

DRHS/03



# DONCASTER RACECOURSE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
PLANNING REF. 16/01752/FULM

commissioned by Doncaster Racecourse  
Management Company Ltd

August 2017



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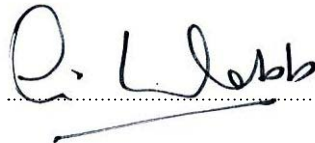
#### PROJECT INFO:

HA Job No. **DRHS/03** / NGR **SE 5951 0294** / Parish **Doncaster** / Local Authority **South Yorkshire** / OASIS Ref. **headland5-292989** / Archive Repository **Doncaster Museum**

#### PROJECT TEAM:

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Approved by **Alistair Webb**





## PROJECT SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook an Archaeological Watching Brief on behalf of Doncaster Racecourse Management Company Ltd on land on the western corner of Doncaster Racecourse at the junction of Leger Way and Bawtry Road. The watching brief took place during the construction of foundations and footings of a planned 150 bedroom hotel in order to mitigate the effect of groundworks on areas previously undisturbed by pre-existing structures or racecourse activities. Monitoring of the groundworks revealed a sequence of made ground deposits used to raise up and level the surrounding area. No remains of any previous buildings associated with the racecourse or any other archaeological features were observed. There was no evidence for occupation or settlement within the development area, indicating that there is very little potential for the presence of currently unknown archaeological features within the area of development. On the basis of the watching brief the construction of the new hotel will not impact any heritage assets.

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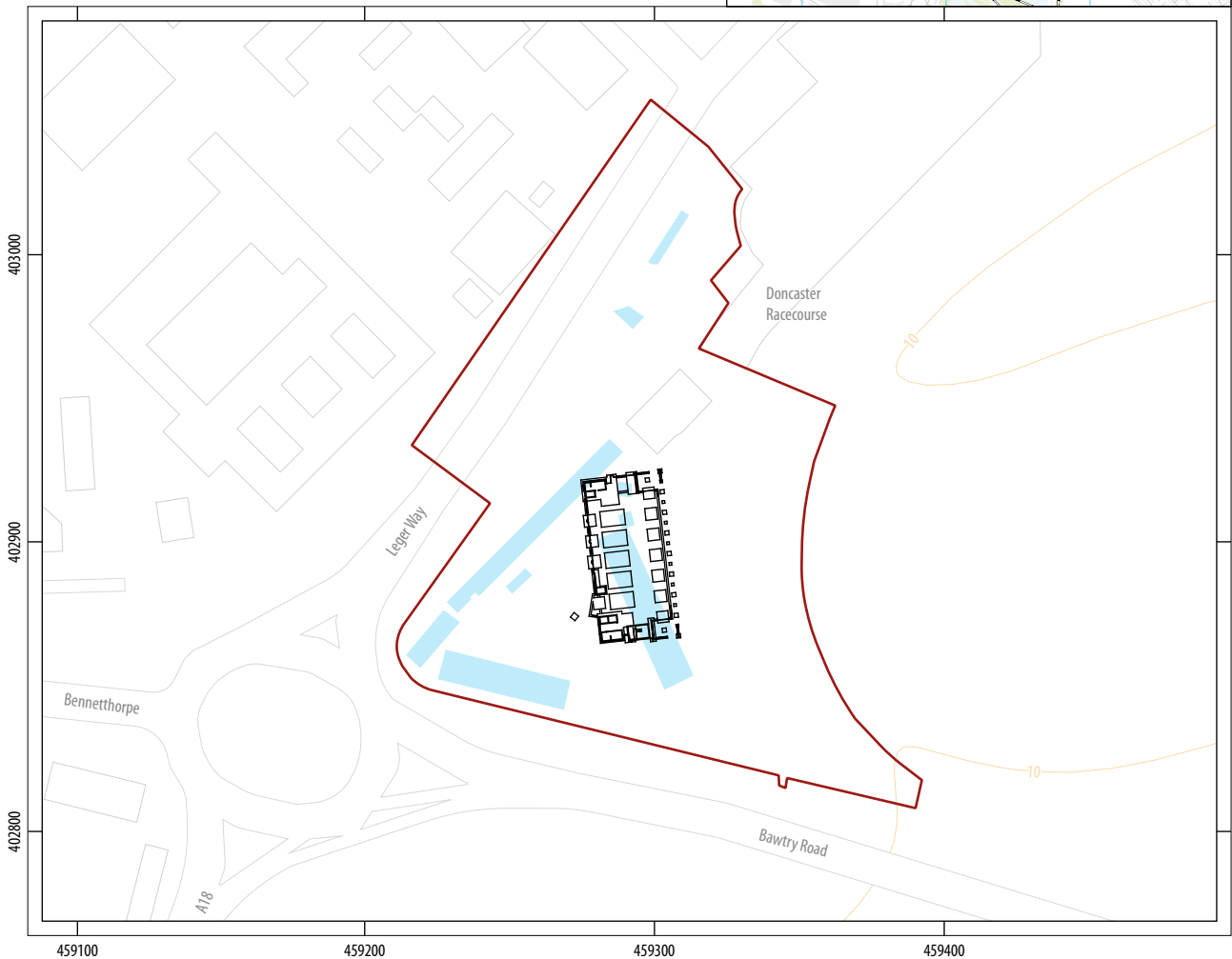
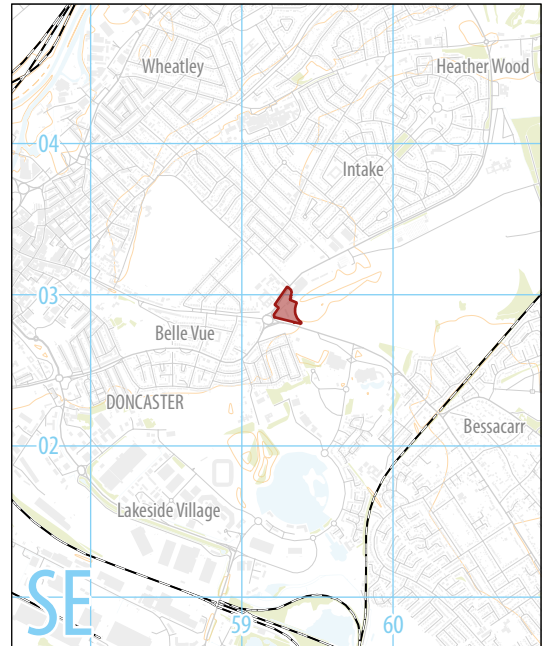
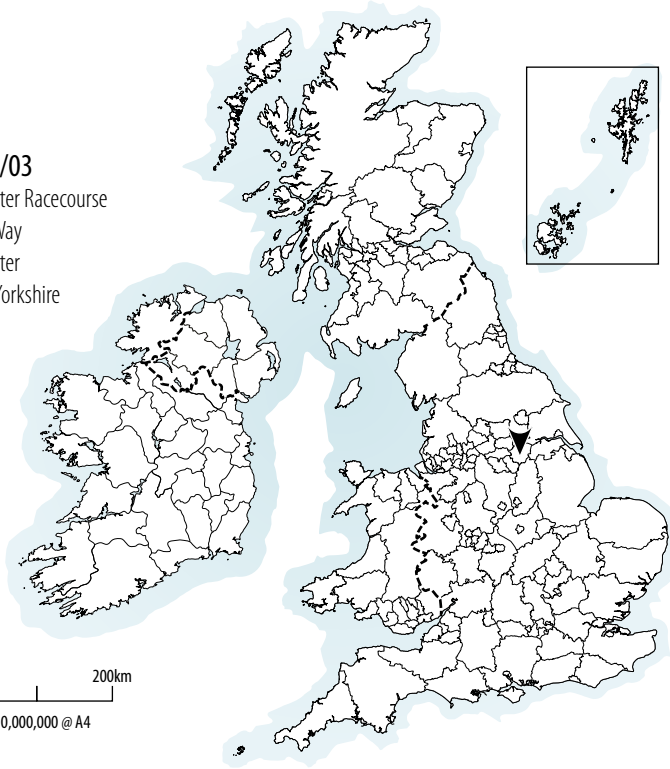
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DRHS/03  
 Doncaster Racecourse  
 Leger Way  
 Doncaster  
 South Yorkshire

0 200km  
 1:10,000,000 @ A4



0 50m  
 1:2,500 @ A4

- proposed development area
- proposed foundation footing
- former building footprint



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ILLUS 1 Site location



# DONCASTER RACECOURSE

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

Headland Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Doncaster Racecourse during the construction of foundations for a 150 bedroom hotel. The watching brief is associated with outline planning permission (Ref. 16/01752/FULM).

Work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Headland 2017) which was submitted to and approved by South Yorkshire Archaeology Service, and with all current industry best practices.

#### 1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposed development area (PDA) comprises the western corner of Doncaster Racecourse at the junction of Leger Way and Bawtry Road, centred on NGR SE 5951 0294 (see Illus 1). A number of buildings associated with the racecourse, including the Old Weighing Room, Jockey Changing Room, Champagne Pavilion, Vet Care Building and Saddling Stalls were all contained within this area but had been demolished in advance of construction.

The solid geology within the PDA consists of Nottingham Castle Sandstone formed approximately 246–251 million years ago in the Triassic Period. Superficial deposits include River Terrace Deposits in the form of sand and gravel which formed approximately 3 million years ago in an environment dominated by rivers (NERC 2017).

#### 1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A Desk Based Assessment (Archaeological Investigations 2005), undertaken as part of an earlier development proposal, did not

identify any archaeological remains within the PDA. It did, however, note the presence of pottery manufacturing sites to the immediate east of the site as well as cropmarks interpreted as being features of likely prehistoric/Romano-British date. Archaeological remains, including ditches and finds of prehistoric date, were recorded during construction of the racecourse stands in the early 20th century providing further evidence of archaeological potential in the vicinity of the PDA. Nevertheless, much of the PDA has been previously built on leaving only small areas of undisturbed ground within the footprint of the hotel (see Illus 2). As the footprint of the hotel and residential development appeared more likely to be undisturbed by previous activity, South Yorkshire Archaeology Service, Archaeological Advisors to the Local Planning Authority, advised that an Archaeological Watching Brief should be maintained during groundworks in areas where there has been no previous activity.

### 2 OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the watching brief was to monitor the groundworks associated with construction of the hotel development and excavate and record any archaeological remains.

The archaeological investigations were undertaken in order to:

- › ensure the excavation and recording of any archaeological remains that would be disturbed by the construction works; and
- › to produce and deposit a satisfactory archive and disseminate the results of the work via grey-literature reporting and publication as appropriate

The resulting archive will be organised and deposited with the Doncaster Museum to facilitate access for future research and



**ILLUS 2** Site plan



**ILLUS 3** Site overview, looking south    **ILLUS 4** Trench 8, west facing section

interpretation for public benefit (CIfA 2014a). An online OASIS form has been completed and is included in the report appendices.

### 3 METHOD

The watching brief was carried out on intermittent days between the 13th March and the 24th March 2017. A total of seven foundation footings (Trenches 1–7) were monitored and recorded measuring 5.5–6m by 6.3–6.9m (see Illus 3). In addition, a foundation trench (Trench 8), aligned north/ south, and located on the eastern edge of the site was monitored and excavated to a depth of 0.93m (see Illus 4).

A mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket was used to excavate deposits to a depth necessary for the works

under direct archaeological supervision. The archaeologist was able to enter the excavated area in order to record any interventions when appropriate.

With the absence of any archaeological features, investigation was limited to the cleaning of sections with hand tools to enable the recording of the stratigraphy of each foundation.

All recording followed the guidance laid down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014b) and was in line with the approved WSI (Headland Archaeology 2017). All trenches and contexts were given a unique number. All recording was undertaken on pro forma recording sheets which conform to archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.



**ILLUS 5** Site overview, looking west

All the groundworks monitored matched the dimensions and locations of the construction plans provided by the Client

A full photographic record was taken using digital photography.

## 4 RESULTS

Full context descriptions and trench descriptions, including dimensions, depths and orientations, are presented in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Contexts are identified numerically by trench (ie Trench 1: (01001), Trench 2: (02001)) with cuts indicated by squared brackets and deposits by rounded brackets. Selected technical detail is utilised below in order to describe the remains found and to inform the interpretation and dating completed and presented in this report. This structure reflects adherence to the ClfA guidance on report production, which states that 'descriptive material should be clearly separated from interpretative statements' (ClfA 2014b, 14, Section 5). Drawing upon the same document it is imperative to create a narrative which uses the evidence gathered to assign significance to heritage assets (remains) encountered:

'If archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their significance in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.' (ClfA 2014b, 14, Section 5)

A plan displaying the foundation groundworks carried out during the watching brief is shown in Illus 2.

Table 1 outlines the stratigraphy of each trench. Trenches 1–7 shared the same general stratigraphy. The uppermost and most recent deposit was a mid-grey hard-core (002) containing crushed brick and stone, varying in thickness from 0.14m to 0.32m across the PDA. This was likely intended to act as a foundation for the asphalt surface and buildings that previously stood on the site. Beneath this lay a second hard-core deposit (003) consisting of a yellow brown sandstone rubble and measuring between 0.1– 0.2m in thickness. Both of these were found to sit upon a sheet of teram geotextile fabric which was visible in all the excavated footings and separated the hard-core from the topsoil deposits beneath.

Trenches 7 and 8 were both seen to share the same stratigraphy. However, due to the depth excavated to in order to satisfy the construction contractor's health and safety requirements, it was not deemed safe for the archaeologists to enter these trenches. As a result no measurements were taken.

Trench 8 was a linear foundation located on the eastern edge of the PDA and orientated north to south along the sites entirety. The uppermost deposit was a very mixed mid grey hard-core (08001), containing crushed brick and stone and very similar to (002) seen elsewhere. It measured 0.4m in thickness and was also laid upon a sheet of geotextile fabric. No second hard-core deposit was observed. A dark brown-black silty clay topsoil (08002) measuring 0.13m in thickness and comparable to (004) was found. No subsoil was present and beneath the topsoil a mid-yellow orange sand natural (08003) was excavated to a thickness of 0.41m.

TR	ORIENTATION	MAX. D	STRATIGRAPHY		ARCHAEOLOGY PRESENT	DIMENSIONS (M)	
			Deposit	D (m)			
1	E-W	1.43m	Hard-core (01002)	0-0.32	None	6.9x5.5	
			Hard-core (01003)	0.32-0.42			
			Burnt deposit (01006)	0.42-0.52			
			Topsoil (01004)	0.52-0.74			
			Subsoil (01005)	0.74-1.19			
			Natural (01001)	1.19-1.43			
2	E-W	1.36m	Hard-core (02002)	0-0.14	None	6.3x5.5	
			Hard-core (02003)	0.14-0.33			
			Topsoil (02004)	0.33-0.58			
			Subsoil (02005)	0.58-1.08			
			Natural (02001)	1.05-1.36			
3	E-W	1.32m	Hard-core (03002)	0-0.15	None	6.7x5.7	
			Hard-core (03003)	0.15-0.35			
			Topsoil (03004)	0.35-0.53			
			Subsoil (03005)	0.53-0.98			
			Natural (03001)	0.98-1.32			
4	E-W	1.40m	Hard-core (04002)	0-0.27	None	6.5x6	
			Hard-core (04003)	0.27-0.43			
			Topsoil (04004)	0.43-0.57			
			Darker topsoil (04008)	0.43-0.57			
			Subsoil (04005)	0.57-1.04			
			Natural (04001)	1.04-1.4			
5	E-W	1.39m	Hard-core (05002)	0-0.26	None	6.8x5.6	
			Hard-core (05003)	0.26-0.43			
			Topsoil (05004)	0.43-0.52			
			Subsoil (05005)	0.52-0.96			
			Natural (05001)	0.96-1.39			
6	E-W	unknown	Hard-core (06002)	N/A	None	unknown	
			Hard-core (06003)	N/A			
			Topsoil (06004)	N/A			
			Subsoil (06005)	N/A			
			Natural (06001)	N/A			
7	E-W	unknown	Hard-core (07002)	N/A	None	unknown	
			Hard-core (07003)	N/A			
			Topsoil (07004)	N/A			
			Subsoil (07005)	N/A			
			Natural (07001)	N/A			
8	N-S	0.94m	Hard-core (08001)	0-0.4m	None	32.0x	
			Topsoil (08002)	0.4-0.53			0.64
			Natural (08003)	0.53-0.94			

TABLE 1 Trench stratigraphy

## 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Monitoring of the groundworks revealed a sequence of made ground deposits used to raise up and level the surrounding area. No remains of any previous buildings associated with the racecourse or any other archaeological features were observed. There was no evidence for occupation or settlement within the development area, indicating that there is very little potential for the presence of currently unknown archaeological features within the area of development. On the basis of the watching brief the construction of the new hotel will not impact any heritage assets.

## 6 REFERENCES

- Archaeological Archives Forum (AAF) 2011 *Archaeological Archives A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (2nd edn)* [online document] Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA): Reading, available from [www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/aaf\\_archaeological\\_archives\\_2011.pdf](http://www.archaeologyuk.org/archives/aaf_archaeological_archives_2011.pdf)
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- Headland Archaeology 2016 *Doncaster Racecourse Hotel and Residential Development; Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief* [unpublished document] Headland Archaeology, Ref. DRHS/03
- Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) 2017 *British Geological Survey* [online] Accessed 6 April 2017 from <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/>

## 7 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 SITE REGISTERS

#### Appendix 1.1 Trench register

TR	ORIENTATION	MAXIMUM D	DESCRIPTION	AREA (M <sup>2</sup> )
1	E-W	1.43m	Blank trench 6.9m x 5.5m.	37.95
2	E-W	1.36m	Blank trench 6.3m x 5.5m.	34.65
3	E-W	1.32m	Blank trench 6.7m x 5.7m.	38.19
4	E-W	1.4m	Blank trench 6.5m x 6m.	39
5	E-W	1.39m	Blank trench 6.8m x 5.6m.	37.4
6	E-W	unknown	Blank trench unknown dimensions	unknown
7	E-W	unknown	Blank trench unknown dimensions	unknown
8	N-S	0.93m	Blank trench 32.0m x 0.64m	20.48

#### Appendix 1.2 Context register

TR	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DIMENSIONS (L X W X D)
1	01001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	6.9m x 5.5m x 0.24m
1	01002	Mid-brown Hard-core	6.9m x 5.5m x 0.32m
1	01003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	6.9m x 5.5m x 0.1m
1	01004	Dark brown topsoil	6.9m x 5.5m x 0.22m
1	01005	Mid-orange subsoil	6.9m x 5.5m x 0.45m
1	01006	Organic-silty natural deposit	6.9m x 5.5m x 0.1m
2	02001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	6.3m x 5.5m x 0.28m
2	02002	Mid-brown Hard-core	6.3m x 5.5m x 0.14m
2	02003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	6.3m x 5.5m x 0.19m
2	02004	Dark brown topsoil	6.3m x 5.5m x 0.25m
2	02005	Mid-orange subsoil	6.3m x 5.5m x 0.5m
3	03001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	6.7m x 5.7m x 0.34m
3	03002	Mid-brown Hard-core	6.7m x 5.7m x 0.15m
3	03003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	6.7m x 5.7m x 0.2m
3	03004	Dark brown topsoil	6.7m x 5.7m x 0.18m
3	03005	Mid-orange subsoil	6.7m x 5.7m x 0.45
3	03006	Organic-silty natural deposit	6.7m x 5.7m x 0.26m
4	04001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	6.5m x 6m x 0.36m
4	04002	Mid-brown Hard-core	6.5m x 6m x 0.27m
4	04003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	6.5m x 6m x 0.16m
4	04004	Dark brown topsoil	6.5m x 6m x 0.14m
4	04005	Mid-orange subsoil	6.5m x 6m x 0.47m

TR	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DIMENSIONS (L X W X D)
4	04006	Darker brown topsoil	6.5m x 6m x 0.14m
5	05001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	6.8m x 5.6m x 0.33m
5	05002	Mid-brown Hard-core	6.8m x 5.6m x 0.26m
5	05003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	6.8m x 5.6m x 0.17m
5	05004	Dark brown topsoil	6.8m x 5.6m x 0.19m
5	05005	Mid-orange subsoil	6.8m x 5.6m x 0.44m
6	06001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	Unknown
6	06002	Mid-brown Hard-core	Unknown
6	06003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	Unknown
6	06004	Dark brown topsoil	Unknown
6	06005	Mid-orange subsoil	Unknown
7	07001	Light brown yellow sandy natural	Unknown
7	07002	Mid-brown Hard-core	Unknown
7	07003	Yellow-brown Hard-core	Unknown
7	07004	Dark brown topsoil	Unknown
7	07005	Mid-orange subsoil	Unknown
8	08001	Mid-brown Hard-core	32.0 x 0.64m x 0.4m
8	08002	Dark brown topsoil	32.0 x 0.64m x 0.13m
8	08003	Light brown yellow sandy natural	32.0 x 0.64m x 0.41m

#### Appendix 1.3 Photographic register

PHOTO	C/S	B/W	DIGITAL	DIRECTION FACING	DESCRIPTION
1	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-001	SW	General shot foundation TR1
2	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-002	SW	General shot foundation TR2
3	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-003	SW	General shot foundation TR3
4	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-004	SE	NW facing representative section TR1
5	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-005	SE	NW facing representative section TR1
6	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-006	NW	SE facing representative section TR2
7	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-007	NW	SE facing representative section TR2
8	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-008	SE	NW facing representative section TR3
9	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-009	SE	NW facing representative section TR3
10	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-010	SW	General shot foundation TR5
11	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-011	SE	NW facing representative section TR5

PHOTO	C/S	B/W	DIGITAL	DIRECTION FACING	DESCRIPTION
12	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-012	SE	NW facing representative section TR5
13	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-013	SW	General shot foundation TR4
14	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-014	NW	SE facing representative section TR4
15	VOID	VOID	VOID	VOID	VOID
16	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-016	SE	Overview of TR1–TR5
17	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-017	S	Overview of TR1–TR5
18	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-018	SW	Working shots
19	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-019	W	Working shots
20	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-020	SE	Working shot of foundation TR6
21	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-021	NW	Working shot of foundation TR7
22	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-022	SW	Working shot of foundation TR7
23	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-023	E	Working shot of foundation TR7
24	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-024	SW	Working shot of foundation TR7
25	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-025	W	Example of backfilled foundation Trench
26	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-026	W	Example of backfilled foundation Trench
27	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-027	W	Example of backfilled foundation Trench
28	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-028	W	Example of backfilled foundation Trench
29	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-029	W	Example of backfilled foundation Trench
30	N/A	N/A	DRHA-03-030	E	W facing section of N-S orientation foundation TR8









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