AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF:
ROKEBY PARK, MORTHAM LANE,
BARNARD CASTLE, COUNTY DURHAM

JUNE 2014

PCA

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF: ROKEBY PARK, MORTHAM LANE, BARNARD CASTLE, COUNTY DURHAM

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Task	*Name*	*Signature*	*Date*
Text prepared by:	Aidan Pratt		13 June 2014
Text checked by:	Jennifer Proctor	J Proctor	19 June 2014
Graphics prepared by:	Jennifer Simonson		16 June 2014
Graphics checked by:	Josephine Brown	Josephine Brown	23 June 2014
Project or Post-Excavation Manager sign-off:	Gary Brown	Gary Brown	23 June 2014

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Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
North Regional Office
Unit N19a Tursdale Business Park
Durham
DH6 5PG

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Rokeby Park, Mortham Lane, Barnard Castle, County Durham

National Grid Reference: NZ 0840 1442

Site Code: ROK 14

Commissioning Client:

Northern Powergrid
Manor House
Station Road
Penshaw
Houghton-le-Spring
Tyne and Wear
DH4 7LA

Tel: 0845 070 7172

Contractor:

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Northern Office
Unit N19a Tursdale Business Park
Durham
DH6 5PG

Tel: 0191 377 1111

CONTENTS

1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1.1 An archaeological monitoring and recording exercise was conducted in association with an electricity supply overhead line (OHL) refurbishment in the grounds of Rokeby Park, near Barnard Castle, County Durham. The site lies at central National Grid Reference NZ 0840 1442, towards the northern side of a sloping field located to the north-west of Dairy Bridge, overlooking Mortham Lane. This field is located to the north of Rokeby Hall, and is bounded by Mortham Lane to the north and the River Greta to the east. The north-eastern part of this field is a Scheduled Ancient Monument comprising the earthworks and buried remains of the medieval St. Michael's Church and its associated graveyard.

1.2 The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Northern Powergrid and was undertaken in May 2014 by Pre-Construct Archaeology. The work was undertaken on the advice of English Heritage to the Department of Culture Media and Sport as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent.

1.3 The archaeological work involved monitoring all invasive groundworks for the OHL refurbishment. Groundworks involved mechanical excavation of an open trench to house the OHL pole. The trench lay within the scheduled area to the west of the upstanding earthwork remains of the church. The trench measured *c.* 2m in length, *c.* 1m in width and was excavated to a depth of *c.* 1.5m.

1.4 The investigation recorded geological deposits as well as undated archaeological remains which may be of medieval origin. These comprised two layers, the lower possibly representing an occupation deposit and the upper the demolition of the former medieval church of St. Michael.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 General Background

2.1.1 A programme of archaeological work was undertaken in association with an electricity supply overhead line (OHL) refurbishment in the grounds of Rokeby Park, near Barnard Castle, County Durham (Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Northern Powergrid and undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) on May 29th 2014.

2.1.2 The area of investigation lies within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of St. Michael's Church (National Monument No. 32058) which takes in the earthwork and buried remains of the medieval church and its associated graveyard. The archaeological work associated with the OHL refurbishment was required on the advice of English Heritage to the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS). Durham County Council Archaeology Section (DCCAS) also have an interest in the work because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site and their overall curatorial role with regard to the historic environment of County Durham.

2.1.3 The archaeological work was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation, (WSI) prepared by PCA (PCA 2014; included as Appendix 2 to this report) and approved by English Heritage. The work involved observation and recording (a 'watching brief') during invasive groundworks for the refurbishment, which involved excavation of a trench to house the new electricity pole. The cable trench was located in the north-western part of the scheduled area and to the west of the upstanding earthworks (Figure 2).

2.1.4 The completed Site Archive, comprising written, drawn and photographic records, will be deposited at the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham, within six months of the completion of fieldwork at the site, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with DCCAS. The site code is ROK 14. The Online 'Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations' (OASIS) reference number for the project is: preconst1-182101.

2.2 Site Location and Description

2.2.1 Rokeby Park lies *c*. 3km south-east of Barnard Castle between the River Tees to the north and the River Greta to the east. The A66(T) road, which in this area follows the line of a Roman road, runs east to west *c*. 500m to the south of Rokeby Park.

2.2.2 The area of investigation lies within a field in the grounds of Rokeby Park which is bounded by Mortham Lane and Teesview Cottage to the north, the River Greta to the east, an unnamed B road leading to Barnard Castle to the west and Rokeby Park to the south.

2.2.3 The site of the new electricity OHL pole lies at central National Grid Reference NZ 0840 1442 (Figure 1). The trench was situated within the north-western part of the scheduled area, *c*. 5m to the west of the upstanding earthwork remains of the chapel (Figure 2).

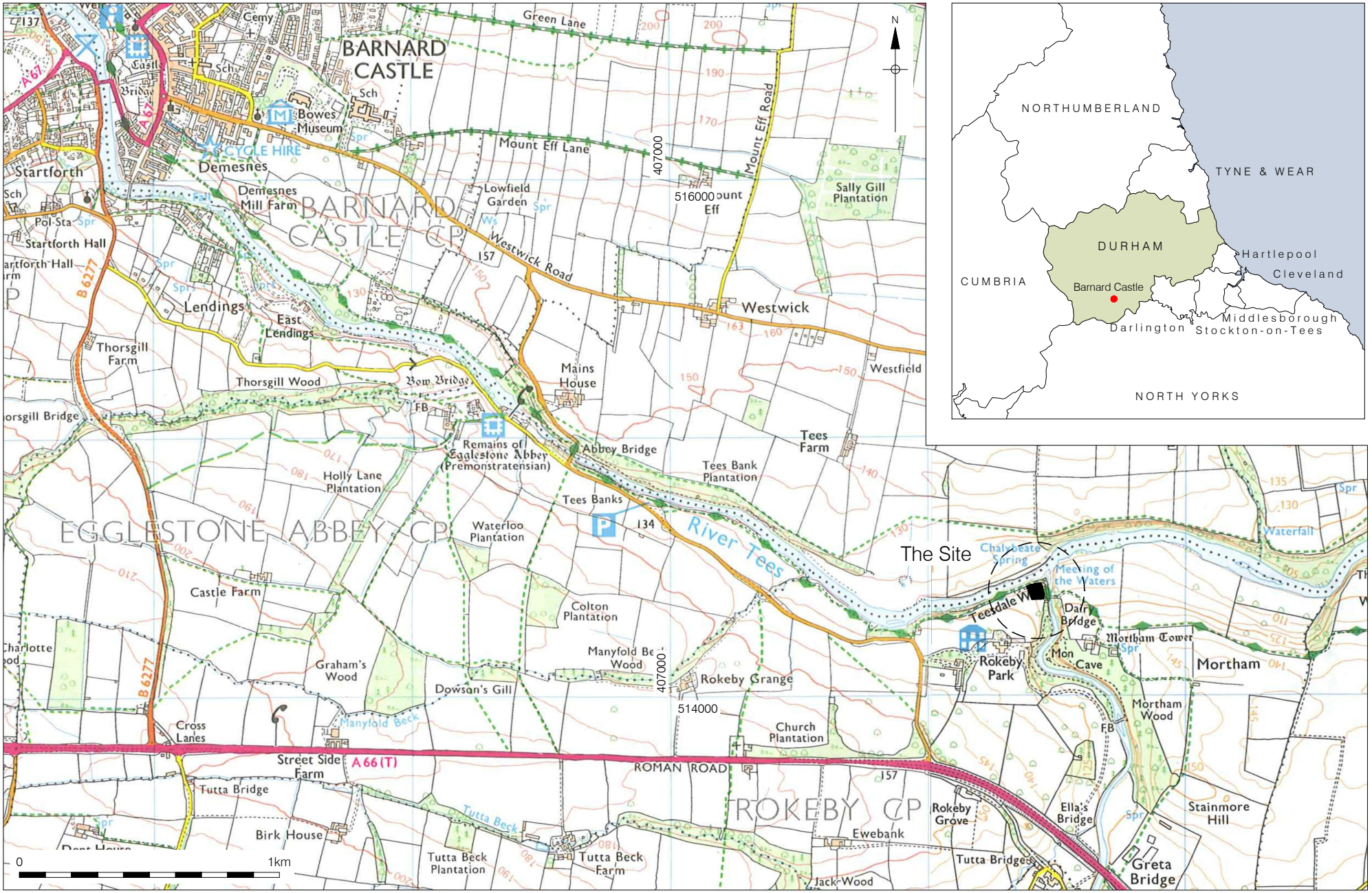

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Figure 1
Site Location
1:2,000,000 & 1:20,000 at A4

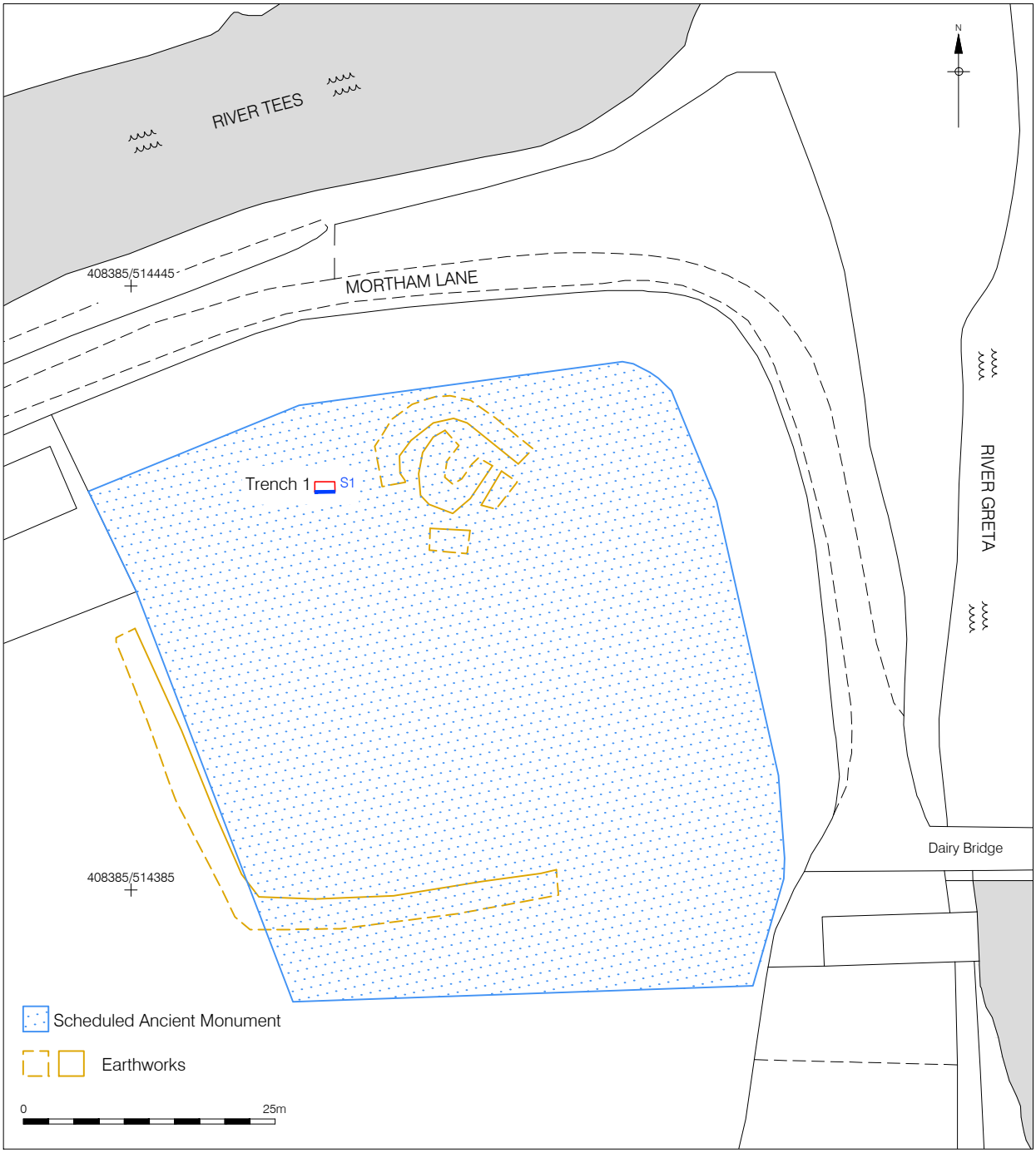

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Figure 2
Trench Location
1:625 at A4

2.3 Geology and Topography

2.3.1 The solid geology of the area is of the Great Limestone Member formed in the Carboniferous Period. The superficial geology of the site is river terrace deposits (undifferentiated) – gravel, sand and silt, formed in the Quaternary Period, due to its proximity to both the rivers Tees and Greta (information from the *British Geological Survey* website).

2.3.2 The site lies on the southern banks of the River Tees, which is situated *c*. 30m to the north of the trench, close to its confluence with the River Greta, which lies *c*. 60m to the east of the trench. The site lies on relatively level riverside land at an elevation of *c.* 120m OD.

2.4 Planning Background

2.4.1 The site of the OHL fixture installation was primarily of archaeological interest because of its location within the scheduled area of the medieval St. Michael's Church and its associated graveyard (Figure 2).

2.4.2 Because the site has Scheduled Monument status, and thus has statutory protection under *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*, any intrusive groundworks for the installation required Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) on the advice of English Heritage to DCMS. In accordance with the 1979 Act, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport consulted with English Heritage before deciding whether or not to grant SMC after an application for the installation was submitted by Northern Powergrid on 11 March 2014. English Heritage considered '…*the effect of the proposed works upon the monument to be works that are due to natural erosion and damage to the existing post*. *This need to be replaced to eliminate safety concerns. The proposed works are unavoidable, sensible and warranted, and will not significantly compromise the integrity of the monument, nor prejudice its longer term preservation'*.

2.4.3 Accordingly, SMC was granted by the Secretary of State, advised by English Heritage, subject to a series of conditions set out in a letter dated 26 March 2014 to Northern Powergrid. Condition c) of SMC states *'No ground works/building works shall take place until the applicant has confirmed in writing the commissioning of a programme of archaeological work before and/or during the development in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State advised by English Heritage'*. Condition f) of SMC requires the herein report on the archaeological recording to be submitted to DCCAS for inclusion in the County Durham HER and a copy to be sent to English Heritage on completion of the fieldwork.

2.4.4 As part of a Scheduled Monument, any archaeological remains affected by the OHL fixture installation would fall within the category of 'designated heritage assets' as defined within current guidance on the historic environment set out within *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

2.4.5 Heritage assets - those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest - remain a key concept of the NPPF, retained from the previous national planning policy *Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment'* (PPS5) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010a). Despite the deletion of PPS5, the *PPS5 Historic Environment Planning*

Practice Guide (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010b) remains a valid and UK Government endorsed document.

2.4.6 No Specification for the archaeological work was produced by English Heritage or DCCAS; instead the aforementioned written scheme of investigation (WSI), as required by SMC, was compiled by PCA and approved by English Heritage prior to work commencing.

2.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The information used for the following summary has been taken from the following websites: 'MAGIC' (for information on scheduled monuments, including 'National Monument Nos.'); 'Keys to the Past' (the online County Durham Historic Environment Record); the English Heritage website (for 'The National Heritage List for England'), 'PastScape' (information drawn from the English Heritage Archive database, for 'Monument Nos.'), with other sources used as appropriate. The research and writing of those responsible is gratefully acknowledged.

2.5.1 Some prehistoric activity is known in the wider area: a penannular gold bracelet of Bronze Age date was found at Greta Bridge, *c.* 1 km to the south of the site and a cropmark identified from aerial photography *c.* 0.9 km to the south-west of the site may represent a rectangular enclosure of Iron Age or Roman date.

2.5.2 A group of Roman altar stones and a milestone (Monument No. 19937) form a garden feature at Rokeby Hall, *c.* 250m south-west of the site; it is thought probable that all the stones were moved here from Greta Bridge and Birdoswald. In or possibly before the early 18th century, a possible Roman shrine was investigated in the vicinity of the confluence of the Greta with the Tees.

2.5.3 The Roman fort at Greta Bridge was founded *c.* 1 km to the south of the site on the terrace overlooking the River Greta to the south-east. The fort lies on the southern side of the Roman road which leads west from Dere Street and across the Pennines; the route of the A66 road, which lies *c*. 500m to the south of Rokeby Park, largely follows the course of the Roman road. The long axis of the fort is aligned upon the terrace to enhance the defensive qualities of the east rampart which survives to a maximum height of 3m. The southern defences are the best preserved and comprise the remains of a double-ditch system, an earthen rampart, and a central causeway and gateway. Find evidence suggests the fort was occupied from the early 2nd to the late 4th century AD.

2.5.4 Excavation and geophysical survey have identified areas of *vicus* attached to the fort at Greta Bridge. One lies to the north of the fort, on the same side of the River Greta, the other appears to have been a ribbon development along the Roman road to the east of the river. The *vicus* appears to have been extant from *c.* AD 150 to the early 4th century AD.

2.5.5 The earliest documentary evidence for the parish church of St. Michael at Rokeby dates from 1205 (HER 1929) however burials dating from the 12th century indicate a slightly earlier origin. The earthwork remains of the church survive to a height of *c.* 0.50m. The form of the church is unusual; a 6m square nave has a 3m by 2m cell, believed to be a porch, attached to the south and a cell to the east, probably the chancel, measuring 5m by 3m. The graveyard within the scheduled area comprises a number of marked graves, as well as the socket stone for a cross. The gravestones include a number of undated examples, a group of 17th and 18th century gravestones now recumbent, a small tomb slab and a 12th-century coped tomb

slab. The extent of the graveyard is delineated by a later park wall on the east and north sides, and on the west by a stone wall garden boundary which is continued as a low bank 24m south beyond the end of the garden wall. The bank then turns east towards Dairy Bridge.

2.5.6 Rokeby Hall was mentioned in the Domesday Book and the site of the present house overlies the site of a medieval hall. The earliest mention of the associated church occurs in 1204 when the advowson of 'Rokeby Church' was given to Brian Fitz Alan of Bedale by the Lord of Rokeby Manor, Robert de Rokeby. In 1342 the church was appropriated by nearby Egglestone Abbey and ordained. In 1539–40 Egglestone Abbey was dissolved and the church was returned to the possession of the incumbent of Rokeby Manor. The lead roof of the church was removed in 1674 and replaced with slate. When Sir Thomas Robinson built a new church dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin to the west of Rokeby Park in the mid-18th century, the old church became disused. In 1769 the church and its churchyard was sold to the Morritt family of Rokeby in exchange for five acres of land opposite the new church. St. Mary's Church, immediately west of the River Greta, was completed and consecrated in 1778.

2.5.7 The now ruined Egglestone Abbey was founded between 1195 and 1198 for a small number of Premonstratensian canons. It lies *c.* 2 km to the WNW of the site, overlooking the Tees. The abbey was dissolved in 1540 and in 1548 it was granted to Robert Strelley who began its conversion into a secular residence. After a series of secular owners, it was sold in 1770 to the Morritt family of Rokeby in whose possession remained until it was placed in the care of the state in 1925.

2.5.8 Approximately 0.3 km to the east of the site of the OHL fixture installation, across the River Greta, is the site of the deserted medieval village and chapel of Mortham, in amongst which stand the remains of Mortham Tower. The settlement was mentioned in the Domesday Book but was destroyed by the Scots in 1346 and never rebuilt. The remains were demolished by Sir Thomas Robinson in the late 18th century. Earthworks, including traces of ridge and furrow, are visible on aerial photographs. Mortham Tower (a Grade I Listed Building) is a fortified manor house, parts of which date from the 14th century. The tower was added in the later 15th century; the south west range, courtyard wall and gateway were built in the early 16th century and the solar was remodelled in the later 16th century. The main building was converted into a barn *c.* 1820. Restoration work was carried out in 1939. The house comprises a number of ranges set around a courtyard with the south side closed by a wall with a central gateway.

2.5.9 The site of the OHL trench is located within the landscaped park associated with Rokeby Hall (Plate 1), a country house constructed between 1725–1730. The land was emparked in 1725 by Sir Thomas Robinson and planted 1730-37. Buildings in the park include an ice house and stables. A late 18th- or early 19th-century lodge is present on the west boundary. The main entrance to the park is by Greta Bridge, this has a gate lodge. There is a lawn and ha ha south of the Hall. A walled kitchen garden is also present.

3. PROJECT AIMS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.1 Project Aims

3.1.1 The project aimed to fulfil the specific requirements of SMC by undertaking an appropriately specified scheme of archaeological investigation in association with the OHL fixture installation.

3.2 Research Objectives

3.2.1 The archaeological work aimed to identify, investigate and record any archaeological remains through a programme of observation and recording - watching brief - conducted in association with all intrusive groundworks associated with the installation of the new pole to carry the OHL.

3.2.2 In view of the known medieval potential of the site, the investigation was carried out with reference to Shared Visions: the North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment (NERRF) (Petts and Gerrard 2006), specifically the following research priorities for the Later Medieval (MD) period, as set out in the NERRF Research Agenda:

- MDv – Churches and religion;
- MDvi – Death and burial;
- MDvii - Medieval ceramics and other artefacts.

3.2.3 An appropriate level of reporting on the work was required, including, if necessary, full analysis and publication of any notable archaeological findings upon completion of the project. Thus the results of the work will constitute the preservation by record of any archaeological remains thus encountered and subsequently removed during the course of works. The full scheme of archaeological work required is described in the following section.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

4.1 Fieldwork

4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken 29 May 2014. The work was undertaken in compliance with the relevant guidance document of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) (IfA, 2008a); PCA is an IfA-Registered Organisation. The PCA WSI (see Appendix 2), approved by English Heritage, should be consulted for full details of the methodologies that were to be employed regarding archaeological recording, sampling, etc.

4.1.2 Groundworks for the OHL refurbishment involved machine excavation of an open trench *c.* 2m in length to house the new electricity pole. The trench ran east-west on the position of the southernmost of the two OHL 'H'-pole's, through a pasture field bound by Mortham Lane to the north and the River Greta to the east with Teesview Cottage to the west (Figure 2, Plate 3).

4.1.3 The trench was excavated to an average depth of 1.4m (1.68m maximum), an average width of 1m and an overall length of 2.02m (Figure 2). Excavation was subject to continuous archaeological monitoring. The trench excavation was undertaken mechanically, using a tracked digger of *c.* 5-tonne size.

4.1.4 Deposits were recorded using the PCA *pro forma* 'Context Recording Sheets'. A photographic record of the work was compiled. The trench was located with hand tapes using the OHL plan provided by Northern Powergrid.

4.2 Post-excavation

4.2.1 The stratigraphic data for the project comprises written, drawn and photographic records. A total of four archaeological contexts were defined. Post-excavation work involved checking and collating site records, and phasing the stratigraphic data. A written summary of the archaeological sequence was then compiled, as described in Section 5.

4.2.2 No artefactual or ecofactual material was recovered during the fieldwork. No suitable archaeological deposits were encountered to warrant the recovery of bulk samples for palaeoenvironmental material.

4.2.3 The complete Site Archive will be packaged for long-term curation. In preparing the Site Archive for deposition, all relevant standards and guidelines documents referenced in the Archaeological Archives Forum guidelines document (Brown, 2007) will be adhered to, in particular a well-established United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) document (Walker, UKIC, 1990) and a more recent IfA publication (IfA 2008b). The depositional requirements of the receiving body, in this case the Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham, will be met in full.

5. RESULTS: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

During the watching brief, separate stratigraphic entities were assigned unique and individual 'context' numbers, which are indicated in the following text as, for example [123]. The archaeological sequence has been assigned to broad phases of activity.

5.1 Phase 1: Natural Sub-stratum

5.1.1 Deposit [4], comprising soft, mid greyish brown clayey silt with occasional sub-angular large sandstone fragments (averaging 0.30m x 0.15m x 0.15m) was exposed as the basal deposit along the length of the trench (Figure 3). This deposit was encountered at a depth of *c.* 1.06m below the existing ground level, sloping down to 1.26m at the western extent of the trench. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.48m. The material forms part of the river terrace deposits which represent the superficial geology of the area.

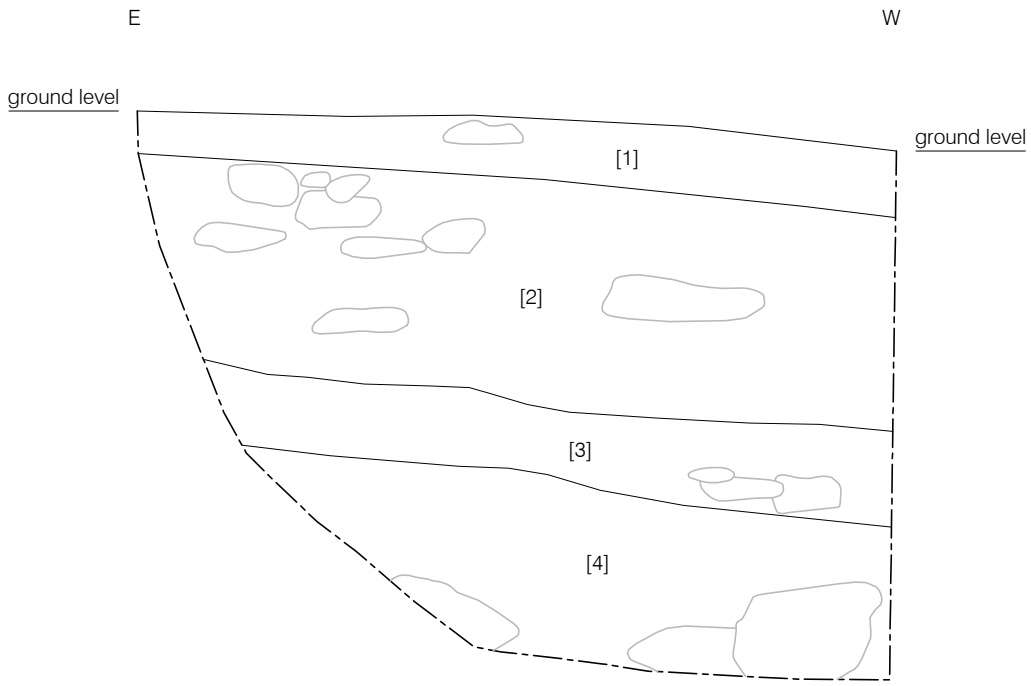
5.2 Phase 2: Undated (Medieval or later)

5.2.1 Phase 2 is represented by two deposits [2] and [3], which extended across the extent of the trench (Figure 3). Deposit [3], which overlay the natural sub-stratum, comprised a firm, mid to dark greyish brown, sandy, clayey silt with very occasional sub-rounded stones (Plate 2). This was encountered at a depth of *c.* 0.8m below the current ground surface, sloping down to 1m at the western extent of the trench, and had as a maximum thickness of 0.26m. This deposit could be a layer of re-deposited natural [4] and may be associated with some stage of the construction or demolition of the former church of St. Michael, possibly being a layer of disturbed ground.

5.2.2 Deposit [3] was overlain by a loosely compacted deposit of mid yellow brown, sandy silt, [2]. This contained a large concentration of sub-angular and angular sandstone blocks (ranging from 0.20m x 0.20m x 0.10m to 0.30m x 0.20m x 0.10m) at the eastern extent of the trench (Plate 2), towards the location of the church of St. Michael. The deposit was encountered at a depth of *c.* 0.30m below the current ground surface dropping to 0.45m at the western extent of the trench, and had a maximum thickness of 0.60m. It is possible that this deposit represents a demolition layer relating to the abandonment of St. Michael's Church.

5.3 Phase 3: Topsoil

5.3.1 The uppermost deposit in the trench was topsoil, [1], which comprised loosely compacted, dark brownish black, sandy silt with occasional sub-rounded and rounded stones. The maximum thickness of the topsoil was 0.22m.



Section 1
Trench 1
North Facing

0 1m

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Figure 3
Section 1
1:20 at A4

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 Geological and archaeological deposits encountered during the watching brief have been assigned to two phases of activity:

- Phase 1, represents the natural geology of the area, a clayey silt deposit recorded within the base of the trench.
- Phase 2 is represented by two layers which may be associated with the former St. Michael's Church. Both are of medieval or later date
- Phase 3 represents the topsoil of the current ground surface.

6.1.2 Remains of possible construction and/or demolition phases of the church were recorded during the watching brief, however no datable artefactual material was recovered to confirm the nature of these deposits.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 The limited results of the archaeological investigations cannot provide any further information about St. Michaels Church. Therefore no further work is required on the information recovered during the watching brief, with the Site Archive, including this report, forming the permanent record of the strata encountered.

7. REFERENCES

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Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*, TSO.

Institute for Archaeologists, 2008a. *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief*, IfA.

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Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2012. *Archaeological Watching Brief in association with Electricity OHL Refurbishment at Rokeby Park, Mortham Lane, Barnard Castle, County Durham*, PCA unpublished.

Petts, D. and Gerrard, C., 2006. *Shared Visions*: *North East Regional Research Framework for the Historical Environment*, English Heritage, Durham County Council and Durham University.

Walker, K., 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage,* Archaeology Section, United Kingdom Institute for Conservation.

Online Sources

British Geological Survey website: http://www.bgs.ac.uk; for geological information.

English Heritage website for the list entry for St. Michael's Church: http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1016875

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

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The curatorial role of Rob Young, Inspector of Ancient Monuments, English Heritage, is acknowledged.

PCA Credits

Fieldwork and Report: Aidan Pratt

Project Manager: Robin Taylor-Wilson and Gary Brown

Post-excavation Manager: Jenny Proctor

CAD: Jennifer Simonson

APPENDIX 1
PLATES

Plate 1. View of parkland with Rokeby Hall to the south.

Plate 2. View of south-facing section of Trench 1 showing deposits [1], [2], and [3] *(scale 0.50m)*

Plate 3. Installation of OHL H-pole in trench

Plate 4. Installation of OHL H-pole with Teesview Cottage in the background

APPENDIX 2
WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief in association with Electricity OHL Refurbishment at Rokeby Park, Mortham Lane, Barnard Castle, County Durham

Prepared on behalf of Northern Powergrid by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited

6 May 2014

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 An appropriately specified programme of archaeological work is required in association with an electricity supply overhead line (OHL) refurbishment in the grounds of Rokeby Park, near Barnard Castle, County Durham. The work – to be undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA) - will involve: archaeological observation and recording – a 'watching brief' – during all invasive groundworks; excavation and recording of any archaeological remains of interest exposed; reporting on the work, including, as appropriate, publication of any significant findings. The work has been commissioned by Northern Powergrid.

1.1.2 The OHL refurbishment work is to take place within a Scheduled Monument, the area occupied by the remains of the medieval St. Michael's Church and its associated graveyard. A single pole is to be replaced within the scheduled area and the installation is to be archaeologically monitored, as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC), on the advice of English Heritage to the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).

1.1.3 No Specification for the work has been prepared but this WSI document set out the scope of work, as required by the SMC. Durham County Council Archaeology Section (DCCAS) also have an interest in the work because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site and their overall curatorial role with regard to the historic environment of County Durham.

1.1.4 In their assessment of the importance of the Scheduled Monument, set out in their monument record, English Heritage describe St. Michael's Church as *'...a well documented example of a medieval church, with a number of medieval grave slabs in their original settings within its associated graveyard'* and go on to say *'The extent of the churchyard is well preserved and deposits within the churchyard are undisturbed and will be well preserved beneath the present ground surface'.*

1.2 Site Location and Description

1.2.1 Rokeby Park, comprising an 18th-century house (the 'Hall') and its landscaped parkland gardens, is located at the confluence of the River Tees and the River Greta (known as 'The Meeting of the Waters') *c.* 4 km to the south-east of Barnard Castle and *c.* 1 km north of the A66 at Greta Bridge.

1.2.2 The scheduled area of St. Michael's Church is situated in the north-eastern corner of the grounds of Rokeby Park; within the scheduled area, the OHL fixture installation is to take place at approximate National Grid Reference NZ 0840 1442, towards the north end of sloping field to the east of Teesview Cottage, overlooking Mortham Lane (postcode DL12 9RZ).

1.2.3 The solid geology of the area is of the Great Limestone Member formed in the Carboniferous Period. The superficial geology of the site is river terrace deposits (undifferentiated) – gravel, sand and silt, formed in the Quaternary Period, due to its proximity to both the rivers Tees and Greta (information from the *British Geological Survey* website).

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The information used for the following summary has been taken from the following websites: 'MAGIC' (for information on scheduled monuments, including 'National Monument Nos.'); 'Keys to the Past' (the online County Durham Historic Environment Record); the English Heritage website (for 'The National Heritage List for England'), 'PastScape' (information drawn from the English Heritage Archive database, for 'Monument Nos.'), with other sources used as appropriate. The research and writing of those responsible is gratefully acknowledged.

1.3.1 Some prehistoric activity is known in the wider area of the site in which the OHL fixture installation is to take place: a penannular gold bracelet of Bronze Age date was found at Greta Bridge, *c.* 1 km to the south of the site; a cropmark identified from aerial photography *c.* 0.9 km to the south-west of the site may represent a rectangular enclosure of Iron Age or Roman date, it lies

1.3.2 A group of Roman altar stones and a milestone (Monument No. 19937) form a garden feature at Rokeby Hall, *c.* 250m south-west of the site; it is thought probable that all the stones were moved here from Greta Bridge and Birdoswald. In or possibly before the early 18th century, a possible Roman shrine was investigated in the vicinity of the confluence of the Greta with the Tees.

1.3.3 The Roman fort at Greta Bridge was founded *c.* 1 km to the south of the site on a river terrace overlooking the Greta. The long axis of the fort is aligned upon the terrace to enhance the defensive qualities of the east rampart which survives to a maximum height of 3m. The south defences are the best preserved and comprise the remains of a double-ditch system, an earthen rampart, and a central causeway and gateway. Find evidence suggests the fort was occupied from the early 2nd to the late 4th century AD.

1.3.4 Excavation and geophysical survey have identified areas of *vicus* attached to the fort at Greta Bridge. One lies to the north of the fort, on the same side of the River Greta, the other appears to have been a ribbon development following the original Roman road on the other side of the river. The *vicus* appears to have been extant from *c.* AD 150 to the early 4th century AD.

1.3.5 It is for the medieval period that the site of the OHL fixture installation has definite archaeological potential. The installation is to take place within the north-east corner of the grounds of Rokeby Park, within the scheduled area occupied by the 'Remains of St. Michael's Church, 50m North West of Dairy Bridge, Rokeby Park' (National Heritage List Entry No. 1016875; National Monument No. 32058).

1.3.6 The scheduled area includes earthwork and buried remains of St. Michael's Church, along with a socket stone for a cross (Monument No. 1259836) and an associated graveyard (Monument No. 1259838). The earthwork remains of the church survive to a height of *c.* 0.50m. The form of the church is unusual; a 6m square nave has a 3m by 2m cell, believed to be a porch, attached to the south and a cell to the east, probably the chancel, measuring 5m by 3m. A number of features at the site are excluded from the scheduling: namely a septic tank and adjacent soakaway for Teesview Cottage, fence line, garden stone wall and poles for services; however, the ground beneath these fixtures/features is included.

1.3.7 The graveyard within the scheduled area comprises a number of marked graves, as well as the socket stone for a cross. The gravestones include a number of undated examples, a group of 17th and 18th century gravestones now recumbent, a small tomb slab and a 12th century coped tomb slab. The small tomb slab is 0.7m long and tapers in width from 0.3m to 0.2m. In section it is a halved octagon and its top panel is decorated with a cross on steps. The 12th century coped tomb slab is 1.65m in length and tapers in width from 0.4m to 0.35m. A cross is depicted on one side panel and on the other is the shears symbol which is interpreted as indicating a female burial. The extent of the graveyard is delineated by a later park wall on the east and north sides, and on the west by a stone wall garden boundary which is continued as a low bank 24m south beyond the end of the garden wall. The bank then turns east towards Dairy Bridge.

1.3.8 The socket stone in the scheduled area measures 0.6m square at its base and is 0.45m high. Just above the base is a concave moulding with a broad, slightly concave chamfer, reducing the dimensions of the stone to 0.4m square at its top. The socket itself measures 0.2m by 0.25m.

1.3.9 Rokeby Hall was mentioned in the Domesday Book and the site of the present house overlies the site of a medieval hall. The earliest mention of the associated church occurs in 1204 when the advowson of 'Rokeby Church' was given to Brian Fitz Alan of Bedale by the Lord of Rokeby Manor, Robert de Rokeby. In 1342 the church was appropriated by nearby Egglestone Abbey and ordained. In 1539-40 Egglestone Abbey was dissolved and the church was returned to the possession of the incumbent of Rokeby Manor. The lead roof of the church was removed in 1674 and replaced with slate. When Sir Thomas Robinson built a new church dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin to the west of Rokeby Park in the mid-18th century, the old church became disused. In 1769 the church and its churchyard was sold to the Morritt family of Rokeby in exchange for five acres of land opposite the new church. St. Mary's Church, immediately west of the River Greta, was completed and consecrated in 1778, with the chancel and organ chamber added in 1877. It is of squared stone with ashlar plinth and dressings with a graduated stone slate nave roof.

1.3.10 The aforementioned, now ruined, Egglestone Abbey was founded between 1195 and 1198 for a small number of Premonstratensian canons. It lies *c.* 2 km to the WNW of the site, overlooking the Tees. The abbey was dissolved in 1540 and in 1548 it was granted to Robert Strelley who began its conversion into a secular residence. After a series of secular owners, it was sold in 1770 to the Morritt family of Rokeby in whose possession remained until it was placed in the care of the state in 1925.

1.3.11 Approximately 0.3 km to the east of the site of the OHL fixture installation, across the River Greta, is the site of the deserted medieval village and chapel of Mortham, in amongst which stand the remains of Mortham Tower. The settlement was mentioned in the Domesday book, but was destroyed by the Scots in 1346 and never rebuilt. The remains were demolished by Sir Thomas Robinson in the late 18th century. Earthworks, including traces of ridge and furrow, are visible on aerial photographs.

1.3.12 Mortham Tower (a Grade I Listed Building) is a fortified manor house, parts of which date from the 14th century. The tower was added in the later 15th century; the south west range, courtyard wall and gateway were built in the early 16th century and the solar was remodelled in the later 16th century. The main building was converted into a barn *c.* 1820. Restoration work was carried out in 1939. The house comprises a number of ranges set around a courtyard with the south side closed by a wall with a central gateway.

1.3.13 As mentioned, the site of the OHL fixture installation is to take place within the landscape park associated with Rokeby Hall, a country house constructed between 1725-1730. The land was emparked in 1725 by Sir Thomas Robinson and planted 1730-37. Buildings in the park include an ice house and stables. A late 18th or early 19th century lodge is present on the west boundary. The main entrance to the park is by Greta Bridge, this has a gate lodge. There is a lawn and ha ha south of the Hall. A walled kitchen garden is also present.

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

2.1 The site of the OHL fixture installation is primarily of archaeological interest because of its location within the scheduled area of the medieval St. Michael's Church and its associated graveyard.

2.2 Because the site has Scheduled Monument status, and thus has statutory protection under *The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979*, any intrusive groundworks for the installation require SMC from DCMS prior to their undertaking. In accordance with the 1979 Act, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport consulted with English Heritage before deciding whether or not to grant SMC after an application for the installation was submitted by Northern Powergrid on 11 March 2014. English Heritage considered '…*the effect of the proposed works upon the monument to be works that are due to natural erosion and damage to the existing post*. *This need to be replaced to eliminate safety concerns. The proposed works are unavoidable, sensible and warranted, and will not significantly compromise the integrity of the monument, nor prejudice its longer term preservation'*.

2.3 Accordingly, SMC was granted by the Secretary of State, advised by English Heritage, subject to a series of conditions set out in a letter dated 26 March 2014 to Northern Powergrid. Condition c) of SMC states *'No ground works/building works shall take place until the applicant has confirmed in writing the commissioning of a programme of archaeological work before and/or during the development in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State advised by English Heritage'*. Condition f) of SMC requires a report on the archaeological recording to be submitted to DCCAS for inclusion in the County Durham HER and a copy to be sent to English Heritage on completion of the fieldwork.

4.2.1 As part of a Scheduled Monument, any archaeological remains affected by the OHL fixture installation would fall within the category of 'designated heritage assets' as defined within current guidance on the historic environment set out within *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.2.2 Heritage assets - those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest - remain a key concept of the NPPF, retained from the previous national planning policy *Planning Policy Statement 5 'Planning for the Historic Environment'* (PPS5) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010a).. Despite the deletion of PPS5, the *PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010b) remains a valid and UK Government endorsed document.

2.4 No Specification for the archaeological work has been produced by English Heritage or DCCAS; instead this document comprises the written scheme of investigation (WSI), as required by SMC, which is to be submitted for approval by English Heritage prior to work commencing.

3. PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The project aims to fulfil the specific requirements of SMC by undertaking an appropriately specified scheme of archaeological investigation in association with the OHL fixture installation.

3.2 The archaeological work will aim to identify, investigate and record any archaeological remains through a programme of observation and recording - watching brief - conducted in association with all intrusive groundworks associated with the installation of the new pole to carry the OHL.

3.3 In view of the known medieval potential of the site, the investigation will be carried out with reference to *Shared Visions: the North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment* (NERRF) (Petts and Gerrard 2006), specifically the following research priorities for the Later Medieval (MD) period, as set out in the NERRF Research Agenda:

- MDv – Churches and religion;
- MDvi – Death and burial;
- MDvii - Medieval ceramics and other artefacts.

3.4 An appropriate level of reporting on the work is required, including, if necessary, full analysis and publication of any notable archaeological findings upon completion of the project. Thus the results of the work will constitute the preservation by record of any archaeological remains thus encountered and subsequently removed during the course of works. The full scheme of archaeological work required is described in the following section.

4. METHOD STATEMENT

4.1 General Standards

4.1.1 All archaeological work will be carried out in compliance with the codes and practice of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) and will follow the relevant IfA standard and guidance document (IfA 1994, last updated 2013). PCA is an IfA 'Registered Organisation'.

4.1.2 All archaeological staff involved in the project will be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. The project will be overseen for PCA by a Member (at MIfA level) of the IfA.

4.1.3 All archaeological staff involved in the project will be aware of the work required, as detailed in this document, and will understand the aims and methodologies of the project.

4.1.4 All relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice will be respected. For Health and Safety purposes, PCA is a sub-contractor and will have no responsibilities as a Principal/Main Contractor. Site welfare will be provided for PCA personnel. All PCA personnel will attend site inductions as required. All archaeological personnel will use PPE.

4.2 Archaeological Methodology - Fieldwork

4.2.1 Continuous archaeological monitoring and observation will be carried out during invasive groundworks during the installation, namely removal of the existing damaged OHL pole, all mechanical or hand excavation to allow for the installation of the new pole and any required supports/stays.

4.2.2 All monitoring and observation will be carried out by one (or more if required) suitably experienced professional archaeologist(s). The watching brief will continue until such time as invasive groundworks are completed or until it becomes obvious that no additional archaeological information of note will be forthcoming, this to be agreed with English Heritage.

4.2.3 Any archaeological remains of possible significance exposed during groundworks are to be immediately examined, hand cleaned, excavated and recorded, to an appropriate level and in accordance with the methodology set out in PCA's *Fieldwork Induction Manual* (PCA 2009) and the long-established Museum of London *Site Manual* (Museum of London 1994).

4.2.4 Within the scope of the watching brief, adequate time is to be afforded for archaeological work to take place to the satisfaction of the attendant archaeologist(s). Depending upon the significance of any archaeological remains, preservation *in situ* may be required, although it is envisaged that, for most remains, preservation by record will be suitable mitigation.

4.2.5 All archaeological remains - structures, features and deposits - encountered at the site will be excavated and recorded to the necessary extent to achieve as full an understanding as possible of the past activity that those remains represent. All archaeological features (layers, cuts, fills, structures) that do not merit preservation *in situ* will be excavated by hand tools and recorded in plan and/or section. Archaeological recording will be carried out by means of unique numeric based context records and will be written, drawn and photographic (and any other appropriate means). All archaeological exposures (layers, cuts, fills, structures) will be recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets. Where stratified deposits are encountered, a 'Harris' matrix will be compiled.

4.2.6 The area of investigation will be located by appropriate means to ensure its accurate location relative to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Drawn records of archaeological features and deposits will normally be at a scale of 1:10 (sections) or 1:20 (plans) and will be prepared in a suitable form of digitisation. Where possible, archaeological features and deposits will be logged relative to Ordnance Datum.

4.2.7 Archaeological excavation may require work by pick/mattock and shovel. Such techniques will be used only for the removal of homogeneous and 'low grade' layers, where it can be reasonably argued, firstly, that more detailed attention would not produce information of value and, secondly, that their removal provides a window onto the underlying archaeological levels. Such tools will not be employed on complex stratigraphy, and where deposits are removed in this manner they will have been properly recorded first.

4.2.8 A photographic record will be compiled using a) a SLR camera with black and white 35mm film to provide negatives from which a set of prints will be generated b) a digital SLR camera of at least 6 megapixels. Graduated metric scales will appear in all photographic frames and, in addition, general 'working shots' will be taken to show the overall scale of the archaeological operation mounted. Full and detailed photographic record sheets cross-referenced to the black and white negatives/prints and the colour digital images/prints will be completed. For digital photography, the 'RAW plus JPEG' camera setting will be used (with the camera set for the largest image size with least compression to produce the highest quality possible JPEG images). The RAW setting allows all the information that the camera is capable of producing to be saved and images retained using this setting will form a key component of the photographic archive along with the black and white negatives generated by 35mm film. RAW images will be converted to the uncompressed format TIFF before they are burnt onto archival quality CD to form the digital element of the photographic archive. A selection of colour printed images (standard 6x4-inch) will be generated from the JPEG images.

4.2.9 In sum, the photographic element of the Site Archive (for deposition with the appropriate repository) will comprise: black and white negatives, black and white prints generated from the negatives, a selection of colour prints generated from digital images, colour digital TIFF images on CD. The County Durham HER will be provided directly with a selection of digital images, as required.

4.2.10 During the archaeological work, a high priority will be given to dating any archaeological remains. Therefore, all relevant artefacts and finds would be retained.

4.2.11 Consideration would also be given to the recovery of specialist samples for scientific analysis, particularly samples of structural materials, samples for absolute dating and bulk or column samples of deposits for palaeoenvironmental evidence. Different sampling strategies may be employed according to established research targets and the perceived importance of the strata under investigation. Bulk sample size will take into account the frequency with which material is likely to occur. In general, however, samples will be of the order of 40 litres where sufficient material is available, although with the expectation that smaller quantities (c. 5-10 litres) will be processed and assessed initially. Thus if no subsequent excavation is undertaken at the site adequate material will remain for further processing and full analysis of the material should that prove necessary.

4.2.12 Assessment of sufficient samples will be undertaken to cover the range of feature types and dates represented by any archaeological remains of note that are encountered. The samples processed and assessed may be a sub-set of a larger number of samples actually recovered during the fieldwork.

4.2.13 The overall aim of the fieldwork with respect to archaeological science is to determine the types of material preserved and in what quantity and condition, thus enabling the aims and objectives of the project as a whole to be addressed. The advice of English Heritage's Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science (RAAS) will be sought, as appropriate.

4.2.14 Deposits would be assessed for their potential for absolute dating by radiocarbon, archaeomagnetism or by any other means and, if appropriate, samples would be recovered for these purposes. Specialist analysis of the recovered material would be a requirement.

4.2.15 Appropriate procedures involving discoveries classed as 'treasure' under *The Treasure Act 1996* (and its 2003 revision) will be followed, as appropriate.

4.2.16 In the event of human burials being discovered, PCA will procure and comply with all statutory consents and licences. Any *in situ* human remains would be recorded to an appropriate level by the use of photography and a *pro forma* 'Skeleton Recording Sheet' and including *in situ* examination by a palaeo-pathologist, if required, then exhumed following receipt of an appropriate licence from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). In 2012 the MoJ reconsidered its approach to burial licenses that it had adopted in 2007: in sum, exhumation license applications under *The Burial Act 1857* will now be considered wherever human remains are buried in sites to which *The Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981* or other burial ground legislation does not apply. The MoJ exhumation licence is now known as an 'Authority to Exhume Buried Human Remains for Archaeological Purposes'.

4.2.17 Waterlogged organic materials, if encountered, would be dealt with according to guidelines set out in relevant English Heritage documents (English Heritage 2010 and 2012).

4.2.18 All processing of artefacts and ecofacts would be undertaken away from the site. All finds will be treated in a proper manner and will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 2001), *Packaging and Storage of Freshly Excavated Artefacts from Archaeological Sites* (UKIC 1983) and *Standard and guidance: for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008).

4.3 Archaeological Methodology – Post-Excavation

4.3.1 Irrespective of whether or not any archaeological remains of note are encountered during the fieldwork, the archaeological investigation will be summarised in a report. The report will include the following information specific to the work:

- a summary statement of the results of the investigations;
- the aims and methods adopted in the course of the work;

- illustrative material (cross-referenced within the text) including an overall site location plan and a plan showing the location all areas of investigation, both tied into the Ordnance Survey grid and at recognisable scales, plans and sections of archaeological deposits at recognisable scales, and photographs, as appropriate;
- text detailing the nature, extent, date, condition and significance of any archaeological remains.

4.3.2 The report will detail the dates when the fieldwork was undertaken.

4.3.3 All recovered artefacts (*e.g.* ceramic, metallic) and samples (*e.g.* bulk soil samples for biological remains) would be examined off-site by appropriate specialists. For each category of artefact and ecofact, an assessment report would be produced, that would include a basic quantification of the material, a statement of its potential for further analysis and recommendations for such work. The results of all specialist assessment reports would be incorporated into the overall report on the watching brief.

4.3.4 PCA's ceramic specialist for medieval and post-medieval pottery is Jenny Vaughan (Northern Counties Archaeological Services). PCA's in house 'small finds' specialist is Dr Marit Gaimster.

4.3.5 PCA's palaeoenvironmental consultant is Dr. Charlotte O'Brien (Archaeological Services Durham University). Human remains and animal bone would be examined by James Langhorne and Kevin Rielly, respectively (both PCA).

4.3.6 PCA's conservation specialist is Karen Barker, a freelance archaeological conservator.

4.3.7 Where one or more elements of the recovered data-set from the watching brief is identified as having potential for further analysis (irrespective of whether or not extensive, significant and/or unexpectedly complex archaeological remains are discovered), an 'Updated Project Design' would be produced to accompany the report on the watching brief and this would detail any requirements for further analysis of material, the results of which would likely require reporting on in a subsequent published paper or report. Costs for any such further analysis and publication can only be established after an initial assessment of the material. The scope of any such further analysis and publication would be agreed with the commissioning client before being undertaken. The 'Updated Project Design' would detail the post-excavation methodologies to be employed, as well as outlining the likely form of a publication paper.

4.3.8 Copies of all reports will be sent to relevant organisations in hardcopy and electronic format, as required. The requirements of relevant organisations with regard to report format and number of copies will be followed. At the time of writing, DCCAS requires 1 no. hardcopy and 1 no. pdf (on CD) for inclusion into the County Durham HER. PCA grant licence to the County Durham HER to use the report and its content.

4.3.9 English Heritage and DCCAS support the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) Project. PCA will complete an OASIS form for the project during the compilation of the report on the work. The OASIS reference number will be included in the report. When the report has become a public document by incorporation into the HER, DCCAS will validate the OASIS form, thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website.

4.4 Site Archive

4.4.1 The data collected during the programme of archaeological work, including all paper and photographic records, as well as all artefacts and ecofacts recovered, will comprise the Site Archive. The Site Archive will be prepared to recognised standards (Brown 2007; IfA 2009 (last updated 2013); Walker 1990).

4.4.2 The Site Archive will be deposited at the County Durham Archaeological Archive, Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, within six months of the completion of fieldwork at the site, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed in writing with English Heritage and DCCAS. Deposition will be in accordance with the County Durham Archaeological Archive policies.

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