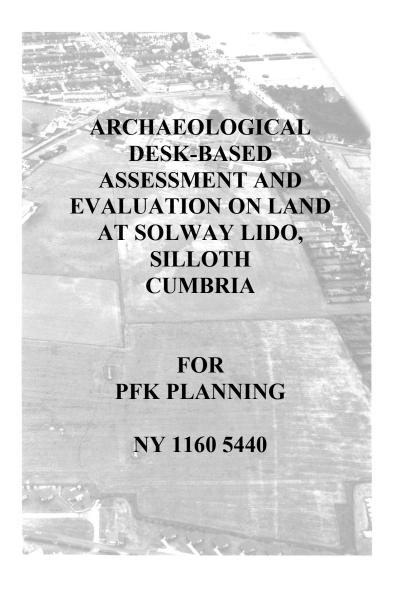
# NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/288/06



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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In February 2006, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by PFK Planning PLC to undertake an archaeological desk based assessment and evaluation in advance of a planning application for a proposed residential caravan site on land at Solway Lido, Silloth, Cumbria (NGR NY 1160 5470). The site is located within the visual envelope of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, and lies 200 metres to the north east of the archaeological remains of a Roman camp which forms part of the WHS (Scheduled Monument No. 27735). As a result, Cumbria County Council's Historic Environment Service recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to and approved by CCCHES. The work consisted of a desk-based assessment and archaeological evaluation by trial trenching of the development area.

The desk-based assessment involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the County Records Office in Carlisle, and the consultation of the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) based in Kendal. The HER includes the locations and settings of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Parks and Gardens and other, non-designated archaeological remains. In addition, a number of published sources were consulted to provide background information, including the journal Britannia and several relevant web sites.

The desk-based assessment located 42 sites from the HER and other sources. These included one prehistoric findspot, nine Roman cropmark and excavation sites, one Medieval excavation site, and thirty-one post-medieval sites (the bulk of which derive from the association of the town with a military airfield).

The walkover survey failed to identify any further sites, though a sub-oval earthwork site seen on the aerial photographs and visible on the ground was tested as part of the archaeological evaluation.

Despite a significant number of important archaeological remains within the vicinity of the development site, the development was found to directly impact on only two archaeological sites: a cropmark of a Roman road, partially excavated in 1994 (HER 6457); and the potential position of a Roman turret (HER 360), forming part of the coastal defences. There was also a possibility of medieval field systems being uncovered, as similar features have been noted less than 100m to the south-east of the site (Jones 2004). The visual aspect of the area was unlikely to be affected, as the development area lies away from the core of the historic town, to the rear of modern housing.

The results of the evaluation succeeded in identifying archaeological remains dating to the later medieval period, in the southern corner of the site; these consisted of a series of ditches, which probably closely relate to ditches identified in an earlier evaluation by NPAL to the south-east. These remains were confined to a very small area of the development site. The cropmarks of the Roman 'road' ditches were found to be an early field boundary, visible on mapping dated to 1868, presumably drainage ditches on both sides of a grubbed-out hedge. Other ditches identified within the evaluation may also result from the same activity. No evidence of a turret was identified, and the evaluation failed to uncover any significant archaeology or finds in the rest of the field.

The presence of medieval archaeology in the south corner is significant, and any disturbance should be mitigated against, either in the form of excavation prior to removal, or preservation *in situ*. In view of the relatively small area of impact the latter option may be preferable. The

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

remainder of the development area yielded no significant archaeology, work should be required.	and therefore no further

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Bruce Armstrong-Payne of Penrith Farmers and Kidd Planning PLC for commissioning the project, and for his assistance throughout the fieldwork. John Finlayson of Solway Lido is thanked for his on-site assistance, and Lance is also thanked for his patient and diligent machining.

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Jo Mackintosh, HER Officer of the Cumbria County Historic Environment Record (HER), Jeremy Parsons, Assistant Archaeologist of Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES), and all the staff at the Cumbria County Record Office in Carlisle for their help during this project. Marc Johnstone of Heritage Media is also thanked for providing the aerial photographic evidence. Thanks are also due to Chris Healey of OA North, who kindly showed us around the excavations at Beckfoot, for which we are grateful.

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Matthew Town and Jo Beaty. The evaluation was undertaken by Jo Beaty, Mark Dodd, Nicola Gaskell, Jennifer Kinsman, Kevin Mounsey, and Martin Sowerby, under the direction of Matthew Town. Metal detecting was kindly undertaken by Alan James. The report was written by Matthew Town and Martin Sowerby, and the drawings were produced by Nicola Gaskell. The project was managed by Frank Giecco, Technical Director for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Gareth Davies.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) were consulted prior to a planning application to be submitted regarding a residential caravan site, which could affect an area considered to have a high archaeological potential. The site is located on land at Solway Lido, Silloth, Cumbria (NGR NY 1160 5470) (Figure 1), and lies within the visual envelope of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. The site also lies 200 metres to the north east of the archaeological remains of a Roman camp which forms part of the WHS (Scheduled Monument No. 27735). Consequently, CCCHES advised that a programme of archaeological works would be necessary prior to any proposed development application. North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were commissioned by PFK Planning PLC to undertake the required archaeological desk-based assessment of the general area around Solway Lido, and an evaluation within the development area itself.
- 1.1.2 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (CHER) in Kendal, the Cumbria County Record Offices in Carlisle (CRO(C)), and the archives and library held by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd. The principal objective of this assessment was to undertake sufficient work in order to identify and characterise the archaeological constraints associated with the development area, in order to assess the archaeological and historical potential of the development site.
- 1.1.3 The field evaluation comprised the excavation of a series of linear trial trenches in order to provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals. The principal objective of this evaluation was to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of any archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed. Twenty nine 30m trenches were to be excavated, comprising a minimum 5% sample of the undeveloped area.
- 1.1.4 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document outlining the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential of the area, an assessment of the impact of the proposed development, and recommendations for further work.

#### 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design was submitted by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd in response to a request by PFK Planning PLC for an archaeological desk-based assessment and evaluation of the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by CCCHES. Following acceptance of the project design, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by the client to undertake the work. The project design was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), and generally accepted best practice.

### 2.2 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 2.2.1 Several sources of information were consulted, in accordance with the project brief and project design. The study area consisted of a 1km radius centred on the proposed development area (Figure 2). The principal sources of information were the Historic Environment Record (HER), maps and secondary sources.
- 2.2.2 Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Kendal, a database of archaeological sites within the county, was accessed. This was in order to obtain information on the location of all designated sites and areas of historic interest and any other, non-designated sites within the study area, which included monuments, findspots, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. A brief record including grid reference and description was obtained for the various sites within the study area, and was examined in depth.
- 2.2.3 **Cumbria County Record Office (Carlisle):** the County Record Office in Carlisle (CRO(C)) was visited to consult documents specific to the study area. Historic maps of the study area, including surveys, Tithe and Enclosure Maps, Acts of Parliament and early Ordnance Survey maps, were examined. A search was made for any relevant historical documentation, particularly regarding the use of the area, drawing on the knowledge of the archivists. Several secondary sources and relevant websites were also consulted.
- 2.2.4 **English Heritage NMR and Archaeology Data Service:** an electronic enquiry was also made of English Heritage's National Monuments Record and the website of the Archaeology Data Service. This was in order to enhance and augment the data obtained from a search of the appropriate repositories.
- 2.2.5 **North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL):** various publications and unpublished reports on excavations and other work in the region are held within the North Pennines Archaeology library and any undeposited archives of the sites themselves were examined. Aerial photographs of the area, supplied by Marc Johnstone of Heritage Media, were also studied.

### 2.3 WALKOVER SURVEY

2.3.1 The site was visited in order to complete a rapid identification survey of the area with the purpose of relating the existing landscape to research findings. The area was walked in 20m transects, and features were recorded using *pro-forma* sheets and digital photography. The features were located using manual survey techniques, tying in the new features to those already shown on ordnance survey mapping.

### 2.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

- 2.4.1 The archaeological evaluation was to have consisted of the excavation of twenty-nine linear trial trenches measuring 30m x 1.6m, which would have provided a 5% sample of an area of approx 3 hectares (Figure 6; Plate 3). This was in order to produce a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals. However, a large pond had been excavated in the position of Trench 23, so an agreement was made with the Assistant Archaeologist for Cumbria County Council to abandon this trench (Parsons *pers. comm*). In summary, the main objectives of the excavation were:
  - to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these were they are observed;
  - to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
  - to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
  - to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.
- 2.4.2 Each trench was mechanically excavated by a 13 tonne tracked 360 degree excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision, to the natural substrate. Each trench was then manually cleaned where possible and any putative archaeological features investigated.
- 2.4.3 Photography was undertaken using Canon EOS 100 and EOS 300V Single Lens Reflex (SLR) cameras. A photographic record was made using digital photography, 200 ISO Black and White Print and Colour Slide film.
- 2.4.4 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (IFA 1994).

### 2.5 ARCHIVE

2.5.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to the County Sites and Monuments Record, where viewing will be available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA 05 SOL-A.

## 3. BACKGROUND

## 3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.1.1 Silloth is a coastal town, which lies approximately 23 miles west of Carlisle, on the western fringes of the North Cumbrian Plain. The plain itself lies to the north and west of the Lake District massif, and encompasses the coastal fringe forming the Solway AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Land use is predominantly pasture, though significant sections of land around Silloth are given over to arable cultivation (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). The progressive intensification of arable practices has lead to the widespread destruction of sub-surface archaeological monuments in this agricultural belt, though aerial photography has succeeded in identifying extensive areas of cropmarks in the area (Bewley 1994). The development area lies to the east of Silloth, south and west of the existing caravan park of Solway Lido. The land is currently in use as pasture.
- 3.1.2 The solid geology consists predominantly of Stanwix Shale. The drift geology consists of a deep accumulation of Devensian till, predominantly boulder clay interleaved with alluvial sand and gravels, which forms a gently undulating landscape of low ridges, intersected by a mainly north-east to south-west orientated drainage system (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). Post-glacial shingle banks along this coast were formed when the sea was reaching its highest level during the melting of the ice-caps (Bewley 1994). The soils consist of mainly Clifton and Brickfield Associations, the former comprising seasonally waterlogged soils which developed over tills (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). The town of Silloth also forms part of an extensive area of salt marsh running along the coast to Scotland (*ibid*),

### 3.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.2.1 *Introduction:* this historical background is compiled mostly from secondary sources, and is intended only as a brief summary of historical developments around the study area.
- 3.2.2 **Palaeolithic:** no early Palaeolithic material has ever been recovered within Cumbria. During the most recent geological period, the Pleistocene, massive north-south travelling ice sheets repeatedly scoured the landscape during prolonged periods of extreme glaciation. Information on the conditions in Cumbria is provided by pollens laid down during the Windermere Interstadial; winter conditions were cold, with excessive flooding, and vegetation only survived in the summer months (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). The latest glaciation, the Devensian, presumably removed much of the evidence from previous periods (Chamberlain and Williams 2001).
- 3.2.3 Towards the end of the Devensian, some time after 13,000 BP, Late Upper Palaeolithic societies returned to Britain. Evidence of occupation in the northwest at this date is extremely scarce, but the discovery of Late Upper Palaeolithic blades at Lindale Low cave, near Grange-over-Sands, and at Bart's Cave, Aldingham, on the

- Furness peninsula, mean that the existence of a Cumbrian Palaeolithic can no longer be entirely dismissed (Chamberlain and Williams 2001).
- 3.2.4 *Mesolithic:* Mesolithic activity in the North Cumbrian Plain is equally scarce, though sites dating to the later Mesolithic are known along the entire length of the Cumbrian coast (Cherry and Cherry 2002, Young 2002); the earliest evidence for Mesolithic activity on the Cumbrian Plain consists predominantly of isolated finds of that date. Hunter-gatherer activity was influenced by changing relative sea-levels on the Solway coast, which formed shingle banks and created the climate for forestation in the area (Lloyd *et al* 1999); there is some evidence of small-scale tree clearance during this period. At St Bees Head, to the south of Silloth, several Mesolithic flint working sites have been found, some spanning through to the Bronze Age (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000), and material occasionally turns up during minor archaeological works (e.g. OA North 2002).
- 3.2.5 From c7000 cal BP, a sequence of acute sea-level changes affected the area, resulting in a dramatic rise in the sea-level, before a gradual return to current levels (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000); this may have effectively removed large numbers of sites along the coast. The present lack of material is also explained by poor visibility of the finds; the retrieval of these finds is heavily influenced by exposures of the material, and is also biased to areas which have been extensively fieldwalked (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, Brennand and Hodgson, 2004). The presence of Mesolithic activity has been better evidenced on the Scottish side of the Solway through the coastal erosion of raised beach deposits; these depositional conditions are absent on the Cumbrian coast (Bewley 1994).
- 3.2.6 Excavations at Eskmeals, to the south of the development area, have revealed extensive remains representing annual settlement (Bonsall *et al* 1994). Recent excavations undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd at New Cowper Farm, 7 miles south of the development area, have also located Mesolithic/early Neolithic flint debitage flakes (Davies forthcoming). Further such sites will be almost certainly uncovered in due course.
- 3.2.7 **Neolithic:** the Neolithic period has been traditionally associated with the development of increasingly sedentary agricultural communities, the appearance of ceremonial and funerary monuments and the development of distinctive pottery and lithic forms, though the manner and chronology of these developments is now in question (Brennand and Hodgson 2004). In the Late Neolithic, the first indications for the existence of social hierarchies are visible through intensification of settlement, landuse and artefact production (*ibid*).
- 3.2.8 In Cumbria, the majority of the archaeological record for this period is represented by ceremonial and funerary monuments, and lithic scatters. As for the Mesolithic, distribution of finds is heavily biased to the location and intensity of particular fieldwork (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). Polished stone axes from the Langdale axe factory in the Cumbrian mountains were traded extensively throughout the British Isles, and it is likely that by the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, the inhabitants of Cumbria were part of an extensive trans-European trading network. Evidence for settlement is primarily inferred by the distribution of these polished stone axes, few of which come from reliable contexts. Over one hundred have been recovered from the Solway Plain, and

studies into the distribution of these axes have produced a pattern suggesting exploitation of both the wetlands and coastland areas, and settlement of the plain itself (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). A series of axes and waste material were recovered from raised beach deposits on the west side of Silloth (Site 1), and these have been assumed to have come from the Langdale axe factory (Bewley 1994), though they have since been lost.

- 3.2.9 Much of the lowland evidence indicates that the majority of Neolithic settlement focused on sandy ridges along coasts, tarns and marshes, with an economy mainly based on natural resources (Bewley 1994). A significant number of monuments in the lowlands have been obliterated by intensive agricultural activity (Hodgkinson et al 2000, Brennand and Hodgson, 2004), and there is only a limited amount of excavated evidence, and even fewer stratigraphically secure assemblages, directly related to Neolithic occupation (Hodgson and Brennand 2004, 7). Most of the cropmark sites identified in the area have traditionally been assigned an Iron Age or Romano-British date (Bewley 1994), though excavation of one of these sites at Plasketlands, near Mawbray, uncovered an extensive palisade of posts, suggesting possible domestic settlement, dated to the mid-fourth millennium BC (Hodgkinson et al 2000, 111). Recent excavations undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd at New Cowper Farm, 7 miles south of the development area, uncovered a pit group containing early Neolithic pottery that was radiocarbon dated to 3650-3510 cal BC (Davies forthcoming).
- 3.2.10 **Bronze Age:** the Bronze Age is marked nationally by the introduction of bronze metalwork, changes in pottery styles, the increased occurrence of single burial traditions and changes in monumental building. In the north-west, there is a great deal of continuity through from the Late Neolithic, though there are hints of changes in the religious, agricultural and social practices. There is a significant increase in clearance activity and the initiation of cereal cultivation in the Early Bronze Age; environmental evidence in the form of cereal pollen, dated to c2000 BC, points to the definite presence of agriculture by this time (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). Despite this, archaeological evidence is scarce, and excavation of Bronze Age sites in Cumbria is limited. Remnants of timber palisades, suggested to be of late prehistoric date, were uncovered at the turn of the nineteenth century on Bowness Common (Hodgson 1904), and a collection of flint artifacts were recovered during excavations at Bowness fort, one of which is thought to be Bronze Age (Potter 1979).
- 3.2.11 The continued exploitation of stone resources over metal is visible through the production of axe hammers in the third millennium BC (Brennand and Hodgson 2004); an axe hammer was found near Silloth in 1917, though its exact location is unclear (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 113). Early metalwork finds are rare in Northern England, and metal production and ownership may have been the sole province of a privileged few.
- 3.2.12 By the beginning of the second millennium BC, social change is reflected most clearly by the adoption of new burial practices. Cist burial, the practice of burying the dead in stone chambers dug into the ground and covered by slabs, seems to have become common at around this time throughout upland Northern England. Though cist burials are often found in isolation, it is suspected that they represent the surviving remnants of long vanished, or hitherto undetected, Bronze Age agricultural landscapes. Recent

excavations undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd at New Cowper Farm, 7 miles south of the development area, uncovered an early cist burial containing a charcoal rich fill that was radiocarbon dated to 2400-2380 cal BC and 2360-2140 (Davies forthcoming). This feature may have been associated with a number of undated ditched boundary features, possibly of Bronze Age date, that might represent subsurface remains similar to some of the extensive cropmark sites identified on the North Cumbrian Plain through aerial photographic evidence (cf. Bewley 1994).

- 3.2.13 Cremation burial was also adopted in the Bronze Age, often associated with barrow mounds; numerous putative Bronze Age monuments, including over twenty possible barrows, have been identified as crop-mark sites on the North Cumbrian Plain, though most of these remain unexcavated (Bewley 1994, Hodgkinson *et al* 2000). It is often unclear whether the contrasting practices of cist burial and cremation burial represent events of contrasting chronology or contrasting social practice. At Ewanrigg, to the south-west of Maryport, field walking discovered prehistoric pottery; a series of subsequent excavations identified a total of 29 cremation burials and a single cist burial. Radiocarbon dates (2470 cal BC 1520 cal BC) suggest that burials were being interred over a period of about 940 years during the Bronze Age. The relationship between the excavated cemetery at Ewanrigg, and an adjacent, unexcavated, settlement site (identified from aerial photographs) is unclear (Bewley 1986).
- 3.2.14 *Iron Age:* there is a scarcity of evidence for settlement on the Solway Plain in the early- to mid-Iron Age, and evidence seems to point to the lowlands being sparsely populated at this point, though archaeological fieldwork in the area has not been intensive and the aceramic character of the assemblages causes problems of identification (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, Brennand and Hodgson 2004). Silloth lay within the so-called territory of the *Brigantes*, though it is unclear to what extent this territory was a Roman construct (Brennand and Hodgson 2004, 22). Cropmarks of large numbers of undated and unexcavated prehistoric enclosures, field systems and trackways have been discovered through the study of aerial photographs, and most are thought to be of Iron Age date (Bewley 1994). The excavated enclosure at Wolsty Hall, for example, is Iron Age, and continues in use into the Romano British period (Blake 1959). Two hillforts are also known at the southern end of the northern coastal plain at Carrock Fell and Swarthy Hill (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000).
- 3.2.15 Although settlements are hard to locate, during the later Iron Age there appears to have been a major expansion in forest clearance in the area, primarily for agrarian purposes; this is illustrated by a substantial drop in arboreal pollen seen in environmental samples dated to this period. Detailed analysis of the timbers from the fort at Carlisle (*Luguvalium*) has also shown that the majority started growing in the first or second centuries BC (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000, 115).
- 3.2.16 *Romano-British:* during the Roman period, there was a heavy military presence in Cumbria. Hadrian's Wall, perhaps begun in 122 AD, was built to define the northern limit of the Roman Empire and a network of military roads, forts and settlements soon sprung up around the focus of Hadrian's Wall (Breeze and Dobson 1976). The Wall and its associated forts, turrets and milecastles were primarily constructed of turf and timber, only later being replaced by stone constructions. However, the section of the Wall west of Carlisle remained as a turf construction (Daniels 1978), presumably due to the added security provided by the Solway Firth. The turrets on the Wall west of

Drumburgh, as well as sections of the Wall and *Vallum*, have been excavated, although the exact line of the Wall is lost by the time it reaches Port Carlisle, and between Port Carlisle and Bowness-on-Solway it is entirely invisible, due to developments and deliberate destruction (*ibid*). The fort at Bowness, named *Maia* by the Romans, is the second largest on the Wall; a *vicus* lies to the south, but has yet to be examined in detail (OA North 2002).

- 3.2.17 The coastal road down the west coast has been identified as the line of the seacoast extension of the Wall, probably connecting with the Roman Military Way at Bowness, though sections of this road have been lost to coastal erosion (Margary 1973). The road is seen at Beckfoot, extending for 1km in each direction from the fort gates, before being lost to ploughing (Breeze 2004). Two phases of coastal defence have been suggested, through excavation and cropmark evidence; this phasing is however open to dispute (*ibid*).
- 3.2.18 The two phases suggested consist of an early palisade constructed along the coast, argued to belong to the primary Hadrianic phase, and said to correspond closely with descriptions of palisades in Germany in the vita Hadriani, a contemporary account of Hadrian's tactics (Jones 1982) (Site 8, 28, 36, 37). The palisade was argued to have been subsequently replaced by the known system of towers extending down the coast between milefortlets. The Moricambe estuary marks the first strategic break in the south Solway shoreline, and it has been suggested that installations south of this may be a secondary phase of installations (Breeze 2004). Excavation by Bellhouse failed to uncover any evidence of any installations between Skinburness (Milefortlet 9) and Blitterlees (Milefortlet 12) (ibid); Towers 12a and 12b were excavated at Silloth Golf Course, revealing stone-built foundations (Bellhouse 1989). Further undiscovered milefortlets are assumed along this stretch to the larger fort of Maryport around 15 miles south. Bellhouse notes a milefortlet at East Cote to the north of Silloth, but suggests that the growth of the town, as well as the development of dunes to the south, have destroyed remains of coastal defences as far as the fort and vicus at Beckfoot, visible as a cropmark 3 miles to the south (though Clare suggests coastal destruction is unlikely – cited in Breeze 2004). Recent work (Dodd 2005a, Dodd 2005b) has failed to uncover any further remains of turrets or milefortlets (see Section 4.6; Sites 3 and 4).
- 3.2.19 The palisade is visible on the aerial photographs as two divergent north-south aligned linear features; parallel and east of these are the cropmarks of the two parallel side ditches of the coastal road (Site 7). The road ditches run through the development area, passed Solway School, to a rectangular cropmark, identified as a camp, and continue south from Silloth to Beckfoot (Jones 1982). The theory of the palisade comes from excavations carried out in 1977, which uncovered a clay-filled ditch, with stake impressions at 0.6m intervals in the soil, which would have held wattle hurdles; the hypothesis was that deep-cut ditches would have been impossible to maintain close to the sea (Jones 1982). The school playing fields were re-excavated in 1994 prior to the installation of a water main, and, and though one of the road ditches was identified, the 'palisades' are now believed to be land drains (Woolliscroft and Jones 2004).
- 3.2.20 Until recent decades, the Roman military sites of Cumbria are also those that have received the most attention from archaeologists and as a result the nature of rural settlement during the Roman period is poorly understood (Philpott 2004). However,

environmental studies suggest that woodland clearances begun in the Iron Age continued apace, implying large scale cultivation of land (ibid). As with preceding periods, a large percentage of the potential Romano-British rural sites around Silloth have only been identified by aerial photography; rectangular field systems have also been identified (Bewley 1994). Where rural sites have been excavated, the traditional Iron Age building form, the roundhouse, continues in use into the Roman period. At Silloth Farm, excavated in 1977, the site consisted of a rectangular enclosure, formed by a bank and ditch, surrounding a series of roundhouses (Higham and Jones 1983) (Site 6; see Section 4.6). By the late third century, roundhouses were being superseded by rectangular timber buildings, for example at Crosshill (Higham and Jones 1983). The few recorded Roman burials from rural Cumbria suggest that Late Iron Age native practice, such as the use of crouched inhumation, continued into the Roman period, whereas burials from Carlisle and the fort at Brough display great variety, such as respectively coffin burial and cremation (Philpott 2004). On the west Cumbria coast lies the Roman cemetery of Beckfoot, currently under excavation by OA North (Healey pers. comm.), which exhibits a variety of cremation and inhumation practices.

- 3.2.21 *Early Medieval:* evidence for Early Medieval activity in north Cumbria is extremely limited, the end of the Roman economy depriving the archaeologist of diagnostic artefactual evidence on all but a small minority of sites (Higham 1986). Work in recent decades has shown that the 'Romans' did not leave behind them a cultural vacuum, and archaeology has begun to fill the gap between the 'Dark Ages' and the colour of, for example, such histories as the Northumbrian monk, The Venerable Bede's, *Historia Ecclesiastica* written in the early eighth century. Environmental studies focussing on pollen remains have indicated a continuing arable economy in Cumbria during the Early Medieval period (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000).
- 3.2.22 Once the Roman administration ended in 410AD, the native Britons gradually reverted to their own autonomy. Angles had begun to enter eastern Cumbria by the seventh century AD, but the west of the county appears politically more stable (Crowe 1984). The discovery of early medieval settlement sites in the region is rare, but a number of putative Romano-British rural sites excavated more than forty years ago may have had late phases that could have been observed with the use of radiocarbon dating. Recent excavations at Stainmore in Cumbria have produced evidence for rectangular post-built buildings and sunken-feature buildings perhaps dating to the seventh or eighth centuries AD (Newman 2004). In 2004, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd excavated a series substantial ditches, associated with smaller ditches (possibly palisade slots), at Solway Lido, Silloth, on land immediately south-east of the development area (Site 42). Charcoal from the fills dated the ditches to 1000AD (Jones 2004), and these are likely to continue into the current development site.
- 3.2.23 Although there is little in the way of direct evidence for activity in the Early Medieval period in Silloth, it is likely that settlement was continuous. North Cumbria fell under the aegis of Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian and Scottish influences (Hodgkinson *et al* 2000), and in the seventh century, the region was absorbed into the kingdom of Northumbria. The name Silloth comes from the Scandinavian *Selathe* meaning 'barns by the sea' (Mills 2003), though this name only appears in 1292, possibly in association with the ownership of Holm Cultram Abbey (see below).

- 3.2.24 *Later Medieval:* by the 11th century, the political situation in Cumbria was volatile, with the emergent kingdom of Strathclyde to the north and the growing power of England to the south competing for political control (Kirkby 1962). Much of the modern county of Cumbria remained outside Norman control (thus not being included in Domesday Book of 1086) until 1092 when William II marched north to Carlisle and drove out one Dolfin.
- 3.2.25 The region was given by King Stephen to King David of Scotland in 1135, returning to England after the Anarchy (Whellan 1860). The abbey of Holm Cultram, to the south east of Silloth in the demesne of Allerdale, was established by Prince Henry, son of King David of Scotland, in c.1150; this grant of land was confirmed by Henry II when the area came under English control (Rollinson 1996). The abbey is recorded as retaining the favour of the king, being exempt from shires and hundreds, wapentakes and tolls (Nicolson and Burn 1777). The abbey was probably responsible for the initiation of the permanent settlement and exploitation of the fringes of the wetlands of the Solway Plain in the twelfth century (Hodgkinson et al 2000). Documentation suggests that by 1175, five grange farms had been established in the area, one at 'Skinburne' (Fletcher and Miller 1997). Dykes were also created to demarcate the monastic possessions; following destruction of Skinburness between 1301 and 1304, a sea-dyke was constructed to protect the village (*ibid*). The farming of sheep, as is the case in the present day, was an important industry in this area along with salt production and peat cutting (ibid).
- 3.2.26 In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the abbey became caught up in the wars between the English and the Scots; following the signing of the Great Charter, King John marched on Scotland, reaching Berwick in 1216. As he returned south, Alexander II of Scotland set off in pursuit. The abbey of Holm Cultram was caught up in the turmoil, and the area was laid waste (Gilbanks 1899). The abbey was again laid waste in 1316, when border raiders attacked the north-west coast, plundering everything as far as Furness. Six years later, Robert Bruce repeated the journey, again laying waste to the abbey (Dickinson 1965).
- 3.2.27 Following the Reformation, the abbot Borrowdale surrendered the abbey to the crown; at the time it was valued at £427 19s 3d. The abbot was given a pardon by the King, and the abbey was allowed to continue as St Mary's Church, with the abbot installed in the rectory. The abbot later maintained detailed accounts of all the tithe payments paid by the parishioners; the first entry for Silloth occurs in Queen Anne's reign, where Silloth paid four shillings tithe in money (Nicolson and Burn 1777). The lands of Holme Cultram were leased out to tenant farmers. At the time of Elizabeth I there were no freeholders in the lordship. The manor of Holme Cultram was retained in crown hands until after the Restoration of Charles II, and in 1732 it was purchased by the Stephenson family (Nicolson and Burn 1777).
- 3.2.28 **Post-Medieval and Modern:** Silloth was developed as a port in the nineteenth century, due to the depth and comparative tranquillity of its bay, protected by a natural breakwater to the west. The port was also ideally situated for the increased traffic to and from Ireland, and, unlike Whitehaven, Workington, Maryport and Port Carlisle, which were all dry docks, Silloth was easily accessible at low tide. In 1854, the Carlisle and Silloth Bay Railway and Dock Company was formed, and applications were made to run a railway from Drumburgh to Silloth, a distance of 13 miles, for the

- construction of a four acre floating deck, and a pier or jetty. In 1856 the railway was opened, and the docks and lighthouse followed a year later (Whellan 1860). The new well-planned town of Silloth sprung up around the dock, and rapidly gained importance as a shipping port. It also became a popular tourist destination, due to its views of the Scottish and Cumbrian mountains (Sites 29-34).
- 3.2.29 In June 1939, as part of the Royal Airforce Expansion Scheme, Silloth Aerodrome was opened, in order to meet the demand of storing newly manufactured aircraft (Barnes nd). The aerodrome directly adjoins the development area; several WWII pillboxes were recorded during a walkover survey in 2003 (OA North 2004; Sites **38-41**) and these are frequently found around the town. In 1943, the airfield became an Operating Training Unit, and became famous for developing the 'Silloth Trainer', the first flight simulator. After the war, the airfield was used as an equipment store and for the scrapping of aircraft. The airfield was closed in 1963, and the Solway Lido and adjacent caravan park were partially built over it.

### 4. ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The assessment results are based on primary documents, most notably maps, and on the secondary sources used in *Section 3.2*. The results are presented according to the archive from which they were consulted. There are 27 HER records for the study area around the site, and extra information was gathered from the immediate vicinity, defined as a 1km radius centred on the site. A full list of the sites identified by the assessment is given in the Gazetteer in *Appendix 1*. A list of 6 historic buildings is also provided in the Gazetteer.

## 4.2 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER)

- 4.2.1 **HER:** there were 27 HER records within the study area, which is defined as a 1km radius around the site (Fig 2). These include 1 entry of prehistoric date, 6 entries of Romano-British date, 1 entry of medieval date, and 19 entries of post-medieval date. A full description can be found in *Appendix 1*.
- 4.2.2 **Listed Buildings:** the listed building records show 6 buildings within a 1km radius of the site. All the buildings relate to the later expansion of Silloth after its resurgence as a holiday destination after the 1860's, and includes a number of hotels. A full description can be found in *Appendix 1*.

## 4.3 CUMBRIA RECORD OFFICE (CARLISLE)

4.3.1 The Carlisle Record Office in Cumbria (CRO(C)) was consulted to collate maps for regression analysis of the study area. Information from primary and secondary sources, including archaeological or historical journals, has been incorporated into the historic background (Section 3.2).

#### 4.4 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- 4.4.1 As part of the documentary search at the Cumbria Record Office in Carlisle (CRO(C)), an in-depth scan of the early maps for Silloth was undertaken. A cartographic date range of between 1868 and 1925 was obtained. The development area will now be discussed with reference to these early sources, noting any changes to the development area within this period.
- 4.4.2 *Ordnance Survey Map Cumbria 1868 First Edition 25" to 1 mile* (Fig 3): the map shows the development area as two fields with entirely different boundaries. The fields depicted extend north-west as long sub-rectangular enclosures from a stream which crosses under the Wigton to Silloth road; the long and thin nature of the field, and vaguely sinuous form of the boundaries, could suggest enclosed strip fields of medieval ridge and furrow, but this is not by any means definitive. The north-western field boundary crosses the development area and corresponds exactly with the identified cropmarks on the aerial photographs (Section 4.5). Elsewhere on the map,

- Silloth Farm is named as 'Old Silloth', which could suggest the farm occupies the site of the original (perhaps ?medieval?) settlement, though again this is speculative at best. A gravel pit is shown to the rear of the farm, and a well-house is shown adjacent to the bridge crossing the stream towards the north of the figure.
- 4.4.3 **Ordnance Survey Map Cumbria 1901 Second Edition 25" to 1 mile** (Fig 4): the map depicts the boundaries as changed, and rationalised into straighter or new subdivisions, or removed entirely. The farm is still depicted as 'Old Silloth', and the gravel pit to the rear is now marked 'Old Gravel Pit'. The bridge crossing the stream on the Silloth to Wigton Road is named as 'Barracks Bridge', and the well-house is no longer shown.
- 4.4.4 *Ordnance Survey Map Cumbria 1925 Third Edition 25" to 1 mile* (Fig 5): the map depicts the development area as lying within a large field, with no field boundaries around its edges. The farm is still depicted as 'Old Silloth', and the gravel pit to the rear is no longer named. The bridge crossing the stream on the Silloth to Wigton Road is still named as 'Barracks Bridge'.

### 4.5 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

4.5.1 Aerial photographs pertaining to the study area were provided by Marc Johnstone of Heritage Media, and were studied at the NPA offices at Nenthead (some reproduced in Plates 1-2). The pictures of the development area clearly show the road cropmarks (Site 7) crossing the development area.

### 4.6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

- 4.6.1 There have been nine archaeological investigations within 5 km of the development area.
- A field south-east of Silloth Farm was partially excavated in 1977, at the instigation of the Department of the Environment and prior to the construction of housing, by Nick Higham and Barri Jones (Higham and Jones 1983; Site 6). The site had been located by aerial photography in 1975 as three sides of an enclosure on a raised sand bank. The excavations identified a well-preserved Romano-British farmstead in good condition. The site defences consisted of a single bank and ditch, with traces of an outer bank on the east side; a quarry pit had also been dug to provide material for the bank. The defences were of one phase, dated within the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. The entrance lay to the north-east, and evidence of cobbling survived in the vicinity. A total of 150 structural postholes were identified in the interior, though no clear building plans were observed, possibly due to multiple rebuilds. A field ditch runs north-west from the site, and was identified as being contemporary with the enclosure. The excavations produced 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century pottery and iron objects (*ibid*).
- 4.6.3 In 1976, the Roman coastal palisade and road ditches (Sites 7 and 8; Plates 1 and 2), identified by aerial photography in 1975, were excavated by Barri Jones on the playing fields of Solway School (Jones 1982), though the exact location of the trench is unknown. Excavation uncovered a clay-filled bedding trench of 0.4m width, excavated to 0.5m deep. The clay showed evidence of stakeholes within it, from which were

recovered Roman nails. This was interpreted as a palisade slot supporting a wattle fence, forming part of the Roman coastal defences. Slots were also excavated across the Roman road ditches, though little information is given regarding these excavations. In 1994, Woolliscroft excavated in the same area ('a little to the north') prior to the installation of a water main (Figure 6). The excavations uncovered one of the road ditches (the northern) excavated by Jones, and showed it to have a V-shaped profile. The southern ditch was largely destroyed at this point. No road surface was seen, and the palisade slots were reinterpreted as being land drains (Woolliscroft and Jones 2004).

- 4.6.4 In November 2003, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation on land to the south-west, at Solway School, Silloth (Jones 2003). The development area had been suggested as the location of Milefortlet 11, part of the Roman coastal defences; four trenches were excavated, but no significant archaeological deposits were identified. In November 2005, further work was undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd at the school, in the form of a desk-based assessment and evaluation (Dodd 2005a). A single trench was excavated adjacent to the school buildings, but again, no significant archaeology was uncovered.
- 4.6.5 In January 2004, OA North undertook a desk-based assessment and rapid identification survey on land 100m south-east of the development area, at Solway Lido, Silloth (OA North 2004). The survey identified significant remains of 20<sup>th</sup> century pillboxes on the site, in addition to modern linear features (Sites **38-41**). Subsequently, in March 2004, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd excavated eleven trenches in the same area (Site **42**). The excavations uncovered a series of substantial ditches, crossing the site in an east-west and north-south direction. There were also a series of further smaller ditches in the north-west corner of the site, which were interpreted as palisade slots. Three ditches were found to contain significant quantities of slag within their upper fills, and quantities of charred grain in their lower fills (Jones 2004). Radiocarbon dating dated the ditches to 1000AD.
- 4.6.6 In the 1990s, Lancaster University Archaeological Unit investigated the Holm Cultram Sea Dyke, on land c2km to the north-east, at Skinburness (Fletcher and Miller 1997). The work comprised combined desk-top assessment, evaluation, and watching brief during reconstruction work. The excavations identified a possible medieval phase adjacent to the village, but concluded that most of the dyke had been reconstructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century. In November 2005, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Chichester Hall, Skinburness (Dodd 2005b). The development area lies 150m to the south of the location of Milefortlet 9, part of the Roman coastal defences, and in 1954, sherds of Roman pottery were recovered adjacent to the development area. A single trench was excavated in the grounds of the hall, but no significant archaeological deposits were identified.
- 4.6.7 At the time of writing, OA North are excavating the Roman cremation cemetery at Beckfoot, and have uncovered a number of cremations and associated pyre debris, as well as ditch features. The company will also shortly be undertaking further work on the fort at Bowness-on-Solway. These works are ongoing and at present unpublished (Healey *pers. comm.*).

### 5. EVALUATION RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The machine stripping of the trenches, which were subsequently excavated by hand down to the natural subsoil, permitted an examination of the archaeological remains within the development site (Plate 3). All trenches locations are depicted in Figure 6; detailed plans and sections for Trenches 4, 6, 18 and 20, are depicted in Figures 7 to 10. Where no features of archaeological interest were located, a trench record sheet was compiled, and context numbers were not issued.

## **5.2** TRENCH 1

- 5.2.1 Trench 1 was 30m long by 1.80m wide and was orientated in a north-east by southwest direction. The trench was positioned in the north-western corner of the evaluation area. The maximum depth of the trench was approximately 0.78m.
- 5.2.2 The machine striping removed 0.28m of topsoil, consisting of mid greyish brown clayey silt. This overlay a deposit of yellowish orange very loose sand, approximately 0.18m in depth, mostly likely formed as a result of blown sand from the nearby beach. This wind-blown deposit overlay the subsoil, which consisted of slightly orange clayey silt 0.3m in depth. The earliest horizon encountered was sealed beneath the subsoil, and consisted of an indurated brownish orange clayey sand, which was clearly natural in origin.
- 5.2.3 No finds were recovered from the trench, and there were no archaeological features observed in the base or sections of the trench.

#### **5.3** TRENCH 2

- 5.3.1 Trench 2 was 29m long and 1.80m wide, and orientated in an east-west direction. It was machine excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m. The trench was located in the north-west corner of the proposed development area.
- 5.3.2 The machine stripping removed 0.17m of topsoil, consisting of loose dark greyish brown silty sand, moderately compacted, with occasional small rounded stones. This overlay a layer of pale greyish orange very loose sand, most likely the same windblown deposit noted in Trench 1. Beneath the sand layer, the subsoil, comprising of a firm mottled mid grey sandy clay, was observed, extending to a depth of 0.3m. Below the subsoil, the natural geology consisted of firm pinkish red-brown silty clay with frequent sub-rounded stones up to 0.05m in diameter.
- 5.3.3 No evidence of any archaeological features was found in the base or sections of Trench 2, and no artefacts were recovered during the excavation.

### **5.4** TRENCH **3**

- 5.4.1 Trench 3 was 30m in length by 1.80m wide, orientated in a north-south direction. It was machine excavated to a maximum depth of 0.90m. The trench was located in the southern extent of the proposed development area.
- 5.4.2 The trench was machine stripped of topsoil, which consisted of moderately compacted greyish brown silty sand with frequent angular stones less than 0.05m in diameter. This deposit overlay 0.40m of subsoil/colluvium consisting of moderately compacted mid to dark grey-brown clay sand with occasional inclusions of rounded stones measuring 0.03m in diameter. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, a firm pinkish red-brown silty clay with frequent sub-rounded stones up to 0.05m in diameter.
- 5.4.3 At the southern end of the trench a ditch, measuring 0.83m in width and 0.60m in depth, running in a north-west by south-east direction was noted, truncating the natural. Due to this area of the trench being largely unworkable because of water and hard frost, this feature was excavated partially by machine in an attempt to give a broad characterisation and date. It showed that the upper fills of the ditch, comprising redeposited sand, were re-cut for the insertion of a later post medieval land drain. The drain consisted of a small red ceramic pipe approximately 0.15m wide. Another ditch was located towards the centre of the trench, aligned almost parallel to the first and orientated north-west south-east. Ditch [147] measured 1.3m wide and had an average depth of 0.50m with gently sloping sides that led to a flat base and was subsequently filled with (146). The ditch may form part of a north-west south-east return of a ditch noted in other trenches, and was also noted in Trench 4. Together both ditches most likely represent post-medieval land boundaries, which were subsequently re-used as a ready-made construction trench for the insertion of land drains. These features indicate post-medieval agricultural activity in the evaluation area.
- 5.4.4 No artefacts were recovered during the excavation of this trench.

#### **5.5** TRENCH 4

- 5.5.1 Trench 4 was 30m in length by 1.80m wide and orientated in an east-west direction (Figure 7). The trench was positioned in the north-western edge of the proposed development site to locate a possible Roman road that was initially identified from aerial photographs of the site and which formed part of the Cumbria coastal defences during the Roman period (HER 9604).
- 5.5.2 The trench was machined twice; initial machining revealed topsoil (100), subsoil (101) and spreads of sand, which were subsequently excavated down to the natural horizon (102). The topsoil consisted of friable, mid red-brown silty sand with occasional subrounded stones less than 0.03m in diameter, and was approximately 0.20m deep in section. Underneath the topsoil a deposit of firm, mixed greyish brown sandy clay, 0.30m deep, was initially identified as the natural subsoil. However this layer was subsequently identified as a dump of redeposited natural, which local knowledge states was due to imported material being used to level the ground in the 1950s (Finlayson

- *pers. comm.*). Beneath the subsoil, the natural horizon consisted of firm mid orangey yellow clay with occasional stones and fragments of manganese.
- 5.5.3 Three linear ditches were revealed, truncating the natural; [103], [105] and [107] (Plate 4). These were all located in the north-west corner of the trench; [103] and [107] relate to cut [147] in Trench 3. All three features were filled with a very compact mid to dark grey silty clay, with occasional sub-rounded stone ((104), (106) and (108)). Ditch [103] was possibly the last in the sequence of the three ditches, as it appears to truncate feature [105], which lies at right angles to it. Shallow linear [107] continues east from the end of [103], and is also likely to be related it, possibly a truncated extension to the ditch.
- 5.5.4 No artefacts were recovered during the excavation of the trench

## **5.6** TRENCH **5**

- 5.6.1 Trench 5 was approximately 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated in a northwest by south-east direction. It was located in the southern area of the proposed development site. The maximum depth of the trench was 0.50m.
- 5.6.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal four distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil consisted of mid-brown clayey silt with occasional small rounded inclusions, 0.02m in diameter, fairly compacted and approximately 0.19m deep. Underneath the topsoil was the subsoil, which was excavated to 0.3m in depth and consisted of mid-brown clayey sand/clayey silt mix, fairly compacted with frequent sub-rounded-rounded stones, which averaged 0.06m in diameter. This deposit is similar to that seen in Trench 4 which formed as a result of levelling the ground in the 1950's with redeposited natural (Finlayson *pers. comm.*). The natural drift geology, underlying the subsoil, comprised a mid greyish orange clayey sand with frequent stone inclusions, mostly small in size.
- 5.6.3 Towards the north-west corner of the trench an area of hard grey silty clay, measuring c5m in length, was exposed and excavated by hand to a depth of 0.3m. It proved to be naturally formed, most likely a shallow pond, which possibly dried up when the land was drained.
- 5.6.4 No evidence of any archaeological features was found in the base of Trench 5, and no artefacts were recovered during the excavation.

#### **5.7** TRENCH 6

- 5.7.1 Trench 6 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located in the south-east corner of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.80m (Figure 8).
- 5.7.2 The trench was machine stripped of topsoil, which consisted of moderately compacted greyish brown silty sand with frequent angular stones less than 0.05m in diameter. This deposit overlay 0.40m of subsoil/colluvium consisting of moderately compacted mid to dark grey-brown clay sand with occasional inclusions of rounded stones measuring 0.03m in diameter. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, a firm

- pinkish red-brown silty clay with frequent sub-rounded stones up to 0.05m in diameter.
- 5.7.3 A number of archaeological features were observed truncating the natural, and these were excavated by hand; the features are described from east to west. At the eastern end, cut [113] was observed. This ditch was aligned north-south, and had a width of 1.80m, and a maximum depth of 0.70m (Plate 5). The ditch extended beyond the limits of the excavation to the north and south; however, it appeared to form a right angle with a further ditch, visible just inside the trench and extending east beyond the trench limits.
- 5.7.4 The ditch contained several fills ((109) (112)); the primary fill (112), a moderately compacted mid-grey fine clayey silt, appeared to have originated from the gradual erosion of the ditch sides. The secondary fill, context [111], consisted of a light grey silty clay and contained large quantities of charred grain (Section 6.2). The tertiary fill (109), mixed light grey and mid orangey yellow clays, was possibly deliberate backfill due to its depth. Fragments of pottery retrieved from the upper fill (109) can be broadly dated to the late medieval period, circa the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (see Section 6.1). The charred grain occurred as wheat and oats of roughly the same quantities, and is likely to originate from processing of cereals, probably during the drying process. The implication from the deposit is for processing to be occurring adjacent to, or in the immediate vicinity of, the ditch feature, and implies the ditch is close to a focus of medieval settlement.
- 5.7.5 Approximately 1m to the west of cut [113], an irregular shallow depression [116] was observed. Due to the limit of excavation, cut [116] was not fully exposed. The feature was 2.50m wide and has a maximum depth of 0.28m. It was filled with two deposits, (114) and (115), a light greyish brown and a mid brown silty clay respectively. The deposits appear to have formed naturally. Several fragment of medieval pottery were recovered from (114), which imply a date within the late medieval period, circa the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries (Section 6.1). The shallow gentle U-shaped profile of this feature possibly implies a pit, however it could be the remnants of a tree, which rotted away in situ.
- 5.7.6 Immediately west of [116] was a modern service trench [129], orientated north-south and with a width of 2.50m. This service ran towards several manhole covers at the eastern extent of the development area; the trench was not excavated. The service trench [129] truncated a sequence of ditches further to the west (Plate 6). Ditch [133] was aligned north-south with a width of 2.40m and a maximum 0.80m deep, filled with (134) and (135), a mid grey clay and mid grey sandy clay respectively. This ditch in turn cuts a further earlier ditch [131], which was 1.50m wide and approximately 0.80m deep. The latter ditch was filled with (132), a firm mid-grey silty clay. None of the deposits produced dating evidence. Deposit (134) was sampled, and the results are summarised in Section 6.2. As both ditches are of similar profile and depth, potentially they both perform the same purpose, namely field boundary ditches, with [133] a recut of [131].

### **5.8** TRENCH 7

- 5.8.1 Trench 7 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-west-by south-east. It was located in the south-east corner of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.56m.
- 5.8.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal three distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil consisted of fairly compacted mid-greyish brown silt containing little or no inclusions, approximately 0.18m deep. Underneath the topsoil was the subsoil, 0.3m in depth, which consisted of mid-brown clayey sand, with occasional sub-rounded-rounded stones, averaging 0.04m in diameter. The natural drift geology underlying the subsoil comprised a mid greyish orange clayey sand with frequent stone inclusions, mostly small in size.
- 5.8.3 No archaeological features were found in the base of Trench 7, and no artefacts were recovered.

### **5.9** TRENCH **8**

- 5.9.1 Trench 8 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-south. It was located in the south-east corner of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.45m.
- 5.9.2 Trench 8 comprised of topsoil, which consisted of moderately compacted greyish brown silty with no inclusions and approximately 0.19m deep. This deposit overlay 0.40m of subsoil/colluvium consisting of moderately compacted mid to dark- brown clayey sand with occasional inclusions of rounded stones measuring 0.03m in diameter. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, comprising an orangeish grey clayey sand with little or no inclusions.
- 5.9.3 No archaeological features were observed in the base of Trench 8, and no artefacts were recovered during the excavation.

### 5.10 TRENCH 9

- 5.10.1 Trench 9 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-west by south-east. It was located in the southern corner of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.26m.
- 5.10.2 Trench 9 comprised of topsoil, which consisted of moderately compacted mid greyish brown silt with no inclusions and was approximately 0.28m deep. This deposit overlay 0.40m of subsoil, consisting of compacted mid orangey brown clayey silt. The depth of the subsoil was 0.33m deep in section. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, comprising an orangeish grey clayey sand with little or no inclusions. A ditch, measuring c 1.8m in width and 4.75m in length, was observed cutting across the northern end of the trench, but only the eastern side of the cut was seen; the ditch was filled with redeposited sand, and was not fully excavated, as it had been examined in

- detail in Trenches 18 and 20, where it was demonstrated to be a probable post-medieval field boundary.
- 5.10.3 No archaeological features were observed in the base of Trench 9, and no artefacts were recovered.

#### 5.11 TRENCH 10

- 5.11.1 Trench 10 was 28m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-west by south-east. It was located in the southern extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m.
- 5.11.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal three distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil, 0.15m deep, consisted of pale grey sandy clay, well compacted with occasional small rounded inclusions, 0.07m in diameter. Underneath the topsoil was the subsoil, averaging 0.40m in depth and consisting of mid-brownish grey clayey sand, moderately compacted with occasional, stone inclusions. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, which varied in colour from mid greyish brown to greyish yellow, mostly sandy clay in texture, however towards the north-east end of the trench it changed to banded mottled orange clay. Evidence of modern intrusions cutting the topsoil and subsoil were noted in the trench. Towards the north-east corner, were two red ceramic field drains and in the south-west corner, a ditch 1.90m wide and 0.70m deep was excavated by machine revealing a ceramic pipe at its base. This ditch aligns with the ditch [123] in Trench 18.
- 5.11.3 No archaeological artefacts were recovered from this trench.

#### 5.12 TRENCH 11

- 5.12.1 Trench 11 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located in the eastern corner of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.78m.
- 5.12.2 The trench was machine stripped, removing 0.25m of dark brownish grey sandy silt topsoil. Beneath this was a deposit of wind blown sand, pale cream in colour with orange iron staining; this layer was a maximum of 0.45m deep, decreasing to 0.25 at the western extent of the trench. This layer overlay a mixed deposit of bluish grey clayey silt subsoil, excavated to 0.28m and most likely derived from marshy ground conditions. The natural beneath the subsoil was a manganese-rich mottled grey clay, changing to pure orange clay in places.
- 5.12.3 No evidence of any archaeological features was found in the base of Trench 11, and no artefacts were recovered.

#### 5.13 TRENCH 12

5.13.1 Trench 12 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located in the eastern corner of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.95m.

- 5.13.2 The trench was machine stripped, removing 0.30m of loosely compacted mid greyish brown silty sand topsoil, containing occasional small sub rounded stones, approximately 0.05m in diameter. Beneath this was a layer of mixed subsoil/sand, and loosely compacted pale greyish yellow sand, up to 0.20m deep; no inclusions were noted. The natural horizon below the subsoil consisted of well compacted clay, varying in colour from mottled grey to orange. This contained frequent small inclusions.
- 5.13.3 No archaeological features were observed in the base of Trench 12, and no artefacts were recovered.

### 5.14 TRENCH 13

- 5.14.1 Trench 13 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-north-east-by south-south west. It was located in the western side of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.20m.
- 5.14.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal three distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil, 0.30m deep, consisted of dark brownish grey sandy silt, with no inclusions. Beneath this was an undulating deposit, broadly 0.35m deep, of wind blown silty sand, with iron leaching to the base. The sand overlay a pale bluish grey friable clayey silt deposit, 0.55m deep in section, which was the same dump of redeposited natural seen in other trenches in this area of the site. Underlying this dumped deposit, the natural was a pale blue and orange clay, changing to a dark orange manganese rich clay at the northern end of the trench.
- 5.14.3 No archaeological features were observed in the base of Trench 13, and no artefacts were recovered.

### 5.15 TRENCH 14

- 5.15.1 Trench 14 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-east-by south-west. It was located in the western side of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m. A sondage was placed in the south-west corner of the trench which measured 2m wide by 1.45m deep.
- 5.15.2 The trench was machine stripped to a maximum depth of 0.70m, revealing three distinct layers. The topsoil was 0.30m thick, consisting of dark greyish brown sandy silt. Below this was the subsoil, up to 0.35m deep and consisting of mid greyish brown sandy silt which in turn overlaid the natural soil horizon.
- 5.15.3 Several modern feature were identified truncating the natural, and were excavated. A circular pit, 0.90m wide by 0.20m deep yielded modern 20th century pottery from its backfill. Immediately to the north of the pit was a large tree bowl filled with dark grey silts. Further south towards the middle of the trench a bright yellow stretch of sand was excavated and it proved to be the location of an east-west running field boundary, clipped in Trench 9 and excavated in Trenches 18 and 20. The ditch was partially excavated to 0.70m in width and up to 0.30m deep. The sand was loosely compacted.

5.15.4 Several sherds of pottery were recovered from this trench, most of which were 20th century in date. These were discarded on site.

## 5.16 TRENCH 15

- 5.16.1 Trench 15 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-east by south-west. It was located in the eastern side of the proposed development site. Most of the trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m. A sondage was placed in the south-west corner of the trench which measured 2.5m wide by 1m deep.
- 5.16.2 The trench was machine stripped to a maximum depth of 0.60m, revealing three deposits. The topsoil was 0.15m thick, and consisted of mid greyish brown clayey sand with occasional small inclusions of stone. Below this was the subsoil, up to 0.40m deep, and consisting of mid orange brown clayey sand, which in turn overlaid the natural soil horizon, which consisted of very mixed clayey sand, varying in colour from mid brown to grey.
- 5.16.3 At the south-western extent of the trench two features were excavated by hand. One proved to be an irregular shaped, tree or small bush bole, filled with mid brown silts. The other feature located approximately 1m to the south-west of the tree bole was a patch of light grey silt. It was similar to that seen in Trench 5, being an area of boggy ground or a pond, which had naturally silted up over a period of time. Further machining showed that this grey deposit was approximately 0.30m deep, and immediately overlaid the natural clay. Also noted in the north-east corner of the trench were two post medieval red ceramic field drains.
- 5.16.4 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

### 5.17 TRENCH 16

- 5.17.1 Trench 16 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located in the eastern side of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.46m.
- 5.17.2 The trench was machine stripped to a maximum depth of 0.46m. The topsoil consisted of a homogenous mid-greyish brown silt with occasional small rounded stones, up to 0.10 m deep in section. The topsoil overlay the natural subsoil; a mid brown clayey sand, up to 0.25m deep. The natural drift geology, underlying the subsoil, comprised an orangey grey clayey sand with occasional small stone inclusions. The natural was cut by a single land drain towards the eastern end of the trench, running in a north-east south-west direction.
- 5.17.3 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

#### 5.18 TRENCH 17

5.18.1 Trench 17 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-west by south-east. It was located in the eastern side of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.50m.

- 5.18.2 The machining revealed three layers, topsoil, subsoil and the natural soil horizon; (see (100) and (102) in Trench 4 for soil descriptions). Two archaeological features were observed in the south-east corner of the trench. A possibly natural linear [139] running almost north-west by south-east along the trench was excavated by hand. It proved to be 0.90m wide and 0.10m deep with gradual sloping sides that lead to a flat base. The fill of [139], (138) was made up of fine grained silty clay which could have formed as a result of water action indicating that the feature was natural rather than being man made (Section 6.2). This feature was subsequently truncated by a post medieval field drain [141], which was deliberately backfilled with mixed redeposited natural (140).
- 5.18.3 One small sherd of degraded 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century domestic pottery was recovered from the fill of the land drain.

### 5.19 TRENCH 18

- 5.19.1 Trench 18 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west (Figure 9). It was located in the eastern side of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.76m. A sondage was placed at the eastern end of the trench, measuring 2m wide by 1m deep, and a further sondage was placed in the centre of the trench, measuring 3m wide by up to 2m deep.
- 5.19.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal three distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil, 0.16m deep, consisted of mid to dark brown clayey sand, well compacted with occasional small rounded inclusions, 0.02m in diameter. Underneath the topsoil was the subsoil, up to 0.55m deep, which consisted of mottled mid-grey sandy clay, moderately compacted with occasional stone inclusions. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, which varied in colour from mid brownish yellow, mostly sandy clay in texture.
- 5.19.3 In the eastern part of the trench, two linear ditches were revealed. Ditch [119] initially was thought to be have been formed naturally and filled with wind blown sand (118). However subsequent machining in adjacent trenches proved that the ditch was a re-cut of an earlier ditch, not seen at this stage. Another ditch [123] was located 2.50m to the west of [119] and aligned approximately parallel to it. Ditch [123] had a width of 1.80m wide, a depth of in excess of 0.75m and contained a series of distinct fills: (120), a mid brownish grey sandy silt; (121), a loose mid-grey sandy silt; and (122), mid grey clayey sand (Plate 7). A small north-south aligned cut [125] was identified at the base of cut [123], clearly contemporary with it. This cut contained a red ceramic field drain and was backfilled with redeposited natural, (124).
- 5.19.4 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

#### 5.20 TRENCH 19

5.20.1 Trench 19 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-south. It was located almost in the middle of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.05m

- 5.20.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal three distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil, 0.40m deep, consisted of a light grey silty sand, loosely compacted with occasional small rounded inclusions. Underneath the topsoil was the subsoil, up to 0.30m deep, which consisted of light orangey sand, loosely compacted with occasional, stone inclusions. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, which varied in colour from a mix of grey and orange bands of well-compacted clay. Evidence of modern intrusions cutting the topsoil and subsoil were noted in the trench and were identified as east-west aligned post medieval land drains.
- 5.20.3 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

## 5.21 TRENCH 20

- 5.21.1 Trench 20 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located at the northern extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.60m (Figure 10).
- 5.21.2 The trench was machine stripped to reveal three distinct layers within the trench. The topsoil, 0.22m deep, consisted of mid brownish clayey sand, which was moderately compacted. Underneath the topsoil was the subsoil, up to 0.35m deep, consisting of mid-greyish brown clayey sand, moderately compacted with occasional stone inclusions. Beneath the subsoil was the natural geology, which varied in colour from mid orange to grey, clayey sand.
- 5.21.3 Two linear ditches were revealed in the eastern end of the trench, truncating the natural, which proved to be the same ditches identified in Trench 18. Ditch [145], the easternmost of the two ditches, was 2.50m wide by a maximum depth of 1.50m, with gradual sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled by (144), a compacted mid-grey sandy clay, excavated to a depth of 0.81m. This latter fill had been cut by a recut of the ditch, [119], which had a steep-sided V-shaped profile and measured 2.14m in width by 1.36m in depth. It was filled by a deposit of primary silting (143) at its base, consisting of a mid-grey compacted clayey silt, 0.08m deep. Above this was a deposit of waterborne silting (142), comprising a compact mid-greyish blue clay visible to a depth of 0.72m. This was overlain by (118), a deposit of loose wind-blown midorangey yellow sand, to a maximum depth of 0.55m (deposit (142) was sampled for environmental data, and is discussed in Section 6.2). To the west of this feature, ditch [123] was again identified, with a width of 1.00m wide, and a depth of in excess of 0.75m. It was filled by (122), a mid grey clayey sand. The small north-south aligned cut [125] was again identified at the base of cut [123], though excess water-logging prevented its full excavation; probing with a road iron did succeed in identifying the red ceramic field drain, however.
- 5.21.4 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

### 5.22 TRENCH 21

5.22.1 Trench 21 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-east by south-west. It was located at the eastern extent of the proposed development site. The trench was

- moved slightly to the south due to a broken land drain flooding the original attempt to machine the trench. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.80m.
- 5.22.2 The topsoil, a clayey sand 0.30m deep, was mid to dark grey brown in colour with occasional mid to dark orange flecks. Beneath this was the subsoil up to 0.25m thick consisting of sandy soil, greyish brown in colour with orange flecks. This overlay the natural, which varied in colour from mid brownish yellow, mostly sandy clay in texture. One land drain running in a north-west by south east direction was noted in the middle of the trench, containing stones rather than a ceramic drain.
- 5.22.3 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

#### 5.23 TRENCH 22

- 5.23.1 Trench 22 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located at the northern extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.69m.
- 5.23.2 The topsoil was approximately 0.23m in depth and made up of mid greyish brown sandy silt. This layer overlay a yellow sand deposit, which was 0.20m deep in the section. This in turn overlay the subsoil, which consisted of loosely compacted brownish orange sand of approximately 0.17m depth. The natural consisted of light to mid orangey sand with numerous inclusions.
- 5.24.3 The field boundary ditches, first identified in Trench 18, continued through the middle of the trench on the same north-south alignment (numbered in Trench 18 as [119], [123], [145]). All these features were fully excavated by machine to a maximum depth of 2.50m. This demonstrated that ditch [123] contained the same red ceramic drain seen in Trench 18 and 20, and that the re-cut of [145], [119], was still present. Towards the western end of the trench, a red ceramic field drain was noted running in a east-west direction.
- 5.23.4 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

#### 5.24 TRENCH 23

5.24.1 Trench 23 was initially to be placed in the northern part of the development site. Following discussions with the Assistant Archaeologist for Cumbria (Parsons *pers. comm*), the trench was not excavated, due to a modern pond occupying the position of the trench.

#### 5.25 TRENCH 24

- 5.25.1 Trench 24 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-west by south-east It was located at the northern extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.79m.
- 5.25.2 At the north west corner of the trench, a large section of extant reinforced concrete was observed beneath the topsoil, which was likely to have formed part of a large

structure (Plate 8). Due to the limit of the excavated trench it was impossible to ascertain a function or date for the feature, but it appeared to be the edge of a large rectangular tank, and probably relates to the use of the area as an airfield in WWII. The rest of the trench was relatively undisturbed and showed that topsoil was 0.30m deep, mid greyish brown in colour. This layer overlay the subsoil which was up to 0.39m deep and made up of mixed slightly orange to brown sandy clay. The underlying natural was mid orangey brown in colour, compacted clayey sand in texture.

5.25.3 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

#### 5.26 TRENCH 25

- 5.26.1 Trench 25 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located at the northern extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.90m.
- 5.26.2 The topsoil was approximately 0.30m in depth, made up of mid greyish brown sandy silt with no noted inclusions. This in turn overlaid the subsoil, which consisted of loosely compacted orangey grey clayey silt, approximately 0.31m in depth. The underlying natural consisted of light to mid orangey sand with numerous inclusions up to 0.08m in diameter
- 5.26.3 The field boundary ditches first identified in Trench 18 continued to run through the middle of the trench on the same alignment (numbered in Trench 18 as [119], [123] and [145]). Both features were fully excavated by machine to a maximum depth of 2.50m. This demonstrated that ditch [123] contained the same red ceramic drain seen in Trench 18 and 20 and that the re-cut of [145] was still visible present in this trench. Towards the western end of the trench, a red ceramic field drain was noted running in an east-west direction.
- 5.26.4 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

## 5.27 TRENCH 26

- 5.27.1 Trench 26 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-west by south-east It was located to the north-west extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.62m.
- 5.27.2 The trench was machine stripped and revealed four main deposits. The topsoil, a mid greyish brown sandy silt, was approximately 0.20m deep, and overlay a band of wind blown sand, which was noted in several other trenches on the west side of the development site. The wind blown sand overlay the sandy subsoil, which was greyish brown in colour with orange flecks, and was 0.30m deep. This in turn overlaid the natural, a mid orange to grey, clayey sand. Towards the north-east of the trench another field drain was noted crossing the trench from east to west.
- 5.27.3 No archaeological finds were recovered from the trench.

### 5.28 TRENCH 27

- 5.28.1 Trench 27 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-south. It was located to the north western extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m. The northern end of the trench was not fully observed as it was full of water, due to a land drain being exposed during machine excavation.
- 5.28.2 Machining showed that topsoil, a sandy silt, was 0.27m deep, and a mid greyish brown in colour. This layer overlaid the subsoil which was up to 0.35m deep and made up of mixed slightly orange to brown sandy clay. The underlying natural was mid orangey brown in colour, compacted clayey sand in texture.
- 5.28.3 No evidence of any archaeological features was found in the base of Trench 27, and no artefacts were recovered during the excavation.

#### 5.29 TRENCH 28

- 5.29.1 Trench 28 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated north-east by south-west. It was located to the western extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.65m.
- 5.29.2 Machine excavation and hand-cleaning of the trench showed that the topsoil was 0.27m deep, and a greyish brown colour. Beneath this was a layer of yellowish brown wind blown sand, which was 0.20m deep. This layer overlay the subsoil which was up to 0.18m deep and made up of mixed slightly orange to brown sandy clay. The underlying natural was mid orangey yellow clay.
- 5.29.3 No evidence of any archaeological features was found in the base of Trench 28, and no artefacts were recovered.

### 5.30 TRENCH 29

- 5.30.1 Trench 29 was 30m long and 1.80m wide and was orientated east-west. It was located at the western extent of the proposed development site. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m.
- 5.30.2 Machine excavation and hand-cleaning of the trench showed that the topsoil was 0.20m deep, and a greyish brown colour. This layer overlaid a subsoil which was made up of mixed slightly orange to brown sandy clay. The underlying natural was mid orangey yellow clay.
- 5.30.3 No evidence of any archaeological features was found in the base of Trench 29, and no artefacts were recovered.

### 6. FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

### 6.1 FINDS

- 6.1.1 **Pottery:** a total of 33 sherds of pottery were recovered from the evaluation, 14 of which were medieval in date. The rest were a mix of modern and 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> century domestic pottery.
- 6.1.2 The medieval pottery recovered from (109), Trench 6 was made up of 1 sherd of red gritty ware, 3 sherds of partially reduced greyware, 1 sherd of reduced greyware and 3 sherds of brown glazed reduced greyware. In (114), Trench 6 there were 5 medieval pottery sherds recovered all from different vessels. The sherds consisted of 1 sherd of green glazed reduced grey ware, 1 jug handle sherd from a green glazed partially reduced grey ware, 1 sherd of green glazed oxidised red earthenware and 2 sherds of red gritty ware. The remaining 2 sherds of medieval pottery were recovered as residual unstratified finds from the topsoil during the initial machine stripping of Trench 6, and consisted of 1 rim sherd of red gritty ware and 1 sherd of partially reduced greyware. All of the medieval pottery recovered can be dated to around the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 6.1.3 All the remaining pottery recovered was from the unstratified post medieval topsoil build-up found during the machine stripping of Trenches 6 and 14. These consist of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century domestic pottery including earthenwares, stonewares and 1 sherd of porcelain. 18 of the sherds recovered were from Trench 14 and the remaining 1 from Trench 6.
- 6.1.4 The medieval pottery sherds, all coming from such a localized area and being relatively unabraded, may point to a settlement focus adjacent to their location, though material could have been transported and dumped into ditches as part of the manuring process. However, the general absence of material in the surrounding trenches may negate this, and the additional evidence supplied by the environmental data strengthens the probability of there having been a medieval settlement nearby.
- 6.1.5 **Glass:** 13 sherds of glass were recovered from the unstratified post medieval topsoil build-up. All the glass recovered was from Trench 14 and consisted of 3 sherds of window glass, 9 sherds of clear bottle glass and 1 complete bottle stopper. The date for all the glass is modern and for domestic use.
- 6.1.6 The remainder of the finds recovered were made up of fragments of Fe and Pb recovered from the residual unstratified post-medieval topsoil build up. These are modern in date and of no archaeological interest.

### **6.2** ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

6.2.1 *Introduction:* within the trenches excavated, some 5 contexts were considered worth sampling. All the samples came from ditches, (138) possibly being natural. All the whole earth samples were selected for processing in order to assess their environmental potential. This will help provide further information as to the

- depositional processes involved in their formation. The methodology employed required that the whole earth samples be broken down and split into their various different components. This was achieved by a combination of water washing and flotation. The recovered remains can then be assessed for content.
- 6.2.2 Flotation separates the organic, floating fraction of the sample from the heavier mineral and finds content of sands, silts, clays, stones, artefacts and waterlogged material. Heavy soil and sediment content measuring less than 1mm falls through the retentive mesh to settle on the bottom of the tank. Flotation produces a 'flot' and a 'residue' for examination, whilst the heavier sediment retained in the tank is discarded. The method relies purely on the variation in density of the recovered material to separate it from the soil matrix, allowing for the recovery of ecofacts and artefacts from the whole earth sample.
- 6.2.3 The retent, like the residue from wet sieving, will contain any larger items of bone, or artefacts. The flot or floating fraction will generally contain organic material such as plant matter, fine bones, cloth, leather and insect remains. A rapid scan at this stage will allow further recommendations to be made as to the potential for further study by entomologists or palaeobotanists, with a view to retrieving vital economic information from the samples. Favourable preservation conditions can lead to the retrieval of organic remains that may produce a valuable suite of information in respect of the depositional environment of the material, which may include anthropogenic activity, seasonality and climate and elements of the economy.
- 6.2.4 The contents of the samples are listed below in Tables 1 and 2.

SAMPLE NUMBER	CONTEXT NUMBER	SAMPLE SIZE (litres)	FLOT SIZE (cm <sup>3</sup> )	RETENT SIZE (cm <sup>3</sup> )
1	104	20	50	1300
2	134	20	10	1100
3	142	30	200	1200
4	111	20	10	3000
5	138	10	5	300

Table 1 Details of samples and contexts

DET	AIL	S	RE	TEI	NT	FR/	ACT	ΓΙΟΙ	N	LIG	HE:	FF	RAC	CTI	ON								
Context	Context type	Sample number	Root material	Charred wood	Waterlogged wood	Burnt bone	Bone	Gravel	Stones	Insects	Charred wood	Root material	Charred wheat	Charred oats	Charred barley	Pale persicaria	Chenopodium	Raspberry	Ranunculus	Docks	Stellaria media	Spergula arvensis	Woody plant parts
104	Fill	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
134	Fill	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
142	Fill	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	3
111	Fill	4	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	1	3	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
138	Fill	5	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Table 2 Contents of flot and retent residues from samples.

**Key to tables:** Fill = ditch, posthole, linear or pit fill. Contents assessed by scale of richness 0 to 3. 0 = not present, 1 = present, 2 = common, 3 = abundant.

- 6.2.5 **Sample 1 (Context 104)**: this sample was from the fill of a ditch or linear feature. The matrix was a compact mid to dark grey silty clay. The retent was made up of gritty gravel with occasional stones with no organic matter present. The flot contained a charred oat as the only seed, probably redeposited from another area.
- 6.2.6 **Sample 2 (Context 134):** this sample came from the fill of a ditch and was a mid grey clay. The retent of this sample was made up of gravel and occasional stones with a minimal amount of root material. The flot contained mainly roots and woody plant parts with one dock seed.
- 6.2.7 **Sample 3 (Context 142)**: this fill is the primary fill of a recut ditch of hard greyish blue clay. The retent again produced only stones and gravel and a small amount of root material. The flot yielded seeds of *Ranunculus*, *Stellaria media* and pale persicaria. There was one very badly degraded cereal grain, possibly wheat. This was probably redeposited. The flot also contained a considerable amount of roots and woody plant parts.
- 6.2.8 Sample 4 (Context 111): this sample came from the secondary fill of a linear ditch feature. The soil was a moderately well compacted light grey silty clay. The retent of this sample was made up of gravel and stones and again contained a small amount of roots and woody plant parts. The flot contained a lot of charred grain, a small amount of charred wood and a seed of raspberry. Again there was also a small amount of root material and some woody plant parts. The charred grain occurred as wheat and oats of roughly the same quantities. The charred grain is likely to originate from processing of cereals, probably during the drying process, and represents a significant anthropogenic deposit, rather than wind-blown or water-borne deposition. The implication from the deposit is for processing to be occurring adjacent to, or in the immediate vicinity of, the ditch feature.
- 6.2.9 **Sample 5 (Context 138)**: this moderate to well-compacted silty clay with inclusions of small sub rounded cobbles, the fill of a possibly natural feature, produced no finds. The retent again produced only stones and gravel with a small amount of roots and woody plant material. The flot yielded a seed of *Spergula arvensis* and one of *Scirpus*, a considerable amount of root material and woody plant parts. There was also a small amount of charred wood.
- 6.2.10 **Discussion:** artefacts recovered from these contexts included medieval pottery and, as seen above, very few ecofacts. Only one of the samples produced charred grain, sample 4, context (111). There were charred grains recovered in the flot of feature [113]. One of the fills from this feature, context (111), produced both wheat and oats. The lack of a notable number of arable weed seeds suggests more an area of processing/drying, the weed seeds having been removed during processing of the grain previously.
- 6.2.11 **Dating:** no scientific dating of material was carried out on this site.

- 6.2.12 **Conclusion and recommendations:** charred grain was recovered from one of the samples. It is obvious that there was some nearby grain processing activity that led to the occurrence of the charred grain in the soil sample, but it is difficult to determine what the source or nature of this activity was given the limited data retrieved from the site. It is probable, however, that the material originates from grain processing within an adjacent settlement.
- 6.2.13 The potential for further information being gained from the examination of this material is limited and so it is recommended that no further work be done.

#### **6.3** VERTEBRATE REMAINS

6.3.1 No bone remains were recovered from the site, indicating that conditions were poor for its preservation or that none was deposited. No burnt bone was recovered.

### 6.4 MOLLUSC REMAINS

6.4.1 No mollusc remains were recovered from the site.

#### 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

- 7.1.1 The potential for prehistoric archaeology is low. It is not impossible that prehistoric antecedents to the later Romano-British archaeology, noted in the Silloth environs, may survive within the development area. However, the general absence of even Iron Age archaeology in Silloth probably precludes this possibility, and the findspot of Neolithic date (Site 1) probably represents an isolated findspot only, which is typical for Cumbria generally.
- 7.1.2 The potential for Romano-British archaeology within the development area was thought extremely high, particularly in view of the known and excavated remains of the Roman palisade and road, which run into the development area itself (Site 7; Higham and Jones 1983, Woolliscroft and Jones 2004). However, Woolliscroft noted that the palisade was likely to be a land drain rather than a feature of Roman date, and this was borne out by the evaluation results, which did not identify any evidence of a palisade within the development area. In addition, the trenching also failed to identify any evidence of the Roman road; Woolliscroft's 'road' ditch clearly corresponds with a field boundary ditch, which is identified on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868 (Figures 3 and 6). This feature was excavated at length during the evaluation trenching (hand excavated in two trenches, and machine excavated in four trenches), and in all cases was found to be of an identical V-shaped profile, with a vertical sided slot at the base, accommodating a ceramic field drain (cf Plate 7). The field drain was clearly inserted at the time of the excavation of the ditch, and therefore the ditch is unequivocally post-medieval in date (probably 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century). In addition, no evidence of Turret 10b (Site 3) was identified in the development area, either in its suggested location or further east, and therefore the conclusion can only be that it lies further to the west, probably under the modern housing.
- The potential for medieval archaeology is high; the development area lies 100m north-7.1.3 west of extensive medieval field systems, dating back to at least the 10<sup>th</sup> century AD, excavated by NPAL in 2004 (Jones 2004, Site 42). Cartographic evidence may also point to medieval strip field systems in the area, and the name 'Old Silloth' attached to the farm to the south could suggest an early (?medieval) settlement was located there. This evaluation also uncovered evidence of medieval field systems dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century, in the south corner of the site (Trench 6), dated from pottery recovered directly from the features, and in the topsoil adjacent. The pottery is of sufficient quantity to imply an adjacent settlement, though no features, such as pits or postholes, which are traditionally suggestive of such settlement, were uncovered. In addition, nearby grain processing activities are also shown, through the recovery of charred grain from one of the ditches. Similar profiles of material were uncovered during the NPAL excavations in 2004 (Jones 2004), though the grain was less abundant in those cases, and the ditches which were dated by radiocarbon dating were excavated several centuries earlier. The suggestion is that there is a, probably extensive, medieval settlement and/or farmstead centred around Old Silloth farm, probably covering

- several centuries, and that this overlaps into the south corner of the development area, though this cannot be conclusively proved without further evaluation or excavation.
- 7.1.4 The potential for post-medieval archaeology is moderate; the historic town of Silloth lies some way to the south-west, and the development area appears to have been an enclosure field for some time, prior to being encroached upon by modern housing. As previously discussed, remains of earlier 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century boundary ditches survive, and extensive networks of land-drains were noted throughout the development area; this confirms this area was used predominantly as agricultural land throughout this period. A WWII concrete tank was identified in the northern corner of the site, in Trench 24, and this represents the only clear evidence of this area being used as part of the Silloth Aerodrome (though a concrete building pad was noted adjacent to the north end of Trench 26).

#### 7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.2.1 On the evidence presented above, there is a moderate potential for the survival of archaeological deposits on the site. The presence of medieval archaeology in the south corner is significant, and any disturbance should be mitigated against, either in the form of excavation prior to removal, or preservation *in situ*. In view of the relatively small area of impact the latter option may be preferable. Any minor works, such as drainage or service courses, should at minimum be monitored by watching brief.
- 7.2.2 The remainder of the development area yielded no significant archaeology, and therefore no further work should be required; the post-medieval boundary ditches have been adequately sampled, and the 20<sup>th</sup> century concrete tank, though of local interest, should not require any further investigation than that undertaken as part of these works.
- 7.2.3 On a more general level, the Scheduled Monument status of the adjacent school field may need to be reassessed, in view of the fact that the absence of a Roman road, signal tower or palisade in this development area has a knock-on effect on this zone, casting doubt on three of the main elements on which the designation is based. It is therefore suggested that English Heritage conduct either a geophysical survey and/or evaluation trenching of this area, to clearly identify the presence or absence of any archaeology, with a view to informing both the designation and future developments adjacent to the Scheduled Monument.

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# **APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES**

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	NGR
1	HER 379	Silloth Axe-Pick Find	A number of flaked flint axes or picks found on the surface of an early post-glacial beach at Silloth. Now lost.	311000 554000
2	HER 359	Turret 10A Estimated Position	Estimated position of Turret 10A, from MU APs 1975 CS140/7	311630 554750
3	HER 360	Turret 10B Estimated Position	Estimated position of Turret 10B, from MU APs 1975 CS140/7	311380 554310
4	HER 361	Milefortlet 11 Estimated Position	Estimated position of Turret 10B, from MU and CCC APs 1975-7	311160 553880
5	HER 2807	Silloth Airfield Pillbox	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1985, but destroyed by 2003	312200 553600
6	HER 4196	Silloth Field System	Settlement and Field System excavated in 1977 (Higham and Jones 1983)	311500 553600
7	HER 9604	Solway Lido Cropmark Site	Series of linear features, probably a road, visible as cropmarks on APs	311470 554310
8	HER 6487	Palisade, Roman Camp and Road	A double-ditched road to a square enclosure and ?palisade, visible on APs	311300 554070
9	HER 10193	Silloth Gasworks	Site of old gasworks, on 1866 OS map	311250 553410
10	HER 15209	Pillbox nr Football Ground	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	311100 553400
11	HER 15210	Pillbox nr Tennis Courts	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	311100 554100
12	HER 15211	Pillbox near Barracks	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	311700 554000
13	HER 15212	Silloth Industrial Estate Pillbox	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	311900 554200
14	HER 15217	Silloth Airfield Pillbox	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	312110 554300
15	HER 15218	Silloth Town Pillbox	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	311490 554600
16	HER 15219	Holme Low Pillbox	A Type 22 WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 2003	311930 553700
17	HER 15220	Silloth Pillbox	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	311600 554500
18	HER 15221	Silloth Pillbox II	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	312000 554600
19	HER 15222	Silloth Airfield Pillbox II	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	312300 554600
20	HER 15223	Silloth Airfield Pillbox III	A WWII pillbox, listed as in this position in 1995, but destroyed by 2003	312200 554500

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21	HER 15226	East Cote Farm Pillbox	Square, stone faced pillbox	312000 555100
22	HER 18956	Fountain, The Green	Drinking fountain set up in 1911 by Silloth Ratepayers Association and Improvements Committee	310970 553730
23	OA North 2004	Gravel Pit	Gravel pit shown on 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition OS Maps	311600 554050
24	OA North 2004	Silloth Farm Pumps	Outbuildings on 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS Map, later a 'Pump' – no longer extant	311650 553950
25	ADS NMR_NATINV- 1095721	East Cote Cottage	A mid or late 18th century house of two storeys and three bays.	311900 555110
26	CBA_DOB- 13283	Silloth Airfield Pillbox	ADS Entry for a Pillbox at Silloth Airfield – same as Site 16?.	311900 553600
27	CBA_DOB- 15808	Silloth Airfield Pickett Hamilton Fort	ADS Entry for a Pickett Hamilton Fort – possibly wrong coordinates?	311200 553600
28	NMR_NATINV- 9675	Roman Frontier Defence	Site of the Roman frontier defence - no visible earthwork remains. Cropmark features similar to those of the Roman Solway Frontier (Lin 100A) were seen in the proximity of Silloth School. Test excavations in 1977 showed them as Roman.	311200 554100
29	LB 21789; NMR_NATINV- 1095883	Christ Church	Parish church, built in 1870-1 by Cory and Ferguson. On a north-east, southwest alignment. Three storey west tower/porch; a five bay nave and aisles with transepts and a semicircular apse. Grade II Listed.	311030 553690
30	LB 21792; NMR_NATINV- 1095885	Queens Hotel, Silloth	Built in the early 1860s, listed partly for group value with Marine Terrace. Of three storeys and five bays with eight bays on Waver Street. Grade II Listed.	311080 553820
31	LB 21791; NMR_NATINV- 1095911	Marine Terrace	Six houses forming a terrace, built in the early 1860s. Listed partly for group value with Christ Church. Grade II Listed.	311040 553760
32	LB 21789	1-4 Criffel Street, formerly the Solway Hotel	Hotel and Shop, formerly the Solway hotel. Early 1860s in construction. Grade II Listed	310963 553546
33	LB 21793	5 Eden Street	Shop, early 1860's. Listed partly for group value with 1-4 Criffel Street and No 9. Grade II Listed.	310970 553531
34	LB 21794	9 Eden Street	Private house, now a bank. Early 1860's. Plaque lists Kathleen Farrier, contralto, who lived there 1936-41. Listed partly for group value with 1-4 Criffel Street and No 5. Grade II Listed.	310981 553528

35	CBA_DOB- 8017	Silloth Airfield Pillbox	ADS Entry for a Pillbox at Silloth Airfield – possibly wrong coordinates?	311100 553500
36	EHNMR-645649	Silloth School Trial Trenching	Trial excavation. Linear earthwork interpreted as palisaded coastal defences. Location approximate.	311000 554000
37	SM 27735	Roman Linear Defences	Scheduled Monument Area for the Roman Defences, Palisade, Road and Camp (Sites 8, 28 etc)	311300 554070
38	HER 40465	Solway Lido Structure	Walkover survey in 2003 identified a sub rectangular earthwork in this location, possibly a pillbox	311617 554175
39	HER 40466	Solway Lido Structure	Walkover survey in 2003 identified a sub rectangular earthwork in this location, possibly a pillbox	311600 554140
40	HER 40467	Solway Lido Structure	Walkover survey in 2003 identified a sub rectangular earthwork in this location, possibly a pillbox	311646 554110
41	HER 40468	Solway Lido Pillbox	Walkover survey in 2003 identified a rectangular brick-built pillbox in this location	311650 554090
42	HER 40707	Solway Lido Settlement Site	NPA field evaluation identified palisade and enclosure ditches dated to 11 <sup>th</sup> century	311670 554230

# **APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT LIST**

Context Number	Trench	Category	Interpretation
100	4	Layer	Topsoil
101	4	Layer	Subsoil
102	4	Layer	Natural
103	4	Cut	Ditch
104	4	Fill	of [103]
105	4	Cut	Ditch
106	4	Fill	of [105]
107	4	Cut	Gully
108	4	Fill	of [108]
109	6	Fill	of [113]
110	6	Fill	of [113]
111	6	Fill	of [113]
112	6	Fill	of [113]
113	6	Cut	Ditch
114	6	Fill	of [116]
115	6	Fill	of [116]
116	6	Cut	Treebole
117	4	Layer	Subsoil
118	18	Fill	of [119]
119	18	Cut	Ditch
120	18	Fill	of [123]
121	18	Fill	of [123]
122	18	Fill	of [123]
123	18	Cut	Ditch
124	18	Fill	of [125]
125	18	Cut	Land Drain
126	VOID	VOID	VOID
127	6	Cut	Land Drain
128	6	Fill	Of [127]
129	6	Cut	Water Service
130	6	Fill	of [129]
131	6	Cut	Ditch
132	6	Fill	of [131]
133	6	Cut	Ditch
134	6	Fill	of [133]
135	6	Fill	of [133]
136	6	Layer	Subsoil
137	6	Layer	Subsoil
138	17	Fill	of [139]
139	17	Cut	Ditch
140	17	Fill	of [141]
141	17	Cut	Land Drain
142	18	Fill	of [119]
143	18	Fill	of [119]
144	20	Fill	of [145]
145	20	Cut	Ditch
146	6	Fill	of [147]
147	6	Cut	Ditch
111		- Jul	21011

# **APPENDIX 3: FIGURES AND PLATES**