

**An Archaeological Evaluation at the
Former Cottam Hall Brickworks,
Cottam, Near Preston,
Lancashire.
Phase 1 Report
NGR SD 507 317**

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Produced for W.A.Fairhurst & Partners

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Non-Technical Summary

This report describes the results of a programme of archaeological evaluation at the site of the former Cottam Hall Brickworks. The site is located to the west of Preston, on a possible route of a Roman Road between forts at Ribchester and Kirkham. The trench found no evidence for archaeological deposits.

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An Archaeological Evaluation at the Former Cottam Hall Brickworks, Cottam, Near Preston, Lancashire. Phase 1 Report NGR SD 507 317

1. Introduction

The site is located at NGR SD 507 317, c.3km to the north west of Preston, just south of the hamlet of Cottam (Figure 1). The site covers some 13.5 hectares and is bounded by Ingol School and modern housing estates to the north, east and south and by Tom Benson Way to the west. The Lancaster Canal runs just to the south-west side of the site (Figure 2).

A recent desk based study and site walkover (Adams 2004) had found most of the northern end site had been quarried for clay which supplied a brickworks formerly located in the south west corner of the site. It was thought unlikely that any archaeological deposits would have survived in these areas. Maps from the late 19th century show a Roman road (Ribchester to Kirkham) crossing the south east corner of the site. It seems likely that the road may have been truncated by earthworks shown on 1930s maps.

The evaluation trenching was undertaken on behalf of National Museums Liverpool by Stephen John Baldwin (Land Use and Heritage Consultant). The evaluation was carried out over 2-days from August 16th -17th 2006. The contractor was assisted on site by Ron Gurney (Archaeological Excavation Services).

The archive is currently held at the offices of National Museums Liverpool Field Archaeology Unit pending completion of the remaining trenches.

2. Aims & Objectives

The project aims to assess the survival of previously undisclosed archaeological deposits relating to the potential Roman road from Ribchester to Kirkham in an area which has not been subject to extensive modern redevelopment or any previous archaeological excavation. The project aims to assess the presence or absence of archaeological deposits, their location, extent, survival, quality, significance and date in accordance with PPG16 Archaeology and Planning (paragraphs 21-30).

3. Methodology

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the project brief issued by National Museums Liverpool (Appendix A). The contractors adhered to the Code of Conduct and Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology issued by the IFA, at all times during the course of the investigations.

The proposed locations of the evaluation trenches were determined after discussion with Mark Adams (Project Officer, National Museums Liverpool Field Archaeology Unit (NMLFAU)) and consultation with the Client and representatives from Bowland Ecology. Three 50 x 1.5 m trenches were proposed by NMLFAU and these were to be placed in the south-west and south-east corners of the site (Fig 2). Trench 1 was opened on 16th August 2006 and placed across the development footprint of the proposed new Care Home. Trenches 2 and 3 have been postponed to a later date by the request of the Client and Ecologist.

The archaeological evaluation consisted of one trench, aligned NNW-SSE, which measured: 50 x 1.5 metres. The trench was located in the position shown in Figure 2 and placed across the development footprint of a proposed new Care Home for Lancashire County Council.

A 6 ton tracked machine with a c.1.5m toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden under direct supervision of the archaeological contractors. Machine excavation continued until the top of any suspected archaeology was encountered, manual excavation then followed. The following procedures were then adopted:

A representative number of excavation contexts were cleaned by hand

All excavation was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological feature or deposits which appeared to be worthy of preservation in situ.

The stratigraphy of the trial trench was recorded even where no archaeological deposits were present.

As no archaeological features were present the trench was drawn in plan at 1:100 scale and a representative west facing section was drawn on dimensionally stable media at a scale of 1:20

All archaeological deposits were levelled to a temporary bench mark located at NGR SD 50922 31514 on the steel cap of borehole no. 12. The borehole TBM has a value of 22.45m AOD (as shown on site plan supplied by Client).

A photographic record of the evaluation was prepared using a Fuji 6 mega pixel model camera. The photographic record includes images illustrating in both detail and general context, the principal features and finds discovered. The record also includes working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. Given the nature of the results (see below) no other images were produced.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using pro-forma based on the standard National Museums Liverpool context recording sheets.

On conclusion of the excavation, the trench was backfilled and the surface levelled and firmed.

4. Trench Stratigraphy

The archaeological stratigraphy for the proposed development area, and observations of features/deposits excavated is discussed below. Context 'cut' numbers appear in square brackets while layer and fill numbers appear in standard brackets. Where a feature is discussed, it is referenced with its cut and associated fill number.

4.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the south-east corner of the site to the north of a steel fence which runs parallel to Cresswell Avenue. The trench was positioned NNW-SSE to investigate the line of the Ribchester to Kirkham Roman road which was thought to pass through this part of the site. The evaluation area was on a low platform of derelict self-generated scrub which fell gradually to the north and west.

Two units of stratigraphy to a maximum depth of 0.25m were recorded in the northern half of the trench (Figures 3 and 4). The uppermost deposit consisted of a 80-180mm deep layer of dark brown sandy topsoil (01) which lay above a deposit (02) of firm 7.5YR 7/4 light pinkish brown clay with frequent small (20-100mm) bluish-grey rounded pebbles. Occasional sherds of post-medieval and Victorian pottery and glass shards with frequent pieces of coal and coke were found impressed into the clay surface (10-15% context).

The southern half of the trench contained a thin layer of light greyish brown sandy topsoil (01) which overlay a deposit of clay (02) contaminated with modern domestic waste from the adjacent housing estate on Cresswell Avenue. The remains of a large piece of rotted timber (03) at 7 metres from the southern end of the trench may have been part of a tree root system.

5. Finds (M. Adams)

The evaluation revealed a small quantity of 19th century and modern artefacts. All of these items were retrieved from the topsoil or its interface with the underlying clay. This material was probably present as a result of casual loss or the disposal of rubbish.

Table 1. Finds Catalogue

Trench	Context	Finds Number	Material	Type	Class	Rim	Base	Lid	Body	Handle	Number of fragments	Weight (g)
I	1	1	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	110.00
I	1	2	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	20.00
I	1	3	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	5.00
I	1	4	Pot	Self-Coloured Ware		0	0	0	1	0	1	6.00
I	1	5	Pot	Self-Coloured Ware		1	0	0	0	0	1	3.00
I	1	6	Copper Alloy	But		0	0	0	0	0	1	4.00
I	1	7	Ceramic	Pipe	Stem	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.00
I	1	8	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	60.00
I	1	9	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	60.00
I	1	10	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	0	0	1	5.00
I	1	11	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	0	0	1	5.00
I	1	12	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	8.00
I	1	13	Pot	Darkware		0	0	0	1	0	1	4.00
I	1	14	Pot	Whiteware		0	0	0	1	0	1	4.00
I	1	15	Pot	Whiteware		0	0	0	1	0	1	4.00

6. Conclusions

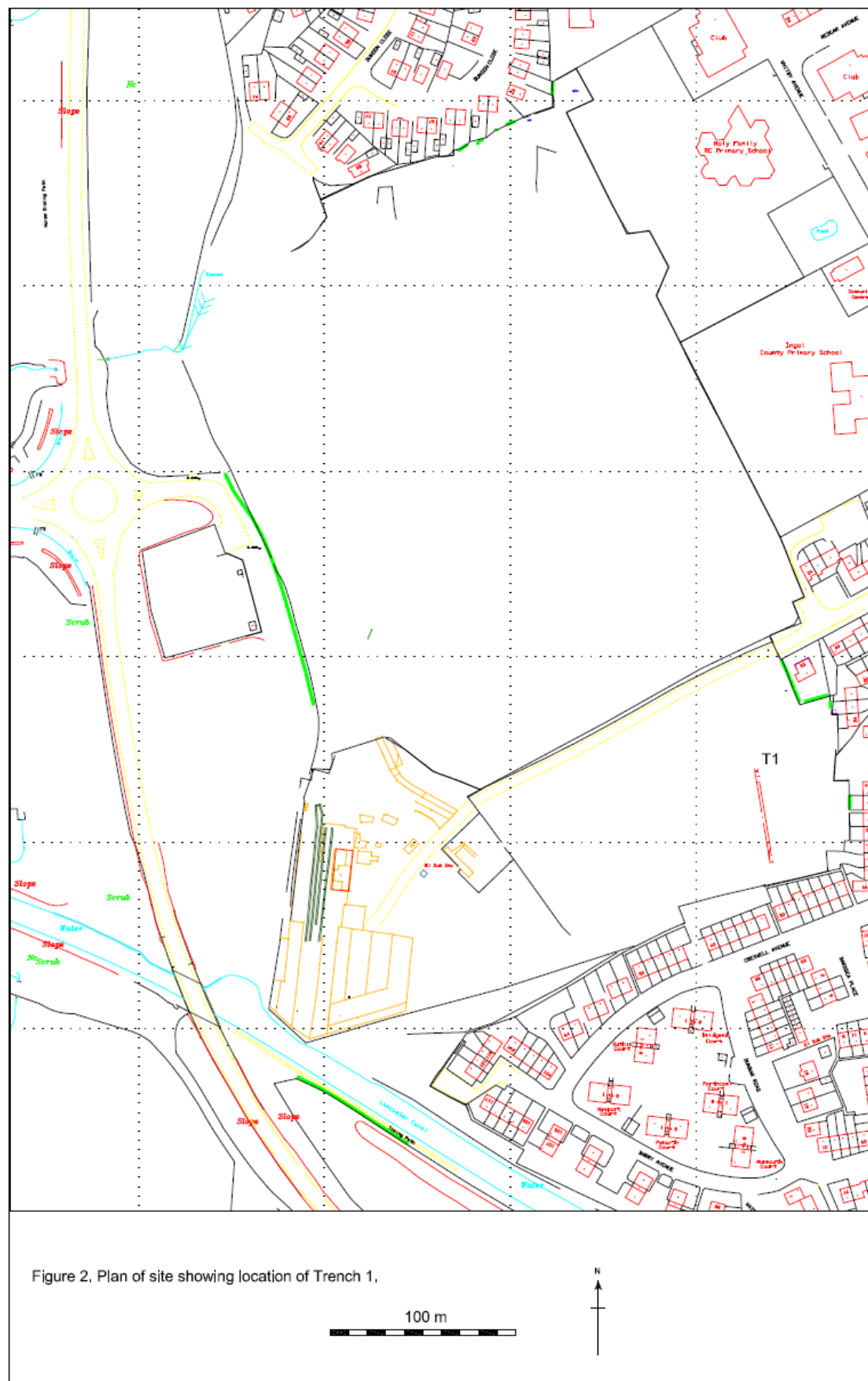
This phase of the evaluation has provided no evidence for archaeological activity at the site. The topsoil in the development area is unusually thin, despite the abundance of vegetation which may suggest that it accumulated in recent years. The original topsoil may have been stripped during evaluation of the clay deposits during the areas use as a brickworks.

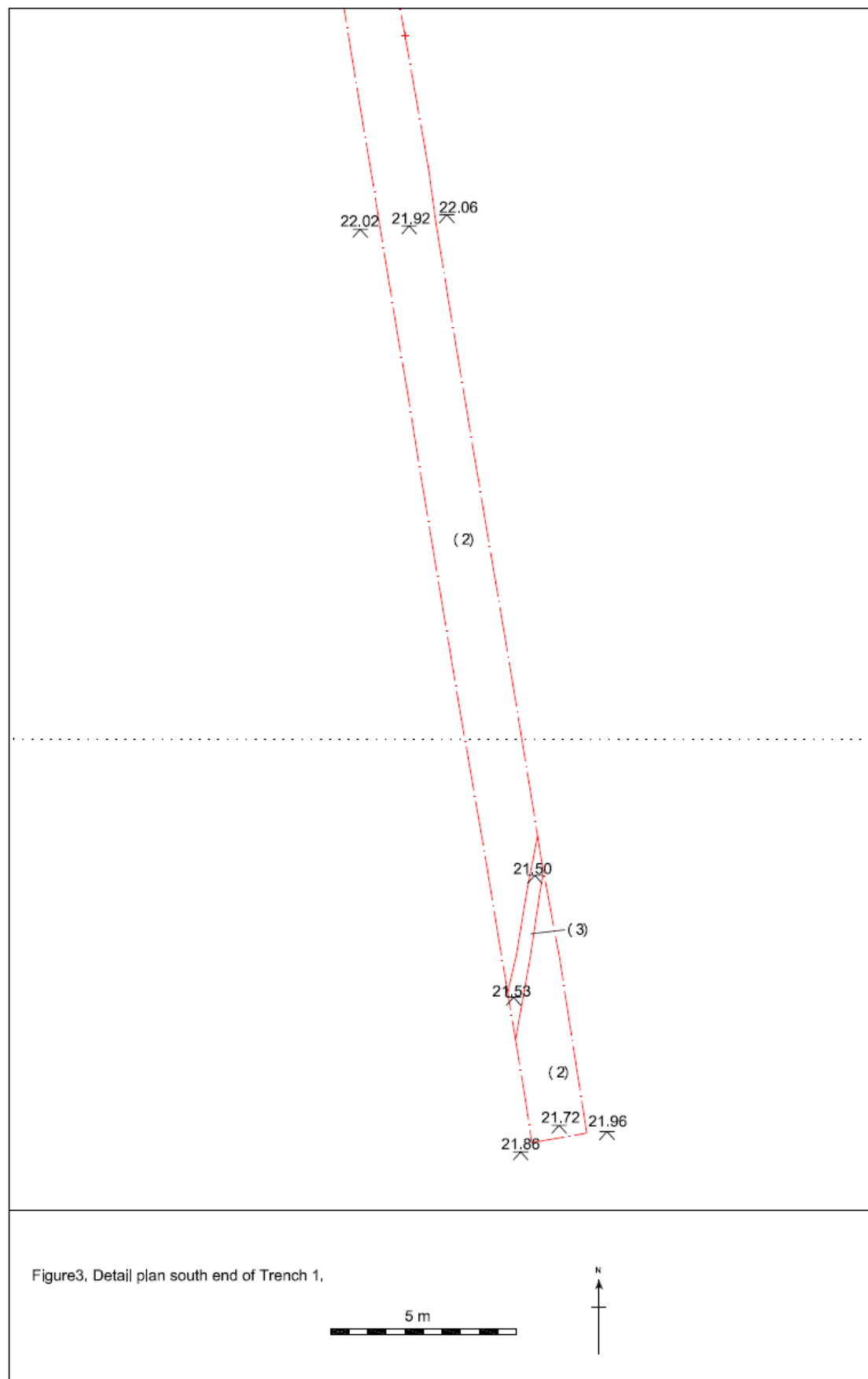
The clay surface exposed after topsoil removal contained frequent coke fragments. These were spread across the trench and were persistent after scraping the clay trample layer down to over 100mm in places. Post medieval pot including sherds of possible C18 and C17 dark glazed ceramics which were found impressed in the clay. It was uncertain if the pot originated in the topsoil and found its way into the clay during the archaeological evaluation; or if the pot was trampled into the clay during historic topsoil removal for past brickwork operations. The excavator suspects the latter course of events.

7. Figures



Figure 1. Site Location. Scale 1:50000





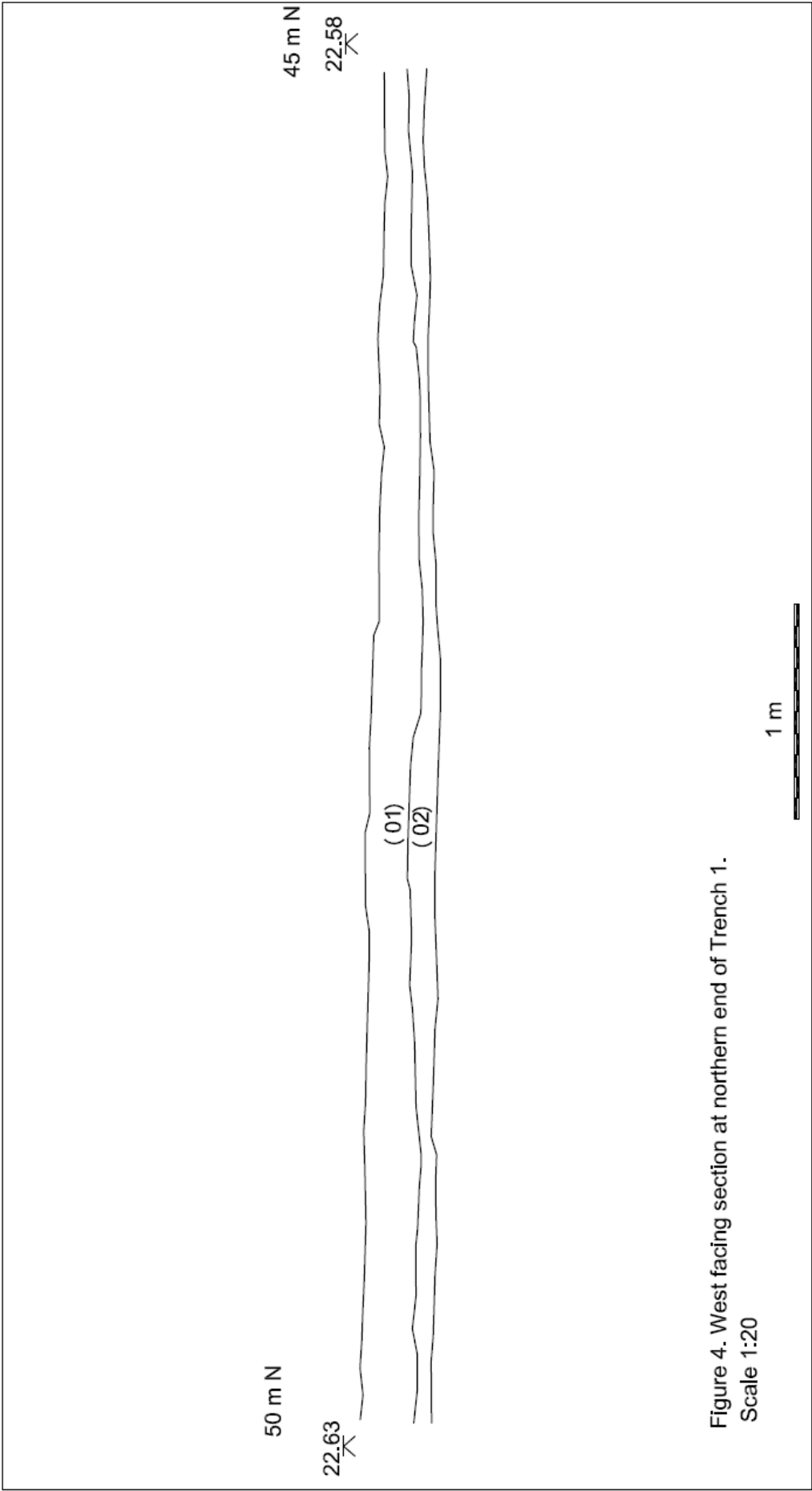


Figure 4. West facing section at northern end of Trench 1.
Scale 1:20

8. Plates



Plate 1. View of Trench 1 looking south.



Plate 2. West facing section of Trench 1.

Appendix A.

**A Project Design for An Archaeological
Evaluation at the Former Cottam Hall
Brickworks, Cottam, Near Preston,
Lancashire.
NGR SD 507 317**

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Produced for W.A.Fairhurst & Partners

August 2006

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A Project Design for An Archaeological Evaluation at at the Former Cottam Hall Brickworks, Cottam, Near Preston, Lancashire. NGR SD 507 317

1. Introduction

This project design was produced by National Museums Liverpool Field Archaeology Unit (NMLFAU) and relates to an archaeological evaluation of an area of land at the former Cottam Hall Brickworks, Cottam, Preston, Lancashire. It has been prepared for the clients W.A.Fairhurst & Partners (hereafter the clients). It has been produced in consultation with Lancashire County Archaeological Service.

This project design, and any associated costings, is valid for a period not greater than three months from the date of submission. It covers only the evaluation of below ground deposits. Separate project designs and costs will be required for any further excavation identified as a result of this work.

1.1 Site Location and Description

The site is located at NGR SD 507 317, c. 3 km to the north west of Preston, just south of the hamlet of Cottam (Figure 1). The site covers some 13.5 ha and is bounded by Ingol School and modern housing estates to the north, east and south and by Tom Benson Way to the west. Lancaster Canal runs just to the south-west of the site. A waste disposal area occupies a strip running along the western side of the site, most of the remainder is derelict self generated scrub, apart from the former site of Cottam Hall Brickworks which occupies the south-western corner of the site. This area is currently occupied by an area of concrete hard standing.

1.2 Previous Work

The only previous work conducted on the site was a Desk Based Assessment conducted for the client (Adams 2004).

The study found that most of the northern end of the site has been previously quarried for clay which was supplied to the brickworks occupying the south-western corner of the site. It is very unlikely that any archaeological deposits survive in these areas.

The only area which may retain any archaeological deposits is the south-eastern corner of the site. Maps from the late 19th century show this area as being crossed by the Roman road from Ribchester to Kirkham. However, it is possible that this feature has been partly or totally destroyed by an extensive earthwork (possibly associated with the brickworks) which appears on maps from the 1930's. There is the additional possibility that the road actually ran further to the south, on a slightly different alignment.

2. Aims and Objectives

The project aims to assess the survival of previously undisclosed archaeological deposits relating to the potential Roman road from Ribchester to Kirkham in an area which has not been subject to extensive modern redevelopment or any previous archaeological excavation. The

project aims to assess the presence or absence of archaeological deposits, their location, extent, survival, quality, significance and date in accordance with PPG16 Archaeology and Planning (paragraphs 21-30).

An archaeological evaluation is not intended to reduce the requirement for the excavation or preservation of known or presumed archaeological deposits. It may be seen as a guide to any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

3. Methods Statement

3.1 Components of the site to be investigated

Three trenches aligned north-south will be excavated across the presumed route of the road (Figure 2). Each trench will measure c. 1.5-2 m in width and will be c. 50 m in length. Other areas of the site are known from documentary sources to have been extensively disturbed by quarrying and will not be evaluated.

3.2 Data-Gathering Method

The site is currently under tree cover and scrub and will therefore not be fieldwalked.

The site is to be evaluated using trial trenching.

1. Trial trenching to the pattern shown in Figure 2. This pattern may require refinement as work on site progresses. Topsoil or other overburden of no archaeological significance will be removed by mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless 'ditching' bucket to just above the occurrence of archaeological deposits. Any machine work will be carried out under the direct supervision of the Project Supervisor. Topsoil and/or other non-archaeological deposits will be removed in level spits to any archaeological horizons, thereafter cleaning/excavation by hand will be employed.
2. All excavated surfaces to be cleaned by hand. Modern features will be excavated rapidly. Any significant archaeological deposits may be left *in situ* following consultation with the County Archaeologist. Other deposits may be excavated fully by hand down to the natural subsoil and recorded in detail, unless worthy of preservation *in situ* (following consultation with the County Archaeologist). Sufficient of the archaeological deposits/features will be examined to recover evidence of date, condition and function. A minimum sample of 50% of archaeological features will be examined by excavation. Features such as post-holes, pits and slots will be half-sectioned and there will be excavation of segments across linear features such as ditches and gullies covering no less than 25% of the feature as exposed in the trench.
3. The recording system currently in use by the Field Archaeology Section will be used (based on the DUA/MOLAS and English Heritage single-context recording system).

4. Photographs will be taken in black and white, colour digital and colour slide of all significant features, relationships and areas. Some colour prints to be taken of significant features and general views.
5. Planning: multi-context planning will usually be undertaken at 1:20 (but 1:10 for complex small features) on A3 permatrace sheets. Sections are usually drawn at 1:10.
6. Artefact recovery: all finds from medieval or earlier contexts to be logged on database (ACCESS). Finds from post-medieval or later deposits or features to be recorded to context only. Certain classes of finds e.g. post 1900 material may be discarded on site.
7. For storage, finds are grouped by material and stored in numerical order of find number within material groups.
8. Environmental sampling: This will be undertaken according to the recommendations in *English Heritage's Centre for Archaeology Guidelines, Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (2002/01)*. Any samples with the potential to supply significant environmental evidence (e.g. waterlogged deposits within pits and ditches) will be sampled; 10 l whole earth samples should be taken from large pits and ditches for flotation. These will be processed and scanned for bone and artefacts and the flots will be examined, an assessment made of the quantity, type and range of material in the samples, and a written report produced with recommendations for further work. This work will be undertaken by an appropriate specialist sub-contractor (probably ARCUS, University of Sheffield).
9. Due to the acidic nature of the soils in this area sampling for pollen is not envisaged.
10. Samples from suitable deposits may be submitted for radiocarbon dating if required.
11. All finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) First Aid For Finds, 1998 (new edition) and the recipient museum's guidelines. Metal finds will be despatched to NML Metals Conservation for stabilisation. Further conservation work will await the results of the assessment stage.

Any finds of human remains will be left *in situ*, covered and protected and the appropriate authorities informed. If removal is essential it can only take place under appropriate Home Office and environmental health regulations, and if appropriate, in compliance with the 'Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act, 1981.

All finds which may constitute 'treasure' under the Treasure Act, 1997 must be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner. Where removal cannot take place on the same working day as discovery, suitable security will be taken to protect the finds from theft.

All identified finds and artefacts will be retained, although certain classes of building material can sometimes be discarded after recording if an appropriate sample the recipient museum's archive curator.
12. Some records will be compiled on computer:

13. Catalogues of photographs, and drawings (plans and sections) will be compiled on ACCESS, to form part of the site archive.

13.1 The finds databases will be updated with spot-dates, then with detailed information in the light of any specialist's report. The databases will form the site archive finds catalogues as well as the Liverpool Museum computer-based catalogue of archaeology collections.

13.2 Plans and sections will be digitised from site drawings onto Autocad 2002. These will form the basis of phased plans to be prepared in the analysis stage and will form the neat archive copies of site plans.

13.3 Site matrices will be compiled on Autocad 2002.

13.4 All text will be generated in Microsoft Word for Windows. Hard copies will be made of all computer-based text, graphics or CAD files.

14. Trenches will be backfilled and consolidated using a JCB or similar.

15. Reporting: The final report will include:

- (a) digital trench location plans by CAD tied into the Ordnance Survey data,
- (b) section drawing(s) (at an appropriate scale) showing depth of deposits including present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale,
- (c) a summary of artefacts by trench together with their interpretation,
- (d) plans of actual features, deposits and, where appropriate, any which were extrapolated to indicate potential deposits (at an appropriate scale and including levels tied in to Ordnance Datum),
- (e) any specialist assessments,
- (f) a concise non-technical summary of the project results.
- (g) an assessment of the archaeological significance of the development site and any archaeological deposits encountered during evaluation,
- (h) place the evidence in its setting, regional context and also aim to highlight any research priorities where applicable.

Wherever appropriate, outline the options for achieving the preferred option of preservation in- situ of significant archaeological deposits

Prior to submission of the final report a summary statement and interim report on the evaluation will be submitted within 2 weeks of the completion of on site works. This is in order to facilitate any required early decision on possible mitigation strategies. The report will be submitted to the Client and Lancashire Council.

One copy of the final report will be deposited with the Lancashire SMR no later than six months after completion of the project. This will be a digital (pdf format) and paper copy of the report, including its relevant accompanying AutoCAD plans. CAD drawings are to be delivered in DXF; Databases in ASCII delimited text or MS Access; Text in ASCII text.

Results of the project, even if negative, may be submitted for publication in the appropriate academic journals.

A copy of the final report/s will be deposited in the National Monuments Record, English Heritage, Swindon.

3.3 Health and safety provision

1. NML has a Health and Safety Policy. The Field Archaeology Unit has a Health and Safety policy to cover the specific hazards encountered in excavations. A full risk assessment will be produced **prior to commencement of work on site**, though the following general comments apply:
2. The client already has details of statutory authorities services on the site, though a cable avoidance tool CAT will be used.
3. The site is to be securely fenced off from the public access prior to start of on site works.
4. Although it is unlikely that any deeply stratified deposits will be encountered, deep or potentially dangerous trenches will be securely fenced with suitable barriers and appropriate signage. Access to deep trenches is to be via a securely fixed ladder.
5. A fully stocked first aid kit and an accident book will be kept on site at all times.
6. All staff will be made aware of safe working practices before the start of the excavation.
7. Hard hats and 'High Visibility' jackets will be worn at all times.
8. In case of emergency, a mobile phone will be available on site at all times.

3.4 Archive Deposition

The archive consists of all written records and materials recovered, drawn and photographic records. It will be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent. It will also contain a site matrix (where appropriate), site summary and brief written observations on the artefactual and environmental data.

The archive will be prepared in line with UKIC Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long- term storage (1990).

The integrity of the site archive will be maintained. All find and records should be properly curated by a single organisation, and be available for public consultation.

Arrangements for deposition of the full site archive ought to be made with the appropriate museum service.

The archive will be presented to the Archive Curator within 12 months of completion of the fieldwork, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with the AO and Archive Curator.

4. Resources and Programming

4.1 Staffing and Equipment

4.1.1 The Project Team

1. The on-site staffing required to complete the fieldwork would be a professional team comprising a site supervisor and three site assistants plus a finds supervisor for post-excavation analysis.
2. It is anticipated that the project team would consist of the following:

Project Officer Dr Mark Adams

Responsibilities:

- Overall control of excavation strategy and tactics.
- Keeping timesheets and personnel records, and records of expenditure.
- To exercise overall control of budget and keep records of all expenditure.
- Review progress to ensure deadlines are met or to agree variations to project design with the client and project team.
- Ensuring accurate and up to date records of attendance, holidays, sickness, are kept for the work of the team.
- Preparation of final versions of digitised site plans and sections on Autocad.
- Liaison with County Archaeological Curator, client and specialists.
- To exercise overall control of manpower to make most effective use of resources in fulfilment of the project design.

Project Supervisor Steve Baldwin

Responsibilities:

- Supervision of machine clearance of topsoil from areas to be excavated.
- Day-to-day decisions on excavation strategy and tactics.
- Ensuring that all records are accurate and complete on site.
- Site photography.
- Liaison with finds supervisor over artefactual evidence and sampling programme.
- Preparation of site matrices and context groupings.
- Preparation of site archive.
- To make detailed records of work carried out during excavation following established procedures and systems.

Site Assistant

Responsibilities

- To carry out fieldwalking under the supervision of the site supervisor.
- To carry out the day to day excavation of deposits under the supervision of the site supervisor.
- To carry out recording of finds as required.
- To produce accurate plans and section drawings as required.
- To assist the site supervisor in recording as required.
- Site photography.

In addition to the above the Museum may use volunteers to assist with excavation and the post-excavation processing of finds ('pot washing' and data input). These are to be employed at the maximum ratio of one volunteer to one paid member of staff. The use of volunteers is intended to provide training opportunities for undergraduates and members of the public.

4.1.2 Materials and Equipment

1. Liverpool Museum possesses a Nikon Total Station EDM and logger, full computing facilities with Autocad 14, Photoshop 5, ACCESS and word processing software.
2. Consumables: Snaplock plastic bags for finds, bags for soil samples, acid-free tissue paper, silica gel, archival quality negative pages and sleeves for storage of slides, general office and draughting supplies (pens, pencils, string, ring binders, permatrace).
3. A JCB will be hired to assist with the opening of trenches. This will be fitted with a 1.6 m wide toothless bucket and operated by a driver supplied by the hire company.
4. Suitable materials for shoring may be required if deep deposits are encountered. Provision is made in the budget for the hire of 'Acro Props' or similar and the purchase of suitable timber.

4.1.3 Premises Hire

No premises will be hired. A portable toilet will be required for the duration of the project.

4.1.4 Security

All unique site records and drawings and all valuable equipment (computers, levels, EDM) will be removed from the site each evening and stored in Liverpool Museum or in other secure accommodation.

Central computer databases are held on existing machines and security copies of all data are sent to the NMGM Archives Department for curation.

All records will be duplicated, and photocopies of all original plans, sections, context records, finds records, sieving records, levels will be stored separately from the original records.

4.1.5 Arrangements for Access

Access to the site is to be arranged via the client.

4.2 Timetable

Scheduling of the work is to be by negotiation between the client and NMLFAU but is currently scheduled to commence on 16th August 2006.

Trial trenching will be undertaken over a three to four day period. A period of five working days is allowed for report writing following completion of fieldwork.

5. Bibliography

Adams M. 2004 *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of Land at the Former Cottam Hall Brickworks, Cottam, Near Preston, Lancashire. NGR SD 507 317.*
Unpublished NMLFAU Report for W.A. Fairhurst.



Figure 1. Site Location

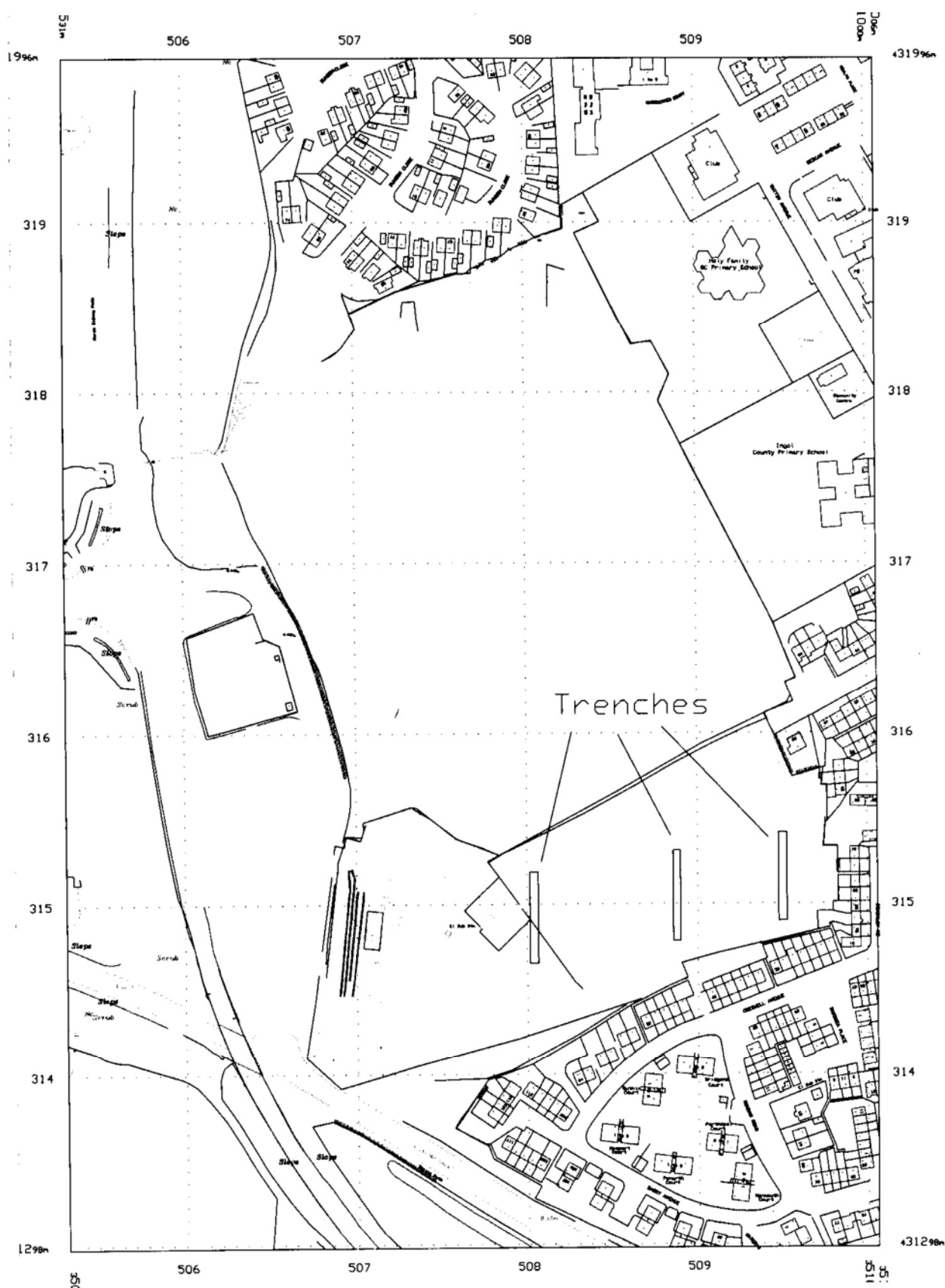


Figure 2. Location of proposed trenches. NTS.

