

BAMBURGH RESEARCH PROJECT

THE OLD RECTORY NORTH ROAD PONTELAND NORTHUMBERLAND



REPORT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND LIMITED EXCAVATION

Compiled for Elborn Design, Architects by The Bamburgh Research Project: Commercial Projects Section

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SUMMARY

This report has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project on behalf of Elborn Design, Architects, regarding work carried out at The Old Rectory, Ponteland, and sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief and limited excavation undertaken by The Bamburgh Research Project during September 2009. The proposed development comprised the erection of a conservatory extension to the existing west wing of the present house and a garden / document store in the south west corner of the garden of The Old Rectory, in Ponteland, Northumberland (NGR NZ165729) (Figures 1 and 2). This evaluation was conducted in response to a brief issued by the Conservation Team of Northumberland County Council and involved machine stripping and hand excavation within the footprint of the proposed conservatory extension, and monitoring of machine excavated foundation trenches in the area of the new building.

The excavation of features and monitoring was undertaken between the 17th and 25th September 2009. Trench 1 was excavated archaeologically and measured 5m north to south by 5.5m east to west, (although the area of topsoil removal was more extensive 11 x 7m approximately) and was located in the north west corner of the proposed development in the area to be occupied by the proposed conservatory (Figure 2).

Trench 1 began as a monitoring exercise but once the topsoil had been removed features of archaeological significance became visible and the decision was made, in conjunction with the Assistant County Archaeologist, to move to an archaeological evaluation of the deposits. The topsoil was removed to a maximum depth of 0.3m revealing a deposit of silty sand that contained medieval pottery, 1015. As the deposit was investigated and more of the site stripped, several linear gully features were identified. Gullies 1005, 1006, 1007, and 1008 were aligned west to east and filled with very similar deposits (1004, 1002, 1003, and 1001 respectively) with the exception of 1003 which contained a proportion of burnt material. These features were cut at their eastern ends by a north to south aligned linear ditch (1014) of larger proportions. Although stratigraphically later the ditch fill contained pottery sherds that co-joined with sherds that were recovered from 1001 the fill of ditch 1008.

Ditch 1014 also cuts a smaller north to south aligned gully feature 1012 (filled by 1011), seen only in profile on the eastern side of a section excavated across the feature (Section 2 Figure 4) Medieval pottery was found in most of the features, but there was a concentration of sherds in fill 1001, the majority of which seemed to belong to large jugs of mid 14th century date, although other sherds which could date between the 13th and early 15th centuries were also present.

The features were clearly defined cut into the subsoil which is variously a light sand 1009, or pea gravel 1010.

The pottery is considered to have been deposited over a relatively short interval of time, indicating perhaps a period of primary occupation between the late 13th to late 14th centuries after which the site does not show much evidence of activity. The present evidence suggests domestic use in the 14th century, within a boundary feature (1014) that perhaps marks the distinction of the domestic site from less intensively occupied land beyond. By the 15th century the site appears to have gone out of use, or the importance of the ditches waned and they gradually silted up.

The investigation has exposed features of significant interest, but the limited excavation area was not extensive enough to reveal a very detailed occupation sequence. Pottery recovered from the excavation is thought to be locally produced and of considerable interest in the understanding of the network of small pottery production sites and fashions of the period in Northumberland .

The site itself is a welcome addition to our knowledge of Medieval Ponteland, which has been rarely seen in modern excavations and certainly the size and nature of the features revealed at The Old Rectory, and the impressive assemblage of pottery, indicates a significant body of material culture remains to be identified in this area, located as it is between the 12th Century church of St. Mary and the 15th Century Pele Tower. It is hoped that future work in the area can further expand our understanding .

**OLD RECTORY GARDEN
PONTELAND
NORTHUMBERLAND**

REPORT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & EXCAVATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This report has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project, Commercial Section for Elborn Design, Architects, and sets out the results of the monitoring and limited excavation undertaken within the garden of the Old Rectory, North Road, Ponteland, in September 2009.
- 1.0.2 The work was undertaken in compliance with a Written Schedule of Investigation compiled by the Bamburgh Research Project in September 2009 in response to a brief issued by the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Planning reference number is: CM/20090265 and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team number is: CM19/8; 9608. The OASIS reference is: bamburgh1-70791

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The site is located in the walled garden to the south of the Old Rectory building, in the town centre of Ponteland, Northumberland, at the southern end of North Road. (NGR NZ 165729) (Figures 1 and 2).

2.2 Archaeological background

- 2.2.1 The Old Rectory is a brick built house on the corner of North Road and Main street, Ponteland. It was built in the early 18th century and heightened in the latter half of that century. It was once the property of Merton College, Oxford who were the lay rectors of Ponteland. Surviving features include two early 18th century panelled rooms and a late 18th century staircase (Pevsner, N. et al, 1992). The site is located within an area of known medieval occupation and many of the surrounding buildings incorporate medieval structural elements. The most prominent of these include the Vicar's Pele, a Scheduled Ancient Monument c.62m south-west of the proposed development area, which is a roofless, rectangular, rubble built medieval fortified tower house that had been incorporated into the old vicarage until its demolition in the 19th century. The tower survives today as a three storey free standing structure. The earliest reference to the building is in a list of castles and fortalices dated 1415, but there is a possibility that there may have been an earlier building in this location (Dodds, M. H. 1926) (Long, B. 1967). The Blackbird Inn, located c.105m to the north of the proposed building incorporates parts of a 14th century or earlier Pele Tower, the remains of which are known to extend to the west of the present public house, and a fireplace of c.1600 date survives on the east side of the basement. The tower was

occupied by the Earls of Athol during the 14th Century during which time it was raided by the Scots (c.1388). The structure was rebuilt in the 17th century, but subsequently fell into ruin until it was restored as part of the Inn constructed in 1935 (Hadcock, R. N. 1939). The Church of St Mary is located c.80m north-east of the site, with surviving structural elements dating to the 12th century and 15th century, incorporated into the 19th century restoration of the building (Pevsner, N. et al, 1992) (Knowles, D. and Hadcock, R.N., 1953) (Cramp, R., 1984) (Briggs, H.D., Cambridge, E. and Bailey, R.N., 1983). Two medieval gullies, relating to drainage or field boundaries were recorded at Peel House in 2003, located c. 35m to the west of the site.

2.2.2 The evidence for prehistoric occupation in the Ponteland area consists largely of aerial photographic evidence for enclosures, such as those noted at Prestwick Whins, Kirkley West Farm and Southeast Farm East (Gates, T.1979) (McCord, N and Jobey, G. 1968). Chance finds of two Neolithic axes and a Bronze age Beaker pottery vessel have been discovered within the area, but with poor provenance, so no clear connection with settlement patterns can be established through them (Dodds, M. H. 1926) (Tait, J. 1965). The evidence for medieval settlement is much stronger. A deserted medieval village at South Dissington may have been in existence since before 1085, when it was given to Tynemouth Priory, but most of the villages of this type date to the 13th century. Callerton Darreynes was one such village destroyed by the Scots in the 14th century. Land reorganisation due to agricultural improvement in the 17th and 18th centuries saw many villages replaced by farms, as at Eland Hall, Little Callerton and Berwick Hill, and other villages were uprooted to provide parkland for country houses as at Kirkley, South Dissington and North Dissington (Wrathmell, S. 1975). There is evidence that many medieval buildings have been demolished completely, such as Kirkley Tower, known in 1415, and Milbourne Chapel recorded in 1202 and 1575, both of which have since been lost and their locations are now unknown. The 13th century manor house Eland Hall, may have stood in the vicinity of Eland Hall farm, where earthworks still survive (Long, B. 1967) (Bates, C. J. 1891).

2.2.3 In the 18th and 19th centuries, the area contained a number of tile and clay works at Berwickhill Tile Works, Clay Mill tile works, Ponteland tile works and Kirkley Tilery (Davison, P J 1986). East of Ponteland there are bell pits from coal working, and quarries are known on Berwick Hill (St Joseph, J. K. 1969) (Jobey, G. 1963). A 19th century corn mill is also recorded at Ponteland. 19th century country houses include Prestwick Hall, Eland Hall, Dissington Hall and Milbourne Hall, all built between 1794 and 1815. In Ponteland town centre several 18th and 19th century farm houses survive on Main Street (12 and 14, 21 and 25) and the Seven Stars Public House is also of 19th century date. More recently a WWII pillbox was constructed east of Smailburn.

2.3 Impact of the development

2.3.1 The development involved the excavation of foundations for the construction of a garden store and document store / study in the garden area south of the main house together with the addition of a conservatory to the house. In addition to foundation trenches for the tool store and study / document store, groundworks were associated with the installation of services and a WC, and the area was subject to ground clearance and the removal of existing sheds. (Figure2)

- 2.3.2 The location of the development, close to the street frontage and nearby medieval buildings, indicates a strong possibility that medieval structural remains or evidence of industry and occupation may be encountered in trenches and groundworks that exceed the depth of topsoil.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.0.1 In the light of the potential for the construction work to impact, in places, upon preserved archaeological remains it was proposed that a continuous watching brief be conducted during the ground work in accordance with the specification laid out in the brief issued by the County Council Conservation Team.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Watching brief

4.1.1 During the groundworks associated with the removal of existing garden sheds and construction of a garden store and document store/study and conservatory a suitably experienced archaeologist, familiar with the archaeological background to the site, would be present to record any items of interest uncovered. Where appropriate all excavation and would be carried out by a machine using a toothless ditching bucket. All work would be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and should follow the IFA Standards for Watching Briefs. This watching brief will conform to the following methodology.

4.2 General standards

- 4.2.1 All archaeological features identified during the monitoring, or following the implementation of the contingency would be sample excavated according to their type and form:

50% of all discrete features.

50% of waterlogged deposits.

25% of stratified deposits.

25% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill

10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill

- 4.2.2 A 40 litre bulk palaeoenvironmental sample would be taken from all features recognised as suitable for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains.

- 4.3.3 Secure contexts would be sampled for dating where appropriate, whether on site or as sub samples of bulk samples. Any concentrations of charcoal or other carbonised material recovered on site would be retained.

- 4.3.4 Pottery and Animal Bone would be collected as bulk samples whilst significant

artefacts would be three-dimensionally recorded prior to processing. All finds would be recorded and processed according to the BRP system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Finds recovery and storage strategies would be in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995 and IFA Guidelines for Finds Work). Should artefacts of gold or silver covered by the 1996 Treasure Act be recovered, appropriate procedures would be followed.

- 4.3.5 In the event of Human burials being revealed they would be left *in situ* and treated in an appropriate manner if possible. Any burial requiring excavation would be exposed, recorded and lifted in total. After consultation with the County Archaeological Officer, if excavation is required, work would comply with the relevant home Office regulations.
- 4.3.6 Any archaeological features encountered would be hand-cleaned, excavated and recorded:
1. A photographic record of the site would be taken using black and white print, colour slide film at 35mm format. In addition a digital photographic record would be compiled.
 2. A written description of features would be recorded using the BRP *pro forma* context recording system.
 3. All features would be drawn at an appropriate scale using pre-printed permatrace. Plans would normally be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10.
- 4.3.7 All archaeological features and horizons would be accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. All levels would be tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.3.8 Arrangements would be made with the appropriate museum for the deposition of the site archive within 6 month of the completion of the post-excavation report.

5.0 MONITORING

- 5.0.1 Following the discovery of artefacts and features of archaeological interest in the area of the new conservatory a site visit by Karen Derham the Assistant County Archaeologist was arranged. Following consultation a strategy of limited excavation, in addition to the trenches required by the foundation of the new conservatory, was undertaken in order to gain an understanding of the revealed archaeology.

6.0 RESULTS

- 6.0.1 Of the two trenches monitored under the watching brief, Trench 1 was the only area to produce archaeological evidence. It was located adjacent to the Old Rectory building within the area stripped to lay the foundations for the proposed conservatory extension. Trench 2 was located in the north west corner of the garden adjacent to the

boundary wall. (Figure 2)

6.1 Trial Trench 1 (Figures 3 and 4)

6.1.1 Trial Trench 1, which measured approximately 5m square, was located in the north west corner of the development adjacent to the Old Rectory building with the brick garden wall and the building on the north and west sides. The excavation was initiated following the discovery of large amounts of medieval pottery as the area was being machine stripped prior to the excavation of foundations. The excavation in this area removed approximately 0.3m of topsoil (1000) to reveal medieval features cut into a mottled mid greyish-brown and light yellow sand (1009) and lenses of mid yellow and yellowish-brown coarse sand and 'pea' gravel with frequent small sub rounded pebbles (1010), which formed the subsoil over the site. It was encountered at a depth of 58.19m OD.

6.1.2 Three shallow, somewhat uneven, gullies (**1005**, **1006** and **1007**) extended broadly parallel to one another on an east to west alignment across the northern and central part of the trench. Gully **1005** was the cut of a sub rectangular feature that extended north beyond the limit of excavation. It was not excavated as it would not be cut by the proposed foundation trenches. The observed dimensions of the feature were 1.8m east to west and over 0.6m north to south. Gully **1007** was much slighter, extending for 2.9m east to west and located centrally within the trench between gullies **1006** and **1008**. The feature was 0.17m deep and up to 0.6m wide. In profile, this gully was concave with sloping 45 degree edges and an undulating concave base cut into the subsoil. Gullies **1005** and **1007** both contained similar fills (1004 and 1003 respectively) comprising a mid greyish brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks, animal bone and medieval pottery sherds. **1006** was the cut of a linear gully that extended west as far as the brick garden wall. In the central part of the gully, where it was excavated in section (Section 1, Figure 4), the feature appears to splay out to the north for approximately 1.2m. The profile is concave with 45 degree sloping sides and an undulating flattish base. The exact edges were difficult to define as the natural deposits into which the feature is cut (1009 and 1010) are very soft, and mottling has occurred. The gully contained a single fill, 1002, which was a mid brown silty sand with moderate plasticity and a slightly coarser granularity than surrounding deposits. Inclusions comprised frequent coal, coke (fired coal), burnt sand and ashy patches as well as moderate small sub rounded and sub angular pebbles less than 0.1m in diameter. The deposit contained occasional animal bone and pottery sherds. The substantial content of fire waste material was the main distinguishing feature of this fill from the fill of ditch **1014**, which cut the feature at its east end. The burnt material was not burnt in situ; there's no evidence of a localised concentration of burning, for example, which suggests that the burnt material is more likely to be fire waste generated somewhere within the vicinity. To the south of the gullies a small east to west ditch was identified, extending from the western limit of excavation for 4.5m to the eastern part of the trench where it was cut by ditch **1014**. It was 0.3m deep and 0.65m wide and ranged in steepness between 75 to 45 degrees with a slightly concave base.

6.1.3 A further small gully (**1012**) was identified at the base of the section cut into north-south ditch **1014** (Section 2, Figure 4). The feature had curving sides at approximately

45 degrees with a concave base. It was 0.25m deep and 0.6m wide and extended north to south, extending beyond the limits of the excavation in both directions. It was filled by a mid greyish-brown silty sand (1011) The feature may be an early north to south aligned ditch that was replaced by the later ditch **1014**. Ditch **1014** was a more substantial ditch than **1008**, which it cut, being 2.25m wide and 0.7m deep (Section 2, Figure 4). Although both wider and deeper than **1008** the fills of the two features (1001 and 1013 respectively) were very similar, comprising a mid greyish brown silty sand, moderately plastic and granular in texture. Sherds of the same pottery vessel were recovered from each indicating that the two features were filled in a broadly contemporary time frame. In addition to ditch **1008**, ditch **1014**, cut gullies **1005**, **1006** and **1007** on their east sides.

- 6.1.4 The topsoil, context 1000, comprised a mixed garden soil of mid greyish-brown sandy silt ranging between 0.15m and 0.3m in depth. The texture was moderately loose but plastic with some granulation. Inclusions comprised occasional glass fragments, tile, CBM, brown pottery sherds, drain sherds, mortar and burnt slate and moderate amounts of coal.

6.2 Trial Trench 2 (Figure 2)

- 6.2.1 Trial Trench 2 was located in the south west corner of the garden and was bounded on the south and west sides by the brick wall that defines the extent of the property. Removal of the topsoil revealed no features of interest and deep trenches cut for foundations did not cut through deposits or features.

6.3 Pottery analysis (Jenny Vaughan)

Introduction

- 6.3.1 An assemblage of 512 sherds of pottery weighing 5.9 kgs was recovered from the watching brief. The great majority of the sherds came from a single context [1001] (see chart below). All the material was medieval, the majority possibly early 14th century but there were a few fragments of earlier 13th century types.

Context	count	weight
1001	451	5395
1002	14	155
1013	47	350

Range and Variety (see catalogue for details)

- 6.3.2 Although there was some variation in colour, from light to dark grey when reduced and buff/orange-buff/red brown where oxidised, most of the fabrics had a similar sandy texture and white streaks. Rouletted decoration, both round the rims and in rows on the body, was present on almost all of the vessels, which appeared to be large jugs with in some instances two handles, judging by the positioning of the spout at right angles to a handle. Handles were mainly flattened into straps (with ridging) but two were more rod like. There was one bridge spout. Several small decorative ‘false’ handles were present. Most of these may have belonged to a single vessel, which unusually did not have rouletting although there was some slashing on one of the decorative handles.

- 6.3.3 A few sherds from [1001] were not part of this group of jugs. There was a jar rim in an oxidised iron rich fabric (later 13th/14th c.) and four body sherds: one early green glazed sherd (13th c.), one small white gritty sherd (early 13th c.?) and two possibly later reduced green glazed sherds (later 14th/15th c.). The material from [1013] appeared on the whole to consist of fragments from those vessels also present in [1001]. The sherds from [1002] did not appear to be part of the same group. They included four white gritty sherds and an early green glazed fragment. Most of the other material in this context was fairly hard and oxidised iron rich.

Data Collection

- 6.3.4 An attempt was made to sort the sherds from [1001] into vessel families as it was evident that large parts of several jugs were present. Some had broken into quite small pieces and this, and the variations in colour and appearance from one part of the body to another, made the process more difficult than at first expected. The other two contexts were rapidly scanned and some 'families' identified. Counts and weights were entered into an Access database table using abbreviated descriptions as fabric types.

Discussion

- 6.3.5 This is a small but interesting group which appears to be fairly homogeneous though the dating, for a number of reasons, is uncertain. Rouletted decoration is present on 12th century unglazed gritty wares on Tyneside, and has been noted on some 13th century glazed wares, but is not at all common. The rather coarse nature of the Ponteland material and the general style and finish of the vessels suggest a late 13th/early 14th century date, although a larger proportion of light firing (buff and buff-white) wares would generally be expected in an assemblage of this date in the north east region. Also, large two-handled vessels are not common, or at least not on Tyneside, until the later 14th and 15th centuries. By this time vessels tend to be better glazed and made in finer, more consistently fired fabrics. It may be that the pottery used in medieval Ponteland, although only 10 miles from the Tyne, has more in common with other areas in Northumberland, where it has been noted that much of the later medieval pottery is quite coarse, than with the medieval pottery of Newcastle. However it may be unwise to place too much emphasis on comparisons with the wider region. This is a small group presumably deriving from a single household which may have been supplied mainly from one, perhaps quite small, production site - the similar nature of the fabric of most of the material and the rouletted decoration certainly suggest a single source. This very homogeneity is another factor making it difficult to date the group with any certainty as the dating of pottery assemblages, in the absence of coins or other specific date indicators, depends to a great extent on the proportions of different types present. However, the first half of the 14th century seems perhaps the most likely date. This is rather a broad date range for a group which must have been deposited over quite a short period of time.
- 6.3.6 This small assemblage serves to highlight the very local nature of pottery in the medieval period and it would be interesting to be able to compare it with other material from Ponteland and its immediate surroundings. A short illustrated report with more detailed fabric descriptions would, especially if further reconstruction of the

vessels was possible, be a useful contribution to the study of Northumbrian pottery. This wider study would also benefit from the scientific analysis (ICPS) of a number of samples to contribute to the identification of possible production sites.

6.4 Plant macrofossil assessment (Charlotte O'Brien)

Methods

6.4.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500 μ m mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots was examined at $\times 60$ magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ7.5 stereomicroscope. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant nomenclature follows (Stace 1997).

Results

6.4.2 Charred plant macrofossils occurred in both contexts, though generally they were in poor condition with many having a degraded or pitted form. Grains and chaff of bread wheat and rye were recorded in context (1002), along with grains of oat, barley, indeterminate cereals, and the seeds and capsule of flax. Charred culm nodes, monocot stems, a fragment of hazelnut shell, and a range of weed seeds including small nettle, sheep's sorrel, dock, goosefoot, selfheal, cinquefoil, sedges, grasses, and cleavers were also noted in context (1002). Context (1001) comprised a similar but smaller assemblage with grains of cf. bread wheat, oats, indeterminate cereals, and weeds seeds of goosefoot and redshank. Oak and birch charcoal were noted in context (1002).

6.4.3 The flots and residues of contexts (1001) and (1002) comprised charcoal, coal, coal shale, CBM, modern roots and unburnt bone. Tiny fragments of calcined bone also occurred in the residue of context (1001). A small shard of glass and fragments of daub were noted in context (1002), and five sherds of pottery were recorded in context (1001). The well-drained nature of the sediment and the presence of roots, suggests the uncharred seeds recorded in context (1002) are recent introductions. The results are presented in Appendix III.

6.4.4 Hand-recovered artefacts included a shaped stone (which is possibly a pot lid), an abraded piece of coal or shale and a fragment of early post-medieval bottle, all from context (1013), and 4 nails, 2 each from contexts (1001) and (2002).

Discussion

6.4.5 A combination of oats, barley, bread wheat and rye were recorded at the site, although many grains in both contexts were unidentifiable, due to poor preservation. This cereal crop assemblage is typical of the medieval period (Greig 1991). Context (1002) comprised the more diverse assemblage, with gathered food (hazelnut) and flax seeds recorded in addition to the range of cereal crops. The presence of chaff and a range of

weed seeds including the arable weed small nettle, in context (1002), suggests crop processing took place at or near the site. The occurrence of a capsule and seeds of flax, possibly suggests that this crop was also cultivated at or near the site. This versatile crop may have been used to produce linseed oil for food, preservative or medicinal uses, and/or the fibres may have been extracted to produce linen clothing, ropes or sacking. The by-products of oil and fibre production could also have been used as fodder or fuel (Bond & Hunter 1987). The poor condition of the grain and absence of diagnostic chaff prevents further identifications of the barley and oat species.

- 6.4.6 The presence of charred plant remains, charcoal, clinker/cinder, CBM, daub, pottery and fragments of calcined and unburnt bone, suggests that the fills accumulated as a result of the disposal of domestic waste.

6.5 Faunal remains assessment

Methods

- 6.5.1 A fragment was only counted as identifiable if it encompassed a discrete anatomical feature, or zone. Notes of ageing data, butchery marks and the like were made where appropriate.

Results and discussion

- 6.5.2 Three contexts from the ditch fills produced finds of animal bone. The numbers of identifiable fragments are small, as may be seen in Table 4.1, below.

Table 1: Faunal species counts

Context	Species	No. of
Hand-		
1001	Cattle	4
1001	Sheep/goat	3
1002	Indet. but cattle-	1
1013	Cattle-size	1
Bulk		
1001	Sheep/goat	1
1001	Frog/toad	many
1002	Indeterminate	fragments

- 6.5.3 The bones are in moderate condition. The largest find, a cattle mandible from the medieval context (1001), has broken into many pieces and all the teeth are now loose. The teeth present are deciduous premolars 2-4 and molars 1-2. An age at death between 18 and 36 months is indicated. The other cattle fragments from this context comprise two loose maxillary teeth and an ulnar carpal. These are all dense elements with good survivability. The sheep/goat fragments identified are two pieces of metatarsal, which may derive from one bone, and one mandible fragment. The single find from context (1002) is an undiagnostic long bone shaft fragment, of cattle-size. The possibly post-medieval context, (1013), produced part of a cattle-size neck vertebra.

6.5.4 The bulk samples have extended the species list by the addition of frog/toad in context (1001). This is not an unusual find for a ditch context. The bones include a range of sizes, indicating the presence of individuals of various sizes and ages. The single find of a sheep/goat tooth from this sample is a tentative indication that cattle bones are more easily retrieved during hand excavation. The additional finds of small, unidentifiable bone fragments in context (1002) may indicate disposal of either canine faecal waste or cleaning waste following an episode of smashing marrow bones.

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.0.1 It is not surprising that an area of land that lies between two major medieval features, St Mary's Church, and the Vicar's Pele Tower, has produced features of significant interest in defining the medieval settlement of Ponteland. The Watching Brief very quickly turned into a limited excavation undertaken to investigate and record medieval features in the area of the new conservatory, as large amounts of green glazed pottery were revealed early in the site stripping process.

7.0.2 The Old Rectory site is one of significant interest, with the presence of a not insubstantial ditch feature that could define property boundaries and could conceivably be associated with defining property of the 15th century Tower. The smaller gullies could indicate domestic settlement evidence nearby, and it would not be entirely unlikely if the present 18th Century building replaced earlier structures for which we have no surviving record.

7.0.3 The pottery is considered to have been deposited over a relatively short interval of time, indicating perhaps a period of primary occupation between the late 13th to late 14th centuries after which the site does not show much evidence of activity. Ditch 1014 may have been re-cut, with **1014** replacing **1012**. Certainly the fact that it cuts the three east to west gullies indicates at least two phases of activity. Though the presence of sherds from the same vessel within the fills of ditches **1008** and **1014** indicate that the phases were not distant in time. The site revealed so far suggests domestic use in the 14th century, within a wider boundary feature that perhaps marks the distinction of the domestic site from adjacent land. By the 15th century the site may have gone out of use, or the importance of the ditches waned and they gradually silted up

7.0.4 The absence of evidence for medieval deposits or features in Trench 2 at the southern end of the garden, suggests that the area of interest may be focused in the vicinity of the main house, but further work, to elucidate the nature of medieval Ponteland, is needed if the features revealed in Trench 1 are to be placed in context, and without that further interpretation is necessarily limited to speculation.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.0.1 The limited area of excavation produced evidence that indicates a site that was used during the 14th century for domestic occupation. Domestic refuse in the form of animal bone, discarded pottery vessels and environmental evidence may suggest that the site was on the periphery of a residence, certainly there is no evidence of structural remain. There is no indication of industry or processing activities directly in the area excavated, but crop cultivation and animal husbandry are evident in the surrounding area during the period of occupation. By the 15th century, the site was going out of use, as the ditches appear to have silted by that time with no new additions to the pottery assemblage. Amphibian bones and weed macrofossils from the ditches suggest they became overgrown and waterlogged and the evidence of the uniform fill of the features supports a steady natural process of silting.

Text: Gerry Twomey
Illustrations: Graeme Young

BRP 09/07b

January 2009

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APPENDIX I

Context list

Trench 1

- 1000 Topsoil
- 1001 Fill of gully 1008 (Same as 1013), silty sand including a deposit of pottery vessels
- 1002 Fill of gully 1006, silty sand, comprised burnt material
- 1003 Fill of gully 1007, silty sand
- 1004 Fill of gully 1005, silty sand
- 1005 Cut of sub rectangular feature likely to be a gully, contained 1004
- 1006 Cut of gully, contained 1002
- 1007 Cut of gully, contained 1003
- 1008 Cut of gully, contained 1001
- 1009 Natural subsoil – light sand
- 1010 Natural subsoil – Sand and pea gravel
- 1011 Fill of North/ South gully 1012, Cut by 1014 Sand
- 1012 Cut of North/ South gully, contained 1011
- 1013 Fill of North/ South ditch (same as 1001) Silty sand
- 1014 Cut of North/ South ditch, contained 1013, cuts 1002, 1003, 1004, 1011
- 1015 Layer over site beneath topsoil

APPENDIX II

Pottery analysis (Jenny Vaughan)

Introduction

An assemblage of 512 sherds of pottery weighing 5.9 kgs was recovered from the watching brief. The great majority of the sherds came from a single context [1001] (see chart below). All the material was medieval, the majority possibly early 14th century but there were a few fragments of earlier 13th century types.

Context	Count	Weight
1001	451	5395
1002	14	155
1013	47	350

Range and Variety (see catalogue for further details)

Although there was some variation in colour, from light to dark grey when reduced and buff/orange-buff/red brown where oxidised, most of the fabrics had a similar sandy texture and white streaks. Rouletted decoration, both round the rims and in rows on the body, was present on almost all of the vessels, which appeared to be large jugs with in some instances two handles, judging by the positioning of the spout at right angles to a handle. Handles were mainly flattened into straps (with ridging) but two were more rod like. There was one bridge spout. Several small decorative 'false' handles were present. Most of these may have belonged to a single vessel, which unusually did not have rouletting although there was some slashing on one of the decorative handles.

A few sherds from [1001] were not part of this group of jugs. There was a jar rim in an oxidised iron rich fabric (later 13th/14th c.) and four body sherds: one early green glazed sherd (13th c.), one small white gritty sherd (early 13th c.?) and two possibly later reduced green glazed sherds (later 14th/15th c.). The material from [1013] appeared on the whole to consist of fragments from those vessels also present in [1001]. The sherds from [1002] did not appear to be part of the same group. They included four white gritty sherds and an early green glazed fragment. Most of the other material in this context was fairly hard and oxidised iron rich.

Data collection

An attempt was made to sort the sherds from [1001] into vessel families as it was evident that large parts of several jugs were present. Some had broken into quite small pieces and this, and the variations in colour and appearance from one part of the body to another, made the process more difficult than at first expected. The other two contexts were rapidly scanned and some 'families' identified. Counts and weights were entered into an Access database table using abbreviated descriptions as fabric types.

Discussion

This is a small but interesting group which appears to be fairly homogeneous though the dating, for a number of reasons, is uncertain. Rouletted decoration is present on 12th century unglazed gritty wares on Tyneside, and has been noted on some 13th century glazed wares, but is not at all common. The rather coarse nature of the Ponteland material and the general style and finish of the vessels suggest a late 13th/early 14th century date, although a larger proportion of light firing (buff and buff-white) wares would generally be expected in an assemblage of this date in the north east region. Also, large two-handled vessels are not common, or at least not on Tyneside, until the later 14th and 15th centuries. By this time vessels tend to be better glazed and made in finer, more consistently fired fabrics. It may be that the pottery used in medieval Ponteland, although only 10 miles from the Tyne, has more in common with other areas in Northumberland, where it has been noted that much of the later medieval pottery is quite coarse, than with the medieval pottery of Newcastle. However it may be unwise to place too much emphasis on comparisons with the wider region. This is a small group presumably deriving from a single household which may have been supplied mainly from one, perhaps quite small, production site - the similar nature of the fabric of most of the material and the rouletted decoration certainly suggest a single source. This very homogeneity is another factor making it difficult to date the group with any certainty as the dating of pottery assemblages, in the absence of coins or other specific date indicators, depends to a great extent on the proportions of different types present. However, the first half of the 14th century seems perhaps the most likely date. This is rather a broad date range for a group which must have been deposited over

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quite a short period of time.

This small assemblage serves to highlight the very local nature of pottery in the medieval period and it would be interesting to be able to compare it with other material from Ponteland and its immediate surroundings. A short illustrated report with more detailed fabric descriptions would, especially if further reconstruction of the vessels was possible, be a useful contribution to the study of Northumbrian pottery. This wider study would also benefit from the scientific analysis (ICPS) of a number of samples to contribute to the identification of possible production sites.

NB: In the catalogue I have used abbreviations for the pot types but, with the exception of those marked with * these are variations on what I see as the main fabric type present, and are descriptive rather than being a type name. Any further work on this group could refine this into perhaps two or three main 'sub' types.

'pot type'	meaning of abbreviation
bw	Buff white ware
*egw	Early glazed ware
*lrg?	Later reduced greenware
med	Medieval (general)
o/rg	Oxidized/reduced greenware
ob	Orange-buff
ob/rg	Orange-buff/reduced green glazed
obggl	„ green glazed
obh	„ hard
*obwh	Orange buff-white hard
*orange h	Orange hard
*oxir	Oxidized iron rich
rg	Reduced greenware
*wgr	White gritty ware

Cont ext	ID	pot type	count	weight	form sherds	comments
1001	1	o/rg	104	1004	r+h b	Jug with strap handle and rouletting, including round rim. Dark grey with oxidised exterior where not glazed (lower body). Zones and patches of green glaze.
1001	2	bw	36	360	r+h b	Streaky fabric
1001	3	obh	18	467	r+h+sp	Fairly hard part oxidised grey/brown fabric, streaky in parts with brownish internal surface and ferrous 'blobs' on surface. Handle at right angles to spout so two (or more!) handled vessel. Green glaze
1001	4	obh	6	116	r+h+sp	Similar to no. 3 but can't be same vessel with another spout (can it?).
1001	5	ob/rg	43	319		Similar to nos. 3 and 4 but internal surface not brown.
1001	6	rg/bw	53	739	h	Strap handle and sherds (some joining). Bands of rouletting. A pale fabric similar to 'bw' but reduced and green glazed.
1001	7	ob	24	408	r+sp+h+4dech	Softish fabric with some white inclusions. Strap handle. Four small decorative 'handles', some slashing on one. Some green/orange glaze.
1001	8	ob/rg	9	94	dech	Decorative false handle with slashing. Some joining sherds reduced, handle oxidised orange buff. Buffish internal surface.
1001	9	r/og	35	780	2h	Part oxidised grey fabric with orange brown internal surface and some streaking. Uneven iron flecked glaze, rouletting. Handles rod and flattened rod (or rounded strap) but look like same vessel.
1001	10	oxir	1	21	r	Jar rim - everted/expanded.
1001	11	ob/rg	53	412		Perhaps same vessel as no.8. - buff int surface. Rouletting.
1001	12	burnt	9	61	r	Rouletted
1001	13	lrg?	2	29		

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1001	14	egw	1	10		
1001	15	wgr	1	4		
1001	16	ob	6	110	h	Strap
1001	17	ob	5	90	r h	
1001	18	rg	14	78		
1001	19	med	17	96		Miscellaneous.
1001	20	obggl	14	197	r+sp	Bridge spout, streaky fabric, rouletting. Red brown int surface.
1002	26	obwh	3	33		
1002	27	orange h	5	50		
1002	28	wgr	4	29	b	
1002	29	ob	1	40	b	
1002	30	egw	1	3		
1013	21	rg	1	58	b	
1013	22	bw	3	41		Same as no. 2.
1013	23	obggl	4	65		Same as vessel with bridge spout?
1013	24	ob	6	33		
1013	25	med	33	153		

APPENDIX III

Plant Macrofossil and animal bone assessment

1.0 Summary

The project

- 1.1 Two bulk environmental samples and hand-recovered bone and artefacts were collected from a small site at Old Rectory, Ponteland, Tyne and Wear by Bamburgh Research Project. This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of the samples.

Results

- 1.2 The results suggest that contexts (1001) and (1002) comprised accumulations of domestic waste. The flots of both samples comprised charred plant macrofossil assemblages including bread wheat, rye, barley and oats, which are typical crops of the medieval period. The presence of chaff and a range of weed seeds such as the arable weed small nettle in context (1002), suggests crop processing took place at or near the site. The poor condition of the grain and absence of diagnostic chaff prevents further identifications of the barley and oat species.
- 1.3 Hand-recovered faunal remains included cattle and sheep/goat from context (1001) and cattle-sized fragments from (1002) and (1013). Sheep/goat and frog/toad bones occurred in the bulk sample of context (1001).

Recommendations

- 1.4 No further plant macrofossil analysis is recommended as the assessment has provided a qualitative interpretation of the assemblages, and has shown that the material present in both contexts is comparable with contemporary sites in the region. If additional works are undertaken on the site, the results from this assessment should be added to any further environmental data produced.
- 1.5 No further work on the present faunal assemblage is recommended. Retention of the bones is only advised if further archaeological investigation of these ditches is proposed.

2.0 Project background

Location and background

- 2.1 Two bulk environmental samples and hand-recovered bone and artefacts were collected from ditch fills at a small site at Old Rectory, Ponteland, Tyne and Wear by Bamburgh Research Project. This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of the samples.

Objective

- 2.2 The objective was to assess the quantity and preservation of plant macrofossil and faunal remains, and to establish their potential to provide information about the contexts and the site in general.

Dates

- 2.3 The samples were received by Archaeological Services Durham University on 13th October 2009. Assessment and report preparation was conducted between 13th November – 4th December 2009.

Personnel

- 2.4 Sample processing was carried out by Janice Adams. Jenny Jones examined the hand-recovered artefacts, and faunal remains assessment was undertaken by Louisa Gidney. Plant macrofossil assessment and report preparation was by Lorne Elliott.

Archive

- 2.5 The site code is **ORP09**. The flots are currently retained in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University awaiting collection or return. The small finds, and hand-recovered bone and artefacts have been returned with this report.

3.0 Plant macrofossil assessment

Methods

- 3.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500 μ m mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots was examined at $\times 60$ magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ7.5 stereomicroscope. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Environmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant nomenclature follows Stace (1997).

Results

- 3.2 Charred plant macrofossils occurred in both contexts, though generally they were in poor condition with many having a degraded or pitted form. Grains and chaff of bread wheat and rye were recorded in context (1002), along with grains of oat, barley, indeterminate cereals, and the seeds and capsule of flax. Charred culm nodes, monocot stems, a fragment of hazelnut shell, and a range of weed seeds including small nettle, sheep's sorrel, dock, goosefoot, selfheal, cinquefoil, sedges, grasses, and cleavers were also noted in context (1002). Context (1001) comprised a similar but smaller assemblage with grains of cf. bread wheat, oats, indeterminate cereals, and weeds seeds of goosefoot and redshank. Oak and birch charcoal were noted in context (1002).
- 3.3 The flots and residues of contexts (1001) and (1002) comprised charcoal, coal, coal shale, CBM, modern roots and unburnt bone. Tiny fragments of calcined bone also occurred in the residue of context (1001). A small shard of glass and fragments of daub were noted in context (1002), and five sherds of pottery were recorded in context (1001). The well-drained nature of the sediment and the presence of roots, suggests the uncharred seeds recorded in context (1002) are recent introductions. The results are presented in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Hand-recovered artefacts included a shaped stone (which is possibly a pot lid), an abraded piece of coal or shale and a fragment of early post-medieval bottle, all from context (1013), and 4 nails, 2 each from contexts (1001) and (2002).

Discussion

- 3.5 A combination of oats, barley, bread wheat and rye were recorded at the site, although many grains in both contexts were unidentifiable, due to poor preservation. This cereal crop assemblage is typical of the medieval period (Greig 1991). Context (1002) comprised the more diverse assemblage, with gathered food (hazelnut) and flax seeds recorded in addition to the range of cereal crops. The presence of chaff and a range of weed seeds including the arable weed small nettle, in context (1002), suggests crop processing took place at or near the site. The occurrence of a capsule and seeds of flax, possibly suggests that this crop was also cultivated at or near the site. This versatile crop may have been used to produce linseed oil for food, preservative or medicinal uses, and/or the fibres may have been extracted to produce linen clothing, ropes or sacking. The by-products of oil and fibre production could also have been used as fodder or fuel (Bond & Hunter 1987). The poor condition of the grain and absence of diagnostic chaff prevents further identifications of the barley and oat species.
- 3.6 The presence of charred plant remains, charcoal, clinker/cinder, CBM, daub, pottery and fragments of calcined and unburnt bone, suggests that the fills accumulated as a result of the disposal of domestic waste.

4.0 Faunal remains assessment

Methods

- 4.1 A fragment was only counted as identifiable if it encompassed a discrete anatomical feature, or zone. Notes of ageing data, butchery marks and the like were made where appropriate.

Results and discussion

- 4.2 Three contexts from the ditch fills produced finds of animal bone. The numbers of identifiable fragments are small, as may be seen in Table 4.1, below.

Table 4.1: Faunal species counts

Context	Species	No. of
Hand-		
1001	Cattle	4
1001	Sheep/goat	3
1002	Indet. but cattle-size	1
1013	Cattle-size	1
Bulk samples		
1001	Sheep/goat	1
1001	Frog/toad	many
1002	Indeterminate	fragments

- 4.3 The bones are in moderate condition. The largest find, a cattle mandible from the medieval context (1001), has broken into many pieces and all the teeth are now loose. The teeth present are deciduous premolars 2-4 and molars 1-2. An age at death between 18 and 36 months is indicated. The other cattle fragments from this context comprise two loose maxillary teeth and an ulnar carpal. These are all dense elements with good survivability. The sheep/goat fragments identified are two pieces of metatarsal, which may derive from one bone, and one mandible fragment. The single find from context (1002) is an undiagnostic long bone shaft fragment, of cattle-size. The possibly post-medieval context, (1013), produced part of a cattle-size neck vertebra.
- 4.4 The bulk samples have extended the species list by the addition of frog/toad in context (1001). This is not an unusual find for a ditch context. The bones include a range of sizes, indicating the presence of individuals of various sizes and ages. The single find of a sheep/goat tooth from this sample is a tentative indication that cattle bones are more easily retrieved during hand excavation. The additional finds of small, unidentifiable bone fragments in context (1002) may indicate disposal of either canine faecal waste or cleaning waste following an episode of smashing marrow bones.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 No further plant macrofossil analysis is recommended as the assessment has provided a qualitative interpretation of the assemblages, and has shown that the material present in both contexts is comparable with contemporary sites in the region. If additional works are undertaken on the site, the results from this assessment should be added to any further environmental data produced.
- 5.2 No further work on the present faunal assemblage is recommended. Retention of the bones is only advised if further archaeological investigation of these ditches is proposed.

Appendix 1: Results from the palaeoenvironmental assessment of the bulk samples

Context	1001	1002
Sample	1	2
Feature	Ditch	Ditch
<i>Material available for radiocarbon dating</i>	✓	✓
<i>Volume processed (l)</i>	54	24
<i>Volume of flot (ml)</i>	300	250
<i>Residue contents (relative abundance)</i>		
Bone (calcined) flecks	-	1
Bone (unburnt)	1	1
Ceramic Building Material	1	1
Charcoal	-	1
Clinker / Cinder	1	2
Coal / Coal shale	1	1
Daub	-	2
Glass (total number of shards)	-	1
Nails (total number)	-	1
Pot (total number of sherds)	5	-
<i>Flot matrix (relative abundance)</i>		
Bone (unburnt)	1	-
Charcoal	2	3
Clinker / Cinder	3	3
Coal / Coal shale	2	1
Mollusca shell (freshwater / terrestrial)	1	-
Monocot stems / culm nodes (charred)	-	1
Roots (modern)	2	1
Uncharred seeds	-	1
<i>Charred remains (relative abundance)</i>		
(a) <i>Urtica urens</i> (Small Nettle) achene	-	2
(c) <i>Avena</i> spp (Oat species) grain	4	3
(c) <i>Cerealia</i> indeterminate grain	3	3
(c) <i>Hordeum</i> spp (Barley species) grain	-	2
(c) <i>Linum usitatissimum</i> (Flax) capsule	-	1
(c) <i>Linum usitatissimum</i> (Flax) seed	-	1
(c) <i>Secale cereale</i> (Rye) grain	-	1
(c) <i>Secale cereale</i> (Rye) rachis fragment	-	2
(c) <i>Triticum aestivum</i> (Bread Wheat) rachis fragment	-	3
(c) <i>Triticum</i> cf. <i>aestivum</i> (cf. Bread Wheat) grain	2	3
(h) <i>Rumex acetosella</i> (Sheep's Sorrel) nutlet	-	1
(t) <i>Galium aparine</i> (Cleavers) seed	-	1

(r) <i>Persicaria maculosa</i> (Redshank)	nutlet	1	-
(t) <i>Corylus avellana</i> (Hazelnut)	nutshell fragment	-	1
(w) <i>Carex</i> spp (Sedges)	biconvex nutlet	-	2
(x) <i>Asteraceae</i> indet. (Daisy family)	achene	-	1
(x) <i>Cenococcum geophilum</i> (soil fungus)	sclerotia	-	2
(x) <i>Chenopodium</i> spp (Goosefoot)	seed	2	2
(x) Poaceae undiff. (Grass family)	caryopsis	-	2
(x) <i>Potentilla</i> spp (Cinquefoils)	achene	-	1
(x) <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> (Selfheal)	achene	-	1
(x) <i>Rumex</i> spp (Dock)	nutlet	-	1

[a-arable; c-cultivated; h-heath; r-ruderal; t-tree; w-wetland; x-wide niche] Relative abundance is based on a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

APPENDIX IV

THE OLD RECTORY, 1 NORTH ROAD, PONTELAND, NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF WRITTEN SCHEDULE OF INVESTIGATION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0.1 This Written Schedule of Investigation has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project for Elborn Design, Architects, regarding the removal of existing garden sheds and construction of a garden store and document store/study at The Old Rectory, 1 North Road, Ponteland, Northumberland, during September 2009. The document sets out the project design for an archaeological watching brief to be conducted during groundworks associated with the development.

3.3.1 The Written Schedule of Investigation details the proposed scheme of works for the watching brief and has been prepared in order to fulfil a requirement for the planning application, as laid out in the brief issued by The Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. The NCCCT reference number is: CM19/8; 9608.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The site is located in the town centre of Ponteland, Northumberland, at the southern end of North Road. (NGR NZ 165729) (Figure 2).

2.2 Archaeological background to the site

2.2.1 The Old Rectory is a brick built house on the corner of North road and Main street, Ponteland. It was built in the early 18th century and heightened in the latter half of that century. It was once the property of Merton College, Oxford who were the lay rectors of Ponteland. Surviving features include two early 18th century panelled rooms and a late 18th century staircase. The site is located within an area of known medieval occupation and many of the surrounding buildings incorporate medieval structural elements. The most prominent of these include the Vicar's Pele, a Scheduled Ancient Monument c.62m south-west of the proposed development area, which is a roofless, rectangular, rubble built medieval fortified tower house that had been incorporated into the old vicarage until its demolition in the 19th century. The tower survives today as a three storey free standing structure. The earliest reference to the building is in a list of castles and fortalices dated 1415, but there is a possibility that there may have been an earlier building in this location. The Blackbird Inn, located c.105m to the north of the proposed building incorporates parts of a 14th century or earlier Pele Tower, the remains of which are known to extend to the west of the present public house, and a fireplace of c.1600 date survives on the east side of the basement. The tower was occupied by the Earls of Athol during the 14th Century during which time it was raided by the Scots (c.1388). The structure was rebuilt in the 17th century, but subsequently fell into ruin until it was restored as part of the Inn constructed in 1935. The Church of St Mary is located c.80m north-east of the site, with surviving structural elements dating to the 12th century and 15th century, incorporated into the 19th century restoration of the building. Two medieval gullies, relating to drainage or field boundaries were recorded at Peel House in 2003, located c. 35m to the west of the site.

2.2.2 The evidence for prehistoric occupation in the Ponteland area consists largely of aerial photographic evidence for enclosures, such as those noted at Prestwick Whins, Kirkley West Farm and Southeast Farm East. Chance finds of two Neolithic axes and a Bronze age Beaker pottery vessel have been discovered within the area, but with poor provenance, so no clear connection with settlement patterns can be established through them. The evidence for Medieval settlement is much stronger. A deserted medieval village at South Dissington may have been in existence since before 1085, when it was given to Tynemouth Priory, but most of the villages of this type date to the 13th century. Callerton Darreynes was one such village destroyed by the Scots in the 14th century. Land reorganisation due to agricultural

improvement in the 17th and 18th centuries saw many villages replaced by farms, as at Eland Hall, Little Callerton and Berwick Hill, and other villages were uprooted to provide parkland for country houses as at Kirkley, South Dissington and North Dissington. There is evidence that many medieval buildings have been demolished completely, such as Kirkley Tower, known in 1415, and Milbourne Chapel recorded in 1202 and 1575, both of which have since been lost and their locations unknown. The 13th century manor house Eland Hall, may have stood in the vicinity of Eland Hall farm, where earthworks still survive. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the area contained a number of tile and clay works at Berwickhill Tile Works, Clay Mill tile works, Ponteland tile works and Kirkley Tilery. East of Ponteland there are Bell pits from coal working, and quarries are known on Berwick Hill. A 19th century corn mill is also known from Ponteland, Ponteland Corn Mill. 19th century country houses include Prestwick Hall, Eland Hall, Dissington Hall and Milbourne Hall, all built between 1794 and 1815. In Ponteland town centre several 18th and 19th century farm houses survive on Main Street (12 and 14, 21 and 25) and the Seven Stars Public House is also of 19th century date. More recently a WWII pillbox was constructed east of Smailburn.

2.3 Impact of the development

- 2.3.1 The development involves the excavation of foundations for the construction of a garden store/ and document store/ study in the garden area south of the main house. In addition to foundation trenches for the tool store and study/document store, groundworks will be associated with the installation of services and a WC, and the area will be subject to ground clearance and the removal of existing sheds. (Figure 2).
- 2.3.2 The location of the development, close to the street frontage and nearby medieval buildings, indicates a strong possibility that medieval structural remains or evidence of industry and occupation may be encountered in trenches and groundworks that exceed the depth of topsoil.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.0.1 In the light of the potential for the construction work to impact, in places, upon preserved archaeological remains it is proposed that a continuous watching brief be conducted during the ground work in accordance with the specification laid out in the brief issued by the County Council Conservation Team.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Watching brief during excavation

4.1.2 During the groundworks associated with the removal of existing garden sheds and construction of a garden store and document store/study a suitably experienced archaeologist, familiar with the archaeological background to the site, will be present to record any items of interest that are revealed. Where appropriate all excavation and will be carried out by a machine using a toothless ditching bucket. All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and should follow the IFA Standards for Watching Briefs. This watching brief will conform to the following methodology.

4.2 Contingency

- 4.2.1 In the event of the discovery of unexpected archaeological remains over and above those predicted by previous archaeological work on the adjoining site, work will cease and the County Archaeological Officer/representative of the developer will be notified in order that an assessment of the importance of the remains and any provision for their recording may be made.
- 4.2.2 A contingency for excavation comprising up to 15 person days can be invoked following consultation with the County Archaeologist.

4.3 General standards

4.3.1 All archaeological features identified during the monitoring, or following the implementation of the contingency will be sample excavated according to their type and form:

- 50% of all discrete features.
- 50% of waterlogged deposits.
- 25% of stratified deposits.
- 25% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill
- 10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill

4.3.2 A 40 litre bulk palaeoenvironmental sample will be taken from all features recognised as suitable for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains.

4.3.3 Secure contexts will be sampled for dating where appropriate, whether on site or as sub samples of bulk samples. Any concentrations of charcoal or other carbonised material recovered on site will usually be retained.

4.3.4 Pottery and Animal Bone will be collected as bulk samples whilst significant artefacts will be three-dimensionally recorded prior to processing. All finds will be recorded and processed according to the BRP system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Finds recovery and storage strategies will be in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995 and IFA Guidelines for Finds Work). Should artefacts of gold or silver covered by the 1996 Treasure Act be recovered, appropriate procedures will be followed.

4.3.5 In the event of Human burials being revealed they will be left *in situ* and treated in an appropriate manner if possible. Any burial requiring excavation will be exposed, recorded and lifted in total. After consultation with the County Archaeological Officer, if excavation is required, work will comply with the relevant home Office regulations.

4.3.6 Any archaeological features encountered will be hand-cleaned, excavated and recorded:

1. A photographic record of the site will be taken using black and white print, colour slide film at 35mm format. In addition a digital photographic record will be compiled.
2. A written description of features will be recorded using the BRP *pro forma* context recording system.
3. All features will be drawn at an appropriate scale using pre-printed permatrace. Plans will normally be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10.

4.3.7 All archaeological features and horizons will be accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. All levels will be tied in to Ordnance Datum.

4.3.8 Arrangements will be made with the appropriate museum for the deposition of the site archive within 6 month of the completion of the post-excavation report.

5.0 MONITORING

5.0.1 Access will be made available at all reasonable times to the archaeological representatives of the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team to inspect the excavation site.

5.0.2 Access to the site will be on the basis of prior notification and subject to any relevant health and safety considerations.

6.0 POST-EXCAVATION WORK, ARCHIVE AND REPORT COMPILATION

6.0.1 On completion of the excavation an assessment of the site records and finds will be undertaken in accordance with English Heritage (1991) guidelines. This will include:

- collation of all site records
 - compilation of a report
 - production of context, photographic, finds and illustration databases
 - analysis of the finds assemblage by relevant specialists
 - environmental assessment of selected bulk samples
- 6.0.2 The assessment report, with each page and paragraph numbered and with cross referenced illustrations, will include:
- summary of the project background
 - site location
 - methodology
 - results of the watching brief
 - site location plans and illustrations of results at appropriate scales
 - interpretation of the results in an appropriate context
 - post-excavation assessment of the site archive
 - catalogue and assessment of the artefactual archive
 - catalogue and assessment of the faunal remains
 - catalogue and assessment of the palaeoenvironmental samples recovered
 - appendix containing a list and summary of each recorded context
- 6.0.3 A copy of the report should be submitted by the archaeologist to the commissioning client, and two copies, one bound and one unbound, to the County SMR within 2 months of completion of the work. A summary will be prepared for 'Archaeology in Northumberland' and an article will be submitted to a local or national journal if appropriate.
- 6.0.4 The site archive will be prepared to the standard specified in the Management of Archaeological Projects, appendix 3 (HBMC 1991) and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC 1990). A summary account of the context record will be included and written by the supervising archaeologist. The archive will be deposited at the specified museum within 6 months of completion of the work on site.
- 6.0.4 An online OASIS form will be completed for the project as part of the post-excavation assessment process.

7.0 PERSONNEL

- 7.0.1 The designated project manager Graeme Young, is one of the directors of the Bamburgh Research Project. A graduate of Newcastle University, with 18 years of experience in field archaeology including directing a number of excavations of urban medieval sites in Newcastle and Durham. He is an Associate Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 7.0.2 Additional field staff, with appropriate archaeological experience, will be engaged as required.

8.0 SUB-CONTRACTED SPECIALISTS

- 8.0.1 Although it is not possible to predict the range of artefacts that may be recovered provision has been made for the analysis of the most common artefacts.

Material	Specialist
Medieval pottery	Jenny Vaughan
Post-medieval pottery	Jenny Vaughan
Prehistoric pottery	Blaise Vyner
Roman Pottery	Blaise Vyner
Animal bone	Durham University Archaeological Services
Palaeoenvironmental	Durham University Archaeological Services

Conservation

Karen Barker

9.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.0.1 The Bamburgh Research Project complies with the 1974 Health and Safety Act and its subsequent amendments in all its operations. The SCAUM manual and the Bamburgh Research Project Health and Safety Policy Document is followed for all site works. A designated and appropriately trained first aider is present at all times during working hours. A First Aid kit, Accident Book and telephone are provided for each project. Safety footwear is mandatory on all excavation sites. Where required safety helmets and reflective jackets are provided. It is policy for a vehicle to be present at an excavation and staff must be appropriately equipped for bad weather.
- 9.0.2 All staff undergo a safety induction prior to commencing work on site. A written risk assessment is undertaken specific for each site. The safety assessment is reviewed on a daily basis and changes to the working conditions monitored continually during adverse weather conditions.

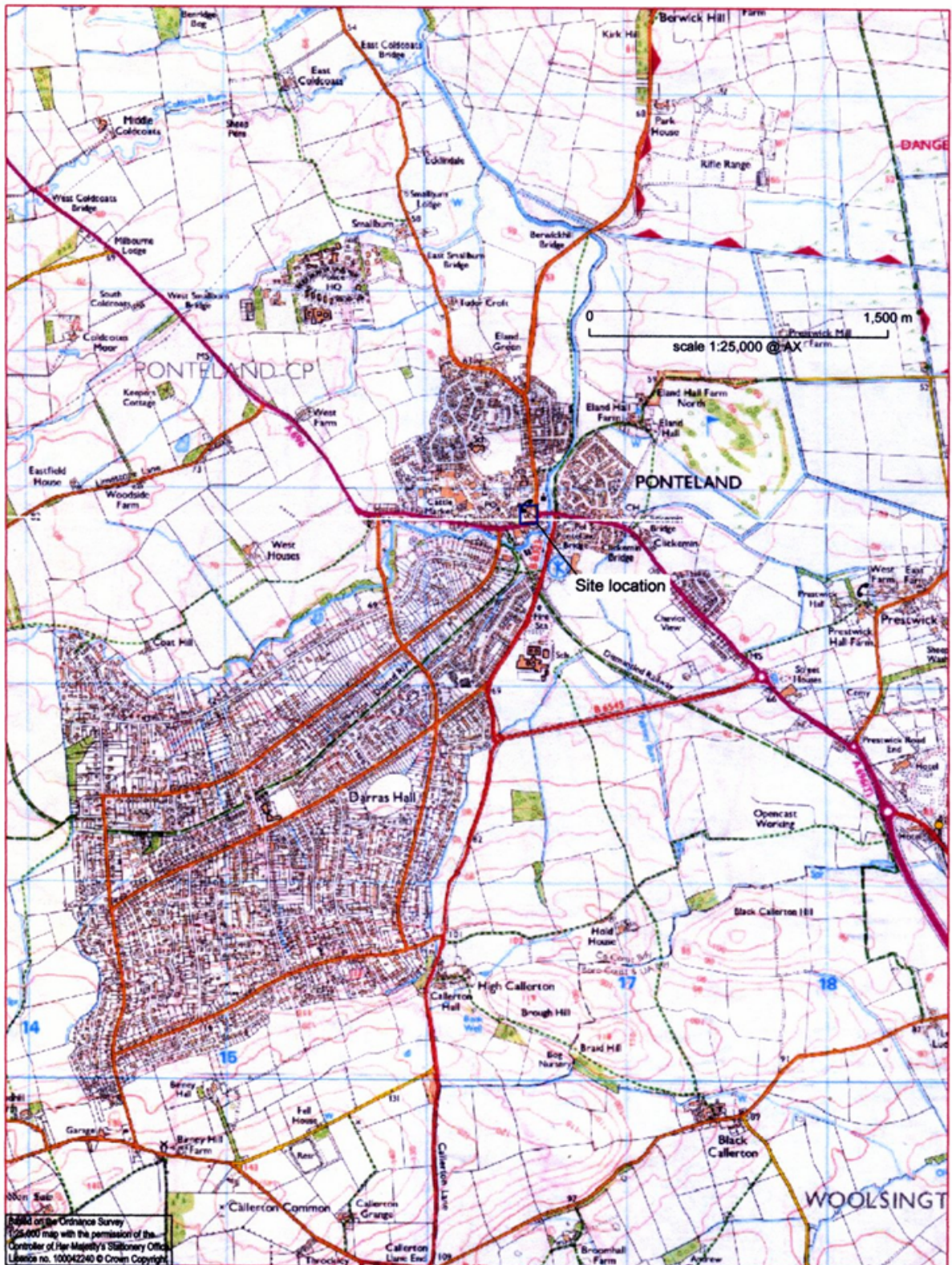
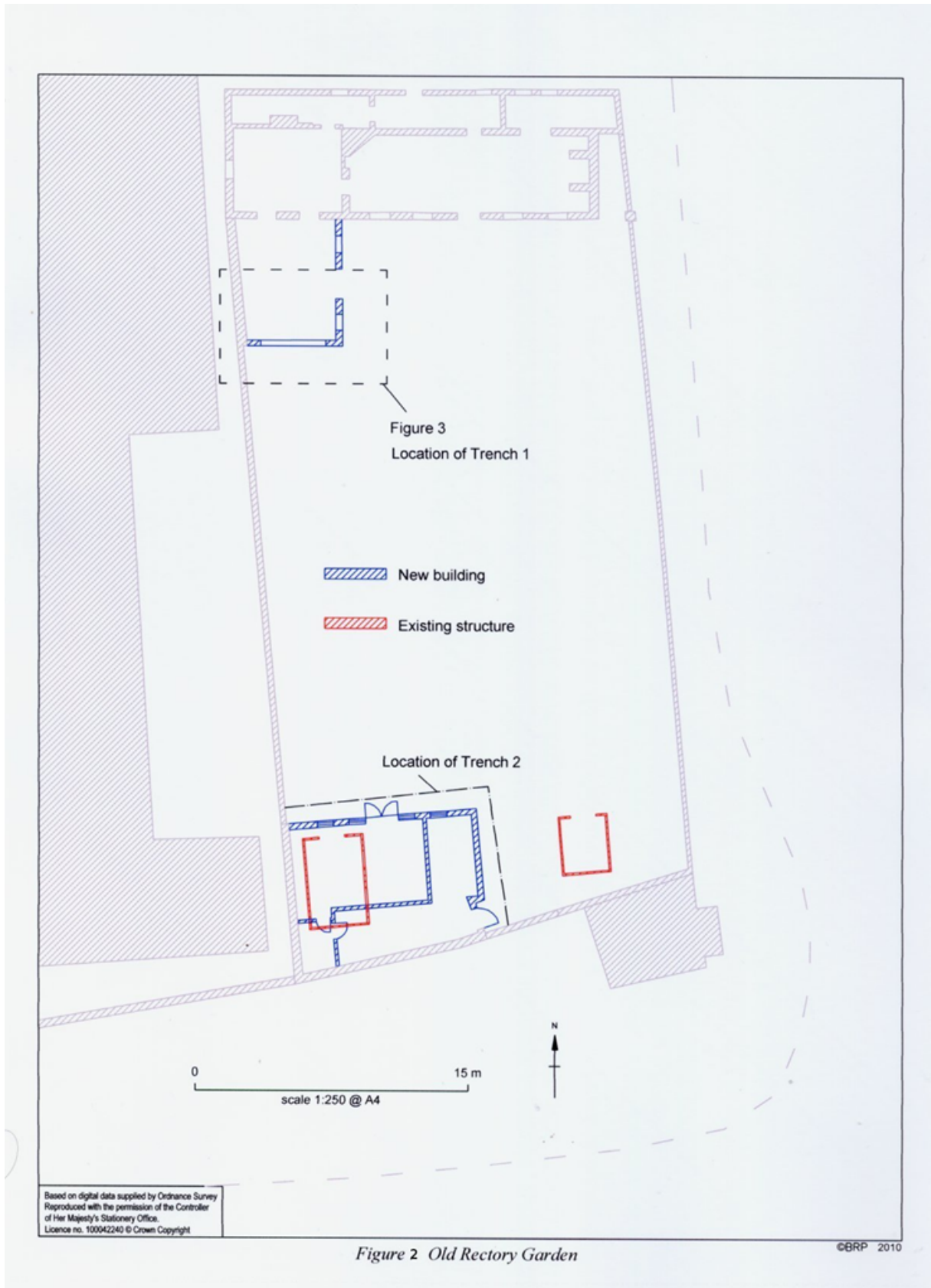
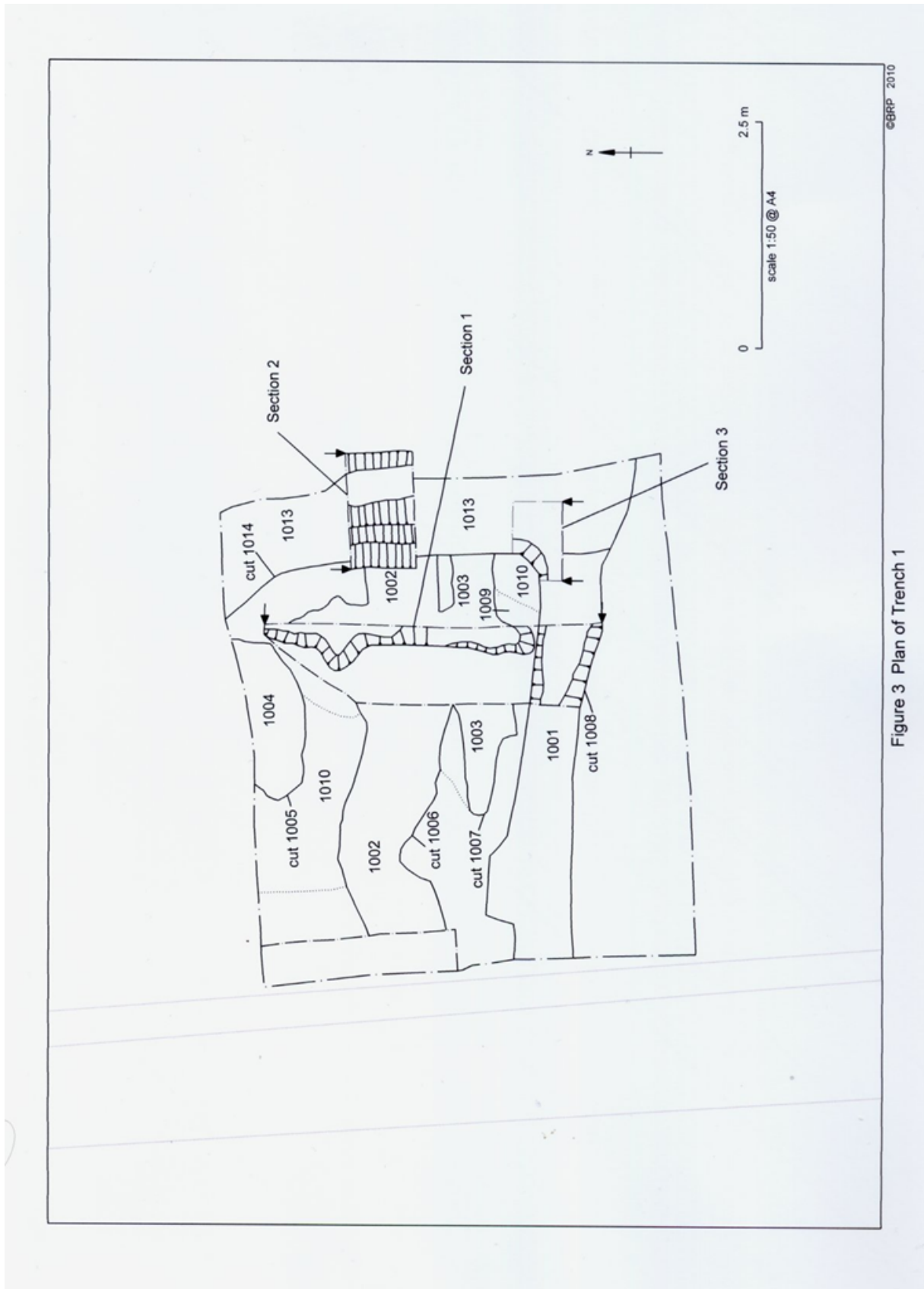


Figure 1 Site location





eBRP 2010

Figure 3 Plan of Trench 1

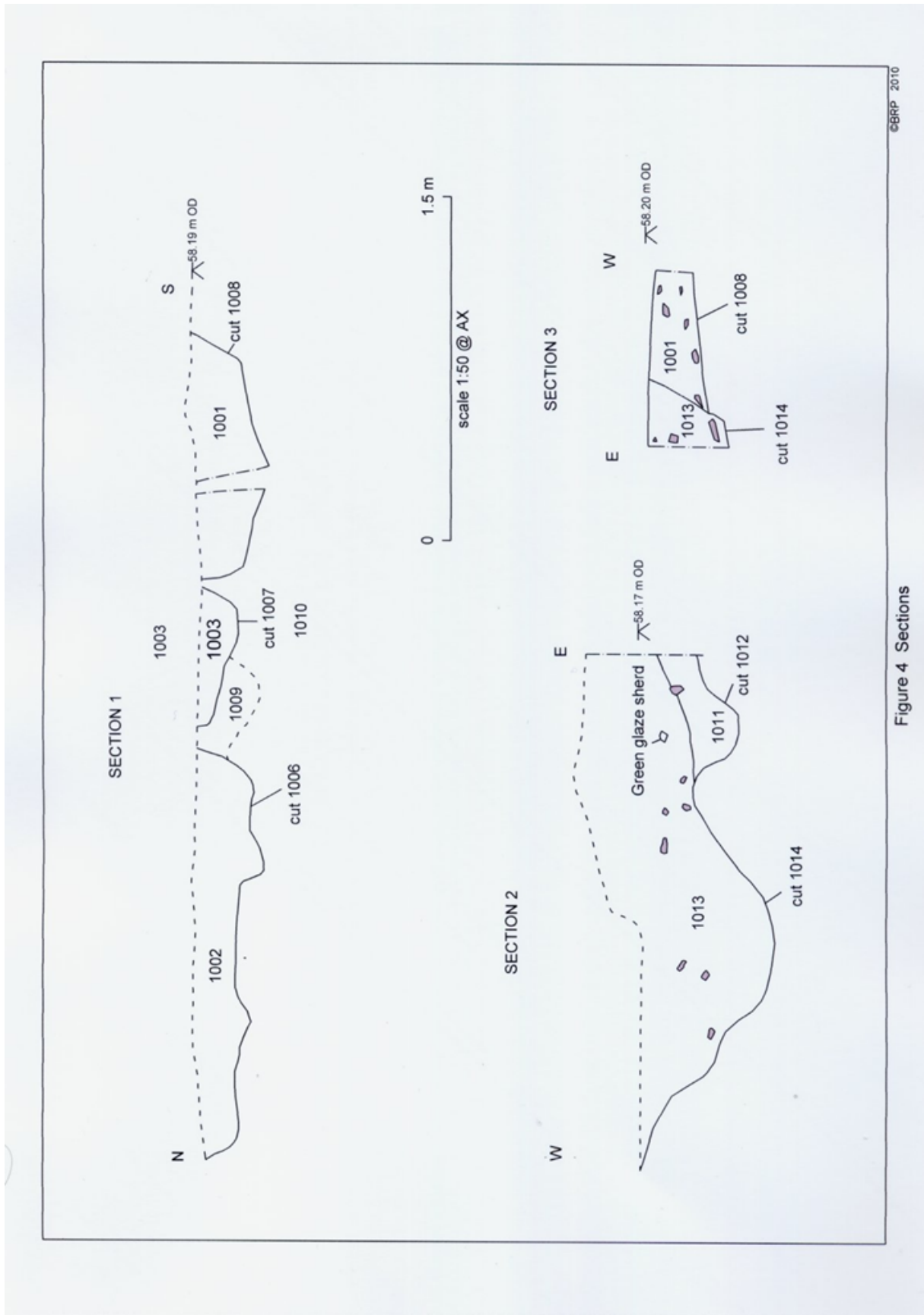


Figure 4 Sections

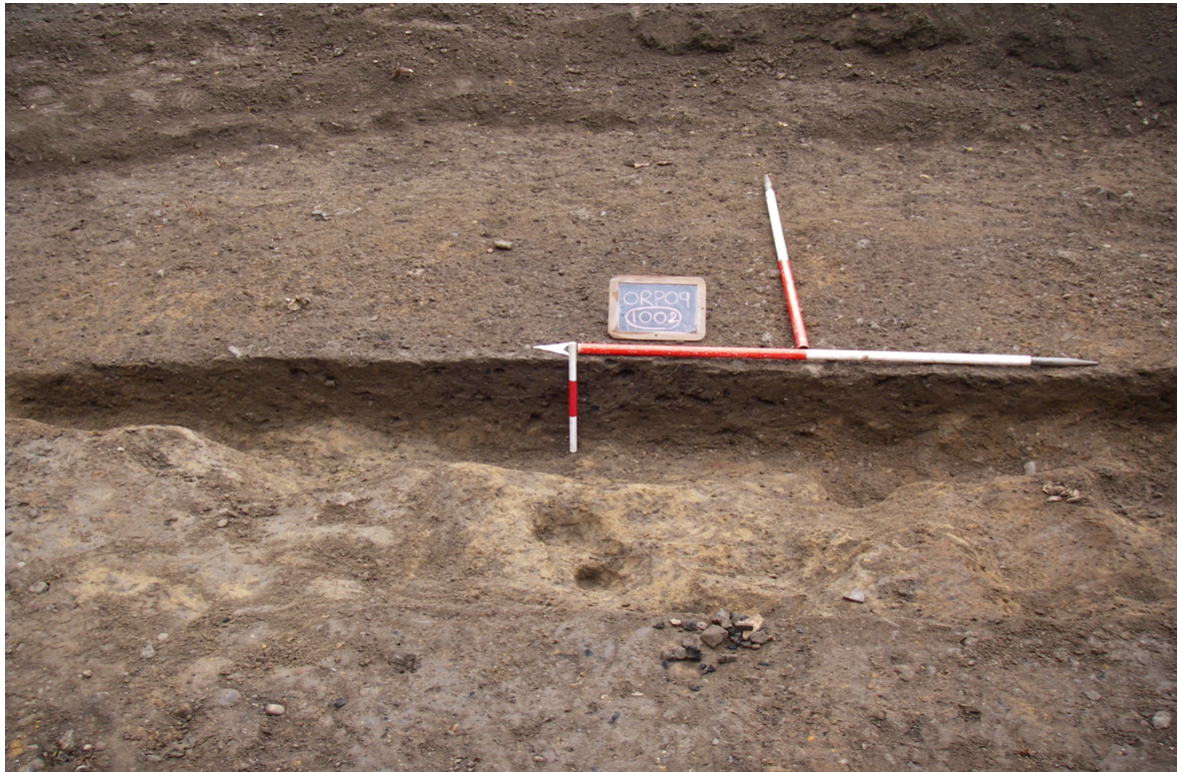


Plate 1: Section through gullies 1006 and 1007, facing east



Plate 2: Sondage to identify the relationship between ditches 1008 and 1014, facing south



Plate 3: Section of main ditch, 1014, with sondage in the background, facing south