

Archaeological Watching Brief at 1-11 Main Street, Brampton, Cumbria

Richard Conolly

Project Code: BTC03
Client: Architects Plus
Date: December 2003

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (BTC03)

Client	Architects Plus
National Grid Reference	NY 5312 6115
Project Manager	Russel Coleman
Project Supervisor	Richard Conolly
Text	Richard Conolly
Illustrations	Mike Middleton
Field Staff	Richard Conolly Paul Masser
Schedule	
Fieldwork	May 2003
Report	December 2003

SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks relating to the redevelopment of 1-11 Main St, Brampton, Cumbria.

No archaeologically significant features or deposits were encountered.

INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief during ground disturbance works associated with the redevelopment of 1-11 Main St, Brampton, Cumbria. The redevelopment comprised the demolition of a garage and adjoining houses and the construction of a new shop with associated parking area to the rear.

The watching brief was required as a condition of planning consent (Planning Application 02/0656) by the local planning authority as the development had the potential to disturb or destroy archaeologically significant deposits or structures. In accordance with this condition, the work was undertaken following a written scheme of investigation approved by Cumbria County Council Archaeology Service. The work was commissioned by Architects Plus, acting on behalf of North Eastern & Cumbrian Co-op.

BACKGROUND

The site lies at the north-western edge of the heart of Brampton, where Main Street meets Moat Side. The site's frontage was formerly occupied by a garage and houses. The area behind these was occupied by an outbuilding with inspection pit and a concrete parking area. Brampton Beck emerges from a culvert to the rear of the site.

Although the site is located on a slight south-facing slope, the ground within the development area was fairly level, and was considerably higher than the surrounding area at its southern and western limits.

The modern settlement of Brampton is centred on the medieval core of Main Street and Front Street. These streets diverge at the western end of the town centre to run eastwards alongside each other, joined by numerous alleys and High Cross Street. Front Street ends at the market place to the south of the present site. Brampton's market was granted its charter in 1252.

To the north-east of the site lies The Mote Castle Mound, from which Moat Street takes its name. This Scheduled Ancient Monument occupies the summit of Castle Hill and is thought to date to the 12th/13th century but also incorporates a 15th century beacon.

The area of Brampton saw considerable activity before the medieval period. Pre-Roman occupation of the area is attested to by chance finds in the town of two stone axe-hammers (SMR Nos. 262 and 264) and two socketed bronze axes (SMR No. 263). The former date to the Neolithic and the latter to the Bronze Age. To the west of the town there are two Bronze Age bowl barrows (SMR Nos. 4568 and 15288).

Approximately 6 km to the north, lies the World Heritage Site of Hadrian's Wall, and there are a large number of associated structures in the surrounding area, including a road (SMR No.10005). To the west of the town, six Romano-British farmsteads (SMR Nos. 243, 244 and 305) have been identified through aerial photography and eight Roman kilns were found during construction work at the secondary school (SMR No. 283).

Post-medieval and modern Brampton has supported several industries including brewing, weaving and tanning. The brewery and tweed mill still stand.

AIMS AND METHODS

The watching brief was intended to ensure that any archaeologically significant deposits or features subject to disturbance or destruction by the development might be appropriately recorded.

Desk-Based Assessment

A rapid desk-based assessment was carried out in advance of fieldwork. This involved the consultation the Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), and, where relevant, referenced primary and secondary sources, and historic maps held by the County Records Office in Carlisle.

Watching Brief

The demolition of the buildings previously occupying the site fell outwith the terms of the watching brief and these were therefore cleared without archaeological supervision.

Following the demolition of these buildings, works involving ground disturbance were monitored. These included the lifting of concrete slab, the grubbing out of wall footings and similar and the excavation of foundation and service trenches.

Excavation, for the most part, was carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted as far as reasonably practicable, with a toothless bucket and operating under constant archaeological supervision. A photographic record of the works, comprising colour slide and print exposures, was made and their extent recorded.

RESULTS

Desk-Based Assessment

The SMR holds no records of any archaeological finds within the site, nor were any of the demolished buildings listed. The long history of settlement in the area is reflected by the number of chance finds within the town. The SMR holds details of chance finds ranging from stone axe-hammers (SMR No. 262) to Roman quern stones (SMR No. 266 & 267) to a medieval ring (SMR No. 4914). Records held by the SMR are listed in full in Appendix 1.

The earliest map to show Brampton in useful detail that the County Record Office holds dates to 1777 (Anon). This shows the frontage of the site to have been occupied by terraced buildings, with the remainder undeveloped. The Oddfellows Arms, which neighbours the current site, is identifiable by its plan, though its function is not recorded.

No significant change may be noted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1863). On this map, Main Street is named Back Street.

Watching Brief

No archaeologically significant deposits or features were identified in the course of the watching brief.

The site's frontage had been disturbed by the foundations of the buildings that had formerly occupied the site but undisturbed natural sand was encountered at a depth of 0.25 m.

The area to the rear of the demolished buildings had been disturbed by an inspection pit and underground tanks for the garage.

The natural sand sloped down to the rear of the site and was covered by a garden soil containing common sherds of modern china. These were not retained.

The ground level had been raised by approximately 1.7 m at the rear of the plot with modern material, including frogged bricks, tyres and similar garage detritus, covered with concrete slab. This modern material overlay a dark soil horizon, again containing modern china. This presumably represented the earlier ground surface. Disturbance did not go beyond this level.

CONCLUSION

No significant archaeological deposits or features were disturbed by the development.

The site is at the edge of medieval Brampton and it is likely that it was undeveloped until the 18th century.

APPENDIX 1: SOURCES CONSULTED

Cumbria SMR

The following records are held by the Cumbria SMR for the Brampton area (Listed buildings are excluded as none are relevant to the development):

Cumbria SMR No.	Description	Status	NGR
243	Settlement cropmark	Destroyed	NY 5220 6090
244	Romano-British farmstead and enclosure	Scheduled	NY 5174 6132
261	Stone knife or scraper	-	NY 53 61
262	Perforated stone axe-hammer	-	NY 5297 6109
263	Two bronze flanged axes	-	NY 53 61
264	Perforated stone axe-hammer	-	NY 53 61
265	Two Roman quern stones	-	NY 5357 6129
266	Roman quern stone	-	NY 5282 6102
267	Roman quern stone	-	NY 5101 6155
282	Mote	Scheduled	NY 5333 6127
283	Roman tilery and iron hoard	-	NY 5243 6130
305	Four Romano-British farmsteads	Scheduled	NY 5122 6120
4189	Tannery	Destroyed	NY 526 612
4568	Bowl barrow	Scheduled	NY 5142 6099
4914	Medieval ring	-	NY 53 61
6997	Brewery	-	NY 529 610
10005	Roman road	-	NY 5115 6151 – 5240 6188
10010	Brewery	-	NY 5338 6091
10041	Tweed mill	-	NY 5328 6105
13878	Coin. Charles I.	-	NY 53 61
15288	Bowl barrow	Scheduled	NY 35135 6090
19200	Pivot stone	-	NY 53 61
19234	Elizabethan coin	-	NY 53 61

Cartographic Sources

Anon, 1777 *Plan of the Town of Brampton*

Ordnance Survey 1863 *County Cumberland (Eastern Division) XVIII.5* 1:2500. Surveyed 1862.

Ordnance Survey 1901 *Cumberland XVIII.5* 1:2500. Surveyed 1862, revised 1899.

Ordnance Survey 1926 *Cumberland XVIII.5* 1:2500. Surveyed 1862, revised & relevelled 1924.

Other Sources

Hutchinson, W 1797 *History of the County of Cumberland*. Jollie, Carlisle (Reprinted 1974 EP Publishing Ltd)

Whellan, W. 1860 *The History and Topography of the Counties of Cumberland and Westmorland*. W. Whellan & Co.

Whitehead, H. 1907 *Talks about Brampton in the Olden Times*. Lewis, Selkirk.

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Film 1 (Colour Slide and Print)

Shot	Facing	Description
1	-	ID shot
2	S	General view
3	N	General view
4	NW	General view
5	S	General view
6	W	East facing elevation Oddfellows Arms
7	W	General view after lifting of concrete slab
8	W	Working shot of excavation of trench at rear of site
9	W	Working shot of excavation of trench at rear of site
10	SW	Northern underpinning of Oddfellows Arms
11	SW	Northern underpinning of Oddfellows Arms
12	SW	Northern underpinning of Oddfellows Arms
13	SW	Southern underpinning hole of Oddfellows Arms
14	SW	Southern underpinning hole of Oddfellows Arms
15	SW	Southern underpinning hole of Oddfellows Arms
16	W	Post-ex view of trench at rear of site.

Film 2 (Colour Slide and Print)

Shot	Facing	Description
1	-	ID shot
2	N	South facing section of inspection pit
3	NW	General view post ex inspection pit
4	S	North facing section foundation trench at SW corner
5	SW	General view of foundation trench SW corner
6	NW	General view of foundation trench at frontage
7	E	General view of rear foundation trench
8	NW	General view of internal strip found
9	NE	General view of rear foundation trench

Film 3 (Colour Slide and Print)

Shot	Facing	Description
1	E	W facing section eastern external strip found
2	SE	W facing section eastern external strip found general
3	E	W facing section eastern external strip found
4	SE	W facing section eastern internal strip found general
5	E	W facing section eastern external strip found
6	SW	Working shot
7	SE	Working shot
8	SE	Working shot

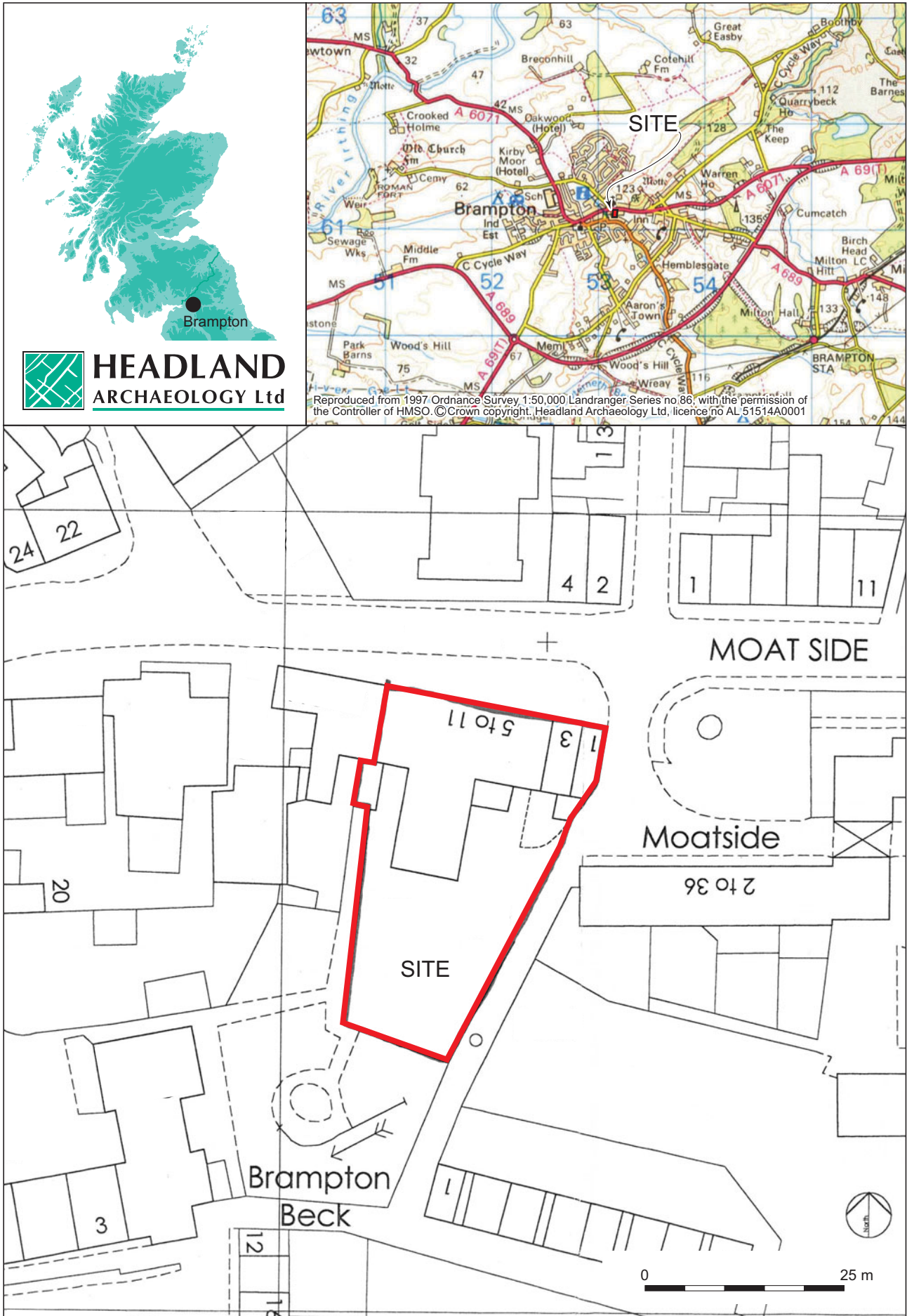


Figure 1. Brampton Town Centre: Site location