



making sense of heritage

Roman Ridge Roman Road Scheduled Ancient Monument 1003672 Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Ref: 86901.01
January 2014



**Roman Ridge Roman Road
Scheduled Ancient Monument 1003672
Doncaster, South Yorkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Prepared for:

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Technical Services
Floor 11, Council House, College Road
Doncaster
DN1 3AJ

Prepared by:

Wessex Archaeology
Unit R6, Riverside Block
Sheaf Bank Business Park
Sheffield
S2 3EN

www.wessexarch.co.uk

January 2014

Report Ref: 86901.01



Quality Assurance

Project Code	86901	Accession Code	N/A	Client Ref.	N/A
Planning Application Ref.	N/A	Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	45436 40557		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	I	AWT	RJO	Richard O'Neill	20.01.14
File:	S:\PROJECTS\86901 (Roman Ridge, Doncaster)\Reports\Working Versions\				
v02	E	AWT	RJO	Richard O'Neill	20.01.14
File:	S:\PROJECTS\86901 (Roman Ridge, Doncaster)\Reports\Working Versions\				
File:					
File:					
File:					

* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

DISCLAIMER

THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT WAS DESIGNED AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A REPORT TO AN INDIVIDUAL CLIENT AND WAS PREPARED SOLELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THAT CLIENT. THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT DOES NOT NECESSARILY STAND ON ITS OWN AND IS NOT INTENDED TO NOR SHOULD IT BE RELIED UPON BY ANY THIRD PARTY. TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PERMITTED BY LAW WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY WILL NOT BE LIABLE BY REASON OF BREACH OF CONTRACT NEGLIGENCE OR OTHERWISE FOR ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE (WHETHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL) OCCASIONED TO ANY PERSON ACTING OR OMITTING TO ACT OR REFRAINING FROM ACTING IN RELIANCE UPON THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT ARISING FROM OR CONNECTED WITH ANY ERROR OR OMISSION IN THE MATERIAL CONTAINED IN THE REPORT. LOSS OR DAMAGE AS REFERRED TO ABOVE SHALL BE DEEMED TO INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, ANY LOSS OF PROFITS OR ANTICIPATED PROFITS DAMAGE TO REPUTATION OR GOODWILL LOSS OF BUSINESS OR ANTICIPATED BUSINESS DAMAGES COSTS EXPENSES INCURRED OR PAYABLE TO ANY THIRD PARTY (IN ALL CASES WHETHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL) OR ANY OTHER DIRECT INDIRECT OR CONSEQUENTIAL LOSS OR DAMAGE.



Roman Ridge Roman Road Scheduled Ancient Monument 1003672 Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Contents

Summary.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Project background.....	1
1.2 The Site.....	1
2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	2
2.1 General.....	2
2.2 Topographic Surveys.....	2
2.3 Excavations.....	2
3 METHODOLOGY.....	3
3.1 Aims and objectives.....	3
3.2 Groundworks.....	3
3.3 Monitoring.....	3
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS.....	3
4.1 Introduction.....	3
4.2 General.....	4
5 DISCUSSION.....	4
5.1 Conclusions.....	4
6 STORAGE AND CURATION.....	4
6.1 Archive.....	4
6.2 Security copy.....	5
7 REFERENCES.....	5
7.1 Bibliography.....	5
8 APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS.....	6

Figures

Figure 1	Site location
Figure 2	Plan of watching brief area: Sections 12 and 13

Plates

Cover	General shot of site
Plate 1	Example of topsoil 10000
Plate 2	Hardcore 10001
Plate 3	Example of tarmac 10002
Plate 4	Area of steps, showing 10003 , the main material of the bank
Plate 5	Post hole dug for handrail by steps showing bedrock 10006 . Intervention is 0.6m deep in total.
Plate 6	Post hole dug for gate post at south end of Site, showing, from base, silt 10003 , crushed brick 10004 , topsoil 10000 and tarmac laid down during works. Intervention is 0.6m deep in total.



Roman Ridge Roman Road Scheduled Ancient Monument 1003672 Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the creation of a cycleway and footpath at Roman Ridge Roman Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire ('the Site'). This work followed on from similar watching brief undertaken on an adjacent part of Roman Ridge (Wessex Archaeology 2012).

The Roman Ridge Roman Road is a large linear earthwork that runs for approximately 5km from Scawsby to Adwick-Le-Street. The road would have formed the main Roman route between *Danum* (Doncaster) and *Lagentium* (Castleford). For much of the route it survives as a pronounced *agger* (raised embankment). The northern and southern sections are Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM 1003672; previously SAM 1179a and SAM 1179b respectively).

Groundworks were designed to avoid damage to the surviving monument and involved the removal of a thin layer of topsoil from the existing path that runs along the top of the earthwork for much of its length. In addition, a total of sixteen small pits were dug for the installation of gates and handrails. No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed. The surface of the Roman road was not encountered, suggesting that, for this stretch of the monument, the original level of the road has eroded away. The main body of the earthwork *agger* was shown to consist of orange brown silt.

The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield, under the project code 86901. The archive will be deposited with DMBC in digital form only. An OASIS form will be submitted at the time of deposition.



Roman Ridge Roman Road Scheduled Ancient Monument 1003672 Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Angela Ganss and Paul Telfer of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to them in this regard. The watching brief was carried out by Ashley Tuck. The report was compiled by Ashley Tuck and the illustrations produced by Chris Swales. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill.



Roman Ridge Roman Road Scheduled Ancient Monument 1003672 Doncaster, South Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology were commissioned by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of a cycleway and footpath at the Roman Ridge Roman Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire (NGR 45436 40557), hereafter 'the Site' (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The Roman Ridge Roman Road is a large linear earthwork that runs between Adwick le Street and Scawsby. The northern and southern sections of the earthwork are Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM 1003672; previously SAM 1179a and SAM 1179b respectively).
- 1.1.3 The removal of topsoil was required along the top of the earthwork for much of its length in order to allow a new surface to be laid down. In addition, a total of sixteen small pits were hand dug for the installation of gates and handrails. The archaeological monitoring programme was required to limit damage to underlying deposits and to record any archaeological remains identified by the works.
- 1.1.4 The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in line with a brief prepared by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (2012) and follows on from a previous scheme of monitoring undertaken on part of the Roman Ridge Roman Road north of the present Site (Wessex Archaeology 2012) and previous topographical survey (ASWYAS 2009) and evaluation (ASWYAS 2010) undertaken to inform the current development.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site (centred on NGR 45436 40557) is a raised earthwork embankment between Green Lane (the B6422) in the north and Stanley Road in the south east. Access was mainly achieved from Layden Drive, a cul-de-sac halfway along this portion of the Roman Ridge. This watching brief was undertaken on works occurring on the southern section of the Scheduled Monument (SAM 1179b).
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area is Upper Magnesian Limestone with overlying shallow, locally brashy, well drained calcareous soils of the Aberford association, with some deeper calcareous soils in colluvium.
(http://www.bgs.ac.uk/education/geology_of_britain/home.html).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The Roman Ridge Roman Road would have formed the main Roman route between *Danum* (Doncaster) and *Lagentium* (Castleford), part of the road network that linked the legionary fortress at Lincoln with the Roman forts at Rossington, Doncaster, Burghwallis, Castleford and York. For much of the route the road survives as a pronounced *agger* (raised embankment).
- 2.1.2 During the post-Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, it is possible that the substantial earthwork that forms the *agger*, or embankment, of the Roman Ridge Roman Road acted as a convenient landscape boundary along which new territorial units were established.
- 2.1.3 The Roman Ridge Roman Road appears to have continued to be utilised as a road throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, although during this time the main north-south route to the north of Doncaster shifted eastward along the line of the Great North Road.
- 2.1.4 The Roman Ridge Roman Road within the survey area continued to run through largely open farmland into the early 20th century, until the establishment of the Brodsworth Colliery in 1904. The colliery site rapidly developed with associated mineral railways, structures and housing at Woodlands and Highfields, adjacent to the Roman road. The Brodsworth Colliery was closed in 1990 and the area was subsequently cleared for redevelopment.

2.2 Topographic Surveys

- 2.2.1 Limited topographic and photographic survey of the monument on the eastern side of the former Brodsworth colliery site was carried out by Wessex Archaeology in 2007 (Wessex Archaeology 2008, Appendix to Thompson-Lawrence 2008). Detailed topographic survey was also carried out along the length of the earthwork in 2009 to inform the current development (ASWYAS 2009).

2.3 Excavations

- 2.3.1 The majority of the archaeological excavations on and adjacent to the Roman Ridge Roman Road have been carried out in relation to the development of the nearby area south of Red House farm for commercial and industrial use. Excavations carried out in 1995 centred on a trench measuring 29m by 1.5m across the earthwork about 145m to the south of the A638 (WYAS 1995). This revealed that the road survived to a height of approximately 1.8m and, in some places, 15m wide. The upper surface of the road was shown to be constructed of compacted layers of crushed limestone and limestone rubble. Probable post-Roman wheel ruts were also observed.
- 2.3.2 In 1996 excavations were undertaken directly to the west of the Roman road (NAA 1996). This identified boundary ditches representing the remains of a late Iron Age field system. A trench located on the western side of the earthwork, to the west of Elmwood Avenue, Woodlands, discovered a substantial depth of topsoil which was subsequently interpreted to be the result of a quarry, possibly related to the construction of the Roman road itself.
- 2.3.3 Further excavations in 2000 concentrated on an area south of Red House farm (NA 2004). This revealed a later raised bank of sand silt material which was believed to be for later maintenance of the road. Two furrows, along the same alignment to the road, were



also identified. These measured approximately 0.6m wide and lay about 6m apart. They were interpreted as being original markers for the layout and construction of the road.

- 2.3.4 A late Iron Age enclosure was identified on the eastern side of the road, which may have been occupied into the early Roman period (NAA 2001, NA 2002 and 2006).
- 2.3.5 Prior to the current development of the Site, seven trenches were excavated along the length of the road in 2009 and 2010 between Adwick and Sunnyfields (ASWYAS 2010). The possible Roman road surface was identified most clearly at the northern and southern extents, near Adwick and Scawsby respectively, where the road lay 0.05-0.35m below the current surface. Elsewhere modern activities relating to the nearby Brodsworth colliery and residential development had caused damage.
- 2.3.6 A watching brief was undertaken in 2012 on the part of the Roman Ridge north of the present Site (Wessex Archaeology 2012). Little of archaeological interest was observed. However, a well-preserved edged cobbled surface, of probable 20th century date, was located immediately above a railway bridge and modern embankment associated with the former mineral railway of Brodsworth colliery, extending north of the designated southern section of the Scheduled Ancient Monument.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The objectives of the watching brief were to limit damage to the monument during the works, and to record any archaeological remains encountered during the works.

3.2 Groundworks

- 3.2.1 The works involved the removal of surface topsoil along the length of the route to create a level base for the deposition of a hardcore base and tarmac surface. A set of steps was constructed to allow access from Layden Drive on to the ridge. The installation of these steps involved the removal of topsoil and the digging of eight small pits for a handrail. A gate was also installed at the south end of the Site, which required a further eight small pits to be dug. All sixteen of these pits were hand-dug to depths of approximately 0.6m below ground level.

3.3 Monitoring

- 3.3.1 All works were conducted in compliance with national guidance for archaeological watching brief (Institute for Archaeologists 2008).
- 3.3.2 Intermittent site visits were made during the groundworks by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. All deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system and a digital photographic record was maintained.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the information held in the Site archive, with a full list of context numbers and context descriptions contained in **Appendix 1**.



4.2 General

- 4.2.1 Groundworks were designed to avoid damage to the surviving monument and involved the removal of typically 0.35m of topsoil. This topsoil (**10000, Plate 1**) was mid-brown or orange-brown silt with up to 10% limestone inclusions. Two further deposits were recorded during the main strip of Site. A patch of probably modern hardcore (**10001, Plate 2**) was identified adjacent to the access from Layden Drive (**Figure 2a**). From the north end of Site (Green Lane) to a farmer's access just beyond the first field boundary on the east side of the ridge (**Figure 2a**), intermittent patches of tarmac (**10002, Plate 3**) were seen.
- 4.2.2 The topsoil was completely removed during the installation of the steps (**Figure 2b**). This revealed an orange-brown dry silty deposit (**10003, Plate 4**), which formed the main body of the bank. **10003** is likely the material originally used to construct the bank and may have originated as local soil. This same deposit was seen in the majority of the post holes dug for the installation of handrails and gates, and was observed to extend to at least 0.9m deep on the main body of the bank.
- 4.2.3 Two of the post-holes dug for handrails were located immediately west of the earthwork *agger*. The north one of these contained 0.35m of topsoil (**10000**) on top of limestone bedrock (**10005, Plate 5**). The southern pit had only 0.6m of topsoil.
- 4.2.4 In the area of the gate at the south end of Site (**Figure 2b**), the raised earthwork *agger* was not visible in the landscape, although it rises and becomes visible again less than ten metres to the north. In this area, most of the pits dug consisted entirely of, or passed through, a layer of modern crushed brick and concrete (**10004, Plate 6**). This may be material associated with the construction of the drive for the adjacent school. The rest of the stratigraphy of these pits consisted of the silt material **10003** already discussed.
- 4.2.5 No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 Conclusions

- 5.1.1 Groundworks were designed to avoid damage to the surviving monument and involved the removal of a thin layer of topsoil from the existing path that runs along the top of the earthwork for much of its length. In addition, a total of sixteen small pits were dug for the installation of gates and handrails. No archaeologically significant features or artefacts were observed. The surface of the Roman road was not encountered, suggesting that, for this stretch of the monument, the original level of the road has eroded away. The main body of the earthwork *agger* was shown to consist of orange brown silt.

6 STORAGE AND CURATION

6.1 Archive

- 6.1.1 The Client has instructed that the archive be prepared for digital storage only. Wessex Archaeology will retain the paper archive for the project until further notice. The complete Site archive including paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following nationally recommended guidelines for digital data (Brown 2011; ADS 2013).



6.2 Security copy

- 6.2.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011); on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

7 REFERENCES

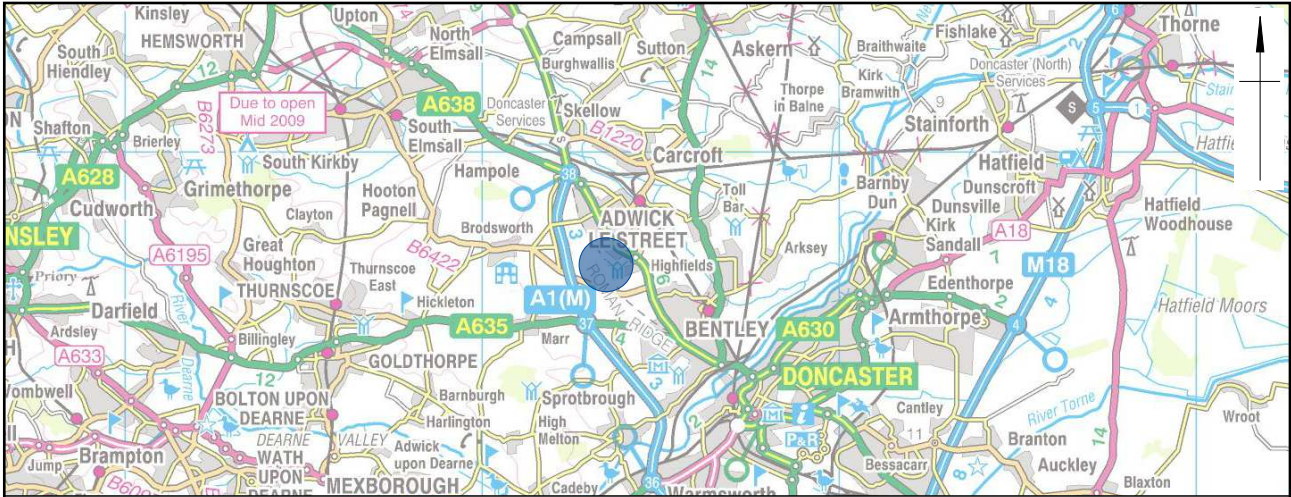
7.1 Bibliography


- ADS, 2013. Caring for Digital Data in Archaeology: a guide to good practice, Archaeology Data Service & Digital Antiquity Guides to Good Practice.
- ASWYAS, 2009. Roman Ridge Roman Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire. Archaeological Topographic Survey. Volume 1: Report. Report No. 1956.
- ASWYAS, 2010. Roman Ridge Roman Road, Doncaster, South Yorkshire. Archaeological Evaluation. Report No. 2060.
- Brown, D.H., 2011. Archaeological archives; a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation. Archaeological Archives Forum.
- Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC), 2012. Site Watching Brief: Roman Ridge Cycleway (Project No. LA796).
- Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), 2008. Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief. Available at: www.archaeologists.net.
- Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA), 1996. Archaeological Evaluation at Adwick-Le-Street for Redhouse Projects. NAA report 96/43.
- Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA), 2001. Redhouse Park, Adwick-le-Street, Doncaster, South Yorkshire: Archaeological Post-Excavation Assessment. NAA report 01/64.
- Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA), 2002. 'Excavation of an Iron Age and Roman landscape at Red House, Adwick Le Street, Doncaster, South Yorkshire 2000-2001: Assessment Report and updated Project Design.
- Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA), 2004. Excavation of a Late Iron Age Enclosure (E1) and the Roman Road at Redhouse Farm, Adwick-Le-Street, Doncaster, South Yorkshire.
- Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA), 2006. Archaeological Excavation of Enclosure 8 (Area 1) on land at Redhouse Farm, Adwick-Le-Street, Doncaster, South Yorkshire: An Interim Report. NA report 06/49.
- Thompson-Lawrence, R., 2008. An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment of the Brodsworth Woodlands Site, Adwick-Le-Street, Enviro Consulting Ltd.
- Wessex Archaeology, 2008. Former Brodsworth Colliery, Brodsworth, near Doncaster, South Yorkshire. Archaeological Watching Brief Report.
- Wessex Archaeology, 2012. Roman Ridge Roman Road, Scheduled Ancient Monument 1179, South Yorkshire: Archaeological Watching Brief. Wessex Archaeology unpublished report no 86900.02.
- WYAS, 1995, Red House Project, Adwick le Street. Archaeological Evaluation, West Yorkshire Archaeology Service report 287.



8 APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No. 100		Max depth: 0.09m
Context	Description	Depth (m)
10000	Topsoil: Mid brown or orange brown silt. Nice soil. 10% limestone in places. No sign of road surface.	0-0.35m
10001	Hardcore: Yellow hardcore (modern?) near gate with layden drive.	0.05m+
10002	Tarmac: tarmac remnants between farmer's access and north end of site.	0.05m+
10003	Layer: main body of earthwork <i>agger</i> seen in excavation for steps, handrails and gate. Orange brown dry silt with up to 20% native limestone <0.07m diameter.	0.3-0.9m+
10004	Layer: modern crushed brick and concrete with brown silt seen in pits for installation of gateposts, especially on west side of ridge.	0-0.6m+ maximum
10005	Bedrock: yellow grey limestone seen in single posthole for handrail by steps to west of <i>agger</i> . Absent in similarly sited adjacent post-hole to south.	0.35m+



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Site location Extent of ASWYAS topographic survey adjacent to WB strip Watching brief strip 	Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2010 This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.	
	Date: 26/10/2012	Revision Number: 0
	Scale: Main graphic - 1:10000 @ A4	Illustrator: CS
	Path: Y:\Projects\86900_Roman Rldge\WB\Drawing Office\Report Figs\WB\2012-10-24\86900_WB figs.dwg	

Site location

Figure 1

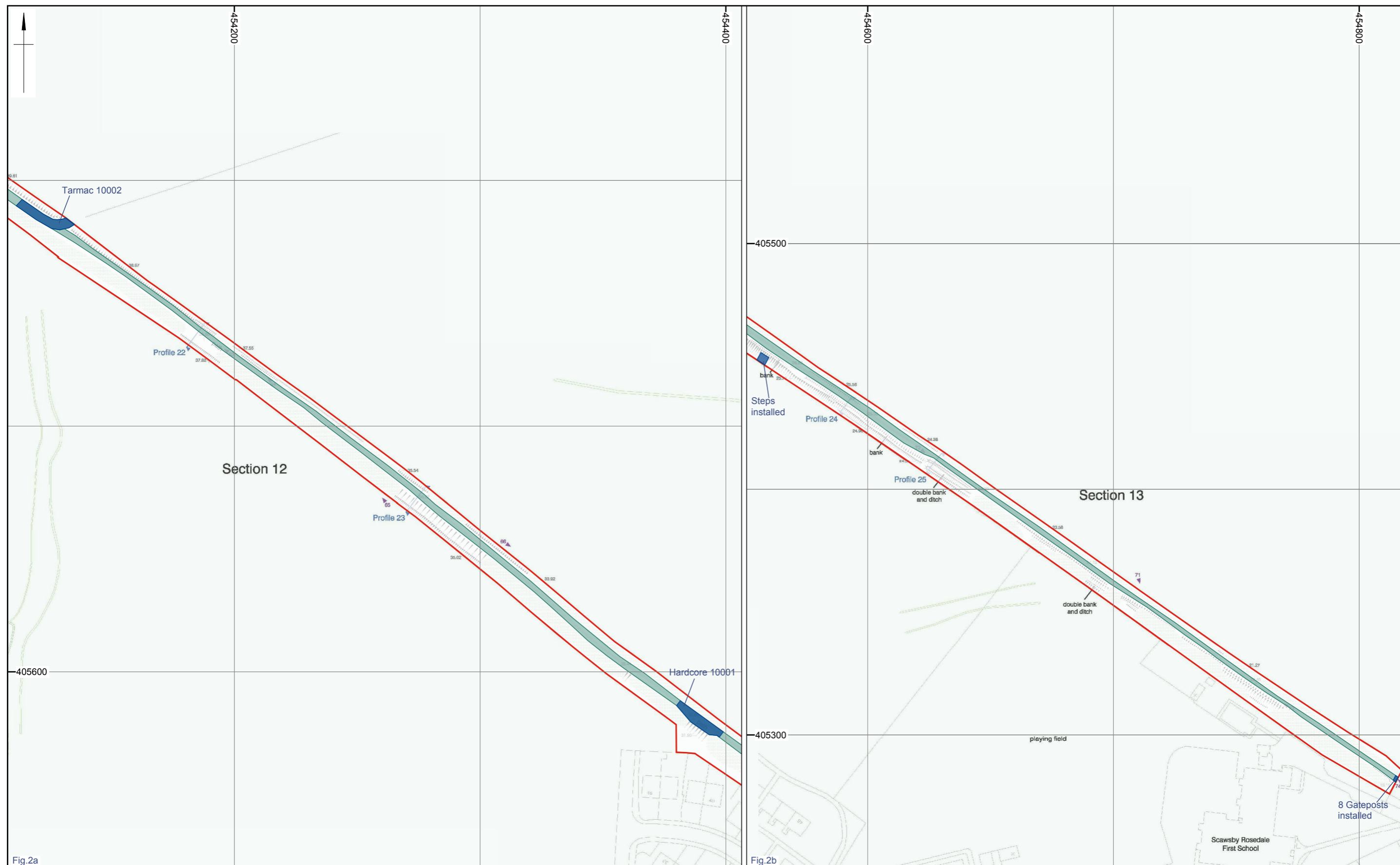


Fig.2a

Fig.2b



Extent of ASWYAS topographic survey adjacent to WB strip
 Watching brief strip
 Significant feature

Topographic mapping provided by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
 Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2010
 This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.

Date:	26/10/2012	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	1: 1500 @ A3	Illustrator:	CS
Path:	Y:\Projects\86900_Roman Ridge WB\Drawing Office\Report Figs\WB\2012-10-24\86900_WB figs.dwg		



Plate 1: Example of topsoil **10000**



Plate 2: Hardcore **10001**


	This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
	Date:	07/01/2014	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	not to scale	Illustrator:	CS
	Path:	Y:\Projects\86900_Roman RIldge WB\Drawing Office\Report Figs\WB\2014-01-07\plates.cdr		



Plate 3: Example of tarmac **10002**



Plate 4: Area of steps, showing **10003**, the main material of the bank



	This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
	Date:	07/01/2014	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	not to scale	Illustrator:	CS
	Path:	Y:\Projects\86900_Roman Rdge WB\Drawing Office\Report Figs\WB\2014-01-07\plates.cdr		



Plate 5: Post hole dug for handrail by steps showing bedrock **10006**. Intervention is 0.6m deep in total



Plate 6: Post hole dug for gate post at south end of Site, showing, from base, silt **10003**, crushed brick **10004**, topsoil **10000** and tarmac laid down during works. Intervention is 0.6m deep in total

	This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.			
	Date:	07/01/2014	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	not to scale	Illustrator:	CS
	Path:	Y:\Projects\86900_Roman Rldge WB\Drawing Office\Report Figs\WB\2014-01-07\plates.cdr		



salisbury rochester sheffield edinburgh



Wessex Archaeology Ltd registered office Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB
Tel: 01722 326867 Fax: 01722 337562 info@wessexarch.co.uk www.wessexarch.co.uk



Wessex Archaeology Ltd is a company limited by guarantee registered in England, company number 1712772. It is also a Charity registered in England and Wales, number 287786; and in Scotland, Scottish Charity number SC042630. Our registered office is at Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB.