

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Client Report No. CP 328/06

**REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT
DRUMBURGH HOUSE, DRUMBURGH, CUMBRIA.**



**COMMISSIONED BY
MR. D. ROBINSON**

NGR: NY 2692 5670

Marc Johnstone
North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
Nenthead Mines Heritage Centre
Nenthead
Alston
Cumbria CA9 3PD

Tel: 01434 38204
Email: info@nparchaeology.co.uk
Website: www.nparchaeology.co.uk

28 November 2006



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2006, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at Drumburgh House, Drumburgh, Cumbria, (NGR: NY 2692 5670), on behalf of Mr Daniel Robinson. Drumburgh House lies in the Roman fort of *Congavata*, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, World Heritage Site and penultimate fort on Hadrian's Wall. The historic village of Drumburgh lies 9 miles west of Carlisle; commands spectacular views across the Solway Firth Estuary and is home to other impressive archaeological monuments including an early 16th century castle.

The proposed work involved the excavation of a series of trenches for the foundations of an extension, a garage and services. Scheduled Monument Consent and Planning Permission were granted for these works but because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site, confirmed by archaeological evaluation, all of the ground-works had to be excavated under a full watching brief condition. The work was formally requested by Mike Collins, Hadrian's Wall Archaeologist for English Heritage, as any construction work in the area was liable to impact on significant archaeological remains.

The construction work involved the excavation of 7 trenches within the grounds of Drumburgh House, and significant archaeology, primarily belonging to the Roman period, was found in these trenches. Trenches 3, 4 and 5, positioned to the north of Drumburgh House, located the probable line of the Hadrian's Wall ditch [108], at a maximum depth of 2.6m below ground level. It was aligned roughly east-west and extended on the same alignment to the wall ditch as observed in fields immediately to the east and west of the property (see Plates 7 and 8).

Trench 2 was positioned 5m to the north of Drumburgh House and ran parallel to its north wall. It contained a Roman ditch [104] (see Plate 13) aligned roughly north-south at 2.8m below ground level (the ditch was 1.4m deep x 3.5m wide), within which lay a well preserved section of worked timber situated 2m below ground level. Curiously, the base of the ditch appeared to be lined with Lakeland slate stones, which were not worked but were reasonably flat (see Plate 14). Due to the alignment and position of this ditch, it is possible that it predates the stone-built Hadrianic fort at Drumburgh and may belong to the initial turf and timber phase of the fort.

Trench 7 was located immediately to the north of and running parallel to the north wall of Drumburgh House, 6.3m in length and 2.4m (max) width. At an average depth of 1m below ground level, a significant portion of Hadrian's Wall [109] remains were discovered on an alignment of roughly northwest-southeast, running directly under the southeast corner of Drumburgh House (see Plate 21). The wall comprised a mixture of roughly hewn sandstone, Lazonby stone from the Lake District and other stones (probably from the nearby beach); to form what appears to be the central rubble-core of Hadrian's Wall. There were very few dressed stones which would have lined either side of the wall originally and we must therefore conclude that the majority of this stone was robbed-out in previous centuries to build housing in the existing village, (for an example see Plate 2 depicting Drumburgh Castle, built in 1515AD). Several sherds of medieval pottery found on top of the wall help to support this theory. Few finds were discovered across the site, however deposit (106) yielded several iron nails, several sherds of medieval pottery, a small piece of lead and a small amount of animal bone – including a horse's tooth. Further to this, a typical bronze Roman 'pennanular' brooch was discovered by metal detector in this context, along with a small metal clothes/sewing pin.

Trenches 1 and 6, which were situated to the south of Drumburgh House, contained no significant archaeological remains.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to extend thanks to Daniel Robinson, of Drumburgh House, for commissioning the project, and for his assistance, patience, enthusiasm and hospitality throughout the duration of the project. Robbie Taylor of Taylor Construction and Ken Birkett JCB Hire demonstrated exemplary skills and versatility throughout the construction work. Steve Mitchelhill of Lowther House, Drumburgh, offered excellent advice and fieldwork support. The Hodgson family, especially John Hodgson, of The Grange and Drumburgh Castle were particularly supportive, giving advice and granting access to surrounding farmland and the castle roof. Alan James, an experienced volunteer for North Pennines Archaeology, provided superb fieldwork support and metal-detecting services. Thanks to Tony Liddell for illustrative assistance. North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would finally like to extend thanks to Mike Collins, Hadrian's Wall Archaeologist, for his support and enthusiasm.

The archaeological watching brief at Drumburgh House and the production of this report was conducted by Marc Johnstone. The overall project was managed by Frank Giecco, Technical Director and Principal Archaeologist of North Pennines Archaeology Ltd. The report was edited by Matthew Town.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In June 2006, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were invited by Mr. Daniel Robinson of Drumburgh House to conduct an archaeological watching brief on works liable to impact on significant archaeological remains belonging to the Roman period in the historic village of Drumburgh, Cumbria. Drumburgh House lies in the Roman fort of *Congavata*, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, World Heritage Site and penultimate fort on Hadrian's Wall. Scheduled Monument Consent and Planning Permission were granted for these works but because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site as outlined above, all of the ground-works had to be excavated under a full watching brief condition. It was a requirement of these works that any discovered remains of Hadrian's Wall were to be left *in situ*, as well as every effort made to preserve any other archaeological features encountered. If significant archaeological remains were encountered, it was accepted by all parties that the archaeologist on site would advise the contractors as to whether the level of the developments would have to be raised over the remains to allow their preservation.
- 1.1.2 The works at Drumburgh House involved the excavation of 7 trenches in total. These included foundation trenches for an extension to the property at the north of the house, a garage to the north of the house, and some service trenches for piping.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1.1 A project design was submitted by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd in response to a request by Mr Daniel Robinson, for an archaeological watching brief in accordance with Mike Collins, Hadrian's Wall Archaeologist for English Heritage. Following acceptance of the project design, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the client to undertake the work.
- 2.1.2 The project design was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 SITE SPECIFIC AIMS

- 2.2.1 Site-specific aims of the watching brief were defined as follows:
- to monitor, as per specifications and project design, all groundworks within the determined excavation area;
 - to advise groundworks team of maximum permitted excavation depths specified in the brief and ensure that these depths are kept to;
 - to detect, if possible, any surviving evidence of Roman activity;
 - to define the location, character, extent and state of preservation of Hadrian's Wall, the Hadrian's Wall ditch, *Congavata/Coggabata* Roman Fort, or any other significant archaeological remains, should these be encountered in the development area, and protect them from impact by the development works;
 - to prepare a report for our client detailing the results of the watching brief, and providing recommendations for any future archaeological work that may be deemed necessary.

2.3 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

- 2.3.1 Excavation was undertaken by the client's contractor, using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. The entire area of excavation for the house extension and car park foundations, along with the trenches for services, was closely monitored, and all archaeological features discovered were investigated and recorded

according to the NPA standard procedure as set out in the company Excavation Manual (Giecco, 2003).

- 2.3.2 A Photographic record of all aspects of the archaeological watching brief was made using Pentax K1000 and Pentax P30 Single Lens Reflex (SLR) manual cameras. A photographic record of all contexts was taken in colour slide and black and white print and included a graduated metric scale. Digital photographs were also taken where applicable (see plates).
- 2.3.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (IFA 1994). All references to cardinal directions refer to site grid north, aligned approximately with Ordnance Survey (OS) grid north.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 The full archive has been produced to a professional standard in accordance with the current English Heritage guidelines set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 2nd Ed. 1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to the County Sites and Monuments Record, where viewing will be available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA 06, DBR-C.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Location, Topography and Geology

- 3.1.1 Drumburgh village (see Plate 1) is situated approximately 14km to the North West of Carlisle, and lies on a *glacial esker* which gives a prominence of around 20m above mean sea level. It is ideally situated commanding an excellent view to the north and east over the flat lands of the inner Solway Firth.
- 3.1.2 The drift geology comprises Devensian tills covered by seasonally waterlogged soils of the Clifton and Brickfield Associations and marine alluviums of the Rockfield Association. The hydrology of the area is dictated by the deep accumulations of glacial till that form a landscape of low ridges, directing the drainage system into a predominately south-west to north-east orientation.

3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 **Place Name Evidence:** the name Drumburgh is formed from the Celtic *drum* or *druim*, meaning ridge or hill and the Old English *burgh* or *burh* meaning fort; literally the ridge by the fort. It is possible however, that the ending of the name could have been changed from the earlier Celtic word *bogh*, meaning small, but being anglicised and conforming to the word *burgh* when Drumburgh became part of the Barony of Burgh-By-Sands in the medieval period.
- 3.2.2 **Roman Drumburgh:** Drumburgh House stands on the northern edge of *Congavata/Coggabata* Roman Fort. From standing in the field west of Drumburgh House (see Plate 5), lines of the fort ditches and other earthworks are still visible. Unfortunately most of the stone from the fort buildings has been robbed, mainly for the building of the 16th century castle which stands to the east of the village (see Plate 2).
- 3.2.3 At 2 acres (0.8ha) in size, the Roman Fort at Drumburgh, or *Congavata/Coggabata* as the Romans knew it, was one of the smallest on Hadrian's Wall. The only classical reference to the fort at Drumburgh is contained in the *Notitia Dignitatum* of the early-fifth century, where the Roman name for the station is recorded as *Congauata*, between the entries for *Aballaba* (Burgh-by-Sands, Cumbria) and the tentatively identified station *Axeloduno* (Netherby, Cumbria). A recently discovered Roman vessel in Staffordshire, recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme, lists Drumburgh as *Coggabata* and this is probably the correct ancient form of the name.
- 3.2.4 The fourth century garrison is recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as *Cohors II Lingonum*, a 500 strong infantry unit enlisted from among the *Lingones* tribe of Upper Germany. The unit is also attested at other forts in northern England at Ilkley in North Yorkshire (*RIB* 635), and at Moresby on the Cumbrian Coast (*RIB* 798 *et* 800). The

entry from the *Notitia Dignitatum* is perhaps over generous however, because it would be quite impossible for the small fort at Drumburgh to have accommodated this large number of soldiers. A Roman Altar can still be seen at the front of the castle (see Plate 3), the inscription long since eroded away; an 1870 transaction states that an inscription on one of the stones at Drumburgh Castle, gave the name of the auxiliary cavalry unit as the *Ala Augusta*. These troops garrisoned the much larger fort at Old Carlisle, 7 miles to the south of Drumburgh and it is entirely possible that they did also garrison *Congavata/Coggabata* for a period. In *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, three incomplete inscribed stones from Drumburgh are recorded; the first states the VII cohort (RIB2051), the second states the VIII cohort (RIB2052), and the third simply bears the name of one the builders, *Vindomorucus* or *Morucus* (RIB2053).

- 3.2.5 Roman defences were seen as essential at Drumburgh, because at very low tide it was, and still is, possible to wade and swim over from Scotland. (Bedoyere 2000), (see also Plate 7). There appears to have been two phases of construction at the fort; the first being a turf and timber fort which predates the building of Hadrian's Wall and is probably associated with the earlier Stanegate defences, and the second was a smaller stone built fort which was a later edition to and whose north wall is formed by Hadrian's Wall. A harbour was possibly in use during the fort's life and several Roman roads branch off from the fort, one quite significantly to the older and larger Trajanic fort at Kirkbride, 4 miles to the southwest.
- 3.2.6 ***The Medieval Period:*** Towards the western edge of the village lies Drumburgh Castle. Originally a 13th century tower house built by the Dacre family and largely rebuilt in 1515, the building now functions as a farmhouse. According to Pevsner the eastern end wall was the original wall of the castle but this had to be taken down and rebuilt in facsimile in the 1970s. A large earthwork in the northwest corner of the roman fort is thought to represent a medieval re-defence of the fort. There is as yet no dating evidence for these earthworks, which could date from the post roman period through to the 13th century when Drumburgh Castle was constructed. Apart from Drumburgh Castle there is no other surviving evidence of medieval occupation in the village.

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

- 3.3.1 There has been interest in the fort at Drumburgh since *John Horsley's* survey in 1730 and there are various vague references by the *Dacre* family who built the castle here. However, it did not receive serious archaeological investigation until the 1899 excavations by F. Haverfield. Professor Haverfield excavated 16 trenches overall but was unfortunate in only finding one corner of the fort. Haverfield reports:

"The masonry which we found is much ruined. The Great Wall and the west wall of the fort have been 'spoiled' down to their foundation courses or even removed wholly. In each wall the surviving foundation course is faced with large thin red-sandstone slabs...At the corner of the fort, where the Great Wall and the fort meet, the foundations seem to be bonded together."

3.3.2 A limited amount of Roman pottery was found and was useful in dating the site but Haverfield's findings were generally inconclusive, himself being confused by a large medieval ditch running straight through the northwest corner of the fort, later attributed to a medieval enclosure associated with the nearby farm The Grange. Haverfield did make the important discovery of a Roman granary building, also in the northwest corner of the fort and he found that the fort was in fact attached to Hadrian's Wall itself. There are only two other examples of this along Hadrian's Wall, one being at Wallsend, the other Greatchesters, and curiously enough, the building of these forts appear to be contemporary with each other.

3.3.3 The true extent of the fort was not actually discovered until 1947. Excavations were conducted by Richmond and Simpson in the 1930s and 40s, in an attempt to trace the course of the *Vallum*. To their surprise they found that the Hadrianic fort was situated within a much larger fort – '*not necessarily Roman*'.

"...the stone-wall fort at Drumburgh...would appear to have been substantially smaller than the earthwork fort which preceded it. The west defences of the early fort were not obliterated...The south ditch of the early fort...was deliberately filled with whitish clay from its own rampart, and it is therefore not impossible that the stone fort impinged upon it, though actual remains, if they existed may have been destroyed in the lowering of the surface already described."

3.3.4 The stone wall which replaced the Turf Wall was examined:

"The further fact emerges that, while the turf wall was here built in normal turf-work the associated fort had a grey clay rampart. The fort was therefore not of one built with the Turf-Wall but additional to it. Its small size (316 by 270 ft) and its intermediate position between the large forts of Burgh-By-Sands and Bowness will further suggest that it does not belong as they do, to the first series of additions but...added still later in the light of experience."

3.3.5 The report ends with a reference to the Drumburgh-Kirkbride road. It had no special significance at that time and was assumed to be heading for the fort at Beckfoot on the coast via Abbeytown. There was nothing illogical in this, as a cross-country road would be linking two Hadrianic sites. However in 1976 the fort at Kirkbride was discovered after years of speculation. Pottery types indicated a Trajanic foundation and the presence of only small amounts of black-burnished ware and the evidence of dismantling suggests the garrison was moved to Bowness, to a new fort on the wall, between 122 and 124 – the '*fort decision*' which also added Beckfoot to the line on the coast. Therefore it would be illogical to expect a road link in the first place to a fort not yet built, and in the second place from a fort about to be demolished and abandoned. On the other hand, as Richard Bellhouse suggests in 1989:

"The Drumburgh-Kirkbride road may be seen as a clue: it suggests there was an outpost fort on the hilltop at Drumburgh before the building of Hadrian's Wall."

3.3.6 Another 'clue' is the turf itself; as Richmond and Simpson point out, wall turf was different from fort turf. If the early fort was there before the turf wall, why was it so

nicely lined up with it, and why was there a butt end to the fort ditch on the west side, with a gap of 32 ft between the ditch end and the Turf Wall?

- 3.3.7 The Roman Latin name for, presumably, the stone fort is listed in the *Notitia Dignitatum* as *CONGAVATA* which was interpreted by Richmond and Simpson as meaning ‘scooped out’ (Richmond and Simpson 1947). This could describe the appearance of the site at the time of the building of the stone fort. The evidence for scooping out is in Richmond and Simpson’s report, p10, in the stackyard of The Grange:

“Here the ditch was in due course found, but two new features presented themselves. The ditch had been reduced 10ft in width by a systematic lowering or removal of the adjacent original surface at an uncertain period. Before this happened, however, the ditch had been deliberately obliterated by a filling of tightly-packed whitish-grey clay at a time when not much silt had gathered in its bottom, and therefore certainly during Roman times and presumably not very long after it had been dug.”

- 3.3.8 According to Bellhouse to reduce ditch width from 15 to 10 ft requires the removal of soil to a depth of 3 feet. If this was indeed part of a ‘scooped out’ area significant enough to give the stone fort its name then what could the soil have been used for? If it was for the turf wall the clay fort must have been there first.
- 3.3.9 It seems that for whatever reason, the army needed a small outpost fort on the summit of Drumburgh hill, probably because of its outlook over the inner Solway; easily available grey clayey marine alluvium from the marsh was used to build the defences, and a lightly constructed gravel road connected the fort to Kirkbride. If plans for the new frontier had been in existence at that time the fort builders would have known exactly where the curtain was to pass over the hill and could have lined up the new fort with its north rampart on the line, and completed the circuit of the defences in grey clay which would later be incorporated in the turf of the Turf Wall. When the curtain was completed the fort had served its purpose and part at least was obliterated.
- 3.3.10 More recent thinking on the matter by the late Barri Jones and Richard Bellhouse, suggests it more likely that the clay fort was part of the pre-wall period organisation rather than an addition to the wall itself. Many forts north of the Tyne-Solway line were abandoned in the early years of the second century and a sort of frontier emerged on the line of the east-west road between Corbridge and Carlisle – *The Stanegate* – with five forts on it dating probably from the end of the first century. More forts were added under Trajan and work on this frontier may have continued into Hadrian’s reign.
- 3.3.11 No further work was carried out until 1999 when Carlisle Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by North West Water to undertake a watching brief during ground-works in and around the village. Forty trenches were excavated, with very little archaeology present in any of the trenches. No evidence was recorded of a *vicus*, with only 1 sherd of Roman pottery being recorded from all of the trenches. A trench situated over the projected south/eastern corner of the fort contained no evidence of the fort whatsoever. The reason for this lack of evidence for the fort appears to be major

terracing in the south/ eastern half of the fort, which may have resulted in its total removal in the area around Overdale House.

- 3.3.12 In 2003, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at Drumburgh House. The only significant deposits were of 14th century date; no significant Roman deposits were recorded. Two additional trenches were excavated as part of this scheme to define the archaeological potential in the area of a proposed extension to Drumburgh House. The trenches positioned to the rear (north) of Drumburgh House located the probable line of the Hadrian's Wall ditch and the position of the berm between the wall and the ditch. The archaeology was heavily truncated but the presumed remains of the berm and associated cobbling were only 0.10m below the present ground surface. Further trenching by NPAL in 2004 failed to uncover any evidence of archaeology.

4. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

- 4.1.1 Summary results of the watching brief are presented below. The context list is reproduced in Appendix 1, with Figure 2 showing the locations of the watching brief and Figure 3 the location of the archaeological features.
- 4.1.2 **TRENCH 1:** Trench 1 was located immediately in front of the south wall of Drumburgh House (see Plate 10). It was opened 5m from the west corner of the house and 0.4m from the east corner and had a width of 0.8m. It curved from corner to corner in a semi-circle, protruding 4m south at its central point. The subsoil (101) comprised of a mixed stone and broken brick rubble layer, containing some post-medieval/modern ceramic pottery (a large broken storage pot), a large quantity of post-medieval/modern broken glass and bottles and a small amount of animal bone (see Plate 11), max depth 1.2m. This was overlain by the present pebbled modern drive surface (100). No significant archaeology was observed.
- 4.1.3 **TRENCH 2:** Trench 2 was situated 4.3m north of and running parallel to the north wall of Drumburgh House. Its western terminus was situated 0.7m west of the western corner of Drumburgh House and the eastern terminus was 6.8m east from the western corner of Drumburgh House. The trench measured 7.5m (length) x 2.3m (max width) x 2.8m (max depth); compact natural red boulder clay was reached beneath this level (103). The earliest deposit was a dark grey-brown clayey-silt (105), which was 1.2m deep x 2.4m wide, and was within a cut into the natural boulder clay, which has been interpreted as a ditch cut [104] of probable Roman date. This context was sampled (environmental sample <1>). The ditch was aligned roughly north-south and was a classic broad U-shaped design. Well preserved worked timbers of probable Roman date were found in the ditch (environmental sample <03>), aligned northeast-southwest, at a depth of 2m below ground level and 1.5m east of the western terminus of Trench 2 (see Plate 15). Unworked but fairly flat green Lakeland slate stones were observed at the base of the ditch (see Plate 14). This layer was sampled for evidence of environmental archaeology <01>. Layer (105) was sealed by a mid grey-brown clayey-silt (106), which in turn was sealed by a fairly sandy-loam modern rubble layer (107) which reached ground level. Context (106) was also sampled (environmental sample <2>).
- 4.1.4 **TRENCH 3:** Trench 3 was situated 4.7m north of Drumburgh House and joined on to trench 2 at right angles on its eastern edge (see Plate 17). The trench measured 6.4m (length) x 1.7m (width) x 2.6m (max depth) and was aligned north-south. The trench comprised of the same stratigraphic sequence as found in Trench 2, however, the natural red boulder clay (103) inclined to a greater depth towards the north end of the trench and fell dramatically at 9.1m north of Drumburgh House. At this point the natural was cut by a very large ditch (see Plate 19) and fell in a wide V-shape from 1.5m below ground level to 2.6m. The ditch was aligned roughly east-west, ran throughout Trench 5, and had a matching cut which was visible in Trench 4 at 9.8m

north of the north-west corner of Drumburgh House. This feature has been interpreted as the probable cut of the Hadrian's Wall ditch [108] and extended on the same alignment to known sections of the Hadrian's Wall ditch as observed in fields immediately to the east and west of the property (see Plates 7 and 8). Unfortunately the ditch stratigraphy was virtually impossible to establish in any great detail due to the very deep and narrow excavations of the trench and waterlogged conditions; however it was observed that the ditch cut began at around 1.4m from present ground level giving it a total depth of 1.2m within the area of excavation. Although the observed width of the ditch was of 2m within the area of excavation, the northern edge of Trench 5 would have had to have been extended considerably to appreciate the true profile of the ditch.

- 4.1.5 **TRENCH 4:** Trench 4 was situated approximately 7.6m west of and exactly parallel to Trench 3 (see Plate 16). Its measurements were 6.7m (length) x 1.1m (width) x 1.9m (depth) and it was aligned north-south. It had the same stratigraphic sequence as Trench 3 and was cut by the Hadrian's Wall ditch [108] at 1.4m south of its northwest corner where the natural red boulder clay (103) fell from 1.1m below present ground level to 1.9m.
- 4.1.6 **TRENCH 5:** Trench 5 was situated 11.2m north of Drumburgh House and was parallel to Trench 2 (see Plate 18). Its measurements were 10.1m (length) x 1.3m (width) x 2.6m (max depth) and it was aligned east-west. It had the same stratigraphic sequence as Trench 4, but was cut by the Hadrian's Wall ditch [108] throughout its length.
- 4.1.7 **TRENCH 6:** Trench 6 was opened along the southwest boundary of Drumburgh House and The Grange. It measured 33.8m (length) x 0.8m (width) x 0.6m (depth) and was aligned north-south. The south end of the trench was 1m further south and 0.8m further east than the northeast corner of The Grange. The trench extended northwards on the exact alignment of the property boundary. At the southern end of the trench some loose sandstone foundation blocks were observed for a length of about 4m indicating that the present boundary wall, which ends exactly where trench 6 begins, once continued for this distance. A few sherds of post-medieval pottery were found in the topsoil (110) of the same location.
- 4.1.8 **TRENCH 7:** Trench 7 was located immediately to the north of and running parallel to the north wall of Drumburgh House, 6.3m in length and 2.4m (max) width (see Plates 20 and 21). At an average depth of 1m below ground level, a significant portion of Hadrian's Wall remains [109] were discovered on an alignment of roughly northwest-southeast, running directly under the southeast corner of Drumburgh House (see Plate 21). The wall comprised a mixture of roughly hewn sandstones (on average 0.35 x 0.25m in size), Lazonby stone from the Lake District and other stones (probably from the nearby beach); to form what appears to be the central rubble-core of Hadrian's Wall. There were very few dressed stones, which would have lined either side of the wall originally. The existing portions of the wall measured 5.4m (length) x 2.4m (width) x 0.5-0.7m (depth) and disappear underneath the northeast corner of Drumburgh House. The wall has been destroyed under the remaining width of the house due to the building of a cellar in the northeast corner, probably when the house

was built. Several sherds of medieval pottery, iron nails, a small piece of lead and a small amount of animal bone – including a horses tooth, were found on top of the wall stones in context (106), which was sampled for evidence of environmental archaeology. Further to this, a typical bronze Roman ‘pennanular’ broach was discovered by metal detector in this context (small find no.01), along with a small metal clothes/sewing pin (small find no.02). This layer was then sealed by context (107) up to ground level (see Trench 2 description). After the archaeological watching brief was complete, the remains of Hadrian’s Wall were left in-situ and preserved by a layer of breathable sheeting, which was covered by a deep layer of sand.

5. FINDS REPORT

5.1 FINDS REPORT

- 5.1.1 The pottery finds and other material have been washed, marked and packaged in accordance with the standard guidelines and under the supervision of Frank Giecco.

5.2 THE MEDIEVAL POTTERY

- 5.2.1 A total of 3 sherds of medieval pottery dated to around the 13th/14th century were recovered from the evaluation. All three were recovered from trench 7 (106) and comprised of 2 fragments of green glazed pottery possibly from a jug and 1 fragment of red gritty ware.

5.3 THE POST MEDIEVAL POTTERY

- 5.3.1 The post-medieval pottery varies in date from the 18th century to the 20th century. A total of 33 sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from Trench 1 (101), 27 of which were large sherds of blackware and 6 sherds of brownware, dated to around the 18th/19th centuries. Nine sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from Trench 6 (110) all of which are dated to 19/20th centuries. Two sherds of pottery were recovered from Trench 7 (106) both dated to 19th century.

5.4 GLASS

- 5.4.1 235 sherds of glass were recovered from Trench 1 (101). 232 of the sherds recovered appear to be fragments of a large glass vessel or vessels comprised of clear glass with onion skin effect peeling. The glass was post-medieval in date, possibly as early as the 18th century. The remaining 3 sherds recovered were 19th/20th century in date. 2 sherds of bottle glass were recovered from Trench 6 (110), both of which are green bottle-glass dated to the 19th/20th centuries.

5.5 METAL

- 5.5.1 A total of 11 fragments of Fe (iron) were recovered from the evaluation. 9 fragments of Fe were recovered from the spoil (U/S) by using a metal detector. The remaining 2 fragments were recovered from Trench 7 (106). One fragment of Pb (lead) was also recovered from Trench 7 (106).

5.6 SMALL FINDS

- 5.6.1 A total of 2 Small Finds were recovered from Drumburgh. SF no.1 was a small Cu alloy pennanular brooch with Fe pin. The brooch could be as early as the Roman period. SF no.2 was a small Cu alloy pin. Both small finds were recovered from Trench 7 (106).

Context	Trench	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
101	1	Pottery	33	3.739	Post-Medieval
101	1	Bottle Glass	235	2.773	Post-Medieval
110	6	Pottery	9	0.150	Post-Medieval
110	6	Bottle Glass	2	0.105	Post-Medieval
106	7	Pottery	3	0.077	Medieval
106	7	Pottery	3	0.016	Post-Medieval
106	7	Fe	2	0.013	Post-Medieval
106	7	Pb	1	0.013	Unknown
U/S		Fe	9	0.120	Post-Medieval
U/S		Cu Alloy	1	0.001	Post-Medieval

Table 1: Finds by Context

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND BONE REPORT

6.1 INTRODUCTION – ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

- 6.1.1 In the area excavated, some two contexts were considered worth sampling. Both came from Trench 2. Another sample of worked wood was also taken from Trench 2 and was drawn and recorded as Sample 3. Both the whole earth samples were selected for processing in order to assess their environmental potential. This will help provide further information as to the depositional processes involved in their formation. The methodology employed required that the whole earth samples be broken down and split into their various different components. This was achieved by a combination of water washing and flotation. The recovered remains can then be assessed for content.
- 6.1.2 Flotation separates the organic, floating fraction of the sample from the heavier mineral and finds content of sands, silts, clays, stones, artefacts and waterlogged material. Heavy soil and sediment content measuring less than 1mm falls through the retentive mesh to settle on the bottom of the tank. Flotation produces a ‘flot’ and a ‘residue’ for examination, whilst the heavier sediment retained in the tank is discarded. The method relies purely on the variation in density of the recovered material to separate it from the soil matrix, allowing for the recovery of ecofacts and artefacts from the whole earth sample.
- 6.1.3 The retent, like the residue from wet sieving, will contain any larger items of bone, or artefacts. The flot or floating fraction will generally contain organic material such as plant matter, fine bones, cloth, leather and insect remains. A rapid scan at this stage will allow further recommendations to be made as to the potential for further study by entomologists or palaeobotanists, with a view to retrieving vital economic information from the samples. Favourable preservation conditions can lead to the retrieval of organic remains that may produce a valuable suite of information in respect of the depositional environment of the material, which may include anthropogenic activity, seasonality and climate and elements of the economy.

- 6.1.4 The contents of the samples are listed below in Tables 2 and 3.

SAMPLE NUMBER	CONTEXT NUMBER	SAMPLE SIZE (litres)	FLOT SIZE (cm ³)	RETENT SIZE (cm ³)
1	105	6	2	600
2	106	12	4	4000

Table 2: Details of samples and contexts

DETAILS			RETENT FRACTION								LIGHT FRACTION															
Context	Context type	Sample number	Root material	Charred wood	Waterlogged wood	Metal	Bone	Gravel	Stones	Metal droplets	Charred wood	Root material	Charred wheat	Charred oats	Charred barley	Grass	Chenopodium	Acer species	Brassica	Sambucus species	Wood fragments	Charred organic	Woody plant parts			
105	Fill	1	0	1	0	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0			
106	Fill	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0			

Table 3: contents of flot and retent residues from samples.

Key to tables: Fill = ditch, posthole or pit fill. Contents assessed by scale of richness 0 to 3. 0 = not present, 1 = present, 2 = common, 3 = abundant.

6.2 SAMPLE 1 (CONTEXT 105)

- 6.2.1 This dark grey-brown clayey-silt (105) was within a ditch cut into the natural boulder clay. This was the primary ditch fill. The retent contained stones and gravel with an amount of charred wood. Part of a metal artefact was also recovered and the head of a human femur. The flot produced a metal droplet, charred wood, root material and a seed of *Chenopodium* species. The main constituent though was wood fragments.

6.3 SAMPLE 2 (CONTEXT 106)

- 6.3.1 Layer (105) was sealed by a mid grey-brown clayey-silt (106), the secondary fill of cut [104]. The retent of this sample was made up of gravel and stones with no other inclusions. The flot contained charred wheat and small oats. There were also small amounts of moss, root material, charred wood and seeds of both *Scirpus* and *Acer* species. This material suggests that the area may have been open for a time when the *Acer* and *Scirpus* spp. were deposited.

6.4 SAMPLE 3 (CONTEXT 105)

- 6.4.1 Well preserved worked timbers of probable Roman date, were found in the ditch (environmental sample <03>) in Context 105. This material was drawn and recorded (see Figure 5).

6.5 DISCUSSION

- 6.5.1 All the samples recovered were from Trench 2. Both flot samples recovered contained seed types suggesting the ground had been left open for a period for them to become deposited. Sample 2 (Context 106) also contained some charred grain. This suggests some activity associated with grain processing in the vicinity. The material recovered from these samples proves the ditch was anthropogenic and the material recovered from it was probably Roman from the associated finds recovered.

6.6 DATING

- 6.6.1 There is enough material from the worked timber from which to get an accurate radiocarbon date. This is a consideration should the funds become available to carry out the work.

6.7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.7.1 Charred grain was recovered from one of the samples in the flot. It is obvious that there was some on site activity leading to the recovery of the charred grain but it is difficult to determine what the source of this material was given the limited information retrieved from the site.
- 6.7.2 The potential for further information being gained from the examination of this material is limited and so it is recommended that no further work be done.

6.8 VERTEBRATE REMAINS

- 6.8.1 No bone remains were recovered from the site.

6.9 MOLLUSC REMAINS

- 6.9.1 No mollusc remains were recovered from the site.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 Trenches 1 and 6 were positioned to the south of Drumburgh House and yielded no significant archaeological remains. Trench 1 was located immediately in front of the house and was probably disturbed by excavations of the cellar when the house was built in the mid 1800s. Trench 6 didn't impact upon any archaeological remains largely due to its shallow depth, and it is likely that future excavations in this area would find significant archaeology below the depth of the trench, such as the medieval archaeology found in the nearby Trench 2 by North Pennines Archaeology in 2003 (Giecco 2003).
- 7.1.2 Trench 2 contained a ditch [104] of probable early Roman date that contained worked wooden timbers and was lined by Lakeland slate stones. Lakeland slate naturally occurs some 30 miles or so to the south of Drumburgh and demonstrates the lengthy journey necessary to acquire stone for the western section of Hadrian's Wall. It is an extremely hard stone, which can only be cut in line with its grain and today is used almost exclusively as roof tiling. Due to the alignment, position and depth of ditch [104], it is possible that it predates the stone-built Hadrianic fort at Drumburgh and may belong to the initial turf and timber phase of the fort, although it would require further archaeological investigation to confirm this theory.
- 7.1.3 Trenches 3, 4 and 5 were cut by a wide V-shaped ditch feature [108]. This feature has been interpreted as the probable cut of the Hadrian's Wall ditch and extended on the same alignment to known sections of the Hadrian's Wall ditch as observed in fields immediately to the east and west of the property (see Plates 7 and 8).
- 7.1.4 Trench 7 contained an impressive section of Hadrian's Wall [109], discovered on an alignment of roughly northwest-southeast, running directly under the southeast corner of Drumburgh House (see Plate 21). The wall is perfectly aligned to the projected alignment of Hadrian's Wall as illustrated by Simpson and Richmond in 1947 (see Figure 4) which is still used on modern Ordnance Survey maps. Although the wall remains are missing the original dressed facing stones, which were robbed out in the medieval period and used as building material in the nearby castle, they still represent a significant and well preserved section of Hadrian's Wall. Sherds of medieval pottery found on the wall imply a medieval looting of stone.
- 7.1.5 Finally, the great depth of subsoil around Drumburgh House was unanticipated and surprising and is likely to have two explanations. Firstly, the deep topsoil could be a result of spoil from the excavation of the cellar when the house was built in the mid 1800s establishing made-up land around the house. Secondly, the Roman levels which reached 2.6m (max depth) could have been an attempt to lower the land level to extract clay and turf for the building of the first fort on the site. In 1947 Simpson and

Richmond suggest that the Roman name for Drumburgh, *Congavata*, could be translated as meaning 'scooped out', a name which does seem appropriate.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.2.1 Intact remains of Hadrian's Wall and the wall ditch are extremely likely to continue eastwards and westwards from Drumburgh House, the projection of which is shown on all modern Ordnance Survey maps. In addition, the remains of an early Roman ditch, possibly relating to the pre-Hadrianic turf and timber fort at Drumburgh, are also likely to continue on a north-south or northeast-southwest alignment. Due to the discovery of archaeological remains of national significance, all areas of land liable for future development in and around the vicinity of Drumburgh House should be considered for further archaeological work.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX AND LEVELS

Context Number	Category	Interpretation
100	Topsoil	Pebbled modern drive surface
101	Deposit	Mixed stone and broken brick rubble layer
103	Natural	Compact natural red boulder clay
104	Cut	Cut of probable Roman ditch
105	Deposit	Dark grey-brown clayey-silt
106	Deposit	Mid grey-brown clayey-silt
107	Deposit	Sandy-loam modern rubble layer
108	Cut	Probable cut of the Hadrian's Wall ditch
109	Masonry	Hadrian's Wall
110	Topsoil	Mid-dark brown silt

Level No.	Trench No.	Height above sea level
1	7	21.34
2	7	20.34
3	7	20.64
4	7	19.94
5	7	21.69
6	7	22.14

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES AND PLATES
