

# Archaeological Evaluation of Plot D east of the Roman Forts, Dirty Lane, Castleshaw, Saddleworth

June and September 2013



Volunteers undertaking geophysical survey and test pitting

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## **Background**

This report describes archaeological investigations in a field to the east of the Scheduled Monument of the Castleshaw Roman Forts. It lies against the south side of Dirty Lane just before it becomes Bleak Hey Nook Lane, at Lower Castleshaw hamlet, located at SE00010966. The land is owned by United Utilities and farmed by David Hurst.

The investigations were in the form of an evaluation and were designed to progress our understanding of the Roman Fort and its environs in accordance with the recommendations of the Castleshaw Conservation Plan (2012). This strategy is supported by a plan showing the location of potential investigation sites, with red being within the Scheduled Monument area and blue outside. The Bleak Hey Nook Lane site is identified as blue Plot D (see Figure 1).

This report can be accessed as a pdf on the Friends of Castleshaw Roman Forts website: [www.castleshawarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.castleshawarchaeology.co.uk).

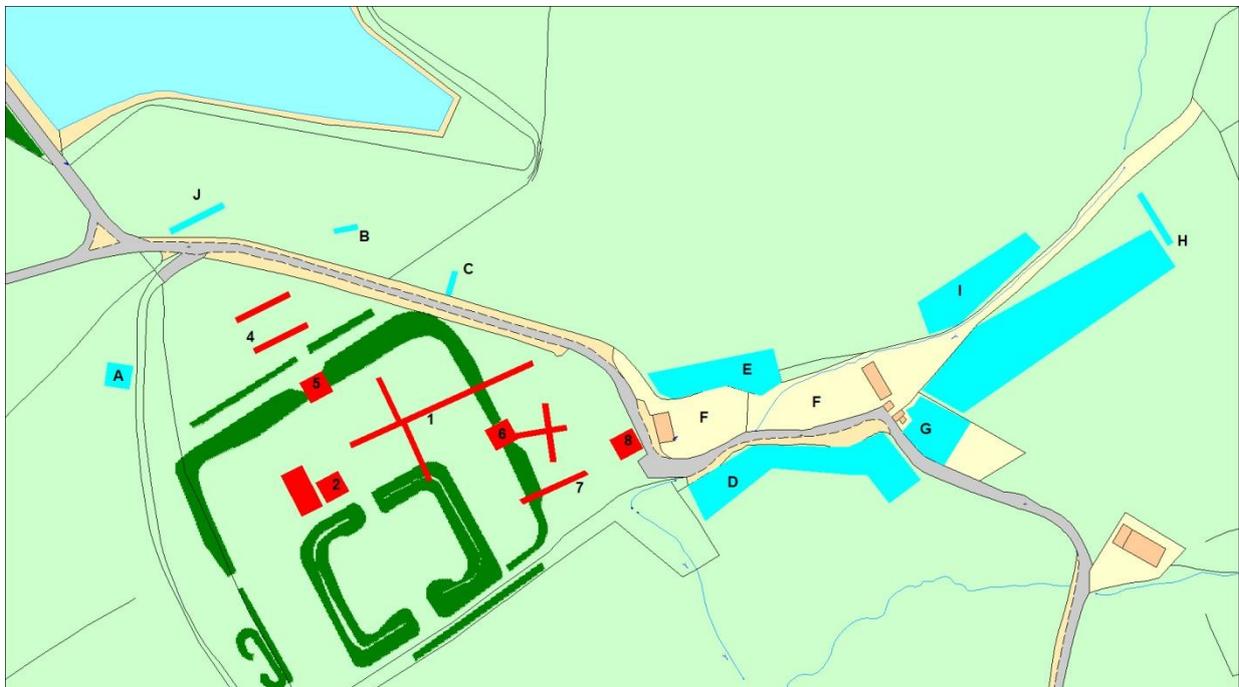


Figure 1: Location of proposed investigation areas, including Plot D, in relation to the current landscape and fort and fortlet sites.

Plot D is an area of relatively flat, higher ground running along the southern edge of Dirty Lane and opposite Castleshaw hamlet. This area will be test pitted for evidence of the potential bath house, burials, funerary monuments, shingles, and mausolea alongside the main Roman highway just to the east of the fort site. Also, there is an opportunity to establish the character and location of the Roman road in this area through test pitting and resistivity survey. There was a post medieval building complex shown here on the 1892 OS 25 inch map, located at SE00040967, consisting of a rectangular structure divided into 3 and enclosed by a rectangular yard. A late 19<sup>th</sup> century photo suggests these were weaving cottages. Some fragmentary remains are visible beside the road and it is likely that further remains will be encountered below-ground to indicate the character, date and function of this site. Test pitting will establish the extent of the remains and inform future investigation and recording strategy. This will help us understand the form and evolution of Castleshaw settlement.



Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 6" map of 1854 showing Lower Castleshaw and the earthworks of the Roman Forts

**Methodology**

Geophysical Survey:



John Pitman from Tameside Archaeological Society undertaking the resistivity survey

Tameside Archaeological Society undertook a resistivity and magnetometer survey across a 40 x 20 metre area on the top, flatish part of the field. A report was produced on the survey results and can be found at [www.castleshawarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.castleshawarchaeology.co.uk). There was a paucity of anomalies and features, and it was not possible to identify a possible Roman road alignment. The lack of features of archaeological interest was later corroborated by the test pitting programme.

#### Test Pitting:

Test pitting consisted of one metre square sample excavations. A written description and photographic record was made of each test pit and its position recorded. Levels were taken of significant archaeological deposits, top and bottom of test pits. Finds were cleaned and described. A report will be produced on the results and lodged with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record and put onto the Friends of Castleshaw Roman Forts website.

The investigations were undertaken by a mixture of experienced and unexperienced volunteers drawn from the Friends of Castleshaw Roman Forts and the Greater Manchester Archaeological Federation, under the directorship of Norman Redhead. A risk assessment was prepared and agreed with the land owner. All test pits were excavated and backfilled in one day so that no holes were left overnight.



Test pitting the former weavers' cottages site

The test pits were designed to evaluate remains relating principally to the project line of the Roman road, possible roadside activity, and the medieval/early post-medieval development of Lower Castleshaw settlement.

## Description of Results

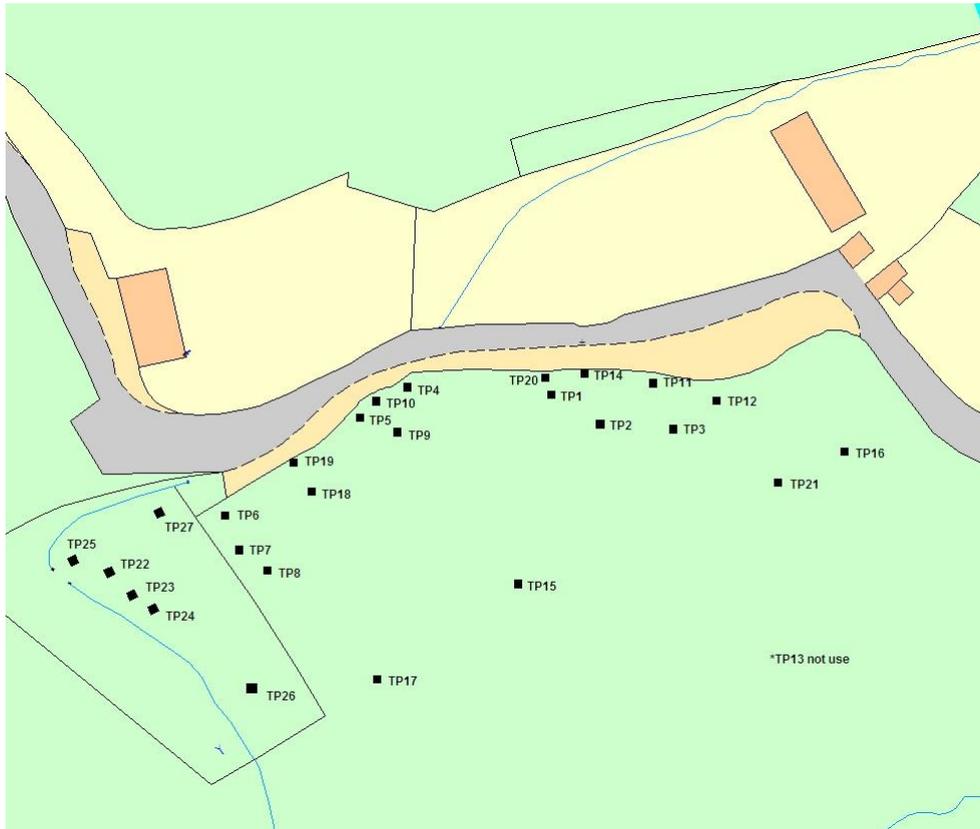


Figure 2: Location of test pits in Plot D and western extension described in this report

### **Test Pit 1**

Located near western edge of yard area behind small rectangular building fronting onto Dirty Lane. Topsoil was 20cm deep and came off onto a layer of demolition material comprising angular and flat gritstones, white mortar, pottery sherds and pieces of ironwork. The stones formed a rough surface. The pottery was 19<sup>th</sup> century but did contain a small red ware base and a cream ware base which might be of (re-deposited Roman origin). Under the rough stone surface was a further 7cm deep layer of dark brown soil which had several sherds of yellow slip ware pottery (18<sup>th</sup> or late 17<sup>th</sup> century date). Under this was natural yellow clay forming a flat surface at a depth of 277.86 m OD. Given the absence of plough soil, it would appear that this area was truncated to create a terrace for the back yard to the cottage.



### Test Pit 2

Not finished. 15 cm depth of topsoil removed to reveal mid-brown plough soil. Topsoil contained brick pieces etc.

### Test Pit 3

The top soil was 20cm deep and contained some 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery fragments. Under this was mid-brown plough soil 16cm deep which came down onto a horizon containing medium size angular sandstones. A sondage showed this to overlie a 25cm deep soft layer of slightly lighter brown silty clay which yielded no finds and could be considered to be a sub-natural deposit. This came off onto natural yellow clay with patches of white clay, lying at a depth of 277.21 m OD in the north-west corner of the test pit but sloping down towards the south.



## Test Pit 4

Located close to fence to look for Roman road remains. Thin gritstone flags were exposed immediately under the turf in the north-east quarter of the test pit. They are therefore of relatively modern origin. Under them and the topsoil was the usual brown plough soil horizon. Top soil and plough soil were both 20 cm deep. A spade-width sondage was cut along one side of the trench and this showed that above natural yellow clay was a 10 cm deep layer of grey clay and gritstone fragments. No road remains were recovered so it is probably located a little further north. It is possible that sub-plough soil negative features such as those identified in the adjacent TPs 5 and 10 could have been present on TP4, but not enough of the base was exposed to determine this.



## Test Pit 5

TP5 was located close to the fence in the hope of locating evidence for the Roman road line. This test pit had the usual c 20 cm top soil but the plough soil was less deep at around only 10cm. An early Victorian half penny and a few sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery came out of these layers. The plough soil came off to reveal natural yellow clay and gravel which were cut by two linear features, both running in a east to west direction. Initially, only one side of one feature was feasible in the confines of the 1m square test pit, so the trial pit was extended to the north by 0.5 m. This revealed the full width of one of the linear features, at 25 cm. On excavation it was found to be only c 8 cm deep with curving sides and a flat base. The fill comprised a mid-brown silty-clay with some flecks of charcoal but no finds. The more northerly linear feature was only defined on its southern edge but within the confines of the trench was found to be a little bit deeper at 12 cm and with a steeper edge. The fill was also different, being a grey, soft silty clay, but again with no finds. Top of natural clay was at 278.17 m OD.

The southern feature could represent the foundation slot for a timber building, whereas it could be speculated that the northern feature could relate to a roadside ditch. Whilst no finds were discovered the fact that the features were sealed by the plough soil and are consistent with similar features found during the fortlet excavations in the 1980s suggests that they are of Roman origin. The lack of evidence for the road itself shows that it is more to the north than expected.





### Test Pit 6

Positioned in north-west corner of the field to look for Roman road or road-side archaeological evidence. 20 cm depth of dark top soil came off onto brown plough soil. There was not time to finish this test pit but a spade-width sondage in the south-east corner showed that had a similar soil profile to Test Pit 7. There were several sherds of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century pot sherds in the topsoil but the plough soil had earlier pottery in the form of several brown glazed sherds of possible 18<sup>th</sup> century origin and a single yellow and brown trail slipped ware sherd of possible 17<sup>th</sup> century date.



### Test Pit 7

Part of south-north line of 3 test pits across upper terrace area of north-west corner of field. Top soil was 20 cm deep, but plough soil was a bit deeper at c 25cm. It became more silty and softer with depth and revealed a layer of weather yellow-orange sandstone with gritstones pieces, set in a mid-grey clay matrix. This in turn came off onto natural yellow and brown clay loam. No evidence of Roman features. Five sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century dark glazed earthen ware from the topsoil. Level of test pit base on natural clay was 276.25 m OD.



### Test Pit 8

Most southerly of line of test pits close to fence on west side of field. Different in character to Test Pit 7, in that the 20 cm of top soil and plough soil was underlain by a cluster of angular gritstones of medium (5-15cm) length. The stones were set into natural clay but no evidence could be found for them to be filling a feature and therefore not be of natural origin.



### Test Pit 9

Designed to look at area a few metres south east of TP5. Top soil of 10cm depth over brown plough soil of similar depth. Beneath this was yellow clay with frequent small angular sandstones. This was deemed to be natural, at a relatively shallow depth. Running in a west to east direction in the middle of the test pit was a shall linear feature cut to a maximum of 5cm deep into the natural yellow clay and petering out towards the east. It had a mid-grey silty clay fill with some charcoal flecking but no finds except for a small iron nail head. Whilst this feature could be interpreted as a foundation slot for a timber building, and its alignment is parallel with the slot seen in the middle of TP5, close inspection shows the cut of the slot starting from the top of plough soil so that it would appear to be post-Roman in origin. Turf at 277.90 m OD, top of natural at 277.60 m OD.





### Test Pit 10

Located tight against the fence by Dirty Lane, aiming to pick up the slot part revealed in TP5. Top soil of 12 cm depth over brown plough soil of 15 cm depth, becoming soft and more silty towards base and mixed with flecks of charcoal and patches of grey silt. At 30 cm depth beneath turf, yellow/orange/white natural clay was found. Cut into this was a linear feature running east to west. On excavation this was found to be 53 cm wide at its maximum, with gently sloping sides creating a broad U shape. The base was 40 cm beneath turf level. The fill was a friable mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and some small gritstone pieces in base. There were no finds but the feature is on the same alignment as the slot against the north edge of TP5. It is Roman in character and sealed by the plough soil. This could be the (very truncated) roadside ditch, with the road pretty well removed and located where Dirty Lane now is. Turf 278.59 m OD, natural top edge 278.29 m OD, base of feature 278.19 m OD.



### Test Pit 11

Located to examine evidence for character of remains of weavers' cottages. Black top soil removal revealed the top of the rubble core of a wall running south-west to north-east. Facing stones appear to have been robbed out and the core comprised medium-sized angular sandstones set in white mortar. The wall edge was evident against mid- to dark brown soil on the west side, with little evidence of a wall foundation trench cut. The eastern side appears to have been the interior of the building with remains of a hearth against the test pit edge. The

hearth base was 60 cm wide, flanked by stone uprights and contained a deposit of 5 cm depth of charcoal. The test pit was extended southwards to determine the wall end/return. A layer of flat, thin sandstones was found at shallow depth within the top soil. As these overlay topsoil or voids, they were felt to be post demolition and not structural as there was no foundation material. In the trench extension the wall was found to terminate in a large rectangular squared-off grit stone measuring 53 cm in length. This appears to mark the end of the building. Within the limited space of the trench and time constraints it was not possible to clearly determine a return wall. However, the test pit has revealed the foundations of the party wall for the eastern-most two weavers' cottages depicted on historic mapping. Frequent finds of 19<sup>th</sup> century transfer willow pattern, white and dark glazed pottery sherds, and iron fragments. Turf level 277.91 m OD, top of wall 277.78 m OD, bottom of hearth 277.55 m OD.



### Test Pit 12

This test pit was designed to reveal remains of the yard wall south of and behind the easternmost weavers' cottage. The top of a wall foundation was located beneath 10 cm of topsoil. There were two courses of flat sandstones with a good facing on the east side, but less well preserved and clear on the inner west wall face. The eastern edge was cut into a brown plough soil, but there was no evidence for an interior yard surface, the materials presumably having been salvaged. The wall was c 40 cm wide but petered out towards the south so that a return was not evident. Lots of finds came from this test pit. These included 19<sup>th</sup> century transfer willow pattern, white, yellow and dark glazed pottery sherds, together with brick, glass, and iron fragments. The wall did not have a foundation trench but lay on a compact layer of shale which was evident as natural across the trench. Top of stone wall 278.08 m OD, top of natural shale 277.98 m OD.



### Test Pit 13

Not assigned

### Test Pit 14

Positioned to examine foundation of wall between the middle of the three former weavers cottages and the smallest, most westerly of those cottages. Topsoil of 10cm depth came off onto some flat gritstones, the largest of which was 35 cm across. It was supported by two smaller stones creating a straight edge on east side. The trench was extended to 2 x1 m to reveal more of the wall base. However, it became clear that most the wall footing had been robbed out and removed, as stones survived very sparsely and only one course deep.



### Test Pit 15

Sited within linear depression to look for track leading down from Castleshaw hamlet to the well. Topsoil and a thin plough soil totalling 15 cm came off on to natural which showed as yellow clay and grey shale. Within the small assemblage of characteristic 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery were two possible earlier sherds, one a dark glazed earthen ware with a bubbly surface and the other a dark brown and yellow trail slip rim fragment.



### Test Pit 16

On a level area of the field possibly representing a building platform. There was 20 cm depth of topsoil and a deep plough soil (brown) of 30 cm. A group of stake holes of c 8 cm depth and filled with dark grey silty clay were found at the base of the plough soil. 6 stake holes were excavated, 4 of which were in a line. The possible stake holes were cut into a silty brown clay deposit underlying the plough soil. Removal of this material showed natural yellow clay with no features evident. The small test pit area precludes an interpretation of the form and function of the structure represented by the stake holes; however, they do appear to be a relatively early feature. Turf top = 276.78 m OD, base of test pit = 276.30 m OD.



### **Test Pit 17**

This was close to the fence enclosing the well (or trough) and in the linear depression created by the former track. Top soil was found to be c 20 cm depth but the brown plough soil was much deeper at c 60 cm, as determined by a sondage in the corner of the test pit. There were no finds lower down but the top soil yielded plenty of 19<sup>th</sup> century material. There was no evidence of the track way that is shown on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition map of 1854 .



### Test Pit 18

Located on relatively flat strip of land just above down slope c 4 metres south of TP 19. Top soil 001 was about 20 cm deep but brown plough soil 002 only 8 cm deep. The latter came off onto friable mid-orange clay with frequent small to medium angular sandstones which appeared to be natural. A handful of 19<sup>th</sup> century finds came from 001 and 002. There was no evidence for possible early features sealed by the plough soil. Turf was 277.28 m OD and the top of the stone deposit was 276.97 m OD.



### Test Pit 19

This was located close to the fence to the east side of the field gate. There was 10 cm depth of top soil, then c 30 cm of brown plough soil which came down onto a stony deposit comprising fairly loose, medium angular sandstones with some early post-medieval pottery in the upper layer. There were a lot of stones and, given the test pit's location, these could represent the remains of a plough damaged Roman road. However, it is equally possible that the stones are of natural origin; further excavation would be required to give more certainty.

The turf level was 277.78 m OD. The test pit was not completed so the depth of the stone deposit is not yet known.



### Test Pit 20

Excavated at 0.5 m wide and 1.5 m long to reveal what appears to be a stone laid path adjacent to the last and smallest building on the west side of the former weavers' cottages. The path appears to have been laid as long narrow grit stones (the one revealed being c 50 cm wide, on one side bordered by upright thin flagstones, whilst on the other being bordered by a line of smaller rounded grit stones bounded again by thin flagstones set on edge. The top of the stone path was at 278.33 m AOD. The path was well preserved and looked very neat, bordered on the west by brown plough soil and on the east by a cinder deposit perhaps part of the yard surface. Plenty of characteristic 19<sup>th</sup> century domestic rubbish finds from the top soil.



### Test Pit 21

This was c 5 m west of TP 16, looking at flat, platform area. A sondage in one corner of the test pit demonstrated a similar sequence of layers to that of TP16, except that there were no stake holes.

## The westward extension of the Plot D test pitting area.



It was decided to seek clarification of the remains of the Roman road alignment (and possible roadside ditch) by extending the test pitting programme to an area west of Plot D that was enclosed by a fence to incorporate a water trough (shown as a well on the OS 1854 map). Within this area was a prominent linear earthwork which was on the projected road line. A further 6 test pits were excavated in this area on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2013.

### Test Pit 22

Located on what was thought to have been an earthwork representing remains of the Roman road as it approached the south-east corner of the fort. 20 cm of top soil came off onto 30cm of brown plough soil. Under this was a layer of light to mid-grey sandy silt with patches of light orange decayed sandstone. A possible negative feature was cut into this layer, appearing as a linear spread of light brown, clean silty clay. The mid-grey material appeared to have washed over the top edge of the feature but a good edge was evident lower down. The cut ran west to east and was meandering. However, the light brown fill had no dating material in it and appeared to go down to considerable depth with natural yellow clay being encountered in a corner sondage at around 1 metre deep. There was no evidence of Roman road material or foundation deposits. Top of test pit turf level was 276.63 m OD, top of grey sandy silt was 276.07 m OD, and natural encountered at 275.54 m OD



### Test Pit 23

Located just downhill of the linear earthwork, on edge of a flat area (terrace). 20 cm top soil and 25 cm brown plough soil which covered a mid-to dark grey silty clay layer characterised by frequent flecks and small pieces of charcoal. Its depth ranged from only 10 cm on the west side of the test pit to c 20 cm on the east side. This deposit looked as though it could be of Roman origin, given its stratigraphic location and similarity to deposits previously excavated within the Roman fortlet. However, a clay pipe stem and bowl fragment was found in its upper surface. This may have worked its way down through root or worm action – but there were no other finds and certainly no Roman material. Under this deposit was a layer of light to mid-grey sandy silt with patches of light orange decayed sandstone, which is the natural sub-soil seen in TP 22 and TP 24. A corner sondage showed this natural continued down for at least another 10 cm. Top of test pit was 275.52 m OD, top of charcoal layer 275.26 m OD, top of grey sandy silt 275.17 m OD.



### Test Pit 24

Located near south side of flat area beneath 'bank' targeted by TP 22. Top soil was 20 cm deep, then brown plough soil of 24 cm which came off onto a thin layer (c 5 cm) of small angular grit stones set in decayed orange sandstone. This was removed to reveal the light to mid- grey silty sand deposit seen in the adjacent TPs 22 and 23. Under this was natural yellow clay. No evidence of cut features or any Roman activity here. Top of test pit was

275.53 m OD, top of grey sandy silt was 274.99 m OD, and the natural clay level was at 274.82m OD.



### Test Pit 25

This was positioned over tumble associated with the former dry stone wall running west to east across the top of the slope in this field. As the test pits lower down had proved negative for the Roman road line, it was hoped that this former field boundary might be sat on top of the road, using it as a foundation. However, having removed some of the wall tumble it was apparent that the wall edge would be difficult to find. A smooth grey silt and decayed black humic soil was revealed but it was decided not to excavate this and to abandon this test pit in favour of one further to the east (TP 27) where the wall face was more clearly defined.



### Test Pit 26

Located on edge of wet, rushy area beside the water trough (spring) down the hill slope and within a fenced area next to the fort site. The idea here was to test for any walls or Roman finds that could indicate a bath house. The existence of a spring here and the roughly rectangular depression associated with it made it worth test pitting to examine archaeological

potential. The 1854 OS 6" map shows a well here and a track running down to it from Lower Castleshaw hamlet.

The metre square test pit showed natural yellow clay and grey shale at relatively shallow depths (c 10 cm). A narrow trench was excavated off this test pit to the east to examine the edge of the rush filled depression. It was found that there was a roughly 45 degree angle cut into the natural shale to create an edge to the depression. No Roman finds and the lack of any structural remains suggest there was no Roman activity here unless it was at the well site itself which was too wet to excavate. The bottom of the depression was about 1 m beneath the ground surface. The upper fills were a mix of yellow clay with some dark humic material, but the bottom 20cm or so yielded a body sherd of possible Midland Purple pottery dating to the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The upper layers yielded typical 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds.



### Test Pit 27

This was positioned against the south face of a former dry stone wall segment. It was possible to clean down the wall face and expose the foundation stones. The wall survived to 60 cm height. The wall edge was followed down to reveal that it sat on a grey silt deposit, which in turn was over a brown silty clay layer of c 20 cm depth, which in turn revealed a grey sandy silt deposit. Under this was a very compact surface of worn cobble grit stones. Due to time constraints the test pit was narrowed to a sondage of c 0.5 sq m so not much could be exposed. It could not be ascertained if the cobble layer is natural or possible remains of the Roman road. Top of wall was at 277.82 m OD, the base at 277.10 m OD and the top of the cobble grit stone layer was at 276.82 m OD.



## Conclusion

The 26 test pits demonstrated that Roman remains are sparse and rather ephemeral in the area of Plot D and its westward extension. It was surprising to find so little evidence of the Roman road, with only TP 19 offering any potential remains. In particular, it was disappointing to find that the linear bank in the westward extension, which on the surface looked very much like a potential survival of the Roman road close to the fort's south-east corner, had no metalling or road foundation material. Elsewhere, TPs 5 and 10 revealed gullies or slots sealed under the plough soil. Whilst having no Roman finds to help date them, these features were nonetheless of a similar character to excavated features within the fortlet. It is possible that the northern-most slot represents a truncated road side ditch, whilst the parallel slot to the south in TP 5 is a timber building slot. However, the limited nature of the area exposed by the test pits makes such interpretation somewhat less than definitive. Opening up a larger excavation area in this vicinity would be worthwhile. One or two test pits, such as TP 24, had deposits of dark grey silty clay with charcoal flecks sealed beneath the plough soil. Unfortunately there were no associated Roman finds so we can only speculate a Roman origin based on similarities with deposits found in the fortlet excavations in the 1980s.

The lack of Roman finds as 'background noise' does suggest that the field investigated as Plot D was little used in the Roman occupation period, despite its close proximity to the projected road line and forts site. Based on the evidence provided by the test pitting evaluation, it is concluded that Dirty Lane represents the line of the Roman road and therefore the road must have kinked to the north slightly to follow the higher ground on the eastern approach to the fort's southern gate. However, given the fact that there was a ditch to the south of the fort rampart, there is very little space available for the Roman road. Could it have been robbed out? It is anticipated that potentially much better preserved remains are available for investigation in the lawned area of the eastern-most house at Lower Castleshaw and also in the fields above the settlement where the road earthwork is clearly visible. These should be a priority for evaluation so that we can obtain a better understanding of the character and width of the Roman road on the east side of the fort.



The red dashed line suggests the line of the Agricolan Fort phase Roman road, adjusted to take account of Plot D test pits.

There are no post-Roman remains that can be attributed to the medieval period. One test pit (TP 26) examined the rectangular shaped depression next to the water trough further down the hill side. It was found that the natural shale had been cut to create this depression. One late 15<sup>th</sup>/early 16<sup>th</sup> century sherd of Midland Purple ware was found near the bottom of the feature, suggesting it could be early post-medieval. The test pit evaluation was successful in locating foundations for the set of weavers' cottages that were situated against the southern edge of Dirty Lane, forming part of Lower Castleshaw hamlet (TPs 11,12 and 14). Remains of yard surfaces and an associated path were also recorded (TP 1 and 20). There was a good assemblage of domestic rubbish, mainly of 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century date but with some 18<sup>th</sup> and possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds as well. Walls belonging to the cottages survive to over 1 metre high on the verge of Dirty Lane, but on the south side of the wooden fence marking the boundary of the field it is clear from the test pit results that the walls have been heavily robbed. Survival of floor surfaces is likely to be patchy, although a hearth was revealed in TP 11.



The weavers' cottages can be seen in the bottom left side of this c 1900 view of Lower Castleshaw (sourced from the Peter Fox Saddleworth Post Card Collection).

#### Research Framework:

In setting out the test pitting evaluation strategy for Plot D several research questions were posed. These are listed below, with commentary relating the evaluation results to the research framework.

- *The nature and form of prehistoric activity at Castleshaw.* Negative evidence. No prehistoric finds from test pits and no features of this date.
- *Understanding palaeo-environmental potential.* No sampling undertaken but no ditch or pit fills with anaerobic conditions suitable for pollen preservation were encountered.
- *Understanding the road network.* The evaluation was unable to provide good evidence for the Roman road alignment, but suggested a location just outside the Plot D research area. This has allowed a revision of our understanding of the line of the Roman road as it approaches the east side of the forts.
- *Understanding the immediate hinterland of the fort including potential for a vicus.* The test pits suggest very limited Roman activity in this area which is close to the eastern defences. Only a couple of possible building slots were identified, but with no finds dating evidence.

- *Understanding the wider landscape associated with the fort, such as evidence for Roman agriculture.* There was a plough soil evident in nearly all the test pits; however, this appears to represent the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century ploughing seen in the 1980s fortlet excavations.
- *The transition from fort to fortlet.* There was no relevant information for this topic.
- *Understanding how the fortlet functioned on a day to day basis.* As above.
- *Understanding the wider landscape associated with the fortlet.* As above.
- *Understanding the decline of the fortlet.* As above.
- *The nature of post-Roman occupation.* As above.
- *The foundations of medieval Castleshaw.* There was very little evidence for medieval activity.
- *Understanding the broader landscape during the post-Roman period.* No relevant information for this topic.
- *Nature of the medieval grange.* No relevant information for this topic.
- *The growth of the medieval hamlet.* The earliest house remains appear to be 18<sup>th</sup> or perhaps early 19<sup>th</sup> century in origin, relating to a set of weavers' cottages. The well or trough is possibly early post-medieval in origin.
- *Do elements of the medieval hamlet survive?* No evidence for this in the test pitted area.
- *Understanding the medieval/post medieval field system.* Apart from the cottages site, there was widespread evidence of ploughing activity of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century origin. There were no banks or ditches revealed in the test pits suggestive of early field boundaries; however, ruinous dry stone field walls and an earth bank field boundary still survive as monuments in the landscape of the Plot D west ward extension area.

## **Acknowledgements**

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Visitors enjoy some live archaeology as they ask questions of volunteers undertaking the test pitting exercise in Plot D.

