



ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

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REPLACEMENT GAS MAIN

WATLING ROAD BISHOP AUCKLAND

prepared for

Northern Gas Networks

Project No.: 1226
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NORTHERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES LTD

REPLACEMENT GAS MAIN, WATLING ROAD, BISHOP AUCKLAND

Archaeological Monitoring

Site name: Watling Road, Bishop Auckland **Grid reference:** NZ 2075 2795 (Fig 1)

Parish: The Parish of St Andrew with St Anne **District:** Bishop Auckland

County: County Durham

Administrative Authority: Durham County Council

Development: Gas main Renewal **Client:** Northern Gas Networks

Archaeological Consultant: RSK Group plc

NAA Monitoring Archaeologist: Kevin Collins **Project Manager:** Oliver Cooper

NAA Project No: 1226 **Dates:** 15/10/14 to 17/10/14

Reasons for watching brief

The excavations were on Watling Road, which is presumed to follow the course of Dere Street, the Roman road running from Catterick Bridge to Binchester, through Bishop Auckland. Dere Street is largely followed by modern roads and hedges (RSK 2014); excavated sections indicate that it was 15 feet wide with stone kerbs. Therefore there was the potential for groundworks to encounter archaeological remains relating to the road.

The archaeological monitoring had the potential to answer the following outline research questions:

- Is evidence of the remains of Dere Street or any features associated with it observable within the pipe trench and are these remains dateable?
- Has insertion of previous utilities removed all traces of Roman road construction at this location or have any remains survived?
- What impact does the replacement of existing utilities services have on the survival of archaeological remains at this location?
- What is the state of preservation of any remains encountered?
- Is there any archaeological evidence for factors which influenced the development of Dere Street?
- Is there any evidence for other archaeological features related to Dere Street?
- Is there any evidence for any earlier or Roman settlement, crafts and industries along the road at this location?

Methodology

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the machine-excavation of two pits (Figure 2) in the western pavement of Watling Road, adjacent to 'The Aclet' public house on Brooklands.

Results

Pit 1 was located 6m from the junction of the slip road leading from Brooklands to Watling road, and measured 4.2m north to south by 1.5m by 1.6m deep. The pit contained redeposited fill from the installation of gas mains, glazed surface water drains and water mains. On the south-eastern side of the pit was an earlier tarmac footpath laid upon a bed of crushed colliery waste at a depth of 0.4m. This footpath had been much denuded by recent excavations for a water main replacement. On the north-western side, the colliery waste was sealed by a cap of redeposited clay and modern garden soil (see Plate 1); no other features or pre-modern artefacts were observed.

Pit 2 measured 2.5m by 1.5m by 1.6m deep and was 1.3m away from the first pit. The deposit sequence was identical, and again there were no artefacts.

Conclusions

There was no evidence within the pipe trench of the remains of Dere Street or any features associated with it. The replacement of existing utilities had no impact on the survival of archaeological remains as the insertion of the original gas main and numerous other services had removed all traces of Roman road construction at this location.

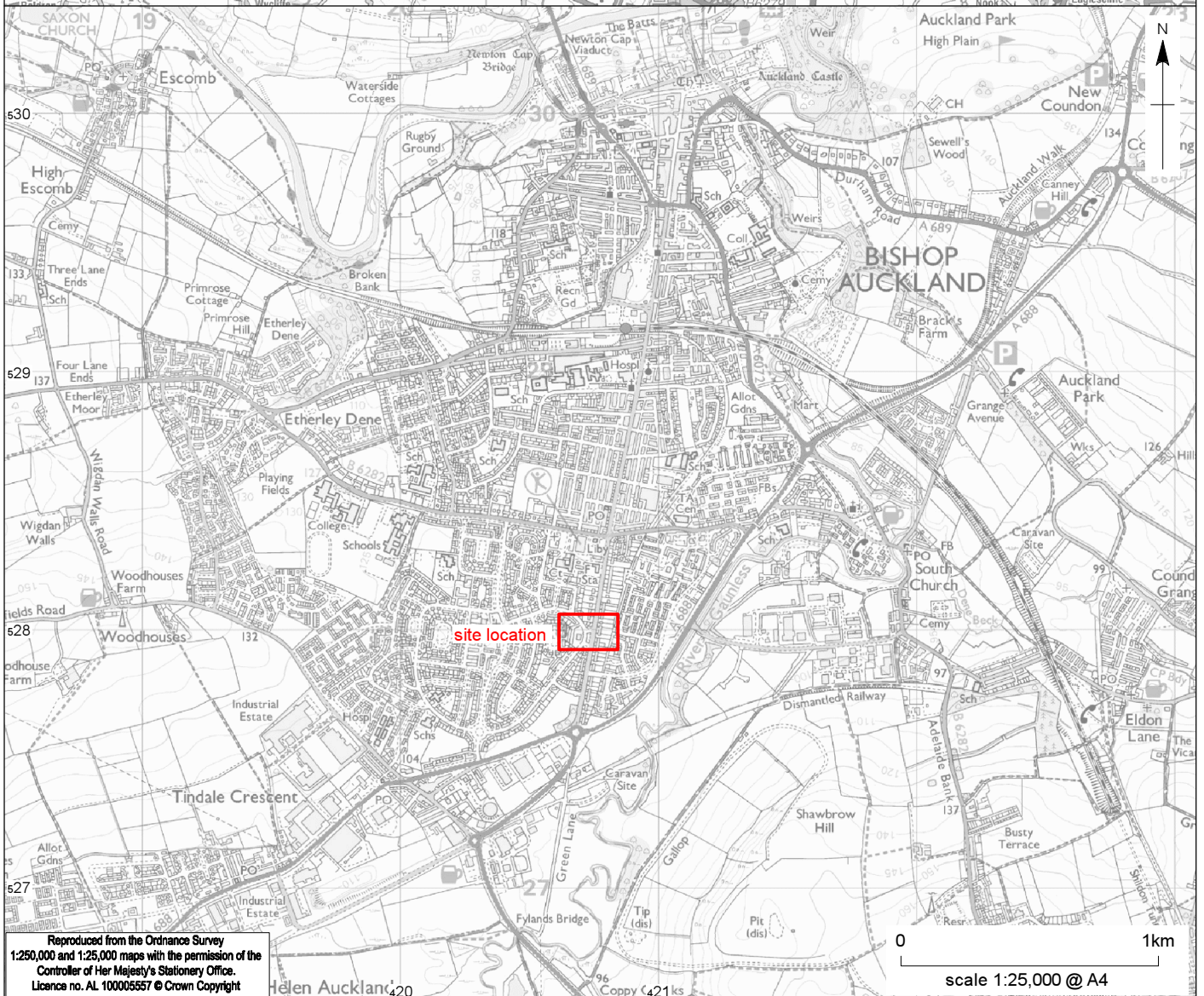
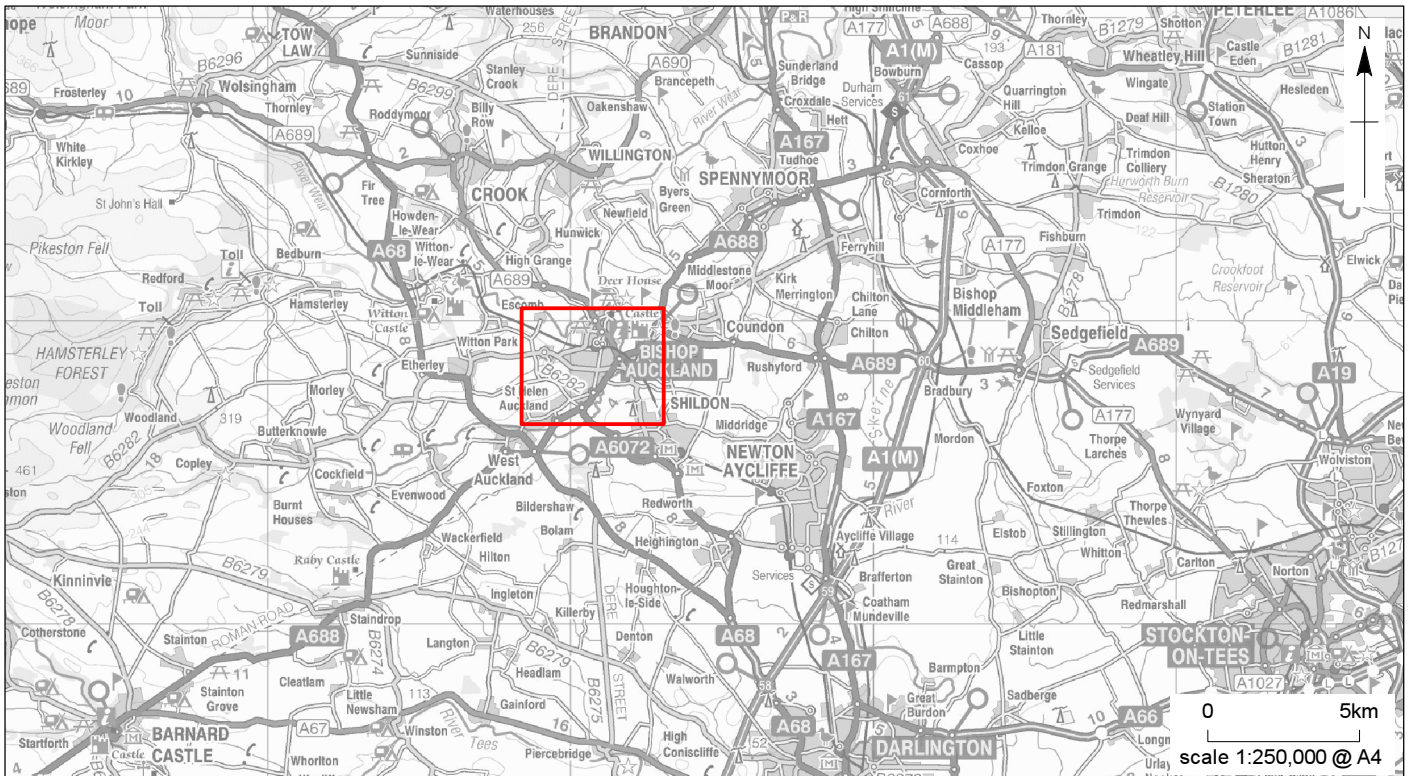
There was no archaeological evidence for any factors which influenced the development of Dere Street, or for any earlier or Roman settlement, crafts or industries along the road.

Reference

RSK (2014) *Watling Road, Bishop Auckland: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

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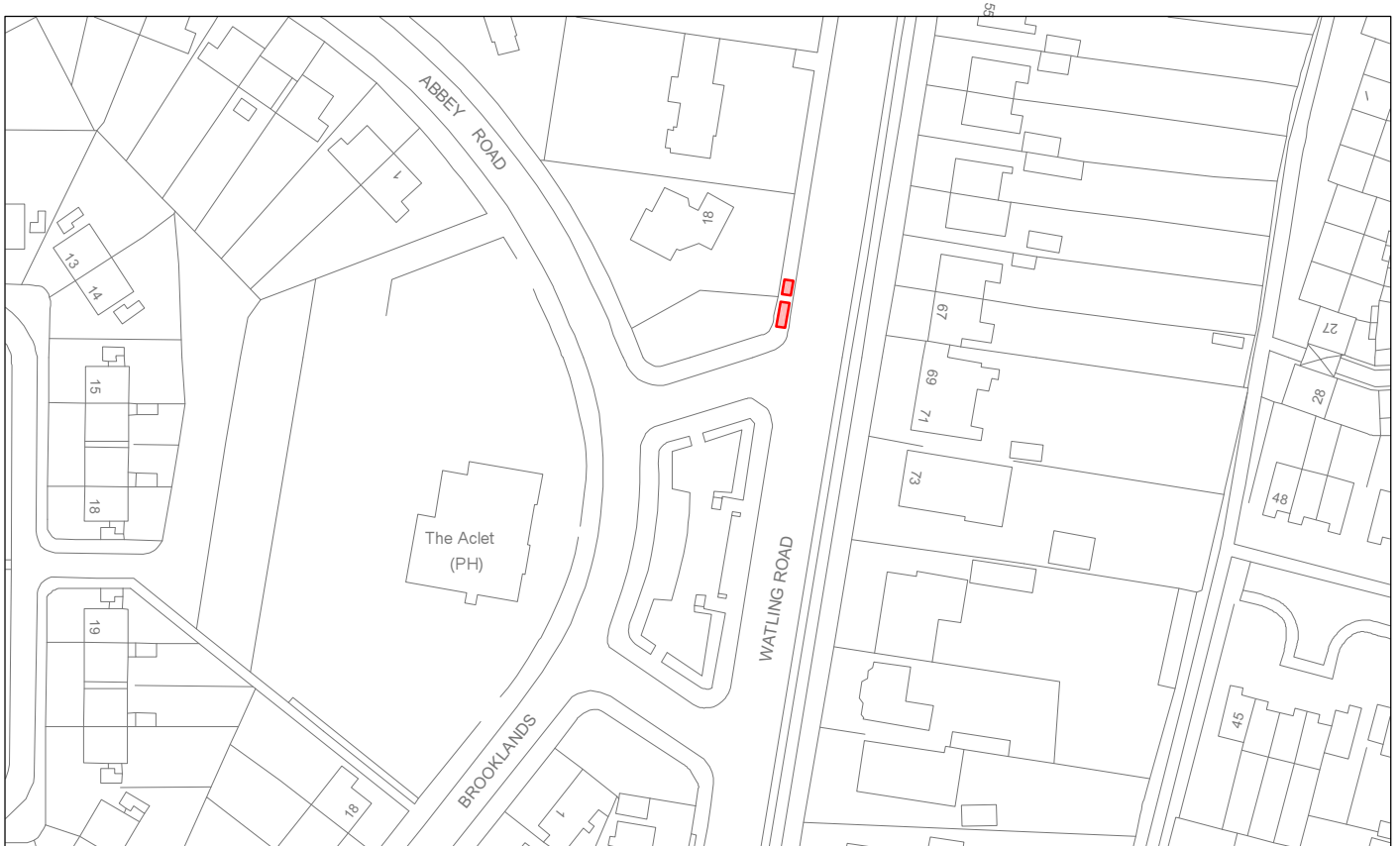


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Watling Road, Bishop Auckland: site location

Figure 1



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Watling Road, Bishop Auckland: monitoring location

Figure 2



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Watling Road, Bishop Auckland:
general view of pit 1

Plate 1