

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Beadnell Campsite, Chathill,
Northumberland.**



Beadnell campsite excavations

ARS Ltd Report 2010/
November 2010

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2010 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Lindisfarne Leisure Ltd to undertake an archaeological watch brief at Beadnell Campsite, Beadnell, Northumberland. The watching brief was carried out during the ground works for developments on the site which included new service roads, hard standings and services.

There has been extensive evidence for prehistoric activity in and around Beadnell including a number of artefacts and a cairn that was discovered to the south of Beadnell in the 1930s. More recently, in 1970, during work on the campsite, two cairns with primary burials dating from the Bronze Age and secondary burials dating from the Iron Age or Romano-British periods were discovered. Within one of the cairns was a fragment of cup and ring marked stone.

Given the close proximity of known archaeology, there was some potential for similar activity within the study area. No archaeological or historically significant features were discovered during the excavations.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In February 2010 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Lindisfarne Leisure Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Beadnell Campsite in Beadnell, Northumberland. The watching brief was carried out during the creation of new service roads, hard standings and services. The campsite is located 10.7 miles NNE of Alnwick and is centred at NU 230 297. The development site covers an area of approximately 13000 m².

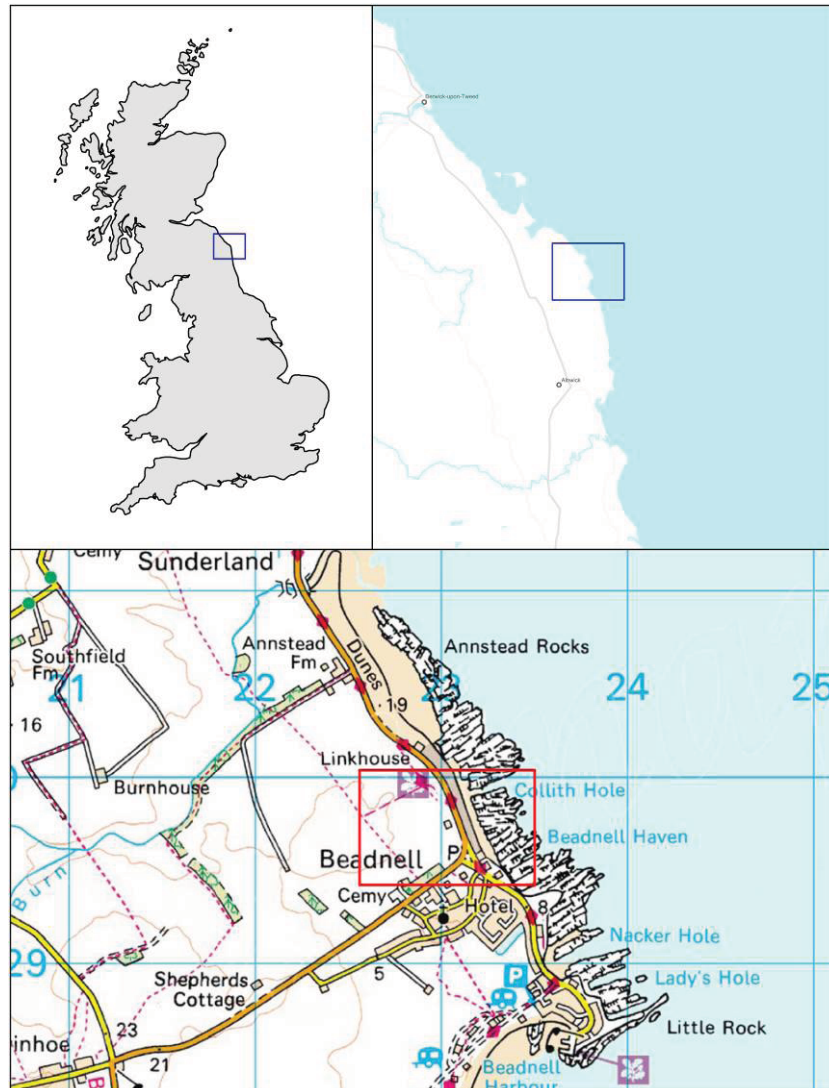


Fig. 1 Site location

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1.2 Soils and Geology

- 1.2.1 The bedrock geology of the area consists of limestone with subordinate sandstone and argillaceous rocks. The superficial deposits consist of till and blown dune sand. (BGS 2010)

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The specification required that a watching brief should be carried out to observe any excavations taking place in order to identify any potential archaeological remains. This involved monitoring the excavation of a new road system, including hard standings, as well as levelling works within the site (Fig. 2).
- 2.2 The area was excavated using a 360 degree mechanical excavator, using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 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). A series of digital photographs were taken throughout the watching brief.

3. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

- 3.1.1 There has been extensive evidence for prehistoric activity in and around the village of Beadnell. Neolithic and Bronze Age artefacts have been discovered as well as the remains of a Bronze Age burial mound and, to the south-east of the campsite, two burial cairns containing human remains were discovered in 1934. There are also a number of cropmarks, visible from the air, which represents ditched enclosures.
- 3.1.2 The most important discoveries dating from the prehistoric period were two prehistoric burial cairns that were discovered during an earlier phase of development at the campsite in 1970 (HER ref 5788). In addition to the primary cist burials within each cairn, at least 18 secondary or satellite burials were recorded. At least one of the cists was noted to contain a fragment of prehistoric cup-and-ring marked stone, almost certainly in a re-used context. Primary burials within the cairns dated from the Bronze Age, though a number of the secondary burials were Iron Age or Romano-British in date.

3.2 Romano-British

- 3.2.1 A number of Iron Age occupation sites have been identified in and around Beadnell from cropmarks although no artefacts have been recovered. Due to the fact that the study area would have been beyond the frontier of Hadrian's Wall during the Roman occupation there are no known Roman sites in the area.

3.3 Medieval

- 3.3.1 There is not much early Medieval occupation evidence from Beadnell and the only possible site is the chapel of St Ebba who was the daughter of the Anglo-Saxon King Aethelfrith. The name 'Beadnell' itself comes from the Old English for 'the flat coastal area belonging to Bedwine.'

- 3.3.2 The earliest reference to Beadnell was in 1161 although it is thought that there was settlement there before then. There are a few buildings in the parish that date to the Medieval period. There were also a number of other small villages in the parish aside from Beadnell, for example Elford and Fleetham. Ridge and furrow indicate the presence of Medieval fieldsystems.

3.4 Post-Medieval

- 3.4.1 During the Post-Medieval period most of Beadnell's wealth came from the sea with the harbour being built in the 18th Century. Dried herring were the biggest export. The harbour also had a lime kiln so lime was another export from the village. As well as industries that relied on the sea, there was a mill and a large number of farmhouses.

4. RESULTS

- 4.1. The landscape of the site is gently sloping to the southwest. Levelling has been necessary in order to prevent further flooding in the area and provide a more firm standing for caravan use. The excavation began in the northern extent of the site (fig. 2, 4 and 5). Topsoil (001) was removed down to the natural clay level (004). An area of peat (003) was excavated in the northern area of the site which was covered by a thin layer of dune sand (002). The dune sand existed to depths of 0.20m to 0.35m. The peat existed to depths of between 0.73m and 0.50m (fig. 3). The excavations for the new road and hard-standings (fig. 2, 6 and 7) penetrated to depths of between 0.50m and 0.30m.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Given the close proximity of known archaeology to the site, there was some potential for similar activity within the study area. However, no archaeological or historically significant features were discovered during the excavations.

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 our client Nick Dawe for facilitating our work, and Nick Best of Northumberland County Council.

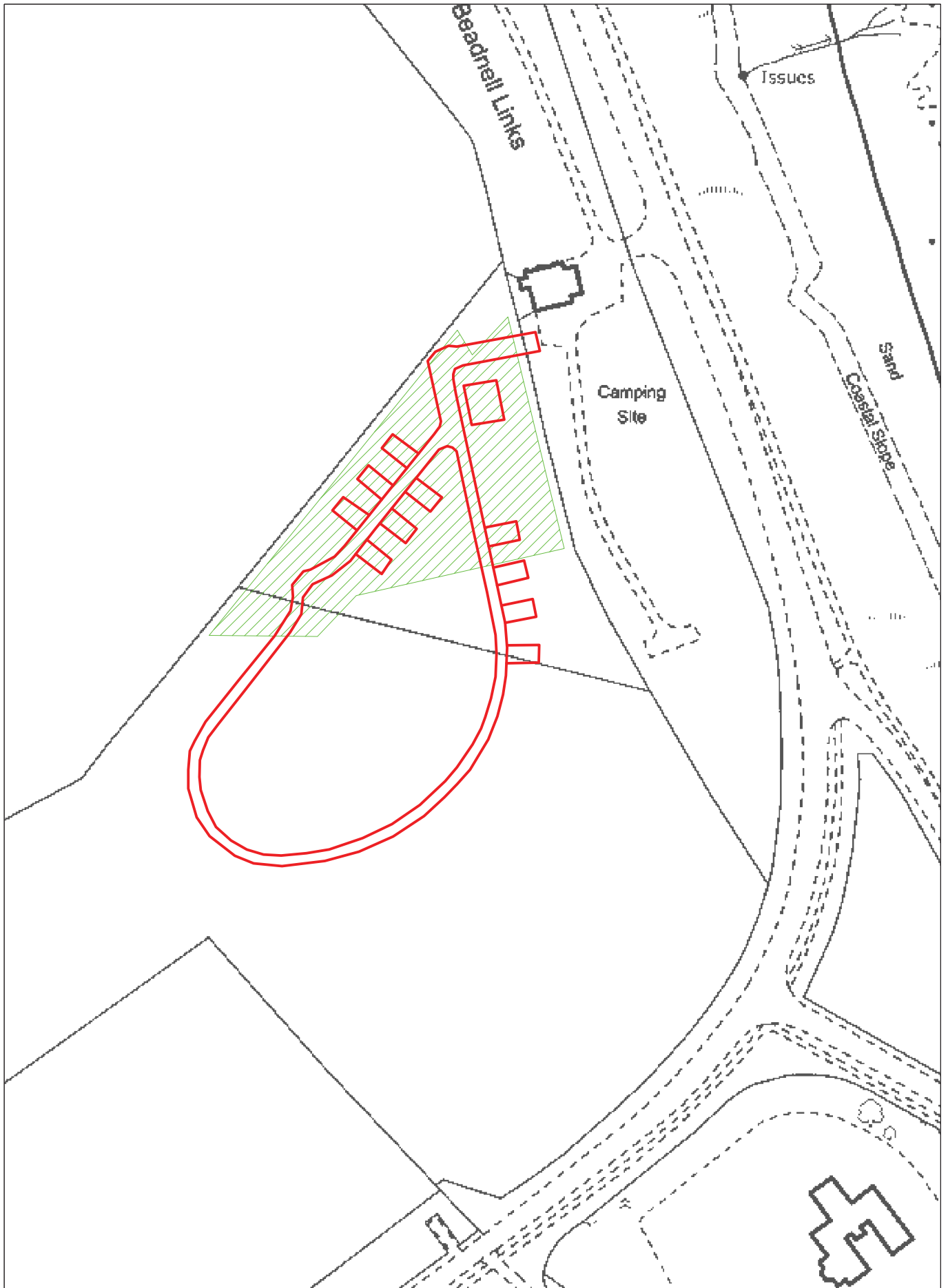
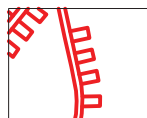


Figure 2
Area of watching brief

Key:



Excavated road and hard-standings



Raised level



Metres 0 20 40

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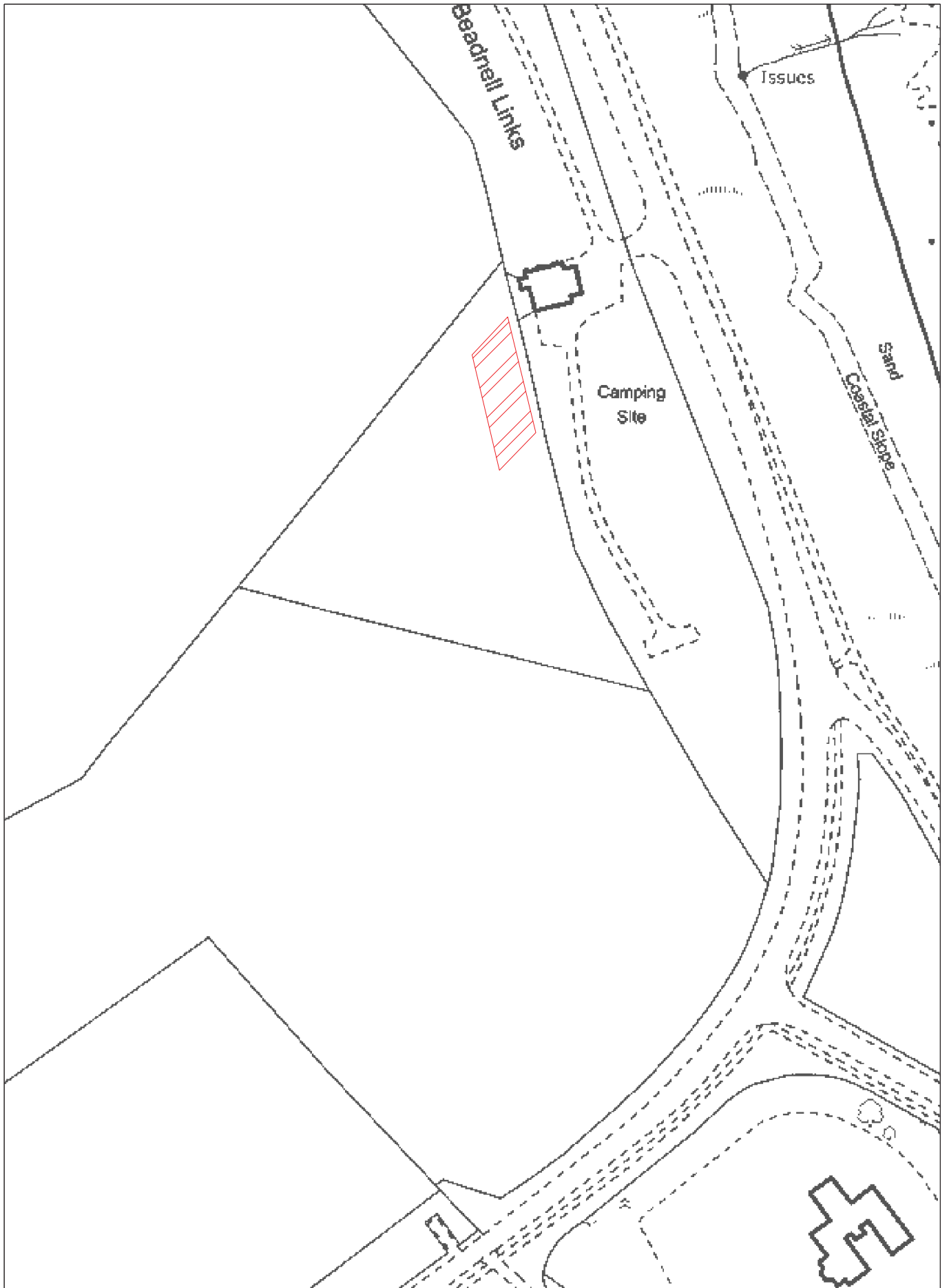
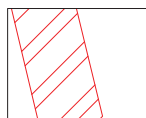


Figure 3
Location of peat

Key:



Location of peat level



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Metres 0 20 40



Figure 4. Levelling of site looking southwest



Figure 5. Sand and peat layers, southeast facing elevation



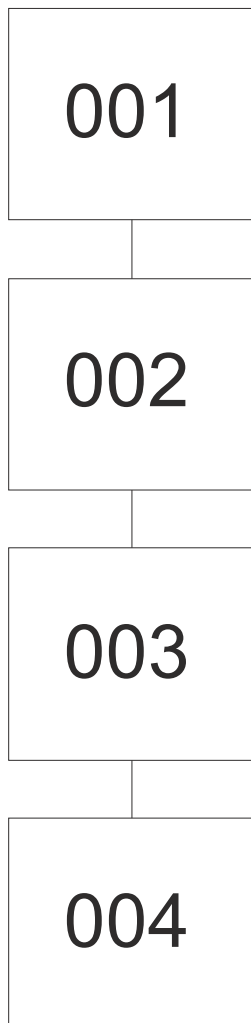
Figure 6. Excavation of hard standings



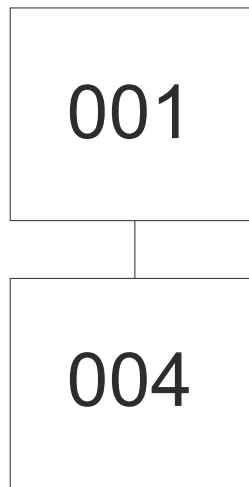
Figure 7. Excavation of new road

APPENDIX II: HARRIS MATRICES

Peat Area



Area of levelling, road and
hard-standing excavation



APPENDIX III: REGISTERS

Context register

Context No.	Description
001	Very dark brown/black stony topsoil
002	Dune sand
003	Peat
004	Orange/brown clay natural

APPENDIX IV: SPECIFICATION

Planning ref: 09/B/0390
NCCCT ref: B5/5: 10330

LAND AT BEADNELL, NORTHUMBERLAND

Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief

Introduction

A planning application has been submitted for improvements and extensions to the existing caravan park at Beadnell, Chathill, NE67 5BX (Fig 1).

The Northumberland Historic Environment Record locates a number of significant archaeological sites within and adjacent to the proposed development area. Most notable among these are the locations of two prehistoric burial cairns discovered during an earlier phase of development at the caravan site in 1970 (HER ref 5788). In addition to the primary cist burials within each cairn, at least 18 secondary or satellite burials were recorded. At least one of the cists was noted to contain a fragment of prehistoric cup-and-ring marked stone, almost certainly in a re-used context. Primary burials within the cairns dated from the Bronze Age, though a number of the secondary burials were Iron Age or Romano-British in date. The re-use of these monuments and the identification of archaeological features of Neolithic to later prehistoric date significantly add to their importance.

Although the features identified in 1970 were wholly destroyed during the development works, there is some potential for the remains of similar features to survive elsewhere within the development area. More generally, recent archaeological excavation and survey along the Northumberland coast indicates that the large areas of the coastline were occupied or exploited by human populations from at least the Mesolithic period. Areas of higher ground, such as the proposed development area, seem to have been favoured for seasonal exploitation, settlement and burial.

The submitted plans indicate that the proposed development will include new infrastructure comprising new spine and service roads, hardstandings, new buildings, extensive landscaping and tree planting. Service trenches for the provision of water and electricity to each fixed pitch will also be required. Whilst some or all of the site has been subject to ploughing in the post-war period, the identification of prehistoric features during earlier development demonstrates that archaeological remains can survive below the plough horizon. Such remains may be impacted or destroyed by the proposed development works.

Northumberland Conservation has advised Northumberland County

Council (NCC) Development Management Team (North Area) that, should permission be granted, a condition should be attached to the permission requiring an archaeological watching brief.

This brief constitutes Northumberland Conservation's justification for the investigation, its objectives and the strategy and procedures to apply to the programme of archaeological recording. This brief does not constitute the required 'written scheme of investigation'.

The developer should discuss their intended scope of works with their archaeological contractor prior to work taking place in order that an appropriate programme of archaeological monitoring can be agreed.

The brief is intended to establish the project parameters to enable an archaeological consultant or contractor to tender for the work and once commissioned to prepare and submit an appropriate Method Statement, Project Design or Specification to Northumberland Conservation for approval prior to work commencing. The project design should be based on a thorough study of all relevant background information, in particular any assessment or evaluation reports or, in their absence, data held or referenced in Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER).

The archaeological consultant or contractor should confirm the extent of the development and the nature of the works with the developer as part of the specification.

Method of work

The purpose of this work is to ensure that important archaeological remains are not destroyed without first being adequately recorded.

The proposed development has the potential to disturb important archaeological remains. It is considered that in this case a watching brief is the appropriate archaeological response. The watching brief should cover the following groundworks for the development:

- Groundworks associated with new road surfaces and hardstandings
- Excavations for the provision of services
- Groundworks associated with site clearance
- Landscaping activities

Should the groundworks not exceed modern disturbance or equally should they exceed the depth at which archaeological remains are present, Northumberland Conservation should be contacted in order to establish whether the watching brief need continue in these specific areas.

General Standards

- i) All work should be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA)¹ and should follow the IfA Standards for Watching Briefs.²
- ii) All staff must be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles.
- iii) All staff must familiarise themselves with the archaeological background of the site, and the results of any previous work in the area, prior to the start of work on site. All staff must be aware of the work required under the specification, and must understand the projects aims and methodologies.
- iv) **The archaeological contractor should note that the formulation of an appropriate environmental sampling strategy is a mandatory part of this project. Advice on such a strategy must be obtained from the English Heritage Scientific Advisor for North East England, Dr Jacqui Huntley, Department of Archaeology, University of Durham, Science Laboratories, South Road, Durham. Tel. 0191 334 1137**
- v) This observation shall involve the systematic examination and accurate recording of all archaeological features, horizons and artefacts identified.
- vi) **If archaeological remains are uncovered, the archaeologist should be given the opportunity of excavating and recording the remains before they are destroyed.**
- vii) A full and proper record (written, graphic and photographic as appropriate) should be made for all work, using pro forma record sheets and text descriptions appropriate to the work. Accurate scale plans and section drawings should be drawn at 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 scales as appropriate. Where skeletons are encountered, they should be recorded by photography and the use of pro forma skeleton recording sheets.
- viii) The area watched by the archaeologist should be accurately tied into the National Grid and located on a 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area. All archaeological deposits and features and at the top and base of all groundworks must be recorded with an **above ordnance datum (aOD)** level.
- ix) A photographic record of all contexts should be taken in colour transparency and black and white print and should include a clearly visible, graduated metric scale. A register of all photographs should be kept.
- x) In the event of human burials being discovered, the archaeologist will procure and comply with all statutory consents and licences under the Burial Act 1857.
- xi) **Where any part of a human burial is disturbed, the whole burial must be archaeologically excavated.**
- xii) Appropriate procedures under the relevant legislation must be followed

¹ Institute for Archaeologists, 2008, Code of Conduct (23 October 2008):

http://www.archaeologists.net/modules/icontent/inPages/docs/codes/code_conduct.pdf

² Institute for Archaeologists, 2008, Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief (October 2008):

<http://www.archaeologists.net/modules/icontent/inPages/docs/codes/watch2.pdf>

in the event of the discovery of artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasure Act 1996.

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

Contingency arrangements

In the event of the discovery of archaeological remains which are of a greater number or extent than anticipated, work will cease and Northumberland Conservation and a representative of the developer will be notified. An assessment will be made of the importance of the remains and any provision for their recording or preservation in situ as appropriate.

The contingency for this project has been set at up to 50 person-days.

In the event that hearths, kilns, ovens or areas of in-situ burning (of whatever period, date or function) are identified during the watching brief, provision should be made to collect at least one archaeo-magnetic date to be calculated from each individual hearth surface (or in the case of domestic dwellings sites a minimum of one per building identified). Where applicable, samples are to be collected from the site and processed by a suitably trained specialist for dating purposes. In the event that such deposits or structures are identified, the Conservation Team should be contacted to discuss the appropriate response. This specific aspect of the sampling strategy should also be discussed in advance with English Heritage as per 'General Standards' above.

Finds

All finds processing, conservation work and storage of finds must be carried out in compliance with the IfA Guidelines for Finds Work and those set by UKIC.

The deposition and disposal of artefacts must be agreed with the legal owner and recipient museum prior to the work taking place. Where the landowner decides to retain artefacts adequate provision must be made for recording them. Details of land ownership should be provided by the developer.

All retained artefacts must be cleaned and packaged in accordance with the requirements of the recipient museum.

Site Archive

The archive and the finds must be deposited in the appropriate local museum, within 6 months of completion of the post-excavation work and report.

Before the commencement of fieldwork, contact should be made with the landowners and with the appropriate local museum to make the relevant arrangements. Details of land ownership should be provided by the developer. Details of the appropriate museum can be provided by Northumberland Conservation.

Northumberland Conservation will require confirmation that the archive had been submitted in a satisfactory form to the relevant museum before recommending to the local planning authority that the condition should be fully discharged.

Report

The archaeological consultant or contractor must submit a copy of the report to their client and Northumberland Conservation within 2 months of completion of the work.

Northumberland Conservation require two copies of the report (one bound and one unbound)

Northumberland Conservation will need to approve the report before discharging the condition on the planning permission

Each page and paragraph should be numbered within the report and illustrations cross-referenced within the text.

The report should include as a minimum the following:

- i) Planning application number, Northumberland Conservation reference, OASIS reference number and an 8 figure grid reference
- ii) A summary statement of the results
- iii) A table summarising the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and spot dating of significant finds
- iv) Above Ordnance Datum levels and levels below current ground level in the text
- v) A location plan of the site at an appropriate scale of at least 1:10 000
- vi) A location plan of the extent of the watching brief within the site. This must be at a recognisable planning scale, and located with reference to the national grid, to allow the results to be accurately plotted on the Sites and Monuments Record
- vii) Plans and sections of archaeology located at a recognisable planning scale (1:10, 1:20, 1:50 or 1:100, as appropriate)
- viii) Above Ordnance Datum (aOD) levels included on plans and sections
- ix) Both aOD levels and depth below current ground level to be included within the text
- x) **Any variation to the above requirements should be approved by the planning authority prior to work being submitted**

OASIS

Northumberland Conservation and HER support the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) Project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large scale developer funded fieldwork.

The archaeological consultant or contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. If the contractors are unfamiliar with OASIS, they are advised to contact Northumberland HER prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the HER, Northumberland HER will validate the OASIS form thus placing the information into the public domain on the OASIS website. The archaeological consultant or contractor must indicate that they agree to this procedure within the specification/project design/written scheme of investigation submitted to Northumberland Conservation for approval

Publication

A summary should be prepared for 'Archaeology in Northumberland' and submitted to Liz Williams, Northumberland HER Officer, by December of the year in which the work is completed.

A short report of the work should also be submitted to a local journal if appropriate and agreed with Northumberland Conservation. If publication is a requirement, the publication report will need to be approved by Northumberland Conservation before discharging the condition on the planning permission

Monitoring

The Assistant County Archaeologist dealing with this application must be informed on the start date and timetable for the watching brief in advance of work commencing.

Reasonable access to the site for the purposes of monitoring the archaeological scheme will be afforded to the Assistant County Archaeologist or his/her nominee at all times.

Regular communication between the archaeological contractor, the Assistant County Archaeologist and other interested parties must be maintained to ensure the project aims and objectives are achieved.

Further Guidance

Any further guidance or queries regarding the provision of a specification should be directed to:

Nick Best
Assistant County Archaeologist
Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

Tel: 01670 534095
Fax: 01670 533409
e-mail: nick.best@northumberland.gov.uk

24/11/09

**FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS, ALL MAPS SUPPLIED BY
NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL MUST BE RETURNED TO
THEM ON COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report Check List

Site name:

Archaeological Contractor:

Check List	Contractor	Northumberland Conservation (NC)
Copy of report checklist		
Planning ref.		
Northumberland Conservation ref.		
OASIS ref.		
Confirmation that all OASIS sections completed incl. submission of grey literature		
8 figure grid reference		
Results		
Summary statement of the results		
Table summarising the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and spot dating of significant finds		
Plans and sections		
Location plan at scale of at least 1:10000		
Plans showing location of archaeological work at recognisable planning scale		
Plans showing location of archaeological work with reference to national grid		
Detailed plans and sections at recognisable planning scale		
Above Ordnance Datum levels and levels below current ground level in the text		
Above Ordnance Datum levels included on plans and sections		
Any variation approved by NC prior to work commencing		

Contractor checked:

NC Officer checked:

Date:

Date: