

CARTMEL PIPELINE, CARTMEL CUMBRIA

Watching Brief Report



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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) on behalf of McAlpine Utilities during excavation of a pipe trench in November 2004 at Cartmel, Cumbria (SD 3805 7855). The work was undertaken following advice from Cumbria County Council Archaeological Service (CCCAS) that the field through which the pipe trench passes, which is within 250m of the Augustinian Priory, contains earthworks of potential archaeological interest. Therefore, it was necessary that an archaeological watching brief was carried out in order to ascertain the presence or absence of any remains relating to the priory or other phases of activity in the area.

Pottery dating to between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries was recovered from the topsoil and, a deposit of gravel and cinders thought to relate to buildings marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1851 was encountered. Otherwise, no features of archaeological significance were encountered.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North would like to thank McAlpine Utilities for commissioning the project and for help in its initial stages.

Paul Gajos undertook the watching brief and compiled the report. Emma Carter produced the drawings. Alison Plummer managed the project and edited the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology North was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of c150m of pipe trench in the village of Cartmel, Cumbria (Fig 1). The trench was located some 250m from Cartmel Priory. The work was carried out in November 2004.

1.2 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.2.1 The site is situated on the southern edge of the village of Cartmel, Cumbria centred on SD 3805 7855 (Fig 2). The route of the pipeline subject to watching brief runs for 95m on a north-east/south-west alignment starting at The Causeway, passing the rear of the Pig and Whistle Public House before crossing Clogger Beck to finish at the unclassified road from Cartmel to Cark. The site lies at approximately 30mOD and at the time of the watching brief the field through which the pipeline passes was under pasture.
- 1.2.2 The geology underlying the site is boulder clay (glacial till). These drift deposits are formed on top of Lower Carboniferous Limestone bedrock (Countryside Commission 1998, 71).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.3.1 An Augustinian Priory was founded at Cartmel by William Marshall around the year 1190 as a thanks-offering for his elevation to the Earldom of Pembroke (Aston 1993, 85). The site chosen for the new monastic house was almost certainly occupied previously by a parish church, situated on a small outcrop of slate in the flood-plain of the river Ay (Dickinson 1991, 14). The priory, though never particularly wealthy, developed over the course of the next three and a half centuries into a complex of some size and complexity; it was suppressed, against a background of violent protest, in the winter of 1536/1537. The buildings of the priory church and the gatehouse survived this Dissolution; the former became the Parish church while the latter remained in use as a courthouse, to be converted later for use as a school (*op cit*, 107). It is possible that other buildings in the vicinity of the church may retain *in situ* medieval fabric (Dickinson 1991, 103-4). The relative positions of the church and the gatehouse would suggest that a large proportion of the present village lies within the area of the former priory enclosure.
- 1.3.2 The church at Cartmel shows signs of having been developed in three principal phases. The earliest fabric on the site dates to the years immediately following the foundation and contains material of great importance for the evolution of Gothic architecture in the region in the late twelfth century (Pevsner 1969, 86). A second campaign of redevelopment took place in the mid-fourteenth century with the creation of a new south choir aisle, now containing a spectacular tomb of the patron, Lord John Harrington. By the end of this century, however, the priory buildings were in a ruinous condition (Dickinson 1991, 44). In the

following century, a far more extensive campaign of alteration of the buildings was carried out, with a refenestration of the church, the construction of a new upper stage to the belfry, and the rebuilding of the nave.

- 1.3.3 The most drastic development of the fifteenth century, however, was the abandonment of the original claustral layout to the south of the church and its replacement by a new set of buildings on the north side of the nave. This development appears to be without parallel from other monastic sites in Britain, and must represent a major disjunction of the archaeological sequence in the vicinity of the church. It has been argued that the reason for the abandonment of the buildings on the southern side was a localised area of serious geological instability, causing the foundations of the claustral ranges to fail (Dickinson 1991, 31). The northern cloister was demolished immediately after the Dissolution and, in the post-medieval period, both it and the southern claustral area have been used as a cemetery. The major implication of this unusual move from the south to the northern side is that the medieval layout of the buildings within the monastic enclosure cannot be determined with any degree of certainty and there is a possibility that monastic buildings were situated in the area of the proposed development.
- 1.3.4 The priory and village of Cartmel have been the subject of extensive study by the late Canon J C Dickinson, a local resident, during which he attempted to determine the boundaries of the monastic enclosure (Dickinson 1991, 103-112). Cavendish Road, running northwards from the priory gatehouse, was formerly occupied by the priory Guest House, now known as the Cavendish Arms, a bakery for visitors to the priory and an orchard (Dickinson 1991, 108-109). Cavendish Road and Priest Lane are both roads of medieval origin (Dickinson 1991, 108-111).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 Following a verbal brief and formal approval from Jeremy Parsons of Cumbria County Council Archaeology Service (CCCAS), OA North was commissioned by McAlpine Utilities to undertake an archaeological watching. The CCCAS brief was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists and with generally accepted best practice.

2.2 WATCHING BRIEF

2.2.1 A permanent archaeological presence was to be maintained during excavations concerning the laying of the new pipe; however, the northernmost 75m of the pipe trench had been excavated and back-filled without archaeological monitoring.

2.2.2 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 made. Section drawings and plans were made of relevant areas of the trenches at appropriate scales. The trench was located using taped measurements from existing walls.

2.3 ARCHIVE

2.3.1 A full archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design (*Appendix I*), and in accordance with current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum.

3. RESULTS

3.1 WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.1.1 A 0.5m wide corridor along the route of the pipeline was initially stripped of turf and topsoil, following which a trench measuring 0.2m wide by 1m deep was excavated. Stratigraphy was shown to consist of turf and topsoil to a depth of 0.1m overlying 0.25m of light orange brown alluvial deposits, which, in turn overlay natural deposits of broken limestone in a sandy-clay matrix. The southernmost 5m of the pipe trench passed through a slightly raised area of ground, which was found to contain a layer of cinders and gravel up to 0.5m thick interposed between the topsoil and alluvial deposits. No dating material was recovered from the cinder and gravel layer.
- 3.1.2 No archaeological features were observed though pottery and glass dating from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries were recovered from the topsoil.

3.2 THE FINDS

- 3.2.1 Seven fragments of pottery and one of glass were recovered from the topsoil during the watching brief. The finds have been dated to the post-medieval period, and are listed in *Appendix 2*. A white salt-glazed stoneware plate with an identical rim to that recovered from this site is illustrated by Barker (1984, 79, Fig 8, number 67).

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 No archaeological features were discovered in the course of the watching brief. A low bank could be seen to cross the northern section of the field on a north-north-east/south-south-west alignment but, unfortunately, the section of the pipe trench which passed through the bank had been excavated and back-filled before an archaeological presence was established on the site. The deposit of gravel and cinders seen to form part the area of raised ground at the southern end of the site is likely to relate to a row of houses, marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1851 (www.oldmaps.co.uk) (Fig 3). These houses stood to the immediate south of the pipe trench. No foundations were encountered in the pipe trench. The lack of archaeological features or deposits encountered during the watching brief show that the field was on the periphery of the settlement and has probably seen little change in its use as pasture or informal meadow over the years.

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX 1: FINDS SUMMARY

Context	Quantity	Material	Description	Date range
Topsoil	2	Pottery	Red earthenware flower pot	Eighteenth - twentieth century
Topsoil	1	Pottery	Brown-glazed red earthenware	Late seventeenth - early twentieth century
Topsoil	1	Pottery	White salt-glazed stoneware press-moulded plate rim with decorated panels	Eighteenth century
Topsoil	3	Pottery	White earthenware, comprising storage jar rim, blue chinoiserie transfer-printed hollow-ware, and undecorated hollow-ware	Late eighteenth - twentieth century
Topsoil	1	Glass	Green wine bottle	Twentieth century

ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Location map

Figure 2: Area of archaeological monitoring

Figure 3: Ordnance Survey map of 1851



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Figure 1: Location Map

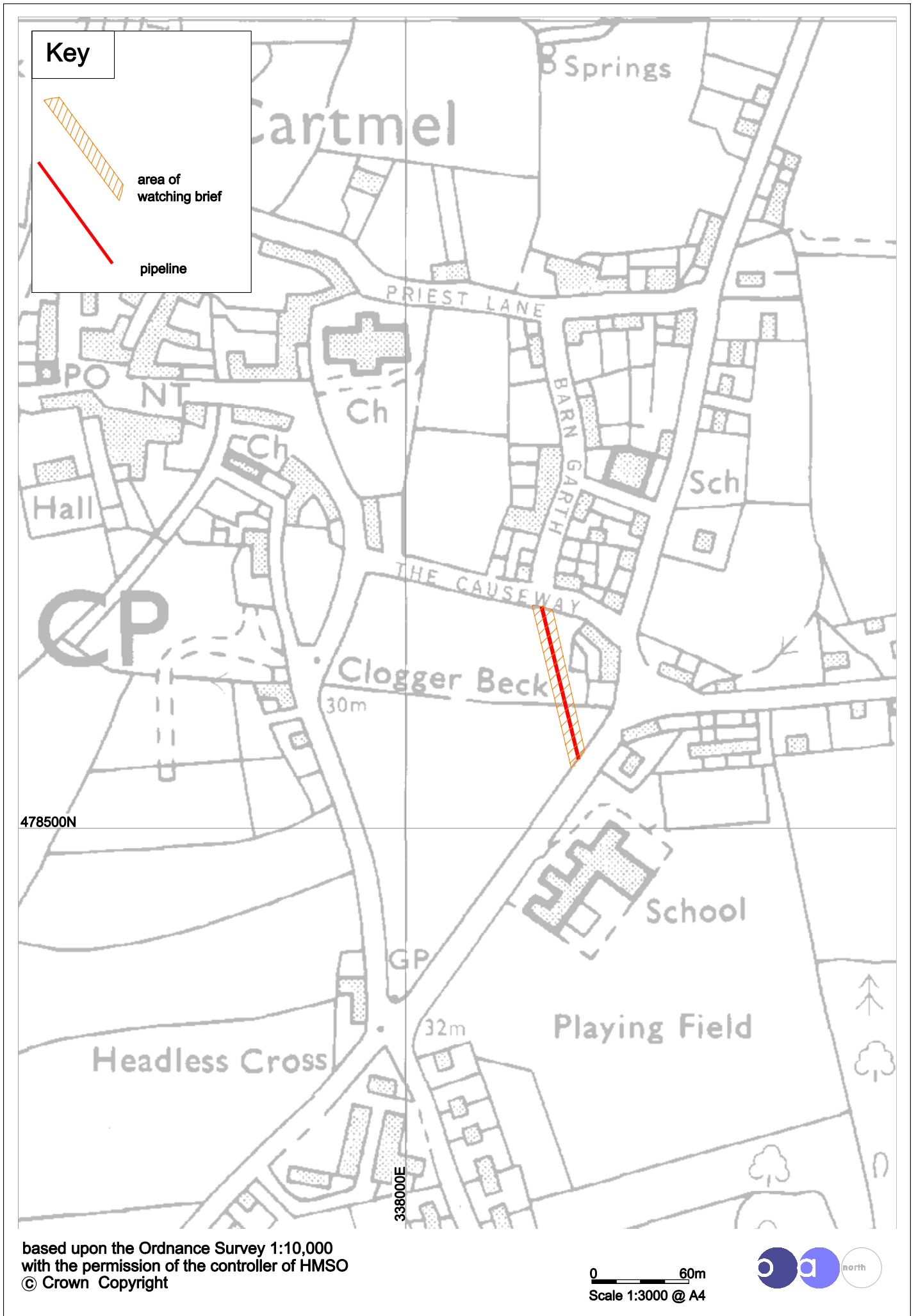
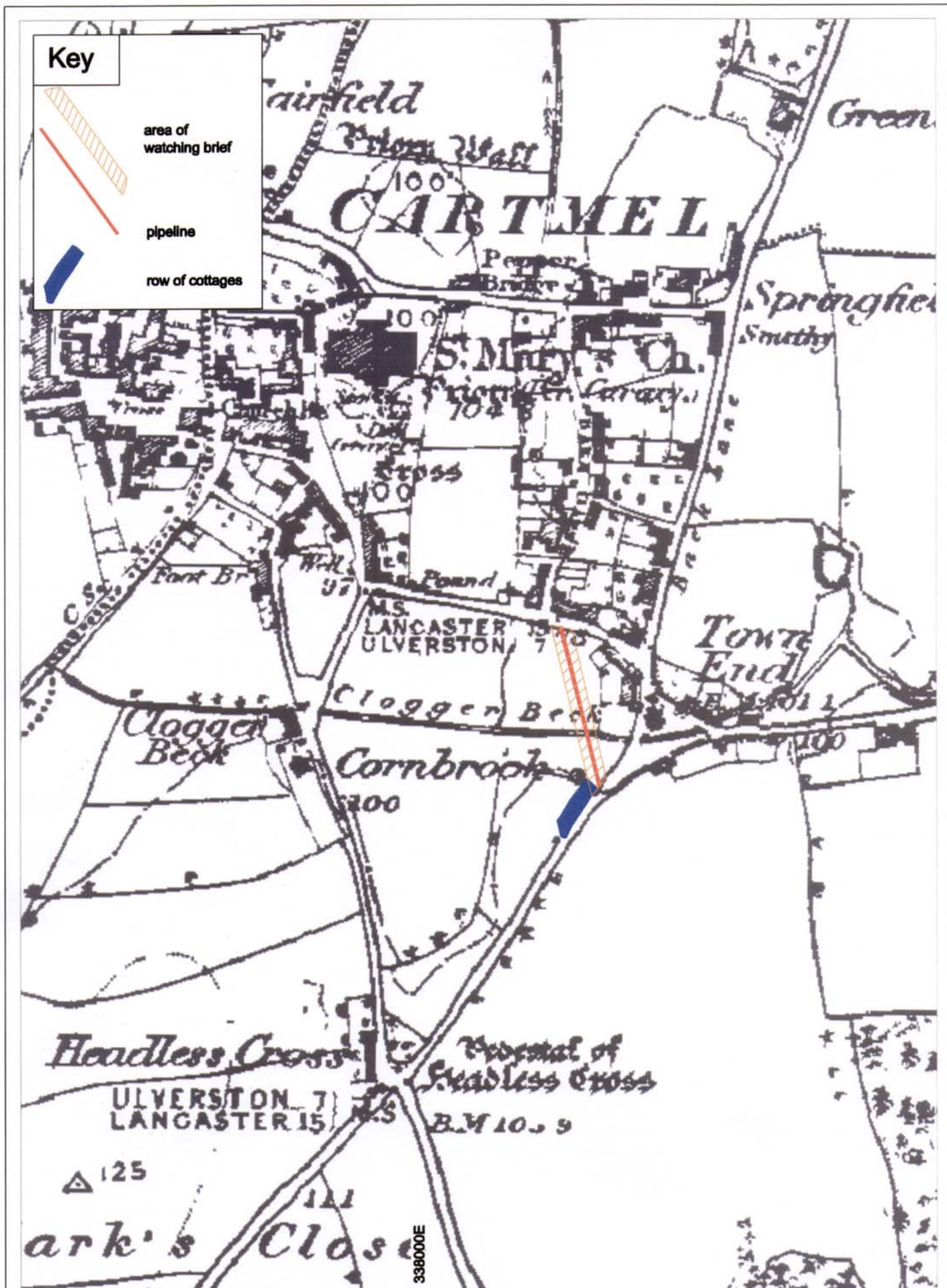


Figure 2: Area of archaeological monitoring



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0 60m
 Scale 1:3000 @ A4



Figure 3: Ordnance Survey map of 1851