



NEGATIVE WATCHING BRIEF  
REPORT

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LAND AT BARK POTS TEA ROOM

CRASTER, NORTHUMBERLAND

prepared for

Shepherd Offshore Ltd

Project No.: 1487

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Illustrations: Dawn Knowles

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Client Shepherd Offshore Ltd

Location The Bark Pots, 9 West End, Craster, Northumberland NE66 3TS

District Alnwick

Planning Ref 14/04120/OUT

Grid Ref NU 25677 19896

OASIS Ref northern1-358622

Dates of Fieldwork 6-26 June 2019



that the shallower services across the site would have no impact upon any significant archaeological deposits that might be present at a greater depth. In addition, the new houses on plots 4-6 were to be constructed upon piled foundations, affording no opportunity for archaeological monitoring.

Prior to commencement of archaeological monitoring, the site had been the subject of clearance including demolition of the former café and removal of vegetation. In addition, a programme of remediation works had been carried out to remove contaminated ground extending across the central part of the development area including the site of the former café, house plot 3 and parts of house plots 2 and 4. Deposits had been removed to a depth of 1-1.5m and replaced with hard-core.

As a consequence of the above factors, archaeological monitoring was restricted to the north-eastern half of the site, including excavation of the 32m-long trench for the new attenuation drain along the north-western site boundary, and excavation of the footings for house-plots 1 and 2.

Excavation of the trench for the attenuation drain, designed to collect rainwater from the shallower drainage and feed it gradually into the Craster Burn at the north-eastern corner of the site, showed that the north-eastern part of the site had been subject to significant landfill in the later 20th century when levelled for use as a lorry depot. This landfill deposit was 1.2-1.6m thick and consisted of a variety of demolition debris and material such as orange plastic fencing and lorry mudguards (Plate 2). Due to the unstable nature of this material, the trench had to be dug down to a more solid deposit, revealing the former ground surface, which consisted of alluvial clay presumably deposited by over-bank flooding of the adjacent burn. Towards the south-western end of the trench, its line was crossed by a former dog-leg of the culvert containing the Craster Burn. At this point, the top of the north-western stone wall of the culvert and part of its silt infill were observed in the base of the trench 1.3m below the existing ground level (bgl.), although flooding of the trench prevented any further investigation (Plate 3). To the west of the culvert dog-leg, near the south-western end of the new trench, brown clay natural geology was observed at a depth of 1.8m bgl., directly overlain by dumps of crushed stone and gravel capped by a tarmac surface at 1.2m bgl.

At the north-eastern end of the site, the footings for the rear of house 1 cut slightly into the slope at the back (south-eastern) of the site, showing that the trackway bordering the south-eastern side of the site had been built-out using whinstone quarry debris capped by a thick deposit of quarry finings. These unstable deposits extended to a depth of c.1.3m bgl. and extended below-ground across the southern half of house plot 1 (Plate 4). They overlay a 0.2m thick layer of yellow-

brown clay, which probably represented a former soil horizon. Below this was a natural, presumably alluvial, deposit of yellow clayey sand and pebbles extending to a depth of more than 2.1m bgl. A similar sequence of deposits was seen in the footing trenches in the south-eastern part of house plot 2, where outcropping whinstone bedrock was intermittently observed at a depth of c.2m bgl.

Approximately 5m from the south-eastern edge of the development area these deposits appeared to be cut by the gently-sloping edge of what was presumably a former channel of the Craster Burn, filled with dark greenish-grey silty clays and silts. At the northern corner of house plot 2, the lowest observed part of the fill-sequence produced an early 20th-century glass bottle from a depth of c.2.0m bgl. These deposits were overlain by up to 1.5m of the same landfill deposit observed in the attenuation drain trench. To the west, the footings for house plot 2 extended into the area that had been subject to remediation works.

No significant archaeological deposits were observed during the course of the monitoring, and no pre-20th century artefacts were found.

**Documentation:** Two accompanying figures and four accompanying plates

**Archive deposition:** Internal at NAA

## References

- Northumberland County Council Conservation Team (NCCCT) (2015) *Land at The Bark Pots Tea Room, 9 West End, Craster, Northumberland, NE66 3TS: Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Application ref: 14/04120/OUT. NC ref: A11/3: 21436.
- NAA (2018) *Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster, Northumberland: Archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd Report 18/110.



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Land at Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster: site location

Figure 1



Land at Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster: proposed development plan showing areas of archaeological monitoring

Figure 2



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*Land at Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster: view looking east along the site with concrete building footings in foreground*

*Plate 1*



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*Land at Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster: eastern end of attenuation drain trench showing modern landfill above former ground surface*

*Plate 2*



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*Land at Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster: dog-leg section of stream culvert in base of attenuation drain trench, culvert wall base below left end of 1m scale*

*Plate 3*



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*Land at Bark Pots Tea Room, Craster: quarry debris overlying natural deposits at south corner of House Plot 1*

*Plate 4*