

**HEXHAM ROAD, HEDDON-ON-THE-  
WALL, NORTHUMBERLAND  
STREET LIGHT REPLACEMENT**

**EVALUATION REPORT**

**MARCH 2018**

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**Hexham Road, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**Site Code: HOW 17**

**Commissioning Client:**

**Galliford Try Infrastructure - Highways Maintenance**

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**HEXHAM ROAD, HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL, NORTHUMBERLAND**

**EVALUATION REPORT**

<b>Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Quality Control</b>	
<i>Project Number</i>	K5351
<i>Site Code</i>	HOW 17
<i>Report Number</i>	RN 11094

<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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## 1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited ahead of a scheme to replace street light columns along Hexham Road, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland (central National Grid Reference NZ 13353 66993. The work was commissioned by Galliford Try Infrastructure and was carried out 6–11 December 2017.
- 1.2 Eleven street light columns were to be replaced along Hexham Road, Heddon-on-the-Wall. Archaeological investigation was required at five of the street light columns, 10HK, 12HK, 13HK, 14HK and 15HK, as they lie within the World Heritage Site and Scheduled Monument of Hadrian's Wall and Vallum (SM Refs. 26038, HA Refs. 1010617). The area of investigation lies within the Scheduled Monument List entry Number 1010617: *Hadrian's Wall and Vallum from East Town House, Heddon-on-the-Wall to the A69 trunk road in wall mile 12*. In this area the Wall and Vallum survive as buried features. Scheduled Monument consent was required for this work and the application was being processed when the work to replace most of the poles inadvertently took place in October 2017. New poles within the scheduled area had been erected at 13–15HK, with the trenches excavated to carry out this work partially backfilled, and a trench had been partially excavated for 10HK. Following on-site discussions with Mike Collins, Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments: Hadrian's Wall, Galliford Try and Pre-Construct Archaeology, a scheme of archaeological evaluation was devised to determine the likely impact on potential archaeological deposits by the work which had already taken place and for the remaining street light still to be replaced.
- 1.3 The evaluation comprised the archaeological cleaning, extension and assessment of the trenches at 13–15HK to the depth of the previously excavated trenches and the excavation of trenches at 10HK and 12HK under archaeological supervision. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC Ref. S00181052) was granted for this work on the advice of Historic England to the Department of Culture Media and Sport on 29 November 2017.
- 1.4 The evaluation determined that the work previously carried out in error to replace the street lights had not damaged any archaeological deposits or structures. In the two locations where the trenches for new lights were excavated under archaeological supervision, no significant archaeological remains were encountered.
- 1.5 In all locations, with the exception of 10HK and 14HK, modern deposits including road services, consolidation deposits and service trenches were encountered to the depth of impact. Possible natural geological material was exposed within Trench 13HK at a depth of c. 1m below the existing ground level.
- 1.6 It was not possible to extend the trench previously dug for 14HK due to the number of live services in this area. A new trench was excavated immediately adjacent to the previously excavated trench and the truncated remains of the core of Hadrian's Wall were encountered in the northern part of the trench at a depth of 0.50m below present ground level and a

highest level of 125.60m OD. To the south the wall had been cut through by an old service trench and it was through the backfill of this service trench that the excavation for the new pole to the east of evaluation trench 14HK had occurred.

- 1.7 Excavation of Trench 10HK, situated to the south of the projected course of the Vallum, ceased at a depth of 1.40m below current ground level as a fragment of worked sandstone of uncertain origin was encountered.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Project Background**

- 2.1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken at Hexham Road, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland in December 2017 (Figure 1-3) in association with a scheme to replace street lighting. The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Galliford Try Infrastructure and was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA). The area of investigation lies within the Scheduled Monument List entry Number 1010617: *Hadrian's Wall and Vallum from East Town House, Heddon-on-the-Wall to the A69 trunk road in wall mile 12*. In this area the Wall and Vallum survive as buried features.
- 2.1.2 Scheduled Monument consent was required for this work and the application was being processed when the work to replace most of the poles inadvertently took place in October 2017. New poles within the scheduled area had been erected at 13–15HK, with the trenches excavated to carry out this work partially backfilled, and a trench had been partially excavated for 10HK.
- 2.1.3 A scheme of archaeological evaluation was devised to determine the likely impact on potential archaeological deposits by the work which had already taken place and for the remaining street light still to be replaced. The evaluation comprised the archaeological cleaning, extension and assessment of the trenches at street lights 13–15HK to the depth of the previously excavated trenches and the excavation of trenches at 10HK and 12HK under archaeological supervision. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC Ref. S00181052) was granted for this work on the advice of Historic England to the Department of Culture Media and Sport on 29 November 2017. The scheme of archaeological works was devised in consultation with Mike Collins, Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments: Hadrian's Wall.
- 2.1.4 The Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigation (OASIS) reference number of the project is preconst1-311007.

### **2.2 Site Location and Description**

- 2.2.1 The archaeological evaluation was conducted along Hexham Road (B6528), Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland (central National Grid Reference NZ 13353 66993). Evaluation trenches at the location of the five street lighting columns situated within the Scheduled Monument were investigated (Figures 1 & 2).
- 2.2.2 Street light column 10HK is located on the south side of Hexham Road, west of the T-junction with the Towne Gate, in the public footway adjacent to a residential house, within the projected course of the Vallum (Figure 2). Column 12HK is located on the corner of the public footway on the west side of the T-junction, within the projected course of the Vallum. Column 13HK is located within the traffic separation island on Hexham Road, a short distance east of the T-junction, c. 25m to the south of the projected course of Hadrian's Wall

and on the edge of the course of the projected course of the Vallum. Column 14HK is situated on the north side of Hexham Road in the public footway to the east of the junction with the Military Road (B6318); the course of Hadrian's Wall is projected to cross this area. Column 15HK is situated on the south side of Hexham Road, to the east of the Petrol Station, c. 5m to the north of the projected line of Hadrian's Wall.

## **2.3 Geology and Topography**

2.3.1 Within the context of the *Natural England National Character Areas*, the site lies in National Character Area 11: Tyne Gap and Hadrian's Wall (Natural England Website). The area is summarised thus:

*This narrow, distinctive corridor centred on the River Tyne separates the uplands of the North Pennines National Character Area (NCA) from the Border Moors and Forests NCA. Westwards are views of pastoral landscapes of the Solway Basin and Eden Valley NCAs and eastwards a more urban character prevails with views of the conurbation of Newcastle in the Tyne and Wear Lowlands NCA. The Tyne valley is underlain by sedimentary Carboniferous rocks comprising a repetitive succession of limestones, sandstones, shales and intrusion of horizontal, igneous rock dolerite. Also, the prominent, intruded igneous Whin Sill formation forms a dramatic escarpment on which Hadrian's Wall is built.*

2.3.2 The bedrock geology of the site comprises mudstone, siltstone and sandstone from the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation formed approximately 318 to 319 million years ago in the Carboniferous Period (BGS17).

## **2.3 Planning Background**

2.3.1 The site of this programme of works is of archaeological interest because it is located within the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and has Scheduled Monument status, and thus has statutory protection under The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Any intrusive groundworks required Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) from Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) prior to their undertaking, in accordance with the 1979 Act. SMC for the groundworks associated with the replacement street lighting scheme was in the process of being applied for when some work inadvertently took place.

2.3.2 Following on-site discussions with Mike Collins, Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments: Hadrian's Wall, Galliford Try and Pre-Construct Archaeology, a scheme of archaeological evaluation was devised to determine the likely impact on potential archaeological deposits by the work which had already taken place and for the remaining street light still to be replaced. Accordingly, SMC was granted by the Secretary of State, advised by Historic England, subject to a series of conditions set out in a letter dated 29th November 2017 to Northumberland County Council (Ref. S00181052). Condition b) of SMC states 'No works shall take place until the applicant has confirmed in writing the commissioning of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State



advised by Historic England'. Condition e) of SMC requires a report on the archaeological recording to be submitted to the relevant Historic Environment Record and to Historic England within three months of the completion of the fieldwork

2.3.3 As part of a Scheduled Monument, any archaeological remains affected by this scheme fall within the category of 'designated heritage assets' as defined within current guidance on the historic environment set out within National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

2.3.4 Heritage assets - those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest - remain a key concept of the NPPF, retained from the previous national planning policy Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (PPS5) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010a). Despite the deletion of PPS5, the PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010b) remains a valid and UK Government endorsed document.

## 2.5 Historical Background

*The archaeological List Entries compiled by Historic England has been used as the basis of the following summary, the research and writing of those responsible is gratefully acknowledged.*

2.5.1 Hadrian's Wall marks one of the frontiers of the Roman Empire and has been designated as a World Heritage Site due to its international importance. The route across the Pennines was recognised by the Roman's for its military importance during their early campaigns through northern England and into Scotland in the second half of the first century AD. Within this period a military road known as the Stanegate was constructed along with a series of forts.

2.5.2 At the start of the second century the frontier of the Tyne-Solway route was being reorganised as the Romans withdrew from Scotland. The position was consolidated by the construction of Hadrian's Wall, under the orders of the Emperor Hadrian. The wall acted as a frontier of the Roman Empire until c.AD 400 when the Roman armies withdrew from Britain.

2.5.3 Stretching over 70 miles from coast to coast, Hadrian's Wall was a continuous barrier built of stone in the east and, initially, of turf in the west. The stone wall was originally designed to be ten Roman feet wide and sections of this width are termed broad wall. A change of plan shortly after construction began led to a reduction in the width of the wall to eight Roman feet, such sections being termed narrow wall. Stretches of both wall types survive, including some sections of narrow wall built on broad wall foundations. For most of its length a substantial ditch on the northern side provided additional defence.

2.5.4 Further defensive positions were added to the wall in the form of small walled fortlets known as milecastles. These were attached to the southern side of the wall with the majority having a gateway to the north. Between the milecastles were two equally spaced towers known as

turrets. Together the milecastles and turrets provided bases from which the curtain wall could be watched and patrolled. Both the turrets and milecastles are thought to have been higher than the wall itself to provide suitable observation points. These smaller defensive positions were originally manned from forts located along the Stanegate, however, at some point forts were constructed along the length of the wall itself. There are 16 forts attached to Hadrian's Wall or in close proximity with some overlying earlier features such as turrets or milecastles.

- 2.5.5 When the forts were placed along the wall line no provision was made for a road to link them. This situation was clearly found impracticable and a metalled track was therefore provided in places along the Vallum between the north mound and the ditch.
- 2.5.6 The Vallum is a massive earthwork monument comprising a broad ditch with flanking mounds, one to the north, and one, sometimes two (the marginal mound) to the south. It runs to the south of the wall, although not at a consistent distance from it and is a unique feature not encountered on any other frontier of the Roman Empire. It extends from Newcastle (but is not known east of Pons Aelius) to the Solway and was probably intended to represent a continuous feature interrupted only by gaps in its line corresponding to the positions of the forts of the wall, of which there were originally nineteen. For much of its course it was laid out in straight lengths of about 3km, approximately 60m south of the wall except where geological or other constraints dictated otherwise (Todd 2007, 124-5).
- 2.5.7 Generally the Vallum comprises a steep-sided ditch, 6m wide and 3m deep, with a flat bottom, flanked by two mounds, north and south, each set back some 9m from the ditch edges. For a great deal of its length a third mound, the so-called marginal mound occupies the south berm, right on the southern lip of the ditch. While excavation has shown that the depth and profile of the Vallum ditch can vary, the 6m width seems to be reasonably constant (Wilmott 2008, 51). The distance of the Vallum from the Wall varies. In general there was a preference for the earthwork to run close to the rear of the Wall where topography allowed. The marginal mound occupies part of the south berm. It has often been stated that the marginal mound comprises mixed material which has been cleared out from the ditch. However at Black Carts there is a substantial marginal mound 4.2m wide and 0.8m in surviving height built of clean material, clay and shale, like the south mound itself. Observations from Appletree and Cawfields also suggest that for some of its length the marginal mound may be primary, or at least near-primary. This idea is supplemented by the fact that often, as in the stretch from Denton westwards to Halton Chesters, the south berm is wider than the north. The phenomenon has also been noted at Wallhouses and at Heddon-on-the-Wall. It seems possible that in these areas provision was made for a marginal mound, which was never actually built (Wilmott 2009, 52).
- 2.5.8 In antiquity it was often considered that that the Vallum predated the stone wall and was built in several phases, and there are numerous antiquarian references supporting this notion (Wilmott 2008, 119). It was proved as early as 1893 that the bulk of the Vallum was

constructed as a single episode, and since its course deviates around wall-forts such as Halton Chesters, Rudchester, and excavated evidence from elsewhere, strongly support the hypothesis that it is a later feature.

2.5.9 The intended purpose of the Vallum is not known, and there probably as many views to its function as there are commentators, but a function related to the control of the hinterland of the wall, and the restriction of access to and through it, seems plausible as an original intent. Such a function may have been difficult to maintain, or eventually became obsolete as the monument was slighted by the construction of many new causeways across the ditch, and breaches made in the banks (not all of which correspond to the positions of new causeways) in the Antonine period. The ditch of the Vallum was subsequently refurbished once the Antonine Wall was abandoned and the frontier re-established along the line of Hadrian's Wall.

2.5.10 The area of investigation lies within the Scheduled Monument List entry Number 1010617: *Hadrian's Wall and Vallum from East Town House, Heddon-on-the-Wall to the A69 trunk road in wall mile 12*. The list entry states:

The monument includes a section of Hadrian's Wall, its external ditch and the Vallum from Heddon-on-the-Wall in the east to the A69 trunk road in the west. This section of the Wall corridor has wide views overlooking the Tyne valley to the south and east, whereas to the north and west the ground rises gently giving a less extensive view. The Wall survives as a buried feature for the whole of this section of its course. It lies beneath the B6318 road except at the west end of this section where it continues in a field up to the A69 trunk road. The wall ditch survives as an earthwork for much of this section, to a maximum depth of 1.5m. The upcast counterscarp, usually known as the 'glacis', also survives up to 0.3m high in the area from north of the Three Tuns Inn to the north of North Lodge. Turret 12a survives as a buried feature below the B6318 road. The location of the turret is known from part excavation by Simpson in 1930. Turret 12b also survives as a buried feature below the B6318 road, probably extending south into the area of woodland to the west of North Lodge. As with turret 12a, part excavation by Simpson in 1930 located the site of this turret. The exact location of milecastle 12 has not yet been confirmed. In relation to the known sites of turret 12a and turret 11b, the site of milecastle 12 is expected to lie in the vicinity of Keeper's Cottage at Heddon-on-the-Wall. The Vallum survives intermittently as an upstanding earthwork throughout this section. The mounds have been reduced by ploughing and the central ditch has silted up for most of its length. The south mound in this section reaches a maximum height of 1.5m, while the ditch has a maximum depth of 0.6m. The course of the Roman road known as the Military Way, which ran along the corridor between the Wall and the Vallum linking the turrets, milecastles and forts, has not yet been confirmed in this section of the corridor. The property known as Tank House, North Lodge and an area east of it, between the Wall and the Vallum, are totally excluded from the scheduling as are the houses and gardens numbered 43 to 57 Military Road. All other buildings, road surfaces and

property and field boundaries within the protected area are excluded from the scheduling, but the ground beneath them is included.

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

#### **3.1 Project Aims**

3.1.1 The project aimed to fulfil the specific requirements of SMC by undertaking an appropriate specified scheme of archaeological evaluation in association with the replacement of five street lighting columns within the course of Hadrian's Wall and the Vallum.

3.1.2 The archaeological work aimed to identify the impact of the work on the archaeological resource which had taken place in error prior to the SMC being granted. This was to be achieved by the archaeological cleaning, extension and assessment of the excavations already carried out at three locations. At one location where excavation had been partially carried and at another where no work had yet taken place, the excavation of trenches was to be carried out under archaeological supervision to allow the installation of two new street lights without damaging any archaeological deposits or structures.

#### **3.2 Research Objectives**

3.2.1 *Frontiers of Knowledge: A Research Framework for Hadrian's Wall* (Symonds & Mason Eds.) has identified a series of specific queries in relation to the monument which are relevant to the work at Heddon-on-the-Wall. These include:

##### **A.3 The Wall**

- **3.1 - Locating the Resource;** the precise course and distribution of the frontier installations and infrastructure remain uncertain.
- **3.2 - Existing Data;** the challenges that arise with utilising existing data.
- **3.3 - Chronology;** establishing the chronological relationship between the key Wall elements.
- **3.4 - Materials;** the precise source of structural material.
- **3.5 - Structures (Function, Curtain, Ditch, Obstacles, Milecastles, Turrets, Vallum);** the precise manner in which the Wall structures interacted and the resulting frontier system.

3.2.2 In addition, the investigations were to 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 for the Roman period, as set out in the NERRF Research Agenda:

- **Riii** Roman Military Presence
- **Riv** Native and Civilian Life
- **Rv** Material Culture
- **Rx** Roman to Early Medieval Transition

- 3.2.3 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. The full scheme of archaeological work required is described in the following section.

## 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Fieldwork

4.1.1 The fieldwork was undertaken in compliance with the codes and practice of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and the relevant ClfA standard and guidance document (ClfA 2014 a & b). PCA is a CIFA 'Registered Organisation'. All fieldwork and post-excavation work was carried out in accordance with the Yorkshire, the Humber & The North East: Regional Statement of Good Practice (SYAS 2011).

4.1.2 Excavations had already taken place at the locations of street lights 13–15HK and the new posts erected. The archaeological evaluation was to include the archaeological cleaning, extension and assessment of these trenches to the depth of the previously excavated trenches. Due to the presence of live cables in 14HK extension was not possible and a new trench was dug immediately adjacent. At street light 10HK a trench had been partially dug and no work had taken place at 12HK. At these locations trenches for new street lights were excavated under archaeological supervision.

4.1.3 The dimensions of the trenches are provided in the table below:

Trench	Measurements (m)		
	Length	Width	Depth
10HK	0.40	0.70	1.40
12HK	0.75	0.70	1.20
13HK	2.00	0.60	1.20
14HK	1.20	0.70	1.00
15HK	0.75	0.50	1.20

4.1.4 Ground level was reduced by hand. The investigation of archaeological levels was by hand, with cleaning, examination and recording both in plan and in section, where appropriate. Investigations within the Trial Pits followed the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation and were conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the field manual of PCA (PCA 2009) and the Museum of London Site Manual (Museum of London 1944).

4.1.5 Deposits and cut features were individually recorded on the *pro-forma* 'Trench Recording Sheet' and 'Context Recording Sheet'. All site records were marked with the unique-number HOW17 (site code). All archaeological features were excavated by hand tools and recorded in plan at 1:20 or in section at 1:10 using standard 'single context recording' methods. The height of all principal strata and features was calculated in metres above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) and indicated on appropriate plans and sections.

- 4.1.6 A detailed photographic record of the evaluation was prepared using SLR cameras (35mm film black and white prints for archive purposes) and by digital photography. All detailed photographs included a legible graduated metric scale. The photographic record illustrated both in detail and general context archaeological exposures and specific features in all trenches.
- 4.1.7 The truncated remains of the core of Hadrian's Wall was encountered in the northern part of 14HK. Following recording of the structural remains the masonry was protected by geotextile and covered in loosely compacted spoil excavated from the trench prior to the trench being backfilled and the tarmac footpath replaced.

## **4.2 Post-excavation**

- 4.2.1 The stratigraphic data for the project comprises written and photographic records. A total of 30 archaeological contexts were defined in the five trenches (Appendix 2). Post-excavation work involved checking and collating site records, grouping contexts and phasing the stratigraphic data. A written summary of the archaeological sequence was then compiled, as described in Section 5.
- 4.2.2 No artefactual material was recovered from the investigations.
- 4.2.3 The complete Site Archive, in this case comprising only the written, drawn and photographic records (including all material generated electronically during post-excavation) 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 the most recent ClfA publication relating to archiving (ClfA 2014c).
- 4.2.4 At the time of writing, the Site Archive was housed at the Durham Office of PCA, Unit 19a Tursdale Business Park, Durham, DH6 5PG. When complete, the site Archive will be deposited under the site code HOW17. The Site Archive will be organised as to be compatible with the other archaeological archives produced in the county. A completed transfer of title deed will accompany the archive on deposition.



## 5. RESULTS: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

*During the archaeological investigation, separate stratigraphic entities were assigned unique and individual context numbers, which are indicated in the following text as, for example [123]. The context numbers have been assigned per trench therefore contexts from Trench 10HK are in the 100s and contexts from Trench 12HK in the 200s etc. The archaeological sequence is described by placing stratigraphic sequences within broad phases, assigned on a site-wide basis in this case. An attempt has been made to add interpretation to the data, and correlate these phases with recognised historical and geological periods. The figures can be found in Appendix 1 with the context index and stratigraphic matrix located in Appendix 2 and 3 respectively. A selection of plates can be found within Appendix 4.*

### 5.1 Phase 1: Undated - natural?

5.1.1 Phase 1 represents the possible natural geological material exposed within Trench 13HK, which comprised firm mid greyish brown clay [304]. The superficial geology was encountered c. 1m below the existing ground level.

### 5.2 Phase 2: Roman

5.2.1 Phase 2 represents comprises Roman activity only recorded in Trench 14HK (Figure 4). A solid sandstone wall [410] was encountered at a depth of 0.50m below current ground level and the southern side had been truncated by an old service trench, [408], creating an irregular edge (Section 4, Figure 4). The structure continued beyond all edges of the trench except to the south and it was exposed for a maximum height of 0.42m, length of 0.70m and width of 1.20m. The wall comprised roughly hewn sandstone bonded with firm, mid reddish brown, sandy clay [409]. The form and location of the structure demonstrates that this is the truncated core of Hadrian's Wall. Street light 14HK lies within the projected course of Hadrian's Wall (see Figures 2 and 3).

### 5.3 Phase 3: Undated – post-medieval?

5.3.1 Features assigned to Phase 3 activity comprised worked stone [103] in Trench 10HK and possible made ground deposits [502-4] in 15HK.

5.3.2 A fragment of worked sandstone [103] was discovered at the base of Trench 10HK at a depth of 1.40m below current ground level. The stone measured c. 300m x 300m with an unknown thickness. As the function or potential significance of the stone was unknown further excavation was ceased to prevent any impact upon the masonry.

5.3.3 The basal deposit [503] within Trench 15K comprised loosely compacted light grey sand exposed for a maximum thickness of 0.24m at a depth of 1m below present ground level. This was overlain by a 0.20m thick deposit of firm, light brown sandy clay [502], overlain by a 0.60m thick deposit compact dark brown silty sand [504]. These deposits appeared to represent made ground, although given the location of the trench to the north of Hadrian's

Wall and within the possible location of the Wall ditch, it is possible that the lower deposits may represent upper backfills of the ditch. However, with such a small area exposed interpretation cannot be certain.

#### **5.4 Phase 4: 20th century to Modern**

- 5.4.1 Consolidation layers, surfaces, backfills and service trenches have been assigned to Phase 4 activity. In 10HK, overlying stone masonry [103] was a sandy consolidation layer with frequent fragments of sandstone [102]. The consolidation layer, measuring 1.22m thick, was in turn overlain by a doorstep [101] and the current tarmac surface [100].
- 5.4.2 The basal deposit [204] within 12Hk comprised compact, light yellow sand with very frequent sandstone fragments, exposed for a maximum thickness of 0.44m. This is interpreted as a 20th-century consolidation layer or possible backfill for the construction cut of the stone boundary wall which was adjacent to the trench. Overlying [204] was a series of consolidation layers and former surfaces. A compact, dark brown, silty sand layer with small/medium angular stones [203] 0.42m thick, was a consolidation base for a previous tarmac road surface [202]. Overlying road surface [202] was a 0.22m thick consolidation deposit [201] comprising compact, mid reddish brown, crushed brick rubble and sand overlain by the current tarmac surface [200].
- 5.4.3 The possible natural sub-stratum in 13HK was overlain by a 0.64m thick, firm mid brown, sandy clay deposit [303]. A ceramic pipe with a diameter of 0.20m cut through this deposit. Overlying the pipe and consolidation layer [303] was an earlier tarmac surface [302] measuring 0.13m thick. Overlying this was a 0.15m thick, loose light brown sand bedding layer [201] for current flagstone surface [300].
- 5.4.4 A service trench cut [408] truncated the south-west extent of the sandstone core of Hadrian's Wall [410] in 14HK. The service trench [408] as exposed measured 0.55m in length, 0.70m wide and 0.36m deep. Two backfill deposits comprising firm, dark grey brown, sandy clay [407] and compact light brown sand [406] were recorded within the service trench cut [408]. Overlying the trench backfills was a 0.18m thick compact dark grey hard-core deposit [405] comprising angular stones. This was a consolidation layer for an earlier tarmac road surface [404] measuring 0.12m thick. The tarmac road surface [404] was in turn overlain by several levelling and consolidation layers [401-403] consisting of clinker, bitumen, crushed brick and sandstone with a combined thickness of 0.19m. These represented consolidation and/or levelling deposits for the two road surfaces above which form the current road surface [400].
- 5.4.5. In Trial Pit 15HK made ground deposit [501] was overlain by topsoil [500] forming the current ground surface.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 The archaeological investigation involved the evaluation of five trenches on Hexham Road, Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. The work comprised the archaeological cleaning, extension and assessment of previously excavated trenches at three locations where street lights 13–15HK had been erected and the excavation of trenches for street lights 10HK and 12HK under archaeological supervision. The aim of this work was to determine the likely impact on potential archaeological deposits by the work which had already taken place and for the work which need to take place for the remaining street lights to be replaced.
- 6.1.2 The evaluation determined that the work previously carried out in error to replace the street lights had not damaged any archaeological deposits or structures. In the two locations where the trenches for new lights were excavated under archaeological supervision, no significant archaeological remains were encountered.
- 6.1.3 It was not possible to extend trench 14HK due to health and safety constraints as numerous services were encountered within the area. A new trench was excavated immediately adjacent to 14HK which demonstrated that below-ground remains relating to Hadrian's Wall survived within the projected course of the Wall despite the scale of truncation during the construction of Hexham Road.
- 6.1.4 Hadrian's Wall marks one of the frontiers of the Roman Empire and has been designated as a World Heritage Site due to its international importance. The monument itself comprises a stone wall of approximately 8 Roman feet in width together with associated turrets and milecastles as well as the Vallum ditch to the south of the feature and a defensive ditch to the north. At Heddon-on-the-Wall the list entry notes that the wall survives as a buried feature for this section of its course, below the B6318 road except at the west end where it continues in a field up to the A69 trunk road.
- 6.1.5 The remains of Hadrian's Wall comprised a truncated sandstone rubble core bonded with clay, approximately 0.50m below present ground level at 125.60m AOD. Evidence is cited for a clay-bonded core at or near Heddon by Daniels (1978, 75) and also at Denton (Bidwell 1996, 32). *Frontiers of Knowledge* (Symonds & Mason 2009, 39) notes that the Broad Wall generally had a clay and rubble core, with a poor brown mortar used for the facing stones in some places, however, specifications for the Narrow Wall and 6-foot variation are less certain, and generally had mortared cores.
- 6.1.6 Hall (2006, 95-96) notes that during the laying of the foundation and footings of the wall a shallow trench was dug involving no more than the removal of the turf, and into this flags or large stones were bedded in clay or earth. On top of the Broad Wall foundation one to four courses of facing stones were laid as the footings; above this the Wall was reduced to its finished width by means of an offset on each face. The foundation and footings seem to have been built chiefly with clay as a bonding medium throughout. Clay was also used

within the construction of the curtain wall with the core consisting of sandstone rubble with either mortar, clay or earth (*ibid.* 99).

- 6.1.7 It is therefore considered that the archaeological investigation has made a contribution to archaeological knowledge of the Roman period. In terms of research frameworks, the project can be considered to have contributed to **A.3 The Wall** in *Frontiers of Knowledge* (Symonds & Mason Eds. 2009) and **Riii Roman Military Presence** in NERRF (Petts & Gerrard 2006).

## **6.2 Recommendations**

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

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## 7.2 Online Sources

The **British Geological Survey** website: [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk). This was consulted for information regarding the geology of the study area.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

### Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Andrew Douglas of Galliford Try Infrastructure for commissioning the archaeological investigations herein described. PCA would also like to thank Mike Collins, Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments: Hadrian's Wall, for advice throughout the project.

### PCA Credits

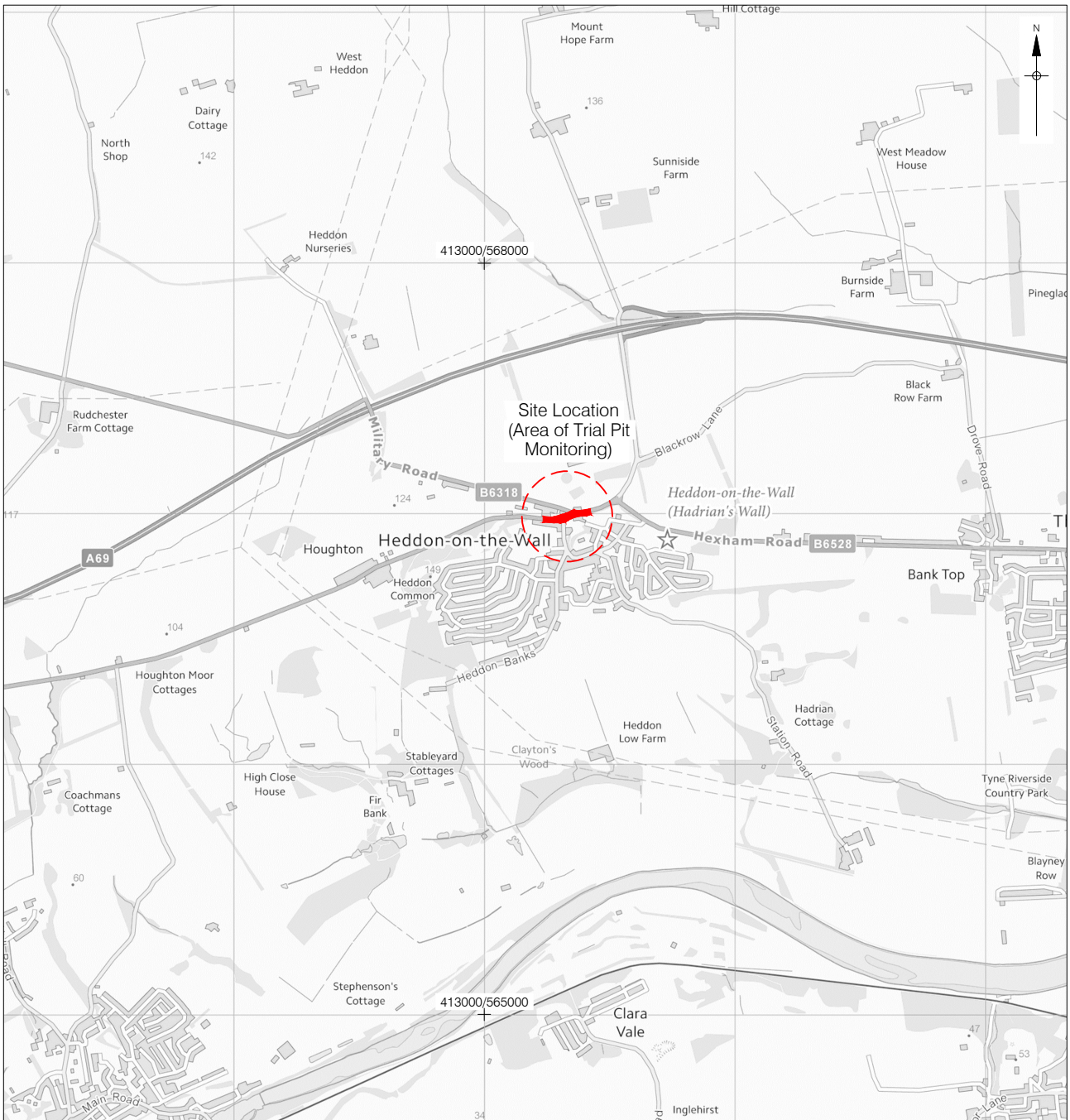
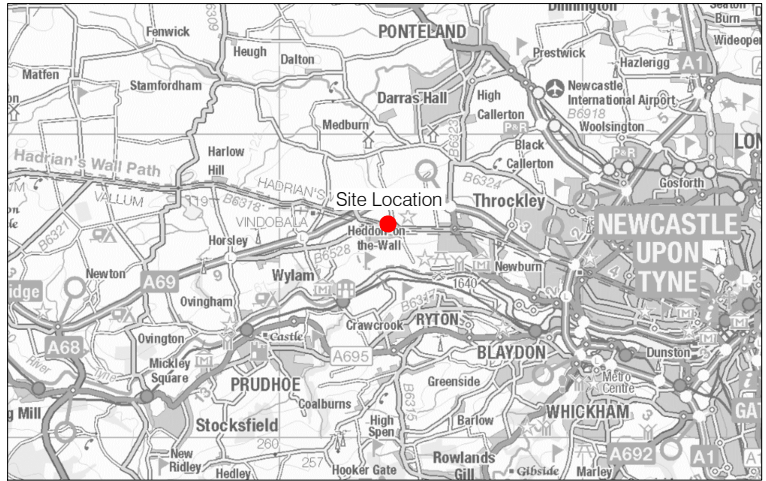
*Fieldwork and Report:* Danni-louise Parker

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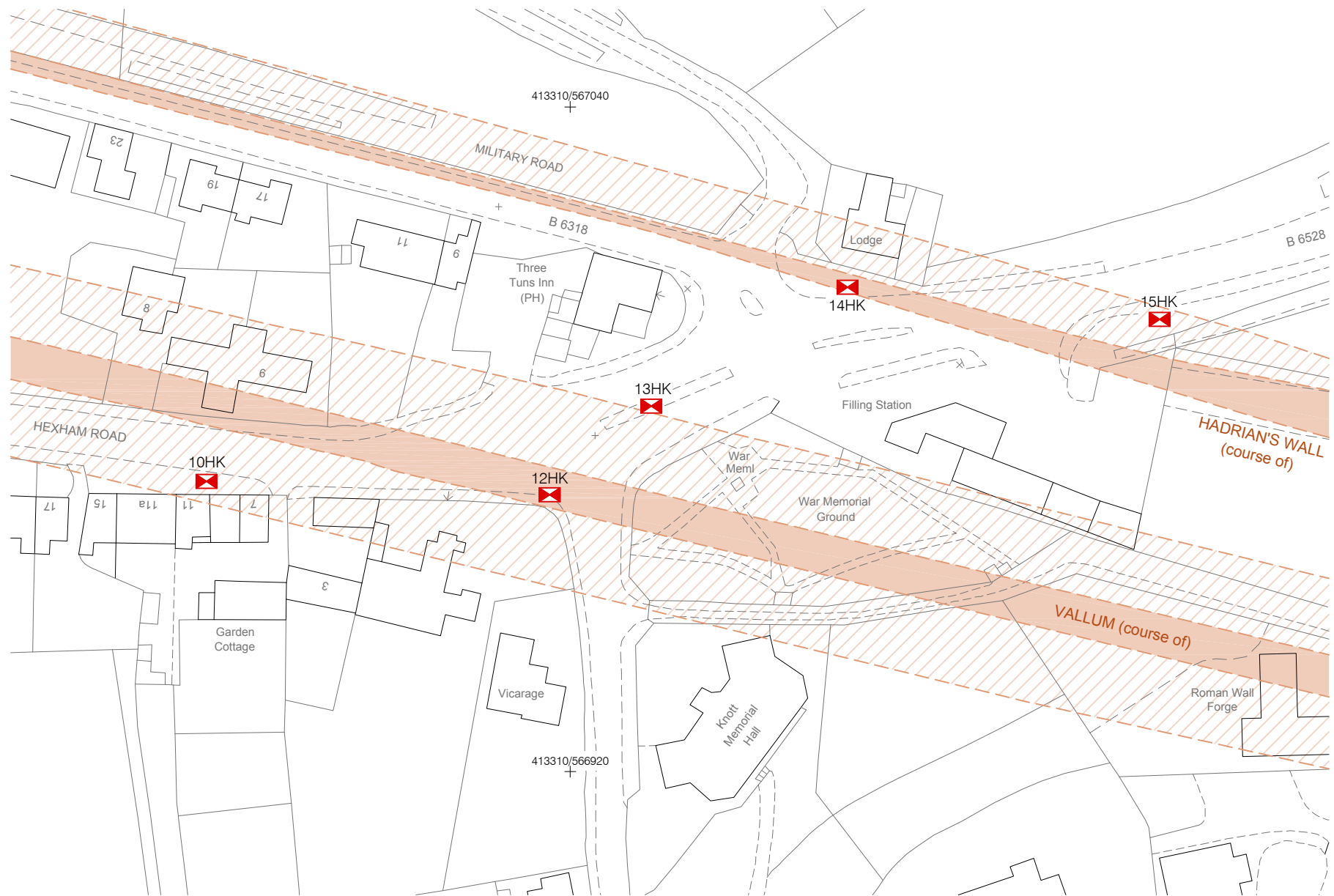
## **APPENDIX 1: FIGURES**





0 1km

Figure 1  
 Site Location  
 1:2,000,000, 1:500,000, 1:25,000 at A4



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 02/02/18 MR

Figure 2  
 Detailed Site Location  
 1:800 at A4

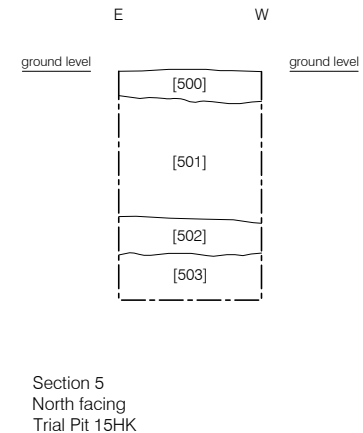
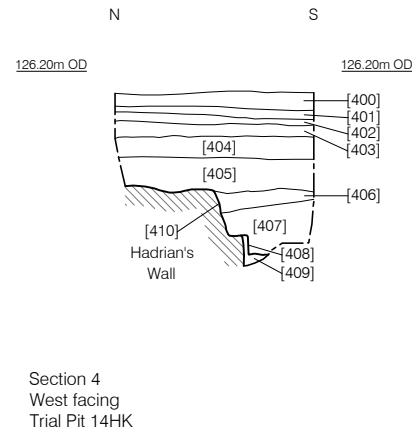
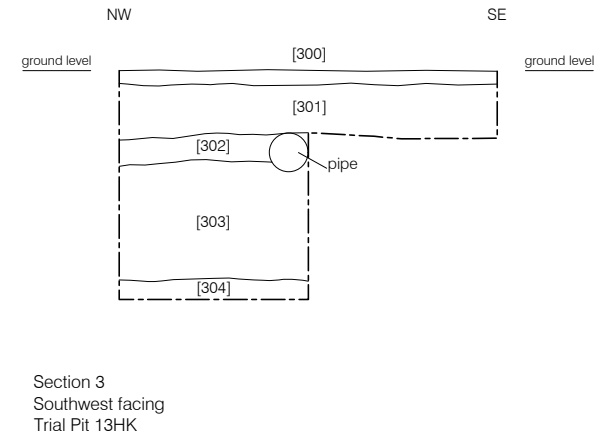
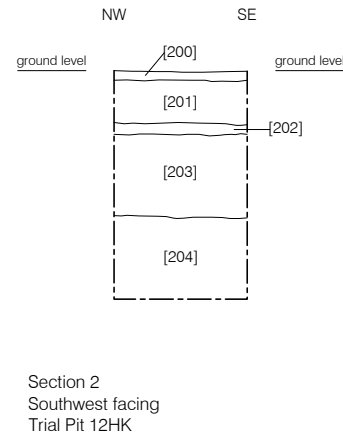
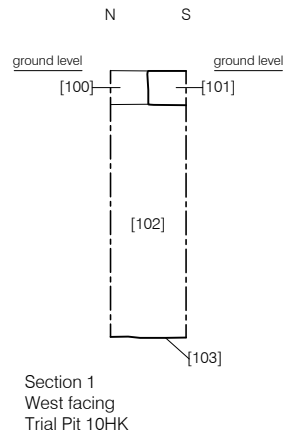
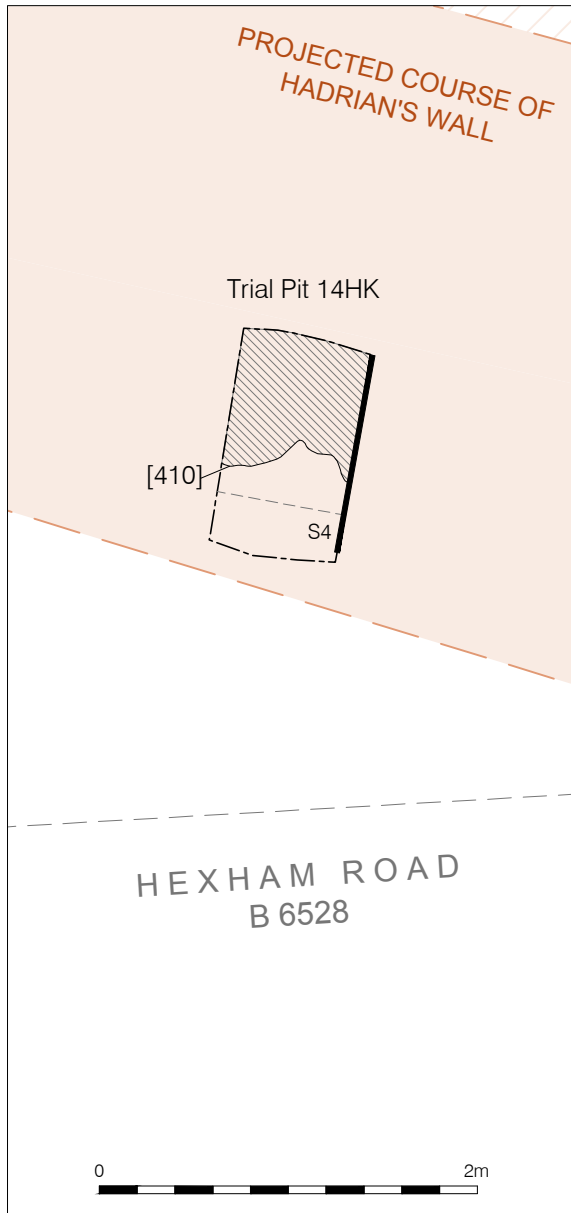


Figure 3  
Plan of Trial Pit 14HK and Sections 1 to 5  
1:40 at A4

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

<b>Context</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Type 1</b>	<b>Type 2</b>	<b>Fill of</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Trial Pit 10HK</b>					
100	4	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac surface
101	4	Masonry	Other		Stone doorstep
102	3	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
103	3	Masonry	Other		Stone masonry
<b>Trial Pit 12HK</b>					
200	3	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac surface
201	3	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
202	3	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
203	4	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
204	4	Deposit	Fill		Possible backfill of construction cut for boundary wall
<b>Trial Pit 13HK</b>					
300	4	Masonry	Floor surface		Stone floor surface
301	4	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation/levelling deposit
302	3	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac surface
303	3	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation/levelling deposit
304	1	Deposit	Natural		Possible superficial geology
<b>Trial Pit 14HK</b>					
400	4	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac surface
401	4	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
402	4	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
403	4	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
404	3	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac road surface
405	3	Deposit	Layer		Consolidation layer
406	3	Deposit	Fill	[408]	Fill of possible service trench [408]
407	3	Deposit	Fill	[408]	Fill of possible service trench [408]
408	3	Cut	Cut		Cut for possible service trench
409	2	Deposit	Layer		Possible clay packing material for wall [410]
410	2	Masonry	Wall		Hadrian's wall
<b>Trial Pit 15HK</b>					
500	4	Deposit	Layer		Topsoil
501	3	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
502	3	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
503	3	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
504	3	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit

### APPENDIX 3: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX

	Trial Pit 10HK	Trial Pit 12HK	Trial Pit 13HK	Trial Pit 14HK	Trial Pit 15HK		
	(100)	(200)	(300)	(400)	(500)		
	[101]	(201)	(301)	(401)			
				(402)			
				(403)			
Phase 4: Modern							
-----							
	(102)	(202)	(302)	(404)	(501)		
	[103]	(203)	(303)	(405)	(502)		
				(406)	(503)		
		(204)		(407)	(504)		
Phase 3: Undated-Post-medieval				[408]			
-----							
				(409)			
				[410]			
Phase 2: Roman							
-----							
Phase 1: Undated: Natural			(304)				

## APPENDIX 4: PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES

*Plate 1: Hadrian's Wall in Trial Pit 14HK: view east, 1m scale*



*Plate 2: Hadrian's Wall in Trial pit 14HK: view north-east, 1m scale*



Plate 3: Hadrian's Wall in Trial pit 14HK: view south-east, 1m scale



Plate 4: Hadrian's Wall in Trial pit 14HK: view south, 0.20m scale



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