

THE VINDOLANDA TRUST

**ASSESSMENT REPORT
FOR
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION
ON LAND AT
CODLEY GATE FARM
BARDON MILL
HEXHAM
NORTHUMBERLAND**

NGR: NY 768 663

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Vindolanda Trust undertook an archaeological investigation of land at Codley Gate farm, Bardon Mill, Hexham, Northumberland (NGR: 7715 6645). The development site is just to the east of the UNESCO Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and lies immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of Vindolanda, Scheduled Ancient Monument (REF# 28471). The land is not scheduled.

2. WORKS DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The development work involves the expansion of existing Museum buildings into the field immediately to the north of the present museum, approximately 1m to the north of the present boundary fence. This proposed work necessitated the excavation of a single trench to explore the archaeological nature of the field, 6m by 1.2m. The location of the trench crossed the area which would be disturbed by the proposed development and can be seen in figure 2.

3. LOCATION

- 3.1 Codley Gate farm/ Vindolanda Museum are on the course of the Stanegate road, 2 miles north of the modern village of Bardon Mill, and 1 mile south of Hadrian's Wall, see *figure 1*. The centre of the development site lies on national grid reference NY 7715 6645. The location of the watching brief was situated in the field immediately to the southeast Codley Gate farm and to the north of the current Museum.

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 A 6m by 1.2m wide trench was cut below the turf in the field. A layer of sodden brown topsoil approximately 15cm – 23cms deep (context CGF-01) lay directly below the turf. The topsoil layer was clean with no evidence of human presence or any artefacts. This was situated on a thicker layer of subsoil (up to 40cms thick in places) which was also very clean and had a lighted loamy texture, and paler in colour compared to the topsoil (context CGF-02). Both of these layers are directly comparable to those encountered by during the excavation of a nearby utilities trench in 2008. Nothing of archaeological significance was found throughout the course of the work.

5. METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 Methods employed during the project complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct (2000)* and *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2001)*. Excavation was carried out by hand digging the trench by Andrew Birley and Lauren Wilkinson (Director of Excavations for the Vindolanda Trust and a site archaeologist). Excavation was halted when changes in soil colour and texture were observed. Any stones removed from the ground were also checked by the archaeologist for man-made tool marks, carvings, inscriptions, graffiti or general sculpture. Nothing was found.

- 5.2 The various stratigraphical contexts were recorded using standard pro-forma recording sheets based on those recommended in the Museum of London's 'Archaeological Site Manual' (1994: 9).
- 5.3 Planning and recording of the trench locations was done using a Leica TC 400NL total station. The same equipment was used to establish heights of the trench top / base above OD, and to tie in to the national grid.
- 5.4 Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and digitised for publication using AutoCAD 2007 software.
- 5.5 All photographs were taken using a Sony 1000m camera @ 21.5 mega pixel resolution.
- 5.6 The full excavation archive has been lodged with 'The Vindolanda Trust' at Chesterholm Museum.

6. RESULTS

- 6.1 Excavation of the trenches revealed no features, deposits, or artefacts of archaeological significance.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

- 7.1 There was an absence of any archaeological material in the development area covered by this watching brief. It is therefore recommended that no further excavation or archaeological investigation is necessary.

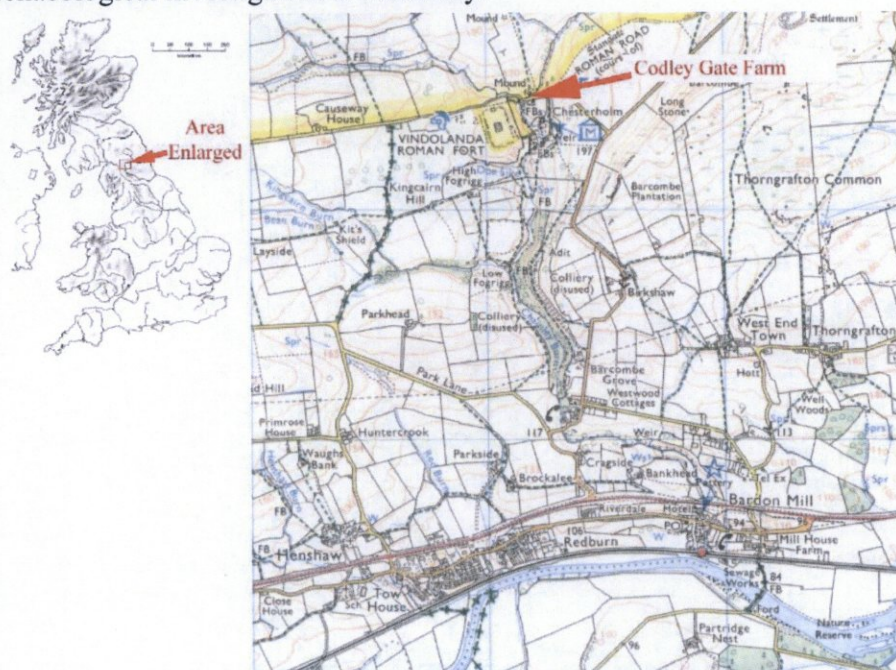


Fig 1. The position of the Field between Vindolanda and Codley Gate farm.

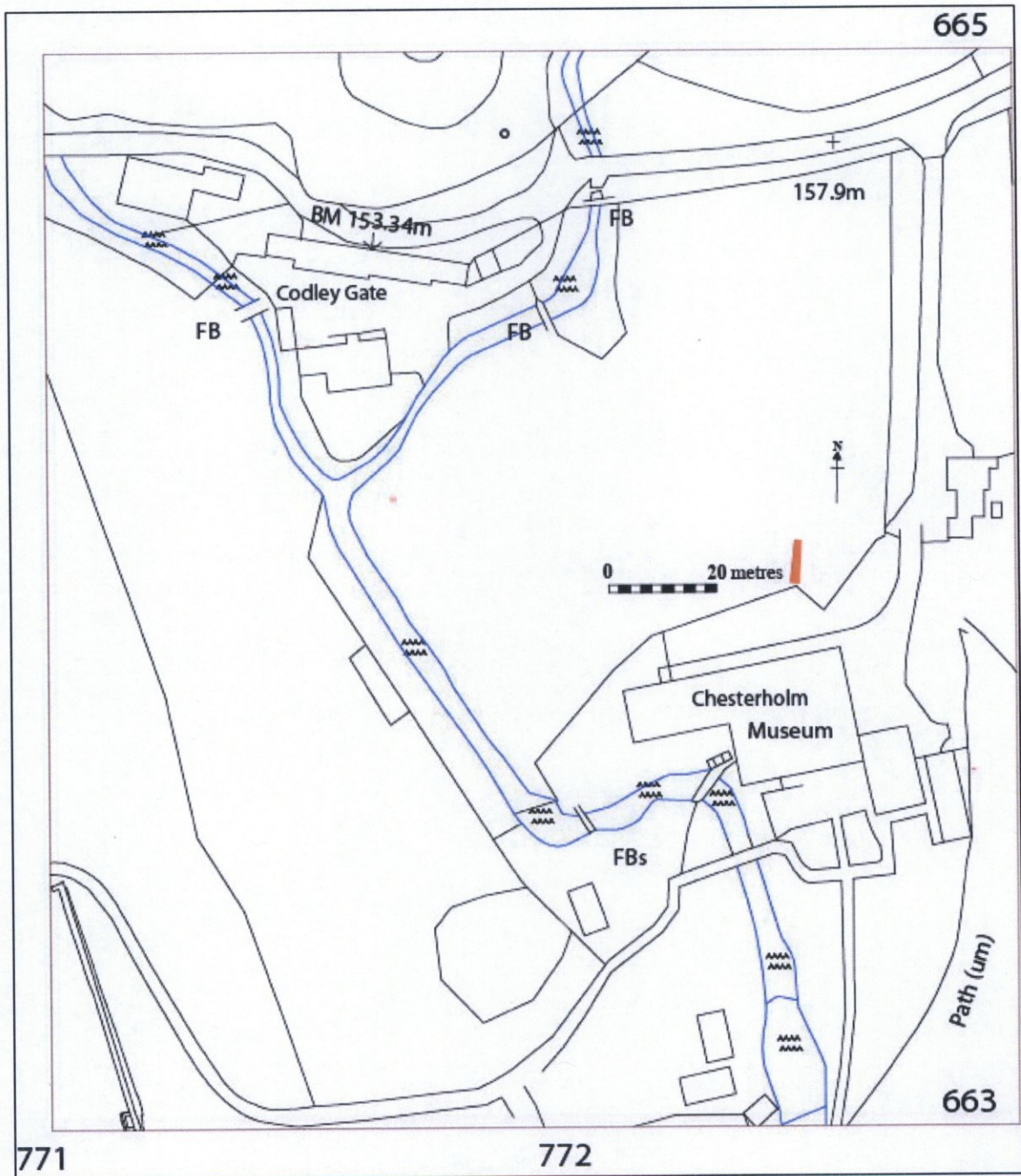


Figure 2. The location of Trench, marked in red.



Figure 3. A photograph of the trench looking north.



Figure 4. Looking East at the eastern edge of the trench. The thin topsoil covering a subsoil which is situated directly on to the clean boulder clay with mixed size rock inclusions.

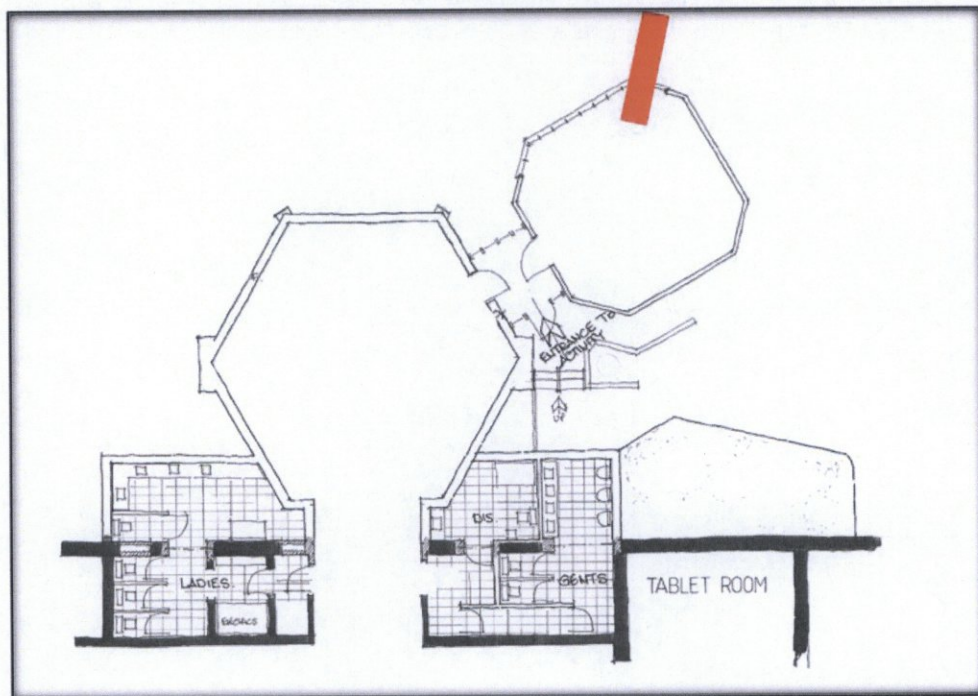


Figure 5. A plan of the proposed museum extension with the position of the excavation trench in red overlaid.