

ECNO/01



# ELLINGTON COLLIERY, NORTHUMBERLAND

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

commissioned by Prospect Archaeology  
on behalf of Harworth Estates

14/03016/FUL

March 2016



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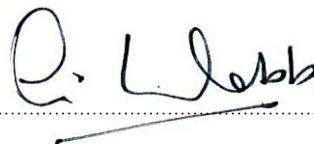
March 2016

project info

**HA JOB NO.** ECNO/01  
**NGR** NZ 422810 591837  
**PARISH** Ellington  
**LOCAL AUTHORITY** Northumberland County Council  
**OASIS REF.** headland5-243022

project team

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook a trial trench archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to the former site of Ellington Colliery, Northumberland, in advance of the proposed development of the site for housing. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present in any of the trenches opened up in the undisturbed ground in the western half of the site. The evaluation was curtailed on the recommendation of the Archaeological Advisor to Northumberland County Council due to the extensive made ground deposits associated with the former colliery and the waterlogged and flooded nature of the eastern part of the site.

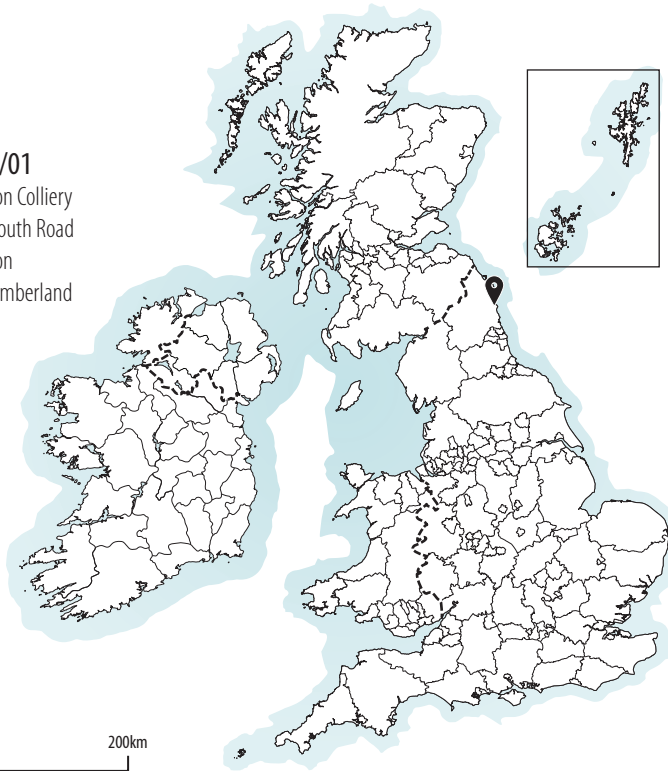
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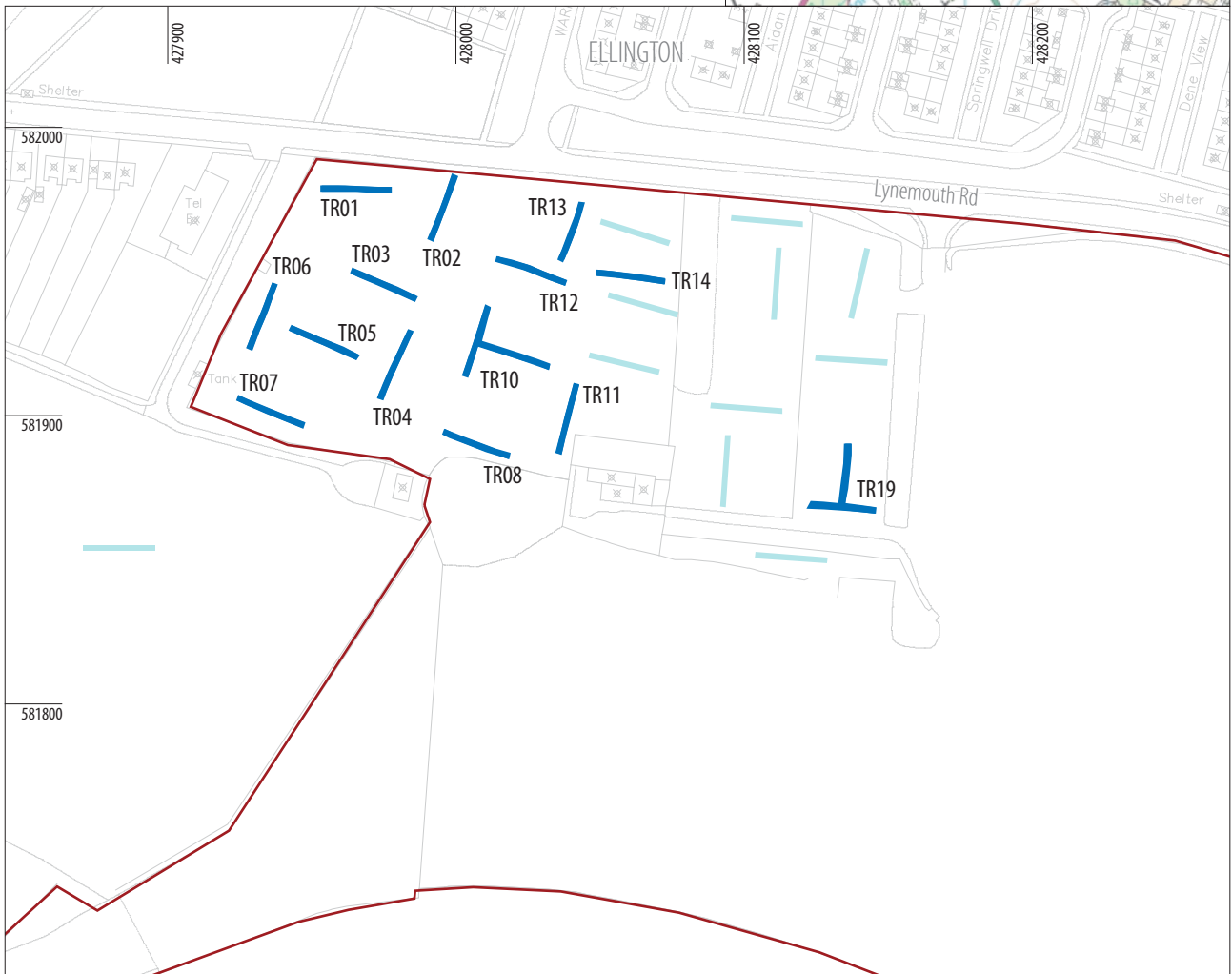
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ECNO/01  
 Ellington Colliery  
 Lynemouth Road  
 Ellington  
 Northumberland



0 200km



KEY  
 [Red line] development boundary  
 [Blue line] trench location  
 [Light blue line] unexcavated trench

0 100m  
 N  
 1:2,500@ A4

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ILLUS 1 Site location

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# ELLINGTON COLLIERY, NORTHUMBERLAND

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

This report presents the results of an archaeological field evaluation on land adjacent to the site of the former colliery at Ellington. The archaeological works were commissioned by Harworth Estates and managed on their behalf by Prospect Archaeology. Harworth Estates are seeking permission for the construction of a retail unit and residential development (Planning Reference 14/03016/FUL).

In line with guidance contained in the National Planning and Policy Framework (2012) the Archaeological Advisor to Northumberland County Council, Mr Nick Best, advised that the site had the potential for the presence of currently unrecorded heritage assets of archaeological interest. In accordance with relevant policy and best practice, the archaeological advisor requested that a field evaluation be undertaken in order to provide sufficient information to allow the consideration of the planning application.

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Harworth Estates to undertake the required works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Prospect Archaeology 2015).

#### 1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The Proposed Development Area (hereafter PDA) is centred at NGR 428102 591837 and covers a rectangular area of approximately 2.5 hectares, located immediately south of Lynemouth Road in Ellington (see **ILLUS 1**). The former site of Ellington Colliery lies immediately to the east and the eastern half of the PDA was used for car parking and ancillary buildings associated with the mine. These buildings were demolished following closure of the mine in 2005.

The PDA is currently rough grassland interspersed with overgrown scrub and dwarf trees that have partially reclaimed this eastern half of the site. The western half of the site is also under rough pasture and the whole area is currently used for grazing horses. The PDA is flat at approximately 20m above Ordnance Datum with large areas in the eastern half of the site under standing water at the time of the evaluation (see **ILLUS 2**).

The underlying geology of the site comprises mudstones, siltstones and sandstones of the Pennine Middle Coal Measures Formation.

This bedrock geology is overlain by superficial deposits of Till (diamicton).

#### 1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Research undertaken for an Environmental Statement (Entec 2008) produced to support a previous planning application confirmed that the only known archaeological features within the PDA were the remains of the colliery and that excavation of these remains would not add to the existing documentary and photographic record of the site. It also confirmed that there are no designated or non-designated assets within the application area. However, it did acknowledge that previously unrecorded features could survive, particularly within the less disturbed (western) parts of the site.

Evidence for prehistoric activity in the area is circumstantial and there is no evidence in the area for activity during the Romano-British period either. The earliest documentary references to Ellington date from the 13th century and analysis of air photographs show extensive evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation in the immediate vicinity. Ellington remained a small agricultural settlement throughout the post-medieval period and until the early 20th century when the first shaft was sunk for the colliery in 1909.

### 2 METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the trenching evaluation was to obtain information on the presence, character, date, status and level of preservation of surviving archaeological remains. It also allows the curatorial authority to determine the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource, and to discuss the necessity for the preservation by record and/or the possibilities which may exist to preserve certain areas of archaeological remains in-situ if appropriate and thus determine their significance.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent, nature and importance of any buried heritage assets within the proposed development area.



**ILLUS 2** Scrub vegetation and waterlogging in eastern part of site  
**ILLUS 3** Trench 4 looking N    **ILLUS 4** Trench 5 looking SE  
**ILLUS 5** Trench 14 looking E

Specifically the evaluation aimed to:

- › Provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of any proposed development to be assessed;
- › Assess the impact of previous land use on the site;
- › Produce a site archive for deposition with Lincoln Museum and to provide information for accession to the Northumberland Historic Environment Record.

The fieldwork was conducted in accordance with the following documents:

- › *Code of Conduct* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2000)

- › *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2001)

## 2.2 METHODOLOGY

The trial trenching was carried out between the 1st February and 3rd February 2016. The evaluation comprised the excavation of approximately 5% of the proposed development area by means of 25 25m x 2m trenches totalling 1,250 linear metres. Following discussion with the Archaeological Advisor some of the trenches to the east of the site were not excavated.

The evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision, with topsoil/upper subsoil being removed by machine and excavation terminating at the uppermost significant archaeological horizon or when geological (natural) deposits were encountered.

Further excavation required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation was continued by hand. A representative sample, sufficient to meet the objectives of the evaluation, of identified features was investigated by hand and all features were recorded. The stratigraphic sequence was recorded in full in each of the trenches, even where no archaeological deposits were identified.

The methodology underlying the archaeological trial trenching programme was outlined in the WSI (Prospect Archaeology 2015). The trench layout was designed to evaluate the site using a systematic trenching array, with the trenches spread evenly across the PDA (see ILLUS 1).

Note – following a review of the opened trenches, and due to the negative results (to the west of the site), extensive made ground and waterlogged and flooded conditions (to the east of the site) the Archaeological Advisor to NCC determined that the remaining trenches in the eastern half of the site need not be excavated.

## 2.3 RECORDING

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). The recorded contexts were assigned unique numbers and recording was undertaken on Headland Archaeology pro forma trench and context record sheets. Digital photographic images were taken of all trenches.

An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded by digital survey using a Trimble dGPS system.

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

Full trench descriptions, including orientation, length, and depth are presented in Appendix 1.

Undisturbed natural deposits generally comprised clays of varying colour, predominantly grey or yellow/orange, located between 0.40m and 0.58 m below current ground level. Superficial deposits of till were recorded in TR13.

Subsoil was recorded in all trenches varying in depth between 0.12m (TR02 and TR03) and 0.24m in TR12 being generally a yellowish brown silty clay. Topsoil was consistent across the site comprising dark brown loamy clay between 0.28m and 0.35m in depth.

The stratigraphy in all of the trenches, (with the exception of TR19/25 where there was no topsoil or subsoil but with a modern gravel surface laid directly onto the natural deposits) consisted of topsoil and subsoil over natural deposits. Land drains were present (but not recorded) in most of the trenches.

No archaeological finds, features, or deposits were present in any of the trenches.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The evaluation has clearly demonstrated that there has been no disturbance of the natural deposits across the western half of the PDA. However, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recorded. In the eastern half of the PDA, although fewer trenches were opened than originally proposed, the evaluation has confirmed that this part of the site has been truncated by modern activity associated with the former colliery site nearby. The presence of a gravelled surface (probably a car park) extends across this part of the PDA. An impermeable plastic membrane beneath the gravel layer accounts for the poor drainage across this part of the site. In the light of the evaluation results no further archaeological work is anticipated.

## 5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS 2014. *British Geological Survey* [online] Available: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed: 17.02.2016

ENTEC 2008 *Ellington Colliery, Northumberland NPPF Update – Archaeology*

Prospect Archaeology 2015 *Ellington Colliery, Northumberland Phase 1 – Written Scheme of Investigation – Evaluation Excavation*

## 6 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 TRENCH AND CONTEXT REGISTER

All trenches 25m X 2m, except for TR09/10 and TR19/25 which formed a T shaped layout of 25m X 2m X 25m.

TR01	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	01001	Topsoil. Grey, dark-brown loam – rare inclusions of coal.	0.00 – 0.32
	01002	Subsoil. Yellowish mid-brown sandy silty clay.	0.32 – 0.54
	01003	Natural. Orange silty clay	0.54+

Summary: No archaeological features or deposits identified.

TR02	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	02001	Topsoil. Fine clay silt.	0.00 – 0.28
	02002	Subsoil. Mid-brown silty clay/Dark brown loamy sandy clay, firm, occasional small rounded stone and gravel inclusions.	0.28 – 0.39
	02003	Natural. Yellowish orange clay.	0.39+

Summary: No archaeological features or deposits identified.

TR03	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	03001	Topsoil. Dark brown loamy clay, -few coal inclusions.	0.00 – 0.36
	03002	Subsoil. Compact sandy silty clay.	0.36 – 0.48
	03003	Natural. Grey silty clay.	0.48 +

Summary: No archaeological features or deposits identified.

TR04	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	04001	Topsoil. Dark grey/brown fine clay silt.	0.00 – 0.36
	04002	Subsoil. Fine silty clay.	0.36 – 0.58
	04003	Natural. Mid yellowish orange clay. Frequent medium stone.	0.58+

Summary: No archaeological features or deposits identified

TR05	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	05001	Topsoil. Dark brown loamy clay with occasional coal flecks.	0.00 – 0.32
	05002	Subsoil. Yellowish mid-brown silty clay. No inclusions.	0.32 – 0.47
	05003	Natural. Orange sandy silty Mid yellow orange sand and gravel, firm.	0.47+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR06	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	06001	Topsoil. Dark brown clay loam, rare inclusions.	0.00 – 0.38
	06002	Subsoil. Mid orange/brown sandy silty clay.	0.38 – 0.54
	06003	Natural.	0.54+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR07	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	07001	Topsoil. Dark brown loamy clay.	0.00 – 0.32
	07002	Subsoil. None.	
	07003	Natural. Yellow sandy clay.	0.32+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR08	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	08001	Topsoil. Greyish/dark brown loamy clay, coal inclusions.	0.00 – 0.27
	08002	Subsoil. Yellowish grey sandy silty clay, occasional coal inclusions.	0.27 – 0.49
	08003	Natural. Orange grey silty clay.	0.49+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR09/10	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	09001	Topsoil.	0.00 – 0.30
	09002	Subsoil.	0.30 – 0.50
	09003	Natural.	0.50+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR11	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	11001	Topsoil.	0.00 – 0.26
	11002	Subsoil.	0.26 – 0.29
	11003	Natural.	0.29+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR12	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	12001	Topsoil.	0.00 – 0.35
	12002	Subsoil. Mid-orange/brown fine sandy clay.	0.35m – 0.59
	12003	Natural.	0.37+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR13	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	13001	Topsoil. Greyish/dark-brown loamy clay.	0.00–0.30
	13002	Subsoil. Medium grey sandy silty clay.	0.30–0.49
	13003	Natural. Glacial till – yellow and grey silty clay.	0.49+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR14	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	14001	Topsoil. Greyish/dark-brown loamy clay, sparse coal inclusions.	0.00–0.32
	14002	Subsoil. Grey sandy silty clay, coal inclusions.	0.32–0.44
	14003	Natural. Medium brown silty clay.	0.44+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

TR19/25	CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION	D (MBGL)
	–	Gravel car park surface.	0.00–0.35
	–	Plastic sheeting.	0.35m– 0.36m
	–	Natural. Not observed.	0.36+

Summary: No archaeological features identified.

APPENDIX 2 OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM:ENGLAND

OASIS ID: headland5-243022

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project name	Ellington Colliery
Short description of the project	Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook a trial trench archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to the former site of Ellington Colliery, Northumberland, in advance of the proposed development of the site for housing. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present in any of the trenches opened up in the undisturbed ground in the western half of the site. The evaluation was curtailed on the recommendation of the Archaeological Advisor to Northumberland County Council due to the extensive made ground deposits associated with the former colliery and the waterlogged and flooded nature of the eastern part of the site.
Project dates	Start: 03-02-2016 End: 01-02-2016
Previous/future work	None
Any associated project reference codes	ECNO15 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	NONE
Significant Finds	NONE
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Housing estates
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
PROJECT LOCATION	
Country	England
Site location	NORTHUMBERLAND CASTLE MORPETH ELLINGTON AND LINTON Ellington Colliery
Postcode	NE61 5PH
Study area	2.5 Hectares
Site coordinates	NZ 28102 91837 55.219917031397 -1.558226654259 55 13 11 N 001 33 29 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 19m Max: 21m
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive Exists?	No
Entered by	Alistair Webb (alistair.webb@headlandarchaeology.com)
Entered on	18 February 2016





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