
NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Client Report No. CP/183/05

**DESK BASED ASSESMENT
AND REPORT ON
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF AT
KIRKLAND HOUSE,
PORT CARLISLE,
CUMBRIA**

NGR: NY 2434 6171

**Planning Application #
2/04/0226**

**FOR
MR HOGG**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Mr Hogg of Kirkland House Farm to carry out a rapid desk based assessment and maintain an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the placement of new septic tank. The work was undertaken as a condition on planning consent for the conversion of a milking parlour to a walkers hostel, due to the sites location within 30 metres of Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site (SAM 26088).

The desk-based assessment showed that archaeology pertaining to the Roman period dominated the area although later activity, particularly during the 19th century also was recognised in the area. The watching brief was of a limited nature and found no archaeological deposits within the trench excavated for the septic tank.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Hogg who gave help and hospitality during the watching brief.

The desk-based assessment was undertaken by Phil Jefferson BA, MA, PIFA and the watching brief maintained by Frank Giecco BA, Dip Arch, AIFA.

The report was written by Frank Giecco and Phil Jefferson, and edited by Juliet Reeves BA. Overall responsibility for the project rested with Frank Giecco, NPA Principal Archaeologist and Technical Director.

1 INTRODUCTION AND LOCATION

- 1.1 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was invited by Mr Hogg of Kirkland House Farm to carry out a rapid desk based assessment and maintain an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a new septic tank.
- 1.2 The proposed work involved the excavation of a single trench measuring 3m by 3m to a depth of 1.5m. This trench was situated approximately 30m to the north of Hadrian's wall within the area of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site (SAM 26088), work could therefore damage or destroy potential archaeological remains that may be situated to the north of wall. As a result, a brief for this project was produced by Cumbria County Council (CCC) Archaeology Service requiring a desk-based assessment, and a watching brief to be maintained during all groundworks.
- 1.3 The work consisted of a desk-based assessment, including the collection of all relevant material from the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the examination of any available maps (printed and manuscript), aerial photographs and other relevant background material. This was followed by a visual examination on site by an archaeologist. Finally, an archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of the sewer trench.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken within the limits of the site.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 3.1.1 A project design was prepared in response to a brief prepared by Cumbria County Council Archaeology Service. This included a detailed specification of works to be carried out, which consisted of a desk-based assessment prior to the watching brief.

3.2 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 3.2.1 The desk-based assessment involved the consultation of the Carlisle Records Office and the Sites and Monuments Record in the first instance. This included the collection of all available information held within the SMR database, 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.
- 3.2.2 Following this the County Records Office in Kendal was also consulted in order to study maps and documents relevant to the study area. This included the collection of historic maps, including Tithes or Enclosure maps and early Ordnance Survey maps. 18th and 19th century mapping was also given particular emphasis given the nature of land use changes during this period. Several secondary sources and journals, such as the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, were also consulted.

- 3.2.3 All available aerial photographs were studied in order to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the changing landscape of the survey area.
- 3.2.4 Some use of the internet was made including a search of Genuki (<http://www.genuki.co.uk>) and the National Monuments Record (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk>).
- 3.2.5 The desk-based assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (IFA 1994).

3.3 WATCHING BRIEF

- 3.3.1 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;
 - adequate time to give the watching archaeologist, if any archaeological remains were uncovered during the project, he/she was enabled to carry out further excavation and recording;
 - to produce a photographic record of all contexts using colour digital, 35mm colour print and monochrome formats as applicable,
 - to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
 - finds were managed by Frank Giecco. The company will undertake first-aid conservation, but if further stabilisation is required there will be consultations with staff from the University of Durham and the LDNPA Archaeologist.
 - any significant environmental deposits encountered would be sampled according to the NPA standard sampling procedure and in consultation with appropriate specialists. The recommended sample sizes for dry deposits being 30-60 litres and for wet deposits the sample sizes should be approximately 5 litres;
 - a site archive will be prepared in accordance with MAP2 standards (English Heritage, 1991).
 - depending upon the results of the work, to prepare a report for publication;
- 3.3.2 This process culminated in the production of a bound client report with each page and paragraph numbered, following the guidance set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (2nd Edition, 1991), including:
- a site location plan, related to the national grid;
 - the dates on which the project was undertaken;
 - a concise, non-technical summary of the results;
 - a description of the methodology employed, work undertaken and the results;
 - plans and sections at an appropriate scale;

- a list of, and spot dates for, any finds recovered and a description and interpretation of the deposits identified;
- a description of any environmental or any other specialist work undertaken and the results obtained;
- a table summarising the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and any spot dating of significant finds;
- recommendations for further analysis if applicable.

3.4 PROJECT ARCHIVE

- 3.4.1 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, 2nd 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.
- 3.4.2 The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA 05 KHP-A.

4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.1 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY OF THE STUDY

- 4.1.1 Kirkland House farm is situated on the outskirts of Port Carlisle approximately 17 kilometres west north west of Carlisle on the Solway Firth (figures 1 and 2), centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference NY 2434 6171. To the south-east lie the villages of Glasson and Drumburgh. Two kilometres to the west lies Bowness-on-Solway.
- 4.1.2 The area under investigation lies on the flat, low lying coastal plain at approximately 6 metres above Ordnance Datum only a short distance from the high tide zone of the Solway Firth. The site lies adjacent to a number of farm buildings set back off the main road with the surrounding area consisting of the Solway estuary and agricultural land.
- 4.1.3 The solid geology of the area comprises Triassic mudstones overlain by drift deposits of raised beach and marine deposits (British Geological Survey).

5 RESULTS

5.1 THE DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

- 5.1.1 Information for the rapid desk-based assessment was collated from a number of sources. These included the Cumbria SMR and Carlisle Archives. These sources allowed the examination of historic mapping, individual sites and monument records, aerial photography as well as other documentary sources.
- 5.1.2 The SMR was consulted examining all records within one kilometre of the site to aid understanding of the archaeological landscape context of the site.

- 5.1.3 **ROMAN** – the remains of the Roman frontier structures associated with Hadrian’s Wall dominate the archaeological record in this area. The course of the wall itself is believed to pass through Kirkland House, with the Vallum lying nearby to the south. Around Port Carlisle the wall is believed to have run very close to the waters edge on a slight ridge now fronted by more recent salt marshes with the wall ditch possibly absent at this point (Bellhouse, 1962; 60).
- 5.1.4 The wall itself terminated close by at Bowness-on-Solway although frontier defences are known to have carried on further around the Cumbrian coast (de la Bédoyère, 1998; 116-117). In some parts the Vallum is still visible close to Port Carlisle although the wall is no longer extant, being largely destroyed during the 19th century when it still existed as a significant earthwork (de la Bédoyère, 1998; 116).
- 5.1.5 In 1934 milecastle 78 was identified lying at a point where the wall and Vallum almost converge a few hundred metres south of Kirkland House (Collingwood Bruce, 1966; 206), at the same time the profile of the Vallum was also investigated. Approximately 30 metres north of Kirkland house turret 78a was also observed in 1948 (ibid; 206).
- 5.1.6 Traces of the remains of the Roman wall and associated features have been found throughout the area including artefacts such as coins and alter stones (Collingwood Bruce, 1966; 207)
- 5.1.7 **POST-MEDIEVAL** – In 1819 a harbour was built by the Earl of Lonsdale in Port Carlisle, with the construction of a canal following in 1823 (Pevsner, 1967; 74) that can be seen on the tithe map (figure 3). However the harbour did not flourish and the Ordnance Survey mapping between 1st edition in 1864 (figure 4) and the 3rd edition of 1925 (figure 5) show very little development or growth of the settlement or even changes to the general field layout around Port Carlisle or Kirkland. The most notable change was the construction of a railway terminating at Port Carlisle, which re-used the existing canal basin after it fell out of use.

5.2 WATCHING BRIEF

- 5.2.1 The watching brief was undertaken during a single day on the 11th of March 2005. A single trench (figure 6) was excavated measuring approximately 3m by 3m and 1.5m in depth (plate 1). Natural silty clay (context **101**) was observed beneath 0.60m of made up ground (context **100**). This thick deposit of mixed rubble and brick was of a 20th century date, containing machine made bricks and remnants of black polythene. No features of archaeological note were observed during the watching brief.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Although the desk-based assessment has shown that the area is rich in potential for archaeological remains, particularly those relating to the Roman period, the watching brief revealed no significant archaeological features or deposits within the excavated area. The limited area investigated means that it is not possible to predict if any archaeological deposits exist within the immediate area of the projected line of the wall or if there has been any significant levels of truncation.

7

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Cartographic sources:

The following maps were examined at the Cumbria Records Office (Carlisle):

1838- Bowness Tithe map.....PR119/25

1864- Ordnance Survey 1st edition (25" to 1 mile)..... Cumberland Sheet XV.5

1900- Ordnance Survey 2nd edition (25" to 1 mile)..... Cumberland Sheet XV.5

1925- Ordnance Survey 3rd edition (25" to 1 mile)..... Cumberland Sheet XV.5

8 APPENDICES

8.1 APPENDIX 1: ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1: Map of site and surrounding area.

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Figure 2: Map of site and surrounding area.

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Figure 3: Tithe map of 1838 (CRO Carlisle- PR119/25).

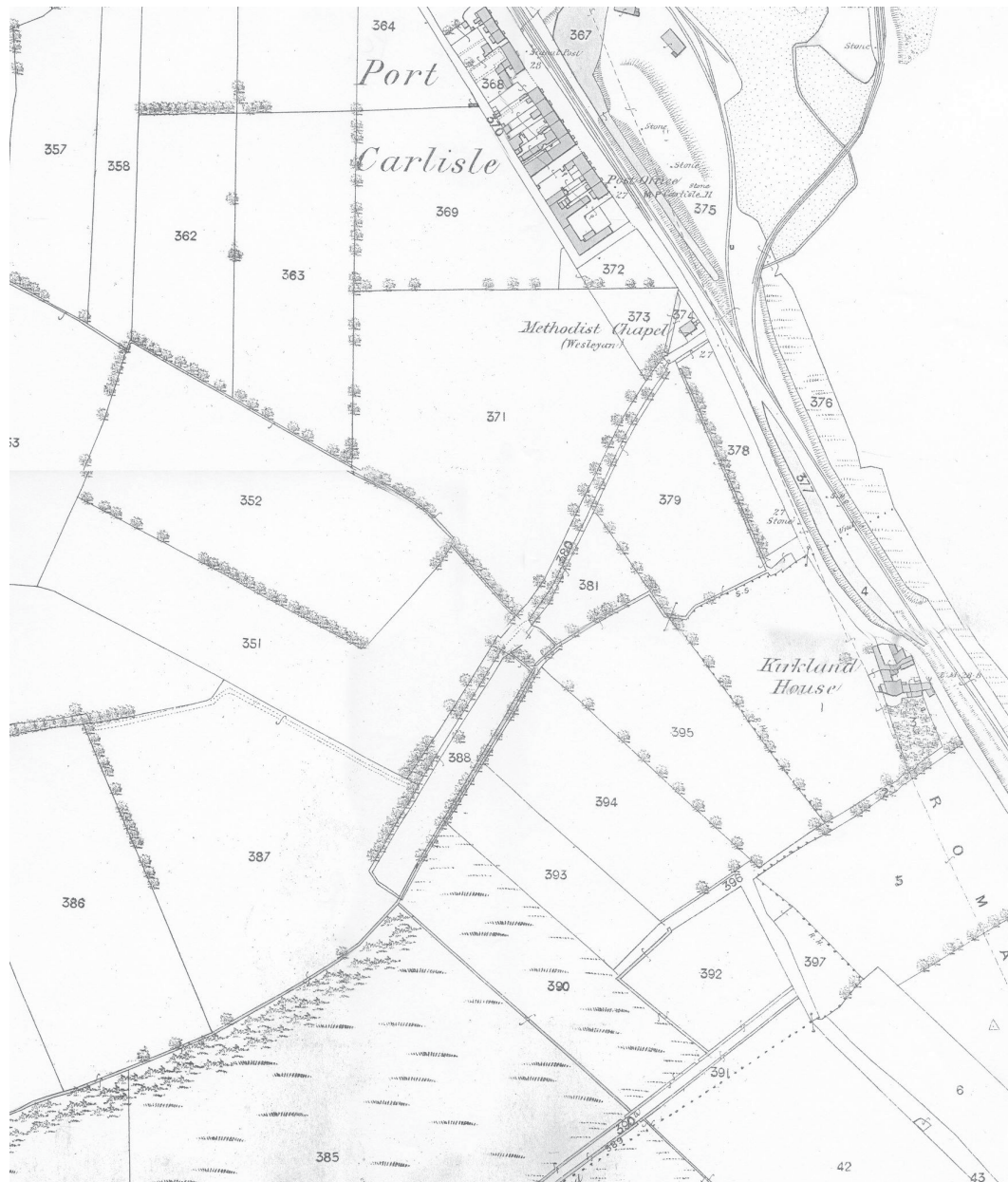


Figure 4: 1st edition OS map of 1864, 25" to 1 mile (CRO Carlisle- Sheet XV.5).



Figure 5: 3rd edition OS map of 1925, 25" to 1 mile (CRO Carlisle- Sheet XV.5).

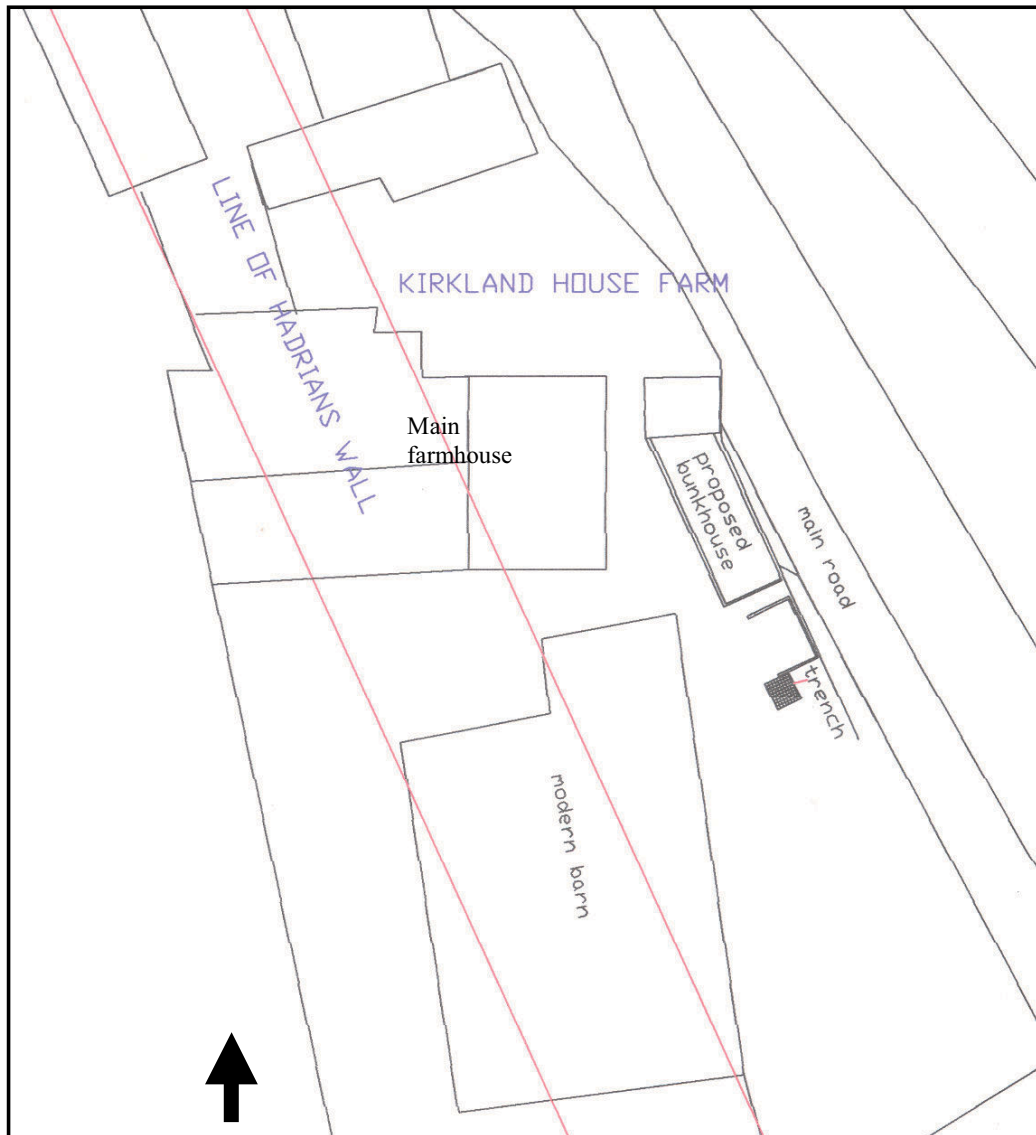


Figure 6: *Location of trench excavated.*

Scale 1:1000



Plate 1: View of deposits within excavated area.