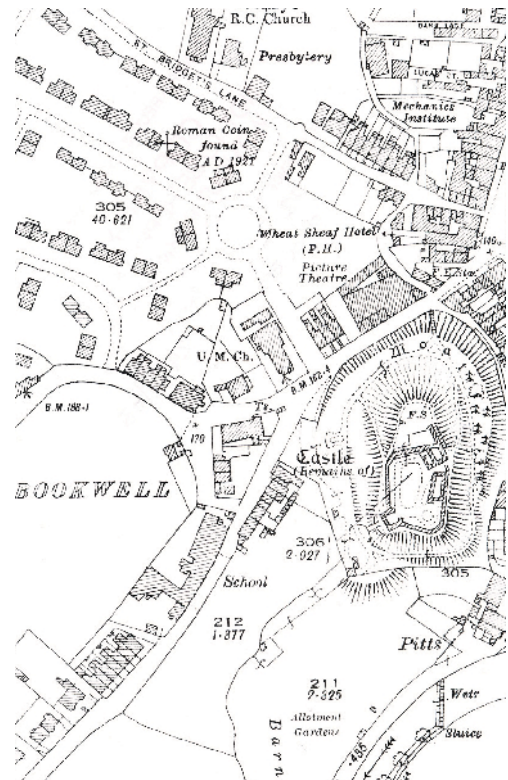


THE OLD CASTLE CINEMA, EGREMONT, CUMBRIA



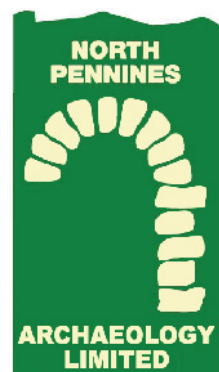
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

CP. No: 1367/10

23/12/2010

NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
NENTHEAD MINES HERITAGE CENTRE,
NENTHEAD,
ALSTON,
CUMBRIA,
CA9 3PD

TEL/FAX: (01434) 382045/043
WWW.NPARCHAEOLOGY.CO.UK



NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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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.

REVISION SCHEDULE			
	01	02	03
PREPARED BY:	David Jackson & Kevin Mounsey		
POSITION:	Project Supervisors		
DATE:	22/12/10		
EDITED BY:	Frank Giecco		
POSITION:	Technical Director		
DATE:	22/12/10		
APPROVED BY:	Matt Town		
POSITION:	Project Manager		
DATE:	22/12/10		

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CONTENTS

SUMMARY	5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	6
1 INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1 Circumstances of the Project	7
2 METHODOLOGY	8
2.1 Project Design.....	8
2.2 The Field Evaluation	8
2.3 The Archive	9
3 BACKGROUND	10
3.1 Location and Geological Context	10
3.2 Historical Context.....	10
3.3 PREVIOUS WORK	12
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS	14
4.1 Introduction.....	14
4.2 Results	14
4.3 Discussion.....	17
5 FINDS.....	18
5.1 Introduction.....	18
5.2 Assessment	18
6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	19
6.1 Conclusions	19
6.2 Recommendations	19
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	20
7.1 Secondary Sources	20
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE	21
APPENDIX 2: FIGURES	22

ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURES (APPENDIX 2)

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION

FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF EVALUATION

FIGURE 3: PLAN AND SECTION OF TRENCH 1

FIGURE 4: PLAN AND SECTION OF TRENCH 2

PLATES

PLATE 1: VIEW NORTHWEST OF TRENCH 1 WITH SURFACE (106) IN FOREGROUND 15

PLATE 2: VIEW EAST OF STONE-LINED CULVERT [110] 15

PLATE 3: VIEW NORTHEAST OF TRENCH 2 16

PLATE 4: VIEW SOUTHWEST OF FEATURE [103]..... 17

SUMMARY

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Martin Cuthell limited, to undertake an archaeological evaluation at The Old Castle Cinema, Egremont, Cumbria (NGR NY 41081 59900). This work follows a planning application (Planning Application No. 04/05/2179) for a residential development on the site. Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) requested that an Archaeological Evaluation be undertaken on the site in order to provide further information, prior to any planning decision.

The work was required as the site lies within the medieval and modern town centres, adjacent to Egremont Castle. A previous Desk Based Assessment carried out by North Pennines Archaeology (Jones 2003) found the site to have been occupied by a tannery, built in 1720, on land immediately north of the main medieval north to south road. During the demolition of the tannery in 1911, substantial masonry remains were found. In 1925 the Old Castle Cinema was built on the site of the tannery.

The associated Field Evaluation carried out in 2003 (Jones 2003) identified no significant archaeological remains within the development area. However the three evaluation trenches largely avoided much of the street frontage, due to the extant cinema building, where the possibility for archaeological remains was considered to be higher.

The Archaeological Evaluation was undertaken over three days between the 8th December and the 10th December 2010. The Evaluation involved the excavation of two trenches, totalling 27.05m² of the development area. It was clear from the archaeological evaluation that the proposed development site has been heavily disturbed in the past, probably during the construction, and subsequent demolition of the Old Castle Cinema. However, several features were revealed which probably relate to the tannery that once occupied the site. Furthermore, the dating and stratigraphy of these features suggest that they belong to two separate phases of the tannery. The dating of one of these features places it within the earliest phase of the tannery in the early/mid-eighteenth century.

Given the extensive disturbance of the proposed development site, it is unclear whether further remains are preserved elsewhere, although given the results of the present evaluation and the evaluation undertaken by NPA Ltd in 2003, it is probable that the level of archaeological preservation is limited.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd would like to thank, Martin Cuthell Limited for commissioning the project, and for all assistance throughout the work. NPA Ltd would also like to thank Jeremy Parsons, Historic Environment Officer, Cumbria County Council for his assistance throughout the project.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Kevin Mounsey, David Jackson and Frank Giecco. The report was written by David Jackson and Kevin Mounsey, who also produced drawings. The project was managed by Frank Giecco, Technical Director for NPA Ltd, who also edited the report.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In December 2010, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were invited by Martin Cuthell Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation assessment at the Old Castle Cinema, Egremont, Cumbria (NGR NY 41081 59900; Figure 1), during groundworks associated with a residential development. The proposed works lie within the immediate vicinity of Egremont Castle, within the medieval and modern town centers. The site was also occupied by an 18th century tannery, which was demolished in 1911. As a result, Jeremy Parsons, Cumbria County Council, Historic Environment Service requested that all ground reduction 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 HE6).
- 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 monitoring works 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 in response to a request by Martin Cuthell limited, for an archaeological field evaluation of the study area. Following acceptance of the project design by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service, 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 two trenches covering 27.05m² of the proposed extraction area. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity, the evaluation trenches being located to target both geophysical anomalies and apparently 'sterile' areas. 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 The evaluation trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. The trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand and all features were investigated and recorded fully according to the North Pennines Archaeology Ltd standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual (Giecco 2003).
- 2.2.4 The evaluation trenches were scheduled to be backfilled at the discretion of the client, following excavation and recording.

2.2.5 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 Beacon Museum, Whitehaven, with copies of the report sent to the County Historic Environment Record at Kendal, Cumbria, available upon request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier **NPA10, OCC-B, CP1367/10**.

2.3.2 North Pennines Archaeology, and Cumbria 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 The proposed development site is situated on gently sloping ground from south to north, at a height of approximately 50m AOD, falling to a height of approximately 43m AOD. It lies within the medieval and modern town centres, adjacent to Egremont Castle. The site is located on Bookwell Road, close to the line of a stream called the 'Skitter beck', a tributary of the River Ehen which flows along the eastern edge of the town and meanders south. The site is bound to the south by the medieval castle and to the north, east and west by modern residential and commercial areas.
- 3.1.2 The underlying geology is comprised of Permo-Triassic rocks, mainly composed of the Steeton Bees Sandstone, with occurrences of limestones and shales (Countryside Commission 1998). The underlying geology is almost completely concealed beneath glacial deposits of boulder clay (till), with sand and gravel in places (*ibid*).

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:* Little is known regarding prehistoric settlement of the Egremont area. A standing circle (now destroyed) existed at Ringingstones (SMR 1198), possibly the same as a tumulus and cairn of ten large stones described by Hutchinson (Read 1999, CCCAS 2000).
- 3.2.3 *Roman:* There is little evidence for Roman period activity within Egremont and its environs. A Roman road from Thornhill-Blackbeck-Calder Bridge has been identified south of Egremont (SMR 1255). A coin of Antoninus Pius was also found to the north of the town (SMR 4620).
- 3.2.4 *Medieval:* Little is known regarding the area around Egremont during the early medieval period, the only evidence being similarities to ancient Welsh landowning patterns and the nature of the Barony of Copeland as a pre-Norman single lordship (Winchester 1979, CCCAS 2000). Egremont is itself a feudal seat of power established in the late 12th – early 13th century (CCCAS 2000), although it is believed that there was a pre-urban settlement centred on the castle, prior to the founding of a planned town in 1200 (Winchester 1979). The first references to the town are from land grants and privileges to a community of burgesses by Richard de Lucy, Lord of the Barony of

Copeland c.1200 (CCCAS 2000). The town was granted a market charter in 1267 and mention of a forfeit of 12d for burgesses not setting out burgage plots in the allotted time suggests the expansion of a rapidly growing town.

- 3.2.5 The economy of Egremont was based on the processing of animal products from nearby farms. The extent of the town was described in the Inquest Post Mortem of John de Multon, whose possessions included a “Castle, with a plot called ‘Applegarth’, the park below the castle, various fisheries, 194 acres of demesne land and 47.5 acres of demesne meadow ... 82 free tenants holding 138 burgages ... 6 waste places called burgages ... (a) weekly market and fair, water mill, fulling mill and 2 smithies.” (CCCAS, 2000). The reference to waste places could indicate urban decay had occurred as a result of the deterioration in climate, cross-border raids and the maintenance of retinues by the nobility and high demands from the Crown, famine and sheep murrains all of which occurred by the mid 14th century.
- 3.2.6 During the Cumbrian Towns Survey, Winchester identified the medieval core of Egremont, in the vicinity of the castle, as Main Street, Market Place and South Street (Winchester 1979). The town also extended along the main road to St Bees, along Herred Lane (Brewery Lane), Herrie Reed Land (Bookwell Road) and Haggot End (*Ibid*).
- 3.2.7 Egremont Castle (SMR 3051), founded in c.1125 as a motte and bailey by William le Meschin, brother of Ranulf, was in decline following the death of John de Multon, and in ruin by 1578 (CCCAS 2000). In May 1922, during the demolition of the old tannery on Bookwell Road, ‘old stonework’ was recovered which had been re-used as part of the tannery, but may have originally been part of the original town gate projecting from the castle.
- 3.2.8 *Post-medieval and Modern:* Throughout the 17th century, in the Borough’s Court Leet verdicts, there is evidence of encouragement to take up burgage plots and to build on them (CCCAS 2000). This may represent an upturn in the fortunes of Egremont, particularly as there is evidence of numerous industrial activities, particularly from the 18th century onwards.
- 3.2.9 During the first half of the 18th century, four tanneries were built in Egremont. The second of these tanneries, the largest in the town, was located on the present study area. The tannery was built in 1720 by Thomas Nicholson of Bigrigg, on land that had been formerly part of the castle grounds. This closed in 1911 and was demolished to make way for the building of the Old Castle Cinema. (Read 1999, CCCAS 2000).
- 3.2.10 There has been a history of iron ore mining in the Egremont area since the 11th century. This intensified in the 17th and 18th centuries and led to an expansion of the town in the 19th century. The population had grown to 2,049 in 1851 from 1,515 fifty years earlier (Whellan 1860). The most notable

iron ore mines were Florence (SMR 12339) and Ulcoats, who combined in 1960 and continued in production until the late 20th century.

- 3.2.11 In the 1950's a Nuclear Processing Plant at Winscale (Sellafield) was built, bringing jobs and prosperity to the region. This prosperity was particularly reflected in Egremont between 1950 and 1990. Since then, however, there has been a marked decline in the fortunes of Egremont, leading to the closure of local businesses, including the Snooker Club within the Old Castle Cinema building on Bookwell Road.

3.3 PREVIOUS WORK

- 3.3.1 During 1994, Turnbull and Walsh undertook investigations at Egremont Castle and established that archaeological deposits within the bailey and on the surface of the Motte had been extensively disturbed during the reorganisation of the castle as a municipal park at the end of the 19th century, although masonry features had been left intact. Virtually none of the excavated deposits could be considered as an intact medieval feature (Turnbull and Walsh, 1994).
- 3.3.2 Between July and November 2001, On Site Archaeology maintained a watching brief during the extension of the Co-op Supermarket, Main Street. The excavation of foundation trenches revealed probable medieval ditches and postholes/pits, including a layer which contained abundant dressed sandstone blocks, mortar and slate, relating to the demolition of the former Victorian Sunday School (OSA, 2002).
- 3.3.3 In June 2002, Oxford Archaeology North undertook an archaeological building investigation project at Egremont Castle. This project identified the date of the castle from its origins as a motte and bailey founded c.1125, with a stone rebuild in the later 12th century. No major 13th century works were identified and the south facade of the great hall was attributed to the early 14th century. The investigation also identified a number of research questions regarding the layout of the castle (OAN, 2002).
- 3.3.4 In October 2003, North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation on the site of the present study area (Jones 2003). The field evaluation found extensive disturbance within the car park area to the southwest of the site, with no surviving archaeological deposits. A trench to the rear (north) of the cinema building found a feature of unknown date, which was interpreted as a path, and a pit also of unknown date. A further test-pit to the south of the site found no structural archaeological remains. A deposit of large cobbles containing two large amorphous clay lumps was tentatively identified as a demolition deposit of an earlier structure. However the field evaluation

largely avoided much of the street frontage, due to the extant cinema building, which has since been demolished.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The archaeological field evaluation was undertaken over three days between the 8th December and the 10th December 2010, and involved the excavation of two trenches, totalling 27.05m² of trenching (Figure 2).
- 4.1.2 The evaluation trenches were excavated to the level of the natural substrate by mechanical excavator. The trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand and investigated and recorded fully. The results of the evaluation are outlined below.

4.2 RESULTS

- 4.2.1 **Trench 1:** Trench 1 was located toward the southeast corner of the proposed development site and was aligned northwest to southeast (Figure 2). The trench measured 9.3m in length and 1.5m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.85m revealing the natural substrate (101), which measured over 0.2m in depth and was comprised of orange/brown coarse gravel (Plate 1). At approximately 0.8m northwest of the southeast end of Trench 1, a northeast to southwest aligned culvert was revealed, which had been cut into the natural gravel (101). The culvert (110) measured over 1.5m in length, c.0.6m in width and 0.2m in depth, and had been lined along both edges with moderately sized sub-rectangular stones. The base of the culvert was comprised of natural gravel (101) (Figure 3, Plate 2). The culvert was filled by a 0.2m deposit of orange/brown silty clay (111), which contained animal bone, and fragments of 18th century pottery. The culvert (110) was sealed by the remains of a flagged sandstone surface (106), which measured over 1.7m in length and over 1.5m in width. Two further sandstone flags were observed approximately 3m further northwest along the trench. However, it is not clear as to whether these flags were in-situ. The sandstone surface (106) was further sealed by a 0.55m deposit of dark brown/black silt mixed with rubble (105) and 0.15m of brown silty topsoil (100) (Figure 3).
- 4.2.2 Within the northwest end of Trench 1, the natural gravel (101) had been cut by a linear feature [107], which measured 5m in length, 0.65m in width and 0.2m in depth. The square cut linear feature [107] was filled by a 0.2m deposit of mortar rubble and concrete fragments (108), and probably related to a foundation trench for the Old Castle Cinema. This was sealed by redeposited natural gravel (102), which measured c.0.7m in depth. The

redeposited gravel was sealed by 0.15m of brown silty topsoil (100) (Figure 3).



Plate 1: View northwest of Trench 1 with surface (106) in foreground



Plate 2: View east of stone-lined culvert [110]

4.2.3 **Trench 2:** Trench 2 was located along the southern edge of the proposed development site, approximately 4.7m southwest of Trench 1 (Figure 2). The northeast to southwest aligned trench measured 8.7m in length and 1.5m in width, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.8m revealing natural orange/brown coarse gravel (101), which measured over 0.75m in depth (Plate 3). Within the southwestern most c.3.6m of the trench, the natural gravel (101) had been cut by a flat sub-circular feature [103], which measured over 3.6m in length, over 1.5m in width and 0.2m in depth. The sub-circular feature [103] had been filled by a stony grey clay (104) which measured 0.2m in depth (Figure 4, Plate 4). However, the grey clay deposit (104) appeared to be extremely solid and uniform in areas, suggesting that it may have been a clay lining for the feature. The grey clay (104) was sealed by a c.0.9m deposit of redeposited natural gravel (102) and c.0.2m of brown silty topsoil (100) (Figure 4).



Plate 3: View northeast of Trench 2



Plate 4: View southwest of feature [103]

4.3 DISCUSSION

- 4.3.1 It was clear from the archaeological evaluation that the proposed development site has been heavily disturbed in the past, probably during the construction, and subsequent demolition of the Old Castle Cinema. However, several features were revealed which probably relate to the tannery that once occupied the site. Within Trench 1, a stone-lined culvert was sealed by a sandstone floor. It is probable that these features relate to two separate phases of the tannery. Furthermore, the pottery retrieved from the fill of the culvert dates from the 18th century, suggesting that this feature relates to the earliest phase of the tannery. It is also possible that the sub-circular feature within Trench 1 may have been the base of a tanning pit as there was an indication that the feature had been lined with clay. Although tanning pits were generally lined with clay, not enough of the feature survived to confirm this.

5 FINDS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 A total of 17 finds from three different contexts were recovered during the evaluation. These included 12 sherds of pottery, 3 bone fragments, a single shard of glass and a single clay pipe fragment.
- 5.1.2 The finds were cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines, and recorded under the supervision of F.Giecco (NPA Ltd Technical Director).

5.2 ASSESSMENT

- 5.2.1 Twelve sherds of pottery were retrieved from three separate contexts. These included a single sherd of late 19th century tin glazed red earthenware from context (105), a single sherd of late 19th/early 20th century porcelain from context (108), and 10 sherds of pottery from the fill (111) of the stone-lined culvert [110]. All of the pottery from the culvert was 18th century in date and domestic in nature, and included five sherds of buff fabric coarse ware, two sherds of Staffordshire trailed slip red earthenware, a single sherd of salt glazed stoneware, a fragment of a Delftware plate, and a fragment of a Crabstock teapot spout.
- 5.2.2 A single shard of green glass was retrieved from context (108). The date of the glass late 19th/early 20th century.
- 5.2.3 A single fragment of clay pipe stem was retrieved from the fill (111) of the culvert [110]. Although clay pipe fragments can be difficult to date, given the date of the associated pottery, it would not be unreasonable to assign the clay pipe fragment an 18th century provenance.
- 5.2.4 Three bone fragments were also recovered from the fill of the stone-lined culvert, probably all from sheep.

Context	Trench	Material	Quantity	Period
105	1	Pottery	1	C19th
108	1	Pottery	1	C19th/20th
108	1	Glass	1	C19th/20th
111	1	Pottery	10	C18th
111	1	Bone	3	C18th?
111	1	Clay Pipe	1	C18th?

Table 1: Finds Table of Artefacts Recovered from the Evaluation.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 During the archaeological field evaluation at The Old Castle Cinema, Egremont, two trenches were excavated covering 27.05m² of the proposed development area. The purpose of the evaluation was to establish the nature and extent of below ground archaeological remains within the vicinity.
- 6.1.2 It was clear from the archaeological evaluation that the proposed development site has been heavily disturbed in the past, probably during the construction, and subsequent demolition of the Old Castle Cinema. However, several features were revealed which probably relate to the tannery that once occupied the site. Furthermore, the dating and stratigraphy of these features suggest that they belong to two separate phases of the tannery. The dating of one of these features places it within the earliest phase of the tannery in the early/mid-eighteenth century.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.2.1 Given the extensive disturbance of the proposed development site, it is unclear whether further remains are preserved elsewhere, although given the results of the present evaluation and the evaluation undertaken by NPA Ltd in 2003, it is probable that the level of archaeological preservation is limited. However, based upon the results of the present study, there may be a narrow band of surviving archaeology on the immediate street frontage that could reveal more information regarding the 18th/19th century tannery which once occupied the site.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT TABLE

Context Number	Context Type	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Geological	Natural Substrate
102	Deposit	Redeposited Natural
103	Cut	Possible Tanning Pit
104	Fill	Fill of [103]
105	Deposit	Mixed Rubbish
106	Deposit	Flagged Surface
107	Cut	Foundation Trench
108	Fill	Fill of [107]
109	Cut	Cut for Culvert (110)
110	Structure	Stone Culvert
111	Fill	Fill of (110)

Table 2: List of Contexts issued during the Evaluation

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES



North Pennines Archaeology Ltd
2010

PROJECT: Old Castle Cinema, Egremont

SCALE: 1:50 000 at A4

REPORT No: CP1367

CLIENT Martin Cuthell Ltd

DRAWN BY: DJ

DATE: December 2010

FIGURE: 1

KEY:

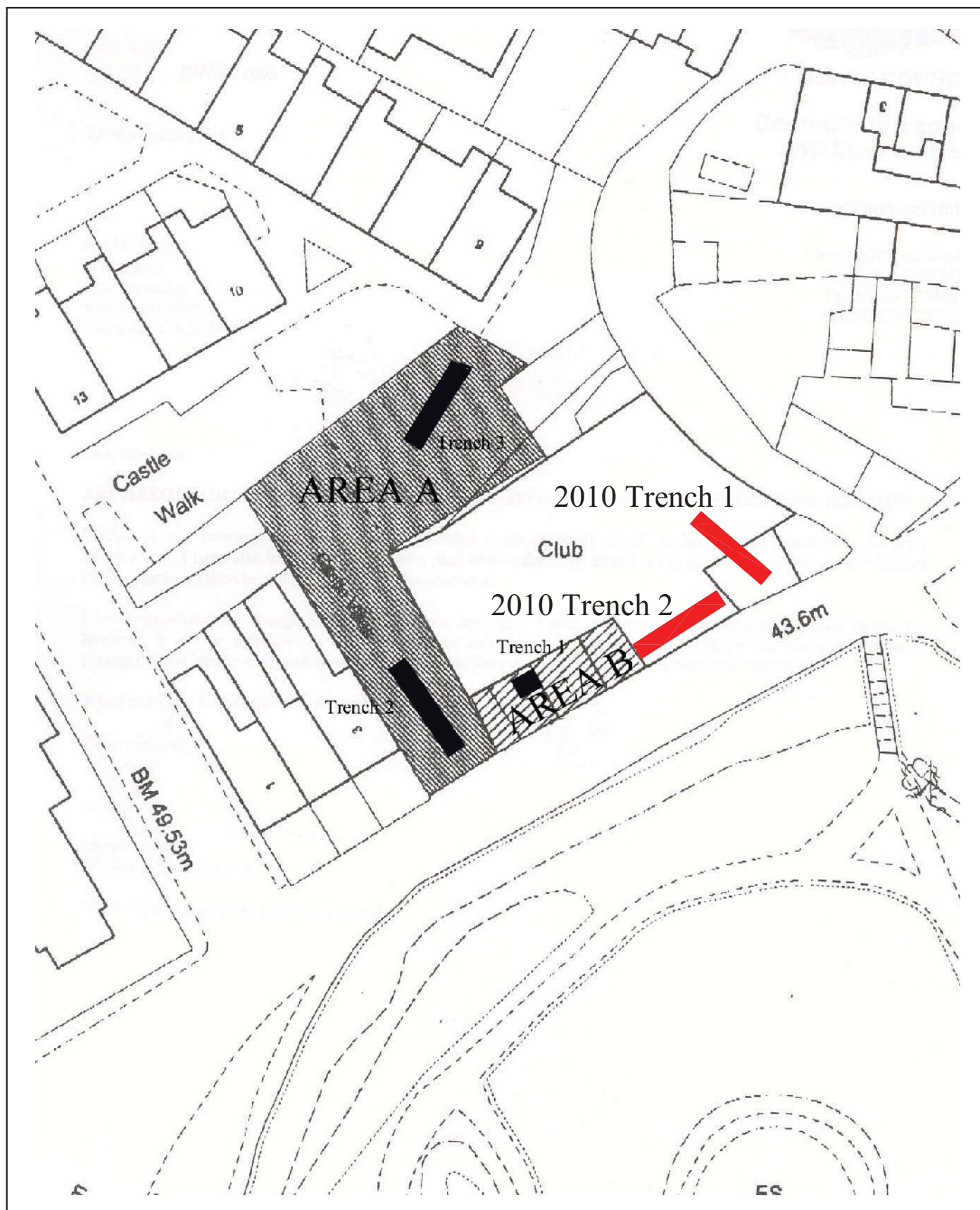


site location



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Figure 1: Site Location







 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2010</p>	<p>PROJECT: Old Castle Cinema, Egremont</p> <p>SCALE: 1:500 at A4</p> <p>REPORT No: CP1367/10</p> <p>CLIENT: Martin Cuthell Ltd</p> <p>DRAWN BY: DJ</p> <p>DATE: December 2010</p> <p>FIGURE: Figure 2</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> NPA 2010 evaluation trench</p> <p> NPA 2003 evaluation trench</p>	 <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>
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Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

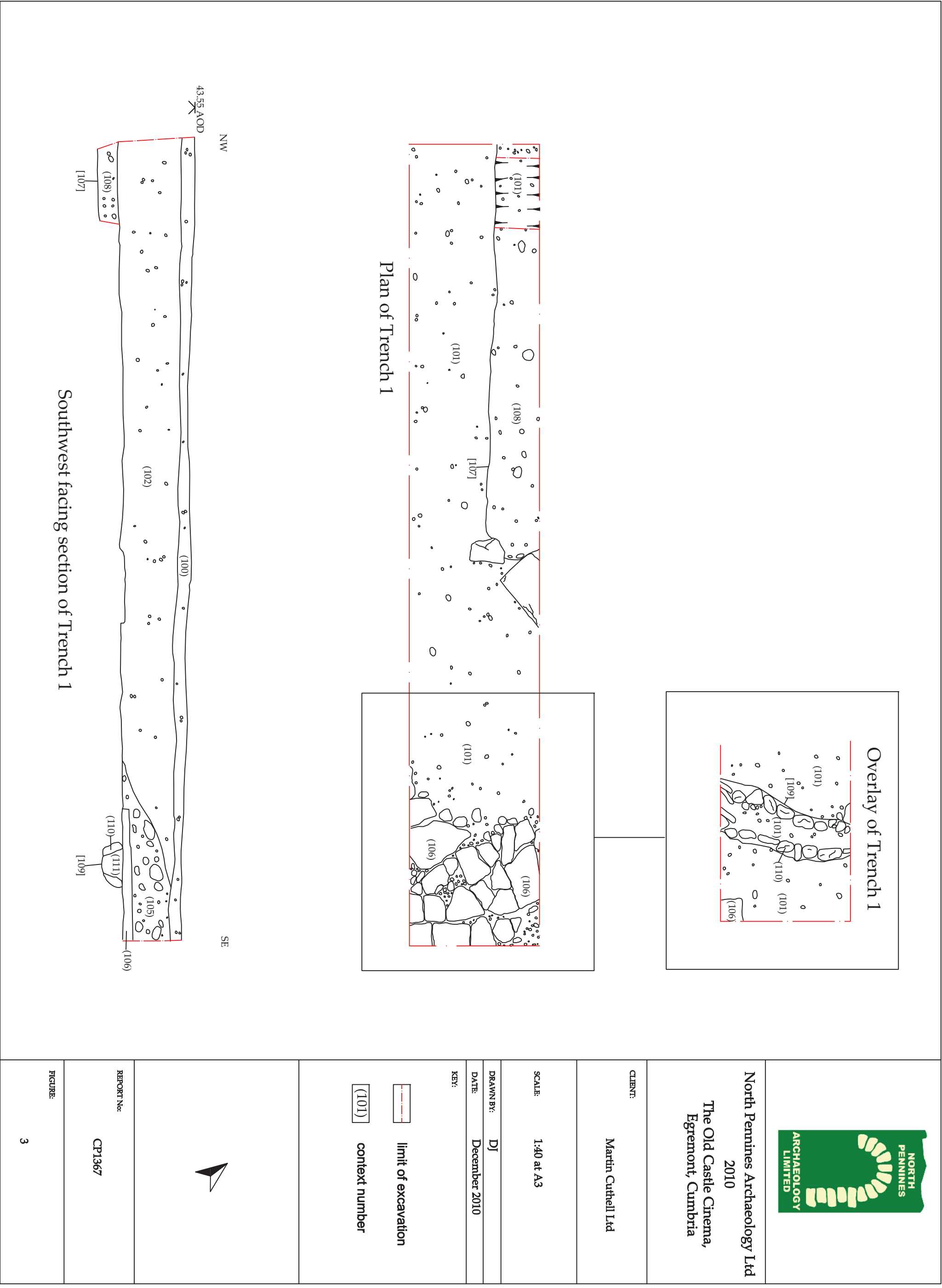


Figure 3: Plan and section of Trench 1



Figure 4: Plan and section of Trench 2