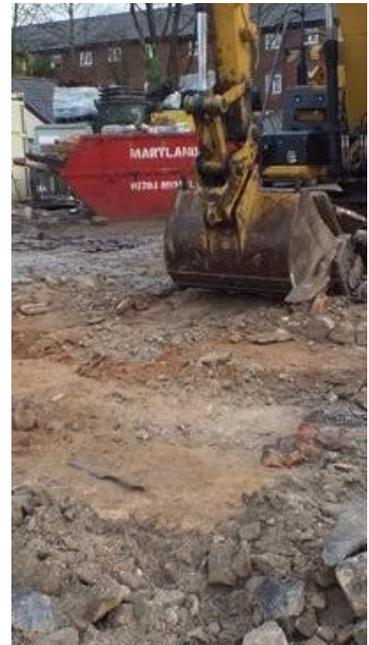


SLACK HOUSE COTTAGES, ST HELENS ROAD, ORMSKIRK, LANCASHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation



Client: David Oldham

Planning Application Reference:
2015/0702/PND

NGR: 342255 407145

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December 2015



Greenlane Archaeology Ltd,
Lower Brook Street, Ulverston,
Cumbria, LA12 7EE

Tel: 01229 588 500
Email: info@greenlanearchaeology.co.uk
Web: www.greenlanearchaeology.co.uk

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Non-Technical Summary

Following the submission of an application for the demolition of Slack House Cottages and The Hawthorns, St Helens Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire, a request was made by the Specialist Advisor (Archaeology) and Lancashire County Council that Slack House Cottages be recorded then, following demolition to footings level, the site should be investigated by an archaeological evaluation trench across its footprint. Following the provision by Greenlane Archaeology of a project design for this the work the building recording was carried out in October, and is subject to a separate report, and the archaeological evaluation was carried out on 1st December 2015.

Slack House Cottages comprised a single row of properties, originally three, then four cottages, but more recently the row of cottages was partially knocked-through to form a smaller number of larger dwellings. They probably served as agricultural workers housing in the first instance, but the lack of useful documentary sources makes it difficult to ascertain who lived in them before the end of the 19th century. The available mapping shows that they were certainly in existence by the 1840s and they were enlarged by the 1890s.

The evaluation trench was situated slightly to the south-east of the centreline of the row of cottages and orientated across the row from front to back. Below the concrete floor of the houses there was a sandy bedding material underneath the earlier part of the building and a thin buried soil was exposed below the extension to the north-east. A linear ditch was exposed at the north-west end of the trench, which followed the bedrock on its north-east side, and a shallow pit was cut into the top of that. Another fairly shallow linear feature was exposed at the south-west end of the trench, which had a charcoal lense at its base. This was truncated by the footings of the cottage to the south-west. The underlying natural varied across the trench from a pale creamy-yellow to orange sand to a firm pink clay.

All of the features encountered appear to pre-date the construction of the cottages or the later extensions to it, but all are evidently post-medieval. The ditch perhaps represents a former field boundary that was back-filled during the construction of the cottages in the early 19th century.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank David Oldham, Director of Capital Developments at Edge Hill University, for commissioning the project. Thanks are also due to Graham Love at Janet Dixon Town Planning and Mike Hight at HPM Ltd for their assistance and information about the site, as well as Jim Charnley, who drove the excavator.

The archaeological evaluation was carried out by Dan Elsworth and Tom Mace, the latter of whom also produced the illustrations. The finds were processed and assessed by staff at Greenlane Archaeology. The report was edited by Jo Dawson and the project was managed by Dan Elsworth.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Following the submission of a pre-determination application (ref. 2015/0702/PND) regarding the demolition of Slack House Cottages and The Hawthorns, St Helens Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire (NGR 342255 407145), a request was made by Peter Iles, Specialist Advisor (Archaeology), at Lancashire County Council (LCC) that Slack House Cottages be first subject to an archaeological building recording and then, following demolition to footings level (Plate 1 and Plate 2), the site be investigated by the excavation of an archaeological evaluation trench across the footprint of the building. The site has been subject to an earlier heritage assessment (Miller 2015), which suggested that the cottages assumed their present form in the late 19th century, although the building recording revealed that much of the surviving fabric was actually early 19th century, with modifications and extensions in the late 19th and 20th centuries (Greenlane Archaeology 2015). It was considered possible that the site had its origins as earlier 'squatter's cottages' (Iles 2015), something that could only be demonstrated through archaeological investigation of below-ground deposits.

1.1.2 Greenlane Archaeology was appointed by David Oldham, Director of Capital Developments at Edge Hill University (hereafter 'the client'), via his agent Graham Love of Janet Dixon Town Planning, to carry out the archaeological building recording and evaluation. In response to this Greenlane Archaeology produced a project design for the work (*Appendix 1*) the building recording was carried out in October 2015, and the results are detailed in a separate report (Greenlane Archaeology 2015), while the evaluation was carried out on the 1st December 2015.



Plate 1: General view of the site pre-excavation, viewed from the south



Plate 2: General view of the site pre-excitation, viewed from the west

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 The site is located approximately 1km south-east of the centre Ormskirk on St Helens Road and now situated on the edge of the grounds of Edge Hill University (Ordnance Survey 2015; Figure 1). The site is approximately 60m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2015).

1.2.2 The underlying solid geology of the region comprises Permo-Triassic red mudstones, siltstones and sandstones but these are typically covered by a thick layer of glacially-derived boulder clay (Countryside Commission 1998, 87). The topography of the local area is, in the more rural parts, typically comprising pasture for livestock enclosed by hedgerows but also areas of vegetable and cereal crops, with smaller irregular areas of woodland and numerous ponds (*op cit*, 89).

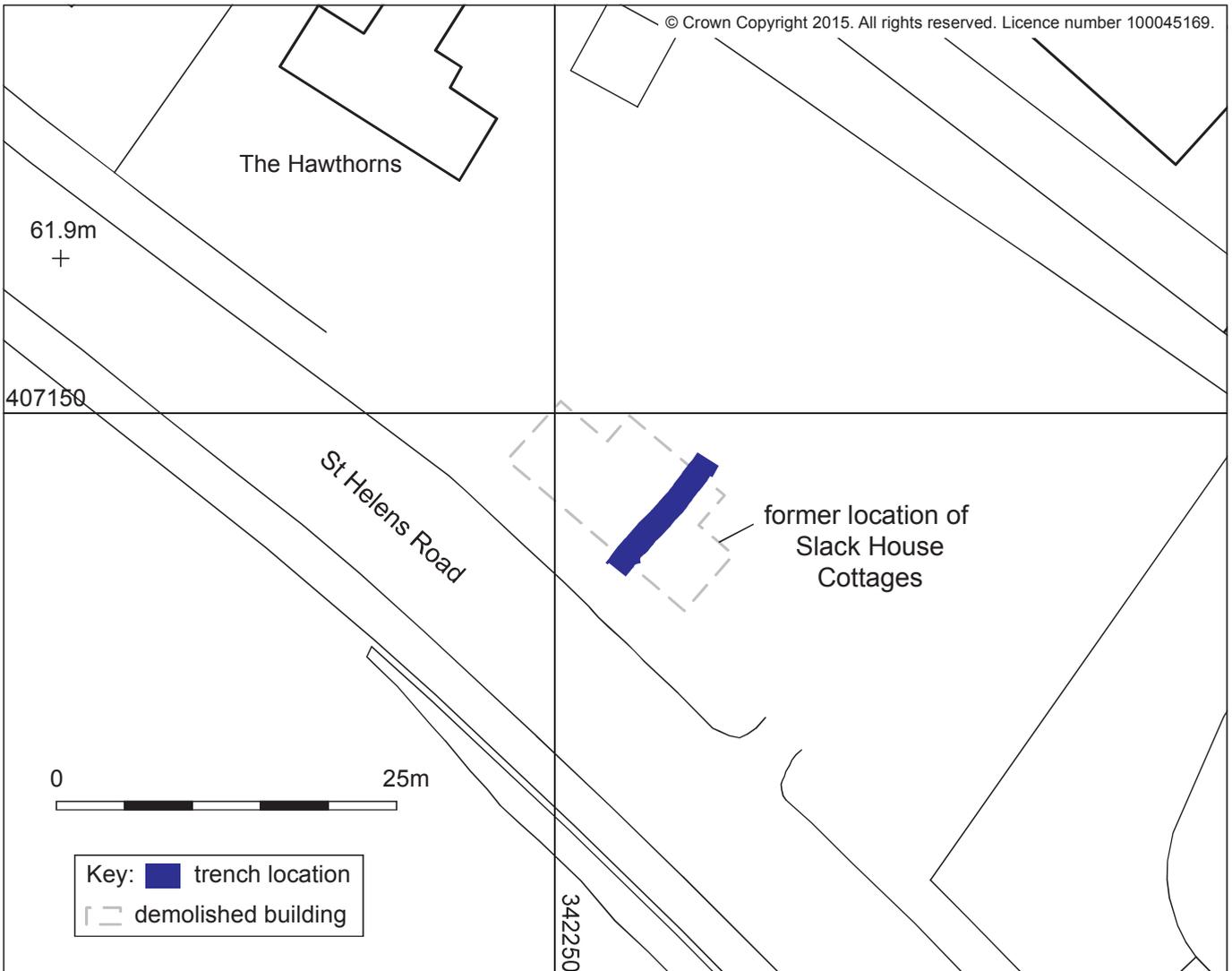
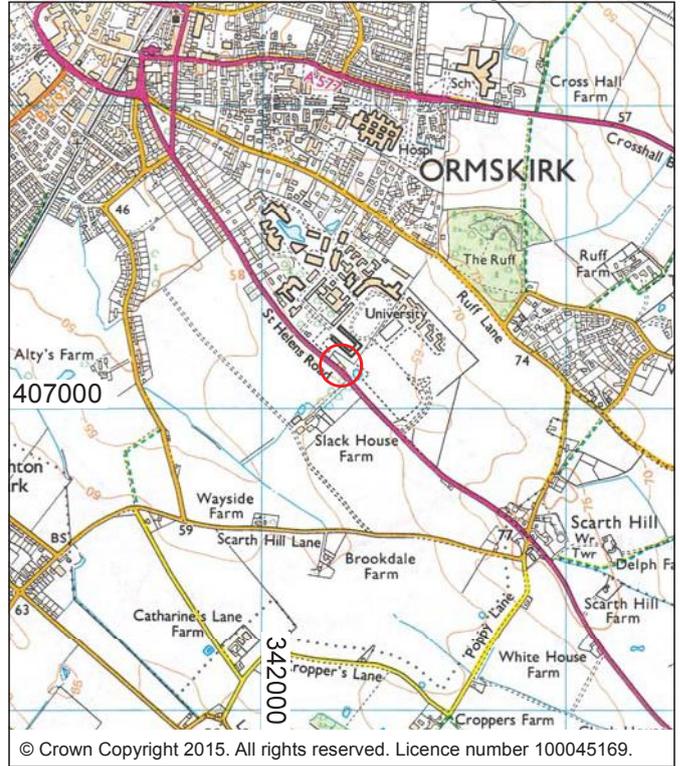
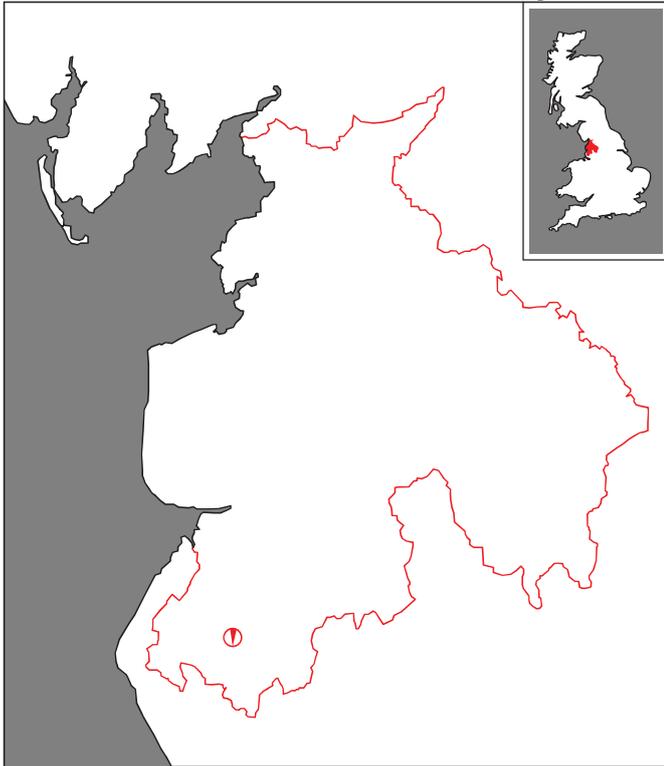


Figure 1: Site location

Client: David Oldham

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 All aspects of the evaluation were carried out according to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014). A suitable archive has been compiled to provide a permanent paper record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and CIfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 The site has been subject to an earlier heritage assessment (Miller 2015) and additional research was carried out as part of the archaeological building recording carried out by Greenlane Archaeology in October 2015 (Greenlane Archaeology 2015).

2.3 Archaeological Evaluation

2.3.1 The evaluation trench was c1.8m wide and c10.6m long, with an area of approximately 19.5m² (Figure 2). Excavation was discontinued once the natural geology was reached at a height of c61m above sea level.



Plate 3: The concrete floor being removed

2.3.2 The concrete floor of the house was removed using a mechanical excavator with a toothed bucket (Plate 3). Bulky deposits below that were removed using a toothless bucket and subsequently cleaned and further investigated by hand. The location of each trench was recorded relative to nearby property boundaries and other structures that were evident on the site plans and Ordnance Survey mapping utilising a total station. All finds were collected from all deposits, as far as was practical. The following recording techniques were used during the evaluation:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all deposits and features (see *Appendix 2*) were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets, in this case context sheets for each context encountered within the trench;
- **Photographs:** photographs in both 35mm colour print and colour digital format were taken of all archaeological features uncovered during the evaluation, as well as general views of the site, the surrounding landscape, and working shots. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report and the remainder are included in the archive. A written record of all of the

photographs was also made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets (Greenlane Archaeology 2007);

- **Instrument survey:** the trench was surveyed using a Leica reflectorless total station coupled to a portable computer running AutoCAD 2006 LT and TheoLT, which captures the survey data in AutoCAD in real-time at a scale of 1:1. This enabled the location of each trench to be positioned and allowed levels above Ordnance Datum to be provided through reference to a nearby spot height;
- **Drawings:** a trench plan was drawn by hand at a scale of 1:20 and sections of features were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 as appropriate.

2.4 Finds

2.4.1 **Collection:** all of the finds were recovered by hand and stored in self-seal bags with white write-on panels on site before being removed for processing and assessment.

2.4.2 **Processing:** artefacts were washed (or dried and dry brushed in the case of glass and metal), dried in a drying oven or naturally air-dried, and packaged appropriately in self-seal bags with white write-on panels.

2.4.3 **Assessment and recording:** the finds were assessed, identified where possible, and a list of them was compiled (see *Appendix 3*).

2.5 Environmental Samples

2.5.1 Two small samples from the charcoal lense encountered in context **108** were retained but these were not processed as this deposit was found to be post-medieval in date and not of archaeological significance.

2.6 Archive

2.6.1 The archive, comprising the drawn, written, and photographic record (see *Appendix 4*) will be deposited with the Lancashire Record Office in Preston. The archive has been compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the CfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). A copy of this report will be supplied to the client, a digital copy will be supplied to the Lancashire County Council Archaeological Service, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition, a digital record of the project will be made on the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

3. Desk-Based Assessment

3.1 Map and Image Regression

3.1.1 **Introduction:** early maps of the area tend to be relatively lacking in detail and are not included in this section as they are not detailed enough to be useful in understanding the development of the site. The footprint of the former Slack House Cottages is marked in red and the trench location is marked in blue on the extracts of the most useful maps reproduced here, which date from the mid-19th century onwards.

3.1.3 **Tithe Map 1845:** this map (LRO DRL 1/58 1845a) shows that the site to the north side of the road to Ormskirk had already seen some development by this time (Plate 4). The arrangement of nearby field boundaries and buildings on site has changed significantly since (cf. Plate 6).

3.1.2 **Ordnance Survey 1849:** the first edition Ordnance Survey map, which was surveyed in 1845-6, is at a scale of 1:10,560 and as such lacks specific detail (Plate 5).

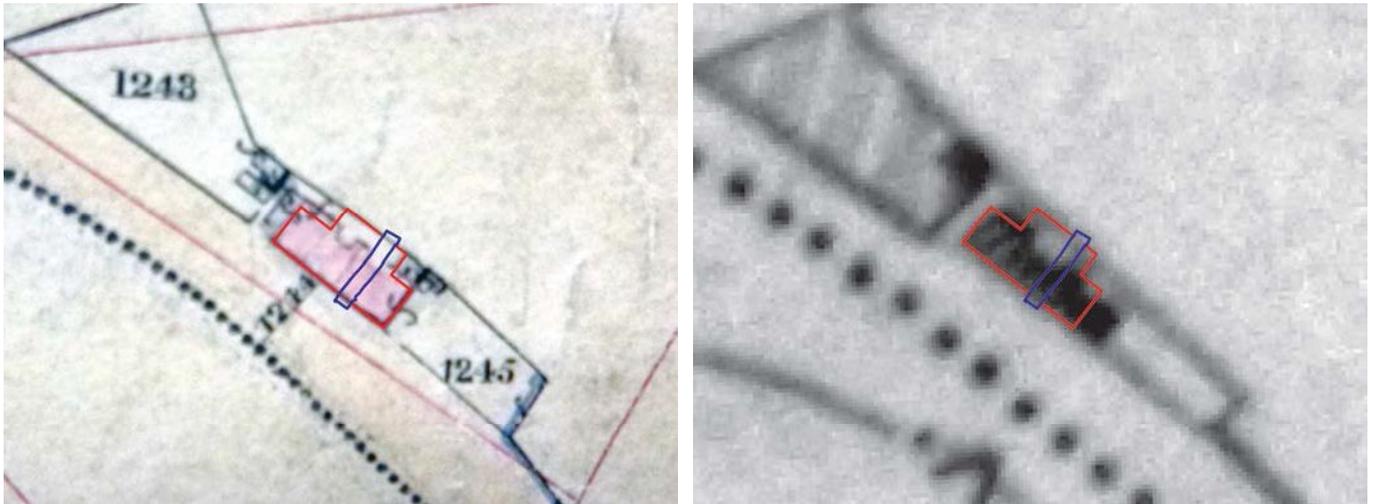


Plate 4 (left): Extract from the Tithe Map of 1845

Plate 5 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1849

3.1.4 **Ordnance Survey 1891:** this is the first 1:2,500 scale plan to depict the site, and is therefore considerably more detailed than its predecessors. It is difficult to overlay this map onto the earlier maps due to various differences in the footprint of the building and changes to the nearby field boundaries. The site presumably underwent fairly substantial changes between this and the earlier maps; for example, the footprint of the buildings is markedly different to that shown on the tithe map of 1845 (Plate 6; cf. Plate 4).

3.1.5 **Ordnance Survey 1908:** this shows essentially the same information as the previous map (Plate 7; cf. Plate 6).

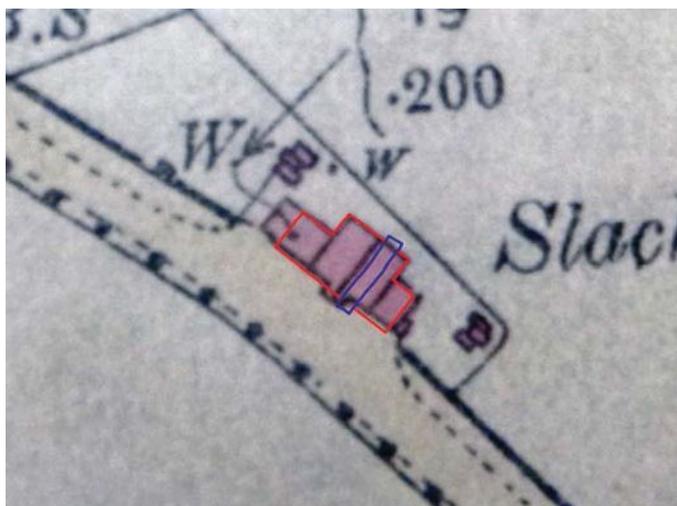


Plate 6 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1893

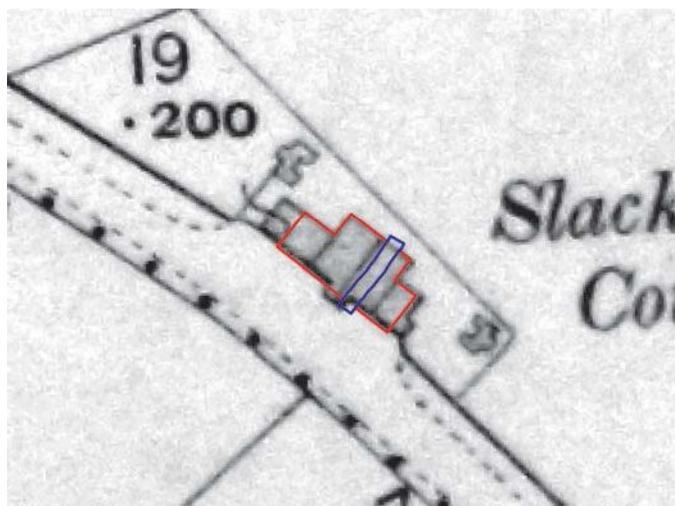


Plate 7 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1908

3.1.5 **Ordnance Survey 1927:** this shows essentially the same information as the previous map (Plate 8).

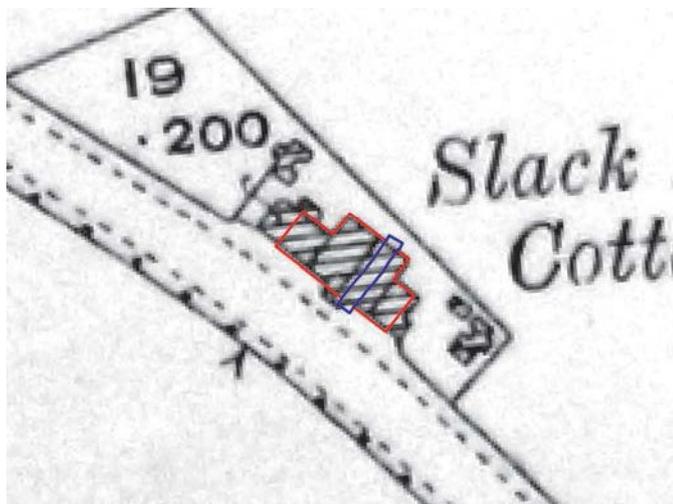


Plate 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1927

3.2 Site History

3.2.1 **Slack House Cottages:** the apportionment accompanying the tithe map of 1845 records plot 1245, which seems to comprise the whole of main part of the building (coloured pink) as '2 cottages and gardens' occupied by John Levesley and Henry Snipe and owned by William and James Parr, although clearly only as lessees, seemingly to the Earl of Derby (LRO DRL 1/58 1845b). The outbuildings to the north-west seem to form part of plot 1243, which also has William and James Parr as lessees but is said to be unoccupied and has no description (*ibid.*). Other documentary records relating to Slack House Cottages are very scarce (Greenlane Archaeology 2015, 9-10).

3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 The site clearly saw development prior to 1845 as buildings are shown at that location on the tithe map of that date. Nearby field boundaries and the footprint of the buildings on site had changed substantially by the time of the first 1:2,500 scale Ordnance Survey map, which was surveyed in 1891. The arrangement of buildings on site remained essentially unchanged after that date (Greenlane Archaeology 2015, 10).

4. Evaluation

4.1 Trench 1

4.1.1 The concrete floor (**100**) of the cottage, which was not very apparent in the north-east extension to the house, was c0.1-0.15m thick. The bedding layer (**101**) below that, below the older part of the cottages at the south-west end of the trench only, was a pale reddish orange sand, up to 0.1m thick. A thin layer of soft sandy-clay (**103**) was encountered below the floor of the extension to the north-east and a soft, dark, loamy topsoil (**102**) was exposed outside the building to the south-west. The underlying geological deposits (**110**) or 'natural' layer into which the lower lying features were cut varied from a compacted, pale creamy-yellow to orange sand to a firm, dark pink clay (Plate 9). Some linear variations within the natural had the look of 'features', filled with very compacted sterile sand on the north-east side, but these were presumably caused by natural processes. The bedrock, which was exposed in places, was a pale yellow sandstone.



Plate 9: General view of the trench, viewed from the north-east

4.1.2 A soft, dark greyish-orange, sand (**108**), seemingly truncated by the south-west wall of the cottages, was encountered below the bedding layer (**101**), laid in a shallow cut [**109**] at the south-west end of the trench (Plate 10 and Plate 11). There was a charcoal lense towards the base of the cut (Plate 12), which was thicker where it was exposed by the wall footings to the south-west. The cut was north-west/south-east aligned, c1.8m wide and up to 0.3m deep, with a flat base and sides sloping at more than 45° on the north-east side and truncated to the south-west.



Plate 10: Sondage cut through deposit (108) and its corresponding cut [109], truncated by the wall of the cottages at the south-west end of the trench, viewed from the south-east



Plate 11: Oblique view of sondage through deposit 108 and cut [109] at the south-west end of the trench, viewed from the south



Plate 12: Charcoal lense within deposit (108) exposed where the wall of the cottage cut through it, viewed from the south-west

4.1.3 A linear ditch [107] c1.2m wide on a north-west/south-east alignment was exposed close to the north-east end of the trench (Plate 13 and Plate 14). The south-west side of the cut sloped at approximately 40° to the horizontal and broke gently to a slightly concave base about c0.3m deep. The north-east side stepped slightly at the top and then followed the underlying bedrock (Plate 15 to Plate 17). The ditch was filled by a firm mid orange-brown loam (106) and contained small orange brick and slate fragments and infrequent sub-rounded and sub-angular stone inclusions.



Plate 13 (left): Pre-excitation view of ditch [107] and pit [105], viewed from the south-east



Plate 14 (right): Pre-excitation view of ditch [107] and pit [105], viewed from the south-west



Plate 15: Section of ditch [107] and pit (105), viewed from the north-west



Plate 16: Bedrock exposed in the north-east side of the ditch [107], viewed from the south



Plate 17: Close-up view of the south-east facing section through ditch 107, viewed from the south-east

4.1.4 A shallow pit [105] to the south-east side of the trench was cut into the top of linear ditch 107 (cutting the fill of 107 (deposit 106)) and the natural (110) to the south-west of that). This pit [105] was a long oval shape, aligned north-east/south-west, c1.3m long by 0.4m wide by 0.15m deep (Plate 18). It was steeper on the north-west side and very shallow to the south-west and had an irregular base. It was filled by a soft, dark grey, sandy silt (104) (Plate 19).



Plate 18 (left): Section of pit [105], viewed from the north-west

Plate 19 (right): Section of pit [105], viewed from the south-west

4.2 Finds

4.2.1 **Introduction:** in total, 62 finds were recovered by hand from a variety of deposits during the evaluation. All of the finds are dealt with by category in the following sections and a complete list is provided in *Appendix 3*.

4.2.2 **Stone artefacts:** two small fragments what appeared to be haematite (iron ore) were recovered from the fill of pit 105 (104), which could be naturally occurring but were not otherwise observed elsewhere on the site. Their presence is difficult to explain, although such ore was historically used for marking sheep in other parts of the North-West, and such small quantities are unlikely to indicate that iron

production was occurring nearby. Fragments of purple roofing slate, probably deriving from Wales, were recovered from the fill of ditch **107** (**106**). While difficult to date in themselves the fact that they would have to have been imported suggests that they are post-medieval. A single fragment of the same material was also recovered from context **104**. A single lump of pinkish-brown flint was recovered from context **108**. This appeared to have resulted from the manufacture of artefacts and must have been brought to the area as flint is not naturally occurring in the region but is difficult to date and must be residual given the presence of a post-medieval find from the same deposit.

4.2.3 Ceramic building material: a single fragment of ceramic building material, probably brick, was recovered from context **104**, and six fragments were recovered from context **106**. While essentially undatable some of those from **106** were evidently sand-cast and all were seemingly hand-made and so, while probably post-medieval, they are likely to pre-date the introduction of mechanical manufacturing processes that became widespread in the second half of the 19th century.

4.2.4 Clay tobacco pipe: an undecorated fragment from a fine, smooth, clay tobacco pipe bowl was recovered from context **108**. It possibly dates from the 18th to 19th century but may be earlier.

4.2.5 Animal bone: six small fragments of animal bone were recovered from context **104**, including a long bone fragment, probably from a sheep, and possible skull fragments. There was no evidence of burning or obvious signs of butchery and species were not identified.

4.2.6 Post-medieval pottery: a mixture of types of post-medieval pottery were recovered, all typical of domestic types used in the area, including the common red earthenwares that are difficult to date closely, utilitarian types of stoneware, and more 'polite' types of tableware such as pearlware, white earthenware, and bone china. In general the tablewares are a better indicator of date and are broadly suggestive of belonging to the 19th century. The piece of white earthenware with blue transfer printed Willow pattern marked 'IMPR[OVED] / STAFF^R / WILLOW' is of particular interest in terms of dating. This mark was used by at least two companies, but most closely matches that used by Edward Walley of the Villa Pottery, Cobridge, Staffordshire, which operated between c1845 and 1858 (Rogers 2004, 287). However, it is not possible to confirm the manufacturer of this piece, although a similar date range is likely and as it does not state that it was manufactured in England it must pre-date 1891 and the American McKinley Tarrif Act (Godden 1991, 11).

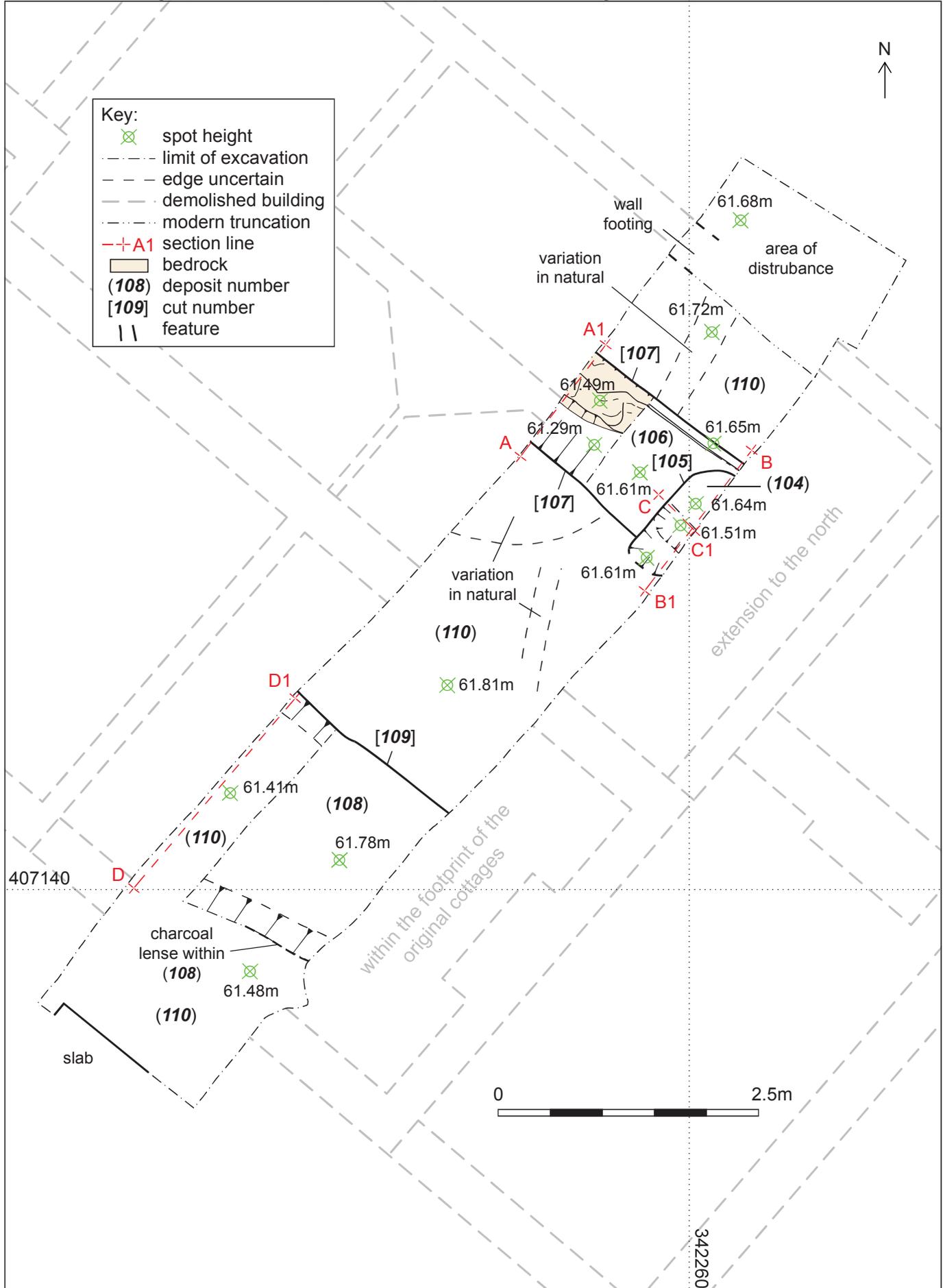


Figure 2: Trench plan

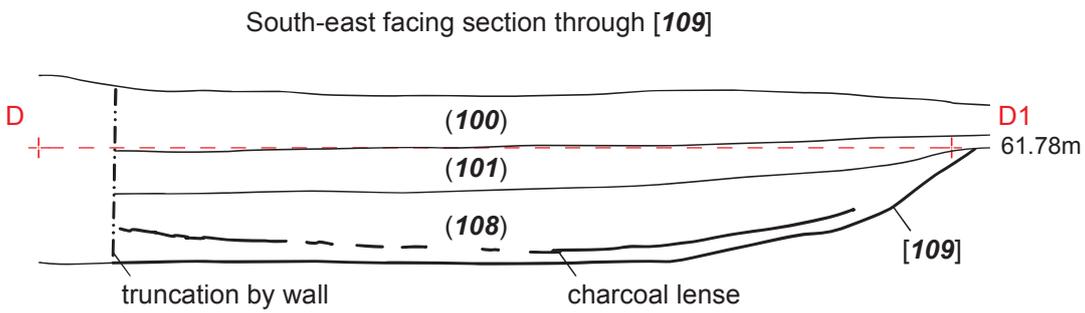
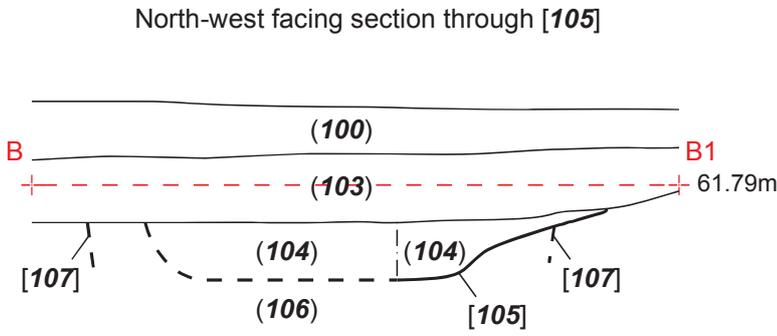
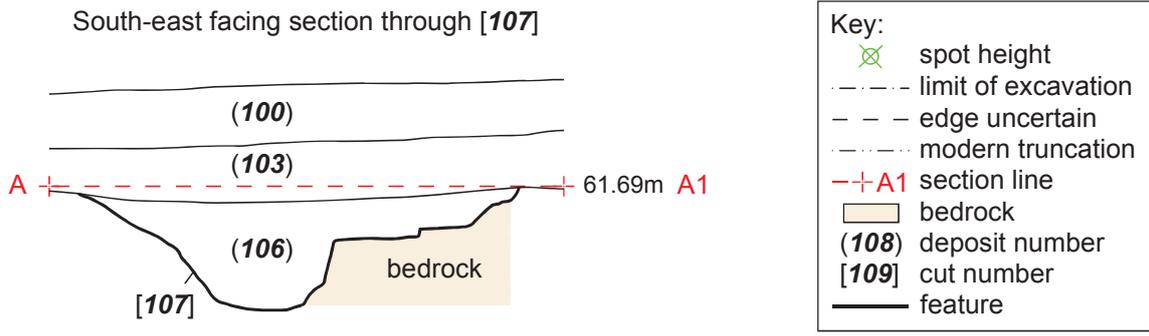


Figure 3: Sections

5. Discussion

5.1 Results

5.1.1 Two linear cut features and a long oval-shaped pit were recorded during the course of the evaluation below overlying deposits, which in turn were located below the concrete floors of the cottage. The ditch **[107]** to the north-east end of the trench followed the bedrock on its north-east side and was slightly cut by the pit **[105]**, which proved to be fairly shallow. A linear area **[109]** to the south-west end of the trench was filled with a sandy deposit (**108**) and had a charcoal lense towards its base.

5.1.2 All of the features encountered, although beneath the cottage, are seemingly post-medieval in origin. Pit **105**, ditch **107**, and the overlying deposit **103** logically must pre-date the construction of the extension of the cottages to the north-east, which the map evidence shows must have been between 1840 and 1891; the evidence from within the building suggested the earlier end of this range (Greenlane Archaeology 2015). The finds from **103** fit within this general period, with the more closely dated marked piece of white earthenware suggests a date in the 1840s or 1850s, which would fit with the evidence of the building recording. Similarly, the linear feature at the south-west end of the trench must logically pre-date the initial construction of the cottages, probably in the early 19th century (Greenlane Archaeology 2015).

5.1.3 The purpose of these features is unclear. Ditch **107** was perhaps just a field boundary that existed before the cottages were constructed; a new boundary being constructed to the north-east. The finds from the fill of this (**106**) suggest it was perhaps filled during the construction of the cottages with waste building material. Similarly, while feature **109** seems to predate the construction of the cottages it was difficult to ascertain its exact relationship, and while it appeared cut by the south-west wall it is possible that this represents material brought from elsewhere put down to provide a dry surface for the original floor, the lense of charcoal representing the clearance of scrub from the site. The piece of flint, although interesting, is presumably residual and while it might indicate evidence for prehistoric activity it may have derived from some distance from the site. The contents of pit **105** (**104**) most likely represents domestic waste deriving from the cottages and was essentially the same as the overlying deposit **103**. These deposits, while not of great archaeological significance, do provide some insight into the sort of pottery used by the people living in these relatively humble dwellings.

5.2 Interpretation

5.2.1 Based on these results a likely sequence of events at the site can be summarised as follows:

- Prior to the construction of the cottages there was an existing field boundary **[107]** on the site in what was probably otherwise an open field;
- In preparation for the construction of the initial phase of the cottages scrub was burnt to clear the ground and a deposit of dry sand (**108**) was brought in to form a surface for the floor of the building;
- The existing field boundary was filled (**106**) during the construction of the cottages, some time in the early 19th century (before 1845), primarily with building debris. A new boundary was constructed to the north-east enclosing the area in which the cottages stood, outwith the area of the evaluation trench;
- Shortly after the construction of the first phase of the cottages a shallow pit **[105]** was excavated, partially across the line of the earlier field boundary and filled with material (**104**) containing domestic waste, presumably produced by the inhabitants of the cottages;
- A soil horizon (**103**), presumably a former garden soil, accumulated over the pit; it too contained domestic waste, presumably deriving from inhabitants of the cottages;
- The cottages were extended to the north-east in the later part of the 19th century, over the area of the pit **[105]** and line of the ditch **[107]**;

- The ground floors throughout the cottages were replaced with concrete in the south-west part at least, and a new bedding layer of crushed material was laid down for this (**101**).

5.3 Conclusion

5.3.1 The evaluation did not find any obvious evidence for settlement on the site before the construction of the cottages in the early 19th century. However, a ditch, probably a former field boundary, which predated the construction of the cottages, was clearly present on the site. It is not clear what date this feature is and the lack of maps before the 19th century do not allow a more detailed appraisal of this to be made. On the basis of the work carried out it is not, however, recommended that any further archaeological work be carried out.

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Appendix 1: Project Design

SLACK HOUSE COTTAGES, ST HELENS ROAD, ORMSKIRK, LANCASHIRE

Archaeological Building Recording and Evaluation Project Design



Client: David Oldham

NGR: 342255 407145

Planning application ref.: 2015/0702/PND

September 2015

Client: David Oldham

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Following the submission of a pre-determination application (ref. 2015/0702/PND) regarding the demolition of Slack House Cottages and The Hawthorns, St Helens Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire (NGR 342255 407145), a request was made by Peter Iles from the Specialist Advisory Service at Lancashire County Council (LCC) that Slack House Cottages be first subject to an archaeological building recording and then, following demolition to footings level, the site investigated by the excavation of an archaeological evaluation trench across the footprint of the building. Greenlane Archaeology was appointed by David Oldham, Director of Capital Developments at Edge Hill University (hereafter 'the client'), via his agent Graham Love of Janet Dixon Town Planning, to carry out the archaeological building recording and evaluation and this project design was produced in response.

1.1.2 The site has been subject to an earlier heritage assessment (Miller 2015), which revealed that the cottages assumed their present form in the late 19th century, although they were built on the site of an earlier structure. It is possible that the site had its origins as earlier 'squatter's cottages' (Iles 2015), something that could only be demonstrated through archaeological investigation of below-ground deposits.

1.2 Greenlane Archaeology

1.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology is a private limited company based in Ulverston, Cumbria, and was established in 2005 (Company No. 05580819). Its directors, Jo Dawson and Daniel Elsworth, have a combined total of over 20 years continuous professional experience working in commercial archaeology, principally in the north of England and Scotland. Greenlane Archaeology is committed to a high standard of work, and abides by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Code of Conduct. The desk-based assessment, building recording, and evaluation will be carried out according to the Standards and Guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a; 2014b; 2014c).

1.3 Project Staffing

1.3.1 The project will be managed by **Dan Elsworth (MA (Hons)), ACIfA**, who will also supervise the building recording and evaluation with appropriately experienced assistance. Daniel graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1998 with an honours degree in Archaeology, and began working for the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit, which became Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) in 2001. Daniel ultimately became a project officer, and for over six and a half years worked on excavations and surveys, building investigations, desk-based assessments, and conservation and management plans. These have principally taken place in the North West, and Daniel has a particular interest in the archaeology of the area. He has managed a large number of recent projects in the North of England, primarily Cumbria and Lancashire, including several archaeological building recordings, ranging from small-scale domestic properties to large industrial complexes. He has also managed numerous archaeological evaluations and excavations over the last 10 years, including large industrial complexes, medieval urban areas, and prehistoric cremation burials.

1.3.2 All artefacts will be processed by staff at Greenlane Archaeology, and it is envisaged that they will initially be assessed by Jo Dawson, who will fully assess any of post-medieval date; medieval pottery will be assessed by Tom Mace. Other types of finds will be assessed by specialist sub-contractors as appropriate, for example Roman pottery would be examined by Ruth Leary, and animal bones by Jane Richardson at Archaeological Services West Yorkshire Archive Services (ASWYAS).

1.3.3 Environmental samples, and faunal or human remains will be processed by Greenlane Archaeology. It is envisaged that the flots from any environmental samples would be assessed by staff at Headland Archaeology, Other remains, such as industrial material, will be assessed by specialist sub-contractors as appropriate and the Specialist Advisory Service at LCC will be informed and their approval will be sought for these arrangements.

2. Objectives

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 To examine early maps of the site and any other relevant primary and secondary sources in order to better understand the dating and development of the building, and set it in its historic context. Specifically, in this case, to expand on the work of the previous heritage assessment in order to establish evidence for the site pre-dating the 19th century.

2.2 Archaeological Building Recording

2.2.1 To undertake a programme of archaeological building recording of the building to a Level 2/3-type standard (English Heritage 2006). This will provide a relatively detailed record of the building, as well as providing information about its development, form and function.

2.3 Archaeological Evaluation

2.3.1 To excavate a single trench across the footprint of the building following demolition to foundation level, in order to presence of any archaeological deposits, features, and structures on the site and establish their form, function, and date where possible.

2.4 Report

2.4.1 To produce a report detailing the results of the building recording and evaluation, which will outline the character, form and development of the historic fabric of the building and the results of the evaluation, while incorporating the results of the desk-based assessment.

2.5 Archive

2.5.1 Produce a full archive of the results of the project.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk-based Assessment

3.1.1 A rapid examination of easily available sources, particularly maps, relating to the site will be carried out. These will include:

- **Lancashire Record Office:** the majority of original and secondary sources relating to the site are deposited in the Lancashire Record Office in Preston. Of principal importance are early maps of the site, particularly Ordnance Survey maps but also the Tithe Map, but other primary sources such as the census, taxation records, parish registers, wills, deeds and other documents will also be consulted. These will be examined in order to establish the date of the building, any periods of alteration, and, where possible, its function in order to set it in its historic context. In addition, any details of the building's architect(s), patrons and owners will be acquired where available;
- **Greenlane Archaeology:** a number of copies of maps and local histories are held by Greenlane Archaeology. These will be consulted in order to provide information about the date of the building, and any obvious phases of alteration.

3.2 Archaeological Building Recording

3.2.1 A programme of archaeological building recording to English Heritage Level 2/3-type standards is required (English Heritage 2006). This is a moderate level of investigation intended to record the form, function and phasing of the building, incorporating the results of the desk-based assessment, in order to aid the interpretation of its development. It will comprise three types of recording:

- **Drawn Record:** plans of all of the principal floors will be produced, indicating alterations to the building and the location of each photographed feature of architectural or historic interest. These will be compiled either through hand measured survey techniques or through the use of a total station coupled to a portable computer running AutoCAD. These are then drawn up to produce the final illustrations. In addition, a plan showing the location of the building in relation to other nearby buildings, structures and landscape features will also be produced, and elevations and cross-sections will be produced where these can reveal specific information about the phasing and development of the building;
- **Written Record:** descriptive records of all elements of the building will be made on Greenlane Archaeology standard *pro forma* record sheets. These records will describe the building's plan, form, function, age, and construction materials. They will then be used to provide an account of the development of the building. In addition, the landscape and historic setting of the building will be described, in particular its relationship with other nearby buildings, streets, settlements and other structures;

- **Photographic Record:** photographs in colour digital format (RAW files at 12meg resolution) will be taken. These will cover both general and detailed shots of the external elevations, individual rooms and circulation areas, but also scaled photographs of specific features of architectural or archaeological interest. In addition, a record of the associated landscape and nearby buildings will also be made. Digital photographs will also be used for illustrative purposes within the report, and a written record will be kept of all of the photographs that are taken.

3.3 Archaeological Evaluation

3.3.1 The evaluation methodology, which is based on Greenlane Archaeology's excavation manual (Greenlane Archaeology 2007), will be as follows:

- The trench will be excavated with regard to the position of any known constraints, focussing on the areas of high archaeological interest or potential, and avoiding areas which are likely to have been severely damaged or truncated by later activity, unless they are considered to have a high potential;
- The overburden, which is unlikely to be of any archaeological significance, will be removed by machine under the supervision of an archaeologist until the first deposit beneath it is reached;
- All deposits below the overburden will be examined by hand in a stratigraphic manner, using shovels, mattocks, or trowels as appropriate for the scale. Deposits will only be sampled, rather than completely removed, below the first identified level of archaeological interest, unless specified by the Specialist Advisory Service at LCC, with the intension of preserving as much *in situ* as possible;
- The position of any features, such as ditches, pits, or walls, will be recorded and where necessary these will be investigated in order to establish their full extent, date, and relationship to any other features. Negative features such as ditches or pits will be examined by sample excavation, typically half of a pit or similar feature and approximately 10% of a linear feature;
- All recording of features will include hand-drawn plans and sections, typically at a scale of 1:20 and 1:10, respectively, and photographs in colour digital format (RAW files at 12meg resolution);
- All deposits, trenches, drawings and photographs will be recorded on Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- All finds will be recovered during the evaluation for further assessment as far as is practically and safely possible. Should significant quantities of finds be encountered an appropriate sampling strategy will be devised;
- All faunal remains will also be recovered by hand during the evaluation, but where it is considered likely that there is potential for the bones of fish or small mammals to be present appropriate volumes of samples will be taken for sieving;
- Deposits that are considered likely to have, for example, preserved environmental remains, industrial residues, and/or material suitable for scientific dating will be sampled. Bulk samples of between 20 and 60 litres in volume (or 100% of smaller features), depending on the size and potential of the deposit, will be collected from stratified undisturbed deposits and will particularly target negative features (e.g. gullies, pits and ditches) and occupation deposits such as hearths and floors. An assessment of the environmental potential of the site will be undertaken through the examination of samples of suitable deposits by specialist sub-contractors (see *Section 1.3.3* above), who will examine the potential for further analysis. All samples will be processed using methods appropriate to the preservation conditions and the remains present;
- Any human remains discovered during the evaluation will be left *in situ*, and, if possible, covered. The Specialist Advisory Service at Lancashire County Council will be immediately informed as will the local coroner. Should it be considered necessary to remove the remains this will be carried out under the guidance of the local coroner, and a licence sought from the Home Office, under Section 25 of the Burial Act of 1857, should this be considered necessary;
- Any objects defined as 'treasure' by the Treasure Act of 1996 (HMSO 1996) will be immediately reported to the local coroner and securely stored off-site, or covered and protected on site if immediate removal is not possible;
- The evaluation trench will be backfilled following excavation although it is not envisaged that any further reinstatement to its original condition will be carried out.

3.3.2 Should any significant archaeological deposits be encountered during the evaluation these will immediately be brought to the attention of the Specialist Advisory Service at LCC so that the need for further work can be confirmed. Any additional work will be carried out following discussion with the Specialist Advisory Service and subject to a new project design, and the ensuing costs will be agreed with the client.

3.4 Report

3.4.1 The results of the building investigation and evaluation will be compiled into a report, which will provide a summary and details of any sources consulted. It will include the following sections:

- A front cover including the appropriate national grid reference (NGR);
- A concise non-technical summary of results, including the date the project was undertaken and by whom;
- Acknowledgements;
- Project Background;
- Methodology, including a description of the work undertaken;
- Results of the desk-based assessment;
- Results of the building recording;
- Results of the evaluation, including finds and samples;
- Discussion of the results including phasing information;
- Bibliography;
- Illustrations at appropriate scales including:
 - a site location plan related to the national grid;
 - a plan showing the location of the building and evaluation trench in relation to nearby structures and the local landscape;
 - plans of all of the principal floors of the building showing the location of each photographed feature of architectural or archaeological interest;
 - elevations of the building, where these have been produced;
 - a cross-section or cross-sections showing as a minimum the roof structure;
 - plans and sections of any features discovered during the evaluation;
 - photographs of the building, features of architectural/historic interest and its landscape, accompanied by appropriate descriptions and photographs of features encountered during the evaluation and general shots of the evaluation trench ;
 - copies of selected historic maps and plans of the building.

3.5 Archive

3.5.1 The archive, comprising the drawn, written, and photographic record of the building and of the evaluation trench, formed during the project, will be stored by Greenlane Archaeology until it is completed. Upon completion it will be deposited with the Lancashire Record Office in Preston, together with a copy of the report. The archive will be compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the ClfA (Brown 2007), and in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). In addition details will be submitted to the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS (OASIS) scheme. This is an internet-based project intended to improve the flow of information between contractors, local authority heritage managers and the general public.

3.5.2 A paper and digital copy of the report will be provided to the client and a digital copy of the report will be provided to the Historic Environment Officer at Lancashire County Council. In addition, Greenlane Archaeology Ltd will retain one copy.

4. Work timetable

4.1 Greenlane Archaeology will be available to commence the project from **5th October 2015**, or at another date convenient to the client. It is envisaged that the elements of the project will be carried out in the following order:

- **Task 1:** desk-based assessment;
- **Task 2:** on-site archaeological building recording;
- **Task 3:** archaeological evaluation;
- **Task 4:** processing and assessment of finds and samples;
- **Task 5:** production of draft report including illustrations;
- **Task 6:** feedback on draft report, editing and production of final report;
- **Task 7:** finalisation and deposition of archive.

5. Other matters

5.1 Access and clearance

5.1.1 Access to the site will be organised through co-ordination with the client and/or their agent(s). In addition, the building will be cleared by the client in order to allow internal photographs to be taken without obstructions. Please note that while the building does not need to be fully cleared before the work is carried out but Greenlane Archaeology reserves the right to increase the price if the building is not accessible enough to carry out the recording, and further visits therefore have to be arranged in order to complete it. This also applies if the exterior is not accessible or obstructed to the extent that it prevents the building recording taking place as required.

5.2 Health and Safety

5.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology carries out risk assessments for all of its projects and abides by its internal health and safety policy and relevant legislation. Health and safety is always the foremost consideration in any decision-making process.

5.3 Insurance

5.3.1 Greenlane Archaeology has professional indemnity insurance to the value of **£1,000,000**. Details of this can be supplied if requested.

5.4 Environmental and Ethical Policy

5.4.1 Greenlane Archaeology has a strong commitment to environmentally and ethically sound working practices. Its office is supplied with 100% renewable energy by Good Energy, uses ethical telephone and internet services supplied by the Phone Co-op. In addition, the company uses the services of The Co-operative Bank for ethical banking, Naturesave for environmentally-conscious insurance, and utilises public transport wherever possible. Greenlane Archaeology is also committed to using local businesses for services and materials, thus benefiting the local economy, reducing unnecessary transportation, and improving the sustainability of small and rural businesses.

6. Bibliography

Brown, DH, 2007 *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer, and Curation*, IfA, Reading

ClfA, 2014a Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment, http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS&GDBA_2.pdf

ClfA, 2014b Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures, http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS&GBuildings_1.pdf

ClfA, 2014c Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation, http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS&GFieldevaluation_1.pdf

English Heritage, 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London

English Heritage, 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*, Swindon

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Iles, P, 2015 *Letter Re. Application 2015/0702/PND – Slack House Cottages and The Hawthorns, St Helens*, unpubl

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Appendix 2: Summary Context List

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Deposit	Pale, greyish-white concrete, c0.1-0.15m thick; gravelly base	Concrete floor of house
101	Deposit	Firm, pale, reddish-orange sand, with 20% brick rubble and 10% concrete rubble inclusions; 0.1m maximum thickness; below the early part of the building to the south-west only	Crushed material / bedding layer for concrete floor
102	Deposit	Soft, dark greyish-black, sandy loam, with 2% rounded cobble inclusions, 0.1-0.2m thick	Topsoil outside building to the south-west
103	Deposit	Soft, dark greyish-brown, sandy-clay, with 2% angular cobbles and fragments of slate, typically less than 0.1m thick	Buried soil; north-east end
104	Deposit	Soft, dark grey, sandy-silt fill of cut 105	Fill of pit 106
105	Cut	Long oval shaped cut, aligned north-east/south-west, c1.3m long by 0.4m wide by 0.15m deep; steep on north-west side and very shallow to the south-west; irregular base; cuts fill (106) of ditch 107	Pit
106	Deposit	Firm, mid orange-brown, loam, containing small orange brick fragments and pieces of slate and some infrequent sub-rounded and sub-angular stone inclusions; fill of cut 107	Fill of ditch 107
107	Cut	Linear cut, aligned north-west/south-east, c1.2m wide by 0.3m deep; the north-east side is bedrock and the south-west side sloped at approximately 40° to the horizontal; concave base; filled by deposit 106	Linear ditch
108	Deposit	Soft, dark greyish-orange, sand, with 10% rounded and sub-angular pebbles; 1.8m wide north-east/south-west by maximum 0.3m thick; a charcoal lense, cut by the line of the wall of the cottages, was present near the base; the charcoal lense was thicker where it was exposed by the wall footings to the south-west	Dumped deposit of sand in shallow cut; truncated by footing of wall on south-west side, fill of 109
109	Cut	North-west/south-east aligned linear cut, 1.8m wide and up to 0.3m deep, sloping at more than 45° on the north-east side and truncated to the south-west, with a flat base; filled by deposit 108	Shallow cut filled with loose sand
110	Deposit	Varying from compacted to firm, pale creamy-yellow to orange sand to dark pink clay, with 6% rounded gravel inclusions; note: some linear 'features' filled with compacted sand on the north-east side, but these were presumably caused by natural processes	Varied geological natural 'layer' above the bedrock (where it was exposed), which was a pale yellow sandstone

Appendix 3: Summary Finds List

Context	Type	Qty	Description	Date range
103	Pottery	3	Black-glazed red earthenware coarseware fragments	Late 17 th – early 20 th century
103	Pottery	1	Pearlware hollow-ware fragment with dark blue Chinoiserie transfer-printed pattern	Early 19 th century
103	Pottery	11	White earthenware: Willow transfer-printed plate rim marked 'IMPR[OVED] / STAFF ^R / WILLOW', blue transfer-printed base (possibly from chamber pot or similar) with gothic/romantic landscape scene, blue painted fragment, earth colours painted fragment, Broseley transfer-printed cup base, factory-produced slipware mug and handle terminal fragment and bowl rim fragment, and four undecorated fragments	19 th – early 20 th century (mid-19 th century for marked Willow piece)
103	Pottery	4	Glazed blue earthenware refitting cup rim and body fragments, and handle fragment probably from same tea cup	19 th – early 20 th century
103	Pottery	1	Bone china tea cup rim with pink lustre and gilding	19 th – early 20 th century
103	Pottery	3	Factory-produced glazed buff-coloured earthenware: bowl rim, body fragment with factory-produced white slip stripes, and body fragment with white slip coating externally	19 th – early 20 th century
103	Pottery	1	Glazed red earthenware fineware foot rim fragment	Late 18 th – 20 th century
103	Pottery	1	Brown-glazed buff-coloured stoneware base fragment	Late 18 th – early 20 th century
104	Pottery	6	White earthenware: blue painted and press-moulded shell edge plate rim, blue Willow transfer-printed hollow-ware body fragment, factory-produced slipware fragment, blue-painted fragment, purple transfer-printed fragment, and undecorated fragment	19 th – early 20 th century
104	Pottery	2	Black-glazed red earthenware coarseware	Late 17 th – early 20 th century
104	Animal bone	6	One long bone fragment, probably from a sheep, and five small, unidentified animal bone fragments, including possible skull fragments	Uncertain
104	Stone	1	Fragment of purple slate (probably of Welsh origin), most likely roofing slate waste	Not closely dateable
104	Industrial residue	3	Burnt coal x 1, non-diagnostic slag (probably smithing) x 1, burnt fuel ash ('potash') x 1	Not closely dateable
104	Ceramic building material	1	Red earthenware (e.g. brick) fragment	Post-medieval
104	Fe	1	Corroded fragment, possibly a small nail	Not closely dateable
104	Stone	2	Small lumps of haematite iron ore	Not closely dateable
106	Stone	6	Fragments of purple slate (probably of Welsh origin), most likely roofing slate waste	Post-medieval?
106	Ceramic building material	6	Pale reddish orange brick fragments, some evidently sand cast and hand-made	Pre-late 19 th century
106	Industrial residue	1	Burnt coal	Not closely dateable
108	Flint	1	Pinkish-brown lump with some flake scars and cortex, as well as possible evidence of burning. Not part of an artefact and at best a piece of waste from flint working	Not closely dateable

Context	Type	Qty	Description	Date range
108	Clay tobacco pipe	1	Fine, smooth, bowl fragment which did not show any decoration	18 th to 19 th century?

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