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July 1993

Amberfield,
Burgh by Sands,
Cumbria

Archaeological Evaluation

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Commissioned by: Carlisle Archaeological Unit

and Funded by: **Two Castles Housing Association**

Amberfield

Burgh by Sands, Cumbria

Archaeological Evaluation

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July 1993

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lancaster University Archaeological Unit were commissioned by Carlisle Archaeological Unit on behalf of Two Castles Housing Association to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the proposed development site at Amberfield, Burgh by Sands, Cumbria.

The present day village of Burgh by Sands affectively straddles the course of the Hadrianic frontier with the presence of a succession of timber and stone constructed forts having been investigated within the Vicarage garden. The discovery of a further fort to the south in the 1970s highlighted the complex and intense nature of the Roman occupation of the area. The development site at Amberfield lies approximately 400m to the south of the known fort under the village and is situated directly between the two forts. The need for an archaeological evaluation was therefore considered necessary to identify the nature and extent of any potential Roman occupation of the area.

The evaluation comprised a programme of trial trenching within the areas to be directly affected by construction.

The evaluation revealed the presence of potential cobble yard surfaces, timber constructed buildings and areas which had undergone intensive domestic occupation, which were evident throughout the site, the majority of which were located immediately below topsoil and therefore are very vulnerable to potentially damaging construction work. The domestic nature of the settlement was reflected in the finds assemblage, which comprised items such as a quern fragment, domestic pottery, including Samian ware and mortaria, and items of jewellery, including a gemstone, all dated to the later second century.

This body of evidence strongly suggests that this activity represents civilian settlement (*vicus*) outside the fort below the village, and that this was of considerable size. Alternatively this activity could represent ribbon development along the southern road from the fort.

The evaluation of the Amberfield site, whilst identifying the extent and approximate date of the archaeological remains within the area of the proposed Phase 1 development was not designed to be a comprehensive investigation of the surviving archaeological deposits. To this end, it is strongly recommended that prior to any intrusive construction is undertaken at the proposed development site, the area should undergo a rigorous and comprehensive open area excavation, in order to better understand the nature of Roman settlement in and around Burgh by Sands.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This final report has been produced as a result of the hard work of numerous people. A great deal of thanks must go to Mr Ray Steel, whose deftness of touch with a mechanical excavator proved invaluable. Thanks must go to all those who assisted in the field and in the office. The information and advice supplied by Mr Mike McCarthy of Carlisle Archaeological Unit was greatly appreciated. Finally thanks must go to Ms Brenda Glencross, for her boundless enthusiasm, and other staff at Two Castles Housing Association and the staff at Johnson and Wright Architects, for all their help with information and plans.

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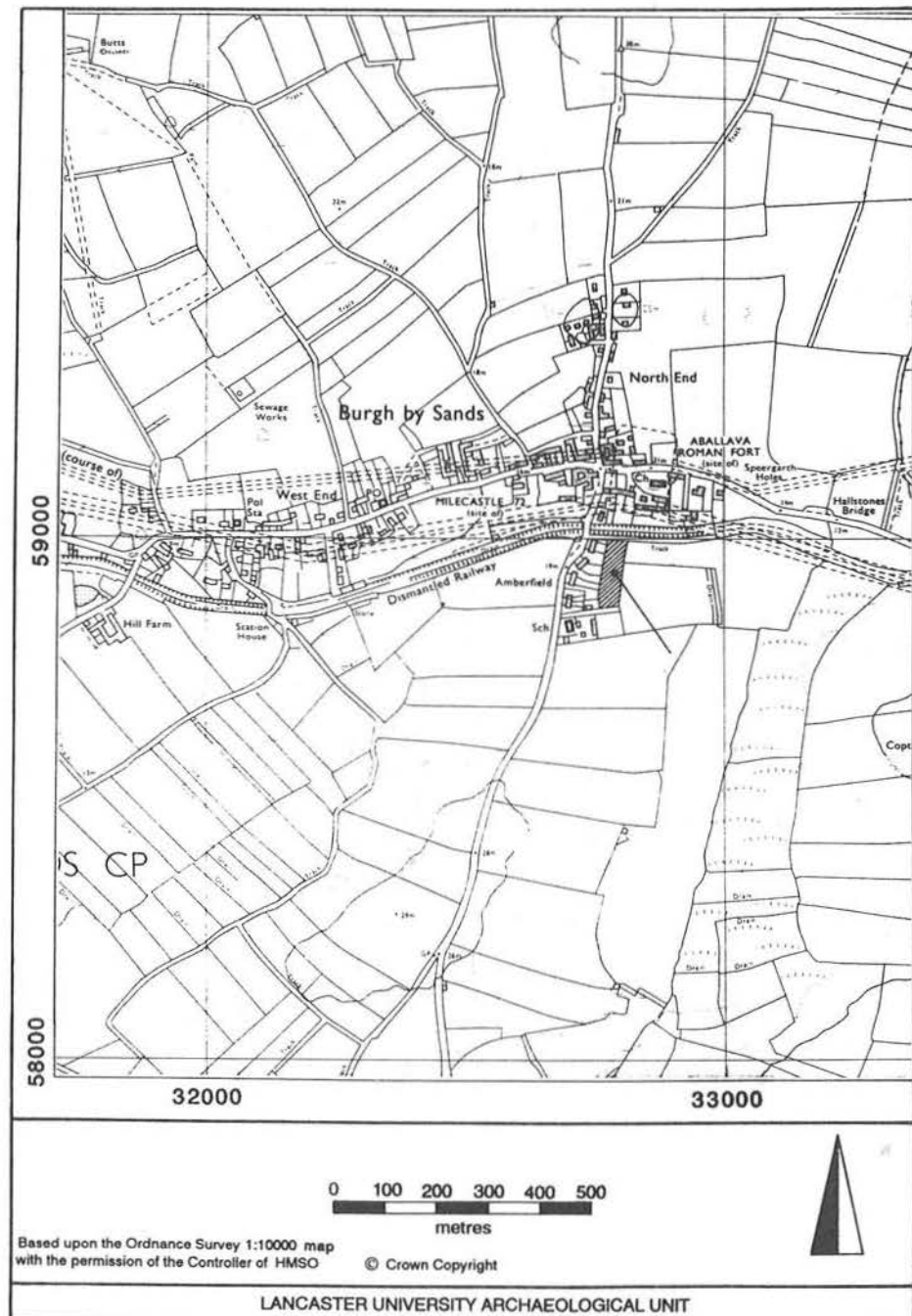


Fig 1 Site location plan

INTRODUCTION

In May 1993, the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU) was commissioned by Carlisle City Council through the Carlisle Archaeological Unit, on behalf of Two Castles Housing Association, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the proposed development site at Amberfield, Burgh by Sands, Cumbria. The evaluation took place over five days which were spread over a period of two weeks, due to existing scheduling commitments by LUAU.

Background

A series of recent archaeological excavations in the area of Burgh by Sands has done much to add to the understanding of the nature of the Roman occupation in the vicinity. The presence of Hadrian's Wall has long been known, as has the presence, below the church, of a large fort. The discovery of a second fort to the south, by aerial reconnaissance and a subsequent excavation of the site, has proven that Roman activity in the area was more complex than formerly thought.

The excavation at the southern fort (termed Burgh 1) produced dating evidence which suggested that the fort was a precursor of the Wall complex to the north. The excavation revealed several distinct phases of construction, the first of which was a watch-cum-gate-tower dated, by the presence of Black Burnished ware pottery, to the early second century (Jones 1979), although Shotter dates it to the late AD90s due to typological parallels from similar, Agricolan, structures along the western approaches to Stainmore (Shotter 1993, 32). The watch-tower appears to have been rapidly superseded by the large, possibly Trajanic, auxiliary fort which was dated to the early second century also (Jones 1979).

The auxiliary fort also appears to have been short-lived, with the decline of the site dated to cAD125 (Shotter 1993, 32), potentially coinciding with the construction of the fort to the north, below the present day village, which has been tentatively dated to the Trajanic/Hadrianic period (M McCarthy pers comm). The shift of emphasis away from the Burgh 1 site suggests that the Hadrianic frontier superseded, as elsewhere, the Stanegate defensive system, of which Burgh 1 was a part, reasonably early in the second century.

Excavations within the Vicarage gardens in 1980, at the projected location of the Turf Wall, have demonstrated that there was a considerable sequence of structural activity on the site (Evans and Jones 1980). A series of timber buildings replaced the Turf Wall, comprising construction trenches, packed with clay and rounded river cobbles, a clay floor overlying the Turf Wall ditch and a paved road surface. Stratigraphically later than these features was a similar series of construction trenches, mirroring those below, although there is some speculation as to whether these structures were located within the fort *enceinte* (Evans and Jones 1980). The finds date both of these phases of construction to the latter part of the second century and the early part of the third. The precise location of these features in relation to the fort is uncertain, what is proven, however, is that there was a sequence of forts, from timber to stone construction on the site at Burgh 2, with a civilian settlement in the vicinity.

The presence, therefore, of the possibly late first century tower and its early second century successor, at Burgh 1, forming part of the western end of the Stanegate frontier, and the subsequent abandonment of the frontier complex in favour of the Turf Wall system to the north with its associated fort, clearly demonstrate the large scale military activity in the vicinity. The shift, during the later second to early third century, from timber to stone construction of the fort, and the evidence found for a possible civilian settlement in the Vicarage garden, demonstrate the continued presence of a military force within the fort and possibly a dependent/supportive community without. Thus the area of the present day village of Burgh by Sands overlies the site of a sustained and complex Roman military and quite possibly also a civilian settlement.

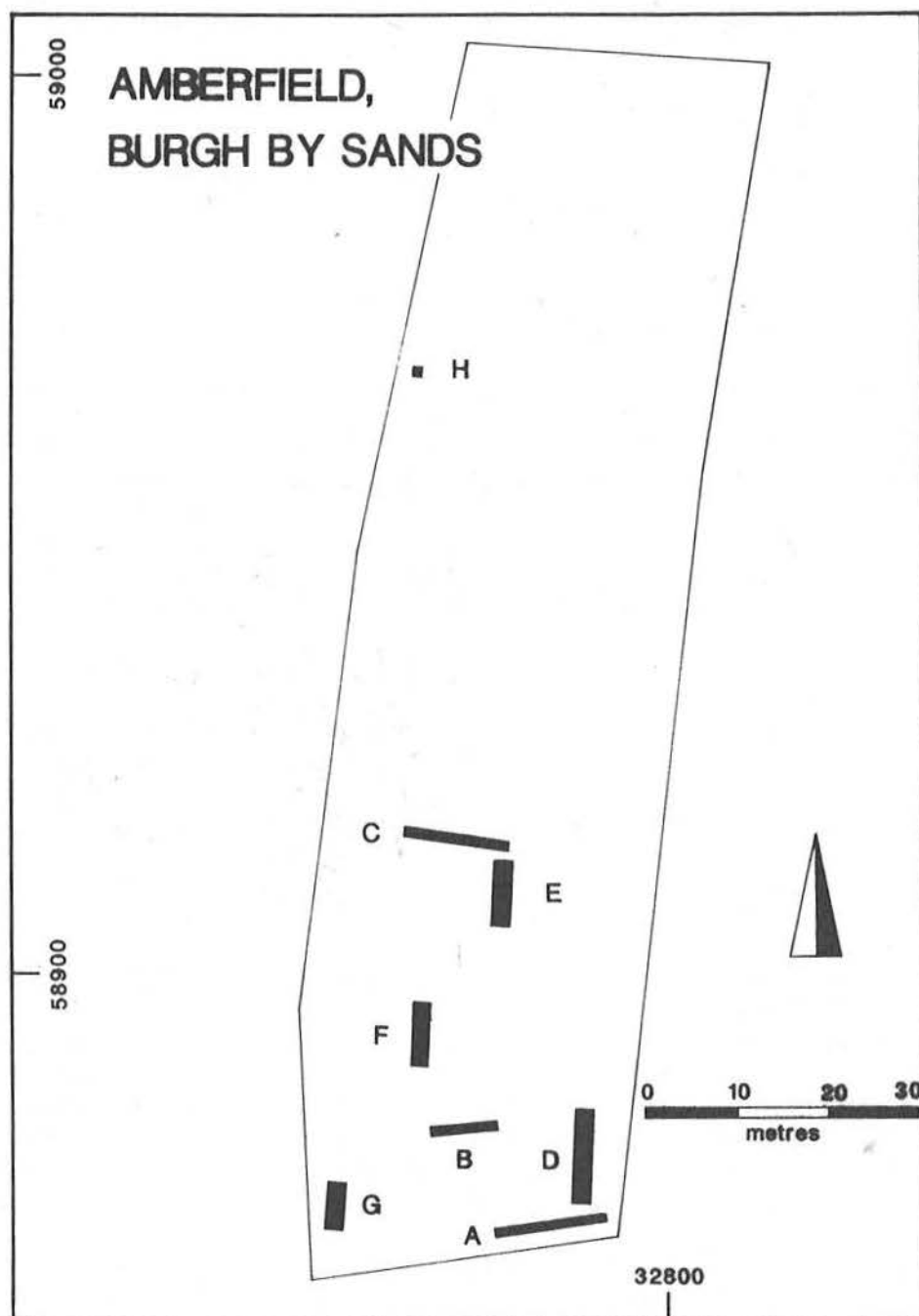


Fig 2 Trench location plan

METHODOLOGY

In all seven trenches were excavated in an area concentrated in the southern third of the field, to the rear of the terrace at Amberfield, Burgh by Sands. This area comprised the proposed Phase 1 development area for which planning consent has already been granted. The trenches were situated in locations which would undergo potentially deep and archaeologically damaging excavations during construction. Furthermore, the trenches were located in such a way as to define and delimit the extent of potential archaeology within this area. A further small sondage was excavated to the north (Trench H) on the proposed site of a pumping station.

In line with current guidelines (ACAO 1993, 9) no significant archaeological deposits were entirely removed or underwent particularly intrusive inspection. Dating evidence was retrieved in the least destructive way, without compromising the integrity of the archaeological record. Archaeological deposits were left undisturbed, wherever possible, in order to minimise the chance of compromising the findings of further work undertaken as a result of recommendations of the evaluation.

The trenches were initially excavated using a Case Construction King mechanical excavator operated by an experienced driver, familiar with the requirements of an archaeological evaluation. The mechanical excavator was fitted with a toothless bucket to minimise damage to archaeological deposits. When identified, the archaeological deposits or natural subsoils were manually cleaned by trowel. The evaluation of archaeological deposits, in some cases, necessitated the excavation of the feature to obtain satisfactory dating evidence.

All features and deposits were individually recorded on separate context sheets and accurate scale drawings (both plans and sections, as appropriate) and a photographic record was taken of every trench. All artefactual evidence was removed for further study to LUAU. The recording methods employed by LUAU during the evaluation process accord with those recommended by English Heritage's Central Archaeological Services and *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991). The complete archive will be deposited with the Carlisle Record Office and the Tullie House Museum, with the agreement of the landowners.

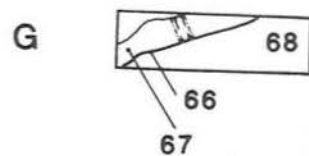
The Finds

A strategy of total collection for all classes of material was adopted as most appropriate to the evaluation context. All finds were handled and processed in accordance with LUAU standard practice. Upon excavation finds were sorted by material category and, in the case of ceramic vessels, by broad chronological range. All finds, unless too fragile, were indelibly marked in the standard LUAU format of site identifier code, context number and object record number. In this case the site code used was BBS93.

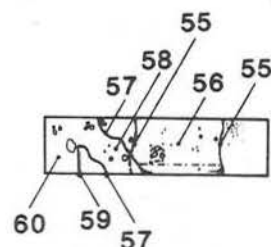
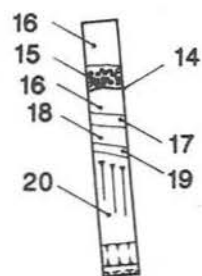
A computer database (using Microsoft Works) was created in order to facilitate rapid quantification and assessment. Full documentation, in an appropriate format, will accompany the finds assemblage when deposited. All finds were examined and assessed by LUAU in-house finds specialists. Detailed measurement and lengthy description are considered inappropriate to rapid assessment, but broad division of finds by chronological range and fabric type was undertaken.

A discussion of all the artefacts from each trench is given at the end of each trench description. A full inventory of the finds appears as an appendix to this report (Appendix 1).

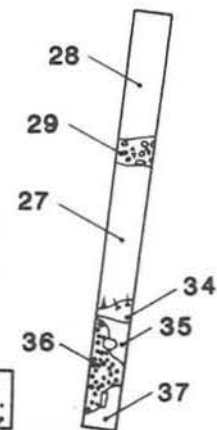
AMBERFIELD, BURGH BY SANDS



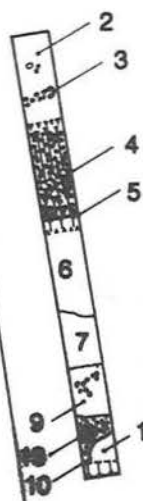
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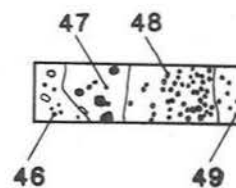
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A



E



D

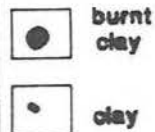
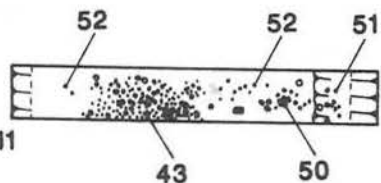


Fig 3 Feature plan

THE EXCAVATIONS

All contexts are shown in parenthesis thus [] and soil colours are given as Munsell soil notation values (10YR 4/2).

Trench A

Trench A was situated at the far south-east of the field and was 13.00m in length, 1.00m wide and aligned east-west. It was excavated to a depth of approximately 0.95m, through an almost continuous deposit of sandy clay loam (10YR 3/3) ploughsoil [2], below which level archaeological deposits were identified.

An intrusion [5] was located centrally within the trench, in which it was possible to identify the top of natural subsoil, which was first encountered at a depth 1.55m. The natural subsoil, [8], in this trench, was very mottled, dirty sand, indicating some degree of disturbance. It was overlain, in the western half of the trench by a well constructed, densely packed, cobbled surface, [4]. This sloped from west to east at an angle of around 15 degrees, which approximated the angle of the present ground topography. The surface was present at 3.00m from the western edge of the trench, for around 2.60m, whereupon it was disturbed on its eastern edge by a large intrusion, [5]. At the eastern end of the trench was another cobbled surface [13]. It was physically lower than cobbled surface [4] to the west, but it shared its 15 degree angle of slope and it is possible that they represent the same feature. It was not possible to link the two surfaces together, as the intervening area was obscured by a series of later, overlying deposits and intrusions.

Intrusion [5], through cobble surface [4], was not clearly defined and was only apparent as an abrupt termination to the cobbles. The edges, where inspected, were gently sloping. The fill comprised a very dark, almost humic, sandy loam [6], which was partially obscured by a spread of reddish orange pea grits, [7], which contained charcoal. A small amount of the gravelly deposit was removed to reveal the mottled sand deposit [8]. It can be assumed that, although the actual eastern limit of the cut was not located, the intrusion was not present at this point, as evidenced by the presence of the natural subsoil. This would make the intrusion no larger than 3.30m from east to west.

To the south, at an approximately 2.80m from the eastern end of the trench, was [9], a deposit of sandy loam (10YR 2/2), which contained some small rounded cobbles within its matrix. This directly overlay the cobble surface in the east [13], and it is possible that [9] was a remnant of the overlying ploughsoil [2], with displaced cobbles within it. To the east, context [12] was identified; this seems to be the same as [9] and shares the same provenance.

Cobble surface [13] was disturbed by a roughly subcircular cut [10], at the very north-east corner of the trench. It was filled by a sand/loam mix (10YR 4/2) [11]. The top of the cut was investigated in section, where it was seen to dive at an approximate angle of 45 degrees.

Above these deposits was an unusually deep deposit of ploughsoil [2] (more than a metre in depth at the eastern end of the trench). Within this deposit was stone filled feature [3], immediately below the topsoil; this was interpreted as a stone packed field drain. These were overlain by a turf and topsoil deposit of sandy loam [1].

The Finds

A total of 29 fragments, mainly ceramic vessel fragments, was recovered from Trench A.

The cobbled surface [4/13], recognised at the base of this trench, produced two fragments of a single mortarium (sandy orange fabric, multicoloured grits), probably of second century date. The vessel was very badly worn. The surface was cut by two linear features, [5] and [10], the fills of which, [6] and [11], both produced a single undiagnostic body fragment in an oxidised fabric. The two fragments appear to join and are without doubt from the same

vessel, thus suggesting a strong link between the two features. The disturbed subsoil [8] is possibly stratigraphically contemporary with [5] and contained a single rim fragment of a Black Burnished ware bowl (possibly G318), which can be dated to the later part of the second century.

Layer [9/12] produced two fragments of Samian vessels, Dr33, a common cup form, most popular in the second century and Dr30R, a small, rouletted variant of cylindrical bowl Dr30. The latter is not a common form and can be dated to the second and early third centuries. The technique of rouletting is closely associated with the East Gaulish production centres, with the exception of Rheinzabern.

Layers [2] and [1] (ploughsoil and topsoil respectively) both produced a mixture of ceramic vessel fragments, including possible modern garden wares and a small fragment of a green-glazed, red-grey fabric strap handle seating of medieval date. Ploughsoil [2] also produced fragments of Dr30R and Dr33, almost certainly from the same vessels as described above.

Most contexts also contained small fragments of construction materials, with brick, tile and daub represented.

Summary

The remains within Trench A were situated below a very deep deposit of ploughsoil and potentially represent some form of large cobbled yard surface or narrow roadway. This cobble feature has been disturbed by a large intrusion in the centre of the trench and also by a smaller subcircular cut in the east. The finds from this trench were domestic in nature and date broadly to the late second century.

Trench B

Trench B was located to the north of, and parallel to, Trench A and was positioned centrally within the field. The total length was 8.00m and it was 1.00m in width. Topsoil was stripped to reveal archaeological horizons, which sloped from west to east, and in the western half of the trench were encountered at a depth of 0.42m. The basal deposit, although not natural subsoil, was an orange pea grit gravel, which contained charcoal and was slightly mottled with loam smears. This gravelly deposit [16]/[20] extended across the trench (in the eastern section it was numbered [20]), and it was cut by a number of features. In the western half of the trench was a north-south linear cut [14]. The upper parts of its sides were angled at approximately 45 degrees, at which point it measured 1.20m across, whilst at the base they became more vertical and the width of the feature subsequently narrowed. It was filled predominantly by river cobbles [15], contained within a matrix of fine loamy sandy silt. The stones were concentrated within the central 0.50m of the cut. This feature was not fully excavated, but it would appear to be the foundation trench for a timber structure.

Further to the east, aligned north-west to south-east, was a linear band of orange, oxidised clay, 1.10m in width. This was numbered [17] in the west and [19] in the east, due to the presence of [18], a strip of greeny grey sandy grit, 0.03m in depth, which sat directly on top of the clay. The clay appeared to cut gravel [19] on its eastern edge. The relationship at the western edge between clay deposit [17] and gravel [16] was obscured by an apparent circular deposit [24] (possibly a post-hole) which was filled by a slightly clayey sand; this cut into both clay deposit [17] and gravel [16].

At the eastern extent of the trench was a north-south aligned linear feature [21], which was 0.60m wide and 0.32m in depth. The cut had a U-shaped profile and was filled with a silty sand (10YR 4/2) [22]. The linear feature was cut through gravel layer [16]/[20].

Overlying these deposits was a ploughsoil, identical to that discovered in Trench A, of dark sandy clay loam (10YR 3/3). This deposit appeared to have been disturbed by an indistinct cut [23], of which only the eastern edge was firmly identified, located immediately to the west of clay deposit [17]. Above this was a topsoil of dark sandy loam (10YR 3/2).

The Finds

A total of six fragments was recovered from Trench B.

Gravel layer [16/20], recognised at the base of this trench, produced a single fragment of animal bone. This layer was cut by two linear features, [14] and [21], the fills of which, [15] and [22], both produced finds. A small cornelian gemstone was recovered from the base of [15], while [21] produced two very small fragments of ceramic vessel, a spall of amphora-type fabric and a small fragment of Black Burnished ware 1 jar, decorated with an acute lattice, suggesting a general second-third century date. The small intaglio gemstone, Henig's shape 4B convex (Henig 1974) is of poor quality, the stone is faulted and cloudy, the workmanship careless. It has been abraded by use and a thin, glossy band at the edges of the gem marks the line of the setting. Henig (*ibid*) suggests that small convex gems are often early, but also notes a group of small, carelessly cut cornelians from Britain, which date to the later third century. The gem is engraved with two insects, probably ants, shown head to head. Ants are regarded as an attribute of the goddess Ceres, who symbolises agricultural plenty. The motif is not common but can be paralleled at Rhayader, where the dating is in dispute but probably cAD100, and at Bearsden, Holt and Wroxeter, all from second century contexts. Such a date, rather than the later third century, would seem more appropriate for this particular gem, especially bearing in mind that it had obviously been in use for some time before deposition. A later second century date would accord with the general ceramic dating of the site.

Summary

Two methods of construction were found within this trench, that of a post-in-trench type foundation slot and that of a large clay bed, with the possible remains of a stone wall on top of it. The finds again were largely domestic, and included a single gemstone found within the foundation trench.

Trench C

Trench C measured approximately 11.00m in length and 1.00m in width. It was aligned east-west and was located at the very northern limit of the Phase 1 development area. After the topsoil [25] and underlying ploughsoil [26] of dark brown silty loam were removed, archaeological features were first observed at a depth of c0.40m. A sondage was excavated at the western end of the trench to establish the precise nature of the geological subsoils. Within this sondage, at a depth of 0.70m below the top of the trench, [40], a deposit of large rounded stones, was seen to underlie a deposit of clean orange sand and gravel [39]. The sand and gravel layer was directly below layer [28], a deposit of sand (7.5YR 5/6), containing some gravel and small stones. All of these deposits appeared to be of natural origin.

Layer [28] was cut by [32], a steep sided, flat based linear slot, aligned north-south, which was 0.79m in width and 0.44m in depth. This feature contained a number of fills, a primary silting deposit of sandy silt [38], (10YR 4/4), a secondary deposit, [33], of brown sandy clay silt, and [29], the upper fill, comprising sandy loam (10YR 3/3) with a high stone content (c5-10%).

On its eastern side, slot [32] also cut through layer [27], a silty sand (7.5YR 4/4) which directly overlay layer [28]. Layer [27] extended for approximately 3.80m eastwards. It appeared to be overlain by a series of deposits at the eastern end of the trench, the most westerly of which, [34], was a brown sandy clay (7.5YR 5/4) containing charcoal flecks and patches of red sand. It was physically higher in the east and sloped downwards to the west. At its eastern edge it was adjacent to [35], a mottled sandy clay loam with patches of charcoal and evidence of burning. To the east of this deposit was a clay loam spread with a high rounded stone content (c30%). This layer, [36], along with [35] to the west, was distinctly higher than the adjacent deposits to the west and east and could be seen to form a small 'hump' or mound. To the east of [36], was a mottled sandy clay loam [37], also containing charcoal and flecks of burnt material, which sloped down to the east.

Several other indistinct features were also recognised ([30] and [31]). These may simply have been undulations in the base of the ploughsoil, but the presence of Roman material in one of them indicated a probable archaeological origin.

The deposits in this trench were all overlain by ploughsoil [26], a silt loam (10YR 4/2) which was 0.28m in depth and overlain by turf and topsoil [25].

The Finds

A total of 55 fragments, mainly ceramic vessel fragments was recovered from Trench C.

The layers at the base of this trench did not produce finds, they were, however, cut by a steep-sided linear feature [32]. The primary fill of this feature, [38], was sterile but the upper fills, [33] and [29], produced a total of seven fragments of Romano-British date. Fill [33] contained a single undiagnostic body fragment in a sandy greyware fabric, and fill [29] produced a small rim fragment of Samian, possibly Dr37, in a Central Gaulish fabric, three small body fragments in Black Burnished ware 1 and the lower handle seating of a flagon-type vessel in a fine orange fabric. This fill also produced a fragment of industrial debris, probably from secondary iron-working (forging slag).

Shallow silty loam deposit [31] produced a single fragment of greyware and a very small amount of light, vesicular debris from an unidentified high temperature process.

Charcoal flecked sandy clay deposits [34] and [35], cobble spread [36], and burnt sandy clay loam [37] are regarded as, together, representing an occupation horizon. All produced small amounts of construction materials, brick, tile and daub. The two eastern deposits, [36] and [37], produced eight and two fragments of Romano-British ceramic vessels respectively, which included Samian (Dr37), greyware, a cream fabric, and several fragments of mortaria in pinkish fabrics, possibly with a cream slip, and multicoloured grits. These were associated with a small fragment of lava, presumably deriving from a lava grindstone of typical Romano-British form. Peacock (1980, 50) suggests that these are largely dated to the first and second centuries and are usually associated with sites with a military connection.

Contexts [26] and [25] (ploughsoil and topsoil respectively) produced exclusively Romano-British assemblages, the vessel fragments were all small and abraded. They include fragments of plain Samian forms, orange and grey wares, a Black Burnished ware 1 dish (possibly G318) of later second century date, and a mortarium fragment in a white fabric with exclusively black grits, suggesting that it is possibly later than the majority of finds on the site.

Summary

Both the artefacts and the archaeological deposits within Trench C suggest some form of domestic activity. The deposits to the east formed a mound, possibly signifying some form of domestic build up. To the west was a structural slot, similar to the post-in-trench foundation slot identified within Trench B, to the south.

Trench D

Trench D was excavated to the immediate north of the eastern end of Trench A and was perpendicular to it. As in Trench A, the topsoil [41] was approximately 0.97m in depth, again directly above archaeological deposits.

At a depth of 1.02m within the trench was sandy clay loam [52] (7.5YR 3/2), which was directly below, in the southern section of the trench, a cobble surface [43], very similar to cobble surface [13], discovered at the eastern edge of Trench A. The surface was concentrated at the eastern section and was at its densest at approximately 1.80m from the southern end. The surface became more fragmentary to the north until it effectively disappeared at 4.80m. At c.6.00m, there was a linear band of rounded cobbles [50], aligned north-south, also overlying [52], the sandy clay loam deposit. The cobble alignment was c.2.40m in length and approximately 0.60m wide. The underlying deposit [52] ended 1.00m from the northern end

of the trench, where the matrix changed to a darker sandy clay loam (10YR 3/2) [51], which began to tip significantly towards the north. The overlying cobble alignment [50] also began to slope towards the north, although the precise relationship between alignment [50] and deposit [51] was not established. It appeared that [51] was the fill of a substantial negative feature which was apparently earlier than the cobble alignment, which had slumped into the upper level of this fill. Both deposits [51] and [52] underlay the cobble alignment.

The overlying deposit of clay loam (10YR 3/3) ploughsoil [42] was exceptionally deep (0.78m) and was identical to that found in Trench A. At the base of this, a cleaning layer [53] was established, over cobbles [43/50]. The ploughsoil was directly below turf and topsoil [41].

The Finds

A total of 34 fragments, mainly ceramic vessel fragments was recovered from Trench D.

The dark sandy clay loam [52], recognised at the base of this trench, produced two small fragments of blown vessel glass in natural metals, both of Romano-British date, but otherwise undiagnostic. Context [50], an extension to cobbled surface [43], was set into this layer. It produced small fragments of tile and a small amount of industrial debris. It is probably contemporary with layer [51], which produced a single small base fragment in Black Burnished ware 1 fabric.

The majority of finds from this trench derive from [53], a cleaning layer over surface [50], below [42]. They include daub, greywares, Black Burnished ware 1, cream fabrics, a small beaker rim and fragment of handled vessel reminiscent of Wilderspool (see Hartley and Webster 1973 for comment on a related production centre near Carlisle), probably of later second century date, a large fragment of Samian, Dr37, of Antonine or later form, amphora, brick and tile, and iron nails.

There were no finds from ploughsoil or topsoil layers.

Summary

Trench D was excavated to establish the extent of the cobbled surfaces and the extent of the deep ploughsoil deposit, discovered within Trench A. A degraded cobble surface was located below more than a metre of ploughsoil, at the south end of the trench, which petered out to the north. An alignment of stones was seen to slump into a possible large pit or ditch in the north. Again the finds were dated to the late second century onwards.

Trench E

Trench E was excavated on a north-south axis, immediately to the south of Trench C, in order to determine the nature and extent of the deposits identified at the eastern end of Trench C. The topsoil [44] was removed and at a depth of 0.37m, archaeological deposits were encountered which were broadly the same as those discovered in Trench C. The northern end of the trench contained [49], a spread of sandy clay loam (10YR 4/3), very similar in both colour and material to context [37] in Trench C. The material to the south of [49], a sandy clay loam (10YR 3/3) with a high cobble content [48], was similar to cobble spread [36] in Trench C and was physically higher than [49] in the north. To the south of cobble deposit [48] was a spread of orange clay loam [47], which contained occasional lumps of burnt clay. This was immediately to the north of [46], a sandy loam (7.5YR 3/2) with occasional small stones within the matrix. The pottery assemblage recovered from these deposits and those similar deposits from Trench C, along with the evidence of burning, would suggest some form of occupational activity in the vicinity. No relationships between these deposits were established, as they were left *in situ*, after adequate dating evidence had been retrieved.

All these deposits were below a silt loam (10YR 4/2) ploughsoil [45] and an overlying greyish brown silty loam topsoil [44].

The Finds

A total of 18 fragments, mainly ceramic vessel fragments was recovered from Trench E.

Contexts [46], [47], [48], and [49] are regarded as, together, representing an occupation horizon. All produced ceramic vessel fragments, all of which are very small and abraded. They include orange and greywares, Black Burnished ware fabrics, a cream fabric, and a fragment of mortarium in a hard dark orange fabric with multicoloured grits. There was a small amount of animal bone from context [47], industrial debris and a copper alloy bangle fragment from cobble spread [48], and a badly corroded dress-fastener fragment from sandy clay loam [49].

There were no finds from ploughsoil or topsoil layers.

Summary

A probable southern continuation of the 'occupation mound' revealed in Trench C was discovered in this trench. The artefacts are also of a similar type and date range, with two ornamental copper alloy objects, possibly indicating a nucleus of habitation in the vicinity.

Trench F

Trench F was located centrally within the field, aligned north-south and measuring 6.00m by 2.00m. After topsoil removal, subsoil and archaeological deposits were identified and investigated at depth of 0.30m. The subsoil [63/64] comprised a loose pea grit/gravel (10YR 3/6) deposit which appeared to be mottled by the overlying topsoil [54]. The subsoil was cut by [55], a steep sided, flat bottomed ditch, c.2.70m in width and 0.40m in depth, which was filled by a very sandy loam [56] (10YR 3/2). Ditch [55] was aligned east-west and was cut by a narrow gully [57] (aligned north-west to south-east) on its southern edge. The gully was 0.50m in width and 0.26m in depth and was filled by [58], a gritty sandy loam (10YR 4/4). Further to the south was an east-west linear feature [59], which did not have a relationship with either the narrow gully or the wider ditch. This feature remained unexcavated but comprised a slightly sandy loam [60] (10YR 3/2), containing a single large boulder, approximately 0.45m in diameter.

Within the fill of the wide ditch [56], was a post-hole [61] with a number of packing stones set around a dark sandy loam fill [62]. All these deposits were overlain by a topsoil deposit [54] of dark (10YR 3/3) sandy loam.

The Finds

A total of 12 fragments, mainly ceramic vessel fragments, was recovered from Trench F.

All finds from this trench derive from the topsoil. All the ceramic fragments are of Romano-British date and include a large fragment of mortarium of so-called Rhaetian type, possibly from Wilderspool, which can be assigned a mid-late second century date, a handled jar in greyware, probably G64 (dated AD120-170), and a small fragment of Samian, Dr37, in a Central Gaulish fabric.

Summary

A large, flat bottomed ditch was located centrally within the trench, suggesting some sort of land division. This ditch was in turn cut by a gully and a stone packed post-hole, revealing both multiphase activity and possible land use changes in the area.

Trench G

This trench was situated in the far south-western corner of the field and was aligned north-south. It measured 6.00m in length and was excavated to a depth of 0.32m. Topsoil was removed, revealing an orange gravel deposit [68], which was disturbed by a linear feature [66], aligned approximately north-west to south-west. This feature, on excavation, was

0.49m in depth, had very steeply sloping sides, and a very acutely angled base, producing a V-shaped profile. The fill [67] was a uniform brown sandy loam with gravel/pea grit components, over which a cleaning layer [69], containing a mass of finds, was established. The topsoil [65] directly overlay gravel spread [68].

The Finds

A total of 15 fragments, mainly ceramic vessel fragments was recovered from Trench G.

The layers at the base of this trench did not produce finds. They were, however, cut by a linear feature [66]; the fill [67], produced three small undiagnostic body fragments in an orange fabric. All other material from the trench derives from cleaning layer [69], and probably originates from fill [67] mentioned above. Ceramic fragments include orange wares, a Black Burnished ware 1 jar rim fragment, and a fragment of mortarium in an orange fabric with multicoloured grits. There are also several fragments of iron objects.

Summary

A single, narrow, V-shaped gully was present, immediately below the topsoil. This area had clearly been subject to erosion since the Roman period, only negative features surviving.

Trench H

Trench H was excavated outside the proposed Phase 1 development area, at a location indicated by Two Castles Housing Association as being the site of pumping station to be constructed during Phase 1. This trench was one metre square and was excavated to establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits. At a depth of 0.35m, an horizon [70], of very dark loamy sand was encountered which contained substantial amounts of charcoal and also Roman pottery fragments.

The Finds

A total of three fragments of ceramic vessel were recovered from Trench H. All were Romano-British in date.

Summary

It is clear that Roman activity was present to the north of the Phase 1 evaluation site.

FINDS DISCUSSION

All finds were examined with regard to the following criteria: preservation level, dating potential and any other point of obvious interest. The level of preservation varied with material groups but was generally good. Ceramics were all medium to well preserved, although some surface deterioration of the Samian was noted. Very little Romano-British glass was recovered; however, this was unweathered, with only slight surface abrasion. Very few copper alloy objects were recovered; one was in poor condition, with soft powdery corrosion products coating all surfaces, whilst the other was in good condition, with smooth patinated surfaces. All ironwork was in poor condition. None of the metalwork has been X-rayed. Very little bone was recovered, but it was well-preserved.

The majority of the dating evidence derives from the ceramic assemblage, almost all of which is of later second-to-third century date. The almost complete absence of post-Roman material from the site, even from the topsoil, is of note.

There appears to be little disturbance over the site. Several of the trenches have no finds at all in their topsoil layers. Where there has been some obvious disturbance, as in Trench A, it is clear, from the presence of fragments of the same vessels in disturbed and undisturbed layers, that finds have not travelled far, suggesting that the disturbance has been small scale.

The bone assemblage is too small to warrant discussion. A small amount of industrial residue and debris were also recovered. That identified derived from secondary ironworking, probably routine blacksmithing.

Discussion

It has been proved that in every trench excavated there was evidence of significant Roman activity. This activity was overlain in the trenches in the south-eastern corner of the site by a substantial deposit of topsoil/ploughsoil, further to the east and north the ploughsoil deposit became much thinner and archaeological features appeared no more than 0.35m below the present day ground surface (in the case of Trenches C, E and G).

The presence of cobble surfaces, straight-sided trenches, and localised areas of heat affected material, suggests that the site had undergone a relatively intense domestic occupation. The ceramic assemblage would seem to be domestic in nature and would not be out of place in the context of extramural settlement. The presence of a relatively large amount of Samian and a fragment of lava grindstone points to a military connection. The intaglio gemstone reinforces this link. Furthermore, the cobbled surfaces in the south-eastern corner of the site, although not fully investigated, are quite possibly the remains of cobbled yard surfaces, also a diagnostic feature of Romano-British civilian settlements within the Roman military sphere. They appear to be too insubstantial to be road surfaces and their erratic presence throughout the trenches would suggest a series of separate deposits, possibly of different phases, rather than a single large feature.

In the north and west, the nature of the deposits changed significantly, and possibly indicated the presence of structures. The substantial heat affected clay base, [17]/[19], in Trench B, the adjacent stone-filled slot [14], also in Trench B, and the steep-sided, similar slot in Trench C, [32], quite possibly indicate the presence of north-south aligned timber buildings on the site. The stone-filled slots have broad parallels with features excavated in the civilian settlement to the east of the Roman fort, in Lancaster (Hair *et al* forthcoming). The amount of construction material including brick and tile, daub and iron nails, suggesting tile-roofed buildings, possibly timber framed, in the vicinity, supports this theory.

The dating evidence for the site came from the range of largely well-preserved Romano-British material, mainly later second century coarsewares; jars, dishes and flagons were represented. Mortaria were well-represented, with a number of vessels present. There was also a very small amount of amphora. The amount of Samian seemed, subjectively, to be quite

large in proportion to the coarsewares and there were a number of fragments of decorated vessels. Most was identified as originating from the Central Gaulish kilns although the Dr30R may be of East Gaulish origin.

CONCLUSION

It is reasonable to suggest that the evidence recovered from the southern third of the field was the remains of an outlying extramural settlement or ribbon development along a road leading towards the Stanegate from the southern gate of the fort below the present village. The finds assemblage from this evaluation is broadly from the later second century and therefore links the settlement closely to the Antonine fort below the village (Burgh 2) rather than the earlier defensive structures to the south (Burgh 1). Trench H, to the north, appeared to identify horizons which pertain to this settlement closer to the site of the fort. The presence of Roman remains at this distance from the fort can only point to a civilian settlement far larger than formerly thought. It is reasonable to assume that further to the north the deposits become, presumably, more concentrated and are likely to reflect the fluctuations of expansion and decline in the occupation of the extramural settlement associated with the Antonine fort.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The information collated under the present brief has enabled the identification of areas of archaeological value. The principle that 'archaeological remains should be seen as a finite, and non renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction' is set out by the Department of Environment (*Archaeology and Planning, Planning Policy Guidance, Note 16, 1990*). It is therefore desirable to preserve features intact and *in situ* where possible. When their destruction is unavoidable, and the site does not merit statutory protection, then mitigation measures must be considered.

The results of the trial trenching, throughout a selected area covered by the planning application, have shown that significant archaeological remains would be damaged during the actual construction of the new dwellings. The remains are of great importance to the understanding of the Roman occupation of the North West of England, when seen in conjunction with other recently excavated sites on or near Hadrian's Wall (for instance Carlisle).

If the development scheme is to go ahead within the area evaluated, it is recommended that, as a minimum requirement, a formal open area investigation should take place prior to the construction. The close proximity of some of the features to the ground surface, notably in Trenches B, C, E, F, and G, would make their destruction unavoidable during construction. Any design modifications, for example, the cutting of slit trenches and subsequent rafting of the dwelling, would not preclude the need for an open area excavation. As so little is known of the nature of the Roman extramural settlement at Burgh by Sands, the limited view that slit trenches would afford would be outweighed by the consequent removal of the features from the archaeological record. It would therefore be necessary to undertake a full excavation in these areas as a mitigation measure, should conservation of the below ground features not be possible.

The presence of archaeological horizons further to the north of the Phase 1 development site, should necessitate at least an evaluation of the area, if not a full excavation on the strength of the undisturbed deposits found during the present project, to the south.

In the event of no further work being undertaken upon the Phase 1 site, it is recommended that a short summary by LUAU should be submitted for publication in the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society.

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APPENDIX 1 -
FINDS CATALOGUE

TRENCH A

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General Date
us	1093	Burnt clay	Daub	3	Undated
	1091	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB:(C2)
	1092	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
1	Topsoil				
	1094	Ceramic	Vessel	1	Mod.(C20)
2	Ploughsoil				
	1044	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB;(C2+)
	1045	Ceramic	Vessel	1	Medieval
	1046	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB/Mod
	1047	Ceramic	Brick/tile	1	Undated
	1048	Ceramic	Tile	1	Undated
	1012	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
3	Cobbled land drain				
	No finds				
4	Cobble surface				
	1002	Ceramic	Brick/tile	1	RB?
	1009	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
5	Intrusion: cut				
	No finds				
6	Fill of 5				
	1003	Ceramic	Brick/tile	2	RB?
	1004	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
7	Pea grit / Charcoal fleck deposit				
	No finds				
8	Layer				
	1008	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
9	Layer				
	1001	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB:(C2)
	1014	Ceramic	Brick/tile	2	RB?
10	Subcircular feature: cut				
11	Fill of 10				
	1006	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB?
	1007	Ceramic	Brick/tile	2	RB?
12	Layer, same as 9				
	1015	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB:(C2+)
13	Cobble surface				
	No finds				

TRENCH B

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
us	1098	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
14	Linear cut No finds				
15	Fill of 14				
	1000	Stone	Gem	1	RB:C2?/C3
16	Layer				
	1011	Bone	Animal	1	Undated
17	Clay foundation No finds				
18	Stone wall? No finds				
19	Clay foundation No finds				
20	Layer, same as 16 No finds				
21	Linear cut No finds				
22	Fill of 21				
	1005/1	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB:(C2)
	1005/2	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
23	Intrusion, cut and fill No finds				
24	Post-hole? cut and fill No finds				

TRENCH C

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
us	1095	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1096	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1097	Iron	Nail	1	Undated
25	Turf and topsoil				
	1072	Burnt clay	Daub	1	Undated
	1068	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1069	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1070	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
	1071	Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB
	1073	Ceramic	Brick	2	Undated
26	Ploughsoil				
	1027	Bone	Animal	2	Undated
	1034	Burnt clay	Daub	1	Undated
	1028	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1031	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1032	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1033	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
27	Layer				
	No Finds				
28	Natural subsoil				
	No finds				
29	Upper fill of 32				
	1066	Burnt clay	Daub	1	Undated
	1063	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1064	Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB
	1065	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
	1067	Ind debris	Forging slag?	1	Undated
30	Stony spread				
	No finds				
31	Spread				
	1054	Ceramic	Vessel	4	RB
	1055	Ind debris		1	Undated
32	Linear cut				
	No finds				
33	Lower fill of 32				
	1021	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
34	Occupation level				
	1016	Ceramic	Tile	8	RB
35	Occupation level				
	1010	Ceramic	Brick/tile	1	RB?

36	Degraded cobbled occupation surface				
	1049	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1050	Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB
	1051	Ceramic	Vessel	4	RB
	1013	Stone	Quern	1	RB
37	Occupation level				
	1043	Burnt clay	Daub	1	Undated
	1042	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
38	Primary fill of 32				
	No finds				
39	Natural Sand and gravel				
	No finds				
40	Natural sand and gravel				
	No finds				

TRENCH D

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
41	Topsoil No finds				
42	Ploughsoil, same as Trench A, context 2 No finds				
43	Cobble surface No finds				
50	Linear cobbled feature				
	1052	Ceramic	Tile	1	RB
	1053	Ind debris		1	RB
51	Layer				
	1020	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
52	Layer				
	1017	Glass	Vessel?	1	RB
	1019	Glass	Vessel	1	RB?
53	Cleaning layer				
	1082	Burnt clay	Daub	1	Undated
	1074	Ceramic	Vessel	15	RB
	1075	Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB:(C2)
	1076	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1077	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1078	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1080	Ceramic	Vessel	4	RB:(C2)
	1081	Ceramic	Brick/tile	2	Undated
	1079	Iron	Nail	1	RB

TRENCH E

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
44	Turf and topsoil				
	No finds				
45	Ploughsoil				
	No finds				
46	Occupation level				
	1040	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
	1041	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
47	Occupation level with burning				
	1062	Bone	Animal	1	Undated
	1056	Ceramic	Tile	1	RB
	1057	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1058	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1059	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1060	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1061	Ind debris		1	Undated
48	Degraded cobble occupation level				
	1035	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1036	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
	1037	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1038	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1090	Cu alloy	Bangle?	1	RB
49	Occupation level				
	1039	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1018	Cu alloy	Fastener	1	RB

TRENCH F

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
54	Topsoil				
	1083	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB:(mC2)
	1084	Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB
	1085	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1086	Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB(m-lC2)
	1087	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1088	Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB:(C2)
	1089	Iron	Nail	1	Undated
55	Large flat bottomed ditch: cut				
	No finds				
56	Fill of 55				
	No finds				
57	Linear gully: cut				
	No finds				
58	Fill of 57				
	No finds				
59	Linear feature: cut				
	No finds				
60	Fill of 59				
	No finds				
61	Post-hole: cut				
	No finds				
62	Fill of 61				
	No finds				
63	Natural subsoil?				
	No finds				
64	Natural subsoil				
	No finds				

TRENCH G

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
65	Topsoil No finds				
66	V-shaped gully: cut No finds				
67	Fill of 66				
1029		Ceramic	Vessel	2	RB
1030		Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
68	Natural subsoil? No finds				
69	Cleaning layer				
1026		Burnt clay	Daub	1	Undated
1022		Ceramic	Vessel	13	RB
1024		Ceramic	Vessel?	1	RB
1025		Ceramic	Vessel	3	RB
1023		Iron	Unidentif	4	Undated

TRENCH H

Cxt	Or.no	Material	Category	Qty	General date
70	Layer				
	1099	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1100	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB
	1101	Ceramic	Vessel	1	RB