

**LAND AT LINKS CRESCENT,  
SEASCALE,  
CUMBRIA**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**CP. No: 10777**

**09/07/2014**



WARDELL ARMSTRONG ARCHAEOLOGY  
COCKLAKES YARD,  
CUMWHINTON,  
CARLISLE,  
CUMBRIA,  
CA4 0BQ  
TEL: 01228 564820  
FAX: 01228 560025  
[WWW.WA-ARCHAEOLOGY.COM](http://WWW.WA-ARCHAEOLOGY.COM)

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# WARDELL ARMSTRONG ARCHAEOLOGY

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**DOCUMENT TITLE:** Land at Links Crescent, Seascale, Cumbria  
**DOCUMENT TYPE:** Archaeological Evaluation Report  
**CLIENT:** Persimmon Homes Lancashire  
**CP NUMBER:** 10777  
**SITE CODE:** LCS-A  
**PLANNING APP. NO:** 4/11/2568  
**OASIS REFERENCE:** wardella2-183414  
**PRINT DATE:** 09/07/2014  
**GRID REFERENCE:** Centred on NY 0390 0138

#### *Quality Assurance*

This report covers works as outlined in the brief for the above-named project as issued by the relevant authority, and as outlined in the agreed programme of works. Any deviation to the programme of works has been agreed by all parties. The works have been carried out according to the guidelines set out in the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Standards, Policy Statements and Codes of Conduct. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance set out by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology on the preparation of reports.

<b>REVISION SCHEDULE</b>			
	<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Sue Thompson		
<b>POSITION:</b>	Assistant Supervisor		
<b>DATE:</b>	03/07/2014		
<b>EDITED BY:</b>	Richard Newman		
<b>POSITION:</b>	Post Excavation Manager		
<b>DATE:</b>	04/07/2014		
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Frank Giecco		
<b>POSITION:</b>	Technical Director		
<b>DATE:</b>	04/07/2014		

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## SUMMARY

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Wardell Armstrong Archaeology were commissioned by Persimmon Homes Lancashire to undertake an archaeological evaluation on an area of land at Links Crescent, Seascale, Cumbria (centred on NGR NY 0390 0138). This work follows a planning application (Planning Application No. 4/11/2568) for a residential development. Copeland Borough Council granted planning consent for the development, on the condition an archaeological evaluation be undertaken. The work is required as the site lies within an area which appears to have been intensively occupied in the prehistoric period, with over 12 known sites dating from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age recorded on the Cumbria sites and monuments record within 1 km of the development site.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken over four days between the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The evaluation involved the excavation of twelve trenches, totalling 850m<sup>2</sup>, 5% of the development area. No significant archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation of the trenches.

As this archaeological evaluation was conducted as part of a condition in association with the development of 33 new dwellings, no further work is deemed necessary. However, given the high archaeological potential of the area, it is recommended that any future work be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Wardell Armstrong Archaeology thank Chris Gowlett Persimmon Homes Lancashire for commissioning the project and for all assistance throughout the work. Wardell Armstrong Archaeology also thanks Jeremy Parsons, Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service, and Stephen White, Carlisle Library.

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology extend their thanks to all staff on site for their help during this project.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Damian Churchill, Kevin Horsley and Sue Thompson. The report was written by Sue Thompson and the drawings were produced by Adrian Bailey. The project was managed by Frank Giecco, Project Manager for WAA, and the report edited by Richard Newman, Post Excavation Project Manager for WAA.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology were commissioned by Persimmon Homes Lancashire to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Links Crescent, Seascale, Cumbria (NGR NY 037 015; Figure 1), prior to the construction of 33 new dwellings. The proposed works lie within the village of Seascale, an area which appears to have been intensively occupied in the prehistoric period from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age with over 12 known sites recorded on the Cumbria Historic Environment Service within 1km of the development site. As a result, Jeremy Parsons of Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service CCCHES has requested a programme of archaeological investigation, prior to the development taking place. This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).
- 1.1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken following approved standards and guidance (IfA 2008), and was consistent with the specification provided by Giecco (2014) and generally accepted best practice.
- 1.1.3 This report outlines the evaluation works undertaken on-site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works.

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## 2 METHODOLOGY

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### 2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design was submitted by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology in response to a request by Persimmon Homes Lancashire for an archaeological evaluation of the study area (Giecco 2013). Following acceptance of the project design by Jeremy Parsons of Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service CCCHES, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology was commissioned by the client to undertake the work. The work was consistent with the Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a).

### 2.2 THE FIELD EVALUATION

2.2.1 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of 12 trenches covering 850m<sup>2</sup> (5%) of the proposed 1.7 hectares development area. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity, with particular regard to the known prehistoric remains in the area.

2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the field evaluation were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.2.3 Turf and topsoil was removed by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. The trial trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand and all features were investigated and recording according to the Wardell Armstrong Archaeology standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (Giecco 2012).

2.2.4 All deposits encountered were deemed unsuitable for environmental sampling, and therefore no samples were retained.

2.2.5 Following excavation and recording, the 12 archaeological trenches were backfilled and the ground surface restored.

2.2.6 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the Management of Archaeological Projects (2nd Edition, 1991).



## 2.3 THE ARCHIVE

- 2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and according to the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be deposited within Whitehaven Record Office, with copies of the report sent to the County Historic Environment Record at Kendal, where viewing will be made available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier WAA14, LCS-A, CP10777.
- 2.3.2 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology and Cumbria County Council support the **Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS)** project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made available by Wardell Armstrong Archaeology as part of this national project.

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## 3 BACKGROUND

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### 3.1 LOCATION AND GEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 Seascale lies within the undulating farmland of the West Cumbria Coastal Plain south of Whitehaven, and north of Barrow in Furness. The West Cumbria Coastal Plain lies between the Irish Sea to the west and the Cumbrian High Fells of the Lake District National Park to the east. Seascale lies at a height of approximately 50m AOD above the coastal strip. The proposed development area has previously provided farmland, with the Town Head Farm buildings to the south. The area is shown in Figure 1.
- 3.1.2 The Natural England places Seascale in a landscape character area known as the '*West Cumbria Coastal Plain*'. This area has a fascinating character of contrasts. Predominantly sedimentary, and dominated by sandstone, there is a significant presence of metamorphic and igneous rocks as a result of volcanic activity in central Cumbria. South of St Bees Head, the area is dominated by Permo-Triassic red sandstones, with some overlying mudstones present in the Barrow-in-Furness area. The landform was further moulded through the ice ages by glacial processes, with a widespread mantle of glacial tills, sands and gravels, eventually forming coastal drumlin features. Its geographical position gave it importance for trade and as a communications route. The richness of mineral deposits of coal and iron ore in particular has given it an industrial history which has continued to the present day, although the nature of the industry has changed ([www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)).

### 3.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 3.2.1 *Introduction:* this historical background is compiled mostly from secondary sources and is intended only as a brief summary of historical developments specific to the study area. References to the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER) are included where known.
- 3.2.2 *Place Name Evidence:* the place name Seascale is believed to mean '*hut by the sea*', from the Old Norse words *saer* and *skali* (Lee 1998, 74).
- 3.2.3 *Prehistoric:* Several prehistoric sites are recorded within the Cumbria HER within a 1km radius. Although there are no sites directly related to the development area, the presence of so many prehistoric findspots, including a Neolithic axe, several flint tool scatters and standing stones make the possibility of further discoveries of particular interest. (Appendix 1)
- 3.2.4 *Roman:* There are no known sites of roman date in the vicinity.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval:* There are no known medieval sites in the local area.
- 3.2.6 *Post-medieval and Modern:* Seascale was on the route of the Furness Railway in the 1850's and became a popular Victorian seaside resort. Several prominent Seascale buildings date to this period, including a watertower and engine shed next to the railway station.

### **3.3 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK**

3.3.1 There has been no known previous archaeological work at Seascale.

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## 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

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### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The evaluation was undertaken between 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014 (Figure 2). The work consisted of the excavation of 12 trenches to the north of Town Head Farm, and was done using a JCB 3cx with a back-hoe and a toothless ditching bucket. All trenches measured 36m x 1.6m.

### 4.2 RESULTS

4.2.1 **Trench 1:** Trench 1 was located in the northern corner of the development area and was aligned northeast – southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.58m revealing the natural drift geology, an orangey red gravelly sand (**102**) below 0.19m of grey brown silty sand subsoil (**101**) and c.0.22m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**100**) (Plate 1). A grey sand (**103**) was observed in the northeastern 6m of the trench, measuring 0.30m in depth. This appears to be a water lain deposit, possibly relating to the beck which forms the eastern boundary of the site.

4.2.2 No archaeological features were noted within Trench 1.

4.2.3 **Trench 2:** Trench 2 was located in the northern corner of site, south of Trench 1, and was aligned northeast-southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.76m revealing orangey red gravelly sand (**201**) below c.0.20m of grey brown silty sand subsoil (**201**) and 0.20m of dark grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**200**) (Plate 2). The same water laid deposit seen in Trench 1 was also observed below the subsoil in the 5m at the northeastern end of the trench (**203**).

4.2.4 No archaeological features were noted within Trench 2.

4.2.5 **Trench 3:** Trench 3 was also located toward the northern corner of the development area, to the south of Trench 2 and aligned northeast-southwest (Figure 2) (Plate 3). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m revealing natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**302**) below 0.25m of grey brown silty sand subsoil (**301**) and 0.20m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**300**). The water laid deposit seen in Trenches 1 and 2 was also observed below the subsoil in the northeastern 5m of the trench to a depth of 0.13m (**303**).

4.2.6 No archaeological features were noted within Trench 3.

4.2.7 **Trench 4:** Trench 2 was located toward in the northern half of the development area and was aligned north-south (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.78m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**402**) below grey brown silty sand subsoil (**401**) up to 0.40m in depth, and c.0.30m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**400**) (Plate 4).

4.2.8 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 4.



*Plate 1: Trench 1 – East Facing*



*Plate 2: Trench 2 – East Facing*



*Plate 3: Trench 3 – North Facing*



*Plate 4: Trench 4 – South Facing*



- 4.2.9 **Trench 5:** Trench 5 was also located in the northern half of the development area and was aligned northwest-southeast (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.63m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**502**) below grey brown silty sand subsoil (**501**) up to 0.30m in depth, and up to 0.23m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**500**).
- 4.2.10 A modern structure was revealed at the north western end of Trench 5, comprising of a single course of bricks bonded with cement mortar built onto a concrete surface measuring 0.13m thick. The brick structure measured at least 2.4m x 3m and was situated just below the turf (Plate 5).
- 4.2.11 **Trench 6:** Trench 6 was located toward the northwest corner of the site and was aligned roughly north-south (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**602**) below 0.30m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**601**), and 0.19m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**600**) (Plate 6).
- 4.2.12 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 6.
- 4.2.13 **Trench 7:** Trench 7 was located toward the northwest corner of the area was aligned northeast-southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**702**) below 0.30m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**701**), and 0.19m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**700**) (Plate 7).
- 4.2.14 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 7.
- 4.2.15 **Trench 8:** Trench 8 was located toward the northwestern corner of the development area, to the south of Trench 7, and was aligned northwest-southeast (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.71m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**802**) below up to 0.30m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**801**), and 0.22m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**800**) (Plate 8).
- 4.2.16 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 8.
- 4.2.17 **Trench 9:** Trench 9 was located in the southern half of the development area was aligned northeast-southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.92m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand (**902**) below up to 0.47m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**901**), and a maximum of 0.45m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**900**) (Plate 9). The same soft grey sand deposit recorded in trenches 1 – 3 was also seen in the 5m at the northeastern end of the trench (**103**). Three land drains filled with rounded cobbles, 0.30m in width, were located within Trench 9.
- 4.2.18 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 9.



*Plate 5: Trench 5 showing modern brick structure – Southeast Facing*



*Plate 6: Trench 6 – South Facing*





*Plate 7: Trench 7 – Southwest Facing*



*Plate 8: Trench 8 – Southeast Facing*

- 4.2.19 **Trench 10:** Trench 10 was located in the eastern half of the development area, to the north of Trench 9 was aligned northeast-southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.90m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand with occasional clay patches (**1002**) below 0.25m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**1001**), and 0.30m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**1000**) (Plate 10). Root disturbance was noted throughout the trench.
- 4.2.20 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 10.
- 4.2.21 **Trench 11:** Trench 11 was located in the eastern half of the development area, to the south of Trench 10 was aligned northeast-southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.80m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand with occasional clay patches (**1102**) below 0.30m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**1101**), and 0.30m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**1100**) (Plate 11). A cobble filled land drain, 0.30m wide, was located at the southwestern end of the trench.
- 4.2.22 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 11, with the exception of a square pit towards the southwestern end of the trench; this was investigated and found to contain a recent pig burial.
- 4.2.23 **Trench 12:** Trench 12 was located in the eastern half of the development area, to the south of Trench 10 was aligned roughly north-south (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.15m revealing the natural drift orangey red gravelly sand with occasional clay patches (**2102**) below 0.30m grey brown silty sand subsoil (**1201**), and up to 0.35m of grey brown sandy silt topsoil (**1200**) (Plate 12). An area of landfill/made ground (1203) was evident in the southern 12m of the trench. This deposit was a maximum of 0.80m in depth and contained frequent modern glass, metal and plastics, including a confectionary wrappers dating to the 1990's. The light grey soft sand water lain deposit along the eastern side of the development area was also seen in patches in Trench 12 to a depth of 0.15m. Three land drains cross the trench, two of which are filled with stone cobbles.
- 4.2.24 No archaeological features were observed within Trench 12, with the exception of a modern pig burial.



*Plate 9: Trench 9 – West Facing*



*Plate 10: Trench 10 - Southwest Facing*





*Plate 11: Trench 11 showing modern cut – North east Facing*



*Plate 12: Trench 12 - South Facing*

#### **4.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING**

- 4.4.1 No archaeological finds were recovered, and no environmental samples were retained during the groundworks.

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## 5 CONCLUSIONS

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### 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 During the archaeological field evaluation at Links Crescent, Seascale, twelve trenches were excavated, covering 850m<sup>2</sup> (5%) of the proposed 1.7 hectares development area. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity, the evaluation trenches being located to provide a representative sample of the development area. All trenches were excavated down to the top of the natural substrate.
- 5.1.2 With the exception of land drains, Trenches 1 - 4 and 6 - 10 were devoid of any archaeological features or deposits. The foundation of a modern brick building was recorded in the northern end of Trench 5 was revealed, built onto a concrete base. A modern pit for the burial of a pig was exposed in the western end of Trench 11, and Trench 12 revealed a dumping ground for general waste containing modern plastics and confectionary wrappers, and also contained a recent pig burial.
- 5.1.3 The purpose of this archaeological field evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of any below ground remains. No archaeological remains were found during the evaluation of the development area; however, given the significance of previous prehistoric discoveries within the vicinity of the local area, it remains possible that future work may lead to further discoveries.

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Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record Online (2014):

[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

## APPENDIX 1: HER ENTRIES

*List of Cumbria HER Entries identified within a 1km radius of the proposed development site.*

Site No.	HER No.	Site Name	Description	Grid Ref.	General Period
1	1265	Arrow Head Finds, Seascale	A flint arrow head found in a garden on the new housing estate at Seascale. In 1950 a fine example of a barbed and tanged arrow head was collected near the new Seascale Post Office	E:304150 N:501300	Prehistoric (Bronze Age, Neolithic)
2	1266	Shingle Terrace Cremation Site, Herding Nab	A Middle Bronze Age buried urn with cremated bones was found in 1874 during the excavation of foundation trenches for Shingle Terrace	E:303800 N:500800	Prehistoric (Bronze Age)
3	1269	Axe Find, Seascale Park	A Neolithic axe found in 1966 while digging at Seascale Park	E:304550 N:501840	Prehistoric (Neolithic)
4	1288	Greycroft/Seascale Howe Farm Stone Circle	In 1923, only one stone of a former stone circle remained. Site was partially excavated and circle reconstructed 1956. Site was found to consist of ten stones with a small, oval central cairn. Bone fragments were observed in the cairn	E:303340 N:502380	Prehistoric (Bronze Age, Neolithic)
5	1302	Seascale Mill Standing Stone	300 yards SE of Seascale Mill is a single standing stone, 4ft high	E:303800 N:502400	Prehistoric (Bronze Age, Neolithic)
6	1304	Stone and Flint Finds, Bailey Ground	In an area south of Seascale known as Bailey Ground, a quantity of flint artefacts including 45 scrapers, 11 flint knives were found. An axe of Ronaldsway type and associated flints also found. The finds were made in 1965 near the edge of a boggy hollow. Within a few feet of the findspot of the axe, a small anvil stone, made from a sub-circular flat coarse millstone grit was found, with a shallow depression pecked into each of	E:304400 N:500900	Prehistoric (Bronze Age, Neolithic)



Site No.	HER No.	Site Name	Description	Grid Ref.	General Period
			its flat surfaces		
7	3559	Flint Finds, Seinton Way	Micro and blade cores found by Jim Cherry at 68 Seinton Way. A few more flints have been found here, including a large thick blade of dark tortoiseshell coloured flint, retouched and heavily utilised on both edges of its dorsal and ventral surfaces	E:304200 N:500900	Prehistoric (Mesolithic)
8	5330	Seascale Moss Bog Body	Bog body found at Seascale Moss in June 1834, found while cutting peat, c.1ft under the surface. Part of the body had been destroyed, but the hands, left ear and feet were perfect. The scalp showed traces of hair and the chin had the remains of a beard. A walking stick of hazel was lying by its side	E:304000 N:502000	Prehistoric (IronAge)
9	6453	Flint Finds, Seascale Golf Course	A few flint flakes found near Seascale Golf Course	E:303400 N:502200	Prehistoric
10	6454	Flint Finds, Bailey Ground	A number of flint flakes, a scraper and two utilised pieces were found on high ground east of Bailey Ground	E:304800 N:501200	Prehistoric
11	6455	Flint Finds, Seascale Golf Course	A few flint flakes were found near Seascale Golf Course	E:303100 N:502100	Prehistoric
12	6457	Flint Finds, Seascale Banks	A few slightly patinated flint flakes found lying on the surface of fields to the north of Newmill Beck	E:303200 N:501800	Prehistoric
13	43834	Whitehaven and Furness Junction Railway	Extant railway named 'Whitehaven and Furness Junction Railway' on the First Edition OS map of c1867		Post Medieval
14	43482	Seascale Gasworks	Site of a former gasworks shown on the Second Edition OS map of 1890	E:303900 N:500950	Post Medieval (Victorian)

## APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Subsoil
102	Deposit	Natural
103	Deposit	Water lain sand
200	Deposit	Topsoil
201	Deposit	Subsoil
202	Deposit	Natural
203	Deposit	Water lain sand
300	Deposit	Topsoil
301	Deposit	Subsoil
302	Deposit	Natural
303	Deposit	Water lain sand
400	Deposit	Topsoil
401	Deposit	Subsoil
402	Deposit	Natural
500	Deposit	Topsoil
501	Deposit	Subsoil
502	Deposit	Natural
600	Deposit	Topsoil
601	Deposit	Subsoil
602	Deposit	Natural
700	Deposit	Topsoil
701	Deposit	Subsoil
702	Deposit	Natural
800	Deposit	Topsoil
801	Deposit	Subsoil
802	Deposit	Natural
900	Deposit	Topsoil
901	Deposit	Subsoil
902	Deposit	Natural
903	Deposit	Water lain sand
1000	Deposit	Topsoil
1001	Deposit	Subsoil
1002	Deposit	Natural
1100	Deposit	Topsoil
1101	Deposit	Subsoil
1102	Deposit	Natural
1200	Deposit	Topsoil
1201	Deposit	Subsoil
1202	Deposit	Natural
1203	Deposit	Landfill/ Made ground
1204	Deposit	Water lain sand

Table 1: List of Contexts issued during the evaluation

## APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

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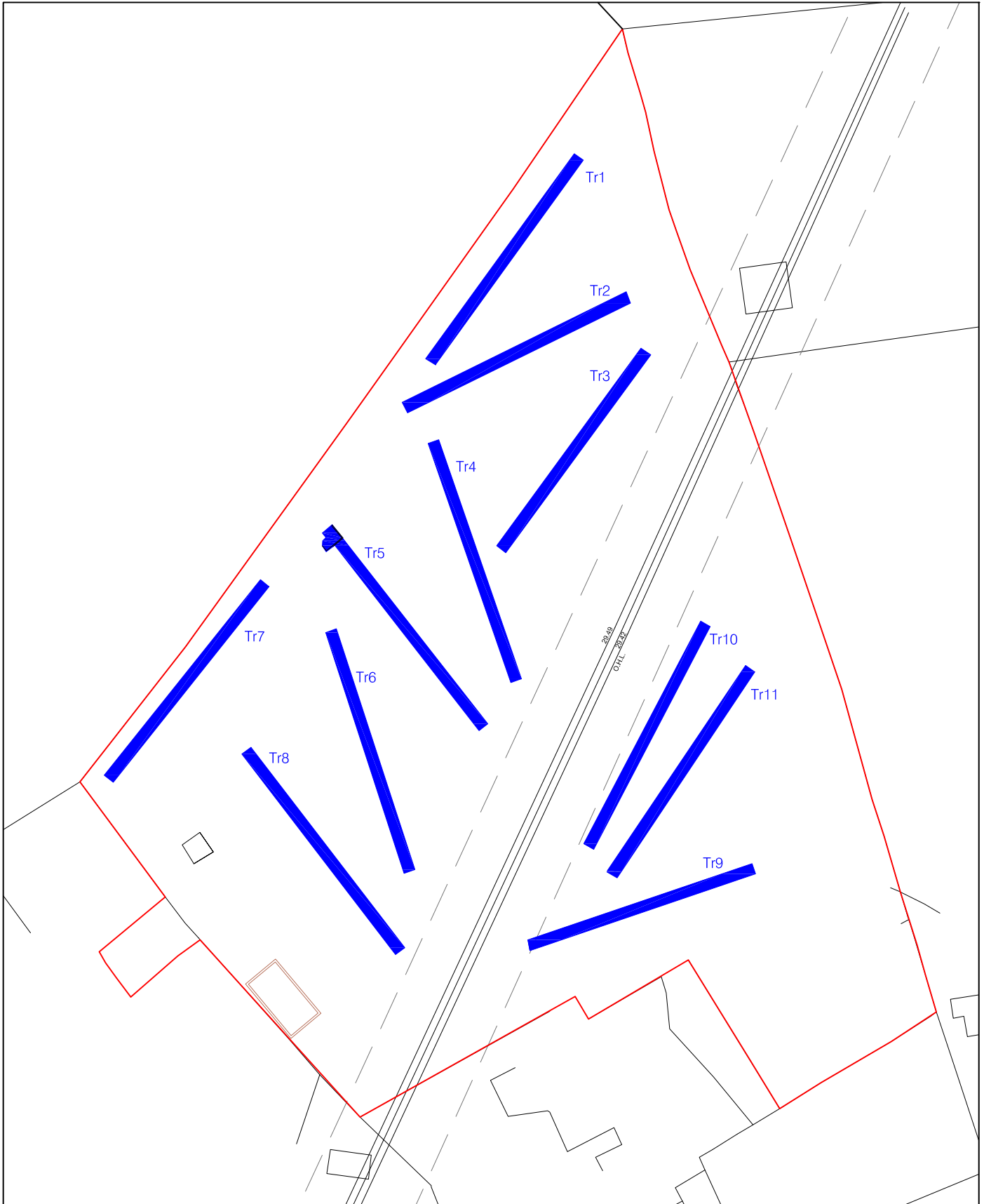
 <p>Wardell Armstrong Archaeology 2014</p>	<p>PROJECT: Land at Links Crescent, Seascale, Cumbria</p> <p>SCALE: 1:25,000 at A4</p> <p>REPORT No: CP10777</p> <p>CLIENT: Persimmon Homes</p> <p>DRAWN BY: AB</p> <p>DATE: June 2014</p> <p>FIGURE: 1</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> Site location</p>	 <p>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100019512</p>
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Figure 1: Site location.







 <p>Wardell Armstrong Archaeology 2014</p>	<p>PROJECT: Land at Links Crescent, Seascale, Cumbria</p> <p>SCALE: 1:750 at A4</p> <p>REPORT No: CP10777</p> <p>CLIENT: Persimmon Homes</p> <p>DRAWN BY: AB</p> <p>DATE: June 2014</p> <p>FIGURE: 2</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> Site boundary</p> <p> Evaluation trenches</p>	 <p>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100019512</p>
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Figure 2: Evaluation trench location plan.