

**Burythorpe Quarry  
Burythorpe  
North Yorkshire  
SE 7850 6576**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

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**Non Technical Summary**

*An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd in June 2003 during the topsoil strip of Area 1 on Kennythorpe Moor. No archaeological features nor finds were recovered during this phase of work. The absence of finds is surprising considering the presence of Prehistoric features and associated finds recovered in previous Watching Briefs at the quarry. The absence of archaeological activity may be due to the topography of Area 1 which consisted of a steep slope aligned east west.*

**1. Introduction**

An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken at Burythorpe Quarry, Burythorpe, North Yorkshire (SE 7850 6576) between June 23<sup>rd</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> and July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003 by MAP Archaeological Consultancy, on behalf of Burythorpe Silica Sand Products Ltd. The Watching Brief was undertaken in order to identify and record any archaeological remains, prior to extension of the present quarry workings, under a condition attached to Planning Consent P966 (Decision No. 97/01063/CPO/MR) for mineral extraction on Kennythorpe Moor.

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**2. Site Description**

Burythorpe Quarry is located in the parish of Burythorpe, North Yorkshire, to the west of the villages of Kennythorpe and Burythorpe (Fig. 1). The current area of quarry extension is situated along the northern boundary of Kennythorpe Moor (Fig. 4. Area 1-3). Area 1 was the subject of this Archaeological Watching Brief, which was located on a moderate to steep slope, predominantly north or north-west facing.

**3. Geology**

The site is located on soils of the Rivington 1 Association, comprising well drained loamy soils over Carboniferous and Jurassic sandstone (Mackney et al. 1983).

#### **4. Archaeological Background**

Previous archaeological investigations within the boundaries of the quarry have revealed extensive evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity and settlement (Fig. 2). Excavations to the north-east of the present development area in 1989 revealed four settlement enclosures of Bronze Age date, three of which continued beyond the area of excavation, as well as three pit groups and additional boundary features (ERARC 1990 : Fig. 3).

Additional archaeological investigations at the quarry site have consisted of a programme of fieldwalking over a Roman villa site identified from aerial photographs (MAP 1992), and a small scale excavation on land to the south of the 1989 excavations, which revealed further evidence of Bronze Age occupation (MAP 1994). During an Archaeological Watching Brief in 2002 undated features along with activity of Iron Age activity was recorded.

#### **5. Method**

The overburden of vegetation and topsoil, including a previously constructed bund, was removed from the western extent of Planning Consent Area P966, over an area measuring approximately 180m x 25m (Fig. 4. Area 1). Vegetation and topsoil was not removed from a strip of land approximately 20m in width at the northern limit of Area 1. Topsoil was removed by a back-acting mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, under the supervision of an archaeologist.

#### **6. Results**

The overburden consisted of a layer of vegetation and roots within a light brownish grey silty sand matrix, measuring 0.50m in depth. This lay directly above light yellow/white natural sand with numerous black/brown concreted mineral deposits, and frequent areas of disturbance by tree roots and animal burrows. No archaeological features or artefacts were encountered.

#### **7. Conclusions**

Previous excavations and Watching Briefs at the quarry have recorded evidence for activity on the site from the Neolithic through to the medieval period. It is therefore surprising that, no features, nor finds were observed or recovered from this phase of work. The only explanation would appear to be the topography of Area 1, which is characterised by a marked slope aligned east to west. If this is the reason for the above results than one has to conclude that land to the east of Area 1 was more favoured in the prehistoric period.

## **8. References**

- Mackney, D.1983 Soils of England and Wales. Sheet 1: Northern England. Soil Survey of England and Wales
- ERARC. 1989 Sample Excavation at Burythorpe Quarry
- MAP. 1992 Fieldwalking at a Roman Villa Site – SAM 1092, Burythorpe, North Yorkshire.
- MAP. 1994 Archaeological Watching Brief, Burythorpe Quarry, North Yorkshire.
- MAP. 2002 Archaeological Watching Brief, Burythorpe Quarry, North Yorkshire