



Wessex Archaeology

**FORMER BRODSWORTH COLLIERY
BRODSWORTH
NEAR DONCASTER, SOUTH YORKSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief on geotechnical works at the former Brodsworth Colliery. The colliery is proposed for mixed development including residential and business properties. The watching brief was carried out following consultation with the South Yorkshire Archaeological Service (SYAS) in order to inform a future strategy for archaeological mitigation. The specific aims of the exercise were to observe, record and determine the nature and extent of the made ground deposits and to determine whether archaeological deposits were present. In the event that archaeological deposits were recorded to determine, the nature, extent and survival of such deposits.

The watching brief was conducted on two separate areas of the site, Areas 1 and 2. Area 1 contained previously observed crop marks of unknown date. Made ground deposits associated with 20th century land-use were present in Area 2, but no archaeological deposits or remains were observed in the test-pits in either of the Areas during the watching brief.

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The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Peter Reeves. The fieldwork was undertaken by Cornelius Barton and Vaughn Birbeck. This report was compiled by Cornelius Barton with illustrations prepared by Kitty Brandon.

FORMER BRODSWORTH COLLIERY BRODSWORTH NEAR DONCASTER, SOUTH YORKSHIRE Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Enviros Consulting Limited (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief on geotechnical investigations at the former Brodsworth Colliery, Brodsworth, near Doncaster in South Yorkshire (the Site).

1.1.2 The watching brief was requested by South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS).

1.1.3 The geotechnical works have been undertaken in advance of proposed mixed development of the Site, which will involve some landscaping. The geotechnical works impact on an area of archaeological potential, Area 1 (see Figure 1).

1.2 Site Description

1.2.1 The Site is irregularly shaped and measures approximately 30ha in total. Area A is farmland under crop. Area B is currently waste ground, the colliery buildings all having been demolished.

1.2.2 The Site is centred on Ordnance Survey NGR 452500 407500.

1.3 Geology

1.3.1 The underlying geology of the area comprises Marl deposits overlying Limestone.

1.4 Topography

1.4.1 The Site sits in a depression and is bounded by earthen banks or bunds. The modern ground level within the site varies from 11.80m – 12.80m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

1.5 Archaeological Background

1.5.1 The Site is located to the north east of Doncaster (the Roman settlement of *Danum*) and lies adjacent and to the west of Ermine Street, the Roman road linking *Londinium* (London) and *Eboracum* (York).

1.5.2 The Site is located within the border area that separated the Romano-British tribes the *Brigantes* (to the north) and the *Coritani* (to the south). Aerial photographs show crop marks intruding into the site area from the fields located to the north of Long Lands Lane; these may define a field system

dated to this period although no obvious signs of a settlement have been recorded.

- 1.5.3 Previous geotechnical Site investigations have recorded peat deposits to the south of the areas that were investigated during this exercise.

2 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives

2.1.1 The primary objective of the watching brief was to establish within the constraints of the development the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, and depth of any surviving archaeological remains within the Site.

2.1.2 Specifically the watching brief sought to establish the nature and date of any made-ground deposits present, and also to determine the presence or absence of peat deposits.

2.2 Geotechnical Pits

2.2.1 The geotechnical investigations at the Site involved the excavation of a series of trial pits, generally 0.8m wide by 1- 2m long (see **Figure 2**). Of these pits 20 were within the area of the archaeological watching brief. Of these, 4 pits were in the area adjacent to the crop marks (Area 1) and the remainder in areas to the east and southeast (Area 2).

2.3 Fieldwork

2.3.1 The watching brief was conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologist's Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2001), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.

2.3.2 Excavation of test-pits in designated areas was carried out under archaeological supervision.

2.3.3 All archaeological deposits were recorded by means of Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording sheets. A photographic record was made by means of black and white prints, colour slides and digital images. Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50.

2.3.4 Where no archaeological remains were present, the area was recorded by means of digital photography and measured sketch plans. Sample sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 No archaeological remains were observed in any of the test pits excavated on the Site. Some areas of the Site contained made-ground deposits.

3.2 Area 1

3.2.1 Area 1, on the north-western part of the Site, is the field containing previously observed crop marks. After consultation with SYAS, the original test-pit locations for this area were altered so as not to impact directly on the crop marks.

3.2.2 The test-pits in Area 1 contained no archaeological deposits. In all but one of the test-pits in this area the observed sequence was a thin (0.10-0.20m) layer of plough soil overlying weathered or bedded limestone (**Figure 3** and **Plate 2**). One test-pit (**212**) contained natural red marl clay to a depth of 5.20m (**Plate 1**) but this material was clean and undisturbed, and appeared to be within a natural hollow or solution hole. No artefacts or archaeological deposits of any date were present in the test pits.

3.3 Area 2

3.3.1 No archaeological artefacts or deposits were present. Some of the test pits contained made-ground of recent origin (**Figure 3** and **Plate 3**). The made ground deposits contained modern building rubble including brick and concrete, along with colliery waste materials such as coal dust and asbestos tiles.

3.3.2 The remaining test pits in Area 2 contained a similar topsoil to that observed in Area 1. The soil covered a red marl clay deposit covering the underlying magnesium limestone (see **Plate 4**).

4 CONCLUSION

4.1.1 No archaeological deposits were recorded in any of the test pits. While this does not indicate an absence of archaeological remains on the Site as a whole, it suggests that the crop marks observed in Area 1 are more likely to be of prehistoric than Romano-British or medieval origin. This is due to the lack of artefactual material, which is normally found in large quantities in Romano-British or medieval sites but is less common in prehistoric sites. Due to the limited sample of the area, however, this evidence is far from conclusive.

4.1.2 Peat deposits were not observed in any of the test-pits.

4.1.3 The trial pits demonstrate that parts of the site have been severely truncated down to the limestone and that these areas have then been covered over by waste relating to the period of the former colliery's operation.

4.1.4 The remainder of the test pits show the standard soil profile for the area which consists of a top or plough soil overlying a reddish marl sub soil that in turn overlies limestone.

5 ARCHIVE

- 5.1.1 The archive, including site drawings and photographic records, is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in London under the WA project code 69470. Following the conclusion of the project the archive will be prepared for deposition at Doncaster Museum in accordance with the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage* (UKIC 1990).

6 APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS BY TEST-PIT

Test Pit Number: 201		
Context	Description	Depth
20101	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.28m
20102	Mid greyish brown silty clay with abundant (c. 40%) limestone inclusions. Brick fragments, pieces of asbestos sheeting and large concrete blocks also noted. Modern demolition rubble or colliery waste.	0.50m
20103	Light reddish brown silty clay with very abundant (c.60%) small limestone inclusions. Subsoil derived from weathering of limestone bedrock.	0.90m
20104	Pinkish grey limestone bedrock.	0.90m+

Test Pit Number: 202		
Context	Description	Depth
20201	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.27m
20203	Light reddish brown silty clay with very abundant (c.60%) small limestone inclusions. Subsoil derived from weathering of limestone bedrock.	0.45m
20204	Limestone bedrock.	0.80m

Test Pit Number: 204		
Context	Description	Depth
20401	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.11m
20402	Contaminated subsoil	0.22m
20403	Weathered limestone	0.50m
20404	Bedded limestone	1m+

Test Pit Number: 205		
Context	Description	Depth
20501	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.05m
20502	Mid greyish brown silty clay with common limestone inclusions. Brick & concrete blocks also noted. Modern demolition rubble or colliery waste.	0.81m
20503	Bedded limestone	0.81m+

Test Pit Number: 207		
Context	Description	Depth
20701	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.14m
20702	Bedded limestone	1.14m+
20703	Cut of modern rubbish pit	1.40m
20704	Mixed soil/rubble/coal fill of 20703	1.40m

Test Pit Number: 211		
Context	Description	Depth
21101	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.15m
21102	Decayed limestone	1m+

Test Pit Number: 212		
	Description	Depth
21201	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.15m
21202	Red marl clay – very clean, natural	5.20m
21203	Limestone/gypsum bedrock	5.20m+

Test Pit Number: 214		
Context	Description	Depth
21401	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.14m
21402	Decayed limestone	1m+

Test Pit Number: 215		
Context	Description	Depth
21501	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions Mid grey-brown clay loam ploughsoil	0.14m
21502	Decayed limestone	1m+

Test Pit Number:256		
Context	Description	Depth
25601	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.11m
25602	Weathered marl/limestone mix	1.6m
25603	Bedded limestone	1.6m+

Test Pit Number: 257		
Context	Description	Depth
25701	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.12m
25702	Mid greyish brown silty clay with 30% limestone inclusions+ building rubble and coal. Modern demolition rubble or colliery waste.	1.50m
25703	Bedded limestone	1.50m+

Test Pit Number: 258		
Context	Description	Depth
25801	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.10m
25802	Mid greyish brown silty clay with 30% limestone inclusions+ building rubble and coal. Modern demolition rubble or colliery waste.	0.35m
25803	Very dark grey silty loam with coal waste- made ground	0.40m
25804	Red marl clay	1.10m
25805	Bedded sandstone	1.10m+

Test Pit Number: 259		
Context	Description	Depth
25901	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.10m
25902	Weathered limestone	1.0m
25903	Bedded limestone	1.0m+

Test Pit Number:260		
Context	Description	Depth
26001	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.10m
26002	Weathered limestone	1.10m
26003	Bedded limestone	

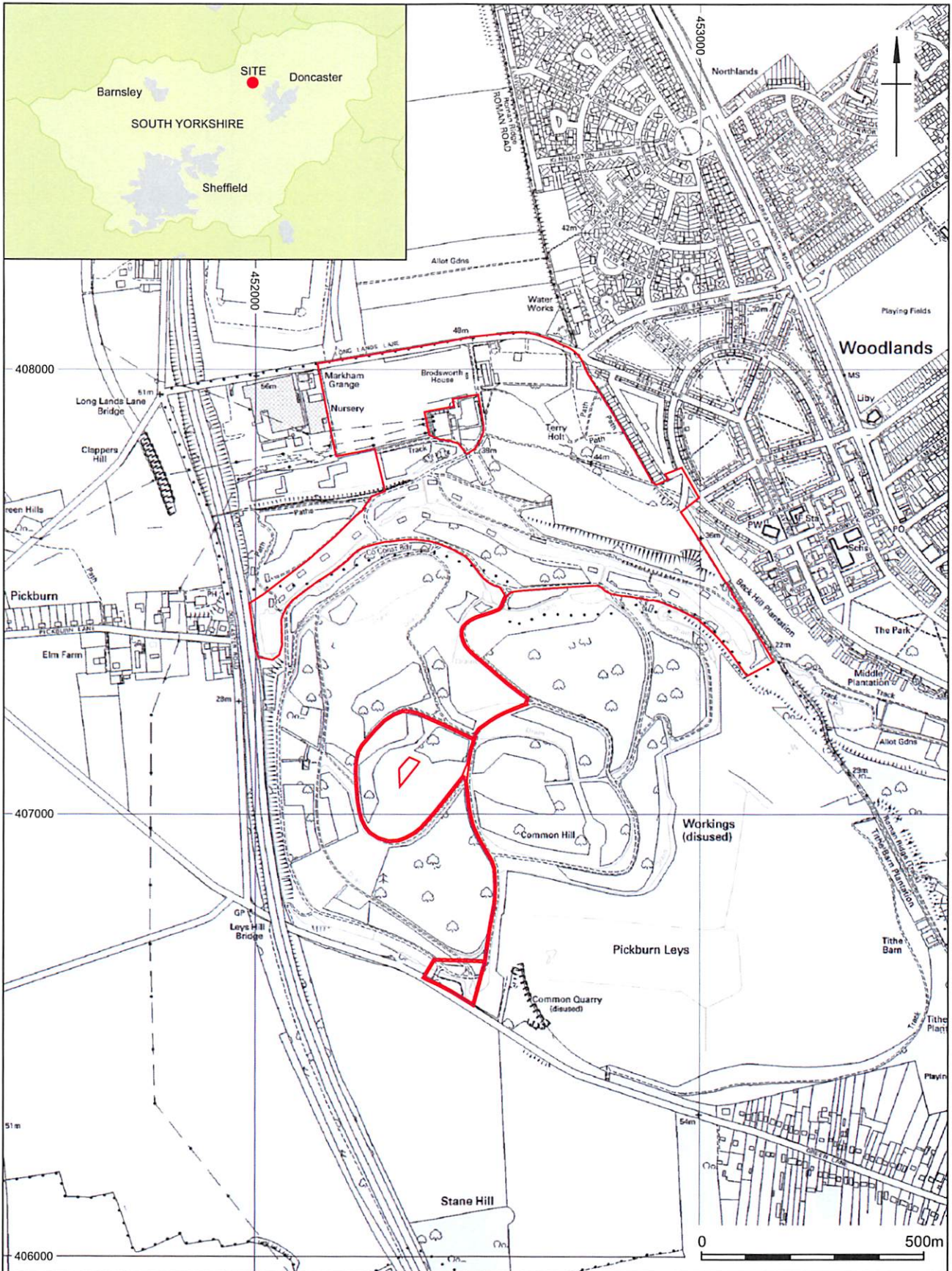
Test Pit Number: 261		
Context	Description	Depth
26101	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.10m
26102	Weathered limestone	1.05m
26103	Bedded limestone	1.05m+



Test Pit Number 262:		
Context	Description	Depth
26201	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with common, angular limestone inclusions	0.10m
26202	Weathered limestone	1.10m
26203	Bedded limestone	1.10m+

Test Pit Number: 263		
Context	Description	Depth
26301	Dark red-brown clay loam subsoil	0.20m
26302	Coarse dark orange sand- clean, no inclusions. Probable redeposited natural	1.20m
26303	Red marl clay- clean natural	1.70m+

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001, *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs.*



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	Date: 20/05/08	Revision Number: 0	
	Scale: 1:12,500	Illustrator: KJB	
Path: London Y:\Projects\69460\Drawing Office\Report Figures\WSI\08-05-20			

Site location

Figure 1