

Project Code: WHWC08

Client: Edwin Thompson on behalf of I & NF Milbourn

Date: June 2008

**Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief at Walby Grange,
Walby, Crosby on Eden, Carlisle, Cumbria**

Ross Murray

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (WHWC08)

Client	Edwin Thompson on behalf of I & NF Milbourn
National Grid Reference	NY 4420 6050
Project Manager	Simon Stronach
Fieldwork	Eddie Bailey Ross Murray Mikael Simonsson Dean Williams
Text	Ross Murray
Illustrations	Rachel Kershaw Mikael Simonsson
Environmental Assessment	Sarah-Jane Haston
Finds Assessment	Julie Franklin
Schedule	
Fieldwork	14 th /15 th and 21 st /22 nd April 2008
Report	June 2008
OASIS Reference no.	headland1-43917

SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology was granted Scheduled Monument Consent to conduct an evaluation at Walby Grange, Walby, Crosby on Eden, Carlisle, Cumbria, across the plotted line of Hadrian's Wall and some associated monitoring works. The work was commissioned by Edwin Thompson on behalf of I & NF Milbourn and was also undertaken in response to a planning condition attached to a farm diversification scheme.

A total of three 50m evaluation trenches were excavated at National Grid co-ordinates as stipulated by English Heritage. A large negative feature, oriented southwest to northeast, was present in all the evaluation trenches and was interpreted as the ditch on the north side of Hadrian's Wall. An area of sandstone slabs to the south of the ditch was present in one of the trenches and may be the remains of the wall itself. A shallow linear feature and two postholes found close to the ditch may also relate to Hadrian's Wall.

The watching brief uncovered no features of archaeological interest; it did recover a largely undiagnostic piece of ceramic building material that could have been a fragment of Roman roof tile or alternatively a post-medieval window box.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. BACKGROUND
3. OBJECTIVES
4. METHOD
5. RESULTS
6. DISCUSSION

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Trench plans and sections

Figure 3: Location of watching briefs Areas 1 & 2

Appendix 1: Site registers

Appendix 2: Environmental Assessment

Appendix 3: Finds Assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

An archaeological evaluation and watching brief were undertaken on land at Walby Grange on the 14th/15th and 21st/22nd April 2008 (Figure 1). Edwin Thompson on behalf of I & NF Milbourn commissioned the work.

These works were undertaken under the terms of Scheduled Monument Consent and they were also designed to meet a condition of planning permission for a farm diversification scheme. Part of the scheme involves the construction of a fenced-off car park on a field to the east of the Walby Grange farm buildings. The line of Hadrian's Wall and related features are known to run through this field (National Monument No 26087) and the development had the potential to impact on scheduled and unscheduled archaeological remains.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The main archaeological potential of this site relates to the remains of Hadrian's Wall and other features of this frontier. The Wall appears to have been constructed from around AD122 on the orders of the Emperor Hadrian, following his visit to the province the previous year.

As originally conceived the frontier works consisted of a linear barrier, with milecastles every Roman mile and two turrets in between each milecastle, supported by forts located to the south. In most of Cumbria, including the area around Walby, the original linear barrier appears to have been constructed of turf, and this was only later replaced in stone. Some time before the linear barrier was finished a decision was made to move the forts up to the line of the Wall. The precise purpose of the Wall itself, whether a fighting platform analogous to a castle wall, or as a means of controlling access and securing tolls, is still the subject of fierce debate. Regardless of this the Wall represented the northern boundary of Roman Britain for much of the next three centuries.

The stone replacement seems to have been located on the line of the turf wall for much of its route, although there are places (e.g. Lannerton) where the replacement was built to the north. In addition, it is known that one of the Roman milecastles (Milecastle 62) is located at the eastern edge of the field in question. The precise location and survival of this feature formed another important aspect of the work.

Although the line of the Wall and its northern ditch is legally protected as a scheduled ancient monument the area to its north has not been included in current scheduling.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 The overall objective of the evaluation was to allow decisions to be made on:

- The precise boundary of the proposed car park, to place it to the north of surviving archaeology on the site, in order to both avoid damage to this archaeology and allow the parking to be placed to demarcate the northern boundary of the Roman frontier.
- The line of the southern boundary fence in order that this is not placed where it is archaeologically damaging.

To this end the evaluation established the presence or absence of archaeological remains, their quality and preservation within the car park site. Only sufficient excavation to allow characterisation of any remains was undertaken in order to avoid unnecessary damage.

3.2 The objective of the watching brief was to prevent inadvertent damage to sensitive archaeological deposits during excavation of two foundation trenches, a pipe trench, holes for wooden decking supports and at the location of a road-widening scheme.

4. METHOD

4.1 The entire site was inspected before the commencement of machine excavation in order to examine any available exposures (ditches, geotechnical test pits etc.).

4.2 A series of 3 linear trial trenches were excavated in the locations shown in the brief provided by English Heritage. All the trenches were surveyed in using a Total Station in conjunction with a digital planning program and related to the National Grid. This was undertaken prior to excavation in order to ensure they were located in the correct positions. The southern end of Trench 3 was moved a few metres to the west in order to avoid a hedge. All the trenches measured 1.5 m by 50 m.

4.3 Excavation of topsoil and unstratified modern material was undertaken by a 7 tonne tracked machine, equipped with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching blade, under direct archaeological supervision. It proceeded to the first significant archaeological horizon, or clean geological sediments, in successive level spits. Subsequent cleaning and excavation was by hand.

4.4 Any exposed features or deposits were cleaned by hand and fully recorded. All trench faces that required examination or recording were cleaned with appropriate hand tools. A full and proper record (written, graphic and photographic) was made. All recording was undertaken using pro-forma record sheets including text descriptions appropriate to the work. Written descriptions included factual data and interpretive elements.

4.5 Drawings were to standard scales (1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 as appropriate); photography involved the use of black and white print and colour slide film and a clearly visible, graduated metric scale. A register of all photographs was kept.

4.6 Sections were accurately related to the National Grid. The stratigraphy of all trenches was recorded.

4.7 All features were located and tied into the National Grid.

4.8 Manual excavation examined all sensitive deposits, and enabled an assessment of the nature, date and survival of deposits. Deposits were hand investigated sufficiently to establish their character but the full depth of deposits to natural was not established across the whole trench. All trenches were excavated stratigraphically. Identified features were sample excavated by hand. Sample excavation of individual features typically comprised up to 25% of linear features and 50% of discrete features. No feature was wholly excavated.

4.9 All excavation (by machine and hand) was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits that appeared worthy of preservation in situ. It was recognised that the evaluation had the potential to impact on remains of national archaeological importance. The field team was aware of this and only excavated deposits to a level sufficient to characterise them.

4.10 Sediment samples were collected from secure archaeological contexts for subsequent processing and assessment. Deposits were sampled systematically in accordance with Headland Archaeology Ltd standard environmental sampling practice. Jacqui Huntley, the English Heritage regional advisor in archaeological science has been previously consulted on this matter.

4.11 All work was carried out in compliance with the codes and practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and followed the IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations and Watching Briefs.

4.17 The removal of modern surfaces/topsoil for road widening was monitored by an archaeologist. Excavation was by a 1m wide flat-bladed bucket and hand. Excavation ceased once modern deposits/topsoil were removed. The exposed surface was cleaned as appropriate and inspected for any underlying archaeological deposits.

5. RESULTS

5.1 EVALUATION (FIGURE 2)

Three trenches were excavated across the plotted course of Hadrian's Wall on current mapping. Each trench was oriented north to south and measured 50m by 1.5m. The southern ends of the trenches were placed, where possible, on National Grid co-ordinates as stipulated by English Heritage. Full detailed descriptions of each trench can be found in Appendix 1. Results are summarised below.

Trench 1

This was located near the western edge of the evaluated area. Approximately nine metres from the southern end of the trench were two areas of friable red sandstone slabs, the largest measured 0.85m by 0.4m. Taken as a group the slabs were laid in a poorly preserved linear arrangement aligned southwest to northeast. They were embedded into glacial till and placed 1.8m apart with a total width of 2.9m from one outside edge to the other.

Two metres to the north was a large negative feature measuring 11.5 m in width and aligned southwest to northeast. In order to confirm the nature of the feature two 0.5m slots were hand excavated. One was placed at the southern edge of the feature and revealed this side to be gently sloping with two small steps. The slot at the northern edge revealed the feature to have a gently sloping side (*c* 30°). The feature was filled with reddish brown sandy clay and excavation ceased at a depth of *c* 0.3m to minimise disturbance.

Approximately 3.5m to the north was a deposit of reddish grey sandy clay containing abundant rounded stones. This lay over the glacial till and beneath a subsoil. The deposit measured 1.9m across, was oriented southwest to northeast and survived to a height of *c* 0.2m.

Immediately north of the deposit was a stone capped culvert. This was oriented north to south and measured 3.7m by 0.8m within the trench. It continued outwith the trench to the north. The sides were constructed from sandstone and brick; large sandstone slabs had been used as capstones. Directly above this, the topsoil contained abundant rounded stone as well as frequent fragments of brick, ceramic tile and field drain. These were also visible on the surface of the field.

Trench 2

The only archaeological feature present in this trench was a large negative feature similar in nature and alignment so assumed to be the same as that identified in Trench 1. Here the feature was 10.9m wide and, as in Trench 1, was oriented southwest to northeast. Two 0.5m slots were excavated at each side of the feature. The southern side initially sloped steeply to a depth of *c* 0.2m where it became much less steep, continuing downwards at an angle of approximately 20°. The northern side sloped down at an angle of 30° to a depth of 0.25m where it became much less steep and continued downwards at a very shallow angle of less than 10°. Excavation ceased after it was established that the feature was cut through the glacial till.

Trench 3

This was located along the east boundary of the field and contained a negative feature interpreted as the same as that encountered in Trenches 1 and 2, two small, circular features and a shallow linear.

The negative feature was 11.5m wide and oriented southwest to northeast. The southern edge was similar to that in Trench 1 in that it was stepped. The upper fill was compact reddish brown silty clay, up to 0.6m deep and contained several large fragments of red sandstone of a material similar to the slabs found *in situ* in Trench 1. Beneath this was another fill of compact, light grey silty clay. Excavation ceased at this deposit.

The northern edge of the feature contained a small step, 0.9m wide and 0.2m deep that contain abundant rounded stones within the fill. These were similar to those forming the low bank in Trench 1. After the step the edge sloped steeply at an angle of *c* 45°.

Two features, 005 and 007, were present *c* 0.9m to the south. They were circular, measured 0.25m and 0.3m in diameter and were 0.2 and 0.15m deep. The fills contained small fragments of charcoal. A shallow linear was present *c* 5.7m to the south; it also ran parallel to the large negative feature. It measured 0.7m wide, was 0.05m deep and was filled with dark

grey silty clay with rare fragments of charcoal. The charcoal fragments recovered from the samples taken from these features were not of a size suitable for identification and/or Accelerated Mass Spectrometry (AMS) dating. No other plant remains were recovered from the samples taken from the features. No artefactual material was recovered from the samples.

5.2 WATCHING BRIEF (FIGURE 3)

A watching brief was undertaken during excavation of two foundation trenches (Area 1), a pipe trench and foundation holes for support posts for wooden decking (Area 2) and at the location of a road-widening scheme (Area 3).

Area 1

The foundation trenches were excavated to a depth of between 0.5m and 0.7m. The glacial till, light yellow compact sandy clay, was encountered at the base. Above this was a layer of levelling material containing abundant modern bricks and stone rubble sealed by a 0.2m thick layer of hardcore and concrete. No archaeological features were present.

Area 2

A total of 36 sockets were excavated in this area, each measured 0.4m by 0.6m. In each case topsoil, up to 0.45m deep, lay over the glacial till. This was light grey sandy clay with frequent pieces of friable red sandstone. A piece of ceramic building material was recovered from one of the sockets (Appendix 3). The pipe trench, 1m wide and up to 0.6m deep, was excavated through made ground and concrete. No archaeological features were present.

Area 3 (Figure 1)

A 1m² test pit was excavated to a depth of 0.6m at the location of proposed road widening. A 0.4m deep deposit of compact silty sand with patches of gravel and clay and fragments of broken ceramic field drain was present beneath the 0.2m deep topsoil. The glacial till was not exposed and no archaeological features were present.

6. DISCUSSION

Hadrian's Wall was originally constructed of turf west of the Irthing river to its end at Bowness-on-Solway. This was subsequently replaced by a stone wall that, in this area, had no foundation trench and was built on a flagstone base, generally between 2.75 and 2.89m wide (Wilmot 2007).

The evaluation located several archaeological features on the plotted line of Hadrian's Wall. There were no upstanding wall remains in the evaluation trenches. The sandstone slabs encountered in Trench 1 were the only evidence of a structure and could be the foundation course of the later stone wall based on their total width of 2.9m and their placement directly on the natural clay. Similar pieces of red sandstone were present in the upper fill of the large negative feature in Trench 3. These may have derived from the stone wall, more specifically from the wall core given their size and shape as well as the lack of facing on the stones.

The large negative feature present in all the evaluation trenches was interpreted as the ditch associated with and to the north of Hadrian's Wall. In order to minimise disturbance a complete section was not excavated. Excavation ceased once it was clear the feature was cut

though the glacial till and appeared to take the form of a large ditch, in both the shape of the cut and the composition of the lower fills which appeared to have derived from silting. There was no clear evidence of the counterscarp on the ditch's northern edge. This was not unexpected given the previous agricultural activity in the evaluated area. The concentration of rounded stone at northern edge of the ditch in Trench 3 and to the north of the ditch in Trench 1 is possibly derived from the counterscarp mound though if so it would be unusual that was several metres from the ditch in the case of Trench 1.

The other features present in Trench 3 (the circular features and shallow linear feature) were very truncated. The circular features are likely to be postholes and could be structural. The limited scope of the evaluation makes it difficult to interpret the function of these features but it is noteworthy that they share same orientation as the ditch and are in the trench closest to the recorded location of a Milecastle (62).

There were no archaeological features present in the areas subject to a watching brief. The piece of ceramic building material recovered from Area 2 is possibly a ridged tile from a roof ridge or a projecting base from a large straight sides vessel, such as a window box. The former suggestion would mean the find was conceivably of Roman date, the latter would place it squarely in the post-medieval period.

REFERENCES

http://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/archaeological.services/research_training/hadrianswall_research_framework/project_documents Accessed 11th June 2008

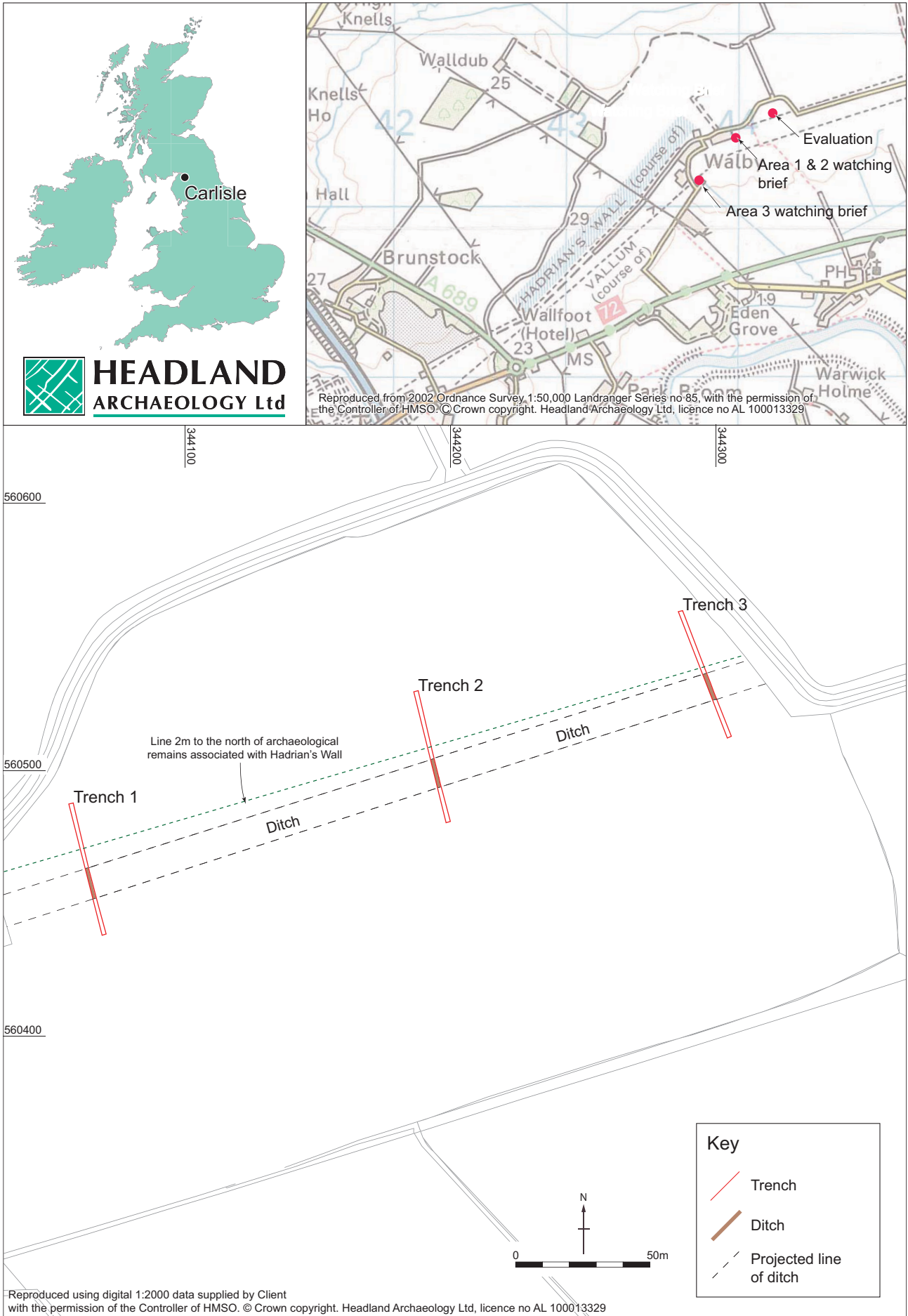
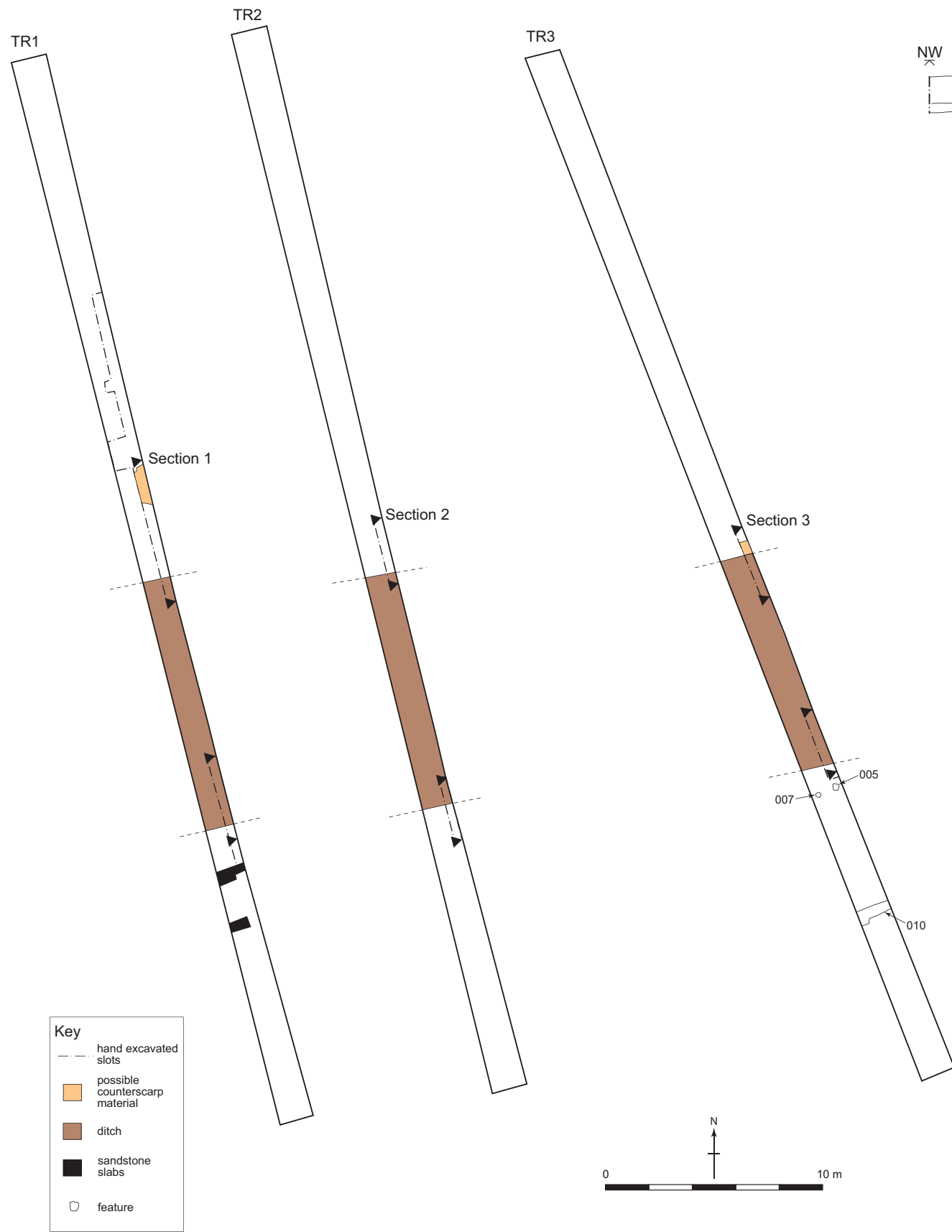


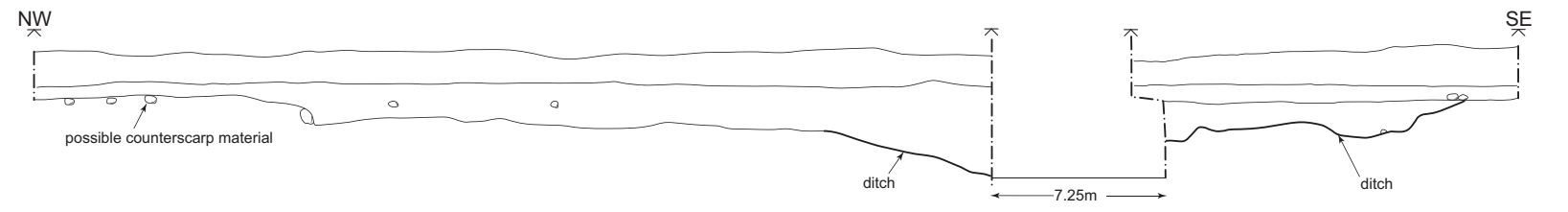
Figure 1: WHWC08 - Walby Grange, Cumbria - Site Location

Plan of trenches

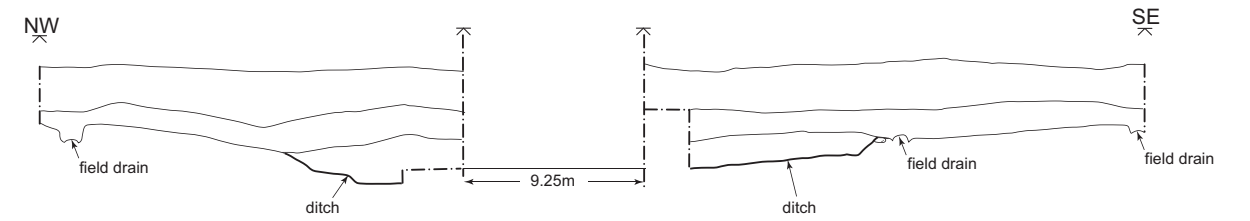


Sections from trenches 1 - 3

Section 1



Section 2



Section 3

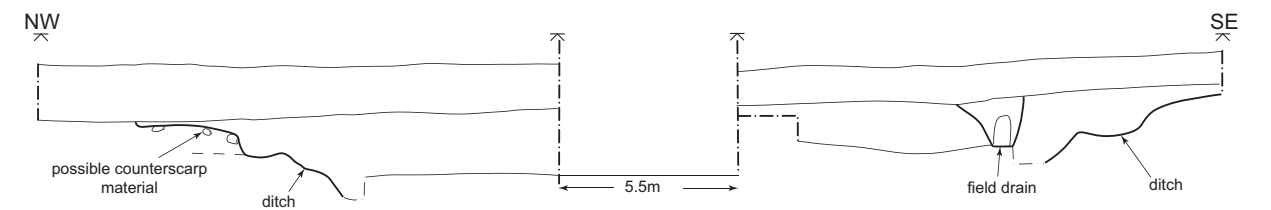


Figure 2: WHWC08 - Walby Grange, Cumbria - Trench plans and sections

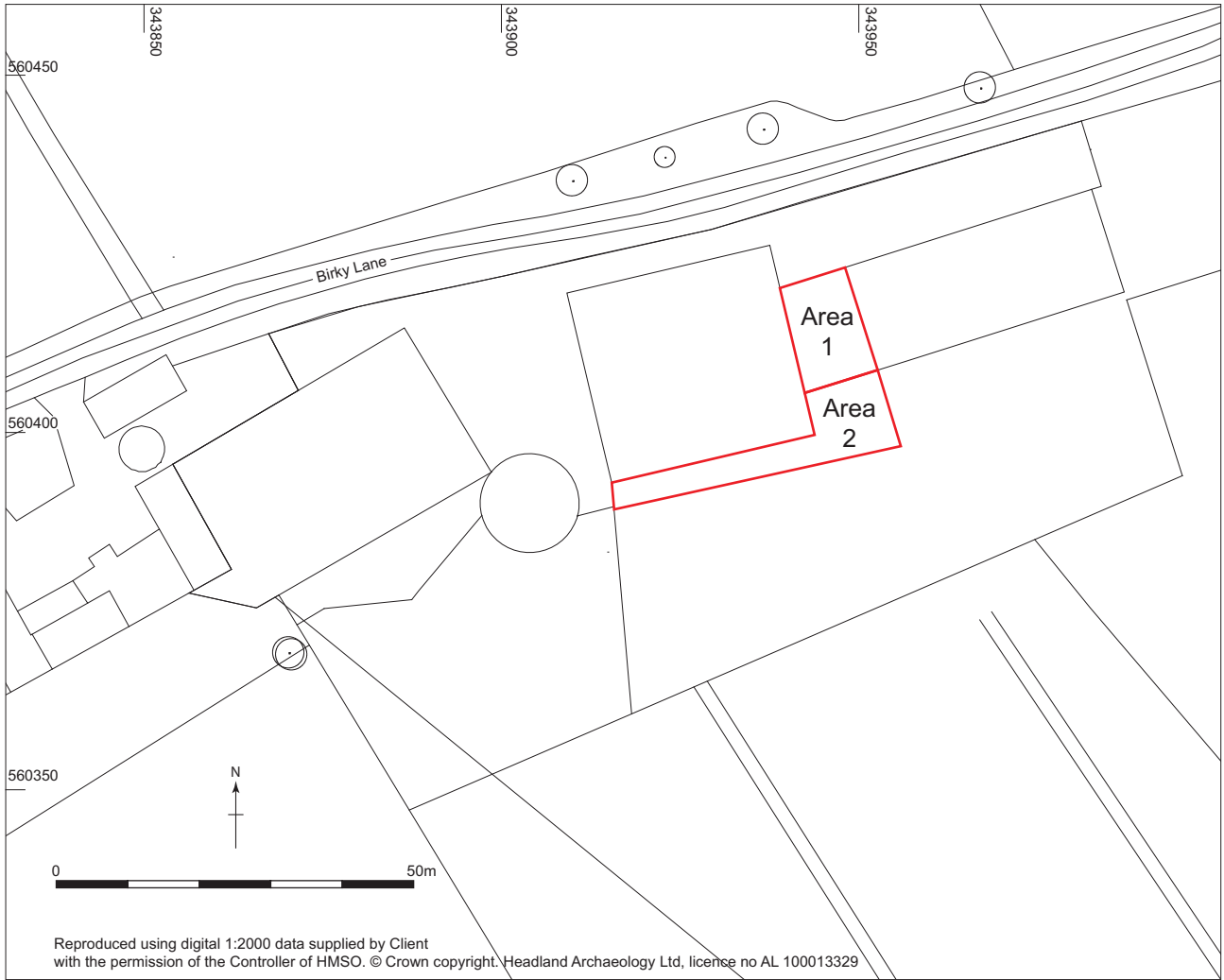


Figure 3: WHWC08 - Walby Grange, Cumbria - Location of watching brief, Areas 1 and 2

APPENDIX 1: SITE REGISTERS**Trench Register**

All trenches were 1.5 m wide

Tr. No	Orientation	Description	Length (m)	Topsoil Depth (m)
1	N-S	Topsoil: Mid brown compact silty clay. B-horizon: Light reddish brown compact sandy clay Natural: Compact yellow brown clay Contained possible wall base, ditch, stone and earth bank, post-medieval culvert and modern track.	50	0.3
2	N-S	Topsoil: Mid brown compact silty clay. B-horizon: Light reddish brown compact sandy clay Natural: Compact pinkish red clay Contained ditch.	50	0.3
3	N-S	Topsoil: Mid greyish brown compact silty clay. B-horizon: Light reddish brown compact sandy clay Natural: Compact reddish brown clay Contained ditch, two postholes and a shallow linear	50	0.3

Context Register

Context Number	Description
001	Topsoil
002	Subsoil
003	Void
004	Void
005	Cut of posthole south of ditch in TR3
006	Fill of posthole 005
007	Cut of posthole south of ditch in TR3
008	Fill of posthole 007
009	Fill of linear feature 010
010	Cut of linear feature south of ditch in TR3
011	Cut of ditch TR1
012	Fill of ditch TR1
013	Possible stone and earth bank TR1
014	Post-med stone-capped culvert
015	Stone and brick trackway (modern)
016	Cut of ditch TR2
017	Fill of ditch TR2
018	Cut of ditch TR3
019	Upper fill of ditch TR3
020	Lower fill of ditch TR3
021	Stony upper fill of ditch- north end TR3

Sample Register

Sample Number	Context Number	Description
1	006	Fill of posthole 005
2	008	Fill of posthole 007
3	009	Fill of linear 010

Drawing Register

Drawing Number	Section	Plan	Description
1	1:20	-	West facing section of ditch Trench 1- south end
2	1:20	-	West facing section of ditch Trench 1- north end
3	1:10	-	West facing section of ditch Trench 2- south end
4	1:10	-	West facing section of ditch Trench 2- north end
5	1:10	-	West facing section of posthole 007
6	1:10	-	East facing section of posthole 005
7	1:20	-	West facing section of ditch Trench 3- south end
8	1:20	-	West facing section of ditch Trench 3- north end

Photograph Register

Black and white print and colour slide

Film No. 1

Shot No.	Direction Facing	Description
1	NE	Section through foundation 1- Area 1
2	W	View of foundation 1- Area 1
3	NE	Section through foundation 2- Area 1
4	NW	View of foundation 2- Area 1
5	S	View of test pit- Area 3
6	N	Linear feature running NE-SW Trench 1 –pre-ex
7	S	Linear feature running NE-SW Trench 1 –pre-ex
8	-	ID Shot
9	N	Pre ex- Deposit of stones and modern tile over stone culvert
10	S	Pre ex- Deposit of stones and modern tile over stone culvert
11	SE	Post-ex view of linear feature 003
12	NE	Post-ex view of linear feature 003
13	E	Remains of post-med/modern track over stone culvert
14	SE	Trench 3- South end of ditch
15	SE	Trench 3- Showing tumble at south end of ditch
16	NE	Trench 3- Section at south end of ditch
17	N	Trench 3- Detail of counterscarp material- north end of ditch
18	SE	Trench 3- Section at north end of ditch
19	W	Trench 2- Section at south end of ditch
20	S	Trench 2- Section at south end of ditch
21	W	Trench 2- Section at north end of ditch
22	N	Trench 2- Section at north end of ditch
23	N	Trench 1- Possible wall foundation
24	S	Trench 1- Possible wall foundation
25	E	Trench 1- Section at south end of ditch
26	E	Trench 1- Section at south end of ditch
27	N	Trench 1- Slot to expose south end of ditch
28	E	Trench 1- Section at north end of ditch
29	E	Trench 1- Section at north end of ditch
30	N	Trench 1- Counterscarp tumble
31	N	Trench 1- Counterscarp tumble
32	N	Trench 1- Post-medieval stone culvert
33	S	Trench 1- Post-medieval stone culvert
34	E	Trench 3- Posthole 005

Film No. 2

Shot No.	Direction Facing	Description
1	-	ID Shot
2	W	Trench 3- Posthole 007
3	NE	Trench 3- Linear feature 010

APPENDIX 2: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

SJ Haston

Headland Archaeology (05/05/08)

Introduction

Three samples were collected for the recovery of charred plant remains and any other environmental or artifactual material (see Samples register). The samples were collected from the fills of two postholes and a linear feature excavated during the trial trench evaluation.

Methods

All samples were processed in laboratory conditions using a standard floatation method (cf. Kenward et al, 1980).

Results

Wood charcoal fragments are present in all three samples, none of which contained fragments of a size suitable for identification and/or Accelerated Mass Spectrometry (AMS) dating (Tables 1 and 2). No other plant remains were recovered from the samples. No artefactual material was recovered from the samples.

Recommendations

No further work is recommended for this site.

References

Kenward, H. K., Hall, A. R. and Jones, A. K. G. (1980). A tested set of techniques for the extraction of plant and animal macrofossils from waterlogged archaeological deposits. *Science and Archaeology* 22, 3-15.

APPENDIX 3: FINDS ASSESSMENT

Julie Franklin
Headland Archaeology (20/05/08)

Finds Summary

The one find is a piece of ceramic building material. It is possibly a ridged tile from a roof ridge. However the asymmetric shape of the ridge implies it may well be a projecting base from a large straight sided vessel, such as a window box. While the former suggestion would mean the find was conceivably of Roman date, the latter would place it squarely in the post-medieval period.

Area	Context	Material	Quantity	Object	Description	Period
Addendum Area 1	T/S	CBM	1	Window Box / Ridge Tile	Small abraded piece. In section has asymmetric triangular ridge on top of curved piece. Curved parts broken on both sides, but c.9mm thick.	Post-Med (Roman??)