

Castrigg Roman Fortlet

Appleby-in-Westmorland

Cumbria



Eden Heritage
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Report EH280/02**

Castrigg Roman Fortlet

Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria

Archaeological Investigation for Appleby Archaeology Group

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Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation

Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs



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The investigation was undertaken with grant funding provided by Age Concern, Appleby Town Council, British Gypsum, The Rotary Club of Appleby and Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society. The work was directed by Martin Railton and supervised by Kevin Mounsey, Eden Heritage Ltd. Duncan Wappett undertook the metal detecting over the spoil heaps next to each trench. Roman ceramics were assessed by Dr David Griffiths, Archaeology.biz. Environmental processing was undertaken under the direction of Katherine Bostock, SLR Consulting. The report was produced and illustrated by Martin Railton, Eden Heritage Ltd.

Summary

In 2025 Eden Heritage Ltd was commissioned by Appleby Archaeology Group to facilitate an archaeological investigation at Castrigg Roman Fortlet near Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference NY 67477 22162). Castrigg is the recorded site of a possible Roman fortlet and/or signal station, as identified through aerial photography, and appears to be connected to the nearby High Street Roman Road. A geophysical survey undertaken by the Group in 2015 confirmed the presence of a sub-rectangular enclosure and evidence for two possible ring ditches relating to different phases of building within the interior, the site being interpreted as an Iron Age or Romano-British farmstead. The purpose of the archaeological investigation was therefore to provide further information on the nature of the site and to date the period(s) of occupation.

The investigation was undertaken by project volunteers from the 1st to 12th of October 2025, with three linear trenches excavated to sample the recorded earthworks and geophysical anomalies. The trenches were located to sample the enclosure ditches, including a possible second outer ditch identified by the geophysical survey, and two overlapping pennanular features, which were detected inside the enclosure. The investigation confirmed the layout of the enclosure, with two sections excavated across the outer ditch. Inside the enclosure two ring ditches were revealed, which apparently related to two round houses or different phases, along with a possible wall foundation and a drip gully. A boundary ditch was also investigated; this appears to be part of a field system extending outwards from the enclosure. The upper fill of the ditch contained Romano-British pottery, suggesting it was filled in during the later Roman period. The pottery recovered was mostly Romano-British in date, likely ranging from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD (the other features were undated).

Environmental samples were collected from several of the excavated features. Although these contained very little in the way of ecofacts, charcoal samples were obtained which are to be submitted for radiocarbon dating. It is hoped that this will help date the round house ring ditches and the period(s) of occupation of the enclosure.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Circumstances

- 1.1.1 Eden Heritage Ltd was commissioned by Appleby Archaeology Group to facilitate an archaeological investigation at Castrigg Roman Fortlet (HER 1653), Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria (centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference NY 67477 22162). The investigation was undertaken by project volunteers, and was grant funded jointly by Age Concern, Appleby Town Council, British Gypsum, The Rotary Club of Appleby and Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society.
- 1.1.2 Castrigg is the site of a possible Roman fortlet and/or signal station, which occupies an elevated location to the north of Appleby-in-Westmorland (Figures 1). The Historic England List Entry for Castrigg Roman Fortlet reads: *“The monument includes the remains of a Roman fortlet situated on a slight rise adjacent to the northern side of the course of the former Roman road from Scotch Corner to Brougham. The fortlet includes a sub-square enclosure, preserved as a cropmark and in places as a very slight earthwork. The enclosure covers an area of approximately 0.5ha. and is surrounded by an intermittent double ditch. In the north east corner of the interior is a double ring ditch which is interpreted as the remains of a Roman signal station”* (List Entry 1007174). This interpretation is believed to be based on a 1949 University of Cambridge air photograph (CUCAP No DO81) which shows the western part of an enclosure, a field system and a double-ditched circular feature to the north-west (Cambridge Air Photos 2025).
- 1.1.3 Geophysical survey was undertaken by Appleby Archaeology Group at Castrigg Roman Fortlet in 2015. Geomagnetic survey revealed the presence of a sub-rectangular enclosure, with possible entrances on three sides, and evidence for two possible ring ditches relating to different phases of building within the interior. A further phase of enclosure or annex to the main enclosure was also revealed to the south-east. The site was interpreted as an Iron Age or Romano-British farmstead, based on the morphology of the features identified. Evidence for the postulated signal station was not identified by the geophysical survey, calling into question the previous interpretation of the site (Appleby Archaeology Group 2015).
- 1.1.4 The purpose of the archaeological investigation was to provide further information on the nature of the site and to date the period(s) of occupation. By doing so it is anticipated that the project will enhance the interpretation of similar monuments, about which very little is currently known.
- 1.1.5 A Project Design for the archaeological investigation at Castrigg Roman Fortlet was produced by Eden Heritage Ltd in March 2024 and was submitted to Historic England (Eden Heritage Ltd 2024). The investigation was undertaken in accordance with the Project Design and scheduled monument consent (SMC) which was granted by Historic England in February 2025 (Historic England Reference S00246828).
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2 Methodology

2.1 Scope of the Work

- 2.1.1 The archaeological investigation focused on the recorded earthwork remains identified at Castrigg Roman Fortlet (Figure 3). The project comprised an archaeological trial trench evaluation, with three trenches located across the earthworks in order to provide information regarding form, function and development of the site. The trenches also tested the interpretation of the 2015 geophysical survey.
- 2.1.2 The investigation involved the excavation of three linear trenches (T1-T3) measuring 30m by 1.8m. These sampled the visible earthworks and the geophysical anomalies identified during the 2015 survey, including several possible soil-filled features (Figure 4). T1 sampled the north side of the earthwork, which appeared well-preserved, while T3 sampled the possible annex on the southeast side. T2 sampled the two possible circular structures recorded by the geophysical survey inside the presumed enclosure. The purpose of the investigation was to obtain information on the date, quality, depth and state of preservation of potential archaeological remains and to date the period of occupation of the site
- 2.1.3 The fieldwork was conducted by members of Appleby Archaeology Group and other project volunteers, with professional supervision and training provided by staff from Eden Heritage Ltd.

2.2 Archaeological Trenches

- 2.2.1 The trenches were positioned and marked out in advance using a Trimble M3 Catalyst GPS system. Turf and topsoil were excavated by machine under close archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator fitted with a ditching bucket. Trenches were excavated to either the top of the uppermost archaeological deposits, or the natural substrate, whichever was observed first. The trenches were then cleaned by hand and all features were investigated and recorded according to the standard procedure as set out in the Museum of London Archaeological Service Archaeological Site Manual (Museum of London 1994).
- 2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the investigation were:
- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where these were observed;
 - to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
 - to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
 - to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

- 2.2.3 All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with codes and practices outlined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2023).
- 2.2.4 Where necessary a Harris matrix was compiled for stratified deposits to provide a detailed record of the stratigraphic sequence observed in each trench, according to the conventions written in the Archaeological Site Manual and in accordance with the CIfA (2023) and Historic England (2015) guidelines. A complete list of excavated contexts in each trench is included in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2.5 All written records utilised Eden Heritage *pro-forma* record sheets. Plans and sections were drawn on water resistant permatrace. Trench plans were drawn to a scale of 1:20 and sections at 1:10. A full digital photographic record of all contexts was maintained and recorded in a register. All photographs included a clearly visible, graduated metric scale. A combination of multi and single context planning was utilised. The site was referenced to the Ordnance Datum and the trenches were tied into the National Grid.
- 2.2.6 All non-modern finds were collected and retained for processing. These were mainly ceramics which were collected in bulk and recorded by context. Significant *in situ* finds were recorded in three dimensions prior to collection. A metal detector was utilised to maximise the collection of metal artefacts from the excavated spoil, in accordance with the Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice.
- 2.2.7 All finds encountered were retained on site and returned to the Eden Heritage Ltd office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context, and the dates were used to help determine the broad date phases for the site.
- 2.2.8 On completion of the project, the finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines. Please note, the following categories of material will be discarded following the submission of this report within 6 months, unless there is a specific request to retain them:
- unstratified material of no research value;
 - modern pottery and finds;
 - material that has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.
- 2.2.9 Environmental sampling was undertaken in order to assess the environmental potential of deposits across the site, including buried soils and the fills of linear features and postholes (see Section 6).
- 2.2.10 Trenches were backfilled 'as dug' upon completion, and the tuft replaced by machine.
- 2.2.11 The fieldwork was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2020). The finds recovered are assessed in Section 5 and the environmental evidence is considered in Section 6.
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2.3 Project Archive

- 2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the Project Design (Eden Heritage Ltd 2024), and the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011).
- 2.3.2 It is anticipated that the project archive and Roman finds will be deposited with Penrith and Eden Museum, if agreeable to the landowner and Appleby Archaeology Group.
- 2.3.3 Eden Heritage Ltd supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this study will be made available by Eden Heritage Ltd as a part of this project, and a copy of the report will be uploaded to the OASIS website within 3 months following approval by the Lake District National Park Authority.

2.4 Publication

- 2.4.1 Copies of the final report (in PDF/A format) will be provided to Historic England and the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER). A PDF copy will also be uploaded to the Appleby Archaeology Group website.
- 2.4.2 A summary of the results of the investigation will be submitted to the Newsletters of Appleby Archaeology Group and Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society.
- 2.4.3 An article will be produced for publication in the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, which will include the results of the scientific dating of samples.

3 Background

3.1 Location and Geological Context

- 3.1.1 Appleby-in-Westmorland lies within the broad river valley landscape of the Eden Valley and is approximately 16 km southeast of Penrith in the Westmorland and Furness district of Cumbria. The town is situated to the west side of the main A66 trunk road and the Settle to Carlisle railway line (Figure 1).
- 3.1.2 Castrigg Roman Fortlet is situated c.2km to the north of Appleby-in-Westmorland, approximately mid-way between the settlements of Crackenthorpe and Brampton. The site is located within a field of pasture 200m to the south of Castrigg, immediately to the west of the Settle to Carlisle railway where it crosses a public bridleway. This bridleway is believed to follow High Street Roman Road (Plate 1).
- 3.1.3 The underlying geology of the area is comprised of Permian New Red Sandstone of Permo-Triassic date, overlain by glacial deposits of boulder clay (BGS 2025). The soils of the area belong to the Clifton Association, which are a group of seasonally waterlogged soils developed in reddish fine loamy till that are related to glaciofluvial deposits (SSEW 1998).
- 3.1.4 The site occupies a prominent hilltop location with an elevation of c.175m aOD (above Ordnance Datum). This forms part of a long ridge of land which falls relatively steeply to the north and south.



Plate 1: View of Castrigg Roman Fortlet with High Street Roman Road in the foreground, looking east

3.2 Archaeological Background

- 3.2.1 It has been suggested that the Roman conquest of the area was accomplished jointly by the governors, Quintis Petillius Cerialis (governor of the province from AD 71 to 74) and Gnaeus Julius Agricola (governor from AD 77 to 83). It appears that their forces may have been split up and Cerialis operated on the east side of the Pennines, whilst Agricola operated in the west. It is usually assumed that Cerialis linked up with Agricola by crossing the Stainmore Pass, where temporary marching camps such as Rey Cross and Crackenthorpe were established by Cerialis (Shotter 1997, 14).
- 3.2.2 The present route of the A66, to the northeast of Appleby-in-Westmorland, is known to follow the course of a Roman road across Stainmore, linking the forts of Bowes (*Lavatris*) and Brough (*Verterae*) to Kirkby Thore (*Bravoniacvm*). Known as High Street Roman Road (HER 1809), this road may have been constructed early in the Roman occupation of northern England, perhaps during the very first campaigns, under Cerealis in the early AD 70s (Figure 1).
- 3.2.3 It is possible that a camp at Crackenthorpe, situated 4.8km to the northwest of Appleby-in-Westmorland and known as Redlands Bank Camp (HER 1654), was used as a base during the construction of the High Street Roman Road (Higham 1986, 151). The camp was recorded by the RCHME in their inventory of Westmorland, but very little of the camp is now visible at the surface (RCHME 1936, 71).
- 3.2.4 It is believed that communications along the High Street Roman Road over Stainmore were facilitated by several Roman fortlets/signal stations (Higham and Jones 1991). These sites include a possible signal station located to the north of Crackenthorpe, known as Maiden Hold Signal Station (HER 1656) and the possible Roman fortlet and signal station at Castrigg (HER 1653). Higham and Jones suggest Gale House northeast of Appleby, and Hangingshaw were other possible locations of signal stations (ibid. 49-50).
- 3.2.5 The High Street Roman Road would probably have connected with a network of other roads, including the Maiden Way running from the Roman fort at Kirkby Thore (*Bravoniacum*) to Carvoan (*Magnis*) on Stanegate (Greystone 1994, 13). Another road referred to as Appleby Street has been suggested running from Castrigg Roman Fortlet northwards along the foot of the Pennines towards Hadrian's Wall (Holdgate 2006, 18) although the evidence for this is possibly more tenuous. The area of Bongate at Appleby may possibly owe its origin to a ford that crossed the Eden above Jubilee Bridge.
- 3.2.6 There is no concrete evidence for Roman activity or occupation within the town of Appleby-in-Westmorland. According to Tom Clare there is evidence that Appleby Castle may stand on the site of an earlier Roman fort or hillfort (HER 5392), but until evidence is recovered this is purely speculation.

3.3 Historic Mapping

- 3.3.1 The Roman Road is recorded on historic maps of Westmorland and identified as ‘A Roman Military Way’ on Thomas Jeffrey’s 1770 Map of Westmorland. The First Edition 6” Ordnance Survey map of 1863 shows the route of the Roman Road to the south of Castrigg Hill as a trackway between fields. The location of Castrigg Roman Fortlet encompassed a high point and was then bisected by a field boundary, with a small square copse located to the south-east (Figure 2a). By the time of the 25” Ordnance Survey map of 1898 the railway had been constructed to the east of the site, intersecting the Roman road.
- 3.3.2 The site appears to have remained largely unchanged in the early 20th century (Figure 2c). The 1949 Cambridge University air photograph shows the eastern portion of a rectangular enclosure and the presumed Roman Signal Station to the west side (Cambridge Air Photos 2025). The field boundary bisecting the west side of the enclosure was extant at this date. The eastern field contained a different crop which was evidently not conducive to cropmark formation as no archaeology is visible in this area. However, to the west a second outer ditch and a field system can be seen extending from the enclosure. A penannular ditch is also visible as a cropmark to the south which appears to be crossed by the road.
- 3.3.3 By the publication of the 1970 Ordnance Survey map the field boundary bisecting the enclosure had apparently been removed, along with the square copse to the west (Figure 2d). The Roman Fortlet is outlined on this map, although the area shown is smaller than the recorded earthwork or cropmark.

3.4 Previous Archaeological Work

- 3.4.1 The Historic Environment Record for Castrigg Roman Fortlet states that antiquarian Thomas Machell recorded the site in the 17th century, which suggests it was still visible in the landscape at that time. Machell recorded a double-ditched enclosure, superimposed on an earlier signal station (HER 1653). The same record states that Richmond did a section in 1932, but no known plan or information is available.
- 3.4.2 Investigations by Historic England in 2012 as part of the Appleby Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) included new aerial survey of the landscape around Appleby-in-Westmorland. Castrigg Roman Fortlet and portions of the Roman road were recorded as earthworks. Castrigg Roman Fortlet was recorded as landscape feature to the northwest of the town showing as a slight earthwork in a field of pasture.
- 3.4.3 In 2015 Appleby Archaeology Group undertook a geophysical survey at the site of Castrigg Roman Fortlet which was known from aerial images of the site (Cambridge Air Photos 2025). Historic England record two features, interpreted as a Roman signal station on a circular platform surrounded by a ditch, and a small rectangular fort, defended by a ditch (Historic England 2025). Geomagnetic survey revealed the presence of a sub-rectangular enclosure, with possible entrances on three sides, and evidence for at
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least two internal round houses of different phases (Figure 3). A further phase of enclosure or annex to the main enclosure was also identified to the south-east. The site was interpreted as an Iron Age or Romano-British farmstead, based on the morphology of the features identified. However, no evidence was detected by the geophysical survey for the Roman signal station (Appleby Archaeology Group 2015).

3.4.4 In 2025 aerial surveys were undertaken for Appleby Archaeology Group by Tony Hunt and Andy Hickie in advance of the archaeological investigation. The surveys were undertaken by drone and included thermal and multispectral surveys and production of a Digital Terrain Model (DTM). The surface remains comprised a ploughed-out rectangular platform, surrounded by a bank and ditch which were most clearly visible on the north-east and north-west sides, the south side apparently having been plough-damaged (Figure 3). The enclosure has an outturned entrance to the south and a curving bank links the enclosure to the Roman road on the south. No obvious signal station is visible on the imagery (Plate 2).

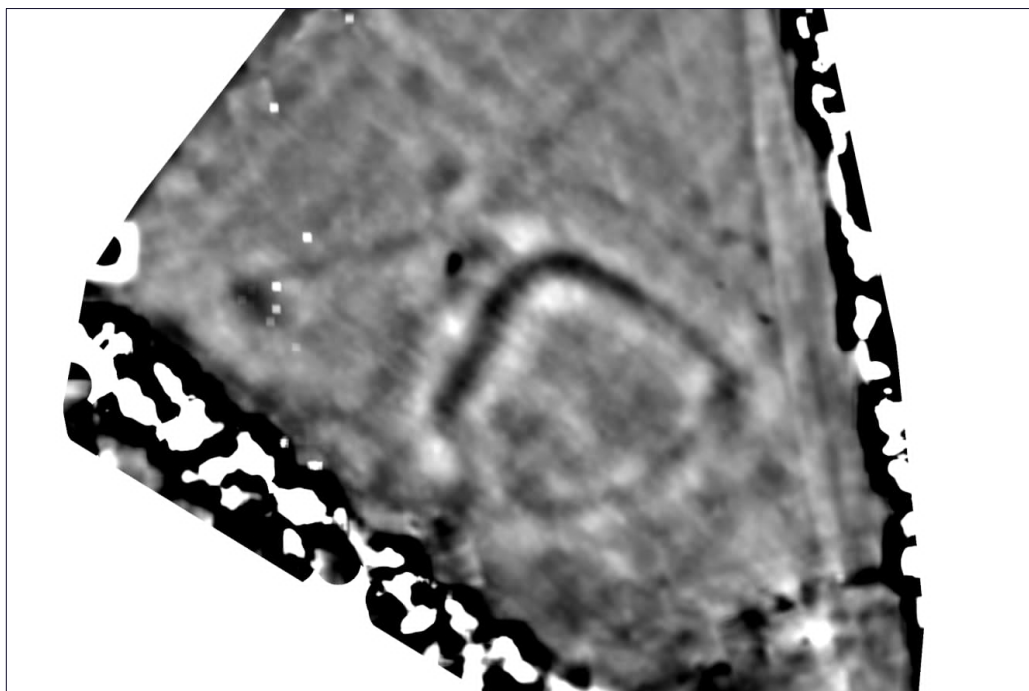


Plate 2: DTM of Castrigg Roman Fortlet (Source: Tony Hunt and Andy Hickie)

4 Archaeological Investigation

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The investigation was undertaken between the 1st and 12th October 2025, with three trenches (T1-3) excavated to sample the recorded earthworks and geophysical anomalies (Figure 3 and Figure 4). The trenches were located to sample the enclosure ditches, including a possible second outer ditch, and two overlapping circular features, which were recorded by the geophysical survey inside the enclosure.
- 4.1.2 Modern plough soil was present beneath the turf across the whole of the site, with an average depth of 0.25m. This covered the natural glacial till, which comprised red/yellow clayey sand, which was identified in all trenches. This deposit contained frequent pebbles, cobbles and some large, rounded boulders.
- 4.1.3 Archaeological features were revealed in all three trenches. The natural clayey sand was cut by an enclosure ditch in Trench 1, which was visible at the surface as a pronounced earthwork. A linear bank and pits were also revealed in the south-west end of Trench 1. In Trench 2 the natural clayey sand was cut by a series of ditches and post holes, and a further linear bank was revealed crossing the east end (Plate 3). Trench 3 revealed a section of enclosure ditch and revealed a second ditch to the south-east.
- 4.1.4 The following text discusses the archaeological features encountered in more detail. Details of the excavated archaeological deposits and their relationships are also included in Appendix 1.



Plate 3: Aerial photograph of Trench 2 under investigation (Source: Duncan Wappett)

4.2 Results

- 4.2.1 *Trench 1*: Trench 1 was placed on the north side of the site and was aligned approximately north-east to south-west to intersect the north-east side of the enclosure (Figures 3 and 4). The north end of the trench encompassed part of a north-east facing slope, which had evidently been ploughed as a deeper plough soil (**100**) was revealed in this area covering the enclosure ditch and the surrounding land.
- 4.2.2 The natural compact red/yellow clayey sand (**101**) was identified at a depth of c.0.25m below ground level (blg) in the south-west end of Trench 1, but this was 0.35m deep at the north-east end.
- 4.2.3 *Enclosure ditch*: at the centre of Trench 1, the red/yellow clayey sand (**101**) was cut by a linear ditch [**102**], which was aligned north-west to south-east in the location of the presumed enclosure ditch (Figure 5 and Plate 4). Due to water ingress, the ditch could not be fully investigated, but the north side was excavated. The ditch was approximately 5m wide and 1m deep with an apparent U-shaped profile.



Plate 4: Excavated section through enclosure ditch [**102**], looking north-west (1m scale)

- 4.2.4 Where excavated, the ditch was filled with 0.3m of red/yellow clayey sand (**115**) containing frequent pebbles and cobbles, which appeared to be either redeposited natural clayey sand or possibly eroded material from the ditch edge. Above this was a 0.2m deep deposit of grey clayey silt (**106**). This included a 0.3m-deep deposit of cobbles and small rounded boulders on the south-west side (**107**), which appeared to be a deliberate deposit to partially backfill the ditch (Plate 5). At the north side was a 0.05m deep layer of grey/black silt which was interpreted as the possible silting of the ditch while it was open.



Plate 5: Enclosure ditch [102] showing backfill (107), looking west (1m and 2m scales)

- 4.2.5 Covering the ditch was a 0.4m deep deposit of brown sandy clay (103) which was interpreted as plough-soil resulting from medieval or post-medieval cultivation. This was cut by the trench [113] for a stone land drain (114) aligned north-west to south-east. The drain had been placed within the enclosure ditch [102], and also cut the ditch fill (106). The drain was 0.45m wide and 0.2m deep formed from two rows of bounders which were capped with flat stones and bonded with red/brown clay (Section 1, Figure 5). The drain was still running with water which prevented further excavation. The trench for the drain was backfilled with cobbles and a deposit of red/brown clayey silt (105), from which a fragment of post-medieval pottery was recovered. The ditch [102] was probably still visible as a landscape feature when the land drain was inserted. Covering the ditch and land drain was 0.5m of modern topsoil (100).
- 4.2.6 *Linear boundary and pits:* at the top of the slope at the south-west end of Trench 1, was a linear deposit of mixed red/yellow clayey sand and cobbles forming a linear bank (104), aligned north-west to south-east (Figure 5 and Plate 6). The bank was 1.4m wide and 0.35m high with a rounded profile. The bank was sectioned and found to contain some larger boulders at the base but contained no dating evidence.
- 4.2.7 Immediately to the south of the bank (104) were two shallow pits cutting the natural red/yellow clayey sand (101). The northern pit [116] was circular measuring 0.9m in diameter and 0.25m deep with a

shallow rounded profile (Section 2, Figure 5 and Plate 7). It was filled with yellow sand containing occasional pebbles (110). This was cut on the east side by an oval pit [108] which was 0.55m in diameter and 0.25m deep with a u-shaped profile and flat base. This pit was filled with grey/brown silty sand (109) containing frequent cobbles and a small boulder. The stones appeared burnt and there were charcoal fragments throughout the fill (109). The pits contained no finds, and their purpose was uncertain.



Plate 6: Bank of material (104) in the south-west end of Trench 1, looking north-east (1m scale)



Plate 7: Pits [116] and [108], looking north-east (1m scale)

- 4.2.8 A third possible pit **[111]** was revealed in the south-west corner of Trench 1, but it extended outside the trench to the west (Figure 5). This measured 0.8m by 0.38m and was 0.15m deep with straight sides and a flat base. The pit was filled with grey/brown sandy clay **(112)** containing cobbles and 'slag' fragments.
- 4.2.9 The purpose of the pits was uncertain, but these indicated activity within the interior of the enclosure. The pits appeared to be heavily truncated by ploughing, unlike the bank **(104)** which was possibly later.
- 4.2.10 *Trench 2*: Trench 2 was situated to the south of Trench 1 within the interior of the enclosure, aligned north-west to south-east (Figure 3 and Figure 4). This trench intersected several geophysical anomalies, which were previously interpreted by the author as penannular soil-filled ditches. These appeared to represent two distinct circular features of different phases and a possible inverted U-shaped feature.
- 4.2.11 The natural compact red/yellow clayey sand **(201)** was identified at a depth of c.0.25m below ground level (blg) in Trench 2. This was cut by curved ditches and post holes, which are believed to relate to at least two round house structures, described here as Round House 1 and Round House 2 (Figure 6).
- 4.2.12 *Round House 1*: the stratigraphically earliest feature observed in Trench 2 was a linear ditch cutting the natural compact red/yellow clayey sand **(201)** at the centre of the trench, aligned north to south (Plate 8). This ditch **[209]** was 1.7m wide and 0.4m deep and had a shallow profile with straight sides and a flat base (Figure 6, Section 4). The primary fill of the ditch was 0.13m of grey clayey sand **(236)**, above which was 0.3m of mixed grey/brown and red/brown clayey sand **(210)** containing cobbles with some boulders. This appeared to be a deliberate deposit and was covered with a layer of cobbles on the east side **(240)**.



Plate 8: Ditch **[209]** showing cobbles **(240)**, looking north (1m and 2m scales)

- 4.2.13 The ditch [209] was cut on the north-west side by trench [211] which appears to have superseded it.
- 4.2.14 *Post holes*: five post holes and a pit were revealed cutting the natural red/yellow clayey sand (201) at the north-west end of Trench 2. Although these had no direct relationship to the ditch [209], the alignment of the ditch corresponded to a penannular geophysical anomaly suggesting that this may be a round house ditch. If correct the pit and post holes would be located inside the round house structure.
- 4.2.15 A sub-circular post-hole [217] with a diameter of 0.6m was partially revealed in the north-west end of the trench. This was 0.2m deep with sloping sides and an irregular base, filled with grey/brown clayey sand (218) with several packing stones placed around the edge (Section 8, Figure 6). Another 0.66m diameter sub-circular posthole [219] to the east was 0.15m deep with sloping sides and an irregular base, filled with grey/brown clayey sand (220) containing charcoal and cobbles (Section 9, Figure 5). Part of another sub-circular post hole [228] was revealed in the north-east edge of the trench. This was filled with grey/brown clayey sand (229) packing stones for a post which would have been outside the trench (Section 10, Figure 5; Plate 9). To the south was another sub-circular post hole [221] measuring 0.7m in diameter with a 0.34m-deep 0.25m diameter north-west side for a post (Section 11, Figure 5). This was filled with grey/brown clayey sand (222) with packing stones placed around the edge of the post hole. The deeper section had a 0.2m-wide 0.26m-deep stone placed vertically in the hole to secure the post. A 0.32m-diameter post hole [230] was revealed to the east which was only 0.15m deep (Section 12, Figure 5). This also had sloping sides and a flat base, being filled with grey/brown clayey sand (231)



Plate 9: Post hole [2228] showing packing stones (229), looking north-east (1m scale)

- 4.2.16 An oval pit [215] was revealed at the north-west corner of Trench 2 (Section 7, Figure 5). This had a steep west side and sloping east side with a flat base. The pit had a c.0.5m-diameter 0.3m-deep boulder placed in the centre, the space around it being filled with red/brown clayey sand and cobbles (216). It was uncertain whether the boulder had just been used to fill in the pit or served another purpose (Plate 10).



Plate 10: Pit [215] containing a large boulder, looking east (2m scale and 1m scale)

- 4.2.17 *Round House 2*: ditch [209] described above was cut on the north-west side by ditch [211] which appears to have superseded it and may relate to another round house, based on the geophysical interpretation.
- 4.2.18 Trench [211] was aligned approximately east to west and was curvilinear in plan, being 1.2m wide and 0.4m deep (Section 3, Figure 6; Plate 11). The trench had sloping straight sides and flat base was filled with grey/brown clayey sand (237) containing numerous cobbles and rounded boulders. The amount of stone and lack of silting suggested this may have been a wall foundation. Immediately to the north-west, and on a similar alignment, was another ditch [224] measuring 1.1m wide and 0.45m deep with a U-shaped profile and flat base (Section 3, Figure 6; Plate 11). The primary fill was a 0.08m-deep deposit of grey/black clayey silt (235) containing charcoal fragments, above which was 0.3m of grey/brown clayey sand (225) containing occasional cobbles and rounded boulders. Covering both features [211] and [224] was a 0.1m-deep deposit of grey/brown clayey sand (212) containing frequent cobbles and pebbles. This appears to have been spread across both features in order to create a level area/crude cobbled surface.
- 4.2.19 To the west there was another ditch [213] on the same alignment as the previous ditch [224] (Figure 6). This was 1.1m wide and 0.45m deep with a U-shaped profile, but with a slightly steeper east side (Section

3, Figure 6; Plate 11). The west side of the ditch exhibited a 0.05m-deep deposit of red/brown clayey sand (**239**) which was likely disturbed natural material that had slumped into the ditch. The ditch was filled with 0.2m of grey clayey sand (**238**) above which was 0.3m of grey/brown clayey sand (**214**).



Plate 11: Ditches **[213]** and **[224]** (shown on the left), and **[211]** looking east (2m scale and 1m scale)



Plate 12: Section through ditch **[203]**, looking north-east (1m scale)

- 4.2.20 At the south-east end of Trench 2 was another ditch [202] aligned north to south which may be part of the same structure (Figure 6). This was 2.1m wide and 0.6m deep with a U-shaped profile, with a steeper west side (Section 5, Figure 6; Plate 12). The primary fill of the ditch comprised 0.15m of grey/black silt containing charcoal (223). The east side of the ditch exhibited a 0.05m-deep deposit of red/brown clayey sand (234) which was probably disturbed/slumped natural material, which was like ditch [213]. Above this was 0.5m of friable grey/brown clayey sand with cobbles (233) and 0.2m of grey/brown clayey sand with occasional pebbles, charcoal and burnt bone fragments (203). This layer included a burnt/slaggy deposit at the upper surface although it was uncertain whether this was contemporary or a later deposit.
- 4.2.21 *Linear boundary and land drain:* at the south-east end Trench 2 was a linear deposit of grey/brown silty sand and cobbles forming a linear bank (206), aligned north-east to south-west (Figure 6 and Plate 13). The bank was 0.8m wide and 0.4m high with a rounded profile. The bank was sectioned and found to contain some larger boulders at the base; it was also associated with a 1.2m-wide 0.3m-deep linear flat-bottomed cut [232] which was visible in the trench section (Section 6, Figure 6). A 0.56m-diameter 0.25m-deep sub-circular cut [226] was also revealed beneath the bank which had the appearance of a post hole. This was filled with grey/brown clayey sand containing boulders, which may have been packing stones for a post. It was uncertain whether this was associated with the bank or was earlier.



Plate 13: Section through bank [206] and land drain [204]/(205), looking south-west (1m scale)

- 4.2.22 Immediately to the east of the bank and on the same alignment was the linear cut [204] of a stone land drain (205). The cut was 0.4m wide and 0.3m deep with vertical sides and a flat base and was seen to cut the west side of the ditch [202]. The drain was constructed using two rows of cobbles with flat stones

on top (like the drain seen in Trench 1). The drain was sealed with redeposited red/yellow clayey sand.

4.2.23 The location of the bank **(206)** corresponded with a post-medieval field boundary as shown on historic mapping (Figure 2 and Figure 4). The land drain **[204]** is almost certainly also a post-medieval feature.

4.2.24 *Trench 3*: Trench 3 was placed on the south side of the site and was aligned approximately north-west to south-east to intersect the south-east side of the enclosure and a possible outer ditch (Figure 4).

4.2.25 The natural compact red/yellow clayey sand **(301)** was identified at a depth of c.0.25m below ground level (blg) in Trench 3. This was cut by the enclosure ditch **[302]** and a field boundary ditch **[304]**.

4.2.26 *Enclosure ditch*: the presumed enclosure ditch **[302]** was revealed in the north-west end of Trench 3 and comprised a c.3m-wide 0.7m-deep U-shaped ditch, aligned north-east to south-west (Plate 14). The ditch contained a 0.13m-deep deposit of red/yellow clayey sand **(309)** with numerous pebbles, which were also deposited as a layer on the upper edges of the ditch. This was filled with 0.7m of grey/brown clayey sand **(303)** including coal fragments, cobbles and small boulders (Section 12, Figure 7). A sherd of Romano-British pottery was also recovered from this deposit, which may be residual. A dump of large boulders **(306)** was present at the centre of the ditch, indicating a deliberate back-filling episode.



Plate 14: Section through ditch **[302]** showing backfill **(306)**, looking north-east (1m and 2m scales)

4.2.27 *Field boundary ditch*: another ditch was revealed at the centre of Trench 3, which is thought to be a field boundary ditch based on aerial photographs of the site. The ditch **[304]** was c.2m wide and 0.7m deep, aligned north-east to south-west (Plate 15). The ditch had a U-shaped profile and contained a 0.13m-deep deposit of grey/brown clayey silt **(307)** on the sides of the ditch containing numerous pebbles and

charcoal fragments. Above this was 0.3m of grey/brown clayey sand (**308**) containing numerous cobbles which appeared to be a deliberate deposit to fill in the ditch (Section 13, Figure 7). The top of the ditch was filled with 0.3m of red/brown sandy clay (**305**) containing several sherds of Romano-British pottery.



Plate 15: Section through ditch [304], looking south-west (1m scales)

4.3 Discussion

- 4.3.1 The archaeological investigation has confirmed presence of a sub-rectangular enclosure as identified by the aerial survey. The enclosure ditch [102] was revealed in Trench 1 in the predicted location, as indicated by the earthwork evidence (see Figure 3). A second ditch [302] was revealed in Trench 3 which was also as expected; however, the fill of this ditch was somewhat different to that observed in Trench 1. This ditch [302] was apparently filled in a single episode using cobbles and boulders, containing coal fragments. The reason is uncertain, but this could suggest the later re-use of the ditch before it was eventually filled in (e.g. as a field boundary). The ditch sections corresponded to geophysical anomalies as detected during the previous geophysical survey. Based on this evidence the enclosure was rectilinear in form but was asymmetrical with curved corners and an entrance on the south-west side. It is possible that there was a bank or wall inside the ditch. In Trench 1, significant deposits of stone (107) appeared to have been pushed into the ditch from the inside. However, it evidently remained visible as a feature in the landscape as an earthwork before being covered over with a significant depth of plough soil.
- 4.3.2 Inside the enclosure, ring ditches have been revealed which probably relate to at least two phases of round house construction. The earliest phase (Round House 1) was represented by ditch [209]. Based

on the shared alignment with one of the penannular geophysical anomalies, this ditch would have curved around the north-west end of Trench 2, encompassing the post-holes and pit in the north-west end. On this basis the features have therefore tentatively been assigned to Round House 1. The ditch [209] appears to have been an open feature as it had silted up (236), before being backfilled (210) and covered with a layer of cobbles (240). The purpose of the ditch may have been drainage around the outside of the Phase 1 round house, but this evidently became redundant, and it was deliberately fill in.

- 4.3.3 The ditch of Round House 1 was cut by a later feature [211] which may have been a wall foundation trench (the feature was represented by a U-shaped geophysical anomaly; however, the anomaly may be misleading). The ditch immediately to the west [224] is associated and may have been a drip gully for the roof. These features were later covered over with a crude cobbled/gravel surface (212). To the west of these, a ring ditch [213] was on the same alignment. This corresponded with a second penannular geophysical anomaly, which is assigned to Round House 2. However, the presence of two ditches [213] and [224] may possibly indicate more than one phase of round house construction is represented. The geophysical anomaly suggests that ditch [213] and [202] are part of the same circuit. Both ditches showed evidence of having been open features with similar primary deposits, before being filled in.
- 4.3.4 The interpretation of the excavated features, considering the geophysical survey and air photograph evidence is shown in Figure 8. This suggests the ring ditch around Round House 1 had a diameter of 18m, while the ring ditch around Round House 2 had a diameter of 21m. The houses would likely be smaller as they would be located within the ring ditches, which acted to drain the areas around the houses. The round houses probably had entrances on the east or south-east sides based on the geophysical anomalies. Foundation trench [211] provided the only evidence for possible round house walls. On this basis an internal house diameter of c.10m seems likely. Evidence for any internal flooring has seemingly been lost through ploughing. The post-holes identified in the north-west end of Trench 2 may have supported the roof or another internal structure, but these were also noted to be truncated features.
- 4.3.5 A probable field boundary ditch [304] was revealed in Trench 3. This appeared as an outer ditch surrounding the enclosure as depicted on the 1949 University of Cambridge air photograph. However, this apparently formed part of a more extensive network of boundary ditches, which radiate out from the enclosure. The upper fill of the ditch contained Romano-British pottery, however no finds were recovered from the primary deposits, suggesting it was backfilled in this period, but it could be earlier.
- 4.3.6 Post-medieval features were also revealed in Trench 1 and Trench 2, comprising two possible field boundary banks (104) and (206), one of which corresponded with the location of a field boundary depicted on historic Ordnance Survey maps. This boundary was removed in the late 20th century. Two post-medieval stone land drains were also revealed crossing both trenches [105]/(114) and [204]/(205).
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5 Finds

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Following the completion of the fieldwork all finds were returned to the Eden Heritage Ltd office for assessment. These were dealt with according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard & Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (CIfA 2020c). All artefacts were assessed according to material type and conform to the deposition guidelines recommended by Brown (2011). The complete finds assemblage is included in Table 1 below.

Tr	Context	Material	No	Weight (g)	Period	Notes
1	105	Ceramic	1	1.2	Post-medieval	White glazed plate or saucer
1	106	CBM	1	15.2	Uncertain	Unshapen chunk of CBM
1	U/S	Ceramic	1	7.9	Roman	Coarse ware fragment
2	210	Glass	1	1.3	Post-medieval/ Modern	Sherd of window glass
2	212	Glass	1	0.9	Post-medieval/ Modern	Sherd of window glass
2	U/S	Ceramic	6	2.4	Post-medieval?	Possible pottery fragments
2	U/S	CU	2	3.3	Post-medieval	Copper alloy and pewter buttons
2	U/S	Fe	1	30	Uncertain	Semi-circular corroded iron object
2	U/S	Glass	1	4.1	Roman	Opaque white glass bangle fragment
3	305	CBM	1	0.7	Roman	Possible CBM fragment
3	305	Ceramic	8	25.8	Roman	Coarse ware fragments, including black-burnished ware x 3
3	309	Ceramic	1	2.1	Roman	Black-burnished ware body sherd
3	U/S	Ceramic	2	1.5	Roman	Possible samian fragments
3	U/S	Fe	2	60	Uncertain	Flat corroded iron fragments
3	U/S	Pb	1	37	Post-medieval	Lead shot

Table 1: Quantification of Bulk Finds by Context

5.2 Romano-British Pottery

By Dr David Griffiths, Archaeology.biz

5.2.1 In total, 17 sherds of pottery, weighing 37.6g, were recovered during archaeological evaluation. The pottery assemblage consisted mostly of Romano-British material with a small quantity of uncertain date (Romano-British to post-medieval); in addition, one fragment of undiagnostic pottery or ceramic building material and three fragments of fired clay were recovered (Table 2).

Pottery				
Period	Ware	Class	Count	Weight
Romano-British	Coarse ware	Black-burnished ware 1-type	4	16.8
Romano-British	Coarse ware	Oxidised ware	1	2
Romano-British	Coarse ware	Reduced ware	5	16.3
Romano-British	Fine ware	Central/East Gaulish samian ware?	2	1.4
Roman to Post-medieval?	Utilitarian?	Utilitarian?	5	1.1
Sub-total			17	37.6
Other materials				
Unknown		Pottery/Ceramic Building Material?	1	1.4
Unknown		Fired Clay	3	15.8
Sub-total			4	17.2
Grand Total			21	54.8

Table 2: Pottery, by ware and class, and other materials, count and weight (in grams).

Trench	Feature	Spot date	Count	Weight
Trench 1	Unstratified	Mid- 2nd to 4th century AD	1	7.7
Trench 2	Unstratified	Roman to Post-medieval?	5	1.1
Trench 3	Fill of boundary ditch [304]	2nd to 4th centuries AD	8	25.4
	Primary fill of ditch [302]	2nd to 4th centuries AD	1	2
	Unstratified	2nd to mid- 3rd century AD	2	1.4
Grand Total			17	37.6

Table 3: Pottery spot dates by trench and feature, count and weight (in grams).

5.2.2 All pottery was examined visually (by eye) and sorted into broad ware groups, fine and coarse wares based on colour, hardness, fracture, and inclusion composition, as outlined in Tomber and Dore (1998, 6-8), and recorded and assessed in accordance with national guidelines (ClfA 2020; 2021; 2024; Barclay et al. 2016). These ware groups (e.g., coarse and fine wares) were further refined by class (e.g., reduced wares, oxidised wares etc.). Where possible, preliminary vessel form and date were noted, with reference to local, regional, and national type and fabric series, specifically The Roman Cemetery at Brougham, Cumbria (Evans 2004) and Scotch Corner (Leary et al. 2020). Assessment of pottery fabrics was undertaken using a low power microscope at X30 magnification with basic classification (e.g., reduced and oxidised wares, fine wares); imports and nationally distributed fabrics were assigned fabric codes where possible, based on The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998). Broad dating for samian ware is taken from Webster (1996).

5.2.3 In total 17 sherds of pottery were recovered, of which 12 were Romano-British period wares including fine and coarse wares. In addition, there were five sherds weighing 1.4g of uncertain date (Table 2). The pottery was recovered from the ditches and from unstratified deposits in all three Trenches (Table 2).

- 5.2.4 *Fine wares*: in total two sherds weighing 1.4g of fine table wares were recovered, possibly of Central or East Gaulish origin (Tomber and Dore 1998, 28-41), and dating from the early 2nd century AD until the middle of the 3rd century AD. The sherds were in very poor condition, and no slip was preserved on their surfaces; the sherds were small, weighing 1.4g in total. The fabric composition of each sherd was the same, lime-rich with some mica inclusions, and the sherds may have originally part of the same vessel. While there are some mica inclusions the fabric looks too coarse for a Lezoux (Central Gaul) product, and the vessel may have been made in Eastern Gaul, however, it was not possible to confirm with certainty during assessment. It was not possible to identify vessel form.
- 5.2.5 *Coarse wares*: in total, 10 sherds of coarse ware pottery were recovered (Tables 2 and 3). The coarse wares comprised reduced (grey) wares (5 sherds), oxidised ware1 (1 sherd), and black-burnished wares (4 sherds). Only one rim sherd was recovered, and all other coarse wares were body sherds. At least three jars were identified, however, only one small rim sherd was recovered which was part of an everted rim reduced ware jar (ID9) of a JC3-JC5 type, dating broadly from the mid- to late 2nd to 4th century AD (Leary 2021, Appendix I, 64).
- 5.2.6 It was not possible to identify the source of any coarse ware products during the assessment. None of the four black-burnished ware sherds were from the major production centres of in Dorset (i.e. fabric DOR BB1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 127), however, one sherd (ID8) may have been produced at Rossington Bridge in South Yorkshire (fabric ROS BB1, Tomber and Dore 1998, 202). Further fabric analysis would be required to confirm the sources of all the coarse ware sherds.
- 5.2.7 *Pottery of Uncertain date*: five undiagnostic body sherds weighing 1.1g in total were recovered; the fabric was oxidised and the sherds were small and relatively thin-walled (c. 3-4mm). It was not possible to date these with any certainty, and they may be of Roman date but could equally be much later.
- 5.2.8 *Other materials*: a single undiagnostic fragment weighing 1.4g was recovered which may be either pottery or ceramic building material (Table 1). Three fragments of fired clay weighing 15.8g were also recovered. The fragments were in pinkish-orange fabrics, and one fragment was partially vitrified, an indication that it had been subjected to high temperatures; this fragment was found in Trench 1, in the fill of enclosure ditch [102]. However, it was not possible to identify what type of structures/features these fragments of fired clay were originally part of (Table 1).
- 5.2.9 *Spatial distribution and Spot dates*: the pottery was recovered from three trenches: 11 sherds from Trench 3, 5 sherds from Trench 2, and a single sherd from Trench 1 (Table 2). It was possible to date some features/deposits; however, most date ranges were relatively broad from the 2nd to 4th centuries.
- 5.2.10 *Discussion and Conclusion*: the pottery recovered from the investigation at Castrigg Roman Fortlet was
-

mostly Romano-British in date. Given the nature of the site, and its location on a major Roman road with multiple sites in the region (e.g. Brougham), the presence of Roman period pottery is expected. While most of the pottery were coarse ware products, there were two sheds of fine samian ware vessel. The date range of the pottery assemblage is broad, from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD, and it was not possible to identify any distinct periods of activity at the fortlet through the pottery alone.

5.2.11 Due to the small size of the pottery assemblage, it is not possible to infer what types of functions were taking place at the site, and/or the social and economic status of those living at or close to the fortlet.

5.3 Post-medieval Pottery

5.3.1 A single fragment of post-medieval pottery, weighing 1.2g, was recovered from Trench 1. This was recovered from the trench for a stone land drain **(114)**. The fragment is in moderate to poor condition.

5.3.2 The fragment is undecorated white glazed earthenware and is probably from a saucer or possible plate. The sherd is likely 19th century in date, but could also be modern, as it is not closely datable.

5.3.3 Nothing further could be gained from the study of this material.

5.4 Glass

5.4.1 A single fragment of probable Roman glass, weighing 4.1g, was recovered during the machine excavation of Trench 2 and is classified as unstratified (U/S). The fragment is part of a Roman glass bracelet of opaque white glass. The fragment is 25mm long, 13.5mm wide and 8mm thick, with a D-shaped profile.

5.4.2 The fragment is undecorated, and is in moderate to poor condition, with fractures on the surfaces, as well as the two broken ends. The fragment has a pock-marked surface and there are tiny bubbles and black fragments within the glass, which are probably associated with manufacturing processes.

5.4.3 It appears to be from a Type 3A bracelet with a rounded 'triangular' profile (Kilbride-Jones 1938, 377). An identical fragment recovered during fieldwalking from Brownelson, Carlisle (NY 3880 5250) was assigned to the 2nd century CE based on other dated examples (Caruana 1989, 57).

5.4.4 Further analysis of the glass fragment could allow it to be assigned to type and dated more precisely.

5.4.5 Two small sherds of window glass, weighing 2.2g, were also recovered from Trench 2, but it is thought these are likely to be intrusive. These were recovered from the layer **(212)** covering features **[209]**, **[211]** and **[224]** which may be contaminated with topsoil or a product of ploughing, and from the upper fill **(210)** which was immediately below this layer. Nothing further could be gained from this material.

5.5 Metal

- 5.5.1 A total of six metal objects, weighing 130.3g, were recovered during the archaeological excavation. These were all recovered from the spoil heaps using a metal detector and are classified as unstratified.
- 5.5.2 A post-medieval lead (Pb) projectile weighing 37g was recovered from Trench 3, The projectile is spherical with a diameter of 19mm and a flat impact surface. There is crimping around the periphery.
- 5.5.3 Two post-medieval copper alloy (Cu) buttons were also recovered. One was 17mm in diameter with a plain flat surface and a broken domed fitting on the reverse. The smaller was also plain and was 13mm in diameter with a broken loop fitting on the reverse. The buttons were in moderate to poor condition.
- 5.5.4 Three corroded iron (Fe) objects were recovered, weighing 90g in total. Two fragments from Trench 3 were flat 7mm thick fragments, which were probably broken fragments from a larger object. A semi-circular corroded iron object was also recovered from Trench 2 with a diameter of 64mm. The object was flat with one rounded and one tapering end suggesting it may have formed a hook or a small crook.
- 5.5.5 The metal objects were all probably post-medieval and were likely casual losses. Nothing further could be gained from the examination of this material.

5.6 Research potential

- 5.6.1 The pottery recovered was mostly Romano-British in date, likely ranging from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD, with two sherds of samian ware dating from the 2nd to mid- 3rd century AD. Due to the small size and poor condition of the pottery assemblage and other materials, further analysis offers limited potential, and no further work is recommended. However, the material is useful for dating purposes. A basic catalogue of all material was created by Dr David Griffiths and will be included with the site archive.
- 5.6.2 Bracelets and bangles are a relatively common find on Romano-British sites. However, the Roman glass bracelet fragment is significant, as it suggests domestic rather than military activity. Details of the Roman glass bracelet should be published along with the Romano-British ceramic assemblage from the site.
- 5.6.3 All of the other finds were residual and do not help to date the period of occupation of the enclosure.

6 Environmental Assessment

By Catherine Bostock, SLR Consulting

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Fifteen environmental samples were submitted for assessment following the archaeological work. The total combined weight of processed sediment was 155.202kg (93.17l). The samples were of a silty matrix.
- 6.1.2 This report presents the results of the assessment of the environmental samples, palaeobotanical and charcoal remains in accordance with Campbell *et al.* (2011).

Sample	Context	Type	Feature
1	106	Bulk	Upper fill of ditch [102] in Trench #1
2	109	Bulk	Fill of small pit [108] in Trench #1
3	115	Bulk	Lower fill of ditch [102] in Trench #1
4	220	Bulk	Fill of post hole [219] in Trench #2
5	222	Hand selected	Fill of post hole [221] in Trench #2
6	203	Bulk	Upper fill of ditch [202] in Trench #2
7	223	Bulk	Basal fill of ditch [202] in Trench #2
8	223	Bulk	Charcoal stain in base of ditch [202]
9	235	Bulk	Basal fill of gulley [224] in Trench #2
10	305	Bulk	Upper fill of ditch [304] in Trench #3
11	307	Bulk	Basal fill of ditch [304] in Trench #3
12	236	Bulk	Basal fill of gulley [209] in Trench#2
13	212	Hand selected	Upper fill of features [211] and [224]
14	214	Hand selected	Upper fill of gulley [213] in Trench #2
15	220	Uncertain	Fill of post hole [219] in Trench #2

Table 4: Feature types

6.2 Methodology

- 6.2.1 The bulk environmental samples were processed at SLR in Carlisle. The colour, lithology, weight, and volume of each sample was recorded using standard SLR pro forma recording sheets (cf. Table 8). Most of the samples were processed with 500-micron retention and flotation meshes using the Siraf method of flotation (Williams 1973), with three being processed by bucket flotation due to their small size. Once dried, the residues from the retention mesh were sieved to 4mm and the artefacts and ecofacts removed from the larger fraction and forwarded to the finds department. The smaller fraction was scanned with a magnet for microslags such as hammerscales. This fraction was then examined for smaller artefacts.

6.2.2 The flots were retained and scanned using a stereo microscope (up to x45 magnification). Any non-palaeobotanical finds were noted on the flot pro forma. Once fully recorded and all relevant material removed the non-archaeological component of the flot was discarded.

6.2.3 Plant remains were identified using the author's reference collection along with Cappers et al. (2012), Stace (2010) with Jacomet (2006) for cereals.

6.3 Results

6.3.1 The fifteen samples were taken from across three trenches, three from Trench 1, ten from Trench 2 and two from Trench 3. Of the fifteen samples, five samples produced ecofacts from their flots.

6.3.2 *Trench 1:* of the three samples taken from Trench 1, one sample produced ecofacts from its flot. Sample <2> was taken from the fill **(109)** of small pit **[108]**. Its flot produced 1.29 grams of charcoal. Material recovered from the dried residue consisted of magnetic material and charcoal.

6.3.3 Samples <1> and <3> were both taken from ditch **[102]**. Both samples had sterile flots. Material recovered from the dried residues consisted of magnetic material, with charcoal also recovered from sample <3>. Sample <1> produced four possible pieces of ochre.

6.3.4 *Trench 2:* of the ten samples taken from Trench 2, three samples recovered ecofacts from their flot. Sample <14> was taken from upper fill **(214)** from gulley **[213]**. Its flot produced 2.37 grams of charcoal. Charcoal and burnt bone was recovered from its dried residue.

6.3.5 Sample <13> was taken from the mixed upper fill **(212)** of features **[211]** and **[224]**, with 0.6 grams of charcoal recovered from its flot. Material produced by its dried residue consisted of magnetic material, charcoal and burnt bone.

6.3.6 Sample <5> taken from fill **(222)** of gulley **[221]** produced 0.29 grams charcoal from its flot. Additional charcoal was also recovered from its dried residue.

6.3.7 The remaining seven samples from Trench 2 had sterile flots. All seven samples produced charcoal and magnetic material from their dried residues. Samples <4>, <6> and <9> also produced burnt bone while sample <15> recovered a possible piece of ochre. Sample <4> also produced a piece of industrial waste composite which also contained burnt bone and charcoal.

6.3.8 *Trench 3:* only one of the two samples from Trench 3 produced anything from its flot. Sample <10>, was taken from the upper fill **(305)** of ditch **[304]** and produced four carbonised indeterminate cereal grains from its flot. Sample <11> was taken from the basal fill **(307)** and its flot was sterile. Charcoal and magnetic material were recovered from the dried residues of both samples, as well as a possible ochre.

6.4 Discussion

- 6.4.1 There is not enough environment material present to say anything meaningful about the assemblage. The absence of carbonised plant macrofossils such as this generally indicate that the sampled features were not routinely receiving debris from domestic or arable processing activities and may have been situated away from core areas of contemporary human occupation.
- 6.4.2 Basic charcoal identification was undertaken for samples which produced more than four grams of charcoal in good condition. Three fragments were then selected from each, which were large enough to allow for identification. Fragments were taken for identification from samples <2>, <4>, <6>, <7>, <9> and <14>. Oak (*Quercus*) was identified in all six samples as was diffuse-porous wood (Table 5).

<>	Oak	Diffused porous
2	2	1
4	1	2
6	2	1
7	2	1
9	1	2
14	2	1

Table 5: Charcoal Identification

6.5 Radiocarbon Suitability

- 6.5.1 Any of the charcoal recovered from across the site, from an assemblage over 4g, could be used for radiocarbon dating, and where charcoal is being considered, the remainder of the fragments in the sample's charcoal assemblage should be identified to species, as long-lived species, such as oak, may provide skewed dates.

6.6 Research Potential

- 6.6.1 Very little palaeoenvironmental material was recovered. The magnetic material recovered from the samples does not contain any hammer scale and therefore is not recommended for further analysis.
- 6.6.2 The magnetic material recovered from this site are likely to be small stones and sediments that naturally contain iron minerals. Their magnetic sensitivity can be affected by the type of iron mineral present, climate change, bacteria influence and human activity e.g. soil movement and heat exposure (Linford 2005). The large quantities of charcoal from the site indicates that most of the magnetic material are likely to be heat magnetised residues (Bayley et al 2001; Linford 2005)

C	<>	CP	Texture	MP	PW	PV	CS	Components	Shape	SW	SV	>SW	>SV	Comments
106	1	mid grey	soft	silty clay	22	16	pale greyish brown	stone >1cm, 20%; stone <1cm, 30%; sand, 50%	sub-rounded	3586	2500	959	600	
109	2	mid brownish grey	soft	silty sand	7	4	pale greyish brown	stone >1cm, 50%; stone <1cm, 15%; sand, 35%	angular	1406	1100	781	600	
115	3	pale brownish grey	soft	sandy silt	32	16	pale reddish brown	stone >1cm, 45%; stone <1cm, 15%; sand, 40%	sub-rounded	9009	5350	5056	2750	
220	4	mid grey	soft	silty clay	13	7	pale reddish brown	stone >1cm, 65%; stone <1cm, 10%; sand, 25%	sub-angular	6307	4400	4625	3100	
222	5	mid brown	soft	clayey silt	0.014	0.01	mid brownish black	stone >1cm, 65%; stone <1cm, 20%; sand, 15%	rounded	5	10	4	7	bucket
203	6	pale grey	soft	silty sand	8	4	pale greyish brown	stone >1cm, 55%; stone <1cm, 15%; sand, 30%	sub-rounded	2414	1800	1395	1050	
223	7	pale reddish grey	soft	silty clay	6	3	pale reddish brown	stone >1cm, 45%; stone <1cm, 20%; sand, 35%	sub-rounded	1021	850	519	400	
223	8	pale reddish grey	soft	silty clay	4	3	pale reddish brown	stone >1cm, 30%; stone <1cm, 20%; sand, 50%	sub-angular	705	500	246	200	
235	9	pale greyish black	soft	silty clay	8	4	dark blackish brown	stone >1cm, 55%; stone <1cm, 10%; sand, 35%	sub-angular	2557	2200	1568	1400	
305	10	mid brown	soft	silty sand	26	18	pale brown	stone >1cm, 25%; stone <1cm, 30%; sand, 55%	sub-angular	7187	4300	2520	1300	
307	11	mid brown	soft	silty clay	11	7	mid brown	stone >1cm, 75%; stone <1cm, 10%; sand, 15%	sub-rounded	3768	2500	3027	2000	
236	12	mid grey	soft	silty sand	7	4	pale greyish brown	stone >1cm, 30%; stone <1cm, 25%; sand, 45%	sub-angular	1197	800	411	300	
212	13	mid brownish grey	soft	sandy silt	0.12	0.1	pale greyish brown	stone >1cm, 65%; stone <1cm, 10%; sand, 25%	sub-rounded	50	40	36	30	bucket
214	14	mid greyish brown	soft	sandy silt	0.068	0.06	mid grey	stone >1cm, 80%; stone <1cm, 10%; sand, 10%	sub-angular	32	40	27	38	bucket
220	15	mid greyish brown	soft	silty clay	11	7	pale reddish brown	stone >1cm, 65%; stone <1cm, 15%; sand, 20%	sub-angular	5098	3500	3623	2500	
					155.202	93.17								

Table 6: Sample Data

Key: C = context number, <=> sample number, CP= colour of pre-processed sediment, MP= matrix of pre-processed sediment, PW= weight (kg) of pre-processed sediment, PV= volume (l) of pre-processed sediment, CS= colour of dried retent residues, SW= weight (g) of dried retent residues, SV= volume (ml) of dried retent residues, >SW= weight (g) of the >4mm fraction of dried retent residues, >SV= volume (ml) of dried retent residues.

C	<=>	Bone		Charcoal		Industrial Waste		Magnetic Material		Ochre	
		wt (g)	ab	wt (g)	ab	wt (g)	ab	wt (g)	ab	wt (g)	act.
106	1							<1	2	4	4
109	2			7	2			<1	2		
115	3			2	2			<1	2		
220	4	2	2	21	3	124	1	<1	2		
222	5			4	2						
203	6	<1	1	20	3			<1	2		
223	7			5	2			<1	1		
223	8			2	2			<1	1		
235	9	<1	1	50	4			<1	2		
305	10			6	2			<1	3	<1	1
307	11			1	2			<1	2	<1	1
236	12			4	2			<1	2		
212	13	10	2	12	2			<1	2		
214	14	9	2	19	3						
220	15			6	2			<1	2	1	1

Key: C = context number, <=> sample number, Act.= actual count, Ab = abundance score: 1=1-10, 2=11-50, 3=51-150, 4=151-250, 5=>250

Table 7: Finds from samples

C	<>	Description of flot	WF	VF	Charcoal (g)	CPR (quantity)
106	1	very fine rootlets 85%; sand 10%; comminuted charcoal 5%	0.6	3		
109	2	very fine rootlets 50%; sand 10%; comminuted charcoal 5%; charcoal 35%	3.6	15	1.29	
115	3	very fine rootlets 15%; sand 45%; comminuted charcoal 40%	4.3	5		
220	4	very fine rootlets 50%; sand 40%; comminuted charcoal 10%	2.1	10		
222	5	sand 5%; comminuted charcoal 95%	0.3	<1	0.29	
203	6	very fine rootlets 70%; sand 20%; comminuted charcoal 10%	1.1	3		
223	7	very fine rootlets 20%; sand 30%; comminuted charcoal 50%	0.7	2		
223	8	very fine rootlets 20%; sand 10%; comminuted charcoal 70%	0.4	1		
235	9	very fine rootlets 85%; sand 5%; comminuted charcoal 10%	0.8	4		
305	10	very fine rootlets 25%; sand 65%; comminuted charcoal 10%	23.4	25		4
307	11	very fine rootlets 30%; sand 55%; comminuted charcoal 15%	3.4	10		
236	12	very fine rootlets 80%; sand 20%	1.2	4		
212	13	very fine rootlets 15%; sand 5%; comminuted charcoal 20%; charcoal 60%	1.1	1	0.6	
214	14	sand 5%; comminuted charcoal 5%; charcoal 90%	2.5	4	2.37	
220	15	very fine rootlets 60%; sand 30%; comminuted charcoal 10%	2.4	20		

Key: C = context number, <> = sample number, WF = weight (g) of flot, VF = volume (ml) of flot, CPR = Charred Plant Remains.

Table 8: Flot data

7 Conclusions

7.1 Origins, Development and Use

- 7.1.1 Castrigg Roman Fortlet comprises a rectilinear enclosure, which has previously been assigned to the Roman period, based on its elevated location and association with a possible signal station and High Street Roman Road. The c.0.5ha enclosure follows the contours of a rounded hill to the north of Appleby-in-Westmorland, and has an outturned entrance to the south, apparently linking it to the Roman road.
- 7.1.2 Previous geophysical survey undertaken by the author with Appleby Archaeology Group revealed that the enclosure contained two penannular features, interpreted as the ring ditches of round houses. The archaeological investigation confirmed the layout of the enclosure, with two sections excavated across the outer ditch in Trench 1 and Trench 3. This had a U-shaped profile and showed evidence for erosion of the ditch sides, but no dating evidence was recovered. The ditch fill contained large quantities of cobbles and some large boulders, which may have been associated with an inner bank or wall, although this was not proven. Inside the enclosure, two ring ditches were revealed in Trench 2, which apparently related to two round houses or different phases, along with a possible wall foundation and a drip gully. The ditches around the structures were probably necessary due to the boulder clay forming the hill, which was noted to be very poorly drained. Several post-holes and a pit were probably associated with the earliest round house (Round House 1), which appears to have been replaced with a slightly larger structure (Round House 2). No dating evidence was recovered from any of the features in Trench 2. Shallow pits were also identified within the enclosure in Trench 1 but their date and function is unknown.
- 7.1.3 Although a domestic function was not confirmed for the enclosure or round houses (no floors or hearths were identified) the evidence suggests the presence of an Iron Age and/or Romano-British settlement. This interpretation is based on three very narrow sample trenches, and the recorded geophysical anomalies. The intermittent nature of the geophysical anomalies appears to relate to the presence of heat-affected material which was identified in some of the excavated features; the archaeological features may be more extensive than was originally indicated by the geophysical (geomagnetic) survey. The archaeological features on the hilltop also appear to have been truncated by ploughing, while the enclosure ditches on the hillside have apparently been covered with a greater depth of plough soil.
- 7.1.4 A second outer enclosure ditch in Trench 3 appears to be part of an early field system. An outer ditch is shown on aerial photography and was detected by geophysical survey but appears to be linked to other linear boundaries extending outside of the area to the north and west. The upper fill of the ditch contained Romano-British pottery, suggesting it was filled in during the later Roman period, but it could

be earlier. The pottery recovered was mostly Romano-British in date, likely ranging from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD, with two sherds of samian ware dating from the 2nd to mid- 3rd century AD.

7.2 Potential for Further Research

- 7.2.1 A rectilinear enclosure has been confirmed by excavation, with an apparent entrance onto High Street Roman Road. Two substantial round house ring ditches and associated post holes were identified within the enclosure but are currently undated. The enclosure ditches are also currently undated, the Romano-British pottery being recovered from the upper fill of an external field boundary ditch. This ditch appears to be part of a more extensive field system surrounding the enclosure, which was evidently open during the Roman period. A priority is therefore to obtain dates the enclosure and round houses. The field system could also be earlier than Roman ceramic material recovered from the ditch fill. Radiocarbon dating is therefore to be undertaken using the charcoal recovered from the excavated features to attempt to date the enclosure and the sampled ring ditches. This information will be published along with the site details in order to inform the interpretation of this site and other similar enclosures.
- 7.2.2 Further excavation could provide more information regarding the structures and activities being undertaken within the enclosure and provide further dating evidence for the occupation of the site. No evidence has yet been identified for the postulated signal station, which the 1949 air photograph suggested was located outside the enclosure immediately to the east. Further archaeological work is needed to confirm the presence of this feature and to confirm whether this interpretation is correct. The possibility exists that this shows the ring ditch of another round house located outside the enclosure.

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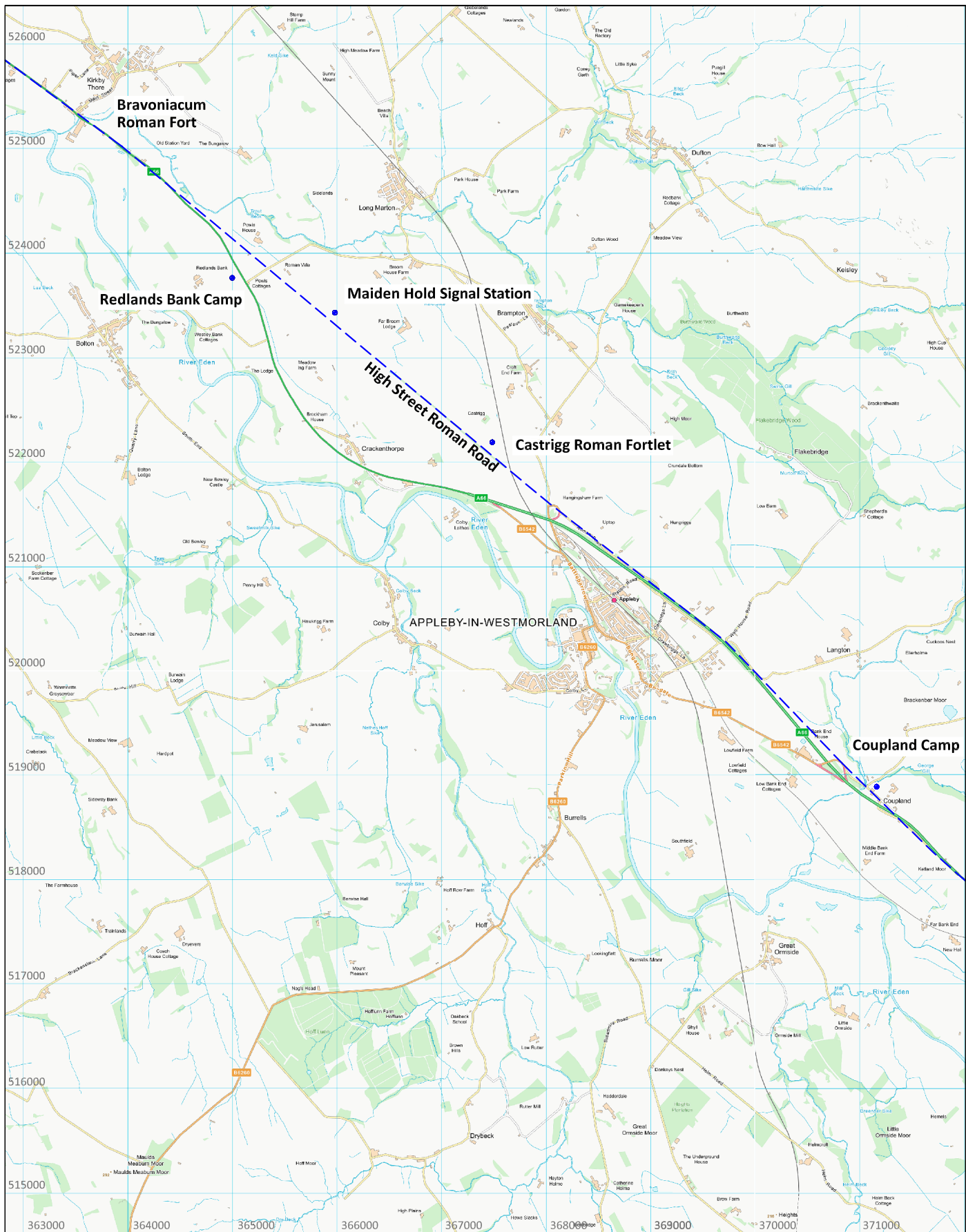
<https://researchframeworks.org/nwrf/>

APPENDIX 1: Context Information

Context	Description	Period	Above	Below	Cuts	Cut by	Filled by	Fill of
100	Topsoil & turf in Trench #1	Modern	101	N/A				
101	Red/yellow clayey sand subsoil	Geological	N/A	100				
102	Cut of enclosure ditch	Iron Age/R-B	101	115	101		115/106	
103	Upper fill of enclosure ditch [102]	Post-medieval	106/107	100		113		102
104	Linear bank	Post-medieval	101	100				
105	Fill of land drain trench [113]	Post-medieval	114	100				113
106	Fill of enclosure ditch [102]	Iron Age/R-B	115	107		113		102
107	Fill of enclosure ditch [102]	Iron Age/R-B	106	103		113		102
108	Cut of shallow pit	Iron Age/R-B?	110	109	110		109	
109	Fill of shallow pit [108]	Iron Age/R-B?	108	100				109
110	Fill of shallow pit [116]	Iron Age/R-B?	116	108		108		116
111	Cut of possible pit	Iron Age/R-B?	101	112	101		112	
112	Fill of possible pit [111]	Iron Age/R-B?	111	100				111
113	Trench for stone drain (114)	Post-medieval	106	114	106/113		114/105	
114	Stone drain	Post-medieval	113	105				113
115	Fill of enclosure ditch [102]	Iron Age/R-B	102	106				102
116	Cut of shallow pit	Iron Age/R-B?	101	110	101		110	
200	Topsoil & turf in Trench #2	Modern	201	N/A				
201	Red/yellow clayey sand subsoil	Geological	N/A	200				
202	Cut of ring ditch	Iron Age/R-B	201	223	201		223/234	
203	Upper fill of ring ditch [202]	Iron Age/R-B	233	200				203
204	Trench for land drain (205)	Post-medieval	101	204	201		204	
205	Stone drain	Post-medieval	204	200				204
206	Linear bank	Post-medieval	232	200				232
207-208	VOID	N/A						
209	Cut of ring ditch	Iron Age/R-B	201	210	201		236/210	
210	Fill of ring ditch [209]	Iron Age/R-B	209					210
211	Foundation trench	Iron Age/R-B	210	237	210		237	
212	Stoney deposit	Iron Age/R-B	225/237	200				
213	Cut of ring ditch	Iron Age/R-B	201	239	201		238/239	
214	Upper fill of ring ditch [213]	Iron Age/R-B	238	200				213
215	Cut of pit/post pad	Iron Age/R-B	201	216	201		216	

Context	Description	Period	Above	Below	Cuts	Cut by	Filled by	Fill of
216	Fill of pit [215]	Iron Age/R-B	215	200				215
217	Cut of post hole	Iron Age/R-B	201	218	201		218	
218	Fill of post hole [217]	Iron Age/R-B	217	200				217
219	Cut of post hole	Iron Age/R-B	201	220	201		220	
220	Fill of post hole [219]	Iron Age/R-B	219	200				219
221	Cut of post hole	Iron Age/R-B	201	222	201		222	
222	Fill of post hole [222]	Iron Age/R-B	221	200				221
223	Primary fill of ring ditch [202]	Iron Age/R-B	202	224				202
224	Cut of ring ditch	Iron Age/R-B	201	235	201		225/235	
225	Fill of ring ditch [224]	Iron Age/R-B	235	212				224
226	Cut of post hole	Iron Age/R-B	201	227	201		227	
227	Fill of post hole [227]	Iron Age/R-B	226	200				226
228	Cut of post hole	Iron Age/R-B	201	229	201		229	
229	Fill of post hole [229]	Iron Age/R-B	228	200				228
230	Cut of post hole	Iron Age/R-B	201	231	201		231	
231	Fill of post hole [230]	Iron Age/R-B	230	200				230
232	Cut associated with bank (206)	Iron Age/R-B	201	206	201		206	
233	Fill of ring ditch [202]	Iron Age/R-B	234	203				202
234	Fill of ring ditch [202]	Iron Age/R-B	223	233				202
235	Primary fill of ring ditch [224]	Iron Age/R-B	224	225				224
236	Primary fill of ring ditch [209]	Iron Age/R-B	209	210				209
237	Possible wall foundation?	Iron Age/R-B	211	212				211
238	Primary fill of ring ditch [213]	Iron Age/R-B	239	214				213
239	Fill of ring ditch [213]	Iron Age/R-B	213	238				213
300	Topsoil & turf in Trench #3	Modern	301	N/A				
301	Red/yellow clayey sand subsoil	Geological	N/A	300				
302	Cut of enclosure ditch	Iron Age/R-B	301	309	301		303/306	
303	Fill of enclosure ditch [302]	Iron Age/R-B	309	300				302
304	Cut of boundary ditch	Iron Age/R-B	301	307	301		307/308	
305	Fill of boundary ditch [304]	Iron Age/R-B	308	300				304
306	Stone fill of enclosure ditch [302]	Iron Age/R-B	309	300				302
307	Primary fill of ditch [304]	Iron Age/R-B	304	308				304
308	Fill of boundary ditch [304]	Iron Age/R-B	307	305				304
309	Primary fill of ditch [302]	Iron Age/R-B	302	303				302

APPENDIX 2: Figures







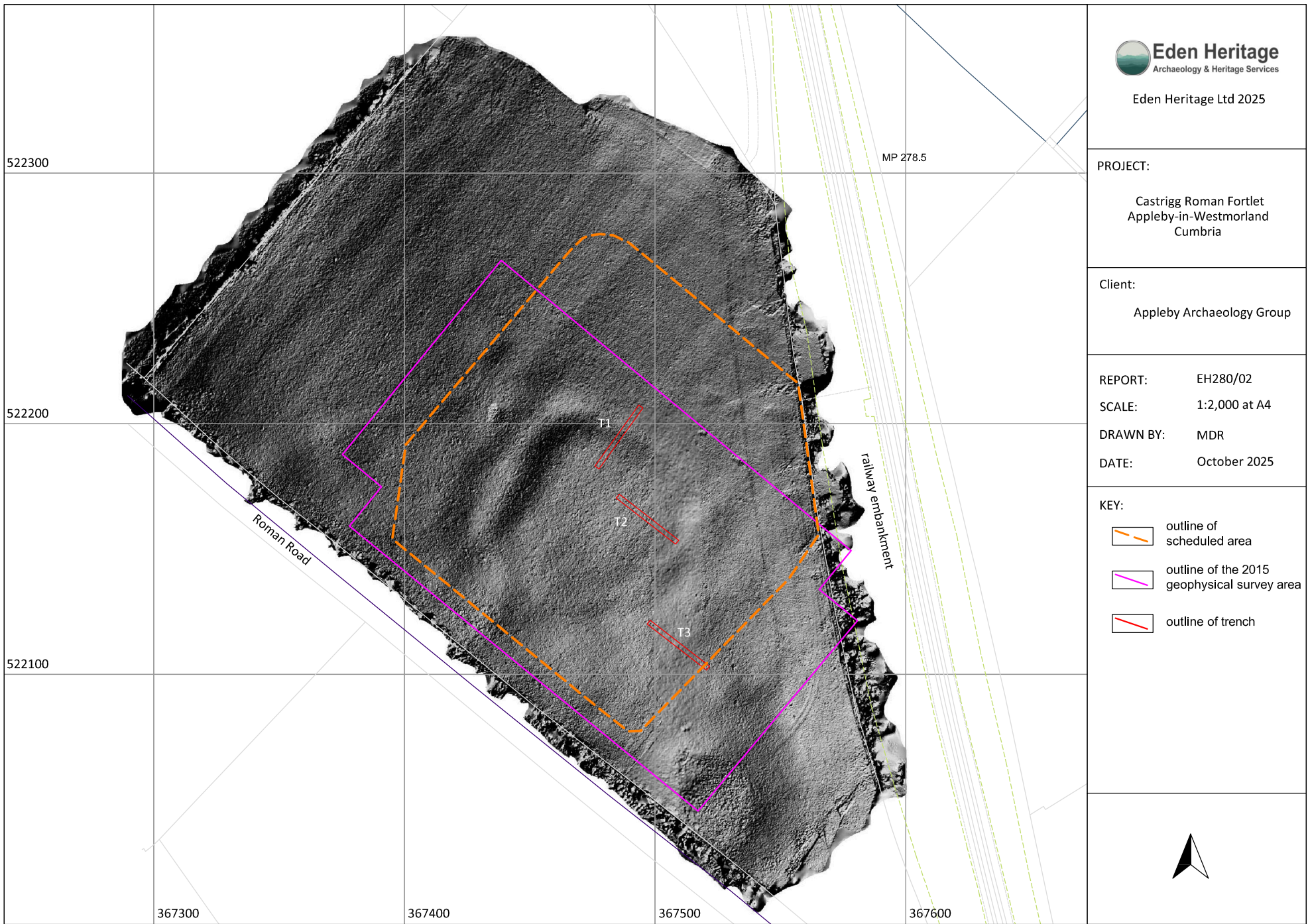
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Figure 1: Location map showing the route of High Street Roman Road and Castrigg Roman Fortlet.



Figure 2: Extracts from historic Ordnance Survey maps (1863-1970).



PROJECT:
Castrigg Roman Fortlet
Appleby-in-Westmorland
Cumbria

Client:
Appleby Archaeology Group

REPORT: EH280/02
SCALE: 1:2,000 at A4
DRAWN BY: MDR
DATE: October 2025




- KEY:**
-  outline of scheduled area
 -  outline of the 2015 geophysical survey area
 -  outline of trench



Figure 3: Digital terrain model (DTM) showing the trench locations (T1-T3).



Figure 4: Trench locations (T1-3) showing geophysical anomalies .

PROJECT:

Castrigg Roman Fortlet
Appleby-in-Westmorland
Cumbria

CLIENT:

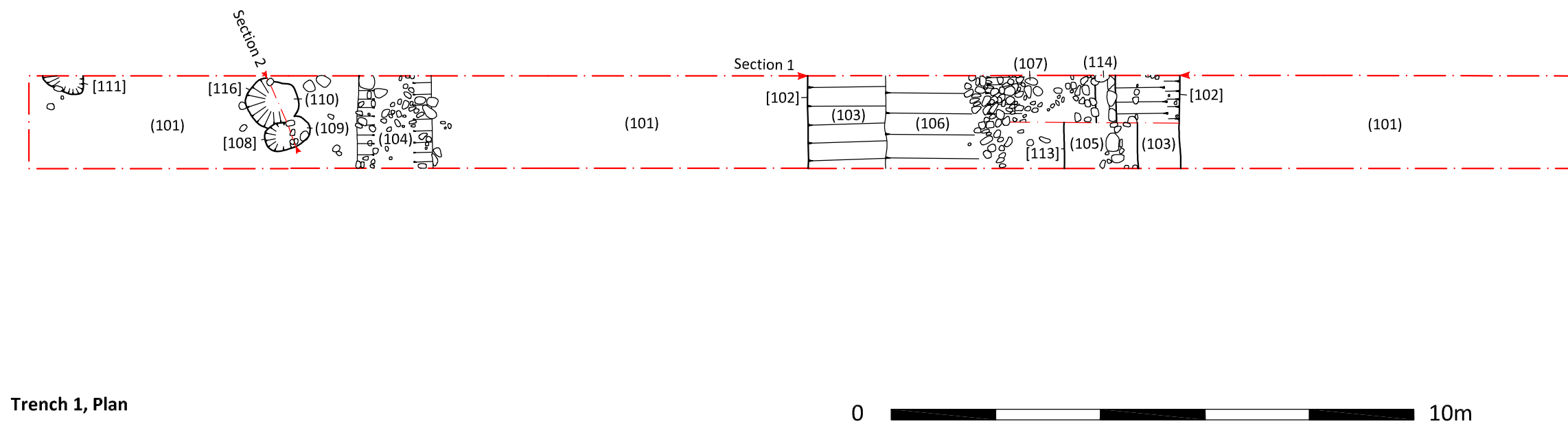
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REPORT: EH280/02

SCALE: 1:100 & 1:50 at A3

DRAWN BY: MDR





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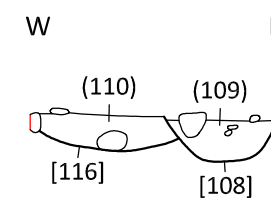
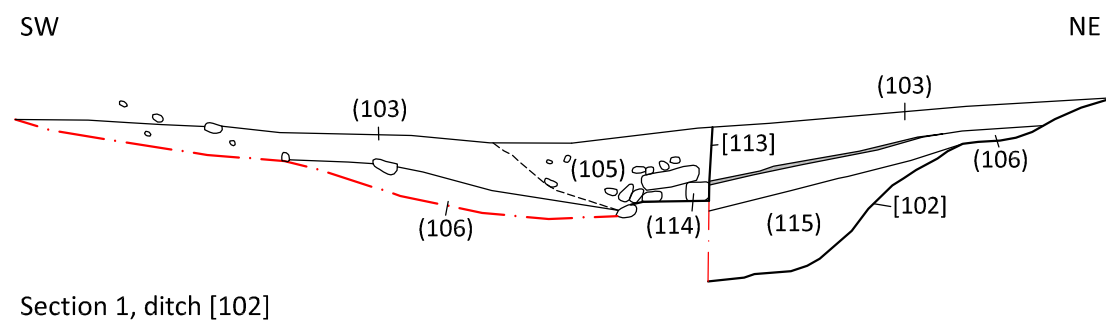


Trench 1, Plan

0 10m

KEY:

-  limit of archaeological excavation
-  context number
-  section location
-  uncertain limit of deposit/feature



Trench 1, Sections

0 5m



Figure 5: Trench 1, Plan and sections.

PROJECT:

Castrigg Roman Fortlet
Appleby-in-Westmorland
Cumbria

CLIENT:

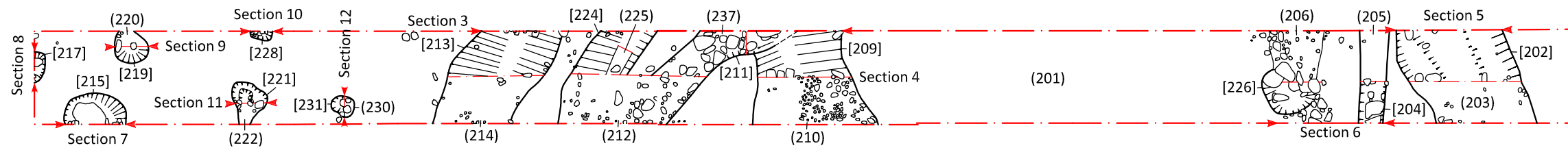
Appleby Archaeology Group

REPORT: EH280/02

SCALE: 1:100 & 1:50 at A3




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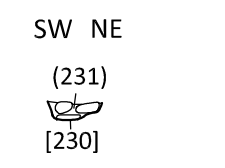
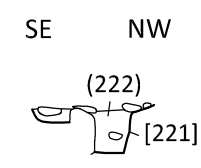
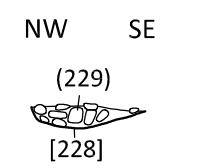
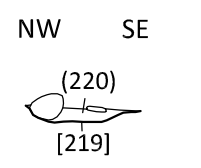
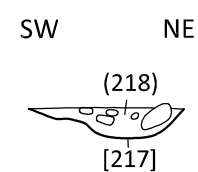
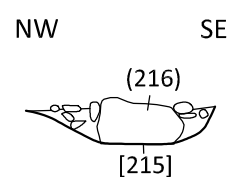
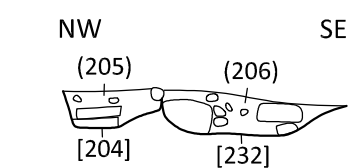
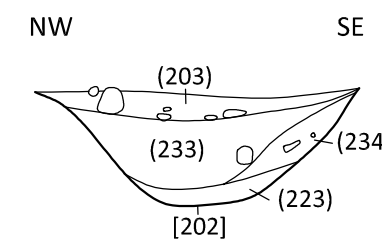
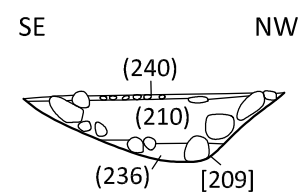
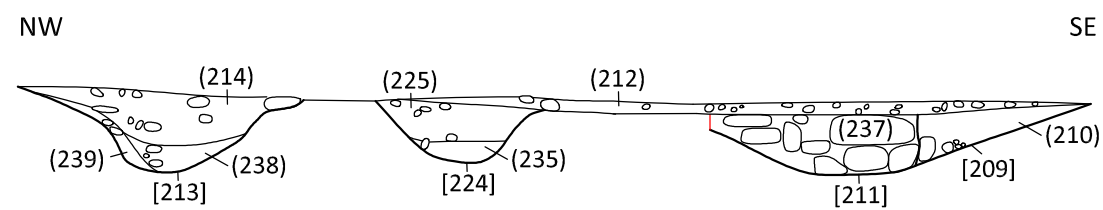
DATE: November 2025



Trench 2, Plan

KEY:

-  limit of archaeological excavation
-  context number
-  section location



Trench 2, Sections



Figure 6: Trench 2, Plan and sections.

PROJECT:

Castrigg Roman Fortlet
Appleby-in-Westmorland
Cumbria

CLIENT:

Appleby Archaeology Group




REPORT: EH280/02

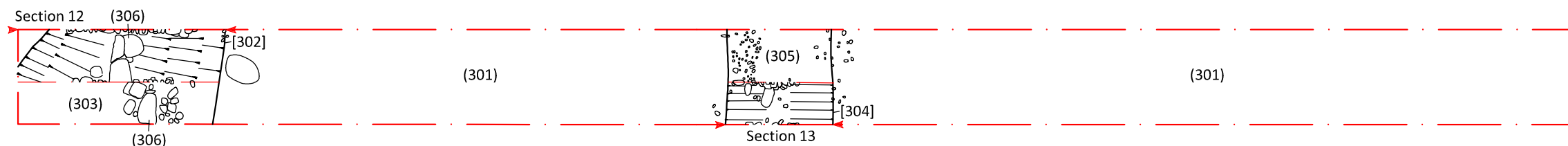
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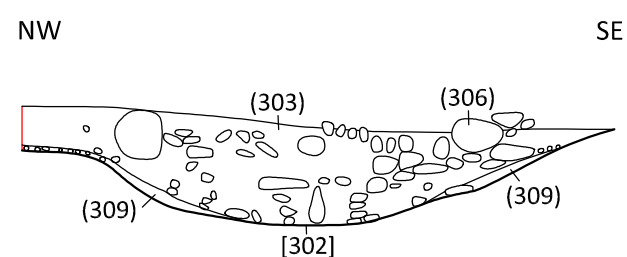
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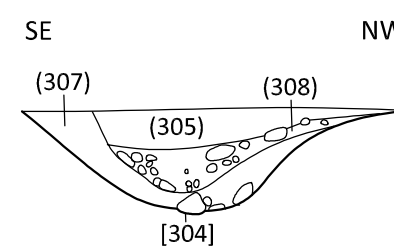
-  limit of archaeological excavation
-  context number
-  section location



Trench 3, Plan



Section 12, ditch [302]



Section 13, ditch [304]



Trench 3, Sections



Figure 7: Trench 3, Plan and sections.

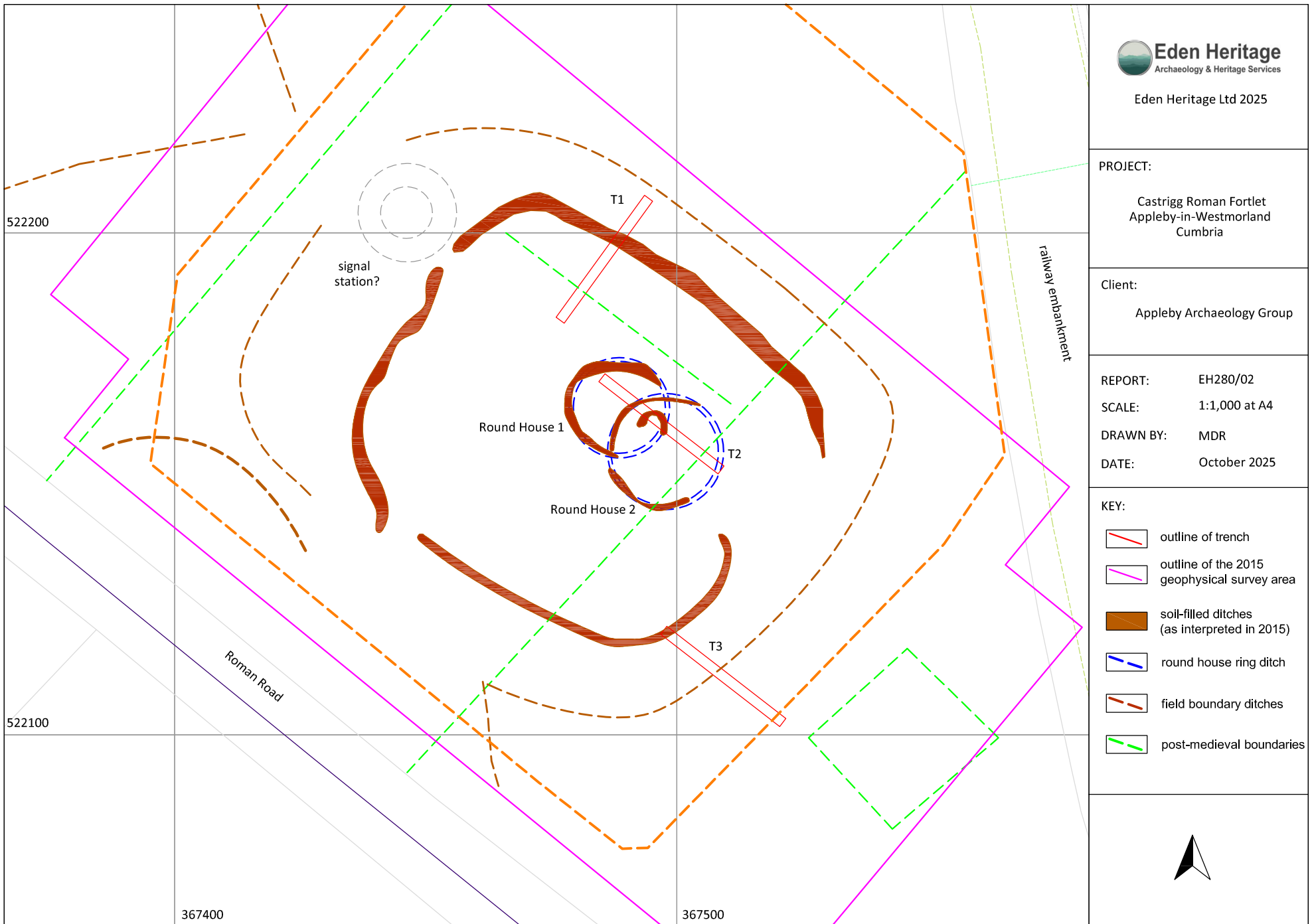


Figure 8: Site interpretation.

**Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation**

**Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs**

