



Archaeological Services
University of Durham

**292 Hexham Road, Throckley,
Northumberland**

archaeological excavation

on behalf of

Fulcrum Connections

ASUD Report 1236
March 2005

Archaeological Services
University of Durham

South Road

Durham DH1 3LE

Tel: 0191 334 1121

Fax: 0191 334 1126

archaeological.services@durham.ac.uk

www.durham.ac.uk/archaeologicalservices

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Suite 13, Regus Building, 4, Admiral Way, Doxford Park, Sunderland, SR3 3XW

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological excavation conducted in advance of the laying of a mains gas pipe at the front of 292 Hexham Road, Throckley, Northumberland. The work comprised the hand excavation of one test pit.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Fulcrum Connections, and conducted by Archaeological Services University of Durham in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation provided by Archaeological Services University of Durham (reference DS05.43).

Results

- 1.3 No archaeological features or remains were identified during the course of the excavation.

Recommendations

- 1.4 There are no recommendations for further archaeological works in connection with this project.

2. Project background

Location (Figures 1&2)

- 2.1 The site is located at 292 Hexham Road, Throckley, Northumberland, at grid reference NZ 1428 6684. It comprises part of the land to the east of the present property, and the public footpath on the north side of Hexham Road immediately in front of the property.

Development proposal

- 2.2 The proposal is to upgrade the existing gas supply by the installation of a new supply pipe.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the archaeological works was to excavate a test pit to ensure that the existing gas main could be located without disturbing Hadrian's Wall, and to record any archaeological deposits exposed by the work.

Specification

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation provided by Archaeological Services and agreed by Northumberland County Council and English Heritage.

Dates

- 2.5 Fieldwork was undertaken on the 21st March 2005. This report was prepared between 21st March and 30th March 2005.

Personnel

- 2.6 Fieldwork was conducted by Andy Willis and supervised by Alan Rae. This report was prepared by Alan Rae, with illustrations by Martin Railton. The Project Manager was Daniel Still.

Archive and OASIS

- 2.7 The site code is HRT 05, for **Hexham Road Throckley, 2005**. The archive is currently held by Archaeological Services and will be deposited in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) in due course. The OASIS project number is archaeol3-7467.

3. Land use, topography and geology

- 3.1 At the time of the watching brief the proposed development area comprised a two-storey private residence opening onto Hexham Road to the south, and the land forming a driveway to the front and east of the property. The site stands at 110m above sea level, on land that falls gradually away towards the south-east. The land to the north and south of the row of houses of which no. 292 is a part is open and used for agriculture.
- 3.2 The solid geology of the area is a Carboniferous limestone sequence, overlain by glacial drift deposits.

4. Historical and archaeological background

- 4.1 Hadrian's Wall is a Roman boundary, initiated after the Agricola invasion of Scotland in the second half of the first century AD, with the construction of a series of forts known as the Stanegate Line. The wall was constructed early in the second century AD with a fortified gateway (milecastle) every Roman mile and two turrets between each pair of milecastles. Hadrian's Wall was abandoned temporarily in the AD140s when the border was moved northwards to a new frontier, known as the Antonine Wall, between the rivers Clyde and Forth in central Scotland. In the 160s the Romans returned to Hadrian's Wall, which remained the northern frontier of the Empire until the end of the Roman period in the 5th century.
- 4.2 In later periods the Wall was used as a convenient source of stone for new buildings over a wide area. In the eastern part of its course, including the Throckley area, the lower courses of the Wall were used as a hard surface for the main east-west road across the Tyne-Solway gap. It is believed that the Wall lies under the road at this site; the vallum, an associated earthwork some distance to the rear of the Wall, can be seen in the field to the south of the house.

Previous archaeological works

- 4.3 No previous archaeological works are known to have been undertaken on or in the immediate vicinity of the site.

5. The excavation

- 5.1 A test pit was located on the footpath in front of the property. It measured 0.75m x 0.75m and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.5m. The tarmac was removed by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. The test pit was then excavated, cleaned and recorded by hand.
- 5.2 The gas main was located 0.5m below ground level [3]. This was overlain by up to 0.35m of made ground consisting of grey-brown silty clay [2]. Directly above this was the tarmac surface of the footpath [1], which was 0.15m thick.

- 5.3 The entire excavation was located within ground that had been disturbed by previous operations.

6. Conclusion and recommendation

- 6.1 No archaeological deposits were identified during the excavation of the test pit. The gas main was connected to the domestic supply using a “Grundomat” subsurface mole cable. No further excavation was therefore undertaken.
- 6.2 No further archaeological work is required in connection with this project.



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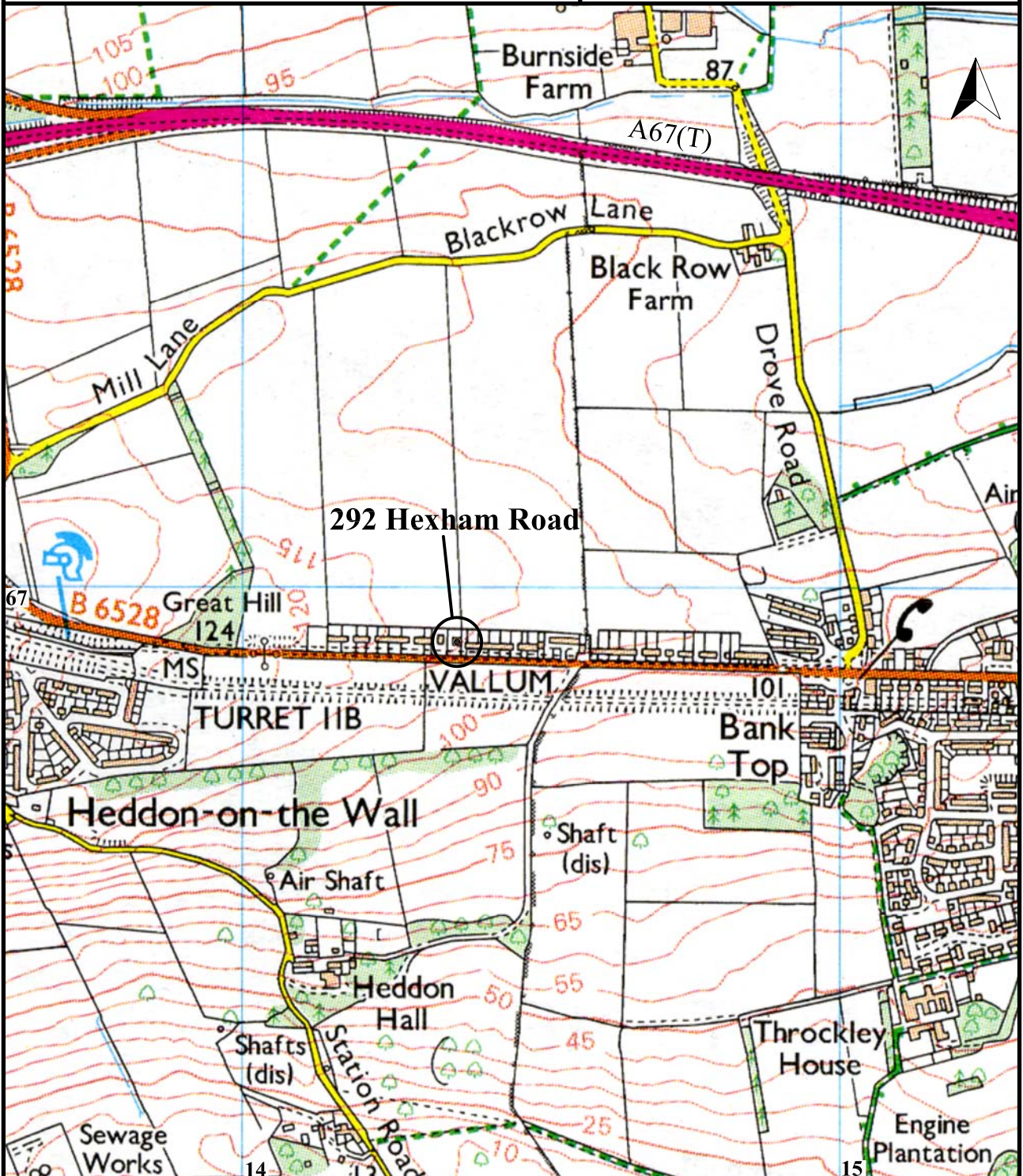
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Figure 1

Site location map

on behalf of
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area of excavation



existing services

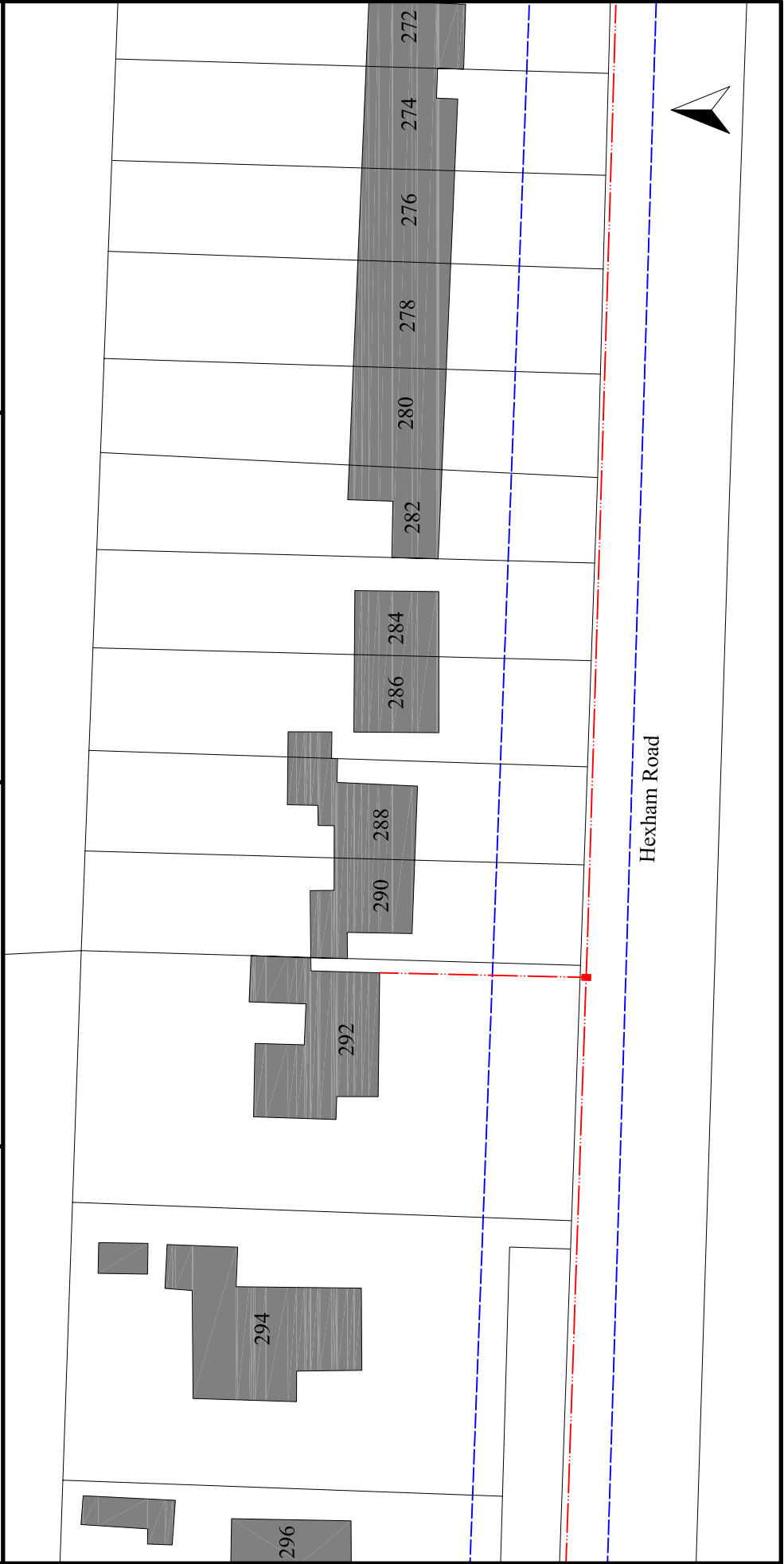


course of Hadrian's Wall



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Figure 2
Location of the excavation



Appendix 1: Context information

Summary list of contexts. The • symbols in the columns at the right indicate the presence of finds of the following types: P pottery, B bone, M metals, F flint, S slag, O other materials.

No	Description	P	B	M	F	S	O
1	Tarmac						
2	Made ground						
3	Gas Main						

Appendix 2: Stratigraphic matrix

