

Project SLAM, Marne Barracks, Catterick, North Yorkshire

archaeological monitoring

on behalf of

Bovis Lend Lease

Report 1358

November 2005

Archaeological Services

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring conducted during the Project SLAM development at Marne Barracks, Catterick. The works comprised the monitoring of the construction of a new storm water drain that connected the new development to the existing drainage network.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Bovis Lend Lease, and conducted by Archaeological Services in accordance with instructions from Debut Services Ltd, Bovis Lend Lease and Defence Estates.

Results

- 1.3 No significant archaeological remains were identified during this monitoring programme.

2. Project background

Location (Figure 1)

- 2.1 Marne Barracks, formerly RAF Catterick, is situated immediately south of Catterick village in North Yorkshire, and is bounded to the west by the A1 and to the east by the River Swale. The Project SLAM development (centred on NGR: SE 2510 9695) covers 11ha of land to the north of the runway, but within the perimeter track and the monitored area was located in the southeast corner of this development.

Development proposal

- 2.2 The proposal was to construct a series of modular accommodation blocks for service personnel, along with associated car parking and services. The monitoring programme related to the construction of a new storm water drain as part of this development.

Objective

- 2.3 The objective of the monitoring programme was to identify, excavate and record any significant archaeological features within the development area in advance of construction, interpreting them in the context of the known archaeological and historical framework and assessing their information potential and significance.

Methods statement

- 2.4 The works have been undertaken in accordance with instructions from Debut Services Ltd, Bovis Lend Lease and Defence Estates.

Dates

- 2.5 Fieldwork was undertaken between 21st March and 7th April 2005. This report was prepared on 8th November 2005.

Personnel

- 2.6 Fieldwork was conducted by Alan Rae, Mark Randerson and Andy Platell. This report was prepared by Andy Platell with illustrations by Martin Railton. The Project Manager was Duncan Hale.

Archive/OASIS

- 2.7 The site code is **MBC 05**, for **Marne Barracks, Catterick 2005** and the OASIS code for the site is archaeol3-11155. It is intended to deposit the site archive with the Yorkshire Museum at York at the end of the project.

Acknowledgements

- 2.8 Archaeological Services is grateful for the assistance of the Quartermaster and service personnel of Marne Barracks, staff of Bovis Lend Lease, Gallifordtry Construction Ltd, Debut Management Services and Defence Estates in facilitating this project.

3. Landuse, topography and geology

- 3.1 At the time of the monitoring works, the development area had been levelled to the top of natural deposits during an earlier phase of archaeological intervention (Archaeological Services 2005b) and construction work had begun on this levelled surface.
- 3.2 With the exception of Castle Hills, the land is predominantly level with a mean elevation of *c.*53m AOD. The solid geology of the site comprises Carboniferous Millstone Grit which is overlain by river gravels, except for the area around Castle Hills. The ‘hills’ are composed of Boulder Clay, with a limited area of glacial sands and gravels immediately to the west and alluvium to the east along the line of the river.

4. Historical and archaeological background

- 4.1 The historical and archaeological background to the site has been extensively covered by an assessment report (Archaeological Services 2001a), an evaluation report (Archaeological Services 2002) and an excavation report (Archaeological Services 2005b). The main findings of these reports are summarised below.

The prehistoric period (up to 70 AD)

- 4.2 A Mesolithic knapping floor was identified during the excavation phase of works, containing over 1100 chert flakes. Overlying this was a large Neolithic palisaded enclosure consisting of two concentric sub-circular palisades that enclosed a total area of *c.*2.75ha (Archaeological Services 2005b). These add to a growing body of evidence for prehistoric occupation of the area that includes a Neolithic cursus, ring ditches and pit alignments at Scorton (Topping 1982); a huge Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age chambered cairn and possible henge at Catterick Racecourse (Moloney 1996, Moloney *et al.* forthcoming); and a possible Bronze Age stone-filled ring-ditch to the south of the runway at Marne Barracks (Archaeological Services 2002).

The Roman period (70 AD to 5th century AD)

- 4.3 The Roman fort and town are located on the banks of the River Swale at Catterick Bridge. Civilian settlement was also concentrated further south along Dere Street at Baines Farm, to the west of the development site (Wilson 1984, Wilson 2002). In addition, a substantial Roman building, possibly part of a villa complex, is present in the centre of the barracks (Hildyard 1955, Wilson *et al.* 1996). Romano-British field systems occur to both the north and the south of the runway (Geoquest Associates 1994, Archaeological Services 2002) and also to the west of the A1 (Wilson 1984, Wilson 2002, Archaeological Services 2005a). These field systems were investigated during the excavation phase of archaeological works and in addition, two areas of sinuous Roman ditch were identified towards Castle Hills, producing 1st to early 2nd century pottery (Archaeological Services 2005b).

The early medieval period (5th century AD to 1066 AD)

- 4.4 Documentary evidence indicates that Catterick remained an important site throughout the early medieval period with several royal marriages and baptisms taking place there (Cosgrave & Mynors 1969, Whitelock 1955, Wilson *et al* 1996). It has been suggested that the later medieval motte and bailey on Castle Hills overlies an earlier Anglian royal vill, although evidence for this remains largely conjectural (Wilson *et al.* 1996). Anglo-Saxon *Grubenhauser* and burials have been found at a number of locations in the Catterick area, including areas within Marne Barracks (Geoquest Associates 1994, Wilson *et al.* 1996).

The medieval period (1066 AD to 1540 AD)

- 4.5 Castle Hills, immediately northeast of the runway, is thought to be a Norman motte and bailey castle and is a scheduled monument. A number of authors (e.g. MacLauchlan 1849, Wilson *et al.* 1996) have suggested that it overlies earlier earthworks although this has never been proven. Ridge and furrow field systems are clearly visible on geophysical survey plans of the airfield (Archaeological Services 2001a), although these proved ephemeral during excavation (Archaeological Services 2002, 2005b).

The post-medieval period (1541 AD to 1899 AD)

- 4.6 No records survive for the date of the parliamentary enclosure of Catterick parish. Certainly this was carried out before the date of the earliest detailed plan in 1739 which shows the field pattern to be little different to that of today, save for the removal of numerous field boundaries (Archaeological Services 2001a). The post-medieval Oran Road is shown on this and later maps and proved to be a properly constructed turnpike road (Archaeological Services 2005b). Between 1822 and 1842 the turnpike was realigned back to the line of the current A1 with the section across the airfield reverting to a track.

The modern period (1900 AD to present)

- 4.7 A Royal Flying Corps unit was posted to Catterick in 1916, beginning the development of what would become RAF Catterick (Francis 2001). The base was redeveloped during the late 1930s as the threat of war increased. As part of this development the runway was extended and hardened, involving considerable landscaping of the site. Most of the development area was covered with up to 1m of infill dating from this landscaping, with smaller areas showing evidence for truncation (Archaeological Services 2005b). Following the war, the airfield became the headquarters of the RAF Regiment until 1994, when the RAF station was closed and the site taken over by Land Command.

Previous archaeological works

- 4.8 Numerous archaeological interventions have taken place at Marne Barracks over a number of years. These are more fully described in our earlier assessment report (Archaeological Services 2001a), which included desk-based research and geophysical, topographical and auger surveys. Following on from this, further geophysical surveying in the northern part of the base (Archaeological Services 2001b) and evaluation by trial trenching

(Archaeological Services 2002) was carried out. Full excavation was carried out across the development area in 2004, in advance of the current development (Archaeological Services 2005b).

5. The monitoring programme

- 5.1 The monitored drain was constructed eastwards from approximately the centre of the palisaded enclosure to a connection with an existing drain 10m to the east of the perimeter track, slightly to the south of Castle Hills. Monitoring was carried out where it crossed the line of the inner and outer palisades on the east side of the monument and also on previously uninvestigated ground to the east of the perimeter track. Monitoring was not carried out across the remainder of excavation area 4 (which had already been archaeologically investigated and reduced to the level of natural deposits) or during the excavation through the perimeter track (since foundations for this track would be likely to have removed any archaeological deposits here).
- 5.2 No archaeological remains were identified during the monitoring programme. Although the construction trench crossed the line of the palisade, it did so at a location where, due to a lack of carbonised remains and the mixed nature of the natural gravel, this monument was particularly difficult to identify. During the excavation phase of works, it was only rarely visible here, during periods of exceptional light and drying conditions (Archaeological Services 2005b, 13).
- 5.3 No artefacts were recovered and no material suitable for environmental assessment was identified during the archaeological monitoring.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 No further works are recommended in relation to this scheme of archaeological monitoring.

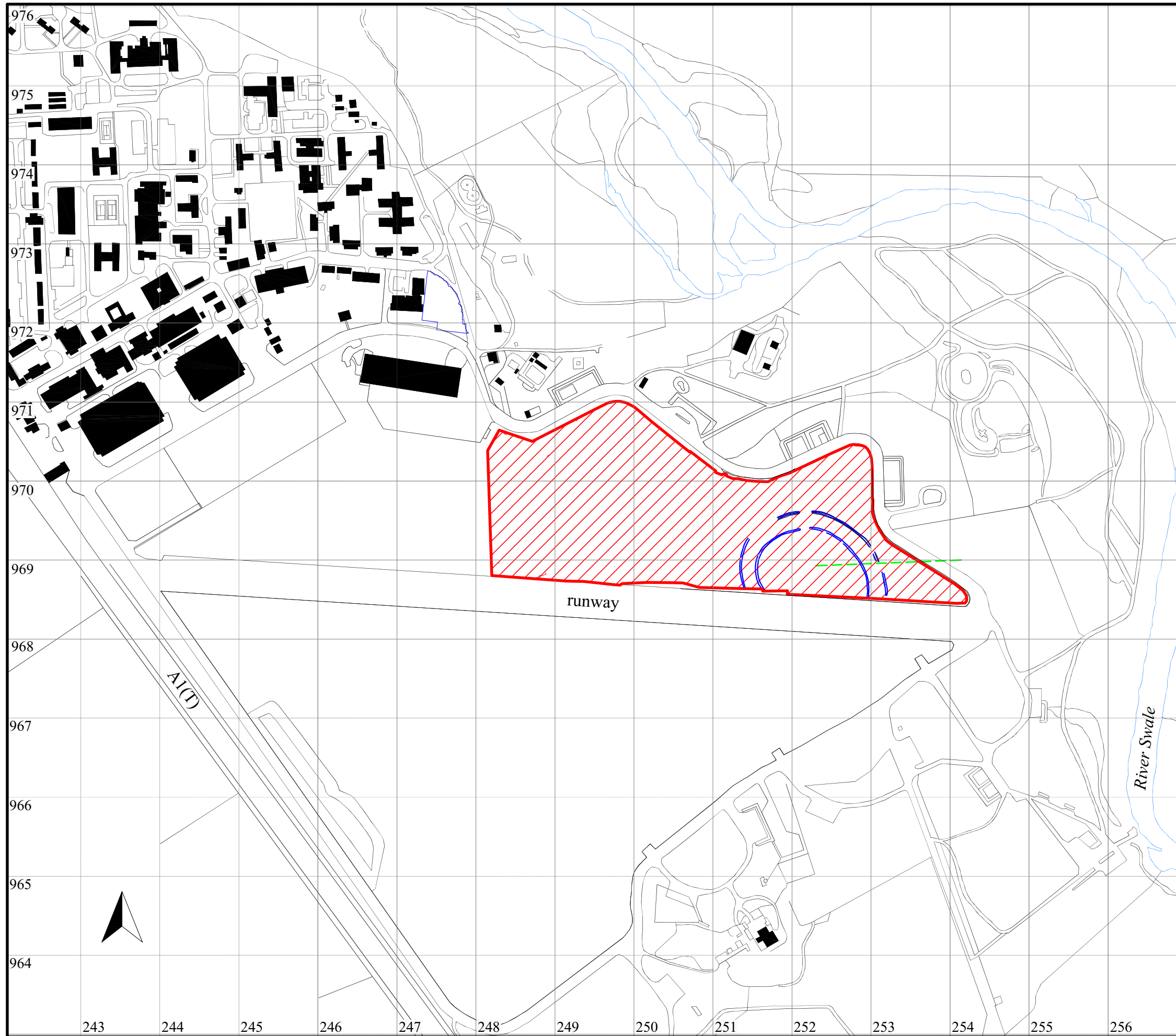
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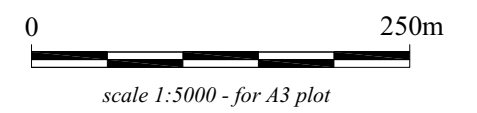
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


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Figure 1

Location plan showing drain trench

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-  area of 2004 excavation
-  outline of palisades
-  approximate course of drain trench