



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



**GAS MAINS REPLACEMENT, ALDBOROUGH,
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

by Mark Johnson

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Abbreviations

BGL Below Ground Level (depth)

SUMMARY

The watching brief produced some significant results. In the southern part of the village natural deposits were seen to lie extremely close to the existing ground surface. In the area of The Square these lay at depths of around 0.90m BGL with archaeological deposits above. To the north of The Square archaeological deposits were so deep that they extended beyond the basal limits of the trenches – this being 1.20m BGL in some instances. There are a number of factors that may explain this.

All inspected archaeological deposits were 'dry' with no richly organic or waterlogged remains being seen though such may survive at greater depth. The stratified deposits in the north of the village, which are predominantly of Roman date, represent a resource of considerable potential. This potential is exemplified by the presence of standing Roman walls that in places survive to a height only 0.30m BGL.

1. INTRODUCTION

Between 12th November and 18th December 2012 York Archaeological trust maintained an archaeological watching brief during a programme of works to replace the existing gas main at Aldborough, North Yorkshire (NGR: SE 4060 6633), (Figure 1, Site location). The works also entailed the insertion of a short single stretch of pipe to link the system into a loop.

Aldborough is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Conservation Area (HBC). The archaeological monitoring was commissioned by Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions.

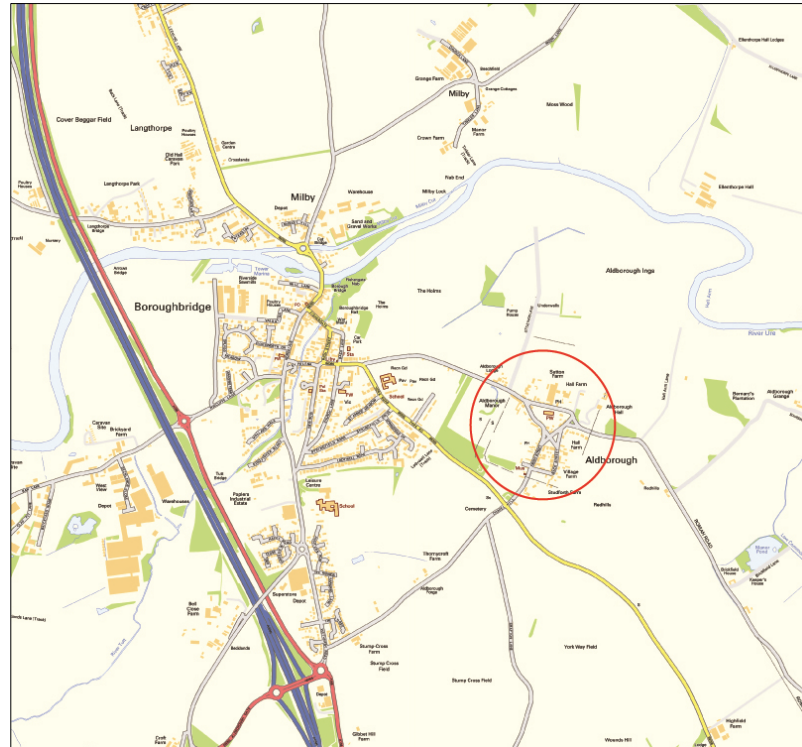


Figure 1 Site location



Figure 2 Area of Aldborough Scheduled Ancient Monument

2. METHODOLOGY

The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Balfour Beatty Utilities Solutions and agreed by English Heritage.

The contractors works involved the replacement of the gas main throughout the village together with the pipes spurring from this to the individual properties. A totally new stretch of gas main, a little over 30m long, was also fitted in order to create a continuous loop. This new work was extended eastwards from the point of junction of Front and Back Streets. The method of mains replacement was via the insertion of new plastic piping within the old steel main as well as within the feeder spurs - most of which had already been replaced by plastic within recent years. As such it was not necessary to excavate a continuous trench along the line of the old main. Instead, a series of small trenches were excavated, by a combination of mechanical and manual means, down to the gas main at the locations where feeder pipes spur off from the main to individual properties. A total of 95 trenches were excavated. Trench size ranged from a minimum of just under 1m square to a maximum of 6m by 1.1m, with the overwhelming majority being closer to the smaller size. The maximum depth of the trenches was 1.2m BGL, mostly being around the 0.90m – 1m mark. A number of these trenches formed the points in which stretches of the new gas main were inserted and jointed. An alternative method of pipe laying was involved in two areas, the 30m long new stretch and a slightly longer stretch in front of Manor Farm on the Boroughbridge Road. This alternative method was 'direct drilling' in which a drilling rig drilled horizontally to the required depth and then dragged the new pipe into the void. This method is invisible from the surface and does not produce any arisings.

The archaeological watching brief entailed the monitoring of all the excavation work associated with the mains replacement. Archaeological access was available during and after the excavation of the trenches. Archaeological finds were retained by context. Cleaning was carried out at the completion of the excavation of each trench and a minimum of one section was drawn to scale and recorded, including where this was effectively archaeologically blank. This recording entailed the description of deposits within a site notebook together with a series of photographs. All records and finds are retained under YAT project number 5666 and the Harrogate Museums site accession code HARGM:14079. All finds were kept by context number, the first two digits of which relates to the trench number.

3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Aldborough lies in the Vale of York just under 1km south-east of the centre of the town of Boroughbridge and around 700m to the west of the River Ure. It lies adjacent to the B6265 York Road and less than 1.5km to the east of the A1M motorway. The south-western part of the village has a superficial geology of Quaternary Till whilst that to the north-eastern part is of Glaciolacustrine deposits. Adjacent to the River Ure there are also deposits of alluvium. The solid geology of the wider locality is of Sherwood Sandstone (BGS). This sandstone in the locality of Aldborough is of a deep reddish colour and is fairly soft. The very south-western limits of Aldborough lie near the crest of elevated ground, known as Chapel Hill, adjacent to York Road. The remainder of the village is situated on the north-eastern slope away from the crest and on land just beyond the principal slope, at the northern end of the village, which is relatively flat. The village is focussed around a small network of roads, the major of which are Front Street, the almost parallel aligned Back Street and Boroughbridge Road at the northern side of the settlement. An open green, known as The Square, lies in the central part of the village. The vast majority of the buildings within Aldborough are of residential character, overwhelmingly of brick of the 18th and 19th centuries, though with a small scattering of 20th century houses.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The modern village of Aldborough lies on the site of the former walled Roman town of *'Isurium Brigantum'* which was tied into the wider network of settlements by Dere Street. The nearby River Ure may also have formed a key element of communication. This town was the Civitas Capital of the Brigantes tribe of northern Britain. There have been a number of archaeological investigations on the site of the Roman town since the 19th century, these ranging from watching briefs to excavations, 29 of which are listed in the English Heritage Pastscape website (Pastscape). The town's defences are said to originate in the 2nd century and to have been altered in the 4th century. Parts of these walls are visible on the north side of the defences. Elements of the town are apparent in aerial photographs, lidar derived images and in the results of recent large-scale geophysical survey (Ferraby and Millett 2012). The site of a bath-house is known close to Aldborough Manor whilst mosaic floors have also been uncovered. Stone quarries of the period are also known in the locality whilst evidence for contemporary extra-mural settlement also exists. It has recently been confirmed that the town had an amphitheatre, this being located at Studforth Hill adjacent to the walled town (Ferraby and Millett 2012). It has been suggested that occupation at the town declined towards the end of the imperial occupation though continued until the late 4th century.

The place-name Aldborough is of Anglo-Saxon origin, the 'ald' and 'burh' meaning 'old fortification' referring to the old Roman town. There are a number of factors pointing towards activity in the area of the old town in the post-Roman period. One strand of this is the 7th century grave of a woman whilst 'Saxon urns' (possibly cremation vessels, were found in the locality during the mid 16th century. An 8th century cross shaft lies within the grounds of Aldborough Manor and may relate to Anglo-Saxon settlement in the area though it has been suggested that the cross may have originated in Ripon (Heritage gateway 55211).

There are a number of documentary references to medieval Aldborough though no buildings of this date, excepting the Church of St Andrew which lies to the north side of Boroughbridge Road, survive. The majority of the fabric of the church dates from the 14th – 18th centuries. Adjacent to the church stands a medieval cross known as the 'Battle Cross'. This apparently commemorates the 1322 Battle of Boroughbridge and was brought to the village from Boroughbride in 1852. It is probable that much, if not all, of the existing street pattern was already established by the medieval period, indeed the alignment of certain elements, particularly Front and Back Street's, could originate in the Roman period. In the immediate environs of the town traces of medieval ridge and furrow field systems, some surviving as prominent earthworks, still survive.

The present housing stock of the village is essentially later post-medieval in date. Many of the buildings are Listed Buildings, principally Grade II (British Listed Buildings). A small number of 18th and 19th century farm buildings are still present within the village though they now have either alternative uses or are largely dilapidated. A single timber framed building, Manor Cottage, which is likely to have 16th century origins lies on the Boroughbridge Road opposite from the village cross.

5. RESULTS

5.1 CHARACTERISATION OF THE TRENCHES BY DEPOSIT

In terms of deposit contents the sequence of trenches can be broken down into four principal groupings, the latter three of which are of archaeological significance. These are:

1. Those that contained exclusively modern materials that relate to the backfills of a variety of modern utility services.
2. Those in which 'natural' geological deposits lie close to the extant ground surface. Sometimes these contained a small amount of post-medieval material, but most often not.

3. Those that contained an extensive depositional sequence. In most cases such deposits extended beyond the basal limits of the trenches. Typically, these contained Roman deposits with overlying material which may be of post-Roman, medieval, or post-medieval in date.
4. Those that contain extensive sequences of soils that are considered 'agricultural-like' in appearance.
5. A small number of 'shallow' pits which did not extend deeper than post-medieval deposits.

The location of all trenches is shown in Figures 4A-C. The locations of the 'characterised' trenches is shown in Figures 5A-C.

5.1.1 GROUP 1 TRENCHES

The entirety of these trenches contained only the backfill materials of cuts for a variety of utilities, both live and redundant. This group encompasses trenches 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 29, 31, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 51, 53, 67, 68, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 94. The most common utility encountered was, naturally enough, the gas main and its spurs but water, electricity and British Telecom services were also encountered in many of the trenches. The absence of archaeological deposits within these trenches engenders no surprise as most utilities tend to congregate in ribbon-like strips, typically under existing pavements and areas of roadway adjacent to pavements. It should also be borne in mind that as a matter of routine efficiency the contractors excavate the minimum amount of material possible to achieve their task. The absence of archaeological deposits does not of course imply an absence in adjacent ground, indeed the presence of residual finds within some of these trenches emphasises the likelihood of this. The distribution of these exclusively backfill trenches is fairly even save for a cluster on Front Street, opposite the grassed Square, that continues around the sweep of the road to the north-west. Several of these trenches contained large amounts of gravel rich pale coloured sands that formed a very distinctive fill and it is probable that this represents the backfilling of an extensive utilities operation in this area.

5.1.2 GROUP 2 TRENCHES

The principal characteristic of this group of trenches is that 'natural' geological deposits lie close to the extant ground surface. Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 30, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66 form the members of this group. Very often such natural deposits lay immediately underneath the modern footpath or road, though sometimes these contained a small amount of post-medieval material between the natural and modern. The spatial distribution of this group of trenches sharply marked, with all trenches of this group lying to the south of The Square. The land within this area falls within the southern part of the Roman town and is situated on a gentle hill-slope, the fall being

aligned south down to north. Internally within this southern area there are further ground-slopes with those adjacent to the roadways being the most obvious. As such, much of the ground to the west of Front Street falls eastwards to the street and a similar directional fall is evident to the north-south aligned part of Back Street. A ground-fall from south to north is also apparent to the east – west aligned stretch of Back Street. A detailed topographic survey of this part of the village and possibly the examination of Lidar data may provide a better picture of the land-form in this part of the village and perhaps reveal evidence for terracing or such like. It is certainly curious, and one of the most striking results of the archaeological observations, that within all the trenches in the southern part of the village 'natural' ground lies so close to the present ground surface and that this contrasts so sharply with the evidence of extensive deep archaeological deposits in the northern parts. It does of course remain a possibility that the slightly higher land adjacent to the roadways in this area may contain intact archaeological deposits. In the area of the roadways and footpaths within this southern part of the village the only archaeological features of antiquity that are likely to survive are those that cut into natural deposits, for example, gullies, pits or ditches.

5.1.3 GROUP 3 TRENCHES

The group 3 trenches are uniformly characterised by the presence of deeply stratified archaeological deposits. This group is comprised of trenches 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 93, 95. In a handful of these trenches excavation was to a depth of 1.2m BGL and in each case the deposits were extending below the basal limits of these, as well as of all other, trenches. All these trenches containing deep stratified deposits are confined to an area extending from the grasses Square northwards. The trench distribution map (by type), (Figures 5A-C) indicates that a relatively small number of the trenches in this area contained only the backfill deposits of modern utilities. However, in all probability deep stratified deposits will lay immediately adjacent to these. This group of trenches also has a western limit, this lying just to the west of Aldborough Manor. Trenches west of this point, the Group 4 trenches, revealed depths of clean, fairly light coloured, sandy silt soils that may loosely be termed 'rural' or 'agricultural' in character as opposed to the dark, rubble rich stratified deposits of the Group 3 trenches.

In many instances it was possible to identify in-situ post-medieval and Roman deposits, though the identification of post-Roman and medieval deposits proved more difficult. These difficulties have root in two principal factors, firstly a paucity of finds material and secondly that little more than a trench section was available for examination. This latter factor is owed to the fact that the bulk of the material from nearly all of the excavated trenches was the backfill of utility cuts rather than in-situ deposits.

5.1.4 GROUP 4 TRENCHES

The characteristics of the Group 4 trenches, Trenches 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, has been briefly alluded to above. Expressed at their simplest the deposits within these trenches were almost entirely clean, light – mid brown, sandy silts of a ‘rural’ as opposed to the much darker, rubbly, ‘urban-type’ deposits of Group 3. Unlike typical rural soils however, the soils of the Group 4 trenches tended to be compact rather than friable, though this may be owed almost entirely to their presence beneath a well used metalled road that is itself of some considerable age. In a number of instances relatively thin, very compact, stone and rubble rich deposits were evident in the upper parts of some of these trenches and these appear to relate to road make-up and metalling of earlier road surfaces. Thin ‘soily’ layers were also present in similar stratigraphic positions and it is probable that these relate to levelling exercises along the course of the road.

5.1.5 GROUP 5 TRENCHES

Trenches of this group were all quite shallow, barely exceeding 0.6m in depth and revealed little more than garden-type soils in the grounds of Aldborough Hall and The Square. It is entirely likely that stratified archaeological deposits lie within the area of these trenches but at greater depth. members of this group are Trenches 44, 45, 46, 47, 71.

5.2 HISTORICAL CHARACTERISATION OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS

Table 1 lists all the trenches and the probable date range of the archaeological deposits contained in each of them. Sections 5.2 and 5.3 are best read with reference to this table.

5.2.1 PREHISTORIC

No prehistoric finds features or deposits were identified during the course of the watching brief. To some degree this may be owed to the characteristics of deposit survival. It has been noted that in the trenches in the southern part of the village natural deposits lie immediately beneath modern surfaces. As such only deeply cut features are likely to survive. In the northern part of the village the depth of Roman and later deposits is so great that any prehistoric features lie at depths greater than that reached in the trenches.

In a small number of instances thin, pale coloured sand/silt layers were noted above natural deposits close to the area of The Square, i.e. spatially between the southern part of the village where natural deposits lie extremely close to the surface and the northern part of the village where deep sequences of deposits extend beyond the basal limits of the trenches. These pale soils seem likely to be naturally formed sub-soils and as such be of pre-Roman date, though they failed to produce evidence for prehistoric activity.

5.2.2 ROMAN

In the area of the trenches in the southern part of the village natural deposits lie below modern surfaces and no features or deposits of this date were encountered. However, a very small amount of Roman pottery was recovered from modern backfills of some trenches. This absence of deposits remains the case as far as a line that coincides fairly closely with the southern side of the grassed area known as The Square. By contrast the trenches north of this point, in the northern part of the village, contain deposits that extended beyond the basal limits of each. The identification of walls and other structural features attributable to a Roman date could readily be made. Many deposits however, including those containing Roman material and likely to relate to collapse, accumulation, and such acts as demolition, levelling etc cannot so readily be dated on the basis of little more than sections, particularly given the high potential for residuality of finds material in the locational context of a former Roman urban centre. Many such deposits could conceivably relate to the post-Roman or medieval periods rather than the Roman.

Finds of Roman date were recovered from a number of trenches. Wall plaster was recovered from trenches 55, 78, 80 and 86, though that from Trench 55 and 86 was residual within later deposits. Roman brick and roofing tegula were recovered from Trenches 28, 31, 33, 41, 42, and 56. That within Trenches 28, 31, 33, 41 and 42 was residual, the remainder being in-situ. Fragments of flue tile were present in several layers within trench 56. Pottery of Roman date, all seemingly of the 2nd-3rd century was found in Trenches 23, 27, 28, 36, 40, 42, 56, 57, 60 and 89. A detailed account of the identified Roman deposits is given below in Section 5.3.

5.2.3 POST-ROMAN

No finds, features or deposits definitely attributable to the period of time between the end of Roman rule and the Norman Conquest were positively identified. However, comments made in 5.1.3 and 5.2.2 above have referred to the difficulties in identifying remains of this and medieval date within the parameters of this watching brief. The absence of archaeological deposits in the Group 2 Trenches in the southern part of the village leaves only the zone occupied by the Group 3 Trenches in the northern part of the village as the only possible location of deposits of this date. No datable finds or features attributable to this period were recovered in any of the trenches, though their absence need not preclude some of the observed deposits being of this date. In this context it is worth noting that in deposits of this date in York the volume of earlier residual Roman pottery is often massively greater than that of the post-Roman. With regard to the dating of observed materials therefore, it may be safest to be 'open-minded' with those that lie above those deposits, that can with some certainty be attributed a Roman origin, and below those that can safely be attributed to the medieval or later periods.

5.2.4 MEDIEVAL

No features or deposits definitely attributable to the medieval period were identified. Pottery of this date was recovered from trenches 31 and 41 but this was residual. Comments made in 5.1.3 and 5.2.2 above have referred to the difficulties in identifying remains of this and of post-Roman date within the parameters of this watching brief. As was also the case with the post-Roman deposits, the only trenches that have the potential to contain medieval material are the Group 3 Trenches in the northern part of the village. Medieval settlement at Aldborough is well attested in a wide variety of contemporary documents as well as in the upstanding physical fabric of its church. It is probable that the modern streets of the village correlate very closely with those of the medieval and as such it may be anticipated that features of medieval date most likely to be encountered in the trenches are those that relate to roads. One such possible case is the earliest metalling evident in Trench 25 (see 5.2.5 below) whilst elements of the makeup deposits and metalling encountered on the line of the existing road to the north of the church may also be of this date (see 5.2.5 below). It is also possible that a wall constructed of brick surmounted by stone could relate to the latter part of the medieval period (see 5.2.5 below). Garden, or agricultural soils present in Trenches 32 and 33 may be of medieval date though a post-medieval date cannot be excluded.

5.2.5 POST-MEDIEVAL

A number of post-medieval finds and features were encountered in the trenches of Groups 2, 3, and 5. In many cases such features were attributed to this date not on the basis of finds material but on stratigraphic position and character. Former kerbing stones were encountered in Trenches 9, 25 and 37 (Plate 1). Some of these were formed of thin very large water-worn cobbles up to 0.30m in length whilst others were of more rectangular form and fabricated of a coarse-grained pale yellow sandstone and measured in excess of 0.35m long, in excess of 0.10m wide and with a height typically around 0.25m.



Plate 1 Former kerbing formed of large water-worn cobbles in Trench 9. Looking W

In the case of Trench 25 (Plate 2) this kerbing was directly associated with a metallised surface formed of a layer of cobbles set within a sandy bedding. This metallising appears to be a precursor of the modern road surface of Back Street. A thin silty deposit above the metallising appears to represent an accumulation over this surface. An earlier metallised surface of small pieces of stone within a silty matrix was evident below this, itself sealed by what is probably an accumulation deposit. The dating of this earlier surface is not clear cut and it could conceivably relate to the medieval period. Additional areas of cobbles, which were not seen to be directly related to kerbing were seen in Trenches 27, 28 and 66. The former two trenches were located on the eastern side of the grassed Square and suggest that the northern part of Back Street was wider than it is now whilst the same argument applies to Front Street in the area of Trench 66.



Plate 2 Metalled surface of cobbles set on a bedding of sand in Trench 25. The position of the kerbing (removed) can be seen in the void to the upper left. The stoney layer below this represents an earlier surface, with accumulation above. Looking NE

Further deposits interpreted as road metalling, and in some instances of possible makeup/levelling deposits for metalling, and of a probable post-medieval date were observed in Trenches 48, 49, 50, 54, 56, 57, 58, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 86, 88, 89, 91 and 93, all on the Boroughbridge Low Road. Characteristically, these were compact and comprised predominantly on stone and gravel, though occasionally of small cobbles, and stratigraphically lay immediately below modern road surfaces and their makeup (Plates 3 and 4).



Plate 3 Stoney layer beneath modern road materials in Trench 48. This probably relates to a post-medieval metallated surface or its bedding. Looking E



Plate 4 Metallated surface, predominantly of cobbles, below modern road materials in Trench 50. The pale coloured layer of crushed stone immediately below may relate to a bedding/makeup. Looking S

Worked garden soils containing later post-medieval materials were present in Trenches 44, 45, 46 and 47, all located below modern surfaces in areas immediately adjacent to Aldborough Hall (Plate 5). These soils were all dark coloured sandy silts. Similar soils in Trenches 32 and 33 may be of medieval or post-medieval date. Soils containing post-medieval material were also occasionally observed above what is demolition or robbing material of former Roman structures, the clearest examples being Trenches 38 and 55 (Plates 21, 22).



Plate 5 Former garden soil beneath modern surfacing in Trench 47, looking S

The remains of a Culvert extending across Boroughbridge Road were encountered in the north-western side of Trench 87 (Plate 6). Aligned south-south-west / north-north-east this feature occupied a construction trench that had been cut from a high level and was somewhat wider than the culvert itself. Backfilled with comparatively stone-free soils this cut had then been capped-off with aggregate to reinstate the roadway. The culvert was constructed of lime mortar bonded bricks capped off with thin slabs of pale yellow sandstone. The characteristics of the brick suggest that this culvert is of 18th or earlier 19th century date. Its alignment suggests it extends from an area somewhat to the west of Aldborough Manor down towards the lower ground to the north.



Plate 6 Remains of culvert in Trench 87, looking SW.

A series of post-medieval deposits were observed in Trenches 32, 33 and 34 in pavement areas immediately adjacent to the boundary wall of Aldborough Hall (Plate 7). In each of these trenches up to 0.30m of rubble, primarily comprised of fragments of ceramic building material, pebbles and fragments and flecks of lime mortar with a small amount of sand, was seen to be located under the existing footpath. The brickwork of the adjacent boundary wall suggests an 18th century, or slightly later date, for this feature. It is probable that this rubbly material relates to the levelling up and bedding for a pavement, though it is not clear whether it was for a pavement contemporary with the construction of the boundary wall, or later.



Plate 7 Post-medieval deposits sandwiched between existing footpath and soils in Trench 33, looking N.

The only structural remains likely to be of post-medieval date relate to an arrangement within Trench 37, which also contained remains of later post-medieval kerbing (Plate 8). Although the remains were partly obscured by a variety of services a wall-like feature, aligned south-west / north-east i.e. parallel to the existing street alignment survived towards the south-eastern side of the trench, the uppermost parts being some 0.55m below existing pavement level. The lowest parts of this feature were two courses of thin bricks bonded with lime mortar. The bricks, which measured some 285mm in length by 60mm thick, appeared to extend to greater depth though it was not possible to excavate these further owing to the presence of adjacent services. The brickwork was surmounted by a single course of rough blocks of a creamy coloured limestone, again bonded with lime mortar, some of which measured in excess of 0.30m across by 0.20m thick. The overall width of the walling could not be determined due to its extending beyond the south-western limits of excavation. Whilst this feature appears to represent a wall quite what its specific function was is less certain, though its alignment does respect that of the adjacent roadway. It may be part of a boundary wall, alternatively, it could even form the sill wall for a timber-framed building. The lack of secure dating evidence for this feature does allow the possibility that it could relate to the latter part of the medieval period.



Plate 8 Stone and brick structural remains in Trench 37, looking SW. Note that the stubs of later kerbing slabs can be seen towards the upper parts of the sections to the side of the trench (removed between these points).

In addition to the trenches already considered further deposits likely to be of post-medieval date were encountered in Trenches 38, 55, 71, 72, 76, 77, 78 and 79. Their tentative identification as post-medieval rests largely on their stratigraphic location between deposits of earlier and modern dates. These deposits are likely to relate to processes of levelling and dumping.

5.2.6 MODERN

Modern deposits and materials were of course present in all trenches in the form of modern road and footpath surfaces, kerbs and their makeup's as well as the old gas main, its cut and backfills. Added to this, many of the trenches also contained the cuts and backfills of a variety of other utility services, both live and redundant. A variation on this theme were deep deposits of yellow sand, of non-local origin, containing occasional thin lenses of darker silty material that continued beyond the bases of Trenches 68 and 69. These are almost certainly of modern origin, though they do pre-date the insertion of the old gas main. The precise context of the origin of these sands however, is uncertain.

5.3 CONSIDERATION OF THE ROMAN DEPOSITS

What are, and what may be, Roman period deposits were encountered in thirty four of the trenches. These deposits can be sub-divided into smaller groups on the basis of their characteristics. As such deposits in five trenches, Trenches 58, 79, 81, 85 and 86, can be seen to relate to walls whilst further probable structural deposits, probably foundation materials, were present in four more, trenches 34, 57, 77 and 82. In Trench 83 there is evidence for what is likely to be a drain or culvert rather than a wall. Deposits likely to relate to road, or surface, metalling were present in Trenches 52, 87 and 88. Extra-mural soils, almost certainly in existence during the Roman period were present in Trenches 89, 90, 91 and 92. The remaining trenches, Trenches 38, 48, 49, 50, 54, 55, 56, 76, 78, 80, 84, 93 and 95, produced a variety of 'soil' and 'rubbly' deposits that are likely to be of Roman origin.

5.3.1 WALLS

The remains of upstanding walls were all located within an area only a little over 90m across within the area of the Boroughbridge Road (Figure 3).

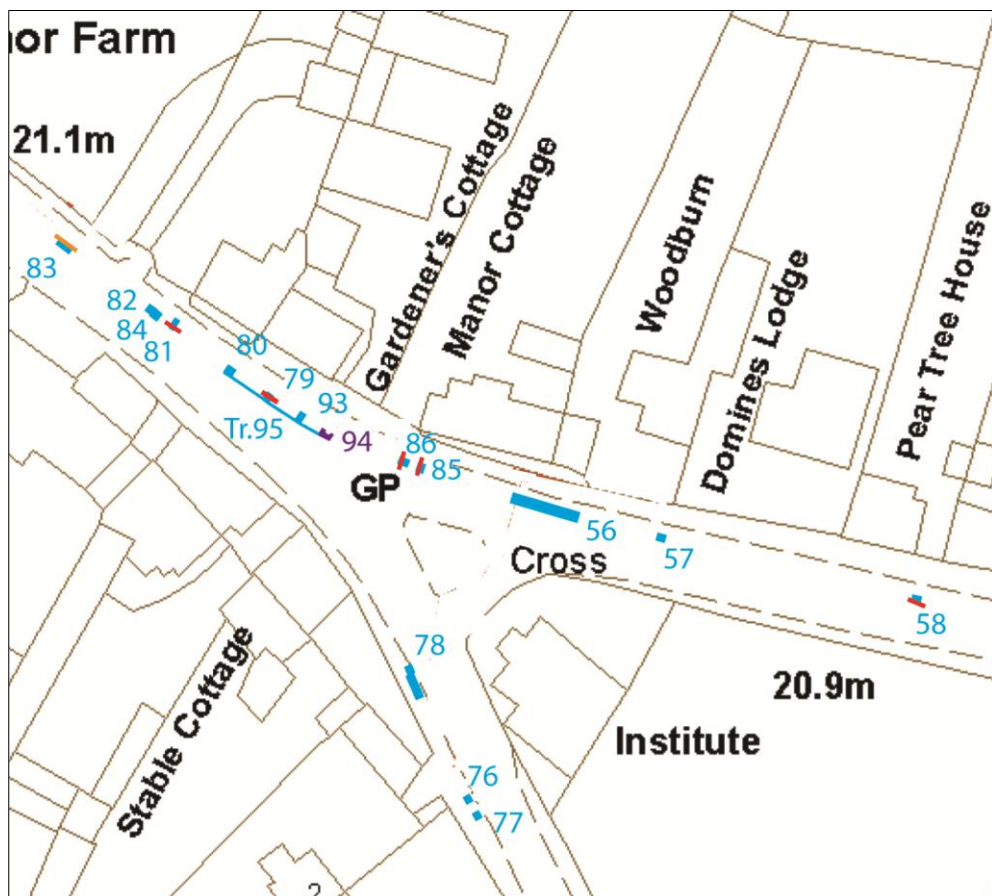


Figure 3 Plan showing location of upstanding Roman walls (red) and possible drain (orange). The lines have been extended to better demonstrate their alignment.

The walling within Trench 58, 586, was visible to its southern side and was comprised of a single course of rough blocks of red sandstone up to 0.32m across and 0.16m thick that were bonded with lime mortar (Plate 9). Although clearly at least partially truncated by the old gas main as well as by old narrow gas spurs, the alignment of the wall appears to be east-south-east / west-north-west. The stone blocks sat directly over a foundation comprised of approximately 60% lime mortar and 40% fragments of sandstone, 587, (largely the local red sandstone though a few pieces of creamy white sandstone were also present). This foundation material extended beyond the basal limits of the trench and was in excess of 0.30m thick. A thin silty deposit that probably accumulated immediately above the remnant stone blocks appears likely to relate to a post-Roman period.



Plate 9 Mortared red sandstone blocks above a thick deposit of lime mortar and rubble in Trench 58, looking S. The sandy silt and mortary deposits directly above are likely to post-date the Roman period.

Within Trench 79 a single course of walling, 797, aligned west-north-west / east-south-east, was observed at the base of the trench at a depth of some 0.90m BGL (Plate 10). This was constructed of roughly squared blocks of red sandstone, up to 0.38m in size, bonded with lime mortar and extended beyond the basal limits of the trench. Clearly in excess of 0.73m wide, the northern face of the wall was fully exposed though its southern face lay beyond the base of the trench. The surviving upper surface of the wall undulated somewhat and this may

be the result of later robbing for stone. The deposit directly overlying the wall, 796 was comprised of angular fragments of sandstone and flecks of mortar with a slightly lesser proportion of greyish brown sandy silt up to 0.30m deep. The stoney characteristics of this deposit suggest it may derive from the robbing of wall 797. As such it is possible that this deposit may relate to a post-Roman, rather than Roman, period.



Plate 10 Wall of mortared red sandstone within Trench 79, looking E

The northern part only of a single course of walling, 8191, aligned west-north-west / east-south-east, was found in Trench 81, the remainder extending beyond both the basal limits and southern baulk (Plate 11). The upper surviving parts this wall, which occurred at around 0.78m BGL, was again constructed of roughly squared blocks of red sandstone, up to 0.32m in size, and bonded with lime mortar. Trench 81 is located only around 15m to the north-west of Trench 79 and although the walling within both is similarly aligned the spatial relationship of the trenches suggests that they may form separate, rather than the same, walls. To the northern side of wall 8191 a deposit comprised overwhelmingly of fragments of red sandstone, 819, was present whilst sealing this was a thin stripe of mortar and plaster, 818. These deposits may relate to the collapse or demolition of this walling as may the deposit overlying the mortar, 817, a spread comprised predominantly of stone rubble.



Plate 11 Wall of mortared red sandstone, 8191, within Trench 81, looking E. Note the stone rubble, 819, sealed by a thin stripe of mortar and plaster, 818, to the north of the wall which may relate to collapse or demolition. The deposit above the mortar stripe, 817, may also relate to this process.

The adjacent trenches 85 and 86 both revealed stretches of walling, several courses tall, aligned north-north-east / west-south-west and at remarkably high levels. The uppermost course of that within Trench 85, 855, occurred within 0.30m of the existing road surface and continued for six courses to the base of the trench, beyond which it extended (Plate 12). The uppermost course within Trench 86, 865, was at a depth of some 0.54m of the present surface and continued for a depth of three courses with suggestions of a fourth extending beyond the basal limits of the trench (Plate 13). The stonework to each wall was of roughly squared blocks of red sandstone, fairly well coursed and bonded with lime mortar. The blocks to wall 855 were up to 0.34m long and 0.14m thick, those to wall 865 being up to 0.32m long by up to 0.15m thick. No surviving face to either wall was visible in the trenches as both walls had been truncated in the past by a combination of gas, water and unidentified services. The closeness of proximity of these similarly aligned walls (the trenches being approximately 1m apart) argues for some sort of relatedness between the two.



Plate 12 Wall of mortared red sandstone, 855, in Trench 85, looking W. Truncated to three sides by modern services the orientation of the blocks indicates the alignment of the wall.



Plate 13 Wall of mortared red sandstone, 865, in Trench 86, looking WNW. Although again heavily truncated the orientation of the blocks indicates the alignment of the wall.

5.3.2 OTHER STRUCTURAL DEPOSITS

Within Trench 57 a dense mass, some 0.38m thick, of large rounded cobbles of a size up to 0.29m across, 579, was observed (Plate 14). This overlay a deposit of pale greenish yellow slightly clayey sand containing occasional flecks of charcoal and the odd fragment of red sandstone. Deposits 578 and 577, essentially fairly thin and very stoney layers containing varying quantities of greyish brown silt overlay the cobbles. These two layers may relate to robbing debris or levelling deposits.

The mass of cobbles 579 are likely to have formed foundation material, possibly for walling, or even for some sort of surface.



Plate 14 Trench 57, looking S. Thick cobble layer can be clearly seen (though many of the cobbles at the section edge have fallen away) as can the stoney layers immediately above. The relatively stone free soil deposit above these produced some residual Roman material

Trench 77 also contained a thick layer of large cobbles together with large fragments of red and white coloured sandstone, 777, close to its base (Plate 15). Lime mortar was also evident between some of these large stones. Interpretation of this deposit is not clear cut. The layer may represent a wall footing or even unwanted left over debris from the robbing of a wall. A pale coloured silty sand deposit, 776, immediately above 777 contained quantities of mortar and flecks of plaster and could conceivably relate to a wall robbing event.



Plate 15 Layer of cobbles in Trench 77, looking S.

The sequence of collapse/demolition deposits above wall 8191 in Trench 81 has been detailed above in Section 5.3.1. These deposits were mirrored by an almost identical series in the adjacent Trench 82. Although no wall was found within Trench 82 this may relate its being several centimetres shallower than Trench 81, the likelihood being that wall 8191 continues its west-north-west course just below the basal limits of trench 82.

Within Trench 34 a dense mass of fragments of red sandstone, 348, were evident to the western part of the south facing elevation (Plate 16). Stratigraphically above this in the eastern part of the section successive deposits of mixed silts, 349, a layer of crushed mortar, 346 and further layers of pale coloured, stoney, silts, 346 and 345 were present. The stone deposit 348 is very likely to be derived from a wall. The particular interest in this instance is that the course of the eastern side of the town wall is said to be located at a point immediately to the east of Trench 34. It is tentatively suggested that 348 may represent the western tail end of deposits associated with either the collapse or robbing of this wall. It is possible that the layer of crushed mortar, 347, may be related to this episode whilst deposits 346 and 345 may post-date this.



Plate 16 Trench 34, looking N. Dense deposit of stone fragments may relate to the demise of part of the eastern side of the town wall, as may the mortar deposit to the lower left. Deposits immediately above this would seem likely to relate to a post-Roman period.

5.3.3 POSSIBLE DRAIN

Toward the very basal parts of Trench 83, and at a depth of some 0.86m BGL what may be the remains of a drain aligned approximately north-west / south-east were revealed (Plates 17, 18). Only the southern part of this feature lay within the trench and these remains were comprised of three slab-like blocks of pale yellowish coloured fine grained sandstone. The pieces had all been roughly squared and the largest was some 0.66m in length. Each piece was bonded with lime mortar to the adjacent piece. A modern electric duct had cut into the top of this feature at the eastern side of the trench. Judicious exploratory probing indicated that the large central slab was only some 0.12m thick and no further stonework could be detected beneath. Such slab-like pieces of stone are perhaps unlikely to have formed part of a wall, particularly as no traces of mortar were present of the upper surfaces of the blocks. These observations may suggest that the slab like elements are actually capping stones sealing a stone-lined channel whose width is somewhat narrower than that of the capping stones themselves. Several drains of such form and of varying sizes are known from Roman contexts in York. Although the absence of dating evidence prevents the attribution of a conclusively Roman date for this feature, such must be considered a distinct likelihood.



Plate 17 Possible drain in Trench 83, looking N.



Plate 18 Looking down onto the possible drain in Trench 83.

5.3.4 METALLING DEPOSITS

A very thick deposit of compacted clean gravel and cobbles was exposed in Trench 52, 524, (Plate 19). This material, which was cut at its eastern side by the trench of an old gas spur, extended from immediately below the tarmac of the footpath to beyond the basal limits of the trench. Suggestions of horizontal laminations were hinted at by lines of aggregate of common size. No finds or other dating material was recovered from this trench. Deposit 524 has the superficial appearance of a thick deposit of road makeup such as is occasionally found in Roman period deposits. Against this, it must be highlighted that the deposit was remarkably clean and, perhaps significantly, extended fully to the underside of the footpath tarmac. Whilst it is conceivable that this deposit may be of Roman date, one is minded to err on the side of caution and accept the possibility that it could be of modern date, perhaps relating to the backfill of a very large modern feature.



Plate 19 Thick deposit of compacted gravel and cobbles in Trench 52, Looking N.

What may be road or surface metalling of the Roman period was present in Trenches 87 and 88 on the Boroughbridge Road. That in Trench 87 was comprised of a series of two horizontally lain stone rich layers, generally in the region of 0.10m thick and extending from a height of 0.79m BGL to the base of the trench at 1.05m BGL, 877, 879 (Plate 20). Interleaved between the two stoney bands was a deposit of yellowish brown sandy silt, 878. No dating evidence was recovered from these deposits.



Plate 20 Two bands of probable metalling in the lower 0.25m of Trench 87, looking SW

Within Trench 88, which lays immediately to the west of the defences of the western side of the Roman town, a somewhat denser layer of probable metalling, 884, was seen (Plate 21). The lower half of this was comprised of coarse gravel and fragments of red sandstone whilst the upper half was of gravel and occasional small cobbles. Interestingly, 884 directly overlay a clean, virtually stone free, soil of brown sandy silt of entirely 'non-urban' character, 885 (see 5.3.5 below). The characteristics of layer 884 suggest the likelihood that it formed metalling for a roadway or surface of some sort.



Plate 21 Probable road metalling in Trench 88 immediately above clean soil, Looking SW.

5.3.5 EXTRA-MURAL SOILS

Clean soils of 'rural', rather than 'urban' appearance and character were observed in trenches 88, 89, 90, 91 and 92 (Plates 22, 23). All these soils were relatively stone free brown sandy silts virtually devoid of human derived material. The distribution of these trenches is quite striking, all occurring outside of the area of the walled town. These have the appearance of soils that were ultimately derived from processes of natural formation, though may well have subject to human working – perhaps predominantly though agriculture. Such may explain the banding within some of the soils best evidenced by that apparent in Trench 91 (see Plate 23). All these soils were fairly compact, a factor perhaps owed to their location beneath a roadway. Where clean relatively stone free soils were observed within the area of the walled town these were darker, occurred at a higher level in the stratigraphic sequence and are likely to be of medieval or later date. These have been considered in Sections 5.2.4 and 5.2.5 above.



Plate 22 Soils in Trench 90, Looking NNE.



Plate 23 Soils in Trench 91, Looking SSW.

5.3.6 OTHER DEPOSITS OF PROBABLE ROMAN ORIGIN

Trenches 38, 48, 49, 50, 54, 55, 56, 76, 78, 80, 84, 93 and 95, produced a variety of deposits that are likely to be of Roman origin. The distribution of these trenches is entirely within that part of Aldborough where archaeological deposits survive, namely the northern part and as far south as the southern edge of The Square. In the majority of trenches where archaeology, of any date, was present this was restricted to thin strips at the edges of the old gas mains trenches and the quantity of in-situ finds material was very limited. Accordingly, the attribution of dates to deposits has to be based primarily on stratigraphic position and character.

Many of these deposits contained significant quantities of stone rubble, mortar and wall plaster – some painted see for example Trenches 38, 48, 49, 55, 80, 84, 91, 93, 95 (Plates 24, 25, 26, 27). The wall plaster in particular provides fairly secure dates for this material as being of Roman origin. However, given that this material is not in-situ, it can equally be argued such deposits are likely to relate to the collapse, demolition or robbing of Roman structures in a post-Roman period and not necessarily within the Roman period itself. Answering the specifics of such questions can readily be made in the context of larger archaeological excavations but not so easily by inspection of thin slithers of deposits within contractor's trenches with a paucity of artefactual material.



*Plate 24 Rubbly deposits of red sandstone in Trench 38, Looking SE.
The silty deposit above contained post-medieval material.*



Plate 25 Mixed rubble deposits in Trench 55, Looking S. Note the creamy white band around 1/3 rd up the section which is comprised predominantly of wall plaster. The thick soily deposit above contained post-medieval finds.



Plate 26 Rubble deposits comprised largely of red sandstone in the lower part of Trench 80, Looking SSW. The date of the paler coloured stoney deposits above is uncertain.



Plate 27 Mixed rubble deposits comprised largely of red sandstone, mortar and plaster in the lower part of Trench 93, Looking WNW.

What may be characterised as ‘softer’ deposits, of a type more likely to relate to accumulations, deposition and dumping rather than to structures in the form of collapse, demolition or robbing, were identified in Trenches 50, 54, 56, 76 and 78. (Plates 28, 29, 30). In all cases these extended beyond the basal limits of the trenches and although the precise upper limits of the Roman material in these sequences could not readily be determined they are clearly of some depth. In all these instances rubble material of stone, mortar and plaster was present, but this was often interleaved with other materials and was at much lesser densities than those trenches with sequences predominantly of rubble. The ‘softer’ materials were principally comprised of layers of silts and sandy silts, occasional clayey layers - or layers with a clay content and charcoal rich layers. Often the colour range of these was quite considerable. The thickness of the soft deposits varied considerably from thin layers of charcoal rich materials only a few mm thick to thicker bands in excess of 0.20m. For the most part these deposits lay fairly horizontally though in the western part of trench 56 and the north-western end of Trench 78 they were inclined, or dipped (see Plates 26, 27). In the case of Trench 78, and possibly so in Trench 56, this appears to be related to the presence of a pit, that to 78 being particularly clear.



Plate 28 Mixture of rubble and soft deposits in the eastern part of Trench 56, Looking SE



Plate 29 Predominantly soft deposits surviving between service cuts in the western part of Trench 56, Looking SW. Note that deposits towards the corner area are dipping down.



Plate 30 Predominantly soft deposits within Trench 78, Looking S. Note the presence of what may be a pit-like feature to the right.

5.4 DISCUSSION

The results of the watching brief are of some significance on a number of grounds. The survival of archaeological deposits, saving a few scraps of post-medieval material, was restricted to the area from the southern part of The Square northwards. In the southern part of the village natural deposits were seen to lie extremely close to the existing ground surface. In the area of the square itself such natural deposits were encountered at a depth of around 0.90m BGL whilst north of The Square archaeological deposits extended beyond the basal limits of the trenches – this being 1.20m BGL in a few instances. Whilst deep stratified deposits survive in the northern, lower, part of the village it may be anticipated that for the most part it is likely to be only cut features that will survive in the southern part.

Although it may be anticipated that deeper deposits would survive in lower, down-slope, parts this in itself does not explain the virtual absence of archaeological material in the southern, sloping part. It could be the case that the observed absence relate in part to the trenches being cut through road and pavement areas that in many instances are somewhat lower than the land to either side of the roadways. This is particularly the case with land to the west side of the part of Back Street which runs parallel to Main Street, with that part which lies to the south of the element of this street running at 90 degrees to Main Street and

the land to either side of Main Street. As such it could be that these existing streets have effectively been cut, possibly by a process of continuous use, to lower levels. In this regard it is worth noting that the alignment of Main Street and the right angle of Back Street lie with close respect to the alignment of the walls of the Roman town and could conceivably be of considerable antiquity. The abruptness of the change in depth of natural deposits at the southern end of The Square is most marked and comments on why this is the case must be entirely speculative. However, differentials in the density of settlement or even truncation may be factors.

Another interesting aspect of the results is the depth of stratified deposits that survive in the northern part of the village. In this area the base of the deposit sequences was not reached in any of the trenches, even those that extended to 1.20m in depth. All inspected deposits were 'dry' with no richly organic or waterlogged remains being seen though such could conceivably survive at a greater depth. Clearly the stratified deposits in this part of the village represent an enormous archaeological resource of some potential. That potential is perhaps highlighted by the presence of standing Roman walls which in the case of Trench 85 survived to a height only 0.30m BGL. Although many of the deposits were to some degree truncated by modern services additional to the gas main it may be anticipated that in areas away from roads, footpaths and housing these remains are likely to survive relatively undisturbed by modern intrusion.

The greatest disappointment with the results of the watching brief was the inability to attribute dates more fully to the elements of the deposit sequence and, to an extent, more fully characterising the precise origin and nature of their deposition. This failure originates primarily in the archaeology within the trenches being comprised of 'slithers' at the side of the gas main cut, rather than a manually excavated mass, and a concomitant paucity of artefactual material within these slithers.

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APPENDIX 1: SITE PLANS, LOCATION AND CHARACTERISATION OF TRENCHES



Figure 4A Location of trenches (S part of village)

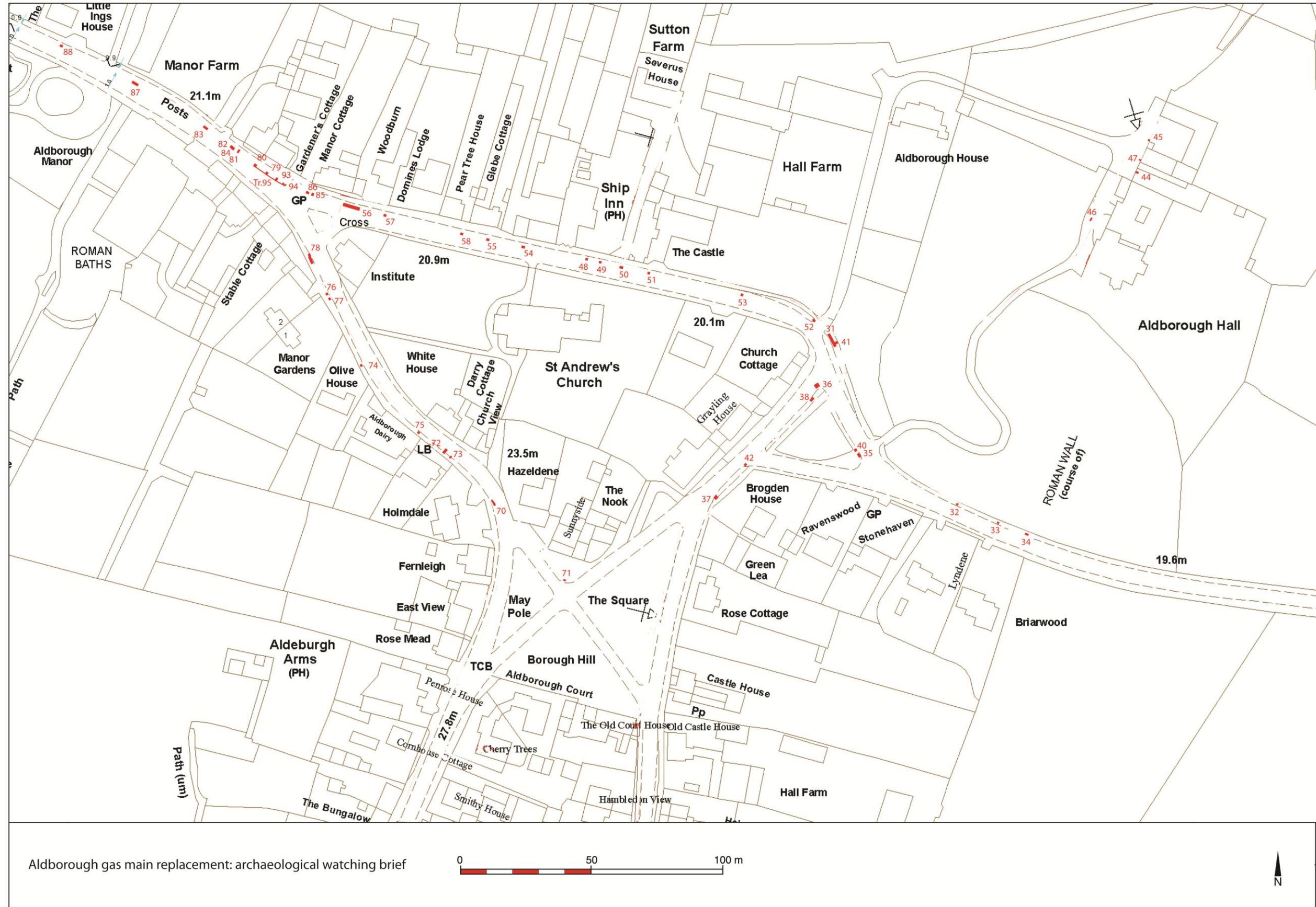


Figure 4B Location of trenches (Central part of village)

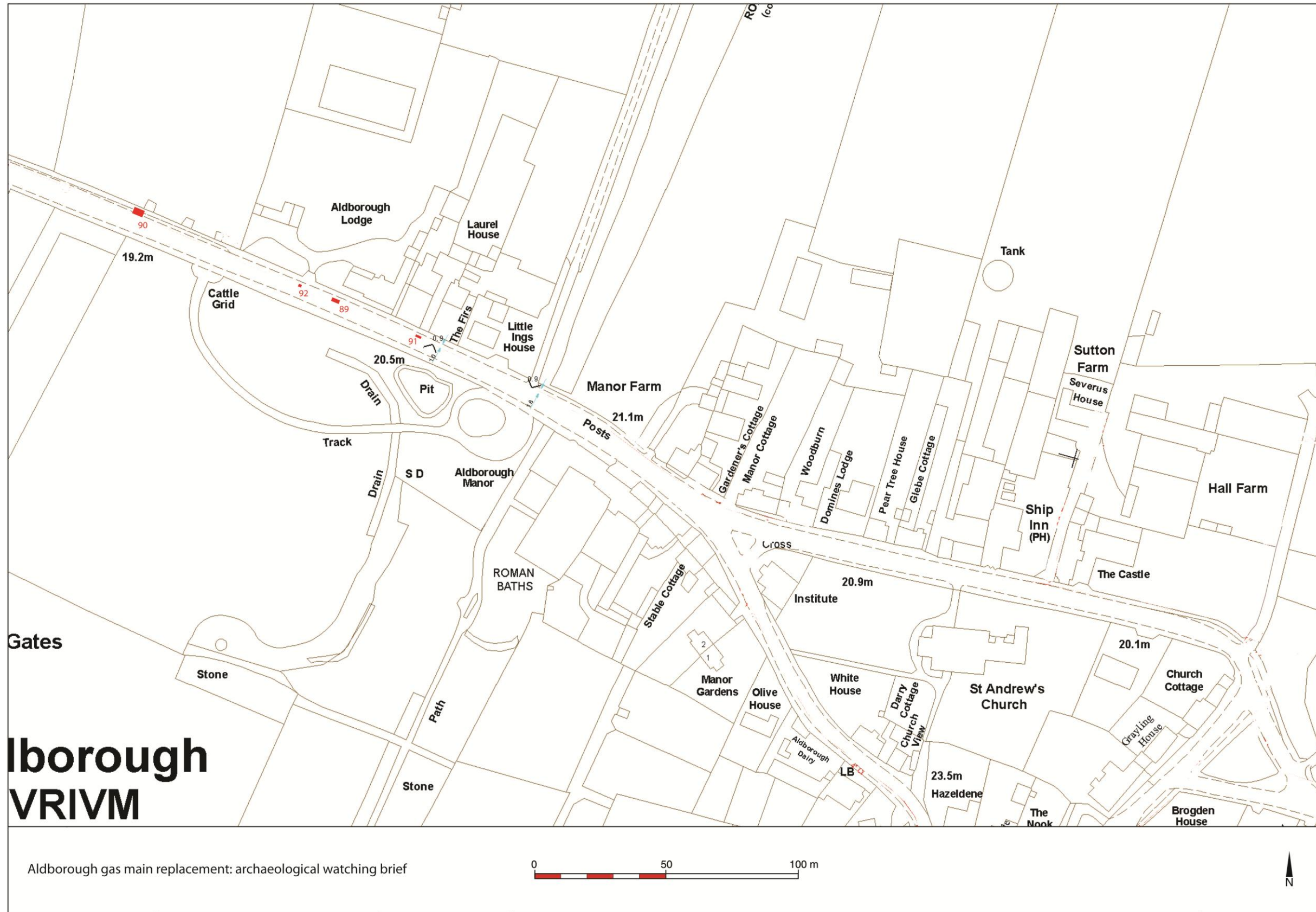


Figure 4C Location of trenches (N part of village)

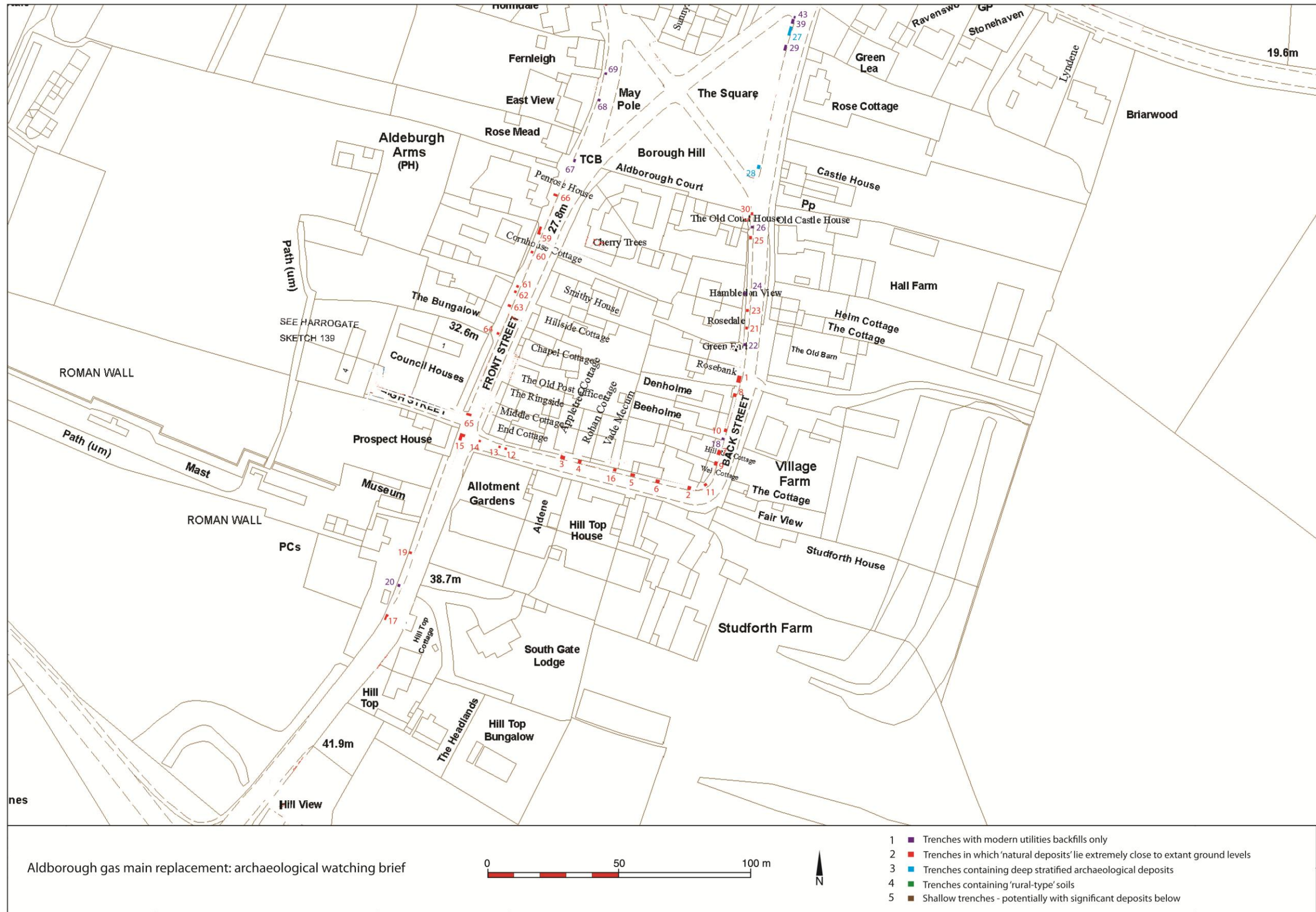


Figure 5A Characterisation of trenches by deposit (S part of village)

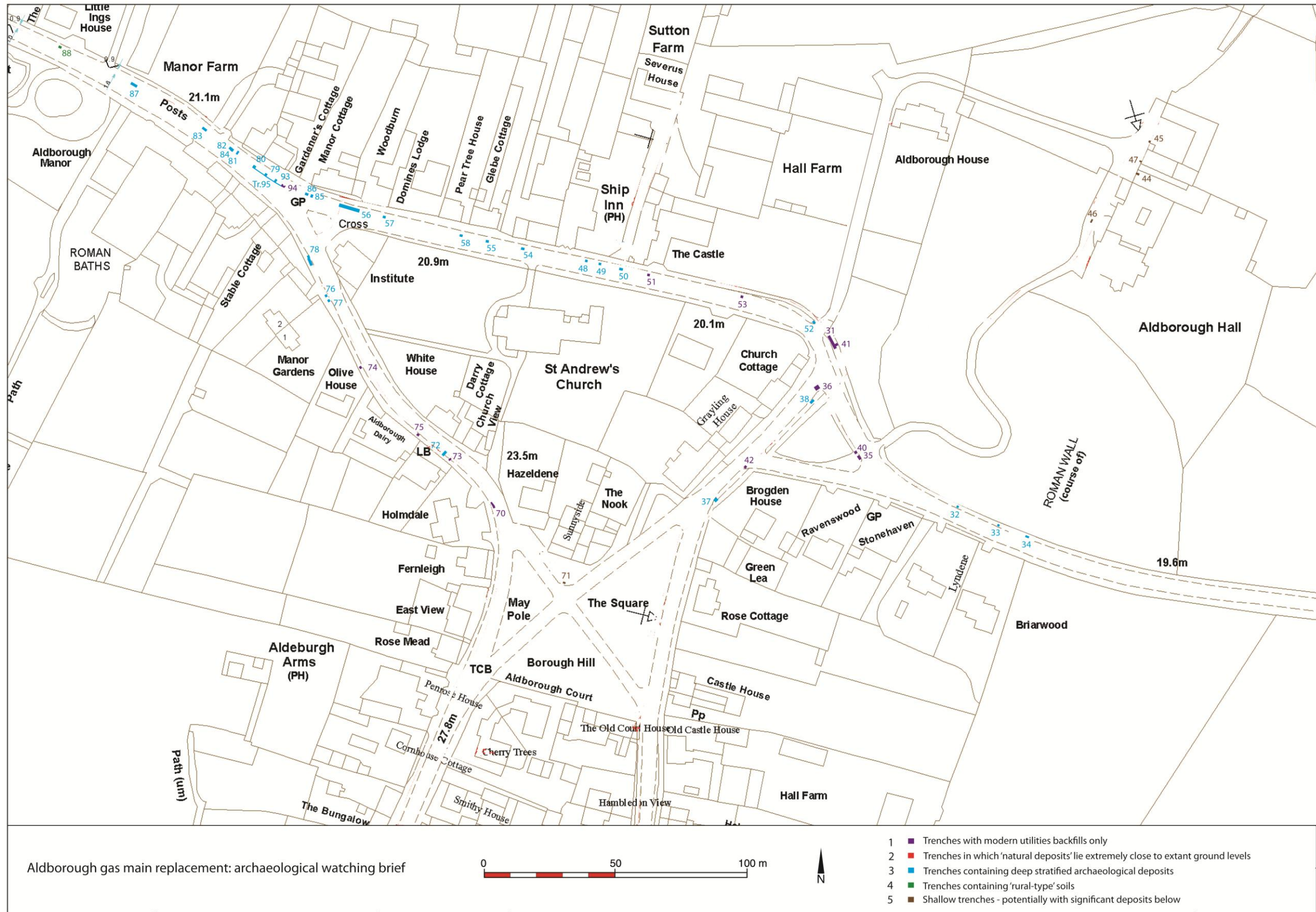


Figure 5B Characterisation of trenches by deposit (Central part of village)

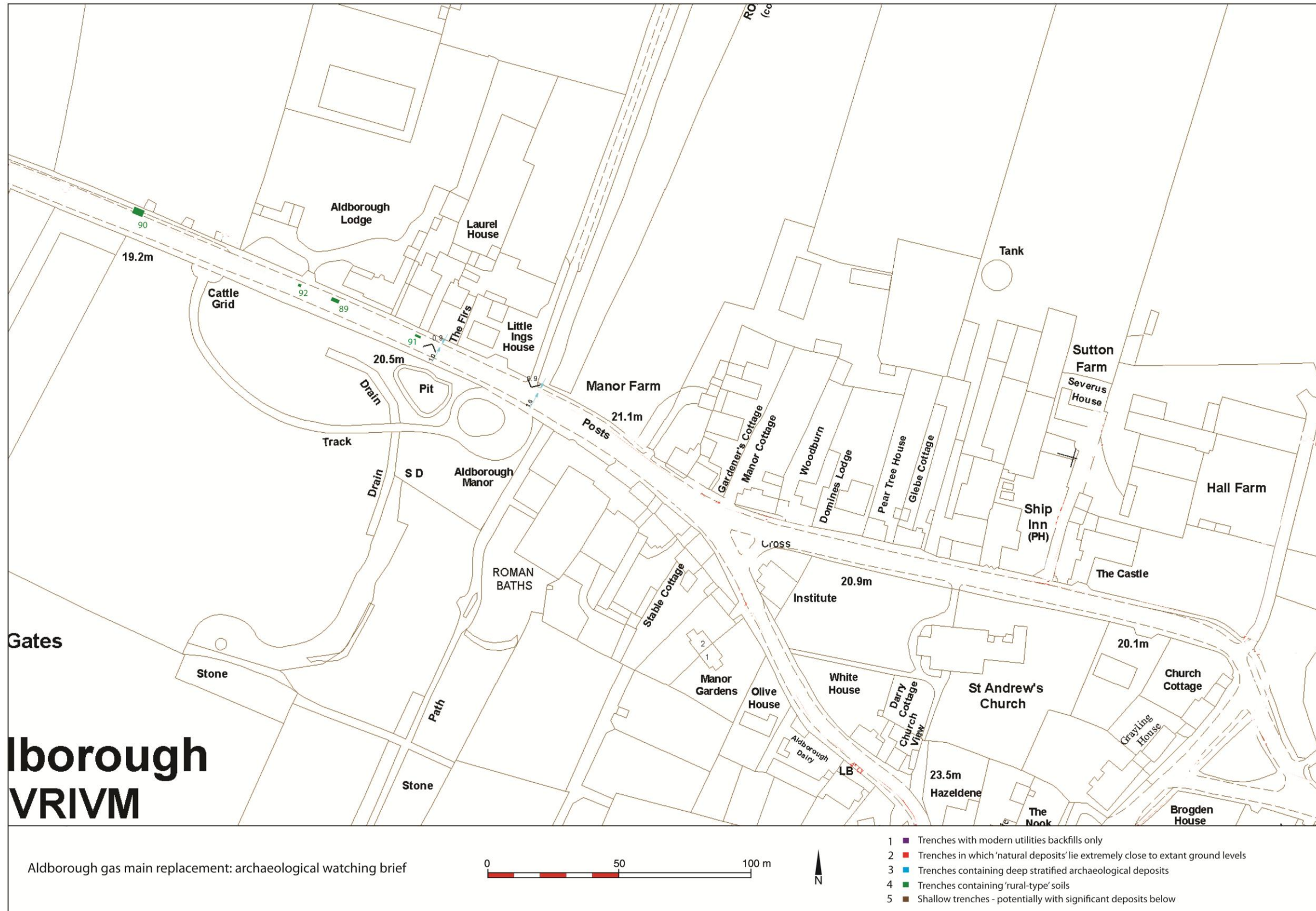


Figure 5C Characterisation of trenches by deposit (N part of village)

APPENDIX 2: TABLE 1, CHARACTERISATION OF DEPOSITS BY PERIOD

TRENCH #	NATURAL DEPOSITS	ROMAN	POST-ROMAN	MEDIEVAL	POST-MEDIEVAL	MODERN
1	X					X
2	X					X
3	X					X
4	X				?	X
5	X					X
6	X					X
7	X				?	X
8	X					X
9	X				X	X
10	X					X
11	X					X
12	X					X
13	X					X
14	X					X
15	X					X
16	X					X
17	X					X
18						X
19	X					X
20						X
21	X					X
22						X
23	X					X
24						X
25				?	X	X
26						X
27		? prob	?	?prob	X	X
28		?prob	?		X	X
29						X
30	X				?	X
31						X
32		?	?	?	X	X
33		?	?	?	X	X
34		X	?	?	X	X
35						X
36						X
37				?prob	X	
38		?prob	?	?	X	X
39	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	abandoned
40					?	X
41						X
42						X
43						X
44					X	X

45					X	X
46					X	X
47					X	X
48		?prob	?	?	X	X
49		?prob	?	?	X	X
50		?	?	?	X	X
51						X
52		?	?	?	?	X
53						X
54		?	?	?	X	X
55		X	?	?	X	X
56		X	?	?	X	X
57		X	?	?	X	X
58		X	?	?	X	X
59	X					X
60	X					X
61	X					X
62	X					X
63	X					X
64	X					X
65	X					X
66	X				X	X
67						X
68						X
69						X
70						X
71				?	X	X
72					X	X
73						X
74						X
75						X
76		?prob	?	?	X	X
77		?prob	?	?	X	X
78		X	?	?	X	X
79		X	?	?	X	X
80		X	?	?	X	X
81		X	?	?	X	X
82		X	?	?	X	X
83		X	?	?	X	X
84		X	?	?	X	X
85		X				X
86		X			X	X
87		?	?	?	X	X
88		?	?	?	X	X
89		?	?	?	X	X
90		?	?	?	?	X
91		?	?	?	X	X
92		?	?	?	?	X

93		X	?	?	X	X
94						X
95		X	?	?	?	X

Table 1 Characterisation of deposits within trenches by period

APPENDICES 3A - 3D: SPECIALIST ARTEFACTUAL REPORTS

3A POTTERY

By Ailsa Mainman

This small collection of 24 sherds is mostly of Roman date with some medieval and post-medieval wares present. In all cases these are common forms and types, and contribute little to the understanding of the site beyond offering a broad chronology. Many of the sherds are small, little more than chips, but in most cases they are quite sharp and fresh.

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	DATE
238	1 samian fragment, 1 mortaria fragment	2 nd /3 rd century
275	1 Roman grey ware with lattice burnishing	2 nd /3 rd century
285	2 samian fragments	2 nd /3 rd century
311	1 Humber, 1 splashed ware	14 th century
361	1 amphora fragment	2 nd /3 rd century
411	2 ?splashed wares	12 th century
421	1 mortaria fragment, 1 oxidized bowl rim	2 nd /3 rd century
553	2 Cistercian ware chips	16 th century
569	1 Roman oxidized bowl rim	2 nd /3 rd century
576	1 samian chip	2 nd /3 rd century
893	1 abraded oxidised Roman sherd	2 nd /3 rd century
4005	1 Roman grey ware; 3 white glazed earthenware, 1 stone ware, 1 transfer-printed ware	19 th century
5604	1 Roman flagon sherd	2 nd /3 rd century

3B SMALL FINDS

By Nicola Rogers

Six small finds were recorded, all of which derived from Group 3 Trenches. Four of the small finds comprise painted plaster fragments (SFs3-6); each find was recovered from a different trench (see table below). It is possible that these fragments may be remnants from walls of Roman date; this being the case, it may be advisable to show these to a Roman wall plaster specialist for confirmation.

The other two small finds are undiagnostic in terms of date: SF1 is a piece of copper alloy wire, and SF2 comprises two probable lead alloy sheet offcuts, indicative of possible lead working in the area at some unknown date.

FIND	CONTEXT	NAME	MATERIAL
SF1	553	Wire	Copper Alloy
SF2	553	Off-cuts	Lead Alloy
SF3	803	Fragment	Plaster
SF4	866	Fragment	Plaster
SF5	784	Fragment	Plaster
SF6	554	Fragment	Plaster

Table 2 List of small finds

3C CONSERVATION

By Holly Marston

INTRODUCTION

Several fragments of fragile wet-packed wall plaster were brought to the conservation lab for condition assessment and treatment. The fragments were split between four small finds, with groups including six, four, seven and forty two fragments respectively. Several of these fragments were painted, with some decoration, and others were without any surface decoration. In general, the wall plaster was cleaned whilst still damp, using swabs of 50:50 ethanol and reverse osmosis water and hand tools to remove the thick layers of burial dirt, and left to dry overnight. The fragments were then cleaned again using swabs of ethanol and hand tools to remove excess soil, before being left to dry and consolidated with two applications of 5% Paraloid B72 methyl methacrylate co-polymer w/v in acetone, applied with a pipette.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The objects are now stable; however they should still be handled with care due to their fragile nature. The wall plaster was packaged in pierced grip-top finds bags with jiffy foam inserts. The wall plaster should be stored at a stable temperature, at 45-60% RH and a maximum of 150 lux.

SMALL FIND 3

CONDITION/DESCRIPTION

This bag contains six fragments of decorated plaster, including three with a cream/white painted surface, and three with a red painted surface. The painted surfaces on these

fragments are plain, with no decoration. The fragments are broken on all edges, but the three fragments with the red painted surface can be joined together.

TREATMENT

The treatment for these fragments follows the general treatment as outlined above. During cleaning, the largest fragment of white/cream plaster broke into two pieces and was readhered back together with HMG Paraloid B72. The largest fragment of plaster with a red surface broke into two pieces and was also readhered with HMG Paraloid B72. The two further fragments of plaster with a red surface were adhered to the largest fragment with HMG Paraloid B72. During cleaning, two substantial fragments of plaster without a decorated surface came loose, but could not be readhered so they were treated separately and packaged alongside the other fragments, as outlined above.

SMALL FIND 4

CONDITION/DESCRIPTION

This bag contains four fragments of decorated plaster, including one with a cream/white painted surface with a red stripe, one with a plain red painted surface, one with a yellow and pink painted surface and one with a thin, plain cream painted surface. The fragments are broken on all edges and no joins can be made between the fragments.

TREATMENT

The treatment for these fragments follows the general treatment as outlined above. The fragment with the cream and red decorated surface is very friable and broke into three pieces during cleaning. These pieces were readhered using HMG Paraloid B72 before the surface could be lost. This fragment should be handled with particular care, as it remains friable after consolidation. During cleaning, one substantial fragment of undecorated plaster came loose, but it could not be readhered, so it was treated separately and packaged alongside the other fragments, as outlined above.

SMALL FIND 5

CONDITION/DESCRIPTION

This includes seven fragments of plaster, including two with a very friable, delaminated, plain cream/white painted surface, two with a plain red painted surface, two with a plain cream/white painted surface and one with a friable cream and red decorated painted surface. The fragments are broken on all edges, and no joins can be made between the fragments.

TREATMENT

The treatment for these fragments follows the general treatment as outlined above. The fragments with the delaminated cream/white surfaces and the red and cream/white painted fragment remain friable after consolidation, so care should be taken when handling them. During cleaning, four substantial fragments of undecorated plaster came loose, but they could not be readhered, so they were treated separately and packaged alongside the other fragments, as outlined above.

SMALL FIND 6

CONDITION/DESCRIPTION

This bag includes 11 fragments of decorated plaster, including one with a friable, delaminated plain cream/white painted surface three with friable plain red painted surfaces, four with plain cream/white painted surfaces, two with white and blue striped painted surfaces and one with a red and white striped painted surface; there are also thirty one fragments of friable, undecorated plaster. This bag also contained a small unworked animal bone. The fragments are broken on all edges, and no joins can be made except one between the blue and white striped fragments.

TREATMENT

The treatment for these fragments follows the general treatment as outlined above. Several of the fragments remain friable after consolidation, and care should be taken when handling them to minimise further loss of the substrate. Several of the smaller fragments were placed in a separate finds bag within the larger bag, to minimise surface loss.

The animal bone was cleaned with swabs of 50:50 ethanol and reverse osmosis water, left to dry overnight and bagged separately within the finds bag.

3D CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Jane McComish

A total of 8.45kg of ceramic building material (CBM) was assessed from the site (Table 3). The CBM comprised 27 sherds which ranged from Roman to modern in date, but some of the sherds were badly fragmented making the dating uncertain. The records are stored on YATs database (IADB).

The Roman CBM accounted for 3.49kg of CBM and comprised three sherds of box flue tile, four sherds of indeterminate form (classed as Roman brick) and four sherds of tegula. The

material was of standard Roman forms, though two of the box flues were abnormally thick. The only sherd of medieval material was a peg tile with a circular peg hole. Tiles of this type were in use from the 13-16th centuries.

The post-medieval and modern CBM accounted for 4.85kg of the total, and comprised nine sherds of brick, one sherd of pan tile, three sherds of drain and a sherd which may represent a modern cover or capping tile of some kind. In the case of the bricks only four sherds could be firmly dated 16th-18th century. The remaining five brick sherds were too badly preserved to be entirely sure of the date, and these sherds could be of any date from medieval to the present. The pan tile was 17th century or later in date. The drain and capping dated to 1850 or later.

CONTEXT	DATING	FORM
261	17th+	Drain, Pan
283	13-16th	Peg
284	1-4th	Tegula
311	1-4th	Roman brick?
333	16-18th?	Post medieval brick
334	16-18th	Tegula, Post medieval brick
344	16-18th	Post medieval brick
361	1850+	Other
411	1-4th?	Tegula?
421	1-4th	Tegula
553	16-18th	Post medieval brick?, Post medieval brick
569	1-4th	Flue
714	16-18th?	Post medieval brick?
796	16-18TH	Post medieval brick
845	16-18th	Post medieval brick
5613	1-4th	Roman brick
5691	1-4th	Roman brick
5692	1-4th	Flue

Table 3 CBM in context order by date and forms present.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the exception of the Roman sherds, the collection was too small and too badly fragmented to merit any further research. The Roman sherds offer some potential for comparing the both the fabrics and dimensions to examples from both Aldborough and York to determine whether CBM was being produced in Aldborough or transported there from York. All of the CBM has currently been retained, but it is recommended that the collection is reduced prior to long term storage, with only the Roman material being retained.