



INSTALLATION OF SIGNAGE AT SAWLEY ABBEY, AND WHALLEY ABBNEY GATEHOUSE, LANCASHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief



Oxford Archaeology North

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Circumstances of Project.....	4
1.2 Site Location, Topography and Geology	4
1.3 Historical and Archaeological Context	4
2. METHODOLOGY	7
2.1 Project Design	7
2.2 Watching Brief	7
2.3 Archive.....	7
3. RESULTS.....	9
3.1 Introduction	9
3.2 Sawley Abbey	9
3.3 Whalley Abbey Gatehouse.....	10
3.4 Finds.....	10
4. DISCUSSION.....	12
4.1 Conclusion	12
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	13
6. ILLUSTRATIONS	14
6.1 Figures.....	14
6.1 Plates	14
APPENDIX 1: PROJECT BRIEF	15
APPENDIX 2: PROJECT DESIGN.....	18
APPENDIX 3: FINDS CATALOGUE.....	21

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) on behalf of English Heritage during the installation of interpretation and warning signage at two scheduled monuments in Lancashire; Sawley Abbey (SM 23690; NGR SD 7781 4645) and Whalley Abbey Gatehouse (SM 23691; NGR SD 7290 3618). The groundworks involved the manual excavation of seven post holes at five separate locations at Sawley Abbey (SMCC 23690/1 and 23692/2; locations 1-5) and two post holes (SMCC 23691/1; location 6) at Whalley Abbey Gatehouse under archaeological supervision on June 21st 2005.

The maximum depth of the post holes was limited to within the topsoil, and no archaeological deposits were encountered. Three of the post holes (locations 1 and 3) were for the purposes of the replacement of existing signage, and were excavated around infilled post holes, and within previously disturbed topsoil. Nevertheless, finds were retrieved from locations 2 and 4 at Sawley Abbey, albeit unstratified. Location 2 was situated at the western edge of the abbey grounds, to the south of the main entrance, in which fragments of animal bone and post-medieval pottery were found. Location 4 was within the remains of abbey church, to the north of the nave, from which six fragments representing two medieval tiles were recovered. These are likely to relate to the disturbed remains of the church floor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Joanne Balmforth of English Heritage for commissioning the project.

The watching brief was undertaken by Dave McNicol, and the drawings were compiled by Emma Carter and Emily Mercer. The finds were examined by Jo Dawson. The project was managed by Emily Mercer, who also edited the report together with Alan Lupton.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by English Heritage to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the installation of interpretation and warning signage at two scheduled monuments in Lancashire; Sawley Abbey (SM 23690 (Fig 2)), and Whalley Abbey Gatehouse (SM 23691 (Fig 4)). Excavation of the signage post holes was carried out under archaeological supervision (SMCC refs 23692/2, 23690/1 and 23691/1) due to the high archaeological potential of the two sites. Little is known of the extent and nature of any archaeological remains in the positions of the post holes, and there is a possibility that the installation may damage or destroy archaeological remains. This project design has been prepared in accordance with a brief (*Appendix 1*) and details of the proposed works provided by English Heritage.
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was undertaken for both sites on Tuesday 21st June 2005 in accordance with OA North's project design (*Appendix 2*). This report sets out the results of the watching brief in the form of a short document.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The remains of Sawley Abbey are situated within the village of Sawley in the Ribble Valley, 6km to the north-east of Clitheroe (NGR SD 7781 4645 (Fig 1)). Whalley Abbey is situated 6km to the south of Clitheroe in the valley of the River Calder and at the south-west end of the village of Whalley (NGR SD 7290 3618 (Fig 1)). The north-west gatehouse is situated to the east of the Whalley Viaduct bridging The Sands and Ridding Lane (Plate 7).
- 1.2.2 The solid geology of the area is essentially made up of Millstone Grit giving way to Carboniferous Limestone and calcareous mudstones (Countryside Commission 1998, 93). The soils are Cambrian stagnogleys (Ordnance Survey 1983) and the drift geology is mainly thick glacial till with areas of sand and gravel (Countryside Commission 1998, 93).
- 1.2.3 The landscape of the wider area is a diverse mix of undulating pasture and broadleaf woodland (*op cit*, 91); the fields tend to be small and defined by hedges and there is a relatively large amount of woodland (*ibid*). The area is on the edge of Pendle Hill to the east, with major river valleys to the south and the Bowland Fells to the north (*ibid*).

1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- 1.3.1 **Introduction:** the following information has been provided by English Heritage, unless otherwise referenced, and is taken from the schedule entry for each abbey.

- 1.3.2 **Sawley Abbey:** the abbey was founded by the Cistercian order, and dedicated to St Mary and St Andrew, by William de Percy in 1147/8. It was colonised by an abbot, twelve monks and ten lay-brothers from Newminster in Northumberland. The abbey suffered at the hands of the Scots, with evidence from documentary sources of some of the abbey buildings being burned at the end of the thirteenth century.
- 1.3.3 The abbey was suppressed in 1536, but under the Pilgrimage of Grace the monks were restored under a new abbot, William Trafford. Incensed by this, Henry VIII sent his commander, the Earl of Derby, to deal with the monks, which resulted in William Trafford being executed for treason in 1537.
- 1.3.4 It is constructed in a combination of dressed sandstone and black shale. The most visible remains are the ruins of the church and immediately attached buildings, which display the usual layout of a Cistercian abbey. The earliest of the standing remains are parts of the mid-twelfth century church. On all sides of the abbey, except the west, are earthworks indicating enclosures, stock pens, gardens, watercourses and structures that would have functioned as the service buildings, such as the infirmary, bake house, brew house and others.
- 1.3.5 **Whalley Abbey Gatehouse:** Whalley Abbey was founded by the Cistercians in the late thirteenth century and was dedicated to St Mary the Virgin. The Abbey Gatehouse, within which the signage was installed, is one of two gateways upstanding; the north-west gatehouse. Other standing remains include the north-east gateway, the north wall along the roadside, east and south ranges of the cloister, the abbot's lodging, Peter of Chester's chapel, and the foundations of the nave. The remains show how the usual alignment of Cistercian abbeys, so that the church ran east/west, was dispensed with at Whalley and the church was aligned north-north-west/south-south-east. This was to enable the best use of the water supply provided by the River Calder.
- 1.3.6 The north-west gateway is the oldest part of the abbey, on which work began in 1320. Work did not begin on the church until ten years later and the remainder of the abbey was complete by the 1440s. The north-west gateway was two-storeys high and built of sandstone rubble, and is now roofless. It was 25m long and 11.5m wide. It is stone-vaulted throughout, and approximately a third of the way through from the east end are two passageways, one for vehicles and one for pedestrians. Also at the eastern end are two side doors now blocked up. The one in the north wall probably led to a staircase to the upper floor and to the lodgings of the vicar of Whalley. An additional doorway in the north wall at the west end would have been used by local people who visited the vicar. The door in the south wall would have led to a now demolished guesthouse.
- 1.3.7 The origins of the abbey are to be traced to the colony of Combermere monks settled at Stanlaw on the Mersey estuary by John, Baron of Halton and Constable of Chester, in 1172. Having occupied the desolate Cheshire location for more than a hundred years, all but six monks in the community abandoned the buildings in 1296, moving instead to a new site at Whalley. Their patron, Henry de Lacy (d.1311) agreed to the transfer since Stanlaw was susceptible to

flooding, and the abbey community's lands were apparently being eroded by the spring tides (Robinson 1998, 202).

- 1.3.8 The choice of the new site was not made in haste, but within twenty years the monks were considering yet a further move to Toxteth. In particular, it seems that Whalley lay too close to Sawley Abbey; the two communities were soon embroiled in a bitter dispute. There were also problems over the lack of timber for building, and even over the claim to the new site itself. All in all, it proved a difficult beginning, though the monks finally chose to stay and started work on permanent buildings (*ibid*).
- 1.3.9 The abbey was dissolved in 1536. The last abbot, John Paslew (1507-37) was implicated in the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536 (*ibid*). He was tried and executed as a traitor in the following March, and Whalley was seized by the Crown. It remained in royal hands until 1553 when it was sold to John Braddyll (the former abbey bailiff) and Richard Assheton. Assheton took the monastic buildings, and his family began the conversion of the infirmary and abbot's house to a mansion. It was not until the 1660s that the abbey was finally demolished, in the time of Sir Ralph Assheton (d. 1680) (*ibid*).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design (*Appendix 2*) was submitted by OA North in response to a request from English Heritage. This was prepared in accordance with an English Heritage brief (*Appendix 1*). The project design was adhered to in full, apart from the withdrawal of a watching brief at Lanercost Priory by the client, originally intended to be undertaken on June 20th 2005. The work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 WATCHING BRIEF

2.2.1 A permanent archaeological presence was maintained during the manual excavation of signage post holes.

2.2.2 **Sawley Abbey:** in total, seven post holes were excavated under watching brief conditions prior to the installation of the following (Fig 3):

- i. Health and Safety sign (location 2); total height of sign is 1800mm with 500mm below ground (two post holes).
- ii. 3 x Interpretation Lecterns (locations 3-5); single post hole to a depth of 300mm.
- iii. Guardianship monolith (location 1); to replace existing green panels and posts, using the same holes and footprint. The depth of hole to be approximately a third of height of 600mm and 300mm x 300mm round per leg.

2.2.3 **Whalley Abbey Gatehouse:** two post holes were hand excavated for the purpose of the installation of one sign (Fig 5):

- i. Health and Safety sign (location 6); total height of sign is 1800mm with 500mm below ground (two post holes).

2.2.4 Recording was by means of OA North's standard context recording system, with trench records and supporting registers and indices. A full photographic record in colour transparency and monochrome formats was undertaken. Section drawings and plans were made of relevant areas at appropriate scales. The post holes were located using taped measurements from existing walls and were excavated manually.

2.3 ARCHIVE

2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design (*Appendix 2*), and in accordance with current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited Lancashire Record Office in Preston on completion of the project, and a copy of this report will be deposited with Lancashire County

Archaeology Service (LCAS) for inclusion in the Lancashire SMR. A paper copy and pdf version on CD will also be forwarded to English Heritage.

3. RESULTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 The objective of the watching brief was to identify any potential archaeological features revealed during the excavation of the post holes for the purposes of the installation of the signage, and record their presence or absence, character and extent, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality. The results may, consequently, be used to add to knowledge about the previous history of activity on the current site and its surroundings and provide information to influence future planning decisions in the area.

3.2 SAWLEY ABBEY

3.2.1 **Location 1, Guardianship monolith:** two postholes were excavated around those currently in existence for the previous monolith, which is sited externally on the north side of the main entrance to the abbey grounds (Fig 3). The maximum extent of each post hole was 320mm x 240mm x 480mm (Plate 2). The area had been disturbed by the installation of the previous monolith and, consequently, no archaeological deposits or finds were encountered.

3.2.2 **Location 2, Health and Safety sign:** two post holes were excavated, each to a maximum extent of 300mm x 300mm x 500mm (Plate 3). The Health and Safety sign was installed within the abbey grounds immediately to the south of the main entrance (Fig 3). No archaeological deposits were encountered as the excavation was restricted to the topsoil. However, the most southerly of the two post holes contained finds, albeit unstratified, consisting of animal bone and pottery (see Section 3.3, below).

3.2.3 **Location 3, 'Welcome to Sawley Abbey' interpretation sign:** this was the first of three interpretation lecterns to be installed. It was a replacement sign situated to the south of the main entrance and location 2, and within the abbey grounds (Fig 3). A single post hole was excavated around the existing infilled hole to a maximum of 350mm x 350mm x 400mm within the topsoil (Plate 4). No archaeological features or finds were encountered.

3.2.4 **Location 4, 'Abbey Church' interpretation sign:** this was the second of three interpretation lecterns to be installed actually within the remains of the Abbey Church, to the north of the nave (Fig 3). A single post hole was excavated around the existing infilled hole to a maximum of 350mm x 300mm x 350mm (Plate 5). No archaeological deposits were encountered due to the limits of the excavation to within the topsoil only. However, medieval tile fragments were retrieved (see Section 3.3, below).

3.2.5 **Location 5, 'Abbey Refectory' interpretation sign:** this third interpretation lectern was positioned more within the southern extent of the abbey remains, within the north-east corner of the refectory (Fig 3). A single post hole was excavated around the existing infilled hole to a maximum of 350mm x 350mm x 300mm within the topsoil (Plate 6). No archaeological features or finds were encountered.

3.3 WHALLEY ABBEY GATEHOUSE

3.3.1 **Location 6, Health and Safety sign:** two post holes were excavated, each to a maximum extent of 400mm x 350mm x 400mm within the topsoil (Plate 8). The Health and Safety sign was installed within the Abbey Gatehouse grounds, immediately to the north of the gatehouse (Fig 5). No archaeological deposits or finds were encountered.

3.4 FINDS

3.4.1 **Introduction:** in total, eight fragments of artefacts and ecofacts were recovered during the watching brief, the majority of which was medieval floor tile, with the remainder comprising post-medieval pottery and animal bone. The finds were recovered from unstratified deposits at two locations within Sawley Abbey only, locations 2 and 4, with none of the other interventions overseen during the watching brief producing any artefacts. A catalogue of the finds is given in *Appendix 3*, and the medieval floor tile is discussed below.

3.4.2 **Medieval floor tile:** six fragments, representing two floor tiles, were recovered from location 4. Five of the fragments joined to form a near-complete tile, allowing its dimensions and details of its manufacture and use to be ascertained. It was square, with sides 135mm long, and 23mm thick, and it had been manufactured using a sand-coated former. The upper surface was smooth, whilst the lower surface had been left rough and uneven, with a sinuous groove near one corner. This is most likely to have been accidental, but could have been an attempt to provide keying. The sides were vertical, with striations caused by knife trimming visible on at least one side. One corner of the tile appeared to have been carefully trimmed, perhaps suggesting that it was custom made. The bubbly and uneven dark green glaze was applied direct to the surface of the tile, with significant quantities of glaze coating the sides and the base. One of the sides had marks where the edge of another tile stuck to it during firing. Traces of cream-coloured mortar were visible on the base and sides of the tile. The tile was badly worn and much of the glaze completely abraded. It showed no signs of re-use, and the breaks appeared to be fresh and of recent origin. It is unlikely that the intervention at location 4 disturbed the remains of an *in situ* tiled floor, as the excavation was limited to what appeared to be topsoil, and some indication of the floor bedding would have also been expected.

3.4.3 The remaining tile fragment was the corner of an unglazed tile, varying between 26mm to 30mm in thickness. It had been made in the same way as the tile described above, but was more low-fired, with wear on the upper surface appearing to cause the coarse inclusions, which were significantly harder than the rest of the fabric, to stand proud of the surface. The breaks on this tile showed slight signs of abrasion, but there was no evidence of re-use. Mortar was present on the base and sides, covering a chip in the side which may have occurred soon after firing.

3.4.4 **Recommendations:** it is recommended that the medieval floor tile fragments area retained, for inclusion within the archive of finds from the site at English

Heritage. With regards to the unstratified bone and pottery, the client has agreed to these being discarded.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 CONCLUSION

- 4.1.1 The watching brief undertaken at Sawley Abbey and Whalley Abbey Gatehouse, was carried out during the hand excavation of a total of nine post holes at six locations, for the purposes of installing interpretation and warning signage. The maximum depth for all of the post holes was restricted to the topsoil and, therefore, no archaeological deposits were encountered. Three of the post holes, at locations 1 and 3 at Sawley Abbey, were excavated around previously existing post holes as they were associated with replacement signage. At locations 2 and 4 at Sawley Abbey unstratified finds were retrieved, consisting of a fragment of animal bone and post-medieval pottery at location 2, and six fragments representing two medieval tiles from location 4. The medieval tiles are thought to relate to the disturbed remains of the church floor, from whence they came.
- 4.1.2 Due to the limited extent of the post hole excavation, it could not be ascertained as to whether archaeological deposits or features exist at a greater depth. However, given the very high archaeological potential for the two sites, and the fragments of floor tile recovered from within Sawley Abbey church, it is extremely likely. Therefore, any further intervention or groundworks should be carried out under archaeological supervision.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London

Ordnance Survey, 1983 *Soils of Northern England*, London

Robinson, D (ed), 1998 *The Cistercian Abbeys of Britain*, London

6. ILLUSTRATIONS

6.1 FIGURES

Figure 1: Location plan

Figure 2: Detailed location map of Sawley Abbey

Figure 3: Location of the postholes excavated for the signage installation at Sawley Abbey

Figure 4: Detailed location map of Whalley Abbey Gatehouse

Figure 5: Location of signage installed at Whalley Abbey Gatehouse

6.1 PLATES

Plate 1: A view of the abbey remains at Sawley Abbey

Plate 2: Two post holes excavated for the Guardianship monolith (location 1) at Sawley Abbey, facing east

Plate 3: Two post holes excavated for the Health and Safety sign (location 2) at Sawley Abbey facing north-west

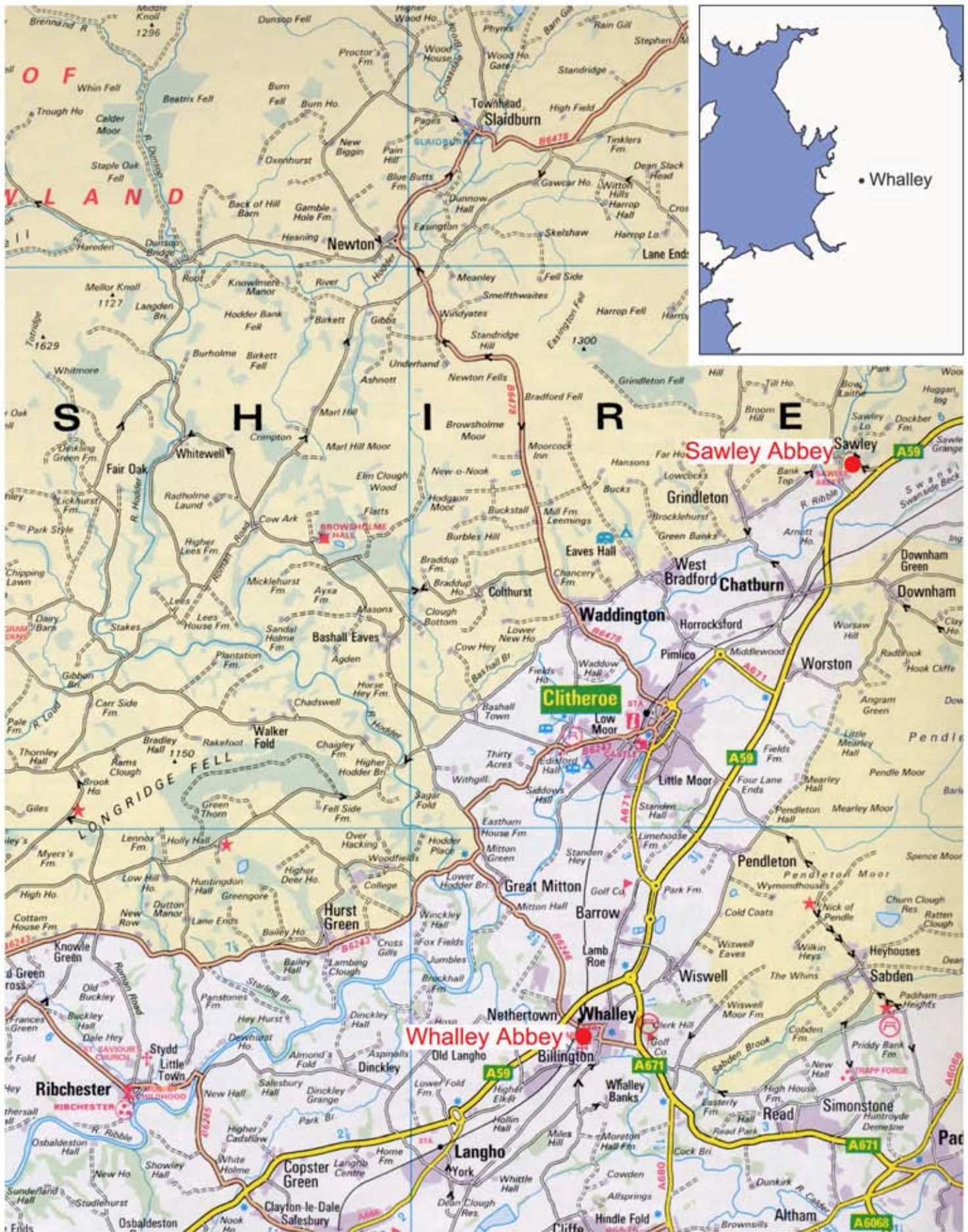
Plate 4: A post hole excavated for the 'Welcome to Sawley Abbey' interpretation sign (location 3) facing north-west

Plate 5: A post hole excavated for the 'Abbey Church' interpretation sign (location 4) at Sawley Abbey facing west

Plate 6: A post hole excavated for the 'Abbey Refectory' interpretation sign (location 5) at Sawley Abbey facing east

Plate 7: A view of the Gatehouse at Whalley Abbey

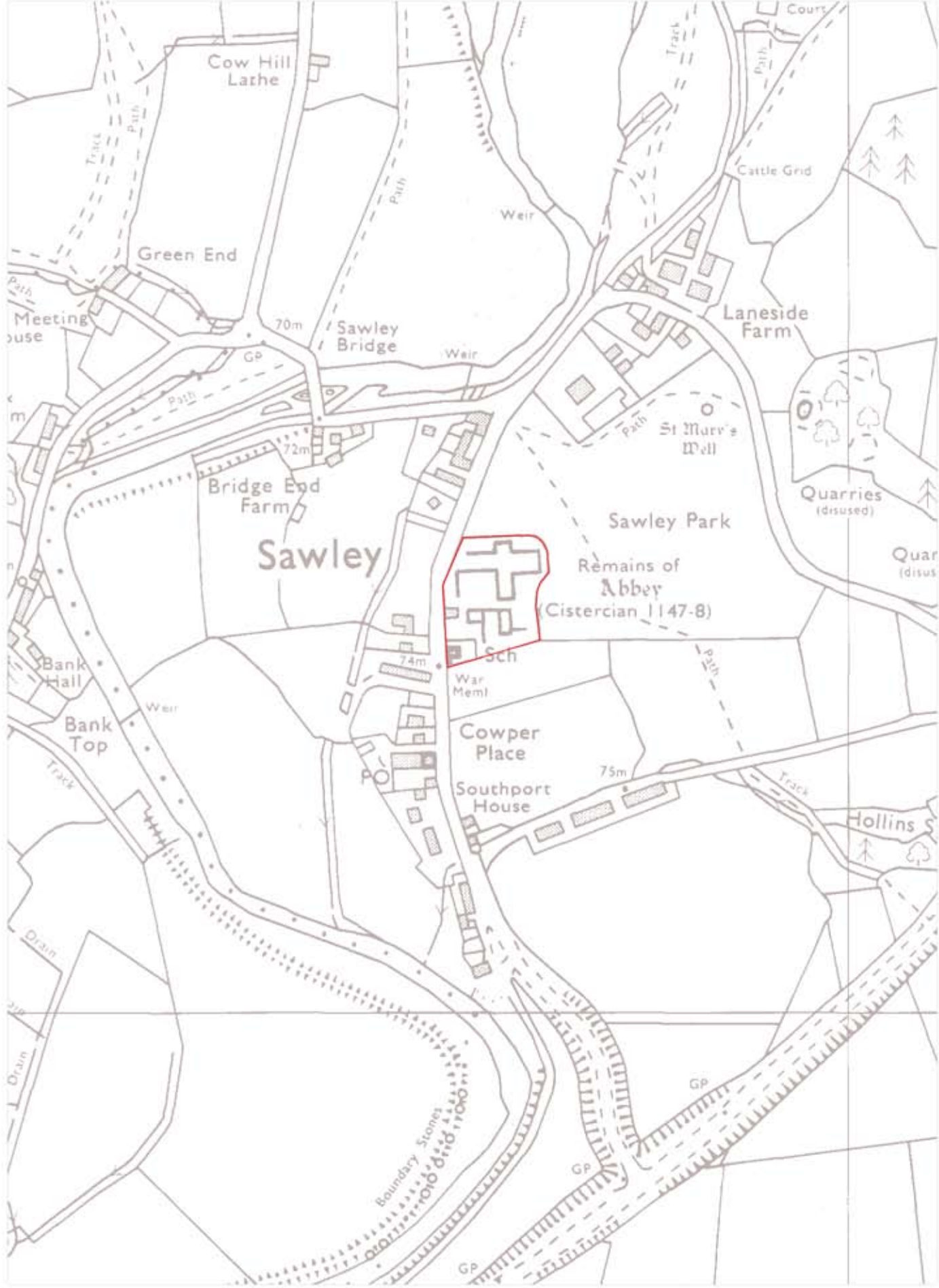
Plate 8: Two post holes excavated for the Health and Safety sign (location 6) at Whalley Abbey, facing north



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Figure 1: Location map



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0 ————— 100m
 Scale 1:5000



Figure 2: Detailed location map of Sawley Abbey

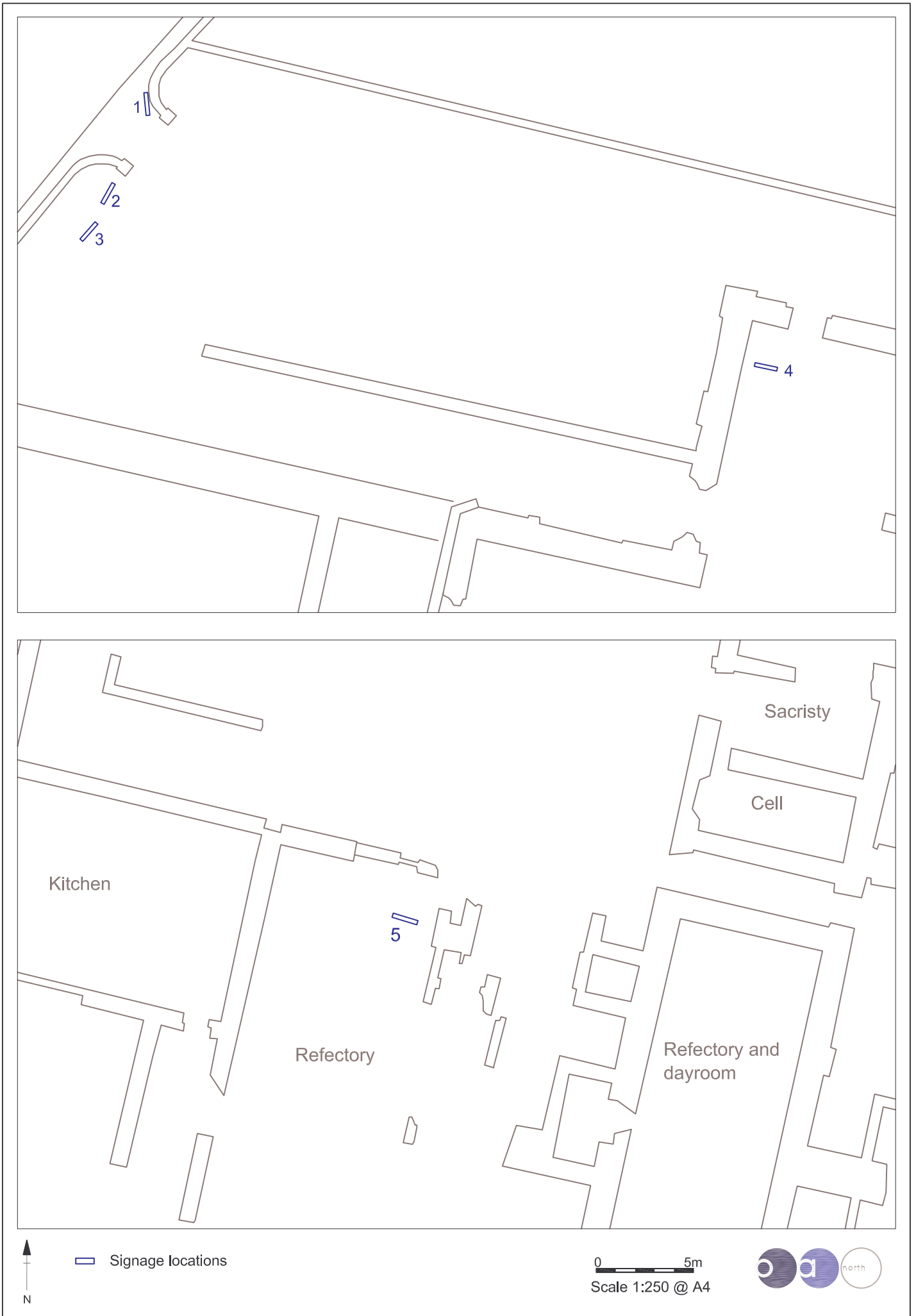
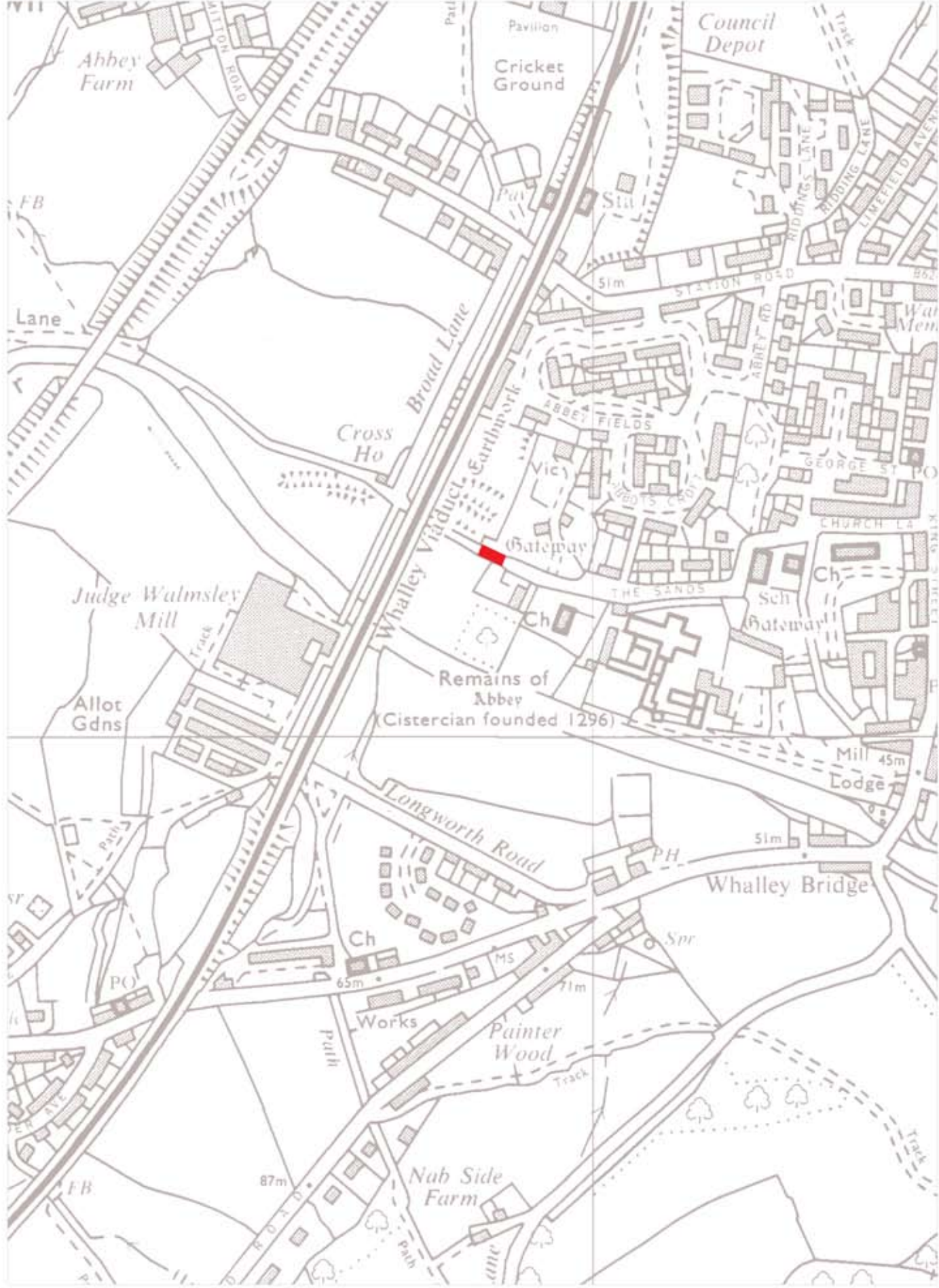


Figure 3: Location of the signage installed during the watching brief at Sawley Abbey



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0 ————— 100m
 Scale 1:5000



Figure 4: Detailed location map of Whalley Abbey Gatchouse

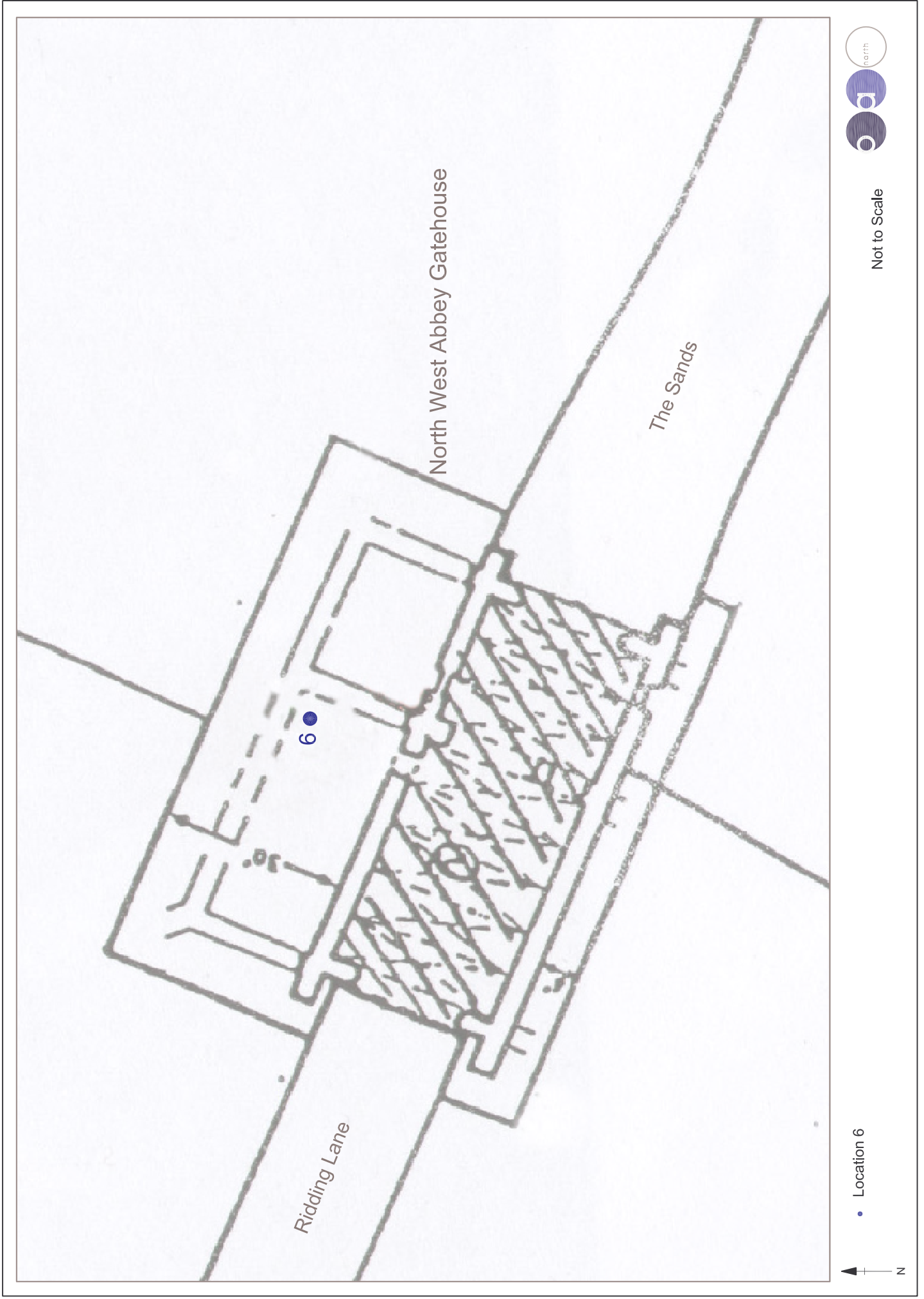


Figure 5: Location of signage installed at Whalley Abbey Gatehouse



Plate 1: A view of the abbey remains at Sawley



Plate 2: Two post holes excavated for the Guardianship monolith (location 1) at Sawley Abbey, facing east



Plate 3: Two post holes excavated for the Health and Safety sign (location 2) at Sawley Abbey, facing north-west



Plate 4: A post hole excavated for the 'Welcome to Sawley Abbey' interpretation sign (location 3), facing north-west



Plate 5: A post hole excavated for the 'Abbey Church' interpretation sign (location 4) at Sawley Abbey facing west



Plate 6: A post hole excavated for the 'Abbey Refectory' interpretation sign (location 5) at Sawley Abbey facing east



Plate 7: A view of the Gatehouse at Whalley Abbey



Plate 8: Two post holes excavated for the Health and Safety sign (location 6) at Whalley Abbey, facing north

APPENDIX 1: PROJECT BRIEF

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Location: Sawley Abbey and Whalley Abbey Gatehouse

Proposal: Installation of interpretation and Warning signage

1. Summary

There is a possibility that archaeological remains may exist on this site but little is known of their extent or of their state of preservation. It has, therefore, been recommended that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out during installation.

This recommendation follows the advice given by central government as set out in *Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16) and as a condition as recommended by the English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Scheduled Monument Consent Class 6.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 NGR: **SD 7781 4645**
Area: **Lancashire**
Known Constraints: **Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade 1 listed building**

3. Planning Background

- 3.1 See enclosed SMCC6 conditions

4. Archaeological Background

- 4.1 See enclosed Entry in the Schedule of Monuments

5. Requirement for an Archaeological Watching Brief

- 5.1 The proposed installation would damage or destroy archaeological remains which may be present on the site. It has therefore been recommended that an archaeological watching brief should take place to record the presence and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits.

- 5.2 See enclosed scope of works

6. Objectives

The objectives of the watching brief are to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site, including its presence or absence, character and extent, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality, in order to make an assessment of its worth in the appropriate context.

- 6.2 The results of the watching brief may be used to:

- produce a record of the location, nature and date of any archaeological remains encountered on the site; and
- add to knowledge about the previous history of activity on the current site and its surroundings; and
- provide information to influence future planning decisions in the area.

- 6.3 The watching brief will cover the whole of the area to be disturbed by the installation and other earthmoving activities.

7 Schedule of works

- 7.1 An adequate written record will be maintained of archaeological features and finds encountered.
- 7.2 The location of all archaeological features and finds will be indicated on a measured plan of the site at an appropriate scale.
- 7.3 Where appropriate, measured drawings will be made of archaeological features encountered.
- 7.4 An adequate photographic record of the watching brief will be prepared. This will include black and white prints with colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the works.

8 Reporting and archiving

- 8.1 The evaluation will result in the production of a report comprising a written description of the features observed and an interpretation of their significance, together with sketch plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate. A copy of this brief, and the project design for the work, should be appended to this report.
- 8.2 Copies of the report will be supplied to Regional Works Manager and the Inspector of Ancient Monuments on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period (a maximum of 6 months after the completion of the fieldwork unless another date is agreed in writing with the Inspector of Ancient Monuments.) This should be provided both as paper copy and in PDF format on CD-ROM
- 8.3 The watching brief may result in an archive of notes, drawings and photographs. A copy of these, together with a copy of the report and any finds, may be deposited with an appropriate museum.

9 General

- 9.1 A written project design, detailing how the assessment is to be undertaken, the name of the project director, the proposed staffing levels and the proposed programme of work shall be produced prior to the commencement of the project. This design should be to the appropriate IFA standard. The archaeological contractor may wish to refer to sections of this brief in the project design, rather than transcribe them. Costings shall be submitted under a separate cover to the project design.
- 9.2 The document entitled "Conditions of Contract for the Provision of archaeological Project Services" is in use as a model of expected practices and procedures. A copy of that document is attached as Appendix One.
- 9.3 The archaeological work may be monitored by the English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments.
- 9.4 Access to the land will be arranged by the client and the successful contractor will need to liaise to ensure that suitable arrangements are established
- 9.5 This brief shall not be altered without the express consent of the English Heritage. It allows some flexibility of approach but deviations from the agreed project design shall be discussed and agreed in advance with Inspector of Ancient Monuments. A copy of the brief on computer disc can be supplied upon request.

10 Further information

- 10.1.1 Further information and details of the proposed development can be obtained from English Heritage.

- 10.2 Further queries regarding this brief or the general conditions can be addressed to Joanne Balmforth, English Heritage, NW Region, Canada House, 3 Chepstow Street, Manchester, M1 5FW.

APPENDIX 2: PROJECT DESIGN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.1.1 English Heritage (hereafter the client) has requested Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) submit proposals to undertake an archaeological watching brief at three separate scheduled sites in Lancashire and Cumbria during the installation of interpretation and warning signage, due to the high archaeological potential. This project design has been prepared in accordance with a brief and details of the proposed works supplied by English Heritage.

1.1.2 It is proposed that one sign will be erected at Lanercost Priory, Cumbria (SM 23689; NGR NY 5560 6373), five signs at Sawley Abbey, Lancashire (SM 23690; NGR SD 7781 4645), and two signs at Whalley Abbey Gatehouse, Lancashire (SM 23691; NGR SD 7290 3618).

(i) **Lanercost Priory.**

- Monday 20th June 2005.
- Health and Safety sign; total height of sign is 1800mm with 500mm below ground (2 post holes).

(ii) **Sawley Abbey.**

- Tuesday 21st June 2005.
- Health and Safety sign; total height of sign is 1800mm with 500mm below ground (2 post holes).
- 3 x Interpretation Lecterns; single post hole to a depth of 300mm.
- Guardianship monolith; to replace existing green panels and posts, using the same holes and footprint. The depth of hole to be approximately a third of height of 600mm and 300mm x 300mm round per leg.

(iii) **Whalley Abbey Gatehouse.**

- Tuesday 21st June 2005.
- Health and Safety sign; total height of sign is 1800mm with 500mm below ground (2 post holes).

1.2 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH

1.2.1 Oxford Archaeology North has considerable experience of excavation of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large scale projects throughout Northern England during the past 24 years. Evaluations, assessments, watching briefs and excavations have taken place within the planning process and according to any statutory constraints, 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 of Field Archaeologists (IFA) registered organisation, registration number 17**, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IFA Code of Conduct.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The following programme has been designed to identify any surviving archaeological deposits and provide for accurate recording of any archaeological remains that are disturbed during the installation process.

2.2 **Watching brief:** to carry out a watching brief during the excavation of the post holes to determine the quality, extent and importance of any archaeological remains on the site.

2.3 **Report and Archive:** a single combined report for all three sites will be produced for the client within eight weeks of completion of the fieldwork. A site

archive will be produced to English Heritage guidelines (MAP 2) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990).

3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 WATCHING BRIEF

3.1.1 **Methodology:** a programme of field observation will accurately record the location, extent, and character of any surviving archaeological features and/or deposits within the proposed ground disturbance. This work will comprise observation during the excavation for the post holes for these works, the systematic examination of any subsoil horizons exposed, and the accurate recording of all archaeological features and horizons, and any artefacts, identified during observation.

3.1.2 The watching brief will cover the whole of the area to be disturbed by the installation.

3.1.3 Putative archaeological features and/or deposits identified, together with the immediate vicinity of any such features, will be cleaned by hand using trowels and, where appropriate, sections will be studied and drawn. Any such features will be sample excavated (ie. selected pits and post holes 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).

3.1.4 During this phase of work, recording will comprise a full description and preliminary classification of features or materials revealed, and their accurate location (either on plan and/or section, and as grid co-ordinates where appropriate). Features will be planned accurately at appropriate scales and annotated on to a **large-scale plan provided by the client**.

3.1.5 A photographic record will be undertaken simultaneously of features and finds, and of general working shots. This will entail black and white prints with colour transparencies, as per Section 7.4 of the English Heritage brief.

3.1.6 A plan will be produced of the areas of groundworks showing the location and extent of the ground disturbance and one or more dimensioned sections will be produced.

3.1.7 **Contingency plan:** in the event of significant archaeological features being encountered during the watching brief, discussions will take place with English Heritage, as to the extent of further works to be carried out. All further works would be subject to a variation to this project design. In the event of environmental/organic deposits being present on site, it would be necessary to discuss and agree a programme of palaeoenvironmental sampling and/or dating with English Heritage.

3.2 ARCHIVE/REPORT

3.2.1 **Archive:** 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 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, and a full copy of the record archive (microform or microfiche) together with the material archive (artefacts, ecofacts, and samples) with an appropriate museum.

3.2.2 **Report:** one bound copy of a written synthetic report will be submitted to the appropriate Regional Works Manager and the Inspector of Ancient Monuments, together with a digital copy supplied as pdf files within eight weeks of completion of fieldwork. Any finds recovered will be assessed with reference to other local material and any particular or unusual features of the assemblage will be highlighted. The report will also include a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived.

3.2.3 **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 HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.1 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). OA North will liaise with the client to ensure all health and safety regulations are met. A risk assessment will be completed in advance of any on-site works. It is assumed that any information regarding health and safety issues on site will be made available by the client to OA North prior to the work commencing on site.

5 PROJECT MONITORING

5.1 Monitoring of this project will be undertaken through the auspices of English Heritage who will supply the necessary information regarding the relevant SMC information and contact details for installation.

6 WORK TIMETABLE

6.1 The duration of the archaeological presence for the watching brief is two days; Monday 20th - 21st June 2005.

6.2 The client report will be completed within approximately eight weeks following completion of the fieldwork.

7 STAFFING

7.1 The project will be under the direct management of **Emily Mercer BA (Hons) MSc AIFA** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

7.2 The watching brief and any subsequent excavation will be supervised in the field by an OA North project supervisor.

7.3 Assessment of the finds from the evaluation will be undertaken under the auspices of OA North's in-house finds specialist **Chris Howard-Davis** (OA North project officer). Chris acts as OA North's in-house finds specialist and has extensive knowledge of all finds of all periods from archaeological sites in northern England.

8 INSURANCE

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage, 1991, *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC), 1990 *Guidelines for the preparation of archives for long-term storage*, London

SCAUM (Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers), 1997 *Health and Safety Manual*, Poole

APPENDIX 3: FINDS CATALOGUE

Site	Location; Context	Quantity	Material	Description	Date range
Sawley Abbey	2; unstratified	1	Ceramic	Brown salt-glazed grey stoneware globular jar rim, with everted rim and incised lines below	18 th - 20 th century
Sawley Abbey	2; unstratified	1	Bone	Pelvis fragment from very small juvenile cow (?), with chop marks indicating butchery	Not closely datable
Sawley Abbey	4; unstratified	5	Ceramic	Refitting fragments from square floor tile (135mm x 135mm x 23mm). Made in sand-coated former, dipped in olive green glaze, upper surface worn smooth. Fabric has quartz grit and ceramic inclusions, and is high-fired, mainly reduced to charcoal grey, with some oxidised orange areas on surface. Cream-coloured mortar adheres to the sides and sand-coated base, and there are no signs of re-use. One corner is shaped but its purpose is unclear.	Medieval
Sawley Abbey	4; unstratified	1	Ceramic	Corner of unglazed floor tile (26-30mm thick). Made in sand-coated former, cream-coloured mortar on sand-coated base and on sides. Fabric is medium fired with reduced mid grey core and light grey part of upper surface, with the rest oxidised orange. Broken surfaces show slight abrasion.	Medieval