

HOLME LEA  
BOWES

REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Prepared by:

*The Archaeological Practice Ltd.*



Prepared for: Mr M A Close

Project Code: AP 08/13

OASIS: thearcha2-45162

Source Number 31516 Event Number 32275

Asset Number H.2045

Artefact Number Consultation Number 19183

HOLME LEA  
BOWES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

JULY 2008



Prepared for: <i>Mr Close</i>	By: <i>The Archaeological Practice Ltd.</i>
----------------------------------	--

Project code: AP08/13	Stage: Final	Compiled by: RJC	Completion date: 05/07/08
--------------------------	-----------------	---------------------	------------------------------

# CONTENTS

## SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION
2. EVALUATION PROGRAMME
3. RESULTS
4. CONCLUSIONS
5. RECOMMENDATIONS

## APPENDICES

6. LEVELS TABLE
7. PROJECT DESIGN FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT HOLME LEA
8. EVALUATION OF BIOLOGICAL REMAINS
9. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROMAN POTTERY

## ILLUSTRATIONS

*Front Cover: View of buildings remains revealed in Trench 3, excavated at the rear of Holme Lea, Bowes.*

*Frontispiece: View from the north of the lower west side of the evaluation site.*

*Illus. 01: The position of the evaluation site (arrowed) in Bowes*

*Illus. 02: The location of trenches within the proposed development site*

*Illus. 03: RCHME Plan of Bowes Roman fort and west part of the modern village, 1990.*

*Illus. 04: The rear of Holme Lea viewed from the south east.*

*Illus. 05: View towards the south-east corner of the evaluation site from WNW.*

*Illus. 06: View towards the south-east corner of the evaluation site from the north.*

*Illus. 07: View towards the south-east corner of the evaluation site from the north-west.*

*Illus. 08: View of redundant former inn building along the western border of the evaluation site.*

*Illus. 09: Plan of Trench 1*

*Illus. 10: Trench 1, Section #1, East Facing*

*Illus. 11: Plan of Trench 2*

*Illus. 12: Section #4 Trench 2, east facing*

*Illus. 13: View of trench 1 from the south*

*Illus. 14: Detailed view of wall remains in Trench 1*

*Illus. 15: View of Trench 2 from the north*

*Illus. 16: Vertical view of circular soakaway uncovered in Trench 2, following excavation*

*Illus. 17: Plan of Trench 3*

*Illus. 18: Trench 3. Section #5. North Facing*

*Illus. 19: View of Trench 3 from the west side*

*Illus. 20: The remains of a wall and flagged floor in Trench 3, viewed from the north-west.*

*Illus. 21: The remains of a wall and flagged floor in Trench 3, viewed from the south side.*

*Illus. 22: Detail of wall masonry remains in Trench 3*

*Illus. 23: Vertical view of Trench 3, east end*

*Illus. 24: An inscribed sherd of amphora from Trench 3.*

*Illus. 25: Enhanced photographs of a fragment of inscribed amphora from buildings remains in Trench 3 -A Obverse; B Section*

*Illus. 26: Plan of Trench 4*

*Illus. 27: Suggested schematic Plan of Trench 4*

*Illus. 28: Trench 4. Section #2. East Facing*

*Illus. 29: Trench 4. Section #3. South east Facing.*

*Illus. 30: View of Trench 4 from the north*

*Illus. 31: View of Trench 4 from the south*

*Illus. 32: View of Trench 4 from the south, following excavation.*

*Illus. 33: View of the north end of Trench 4 from the south, following excavation.*

*Illus. 34: Trench 5. Section #1. East Facing*

*Illus. 35: View of Trench 5 from the north*

*Illus. 36: View of Trench 5 from the south*

*Illus. 37: View of Trench 5 from the south with farm buildings to the rear.*

## SUMMARY

*This document reports on archaeological evaluation trenching conducted to inform a proposal for the development of a farm yard to the rear of Holme Lea on the south side of Bowes village, County Durham. Previous documentary work has provided contextual information regarding the archaeological and historical development of the area, showing that the site lies within the area of a Roman civil settlement on the east side of Lavatris Roman fort, and concluded that there was a high likelihood of Roman and perhaps later remains surviving there. Accordingly, the trenching was devised to determine the precise impact of the proposed scheme on the cultural heritage of the area.*

*The aims of the programme of evaluation trenching were to investigate the possibility that significant archaeological remains were present on the site, to determine the character of any such remains and determine, as far as possible, their function and state of preservation. Five trenches were placed in positions which it was considered provided a reasonable sample of individual sites flagged as of potential importance in the archaeological assessment report.*

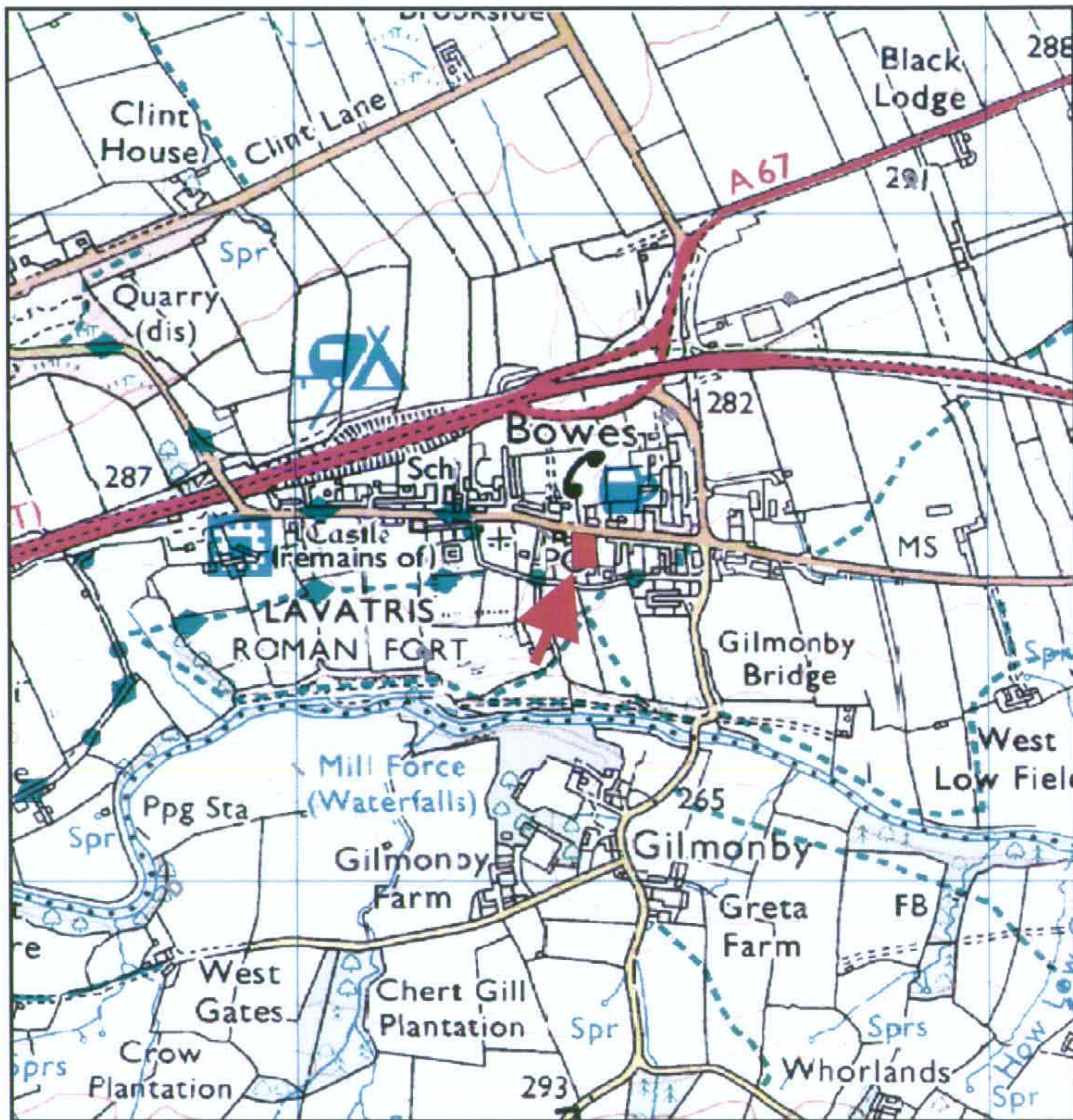
*A mechanical excavator, closely supervised by an archaeologist, was used to excavate the surface topsoil of each trench until archaeological features or sub-soil were encountered. All anomalies or features of potential interest were examined closely by hand to appraise their importance and, if necessary, for recording purposes.*

*The investigation of the site by archaeological trenching revealed a variety of remains including structures and deposits between 0.35m and 1.3m below the present ground surface.*

*The remains recovered from Trench 1 included those of a substantial clay-bonded stone wall and possible flooring of likely Roman origin. In Trench 2 there was no evidence for intensive Roman activity, but some indication that the area had been heavily disturbed, with a post-medieval structure identified as a soakaway in the upper levels. In Trench 3 was a substantial drystone wall of Roman origin, identified as the footings and lower wall courses of a substantial Roman building, associated with a flagged surface and more ephemeral remains of gulleys and/or further building footings. Trench 4 revealed a series of gulleys containing Roman pottery, interpreted as the foundations of wooden buildings and/or associated drainage trenches. A spread of sandstone rubble uncovered in Trench 5 was associated with very abundant Roman pottery, indicating that it is the product of Roman building activity, perhaps representing a demolition phase or degraded revetment wall.*

*The remains encountered at Holme Lea were similar in character to those previously reported by investigations in the same general area on the east side of the Roman Fort site, notably those conducted by Frere & Hartley in 1966 and by BAP in 1999, both of which uncovered the remains of clay-bonded stone buildings, flagged surfaces and gulleys, all associated with abundant Roman pottery, mainly dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, but apparently including some later material.*

*The substantial and varied Roman structural remains uncovered and recorded on the east side of the site were more substantial than those recorded under deeper overburden in the centre and towards the east side of the site. The nature of remains found upon the site supports a recommendation for mitigation by avoidance in the east side of the site where evidence for substantial remains of stone structures was discovered, and mitigation by avoidance, conservation or record in the west side of the site where more ephemeral remains were uncovered.*



*Illus. 01: The position of the evaluation site (arrowed) in Bowes.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

---

## 1.1 Purpose of Evaluation

The following is a report on a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching carried out at Holme Lea on the south side of Bowes main street, where it is proposed to site a housing development on back-plot land to the rear of houses facing the main road. The current evaluation strategy was designed by the Archaeological Officer for Durham County Council to further inform the planning process with regard to the development by testing for the existence of, and defining the nature of any features of archaeological importance found to survive under the present ground surface.

The motivation for archaeological evaluation is that the site is located within an area considered on the basis of archaeological assessment and previous archaeological discoveries to be of high archaeological potential. Notably, in 1999 Brigantia Archaeological Practice (BAP)<sup>1</sup> carried out an evaluation excavation in the area immediately south of the present evaluation site which revealed a flagged surface and abundant pottery of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries, and in 2000 a geophysical exploration and excavations by ASUD at the east end of modern Bowes revealed traces of ditches, trackways and stone buildings, all considered to be Roman in date. This evidence strongly suggests the presence of a Roman civil settlement, or *vicus* extending eastwards from the Roman fort on the south side of the road towards the east end of the village. Holme Lea is located in the heart of this suggested *vicus* area.

## 1.2 Site Location

The site is located to the rear of Holme Lea farmhouse on the south side of Bowes village street some 74 metres from the inner face of the fort defences (represented by the churchyard wall east of the parish church), or around 50 metres east of the presumed eastward extent of the Roman fort defences (as represented by a northward projection of Back Lane towards the village street) (Grid Ref NY 994 135). The site is largely undeveloped, but contains, in addition to the farmhouse and its modern eastward extension, a garage structure in the north-east, a linear stone building in poor condition, formerly an accommodation block associated with the former Rose & Crown public house, extending N-S along the west boundary wall of the site, and the remains of a chicken shed in the south-east corner of the site. A large stone dump in the centre of the site is the product of the demolition of a building formerly occupying part of the site.

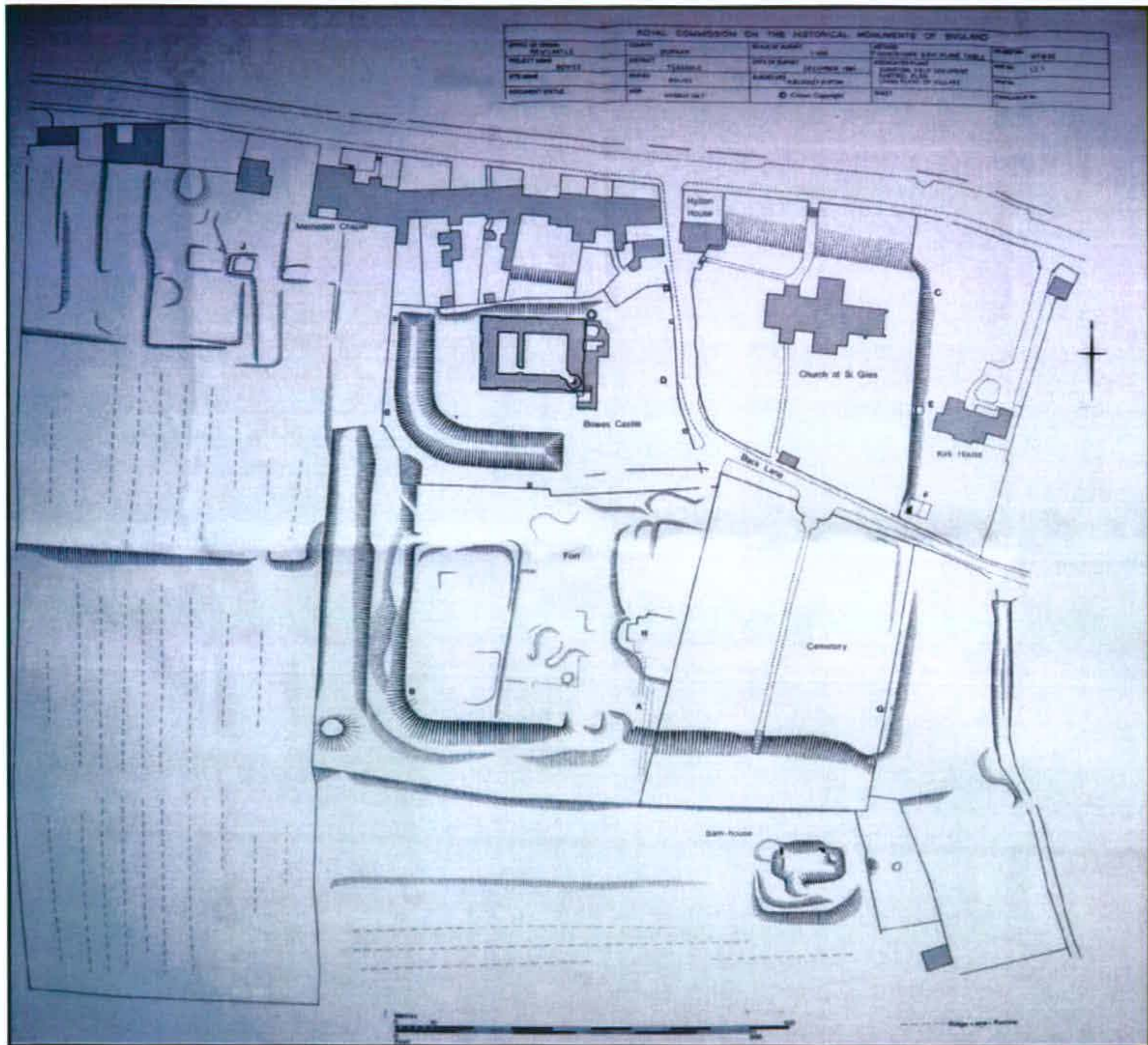
---

<sup>1</sup> Brigantia Archaeological Practice, 2007, *Archaeological Assessment of Land to the rear of Holme Lea, Bowes, County Durham*.





*Illus. 02: The location of trenches within the proposed development site.*



*Illus. 03: RCHME Plan of Bowes Roman fort and west part of the modern village, 1990.*



*Illus. 04: The rear of Holme Lea viewed from the south east.*

### **1.3 Previous Archaeological work in the Assessment Area**

Excavations have taken place at Bowes Fort under the direction of Hartley and Frere in 1966-7 (see *The Journal of Roman Studies* 58/1968/179-81) and 1970 (see *Britannia* 2/1971/251); and in 1988 by E J Judge (see *Britannia* 20/1989/277). These investigations examined the defences and *principia* of the fort, showing a sequence of activity from the late 1<sup>st</sup> to late 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, including phases of timber building followed by stone buildings from the Hadrianic period onwards. Hartley and Frere also excavated north of the fort, where they tentatively identified a ditched annexe containing possible gardens, and east of the fort to the south of Back Lane, where a road flanked by gulleys was exposed, together with evidence for timber buildings.

In 1990 the Antiquities Officer at Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle requested an RCHME survey of Bowes village and the two scheduled monuments within it, the castle and the Roman fort (SAMs 118 and 111), since it was considered that there was a potential threat to the archaeology of the village by in-fill housing. The Commission in Newcastle undertook a 1:500 survey of the fort in late 1990 using standard methods of control (Wild T1000 total stations theodolite and DI1000 EDM), followed by the supply of archaeological detail by Wild RK1 self-reducing alidade and plane table.<sup>2</sup> For the village a 1:2500 SUSI copy of the current OS plan was used as a base map onto which details of the earthwork, not shown by OS, were added: thus the relationship between the Medieval earthworks and the modern village could be demonstrated. This revision of the OS plan encompassed about 40 hectares.

In 1993 an Investigation of a 13.5m long area between the south wall of the castle and the south ditch took place at the behest of English Heritage under the direction of A M Whitworth in advance of drainage works. A section of apparently collapsed wall was found in front of the south wall of the castle, whilst the remains of a wall of probable medieval date were found aligned parallel to the south ditch. Pottery of 12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> century date and several fragments of medieval window glass were recovered (*Medieval Archaeology* 38/1994). In 1994 a watching brief held on the north side of the village street close to the Methodist Church revealed truncated stone walls and surfaces of possible Roman date. In 2002 a watching brief west of Bowes Hall revealed little evidence for Roman activity, suggesting that this area lay outside the limit of Roman (*vicus*) occupation on the north-east side of the fort.

In 1999 BAP carried out an evaluation excavation in the area (currently occupied by Greta Villa) immediately south of the present evaluation site. This excavation revealed a flagged surface associated with the remains of a clay-bonded masonry wall, along with pottery of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. The excavator acknowledged difficulties in interpreting the results of the excavation, but concluded that the nature of the surface suggested some kind of military or municipal construction and the quantity of pottery recovered indicated considerable activity on or near the site (BAP 2007, 7).

In 2000 a geophysical exploration was carried out in advance of excavates by ASUD south of the Annams estate at the east end of modern Bowes (NGR NY 9954 1333), somewhat to the east of Holme Lea. This investigation revealed traces of ditches, trackways and stone buildings, all considered to be Roman in date.

An Archaeological Desk-Top Assessment carried out for the Holme Lea site by The Brigantia Archaeological Practice (BAP 2007) in 2007 included the collation and analysis of evidence from various archival sources, including previous archaeological studies, together with a site visit. The report noted the known position and importance of Roman remains in the area, as well as discussing the medieval castle and village, the layout of which is thought to have included the current main street north of the evaluation site, and Back lane to the south. It concluded that while evidence for prehistoric activity, although hitherto unattested, may survive on the site, the preservation of Roman remains within the site is likely to be good. Later activity is unattested, although the site may have been part of the medieval village and certainly came into use as a back-plot or farmyard in the post-medieval and modern periods (BAP 2007, 10-11).

The assessment report (BAP 2007) recommended the excavation of evaluation trenches in order to establish the nature, state of preservation and potential of any surviving remains.

#### 1.4 Cultural Heritage Background

Bowes is known from considerable documentary and physical evidence to have been the site of a Roman fort occupied between the late 1<sup>st</sup> to late 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, the earliest period associated with phases of timber building followed by stone buildings from the Hadrianic period onwards. The Roman name for the Bowes fort (NGR: NY9913) is well documented, being recorded in three of the major classical geographical sources. It occurs twice in the Antonine Itinerary, as *Lavatris* in *Iter II* (from Hadrians Wall to Richborough in Kent) and as *Levatris* in *Iter V* (from London to Carlisle on the Wall), in both cases appearing between the entries for VERTERIS (Brough Castle, Cumbria) and CATARACTONIVM (Catterick, North Yorkshire). The name appears as *Lauatres* in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, where it is listed among the forces commanded by the 'Duke of the Britains', between the entries for CONCANGIS (Chester-le-Street, Durham) and Brough Castle. In the Ravenna Cosmology (R&C#135) it appears as *Lavaris*, between the <sup>sp. "Cosmography"</sup> entries for VINOVIVM (Binchester, Durham) and Catterick. The only building inscriptions recovered from the *Lavatris* fort are those of auxiliary regiments; the absence of any legionary stones at Bowes may mean that they still remain to be discovered, perhaps re-used within the walls farms and field walls in the area.

The ramparts of the Roman fort survive as earthworks south of the village street, but the majority of the internal space has been disturbed by later buildings and developments, including the castle and later structures in the north-west quadrant, the medieval church in the north-east and the post-medieval churchyard in the south-east. The site of the current evaluation is some distance to the east of the eastern defences of the fort, in an area considered on the basis of a number of excavations, notably by Frere and Hartley in 1966, together with topographical factors and stray finds to be the site of a Roman civil settlement, or *vicus*. The area thought to be covered by the *vicus* includes most or all of the present eastward extent of the modern village. Although various remains including gulleys, roadways and the remains of stone buildings footings have been recorded in this area, the only substantial extra-mural building recorded at

Bowes until the current evaluation was the bath-house associated with the fort (Salway 1965, 141-2),<sup>3</sup> the visible remains of which have been exposed immediately south of the south-east corner of the fort, south of the present cemetery. Hartley and Frere also excavated north of the fort, where they tentatively identified a ditched annexe containing possible gardens, although this interpretation remains largely conjectural.

---

<sup>3</sup> Salway, P., 1965, *The Frontier People of Roman Britain*. Cambridge University Press.

## 2. EVALUATION PROGRAMME

---

### 2.1 Aims

Given the potential archaeological sensitivity of the site, the Planning Archaeologist for Durham County Council requested that the archaeological potential of the site should be investigated in order to establish whether the proposed invasive development works are likely to impact on any archaeological remains of significance. The project brief requested that several specific sites within the area to be impacted by the development should initially be investigated by excavation in the evaluation phase of archaeological work.

Accordingly, the aims of the programme of evaluation trenching were to investigate the possibility that significant archaeological remains were present on the site, to determine the character of any such remains and determine, as far as possible, their function and state of preservation.

### 2.2 Trench Location and Extent

Five trench locations were identified in the Project Specification provided by the Durham County Council (DCC) Archaeological Officer. The trench locations were not determined by the presence of known archaeological remains, but were sited in order to cover a reasonable sample of the site area, as follows:

Trench 1: On the site of a small garden on the street frontage in the north-east corner of the site.

Trench 2: In the centre of the west part of the site.

Trench 3: In the centre of the east part of the site.

Trench 4: Close to and parallel with the former inn building in the south-west corner of the site.

Trench 5: Across the footings of chicken sheds in the south-east corner of the site.

The locations of the evaluation trenches are shown on *Illustration 02*.

### 2.3 Methods

Five trenches were placed in positions specified in the Specification document and project design

In each case, a mechanical excavator, closely supervised by an archaeologist, was used to excavate the surface topsoil until archaeological features were encountered. The trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.5 metres. All anomalies or features of potential interest were examined closely by hand to appraise their importance and, if necessary, for recording purposes. The surface of the sub-soil was also cleaned by hand to reveal any potential features cut into it. All trench sections were also hand-cleaned for recording purposes.



*Illus. 05: View towards the south-east corner of the evaluation site from WNW.*



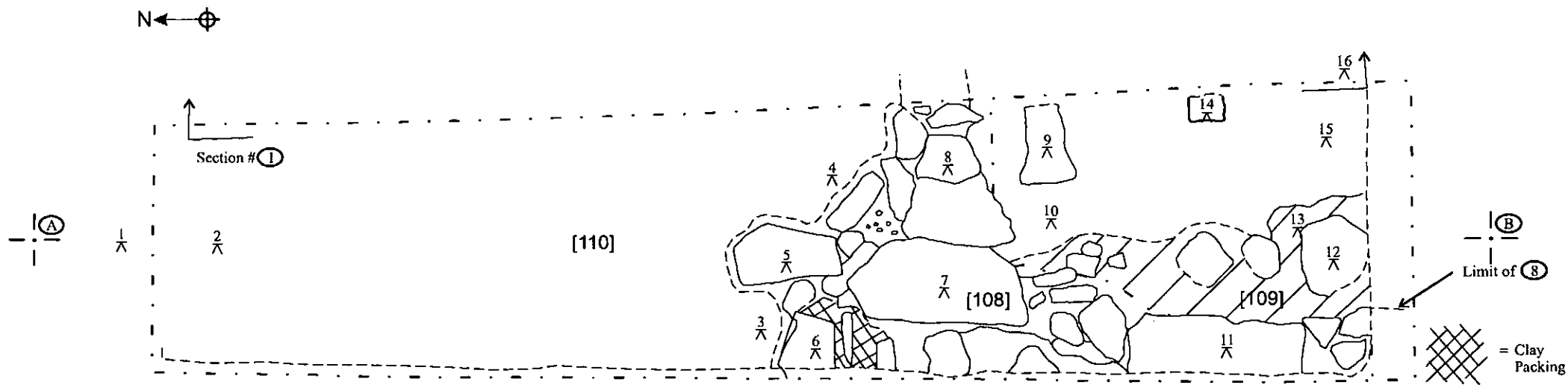
*Illus. 06: View towards the south-east corner of the evaluation site from the north.*



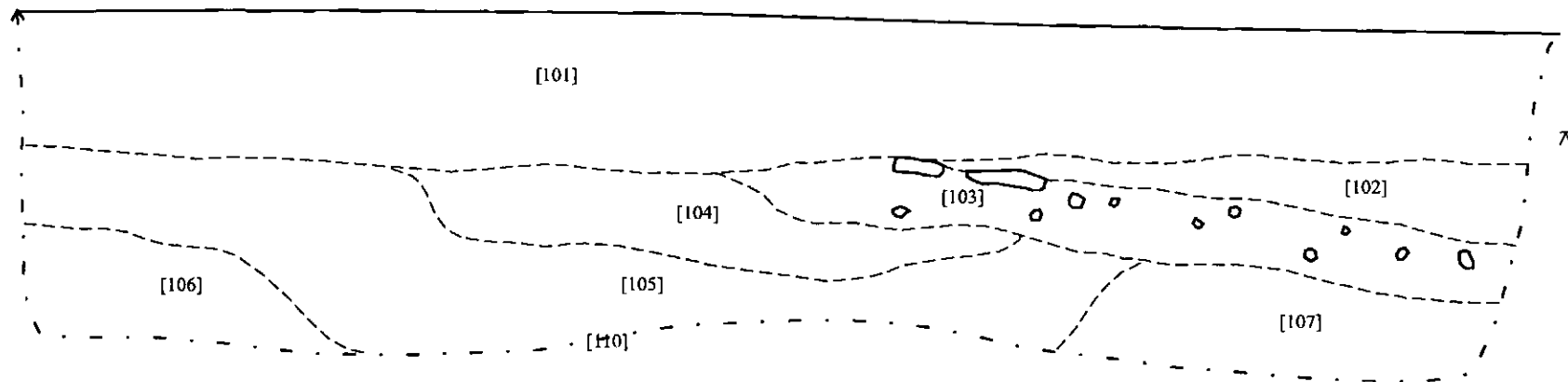
*Illus. 07: View towards the south-east corner of the evaluation site from the north-west.*



*Illus. 08: View of redundant former inn building along the western border of the evaluation site.*

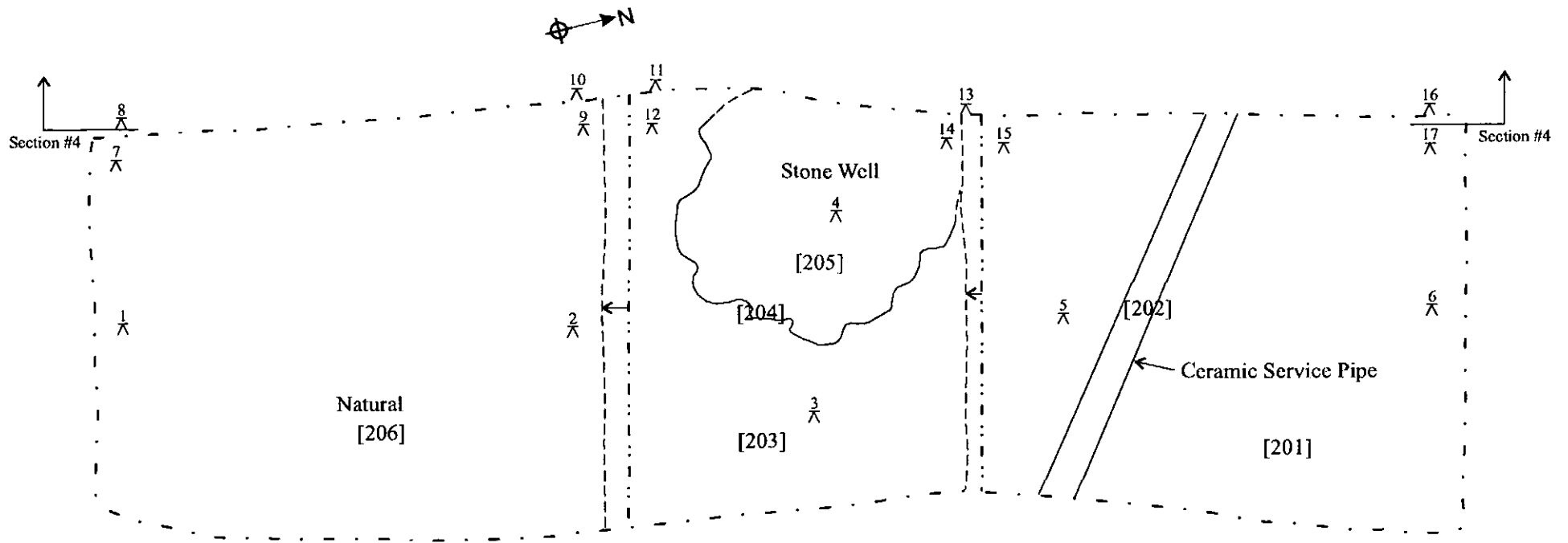


*Illus. 09: Plan of Trench 1*

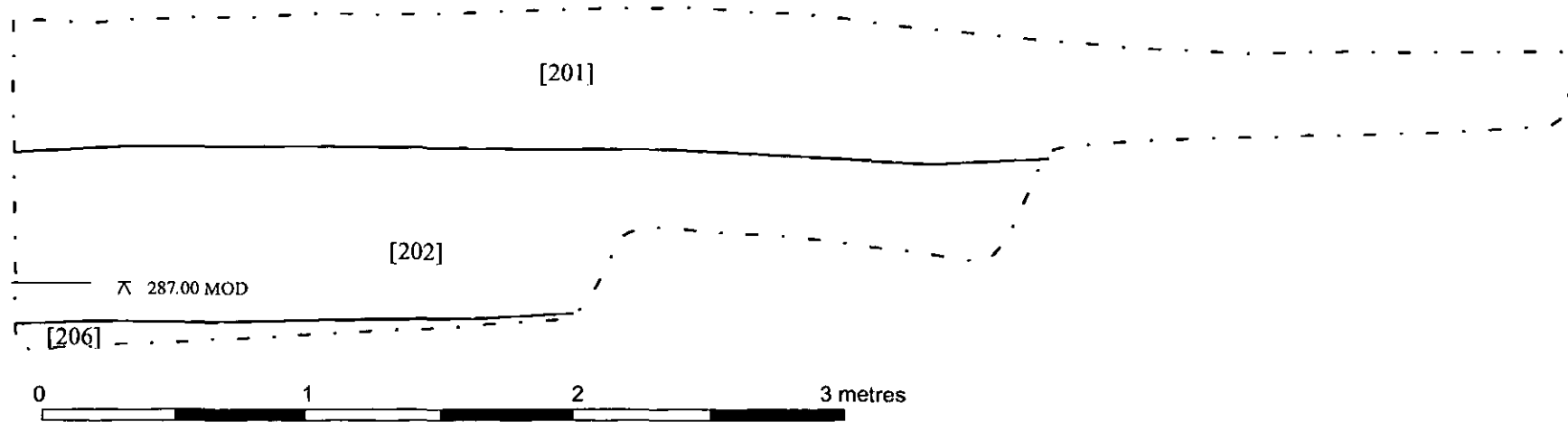


*Illus. 10: Trench 1, Section #1, East Facing.*





**Illus. 11: Plan of Trench 2**



**Illus. 12: Section #4 Trench 2, east facing**

### 3. RESULTS

---

#### 3.1 *Trench 1 (Illus. 09 - 10)*

Trench 1 was positioned in a small enclosed garden which bordered the main village road and the northern boundary of the site. The trench measured 4.5m (length) x 1m (width) x 1.1m (maximum depth).

Below the loam-based top-soil [101] was a deposit of modern overburden, reaching depths of 0.40m below ground level, sealing three layers [102-4] of probable post Roman date. Below this was a layer [105] which may represent the robbing of wall remains [108]. The wall remains, belonging to context [108], comprised rubble and clay wall-core material. They aligned north-south with a possible east-west return on the east side. Beneath the wall remains was a deposit of grey/green silt [107] which sealed a linear upstanding deposit of mixed clay and sandstone fragments and pieces [109]. This feature was found to be on approximately the same alignment as the wall remains [108] and has been interpreted as a possible demolished wall. The redness of the clay suggested possible burning. Firm, silty boulder clay [110], interpreted as the natural sub-soil, was encountered at 1.1 metres below ground level.

Description of contexts recorded in Trench 1 (see Section #1):

[101] Loose black silt, with frequently occurring fragments of sandstone (0.02 -0.05m diameter).

[102] Loose dark brown clay-silt with some rubble.

[103] Soft friable mid-brown silt-clay, with common inclusions of well sorted sandstone pieces (0.02 - 0.12m in diameter).

[104] Mixed orange brown, soft friable silt-clay, with rare concentrations of domestic ash waste and small quantities of sandstone fragments (no greater than 0.04m in diameter).

[105] Soft friable mid red-brown silt-clay, containing around 5% coarse sand, and small quantities of sandstone fragments (no greater than 0.05m in diameter).

[106] = [107] Soft loose silty clay, with c.10% coarse sand and occasional fragments of well sorted sandstone (no greater than 0.06m in diameter). Also contained occasional lenses of mixed yellow clay.

[108] Remains of wall footings, aligned N-S with a possible east-west return at its north end.

[109] Firm plastic mixed clay bond, with possible wall footings which comprise pieces of sandstone and flat sandstone slabs.

[110] Firm, silty boulder clay.

#### *Interpretation*

The remains recovered from Trench 1 included those of a substantial clay-bonded stone wall aligned north-south with a possible east-west return at its north end. At the south end of the trench the arrangement of flat stones could, as an alternative to wall footings, also be interpreted as flooring. The remains were not distinctively Roman or post-Roman in character, but the abundance of Roman pottery in the vicinity of the wall suggests its most likely date of origin. However, it should also be noted that the recorded wall remains are on the line of post-medieval (and possibly medieval) housing on the street frontage, so a post-Roman date can not be excluded.

#### 3.2 *Trench 2 (Illus. 11 - 12)*

This trench was positioned in the north part of the area of investigation. The trench was aligned north-south to the rear of the site and its dimensions were 6m (length) x 1.6m (width) x 1.3m (maximum depth).



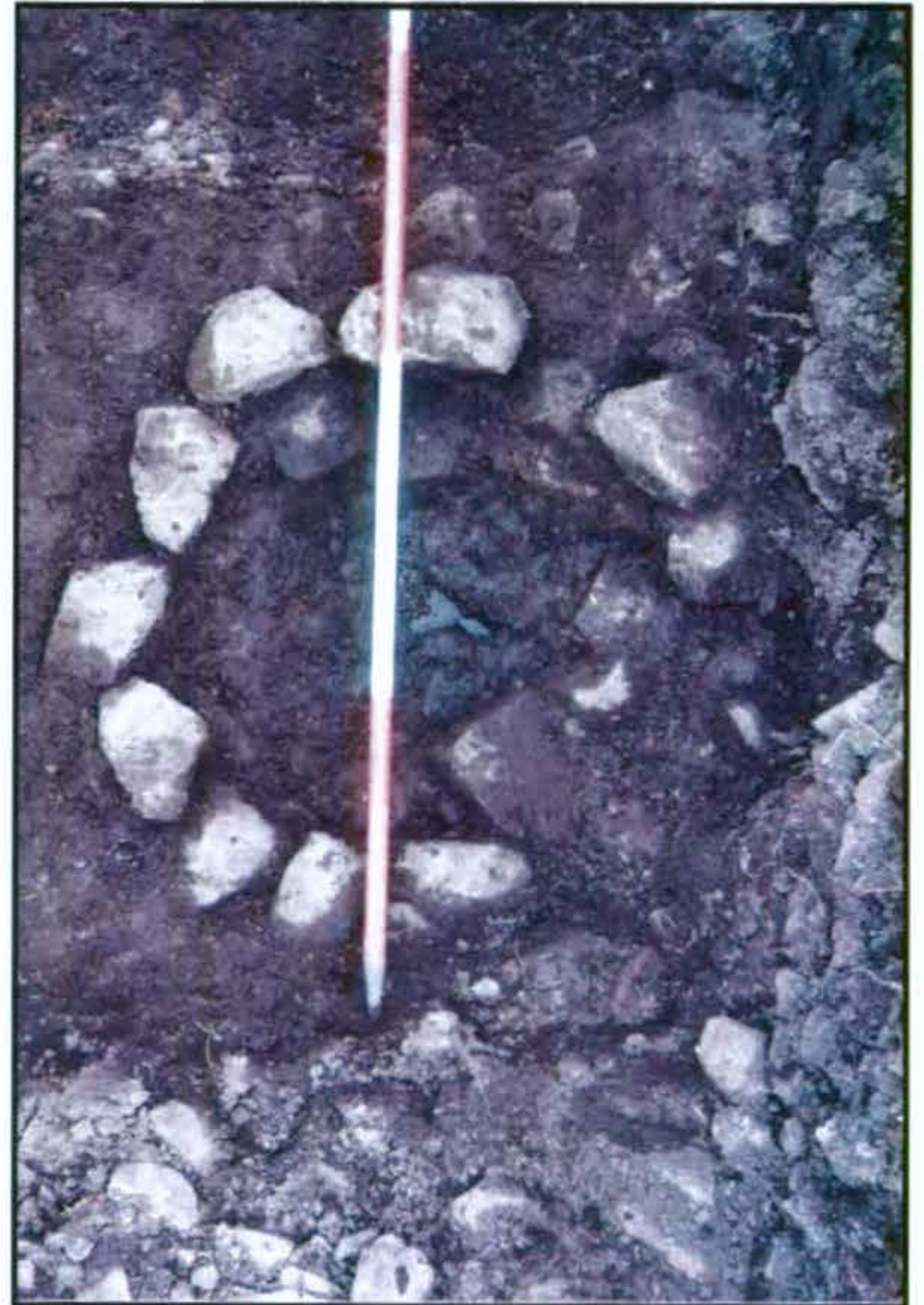
*Illus. 13: View of trench 1 from the south.*



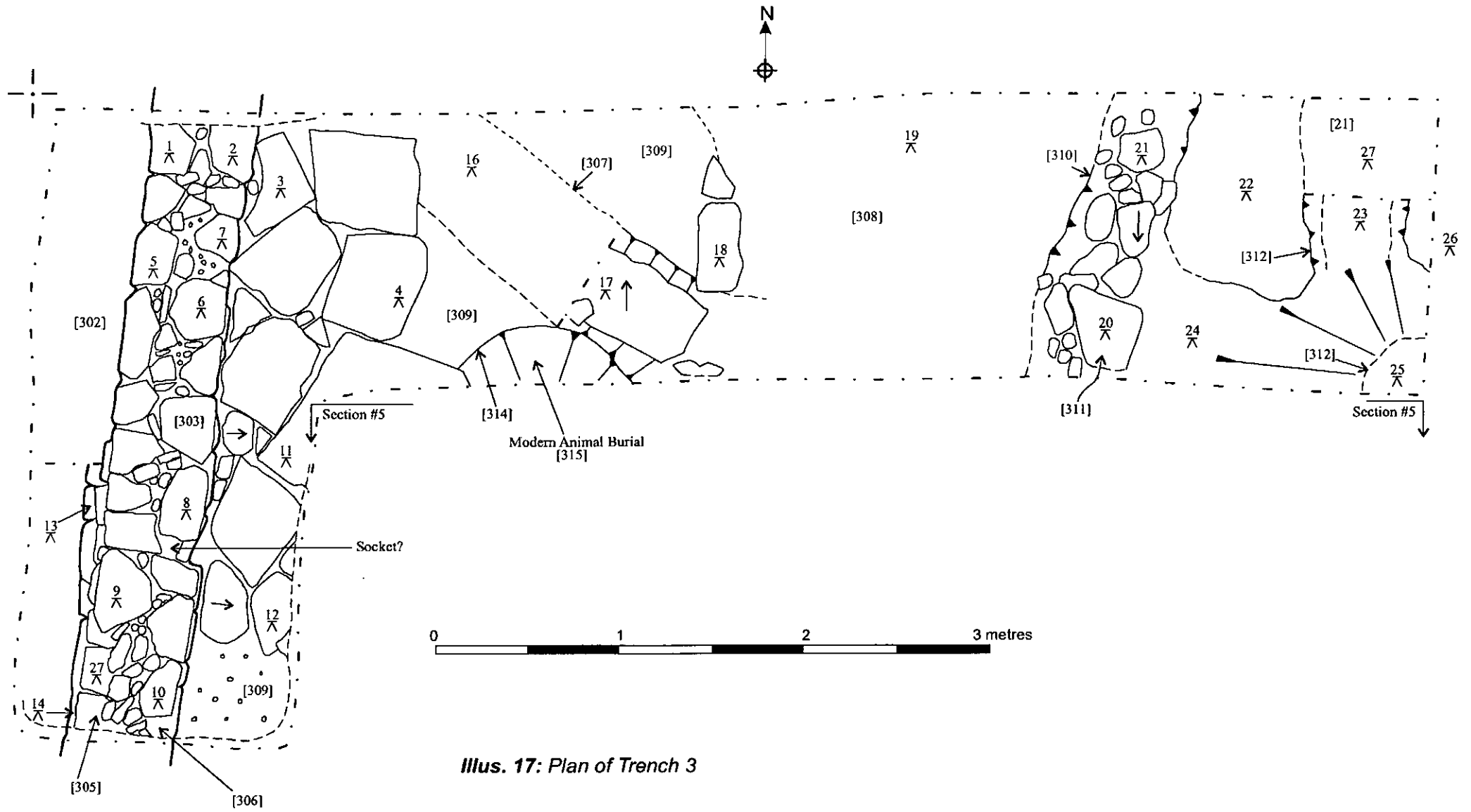
*Illus. 14: Detailed view of wall remains in Trench 1.*



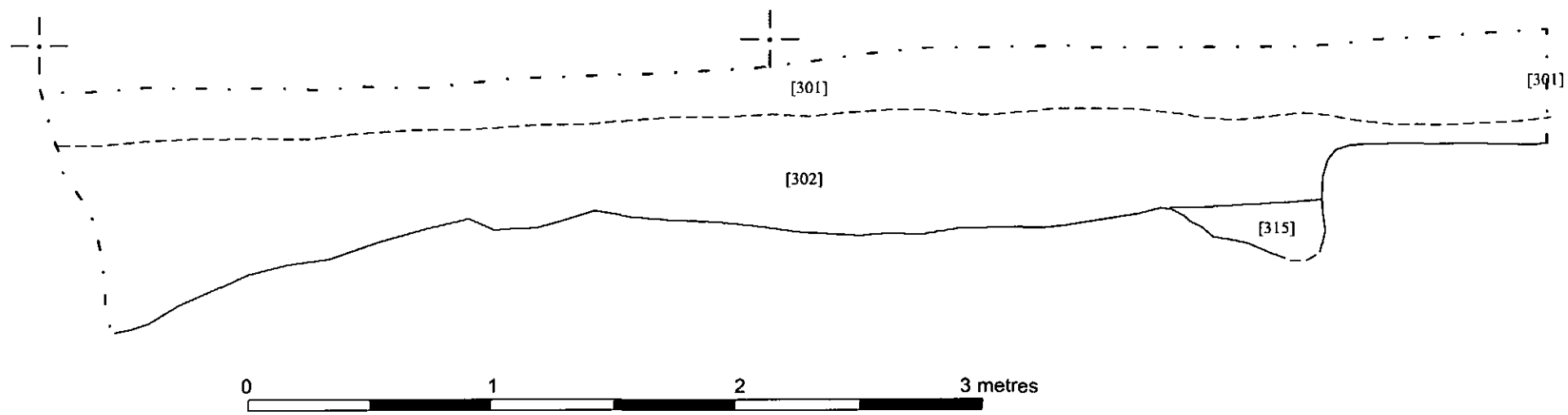
*Illus. 15: View of Trench 2 from the north.*



*Illus. 16: Vertical view of circular soakaway uncovered in Trench 2, following excavation.*



**Illus. 17: Plan of Trench 3**



*Illus. 18: Trench 3. Section #5. North Facing.*

Below the loam-based top-soil [201] was a substantial deposit of loose black clay-silt with frequently occurring fragments of sandstone [203] approximately 1m in depth. Running across the upper part of the trench at or close to the intersection of [201] and [203] was a modern drain [202]. Cut into [203] in the centre of the trench were the remains of a circular stone well or soak-away [204], some 1.3m in diameter, constructed of water-worn riverine cobbles and split sandstone pieces arranged in a rough circle. Feature [204] contained a shallow deposit of rounded pebbles and silt [205], with some sherds of post-medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery. Below [203] was the natural, boulder clay subsoil [206]. Sparse sherds of Roman pottery and a single sherd of green-glazed medieval pottery were also recovered from the trench.

#### *Interpretation*

No remains of Roman construction were recorded in Trench 2 and the sparsity of Roman pottery recovered did not suggest intensive Roman activity in the immediate vicinity. The only structural remains recorded were those of a shallow depression bordered by angular sandstone blocks, filled with cobbles and associated with post-medieval pottery. This feature was not a substantial structure and appeared to have been constructed as a soakaway rather than water container, perhaps servicing the adjacent inn.

### **3.3 Trench 3 (Illus. 17-18)**

Trench 3 was an "L" shaped trench positioned to the rear of the site within the old farm yard. The longest alignment stretched for 7.5m in length (east-west) and 1.6m in width. The shorter alignment (north-south), measured 3.4m (length) x 1.6m (width) before returning at the west end. The maximum depth of the trench was 1m.

Below the loam-based top-soil [301] and stony sub-soil deposit [302] reaching a depth of 0.3m were the remains of a well built stone wall at the west end of the trench, aligned north-south [303] with associated stone flags to the east [304]. Three courses of masonry were exposed on the west (external) face of the wall. These regular courses were constructed of unbonded, split sandstone blocks, plugged in places with pieces of ceramic tile and amphora body sherds. The lower course of blocks was offset and formed a sturdy foundation course. The east face of the wall was unfaced, but it is possible that facing stones formerly present had been removed. Two possible sockets [305] & [306] had been constructed in the wall, perhaps to support timber uprights. The flagstones forming a floor east of the wall were 0.10m thick and laid in an irregular pattern with smaller flat pieces inserted into the gaps. A large quantity of exclusively Roman pottery was also discovered in fills either side of the wall and on the flagged surface. To the east of the flags a shallow ditch [307] filled by [302] ran NW-SE across the trench between patches of boulder clay subsoil and rock outcrop [309], apparently cutting through the Roman surfaces. East of the flagged surface was a deposit of modified boulder clay sub-soil [308], probably the base of [304], fragments of which also occurred on the east side of [307]. Running north-south across the east end of the trench was a drain or wall footing [310] filled with rubble [311]. East of [310/11] was a further gulley-like feature [312] filled with [302] and associated with a deeper cut [313] in the south-east corner. A modern animal burial [315] was found in a cut [314] in the centre of the south side of the trench.

#### *Interpretation*

Trench 3 contained evidence for a substantial drystone wall, faced on the west (external) side and incorporating pieces of Roman-period tile and amphora in the build. This closely resembled the construction of walls excavated in northern vici such as Housesteads (Crowe 2004, 73-81)<sup>4</sup> and Wallsend (The Archaeological Practice, 2006: 52 Carville road, Wallsend: Archaeological Evaluation, *Illus. 12 & 13*). A flagged surface on the east side of the wall indicates that its interior may lie on that side, although the best faced side of the wall was its west side. Poorly surviving

<sup>4</sup> Crow, J., 2004, *Housesteads: A fort and garrison and Hadrian's Wall*. Tempus.



*Illus. 19: View of Trench 3 from the west side.*



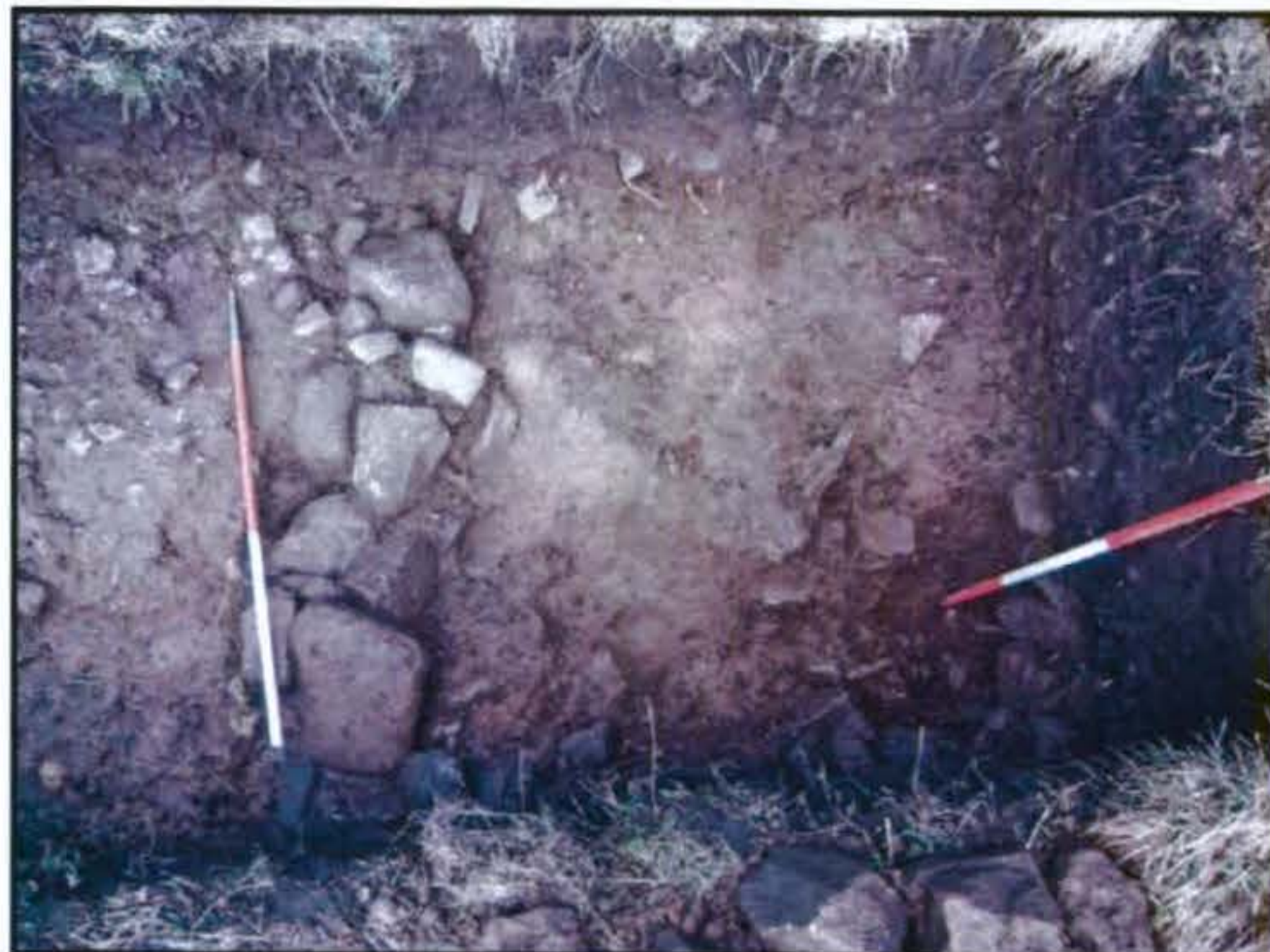
*Illus. 20: The remains of a wall and flagged floor in Trench 3, viewed from the north-west.*



*Illus. 21: The remains of a wall and flagged floor in Trench 3, viewed from the south side.*



*Illus. 22: Detail of wall masonry remains in Trench 3.*

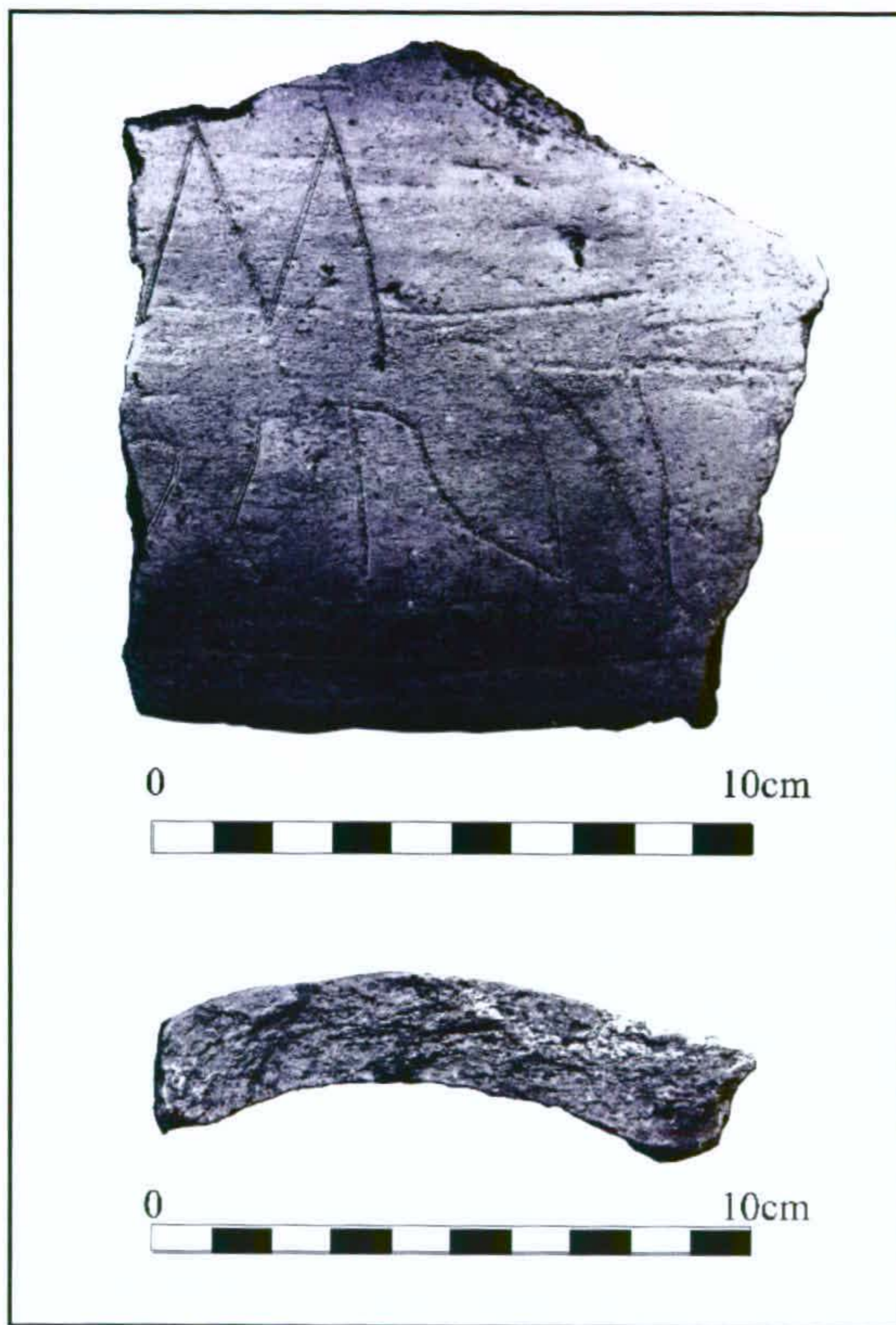


*Illus. 23: Vertical view of Trench 3, east end.*

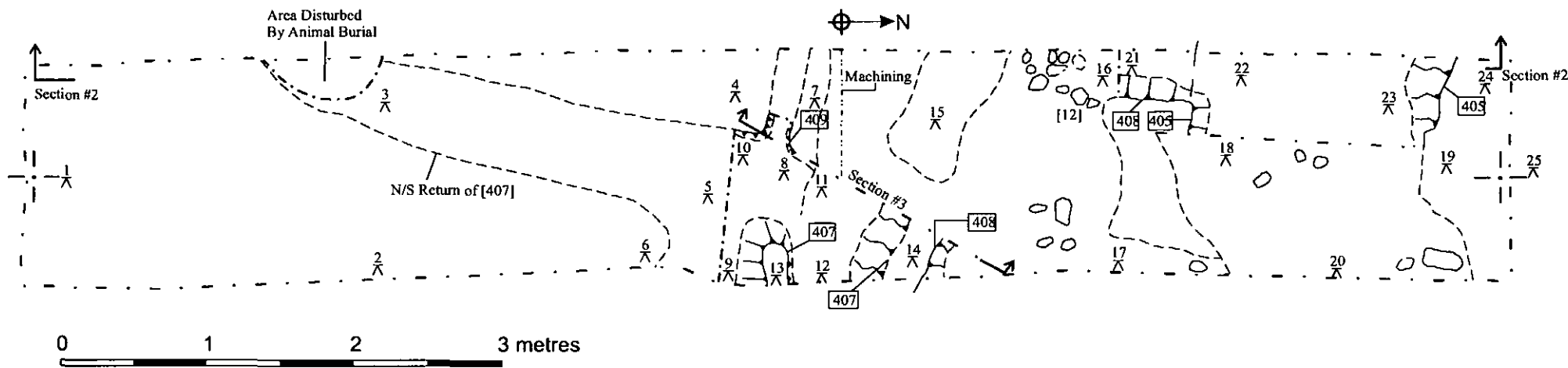


*Illus. 24: An inscribed sherd of amphora from Trench 3.*

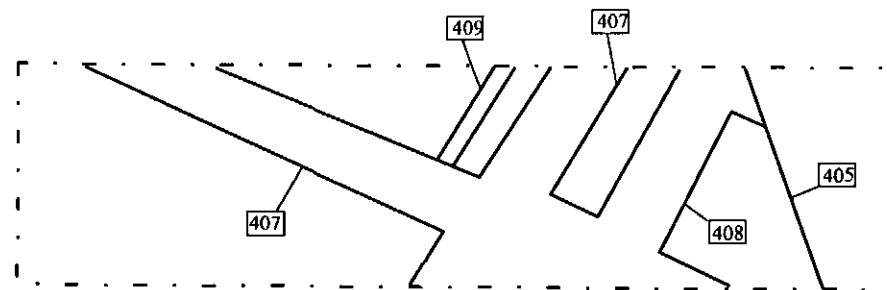




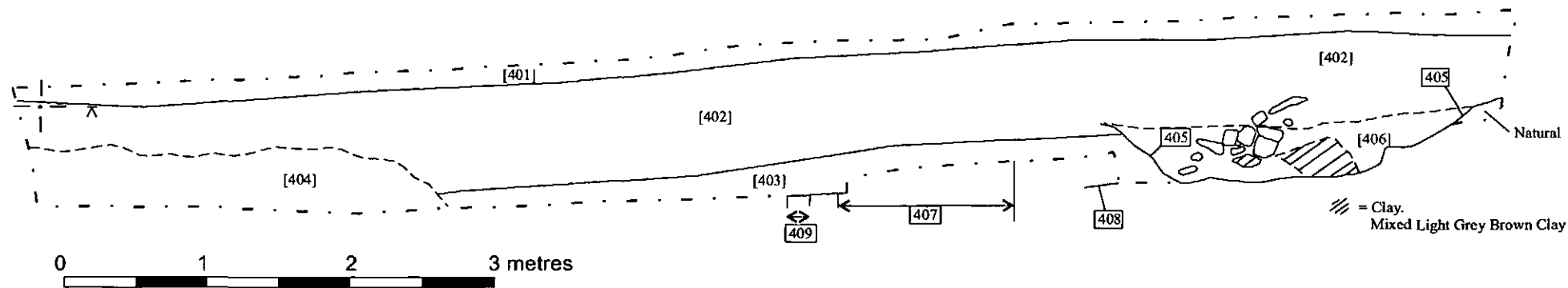
*Illus. 25: Enhanced photographs of a fragment of inscribed amphora from buildings remains in Trench 3 - A Obverse; B Section.*



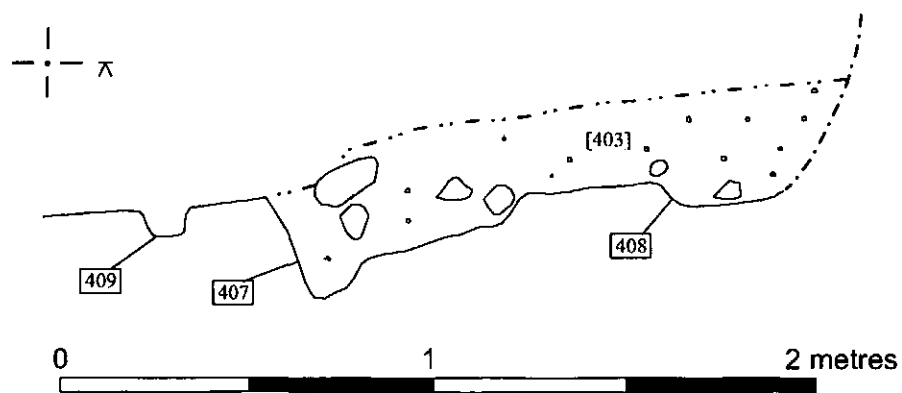
*Illus. 26: Plan of Trench 4.*



*Illus. 27: Suggested schematic Plan of Trench 4.*



*Illus. 28: Trench 4. Section #2. East Facing.*



*Illus. 29: Trench 4. Section #3. Southeast Facing.*



*Illus. 30: View of Trench 4 from the north.*



*Illus. 31: View of Trench 4 from the south.*



*Illus. 32: View of Trench 4 from the south, following excavation.*



*Illus. 33: View of the north end of Trench 4 from the south, following excavation.*

remains of gulleys and/or buildings footings and a possible pit in the south-east corner indicate probable earlier remains of Roman occupation activity. The abundant Roman pottery recovered from this trench, notably on the west side of the wall and in gulleys to the east, indicate Roman activity in the third century.

### 3.4 *Trench 4 (Illus. 26-33)*

Trench 4 was positioned to the rear of the site on a north-south alignment and parallel to two stone farm buildings, the southern of which was used as a stock shed and the other had been residential, associated with a former roadside inn. The trench measured 10m (length) x 1.5m (width) to a maximum depth of 1.35m.

Below the loam-based top-soil [401] was a substantial deposit of overburden [402], 0.85m in depth, above the level of significant archaeological remains, represented first by [403], a loam-based spread containing abundant Roman pottery dated to the 1st or early 2<sup>nd</sup> century. At the south end of the trench, a rubble-based deposit [404] may be a demolition deposit. At the north end of the trench, apparently cut through [403], a large cut intrusion of unknown function [405] measured 1.65m (width) x 0.3m (depth) on an approximate east-west alignment. This feature, filled with mixed deposits including deposits [406] of clay and silty loam also truncated the north end of a pair of parallel robbing cuts [407 & 408] which were aligned north-south with east-west returns. [407] was aligned east-west with the remains of a north-south return at its west end, which had been truncated by [405]. These clearly defined robbing cuts represent the footprint of rooms in a range, or separate buildings, which probably date from the Roman period and were removed at the same time. In the centre of trench 4, a wide slot was discovered [409] measuring 0.12m deep x 0.20m wide. The slot was cut by the north-south line of [405] extending to the west by 0.6m. This slot is probably an internal feature of a Roman building or could even represent an earlier phase.

#### *Interpretation*

Trench 4 contained interesting and complex archaeological remains probably relating to an early phase of Roman activity on the site; large quantities of Roman pottery being recovered throughout. The most significant remains were a series of gulleys marked as dark linear depressions in the orange sub-soil, for which the most likely interpretation is the foundations of wooden buildings and/or associated drainage gulleys. The ephemeral nature of the remains made it difficult to determine a clear pattern, but a suggested arrangement is shown in Illus. 27.

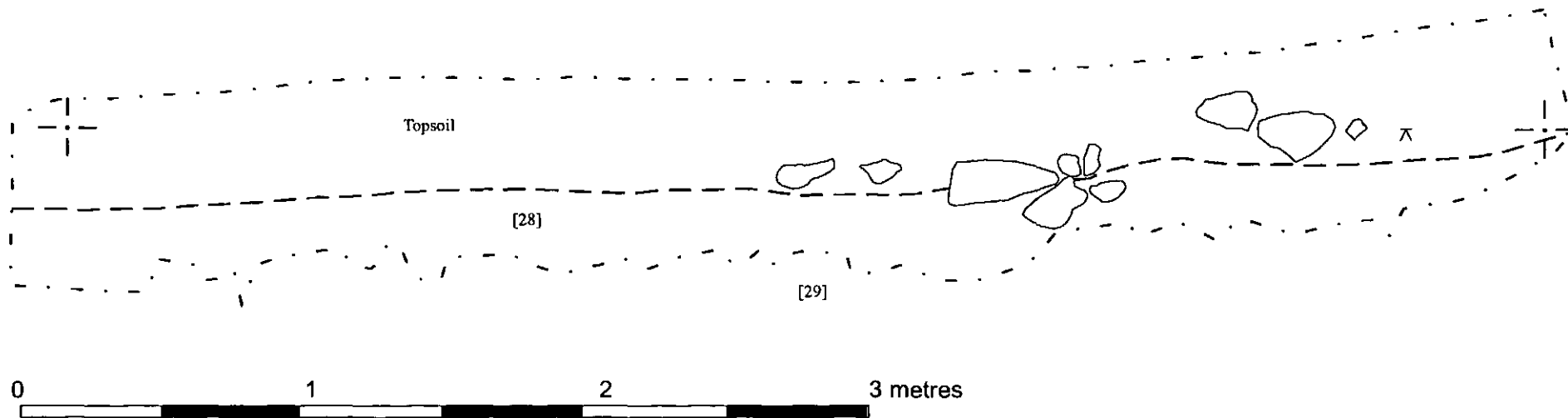
### 3.5 *Trench 5 (Illus. 34-37)*

Trench 5 was positioned in the south-east corner of the site, across the surviving footings of a demolished chicken shed. The trench measured 6m (length) x 1.6m (width) with a maximum depth of 0.7m.

Below the loam-based top-soil [501] was a deposit of stony plough soil [502], beneath which was a compact spread of tumbled demolition material [503]. No traces of actual walling, either *in situ* or collapsed, could be detected within this spread, nor were there any convincing arrangements of stone suggestive of intact flooring. The spread of material stepped down 0.20m 1.7 metres from the north end of the trench, then inclined gently downwards to the south. A large quantity of Roman pottery was collected from this deposit, along with some iron nails recovered by metal detector survey.

#### *Interpretation*

The spread of sandstone rubble uncovered in Trench 5 was associated with very abundant Roman pottery and some iron nails, indicating that it is the product of Roman building activity,



*Illus. 34: Trench 5. Section #1. East Facing.*



*Illus. 35: View of Trench 5 from the north.*



*Illus. 36: View of Trench 5 from the south.*



*Illus. 37: View of Trench 5 from the south.  
With farm buildings to the rear.*

perhaps representing demolition of stone buildings to provide the base for a subsequent re-construction phase or, alternatively, a degraded revetment wall separating the main area of *vicus* settlement from the steeply sloping valley side (although this less likely, given the evidence of Roman occupation recovered just to the south by Frere and Hartley in 1966 and BAP in 1999). The quantity of pottery recovered from this trench indicates considerable Roman activity in the immediate vicinity, apparently most intense during the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Exposing a wider area may well reveal patterns in the rubble, such as post holes indicating later structural phases which are impossible to decipher in a small trench.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

---

The evaluation excavations revealed a variety of remains including structures and deposits between 0.35m and 1.3m below the present ground surface.

The remains recovered from Trench 1 included those of a substantial clay-bonded stone wall and possible flooring. Although the remains were not distinctively Roman in character, the abundance of Roman pottery in the vicinity of the wall suggested that the remains encountered here are more likely to be Roman than of later origin.

In Trench 2 there was no evidence for intensive Roman activity, but some indication that the area had been heavily disturbed. Within the upper deposits was a shallow depression bordered by angular sandstone blocks, filled with cobbles and associated with post-medieval pottery, identified as a soakaway of post-medieval origin.

In Trench 3 was a substantial wall incorporating pieces of Roman-period tile and amphora, which can be identified as the footings and lower wall courses of a substantial Roman building. A flagged surface on the east side of the wall indicates that its interior may lie on that side. East of the wall, surviving remains of gulleys and/or buildings footings indicate probable earlier remains of Roman occupation activity. The abundant Roman pottery recovered from this trench, notably on the west side of the wall and in gulleys to the east, indicate Roman activity in the third century.

Trench 4 contained interesting and complex archaeological remains, most of which probably relate to an early phase of Roman activity on the site; with large quantities of first or early second century Roman pottery being recovered from a series of gulleys, for which the most likely interpretation is the foundations of wooden buildings and/or associated drainage trenches. Some later activity is indicated by late third or fourth century pottery from a single context.

The spread of sandstone rubble uncovered in Trench 5 was associated with very abundant Roman pottery and some iron nails, indicating that it is the product of Roman building activity, perhaps representing a demolition phase or degraded revetment wall.

In general terms the trenches revealed evidence for considerable Roman activity within the site at the rear of Holme Lea. The Roman structural remains uncovered and recorded on the east side of the site were later and more substantial than those recorded under deeper overburden in the centre and towards the west side of the site. The remains encountered were similar in character to those previously reported by investigations in the same general area on the east side of the Roman Fort site, notably those conducted by Frere & Hartley in 1966 and by BAP in 1999, both of which uncovered the remains of clay-bonded stone buildings, flagged surfaces and gulleys, all associated with abundant Roman pottery, mainly dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. However, the excavations reported here are the first to reveal substantial and well-preserved remains of buildings outside the fort interior and closely associated bathhouse. They are also significant in suggesting continuous activity on the site of the *vicus* from the late first century to fourth century AD.

The presence of 3<sup>rd</sup> and possibly 4<sup>th</sup> century pottery in trenches 3 and 4 is significant, since *vici* in northern Britain do not generally outlive the 3<sup>rd</sup> century; Housesteads *vicus* lasted until c.270, but some seem to have been extinguished earlier. The evidence from Bowes generally follows the pattern of other *vici*, with abundant 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century pottery, but the apparent presence of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century material, indicating continued activity (however sporadic or isolated), is of considerable interest.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

---

The nature of remains found upon the sites investigated in April 2008 supports a recommendation for mitigation by avoidance in the east side of the site where evidence for substantial remains of stone structures was discovered, and mitigation by avoidance, conservation or record in the west side of the site where more ephemeral remains were uncovered. Mitigation by record should involve the archaeological excavation of new build foundations or entire footprints, as appropriate. Mitigation by avoidance involves the exclusion of given parts of the site from development. Mitigation by conservation may include the construction of rafted foundations above the level of archaeological remains, or the partial stripping, followed by build-up and compaction of ground levels using artificial fills to enable trenching at levels above archaeological remains.

## 6. LEVELS TABLE

Heights are given in metres AOD and keyed to Illustrations 09, 11, 17 & 26.

TR#1	TR#2	TR#3	TR#4	TR#5
1 = 288.30	1 = 286.69	1 = 285.62	1 = 286.00	1 = 284.81
2 = 287.26	2 = 286.75	2 = 285.48	2 = 286.06	2 = 284.12
3 = 287.33	3 = 287.13	3 = 285.44	3 = 286.01	3 = 284.08
4 = 287.28	4 = 287.05	4 = 285.39	4 = 286.11	4 = 284.80
5 = 287.52	5 = 287.57	5 = 285.58	5 = 286.13	5 = 284.86
6 = 287.76	6 = 287.55	6 = 285.56	6 = 286.09	6 = 284.24
7 = 287.66	7 = 286.75	7 = 284.87	7 = 286.13	7 = 283.93
8 = 287.49	8 = 288.01	8 = 285.50	8 = 285.97	8 = 284.26
9 = 287.27	9 = 286.79	9 = 285.60	9 = 285.89	9 = 284.80
10 = 287.17	10 = 287.94	10 = 285.48	10 = 285.91	10 = 284.95
11 = 287.53	11 = 287.92	11 = 285.32	11 = 285.84	11 = 284.34
12 = 287.30	12 = 287.09	12 = 285.27	12 = 285.93	12 = 284.38
13 = 287.25	13 = 287.96	13 = 285.29	13 = 286.10	13 = 284.92
14 = 287.19	14 = 287.12	14 = 284.90	14 = 286.16	14 = 284.11
15 = 287.08	15 = 287.57	15 = 285.65	15 = 286.40	15 = 284.52
16 = 288.19	16 = 287.94	16 = 285.18	16 = 286.41	16 = 284.53
	17 = 287.69	17 = 284.85	17 = 286.45	17 = 285.00
		18 = 285.10	18 = 286.54	
		19 = 285.03	19 = 286.62	
		20 = 284.96	20 = 286.55	
		21 = 285.10	21 = 286.20	
		22 = 284.88	22 = 286.21	
		23 = 284.74	23 = 286.31	
		24 = 284.71	24 = 286.64	
		25 = 284.40	25 = 287.41	
		26 = 285.50		
		27 = 285.36		

## 7. PROJECT DESIGN FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT HOLME LEA BOWES

---

*Prepared by*  
The Archaeological Practice Ltd.  
February 2008

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following represents a project design for a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching to further inform a proposal by Mr & Mrs Close to develop a field (NY 99415 13491) on the south side of Bowes village for residential use, including the insertion of water and sewerage services, car access and parking.

1.2 An archaeological assessment of the site (HER ref. 15779) indicates that it lies within the civilian settlement, or vicus of the adjacent Roman fort of Lavatrae but that it has been used as agricultural land since at least the 19<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps much longer. Therefore, there is a reasonable chance that the site was occupied and used for residential and other activities in the Roman period, perhaps also in the medieval period, and that archaeological remains from those periods have not been disturbed by subsequent land-use.

1.3 Given the archaeological sensitivity of the site, the Durham County Archaeologist has stipulated that the archaeological potential of the proposed development area should be further investigated by means of a programme of trial trenching in order to establish whether any proposed development of the area is likely to impact on features and/or deposits associated with the Roman Fort and vicus, medieval castle or medieval and post-medieval town of Bowes.

### 2. SCHEME OF EVALUATION

#### 2.1 Programme and specification

2.1.1 A programme of evaluation fieldwork sufficient to establish the character and quality of any surviving archaeological features, such as those identified above, is described below and keyed to *Illus. 1*.

#### 2.2 Trench location and dimensions

2.2.1 Five trench positions (See *Illus. 01*) have been selected for the purposes of archaeological investigation. The 5 trenches will cover a total area of 60m<sup>2</sup> and will be situated in positions considered to be of greatest archaeological potential within the footprint of the proposed development.

The trenching aims to define the extent, character and state of preservation of any archaeological remains found to survive on the site

#### 2.3 Trenches descriptions

##### 2.3.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 is in the north part of the site situated on a north-south alignment. The trench will cover an area of 5m x 1.5m.

##### 2.3.2 Trench 2

Trench 2, in the north-west area of the site, will cover an area of 10m x 1.5m on an east-west alignment.

##### 2.3.3 Trench 3

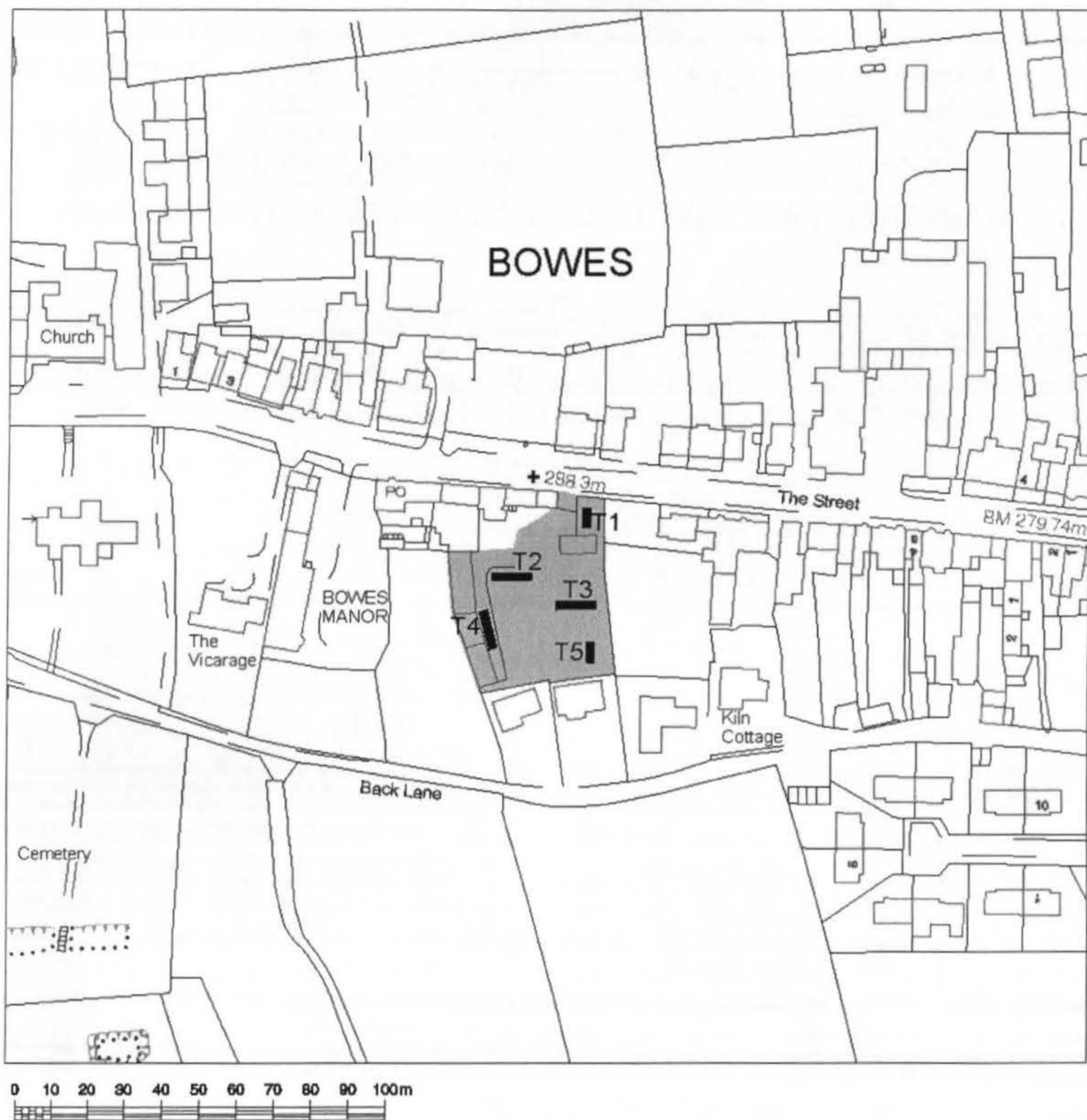
Trench 3 will be located just to the south of trench 1 on an east-west alignment. It will cover an area of 10m x 1.5m.

##### 2.3.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 will be situated on the west side of the site and will cover an area of 10m x 1.5m.

### 2.3.5 Trench 5

Trench 5, on a north-south alignment, is in the south part of the site and will cover an area of 5m x 1.5m.



*Illus. 01: Trench Location plan.*

## 3. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

### 3.1 General

3.1.1 The Field Investigation will be carried out by means of Archaeological Excavation.

3.1.2 All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and will follow the IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations.

3.1.3 All archaeological staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. Before commencement of work they will have been made aware of what work is required under the specification and they will understand the aims and methodologies of the project.

## 3.2 Excavation

3.2.1 Evaluation trenches will be excavated in the positions indicated in the preceding section. Excavation, recording and sampling procedures will be undertaken using the strategies indicated below.

3.2.2 The setting out of the trenches will be undertaken by the archaeological contractor.

3.2.3 Unstratified modern overburden will be removed mechanically, using an appropriate machine with a toothless ditching blade under strict archaeological supervision. The removal of modern overburden above the first significant archaeological horizon will be executed in successive level spits. All mechanical excavation will be supervised by, and all manual excavation carried out by archaeologically competent staff.

3.2.4 Spoil will be kept close-by and rapidly backfilled into the trenches at the conclusion of this work. Although the site is private property without public access, signs will be displayed to warn of deep excavations on the site.

3.2.5 On completion of machine excavation, all excavation of archaeological horizons and trench faces will be carried out by hand and every effort will be made to leave all nationally important remains *in situ*.

3.2.6 All excavation of archaeological horizons will be carried out by hand and every effort will be made to leave all nationally important remains *in situ*.

3.2.7 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits identified will be excavated by hand through a sampling procedure to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described. Pits and postholes will normally be sampled by half-sectioning although some features may require complete excavation. Linear features will be sectioned as appropriate. No archaeological deposits will be entirely removed unless this is unavoidable.

3.2.8 A suitable metal detecting survey of the open trenches prior to archaeological excavation will be carried out; in addition, all spoil from the excavations will be examined. One of the excavation team, Mark Johnson, is a metal detectorist and will carry out the work. In addition, Northumbrian Archaeology Group (NAG) and Rob Collins, Portable Antiquities Officer based at the Museum of Antiquities, University of Newcastle upon Tyne have been informed in order to source additional detectorists, to be brought in if merited by the scale of work.

3.2.9 Archaeological stratigraphy revealed by excavation will be recorded by the following means:

3.2.9.1 **Written descriptions.** Each archaeological context will be recorded on a pro-forma sheet. Minimum recorded details will consist of the following: a unique identifier; an objective description which includes measurements of extent and details of colour and composition; an interpretative estimate of function, clearly identified as such; at least one absolute height value; the identifiers of related contexts and a description of the relationship with such contexts (for preference, executed as a mini Harris matrix); references to other recording media in which representations of the context are held (plans, sections, photographs).

3.2.9.2 **Measured illustrations.** Detail plans and sectional profiles of archaeological features will be at appropriate scales (1:20 or 1:10). Archaeological contexts will be referenced by their unique identifiers. All illustrations will be properly identified, scaled and referenced to the site survey control.

3.2.9.3 **Photographs.** Digital photographs will be taken for purposes of record. Any features of archaeological note will also be recorded on colour film stock. A system will be used for identifying the archaeological features photographed.

3.2.10 An appropriate control network for the survey of any archaeological remains revealed in excavation will be established.

3.2.11 The survey control network will be related to the OS grid.

3.2.12 The survey control network and the position of recorded structures, features and finds will be located on a map of an appropriate scale (1:2500 or 1:500)

3.2.13 At least one absolute height value related to OD will be recorded for each archaeological context.

3.2.14 All processing, storage and conservation of finds will be carried out in compliance with the relevant IFA and UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation) guidelines.

3.2.15 Portable remains will be removed by hand; all artifacts encountered will be recovered.

3.2.16 The potential requirement for specialist analyses (see below) is an unavoidable risk in all such excavations. The scientific investigation of any features/deposits which are considered significant will be undertaken as a non-negotiable part of this programme. Any such analyses would be carried out by specialists and priced to the client on a costs only basis (see Contingencies in the Project Costing).

### **3.3 Analysis and Reporting of Recovered Data**

3.3.1 Following the completion of the Field Investigation and before any of the post-excavation work is commenced, an archive (the Site Archive) containing all the data gathered during fieldwork will be prepared. This material will be quantified, ordered, indexed and rendered internally consistent. It will be prepared according to the guidelines given in English Heritage's MAP 2 document, Appendix 3 (English Heritage 1991).

3.3.2 An interim report of no less than 200 words, containing preliminary recommendations for any further work required, will be produced within two weeks of completion of the field investigation for the commissioning client and the Durham County Archaeologist.

3.3.3 Following completion of the Field Investigation, a full report will be prepared collating and synthesizing the structural, artefactual and environmental data relating to each agreed constituent part of the evaluation works.

### **3.4 Environmental Sampling and Scientific Dating**

3.4.1 The investigations will be undertaken in a manner consistent with "The Management of Archaeological Projects", English Heritage 1991 and with "Archaeological Science at PPG16 Interventions: Best Practice for Curators and Commissioning Archaeologists", English Heritage, 2003.

3.4.2 The following strategy for environmental sampling will be confirmed with Jacqui Huntley, English Heritage Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science (0191 3341137 or 07713 400387) before the excavation begins.

3.4.3 Deposits/fills with potential for environmental evidence will be assessed by taking up to two bulk samples of 30 litres from any context selected for analysis by the excavator from suitable (i.e. uncontaminated) deposits. Deposits/fills totalling less than 30 litres in volume will be sampled in their entirety. Six of the collected samples which are judged to be most suitable on grounds of being derived from uncontaminated and reasonably well-dated deposits and/or recognisable features will be selected for full analysis, reporting and publication.

3.4.4 Deposits will be sampled for remains of pollen, food residues, microfossils, small boned ecofacts (e.g. fish & insects/micro-fauna), industrial residues (e.g. micro-slugs - hammer-scale and

spherical droplets), cloth and timber. Flotation samples and samples taken for coarse-mesh sieving from dry deposits will be processed at the time of fieldwork wherever possible.

3.4.5 Any significant animal bone assemblages, which can be used to explore themes such as hunting and fowling, fishing, plant use and trade, seasonality, diet, age structures, farrowing areas, species ratios, local environment will be assessed by a recognised specialist.

3.4.6 Waterlogged organic materials should be dealt with following recommendations in *Guidelines for the care of waterlogged archaeological leather* (English Heritage and Archaeological Leather Group 1995).

3.4.7 Deposits will be assessed for their potential for radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic (guidance is available in the Centre for Archaeology Guideline on Archaeometallurgy 2001) and Optically Stimulated Luminescence dating. As well as providing information on construction techniques, timbers will be assessed for their potential for dendrochronology dating, in which case sampling will follow procedures in *Dendrochronology: guidelines on producing and interpreting dendrochronological dates* (Hillam 1998) and *Guidelines on the recording, sampling, conservation and curation of waterlogged wood* (R. Brunning 1996). A maximum of 5 samples of material suitable for dating by scientific means (eg: Radiocarbon, Luminescence, Remnant Magnetism, etc.) will be collected.

3.4.8 Information on the nature and history of the site, aims and objectives of the project, summary of archaeological results, context types and stratigraphic relationships, phase and dating information, sampling and processing methods, sample locations, preservation conditions, residuality/contamination, etc. will be provided with each sample submitted for analysis.

3.4.9 Laboratory processing of samples shall only be undertaken if deposits are found to be reasonably well dated, or linked to recognisable features and from contexts the derivation of which can be understood with a degree of confidence.

3.4.10 Human remains will be treated with care, dignity and respect, in full compliance with the relevant legislation (essentially the Burial Act 1857) and local environmental health concerns. If found, human remains will be left in-situ, covered and protected, and the police, coroner and County Archaeologist informed. If it is agreed that removal of the remains is essential, the Archaeological Practice Ltd, will apply for a licence from the Home Office. Analysis of the osteological material will take place according to published guidelines, *Human Remains from Archaeological Sites, Guidelines for producing assessment documents and analytical reports* (English Heritage 2002).

3.4.11 If anything is found which could be Treasure, under the Treasure Act 1996, it is a legal requirement to report it to the local coroner within 14 days of discovery. The Archaeological Practice Ltd. will comply with the procedures set out in The Treasure Act 1996. Any treasure will be reported to the coroner and to The Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officer, Rob Collins (0191 2225076 or [Robert.Collins@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:Robert.Collins@newcastle.ac.uk)) for guidance on the Treasure Act procedures. Treasure is defined as the following:

- Any metallic object, other than a coin, provided that at least 10% by weight of metal is precious metal and that is at least 300 years old when found
- Any group of two or more metallic objects of any composition of prehistoric date that come from the same find
- All coins from the same find provided that they are at least 300 years old when found, but if the coins contain less than 10% gold or silver there must be at least ten
- Any object, whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, another object that is Treasure
- Any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. Only objects that are less than 300 years old, that are made substantially of gold or silver, that have been deliberately hidden with the intention of recovery and whose owners or heirs are unknown will come into this category



## 4 Production of Final Report

4.1 Copies of the report will be provided within two months of the completion of fieldwork to the Client, the Durham County Archaeologist (for consideration and deposition in the Durham County HER). An additional digital copy of the report will be lodged with the County HER.

4.2 Three bound and collated copies of the report will be provided. Each will be bound, with each page and heading numbered. Any further copies required will be produced electronically. The report will include as a minimum the following:

A summary statement of methodologies used.

A location plan of the site and any significant discoveries made.

Plans and sections of any archaeological discoveries of note.

A summary statement of results.

Conclusions

Recommendations

A table summarizing the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and spot dating of significant finds.

4.3 The report will finish with a section detailing recommendations for further archaeological work needed to mitigate the effects of the development upon any significant deposits revealed during the evaluation or if necessary, for further evaluation. This will be drawn up in consultation with the Durham County Archaeologist and may involve more extensive excavation.

4.4 Results of the evaluation work will form the basis of recommendations from the following range of options:

1. *No further archaeological work required*

2. *Further evaluation work required*

3. *Mitigation work will be required to preserve features by record (i.e. excavation or watching brief and consequent reporting) should they be threatened by development*

4.5 Following completion of the analysis and publication phase of the work, an archive (the Research Archive) containing all the data derived from the work done during the analysis phase will be prepared. The archive will be prepared to the standard specified by English Heritage (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation guidelines.

4.6 Arrangements will be made to deposit the Site Archive (including Finds) and the Research Archive with the designated repository within 6 months of the end of the fieldwork. Additionally, a copy shall be offered to the National Monuments Record (NMR).

4.7 Summary reports of the project will be prepared, if necessary, for inclusion in the appropriate Notices, Annual Reviews, Reports, etc.

4.8 An entry for inclusion in the Durham Heritage Environment Record will be prepared and submitted.

## 5 OASIS

---

5.1 The Archaeological Contractor will complete the online form for the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations Project (OASIS), following consultation with the Durham CC Archaeologist. The Contractor agrees to the procedure whereby the information on the form will be placed in the public domain on the OASIS website, following submission to or incorporation of the final report (see 3.4) into the Durham HER.

## 6. EXECUTION OF THE SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

6.1 The Developer has appointed The Archaeological Practice Ltd. as a professionally competent Archaeological Contractor, on agreed terms, to execute the scheme as set out in the brief supplied by the County Archaeology Service.

6.2 The present project design must be submitted for approval and, if necessary, modification by the County Archaeology Service before work on-site can proceed.

6.3 The Developer will allow the County Archaeology Service and the appointed contractor all reasonable access to the site for the purposes of monitoring the archaeological scheme, subject only to safety requirements.

6.5 The archaeological contractor appointed to manage the execution of the scheme shall ensure that:

6.5.1 the appropriate parties are informed of the objectives, timetable and progress of the archaeological work

6.5.2 the progress of the work is adequately and effectively monitored and the results of this are communicated to the appropriate parties.

6.5.3 significant problems in the execution of the scheme are communicated at the earliest opportunity to the appropriate parties in order to effect a resolution of the problems.

6.6 The archaeological contractor will carry, and will ensure that other archaeological contractors involved in the scheme carry appropriate levels of insurance cover in respect of Employers Liability, Public and Third Party Liability & Professional Indemnity.

6.7 The archaeological contractor will liaise with the appointed CDM Planning Supervisor and prepare or arrange for the preparation of a Safety Plan for the archaeological work.

6.8 At or before the commencement of the scheme the Developer, the appointed Archaeological Contractors, the County Archaeological Officer and other appropriate parties will agree arbitration procedures to be followed in the event of any unresolvable difficulties or disputes arising from the scheme

6.9 Careful assessment has led to the definition of a number of research objectives which identify with a high degree of likelihood the kind of archaeological deposits which the investigation will encounter. Nevertheless, it is possible that discoveries will be made which could not reasonably have been foreseen on the basis of all the information currently available. Any difficulties arising from unforeseen discoveries will be resolved by discussion between all the parties involved. There will be a presumption, the investigation having been carried out in accordance with the schedule set out in this document, and to the satisfaction of the County Archaeological Officer, and all other considerations being equal, that no executive or financial obligation shall attach to any particular party in the event of unforeseen discoveries being made, and that the executive and financial responsibility for dealing with such unforeseen discoveries shall rest outside the currently agreed scheme of investigation.

6.10 The Archaeological Contractor(s) appointed to execute the scheme will procure and comply with all statutory consents and licences under the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981 regarding the exhumation and interment of any human remains discovered within the site, and will comply with all reasonable requirements of any church or other religious body or civil body regarding the manner and method of removal, re-interment or cremation of the human remains, and the removal and disposal of any tombstones or other memorials discovered within the site. The Developer will incur all costs resulting from such compliance.

## 7 Timescale & Personnel

7.1 Our estimate based on the brief supplied and knowledge of the site is that the excavation and recording work will require an excavation team of two excavators (all professionally trained archaeologists) over a period of up to 5 days.

7.2 Following the completion of on-site work, further time will be required to produce an appropriately illustrated report on the work, as detailed above.

### 7.3 Fixed Costs

Production and agreement with DCC of Scheme of Investigation

Archaeological Excavation team over a period of 5 days (incl. all equipment and travel costs except those specified below)

Table 1: Staffing levels associated with individual tasks (incl. of all equipment and travel costs)

Activity	Personnel	Est. Person days
Stage 1: Excavation of 5 trenches	PA	1
	AA	10
Stage 2: Archiving, Analysis and Reporting	PA	3
	AA	2
Specialist assessment of environmental samples	PRS	N/A
Specialist assessment of pottery and small finds	LA-J/JND/JV	N/A

Personnel:

**Archaeological Practice**

PA: Project Archaeologist

AA: Assistant Archaeologists

**Sub-Contractors**

PRS: Palaeoecology Research Services

JND: John Dore

LAJ: Lindsay Allason-Jones

JV: Jenny Vaughan (NCAS)

## 8. EVALUATION OF BIOLOGICAL REMAINS

---

Evaluation of biological remains from excavations at Holme Lea,  
Bowes, County Durham

by

*Palaeoecology Research Services [PRS 2008/46]*

Alexandra Schmidl, John Carrott, Deborah Jaques and Alex Beacock

### Summary

---

*Two sediment samples, recovered from deposits encountered during an archaeological excavation at Holme Lea, Bowes, County Durham, were submitted for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential. The site was located on the south side of Bowes village within the vicus of the adjacent Roman fort of Lavatrae. Roman pottery was recovered from each of the five trenches that were excavated and features included stone building foundations and various slots interpreted as the remains of wooden structures but which could, perhaps, have been gullies.*

*Ancient biological remains recovered from the sediment samples were restricted to very small quantities of unidentified charcoal, a few other charred plant remains (including occasional cereal grains and fragments of hazelnut shell) and traces of unidentified bone. Most of the remains probably represented food waste but the quantities recovered were too small to be of any real interpretative value. However, the cereal grains and hazelnut shell fragments would provide suitable material for radiocarbon dating, if required.*

*No further study of the tiny quantities of rather poorly preserved biological remains recovered from these deposits is warranted. On the evidence reported here, any future interventions at this site are unlikely to encounter deposits with significant concentrations of interpretatively valuable biological remains.*

**KEYWORDS:** HOLME LEA; BOWES; COUNTY DURHAM; EVALUATION; ROMAN; PLANT REMAINS; CHARRED PLANT REMAINS; CHARRED CEREAL GRAINS; VERTEBRATE REMAINS

Contact address for authors:

Prepared for:

**Palaeoecology Research Services  
Unit 8  
Dabble Duck Industrial Estate  
Shildon  
County Durham DL4 2RA**

**The Archaeological Practice Ltd  
34G Clayton Street West  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 5DZ**

**4 June 2008**

## Introduction

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by The Archaeological Practice Ltd at Holme Lea, Bowes, County Durham (NGR NY 99415 13491), early in 2008.

The site was located on the south side of Bowes village within the *vicus* of the adjacent Roman fort of Lavatrae. Roman pottery was recovered from each of the five trenches that were excavated and features included stone building foundations and various slots interpreted as the remains of wooden structures but which could, perhaps, have been gullies.

Two bulk sediment samples ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al.* 1992) were submitted to Palaeoecology Research Services Limited (PRS), County Durham, for an evaluation of their bioarchaeological potential.

## Methods

The lithologies of the samples were recorded, using a standard *pro forma*, prior to processing. Subsamples were taken and processed, broadly following the techniques of Kenward *et al.* (1980) for the recovery of plant and invertebrate macrofossils. Before processing the subsamples were disaggregated in water and their volumes recorded in a waterlogged state.

Plant remains in the processed subsample fractions (residues and washovers) were recorded briefly by 'scanning' using a low-power microscope, identifiable taxa and other biological and artefactual components being listed on paper. Both the washovers and the residues were largely mineral in nature and were dried and weighed before being recorded. Nomenclature for plant taxa follows Stace (1997).

During recording, consideration was given to the identification of remains suitable for submission for radiocarbon dating by standard radiometric technique or accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS).

For the vertebrate remains recovered, subjective records were made of the state of preservation, colour of the fragments, and the appearance of broken surfaces ('angularity'). Brief notes were made concerning fragment size, dog gnawing, burning, butchery and fresh breaks where applicable. Where possible, fragments were identified to species or species group using the PRS modern comparative reference collection. Fragments not identifiable to species were described as the 'unidentified' fraction. Within this fraction fragments were assigned to one of three categories: large mammal (assumed to be cattle, horse or large cervid), medium-sized mammal (assumed to be caprovid, pig or small cervid) and wholly unidentifiable.

## Results

The results are presented in context number order. A brief summary of the processing method and an estimate of the remaining volume of unprocessed sediment follows (in round brackets) after the sample numbers (assigned by PRS for internal record keeping purposes).

No invertebrate remains were recovered from the subsamples.

### Context 00

Sample 1/T (3 kg/2.5 litres sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 5 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Just moist, mid to dark grey-brown to mid to dark grey (with some patches of light grey and yellowish-grey), soft and crumbly to unconsolidated, sandy silty clay. Stones (2 to 20 mm) and fragments of bone were present in the sample.

The rather small washover (65 g, dried) was mostly sand, coal (to 5 mm) and charcoal (to 10 mm), with some cinder (to 10 mm) and a few unidentified bone fragments (to 10 mm). There were also five charred fragments of rhizome/root/rootlets and a single charred grain of naked wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L./*T. durum* Desf./*T. turgidum* L.). The small number of waterlogged remains noted – an achene of crowfoot (*Ranunculus* subg. *Batrachium*) and four needles of yew (*Taxus baccata* L.) – were interpreted as probable modern contaminants.

The medium-sized residue (dry weight 1.00 kg) was mostly sand and stones (to 68 mm), with some bone fragments (to 45 mm; 14 g). The last consisted of 43 poorly preserved (battered) fragments, five of which were burnt – none could be closely identified but some were large mammal shaft fragments.

### Context 00 [no context information available]

Sample 2/T (3 kg/2.5 litres sieved to 300 microns with washover; approximately 5 litres of unprocessed sediment remain)

Just moist, mid yellowish-brown to mid to dark brown (with a green cast and some black flecks), crumbly to unconsolidated, slightly clay sandy silt, with some stones (2 to 6 mm) and bone fragments present.

The small washover (36 g, dried) was mainly of sand, charcoal (to 5 mm) and small fragments of unidentified bone (to 5 mm), with a little coal (to 5 mm) and cinder (to 5 mm) and, again, there were five charred fragments of rhizome/root/rootlets. Identifiable charred botanical remains were restricted to three fragments of hazel (*Corylus avellana* L.) nutshell, one grain of barley (*Hordeum distichon* L./*H. vulgare* L.) – probably a hulled variety – one grain of oat (*Avena*) and a single caryopsis of brome (*Bromus*).

The medium-sized residue (dry weight 0.673 kg) was mostly of sand and stones (to 70 mm), with some bone (to 57 mm; 25 g) and traces of brick/tile (to 11 mm; 2 g), pottery (to 36 mm; 9 g), charcoal (to 7 mm; <1 g). Forty-six rather poorly preserved bone fragments were

recovered which included pieces of large mammal shaft and rib and medium-sized mammal cranium – none of the bones could be identified more closely.

## Discussion and statement of potential

Ancient biological remains recovered from the sediment samples were restricted to very small quantities of unidentified charcoal, a few other charred plant remains and traces of unidentified bone.

The identifiable charred plant remains included grains representing cereal crops (barley, naked wheat and oat) and hazelnut shell presumably also food waste (from a gathered food resource). The bone fragments probably also represented food waste but, overall, the remains were too few to be of any real interpretative value.

The cereal grains and hazelnut shell fragments recovered from the sediment samples would provide suitable material for radiocarbon dating (via AMS) of the deposits, if required.

On the evidence reported here, any future interventions at this site are unlikely to encounter deposits with significant concentrations of interpretatively valuable biological remains.

## Recommendations

No further study of the tiny quantities of rather poorly preserved biological remains recovered from these deposits is warranted.

## Retention and disposal

Unless required for purposes other than the study of the biological remains, the remaining sediment from the deposits reported here may be discarded.

## Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham), along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

## Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to Richard Carlton, of The Archaeological Practice Ltd, for providing the material and the archaeological information.

## References

Dobney, K., Hall, A. R., Kenward, H. K. and Milles, A. (1992). A working classification of sample types for environmental archaeology. *Circaea, the Journal of the Association for Environmental Archaeology* **9** (for 1991), 24-6.

Kenward, H. K., Hall, A. R. and Jones, A. K. G. (1980). A tested set of techniques for the extraction of plant and animal macrofossils from waterlogged archaeological deposits. *Science and Archaeology* **22**, 3-15.

Stace, C. (1997). *New flora of the British Isles: 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



## 9. ASSESSMENT OF THE ROMAN POTTERY

---

Author **Ray McBride**  
Checked by **Alex Croom**  
Approved for release by **Paul Bidwell**  
Commissioned by **The Archaeological Practice**  
TWN Project Number **839**  
Date **6<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

### 1. Introduction

In total, 209 sherds weighing a total of 2.04kg of Roman coarse wares and fine wares and 5.42kg of amphorae were recovered from four trenches. The pottery ranges in date from the Flavian period to no later than the mid-third century. The number of sherds break down into the following fabric groups:

<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Sherd count</b>
Amphorae:	35
Samian:	70
Fine wares:	6
Mortaria:	5
Oxidised wares:	52
Reduced wares:	41

### 2. Dating

Trench 1 yielded a total of 11 sherds of Roman pottery, all of which need not be later than the Trajanic period. Trench 3 yielded 72 sherds dating to the third century. Trench 4 contained 59 sherds from three contexts which can be divided into two groups. Contexts [402] and 12 contain pottery from the Flavian-Trajanic period whereas context [406] has BB1 and BB2, placing it in the period dating to the late-second to third century. Trench 5 contained the largest group of pottery with 97 sherds. This pottery is more fragmented and worn than the pottery from other trenches and has produced the largest amount of amphorae, comprising Dressel 20 type (carrying olive oil) and *Camulodunum* type 186 (carrying fish sauces). The pottery from trench 5 is generally second century in date.

### 3. Fabrics

Trenches 1 and 4 contained pottery of types and fabric previously noted at Bowes in a locally-produced ware (McBride and Bidwell forthcoming). This fabric is believed to be made in the north of England, and probably in the vicinity of Bowes Roman fort to judge by the number of imperfect vessels seen previously. This locally-produced ware was prevalent in the *principia* of Bowes fort and dates to the Flavian-Trajanic period.

#### 4. Previous work

This pottery supports the conclusions of a recent study for the foundation and abandonment of the *vicus* (McBride and Bidwell forthcoming). A Flavian-Trajanic establishment for the *vicus* is likely with occupation ceasing not later than the mid-third century. The lack of late Roman pottery is particularly interesting as it suggests the area was not in use in the late Roman period despite the fort remaining in use into the late fourth century.

#### 5. Recommendations

Despite its small size, this assemblage would benefit from further study. The quantities recovered (including amphorae) are comparable in size to previous investigations of the *vicus* giving a combined quantity of approximately 14kg. A record of this pottery is recommended to a level compliant with the Study Group for Roman Pottery's phase 2 ceramic archive (Darling 2004) in order to further the study of Bowes Roman pottery and to investigate the relationship between the supply of pottery to the fort and to the *vicus*. Further study could also place the supply of pottery to Bowes within the wider framework of pottery supply to the Roman military frontier. In light of a more comprehensive report currently in preparation (McBride and Bidwell forthcoming), the publication of a detailed study is not recommended. A short note limited to new forms in the locally-produced fabrics is advised and should include the illustration of approximately four vessels. A study of the samian may be beneficial as the relatively large number of sherds include South Gaulish fabrics and more unusual types such as Dragendorff 35.

#### 6. Storage

The material is in good condition and suitable for long-term storage.

#### Bibliography

Darling, M. J., 2004, 'Guidelines for the archiving of Roman pottery', *J. Roman Pottery Stud*, 11, 67–74.

McBride, R. M., and Bidwell, P. T., forthcoming, 'The Roman coarse pottery' in Frere, S. S., and Hartley, B. R., in prep. *Excavations at Bowes Roman fort*.