

WEST LAKES ACADEMY, EGREMONT

Cumbria

Archaeological Evaluation



Oxford Archaeology North

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Prepared by: Richard Gregory, Andrew Bates,

and Becky Wegiel

Position: Project Manager, Project Officer,

and Supervisor

Date: 16th August 2010

Checked by: Richard Gregory

Position: Project Manager

Date: 18th August 2010

Approved by: Alan Lupton

Position: Operations Manager

Date: 20th August 2010

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

Osney Mead

© Oxford Archaeology Ltd (2010)

Signed

Janus House Osney Mead Oxford OX2 0EA

t: (0044) 01865 263800 f: (0044) 01865 793496

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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by Kier Construction Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation at West Lakes Academy, Egremont (centred on NY 0100 1095), as a prerequisite to the construction of a replacement school.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of four trial trenches in order to determine the presence, or absence, of below-ground remains associated with four potential archaeological sites, which might be affected by proposed groundworks, connected with the construction of the replacement school. These sites, which were identified by an earlier OA North desk-based assessment, included: medieval burgage plots (Site 9); a late nineteenth-century public slaughterhouse (Site 19); a nineteenth-century, or earlier, brewery (Site 20); and a late nineteenth-century auction mart (Site 21).

The evaluation indicated that within the areas examined, no surviving *in situ* archaeological remains were present. Furthermore, the evaluation suggested that any early remains which may have been originally found in the areas examined were probably comprehensively destroyed immediately prior to the construction of twentieth-century school buildings, which currently occupy the site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) is grateful to Nigel Griffith, Project Manager, Kier Construction Ltd for commissioning the project. Thanks are also due to Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Officer, Cumbria County Council, and Eleanor Mcfarlane, Site Manager, Kier Construction Ltd, for advice and support.

The initial programme of archaeological investigation (mobilisation 1) was directed by Andrew Bates, assisted by Nate Jepson, whilst the later programme of investigation (mobilisation 2) was directed by Becky Weigel, assisted by Christina Robinson. The report was written by Richard Gregory, Andrew Bates, and Becky Weigel, whilst the illustrations were produced by Maria Rowland. The report was edited by Richard Gregory, who was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In response to a request from Kier Construction Ltd, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) submitted a project design to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation at West Lakes Academy, Egremont (centred on NY 0100 1095; Fig 1), as a prerequisite to the construction of a replacement school. The project design (*Appendix 1*) was initially devised in February 2010, following consultation with the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES), and following its acceptance by Kier Construction Ltd, OA North was commissioned to undertake the work, which commenced in June 2010.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation followed an earlier archaeological desk-based assessment undertaken by OA North (OA North 2009), which identified four potential archaeological sites, that might be affected by both the proposed demolition of existing school buildings and the proposed construction of several new school buildings. The aim of the evaluation was to, therefore, determine the extent and survival of any potential below-ground remains associated with these sites.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND MODERN LAND-USE

- 1.2.1 West Lakes Academy lies within the centre of Egremont, Cumbria (Fig 1), to the west of Main Street. Egremont is a small historic town, probably founded in the twelfth century, which lies within the West Cumbrian Coastal Plain, a pastoral landscape that fringes the upland fells to the east (Countryside Commission 1998, 25).
- 1.2.2 Topographically, the site of West Lakes Academy is situated on fairly flat ground lying at approximately 50m above Ordnance Datum. The solid geology within the proposed development area, as characterised by Ordnance Survey geological mapping, consists of Bockram bedrock, which is overlain by superficial deposits of Devensian till and alluvium.
- 1.2.3 In terms of the modern land-use, West Lakes Academy comprises an early twentieth-century building, which was the original school and that now acts as the school library, and several other buildings that were constructed during the 1960s. The site of the Academy also contains a sports ground, which is located to the west of the school buildings.

1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.3.1 *Introduction:* the following section provides a summary account of the archaeological and historical background pertinent to the West Lakes Academy development site.

- 1.3.2 *Prehistoric:* there is no direct evidence for prehistoric activity within the West Lakes Academy site, or within its immediate environs. However, evidence from the wider area suggests that Mesolithic (10,000-3,500 cal BC) communities were active within the eastern Cumbrian uplands and also along the coast, between Haverigg and St Bees, where they were probably exploiting both food and raw-material resources (Cherry and Cherry 2002, 2-5; Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 69).
- 1.3.3 Several funerary and ceremonial monuments form evidence of Neolithic (3,500-2,200 cal BC) and Bronze Age (2,200-700 cal BC) activity within the vicinity of Egremont. These include those at Blakely Raise and Studfold, which may be early Bronze Age in date (Burl 2000, 109), as well as monuments that have now been destroyed at Egremont le Wheles, Lamplugh, and Wilton (Waterhouse 1985, 34). A, now destroyed, stone circle (HER 1198) was also located to the south-east of Egremont, and it is possible that this may be the tumulus and circle of ten large stones known as 'Ringing Stones' which was described by Hutchinson in 1794 (CCC 2006, 4). In addition, Ehenside Tarn, located approximately 4km south of Egremont, has produced an abundance of Neolithic cultural material (Hodgkinson et al 2000, 71). Finds of Bronze Age stone tools have also been recovered around the Beckermet and Seascale areas, to the south of Egremont (op cit, 76), whilst, further to the east, the remains of burial and clearance cairns indicate that the uplands areas were also exploited during the Bronze Age (Quartermaine and Leech forthcoming).
- 1.3.4 During the Iron Age it is possible that the area around Egremont was utilised by later prehistoric communities. Although no direct evidence for this is presently available, possible Iron Age settlements and field systems have been identified across the Solway Plain to the north, and to the east within the uplands of the Lake District (Bewely 1994; Quartermaine and Leech forthcoming).
- 1.3.5 *Roman:* the forts at Ravenglass, to the south, and at Moresby, to the north, are the closest Roman military sites to West Lakes Academy (Shotter 1993, 44). Although there are no Roman roads recorded running between these two forts, a road ran southwards from Papcastle to the River Ehen near Egremont (*ibid*) and may have continued as far as Ravenglass (Margary 1973, 395–6). A Roman road is also thought to be located at St Thomas's Cross, south-east of Egremont, possibly part of a road running from Thornhill to Blackbeck, and on to Calder (HER 1210; HER 1255). A coin hoard was found at Braystones, south of Egremont, near to the River Ehen, and finds of Romano-British pottery have been found at Eskmeals further south (Bellhouse 1989, 61–3). However, direct evidence for Roman activity within Egremont is confined to a Roman coin of Antoninus Pius (AD 138-61), although the exact location and circumstances of this find are not known (HER 4620).
- 1.3.6 *Medieval:* there is no firm evidence for medieval activity within Egremont prior to the eleventh century. Indeed, the place-name Egremont first appears during the Norman period, and this name may derive from the Latin *acri mons* or the French *aigre mont*, meaning 'sharp-pointed hill'. An alternative

- derivative is 'hill beside the [river] Ehen', particularly as the Latin for Ehen, in the *Register of St Bees*, is *Egre* (Armstrong *et al* 1971, cited in CCC 2006).
- 1.3.7 Historically, Cumberland did not come under Norman rule until 1092 (Newman 2006, 93), and the Barony of Egremont was one of three estates forming the Forest of Copeland, which was established sometime after 1120 (Todd 1995). The early history of Copeland is not clearly understood, but in the first quarter of the twelfth century, Henry I placed William Meschin as the overlord of Copeland (Fair 1937). William Meschin founded a chapel in Egremont in 1122 and Egremont Castle in *c* 1125 (CCC 2006).
- A grant of land and privileges to a community of burgesses by Richard de Lucy, the Lord of the Barony of Copeland in c 1200 indicates that the urban settlement of Egremont had its origins in the late twelfth century (Winchester 1979). The grant details the agricultural rights of the burgesses, and the duties they were to carry out in return. This grant also mentions 'the assize of dyers, weavers and fullers', indicating that these industries were taking place by the late twelfth/early thirteenth century. In 1267, Egremont received a royal market charter; the market subsequently serving the area between Workington and Ravenglass (ibid). An early, possibly thirteenth-century, market cross was also discovered in 1922, and now stands within the castle grounds (HER 4447). Winchester (1979) has located the core of the medieval settlement as falling on Main Street and it is clear from early nineteenth-century mapping that the area on the western side of Main Street, which extends into the proposed development area, originally contained medieval burgage plots (Site 09; Fig 2). Accordingly, this area was targeted by the archaeological evaluation (Trench 2; Fig 2).
- 1.3.9 The fourteenth century represents a period of economic and social instability that was probably caused by several rebellions and feuds in Cumbria, as well as raids from Scotland (Winchester 1987). These attacks were led by Robert the Bruce in the first half of the fourteenth century (Rollinson 1996, 50) and included assault on Egremont Castle in 1315 (Turnbull and Walsh 1994, 79). In addition, outbreaks of the plague also devastated vast areas during this period (Rollinson 1996, 50).
- 1.3.10 It is known that during the early part of the fourteenth century, John de Multon held the Barony of Egremont from 1322 until his death in 1334. The area was then divided between his three sisters, and the rents from the burgesses in Egremont were also divided by three (Winchester 1979).
- 1.3.11 A survey carried out in Egremont in 1334 allows the form of the medieval settlement to be reconstructed to some degree (Curwen 1913; Winchester 1979). Significantly, this survey recorded: the castle; a dovecot; the park below the castle; fisheries; 194 acres of demesne land and 47.5 acres of demesne meadow. Also listed were: 138 burgage plots; a number of waste places, including eight unbuilt burgage plots; two mills, one for fulling and one for corn; and two smithies (*ibid*). An annual fair was held as well as the weekly market, whilst the town's industries seem to have been predominantly associated with the processing of local animal products (Winchester 1979).

- 1.3.12 From the fifteenth century, a series of truces brought relative stability to the area, and by 1578, two-thirds of Egremont had passed to the Percy family, the Earls of Northumberland (Liddell 1966). The Percy Survey of the Copeland Forest was ordered by the then Earl of Northumberland in 1578 (*ibid*). The survey recorded 101 burgage plots in Egremont, as opposed to 138 recorded in the 1330s. This, plus the description of the castle in 1578 as 'almost ruined', suggests that there was a decline in the town between the latter part of the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries (Curwen 1913).
- 1.3.13 *Post-Medieval:* during the seventeenth century Egremont and the surrounding areas were partially engaged in the production of linen, wool, and leather goods, some of which were sent to Whitehaven for export to the American markets (Collier 1991, 26-7). By the nineteenth century a number of industrial sites associated with these industries were therefore located within, or close to, the town. These included seven water mills on the banks of the River Ehen and several tanneries (Winchester 1979).
- 1.3.14 In addition to these industries, haematite mining became an important industry within Egremont from the eighteenth century onwards (Lancaster and Wattleworth 1977). This led to the establishment of several mines within Egremont during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which included the late nineteenth-century Falcon Pit mine located within the grounds of West Lakes Academy. This mine was worked by the Wyndham Mining Company and was served by the Gillfoot Branch Railway, which connected the pit with main line railway line running Whitehaven the to (http://www.dmm.org.uk/lom/1914_206. htm). However, although this mine lies within the grounds of West Lakes Academy it was not targeted by the archaeological evaluation due to Health and Safety concerns.
- 1.3.15 Other significant nineteenth-century sites located within the grounds of West Lakes Academy are plotted on nineteenth-century mapping. The earliest of these sites formed part of a brewery, and was a square outbuilding, which is first depicted on the 1842 tithe map as falling within a plot of land termed 'Brewery Croft'. The site of this building (Site 18; Fig 2) was targeted by the evaluation (Trench 1; Fig 2). In contrast, the remaining nineteenth-century sites located within the development area date to the latter part of the nineteenth century. These include two adjacent buildings (Site 19; Fig 2) which are denoted on the 1899 Ordnance Survey map as 'Public Slaughter Houses', and a square building to the east (Site 21; Fig 2), which is denoted as 'Auction Mart' on this map. Both of these sites were targeted by the archaeological evaluation (Trenches 3 and 4; Fig 2).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The fieldwork programme comprised the excavation of four evaluation trenches (Fig 2; Trenches 1-4), the precise positioning and size of which were determined following consultation with CCCHES in June and July 2010. These trenches were between 8m and 10m long, and 1.65m and 2m wide, and were excavated over four potential archaeological sites, which were identified during an earlier OA North desk-based assessment (OA North 2009; Sites 9, 19, 20 and 21). The sites included: medieval burgage plots (Site 9), extending into the school grounds from the medieval settlement centred on Main Street to the east; a late nineteenth-century public slaughterhouse (Site 19); a nineteenth-century, or earlier, brewery (Site 20); and a late nineteenth century auction mart (Site 21).
- 2.1.2 The evaluation trenching was undertaken as two separate mobilisations. The first mobilisation was completed between the 1st and 3rd June 2010 when the area of the former medieval burgage plots (Site 9; Trench 2) was examined, which would be potentially impacted on by the construction of a proposed drainage run. During this initial mobilisation the site of a nineteenth-century brewery (Site 20; Trench 1) was also examined, as this would partially lie beneath the footprint of a proposed building, and would also be partially impacted on by the routes of several proposed services. The second mobilisation was undertaken between the 19th and 21st July 2010. During this latter mobilisation the sites of a late nineteenth-century auction mart (Site 21; Trench 3) and slaughterhouse (Site 19; Trench 4) were examined, as both of these sites would be potentially impacted on during the proposed demolition of pre-existing school buildings as part of the redevelopment of the school.
- 2.1.3 All archaeological work undertaken was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures provided by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA).

2.2 EVALUATION TRENCHING

- 2.2.1 In all trenches, the modern surface and overburden was mechanically removed and any modern services exposed by the trenching were retained. Following mechanical stripping, the trenches were then manually cleaned and excavated.
- 2.2.2 All information was recorded stratigraphically with accompanying documentation (plans, sections and both colour slide and black-and-white print photographs, both of individual contexts and overall site shots from standard view points). Photography was undertaken with 35mm cameras on archivable black-and-white print film, and all frames included a visible, graduated metric scale. In addition, digital photography was employed throughout the course of the fieldwork, and a selection of these photographs have been incorporated into this report for illustrative purposes.

2.2.3 The locations of the trenches and heights above OD were surveyed using a differential GPS, and all field drawings were drawn at an appropriate scale.

2.3 ARCHIVE

2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and in accordance with the current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the County Record Office and a copy of this report has also been submitted to the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record.

3. EVALUATION RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 In total, four evaluation trenches were excavated, which targeted four potential archaeological sites, which might be impacted on during groundworks associated with the construction of the replacement school (Fig 2; Sites 9, 19, 20, and 21). This section presents a summary account of the features and deposits uncovered by the evaluation trenches. A list of all archaeological contexts can be found in *Appendix 2*.

3.2 TRENCH 1

- 3.2.1 Trench 1 was orientated east/west and was positioned over the site of the outbuilding (Site 20) associated with the nineteenth-century, or earlier, brewery (Fig 2). The trench measured 10m in length and was 1.65m wide, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.75m.
- 3.2.2 Initially, the excavation of Trench 1 entailed the removal of a 0.45m thick layer of turf and topsoil (100). This, in turn, sealed a 0.50m thick layer of stone and brick rubble (101), which may have included building material derived from the former brewery. Underlying this rubble layer, a deposit of water-sorted gravels (102) was encountered, the natural origin of which was confirmed through the excavation of a 0.8m deep sondage into this deposit (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Trench 1 following the exposure of natural gravel (102) and a modern concrete stanchion (foreground)

3.2.3 The only below-ground feature encountered in Trench 1 was a modern concrete stanchion (Plate 1) and, apart from this modern feature, no archaeological features or structures were located within this evaluation trench.

3.3 TRENCH 2

3.3.1 Trench 2 was orientated north-west/south-east and was positioned along a proposed drainage run, forming part of the replacement school, which traversed an area that formerly contained medieval burgage plots (Fig 2; Site 9). The trench measured 10m in length and was 1.7m wide and during its excavation initially a 0.35m thick layer of tarmac and stone chippings was removed, which sealed three layers of hardcore (200, 201, and 203). Beneath the hardcore, a glacial clay till (203) was encountered, into which a 0.6m deep sondage was excavated in order to confirm its natural origin (Plate 2).



Plate 2: The northern end of Trench 2 following the exposure of the natural glacial clay till (203)

3.3.2 The only below-ground feature identified was a modern electricity cable, located in the north-western half of the trench, and no deposits or features of archaeological significance were located in this trench.

3.4 TRENCH **3**

3.4.1 Trench 3 was orientated north-east/south-west and targeted the site of a late nineteenth-century auction mart (Fig 2: Site 21). The trench measured 8 x 2m, was excavated to an average depth of 0.4m, and was positioned across a walled area located within the school playground.

3.4.2 During excavation of the trench, a modern tarmac surface (300) was initially removed and immediately below this a second modern surface was present, composed of brick setts (301). Beneath the brick-sett surface was a 0.16m thick deposit of made ground (302), which contained a high frequency of stone. This deposit sealed the natural superficial geology, which in this area of the site comprised glacial till (303) (Plate 3). This natural deposit was also truncated, close to the north-eastern and south-western ends of the trench, by two modern ceramic drains. However, no remains of the auction mart (Site 21), nor any other remains of archaeological significance, were present within this evaluation trench.



Plate 3: The north-eastern end of Trench 3 following the exposure of the natural glacial till (303) and a modern ceramic drain (foreground)

3.5 TRENCH 4

- 3.5.1 Trench 4 was excavated over the site of a late nineteenth-century slaughterhouse (Site 19). The trench was orientated east/west and was positioned across a tarmac path and also over two grassed areas found either side of this path (Fig 2). The trench measured 10 x 1.8m, and was excavated to a depth of 0.9m.
- 3.5.2 Following the excavation of the turf and tarmac surface (400), and the removal of a layer of concrete paving slabs, found immediately below the tarmac path, a 0.3m thick layer of rubble (401) was encountered. This layer mainly comprised roughly hewn red sandstone blocks, with some roofing slate, though towards the western end of the trench a number of curved sandstone blocks were observed (Plate 4). The character of this deposit suggests that it

constituted material that was possibly derived from the late nineteenth-century slaughterhouse.



Plate 4: Curved sandstone blocks recovered from Trench 4

3.5.3 Beneath the layer of rubble a c 0.4m thick layer of silty clay subsoil (402) was identified, which sealed the natural glacial till (403), and at the western end of the trench this glacial till was truncated by two modern drains (Plate 5). These drains formed the only *in situ* below-ground features found within the trench, and no significant archaeological remains or structures were identified.



Plate 5: Trench 4 following excavation. Looking west

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 The archaeological evaluation completed at West Lakes Academy was undertaken across an area, which has been the focus for human activity from the medieval period onwards (OA North 2009). Potential sites of archaeological significance, which might be affected by the proposed rebuilding of the school, included medieval burgage plots (Site 9); a late nineteenth-century public slaughter house (Site 19); a nineteenth-century, or earlier, brewery (Site 20); and a late nineteenth century auction mart (Site 21). Accordingly, the purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence or absence of any below-ground remains associated with these sites.
- 4.2 The evaluation trenches clearly indicated that, within the areas examined the only *in situ* below-ground features discovered all appeared to relate to modern services, associated with the twentieth-century school buildings presently found at the site. Indeed, the only potential evidence of pre-twentieth-century activity included building materials discovered at two of the sites (Sites 19 and 20), possibly derived from nineteenth-century, or earlier, buildings, which had been incorporated intentionally or serendipitously into twentieth-century levelling deposits.
- 4.3 It, therefore, appears that prior to the construction of the twentieth-century school buildings, the below-ground remains associated with all of the potential archaeological sites were comprehensively destroyed, and that this episode of destruction probably entailed substantial reductions to the pre-twentieth-century ground surface in the areas investigated.

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APPENDIX 1: PROJECT DESIGN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 Kier Construction (hereafter the 'client') has requested that Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) undertake an archaeological investigation of the site of the proposed West Lakes Academy (former Wyndham School), Egremont, Cumbria (centred NGR NY 0095 1095). A desk-based assessment previously undertaken ahead of the proposed redevelopment (OA North 2009) identified a potential for archaeological remains to survive below ground. Consequently, a brief was issued by Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) for a programme of targeted trial trenching investigating six gazetteer sites from the desk-based assessment; Site 9, burgage plots extending into the school grounds from the medieval settlement centred on Main Street to the east; Site 16, branch railway and buildings associated with Falcon Pit; Site 18, houses seen on the tithe map that may possibly relate to the medieval settlement, Site 19, late nineteenth century public slaughter house; Site 20, nineteenth century or earlier brewery; and Site 21, late nineteenth century auction mart (ibid).
- 1.1.2 However, following consultation with the client and CCCHES, a revised programme of trial trenching will be undertaken targeting only four of the sites; 9, 19, 20 and 21. Site 16 has been excluded for health and safety reasons following the recent backfilling and grouting of the mine shaft after its collapse, situated within the centre of Site 16, and Site 18 is immediately outwith the development boundary.

1.2 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH

- 1.2.1 Oxford Archaeology North has considerable experience of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large scale projects throughout Northern England during the past 30 years. Evaluations, assessments, watching briefs and excavations have taken place within the planning process, to fulfil the requirements of clients and planning authorities, to very rigorous timetables.
- 1.2.2 OA North has the professional expertise and resources to undertake the project detailed below to a high level of quality and efficiency. OA North is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation, registration number 17, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IfA *Code of Conduct* (2009).

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 This initial phase of the archaeological investigation aims to evaluate the potential for surviving below-ground archaeological deposits, and determine their extent, nature and significance of any remains that may be threatened by the proposed development. To this end, the following programme has been designed to provide a programme of archaeological evaluation. The results will provide information as to the impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains uncovered and the need for any subsequent mitigation strategy. The stages to achieve these ends are as follows:
- 2.2 **Archaeological Evaluation:** to implement a programme of trial trenching four sites of archaeological potential (Sites 9, 19, 20, and 21) within the proposed development area. This is likely to be undertaken over two separate mobilisations; Sites 9 and 20 during the summer half-term holidays 2010 (31st May to 4th June), and Sites 19 and 21 during the school's summer break 2010.
- 2.3 **Report and Archive:** a report will be produced for the client within eight weeks following completion, unless a report submission deadline is agreed with the client at the time of commission. An archive will be produced to English Heritage guidelines (MAP 2 (1991)).

3 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 3.1 **Risk Assessment:** OA North 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 (1997). A written risk assessment will be undertaken in advance of project commencement and copies will be made available on request to all interested parties.
- 3.2 Services and other constraints: full regard will, of course, be given to all constraints (services etc.) during the evaluation as well as to all Health and Safety considerations. As a matter of course the field team will use a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) and Genny prior to any excavation to test for services. However, this is not foolproof and any information regarding the location of known services within the client's possession should be made known to the OA North project manager prior to commencement of the site work in order to minimise risk and disruption.
- 3.3 **Contamination:** any information of known contamination issues or any specific health and safety requirements on site should be made available to OA North by the client to ensure all procedures can be met, and that the risk is dealt with appropriately. Should any presently unknown contamination be discovered during excavation, it may be necessary to halt the works and reassess the risk assessment. If it is necessary to cause any delay to on-site work, and supply additional PPE or other contamination avoidance equipment this will be costed as a variation.
- 3.4 **Staff issues:** all project staff will be CSCS qualified, proof of which can be provided in the form of CSCS cards.
- 3.5 A portable toilet with hand washing facilities will be provided for each mobilisation and located on or adjacent to the site, unless the client would prefer to arrange alternative facilities.
- 3.6 *Fencing/hoarding requirements:* it is understood that heras-style fencing will be provided by the client during the trenching fieldwork.

4 METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 TRIAL TRENCHING

- 4.1.1 The programme of trial trenching will establish the presence or absence of any previously unsuspected archaeological deposits and, if established, will then test their date, nature, depth and quality of preservation. In this way, it will adequately sample the threatened available area.
- 4.1.2 *Trenches:* the evaluation is required to examine Sites 9, 19, 20, and 21 (see attached plan). This equates to 4 trenches measuring 10m, and approximately 1.7m (the width being equivalent to a typical excavator bucket). During excavation of the trenches there may be areas inappropriate for evaluation and hence may reduce the overall area of evaluation trenching.
- 4.1.3 The following proposal assumes the site is free of obstruction. Should excavation of the trenches be inhibited by such, this will be charged as an agreed variation to the contract.
- 4.1.4 Methodology: the topsoil will be removed by machine (fitted with a toothless ditching bucket) under archaeological supervision to the surface of the first significant archaeological deposit. This deposit will be cleaned by hand, using either hoes, shovel scraping, and/or trowels depending on the subsoil conditions, and inspected for archaeological features. All features of archaeological interest must be investigated and recorded unless otherwise agreed by CCCHES.

- 4.1.5 In normal circumstances the trenches would not be excavated deeper than c 1.2m to accommodate health and safety constraints, or less if the deposits are soft or unstable. However, should significant archaeological deposits be discovered requiring evaluation at a depth beyond 1.2m the trench sides will be stepped out accordingly. If there is a knock-on affect to the work timetable as a result, this will be costed as a day-rate, provided as a contingency.
- 4.1.6 Any impeding rubble/concrete surfaces will need to be removed prior to trenching. Therefore, any concrete surfaces that require breaking out will be carried out under OA North supervision, using a breaking arm mounted on the mechanical excavator. As with the depths of excavation, any affect on the work timetable as a result, will be costed as a dayrate, provided as a contingency.
- 4.1.7 All trenches will be excavated in a stratigraphical manner, whether by machine or by hand. Trenches will be located by use of GPS equipment which is accurate to +/- 0.25m, altitude information will be established with respect to Ordnance Survey Datum.
- 4.1.8 Any investigation of intact archaeological deposits will be exclusively manual. Selected pits and postholes will normally only be half-sectioned, linear features will be subject to no more than a 10% sample, and extensive layers will, where possible, be sampled by partial rather than complete removal. It is hoped that in terms of the vertical stratigraphy, maximum information retrieval will be achieved through the examination of sections of cut features. All excavation, whether by machine or by hand, will be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features, which appear worthy of preservation *in situ*.
- 4.1.9 All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, using a system, adapted from that used by Centre for Archaeology Service of English Heritage, with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections, and monochrome contacts) to identify and illustrate individual features. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.
- 4.1.10 Results of all field investigations will be recorded on *pro forma* context sheets. The site archive will 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 system, and will be handled and stored according to standard practice (following current Institute of Field Archaeologists guidelines) in order to minimise deterioration.
- 4.1.11 *Environmental Sampling:* environmental samples (bulk samples of 40 litres volume, to be sub-sampled at a later stage) will be collected from stratified undisturbed deposits and will particularly target negative features (gullies, pits and ditches). An assessment of the environmental potential of the site will be undertaken through the examination of suitable deposits by the in-house palaeoecological specialist, who will examine the potential for further analysis. The assessment would include soil pollen analysis and the retrieval of charred plant macrofossils and land molluses from former dry-land palaeosols and cut features. In addition, the samples would be assessed for plant macrofossils, insect, molluses and pollen from waterlogged deposits. The costs for the palaeoecological assessment are defined as a contingency and will only be called into effect if good deposits are identified.
- 4.1.12 Advice will also be sought as to whether a soil micromorphological study or any other analytical techniques will enhance the understanding of the site formation processes, including the amount of truncation to buried deposits and the preservation of deposits within

- negative features. Should this be required the costs for analysis have been provided as a contingency.
- 4.1.13 *Faunal remains:* if there is found to be the potential for discovery of bones of fish and small mammals a sieving programme will be carried out. These will be assessed as appropriate by OA north's specialist in faunal remains, and subject to the results, there may be a requirement for more detailed analysis. A contingency has been included for the assessment of such faunal remains for analysis.
- 4.1.14 *Human Remains:* any human remains uncovered will be left *in situ*, covered and protected. No further investigation will continue beyond that required to establish the date and character of the burial. CCCHES and the local Coroner will be informed immediately. If removal is essential the exhumation of any funerary remains will require the provision of a Home Office license, under section 25 of the Burial Act of 1857. An application will be made by OA North for the study area on discovery of any such remains and the removal will be carried out with due care and sensitivity under the environmental health regulations. Any delays caused by unforeseen and complex excavation of inhumations may be subject to a variation to the cost of the contract and will be agreed with the client.
- 4.1.15 *Contingency plan:* a contingency costing may also be employed for unseen delays caused by prolonged periods of bad weather, vandalism, discovery of unforeseen complex deposits and/or artefacts which require specialist removal, use of shoring to excavate important features close to the excavation sections etc. This has been included in the Costings document and would be in agreement with the client.
- 4.1.16 The evaluation will provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relative importance against known development proposals. In this way, an impact assessment will also be provided.

4.2 FINDS

- 4.2.1 All finds recovered during the evaluation investigation will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) *First Aid For Finds*, 1998 (new edition) and the recipient museum's guidelines.
- 4.2.2 Finds recovery and sampling programmes will be in accordance with best practice (current IFA guidelines) and subject to expert advice. OA has close contact with Ancient Monuments Laboratory staff at the Universities of Durham and York and, in addition, employs in-house 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. Finds storage during fieldwork and any site archive preparation will follow professional guidelines (UKIC). Emergency access to conservation facilities is maintained by OA North with the Department of Archaeology, the University of Durham.
- 4.2.3 Neither artefacts nor ecofacts will be collected systematically during the mechanical excavation of the topsoil unless significant deposits, for example clay pipe waster dumps, are encountered. In such an eventuality, material will be sampled in such a manner as to provide data to enhance present knowledge of the production and dating of such artefacts, although any ensuing studies will not be regarded as a major element in any post-excavation analysis of the site. Other finds recovered during the removal of overburden will be retained only if of significance to the dating and/or interpretation of the site. It is not anticipated that ecofacts (eg unmodified animal bone) will be collected during this procedure.
- 4.2.4 Otherwise artefacts and ecofacts will be collected and handled as per specification. All material will be collected and identified by stratigraphic unit during the evaluation trenching

- process. Finds will be processed and administered at regular intervals (on a daily basis) and removed from the site.
- 4.2.5 Any waterlogged finds will be treated as appropriate. In the case of large deposits of waterlogged environmental material (eg unmodified wood), advice will be sought with the OA North consultant with regard to an appropriate sampling strategy.
- 4.2.6 Where possible, spot dates will be obtained on pottery and other finds recovered from the site. Artefacts will be examined and commented upon by OA North in-house specialists.
- 4.2.7 All identified finds and artefacts will be retained, although certain classes of building material can sometimes be discarded after recording if an appropriate sample is retained on advice from the recipient museum's archive curator.
- 4.2.8 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. Where removal cannot take place on the same working day as discovery, suitable security will be employed to protect the finds from theft.

4.3 REPORT

- 4.3.1 *Interim statement:* following the completion of the evaluation of Sites 9 and 20 an interim statement will be issued to the client and CCCHES to inform of the findings in order that any mitigation requirements can be met.
- 4.3.2 *Final report:* once the second phase of trenching has been completed on Sites 19 and 20, and within approximately eight weeks, a final report will be issued for both phases of trenching. One bound copy of a written synthetic report will be submitted to the client, together with a copy on CD, and three copies to the Cumbria HER. The report will include;
 - a site location plan related to the national grid
 - a front cover to include the planning application number, where relevant, and the NGR
 - a concise, non-technical summary of the results
 - the circumstances of the project and the dates on which the fieldwork was undertaken
 - description of the methodology, including the sources consulted
 - a summary of the historical background of the study area
 - appropriate plans showing the location and position of features or sites located
 - a statement, where appropriate, of the archaeological implications of the proposed development
 - photographs as appropriate
 - a copy of this project design, and indications of any agreed departure from that design
 - the report will also include a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived, and a list of any further sources identified but not consulted
 - an index to the project archive

4.3.3 **Confidentiality:** all internal reports to the client are designed as documents 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. They are not suitable for publication as academic documents or otherwise without amendment or revision.

4.4 ARCHIVE

4.4.1 The results of all archaeological work carried out will form the basis for a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with Appendix 3 of the current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991). This archive will be provided in the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology format and a synthesis will be submitted to the HER (the index to the archive and a copy of the report). OA North practice is to deposit the original record archive of projects (paper, magnetic and plastic media) with the County Record Office, Whitehaven, and the material archive will be submitted to an appropriate museum.

5 OTHER MATTERS

5.1 ACCESS

5.1.1 Liaison for basic site access will be undertaken through the client, and that the work is likely to be scheduled within the Easter and Summer school holidays. It is understood that there will be access for both pedestrian and plant traffic to the site.

5.2 **REINSTATEMENT**

5.2.1 The ground will be backfilled so that the topsoil is laid on the top, and the ground will be roughly graded with the machine. Should there be a requirement by the client, other than that stated, this will involve recosting.

5.3 **Insurance**

5.3.1 OA North has a professional indemnity cover to a value of £2,000,000; proof of which can be supplied as required.

5.4 **PROJECT MONITORING**

5.3.2 Whilst the work is undertaken for the client, the County Archaeologist or representative will be kept fully informed of the work and its results, on behalf of the local planning authority, and will be notified a week in advance of the commencement of the fieldwork. Any proposed changes to the project design will be agreed with CCCHES in consultation with the client.

5.5 **WORK TIMETABLE**

- 5.5.1 *Evaluation Trenching:* it is anticipated that two to three days will be required for each phase of trenching;
 - Phase 1, Sites 9-20 school's summer half-term break (31st May to 4th June) 2010,
 - Phase 2, Sites 19-21 school's summer break 2010.
- 5.5.2 **Report and Archive:** the report and archive will be produced following the completion of all the fieldwork. The final report will be available within eight weeks of completion of the fieldwork, subject to any outstanding specialists' reports, and the archive deposited within six months.

5.5.3 OA North would require a formal written agreement at least one week before commencement in order to notify CCCHES and schedule the work as above.

5.5 STAFFING

- 5.5.1 The project will be under the direct management of **Richard Gregory BA (Hons) PhD** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.
- 5.5.2 The evaluation will be supervised by either an OA North project officer or supervisor experienced in this type of project, with an assistant. Due to scheduling requirements it is not possible to provide these details at the present time. All OA North project officers and supervisors are experienced field archaeologists capable of carrying out projects of all sizes.
- 5.5.3 Assessment of the finds from the evaluation will be undertaken under the auspices of OA North's in-house finds specialist **Christine Howard-Davis** (OA North finds manager). Christine has extensive knowledge of finds from many periods in the North West.
- 5.5.4 Assessment of any palaeoenvironmental samples will be undertaken by or under the auspices of **Elizabeth Huckerby MSc** (OA North project officer). Elizabeth has extensive knowledge of the palaeoecology of the North West through her work on the English Heritage-funded North West Wetlands Survey.

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APPENDIX 2: LIST OF CONTEXTS

Context	Trial Trench	Depth (m)	Category	Description
No	No	1		T. C.
100	1	0.45	Layer	Topsoil A ligh yellowish brown fine sandy silt
101	1	0.50	Layer	Rubble layer. Fragmented brick and stone, mixed with a dark grey sandy silt sediment
102	1	Min 0.80	Layer	River gravels. A fine to coarse sandy silt, with abundant small to medium sized sub-rounded (water worn) stone
103	1	Min 0.33	Structure	Concrete stanchion.1.39 by 1.03 in size.
200	2	0.03	Layer	Tarmac of tennis courts
201	2	0.12	Layer	Stone chippings of tennis courts
202	2	0.20	Layer	Gravel hardcore of tennis courts
203	2	0.60	Layer	Glacial till. A mid-orangey red coarse sand clay.
300	3	0.06	Layer	Tarmac
301	3	0.08	Layer	Modern brick setts
303	3	-	Layer	Glacial till
400	4	0.12	Layer	Tarmac/turf
401	4	0.30	Layer	Rubble deposit
402	4	0.40	Layer	Silty
403	4	-	Layer	Glacial till

ILLUSTRATIONS

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Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Trench location plan

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: Trench 1 following the exposure of natural gravel (102) and a modern concrete stanchion (foreground)

Plate 2: The northern end of Trench 2 following the exposure of the natural glacial clay till (203)

Plate 3: The north-eastern end of Trench 3 following the exposure of the natural glacial till (303) and a modern ceramic drain (foreground)

Plate 4: Curved sandstone blocks recovered from Trench 4

Plate 5: Trench 4 following excavation. Looking west

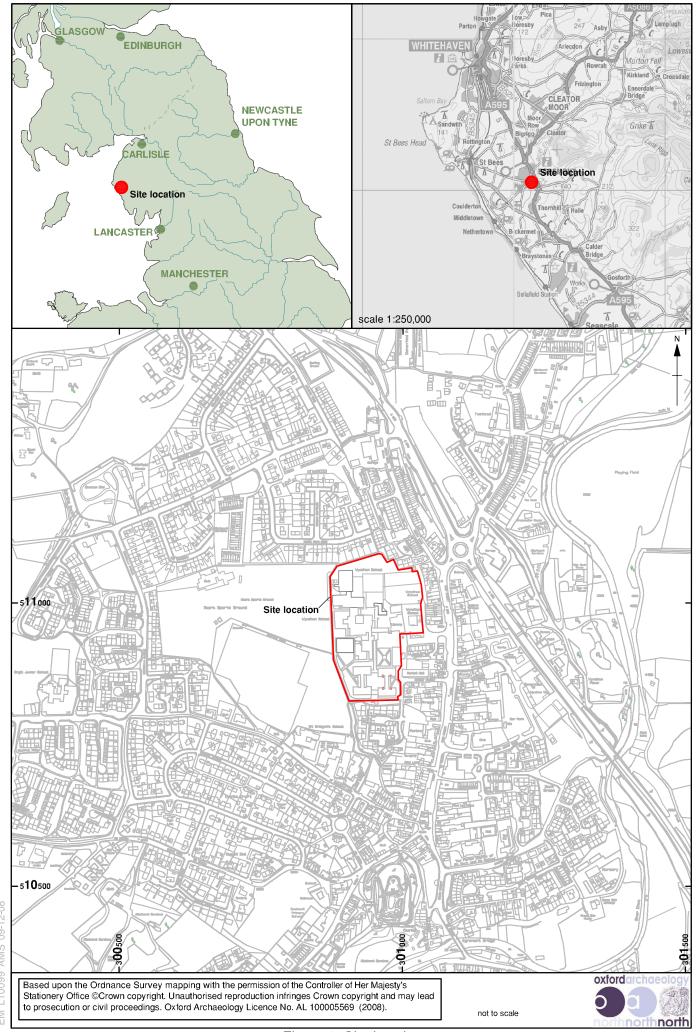


Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Trench location plan



OA South

Janus House Osney Mead Oxford OX2 0ES

t:+44(0)1865 263800 f:+44 (0)1865 793496 e:info@oxfordarch.co.uk w:http://thehumanjourney.net

OA North

Mill 3 Moor Lane Mills Moor Lane Lancaster LA11GF

t:+44(0)1524 541000 f:+44(0)1524 848606 e:oanorth@thehumanjourney.net w:http://thehumanjourney.net

OAEast

15 Trafalgar Way Bar Hill Cambridgeshire CB238SQ

t:+44(0)1223 850500 f:+44(0)1223 850599 e:oaeast@thehumanjourney.net w:http://thehumanjourney.net

OA Méditerranée

115 Rue Merlot ZAC La Louvade 34 130 Mauguio France

t:+33(0)4.67.57.86.92 f:+33(0)4.67.42.65.93 e:oamed@thehumanjourney.net w:http://oamed.fr/

Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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