



Burtonwood, Papcastle, Cockermouth, Cumbria.

Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology North

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Roy Wilson

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BURTONWOOD, PAPCASTLE, COCKERMOUTH, CUMBRIA: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A planning application (2/2013/0198) was made by Roy Wilson for the construction of a new-build garage attached to Burtonwood, Papcastle, Cockermouth (NGR NY 11263 31235; Fig 1).
- 1.2 As the site lies to the south-east of Papcastle Roman fort, within land within the former Roman settlement associated with it (*Appendix 1*), Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) attached a condition to the planning application, stipulating that an archaeological watching brief should be maintained during the ground works for the development. These requirements were conveyed to Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was provided, see *Appendix 1*. OA North were subsequently commissioned to undertake the watching brief.
- 1.3 It was not considered appropriate to include a full archaeological background for Papcastle in this report, as this seems disproportionate and it has been documented, on many occasions, elsewhere. However, the archaeological background to the site has been summarised within the WSI (*Appendix 1*).

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The watching brief was undertaken by Paul Clark, in accordance with OA North standards (which in turn meet those of English Heritage and the Institute of Field Archaeologists) on the 9th and 10th July 2013. The groundworks undertaken initially consisted of the excavation into the slope at the northern end of the proposed garage, of an area measuring 3m by 5.2m in plan (Fig 2; Plates 1 and 2), to a maximum depth of 1.2m, to reduce this area to the required construction level for the floor slab. This was followed by the excavation of the strip foundations for the garage (Fig 2; Plates 3 and 4), which were 0.45m wide and were excavated to a depth of 0.45m below the floor slab level. In addition, an area measuring 4m by 2.5m in plan, immediately to the east, in land belonging to Warwick House, was levelled, digging into the slope to a maximum depth of 0.5m. All excavation was undertaken by a 1.8 tonne tracked excavator, using a toothed bucket.

3 RESULTS

- 3.1 The northern end of the site, in the area of the slope, contained deposits comprising 0.25m of topsoil, overlying boulder clay, which contained frequent small to large stones, representing the natural glacial drift. To the south of the slope, a thin (25mm) concrete slab was present, overlying the natural boulder clay. The excavation of the southern foundation revealed a gas pipe along its length, which had been cut into the natural geology, whilst an electric cable was encountered at the southern end of the western foundation.

- 3.2 The excavation in the grounds of Warwick House revealed only topsoil, to a maximum depth of 0.25m, directly overlying the natural geology.
- 3.3 No finds or features of archaeological significance were encountered during the course of the groundworks.

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Plan of groundworks

PLATES

Plate 1: East-facing view of excavation of slope

Plate 2: East-facing view of area reduced to construction level

Plate 3: East-facing view of excavation of northern foundation trench

Plate 4: South-west-facing view of site following excavation of foundation trenches

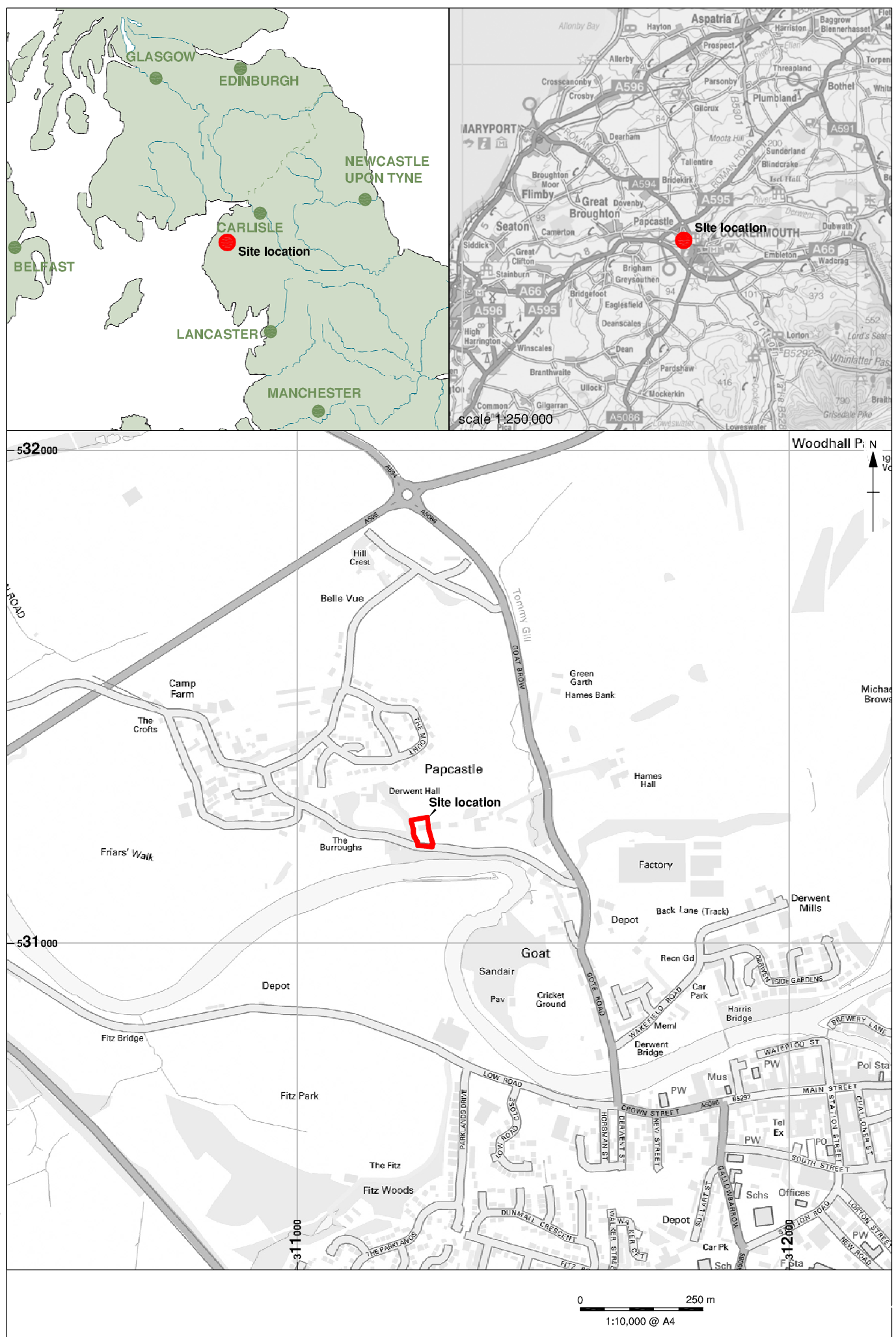


Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Plan of groundworks



Plate 1: East-facing view of excavation of slope



Plate 2: East-facing view of area reduced to construction level



Plate 3: East-facing view of excavation of northern foundation trench



Plate 4: South-west-facing view of site following excavation of foundation trenches

APPENDIX 1: WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

Oxford

Archaeology

North

April 2013

**BURTONWOOD
PAPCASTLE,
COCKERMOUTH,
CUMBRIA
CA13 0JN**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Proposals

The following project design is offered in response to a request for a proposed archaeological watching brief at Burtonwood, Papcastle issued by Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) have produced the following Written Scheme of Investigations for an archaeological Watching Brief on construction work for a new-build garage to be attached to a residence: Burtonwood, Papcastle, Cockermouth, CA13 0JN, Planning Reference 2/2013/0198 (Fig 1). Specifically, it proposes monitoring all activities, which will result in a below-ground-level impact, where there is significant potential for disturbing any archaeological deposits that may be present. This document has been produced at the request of Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) and is in accordance with the advice CCCHES have given to Allerdale Borough Council, which states:

An archaeological watching brief shall be undertaken by a qualified archaeologist during the course of the ground works of the permitted development. The archaeological watching brief shall be in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority in advance of the permitted development. Within two months of the completion of the permitted development, 3 copies of the report shall be furnished to the Local Planning Authority.

- 1.1.2 The purposes of the watching brief have been specified as being in order to "...afford a reasonable opportunity for an examination to be made to determine the existence of any remains of archaeological interest within the site and for the investigation and recording of such remains".

1.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.2.1 The fort at Papcastle (*Derwentio*; Rivet and Smith 1981, 334) occupied a strategically important site, on a hill overlooking fertile agricultural land, close to a fording point on the River Derwent, and with good road connections to other forts in the area, including Old Carlisle, Maryport, Moresby and Brougham (Collingwood 1913, 131). On present evidence, it has been suggested that Papcastle may be an early second-century foundation, replacing an earlier fort at Caermote (Breeze 1988, 13 and fig 1). The known stone fort was probably built in the late second or early third century, although even this is not entirely certain (Birley 1963, 121). Occupation appears to have been continuous into the second half of the fourth century (*ibid*).
- 1.2.2 In addition to the fort itself, Papcastle has long been known as the site of a considerable Roman civilian settlement (Birley 1963). This developed south of the fort during the second century and parts at least continued to be occupied until the mid-fourth century or later (Olivier *et al* in prep; OA North 2008). A community geophysical survey on the environs of Papcastle, led by Grampus Heritage (Graham 2011), was undertaken in 2009, revealing significant remains across the area surveyed. This led to an archaeological evaluation on land to the south of the River Derwent, adjacent to Low Road, Cockermouth, in 2010, by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (Giecco and Jackson, 2011). The evaluation revealed significant Romano-British features in each of the eight trenches excavated, with the majority of the surviving features dating to a period of intensive occupation extending from the early second-century through to the late third-century, with some level of occupation extending into the fourth-century. The make-up of the settlement was mixed including timber buildings located within small enclosures with signs of small-scale industrial activity and more extensive structures with substantial stone foundations with possible military connections, including a water mill and associated mill race. A possible early marching camp and a circular feature measuring approximately 60m in diameter of unknown function were also identified (*ibid*).
- 1.2.3 The application site lies within land that lies within the former Roman settlement. Identified within Area 3 of the Grampus Heritage-led geophysical survey, c 100m to the west of Burtonwood, were the probable remains of a rectangular building fronting onto a possible road or track (Graham 2011, 17; fig 10). Additionally, adjacent and to the east of this building, the

survey indicated a north/south-aligned ditch (*ibid*). As such, the new building has the potential to disturb archaeological remains.

1.3 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH (OA NORTH)

- 1.3.1 OA North has considerable experience of the evaluation and excavation of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large-scale projects throughout Northern England, including Cumbria, during the past 35 years. OA North is an Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) registered organisation, number 17, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IFA Code of Conduct. A rigorous approach is taken towards health and safety and our staff are CSCS accredited. OA North are insured for third party liability and carry Public, Employers and Professional indemnity.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 PROJECT AIMS

- 2.1.1 The watching brief will monitor all construction works that will result in a below-ground-level impact and where there is significant potential for disturbing any archaeological remains that may be present. For example all excavations for foundations, services, areas for stockpiling or hard-standing. This will be with the intention of identifying and appropriately characterising and recording any archaeological features or deposits present within the impacted zone. This information will be used to inform a decision regarding whether such archaeological remains can be preserved *in situ* or whether there is a requirement to excavate them and preserve them by record. In the event of the latter, archaeological work will be undertaken so as to ensure that an accurate record of the archaeological remains is made and that, as far as is possible, they are understood.

2.1.2 REPORT AND ARCHIVE PRODUCTION

- 2.2.1 If the results of the watching brief are negative, a very brief report to this effect can be produced for the client and supplied to CCCHES, upon their request. If any significant archaeology is identified a suitable level of analysis/reporting will be agreed with the client and CCCHES. Such a report will as a minimum include:

- A site location plan, related to the national grid;
- A front cover/frontispiece which includes the planning application number and the national grid reference of the site;
- The dates on which the fieldwork was undertaken;
- A concise, non-technical summary of the results;
- An explanation of any agreed variations to the brief, including justification for any analyses not undertaken;
- A description of the methodology employed, work undertaken and the results obtained;
- Plans and sections at an appropriate scale, showing the location and position of deposits and finds located, and absolute heights above Ordnance Datum;
- A list of, and dates for, any finds recovered and a description and interpretation of the deposits identified;
- A description of any environmental or other specialist work undertaken and the results obtained.

- 2.2.2 Three copies of the report will be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record (CHER) within a reasonable period following the completion of fieldwork. This will be on the understanding that the report will be made available as a public document through the CHER.
- 2.2.3 The results of the watching brief will be made available for inclusion in a summary report to a suitable regional or national archaeological publication if further archaeological fieldwork is expected.
- 2.2.4 An archive will be prepared in accordance with the recommendations in Brown (2007). Arrangements will be made for its long term storage and deposition with an appropriate repository. A copy shall also be offered to the National Monuments Record.
- 2.2.5 In the event that any finds are recovered, the transfer of the ownership of finds will be made to a local or relevant specialist museum, assuming the landowner gives their approval. The County Historic Environment Service will be notified of the arrangements made.
- 2.2.6 Cumbria HER is taking part in the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/> will, therefore, also be completed as part of the project. This will be on the understanding that information on projects undertaken in Cumbria will be made available through the above website, unless otherwise agreed.

3. METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 FIELDWORK

- 3.1.1 All aspects of the evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (2009).
- 3.1.2 The archaeological techniques will be selected to cause the minimum amount of destruction. Work will proceed in such a manner as to avoid any unnecessary delays to construction and will comply with all relevant health and safety regulations. All of those working on site will be made aware of the significance and history of the site.
- 3.1.3 An archaeologist will attend the site, on the request of the client or their representative, to monitor any below-ground works which will have a significant potential of disturbing any archaeological remains that might be present. It is anticipated that this will include all hand-dug or mechanical stripping of topsoil *etc* and/or deeper excavation, for example, site clearance, foundations, drains or service trenches or areas for storage or hardstanding.
- 3.1.4 If archaeological features or deposits are encountered during excavation, measures will be taken to safeguard them, and the client and CCCHES will be informed, as soon as is practicable. If the archaeological remains are of limited significance and/or extent, it may be possible to mitigate them during the course of the watching brief. In the event of more significant remains being discovered, a decision will be reached, through discussion with the client and CCCHES, as to whether the archaeology can be preserved *in situ* or whether it should be excavated and preserved by record. In the case of *in situ* preservation, an explicit methodology will need to be determined to ensure that the archaeological remains are not compromised. If excavation is preferred, a methodology for this will be agreed with the contractor that allows sufficient time for the archaeology to be excavated and recorded, and which causes the minimal amount of disruption to the construction works.
- 3.1.5 Any human remains found will be left *in situ*, covered and protected. No further investigation will normally proceed beyond that necessary to establish the date and character of the burial, and the CCCHES and the local Coroner will be informed immediately if a burial is discovered. If removal is essential, the exhumation of any funerary remains will require the provision of a Ministry of Justice licence, under section 25 of the Burial Act of 1857. The

removal of human remains will be carried out with due care and sensitivity under the environmental health regulations.

- 3.1.6 All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, using a system, adapted from that used by the Centre for Archaeology Service of English Heritage. Results of all field investigations will be recorded on OA North's *pro forma* context sheets. All features and deposits will be planned at an appropriate scale and representative trench sections will be drawn. Digital photographs will record the trenches and illustrate individual features. The elevation of the underlying natural deposits will be recorded as will the elevation of any archaeological horizons. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.
- 3.1.7 Finds recovery and sampling programmes will be in accordance with current best practice (following IfA and other specialist guidelines). All artefacts and ecofacts will be treated in accordance with OA North standard practice, which is cognisant of IfA and UKIC Guidelines. In general, this will mean that (where appropriate and safe to do so) finds are washed, dried, marked, bagged and packed in stable conditions; no attempt at conservation will be made unless special circumstances require prompt action. In such a case guidance and/or expertise will be sought from a suitably qualified conservator. OA North will assess the finds for conservation after fieldwork has been completed, but the cost of conservation must be born by the client.
- 3.1.8 Samples will be collected for artefact retrieval should this prove necessary, for example, in the case of deposits associated with metalworking being identified.
- 3.1.9 Any gold and silver artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996/7.
- 3.1.10 The field team will be advised and supported by Oxford Archaeology's in-house environmental specialists. An agreed sampling strategy will be defined through discussions with CCCHEs, if archaeologically sensitive features or deposits are encountered during the watching brief.

3.4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 3.4.1 OA North recognises its responsibilities with regard to health and safety, and will establish safe working practices in accordance with current legislation. OA North provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Health and 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 OA North's own health and safety guidance documentation. OA North's site staff are CSCS accredited and senior staff are qualified First Aiders. All staff are issued with Personal Protective Equipment and each team with a telephone and a first aid kit. OA North will liaise with all parties to ensure all site specific health and safety regulations are met. A risk assessment will be completed in advance of any on-site works, which will be made available with our method statement.
- 3.4.2 OA North staff will work under the supervision of the principle contractor, with regards to site health and safety procedures and legislation. Site access will be well regulated and notification of hazards such as services and contaminated ground will be obtained from the principle contractor. It will be the principal contractor's responsibility to alert OA North of any such.

4. RESOURCES AND PROGRAMMING

4.1 STAFF AND TIMETABLE PROPOSALS

- 4.1.1 The overall management of the project will be undertaken by **Fraser Brown** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.
- 4.1.2 The watching brief will be undertaken by a competent archaeologist. The duration of the work will be dependent on the principle contractor's programme.
- 4.1.3 If finds or deposits are encountered that require specialist input, OA North will use Oxford Archaeology's in-house specialists out of preference, but external specialists may also be commissioned, subject to the agreement of the CCCHES, should no in house expertise be available.
- 4.1.4 Normally OA North staff work a 7.5 hour day, Monday to Friday, though adjustments to hours may be made to maximise daylight working time in winter and to meet travel requirements

5. PROJECT MONITORING

5.1 PROCEDURE

- 5.1 Fieldwork will be monitored by the Historic Environment Officer on behalf of the local planning authority. CCCHES will be given prior notification, detailing when the watching brief is going to take place, and will be afforded access to the site at reasonable notice.
- 5.2 The involvement of CCCHES will be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

6. REFERENCES

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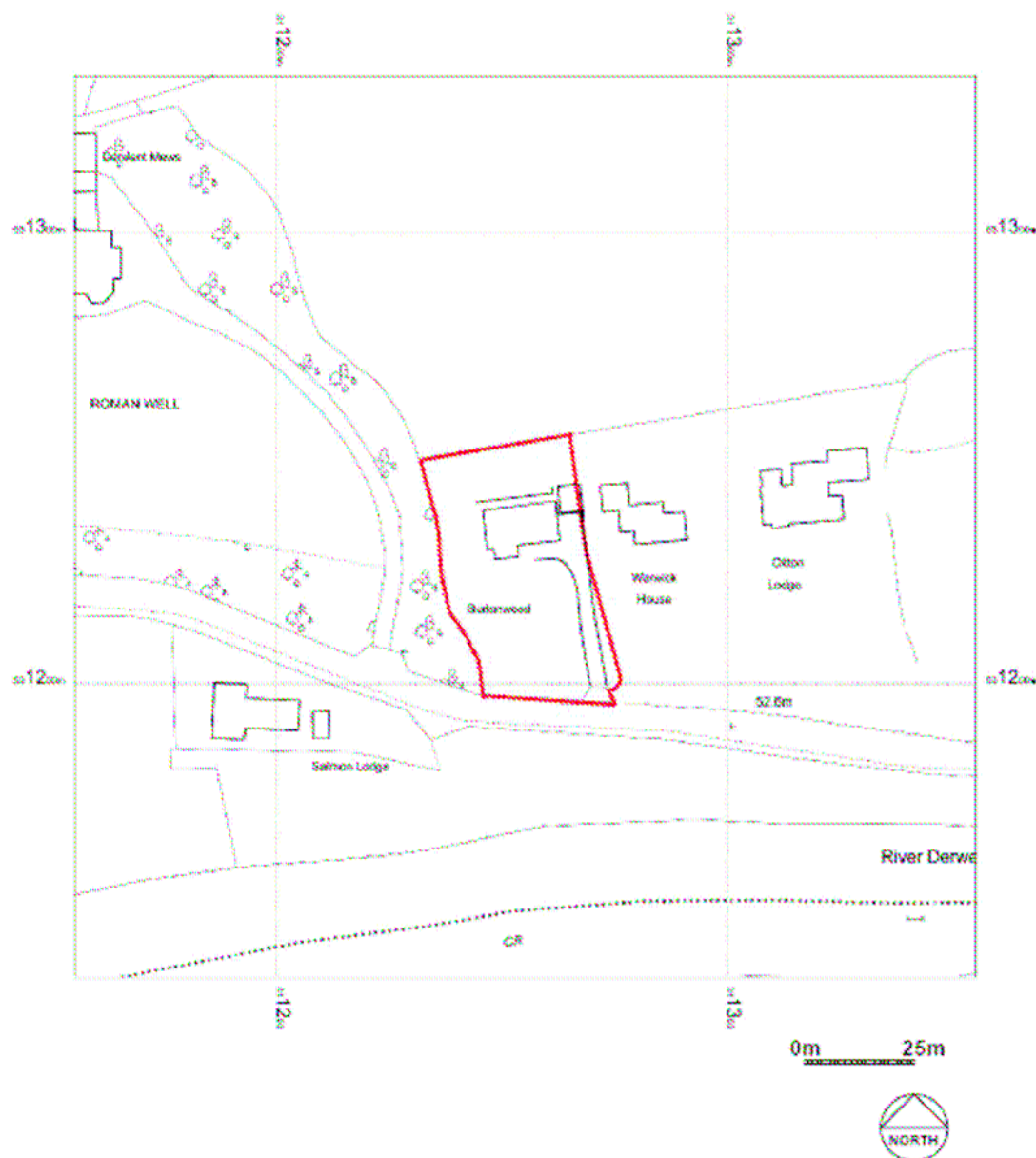


Figure 1: Location of the watching brief (application area within red box)