

RIVER CROSSING AT WHITTINGTON, LANCASHIRE

Summary Report on Archaeological Watching Brief



Client: United Utilities Ltd
NGR: 361015 475694

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Project details: this report was commissioned by United Utilities through Paul Wyre, Estates and Wayleaves officer. The specification for the archaeological watching brief was produced by Doug Moir of Lancashire County Archaeology Service and the fieldwork was carried out by Sam Whitehead of Greenlane Archaeology, Ulverston, Cumbria, who also wrote the report. The project was managed by Jo Dawson of Greenlane Archaeology. The work was carried out on the 14th and 15th August 2007, and involved monitoring AMS Ltd passing a drill string under the River Lune near Whittington Lancashire. The horizontal directional drilling was to facilitate the passage of a new cable beneath the river bed, and at each end of the duct run a pit was dug, one to launch and one to receive the drill. Only the retrieval pit was to be monitored by an archaeologist as this was on the eastern side of the river, adjacent to the south-western boundary of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (LA39), the Roman fort and civil settlement at Over Burrow. The centre of the fort is located to the east side of the A683, and south of Yew Tree Farm at NGR 361491 475983, and the watching brief area was at NGR 361015 475694 (Figs 1-3).

Watching brief: the pit was machine excavated with a JCB and was 2.00m north-south, 3.50m east-west and 2.00m deep. The contractors on site were very helpful and the pit was taken down slowly with a flat bladed bucket, and the spoil spread around to help facilitate finds retrieval. The depth of the pit was such that it was not safe to enter, so no section could be drawn. A single alluvial deposit, probably made up of multiple episodes of flooding, was exposed beneath the topsoil and consisted of reddish pale-mid brown silty-sands with occasional to moderate rounded and sub-rounded gravels, pebbles and cobbles which were river rolled and thought to be granite. The deposits became imperceptibly paler with depth as well as sandier and stonier but were entirely homogenous. The deposits were sterile and no traces of human activity were found. It was assumed that on this side of the river deposition was still occurring or had recently taken place and that the course of the river may well have already destroyed any archaeology as it meandered around in this large valley. The weather conditions were overcast and damp underfoot but in no way compromised the execution of the project.

Archive: the archive for this project is currently held in the offices of Greenlane Archaeology Ltd and will be deposited at Lancashire's record office in Preston. It contains the following:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| • Project brief | Paper | A4, 2 sheets, double sided |
| • Client's drawing | paper | A4, 1 sheet, single sided |
| • Context record sheet | Paper | A4, 1 sheet, double sided |
| • Photo record indices | Paper | A4, 1 sheet, double sided |
| • Negatives | Negative film | 4 strips, 6x1 inch |
| • Photographs | Gloss print | 12 |
| • Digital archive | CD | 1 |
| • Digital archive index | Paper | A4, 1 sheet |
| • Day record sheets | Paper | A4, 2 sheets, single sided |
| • General location notes | Paper | A4, 1 sheet, single sided |

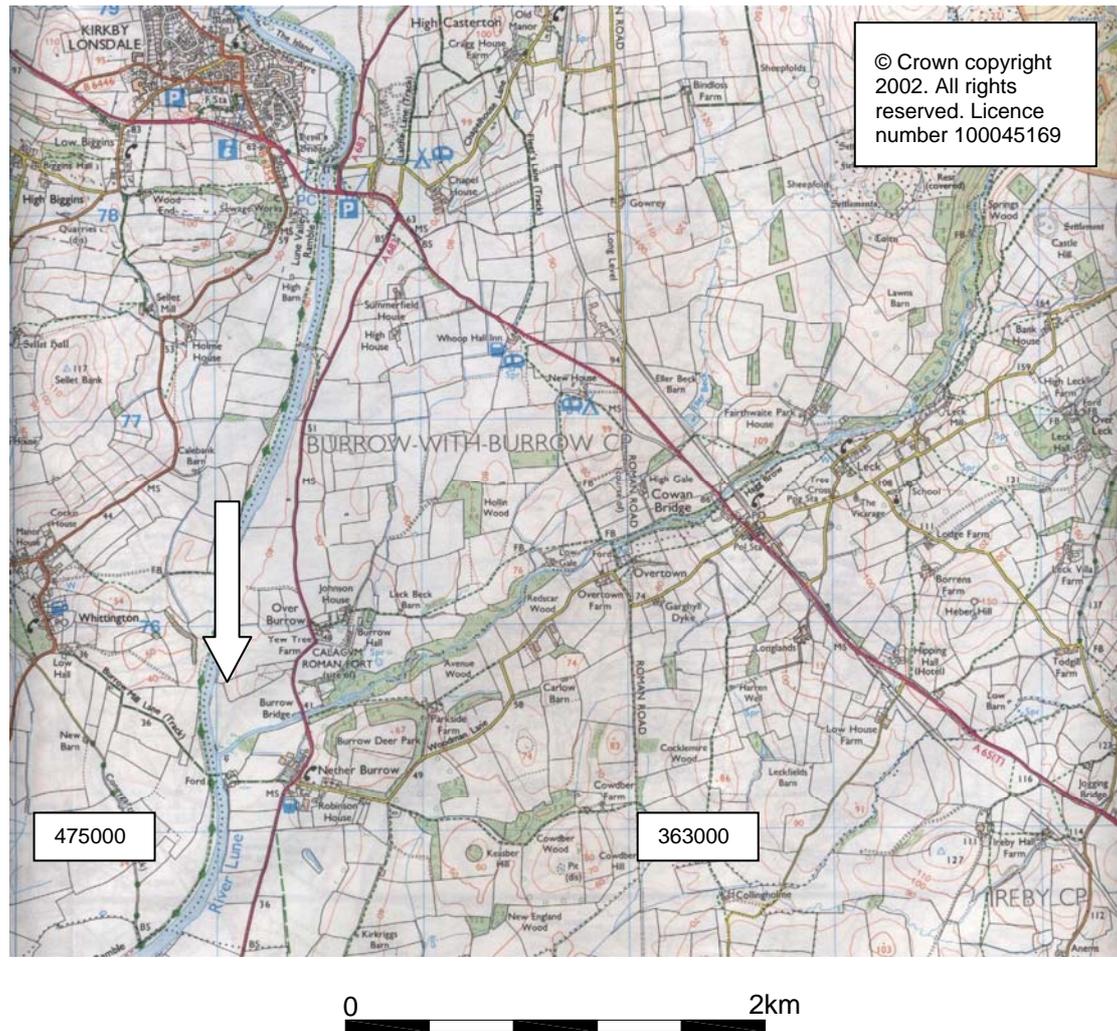


Figure 1: General site location

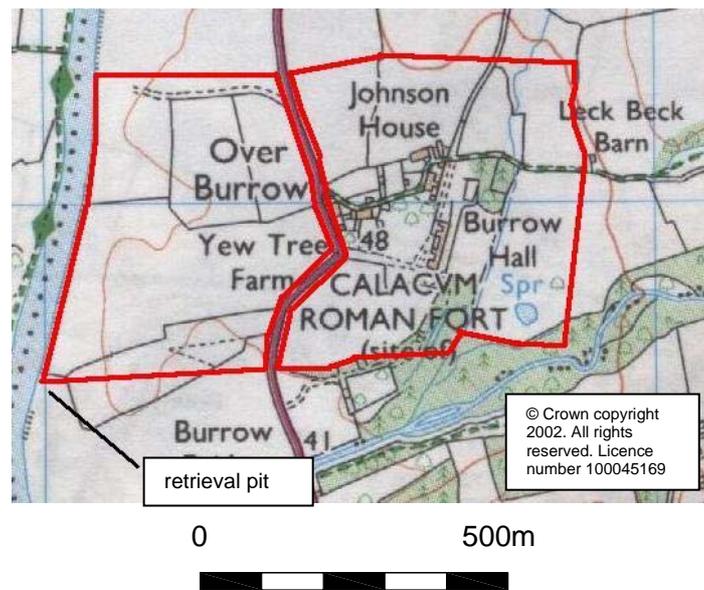


Figure 2: Detailed site location showing the approximate area of the Scheduled Monument in red

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Scheduled Monument area

475700

retrieval pit

360500

361000

361050

475650

Project:
River crossing, Whittington

Project Code: G1054

Site Code: WH07

Key:  approximate extent of SM
 footpath  river
 existing cable  fence
 retrieval pit  duct run



Date: September 2007



Figure 3: Trench location

Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief

The text below has been extracted by Greenlane Archaeology Ltd from the Standard Paragraphs from Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief, produced by Lancashire County Archaeology Service in 2006. Any details not directly relevant to the Whittington River Crossing project, such as mention of specific museums, have been removed.

3. General Considerations

3.1 Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor should confirm in writing adherence to this specification, or state (with reasons) any proposals to vary the specification. Should the contractor wish to vary the specification, then written confirmation of the agreement of LCAS to any variations is required prior to work commencing. The archaeologist carrying out the watching brief should be appropriately qualified and experienced. Any technical queries arising from the specification detailed below should be addressed to LCAS *without delay*.

4. Fieldwork Methodology

3.1 An archaeologist should be present on site during the excavation of any area in the area of development, whether this is for foundation trenches, service trenches or landscaping. The archaeologist should view the area as it is being dug and any trench sections after excavation has been completed. Where archaeology is judged to be present, the excavated area should be rapidly cleaned and the need for further work assessed. Where appropriate, any features and finds should then be quickly hand excavated, sampled and recorded, within the confines of the excavated trench.

4.2 Excavated soil should be searched as practicable for finds. The presence and nature of 19th and 20th century material should be noted (quantified and summarily described) but finds of this date need not be retained for processing. Finds judged to be 18th-century in date or earlier should be retained.

4.3 The actual areas of ground disturbance, and any features of possible archaeological concern noted within these areas, should be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs (35mm black and white print and colour slide), scale drawings (i.e. plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, both including height above O.D.) and written description sufficient to permit the preparation of a report on the site.

4.4 The intention of the archaeological watching brief is not to unduly delay the work of other contractors on site. This work should not, therefore prejudice the progress of the main or subsidiary contractor's work, except by prior agreement and on-site co-operation.

4.5 The archaeologist on site will naturally operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations. In this case, where archaeological work is carried out at the same time as the work of other contractors, regard should also be taken of any reasonable additional constraints that these contractors may impose. This work may require the preparation of a Risk Assessment of the site, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations. **LCAS and its officers cannot be held responsible for any accidents that may occur to outside contractors engaged to undertake this survey while attempting to conform to this specification.**

5. Unexpectedly Significant or Complex Discoveries

5.1 Should there be, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries made that warrant more detailed recording than possible within the terms of this specification, then the archaeological contractor is to

urgently contact LCAS with the relevant information to enable the matter to be resolved with the developer.

5.2 Any human remains that are discovered must initially be left in-situ, covered and protected. If removal is necessary, this must comply with the relevant legislation, any Home Office and local environmental health regulations and English Heritage's and The Church of England's *Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England* (2005) where relevant.

5.3 The terms of the Treasure Act, 1996 must be followed with regard to any finds, which might fall within its purview. Any such finds must be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner as required by the procedures laid down in the "Code of Practice". Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures must be taken to protect the finds from theft.

6. Monitoring

6.1 The recording exercise will be monitored as necessary and practicable by LCAS Advisory Service in its role as 'curator' of the county's archaeology. LCAS should receive as much notice as possible in writing (and certainly not less than one week) of the intention to start the watching brief.

7. Post-Excavation/Post-Recording Work and Report Preparation

7.1 On completion of the fieldwork, any samples shall be processed and all finds shall be cleaned, identified, assessed, dated (if possible), marked (if appropriate) and properly packed and stored in accordance with the requirements of national guidelines. A fully indexed field archive shall be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and fully labelled photographs. Labelling should be in indelible ink on the *back* of the print and should include film and frame number; date recorded and photographer's name; name and address of site; national grid reference. Photographic prints should be mounted in appropriate archivally-stable sleeves. A quantified index to the field archive should form an appendix to the report. The original archive is to accompany the deposition of any finds, providing the landowner agrees to the deposition of finds in a publicly accessible archive (see Section 8.1 below).

7.2 A report should be produced to provide background information, a summary of the works carried out, a description and separate interpretation of any features and finds identified. Details of the report's style and format are to be determined by the archaeological contractor, but it should include a full bibliography, a quantified index to the site archive and as an appendix, a copy of this specification. The report illustrations should include, as a minimum, a location map at 1:10000, trench location plan at 1:500 or 1:1000 plus any drawings (at least one a plan and one section per trench) and photographs, which for the purpose of the report may be supplied as high quality jpegs.

7.3 If nothing of archaeological interest is identified during the course of the watching brief, then a summary report will be adequate, as long as sufficient details are supplied for SMR purposes. Illustrations would not be required, although it would be anticipated that black and white prints would form part of the archival record. A summary record should include: (1) details of the commissioning body; (2) the nature of the development and resultant ground disturbance; (3) the position of any ground disturbance viewed with relation to adjacent existing fixed points (i.e. site location plan at 1:10000, and trench location plan showing location of trenches observed at 1:1000); (4) the date(s) of fieldwork; (5) name(s) of fieldworker(s); (6) written observations on the nature and depth of deposits observed (this may include annotated sketch sections); (7) the conditions under which they were observed (for example, details of weather conditions, ease of access and views, attitude of other organisations *etc.*); (8) a quantified index to the field archive; (9) details of the archives present location and intended deposition and (10) a copy of this specification.

7.4 The report should be produced within three weeks of completion of the fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed with LCAS. Copies of the report should be supplied to the client, and to the Lancashire SMR as an Adobe Acrobat 'pdf' on CD-ROM. The report will become publicly accessible once deposited with the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record.

7.5 Provision and agreement will be made for the appropriate academic publication of any results that are not to form part of any further work. A brief summary report of fieldwork, to appear in the Council for British Archaeology North West *Archaeology North West* should be produced, even when an excavation encountered no archaeological deposits. This should be sent to the editor of *Archaeology North West* in time for it to appear within a calendar year of the completion of fieldwork.

8. Deposition of Archive

8.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the archaeological contractor must contact the relevant District museum archaeological curator in writing (copied to LCAS) to determine the museum's requirements for the deposition of an excavation archive.

8.2 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to endeavour to obtain consent of the landowner, in writing, to the deposition of finds with the relevant Museum.

8.3 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to meet the relevant Museum's requirements with regard to the preparation of fieldwork archives for deposition.

8.4 The museums officer should be notified in writing of the commencement of fieldwork at the same time as the Lancashire County Archaeology Service.