


NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

SCOUT MOOR QUARRY EXTENSION, EDENFIELD, LANCASHIRE



EXCAVATION IN PROGRESS, SCOUT MOOR QUARRY

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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Quality Assurance

This report covers works as outlined in the brief for the above-named project as issued by the relevant authority, and as outlined in the agreed programme of works. Any deviation to the programme of works has been agreed by all parties. The works have been carried out according to the guidelines set out in the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Standards, Policy Statements and Codes of Conduct. The report has been prepared in keeping with the guidance set out by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd on the preparation of reports.

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SUMMARY

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Scott Wilson Ltd, on behalf of their clients Marshalls PLC, to undertake an archaeological watching brief on groundworks relating to the extension of Scout Moor Quarry, Edenfield, Lancashire (NGR SD 8191 1852).

The extension area has been subject to a number of pre-application assessments in 1996 and 1997, which identified the site to be of archaeological interest. Following on from this, Scott Wilson Ltd undertook a cultural heritage report in 2007 in order to establish the scope of the archaeological work required to fulfil the archaeological conditions of the planning decision. The report identified a number of historic structures and features within the extension area which were likely to be impacted upon by the extension, most notably remains of post-medieval mining activity. As a result, a programme of historical documentary assessment, topographical survey and photographic recording of features was undertaken, together with a programme of peat coring across the extension area. Following this programme of works, and in line with discussions with Lancashire County Council, further works were also required, in the form of a General Archaeological Watching Brief to monitor soil-stripping on the edge of the quarry, and a Targeted Archaeological Watching Brief on a historic winding structure, identified from an earlier walkover survey and through cartographic analysis. The two watching briefs form the focus of this report.

The General Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken over five days between the 9th and 13th of June 2008. The watching brief monitored the stripping of an area of soil to stabilise the quarry face, consisting of peat deposits overlying boulder clay, which in turn sealed a thin seam of coal. A small section of the spoil-heap of one of the bell-pits identified and recorded during the topographical survey, associated with the early coal-mining activity, was clipped during the groundworks. No further archaeological remains were noted.

The Targeted Archaeological Watching Brief could not be completed, as upon arrival on the site on the 5th June, it was found that the remains of the winding structure had been already removed, and that the surrounding area had been stripped down to the boulder clay. This phase of works was therefore abandoned.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Nick Finch, Assistant Archaeological Consultant for Scott Wilson Ltd, for commissioning the project, and for all assistance throughout the work.

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would also like to extend their thanks to Wayne Lightfoot of CHC Ltd, and all staff at the quarry, for their help during this project.

The main archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Patricia Shaw, with the preliminary site visit and survey undertaken by Rachel Horn, Helen Noakes and Matthew Town. The report was written by, and the drawings were produced by, Matthew Town, who also managed the project in his capacity as Project Manager for NPA Ltd. The report was edited by Frank Giocco, NPA Technical Director.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In response to the archaeological conditions of a planning decision for a quarry extension at Scout Moor Quarry, Edenfield, Lancashire (NGR 8191 1852), a cultural heritage report was produced by Scott Wilson (Scott Wilson 2007a), which identified a number of historic structures and features within the extension area that were likely to be impacted by the proposed quarry extension. The work followed previous archaeological assessments of the area, including the preparation of an Environmental Statement (ES) for the proposed extension (Richard Raper Planning 1997, WYAS 1996), and an additional archaeological desk-based assessment and palaeo-environmental investigation (Geary 2001) which was carried out for a nearby wind farm (West Coast Energy Ltd 2003).
- 1.1.2 In response to this cultural heritage appraisal, Scott Wilson devised an Archaeological Project Design (Scott Wilson 2007b), which set out the scope and methodologies to be used for recording the features and structures identified as being at risk from the proposed quarry extension. The Archaeological Project Design specifically detailed the requirement for a programme of historical documentary assessment, topographical survey and photographic recording for the features identified to be at risk from the proposed quarry extension, as well as the scope of an auger survey for the assessment of an area of the peat that would be impacted by the extension; the results of this programme of works are forthcoming (Scott Wilson 2008).
- 1.1.3 Scott Wilson Limited were subsequently commissioned by Marshalls PLC to prepare a specification for archaeological watching brief works (General and Targeted Watching Brief) for an area of soil stripping necessary to stabilize an existing quarry face edge within the area covered by the proposed extension to the quarry. The specification was prepared in consultation with Peter Iles, Lancashire County Council Archaeological Officer.
- 1.1.4 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (NPAL) were commissioned by Scott Wilson Limited to undertake the archaeological watching brief works, consistent with the specification provided by the company (Scott Wilson 2008b) and to IFA guidelines and generally accepted best practice. This report outlines the monitoring works undertaken on-site, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 No project design was required. All works were undertaken in accordance with a specification prepared by Scott Wilson Ltd (Scott Wilson 2008b). This was adhered to in full, and the work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 2002), and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 THE WATCHING BRIEF

2.2.1 The works involved a structured watching brief to observe, record and excavate any archaeological deposits from the development site.

2.2.2 The aims and principal methodology of the watching brief can be summarised as follows:

- to determine the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains;
- to produce a photographic record of all contexts using colour digital, 35mm colour slide and monochrome formats as applicable, each photograph including a graduated metric scale;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful of dating purposes;
- to produce a site archive in accordance with MAP2 standards (English Heritage 1991).

2.2.3 An area of approximated 280m x 25m (7000m²), along the existing working quarry face was stripped of soil (topsoil and peat) and stored in a bunded storage area for later restoration purposes. Apart from the remains of an historic colliery structure (S7) in the southern end, there were no other visible remains of historic mining /quarrying features within the area to be soil stripped, although the perimeter of a bell pit and upcast (S6) was close to the boundary of the soil strip. Archaeological monitoring and supervision of groundworks associated with the stripping commenced on Thursday 5th June 2008.

2.2.4 *General Archaeological Watching Brief:* a general watching brief was carried out within the area indicated in Figure 2 (cross-hatched) in order to identify and record the presence/absence of other features or structures that relate to historical mining /quarrying activity at the site; and to identify the presence

/absence, nature, extent, and date of any archaeological remains, including finds which were to be disturbed as a result of the topsoil stripping.

- 2.2.5 *Targeted Archaeological Watching Brief:* the objective of the targeted archaeological watching brief was to record any buried remains of the historic colliery structure (S7) and/or those remains associated with it. Research had suggested that the winding house was abandoned in the mid-to late 20th century and that at least two walls and demolition debris (including evidence for the mounting of the former winding gear and steam engine) survive above ground level. The area around S7 had an irregular turfed surface and it was possible that beneath the grass lay further building debris and possibly the footprint of the winding structure. The base of the housing for the steam engine and the associated chimney would be expected to comprise substantial structural remains and it was likely that parts or all of them would survive in a building that appeared to have largely collapsed over time following its abandonment rather than having been systematically demolished. Other features that could have been associated with the pit head would include the entrance to the drift mine, the head of the tramway and any other features not so far identified.
- 2.2.6 A summary of the findings of the watching brief is included within this report.

2.3 THE ARCHIVE

- 2.3.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification, and in line with current UKIC (1990) and English Heritage Guidelines (1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository, with copies of the report sent to the County Historic Environment Record at Preston, Lancashire, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA08, SMR-B, CP 710/08.
- 2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology, Scott Wilson Ltd and Lancashire County Council support the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an on-line index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature, created as a result of developer-funded archaeological work. As a result, details of the results of this project will be made available by North Pennines Archaeology, as a part of this national project.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 LOCATION AND GEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

- 3.1.1 Scout Moor forms part of the western Pennine upland area to the east of the Irwell Valley, above Edenfield, in the district of Rossendale, Lancashire. The quarry is located at the break of slope on Scout Moor, and is overlooked by the summit of Whittle Pike to the east (Figure 1). The extension area forms an additional slice down the eastern edge of the existing quarry and forms a distinctive plateau within Scout Moor, bounded to the west by the existing quarry and to the east by the shoulder of Whittle Hill. Scout Moor is part of the typical hill/valley scenery of Rossendale characterised by deeply incised valleys, prominent hilltops and moorland ridges with urban development situated in the lower valley floors (Scott Wilson 2008a).
- 3.1.2 The area comprises upper moorland topography with the ground rising gently from 330m AOD to 400m AOD at the base of Whittle Pike. The amount of rainfall experienced on the western side of the Pennines is considerable with over one metre recorded annually. At the base of Whittle Pike the surface water is held within blanket peat, which covers a substantial amount of the northern end of the extension area with thin upland soil on the better drained area to the south. The peaty area is marsh-like with wet flush areas and surface streams channelling the surface water to Dearden Brook and Scout Moor Brook to the north. Peat stripped off the existing working area of the quarry has recently been dumped along the edge of the current extraction area, in these areas water runs across the subsoil surface. Immediately beneath the peat the superficial geology consists of boulder clay and below this solid geology of shale, Rough Rock and Upper Haslington Flag. The two leaves of Rough Rock are separated by a narrow coal seam. Previous mining activity at the site has exploited the deposits of coal and stone (*op. cit.*).

3.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 3.2.1 The earliest known activity, which may have extended within the area affected by groundworks, comprises part of the considerable evidence for extensive mining activity on Scout Moor since at least the end of the eighteenth century. The earliest phase (pre-Industrial period) of this activity is represented by the remains of bell pits and upcast mounds within the extension area that are scattered along the edge of the existing quarry face.

- 3.2.2 A later phase of mining is represented by the remains of Scout Moor Colliery (Industrial period) that includes the lower stone course of a number of visible buildings and structures.
- 3.2.3 A number of upstanding dry stone walls cross the moorland and suggest that the area was used for seasonal sheep pasture during the post-medieval period. The remains of at least one collapsed wall on the edge of the extension area suggest that the enclosure of the moorland may have begun at an earlier period (Scott Wilson 2008a).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The watching brief monitoring was undertaken in two key phases. The first phase was on Thursday 5th of June 2008 (Targeted Archaeological Watching Brief), followed by a longer phase between Monday 9th of June and Friday 13th of June 2008 (General Archaeological Watching Brief). The former related to the metric recording of, and controlled stripping of the soil around, an historic colliery winding structure (site S7 in Scott Wilson 2008a) whilst the latter related to groundworks required for the stabilization of the quarry edge through the removal of an overhang by machine stripping of soil along the quarry edge (Figure 2).

4.2 PHASE 1: TARGETED ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

4.2.1 The Phase 1 Targeted Archaeological Watching Brief aimed to record the remains of the colliery winding structure (S7) uncovered during previous recording works on the moor (Scott Wilson 2008a) through a combined programme of metric survey of the surviving remains, and controlled stripping of deposits around the structure to define the extent and survival of the sub-surface remains of the structure or related buildings (Figure 2).

4.2.2 Regrettably, on arrival on the site to commence the recording, the structure was found to have been entirely removed during earlier unmonitored excavation work, in order to provide an access route onto the area of the main area of stripping, which was due to follow on from this phase (Lightfoot *pers. comm.*). A thorough examination of the area of the building's original location was made, and no trace could be found of any foundation remains or other structural evidence, the entire structure having been removed and stored in a two metre high conical pile of rubble located to the east of the stripped area (Plate 1). Examination of the soil profile noted that topsoil had mainly been removed across the area, but remnant patches of the topsoil remained, comprising dark greyish brown humic silt. Beneath the topsoil, the natural drift geology, a pinkish orange boulder clay, was visible in patches (during subsequent monitoring works, this area was stripped again, to remove the remaining topsoil, but no evidence of any structural or archaeological were noted – Shaw *pers. comm.*). This phase of works was therefore duly abandoned.



Plate 1: Site of Former Colliery Winding Structure S7, facing South; Ranging-Pole marks Approximate Location of Building

4.3 PHASE 2: GENERAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

- 4.3.1 The Phase 2 General Archaeological Watching Brief aimed to monitor all subsequent groundworks associated with the extension of the quarry area, comprising at this stage the removal of an area of overhang of soil deposits above the quarry face. The watching brief also aimed to monitor any possible damage which could occur to an adjacent bell-pit with associated spoil-heap (S6) uncovered during previous recording works on the moor (Scott Wilson 2008a); the extent of the area monitored is shown in Figure 2.
- 4.3.2 All deposits were removed in spits, and the material removed was stored in heaps adjacent to the stripped area. The stratigraphic matrix observed within the excavated area remained constant throughout. The uppermost layer removed consisted of layer of peat/humic topsoil (100), which varied in colour from dark brown to black and was noted to have a high organic content, varying from fully humified to raw peat, with few small stone inclusions evident. The depth varied between 0.20m to 1.00m in places. This overlay the natural drift geology (101), which consisted of a grey to pinkish orange boulder clay with occasional sub-rounded stone inclusions. The boulder clay was removed to a varying depth of between 0.70m and 2.00m

across the stripped area. Removal of the boulder clay revealed the Rough Rock, containing a seam of thin coal between 0.20m and 0.50m in depth, loosely compacted (102). No archaeological remains were noted, though, a small 0.20m section of the spoil-heap forming the western side of bell-pit S6 was partially clipped during the stripping operations, exposing waste coal material from the mining operations.



Plate 2: Phase 2 Stripping Operations in Progress, facing West

4.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING

- 4.4.1 No archaeological finds were recovered, and no environmental samples were retained during the groundworks, the site having been previously the subject of an environmental auger survey (Scott Wilson 2008a).

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 *Phase 1:* following unmonitored stripping operations at the quarry, no remains of the colliery winding structure previously identified during the archaeological recording on the moor (Scott Wilson 2008b) were uncovered. The site had been stripped down to boulder clay, and all evidence of the structure had been removed and stockpiled to the east of the stripped area. No other archaeological remains were noted, and this phase was duly abandoned.
- 5.1.2 *Phase 2:* deposits of peat of varying thickness were removed to uncover the boulder clay, which was found to seal the Rough Rock which contained a thin coal seam, presumably that targeted by the miners during the 19th century and earlier. Part of one of the bell-pits previously recorded (Scott Wilson 2008a) was clipped during the operations, but not otherwise severely damaged. No other archaeological remains were noted.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

PHASE 2: GENERAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Peat/Humic Topsoil
101	Deposit	Boulder Clay
102	Deposit	Rough Rock containing coal seam

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES
