

Metal detector survey and Archaeological
Evaluation, two proposed house sites, West Plean,
Stirling Council



Site 1 (Neuk of Hedge) from Site 2 (north of West Plean cottages) on north side of road



17th March 2013

Introduction (Illus 1)

A metal detector survey and archaeological evaluation on the sites of two new houses at West Plean, Stirling Council was carried out for Mrs Moira Stewart to satisfy the archaeological condition on the planning consent for these developments, as noted by Stirling Council's archaeological advisor in the conditions attached to Planning Applications 12/00408/PPP and 12/00409/PPP. The site evaluation was undertaken by the author on Monday 11th March 2013 (Site Code PLE01) and the detector survey was undertaken by the Scottish Artefact Recovery Group on Friday 8th March 2013 (Site Code PLE02), weather conditions were cold and overcast on the Friday and bright, cold and sunny with snow on the Monday.

Archaeological Background (Illus 2)

Site 1. Residential development at Land Some 45 Metres North West Of Neuk O'Hedge, Plean

The proposed development site lies directly over the line of the Roman Road between the Roman forts at Camelon and Doune (SMR 1085.12; 1085.14). It dates from the 1st century AD and was constructed on behalf of the Flavian Emperors by Agricola and was used across the Roman invasions and occupations of Scotland. The presence of the road as sub-surface feature has been confirmed by archaeological excavation immediately to the north-west of this site.

King Edward II of England used the same road in his march to Bannockburn in 1314 and it was also used during the Scottish civil war that culminated in the death of King James III at the Battle of Sauchieburn in 1488 and ultimately led to the coronation of his son James IVth. Indeed, the proposed development area is included in Historic Scotland's proposed designation for the site of the Battle of Sauchieburn in their Inventory of Historic Battlefields in Scotland.

The Roman Road will have been used repeatedly for successive invasions of Scotland and troop deployments across the central belt and north of the Forth and the above examples are merely the best known. It is likely that both the road and objects associated with troop movements may lie in the proposed development area. The proposed development has the potential to destroy that material.

Site 2 Residential development at Land Adjacent To North Of 4 West Plean Cottages, Plean

The proposed development site lies within the area included in Historic Scotland's proposed designation for the site of the Battle of Sauchieburn (1488) in their Inventory of Historic Battlefields in Scotland. The Battle of Sauchieburn a civil war between King James III and the supporters of his son the future King James IVth. James III died at the battle and was buried at Cambuskenneth Abbey. The proposed development area may contain objects associated with this battle, which would be damaged or destroyed by the development.

Land Some 45 Metres North West Of Neuk O'Hedge, Plean

Site Evaluation (Illus 3-5)

Five trenches were opened in the proposed development area to sample the presence or absence of deposits and features associated with the road line. They were located to avoid the position of several large trees and an active septic tank for a neighbouring house.

Trench 1 (Illus 6)

This trench lay at the western end of the site and measured 5m by 2m and ran on a NW-SE alignment. 0.90m of grey black silty clay and occasional stone and brick was revealed overlying a compact orange brown sandy clay and gravel (natural). No archaeological deposits or features were located.

Trench 2 (Illus 7)

This trench lay to the east of Trench 1 and also measured 5m by 2m and ran on a NW-SE alignment. 0.65m of grey black silty clay was located overlying a light brown silty clay and broken sandstone (natural). No archaeological deposits or features were located.

Trench 3 (Illus 8)

This trench lay at the northern end of the proposed development area and measured 5m by 2m and ran on a N-S alignment. 0.76m of grey black silty clay was located overlying brown clay and broken sandstone (natural). No archaeological deposits or features were located.

Trench 4 (Illus 9 and 10)

This trench lay at the southern end of the proposed development area and was laid out to cross the line of the Roman road as marked on the Ordnance Survey map (Illus *). It measured 5m by 2m and ran on a SW-NE alignment. 0.60m of grey brown silty clay was located overlying a brown clay (natural) and a mixed brown silty clay with patches of compressed gravel and small stones. This latter deposit had a well defined western edge and probably represents the road line. No finds were recovered.

Trench 5 (Illus 11, 12 and 13)

This trench lay to the north of Trench 4 and was also laid out to cross the road line. It measured 7m by 2m and ran on a SW-NE alignment. 0.60m of grey brown silty clay was located overlying a very compact layer of crushed black coal (500) 0.10m thick. 500 was removed to reveal a layer of grey silty clay (501) 0.10m thick. 501 was removed to reveal a further compact layer of crushed black coal (502) and occasional large stones. This sequence of layers of crushed coal and silty clays were very compact, had a defined eastern edge and probably represent the road line. A single piece of ceramic field drain was visible in layer 501 in the trench section suggesting that it is the later Post medieval surfaces of the road line that were encountered.

Conclusions

This site evaluation located the western and eastern edges and surfaces of the road line in Trenches 4 and 5 as predicted on the Ordnance Survey map. Trenches 1, 2 and 3 located no archaeological deposits or features. To avoid any disturbance to surviving archaeological deposits and features it is recommended that the site of the proposed new house is kept away from the road line otherwise further archaeological works in advance of development will be required. If any of the proposed new services for the house cross the road it is recommended that they are archaeologically monitored. The final decision on the need for further work however rests with Stirling Council's archaeologist.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Alastair the machine driver for his help with this evaluation.

Land Adjacent To North Of 4 West Plean Cottages, Plean

Metal Detector Survey (Illus 1, 2, 14-16)

The areas of the proposed two house sites to the north of West Plean Cottages were detected by two members of the Scottish Artefact Recovery Group under the supervision of the author.

Results

Of the 23 find spots located by the metal detectors only two were of any interest producing a silver love token of William III (dated to 1697) and an abraded Charles I Turner or Bodle (dated to the 1640's). The remaining 21 find spots produced either pieces of modern scrap iron, aluminium foil or anthracite. Nothing relating to the Battle Field of Sauchieburn was located.

William III love token (Illus 17)

The giving of a silver coin (often very worn) as a token of love was very common in the past. In order for the coin to take on the properties of an amulet, and to prevent it from being used for its original purpose, it was bowed or bent in half. Many of these bowed or crooked coins have been found on farmland, and they seem particularly prolific where fairs were held. In the past, fairs or similar events of this type, were the only occasions when large numbers of people collected together, and perhaps the only chance in country areas for young people to meet.

Charles I Turner or Bodle (Illus 18)

Turner coins (or Bodles) were worth twopence Scots and large numbers were issued in the 1640s. The mint at Edinburgh used machinery to strike the coins, an advance on the hand-hammered issues of previous reigns. Copper turners were the only coins minted during the Civil War.

Conclusions

Following the metal detector survey of the two proposed house sites the author feels that nothing was located to justify the need for any further work on either of the sites.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Lesley and Carol of the Scottish Artefact Recovery Group for their help with this metal detector survey.

Illustration List

Illustration 1 Site Locations marked in red (based on Ordnance Survey map Crown Copyright 2013. All Rights Reserved. Licence number 100049628)

Illustration 2 Line of Roman road as marked on 1861 Ordnance Survey map, red dot marks location of site 1, green dot is site 2. (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

Illustration 3 Trench locations at site North West of Neuk o' Hedge (road line is black line indicated by red arrow)

Illustration 4 Site 1 looking South West

Illustration 5 Site 1 looking North

Illustration 6 Trench 1 looking north showing natural brown clay below grey brown silty clay

Illustration 7 Trench 2 looking south showing natural brown clay and stones below grey brown silty clay

Illustration 8 Trench 3 looking south east showing natural brown clay below grey brown silty clay

Illustration 9 Trench 4 looking east showing edge of visible road line (marked with red arrows)

Illustration 10 Trench 4 Closer view of road surface and western edge looking west

Illustration 11 Trench 5 looking north west

Illustration 12 Trench 5 crushed coal and occasional stones in road surface at west end

Illustration 13 Trench 5 showing sequence of road surfaces in trench section looking south

Illustration 14 Site 2 metal detected find spots showing location of William III love token (A) and Charles I Turner or Bodle (B)

Illustration 15 General view of site prior to metal detecting (Ranging Rods indicate boundary of development area)

Illustration 16 Metal detecting in progress looking North

Illustration 17 Charles III Love Token dated to 1697

Illustration 18 Charles I Turner or Bodle coin dated to 1640's (very abraded but crown is just visible at point marked with red arrow)

Discovery & Excavation in Scotland Entry

| | |
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| LOCAL AUTHORITY: | Stirling Council |
| PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME: | Land west of Neuk o'Hedge, West Plean and Land North of West Plean Cottages, West Plean |
| PROJECT CODE: | PLE01 and PLE02 |
| PARISH: | St Ninians |
| NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR(S): | Derek Hall |
| NAME OF ORGANISATION: | Derek Hall, archaeologist and ceramic specialist |
| TYPE(S) OF PROJECT: | Archaeological Evaluation and metal detector survey |
| NMRS NO(S): | NS88NW 42 |
| SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S): | Roman road Camelon-Ardoch-Strageath-Cargill Battlefield of Sauchieburn |
| SIGNIFICANT FINDS: | Charles I Turner or Bodle and William III Love Token |
| NGR (2 letters, 6 figures) | Site 1 – NS 814 872 Site 2 – NS 814 873 |
| START DATE | 8th March 2013 |
| END DATE | 11th March 2013 |
| PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.) | None |
| MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields) | Two proposed housing sites at West Plean were investigated by evaluation and metal detector survey respectively. The site evaluation (Site 1) located the line of the Roman and later road line as marked by the Ordnance Survey. The metal detector survey (Site 2) found nothing associated with the Battle of Sauchieburn but did find two 17th Century coins (A William III Love Token and a Charles I Turner or Bodle). |
| PROPOSED FUTURE WORK: | None |
| SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY: | Mrs Moira Stewart |
| CAPTIONS FOR ILLUSTRS | N/A |
| ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR: | 34 Glenfarg Terrace, Perth, PH2 0AP |
| ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended) | NMRS |
| EMAIL ADDRESS: | Derek.hall1@blueyonder.co.uk |

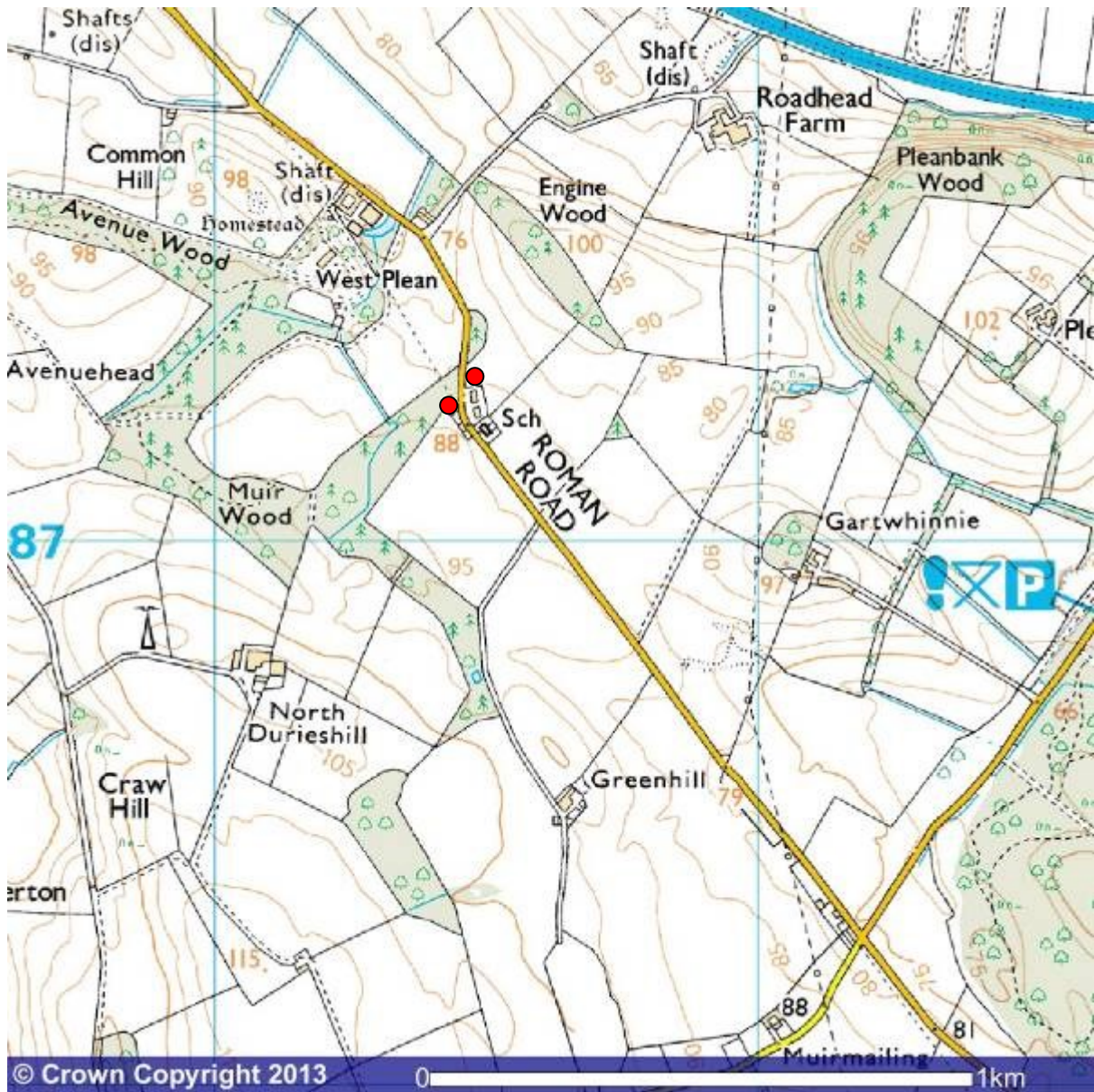


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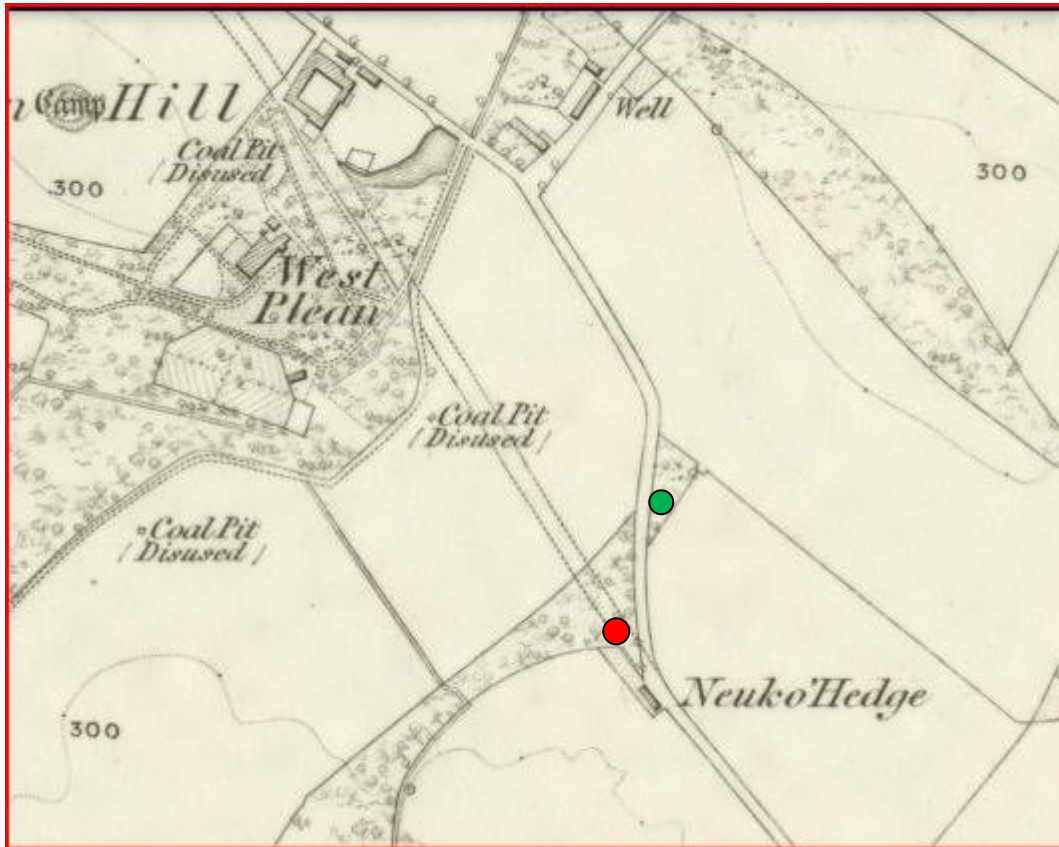


Illustration 2 Line of Roman road as marked on 1861 Ordnance Survey map, red dot marks location of site 1, green dot is site 2. (© Trustees of National Library of Scotland)

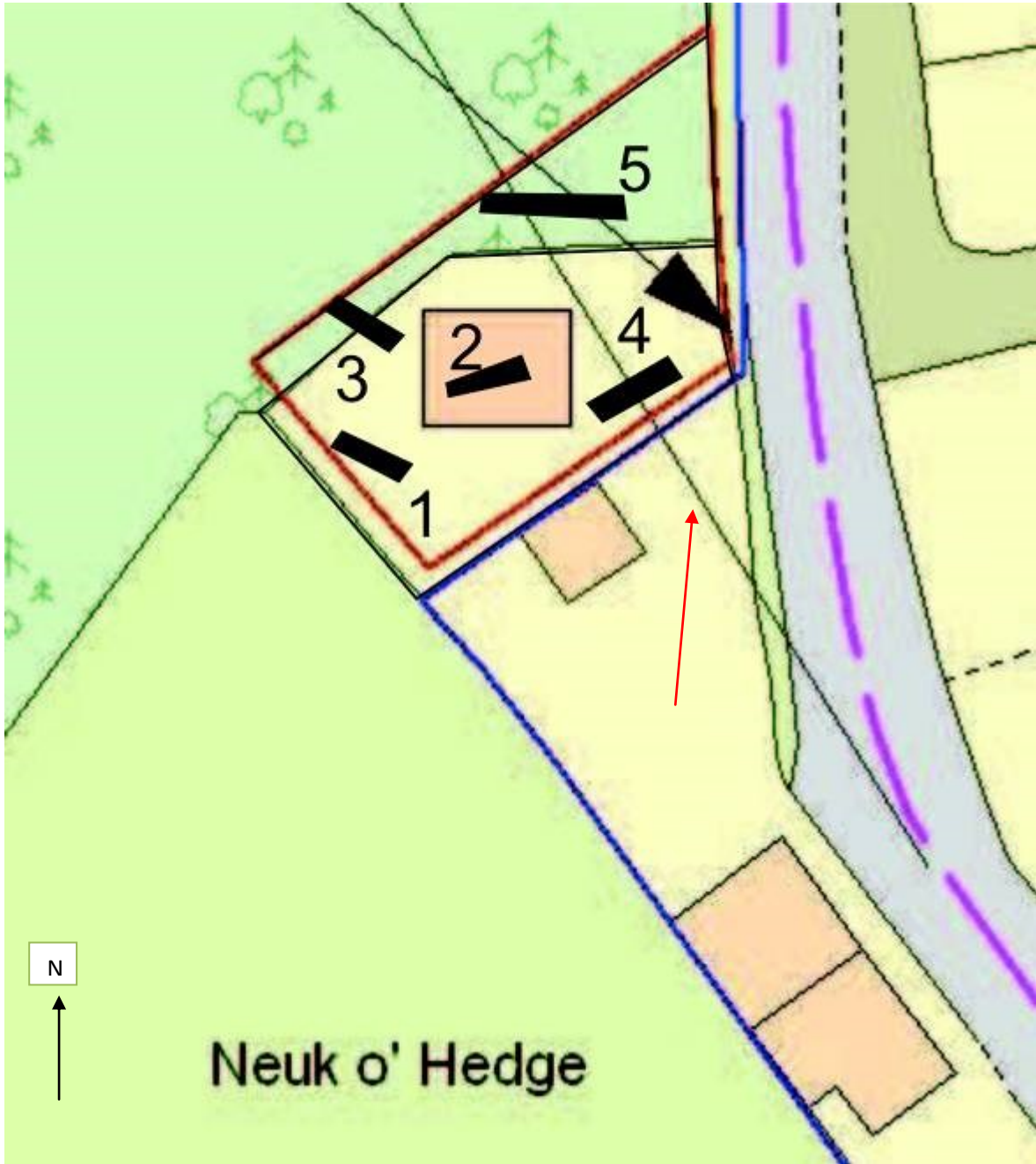


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Illustration 5 Site 1 looking North



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Illustration 7 Trench 2 looking south showing natural brown clay and stones below grey brown silty clay



Illustration 8 Trench 3 looking south east showing natural brown clay below grey brown silty clay



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Illustration 10 Trench 4 Closer view of road surface and western edge (red arrows) looking west



Illustration 11 Trench 5 looking north west



Illustration 12 Trench 5 crushed coal and occasional stones in road surface at west end (red arrows mark edge of road)



Illustration 13 Trench 5 showing sequence of road surfaces in trench section looking south

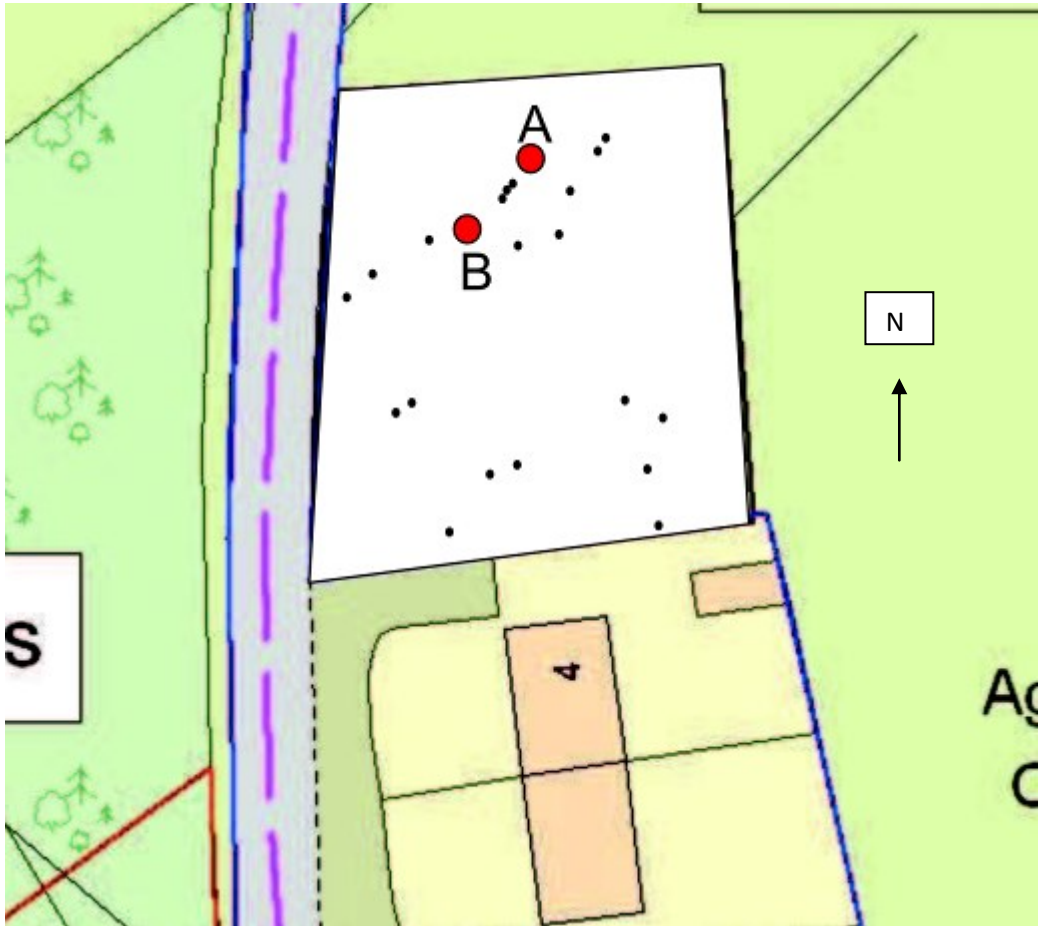


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