

**LAND AT SEGHILL
CARAVAN PARK,
SEGHILL,
CRAMLINGTON,
NORTHUMBERLAND**



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT
CP. No: 1340/10
15/12/2010**

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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 for 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 invited by Big Tree Planning, on behalf of their client, Mr Michael Burke, to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Seghill Caravan Park, Seghill, Cramlington, Northumberland (NGR NZ 2806 7445). This work followed a planning application for the proposed construction of 22 dwellings on the site of the former caravan park, with associated access, parking and landscaping (Planning Application No. 10/S/00496).

Previous desk-based assessments have been undertaken of land to the north and west of the proposed development site, which have identified a number of cropmark enclosures, which have been interpreted as later prehistoric or Romano-British settlements (Scott Doherty Associates 1997 and Golder Associates 2006). The site is also situated within the grounds of Seghill Hall, which is a Grade II Listed Building, constructed in c.1830. The hall lies in the approximate location of Seghill Medieval Village, although its precise location and extent is unknown. Given the significant potential for surviving archaeological remains ranging from the later prehistoric and Romano-British, through to the medieval period and onwards, Northumberland County Council Conservation Team (NCCCT) advised that an archaeological field evaluation be undertaken, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved by NCCCT.

The archaeological field evaluation was undertaken over six days between the 29th November and the 6th December 2010, and involved the excavation of 11 trenches, totalling 586m² of trenching. All of the evaluation trenches were excavated to the level of the natural substrate with the exception of Trench 9 and Trench 12, which were excavated to a maximum depth of 2.5m and 2m respectively without breaching the modern overburden.

No remains associated with later prehistoric or Romano-British activity, or with the Seghill Medieval Village, were observed during the evaluation, all trenches being devoid of any archaeological finds, features or deposits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to offer thanks to Big Tree Planning, and to their client, Mr Michael Burke, for commissioning the project. Thanks are also due to Nick Best, Northumberland County Council Conservation Team, for his assistance during this project.

NPA Ltd would also like to thank David Erskine for his hard work during the project.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Sue Thompson, Annie Anderson, Charles Rickerby, and Cat Jenkins, under the supervision of David Jackson, Project Supervisor for NPA Ltd. The report was written by David Jackson, who also produced the drawings. The project was managed by Martin Railton, Project Manager for NPA Ltd, who also edited the report.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In November 2010, North Pennines Archaeology were invited Big Tree Planning, on behalf of their client, Mr Michael Burke, to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Seghill Caravan Park, Seghill, Cramlington, Northumberland (NGR NZ 2806 7445; Figure 1), following a planning application for the construction of 22 dwellings on the site, with associated access, parking and landscaping (Planning Application No. 10/S/00496). Previous desk-based assessments identified the possible survival of later prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval remains within the proposed development area (Scott Doherty Associates 1997 and Golder Associates 2006). As a result, the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team (NCCCT) recommended that the proposed development site be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation. This is in line with government advice as set out in the DoE Planning Policy Guidance on Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16) and its successor, PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment (Policy HE 6).
- 1.1.2 All stages of the archaeological work were undertaken following approved statutory guidelines (IfA 2008), and generally accepted best practice.
- 1.1.3 This report outlines the evaluation work undertaken on-site, the subsequent programme of post-fieldwork analysis, and the results of this scheme of archaeological works.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

2.1.1 A project design was submitted by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd (Railton 2010) in response to a request by Big Tree Planning, on behalf of their client, Mr Michael Burke, for an archaeological evaluation of the study area. Following acceptance of the project design by the Northumberland County Council Conservation Team (NCCCT), 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 for Archaeologists (IfA), and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 THE FIELD EVALUATION

2.2.1 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of 11 trenches covering 586m² of the proposed 1.84ha development area. Part of the 1.84ha application area was comprised of modern overburden to a depth of over 2m, with a further area scheduled for investigation being within close proximity to an existing dwelling. As a result, the NCCCT agreed that only minimal excavation was required within these areas, reducing the evaluation area to 3% of the proposed development site. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity. All work was conducted according to the recommendations of the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

2.2.2 In summary, the main objectives of the field evaluation were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- to establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- to recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.2.3 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. The trial trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand where safe to do so, and investigated and recorded according to the North Pennines Archaeology Ltd standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (Giecco 2003).

2.2.4 The fieldwork programme was followed by an assessment of the data as set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (2nd Edition, 1991).

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) and according to the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2007). The archive will be deposited within the Great North Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne, with copies of the report sent to the Northumberland Historic Environment Record, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier **NPA10, SCC-A, CP 1340/10**.

2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology, and Northumberland County Council Conservation Team, supports 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 The proposed development site lies on the northwest side of Seghill, approximately 1km to the southeast of Cramlington, Northumberland, at a height of c.45m AOD (Figure 1). The site is bound by Mill Lane to the south, a modern housing estate and Fox Lea Walk to the southeast, and Seghill Hall to the northwest. The site is centred on National Grid Reference NZ 2806 7445. The Seaton Burn runs along the southern boundary of the site, with pastoral fields to the east. At present the site consists of grass scrubland wooded areas, with the remains of the former caravan park surviving as concrete and tarmac hard standing with several access roads traversing the site (Figure 2).
- 3.1.2 The underlying geology of the Southeast Northumberland Coastal Plain is comprised of Coal Measures of Upper Carboniferous age, which consists mostly of mudstones and sandstones with numerous coal seams. The underlying geology is covered by glacial debris, mainly in the form of boulder clay or till, which was deposited from ice sheets during the last glacial period (Countryside Commission 1998).

3.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- 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.
- 3.2.2 *Prehistoric and Roman:* there is no known evidence for prehistoric activity within the proposed development site. However, previous investigations within the surrounding area have identified a number of cropmark enclosures, which have been interpreted as later prehistoric or Romano-British settlements (Scott Doherty Associates 1997 and Golder Associates 2006). These include a double-ditched enclosure between Middle Farm and east Cramlington to the north of the site (SMR Ref. NZ 27 NE 9), a single-ditched rectangular enclosure located c.500m to the north of Seghill Hall (SMR Ref. NZ 27 NE 16), and a square enclosure on the north side of the Seaton Burn, approximately 750m to the west of the site (SMR Ref. NZ 27 SE 5).
- 3.2.3 *Medieval:* there is no recorded evidence of any medieval activity within the proposed development area. However it has been suggested, based on historical documents, that Seghill Hall is situated within the approximate

location of a Deserted Medieval Village. The precise location and extent of Seghill medieval village is not known, as no remains are visible.

3.2.4 Seghill is first mentioned as 'Seyhal' in Henry I charter of c.1100 and was one of nine townships within the larger Parish of Earsdon. The township boundary survives as a bank and ditch c.1km to the northwest of the proposed development area (Scott Doherty Associates 1997).

3.2.5 *Post-medieval:* Seghill Hall is a Grade II Listed house constructed in c.1830, extended and remodeled internally in 1908. The gate lodge, piers and screen wall at the entrance to Seghill Hall were constructed at the same date as the main house and are also Grade II Listed. The Earsdon Tithe Map of 1841 shows the land around Seghill Hall to have been agricultural, with many of the original field boundaries surviving up to the present day.

3.3 PREVIOUS WORK

3.3.1 Only two previous investigations are known to have taken place within the vicinity of the proposed development area. These include a desk-based assessment undertaken by Scott Doherty Associates (1997) and a desk-based assessment undertaken by Golder Associates (2006). These previous investigations identified a number of cropmark enclosures of possible later prehistoric or Romano-British date, within the vicinity of the present study area.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The archaeological field evaluation was undertaken over six days between the 29th November and the 6th December 2010, and involved the excavation of 11 trenches, totalling 586m² of trenching (Figure 2).
- 4.1.2 Part of the 1.84ha application area was comprised of modern overburden to a depth of over 2m, with a further area scheduled for investigation (Trench 7) being within close proximity to an existing dwelling. As a result, the NCCCT agreed that only minimal excavation was required within the area of the modern overburden, whilst the area around Trench 7 could remain uninvestigated, reducing the evaluation area to 3% of the proposed development site.
- 4.1.3 All evaluation trenches, with the exception of Trench 9 and Trench 12, were excavated to the level of the natural substrate with a New Holland backhoe loader, using a 1.5m wide ditching bucket.
- 4.1.4 The trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand where possible, and investigated and recorded fully. The majority of the trenches had been heavily disturbed by concrete hardstanding, modern services and root activity. The results of the evaluation are outlined below.

4.2 RESULTS

- 4.2.1 **Trench 1:** Trench 1 was located toward the northern boundary of the proposed development area and was aligned east to west (Figure 2). The trench measured 30m in length and 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.9m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (101) (Plate 1). The natural substrate (101) was sealed by a deposit of grey/brown mixed silty clay subsoil (105), which measured c.0.7m in depth. This was further sealed by a c.0.2m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (100) (Plate 2).
- 4.2.2 **Trench 2:** Trench 2 was located toward the northern boundary of the site, approximately 16m east of Trench 1 (Figure 2). The east to west aligned trench measured 30m in length and 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (101) (Plate 3), below a c.0.7m deposit of grey/brown mixed silty clay subsoil (105) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (100).
- 4.2.3 **Trench 3:** Trench 3 was a T-shaped trench, located toward the northern end of the development area, approximately 24m south of Trench 1 (Figure 2). The trench measured 30m in length east to west and 15m in length north to

south. Trench 3 was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.6m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (101), which measured over 0.4m in depth (Plate 4). The natural substrate was sealed by a c.1m deposit of grey/brown mixed silty clay subsoil (105) and a c.0.2m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (100).



Plate 1: Trench 1 looking east



Plate 2: North facing section of Trench 1



Plate 3: Trench 2 looking west



Plate 4: Trench 3 looking west

- 4.2.4 **Trench 4:** Trench 4 was located toward the northeastern boundary of the development area, approximately 32m east of Trench 3 (Figure 2). The north to south aligned trench measured 20m in length and 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.9m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (101) (Plate 5), below a c.0.5m deposit of grey/brown mixed silty clay subsoil (105) and a c.0.4m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (100).
- 4.2.5 **Trench 5:** Trench 5 was located approximately 15m southwest of Trench 4 and was aligned east-northeast to west-southwest (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.5m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (101) (Plate 6), which measured over 0.7m in depth. The natural substrate was sealed by a c.0.4m deposit of grey/brown mixed silty clay subsoil (105) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (100).
- 4.2.6 **Trench 6:** Trench 6 was located within the centre of the proposed development area, approximately 17m west of Trench 5 (Figure 2). The north-northeast to south-southwest aligned trench measured 30m in length and 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (101), which measured over 0.5m in depth. The natural substrate was sealed by a c.0.4m deposit of grey/brown mixed silty clay subsoil (105) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (100) (Plate 7).



Plate 5: Trench 4 looking south



Plate 6: Trench 5 looking west-southwest



Plate 7: Trench 6 looking north-northwest

4.2.7 **Trench 8:** Trench 8 was a T-shaped trench, located along the eastern edge of the proposed development site, approximately 15m southeast of Trench 6 (Figure 2). Trench 8 measured 20m in length by 2m in width northeast to southwest, and 30m in length by 2m in width northwest to southeast. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (**101**), which measured over 0.25m in depth (Plate 8). The natural substrate was sealed by a 0.15m deposit of orange/grey brown sandy clay (**104**). This was further sealed by a c.0.2m deposit of black hardcore and rubble (**103**) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay mixed with rubble (**102**). The deposit of silty clay (**102**) was sealed by a c.0.1m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (**100**) (Plate 9).

4.2.8 **Trench 9:** Trench 9 was located toward the southeast corner of the proposed development area, approximately 16m southeast of Trench 8 (Figure 2). The northeast to southwest aligned trench measured 9m in length and 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.5m revealing a deposit of dark brown/grey silty clay made ground (**107**), which measured over 2m in depth. The made ground (**107**) was sealed by a c.0.2m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay mixed with rubble (**102**) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (**100**) (Plate 10).



Plate 8: Trench 8 looking southeast



Plate 9: Southeast facing section of Trench 8



Plate 10: Northwest facing section of Trench 9

4.2.9 **Trench 10:** Trench 10 was aligned northwest to southeast and was located toward the western development area, approximately 35m west of Trench 8 (Figure 2). Trench 10 measured 30m in length and 2m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.3m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (**101**), which measured over 0.1m in depth (Plate 11). The natural substrate (**101**) was sealed by a 0.15m deposit of orange/grey brown sandy clay (**104**) and a c.0.5m deposit of dark brown/grey silty clay made ground (**107**). This was further sealed by a c.0.2m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay mixed with rubble (**102**) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (**100**).



Plate 11: Trench 10 looking southeast

4.2.10 **Trench 11:** Trench 11 was a T-shaped trench, located along the western boundary of the development area, approximately 12m west of Trench 10 (Figure 2). Trench 11 measured 15m in length by 2m in width northwest to southeast and 10m in length by 2m in width northeast to southwest. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m revealing natural grey/orange mixed sand and clay (**101**), below a 0.15m deposit of orange/grey brown sandy clay (**104**). The sandy clay (**104**) was sealed by a c.0.5m deposit of dark brown/grey silty clay made ground (**107**) and a c.0.2m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay mixed with rubble (**102**). This was further sealed by a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (**100**) (Plate 12).



Plate 12: Trench 11 looking southwest



Plate 13: Northwest facing section of Trench 12

4.2.11 **Trench 12:** Trench 12 was located toward the southwest corner of the proposed development area, approximately 22m south of Trench 11 (Figure 2). Trench 12 measured 17m in length by 2m in width northeast to southwest and 5.5m in length by 2m in width northwest to southeast. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 2m revealing a deposit of dark brown/grey silty clay made ground (**107**), which measured over 1.5m in depth. The made ground (**107**) was sealed by a c.0.2m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay mixed with rubble (**102**) and a c.0.3m deposit of mid-grey/brown silty clay topsoil (**100**) (Plate 13).

4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING

4.3.1 No archaeological or palaeoenvironmental remains were noted during the evaluation. All finds were classified as modern and discarded.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1.1 During the archaeological field evaluation on land at Seghill Caravan Park, 11 trenches covering 586m² of the proposed 1.84ha development area were excavated, comprising a 3% of the proposed development site.
- 5.1.2 All of the evaluation trenches were excavated to the level of the natural substrate with the exception of Trench 7, which remained unexcavated and Trenches 9 and 12, which were excavated to a maximum depth of 2.5m and 2m respectively without breaching the modern overburden.
- 5.1.3 No remains associated with later prehistoric or Romano-British activity, or with the Seghill Medieval Village, were observed during the evaluation, all trenches being devoid of any archaeological finds, features or deposits.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.2.1 As this archaeological investigation was conducted in response to a planning application for the proposed development of Seghill Caravan Park, no further archaeological work is deemed necessary. However, it is recommended that any further work outside the present evaluation area be subject to a programme of archaeological investigation.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

6.1 SECONDARY SOURCES

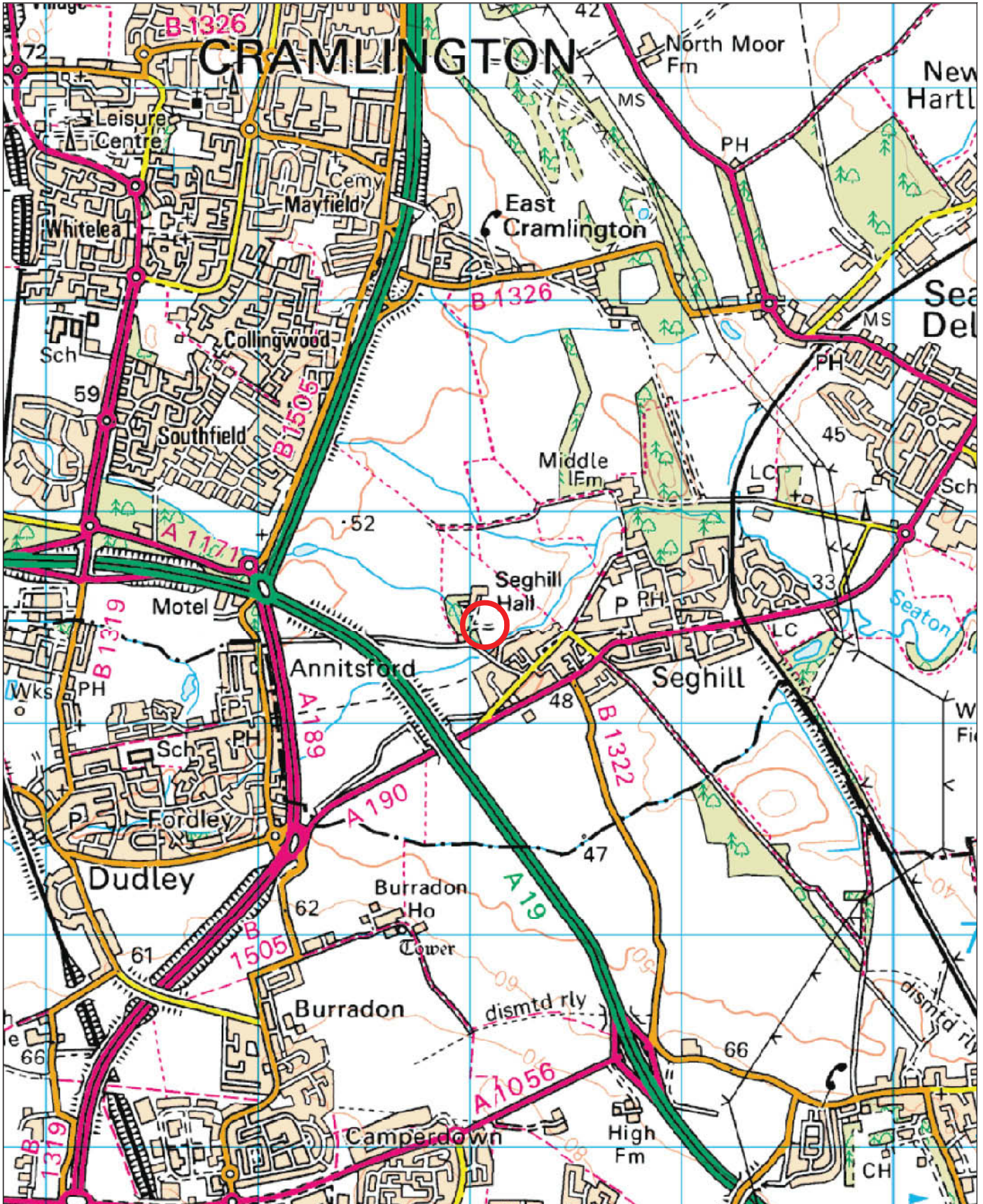
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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Geological	Natural Substrate
102	Deposit	Silty Clay/Rubble
103	Deposit	Hardcore/Rubble
104	Deposit	Sandy Clay Subsoil
105	Deposit	Silty Clay Subsoil
106	Deposit	Hardstanding
107	Deposit	Silty Clay Made Ground

Table 1: List of contexts issued during the archaeological field evaluation

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES



North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2010

PROJECT: Seghill Caravan Park, Cramlington
 SCALE: 1:25,000 at A4
 REPORT No: CP1340
 CLIENT: Mr Michael Burke
 DRAWN BY: MDR
 DATE: December 2010
 FIGURE: 1

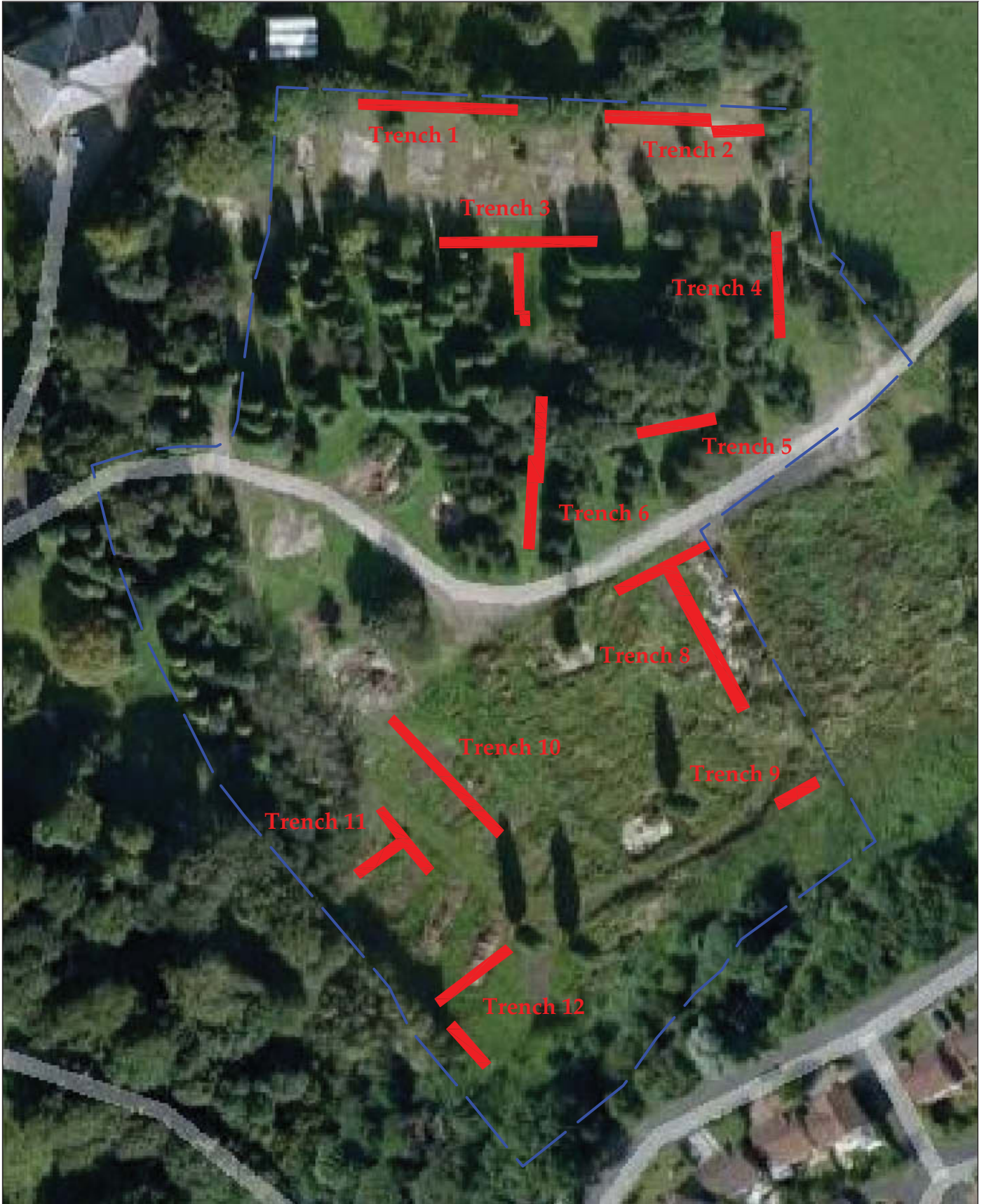
KEY:

 location of proposed development area



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Figure 1 : Site location







 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2010</p>	PROJECT:	Seghill Caravan Park, Cramlington	KEY:	 <p>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100014732</p>
	SCALE:	1:1000 at A4	 outline of proposed development area	
	REPORT No:	CP1340	 evaluation trench	
	CLIENT	Mr Michael Burke		
	DRAWN BY:	DJ		
	DATE:	December 2010		
FIGURE:	2			

Figure 2 : Trench location plan