



29 CHURCH ST RIBCHESTER, LANCASHIRE

Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology North

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MR R MILNES

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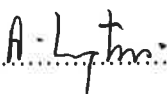
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SUMMARY

Both Listed Building Consent and planning permission (3/2010/0090 & 3/2010/0091) has been granted by Ribble Valley Borough Council for the demolition of existing rear out-buildings and construction of a new extension at 29 Church Street, Ribchester (SD 6497 3528), together with internal alterations and general repairs to update the house to modern living requirements/standards (Fig 1).

Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the area, the site lies within the limits of Ribchester Roman fort and associated settlement (Ancient Monument No 14255), Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS) recommended that any groundworks required as part of the proposed development should be the subject of an archaeological watching brief. This work now forms a condition of both the listed building consent and planning permission.

Ivan Wilson of IWA Architects Ltd, acting on behalf of Mr R Milnes, contacted Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) with regards to undertaking the watching brief. Following submission of a quote, OA North was commissioned to carry out the work, which took place on 23rd March 2011.

The groundwork undertaken on this date consisted of the excavation of a service trench 0.5m wide and 0.5m deep, on the eastern and northern sides of the building, excavated through an area measuring 22m by 17m. Some work had been undertaken removing a layer of gravel and concrete along the route of the trench prior to the watching brief, therefore the remains of a cobbled area associated with the building could be seen on the surface. The cobbles appeared in intermittent patches along the length of the trench (removal of the concrete had evidently impacted on the cobbles beneath) but possibly would have formed the main ground level to the rear of the property.

Beneath the cobbled surface was a sandy deposit filled with smaller pebbles, this was presumably the bedding layer for the cobbles to be laid upon, some fragments of post-medieval pottery were evident in this deposit. Underlying the sand was a more compacted clay deposit, rich in post-medieval pottery (Plate 4), this deposit was not removed in its entirety as an adequate depth for the service trench was reached while within it, excavation halted at depth of 0.70m.

No deposits of archaeological significance were revealed and the limited assemblage of finds has not been retained. Following the results of the watching brief, no further work is recommended.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Ivan Wilson of IWA Architects Ltd for commissioning the work. Aiden Parker undertook the watching brief and also wrote the report. Mark Tidmarsh produced the drawings. Alison Plummer managed the project and Alan Lupton edited the report.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Both Listed Building Consent and planning permission (3/2010/0090 & 3/2010/0091) has been granted by Ribble Valley Borough Council for the demolition of existing rear out-buildings and construction of a new extension at 29 Church Street, Ribchester (SD 6497 3528), together with internal alterations and general repairs to update the house to modern living requirements/standards (Fig 1).
- 1.1.2 Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the area, the site lies within the limits of Ribchester Roman fort and associated settlement (Ancient Monument No 14255), Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS) recommended that any groundworks required as part of the proposed development should be the subject of an archaeological watching brief. This work now forms a condition of both the listed building consent and planning permission.
- 1.1.3 Ivan Wilson of IWA Architects Ltd, acting on behalf of Mr R Milnes, contacted Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) with regards to undertaking the watching brief. Following submission of a quote, OA North was commissioned to carry out the work.



Plate 1: the rear of 29 Church Street during excavation

1.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 **Site Location:** 29 Church St is located on Church Street on the northern bank of the river Ribble (NGR SD 6497 3528) in the village of Ribchester in central Lancashire (Fig 1), roughly mid-way between the central Pennine uplands and the Irish Sea.
- 1.2.2 **Geology:** the solid geology around Ribchester is dominated by Sabden shales of the Millstone Grit Group masked by thick (up to 50m to rockhead) boulder clay deposits (Aitkenhead *et al* 1992). Ribchester town and the fort are thought to stand on deposits of a second terrace of the Ribble (*ibid*) which rises to *c* 3-4m above the floodplain. This terrace formation is being actively eroded with about one third of the area of the fort lost to fluvial processes to date. Soils of the second terrace comprise 0.6-0.8m of unmottled sandy loams overlying slightly mottled sandy clay loams.

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.3.1 Number 29 Church Street forms part of a town house or pair of houses (along with no. 28), and is a grade II Listed Building (Lancashire Historic Environment Record PRN 18053), dated 1745. The house has already been the subject of some archaeological recording (*29 Church Street, Ribchester: Historic Building Assessment*, Stephen Haigh, October 2009).
- 1.3.2 The application site lies *c* 50m north, and *c* 120m west of the Scheduled Areas of the Roman fort and *vicus* (civilian settlement) at Ribchester (Ancient Monument No. 14255). A large number of finds dating to the Roman period have been found close by, including pottery from watching briefs at Church Street garage in 1995 (PRN 1847) and 49 Church Street in 1997 (PRN 3974), structural remains from the 1976 excavation at the Black Bull in 1976 (PRN 4216) and the evaluation at the Garden Centre in 1983 (PRN 25436), as well as a metalled road surface and indications of industrial use at the Pope Croft evaluation in 1997 (PRN 11886). Church Road also follows the line of the Roman road from Ribchester to Galgate (Margary 704 – PRN 26147).

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken by Aidan Parker on 23rd March 2011, in accordance with the LCAS specification (*Appendix 1*) for a programme of archaeological work at 29 Church Street, Ribchester and OA North standards (which in turn meet those of Historic England (2015), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014a, b and c) SCAUM (1997) and United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990, 1998)).
- 2.2.2 The groundwork undertaken on this date consisted of the excavation of a service trench 0.5m wide and 0.5m deep, on the eastern and northern sides of the building, excavated through an area measuring 22m by 17m.

RESULTS

3.1 RESULTS

- 3.1.1 Some work had been undertaken removing a layer of gravel and concrete along the route of the trench prior to the watching brief, therefore the remains of a cobbled area associated with the building could be seen on the surface (Plate 3). The cobbles appeared in intermittent patches along the length of the trench (removal of the concrete had evidently impacted on the cobbles beneath) but possibly would have formed the main ground level to the rear of the property.
- 3.1.2 Beneath the cobbled surface was a sandy deposit filled with smaller pebbles, this was presumably the bedding layer for the cobbles to be laid upon (Plate 4), some fragments of post-medieval pottery were evident in this deposit
- 3.1.3 Underlying the sand was a more compacted clay deposit, rich in post-medieval pottery (Plate 4), this deposit was not removed in its entirety as an adequate depth for the service trench was reached while within it, excavation halted at depth of 0.70m.



Plate 2: the rear of 29 Church Street after excavation



Plate 3: Cobbled yard surface at rear of 29 Church Street

Plate 4: West-facing sample section of service trench showing various



deposits

3.2 FINDS

- 3.2.1 Finds consisted of various fragments of nineteenth and twentieth century post-medieval pottery, slipware and tobacco pipe fragments. None have been retained

4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 A watching brief was undertaken on footings to the rear of 29 Church St, Ribchester on 23rd March 2011. No deposits of archaeological significance were revealed and the limited assemblage of finds has not been retained. Following the results of the watching brief, no further work is recommended.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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6 ILLUSTRATIONS

6.1 LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:

Figure 2:

6.2 LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: the rear of 29 Church Street during excavation

Plate 2: the rear of 29 Church Street after excavation

Plate 3: Cobbled yard surface at rear of 29 Church Street

Plate 4: West-facing sample section of service trench showing various deposits

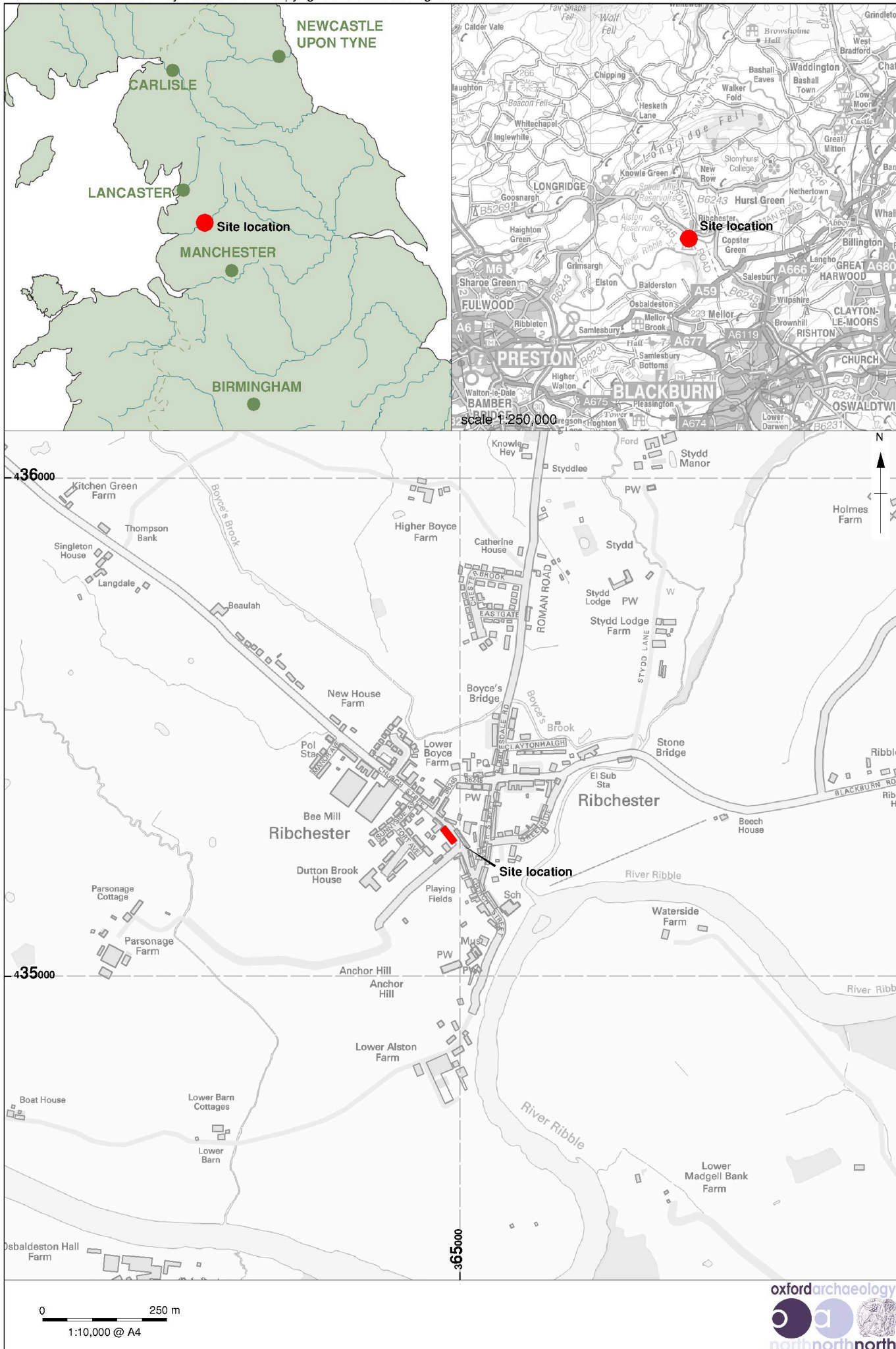


Figure 1: Site location

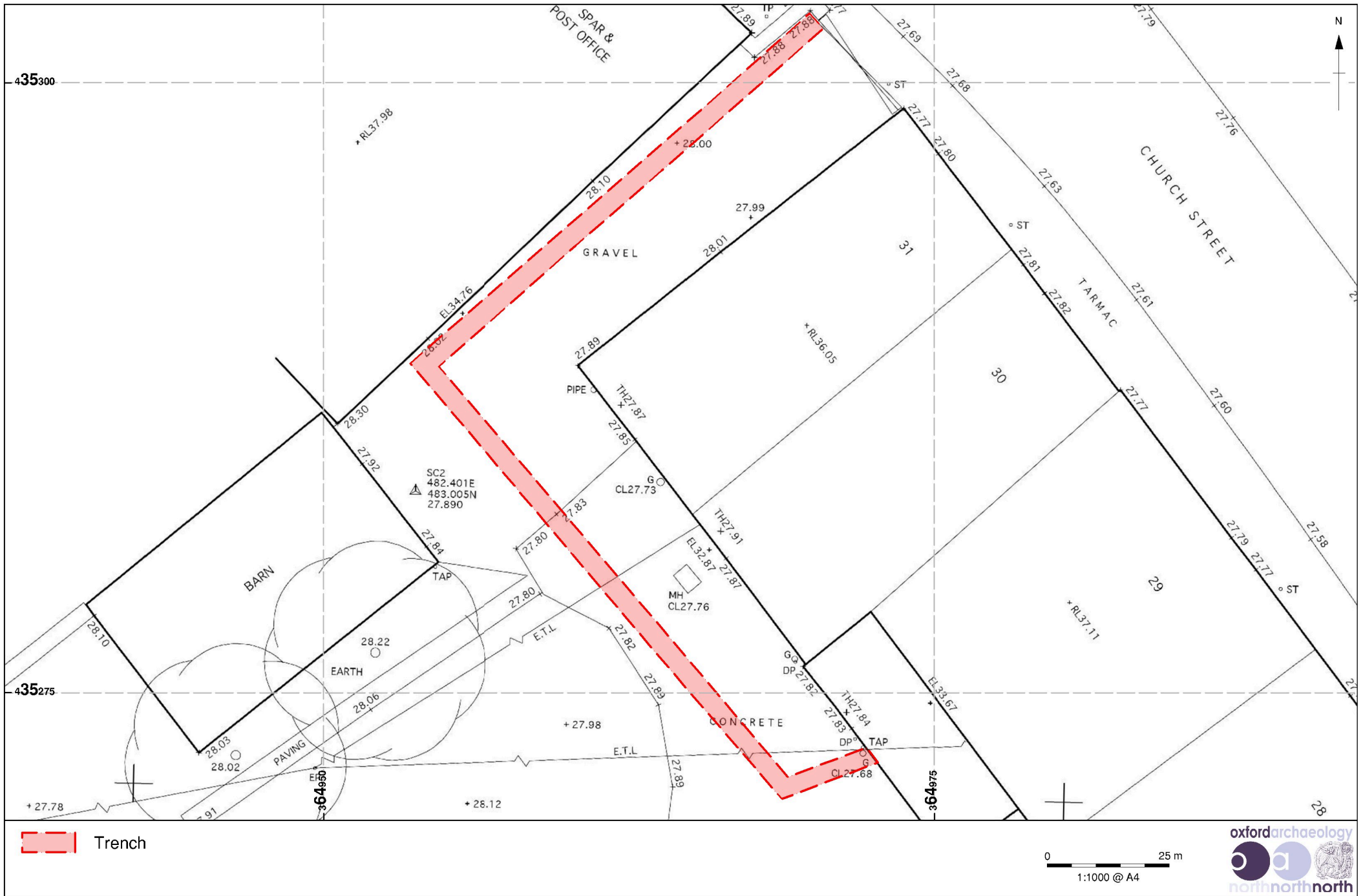


Figure 2: Location of service trench

APPENDIX 1: SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT 29 CHURCH STREET, RIBCHESTER

Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at 29 Church Street, Ribchester (SD 6497 3528)

Prepared on behalf of Ribble Valley Borough Council for Mr R. Milnes, applicant

1. Introduction

1.1 Both Listed Building Consent and planning permission (3/2010/0090 & 3/2010/0091) has been granted by Ribble Valley Borough Council for the demolition of existing rear out-buildings and construction of new extension; internal alterations and general repairs to update house to modern living requirements/standards at 29 Church Street, Ribchester.

1.2 Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the area, the site lies within the limits of Ribchester Roman fort and associated settlement, Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS) recommended that any groundworks required as part of the proposed development should be the subject of an archaeological watching brief. This work now forms a condition of both the listed building consent and planning permission.

2. Archaeological Interest

2.1 Number 29 Church Street forms part of a town house or pair of houses (along with no. 28), and is a grade II Listed Building (Lancashire Historic Environment Record PRN 18053), dated 1745. The house has already been the subject of some archaeological recording (*29 Church Street, Ribchester: Historic Building Assessment*, Stephen Haigh, October 2009).

2.2 The application site lies *c.* 50m north, and *c.* 120m west of the Scheduled Areas of the Roman fort and vicus (civilian settlement) at Ribchester (Ancient Monument No. 14255). A large number of finds dating to the Roman period have been found close by, including pottery from watching briefs at Church Street garage in 1995 (PRN 1847) and 49 Church Street in 1997 (PRN 3974), structural remains from the 1976 excavation at the Black Bull in 1976 (PRN 4216) and the evaluation at the Garden Centre in 1983 (PRN 25436), as well as a metalled road surface and indications of industrial use at the Pope Croft evaluation in 1997 (PRN 11886). Church Road also follows the line of the Roman road from Ribchester to Galgate (Margary 704 – PRN 26147).

2.3 There is therefore a high potential for any ground disturbance required as part of the current proposals to encounter archaeological deposits associated with settlement of the Roman period.

3. General Considerations

3.1 Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor should confirm in writing adherence to this specification, or state (with

reasons) any proposals to vary the specification. Should the contractor wish to vary the specification, then written confirmation of the agreement of LCAS to any variations is required prior to work commencing. The archaeologist carrying out the watching brief should be appropriately qualified and experienced. Any technical queries arising from the specification detailed below should be addressed to LCAS *without delay*.

4. Fieldwork Methodology

4.1 An archaeologist should be present on site during the excavation of any area below a depth of 0.15m. (approximately six inches) in the area of development. This applies to any proposed new internal underfloor heating, excavation for the proposed new extension and new garage and car parking (as mentioned in IWA Architects Design and Access Statement). The archaeologist should view the area as it is being dug and any trench sections after excavation has been completed. Where archaeology is judged to be present, the excavated area should be rapidly cleaned and the need for further work assessed. Where appropriate, any features and finds should then be quickly hand excavated, sampled and recorded, within the confines of the excavated trench.

4.2 Excavated soil should be searched as practicable for finds. The presence and nature of 19th and 20th century material should be noted (quantified and summarily described) but finds of this date need not be retained for processing. Finds judged to be 18th-century in date or earlier should be retained.

4.3 The actual areas of ground disturbance, and any features of possible archaeological concern noted within these areas, should be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, scale drawings (including height above O.D.) and written description sufficient to permit the preparation of a report on the site.

4.4 The intention of the archaeological watching brief is not to unduly delay the work of other contractors on site. This work should not, therefore prejudice the progress of the main or subsidiary contractor's work, except by prior agreement and on-site co-operation.

4.5 The archaeologist on site will naturally operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations. In this case, where archaeological work is carried out at the same time as the work of other contractors, regard should also be taken of any reasonable additional constraints that these contractors may impose. This work may require the preparation of a Risk Assessment of the site, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations. LCAS and its officers cannot be held responsible for any accidents that may occur to outside contractors engaged to undertake this survey while attempting to conform to this specification.

5. Unexpectedly Significant or Complex Discoveries

5.1 Should there be, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries made that warrant more detailed recording than possible within the terms of this specification, then the archaeological contractor is to urgently contact LCAS with the relevant information to enable the matter to be resolved with the developer.

5.2 Any human remains that are discovered must initially be left in-situ, covered and protected. If removal is necessary, this must comply with the relevant legislation, any Home Office and local environmental health regulations and English Heritage's and The Church of England's *Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England* (2005) where relevant.

5.3 The terms of the Treasure Act, 1996 must be followed with regard to any finds, which might fall within its purview. Any such finds must be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner as required by the procedures laid down in the "Code of Practice". Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures must be taken to protect the finds from theft.

6. Monitoring

6.1 The recording exercise will be monitored as necessary and practicable by LCAS in its role as 'curator' of the county's archaeology. LCAS should receive as much notice as possible in writing (and certainly not less than one week) of the intention to start the watching brief. A copy of the archaeological contractor's risk assessment of the site should accompany the notification.

7. Post-Excavation/Post-Recording Work and Report Preparation

7.1 On completion of the fieldwork, any samples shall be processed and all finds shall be cleaned, identified, assessed, dated (if possible), marked (if appropriate) and properly packed and stored in accordance with the requirements of national guidelines. A fully indexed field archive shall be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and fully labelled photographs. Labelling should be in indelible ink on the *back* of the print and should include film and frame number; date recorded and photographer's name; name and address of site; national grid reference. Photographic prints should be mounted in appropriate archivally-stable sleeves. A quantified index to the field archive should form an appendix to the report. The original archive is to accompany the deposition of any finds, providing the landowner agrees to the deposition of finds in a publicly accessible archive (see Section 8.1 below).

7.2 A report should be produced to provide background information, a summary of the works carried out, a description and separate interpretation of any features and finds identified. Details of the report's style and format are to be determined by the archaeological contractor, but it should include a full bibliography, a quantified index to the site archive and as an appendix, a copy of this specification. The report illustrations should include, as a minimum, a

location map at a reasonable scale plus any drawings and photographs.

7.3 If nothing of archaeological interest is identified during the course of the watching brief, then a summary report will be adequate, as long as sufficient details are supplied for HE purposes. Illustrations would not be required, although it would be anticipated that black and white prints would form part of the archival record. A summary record should include: (1) details of the commissioning body; (2) the nature of the development and resultant ground disturbance; (3) the approximate position of any ground disturbance viewed with relation to adjacent existing fixed points; (4) the

date(s) of fieldwork; (5) name(s) of fieldworker(s); (6) written observations on the nature and depth of deposits observed (this may include annotated sketch sections); (7) the conditions under which they were observed (for example, details of weather conditions, ease of access and views, attitude of other organisations *etc.*); (8) a quantified index to the field archive; (9) details of the archives present location and intended deposition and (10) a copy of this specification.

7.4 The report should be produced within three weeks of completion of the fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed with LCAS. Copies of the report should be supplied to the client and the Lancashire HER. The report will become publicly accessible once deposited with the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record.

7.5 Archaeological contractors must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact Lancashire HER prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the HER, Lancashire HER may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer (Ken Davies) at Lancashire HER.

8. Deposition of Archive

8.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the archaeological contractor must contact the relevant District museum archaeological curator in writing (copied to LCAS) to determine the museum's requirements for the deposition of an excavation archive. In this case the contact is either Patrick Tostevin, Curator, Ribchester Museum, Riverside, Ribchester, PR3 3XS, tel: 01254 878261 or Edmund Southworth, Director, Lancashire Museum Services, Stanley Street, Preston, PR1 4YP; telephone 01772 534075, fax: 01772 534079

8.2 It is the policy of the Museum of Lancashire to accept complete excavation archives, including primary site records and research archives and finds, from all excavations carried out in the County, which it serves.

8.3 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to endeavour to obtain consent of the landowner, in writing, to the deposition of finds with the Museum of Lancashire.

8.4 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to meet the Museum of Lancashire's requirements with regard to the preparation of fieldwork archives for deposition.

8.5 The museums officer named in 8.1 above should be notified in writing of the commencement of fieldwork at the same time as the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record.

9. Further Details

9.1 Any queries about the contents of the specification should be addressed to Lancashire County Archaeology Service, Lancashire County Council, Highways &

Environmental Management, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston PPR1 8RD Tel
01772 531734, fax 01772 533423

10. Valid period of specification

10.1 This specification will remain valid for up to one year from the date of issue. After that time it may need to be revised to take into account new discoveries, changes in policy or the introduction of new working practices or techniques.

Lancashire County Archaeology Service September 2010

Douglas Moir

Planning Officer (Archaeology)

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