

An Archaeological Watching at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge



View facing west of Trench 6 looking towards The Counting House, Stagshaw Bank

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge

ARS Ltd Report 2017/57

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Archaeological Research Services Ltd

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Executive Summary

Project Name: An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge

Site Code: STAG17

Planning Authority: Northumberland County Council

Superficial Geology: Devensian Till

NGR: NY 98656 67310

Date of Fieldwork: February 2017

Date of Report: April 2017

In February 2017 Archaeological Research Services Limited was commissioned by Northumbrian Water Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief at land south of Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge. The archaeological watching brief monitored the replacement of a c.2km length of water pipe below the route of the A68 trunk road north of Corbridge. The pipework was inserted using horizontal directional drilling below the western edge of the carriageway and required the excavation of 19 launch and receive pits within close proximity to the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road. Consequently, all groundworks were subject to archaeological monitoring in order to mitigate against any potential damage caused to sub-surface archaeological remains situated within the development area. The complete scheme of works extended along the western edge of the A68 trunk road, from the site of the former Fox and hounds Inn at the northern portion of the site, to Shawwell Farm at the southern extent of the site.

The archaeological watching brief revealed evidence for post-medieval and Roman activity occurring along the route of the A68 trunk road immediately north of Corbridge town centre. At the northern extent of the scheme, a fragmentary sandstone layer was identified in the open-cut trench opposite the site of the former Fox and Hounds Inn. The sandstone layer was overlain by modern road construction deposits and interpreted as a probable post-medieval levelling layer or sub-base deposit for an earlier road surface.

Groundworks opposite Chantry Farm and Shawwell Farm also revealed evidence for a multi-phase cobbled road surface at a depth of approximately 1m below present ground level (BGL). The surfaces were constructed using loosely packed, sandstone cobbles pressed into either the natural substrate or the underlying deposits associated with an earlier road surface. The form and location of the cobbled surfaces, identified during the present phase of development, broadly corresponded with the archaeological evidence retrieved from previous, nearby investigations of Dere Street Roman Road. Consequently, the cobbled surfaces revealed during the course of the watching brief were tentatively interpreted as the relict remnants of Dere Street Roman Road and suggest that archaeological evidence related to the Roman thoroughfare remains preserved in-situ below the route of the modern A68 trunk road between Chantry Farm and Shawwell Farm.

1. Introduction

1.1. In February 2017 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Northumbrian Water Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief at land south of Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge. The archaeological watching brief monitored the replacement of a c.2km length of water pipe below the route of the A68 trunk road north of Corbridge. The pipework was inserted using horizontal directional drilling below the western edge of the carriageway and required the excavation of multiple launch and receive pits within close proximity to the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road. Consequently, all groundworks were subject to archaeological monitoring in order to mitigate against any potential damage caused to sub-surface archaeological remains situated within the development area.



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

2. Location and Geology

2.1 The site was located at NY 98656 67310 on land approximately 2km north of Corbridge town centre and 800m south of Portgate (HER N8638; NHLE 1010625), the fortified gateway spanning Dere Street Roman road as it passed through Hadrian's Wall. The solid geology of the area is a mudstone, sandstone and limestone bedrock of the Stainmore Formation overlain by superficial deposits of Devensian till formed during the Quaternary Period (British Geological Survey 2017).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Prehistoric

3.1 Evidence of early prehistoric activity within the vicinity of Corbridge consists of Mesolithic flint findspots at Shorden Brae (HER N9038), Gallowhill (HER N8672) and Caistron Field (HER N8683) (Wymer and Bonsall 1978; Waddington 2004, 69-70 and 72). A hoard of Bronze Age metal objects (HER N10055), consisting of dagger fragments, two spearblades and a flanged axe were also discovered 400m north-east of the site during construction of the Newcastle - Carlisle railway line in 1835. Additional later prehistoric activity close to Corbridge is restricted to a fortified Iron Age settlement, located at Shildon Hill, 5km north-east of Corbridge town centre (HER 9011) (Jobey, 1964). No prehistoric activity has been recorded within the site boundary.

Romano-British

3.2. A Roman fort was established at Corbridge (NHLE 100098), approximately 1.9km south-west of the site, during the late first century AD. The fort was established on the line of the Stanegate Roman road. When Hadrian's Wall was built to the north of the Stanegate, running between the Tyne-Solway gap from AD 122 to 128, some of the Stanegate forts became redundant as they were now situated within the hinterland of the newly established frontier. Corbridge, however, maintained its overall strategic importance due to its location guarding Dere Street, the main supply route from York to Newstead in Scotland as well as the important crossing of the Tyne. An extra-mural settlement was enclosed within the defences and a significant civilian *vicus* grew up around the military site. By the mid-second century AD Corbridge was a defended market town and later expanded to occupy an area of approximately 13ha-17ha by the third and fourth centuries (Finlayson and Hardie 2010).

3.3 The monitoring site is located 2km north of *Corstopitum* Roman town (NHLE 100098) within close proximity to the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392). Dere Street is the modern designation applied to a Roman road which ran north from the Roman city of *Eboracum* (York), crosses the route of Hadrian's Wall at Portgate, Northumberland and continues north to the Antonine Wall in Scotland. An aerial photographic transcription exercise conducted in 2006 shows Dere Street as cropmarks in fields north of Ladycutters Lane and south-west of Corbridge town centre.

Similarly, a series of linear cropmarks, situated within the fields east of Stagshaw House, have also been interpreted as demarcating the probable location of sub-surface remains associated with Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392).

3.4 The proposed scheme of works was situated approximately 100m west of Chantry Farm which broadly matches the location of pre-existing medieval structures associated with Stagshaw Hospital (HER N8658). The hospital was probably founded by one of the Clavinger Lords of Corbridge in the 13th century along the route of Dere Street Roman Road. The hospital entered decline and was abandoned prior to the late 14th century (Craster 1914; Hadcock 1939).

3.5 The site of Stagshaw Bank Cattle Fair (HER 8679) was also located immediately north-west of the monitored area and was, during the medieval and post-medieval periods, one of the largest livestock markets in Britain. The fair was attended by farmers from the border counties of both England and Scotland and, until the advent of the railway, provided a marketplace for the sale of approximately one hundred thousand sheep and cattle. The fairs were traditionally held annually on 6th May, 4th July, 5th August, 26th September and 24th October (Craster 1914; Tomlinson 1985). However, by the early 20th century the popularity of the fair had dwindled and was only held for a single day each year until the markets eventual closure in 1927.

4. Aims and Objectives

4.1 The principal aim of the archaeological monitoring is to ensure that any potential archaeological remains associated with Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392), encountered during the course of the groundworks, are not destroyed without first being recorded and interpreted.

4.2 The following objective will contribute towards accomplishing the aim: To record the nature, extent and date of any surviving archaeological remains associated with Dere Street Roman Road followed by, on completion of the on-site works, post-excavation analysis, reporting, publication, and archiving.

5. Methodology

5.1 The watching brief monitored the excavation of 19 trenches, and a single test pit, inserted at 100m intervals along the full length of the scheme in order to provide launch and receive access pits for directional drilling machinery (Figure 11). Two open cut trenches were also excavated at the northern and southern extent of the scheme as directional drilling was prohibited due to a high concentration of buried services in these locations. The complete scheme of works extended along the western edge of the A68 trunk road, from the site of the former Fox and hounds Inn at the northern portion of the site, to Shawwell Farm at the southern extent of the site.

5.2 The trenches were excavated by a 360^o mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket in level spits to the depth of either the natural substrate or the first archaeological horizon. The base and section of each newly exposed area was then

examined and cleaned by hand. All machine excavation was carried out under careful archaeological supervision and in accordance with the methodology set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Northumberland County Council (see Appendix III).

6. Results

Archaeologically Sterile Trenches

6.1. Trenches 1-5, 7 – 15, and 17 – 18 contained no finds or features of archaeological significance and displayed a relatively simple depositional sequence. An initial deposit of topsoil (008) overlay an orange-brown subsoil (009) which in turn sealed a variable natural geology characterised by either an orange-yellow, silty-sand (006) or an orange-yellow, sandy-clay (012) (Figure 16 and 30).

Archaeologically Sensitive Trenches

Trench 6

6.2 Trench 6 characterised the northernmost open-cut trench and bisected the route of the A68 trunk road immediately opposite Fox and Hounds Cottage (Figure 2 and 4). The trench was aligned on a broadly east-west alignment and was excavated through the modern road surface and underlying sub-base layers (001 - 003). A poorly-sorted limestone rubble deposit (005) was identified underlying the modern road construction deposits and was interpreted as a levelling layer or foundation deposit for an earlier, probable post-medieval, road surface (Figure 2). Limestone foundation layer (005) was identified at a height of 189.49m aOD and was set into the natural substrate (006) extending across the base of the trench (Figure 12).

6.3 The eastern and western extents of the trench were excavated through the grassy verge bordering the route of the modern road and identified a pair of north-south aligned water pipe service trenches (F011 and F018) at an average depth of 189.67m aOD. The modern service trenches were sealed by topsoil (008/017) and truncated both the subsoil (002) and natural substrate layers (006).



Figure 2. View facing NNW of post-medieval or 19th century levelling layer (005) in Trench 6 (Scale= 1 x 1m).



Figure 3. View facing NNW of northern section in Trench 6 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 4. View facing west showing location of Trench 6 opposite The Planting House, Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge (Scale = 1 x 1m).

Trench 16

6.4 Trench 16 was characterised by a 2m x 0.80m 0.95m launch and receive pit excavated through the grass verge west of the A68 trunk road, c.80m south of Gardeners Cottage (Figure 11). The initial deposit comprised a 0.35m thick layer of topsoil (008) overlying a poorly sorted crushed shale and bitumen deposit (035) interpreted as construction debris inserted during the formation of the modern road surface (001) (Figure 13). The modern construction layer (035) sealed a buried subsoil (034) which, in turn, overlay a fragmentary sandstone surface (033). Surface (033) was pressed into a 0.08m thick, silty, trample deposit (032) which overlay an additional buried limestone surface (031). Both surfaces were constructed from rounded sandstone cobbles, which were unbonded but laid flat into the underlying deposits (Figure 5, 6 and 13). The uppermost surface (033) was identified at a height of 134.07m aOD whilst the lower surface (031) was revealed at a height of 133.84m aOD. Due to their form and location, both surfaces (031) and (033) were interpreted as the relict remains of Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392). The cobbles comprising the lower Roman road surface (031) extended across the base of Trench 16 and sealed the natural clay geology (012) which was identified at a depth of 133.77m aOD.



Figure 5. View facing east of the northern section through Trench 16 with upper road surface (033) visible at the base of the trench (scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 6. View facing north of fragmentary Roman road surface (031) in Trench 16 (Scale = 1 x 0.2m).



Figure 7. View facing south-west of Trench 16.

Trench 19

6.5 Trench 19 formed the southernmost boundary of the scheme and was characterised by a 54m x 0.50m x 1.2m open cut trench which extended along the western edge of the A68 trunk road and bisected the thoroughfare c.28m north of Shawwell Farm (Figure 2 and 15). The eastern portion of Trench 19 was excavated through the grass verge bordering the eastern edge of the modern road and revealed a fragmentary sandstone surface (031) at a height of 99.90m aOD. The surface was sealed by overlying deposits of topsoil (008) and subsoil (009) and was heavily truncated by a north-south aligned modern service trench F042. Consequently, surface (031) was revealed in a fragmentary form and only identifiable below the northern section of Trench 19. The form and location of surface (031) was near identical to the previously identified surfaces revealed in Trench 16 and was similarly interpreted as the fragmentary remnants of Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392). Roman road surface (031) did not extend below the route of the modern road and may therefore be reasonably interpreted as extending eastwards under the grass verge situated immediately west of Shawwell Farm. The remainder of Trench 19 displayed a simple depositional sequence comprising the modern road construction layers (001 - 003) overlying an orange-yellow, sandy-clay natural substrate (012) which was revealed at depth of 0.35m below present ground level. The natural substrate was truncated by a pair of east-west aligned service trenches (F043/F046) immediately east of the Northumbrian Water Pumping Station at Shawwell Reservoir and may be reliably interpreted as 20th century services related to the operation of the pumping facility.



Figure 8. View facing north-west of heavily truncated surface (031) at the base of Trench 19 (Scale = 1 x 0.2m).



Figure 9. View facing south-east across Trench 19 towards Shawwell Farm. Surface (031) was identified at the base of the trench excavated through the grass verge east of the road (centre background) (Scale = 1 x 1m).

Test Pit 1

6.6 Test Pit 1 measured 1.2m x 1.8m x 0.98m at its maximum extents and was excavated through the grass verge west of the A68 trunk road opposite Chantry Farm (Figure 11 and 14). The overlying topsoil and subsoil deposits (008 and 009) sealed a dark orange-grey colluvial deposit (038) which in turn sealed a fragmentary, cobbled sandstone surface (031) at a height of 131.85m aOD (Figure 10). Both the colluvium (038) and the surface (031) were truncated by a service trench filled with a modern, east – west aligned water pipe and a deposit of poured concrete (036). The cobbled surface in Test Pit 1 was interpreted as further evidence for Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392) and complemented the archaeological evidence previously identified in Trenches 16 and 19.



Figure 10. View facing SSW of surface (031) at the base of Test Pit 1 (Scale =1 x 1m).

7. Discussion

7.1. The archaeological watching brief at Stagshaw Bank revealed probable evidence for both post-medieval and Roman activity occurring in close proximity to the route of the A68 trunk road north of Corbridge.

7.2 The coarse, limestone deposit (005) identified in Trench 1 may be tentatively interpreted as the base layer for an earlier post-medieval road surface which pre-dated, the route of the modern A68 trunk road. The post-medieval date ascribed to the deposit is largely arbitrary and based on both the relative depth of the limestone layer coupled with the crude arrangement of the individual stone fragments which are at variance with modern road construction materials. Similarly, it seems probable that any flagging or cobbling associated with deposit (005) may have been removed or truncated prior to the insertion of the modern road surface construction deposits (001 - 003) during the 20th century.

7.3 The archaeological evidence for Roman activity was confined to the cobbled surfaces (031/(033) identified in Test Pit 1 and Trenches 16 and 19. The surfaces were interpreted as the relict remains of Dere Street Roman Road, a portion of the Roman army's north-south arterial route across northern Britain, linking the legionary fortresses at York (*Eboracum*) and Inchtuthil, Scotland. The strategic importance of Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392) almost certainly classified the route as a military thoroughfare (*via militares*) constructed by the army but built using a variety of methods influenced by differing factors such as ground condition, underlying soil type and the availability of local resources (O'Connell, White and Cressey 2014). Consequently, the form of Dere Street Roman Road varies along the thoroughfares routes, however, the probable Roman road surfaces in Trenches 16, 19 and Test Pit 1 were broadly characteristic of the archaeological material revealed during earlier excavations, across the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road, in the vicinity of Corbridge. For example, Hildyards excavations at Appleby Dene in 1951 revealed that a section of Dere Street Roman Road, immediately south-east of Corbridge, was constructed using small, loosely packed, sandstone cobbles pressed into the underlying natural geology in a manner near identical to the cobbled surfaces (031) revealed during the present phase of excavations at Stagshaw Bank (Hildyard 1952). Similarly, the presence of multi-phase, super-imposed road surfaces in Trench 16, opposite Chantry Farm, was also identified during Forster and Simpsons *Corstopitum* excavations across Dere Street during the early 20th century (Forster and Knowles 1914; Simpson 1972). Consequently, although no finds were retrieved in association with surfaces (031) or (033) their form and relative depth below present ground level suggest that sections of Dere Street Roman Road remain preserved below the route of the modern A68 trunk road opposite Chantry Farm and Shawwell Farm.

7.4 It is also worth noting that the route of the Roman Road may be tentatively extrapolated from the identification of the surfaces in the southernmost open-cut trench and the launch and receive pits excavated during the present phase of excavation. For example, cobbled surface (031) was revealed below the grass verge

immediately west of Shawwell Farm but did not extend below the route of the modern road surface at this location. However, the Roman road reappears west of the A68 trunk road, opposite Chantry Farm, suggesting that within the 250m distance separating Chantry Farm from Shawwell Farm, Dere Street bisects the route of the modern road on a broadly northern alignment (Figure 11).

7.5 The watching brief has provided valuable evidence regarding both the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road and the relative depths at which the road may be located. The evidence retrieved during the present phase of development may assist in determining the archaeological potential of the site during future development schemes and could be used to inform upon any associated mitigation and design strategies.

8. Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright

8.1. Any publicity will be handled by the client.

8.2. Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

9. Statement of Indemnity

9.1 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.

10. Acknowledgements

10.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved with this work, in particular Ben Ralston of Northumbrian Water Ltd for commissioning the project and Karen Derham, Assistant County Archaeologist at Northumberland County Council, for her advice and guidance.

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Appendix I - Context Register

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge

Context No.	Type	Description/Interpretation	Level (below ground level) BGL (m)
001	Surface	Mid white-grey tarmac in Tr. 6, 11, 12 and 19. Avg. depth – 0.2m <i>Modern surface of A68 trunk road</i>	-
002	Deposit	Dark grey-black stony layer in Tr. 6, 11, 12 and 19. Avg. depth – 0.08m. <i>Modern road construction deposit – base layer</i>	0.2m
003	Deposit	Mid white-grey stony deposit containing large sub-angular sandstone inclusions in Tr. 6, 11, 12 and 19. Avg. depth – 0.08m. <i>Modern road construction deposit – Sub-base layer</i>	0.28m
004	Deposit	Well sorted, orange-yellow silty-sand in Tr. 6. Avg. depth- 0.04m. <i>Modern road construction deposit – levelling layer</i>	0.36m
005	Layer	Moderately sorted stony layer comprising medium to large sub-angular sandstone inclusions in Tr. 6. Avg. depth – 0.12m. <i>Levelling or consolidating layer for earlier post-medieval road surface</i>	0.40m
006	Layer	Mid brown- yellow silty-sand in Tr. 2 and 6. <i>Natural Substrate</i>	0.52m
007	Cut	Cutting for probable post-medieval road in Tr. 6. Truncates natural sand (006) and filled by levelling layer (005). <i>Post-medieval road cutting.</i>	0.40m
008	Layer	Dark grey-brown topsoil layer in Tr. 1 -10 and 13 – 16. Avg. depth – 0.32m <i>Topsoil</i>	-
009	Layer	Mid brown-orange subsoil in Tr. 1- 10 and 13 – 16. Avg depth – 0.17m. <i>Subsoil</i>	0.32m
010	Cut	Vertically sided cut of modern pipe trench in Tr. 6 <i>Modern water pipe service trench</i>	0.22m
011	Deposit	Poorly sorted grey-brown backfill deposit sealing water pipe in cut [010] – Tr. 6. Avg Depth – 0.67m. <i>Fill of modern service pipe trench</i>	0.22m
012	Layer	Light orange-yellow silty clay in Tr. 1, 3 – 5, 7 – 11, 13, 15 – 19. <i>Natural Substrate</i>	0.50m (min)
013		VOID	
014		VOID	
015		VOID	
016	Surface	Mid grey-black tarmac in Tr. 4. Avg. Depth – 0.11m. <i>Earlier 20th century road surface</i>	0.30m
017		VOID	
018	Deposit	Dark yellow-brown backfill deposit in service pipe cut [021] in Tr. 6. Avg. depth 0.20m. <i>Modern backfill of water pipe trench.</i>	0.3m
019		VOID	
020	Deposit	Mid white-grey concrete pipe protection/casing filling service pipe trench cut [021] in Tr. 6. Avg. depth – 0.17m. <i>Modern fill of water pipe trench.</i>	0.5m
021	Cut	Vertically-sided cut of pipe trench filled by (018 and (020) in Tr. 6. <i>Cut of modern pipe trench.</i>	0.3m
022	Deposit	Mid black-grey fill of service pipe trench [023] in Tr. 8. Avg. depth – 0.8m. <i>Backfill in modern pipe trench.</i>	0.14m

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge

Context No.	Type	Description/Interpretation	Level (below ground level) BGL (m)
023	Cut	Vertically sided cut of modern pipe trench filled by (022) in Tr. 8. <i>Cut of pipe trench.</i>	0.14m
024	Deposit	Poorly sorted deposit of blue-grey shale in Tr. 8. Avg. depth – 0.09m. <i>Modern construction waste</i>	0.20m
025	Deposit	Orange-yellow silty-clay in Tr. 9. Avg. depth 0.15m. <i>Redeposited natural clays capping 19th century culvert</i>	0.25m
026	Structure	Sandstone culvert constructed from squared sandstone blocks bonded with a cementitious mortar in Tr. 9. <i>19th century culvert.</i>	0.40m
027	Deposit	Dark brown-grey redeposited topsoil and subsoil in service trench – Tr. 12. <i>Backfill in modern water pipe trench.</i>	0.24m
028	Cut	East-west aligned vertically-side pipe water pipe trench cut in Tr. 12. Filled by (027). <i>Modern water pipe service trench.</i>	0.24m
029		VOID	
030		VOID	
031	Surface	Cobbled surface in Tr. 16, 19 and Test Pit 1. Constructed using small – medium rounded sandstone cobbles set into the natural substrate. Represents lower road surface in Tr. 16. <i>Probable Roman road surface</i>	0.95m
032	Deposit	Mid. grey-brown silty-clay overlying lower road surface (031) and overlain by upper road surface (033) in Tr. 16. Avg. depth – 0.05m. <i>Roman trample deposit – no finds.</i>	0.80m
033	Surface	Cobbled surface in Tr. 16. Constructed using small – medium rounded sandstone cobbles laid over trample deposit (032) and early road surface (031).	0.75m
034		Same as (009)	
035		Same as (003)	
036	Deposit	White-grey concrete casing for modern service pipe in Test Pit 1. Fill of cut [037]. <i>Modern concrete water-pipe casing.</i>	0.19m
037	Cut	Vertically sided cut for modern water pipe in test Pit 1. Truncates subsoil (009), colluvium (038) and Roman road surface (031)	0.19m
038	Deposit	Dark yellow-brown colluvium in Test Pit 1. Avg. depth – 0.32m	0.16m

Appendix II – Figures



Figure 11. Location plan of Trenches 1 - 19

Drawn: RL
Scale: 1:5000@A4

Key:

- Trench 1 - Archaeologically Sterile
- Trench 1 - Archaeologically Significant
- - - - - Projected line of Roman Road



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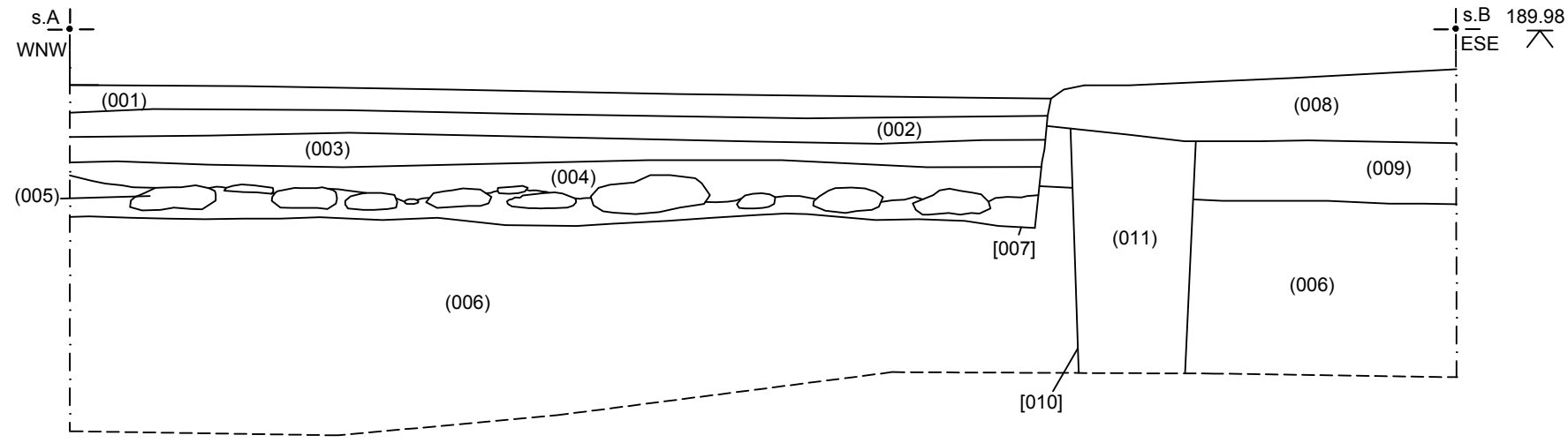


Figure 12. Representative section through Trench 6

Scale: 1:20@A4
 Drawn: RL

Key:

Section A. Representative section through the eastern portion of Trench 6



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Section B. West-north-west facing section through Trench 16

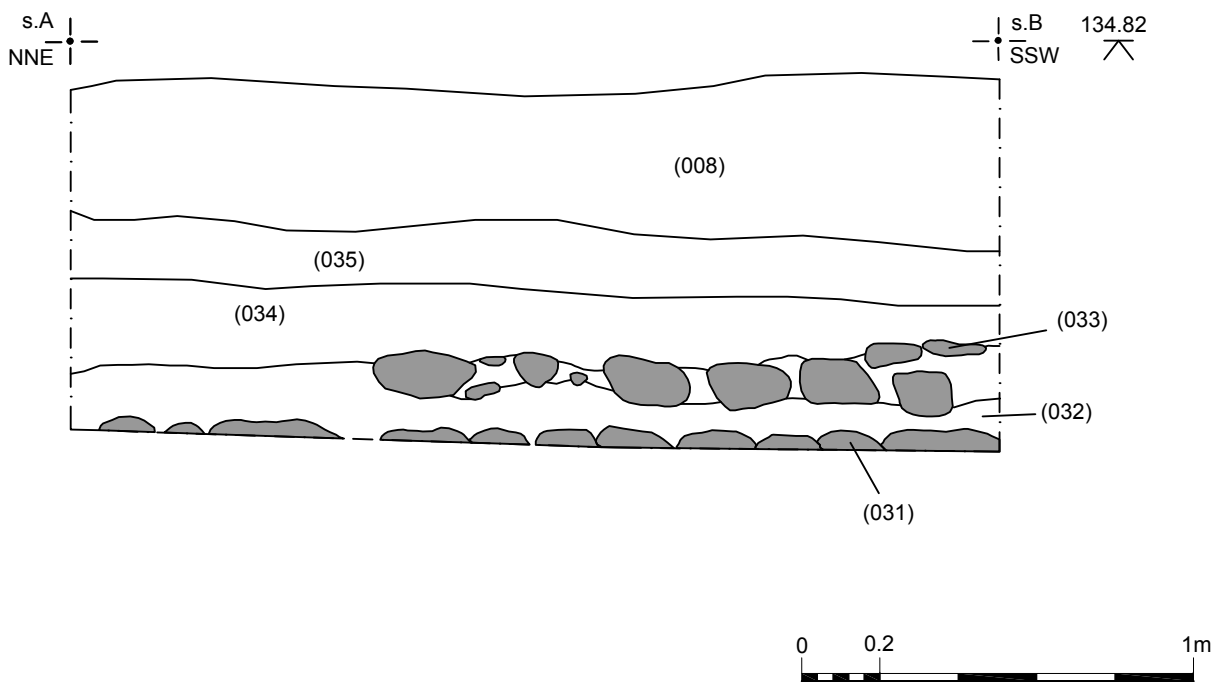



Figure 13. Plan and section of Trench 16

Scale: Plan - 1:40@A4
 Section - 1:20@A4
 Drawn: RL

Key:

 - Stone

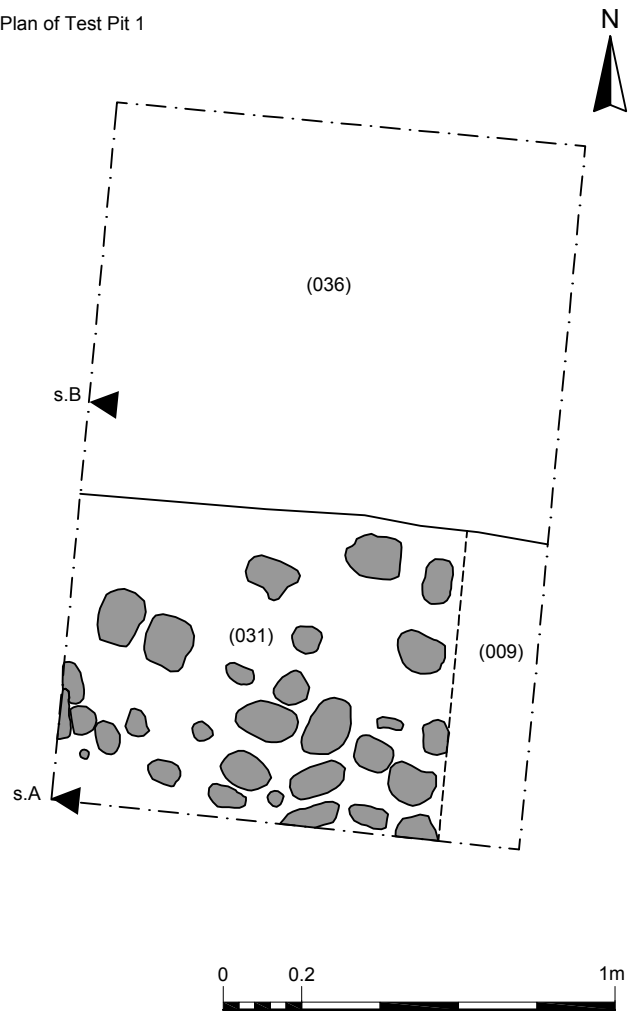
134.82  - Height mOD

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Plan of Test Pit 1



ESE-facing section through Test Pit 1

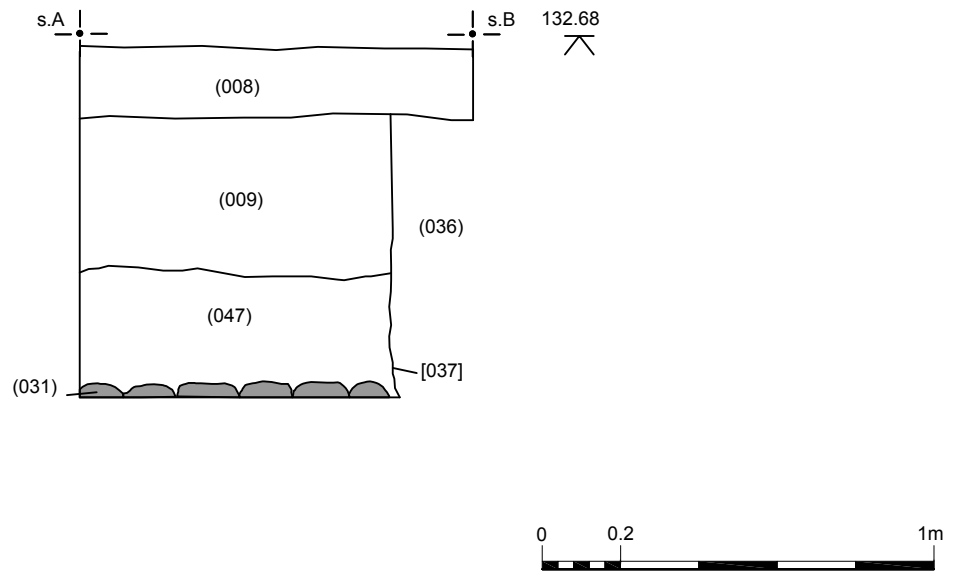



Figure 14. Plan and section through Test Pit 1

- Key:
-  - Stone
 - $\overline{\wedge}$ 134.82 - Height mOD

Scale: 1:20@A4
Drawn: RL

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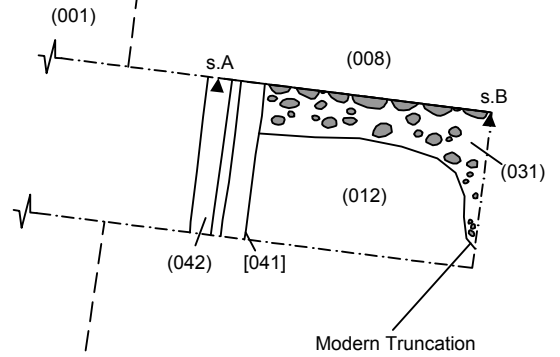
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Plan of eastern portion of Trench 19

Road Surface

Grass Verge



SSE facing section through eastern portion of Trench 19

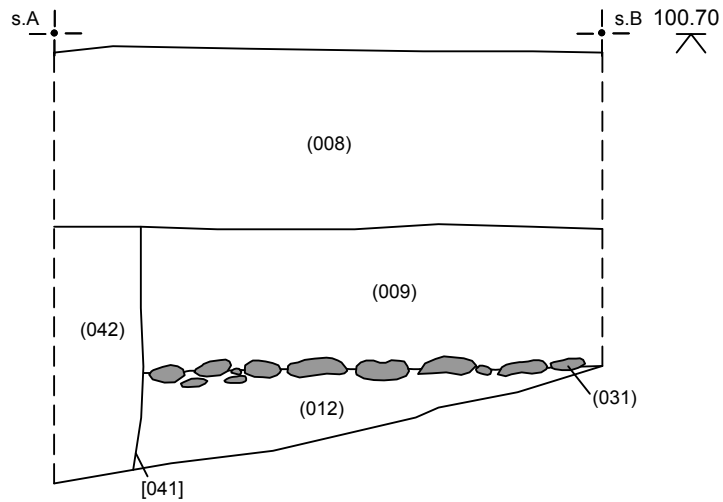



Figure 15. Section and plan through eastern portion of Trench 19

Scale: - Plan - 1:40@A4
- Section- 1:20@A4

Key:

 - Stone

 134.82 - Height mOD

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Archaeologically Sterile Trenches



Figure 16. View facing west of section through Trench 1 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 17. View facing west of section through trench 2 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 18. View facing west of section through Trench 3 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 19. View facing west of section through Trench 4 (scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 20. View facing west of section through Trench 7 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 21. View facing east of section through Trench 8 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 22. View facing west of section through Trench 9 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 23. Oblique view facing south-west of Trench 10 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 24. View facing east of section through Trench 11 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 25. View facing east of Trench 12 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 26. View facing west of Trench 13 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 27. View facing east of Trench 14 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 28. View facing west of section through Trench 15 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 29. View facing north-east of Trench 17 (Scale = 1 x 1m).



Figure 30. View facing south-east of Trench 18 with substantial modern road penning visible immediately below the modern road surface base layers (Scale = 1 x 1m).

**Appendix III –
Written Scheme of Investigation**

Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge, Northumberland

Written Scheme of Investigation For Archaeological Watching Brief

2017



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Angel House, Portland Square, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1HB

www.archaeologicalresearchservices.com

**on behalf of
Northumbrian Water**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared by Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) on behalf of Northumbrian Water. It provides a WSI for archaeological monitoring during pipe repair and replacement groundworks at land to the east of Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge, NE45 5PG.

1.2 Replacement of a c.2km length of water pipe is required below the route of the A68 trunk road north of Corbridge. The pipework will be inserted using horizontal directional drilling below the western edge of the carriageway and requires the excavation of approximately thirteen launch and receive pits within the close proximity to the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road. Consequently, the initial excavation of the launch and receive pits will be subject to archaeological monitoring in order to mitigate against any damage caused to sub-surface archaeol within the development area.

1.3 This WSI confirms the nature of the archaeological monitoring to be undertaken by ARS Ltd at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge, in accordance with guidance from Karen Derham, Assistant County Archaeologist at Northumberland County Council (NCC).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Site Location and Geology

2.1.1 The monitoring site is located at Stagshaw Bank, 2.9km to the north of Corbridge town centre, and is centred at NGR NY 98499 67361 (Figure 1).

2.1.2 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is comprised of mudstone, sandstone and limestone of the Stainmore Formation, formed during the Carboniferous Period when the local environment was previously dominated by swamps, estuaries and deltas. This is overlain by superficial glaciofluvial deposits of Devensian sands and gravels and Diamicton Till (BGS 2017).

2.2 Archaeological and Historical

2.2.1 The archaeology of Corbridge is dominated by two settlements: the Roman garrison town of *Corstopitum* and the later, medieval town of Corbridge just to the east. *Corstopitum* was located at the junction of the Stanegate and Dere Street Roman roads and was originally established after 85AD as a fort and later converted into a supply base for the Roman military frontiers along Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall (NCC 2008).

2.2.2 The monitoring site is located 1.9km north of Corbridge Roman town (NHLE 1000098) and is located within close proximity to the projected route of Dere Street Roman Road (HER N12392). Dere Street is the modern designation applied to a Roman road which ran north from the Roman city of *Eboracum* (York), crosses the route of Hadrians Wall at Portgate, Northumberland and continues north to the



Antonine Wall in Scotland. An aerial photographic transcription exercise conducted in 2006 shows Dere Street as cropmarks in fields north of Ladycutters Lane and south-west of Corbridge town centre. Similarly, a series of linear cropmarks, situated within the fields east of Stagshaw House, have also been interpreted as demarcating the probable location of sub-surface remains associated with Dere Street Roman Road (HER N8711).

2.2.3 The proposed scheme of works is also situated approximately 100m west of Chantry Farm which broadly matches the location of pre-existing medieval structures associated with Stagshaw Hospital (HER N8658). The hospital was probably founded by one of the Clavering Lords of Corbridge in the 13th century along the route of Dere Street Roman Road. The hospital entered decline and was abandoned prior to the late 14th century (Craster 1914; Hadcock 1939).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Regional Research Aims and Objectives

3.1.1 Research topics identified in *The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (NERRF) (2006) for Roman military presence includes placing any and all work on Hadrian's Wall and the associated military infrastructure in an international context. The world importance of the Wall is highlighted by its status as a World Heritage Site, and moves to integrate this research on other important Roman limes structures further emphasise this dimension of the region's Roman heritage (Petts *et al.* 2006, 148).

3.2 Archaeological Monitoring Aims and Objectives

3.2.1 The principal aim of the archaeological monitoring is to ensure that any potential archaeological remains associated with Dere Street Roman Road, encountered during the course of the groundworks, are not destroyed without first being recorded and interpreted.

3.2.2 The following objective will contribute towards accomplishing the following aim:

- ◆ To record the nature, extent and data of any surviving archaeological remains associated with Dere Street Roman Road followed by, on completion of the on-site works, post-excavation analysis, reporting, publication, and archiving.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Approximately thirteen, 3m x 1.7m trenches will be excavated at 100m intervals along the full length of the scheme in order to provide launch and receive access pits for directional drilling machinery. An additional open cut trench, of



variable size, will also be excavated within the southern reservoir area in order to provide access to pre-existing pipework.

4.1.2 The archaeological monitoring during excavation of the trenches will be carried out in accordance with the guidance laid out in ClfA's *Code of Conduct* (2014a) and *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2014b). The records will follow standard conventions set by the Museum of London Archaeological Service (MoLAS) (2002).

4.1.3 All relevant ground works will be undertaken by a suitable mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. If significant archaeological features are identified, then NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist will be notified and a decision taken as to the best method of proceeding.

4.1.4 ARS Ltd will provide a suitably qualified archaeologist during ground works on the site for archaeological monitoring. The on-site archaeologist will be fully apprised of the archaeological potential of the site. The archaeologist will be given the opportunity to stop site work in order to investigate potential archaeological features and adequate time will be allowed for recording any such features.

4.1.5 All spoil removed during groundworks will be scanned visually to recover small finds. Any finds so recovered will be recorded and their location noted on a site plan at a relevant scale. All finds will be retained and recorded.

4.1.6 Where archaeological features and/or deposits are identified during the watching brief, then said features will be investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed.

4.1.7 Any human remains discovered will initially be left in-situ and, if removal is deemed necessary, this will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Justice regulations and in discussion with NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist.

4.1.8 Finds of "treasure" will be reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act (1996) procedures.

4.1.9 ARS Ltd will ensure that heavy plant or machinery will not be operated in the immediate vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded. Contractors and plant operators will be notified that any observations of archaeological remains must be reported immediately to the archaeologist on site. Regular contact will be ensured between ARS Ltd. and the site project manager to ensure that ARS Ltd. is kept up to date with site works and given the chance to respond appropriately and in line with the requirements NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist requirements.

4.1.10 All site operations will be carried out in a safe manner in accordance with ARS Ltd's health and safety policy. A risk assessment will be prepared before commencement on site.



4.2 Recording

4.2.1 The site will be accurately tied into the National Grid and located on a 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area. The site will be recorded using a single context planning system in accordance with ClfA guidance and the ARS Ltd field recording manual.

4.2.2 A full and proper record (written, graphic and photographic as appropriate) will be made for all work, using pro-forma record sheets and text descriptions appropriate to the work. A plan of the excavated areas will be maintained, features noted and section lines recorded. All drawings will be carried out at an appropriate scale and all contexts will be recorded using a single context recording system. Sample representative levels will be taken to record the maximum depth of excavation and /or natural should no archaeological features be uncovered.

4.2.3 The stratigraphy of the site will be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified.

4.2.4 Where stratified deposits are encountered, a 'Harris' matrix will be compiled.

4.2.5 All archaeological deposits and features will be recorded with above ordnance datum (aOD) levels.

4.2.6 Site photography will be in high resolution (7 megapixel or greater) colour DSLR photography. Photography will include general site shots, shots of the excavation area and shots of individual features and groups of features. All photographs will include a suitable photographic scale (where appropriate) and will be recorded on a photographic register with the subject and direction of each shot.

5 FINDS PROCESSING AND STORAGE

5.1 All finds processing, conservation work and storage of finds will be carried out in accordance with the ClfA (2014c) *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* and the UKIC (1990) *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archives for Long-Term Storage*.

5.2 Artefact collection and discard policies will be appropriate for the defined purpose.

5.3 Bulk finds which are not discarded will be washed and, with the exception of animal bone, marked. Marking and labelling will be indelible and irremovable by abrasion. Bulk finds will be appropriately bagged, boxed and recorded. This process will be carried out no later than two months after the end of the excavation.

5.4 All small finds will be recorded as individual items and appropriately packaged (e.g. lithics in self-sealing plastic bags and ceramic in acid-free tissue paper). Vulnerable objects will be specially packaged and textile, painted glass and coins stored in appropriate specialist systems. This process will be carried out within two days of the small find being excavated.



5.5 Metal finds will be sampled, processed and analysed in line with *Centre for Archaeological Guidelines: Archaeometallurgy* (Historic England 2001) and *Guidelines on the X-radiography of archaeological metalwork* (Historic England 2006). Any waterlogged artefacts or ecofacts will be sampled, processed and analysed using *Waterlogged Wood* (Historic England 2010) and *Waterlogged Organic Artefacts. Guidance on their Recovery, Analysis and Conservation* (Historic England 2012).

5.6 During and after the excavation all objects will be stored in appropriate materials and storage conditions to ensure minimal deterioration and loss of information (including controlled storage, correct packaging, and regular monitoring, immediate selection for conservation of vulnerable material). All storage will have appropriate security provision.

5.7 The deposition and disposal of artefacts will be agreed with the legal owner and repository museum prior to the work taking place. All finds except treasure trove are the property of the landowner.

5.8 All retained artefacts and ecofacts will be cleaned and packaged in accordance with the requirements of the recipient museum.

6 REPORT

6.1 Following completion of the archaeological monitoring, Archaeological Research Services Ltd will produce a report which will include:

- ◆ Non-technical executive summary
- ◆ Introductory statement
- ◆ Aims and purpose of the project
- ◆ Methodology
- ◆ A location plan showing all excavated areas and any archaeological features with respect to nearby fixed structures and roads
- ◆ Illustrations of all archaeological features with appropriately scaled hachured plans and sections
- ◆ An objective summary statement of results
- ◆ Conclusions
- ◆ Supporting data – tabulated or in appendices
- ◆ Index to archive and details of archive location
- ◆ References
- ◆ Statement of intent regarding publication
- ◆ Confirmation of archive transfer arrangements
- ◆ A copy of the WSI and OASIS form



6.2 Upon completion of the report, one digital copy of the report will be supplied to the NCC Assistant County Archaeologist for approval and sign off.

6.3 One bound copy of the final report with a digital copy of the report in PDF/A format on disk will be deposited with the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER). A copy of the report will be uploaded as part of the OASIS record (see below) for online access via the Archaeological Data Service.

7 MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 Notice of the commencement of works will be given to the designated NCC Assistant County Archaeologist.

Karen Derham
Assistant County Archaeologist
Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF
Tel: 01670 622655

7.2 ARS Ltd will liaise with NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist at regular intervals throughout the course of the work.

7.3 The client will afford reasonable access to NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist, or their representatives, for the purposes of monitoring the works.

8 STAFFING

8.1 The Project Manager for the watching brief will be Reuben Thorpe, Project Manager at ARS Ltd. The Fieldwork Project Officer will be Rupert Lotherington ACIfA, Projects Officer at ARS Ltd.

8.2 Specialist analyses will be carried out by appropriately qualified specialists as detailed subject to availability.

◆ Flint and prehistoric pottery:	Dr Clive Waddington MCIfA
◆ Romano-British pottery:	Paul Bidwell
◆ Roman Small Finds:	Lindsay Allason-Jones MCIfA
◆ Samian Ware:	Dr Gwladys Monteil
◆ Medieval and post-medieval pottery:	Dr Chris Cumberpatch or Dr Robin Holgate MCIfA



- ◆ Glass, clay pipes and metalwork: Mike Wood MCIfA
- ◆ Plant macrofossils and charcoals: Luke Parker
- ◆ Human and animal bone: Milena Grzybowska
- ◆ Radiocarbon dating: Prof Gordon Cook (SUERC)
- ◆ Finds conservation: Vicky Garlick (Durham University)

9 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

9.1 Deposition Guidelines

9.1.1 Should significant finds or stratigraphy be generated, then an accession number will be requested from the appropriate repository museum, and a digital, paper and artefactual archive will be prepared by ARS Ltd, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data (in a format to be agreed by the repository museum and Museum Curator). The archive will be deposited with the Great North Museum in line with the ClfA (2013c) *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, Society of Museum Archaeologists (1993) *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* and will be deposited within two months of the completion of the report. NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist will be notified in writing on completion of the fieldwork with projected dates for the completion of the report and deposition of the archive. The date for deposition of the archive will be confirmed in the report and NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist informed in writing on final deposition of the archive.

9.1.2 All artefacts and associated material will be cleaned, recorded, properly stored and deposited in the archive (see above).

9.1.3 A full set of annotated, illustrative pictures of the site, excavation, features, layers and selected artefacts will be supplied to the HER and deposited with the archive as digital images on a CD ROM that will be attached with the report.

9.2 OASIS

9.2.1 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. All parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included within the archive).



10 GENERAL ITEMS

10.1 Health and Safety

10.1 All work will be carried out in accordance with The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Specific health and safety policies exist for all our workplaces and all staff employed will be made aware of the policy and any relevant issues. The particular risks involved with this project will be assessed, recorded and relevant mitigation measures put in place as part of a full risk assessment, which will be compiled in advance of fieldwork and will be read and signed by all on-site operatives. ARS Ltd retains Peninsula as its expert health and safety consultants.

10.2 Insurance Cover

10.2 ARS Ltd has full insurance cover for employee liability public liability, professional indemnity and all-risks cover.

10.3 Changes to the Written Scheme of Investigation

10.3 Changes to the approved methodology or programme of works will only be made with prior written approval of NCC's Assistant County Archaeologist.

10.4 Publication

10.4 If significant archaeological remains are recorded, a summary of the project with, if appropriate, selected drawings, illustrations and photographs will be prepared for publication in online, journal or monograph form as appropriate. Additional popular articles will also be produced for local and/or national magazines as appropriate. The final form of the publication is to be agreed with the planning archaeologist and the client dependent on the results of the fieldwork

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FIGURES






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



Figure 2. Location of Watching Brief

Drawn: RL
Scale: 1:10000

Key:

 Watching Brief Area



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**Appendix IV –
OASIS Form**

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

Printable version

OASIS ID: archaeol5-283637

Project details

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stagshaw Bank, Corbridge
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief upon 19 launch and receive directional drilling pits excavated along a c.2km route north of Corbridge. The groundworks were largely focused upon the grass verge west of the modern A68 trunk road although two open cut trenches were excavated across the modern road at the northern and southern extent of the scheme. The project identified the remains of Dere Street Roman road at a depth of c.1m below present ground level opposite Chantry Farm and Shawwell Farm, Northumberland.
Project dates	Start: 01-02-2017 End: 26-04-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	STAG17 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	HER N12392 - Related HER No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport
Monument type	ROMAN ROAD Roman
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country England
Site location NORTHUMBERLAND TYNEDALE CORBRIDGE Stagshaw Bank
Postcode NE45 5PG
Study area 2 Kilometres
Site coordinates NY 98656 67310 55.000289344868 -2.021012513785 55 00 01 N 002 01 15 W Point
Lat/Long Datum Unknown
Height OD / Depth Min: 100.7m Max: 189.98m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project brief originator Northumberland County Council
Project design originator Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project director/manager Reuben Thorpe
Project supervisor Rupert Lotherington
Type of sponsor/funding body Northumbrian Water
Name of sponsor/funding body Northumbrian Water Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient Great North Museum
Digital Contents "none"
Digital Media "Images raster / digital photography","Text"

available
Paper Archive recipient Great North Museum
Paper Contents "none"
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Diary", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title An Archaeological Watching Brief at Stagshaw Bank, Corbrdige
Author(s)/Editor(s) Lotherington, R
Other bibliographic details ARS Ltd Report No. 2017/57
Date 2017
Issuer or publisher Archaeological Research Services
Place of issue or publication Hebburn
Description Soft bound grey literature report

Entered by Rupert Lotherington (rupert@archaeologicalresearchservices.com)
Entered on 26 April 2017

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