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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING AT
MOOR END FIRING RANGE,
WATHGILL, CATTERICK GARRISON.**

A report to White Young Green Consulting Engineers.

5th August, 2001

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING AT
MOOR END FIRING RANGE, WATHGILL,
CATTERICK GARRISON.**

Grid ref. ??

1. Instructions were received from White Young Green Consulting Ltd for the execution of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording in connection with the construction of a new 600 metre firing range at Wathgill Camp, Catterick Garrison. Fieldwork was carried out in late July, 2001.
2. Work was conducted according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by the Environmental Services Department of North Yorkshire County Council and dated January 2001.
3. The site is part of an extensive area of unimproved moorland pasture, partly used for grazing but predominantly in use as a training area for the Ministry of Defence. Visible archaeology in the immediate area is mainly in the form of slight and vague vestiges of former industry (quarrying and mining), though there is considerable evidence of prehistoric activity on generally similar land within a few kilometres. The surface geology is of boulder clay with a few patches of peat and of fluvio-glacial gravel.
4. For the purposes of the archaeological recording, the site was divided into three Areas, shown on Fig.1. Monitoring and recording consisted of:
 - (i) A watching brief maintained during stripping of topsoil in Area 1 (where the buildings associated with the firing range were to be erected).
 - (ii) A watching brief maintained during topsoil stripping over the full area of the range as defined by Area 3.
 - (iii) The excavation and recording of a section across a boundary feature located in Area 2.
5. Watching briefs were carried out on behalf of the contractors: the excavation and recording of the boundary section on behalf of White Young Green (Consulting Engineers).

THE WATCHING BRIEFS

6. Monitoring was maintained during topsoil stripping, and stripped areas were inspected before heavy traffic had moved over them. Dry conditions had ensured a clean strip, and that any sub-surface disturbance was likely to be readily visible. A check of heaps of loose spoil was also carried out.
7. Results were entirely negative. No feature or structure of archaeological interest was discovered. No loose object of interest was found (indeed, apart from cartridge cases and similar martial *detritus*, no artefact at all was recovered).

SECTION OF BOUNDARY FEATURE

8. The boundary feature was aligned north-south, and followed the western edge of a small gill or watercourse which was, at the time of the fieldwork, entirely dry. The southern part of the boundary was visible as a ruinous dry-stone wall, standing to a height of about a metre and built of irregular quarried stone, with some more rounded boulders which were presumably derived from the glacial clitter. The wall appeared to stand upon a low earthen bank, but it was by no means clear from surface indications whether this bank was a distinct (and probably earlier) feature, or merely the product of decay and the accumulation of loose material around the base of the wall.

9. The boundary feature did not stand alone, but was part of a distinct system of enclosures which was further visible both to north and south of the investigated area. These features appear no different from the many other walls and enclosures general in the area and originating (where datable) in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They appear consistent with the enclosures shown on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map of the area (1857), and the general appearance and state of preservation are much the same as those of others in this part of the Defence Estates which are certainly of early nineteenth century date (*e.g.* in the vicinity of Cordilleras and Feldom Gate).

10. A broad section of the boundary feature, measuring 3 metres long by three metres broad, was excavated near its northern end, at a point at which little of the standing dry-stone wall survived (Fig. 2). Turf was stripped using a JCB excavator; further excavation and cleaning were thereafter carried out using hand tools. The deposits identified were as follow:

[001] 10-12 cms. of rough turf, with some stones protruding in places.

[002] A bank of loose, grey-brown clay soil, crumbly in texture, with considerable root penetration and containing large stones, the remains of the ruinous dry-stone wall. This bank reached a maximum height of 46 cms. above the underlying natural clay.

[003] Undisturbed, natural, orange-brown boulder clay.

[004] At the extreme western edge of the section, the natural clay dropped sharply and was overlaid by an orange-brown clay soil generally similar to the natural, but somewhat mixed with grey clay, and of a disturbed appearance. This was interpreted as a natural silt filling the edge of the natural gill or stream-bed.

11. No trace of any earlier boundary feature was found in the clay surface under the bank.

12. The complete absence of any buried soil or turf-line need not be seen as evidence for earlier stripping of soil from the site: in view of the very loose and porous nature of the material of the bank [002], it is very unlikely that anything of the sort would have survived.

13. There is nothing to suggest that the bank is anything other than the product of decay of the field-wall and of the accumulation of loose material against its foot: specifically, there is no evidence of any boundary feature earlier than the dry-stone wall which is still visible.

14. No artefact or other object was recovered during the excavation.

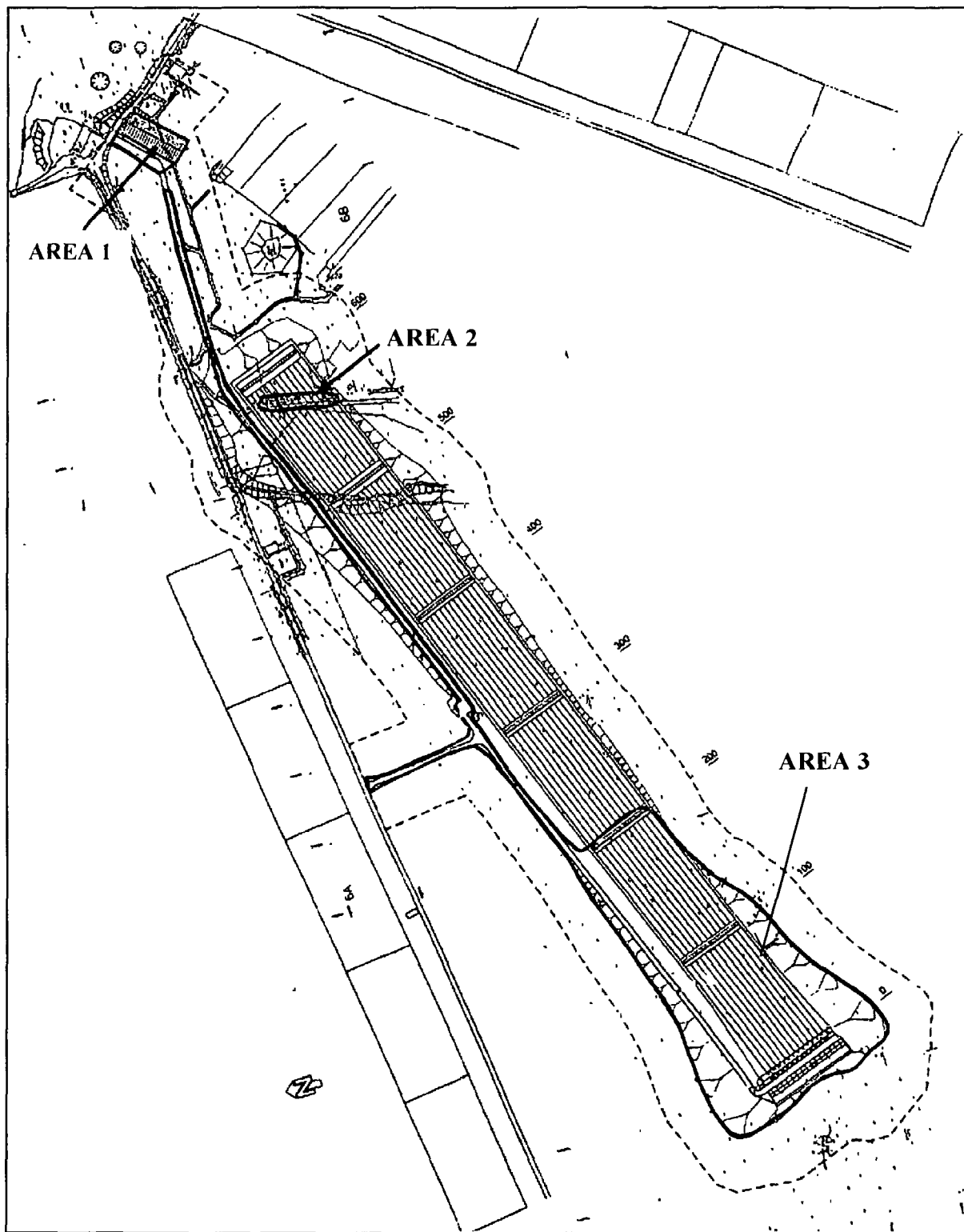
CONCLUSIONS

15. All evidence suggests that the boundary feature is merely a ruinous example of the field-walls found generally in the area, and that it is of later eighteenth-century or early nineteenth-century date.

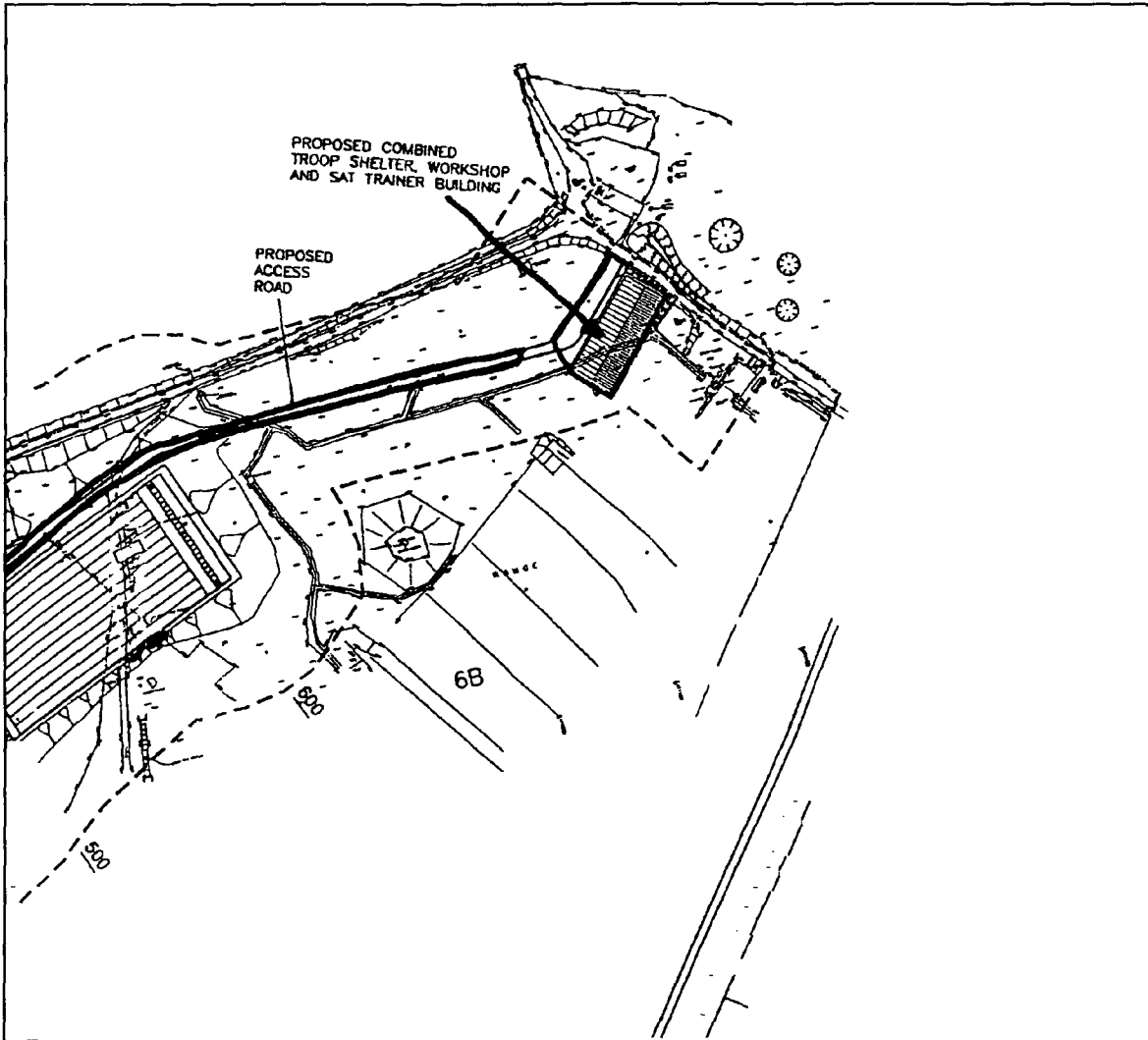
16. There is no evidence for anything else of archaeological significance in the area of the development.

17. No further archaeological intervention is required.

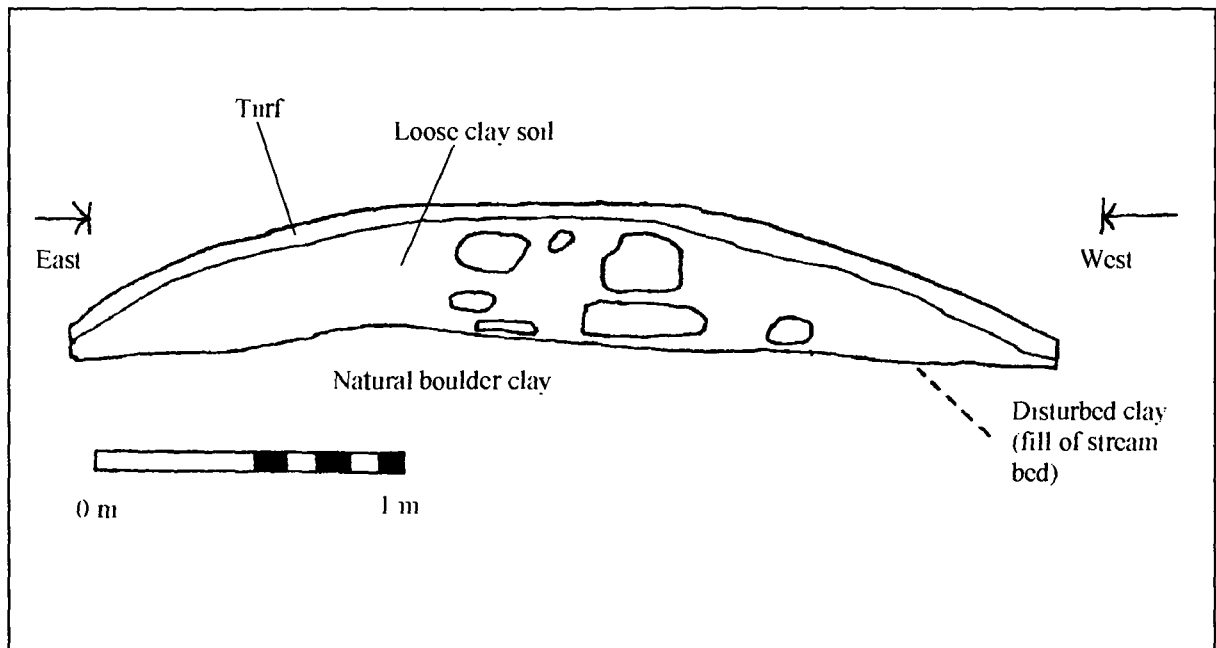
Percival Turnbull.
5th August, 2001



Archaeological monitoring and recording
Moor End Firing Range
Fig. 1
Site areas.



Archaeological monitoring and recording
Moor End Firing Range
Fig. 2
Location of trench (shown red)



Archaeological monitoring and re-
cording
Moor End Firing Range
Fig. 3
Section of boundary feature