

ABBAY HOUSE HOTEL, ABBAY ROAD, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Evaluation



Client: Abbey House Hotel

NGR: 321664 472102

SM No. 1010014

SMC ref. S00166022

© Greenlane Archaeology Ltd

August 2017



Greenlane Archaeology Ltd,
Lower Brook Street, Ulverston,
Cumbria, LA12 7EE

Tel: 01229 588 500
Email: info@greenlancearchaeology.co.uk
Web: www.greenlancearchaeology.co.uk

Contents

Illustrations.....	2
List of Figures.....	2
List of Plates.....	2
Summary.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	3
1. Introduction.....	4
1.1 Circumstances of the Project.....	4
1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography.....	4
2. Methodology.....	6
2.1 Heritage Assessment.....	6
2.2 Archaeological Evaluation.....	6
2.3 Finds.....	6
2.4 Environmental Samples.....	7
2.5 Archive.....	7
3. Desk-Based Assessment.....	8
3.1 Map and Image Regression.....	8
3.2 Background History.....	9
3.3 Previous Archaeological Work.....	12
3.4 Conclusion.....	14
4. Fieldwork Results.....	15
4.1 Pre-excavation photographic record.....	15
4.1 Trench 1.....	15
4.2 Trench 2.....	17
4.3 Finds.....	18
4.4 Samples.....	18
5. Discussion.....	21
5.1 Results.....	21
5.2 Conclusion.....	21
6. Bibliography.....	22
6.1 Primary and Cartographic Sources.....	22
6.2 Secondary Sources.....	22
Appendix 1: Project Design.....	25
Appendix 2: Summary Context List.....	30
Appendix 3: Summary Finds List.....	31
Appendix 4: The Ceramic Building Material from AH17.....	32
Appendix 5: Environmental Sample Data.....	33
Appendix 6: Environmental Sample Assessment.....	34

Illustrations

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location	5
Figure 2: Results of the geophysical survey (after Geophysical Surveys 1989, figure 5)	13
Figure 3: Site plan, showing trench locations and features identified by geophysical survey	19
Figure 4: Detailed drawings of feature 103	20

List of Plates

Plate 1 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1851	8
Plate 2 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1873	8
Plate 3 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1891	9
Plate 4 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1913	9
Plate 5 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1933	9
Plate 6 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1956	9
Plate 7 (left): General view of the area of Trench 1 prior to excavation, viewed from the north	15
Plate 8 (right): General view of the area of Trench 2 prior to excavation, viewed from the north	15
Plate 9 (left): Trench 1 after initial clean, viewed from the north-west	16
Plate 10 (right): Trench 1 after initial clean, viewed from the south-east	16
Plate 11 (left): Irregular feature 103 at the south-east end of Trench 1, viewed from the north-west	16
Plate 12 (right): Irregular feature 103 at the south-east end of Trench 1, viewed from the south-east	16
Plate 13 (left): Irregular feature 103 at the south-east end of Trench 1, viewed from the south-west	17
Plate 14 (right): Irregular feature 103 in trench section	17
Plate 15 (left): Trench 2, viewed from the south-east	17
Plate 16 (right): Trench 2, viewed from the north-west	17

Summary

Prior to the submission of a planning application for a range of alterations to the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria and its grounds Historic England was consulted. The hotel, which is a Grade II* Listed Building, is located within the precinct of Furness Abbey and therefore within a Scheduled Monument. Following this consultation it was requested that a heritage assessment of the site be compiled and as a result Greenlane Archaeology was commissioned to carry this out. This was intended to establish at an early stage whether there were likely to be any sites of archaeological interest within the proposed development area and assess how the proposals might affect these sites. The work for the project, including a site visit, was carried out in February 2017.

This demonstrated that according to the available map evidence the area was originally open fields, albeit within the precinct of Furness Abbey, but that there is a background of archaeological remains in the wider area dating from the prehistoric period onwards, including a number of finds of Roman date from within the Abbey precinct. The Abbey was established in 1127 and became one of the most powerful monastic houses in the country. The Abbey House Hotel was built to the designs of Sir Edward Lutyens in 1914 as a house for the director of Vickers shipyard and guests. It subsequently became an old people's home and was converted into a hotel in 1985. It is evident that the construction of Abbey House will have caused some disturbance to the areas immediately adjacent to the building. Nevertheless, the location of the proposed overflow carpark as part of the current scheme is some distance from the hotel in an area less likely to have seen any disturbance and so an archaeological evaluation in this area was considered a suitable means of further assessment prior to any building work taking place and so Scheduled Monument Consent was obtained in order to facilitate this.

The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches, each approximately 5m long by 1.8m wide. Similar layers of topsoil and subsoil were noted above the natural in both trenches and, although no features were observed in Trench 2, a possible pit with an irregular shape was encountered at the south-east end of Trench 1 to the south of the area. This contained a moderate amount of charcoal spread throughout its fill, but no other finds from which to date it or infer its function. The colour and consistency of the fill of the pit was not readily distinguishable from the subsoil, and both the cut and fill of the feature had been disturbed by animal burrowing, which suggests this feature is likely to be relatively modern. A fragment of post-medieval glass was recovered from the topsoil in this trench, but of more interest is the fragment of Roman ceramic building material, probably roofing tile, recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2, which was otherwise void of archaeological finds and features. This adds to the growing list of stray finds of Roman date recovered from the immediate area, including a number of coins, but evidence has yet to be confirmed of settlement of that period nearby. While, this fragment may have been brought to the site for use in an oven base or as hard-core the presence of a nearby Roman structure should not be ruled out. If structures of that date were indeed present within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel, they may have been obscured on the surface or partially destroyed by construction and landscaping carried out in the post-medieval period; however, there is still potential for further finds of medieval and Roman date to be recovered from the wider area, which was also identified as a possibility by the earlier heritage assessment, and so further archaeological work in the area of the proposed car park, in the form of a watching brief, is recommended.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Abbey House Hotel for commissioning the project. Special thanks are due to Tim Kilroe at Bethell and John Horton, General Manager at the Abbey House Hotel, for their help during the evaluation and for organising the plant hire.

The evaluation was carried out by Dan Elsworth and Tom Mace, both of whom wrote this report. The illustrations were produced by Tom Mace. The finds and sample were processed by Dan Elsworth and the post-medieval find identified and catalogued by Jo Dawson. The environmental sample was assessed by Angela Walker at Headland Archaeology, and the Roman ceramic building material was assessed by Dr Phil Mills. The report was edited by Jo Dawson and the project was managed by Dan Elsworth.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

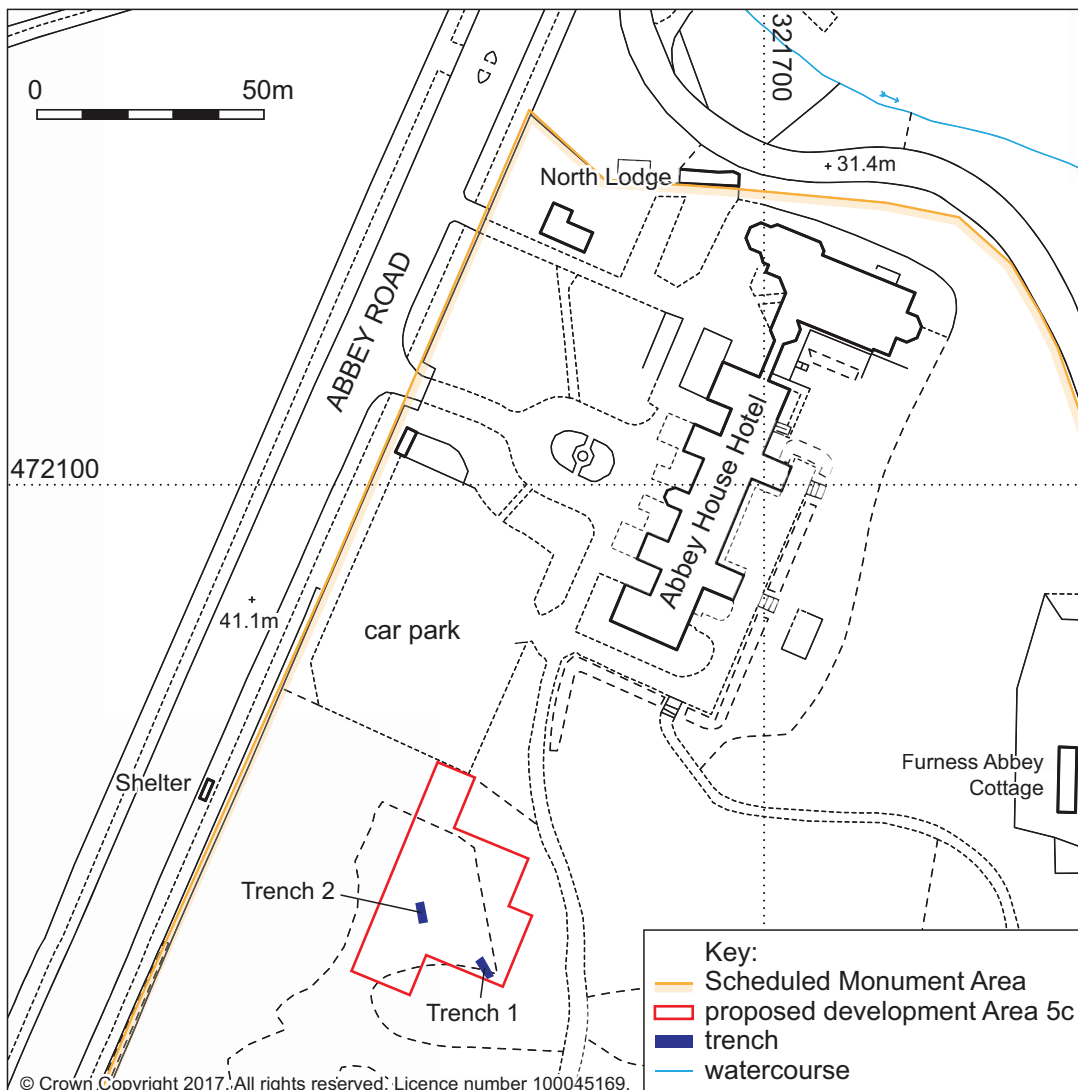
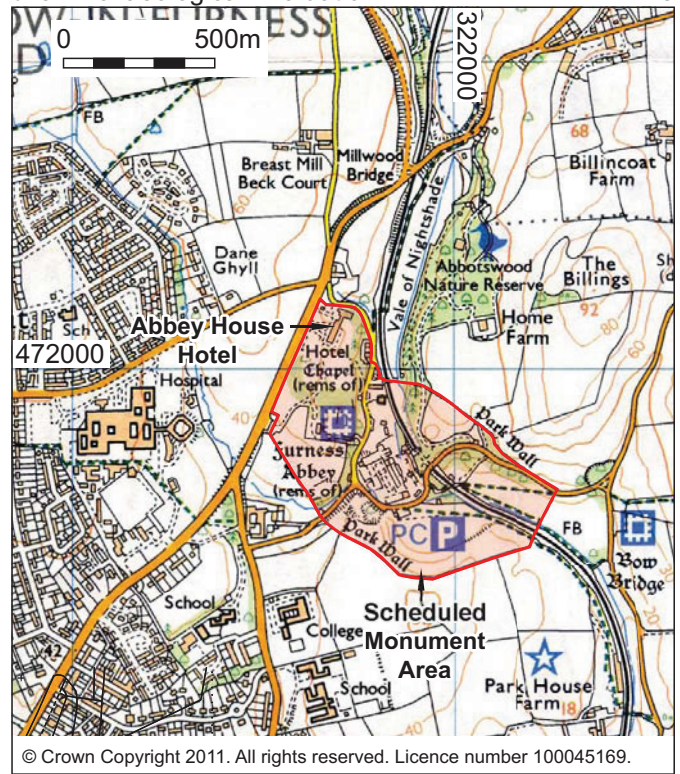
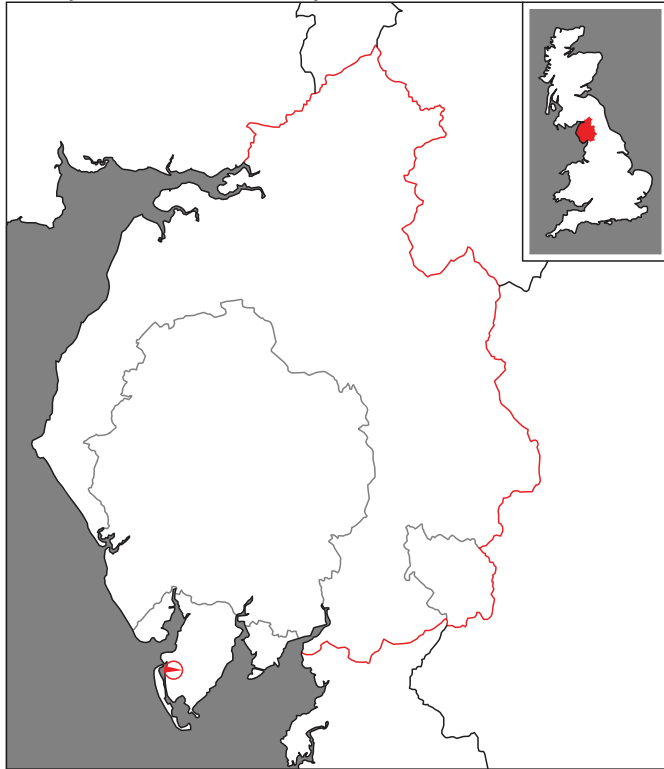
1.1.1 Prior the submission of a planning application for alterations to and the creation of an overflow carpark at the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (centred on NGR 321664 472102), and following consultation with Historic England, it was recommended that a heritage assessment be compiled for inclusion with the application. The whole site falls within the Scheduled Monument area for Furness Abbey (No. 1010014; Figure 1). Greenlane Archaeology were therefore appointed by the Abbey House Hotel (hereafter 'the client'), through Tim Kilroe at Bethell, to carry out the work, which was undertaken in February 2017.

1.1.2 This revealed that there was some archaeological potential across the affected area, although immediately adjacent to the hotel building, where some new building and landscaping was proposed, there was likely to have already been some disturbance. However, the proposed new overflow carpark is some distance from the hotel in an area less likely to have been disturbed and so further archaeological assessment was considered suitable. A proposal was therefore made that this area be subject to archaeological evaluation and as a result Scheduled Monument consent for this was obtained (ref. S00166022) and a project design produced outlining how the work would be carried out.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 Furness Abbey is located towards the south-west end of the Furness Peninsula between the towns of Dalton-in-Furness and Barrow-in-Furness, in southern Cumbria. This area is on the north side of Morecambe Bay on a sandy coastal plain, consisting of gently undulating pastureland, with higher ground a short distance to the north (Countryside Commission 1998, 65). The Abbey is situated at the base of the west edge of the steep sided and wooded Vale of Nightshade; this sheltered valley is fed by Mill Beck which has cut deep into the Sherwood sandstone geology of the area (Moseley 1978, fig 1). The Abbey House Hotel is situated on higher ground to the west of the Abbey, adjacent to the main road between Dalton-in-Furness and Barrow-in-Furness, and the site ranges from approximately 20m to 40m above sea level.

1.2.2 The trenches are located within a fairly flat area of lawn to the south of the current car park in front of the west side of the hotel, intended for additional parking as part of the proposed redevelopment of the site (Figure 1).



Client: Abbey House Hotel

© Greenlane Archaeology Ltd, August 2017

Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Heritage Assessment

2.1.1 The previous heritage assessment (Greenlane Archaeology 2017a) was consulted in order to place the results of the evaluation into their local context and information from that report is included in this report where relevant. The trenches are situated within **Area 5c** from the earlier Heritage Assessment, which is intended for additional parking as part of the proposed redevelopment (*ibid*).

2.2 Archaeological Evaluation

2.2.1 The evaluation was carried out according to the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014) and comprised two evaluation trenches, which targeted, as much as possible, the line of features of possible archaeological interest identified in a geophysical survey carried out in 1988 (Figure 2; Figure 3). Both of the trenches were approximately 5m long by 1.7m wide giving a combined area evaluated of 18.5m². A plan of the proposed trench locations was submitted with the Scheduled Monument consent application. Excavation was discontinued once the natural geology was reached, which was consistently at a depth of c0.3-0.4m below the current ground surface at a height of between 38.8m and 40.6m above sea level.

2.2.2 The topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket. Deposits below this were subsequently cleaned and further investigated by hand. The location of each trench was recorded relative to nearby property boundaries and other structures that were evident on the site plans and Ordnance Survey mapping utilising a total station. All finds were collected from all deposits, as far as was practical, and the trench and spoil were scanned periodically with a metal detector but no metal finds were found. The following recording techniques were used during the evaluation:

- **Written record:** descriptive records of all deposits and features (see *Appendix 2*) were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets, specifically trench record sheets and individual context record sheets where necessary;
- **Photographs:** photographs in both 35mm colour print and colour digital format were taken of all archaeological features uncovered during the evaluation, as well as general views of the site, the surrounding landscape, and working shots. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report and the remainder are included in the archive. A written record of all of the photographs was also made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets (Greenlane Archaeology 2007);
- **Instrument survey:** the trenches were surveyed using a Leica reflectorless total station coupled to a portable computer running AutoCAD 2006 LT and TheoLT, which captures the survey data in AutoCAD in real-time at a scale of 1:1. This enabled the location of each trench to be positioned and allowed levels above Ordnance Datum to be provided through reference to a nearby spot height;
- **Drawings:** plans and sections of features were drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate.

2.3 Finds

2.3.1 **Collection:** all of the finds were recovered by hand and stored in self-seal bags with white write-on panels on site before being removed for processing and assessment.

2.3.2 **Processing:** artefacts were washed (or dried and dry brushed in the case of glass and metal), dried in a drying oven or naturally air-dried, and packaged appropriately in self-seal bags with white write-on panels.

2.3.3 **Assessment and recording:** the finds were assessed through visual examination, identified where possible by comparison with published examples, and a list of them was compiled (see *Appendix 3*). A full description of the Roman ceramic building material is provided in *Appendix 4*.

2.4 Environmental Samples

2.4.1 **Strategy:** a 10 litre sample was taken from context **102**.

2.4.2 **Processing:** the sample was wet sieved by hand; the light fragments were floated off and collected in 250µm and 500µm sieves with the coarse component collected on a 1mm mesh. The flot and retent were then dried in a drying oven. The flot was sent for specialist assessment (see *Appendix 5*). The retent was also examined by eye and all ecofacts and artefacts extracted.

2.4.3 **Assessment and recording:** the ecofacts within the flot were assessed using a stereomicroscope at magnifications of x10 and up to x100 where necessary to aid identification. Identifications were confirmed using modern reference material and seed atlases including Cappers *et al* (2006), Stace (1997), and Zohary *et al* (2012). The content of the retent was recorded on *pro forma* record sheets. The results are discussed in *Section 5.4* and a full catalogue is produced in *Appendix 5*.

2.5 Archive

2.5.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design, and current ClfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness after the completion of the project. On completion of the project a copy of this report will be provided for the client and a copy will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition a digital copy will be provided to the Historic Environment Record at Cumbria County Council, and a record of the project will be made on the OASIS scheme.

2.5.2 The client will ultimately be encouraged to transfer ownership of any significant finds to a suitable museum. If no suitable repository can be found the finds may have to be discarded and in this case as full a record as possible would be made of them beforehand.

3. Desk-Based Assessment

3.1 Map and Image Regression

3.1.1 **Introduction:** although there are early, typically county-wide, maps that include the area, they are generally very small scale and so typically the first useful maps of the area do not appear until the early 19th century. However, in this case there are earlier estate plans of late 18th century date, although these cannot be reproduced for copyright reasons. As a result, it is maps from that date onwards that are discussed below. The proposed development area, **Area 5c**, is outlined in red while the trench locations are marked in blue.

3.1.2 **Estate plan, c1775:** part of an estate plan, the original of which is apparently at Holker Hall, is reproduced in the most recent guidebook to Furness Abbey (Wood 1998, 31). This does not show the site but does show the land to the south and is essentially identical to the later map of c1783 (see Section 3.1.3 below).

3.1.3 **Estate plan c1783:** an estate plan of land formerly belonging to Furness Abbey held as part of the Devonshire family collection at Chatsworth House (Chatsworth House 4132 c1783) shows a similar arrangement to that in the later Ordnance Survey maps. The current site is part of a field named 'Marrs', which possibly derives from the Old English (ge)maere meaning boundary, as found in cases such as Mersey and Mere Beck (Ekwall 1922, 15), but it is also likely to relate to the surname Marr and could simply refer to land belonging to someone of that name.

3.1.4 **Estate plan 1806:** a slightly later estate plan, again held in the collection at Chatsworth House (Chatsworth House 4130 1806), shows the same arrangement as the earlier plan, with field name 'Marrs' again given.

3.1.5 **Ordnance Survey 1851:** the site had clearly seen little development by the time the first 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey map of the area was produced, which was surveyed in 1847 (Plate 1). Some contours are shown, indicating that the land was not entirely level at this time and sloped down to the east.

3.1.6 **Ordnance Survey 1873:** the site is relatively unchanged apart from the field has what appears to be an area of gardens positioned along the eastern end (Plate 2).

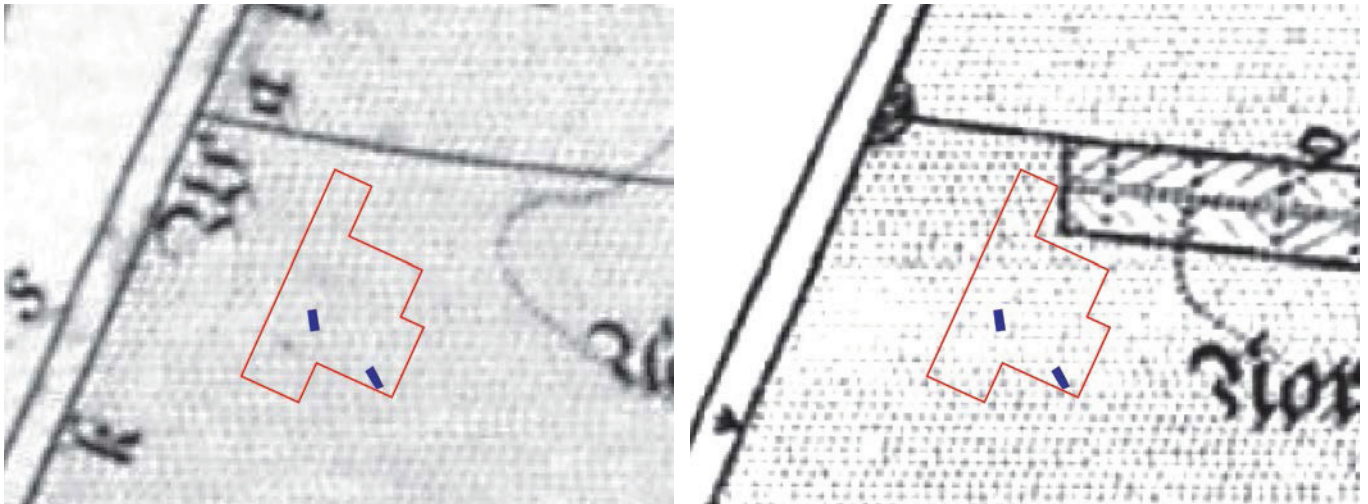


Plate 1 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1851

Plate 2 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1873

3.1.7 **Ordnance Survey 1891:** although this map is more detailed as it is at a larger scale, it is apparent that the site is essentially unchanged since 1851 (Plate 3; cf. Plate 2).

3.1.8 **Ordnance Survey 1913:** the site remains essentially unchanged since 1891 (Plate 4).

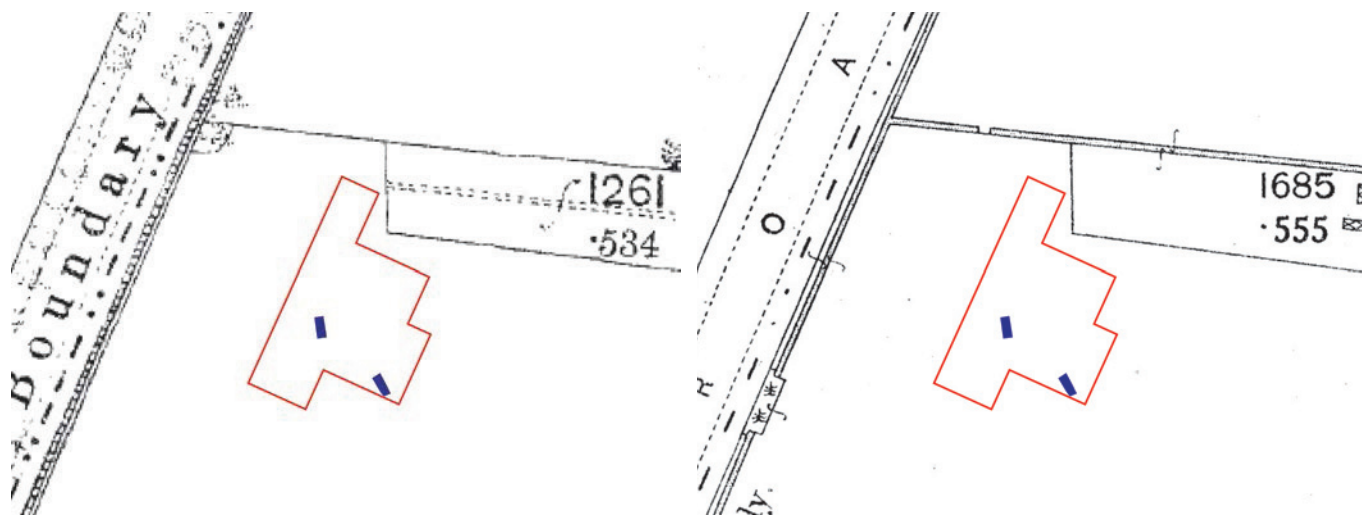


Plate 3 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1891

Plate 4 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1913

3.1.9 **Ordnance Survey 1933:** this is the first Ordnance Survey plan to post-date the construction of the Abbey House and it shows a range of associated structures, including a probable tennis court adjacent to **Area 5c** (Plate 5).

3.1.10 **Ordnance Survey 1956:** the site appears to be unchanged from the earlier edition of the Ordnance Survey map (Plate 6; cf. Plate 5). The tennis court next to **Area 5c** is still present.



Plate 5 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1933

Plate 6 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1956

3.2 Background History

3.2.1 **Prehistoric Period (c11,000 BC – 1st century AD):** while there is limited evidence for human activity in the county in the period immediately following the last Ice Age, what there is has been found in the southernmost part, on the north side of Morecambe Bay. Excavation of a small number of cave sites has found the remains of animal species common at the time but now extinct in this country and artefacts of Late Upper Palaeolithic type (Young 2002).

3.2.2 The county was clearly more densely inhabited during the following period, the Mesolithic (c8,000 – 4,000 BC), as large numbers of artefacts of this date have been discovered during field walking and eroding from sand dunes along the coast (Cherry and Cherry 2002). Coastal areas and river valleys are notably places where such material is frequently found in the wider region (Middleton *et al* 1995, 202;

Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 151-152; Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 26) and in the area around Morecambe Bay there is generally quite plentiful evidence for activity in this period (Elsworth 1998).

3.2.3 In the following period, the Neolithic (c4,000 – 2,500 BC), large scale monuments such as burial mounds and stone circles begin to appear in the region and one of the most recognisable tool types of this period, the polished stone axe, is found in large numbers across the county, having been manufactured at Langdale in the central Lake District (Hodgson and Brennand 2006, 45). Remains other than monumental structures or stray finds are generally rare but in Furness a number of sites have now been found containing evidence of what might be settlement remains of this date, including two groups of features in the Roose area (Headland Archaeology 2001; OA North 2002) and substantial remains at Stainton Quarry (Matt Town pers comm). In addition, flint finds of various dates, including the Neolithic, have been found during ploughed field walking from the wider area around the site (Evans 2008).

3.2.4 During the Bronze Age (c2,500 – 600 BC) monuments, particularly those thought to be ceremonial in nature, become more common still (see Barrowclough 2010, 105-191), although settlements start to become more readily identified during this period, many of which probably continued to be occupied into the Iron Age and beyond. Stray finds of Bronze Age date are found throughout the county, often deliberately deposited in wetland areas (*op cit*, 169-191).

3.2.5 As mentioned above, it is likely that settlement sites thought to belong to the Iron Age have their origins in this period, although few have been studied in enough detail to be ascertain of this. Sites of this type are recorded typically as crop marks revealed in aerial photographs but they are typically undated and little understood. The classic site of the Iron Age is the hillfort, and while these are not well represented in the immediate area, although there was possibly one at what is now the site of a park on the edge of Barrow, and there are others recorded in the local area, for example on Hoad hill near Ulverston (Elsworth 2014), and Skelmore Heads near Urswick, although evidence for activity in the Neolithic was also associated with the latter (Powell 1963). There is likely to have been a considerable overlap between the end of the Iron Age and the beginning of the Romano-British period and it is evident that in this part of the country, initially at least, the Roman invasion had a minimal impact on the native population in rural areas (Philpott 2006, 73-74). Stray finds are rare from this period, although part of a beehive quern of either Iron Age or Roman date was found within the precinct of Furness Abbey near the 'Abbey Mill' in 1881 (Spence 1935, 180).

3.2.6 **Romano-British to Early Medieval Period (1st century AD – 11th century AD):** there have been occasional finds of Roman coins from the general area (e.g. Shotter 1989), but evidence has yet to be confirmed of settlement in the area from the period. There has been discussion about the likelihood of Roman military occupation in the Cartmel and Furness Peninsulas for some time, and although a good case can be made for a Roman presence the evidence for it is limited and not yet totally convincing (see Elsworth 2007). What is of note is that of the various finds of Roman date that have been discovered in the area, many came from the vicinity of Furness Abbey. These include four Roman coins found in 1915 and 1916 of second and fourth century date, which, although not located at the time beyond having been found in the garden of 'Mr Archibald Miller, director of Vickers' near Furness Abbey (Anon 1916, 292) is presumably a reference to the Mr Miller of Dunlop House (now named Oaklands) immediately to the south off the Abbey House Hotel (see *Section 3.2.11* below). These form part of a remarkable number of Roman coins found within the precinct of Furness Abbey (Shotter 1989), to which a Roman statue thought to be of Hercules and apparently also found at Furness Abbey can also be added (Elsworth 2007, 43).

3.2.7 The early medieval period is not well represented in the area in terms of physical archaeological remains, which is a common situation throughout the county. The local area as a whole has a complex mixture of place-names of Celtic British, Anglian (Old English), and Norse type suggesting that the early medieval period was a time of dynamic and rapid population change (Edmonds 2013). However, physical evidence for settlement of this date is very limited. Many local place-names demonstrate the mixture of Anglian and Norse influence, such as Dalton, while place-names such as Roose and Leece suggest the late survival of British people (Ekwall 1922; Coates and Breeze 2000, 317). While the name 'Furness' is Norse the valley in which the abbey now stands was known as Beckansgill, suggesting an Irish influence (Ekwall 1922, 138), although probably due to the movement of Norse people from that

area into Cumbria in the early 10th century (Griffith 2010, 48-66). Finds of early medieval date in the immediate vicinity of the site are rare, although a lead weight decorated with a reused piece of Anglian metalwork was found near Breast Mill Beck and is now in the Dock Museum. In addition, a further early medieval weight, again made from a piece of reused metalwork, of ecclesiastical origin, may also have been found near Furness Abbey (it is currently held in the British Museum, Ref. 1870,0609.1, who list its find spot as 'Furness abbey, near'; British Museum 2017) although its provenance is less certain (Edwards 1998, 38-39).

3.2.8 Medieval Period (11th century AD – 16th century AD): the site is situated within the precinct of Furness Abbey, which inevitably therefore dominates the relevant history of this period. The following historical background is largely taken from the Victoria History of the County of Lancashire (Farrer and Brownbill 1914). The Abbey was founded by Stephen, Count of Boulogne and Mortain, later king of England. In 1124 he gave a site at Tulketh, Preston to monks of the Savignac order, before granting them land in Furness in 1127 at which point they established a monastic house there. By 1147 the Savignac order had been incorporated into the Cistercian tradition making Furness Abbey the first Cistercian house in England, and further expansion of the site began. The remains of the Savignac monastery are still present above and below ground as well as the more extensive Cistercian monastery, as revealed during recent excavation work carried out as part of recent stabilisation work (Jeremy Bradley pers comm). The monastery grew in prosperity, and at the time of its dissolution in 1537 it was the second richest Cistercian monastery in England. The Abbey had acquired extensive property in the Lake District, Yorkshire, and Lincolnshire and the deep-water port at Piel allowed access and trade with the Isle of Man and Ireland. Sheep farming played an important part in the Abbey's growing wealth, due to the price of wool, as did the continued exploitation of the Furness iron ore deposits, which paved the way for the region's post-medieval development.

3.2.9 It is not clear how all the various elements of the outer part of the precinct were used during the abbey's lifetime. However, a possible cist found in an outbuilding and human remains found on associated land to the south of the Abbey House Hotel (HER No. 5743), might suggest that this area was home to a lay cemetery or similar (Close in West 1805, 366; Dickinson 1967, 64n).

3.2.10 Post-medieval Period (16th century AD – present): after the Dissolution the monastery was handed over to the crown and the land was subsequently granted to the king's minister Thomas Cromwell. Two years later it was passed to Sir Thomas Curwen the head of a leading local family. Thomas Curwen passed the property to his son-in-law John Preston, and in 1671 the then owner, Thomas Preston, built a mansion house on the grounds. The mansion deteriorated until it was sold to the railway company and rebuilt as a hotel during the 1850s and the 1860s (Wood 1998, 34). The hotel suffered bomb damage in 1941 and was demolished in 1953 (*ibid*). Some traces of the north wing have been incorporated into the Abbey Tavern, which now stands in its place. The hotel was designed to serve the railway which was opened in 1847. In 1923 Richard Cavendish placed the ruins in the care of the Ministry of Works (*ibid*). As is apparent from the map regression (see Section 3.1) the site was essentially undeveloped until the construction of Abbey House in 1914, an event that came to dominate this part of the area within the precinct of Furness Abbey.

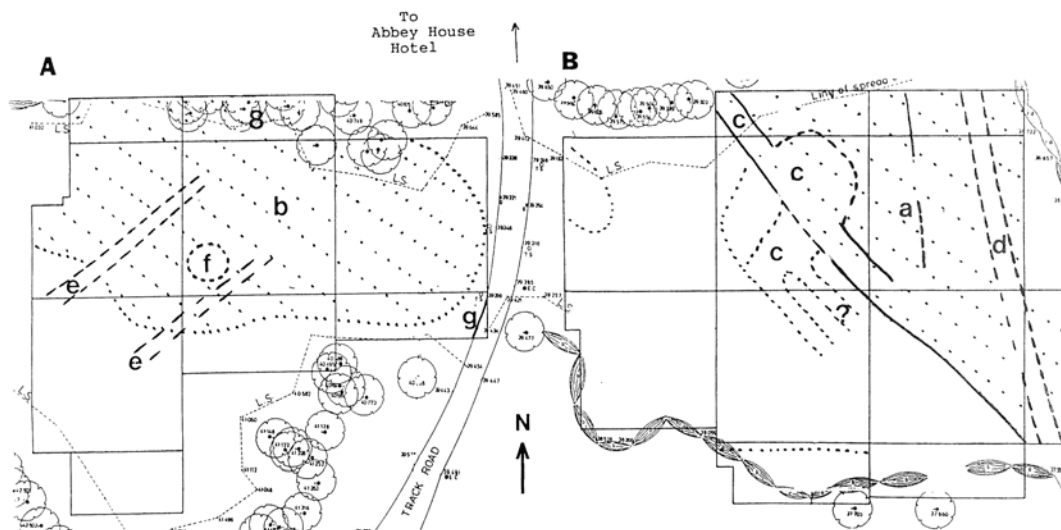
3.2.11 Abbey House: the Abbey House Hotel originated as a private house, known as Abbey House or 'The Abbey House', which was built for Vickers Ltd shipbuilders of Barrow and is now Listed Grade II*. They had gone through a considerable period of expansion in the years leading up to the First World War and had nowhere suitable to house and entertain visitors (Melville 1978a). In addition the managing director at the time, James (later Sir) McKechnie, who was living at the County Hotel in Ulverston and commuting to Barrow by horse had been forced to leave after the County Hotel was destroyed by fire on October 18th 1911 (*ibid*). As a result it was decided to build a guest house close to Barrow but with its own grounds, and a plot of land at the Abbey, all of which was the property of the Cavendish family, was chosen (*ibid*). The well-known London-based architect Edward Lutyens (also later Sir) was commissioned, although it is clear from some of the plans available, the earliest of which date to 1913, that at least two different designs were proposed (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146 1913-1960). The chosen design was an H-shaped plan in a mix of broadly Tudor and Elizabethan styles (Hussey 1921), but very minimal, in red ashlar sandstone and was only partially finished at the outbreak of the First World War, although to the extent that McKechnie and several guests were able to move in (Melville 1978a). After

the war Abbey House became the residence of Commander Charles Craven, who had been appointed at Vickers (Melville 1978b). He was succeeded by Commander Micklam, who did not live in the area, who was succeeded in turn by Sir Charles Simon who did reside at Abbey House (*ibid*). However, with his departure its future was sealed – the increasing cost of maintaining the building and staff made it too expensive and eventually it was offered, with its grounds, to the local corporation ‘at a nominal sum, for use as a home for elderly people’ (*ibid*). A series of plans of the proposed alterations, dated c1960 exist in the archives (CAC(B) BA/S/BC/184 c1960), but these must be closer to c1950 as it was officially opened on March 1st 1951 (Melville 1978b). The neighbouring property to the south, initially called Dunlop House, was built for Vickers’ secretary Mr Miller but clearly remained on land belonging to Vickers and was initially effectively part of the Abbey House estate as it too was sold to the corporation and opened as a children’s nursery on 29th November 1951 (*ibid*). By the late 1970s the unsuitability of it as an old peoples’ home was becoming apparent (Melville 1978a) and it was converted into a hotel in 1985.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Work

3.3.1 A number of recent small pieces of work have been carried out at the Abbey House Hotel:

- a geophysical survey was carried out at Abbey House Hotel in January 1989 (Geophysical Surveys 1989; see Figure 2 – note that the number 8 at the top edge of area A is a reference to the grid used during the original survey and is not relevant to the interpretation). Unfortunately, the grid reference for the location of the work is a generic one for Furness Abbey, which is some distance to the south. The written description neglected pertinent details, such as the survey area or the size of the grid squares; the figures in the report do not include a scale, and it is suspected that the orientation of the plans is also incorrect, so it is not possible to accurately locate the survey. The location of the survey on Figure 2 is therefore a best guess: the location is based on the limited topographic detail shown on the 1989 plan, the grid has been resized to be 20m squares, and the plan has been rotated to better align the 1989 plan with the location of tracks on modern mapping;



ID	Description	Interpretation
a	area of high resistance	geological or topographical in origin
b	area of high resistance	geological or topographical in origin
c	area of high resistance	potential structural interest
d	linear low resistance anomaly	possible ditch (or waterlogged rift in the bedrock) or track
e	small linear anomaly	possible ditches or service mains
f	circular low resistance anomaly	possible large pit or the site of an up-rooted tree
g	high resistance anomaly	marks the edge of the hardcore drive

Figure 2: Results of the geophysical survey (after Geophysical Surveys 1989, figure 5)

- ground work associated with the construction of the north extension to the hotel, involving excavation of a small area adjacent to the north wall of the hotel (area 1) and trenches to the east and north-west of the hotel (area 2 and area 3 respectively), was monitored by watching brief between June and September 2000 and April 2001 (OA North 2002, 2). Post-medieval activity was apparent in the first two areas but in the third area, north of the North Lodge, a sandstone wall was uncovered of uncertain date; it probably represented an earlier continuation of the stone wall of post-medieval date but may have been an earlier boundary which coincided with the precinct wall surrounding Furness Abbey (*ibid*);
- a desk-based assessment and watching brief was carried out for the construction of a two storey extension, garage, and new porch at Furness Abbey Cottage, Abbey Approach (NGR SD 21778 72039) in December 2007 (Greenlane Archaeology 2008). The property was built c1873 for the Furness Railway Company. The watching brief revealed that the footprint for the new extension followed the outer line of the demolished coach house, whose walls survived below ground level. The result of this was that backfilled foundation trenches were probably re-excavated. The situation was the same in the porch area; here the foundations for an earlier porch had disturbed the ground. Excavations in the area of the garage revealed that the base of the quarry was possibly deeper than the current ground level and that some infilling and landscaping had occurred in this area, probably at the time the house was constructed or later. No earlier archaeological features were encountered;
- an archaeological watching brief was carried out as part of a scheme to provide new signage within the grounds of the Abbey House Hotel in May 2014 (Greenlane Archaeology 2014). The watching brief monitored the excavation by hand of a pair of new postholes for one of the new signs. The postholes were excavated in areas that have been disturbed by tree roots and pre-existing signage, and no archaeological finds or features were observed;

- a watching brief monitored the excavation of two large pits for the creation of soakaways in the driveway at Furness Abbey Cottage, Abbey Approach in July 2017 (Greenlane Archaeology 2017b). This revealed considerable deposits of dumped material of probable 19th century date below the surface of the driveway, beneath which in the southern pit was the base course of a well-built wall of large dressed blocks and in the northern pit the dumped deposit was laid on what appeared to be a less substantial wall of thinner dressed blocks. It is possible that these represent sections of the precinct boundary of the Abbey, which is thought to have been in this location.

3.4 Conclusion

3.4.1 **Potential:** this part of the Furness Abbey precinct has seen relatively little investigation, primarily because it is some distance from the main area of the abbey buildings and within the private grounds of the Abbey House Hotel. Previous archaeological work in association with other developments at the Abbey House Hotel (OA North 2002; Greenlane Archaeology 2014) have not revealed any archaeological remains of significance, but these have been very limited. The site's proximity to and association with Furness Abbey means that there remains the potential to find remains of medieval date and the discovery of Roman coins from nearby also indicates that there is the potential for earlier activity in this area.

3.4.2 **Disturbance:** the early plans and photographs show that the construction of the building, including the associated terraces, driveway and walkways, would have had an impact on any below-ground remains that might have been present in the areas immediately adjoining the original part of the Abbey House. The site of the proposed additional car parking (**Area 5c**) has probably only been affected by less intrusive factors, such as maintenance of the grounds at the hotel.

3.4.3 **Impact:** in general, all of the proposals are likely to require either relatively shallow excavation or narrower, deeper excavation for services such as cables. **Area 5c** is unlikely to have seen considerable disturbance associated with the construction of the Abbey House in 1914, the installation of associated drains and services, or the subsequent extension of c2000.

3.4.4 **Recommendations:** It is apparent from the results of the earlier heritage assessment that while the site is archaeologically significant and there is some potential for remains of at least medieval and possibly Roman date to be present these are likely to have been substantially disturbed across much of the site by previous construction work and associated activity related to the Abbey House with the possible exception of **Area 5c**, which is further from the hotel and perhaps therefore less likely to have been disturbed.

4. Fieldwork Results

4.1 Pre-excavation photographic record

4.1.1 As a general condition of the Scheduled Monument consent the site was recorded prior to the commencement of groundworks associated with the proposed development. The area of the gardens to the south of the current car park is around 40m above sea level and fairly flat. The area has been extensively landscaped. Trench 1 was located close to the treeline to the south of the area and Trench 2 was further to the north (Plate 7 and Plate 8; Figure 3).



Plate 7 (left): General view of the area of Trench 1 prior to excavation, viewed from the north

Plate 8 (right): General view of the area of Trench 2 prior to excavation, viewed from the north

4.1 Trench 1

4.1.1 Trench 1 was located at the south end of the area on a north-west/south-east alignment. It measured approximately 5m long by 1.6m wide at the south-east end and widened to 2m at the north-west end and was intended to catch the line of the northernmost of the small linear anomalies identified by geophysical survey if it continued in this direction. The topsoil (**100**) was a soft, dark reddish brown, silty-clay up to 0.15m thick and contained 20% angular cobbles (red sandstone) and denser patches of larger angular boulders (red sandstone flags) and paler clay. Below that the subsoil (**101**), which was a soft silty-clay with 30% sub-angular pebbles, was up to 0.2m thick on top of the mid orange silty-clay natural (**104**), which was noticeably firmer than the subsoil (**101**). After the first clean of the trench it was noted that there was a patch of looser darker material with lots of charcoal and stones, corresponding with mole burrows, at the south-east end of the trench (Plate 9 and Plate 10). This looser darker material may also have related to the fill (**102**) of what may have been an odd shaped pit or ditch (**103**) at this end of the trench (Plate 11 to Plate 14; Figure 4). This irregular feature (**103**) extended beyond the limits of the trench and was at least 1m north-east/south-west by 1.5m north-west/south-east. It had an irregular base, which was flat to the south-east and dipped to the north-west, and animal burrowing was certainly in evidence to the north-west end. It was filled with a soft, mid reddish orange-brown silty-clay (**102**), which was very similar in colour and consistency to the subsoil (**101**). In the absence of any finds from the fill of this possible pit (other than the presence of charcoal throughout) it was not entirely clear if it was indeed an irregular pit or ditch, just a dip in the underlying natural, or possibly the site of an uprooted tree.



Plate 9 (left): Trench 1 after initial clean, viewed from the north-west



Plate 10 (right): Trench 1 after initial clean, viewed from the south-east



Plate 11 (left): Irregular feature 103 at the south-east end of Trench 1, viewed from the north-west



Plate 12 (right): Irregular feature 103 at the south-east end of Trench 1, viewed from the south-east



Plate 13 (left): Irregular feature 103 at the south-east end of Trench 1, viewed from the south-west

Plate 14 (right): Irregular feature 103 in trench section

4.2 Trench 2

4.2.1 Trench 2 was aligned almost north/south and measured 4.7m long by 2m wide (Plate 15 and Plate 16). The topsoil (**200**) was soft, dark greyish-brown silt, 0.2m thick, with 2% rounded pebble inclusions. This overlay a thin subsoil (**201**) above the firm, gravelly sandy-clay natural (**202**). The sandy-clay layer was mid brownish-orange, with some mottling probably caused by bioturbation. The trench was void of archaeological features.



Plate 15 (left): Trench 2, viewed from the south-east

Plate 16 (right): Trench 2, viewed from the north-west

4.3 Finds

4.3.1 **Roman Ceramic building material:** a worn 47g fragment of ceramic building material was recovered from the topsoil (**200**) in Trench 2 (see *Appendix 4*). The levigation and density of the fabric is consistent with a Roman fabric and the object thickness is consistent with a fragment from a roofing tile (*tegula*). Similar material is common on Roman military sites in the area and was manufactured at Muncaster, near the fort at Ravenglass, 25km to the north-west (Bellhouse 1960; 1961) and at Quernmore, some 30km to the south-east, near the fort at Lancaster (Leather and Webster 1988; Shotter and White 1990, 51-53; Hudson 1993; 1994). Dating is difficult, but the material from Ravenglass is thought, on the basis of associated finds, to belong to the early part of the 2nd century (Bellhouse 1961, 55-56) while the kilns at Quernmore have been dated to the late 1st to early 2nd century (Leather and Webster 1988, 91; Shotter and White 1990, 52). Numerous fragments of roofing tile (*tegula* and *imbrex*) and box flue tile were recently recovered from work at Ravenglass indicated that there were probably structures immediately nearby, including a probable bath house (Greenlane Archaeology 2016, 14).

4.3.2 The presence of such material is potentially significant at Furness Abbey, since no known military sites of Roman date are recorded in the immediate vicinity. While small groups of ceramic building material, not associated with nearby structures, are found in rural sites in Britain, where they were used as oven bases or as general hard-core, the nearest known sources being at such a distance makes the likelihood that this was produced locally more likely. The argument over whether the Roman military had a presence in Furness has been recently re-examined and it is interesting to note that two of the largest concentrations of recorded material of Roman date in the area are Dalton-in-Furness and Furness Abbey (Elsworth 2007), with a number of coins found immediately to the south of the evaluation site (Anon 1916). No further work is recommended on the current material, but further work on the site in order to identify whether there are associated remains would be beneficial.

4.3.3 **Post-medieval glass:** a fragment of 19th to 20th century dark green glass bottle was recovered from the topsoil (**100**) in Trench 1.

4.4 Samples

4.4.1 A single 10 litre sample was recovered from context **102**, the fill of pit **103**. As this was highly disturbed by roots and animal burrows nearer the top only material from near the base of the feature was considered suitable for sampling. The details of the contents of the sample are contained in *Appendix 5*, but in summary the retent was found to contain a small amount of material relating to the working and perhaps manufacture of iron in the form of hammerscale and slag, as well as a relatively large amount of charcoal. The flot also contained large amounts of rectilinear oak charcoal but no other identifiable species and so, while the oak charcoal could be used for radiocarbon dating it would not give particularly reliable results.

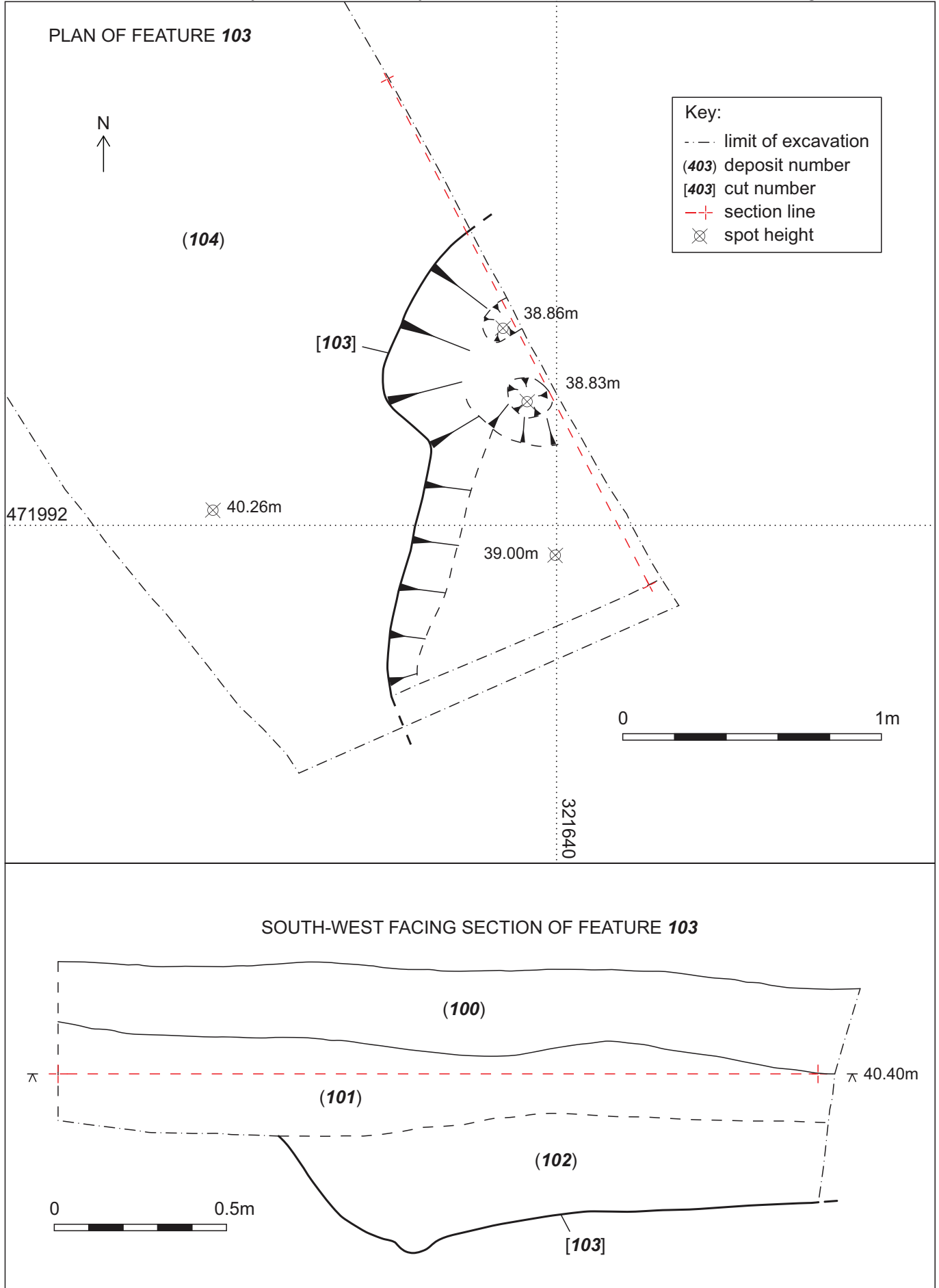


Figure 4: Detailed drawings of feature 103

5. Discussion

5.1 Results

5.1.1 Essentially the same sequence of deposits was encountered in both trenches: a soft, dark silty topsoil on top of a silty-clay subsoil above the natural. The natural varied from a silty-clay, which was noted to be firmer than the subsoil, in Trench 1 to a fairly firm gravel in Trench 2. Animal burrowing had caused some disturbance to sedimentary deposits in both trenches.

5.1.2 There was only a single feature in Trench 1, a possible pit or ditch terminus (**103**) at the south-east end. This feature was irregular and contained no finds other than a small amount of iron working slag and hammerscale and large amounts of charcoal spread throughout the fill (**102**), deriving primarily from oak trees. In colour and consistency, however, the fill of the pit (**102**) was not readily discernible from the overlying subsoil (**101**), and both the cut and fill of the feature had been disturbed by burrowing action. There were no features in Trench 2 and only a single find recovered from the topsoil, but this comprised a piece of ceramic tile of probable Roman date, an unusual and potentially significant discovery in the local area.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 No significant archaeological features were observed in either of the two trenches, although the purpose and date of the pit or ditch in Trench 1 is uncertain. While it would be possible to obtain a radiocarbon date from the material in the sample as it is mostly oak it would not be particularly reliable.

5.2.2 Despite the limited results of the evaluation, however, the retrieval of a fragment of ceramic building material of probable Roman date is of interest. There is little known Roman activity in the immediate area, with the exception of stray finds, and evidence has yet to be confirmed of a military presence and any form of associated settlement in the area from the period. Late 18th and 19th century antiquarians considered a Roman military presence in the Furness area beyond question, but by the 20th century there was a complete reversal of opinion (summarised in Elsworth 2007, 31-37). Re-examination of the evidence suggests a strong Roman influence or “background” presence in the peninsula during the Roman period, which doubtless would have been attractive for its rich iron reserves (Shotter 1995, 74; Elsworth 2007, 37, 41-43). As noted in *Section 4.3.1*, the fragment of ceramic building material may have been brought to site for use as an oven base or hard-core, but it could derive from a nearby structure; however, since it came from the topsoil layer (**200**), the proximity or condition of any remaining structural remains of that date cannot be ascertained. Much of the area of the gardens at Abbey House Hotel has been landscaped, which may have obscured or partially obliterated any such remains, if indeed they were present within the grounds of the Hotel. Nevertheless, the presence of other finds of Roman date from the area of Furness Abbey is suggestive of a settlement of some form and further archaeological monitoring would be recommended during the creation of the proposed car park.

6. Bibliography

6.1 Primary and Cartographic Sources

CAC(B) BA/S/BC/146, 1913-1960 *Two Rolls of Plans Including Abbey House, Lodge and Gardens*

CAC(B) BA/S/BC/184, c1960 *Conversion of Abbey House Hotel to Accommodation for Aged Persons*

Chatsworth House 4130, 1806 *Furness Abbey Park*

Chatsworth House 4132, c1783 *Map of Furness Abbey and Surroundings*

Ordnance Survey, 1851 *Lancashire Sheet 21*, 1: 10,560, surveyed 1847

Ordnance Survey, 1873 *Lancashire Sheet 21*, 1:10560, surveyed 1847, revised 1873

Ordnance Survey, 1891 *Lancashire Sheet 21.4*, 1: 2,500, surveyed 1889

Ordnance Survey, 1913 *Lancashire Sheet 21.4*, 1: 2,500, revised 1911

Ordnance Survey, 1933 *Lancashire Sheet 21.4*, 1: 2,500, revised 1931

Ordnance Survey, 1956 **SD27SW**, 1: 10,560

Ordnance Survey, 2011 **OL 6**, *The English Lakes: South-western area; Coniston, Ulverston and Barrow-in-Furness*, 1: 25,000

6.2 Secondary Sources

Anon, 1916 Roman Coins from Furness Abbey, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **16**, 292

Barrowclough, D, 2010 *Prehistoric Cumbria*, Stroud

Bellhouse, RL, 1960 Excavation in Eskdale, the Muncaster Roman Kilns, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **60**, 1-12

Bellhouse, RL, 1961 Excavation in Eskdale, the Muncaster Roman Kilns, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **61**, 47-56

British Museum, 2017 *Collection Online: Weight/Figure*, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=86689&partId=1&searchText=furness&page=1

Brown, DH, 2007 *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer, and Curation*, IfA, Reading

Cappers, RTJ, Bekker, RM and Jans, JEA, 2006 *Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands*, Groningen

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, revised edn, Reading

Cherry, PJ, and Cherry, J, 2002 Coastline and Upland in Cumbrian Prehistory – A Retrospective, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 3rd ser, **2**, 1-20

Coates, R, and Breeze, A, 2000 *Celtic voices, English places. Studies of the Celtic impact on place-names in England*, Stamford

Countryside Commission, 1998 *Countryside Character, Volume 2: North West*, Cheltenham

Dickinson, JC, 1967 Furness Abbey: An Archaeological Reconsideration, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **67**, 51-80

Edmonds, F, 2013 The Furness Peninsula and the Irish Sea Region: Cultural Interactions from the Seventh Century to the Twelfth, in C Downham (ed), *Jocelin of Furness: Essays from the 2011 Conference*, Donnington, 17-44

- Edwards, BJN, 1998 *Vikings in North West England: The Artefacts*, Lancaster
- Ekwall, E, 1922 *The Place-Names of Lancashire*, Manchester
- Elsworth, DW, 1998 *The Mesolithic Around Morecambe Bay*, unpubl dissertation, University of Edinburgh
- Elsworth, DW, 2007 The 'Streetgate' at Conishead, the 'Castellum' at Dalton, and Roman Furness, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 3rd ser, **7**, 31-48
- Elsworth, DW, 2014 Hillforts Around Morecambe Bay, in T Saunders (ed), *Hillforts in the North West and Beyond*, Archaeology North West, new ser, **3**, Manchester, 51-60
- English Heritage, 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London
- Evans, H, 2008 *Neolithic and Bronze Age Landscapes of Cumbria*, BAR British Ser, **463**, Oxford
- Farrer, W, and Brownbill, J, 1914 *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, **8**, London
- Geophysical Surveys, 1989 *Report on Geophysical Survey: Abbey House Hotel, Barrow-in-Furness*, unpubl rep
- Greenlane Archaeology, 2007 *Archaeological Excavation Manual*, unpubl rep
- Greenlane Archaeology (GA), 2008 *Furness Abbey Cottage Abbey Approach, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria: Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpubl rep
- Greenlane Archaeology, 2014 *Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria: Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpubl rep
- Greenlane Archaeology, 2016 *Walls Bridge Embankment, Ravenglass, Cumbria: Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpubl rep
- Greenlane Archaeology, 2017a *Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria: Heritage Assessment*, unpubl rep
- Greenlane Archaeology, 2017b *Furness Abbey Cottage, Abbey Approach, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria: Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpubl rep
- Griffith, D, 2010 *Vikings of the Irish Sea*, Stroud
- Headland Archaeology, 2001 *Results of an Archaeological Evaluation at Roose Quarry, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria*, unpubl rep
- Hodgkinson, D, Huckerby, E, Middleton, R, and Wells, CE, 2000 *The Lowland Wetlands of Cumbria*, North West Wetlands Survey **6**, Lancaster Imprints **8**, Lancaster
- Hodgson, J, and Brennand, M, 2006 The Prehistoric Period Resource Assessment, in, M Brennand (ed), *The Archaeology of North West England: An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England: Volume 1 Resource Assessment*, Archaeology North West, **8**, Manchester
- Hudson, PJ, 1993 Notes on Roman Kiln Sites in Quernmore, *Contrebis*, **18**, 23-38
- Hudson, PJ, 1994 Another Possible Roman Kiln Site in Quernmore, *Contrebis*, **19**, 45-113
- Hussey, C, 1921 Abbey House, Barrow-in-Furness: The Guest House of Messrs. Vickers Ltd, *Country Life*, April 2nd 1921, 398-404
- Leather, GM, and Webster, PV, 1988 The Quernmore Kilns, in GDB Jones and DCA Shotton (ed), *Roman Lancaster: Rescue Archaeology in an Historic City 1970-75*, Brigantia Monograph **1**, Manchester, 85-93
- Melville, J, 1978a A Mansion fit for Vickers' Guests, *North West Evening Mail*, 1st September
- Melville, J, 1978b 'Say, are you the Abbot?', *North West Evening Mail*, 15th September
- Middleton, R, Wells, CE, and Huckerby, E, 1995 *The Wetlands of North Lancashire*, North West Wetlands Survey **3**, Lancaster Imprints **4**, Lancaster

- Moseley, F (ed), 1978 *The Geology of the Lake District*, Yorkshire Geological Society, occ publ **3**, Leeds
- Oxford Archaeology (OA) North, 2002 *Abbey House Hotel, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria: Watching Brief Report*, unpubl rep
- Philpott, R, 2006 The Romano-British Period Resource Assessment, in Brennand, M, (ed) *The Archaeology of North West England: An Archaeological Research Framework for the North West Region – Volume 1, Resource Assessment*, Archaeology North West **8**, Manchester, 59-90
- Powell, TGE, 1963 Excavations at Skelmore Heads near Ulverston, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **63**, 1-27
- Shotter, DCA, 1989 Roman Coin-Finds in Cumbria, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **89**, 41-50
- Shotter, DCA, 1995 Romans in South Cumbria, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **95**, 73-77
- Shotter, DCA, and White, AJ, 1990 *The Roman Fort and Town of Lancaster*, Centre for North-West Regional Studies, occasional paper **18**, Lancaster
- Spence, JE, 1935 Report of the Committee for Prehistoric Studies, 1933-1935, *Trans Cumberland Westmorland Antiq Archaeol Soc*, 2nd ser, **35**, 170-181
- Stace, C, 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles* (second edition), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- West, T, 1805 *The Antiquities of Furness*, 2nd edn with additions by W Close, Ulverston
- Wood, J, 1998 History, in English Heritage (ed) *Furness Abbey*, London, 22-33
- Young, R, 2002 The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Periods in Northern England: An Overview, in Brooks, C, Daniels, R, and Harding, A, (ed), *Past, Present and Future: The Archaeology of Northern England*, Architect Archaeol Soc Durham Northumberland, res rep **5**, 19-36
- Zohary, D, Hopf, M, and Weiss, E, 2012 *Domestication of Plants in the Old World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford

Appendix 1: Project Design

ABBNEY HOUSE HOTEL, ABBNEY ROAD, BARROW-IN-FURNESS, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Evaluation Project Design



Client: Abbey House Hotel

NGR: 321608 472029

April 2017

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 As part of proposed alterations and additions to the Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria (NGR 321608 472029), which included the creation of a new overflow carpark on land adjoining the existing carpark, to the south-west of the Abbey House Hotel, a Scheduled Monument Consent application was submitted for the excavation of evaluation trenches within the area of the proposed new carpark. The whole of the hotel and associated grounds is situated within the outer precinct of Furness Abbey, and therefore within the Scheduled Monument area (No. 1010014). An archaeological evaluation was therefore considered to be the most appropriate way in which to assess the archaeological potential of this area, prior to the actual proposals being taken forward. Following consultation with Andrew Davison, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments (North West) at Historic England, it was determined that the evaluation should comprise the excavation of two 5m long by 1.5m wide trenches (totalling 15m square) within the area of the proposed new carpark. Greenlane Archaeology was appointed by Abbey House Hotel (hereafter 'the client'), via Tim Kilroe, to carry out the archaeological evaluation and this project design was produced in response.

1.1.2 The site is situated within the precinct of Furness Abbey, on the north-west side. A previous heritage assessment was carried out as part of the proposals (Greenlane Archaeology 2017), which revealed that while Furness Abbey was established in AD 1127 there is evidence for earlier activity in the locality, including prehistoric finds from across the Furness Peninsula and Roman coins within the Abbey Precinct. The Abbey was closed as part of the Dissolution in 1537 and the land fell into private hands, with the site of the Abbey House Hotel initially just farm land. The current building was constructed to provide a house for the manager of Vickers Shipbuilders in Barrow and guest house for visiting clients, and constructed to the designs of Edward Lutyens in 1914, before being latterly used as an old people's home and then hotel.

1.2 Greenlane Archaeology

1.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology is a private limited company based in Ulverston, Cumbria, and was established in 2005 (Company No. 05580819). Its directors, Jo Dawson and Daniel Elsworth, have a combined total of over 35 years continuous professional experience working in commercial archaeology, principally in the north of England and Scotland. Greenlane Archaeology is committed to a high standard of work, and abides by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Code of Conduct. The evaluation will be carried out according to the Standards and Guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).

1.3 Project Staffing

1.3.1 The project will be managed by **Dan Elsworth (MA (Hons), ACIfA)**, who will also supervise the evaluation with appropriately experienced assistance. Daniel graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1998 with an honours degree in Archaeology, and began working for the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit, which became Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) in 2001. Daniel ultimately became a project officer, and for over six and a half years worked on excavations and surveys, building investigations, desk-based assessments, and conservation and management plans. These have principally taken place in the North West, and Daniel has a particular interest in the archaeology of the area. Since establishing Greenlane Archaeology in 2005 he has managed a large number of recent projects in the North of England, primarily Cumbria and Lancashire, including numerous archaeological evaluations and excavations over the last 12 years, including large industrial complexes, medieval urban areas, and prehistoric cremations.

1.3.2 All artefacts will be processed by staff at Greenlane Archaeology, and it is envisaged that they will initially be assessed by Jo Dawson, who will fully assess any of post-medieval date, and Tom Mace, who will fully assess any medieval pottery. Other types of finds will be assessed by specialist sub-contractors as appropriate, for example Roman pottery would be examined by Ruth Leary, and animal bones by Jane Richardson at Archaeological Services West Yorkshire Archive Services (ASWYAS).

1.3.3 Environmental samples, and faunal or human remains will be processed by Greenlane Archaeology. It is envisaged that the flots from any environmental samples would be assessed by staff at Headland Archaeology. Other remains, such as industrial material, will be assessed by specialist sub-contractors as appropriate, and with the engagement of specialists other than those previously/routinely used by Greenlane Archaeology, Historic England will be informed and their approval will be sought for these arrangements.

2. Objectives

2.1 Heritage Assessment

2.1.1 To consult the previous heritage assessment in order to provide relevant historical and archaeological information about the site.

2.2 Archaeological Evaluation

2.2.1 To excavate evaluation trenches totalling 15 square meters across the site, targeting areas of known or inferred archaeological interest based on the results of the desk-based assessment, in order to identify the presence of any archaeological deposits, features, and structures on the site and establish their form, function, and date where possible.

2.3 Report

2.3.1 To produce a report detailing the results of the evaluation, which will outline the historical and archaeological background to the site and the results of the evaluation.

2.4 Archive

2.4.1 Produce a full archive of the results of the project.

3. Methodology

3.1 Archaeological Evaluation

3.1.1 It is anticipated that two evaluation trenches each approximately 5m long by 1.5m wide will be excavated. Where possible they will be positioned in order to encounter features of suspected archaeological interest, in particular the lines of anomalies revealed in an earlier geophysical survey carried out on land immediately to the south, although the exact location of this is not clear (Greenlane Archaeology 2017). A proposed trench location plan will be submitted as part of the Scheduled Monument Consent application. The evaluation methodology, which is based on Greenlane Archaeology's excavation manual (Greenlane Archaeology 2007), will be as follows:

- The trenches will be excavated with regard to the position of any known constraints, focussing on the areas of high archaeological interest or potential, and avoiding areas which are likely to have been severely damaged or truncated by later activity, unless they are considered to have a high potential;
- The overburden, which is unlikely to be of any archaeological significance, will be removed by machine under the supervision of an archaeologist until the first deposit beneath it is reached;
- All deposits below the overburden will be examined by hand in a stratigraphic manner, using shovels, mattocks, or trowels as appropriate for the scale. Deposits will only be sampled, rather than completely removed, below the first identified level of archaeological interest, unless specified by Historic England, with the intension of preserving as much *in situ* as possible;
- The position of any features, such as ditches, pits, or walls, will be recorded and where necessary these will be investigated in order to establish their full extent, date, and relationship to any other features. Negative features such as ditches or pits will be examined by sample excavation, typically half of a pit or similar feature and approximately 10% of a linear feature;
- All recording of features will include hand-drawn plans and sections, typically at a scale of 1:20 and 1:10, respectively, and photographs in colour digital and 35mm colour print format;
- All deposits, trenches, drawings and photographs will be recorded on Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- All finds will be recovered during the evaluation for further assessment as far as is practically and safely possible. Should significant quantities of finds be encountered an appropriate sampling strategy will be devised;
- All faunal remains will also be recovered by hand during the evaluation, but where it is considered likely that there is potential for the bones of fish or small mammals to be present appropriate volumes of samples will be taken for sieving;
- Deposits that are considered likely to have, for example, preserved environmental remains, industrial residues, and/or material suitable for scientific dating will be sampled. Bulk samples of between 20 and 60 litres in volume (or 100% of smaller features), depending on the size and potential of the deposit, will be

collected from stratified undisturbed deposits and will particularly target negative features (e.g. gullies, pits and ditches) and occupation deposits such as hearths and floors. An assessment of the environmental potential of the site will be undertaken through the examination of samples of suitable deposits by specialist sub-contractors (see *Section 1.3.3* above), who will examine the potential for further analysis. All samples will be processed using methods appropriate to the preservation conditions and the remains present;

- Any human remains discovered during the evaluation will be left *in situ*, and, if possible, covered. The Historic England will be immediately informed as will the local coroner. Should it be considered necessary to remove the remains this will be carried out under the guidance of the local coroner, and a licence sought from the Ministry of Justice, as per the amendments to Section 25 of the Burial Act of 1857;
- Any objects defined as 'treasure' by the Treasure Act of 1996 (HMSO 1996) will be immediately reported to the local coroner and securely stored off-site, or covered and protected on site if immediate removal is not possible;
- The evaluation trenches will be backfilled following excavation although it is not envisaged that any further reinstatement to its original condition will be carried out.

3.1.2 Should any significant archaeological deposits be encountered during the evaluation these will immediately be brought to the attention of Historic England so that the need for further work can be confirmed. Any additional work will be carried out following discussion with Historic England and subject to a new project design, and the ensuing costs will be agreed with the client.

3.2 Report

3.2.1 The results of the desk-based assessment and evaluation will be compiled into a report, which will provide a summary and details of any sources consulted. It will include the following sections:

- A front cover including the appropriate national grid reference (NGR);
- A concise non-technical summary of results, including the date the project was undertaken and by whom;
- Acknowledgements;
- Project Background;
- Methodology, including a description of the work undertaken;
- Results of the desk-based assessment;
- Results of the evaluation, including finds and samples;
- Discussion of the results including phasing information;
- Bibliography;
- Illustrations at appropriate scales including:
 - a site location plan related to the national grid;
 - a plan showing the location of the evaluation trenches in relation to nearby structures and the local landscape;
 - plans and sections of any features discovered during the evaluation;
 - photographs of features encountered during the evaluation and general shots of the evaluation trenches;
 - copies of selected historic maps and plans.

3.3 Archive

3.3.1 The archive, comprising the drawn, written, and photographic record of the evaluation trenches, formed during the project, will be stored by Greenlane Archaeology until it is completed. Upon completion it will be deposited with the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness, together with a copy of the report. The archive will be compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the ClfA (Brown 2007), and in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). In addition details will be submitted to the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations (OASIS) scheme. This is an internet-based project intended to improve the flow of information between contractors, local authority heritage managers and the general public.

3.3.2 A paper and digital copy of the report will be provided to the client and a digital copy of the report will be provided to Historic England for their archive and to the Cumbria Historic Environment Record. In addition, Greenlane Archaeology Ltd will retain one copy.

4. Work timetable

4.1 Greenlane Archaeology will be available to commence the project from **15th May 2017**, or at another date convenient to the client. It is envisaged that the elements of the project will be carried out in the following order:

- **Task 1:** archaeological evaluation;
- **Task 2:** processing and assessment of finds and samples;
- **Task 3:** production of draft report including illustrations;
- **Task 4:** feedback on draft report, editing and production of final report;
- **Task 5:** finalisation and deposition of archive.

5. Other matters

5.1 Access and clearance

5.1.1 Access to the site will be organised through co-ordination with the client and/or their agent(s).

5.2 Health and Safety

5.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology carries out risk assessments for all of its projects and abides by its internal health and safety policy and relevant legislation. Health and safety is always the foremost consideration in any decision-making process.

5.3 Insurance

5.3.1 Greenlane Archaeology has professional indemnity insurance to the value of **£2,000,000**. Details of this can be supplied if requested.

5.4 Environmental and Ethical Policy

5.4.1 Greenlane Archaeology has a strong commitment to environmentally and ethically sound working practices. Its office is supplied with 100% renewable energy by Good Energy, uses ethical telephone and internet services supplied by the Phone Co-op. In addition, the company uses the services of The Co-operative Bank for ethical banking, Naturesave for environmentally-conscious insurance, and utilises public transport wherever possible. Greenlane Archaeology is also committed to using local businesses for services and materials, thus benefiting the local economy, reducing unnecessary transportation, and improving the sustainability of small and rural businesses.

6. Bibliography

Brown, DH, 2007 *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer, and Curation*, IfA, Reading

CIfA, 2014 Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation, http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CIfAS&GFieldevaluation_1.pdf

English Heritage, 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London

Greenlane Archaeology, 2017 *Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria: Heritage Assessment*, unpubl rep

Appendix 2: Summary Context List

Context	Type	Description	Interpretation
100	Deposit	Soft, dark reddish brown, silty-clay, 0.15m thick; 20% angular cobbles (red sandstone), including some denser patches of larger angular boulders (red sandstone flags) and paler clay	Topsoil / dumped
101	Deposit	0.2m thick, soft silty-clay; mid reddish orange, with 30% sub-angular pebbles	Subsoil
102	Deposit	Soft, mid reddish orange-brown silty-clay with 10% rounded pebble, up to 0.3m thick	Fill of irregular pit 103 ; very similar to subsoil
103	Cut	Irregular pit cut, perhaps broadly oval-shaped, extending beyond the limits of the trench, and aligned north-east/south-west; at least 1m north-east/south-west by 1.5m north-west/south-east, the sides are poorly defined at approximately 45° to horizontal, with an irregular base, which was flat to the south-east and dipped to the north-west; animal burrowing in evidence to base; filled by 102	Cut for irregular pit or ditch; possible dip in natural or site of uprooted tree
104	Deposit	Mid orange silty-clay, with 20% rounded pebble inclusions, at least 0.1m thick; firmer than the subsoil (101); there was a patch of looser darker material with lots of charcoal and stones but corresponding with mole burrows	Natural
200	Deposit	Soft, dark greyish-brown silt, 0.2m thick, with 2% rounded pebble inclusions	Topsoil
201	Deposit	Firm, dark pinkish grey silty-clay, with 30% rounded pebbles, 0.1m thick	Subsoil
202	Deposit	Firm, gravelly sandy-clay; mid brownish-orange at base of trench, some mottling probably caused by moles	Natural

Appendix 3: Summary Finds List

Context	Type	Qty	Description	Date range
100	Glass	1	Dark green bottle body fragment	19 th – 20 th century
200	Ceramic building material	1	Thick piece of soft, gritty orange fabric consistent with a fragment from a tegula (see <i>Appendix 4</i>)	Roman

Appendix 4: The Ceramic Building Material from AH17

Dr Phil Mills, July 2017

There was a single fragment of ceramic building material (CBM) presented from context (**200**), weighing 47g. There was one extant surface, slightly sandy, probably the base of the object, thickness is perhaps 23mm. The fabric is reddish yellow (5YR6/6), hard with a harsh sandy feel and irregular fracture. Inclusions include common rounded quartz at 0.4mm and moderate rounded lime at 0.4mm and sparse silver mica. The levigation and density of the fabric is consistent with a Roman fabric. The thickness is consistent with a fragment from a tegula.

Small groups of CBM fragments, not associated with nearby structures, are found in rural sites in Britain. These may have been brought into a site for use as oven bases, or as general hardcore. However, given the aceramic nature of rural Cumbria in the Roman period, the proximity of a Roman structure should not be ruled out.

No further work is recommended on the current material.



Plate 1: CBM Fabric from a fresh break at x10

Appendix 5: Environmental Sample Data

Sample number	Context number	Size (litres)	Context type
1	102	10	Deposit, fill of pit [103]

Table 1: Summary of samples taken

Sample number	1
Uncharred organic (roots)	+
Charred organic	+++
Bone	+
Iron working slag	+
Hammerscale	++
Mineralized organic (St Cuthbert's beads)	+

Table 2: Contents of retents (Key: + = 1-9, ++ = 10-20, +++ = 21-50, ++++ = >51)

Sample number	Context Number	Total flot volume (ml)	Feature	Flot charcoal quantity	Flot charcoal max size (mm)	Retent charcoal quantity	Retent charcoal size (mm)	Material available for AMS	Comments
1	102	195	Fill of pit [103]	++++	22	+++	5	No	rectilinear oak charcoal; some vitrified fragments, sediment coated, worm egg capsule, insect remains, uncharred root material

Table 3: Volume and contents of flot (Key: + = rare (1-5), ++ = occasional (6-15), +++ = common (16-50), ++++ = abundant (>50); Note: charcoal over 10mm is sufficient for identification and AMS dating)

Appendix 6: Environmental Sample Assessment

Introduction

One bulk sediment sample, from an undated pit, was recovered during archaeological works at Abbey House Hotel, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. The aims of the assessment were to assess the presence, preservation and abundance of any environmental remains and to determine the potential of the material in indicating the character and significance of the deposit.

Methodology

Bulk samples were subjected to flotation and wet sieving in a Siraf-style flotation machine. The floating debris (the flot) was collected in a 250 µm sieve and once dry, scanned using a binocular microscope. Any material remaining in the flotation tank (retent) was wet-sieved through a 1mm mesh and air-dried. All samples were scanned using a stereomicroscope at magnifications of x10 and up to x100. Identifications, where provided, were confirmed using modern reference material and seed atlases including Cappers et al. (2006) and Zohary et al. (2012) nomenclature for wild taxa follows Stace (1997).

Results

Results of the assessment are presented in Appendix 5. There was no material present sufficient for AMS (Accelerated Mass Spectrometry) radiocarbon dating.

Wood charcoal

Rectilinear oak charcoal was present in the sample including a small number of vitrified fragments. The fragments were insufficient for AMS dating.

No other charred plant remains were present.

Discussion

The charred plant remains provide very limited evidence for activity at the site. Once incorporated into negative features charred remains tend to survive well but, as in this case, their inclusion is often incidental and the materials have no direct relationship to the features themselves.

The paucity of remains precludes further analysis.