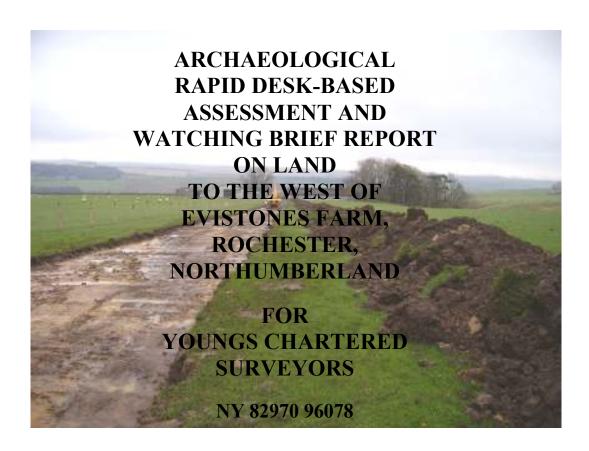
NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/654/08



OASIS Ref: northpen3-40176

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were invited by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake the required rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief. All of groundworks were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of these works, a rapid desk-based assessment was completed in order to achieve a full understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site (Town 2008). All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994 and 2001) and in line with the brief produced by the Northumberland National Park Authority's Archaeologist (Jones 2008).
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Northumberland HER, the Northumberland County Record Offices in Woodhorn (NRO) 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 extent of the anticipated archaeological remains, and to assess the impact that the development will have upon them, to provide details of what might be encountered during the proceeding groundworks to be monitored by the archaeological watching brief.
- 1.1.4 This report comprises the results of the various stages of the archaeological work programme, namely: the rapid desk-based assessment, and the written report, following the archaeological recording of the groundworks associated with the development, as outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation.

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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2.2 Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Morpeth, 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 has been included in Appendix 1. All secondary sources were also examined, and no geotechnical data was available for the development site. One aerial photograph of the area was located, and is referenced in 3.4.
- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
- 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. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

6.1 PRIMARY SOURCES

Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

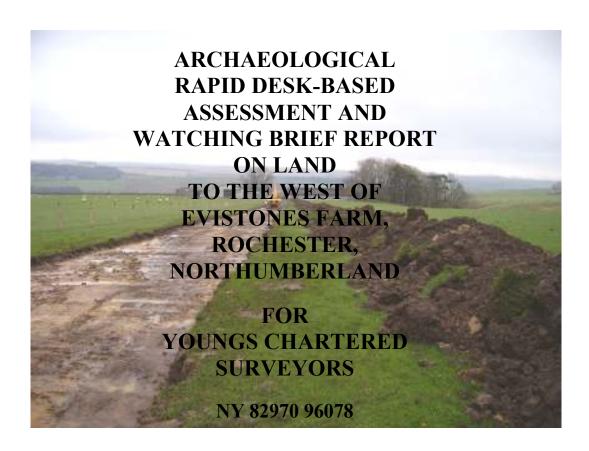
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were invited by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake the required rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief. All of groundworks were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of these works, a rapid desk-based assessment was completed in order to achieve a full understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site (Town 2008). All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994 and 2001) and in line with the brief produced by the Northumberland National Park Authority's Archaeologist (Jones 2008).
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Northumberland HER, the Northumberland County Record Offices in Woodhorn (NRO) 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 extent of the anticipated archaeological remains, and to assess the impact that the development will have upon them, to provide details of what might be encountered during the proceeding groundworks to be monitored by the archaeological watching brief.
- 1.1.4 This report comprises the results of the various stages of the archaeological work programme, namely: the rapid desk-based assessment, and the written report, following the archaeological recording of the groundworks associated with the development, as outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation.

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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2.2 Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Morpeth, 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 has been included in Appendix 1. All secondary sources were also examined, and no geotechnical data was available for the development site. One aerial photograph of the area was located, and is referenced in 3.4.
- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
- 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. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

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Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

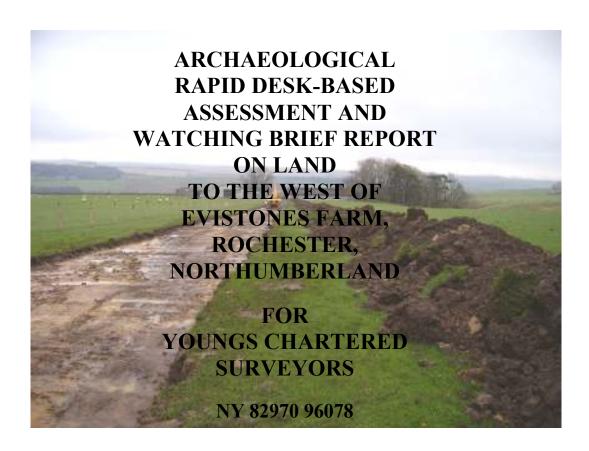
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/654/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were invited by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake the required rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief. All of groundworks were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of these works, a rapid desk-based assessment was completed in order to achieve a full understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site (Town 2008). All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994 and 2001) and in line with the brief produced by the Northumberland National Park Authority's Archaeologist (Jones 2008).
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Northumberland HER, the Northumberland County Record Offices in Woodhorn (NRO) 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 extent of the anticipated archaeological remains, and to assess the impact that the development will have upon them, to provide details of what might be encountered during the proceeding groundworks to be monitored by the archaeological watching brief.
- 1.1.4 This report comprises the results of the various stages of the archaeological work programme, namely: the rapid desk-based assessment, and the written report, following the archaeological recording of the groundworks associated with the development, as outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation.

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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2.2 Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Morpeth, 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 has been included in Appendix 1. All secondary sources were also examined, and no geotechnical data was available for the development site. One aerial photograph of the area was located, and is referenced in 3.4.
- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
- 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. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

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Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

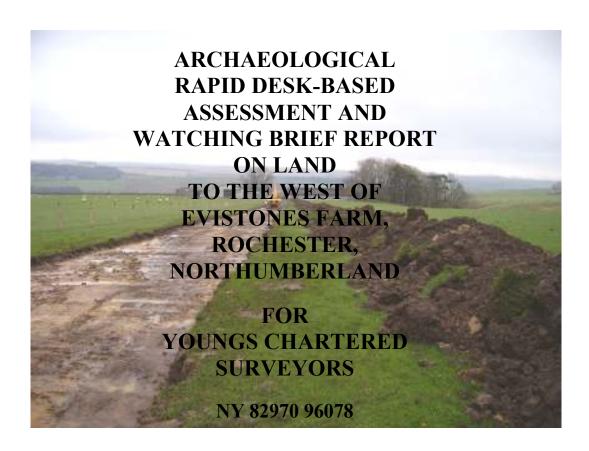
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/654/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were invited by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake the required rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief. All of groundworks were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of these works, a rapid desk-based assessment was completed in order to achieve a full understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site (Town 2008). All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994 and 2001) and in line with the brief produced by the Northumberland National Park Authority's Archaeologist (Jones 2008).
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Northumberland HER, the Northumberland County Record Offices in Woodhorn (NRO) 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 extent of the anticipated archaeological remains, and to assess the impact that the development will have upon them, to provide details of what might be encountered during the proceeding groundworks to be monitored by the archaeological watching brief.
- 1.1.4 This report comprises the results of the various stages of the archaeological work programme, namely: the rapid desk-based assessment, and the written report, following the archaeological recording of the groundworks associated with the development, as outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation.

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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2.2 Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Morpeth, 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 has been included in Appendix 1. All secondary sources were also examined, and no geotechnical data was available for the development site. One aerial photograph of the area was located, and is referenced in 3.4.
- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
- 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. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

6.1 PRIMARY SOURCES

Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

Ordnance Survey 1st Edition, 1844/5, HMSO © Crown Copyright

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

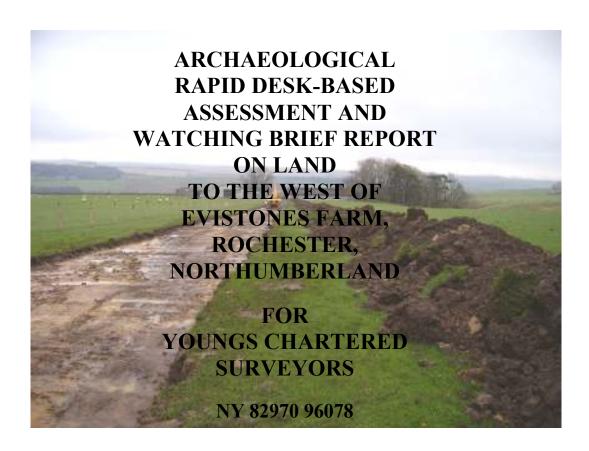
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/654/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
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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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2.2 Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Morpeth, 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 has been included in Appendix 1. All secondary sources were also examined, and no geotechnical data was available for the development site. One aerial photograph of the area was located, and is referenced in 3.4.
- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
- 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. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

Ordnance Survey 1st Edition, 1844/5, HMSO © Crown Copyright

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

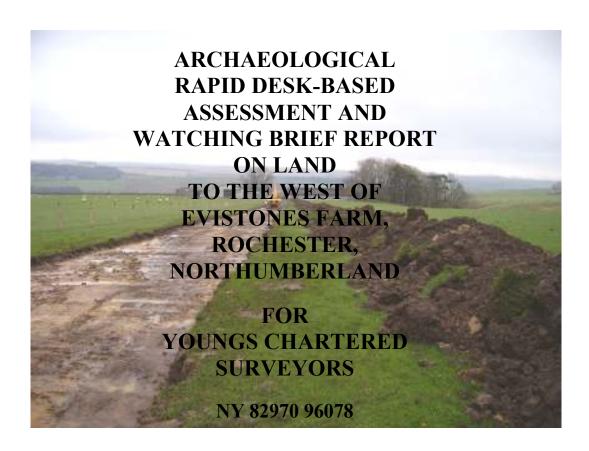
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/654/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were invited by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake the required rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief. All of groundworks were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of these works, a rapid desk-based assessment was completed in order to achieve a full understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site (Town 2008). All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994 and 2001) and in line with the brief produced by the Northumberland National Park Authority's Archaeologist (Jones 2008).
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Northumberland HER, the Northumberland County Record Offices in Woodhorn (NRO) 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 extent of the anticipated archaeological remains, and to assess the impact that the development will have upon them, to provide details of what might be encountered during the proceeding groundworks to be monitored by the archaeological watching brief.
- 1.1.4 This report comprises the results of the various stages of the archaeological work programme, namely: the rapid desk-based assessment, and the written report, following the archaeological recording of the groundworks associated with the development, as outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation.

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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
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- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
- 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. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

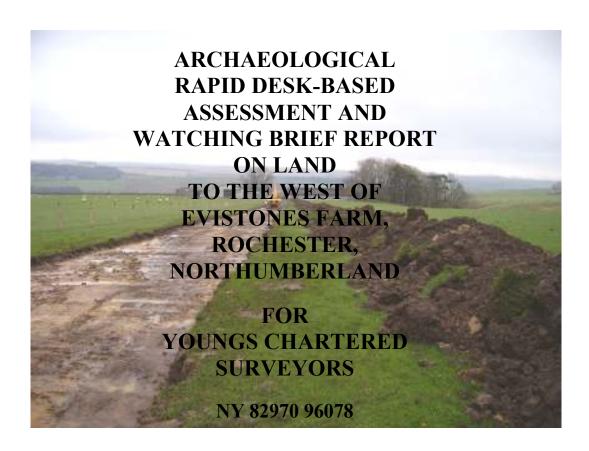
APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Project Designs and Client Reports No. CP/654/08



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2008, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake a rapid archaeological desk based assessment and watching brief as part of the archaeological recording of works due to be undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NY 82970 96078). The site is located within an area of known archaeological interest, particularly concerning the Romano-British settlement at Rochester, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones. As a result the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) recommended a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation submitted to, and approved by the NNPA. These works require a rapid desk-based assessment study of the area, followed by a watching brief to monitor all groundworks relating to the development.

The desk-based study involved the examination of all pertinent documents and cartographic sources held in the Northumberland County Records Office at Woodhorn, and the consultation of the Historic Environment Record (HER) of Northumberland, held at Morpeth. 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 on the site.

The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.

As the area lies within an area of known archaeological sensitivity, mitigation in the form of a Watching Brief was undertaken on all groundworks associated with the development. The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length, with an extension on a north-west direction of a further 80m. The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m. This deeper part was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of a maximum depth of 0.8m. A further deeper cut was necessary 3m from the north-western extent of the total 354m trench, of a maximum 1.0m depth. No archaeology was encountered during these works.

As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to works undertaken on land to the west of Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and the fact that much of these groundworks did not extend below the topsoil, any further development in the area may be required to be subjected to a similar programme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, for commissioning the project, and to Ernie Coulson, on-site contractor for all help with information regarding the timetabling of groundworks. Thanks also to Chris Jones, of the Northumberland National Park Authority, and to Liz Williams HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team. Further thanks are extended to all of the staff at the Northumberland County Record Office at Woodhorn.

The desk-based assessment and watching brief was undertaken by Cat Peters. The report and the drawings were also produced by Cat Peters. The project was managed by Matt Town, Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Matt Town.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 The Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA) has approved an application for the construction and upgrading of access tracks on land to the west of Evistones Farm, Rochester, Northumberland (NNPA Ref. 9.07.14/CJ/08NP0003). The development site, centred on NY 82970 96078, is within an area of known archaeological potential, relating to a Romano-British settlement, and the deserted medieval village of Evistones, and deposits of archaeological significance may exist in the area of the proposed works. As a result, a condition of the planning permission was that, before the development commences, a programme of archaeological work be undertaken in accordance with the written scheme of investigation, approved by the National Park Authority (Jones 2008). This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16), and with Policy C16 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were invited by Jonathan Wallis, of Youngs Chartered Surveyors, to undertake the required rapid desk-based assessment and archaeological watching brief. All of groundworks were excavated under a full watching brief condition. The objective of this watching brief was to obtain an adequate record of any archaeological deposits or finds, which were disturbed or exposed by work associated with the development. Prior to the commencement of these works, a rapid desk-based assessment was completed in order to achieve a full understanding of the nature of the existing resource regarding the geographical, topographical, archaeological and historical context of the site (Town 2008). All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IFA 1994 and 2001) and in line with the brief produced by the Northumberland National Park Authority's Archaeologist (Jones 2008).
- 1.1.3 The desk-based assessment comprised a search of both published and unpublished records held by the Northumberland HER, the Northumberland County Record Offices in Woodhorn (NRO) 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 extent of the anticipated archaeological remains, and to assess the impact that the development will have upon them, to provide details of what might be encountered during the proceeding groundworks to be monitored by the archaeological watching brief.
- 1.1.4 This report comprises the results of the various stages of the archaeological work programme, namely: the rapid desk-based assessment, and the written report, following the archaeological recording of the groundworks associated with the development, as outlined in the approved written scheme of investigation.

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 Youngs Chartered Surveyors for a rapid archaeological desk-based assessment and accompanying watching brief in the study area, in accordance with a brief prepared by the Northumberland National Park Authority. 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 RAPID 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. The principal sources of information were historic maps and plans of the area and secondary sources, with a brief surmise of the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 2.2.2 Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER): the HER in Morpeth, 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 has been included in Appendix 1. All secondary sources were also examined, and no geotechnical data was available for the development site. One aerial photograph of the area was located, and is referenced in 3.4.
- 2.2.3 Northumberland County Record Office (Woodhorn): the catalogues of the County Record Office in Woodhorn (NRO) was checked regarding 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. Unfortunately no tithe or enclosure maps were held in the catalogues of either Evistones or Cleughbrae. Several watercolours and pencil drawings of the bastles at **Evistones** cited (e.g. NRO SANT/BEQ/2/1/26/43 SANT/BEQ/2/1/8/8/A), but as the records are unavailable for copying, and as they are not strictly relevant to the study site, these have not been included. Various documents relating to the genealogy of families in the area are also included (e.g. NRO 00542/21 and NOR 00542/24), but these bear little relevance to possible sub-surface archaeological traces in the area. All relevant information has been summarised in 3.2.
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- obtained from a search of the appropriate repositories. No additional relevant sources were provided in the Archaeology Date Service catalogue that were not found elsewhere.
- 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.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.3.1 All groundworks associated with the development were monitored by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeologist, adhering to the project design, the NNPA brief and IFA guidance (IFA 1994) and best practice procedures. All groundworks were recorded using pro-forma record sheets, and on-site sketches and plans were made as necessary to indicate where the groundworks occurred. A photographic record was made of the developments, in digital format, as well as in Colour Print and Black and White format for archiving purposes. The watching brief is discussed in full in Section 4.1.

2.4 ARCHIVE

- 2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design, and with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to a suitable repository, where viewing will be made available on request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, EFR-A, CP654/08.
- 2.4.2 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd and the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team support the Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this survey will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

3.1.1 The site is centred upon National Grid Reference NY 82970 96078 in the parish of Rochester in Redesdale in West Northumberland (Figure 1). The following geological background information has been gleaned from Northumberland National Park Authority's geology information background, located online on the National Park website at:

http://www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk/understanding/geology/geologicalhis tory/quaternarydeposits.htm.

- 3.1.2 The Quarternary Period Spans the last 2 million years. Throughout much of the Devensian glaciation large areas of Northumberland lay beneath fast-moving, dynamic parts of the British ice-sheet. The effects of warm-based ice streams can be seen in the landscape surrounding the Cheviot massif, in the Tweed Basin and Tyne Gap, where they have effectively moulded and streamlined the land. However, the Cheviot massif appears to have deflected much of the streaming ice around it to the north, and south, remaining relatively unaltered. The solid geology of the site is Low Water Formation of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group, with glacial till surface drift (British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology Sheet 38 Ambleside).
- 3.1.3 Carboniferous rocks formed approximately 354 to 290 million years ago. In Carboniferous times the district lay in the Northumberland Trough, bounded by two fault systems which influenced sedimentation: the North Solway Fault to the north and the Stublick-Ninety Fathom Fault to the south. During Dinantian and early Namurian times over 2500 metres of shallow marine and deltaic deposits, derived from the north and east, were laid down in the Northumberland Trough. This is in stark contrast to the much thinner succession laid down south of the Stublick Fault, on the more buoyant 'Alston Block'. The Namurian rocks typically comprise thick successions of shales, siltstones and sandstones with some, generally thin, beds of limestone and coals. During Westphalian times equatorial forests of huge primitive trees, ferns and other vegetation flourished on swampy delta slopes and thick deposits of peat derived from the partial decay of this vegetation accumulated from time to time on this surface forming the material that was eventually preserved as coal. The great diversity of form and chemical composition amongst coal 'types' is due, in part, to essential differences in the plant material from which they have evolved, as well as to geological processes which progressively altered the nature and maturity of coals. It is likely that rocks of later Namurian and Westphalian age once covered the whole of the district but were later removed. Much of this erosion probably took place in the late Carboniferous and early Permian periods.

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 specific to the

- study area. Much has been gleaned from background information provided by the Historic Environment Record, and by the on-line access to the Historic Environment Record holdings, at www.keystothepast.info. The cartographic sources will be discussed with the secondary sources in this section, in chronological sequence. All Site Numbers referred are summarised in Appendix 1, and shown in Figure 2.
- 3.2.2 **Prehistoric Period:** evidence for prehistoric habitation in Rochester comes from the finds of two stone axes dating to the Neolithic period near Elishaw Bridge and Troughend. Two examples of long cairns, a rare occurrence in Northumberland, have also been found in the parish, also dating to the Neolithic period, at Bellshiel Law and Dour Hill. A Bronze Age cist burial also lies within the vicinity of Dour Hill. Further evidence for Neolithic activity in the region comes from the appearance of cup marked stones in the parish. Bronze Age cairns are more common, located at Dour Hill, Ravens Pike, Bellshiel Law, Bellshiel Bridge, Yatesfield. A burial of the period has also been recovered from the centre of Three King's Stone Circle. Several hut circles in the area show that habitation continued right up until the Roman invasion. Examples have been found at Woolaw, and evidence for cord and rig plough marks show late prehistoric agricultural practices at Nether Houses and Yatesfield.
- 3.2.3 *Romano-British Period*: Romano-British activity is well evidenced in the area. The area is to the north of Hadrian's Wall, but the Romans did advance northwards into Scotland along Dere Street. Several temporary Roman camps relating to these excursions have been found at Dargues, Sills Burn South, Sills Burn North and Silloans. They also constructed two forts in the area, one at Blakehope and one at High Rochester. The remains at High Rochester are particularly well preserved with stone gateways, earthwork defences, and also evidence for a *vicus* that had developed alongside the fort. A Roman cemetery lies nearby, at Petty Knowes, holding four monumental tombs and at least one hundred small barrows.
- 3.2.4 Much of the indigenous population would have continued much as they did before the arrival of the Romans. Small farmsteads and evidence for agricultural activity from these communities has been found at Yatesfield Hill, Rattenraw Farm and Whitelee. Of direct relevance to the study area is the appearance of two Romano-British period enclosures within 500m of the proposed groundworks. One (Site 1) is a sub-rectangular enclosure consisting of a stony bank, of 3m width and 0.6m height across the north and west sides of the site. The rest has been destroyed by afforestation in the area. Internally, a slight stony bank forming a sub-division in the north-west angle is decipherable. This was probably once a habitation enclosure. The second (Site 3) is referred to as 'Netherhouses 3', and was a rectilinear enclosure of the North Tyne type (Charlton and Day 1978, 85). It has since been planted over. The occurrence of sites of this period is such close proximity to the development site suggests that further remains of the period may be found during the groundworks.
- 3.2.5 *Medieval Period:* very little is known of the medieval period, after the Roman withdrawal in Rochester. Shielings of the era have been located, used as temporary shelter by shepherds, and documentary evidence suggests that a hospital existed at Eilshaw. Old route ways utilised by farmers and shepherds are also known at Outer Golden Pot, Middle Golden Pot, Inner Golden Pot and Phillips' Cross. One of the few known villages of the period lies close to the development site, at Evistones (Site 2), less than 600m to the north. It is a Scheduled Monument, and survives as a series of

rectangular buildings of longhouse form, and at least 3 bastles, linked together by walls and places around a central place, perhaps an irregular-shaped village green (The Conservation Practice 1999). It represents several phases of settlement, perhaps forming a fortified village by the late medieval period. It was inhabited up until at least 1693 (Hodgson 1827, 135). Further evidence for medieval activity in close proximity to the study area is in the form of a hollow way (Site 4), or track way, which linked the medieval settlement at Evistones to another one at Burdhope.

- 3.2.6 **Post-Medieval Period:** evidence for settlement at Evistones to have continued into the post-medieval period comes from the existence of bastles, which were defended farmsteads. These were popular during the 16th and 17th centuries as feuds between families and skirmishes from Scotland increased. By the 18th and 19th centuries, the problems had subsided, and less defensive farmsteads were once again popular. Cleughbrae, the farm relating to the groundworks, is first referenced in 1755, regarding a lease (NRO UR/P6/4/1/1), and was inhabited at that time by John Fletcher, Gentleman. Ashtrees (Site 6), a mid-19th century farmstead also dates to this period and is close to the study site, to the south. A shooting lodge (Site 7) was built at a similar time, 1878, typical of the mid-Victorian style (Grundy 1987).
- 3.2.7 *Modern Period:* a search of cartographic sources has shown that very little has changed within the area of the development site. The original Ordnance Survey Maps were studied, but were not available for copying, so have been reproduced from sketches and notes. They show little change in the area between the production of the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1845 (Figure 3) and the publication of the Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1919 (Figures 4 and 5). The only other known historic or cultural site within 1km of the site is a chert deposit (Site 5), a natural geological feature.

3.3 Previous Archaeological Investigation

3.3.1 No previous archaeological investigation is known to have taken place on the site. The only archaeological works undertaken within 1km of the development site was an archaeological building recording of the main standing remains of the bastle houses at Evistones in 1999 (The Conservation Practice 1999). Recent damage by sheep was noted, with erosion from exposure to root expansion and frost. This has little relevance regarding possible sub-surface deposits likely to be encountered during the groundworks, although the location of important medieval remains so close to the site does suggest sub-surface remains of the period may be uncovered.

3.4 **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**

3.4.1 The Northumberland Historic Environment Record catalogue includes a collection of aerial photographs of the county. One of the photographs shows the eastern part of the area due to be affected by groundworks (HER Ref: RAF 106G/UK/628 frame 3163) and was taken on 10th August 1945 (Figure 6). The HER Officer for Northumberland County Council Conservation Team suggested that ridge and furrow could be seen, but it could be that the evidence outlined in Figure 6 is more recent agricultural activity in the vicinity.

4 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.1.1 The watching brief was carried out on Monday 28th April 2008 and Thursday 1st May 2008. It monitored all groundworks associated with the construction of a new track way to lead from the central farmyard of Cleughbrae, westwards across a field and a short stretch of woodland to the existing track beyond. This was to provide a safe and easy route, avoiding the existing track way over a ford to the south, for waggons and heavy machinery needing to gain access to the plantations to the west, to fell the trees there.
- 4.1.2 All excavation works were undertaken by a ditched 360° excavator with a toothless bucket, and the spoil was deposited on the southern side of the east-west aligned trench. The contexts observed are outlined in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.3 The groundworks occurred in two stages; the first consisted of the excavation of a linear east-west aligned trench, 4.5m wide and 274m in length (Figure 7). The easternmost extent of the trench was the deepest, where it gradiated from the farmyard to create a gentle slope, at its deepest, 0.7m.



Plate 1: The easternmost extent of the east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4 The deeper part of the trench was only maintained for 10m, beyond which the excavation consisted of a 0.2m topsoil scrape for the remainder of the 274m total

length. At the 120m mark, a deeper cut was necessary due to water logging, and this consisted of a 2m by 2m pit, of maximum depth 0.8m.



Plate 2: The east-west aligned trench, facing west

4.1.4. The second stage occurred a few days later, on 1st May 2008, and consisted of an extension to the east-west aligned trench outlined above, this time, through a narrow strip of woodland, rather than through pastoral land (Figure 7). It extended from the dry stone wall which had formed the western extent of the east-west aligned trench, on a north-westerly direction for 80m, retaining the 4.5m width of the original excavation, and finishing at a second dry stone wall, the other side of which lay the existing track way. The maximum depth of this extension trench was 0.2m, although it was necessary to excavate a deeper stretch, 3m from the western edge of the trench, and this was 3m in width, and 4.5m in length, of a maximum of 1.0m depth.



Plate 3: The extension, facing north-west

4.1.5 Thus the two trenches, which formed one continuous linear trench, made a total length of 354m of excavation area, and the width throughout was 4.5m. The same stratigraphy was observed throughout the extent of the excavation. The topsoil consisted of a middark brown loose loam (100), varying in depth between 0.24m and 0.34m, and which overlay a clay-like orange loam with occasional grey clay inclusions and a number of stones ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in size (101). This could have been the natural soil horizon. In areas, the depth of the topsoil was not reached. No archaeological features were observed and no finds were recovered during the works.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment showed that two late prehistoric settlement sites, and one important medieval village are located within close proximity to the proposed groundworks. A study of cartographic sources has shown that little post medieval or modern activity has affected the area, and that should sub-surface archaeological remains exist in the area, they are likely to be undisturbed and well preserved.
- 5.1.2 Despite the high archaeological potential of the area, the watching brief did not encounter any archaeological features. As much of the groundworks did not exceed 0.2m in depth, there remains the possibility that archaeological features may survive at a greater depth, as in areas, the extent of the topsoil was not revealed. The locations of all groundworks associated with the development were monitored, and an archive kept for future reference.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 As this report comprises the recommendations for archaeological recording of the developments relating to groundworks on land near Evistones Farm, no further work is necessary. However, due to the continuing high archaeological potential of the area, and proximity of important sites (two late prehistoric settlement sites and one medieval village, also a Scheduled Monument) any further development in the area may be subjected to a similar scheme of archaeological mitigation, subject to the advice of the Northumberland National Park Authority Archaeologist.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

6.1 PRIMARY SOURCES

Aerial Photograph Showing Part of Groundworks, 10th August 1945

(HER Ref: 106G/UK/628 frame 3163)

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APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF SITES

The locations of the following sites are shown in Figure 2.

Site No.	Source	Name	Description	Period	NGR (NY)
1	HER 8101	Romano-British Enclosure	A sub-rectangular enclosure seen on Aerial Photography and surviving as an earthwork	Romano-British	8260 9686
2	HER 8103	Evistones	Peel and Strong Houses constituting a deserted medieval village	15 th century, deserted late 17 th century	8305 9677
3	HER 8139	Netherhouses 3	Romano-British rectilinear enclosed settlement	Romano-British	8240 9680
4	HER 8140	Hollow Way	Hollow way linking medieval settlements of Burdhope and Evistones	Medieval	8150 9840- 8300 9680
5	HER 8147	Redesdale chert deposit	Chert deposit in rough surfaced flaggy sandstones- Natural Feature	Natural Feature	8300 9600
6	HER 14386	Ashtrees	Mid 19 th century farmhouse of dressed stone with slate roof	1840	8373 9573
7	HER 14943	Evistones shooting lodge	Late 19 th century shooting lodge of snecked stone with slate roof	1878	8335 9666

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT TABLE

Context	Type	Depth and extent	Description
Number			
100	Deposit	0.24m-0.34m depth. Seen	Loose mid-dark brown soil loam
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	
101	Deposit	Extent not reached. Seen variously	Firm orange clay-like loam with
		throughout trench (4.5m by 274m)	occasional grey clay inclusions and stones
		, , ,	ranging from between 0.05 and 0.2m in
			size

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES