

BARROW HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE, WALNEY ROAD, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Desk-Based
Assessment



Client: Capita Symonds
NGR: 319067 470699

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Non-Technical Summary

Prior to the submission of a planning application by Capita Symonds for the expansion of the household waste recycling centre at Walney Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (NGR 319067 470699) an archaeological desk-based assessment was recommended by the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). The work was carried out by Greenlane Archaeology in June and July 2008.

The background history and map regression suggest that the site remained virtually unchanged from the monastic period until the mid 19th century and the height of the Industrial Revolution in the Barrow-in-Furness area. It is situated immediately north of the site of the village of Cocken, a grange of Furness Abbey recorded from 1336. During the late 19th century the Cocken estate, where the site is situated, was sold off to the business interests of the railways and heavy industries of the time. By 1891, the land was covered in railway lines or had reverted back to marshland. Where Cocken village once stood is now the site of Barrow Fire Station.

Geotechnical information shows that the site area is covered by a thick layer of slag, presumably an extension of that deposited in a large slag bank to the north-west. The site visit revealed that the current site is of negligible archaeological or historical merit, and no recording work is therefore required.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Capita Symonds for commissioning and supporting the project, in particular Sue Hotchkiss and Stephen Capstick for their help and information. Additional thanks are due to Gary Edmondson at Cumbria Waste Management for help with access to the site and the staff of Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness for help with accessing their archives. Special thanks are due to Jo Mackintosh, Historic Environment Record Officer, for providing access to the Cumbria Historic Environment Record, and to Jeremy Parsons, Assistant Archaeologist at Cumbria County Council, for providing information regarding the project.

The desk-based assessment and site visit were carried out by Steve Clarke who also compiled the report, Dan Elsworth managed the project, and Jo Dawson edited the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

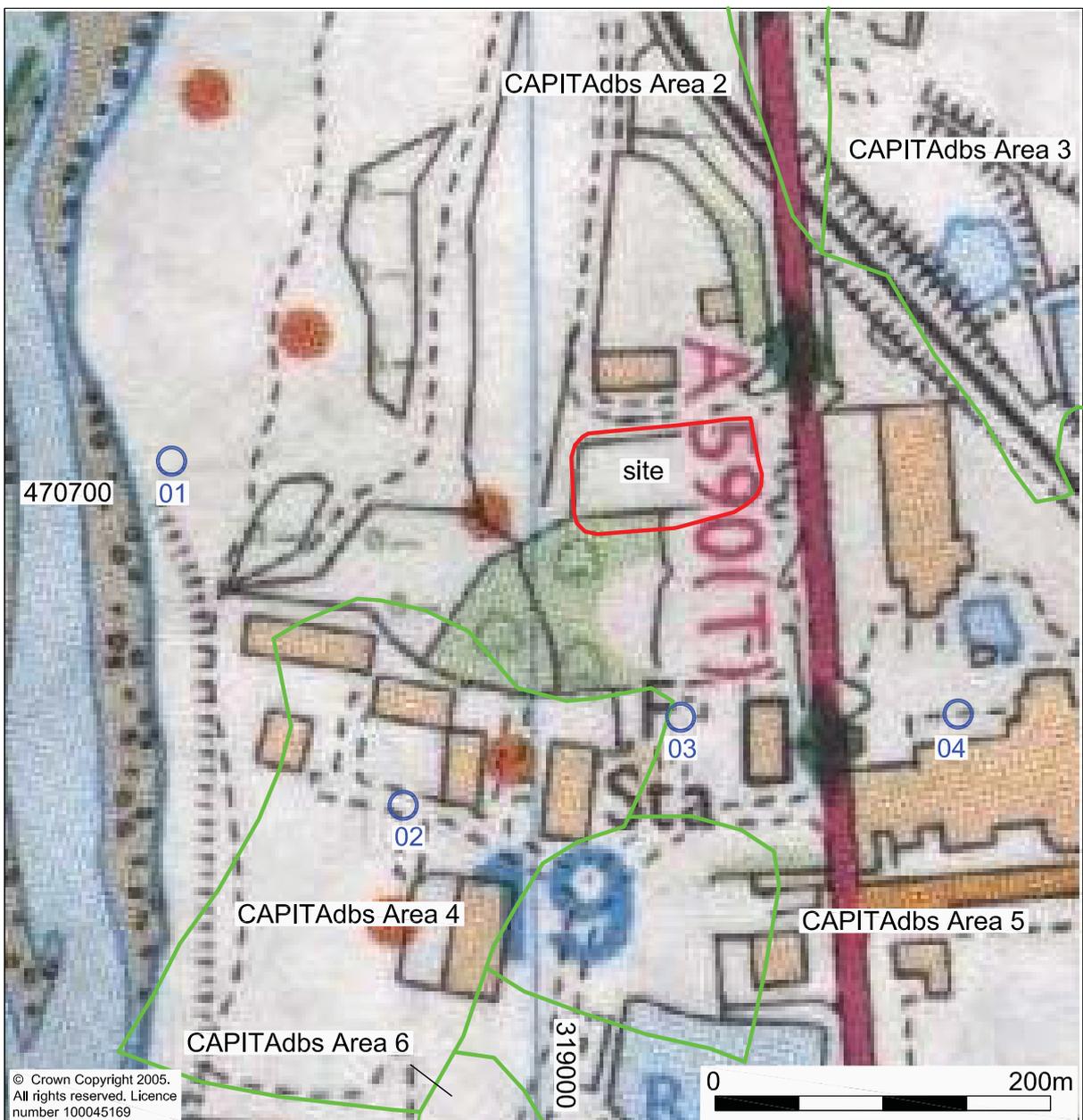
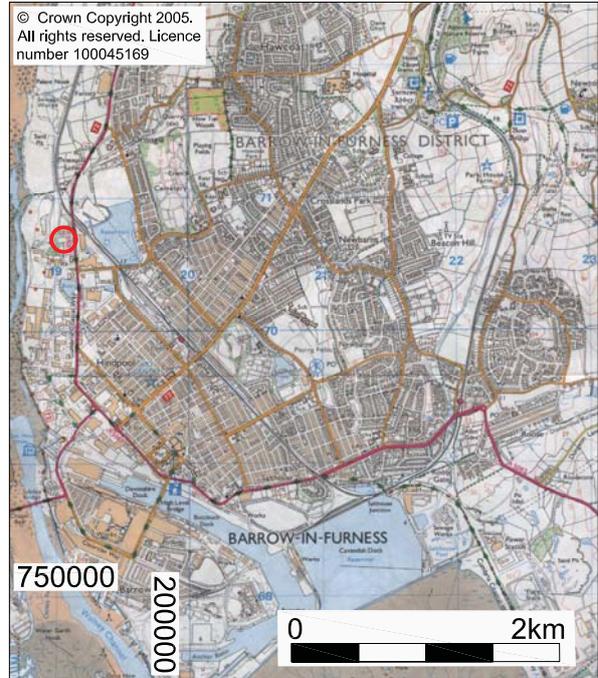
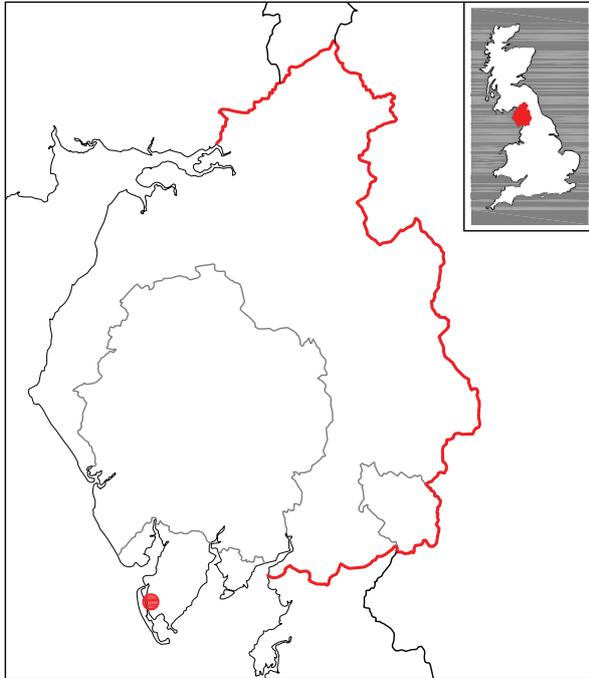
1.1.1 Prior to the submission of a planning application by Capita Symonds (hereafter 'the client') for the expansion of the household waste recycling centre at Walney Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (NGR 319067 470699), an archaeological desk-based assessment was recommended by the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service. This is intended to establish the location, extent, survival, and significance of any known archaeological remains on the site, and assess the likelihood of additional, unknown remains being present.

1.1.2 A project design was produced by Greenlane Archaeology (see *accompanying CD*), and following the acceptance of this the desk-based assessment was undertaken during June 2008.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 The site covers an area of approximately 8,434 square meters and is situated west of Walney Road and north of Phoenix Road, 1.5km north-west of Barrow town centre (Fig 1). Walney Channel is located some 200m to the west.

1.2.2 The site lies on relatively flat ground and is approximately 16m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2005). The solid geology of the area is likely to comprise a mix of Mercia mudstones and red sandstones of the Triassic period (Moseley (ed) 1978). This is likely to be covered by a thick glacially-derived till (Countryside Commission 1998, 27), which will have been affected by alluvial activity and in places layers of peat and marine clay have been recorded at a significant depth below the surface (Kendall 1900).



Client: Capita Symonds

Figure 1: Site location

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2. Methodology

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 A desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with IFA guidelines (IFA 2001). This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site and published secondary sources, with other information covering the history and archaeology of the wider area included in the site background (*Section 3.1*). A number of sources of information were used during the desk-based assessment:

- **Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record (CCCHER):** this is a list of all the known sites of archaeological interest within the county, which is maintained by Cumbria County Council and is the primary source of information for an investigation of this kind. A list of all of the known sites of archaeological interest within approximately 250m of the centre of the proposed development area was acquired; each identified site comes with a grid reference, description and source and any additional information referenced was also examined as necessary. All of the sites recorded in the HER were compiled into a gazetteer (*Appendix 1*) and their location along with that of earlier pieces of archaeological work carried out in the vicinity of the study is shown in Figure 1;
- **Cumbria County Record Office, Barrow-in-Furness (CRO(B)):** this was visited in order to examine early maps and plans of the site, original documents relating to businesses and properties on the site, and local and regional histories and directories;
- **Geotechnical data:** information obtained from boreholes and test pits excavated across the site, provided by the client, was examined in order to assess the below ground deposits;
- **Greenlane Archaeology Library:** additional secondary sources, used to provide information for the site background, were examined.

2.2 Site Visit

2.2.1 The site was visited on 30th June 2008. The standing structures and the rest of the site were rapidly examined, colour digital record photographs were taken and notes made of any mitigating factors that might have impacted on any remains of archaeological interest or would be hazardous if undertaking further work on the site.

2.3 Archive

2.3.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design (*see accompanying CD*), and current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness on completion of the project. A copy of this report will be deposited with the Cumbria Historic Environment Record, one with the client, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition, a record of the project will be made on the OASIS scheme.

3. Results

3.1 Background History

3.1.1 **Introduction:** the background history is largely compiled from secondary sources in order to provide a context within which to place the results of the desk-based assessment. Where a specific site identified within the study area is considered relevant to the understanding of its history it is discussed in the relevant section. Information regarding the specific development and use of the site is presented in the map regression in *Section 3.2*. The most significant historical site in the vicinity of the site is the lost village of Cocken and so a considerable amount of the background deals with its history, much of this information being taken from '*Cocken: The History of a Furness Village*' by WB Kendall.

3.1.2 **Prehistoric:** evidence of prehistoric activity in the period immediately following the last Ice Age is not common in the north-west of England as a whole, though recent work has identified evidence within the Furness Peninsula itself (Young 2002). Sites near Ulverston and Grange-over-Sands have revealed remains dating to approximately 10,000 years ago (*op cit*, 20), although much of this is unpublished and further work is necessary to truly understand its significance. Closer to Barrow there is evidence of sites dating to the Mesolithic period, particularly on Walney Island off the south-west coast, although these consist almost entirely of surface finds (Cherry and Cherry 2002). During the later periods of the Neolithic and Bronze Age extensive settlements were probably established across the Furness Peninsula. Numerous isolated finds have been discovered, including stone and bronze axes, bronze swords and spearheads (Barnes 1978, 9), and stone axes have been found in quite close proximity to the site (Robinson 1985, 40-42; Clough and Cummins 1988, 224). Numerous burial mounds in the general area date from around this period, as well as other monuments such the stone circle at Birkrigg (Barnes 1978, 9-10). Occupation in the local area undoubtedly continued into the Iron Age and is probably represented by settlements such as the one at Stone Walls near Urswick, where there is also evidence of early iron mining (Bowden 2000), although definite evidence is lacking.

3.1.3 **Roman:** although there is no evidence of structural remains from this period, the relatively large number of Roman coins found in the Furness area suggests a degree of interaction between the Romans and the local populace (Shotter 1995). A more recent reassessment of the evidence suggests that early antiquarian claims for a road of Roman date across the Furness Peninsula and some form of settlement, perhaps a fort, at Dalton have greater validity than generally thought (Elsworth 2007).

3.1.4 **Medieval:** the study area is immediately north of the site of the village Cocken, which was first recorded in 1336 (as 'Kokayne') when Edward III gave the Abbot of Furness Abbey the right to free warren on lands nearby (Farrer and Brownbill 1914, 287; Gazetteer Site 03; Fig 1). Cocken was a grange (a farm owned by the Abbey), and its estates covered an area of about 360 acres, 32 of which were swamp (Kendall 1898, 37); the establishment of Cocken was part of a wider period of land reclamation that took place soon after the establishment of Furness Abbey (Rollinson 1963, 14). The grange was divided into eight tenements whose tenants paid rent by partly in cash as well as goods and labour (Kendall 1898, 40-41). Eight homesteads were erected and each of the six fields within the grange would have been divided into narrow plots (*ibid*). It was clearly of some importance from an early date as in 1367 a John de Cocken became abbot of Furness Abbey (Beck 1844, 274). It is listed in several documents relating to abbey properties; in 1509 it is named amongst several properties that were required to provide men to serve the

abbey against the Scots (*op cit*, 304), and in 1535 a rental lists the produce it was bound to provide the abbey as including hens, oats, and grain (*op cit*, 326). In 1537 the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII, which included Furness Abbey, meant that the ownership of Cocken reverted to the Crown (Kendall 1898, 43).

3.1.4 **Post-medieval:** the dissolution of Furness Abbey resulted in neglect of the watercourses and drainage of the land, from which disputes arose between neighbouring villages (*op cit*, 44-47). In 1564 a dispute broke out between Cocken and Barrow over who was responsible for a drain to be built between Cocken Meadow and the sands at Hindpool (*ibid*). The drain was not built until 1607 by a William Whinwray, a tenant of Cocken, who was rewarded with a small meadow called the Toad Pot (*ibid*). Disputes over drainage continued until the 1780s (*ibid*). The use of land at Cocken would have rotated between pasture, sheep and cattle, arable, and wheat crops, which also led to disputes between the tenants (*ibid*). There were also ongoing disputes between neighbouring villages over the use of Brows, the land running along the edge of Walney Channel (*ibid*). In 1652 George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends (the Quakers), visited Cocken where he held a meeting before going to Walney (Jones 1976, 172). On landing in Walney he was mobbed by about 40 men, he escaped and returned to Cocken where he was set upon by the men of the village and driven out (*ibid*). It is perhaps notable in understanding the size and importance of Cocken at this time that it is described as a 'town' by George Fox, although in reality it was probably only ever a hamlet or small village.

3.1.5 By 1690 the prosperous years were ending, and with rents being less than the mortgages of the landowners, estates could no longer be cultivated at a profit (Kendall 1898, 49). In 1741 the tenants of the village apportioned and fenced the common land (*op cit*, 49-50). The land divided comprised the whole of the Cocken township apart from few small paddocks and strips of land near the village (*op cit*, 50-51). Each tenant now had one single plot in a common field rather than small plots scattered around the estate (*ibid*). Following the enclosure of the land outside investors started showing an interest in the Cocken estates (*op cit*, 51-52). Thomas Parke inherited two estates from his father Jonah in 1745 and sold them to Walney and Ireth Chapels (*ibid*). A James Butcher, who farmed in Ormsgill, also bought two estates in 1776 after taking on the lease in 1761 (*ibid*). Lord Cavendish had succeeded to Sir Thomas Lowther's estate in 1756 (*ibid*).

3.1.6 In 1745 John Romney from Dalton-in-Furness bought the field of one Thomas Richardson which was situated in the north-west corner of Cocken and renamed it High Cocken (*op cit*, 50-51). It was here that George Romney the artist, as an 11-year old, began reproducing prints using chalk and haematite on the farm's workshop walls (*ibid*). At 21 George Romney was apprenticed to a travelling portrait painter named Steele (*ibid*). Apart from visits to the north in 1765 and 1767 he remained in London (*ibid*). On his father's death in 1788 George inherited the High Cocken Estate (*ibid*). Romney took over the quarry just north of his estate and made it available to the tenants and owners of the estates of Cocken principally for use as masonry for wall and house repairs (*op cit*, 54). However, as there was no one person responsible the quarry was allowed to fall into disrepair (*ibid*).



Plate 1: The house of Jonas Parke, c.1880 (from Kendall 1898)

3.1.7 By the late 18th century Cocken, which once had eight houses, had been reduced to two (*op cit*, 55). Two houses were probably pulled down at the creation of the Ormsgill estate the 17th century (*ibid*), and others were left to decay as land was let to families based outside the area (*ibid*). In the 18th century Jonah Parke rebuilt two of his houses and let the other go to ruin (*ibid*). A fifth went the same way when High Cocken was built in 1742 and a sixth went to ruin when Lord Cavendish let his estate to neighbouring tenants (*ibid*). The remaining two houses were built by Jonah Parke (Plate 1) and James Butcher (*ibid*).

3.2 Map Regression

3.2.1 **Hennet 1830:** while lacking detail, this map does show the village of Cocken (named 'Cocking') in relation to the other hamlets at that time within what is now Barrow-in-Furness (Plate 2).

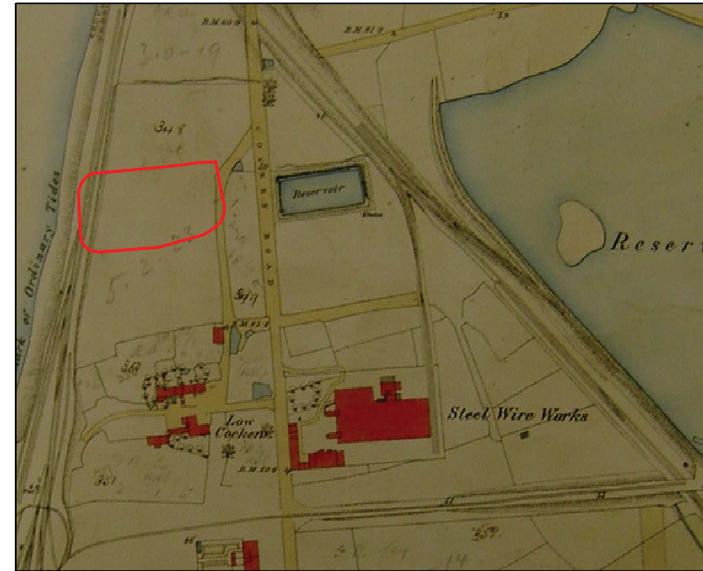


Plate 2: Extract from Hennet's map of 1830

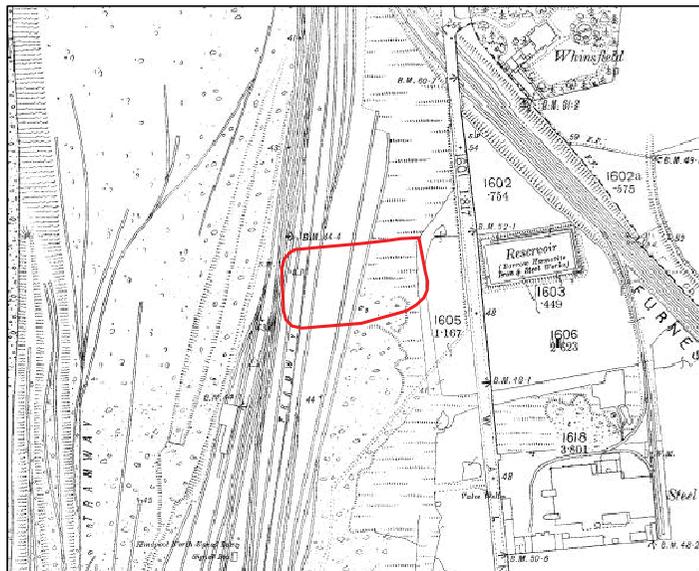
Tithe Map 1842



Ordnance Survey 1873



Ordnance Survey 1891



Ordnance Survey 1913



Figure 2: Map regression 1842-1913

3.2.2 **Tithe map of 1842 (Fig 2):** this map shows that the west side of the site in 1842 was on the edge of Walney Channel, and approximately 10m to the west is a track running north/south to Cocken village, which is 90m to the south. The site is within a large field and the area is, in general, agricultural in character (CRO(B) BPR/1/I3/2 1842).

3.2.3 **Ordnance Survey 1851:** although not as detailed as any of the following or preceding maps, this shows much the same information as the previous one; Cocken is still depicted as a small group of buildings and the surrounding area is essentially rural in character. A lime kiln belonging to Cocken village is shown to the west (Gazetteer Site 02).

3.2.4 **Ordnance Survey 1873 (Fig 2):** this map shows a considerable number of changes since 1851. To the west between the site and Walney Channel are railway sidings, and to the east is a main road, which runs north/south and Cocken village. This road, Cocken Road, is the fore-runner to the A590. Also to the east are a reservoir, a steel wire works (Gazetteer Site 04), and the Furness railway line running from Barrow to the north. Cocken village itself appears little changed.

3.2.5 **Ordnance Survey 1891 (Fig 2):** this map shows more development of the area around Cocken since 1875. The ground between the site and Walney Channel has been built up, the edge of the channel is now some 200m from the site. Much of new land has been used for railway sidings, some of which run across the site. Cocken village has been totally demolished and no longer exists, with only the early track from the village shown. To the north-west of the site, on the other side of the main road, now called Walney Road, and the railway is a new estate, Whinsfield. All field boundaries have now disappeared from around the site between the main road and the channel edge.

3.2.6 **Ordnance Survey 1913 (Fig 2):** there has not been much change around the area of the site, but to the west side of Walney Road development is continuing. It is apparent, however, that some tipping of material, presumably also slag from the iron works, has been taking place close to the site and approximately on top of the former site of Cocken.

3.2.7 **Map of the field boundaries of Cocken, 1894:** this map from '*Cocken: The History of a Furness Village*' (Kendall 1898) shows field boundaries within the Cocken township, and is probably a depiction of how the estate would have appeared after the enclosure act of 1742, and after the estate of High Cocken was created by John Romney in 1745. The study area is situated over what was agricultural land in the south-east corner of a field known as Longcroft (Plate 3).

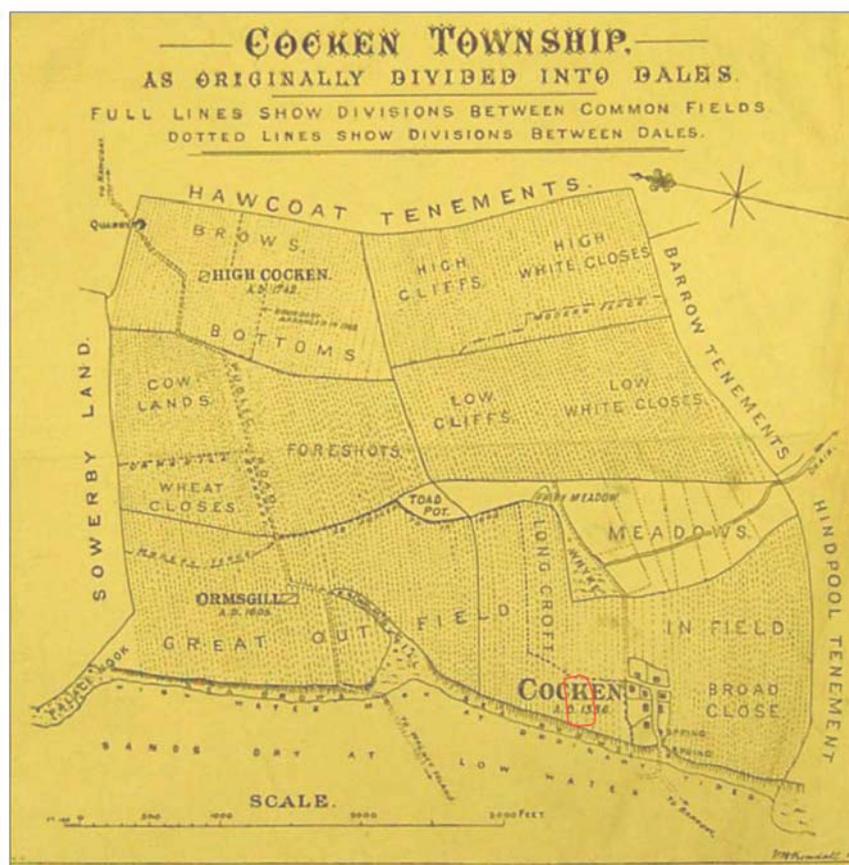


Plate 3: Plan of the Cocken Township by WB Kendall (1894), showing the site in red

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 **Introduction:** while there have been no investigations of below-ground remains in the immediate environs of the site, several archaeological surveys and desk-based assessments have been carried out in the general area. The majority of these were carried out as part of an extensive series of reports relating to 13 areas along Walney Channel, stretching from immediately north of Ormsgill in the north to the western edge of Barrow Island in the south. The first six of these are of relevance to this study (CAPITAdbs 2003a-f). In addition, a more recent survey and assessment of the slag bank immediately north-west of the site has been undertaken (OA North 2006). Although none of these reports have any great bearing on the present assessment, they are briefly discussed below in order to put the site into context.

3.3.2 **Slag Bank North End, 2003:** a desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ed Dennison on behalf of CAPITAdbs of an area of slag banks immediately west of Ormsgill, which were thought to have largely formed in the 1890s as a result of waste from the Hindpool Iron and Steel Works, situated some distance to the south, being tipped in the area (CAPITAdbs 2003a). Only three sites of archaeological interest were recorded within the study area, comprising the slag bank itself, a WWII pillbox, and a slag reduction works.

3.3.3 **Cocken Access Area, 2003:** a desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ed Dennison on behalf of CAPITAdbs of a small area immediately south of the slag banks (see Section 3.3.2 above) (CAPITAdbs 2003b). Two previously unrecorded sites of archaeological interest were identified, but neither was of significance.

3.3.4 Former Landfill Site, 2003: a desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ed Dennison on behalf of CAPITAdbs of an area formerly occupied in the 1950s and 60s by a clay pit, which then became a landfill site in the 1980s (CAPITAdbs 2003c). The study area also included the sites of a reservoir, the Furness Railway Hawcoat branch, Whinfield House and gardens, and the former course of Cocken Lane. It was considered likely that any archaeological deposits would have been removed by the initial excavation of the clay pit.

3.3.5 Phoenix Road, 2003: a desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ed Dennison on behalf of CAPITAdbs prior to the development of Phoenix Road. Within this study area are the sites of Cocken limekiln, Cocken village, and ancillary railway structures (CAPITAdbs 2003d). These sites were considered likely to have been destroyed by the dumping of slag and subsequent reclamation activity.

3.3.6 Cocken Villa, 2003: a desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ed Dennison on behalf of CAPITAdbs prior to development of this area adjacent to Phoenix Road. Cocken Villa was a large house and gardens, built between 1850 and 1871 for the Barrow Haematite Iron and Steel Company and had only recently been demolished (CAPITAdbs 2003e). This building did not appear to have been subject to any archaeological recording.

3.3.7 Cocken Lake, 2003: a desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ed Dennison on behalf of CAPITAdbs prior to the study area being levelled as part of the Project Furness reclamation scheme. There were five sites of archaeological interest identified within the study area, all associated with the former Steel Works (CAPITAdbs 2003f). These sites comprised two steel foundries, an ingot mould foundry, gas producers building, and a former reservoir. The steel works were closed in 1983 and the site cleared.

3.3.8 Barrow Slag Bank, 2006: a desk-based assessment and photographic survey of the central portion of the slag bank was undertaken by OA North (2006) on behalf of Capita Symonds, prior to the area being landscaped. The survey found that part of the slag bank had already been subject to considerable alteration by removal of slag material, which has resulted in any evidence of relationships between phases of deposition probably being lost.

3.4 Geotechnical Information

3.4.1 A programme of exploratory geotechnical investigation of the site was undertaken by Amy Engineering on behalf of Capita Symonds, comprising three boreholes and 14 test pits. The boreholes were placed outside of the existing recycling site, in the area which is to be utilised for its expansion. These revealed a considerable depth (almost 8m in one location) of made ground, consisting largely of sand and slag. The test pits showed that the majority of the site had a 0.2m to 0.3m thick layer of topsoil beneath which was typically 2-3m of slag and slag mixed with clays, gravels, and building debris on top of clays that probably represent the original ground surface. The exception to this was the borehole in the north-east corner of the site which was 2.6m in depth but revealed a layer of reddish brown clay at 2.3m. It is evident that any archaeological deposits are likely to be buried beneath a considerable amount of later material.

3.5 Site Visit

3.5.1 A brief examination of the site was carried out principally to identify the presence of anything that might have had an impact on the survival of archaeological deposits, or that might present difficulties of, for example, access or health and safety, during any further investigative work.

3.5.2 **Study area:** the planned site is larger than the existing one, extending to the south and east by approximately 35m. On the west side of the site is the south end of the slag bank (Plate 4), and to the south are two smaller banks of redeposited material (Plate 5). These banks run in a north/south direction with a slight depression in the centre with the ground rising up some 3m at each end (Plate 6). To the north is the site belonging to CAW, which contains large industrial units and the remaining area is surfaced with concrete and tarmac (Plate 7). To the east is a low bund, approximately 3m in height, between the site and the A590, which is either side of the access road to the existing waste recycling site.



Plate 4: (left) The slag bank to the rear (west side) of the existing site

Plate 5: (right) The south side of the existing site



Plate 6: (left) The depression south of the site

Plate 7: (right) The main site compound with the south end of the slag bank to the west

4. Discussion

4.1 Potential for Below Ground Remains

4.1.1 Study of the map regression indicates that the site is situated within what was agricultural land just north of the site of the medieval village of Cocken, which is most likely to be situated beneath the present fire station. The site is within an area where the ground has been significantly built up over the last hundred years, but it is possible that below these made up layers archaeological features may have survived. These could include features relating to the village of Cocken, but prehistoric material might also be present. However, the potential for anything of significance to be present in this area, particularly relating to the medieval village of Cocken, is relatively low. In addition, there is a considerable depth of later material deposited across the entire area, and unless this is due to be removed as part of the expansion of the site, any archaeological remains that might be present would be well protected beneath it.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 It is therefore recommended that unless extensive ground works are carried out as part of the extension, which remove deposits across the site to a depth of more than c2m, no further archaeological work should be carried out. Should there be any likelihood of disturbance to deposits beneath the layer of slag then the site should be subject to archaeological evaluation.

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Appendix 1: Gazetteer of Sites

Site Number: 01

Site Name: WW II Pillbox near Walney Channel

NGR: 318800 470700

Sources: HER

HER No: 19839

Designation: none

Date: 20th century

Description: Concrete pillbox.

Site Number: 02

Site Name: Cocken Lime Kiln

NGR: 318940 4704510

Sources: HER

HER No: 16130

Designation: none

Date: Post-medieval

Description: Site of Cocken lime kiln, as shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1851.

Site Number: 03

Site Name: Cocken Deserted Village

NGR: 319120 470580

Sources: HER; Kendall 1898

HER No: 2715

Designation: none

Date: Medieval – post-medieval

Description: Site of Cocken village, recorded from as early as 1336 but destroyed by the growth of the railway and local industries in the late 19th century.

Site Number: 04

Site Name: Barrow Steel Hoop and Wire Works

NGR: 319250 470550

Sources: HER; Martin 1996

HER No: 16286

Designation: none

Date: Post-medieval

Description: Site of the wire works. The building no longer exists. Recorded on Ordnance Survey maps from as early as 1873.
