An Archaeological Evaluation at The Lonnen, Ryton, Gateshead

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Compiled By:
Philippa Cockburn and Milena Grzybowska
Archaeological Research Services Ltd
The Eco Centre
Windmill Way
Hebburn
Tyne and Wear
NE31 1SR

Checked By:
Chris Scott MIfA
Tel: 0191 4775111
admin@archaeologicalresearchservices.com
www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com

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Executive Summary
Project Name: The Lonnen, Ryton
Site Code: RY14
Planning Authority: Tyne and Wear County Council
Location: The Lonnen, Ryton, Gateshead
Geology: Mudstone, siltstone and sandstone overlain by superficial deposits of sand and gravel.
NGR: NZ 16371 64023
Date: April 2014

In April 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Galliford Try to undertake an archaeological evaluation at The Lonnen, Ryton in Gateshead. The trenching was carried out as a condition of planning permission in advance of development on the site. The development will comprise 20 houses with associated gardens, parking and roads.

An archaeological Desk-Based Assessment carried out by ARS Ltd in January 2014 (Cockburn 2014) determined that the line of the Stella Grand Lease Way, which was opened in the 1630s, ran immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the development site. The line of the Stella to Ryton Moor Way was also located in close proximity to the study area. HER and NRHE data for the site and the wider area has demonstrated that Ryton and the surrounding villages played important roles in the development of industry in the North East of England. A number of old coal pits and shafts are shown in both the HER records and on Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping from 1862, along with Stella pit, Addison Colliery and Stargate Colliery, which all lie within or just beyond the 1km study area that was investigated as part of the DBA. OS mapping also demonstrates how the villages of Addison, Stella, Stargate and Ryton expanded and developed as industry in the area boomed. The development site is also situated very close to the site of the Battle of Newburn Ford which was fought between English and Scottish troops in 1640.

There was the possibility that archaeological remains relating to the waggonways could have existed within the site. The two evaluation trenches were sited in order to target those areas that had been disturbed the least by previous development and were therefore most likely to contain surviving archaeological remains.

One of the trenches could not be excavated due to its position at the top of a steep incline which meant that the mechanical excavator could not access it. The second trench was excavated on a north-south alignment adjacent to the existing access road. A modern dog burial and a feature of unknown function were found within the trench.

1 Introduction

1.1 In April 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Galliford Try to undertake an archaeological evaluation at The Lonnen, Ryton in advance of development on the site. The development will comprise 20 houses with associated gardens, parking and roads.

1.2 An archaeological Desk-Based Assessment carried out by ARS Ltd in January 2014 (Cockburn 2014) found that the route of the Stella Grand Lease Way, which opened in the 1630s, ran directly adjacent to the eastern boundary of the development site. The line of the Stella to Ryton Moor Way was also located in close proximity to the study area. There is therefore the potential for remains relating to the wooden waggonways to exist within the site.

Archaeological and Historical Background

1.3 The site of the Battle of Newburn Ford lies immediately to the east of the site. The battle, which was fought between English and Scottish troops in 1640, is considered to be of great political importance due to the fact that it led to the capture of the city of Newcastle two days later and forced King Charles to install the Long Parliament. Also, immediately adjacent to the Proposed Development Area is the line of the Stella Grand Lease Way, which was opened in the 1630s. HER and NRHE data for the site and the wider area has demonstrated that Ryton and the surrounding villages played important roles in the development of industry in the North East of England. A number of old coal pits and shafts are shown in both the HER records and on Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping from 1862, along with Stella pit, Addison Colliery and Stargate Colliery, which all lie within or just beyond the 1km study area that was investigated as part of the DBA. OS mapping also demonstrates how the villages of Addison, Stella, Stargate and Ryton expanded and developed as industry in the area boomed. The Proposed Development Area itself remained unoccupied well into the 20th century until 'The Lonnen' was constructed there. The flats appear on OS maps from 1984 (Cockburn 2014).

Method Statement

1.4 The archaeological evaluation comprised two trenches, one measuring 15m x 2m and one measuring 25m x 2m. Due to its location at the top of a steep incline, the 15m trench was not able to be excavated as the mechanical excavator was unable to access it.

1.5 The remaining trench was excavated by a machine using a toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. The machine removed the deposits of the trench in spits until the first potential archaeological horizon or the natural was exposed.

1.6 The excavated trench was recorded using a single context recording system. Each layer encountered was given a unique context number and a full written description. A photographic record of the trench was created and a plan and single section of the trench was produced. Any archaeological features that were encountered were planned and drawn in section at a suitable scale.

2 Results

2.1 Trench 1 was excavated on a north-south alignment, running adjacent to the existing access road in to the site. Initially, the trench was supposed to measure 25 x 2m however a modern drainage pipe was encountered at the extreme southern end of the trench at a depth of approximately 1m. In an attempt to avoid this service the trench was moved towards the north, shortening it by approximately 10m. The trench was then excavated down to maximum a depth of 0.94m where the drainage pipe was encountered again. The natural sand and gravel was also found at this depth, however, and so the rest of the trench was excavated to the same level.

2.2 The stratigraphy of the trench consisted of modern topsoil with turf, (101), that had a maximum depth of 0.15m. Below this was a layer of made ground, (102), with a maximum depth of 0.8m. The made ground consisted of very dark brown/black clayey silt containing brick and stone rubble inclusions and modern debris. The natural yellow sand and gravel, (103), was encountered directly beneath the made ground and continued beyond the limits of the excavation. The modern drainage pipe ran down the entire length of the trench from south to north. The ceramic pipe had been laid within a cut, [109], that had been filled with pea gravel, (108), and had a width of 0.4m.

2.3 Approximately 6m from the southern end of the trench, three small features forming an 'H' shape were encountered. Feature (114) was a small, very ephemeral linear running from east to west diagonally across the trench, cut by the modern drainage ditch (108). The fill of this feature was mottled yellow and brown clayey silt. Cut by this was another small linear, (104), running from north to south and containing a dog burial, (110). The fill of the feature, (104), consisted of dark brown clayey silt with gravel inclusions, and the cut was steeply sided with a flat base. The dog had been placed in the cut with its front end towards the north and its back end towards the south. The animal had been placed lying on its left-hand side with its head twisted back, resting on its ribs. The pelvis and hind legs of the dog extended into the fill of an earlier feature, (112), which was very wet and had, as a result, been pushed lower than the remainder of the skeleton and twisted so that the pelvis was found in an upright position. A small assemblage of animal bone was retrieved from the bottom of the feature (112). Feature (112) was a small linear running from east to west, cut by the modern drainage pipe, (108), and the dog burial, (104), with a very dark brown clayey silt fill. A piece of modern wire, some sherds of modern pottery and some fragments of modern ceramic pipe were recovered from the very base of feature (112).

2.4 The only other feature found within the trench was a small ovoid feature of unknown function. The feature, (106), had a very wet, dark brown/black, clayey loam fill with no inclusions. The cut, [107], was steeply sided with a rounded base. The feature had been cut by the modern drainage pipe, (108). No finds were recovered from the fill of the feature.

3 Specialist report

Animal bone assessment *by Milena Grzybowska*

3.1 Aims and Objectives

The aims of this assessment were to consider the nature of the recovered material, estimate its potential for future analysis and to consider the relevance of the material to archaeological investigation.

3.2 Material

Material derived from features (104) and (112). The entire assemblage comprised a one litre sample bag of animal remains. All the animal bones were collected by hand.

3.3 Methods

The assessment follows *English Heritage MAP2* (1991) and *Animal bones and Archaeology: Guidelines for best practice, Consultation draft* developed by English Heritage (Baker and Worley 2013).

For the purpose of this assessment full speciation was not attempted with reference to close taphonomic groups, i.e. sheep vs goat. Preservation and taphonomic traces were recorded. The state of preservation was scored using a three stage system (1- poor, 2- moderate, 3 - good). Numbers of ageable and measurable specimens was recorded. Bones were considered ageable on the basis of epiphyseal fusion; mandibles on the basis of tooth eruption and wear phase. Sex assessment is based on the presence of skeletal elements and morphological traits. The measurable specimens of this assessment excluded unfused and incomplete bones; measurements considered followed Von den Driesch (1976). A zone recording system was not applied. Identification of elements facilitated the interpretation of the nature of the assemblage (i.e.-butchery vs craft-related vs consumption waste). The presence of animal bone groups and articulating specimens was noted.

3.4 Results

Due to the distinct character of features, the faunal remains were assessed separately according to each feature.

3.4.1 Animal bone group from feature (104)

Feature (104) contained faunal articulated remains ABG1, of grade 3 preservation. It comprised a complete skeleton of a dog (*Canis familiaris*, Figure 4). The presence of a *baculum* (penis bone) facilitated sexing the animal. No taphonomic traces were observed. Four vertebrae displayed pathological lesions. Peri-mortem lesion of the skull has been noted (Figure 3). Nearly all the bones were measurable.

3.4.2 Animal bone from feature (112)

Feature (112) contained animal remains of grade 3 preservation. The fragmentation of bones varied from complete to very fragmented. The taxa identified included cattle (*Bos taurus*) and sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) (Table 1). The assemblage consisted of articulating elements of bovine foot and disarticulated, predominantly fragmented, remains from multiple bodyparts. A percentage of the bones were identified as ageable and measurable. Sex could not be established for any of the elements.

Taxon	***Element***	***Ageable***	***Sexable***	***Measurable***	***Taphon. traces***	***Pathology***
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	1st phalanx	No	No	Yes	None	None
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	1st phalanx	No	No	Yes	None	None
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	2nd phalanx	No	No	Yes	None	None
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	2nd phalanx	No	No	Yes	None	None
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	3rd phalanx	No	No	Yes	None	None
Cattle (*Bos taurus*)	rib	No	No	Yes	Filleting, gnawing	None
Sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	metacarpal	No	No	No	Gnawing	None
Sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	2nd phalanx	Yes	No	No	Butchery	None
Sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*)	vertebra fr.	Yes	No	No	None	None
Large ungulate	innominate fr.	No	No	No	Butchery	None
Large ungulate	humerus fr.	No	No	No	Butchery	None
Unidentified	unidentified fr.	No	No	No	Butchery	None
Unidentified	unidentified fr.	No	No	No	Butchery	None
Unidentified	unidentified fr.	No	No	No	None	None

Table 1: Animal remains from feature (112).

3.5 Conclusion

Feature (104) represented a deliberate deposition of a dog. The animal displayed a peri-mortem trauma to the head. The full articulation of the remains indicated that the remains were not disturbed after deposition.

Feature (112) contained butchery waste products that derived from domesticated species. Articulating bones of the cattle suggested that once deposited, little further disturbance occurred to the bone waste. Gnawing marks identified on some of the bones represent pre-depositional action.

Further analysis of the assemblage is not recommended.

4 Discussion

4.1 No evidence of either the Stella Grand Lease Way or the Stella to Ryton Moor Way was found during the evaluation, although one area of the site remains un-investigated due to a lack of access for the mechanical excavator. No finds or features relating to the Battle of Newburn Ford were found during the evaluation.

4.2 The three small linear features encountered within the trench, (104), (112) and (114), pre-date the modern drainage pipe. However, the presence of modern pottery, ceramic pipe and a short length of wire within the fill of feature (112) indicate that the features themselves are relatively modern. The dog burial was shown, by excavation, to post-date feature (112) and is therefore also known to be modern. The other small feature, (106), did not produce any dating evidence and its function is unknown. No other finds or features were encountered within the trench.

5 Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright

6 Statement of Indemnity

6.1 All 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.

7 Acknowledgements

7.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those who contributed to the outcome of this project, in particular Gary Young and Paul Hacking of Galliford Try and David Heslop, Tyne and Wear County Archaeologist.

References

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Appendix 1- Context Register

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Description
1	101	Deposit	Topsoil and turf
1	102	Deposit	Made ground
1	103	Deposit	Natural sand and gravel
1	104	Fill	Fill of dog burial
1	105	Cut	Cut of (104)
1	106	Fill	Fill of small ovoid feature
1	107	Cut	Cut of (106)
1	108	Fill	Pea gravel fill of drain trench
1	109	Cut	Cut of (108)
1	110	-	Dog skeleton
1	111	Cut	Cut of (112)
1	112	Fill	Linear feature
1	113	Cut	Cut of (114)
1	114	Fill	Linear feature

Appendix 2- Figures

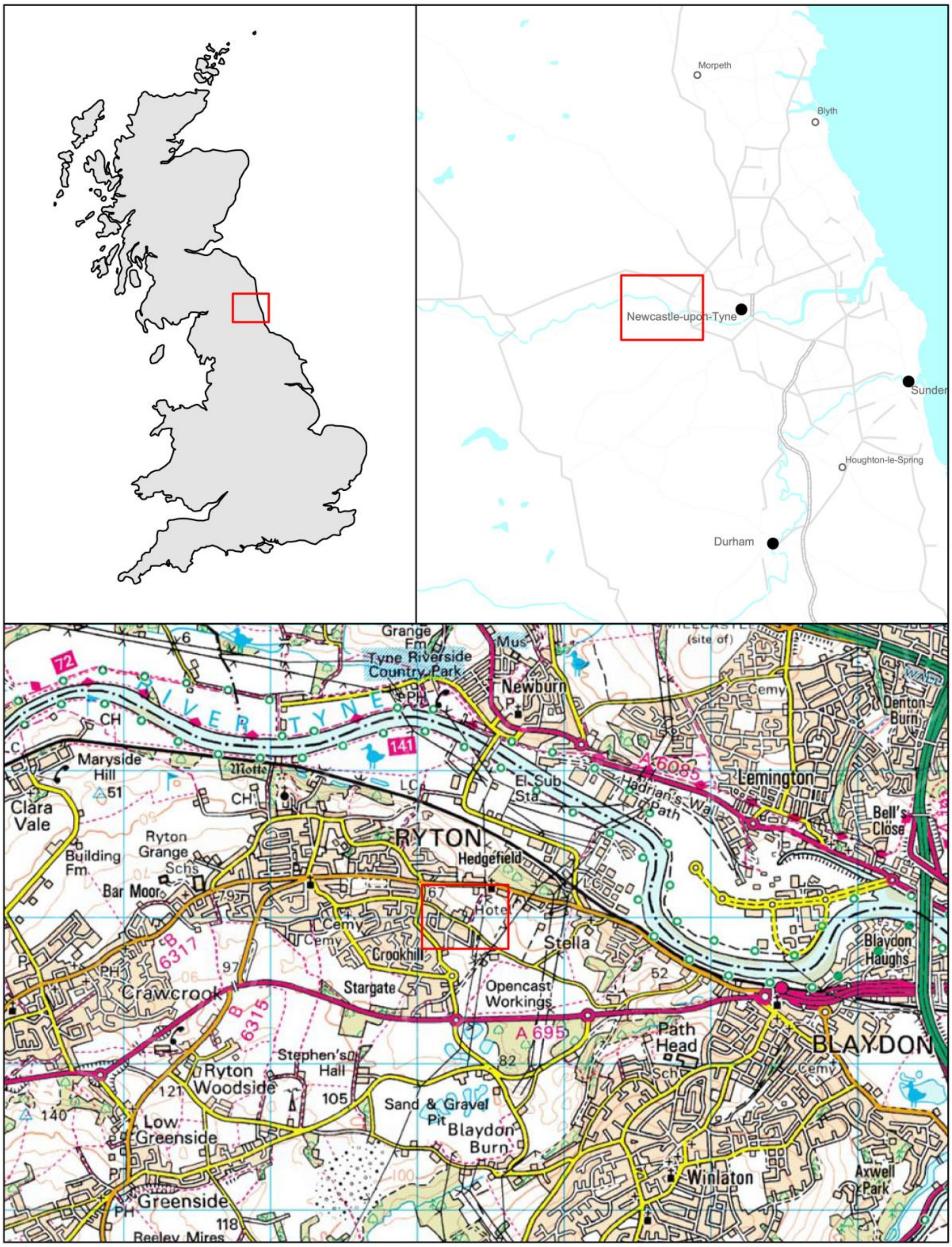
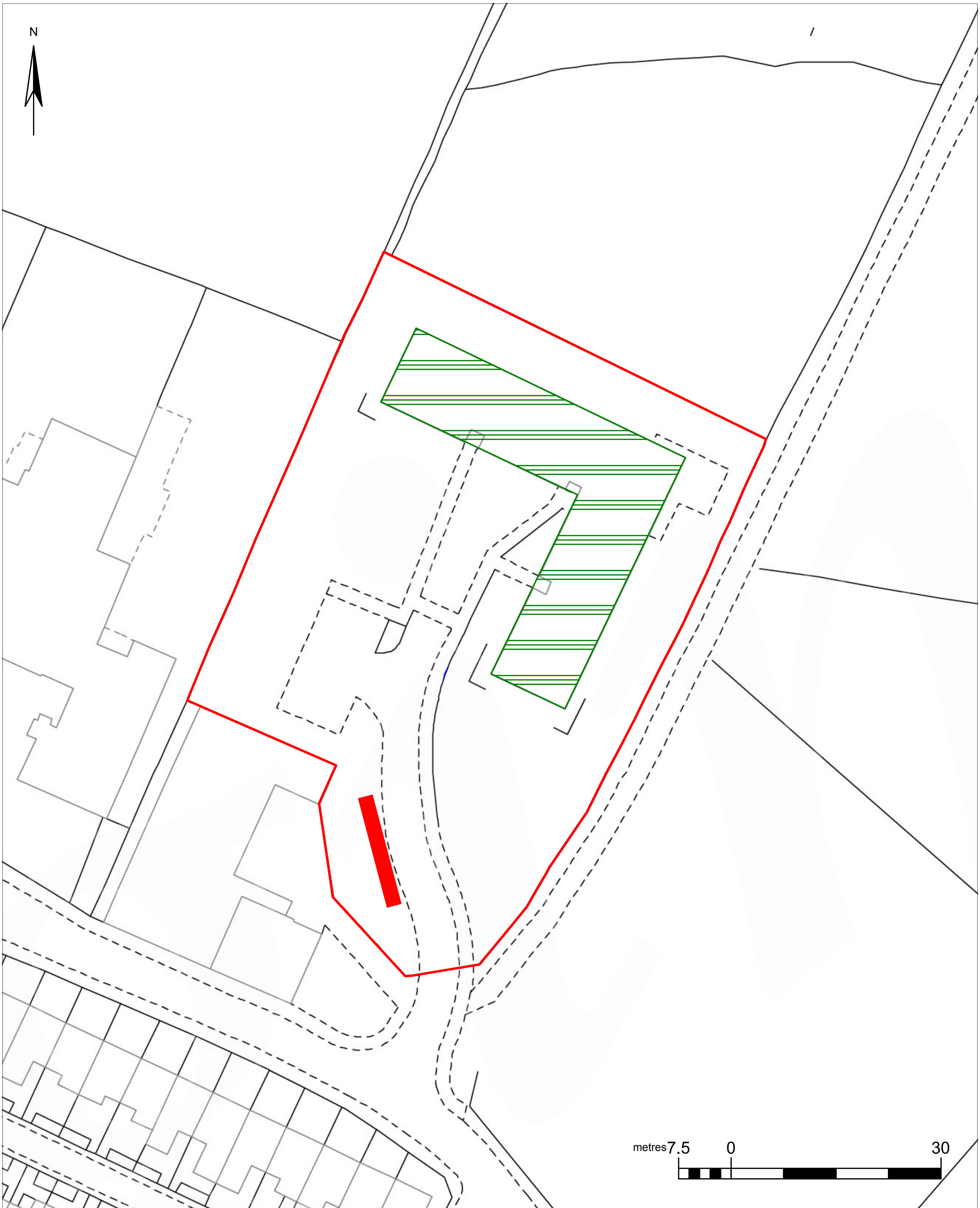
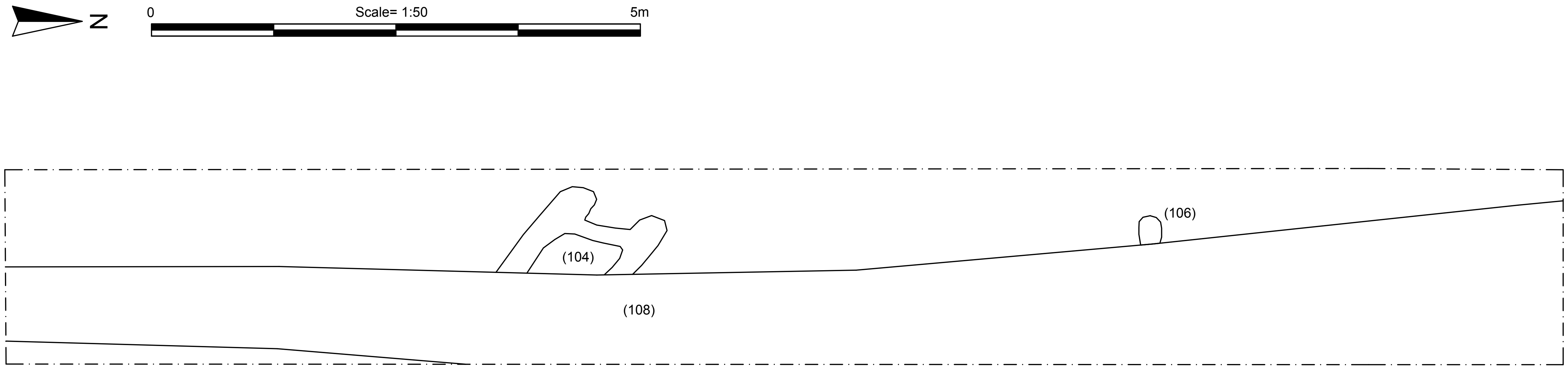
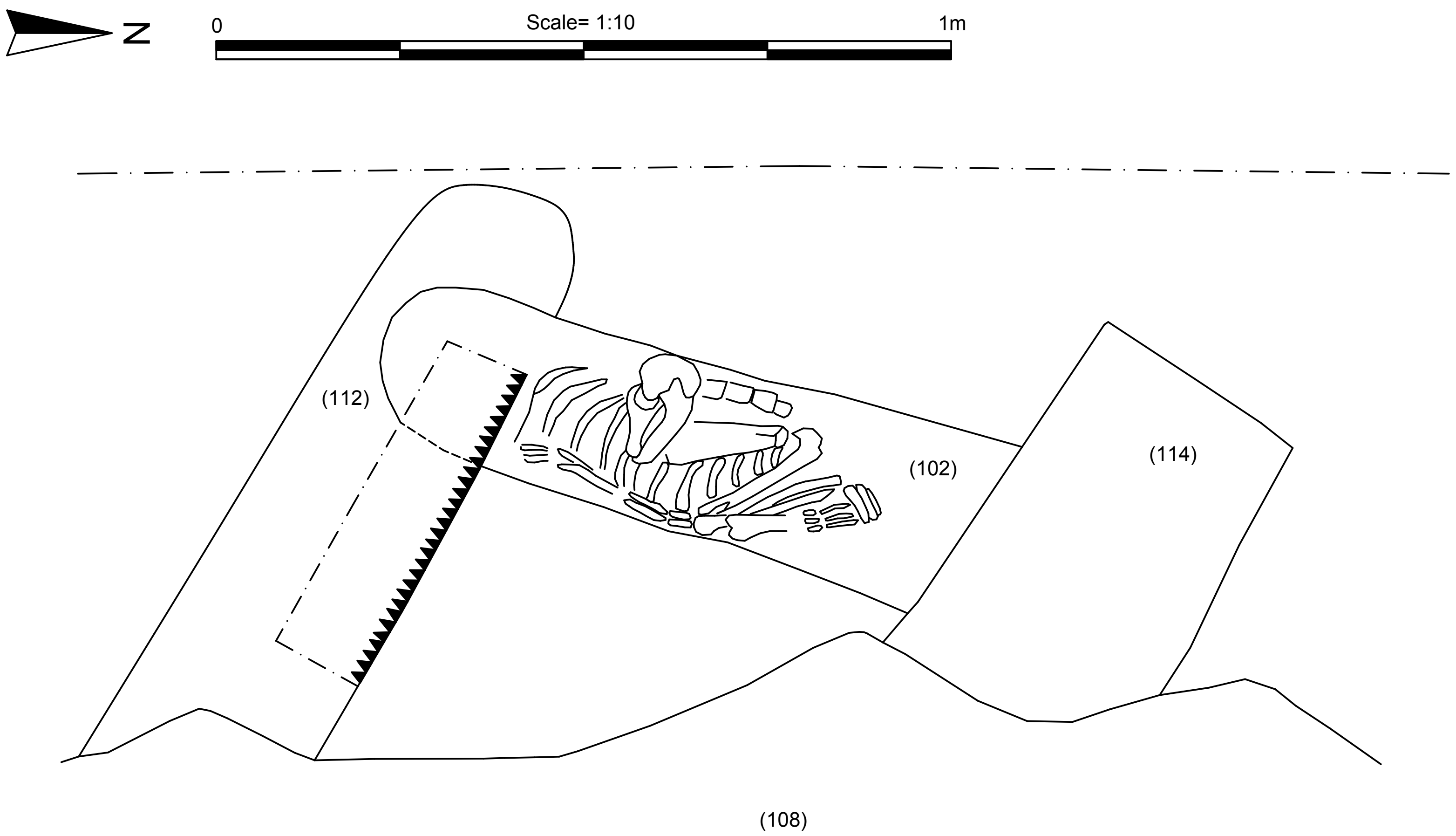


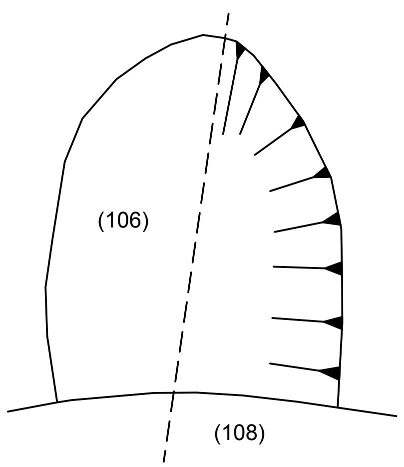
Figure 1: Site location



Archaeological Research Services Ltd The Eco Centre Windmill Way Hebburn Tyne and Wear NE31 1SR	Figure 2: A plan of the site showing the footprint of the previous building and the position of the evaluation trench.	Key: Site boundary Footprint of previous building- no longer extant Evaluation trench	
Site: The Lonnen, Ryton Date: April 2014 Drawn: PC Scale: 1:750 at A4	Notes:		Copyright/Licencing: This drawing © A.R.S. Ltd Ordnance Survey data if applicable © Crown Copyright, all rights reserved reproduced with permission. Licence No. 100045420







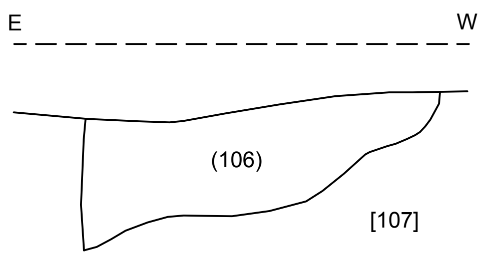


Figure 3:

Plan of Trench.

Plans and sections of features within the trench.

Scale: Varies

Key:

Figure 4: Features (104), (112), (114) and the dog burial

Figure 5: The trench showing the modern drainage pipe at the base of teh trench to the right. Looking north, scale = 1m.

Figure 6: Feature (106) after 1/2 sectioning.

Figure 7: The skeleton of the dog (ABG1), Feature (105).

Figure 8: Peri-mortem lesion of the skull, ABG1.