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LAND NORTHWEST  
OF THE ANCHOR INN  
Whittonstall  
Northumberland

NGR 407168 557182

Archaeological Monitoring

Project 189-17-HS | November 2019

for Simon Timperley Chartered Architect  
on behalf of Mr Langan and Mr Ward

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# Archaeological Monitoring

## Land Northwest of the Anchor Inn

Whittonstall  
Northumberland

November 2019



**VINDOMORA SOLUTIONS LTD**  
*Archaeological Practice*

Registered in England & Wales | Company Registration No. 9505415  
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## SUMMARY

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Name of location:	Land northwest of the Anchor Inn
Address of location:	Whittonstall, Northumberland DH8 9JN
National Grid Reference:	NGR 407168 557182
Client:	Simon Timperley Chartered Architect on behalf of Mr Langan and Mr Ward
Project Type:	Archaeological Monitoring (Watching Brief)
Local Authority Conservation Team:	Northumberland Conservation
Planning Application Reference:	17/01091/FUL, Condition 13
Project Site Code:	AIW-18
Vindomora Solutions Reference:	189-17-HS
Report Author:	Tony Liddell
Report Version/Date:	V1 / 05 December 2019
This document datestamp:	05 December 2019
OASIS Identifier:	vindomor1-375017
Ordnance Survey Licence Reference:	100053142
Google Earth Pro Licence:	Licensed 2015-19

## CONCISE SUMMARY OF REPORT

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In May 2018 Vindomora Solutions Ltd were commissioned by Simon Timperley Chartered Architect on behalf of his clients Mr Ward and Mr Langan to undertake a scheme of archaeological monitoring on land northwest of the Anchor Inn, Whittonstall, Northumberland. The monitoring was undertaken to fulfil Condition 13 of planning application 17/01091/FUL. The planning application sought to build one two storey dwelling with associated access. The Local Planning Authority identified the need for the monitoring project during the planning consultation. The work was undertaken in accordance with policy BE29 of the Northumberland County Council Tynedale District Local Plan and paragraphs 141, 176 and 203-206 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* as the development area was deemed to be of archaeological interest, primarily due to the presence of Dere Street Roman Road running through the development site.

*The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in three stages spanning over four days between May 2018, June 2019 and July 2019. The watching brief covered the cutting of the access track from the road to the north, the formation of a bin store area on the west side of the access road, the observation of service trenches at the northern edge of the site as well as within the Anchor Inn carpark, and also the formation of a platform in the natural clay in which to cut the house foundation trenches.*

*Two small sections of Dere Street were observed, both highly truncated. The first section was found on the east side of the access road, and while officially outside of the access road excavation area a small section was disturbed during the works and so cleaned and recorded. The second small section was noted in a service slip trench on the northern edge of the site. Both sections of road comprised flat stones bedded onto the natural substrate, with no definitive dressing bar small patches of gravel. No other structural or artefactual evidence of archaeological remains were observed.*

*The watching brief suggests that the line of Dere Street runs approximately 5m further north than projected on Ordnance Survey mapping and had, for the most part been removed within the current development area in antiquity, leaving only small elements remaining.*



Figure 1. Location of the site, regionally.



## 1. SCOPE OF PROJECT

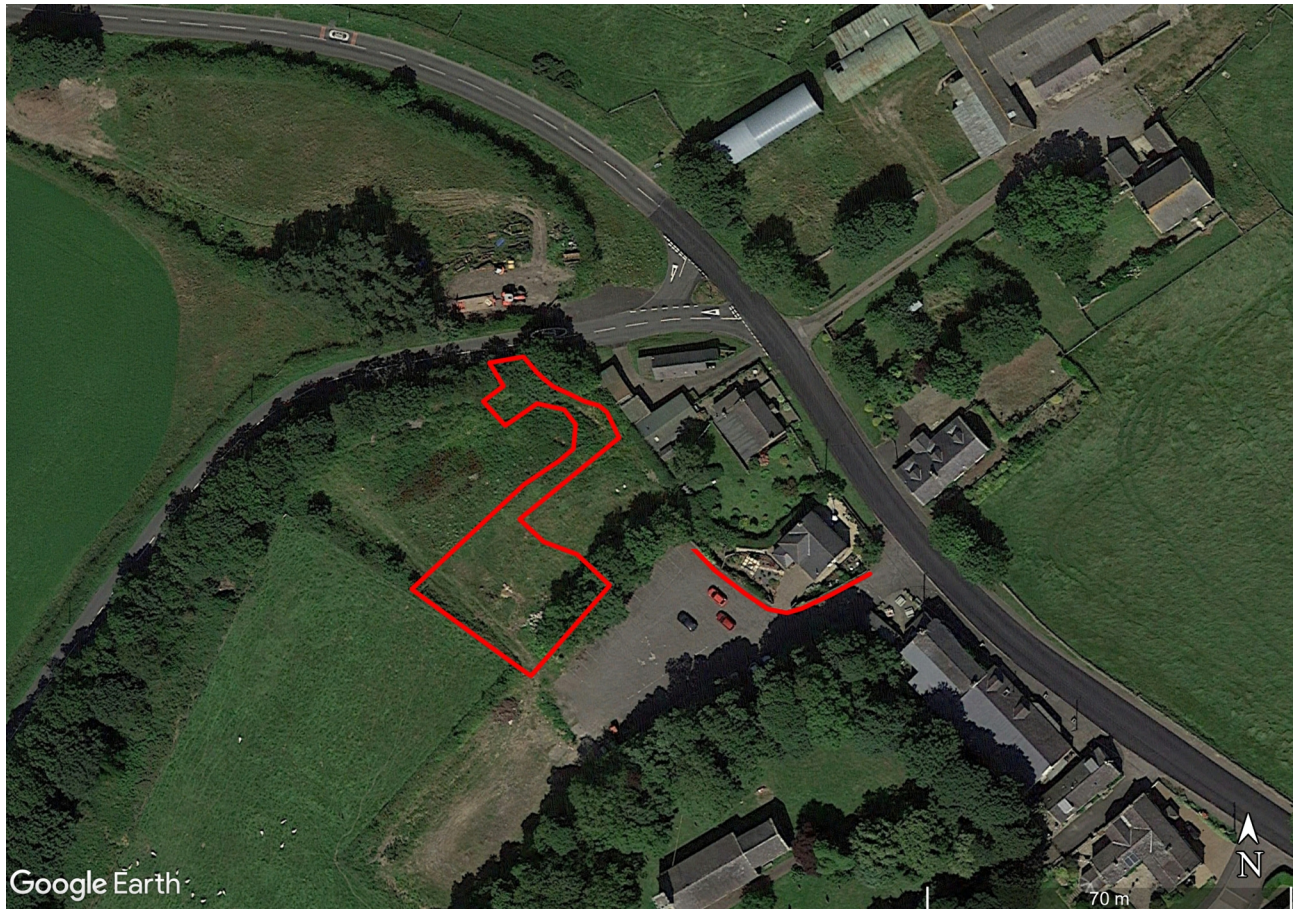


Plate 1. Aerial view of the site in July 2017 (dataset ©2019 Google). The site boundary and service run is marked in red.

### 1.1 Project location

- 1.1.1 The development site is located 60m northwest of the Anchor Inn, Whittonstall, Northumberland (centred at NGR 407168,557182). The site lies to the southwest of Ivy Cottage which lies on the south side of the B6309. To the north of the site lies the Whittonstall to Kiln Pit Hill road. The site location can be seen regionally on Figure 1 and locally on Figure 2.
- 1.1.2 At the time of the monitoring, the site comprised rough, un-developed ground.
- 1.1.3 **Geology:** The development area lies over the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation, comprising interbedded sandstone, siltstone and mudstones with numerous coal seams in the upper levels. Over this lies Devensian Till mainly composed of sands, clays and gravel (British Geological Survey, 2019).
- 1.1.4 The site slopes upward from 210m OD (Ordnance Datum, above sea level) on its northern edge (by the access road entrance) southward toward the southern site boundary to 214m OD.

### 1.2 Circumstances of the Project

- 1.2.1 On the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018 Vindomora Solutions Ltd were commissioned by Simon Timperley Chartered Architect on behalf of his client Mr Ward to undertake a scheme of archaeological monitoring on land northwest of the Anchor Inn, Whittonstall, Northumberland. The monitoring was undertaken to fulfil Condition 13 of planning application 17/01091/FUL. The planning application sought to build one two storey dwelling with associated access.



1.2.2 The Local Planning Authority identified the need for the monitoring project during the planning consultation. The work was undertaken in accordance with paragraphs 141, 176 and 203-206 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* as the development area was deemed to be of archaeological/historical interest. The work requirement was also in accordance with policy BE29 of the Northumberland County Council Tynedale District Local Plan.

1.2.3 Archaeological and historical research objectives are built into developer funded archaeological schemes of work. This is the result of a number of English Heritage national policy frameworks: *Exploring our Past* (1991), *Frameworks for our Past* (1996), *Research Agenda* (1997) and *Policy Statement on Implementation* (1999). The research priorities proposed initially to have potential direct relevance to this project are set out in *Shared Visions: North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (2006), in particular:

- Roman: Rii - Roads and communication
- Riii - The Roman military presence
- Rv - Material culture

### 1.3 Written Scheme of Investigation

1.3.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for this project was produced by John Welsh of AAG Archaeology and approved by Karen Derham, Assistant County Archaeologist for Northumberland Conservation (Document AIW17\_revised, dated 2017).

### 1.4 Timetable of works

1.4.1 The fieldwork was undertaken in three stages:

1. between 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> May 2018;
2. 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019;
3. 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019.

1.4.2 The results of the inspection and survey were compiled into this report during the week commencing the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019, with the report finalised on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

### 1.5 Professional standards

1.5.1 The work undertaken was in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (2014) and their *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (2014) as well as the British Archaeologists' and Developers' Liaison Group's *Code of Practice* (1988).

### 1.6 Health and safety

1.6.1 Standard PPE was utilised for health and safety purposes throughout the fieldwork. All issues of on-site health and safety were undertaken in accordance with the Vindomora Solutions Limited *Health and Safety Manual* (updated 2018).

### 1.7 Archive

1.7.1 A full archive has been compiled in line with the specification and current UKIC and English Heritage Guidelines. The project code is **AIW-19** (Land northwest of the **Anchor Inn, Whittonstall 2019**). Vindomora Solutions support the **Online AccesS** to the **Index of Archaeological Investigations** project (OASIS). As a result, this report will be made available to the project under the unique identifier **vindomor-1375017**.

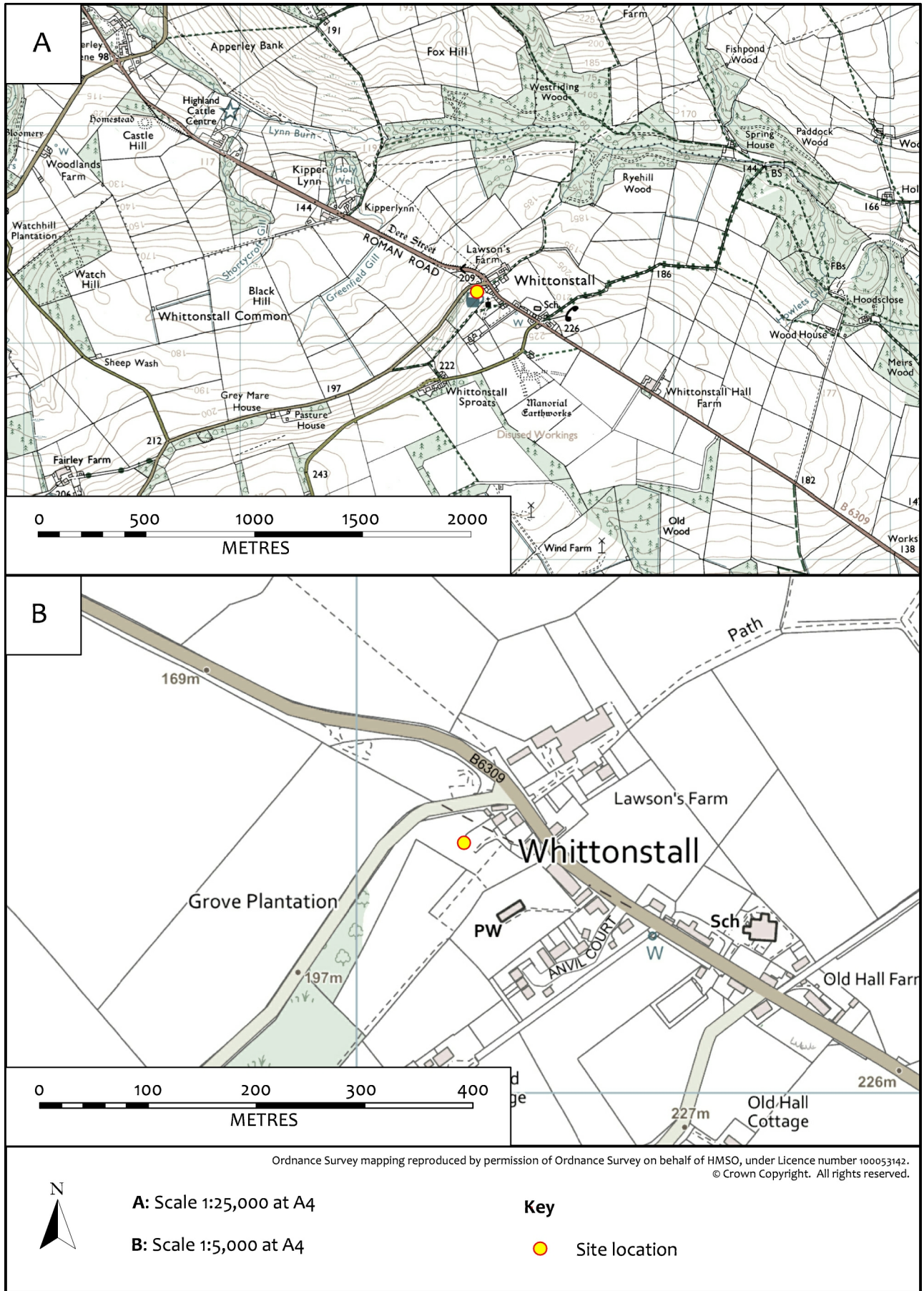


Figure 2. Location of the site, locally.



## 2. BACKGROUND



Plate 2. Extract from the 1921 Ordnance Survey map. The site boundary and service run is marked in red.

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Whittonstall has been an established settlement since at least the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with the earthwork remnants of the manorial settlement located 390m southeast of the development area. The main focus of interest with this project however was in the location and alignment of the Roman road Dere Street and any associated activity.

### 2.2 Dere Street

2.2.1 Dere Street Roman Road ran north from York, crossed the Stanegate at Corbridge and continued north at least as far as the Antonine Wall. The Roman name for the road is lost, with the name 'Dere' deriving from the Anglo-Saxon 'Deira'. The road was initially built to allow the advancement of the Roman army, under the command of Agricola into the north in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

2.2.2 The route of Dere Street within the development area is a length of road between Corbridge and Ebchester. Known settlement beyond the forts and their associated towns is known: 1.7km to the northwest on the south side of the road lies a small Romano-British settlement known as Castle Hill fort.

2.2.3 Dere Street is marked on modern Ordnance Survey mapping as running beneath the route of the B6309 to the northwest of Whittonstall cutting directly through the village and then rejoining the route of the modern road to the east of the village. However, the historic mapping pre 1950s (see Plate 2) suggests that rather than run straight, the line of Dere Street kinks to the northeast before



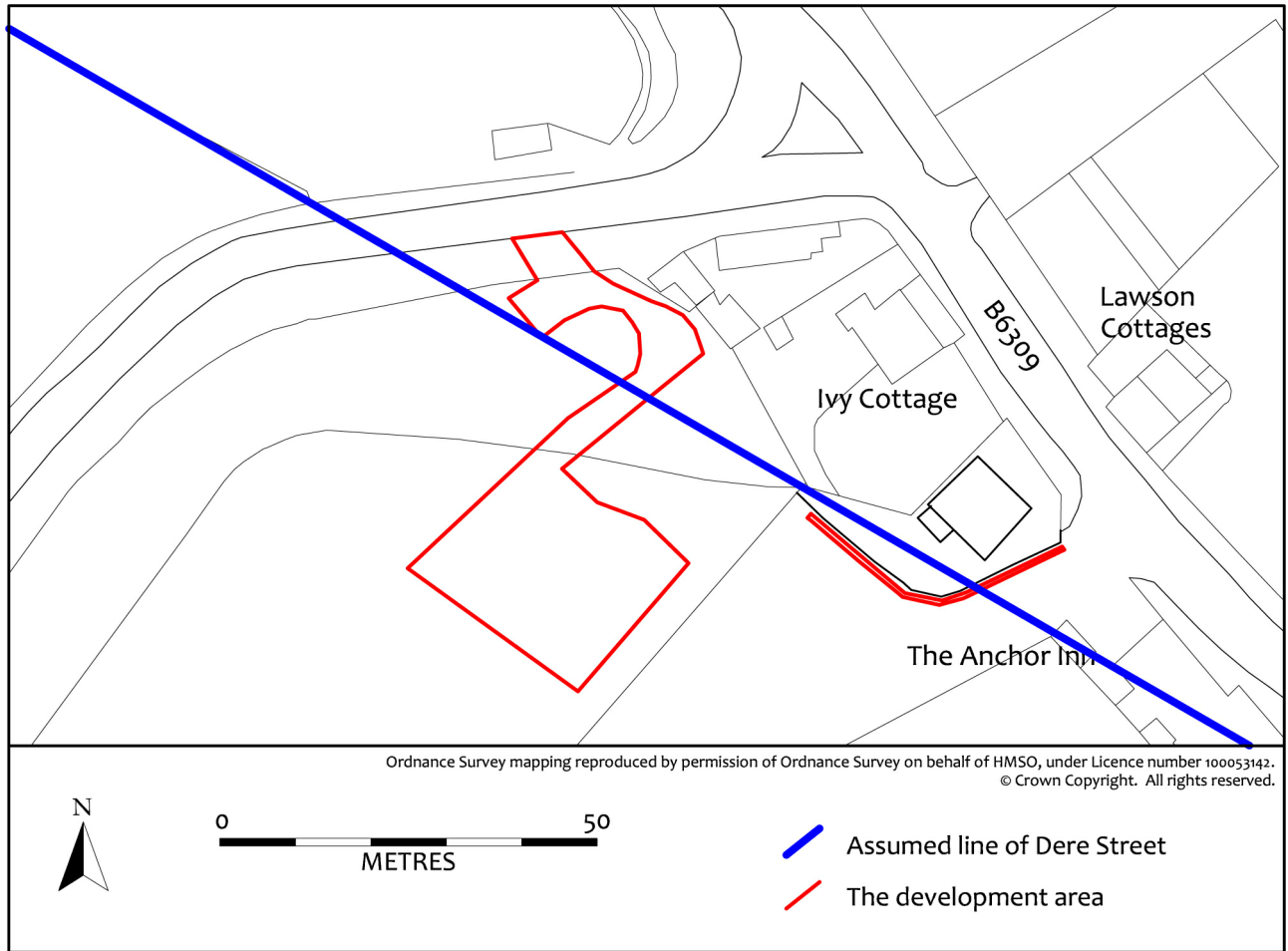


Figure 3. The assumed line of Dere Street through the development area.

returning southeast, lying roughly on alignment with the B6309 though a number of metres to the north. For Dere Street to do that would suggest that the road was routed around an obstacle - not a town as the road would likely have run straight through it, but a feature such as a fortlet or villa. No evidence exists for such a feature, and the line of the road had been 'corrected' to run straight by the time of the 1962 edition of the Ordnance Survey. Figure 3 above plots the assumed line on the Ordnance mapping.

- 2.2.4 As such, there was high potential for the line of Dere Street to be cut by the proposed development, along with any potential roadside Roman features.

## 3. THE MONITORING



Plate 3. Aerial view of the site in late May 2018 (dataset ©2019 Google).

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The scheme of works consisted of monitoring the excavation of house foundations, the line of the site access track and service runs on three separate occasions (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> May 2018, 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019). Plate 3 shows aerial imagery taken on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2018, nine days after completion of the initial watching brief. The extent of the surface clearance, the route of the access track and the location of the house foundations can be seen. Figure 4 shows a plan of the overall extent of the works.

3.1.2 For ease of interpretation a single context system was used to record the site. Archaeological features were identified in red with the prefix 'F' and are set within square brackets within the text below, eg [F1] for archaeological feature #1. Contexts (each context represents a different event or event element) are identified in blue, with rounded brackets for deposits and fills, eg (#) for context identifier #1, and in squared brackets for cuts, example [#]. Geological contexts are identified in green with rounded brackets, to differentiate from archaeological contexts, eg (x).

### 3.2 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> May 2018

3.2.1 Mick Coates of Vindomora Solutions Ltd attended and undertook this stage of the works, which included observation of the cutting of the house foundations as well as the stripping of the access road leading from the road to the north up to the house.

3.2.2 The watching brief comprised the observation of the stripping of a platform 17.54m long by 13.26m wide down to the natural clay substrate (G1). The overburden (1) consisted of mixed loamy clay,



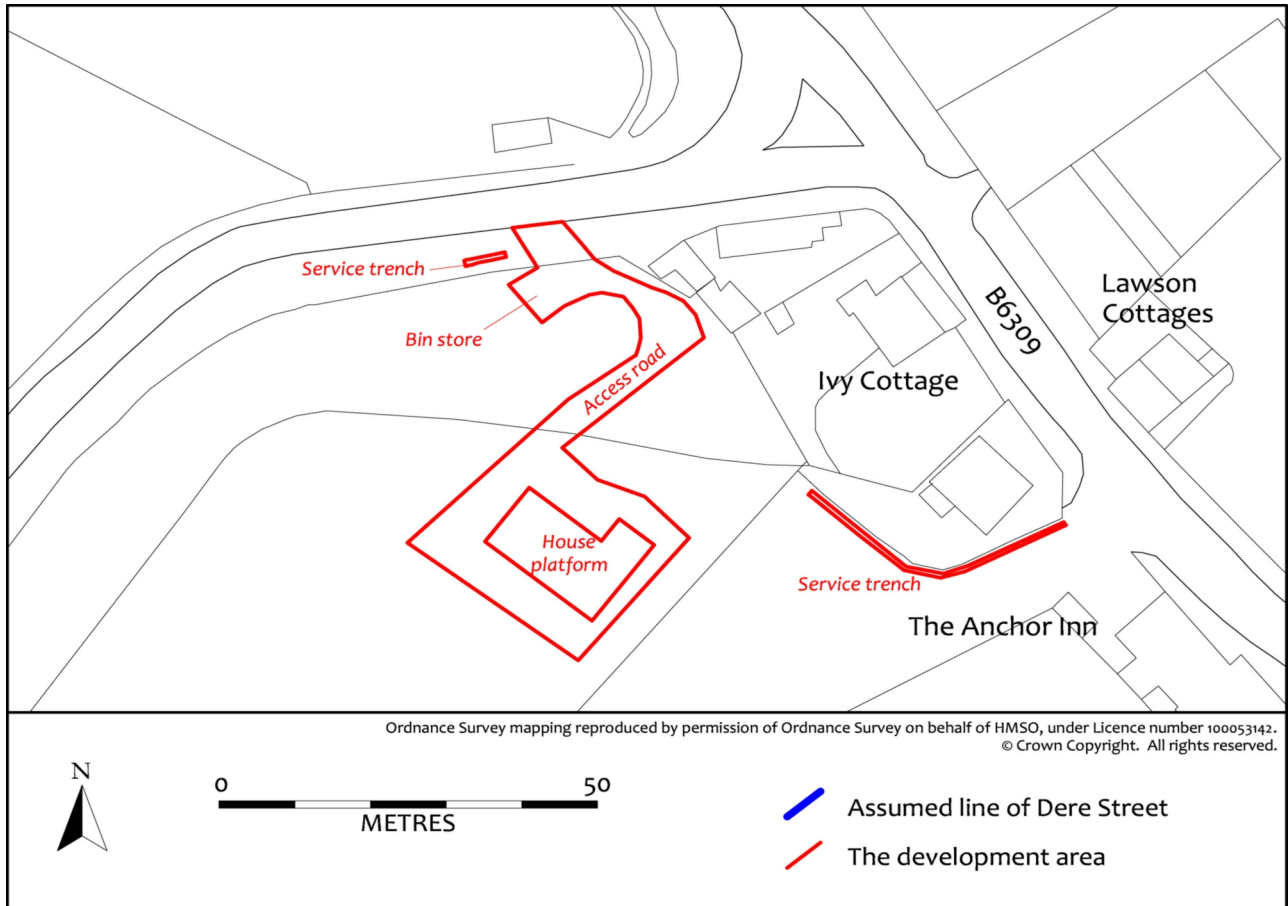


Figure 4 (above). Plan of the extent of the watching brief.



Plate 4 (above). The platform strip for the house foundations, looking southeast.





Plate 5. The access road cut looking west by the entrance from the road to the north.

with small to medium stones and frequent items of modern debris. No archaeological deposits, structures or artefacts were observed during the excavation of the house foundations, and as such it was deemed that the cutting of the foundation trenches within that cleared platform could continue unimpeded. The platform strip can be seen on Plate 4.

- 3.2.3 The monitoring of the access road required stripping between 1m of overburden (to the north by the roadside, see Plate 5) and 0.15m on the area adjacent to the house platform. As with the platform, the road strip overburden (1) was a mixed loamy clay, with small to medium stones and frequent items of modern debris. This was found to lie over sandy yellow-grey clay (G1) with frequent inclusions of coal with occasional banded spurs of natural laminated sandstone.
- 3.2.4 The access track was cut southeast from the road entrance for 26m (plan view) before turning to the southwest to head toward the house platform. At the turning point, remnants of Dere Street were noted on the southeastern side of the access track: degraded wooden pegs were also observed along its section, suggesting that at some point in antiquity the area re-dug for the access road had already been disturbed. Certainly, the southern edge of the road had also been truncated due to a sewer line and associated septic tank cutting through it (See Figure 5). This section of Dere Street lay outside the impact of the overall development, but as it was exposed by the excavation of the access road a 2m long area was cleaned and recorded (see Plate .
- 3.2.5 **Dere Street:** The remains of Dere Street [F1] consisted of a single course (2) of mixed limestone and sandstones, rounded to sub-rounded and showing wear on the upper surface. The road surface lay directly on top of the natural clay substrate. No definitive dressing material remained, though during cleaning small patches of gravel (3) were observed. The road appeared to be truncated on its northern side, with no camber. There was no evidence of a roadside ditch running across the access track in this area, though the truncated nature of the northern edge of the road coupled with the further investigation area for such a feature lying outside of the development area meant that the presence of such a feature could not be ascertained. The small section of





Plate 6 (above). The truncated remains of Dere Street, looking west toward the house platform.

road that was cleaned and recorded measured 5.4m wide, though its truncation would suggest a wider feature.

### 3.3 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019

3.3.1 The watching brief was undertaken by Mick Coates and consisted of the monitoring of a small strip trench running east west along the northern edge of the site, set circa 1.5m south from the boundary line, and a 3.9m by 3.4m cut into the western bank of the access road for use as a bin store area.

3.3.2 The trench measured 5.5m long, 0.6m deep and 0.7m wide. The western 1.9m contained the remains of Dere Street road surface [F1], truncated again along the northern edge (see Plate 7). As with the road section noted to the



Plate 7 (right). The truncated remains of Dere Street within the slip trench, looking north.





Plate 8. The bin store area, looking southwest.

north, the stones were laid directly on top of the natural substrate but in this case the stones still formed part of a semi-coherent flagged surface, though again no dressing material was observed.

3.3.3 The excavation for the bin store measured 3.4m long by 3.9m wide and 1.6m deep (at its southwestern edge), cut into the bank-side at the western edge of the access track (see Plate 8). No archaeological remains were noted within this area, so the road surface and any other related remains must have been removed in antiquity.

#### 3.4 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019

3.4.1 On the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2019, the service run was cut through the Anchor Inn carpark. The monitoring was undertaken by Mick Coates. The run lay 1m to the south of the boundary wall belonging to housing north of the carpark and followed the wall line until reaching a connector point directly west of the Inn by the B6309. Its western end terminated by the boundary wall, where it would be connected to an above ground supply through the wall.



Plate 9. The northeastern end of the service run overlooking the B6309.

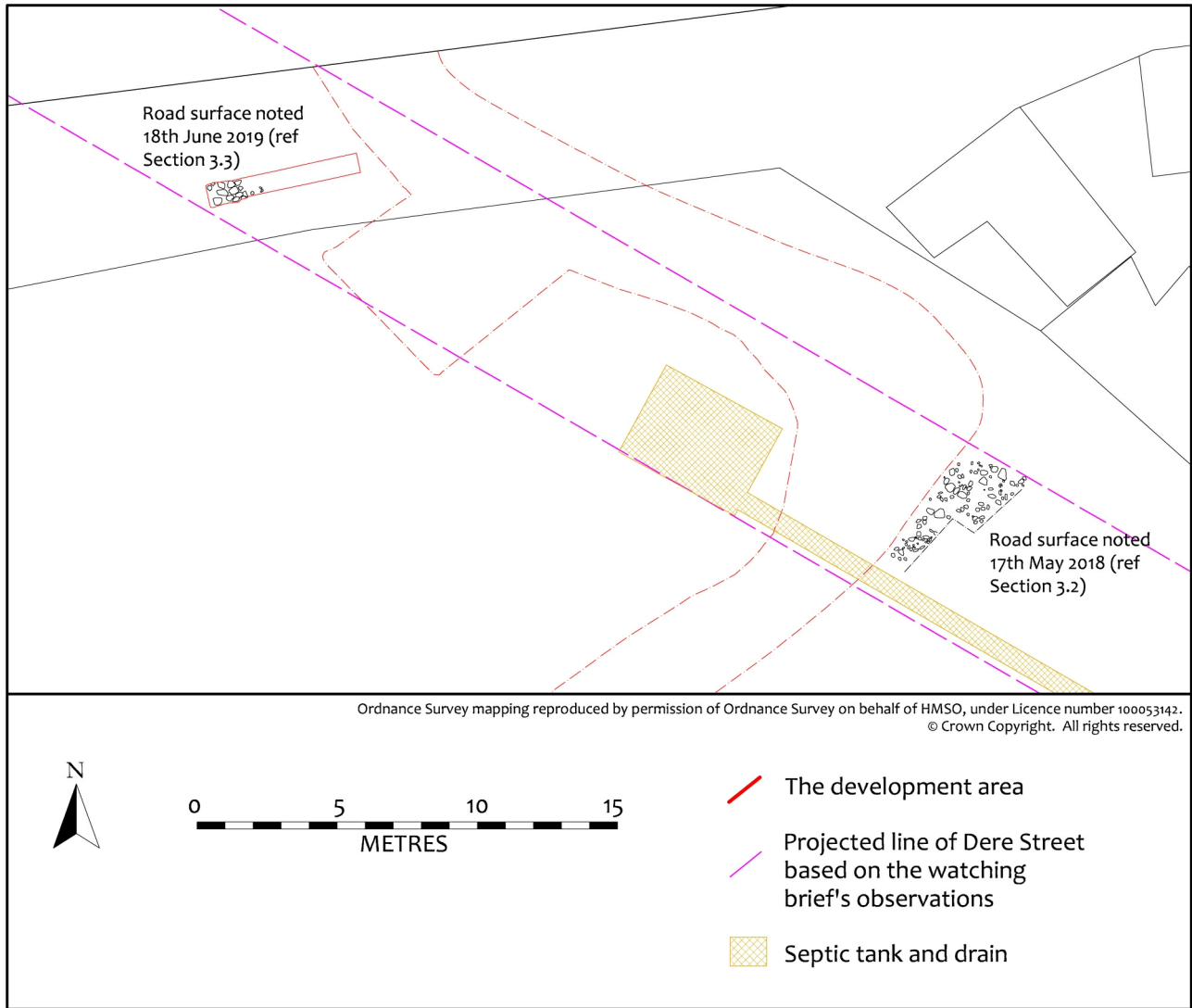


Figure 5. The remains of Dere Street noted in the watching brief.

3.4.2 The trench measured 0.6m deep, 0.7m wide and 39m long. Below the layers of tarmac carpark/carpark access road surface was a mixed deposit of soils, clay, ash, brick and 20<sup>th</sup> century debris debris (4). This appeared to form the packing material beneath the modern surface, and was not breached for the length of the service run. As such, no archaeological material was noted within this section of the monitoring scheme.

### 3.5 Archaeological context identifier summary

Feature #	Context #	Context type	Description
	G1	Natural substrate	Mixed sandy clay with laminated sandstone and coal deposits
	1	Accumulation	Mixed loam and sandy clay overburden
F1	2	Structure	Stone flagging of Dere Street
F1	3	Deposit	Possible remains of gravel dressing for Dere Street
	4	Deposit	20 <sup>th</sup> century accumulation beneath Anchor Inn carpark

Table 1. Features and contexts



## 4. DISCUSSION

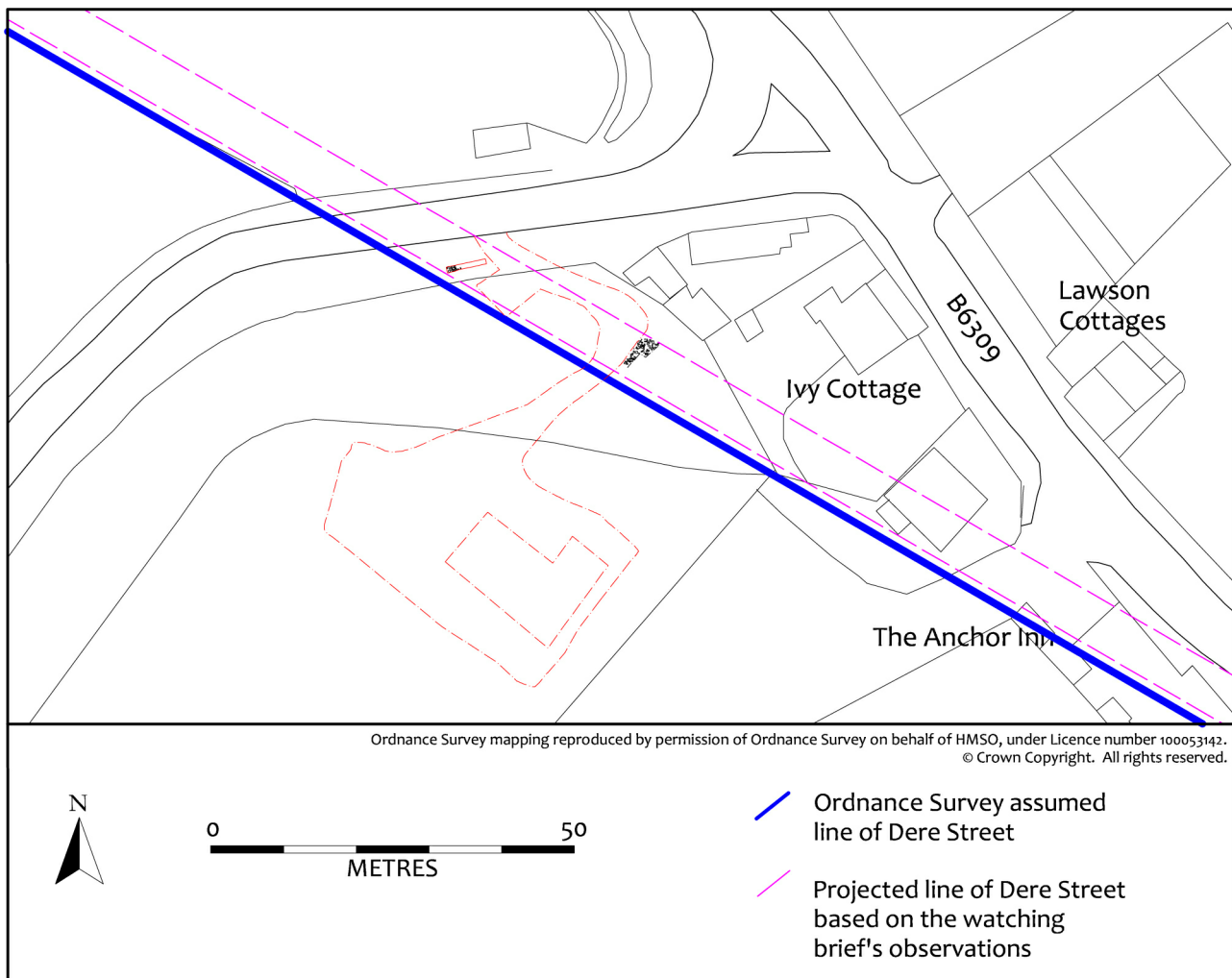


Figure 6. The remains of Dere Street noted in the watching brief against the previously projected line

### 4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in three stages spanning over four days between May 2018, June 2019 and July 2019. The watching brief covered the cutting of the access road from the road to the north, the formation of a bin store area on the west side of the access road, the observation of service trenches at the northern edge of the site as well as within the Anchor Inn carpark, and also the formation of a platform in the natural clay in which to cut the house foundation trenches.
- 4.1.2 Two small sections of Dere Street were noted, both **highly** truncated. The first section was found on the east side of the access road, and while officially outside of the access road a small area was disturbed during the development and so cleaned and recorded. The second small section was noted in a service slip trench on the northern edge of the site. Both sections of road comprised flat stones bedded onto the natural substrate, with no definitive dressing bar small patches of gravel. No other structural or artefactual evidence of archaeological remains were observed.

### 4.2 Discussion

- 4.2.1 Figure 6 shows the line of Dere Street projected on the Ordnance Survey against the suggested alignment proposed by the watching brief, which moves the road approximately 5m to the north.



The southern edge of the road within the land boundary plot has likely been removed by the sewer and septic tank noted in Section 3.2.4, and the presence of the tank and lack of remains west of the first section noted at the eastern edge of the access track and within the cut for the bin store suggests the road had been removed in antiquity within this section. However, east of this and north of the sewer cut, the road may survive but to what level of preservation is unknown. So too the location of the small section of road within the service cut on the northern edge of the site suggests that the road may still exist at this point.

- 4.2.2 The presence of Dere Street in these extremities of the overall land boundary will likely be impacted upon by any future development (in those areas) outside of the current planning application and would require further mitigation works should this issue arise.

*Plate 10. The truncated remains of Dere Street in the northern slip trench, looking northeast.*





## 5. REPOSITORIES AND SOURCES

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### 5.1 Repositories

- Beamish Museum People's Collection.** Online at <http://collections.beamish.org.uk/>
- Britain from Above Project.** Online at <http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>
- British Library.** Online at <http://www.bl.uk/>
- British Geological Survey.** Online at <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>
- Durham Record Office.** County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL
- Google Earth Pro 2019**
- Historic England Archive.** Online at <http://archive.historicengland.org.uk>
- Keys to the Past.** Online at <http://www.keystothepast.info>
- Newcastle City Library.** Local studies section, Princess Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE99 1DX
- PastScape Project.** Online at <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/default.aspx>
- Portable Antiquities Scheme.** Online at <https://finds.org.uk/>
- Tyne and Wear Archives.** Blandford House, Blandford Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4JA
- ViewFinder Project.** Online at <http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/>
- Vindomora Solutions Ltd Archive.** Prospect House, Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, County Durham DH8 7PW

### 5.2 Sources

- ClfA (2014) Code of Conduct. *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists*
- ClfA (2014) *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs.* Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
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