

CTBN14/001

25 CASTLE TERRACE, BERWICK UPON TWEED

Archaeological Evaluation

for Nash Partnership

14/00511/FUL

April 2014

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25 CASTLE STREET, BERWICK UPON TWEED

Archaeological Evaluation

Summary

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Nash Partnership to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 25 Castle Terrace, Berwick-upon-Tweed in support of a planning application (ref 14/00511/FUL). The site is located immediately west of a scheduled area at 21-23 Castle Terrace (ref 1019902). Three trenches were excavated totaling 27.5m². The depth of the trenches varied between 0.7m and 0.9m below the existing ground surface to a maximum depth of 47.7m OD. A single east-west aligned gully was recorded at the south end of Trench 1, close to the south eastern limit of the proposed development. No features relating to the scheduled medieval churchyard were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Nash Partnership to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 25 Castle Terrace, Berwick-upon-Tweed in support of a planning application (ref 14/00511/FUL). The proposed development involves the demolition of an existing house and garage at the address and construction of a new dwelling. The objectives of the evaluation were to provide further information about the archaeological resource and to enable appropriate decisions to be reached regarding the project design, planning submission and any further mitigation measures; in keeping with current policy and guidance (National Planning Policy Framework).

2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located at NGR: NT 99082 53695; 330m north-west of Berwick Castle at the north-western edge of Berwick-upon-Tweed (Illus 1). It is positioned on a high cliff above the north bank of the River Tweed with extensive views over the Tweed Valley. The site is around 48m OD and is underlain by Fell Sandstone Formation – Sandstone, itself overlain by Devensian Till (British Geological Survey website; <http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

The immediate environs consist of residential housing developments to the north, west and east and gardens to the south. The site is currently occupied by a residential house, garage and garden.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies within the settlement of Bondington, an abandoned medieval village which lay outside the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed. The name of the village indicates a Saxon origin and it is mentioned in the Kelso Chartulary (1128-1158), but there is no reference to Bondington in the Scotch Rolls of 1336. The advent of the Anglo-Scottish wars in the 14th

century led to the creation of defences for the town and the abandonment of areas as part of the retreat within the town walls of Berwick-upon-Tweed; it is likely that Bondington was deserted at this time.

Excavations by Headland Archaeology (Jones 2007) identified possible remains relating to Bondington in a programme of excavations located around 500m northwest of the site; on land adjacent to Cheviot House, Castle Terrace.

The first cartographic evidence for a structure on the proposed development site is the 1947 Ordnance Survey (showing revisions of 1938) that depicts a building under construction, along with neighbouring plots that include the adjacent number 23.

A report in the Berwick Advertiser newspaper from March 1941 mentions the discovery of human remains in several different areas of 21 Castle Terrace and a human skull was recovered during the construction of the present house at 23 Castle Terrace. A rescue excavation at 21 and 23 Castle Terrace in 1998 (The Archaeological Practice 1999) uncovered upstanding and below-ground remains of a church and multiple burials within an associated graveyard, including complete skeletons and stone coffins with elaborately carved slabs. A total of 45 densely packed graves were excavated and the excavators estimated at least 400 burials were contained within the graveyard. Following excavation, the plots of 21 and 23 Castle Terrace were scheduled on the advice of English Heritage (ref 1019902).

The church is believed to be one of three in this location known from medieval documents to have been abandoned; the nunnery of St Leonard, and the churches of St Lawrence and St Mary the Virgin, with the latter the most likely candidate. The excavation was unable to identify boundaries indicating the limit of the graveyard; however a Local Board of Health plan of 1852 depicts a large plot of land south of the Duns Road whose boundaries may reflect the site of the church and graveyard. According to this plan the western boundary of the site is broadly similar to the present western boundary of 23 Castle Terrace, although on a different alignment.

The significance of the archaeological resource lies in the abandonment of the church in the 14th century which means any remains are unlikely to have been disturbed by subsequent burials and / or construction (as occurs with churches that continue

to be used). This narrow period of existence (12th-14th century) points to an important resource with potential to make a significant contribution to the understanding of the late medieval period in the Border region.

4 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

In general, the purpose of the evaluation was to provide sufficient evidence for confident prediction of the archaeological significance and potential of the proposed development site.

More specific aims of the evaluation included:

- Establishing if any remains associated with the medieval settlement of Bondington survive within the development site
- Establishing if remains of the scheduled church and graveyard site extend into the development site
- Establishing the location, extent, nature and date of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the accessible areas targeted for trenching.
- Establishing the integrity and state of preservation of archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the accessible areas.

The results of the evaluation will be used to inform and support the planning application. Any additional phases of work would likely be covered by conditions attached to planning consent and would be subject to Written Schemes of Investigation, agreed in writing in advance of any further mitigation works.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Site works

The work was undertaken as specified in the WSI. The trenches were opened with a mechanical

excavator, suitably equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. All trenches were excavated by machine under direct archaeological supervision to remove topsoil and deposits of modern make-up. Excavation was undertaken in controlled spits with machine excavation terminating at the top of the natural geology or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was encountered first. Spoil was stored beside the trench.

Excavation of archaeological deposits and features required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation continued by hand. On completion of machine excavation, all faces of the trench that require examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools where required. The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in all the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits have been identified.

A sufficient quantity (to adequately evaluate the site) of identified features were investigated and recorded. No features were wholly excavated.

5.2 Recording

All aspects of the work were undertaken in accordance with the current relevant Standards and Guidance for archaeological evaluation of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2009).

All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance for conducting archaeological evaluations. All contexts were given unique numbers and can be found in Appendix 1. All recording was undertaken on *pro forma* record cards. Digital images were taken; a graduated metric scale was clearly visible. Digital images were also taken for illustrative purposes. A full list of the photographic record can be found in Appendix 1

5.3 Reporting and Archives

The results of the works are presented below. A summary report has been prepared for submission to the OASIS database (headland1-177223).

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited in the County Sites and

Monuments Record to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit. The records (paper and digital) will be archived according to best practice guidelines set out by the Archaeological Archiving Forum (July 2007).

6 RESULTS

A total of three trenches were excavated (see Illus 1), comprising approximately 28.5 m², equating to an approximate 10% sample of the available area. The trenches were located in order to gain the optimal coverage of a limited area focusing on the location of the proposed new development footprint.

Two trenches were excavated to the rear of the existing property (Trench 1 and 2) with the third trench (Trench 3) located to the south-east corner of the courtyard to the front of the property.

The two trenches to the rear were located on the raised garden area immediately south of the upstanding house. Both trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 1m; revealing the geological subsoil. In Trench 1 (Illus 2), this subsoil comprised a light reddish brown clayey sand with occasional stone inclusions. This differed slightly from Trench 2 (Illus 3) where the geological subsoil contained frequent stone inclusions with a more clayey till formation. The geological subsoil was reached at a depth of between 47.7m OD (at the south end) and 47.8m OD (at the north end) in Trench 1 and between 48m OD (at the east end) and 48.2m OD (at the west end) in Trench 2.

A single east/west aligned linear gully was recorded cutting the geological subsoil at 47.7m OD at the south end of Trench 1 (Illus 4). The Gully [003] was 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep with steep sides leading to a concave base. It was filled with homogeneous mid-reddish brown clayey sand with occasional small stone inclusions. No evidence relating to its function or date was identified.

Both trenches recorded a shallow layer of subsoil (002) overlying the geology. This was more evident in Trench 1 where up to 0.2m was recorded. A single small shard of medieval pottery was recovered from this layer in Trench 1. The subsoil was overlain by a soft deposit of dark reddish brown sandy loam (001) with occasional stone

inclusions up to 0.7m deep that formed the garden topsoil.

Trench 3 (Illus 5) to the north-east corner of the existing property was 3.3m long and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m (47.8m OD). The geological subsoil was similar to that recorded in Trench 2 with a stone rich reddish brown clayey till. Overlying this was up to 0.7m of compacted dark reddish brown sandy loam with moderate stone inclusions and heavy root bioturbation. The compact nature of this material may suggest that it had been re-deposited as it was very close to a service manhole and also formed part of the gravel driveway of the property. No features of archaeological significance were identified in the trench.

7 DISCUSSION & STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

The proposed development site was considered to have archaeological potential due to its location within the medieval settlement of Bondington and in particular as it lies adjacent to a scheduled medieval church and graveyard site (ref 1019902).

The trial trenching identified one isolated archaeological feature at the south eastern extent of the site, cut into the geological subsoil. It took the form of a single linear gully, sealed by a well developed soil horizon 0.9m in thickness. There was no dating evidence for the recorded gully feature; however a medieval origin associated with Bondington cannot be ruled out. The recording of a single feature suggests any activity was sparse, as the deep soil profile would be expected to protect archaeological features if present. It seems unlikely that the settlement remains of a medieval burgage plot are represented, as a higher frequency of pits and midden deposits would be anticipated in such cases. The gully may therefore equally be the remains of modern drainage activity. It is not considered to be sufficiently significant in itself to warrant further mitigation.

The evaluation has also established as far as is practicable that remains associated with the scheduled church and graveyard (in particular inhumations) do not extend into the proposed

development site and are limited to the scheduled area.

1954 Ordnance Survey Northumberland
Sheet NT95 1:25000

In conclusion, there remains the potential for archaeological remains to survive on the site; however in considering the evaluation results and the relatively small footprint of the proposed development on previously undisturbed ground (ie that avoiding the currently upstanding structures) it is deemed the impact and therefore archaeological potential of the proposed development is low.

1962 Ordnance Survey Northumberland
1:2500

8.3 Other sources

Internet

British Geological Society:
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk>

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliographic sources

Archaeological Archives Forum
Archaeological Archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (published by the IfA 2007).

IfA Standards and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation (revised October 2008).

Jones, E 2007 *Castle Terrace, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland: Results of an Archaeological excavation, Area 1*.
Unpublished client report (CTB06)

The Archaeological Practice 1999 *Rescue Recording of a Church and Graveyard: 21 Castle Terrace*, Unpublished Client Report University of Newcastle

8.2 Cartographic sources

1852 Local Board of Health Plan of Berwick-upon-Tweed

1857 Ordnance Survey Berwick, Sheet XVIII.7 (Liberties Of Berwick) 25 inch

1924 Ordnance Survey Northumberland 1:2500

1947 (Revised 1938) Ordnance Survey Northumberland Sheet nll.SW 6 inch

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Photographic register

Frame no.	digital no.	Direction	Description
001	001	W	Pre-excavation shot
002	002	NE	Pre-excavation shot
003	003	S	Pre-excavation shot
004	004	S	Trench 1 from the N end
005	005	W	Trench 2 from the E end
006	006	N	Trench 3 from the S end
007	007	S	Trench 1 from the S end
008	008	N	Trench 3 from the S end
009	009	S	Detail of the gully cut 003 in trench 1
010	010	W	East facing section of gully cut 003
011	011	S	Gully cut 003 in trench 1
012	012	S	Gully cut 003 in trench 1
013	013	S	Trench 1 showing the location of gully cut 003
014	014	E	Detail og gully cut 003

Context register

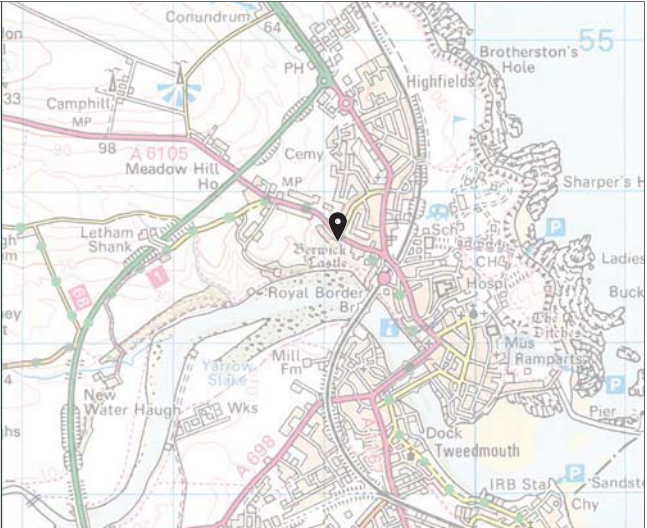
Context no.	Area	Description
001		A layer of garden soil comprising a soft dark reddish brown sandy loam with occasional stone inclusions. Up to 0.7m deep. Recorded in trench 1 and 2
002	Tr1	A t layer of soft mid reddish brown clayey sand subsoil with occasional stone inclusions. Up to 0.2m deep in Trench 1 but also recorded in Trench 2. Below the garden topsoil and above the natural.
003	Tr1	An E-W aligned gully cut 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep with steep sides leading to concave base. Cut the natural and is filled with 004. Located to the S end of trench 1.
004	Tr1	soft mid reddish brown clayey sand fill with occasional stone inclusions. Single fill of gully cut 003. Top of the fill was at 47.7m OD
005	Tr1	Geological subsoil formed of a light reddish brown clayey sand till with occasional large stone inclusions.

Trench register

Trench no.	Alignment.	Description
Trench 1	N-S	Trench 1 was 8.4m long and 1.5m wide excavated to a maximum depth of 1m. At the S end the geological subsoil 005 was recorded at 47.7m OD but was slightly lower (47.8m OD) at the N. A single linear E-W aligned gully [003] was recorded at the S end. Up to 0.2m of subsoil (002) was recorded below 0.7m of topsoil (001)
Trench 2	E-W	Trench 2 was 7.3m long and 1.5m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m (48.2m OD). No archaeology was recorded and the section identified two distinct layers of material – [001] and [002] over the glacial till.
Trench 3	N-S	Trench 3 was 3.3m long and 1.5 m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m (47.8m OD). No archaeology was recorded and the section identified a single layer of compact garden soil with moderate stone inclusions.



25 Castle Terrace
Berwick-upon-Tweed
Northumberland



HEIGHTS

1	48.2m AOD
2	48.7m AOD
3	47.8m AOD
4	47.8m AOD
5	48.6m AOD

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scale 1:500 @ A4



Illus 1
Site location

Illus 2

View of trench 1 from the north end



Illus 3

General view of trench 2 from the east end



Illus 4

Detail of gully cut [003] in Trench 1



Illus 5

View of trench 3 from the south end

