NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Client Report No. 76/05

DESK BASED ASSESMENT AND REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT MONKHILL, CUMBRIA

NGR: NY 345 586

FOR UNITED UTILITIES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Julia Collinson of United Utilities, to undertake archaeological work at Monkhill, Carlisle, Cumbria as required in a brief prepared by Cumbria County Council Archaeology Service. The brief required the collation of a desk-based assessment of the archaeology within the area and the maintenance of a watching brief on all intrusive groundwork associated with the replacement of electricity cables.

The groundworks undertaken were in the vicinity of the projected line of the Vallum, part of Hadrian's Wall and therefore a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No. 26118). A combination of the desk-based assessment and the watching brief would record not just the position of the Vallum but any archaeological deposits that may have been affected by such work.

During the watching brief a number of archaeological features were encountered including some deposits that may relate to the Vallum itself.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to the following people and institutions that gave help and assistance during the compilation of this report: Julia Collinson and Linda Bowie, United Utilities, and the staff of the Carlisle Records office.

The desk-based assessment was compiled by, and the watching brief maintained by Phil Jefferson BA, MA, PIFA.

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

1 Introduction And Location

- 1.1 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd was invited by Julia Collinson of United Utilities to maintain an archaeological watching brief along the route of a replacement low voltage electricity cable. The site is positioned at NY 345 586, and consists of an area of tarmac road surface and grass covered verges running through the village of Monkhill, Carlisle.
- 1.2 The groundworks were undertaken on land over the projected line of the Vallum at Monkhill, recorded on the sites and monuments record as (5782) and Scheduled Ancient Monument number (26118). Such work could damage or destroy any shallow archaeological features, in addition to disturbing the upper surface of deeper features. 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 associated with the cable replacement scheme.
- 1.3 The work consisted of a desk-based assessment for the route and immediate surrounding area, including the collection of all relevant material from the CCC Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and the examination of any available maps (printed and manuscript), aerial photographs and other relevant background material. Additionally an archaeological watching brief of all sections of the electricity line route was maintained.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 No previous archaeological work is known to have taken place within the confines of the site. Crop marks have been recorded near Monkhill and may point to the presence of a temporary fort or marching camp. The origins of Monkhill may date back to the medieval period and it is possible that some evidence of this medieval settlement may have been affected by this scheme.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 PROJECT DESIGN

3.1.1 A project design was prepared in response to a project brief prepared by the CCC Archaeology Service. This included a detailed specification of works to be carried out, which consisted of a desk-based assessment prior to fieldwork, the monitoring of the excavation of the cable trench and a programme of post excavation and reporting.

3.2 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

3.2.1 The desk-based assessment involved the consultation of the Cumbria County 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 Carlisle was also consulted in order to study maps and documents relevant to the study area. This included the collection of historic maps, including Tithe or Enclosure maps and early Ordnance Survey maps. 18th and 19th century mapping will also be 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. This involved both the consultation of the Cumbria County Council SMR in Kendal and English Heritage's National Monuments Record in Swindon.
- 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;
 - to establish if possible the exact position of the Vallum;
 - to produce a photographic record of all contexts using colour digital, 35mm colour print and monochrome formats as applicable, each photograph including a graduated metric scale;
 - to recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
 - to sample environmental deposits according to the NPA standard sampling procedure and in consultation with appropriate specialists;
 - to create a site archive was prepared in accordance with MAP2 standards (English Heritage, 1991).
- 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. The archive can be accessed under the unique project identifier NPA 05 MNK-A.

4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.1 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND HYDROLOGY OF THE STUDY AREA

- 4.1.1 Monkhill is a small village situated around a crossroads centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) NY 3435 5865 (figure 1). The village lies 1 kilometre southwest of Beaumont and the closest course of the River Eden. Kirkandrews-on-Eden is situated 1 kilometre to the east, and Burgh by Sands 1.5 kilometres to the west.
- 4.1.2 The area under investigation lies on a small hill rising from approximately 20 to 35 metres above Ordnance Datum. The route of the electricity cable runs through the roads and verges centred on the crossroads at the centre of the village. The area it runs through is largely developed with residential properties, gardens and the road system, in addition to a small chapel. Beyond the settlement is gently undulating farmland with hedged boundaries.
- 4.1.3 The solid geology of the area comprises Triassic mudstones, overlain by drift deposits of boulder clay and morainic drift (British Geological Survey).

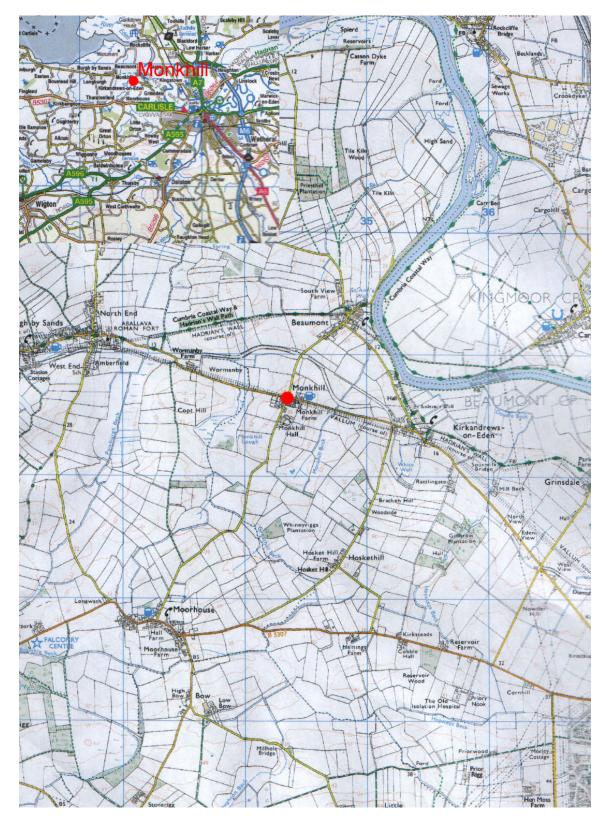


Figure 1: Map of site and surrounding area.

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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 search provided a number of individual records for Monkhill and the immediate surrounds (figure 2, Appendix 1). These records represent known sites or findspots within the study area that can help place the material observed during the watching brief into its broader context. The search results will be discussed in chronological order.
- 5.1.3 **PREHISTORY** Nothing has so far been recorded relating to the prehistoric past within Monkhill and its immediate surrounds.
- 5.1.4 **ROMAN** Within the study area a number of cropmarks observed from aerial reconnaissance have been related to the Roman period. Three sides of both Beaumont Roman Temporary Camp (**SMR number 425**) and Monkhill Temporary Roman Camp (**426**) have been recognised from aerial photographs the full extent or survival of the remains is unknown.
- 5.1.5 A further cropmark of a 20-metre diameter circular feature has also been observed by the study of aerial photographs. this has been interpreted as Monkhill Watch Tower (15237). This feature is one of a number of similar watchtowers in an inter-visible chain running east to west.
- 5.1.6 The most significant Roman remains within Monkhill comprise part of the Vallum for Hadrian's Wall (SMR group number 5782, Scheduled Ancient Monument 26118). The Wall was constructed in response to the Emperor Hadrian's visit in 122 AD, with its construction starting at that time under governor Aulus Platorius (de la Bédoyère 2002; 13-14). Within a few years of the start of its construction forts were being added along its length and it was around this time that the Vallum was added (ibid; 18).
- 5.1.7 In general the Vallum lay around 35 metres south of the Wall itself, but does vary considerably (ibid; 18-19). This is what happens near Monkhill; the Wall departs from Vallum at Kirkandrews and follows a series of bluffs to the north to Beaumont while the Vallum continues straight. As it passes through Monkhill the current road roughly follows the line of the Vallum's route, before the wall rejoins the Vallum near Burgh-by Sands (Collingwood Bruce, 1966; 199). The land between Vallum and Wall appears to be demarcated as a military zone or corridor with crossings built opposite forts which would allow the funnelling of cross wall traffic into easily policed crossings (de la Bédoyère 2002; 18-19).
- 5.1.8 The general character of the Vallum as recorded elsewhere along its length shows that it consisted of a flat bottomed ditch just under six metres wide which was flanked on both sides by a bank measuring three metres high and six metres wide. These banks were usually situated around nine metres away from the ditch

(de la Bédoyère, 2002; 18). The banks flanking the ditch were often neatly revetted (Shotter, 1996; 64) and even in poor terrain the Vallum was present, showing how much of an integral part of the wall it was (Shotter, 1996; 65).

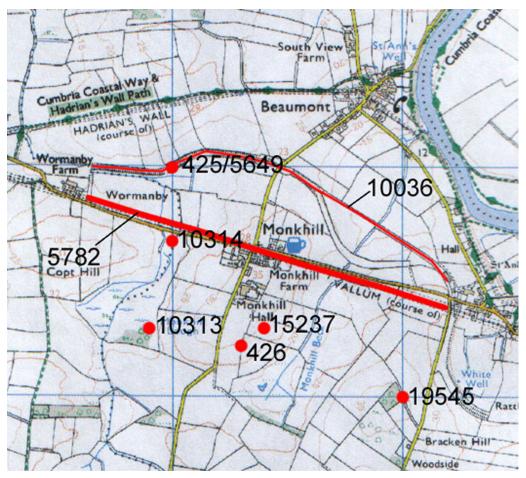


Figure 2: Location of Sites and Monuments Records within and around Monkhill

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- 5.1.9 **MEDIEVAL** (see figure 2) Two records exist within the SMR relating to medieval activity close to Monkhill. The locations of both are not accurately known. The first is Castle Green Motte Site, Beaumont on Eden (5649). This motte, belonging to the Le Brun family was probably abandoned in the 14th century. It is believed to be set on a former Roman milecastle which would mean that it is closer to Beaumont than Monkhill; however, such a structure could suggest that a wider amount of activity was occurring during this period, possibly stretching towards Monkhill.
- 5.1.10 The second record (19545) relates to the finding of a later medieval reduced green ware jug. This probably dates to the 15th century and is an indicator of activities occurring in the area at that time.

- 5.1.11 **POST-MEDIEVAL (see figure 2)** The commons of Burgh Barony, in which Monkhill is situated, were allocated and divided up by agreement with the Lord of the Manor in 1680, (Nicolson & Burn, 1976; 224). This would mean a change in land use and enclosure around this period.
- The site of Monkhill Mill (10314) lies to the west of the village and used to be a Corn Mill set on the northern shore of a small reservoir. Although the date of its construction is unknown it was mentioned in an advertisement in the Cumberland Journal in 1801. The windmill (tower mill) now minus cap and sails lies close to the centre of the settlement and was probably erected in the later 18th century, and was under same ownership of nearby water mill (Hughes, 1972; 131)
- Running to the north of Monkhill, and in places re-using the route of an earlier canal lies the former line of the Carlisle and Silloth railway (**10036**). The date of construction for this is unknown although on the 1843-44 Tithe map of Burgh by Sands the railway is not present, by 1866 the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map shows the canal as disused and the railway constructed.

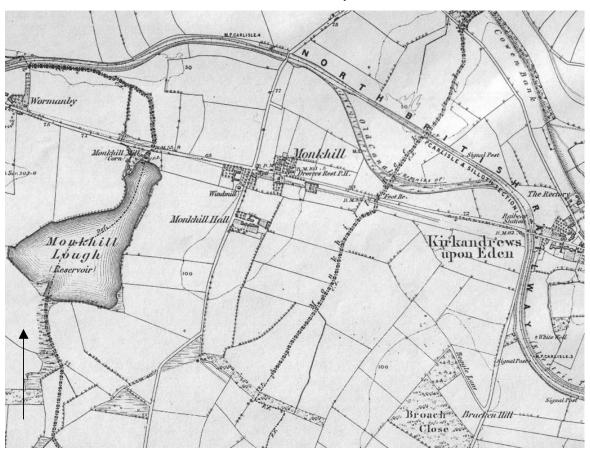


Figure 3: Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1866) Scale 6 inches to 1 mile.

5.1.14 A comparison of the historic mapping also shows changes in the enclosures, and growth of the settlement. The 1831 Corn Tithe shows relics of the earlier strip fields particularly to the south-east of the village (plate 1). On the 1866 1st

edition Ordnance Survey map many of the boundaries have been removed to make larger fields, although the general trends of the fields are still the same.

- 5.1.15 The 2nd and 3rd Edition OS maps show only minor alterations to the fields as well as the addition of several more structures within the village. The current landscape around Monkhill is relatively unaltered from this time except for further buildings being added.
- 5.1.16 **UNKNOWN** (see figure 2)— The reservoir (10313) on the northern edge of which the watermill stands is of unknown date.

5.2 WATCHING BRIEF

- 5.3.1 The watching brief was undertaken over a period of seven days between 14th March and 10th April 2005. During this time all intrusive groundwork involved with the cutting of a trench for the pipe and cable junctions were observed. Of these only two areas appeared to contain archaeological deposits, these will be described separately.
- 5.3.2 The route of the cable trench covered a total distance of approximately 100 metres, with a number of branches coming off the main north-south orientation and junctions to connect with existing services. The route of the trench and the location of individual areas discussed within the text can be found in figure 4. Deposits and features referred to in the text are described in Appendix 2.
- 5.3.3 No archaeological finds were retained from the route of the trench. Several fragments of modern and 19th century pottery and glass were observed within the topsoil, their presence was noted prior to discarding.
- 5.3.4 The cable trench maintained an average depth of 0.65 metres across the entire route and varied between 0.35 and 0.45 metres in width. It was excavated by a small rubber-tracked 360° tracked excavator using a toothed bucket.
- 5.3.5 Where no archaeological features were observed the sub-surface deposits consisted in general of topsoil (context 100) directly overlying the undisturbed natural geology (102). When on the verges of the road, and when cut through the road, a layer of tarmac (101) was recorded overlying different types of sub-base and hardcore overlying the natural.
- 5.3.6 Modern services were common throughout the route of the pipeline. These were particularly concentrated towards the edges of the roads where a large number of pipes at varying depths could be observed. The areas where there was a concentration of these services, along with the construction of the road surfaces has meant a greater degree of truncation to any underlying archaeological deposits. Due to the shallow depth of the cable trench these modern disturbances mask the presence of any archaeology that may still be intact at a greater depth.

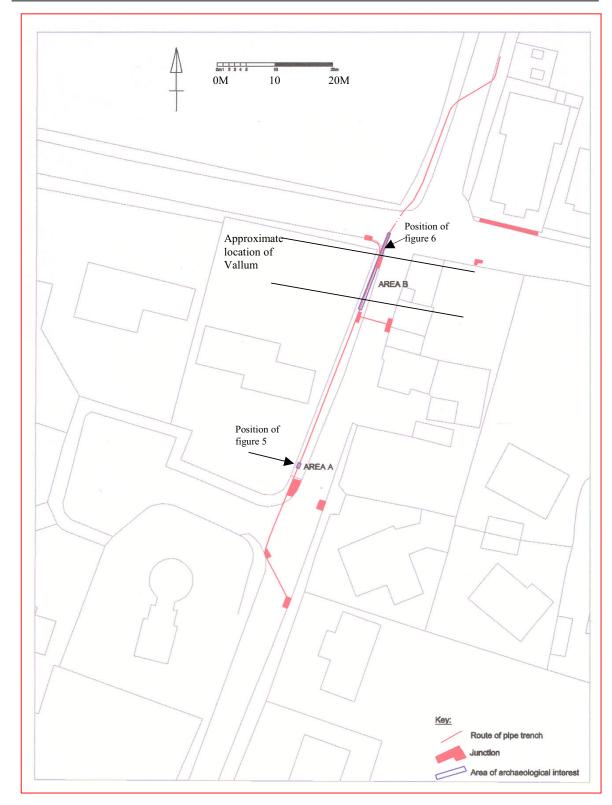


Figure 4: Location of pipe trench and areas of archaeological interest observed during watching brief. Scale as shown

- 5.3.7 **AREA A-** The first area of archaeological interest was situated on the verge of the side road 40 metres south of the main east-west road (see figure 4). In this instance a probable small, v-shaped linear feature (see plate 2) was observed (103). This was filled by a primary deposit of mid-brownish grey sandy loam (105), possibly formed through the initial erosion of the sides of the linear, and then a secondary deposit of very dark brown silty clay (104).
- 5.3.8 No dating evidence was recovered from any of these deposits. It is believed that from its profile (figure 5) and what could be observed in both sections of the cable trench it was a small linear field boundary ditch. However the nature of the watching brief meant that only a limited view was possible, making any further interpretation difficult.

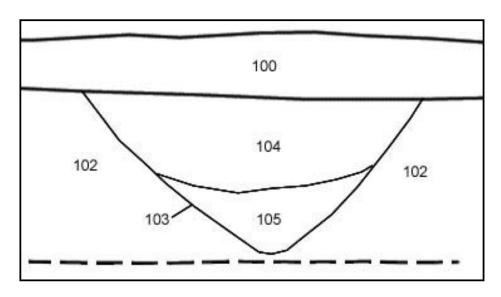


Figure 5:

East facing section of Area A showing possible linear 103 (Scale 1:20)

- 5.3.9 **AREA B-** (see figure 4) This area was also situated on the same verge as Area A although much closer to the main road. Here the natural (**102**) appeared to have been truncated and a number of deposits were observed along the base of the pipe trench. The most likely interpretation for this is for one or possibly two substantial cut features (Figure 6) to be running across the line of the pipe trench.
- 5.3.10 The cut for the southernmost feature (109) is only visible at the top of the southern edge. As with all of the deposits within this area the depth of the cable trench and the amount of truncation through modern services in this area severely hampers full investigation and interpretation. The small amount of cut 109 visible shows a uniform moderate slope on its southern side. The northern side is harder to determine. A small 'island' of possible redeposited natural was visible after 6 metres that may represent the northern side of the of this substantial feature or some deliberate infilling.

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North

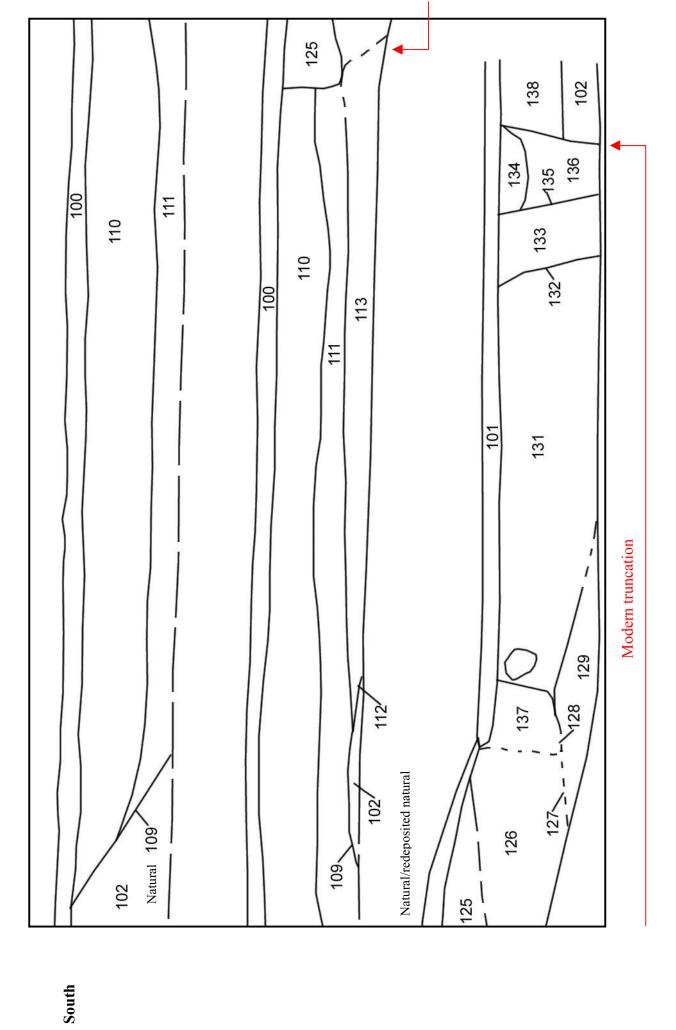


Figure 6: East facing section of Area B showing archaeological deposits and modern truncation (Scale 1:20; Split into 3 sections to retain scale)

- 5.3.11 The northern side of this small area of possible natural dips down again, and this is possibly another cut feature 112. As only a very small portion is visible it is not possible to describe. However the northern edge of this potential cut feature is not visible due to the level of modern truncation towards the north (see figure 6) and the depth of the trench. The archaeological deposits filling this feature are visible for four metres from its southern edge before a series of service trenches disturbs it, the natural (102) is not visible again for a further five metres.
- 5.3.12 Filling this possible second cut feature is a uniform dark greyish brown clay loam (113). Only the upper surface of this deposit is visible and it is not known how deep this deposit may go. Its appearance suggests that it has been partially formed through the gradual washing in of surrounding soils rather than a rapid or deliberate backfilling event.
- 5.3.13 Overlying 113 and also forming the fill of 109 was a dark greyish brown sandy silt deposit (111). If the small deposit of mid orange brown silty clay (102) is natural which was identified between 109 and 112 the two cut features, then this deposit would suggest that cut 112 had silted up prior to the final infilling of feature 109.
- 5.3.14 After both potential features had been inilled the remaining depression was sealed by context 110, a mottled mid-brown silty sand deposit which runs across both features before being truncated by modern services to the north. As with the earlier deposits context 110 produced no finds to assist in dating this final phase of infilling. Context 110 was then cut by a series of modern service trenches.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- Both features 109 and 112, the probable substantial east-west oriented ditches, lie close to the projected line of the Vallum. Although the depth and general character of the features are impossible to interpret within the confines of the small cable trench it would appear likely that the deposits observed are part of the Vallum itself.
- 6.2 Cut feature 109 measures approximately 6m and the potentially earlier feature 112 between 3.2m and 7.3m; both potentially wide enough for the Vallum and possible suggesting some form of recut.
- 6.3 If the small island of natural is interpreted as redeposited, both contexts 111 and 113 would be filling the same feature with context 112 being a tip line rather than a cut. Although the width of the cut features taken as a whole (9m) would be on the wide side for the Vallum it is possible that the Vallum is running across the trench at a slight angle which would explain the excessive width.
- Regardless of the uncertainty over cut 112, the watching brief has allowed the location of the Vallum to be tied down more accurately than in the past in this area. It has also shown that where services are not present there is a good survival of remains very close to the current ground surface. Only through more extensive fieldwork could the observations of the watching brief and the character of the features observed be better understood.

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Cartographic Sources:

- Beaumont and Kirkandrews on Eden, Corn Tithes (1831) Carlisle Archives: QRX1
- Burgh by Sands, Tithe Awards (1843-44) Carlisle Archives: DRC/8/34
- 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1866), 6" to 1 mile Cumberland Sheet XVI
- 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey (1901), 25" to 1 mile Cumberland Sheet XVI.13
- 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey (1926), 25" to 1 mile Cumberland Sheet XVI.13

8 APPENDICES

8.1 APPENDIX 1: SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORDS

Cumbria SMR No.	NGR	Name	Site type	Description	Period
425	33400 0 55900 0	Beaumont Roman Temporary Camp	Frontier Defence, Temporary Camp	Temporary camp seen as a cropmark immediately south of Milecastle 71, east side approx. 135m visible, short lengths of north and south sides visible	Roman
426	33430 0 55830 0	Monkhill Temporary Roman Camp, Beaumont	Frontier Defence, Temporary Camp	Cropmarks from aerial photography show line of south side (60m visible) and east and west sides (45m visible) of temporary camp	Roman
5782		Hadrian's Wall, Vallum	SAM 26118 Frontier Defence	Group number for Hadrian's wall and related features	Roman
15237	33440 0 55840 0	Monkhill Watch Tower, Kirkandrews	Frontier defence	Cropmark on aerial photographs, one of a number of circular features in broad line. 20m in diameter	Roman
5649	33400 0 55900 0	Castle Green Motte Site, Beaumont on Eden	Motte	Motte of the Le Brun family said to be set on a milecastle, location unknown, probably abandoned in 14 th century	Medieval
19545	33500 0 55800 0	Pot find, Kirkandrews-on- Eden	Findspot	Late medieval reduced green ware jug, of probable 15 th century date	Medieval
10036	31500 0 55137 0	Holme East Waver Railway/Kirtle Bridge. Annan & Brayton Branch	Railway	Course of former railway line of unknown date	Post-Med
10314	33400 0 55867 0	Monkhill Mill Corn Mill	Watermill	Site of corn mill of unknown date on northern shore of old reservoir, mentioned in advertisement in Cumberland Journal in 1801	Post-Med
10313	33390 0 55830 0	Monkhill Lough Reservoir	Reservoir	Site of old reservoir, now marshland	Unknown

8.2 APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT RECORDS

Context No.	Туре	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil with turf cover, mid to dark brown clay loam
101	Layer	Tarmac covering road surfaces
102	Deposit	Natural, predominately mid brownish orange clay loam
103	Cut	Possible east-west oriented v-shaped linear
104	Fill	V. dark brown silty clay deposit, infilling of ditch through breakdown of surrounding topsoil, i.e. through ploughing
105	Fill	Mottled mid brownish grey sandy loam primary fill of possible linear, possibly the results of the initial erosion of material of the sides of the linear
106	Cut	Cut for concrete foundation of edge of block paving
107	Fill	Dark brown clay loam backfill of foundation cut
108	Structure	Modern concrete foundation for edge of block paving
109	Cut	Upper edge of a possibly substantial east-west oriented ditch. Base not visible and interpretation limited but could possibly be a later re-cut of a second substantial possible linear immediately to the north
110	Deposit	Mottled mid brown deposit of silty sand lying above two possible substantial ditches. Deposit could be the result of material gradually infilling the earthwork hollow formed by these two linears
111	Fill	Uniform deposit of dark greyish brown sandy silt, appears to be an upper fill of 109, but also overlies (possibly in a former depression) linear 112, therefore suggesting difference in phasing
112	Cut	Very small portion of cut on the southern side of a potential east-west linear.
113	Fill	Uniform dark greyish brown clay loam fill of possible linear 112
114	Structure	Block paving on pavement
115	Structure	Kerbstone
116	Fill	Hardcore, sand and gravel backfill of kerbstone cut
117	Cut	Stepped cut for placement of kerbstone
118	Cut	Cut for service trench
119	Fill	Mixed deposit, backfill of service trench
120	Cut	Cut for service trench
121	Fill	Pink gravel sub-base for road

122	Layer	Fine dark grey brown gravel, bedding for road
123	Fill	Concrete support for kerbstone
124	Cut	Cut for lamp-post foundation
125	Fill	Backfill of lamp-post foundation, includes concrete footing
126	Fill	Backfill of foul water pipe trench, dark brown sandy loam
127	Cut	North-south cut for foul water pipe
128	Cut	Indistinct cut for service trench
129	Deposit	Mid brown clay loam deposit that appears compacted and contains fragments of modern brick, particularly towards the upper surface. Possibly disturbed during construction of road or services
130	Structure	Exposed area of brickwork associated with adjacent water run off drain
131	Deposit	Mid brown sand and gravel mix, sub-base for road
132	Cut	Cut for service trench
133	Fill	Fill of service trench
134	Fill	Un-compacted tarmac upper fill of service trench
135	Cut	Cut for service trench
136	Fill	Fill of service trench
137	Fill	Fill of service trench
138	Deposit	Mid greyish brown sand loam surrounding hardcore, sub- base for road surface
139	Fill	Soft red sand and concrete backfill of service trench
140	Cut	Service trench close to centre of road
141	Structure	Kerbstone
142	Fill	Backfill of kerbstone trench, concrete on verge side of kerbstone
143	Cut	Cut for kerbstone
144	Fill	Redeposited natural backfill of service trench
145	Cut	Cut for service trench
146	Deposit	Disturbed ground under topsoil along verge, disused telecom cable in deposit suggests it is the result of very shallow service trench
147	Cut	Cut for service trench
148	Fill	Fill of service trench
149	Cut	Cut for large service trench

150	Fill	Gravel and stone rich backfill of service trench
151	Cut	Cut for service trench
152	Fill	Redeposited backfill of service trench
153	Cut	Cut for service trench
154	Fill	Redeposited backfill of service trench
155	Cut	Cut for service trench
156	Fill	Redeposited natural backfill of service trench
157	Cut	Cut for service trench, one of a large number running down edge of road together
158	Fill	Mid brownish grey hardcore and gravel backfill of service trench

8.3 APPENDIX 3: PLATES



Plate 1: Detail from 1831 Corn Tithe (Carlisle Archive: QRX1), north is to the right of the picture.



Plate 2: Detail of feature 103 facing west