

BAMBURGH RESEARCH PROJECT



ROCK COTTAGE BAMBURGH NORTHUMBERLAND

REPORT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

Compiled for Mr and Mrs Potier by The Bamburgh Research Project: Commercial Projects Section

BRP 16/01b

March 2016

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Frame 1: Building extension trench, looking east
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SUMMARY

This report has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project, Commercial Projects Section for Mr and Mrs Potier. The document sets out the results of a process of archaeological monitoring, undertaken during groundworks associated with the construction of a new annexe and an extension to the rear of Rock Cottage, Bamburgh, Northumberland. The work was undertaken by the Bamburgh Research Project (BRP) on 1st 8th 9th and 10th March 2016, in compliance with a Written Schedule of Investigation compiled by the Bamburgh Research Project, in July 2015. The planning application reference number is: 15/00479/FUL and the OASIS record number is: bamburgh1-247881.

The development area was at the east side of Bamburgh Village at Rock Cottage, 33 Front Street, which lies 7km east of Belford in north east Northumberland (NU 1748 3484). The extension to the cottage and new build annexe was to the rear of the current cottage and on the site of a former garage at the south side of the garden, respectively (Figures 1 and 2).

Subsoil was nowhere encountered and excavation depth, throughout the monitoring period, was dictated by the depth required by the foundations. As predicted by the information supplied by the contractor, Elcot Environmental, the area of the extension to the rear of the house was within the footprint of the Japanese Knotweed removal and had been disturbed to greater than the depth of excavation.

At the southern end of the garden the excavation of the annex foundation trenches varied between 0.6 and 0.8m below ground level. Two layers were revealed, the lower, at about 0.4m below ground level, comprised a red-brown sandy silt with sparse pebble and small stone inclusion. This layer also contained patches of stone rubble and white mortar including occasional fragments of ceramic building material, too small to identify. It produced no other dating evidence and was not bottomed. Above it a very dark grey-brown sand and silt was present extending up to the level of the base of the concrete slab on which the former garage had been constructed. No indications of any archaeological remains of interest were uncovered during the course of this work and even pottery and animal bone were absent.

No indication of structural features or pits was seen and there was a general absence of occupational material, such as animal bone and pottery. The impression formed was that the foundation trenched had only penetrated into the uppermost layers of what might prove to be a deep stratigraphy. As a consequence the present monitoring has not much advanced our understanding of the stratigraphic sequence in this part of the village. It can be speculated that the annexe lies close to the boundary between two rear plots in a burgage plot type sequence. If this is the case then the absence of animal bone and pottery, that would be expected in an area of likely midden dumping, may indicate that only layers of recent date were encountered.

**ROCK COTTAGE
BAMBURGH
NORTHUMBERLAND**

**REPORT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MONITORING AND RECORDING**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This report has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project, Commercial Projects Section for Mr and Mrs Potier. The document sets out the results of a process of archaeological monitoring, undertaken during groundworks associated with the construction of a new annexe and an extension to the rear of Rock Cottage, Bamburgh, Northumberland.
- 1.0.2 The work was undertaken by the Bamburgh Research Project (BRP) on 1st 8th 9th and 10th March 2016, in compliance with a Written Schedule of Investigation compiled by the Bamburgh Research Project, in July 2015. The planning application reference number is: 15/00479/FUL and the OASIS record number is: bamburgh1-247881.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The proposed development area is at the east side of Bamburgh Village at Rock Cottage, 33 front Street, which lies 7km east of Belford in north east Northumberland (NU 1748 3484). The extension to the cottage and new build annexe were to the rear of the current cottage and on the site of a former garage at the south side of the garden, respectively (Figures 1 and 2).

2.2 Archaeological background

- 2.2.1 Bamburgh like Edinburgh and Dumbarton is believed, from documentary evidence, to have formed a focus to a British kingdom in the immediate post-Roman period. Anglo-Saxon settlement is thought to have begun at Bamburgh in the mid 6th century (H.E., 562) and by the 7th century it had become the pre-eminent centre of the Anglo-Saxon dynasty that came to dominate Northumbria. It is clear from archaeological and documentary sources that an early medieval site of international importance lies beneath the castle. It is also highly probable that an early medieval site also lies in the area of the modern village. While references to Bamburgh in pre-conquest documents use the Latin term *urbs* (walled city) to denote the residence of the kings, Bede notes the existence of a separate but closely linked settlement nearby. St. Aidan is stated as having died within a church in a royal *vill* (*villa regis*) near to the *urbs* of Bamburgh. Royal *vills* were the centres of extensive estates, to which the local populace owed service and taxes (Campbell 1979, 44). The present parish church at Bamburgh (HER 5257) is unique as the only known medieval dedication to

St. Aidan. This, together with its position, strongly suggests that the church in which St. Aidan died was the predecessor of the present parish church, and that a royal *vill* or estate centre lies under the present village (Cambridge 1995, 136-8).

2.2.2 A number of medieval features and sites are known to have been present in and around the site of the present village. The church of St Aidan located at the west side of the village (HER 5257) contains structural work of the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries. Masonry believed to be a part of The Master of Bamburgh's Tower, first noted in AD 1415, is preserved within the east wall of the churchyard (HER 5258). A cell of Augustinian canons was founded at Bamburgh in AD 1121. Masonry remains now built into the farm buildings adjacent to Bamburgh Hall are noted as possibly representing part of the monastic buildings (HER 24160). A borough is known from documentary sources to have been present at Bamburgh during the medieval period. The names of six streets within the town are mentioned by these records. Spitalgate was a major thoroughfare that extended beyond the legal limits of the borough. A linear earthwork, to the north of the County Council car park, that aligns with South Victoria Terrace, has been proposed as the former line of Spitalgate since the 19th century, an interpretation reinforced by Stewart Ainsworth during the Time Team investigations of 2010 (Ainsworth *pers comm.*). The post-medieval history of the village is dominated by its ownership by a series of great estates beginning with the purchase of the castle and village by Nathaniel Crewe, Bishop of Durham, in the early 18th century. It was purchased by the first Lord Armstrong in 1888 and remains in the ownership of the Trustees of Lord Armstrong to the present.

2.2.3 Speed's map of AD 1610 depicts Bamburgh in a stylised fashion and is unable to contribute any information regarding the layout of the village. Armstrong's map of AD 1769 is the first to depict the village with any detail, showing the triangular plan of the village green and an indication of houses along the streets, together with the church and the ruins of the friary at the west end of the village. Fryers map of AD 1820 has little to add but Greenwood's map of AD 1828 depicts the village in somewhat greater detail, confirming the presence of the core of the village, as it exists to the present day, and depicting buildings along the line of Front Street including what appears to be the area of Rock Cottage. The Tithe map of AD 1846 and the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, of c. AD 1860, are the first to depict the village in any detail and both depict structures on the site of the cottage.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Monitoring during excavation

3.1.1 During all excavation activity a suitably experienced archaeologist, familiar with the archaeological background of the site, will be present to record any items of interest that are revealed. All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IfA 2013) and should follow the IFA Standards for Watching Briefs (IfA 2008). This watching brief will conform to the following methodology.

3.1.2 A contingency of up to 20 person days of investigation can be invoked following

consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist, the client and the monitoring archaeologist.

3.2 General standards

3.2.1 All archaeological features identified will be sample excavated according to their type and form.

50% of all discrete features.

25% of the area of a linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill.

10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill.

3.2.2 A 40 litre bulk palaeoenvironmental sample will be taken from all features recognised as suitable for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains.

3.2.3 Secure contexts will be sampled for dating where appropriate, whether on site or as sub samples of bulk samples. Any concentrations of charcoal or other carbonised material recovered on site will usually be retained.

3.2.4 Pottery and Animal Bone will be collected as bulk samples whilst significant artefacts will be three-dimensionally recorded prior to processing. All finds will be recorded and processed according to the BRP system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Finds recovery and storage strategies will be in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995 and IfA Guidelines for The Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials 2008). Should artefacts of gold or silver covered by the 1996 Treasure Act be recovered, appropriate procedures will be followed.

3.2.5 In the event of human burials being revealed they will be left *in situ* and treated in an appropriate manner. After consultation with the County Archaeological Officer, if excavation is required, work will comply with the relevant home Office regulations.

3.2.6 Any archaeological features encountered will be hand-cleaned, excavated and recorded:

1. A photographic record will be compiled using black and white print, and digital, recording both as jpeg and raw format.
2. A written description of features will be recorded using the BRP *pro forma* context recording system.
3. All features will be drawn at an appropriate scale using pre-printed permatrace. Plans will normally be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10.

3.2.7 All archaeological features and horizons will be accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. All levels will be tied in to Ordnance Datum.

3.2.8 Arrangements will be made with the appropriate museum for the deposition of the site archive within 6 month of the completion of the post-excavation report. A copy of

the digital photos will be submitted to the ADS. Should no archaeological features be encountered a basic record would only be compiled with digital photography and only the report will be submitted to the archive.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Monitoring during excavation

- 4.1.1 The monitoring on the extension to the building was undertaken on Tuesday the 1st March and that on the foundations for the annexe from Tuesday 8th to Wednesday 9th March 2016. Subsoil was nowhere encountered and excavation depth through the monitoring period was dictated by the depth required by the foundations. As predicted by the information supplied by the contractor, Elcot Environmental, the area of the extension to the rear of the house was within the footprint of the Japanese Knotweed removal and had been disturbed to greater than the depth of excavation.
- 4.1.2 At the southern end of the garden the excavation of the annex foundation trenches varied between 0.6 and 0.8m below ground level. Two layers were revealed the lower, at about 0.4m below ground level comprised a red-brown sandy silt with sparse pebble and small stone inclusions. This layer also contained patches of stone rubble and white mortar including rare fragments of ceramic building material, too small to identify. It produced no other dating evidence and was not bottomed. Above it a very dark grey-brown sand and silt was present extending up to the level of the base of the concrete slab, on which the former garage had been constructed. No indications of any archaeological remains of interest were uncovered during the course of this work and even pottery and animal bone were absent.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.0.1 No indication of structural features or pits was seen and there was a general absence of occupational material, such as animal bone and pottery. The impression formed was that the foundation trenches had only penetrated into the uppermost layers of what might prove to be a deep sequence. As a consequence the present monitoring has not much advanced our understanding of the stratigraphic sequence in this part of the village. It can be speculated that the annexe lies close to the boundary between to rear plots in a burgage plot type sequence. If this is the case then the absence of animal bone and pottery that would be expected in an area of likely midden dumping, may indicate that only layers of recent date were encountered.

Text and illustrations: Graeme Young
BRP 16/01b

March 2016

REFERENCES

Published and unpublished sources

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BRP Finds Manual, 2000

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Campbell J. 'Bede's Words for Places', in (ed.) P. H. Sawyer *Names, Words and Graves: Early Medieval Settlement*. Leeds 1979, 34-51.

English Heritage *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*, 1991.

English Heritage *A strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds*. Ancient Monuments Laboratory, 1995.

IfA 2013 Code of Conduct 2013

IfA 2008 Standard and Guidance for Watching Briefs 2008

IfA 2008 Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials 2008

APPENDIX I

ROCK COTTAGE BAMBURGH NORTHUMBERLAND

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING WRITTEN SCHEDULE OF INVESTIGATION

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 This Written Schedule of Investigation has been compiled by The Bamburgh Research Project, Commercial Projects Section for Mr and Mrs Potier. The document sets out the project design for the archaeological monitoring to be undertaken during groundworks associated with the proposed construction of an extension to the rear of the current cottage and the construction of an annexe on the site of the current garage, at Rock Cottage, 33 Front Street, Bamburgh, Northumberland. The planning application reference number is: 15/00479/FUL.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The proposed development area is at the east side of Bamburgh Village at Rock Cottage, 33 front Street, which lies 7km east of Belford in north east Northumberland (NU 1748 3484). The extension to the cottage and new build annexe will be to the rear of the current cottage and on the site of a garage at the south side of the garden, respectively (Figures 1 and 2).

2.2 Archaeological Background

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- 2.2.2 A number of medieval features and sites are known to have been present in and around the site of the present village. The church of St Aidan located at the west side of the village (HER 5257) contains structural work of the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries. Masonry believed to be a part of The Master of Bamburgh's Tower, first noted in AD 1415, is preserved within the east wall of the churchyard (HER 5258). A cell of Augustinian canons was founded at Bamburgh in AD 1121. Masonry remains now built into the farm buildings adjacent to Bamburgh Hall are noted as possibly representing part of the monastic buildings (HER 24160). A borough is known from documentary sources to have been present at Bamburgh during the medieval period. The names of six streets within the town are mentioned by these records. Spitalgate was a major thoroughfare that extended beyond the legal limits of the borough. A linear earthwork, to the north of the County Council car park, that aligns with South Victoria Terrace, has been proposed as the former line of Spitalgate since the 19th century, an interpretation reinforced by Stewart Ainsworth during the Time Team investigations of 2010 (Ainsworth *pers comm.*). The post-medieval history of the village is dominated by its ownership by a series of great estates beginning with the purchase of the castle and village by Nathaniel Crewe, Bishop of Durham, in the early 18th century. It was purchased by the first Lord Armstrong in 1888 and remains in the ownership of the Trustees of Lord Armstrong to the present.

- 2.2.3 Speed's map of AD 1610 depicts Bamburgh in a stylised fashion and is unable to contribute any

information regarding the layout of the village. Armstrong's map of AD 1769 is the first to depict the village with any detail, showing the triangular plan of the village green and an indication of houses along the streets, together with the church and the ruins of the friary at the west end of the village. Fryers map of AD 1820 has little to add but Greenwood's map of AD 1828 depicts the village in somewhat greater detail, confirming the presence of the core of the village, as it exists to the present day, and depicting buildings along the line of Front Street including what appears to be the area of Rock Cottage. The Tithe map of AD 1846 and the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, of c. AD 1860, are the first to depict the village in any detail and both depict structures on the site of the cottage.

2.3 Impact of the development

- 4.1.1 The development, comprises the erection of an extension to the rear of the present cottage, together with the construction of a new annexe on a site presently occupied by a garage, at the south-south-east end of the property. The extension to the rear of the cottage is reported as a 2m extension to the kitchen and the annexe measures 10m north to south by 6m east to west (Figure 2).
- 2.3.2 Bamburgh is noted within the North East Region Research Framework for the Historic Environment (Petts and Gerrard 2006, 61) as a site of national as well as regional importance. It is problematic that the extent of the urban settlement in the early medieval period can only be speculated upon, using analogy with comparable sites within the region, as no direct evidence for early medieval Bamburgh has been identified, within the village, to date. Such potential raises the possibility that such material could be present within the proposed development.
- 2.3.3 The available evidence provides a quite compelling argument that medieval Bamburgh was more extensive, and potentially more densely settled, than the present village. The clear implication of this is the potential for archaeological material, of importance, to be present within the site, and vulnerable to development activity. It is not certain that this is the case though, as predicting the presence of extensive archaeological material in this area of the village relies in no small part on the identification of a linear earthwork as one of the principal streets of the medieval borough (Spitalgate), which is by no means certain. In addition the limited cartographic evidence allows some reason to doubt that the medieval borough extended into the development site. Further to this it is clear from the report detailing the removal of knotweed from the garden area that large parts of the back plot have been disturbed to a considerable depth, including up the rear wall of the cottage on the east side of the garden.
- 2.3.4 It is clear, due to the historic nature of the area that the new development will have the potential to impact on preserved archaeological remains and that a watching brief on the groundworks represents a sensible precaution until the absence of archaeological material can be demonstrated. In the case of the extension to the kitchen. This appears to be in the area of deep ground disturbance associated with the knotweed removal and no risk to archaeological material should result.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 In the light of the potential for the construction works to impact upon preserved archaeological remains it is proposed that a continuous watching brief be conducted during the intrusive ground work. Provision will be made for the archaeological consultant to suspend works to allow for the rapid investigation and recording of objects or features encountered. Should archaeological material be encountered the consultant will keep the Assistant County Archaeologist informed. Additionally in the event that it becomes clear that, previous ground disturbance is present over the development area and it is not reasonable to expect the presence of archaeological material the Assistant County Archaeologist will also be informed.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Monitoring during excavation

- 4.1.1 During all excavation activity a suitably experienced archaeologist, familiar with the archaeological background of the site, will be present to record any items of interest that are revealed. All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IfA 2013) and should follow the IFA Standards for Watching Briefs (IfA 2008). This watching brief will conform to the following methodology.
- 4.1.2 A contingency of up to 20 person days of investigation can be invoked following consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist, the client and the monitoring archaeologist. This will allow for the excavation of archaeological material exposed by the construction work and any contiguous deposits

essential for interpretation.

4.2 General standards

2.1.1 All archaeological features identified will be sample excavated according to their type and form.

50% of all discrete features.

25% of the area of a linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill.

10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill.

4.2.2 A 40 litre bulk palaeoenvironmental sample will be taken from all features recognised as suitable for the preservation of palaeoenvironmental remains.

4.2.3 Secure contexts will be sampled for dating where appropriate, whether on site or as sub samples of bulk samples. Any concentrations of charcoal or other carbonised material recovered on site will usually be retained.

4.2.4 Pottery and Animal Bone will be collected as bulk samples whilst significant artefacts will be three-dimensionally recorded prior to processing. All finds will be recorded and processed according to the BRP system and submitted for post-excavation assessment. Finds recovery and storage strategies will be in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995 and IfA Guidelines for The Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials 2008). Should artefacts of gold or silver covered by the 1996 Treasure Act be recovered, appropriate procedures will be followed.

4.2.5 In the event of human burials being revealed they will be left *in situ* and treated in an appropriate manner. After consultation with the County Archaeological Officer, if excavation is required, work will comply with the relevant home Office regulations.

4.2.6 Any archaeological features encountered will be hand-cleaned, excavated and recorded:

1. A photographic record will be compiled using digital recording both as jpeg and raw format.

2. A written description of features will be recorded using the BRP *pro forma* context recording system.

3. All features will be drawn at an appropriate scale using pre-printed permatrace. Plans will normally be drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10.

4.2.7 All archaeological features and horizons will be accurately tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. All levels will be tied in to Ordnance Datum.

4.2.8 Arrangements will be made with the appropriate museum for the deposition of the site archive within 6 month of the completion of the post-excavation report. A copy of the digital photos will be submitted to the ADS. Should no archaeological features be encountered there will be no physical archive and the digital photographs and digital report will be submitted to the ADS archive at York.

5.0 MONITORING

5.1 Access will be made available at all reasonable times to the archaeological representatives of the Northumberland County council Conservation Team to inspect the excavation site.

5.2 Access to the site will be on the basis of prior notification and subject to any relevant health and safety considerations.

6.0 POST-EXCAVATION WORK, ARCHIVE AND REPORT COMPILATION

6.1 On completion of the monitoring an assessment of the site records and any finds will be undertaken in accordance with English Heritage (1991) guidelines and the IfA Standard and Guidance Watching Briefs (IfA 2008). This will include:

- collation of all site records
- compilation of a report
- production of context, photographic, finds and illustration databases
- analysis of any the finds assemblage by relevant specialists

- environmental assessment of selected bulk samples

6.2 The assessment report, with each page and paragraph numbered and with cross referenced illustrations, will include:

- summary of the project background
- site location
- methodology
- results of the watching brief
- site location plans and illustrations of results at appropriate scales
- interpretation of the results in an appropriate context
- post-excavation assessment of the site archive
- catalogue and assessment of the artefactual archive
- catalogue and assessment of the faunal remains
- catalogue and assessment of the palaeoenvironmental samples recovered
- appendix containing a list and summary of each recorded context

6.3 A bound copy copy of the report should be submitted by the archaeologist to the commissioning client, and both a bound copy and digital copy submitted to the County Council Conservation Team within 15 working days of completion of the work. A summary will be prepared for 'Archaeology in Northumberland' and an article will be submitted to a local or national journal if appropriate.

6.4 The site archive will be prepared to the standard specified in the Management of Archaeological Projects, appendix 3 (HBMC 1991) and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC 1990). A summary account of the context record will be included and written by the supervising archaeologist. The archive will be deposited at the specified museum within 6 months of completion of the work on site. If the results of the watching brief reveal an archaeology of significance then there will be no material archive and only the digital records will be submitted to the ADS at York.

6.5 An online OASIS form will be completed for the project as part of the post-excavation assessment process.

7.0 PERSONNEL

7.1 The designated project manager Graeme Young, is one of the five directors of the Bamburgh Research Project. A graduate of Newcastle University, with 28 years of experience in field archaeology including directing a number of excavations of urban medieval sites in Newcastle and Durham.

7.2 Additional field staff, with appropriate archaeological experience, will be engaged as required.

8.0 SUB-CONTRACTED SPECIALISTS

8.0.1 Although it is not possible to predict the range of artefacts that may be recovered provision has been made for the analysis of the most common artefacts.

Material	Specialist
Medieval pottery	Jenny Vaughan
Post-medieval pottery	Jenny Vaughan
Prehistoric pottery	Blaise Vyner
Roman Pottery	Blaise Vyner
Animal bone	Durham University Archaeological Services
Palaeoenvironmental	Durham University Archaeological Services
Conservation	Durham University Archaeological Services

9.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 9.0.1 The Bamburgh Research Project complies with the 1974 Health and Safety Act and its subsequent amendments in all its operations. The SCAUM manual and the Bamburgh Research Project Health and Safety Policy Document is followed for all site works. A designated and appropriately trained first aider is present at all times during working hours. A First Aid kit, Accident Book and telephone are provided for each project. Safety footwear is mandatory on all excavation sites. Where required safety helmets and reflective jackets are provided. It is policy for a vehicle to be present at an excavation and staff must be appropriately equipped for bad weather.
- 9.0.2 All staff undergo a safety induction prior to commencing work on site. A written risk assessment is undertaken specific for each site. The safety assessment is reviewed on a daily basis and changes to the working conditions monitored continually during adverse weather conditions.

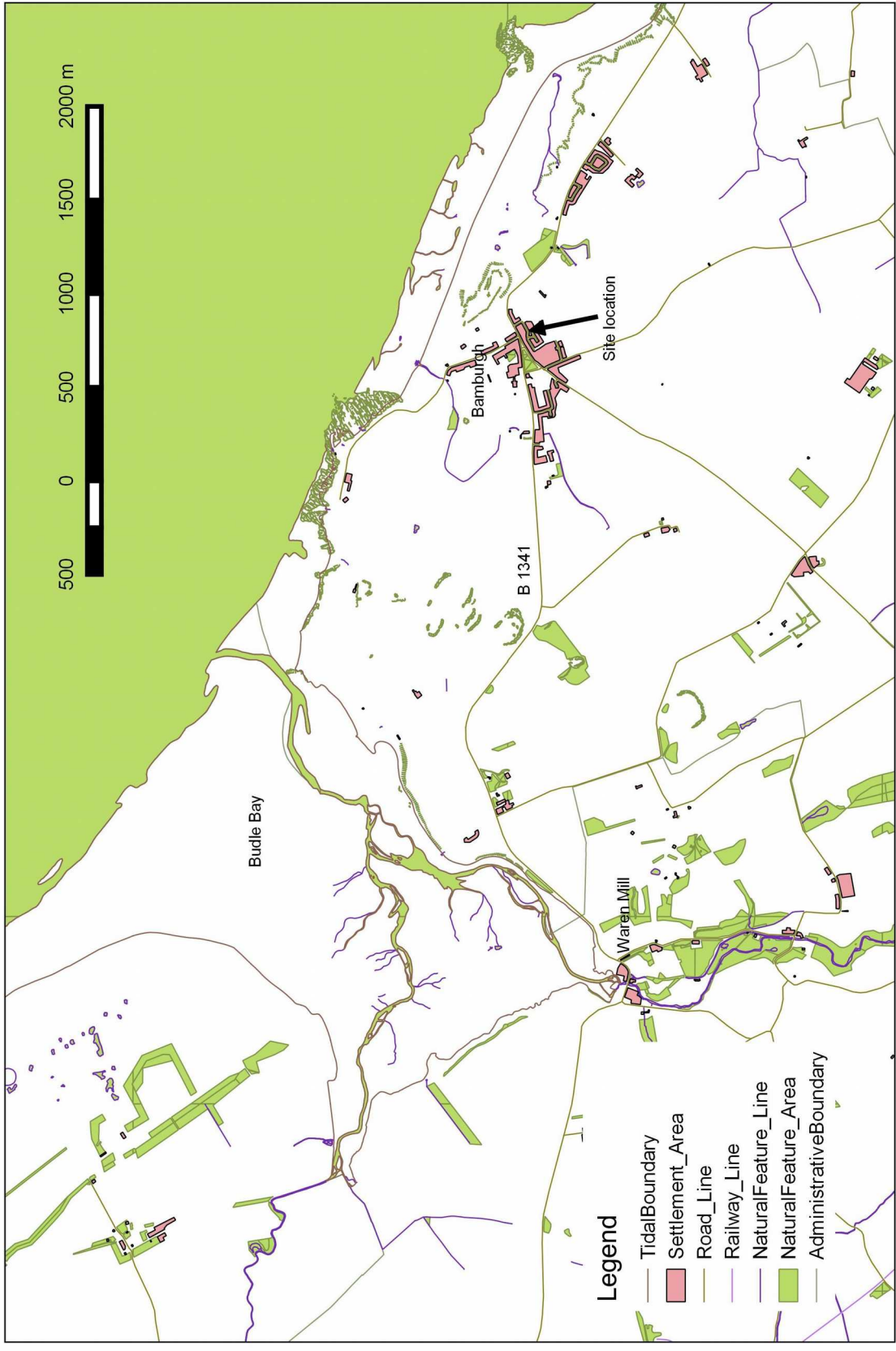


Figure 1 Location



Figure 2 Plan of the development



Frame 1: Building extension trench, looking east



Frame 2: Annexe north construction trench, looking north-east



Frame 3: Annexe east construction trench, looking north east



Frame 4: Annexe south construction trench, facing east