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# **NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

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**Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/546/07**



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
WATCHING BRIEF  
ON CORBRIDGE  
SEWER REFURBISHMENT,  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
FOR  
NORTHUMBRIAN WATER  
PLC.**

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# CONTENTS

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	<i>Page</i>
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	III
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	V
<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT .....	6
<b>2 METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 PROJECT DESIGN.....	7
2.2 WATCHING BRIEF .....	7
<b>3 BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY .....	8
3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....	8
3.3 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS .....	9
<b>4 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF.....</b>	<b>11</b>
4.1 RESULTS .....	11
<b>5 FINDS.....</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1 FINDS RESULTS.....	21
<b>6 CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
6.1 CONCLUSIONS.....	22
<b>7 BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>23</b>
7.1 SECONDARY SOURCES.....	23
<b>APPENDIX 1: TEST PIT DETAILS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3: FIGURES .....</b>	<b>26</b>

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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

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*Location*

FRONT COVER: CORBRIDGE BRIDGE.....	FRONTISPIECE
FIGURE 1 : LOCATION OF CORBRIDGE.....	APPENDIX 3
FIGURE 2 : GENERAL WORKS LOCATION, NORTH OF THE RIVER TYNE .....	APPENDIX 3
FIGURE 3 : GENERAL WORKS LOCATION, SOUTH OF THE RIVER TYNE .....	APPENDIX 3
FIGURE 4 : SITE LOCATION, 1-3 BRIDGE END COTTAGES .....	APPENDIX 3
FIGURE 5 : SITE LOCATION, FRONT STREET JUNCTION .....	APPENDIX 3
FIGURE 6 : SITE LOCATION, THE ANGEL INN AND PRINCES STREET .....	APPENDIX 3
PLATE 1: TEST PIT 1, FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 11
PLATE 2 : TEST PIT 2, FACING EAST .....	PAGE 11
PLATE 3 : TRENCH LOCATION, FACING NORTHWEST .....	PAGE 13
PLATE 4 : DRAIN/CULVERT <b>101</b> .....	PAGE 12
PLATE 5 : EXCAVATION OF TRENCH, FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 13
PLATE 6 : EXISTING CONCRETE TANK.....	PAGE 13
PLATE 7 : TRENCH LOCATION, FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 14
PLATE 8 : EXCAVATION OF TRENCH, FACING EAST .....	PAGE 14
PLATE 9 : EXCAVATION OF TRENCH, FACING NORTHWEST.....	PAGE 14
PLATE 10: WALL <b>105</b> , FACING NORTHEAST.....	PAGE 15
FIGURE 11 : TRENCH LOCATION, FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 16
FIGURE 12 : TRENCH FACING, WEST.....	PAGE 16
FIGURE 13 : TRENCH LOCATION, FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 16
FIGURE 14 : TRENCH, FACING NORTH.....	PAGE 16
FIGURE 15 : EXCAVATION TRENCH, NOTE BRICK AND CONCRETE STRUCTURE.....	PAGE 17
FIGURE 16 : PRINCES STREET, FACING NORTH. ....	PAGE 17
FIGURE 17 : DRAIN <b>108</b> , FACING NORTHWEST.....	PAGE 18
FIGURE 18 : DRAIN 108, FACING WEST.....	PAGE 18
FIGURE 19 : WALL <b>111</b> , FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 19
FIGURE 20 : WALL <b>111</b> , FACING NORTHEAST .....	PAGE 19
FIGURE 21 : TRENCH EXCAVATION, FACING NORTH .....	PAGE 20
FIGURE 22 : TRENCH BACKFILL, FACING SOUTH .....	PAGE 20

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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North Pennines Archaeology Ltd. were approached by Northumbrian Water PLC to design a programme of archaeological recording following the clause placed on the planning consent for a programme of recording, by the Northumberland County Conservation Team, on areas in Corbridge disturbed by a Sewer Refurbishment Scheme. This archaeological recording took the form of a watching brief, as required, adhering to the brief and Written Scheme of Investigation. This report outlines the results of this programme of archaeological monitoring.

Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, and the high number of test pits and construction trenches excavated under archaeological supervision, few archaeological features were encountered during the watching brief. This can be largely explained by the location of the test pits and other trenches upon pre-existing water main services, meaning that the areas excavated had been previously disturbed.

Of the few archaeological features encountered were the surviving remains of a drain/culvert and a section of walling at Station Road, which may be associated with the former hospital buildings, which lie immediately to the east of the works. Another narrow small wall was revealed adjacent to Bridge End Cottages, which possibly forms a revetting wall in an attempt to contain river erosion. A drain/culvert was also uncovered on Princes Street, which appears to be post-medieval in date, due to the number of 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds recovered from within the backfill of the drain.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Northumbrian Water PLC for commissioning the project, in particular Mark Morris, for his assistance throughout the project.

The watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters, Martin Sowerby, Frances Wood, David Jackson and Matt Nichol. The resulting report was written and the drawings were produced by Cat Peters and Martin Sowerby. Frank Giecco managed the finds. Frank Giecco, Managing Director of NPA Ltd, managed the project. Juliet Reeves edited the report.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 A study of the area of Corbridge due to be affected by the Sewer Refurbishment Works concluded that deposits of archaeological significance may exist in certain areas. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commenced, a programme of archaeological work was undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. This was in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16).
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) was invited by Northumbrian Water PLC, to undertake the required archaeological watching brief. The proposed groundworks involved the reconstruction to existing chambers, and the insertion of some additional pipe work. All groundworks within the areas outlined by the brief, were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994a and 1994b).
- 1.1.3 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document outlining the archaeological findings from some of the areas, and a summary of each test pit recorded as part of the archaeological watching brief. The recommendations and conclusions are based on these studies.

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## 2 METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design was submitted by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd in response to a request by Northumbrian Water PLC for archaeological advice on the study area. 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 1990), and generally accepted best practice.

### 2.2 WATCHING BRIEF

2.2.1 The Watching Brief was undertaken in accordance with standards and procedures set out by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1990). It involved the monitoring of all groundworks situated within the area of high archaeological potential, as outlined by Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. These areas were highlighted by an assessment of the archaeological potential of the proposed works. The main purpose of an Archaeological Watching Brief is to ensure that important archaeological remains are not destroyed without first being adequately recorded by an appropriately qualified and experienced archaeologist.

2.2.2 In total four areas were observed under archaeological watching brief conditions these were, Station Road on the south side of the bridge, land adjacent to Bridge End Cottages which continued up the hill towards the Angel Inn and Princes Street. The programme of archaeological monitoring commenced on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and concluded on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

### 2.3 ARCHIVE

2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and 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 NPA06, CP546/07, SRC-A.

2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this assessment will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

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## 3 BACKGROUND

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### 3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The site covers the centre of Corbridge, an important small historic village lying in the Tyne Valley in the north-east of England, 16 miles west of Newcastle and *c.* 3.5 miles east of Hexham (Figure 1). The site is centred upon national grid reference NY 9908 6435, a point at the centre of Corbridge (Figure 2). It stands in an elevated position on the north bank of the River Tyne.
- 3.1.2 The geology of the immediate area consists of stepped alluvial terraces, which have been created, by the River Tyne and its changing course. The underlying geology consists of the Stainmore Group of limestone and sandstone which contain thin coal seams overlain by glacial sands, gravel and boulder clay (Lovell 1981, 3-4).

### 3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 This is intended as an introduction and summary of Corbridge's past, based on cartographic and published sources.
- 3.2.2 Corbridge has a long history, recorded from early times. The Romans created a town and administrative centre here, called Corstopitum. The Roman road known as Watling Street passes through the parish. Corstopitum was known as a centre where the surrounding British people lived and worked much as they had before the Romans came.
- 3.2.3 The Anglican church of St. Andrews is the parish church of Corbridge, and is thought to have been consecrated in 676AD. Saint Wilfrid is supposed to have built the church at the same time that Hexham Abbey was constructed. It has changed several times throughout the centuries, with a Norman doorway still in evidence, as well as a lych gate constructed in memory of the soldiers killed in the First World War. There are only three fortified vicarages in the county, and one of these is at Corbridge. Built during the reign of Edward II in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the vicar's Pele is to be found in the southeast corner of the churchyard, said to have walls 4 feet in thickness and built mainly from stones taken from Corstopitum. The register for St. Andrews dates from 1657. Later on in the town's ecclesiastical history, Wesleyan, Primitive and Free Methodist chapels were all built too.
- 3.2.4 Corbridge suffered, as did many other settlements in the county, from border warfare, which was particularly prevalent between 1300 and 1700. Raids were commonplace, and it was not unusual for the livestock to be brought into the town at night and a watch placed to guard either end of the street for marauders. The bridge over the Tyne at Corbridge dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but has not survived. The present bridge was erected in 1674, an impressive stone structure with 7 arches.
- 3.2.5 Stagshaw Bank fair, held traditionally on July 4<sup>th</sup>, was one of the most famous of the country fairs. It included a huge sale of stock, and was proclaimed each year by the



bailiff to the Duke of Northumberland. Today the County Agricultural Show is held in the fields outside Corbridge each year, a very popular rural event, drawing people from all over Northumberland as well as further afield.

### **3.3 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

- 3.3.1 In May 2001 Archaeological Services at the University of Durham undertook a field evaluation at Duke's Cottages in advance of a residential development. The work revealed archaeological features including a shallow gully and also recovered fragments of medieval pottery (ASUD 2001).
- 3.3.2 In September 2003 Tyne & Wear Museums Archaeology Department maintained a watching brief during the upgrading and extending of existing water services within Corbridge at Well Bank, Town Farm Fields and West Terrace. The work revealed a number of undated surfaces surviving beneath the road surface and modern disturbance and concluded that there is a strong possibility of surviving archaeological remains throughout medieval Corbridge (TWM 2003).
- 3.3.3 In October 2003, the Archaeological Practice (TAP) undertook a field evaluation on land at 2 Princes Street, Corbridge. The work revealed the presence of a shallow linear ditch filled medieval pottery of 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century date and extensive potential for environmental sampling (TAP 2003).
- 3.3.4 In December 2003 Tyne & Wear Museums Archaeology Department maintained a watching brief on behalf of Integrated Utility Services of groundworks to the north and south of the bridge. The work revealed an undated cobble surface beneath the road surface and modern disturbance (TWM 2003).
- 3.3.5 In August 2004 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook two archaeological field evaluations on land behind Eastfield House, Corbridge, Northumberland. The work revealed a number of archaeological features within the south of the site. These included a circular stone built structure with a flagged sandstone floor, a possible robber trench surviving as a shallow linear feature filled with stone fragments, a linear ditch of probable medieval date, linear features, pits and post holes of probable medieval origin. A number of fragments of 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century pottery and glass were also recovered.
- 3.3.6 In November 2004 North Pennines Archaeology maintained an archaeological watching brief of works Sunnybrae, Stagshaw Road, Corbridge, Northumberland. A heavily truncated grave was observed, with only a fragment of pelvis and right and left femur exposed, the remainder of the lower skeleton continued under the section. The grave was aligned east west and probably part of the medieval cemetery, where similar burials have been dated to the 13<sup>th</sup> century.
- 3.3.7 In January 2007, a watching brief being undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology required a full excavation at the site of the Angel Inn Corbridge. Two burials were encountered, as well as several wall footings, showing medieval occupation of the area.

- 3.3.8 In 2007 Pre-Construct Archaeology undertook an excavation on St. Helen's Street, Corbridge where they found evidence for a large rectilinear building along the street frontage (Aaron. pers. comm.).
- 3.2.9 From October 2007 onwards, Pre Construct Archaeology have been undertaking an archaeological watching brief on works associated with electricity cabling in Corbridge, predominantly along Main Street. The deposits generally consisted of a previously disturbed mixed backfill, associated with previous service pipes in the area, but at the corner of Main Street and Princes Street, in the pavement in front of the Angel Inn, a feature was observed. Due to the nature of the trenching, the extent of the feature was never uncovered, but the archaeologist on-site suggested a pit or trench could be represented. Several pieces of medieval pottery were encountered within this feature, which have yet to be analysed (Aaron pers. comm.).

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## 4 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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### 4.1 RESULTS

- 4.1.1 The preliminary groundworks to replace and upgrade the sewer system in Corbridge were undertaken in a number of locations throughout the town. Those works with the potential for subsurface archaeological features were monitored under archaeological watching brief conditions. The areas observed were; Station Road, situated at the southern end of the River Tyne bridge, Bridge End Cottages, located on the northern end of the bridge, the Angel Inn, situated on the junction between Princes Street, Main Street and Middle Street and finally Princes Street (see Figures 2-6). The watching brief commenced on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007 and concluded on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008.
- 4.1.2 **Princes Street (Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2007; Plates 1 and 2):** archaeological supervision commenced on works located on Princes Street, Corbridge. Two preliminary test pits (trial test pits 1 and 2) were excavated to locate the nature and depth of the sewerage system in this area. Trial test pit 1, measured 2m in length and 0.7m in width. The maximum depth reached by hand digging was 1.2m, the legal maximum. An extension was later added to it, 2.5m in length and 0.85m wide, forming an L-shaped test pit, with a box inserted to reach a final depth of 1.6m. Trial test pit 2 was 1.7m by 0.65m to a maximum depth of 1.2m. Both test pits revealed an orange-brown sandy loam with brick and rubble inclusions overlain by a 0.1m thick hardcore make-up layer, overlain by a 0.1m thick layer of tarmac, forming the road surface. Five pre-existing services were located within the test pits, explaining the mixed backfill-like deposit below the road make-up surfaces. No archaeological features were observed during the excavation of these two test pits. Further archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of trenches to insert new drains (see 4.1.24 – 4.1.31).



**Plate 1:** Test pit 1, facing north



**Plate 2:** Test pit 2, facing east

- 4.1.3 **Station Road (Fig 3: Plates 3 and 4):** archaeological monitoring commenced on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008, adjacent to Station Road, on the southern side of the River Tyne. The groundworks involved the excavation of single 2.5m by 5.5m construction trench to insert a new concrete chamber to improve wastewater runoff from existing manholes. This trench was later extended 1.5m to the northeast to join up with a pre-existing manhole (see also 4.1.16).



**Plate 3:** Trench location, facing northwest



**Plate 4:** Drain/culvert **101**

- 4.1.4 The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 3.5m cutting into the naturally deposited river gravels. Overlying the natural were three distinct layers, and a single archaeological feature of note. The natural substrate **100**, was exposed at a depth of 0.45m below the modern ground surface and consisted of moderately compacted pale greenish grey silty sand with 90% small to medium rounded inclusions. Located at the northern extent of the trench was a stone drain/culvert **101**, which was constructed from randomly coursed yellow sandstones and was bonded with a dark grey mortar. It is highly likely that the drain relates to the cottages (or former hospital, now Lion Court) located c 20m to the south of the excavation trench. Overlaying the drain was 0.30m of mixed redeposited natural and hardcore **102**, which was presumably laid as bedding for the modern concrete road surface **103**.
- 4.1.5 **1-3 Bridge End Cottages (see Figure 4):** archaeological monitoring initially commenced on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and continued intermittently until the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008. The works were located immediately north of the bridge, adjacent to Nos 1-3 Bridge End Cottages. As a large number of interventions were made in this area, the phases and locations of the works have been placed in date order and are discussed below.
- 4.1.6 **10<sup>th</sup> January 2008 (see Plates 5 and 6):** a single trench was observed under archaeological monitoring conditions. The watching brief was required in order to ascertain the location of an existing sewerage/ wastewater grading or holding tank. The trench was approximately 4.5m wide by 6m long with approximately 0.43m of modern tarmac and hardcore bedding material being mechanically removed, revealing the top of the tank.
- 4.1.7 As the construction cut for the chamber covered the entire trench no archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief. The top of the tank was removed to gain access to the inner chamber in order to insert a number of screens to contain waste products from the sewerage pipes and stop them entering the River Tyne.

**Plate 5:** Excavation of trench, facing north**Plate 6:** Existing concrete tank

- 4.1.8 **23<sup>rd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008:** further observations were undertaken to excavate a pipe trench connecting the chamber to an existing manhole. The trench was 1.3m wide, which revealed an earlier water pipe. A large number of services were noted within the trench, which showed that the area had been disturbed, therefore any archaeological deposits or remains would be severely truncated.
- 4.1.9 **25<sup>th</sup> January 2008:** a small square trench was excavated approximately 4m to the north east of the chamber to locate and replace a pre-existing manhole and inspection chamber. The trench measured 4m long by 1.5m wide and 2m deep. As the trench was located within a cut for an earlier water pipe, no archaeology was observed. However, an examination of the section was made which showed that the modern road surface had been constructed onto a layer of medium sized sub-rounded cobbles, which presumably relates to an earlier road surface.
- 4.1.10 **28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008:** work continued on the excavation of the trench which started on the 25<sup>th</sup> January, which consisted of the removal of approximately 1m of mixed disturbed backfill. A number of live services were again exposed making the recording of the trench difficult. No finds were recovered.
- 4.1.11 **30<sup>th</sup> January 2008:** the trench was extended further towards the large concrete holding tank adjacent to Bridge End Cottages, removing approximately 3m of modern road surface. The trench was 1.73m wide with a depth of 2.89m. The natural was located 1.20m below ground level (bgl), and consisted of pale green to grey river gravels. Overlaying the natural was 0.70m of yellow hardcore, mixed with dark grey rubble. The bedding for the modern road and footpath as well as the tarmac surface made up the rest of the trench.
- 4.1.12 **11<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (see Plates 7 and 8):** a new trench was excavated at the top of the hill towards the Angel Inn and adjacent to the Front Street Junction. The works were required to replace a pre-existing manhole inspection chamber and associated pipes. The initial trench for the chamber measured 2m by 2m with an extension added to northwest, which were 3m long by 1.70m wide. Both trenches were 2m deep. The natural was visible only 1.26m below the modern road surface and was mid greenish brown in colour with 80% small to medium sized stone inclusions. The natural was overlaid by mixed redeposited natural and dark grey bedding gravels from the numerous services located within this trench (BT, water, electricity). This trench linked

an existing manhole near Front Street through this chamber and down the hill to the larger concrete tank at the base of the hill.



**Plate 7:** Trench location, facing north



**Plate 8:** Excavation of trench, facing east

- 4.1.13 **12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008:** work continued on both days. The maximum depth of the trench was 2.95m deep. Due to the disturbed nature of the ground, no archaeological features or deposits were exposed, nor were any finds recovered.
- 4.1.14 **14<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (see Plate 9):** a small trench measuring 1.5m by 2m was excavated on the north side of the bridge, along the eastern row of houses adjacent to Bridge End Cottages. The cut was 0.76m deep and was filled with loose redeposited natural and mixed with small to medium sized yellow sandstone fragments. The purpose of the trench was to locate a large water pipe, which runs down the hill from the town. After the pipe was located it was immediately backfilled with gravels. No finds were recovered. Approximately 3m south of the test pit another large trench was opened, which was required in order to replace a manhole. Initially, the trench measured 2m by 2m and was excavated to a depth of 0.25m bgl.



**Plate 9:** Excavation of trench, facing northwest, with the small test-pit in the background

- 4.1.15 **18<sup>th</sup> February 2008:** the excavations, which commenced on the 14th February to upgrade a manhole, continued. The trench was enlarged to 3.70m long by 2.30m wide and 1.40m deep revealing a number of live utilities. No archaeology was observed.
- 4.1.16 **Station Road (19<sup>th</sup> February 2008, see Plate 10):** the original trench located on Station Road was re-opened to connect the new manhole to a pre-existing chamber. During the excavations a substantial northeast by southwest aligned stone wall/structure, **105**, was revealed. The wall consisted of roughly hewn sandstones; approximately four courses high and was bonded with a grey mortar. It is possible that the wall relates to the former hospital buildings (Lion Court), which lies 5m to the east of the groundworks.



**Plate 10:** Wall 105, facing northeast

- 4.1.17 **Bridge End Cottages (20<sup>th</sup> February 2008; see Plates 11 and 12):** the trench, which was excavated on the 18<sup>th</sup> February, was resumed. The area of the trench has been enlarged to 4.5m by 1.7m. The expected depth of the trench was 2.80m, however a large drain was encountered 1.30m below the road surface, which resulted in the partial abandonment of the trench until a site meeting was undertaken. Also within this trench were several curb-like stones, which were visible in the east facing section. These stones lay 1m west of the existing path and it is likely that the road has been widened at some stage and these stones relate to an earlier pathway. The silty natural was visible 1.10m bgl, whilst 0.20m of redeposited natural and overburden made up the remaining depth of the trench.
- 4.1.18 **Bridge End Cottages (21<sup>st</sup> February 2008; see Plates 11 and 12):** after the drain that was encountered on the 20<sup>th</sup> February was removed, the trench was mechanically excavated to a maximum depth of 2.80m. As the trench cuts into the natural soil horizon, no archaeological features were noted. Work also commenced to join the manhole located at the junction of Front Street to the current trench under observation. Approximately 7m of modern tarmac were removed to a maximum depth of 1.40m by 1.70m wide. Due to heavy rain the trench was immediately shored to stop the sides from collapsing, therefore an examination of the sections were not possible for health and safety reasons.

- 4.1.19 **26<sup>th</sup> February 2008:** the trench was extended further northwards to join with the new manhole chamber halfway up the hill at the junction Front Street. A total of 12m of trenching have been excavated towards the Angel Inn and Main Street.



**Plate 11:** Trench location, facing north

**Plate 12:** Trench facing, west

- 4.1.20 **27<sup>th</sup> February 2008:** machining continued up the hill. Approximately 18m have been excavated since the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2008, with the trench being on average 1.3m wide by 1.70m deep. The natural soil horizon has been observed along the entirety of the trench and lays 1.20m below the modern tarmac road surface. The layers and deposits above the natural, vary considerably as a result of the large number of service trenches within this area of the town.
- 4.1.21 **28<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (see Plates 13 and 14):** the final section of trenching was completed, joining the two new manhole inspection chambers. The remaining trench was 9m long by 1.40m wide and up to 2.30m deep. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief.



**Plate 13:** Trench location, facing north

**Plate 14:** Trench, facing north



- 4.1.22 **7<sup>th</sup> March 2008** (see *Figure 4; Plate 15*): immediately adjacent No2 Bridge End Cottage, a 2.8m by 2.8m trench was excavated to insert a new overflow chamber. The maximum depth of the trench was 2.1m. As other services and the construction of the concrete and brick chamber had previously disturbed the ground, no archaeological features were observed.



**Plate 15:** Excavation trench, note brick and concrete structure

- 4.1.23 **25<sup>th</sup> March 2008**: work on the trench that was excavated on the 7<sup>th</sup> March was partially re-excavated. As the trench had been previously observed no further archaeological features were noted.
- 4.1.24 **Princes Street (26<sup>th</sup> March 2008; see Plate 16)**: a single trench was opened along Princes Street, directly opposite the western facing wall of the Angel Inn. The area had seen previous archaeological excavations to the rear of the Angle Inn, which exposed significant archaeological remains relating to the medieval period (Liddel 2007). The trench measured 1.30m wide by 2m long and was 0.20m deep. No archaeology was observed due to the number of services trenches within this initial excavation.



**Plate 16:** Princes Street, facing north.

- 4.1.25 **27<sup>th</sup> March 2008:** continued excavations at Princes Street. The trench was extended from the previous days works by 2m. The width of the trench continued at 1.30m whilst its maximum depth was 0.80m. The entire trench comprised re-deposited natural backfilled including concrete fragments and further pipe work.
- 4.1.26 **28<sup>th</sup> March 2008:** limited works continued at the Middle Street/Princes Street junction, extending the trench 2m to the south. Again, a large number of services were exposed directly below the modern tarmac road. No archaeology was noted, as the excavations did not continue below the services at this time.
- 4.1.27 An additional test pit was excavated approximately 15m north of the River Tyne and 5m west of the bridge (Bridge End Cottages). The pit measured 2.5m by 2.5m, however due to the instability of the ground the pit was shored up immediately and became difficult to record. A large number of modern pottery sherds, glass and metalwork were noted at the base of the trench, suggesting a dumping area for the town.
- 4.1.28 **31<sup>st</sup> March 2008:** limited excavations continued at the Middle Street/Princes Street junction. The trench was only extended by 2m due to the risk of damaging a large number of live services within the trench, which necessitated hand excavation.
- 4.1.29 **1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 (see Plates 17 and 18):** the excavation of the trench at the junction of Middle Street and Princes Street continued towards an existing manhole/inspection chamber. Approximately 0.50m bgl, a north south aligned stone drain/culvert was exposed within the west facing section of the trench, approximately 5m from the northern extent of the days trenching. The drain/culvert **108**, consisted of roughly hewn yellow sandstones, randomly coursed with flat capping stones and was bonded with a degraded pale grey lime mortar. The stone drain/culvert abutted a modern iron water pipe. It is possible that the drain/culvert was an earlier attempt at drainage, which in turn was superseded when the metal drain was added in the 1950's (*Wilson pers comm.*).



**Plate 17:** Drain **108**, facing northwest



**Plate 18:** Drain **108**, facing west

- 4.1.30 The drain directly overlaid *c* 0.10m of greyish silt, **109**, which contained charcoal fragments. It is possible that this layer acted as bedding for the drain and the charcoal fragments have been brought down by water in the drain. The natural was exposed at a depth of 1.5m whilst 0.32m of disturbed overburden and 0.20m of modern road surface made up the remaining depth of the trench.

- 4.1.31 **2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008:** work continued with the trench extension at the junction of Middle Street and Princes Street. The trench was extended to a width of 1.3m by 2m deep and 8m long. No further observations were required at this location, therefore work commenced at Bridge End Cottages to continue with the pipe excavations (see 4.1.32).
- 4.1.32 **3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008:** approximately 8m of trenching were undertaken adjacent to Bridge End Cottages to lay a new drainage pipe between two previously excavated concrete chambers. The trench was 1.3m wide, and at an average depth of 1.8m. At the base of the trench a large cast iron pipe was exposed, however this will remain in-situ, as the new pipe will be positioned on top of the earlier pipe. The nature of the backfill within the trench shows that the trench cut for the cast iron water pipe had severely disturbed the ground. As a result of this, no archaeological features or layers were observed with the course of the watching brief.
- 4.1.33 **4<sup>th</sup> April 2008 (see Plates 19 and 20):** trench extension proceeded after the trench that was opened on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February was backfilled. The trench measured 1.3m wide by 1.8m deep and continued for 3.5m towards the river. A section of walling was uncovered towards the northern extent of the trench, aligned north-northwest by south-southeast. The wall, **III** was constructed from yellow roughly hewn sandstone blocks, measuring 0.30m by 0.25m by 0.10m and is bonded with a pale greyish white lime mortar. The structure was approximately 0.5m bgl. and 1.5m in height and extended 0.70m into the trench (from the west facing section). However, the wall was severely truncated when the existing pipe was laid and will be further truncated when the new pipe is added. It is likely that the wall originally formed part of a revetment associated with the River Tyne, however as only a short section of walling was exposed, this must remain speculative. A significant amount of late post-medieval and modern pottery fragments were recovered from this trench, indicating a post-medieval/modern date for this wall. The natural substrate was not seen within the trench and the makeup of the ground consisted of loose dark brown silty sand, with 80% inclusions of small to large sub angular stones and yellow sand stone, which presumably came from the construction of the wall.



**Plate 19:** Wall **III**, facing north



**Plate 20:** Wall **III**, facing northeast

- 4.1.34 *7<sup>th</sup> April 2008 (see Plates 21 and 22):* work continued from the 4<sup>th</sup> April on the excavation of the trench. It measured 3m long by 1.4m wide and an average of 2.5m deep, which exposed the original metal water pipe. The natural soil horizon was visible in the section, consisting of pale green to brown silty sand with 70% small to medium sub-rounded inclusions of river gravels. The natural was overlaid by 1.5m of modern overburden. As the ground had been previously disturbed no archaeological features or deposits were observed within the trench.



**Plate 21:** Trench excavation, facing north



**Plate 22:** Trench backfill, facing south

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## 5 FINDS

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### 5.1 FINDS RESULTS

- 5.1.1 This section outlines the results of the finds analysis undertaken on the small finds recovered from the monitored trenching as part of the watching brief. A total of 29 finds were recovered during the watching brief. The majority of these consisted of post medieval pottery and glass fragments all of which came from unstratified contexts, which shows the extent of disturbance throughout the area monitored by the watching brief.
- 5.1.2 **The Pottery:** the excavation has produced a small assemblage of post-medieval pottery, which predominantly dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The pottery is in good condition, and consists of small to large fragments.
- 5.1.3 In total, 29 fragments (weighing 1.52kg) were recovered from the excavation, all of which were derived from unstratified contexts. All the fragments were examined and recorded by sherd numbers and weight, in order to determine the relative proportions of vessel form and type.
- 5.1.8 **Glass:** 2 sherds of glass (weighing 0.058kg) were recovered from the watching brief, all of which were recovered next to the River Tyne. The fragments are all modern in date and all the examples appear to have been related to domestic use.

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## 6 CONCLUSIONS

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### 6.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, and the number of trenches excavated under archaeological supervision, few archaeological features were encountered during the entirety of the watching brief. This can be largely explained by the location of the test pits upon pre-existing water main services, meaning that the areas excavated had been previously disturbed.
- 6.1.2 Of the few archaeological features encountered were the surviving remains of a drain/culvert and a section of walling Station Road, which may be associated with the former hospital buildings, now Lion Court. Another narrow small wall was revealed adjacent to Bridge End Cottages, which possibly formed a revetting wall in an attempt to contain river erosion. A drain/culvert was also uncovered on Princes Street, which appears to be post-medieval in date.

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## APPENDIX 1: TEST PIT DETAILS

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### Princes Street

<b>Test Pit Number</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Depth (max)</b>	<b>Date opened</b>	<b>Finds/ Contexts</b>
Trial Test Pit 1	4.5m	2m	1.2m	19/11/07	
<b>Location</b>					<b>Finds/ Contexts</b>
Half way down Princes Street, beside the Angel Inn extension					None
<b>Description</b>					
Orange-brown sandy loam overlain by 0.1m thickness of hardcore, overlain by 0.1m thickness of tarmac road surface. An L-shaped test pit					

<b>Test Pit Number</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Depth (max)</b>	<b>Date opened</b>	<b>Finds/ Contexts</b>
Trial Test Pit 2	1.7m	0.65m	1.2m	20/11/07	
<b>Location</b>					<b>Finds/ Contexts</b>
At the southern end of Princes Street, beside the south-west corner of the Angel Inn					None
<b>Description</b>					
Orange-brown sandy loam overlain by 0.1m thickness of hardcore, overlain by 0.1m thickness of tarmac road surface					



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**APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INDEX**

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<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
100	Deposit	Natural
101	Structure	Drain
102	Deposit	Hardcore
103	Surface	Modern Road
104	Layer	Natural
105	Structure	Wall
106	Layer	Made Ground
107	Deposit	Made Ground
108	Structure	Drain
109	Deposit	Bedding Material
110	Deposit	Made Ground
111	Structure	Wall
112	Deposit	Modern Road surface

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## **APPENDIX 3: FIGURES**

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