972 identified another burial. The possible early date of the burials has been considered to indicate a potential for an earlier religious establishment on the site of the medieval chapel. Although there is no archaeological evidence for an Anglo-Saxon origin for St Helen's Chapel or Well, it is often common for wells to be given a Saint's name and later associated with a church. The pre-medieval origin of the name has been suggested to indicate the site was dedicated during the time of the Anglo-Saxon Monastery, possibly representing the Christianisation of a previously Pagan site.
- 2.5.5 The 2009 evaluation did not identify any burials within the investigated areas, however due to their proximity there was considered to remain a low potential for burials to be present within the site. Furthermore, although the evaluation indicated that the site of the well had been impacted by the construction and subsequent demolition of a cellar, the original depth of the

well is unknown and there remained the potential for the well shaft to be encountered beneath the level of later disturbance.

- 2.5.6 Although it is not known when St. Helen's Chapel fell into disuse, the site had evidently been largely cleared by the beginning of the 19th century. Being situated outside of the town walls, it is possible the chapel was pulled down during the Civil War when in 1644 Parliamentarian forces took possession of the town from the Royalist Lumley family and erected earthworks across the peninsula (Page 1928). The earthworks were short lived, with the House of Commons ordering them to be taken down in 1647. An 1816 description of the Civil War defences indicated that the remains were still visible having evidently been *'little more than ditches and entrenchments, supported perhaps with cannon at various points, particularly the mound near St. Helen's Well'* (Sharp 1851, 155). It is possible that the mound was the same indicated as the probable site of the chapel in 1816, or an indication of an unrecorded nearby structure. It was considered that there was a low possibility that archaeological remains associated with the Civil War defences could be present at the site. The 2009 excavation revealed a former NE-SW aligned boundary ditch, with associated postholes, which could be associated with the Chapel, or possibly the Civil War defences (NPA 2009b).
- 2.5.7 By the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1861, although the site still lay within the open commons of Farwell Field, urban development was encroaching and the course of unfinished streets are depicted close to the site. The early OS maps illustrate a rectangular structure labelled as St Helen's Well within the north-western part of the site, and beyond the site boundary to its north-east the outlined site of St Helen's Chapel. By the time of the 1897 OS map the site was occupied by a row of terraces fronting Durham Street, with rear wings and small yards backing onto the narrow land of Farwell Place; this street ran NW-SW across the centre of the site. Within the southern half of the site there were small terraces fronting onto Farwell Place and Warren Street, forming a small yard between known as Warren Place, and a group of three larger properties at the corner of Corporation Road and Warren Street. According to building control plans of the late 19th and early 20th century, many of the properties within the area comprised of a shop on the ground floor with parlours and living spaces on the first floor and privies and coal stores in the backyard. Although none of the properties documented had cellars, the discovery of a cellar in Trench 2 of the 2009 excavation indicates that occasional properties did possess them (NPA 2009b).
- 2.5.8 The housing in this area was condemned during the 1930s and 1940s and urban slum clearance undertaken from 1948 cleared vast swathes of the Headlands area. The housing on the site was demolished in 1962 and the Headland Fire Station opened on the site in May 1964. This was demolished in 2013.

### **3. PROJECT AIMS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1 Project Aims**

3.1.1 The principal aim of the archaeological monitoring was to allow the developer to make proper provision for the recording and analysis of archaeological deposits and any human remains disturbed by the project. This was in line with the planning condition on the application consent. The general aims of the project were:

- to identify and record any archaeological deposits, structures or built fabric within the site;
- to determine the extent, condition, character, significance and date of any encountered or exposed archaeological remains;
- to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated during groundworks;
- to recover artefacts disturbed by the site works;
- to recover samples from sealed waterlogged contexts for environmental processing;
- to prepare a comprehensive record and report of archaeological observations during the site work.

#### **3.2 Research Objectives**

3.2.1 The objectives of the project were to:

- record all archaeological deposits with the aim of characterising medieval and early medieval activity connected with the Chapel of St Helen and its associated Holy Well;
- define the burial tradition (e.g. orientation; grave goods) carried out at the chapel;
- include a programme of post-excavation work including osteoarchaeological analysis of all human remains and absolute dating (e.g. radiocarbon) of a sample of burials (including charnel if no in situ remains are noted).

This is in line with the Regional Research Agenda for the area (Petts and Gerrard 2006) sections EMvii 'Death and Burial.

3.2.1 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 would therefore 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 intermittently from 11 to 25 March 2014. 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 WSI should be consulted for full details of the methodologies that were to be employed regarding archaeological recording, sampling, *etc.* (Ecus 2014).
- 4.1.2 Monitoring took place during groundworks across four areas of the site (Figure 2). Area 1 was situated adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site and ground reduction took place across an area that measured c. 13m by 5m (Plate 2). Ground reduction also took place adjacent to the western boundary across an area that measured c. 16m by 6m (Area 2). An inspection pit located a short distance to the west of Area 1 was removed and ground reduction here took place across an area that measured 7m by 2.40m (Area 3). Area 4 comprised the strip foundation trenches for the new building, located across the central part of the site (Plate 7).
- 4.1.3 Archaeological structures and deposits were examined, hand cleaned 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). A photographic record of the work was compiled. The monitored areas were located using hand tapes, the existing site plan and the architect's drawing for the new build supplied by the client.

### **4.2 Post-excavation**

- 4.2.1 The stratigraphic data for the project comprises written, drawn and photographic records. A total of 37 archaeological contexts were defined. Post-excavation work involved checking and collating site records. A written summary of the findings was then compiled, as described in Section 5.
- 4.2.2 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 Tees Archaeology, will be fulfilled.



## 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 is described below for each area in turn, with stratigraphic entities assigned to a scheme of broad phases assigned on a site-wide basis*

### 5.1 Area 1 (Figure 2)

#### ***Phase 4: Post-medieval***

5.1.1 The earliest deposit encountered in Area 1 comprised light yellowish brown and mid pinkish brown clayey sand, [4], which was exposed for a maximum distance of c. 3.50m east-west by c. 20m north-south. This deposit contained flecks of mortar and ceramic building material throughout and is interpreted as a levelling deposit associated with the late 19th-century residential buildings first depicted on the site on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897.

5.1.2 A circular brick water cistern, [6], within a construction cut, [8], truncated levelling deposit [4]; this was located close to the eastern boundary of the site (Figure 2). Its external diameter was c. 1.75m and it was at least 1.20m deep. The water cistern was built in red brick (220mm x 110mm x 70mm) exposed to at least ten courses in stretcher bond and bonded by light grey lime mortar. The internal surface of the brick cistern was sealed by a layer of bitumen presumably to make the structure waterproof. No datable material was recovered from the construction cut backfill, [7]. The earliest fill recorded within the cistern comprised black humic sandy silt, [17], at least 0.20m thick, with frequent brick and brick fragments. This was directly overlain by c. 1m thick brick rubble within a mid yellow brown sand matrix, [5]. An enamelled iron wash tub and fragments of a cast iron fireplace grate were also observed within backfill deposit, [5], indicating that household waste had also been disposed of in the structure.

5.1.3 A brick surface, [2], was recorded across Area 1 for a maximum distance of 3.50m east-west and 20m north-south (Plate 3). The surface was constructed with red brick (230mm x 100mm x 80mm) and was dry bonded, bedded on a c. 0.10m thick dark grey sand, [3]. The brick surface was laid directly over the brick cistern and levelling deposit [4] and represents an earlier surface predating the current concrete slab.

#### ***Phase 5: Modern***

5.1.4 Directly overlying brick surface [2] was a c. 0.20m thick concrete surface forming the present surface at the time of the investigations.

### 5.2 Area 2 (Figures 2 and 3)

#### ***Phase 4: Post-medieval***

5.2.1 The earliest deposit exposed within Area 2 comprised light greyish brown sandy silt, [16], which contained small fragments of ceramic building material and flecks of mortar throughout. This deposit is interpreted as a levelling deposit associated with the construction of residential dwellings which are depicted on the 2nd Edition Ordnance survey map of 1897.

- 5.2.2 Elements of a basement structure were recorded adjacent to the western edge of the site within Area 2 (Figure 2). This comprised a wall and fireplace, [10], with a drainage feature, [14], attached to the south of the wall. Another segment of wall, [18], was located c. 5m to the north. These structural elements probably represent the basement of a residential building located at the corner of Durham Street and Corporation Road first depicted on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897.
- 5.2.3 The southernmost basement element, [10], which represents the external wall of the building comprised an approximately NW-SE aligned rectangular fireplace with external dimensions of 2.07m NW-SE by 0.70m NE-SW (Figure 3; Plates 4 and 5). This was at least 1m high with a flue located to the south-east which measured 0.75m NW-SE by 0.25m NE-SW. Built of brick (230mm x 110mm x 80mm) it survived to at least 20 courses in both header and stretcher courses, bonded by light grey lime mortar, with the majority of the brick surface rendered with light grey lime mortar.
- 5.2.4 Adjoining the north-western end of the fireplace was a short length of wall which ran on the same alignment and was recorded for a distance of 0.74m. This was 0.32m wide and was exposed for a maximum height of 0.64m. It was brick built (230mm x 110mm x 80mm) and was exposed to at least 11 courses in stretcher bond, bonded by light grey lime mortar. At the north-western extent of the wall, a small portion of a returning wall was observed immediately under the present perimeter brick wall of the site. Presumably the entirety of the basement structure was built within a narrow construction cut, [11], and a portion of this was recorded immediately to the south of the wall and fireplace truncating levelling deposit [16].
- 5.2.5 Located immediately to the south of the fireplace was a square drainage structure, [14], recorded within a narrow construction, [15] (Plates 4 and 5). This measured 0.71m by 0.68m and was at least 0.32m deep. The upper three courses were brick built (230mm x 110mm x 80mm) in stretcher bond and the lower course was built using two U-shaped adjoining salt glazed ceramic bricks (680mm x 340mm), all bonded with light grey lime mortar. No datable material was recovered from its mid grey silty sand backfill, [13].
- 5.2.6 A short length of WNW-ESE aligned wall, [18], was exposed for a maximum distance of 2.10m c. 5m to the north of the fireplace and brick wall (Figure 3; Plate 6). This was 0.34m wide and at least 0.40m high. It was built principally of roughly hewn limestone blocks (minimum 110mm x 110mm x 100mm – maximum 210mm x 200mm x 200mm). At its eastern extent the wall was built using brick (230mm x 110mm x 80mm). The wall was exposed to at least four courses high and was bonded by light grey lime mortar. No construction cut was encountered for this wall. It may represent part of the same structure as wall [10], although was on a slightly different alignment and may represent an internal element. It is possible that the stone element of this structure may be of earlier origin and was incorporated into the 19th-century building as represented by the brick-built element.
- 5.2.7 Basement structures [10] and [18] were backfilled by rubble deposits, [9] and [12], with this material presumably derived from the demolition of the building.

### **5.3 Area 3 (Figure 2; Section 1, Figure 4)**

#### ***Phase 1: Natural***

5.3.1 Area 3 comprised an area measuring 7.50m north-south and c. 2.70m east-west where the hard standing remains of the former vehicle inspection pit were removed. The earliest deposit encountered within this area was light yellowish grey fractured limestone bedrock, [27], encountered at a depth of c. 1m below the present ground level (Section 1, Figure 4). This was directly overlain by a c. 0.18m thick firm mid pinkish brown and mid reddish brown sandy clay and clay, [26], representing the natural boulder clay.

#### ***Phase 2: Developed soil***

5.3.2 Directly overlaying the natural clay was a light greyish brown silty sand deposit, [25], up to 0.30m thick which was recorded extending across Area 3. This deposit was relatively sterile and no datable artefactual material was recovered; it has tentatively been interpreted as a developed soil.

#### ***Phase 4: Post-medieval***

5.3.3 A light yellowish brown sand deposit, [24], up to 0.17m thick was recorded within the northern half of Area 3. This deposit contained frequent patches of degraded limestone throughout and in turn was directly overlain by a c. 0.28m thick deposit of dark grey silty sand, [23], that extended across Area 3. Both deposits [24] and [23] are interpreted as levelling deposits derived from activity associated with the construction of residential dwellings in the later part of the 19th century. Landscaping across the site prior to the construction of the residential houses probably involved reduction in ground level across the northern part of the site with this material deposited to the south.

#### ***Phase 5: Modern***

5.3.4 Directly overlying the uppermost levelling deposit was a light yellowish brown silty sand levelling deposit, [22], which was up to 0.18m thick and extended across Area 3. This was overlain by a c. 0.16m thick brick rubble deposit within a sandy silt matrix, [21]. Both deposits represent 20th-century levelling and consolidation deposits associated with the construction of the former Fire Station.

5.3.5 Truncating the uppermost levelling and consolidation deposit was an east-west aligned 20th-century service trench, [20], recorded for a maximum distance of 2.70m east-west. This was 0.70m wide and at least 1m deep and its single fill comprised mid brownish grey silty sand [19].

### **5.4 Area 4 Foundation Trench (Section 2, Figure 4)**

#### ***Phase 1: Natural***

5.4.1 The earliest deposit encountered within the foundation trench comprised light grey limestone bedrock, [37] (Plate 8). This was encountered at various depths ranging from a minimum depth of 1m below present ground level in the north-eastern part of the trench sloping down to the south-west where bedrock was encountered at a maximum depth of 2.20m below present ground level. The bedrock was overlain by firm pinkish brown sandy clay, [36], representing boulder clay, which was up to 0.20m thick.

- 5.4.2 Directly overlaying the natural clay was a deposit of light grey and light yellowish brown sand, [35], up to 0.21m thick, which was only recorded within the northern NNE-SSW aligned foundation trench (Section 2, Figure 4). No datable artefactual material was recovered from this deposit and it may be of natural origin.

***Phase 3: Undated***

- 5.4.3 A short length of a NE-SW aligned wall foundation, [31], within a narrow construction cut, [32], was recorded truncating deposit [35] within the northern element of the WNW-ESE aligned foundation trench (Figure 2 and Section 2, Figure 4). This was encountered at a depth of c. 0.55m below the present ground level. It was exposed for a maximum distance of 0.40m NE-SW, with a squared terminal to the south-west, and was 0.45m wide and 0.55m high. The wall was built in roughly hewn limestone blocks (up to 270mm x 100mm) surviving to two courses and was bonded by clayey sand. Although no datable material was recovered from the wall, its form and composition suggest a possible medieval date.

***Phase 4: Post medieval***

- 5.4.4 Part of a substantial feature, [34], was recorded in section truncating the eastern edge of wall foundation, [31] (Section 2, Figure 4). Only a small portion of this feature was exposed for a maximum width of 0.26m and depth of 0.35m. Its single dark grey clayey silt fill, [33], contained brick fragments throughout. Based on the composition of its fill it may represent a drainage feature of late 19th century date.
- 5.4.5 Directly overlying feature [34] and wall [31] was a mid greyish brown sand deposit, [30], which extended across all parts of the foundation trench. It varied in thickness from 0.15m within the eastern part of the trench to a maximum of thickness of 1.20m at the western and south-western sides. This deposit is interpreted as a levelling deposit associated with the construction of residential dwellings in the later part of the 19th century.

***Phase 5: Modern***

- 5.4.6 Directly overlying levelling deposit [30] was a mid grey brown silty sand levelling deposit, [29], which extended across the foundation trench and was up to 0.24m thick. This was overlain by a c. 0.20m thick concrete and crushed stone deposit within a sand matrix, [28]. Both deposits represent 20th-century levelling and consolidation deposits associated with the former Fire Station.

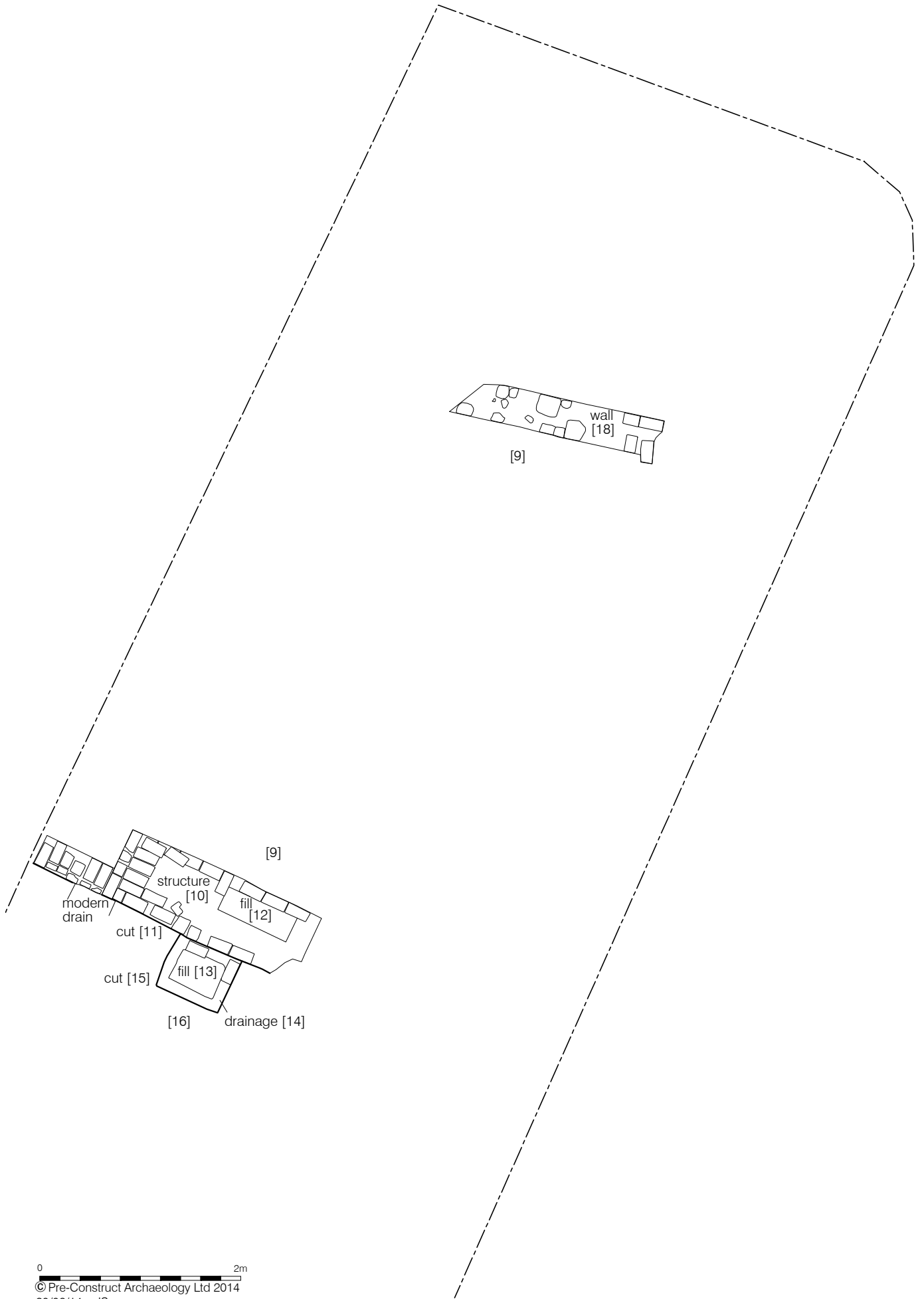
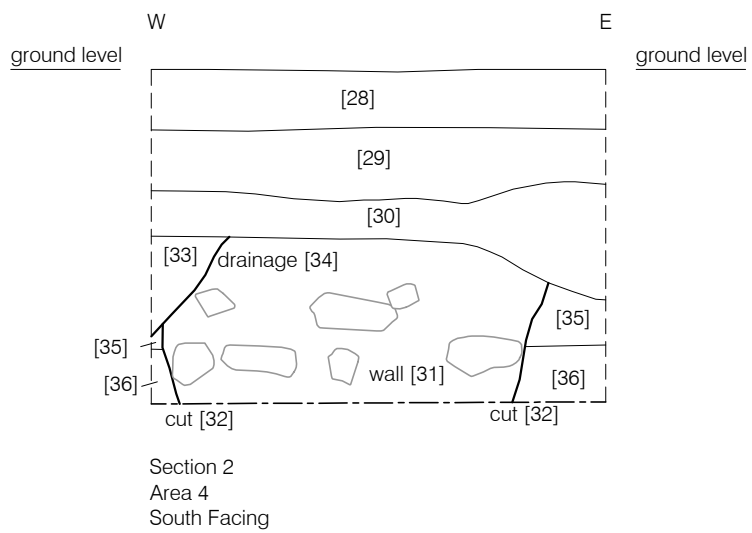
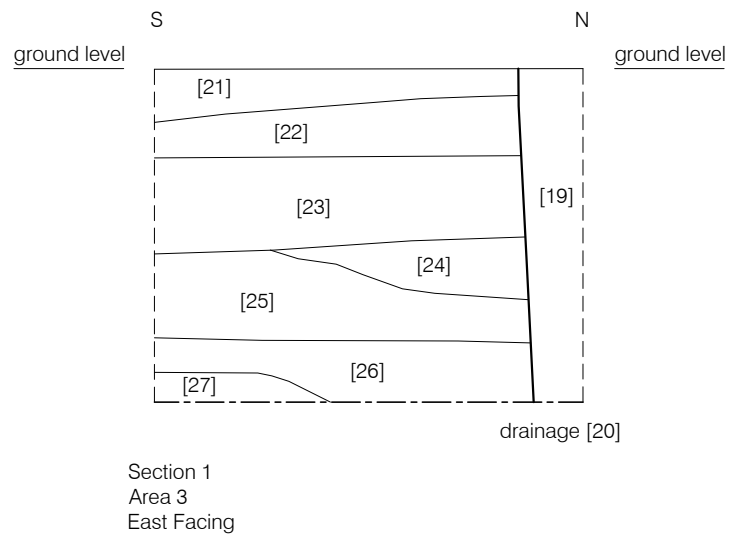


Figure 3  
 Detail of Area 3  
 1:50 at A4



0 1m  
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20/06/14 JS

Figure 4  
Sections 1 & 2  
1:25 at A4

## **6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

- 6.1.1 Limestone bedrock was encountered in several locations during the watching brief at the site. The depth at which this was recorded below present ground level ranged from a minimum of 1m in the north-eastern part of the Area 4 foundation trench to 2.20m in the south-west. This reflects the natural topography of this part of Hartlepool Headland; the land slopes down to either side from a ridge running NW-SE (Daniels 2010, figure 1.4). The bedrock was overlain by a thin covering of boulder clay representing the natural glacial till and this was a maximum of just 0.20m thick. Such thin deposits of till are typical of the headland area and previous investigations have shown that the drift deposits are often heavily denuded and truncated with archaeological deposits often found immediately overlying the bedrock (Daniels 2010, 4).
- 6.1.2 A developed soil up to 0.30m thick overlay the glacial till and this was recorded across the extent of Area 3 in the eastern part of the site. No artefactual material was recovered from this silty sand deposit to determine the date of origin. A possible cultivation horizon comprising a 0.30m thick silty clay deposit was also recorded during the earlier evaluation within trenches located in the north-east and south-west corners of the site (NPA 2009b). Investigations at St Helen's Primary School, located a short distance to the north-east of the site on the north side of Durham Street, also revealed a developed soil which was dated by thermoluminescence to the 10th century (Daniels 1986). During the medieval period the site lay beyond the town within open common grazing commons of Farwell Field and the Ordnance Survey first edition of 1861 shows that it remained as undeveloped agricultural land until relatively recently. In the absence of any artefactual evidence or scientific dating, the developed soil horizon recorded during the watching brief at the site remains undated.
- 6.1.3 The only possible evidence for medieval archaeological remains recorded during the watching brief comprised a short segment of the south-western terminal of a NE-SW aligned stone wall foundation which was encountered within the central northern part of Area 4, towards the central part of the site. With such a small area exposed and in the absence of any artefactual evidence, dating must remain speculative, but the construction techniques and material used indicates a possible medieval origin. It is also possible that the limestone wall foundation element of a NNW-SSE aligned wall encountered within Area 2, near to the north-western corner of the site, may be of earlier origin and was incorporated into the late 19th-century brick cellar in this area. However, again in the absence of artefactual evidence this remains uncertain.
- 6.1.4 Deposits recorded within all areas investigated demonstrated that the site had evidently been subject to extensive levelling activity prior to the construction of the terraced housing in the late 19th century. The remnants of a brick cellar with fireplace and external drain were recorded in Area 3 adjacent to the central western boundary of the site. This presumably formed part of a building which was situated at the corner of Durham Street and Corporation Road, with Farwell Place running alongside the back of this property. The earlier evaluation had also encountered part of a cellar in the north-western corner of the site, which was presumably part of this same property. Demolition rubble within that trench was excavated to a depth of 2.50m below the existing ground level and this was interpreted as the backfill of a cellar and a north-south aligned red brick wall was interpreted as part of an internal division

within the cellar. The county archives do not record the presence of cellars in this Victorian terrace. Building control plans of the late 19th and early 20th century show that many of the properties within this area comprised a shop on the ground floor with parlours and living spaces on the first floor and privies and coal stores in the backyard.

6.1.5 A circular brick water cistern with bitumen waterproof lining recorded within Area 1 adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site is also considered to be of late 19th century date. By 1897 this part of the site lay within the back yard area of a house fronting Durham Street and backing onto Farwell Place. The previous watching brief undertaken in 2013 uncovered part of a presumed to be circular brick structure in the south-western corner of the site (Sherlock 2013). Only the upper northern part of this was revealed within the monitored area, but projection of its curved wall indicates that it was probably of similar diameter to the water cistern recorded in the east.

6.1.6 In conclusion, no remains associated with the medieval St Helen's Chapel and Well were identified during the watching brief and no human remains were uncovered.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

6.2.1 No further work is required on the information recovered during the watching brief, with the Site Archive, including this report, forming the permanent record of the strata encountered.



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### **Online Sources**

The **British Geological Survey** website: *www.bgs.ac.uk*. This was consulted for information regarding the geology of the study area.

The **PastScape** website, the online records held in English Heritage's national historic environment database: *www.pastscape.org.uk/English Heritage*

## **8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS**

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### **PCA Credits**

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*Project Manager:* Robin Taylor-Wilson

*Report:* Aaron Goode and Jennifer Proctor

*CAD:* Jennifer Simonson

**APPENDIX 1  
PLATES**



Plate 1. General view of site at beginning of watching brief, looking north



Plate 2. Area 1, general view, looking south



Plate 3. Area 1, detail of brick surface [2], looking east (*scale 1m*)



Plate 4. Area 2, external cellar wall and fireplace [10] and drain [14], looking south (*scale 1m*)



Plate 5. Area 2, fireplace [10], looking south-west (*scale 1m*)



Plate 6 Area 2, stone and brick wall [18], looking west (*scale 1m*)



Plate 7. Area 4, general view of foundation trenches, looking north-west



Plate 8. Area 4, detail of westernmost foundation trench with limestone bedrock exposed in base, looking south