

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Castle Farm, Ogle, Northumberland.



The development site, looking north

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In May 2009 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by William Walton and Sons to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Castle Farm, Ogle. The monitoring was carried out during ground works for the demolition of an existing barn and the construction of a new steel framed building.

The watching brief was undertaken on excavations for 12 1x1m foundation trenches associated with the new building. There were no surviving in-situ archaeological remains of significance in the areas of the watching brief.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Location and scope of work

1.1.1. In May 2009 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by William Walton & Sons Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Castle Farm, Ogle (Fig. 1). The work was carried out during the excavation of 12 1x1m foundation trenches for the construction of a new steel framed building which will replace a barn that has already been partially demolished.

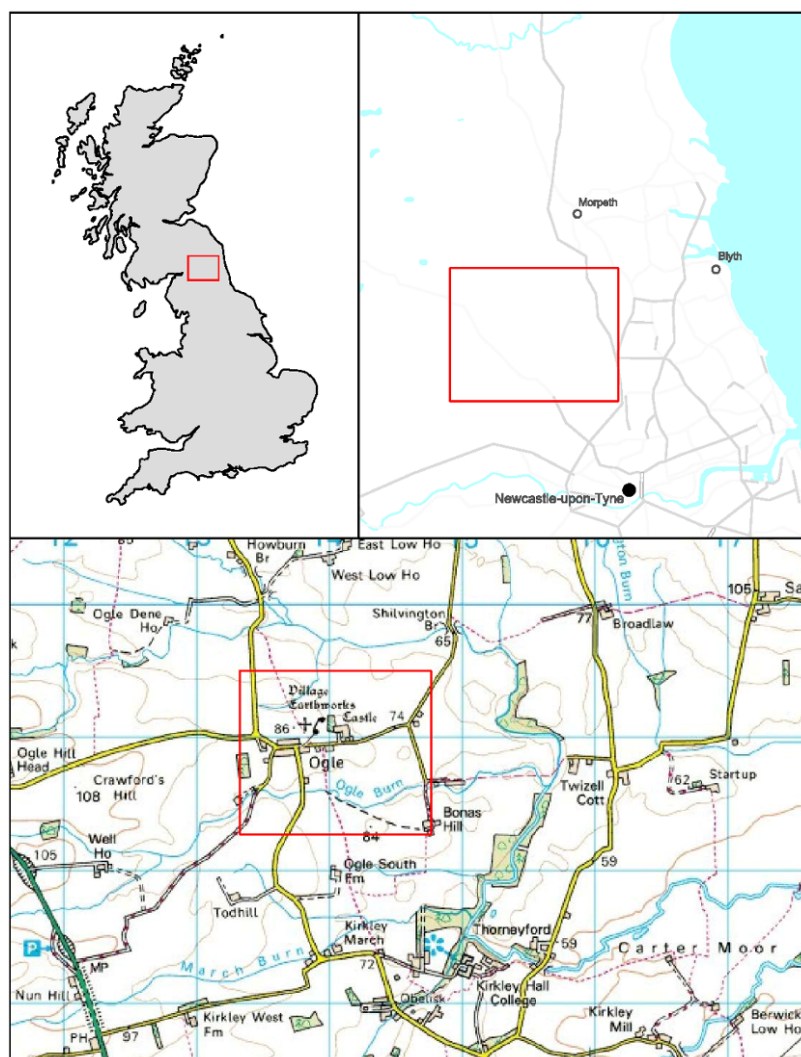


Fig. 1 Site location

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1.2 Location and topography

1.2.1 Castle Farm is located in Ogle at NZ 1424 7911 (Fig. 2). The landscape is gently undulating and land use is a mixture of agricultural and urban in character, lying to the north of the major conurbation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The farm complex is situated at 60m aOD. The bedrock geology of the area consists of Westphalian Coal Measures and the superficial geology is made up of glacial till deposits (British Geological Survey 2007).

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The specification required that a watching brief should be carried out to observe any ground works taking place for the proposed development, in order to identify any potential archaeological remains. This involved monitoring the excavation of 12 1x1m foundation trenches.
- 2.2 The topsoil to the west of the existing barn was removed in a strip, which measured approximately 30m in length, by a machine using a 1m back-acting toothless ditching bucket. The 12 trenches were then excavated, also by machine, using a 0.5m back-acting toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. The machine removed the modern overburden in level spits until the limit of necessary excavation was reached.
- 2.3 A single context recording system was employed. Each layer encountered was given a unique context number and a full written description (a Harris matrix is shown in Appendix II and a full context register is shown in Appendix III). Photographs were taken in black and white print and colour transparency in order to record the ground work. A photographic register can be found in Appendix III.

3. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1. Prehistoric

There is no evidence of prehistoric activity in the area of Ogle. The closest area of activity is at nearby Whalton (just north of Ogle) where there are the possible remains of an Iron Age hill fort.

3.2. Medieval

To the north of the main road, running through Ogle, there are visible remains in the form of earthworks of a deserted medieval village (Keys to the Past). Ogle Castle stands at the eastern side of Ogle village within the boundaries of Castle Farm. The castle is a grade 1 listed building surrounded by a double moat which has been scheduled due to its national importance. The original tower dated to around 1341 when a licence was granted to crenellate. The main building was restored with minor additions in the 20th century. The double moat is largely filled in and now only exists to the north west.

3.4. Post-Medieval

There is no evidence to suggest why the medieval village was abandoned, but it is clear that the village shifted south after the medieval period.

4. RESULTS

- 4.1 A total of 12 trenches were excavated which are shown on the plan in Fig. 2.
- 4.2 *Trenches 1,2, 4-6:*
Once the topsoil (001) had been removed (Fig. 3) a layer of hardcore and rubble (002) was encountered to a depth of approximately 0.2m. Below this was an

orange/grey clay subsoil (003) which existed beyond the limits of the excavation. There were no archaeological features, deposits, buried land surfaces or small finds located within Trenches 1-6.

4.3 *Trench 7:*

Trench 7 was located within the partially demolished barn. The upper surface consisted of dark brown soil (004) with modern brick inclusions and was approximately 0.15m deep. Below this was a layer of made-ground (005) containing stones and gravel with a depth of approximately 0.1m before the orange/grey clay subsoil (003) was reached which existed beyond the limits of the excavation. There were no archaeological features, deposits, buried land surfaces or small finds located within trench 7.

4.4 *Trenches 8-12:*

Trenches 8-12 were all located on the current concrete (Fig. 4) yard surface (006). Prior to the watching brief each trench had had the 1x1m square of concrete removed from above it. Beneath the concrete in each trench was a layer of hardcore (007) to a depth of 0.4m. Below this was the orange/grey clay subsoil (003) which had been encountered across the rest of the site. There were no archaeological features, deposits, buried land surfaces or small finds within trenches 8-12.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The watching brief revealed a layer of modern hardcore and rubble that was created when the existing barn was built. There were no surviving *in-situ* archaeological remains of significance in the areas of the watching brief.

6. PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

- 6.1. Any publicity will be handled by the client.
- 6.2. Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

7. STATEMENT OF INDEMNITY

- 7.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1. Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to express special thanks to William Walton of Castle Farm.

9. REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 1979. *Geological Survey 1:50000 Map*. Third Edition (Solid). Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Websites

British Geological Survey www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.htm

APPENDIX I: FIGURES

Fig 2



Fig. 3 A test pit to the west of the site with topsoil removed.



Fig. 4 A test pit to the east of the site cut through concrete.

APPENDIX II: HARRIS MATRICES

APPENDIX III: REGISTERS

Context register

Context No.	Trench	Description
001	1-6	Topsoil with turf
002	1-6	Hardcore and rubble
003	All	Orange/grey clay subsoil
004	7	Dark brown soil with brick
005	7	Hardcore, stones and gravel
006	8-12	Concrete yard surface
007	8-12	Hardcore beneath concrete

Photographic registers

Film One: Colour Slide

Shot No.	Direction	Scale	Description	Taken by
1	N	1m	Trench 1	PC
2	N	1m	Trench 2	PC
3	N	1m	Trench 3	PC
4	N	1m	Trench 4	PC
5	N	1m	Trench 5	PC
6	W	1m	Trench 6	PC
7	N	1m	Trench 7	PC
8	E	1m	Trench 8	PC
9	E	1m	Trench 9	PC
10	E	1m	Trench 10	PC
11	E	1m	Trench 11	PC
12	E	1m	Trench 12	PC

Film Two: Black and White Print

Shot No.	Direction	Scale	Description	Taken by
1	N	1m	Trench 1	PC
2	N	1m	Trench 2	PC
3	N	1m	Trench 3	PC
4	N	1m	Trench 4	PC
5	N	1m	Trench 5	PC
6	W	1m	Trench 6	PC
7	N	1m	Trench 7	PC
8	E	1m	Trench 8	PC
9	E	1m	Trench 9	PC
10	E	1m	Trench 10	PC
11	E	1m	Trench 11	PC
12	E	1m	Trench 12	PC

APPENDIX IV: SPECIFICATION

Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Watching Brief, Castle Farm, Ogle, Northumberland

Planning Ref: 05/D591

NCCT Ref: CM27/3: 4987

1. Introduction

- 1.1. An planning application has been made to demolish existing barns and erect a new steel framed building at Castle Farm, Ogle. This is located at the eastern end of the deserted medieval village and field system of Ogle, which are a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument. Ogle Castle, a Grade I Listed building is located to the north-west of the development area.
- 1.2. The proposed development is situated at OS grid reference NZ 1424 7911 just outside the Scheduled area. There have been no previously recorded archaeological works on this site. This written scheme of investigation details the works to be undertaken during an archaeological watching brief at the site in accordance with the brief prepared by Nick Best, Assitant County Archaeologist for Northumberland.

2. Site Specific Requirements

- 2.1. The client for this work is Willam Walton. The nature and extent of the works has been confirmed with the client.
- 2.2. The work to be undertaken is an archaeological watching brief which aims to ascertain whether there are any archaeological constraints which may affect the proposed development. This will be done by establishing the presence or absence of archaeological remains, their quality, depth and preservation. The overall aim of the watching brief will be:
 - to establish the presence/absence, nature, depth and character of any possible archaeological features
 - to make suggestions, where possible, about further mitigation which may be necessary to preserve archaeological features *in situ*, or
 - to make suggestions to preserve archaeological features by record, where necessary
 - to determine if further archaeological interventions are required
- 2.2. Should archaeology be discovered a course of action will be discussed with Nick Best, Assistant County Archaeologist and approved prior to further work being undertaken on the site.

3. Project Management and Standards

- 3.1. The project will be carried out in compliance with the codes of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) (2000) and will follow the IFA Standard and Guidance for Excavations (1995).

- 3.2. All staff employed on the project will be suitably qualified and experienced for their respective project roles and have practical experience of archaeological excavation and recording. All staff will be made aware of the archaeological importance of the area surrounding the site and will be fully briefed on the work required by this specification. Each member of staff will be fully conversant with the aims and methodologies and will be given a copy of this written scheme of investigation to read. All members of staff employed by Archaeological Research Services Ltd are fully qualified and experienced archaeologists, this will ensure that appropriate decisions regarding environmental and dating sampling will be made in the field.

4. Methods

- 4.1. Unstratified modern material will be removed by a machine using a 1m wide, toothless ditching bucket, under continuous archaeological supervision. The topsoil or recent overburden will be removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits. No machinery will track over areas that have been stripped.
- 4.2. The trenches will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools in order to expose surviving archaeological features and deposits.
- 4.3. All archaeological features and deposits will be recorded on a pre-excavation plan before excavation, sampling and recording.
- 4.4. All features exposed will be excavated by hand. Sampling will typically comprise 50% of every discrete feature; 25% of linear/curvilinear features with non-uniform fill and 10% of linear features with a uniform fill.
- 4.5. In the event of human burials being discovered, they will be left *in-situ*, covered and protected and the coroners' office informed. If removal is essential, work will comply with relevant Home Office regulations.
- 4.6. Appropriate procedures under the relevant legislation will be followed in the event of the discovery of artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasures Act 1996.
- 4.7. Deposits that have the potential for providing environmental or dating evidence will be assessed while the work is in progress. An environmental sampling strategy has been agreed with the English Heritage Scientific advisor for North-East England, Jacqui Huntley. The sampling strategy comprises the following:
- All intact archaeological contexts will be sampled. Small pit features will be 100% sampled while bulk samples of 40 litres will be taken from larger feature contexts, such as linear ditch fills.
 - Any samples recovered will be floated on site in graduated sieves with the smallest being 500µm and the flots and residues collected. Samples will be analysed by B Johnson of Archaeological Research Services Ltd and an

assessment report prepared in accordance with Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (HBMC 1991).

- 4.8. During and after the excavation, all recovered artefacts and environmental samples will be stored in appropriate materials and storage conditions to ensure minimal deterioration and loss of information (this will include controlled storage, correct packaging, regular monitoring of conditions and immediate selection for conservation of valuable material).

5. Recording

- 5.1 The site will be accurately tied into the National Grid and located on a 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area.
- 5.2 A full and proper record (written, graphic and photographic as appropriate) will be made for all work, using pro-forma record sheets and text descriptions appropriate to the work. Accurate scale plans and section drawings will be drawn at 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 scales as appropriate.
- 5.3 The stratigraphy of the trenches will be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified.
- 5.4 All archaeological deposits and features will be recorded with above ordnance datum (AOD) levels.
- 5.5 A photographic record of all contexts will be taken in colour transparency and black and white print and will include a clearly visible, graduated metric scale. A register of all photographs will be kept.
- 5.6 Where stratified deposits are encountered, a 'Harris' matrix will be compiled.

6. Access

- 6.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will give the Assistant County Archaeologist 10 working days (or less if so agreed) notice of the commencement of fieldwork.
- 6.2 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will afford access to the Assistant County Archaeologist or their representative at all times, for the purposes of monitoring the archaeological evaluation.
- 6.3 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will maintain regular communication with the Assistant County Archaeologist to ensure that the project aims and objectives are met.

7. Finds Processing and Storage

- 7.1. All finds processing, conservation work and storage of finds will be carried out in compliance with the IFA guidelines for Finds Work (2001) and those set out by UKIC (1990).

- 7.2 Artefact collection and discard policies will be appropriate for the defined purpose.
- 7.3 Bulk finds which are not discarded will be washed and, with the exception of animal bone, marked. Marking and labelling will be indelible and irremovable by abrasion. Bulk finds will be appropriately bagged, boxed and recorded. This process will be carried out no later than two months after the end of the excavation.
- 7.4 All small finds will be recorded as individual items and appropriately packaged (e.g. lithics in self-sealing plastic bags and ceramic in acid-free tissue paper). Vulnerable objects will be specially packaged and textile, painted glass and coins stored in appropriate specialist systems. This process will be carried out within two days of the small find being excavated. Prehistoric pottery will not be cleaned or be subject to any abrasion or loss of adhering residues.
- 7.5 During and after the excavation all objects will be stored in appropriate materials and storage conditions to ensure minimal deterioration and loss of information (including controlled storage, correct packaging, and regular monitoring, immediate selection for conservation of vulnerable material). All storage will have appropriate security provision.
- 7.6 The deposition and disposal of artefacts will be agreed with the legal owner and the Museum of Antiquities prior to the work taking place. All finds except treasure trove are the property of the landowner.
- 7.7 All retained artefacts and ecofacts will be cleaned and packaged in accordance with the requirements of the recipient museum.

8. Site archive

- 8.1 The archive will be compiled in an orderly fashion to the standards and format set out in Management of Archaeological Projects 2 (HBMC 1991) and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC 1990). The archive will be deposited with the Museum of Antiquities within 6 months of the fieldwork once all post-excavation work is completed and the final report produced.

9. Report

- 9.1 One copy of the report will be submitted to the client, and two hard copies (one bound and one unbound) and one digital copy will be submitted to the Northumberland SMR within fourteen working days of the completion of the fieldwork. Each report will be bound with each page and paragraph numbered and will include as a minimum the following:
- executive summary
 - a site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale with 10 figure central grid reference
 - contractor's details including date work carried out

- nature and extent of the proposed development, including developer/client details
- description of the site location and geology
- trench plans to a suitable scale and tied into the national grid so that features can be correctly orientated
- discussion of the results of field work
- context & feature descriptions
- features, number and class of artefacts, spot dating & scientific dating of significant finds presented in tabular format
- plans and section drawings of the features drawn at a suitable scale
- additional plans/map extracts to display noted and recorded archaeological features as appropriate
- recommendations regarding the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological work, including publication
- bibliography

11. OASIS

- 11.1 ARS Ltd will complete an on-line OASIS form for this evaluation. ARS Ltd is a registered contractor on the OASIS system and has uploaded archaeological reports before.

12. Dissemination/Publication

- 12.1 A summary will be prepared for 'Archaeology in Northumberland' and submitted to Sarah MacLean by the beginning of December of the year in which the work is completed.
- 12.2 A short article will be prepared for a local journal if appropriate.

13. References

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 1995. *Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation.*

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2000. *Code of Conduct.*

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2001. *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.*

UKIC (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation). 1990. *Guidelines for the Preparation of Archives for Long-Term Storage.*