



VICTORIA HOUSE, 34 WELLGATE, CLITHEROE, LANCASHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief



Oxford Archaeology North

September 2006

JYM Partnership

Issue No: 2006-7/485

OAN Job No: L9653

NGR: SD 7450 4185

Planning Reference: 3/2005/0770

Document Title: VICTORIA HOUSE, 34 WELLGATE, CLITHEROE,
LANCASHIRE

Document Type: Archaeological Watching Brief

Client Name: JYM Partnership

Issue Number: 2006-7/485
OA Job Number: L9653

National Grid Reference: NGR SD 7450 4185

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....	1
SUMMARY	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Circumstances of the Project.....	5
2. METHODOLOGY.....	6
2.1 Project Design	6
2.2 Map Regression Analysis.....	6
2.3 Watching Brief	6
2.4 Archive.....	6
3. BACKGROUND.....	7
3.1 Location, Topography and Geology	7
3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background	7
4. RESULTS.....	9
4.1 Cartographic Analysis.....	9
4.2 Watching Brief	9
5. DISCUSSION.....	10
5.1 Conclusions	10
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY	11
6.1 Cartographic Sources	11
6.2 Secondary Sources	11
ILLUSTRATIONS	12
Figures.....	12
Plates	12

APPENDIX 1: PROJECT DESIGN..... 13

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF CONTEXTS..... 14

SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology North in February 2006 at 34 Wellgate, Clitheroe, Lancashire (NGR SD 7450 4185). The work was commissioned by the JYM Partnership, who propose to redevelop and extend the present building, which lies within an area of recognised archaeological potential. The watching brief was undertaken to the rear of the property, during the removal of overburden from within a small area of the site to facilitate the footings for a stairwell. No features of archaeological interest were discovered during the watching brief.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank JYM Partnership for commissioning the project.

Steve Clarke undertook the watching brief, and also wrote the report. Tony Lee undertook the cartographic study and Mark Tidmarsh produced the drawings. Alison Plummer managed the project and also edited the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Following proposals by JYM Partnership to extend and make alterations to the existing building at 34 Wellgate, Clitheroe, Lancashire (NGR SD 7450 4185), Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS) recommended that an archaeological watching brief be conducted during any associated groundworks. In accordance with this verbal brief, OA North compiled a project design (*Appendix 1*). Following approval of the project design by LCAS, OA North was duly commissioned to undertake the watching brief at the rear of the property. The watching brief was carried out during February 2006, and this report sets out the results in the form of a short document.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1.1 The project design (*Appendix 1*) was adhered to in full and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and generally accepted best practice

2.2 MAP REGRESSION ANALYSIS

- 2.2.1 In an attempt to identify the origins of 34 Wellgate, and to investigate the suggested presence of the town well, a run of early edition Ordnance Survey maps covering the study area was consulted at the Lancashire Record Office in Preston.

2.3 WATCHING BRIEF

- 2.3.1 During the watching brief close liaison was maintained between OA North staff and the site contractors. The groundworks for the footings were effected by manual excavation. This work comprised observation during the excavation, and the examination and preliminary classification of any features thus exposed. The programme of field observation recorded the location, extent, and character of any surviving archaeological features. In addition, the location of features was planned. A photographic record in colour slide, monochrome and digital formats was also compiled.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design (*Appendix 1*), and in accordance with current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the Lancashire Record Office (Preston).

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 Number 34 Wellgate, also known as Victoria House is situated in the centre of Clitheroe, on the corner of Wellgate and Lowergate (NGR SD 7450 4185). Wellgate lies within the historic core of the town, north-east of the Castle.
- 3.1.2 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).
- 3.1.3 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*). Clitheroe falls within the area known as the 'Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill': a transitional region between the upland core of the Bowland Fells and the flat landscape of the Lancaster and Amounderness coastal plain (*ibid*).

3.2 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric activity in the region is currently sparse. It is likely that the Bowland Landscape and its fringes were populated by nomadic hunters from as early as 10,000 BC (Countryside Commission 1992), when much of the area was covered in broadleaved forests. Woodland clearance began in the Neolithic period, and this process continued throughout the Bronze Age (Middleton 1996). Evidence for late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity in the area has been found in the form of sites at Bleasdale Circle and Oak Farm near Chipping, along with remains found in a cave above Whitewell and a possible group of tumuli on Waddington Fell (*ibid*). Evidence for Iron Age activity is sparse in the region, and there is also a lack of easily definable Iron Age material culture, although this is attributed to a lack of research rather than an abandonment of the landscape, as pollen evidence has indicated an increase in activity represented by woodland clearance at this time (MacKay and Tallis 1994, 578).
- 3.2.2 **Romano-British Period:** by the end of the Iron Age the Bowland area was probably under the control of the Brigantes, who are thought to have had an important centre at Ingleborough (Newman and Hodgkinson 1997, 20) to the north-west of the study area. The Romans occupied the central Pennines area, including Bowland, in the early AD 70s and a fort was established at Ribchester. The Roman road from Ribchester to Burrow in Lonsdale lay approximately 10km west of Clitheroe.
- 3.2.3 **Early Medieval Period:** there is little evidence for early medieval activity in the region, with the nearest known remains being found at Ribblehead near Ingleborough, and the Minster site of Whalley (Newman 1996, 102). However

documentary evidence suggests that the Bowland area passed out of British control and was integrated into the Kingdom of Northumbria in the seventh century AD (*op cit*, 21). The majority of place names in the region, such as Chipping and Waddington in the study area are of Anglo-Saxon origin, and these towns are likely to have been established before the onset of Viking settlement in the late ninth century (*ibid*). Traces of the Viking occupation can be seen in the place-names of the Bowland Region, for example Battersby (*ibid*), and in the origin of upland features such as ‘fell’, ‘moss’, ‘thwaite’ and ‘beck’ (Countryside Commission 1992, 13).

- 3.2.4 **Late Medieval:** at the time of the Norman Conquest the region was divided between the Earldoms of Northumbria and Mercia, with the River Ribble as its boundary. After the Conquest the lands were granted to Roger de Poitou and formed part of the original county of Lancashire. After Roger de Poitou, the ownership of the land passed to Robert de Lacy in the early twelfth century. Clitheroe was granted a charter in the mid-thirteenth century (White 1996, 127).
- 3.2.5 Although the exact origins of Clitheroe Castle are unclear, documentary sources dating to 1102 confirm the presence of a military structure by this date (English Heritage 1997). During the mid twelfth century some new construction was undertaken by Robert de Lacy and throughout the thirteenth century the castle was garrisoned by a small number of men. It acted as the seat of the Honour of Clitheroe owned by the lords of the Manor, the de Lacy’s, and functioned as a court and small prison (*ibid*).
- 3.2.6 **Post-medieval:** industrial development, which had begun in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was based on the production of wool and linen. During the last quarter of the eighteenth century, cotton manufacture was introduced with water powered spinning factories and domestic handloom weavers’ cottages; the first spinning mill being established in 1782 at Low Moor. Settlements of weavers’ cottages followed, and the opening of the Bolton, Blackburn and Clitheroe railway in 1850 provided a major stimulus to the textile industry. The railway provided a major boost to the limestone and cement industries and many new quarries were developed after 1850. Textile growth resulted in secondary industries, such as bobbin making, engineering and millwrighting.

4. RESULTS

4.1 CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

- 4.1.1 *Ordnance Survey First Edition 1:10560, 1847*: a detached ‘L-shaped’ building was identified on the site of 34 Wellgate. The map showed little detail, and the town well was not identified.
- 4.1.2 *Ordnance Survey First Edition 1:2500, 1886* (Fig 2): a higher density of buildings was shown on and around the corner of Wellgate and Lowergate. A large, square building was identified on the site of 34 Wellgate, with an outshut or extension to the rear. ‘The Towns Well’ was written on this map, between number 34 and an Inn standing opposite, although the exact location of the well was not made clear.
- 4.1.3 *Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1:2500, 1912* (Fig 3): 34 Wellgate appeared to have been extended to the west, and incorporated the gap that had hitherto separated number 34 from the building to its west. A slightly higher density of buildings was shown behind the street frontage. Again, the exact location of the well was difficult to determine from this map.
- 4.1.4 *Ordnance Survey Third Edition 1:2500, 1932* (Fig 4): this map indicates that no significant changes had taken place, either at 34 Wellgate, or in the immediate vicinity. The exact location of the well remained unclear.

4.2 WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.2.1 The excavation for the footings covered an area 2.1m by 0.8m, and was located between the rear extensions of the property, at the base of a brick-built wall (Fig 5). The stratigraphy exposed within the section of the footing (Fig 6) comprised evidence for surfaces and associated make-up layers for the yard. These are listed in *Appendix 2*. The uppermost make-up layer comprised loose red bricks uniformly laid (2). This overlay both a layer of concrete (3), and a section of red brick wall running north-south to east-west (4). The function of this wall is unclear. The lower two make-up layers observed comprised rubble in a matrix of loose mortar and re-deposited soil (5) and a slightly greenish-grey wet clay with moderate inclusions of small-to-medium sized stones, slate and brick (6). Due to the limited depth of the excavation (0.80m) natural subsoil was not reached.
- 4.2.2 No features of archaeological interest were observed as the excavation for the footings did not continue beneath the depth of the make-up layers. No artefacts were recovered during the watching brief.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The cartographic evidence indicated that a building has existed on the site of 34 Wellgate since at least the mid-nineteenth century. The building was subject to enlargement in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both to its frontage and to the rear. It is unclear from map evidence alone how much of the original building fabric survives. The location of the town well was clearly very close to Number 34, perhaps at the other side of the road to the building frontage, although its exact location could not be ascertained.
- 5.1.2 Although located within a general area of recognised archaeological potential, no significant finds or archaeological horizons were encountered during the watching brief.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

6.1 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- Ordnance Survey, 1847 *Lancashire Sheet XLVII Edition of 1847*, 1:10560
- Ordnance Survey, 1886 *Lancashire Sheet XLVII.10 Edition of 1886*, 1:2500
- Ordnance Survey, 1912 *Lancashire Sheet XLVII.10 Edition of 1912*, 1:2500
- Ordnance Survey, 1932 *Lancashire Sheet XLVII.10 Edition of 1932*, 1:2500
- Ordnance Survey, 1983 *Soils of Northern England*, **1**, 1: 250000

6.2 SECONDARY SOURCES

- Anon, 2006 <http://www2.burnleytoday.co.uk/info%5Fguide/info/default.asp?townName=Clitheroe>
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- White, A, 1996 Medieval Towns, in R. Newman (ed) *The Archaeology of Lancashire*, Lancaster, 125-138

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location Map

Figure 2: Extract from Ordnance Survey, First Edition map 1886, 1:2500

Figure 3: Extract from Ordnance Survey, Second Edition map 1912, 1:2500

Figure 4: Extract from Ordnance Survey, Third Edition map 1932, 1:2500

Figure 5: Site Plan

Figure 6: Section

PLATES

Plate 1: Section showing stratigraphy of earlier surfaces

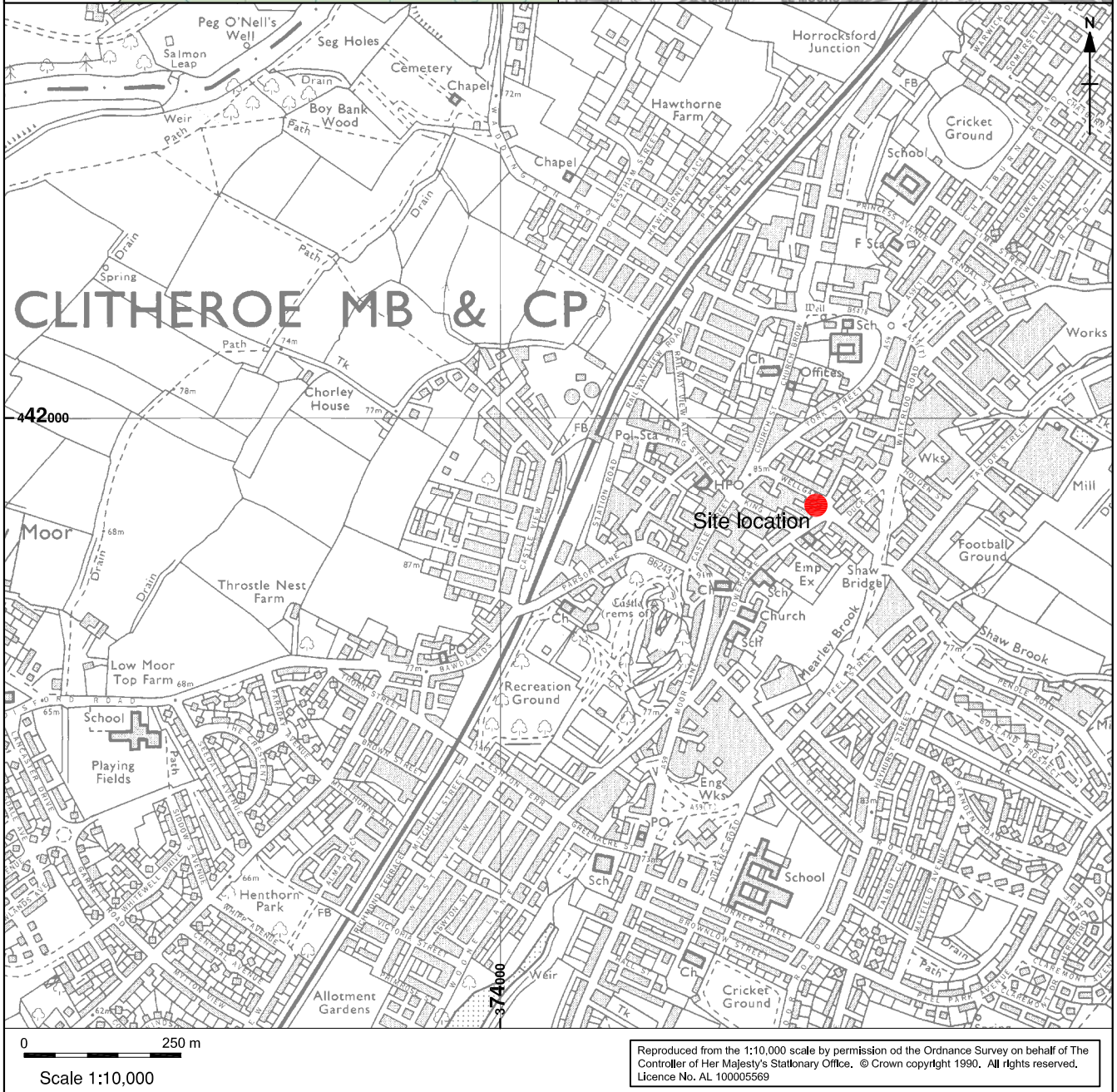


Figure 1: Site Location

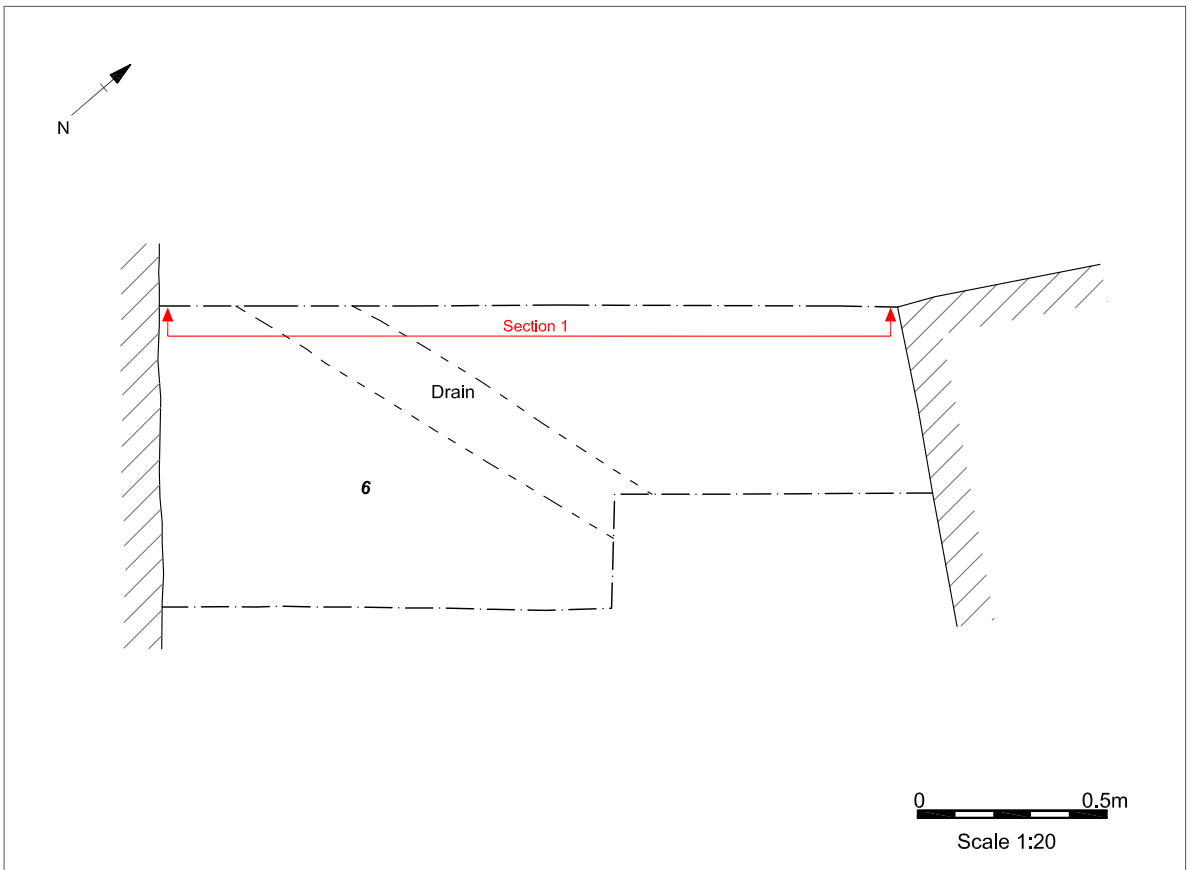
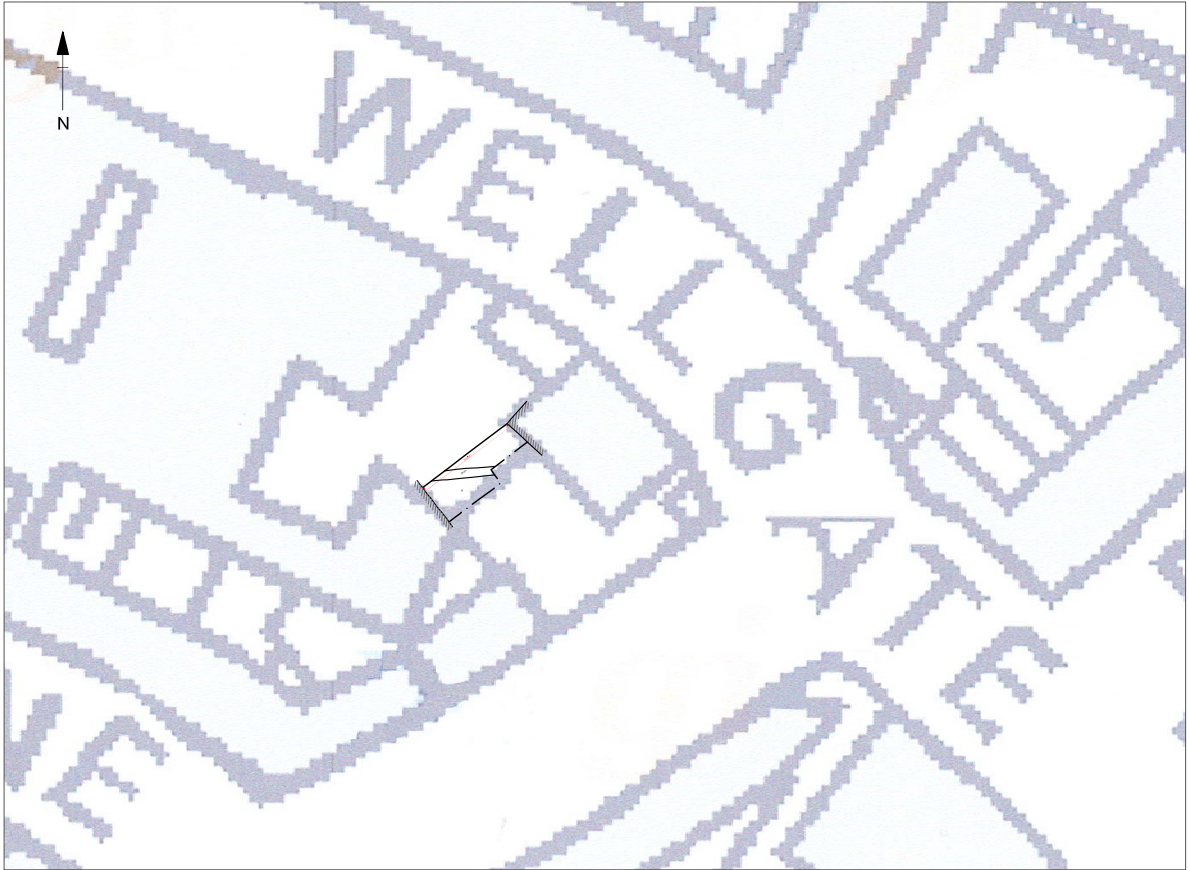


Figure 5: Site plan

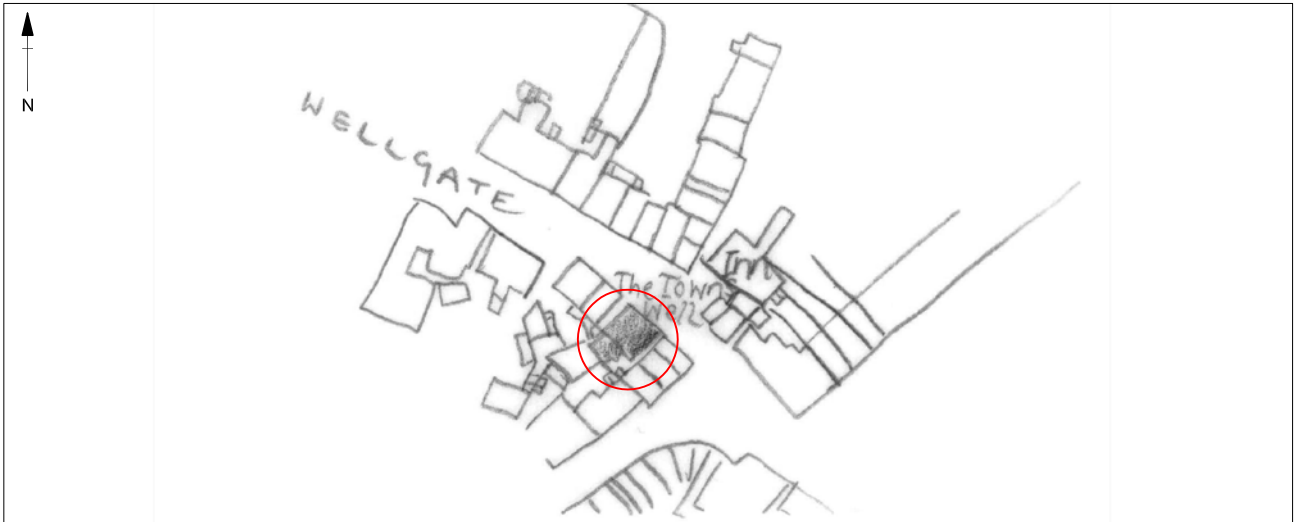


Figure 2: Extract from Ordnance Survey First Edition map, 1886 (1:2500)

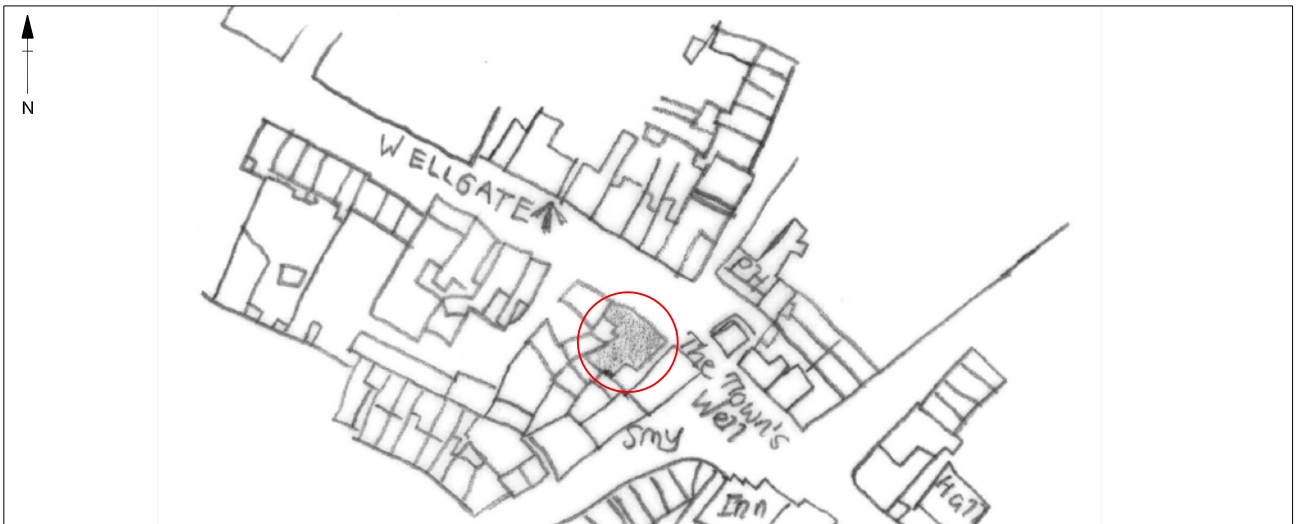


Figure 3: Extract from Ordnance Survey Second Edition map, 1912 (1:2500)

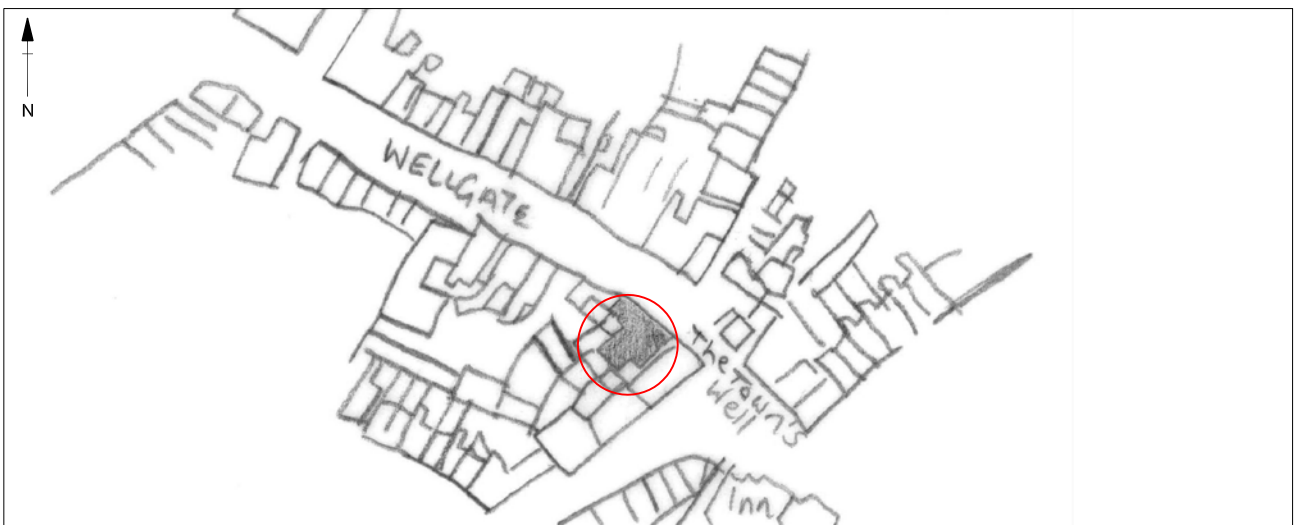


Figure 4: Extract from Ordnance Survey Third Edition map, 1932 (1:2500)

Key



truncated



edge of excavation



edge of context



uncertain edge



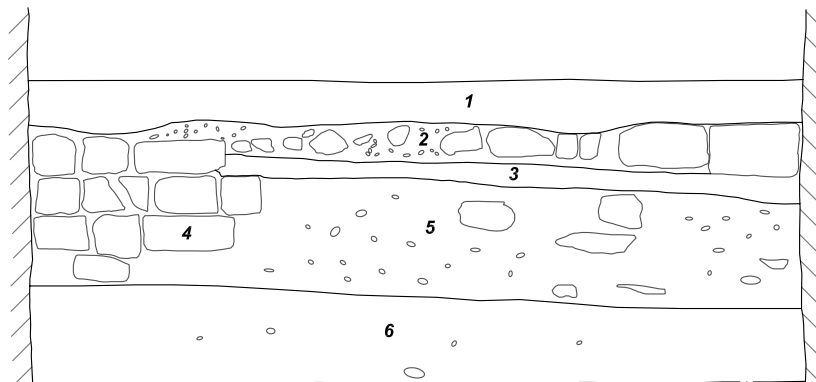
context number



stone

SW

NE



0 0.5m

Scale 1:20

Figure 6: Section



Plate 1: Section showing stratigraphy of earlier surfaces

APPENDIX 1: PROJECT DESIGN

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This project design has been compiled for the JYM Partnership (hereafter the client). It presents proposals for the rapid assessment of Victoria House, 34 Wellgate, Clitheroe, Lancashire. Section 2 of this document states the objectives of the project, Section 3 deals with OA North's methodology. Section 4 addresses other pertinent issues including details of staff to be involved, and project costs are presented in Section 5.
- 1.2 Planning permission has been granted by Ribble Valley Borough Council for extension and alterations to the property, which is a commercial premises. The planning Archaeologist at Lancashire County Council Archaeology Service (LCAS) has recommended that a rapid desk-based assessment and watching brief are undertaken prior to and during groundworks associated with the proposed extension at Victoria House. Victoria House is approximately 160 years old and is located close to one of the town wells with a Conservation Area.
- 1.3 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 provide for accurate recording of any archaeological deposits that are disturbed by ground disturbing activities associated with the construction of the proposed extension. A rapid desk-based assessment will precede a watching brief to place any findings that are made into an historic context.

3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 RAPID DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 3.1.1 The following rapid assessment will be undertaken as appropriate, depending on the availability of source material. The level of such work will be dictated by the time scale of the project.
- 3.1.2 **Documentary and Cartographic Material:** this work will comprise a rapid review of the published and unpublished information relevant to the site. It will include an appraisal of the data in the County Record office (Preston). It will investigate the past use of the site through an examination of the historic mapping of the area. Other sources to be consulted should include trade directories, illustrative evidence and published and unpublished documentary sources.

3.2 WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.2.1 A programme of field observation will record accurately the location, extent, and character of any surviving archaeological features and/or deposits within the area of ground disturbance for the proposed extension foundations. This work will comprise observation during the excavation for these works, the systematic

examination of any subsoil horizons exposed during the course of the groundworks, and the accurate recording of all archaeological features and horizons, and any artefacts, identified during observation.

- 3.2.2 Putative archaeological features and/or deposits identified by the machining process, together with the immediate vicinity of any such features, will be cleaned by hand, using either hoes, shovel scraping, and/or trowels depending on the subsoil conditions, and where appropriate sections will be studied and drawn. Any such features will be sample excavated (ie 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).
- 3.2.3 It is assumed that OA North will have the authority to stop the works for a sufficient time period to enable the recording of important deposits. It may also be necessary to call in additional archaeological support if a find of particular importance is identified or a high density of archaeology is discovered, but this would only be called into effect in agreement with the Client and the County Archaeology Service and will require a variation to costing.
- 3.2.4 **Written Record:** during this phase of work, recording will comprise a full description and preliminary classification of features or materials revealed. All information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically utilising OA North pro-forma. Areas of excavation will be assigned trench numbers and context numbers will be applied to archaeological features.
- 3.2.5 **Site Drawings:** a large-scale plan (provided by the client) will be produced of the area of the groundworks showing the location and extent of the ground disturbance, appropriately labelled to correspond with the written record. Archaeological features will be recorded accurately (either on plan (1:20) and/or section (1:10), and as grid co-ordinates where appropriate).
- 3.2.6 The site drawings will be manipulated in an industry standard CAD package (AutoCAD release 14/release 2000) for the production of final drawings.
- 3.2.7 A photographic record will be undertaken simultaneously. This will utilise a 35mm camera for the production of both colour slides and monochrome prints. A photographic scale will appear in all images captured. The photographic index will describe and locate each area/feature photographed.
- 3.2.8 **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. The LCAS 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, and if appropriate, in compliance with the 'Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act, 1981.

- 3.2.9 **Treatment of finds:** no sampling of finds will take place during fieldwork. All finds 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.
- 3.2.10 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.
- 3.2.11 **Treasure:** any gold and silver artefacts recovered during the course of the excavations 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.
- 3.2.12 **Environmental Samples:** samples will also be collected for technological, pedological and chronological analysis as appropriate. If necessary, access to conservation advice and facilities can be made available. OA North maintains close relationships with Ancient Monuments Laboratory staff at the Universities of Durham and York and, in addition, employs artefact and palaeozoological specialists with considerable expertise in the investigation, excavation and finds management of sites of all periods and types, who are readily available for consultation.

3.3 REPORT/ ARCHIVE

- 3.3.1 **Interim Statement:** in the event that further work is recommended an interim statement will be issued. In this instance or in the event that the client specifically requests an interim statement it should be noted that all illustrations will be copies of field drawings and not completed CAD drawings.
- 3.3.2 **Final Report:** two copies of the report (one bound, one CD ROM pdf) will be issued to the client within three weeks of completion of the fieldwork. A further copy of the report will be issued to the LCAS (CD ROM pdf). The report will present the following information:
- (i) **Summary:** a summary statement of the findings;
 - (ii) **Introduction:** the background to the project including location details;
 - (iii) **Methodology:** an outline of the methodology of all elements of the programme of work;
 - (iv) **Historical Background:** a brief historical background to the site;
 - (v) **Results:** an account of the past and present land use of the study area;
An account of known sites identified through the study of documentary sources;
An account of archaeological features identified during the course of the watching brief;

- (vi) **Discussion:** a description of the significance of the study area in its local and regional context;
 - (vii) **Impact/Recommendations:** the identification of areas where further development will impact upon the archaeological resource in addition to the impacts of the current development;
 - (viii) **Illustrations:** maps, plans, sections and copies of the site photographic archive;
 - (ix) **Appendices:** a copy of the brief and this project design;
- 3.3.3 Provision will be made for a summary report to be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork, if relevant results are obtained.
- 3.3.4 **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.
- 3.3.5 **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). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. This archive will be provided in the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology format and a synthesis will be submitted to the SMR (the index to the archive and a copy of the report). Arrangements for deposition of the full site archive will be made the Lancashire County Record Office.

4 OTHER MATTERS

- 4.1 **Project Monitoring:** whilst the work is undertaken for the Client, the Lancashire Archaeological Officer will be kept fully informed of the work. Any proposed changes to the project design will be agreed with the Archaeological Officer and the Client.
- 4.1.1 **Access:** OA North will consult with the Client regarding access to the site.
- 4.1.2 **Health and Safety:** 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.
- 4.1.3 **Work Timetable:** the desk-based element is expected to take approximately one day to complete. The duration of the watching brief will be dependent upon the progress of the contractor. The report will be completed within approximately three weeks following completion of the fieldwork.

- 4.1.4 **Staffing:** the project will be under the direct management of **Alison Plummer BSc (Hons)** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.
- 4.1.5 **Tony Lee BA** (OA North Project Supervisor) will undertake the rapid desk-based assessment. Present timetabling constraints preclude who will be undertaking the watching brief, although it is likely that this will be undertaken by an OA North supervisor suitably experienced in this field.
- 4.1.6 **Insurance:** OA North has professional indemnity to a value of £2,000,000, employer's liability cover to a value of £10,000,000 and public liability to a value of £15,000,000. Written details of insurance cover can be provided if required.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF CONTEXTS

Context	Deposit	Depth	Description
1	Yard surface	0.15m	Concrete
2	Make-up layer	0.14m	Loose red bricks uniformly laid
3	Surface	0.08m	Concrete
4	Wall	0.08m	Butt of truncated red brick wall running north-west to south-east
5	Make-up layer	0.27m	Rubble, loose mortar and re-deposited soil
6	Make-up layer	0.2m+	Slightly greenish-grey wet clay with moderate inclusions of small to medium sized stones, slate and brick