

2021

Northumberland

Archaeological  
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NEW CONSERVATORY  
AT TOLL HOUSE  
Wall  
Northumberland  
NGR 393516 569403  
Archaeological Monitoring  
Project 368-21-MON | July 2021



On behalf of Sylvia Hunnam  
Planning application reference 20/04147/FUL

**VINDOMORA SOLUTIONS LTD**  
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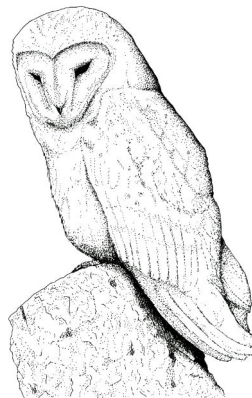


Archaeological Monitoring  
(Watching Brief)

**NEW CONSERVATORY  
AT TOLL HOUSE**

Wall  
Northumberland

July 2021



**VINDOMORA SOLUTIONS LTD**  
*Archaeological Practice*

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## SUMMARY OF PROJECT REFERENCES

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<b>Name of location:</b>	Toll House, new conservatory
<b>Address of location:</b>	Toll House, Wall, Northumberland NE46 4EX
<b>National Grid Reference:</b>	NGR 393516 569403
<b>Client:</b>	Sylvia Hunnam
<b>Project Type:</b>	Archaeological Monitoring (Watching Brief)
<b>Local Authority Conservation Team:</b>	Northumberland Conservation
<b>Planning Application reference:</b>	20/04147/FUL
<b>Planning Application Condition ref:</b>	4
<b>Project Site Code:</b>	THW-21
<b>Vindomora Solutions Ltd reference:</b>	368-21-MON
<b>Report Author:</b>	Mick Coates and Tony Liddell
<b>Report Version/Date:</b>	V1 / 13 Jul 2021
<b>This document date-stamp:</b>	Tuesday, 13 July 2021
<b>OASIS Identifier:</b>	vindomor1-425889
<b>Ordnance Survey Licence reference:</b>	100053142
<b>Google Earth Pro Licence:</b>	Licensed 2015-21

## CONCISE SUMMARY OF REPORT

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In March 2021 Vindomora Solutions Limited were commissioned by Sylvia Hunnam to undertake an archaeological monitoring scheme on land adjacent to Toll House, Wall, Northumberland. The monitoring was undertaken to fulfil Condition 4 of planning application 20/04147/FUL, which seeks to construct a single storey timber conservatory on the west side of Toll House, an 18th century building originally named Brunton Turnpike. The site also lies within potential Roman and Early medieval activity, and is thus an area of archaeological interest.

The groundworks were monitored on the 7th July 2021. The natural substrate comprising sandstone and interleaving boulder clay/glacial till was observed on the base of all foundation trench legs. Over the natural substrate was a layer of redeposited clay containing modern construction debris and services, over which was the bedding material and in turn the flagged patio surface.

No features associated with the potential Roman or Early medieval activity on the site were observed within the trench network, with the modern nature of the overburden suggesting that the area was stripped during the late 20th century, the process of which may have removed any subsoil features associated with earlier habitation on the site.

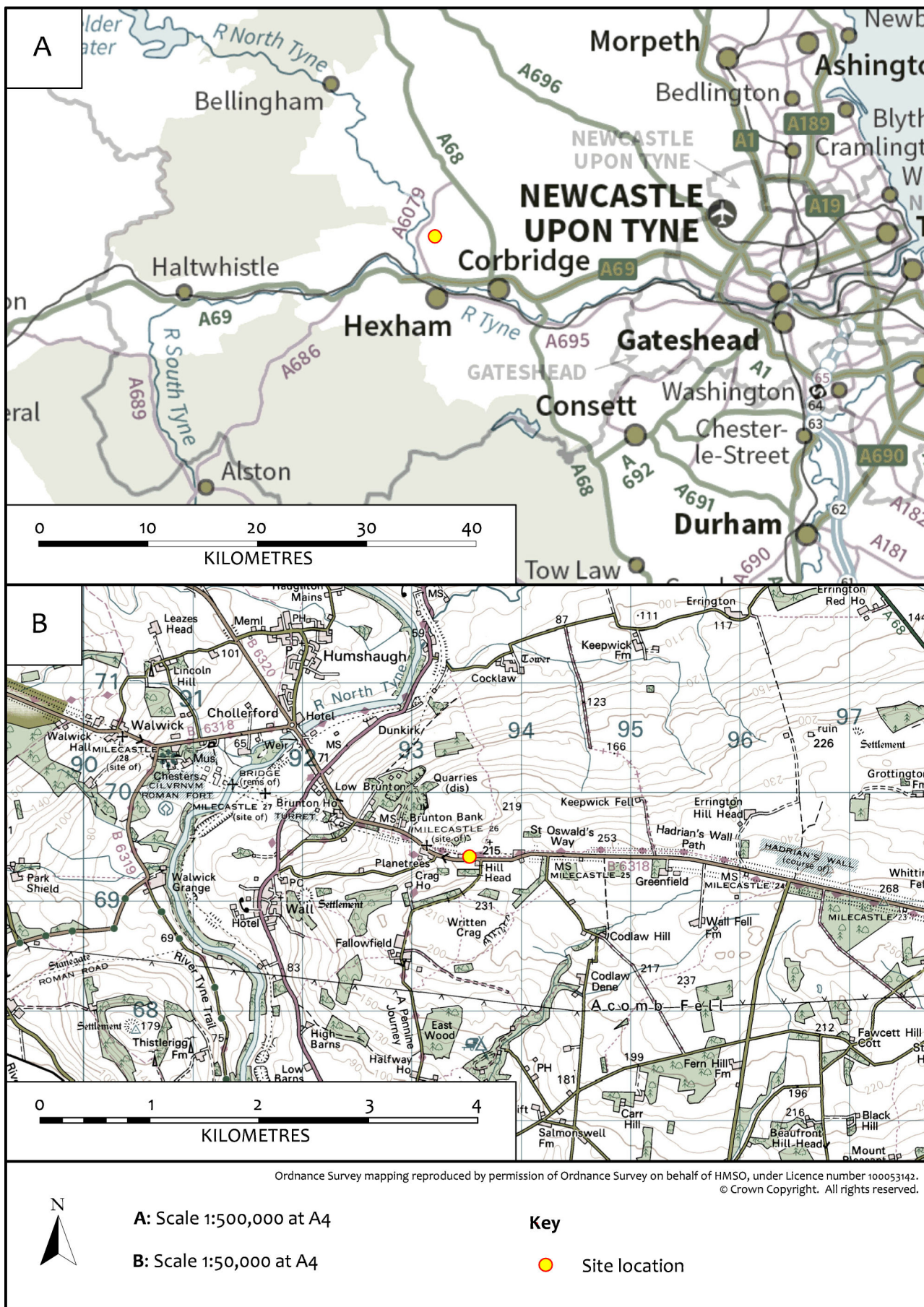


Figure 1. Location of the site, regionally



## 1. THE PROJECT



Plate 1. Aerial view of the site and surrounding area (dataset © 2021 Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky)

### 1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 Vindomora Solutions Ltd were commissioned by Sylvia Hunnam to undertake an archaeological monitoring scheme (watching brief) on land adjacent to Toll House, Wall, Northumberland. The monitoring was undertaken to fulfil Condition 4 of planning application 20/04147/FUL. The location and extent of the watching brief can be viewed on Figure 4.

1.1.2 The planning application seeks to construct a single storey timber conservatory on the west side of Toll House, an 18<sup>th</sup> century building originally named Brunton Turnpike. Condition 4 (the subject of this archaeological scheme of works) reads thus: “A programme of archaeological work is required in accordance with NCCCT Conservation Team (NCCCT) Standards for Archaeological Mitigation and Site Specific Requirements document (dated 26/1/2021). The archaeological scheme shall comprise three stages of work. Each stage shall be completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before it can be discharged.

a) No development or archaeological mitigation shall commence on site until a written scheme of investigation based on NCCCT Standards and Site Specific Requirements documents has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

b) The archaeological recording scheme required by NCCCT Standards and Site Specific Requirements documents must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

c) *The programme of analysis, reporting, publication and archiving if required by NCCCT Standards and Site Specific Requirements documents must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.*”

1.1.3 The work required (watching brief) was undertaken in accordance with paragraphs 38 and 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Tynedale Local Plan Policy BE29.

## 1.2 Project location

1.2.1 The proposed development area (PDA) is located on the west side of Toll House, Wall, Northumberland (centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference 393516 569403). The postcode for the site is NE46 4EX. To the south of Toll House lies the B6318, with St Oswald’s Hill head Farm 420m to the east.

1.2.2 *Figure 1* shows the location of the scheme regionally and *Figure 2* locally.

## 1.3 Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)

1.3.1 The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for this project was produced by Tony Liddell, Principal Archaeologist for Vindomora Solutions Ltd and approved by Karen Derham, Assistant County Archaeologist for Northumberland Conservation (Version 1, approved 7th May 2021).

## 1.4 Professional standards

1.4.1 This project complied with the following professional standards:

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Code of Conduct*
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*
- British Archaeologists’ and Developers’ Liaison Group (1988) *Code of Practice*
- Historic England (2015) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers’ Guide*
- SYAS (rev 2019) *Yorkshire, the Humber and the North East: Regional Statement of Good Practice for Archaeology in the Development Process*
- UKIC (1990) *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives for Long Term Storage*

## 1.5 Health and Safety

1.5.1 All work on site abided by the Health and Safety Act of 1974 and all its subsequent amendments. All fieldwork projects are undertaken in accordance with the Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers (FAME) manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* and the Vindomora Solutions Ltd *Health and Safety Manual* (v9, 2021).

1.5.2 The fieldwork was undertaken during COVID-19 restrictions. All of the necessary regulations were adhered to on site.

1.5.3 Appropriate care and attention was taken during the works, and appropriate PPE utilised.

## 1.6 Timetable of works

1.6.1 The monitoring fieldwork was undertaken on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

## 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 **THW-21 (Toll House Wall 2021)**. 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 **vindomori-425889**.



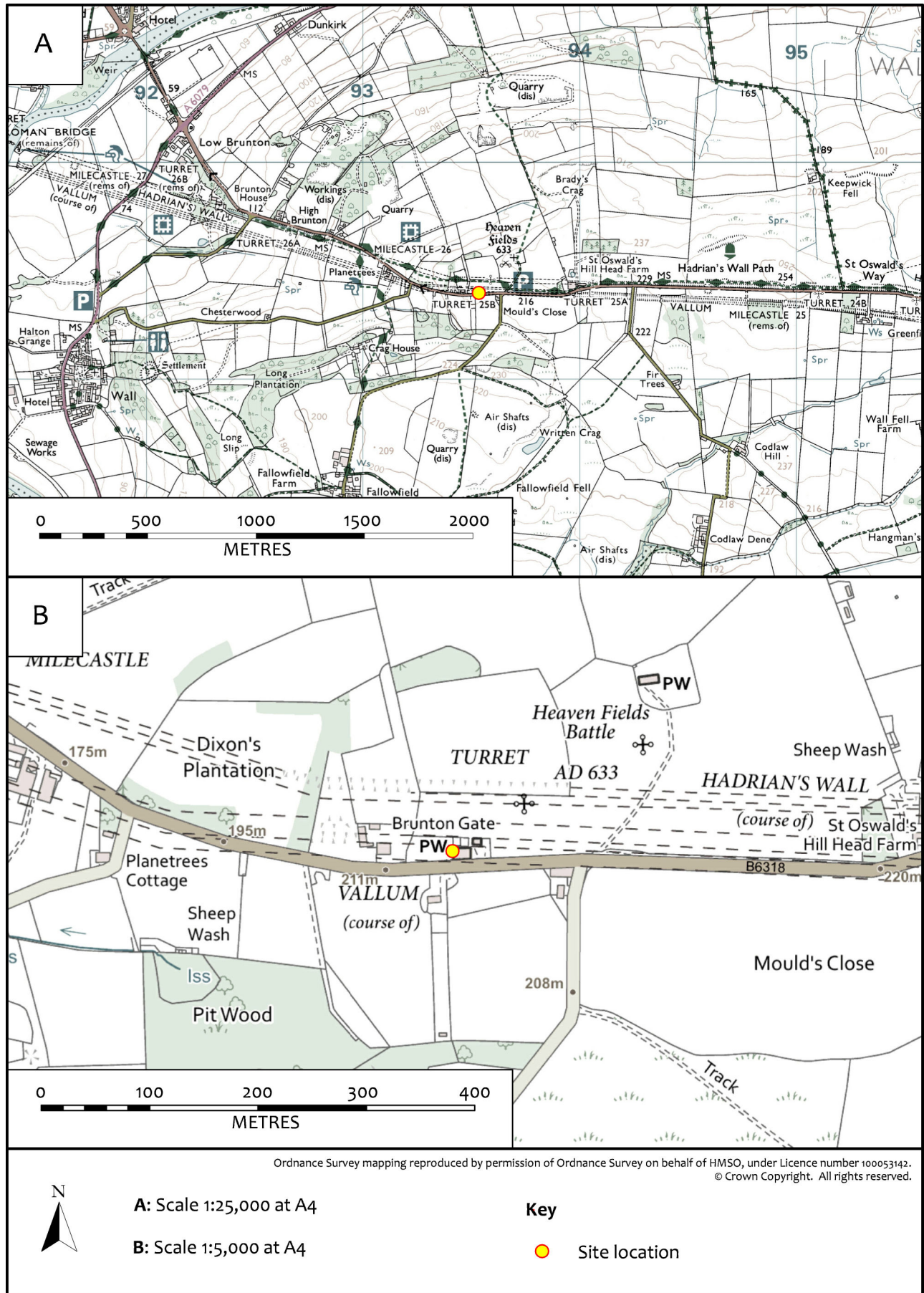


Figure 2. Location of the site, locally

## 1.8 Research Agenda

- 1.8.1 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).
- 1.8.2 The research priorities with deemed within the WSI to have direct relevance to this project are set out in *Frontiers of Knowledge: A Research Framework for Hadrian's Wall* (Symonds and Mason, 2009) and *Shared Visions: North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (2006), in particular:
  - 1.8.3 Roman:
    - Riii. The Roman military presence;
    - Riv. Native and civilian life;
    - Rv. Roman material culture;
    - Rix. Landscape and environment;
    - Rx. Roman-early medieval transition.
  - 1.8.4 Early-medieval:
    - EMi. Landscape;
    - EMvi. Christianity;
    - EMi. Death and burial.



## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Geology

- 2.1.1 Geology: The site lies within an area of Devensian till (British Geological Survey 2021), a glacial deposit noted on site as comprising interleaving bands of clay and laminated yellow-brown sandstone.

### 2.2 Elevation

- 2.2.1 The site lies at an average of 214m OD (height above sea level).

### 2.3 Historical/Archaeological

- 2.3.1 The *Historic Environment Record* (HER) dataset relating to the background summary of this report was provided by Elizabeth Williams, HER Officer for Northumberland County Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The information is summarised below and is depicted on *Figure 3*.
- 2.3.2 HER 29682: Possible enclosure, lying 80m to the north of the development. The remains of a possible subrectangular enclosure were identified from geophysical survey undertaken in 2015. The feature measures about 33m north-east to south-west.
- 2.3.3 HER 8623: *Hadrian's Wall and vallum between field boundary east of Milecastle 24 and field boundary west of the site of Turret 25B in wall miles 24-25*. This site lies directly adjacent to the proposed northern wall of the new conservatory. Scheduling revised on 14th July 1997, new National Monument Rumber 26049. The monument includes the section of Hadrian's Wall and its associated features between the field boundary east of Milecastle 24 and the field boundary west of the site of Turret 25b east of Brunton Gate. The wall ditch survives well as an earthwork visible on the ground for most of this section. It averages about 2.5m deep throughout, though it reaches a maximum of 3.6m deep in places. The upcast mound from the ditch, known as the glacis, is visible intermittently, usually in places where it has survived ploughing. Where extant it is generally irregular, sometimes containing much stony material, and averaging about 1m in height... The course of the Roman road known as the Military Way, which ran along the corridor between the Wall and the vallum linking turrets, milecastles and forts... The vallum survives as an upstanding earthwork for much of this section where it mirrors closely the line of the Wall. The north mound averages about 1m where extant with a maximum height of 1.6m in places. The south mound also averages about 1m, but has a maximum height of 4m in places. The ditch is generally between 1.5m and 2m in depth where extant. Elsewhere it survives as a buried feature that has silted up.
- 2.3.4 HER 8544: Site of Hadrian's Wall Turret 25b, located 70m northeast of the proposed conservatory. This was located in 1959, 135ft west of the fence west of St Oswalds' Church and 30ft gins south of the stone wall to the north at this point... Its construction is of the type generally associated with Leg.XX but no evidence was found for an occupation later than late Antonine. There are no surface remains of this turret. Scheduling revised on 14th July 1997, part of National Monument number 26049. Turret 25b is situated on a west facing slope to the south west of St Oswald's Church. A hole cut through the floor of Turret 25b, as seen in the excavations by C C Woodfield, might have been the foundation pit cut for Oswald's cross. The cross was set up by King Oswald before battle with Caedwalla in the seventh century AD.
- 2.3.5 HER 8627: *Hadrian's Wall and vallum between St Oswald's Cottages, east of Brunton Gate and the North Tyne in wall miles 25, 26 and 27*. This area lies 17m east of the development. Hadrian's Wall bends slightly northwards at Dixon's Plantation and then follows a straight alignment all the way down to the crossing of the North Tyne. The B6318 road runs to the north of the Wall line for most of this section. The Wall is visible as an upstanding monument only in parts of this section... Elsewhere throughout this section the Wall survives as a buried feature beneath grassland and dense woodland. The outer ditch is visible intermittently as a well preserved earthwork.

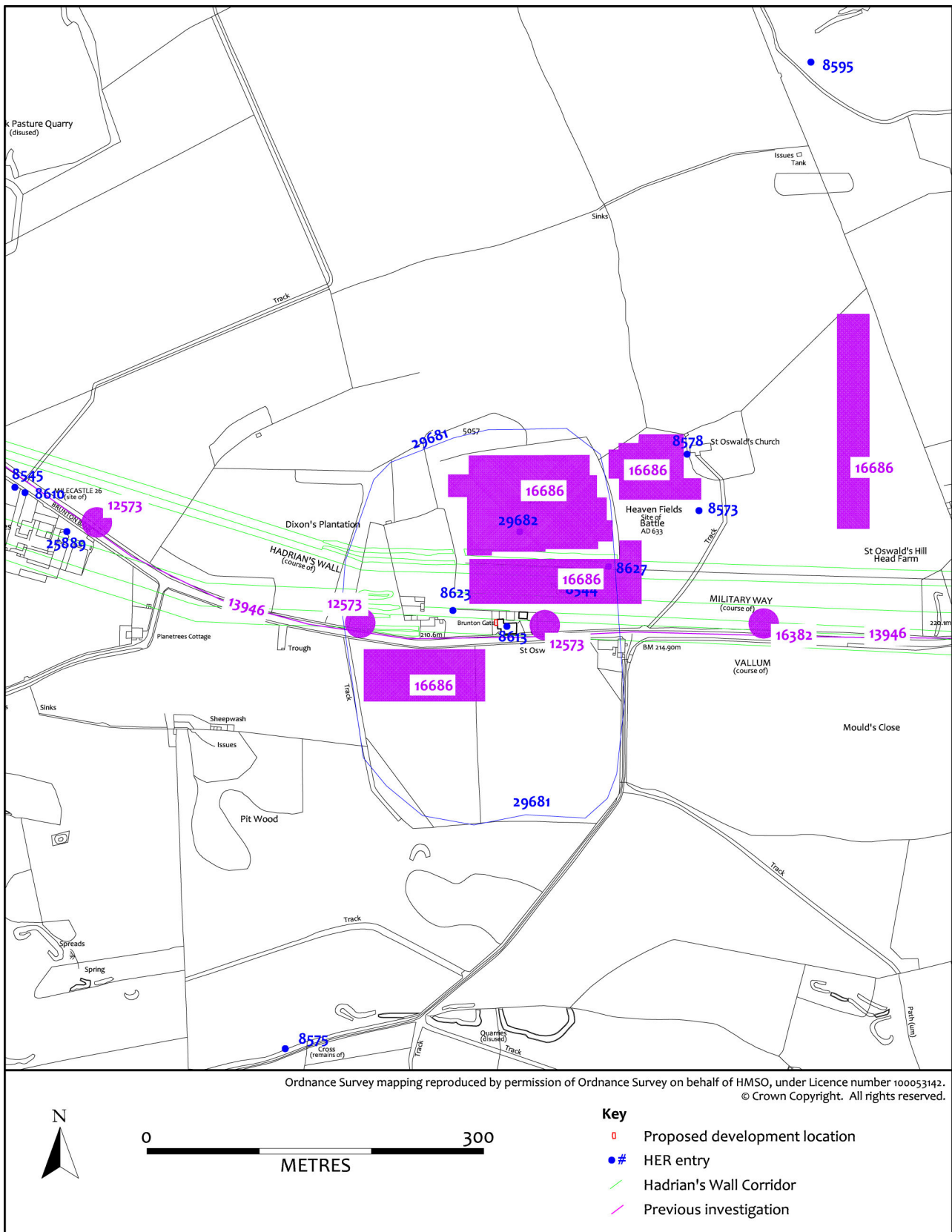


Figure 3. Location of the recorded HER sites and events in proximity to the development

2.3.6 HER 8545: Hadrian's Wall Milecastle 26. This is of long-axis type, and was examined on February 5th 1930. The measurements to the internal faces of the side walls were 24ft and 37ft respectively from the east side of the service road to Planetrees. There are no visible remains; the site is mainly

covered by a modern road. Resited on OS 25 inch from Hepple's sketch. Milecastle 26. Scheduled Ancient Monument 26050, scheduling revised on 14th July 1997.

- 2.3.7 HER 8573: The site is located within the area known as the Battle of Heavenfield. In the last weeks of 633, Oswald, son of Aethelfrith, defeated and killed Cadwallon near Rowley Burn, south of Hexham. Oswald was immediately accepted as King in Deira and Bernicia, the two fundamental divisions of Northumbria. The battle between Oswald and Cadwalla took place at Hefenfelth, interpreted by Bede as the heavenly plain. Nothing is known of the details of the battle, but Cadwalla, defeated, fled southward and was slain at Deniseburn, now Rowley Water, a tributary of the Devil's Water, about seven miles from the site of the battle. Mould's Close is a field on the opposite side of the road from St Oswald's chapel. Here, according to local tradition, the fight was at its hottest, and skulls and hilts of swords have been ploughed up.
- 2.3.8 HER 8578: Church of St Oswald, located 230m northeast of the proposed development. The current church dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century with later additions, but its predecessor is mentioned in 1310 as being in need of repair, and a survey of c.1715 noted that it was roofless. In 1737 it was rebuilt or largely repaired; this date appears on a sundial. There is a late 2nd, or early 3rd century Roman altar inside the church. It is 4ft 6ins high and stands against the north wall. The inscription has perished, but on the sides are visible the sacrificial cleaver, the paten and a vine branch: along the base is a border of grapes and in the top is a socket hole. The altar has been used as the base of a cross commemorating the battle of Heaven Fields. In 1807 it was lying in the churchyard and for a time was used as a gatepost. Between 1825-51 it was removed to Brunton House and finally in 1949, placed in the church. The church is in use; some carved stones lying in the south porch are the only visible remains of an earlier building. The Roman altar, as described, is still in the church.
- 2.3.9 HER 29681: The proposed development lies within the potential site of an early medieval monastery. Documentary evidence from Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People suggests that an unsuccessful venture to establish a monastery preceded Aidan's successful mission on Lindisfarne. This earlier mission may have been led by monks from Iona who accompanied Oswald's army, and who might have set up a monastery around the site of Oswald's cross immediately after the victory at the Battle of Heavenfield. It has been suggested that a hole cut through the floor of Turret 25b might have been the foundation pit cut for Oswald's cross. There is a distinctive pattern of fields around Turret 25b which describe a subrectangular outline with rounded corners. The area measures about six hectares and is similar in proportion to the known monastic enclosure on Iona and that reconstructed on Lindisfarne. A hypothesis has been proposed that the shape of the field boundaries preserves the outline of an early monastic precent, established by the first (unsuccessful) mission from Iona to Northumbria. Geophysical survey of the area in 2015 failed to detect any anomalies that corroborate this hypothesis.
- 2.3.10 HER 8610: The site of Plantrees Farm gin house lies m to the west of the proposed development.
- 2.3.11 HER 8575: This site of a medieval cross base partly incorporated into a dry-stone field wall, located 420m southwest of the proposed development. It appears to be in its original position: there is no trace of the shaft. The base is cut from a sandstone boulder and, whereas the top surface is slightly inclined, the rectangular socket cavity is vertical suggesting, therefore, that it was cut in situ. There is no trace of cross components in the vicinity. The monument is a Grade II Listed Building and also a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- 2.3.12 HER 8613: This entry belongs to the Toll House itself. Brunton Toll House. Cottage called Brunton Gate. Brunton Gate, grade II listed building. Toll house, probably 1757. Originally called Brunton Turnpike. Deleted from the List 21st July 1993.

## 2.4 Previous investigations

- 2.4.1 No previous archaeological investigation works have been done within the development area. However, a number have been undertaken in the vicinity, detailed below.
- 2.4.2 Event 12573: Mixture of total and partial excavations undertaken at Turrets 18b, 25b, 26a, 35a, 45a

and 51b along Hadrian's Wall by C Woodfield and J Birch of the Durham University Excavation Committee in 1959 in advance of consolidation work by the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. (Turret 51b lies outside of Northumberland). Details of construction, phases of construction and alterations, internal features (especially of note as the reason for the work) and finds recovered at each turret. Partial excavations at 18b and 26a (of southern and northern portions accessible for excavation). Total excavation at 25b, 35a, 45a and 51b. Excavations included adjacent and adjoining portions of the curtain wall as well.

- 2.4.3 Event 13946: An archaeological watching brief undertaken in association with a road maintenance coring survey along more than 57km of the B6318 in Northumberland. The watching brief was intermittent between November 2006 and April 2007 and investigations were undertaken with Scheduled Monument Consent. A total of 162 cores were taken, located at 400m intervals alternately on the westbound and eastbound carriageways. Excavation and removal of all cores, up to 500mm depth, was carried out under archaeological supervision. Deposits of archaeological significance were encountered in 39 (24%) of the cores and were for the most part deposits that probably represented the rubble core of the levelled foundations of Hadrian's Wall.
- 2.4.4 Event 16382: Observation and recording of groundworks associated with groundworks for two traffic signs and a marker post in 2018. Works involved the excavation of five postholes to depths of 0.7m and 0.4m. No features of archaeological significance were encountered.
- 2.4.5 Event 16686: Gradiometry surveys were carried out in fields adjacent to Hadrian's Wall at Heavenfield in the autumn of 2015 and in 2016 by the Bernician Studies Group, with no results.



### 3. THE FIELDWORK RESULTS

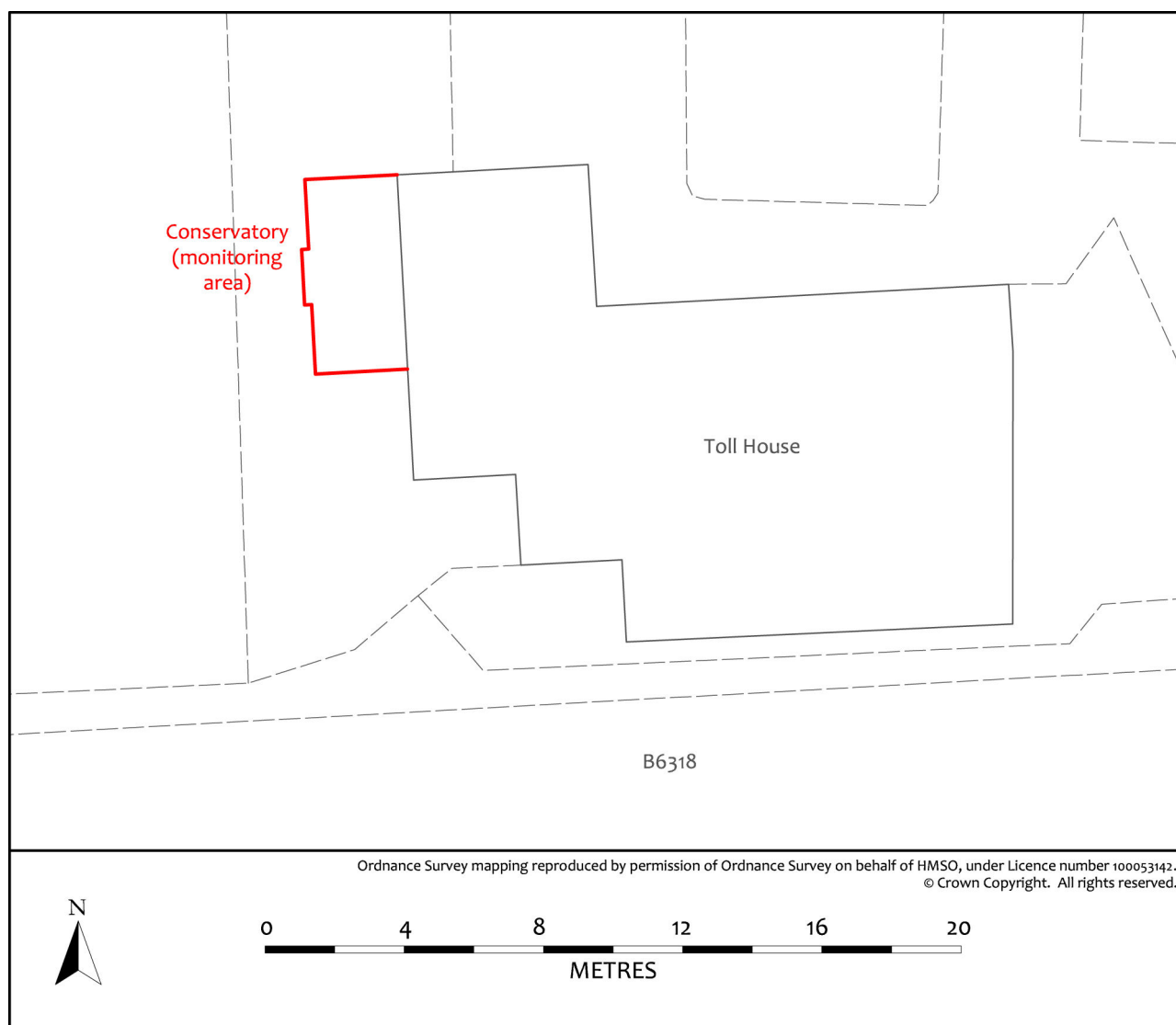


Figure 4. Location and extent of the conservatory extension.

#### 3.1 Methodology

- 3.1.1 The watching brief involved the observation and examination of all material excavated and removed from the development area by the contractor. The trenches were excavated by a 360 mini digger and partially by hand, totalling an excavation area of 7.05m<sup>2</sup>. The extent of the watching brief can be seen on Figure 4.
- 3.1.2 The works were recorded with a single context system. Four contexts in total were recorded:
- (1) Upper surface of flag stones
  - (2) Bedding deposit for flag stones
  - (3) Mixed and disturbed re-deposited clay with modern services
  - (4) Geological horizon

#### 3.2 Results

- 3.2.1 The development required the initial removal of the existing precast flagged patio surface, with a trench network system to be excavated through the remaining underlying deposit. The trench network system incorporated three foundation trench legs of which the southern leg measured

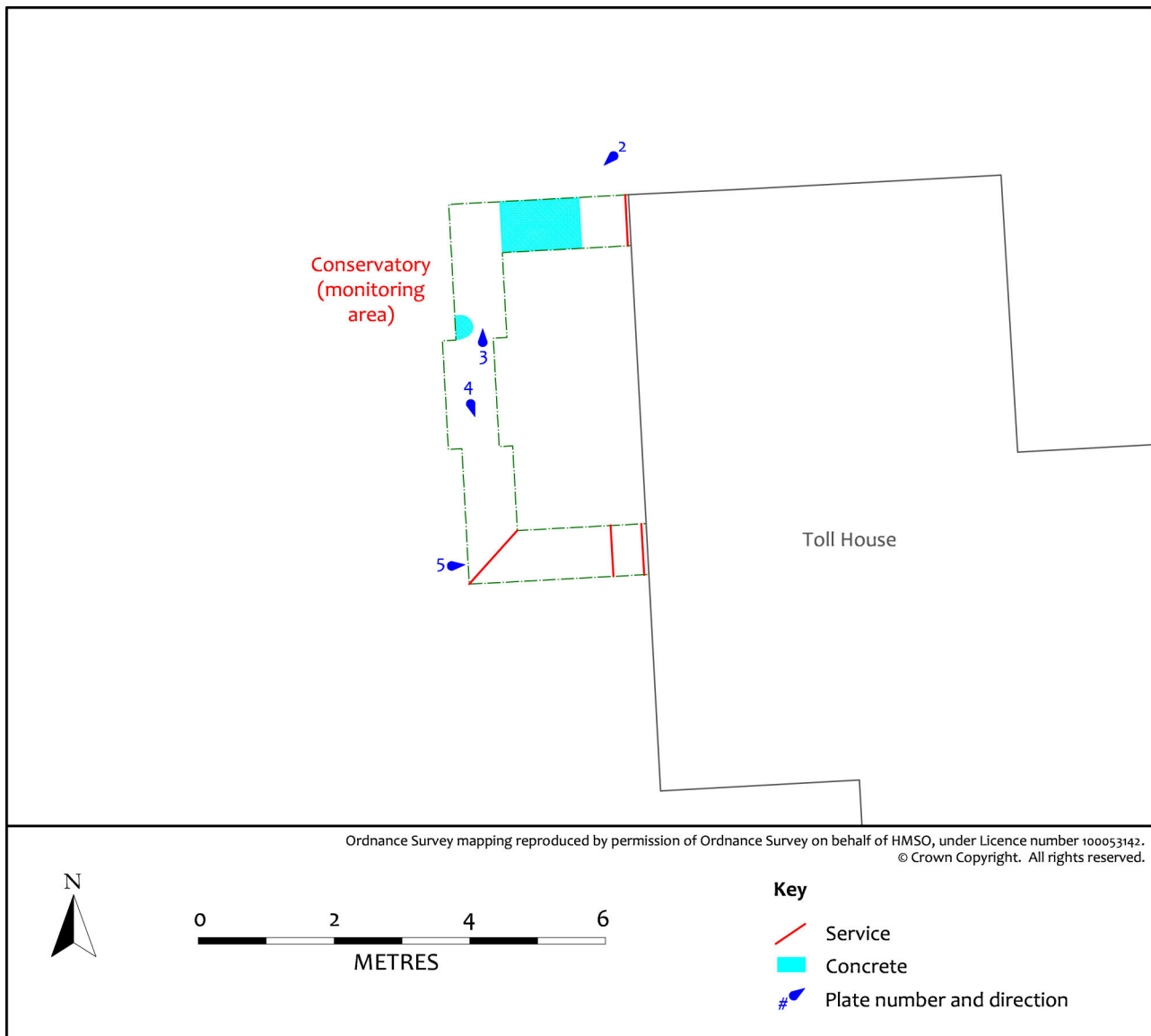


Figure 5. Detail of the trenching plan, showing the modern services and concrete.

2.65m, the western leg measured 5.6m and the northern trench leg measured 2.65m. All trench legs achieved a maximum depth of 0.8m below the original ground surface. The trenching system can be seen on Figure 5.

- 3.2.2 Three modern services were uncovered during the trench excavations, all within the southern trench leg. These services included two 4" plastic service ducts and a 2" plastic conduit for lighting. The 2" lighting conduit was located immediately against the existing western gable of Toll House, aligned north by south and observed at a depth of 0.4m. This conduit was also observed within the northern trench leg at the same depth and alignment and continued through the limits of excavation to the north. The two 4" plastic service ducts were observed lying directly upon natural deposit (4) at a depth of 0.65m with one aligned north by south and the second aligned northeast by southwest: no initial or termination points for these service ducts were observed.
- 3.2.3 Above the natural geology (4) was a deposit of mixed redeposited clay (3), firm and quite sandy, mid to dark brown in colour with numerous and frequent small stones included and measuring up to 0.55m in thickness; also included within this deposit was a range of various modern waste construction debris in the form of broken brick, roofing slate, degraded concrete and precast paving and metal fixings (nails and washers). The observed plastic service ducts described above were cut through this deposit. This redeposited clay had an overall disturbed appearance and





Plate 2. The northern trench leg looking southwest showing concrete slab

Plate 3. The western trench leg, northern half looking north during excavation







Plate 4. The western trench leg, southern half looking southeast

Plate 5. The southern trench leg looking east





represented an infilling/levelling deposit associated with a prior construction phase belonging to Toll House, likely to form the flagged patio surface that was removed prior to the current trench leg excavations.

- 3.2.4 Above this redeposited clay (3) was a bedding deposit (2) consisting of small pea gravels and grey shingle mixed randomly with a creamy yellow screed, which measured 0.15m in thickness. It was firm with a slight compaction possibly due to rolling or the action of machine plate compactors across the surface of the deposit. This material was a bedding deposit for the upper flagged surface (1) which consisted of square buff coloured weathered flagstones each measuring 0.50m by 0.50m with a thickness of 0.15m.

### 3.3 Observed Geology

- 3.3.1 Natural geology (4) was observed within all legs of the trench network system at a level of 0.65m below the original ground surface, and comprised glacial till consisting of interleaving bands of clay and laminated sandstone, yellow-brown in colour with a slight compaction. The material was gritty and sandy: the upper surface of the sandstone within the southern leg was smooth and worn, with the same deposit observed within the western and northern legs albeit with a more fractured and angular upper surface appearance.

## 4. DISCUSSION

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### 4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 The groundworks were monitored on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The natural substrate comprising sandstone and interleaving boulder clay/glacial till was observed on the base of all foundation trench legs. Over the natural substrate was a layer of redeposited clay containing modern construction debris and services, over which was the bedding material and in turn the flagged patio surface.
- 4.1.2 No features associated with the potential Roman or Early medieval activity on the site were observed within the trench network, with the modern nature of the overburden suggesting that the area was stripped during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the process of which may have removed any subsoil features associated with earlier habitation on the site.

### 4.2 Recommendations

- 4.2.1 It is recommended that no further archaeological work is required within the confines of planning application 20/04147/FUL.

## 5. REPOSITORIES AND SOURCES

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### 5.1 Repositories

#### 5.1.1 Online:

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>  
Historic England Archive. Online at <http://archive.historicengland.org.uk>  
Keys to the Past. Online at <http://www.keystothepast.info>  
PastScape Project. Online at <http://www.pastscape.org.uk/default.aspx>  
Portable Antiquities Scheme. Online at <https://finds.org.uk/>  
ViewFinder Project. Online at <http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/>

#### 5.1.2 Record Offices/archives:

Newcastle City Library. Local studies section, Princess Square, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE99 1DX  
Durham Record Office. County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL  
Tyne and Wear Archives. Blandford House, Blandford Square, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4JA  
Vindomora Solutions Ltd Archive. Prospect House, Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, County Durham DH8 7PW

#### 5.1.3 Other:

Google Earth Pro

### 5.2 Sources

#### 5.2.1 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists:

(2014) *Code of Conduct*.  
(2014) *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*.  
(2014) *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*.

#### 5.2.2 Department for Communities and Local Government:

(rev. 2019) *Communities and Local Government: National Planning Policy Framework*

#### 5.2.3 English Heritage:

(2008) *Conservation Principles - Policies and Guidance*  
(1991) *Managing Archaeological Projects*. Second edition  
(2010) *Measured and Drawn - Techniques and practice for the metric survey of historic buildings*

#### 5.2.4 Historic England:

(2015) *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment - The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*

#### 5.2.5 Ordnance Survey mapping:

1861, 1862 Town Plan, 1896 Town Plan, 1898, 1940, 1952, 1970 and 2021 editions

#### 5.2.6 Research Frameworks:

Petts, D. & Gerrard, C. (2006) *Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment*. Durham