

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Trinity Church, Buxton, Derbyshire



View of excavated trench

ARS Ltd Report 2011/21

November 2011

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Contents

List of Figures.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
1. Introduction.....	5
1.1. Location and Scope of Work.....	5
1.2. Geology and preservation.....	6
2. Methodology.....	7
3. Results.....	9
4. Conclusion.....	10
5. Publicity, confidentiality and copyright.....	11
6. Archive deposition and publication.....	11
7. Statement of indemnity.....	11
8. Acknowledgements.....	11
9. References.....	12
Appendix I Written Scheme of Investigation.....	13

List of Figures

1.	Site location.....	5
2.	Site plan.....	7
3.	Photograph of excavated trench.....	8

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2011 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Condy and Lofthouse Architects Ltd, on behalf of Trinity Church, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Trinity Church, Buxton prior to extensions and remodelling of the church building.

The work consisted of a narrow trench running from the western elevation of the church and around the southern elevation towards the west.

No features of archaeological significance or buried land surfaces were revealed.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and background

1.1.1 In April 2011 Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) were commissioned by Condy and Lofthouse Architects Ltd, on behalf of Trinity Church, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Trinity Church, Buxton, Derbyshire (Fig. 1). The work was carried out during groundworks for the extension and remodelling of the current church building.

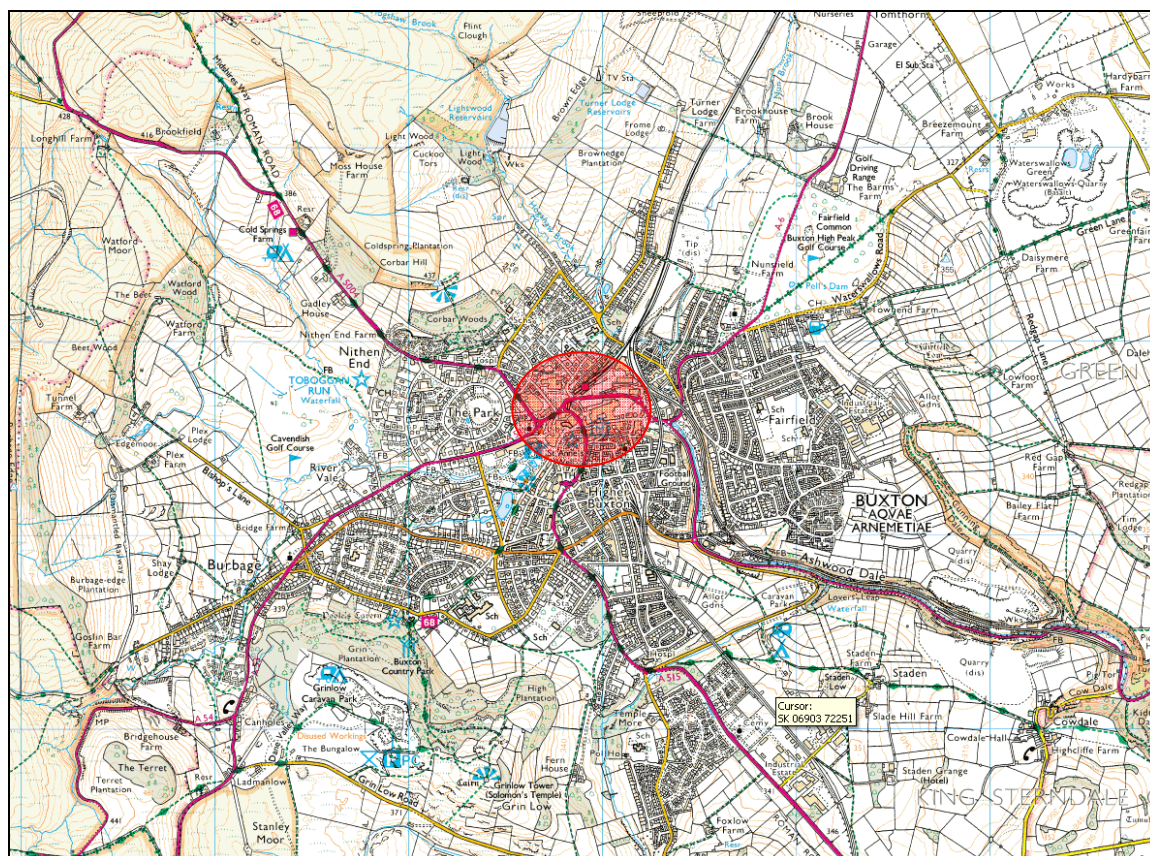


Fig. 1 Site location

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1.1.2 The site is centred at NGR SK 06128 73449, and is located on Hardwick Mount, in the centre of Buxton.

1.1.3 The proposed development site is close to a number of Listed Buildings and known heritage assets, as well as lying within the Buxton Area of Archaeological Interest. This is a locally-designated heritage asset relating to the probable extent of the Roman town (*Aquae Arnemetiae*).

1.1.4 Close to the development are the remains of several prehistoric and Roman monuments, including the site of a potential Roman structure on Terrace Road, an assemblage of bones and bronze objects dated to the Bronze Age found during a road construction between Spring Gardens and Silverlands in 1898 (HER 2801) and a possible barrow at the site of The Slopes (HER 2873), nominally dating to the Roman period, but

more likely a re-used Bronze Age barrow.

1.1.5 Medieval monuments in the area include several churches, such as the Church of St. Anne on High Street and a medieval cross shaft, now situated in the market place, but previously located in a field adjoining St. Ann's stables.

1.1.6 The town of Buxton was developed as a spa town in the late 1770s by the fifth Duke of Devonshire, and many of the original buildings still exist (Pevsner and Williamson 1986, 113). Trinity Church itself was built between 1873 and 1906 and is situated close to the site of a demolished 19th century Congregational Chapel, also on Hardwick Mount (HER 31168).

1.2 Geology and preservation

1.2.1 The solid geology of the site consists of Carboniferous Limestone of the Monsal Dale formation (British Geological Survey 2011). There is no substantial superficial geological cover.

1.2.2 Due to the continual development of Buxton since the 18th century, it was deemed that there was a potential for this area to retain potentially significant buried archaeological remains. Any such evidence would almost certainly be damaged or destroyed by the foundation construction, necessary service and drain excavations and the general construction process. Due to the nature of the current land use, it is also possible that human remains will be uncovered.

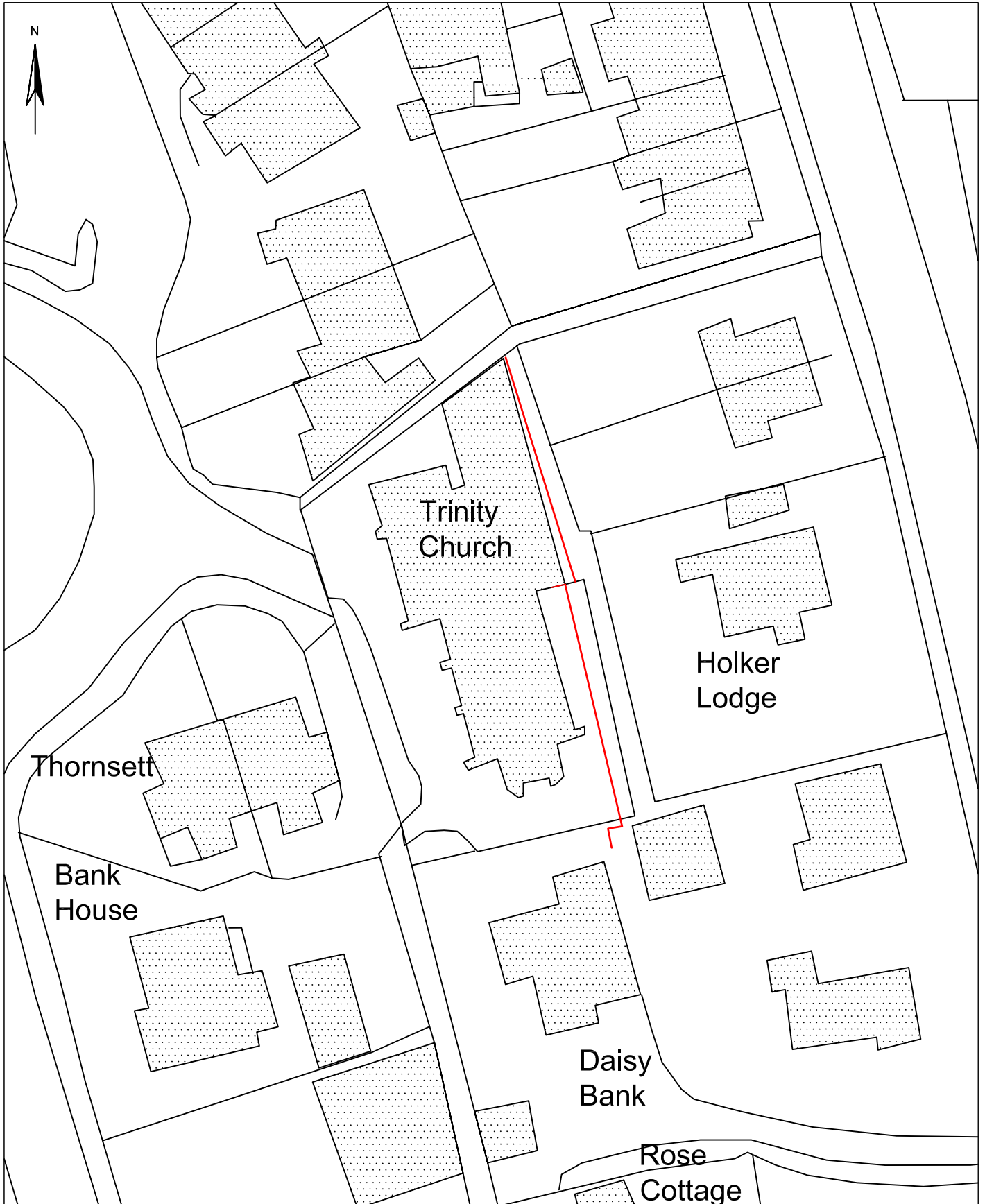
2. METHODOLOGY

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 a single trench running from the western elevation of the church, around to the east (Fig 2.)

2.2 The trench was excavated by machine, using a back-acting toothless ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. The machine removed the concrete and gravel (001) and topsoil (002) in level spits until the first potential archaeological horizon (003) was exposed. The surface was then cleaned using hand tools in order to expose any archaeological features.

2.3 A single context recording system was employed. Each layer encountered was given a unique context number and a full written description. Photographs were taken in black and white print and colour transparency in order to record the ground work. These were supplemented by high-resolution digital photography.

2.4 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2001), and the full Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) is included below as Appendix I.



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 DE45 1HB

Figure 2:
 Site plan

Key:
 — Route of proposed drainage excavations

Site Code: TRCB '11
 Date: 03/11/2011
 Drawn: KM
 Scale: 1:500 at A4

Notes:

Copyright/Licencing:

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3. RESULTS

3.1 Concrete and gravel

A concrete and gravel layer (001) covered the entire excavation area. This was modern and was removed with a machine under archaeological supervision

3.2 Topsoil

Below the concrete and gravel layer was a thin layer of compacted topsoil (002), approximately 0.25m in depth. It consisted of a dark greyish-brown clayey-silt with a small amount of limestone fragments included within the matrix. This represented a buried, though modern topsoil, and was carefully removed in spits under archaeological supervision.

3.3 Rubble

Directly below the topsoil was a layer of limestone rubble set into a clay matrix (003). This rubble is likely to be backfill created during the construction of the adjacent cellar/boiler room during the late 1860s and is likely to be crushed and redeposited bedrock.

3.2. Natural substratum

Directly below the rubble layer (003) was the natural substratum which in this case consisted of undisturbed Carboniferous Limestone bedrock presented in slab formations. It is interesting to note that a large amount of fossils (particularly of brachiopods) were found within this bedrock and the limestone rubble in the layer above.



Figure 3: View of excavated trench

3.4 No features, finds or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed during the excavation process.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1. There were no archaeological features, deposits, buried land surfaces or small finds located within the trenches.

5. PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

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

6. ARCHIVE DEPOSITION AND PUBLICATION

- 6.1 A digital and paper archive will be prepared and deposited with Buxton Museum and Art Gallery by February 2012. This will consist of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data associated with the project. An accession number has been requested from Buxton Museum and Art Gallery and this is DERSB 2011.6.
- 6.2 A summary of the project, with selected drawings, illustrations and photographs will be submitted within 2 years of the completion of the project to the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal for publication. The results of the work will be published at least in summary form in the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal.

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 thank all those involved in this project, in particular Steve Short of Trinity Church, Jason Maher of Condy and Lofthouse Architects and Steve Baker of Derbyshire County Council.

9. REFERENCES

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). 2008. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Reading, Institute for Archaeologists.

Pevsner, N. and Williamson, E. 1986. *The Buildings of England: Derbyshire*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press.

Websites

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

Derbyshire Historic Environment Record. www.heritagegateway.org.uk
Accessed 03/11/2011

APPENDIX I - WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Condry and Lofthouse Ltd. has been appointed to undertake extensions and remodelling of Trinity Church, Buxton.
- 1.2. A watching brief has been requested in order to discharge the following planning approval condition: *“No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of an archaeological watching brief in accordance with written scheme of investigation (WSI) submitted by the applicant and approved by the Development Control Archaeologist acting on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.”*
- 1.3. This Written Scheme of Investigation has been requested by the Development Control Archaeologist for Derbyshire.
- 1.4. The objective of the watching brief is to ensure that any archaeological features encountered during the groundworks in the specified area are recorded and interpreted and, if at all possible protected.

2. Location and Background

- 2.1. Trinity Church is centred at SK 06128 73449. It is located on Hardwick Mount, in the centre of Buxton.
- 2.2. The proposed development site is close to many listed buildings and historic monuments, and it lies within the Buxton Area of Archaeological Interest. This is a locally designated heritage asset relating to the extent of the Roman town.
- 2.3. Close by are the remains of several prehistoric and Roman monuments, including the site of an alleged Roman structure on Terrace Road, an assemblage of bones and bronze objects dated to the Bronze Age found during a road construction between Spring Gardens and Silverlands in 1898 (HER 2801) and an alleged barrow at the site of The Slopes (HER 2873), probably dating from the Roman era.
- 2.4. Medieval monuments in the area include several churches, for example the Church of St. Anne on High Street, and a medieval cross shaft, now situated in the market place but previously located in a field adjoining St. Ann's stables.
- 2.5. The town of Buxton was developed as a spa town in the late 1770s by the fifth Duke of Devonshire, and many of the original buildings still exist (Pevsner 1986, 113). Trinity Church itself was built between 1873 and 1906 and is situated close to the site of a demolished 19th century Congregational Chapel, also on Hardwick Mount (HER 31168).

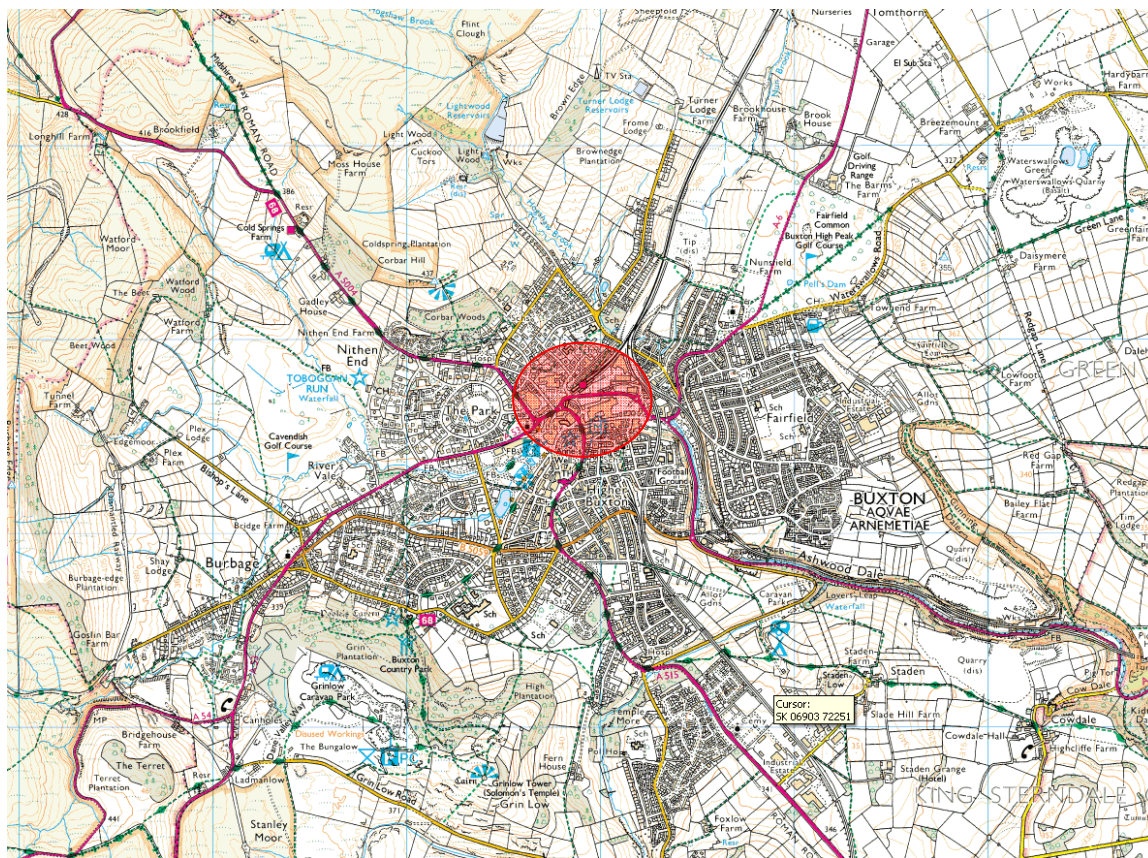


Figure 1. Location map of Trinity Church, Buxton.

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- 2.6. The current development involves the extension and remodelling of the existing Trinity Church building, including the creation of a new parking area.
- 2.7. Due to the continual development of Buxton since the 1700s, there is a potential for this area to retain important buried archaeological evidence. Any such evidence would almost certainly be damaged or destroyed by the foundation construction, necessary service and drain excavations and the general construction process. Due to the nature of the current land use, it is also possible that human remains will be uncovered.

3. Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1. Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) will provide a suitably qualified archaeologist to observe groundworks. If a mechanical excavator is used for groundworks then the archaeologist on site will ensure that a toothless ditching bucket is used. The on-site archaeologist will be given the opportunity to stop site work in order to investigate potential archaeological features and adequate time will be allowed for recording any such features.

- 3.2. A written, drawn and photographic record will be maintained during the watching brief plus all significant archaeological remains will be recorded and/or retrieved. The onsite drawings will follow the archaeological drawing conventions in MoLAS' Archaeological Site Manual (2002). All excavations will be recorded in accordance with normal principles of archaeological evaluation upon pro forma context sheets.
- 3.3. Where archaeological features and/or deposits are identified during the watching brief, then a sufficient quantity of the said features will be investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed. All features thus investigated will be recorded in plan and section and significant archaeological finds recovered will be retained for analysis. Any archaeological features identified will be photographed and drawn in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section at a scale of 1:10. The stratigraphy, where relevant and apparent, will be recorded within the area of the excavation.
- 3.4. For brick structures, the record will include details of brick dimensions and type (handmade/machine-made, plain/frogged), mortar (colour, composition, hardness) and the extent of structures (number of courses, thickness in skins).
- 3.5. A plan of the excavated areas will be maintained, features noted and section lines recorded. All drawings will be carried out at an appropriate scale and all contexts will be recorded using a single context recording system. The site archive will include plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a scale photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent. Should archaeological features be present then the locations and height AOD of the features will be accurately fixed, surveying in either the planning baselines or the features themselves.
- 3.6. The watching brief will be undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Watching Briefs.(2001).
- 3.7. Any human remains discovered will initially be left in-situ and, if removal is deemed necessary, this will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant Ministry of Justice regulations.
- 3.8. ARS Ltd will ensure that heavy plant or machinery will not be operated in the immediate vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded. Contractors and plant operators will be notified that any observations of archaeological remains must be reported immediately to the archaeological officer on site.
- 3.9. A risk assessment will be undertaken before commencement of the work and health and safety regulations will be adhered to at all times.

4. Artefact and Ecofact Collection and Recording

- 4.1. Artefact collection policy will be concerned with the provision of adequate samples for meeting the objectives of the work. Discarded artefactual materials will be described and quantified through assignment to broad categories in the field. Analysis of finds will be undertaken, as necessary, by suitably qualified specialists. Retained finds will be cleaned, marked, catalogued and packed in materials, as appropriate, for long term storage (see 7. Archive Deposition below).
- 4.2. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. Finds of "treasure" will be reported to the Coroner in accordance with the Treasure Act (1996).

- 4.3. Collection policies for structural remains and industrial residues have been set out by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA, 1993). The presence of such materials within a context will be recorded even where comprehensive retention is not considered appropriate.
- 4.4. It is not considered likely that waterlogged, palaeoenvironmental or human remains will be encountered at any stage of this project. However, should such remains be identified work will cease and a meeting arranged between ARS Ltd, the landowner and the Development Control Archaeologist to discuss further procedures.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

- 5.1. One week prior notice of the commencement of the project is to be given to the Derbyshire County Council Development Control Archaeologist:

Steve Baker,
Development Control Archaeologist,
Derbyshire County Council,
Shand House,
Dale Road South,
Matlock,
Derbyshire DE4 3RY

steve.baker.@derbyshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01629 539773

- 5.2. ARS Ltd will liaise with the Derbyshire Development Control Archaeologist at regular intervals throughout the course of the work.

6. Report

- 6.1. Following completion of the watching brief ARS Ltd will produce a report which will include:
 - Non-technical summary
 - Introductory statement
 - Aims and purpose of the project
 - Methodology
 - A location plan showing all excavated areas with respect to nearby fixed structures and roads
 - Illustrations of all archaeological features with appropriately scaled hachured plans and sections (illustrating height AOD)
 - An objective summary statement of results
 - Conclusions
 - Supporting data – tabulated or in appendices
 - Index to archive and details of archive location
 - References
 - Statement of intent regarding publication
 - Confirmation of archive transfer arrangements

- A copy of the DCC brief
 - A copy of the OASIS form
 - The proposed date of deposition of the archive
- 6.2. Copies of the final report will be deposited with the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record, and will be submitted to the Development Control Archaeologist within six weeks of the completion of fieldwork.

7. Archive Deposition

- 7.1. A digital, paper and artefactual archive will be prepared and deposited according to *Procedures for the transfer of archaeological archives* (Museums in Derbyshire 2003), and will consist of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data in a format to be agreed by the repository museum, which in this case will be:
- Buxton Museum and Art Gallery
Terrace Road
Buxton
Derbyshire
SK17 6DA
Tel: 01298 24658
Fax: 01298 79394
buxton.museum@derbyshire.gov.uk
- 7.2. An accession number has been requested from Buxton Museum and Art Gallery and this is DERSB 2011.6.
- 7.3. All artefacts and associated material will be cleaned, recorded, properly stored and deposited in the archive (see above).
- 7.4. A full set of annotated, illustrative pictures of the site, excavation, features, layers and selected artefacts will be supplied to the HER and deposited with the archive as digital images on a CD ROM along that will be attached with the report.
- 7.5. Both the Development Control Archaeologist and the museum curator will be notified on completion of fieldwork, with a timetable for reporting and archive deposition.
- 7.6. Written confirmation of the archive transfer arrangements, including a date (confirmed or projected) for the transfer, will be included as part of the final report.
- 7.7. An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> has been initiated for the building recording phase of this project, and the watching brief data will be added to this record. Key fields will be completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. All parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included within the archive).
- 7.8. The Development Control Archaeologist will be notified of the final deposition of the archive.

8. Changes to Methodology or Work Programme

- 8.1. Changes to the approved methodology or programme of works will only be made with the prior written approval of the Development Control Archaeologist.

9. Publication

- 9.1. A summary of the project, with selected drawings, illustrations and photographs, will be submitted within 2 years of the completion of the project to Derbyshire Archaeological Journal for publication. The results of the work will be published at least in summary form in Derbyshire Archaeological Journal.

10. References

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). 2008. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Reading, Institute for Archaeologists.

Museum of London Archaeological Services (MoLAS). 2002. *Site Manual*. London, Museum of London.