

**ELECTRICITY NORTH WEST** 

LAND WEST OF THE PLOUGH, BANKS, CUMBRIA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RAPID DESK BASED ASSESSMENT AND WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

**April 2017** 



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#### **ELECTRICITY NORTH WEST**

Land west of The Plough, Banks, Cumbria

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report** 

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DESK BASED ASSESSMENTS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION
GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY
TOPOGRAPHIC AND LANDSCAPE SURVEY
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



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#### **SUMMARY**

Wardell Armstrong Ltd were commissioned by Electricity North West to undertake a rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief on groundworks occurring during electricity works on land southwest of The Plough, Banks, Cumbria (NY 57099 64563), associated with the relocation of a pole and associated stay. The work was required at the request of Mike Collins, Hadrian's Wall Officer for Historic England as the site lies within the area of the Scheduled Monument of Hadrian's Wall and vallum, located between the field boundary west of Coombe Crag and Banks Green Cottage and the road to Lanercost at Banks in wall miles 51 and 52' (NHL 1010996).

Despite the high potential for archaeological deposits of the Roman period in particular surviving within the immediate vicinity of the archaeological monitoring site, the possible presence of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century quarry on the site, shown on the Lanercost Enclosure map of 1803 (Figure 4), may have had an impact on any previously surviving archaeological remains.

The watching brief was undertaken on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and monitored the excavation of a pit for the new locations of an electricity pole and associated stay 63027L03201A.

The pit was excavated to a depth of c.1.8m and was 0.6m in diameter.

No finds or features associated with the Hadrian's Wall frontier system or any other archaeological remains were observed during the investigation.



### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Wardell Armstrong Ltd (WA) thank Gregg Davies of Electricity North West for commissioning the project, and for all their assistance throughout the work. Also, WA thank Mike Collins, Hadrian's Wall Archaeologist for Historic England, for all assistance.

The rapid desk-based assessment was undertaken by Ariane Buschmann and the archaeological watching brief monitoring was undertaken by Sue Thompson, who also wrote the report. The figures were produced by Helen Phillips. The project was managed by Frank Giecco and the report edited by David Jackson.



#### 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Circumstances

- 1.1.1 In March 2017, Wardell Armstrong Archaeology (WA) undertook an archaeological watching brief on electricity maintenance works occurring southwest of The Plough, Banks, Cumbria (NGR: NY 57099 64563; Figure 1). The work was commissioned by Gregg Davies of Electricity North West, in advance of pole refurbishment works at the site.
- 1.1.2 Archaeological work was required as the proposed refurbishment works were situated within the scheduled area of 'Hadrian's Wall and vallum between the field boundary west of Coombe Crag and Banks Green Cottage, and the road to Lanercost at Banks in wall miles 51 and 52' (NHL 1010996).
- 1.1.3 The international importance of the surviving remains of Hadrian's Wall has been recognised through designation as a World Heritage Site (WHS). Given that the electricity works were occurring within such an archaeologically sensitive area, Mike Collins, Hadrian's Wall Archaeologist for Historic England, requested the archaeological monitoring of all excavations occurring as part of the electricity works.

### 1.2 Project Documentation

- 1.2.1 The project conforms to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted by WAA (2016a), which was prepared in consultation with Mike Collins of Historic England. The WSI was approved by Mike Collins prior to the fieldwork taking place.
- 1.2.2 This report outlines the work undertaken on site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological monitoring.

### 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 archaeological watching briefs* (2014a), and in accordance with the WAA fieldwork manual (2017).
- 2.1.2 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs (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 A rapid desk-based assessment was prepared by WA Ltd as part of this programme of works and is included within this report. This 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 0.5km from the site monitored during the watching brief.

## 2.3 The Watching Brief

- 2.3.1 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of all excavations occurring as part of the electricity woks. This consisted of the excavation of a hole for a new electricity pole, to a depth of 1.8m using an auger, and the excavation of a second hole for the new supporting stay, between 1.6m and 2.0m deep (Crowdy 2012, 3). The general aims of the monitoring 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.
- 2.3.2 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 within Tullie House Museum, with copies of the report sent to the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) in Kendal, Cumbria, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier WA 17, LWP /A, CP11918.
- 2.3.3 Wardell Armstrong Ltd 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 WA Ltd as a part of this national project. The OASIS reference for the project is: wardella2-279974.



#### 3 BACKGROUND

## 3.1 Location and Geological Context

- 3.1.1 The site is located within the small settlement of Banks, approximately 3km northeast of Brampton, Cumbria (NGR: NY 57099 64563; Figure 1). The site monitored during the watching brief, was undertaken on an unadopted track to the west of The Plough (Figure 2).
- 3.1.2 The underlying solid geology within the area of investigation is mapped as limestone, sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of the Tyne Limestone Formation deposited during the Carboniferous Period approximately 331 to 339 million years. This is overlain by superficial deposits of diamicton of the Devensian Till deposited 2 million years ago during the Quaternary Period (BGS 2016).

## 3.2 Historic Landscape Character

- 3.2.1 The Historic Landscape Characterisation (accessed 2016) positions Banks within 'Area 27: Irthing Valley', a mixed pattern of modern and older settlements and field enclosure, moderate legibility of landscape elements of medieval origin in Cumbria: The River Irthing and its tributaries are the main topographical features of this character area. Much of the character area is within the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage site visual impact zone. The line of the Wall runs to the north of the River Irthing, and for part of its length forms a discernible feature within the local fieldscape. The settlement pattern is predominantly dispersed, with 39% of the discrete settlements pre-dating 1770, and 47% are of 19th century origin. Many of the discrete settlements are around the edge of former common waste, and some of the discrete and nucleated 19th century settlements relate to small-scale rural Industry, including coal mining (CHLCP 2009, 75).
- 3.2.2 Although much of the settlement pattern appears to be of relatively recent origin, the field systems have much older roots. The character area is dominated by ancient enclosures with former common arable areas associated with the principal older nucleations, such as Walton, Brampton, Farlam and Talkin. Planned enclosures are largely confined to low moorlands. The remainder of the ancient woodland is confined to the valleys of the River Irthing, Cam Beck, King Water and River Gelt (CHLCP 2009, 75).

### 3.3 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.3.1 A rapid desk-based research exercise was carried out to provide a background to the



works, and to outline the archaeological potential of the area and the surrounding landscape to a distance of up to 0.5km, using online access to Cumbria's HER (Cumbria HER 2016) as well as other readily available sources, referenced as relevant within the text. The results are outlined below:

- 3.3.2 *Prehistoric:* there is no known evidence for prehistoric activity occurring within the 0.5km study area.
- 3.3.3 *Romano-British:* the site lies within a particularly significant part of the Hadrian's Wall corridor, as it contains three well-preserved and upstanding turrets and a signal tower. The archaeological remains, especially the remains of both the Turf and Stone Wall, *vallum* and Military Way, contain important information regarding the function and development of the frontier system over time (Wooler and Jackson 2014, 12).
- 3.3.4 Turret 52a, to the east of the site, is the nearest of the turret and milecastle structures, and is known as Banks East Turret. It survives as an upstanding stone feature, with walls up to a maximum height of 1.75m. Excavations in 1933 by Simpson and Richmond found remains of the demolished Turf Wall abutting its east wall. It was used continuously until at least the end of the 3rd century AD.
- 3.3.5 The exact course of the Roman road known as the Military Way, which ran along the corridor between the Wall and the vallum linking the turrets, milecastles and forts, is known intermittently throughout this section of the Scheduled Monument, where it survives as an earthwork feature. Opposite the disused quarry west of Bankshead Farm the Military Way survives as a terrace, 3m-5m wide, on the north side of an old hedge line. Occasional rises in hedgelines denote traces of its course.
- 3.3.6 The *vallum* survives intermittently as an upstanding earthwork visible on the ground throughout this section. It is best preserved at the east end of this section where the ditch averages 2.5m deep to the north, and the north and south mounds are nowhere more than 0.6m high. Elsewhere the *vallum* survives either as a ploughed down scarp up to 0.9m high and the ditch 0.8m high, or there are no surface traces at all. Excavations in the vicinity of Pike Hill Tower in 1932 by Simpson found the ditch to be rock cut for at least 46m and crossings were noted at 41.5m intervals in the south mound. Excavations in advance of construction work at Banks in 1977 by Austen identified the north edge of the *vallum* ditch.
- 3.3.7 *Medieval:* there is evidence for medieval settlement in the vicinity of the site. To the north-east of Banks, is the site of a medieval enclosure castle, Triermain, and to the south-west is the settlement of Lanercost associated with the medieval monastery



- that now forms the parish church. The place name Banks is first referenced in 1256 and the settlement appears to have medieval origins (Newman 2014).
- 3.3.8 *Post-Medieval*: Hodskinson and Donald's Map of Cumberland 1774 depicts several properties at 'Banks', to the west of the present site, and at 'Banks Head', which appear to be clustered on the south side of the road at this date. No buildings are shown at the location of the present Plough building (Figure 3). The 'Picts Wall', the route of Hadrian's Wall, is shown hachured, and running approximately parallel with the main east-west road.
- 3.3.9 The Lanercost Enclosure Award Map of 1803 (Figure 4), shows the edge of the enclosure in red, with buildings lining the road. At this date, the proposed development site lies within the vicinity of Banks hill, and appears to have been in use as a 'freestone' quarry, with The Plough, presumably the building in green, to the east (Figure 4). Joseph Parker appears to have been at The Plough, with the quarry owned by the Lord of Carlisle. The farmstead of Callees is shown to the north-west (HER 41498) and Banksfoot to the south-west (HER 41499), indicating the agricultural nature of the study area. Greenwood's plan of 1823 (Figure 5) also shows Callees and shows the area monitored during the watching brief as being at Banks Hill, with one building now shown on the north side of the road, which could possibly be the plough.
- 3.3.10 The Plough itself dates to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the oldest part stands on the foundations of Hadrian's Wall. It was formerly an inn, labelled as '*Plough P.H.*' on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1864 (Figure 6). It was no longer labelled as a public house on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1901 (Figure 7), and at some time after 1926 (Figure 8) but before 1974 (Figure 9), it had become Banks' Post Office. It is presently a domestic dwelling.
- 3.3.11 The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1864 (Figure 6) shows several quarries in the vicinity of the archaeological monitoring site, including one to the north-east, 'quarries', a limekiln to the south-east (HER 10017) and a further quarry to the southwest. The 'freestone' quarry shown within the immediate vicinity of the site on the 1803 map is no longer depicted (Figure 4). These are all labelled as 'old' by the publication of the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1901 (Figure 7).
- 3.3.12 *Modern:* the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1926 (Figure 8), shows little change since the 1901 edition (Figure 7), although the former quarries, earlier labelled as 'old' are no longer labelled at all. Between 1926 (Figure 8) and 1974 (Figure 9), a more formalised track has been established, the present unadopted road, to the west



of the former Plough Inn. Otherwise the area remains much the same.

3.3.13 Previous archaeological works in the vicinity of Banks, also occurring as a result of electricity maintenance works, have not encountered any finds or features of archaeological significance (Wooler and Jackson 2014; Mounsey 2012). An archaeological evaluation was undertaken to the west of the present site, at Riggside, and although this encountered no finds or features associated with the Hadrian's Wall frontier system, a small assemblage of medieval pottery was recovered, which, together with other finds from the same garden, suggests medieval activity in the immediate vicinity (Buschmann, Jackson and Thompson 2016, 3).



#### 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The watching brief was undertaken on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The archaeological watching brief monitored all groundworks associated with the replacement of an electricity pole and associated stay wire (Pole 63027L03201A; Figure 2).

## 4.2 Results

- 4.2.1 A hole was excavated for the location of a new electricity pole measuring c. 0.6 x 0.6m and was 1.8m deep, exposing a thin deposit of dark grey-brown sandy silt topsoil which measured a maximum of 0.10m, and was above 0.4m of a mixed dark brown silty sand subsoil. Natural geological deposits of yellow/grey sandy clay were reached at around 0.5m below the current ground surface (Plate 1).
- 4.2.2 A cast iron pipe was noted just below the ground surface which extended east. An area of red sand just below the turf on the west side of the hole probably relates to this disused service pipe.
- 4.2.3 The site of the new electric pole was located to the south of the raised bank to the west of The Plough. While it was hoped that this watching brief might characterise the significance of an earthen mound, the location of the pole was actually around 6m from the centre of the mound and did not therefore impact upon it.
- 4.2.4 No archaeological remains were seen during the groundworks.



Plate 1: Hole excavated for new electric pole; looking east



## 4.3 Archaeological Finds and Environmental Sampling

- 4.3.1 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery and glass were recovered from both the topsoil and subsoil during the watching brief. The pottery was domestic tableware, including transfer printed ware plates. The glass comprised fragments of bottle glass. The finds are of low archaeological potential and were not retained.
- 4.3.2 No environmental samples were recovered during the groundworks.



### 5 CONCLUSIONS

## 5.1 **Summary**

- 5.1.1 The archaeological watching brief monitored all excavations associated with a new electric pole placement west of The Plough, Banks. Nineteenth century ceramics and glass were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil. No remains of archaeological interest were encountered during the groundworks.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high potential for archaeological deposits of Roman date in particular, surviving within the immediate vicinity of the archaeological monitoring site, the possible presence of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century quarry on the site, shown on the Lanercost Enclosure map of 1803 (Figure 4), may have had an impact on any previously surviving remains.



#### 6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Lanercost Enclosure Award Map of 1803 (CACC QRE 1/75)

Greenwood's Map of Cumberland, 1823

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Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1901 (25" to 1 mile scale)

Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1926 (25" to 1 mile scale)

Ordnance Survey Map, 1974 (1:2,500 scale)

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## **APPENDIX 1: FIGURES**

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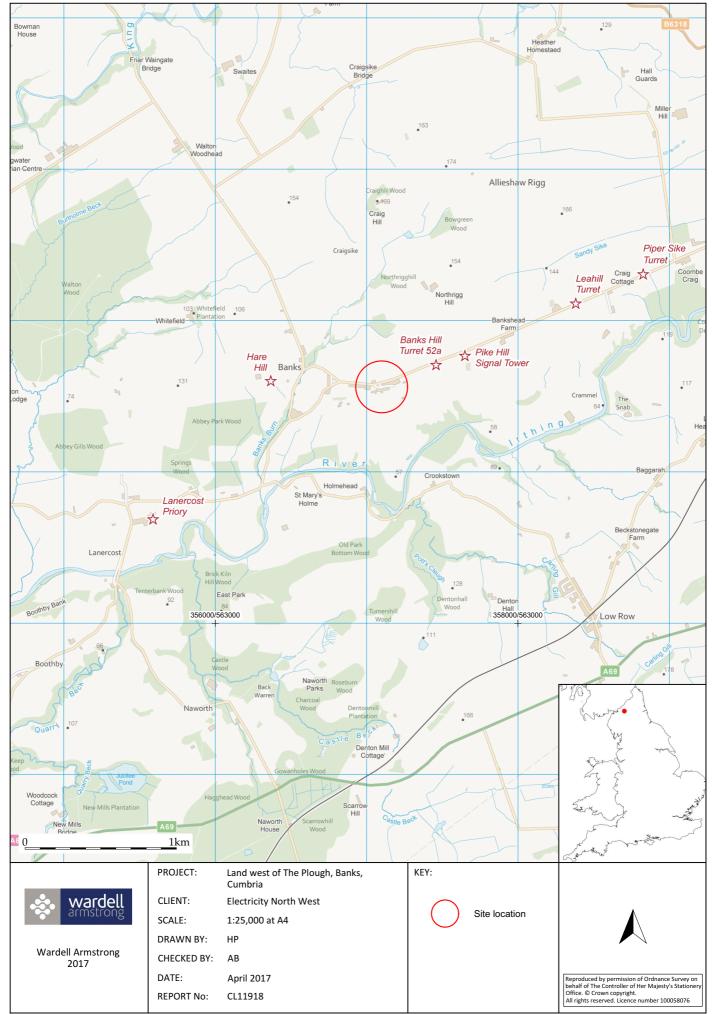


Figure 1: Site location.

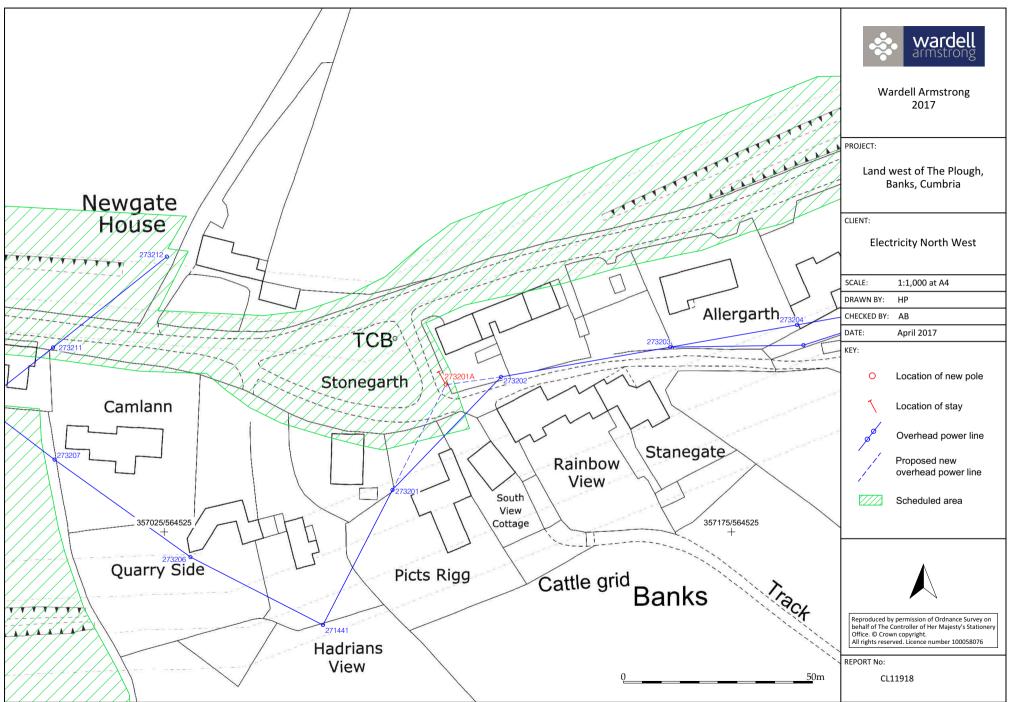


Figure 2: Detailed site location showing area monitored during watching brief.



Figure 3: Hodskinson and Donald's Map of Cumberland, 1774.

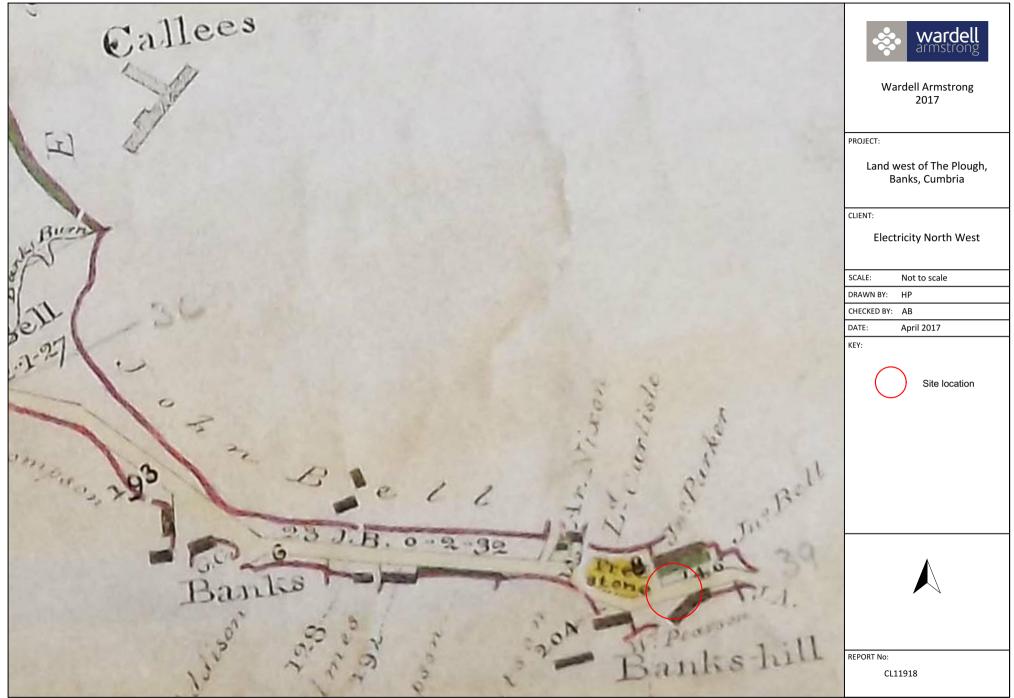


Figure 4: Lanercost Enclosure Award Map, 1803.

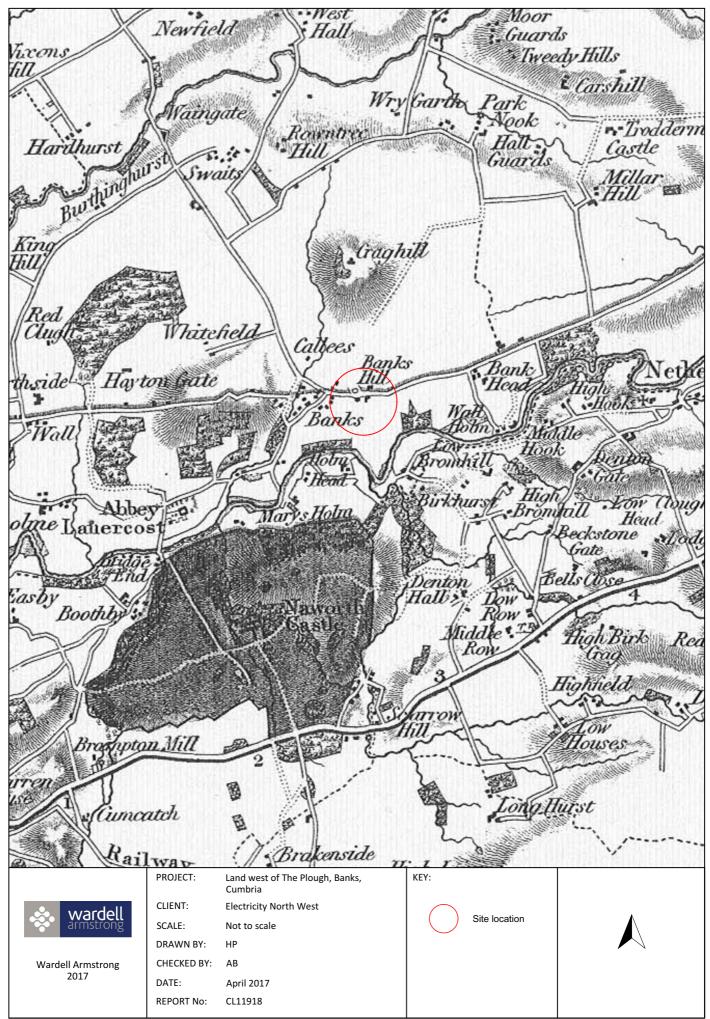


Figure 5: Greenwood's Map of Cumberland, 1823.

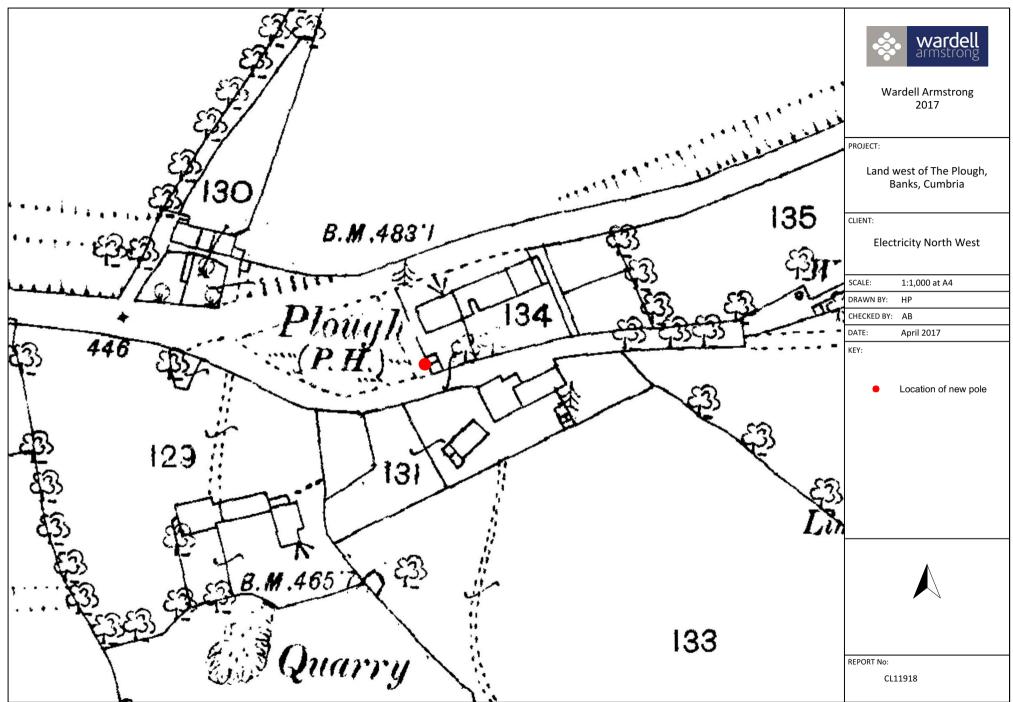


Figure 6: First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1864 (25 inches to 1 mile scale).

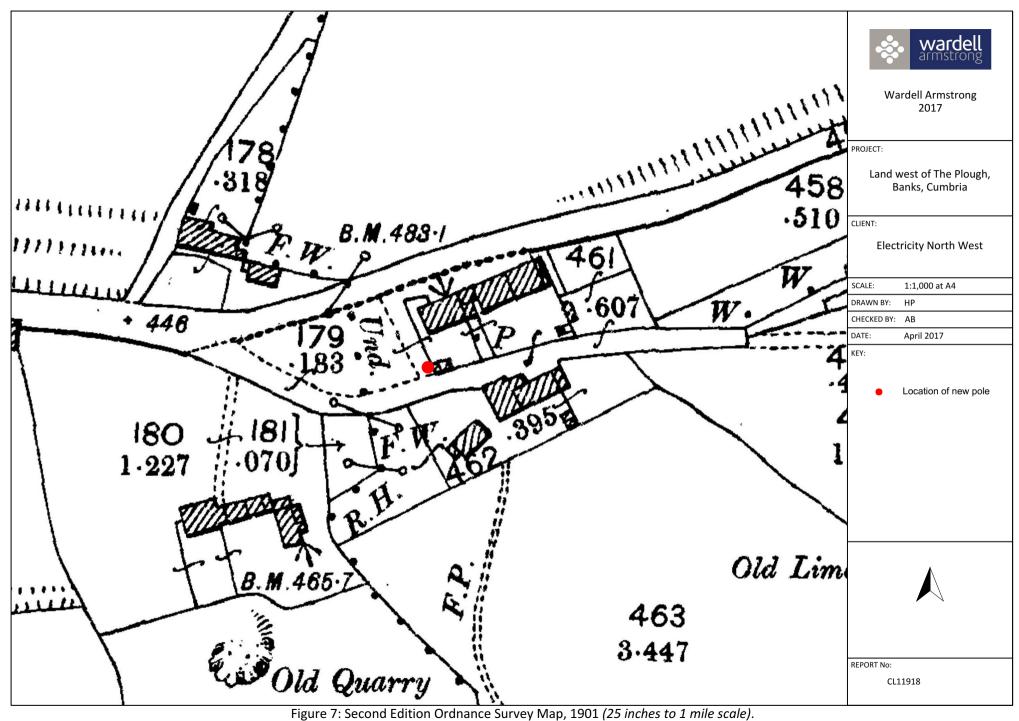


Figure 7: Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1901 (25 inches to 1 mile scale).

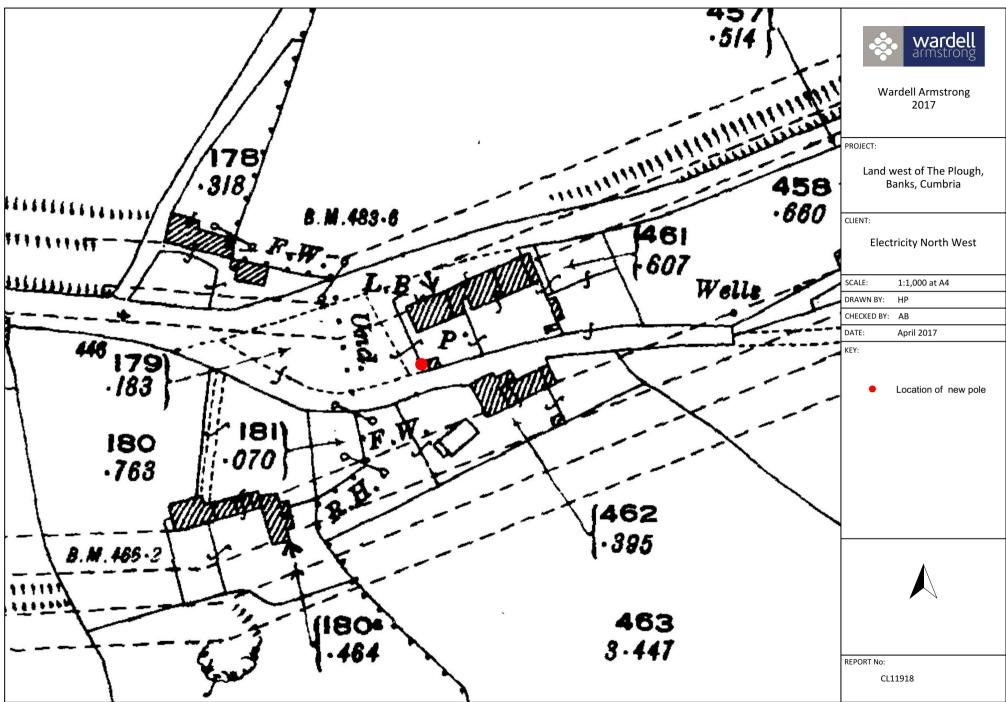


Figure 8: Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1926 (25 inches to 1 mile scale).

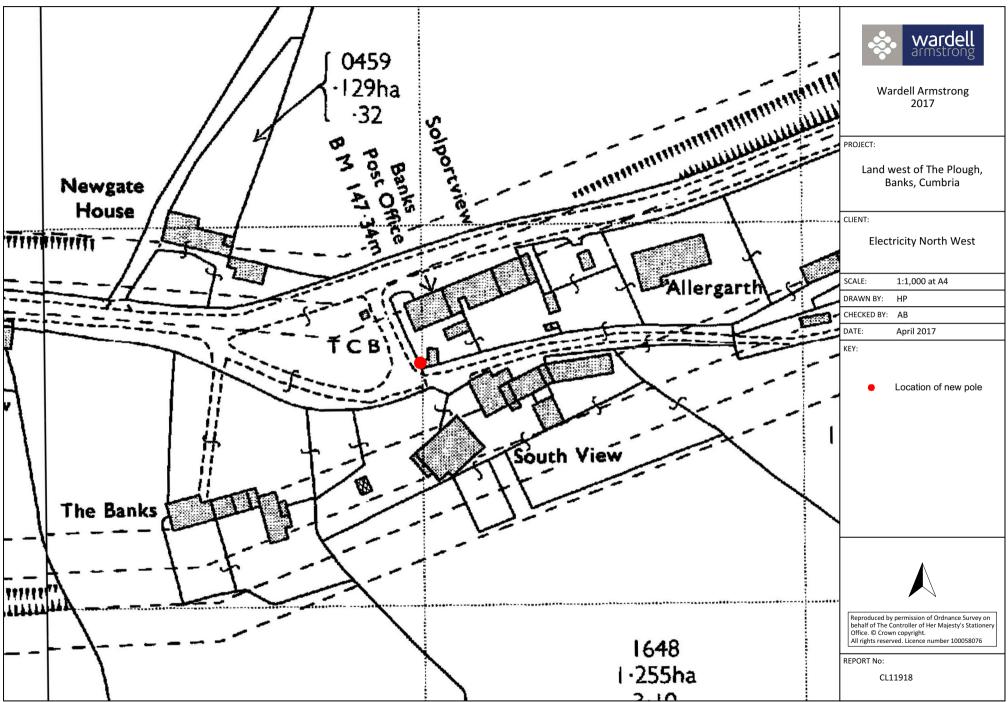


Figure 9: Ordnance Survey Map, 1974 (1:2,500 scale).

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