

# FORMER JOINERS WORKSHOP, HEVERSHAM, MILNTHORPE, CUMBRIA

## Archaeological Evaluation



Client: Roland Handley  
Planning Ap. Ref.: SL/08/0755

NGR: SD 4956 8339

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## Non-Technical Summary

A planning application was submitted by Roland Handley for the construction of a new dwelling on the site of a former joiner's workshop in Heversham, Cumbria. Following a recommendation by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service, an archaeological planning condition was placed on the planning consent by South Lakeland District Council. The work required a rapid desk-based assessment and 25 square metres of evaluation trenching. A project design was produced by Greenlane Archaeology and following the acceptance of this the desk-based assessment and evaluation were undertaken in January 2009.

The desk-based assessment revealed that while there was some evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity in the general area, the most archaeologically and historically significant aspect of Heversham was the presence of an early medieval monastery. This is only mentioned in one source, however, and there is limited physical evidence apart from part of a carved stone cross and possible early burials at the church. Heversham probably changed very little during the medieval and post-medieval period; the manor including the bulk of the village, which had its capital at Heversham Hall, a 14<sup>th</sup> century tower house, was granted to St Mary's Abbey in York. The development site is situated in the former vicarage garden, the vicarage having been in existence since at least 1460. The vicarage subsequently became a private house and is now the Blue Bell Hotel, although it was separated from the development site by the construction of a bypass known as Prince's Way in 1927.

The excavation of three evaluation trenches encountered a homogenous layer of post-medieval garden soil that was typically 0.40m thick which directly overlay the limestone bedrock. No significant archaeological finds or features were observed; pottery from the garden soil dated from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards and was typically 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. It seems likely that the garden soil was imported in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century to improve or create the vicarage gardens which this site once formed part of, and that any earlier deposits were subsequently truncated.

## Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Roland Handley for commissioning the project and for his help on site and for providing information about its development. Additional thanks are due to the staff of Cumbria Record Office in Kendal for help with accessing their archives. Thanks are also due to Jo Mackintosh, Historic Environment Record Officer, for providing information from the Cumbria Historic Environment Record, and to Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Officer at Cumbria County Council, for providing a brief, approving the project design and proposed trench plan, and monitoring the evaluation.

The desk-based assessment was carried out by Steve Clarke who also assisted Sam Whitehead in the field evaluation and compilation of this report. The finds were assessed by Jo Dawson, who also edited the report. The project was managed by Dan Elsworth.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 A planning application was submitted by Roland Handley (hereafter 'the client') for the construction of a new dwelling on the site of a former joiner's workshop, Heversham, Milnthorpe, Cumbria (Planning Application No. SL/08/0755; NGR SD 4956 8339). South Lakeland District Council (SLDC), after consultation with Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CHES), placed an archaeological condition on the planning consent, which stated:

Condition (5) No development shall commence within the site until there has been secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The written scheme will include the following components:

- (i) An archaeological evaluation to be undertaken in accordance with the agreed written scheme of investigation;
- (ii) An archaeological recording programme the scope of which will be dependant upon the results of the evaluation and will be in accordance with the agreed written scheme of investigation;
- (iii) Where appropriate, a post-excavation assessment and analysis, preparation of a site archive ready for deposition at a store approved by the Planning Authority, completion of an archive report, and publication of the results in a suitable journal.

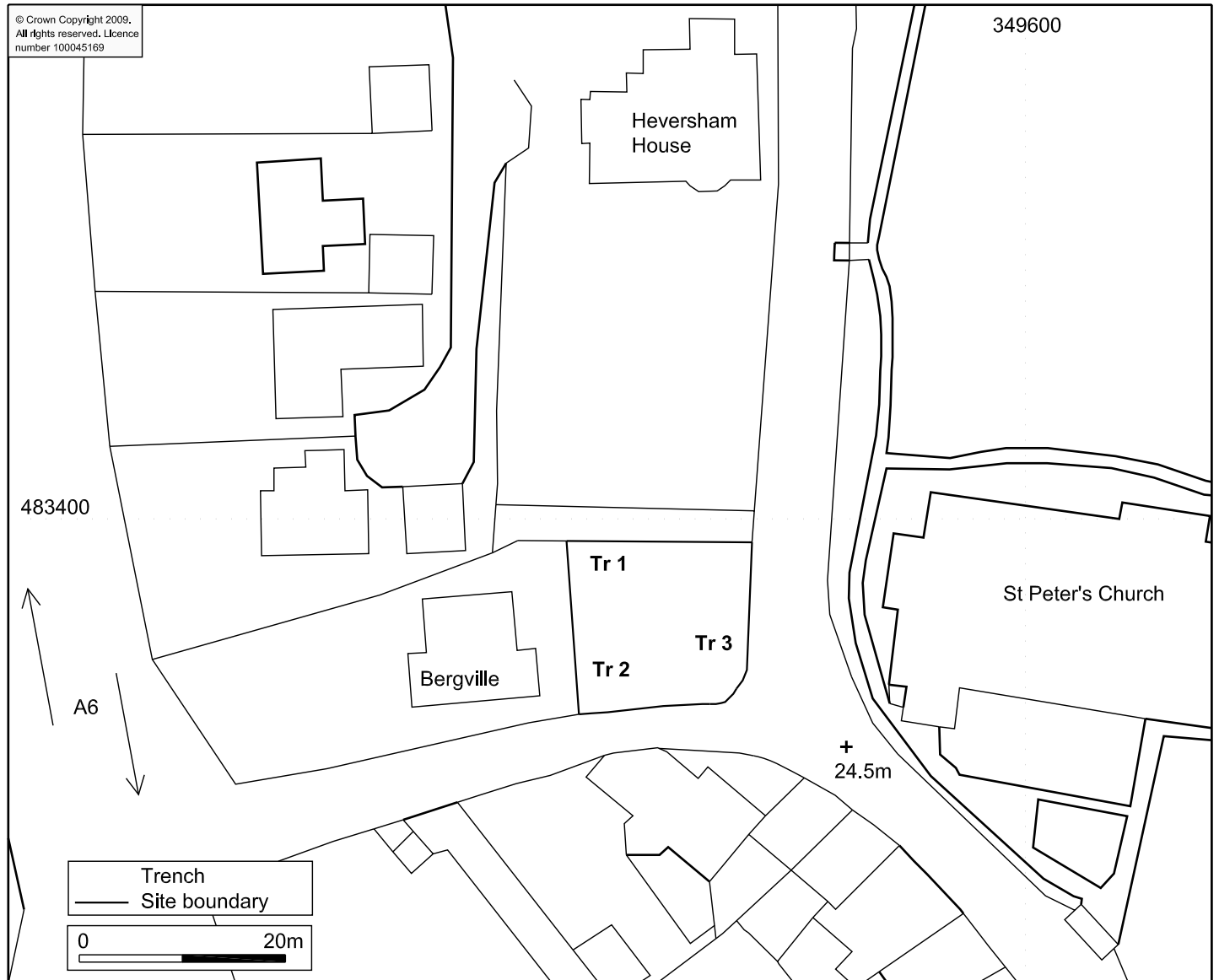
Reason (5) To afford reasonable opportunity for an examination to be made to determine the existence of remains of archaeological interest within the site and for the preservation, examination or recording of such remains in accordance with Policy C19 of the South Lakeland Local Plan.

1.1.2 A brief for the evaluation of part of the site was then issued by CHES (CHES 2008; *Appendix 1*), in response to which Greenlane Archaeology produced a project design (Greenlane Archaeology 2009; *Appendix 2*). The evaluation is intended to establish, where possible, whether any remains of archaeological significance are present on the site, their nature, degree of survival, extent, significance, and date. As part of the work on site a desk-based assessment was also to be carried out. This was intended to set the site in its historical and topographical context, and establish the location, extent, survival, and significance of any known archaeological remains on the site prior to the evaluation.

## 1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 The site is on the west side of the main road through the village, directly opposite the parish church of St Peter's, and lies at approximately 24m above sea level. Heversham is located at the top of the Kent estuary in the north-east corner of Morecombe Bay, in south Cumbria, one mile north of Milnthorpe and approximately nine miles south-west of Kendal on the A6 (Figure 1).

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area comprises Dinantian Carboniferous limestone which outcrops in places but is covered by glacial tills (Moseley 1978, plate 1) in the vicinity of the site. The landscape is characterised by gently undulating pasture, conspicuous limestone hills and outcrops (Countryside Commission 1998, 64).



## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 A desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with IFA guidelines (IFA 2001a). This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site, information from the Cumbria HER, and published secondary sources. A number of sources of information were used during the desk-based assessment:

- **Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record (HER):** 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. All of the known sites of archaeological interest within 250m of the centre of the proposed development area were examined; each identified site comes with a grid reference, description and source and any additional information referenced was also examined as necessary. In addition, unpublished reports of archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the site were examined;
- **Cumbria County Record Office, Kendal (CRO(K)):** this was visited in order to examine early maps and plans of the site, and local and regional histories;
- **Greenlane Archaeology Library:** additional secondary sources, used to provide information for the site background, were examined.

### 2.2 Evaluation

2.2.1 The brief (see *Appendix 1*) issued by the CHES requested a minimum of 25 square meters of trenching, in total three trenches were excavated covering an area of 30 square metres.

2.2.2 The evaluation was carried out according to IFA guidelines (IFA 2001b). The topsoil was machine stripped down to the first deposit of archaeological interest or the natural geology, whichever was encountered first, and the subsequent trench sections and deposits were hand cleaned and recorded. The archaeological deposits were then recorded in the following manner:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all deposits were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **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 evaluation trenches, the surrounding landscape, and working shots. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report, and the remainder are presented on the accompanying CD. A written record of all of the photographs was also made on Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Drawings:** drawings produced for each trench included the following:
  - i. a plan showing the location and contents of all of the trenches at a scale of 1:100;
  - ii. a section at a scale of 1:50.

2.2.3 The location of the trenches was recorded relative to the site boundaries that were evident on the site plans and Ordnance Survey maps. A summary context list is presented in *Appendix 3*.



## 2.3 Finds

2.3.1 **Processing:** all of the artefacts were washed, and then air-dried in a heated drying cabinet and packaged appropriately in self-seal bags with white write-on panels.

2.3.2 **Assessment and recording:** the finds were assessed, identified, and catalogued (see *Appendix 4*).

## 2.4 Archive

2.4.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design (see *Appendix 2*), 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 Kendal on completion of the project. Three copies 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. Desk-Based Assessment

#### 3.1 General Background

3.1.1 **Prehistoric to Romano-British:** there is minimal evidence for activity in the immediate proximity of the site during this period. There is a record of Mesolithic flint artefacts having been found in the general vicinity of the site by J Cherry (HER No. 3370), but there is some doubt about the provenance and nature of this discovery as the supposed finder had no knowledge of it when asked in 1998 (Elsworth 1998, 62). Mesolithic material has, however, certainly been discovered at Levens, to the north, during excavations in Levens Park (Cherry and Cherry 2000). In addition, a beaker burial was found at the same site (Turnbull and Walsh 1996), and more recently, late Neolithic and/or Bronze Age burials have been excavated prior to an extension to Dallam School in Milnthorpe (ASUD 2005a; 2005b). A human skull has also been found at a depth of 15ft to the west of the site, on the edge of the marshes, which may be prehistoric in date but there is little known about this discovery (HER No. 13984). There is no known record of Roman activity in the vicinity of Heversham, although Roman coins have been recorded at Hincaster, which, when taken into consideration alongside the place-name evidence, has been taken to suggest that there is a Roman site in that location (Shotter 2004, 30).

3.1.2 **Medieval:** the place-name Heversham is thought to comprise the Old English *Heahfrio*, a personal name (in reduced form), and the Old English *heim* for homestead (Smith 1967, 87). More significantly there is also evidence that Heversham was the site of an early monastery by at least the early 10<sup>th</sup> century (HER No. 4082), at which date the abbot Tildred is recorded as having fled eastward in advance of approaching Norse raiders (Sawyer 1978, 3, citing the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*). There are also remains of an early medieval cross shaft in the church (see illustration in Curwen 1925, 29), and burials of possible early medieval date were discovered in the churchyard during repairs to the lych-gate (CCC and EH c2002, 4; HER No. 2501).

3.1.3 At the time of the Norman Conquest the manor of Heversham was held by Tostig, the Earl of Northumbria (CCC and EH c2002, 4). The manor was later divided and granted to the Lords of Kendal; in 1160 the Milnthorpe moiety whose caput was at Milnthorpe manor or court was passed from William de Lancaster to Alexander de Wyndsore, while the Heversham moiety was granted to St Mary's Abbey in York with its caput at Heversham Hall (*ibid*). Milnthorpe was retained by the Wyndsore family until 1385 during which time it was granted a market charter, in 1280 (*ibid*). Heversham Hall, a short distance to the south-west, still incorporates the remains of a 14<sup>th</sup> century fortified hall or tower (Perriam and Robinson 1998, 347; HER No. 2500). The present parish church of St Peter is thought to be at least 12<sup>th</sup> century, although it has been considerably modified on several occasions and was essentially rebuilt in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Curwen 1925; HER No. 2501). The Blue Bell Hotel, to the immediate west of the site, is thought to have 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century origins (Anon n.d.; Bingham n.d.). It was formerly the vicarage, which was ordained in 1460 by the Archbishop of York; the vicar at this time was to have 'a manse and competent garden to be built and repaired the first time at the cost of the abbot' (Farrer 1924, 151).

3.1.4 **Post-Medieval:** in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century Thomas Bradley held the manor of Heversham, but he sold it to James Bellingham in 1597 (Farrer 1924, 156). The hall was bought by Edward Wilson in 1612, who founded Heversham Grammar School in 1613 (Bingham 2000). The Handleys bought the hall in 1877 and retain it to the present day (*ibid*). Between 1819 and 1822 John MacAdam built the new turnpike

(later to become the A6) through Heversham, replacing the road linking Kendal to the port at Milnthorpe, which had been built in 1759 (*ibid*). In 1846 the London and North-West Railway line was built through the parish, the station for Heversham opened in 1890 (*ibid*).

3.1.5 It is evident from the cartographic sources (see *Section 3.2* below) that the development site was situated in what were the grounds of the former vicarage. This had probably been occupied since at least 1460 (see *Section 3.1.3* above), but was sold in 1843 by the incumbent, Rev RW Evans (Bingham 1984). The new owner, a Miss Mary Woods, renamed it Elm Lawn, and lived there until her death in 1904 (Curwen 1930). The Land Valuation of 1910 (CRO(K) WT/DV/2/39 1910) records that Elm Lawn was at that time owned by Mr Knowles, a solicitor from Skipton, and the tenant is a TR Satterthwaite. At some point after 1910 the house became a temperance hotel before being renamed Heversham Hotel (Bingham 2000). In 1927 a bypass, Prince's Way, one of the first in the country, was built on the west side of the village, immediately to the west of the development area and separating the Heversham Hotel from its gardens (*ibid*). In 1952, after the closure of the Blue Bell Inn a short distance to the north, the licence was transferred to the hotel and it was subsequently renamed the Blue Bell Hotel in 1966 (*ibid*). The development site itself was not built on until some time between 1914 and 1956 when wooden sheds were constructed on its north and east sides (Roland Handley *pers com*). It is probable that at this time, or when the bungalow to the west was built, the site no longer belonged to the hotel. The wooden sheds were subsequently developed into a more substantial joiner's workshop (*ibid*).

## 3.2 Map Regression

3.2.1 **Mount's Map 1826:** this is the earliest map of Heversham village and quite detailed (CRO(K) WS/D/Acc. 950/49 1826; Plate 1). It shows the vicarage and its gardens, Heversham House to the north of the site, and the row of terraced cottages to the south, all of which are still extant. The site itself is shown as part of the plot of ground belonging to the vicarage; unfortunately there is no apportionment giving details of the plot numbers.

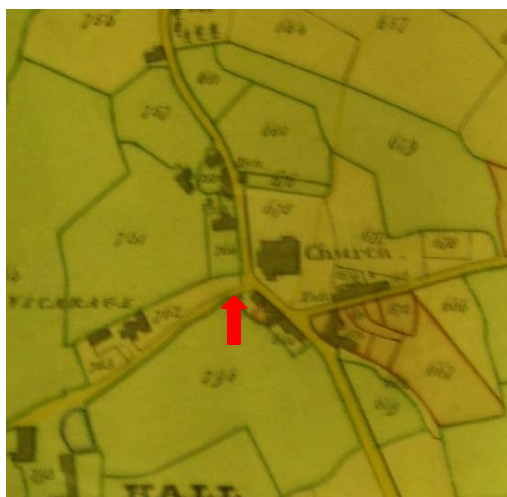


Plate 1: Mount's map of 1826

3.2.2 **Ordnance Survey c1859:** this map (Plate 2) shows that the site was part of the large gardens of the 'Old Vicarage' for St Peter's church, and a figure-of-eight arrangement of paths and associated vegetation is shown crossing the site. Heversham House and gardens are clearly depicted to the north of the site.

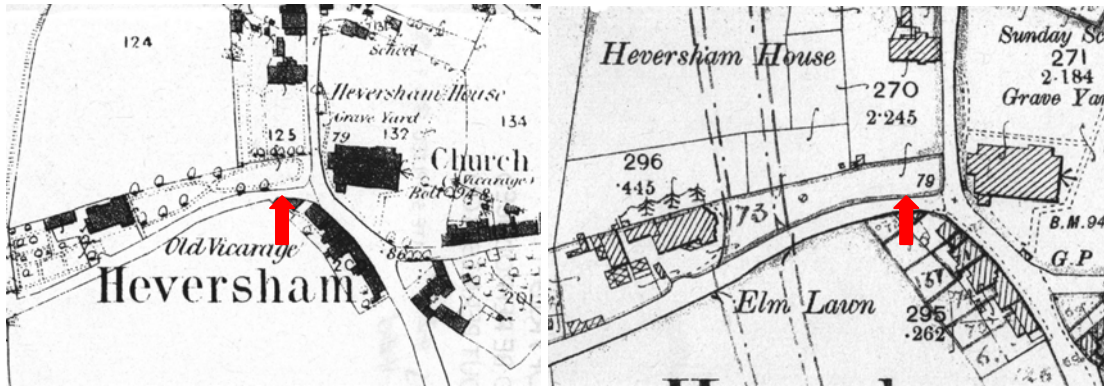


Plate 2: (left) Ordnance Survey c1859

Plate 3: (right) Ordnance Survey 1898

3.2.3 **Ordnance Survey 1898:** it is evident that very little has changed in the 40 years since 1858 (Plate 3). This map was used for the 1910 land evaluation, and this copy also has an outline of the proposed Prince's Way bypass drawn on it; probably after 1910 as this was not built until 1927 (see Section 3.1.5 above).

3.2.4 **Ordnance Survey 1914:** although little has changed, the map

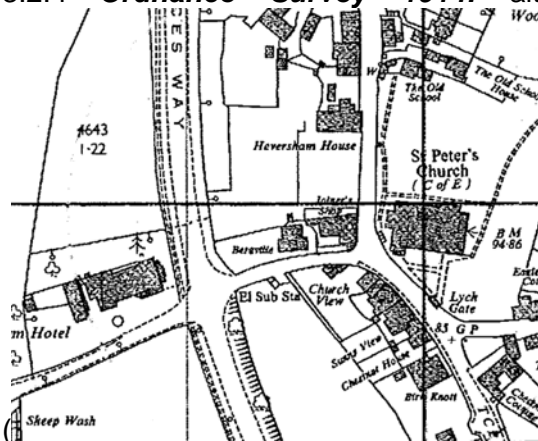


Plate 4) shows that the Old Vicarage is now call Elm Lawn.

3.2.5 **Ordnance Survey 1970:** this map (Plate 5) clearly shows the joiner's workshop that has been built since 1914 now occupying the site. Immediately to the west another property, Bergville, a bungalow, has been built. Further west the Heversham Hotel is still shown, although it had supposedly taken the name Blue Bell Hotel by this date (see Section 3.1.5 above).

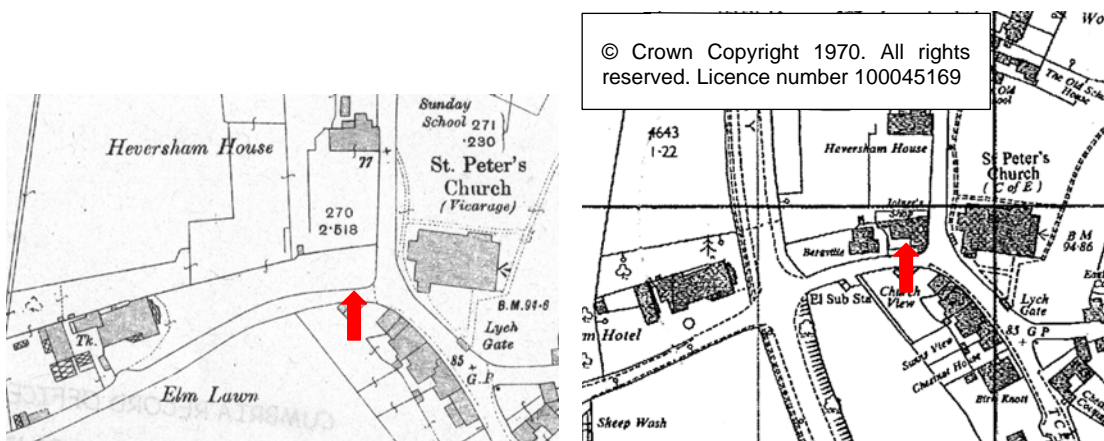


Plate 4: (left) Ordnance Survey 1914

## Plate 5: (right) Ordnance Survey 1970

### 3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 According to the Historic Environment Record (HER) no previous archaeological work has been carried out in close proximity to the site. The closest is perhaps the evaluation carried out at Harmony Hill in 2008 (Greenlane Archaeology 2008), although this only revealed post-medieval remains and slight evidence for medieval activity. However, a recent piece of archaeological fieldwork further to the south-east of the site is noteworthy, as it related to previously unknown and significant below-ground remains. The evaluation at Dallam School in Milnthorpe was undertaken by Archaeological Services, University of Durham and revealed a Late Neolithic cremation (ASUD 2005a). The subsequent excavation in 2005 revealed a further three cremations, two of which were contained in urns and all of which dated from the late Bronze Age. A stone filled ditch and a pit, both of which were undated, were thought to be associated (ASUD 2005b). This site is of regional importance and highlights the possibility for the preservation of prehistoric features in the local area.

### 3.4 Discussion

3.4.1 Except for the bypass in 1927 and the developments in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the desk-based assessment has revealed that the immediate area of the village around the development site has changed very little in the last 200 years. Prior to the sale of the vicarage in 1843 the land has probably always belonged to the church, though there is no record of any buildings being on the site prior to the workshop. The site is considered to be within the medieval core of the village (HER No. 3369) so its location therefore has the potential for medieval features. Earlier remains, particularly those of prehistoric and Roman date, have not been found in close proximity to the site, although the presence of Neolithic and Bronze Age burials in nearby Milnthorpe and shows the potential for prehistoric activity in the area.

3.4.2 The most significant element of Heversham's history is the evidence for an early monastery, although this comes from a small number of references in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*. Human remains have been found in the vicinity of the church and further to the west, but these remain undated and there is little additional information available about them. It is the site's proximity to the church that indicates that there is some archaeological potential as this been suggested as a likely location for the site of the earlier monastery (although Heversham Hall, HER No. 2500, has also been considered a likely location).



## 4. Evaluation

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The site area was approximately 275 square metres in size, was roughly square in shape, and sloped gently from east to west. The site was bounded on its north and east sides by a substantial limestone rubble wall capped with sandstone flag copings (Plate 6). This wall curved around the south-east corner of the site into which an ornate arched pedestrian door with a moulded sandstone surround had been constructed. Just south of the doorway the wall was broken by the main site entrance, south of which a low rubble wall continued southwards. The western limit of the site was formed by a modern timber panelled fence with concrete posts (Plate 7).



Plate 6: (left) North-east part of site from the south



Plate 7: (right) West end of site from the east

### 4.2 Trench 1

4.2.1 This trench was 9m long, orientated east/west, and was on average 1.5m wide (see Figures 1 and 2). A 0.05m thick deposit of yellow gravelly-clay (**100**) overlay a deposit of greyish dark-brown sandy clay garden soil (**101**) that was up to 0.70m thick (Plate 8). The garden soil came straight down onto undulating limestone bedrock (Plate 9) that was overlain by thin deposits of yellow clay; this had possibly been truncated by gardening activities. No archaeological features were recorded, although finds from the garden soil included ceramic building material, sawn mammal bone, and pottery dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards – the majority of which was 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Plate 8: (left) Detail of Trench 1 section (west end) from the north



Plate 9: (right) Trench 1 from the east

## 4.3 Trench 2

4.3.1 This trench was 6m long, orientated east/west, and was on average 1.25m wide; it contained no archaeological features. A shallow layer of grey sandy-gravel overburden (**200**) overlay a similarly shallow deposit of yellow sandy gravel (**201**), this overlay the greyish dark-brown sandy clay garden soil (**202**). The garden soil was typically 0.30m thick and once again sat directly on undulating limestone bedrock that appeared to fracture horizontally into slabs (Plate 10). A small quantity of pottery, glass, and a clay pipe stem were recovered from the garden soil, these finds were predominantly 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Plate 10: (left) Trench 2 from the north

Plate 11: (right) Trench 3 from the south

## 4.4 Trench 3

4.4.1 This trench was 5m long, orientated north/south, and was on average 1.25m wide. It contained a deposit of greyish dark-brown slightly silty, sandy-clay garden soil (**300**) that was 0.50m thick, which was laid directly onto undulating limestone bedrock whose hollows were filled by thin deposits of yellow clay (Plate 11). No archaeological features were encountered. Two sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery were recovered from the garden soil along with fragment of earthenware field drain of a similar date.

## 4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 Three separate deposits were recorded during the evaluation; a layer of gravelly overburden that represented the demolition of the joiner's workshop and the concrete slab upon which it sat, a yellow gravelly clay that had been laid to level the ground prior to the joiner's workshop, and an underlying deposit of garden soil that was 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century in origin. Limestone bedrock was present below these deposits; this was typically 0.50m below the ground surface level.

## **5. Conclusion**

### **5.1 Results and Discussion**

5.1.1 The results of the field evaluation revealed no archaeological features. The map regression revealed that the site used to be the east end of a long plot belonging to the Blue Bell Hotel, previously the vicarage. It seems likely that soil was imported to improve the gardens of the vicarage in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century and gardening or horticultural activity has subsequently truncated any subsoil that may have previously existed.



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## **Appendix 1: Project Brief**

## **Appendix 2: Project Design**

### Appendix 3: Summary Context List

Context	Type	Trench	Description	Interpretation
100	Layer	1	Yellowish-brown firm fine sandy-clay, occasional sub-rounded stones pebbles and cobbles	Levelling/make-up layer
101	Layer	1	Blackish brown slightly silty sandy clay, occasional sub-rounded pebbles and limestone cobbles	Garden soil
200	Layer	2	Light yellowish-brown sandy limestone gravel	Levelling layer
201	Layer	2	Yellowish-brown firm fine sandy-clay, occasional small to sub-rounded cobbles	Levelling/make-up layer
202	Layer	2	Blackish brown slightly silty sandy-clay, occasional sub-rounded gravels and medium to large slab fragments of limestone bedrock	Garden soil
300	Layer	3	Blackish brown slightly silty sandy clay, occasional sub-rounded pebbles and medium to large slab fragments of limestone bedrock	Garden soil
-	Layer	All	Limestone bedrock	Natural geology

## Appendix 4: Summary Finds List

Context	Find type	Quantity	Description	Date range
101	Pottery	1	Brown-glazed red earthenware with white slip stripe	Late 17 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	1	Mottledware hollowware fragment	Late 17 <sup>th</sup> to early 18 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	2	Red earthenware flower pot fragments	18 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	1	White salt-glazed stoneware cup (?) fragment	18 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	2	Creamware press-moulded plate rim fragments: feather edge and dotted edge	Mid - late 18 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	3	Pearlware plate base, hollowware fragment, and blue shell edge plate rim	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> – early 19 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	1	White earthenware 'Willow' transfer-printed hollowware body fragment	19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Pottery	2	Refitting green transfer-printed jug (?) fragments	19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Ceramic building material	1	Red brick fragment	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> – early 19 <sup>th</sup> century
101	Animal bone	13	Large and medium mammal, large bone cut and marrow removed	Not closely dateable
202	Pottery	1	Black-glazed red earthenware fragment	Late 17 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
202	Pottery	1	Red earthenware flower pot fragment	18 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> century
202	Glass	1	Green bottle fragment	19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century?
202	Clay tobacco pipe	1	Plain stem fragment with narrow bore	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> – early 19 <sup>th</sup> century
300	Pottery	1	Pearlware 'Willow' transfer-printed hollowware rim fragment	Early 19 <sup>th</sup> century
300	Pottery	1	White earthenware with factory-produced slip decoration	19 <sup>th</sup> – early 20 <sup>th</sup> century
300	Ceramic building material	2	Red earthenware field drain fragments	19 <sup>th</sup> – to early 20 <sup>th</sup> century?