

**STREET LIGHT REPLACEMENT,  
JUNCTION OF THE B6318 & A68,  
PORT GATE, CORBRIDGE,  
NORTHUMBERLAND**

**EVALUATION REPORT**

**OCTOBER 2018**

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**Street Light Replacement, Junction of the B6318 & A68, Port Gate, Corbridge,  
Northumberland**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

***Commissioning Client:***

**Galliford Try Infrastructure – Highways Maintenance**

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**STREET LIGHT REPLACEMENT, JUNCTION OF THE B6318 AND A68, PORT GATE,**  
**CORBRIDGE, NORTHUMBERLAND**

**EVALUATION REPORT**

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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 at the roundabout junction of the B6318 and A68, Port Gate, Corbridge, Northumberland (central National Grid Reference NY 98762 68729). The work was commissioned by Galliford Try Infrastructure and was carried out 26-27 September 2018.
- 1.2 The overall scheme involves the replacement of thirteen street light columns at the junction. This phase of archaeological work comprised the evaluation of five of the proposed locations of street light column replacements that lie within the the Scheduled Monument of Hadrian's Wall and Vallum (SM Ref. 1010625: *Hadrian's Wall and Vallum between the Fence Burn and the track to Portgate Cottage in wall miles 21 and 22*). At this location the Wall and Vallum survive as buried features. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC Ref. S00201679) was granted for this work on the advice of Historic England to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport on 19 September 2018.
- 1.3 The intersection of the Roman road known as Dere Street, the principal north-south route into Scotland, and Hadrian's Wall is located at the site of the junction of the B6318 and A68. It is evident from historic maps that the location and design of the junction of the B6318 and the A68 was altered in the late twentieth century, from its earlier layout as a four-way junction, to the current layout as a roundabout. The locations of both roads have been moved to the north-east at the point of their junction, the B6318 was moved north and the A68 has been moved to the east.
- 1.4 The evaluation comprised the excavation, cleaning, assessment and recording of five trial pits (469C, 470C, 471C, 472C and 484C). The proposed dimensions of each trial pit was c. 1m x 1m, excavated to a depth of 1.2m. However, the dimensions of the pits, with the exception of Trial Pit 484C, had to be altered to avoid power services. All trial pits were sited approximately 1m away from the current street lights.
- 1.5 Five phases of activity were encountered within the trial pits investigated: Phase 1: Superficial Geology; Phase 2: Roman; Phase 3: undated; Phase 4: Post-medieval and Phase 5: Modern.
- 1.6 Superficial geology (Phase 1) was exposed within Trial Pit 469C at a depth of c. 1.08m below the existing ground level.
- 1.7 Roman activity (Phase 2) was encountered in two trial pits, both located in the grass verge along the western side of the A68, south of the roundabout. The uppermost surviving deposit comprised compact sandstone rubble fragments in a clay matrix encountered at a depth of c. 0.83m below present ground level in Trial Pit 469C and c. 0.79m in Trial Pit 470C, 0.14m and 0.21m thick, respectively. In both pits this overlay a clay deposit, 0.10m thick in Trial Pit 469C and at least 0.29m thick in Trial Pit 470C. These deposits are

interpreted as deposits that would have formed the agger of Dere Street Roman road, the ridge constructed to support the road surface.

- 1.8 Phase 3 represents an undated but probably early post-medieval levelling deposit encountered in Trial Pit 470C which directly overlay Phase 2 Roman activity.
- 1.9 Post-medieval activity (Phase 4) is represented by levelling deposits encountered in Trial Pits 471C and 472C and a sandstone wall encountered in Trial Pit 472C.
- 1.10 Modern deposits (Phase 5) were recorded in all trial pits and comprised levelling and consolidation deposits, road surfaces and service trenches. In Test Pit 469C modern deposits directly overlay Phase 2 Roman deposits interpreted as associated with Roman Dere Street. Trial Pits 471C and 484C were excavation to the maximum allowable depth of 1.2m below present ground level. Although no archaeological deposits of significance were encountered at these locations, remains of Roman date could potentially survive at greater depths.

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Project Background**

- 2.1.1 This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken 26th-27th September 2018 at the roundabout junction of the B6318 and A68, Port Gate, Corbridge, Northumberland (Figures 1 and 2). The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Galliford Try Infrastructure and was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) in association with a scheme to replace street lighting.
- 2.1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken within part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site core area (ref 1000098) and lies within the area of a Scheduled Monument (ref 1010625: *Hadrian's Wall and Vallum between the Fence Burn and the track to Portgate Cottage in wall miles 21 and 22*). In this area the Wall and Vallum survive as buried features. Prior to the undertaking of the archaeological work Scheduled Monument Consent was granted on the advice of Historic England to the Department of Culture Media and Sport on 19 September 2018 (SMC ref. S00201679). The intersection of the Roman road known as Dere Street, the principal north-south route into Scotland, and Hadrian's Wall is located at the site of the junction of the B6318 and A68.
- 2.1.3 The scheme of archaeological works was devised in consultation with Mike Collins, Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments: Hadrian's Wall to determine the likely impact on potential archaeological deposits by the proposed street light column replacement work at the junction of the B6318 and A68. A Written Scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by PCA and approved by Historic England prior to the work commencing (PCA 2018).
- 2.1.4 The evaluation comprised five trial with proposed dimensions of c. 1m x 1m x 1.20m deep (Trial Pits 469C, 470C, 471C, 472C & 484C), although, the dimensions of each trial pit, with the exception of Trial Pit 484C, had to be altered to avoid power services
- 2.1.5 The Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigation (OASIS) reference number of the project is: preconst1-330206.

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

- 2.2.1 The site lies approximately 4km north of Corbridge and 4.4km north of the River Tyne. All trial pits were situated at the roundabout junction of the B6318 and A68, Port Gate, Corbridge, Northumberland (central National Grid Reference NY 98762 68729) (Figures 1 & 2).
- 2.2.1 This section of the wall corridor occupies an east facing slope with limited views in all directions. Hadrian's Wall survives as a buried feature beneath the B6318 road throughout most of this section; however, towards the west end of the section it survives as a visible earthwork.



2.2.2 All the groundworks associated with the scheme were undertaken within the verge of the roundabout junction of the B6318 and A68 and involved archaeological evaluation at the proposed locations for the provision of five street lighting column replacements (469C, 470C, 471C, 472C, 484C).

2.2.3 Trial Pits 469C and 470C were located on the west side of the A68, south of the B6318 on the grass verge adjacent to the *Errington Arms* Public House. Trial Pit 471C was located to the south-west of the junction of the B6318 and A68, on the grass verge north east of the *Errington Arms* Public House. Trial Pit 472C was located to the south of the B6318, west of the A68 on the grass verge to the north of the *Errington Arms* Public House. Trial Pit 484C was located to the south east of the junction of the B6318 and A68, on the grass verge to the west of a public footway (Figure 2).

### 2.3 Geology and Topography

2.3.2 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.*

2.3.3 The bedrock geology of this part of Northumberland broadly comprises sandstone of the Stainmore Formation formed in the Carboniferous Period (BGS 2018).

2.3.4 The superficial geology of the area is composed of Devensian-Diamicton till formed 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (*ibid.*).

### 2.3 Planning Background

2.3.1 The site of this programme of works is primarily of archaeological interest because it lies in part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site core area (Ref 1000098) and has Scheduled Monument status (Monument Number 1010625: Hadrian's Wall and vallum between the Fence Burn and the track to Portgate Cottage in wall miles 21 and 22). At this location the Roman road known as Dere Street intersects with Hadrian's Wall.

2.3.2 Specifically, the site has potential for the presence of important archaeological remains associated with the Roman gatehouse where Dere Street crossed the wall at the Port Gate roundabout location, as exposed in archaeological excavations undertaken in 1966 (HER 1010625).

- 2.3.3 Because the site has Scheduled Monument status, and thus has statutory protection under The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, any intrusive groundworks for the installation required SMC from DCMS prior to their undertaking. In accordance with the 1979 Act, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport consulted with Historic England before deciding whether to grant SMC after an application for the installation was submitted by Galliford Try Plc 30th August 2018. Historic England considered '*...the effect of the proposed works upon the monument to be archaeological evaluation necessary to assess the extent, depth and nature of archaeological deposits in order to provide information to underpin decisions on the management of the monument, changes in its land use, or development proposals.*'
- 2.3.4 Accordingly, SMC was granted for the archaeological evaluation by the Secretary of State, advised by Historic England, subject to a series of conditions set out in a letter dated 19th September 2018 to Mr Andrew Douglas (Galliford Try Plc). Condition b) of SMC states '*No works shall take place except 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 required a report on the archaeological recording to be sent to the County Historic Environment Record and to Mike Collins at Historic England within 3 months of the completion of the works (or such other period as may be mutually agreed).
- 2.3.5 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 (revised 2018)).
- 2.3.6 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.
- 2.3.7 The project aimed to fulfil the specific requirements of SMC by undertaking an appropriately specified scheme of archaeological investigation, in this case archaeological evaluation, in association with the proposed locations of replacement street light columns (469C, 470C, 471C, 472C, 484C). The overall street light replacement scheme involves a total of thirteen location with the remaining eight replacement street light column locations to form a separate phase of archaeological work.
- 2.3.8 All archaeological work 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 & c). PCA is a CIFA Registered Organisation. All fieldwork and

post-excavation was carried out in accordance with the Yorkshire, the Humber & The North East: Regional Statement of Good Practice (SYAS 2011).

- 2.3.9 Historic England has responsibility for archaeological development control in relation to the Scheduled Monument. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the archaeological work was submitted and approved by Historic England prior to work commencing (PCA 2018).

## 2.4 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.*

- 2.4.1 The remains of the Roman fort and settlement of *Corstopitum* or *Coria* lie on the northern bank of the Tyne at Corbridge, c. 3.86km to the south of the site. The fort was preceded by an earlier fortress at Red House c. 3.92km to the south-west of the Errington Arms, where a substantial supply base was established during the northern campaigning of Agricola, which began in AD 79.
- 2.4.2 Dere Street was the major road which ran from the legionary fortress at York through North Yorkshire and County Durham, crossed the Tyne at Corbridge and then continued up through the Cheviots into Scotland. The road carried on up to the fort at Newstead at the crossing of the River Tweed, ending at the Antonine Wall (Rowland 1974). The construction of the main site at Corbridge and that of Dere Street are thought to be contemporary. The fort's foundation was probably linked with the withdrawal from Scotland after the replacement of Agricola, perhaps some time in the late 80s (Bishop and Dore 1989). Therefore, it is considered that the late AD 80s is a likely foundation date for Dere Street within this area.
- 2.4.3 The course of Dere Street follows the A68, just outside the Errington Arms Public House. Immediately south of the Vallum, for 150m, there is an overgrown mound beside the west verge of the A68, representing part of the Roman road which was not built directly over.
- 2.4.4 By the end of the first century AD, the Red House supply base had been replaced by the fort at Corbridge, this strategically situated c. 4km south of Hadrian's Wall at the junction of Dere Street and the Stanegate road; the east-west route across the Tyne-Solway isthmus generally thought to have formed part of a frontier system that was a precursor to Hadrian's Wall. A complex succession of forts was built at Corbridge, which reflects the history of the northern frontier, before the site became largely a civilian town, although retaining a military presence (Bishop & Dore 1989).
- 2.4.5 Dere Street has been the subject of several archaeological investigations along its extensive length. The construction largely conforms to that generally seen for most other Roman roads in Britain (Margery 1965; Davies 2002). Roads were generally laid upon a well-constructed embankment (agger) of varying height, in order to provide a properly drained base and foundation. The material for the agger was generally derived from the excavation of a broad scoop-ditch along one or both sides of the road, or sometimes from a series of pits

alongside it. Some roads had a road zone set out prior to construction, this delineated by parallel, narrow, shallow ditches. These were placed well back from the road with the agger built centrally between them. Margery (1965, 22) noted that the widths recorded for such zones indicated two classes of main roads, one with ditches c. 25.50m apart (centre to centre) and secondary class with ditches c. 18.90m apart.

- 2.4.6 Across Roman Britain there was great variation in agger design and construction. In some places a simple earth bank was raised, while in others the agger was carefully built up in layers of stone or other material to the required height. The most important routes, such as Ermine Street, saw the agger up to 1.80m high and 15.0 wide, while lesser routes had much less substantial or even almost non-existent embankments, with the road surface effectively laid directly upon the existing ground surface (Margery 1965, 21). However, for most Roman roads in Britain, the width of the agger lies between 8.0m and 13.0m, and its height is typically c. 0.75m (English Heritage 1989, 4).
- 2.4.7 Upon the agger was the actual road carriageway, sometimes with a foundation of large stones below the surface treatment, which varies greatly across Britain. A few locations have produced evidence of paving stones on the road surface, while no metalling at all was evidently used in places. More typically, however, rammed pea gravel or fine to medium pebbles were used, with flint, chalk and even iron slag also used to a lesser extent. Whatever was used, the aim was to provide a durable surface treatment suitable for a variety of traffic including carts and horses. The most important route had carriageways up to 9.0m wide, with lesser roads around 4.50-5.50m wide and roads in more rural locations down to 3.0-3.50m wide (Margery 1965, 21). The road surface was often steeply cambered to assist drainage, with this being a design feature facilitated by the method of construction of the agger. Durability was sometimes increased by the use of kerbs along either side of the agger; cut stone was used for such a purpose on the Devil's Causeway roman road in Northumberland (English Heritage 1989, 4). If necessary, roads were accompanied by side drainage features, mostly simple ditches presumably along the line of the original 'scoop' ditch, but there are also examples of stone- or timber- lined drains and even stone-built culverts running alongside the agger; a notable example of such culverting occurs on Dere Street at High Rochester (the site of the Roman fort *Bremenium*), c. 38km north of Corbridge.
- 2.4.8 Archaeological work in 1995 at Riding Mill c. 7.3km to the south-east of the site, identified a c. 50m length of Dere Street (PCA 2011a). The road was c. 8.0m wide and comprised three successive surfaces 0.20m, 0.15m and 0.25m thick (latest to earliest). It was not established whether the carriageway was kerbed or if roadside ditches were present.
- 2.4.9 Rowland recounted the words of antiquarian Roger Gale who in 1711 wrote of Dere Street near Ebchester as being '*...in a direct line along one of the most entire, regular, and large ways I ever saw, and the ridge being for the most part 2 yards [c. 1.80m] in height, full 8 yards [c. 7.30m] broad, and paved with stone, that it is at present as even as new laid*'

(Roland 1974, 19). Writing about the same Roman road some two hundred years later, travel writer Jessie Mothersole said, *'It is difficult to believe that such was its condition only a little more than two centuries ago, when today we have to search even for vestiges'* (Mothersole 1927).

- 2.4.10 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.
- 2.4.11 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.
- 2.4.12 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.
- 2.4.13 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.
- 2.4.14 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.

- 2.4.15 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.
- 2.4.16 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, p.124-5).
- 2.4.17 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 where there is a substantial marginal mound 4.2m wide and 0.8m in surviving height. It was 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).
- 2.4.18 The earliest surviving mention of the earthwork is made by Bede who refers to a vallum, or earthen rampart, as distinct from a wall, murus; and it is this term which persists as the name for the monument even though the essential component of the monument is the fossa (ditch).
- 2.4.19 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.

- 2.4.20 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.
- 2.4.21 Whilst all the forts added to the Wall are broadly similar in size, no two are exactly alike and there is no standard internal layout. However, when originally built, all forts enclosed a fairly standard range of buildings including a headquarters building, commandant's house, hospital, barracks, stables, granaries and workshops. The size and number of barracks blocks has, in the past, been used to determine the size and type of military unit stationed there. This is a difficult exercise which remains the subject of much debate. The area outside the fort was put to a variety of uses. There was usually a bath house and normally a number of temples, burial grounds and other official establishments such as lodging houses for official visitors. Over time sprawling external settlements known as vici grew up around many forts. These housed a range of people and activities attracted by the military presence. Some of the inhabitants may have been families of troops stationed on the Wall, although it was not until the third century that soldiers on active duty were officially permitted to marry. Others may have been retired soldiers and their families. Traders and merchants are also thought to have set up workshops and shops in the vici. The most common type of building found here, as well as in other areas around forts, was the long narrow strip building. These appear to have been used for both domestic and commercial purposes.
- 2.4.22 Hadrian's Wall survives in various states of preservation along its length. In places, especially in the central section, the Wall remains several courses high and the attached forts, turrets and milecastles are also clearly identifiable. Elsewhere the Wall has been virtually robbed out and only its foundations survive beneath the present ground surface. Although some sections of the frontier system no longer survive visibly, sufficient evidence does exist for its position to be fairly accurately identified throughout most of its length.
- 2.4.23 An excavation in 1966 revealed that where Dere Street crossed the Wall, a gatehouse- the Port Gate- formed of massive masonry blocks which projected northwards from the wall by 3.6m had been constructed. The site of this gatehouse- built to control traffic along Dere Street as it passed through the Wall- lies within Scheduled Monument No. 26047. It was probably a square or rectangular structure.
- 2.4.24 The list entry (Historic England) for this section of wall (1010625) are detailed below:  
National Monument No. 1010625

Hadrian's Wall and vallum between the Fence Burn and the track to Portgate Cottage in wall miles 21 and 22

*The monument includes the section of Hadrian's Wall between the Fence Burn in the east and the west side of the track to Portgate Cottage in the west. This section of the Wall occupies an east facing slope with limited views in all directions.*

*The Wall survives as a buried feature below the B6318 road for most of this section. The stretch of Wall 220m east to 320m west of the course of the A68, where the B6318 swings north to a roundabout, lies below the 18th century metalled road which is now disused. The wall ditch survives as a buried feature for most of this section; however, towards the west end of the section it survives as a visible earthwork. The maximum height of its south scarp is 4m and the maximum height of its north scarp is 2m. There are slight traces of the upcast mound, known as the 'glacis', to the north of the ditch.*

*Milecastle 22 is located about 220m east of the junction of the B6318 and the A68 on an east facing slope. It survives as a square turf covered platform, 0.5m high on its east side. The milecastle was partly excavated in 1930, when its internal width was shown to be about 17.5m, while the walls were 2.45m thick. The north gateway had been blocked early on, probably because the gateway carrying Dere Street Roman road through the line of the Wall was near enough to serve all purposes for which a milecastle gateway could be used.*

*Turret 21b occupies a prominent point 230m west of the Roman fort at Haltonchesters. There are no visible remains above ground, but it is expected to survive as a buried feature.*

*Turret 22a is situated about 200m west of the Port Gate roundabout on an east facing slope. It was located and partly excavated in 1930. There are no upstanding remains.*

*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, survives intermittently throughout this section. East of milecastle 22 there is a 170m stretch of the road which survives as an upstanding ridge, in a field which also has extensive ridge and furrow earthworks. The road here survives to a maximum height of 0.3m. Further west its remains were traced as parchmarks in the soil during dry conditions. Elsewhere in this section its course has not yet been confirmed.*

*The vallum survives intermittently as an upstanding earthwork throughout this section. Where it is best preserved, between the Fence Burn and the A68, the ditch reaches a maximum depth of 0.9m, the north mound a height of 0.7m and the south mound a height of 0.3m. Elsewhere the mounds have been damaged and spread by ridge and furrow cultivation and the ditch has silted up to varying degrees.*

*The Roman road known as Dere Street which ran from York into Scotland crossed the line of the Wall in this section. The course of the A68 road follows that of Dere Street along this part of its course. Immediately south of the vallum, for 150m, there is an overgrown mound*



*beside the west verge of the A68, representing part of the Roman road which was not built directly over.*

*An excavation in 1966 revealed that where Dere Street crossed the Wall, a gatehouse, formed of massive masonry blocks which projected northwards from the Wall by 3.6m had been constructed. The site of the gateway lies within the protected area.*

*The Errington Arms and the buildings and forecourt of the petrol station at Port Gate are totally excluded from the scheduling. All road surfaces, field boundaries, street furniture, telegraph and electricity poles are excluded from the scheduling, but the ground beneath all these features is included*

- 2.4.25 Dere Street is known to have crossed Hadrian's Wall at the site of the junction of the B6318 and A68. It is, therefore, worth noting that it is evident from historic maps that the location and design of the junction of the B6318 and the A68 was altered in the late twentieth century, from its earlier layout as a four-way junction, to the current layout as a roundabout. As a result of these alterations the locations of both roads have been moved to the north-east at the point of their junction, the B6318 was moved north and the A68 has been moved to the East. Evidence of the previous road layout is still evident at present ground level and can be seen to the immediate north and east of the *Errington Arms* Public House, as well as both to the north-west and south-east of the juncture of the B6318 and A68.
- 2.4.26 In 1745, General Wade constructed a new lateral road (the Military Road) to link Newcastle and Carlisle to improve the efficiency of troop movements in response to the Jacobite rebellion. This road is believed to have utilised the levelled foundations and lower courses of Hadrian's Wall for almost 30 miles out of Newcastle.
- 2.4.27 Previous archaeological work within the near vicinity of the site comprised a watching brief associated with the signing improvements on the roundabout itself (PCA 2011b). No features of archaeological significance were encountered during the investigation.

### **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 Dere Street, Hadrian's Wall and the Vallum.

3.1.2 The broad aim of the project was to ensure that globally important archaeological remains were not were not damaged and were adequately recorded. The main objective of the evaluation was to provide information about the potential impact of future street lighting replacement work within the area of the Scheduled Monument. Additional aims of the project were:

- to compile a Site archive consisting of all site and project documentary and photographic records, as well as all artefactual and paleoenvironmental material recovered;
- to compile a report that contains an assessment of the nature and significance of all data categories, stratigraphic, artefactual, *etc.*

3.1.3 Historic England considered it necessary, based upon the effect of the proposed works upon the monument, to conduct an archaeological evaluation to assess the extent, depth and nature of archaeological deposits in order to provide information to underpin decisions on the management of the monument, changes in its land use, or development proposals (Historic England Ref: S00201679).

3.1.4 Accordingly Scheduled Monument Consent for the archaeological evaluation was granted under section 2 of the 1979 Act subject to the following conditions:

- The works to which this consent relates shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State, who will be advised by Historic England. At least 4 weeks' notice (or such shorter period as may be mutually agreed) in writing of the commencement of work shall be given to Mike Collins, Historic England, Bessie Surtees House, 41-44 Sandhill, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3JF, 0191 2691212, [mike.collins@historicengland.org.uk](mailto:mike.collins@historicengland.org.uk), in order that an Historic England representative can inspect and advise on the works and their effect in compliance with this consent.
- No works shall take place except in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State advised by Historic England.
- All those involved in the implementation of the works granted by this consent must be informed by the applicant that the land is designated as a scheduled monument under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended); the extent of the scheduled monument as set out in both the scheduled monument description and

map; and that the implications of this designation include the requirement to obtain Scheduled Monument Consent for any works to a scheduled monument from the Secretary of State prior to them being undertaken.

- Equipment and machinery shall not be used or operated in the scheduled area in conditions or in a manner likely to result in ground disturbance other than that which is expressly authorised in this consent.
- A report on the archaeological recording shall be sent to the County Historic Environment Record and to Mike Collins at Historic England within 3 months of the completion of the works (or such other period as may be mutually agreed).
- The contractor shall complete and submit an entry on OASIS (On-line Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations - <http://oasis.ac.uk/england/>) prior to project completion, and shall deposit any digital project report with the Archaeology Data Service, via the OASIS form, upon completion

### **3.2 Research Objectives**

- 3.2.1 The basic layout of the Roman road network in the region is well understood, although there are still gaps where the precise route is conjectural. In addition to the major roads, there would have been minor routeways, about which relatively little is known (NERRF, Petts & Gerrard 2006).
- 3.2.2 Specific research objectives to be addressed by the project were formulated with reference to the main existing archaeological research framework, Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (NERRF, Petts & Gerrard 2006) which highlights the importance of research as a vital element of development led archaeological work.
- 3.2.3 The relevant key research priority for the Roman period in the NERRF research agenda and strategy with regards to Dere Street is 'Rii. Roads and communication' which states that '*The Roman communication network in the region is only superficially understood and a greater understanding of its development is a priority*' and goes on to stress that '*There has been very little excavation of roads in general...*'.
- 3.2.4 *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.

3.2.5 In addition, the investigations were 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:

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

3.2.6 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 The project was managed in line with principles set out in Historic England's '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (MoRPHE) published in 2006.
- 4.1.3 All archaeological staff involved in the project were suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. The project was overseen for PCA by the Regional Manager of the Durham Office, Jennifer Proctor.
- 4.1.4 All relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice were respected. PCA's Health and Safety (H&S) Policy is the starting point for managing H&S at all locations where PCA carries out its operations.
- 4.1.5 As detailed in the WSI the evaluation comprised five trial pits each with proposed dimensions of 1m x 1m square to be excavated to a depth of 1.20m (Trial Pits 469C, 470C, 471C, 472C and 484C). The existing street lighting columns were in place at the time of the archaeological evaluation therefore the location of the trial pits were sited immediately adjacent to these. The dimensions of the trial pits were subsequently altered to avoid live services. Due to the depths of these excavations stepping was required to prevent collapse.
- 4.1.6 The dimensions of the trial pits are provided in the table below:

Trial Pit	Measurements (m)		
	Length	Width	Depth
469C	0.80	1.20	1.20
470C	0.80	1.20	1.20
471C	0.90	1.10	1.20
472C	1.10	1.20	1.20
484C	1.20	1.20	1.20

- 4.1.7 Before and throughout the excavation of the trial pits a C.A.T. scanner and Genny were used to identify the locations of any services.

- 4.1.8 The initial removal of all modern surface treatments and modern overburden was undertaken by Galliford Try's groundworks team under continuous archaeological supervision. Excavation was carried out by hand using shovels, picks and mattocks; a pneumatic pick was used to break through tarmac surfaces in trial pits 469C and 472C. Excavation continued in 100mm spits until the top of the archaeological sequence or natural geology. Upon the removal of modern overburden the excavation work was undertaken by archaeologists. Investigations within the trial pits followed the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation and were conducted in accordance with the methodology set out in the WSI (PCA 2018), the field manual of PCA (PCA 2009) and the Museum of London Site Manual (Museum of London 1994).
- 4.1.9 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 PGN 18 (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. Trenches were located with a hand-held GPS and tied into the Ordnance Survey Grid.
- 4.1.10 A detailed photographic record of the evaluation was prepared using SLR cameras (35mm film black and white prints for archive purposes) and by digital SLR 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 trial pits.
- 4.1.11 Once recorded, all trial pits were back filled by hand and mechanically compacted by Galliford Try's groundworks team.

## **4.2 Post-excavation**

- 4.2.1 The stratigraphic data for the project comprises written and photographic records. A total of 35 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 at the Great North Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne, under the site code PGN18. The Site Archive will be organised so 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 469C are in the 46900s and contexts from Trench 470C in the 47000s 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: Geological substratum

5.1.1 Phase 1 represents the superficial geology exposed within Trial Pit 469C. This comprised stiff mid greyish brown sandy clay [46905] with frequent small angular stone inclusions. The superficial geology was encountered at a depth of c. 1.08m below the existing ground level at 210.42m AOD.

5.1.2 Geological substratum was not encountered within Trial Pits 470C, 471C, 472C and 484C.

### 5.2 Phase 2: Roman

5.2.1 Phase 2 represents Roman activity encountered in Trial Pits 469C and 470C.

5.2.2 In Trial Pit 469C two deposits, [46904] & [46903], recorded within a broad construction cut [46906] are likely to represent surviving elements of Roman Dere Street. The earliest deposit encountered comprised a c. 0.10m thick firm mid brownish grey clay [46904]. The deposit was encountered at a depth of 0.91m below present ground level at 210.52m AOD and probably represents part of the agger for Dere Street. An agger is a ridge that would have supported the Roman road surface. The material used to form the agger would have been derived from the excavation of ditches alongside the road, however, due to the limit of excavation, the full extent of Dere Street was not exposed and therefore no roadside ditches were observed.

5.2.3 Agger deposit [46904] was overlain by a compact sandstone rubble deposit [46903] in a clay matrix up to 0.14m thick, encountered at a depth of c. 0.83m below present ground level at 210.66m AOD. This deposit also represents an agger layer of the Roman road (Figure 3; Plate 1).

5.2.4 In Trial Pit 470C a similar sequence of deposits representing the agger for Dere Street Roman road was recorded, although at this location a construction cut was not encountered. The earliest deposit exposed comprised soft dark brown silty clay [47009] exposed for a maximum thickness of 0.29m, continuing below the base of the trench. This was



encountered at a depth of c. 1.0m below present ground level at 210.83m AOD. It was overlain by a c. 0.21m thick compact sandstone rubble [47008], encountered at a depth of c. 0.79m below present ground level at 211.04m AOD (Figure 3; Plates 2 & 4).

### **5.3 Phase 3: Undated/post-medieval**

5.3.1 Undated, but probably early post-medieval, activity encountered in Trial Pit 470C directly overlay Phase 2 Roman deposit [47008] and comprised a soft mid greyish brown silty clay deposit [47007] up to 0.26m thick at 21.13m AOD. This layer probably represents a levelling deposit for post-medieval road surfaces (Figure 4; Plate 4).

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

5.4.1 Phase 4 represents post-medieval activity recorded in Trial Pits 471C and 472C.

5.4.2 In Trial Pit 471C, a compact shale and coal deposit [47105] at least 0.31m thick was encountered at a depth of c. 0.89m below present ground level at 211.03m AOD. A few fragments of clay tobacco pipe were present within this deposit.

5.4.3 The earliest deposit encountered in Trial pit 472C comprised compacted shale and coal [47204] at least 0.55m thick, encountered at a depth of c. 0.66m below present ground level at 211.64m AOD. This deposit represents a post-medieval levelling deposit and clay tobacco pipe fragments were also observed in this material.

5.4.4 A masonry wall [47203] within a narrow construction cut [47203] truncated levelling deposit [47204] (Figure 4; Plates 5 & 6). Only a small portion of this wall was exposed in the southernmost baulk therefore its full dimensions were not established. The wall itself was built on a c. 40mm thick lime mortar sub-base and survived to a single course of roughly hewn sandstone up to 0.25m high, bonded with light grey lime mortar at 211.63m AOD. The wall may represent a structure depicted on 19th-century maps at this location however due to the limited exposure of this wall its definitive interpretation is impossible.

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

5.5.1. Phase 5 modern activity is represented by utility services, consolidation deposits, surfaces and topsoil.

5.5.2. In Trial Pit 469C Phase 2 Roman deposit [46903] was directly overlain by a c. 0.29m thick asphalt tarmac surface [46902] at 210.92m AOD. This was in turn overlain by a c. 0.30m thick sandy clay consolidation deposit [46901]. Topsoil comprised c. 0.25m thick sandy clay [46900].

5.5.3. The earliest Phase 5 deposits encountered in Trial Pit 470C comprised two consolidation deposits, [47006] & [47005], which had a maximum combined thickness of 0.40m, for a c. 0.10m thick buried asphalt surface [47004] at 211.64m AOD. The asphalt surface [47004]

was truncated by modern utility service trench [47001] which contained a black plastic electricity cable [47002]. Topsoil comprised c. 0.19m thick sandy clay [47000].

- 5.5.4. In Trial Pit 471C c. 0.60m thick compacted gravel consolidation deposit [47104] was encountered at a depth of 0.29m below present ground level at 211.63m AOD. This in turn was truncated by a utility service trench [47103] which contained a plastic cable [47102] and grey clay silt backfill [47101]. Topsoil comprised c. 0.29m thick sandy clay topsoil [47100].
- 5.5.5. In Trial Pit 472C a c. 0.36m thick buried asphalt surface [47201] at 212.04m AOD directly overlay Phase 4 post-medieval wall [47202]. A modern utility service trench [47207] was encountered above the tarmac surface [47201] with a plastic cable and a silty clay backfill [47205]. Topsoil comprised c. 0.25m thick sandy clay.
- 5.5.6. Two consolidation layers were recorded in Trial Pit 484C at 211.02m AOD including a strongly cemented stone rubble deposit [48402] at least 0.77m thick and a c. 0.23m thick silty clay [48401]. Topsoil comprised c. 0.20m thick sandy clay [48401].

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Conclusions

- 6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation at the roundabout junction of the B6318 and A68, Port Gate, Corbridge work involved the evaluation of five trial pits. The aim of the work was to determine the likely impact on potential archaeological remains of Hadrian's Wall and Dere Street Roman road by proposed works associated with the replacement of the street light columns within the Scheduled Monument Area. The archaeological evaluation comprised the, cleaning and recording of five trial pits at locations immediately adjacent to extant street light column locations (469C, 470C, 471C, 472C, 484C).
- 6.1.2 Dere Street Roman road is traditionally viewed as starting at York, passing through Aldborough in North Yorkshire and up the line of the A1 as far as Piercebridge in County Durham, when its line is adopted by the A68 as it passes through Corbridge and then Newstead as it penetrates central Lowland Scotland on its way to the Firth of Forth and the Antonine Wall (Rowland 1974). The junction of the B6318 and A68 at Port Gate, Corbridge lies on the route of Dere Street as it crossed Hadrian's Wall from the main Roman Fort and settlement at Corbridge (*Corstopitum* or *Coria*) to the south.
- 6.1.3 Dere Street likely remained in use throughout the medieval period, right up to the end of the 18th century and is thought to have fallen out of significant use with the end of cattle droving.
- 6.1.4 Investigations in 1966 revealed that where Dere Street crossed the Wall (outside the Errington Arms public house) a gatehouse formed of massive masonry blocks projected from the wall by 3.6m.
- 6.1.5 During the excavation of the trial pits, below-ground remains relating to Roman Dere Street (Phase 2) were identified at two locations within the grass verge on the west side of the A68, south of the roundabout (Trial Pit 469C & 470C). No archaeological remains associated with Hadrian's Wall or the Port Gate were identified within any of the trial pits.
- 6.1.6 Within Trial Pits 460C and 470C, two agger deposits for Dere Street Roman road were encountered at between 210.66m AOD (TP469C) and 211.04m AOD (TP470C) and comprised layers of sandstone rubble and compacted clay.
- 6.1.7 Although the remains of Roman Dere Street, as exposed in both trial pits, suggest a single phase of construction similar to that observed at excavations of the Maiden Way (Mounsey 2011), this may be due to truncation that occurred during the construction of the modern road. The truncation of the surface of the Roman road was evident in Trial Pit 469C where the modern asphalt surface has been constructed directly onto the sandstone agger material at this location.
- 6.1.8 Dere Street has been the subject of several archaeological investigations along its extensive length. Its construction largely conforms to that generally seen for most other Roman roads

in Britain (Margery 1965; Davies 2002). Roads were generally laid upon a well-constructed embankment (agger) of varying height, in order to provide a properly drained base and foundation. The material for the agger was generally derived from the excavation of a broad scoop-ditch along one or both sides of the road, or sometimes from a series of pits alongside it. Some roads had a road zone set out prior to construction, this delineated by parallel, narrow, shallow ditches. These were placed well back from the road with the agger built centrally between them. Margery (1965, 22) noted that the widths recorded for such zones indicated two classes of main roads, one with ditches c. 25.50m apart (centre to centre) and secondary class with ditches c. 18.90m apart.

- 6.1.9 Across Roman Britain there was great variation in agger design and construction. In some places a simple earth bank was raised, while in others the agger was carefully built up in layers of stone or other material to the required height. The most important routes, such as Ermine Street, saw the agger up to 1.80m high and 15.0 wide, while lesser routes had much less substantial or even almost non-existent embankments, with the road surface effectively laid directly upon the existing ground surface (Margery 1965, 21). However, for most Roman roads in Britain, the width of the agger lies between 8.0m and 13.0m, and its height is typically c. 0.75m (English Heritage 1989, 4).
- 6.1.10 Upon the agger was the actual road carriageway, sometimes with a foundation of large stones below the surface treatment, which varies greatly across Britain. A few locations have produced evidence of paving stones on the road surface, while no metalling at all was evidently used in places. More typically, however, rammed pea gravel or fine to medium pebbles were used, with flint, chalk and even iron slag also used to a lesser extent. Whatever was used, the aim was to provide a durable surface treatment suitable for a variety of traffic including carts and horses. The most important route had carriageways up to 9.0m wide, with lesser roads around 4.50-5.50m wide and roads in more rural locations down to 3.0-3.50m wide (Margery 1965, 21). The road surface was often steeply cambered to assist drainage, with this being a design feature facilitated by the method of construction of the agger. Durability was sometimes increased by the use of kerbs along either side of the agger; cut stone was used for such a purpose on the Devil's Causeway roman road in Northumberland (English Heritage 1989, 4). If necessary, roads were accompanied by side drainage features, mostly simple ditches presumably along the line of the original 'scoop' ditch, but there are also examples of stone- or timber- lined drains and even stone-built culverts running alongside the agger; a notable example of such culverting occurs on Dere Street at High Rochester (the site of the Roman fort *Bremenium*), c. 38km north of Corbridge.
- 6.1.11 Archaeological work in 1995 at Riding Mill c. 7.3km to the south-east of the site, identified c. 50m length of Dere Street (PCA 2011a). The road was c. 8.0m wide and comprised three successive surfaces 0.20m, 0.15m and 0.25m thick (latest to earliest). It was not established whether the carriageway was kerbed or if roadside ditches were present.

- 6.1.12 The construction of the main site at Corbridge and that of Dere Street are thought to be contemporary since detailed excavation of both the fort and settlement at Corbridge established a construction date of after AD 85. Bishop concluded that its foundation was probably linked with the withdrawal from Scotland after the replacement of Agricola, perhaps some time in the late 80s. Therefore, it is considered that the late AD 80s is a likely foundation date for Dere Street within this area.
- 6.1.13 In terms of construction, the remains of Dere Street at the junction of the B6318 and A68 were not particularly unusual in the overall context of Roman road building. Of note was the fact that the material forming the agger directly overlay the geological substratum in Trial Pit 469C, without any trace of an intervening palaeosol, suggesting that the agger had been laid in a broad construction cut, possibly excavated between quarry scoop ditches. The implication of this is that the existing ground surface was reduced (presumably including any subsoil below the existing topsoil) along the road corridor, before construction began.
- 6.1.14 An example of such an approach being adopted during Roman road construction was on the earliest phase of the London to Colchester road, as excavated at Old Ford (Sheldon 1971). The excavator there suggested that quarrying of natural sand and gravel was the purpose of such activity at that site, with the quarry area then being backfilled with clay to provide a more stable sub-base for the agger than the geological substratum. At Farnley Gate (PCA 2011a), the topographic setting, on the sloping valley side of the Tyne, may also have been a factor in the technique adopted. Margary (1965, 21) noted that Roman roads cut along hillsides tended to be generally narrower as greater widths would have entailed far more extensive excavations due to the requirement to create a level terrace for the road.
- 6.1.15 A post-medieval wall of roughly hewn sandstone construction was encountered in Trial Pit 472C. This may represent part of a structure located to the north west of the junction of the B6318 and A68, prior to the 20th-century alterations, which appears on OS maps until the late 19th-century.
- 6.1.16 The evaluation determined that two trial pits, 471C and 484C, contained only post-medieval and modern consolidation deposits and surfaces, with no significant archaeological deposits identified.
- 6.1.17 The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to provide information about the potential impact of the proposed street light replacement works would have on the locations within the area of the Scheduled Monument. To this end, significant archaeological remains associated with Roman Dere Street would be impacted upon at the locations of Test Pits 469C and 470C. No archaeological remains of significance were identified within Tests 471C, 472C and 484C, therefore it is unlikely that the proposed street light replacement works in this area, if excavated to a maximum depth of 1.20m would impact on any archaeological remains of significance.

- 6.1.18 Despite the limited area of the watching brief, the work at the junction of the B6318 and A68, Port Gate, Corbridge, has provided important further knowledge of Dere Street Roman road in this area. Not only has the line of the road been firmly established at this particular location, but further evidence of the techniques employed during construction have been recorded.
- 6.1.19 It is considered that the archaeological investigation has made a significant contribution to archaeological knowledge of the Roman period. In terms of research frameworks, the project can be considered to have contributed to **A3** *The Wall in Frontiers of Knowledge* (Symonds & Mason Eds. 2009), and **Rii** *Roads and Communication* and **Riii** *Roman Military Presence* and **Riv** *Native and Civilian Life* in NERRF (Petts & Gerrard 2006).

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*MAGIC* website: <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>



## **8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS**

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### **PCA Credits**

*Fieldwork:* Scott Vance (Supervisor) and James Hopper

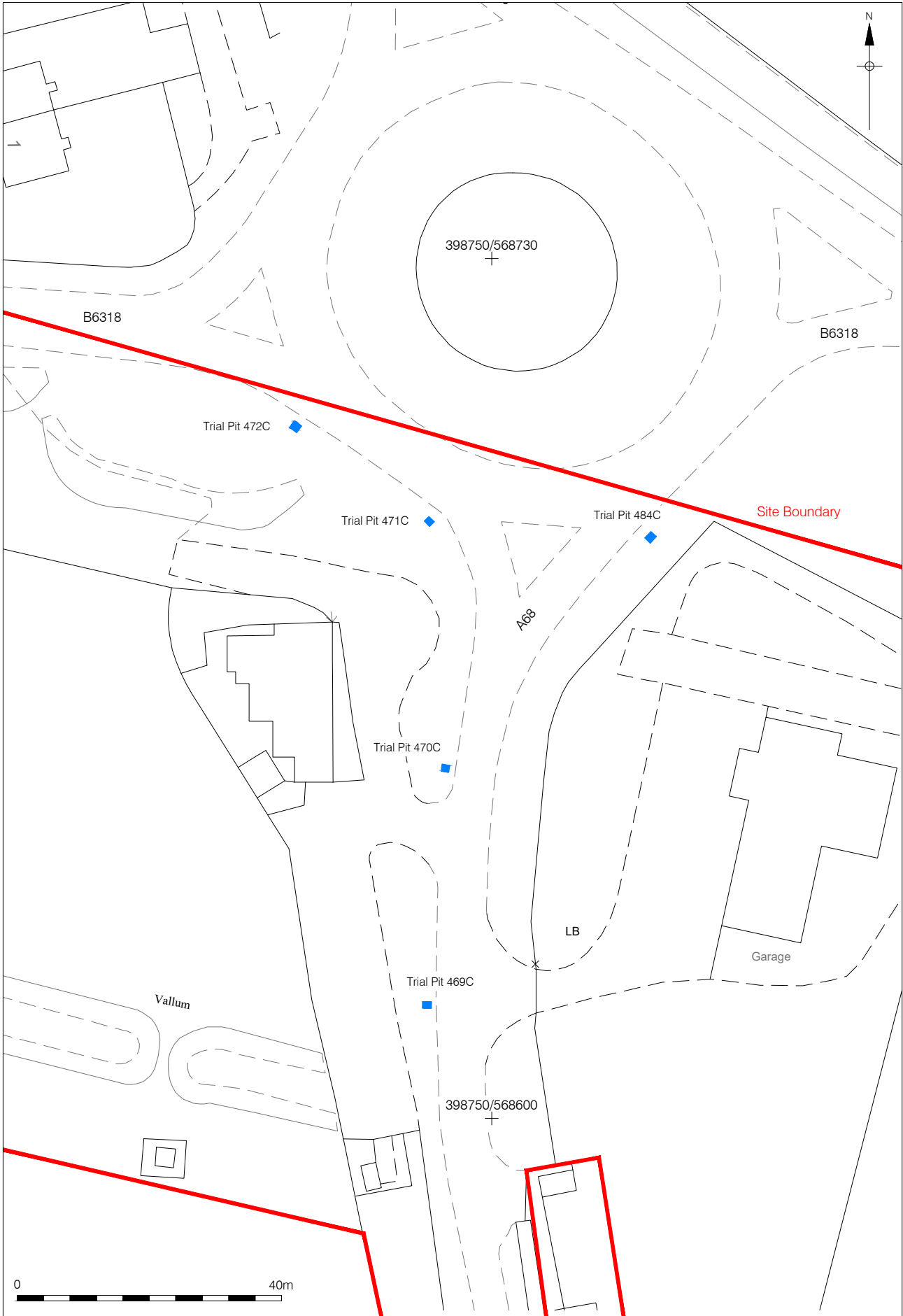
*Report:* James Hopper and Scott Vance

*Project Manager:* Aaron Goode

*CAD:* Diana Valk

## **APPENDIX 1: FIGURES**

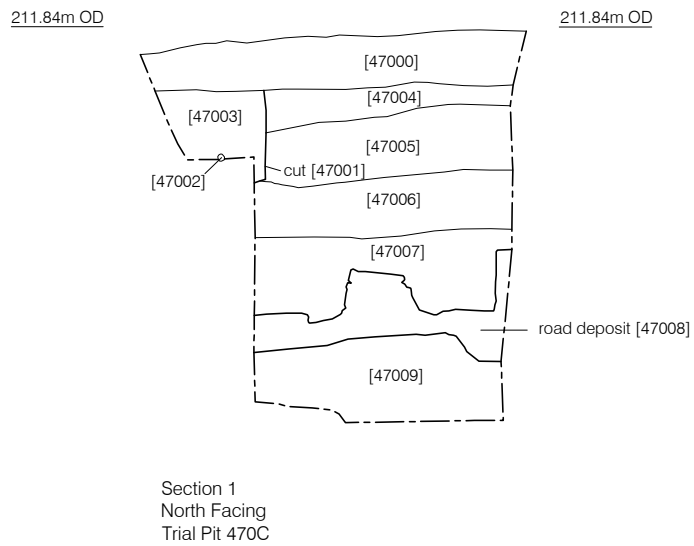
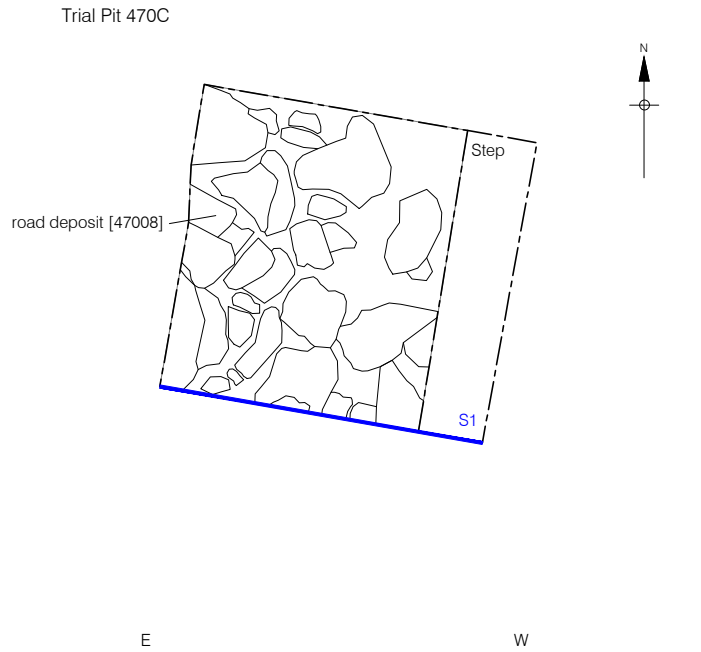


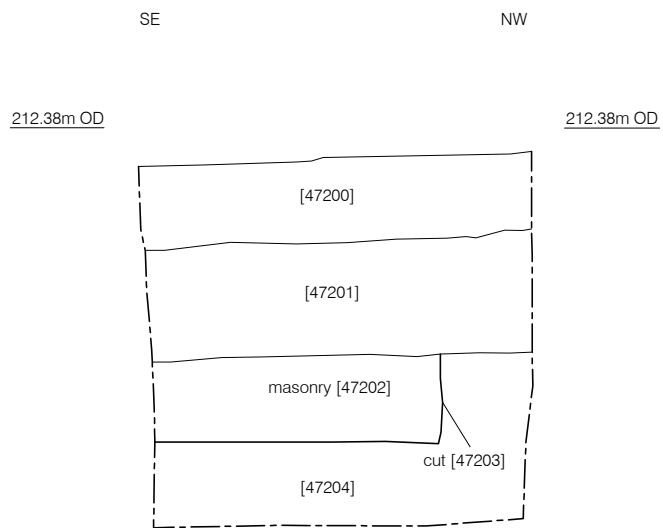
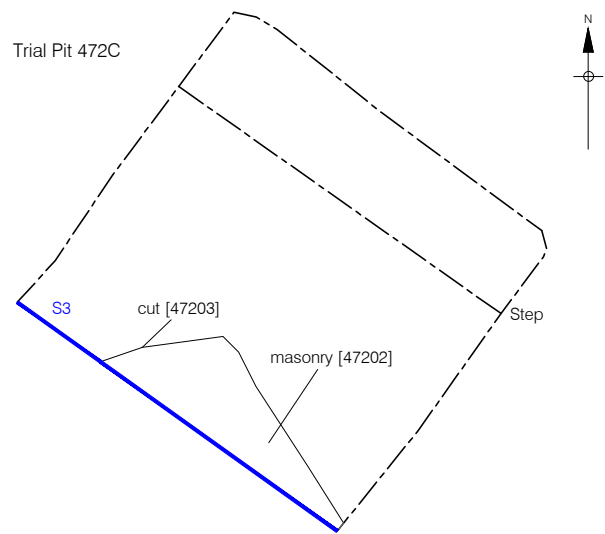


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Figure 2  
 Detailed Site Location  
 1:800 at A4







Section 3  
 Northeast Facing  
 Trial Pit 472C

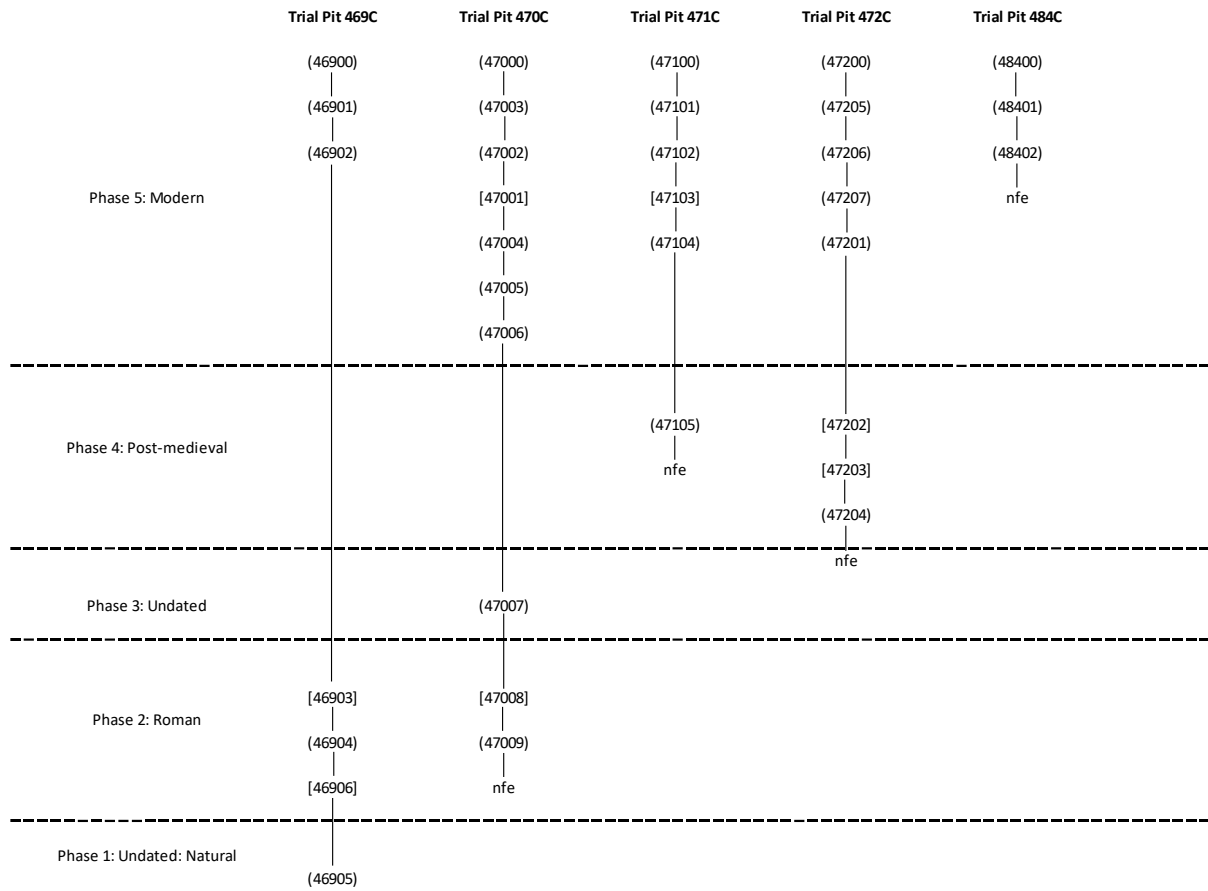


## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX

<b>Context</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Type 1</b>	<b>Type 2</b>	<b>Fill of</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>Trial Pit 469C</b>					
46900	5	Deposit	Layer		Topsoil
46901	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
46902	5	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac surface
46903	2	Deposit	layer		Roman agger deposit
46904	2	Deposit	Layer		Roman agger deposit
46905	1	Deposit	Layer		Natural sub-stratum
46906	2	Cut	Construction		Construction cut for agger deposits [46903/4]
<b>Trial Pit 470C</b>					
47000	5	Deposit	Layer		Topsoil
47001	5	Cut	Cut		Cut of cable trench
47002	5	Deposit	Cable		Power Cable
47003	5	Deposit	Fill	[47001]	Fill of cable trench [47001]
47004	5	Deposit	Road surface		Tarmac surface
47005	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
47006	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
47007	3	Deposit	Layer		Possible consolidation deposit
47008	2	Deposit	Layer		Roman agger deposit
47009	2	Deposit	Layer		Roman agger deposit
<b>Trial Pit 471C</b>					
47100	5	Deposit	Layer		Topsoil
47101	5	Deposit	Fill	[47103]	Fill of cable trench [47103]
47102	5	Deposit	Cable		Power cable
47103	5	Cut	Cut		Cut of cable trench
47104	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
47105	4	Deposit	Layer		Possible consolidation deposit
<b>Trial Pit 472C</b>					
47200	5	Deposit	Layer		Tarmac surface
47201	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
47202	4	Masonry	Wall		Stone wall
47203	4	Cut	Cut		Construction cut for wall [47202]
47204	4	Deposit	Layer		Possible consolidation deposit
47205	5	Deposit	Fill	[47207]	Fill of cable trench [47207]
47206	5	Deposit	Cable		Power Cable
47207	5	Cut	Cut		Cut of cable trench
<b>Trial Pit 484C</b>					
48400	5	Deposit	Layer		Topsoil
48401	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit
48402	5	Deposit	Layer		Made ground deposit



### APPENDIX 3: STRATIGRAPHIC MATRIX



## APPENDIX 4: PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES

*Plate 1: Dere Street in Trial Pit 469C: view north, 0.5m scale*



*Plate 2: South facing section of Trial Pit 469C: view north, 1m scale*



Plate 3: Dere Street in Trial Pit 470: view west 0.5m scale



Plate 4: North facing section of Trial Pit 470C: view south, 1m scale



Plate 5: Stone wall in Trial Pit 472C: view south, 0.2m scale



Plate 6: North facing section of Trial Pit 472C: view south, 1m scale



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