

LANCASTER  
UNIVERSITY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
UNIT



August 1993

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Dowbridge Close,  
Kirkham,  
Lancashire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Commissioned by: **Paul Leech Associates**

Funded by: **Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde Health Authority**

Dowbridge Close,  
Kirkham,  
Lancashire

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Archaeological Evaluation

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*With contributions  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Lancaster University Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Paul Leech Associates, on behalf of Wyre and Fylde Health Authority, to undertake an archaeological evaluation on the proposed redevelopment site at Dowbridge Close, Kirkham. The presence of a Roman fort at Kirkham had long been recognised and the discovery of Roman material in the vicinity of Dowbridge Close has led to suggestions that the area of Dowbridge presently occupies the precise location of the fort.

The evaluation comprised a desk-based search of the existing documentary sources pertaining to the Dowbridge area, carried out in conjunction with a series of seven trial trenches which were located in the areas which were to be directly affected during the redevelopment.

The desk-based search revealed a long history of archaeological investigation in the area culminating in a series of excavations being carried out in the 1960s and a small excavation undertaken in 1985, both of which identified substantial Roman remains in the area of Dowbridge and Myrtle Drive.

The present archaeological evaluation also identified substantial Roman remains within the area of the proposed redevelopment site at Dowbridge Close. At least one, and possibly a second, large east-west aligned ditch was identified in Plot 2, the former measuring 2.50m in width and 1.50m in depth. Within Plot 3 the potential remains of Roman timber buildings were revealed and in Plot 1 a large sandstone wall of Roman date was discovered, measuring 1.50m in width.

The remains were substantial enough to conclude that a significant Roman military defensive centre occupied the area. The fort may have had, to the south, an extramural civilian settlement, and there is some evidence of a change of alignment within it during its occupation. The whole area has suffered considerably through modern disturbance and only the more robust or large negative features (the ditches) survive in any considerable form.

Whilst of great importance to the understanding of the Roman occupation of the North West of England, the site has suffered enough modern disturbance to remove the need for the statutory protection of the remains. The modern disturbance, however, does not preclude the need for a thorough investigation of the site by open area excavation, should planning permission be granted. Furthermore, in the event of the land being sold without development permission, an agreement should be reached to ensure that archaeological work be undertaken prior to any ground disturbance; this would include the laying of mains, the planting of trees and the erection of fences.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This final report has been produced as a result of the hard work of numerous people. A great deal of thanks must go to Mr Jonathan Tulie and Kevin Bamber, both of whom displayed a deftness of touch with a mechanical excavator that proved invaluable. The help of Andy Brough, whose contacts in the world of mechanical excavation were indispensable, is also greatly appreciated. Thanks must go to all those who assisted in the field and in the office. The information and advice supplied by Mr Ben Edwards, the Lancashire County Archaeologist, Mr Peter Iles, the County Archaeological Curator, and Dr David Shotter of Lancaster University was greatly appreciated. Thanks must go to Mr Paul Leech for all his help with information and plans. Finally, thanks must go to the residents of Dowbridge Close, for their tolerance, particularly those night-nurses whose day off was shattered by the excavation of Trench 7, outside their front door.

### Project Staff

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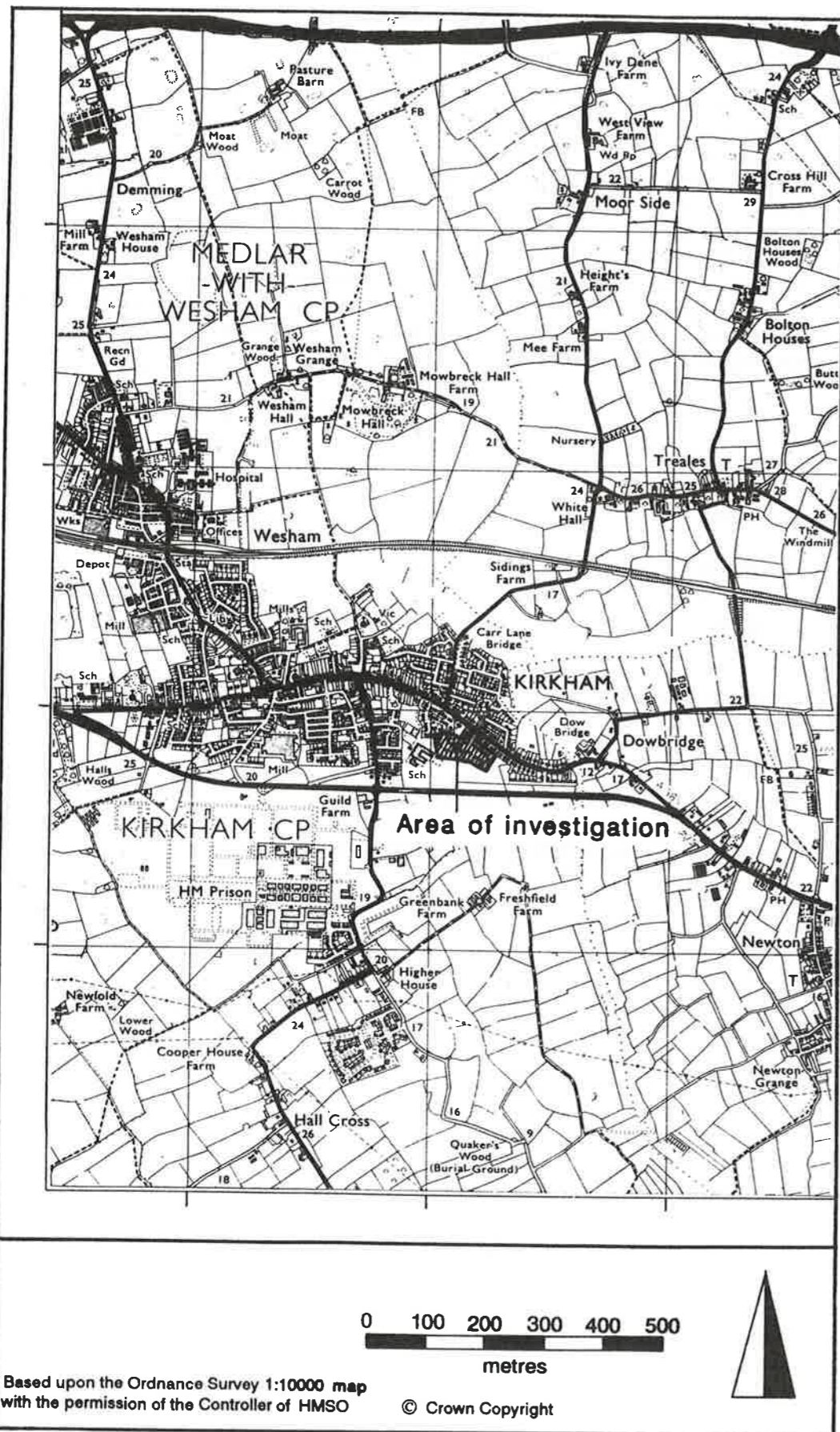


Fig 1 Site location plan

### INTRODUCTION

The proposed development site at Dowbridge Close, Kirkham, was considered by the County Archaeological Curator, Mr P Iles, to require an archaeological evaluation in advance of the determination of a planning application for redevelopment. The work was undertaken by Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU), to a specification provided by Mr Iles (Appendix 1) and in agreement with a Project Design compiled by LUAU (Appendix 2), and commissioned by Paul Leech Associates on behalf of Wyre and Fylde Health Authority. A total of seven trial trenches was excavated during the five day period from 28th July to 4th August 1993.



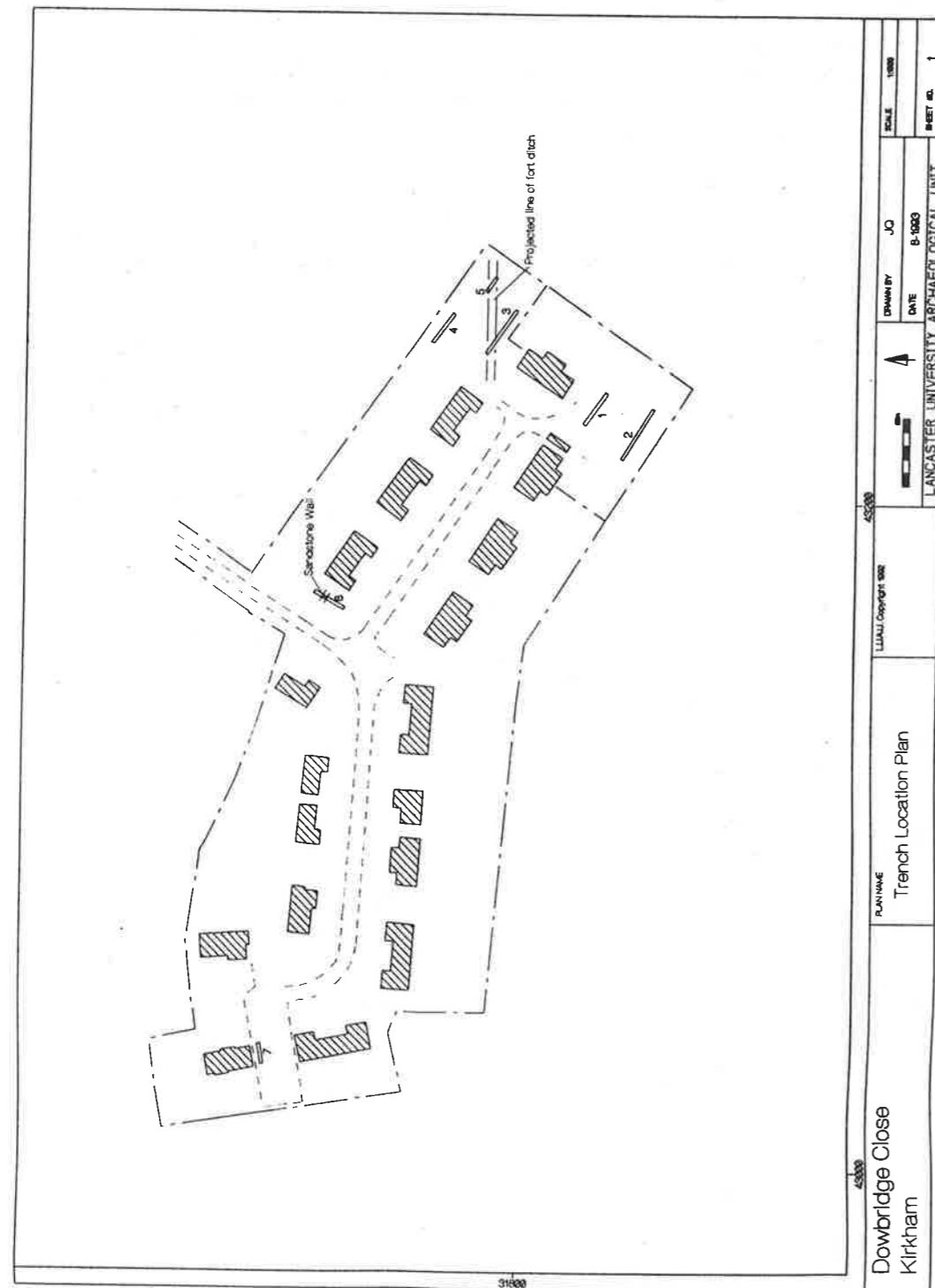


Fig 2 Trench location plan, showing the alignment of large features

## BACKGROUND

The area of the proposed development site at Dowbridge Close, Kirkham, has long been the postulated site of a Roman fort. Individual find spots of Roman date in the vicinity of Dowbridge attest to the presence of Roman activity in the area. Limited, unpublished investigations undertaken by a local amateur group during the 1950s and 60s identified potential Roman features on both sides of the A584 in the vicinity of the windmill; these included a pair of substantial ditches and a possible rampart. Although the discovery of the rampart and ditches strongly suggest a Roman fort in the area, nothing is known of the precise size or shape of that fort (Shotton 1993). To this end, the County Archaeologist, Mr B Edwards, has commented that '...any possibility of archaeological work on the remaining likely undisturbed areas [is] of great importance...The area of the 1993 development proposals is almost certainly the last in which it may be possible to remedy that deficiency [the unknown anatomy of the fort], and the grasping of that opportunity is, in terms of the archaeology of Roman Britain, of considerable importance' (B Edwards pers comm).

The area within the 'Married Quarters' has not previously been formally investigated and the garden areas of the housing complex offer the most likely area for undisturbed archaeological deposits to survive. It was considered that any intrusive activity in the area would compromise any potential below ground features.

### The Roman Fort at Kirkham

B Edwards

#### Introduction

The existence of a Roman site of some kind at Kirkham seems first to have been acknowledged in print by Edward Baines (Harland 1870 2, 482). He reported the finding, c1800, of a shield boss which had been recorded by T D Whitaker (1823 2, 456-457), but he had to correct Whitaker's location of the find from Garstang to Kirkham. Whitaker had not, in any case, attempted any deduction from the find, so that Baines did not have to relocate any putative Roman site. Baines, however, recorded finds of other Roman material from Kirkham, and deduced the existence of what he called an 'out-fort' for the defence of the 'Roman Port of Lancashire', which he located on the River Wyre, near Wharles, as against the then more generally received location of Freckleton Naze. Since Baines' time it has become accepted that Kirkham was the site of a Roman fort, though information about it remains regrettably scanty.

#### Siting

The reasons for the siting of a Roman fort on the hill on which Kirkham windmill later stood can readily be demonstrated from a relief map. This is one of the highest points, rising to 30.8m OD, on the glacial moraine which runs through the Fylde westwards from Preston to terminate in the cliffs at Blackpool. Just east of this, the moraine ridge is breached by the valley of the Dow Brook, with its headwaters, the Spen Brook and the Wrongway Brook. The Dow Brook discharges into the Ribble south of Kirkham, near the northern terminus of an ancient ford across the Ribble. That this route could be used to outflank the lowest bridging point of the Ribble in the vicinity of Walton-le-Dale was demonstrated at the time of the English Civil Wars, and a Roman cavalry fort at Kirkham not only makes sense, but would seem to be almost inevitable.

#### The Fort

The precise size or shape of the fort can not be defined. This makes any possibility of archaeological work on the remaining likely undisturbed areas of great importance. There are, however, a number of pieces of evidence about the fort, which fall into two categories: first, casual finds and observations; and, second, the results of excavation.

Casual finds include: the shield boss, found c1800, near the Dow Brook, east of the site, and other finds made at about the same time; evidence of Roman burials found between 1840 and 1849 on the opposite bank of the Dow Brook; what was almost certainly a tombstone of the 'cavalryman and barbarian' type, similar to one at Ribchester, seen and destroyed when the parish church was rebuilt in 1844; a coin hoard in a small samian jar found during the construction of Kirkgate in 1853; much pottery, leather and other material observed by local enthusiasts in the late 1950s and early 1960s in the area of Pennine View and Myrtle Drive; indications of a rampart seen about the same time, when the RAF married quarters were built; a complete jar in orange fabric recovered from the Dow Brook to the west of Carr Lane in 1971.

The picture is less complete when considering the results of excavations. In the 1930s Mr Burrows of Poulton-le-Fylde excavated west of the Dow Brook and found Roman material. He was at the time much more concerned to discredit the existence of the Roman road from Ribchester into the Fylde via Kirkham than to prove the existence of a fort. The evidence of a rampart seen during the building of the RAF houses, however, stimulated local interest, and a society was formed which excavated, under the direction of a local amateur, approximately from 1957 to 1964.

Sadly, although some drawings, some summary reports, and quite a bit of pottery survive, the work was never properly written up, the excavator is now dead and his notes do not survive.

Apart from this, a major opportunity was missed when the Carr Hill Hotel, in the grounds of which much of the society's excavations took place, was demolished and its site covered with bungalows. Finally, a tiny excavation in a garden on the corner of Myrtle Drive in 1985 demonstrated, were it necessary, that Roman stratigraphy exists to a considerable depth at Kirkham. It also revealed a deep depression which may have been a ditch, with an edge leading in the likely direction for it to have been an eastern defensive ditch. The site was too small to permit distinction between this possibility and a large pit. It must be said, however, that the possible ditch would have been continued in the precise area of Plots 2 and 3 of the present development proposals.

#### Conclusion

That there was a Roman fort at Kirkham from the first century into the second century can hardly be doubted. There is also evidence suggesting its continuation somewhat later. At the same time it is true that almost nothing is known of the anatomy of that fort. The area of the 1993 development proposals is almost certainly the last in which it may be possible to remedy that deficiency, and the grasping of that opportunity is, in terms of the archaeology of Roman Britain, of considerable importance.

## METHODOLOGY

A series of seven trenches was excavated in areas which at the time of the fieldwork were undeveloped communal gardens (Plot 4 was a car park). The trenches varied in length but were on average at least ten metres in length and one metre wide. All the trenches were located in areas where the erection of new dwellings was proposed and would undergo potentially deep and archaeologically damaging excavations during construction.

Prior to each trench being excavated, all the appropriate service information was consulted. This was complemented by a thorough scan of the area using a *Scanumatic* Uscan Cable Avoiding Tool.

In line with current guidelines (ACAO 1993, 9) no significant archaeological deposits were entirely removed or underwent particularly intrusive inspection. Dating evidence was retrieved in the least destructive way, without compromising the integrity of the archaeological record. Archaeological deposits were left undisturbed, wherever possible, in order to minimise the chance of compromising the results of any further work undertaken as a result of recommendations from this evaluation.

The majority of the excavation work was undertaken by machine (a JCB Sitemaster 3CX 4x4 fitted with a 0.96m toothless bucket). Once archaeological features had been revealed, excavation was carried out manually. The evaluation of archaeological deposits, in some cases, necessitated the partial excavation of the feature to obtain satisfactory dating evidence.

All features and deposits were individually recorded on separate context sheets and accurate scale drawings (both plans and sections, as appropriate), and a photographic record was taken of every trench. All artefactual evidence was removed for further study at LUAU. The recording methods employed by LUAU during the evaluation process accord with those recommended by English Heritage's Central Archaeological Services and in *The Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991).

All the excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the project proposals submitted by LUAU in agreement with the County Archaeological Curator (Appendix 2).

In this report individual contexts are shown in parenthesis [ ] and soil colours are given as Munsell soil notation values (10YR 4/2).

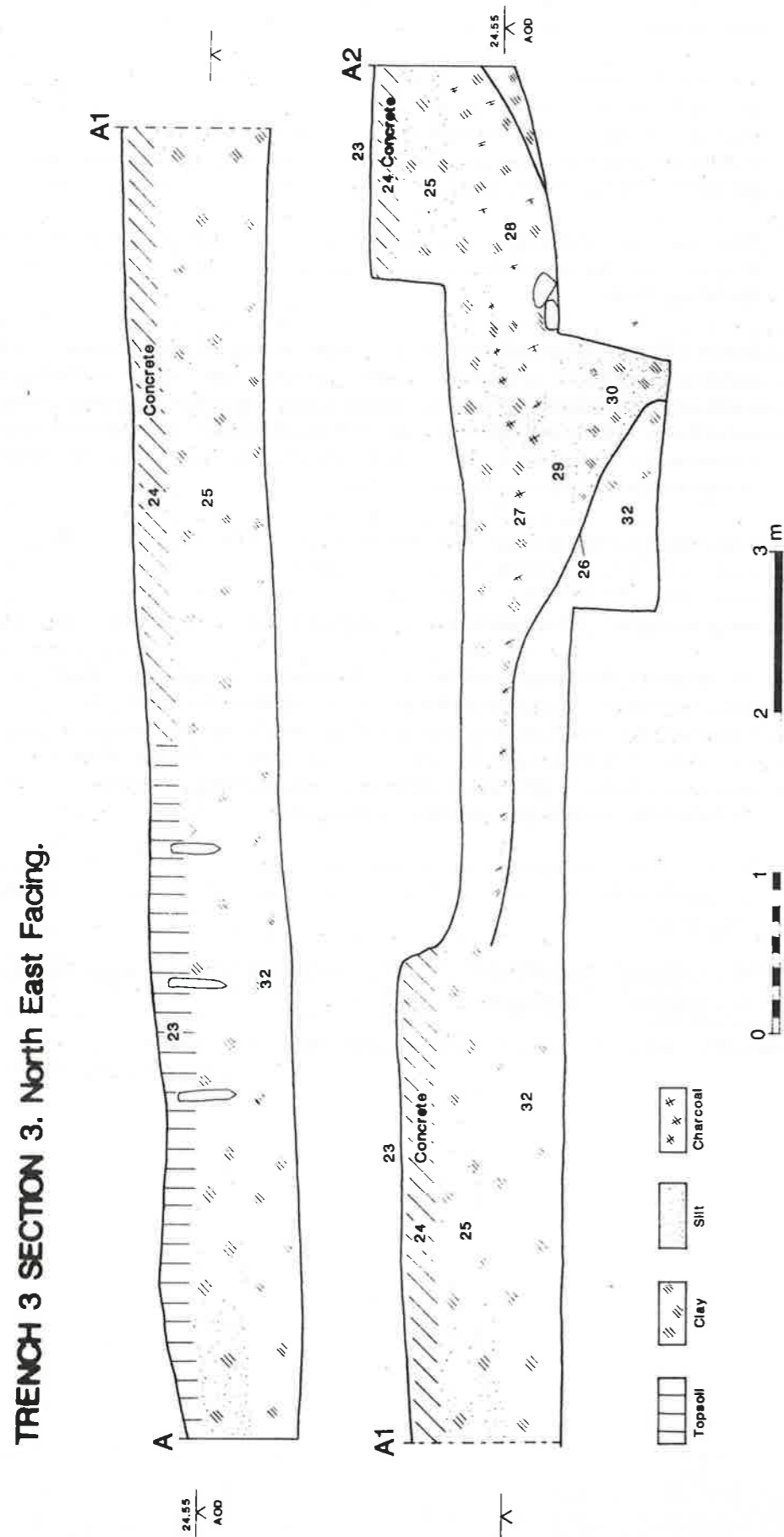


Fig 3 North-facing section of Trench 3, showing ditch 26

## THE TRIAL EXCAVATIONS

### Trench 1

Trench 1 was excavated in Plot 3; it was aligned north-west to south-east and was 11.20m in length. The trench was excavated to a depth of 1.20m at the north-western end, whereupon natural boulder clay [7] was revealed. Archaeological features were established in the centre of the trench at a depth of 0.60m. These features comprised two linear slots, [8] to the north-west being very narrow and shallow (c0.08m in depth), filled by clay silt [9] (10YR 4/1) and a more substantial feature, [10], to the south-west. Slot [10] was flat-based with sides at c30 degrees to horizontal. It was 0.60m in width and aligned north-south. It was filled by a dark silt [11] (10YR 3/3), 0.15m in depth, with an abundance of charcoal and a number of Roman pottery fragments. It is possible that this slot was some form of structural component of a Roman building. The slot cut through natural boulder clay [7] on the eastern side, and through a grey (10YR 4/3) clay silt deposit [6] on the west.

These features were overlain by a dark grey silty clay (10YR 3/1) [5], which was present throughout the trench at a depth of c0.40m. This deposit contained a number of clay pipe stems and other ceramic material of a post-medieval date, and probably represents ploughsoil. At the western end of the trench, silty clay ploughsoil [5] was overlain by a series of modern construction deposits, comprising a small lens of dark greyish brown clay silt [4], below a compacted clay layer [3], which underlay a sandy clay loam lens, [2]. These deposits extended eastwards for c2.40m whereupon they terminated. At this point a topsoil deposit of clay loam [1] (10YR 3/2) overlay both [2], the modern construction debris, and silty clay ploughsoil [6].

### Trench 2

This trench was also excavated in Plot 3, 15.00m to the south of Trench 1. It was cut on a north-west to south-east axis and was 16.40m in length. Natural boulder clay was established within the trench at the far eastern end at a depth of 0.50m (a sondage was excavated through the clay deposit [17] where it was seen, unchanged, at a depth of 1.00m). Within this area was a modern land drain [21], at a depth of c1.00m. A linear feature [18] was revealed at c6.00m from the south-western end of the trench, this cut through a clay silt deposit [16] (10YR 4/3), which overlay boulder clay throughout the trench. It was aligned east-west and was 0.75m in width. The feature was deliberately deeper to the east (0.47m) where it terminated in a butt end. The eastern end of the linear feature was filled by three large semicircular stones [20], which were below a very mixed fill of dark silt and clay clods [19]. Roman pottery sherds were recovered from this feature, which could be interpreted as a beam slot or other form of construction trench for a building. At the western end of the trench another land drain [22] was revealed which cut through the natural boulder clay [17] at a depth of 1.20m.

Above clay silt [16] was a series of modern construction deposits similar to those found within Trench 1. These comprised [15], a dark grey clay silt (10YR 4/1), which was above [16], the clay silt, and directly below [14], a stiff yellowish red clay (5YR 4/6). The clay deposit was only present as a lens and probably represented a dump or smear of construction material. Clay deposit [14] was overlain by [13], a black tarmac hardstanding, measuring 0.05m in depth and c2.50m in length from the western edge of the trench. Tarmac [13] was directly below a topsoil deposit [12] of clay loam (10YR 3/2). These overlying layers produced post-medieval pottery.

### Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the south of Plot 2 and was aligned approximately north-west to south-east. It measured 15.20m in length and was excavated in part to a depth of c2.00m. At the north-western end of the trench, at a depth of 0.58m, was a substantial ditch [26], c3.00m in width, cutting through natural clay [32], aligned on an east-west axis. The ditch measured 1.20m in depth and had sides at an approximate angle of 65 degrees. The base of the ditch was formed by a narrow (c0.20m) straight sided slot. The slot was filled by a very waterlogged

black silt [31], which in turn was overlain by a very mottled, very mixed deposit [30], formed predominantly of clay but which also contained some silt and evidence of mineralization. This deposit was approximately 0.50m in depth and was present throughout the ditch. It was overlain by a very gritty grey silt deposit [29], 0.24m in depth, and in turn overlain by both a greyish orange clay [28], to the west, and [27], a pale orange grey compacted silty clay to the east. Greyish orange clay [28] was almost identical to the underlying natural boulder clay [32]; the presence of charcoal smears within ditch fill [28] and the slightly less compacted nature of the clay allowed positive identification of the ditch fill. Silty clay deposit [27] was the upper fill of ditch [26] and also contained charcoal fragments.

Ditch [26] was overlain by c0.50m of uniform brown clay silt ploughsoil [25], which was directly below both concrete hardstanding [24], in the west of the trench, and topsoil [23]. Topsoil, a grey brown silty loam, contained a fence line of three modern stakes at the eastern end of the trench.

#### Trench 4

Trench 4 was located 14.00m to the north-west of Trench 3 in Plot 2 and shared the same north-west to south-east alignment. It measured 11.20m in length. At the far north-western end of the trench was a steep sided feature [35], cut into natural clay [37]; this was excavated to a depth of c0.70m. Although very little of the feature was excavated, the sides were observed to slope at an approximate angle of 60 degrees and it was seen to follow an east-west alignment. The fill of this feature was [36], a very gritty waterlogged dark yellowish brown silt (10YR 4/2), which contained a few sherds of Roman pottery. It is possible that this feature may represent an isolated pit of Roman date, but the alignment of its southern edge was identical to that of the ditch in Trench 3 and it could therefore be part of a Roman defensive system.

The feature was located directly below [34], a dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) silt deposit. The boundary between the overlying silt [34] and the upper fill of the feature were very difficult to discern, therefore a cleaning layer [58] was defined to the north-west area of the trench to prevent the 'mixing' of finds between different contexts. Silt deposit [34] was below silty loam topsoil [33]. To the south-east the area had been heavily disturbed by two modern pits, [38] and [40], which were filled by identical building rubble deposits, [39] and [41].

#### Trench 5

Trench 5 was excavated in an attempt to establish the alignment of the ditch [26], discovered in Trench 3. It was aligned north-west to south-east, measured 4.30m in length, and was located 10m to the north-east of the south-east end of Trench 3. The northern edge of the east-west ditch [26] was revealed cutting through natural boulder clay [44], at a depth of c0.45m, but this was not excavated. The southern edge of the ditch (numbered as [42] in this trench) was not exposed. Fill [43] was very similar to [27], that found within Trench 3, a very mottled orange grey clay. It was directly overlain by a dark brown silt loam topsoil [33].

#### Trench 6

Trench 6 was located within Plot 1, adjacent to the entrance to Dowbridge Close. It measured 10.00m in length and was aligned on a north-east to south-west axis. The trench was divided into two by a modern garden path which served as access to the occupied house. At the extreme north-west of the trench on the northern side of the path, at a depth of c0.50m, was a deposit of mottled and disturbed clay [52], which was cut by a modern ceramic drain [51]. The clay was overlain by a very mottled, predominantly black silty clay [50], which underlay topsoil deposit [45], a silty clay loam (10YR 3/2).

Natural subsoils were not established at the south-eastern end of the trench where a small sondage was excavated. At a depth of 0.82m, [49], a possible surface of sandstone fragments, was revealed which overlay a layer of grey, mineral affected silt [57]. The fragmented sandstone deposit was overlain by a brown clay silt layer [47] (10 YR 5/3) which contained Roman material. This deposit also overlay a large sandstone wall [48]. It measured 1.50m in

width and was constructed of sandstone blocks. The approximate alignment could be conjectured as north-west to south-east. The north-western side of the wall was faced with well finished sandstone blocks (0.40m x 0.40m x 0.20m), the remainder of the wall was constructed from unfinished sandstone blocks. The upper courses of wall [48] were situated at a depth of only 0.18m below the present ground surface, 2.80m from the north-eastern section edge. Wall [48] was not excavated but can be confidently dated as Roman since the overlying material, [46], contained Roman brick and tile debris. Silty clay deposit [46] was situated directly below dark brown silty clay loam topsoil [45].

#### Trench 7

Trench 7 was excavated in the far west of the development site in Plot 4. The trench was restricted to 4.20m in length due to the fact that a tarmac surface, 0.12m in depth, had to be removed, and also due to the presence of underground services in the area, and the continued occupation by night shift workers of the adjacent building. The trench was excavated on an east-west axis and to a total depth of 0.92m. No archaeological features were identified. A thin deposit of loamy silt, [55], 0.16m in depth, overlay natural boulder clay [56]. Silt deposit [55] was below a 0.36m deep deposit of sandstone hardcore [54], which was used to support the tarmac surface [53] of the car park.

#### Discussion

The archaeological features identified during the evaluation are of exclusively Roman date and those located in Plots 1 and 2 particularly would suggest a settlement of some considerable size. The ditches discovered in Trenches 3, 4, and 5 strongly suggest a defensive purpose; the typical V-shaped profile and small square slot at the base are diagnostic of Roman military defensive ditches. The alignment of the ditches, on an east-west axis, complement the results from previous excavations in 1985, from which it could be postulated that the area occupied by Plots 3 and 4 is on the eastern limit of the proposed Roman fort.

The remains of structural features in Plot 3, to the south of the ditches, probably represent traces of extramural structures within a civilian settlement or *vicus* adjacent to the fort. Their complementary alignment to the ditches to the north is in accordance with the apparently regulated settlement pattern evidenced at recent excavations within the areas of Roman extramural activity at Ribchester and Lancaster (Buxton and Howard-Davis, forthcoming, Hair *et al* forthcoming). The absence of occupation horizons associated with these structural features suggests a certain amount of truncation has occurred.

The presence of a massive sandstone wall further to the west, within Plot 1 (Trench 6), substantiates previous archaeological findings of red sandstone being used as a building material (the red sandstone rubble from a trench excavated adjacent to the windmill in 1959 was interpreted as being from a collapsed/dismantled wall). The alignment of the wall found within Plot 1 differs from that of the ditches and the structural features. This perhaps indicates a realignment of the Roman complex onto a north-west to south-east axis and also highlights that two construction types used during the Roman period: post-in-trench timber structures and stone buildings, possibly implying more than one phase of construction or structures of different status. The deposit of sandstone fragments below the silt deposit within Trench 6 is the only evidence recovered to suggest possible occupation horizons associated with the Roman features. The archaeological features within the remainder of the trenches appear to have suffered from truncation by modern construction to a significant degree, thus only negative features (ditches and slots) within Plots 2 and 3 remain intact.

## The Finds

*Christine Howard-Davis*

Artefacts were recovered from a total of 15 contexts during the evaluation. Those from the fill of a linear slot [11], a similar linear slot fill [20], ditch fill [29], possible ditch fill [36], ploughsoil [46], grey clay silt [47], and a cleaning layer for Trench 4 [58] were exclusively Romano-British in date, whereas those from the remainder of the contexts were either mixed or late in date.

The Romano-British artefacts represented were ceramic vessels (Black Burnished 1 ware, orangewares, greywares and whitewares) and brick and tile fragments. None of the artefacts was closely dateable but fragments of a white-slipped flagon, white gritted mortarium, a rim of Black Burnished ware 1 and a small fragment of Central Gaulish decorated Samian, suggest a mid-second century date range.

All the material has been badly affected by adverse soil conditions, making the vessel fragments soft and friable and, in addition, many of the fragments are small and badly abraded, suggesting a considerable amount of disturbance.

The later material on the site can be assigned a late nineteenth to twentieth century date. It comprises ceramic kitchenwares, glass bottles, clay pipe and fragments of stone glazed drainpipes, along with modern brick. The presence of this can be accounted for as midden/nightsoiling and field drainage.

## Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation identified substantial Roman remains within the area of the proposed redevelopment site at Dowbridge Close. The remains were substantial enough to conclude that a significant Roman military defensive centre occupied the area, which appears to have had, to the south, an extramural settlement. There is also some evidence of a change of alignment within the fort during its occupation. The whole area has suffered considerably through modern disturbance and only the more robust or large negative features (the ditches) survive in any considerable form.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The information collated under the present brief has enabled the identification of areas of archaeological value. The principle that 'archaeological remains should be seen as a finite, and non renewable resource, in many cases highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction' is set out by the Department of Environment 1990). It is therefore desirable to preserve features intact and *in situ* where possible. When their destruction is unavoidable, and the site does not merit statutory protection, then mitigation measures must be considered.

The results of the trial trenching throughout a selected area covered by the planning application have shown that archaeological remains would be damaged during the actual construction of the new dwellings. No archaeological features were discovered in the far western plot (4) but the presence of Roman remains from every trench to the west suggests some nucleus of activity in that area. The absence of archaeological features within Plot 4 does not preclude the possibility of below ground remains surviving in the vicinity.

The truncation suffered as a result of modern ground alterations has, to large degree, affected the archaeological remains in all the trenches. This disturbance has effectively removed evidence in Trenches 1 and 2 of occupation horizons associated with the structural remains. The truncation is of such a scale as to remove the need for a recommendation that the planning application should not proceed and that the site should be protected statutorily. The remains are, however, of great importance to the understanding of the Roman occupation of the North West of England, when seen in conjunction with the recently excavated sites at Ribchester and Lancaster.

If the redevelopment scheme is to go ahead within the areas evaluated, then, as a minimum requirement, a formal open area investigation is necessary prior to the construction. The close proximity of some of the features to the ground surface, notably the wall in Trench 6, would make its destruction unavoidable during construction. Furthermore the negative features within Trenches 1 to 5 would be severely compromised. Any design modifications, for example, the cutting of slit trenches and subsequent rafting of a dwelling, would not preclude the need for an open area excavation. As so little is known of the nature of the Roman settlement of the site, the limited view that slit trenches would afford would be outweighed by the consequent removal of the features from the archaeological record. It would therefore be necessary to undertake a full excavation in these areas as a mitigation measure, should conservation of the below ground features not be possible.

In addition, it is recommended following consultation with the Lancashire Archaeological Curator, that if the land was sold without development permission, an agreement should be reached to ensure that archaeological work be undertaken prior to any ground disturbance; this would include the laying of mains, the planting of trees and the erection of fences.

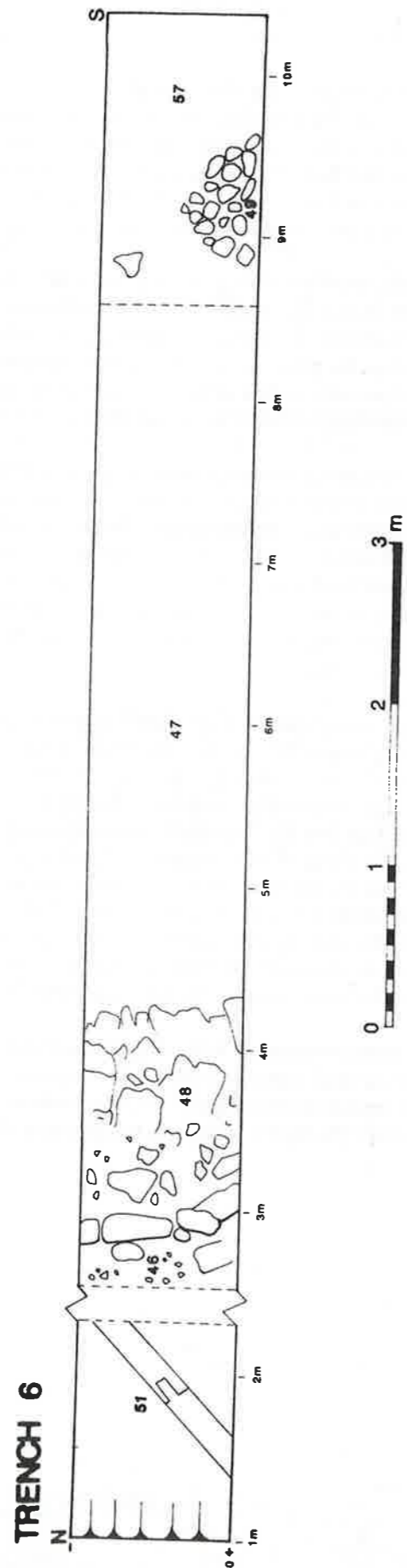


Fig 4 Plan of Trench 6, showing sandstone wall 48

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APPENDIX 1 -  
PROJECT DESIGN

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July 1993

**DOWBRIDGE CLOSE  
KIRKHAM, LANCASHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

***Proposals***

*The following project design is offered in response to communication from Mr Paul Leech, of Paul Leech Associates, for an archaeological evaluation in advance of the submission of a planning application for development at Dowbridge Close, Kirkham, Lancashire.*



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## PROPOSALS

The proposed infill development at Dowbridge Close, Kirkham, Lancashire, will affect an area which is almost certainly within, or immediately adjacent to, a Roman fort. Previous work in the vicinity has been extremely limited and little is known about this important monument. It has been suggested by the County Archaeologist that this may be the last area in the vicinity of the fort where intact Roman stratigraphy might be identified. This evaluation is aimed at assessing whether any archaeological material survives within the designated area for the evaluation and, if so, if possible in the rigorous timescale, its quantity, period and quality, in the context of the known archaeology of the area.

The Lancaster University Archaeological Unit has considerable experience of the evaluation and excavation of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large scale projects during the past 15 years. Evaluations have taken place within the planning process, to fulfil the requirements of clients and planning authorities, to very rigorous timetables. LUAU has the professional expertise and resource to undertake the project detailed below to a high level of quality and efficiency. LUAU and all its members of staff operate subject to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct.

The following programme has been designed, in accordance with the brief supplied, to provide an accurate archaeological assessment and evaluation of the designated area, within its broader context. The required stages to achieve these ends are as follows:

### **1. Desk Top Survey**

A limited programme to accrue an organised body of data, from which a balanced programme of trial trenching can be devised.

### **2. Field Evaluation**

Limited trial excavations, following the agreed programme, to establish the nature, extent, chronology and preservation of archaeological deposits sampled. This will record fully the sampled areas; suitable samples recovered will be assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential.

### **3. Evaluation Report**

A written evaluation report will assess the significance of the data generated by this programme within a local and regional context. It will advise on the mitigation measures necessary to protect and/or record (to appropriate levels) identified archaeological features and deposits, including the appropriate excavation, recovery, and recording strategies.

## WORK PROGRAMME

The following work programme is submitted in line with the stages and objectives of the archaeological work summarised above.

### 1. Desk top survey

The following will be undertaken as appropriate, depending on the availability of material. The level of such work will be dictated by the timescale of the project. In this case, the limited timescale will allow only the most cursory search.

#### *i Documentary and cartographic material*

This work will address the full range of potential sources of information, although it will concentrate on previous archaeological work, particularly the references contained in published sources and the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record. It will make reference to appropriate sections of County histories, early maps, and such primary documentation (tithe and estate plans etc) as may be reasonably available. Particular attention will be paid to field- and place-names recorded on early cartographic sources as these often provide important evidence of archaeological activity. Any photographic material lodged in either the County Sites and Monuments Record or the County Record Office will also be studied. Published documentary sources will be examined and assessed.

Given the timescale, as much of this information as possible will be gleaned from consultations with the County Archaeologist.

#### *ii Oral evidence*

Where available, oral evidence for the presence of archaeological stratigraphy in the area will be collected.

#### *iii Physical environment*

A desk-based compilation of geological (both solid and drift), pedological, topographical and palaeoenvironmental information, including available engineering and borehole data, will be undertaken. This will not only set the archaeological features in context but also serves to provide predictive data, that will increase the efficiency of the field investigation.

#### *iv Access*

Liaison for basic site access will be undertaken. The precise location of any services or pipelines within the study area will also be established, as will its legal status, and any other relevant designations.

*v Collation of data*

The data generated by i-iv above, will be collated and analysed in order to provide an assessment of the nature and significance of any subsurface remains. It will also serve as a guide to the archaeological potential of the area to be investigated, and the basis for the formulation of a detailed field programme, and associated sampling strategy.

## 2. Field Evaluation

Following a rapid field inspection, a limited programme of trial excavation will be undertaken, following the sampling strategy and timetable established following the desk top survey, in consultation with the County Archaeological Curator, in order to fulfil the objectives of the Evaluation. This will assess the presence or absence of archaeological deposits within the study area and, if possible, will test the date, nature, and quality of preservation of any surviving archaeological deposits. Excavation will normally be limited to the upper surface of significant archaeological deposits, unless further work is regarded by the County Archaeological Curator and ourselves as essential in order to complete the full evaluation.

*i Methodology*

To maximise the speed and efficiency of the operation the majority of the work (including removal of overburden) will be undertaken by machine, although in areas where ephemeral remains are expected, the trenches will be hand dug. A mini-excavator (a JCB or a Kubota PC20, with a three foot toothless bucket) is normally used by the Unit for work of this nature (LUAU employs a trained machine operator, whose services may be available). As a matter of course the Unit uses a U-Scan device prior to any excavation to test for services.

In the timescale possible for this evaluation, it is not considered either feasible or necessary to undertake any form of remote sensing, which is a relative expensive option, the results of which are normally subsequently verified by trial excavation. In this case, the evaluation will concentrate on areas of new build and a trench will be excavated across the location of each new structure, to assess the presence or absence of archaeological deposits.

Full regard will, of course, be given to all constraints (services etc) during the excavation of the trenches, as well as to all Health and Safety considerations. LUAU provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Unit Safety policy. All site procedures are in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (1991) and risk assessments are now being implemented for all projects.

Land disturbed as a result of this work will be reinstated to the satisfaction of the client/landowner. In cases where the depth of the trench exceeds the legal permitted depth of 1.2m, shoring in the form of acroprops and timber will be provided during excavation and for the purposes of inspection to maintain the stability of the sides. Boards will be provided to protect the external trenches from the weather and to provide extra security in terms of safety, whilst the trenches remain open. If required, movable fencing can be maintained around open trenches.

#### *ii Timetable*

All excavation will be undertaken within constraints agreed with the client. Subject to these constraints, work of this scale and nature can normally be completed within a period of *c* five days.

#### *iii Recording*

All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections and both black and white and colour photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.

Results of the field investigation will be recorded using a computer-based system, adapted from that used by Central Archaeological Services of English Heritage (Delilah-type suite), or a compatible paper record will be made, if no detailed stratigraphy is identified. The archive would include both a photographic record and accurate large scale plans and sections at an appropriate scale (1:50, 1:20, and 1:10). All artefacts and ecofacts will be recorded using the same computerised system, and will be handled and stored according to standard practice (following current Institute of Field Archaeologists guidelines) in order to minimise deterioration. Samples will be collected for technological, pedological, palaeoenvironmental and chronological analysis as appropriate. If necessary, access to conservation advice and facilities can be made available. LUAU maintains close relationships with Ancient Monuments Laboratory staff at the Universities of Durham and Newcastle and, in addition, employs artefact and palaeoecology specialists with considerable expertise in the investigation, excavation and finds management of sites of all periods and types, who are readily available for consultation.

### **3. Evaluation report**

#### *i Archive*

The results of the fieldwork will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition, 1991*). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material

gathered during the course of the project. It will include summary processing and analysis of all features, finds, or palaeoenvironmental data recovered during fieldwork. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the IFA in that organisation's code of conduct. LUAU conforms to best practice in the preparation of project archives for long-term storage. The expense of preparing such an archive is part of the project cost, but only represents a very small proportion of the total. This archive will be provided in the English Heritage Central Archaeological Services format, both as a printed document and on computer disks as ASCII files, for inclusion in the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record. A copy of the archive will also be available for deposition with the National Archaeological Record in London. LUAU practice is to deposit the original record archive of projects (paper, magnetic and plastic media) with the appropriate County Record Office, and a full copy of the record archive (microform or microfiche) together with the material archive (artefacts, ecofacts, and samples) with an appropriate museum. The actual details of the arrangements for the deposition/loan and long term storage of this material will be agreed with the landowner (through their agents), and the receiving institution. Wherever possible, LUAU recommends the deposition of such material in a local museum approved by the Museums and Galleries Commission, and would make appropriate arrangements with the designated museum at the outset of the project for the proper labelling, packaging, and accessioning of all material recovered. The archive costs include a single payment of £11/m<sup>3</sup> to the receiving museum as a one-off contribution towards the cost of long term storage and curation.

#### *ii Evaluation report*

Due to the rigorous timetable engendered by the planning application, in the first instance a statement of archaeological potential in the form of a letter will be submitted for consideration by Fylde Borough Council.

Following this, one bound and one unbound copy of a written synthetic report will be submitted to the Client, and a further copy submitted to the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record following any comments from the Client. The report will include a copy of the agreed project design, and indications of any agreed departure from that design. It will present, summarise, and interpret the results of the programme detailed above and will include a full index of archaeological features identified in the course of the project, with an assessment of the overall stratigraphy, together with appropriate illustrations, including detailed plans and sections indicating the locations of archaeological features. Any finds recovered from the excavations will be assessed with reference to other local material and any particular or unusual features of the assemblage will be highlighted and the potential of the site for palaeoenvironmental analysis will be considered. The report will also include a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived, and a list of further sources identified during the programme of work, but not examined in

detail.

This report will identify areas of defined archaeology, the location of trenches, and whether the results of the sampling were positive or negative. An assessment and statement of the actual and potential archaeological significance of the site within the broader context of regional and national archaeological priorities will be made. Illustrative material will include a location map, section drawings, and plans; it can be tailored to the specific requests of the client (eg particular scales etc), subject to discussion. The report will be in the same basic format as this project design; a copy of the report will be provided on 3.5" disk (IBM compatible format).

### *iii Proposals*

The report will make a clear statement of the likely archaeological implications of the intended development. It will highlight where, as a first option, the preservation *in situ* of significant archaeological features should take place and possible strategies for the mitigation of the impact of the industrial development, including design modification, will be considered. In some instances, depending on the significance of the results of the evaluation, it may be necessary to advocate that development should not take place, if no other mitigating course of action is possible. In other cases, when conservation is neither possible, nor practical, it may be appropriate to suggest a further stage of more intensive archaeological work in order to mitigate the effects of development.

### *iv Confidentiality*

The evaluation report is designed as a document for the specific use of the Client, for the particular purpose as defined in the project brief and project design, and should be treated as such; it is not suitable for publication as an academic report, or otherwise, without amendment or revision. Any requirement to revise or reorder the material for submission or presentation to third parties beyond the project brief and project design, or for any other explicit purpose can be fulfilled, but will require separate discussion and funding.

## 5. Project monitoring

### *i Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record*

Any proposed changes to the project design will be agreed with the Lancashire County Archaeological Curator in coordination with the Client. The Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record will be informed in writing at the commencement of the project and LUAU will arrange a preliminary meeting with them at the outset of the project. Recommendations for further archaeological work deemed necessary as a result of this evaluation will be discussed with the County Archaeological Curator prior to the submission of the report. LUAU

will give access to the County Archaeological Curator for the purpose of monitoring the proposed works, in consultation with the Client.

*ii Paul Leech Associates*

An initial meeting of all parties will be arranged at the commencement of the project, if the Client so desires. LUAU will consult with Paul Leech Associates regarding the contents of the draft report before its final submission. Consultation is to include the attendance of a representative of Paul Leech Associates, if required, at any meetings convened with the County Archaeological Curator, to discuss the draft report or any other matter.

## WORK TIMETABLE

The various stages of the project outlined above will fall into three distinct phases, which would follow on consecutively, where appropriate.

The phases of work would comprise:

***i Desk Top Survey***

Normally a one week period is required to collate the available data. This would, if possible, include a site visit. In the circumstances, however, a cursory collation will be undertaken in 2 days.

***ii Field Evaluation***

To be undertaken during a one week period.

***iii Prepare Evaluation Report***

To be completed within one and an half weeks.

LUAU can execute projects at very short notice once an agreement has been signed with the client. LUAU would be able to submit the letter to the client in time for the Fylde Borough Planning Committee meeting on 11th August 1993, to satisfy the planning needs, subject to the terms of a legal agreement. This would be followed by the full evaluation report to be submitted to the client at a time to be arranged, subject to the terms of the agreement.



## OUTLINE RESOURCES

The following resource base will be necessary to achieve the proposals detailed above. The breakdown of the total cost of the project is provided on the accompanying project costing form.

The total cost quoted on the accompanying sheet is a fixed price, inclusive of all management, overheads, and other disbursement costs (travel and expenses), to undertake the programme of work as defined in the project brief and this project design. Any other variations from this programme of work at the clients' direction will require recosting.

Work of this nature is generally regarded as academic research, and is therefore usually VAT exempt.

### *i Desk Top Survey*

2 man-days Project Officer (Team Leader)

### *ii Field Evaluation*

5 man-days Project Officer

5 man-days Project Worker

5 man-days Project Worker

1 man-day Surveyor

Finds and Environmental Specialist consultation as necessary

### *iii Evaluation Report*

8 man-days Project Officer

3 man-days Draughtsperson

1 man-day Editor and DTP

The project will be under the direct line management of **Rachel Newman, BA** (Unit Assistant Director) to whom all correspondence should be addressed. All Unit staff are experienced, qualified archaeologists, each with several years professional expertise. Project Officers in Unit terminology are senior supervisors, capable of organising and running complex area excavations as well as short-term evaluations to rigorous timetables.

**APPENDIX 2 -  
PROJECT BRIEF**

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**Dowbridge Close, Kirkham (SD 43153185 ac)**

This brief has been written by the Lancaster University Heritage Planning Consultancy for and on behalf of Paul Leech Associates, as a result of discussions between Mr Leech and P D Iles, the County Archaeological Curator.

**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 As part of the development procedure a planning application (no. 5/93/275) was submitted to Fylde Borough Council. This application is for the construction of six new houses and the conversion of three detached dwellings into six semi-detached dwellings along with associated highway improvements. These works are intended to increase the housing density in an existing residential area.
- 1.2 Archaeological matters have been deemed by the DoE to be material considerations in the determination of planning applications. As a consequence of this all planning applications in Lancashire are monitored by the Lancaster University Heritage Planning Consultancy and are compared with the known archaeological sites listed in the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record.
- 1.3 When this particular planning application was examined it was immediately obvious that the proposed development had significant archaeological implications, Dowbridge Close being located on the southern corner of the Roman fort at Dowbridge. Whilst the existence of the fort and its associated civilian settlement has been known for many years, its exact location and extent have long been a problem, though it is potentially of national importance.
- 1.4 Because of this high archaeological importance it was recommended that a pre-determination archaeological evaluation be undertaken. This brief has been written as a result of this recommendation and its purpose is to specify only such archaeological works as is necessary to provide sufficient information on the archaeological implications of the proposed development to allow an informed and reasonable planning decision to be made. This work should not, therefore, be viewed as a research project in its own right.

**2 The Site**

- 2.1 Dowbridge Close is an area of former RAF housing, now owned by the NHS, to the south of Dowbridge, Kirkham. The close is in the form of a distorted and inverted "T", the stem of which points north east and connects to Dowbridge, the proposed developments are sited on a number of plots distributed along the length of the close. Plot 1 is to the east of the stem of the "T", plots 2 and 3 at the end of the eastern arm and plots 4 to 7 at the end of the western arm. These plots are shown on the attached drawing, as are three associated areas of highway improvements.
- 2.2 The existing buildings on site comprise a number of detached and semi-detached properties, some with separate garages. They are known to have been erected between 1938 and 1970 on land which was formerly part of South Farm, Dowbridge and latterly occupied by Carr Hill Racecourse (set out between 1932 and 1938). A road or trackway, Kettle Well Lane, used to pass across the south western extremity of the site and is shown on maps of 1837 and 1848 but had been truncated by 1932 and disappeared completely by 1970.

- 2.3 Little is known of the Roman occupation site at Dowbridge. Antiquarian reports discuss various objects including pottery and tile, coins and building foundations as well as good traces of a supposed Roman road from Preston, and it has long been accepted that a Roman station lay hereabouts. Despite some attempt to indicate the location of such features (eg. see Rev W Thornber in *THSLC Vol. 3 1851, p59*) the precise location of the fort does not appear to have been revealed until the latter half of the 20th century.
- 2.4 Pickering's excavation at Dowbridge, undertaken in 1959, has unfortunately never been published. This dig, close to the site of Kirkham Windmill, apparently revealed the north west corner of the fort and indicated that the fort has been bisected by the main road. Other evidence, including work by B J N Edwards, the County Archaeologist, seems to confirm this and indicates that a significant civilian settlement existed, associated with the fort.
- 2.5 The purpose of the fort here at Kirkham is unknown. It is possibly an important defensive position on the route to the Portus Setantiorum which figures in the *Geography* of Ptolemy of Alexandria. This is a Roman seaport on the North Western coast, but which unfortunately has never been positively identified. Whilst current opinion favours a now inundated site just off the coast at Fleetwood for the Portus, a strong case has also been made for its location at Freckleton on the Ribble, immediately to the south of Dowbridge.
- 2.6 The topography of the Dowbridge site, located as it is on Carr Hill, makes it a good defensive and habitation site when compared to the lower lying areas around. Recent research shows that raised sites adjacent to lowlying former marsh and peatland were favoured sites for settlement during the middle and later prehistoric period. This aspect of the site and the a number of prehistoric items found in the vicinity may well mean that it was utilised by the native British population before the Roman occupation of the area. No actual prehistoric settlement has yet been found at Dowbridge but it is often suggested that many Roman military sites were located at pre-existing defensive or settlement sites.
- 2.7 The site at Dowbridge is one of only four known Roman forts in Lancashire, the others being at Lancaster, Ribchester and Over Burrow. It has attracted little archaeological attention when compared to these other sites which, unlike Dowbridge, are protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The other forts lie on the main Roman road network and that at Dowbridge is distinct in that it is located on a spur leading off to the west. This road probably forms the link to the Portus Setantiorum (above) and the fort would therefore represent an important defensive position along this route, particularly if the Portus is located close by at Freckleton.
- 2.8 Like the sites at Lancaster and Ribchester, Dowbridge fort appears to have been accompanied by a civilian settlement (or *Vicus*). This is likely to have been occupied by persons trading with the fort's occupants or seeking protection from it. It is also possible that it represents a survival of a pre-existing population (above).

### 3 Archaeological Implications

- 3.1 Being one of a small number of Roman sites in the county and associated with a seaport, the fort at Dowbridge is potentially of national importance. It is known that significant archaeological remains existed when the 1959 excavations were undertaken and are still likely to remain around, between and possibly under the housing and roads in the area.
- 3.2 The implications of this development proposal depend upon the nature, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits in the area. Should well preserved deposits relating to the fort or its associated civilian settlement survive in significant amounts it is likely to be a candidate for inclusion into the Schedule of Ancient Monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. Development in the area which destroyed significant archaeological remains may then be seen as inappropriate or at least need to be preceded by formal archaeological excavation. Equally if it can be shown that development will not affect any areas of surviving archaeological deposits, either because of their depth and nature or because of later damage to them, then there will be little or no need for any archaeological intervention.
- 3.3 Exactly what, if any, damage has been done to the Roman deposits by later development cannot, however, be determined without a programme of archaeological fieldwork. This fieldwork is necessary before any planning decision is reached in order that an informed and reasonable decision can be made. It is not possible for this work to be undertaken after development permission has been granted without the attachment of such stringent conditions as would probably fail the test of "reasonableness" as specified in DoE circular 1/85.

### 4 The Brief

- 4.1 The archaeological work necessary on the site is intended to assess the nature, extent, survival and importance of archaeological deposits on the site of the proposed development. The archaeological implications of the proposed development can thus be assessed and a reasonable and informed planning decision reached.
- 4.2 The work should consist of four main stages.
- 4.2.1 A limited programme of documentary research, concentrating on the Roman occupation of Dowbridge, but not neglecting other information which may have a bearing on the archaeological potential of the site.
- 4.2.2 The excavation of at least one trench, sited across each of the areas of new construction (sites 1, 2, 3 and 4).
- 4.2.3 The formulation and submission of a report detailing the work undertaken and the results of that work.
- 4.2.4 The creation and deposition of an archive to the appropriate professional standard.

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- 4.3 A written project design should be produced detailing how the evaluation is to be undertaken, the name of the project director, the proposed staffing levels and the proposed programme of work. This project design would normally be submitted in advance of a contract being issued, but this requirement has been waived for Lancaster University Archaeological Unit.
- 4.4 It is important that the project design takes into account the state of the site and the archaeological contractors are advised to discuss this with the developers.
- 4.5 Excavation may be undertaken by hand, machine or a combination of both. The excavation strategy should be designed to assess the survival, nature and extent of any archaeological deposits.
- 4.6 The deposits encountered during the excavations should be sampled according to the appropriate professional standards, advice on which can be obtained from the Environmental Archaeological Unit at York or other appropriately qualified centres. A preliminary analysis of promising environmental samples should be undertaken with a view to assessing their potential for identifying, dating and interpreting the deposits from which they are derived.
- 4.7 The details of backfilling and protective fencing around excavated sites needs to be discussed with the developers prior to the start of works and should comply with the appropriate health and safety regulations, standards of working and codes of practice.
- 4.8 The report should address the archaeology and palaeoenvironment of the archaeological site. It should contain an executive summary, introduction, description of works, discussion and conclusion. A copy of this brief and the agreed project design, as well as an indication of any departure from the agreed project design should be attached as appendixes. It should include a plan of the site indicating where trenches were excavated, along with plans and sections of the deposits revealed even where no archaeological features have been identified. Other appropriate maps, plans, sections, photographs or other illustrative material may also be included. A full bibliography of sources consulted must also be attached.
- 4.9 The archaeological work is intended to provide sufficient information for a reasoned and informed planning decision to be made, and this should be borne in mind when the report is compiled. The report may be utilised for the formulation of an archaeological mitigation strategy and recommendations for further archaeological work may be included. Such recommendations should be discussed with the County Archaeological Curator prior to the submission of the report.
- 4.10 The executive summary of the report should be provided to the County Archaeological Curator not later than 5pm on Tuesday 10th August 1993. The full report should be

## Brief for Archaeological Assessment

completed and submitted within six weeks after completion of the fieldwork unless otherwise agreed with the County Archaeological Curator.

- 4.11 Agreement should be reached with the developers concerning the deposition of the evaluation archive and the provision of an appropriate synopsis for the County Sites and Monuments Record and the National Archaeological Record. Costings should reflect the capital cost of the deposition of the archive. Whilst the site owners have property rights over finds, objects should normally be deposited in a Museums and Galleries Commission approved archaeological museum, either on loan or by donation.
- 4.12 A full archive should be created to the appropriate professional standards, and deposited according to the agreement reached in 4.11 above.
- 4.13 The archaeological work shall be monitored by the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record and the archaeological contractor should contact the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record to arrange this monitoring.
- 4.14 Any costings provided for the archaeological work should not form part of the project design.
- 4.15 This brief allows some flexibility in approach, but deviations from the agreed project design should be discussed and agreed in advance with the County Archaeological Curator.
- 4.16 This brief is not to be altered without the express permission of the County Archaeological Curator.
- 4.17 The document entitled "General Conditions for Appropriate Archaeological Contractors in Lancashire" is in use as a model of expected practices and procedures. A copy of this document is attached as Appendix One. Where this document refers to the County Council, the role described is currently being undertaken by the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record Officer.

## 5 Further Information

- 5.1 Further queries regarding this brief or the general conditions can be addressed to the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record Officer, Tel. 0524 65201 ext 4385



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