



Church Farm, Church Brough, Eden District, Cumbria.

Archaeological Watching Brief

prepared for George & Diane Beckwith

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A Watching Brief at Castle Farm, Church Brough, Cumbria.

CASTLE FARM, CHURCH BROUGH, EDEN DISTRICT, CUMBRIA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF. SITE CODE BRG 08

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Summary

Following an earlier enquiry, on the 17th of March 2008, Archaeo-Environment Ltd, were commissioned by Mr and Mrs Beckwith of Castle Farm, Church Brough to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two trenches to connect drainage pipes from an existing stone built farm building recently converted to an ice-cream parlour, with existing drains.

Church Brough is a village of some antiquity built over a Roman Fort of the Flavian period and associated settlement later to be superseded by a Norman Fortress and the planned settlement with church and green which survives today. Large areas of this including the development area are scheduled as an ancient monument.

The settlement dates from the late 1st century AD and so potentially contains evidence of over 2000 years of human activity. In particular buried archaeological remains if investigated correctly can add to our knowledge and understanding of the region's cultural heritage. English Heritage therefore required that excavation of two drainage channels to connect the ice-cream parlour with existing drains across the farmyard should be archaeologically monitored. This was reinforced by a condition attached to the planning permission for the creation of the ice-cream parlour on the advice of Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service. This watching brief has allowed a report to be produced and lodged with English Heritage and the County Sites and Monuments Record both to inform future planning in the area and to be available to any one wishing to study the history and archaeology of the area.

The development works consisted of the excavation of 2 trenches each the width of a mini-digger bucket (0.5 metres) and 0.5 metres in depth. Trench 1 connected an outlet on the NW corner of the Ice Cream Parlour to a drain centrally placed in the farmyard. Trench 2 was on the south side of the building and only 2m in length. Work was undertaken on the morning of the 17th of March 2008.

In summary, the watching brief provided little evidence of in-situ archaeological deposits of pre 20th century date. Based on the evidence from the watching brief, the drainage works appear to have had a negligible impact on the archaeological resource of Castle Brough.

In the light of these results it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required on the archive from these observations and that further keyhole excavation within the farmyard would be of limited value.

Acknowledgements

Archaeo-Environment would like to thank Mr and Mrs Beckwith for commissioning the work, their family and contractor for their assistance. We would also like to thank Andrew Davison of English Heritage for clarification on the requirements of the work and Cumbria Council Archaeology Section for highlighting the need for the work through the planning process.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Archaeo-Environment Ltd (AE) were commissioned by George and Diane Beckwith of Castle Farm, Brough to undertake a controlled archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two trenches to connect a new ice-cream parlour within an existing farm building, to existing foul water drains within an established farmyard area. Castle Farm lies adjacent to the site of Brough Castle and the underlying Roman fort of *Verterae*, located at the eastern end of the Eden Valley in Cumbria, formerly the historic county of Westmorland (NY 7924 1405) (Figure 1). The Castle, Roman Fort and associated civil settlement are protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (CU334). While the buildings of Castle farm are within the scheduled area they are not scheduled but the ground beneath them is.
- 1.2 The archaeological work was initiated by Mr and Mrs Beckwith in response to advice from English Heritage and Cumbria County Council Archaeology section regarding both on going management of the scheduled area, and the planning matters surrounding the change of use of a former agricultural building into an ice-cream parlour (planning ref 3/05/0514).
- 1.3 The work was undertaken at short notice by AE and the scope of works clarified in a telephone conversation with Andrew Davison of English Heritage and Jeremy Parsons of Cumbria County Council (CCC). In essence while the excavation of the two trenches was thought to be unlikely to damage any archaeological deposits, the location within a scheduled area and close to known remains of national importance meant that it was essential the works were observed by a professional archaeologist both in case of any unexpected discoveries and to provide a record of the ground conditions within the farmyard to guide the need for any future archaeological work. A copy of the brief for the work provided by CCC dated 19/7/2006, was presented to AE by Mrs Beckwith on arrival at site on the morning of the watching brief. A copy of this is attached to this report at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 Excavation of the two trenches took place on the morning of the 17th of March 2008 a sunny and cold day with a light wind.
- 1.5 This report provides a brief summary of the historical and archaeological background to the site, describes the watching brief methodology employed, and

details the results of the archaeological observations. The report concludes with a series of recommendations and conclusions.

2.0 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Location

- 2.1 Castle Brough is located in the Eden District of the county of Cumbria, formerly the historic county of Westmorland. The village is located at NY (3)79160 (5)14033 some 13km to the east of the former county town of Appleby-in-Westmoreland and sits to the south of the A66 trunk road and occupies a strategic position at the western end of the Stainmore Pass, a major modern east-west road and of considerable historic importance (Figure 1). Castle Farm is located at the west end of the village green and the two trenches excavated were within the existing farmyard.



Plate 1. Farmyard looking north-west immediately prior to excavation of Trench 1.

Geology and topography

- 2.3 The underlying solid geology of Church Brough is Carboniferous Limestones, heavily glaciated during the last Devonian ice-age. The drift geology is comprised of glacial boulder clays with occasional morainic features of sands and gravels and erratic rocks such as Shap granite to the west. The site sits approximately on the 180m above OD contour on a prominent site above and to the south of the Swindale Beck.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The limited scope of this work does not permit a detailed archaeological and historic background to be provided in this case. Sufficient to say that Brough and the Eden Valley are of considerable archaeological significance from prehistoric times onwards, largely due to both the strategic nature of the location on the east-west route over the Pennines through the Stainmore Pass, and to the fertile soils of the Eden valley.

3.2 Previous archaeological work.

Prior to 1954 small investigations incidental to conservation work had taken place on the Fort/Castle site. In 1954 Eric Birley excavated two areas within the fort, one close to the central western gate, the other approximately in the centre which may have found evidence of the *principia* and part of a granary. Further work in 1971-2 during the realigning of the A685 and dualling of the A66 were undertaken by Manchester University Archaeology Department. These provided evidence for a *vicus* (civilian settlement) to the east of the fort and a large cemetery some 300m east of the fort. These were thought to be Flavian and Trajanic in date i.e. from the late 1st century to the mid 2nd century AD.

4.0 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 The primary aim of the watching brief was to determine the presence and record any archaeology within the farmyard associated with principally Roman Fort or medieval castle and which the planned installation of the pipe/drain would disturb.

4.2 The objectives of the watching brief were identified in discussion with English Heritage and in the brief issued by CCC (Appendix 1) at para 4.1.1. These were;

‘To identify any surviving archaeological remains within the development ground works and to investigate and record any revealed archaeological remains or deposits’.

Methodology

4.3 All excavation was under archaeological supervision. Machine excavation using a 360^o excavator was undertaken by the contractor to remove material down to a level at which either significant archaeological remains were first identified or down to natural/required level, whichever came first. Once an archaeological horizon had been identified the methodology required that all deposits were hand excavated by the supervising archaeologist to an appropriate level to understand the stratigraphic relationship of any features.

4.5 In the event all excavation was within ground either previously disturbed by re-surfacing or repairing of the farmyard surface. A record was made of each trench

following excavation.

- 4.5 The location of each trench was surveyed in from fixed points on surrounding topographical features represented on Ordnance Survey data.

Excavation

- 4.6 Archaeological observation was undertaken on the morning of 17-3-2008. Two trenches were excavated, Trench 1 was located to the east of the ice-cream parlour and arced around the north side of the farm yard to connected with an existing drain centrally placed to the eastern entrance to the yard. Trench 2 was at the south-west corner of the same building.
- 4.8 Cumbria County Council Archaeological Service were contacted to note start of works and to afford an opportunity to visit the site.
- 4.9 Following excavation and recording plastic pipework, was installed in each trench and it was backfilled.

5.0 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1 (T1)

Located within the farmyard. Measured 0.5m wide and 0.5m in depth (max). Approximately 14m in length.

Context [101] Farmyard surface; Mixed layer of compact cobbles and tarmac patching. 0.20m in depth.

Context [102] Dumping deposit; moderately compact, dark brown colour composed of 50% sand/ 20% silt/ 20% clay 10% large fragments of decayed red sandstone. Varied in depth between 0.10m and 0.30m.

Context [103] Orange-brown sand with occasional large stones and small pebbles . Varied in depth between 0.05 and 0.15m in section and extended beneath the maximum depth of excavation.

Context [104] at the eastern extremity of T1 where it turned south and on its northern side there appeared to be an area of angular pebbles seen only in section. Upon excavation of the trench this released a considerable quantity of water which dried up after some half and hour. (Plate 3)

Also without being discernible as a separate context it was observed that at the southern end of the trench as it approached the existing drain there was a greater number of large rounded cobbles some up to 0.50m in diameter. This most likely formed an inclusion within [101] and [102] and represented part of an on going process of levelling and repair of the farmyard surface.



Plate 2. Trench 1 at completion of excavation.



Plate 3. Context [104] drain.



Plate 4. South facing section of Trench 1.

5.2 Trench 2 (T2)

Located adjacent to the south elevation of the building. Measured 2m (E-W) by 0.5m (N-S), max depth 0.5m.

Context [201]. Cobble surface composed of small cobbles c.150mm in diameter and set in a matrix of silt/sand/clay. One small piece of modern willow pattern pottery recovered. 0.15m in depth.

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Context [202]. Moderately compact clay 50%/sand 30%/silt 10%/ small decayed red sandstone fragments 10%. 0.25m in depth.

Context [203]. Orange-brown sand with occasional large stones and small pebbles. Maximum observed depth 0.10m in section and extended beyond the maximum depth of excavation. Excavated to 0.10m, deposit extended beyond maximum depth of excavation.



Plate 5. Location of Trench 2. South side of ice-cream parlour looking north-west.



Plate 6. Trench 2, south facing section.

6.0 DISCUSSION

6.1 Both trenches told a similar story of a well-used post medieval farmyard surface [101] & [201], composed of small cobbles set into a sand & clay matrix with many

small fragments of red sandstone [102] & [202]. The yard surface appeared to have been patched and repaired several times over and only contained one datable piece of evidence; a sherd of 19th century willow pattern pottery from the base of [201]. Only one feature was observed within this phase, namely a shallow channel [104], filled with rough aggregate and acting as a modest land drain. The yard surface and make up appeared to be a largely uniform 0.40m in depth below which were found orange-brown sands and gravels [103] & [203], containing no artefactual evidence, but detecting whether these are undisturbed natural or a large dumping/levelling deposit would require a larger open area excavation.

Future research

- 6.2 It is clear that the area of the farmyard has been in use as such for some while with several layers of cobbled and hard packed layers and repairs visible in the section of the trenches. The location of the farmyard is outwith the Roman Fort and defences of the medieval castle, but in an area that some form of occupation or use can be expected. From the results of this watching brief any such evidence in the farmyard area is ephemeral and probably only survives as negative features cut into the sands and gravels observed at the base of the trenches. As such key-hole observations in future are likely to be of little use and large open areas should be preferred. The site as a whole does have significant research potential to address a number of key areas of interest highlighted within a broader regional research agenda.

7.0 DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

- 7.1 The impact of the development on the archaeological resource of Church Brough has been negligible due to earlier disturbance in the late 19th or mid 20th centuries within the confines of a well-used farmyard.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 In summary, while little of historic interest was located within the two trenches, the work has provided an opportunity for modern archaeological observation within the historic core of Church Brough. The scheduled site of castle and Roman fort together with the village itself is obviously of significant historic, landscape and archaeological importance and further evaluation should take place within the village if development is proposed. In particular the village has the potential to enhance our knowledge of Roman military and civilian occupation, late Anglo-Saxon settlement, Norman and later military occupation and post conquest planned village design and evolution.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The watching brief provided little evidence of in-situ archaeological deposits of pre 20th century date and therefore the drainage works appear to have had a negligible impact on the archaeological resource of Castle Brough. In the light of these results it is recommended that no further archaeological work is required on the archive from these observations and that further key-hole excavation within the farmyard would be of limited value. The sands and gravels revealed at approximately 0.40m below the current ground surface appear uncontaminated and may well be natural and in-situ, it is however possible that in such an intensively occupied area as the high ground occupied in turn by Roman fort and medieval castle that these sands and gravels are a large dumping/levelling deposit beneath which archaeological deposits remain. It is suggested that any future archaeological intervention in this area should both seek to produce a deeper section, and also if possible open up a wider area to ascertain if the gravels reveal any negative features such as post holes for timber buildings not evident in the key-hole observation of the watching brief.

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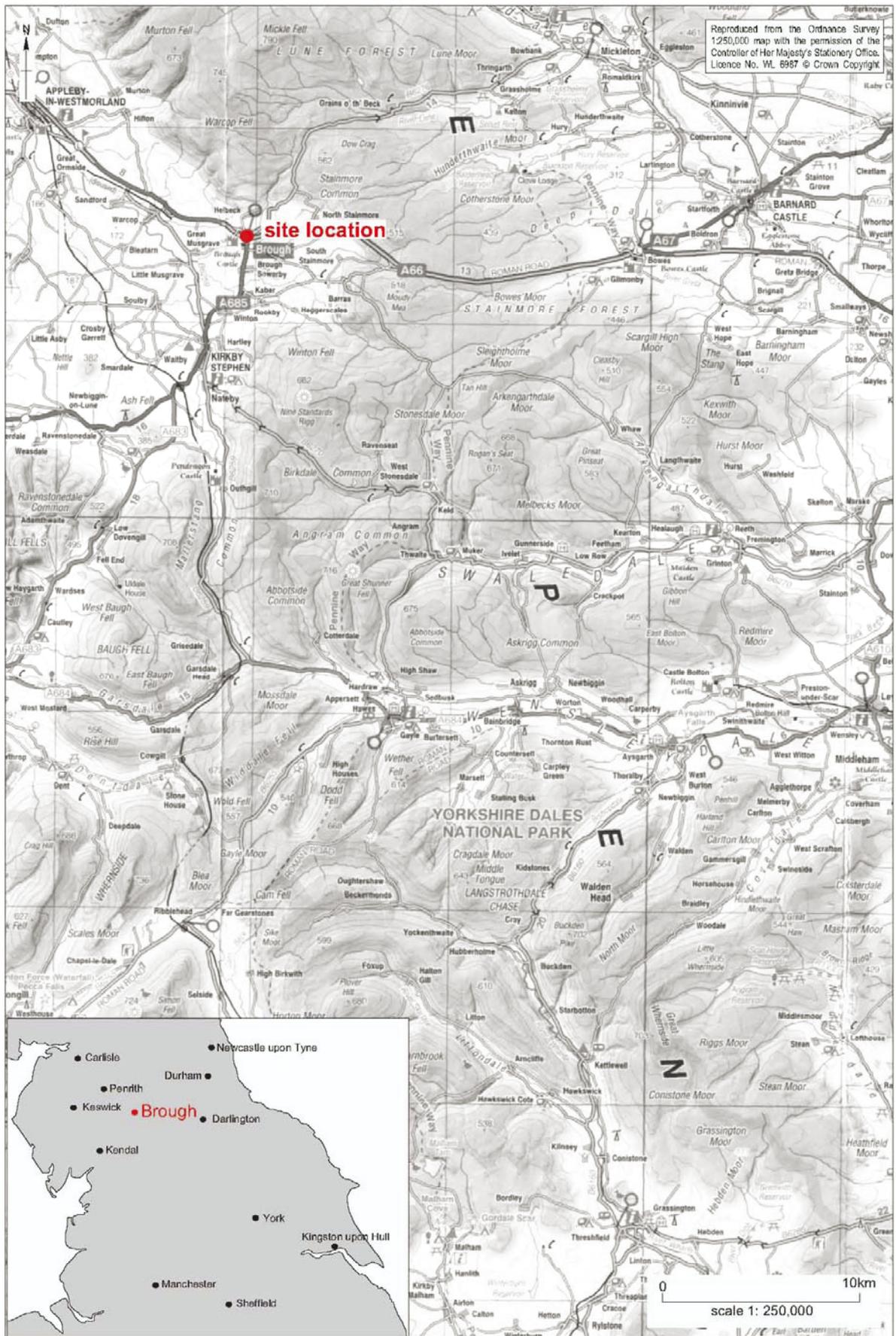


Figure 1 Church Farm, Church Brough, Cumbria: site location

REFERENCES

Published sources

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Appendix 1.

**BRIEF FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT BROUGH CASTLE FARM, CHURCH BROUGH, KIRKBY STEPHEN
CUMBRIA**

Issued by the

County Historic Environment Service

Environment Unit, Economy, Culture and Environment



Date of Brief: 19 July 2006

This Design Brief is only valid for 1 year after the above date. After this period the County Historic Environment Service should be contacted. Any specification resulting from this Brief will only be considered for the same period.

1. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SUMMARY

Site: Brough Castle Farm, Church Brough

Grid Reference: NY 7924 1405

Planning Application No.: 3/05/0514

Detailed proposals and tenders are invited from appropriately resourced, qualified and experienced archaeological contractors to undertake the archaeological project outlined by this Brief and to produce a report on that work. The work should be under the direct management of either an Associate or Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, or equivalent. No fieldwork may commence until approval of a specification has been issued by the County Historic Environment Service and English Heritage.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) and English Heritage have been consulted by Eden District Council regarding a planning application for the change of use of existing farm buildings to provide an ice cream parlour, production room, bakery and preparation room for chicken and turkeys at Brough Castle Farm, Church Brough.
- 2.2 The scheme affects an area of archaeological significance within the Scheduled Monument of Brough Roman Fort and Medieval Castle (Scheduled Monument no. 334). Consequently, a programme of archaeological works comprising a watching brief is required during the course of the ground works of the development. Please note that Scheduled Monument Consent will be required to undertake this work.
- 2.3 This advice is given in accordance with guidance given in Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (Archaeology and Planning) and with policy BE9 of the Eden Local Plan.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The site lies within the Scheduled Monument of Brough Roman Fort and Medieval Castle (Scheduled Monument no. 334).

4. SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

- 4.1 *Objectives*
 - 4.1.1 To identify any surviving archaeological remains within the development ground works and to investigate and record any revealed archaeological remains or deposits.
- 4.2 *Work Required*
 - 4.2.1 Before any on site work commences the County Historic Environment Record should be consulted and a *rapid* desk-based survey of the existing resource undertaken. This should include an assessment of those primary and secondary sources and any relevant aerial photographs referenced in the County Historic Environment Record.
 - 4.2.2 All topsoil stripping, ground reduction, and excavation of footings and services trenches must be carried out under archaeological supervision. Any putative archaeological features must then be cleaned by hand and if possible a stratigraphic record made. Finds and environmental samples should be retrieved as appropriate. A reasonable period of uninterrupted access should be allowed to the archaeologist for all necessary archaeological recording.

5. SPECIFICATION

- 5.1 Before the project commences a specification must be submitted to and approved by the County Historic Environment Service and Andrew Davison at English Heritage.
- 5.2 Proposals to meet this Brief should take the form of a detailed specification prepared in accordance with the recommendations of *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd ed. 1991, and must include:
- ❖ A description of the methods of observation and recording system to be used
 - ❖ A description of the finds and environmental sampling strategies to be used
 - ❖ A description of the post excavation and reporting work that will be undertaken
 - ❖ Details of key project staff, including the names of the project manager, site supervisor, finds and environmental specialists and any other specialist sub-contractors to be employed
 - ❖ Details of on site staffing, e.g. the number of people to be employed on site per day
 - ❖ A projected timetable for all site work and post excavation work (through to final publication of results)
- 5.3 Any significant variations to the proposal must be agreed by the County Historic Environment Service and English Heritage in advance.

6. REPORTING AND PUBLICATION

- 6.1 The archaeological work should result in a report, this should include as a minimum:
- ❖ A site location plan, related to the national grid
 - ❖ A front cover/frontispiece which includes the planning application number and the national grid reference of the site
 - ❖ A concise, non-technical summary of the results
 - ❖ A description of the methodology employed, work undertaken, and the results obtained
 - ❖ Plans and sections at an appropriate scale showing the location and position of deposits and finds located
 - ❖ A brief photographic record of the site must be included, showing any features of archaeological interest. Where the results of the project revealed no significant archaeological remains a single photograph showing an indicative section of trench will suffice.
 - ❖ A list of, and dates for, any finds recovered and a description and interpretation of the deposits identified
 - ❖ A description of any environmental or other specialist work undertaken and the results obtained
 - ❖ The dates on which the project was undertaken
- 6.2 Three copies of the report should be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record and one copy sent to English Heritage within six months of completion of fieldwork. This will be on the understanding that the report will be made available as a public document through the County Historic Environment Record.
- 6.3 A summary report should be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. If archaeological remains of significance are identified, one or more full reports should also be submitted to a suitable journal or other publication in due course.
- 6.4 Cumbria HER is taking part in the pilot study for the *Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis> must therefore also be completed as part of the project. Information on projects undertaken in Cumbria will be made available through the above website, unless otherwise agreed.

7. THE ARCHIVE

- 7.1 An archive must be prepared in accordance with the recommendations of *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd ed. 1991, and arrangements made for its deposit with an appropriate repository. A copy shall also be offered to the National Monuments Record.

7.2 The landowner should be encouraged to transfer the ownership of finds to a local or relevant specialist museum. The museum's requirements for the transfer and storage of finds should be discussed before the project commences.

7.3 The County Historic Environment Service must be notified of the arrangements made.

8. PROJECT MONITORING

8.1 One weeks notice must be given to the County Historic Environment Service and English Heritage prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

9. FURTHER REQUIREMENTS

9.1 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to establish safe working practices in terms of current health and safety legislation, to ensure site access and to obtain notification of hazards (eg. services, contaminated ground, etc.). **The County Historic Environment Service bears no responsibility for the inclusion or exclusion of such information within this brief or subsequent specification.**

9.2 The Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists must be followed.

9.3 The involvement of the County Historic Environment Service and English Heritage should be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information regarding this Brief, contact

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As part of our desire to provide a quality service to all our clients we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this design brief. Please address them to the Assistant Archaeologist at the above address.