

KINGSLEY COTTAGE, RED LION LANE, NANTWICH, CHESHIRE



Archaeological Watching Brief



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CgMs**

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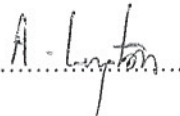
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Prepared by: Elizabeth Murray
Position: Supervisor
Date: September 2008

Checked by: Stephen Rowland
Position: Project Manager
Date: October 2008

Approved by: Alan Lupton
Position: Operations Manager
Date: October 2008

Signed.....

Signed.....

Oxford Archaeology North

Mill 3, Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 6JF
t: (0044) 01524 848666
f: (0044) 01524 848606

w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

© Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd (2008)

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0EA
t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 Circumstances of the Project	4
1.2 Location, Topography and Geology	4
1.3 Historical and Archaeological Background	5
2. METHODOLOGY.....	7
2.1 Written Scheme of Investigation	7
2.2 Watching Brief.....	7
2.3 Palaeoenvironmental Assessment.....	8
2.4 Archive.....	8
3. RESULTS.....	9
3.1 Introduction.....	9
3.2 Fieldwork Results	9
3.3 Finds.....	11
3.4 Palaeoenvironmental Assessment.....	12
4. CONCLUSIONS.....	13
4.1 Discussion	13
4.2 Impact Assessment.....	15
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	16
5.1 Cartographic Sources	16
5.2 Secondary Sources	16
6. ILLUSTRATIONS	17
9.1 Figures.....	17
9.2 Plates	17
APPENDIX 1: CGMS WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION.....	18
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT LIST.....	19
APPENDIX 3: FINDS CATALOGUE.....	20

SUMMARY

Following proposals by McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd (MSD) for a residential development on the former site of Kingsley Cottage, Kingsley Fields, Nantwich, Cheshire (SJ 647 526), Cheshire County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) requested that a programme of archaeological monitoring should accompany any groundworks, in recognition of the archaeological potential of the site. The development area lies adjacent to a Roman industrial site of national significance excavated in 2001 and 2002 whilst a previous evaluation around Kingsley Cottage identified the presence of a Roman road likely to correspond with a north-west/south-east aligned feature running between the industrial site to the west, and a road identified previously at Wood Street, to the south-east. In 2007 Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by CgMs, on behalf of MSD, to undertake the archaeological watching brief.

The watching brief was carried out in two stages, the first in May 2007 and the second in June and July 2008. Observations in the first phase were limited to a perusal of the site following an extensive site strip, whilst a permanent presence was maintained during the second phase, which involved further site stripping and deeper excavation for footings and crane bases. Stripping revealed extensive deposits of modern made ground and re-deposited material, sealed beneath which were identified a number of archaeological features cutting the natural alluvium. Chief among these was the predicted Roman road, which, although heavily truncated, was likely to date to the second century AD. Although extant for a length of some 17m within the excavated foundation trenches at the southern end of the site, the surface was not consistently exposed in either plan or section. A single pit from which a small assemblage of Roman pottery was recovered was also identified, and may be indicative of low intensity roadside activity: there was nothing akin to the concentration of remains identified to the west in 2001-2, and it seems likely that the present development site falls outside of the Roman industrial zone.

The road would appear to have fallen out of use prior to the fourth century, and was sealed by successive alluvial layers containing Roman artefacts. The watching brief identified a resumption of activity in the post-medieval period, with a number of structural, drainage, boundary and pit features likely to be associated with Kingsley Cottage. The earliest finds suggested a seventeenth-century commencement, although those of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century date were far more common and are likely to relate to the main period of post-medieval activity on the site.

Although there is little scope for the preservation of archaeological remains within the northern part of the site, there is a possibility that features may survive to the south of the Roman road and of the recently-excavated foundation trenches.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OA North is grateful to McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd for commissioning the project, and for the conduct of their staff on site, particularly Carl Guy, the site foreman. Further thanks are expressed to Mark Leah, Development Control Archaeologist for Cheshire County Council, for providing support and advice on site, and also to Rob Bourn of CgMs for his liaison and provision of supporting information.

The watching brief was undertaken by Kathryn Levey and Elizabeth Murray, the latter of whom compiled the report. The finds were assessed by Christine Howard-Davis and the palaeoenvironmental material by Sandra Bonsall and Elizabeth Huckerby. John Zant identified the Roman coin. The report was illustrated by Marie Rowland and Alex Sperr and edited by Stephen Rowland, who also managed the project.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In 2003, McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd (MSD) submitted proposals for a residential development on land formerly occupied by Kingsley Cottage, at Red Lion Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire (NGR SJ 647 526; Fig 1). The site lies within an area of recognised archaeological potential and, accordingly, Cheshire County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) requested that a programme of archaeological investigation be undertaken in association with the development. A desk-based assessment of the site was undertaken by CgMs in October 2003, which collated evidence of a number of sites of Roman date in those parts of Kingsley Fields around, and by extrapolation, within, the present development site. Previous fieldwork on a c 1.5ha plot to the west of the present development area identified extensive Roman activity, including pits, gullies, burials, a road and two large tanks or cisterns preserved by waterlogging (Connelly and Power 2005). Further archaeological evaluation to the north of Kingsley Cottage in August 2003 identified a much lower density of archaeological remains, including a pit and the continued route of the Roman road (CgMs 2003). The road, accompanied by an associated drainage ditch, ran on a north-west/south-east alignment that was likely to carry the feature into the present development area. Subsequently, CCCHES recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be maintained during all negative groundworks on the site, for which CgMs produced a written scheme of investigation (*Appendix 1*).
- 1.1.2 In 2007 Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) were commissioned by CgMs, on behalf of McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd, to undertake the watching brief of the groundworks, which were conducted in two distinct phases. The first phase, which was monitored on the completion of works in May 2007, involved the stripping of topsoil across much of the site, and some reduction of ground levels. The second phase of intrusive works took place intermittently in June and July 2008 and, with the exception of piling, was subject to a continuous archaeological presence.

1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The site at Red Lion Lane is located to the west of the centre of Nantwich, barely 60m from the west bank of the River Weaver. The rather irregularly-shaped site covers c 0.25 ha and is bounded by the modern developments of Holland Walk and Earnley Close, respectively to the north and west, to the south-east by the rear plots of properties on Welsh Row, and to the south-west by Red Lion Lane itself. The site is fairly level at 40m OD (CgMs 2003) and, prior to redevelopment, appears to have been occupied by scrubby waste ground that developed following the demolition of Kingsley Cottage and several other post-medieval and modern structures that formerly occupied the central and southern parts of the site.

1.2.2 The underlying solid geology of Nantwich is Keuper Marl, within which are the salt beds which have been so influential on the historical development of the town (Shaw and Clark 2003). Within the development area these are overlain by drift deposits of river gravel and alluvium (British Geological Survey 1967).

1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.3.1 **Introduction:** the following section is intended to provide a brief overview of the nature of the archaeological remains within and around the development site in order to contextualise the results of the watching brief. A more detailed treatment can be found in the CgMs desk-based assessment (2003), upon which this section is based, or in the *Nantwich Archaeological Assessment* (Shaw and Clark 2003), undertaken as part of the Cheshire Historic Towns Survey.

1.3.2 **Prehistoric:** whilst there is evidence for prehistoric activity from the wider area, there is no archaeological evidence from the modern confines of Nantwich. It is of interest, however, that coarse ceramic containers frequently associated with salt-making have been recovered from the Iron Age hillfort at Beeston (Shaw and Clark 2003), 14km to the north-west, although their contents need not necessarily have derived from Nantwich brine springs.

1.3.3 **Roman:** conversely, there is copious evidence for Roman settlement and exploitation of the brine springs on an industrial scale from Nantwich. That of most relevance lay within those recently-developed parts of Kingsley fields to the north and west of the present site. The highly significant site, c 1.5ha in extent, was recorded in advance of building works and exhibited various forms of settlement, industrial and even burial activity over two phases spanning the second and third centuries AD (Connelly and Power 2005). Many of the deposits revealed were waterlogged, including two large tanks or cisterns, whilst a second-century road, flanked by ditches, ran on a north-west/south-east alignment through the northern part of the investigated area and headed towards what is now Wood Street, where Welsh Row, the principle street on the west side of the Weaver, crosses the river (*ibid*; M Leah pers comm). In 2003 University of Manchester Archaeology Unit (UMAU) excavated three evaluation trenches towards the centre of the present development site. Within a trench placed immediately to the north of Kingsley Cottage, a pit and a linear feature were recorded. The latter was interpreted as being part of an extension of the Roman road identified during the excavation to the north-west, with the bulk of the road thought to lie beneath the cottage; there were no indications of any other Roman remains within the evaluated area (CgMs 2003).

1.3.4 **Medieval and post-medieval:** despite a number of detailed excavations within the town, the archaeological record for early medieval Nantwich as a whole is sparse, the only tangible evidence comprising an eighth- to ninth-century bronze mount of uncertain provenience (Shaw and Clarke 2003). However, Domesday records that, prior to the Conquest, Nantwich had been the site of several salt houses, of which eight were held in part by the King and by the Earl of Mercia. Valued at £21, Nantwich was thus the foremost of Cheshire's

three salt towns (*ibid*) and, throughout the Middle Ages, second only to Chester. Recent excavations in the Welsh Row area have revealed extensive evidence, much preserved through waterlogging, of medieval and post-medieval buildings and salt-making activity, with that identified at First- and Second Wood Street within 100m of the development site (Connelly and Power 2005). None was identified during those excavations at Kingsley Fields, however. Kingsley Cottage, which once occupied the centre of the development area, is thought to date to the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries (CgMs 2003). Prior to the commencement of groundworks and of the watching brief on the site, a number of surface features associated with the demolished cottage remained extant, including paved surfaces and boundary walls. Several subsoil features containing fragments of post-medieval brick, slag, glass and pottery were identified during the UMAU evaluation; these were thought to have been related to the cottage (*ibid*).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

- 2.1.1 The CCCHEs-approved CgMs written scheme of investigation (*Appendix 1*), was adhered to as fully as possible, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 WATCHING BRIEF

- 2.2.1 **Groundwork contractor's methodology:** the first phase of (unmonitored) groundworks comprised the stripping of topsoil and subsoil deposits from the central portion of the site (an area measuring approximately 40m east/west by up to 60m north/south), reducing the ground level perhaps by as much as 1.5m to 2m. Under archaeological supervision, the second phase of activity continued the process of stripping with a 360 degree mechanical excavator fitted with a toothed ditching bucket, until the whole of the site was free of topsoil and thick deposits of overburden. The same equipment was used for deeper groundworks penetrating the underlying alluvial deposits, which were undertaken at various points within the northern part of the site (Fig 2). Such works included the draining and backfilling of a large pond, and the excavation of a series of deep, rectilinear trenches. The smallest, at 4.5m x 4.3m, lay just inside the site entrance, whilst a large c 15m square intervention for a crane base was dug on the site of the backfilled pond. Ground conditions appear to have necessitated a change of strategy for the crane and other construction equipment, and two 6m-wide and 1.7m-deep trenches with a cumulative length of 23m were excavated, unmonitored, to coincide largely with that of the previous square base.
- 2.2.2 Following these preparatory works, the footings were dug down to natural alluvium at varying depths across the site, again using a toothed bucket. The trenches were approximately 1.5m in width, wider in places where structurally necessary, and were immediately laid with steel reinforcing panels in preparation for the pouring of the concrete, which was always carried out relatively promptly after the cutting of the trenches. Work commenced on the footings from the most southerly point on the site in a clockwise fashion.
- 2.2.3 **Archaeological monitoring:** following the completion of the unmonitored Phase 1 groundworks, all accessible exposed areas of the site were examined for the presence of visible archaeological remains and, where possible, exposed sections were studied to try and establish the depth of truncation of modern, archaeological and natural deposits. The surfaces of spoil heaps were scanned for finds. During Phase 2, as far as possible, close liaison was maintained with the groundwork contractors. The programme of field observation comprised the systematic examination and accurate recording of all features, horizons, and artefacts of archaeological interest exposed during

the groundworks. The location, extent, and character of features of archaeological interest, including sub-soil horizons, were recorded.

- 2.2.4 The discovery of the Roman road necessitated the adoption of a more specific methodology to protect those parts exposed within the foundation trenches and to open up a separate area to allow more detailed investigation. After consultation with MSD and with CCCHEs it was deemed appropriate to seal the exposed parts of the surface with heavy duty plastic sheeting. Using first a mechanical excavator and then by hand, a small slot, 1.5m x 4m, was excavated to the south of the footings to allow the characterisation and recording of the archaeological remains.
- 2.2.5 The recording during the fieldwork conformed to the standard context recording system utilised by OA North, which comprised the use of *pro-forma* watching brief record sheets with supporting registers and indices. A full, indexed, photographic record in colour transparency and monochrome formats was also produced. Section drawings and plans were made at appropriate scales, and these were located using taped measurements from existing boundaries and landmarks, or, following the discovery of the section of Roman road, with a Leica GPS accurate to 20mm.

2.3 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 2.3.1 During the watching brief, a single bulk sample was taken from a secure context above the Roman road, so that it might be assessed for the analytical potential of any preserved plant remains, and for the recovery of small artefacts and cultural residues. Ten litres of the sample was disaggregated by hand water, with the light fraction (flot) collected on a 250 micron mesh and the dense residue collected within a series of graded sieves; both fractions were allowed to dry. The flot was scanned with a Leica MZ6 stereo microscope and the plant material was provisionally identified and recorded; botanical nomenclature follows Stace (1997). Plant remains were scored on a scale of abundance of 1-4, where 1 is rare (up to 5 items) and 4 is abundant (>100 items). The components of the matrix were also noted and scored on a similar scale.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full archive of the work undertaken has been produced to a professional standard in accordance with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The archive will be deposited in the Cheshire County Record Office in Chester, and a copy of the report will be forwarded to the Cheshire Historic Environment Record, also in Chester.

3. RESULTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 The following section presents the results of the watching brief of those groundworks detailed in *Section 2.2.1*. Although the development involved the excavation of several separate interventions, in archaeological terms, these divisions are somewhat arbitrary and, as far as possible, the results have been synthesised to form a coherent whole, with references to individual interventions only where these serve as landmarks. Context descriptions are presented in *Appendix 2* and, for the sake of brevity, are not detailed within this section.

3.2 FIELDWORK RESULTS

3.2.1 **Site strip:** although the majority of the site strip was undertaken without archaeological supervision, these results from the monitored areas are likely to be representative of the site as a whole. Observations demonstrated that, beneath topsoil **100**, there was a considerable depth of demolition debris across much of the site (deposit **104**, for example), presumably arising from the demolition of those buildings that formerly had occupied the site; that within the eastern part of the site was particularly contaminated and was not investigated closely. Within the southern part of the site, demolition debris and modern refuse appeared to have been incorporated with a considerable volume of bovine waste material (context **125**), deposited together within 10m by 8m cut **124**. Removal of these modern deposits revealed an extensive sandy interface/subsoil layer, **101**, up to c 0.5m thick and containing occasional charcoal and cultural material, mostly of post-medieval or modern date, but occasionally Roman. Subsoil **101** in turn sealed a series of alluvial deposits, the uppermost a 0.5m depth of banded light grey sands, **103**, followed by a layer of coarse sand **106**, which became increasingly silty with depth. All of the identified archaeological features were found to cut sand **103**.

3.2.2 **Roman features:** the earliest identified archaeological remains included metal surface **119**, which was initially observed for a length of c 17m in the north-facing sections of the most south-westerly foundation trenches (Fig 3; Plate 1), before a wider area was exposed to the south within an archaeological sondage. Surface **119** was patchy in places and clearly had been truncated to a greater or lesser extent across much of its length (Plates 2 and 3), whilst its intermittent disturbance by piles and the use of a toothed bucket did not aid its initial identification. At the western end of the sondage the road was severely truncated by activity associated with Kingsley Cottage, and survived only as a thin band of make-up material, whilst the more easterly portion was truncated by later cut **124** (Plate 4); no further evidence of the surface was identified in those foundation trenches to the east. Although the full width of the road was not seen in plan, there was sufficient evidence to suggest that it was orientated north-west/south-east, following a natural slope in the alluvium from 36.3m OD in the west to 37.1m OD in the east. The surviving surface, **119**, up to

0.3m thick, comprised sub-rounded and sub-angular gravel and stones up to approximately 0.1m across, within a grey gleyed sandy matrix. It appeared to have been laid directly onto the natural sand, **103**, with the larger stones generally at the top. No finds were recovered from below the road surface, but Roman artefacts, including pottery and a fragment of lead, were all recovered during the cleaning of the road surface (recovery context **120**).

- 3.2.3 Pit **131** was identified within the most south-westerly foundation trench, extending beyond the southern and western limits of excavation (Plates 5 and 6). In section the pit could be seen to contain several fills, of which fill **136** appeared to have accumulated at a very steep angle, indicative of deliberate, albeit perhaps gradual, filling rather than natural silting. The final fill, **132**, perhaps represented a more rapid backfilling and contained a quantity of second-century pottery. Road **119**, pit **131** and alluvium **103** at the western end of the site, were sealed by two successive fairly localised sandy overburden deposits, **121** and **122** (uppermost), both of which produced artefact assemblages of solely Roman date, including a coin from layer **121**.
- 3.2.4 **Other features:** observation of the foundation trenches within the southern part of the site identified a number of truncated and rather discontinuous archaeological features (contexts **107** to **118**), all likely to relate to the post-medieval settlement activity on the site (Plate 7). Structural remains comprised a small stub of roughly east/west aligned wall **109**, and, similarly aligned, L-shaped wall **110**, which had been robbed-out and backfilled with material containing Roman and seventeenth- to eighteenth-century pottery. Linear features **117 = 126** and **128** would appear to represent narrow ditches on a similar alignment, their fills, **118** and **127**, respectively, containing small assemblages of eighteenth- to nineteenth-century pottery and occasional residual Roman material. Handmade brick-lined drain **112** was observed in section at several points in the north-eastern foundations, and may have fed into ditch **117 = 126**, although any conjunction of these features lay outside of the foundation trenches. Several pits were also identified, including pit **134** within the western-most foundation trench; the only artefact to derive from this 0.35m deep by 0.8m wide feature was a single sherd of abraded Roman pottery, which may well have been residual. Otherwise, the earliest post-medieval pit, **113**, contained eighteenth-century and residual Roman pottery, and had been clipped by pit **115**, itself likely to date to the nineteenth century on the basis of the finds from fill **116**. Pit **107**, at the south-eastern end of the foundations, measured 2.7m across, but the finds from fill **108** implied that it was rather modern in date.
- 3.2.5 No archaeological features were identified within those foundation trenches at the northern end of the site. A representative sample of these were observed during excavation, and it soon became clear that the material revealed had been redeposited as a result of the Phase 1 stripping works (Plate 8). In agreement with CCHES, no further archaeological monitoring was undertaken of this area.

3.3 FINDS

3.3.1 **Introduction:** in all, 173 fragments of artefacts and ecofacts were recovered during the investigation, including ceramics, glass, ferrous and non-ferrous metal, industrial waste; their distribution by material-type and context is shown below (Table 1). All were examined in the course of this assessment, and a preliminary computer database created.

Context	Context Type	Material Type				Totals
		Pottery	Coin	CBM	Other	
101	Subsoil interface	15	1		2	18
108	Fill of pit 107	3			3	6
111	Fill of robber trench 110	7				7
114	Fill of pit 113	3				3
116	Fill of pit 115	8		1	1	10
118	Fill of linear/boundary feature 117 = 126	11				11
120	Cleaning layer above road 119	8		7	1	16
121	Horizon sealing road 119	10	1	12	7	30
122	Soil horizon above 121	16		6	2	24
127	Same as 118	2			1	3
129	Fill of linear feature 128	5			1	6
132	Fill of pit 131	7		13	2	22
134	Fill of pit 134	1				1
us		4		12		16
Totals		100	2	51	20	173

Table 1: Distribution of artefacts and ecofacts by context

3.3.2 **Quantification:** the larger part of the assemblage comprised pottery, with 100 sherds recovered in total. The assemblage fell into two quite separate groups, the earliest being Romano-British, and dating largely to the second century AD (from contexts **101**, **111**, **114**, **120**, **121**, **122**, **132** and **134**), the other being eighteenth- to nineteenth-century in date (from contexts **101**, **108**, **111**, **114**, **116**, **118**, **127**, **129**, and unstratified).

3.3.3 **Roman ceramics:** the Romano-British material was generally in small and abraded fragments, but represented a range of fabrics, including Central Gaulish samian ware, probable Wilderspool fabrics (including rough-cast ware), and single sherds of Black Burnished ware and greyware. Some of the material derived from mixed contexts, where it was clearly residual (**101**, **111**, **114**), but in most other cases it appears to have been in context producing only Romano-British material. The presence of a bowl form imitating samian form Dr 44 seems to suggest a later second-century date for this group, a date corroborated by the presence of a *sestertius* of Antoninus Pius in context **121**. A number of small fragments of tile or brick came from the same contexts as the pottery and, though they cannot be dated, are most likely to be of a similar date to the pottery.

3.3.4 **Post-medieval ceramics:** the eighteenth-century and later pottery group was in considerably better condition. It comprised a range of domestic fabrics, mainly

large kitchen vessels in black-glazed redware fabrics which were probably locally-produced. There were, in addition, several fragments of slip-decorated wares, the earliest being two abraded fragments of Staffordshire type, from context **101**, which might be as early as the late seventeenth century. The remainder, however, derived from press-moulded vessels, and are likely to be from the eighteenth century. Whilst the bulk of the vessels can be dated to the later eighteenth and early nineteenth century, it is clear that deposition continued to the end of the nineteenth or even into the early twentieth century, with an unstratified stoneware ginger beer bottle being the latest from the site.

3.3.5 **Other finds:** there were only three fragments of glass, one being diamond-cut window glass, one a fragment of late eighteenth-century wine bottle, the third a complete mould-blown embossed beer bottle (from context **108**) and of a similar date to the stoneware ginger beer bottle. A single fragment of lead came from road surface cleaning layer **120**, but, similar to a small unidentifiable fragment of iron from pit fill **132**, is not intrinsically datable, although the associated pottery suggests that this metalwork may be of Roman date. Two clay tobacco pipe stem fragments cannot be dated further, whilst a second coin (Victoria; 1870) came from context **101**. Small amounts of non-specific industrial debris came from a number of contexts. Some seem to derive from fired structures rather than to be associated with metal-working or other high-temperature processes.

3.4 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

3.4.1 The sample, which derived from the layer **121** immediately above Roman road surface **119**, contained charred wheat (*Triticum* sp) grains (Table 2), cultivated legumes (>4mm) probably pea/bean (*Pisum sativum*/*Vicia faba*) and a hazel nut fragment (*Corylus avellana*). Low numbers of waterlogged plant remains were recorded, which included common chickweed (*Stellaria media*) and poppies (*Papaver*). The taphonomy of the few waterlogged seeds recorded is uncertain and may either be contemporary with the charred remains or more recent contamination. The matrix contained charcoal, coal, clinker and bone, of which some was burnt.

Sample number	Context number	Feature	Flot volume ml	Flot description	Plant remains	Potential
1	121	A layer above the Roman road (119)	50	Charcoal >4mm (3), coal (2), burnt bone (1), bone (2), clinker (3), glassy sphere	CPR (3) <i>Triticum</i> , Legumes >4mm, <i>Corylus avellana</i> fragment WPR (1) <i>Stellaria media</i> , <i>Papaver</i>	Good

Table 2: Assessment of charred and waterlogged plant remains from Red Lion Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire

Plants scored on a scale of 1-4, where 1 is rare (up to 5 items) and 4 is abundant (>100 items). CPR = Charred plant remains, WPR = Waterlogged plant remains.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 DISCUSSION

- 4.1.1 **Introduction:** although an evaluation had been undertaken of the present site, the current watching brief of the removal of extensive overburden deposits had the potential to afford an excellent opportunity to establish the extent and survival of any archaeological remains within the development area, particularly any that might be associated with the adjacent nationally important Roman industrial site. From the results of the previous evaluation of the site it had been concluded that, although the Roman road identified within the western part of Kingsley Fields was likely to have traversed the present site, it was unlikely to have been flanked by the concentrated activity observed further to the west (CgMs 2003). Although that interpretation was largely bourn-out by the results of the present watching brief, some circumspection is required in their interpretation.
- 4.1.2 There were a number of factors that could have reduced the amount of information recoverable from the present watching brief. Chief among these was the fact that the site had been subject to a considerable degree of ground disturbance and earth movement prior to the watching brief taking place and, although upon the resumption of permanent monitoring much of site was observed to have been reduced to a subsoil interface horizon (context **101**), some of this material was likely to have been re-deposited very recently. This was most apparent in the northern part of the site, where all of the foundation trenches were excavated through such material. Similarly, the narrow interventions and damp ground conditions did not facilitate the identification of subsoil features that had already suffered truncation at various points in time. Conversely, the excavation of a small stretch of road **119** technically outside of the area of impact allowed this feature to be investigated in a way that was not possible within the foundation trenches, and OA North are grateful to McCarthy and Stone (Developments) for their consideration and co-operation in that instance.
- 4.1.3 **Roman features:** despite the amount of disturbance on site, the predicted Roman road was indeed observed and, though clearly running north-west/south-east, where identified, appeared to run a little further south of its projected route. The full width of the road was never observed fully in plan or section, instead for the most part appearing somewhat disparately in various foundation trenches. Similarly, it is uncertain how representative the surviving maximum 0.3m thickness was of the original depth of the surface, and whether or not the road had been cambered. Although its full dimensions and level of truncation are unclear, by extrapolating from the areas where it was observed, it is possible to suggest it was at least 4m wide. There can be little doubt from the profusion of alluvial deposits, from the gleyed nature of the matrix of the road, and from the presence of waterlogged organic material from the western parts of Kingsley Fields, that the area was rather wet during the Roman period. Surprisingly, however, road **119** appears not to have been built on a

foundation or *agger* to raise its height and increase drainage as other roads in damp surroundings have been suggested to be (OA North 2005). Unlike that to the west (Connelly and Power 2005), there was no evidence from the present watching brief that road **119** had been flanked by roadside ditches.

- 4.1.4 The finds suggest that the road was constructed in the second century, and was not especially long-lived, its usage clearly to provide access to the industrial site to the west (activity at which appears not to have transcended the fourth century - Connelly and Power 2005), rather than as a major thoroughfare. Those finds from the surface of road **119** and the deposits directly above it, **121** and **122**, are all dateable to the second or early third century AD lending further credence to the road's corollary with the contemporary thoroughfare uncovered by the UMAU excavation to the west (*op cit*, 34). The fact that the road was sealed by sandy layers, possibly alluvial in origin, may provide a clue for its abandonment.
- 4.1.5 The presence of residual Roman finds within post-medieval features suggest that these may have disturbed Roman remains other than just the road, whilst the datable contents of pit **131**, which, like the road, was also sealed beneath layer **121**, potentially provide a tantalising glimpse of contemporary road-side activity in the area. The purpose of the pit remains somewhat unclear and any interpretation of function is hindered by the fact that its position militated against full excavation. However, the angle of the fills might suggest a slow but deliberate filling with some form of human waste, followed by a more rapid backfilling/silting-up. Although one pit does not make a roadside settlement, its presence is of interest when it is considered that very little of the area to the south of the Roman road was stripped to natural deposits. There was, however, nothing comparable with those remains to the west (Connelly and Power 2005), and the evidence would suggest that Roman industrial activity did not extend beyond that identified by UMAU (*ibid*).
- 4.1.6 It seems possible that the area could have been used for agriculture, perhaps in dryer spells, both during and after the road's period of use, as demonstrated by the palaeoenvironmental remains. The sample from road-sealing layer **121** produced moderate numbers of charred plant remains, all from food plants such as cereals and peas/beans and, as such, is broadly analogous to the more copious evidence from the Kingsley Fields site to the west (C O'Brien pers comm) and from a second- to fourth-century plank-lined tank at St Anne's Lane (Tomlinson 1987; Hall and Huntley 2007, 76).
- 4.1.7 **Post-medieval features:** many of the post-medieval remains likely to be associated with Kingsley Cottage had been quite severely truncated and survived little better than the Roman features. There was evidence to suggest that settlement activity on the site had commenced as early as the seventeenth century, with several phases of construction and pit-digging activity that are not possible to define closely.

4.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.2.1 Whilst the programme of groundworks has impacted upon the archaeological resource, particularly within the northern part of the development site, it is likely that at least part of the road will remain unaffected if the current plan of works remains the same: only landscaping is planned for the area in which the projected line of the road runs. Where exposed, the road had already been heavily truncated to both its western and eastern extent, as well as to the north. It is unclear how much of this destruction, especially that to the west and north, occurred prior to the arrival of the contractors on to site, but the truncation to the east would appear to relate to activity associated with the construction, use and demolition of Kingsley Cottage and there is reason to believe that outside of this area, the road may be well-preserved.
- 4.2.2 Although the present site seems to fall outside the concentration of Roman industrial activity on the western side of Kingsley Fields, it remains possible that some buried features of archaeological interest survive, particularly along the southern edge of the development that remain undisturbed by the present development.
- 4.2.3 **Recommendations:** it is recommended that a brief note on the findings should be prepared for inclusion within a suitable journal and that more detailed analysis of the palaeoenvironmental material be considered. Given the proximity of the site to the more intense activity on the western side of Kingsley Fields, a full identification of the plant species present (if possible) and a better understanding of the taphonomy of the sample may be of value.

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6. ILLUSTRATIONS

6.1 FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Site Plan

Figure 3: Detailed plan of monitored foundation trenches and Section 3 and 5

6.2 PLATES

Plate 1: Roman road **119** in north-facing section with construction work ongoing

Plate 2: West-facing shot of road **119** in plan with modern cut **124** in foreground; 1m scale

Plate 3: Roman road **119** in plan; 1m scale

Plate 4: West-facing section showing linear feature **128** and road **119** truncated by modern cut **124**; 0.5m scale

Plate 5: Pit **131** in plan; 0.5m scale

Plate 6: North-facing section of **131**; 0.5m in scale

Plate 7: Drain **112**; 0.5m scale

Plate 8: West-facing section showing re-deposited subsoil **101** after earlier ground clearance works truncated features; 0.5m scale

APPENDIX 1: CGMS WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

**SPECIFICATION FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**

**KINGSLEY COTTAGES
RED LION LANE
NANTWICH
CHESHIRE**

ROB BOURN BA MA MIFA

MARCH 2007

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction and Archaeological Background
- 2.0 Techniques

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 Site Location

Fig. 2 Site Details

APPENDIX 1

CgMs. 2003. Kingsley Cottage, Red Lion Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. Unpublished Client Report.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 A resolution to grant planning permission has been passed for the residential redevelopment of Kingsley Cottage, Red Lion Lane, Nantwich. The resolution to grant indicates that permission will be granted with a 'PPG16 style' standard condition requiring a watching brief.

1.2 Site Location And Description

1.2.1 The site is at Kingsley Cottage, Red Lion Lane, Nantwich (also referred to as the study site), at grid reference SJ 647 526. It is bound by Red Lion Lane to the west and the rear gardens of properties fronting Welsh Row to the south (Figs. 1 and 2).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 A resolution to grant planning permission has been passed by the Local Planning Authority. When granted, the consent will have a PPG16 style condition attached to it requiring a watching brief.

1.4 Archaeological Background

1.4.1 The site has already been the subject of a desk-based assessment (Appendix 1) and an archaeological evaluation. This established that the site is known to contain the remains of a Roman road. This runs north east – south west across the site and is thought to lie directly below Kingsley Cottage itself with at least one flanking ditch which was recorded in a trench excavated immediately to the north of the driveway of the cottage. No significant archaeological were recorded within the rest of the site.

2.0 TECHNIQUE

2.1 The aims of the project will be to record the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the site.

2.2 Initially examination of all archaeological deposits should be by hand with cleaning, examination and recording both in plan and section. Archaeological excavation may require work by pick and shovel or occasionally further use of the machine. Such techniques are only appropriate for the removal of homogeneous or low-grade deposits, which may give a "window" into underlying levels. They must not be used on complex stratigraphy and the deposits to be removed must have been properly recorded first.

2.3 Removal of any human remains can only take place under appropriate Home Office and environmental health regulations, however, should such remains be encountered, ideally they should be kept in-situ.

2.4 Access and Safety

2.4.1 Reasonable access to the site is to be arranged for representatives of Cheshire County Council who may wish to make site inspections to ensure that the archaeological investigations are progressing satisfactorily.

2.4.1 All relevant health and safety regulations must be followed. Barriers, hoardings and warning notices should be installed as appropriate. Safety helmets and safety boots are to be used by all personnel as necessary. A copy of the risk assessment must be supplied to CgMs, however, CgMs and the client (McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd) take no responsibility for its content, as Health and Safety is the contractors responsibility.

2.4.2 No personnel are to work in deep unsupported excavations.

2.5 Recording Systems

2.5.1 Context sheets should include all relevant stratigraphic relationships and for complex stratigraphy a separate matrix diagram should be employed. This matrix should be fully checked during the course of the watching brief. If there is any doubt over recording techniques, Cheshire County Council's guidance will be sought.

- 2.5.2 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered on to prepared pro-forma recording sheets. Sample recording sheets, sample registers, finds recording sheets, access database catalogues, and photo record cards will also be used. This requirement for archival compatibility extends to the use of computerised database.
- 2.5.3 A site location plan is required. A general plan (e.g. OS 1:1250) showing the investigation area and development site in relation to surrounding locality and street pattern.
- 2.5.4 This will be supplemented by a plan showing the location of the areas investigated, OS grid and site grid (if any). The locations of the OS bench marks used and site TBM will also be identified.
- 2.5.5 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits must be made. All significant deposits that significantly affect the interpretation of the site and relate to the objectives of the watching brief should be formally planned in relation to OS grid and be at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20.
- 2.5.6 Sections containing significant deposits, including half sections, should be drawn as appropriate.
- 2.5.7 All archaeological plans and sections should be on drawing film at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 and should include context numbers and OD spot heights for all principal strata and features.
- 2.5.8 An adequate photographic record of any significant archaeological remains is required, in both plan and section. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies (on 35mm film), illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. The transparencies will be mounted in suitable frames. Where appropriate a photogrammetric record will be made of complex structures, features and horizons liable to be damaged in the course of the evaluation.
- 2.5.9 A Harris Matrix stratification diagram will be compiled (if appropriate) and fully checked during the course of the excavations.

2.6 **Finds and Samples**

- 2.6.1 A high priority should be given to dating any remains so all artefacts and finds are to be retained. Consideration should also be given to the recovery of specialist samples for scientific analysis, particularly samples for absolute dating, structural materials and cultural/environmental evidence. Different sampling strategies may be employed according to established research targets and the perceived importance of the strata under investigation.
- 2.6.2 The strategy for sampling archaeological and environmental deposits and structures (which can include soils timbers, animal bone and human burials) will be developed in consultation with Cheshire County Council. The advice of the County Council and/or the English Heritage Environmental advisor for the area will be sought at the project planning stage and arrangements for a site visit to determine the importance and sampling requirements should be made (if appropriate) for all deposits exposed during the investigation.
- 2.6.3 A high priority will be given to the sampling of river and other anaerobic deposits (if present) where organic materials may be preserved.
- 2.6.4 Organic samples will be subject to appropriate specialist analysis. There may be a requirement to submit timbers to dendrochronological analysis and to process some samples to provide C14 dating. Other forms of specialist analysis may also be appropriate.
- 2.6.5 The finds retrieval policies of the county will be adopted. All identified finds and artefacts will be retained, although certain classes of building material can sometimes be discarded after recording if an appropriate sample is retained. No finds will be discarded without the prior approval of the nominated representative of the local authority.
- 2.6.6 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner and to the standards of the county. They will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation "Conservation Guideline No 2". Appropriate guidelines set out in the Museums and Galleries Commissions "Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (1991)" will also be followed.

2.6.7 All finds (other than those covered by the Treasure Act 1996 and human remains) are the property of the landowner. The agreement of the landowner for the ownership of any finds to be transferred to the appropriate repository will be sought.

2.7 **Site Archive**

2.7.1 The site archive will contain all the data collected during the watching brief including records, finds and environmental samples. It should be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent.

2.7.2 Adequate resources will be provided during fieldwork to ensure that records are checked and internally consistent.

2.7.3 Archive consolidation will be undertaken immediately following the conclusion of fieldwork. The archive will be assembled in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991). The integrity of the primary field record will be preserved. Security copies in digital or fiche format will be maintained.

2.7.4 Provision shall be made for the deposition of archive and artefacts with the appropriate repository from whom an accession number must be obtained prior to commencement of the fieldwork. The County Council shall be advised of the proposed investigation before excavation starts and the contractor shall adhere to any reasonable requirements they may have regarding conservation and storage of excavated material and archive. The archive shall be prepared in accordance with the guidelines published in *Guidelines for the preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage* (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990) and *Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission, 1994). Deposition shall take place after completion of the works.

2.8 **Reporting**

2.8.1 A report on the results of the evaluation and the watching brief will be prepared within three weeks of completing the fieldwork. This should include:

- Summary
- Site code/project number

- Dates of fieldwork visits
- Grid reference
- Location plan with scale
- Plan of observed areas utilising the development site plan on which location of archaeological features should be noted
- The aims and methods
- The nature, extent, date, condition and significance of the archaeological features and finds with specialist environmental and finds specialist reports (if appropriate) and parallels from other sites if required
- Section and plan drawings with ground level, height OD and vertical and horizontal scales
- Photographs (minimum 35mm format) of significant features/deposits encountered.
- General site photographs
- Written description and analysis of the methods and results of the watching brief in the context of the known archaeology of the area and a consideration of evidence within the wider landscape setting

2.8.2 Copies of the watching brief report should be sent to CgMs who will forward it to the relevant local authorities.

2.9 Monitoring

2.9.1 Cheshire County Council may monitor progress and have been notified of the start date.

APPENDIX 1

CgMs. 2003. Kingsley Cottage, Red Lion Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. Unpublished Client Report.

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT LIST

Context	Category	Maximum Depth (m)	Description
100	Deposit	0.2 max	Topsoil
101	Deposit	0.38 max	Dark grey/black sand; subsoil interface horizon
102	Deposit	0.72	Mid- to dark grey sand; probably same as 121 and 122
103	Deposit		Natural sand geology
104	Deposit	0.5	Demolition debris, partly contaminated
105	Deposit	1 +	Dark blackish-grey sandy clay; contaminated
106	Deposit	0.6 max	Yellowish-orange coarse sand; natural geology
107	Cut		Cut of large pit, 2.7m long
108	Deposit		Fill of pit 107
109	Structure		East/west aligned brick wall; three skins of hand made brick (245mm by 70mm by 120mm), three to four courses bonded with grey lime mortar
110	Cut		Robbed-out wall cut; L-shaped and 0.6m wide
111	Deposit	0.2 max	Fill of 110
112	Structure		Drain lined with handmade brick; 0.5m wide by 1.6m long
113	Cut	1.2	Pit, cut by 115
114	Deposit	1.2	Fill of 113 ; blackish-grey sand
115	Cut	1.15	Pit, cutting 113
116	Deposit	1.15	Fill of 115 ; blackish-grey sand and rubble
117	Cut	1	Pit/possible linear; may be the terminus of 126
118	Deposit	1	Fill of 117
119	Structure	0.3 max	Metalled surface of Roman road; sub-rounded stones in a light grey gleyed sand matrix
120	Layer		Cleaning layer above 119
121	Deposit	0.3 max	Mid- to light grey friable sand; layer above Roman road 119
122	Deposit	0.3 max	mid-grey sand deposit above 121 and below 125
123	Not used		
124	Cut	0.6	Large modern intrusion
125	Deposit	0.6 max	Fill of 124 ; demolition rubble and organic waste
126	Cut	1	Linear cut, possibly same feature as 117 ; heavily truncated
127	Deposit	1	Fill of 126 , possibly the same as 118
128	Cut	0.4	Cut of linear; truncated vertically
129	Deposit	0.4	Fill of 128 ; dark brown sand with lenses of re-deposited natural
130	Deposit	0.4	Re-deposited natural overlying 128/129 , probably recent
131	Cut	0.4	Pit cutting natural, below 121
132	Deposit	0.4	Fill of 131
133	Cut	0.35	Cut of pit/linear
134	Deposit	0.35	Fill of 133 , truncated vertically
135	Deposit	0.005	Fill of 131 ; fine band of gravel at base of feature
136	Deposit	0.3	Fill of 131 , lenses of yellow sand and grey sand
137	Deposit	0.3	Fill of 131 ; re-deposited natural sand
138	Cut		Construction cut truncating Roman road 119 at its eastern extent in the section

APPENDIX 3: FINDS CATALOGUE

Context	OR No	Material	Category	Count	Description	Period
101	1032	Ceramic	vessel	1	Complete stoneware bottle. Stamped SKEY Tamworth at base	
101	1033	Ceramic	vessel	15	Two joining fragments battered Staffordshire thrown slip-decorated dish; one fragment brownish fabric slip decorated vessel rim; one fragment black-glazed redware bowl; one small white china head; one fragment Nottingham stoneware bowl with horizontal lugs; one fragment Creamware, foot; one fragment slip-decorated press-moulded dish; two fragments blue and white underglaze transfer-printed plates; one abraded red-painted beaded rim; one fragment ?Wilderspool orange-oxidised fabric with white slip; one small fragments ?Severn Valley ware	Second-third century; Late seventeenth-eighteenth century
101	1034	Bone		1	Tooth	
101	1035	Glass	window	1	One fragment bluish-natural sheet glass, diamond cut.	Post-medieval
101	1036	Cu alloy	coin	1	Penny. Victoria, 1870. 'Bun penny'	1870
108	1021	Ceramic	tobacco pipe	1	Stem only	Post medieval
108	1022	Glass	vessel	2	Complete natural greenish mould-blown beer bottle. Shrewsbury and Wem brewery; base fragment dark olive green wine bottle	Late eighteenth century, Late nineteenth – early twentieth century
108	1023	Ceramic	vessel	3	One fragment black-glazed ware with cream fabric; one fragment unglazed redware; one fragment black-glazed redware, large bowl.	Eighteenth century?
111	1005	Ceramic	vessel	7	Three fragments single bowl imitating Dr 44 on cream oxidised micaceous fabric with red-painted surfaces (Gillam 200); one fragment ?Central Gaulish samian; two joining fragments base in very fine black-glazed redware; small blackware rim	Mid-late second- early third century; late seventeenth-eighteenth century
114	1020	Ceramic	vessel	3	Two fragments mottled ware (base and plate rim); one worn mortarium rim, white fabric	Second century?; Eighteenth century
116	1030	Ind debris		1	Unidentifiable burnt material	
116	1031	Ceramic	building material	1	Chip of tile or brick	Nineteenth century?
116	1031	Ceramic	vessel	8	Three fragments black-glazed redware, base body and rim of large bowl; five fragments of a single self-glazed collar-rimmed jar, self-glazed redware	Nineteenth century?
118	1027	Ceramic	vessel	11	Four fragments black-glazed redware, all from large bowls; one fragment self-glazed laminated redware fabric, possibly imitating agate ware; one fragment grey stoneware jar; five fragments pearlware plates, at least two vessels, blue feathered edges.	Late eighteenth-nineteenth century
120	1011	Lead	drip	1	Solidified drip	

Context	OR No	Material	Category	Count	Description	Period
120	1012	Ceramic	building material	4	Very small fragments tile or brick	Romano-British?
120	1012	Ceramic	vessel	5	Four small fragments orange oxidised; one chip samian, micaceous fabric suggests Lezoux	Second century
120	1019	Ceramic	building material	2	Very small fragments of tile or brick	Romano-British?
120	1019	Ceramic	vessel	3	One small fragment decorated samian, probably Dr 37, with freestyle decoration, probably Lezoux	Late second century?
121	1000	Cu alloy	coin	1	Large coin, JZ identified as Antoninus Pius (sestertius), with small fragment of BB1 to the rear	Second century
121	1001	Ind debris		1	Metal-working residue?	
121	1002	Stone	flint	1	Small fragment brown flint with some surface cortex remaining, probably natural.	
121	1003	Ceramic	building material	9	Very small fragments tile or brick	Romano-British?
121	1003	Ceramic	vessel	7	Three chips samian; one fragment very worn mortarium, orange fabric with mixed grits; three small fragments orange oxidised fabric	Romano-British
121	1024	Bone		1	Small abraded fragment of calcined bone	
121	1025	Ceramic	building material	3	Very small fragments of tile or brick	Romano-British?
121	1025	Ceramic	vessel	3	One rim open bowl, probably Severn Valley ware; two small orange oxidised fragments, possibly Wilderspool	Second- early third century
121	1026	Ind debris		4	Burnt daub?	
122	1006	Ceramic	vessel	1	Small fragment orange oxidised base	Romano-British
122	1009	Ind debris		2	Small fragments of vitrified clay	
122	1010	Ceramic	building material	6	Very small fragments tile or brick	Romano-British?
122	1010	Ceramic	vessel	15	One fragment Black Burnished ware; one small fragment rough-cast beaker - Wilderspool?; 13 very small chips orange oxidised fabric	Second century?
127	1007	Ceramic	tobacco pipe	1	Stem only	Post-medieval
127	1008	Ceramic	vessel	2	Creamware plate	Late eighteenth-early nineteenth century
129	1028	Ceramic	vessel	5	One black-glazed redware storage vessel with horizontal lugs, laminated fabric suggests Buckley; thin walled black-glazed redware base, tankard?; one fragment mottled ware; one fragment brown stoneware hollow ware vessel; one fragment slip-decorated press-moulded dish	Late eighteenth century
129	1029	Ind debris		1	One fragment	
132	1014	Ceramic	building material	13	Very small fragments tile or brick	Romano-British?
132	1014	Ceramic	vessel	7	One small fragment amphora; two fragments Wilderspool-type fabric with white slip; one small fragment greyware; three small fragments orange oxidised ware	Second century?
132	1015	Stone	flint	1	Patinated and abraded ?cream flint.	
132	1016	Iron	fragment	1	Small unidentifiable fragment	
134	1018	Ceramic	vessel	1	One small abraded fragment of orange	Romano-British

Context	OR No	Material	Category	Count	Description	Period
					oxidised fabric.	
Unstrat	1004	Ceramic	Building material	12	Very small fragments tile or brick	Romano-British?
Unstrat	1013	Ceramic	vessel	1	Complete stoneware ginger beer bottle. Comer Jones Brewery, London Road, Nantwich	Late nineteenth to early twentieth century
Unstrat	1017	Ceramic	vessel	3	Two fragments black-glazed redware; one fragment press-moulded slip-decorated dish	Eighteenth century

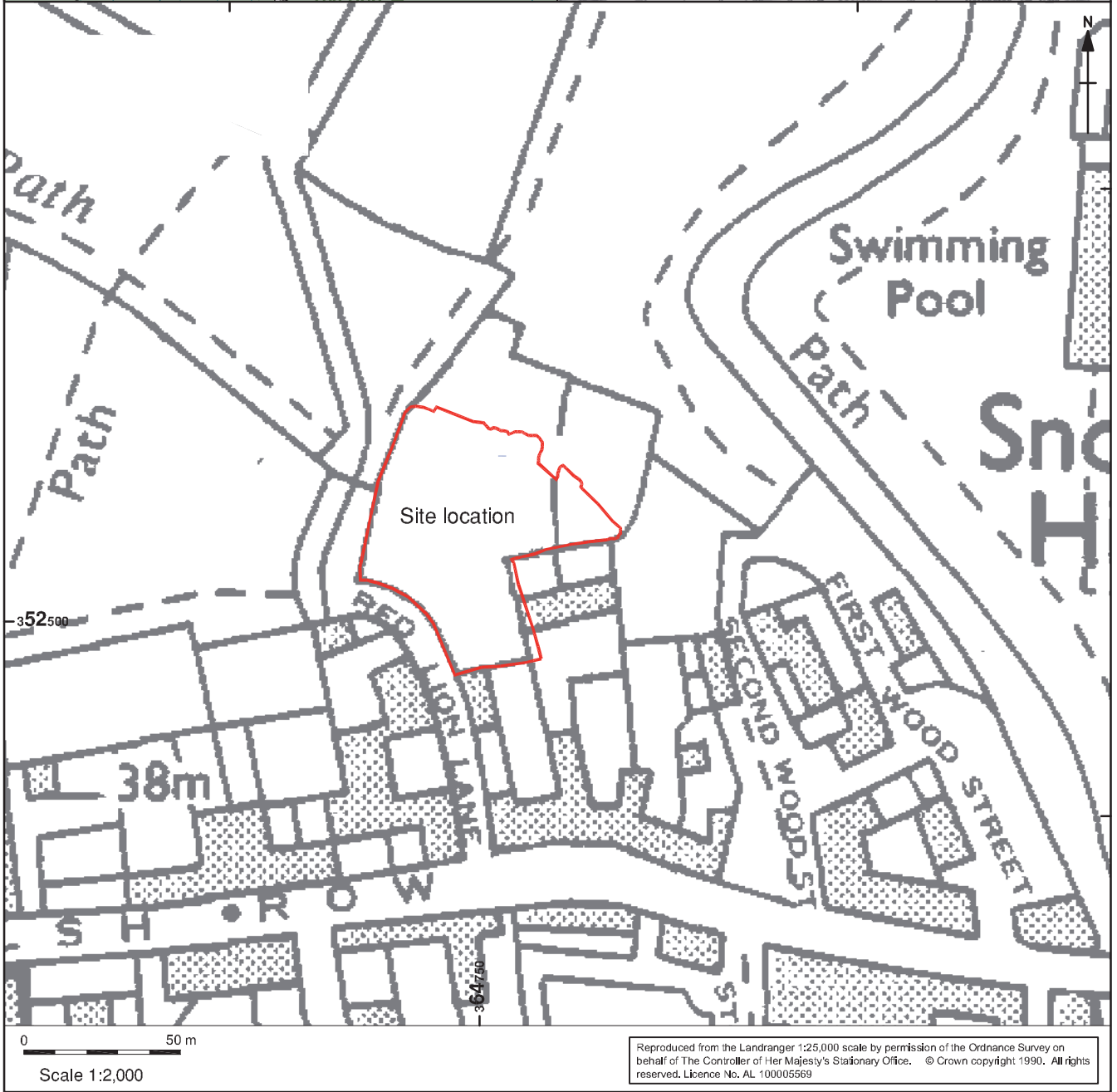


Figure 1: Site Location

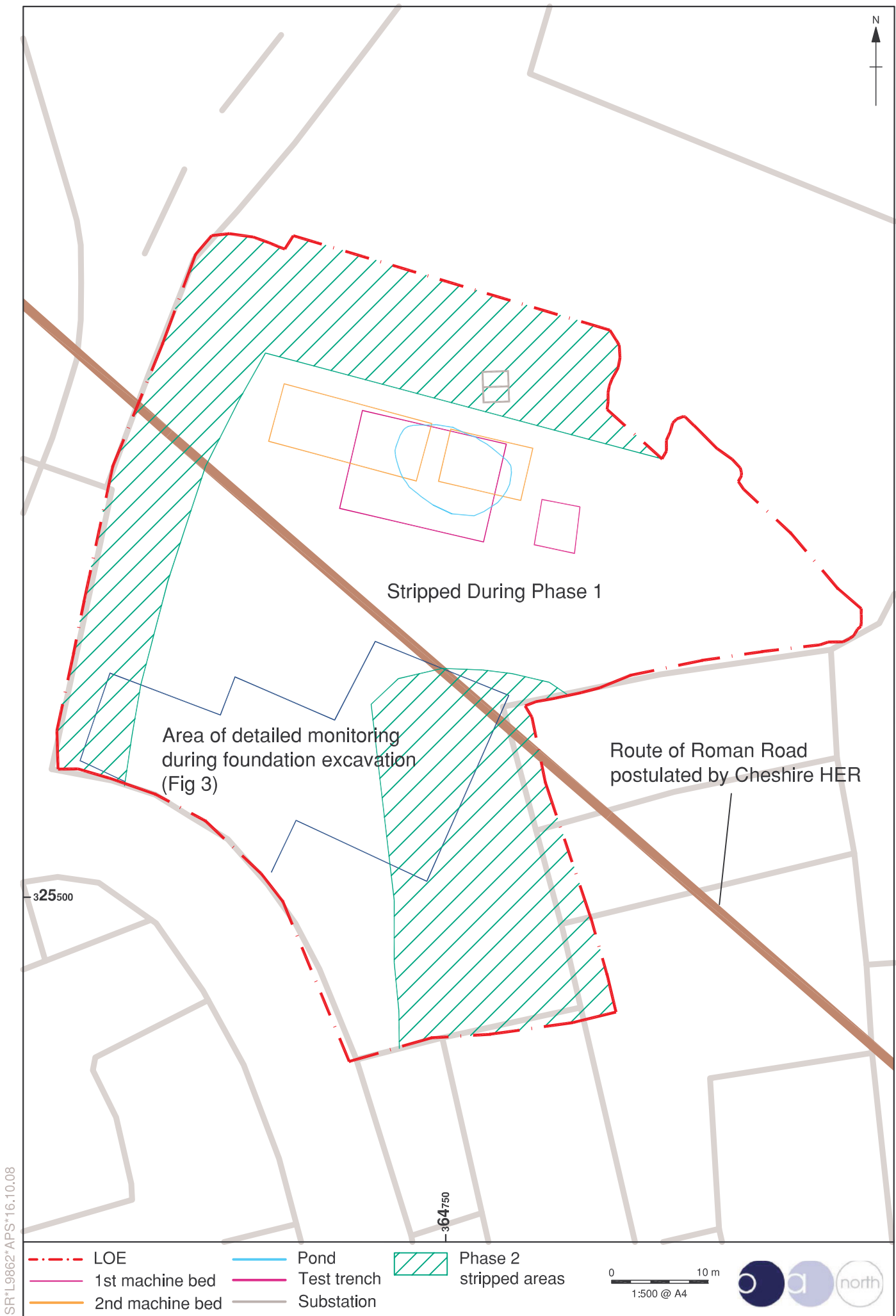


Figure 2: Site plan

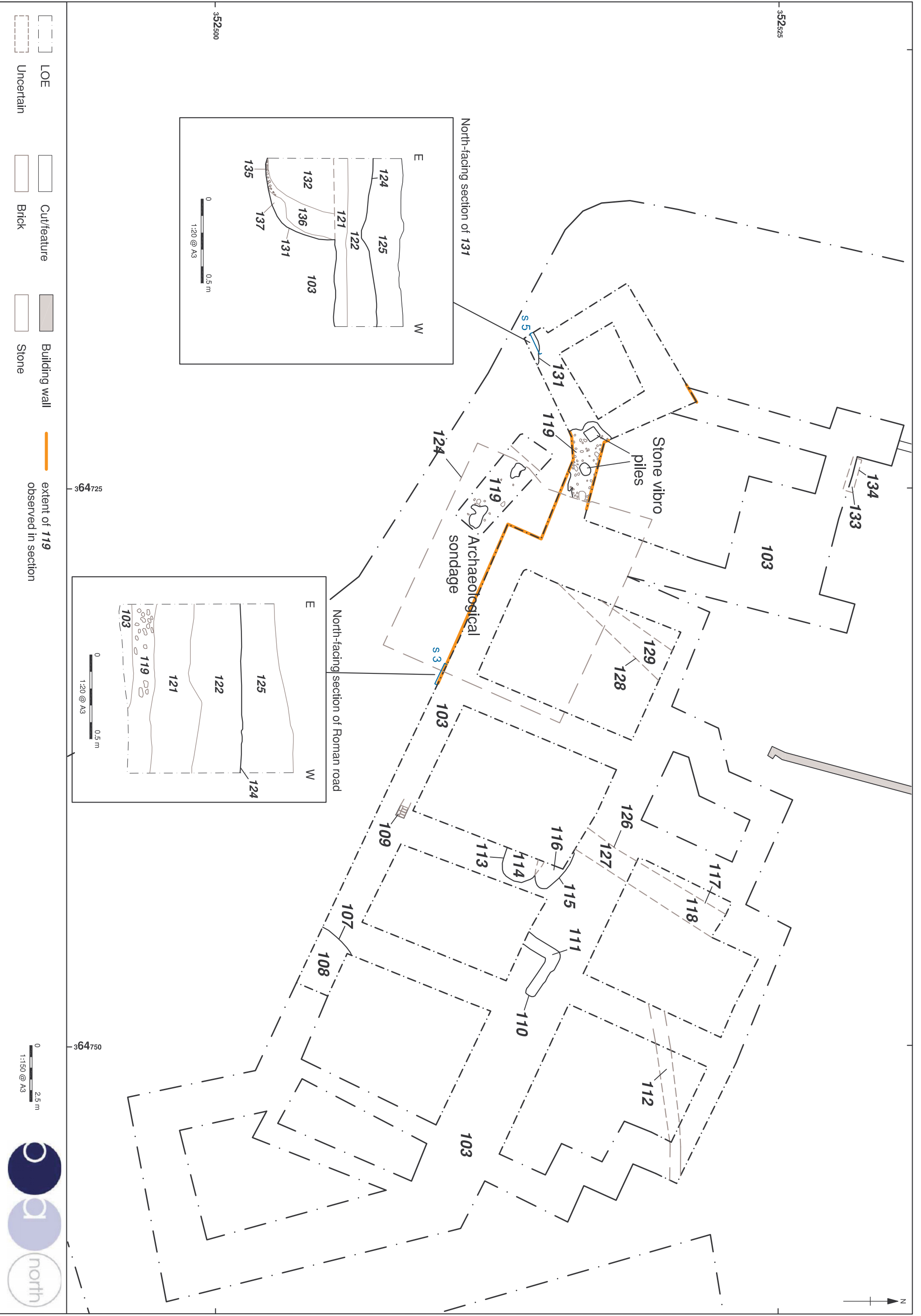


Figure 3: Detailed plan of monitored foundation trenches and sections 03 and 05



Plate 1: Roman road 119 in north-facing section with construction work ongoing



Plate 2: West-facing shot of road 119 in plan with modern cut 124 in foreground; 1m scale



Plate 3: Roman road 119 in plan; 1m scale



Plate 4: West-facing section showing linear feature 128 and road 119 truncated by modern cut 124; 0.5m scale



Plate 5: Pit 131 in plan; 0.5m scale



Plate 6: North-facing section of 131; 0.5m in scale



Plate 7: Drain 112; 0.5m scale



Plate 8: West-facing section showing re-deposited subsoil 101 after earlier ground clearance works truncated features; 0.5m scale