



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT THE COMMUNITY STADIUM, YORK

By Thomas Coates

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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Abbreviations

AOD – Above Ordnance Datum

BGL – Below Ground Level

BGS – British Geological Survey

WSI – Written Scheme of Investigation

YAT – York Archaeological Trust

Non-technical Summary

On the 6th February and 24th May 2018, York Archaeological Trust conducted a watching brief at Community Stadium, Monks Cross, York (SE 6218 5472).

The work was undertaken for Buckingham Group Contracting to satisfy the planning condition for archaeological watching brief required by the City of York Council (14/02933/FULM). The work followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by YAT (Appendix 3). An irregular shaped trench approximately 350 sq. metres was excavated to locate and record the continuation of the southern side of the Roman camp ditch enclosure, and any associated features such as possible remains of the embankment. The northern side of the camp was excavated in 2015 as part of a YAT led community project on the excavations of the stadium (McComish 2015).

Other than investigating natural variations in the geology, the result of the excavation shows the ditch to continue with no indication of an entrance into the camp with possible remains of the very base of the embankment on the internal side of the camp ditch enclosure. 2 post-holes of unknown date were recorded due to their close proximity with the ditch, however, these were most likely related to a modern fence line.

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	Community Stadium, Monks Cross, York
YAT Project No.	6014
Document Number	2018/25
Type of Project	Watching Brief
Client	Buckingham Group Contracting
Planning Application No.	14/02933/FULM
NGR	SE 6218 5472
Museum Accession No.	YORYM:2015.406
OASIS Identifier	yorkarch1-318245

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1 INTRODUCTION

On the 6th February and 24th May 2018, YAT conducted a watching brief and excavation at the Community Stadium, Monks Cross, York (SE 6218 5472) (Figure 1 Site Location).

The work was undertaken for Buckingham Group Contracting to fulfil a planning condition applied by CYC (14/02933/FULM).

Work involved a watching brief where it was expected there was part of the ditch associated with the Roman camp and continued monitoring further north east where ground reduction will take place for the foundation cuts.

Trench 1 was excavated in advance of proposed raised ground formation. This revealed the known trajectory of the Roman camp ditch. However, there was no evidence to suggest a break where there may have been an entrance way, so a methodology was approved in consultation with the City of York Archaeologist to machine-excavate a slot through the ditch, followed by a hand clean and record of one section. See Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for full details (Appendix 3).

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology followed the WSI (Appendix 3)

2.1 Trench

A single trench was excavated (Figure 2):

No.	Size (m)	Rationale
1	350 sq.m	To locate the continuation of the Roman camp ditch enclosure and identify any possible remains of the associated embankment.

2.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was located on the scale base map provided by the client; alterations of the area were made due to the scope of works in the surrounding area adhering to health and safety regulations.

A section of the ditch was excavated using a 25 tonne machine excavator with a ditching bucket, with one section hand excavated and recorded using YAT recording methods. Two post-holes were hand excavated and recorded using YAT recording methods. Another slot was excavated further north to ascertain more information regarding possible remains of the associated ditch embankment.

As soon as archaeological work was completed, the trench was backfilled at the request of the client.

2.3 Ground Reduction Area/Foundation Trenches

The area of foundation trench monitoring was located north-east of Trench 1. This was part of an intermittent monitoring phase to identify and possibly record the trajectory of the continued Roman camp ditch and any possible associated features.

3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The proposal site is at the Community Stadium, Monks Cross, York. (Figure 1). The site is located approximately 3km north-east of York Minster, and 1km south of Huntington village centre, on low-lying land ranging from 14.5-15m AOD. The River Foss lies 1.2km to the west of the site.

The underlying solid geology is of Sherwood sandstones of late Permian date, overlain by drift geology of Warp and Lacustrine clays (British Geological Survey).

The site was formerly used as a sports stadium, containing a rugby pitch surrounded by an oval-shaped running track, which has since been removed. The stadium structures, including the two grandstands, have now been demolished and the site is now into the initial phase of ground works for the construction of the community stadium.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The overarching phase of archaeological activity on the site relates to the Roman military camp that occupies the majority of the study site area; part of the camp survives as visible earthworks outside the site boundary, to the west, and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The majority of post-Roman activity on the site primarily relates to agriculture.

Aerial photography undertaken in 2002 by English Heritage revealed the presence of two Roman camps in the Huntington Moor area. The south-easternmost of these was named Camp 1, whilst the north-westernmost was named Camp 2, and it is Camp 2 that is the focus of this watching brief. An earthwork survey of the camp, undertaken in 2013, saw that the bank of the camp was 6-8m wide, with evidence of ponding of water in a 10m area immediately inside the bank and in a 2-4m wide area to the exterior (Pinnock 2013).

A geophysical survey was undertaken on both the scheduled part of the site and the area under the stadium in 2015. Whilst no features were detected on the rugby pitch due to the depth of modern deposits, a resistivity survey on the extant scheduled earthworks was more successful. The survey clearly identified the outline of both the ditch and bank of the western corner of the Roman camp (McComish 2015).

In the summer of 2015 an archaeological excavation was undertaken on the study site by York Archaeological Trust. The excavation revealed the remains of the Roman camp 2; a large ditch, roughly L-shaped in plan that formed the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of the camp. On the north-eastern side of the ditch there was a gap 5.2m wide, marking an entrance into the camp. The ditch termini on either side of the entrance were square in plan. A small number of undated pits and post-holes were also recorded along with 18th century plough furrows and modern field drains (McComish 2015).

5 RESULTS

The following results are divided into the various stages of works undertaken on site. In each case where context numbers have been assigned they are included in brackets, for example (C1000) for deposits and [C1001] for cuts.

The comprehensive context list is in Appendix 2.

5.1 Trench 1

The earliest feature encountered was the Roman military camp ditch enclosure [C1005] filled by deposits (C1001), (C1002), (C1003) and (C1004). The ditch ran the full length of Trench 1 on a north-east/south-west alignment. An associated deposit was originally thought to be the remains of the internal embankment (C1006), but considering the original profile and shallow depth of both this feature and the Roman camp ditch truncated by deep ploughing over an extended period of time, this is now considered unlikely and the deposit is therefore interpreted as unknown.

Pottery from within the lower infill (C1003) of the camp ditch offers a provenance contemporary with the Roman occupation of York. These spot finds suggest anywhere between the late 1st century and early 3rd century (Monaghan 1997).

The only other features encountered were a series of modern post-holes that were related to a pre-existing fence line, two were recorded for reference, [C1010] and [C1012]. Both were similar in shape and profile, with [C1010] containing small fragments of ceramic building material from within the backfill (C1009), and [C1012] containing decaying remains of a timber post from within the backfill (S1011), which fragmented during excavation.

A second slot into the ditch was excavated by a machine bucket to ascertain further information regarding the possible remains of the embankment (Plate 4). However, very little survived of the deposit (C1006) in this area, therefore it was decided that the first recorded profile provided the most information from within this trench.

5.2 Ground Reduction/Foundation Trench Monitoring

On 24th May 2018, monitoring of the foundation trenches occurred in the area north-east of Trench 1 as seen in Illustration 1 of the WSI. The results showed a continuation of the Roman camp ditch (Plate 5) connecting what was recorded of the camp ditch in Trench 1 and the extent of the ditch recorded in the 2015 community excavation (McComish 2015).

It is worth noting that the foundation trenches did not expose the full extent of the Roman camp ditch, therefore it is impossible to determine whether there was a second entrance into the camp located within this part of the enclosure. However, the areas that were exposed suggest there was no break or evidence of *termini*.

Apart from digital photography, no recording took place. This is because the position of the foundation trenches meant that the ditch appeared oblique in profile which would ultimately give a false representative section.

6 DISCUSSION

The results appear to reflect the works carried out on the 2015 community excavation (McComish 2015) with the sole discovery of archaeological significance being the known ditch forming the enclosure of the Roman marching camp. This is reinforced by confirmed datable evidence from within the initial silting deposits while the camp was in use.

Despite the initial speculation that there may have been an associated embankment, as well as the close proximity of Trench 1 to the Scheduled Monument part of the Roman camp ditch enclosure to the west, outside of the development area, it is evidently clear that if there was one it would have been truncated by extensive agricultural ploughing.

All other recorded features and observed deposits were either Modern in date or formed by natural disposition.

LIST OF SOURCES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

YAT gives many thanks to Buckingham Group Contracting for their cooperation during the course of the works.

APPENDIX 1 – INDEX TO ARCHIVE

Item	Number of items
Context sheets	0
Levels register	0
Photographic register	0
Sample register	0
Drawing register	0
Original drawings	3
B/W photographs (films/contact sheets)	0
Colour slides (films)	0
Digital photographs	60
Written Scheme of Investigation	1
Report	1

Table 1 Index to archive

APPENDIX 2 – CONTEXT LIST

Trench	Context Number	Description
1	1000	Topsoil
1	1001	Fill of ditch [1005]
1	1002	Fill of ditch [1005] Firm, mottled yellowish-grey, silty clay. Occasional flecks of charcoal
1	1003	Fill of ditch [1005] Firm, mottled mid-yellowish-grey, silty clay. Occasional flecks of charcoal
1	1004	Fill of ditch [1005] Firm, mid orangey yellow with mottled elements of mid-grey. Occasional flecks of charcoal
1	1005	Cut of Roman camp boundary ditch
1	1006	Fill, unknown. Firm, mid-yellowish-grey, silty clay.
1	1007	Natural
1	1008	Subsoil
1	1009	Modern post-hole backfill of [1010]
1	1010	Cut of modern post-hole
1	1011	Modern post-hole backfill of [1012]
1	1012	Cut of modern post-hole

Table 2 Context list

APPENDIX 3 – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Site Location: Community Stadium, Monks Cross, York

NGR: SE 6218 5472

Proposal: Erection of 8,000 seat Community Stadium, leisure centre, multi-screen cinema, retail units, outdoor football pitches, community facilities and other ancillary uses, together with associated vehicular access, car parking, public realm, and hard and soft landscaping following demolition of existing structures

Planning ref: 14/02933/FULM

Prepared for: Buckingham Group Contracting

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7 SUMMARY

1.1 Buckingham Group Contracting have received planning consent for the erection of an 8,000 seat community stadium and other leisure facilities at Community Stadium, Monks Cross, York (SE 6218 5472). The scheme will include associated vehicular access, car parking, public realm, and hard and soft landscaping.

1.2 The following archaeological condition has been imposed:

No work shall commence on site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (a watching brief on all ground works by an approved archaeological unit).

1.3 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared in response to a Brief written by York City Council. The work will be carried out in accordance with the Brief and this WSI.

8 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

2.1 The proposal site is at Community Stadium, Jockey Lane, York (Figure 1). The site is located approximately 3km north-east of York Minster, and 1km south of Huntington village centre, on low-lying land ranging from 14.5-15m AOD. The River Foss lies 1.2km to the west of the site.

2.2 The underlying solid geology is of Sherwood sandstones of late Permian date, overlain by drift geology of Warp and Laucustrine clays (British Geological Survey).

2.3 The site was formerly used as a sports stadium, containing a rugby pitch surrounded by an oval-shaped running track, which is still present. The stadium structures, such as the two grandstands, have now been demolished and the site is now an unoccupied wasteland.

9 DESIGNATIONS & CONSTRAINTS

3.1 The site is immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Roman Camp on Huntington South Moor, 300m east of Huntington Grange; one of only four identified Roman camps close to the City of York.

10 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

4.1 The overarching phase of archaeological activity on the site relates to the Roman military camp that occupies the majority of the study site area; part of the camp survives as visible earthworks outside the site boundary, to the west, and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (see above). The majority of post-Roman activity on the site primarily relates to agriculture.

4.2 Aerial photography undertaken in 2002 by English Heritage revealed the presence of two Roman camps in the Huntington Moor area. The south-easternmost of these was named Camp 1, whilst the north-westernmost was named Camp 2, and it is Camp 2 that is the focus of this watching brief. An earthwork survey of the camp, undertaken in 2013, saw that the bank of the camp was 6-8m wide, with evidence of ponding of water in a 10m area immediately inside the bank and in a 2-4m wide area to the exterior (Pinnock 2013).

4.3 A geophysical survey was undertaken on the site in 2015, and whilst no features were detected on the rugby pitch due to the depth of modern deposits, a resistivity survey on the extant earthworks was more successful. The survey clearly identified the outline of both the ditch and bank of the western corner of the Roman camp (McComish 2015).

4.4 In the summer of 2015 an archaeological excavation was undertaken on the study site by York Archaeological Trust. The excavation revealed the remains of the Roman camp 2; a large ditch, roughly L-shaped in plan that formed the north-eastern and south-eastern sides of the camp. On the north-eastern side of the ditch there was a gap 5.2m wide, marking an entrance into the camp. The ditch termini on either side of the entrance were square in plan. A small number of undated pits and post-holes were also recorded along with 18th century plough furrows and modern field drains (McComish 2015).

11 GROUNDWORKS TO BE MONITORED

5.1 This work will comprise a **continuous** watching brief during the ground reduction excavation in the area of the known Roman archaeology (Illustration 1).

5.2 If the archaeological remains consist solely of the ditch previously identified (see above) then two slots will be excavated mechanically to allow the profile to be determined.

5.3 If evidence for an entrance to the marching camp, the corner of the camp, or for any other archaeological features is identified, these will be hand-excavated archaeologically.

12 DELAYS TO THE DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

6.1 All earth-moving machinery must be operated at an appropriate speed to allow the archaeologist to recognise, record and retrieve any archaeological deposits and material.

6.2 It is not intended that the archaeological monitoring should unduly delay site works. However, the archaeologist on site should be given the opportunity to observe, clean, assess and, where appropriate hand excavate, sample and record any exposed features and finds. In order to fulfil the requirements of this WSI, it may be necessary to halt the earth-moving activity to enable the archaeology to be recorded properly.

6.3 Plant or excavators shall not be operated in the immediate vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded and the archaeologist on site has given explicit permission for operations to recommence at that location.

13 RECORDING METHODOLOGY

7.1 If a base plan of intervention areas is available, the areas being monitored will be determined using this information. If a plan is not available, or the watching brief work involves monitoring of long linear works, interventions which are not mapped, or large open areas, the location of the monitoring will be determined using a hand-held GPS, which will provide accuracy to c.2m.

7.2 Unique context numbers will only be assigned if artefacts are retrieved, or stratigraphic relationships between archaeological deposits are discernible. In archaeologically 'sterile' areas, soil layers will be described, but no context numbers will be assigned. Where assigned, each context will be described in full on a pro forma context record sheet in accordance with the accepted context record conventions.

7.3 Archaeological deposits will be planned at a basic scale of 1:50, with individual features requiring greater detail being planned at a scale of 1:20. Larger scales will be utilised as appropriate. Cross-sections of features will be drawn to a basic scale of 1:10 or 1:20 depending on the size of the feature. All drawings will be related to Ordnance Datum. Where it aids interpretation, structural remains will also be recorded in elevation. All drawings will be drawn on inert materials. All drawings will adhere to accepted drawing conventions

7.4 Photographs of archaeological deposits and features will be taken. This will include general views of entire features and of details such as sections as considered necessary. The photographic register will comprise digital photographs. All site photography will adhere to accepted photographic record guidelines.

7.5 Areas which are inaccessible (e.g. for health and safety reasons) will be recorded as thoroughly as possible within the site constraints. In these instances, recording may be entirely photographic, with sketch drawings only.

7.6 All finds will be collected and handled following the guidance set out in the ClfA guidance for archaeological materials. Unstratified material will not be kept unless it is of exceptional intrinsic interest. Material discarded as a consequence of this policy will be described and quantified in the field. Finds of particular interest or fragility will be retrieved as Small Finds, and located on plans. Other finds, finds within the topsoil, and dense/discrete deposits of finds will be collected as Bulk Finds, from discrete contexts, bagged by material type. Any dense/discrete deposits will have their limits defined on the appropriate plan.

7.7 All artefacts and ecofacts will be appropriately packaged and stored under optimum conditions, as detailed in the RESCUE/UKIC publication *First Aid for Finds*, and recording systems must be compatible with the recipient museum. All finds that fall within the purview of the Treasure Act (1996) will be reported to HM Coroner according to the procedures outlined in the Act, after discussion with the client and the local authority.

7.8 A soil sampling programme will be undertaken for the recovery and identification of charred and waterlogged remains where suitable deposits are identified. The collection and processing of environmental samples will be undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidelines (Campbell, Moffatt and Straker 2011). Environmental and soil specialists will be consulted during the course of the evaluation with regard to the implementation of this sampling programme. Soil samples of approximately 30 litres for flotation (or 100% of the features if less than this volume) will be removed from selected contexts, using a combination of the judgement and systematic methodologies.

- **Judgement sampling** will involve the removal of samples from secure contexts which appear to present either good conditions for preservation (e.g. burning or waterlogging) or which are significant in terms of archaeological interpretation or stratigraphy. (Given the nature of an archaeological watching brief, it is anticipated that the implementation of a systematic sampling methodology will not be possible).

7.9 It is unlikely that any industrial activity has taken place on the site, but if any such activity is identified industrial samples and process residues will also be collected. Separate samples (c. 10ml) will be collected for micro-slugs (hammer-scale and spherical droplets) (Historic England 2015).

7.10 Other samples will be taken, as appropriate, in consultation with YAT specialists and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor, as appropriate (e.g. dendrochronology, soil micromorphology, monolith samples, C14, etc.). Samples will be taken for scientific dating where necessary for the development of subsequent mitigation strategies. Material removed from site will be stored in appropriate controlled environments.

7.11 In the event of human remains being discovered during the evaluation these will be left *in-situ*, covered and protected, in the first instance. The removal of human remains will only take place in compliance with environmental health regulations and following discussions with, and with the approval of, the Ministry of Justice. If human remains are identified, the Ministry of Justice and curator will be informed immediately. An osteoarchaeologist will be available to give advice on site.

- If **disarticulated** remains are encountered, these will be identified and quantified on

site. If trenches are being immediately backfilled, the remains will be left in the ground. If the excavations will remain open for any length of time, disarticulated remains will be removed and boxed, for immediate reburial by the Church.

- If **articulated** remains are encountered, these will be excavated in accordance with recognised guidelines (see 7.12) and retained for assessment.
- Any grave goods or coffin furniture will be retained for further assessment.

7.12 Where a licence is issued, all human skeletal remains must be properly removed in accordance with the terms of that licence. Where a licence is not issued, the treatment of human remains will be in accordance with the requirements of Civil Law, ClfA Technical Paper 13 (1993) and Historic England guidance (2005).

14 REPORT & ARCHIVE PREPARATION

8.1 Upon completion of the groundworks, a report will be prepared to include the following:

- a) A non-technical summary of the results of the work.
- b) An introduction which will include the planning reference number, grid reference and dates when the fieldwork took place.
- c) An account of the methodology and results of the operation, describing structural data, associated finds and environmental data.
- d) A selection of photographs and drawings, including an overall plan of the site accurately identifying the areas monitored.
- e) Specialist artefact and environmental reports as necessary.
- f) Details of archive location and destination (with accession number, where known), together with a catalogue of what is contained in that archive.
- g) A copy of the key OASIS form details
- h) Copies of the Brief and WSI
- i) Additional photographic images may be supplied on a CDROM appended to the report

8.2 Copies of the report will be submitted to the commissioning body and the HER/SMR (also in PDF format).

8.3 The requirements for archive preparation and deposition will be addressed and undertaken in a manner agreed with the recipient museum. In this instance Yorkshire Museum is recommended and an agreed allowance should be made for the curation and storage of this material.

8.4 Provision for the publication of results, as outlined in the Brief, will be made.

8.5 The owner of the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in the information and documentation arising from the work, would grant a licence to the County Council and the museum accepting the archive to use such documentation for their statutory functions and provide copies to third parties as an incidental to such functions. Under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), such documentation is required to be made available to enquirers if it meets the test of public interest. Any

information disclosure issues would be resolved between the client and the archaeological contractor before completion of the work. EIR requirements do not affect IPR.

15 HEALTH AND SAFETY

9.1 Health and safety issues will take priority over archaeological matters and all archaeologists will comply with relevant Health and Safety Legislation.

9.2 A Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the start of site works.

16 TIMETABLE & STAFFING

10.1 The timetable will be confirmed with Buckingham Group Contracting

10.2 Specialist staff available for this work are as follows:

- Human Remains - Malin Holst (York Osteoarchaeology Ltd)
- Palaeoenvironmental remains – PRS Ltd
- Head of Curatorial Services - Christine McDonnell
- Finds Researcher - Nicky Rogers
- Medieval Pottery Researcher - Anne Jenner
- Finds Officers – Nienke Van Doorn
- Archaeometallurgy & Industrial Residues – Dr Rod Mackenzie & Dr Roger Doonan
- Conservation – Ian Panter

17 MONITORING OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

11.1 As a minimum requirement, the City of York Archaeologist John Oxley will be given a minimum of one week's notice of work commencing on site, and will be afforded the opportunity to visit the site during and prior to completion of the on-site works so that the general stratigraphy of the site can be assessed. York Archaeological Trust will notify the City of York Archaeologist of any discoveries of archaeological significance so that site visits can be made, as necessary. Any changes to this agreed WSI will only be made in consultation with City of York Archaeologist.

18 COPYRIGHT

12.1 York Archaeological Trust retain the copyright on this document. It has been prepared expressly for Buckingham Group Contracting, and may not be passed to third parties for use or for the purpose of gathering quotations.

19 KEY REFERENCES

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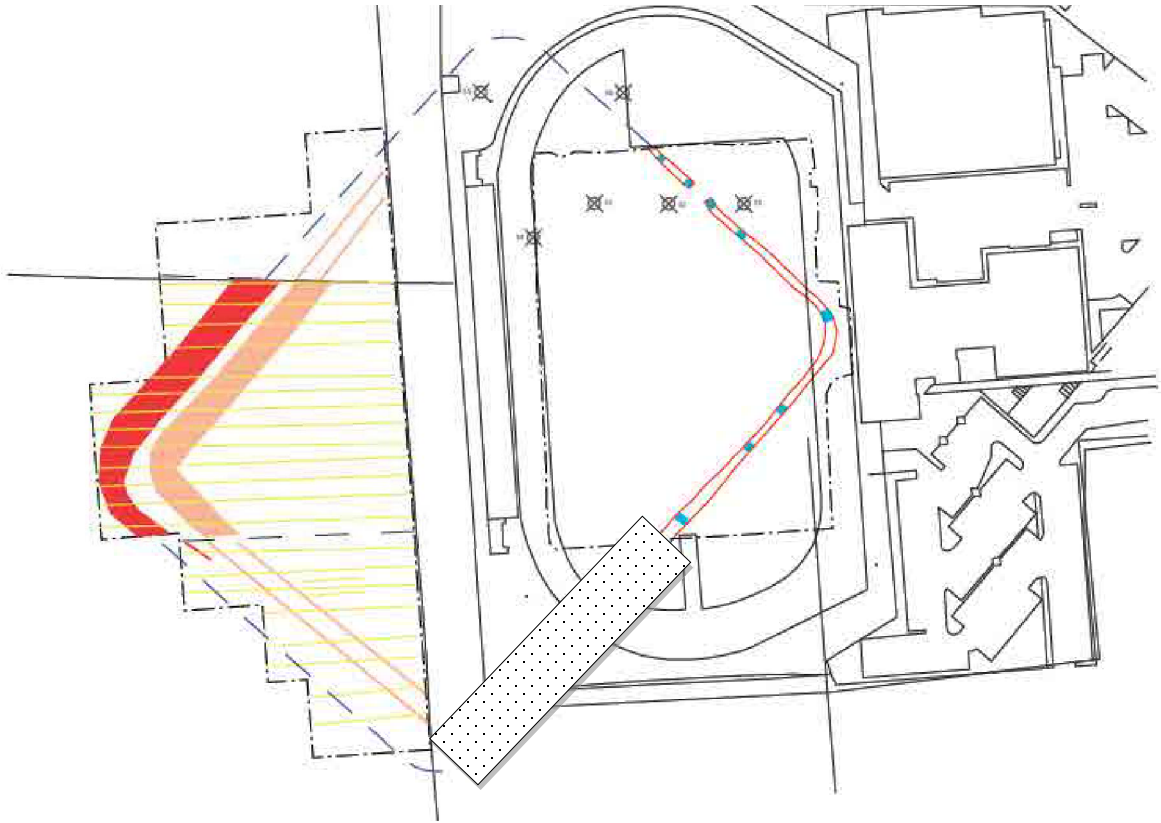
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For the latest Historic England guidance documents see:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/latest-guidance/>



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Illustration 1: Location of works to be monitored (in stippled box) with known Roman archaeology for reference.



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PLATES



Plate 1 Trench 1 Pre-excitation shot of Roman camp ditch, facing north east. Scale unit 500mm.

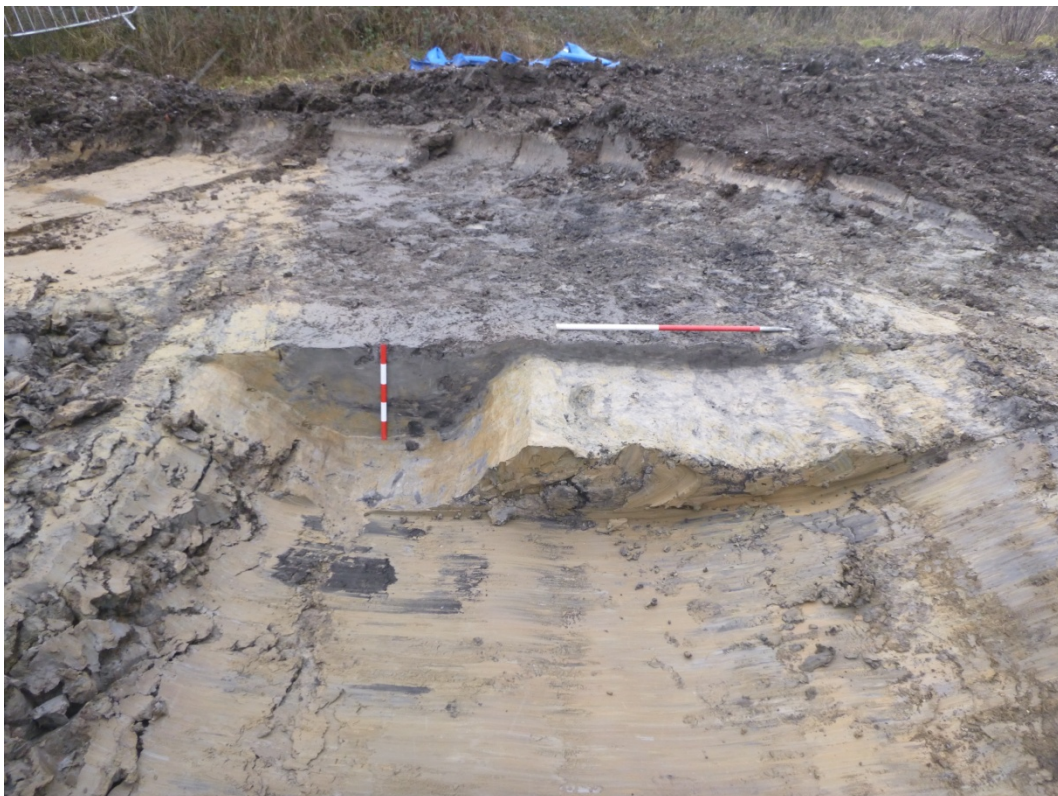


Plate 2 Post excavation shot of Roman camp ditch, facing south-west. Scale unit 100mm & 500mm.



Plate 3 Section of modern post-hole with remains of timber post, facing south-east. Scale unit 100mm.



Plate 4 Second machine slot through the Roman camp ditch, facing north-east.



Plate 5 Representative section of the Roman camp ditch within the foundation trenches, facing north-east. Scale unit 100mm



Figure 1 Site Location

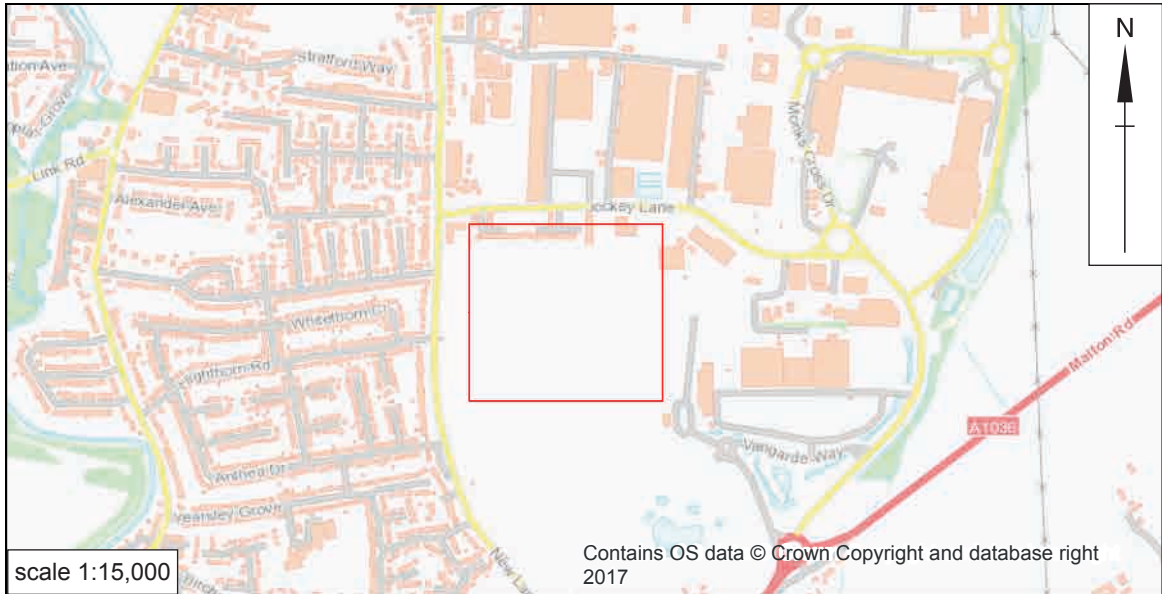


Figure 2 Works Location

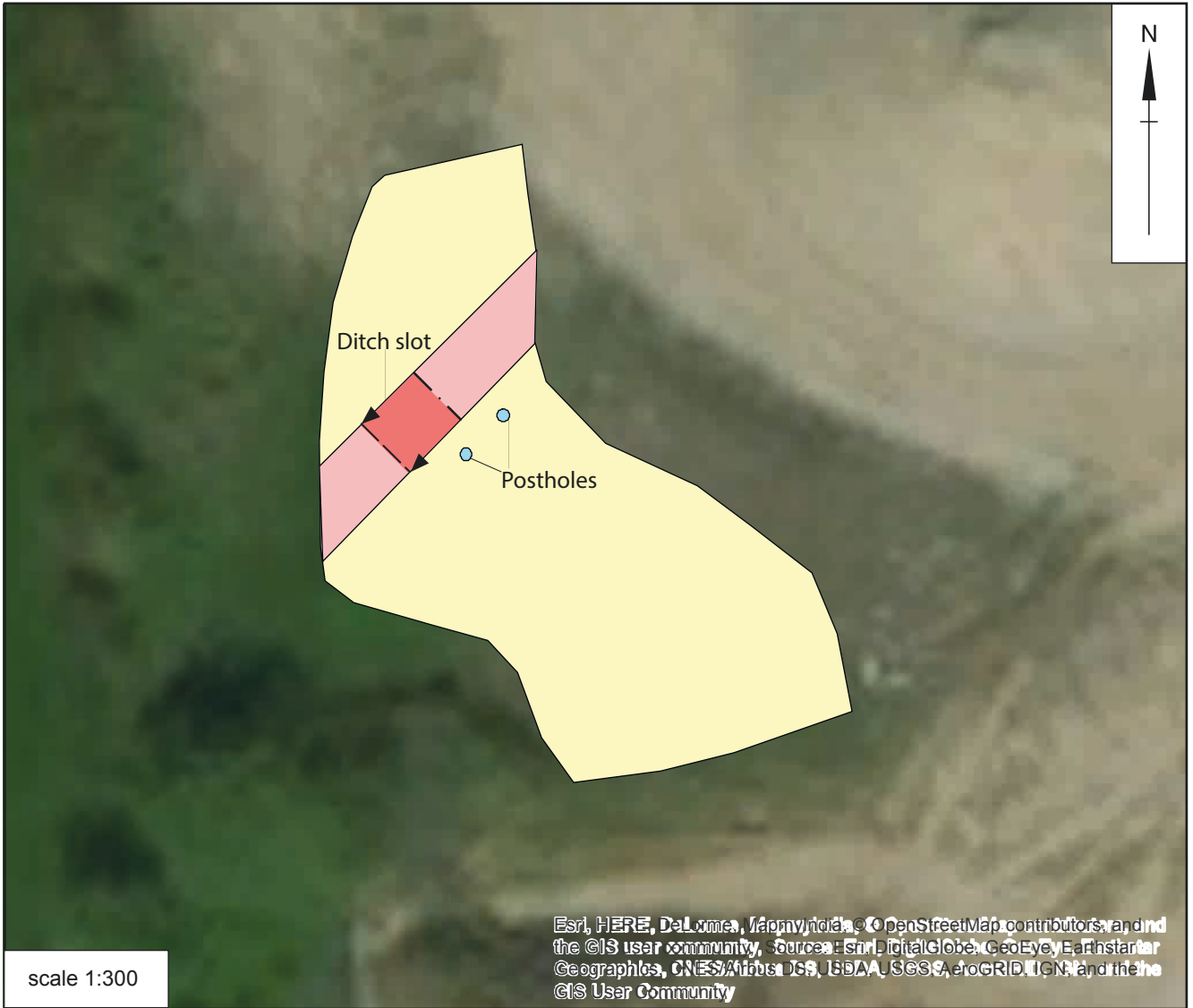


Figure 3 Works Location showing Trench 1 and location of features

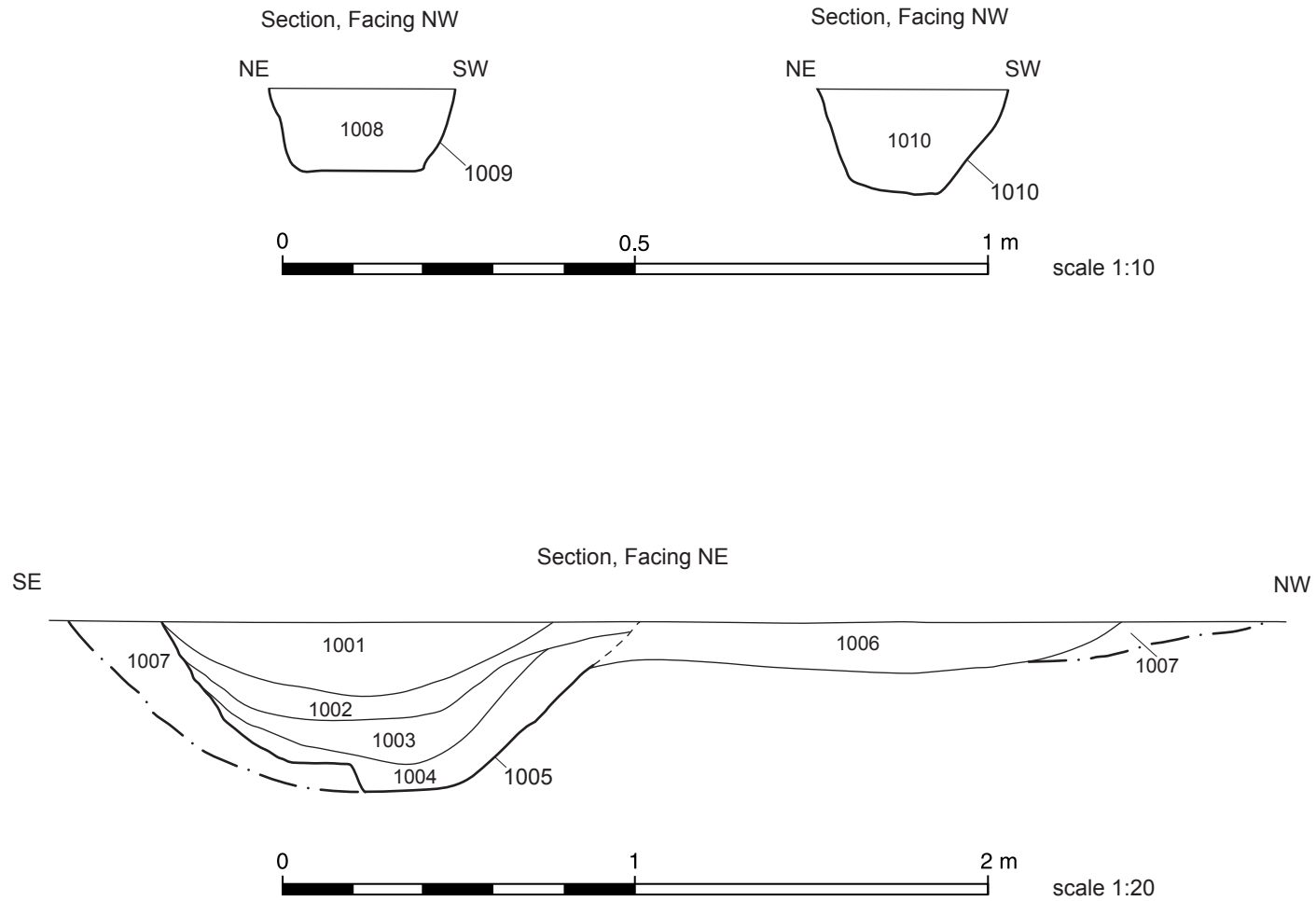


Figure 4 Section of 2 post-holes and the Roman camp ditch



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