

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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**FOR
SLEEPERZ LTD
NZ 2352 6416**

Matthew Town, BA, MA
North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
Nenthead Mines Heritage Centre
Nenthead
Alston
Cumbria CA9 3PD
Tel: (01434) 382045
Fax: (01434) 382294
Mobile: 07920 105819
Email: m.town@nparchaeology.co.uk

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2007, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Sleeperz Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation at the Former Parcels Office, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear (NGR NZ 2352 6416). The work followed an initial desk-based assessment undertaken by NPA in 2006, which located a total of 23 sites from the HER and other sources in close proximity to the development site (Peters and Wooler 2006). Roman structures are known to survive nearby, and of particular concern were the remains of Hadrian's Wall, which has been located directly opposite the site, as well as the Roman fort and possible *vicus* which lies to the east. In addition, important medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains may survive sub-surface. Prior to the construction of the depot in 1906, housing and a former public house (the Talbot Inn), with a courtyard to the rear (Dawson's Court), known to date to at least 1736, occupied part of the development footprint. Furthermore, the site lies close to the other medieval sites such as the Carmelite Friary, the Hospital of Mary the Virgin and Newcastle's Town Walls. As a consequence, the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer requested an archaeological evaluation of the site, consisting of a total of four 4m by 1.5m trenches. As the Parcels Office was in a poor state of repair, these had to be excavated avoiding areas of water damage to the floor above, as well as the foundations of the building, so that possible collapses could be averted. The trenches were cut through the concrete floor of the Parcels Office, and all excavation was undertaken under electric lighting, as the building was in near darkness.

The results of the evaluation were mixed. Trenches 1 and 2 had been positioned to sample areas known to have been the location of housing, demolished by 1906. Trench 1 was located in what originally was a covered walk-way adjacent to the Talbot Inn, and therefore may have had undisturbed archaeological deposits beneath. Trench 2 was within the footprint of buildings, but was thought might possibly provide evidence for the dating of the housing on the site. Unfortunately, both trenches only succeeded in uncovering large quantities of rubble, indicating that the houses had extensive cellars, though Trench 1 did identify several undated cellar walls, some of which were constructed of sandstone. These trenches could not be fully recorded due to their dangerous unstable state.

In contrast, Trenches 3 and 4 did succeed in identifying significant archaeological remains. Trench 4, which had been positioned in order to sample the original location of the Westgate Road prior to the alteration of its alignment, uncovered the original setts for the road, lying underneath the demolition rubble of the former housing. The setts were truncated at the eastern end of the trench by a number of services. The setts appeared to overlie earlier cruder road surfaces, presumably of early post-medieval date. These in turn were located above an extensive deposit of late medieval soil, which contained a number of sherds of medieval pottery of 13th to 15th century date. The medieval soil overlay a large sandstone culvert, which crossed the trench in an east-west direction. The purpose of the culvert is unknown, but may have served as a water-management feature, or a drain. Trench 3 lay in the approximate area of Dawson's Court, an area again potentially undisturbed. Beneath the demolition rubble of the former housing, a layer of medieval soil, broadly 14th century in date, was identified. A pit had been cut from this horizon, containing three fills, all with high organic content. The pit had a series of timber planks lining the edge of the cut, and a broken but nearly intact medieval jug was recovered from the pit, also broadly 14th century in date. Beneath the medieval layer was a Roman layer, which produced several fragments of 2nd to 3rd century Roman pottery. The layer sealed a small pit or posthole, presumably also of Roman date. The Roman layer overlay the natural drift geology.

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The presence of Roman and medieval archaeology on the site is significant, and any disturbance should be mitigated against, either through preservation *in-situ* or through excavation. The remnants of buildings and road surfaces represent a rare preservation of an early post-medieval streetscape on the site, and should also be examined if the site is to be excavated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Norman Davies of Sleeperz Ltd for commissioning the project, and for his assistance throughout the fieldwork. Thanks are also due to: Loughlin O' Gorman, Project Engineer for Capita Symonds Structures, for providing the structural survey and commenting on the project; and Danny O'Toole, Dermot Skelly and Bob Finch, Network Rail, for facilitating access to the building. North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Jennifer Morrison, Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer, Newcastle City Council, for all her help throughout the project, and to Jacqui Huntley, English Heritage Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science, for her advice on the environmental sampling. Robin Taylor-Wilson, of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, is also thanked for providing an interim report on the archaeological evaluation at 1-8 Westgate Road. The groundworks were ably undertaken by North Pennines Heritage Ltd, under the capable direction of Chris Reid, Project Manager for the company.

The evaluation was undertaken by Tony Liddell, Cat Peters, and Matthew Town. The report was written by Matthew Town. The finds were assessed by Jenny Vaughn (NCAS), Jo Beaty and Frank Giecco. The environmental samples were assessed by Patricia Shaw. The drawings were produced by Cat Peters, with the pottery and timber illustrations by Frances Wood. The project was managed by Matthew Town, Senior Project Officer for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Juliet Reeves.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Newcastle City Council were consulted regarding a planning application submitted for a proposed development of a hotel on the site of the Former Parcels Office, also known as the S&T Stores Building, located on Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear (NGR NZ 2352 6416) (Figure 1). Following initial advice from the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were commissioned by Sleeperz to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of the site, and an archaeological building recording of Parcels Office and associated railway arches (Peters and Wooler 2006). The site is located within close proximity (c. 150m to the west) of *Pons Aelius* Roman Fort and lies within Hadrian's Wall corridor. Hadrian's Wall is unscheduled at this point but is designated as part of the Unesco World Heritage Site. The assessment concluded that the development area lay on the possible line of the Military Way associated with Hadrian's Wall, and could also impact on the former extent of the *vicus* and cemetery which surrounded the Roman fort. The site could also impact on an Anglo-Saxon Cemetery which lies in close proximity, and further medieval archaeology was possible as the site lies within the medieval town walls. The site also lies close to the Carmelite Friary and cemetery and the Hospital of St. Mary the Virgin. In addition, a row of small buildings and a public house (The Talbot Inn), forming part of Dawson's Court, was built on the site before 1736, and was demolished in 1906 with the construction of the Parcels Office. Consequently, Jennifer Morrison advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation would be necessary prior to the proposed development.
- 1.1.2 A total of four 4m by 1.5m linear trial trenches were excavated, in order to provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals. The principal objective of this evaluation was to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of any archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed.
- 1.1.3 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document outlining the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential of the area, an assessment of the impact of the proposed development, and recommendations for further work.

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 Sleeperz Ltd, for an archaeological evaluation of the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer. Following acceptance of the project design, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the client to undertake the work. 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 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

2.2.1 The archaeological evaluation consisted of the excavation of four linear trial trenches measuring 4m x 1.5m (Figure 2). This was in order to produce a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains, detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals. A recent structural survey of the Parcels Office (Capita Symonds 2006) had recommended that all the trenches be positioned in order to avoid: the cellars of the former Talbot Inn; the drainage gulleys and manholes in the existing floor; the raised suspended floor; the potentially live pipework along the western edge of the building; any other services; and the two lift pits. Also the trenches were not to be located beneath the areas of water damage on the first floor. The trenches were also to be kept away from the basements of the adjacent 'Tokyo' public house and offices and the railway arches and existing foundations. The location of the trenches was finalised between all parties before excavation commenced, and the locations of the trenches were surveyed in by Total Station Theodolite.

2.2.2 The trench outlines were cut through the concrete floor with an abrasive wheel, and all concrete and overburden was removed with a 3.5 tonne 360° mini-digger with a toothless ditching bucket, down to the first significant archaeological deposit. The trenches were subject to continuous scanning using a CAT scan, to check for services. All subsequent excavation was by hand, and the total depth of trench did not exceed 1.5m below ground level for the Health and Safety reasons. Each trench was then manually cleaned and any putative archaeological features investigated.

2.2.3 In summary, the main objectives of the excavation were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they are 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.

- 2.2.4 Photography was undertaken using two Canon EOS 500 Single Lens Reflex (SLR) cameras, and Nikon D40 Digital Camera. A photographic record was made using digital photography, 3200 ISO Black and White Print and 1600 ISO Colour Print film. Colour Print film was used in lieu of Colour Slide due to the higher film speeds available, following verbal agreement with the Tyne and Wear Archaeology Officer.
- 2.2.5 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (IFA 1994).

2.3 ARCHIVE

- 2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to the County Historic Environment Record, where viewing will be available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA 07 TPO-B.
- 2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology and Newcastle City Council support 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 evaluation will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The development site lies within an urban context, in the centre of the city of Newcastle upon Tyne, c.50m to the east of Central Station, the mainline railway station serving the city, and c.100m north of the River Tyne (Figure 1). The site is bounded to the north by Westgate Road, a Public House and the Bolbec Hall; to the east by a subway leading to Forth Street to the south; to the south, by railway tracks; and to the west by car parking. The site is a former Parcels Office, and is currently disused and derelict. The building has been empty since the early 1990s.
- 3.1.2 The natural subsoil of the area consists of a glacial drift of boulder clay, the Lodgement Till, which overlies carboniferous rocks containing coal measures at a depth of 50m. The Till survives to a maximum depth of 30m, but is 10m thick in most areas. Post glacial streams which flow into the River Tyne have cut deep narrow gorges through the boulder clay and solid rock, though most were culverted in the 19th century.

3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 Most of the earliest historical evidence for the site is dominated by the Romano-British period (c. AD 43- AD 410), and the fort of *Pons Aelius* and Hadrian's Wall. Limited evidence of pre-Roman activity in the vicinity of the site does exist, however, in the form of ard marks surviving beneath Roman occupation layers, found during excavations at the castle keep to the east of the site; cord rig and two small east-west ditches were also uncovered (Inkster and Speak 1997).
- 3.2.2 The fort lies in the present location of the castle keep, approximately 150m east of the site, and has been extensively excavated over the years, though mostly isolated sections have only ever been identified. It is known that the stone fort was built in the late 2nd or early 3rd century, though it has not been possible to locate all of the walls of the fort, nor to determine what the relationship was between the fort and Hadrian's Wall. A surviving part of a Roman road was discovered in front of the Black Gate in 1972, and two wide ditches, sealed beneath the west granary and the *Via Principalis* of the fort produced Hadrianic pottery, although the function and date of the ditches themselves could not be ascertained. Later on, the north-east corner of the fort was located beneath the Clack Gate (Daniels 1989). The location of the *vicus* is uncertain, although various unstratified Roman finds found in the vicinity of Clavering Place have led to suggestions that this represents the civilian settlement (e.g. Mabbitt 2004). Between January and February 2007, PCA Ltd undertook an evaluation at 1-8 Westgate Road, within the listed railway arches. Only limited excavation was possible, but the evaluation succeeded in uncovering cobble spreads and drains, walls, and pits of Roman date, as well as a number of medieval features. An assemblage of Roman pottery, including Roman coarse wares, fine wares, amphorae and samian wares, was recovered. Roman 'small finds' included a coin, a lead spindle whorl and a finely decorated bone pin. Although precise interpretation of the archaeological remains has

not been finalised, the excavated evidence points to significant Roman occupation at the site. Whether these remains relate to *vicus* settlement close to the fort or to the military installation itself is not certain. The range of artefactual material recovered is indicative of high status, possibly military, Roman period settlement. The various surfaces recorded could represent yards or roads, possibly associated with defined properties in a civilian settlement, as identified at other *vici* in the Roman North, or could represent areas of hardstanding for military activity, for example parade grounds (PCA 2007).

- 3.2.3 The development site lies within the Hadrian's Wall Corridor, a World Heritage Site, with the wall broadly following the alignment of the modern Westgate Road. Recent excavation (McKelvey *et al* 2004) revealed an offset flagged foundation of the characteristic Broad Wall construction at the site of the former Hertz Building. This shows that the line of Hadrian's Wall follows a gradual south-easterly route towards the Roman fort, just to the north of the development area, on the opposite side of the road to the Parcels Office.
- 3.2.4 Evidence of an Early Medieval (c. AD 410 – AD 1066) Christian cemetery is known to have occupied part of the area of the medieval castle, lying over and probably also within the Roman fort. Between 1977 and 1992, a total number of 660 burials were excavated to the west and north of the castle keep, beneath, and to the north of, the railway viaduct (Harbottle 1996). Some skeletons were complete, whilst many had been heavily disturbed by later graves and by the developments in the area over the centuries. The burials were particularly concentrated on the north side of the keep, where up to six layers of graves were detected. Most of the graves lay in a horizontal band between the ruins of the Roman fort and the base of the clay rampart of the Norman Castle. The few artefacts that were recovered from this cemetery suggest a date of c. AD 700. The cemetery appears to have continued in use until the construction of the stone castle, which began in 1168. The true extent of the cemetery is not known, as no cemetery boundary has ever been located. A chapel associated with the cemetery is thought to have also existed on the site of the castle, later replaced by St. Nicholas Cathedral.
- 3.2.5 The Later Medieval (c. AD 1066 – AD 1485) castle was built in AD 1080. The population of Newcastle at this time was probably less than 1,000. By the end of the 14th century, the population was around 4,000. Until the bridging of Lort Burn, the settlement was quite difficult to move around, with other deep dunes such as the Pandon Burn and Enick Burn fragmenting the town. The construction of the Medieval Tyne Crossing and Low Bridge provided easy access over Lort Burn, paving the pattern of settlement in the area. The major monastic sites, St Mary the Virgin in Westgate (built in 1154), and the Carmelite Friary (built in 1307), both helped to further structure the medieval settlement pattern of Newcastle upon Tyne. It is thought that the Carmelite Friary was bounded by Clavering Place, Hanover Street, Orchard Street and another point, somewhere beneath the railway. Parts of a church have been observed beneath, and to the south of, Forth Street. A south cloister with lean-to walkways and a south range have also been observed beneath the Royal Mail Car Park, to the south of the development site. Much of Medieval Newcastle was removed with the onset of the Industrial era, in the 1880s.

- 3.2.6 Until 1750, the only link between Newcastle and Carlisle was a bridle way which was impassable for wheeled vehicles. Any goods needing to be transported between the two cities were restricted to the carrying capacity of pack horses (Rankin and Wood 1980, 5). Under the direction of General Wade, a Military Road was constructed linking the Tyne and Solway, following the Roman wall for much of its length, and resulting in the journey between the two cities taking three days by cart. In 1827 Westgate Road, which follows its line, was known as Westgate Street, and was described as *“a long, airy and pleasant street, and contains several very handsome houses, having gardens or grass plots behind. It is chiefly inhabited by clergy and gentry and indeed it seems all along to have been inhabited by such more than others”* (MacKenzie 1827, 170). On the southern side of the eastern end of the road was a back yard called Dawson’s Court, parts of which occupy the development area.
- 3.2.7 In 1845, an Act of Parliament sanctioned the building of the Central Station, with the final building opening in 1847. In the 1870s and 1890s, the station was extended several times, with the construction of arches to carry the extensions. It is clear from the First and Second Edition Ordnance Survey Maps that the extension of the railway affected the environs of the development site substantially. The procedure of the procurement of land in this area by the railways was much aided by the co-operative nature of the Newcastle Corporation, who saw the work as a programme of civic improvement (Fawcett 1999, 104). Speaking of property at the foot of Westgate Road, one councillor stated *“if nothing more was done than the removal of that rookery of immorality and the large number of thieves and vagabonds who live in the neighbourhood ... it would be a great advantage”*. This area of Westgate Road had clearly suffered since the 1827 description, the rise of industrialisation having led to the need for poorer and more tightly packed housing for workers. By 1883, the buildings at the eastern end of Westgate Road were at least 140 years old and, seemingly, in a bad state of repair. Dawson’s Court, which appears to have been a mainly residential area, had three public houses; the Turk’s Head Inn, the Locomotive Inn and the Talbot Inn (the latter of which formed part of the Development area in 1862 on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map). Most of these had disappeared by 1891 to make way for the arches, though a small section, including the Talbot Inn, was spared.
- 3.2.8 In 1906, the ‘NER Parcels Department’, the present day Parcel Office, was built. The new Parcels Department of the Station made some use of the arches below the station, but it was displayed to the outside world *“in the rather incongruous form of a tall wooden frontage of entirely functional aspect, finishing in three gables”* (Fawcett 1999, 112). The Talbot Inn and remaining housing was demolished in order to create this. Memories of the Parcels Department from between 1958 and 1962 give some idea of how busy and important this department was in the station, and helps explain why such a large building was necessary, *“The parcels office at Newcastle Central... was on Westgate Road and was a cavernous wooden building full of barrows piled high with parcels of all shapes and sizes, and many staff coming and going with more barrows. [...] The 'Central' was a very exciting and fairly noisy place to work and the platforms were often full of barrows piled high with mail sacks and these would be hauled about by small motorised units. [...] These were usually dealt with at night, and loading or unloading a railway mail van was a frenzied operation. [...] Hoists*

existed to move the barrows from the platform to a lower level where they would be dealt with by Post Office employees” (Makepeace 2006). The office closed in 1991.



Plate 1: The Parcels Office in 1977

4. EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 All the trenches on the site were cut through the ground-floor slab, constructed of concrete [100], using an abrasive wheel. The concrete appeared to have been laid down in two distinct episodes; the lower layer clearly dated to the construction of the Parcels Office in 1906, as crushed brick and other demolition rubble had been used as the aggregate in its construction. A more recent layer of concrete has since been spread over the earlier layer, forming the current ground surface. The concrete extended to up to 0.30m in thickness. On cutting the trenches, the overburden was then machine stripped down to the first significant archaeological deposit, whereupon the remainder of the deposits were hand-excavated; Trenches 1 and 2 only yielded demolition rubble, and as such this was cleared using careful machining. Natural drift geology was only identified in Trench 3. All trench locations are depicted in Figure 2; detailed plans and sections for all the trenches are depicted in Figures 3 to 6.



Plate 2: Cutting Trenches 1 and 3

4.2 TRENCH 1

- 4.2.1 Trench 1 was 4m long by 1.50m wide, and was orientated in a north-east by south-west direction (Figure 4). The trench was positioned in the northern corner of the evaluation area. The maximum depth of the trench was over 2m.
- 4.2.2 Initial machining removed a quantity of demolition rubble (115) across the length of the trench, exposing a series of walls [116], [117] and [118]. The rubble consisted of a large percentage of mortar chunks and sandstone blocks in a very loose matrix of grey to blackish brown sand; little brick rubble was noted, implying that the buildings from

which the rubble came were mainly built of sandstone. Excavation by machine continued around the walls, in order to expose them as fully as possible in the limited confines of the trench.

- 4.2.3 The main wall identified, [116], was north-south aligned, and was exposed to approximately seven courses and 0.9m in height. The wall was constructed of a yellow sandstone, mortared with lime mortar, with little or no visible core in the wall. The wall measured approximately 2.5m in length by 0.42m in width. Abutting the wall on the western side was a further wall [118], only partially exposed due to the depth of rubble at this point. The wall appeared later than [116], and extended beyond the limits of excavation to the west. Only one upper course was exposed, and the visible section only measured 0.60m in length by 0.42m in width. To the north of wall [116], and partially visible in the south-facing section, was a further wall [117]. This wall extended westwards 0.75m from the projected northern end of wall [116], and was built of fifteen courses of header-set brick, to 1.20m in height. All the walls showed evidence of painting and plastering on their surfaces.
- 4.2.4 The walls appeared to be cellar walls, which from the position of the trench, located to target a passageway, imply that the cellars continued north-westwards beyond the footing of the Talbot Inn (Figure 3). The rubble presumably derives from the demolition of the buildings in 1906. The sandstone walls are likely to be of 18th century date or earlier, though the brick wall is more likely of 19th century derivation. No evidence of the natural drift geology was uncovered in this trench.



Plate 3: Trench 1 facing south-west, showing Wall [116]

4.3 TRENCH 2

- 4.3.1 *Trench 2:* Trench 2 was 4.05m long by 1.53m wide and was orientated in a broadly east-west direction (Figure 4). The trench was positioned in the centre of the

evaluation area, just north of the lift shaft in the centre of the building. The maximum depth of the trench was approximately 1.75m.

- 4.3.2 Due to the unstable nature of this trench, only limited cleaning was possible. Directly beneath the concrete [100], within the southern edge of the trench, and extending north into the trench approximately 0.50m, was a substantial concrete stanchion [134]. The stanchion measured 2.10m in length, and was visible to a depth of 0.40m. The stanchion was broadly aligned with the lift shaft, and may have served as a foundation for the northern lift wall. It was therefore left *in situ* for this reason.
- 4.3.3 The stanchion had been constructed on top of substantial deposits of rubble [133], which were broadly identical to [115] seen in Trench 1. Machining around the stanchion allowed the removal of this rubble to 1.5m depth. Unlike Trench 1, no evidence of any walls was identified. The rubble presumably also derives from the demolition of buildings on the plot in 1906; the trench was positioned directly over one of these buildings, and the implication is that the trench may be located over a rubble-filled cellar, the limits of which were not seen by this trench. A modern pipe or cable cuts the north-eastern corner of this trench, but this appears not to be an active service. It was nevertheless left *in situ*. No evidence of the natural drift geology was uncovered in this trench.



Plate 4: Trench 2, facing east, showing stanchion [134]

4.4 TRENCH 3

- 4.4.1 Trench 3 was 4.08m long by 1.61m wide, and was orientated in an east-west direction (Figure 5). The trench was positioned at the western end of the evaluation area. The maximum depth of the trench was over 1.25m.



Plate 5: Trench 3, facing west, showing Pit [111]

- 4.4.2 The overburden (104) and (105) was removed by machine. Deposit (104) consisted of a band of compacted laminated creamy-brown mortar, grey silt and brown sand, and contained large lumps of mortar and brick fragments. The deposit extended across the length and width of the trench and was excavated to 0.13m depth. This deposit appeared to have derived from the demolition of the buildings in 1906, and was similar to the rubble seen in Trenches 1 and 2. Beneath this was a thicker band of loose, mottled whitish brown sandy and silty clays (105), with a high percentage of mortar and sandstone inclusions. This deposit also appeared to be a demolition deposit, though perhaps relating to an earlier phase, most likely when the first buildings were cleared in 1891. A sherd of late medieval, possibly 16th century, pottery was recovered from this context. A modern ceramic drain pipe [106] had been cut through the demolition deposits, though it was not possible to discern where it had been cut from, due to the homogenous nature of the deposits. The service ran north-south across the trench, sloping down southwards to the trench base. A cut for a cable [103] was also visible, running along the southern side of the trench, cutting both demolition deposits and presumably installed when the Parcels Office was built. The cable trench measured 0.80m in width, and had been dug to 0.65m depth. The cable was still in position, but was not an active service. It was nevertheless left *in situ*. The cable was encased in wood, and sealed under a line of bricks. The cable trench had been back-filled with (102), a soft and sticky dark blackish grey sandy silt containing fragments of mortar and rubble.
- 4.4.3 Beneath the overburden was a deposit of sticky dark greyish brown gritty silty clay (107), excavated to 0.35m depth and extending across the whole trench. The layer was found to contain six sherds of medieval pottery, all from the first half of the 14th century, and as such is almost certainly a medieval soil horizon. A circular pit [111], measuring 1.13m in diameter, was identified towards the western end of the trench, cut from this horizon. The pit was cut to 0.82m depth, and had steep vertical sides and a flat base. Excavation of the pit yielded three fills. The upper fill (108) consisted of a

sticky mottled orange and grey silty clay, with charcoal flecks. The fill contained four sherds of medieval pottery, all late 13th to early 14th century. The central fill (109), a sticky dark blackish grey clay-silt, also had a high charcoal content. The fill contained fragments of wood with a tar like substance accreted to it, and a near-complete though fragmented small medieval jug, dated to the late 13th / early 14th century (Figure 7). The jug appears likely to have been dropped into the pit whilst intact. A probable human tooth was also recovered from this fill. The final deposit (110), a soft and sticky light greyish blue clay, possibly containing lime, formed the primary silting layer in the pit. Arranged around the pit, and set down in to the natural drift geology (101), were a series of four vertically-set timber planks, forming a crude lining (Figure 8). The purpose of these planks was not clear, though it is presumed that they originally supported some form of structure above the pit, or held a lining against the sides, though none was seen during the excavation. The planks had a tar-like substance accreted to them, possibly some form of crude water-proofing. Environmental analysis has identified crystals of urea within two of the fills, and has suggested that the pit may have been used to store urine, perhaps for tanning processes nearby (Section 5.2). Both the pit and medieval layer point to undisturbed medieval deposits surviving in this area, dating to the early 14th century.



Plate 6: Pit [111] showing various fills.

- 4.4.4 The pit was cut through a layer of soft and sticky bluish grey clay (112), containing frequent charcoal flecks and excavated to 0.28m depth; this lay directly underneath deposit (107). The deposit extended the length of the trench and contained four sherds of Roman pottery, including relatively unabraded fragments of black-burnished ware and mortarium; these broadly date to the 2nd to 3rd century. The layer sealed a small pit or posthole [114], measuring 0.37m by 0.17m and excavated to a depth of 0.20m. The pit extends beyond the excavation limits to the south. The cut was filled with a deposit of firm reddish grey clay, including degraded sandstone and bone fragments (113).

The function of the pit was uncertain, but the presence of both the pit and layer point to the survival of undisturbed Roman deposits in the area.

- 4.4.5 The natural drift geology beneath (112) consisted of a plastic mixed creamy orange and brown clay (101). There were some concerns that the deposit might be re-deposited, as a number of flecks of charcoal were noted within the deposit, though it was surmised that these may have leached in from deposit (112). In addition, in the edge of cut [111] the deposit noticeably changed to a grey clay at 0.50m depth. However, due to the confines of the trench and the depth restrictions it was not possible to test this further.

4.5 TRENCH 4

- 4.5.1 Trench 4 was 4.15m long by 1.60m wide, and was orientated in a north-west south-east direction (Figure 6). The trench was positioned at the eastern end of the evaluation area. The maximum depth of the trench was 1.5m.



Plate 7: Trench 4, facing west

- 4.5.2 Initial machining of the trench identified that the eastern end had been truncated by three services: [120], [122] and [135]. Cut [120] consisted of a north-east south-west aligned cut, with near-vertical flat sides; the base was not excavated due to depth restrictions. The service cut measured 2.3m in length by 0.80m in width, and was excavated to 1.2m depth. It contained (119), a loose mid blackish-grey clay-silt backfill, overlying a live electricity cable encased in a pipe, which was left *in situ*. Cut [122] consisted of north-south aligned cut, with vertical sides, possibly truncated by [120], though the exact relationship was unclear. The cut measured 1.5m in length by 1.2m in width, forming the eastern 1.2m of the trench. It was excavated to 1.2m depth, and was found to be filled with (121), a loose dark grey silty sand fill. A number of modern and earlier finds were recovered from this fill; most of the early finds dated to

the 13th century. Due to the depth restrictions, it could not be fully excavated, so no evidence of the service for which it had been dug was uncovered. However, it appeared to run between a number of manholes seen in the concrete floor surface [100], and was thought to be a sewer; a brick manhole chamber measuring seven courses in height was also noted in the section at the north-eastern corner of the trench. Cut [135] ran north-west south-east across the centre of the trench, with vertical sides and a rounded base. The cut measured 0.7m in width by 0.80m in depth, and contained a ceramic pipe [137], and a backfill of loose rubble and silt (136). The truncation from all three services amounted to the near total destruction of all deposits within approximately one third of the eastern trench area. However, deposits and structures survived well in the remainder of the trench.

- 4.5.3 Immediately beneath the concrete floor [100], a deposit of demolition rubble (123) was identified. The deposit consisted of large sub-angular sandstone rubble blocks in a firm gritty sand matrix, with occasional brick fragments, and was excavated to 0.25m depth. It appeared to extend the length and width of the trench, though truncated by [120] to the east. The demolition rubble clearly derived from the demolition of the earlier buildings in 1906, prior to the construction of the Parcels Office. Beneath the demolition deposit were a series of setts [124], quite disturbed but still appearing to form a coherent structure. The setts consisted of rectangular stone blocks, set in a deposit of dark greyish brown compact sandy silt (125), which extended to 0.14 depth and formed the bedding layer. The setts appear to be surviving evidence of the original alignment of Westgate Road, possibly dating to as early as the 18th century. The demolition deposit (123) appeared fairly well laid, in comparison to the more random nature of the deposits identified in the other trenches, and it may have been carefully set down to form a bedding layer for the concrete, on top of the already firmly positioned setts. The implication is that the road surface will therefore survive fairly untruncated across the site.



Plate 8: culvert [131], facing south, with setts [124] visible in section.

- 4.5.4 Beneath **(125)**, a small ditch cut **[127]** was noted, running east-west across the trench. The cut measured 0.45m in width by 0.35m in depth and extended for at least 2m. The feature was not fully excavated due to the confines of the trench, so its purpose is unknown. The cut was filled by **(126)**, a very compact pale reddish grey gritty clayey silt. The ditch was cut through **(129)**, a deposit of loose orangey yellow gritty sand, and **(128)**, a deposit of dark blue-grey clayey silt. The combined depth of these was 0.10m; they appear to have been laid down as a crude track surface, most probably an earlier precursor to the setts in the 18th or 19th century. The deposits are tentatively dated to the early post-medieval period.
- 4.5.5 Beneath **(128)**, a deposit of fairly undifferentiated firm mid brownish grey sandy silt **(130)** was identified, excavated to 0.65m depth. The full depth could not be reached, due to the depth restrictions in the trench. The deposit yielded thirty sherds of medieval pottery, mainly 13th to 15th century, and residual sherds of Roman pottery, including Samian ware. Two sherds of possible 19th century pottery were recovered, but these are likely to be intrusive from one of the many service cuts through this deposit. The implication therefore is that this is a preserved medieval soil horizon. Beneath the soil, and sealed by it, was a large sandstone culvert **[131]**. The culvert was constructed of six large capstones set on irregular stone wall settings on each side, and measured 3.16m in length by 1.26m in width. The exact extent of the culvert is unknown, as it extends beyond the trench limits. It appears to follow a similar alignment to Westgate Road, and is presumably an early water-management system or a drain. The culvert was clearly known about in the 19th century, as a modern ceramic pipe **(132)** was identified using the culvert as a soakaway point. The presence of the soil and presumably medieval culvert point to well-preserved medieval deposits surviving in this area. No evidence of the natural drift geology was uncovered in this trench.

5. FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 The bulk of the finds from the Parcels Office were concentrated in Trench 3 and were recovered from several cut features and undisturbed layers of Roman and Medieval date. A total of: eighty sherds of pottery, weighing 1.85kg; five clay pipe stems; six fragments of CBM; and four fragments of glass, were recovered from the Former Parcels Office, Westgate Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Full assessment of the finds assemblage was undertaken by Jenny Vaughn at NCAS, up to MAP2 assessment stage.

5.2 POTTERY

5.2.1 **Quantity, date, distribution:** four of the sherds were originally identified as Roman, although there is doubt over the identification of one of the sherds, while the majority of the rest were medieval, broadly 13th to 15th century. There was a small amount of late 18th/19th century material. As can be seen from the table most contexts produced only a small number of sherds.

context	sherds	weight	
105	1	36	A late medieval, possibly 16 th c. fragment.
107	6	91	First half of the 14 th c.
108	4	48	Late 13 th /14 th c.
109	7	661	Six sherds one vessel (small jug) – late 13 th /early 14 th c.
112	4	163	Roman – though one small sherd is queried as Roman.
121	25	513	Broadly 13 th c. but there is much later material present.
130	33	338	One Roman and two possible 19 th c. fragments. The medieval material is 13 th to possibly 15 th c. although only a few sherds are likely to be this late.

Table 1: Summary of Finds Quantities and Dates

5.2.2 **Range and variety:** (see catalogue for full details) light firing wares of various regional types (see Fabric groups 3 and 4) dominated the medieval component of the assemblage, although there were only three form sherds; the base of a rod handle in a gritty white fabric, a large part of an everted jar rim in a sandy pinkish buff fabric and a small rim sherd, probably a jug, in a yellow glazed white fabric. There were two early green glazed rod handles and another everted jar rim in an oxidised, quite fine fabric but the most complete vessel was a small shouldered jug in a dull pink fabric with white streaking (context (109)). One small fragment of a possible imported redware vessel was present in context (121).

5.2.3 **Discussion/Potential:** the fabric of the small jug does not easily fit into the recognised local fabric type series although that is not to say that the vessel must therefore be an import. Its relatively complete condition suggests primary rubbish disposal. If this is the case larger scale excavation on the site has the potential to produce the type of

domestic assemblage, well stratified or pit groups, and linked to properties, which have been relatively scarce on Tyneside. The assemblage is fairly mixed, although little could be assigned to the late medieval period, and, apart from the jug mentioned above, it is of no intrinsic interest. Its size means it has little value other than to give an indication of the date range of activity on the site.

- 5.2.4 The Roman pottery was quite small, and as such detailed assessment was not undertaken; a Roman pottery specialist should be consulted to confirm the identification and dating of the Roman sherds. The Roman pottery consisted of three sherds of Roman coarseware, one sherd of mortarium, and one sherd of Samian. These broadly date to the 2nd to 3rd century.

5.3 CLAY PIPE

- 5.3.1 Of the five fragments of stem from **(130)** one had a bore of 8/64", two of 7/64", one of 6/64" and one of about 5/64". Although not a precise guide to date the two narrower ones are likely to be 18th century and the other three 17th century.

5.4 CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

- 5.4.1 There were six fragments of ceramic building material from **(130)** consisting of:

- Two small pieces of pantile
- One brick fragment, red brown fabric – about 48 mm thick but surfaces all damaged.
- Three brick fragments of a lighter, orange colour fading to yellowish white in parts. No dimensions.

- 5.4.2 The pantile is likely to be 17th or 18th century. Without more dimensions and details of surface treatment the bricks are both difficult to date and of little interest. They are not of the common medieval brick fabrics found in Newcastle but may be late medieval or 17th century.

5.5 GLASS

- 5.5.1 There were four fragments from **(121)** consisting of:

- Two fragments of finely ridged 'vision proof' glass – late 19th/20th c.
- One fragment of dark green bottle glass – probably 19th century.
- One fragment of green bottle glass with heavy gold patina – possibly 18th century.

- 5.5.2 The condition alone of the second piece of bottle glass suggests an earlier date but the fragments are of no particular interest.

5.6 ENVIRONMENTAL AND BONE DATA

- 5.6.1 **Introduction:** in the trenches excavated, six contexts were considered worth sampling. Three of the samples came from different contexts within one pit, one of which was waterlogged. There was the fill of a posthole, a Roman soil layer and a Medieval soil layer. All 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.
- 5.6.2 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.
- 5.6.3 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.
- 5.6.4 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	108	10	50	3000
2	109	10	200	3000
3	110	10	50	2000
4	113	5	5	300
5	107	10	10	5000
6	112	10	25	1500

Table 2: Details of samples and contexts

Context	Context type	Sample number	Pottery	Urea crystals	Wood	Seeds/fruit	Burnt bone	Bone/teeth	Metalwork	Coal	Gravel	Stones
108	Fill	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	2	3	1
109	Fill	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	3	1
110	Fill	3	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	2	3	1
113	Fill	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	2
107	Lay	5	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	1
112	Lay	6	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	1

Table 3: Contents of retent from samples.

Context	Context type	Sample number	Charred grain	Raspberry	Elder	Gallium species	Pale persicaria	Chrysanthemum sp.	Potentilla sp.	Chickweed	Chenopodium sp.	Rumex sp.	Scirpus sp.	Vicia sp.	Cirsium sp.	Insects/larvae	Bone	Coal	Cinders	Wood	Charred wood	Woody plant parts
108	Fill	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
109	Fill	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1
110	Fill	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2
113	Fill	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
107	Lay	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
112	Lay	6	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0

Table 4: Contents of flot from samples.

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

5.6.5 **Sample <1> (108):** this sample was the upper fill of a Medieval pit. The matrix was a sticky mottled orange and grey clay with some silt. There were inclusions of stone and charcoal flecks. The retent was mainly gravel with some stones. There was Medieval pottery, burnt bone, bone and coal in the retent. Importantly there were also crystals of

urea suggesting that at least some of the contents of the pit had been urine. The flot contained several seeds, none of which were charred. The seeds comprised raspberry, dock, fat-hen, *Scirpus* sp. and *Potentilla* spp. These were probably deposited when the pit was still in the process of backfilling as they all appeared uncharred and not fossilised.

- 5.6.6 **Sample <2> (109)**: this context made up the secondary fill of the pit with a matrix of sticky dark blackish grey material. This had a highly organic content as well as charcoal and small stones. The context also contained a Medieval jug. The retent of this sample was made up of mainly gravel with some stones. Medieval pottery was also recovered along with a tooth, possibly human. Seeds present were pale persicaria and raspberry, all appeared fossilised to some degree. Some insect larvae were also present. Seeds of raspberry, *Cirsium* sp. and *Chrysanthemum* spp. were present in the flot with also wood and woody plant parts. Two bones from a small mammal, probably mouse, were also recovered. These seeds appeared fossilised.
- 5.6.7 **Sample <3> (110)**: this context was the primary fill of pit [111]. It was a soft, sticky light grey blue organic clay. It had inclusions of small stones and fills the base of the cut. Again the retent was mainly gravel with some stones and urea crystals were also present. There were also fossilised seeds of raspberry, cherry, plum and *Brassica* sp. and small twigs that were also fossilised. Coal and wood fragments were also present with the tibia of a bird. The flot comprised raspberry, chickweed and *Chrysanthemum* sp. seeds. There was also an amount of woody plant parts with coal, wood and larvae/insect parts present.
- 5.6.8 **Sample <4> (113)**: this sample came from the fill of a posthole and was a firm, reddish grey clay with inclusions of degraded sandstone and contained some bone. The retent of this sample was made up of gravel and stones with some coal and bone present. The bone was the partial scapula of a sheep and 2 other unidentifiable fragments. The flot contained fat-hen seeds, a small amount of charred wood, coal, wood and insect larvae.
- 5.6.9 **Sample <5> (107)**: this deposit of sticky, dark greyish brown silty clay contained occasional sub rounded stones. The deposit extended the length and width of Trench 3 and had inclusions of Medieval pottery. The retent again produced stones and gravel with small pieces of Medieval pottery. Coal was also present with a tooth of both cattle and sheep. The flot yielded a charred wheat grain. Other seeds present were modern and consisted of *Scirpus* sp., *Galium* spp., elder and raspberry. Cinders, coal and wood were also present in small quantities with small mammal bones, probably mouse.
- 5.6.10 **Sample <6> (112)**: this sample from a deposit was a soft, sticky blue-grey clay with inclusions of frequent charcoal flecks. The deposit extended the width of Trench 3 and sealed the posthole from which Sample <4> came. The layer produced Roman pottery. The retent produced mostly gravel with some stones. Roman pottery and a magnetic object were also recovered. A small amount of coal and some unidentified bone were also present. The flot yielded coal, wood and seeds of *Galium*, *Vicia* and *Chrysanthemum* species and pale persicaria, all of which appeared to be modern intruders.

- 5.6.11 **Discussion:** the flint samples recovered yielded only a few seeds and these were mainly modern intruders. Very few ecofacts were recovered from the samples. The dating of these features can be done using pottery typology. The posthole fill (Sample <4>, context (113)) and the layers (Samples <5> and <6>, contexts (107) and (112) respectively) produced very little material to give an interpretative opinion. There were a few bone fragments in Sample <4> but the assemblage was too small to determine what the animals had been used for.
- 5.6.12 Sample <5> (107) produced 2 teeth but again these are not enough from which to form a pattern of use. This sample was however, the only one to produce charred grain. This may have been from soil management practices where hearth contents were spread on the land to increase productivity. There is very little other evidence to say how the grain may have been introduced.
- 5.6.13 Samples <1>, <2> and <3> ((108), (109) and (110)) were taken from the fills of the same pit. These formed the most interesting assemblage. There was a lot of organic debris in Sample <2>, mostly formed by woody plant parts. There were quite a few what appeared to be fossilised seeds in this sample and in Sample <3>. Although there were no urea crystals in the material, both the upper fill (108) and the lower (109) contained them.
- 5.6.14 This is evidence that urine was present in the pit, the crystals growing from this as the material dried out. No material was recovered that may suggest the pit was used for retting or hide treatment but it is possible that this was a pit where urine was stored for future use, this was also borne out by the mineralisation (fossilisation) of some of the seeds. The wood in Sample <3> (110) was coated in a tar like substance, presumably to make it leak proof so the urine would be retained.
- 5.6.15 **Timber:** a number of pieces of timber were recovered from the fills of pit [111], including four planks set vertically around the inside of the cut. Initial examination of the timbers has failed to identify their species. The timbers had been accreted in tar in order to make them water-proof. The timber has all been washed and packed in water-logged conditions, and further assessment will be undertaken of this in the future. The planks have been drawn and are illustrated in Figure 8.
- 5.6.16 **Vertebrate remains:** only a few small amounts of bone were recovered by hand during the excavation. Context (105) produced a fragment of cattle phalange, probably male due to the size. From the Medieval pit, two contexts produced bone. In context (108) there were 12 fragments of bone recovered. Of these 10 were unidentifiable to species or skeletal part. Of the other 2 one was a navicular cattle bone of a male cow and the other was a butchered fragment of a cattle metacarpus. Context (109) produced a fragment of rib, probably cattle, that showed signs of butchery.
- 5.6.17 The context that produced the largest bone assemblage was (121). This comprised 2 horse teeth, 3 fragments of horse or cattle ribs and another rib fragment, possibly from a sheep. There was also a fragment of a large skeletal limb element but it was not possible to determine the species as the head was broken off. Half the distal end of a cattle bone was present that also showed signs of butchery, possibly for marrow removal. There were 6 other fragments that were unidentifiable, 1 showed signs of butchery consistent with marrow removal. Context (130) produced 2 sheep jaws and 2

fragments of rib, probably also sheep. There were also 2 cattle teeth and 2 unidentifiable fragments, both showing signs of butchery.

- 5.6.18 None of the bone is present in sufficient quantity to form an assemblage worthy of further study although it is quite well preserved for the most part suggesting that no great amount of bone has deteriorated.
- 5.6.19 *Mollusc remains:* only 2 fragments of shell were recovered and it was not possible to identify them even to genus. These were hand recovered from context **(121)**. No further information can be learned from this material.
- 5.6.20 *Dating:* there is enough charred organic material for a radiocarbon date to be done but because there is firm dating evidence from typology this is thought unnecessary at this stage.
- 5.6.21 *Conclusion and Recommendations:* the material recovered from this site was limited in its use as an interpretative tool to determine what was happening in this area. 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. There are however some interesting features and it is recommended that should the site go to full excavation the expose of further features may lead to a better knowledge of the archaeology of this area of Newcastle.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation identified that the construction of the Parcels Office in 1906 has had limited impact on the sub-surface archaeological remains, which implies that the preservation on site is likely to be fairly good. The main identifiable truncation comes from the limited foundations for the building (the columns which front Westgate Road are built on concrete pads as illustrated in Figure 10 of Peters and Wooler 2006, and identified in Trench 2 for the lift shaft wall), and the service runs, which have caused localised and limited truncation of some of the deposits. Nevertheless, the archaeological evaluation has succeeded in identifying important archaeological remains, dating to as early as the 2nd to 3rd century, within the development area.
- 6.1.2 Prior to the construction of the Parcels Office in 1906, the development area was the site of housing, dated cartographically to at least 1736, which included a number of public houses, amongst which was the Talbot Inn. The housing fronted onto the old Westgate Street, now Westgate Road, which was realigned in the 19th century. To the rear of the housing was Dawson's Court, an enclosed yard. The housing is likely to be on the site of medieval occupation, though subsequent renewal of the buildings and the construction of cellars will probably have truncated most of the early deposits associated with this occupation. Two of the trenches, Trench 1 and Trench 2, were excavated to examine this section of the development area. Both trenches only succeeded in uncovering demolition rubble within the cellars of the houses, the result of the clearance of the housing for the construction initially of the Railway Arches in 1891, and subsequently the Parcels Office in 1906. A few walls were identified in Trench 1, though these could not be securely dated, but their construction in sandstone tentatively places them in the 18th century (brick being the preferred 19th century material). In addition to the remains of the housing, the original course of the 18th century Westgate Street is likely to survive largely undisturbed beneath the demolition rubble of the houses, as an intact section of the road was identified in Trench 4, comprising setts within a bedding layer. The implication is that the layout of the buildings and the course of the road will be identifiable if the site is to be excavated.
- 6.1.3 Before the construction of the post-medieval housing and Westgate Street, the site was the focus for medieval settlement. Most of the evidence for this survives outside of the main areas of truncation, primarily beneath the surviving remnants of Westgate Street and the post-medieval yard areas to the rear of the main housing, such as Dawson's Court; nevertheless, isolated islands of medieval housing may survive, between cellaring of the street frontage, as yet unidentified. In Trench 3, a medieval layer, dated to the 14th century, was identified, extending the length of the trench. The layer was not truncated, and the implication is that a significant horizon of deposit will survive in this area. In Trench 4, a deep deposit of medieval soil, dated to the 13th to 15th century, was also found.
- 6.1.4 In addition to the layers in Trenches 3 and 4, contemporary features were also noted. In Trench 3, a medieval pit was identified, excavation of which showed it to have had

a timber lining. The pit contained a nearly intact small jug, and also yielded crystals of urea, suggesting it may have been used to store urine, perhaps for tanning. Medieval pits and cess-pits are common in the backlands of medieval houses, usually contained within the burgage plots which extended to the rear of the houses, and were typically dug, or finished their lives as, rubbish pits. In Trench 4, a sandstone culvert was uncovered beneath the medieval layer; this points to the potential survival of important medieval structural remains. Future excavation of these deposits, features and structures would provide an important resource for the understanding of medieval settlement in this area. In addition, the presence of previously unknown pottery assemblages within the features point to a potentially unique opportunity to examine well-stratified and dated deposits, which would further the understanding of medieval pottery traditions on Tyneside.

- 6.1.5 Within Trench 3, a similarly untruncated deposit of Roman soil, dating to the 2nd to 3rd century, was identified, extending beneath the medieval deposits and forming a combined depth of archaeology to at least 600mm depth. The depth of the Roman archaeology coincides with the depths recorded in the PCA excavations undertaken to the east (PCA 2007), where most of the Roman archaeology was identified at approximately 28m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum). As for the medieval archaeology, the presence of untruncated deposits points to a significant horizon of archaeology surviving in this area. Beneath this layer, a small feature was noted cutting the natural drift geology. This implies that features will survive well, largely untruncated by later development. The natural drift geology was not reached in Trench 4, and as such the possibility remains that further deposits may be uncovered in this area, beyond the depth restrictions imposed through the excavation of the current trenches. The presence of *ex-situ* sherds of Roman pottery in the trench imply that features may yet be uncovered.
- 6.1.6 No pre-Roman archaeology was identified in the trenches, though the presence of this should not be definitively ruled out, in view of the small sample area examined.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.2.1 The development area covers approximately 800m². Of this, approximately 250m² is likely to have been truncated by cellaring, assuming all the houses along Westgate Street had cellars (which we know was the case for two of the five houses which fronted onto the street – Figure 3). The buildings to the rear, around the perimeter of Dawson's Court, probably did not, as these are likely to have been constructed as infilling of the burgage plots, and as such beneath their foundations intact deposits will almost certainly survive. The structure and layout of all the buildings and Westgate Street will be discernible if the site is to be excavated, and the buildings represent a rare survival of a post-medieval streetscape. Limited recording of the walls and floors, and road surfaces, is therefore recommended through photographic record and survey, in particular if the remains are to be removed permanently by any future development.
- 6.2.2 Of the remaining 550m², there is a strong probability of surviving archaeological deposits dating to the Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. In summary, the site is of extreme importance for the furthering of knowledge of the archaeology of this area of Newcastle, which to date has been concentrated on the castle environs, and

only small-scale developer-led excavations and evaluations have been undertaken in the vicinity. The presence of Roman and medieval archaeology across the site is significant, and any disturbance should be mitigated against through preservation *in-situ* or targeted excavation.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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7.2 SECONDARY SOURCES

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APPENDIX 1: POTTERY GROUPED BY CONTEXT

Pottery is catalogued using a system of numbers and names or letter codes. These are primarily meant for use in the computerised database and in the archive catalogues, though numbers might be used in charts for convenience. Many numbers refer to traditions or broad groupings rather than individual fabrics, thus one fabric *group* may have several fabric *types*. (Some numbers in the full sequence do refer to specific types.) The system is meant to be flexible so that, for instance, if dealing with a large assemblage fabric groups may be subdivided by decimal points to assist statistical analysis. It (the system) has however, appeared in print used by other workers not as originally intended. The letter codes are abbreviations of the names or descriptions in common use in the area.

Fabric types present in each context are recorded (by count and weight) in an Access database table. Depending on size of assemblage or other specific requirements some records may be a 'sherd family' (i.e. from a single vessel) if this is easily recognisable, but generally speaking for assessment each record will probably have sherds from more than one vessel.

General abbreviations used in catalogue (see also under fabric groups):

abbreviation	meaning
ext	external, externally or exterior
ggl	green glazed
gl	glaze or glazed
gr	gritty
h	handle
incl	inclusions
int	internal, internally or interior
misc	miscellaneous
ox	Oxidized
prof	profile
r	rim

The following notes are adapted to be relevant to this assemblage.

FG1 Roman

FG3 Coarse gritted wares: coarsely or abundantly gritted wares, i.e. at least a proportion of inclusions are large than 0.5mm. This group includes coarser gritted varieties of types in FG 4, 5, and 6. Broadly 12th to 13th c. date range.

FG4 Buff white/light firing wares (bw) (and see below): wares made in buff or white firing clay. Light coloured wares which do not appear to be as the originally defined Tyneside buff white (bw) types (Ellison, 1981) are catalogued as 'buff', 'pink' etc. 'p' and 'h' indicate pink and hard fired respectively. The date range is broadly 13th to 14th century (bw is dominant in the later 13th and early 14th century) though quite fine buff wares do occur in the 12th century at the Castle, Newcastle.

- FG 5 Orange/oxidized wares:** this category covers wares using a more iron-rich clay than the buff wares, i.e. firing orange or light red. Some of these have also been found associated with 12th century pottery at the Castle and so we are currently unsure of the dating of some of these types. ob = orange buff.
- FG 6 Early glazed wares egw/eg2 :** these are dark firing fabrics with green glaze. They used to be called early reduced green glazed wares and appear as such in reports published to date. However, the fabrics of these wares are not generally speaking (though some may be) made from reduced iron rich clays; the grey colour being due to carbon unburnt during the firing process. These date broadly speaking to the first three quarters of the 13th century. Type 2 (eg2, formerly rg2) is a very dark grey fabric with fairly abundant quartz inclusions. The general 'early glazed ware' (egw) category covers various grey fabrics with green glaze.
- FG 7 Iron rich medieval general rg and oxir :** this group includes reduced greenwares which do not have all the later rg characteristics (see below); fabrics may be slightly gritty/sandy or glaze may be patchy. Oxidised (oxir) and part oxidised wares with same characteristics may be included.
- FG 8 Later reduced green wares lrg :** hard dark grey fabrics with good glaze cover. These occur in large quantities in 15th c. deposits in Newcastle. Oxidised and part oxidised examples occur. (Rg4 is the classic type found in Newcastle)
- FG 10 Other medieval:** unprovenanced wares which do not fit easily into the above categories. Also used for small miscellaneous medieval fragments.
- FG 23 Miscellaneous Imports:** there is only one possible fragment.
- FG 31 English stonewares Eng st :** not always easy to date.
- FG 32 Later glazed redwares lgre :** these later glazed redwares occur in large quantities in late 18th and 19th century deposits. Large bowls usually have internal white slip coating (lgresl), many have manganese mottling. These can be identified with the 'brownwares' produced in Newcastle and Sunderland. The first known production site started about 1720 at Newbottle just north of Houghton-le-Spring in Co. Durham.
- FG 33 Late post medieval white glazed white earthenwares:** late 18th c. onwards.
- FG 50 Unidentifiable**

Fabric No/Name	No.	Wgt.	Part	
Context 105				
8 lrg	1	36		Sandier than rg4 with very occasional medium quartz.
Context 107				
3 buff gr ggl	1	3		Thin walled with light green gl ext, two impressed lines. Ill sorted inclusions from fine to very large.
4 buff sandy	1	6		Very thin walled sooted.
4 bw	1	4		Browny green gl.
7 rg	2	36		Mid grey with lighter ext margin. Sandy.
7 oxir	1	42	r	Everted jar rim. Fine sandy fabric with grey core where thick. Patches of green/yellow gl int and ext.
Context 108				
4 bw	2	37		One is reduced light grey with a matt brownish gl., other is off white.
5 orange	2	11		Sandy oxidised fabric.
Context 109				
4 bw	1	7		
10 pink	6	654	prof	Large part of a small shouldered jug with simple slightly expanded rim and rod handle. Slightly unusual fabric dull pink with white streaking. Occasional large and very large red ferrous grits, occasional opaque white incl and quartz med to very large (including quartz aggregate) but none of incl. are frequent.
Context 112				
1 ox/reduced	1	8		
1 mortaria	1	24		
1 Roman grey	2	131	prof	Profile of shallow bowl
Context 121				
3 white gr	2	25		Ill sorted incl, some very coarse. Some sooting. Patch gl.
3 white gr ggl	1	71	h	Thumbed lower rod handle attachment
4 bwh	3	49		
4 pink/grey	1	13		Abraded sherd with pink ext and light grey int. Not coarse - occasional medium quartz but most fine.
4 white	3	29	r	A yellow glazed rim (expanded, slightly everted). Fabrics of all have frequent, though mostly small/medium incl.
6 egw	4	65		All with white margins/surfaces.
6 eg2	2	135	2h	two sections of rod handle - do not appear to be same ves.
10 med	1	13		Flat frag with gl upper surface. greyish buff sandy fabric but sooted/burnt so difficult to tell.
23 red imp?	1	4		Small fragment with white slip and apple green glaze. Possibly an import but too small to ID.
31 Eng st	1	48		
32 lgresl	4	54	r	Flanged rim of bowl. Manganese mottling.
33 lpm ww	2	7		

Fabric No/Name	No.	Wgt.	Part	
Context 130				
1 Samian	1	3		Very pale fabric. Glaze one side only
3 pink buff gr	3	14		Joining flat fragments with rough surfaces - burnt pot base?
4 bw	4	57		
4 pink	1	13		Abraded sooted fragment.
4 buff misc	3	24		
4 pink buff	1	46	r	A pinkish buff quite sandy fabric with darker surfaces. Everted rectangular jar rim.
4 bwp	4	26		
5 ob	3	7		Very thin walled, fairly fine fabric, patchy yellow brown gl.
5 ob	2	16		Sooted.
6 egw	2	5		
7 rg	1	36		Fairly coarse sandy fabric, uneven yellow green gl.
8 lrg	1	11		Small chunky piece.
10 med	1	21		Flat sooted fragment from a base with int green gl.
10 ox misc	4	40		All sooted.
32 lgre	1	10	r	Chipped rim, probably from a large jar. Part reduced with brown glaze.
50 burnt pm?	1	9		

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT LIST

Context	Trench	Type	Description
100	<i>All</i>	Deposit	Concrete
101	<i>3</i>	Deposit	Natural
102	<i>3</i>	Fill	of 103
103	<i>3</i>	Cut	Cable Trench
104	<i>3</i>	Deposit	Demolition Layer
105	<i>3</i>	Deposit	Primary Demolition
106	<i>3</i>	Cut	Drain
107	<i>3</i>	Deposit	Medieval Layer
108	<i>3</i>	Fill	of Pit 111
109	<i>3</i>	Fill	of Pit 111
110	<i>3</i>	Fill	of Pit 111
111	<i>3</i>	Cut	Medieval Pit
112	<i>3</i>	Deposit	Roman Layer
113	<i>3</i>	Fill	of 144
114	<i>3</i>	Cut	Roman Posthole
115	<i>1</i>	Deposit	Demolition Layer
116	<i>1</i>	Structure	Wall
117	<i>1</i>	Structure	Wall
118	<i>1</i>	Structure	Wall
119	<i>4</i>	Fill	of 120
120	<i>4</i>	Cut	Cable Trench
121	<i>4</i>	Fill	of 122
122	<i>4</i>	Cut	Service
123	<i>4</i>	Deposit	Demolition Layer
124	<i>4</i>	Structure	Road
125	<i>4</i>	Deposit	Bedding Layer
126	<i>4</i>	Fill	of 127
127	<i>4</i>	Cut	Ditch
128	<i>4</i>	Deposit	Track
129	<i>4</i>	Deposit	Track
130	<i>4</i>	Deposit	Backfill?
131	<i>4</i>	Structure	Culvert
132	<i>4</i>	Feature No	Service
133	<i>2</i>	Deposit	Demolition Layer
134	<i>2</i>	Structure	Concrete
135	<i>4</i>	Cut	Service
136	<i>4</i>	Fill	of 135
137	<i>4</i>	Feature No	Service

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES



North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2007

Former Parcels Office,
Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne

SCALE: 1:2500

DRAWN BY: CP

DATE: March 2007

LOCATION:



KEY:



Site Location

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Newcastle Central Station

Figure 1 : Site Location

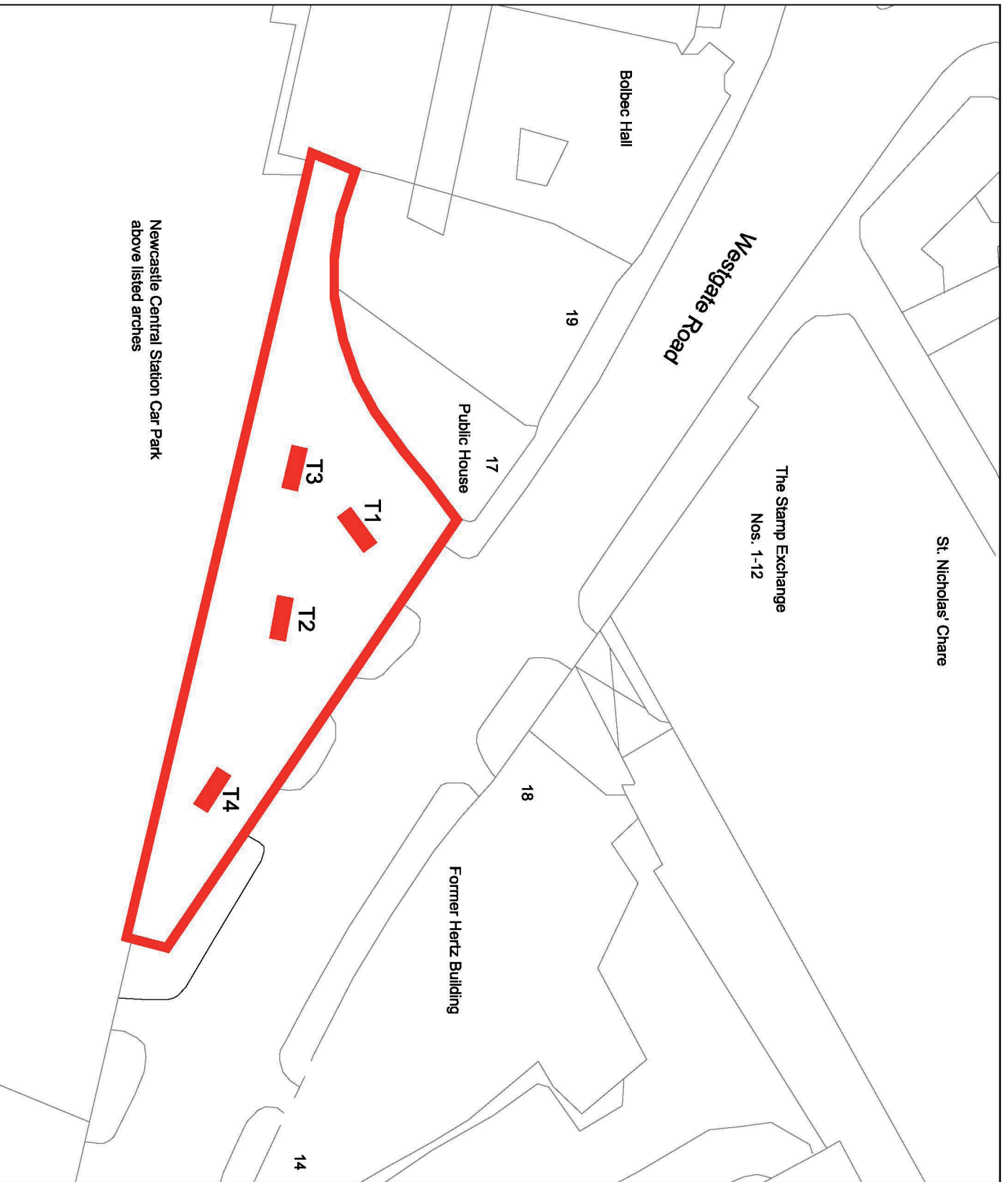


Figure 2 : Location of Trenches

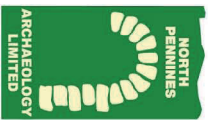

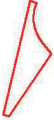

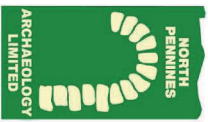
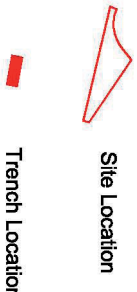
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Figure 3 : Location of Trenches in Relation to First Edition Ordnance Survey Mapping, 1878

 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2007 Former Parcels Office, Westgate Road Newcastle upon Tyne</p>	<p>SCALE: 1:500</p> <p>DRAWN BY: CP</p> <p>DATE: March 2007</p>	<p>LOCATION:</p>	<p>KEY:</p>  <p>Site Location</p> <p>Trench Location</p>	<p>REPORT No: CP 447/06</p> <p>COMMISSIONED BY: Sleepertz Ltd</p>
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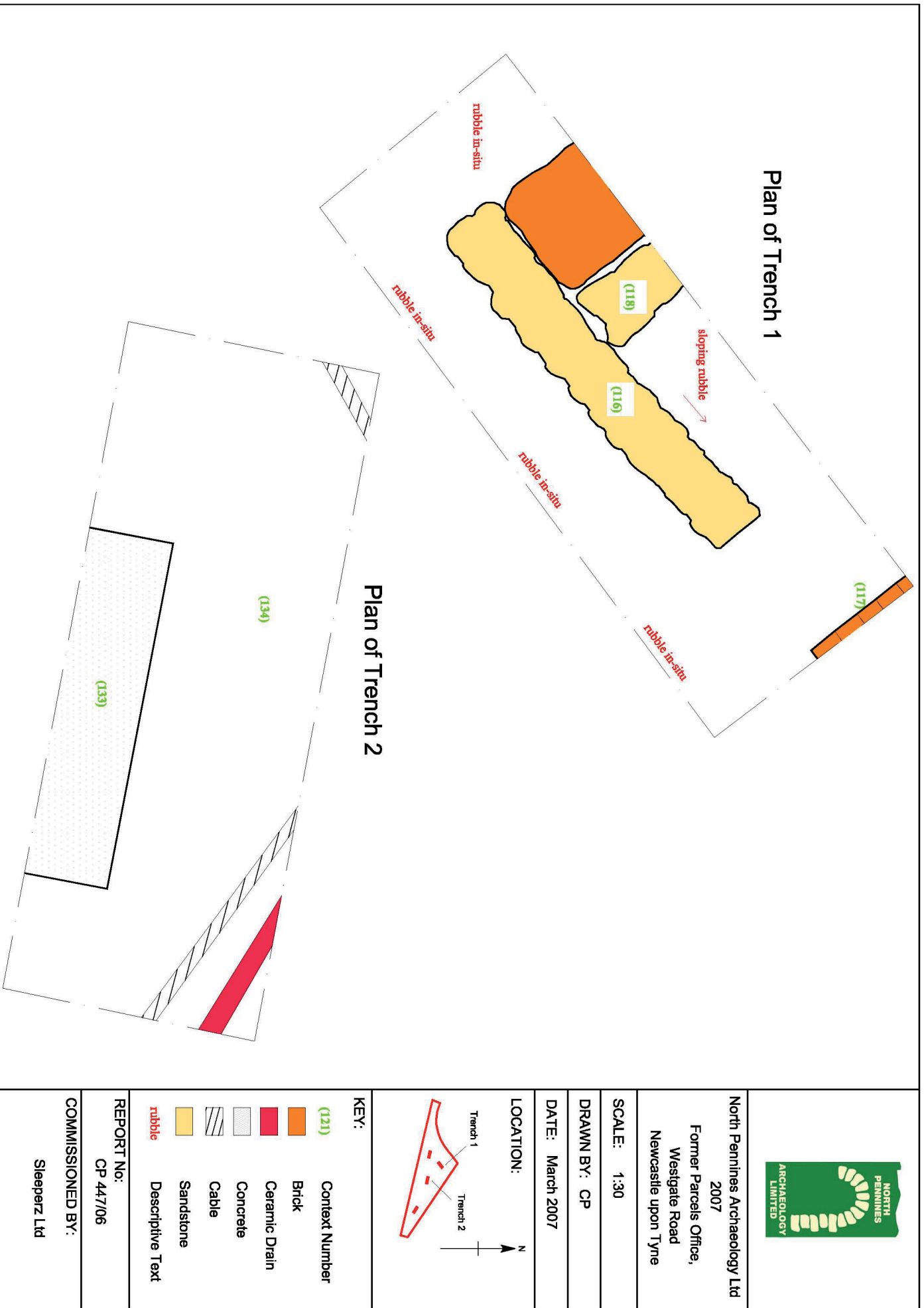
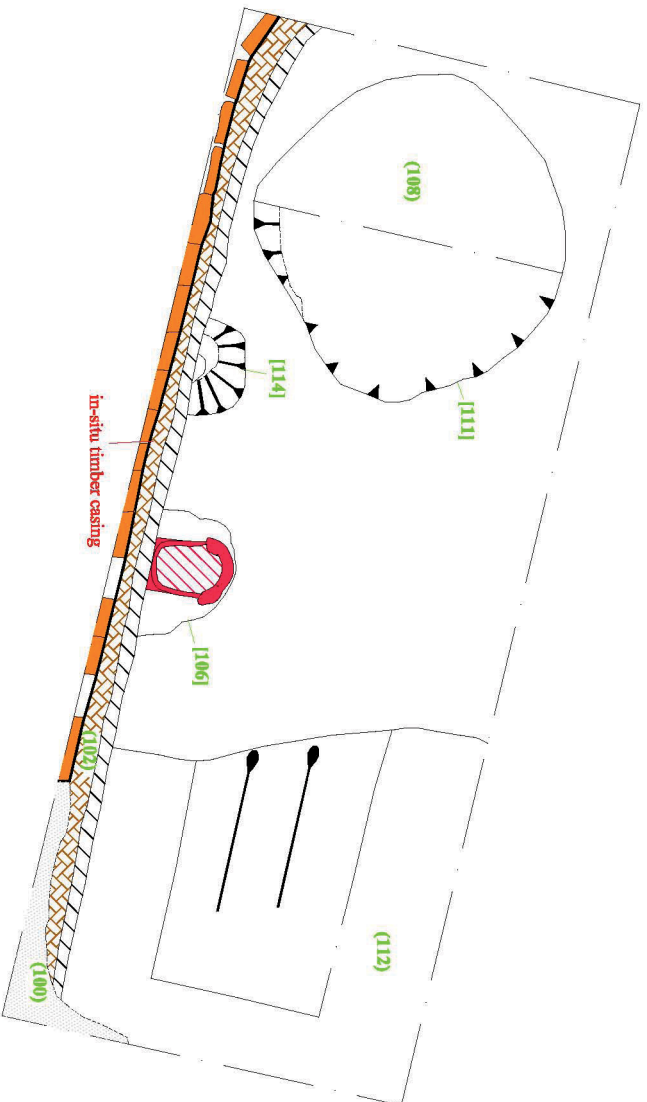
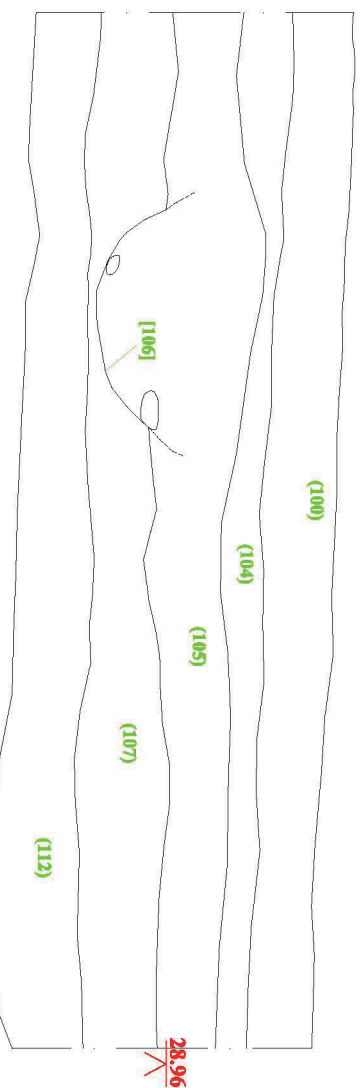


Figure 4 : Plans of Trenches 1 and 2

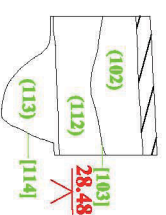
Plan of Trench 3



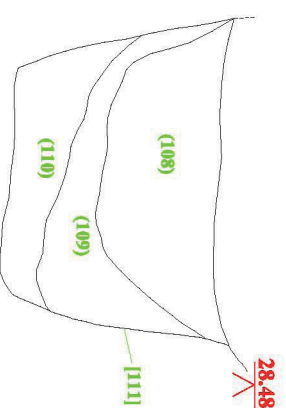
North-West Facing Section of Trench 3



North-East Facing Section through Cut 114



South-East Facing Section through Cut 111



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2007

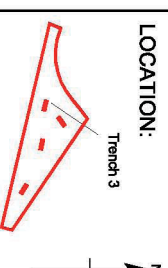
Former Parcels Office,
Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne

SCALE: 1:30

DRAWN BY: CP

DATE: March 2007

LOCATION:



KEY:

(121)	Context Number
Orange	Brick
Red	Ceramic Drain
Grey	Concrete
White	Cable
Yellow	Sandstone
Diagonal lines	Timber
Red hatched	Descriptive Text

REPORT No:
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Figure 5 : Plan and North-West Facing Section of Trench 3 with sections through features



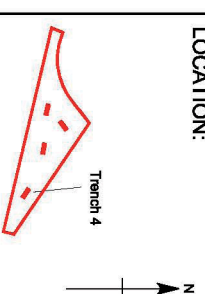
North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2007
Former Parcels Office,
Westgate Road
Newcastle upon Tyne

SCALE: 1:30

DRAWN BY: CP

DATE: March 2007

LOCATION:



KEY:

- (121) Context Number
- Ceramic Drain
- Concrete
- Cable
- Sandstone
- Cobble

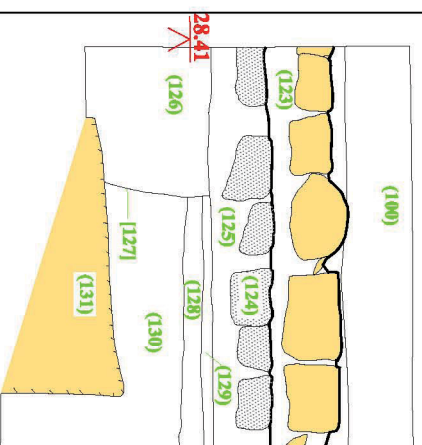
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Plan of Trench 4



South-East Facing Section of Trench 4



North-East Facing Section of Trench 4

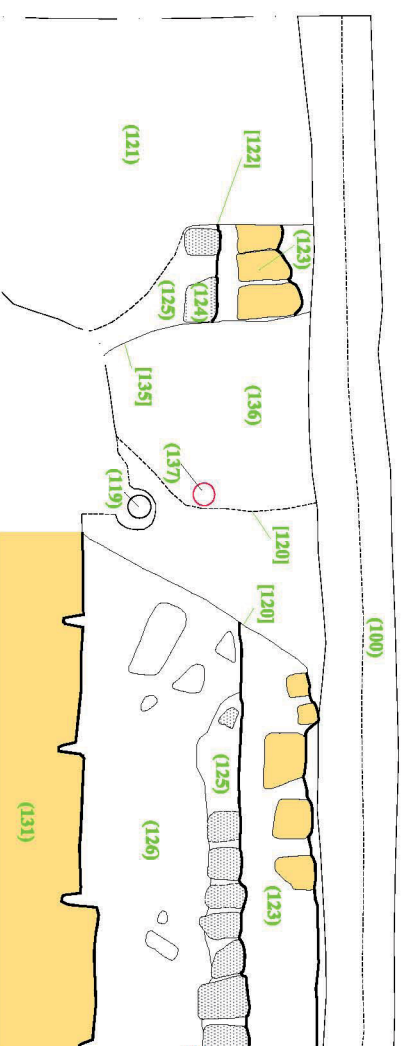
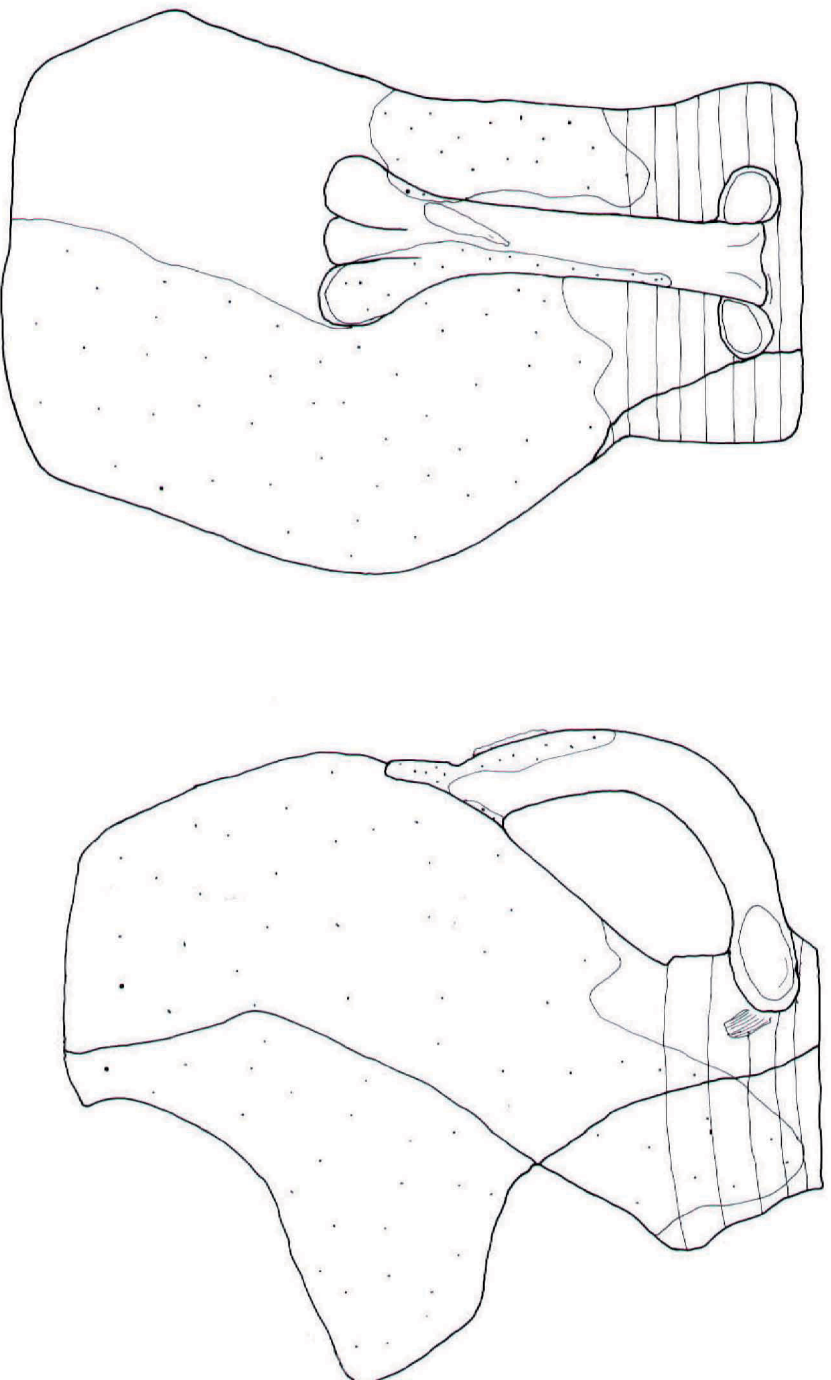


Figure 6: Plan and Section Drawings of Trench 4



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Newcastle upon Tyne

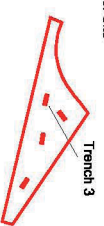
SCALE: 1:2

DRAWN BY: CP

DATE: March 2007

LOCATION:

Plan of Site



Plan of Trench 3
Cut (111)



South-East Facing Section through Cut 111



KEY:

 Areas of Glazing

REPORT NO:

CP 447/06

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Figure 7 : Illustration of the Medieval Jug found in (109) in Trench 3

