

Alison Clarke
Archaeological Consultant

18 Ash Grove, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 1RQ
Tel 0609 776501 Fax 0609 779968

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CATARACTONIUM ROMAN STATION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

ON

A6136 ROADWORKS

FOR

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

WATCHING BRIEF AT CATARACTONIUM ROMAN FORT FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY HIGHWAYS

INTRODUCTION

In February and March 1994, North Yorkshire County Highway Department undertook re-kerbing work on the A6136 west of the A1. The work involved the removal and relaying of existing kerbs, along with the associated footpath in places, the stripping of the top layer of the highway and relaying, and the moving of two existing gullies.

Part of the work was to take place within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Cataractonium Roman Station, so Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent was sought and granted subject to an archaeological watching brief on all ground disturbance work.

CATARACTONIUM

The Roman occupation of Catterick began with a fort of the 1st century A.D., which had a civilian settlement nearby to the east. Both fort and civilian settlement had varied fortunes over the centuries, but military occupation seems to have continued up to the 4th century and pottery and rebuilding indicates some occupation into the 5th century.

The area occupied by the Roman settlement extended both north and south of the River Swale along the route of Dere Street, and excavation in the past has revealed extensive remains both from within the scheduled area of the fort and from Roman and post-Roman settlement in the vicinity.

The site is a nationally important one in terms of its potential for revealing elements of Roman military history, its evidence of civilian settlement in a northern context, and its evidence of late Roman and post-Roman occupation. This importance is reflected in the scheduled area which covers the fort and town areas north and south of the Swale.

THE WATCHING BRIEF

The watching brief was carried out between 11 February and 4 March 1994. The stripping of the top surface of the road did not impinge on previously undisturbed layers in any place. The removal of the old kerbs on the southern side of the road involved the excavation of a trench 40 cm wide, 29 cm down from the verge and footpath. This did not extend below or beyond the existing road make-up. The kerbs on the north side of the road were buried beneath the road surface, but a similar trench to remove them did not extend beneath or beyond the existing road make-up, apart from a slight disturbance of the turf and topsoil of the grass verge at the road edge.

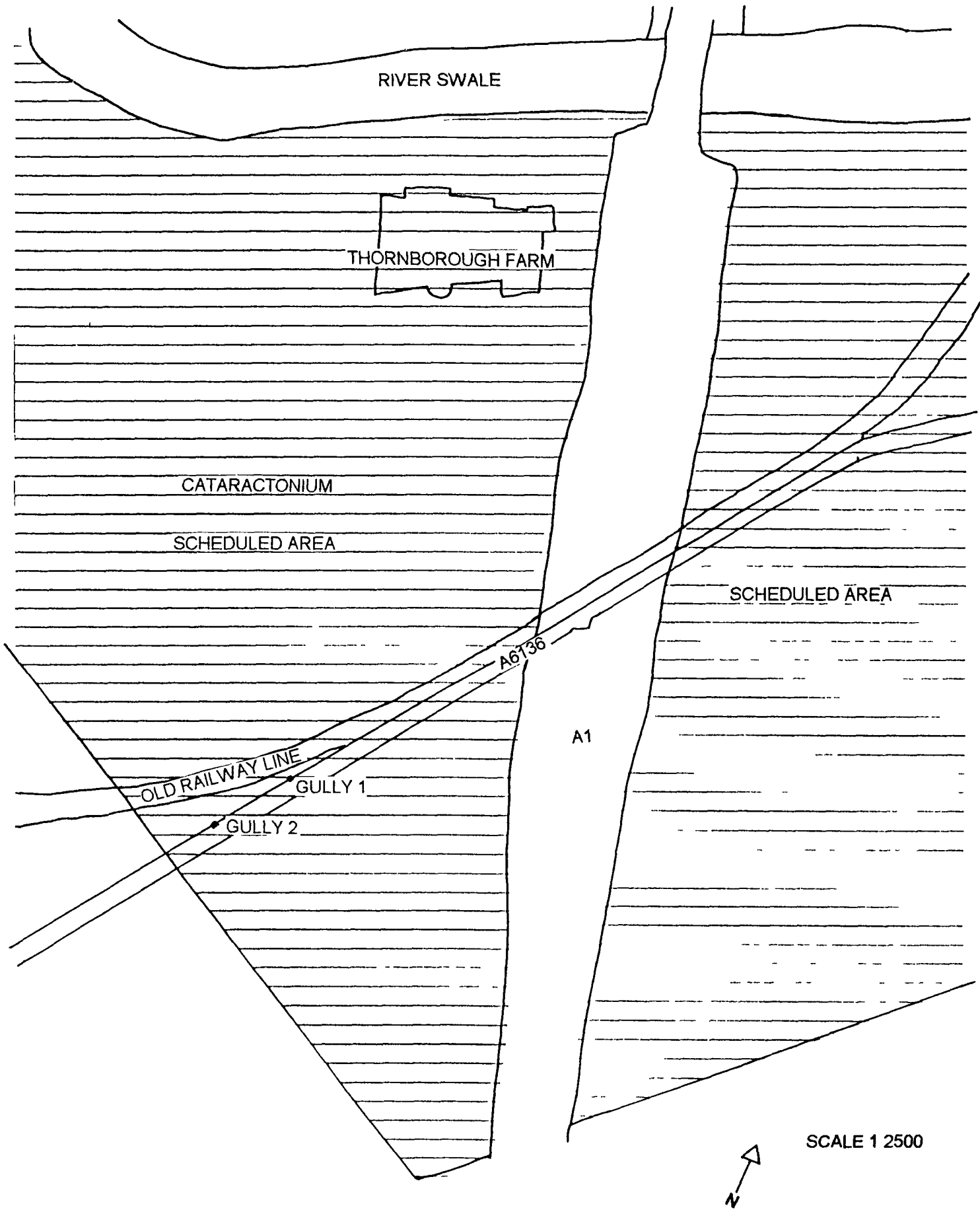
Two existing gullies, which were positioned in the grass verge on the northern side of the road, were moved out slightly into the road. This involved the removal of the stone setts around the gullies and the

ceramic drains, and the excavation of a new hole at the road side (see plans 2 and 3)

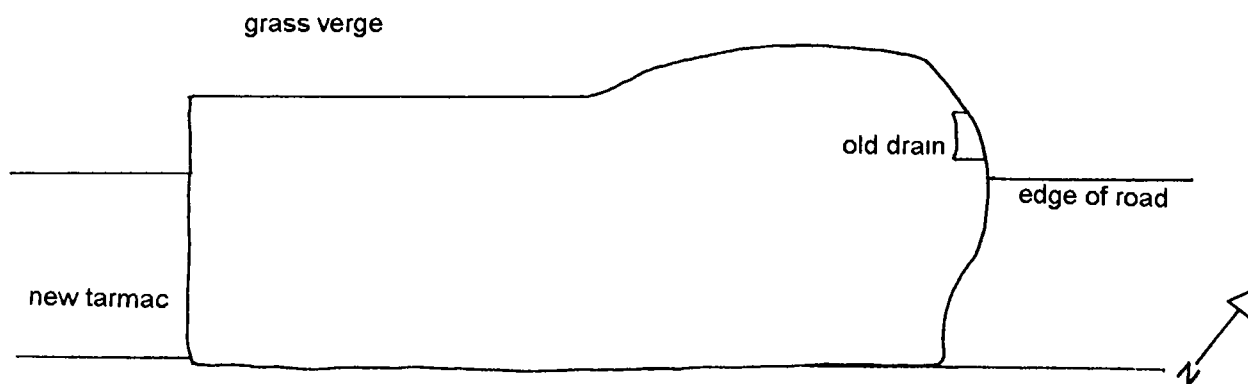
The first, gully 1, was 70 cm wide by 200 cm long, and was 125 cm deep, and contained 50 cm of road fill, below which a fine mid brown loam merged into grey-brown clay at 115 cm below the surface. The second hole, gully 2, was 75 cm by 140 cm, and was 114 cm deep. Immediately below the 50 cm of road fill was a mixed light brown stony loam containing some large cobbles, which overlay brown clay at 96 cm below the surface. No features or artefacts of archaeological interest were observed.

Alison Clarke

March 1994

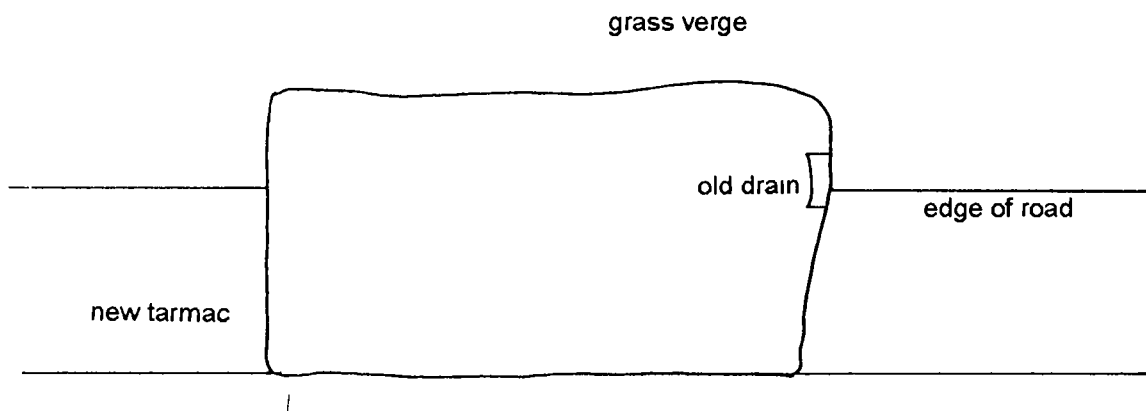


CATTERICK BRIDGE PLAN 1



CATTERICK BRIDGE PLAN 2 GULLY 1

SCALE 1 20



CATTERICK BRIDGE PLAN 3 GULLY 2