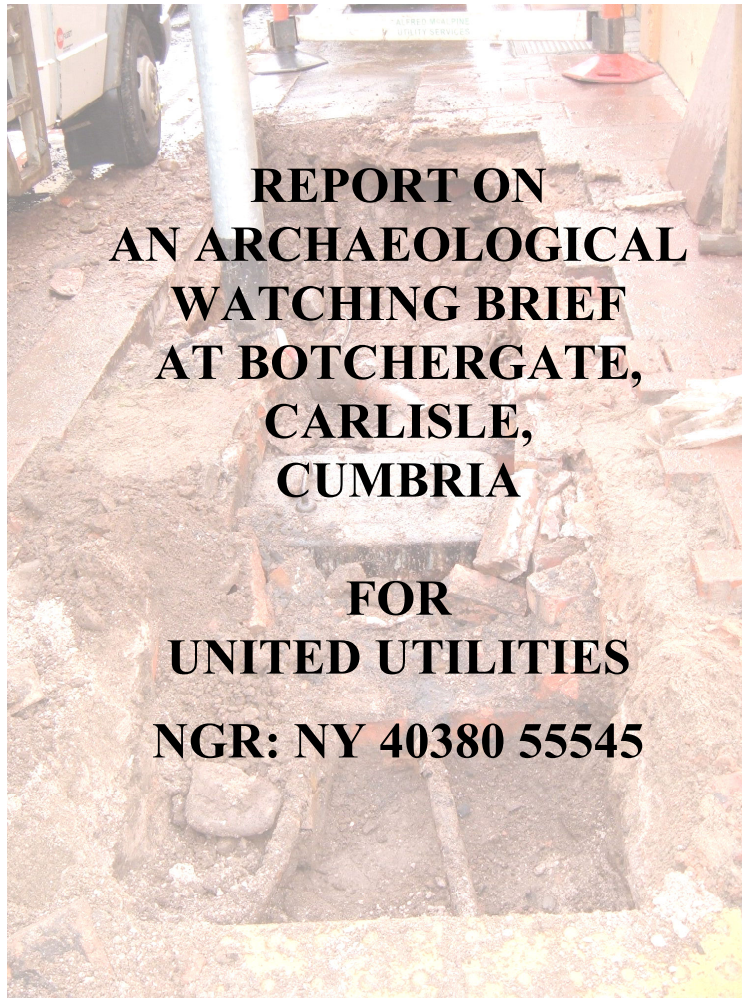


# **NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

**Client Report No. 228/06**



## **REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT BOTCHERGATE, CARLISLE, CUMBRIA**

**FOR  
UNITED UTILITIES  
NGR: NY 40380 55545**

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## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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During May 2006, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd carried out an archaeological watching brief on Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria, on behalf of United Utilities (NGR NY 40380 55545). The work was required as the company were replacing two electricity link boxes. The link boxes were located at the top of Botchergate, Carlisle. Cumbria County Council Environment Services requested a proposed programme of archaeological work in a written brief, due to the potential archaeological sensitivity of the area. The replacement of the link boxes was therefore monitored and the results of the monitoring process observed no features or layers of archaeological potential.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Joanne Beaty carried out the fieldwork. The report was prepared by Joanne Beaty and edited by Juliet Reaves. Frank Giecco, NPA Technical Director, managed the project. Thanks are due to Julie Collinson of United Utilities for her assistance and guidance in this project, and to Jeremy Parsons, Assistant Archaeologist for Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Services.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 In May 2006, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological watching brief on Botchergate, Carlisle (NGR: NY 40380 55545; Fig 1), following a request by United Utilities for archaeological monitoring during the replacement of two link boxes.
- 1.1.2 The two link boxes were located on Botchergate. One adjacent to Portland Place, the other on the corner of Portland Place and Botchergate. Botchergate lies on the Roman road into Carlisle and the Roman cemetery, which lined the road on both sides. Due to the significant amount of archaeological remains in this area belonging to the Roman period and its association with the Roman cemetery Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service requested that an archaeological watching brief monitor the replacement of the link boxes. The watching brief was carried out on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2006.
- 1.1.3 The geology of the area consists of boulder clay interleaved with alluvial sand and gravels, which occurs along the rivers and merges into marine alluvium near the upper limits of tidal waters. The boulder clay has been deposited by ice and is derived from bedrock traversed by glacial movement and is heterogeneous (SSEW 1984).
- 1.1.4 The principal rivers closest to the study area are the Rivers Caldew and Petteril, which flow to the south and west of the study area respectively. The river Petteril also forms the parliamentary and municipal boundary and marked the medieval Socage Manor of Carlisle

### 1.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.2.1 The study area lies on the road known as Botchergate, which derives its name from Botchardgate from 'Botchard', who held the medieval lordship, and 'gate' from the Anglo-Scandinavian gate, which means road (Parson and White 1829).
- 1.2.2 There is extensive potential for prehistoric activity within and around Carlisle, including the remains of ard marks from prehistoric ploughing at Blackfriars Street and Lowther Street. Neolithic and Bronze Age pottery was found at Scotby Road, including Grooved Ware and Beaker pottery, and collared urn and burnt mound were excavated at Garlands Hospital (Perriam 1992, 3). Flints of Neolithic and Bronze Age date have been found, and two socketed Late Bronze Age axes were found at Kings Meadow, Stanwix (SMR No. 525). It has been suggested that the promontory on which Carlisle Castle now stands has been a defended site since at least the Iron Age and possibly a pre-Roman *dun*.
- 1.2.3 By 73AD a Roman fort had been established at the northern end of the present city centre, and this quickly expanded to become a substantial civilian settlement measuring over 40 acres in area. The withdrawal by the Romans from Scotland in the 80's and the building of Hadrian's Wall from AD 122 probably had a substantial impact on the settlement. By about AD 200 Carlisle, known as

*Luguvalium*, seems to have been granted special status, and it continued to flourish with a large number of houses, shops, administrative and other public buildings, until the end of the Roman occupation in 400 AD.

- 1.2.4 The corridor either side of London Road and Botchergate has long been known to contain Roman remains, with some 40 burials recovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and other remains recovered during systematic archaeological excavation during the 1990's (Carlisle Archaeology, Lancaster University Archaeological Unit). Little is known, however, regarding the extent of the Roman cemetery (and settlement) or the nature and extent of medieval settlement.
- 1.2.5 Following the withdrawal of the legions in the early part of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Carlisle probably continued to be occupied, and it housed an important monastic community from the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The arrival of the Normans in 1092 heralded a period of major change, during which the city was enclosed by walls. Throughout the middle ages and up to the Jacobite rebellion in 1745, Carlisle was a major frontier city on the borders of England and Scotland.
- 1.2.6 From the middle ages until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Carlisle was more or less confined to land within the city walls, apart from three ribbon-like suburbs outside the three city gates. From the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the rapid extension of the town during the Industrial Revolution, the here suburbs grew very rapidly in size, with new housing, factories, roads, and industrial and commercial premises. These developments, together with the advent of the railways, expanded over what had previously been open countryside.
- 1.2.7 The development site lay outside the principal area of settlement during the medieval period, a territory the outside the city walls, was subject to ravaging and frequent raids and invading retinues. It is likely the site consisted of agricultural land during the medieval period, and formed part of the medieval lordship or *demesne* of Carlisle.
- 1.2.8 Following the union of the English and Scottish crowns with the accession of James I to the English throne in 1603, a programme of pacification of the borderlands began. This saw a modernisation of tenureships of great benefit to northern landowners and a breakdown of traditional forms of Border service (Spence 1984; 64). This process of modernisation led to the undertaking of two detailed surveys of the socage or manorial lands of Carlisle, Thomas Johnson in 1608 and Aaron Rathbone in 1611 (Ibid, 67).
- 1.2.9 During the later 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the introduction of the factory system and increasingly complex technologies gave rise to a substantial population increase in urban areas throughout Britain. In Carlisle, the construction of factories and their attraction to migrant workers from the adjacent countryside saw a concomitant rise in the urban population and a need for new residential housing outside the traditional city centre. A prime area, immediately outside the historic core, was the north and east of Botchergate. Portland Place was situated near one of the poorest areas of the expanding city. The area was characterised by narrow streets and cramped back-to-back housing.



## **2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 General Objectives**

2.1.1 The watching brief comprised monitoring the replacement of electricity link boxes.

2.1.2 In summary, general objectives of the watching brief were:

- to observe and record archaeological remains should they occur within the defined watching brief area;
- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains as far as possible within the remit of the archaeological watching brief condition;
- to recover artefactual material, especially where useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives.

### **2.2 Site Specific Aims**

2.2.1 Site-specific requirements were defined as follows:

- to monitor the area during excavation to impact depth (approx 0.6m below present-day ground level) for link box replacement;
- to investigate and record any archaeological remains encountered, and to protect them from damage where appropriate;
- to define the location, character, extent and state of preservation of any features associated with the site of the Roman Road and cemetery should this be encountered in the development area, and protect them from impact by the development works.

## **3 METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Fieldwork**

3.1.1 The watching brief comprised of one day of observation in two distinct areas along the Botchergate area of Carlisle. The machine-excavated trench proved to reach a maximum depth of 0.6m, maximum width of 2m and maximum length of 5m.

3.1.2 NPA standard pro-forma watching brief sheets were completed during the observations and any archaeological features were investigated and recorded, in accordance with the NPA standard procedure as set out in the company Manual (Giecco, 2001) and the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (IFA 1994).

3.1.3 Photography was undertaken using Pentax K1000 and Pentax P30 Single Lens Reflex (SLR) manual cameras. A photographic record was made using 200 ISO colour print film and 400 ISO black and white print film.

3.1.4 All references to cardinal directions refer to site grid north.

## **3.2 Project Archive**

3.2.1 The full archive has been produced to a professional standard in accordance with the current English Heritage guidelines set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 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 06, LBB-A.

# **4 RESULTS**

## **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 Archaeological observations in the Botchergate study area lasted for one day. A brief period of time was obtained by the archaeologist to conduct a thorough examination of the material removed from the trench and to examine and record the sections and bottom of the excavated trench before the link boxes were replaced and backfilled.

4.1.2 No archaeological features were exposed during the excavations and no finds were recovered during the excavations.

## **4.2 Trench 1**

4.2.1 Trench one was located outside the Merry Chef, adjacent to Portland Place on Botchergate, Carlisle. The trench was a maximum 0.5m deep, 0.6m wide and 0.7m long. The removal of the paving slabs revealed a layer of small stone chippings as a level bedding for the paving slabs. Sealed beneath the stone chippings was the old link box surrounded by a mix of dark brown soil, debris and rubble, such as fragments of brick and concrete. There were no archaeological deposits found in this trench.

## **4.3 Trench 2**

4.3.1 Trench two was located outside The Border Rambler Public House, on the corner of Portland Place and Botchergate. The trench was a maximum 0.6m deep, 2m wide and 5m long. A similar sequence of deposits was observed as in Trench 1. The removal of the paving slabs revealed a layer of small stone chippings used to level the paving slabs. Sealed beneath this was a mix of soil (dark brown), rubble and general debris used to backfill the trench after the original link box was fitted. When the link box was removed, the ground underneath had been disturbed and was a similar mix of soil and rubble as above. There were no archaeological deposits found in this trench.

#### **4.4 Interpretive Discussion**

- 4.4.1 The close proximity of the excavation to the Roman Road and cemetery justified the need for the watching brief to ensure no features or finds of archaeological significance were impinged upon by the removal of the material during excavation. In the event, no features of archaeological interest were noted. Following consultation with Jeremy Parsons (Assistant Archaeologist, CCCHEs), it was agreed that no further work was required.

## **5 Conclusions**

### **5.1 Summary of Results**

- 5.1.1 The archaeological watching brief carried out on Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria, failed to detect any archaeological features during the excavation for the replacement of link boxes. It must be concluded that no archaeological features have ever been present at this depth, or if they have, then they have been truncated by later developments.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

- 5.2.1 The work detailed here constitutes the final report on the full programme of archaeological watching brief undertaken at the site. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological work would be required.

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Plate 1: Trench one adjacent to Portland Place on Botchergate.





Plate 2: Trench two on Portland Place