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# **NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

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**Client Report No. 218/05**

**REPORT ON  
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT  
AND FIELD EVALUATION  
AT CUMCATCH FARM,  
BRAMPTON,  
CUMBRIA**

**For  
MR W.DOTCHIN  
NGR NY 5475 6120**

**Planning Application Nos:  
1/04/0808, 1/04/0809, 1/04/0810**

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## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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In June 2005 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological desk-based assessment and field evaluation at Cumcatch Farm, Brampton, Cumbria. The work was requested in response to a series of planning applications for two agricultural buildings and a workshop, a scheme considered to affect an area of high archaeological potential. The work conformed to the standards set out in a brief provided by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service.

The work involved the consultation of the County Sites and Monuments Record in Kendal and the County Record Office, Carlisle, in order to assess the existing information regarding the site's historic, archaeological, topographical and geographical context prior to the commencement of fieldwork. This involved the collection of all readily available information regarding the archaeological landscape of the study area, including the locations and settings of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Parks and Gardens and other, non-designated archaeological remains. This was followed by a visual site inspection and the excavation of a series of trial trenches in order to assess the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains.

No archaeological deposits were observed within any of the trenches. The natural substrate was observed at a depth of between 0.90m and 1.40m below ground level.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The project was managed and fieldwork directed by Chris Jones BA, MA, AIFA, assisted by Alan James and Odele Smith. The report was written by Chris Jones and edited by Juliet Reeves.

## **1 INTRODUCTION AND LOCATION**

- 1.1 In June 2005 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological field evaluation at Cumcatch Farm, Brampton, Cumbria on behalf of Mr W.Dotchin. The work was required in a brief provided by Jeremy Parsons of Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES, 2005) in response to a series of planning applications for the construction of two agricultural buildings and a workshop.
- 1.2 The site is located on the south side of modern A69 Brampton bypass. The area is shown in Figure 1.
- 1.3 The site is situated within a gently undulating landscape, at a height of approximately 138m AOD. The geology of the area consists of red St Bees sandstone overlain by reddish till (SSEW 1984).

## **2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY**

- 2.1 The work undertaken consisted of a desk-based assessment, visual site inspection and field evaluation.

### **2.2 PROJECT DESIGN**

- 2.2.1 A project design was prepared in response to a brief prepared by Cumbria County Council Archaeology Service and English Heritage for an archaeological field evaluation. This included a detailed specification of works to be carried out, which consisted of a desk-based assessment prior to fieldwork, a visual site inspection, the excavation of a series of trial trenches and a programme of post excavation and reporting.

### **2.3 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

- 2.3.1 The assessment involved the consultation of the Cumbria County Council Sites and Monuments Record, Kendal. 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.
- 2.3.2 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.
- 2.3.3 Further documentary study was undertaken at the County Record Office, Carlisle, which involved the collection of all relevant historical maps and documents including surveys, Tithes and Enclosure Maps, Acts of Parliament and early Ordnance Survey maps.
- 2.3.4 The desk study was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (IFA 1994).

## **2.4 VISUAL SITE INSPECTION**

2.4.1 A visual site inspection was undertaken by Chris Jones prior to the commencement of fieldwork which found neither hazards to health or safety nor any constraints to undertaking fieldwork, such as Tree Preservation Orders of public rights of way.

2.4.2 The walkover survey viewed the area to the east of the farm buildings for any visible archaeological remains and found none. According to the client, Mr Dotchin, the area of the footprint of the workshop and easternmost agricultural building had been disturbed through construction of the A69 Brampton by-pass and by groundworks undertaken as part of farming practices. The field showed no above-ground evidence of recent disturbance and consisted of gently undulating grassland.

## **2.5 FIELD EVALUATION**

2.4.1 The field evaluation consisted of the excavation of 2 linear trial trenches measuring 15m x 2m which provided a 5% sample of an area 900m<sup>2</sup>. This was in order to produce a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relevant importance against known development proposals.

2.4.2 In summary, the main objectives of the excavation were:

- to establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these were they are 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 paleoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

2.4.3 Each trench was mechanically excavated by a JCB 3CX excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision, to the natural substrate. Each trench was then manually cleaned and any putative archaeological features investigated.

2.4.4 Photography was undertaken using Canon EOS 100 and EOS 300V Single Lens Reflex (SLR) cameras. A photographic record was made using digital photography, 200 ISO Colour Print and Colour Slide film.

2.4.5 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (IFA 1994).

## **2.5 PROJECT ARCHIVE**

2.5.1 The full archive has been produced to a professional standard in accordance with the current English Heritage guidelines set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 1991). The archive will be deposited within an appropriate repository and a copy of the report given to the County Sites and Monuments Record, where viewing will be available on

request. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA 05 SRW-A.

### 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There is no direct evidence of prehistoric settlement at the site although a number of prehistoric monuments are known to exist in and around Brampton, and the area is known to have been occupied since the Mesolithic period (Giecco, 2002: 10).
- 3.2 Following the Roman occupation of northern England around AD 70, the region formed part of the northern frontier of the Roman Empire. Hadrian's Wall, begun in AD 122, was constructed between the Tyne and the Solway to defend this frontier. The wall, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and World Heritage Site is located approximately 4 miles north of the proposed development area. Other sites of Roman date in the area include a substantial Roman fort close to Brampton Old Church, several Romano-British farmsteads (Blake 1959), a nearby Roman road (the Stanegate) and a Roman auxiliary tiler (Hogg 1965).
- 3.3 The town of Brampton was in existence by the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, and following the accession of the Lands of Carlisle to Henry II from the Scots in 1158, the area became part of the barony of Gilsland (Giecco, *ibid*).
- 3.4 Brampton was granted a market charter in 1252, which indicates increasing prosperity in the area at this time.
- 3.5 Earthworks thought to represent house platforms, garths, enclosures and field systems can be seen on aerial photographs in the field directly adjacent to the Cumcatch farm to the southeast, centred on NGR 55306120. A combination of complex factors including declining prosperity and deteriorating climate caused the abandonment of many small hamlets and settlements throughout England during the fourteenth century, and a medieval date for these earthworks is therefore possible. As no excavation has ever been carried out at the site a medieval date cannot be confirmed.
- 3.6 The region was frequently ravaged by cross-border conflict during the many periods of Anglo-Scottish hostility, prior to the Union of the Crowns in 1603. The late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries saw the construction of numerous substantial stone built houses or bastles to protect the inhabitants and their animals from raiding parties operating from both sides of the border. Cumcatch farm itself is the site of the fragmentary remains of a bastle house, converted for use as a byre during the nineteenth century and currently grade II listed (Cumbria Sites and Monuments Record, SMR 242, LBSMR 20357). This building was the subject of a recent survey prior to conversion work (Ryder, 2004) and is listed Grade II.
- 3.7 The later farm buildings are themselves of historical interest and represent a multi-phased planned farmstead dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Structures associated with the farm buildings included a 19<sup>th</sup> century gin-gang, demolished in 1972 (*ibid*).



## **4 RESULTS**

- 4.1 The evaluation was undertaken by Chris Jones BA, MA, AIFA, Project Archaeologist, assisted by Alan James and Odele Smith.
- 4.2 Two linear trial trenches were excavated within the footprint of the westernmost agricultural building.
- 4.3 All references to cardinal directions refer to site grid north. Heights refer to the depth below current ground level.
- 4.4 Trench 1 measured 15m x 2m and was oriented northwest - southeast. The natural substrate was observed at a depth of 0.90m and consisted of reddish brown sandy gravel (**101**), which was sealed by a series of layers of redeposited material (**102 – 103**). Context 103 was sealed by a thin turf layer (**100**). No archaeological features were observed within this trench with the exception of modern service trenches identified by the client.
- 4.5 Trench 2 was measured 15m x 2m and was oriented northeast – southwest. The natural substrate was observed at a depth of 1.40m and consisted of reddish brown sandy gravel (**101**), which was sealed by a layer of imported topsoil (**102**), which was in turn sealed by a thin turf layer (**100**). No archaeological features were observed within this trench with the exception of a modern service trench also observed in trench 1 and identified by the client as a water-pipe trench.

## **5 THE FINDS**

- 5.1 No artefacts were recovered from any stratified contexts. A few modern (i.e. late 20<sup>th</sup> century) items were discovered during a metal detector survey, none of which were retained.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 No archaeological deposits were observed within any of the trenches.

## 7 **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- English Heritage (1991) *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*. London: English Heritage.
- Giecco, F.O. (2001) *North Pennines Heritage Trust Excavation Manual*. Unpublished: North Pennines Heritage Trust..
- IFA (1994) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*. Reading: Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- Jones, C.J. (2005) *Project Design for an Archaeological Field Evaluation at Cumcatch Farm, Brampton, Cumbria* North Pennines Archaeology Ltd. Project Design No. 218.
- Parsons, J.N. (2005) Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation on land at Cumcatch Farm, Brampton, Cumbria. Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service.

**8 APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF CONTEXTS**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
100	Deposit	Topsoil
101	Deposit	Reddish brown sandy gravel
102	Deposit	Imported topsoil
103	Deposit	Redeposited sandy gravel

*Table 1: Index of Contexts*

**9 APPENDIX 2 – ILLUSTRATIONS**



*Plate 1: Trench 1. Looking North-West.*



*Plate 2: Trench 2. Looking South-West.*





*Plate 3: Proposed location of workshop, looking north.*



*Plate 4: Proposed location of easternmost agricultural building, looking south.*