



ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

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REPLACEMENT GAS MAIN

**679 WEST ROAD
DENTON BURN
TYNESIDE**

prepared for

Northern Gas Networks

Project No.: 1207
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NORTHERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES LTD

REPLACEMENT GAS MAIN, 679 WEST ROAD, DENTON BURN, TYNESIDE

Watching Brief Report

Site location: 679 West Road, Denton Burn, Tyneside

Grid reference: NZ 202 655 **Development:** Gas main

Client: Northern Gas Networks **Archaeological Consultant:** RSK Group plc

NAA Monitoring Archaeologist: Andrew Durkin

NAA Project Manager: Oliver Cooper

Date: 04/07/2014

NAA project number: 1207

Reasons for watching brief

The scheme comprised the installation of a short section of gas main to a shop at number 679 West Road, Denton Burn (Figure 1). The shop lay directly on the line of Hadrian's Wall; one section of wall foundations has been conserved within the grounds of *Kwik-Fit*, some 100m to the south-east. Another section- complete with a turret- lies 200m to the north-west. The First Edition 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey map of 1859-61 depicted the section of Hadrian's Wall preserved to the south-east, and marked the projected line of the wall through the site of the new gas main. Based on the scheme's location, its archaeological potential and a review of the Hadrian's Wall Research Framework (Symonds and Masson 2009), it was considered that the work had the potential to answer the following outline research questions:

- Is evidence of remains of the Wall or any features associated with it observable within the pipe trench and are these remains dateable?
- What is the state of preservation of any remains encountered?
- Is there any evidence for archaeological features related to other elements of the Hadrian's Wall complex of military defensive installations?
- Is there any observable evidence for Romano-British civilian settlement activity within the vicinity of Hadrian's Wall?

Results

The pipe was installed using directional drilling via three hand-excavated trenches (Figure 2). Trench 1 was the point of connection with the gas main within the pavement. It measured 1.4m north to south by 0.7m east to west and was 0.7m deep. The trench was entirely within the backfill of the existing main, comprising dark ashy gravelly silt.

Some 5.5m to the south, Trench 2 (Plate 1) was excavated within the concrete pavement and measured 1.05m by 0.55m by 0.75m deep. Below the concrete was orange-brown natural clay.

Trench 3 was approximately 5m to the south of Trench 2 and measured 1.1m by 0.56m by 0.54m deep, and incorporated a 0.25m wide, 0.3m deep slot connecting it to the building. Along the eastern half of the trench were the remains of an earlier concrete surface, some 0.25m below current ground level. The remainder of the trench was cut through natural orange-brown coarse clay sand.

No obstructions were encountered during the horizontal boring between the three trenches.

Discussion

No evidence for Hadrian's Wall, its foundations or associated Roman activity was observed during the archaeological watching brief. The presence of natural clay horizons immediately below the concrete suggested that the ground had been reduced prior to the construction of the shops in the 1930s/40s.

Reference

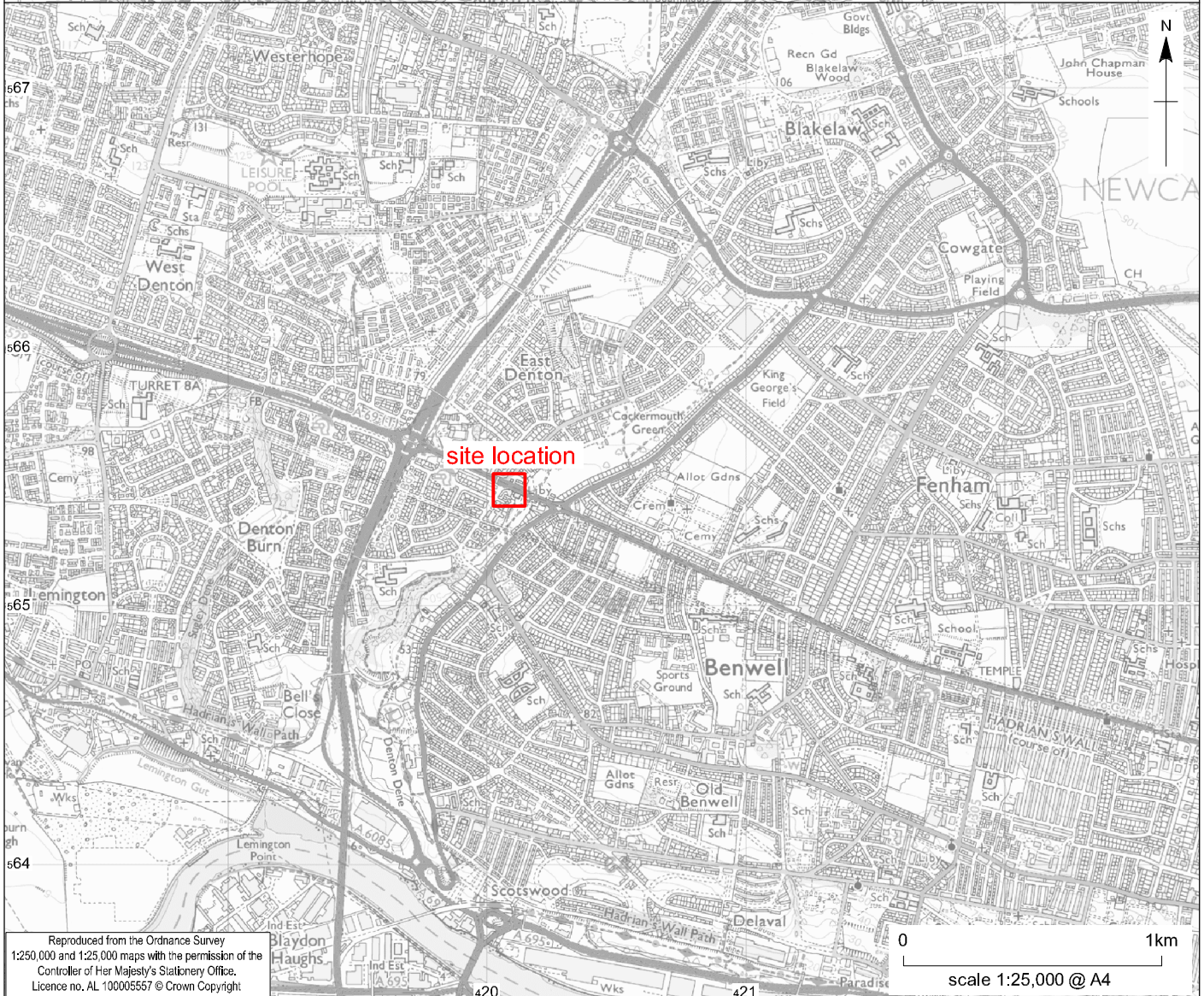
Symonds, M. and Mason, D. J. P. (Eds) (2009) *Frontiers of Knowledge: A Research Framework for Hadrian's Wall, Part of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site*.

Documentation: Digital photographs

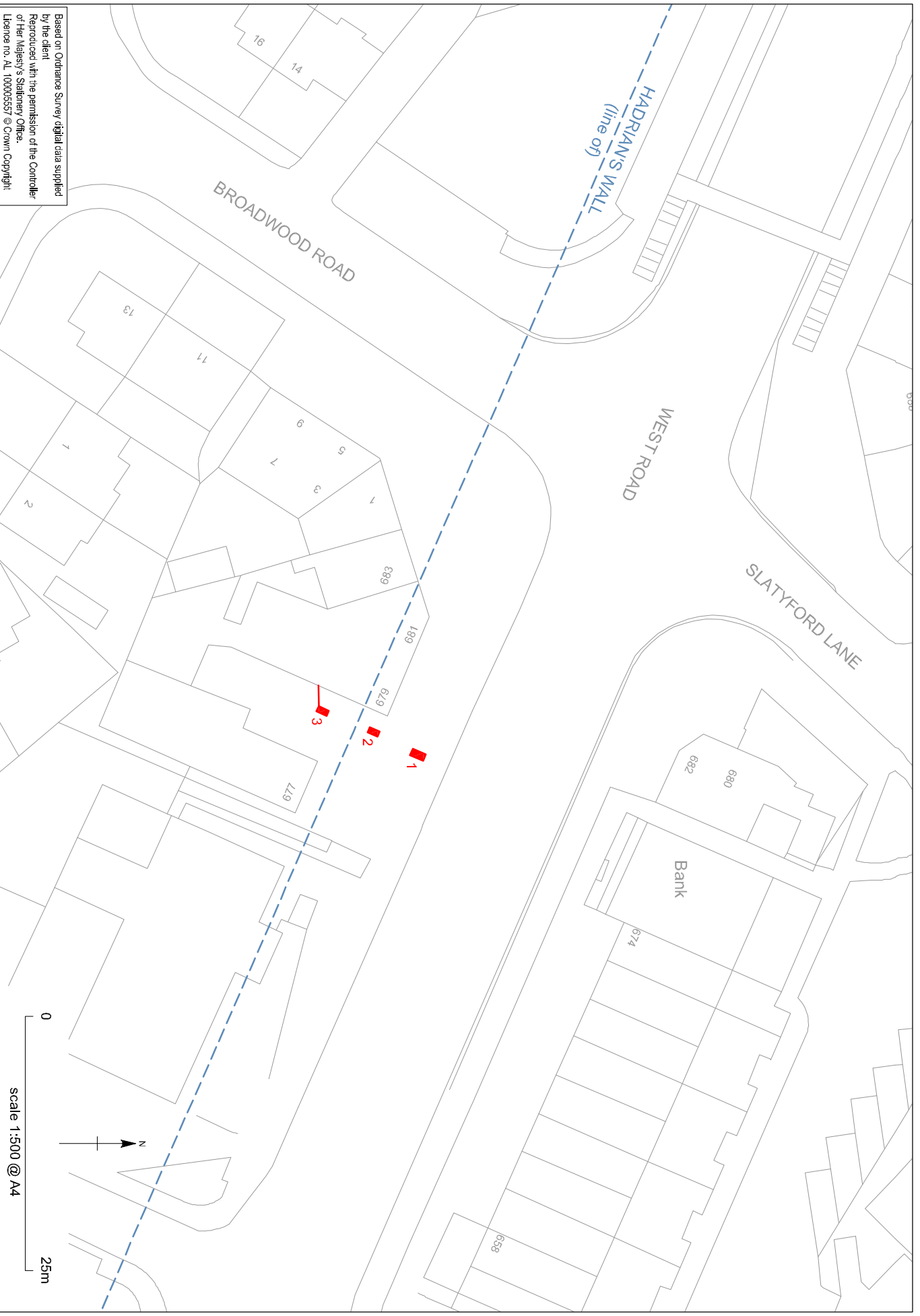
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679 West Road: trench location

Figure 2

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679 West Road: Trench 2

Plate 1