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DESK BASED ASSESSMENTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY TOPOGRAPHICAL AND LANDSCAPE SURVEY HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING EIA AND HERITAGE CONSULTANCY



**ELECTRICITY NORTH WEST** 

REFURBISHMENT OF HIGH & LOW VOLTAGE OVERHEAD APPARATUS, OLDWALL, IRTHINGTON CUMBRIA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

January 2016





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#### **ELECTRICITY NORTH WEST**

#### Oldwall, Irthington, Cumbria

#### **Archaeological Watching Brief**

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## SUMMARY

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA) was commissioned by Electricity North West, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Oldwall, Irthington, Cumbria (CA6 4PP), (NGR: NY 4799 6166). The watching brief and trial trench evaluation was required as part of a scheme of archaeological works as the excavations were undertaken in the vicinity of a scheduled monument area, within the buffer zone of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) produced in response to advice given by Mike Collins, Inspector of Ancient Monuments (Hadrian's Wall) at Historic England.

The trial trench evaluation consisted of one 1 x 1m test pit excavated in the garden of east Oldwall Farmhouse. The archaeological trench was excavated by hand down to the natural substrate. No archaeological remains were encountered.

A watching brief was maintained during intrusive groundworks to the south of Oldwall, Irthington. No archaeological features were observed.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA) thanks Electricity North West for commissioning the project, and for all their assistance throughout the work, and Mike Collins, Inspector of Ancient Monuments (Hadrian's Wall) at Historic England.

Wardell Armstrong Archaeology also thanks the Rob While of Electricity North West, for his help during this project.

The research was undertaken by Cat Peters. The trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Elenora Montanari and Ed Johnson, who also wrote the report. The watching brief was maintained by Sue Thompson. The project was managed by Frank Giecco and the report edited by Richard Newman.



### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 **Project Circumstances and Planning Background**

- 1.1.1 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WAA) was commissioned by Electricity North West to undertake a trial trench evaluation and watching brief prior to the groundworks associated with the replacement and refurbishment of several electricity poles in the vicinity of East Oldwall Farmhouse (NGR: NY 4799 6166). The first phase consisted of the excavation of a 1 x 1m test pit in the grounds of East Oldwall Farmhouse on the site of a new stay wire for pole 63030L01604. The second phase comprised a watching brief to monitor excavations on the location of poles 63030L01603, 63030H02201 and 63030L1604.
- 1.1.2 The sites lie on land within to the scheduled monument of Hadrian's Wall between miles 59 and 60 (Scheduled Monument No. 1010990) and as a consequence a programme of archaeological work was undertaken in advance of groundworks associated with the refurbishment and replacement of the before mentioned poles.
- 1.1.3 The groundworks themselves were monitored as a watching brief. All work was carried out under Scheduled Monument Consent.

#### 1.2 **Project Documentation**

- 1.2.1 A WSI (WAA 2016) was produced to provide a specific methodology based on the advice of Mike Collins, of Historic England, for a programme of archaeological mitigation implemented via a watching brief and archaeological trial trench. This was approved by the archaeological planning advisor prior to the fieldwork taking place. This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012).
- 1.2.2 This report outlines the work undertaken on site, the subsequent programme of postfieldwork analysis, and the results of this fieldwork.



### 2. METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Standards and guidance

- 2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief (2014a). The archaeological evaluation was undertaken following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2014a). Both ran in accordance with the WAA fieldwork manual (2015).
- 2.1.2 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a) and the *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

#### 2.2 Documentary Research

2.2.1 As part of this project, archaeological desk-based research was undertaken, included within this report, which sets out the archaeological and historical background of the site, and provides an assessment of the significance of all known and potential heritage assets up to 500m from the area of investigation, this wider area, referred to as the study area.

#### 2.3 Trial Trench Evaluation

- 2.3.1 The main objectives of the evaluation were to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed.
- 2.3.2 The trench was excavated by hand to the top of archaeological deposits, or the natural substrate, whichever was observed first. In the event of encountering significant archaeological deposits at a shallower depth the excavation was to be terminated. Following on from this work an agreed position was to be defined for the new pole and a further SMC sought for installation in this location. If the evaluation trench recorded significant archaeological deposits relating to Hadrian's Wall a second trench



was to be excavated to locate a new location for pole (No.63030L01604). This second trench would only be implemented with full agreement from all parties.

## 2.4 **The Watching Brief**

- 2.4.1 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of all intrusive works associated with the current development. This groundworks comprised the excavation of a shallow pit measuring 2 x 2m to the south of Pole 63030H02201 for a joint hole, and the replacement of the pole and associated stay wire.
- 2.4.2 The general aims of these investigations were:
  - allow the monitoring archaeologist to signal that an archaeological find has been made before it is destroyed
  - to provide the opportunity for appropriate resource allocation if the archaeological find cannot be dealt with under the watching brief remit
  - to determine the presence or absence of buried archaeological remains within the proposed development site
  - to determine the character, date, extent and distribution of any archaeological deposits and their potential significance
  - determine levels of disturbance to any archaeological deposits
  - investigate and record all deposits and features of archaeological interest within the areas to be disturbed by the current development
  - to determine the likely impact on archaeological deposits from the proposed development
  - to disseminate the results of the fieldwork through an appropriate level of reporting.
- 2.4.3 Deposits considered not to be significant were removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to maximise the chance for identification of archaeological remains should they be present. All intrusive groundworks were monitored under close supervision by a suitably trained archaeologist. No archaeological remains were observed during the groundworks.
- 2.4.4 All finds encountered were retained on site and returned to the Carlisle office where they were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* was then produced for each stratified context under the supervision of the WAA Finds Officer, and the dates were used to help determine the broad date phases for the site. On completion of this project, the finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard



guidelines (*ibid*). Please note, the following categories of material will be discarded after a period of six months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- unstratified material;
- modern pottery;
- material that has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.
- 2.4.5 No environmental samples were taken during the watching brief.
- 2.4.6 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project specification, and the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be deposited with Tullie House Museum, Carlisle, with copies of the report sent to the Cumbria HER, Oxenholme, Kendal, available upon request. The project archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier CP11578/16 OWI-A.
- 2.4.7 Wardell Armstrong Archaeology supports 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 WAA as a part of this national project. The OASIS reference for the project is: wardella2-255129



### 3. BACKGROUND

### 3.1 Location and Geological Context

- 3.1.1 The sites affected by the groundworks lies to the south of the hamlet of Oldwall to the north of Carlisle Airport and to the west of Irthington, and Brampton and north-east of Carlisle (NY 4799 6166). The site's environs comprise arable farmland located to the south of the hamlet of Oldwall.
- 3.1.2 The underlying solid geology within the area of investigation is mapped as sandstone of the Permo-Triassic New Red Sandstone group. This is overlain by drift deposits of glacial till, primarily in the form of Boulder Clay (BGS 2015).

#### 3.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.2.1 Desk-based research was undertaken as a preliminary part of this project, to summarise the known historical and archaeological background of the site and the surrounding landscape to a distance of around 500m. The results of this are included below.
- 3.2.2 This research has identified that the area affected by the groundworks lies within the buffer zone of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Asset 10).
- 3.2.3 Two heritage assets designated as scheduled monuments are recorded within the immediate vicinity of the site, both of which are parts of the Hadrian's Wall environs. The scheduled sites are the Wall and vallum between the A6071 to The Cottage in Oldwall in wall miles 57, 58 and 59 (Asset 11) and the section of the Wall and vallum between the road to Laversdale at Oldham and Baron's Dike in wall miles 59 and 60 (Asset 12).
- 3.2.4 Four listed buildings of the post medieval period are recorded from within the search area (Assets 6-9) as well as five non-designated heritage assets are recorded within the immediate vicinity of the site. These non-designated heritage assets also relate to Hadrian's Wall related activity. The key archaeological risk is therefore of encountering archaeological remains of the Roman period relating to Hadrian's Wall and associated features. The reason for the watching brief was the proximity of the



groundworks to the scheduled monument and World Heritage site of Hadrian's Wall and environs, and was required as a condition of scheduled monument consent.

- 3.2.5 No previous archaeological works have been undertaken within the development area. Numerous previous archaeological works have occurred in the wider area, some at Watchclose Camp to the south-west (e.g. Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society excavations in 1936), with most of these occuring as a result of developments at Carlisle Airport (e.g. Carlisle Archaeological Unit 1995-6, Capita Symonds in 2006, North Pennines Archaeology in 2007, 2010 and 2011, 2013 and 2014 and Archaeological and Educational Services in 2011). A programme of archaeological watching briefs was undertaken during minor excavations associated with the development of the Hadrian's Wall Path National Trail, within the Scheduled Monument of Hadrian's Wall and Vallum between the A6071 and The Cottage (McNaught and Scott 2001). No significant archaeological features were recorded.
- 3.2.6 **Prehistoric**: there is no known evidence for prehistoric activity in the study area.
- 3.2.7 **Roman**: the groundworks undertaken under archaeological supervision occurred within the buffer zone of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall) (Asset 10). Hadrian's Wall, along with the German Limes and the Antonine Wall, forms the World Heritage site. It was constructed c. AD 122 by the Emperor Hadrian across a distance of 118km and is a "striking example of the organisation of a military zone and illustrates the defensive techniques and geopolitical strategies of ancient Rome" (Historic England 2015).
- 3.2.8 The area monitored during the archaeological watching brief lay between two scheduled sections of Hadrian's Wall and environs (Assets 11 and 12). The area to the east is scheduled under 'Hadrian's Wall and vallum from A6071 to The Cottage in the case of the Wall, and the road to Oldwall, for the vallum, in wall miles 57, 58 and 59' (Asset 11). Hadrian's Wall survives as a buried structure in this area with no upstanding remains, though "occasional rises in hedge lines and field walls are the only traces left on surface" (Historic England 2015). Between Chapel Field and Oldwall the course of the Wall is overlain by a hedge on top of an earth and stone bank, almost 2.5m wide. The wall ditch in this area is preserved as an intermittent earthwork visible on the ground throughout this section. In the south-western part of this section, the ditch survives in better condition, averaging between 1.6 and 1.8m in depth, with the upcast mound, referred to as the glacis, not surviving as a visible feature above ground. The



vallum survives as a buried feature for most of its course in this section, with few remains visible. Milecastle 59 (Asset 5) is located c. 450m east of Oldwall surviving as a buried feature with no visible remains. Excavations by Haverfield in 1894 encountered stone foundations and a pottery assemblage, and a geophysical survey undertaken in 1981 indicated that remains of the south wall survive in situ. The exact location of Turret 59a has not yet been confirmed, though is expected to be to the immediate east of Oldwall. The precise course of the Roman road known as the Military Way has not been confirmed but is thought to run parallel to the Wall line, and 20-30m to the south of it.

- 3.2.9 The area to the west of the area affected by the groundworks is scheduled under 'Hadrian's Wall between the road to Laversdale at Oldwall and Baron's Dike in wall miles 59 and 60' (Asset 12). In this section, the Wall survives as a buried feature throughout, apart from a low scarp 0.2m high in the area north of Bleatarn (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1010989), though its course has been confirmed in places by Haverfield during excavations in 1894. The wall ditch survives as an earthwork visible on the ground throughout this section, between 1m and 1.6m deep with a modern drain following much of its length. The glacis does not survive as a visible feature in this section of the Wall and environs. The exact locations of milecastle 60, turrets 59b, 60a and 60b and the course of the Military Way have not been confirmed in this section.
- 3.2.10 Other evidence for Roman activity from the study area comes from architectural features (Asset 4), findspots of an altar (Asset 2) and a centurial stone (Asset 3) and a milestone at Oldwall (Asset 1).
- 3.2.11 **Medieval**: during the medieval period the study area was part of the Barony of Gilsland, a relatively independent and powerful lordship which may have been established at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Newman 2006, 14). It seems that the area of the airport itself was common grazing during this period, in the township of Newby (Whellan 1860, 680-1).
- 3.2.12 **Post Medieval**: the area remained in use as agricultural land during the post medieval period. Oldwall is first referenced in a survey of 1603 (Armstrong *et al* 1950, 93), with Old Wall Farm (Asset 6) and barn (Asset 8), East Old Wall farmhouse (Asset 9) and The Cottage (Asset 70) dating to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Old Wall is illustrated as a hamlet on Hodskinson and Donald's plan of 1774 (Figure 4).



- 3.2.13 The agricultural developments in the area were triggered by 'An Act for dividing, allotting and enclosing the several Open and Common Fields, Moors, Commons and Waste Grounds, in the Parish of Irthington, in the County of Cumberland', brought before the House of Lords on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1779 (<u>http://www.british-history.ac.uk/lords-</u> <u>jrnl/vol35/pp695-711</u>). The common land lay between Oldwall to the north and Newby to the south, meaning the area affected by groundworks was just within the northern area of the common. The new field system formed rectilinear fields with straight boundaries, clearly distinguishable from the pre-existing landscape. A woodland plantation was created at Watchclose, still in existence today (Newman 2006, 18), with the rest of the area improved for arable cultivation. Many upstanding archaeological features disappeared over the successive years.
- 3.2.14 The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881 shows the area affected by groundworks as lying within agricultural land to the south of Oldwall, within a field to the immediate west of which is the main north-south road to the settlement and to the north of which a small row of cottages is depicted (Figure 5).
- 3.2.15 **Modern**: the layout shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1881 (Figure 5) continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figures 6 and 7). At some time between 1925 (Figure 7) and 1974 (Figure 8) the small row of cottages to the north of the area to be affected by groundworks had been demolished, as was the building to the north-east, with new dwellings, annotated 'Romanway' and 'The Cottage'. Various other buildings had been constructed in these intervening years in the hamlet of Oldwall, infilling vacant plots, and a new south-west north-east road had been constructed to the north of the hamlet (Figure 8). Between 1974 and 2015, the farm to the north-east of the area monitored by the watching brief had been further developed, with buildings demolished and replaced. The area in which the groundworks occur itself, remained in agricultural land throughout the post medieval and modern periods, and thus retains the potential for early deposits to survive.



### 4. Trial Trench Results

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.2 On the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 a 1 x 1m test pit was excavated by hand across the area to be affected by work associated with the replacement of an electricity pole stay wire (Pole No. 63030L01604; Figure 9). The pit was situated west of the existing pole and sited in an area of mature trees within the garden of East Oldwall Farmhouse. The test pit was reduced to a 1 x 1m size due to the mature trees and an existing path limiting the space available.

#### 4.2 Results

- 4.2.1 The trench was excavated through 0.50m of a mid-brown silty topsoil and 0.15m of a light brown sandy subsoil. Both layers were heavily affected by the existing rooting from the neighbouring mature trees.
- 4.2.2 The natural geology revealed was a compact orange red silty sand with frequent sandstone inclusions (Plates 1 and 2).
- 4.2.3 A modern dog burial was encountered and identified through conversations with the landowner, this was reburied during backfilling. No other archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were noted.
- 4.2.4 No finds were recovered or environmental samples were recovered during the trial trench evaluation.



### 4. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken between 9<sup>th</sup> June and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The archaeological watching brief monitored all groundworks associated with the replacement of an electricity pole and associated stay wire (Pole 63030H02201; Figure 2), and the excavation of a pit to the south of this pole. No work was done during the current phase of works on poles 6303L01604 and 63030L01603.

#### 4.2 Results

- 4.2.1 A trench measuring 2 x 2m and an average of 0.60m deep was excavated immediately south of Pole 63030H02201, exposing an thick deposit of mid grey-brown sandy silt topsoil/ploughsoil measuring 0.60m. There was no clear subsoil, and the natural substrate was not reached (Plate 3).
- 4.2.2 Pole 63030H02201 was removed and a new pole replaced into the same hole. The removal of the old pole was monitored, exposing 0.20m grey brown silty topsoil above a mixed sandy deposit, the backfill from the previous erection of the old pole into a larger hole (Plate 4). The hole measured roughly 0.40m in diameter and was 2.20m deep.
- 4.2.3 No archaeological remains were seen during the groundworks.

#### 4.3 Archaeological Finds and Environmental Sampling

- 4.3.1 Frequent sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery, glass and clay pipe were recovered from the trench during the watching brief, all of which came from the topsoil. The pottery included was all domestic tableware, including plates, bowls and a jug or teapot. Both glazed red earthernware and refined white earthernware were present, with spongewear and transfer printed ware common among the fragments. It is likely that these relate to the cottages formerly built on the site (Figures 5, 6 and 7). The finds are of low archaeological potential and were not retained.
- 4.3.2 No environmental samples were recovered during the groundworks.



## 6. CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.1 Summary

6.1.1 The archaeological watching brief monitored all excavations associated with the pole refurbishment works at Oldwall, Irthington. 19<sup>th</sup> century ceramics were recovered from the topsoil, however, no significant archaeological remains were encountered, either during the trial trench evaluation or the watching brief phase.

#### 6.1 Development Impact

6.2.1 The electricity refurbishment works at Oldwall did not result in the impact on any archaeological remains.



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### APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF ASSETS

Asset Number	Reference	Name	Period	Grid Reference
1	HER 230	Old Wall Milestone	Roman	348000,561700
2	HER 236	Altar Find	Roman	348100,561700
3	HER 231	Centurial Stone Find	Roman	348130,561710
4	HER 232	Architectural Features	Roman	348130,561710
5	HER 221	Site of Hadrian's Wall Milecastle 59, scheduled	Roman	348540,561750
6	NHL 1087623	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> century building, Old Wall Farmhouse. Grade II Listed Building	Post Medieval	347911,561680
7	NHL 1138027	Mid 17 <sup>th</sup> century building, The Cottage. Grade II Listed Building	Post Medieval	348029,561688
8	NHL 1087622	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> century barn to the north east of Old Wall. Grade II Listed Building	Post Medieval	348135,561769
9	NHL 1087621	1701 dated farmhouse, East Old Wall, and attached buildings. Grade II Listed Building	Post Medieval	348171,561754
10	NHL 1000098	Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall) UNESCO World Heritage Site	Roman	298058,495707 to 436625,575177
11	NHL 1010988	Hadrian's Wall and vallum from A6071 to The Cottage, in the case of the Wall, and to the road to road to Oldwall, for the vallum, in wall miles 57, 58 and 59. Scheduled Monument	Roman	349074,561908
12	NHL 1010989	Hadrian's Wall between the road to Laversdale at Oldwall and Baron's Dike in wall miles 59 and 60. Scheduled Monument	Roman	347042,561357



### **APPENDIX 2: PLATES**



Plate 1: Trial Trench facing north-west



Plate 2: Trial trench facing south-west





Plate 3: Joint hole facing east



Plate 4: Pole 63030H02201 facing north



#### **APPENDIX 3: FIGURES**

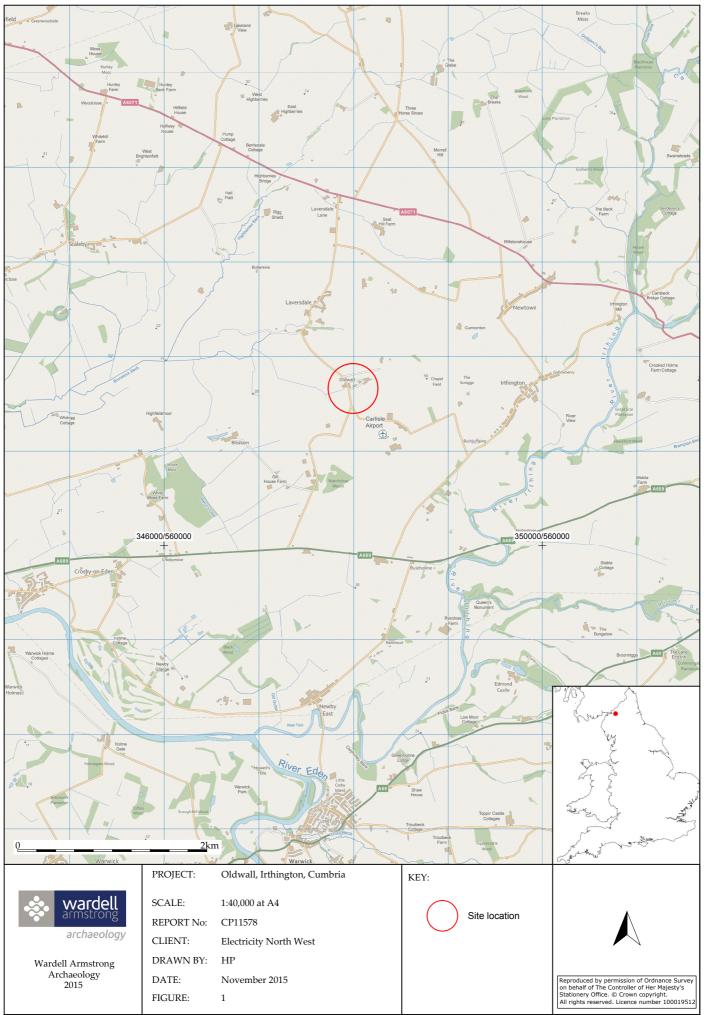


Figure 1: Site location.

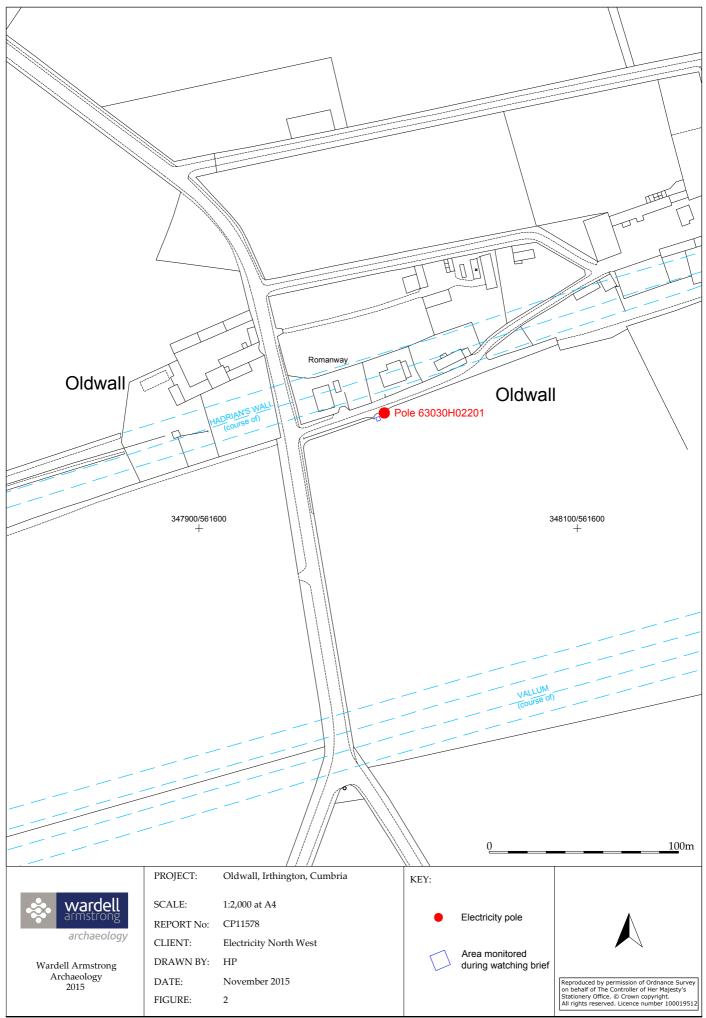


Figure 2: Location of groundsworks monitored during archaeological watching brief.

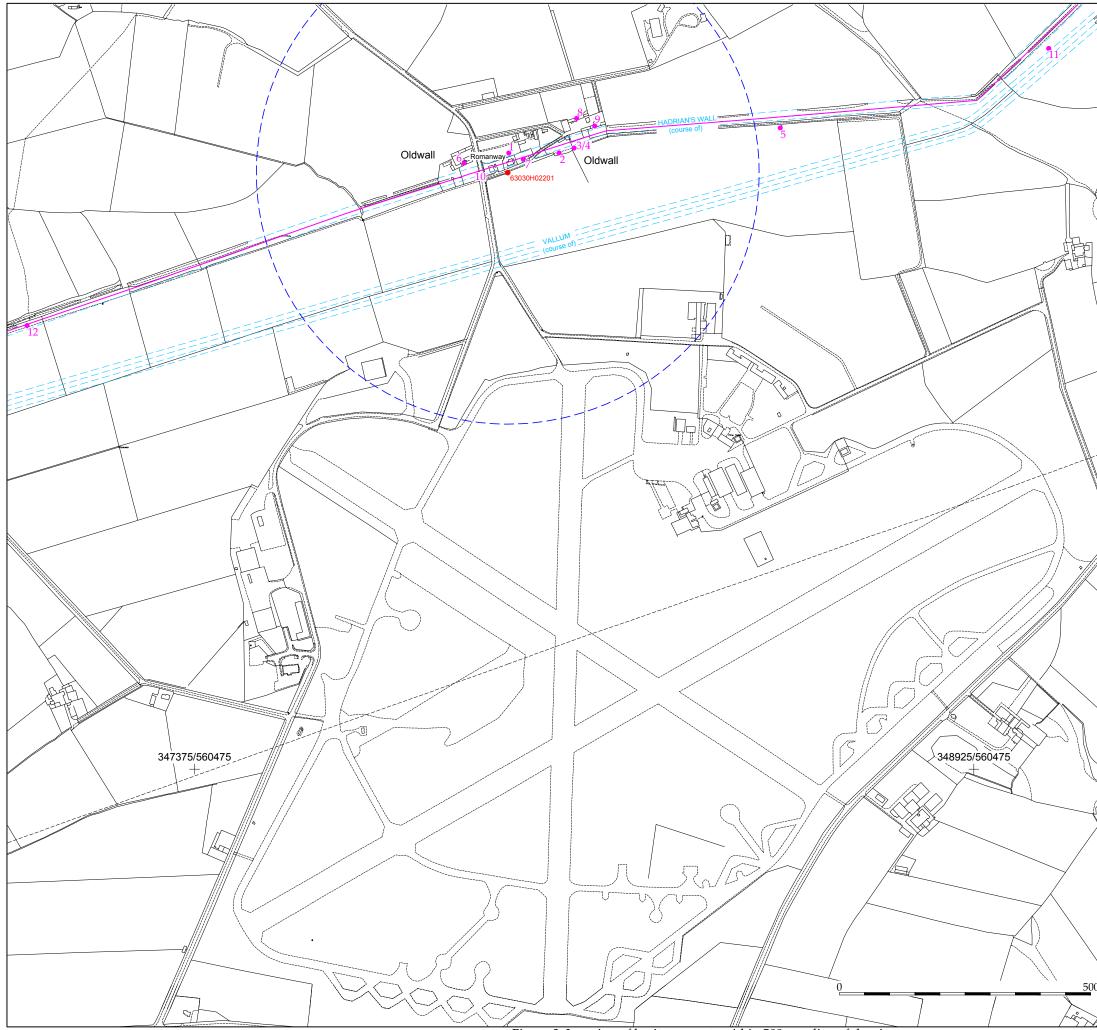


Figure 3: Location of heritage assets within 500m radius of the site.

	wardell armstrong archaeology
	Wardell Armstrong Archaeology 2015
	PROJECT: Oldwall, Irthington, Cumbria
	CLIENT: Electricity North West
P	SCALE: 1:7,500 at A3
	DRAWN BY: HP
	DATE: Novermber 2015
	KEY:
	Electricity poles
	500m radius
	<ul> <li>Heritage assets</li> </ul>
	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.
	CP11578
m	FIGURE: 3
« »›	

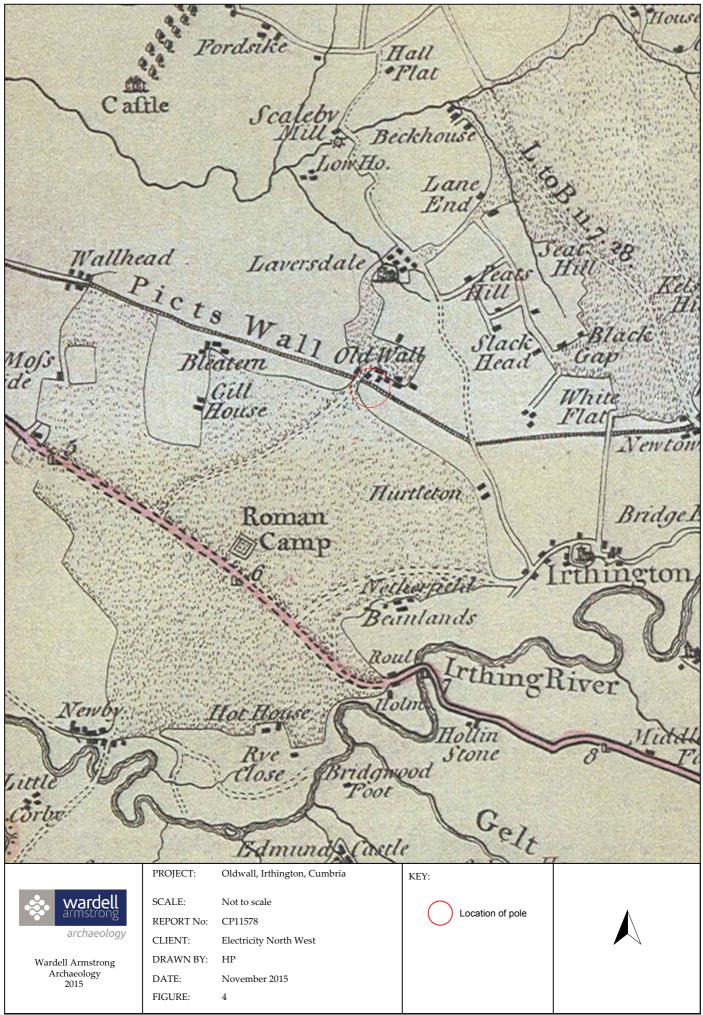


Figure 4: Hodskinson and Donald's Map of Cumberland, 1774.

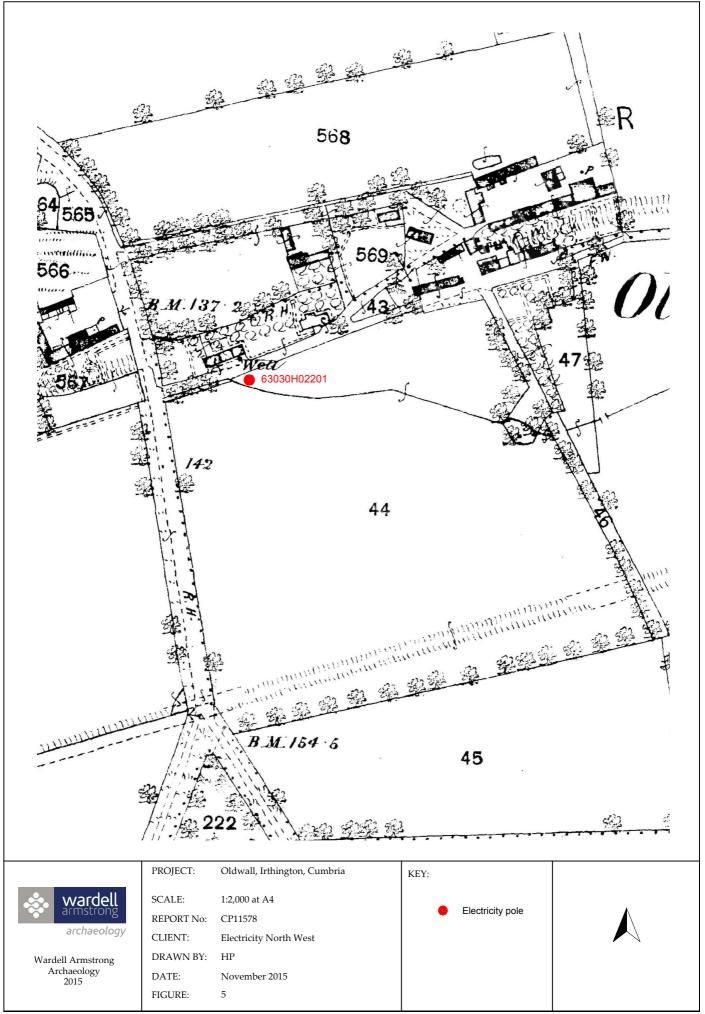


Figure 5: Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1881.

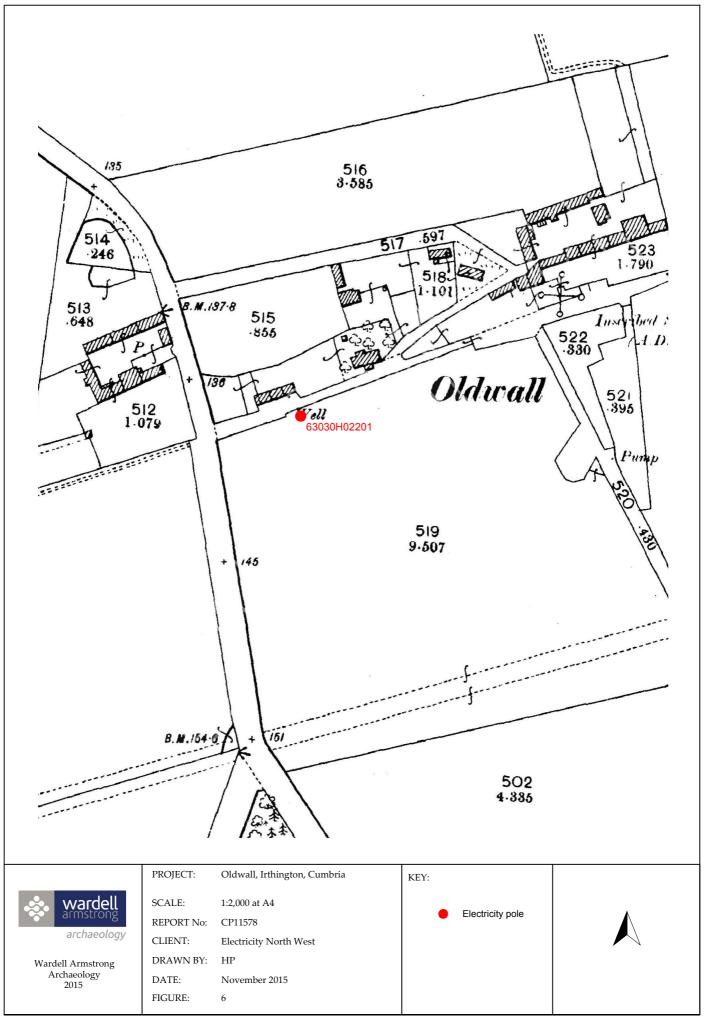


Figure 6: Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1901.

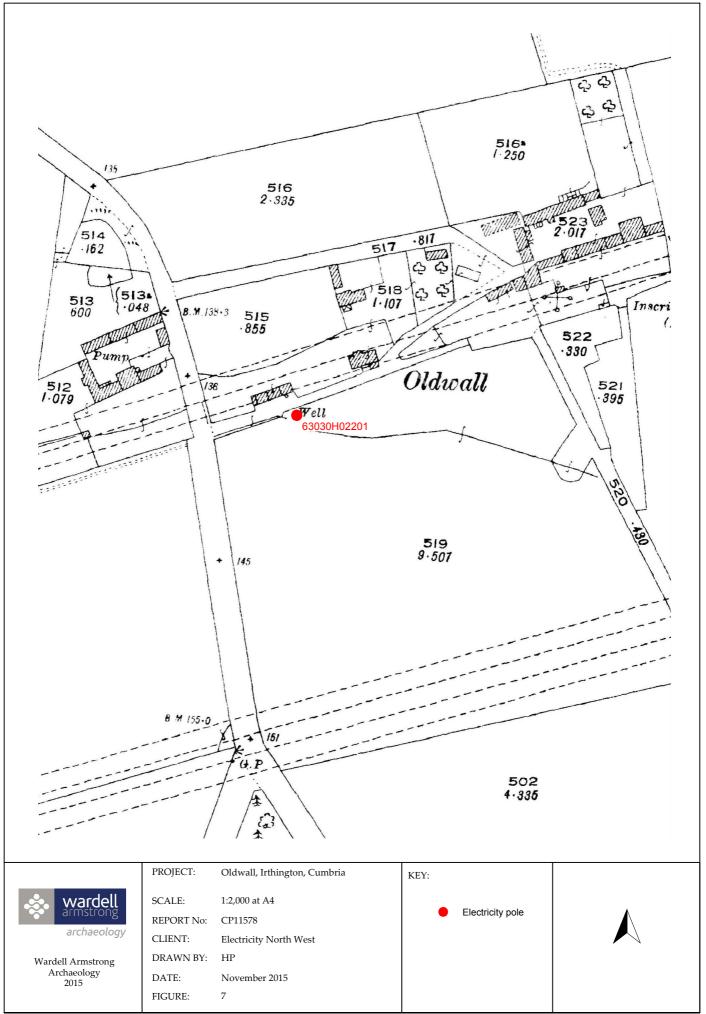


Figure 7: Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1925.

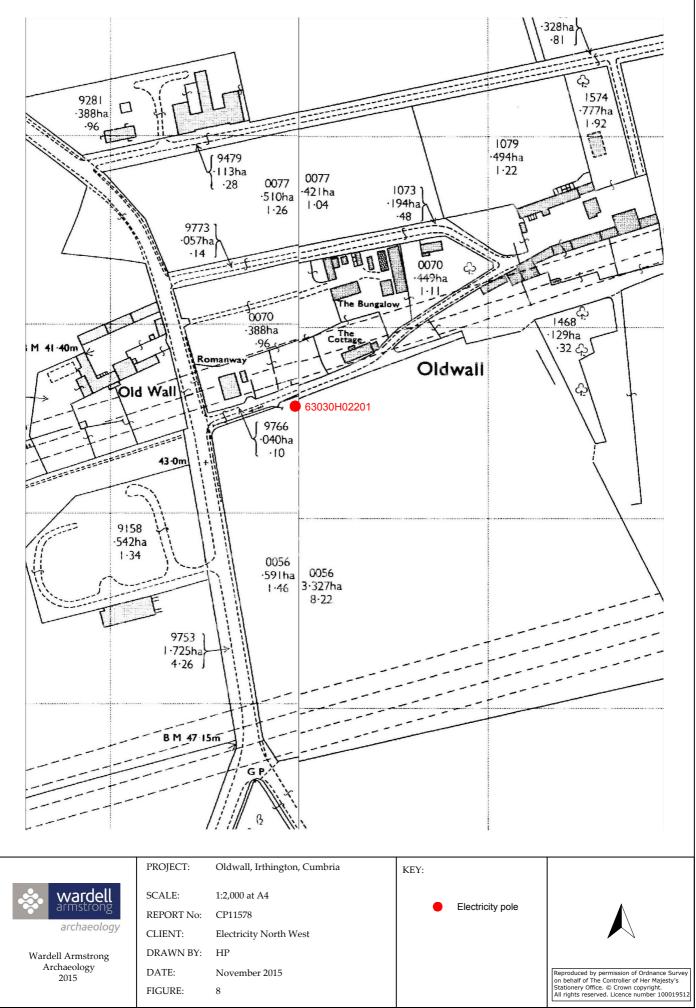


Figure 8: Ordnance Survey Map, 1974.

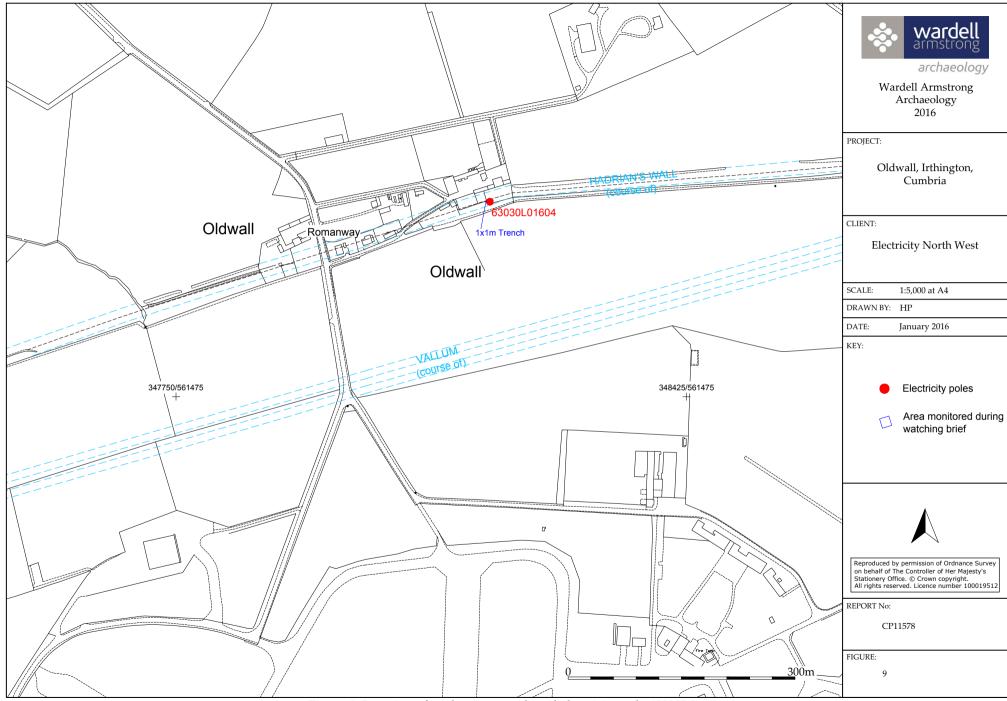


Figure 9: Location of evaluation trench and electricity pole 63030L01604.

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