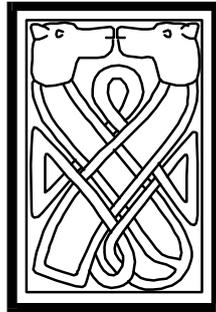


BAMBURGH RESEARCH PROJECT



LAND TO THE REAR OF 71 RAVENSDOWNE, BERWICK UPON TWEED, NORTHUMBERLAND

REPORT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

Compiled for Mr Philip Rhyder by The Bamburgh Research Project: Commercial Projects
Section

BRP 09/04

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Figure 1 Site location

Figure 2 Location of new build

Plate 1 Construction trenches, facing south-east

SUMMARY

This report has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project for Mr Philip Rhyder and sets out the results of the archaeological monitoring undertaken in May 2009, during the groundworks associated with the construction of a small extension to the rear of 71 Ravensdowne, Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland (NGR NU 0007 5300) (Figures 1 and 2).

The watching brief was undertaken on Tuesday 5th May when the foundation trenches for the new development were excavated to a depth of 0.5 to 0.6m below the present ground level. The new build lay in the area of an existing patio constructed from a thin layer of concrete, 0.15 to 0.2m thick, laid on a dark grey-brown rubble topsoil mixture that extended to c. 0.3m below ground level. Below this, a layer of made ground comprising a medium grey-brown stony clay silt extended to the full depth of the trench. Brick fragments of 19th to early 20th century date were encountered within this layer. With the exception of the base of the stone wall that demarked the south side of the garden plo, exposed along the southern foundation trench, no features of archaeological interest were identified.

Although Ravensdowne lies within the defensive walls and is an area of great archaeological potential the depth of excavation of the trenches for the current development was too shallow to reach any layers of archaeological significance.

**LAND TO THE REAR OF 71 RAVENSDOWNE,
BERWICK UPON TWEED,
NORTHUMBERLAND**

REPORT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This report has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project, Commercial Section for Mr Philip Rhyder. The document sets out the results of the monitoring of the groundworks associated with the excavation of the construction trenches for a small extension to the building at 71 Ravensdowne, Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland, undertaken during May 5th 2009.
- 1.0.2 The work was undertaken in compliance with a Written Schedule of Investigation compiled by the Bamburgh Research Project in March 2009 in response to a brief issued by the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. The NCCCT reference number is: B38/56: 9150 and the Planning Reference number is 09/B/0019 The OASIS record number is: bamburgh1-59284.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The site lies to the rear of 71 Ravensdowne, to the south of the barracks, within the Elizabethan walls and in the north east of the town of Berwick upon Tweed in North Northumberland (NGR NU 0007 5300) (Figures 1 and 2).

2.2 Archaeological background to the site

- 2.2.1 Although there is evidence for prehistoric activity within the lower Tweed valley area there is no clear evidence that prehistoric features are likely to be present in the development area. Roman activity in the area is indicated by the presence of the Devil's Causeway, Roman Road leading to the mouth of the Tweed. Such activity is likely to be concentrated to the south of the river in the area of a putative Roman fort.
- 2.2.2 Berwick is believed to have originated during the Anglo-Saxon period as a farm/processing centre of a greater estate, possibly part of the monastic estate of Coldingham. The earliest documentary evidence for Berwick's existence is found in a charter of Edgar, King of Scots, dating to 1095. Berwick grew in importance during the 12th century becoming one of the most significant trading centres in Scotland. By the end of the 13th century at least 15 religious houses are known to have held property in Berwick. Alexander II founded a Dominican Friary, probably located near Northumberland Avenue, around 1240 and a Carmelite Friary, founded in 1270, was located on a site close to, or beneath, the present Governor's House in Palace Street East. The Augustinian Friary was founded in the town in 1296, but its location is not

known. The Franciscan Friary may have been located in the area now occupied by Nos.25-31 Low Greens and the grassed area to the north. The House of the Friars of the Sack, present in the mid 13th century, was abolished at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274 and the site subsequently sold to the Dominicans.

- 2.2.3 The enclosed area of the town in the 13th century extended to some 125 acres, but only two-thirds of the area is believed to have been intensively developed during the medieval period. Briggate, Marygate and the whole of the Ness are thought to have been quite densely occupied from the medieval to the present.
- 2.2.4 Construction of a town wall was started at Berwick after its capture by Edward I of England in 1296, and completed in the early 14th century. These defences lay well to the west of the later walls, linking with Berwick Castle, in the area of the present railway station. As a consequence of the Border wars the prosperity of the town was greatly reduced. When a new defensive rampart was constructed during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) only two thirds of the medieval town was included within the new defensive line, which passed 50m to the north west of the development site at its closest.
- 2.2.5 Cartographic evidence shows Ravensdowne as a built up road from the 17th century, supporting the assumption that it has been part of the urban centre of Berwick from the medieval period. As such it represents an area of great archaeological potential. Francis Cowe, a local expert on Berwick has proposed Ravensdowne (medieval Ravensdale) as the possible location of the House of the Friars of the Sack, in existence within Berwick by the mid 13th century (Cowe, 1998).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Monitoring during excavation

- 3.1.1 A suitably experienced archaeologist, familiar with the archaeological background to the site, was present to record any items of interest that were revealed. All work was carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and followed the IFA Standards for Watching Briefs. The work undertaken conformed to the methodology listed below.

3.2 General standards

- 3.2.1 All archaeological features identified during the monitoring, would be sample excavated according to their type and form:

50% of all discrete features.

50% of waterlogged deposits.

25% of stratified deposits.

25% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill

10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill

- 3.2.2 A 40 litre bulk palaeoenvironmental sample would be taken from all features

recognised as suitable for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains.

- 3.2.3 Secure contexts would be sampled for dating where appropriate, whether on site or as sub samples of bulk samples.
- 3.2.4 Pottery and Animal Bone would be collected as bulk samples whilst significant artefacts would be three-dimensionally recorded prior to processing. All finds would be recorded and processed according to the BRP system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Finds recovery and storage strategies were in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995 and IFA Guidelines for Finds Work). Had artefacts of gold or silver been recovered they would be treated in accordance with the 1996 Treasure Act and appropriate procedures would be followed.
- 3.2.5 In the event of Human burials being revealed they would be left *in situ* and treated in an appropriate manner. Consultation with the County Archaeological Officer would be sought to determine further action.
- 3.2.6 Any archaeological features encountered would be hand-cleaned, excavated and recorded:
1. A photographic record of the site was taken using black and white print, colour slide film at 35mm format. In addition a digital photographic record was compiled.
 2. A written description of features was compiled using the BRP *pro forma* context recording system.
- 3.2.8 Arrangements will be made with the appropriate museum for the deposition of the site archive within 6 month of the completion of the post-excavation report.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Monitoring during excavation

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken on Tuesday 5th May when the foundation trenches for the new development were excavated to a depth of 0.5 to 0.6m below the present ground level. The new build, which measured 5.22m east to west by 5.5m north to south, lay in the area of an existing patio constructed from a thin layer of concrete, 0.15 to 0.2m thick, laid on a dark grey-brown rubble topsoil mixture that extended to c. 0.3m below ground level. Below this, a layer of made ground comprising a medium grey-brown stony clay silt extended to the full depth of the trench. Brick fragments of 19th to early 20th century date were encountered within this layer. With the exception of the base of the stone wall that demarked the south side of the garden plot being exposed along the southern foundation trench no features of archaeological interest were identified.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.0.1 Although Ravensdowne lies within the defensive walls and is an area of great archaeological potential the depth of excavation of the trenches for the current development was too shallow to reach any layers of archaeological significance.

REFERENCES

Published and unpublished sources

- BRP Finds Manual, 2000
BRP Health and Safety Document
Cowe F. M. Berwick upon Tweed, A short historical guide. 1998.
English Heritage *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*, 1991.
English Heritage *A strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds*. Ancient
Monuments Laboratory, 1995.
IFA 2000 Code of Conduct
IFA 2001 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs.

APPENDIX I

LAND TO REAR OF 71 RAVENSDOWNE, BERWICK UPON TWEED, NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF WRITTEN SCHEDULE OF INVESTIGATION

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This Written Schedule of Investigation has been compiled by the Bamburgh Research Project, in April 2009, for Mr Philip Rhyder regarding the construction of an extension to the rear of 71 Ravensdowne, Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland. The document sets out the project design for an archaeological watching brief to be conducted during groundworks associated with the scheme.
- 1.0.2 The Written Schedule of Investigation details the proposed scheme of works for the watching brief and has been prepared in order to fulfil a requirement for the planning application, as laid out in the brief issued by The Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. The NCCCT reference number is: B38/56: 9150 and the Planning Reference number is 09/B/0019.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.2.1 The site lies to the rear of 71 Ravensdowne, to the south of the barracks, within the Elizabethan walls and in the north east of the town of Berwick upon Tweed in North Northumberland (NGR NU 0007 5300) (Figures 1 and 2).

2.3 Archaeological background to the site

- 2.2.1 Although there is evidence for prehistoric activity within the lower Tweed valley area there is no clear evidence that prehistoric features are likely to be present in the development area. Roman activity in the area is indicated by the presence of the Devil's Causeway, Roman Road leading to the mouth of the Tweed. Such activity is likely to be concentrated to the south of the river in the area of a putative Roman fort.
- 2.2.2 Berwick is believed to have originated during the Anglo-Saxon period as a farm/processing centre of a greater estate, possibly part of the monastic estate of Coldingham. The earliest documentary evidence for Berwick's existence is found in a charter of Edgar, King of Scots, dating to 1095. Berwick grew in importance during the 12th century becoming one of the most significant trading centres in Scotland. By the end of the 13th century at least 15 religious houses are known to have held property in Berwick. Alexander II founded a Dominican Friary, probably located near Northumberland Avenue, around 1240 and a Carmelite Friary, founded in 1270, was located on a site close to, or beneath, the present Governor's House in Palace Street East. The Augustinian Friary was founded in the town in 1296, but its location is not known. The Franciscan Friary may have been located in the area now occupied by Nos.25-31 Low Greens and the grassed area to the north. The House of the Friars of the Sack, present in the mid 13th century, was abolished at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274 and the site subsequently sold to the Dominicans.
- 2.2.3 The enclosed area of the town in the 13th century extended to some 125 acres, but only two-thirds of the area is believed to have been intensively developed during the medieval period. Briggate, Marygate and the whole of the Ness are thought to have been quite densely occupied from the medieval to the present.

- 2.2.4 Construction of a town wall was started at Berwick after its capture by Edward I of England in 1296, and completed in the early 14th century. These defences lay well to the west of the later walls, linking with Berwick Castle, in the area of the present railway station. As a consequence of the Border wars the prosperity of the town was greatly reduced. When a new defensive rampart was constructed during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603) only two thirds of the medieval town was included within the new defensive line, which passed 50m to the north west of the development site at its closest.
- 2.2.5 Cartographic evidence shows Ravensdowne as a built up road from the 17th century, supporting the assumption that it has been part of the urban centre of Berwick from the medieval period. As such it represents an area of great archaeological potential. Francis Cowe, a local expert on Berwick has proposed Ravensdowne (medieval Ravensdale) as the possible location of the House of the Friars of the Sack, in existence within Berwick by the mid 13th century (Cowe, 1998).

2.2 Impact of the development

- 2.2.3 The development involves the excavation of a foundation trench for the walls of an extension to the existing house. The depth of excavation for the foundations is predicted as 600mm below the present ground surface. Where possible the existing floor surface will be used as the base of the floor surface to the new development. The new extension will measure 5.22m east to west by 5.5m north to south. A new drain will be laid to an existing manhole to the north of the new development (Figure 2).
- 2.2.4 The groundworks will cause disturbance up to 600mm below the present ground level within an area that lay within the bounds of medieval Berwick and could have formed part of a back yard to a burgage plot. As such it is entirely possible that features such as pits or even structures of medieval date could be encountered.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.0.1 In the light of the potential for the construction work to impact, in places, upon preserved archaeological remains it is proposed that a continuous watching brief be conducted during the ground work associated with the construction of the new building, services and landscaping in accordance with the specification laid out in the brief issued by the County Council Conservation Team.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Watching brief during excavation

- 4.1.1 During the groundworks associated with construction activity a suitably experienced archaeologist, familiar with the archaeological background to the site, will be present to record any items of interest that are revealed. Where appropriate all excavation and will be carried out by a machine using a toothless ditching bucket. All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and should follow the IFA Standards for Watching Briefs. This watching brief will conform to the following methodology.

4.2 Contingency

- 4.2.1 In the event of the discovery of unexpected archaeological remains over and above those predicted by previous archaeological work on the adjoining site, work will cease and the County Archaeological Officer/representative of the developer will be notified in order that an assessment of the importance of the remains and any provision for their recording may be made.
- 4.2.2 A contingency for excavation comprising up to 10 person days can be invoked following consultation with the County Archaeologist.

4.3 General standards

4.3.1 All archaeological features identified during the monitoring, or following the implementation of the contingency will be sample excavated according to their type and form:

- 50% of all discrete features.
- 50% of waterlogged deposits.
- 25% of stratified deposits.
- 25% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill
- 10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill

4.3.2 A 40 litre bulk palaeoenvironmental sample will be taken from all features recognised as suitable for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains.

4.3.3 Secure contexts will be sampled for dating where appropriate, whether on site or as sub samples of bulk samples. Any concentrations of charcoal or other carbonised material recovered on site will usually be retained.

4.3.4 Pottery and Animal Bone will be collected as bulk samples whilst significant artefacts will be three-dimensionally recorded prior to processing. All finds will be recorded and processed according to the BRP system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Finds recovery and storage strategies will be in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995 and IFA Guidelines for Finds Work). Should artefacts of gold or silver covered by the 1996 Treasure Act be recovered, appropriate procedures will be followed.

4.3.5 In the event of Human burials being revealed they will be left *in situ* and treated in an appropriate manner if possible. Any burial requiring excavation will be exposed, recorded and lifted in total. After consultation with the County Archaeological Officer, if excavation is required, work will comply with the relevant home Office regulations.

4.3.6 Any archaeological features encountered will be hand-cleaned, excavated and recorded:

3. A photographic record of the site will be taken using black and white print, colour slide film at 35mm format. In addition a digital photographic record will be compiled.
4. A written description of features will be recorded using the BRP *pro forma* context recording system.
5. All features will be drawn at an appropriate scale using pre-printed permatrace. Plans will normally be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10.

4.3.7 All archaeological features and horizons will be accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. All levels will be tied in to Ordnance Datum.

4.3.8 Arrangements will be made with the appropriate museum for the deposition of the site archive within 6 month of the completion of the post-excavation report.

5.0 MONITORING

5.0.1 Access will be made available at all reasonable times to the archaeological representatives of the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team to inspect the excavation site.

5.0.2 Access to the site will be on the basis of prior notification and subject to any relevant health and safety considerations.

6.0 POST-EXCAVATION WORK, ARCHIVE AND REPORT COMPILATION

- 6.0.1 On completion of the excavation an assessment of the site records and finds will be undertaken in accordance with English Heritage (1991) guidelines. This will include:
- collation of all site records
 - compilation of a report
 - production of context, photographic, finds and illustration databases
 - analysis of the finds assemblage by relevant specialists
 - environmental assessment of selected bulk samples
- 6.0.2 The assessment report, with each page and paragraph numbered and with cross referenced illustrations, will include:
- summary of the project background
 - site location
 - methodology
 - results of the watching brief
 - site location plans and illustrations of results at appropriate scales
 - interpretation of the results in an appropriate context
 - post-excavation assessment of the site archive
 - catalogue and assessment of the artefactual archive
 - catalogue and assessment of the faunal remains
 - catalogue and assessment of the palaeoenvironmental samples recovered
 - appendix containing a list and summary of each recorded context
- 6.0.3 A copy of the report should be submitted by the archaeologist to the commissioning client, and two copies, one bound and one unbound, to the County SMR within 2 months of completion of the work. A summary will be prepared for 'Archaeology in Northumberland' and an article will be submitted to a local or national journal if appropriate.
- 6.0.4 The site archive will be prepared to the standard specified in the Management of Archaeological Projects, appendix 3 (HBMC 1991) and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC 1990). A summary account of the context record will be included and written by the supervising archaeologist. The archive will be deposited at the specified museum within 6 months of completion of the work on site.
- 6.0.4 An online OASIS form will be completed for the project as part of the post-excavation assessment process.

7.0 PERSONNEL

- 7.0.1 The designated project manager Graeme Young, is one of the five directors of the Bamburgh Research Project. A graduate of Newcastle University, with 21 years of experience in field archaeology including directing a number of excavations of urban medieval sites in Newcastle and Durham. He is an Associate Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 7.0.2 Additional field staff, with appropriate archaeological experience, will be engaged as required.

8.0 SUB-CONTRACTED SPECIALISTS

- 8.0.1 Although it is not possible to predict the range of artefacts that may be recovered provision has been made for the analysis of the most common artefacts.

Material	Specialist
Medieval pottery	Jenny Vaughan
Post-medieval pottery	Jenny Vaughan
Prehistoric pottery	Blaise Vyner

Roman Pottery
Animal bone
Palaeoenvironmental
Conservation

Blaise Vyner
Durham University Archaeological Services
Durham University Archaeological Services
Karen Barker

9.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.0.1 The Bamburgh Research Project complies with the 1974 Health and Safety Act and its subsequent amendments in all its operations. The SCAUM manual and the Bamburgh Research Project Health and Safety Policy Document is followed for all site works. A designated and appropriately trained first aider is present at all times during working hours. A First Aid kit, Accident Book and telephone are provided for each project. Safety footwear is mandatory on all excavation sites. Where required safety helmets and reflective jackets are provided. It is policy for a vehicle to be present at an excavation and staff must be appropriately equipped for bad weather.
- 9.0.2 All staff undergo a safety induction prior to commencing work on site. A written risk assessment is undertaken specific for each site. The safety assessment is reviewed on a daily basis and changes to the working conditions monitored continually during adverse weather conditions.