

## An Archaeological Watching Brief at The Friarage, Hartlepool



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## ***Executive Summary***

*In March 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Galliford Try to undertake an archaeological watching brief at The Friarage, Hartlepool, during investigative works on the building to establish whether or not there are an additional row of doors or windows at basement level.*

*The site includes the remains of a former Franciscan Friary and a later 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion that succeeded it. The Friary has been partly excavated, revealing evidence of the robbed out walls of the Friary Church, cloister range and a number of human burials within it. Anglo-Saxon features, including buildings and boundary ditches have also been recorded.*

*Two test pits were dug alongside the building on the east elevation underneath the two southernmost windows. The first test pit, at the southernmost extent of the elevation, revealed a blocked up doorway. The stonework in the blocked-up portion was very loose. When it was removed it was revealed that there was a stone arch behind the outer face of the building. The basement had been backfilled with modern demolition debris. The second test pit revealed the sill of a window with a single surviving stone mullion. A layer of render was obscuring the top of the window so it could not be established whether or not it was a full size window.*

*The stonework that had been removed from the blocked doorway was reinstated and both pits were backfilled.*



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Galliford Try to undertake an archaeological watching brief at The Friarage, Hartlepool (Figure 1). The site contains the remains of a Franciscan Friary and a later 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion. The Friary has been partly excavated, revealing evidence of the robbed out walls of the Church and cloister range. A number of human burials were discovered within it. Anglo-Saxon features, including buildings and boundary ditches have also been recorded.
- 1.2 The proposed development includes restoring the 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion and constructing new houses on the land adjacent to it.
- 1.3 A Victorian illustration shows the current building with what appears to be an extra set of windows below ground level. The watching brief monitored the excavation of two test pits that were dug down the side of the building in order to demonstrate whether or not these windows existed (see Figure 2).

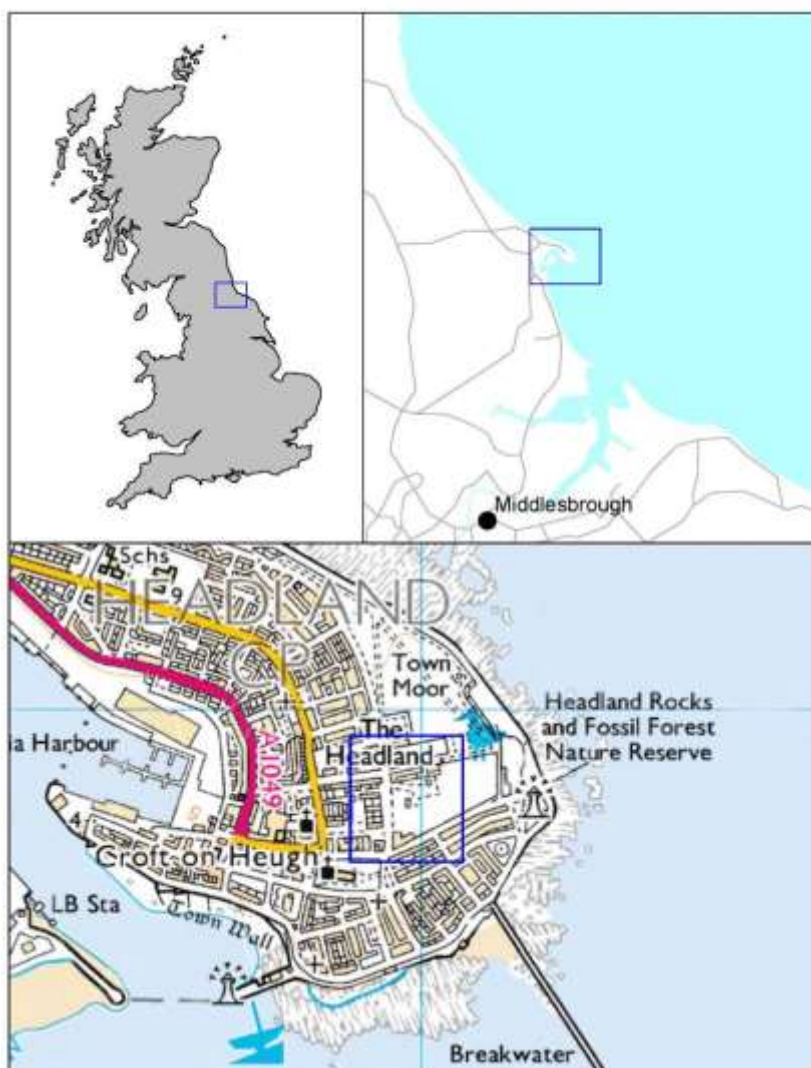


Figure 1: Site location Ordnance Survey data copyright OS, reproduced by permission, Licence no. 100045420

## **2. Location and Geology**

- 2.1 The watching brief took place on land immediately adjacent to the 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion. The site lies approximately 200m to the west of The North Sea coast, approximately 100m to the south of Hartlepool Town Moor (Figure 2) and is centred at NZ 52970 33789.
- 2.2 The local geology is made up of Dolostone, of the Roker Formation. No drift geology for the area is recorded on the British Geological Survey website (BGS 2013).

## **3. Historical and Archaeological Background**

- 3.1 The town of Hartlepool has its origins in the medieval period, when it succeeded an Anglo-Saxon Monastery and settlement. The development site includes the archaeological remains of a former Franciscan Friary and a later upstanding 17<sup>th</sup> century Mansion that was constructed once the friary ceased to be in use.
- 3.2 Limited archaeological excavations of The Friary have been carried out in the past. Although the excavations only uncovered parts of the Friary, they revealed evidence to indicate that the Friary church walls had been robbed out. The cloister range was also excavated and a number of human burials were discovered within it. Anglo-Saxon features, including buildings and boundary ditches, have also been recorded on the site.
- 3.3 In the 19<sup>th</sup> century a hospital was established but was demolished in the mid 1980s. It is known that basements from the hospital are present, particularly in the south-west corner of the proposed development site.
- 3.4 A watching brief was carried out in November 2013 by ARS Ltd (Cockburn 2013) when a number of geotechnical test pits and boreholes were dug across the site. A short section of stone wall was encountered in one trench to the north-west of the exiting Friarage building while remains associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century hospital were found towards the south-west.
- 3.5 A Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out by ARS Ltd in February 2014 (Clarke 2014) that assessed the impact that the proposed development would have on the Friarage building and any buried archaeological remains that exist across the site. It was concluded that any impact upon the upstanding building would be minor while the impact upon buried remains would be moderate. It was recommended that mitigation should include a mixture of archaeological excavation, watching brief and building recording.

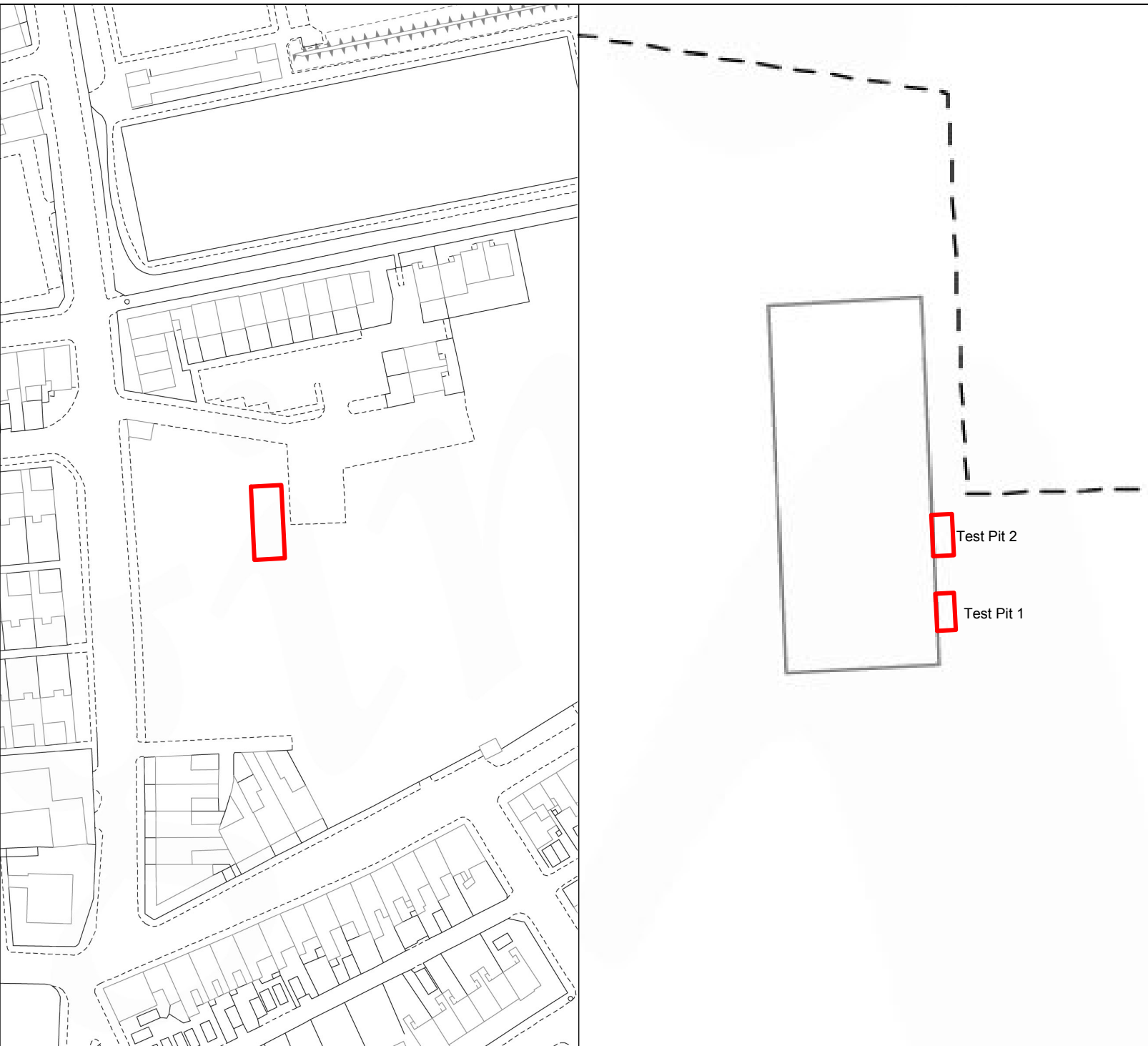
## **4. Methodology**

- 4.1 The watching brief involved the archaeological monitoring of two test pits immediately adjacent to the east elevation of the Friarage building.
- 4.2 Both test pits, and particularly the stonework of the building, were cleaned by hand sufficiently to allow the identification and planning of archaeological features. Each trench was planned at an appropriate scale and all structural features were drawn at a scale of 1:10.

Figure 2:

Test Pit location plan

Key:



Test Pit 2

Test Pit 1

## **5. Results**

**5.1** Context numbers for this watching brief were carried over from the watching brief that was carried out in November 2013.

### **5.2 Test Pit 1**

5.2.1 Test Pit 1 was excavated directly beneath the easternmost windows on the east elevation of the extant Friarage Mansion building. The pit was dug through the modern turf and topsoil (001) on to modern made ground (002) that consisted of dark brown clayey silt containing brick and stone rubble and modern debris. At approximately 0.3m deep a broken and disturbed concrete slab (016) was encountered. A layer of broken brick had been laid before the concrete had been poured over it in order to create a level surface. There was more made ground beneath the concrete and this continued beyond the limit of excavation. The test pit had an overall depth of 0.75m.

5.2.2 In recent years a layer of render had been applied to the outer face of the building from approximately 0.45m above ground level to approximately 0.5m below. This render had chipped off in some places and investigation of the stonework of the building revealed a doorway that had been blocked up with re-used faced sandstone blocks bonded with lime mortar. Due to the shallow depth of the trench only the top 0.6m of the doorway was revealed. The left jamb of the doorway was visible but the right jamb was beyond the limits of the pit. There was no sign of a lintel along the top of the doorway.

5.2.3 The stonework in the blocked-up doorway was very loose and poorly constructed and some of the stones became dislodged during excavation. When some of the stones were removed they revealed that the wall was constructed with an inner and an outer leaf of faced sandstone blocks with a lime mortar core. The interior of the door was topped by a segmented arch constructed of carved sandstone blocks. The arch could be seen springing from the inner leaf of the left door jamb.

5.2.4 The basement beyond the door had been backfilled with modern rubble and demolition debris although there was a gap of approximately 0.2m between the top of the backfill and the ceiling.



Figure 3: Looking through the blocked opening to the arch beyond.



Figure 4: Test Pit 1 showing the blocked doorway.



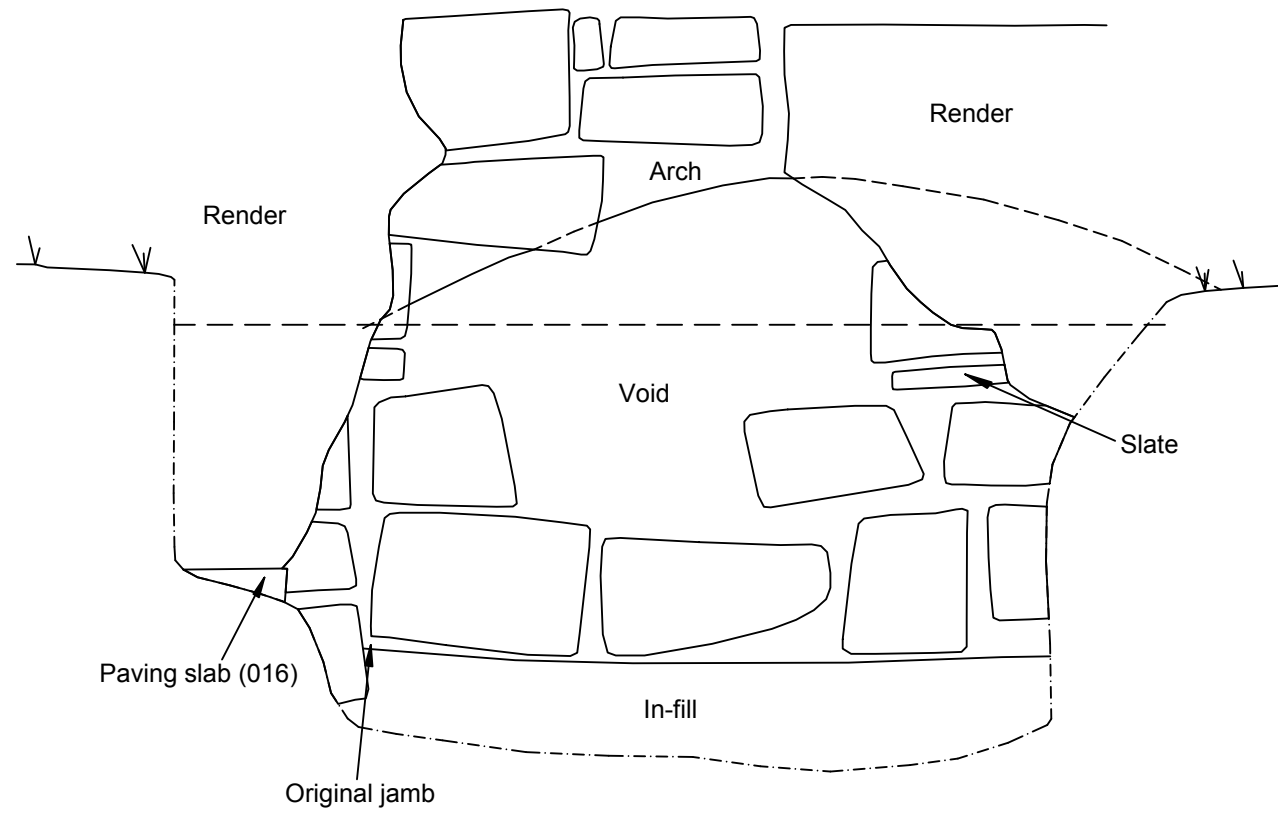
### 5.3 Test Pit 2

- 5.3.1 Test Pit 2 was excavated directly beneath the second window from the south on the east elevation. The pit was dug through the modern turf and topsoil (001) on to modern made ground (002) that consisted of dark brown clayey silt containing brick and stone rubble and modern debris. At a depth of 0.33m a large concrete slab (017) was found that ran beneath the edges of the pit and beneath the render on the outside of the building. A mechanical breaker was used to break up the concrete slab before it was removed. Another layer of made ground was encountered beneath the concrete that consisted of very dark brown clayey silt containing crushed sandstone and lime mortar (004). This deposit continued beyond the limits of the excavation.
- 5.3.2 At a depth of approximately 0.6m a stone window sill was discovered. Cleaning the stonework revealed the lower right hand side of a window with a single surviving stone mullion. There was a scar on the sill where another mullion would have originally been. The window had been blocked up with sandstone blocks bonded with lime mortar. The render on the outside of the building covered the top portion of the window although some of this was loose and became dislodge during excavation which revealed more of the window.



Figure 5: Test Pit 2 showing the stone window sill with surviving mullion. Scale = 1m

Test Pit 1



Test Pit 2

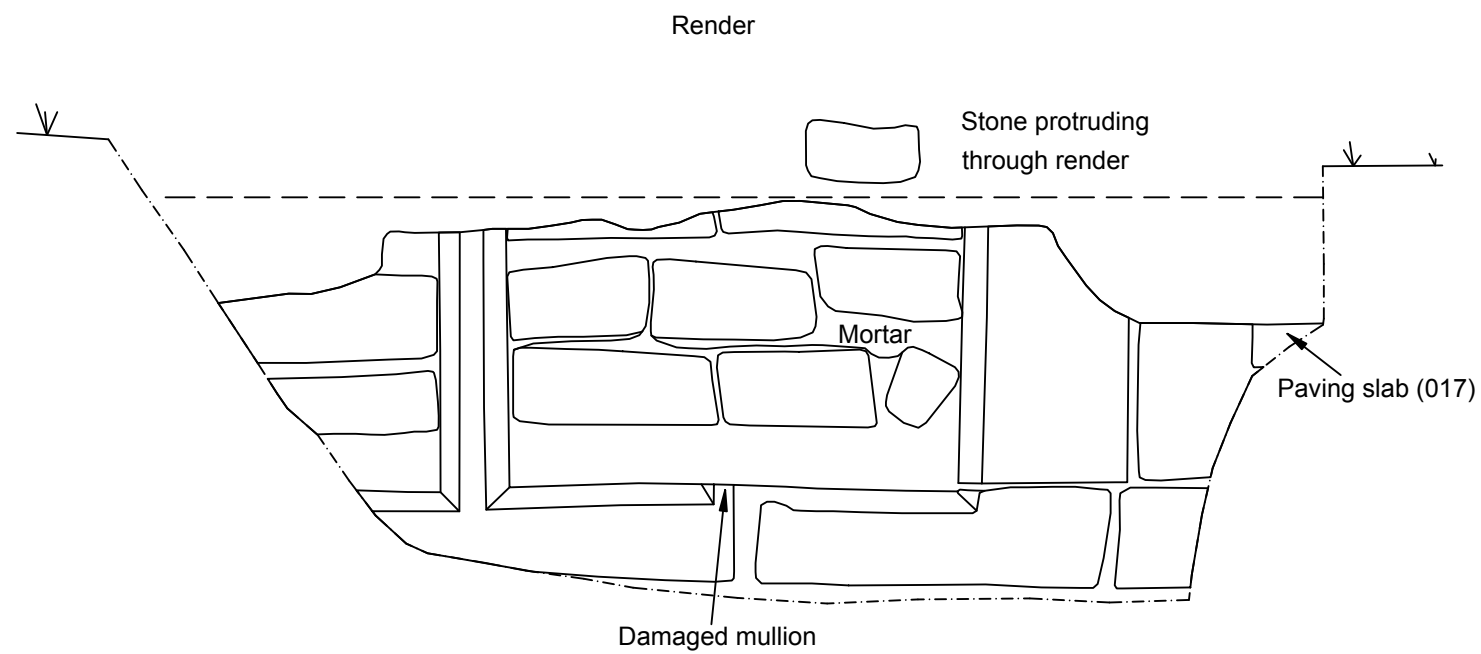


Figure 6:

Sections of Test Pits 1 and 2 showing door and window detail

Key:



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## **6. Discussion**

- 6.1. The lack of a lintel across the top of the blocked doorway is unusual and may indicate that it was originally a window that was later opened up and made in to a door before subsequently being blocked up when the hospital closed. If this is the case then the only access into the basement would have been from inside the building. Although the stonework beneath the other two windows was not investigated it is assumed that a further two blocked-up mullioned windows would be present.

## **7. Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright**

- 7.1. Any publicity will be handled by the client.
- 7.2. Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

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- 8.1 Statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

## **9. Acknowledgements**

- 9.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved with this work, in particular Stephen Bell of Galliford Try, Peter Rowe development control archaeologist for Tees Archaeology and Chris Green of Historic Property Restoration Ltd.

## **10. References**

British Geological Survey (BGS) <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/>