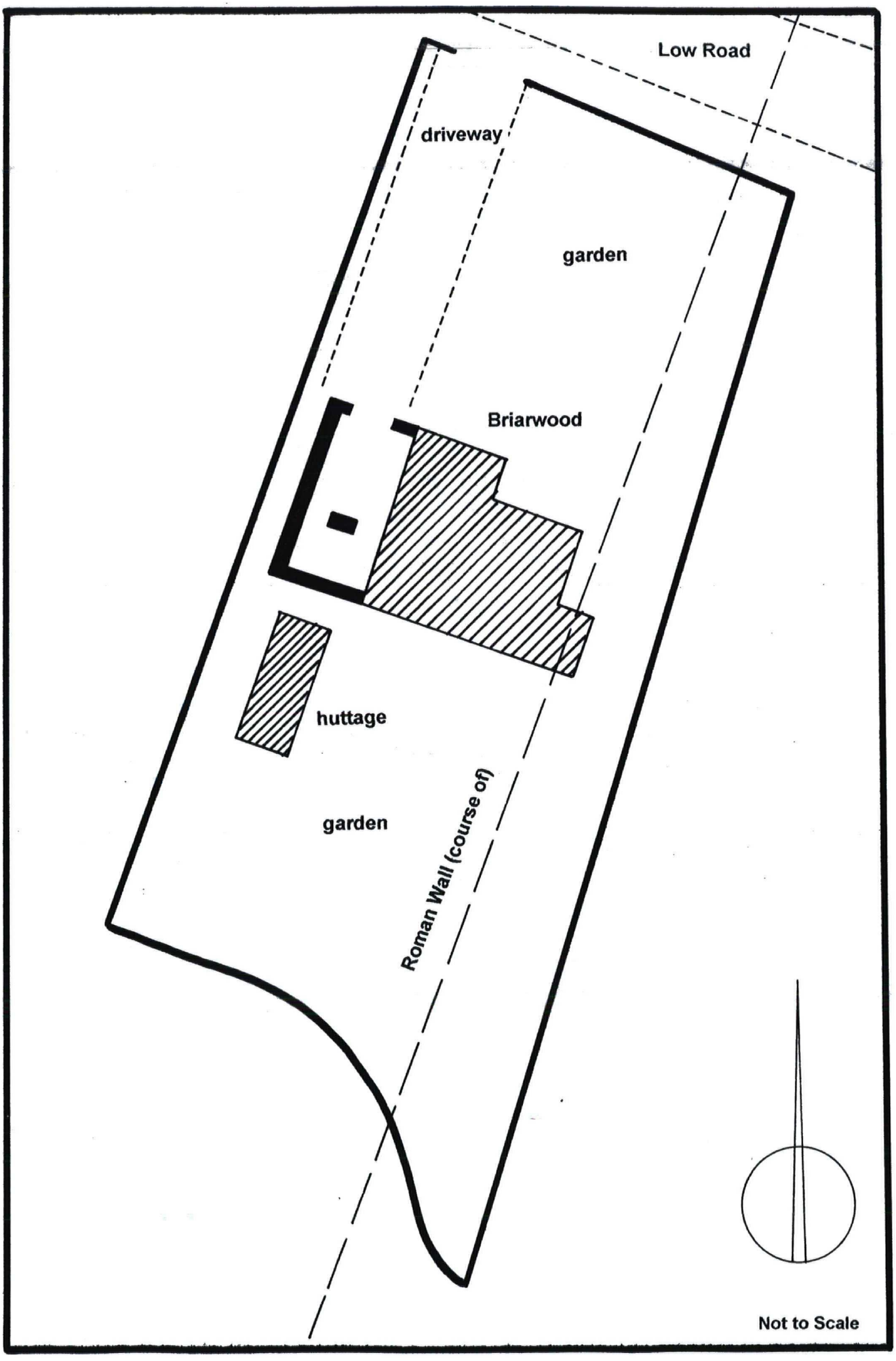
Plate 1

General shot of study area, facing south.

FIGURE 2 SITE PLAN



were situated to the west of the study area.

To the west of the study area a recent programme of Archaeological works were undertaken along Back Lane on the village sewage network by Kevin Cale for Harrogate Borough Council / Yorkshire Water Services Ltd (07/97). These works failed to identify any significant archaeological features or deposits, the stratigraphy had been heavily disturbed over the last 250 years by successive service trench excavations.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The existing site is occupied by a detached two storey dwelling with a attached single storey structure compromising Garage, Storage and Covered Way. The existing development is centrally located within a sub-rectangular property parcel that fronts onto Low Lane. The dwelling is accessed by a drive from Low lane and is surrounded by gardens.

The existing ground level across the study area occupies an elevated aspect overlooking Low Lane, the site slopes downwards, gently, to the north from 22.316 m AOD to Low Lane at 20.000 m AOD.

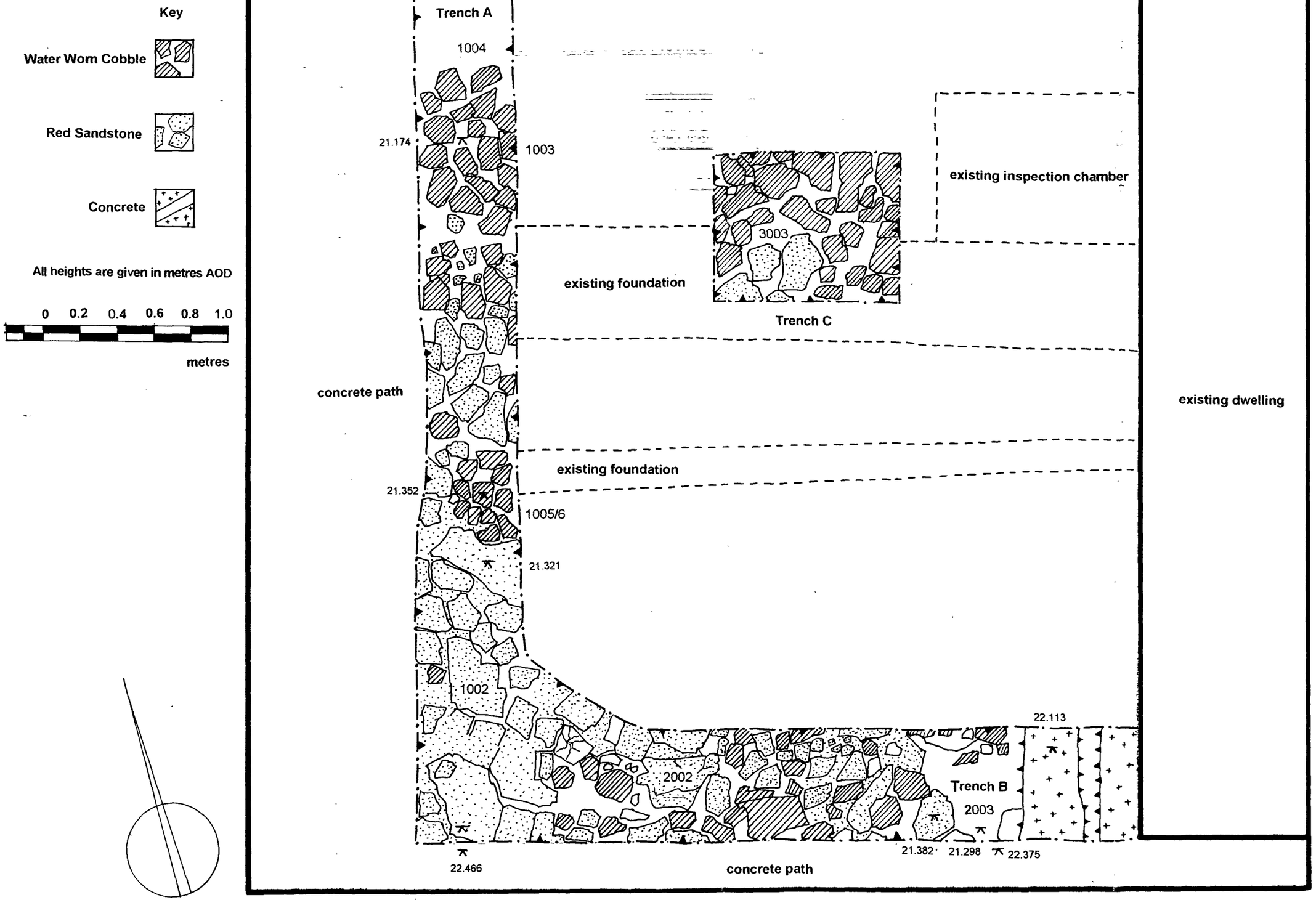
THE AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

It is acknowledged that the study area may well contain the remains of the Roman and Medieval occupation of Aldborough, however, from the results of the desk top study it is anticipated that there has been a high level of ground disturbance across the site.

The greater proportion of the proposed extension lies within the footprint of the existing single storey garage and outbuildings, the foundations for the new building run adjacent and parallel to the existing foundations. The southern extent of the proposed building extend up to 1.7 metres beyond the curtilage of the existing development into a potential area of less heavily disturbed ground.

In my opinion, due to the above there was a low probability that archaeology survived in situ within the proposed development area. Should any archaeology survive in situ it was likely that this would comprise of Post Medieval and Medieval deposits and possibly structural remains associated with the tenement strips and these will all most certainly overly a stratified sequence of deposits associated with the Roman perimeter defences.

FIGURE 3 TRENCH A , B, C



It was recommended that an archaeologist was appointed to maintain a Watching Brief on the machine excavations and removal of the overburden from the line of the proposed strip foundations.

Following this the Archaeologist should then excavate the strip foundations, by hand, until the required depth of dig has been achieved.

A total of 4 foundation trench's were excavated, these measured in total 16.0m long x 1.15 m deep x 0.70m wide.

Prior to the works commencing it had been anticipated that additional archaeological input would be required in the excavation of up to two lengths of surface water drainage trench, with a combined length of 3.0 m, together with the excavation of two lengths of foul water drain, with a combined length of 4.5m. On the conclusion of the strip foundation trench's it was confirmed that these excavations would be restricted to those areas of disturbed ground and as such were not subjected to archaeological investigation.

The aims of the archaeological investigation were to:

a. record any finds, features or structures of archaeological interest and obtain information on the presence, extent, character, date and depth of these remains.

b. The archaeology was recorded using professionally approved techniques, standard forms and conventions.

c. Liaise with the client, English Heritage (EH), and the Architect, Mr.D.Brench regarding recommendations to the proposed development to ensure the minimum damage to any significant archaeological remains which have been identified at or above the maximum depth of excavation; and

d. to assess the importance of any remains found and interpret them in terms of their historical context.

CONCLUSION

The recent archaeological investigation conducted by Mr.K.J.Cale for Mr. & Mrs.Elgin at Briarwood, Low Lane, Aldborough has provided further details concerning the nature, layout and development of the settlement.

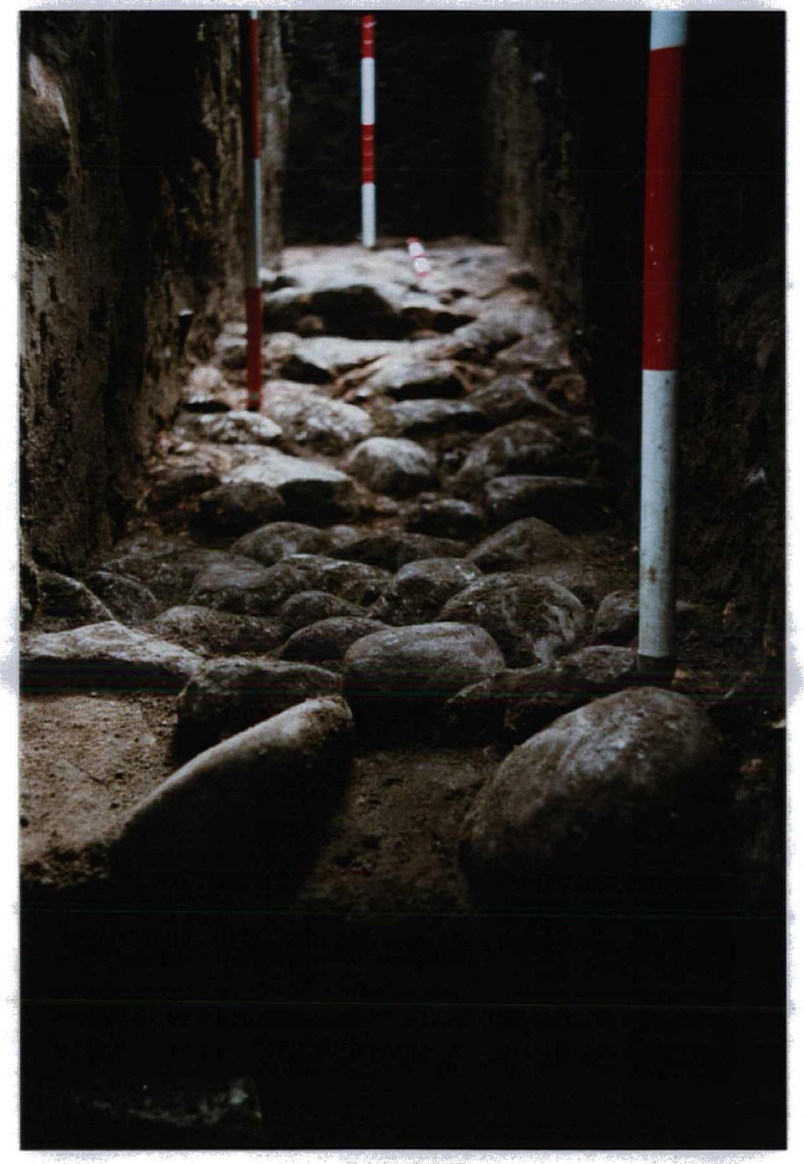
Natural sub-soil was not encountered within the trench excavations.

Plate 2 & 3

Trench A, Late Roman Structure (context 1002), facing north.

Trench A, Late Roman Structure (context 1002) including posthole (context 1005/6), facing south.

Trench A, Late Roman Structure, posthole (context 1005/6), facing west.



Trench A, Late Roman Structure, (context 1003/4), facing south.

The remains of a demolished building were identified within the south western quadrant of the site. This rectilinear feature consisted of a cobble filled foundation trench that enclosed a layer of red sandstone. The surface of this structure was bedded relatively level at 21.321 metres AOD. The red sandstone consisted of a heavily crazed and disarranged layer of slab like fragments that had been subjected to a high level of trampling. A cobble filled post hole was identified within the northern extent of this layer of sandstone. The internal surface of the structure was imbedded with Late Roman pottery and fired clay roof tile. The foundation trench's for the structure had been cut into a layer of what appeared to be a buried top soil that contained Late Roman pottery and a small quantity of butchered animal bone.

The form and nature of this structure and the associated layer of buried top soil were not investigated as they were identified at and below the required depth of dig. However, the remains are consistent with the structural components of a stone and timber building that was roofed in fired clay tiles and that may well date to the Late Roman period. The building would have been located within the eastern extent of the defended settlement immediately adjacent to the perimeter wall.

The structural remains were sealed by a single, overall, layer of buried top soil. This layer of sandy loam measured up to 1.20m in depth and contained a very low quantity of inclusions. The finds recovered from this layer were predominantly Late Roman with the occasional sherd of 19th century pottery, the latter was recovered from the interface with the existing ground levels and would appear to be the result of recent disturbance.

The presence of such a large volume of a topsoil that has no variation in colour, texture inclusions or finds that would suggest a protracted sequence of deposition would suggest that the layer was deposited in a single programme of landfill / landscaping works. The date for this earth movement is difficult to establish but from the absence of an interface on the surface of the structural remains a Late Roman date would be the most likely. However, this still leaves one obvious question unanswered, what was the reasoning behind this earth movement.

No evidence was found to support any Anglo - Scandinavian, Medieval or Post Medieval occupation of the site.

Further to my discussions with Mr.O'Brian, Building Inspector, Harrogate Borough Council it was agreed that the structural remains could remain in-situ beneath the concrete foundations. The Contractor John Ellis Builders Ltd. kindly agreed to seal the feature with a plastic membrane overlaid with sand in an attempt to conserve same.

Plate 6

Trench B, Late Roman Structure, (context 2002), facing west.

Plate 7

Trench B, Late Roman Structure, (context 2002), facing east.

A small quantity of finds were recovered from these excavations, this assemblage was predominantly Late Roman pottery and animal bone. Discussions are presently underway with Mr.& Mrs Elgin regarding the future analysis and curation of this material.

Kevin John Cale **July 1998**

APPENDIX A

Foundation Trench Excavations

Trench A

Type:	Foundation : strip : hand
N.G.R:	440756 466327
Length:	16.0 metres
Width:	0.54 metre
Depth:	1.50 metre
Planform:	Liner
Aligned:	North
Area:	8.60 square metres
Context No's:	1000 - 1006
Plate No:	2 -5
Fig. No:	3

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the west elevation of the proposed extension. The trench was excavated parallel to the line of an existing paved footway. The trench was contained to the west by the concrete, strip, foundations of the former extension (context 1000). The line of the trench was intersected by two, existing, concrete foundations, the location of one of which corresponded exactly with that of the proposed partition wall. The existing ground levels slope very gently downwards to the north. On the removal of recently deposited demolition rubble and overburden the trench was excavated into a single layer of buried topsoil.

The dark brown (7.5YR4/3) layer of sandy loam (context 1001) was friable, relatively dry and well drained. The layer contained a low quantity of inclusions. The surface of the layer was relatively level and comparable with the fall of the existing ground level. The layer was identified along the entire length of the trench and was found to extend beyond in to Trench B (context 2001) and Trench C (context 3001) Areas of this layer had been cut and disturbed during the excavations for the former foundations, there were also indications that the surface of the layer had been disturbed during the recent demolition works, this has resulted in the trampling and the contamination of this layer with 19th century pottery and glass. Upon excavation it was revealed that the layer contained a moderate quantity of Roman pottery. The layer exceeded 1.0 m in depth and consisted of a single, overall deposit, with no subtle variations within the nature and colouration of the layer to suggest a protracted period of deposition or the accumulation of a series of tippings. But rather the evidence would suggest that it arrived on site as a result of a single programme of landfill / landscaping works.

The base of the buried top soil was reached at 21.321 metres AOD. The layer was found to seal a layer of red sandstone (context 1002) and towards the northern extent of the trench a layer of loamy sand (context 1004).

The red sandstone layer was made up of fragmented slabs, that were heavily crazed and well compacted. The surface was relatively level, sloping downwards to the north on a very gentle gradient, the surface extended to the east within Trench B (context 2002). The layer had the appearance of a heavily trampled surface. The surface appears to have been cut by a post hole (context 1005), this circular feature had a diameter of 0.48 m and had been backfilled with a cobble fill (context 1006).

To the north the red sandstone layer was contained by a concentration of water worn cobbles (context 1003). The level of the adjacent surfaces was comparable, with that of the cobbles slightly depressed and undulating. It is suspected that the cobbles were multiple in depth, with each cobble measuring less than 0.20 m in size. It appeared that the cobbles were bedded within a layer of buried topsoil (context 1004) The cobbles were restricted to a narrow strip measuring 1.30 m wide with no indication that they had ever continued to the north or south of same. This may suggest that the cobbles were contained within a construction trench and as such formed the foundations for a timber/stone building.

To the north of these structural features within Trench A a buried topsoil was identified (context 1004) this layer of light/medium brown (7.5YR4/3) loamy sand was dry and well compacted. The matrix contained a low quantity of inclusions, namely lenses of yellow brown sand together with occasional fragments of crushed fired clay tile. The matrix was very similar to the more recent deposit, context 1001, the interface between these two layers was not clear. The layer has the characteristics of a buried topsoil and it's relationship with the structural feature to the south may suggest that the layer is a late roman topsoil. The layer was found to exceed 0.30m in depth, the layer was identified within the base of the trench excavation.

Trench B

Type:	Foundation : strip : hand
N.G.R:	440757 466323
Length:	3.90 metres
Width:	0.60 metre
Depth:	1.15 metre
Planform:	Liner
Aligned:	East
Area:	2.34 square metres
Context No's:	2000 - 2003
Plate No:	6,7
Fig. No:	3

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the south elevation of the proposed extension. The trench was excavated parallel to the line of an existing paved footway. The trench was excavated into the former flower beds situated to the south of the concrete, strip, foundations of the former extension. The line of the trench was intersected by a concrete encased drain. The existing ground levels were relatively level. On the removal of recently deposited topsoil (context 2000) the trench was excavated into a single layer of buried topsoil.

The medium brown (7.5YR3/2) layer of sandy loam (context 2001) was moderately well compacted, relatively dry and well drained. The layer contained a low quantity of inclusions. The surface of the layer was relatively level. The layer was identified along the entire length of the trench and was found to extend beyond in to Trench A (context 1001). Upon excavation it was revealed that the layer contained a moderate quantity of Roman pottery, together with occasional sherds of 19th century pottery. The layer exceeded 1.0 m in depth and consisted of a single, overall deposit, with no subtle variations within the nature and colouration of the layer to suggest a protracted period of deposition or the accumulation of a series of tippings. But rather the evidence would suggest that it arrived on site as a result of a single programme of landfill / landscaping works.

The base of the buried top soil was reached at 21.342 metres AOD. The layer was found to seal a layer of red sandstone (context 2002). The red sandstone layer was made up of fragmented slabs, that were heavily crazed and well compacted, together with occasional water worn cobbles. The surface was relatively level, sloping downwards to the south on a very gentle gradient, the surface extended to the west within Trench A (context 1002). The layer had the appearance of a heavily trampled surface. Towards the eastern extent of the trench the ratio of water worn cobbles within this layer began to increase, it would appear that these were bedded within a layer of buried topsoil (context 2003).

This layer of light/medium brown (7.5YR4/3) loamy sand was dry and well compacted. The matrix contained a low quantity of inclusions, namely lenses of yellow brown sand together with occasional fragments of crushed fired clay tile. The matrix was very similar to the more recent deposit, context 2001, the interface between these two layers was not clear. The layer has the characteristics of a buried topsoil and it's relationship with the structural feature to the south may suggest that the layer is a late roman topsoil. The layer was found to exceed 0.20m in depth, the layer was identified within the base of the trench excavation.

Trench C

Type:	Foundation : strip : hand
N.G.R:	440758 466327
Length:	0.90 metres
Width:	0.40 metre
Depth:	1.18 metre
Planform:	Liner
Aligned:	East
Area:	0.36 square metres
Context No's:	3000 - 3003
Plate No:	-
Fig. No:	3

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the internal partition wall of the proposed extension. The trench was excavated on the line of the former partition wall and was also intersected by a former brick, inspection chamber. The existing ground levels slope very gently downwards to the north. On the removal of recently deposited demolition rubble (context 3000) and overburden the trench was excavated into a single layer of buried topsoil.

The medium brown (7.5YR3/2) layer of sandy loam (context 3001) was moderately well compacted, relatively dry and well drained. The layer contained a low quantity of inclusions. The surface of the layer was relatively level. The layer was identified along the entire length of the trench and was found to extend beyond in to Trench A (context 1001). Upon excavation it was revealed that the layer contained a moderate quantity of Roman pottery, together with occasional sherds of 19th century pottery. The layer measured 0.80 m in depth and consisted of a single, overall deposit, with no subtle variations within the nature and colouration of the layer to suggest a protracted period of deposition or the accumulation of a series of tippings. But rather the evidence would suggest that it arrived on site as a result of a single programme of landfill / landscaping works.

The base of the buried top soil was reached at 21.190 metres AOD. The layer was found to seal a concentration of water worn cobbles (context 3003). This structural layer was made up of water worn cobbles and occasional fragments of red sandstone (these were concentrated within the southern extent of the trench) the surface of the latter were heavily crazed, well compacted and was relatively level. The same structural feature extends to the west within Trench A (context 1003). The layer had the appearance of a cobble filled foundation trench.