

Colby Flow Transfer Structure, Colby, Cumbria



Watching Brief Statement



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Prepared by: Becky Wegiel
Position: Supervisor
Date: May 2011

Checked by: Alison Plummer
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: October 2011

Signed... *A.P. Plummer*

Approved by: Alan Lupton
Position: Operations Manager
Date: October 2011

Signed..... *A. Lupton*

Oxford Archaeology North

Mill 3
Moor Lane Mills, Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1GF
t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606

w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

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Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0EA
t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496

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SUMMARY

United Utilities proposed the construction of a flow transfer structure, which necessitated the construction of a pipeline from Colby Lane, Appleby (NY 368008 519797) to the junction at Colby House and Midtown Farm, Colby, Cumbria (NY 366535 520666). An additional short branch extended from the eastern side of Colby Bridge (NY 366844 520253) to terminate in a field to the east of Colby Beck (NY 366989 520909).

Following the results of rapid archaeological desk-based research (OA North 2010) of the proposed development area, the Planning Archaeologist at Cumbria County Council requested that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the pipeline works in areas of previously undisturbed ground. The subsequent watching brief took place to the west of Colby Bridge, and was completed in two phases in December 2010 and May 2011. No archaeological remains were observed during either phase of the works.

No recommendations are offered for further archaeological investigation in this area of the pipeline easement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank United Utilities for commissioning the project. Thanks are also due to Waitings pipeline contractors and AE Yates Ltd for facilitating the groundworks.

Becky Wegiel undertook the fieldwork and wrote the report. Mark Tidmarsh produced the illustrations. Alison Plummer managed the project, and also edited the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 United Utilities proposed the construction of a flow transfer structure, from Colby Lane, Appleby (NY 368008 519797) to the junction at Colby House and Midtown Farm, Colby, Cumbria (NY 366535 520666; Fig 1), a distance of approximately 2.5km. The proposed pipeline also has a branch approximately 900m long leading from the eastern side of Colby Bridge (NY 366844 520253) terminating in a field to the north-east of Scholarbrow Plantation, to the east of Colby Beck (NY 366989 520909).
- 1.1.2 Following the results of rapid archaeological desk-based research (OA North 2010) of the proposed development area, the Planning Archaeologist at Cumbria County Council requested that an archaeological watching brief be undertaken during the pipeline works in areas of previously undisturbed ground. The subsequent watching brief took place to the west of Colby Bridge (Fig 2) and was completed in two phases in December 2010 and May 2011.
- 1.1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the rapid research report (OA North 2010), which presents an historical and archaeological context for the pipeline route.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 WATCHING BRIEF

- 2.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken along a small section of easement west of Colby Bridge (Fig 2). This stripping was carried out in two phases: Phase 1 being a general easement strip and pipe trench excavation, and with the phase 2 work relating to the construction of a small transfer kiosk, and included the excavation of a shaft.
- 2.1.2 The Phase 1 work had started a week prior to an archaeologist being called to attend site, and so the topsoil from the area had already been stripped and the bulk of the pipeline had been excavated and backfilled. This work was also undertaken in very cold weather with several inches of snow lying on the ground (Plate 1). A permanent presence watching brief was maintained for the second phase.
- 2.1.3 The topsoil was removed using mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m ditching bucket down to the natural geology in the area of the shaft, and down to the subsoil where the pipe-trench was to be excavated. For the phase 1 works the pipe-trench was excavated in 4m lengths with a toothed bucket to a depth of 3m, at which point a box was inserted to stabilise the sides. Before the box was put in the sections were inspected for archaeological remains. Only the final 20m of pipe-trench was undertaken under archaeological supervision.

2.2 ARCHIVE

- 2.2.1 The results of all archaeological work carried out will form the basis for a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, 2006). The original record archive of the project will be deposited with the County Record Office in Carlisle.
- 2.2.2 The Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) online database *Online Access to index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) will be completed as part of the archiving phase of the project.

3. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

3.1 PHASE 1

- 3.1.1 A dark brown topsoil (0.3m in thickness) overlay a patchy and mixed orange/red silty-clay subsoil, which exhibited signs of having been levelled or compacted possibly as the result of long-term disturbance from agricultural vehicle activities (Plates 1 and 2). The natural geology comprised a mid-pinkish-brown silty-clay. No archaeological features were observed.



Plate 1: Phase 1, general view of the stripped area illustrating the harsh weather conditions



Plate 2: Phase 1, south-facing section through the pipe-trench

3.2 PHASE 2

- 3.2.1 The dark brown topsoil, measuring approximately 0.2m in depth, was removed down to brownish-red silty-clay subsoil (Plate 3). No archaeological features were observed within the stripped area.



Plate 3: Phase 2 stripping, general view looking north

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

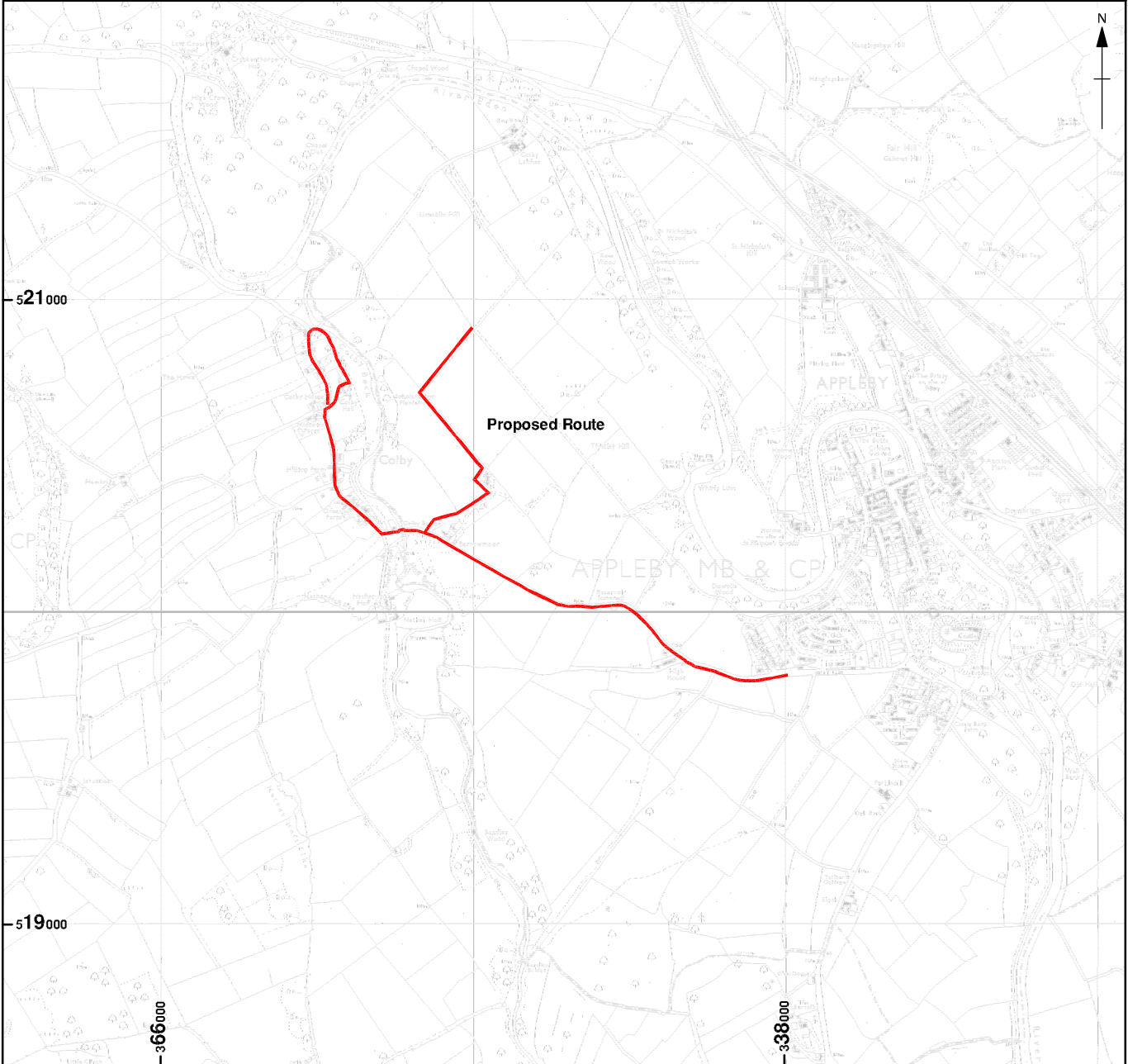
English Heritage, 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, London

OA North, 2010 *Colby Flow Transfer Structure, Colby, Rapid Desk-Based Research*, unpubl rep

5. ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Site location map

Figure 2: Plan showing location of the watching brief



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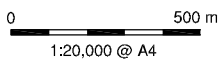


Figure 1: Site location

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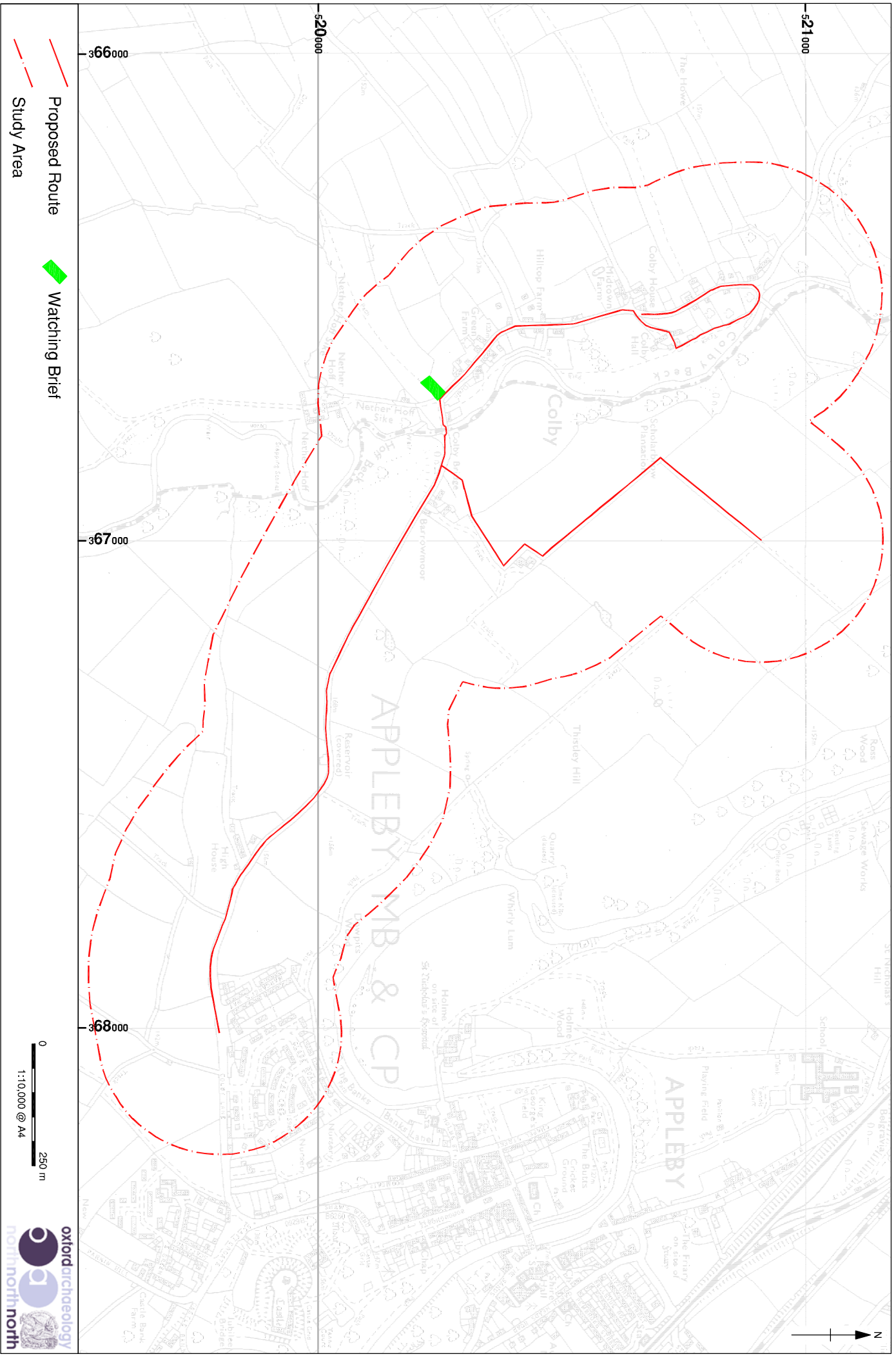


Figure 2: Plan showing location of Watching Brief