



Archaeological Watching Brief at
Kilnhurst Ings, Swinton,
South Yorkshire
Watching Brief Report

ArcHeritage February 2016

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT KILNHURST INGS, SWINTON, SOUTH YORKSHIRE

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CONTENTS

Non-technical summary	ii
1 Introduction.....	1
2 Location, geology & topography.....	1
3 Archaeological background.....	1
4 Aims and objectives.....	1
5 Results.....	2
5.1 Scoops.....	2
5.2 Connector ditch.....	2
6 Discussion & conclusions	3
7 Acknowledgements	3
8 Bibliography.....	3
Figures	4
Plates	5
Appendix 1: Index to archive	10
Appendix 2: Context list	11
Appendix 3: Finds assessment	12

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Plan of the works monitored

PLATES

Plate 1: Scoop 1, facing north. Scale 1m.	5
Plate 2: Scoop 2, facing south. Scale 1.	5
Plate 3: Detail of discoloured clay in Scoop 2. Scale 1m.	6
Plate 4: General view of Scoop 3, looking north-west. Scale 1m.....	6
Plate 5: Linear [302] in Scoop 3. Facing south, scale 1m.....	7
Plate 6: General view of Scoop 4, facing north-east. Scale 1m.....	7
Plate 7: Working shot of the initial excavation of the connector ditch.	8
Plate 8: South-facing section of the connector ditch, with the deposit of industrial waste (502).....	8
Plate 9: North-western shallower end of the connector ditch, looking north. Scale 1m.....	9
Plate 10: Woodward’s Chemist bottle from (102). Scale 10cm.	13
Plate 11: Owbridge’s Lung Tonic bottle from (102). Scale 10cm.....	13
Plate 12: Glass bottle from (102). Scale 10cm.....	14
Plate 13: Pottery from (102). Scale 10cm.....	14

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief at Kilnhurst Ings, Swinton, South Yorkshire. The work was undertaken on behalf of the Sheffield Wildlife Trust during habitat creation works, and was requested by the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS).

The work required monitoring the excavation of one connector ditch and four scoops, associated with habitat improvement at the site. Patches of industrial waste such as clinker and slag were observed throughout the topsoil across the site, possibly previous attempts at drying out the wet landscape. Ceramic and glass items within these deposits suggest a date of the late 19th to early 20th century. These deposits may be associated with a nearby forge and pottery works, both of which would have produced large quantities of such clinker and slag as waste by-products.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief at Kilnhurst Ings, Swinton, South Yorkshire. The work was undertaken on behalf of the Sheffield Wildlife Trust during habitat creation works and was requested by the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS).

The works involved creating four simple shallow 'scoops', and a connector ditch. These works were continually monitored and all work was completed with adherence to ClfA standards (2014a, 2014b).

2 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The development area at Kilnhurst Ings (SK 46573 97613, Figure 1) is located on Hooton Common, to the south-east of Swinton, South Yorkshire. The site is bounded by the B6090 Hooton Road to the south, the River Don to the east and the Sheffield and South Yorkshire Navigation Canal to the west. To the north of the site lies Hooton Common and Denaby Common, which give way onto the modern industrial estate of Swinton Bridge.

The underlying superficial deposits are alluvium, which in turn overlies mudstone, siltstone and sandstone of the Pennine Middle Coal Measures Formation (BGS 2016).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Little archaeological remains are known to exist within the vicinity of the site. Prehistoric activity in the area is attested to by the findspot of a Late Bronze Age hoard located approximately 200m to the west of the site (South Yorkshire HER no. 00830/01). The hoard includes a Palstave, a socketed hammer, a socketed gauge, and two fragmentary spearheads.

No further archaeological evidence is known until the post-medieval period. Approximately 50m to the south-east of the site is the location of Kilnhurst Forge, (South Yorkshire HER no. 03881/01). The forge no longer exists, but the remains of the sluice and weir are still extant in the river. The site Kilnhurst Bridge Pottery Works exists approximately 150m to the south-west of the site (South Yorkshire HER no. 03617/01), established around 1784. By 1854 the property included a biscuit kiln, gloss kiln, greenhouse, hot house, black kiln, white throwing house and several warehouses, although the site was closed shortly after 1863.

Historic mapping from the 19th century onwards shows that the site has remained undeveloped, open land since the mid-19th century.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the archaeological watching brief are detailed below:

- to determine the presence or absence, character, extent, depth and complexity of archaeological remains within the site;
- to interpret the archaeology of the site within its local, regional, and national, archaeological context.

5 RESULTS

The works (Figure 2) involved creating four simple shallow ‘scoops’, each between 30-40m in length and 10-20m in width, not exceeding a depth of 0.40m. A connector ditch was also created between the existing channels on the site, connecting with the western existing channel, running east for approximately 70m, turning north for 190m, and finally turning west for 40m, to connect with Scoop 1. All work was completed with adherence to the ClfA’s guidance and standards (ClfA 2014a, 2014b).

5.1 Scoops

5.1.1 Scoop 1

Scoop 1 (Plate 1) was a north-to south aligned oblong measuring approximately 40m by 12m and reaching a maximum depth of 0.20m. The dark brown silty-clay topsoil (101) immediately overlay orange and mottled grey clay subsoil (103). At the northern end of the scoop, a spread of clinker (102) at the interface between the topsoil and subsoil contained glass bottles and pottery fragments. A sample of these artefacts was collected (Appendix 3, Plates 10-13), and all date to the late 19th to early 20th centuries.

5.1.2 Scoop 2

Scoop 2 (Plates 2 and 3) was located to the north of Scoop 1 and measured approximately 38m by 14m, reaching a maximum overall depth of 0.25m. The dark brown silty clay topsoil directly overlay pale grey-orange silty clay subsoil (202), which turned gradually paler towards the northern end of the scoop.

At the northern end of the scoop, a sub-rounded patch of reddish-orange clay sand (Plate 3), was present. This was initially thought to be a heat-affected area, although on closer inspection and following investigation, it seems more likely to be a variation in the natural geology (202).

5.1.3 Scoop 3

Scoop 3 (Plate 4 and 5) was located to the north-west of Scoop 2 and measured approximately 23m by 13m. The dark brown silty clay topsoil (301) measured between 0.05-0.15m in thickness and directly overlay brown-yellow sandy clay subsoil (304). A roughly north to south aligned irregular linear cut [302] was visible at the eastern side of the scoop (Plate 5). This was filled with stone rubble and clinker (303), and measured approximately 0.4m in width, visible for 3m in length before continuing beyond the southern end of the scoop.

5.1.4 Scoop 4

Scoop 4 (Plate 6) was located to the west of Scoop 1 and measured approximately 33m by 13m, with an overall depth of approximately 0.2 to 0.3m. The dark brown silty clay topsoil (401) directly overlay mid grey-brown clay silt subsoil (402). The topsoil deposit contained isolated patches of clinker with occasional 19th- to 20th-century pottery and brick fragments.

5.2 Connector ditch

The deposit sequence within the ditch (Plates 7 to 9) was relatively uniform, with mid-brown clay-silt topsoil (501) measuring between 0.3 and 0.7m thick present throughout the whole ditch. This overlay pale orange-brown slightly silty clay subsoil (503), which continued below the base of the excavations. Along the southern east-west alignment of the connector ditch a

distinct slag deposit (502) was present (Plate 2), measuring between 0.3 and 0.4m in thickness. This deposit was isolated, and was not present in the majority of the ditch, although at the northern end of the ditch a similar patch of slag and clinker was observed.

The connector ditch measured approximately 2m in width by 0.8m in depth, becoming shallower to approximately 0.3m at the north-western end, where it connected with Scoop 1.

6 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

Patches of industrial waste such as clinker and slag were observed Scoops 1, 3 and 4, and in isolated locations throughout the connector ditch. These industrial waste deposits contained fragments of brick, glass and pottery. A representative sample of these artefacts have been assessed (Appendix , Plates 10-13) and suggests a date of late 19th/early 20th century. Given the location of the nearby forge and pottery works, both located within a 200m radius of the site, it is possible that these dumps of material represent waste material from these works, which would have been readily accessible and perhaps used to level or dry out wet areas around the site.

The linear feature [302] in Scoop 3 contained a rubble fill and clinker fill (303). This feature was present for approximately 3m before continuing beyond the southern extent of the scoop. The north-south alignment suggests that it may be a previous attempt at drainage on the site.

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ArcHeritage would like to thank the Sheffield Wildlife Trust for commissioning the work.

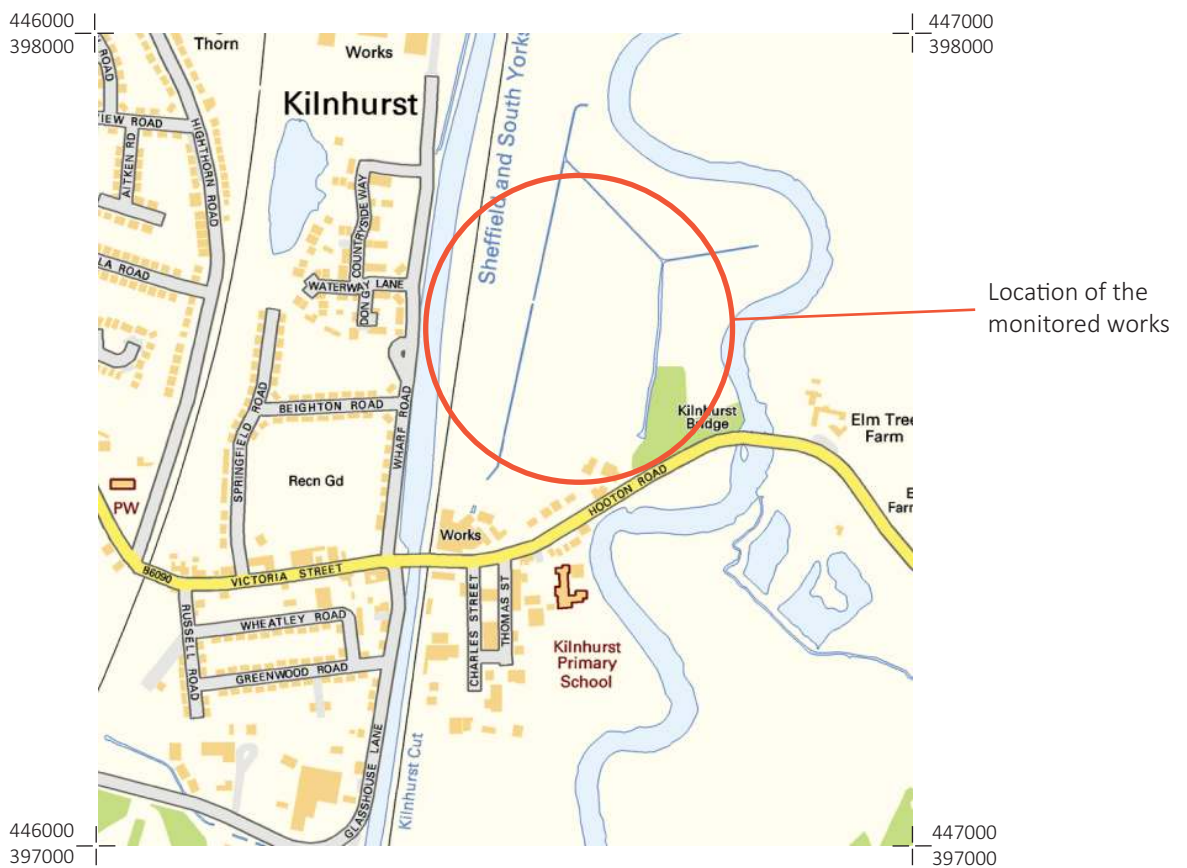
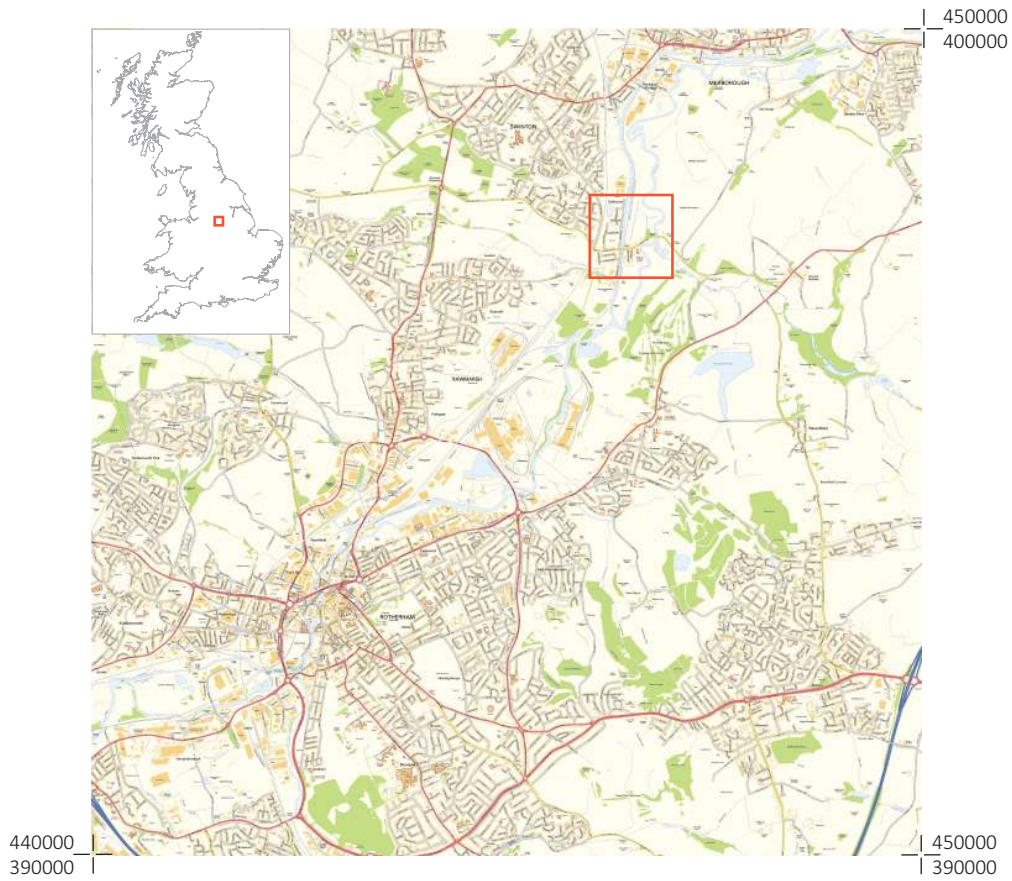
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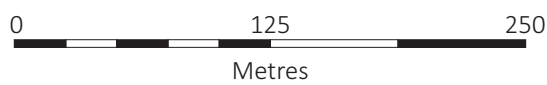
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FIGURES





- Scoops
- Connector ditch

PLATES



Plate 1: Scoop 1, facing north. Scale 1m.



Plate 2: Scoop 2, facing south. Scale 1.



Plate 3: Detail of discoloured clay in Scoop 2. Scale 1m.



Plate 4: General view of Scoop 3, looking north-west. Scale 1m.



Plate 5: Linear [302] in Scoop 3. Facing south, scale 1m.



Plate 6: General view of Scoop 4, facing north-east. Scale 1m.



Plate 7: Working shot of the initial excavation of the connector ditch.



Plate 8: South-facing section of the connector ditch, with the visible deposit of industrial waste (502). Scale 1m.



Plate 9: North-western shallower end of the connector ditch, looking north. Scale 1m.

APPENDIX 1: INDEX TO ARCHIVE

Item	Number of items
Context sheets	6
Photographic register	1
Digital photographs	30
Digital data	1 (GIS)
Written Scheme of Investigation	1
Report	2

Table 1: List of archive contents

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT LIST

Context No.	Location	Description
101	Scoop 1	Topsoil
102	Scoop 1	Clinker spread
103	Scoop 1	Subsoil
201	Scoop 2	Topsoil
202	Scoop 2	Subsoil
301	Scoop 3	Topsoil
302	Scoop 3	Linear cut
303	Scoop 3	Rubble and clinker fill of [302]
304	Scoop 3	Subsoil
401	Scoop 4	Topsoil
402	Scoop 4	Subsoil
501	Trench	Topsoil
502	Trench	Clinker spread
503	Trench	Subsoil

Table 2: List of contexts

APPENDIX 3: FINDS ASSESSMENT

A small selection of finds (Table 3, below, Plates 10-13) was recovered from the site, from the clinker deposit (102) in Scoop 1. The assemblage comprised three glass bottles and a fragmented ceramic bowl. This material is representative of the material within the isolated clinker spreads observed across the site.

At least two of the bottles relate to medicinal vessels, with one of the bottles from Woodward's Chemist, London, and the other containing Lung Tonic from Owbridge's in Hull. The third bottle, a small, tall, thin item, may be a vial and could also have served a medicinal purpose. The style and manufacture of all three bottles suggests a 19th/early 20th century date, although one of the bottles can be dated more precisely; Owbridge's Lung Tonic Factory was based in Hull, and operated from 1895-1975 (Glass Message Board 2015).

The pottery is of a similar date to the glass bottles, comprising a fragment of a decorated bowl or dish decorated with brown transfer-print.

The finds assemblage is small and fairly modern, and of little research value. As such, it is not recommended for retention.

Context	Material	Description	Dimensions l x h x w (mm)	Date
102	Glass	1x complete clear bottle. 'WOODWARD CHEMIST LONDON' embossed on front face. Machine made. Neck for stopper rather than screw top.	155 x 65 x 35	19 th /20 th
		1x blue/green clear bottle. Body complete but broken at base of neck. 'LUNG TONIC' embossed on one main face. 'HULL' embossed on one side face, with 'OWBRIDGE'S' on the opposite side. Machine made.	98 x 45 x 29	Late 19 th /20 th
		1x complete blue/green clear glass bottle/vial. Plain, no decoration or maker's marks. Machine made. Neck for stopper rather than screw top.	20Ø x 85	19 th /20 th
102	Pottery	1x cream fabric with white glaze, plain on the inside, outside face has transfer-printed brown decoration. Small bowl/dish? No maker's mark visible	92Ø x 73	19 th /20 th

Table 3: Finds quantification

Glass Message Board. 2015. <http://www.glassmessages.com/index.php?topic=40872.0> [Accessed 11th February 2016].



Plate 10: Woodward's Chemist bottle from (102). Scale 10cm.



Plate 11: Owbridge's Lung Tonic bottle from (102). Scale 10cm.



Plate 12: Glass bottle from (102). Scale 10cm



Plate 13: Pottery from (102). Scale 10cm.

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