

# CFA Archaeology Ltd

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*Environmental Impact Assessment*

*Intpretation, Design & Display*

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*Field Evaluation & Excavation*


*Historic Building Recording*

*Site & Landscape Survey*

*Geophysical Survey*

**OS Field No 7992,  
Blitterlees, Silloth,  
Cumbria.**

**Archaeological Evaluation  
Report No. 1900**

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Fig. 1 Location map showing trial trenches

Fig. 2 General view of Trench 1

Fig. 3 General view of Trench 5

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 General**

This report presents the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment and evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in May 2011 at OS Field No. 7992 adjacent to Blitterlees, Silloth, Cumbria (NY 1080 5193, Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Taylor & Hardy on behalf of Mr David Montgomerie.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 03 February 2011 was produced by CFA based on a Brief issued by the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). This required that a desk-based assessment be completed and an invasive evaluation covering 300m<sup>2</sup> take place within OS Field No. 7992. A trench plan for the evaluation was approved by CCCHES prior to the fieldwork.

OS Field No. 7992 was considered to have high archaeological potential as it lies within the visual impact zone of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site.

### **1.2 Objectives**

The objectives of the evaluation were:

- to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. An adequate representative sample of the area where archaeological remains are potentially threatened will be studied.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 General**

Work was conducted with regard to the Institute for Archaeologists' Standards. Recording of all elements was done following established CFA methods.

### **2.2 Desk-Based Assessment**

A desk based assessment was undertaken by examining Historic map coverage for the area and other readily available cartographic information on pre-recent land use in OS Field No. 7992. Records held by the Council Historic Environment Record (HER) and English Heritage (EH) were consulted as appropriate.

A visual inspection of the field was carried out prior to work starting. This recorded any surface features of potential archaeological interest, areas of potentially significant disturbance, and hazards and constraints to the undertaking of the work.

### **2.3 Trial Trenching**

Trenches covering 312m<sup>2</sup> (5% of OS Field No. 7992) were excavated. The trenches were excavated by a wheeled back-acting excavator using a flat-bladed bucket under constant archaeological supervision to remove topsoil and other deposits down to natural subsoil or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was reached first. Any further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation was carried out by hand.

On-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, by 35mm and digital photography and by completing standard CFA record forms.

The trenches were backfilled at the end of the evaluation on completion of recording. Their locations were recorded by industry standard surveying equipment.

### **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

#### **3.1 Desk-Based Assessment**

##### *Cartographic*

The First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1866 depicts OS Field No. 7992 as open farmland with trees in the south-east corner, with the field slightly larger than at present due to the eastern boundary lying further to the east. The other three sides of the field remain the same.

The eastern boundary of the field as it is today was formed by 1957. This appears to be due to the construction of a building to the immediate east side of OS Field No. 7992. There is no change to the field's shape on the OS map series from 1957 to 1972 and into the present day.

The 1970-1 OS map numbers the field as 7992 and gives its area as 0.596ha.

##### *Historic Environment Record and Statutory Designations*

Cumbria HER does not hold any records of sites within OS Field No. 7992 but a number of sites lie in the immediate vicinity. A cropmark of an enclosure (HER no. 6884) is recorded to the immediate west of OS Field No. 7992. A linear feature (HER no. 9601) is also recorded as a cropmark to the north-west of the field. The date of these two cropmarks is unknown. A Roman coin hoard was found at Greenhow School (HER no. 17701) to the north-east of OS Field No. 7992.

English Heritage (EH) does not hold any records of sites within OS Field No. 7992 but a number of important sites lie in the surrounding area and are protected as Scheduled Monuments. These include parts of the Roman frontier defences along the Cumbrian coast to the west of the field, including milefortlets and towers (SM nos. 1014913, 1014800, 1014801). Further scheduled remains to the south at Wolsty Hall include a prehistoric enclosure and hut circle, a trackway, a Romano-British enclosure, and a Romano-British farmstead and associated field system (SM nos. 1013504, 1013505). Also at Wolsty is the remains of Wolsty Castle moated site (1013508).

#### **3.2 Evaluation**

Seven evaluation trenches amounting to 312m<sup>2</sup> (5% of OS Field No. 7992) were excavated within the field (Fig. 1). A full list of trenches is provided in Appendix 1.

OS Field No. 7992 was rough pasture with an uneven surface at the time of the evaluation. The field was largely flat and dipped towards the eastern boundary.

Topsoil varied from 0.3-0.5m in depth. Natural varied from beige/orange sands with small pebbles, interspersed with frequent bands of gravel, and sandy clay present in the north-west corner of the field. In the south-east corner, a layer of clean, probably windblown sand up to 0.4m thick was present beneath the topsoil and overlying natural clay. Plough scars were occasionally visible (Fig. 3).

There were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance recorded.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The desk-based assessment identified no known sites within OS Field No. 7992 but indicted the presence of important archaeological remains in the vicinity.

Seven evaluation trenches amounting to 312m<sup>2</sup> (5% of OS Field No. 7992) were excavated. There were no features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological significance recorded.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports will be deposited with Tullie House, Cumbria.

## **5. REFERENCES**

### **Cartographic**

Ordnance Survey First Edition Map 1866 Cumberland 1:2500

Ordnance Survey First Edition Map 1868 Cumberland 1:10,560

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1900 Cumberland 1:2500

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1901 Cumberland 1:10,560

Ordnance Survey Third Edition 1926 Cumberland 1:2500

Ordnance Survey Third Edition 1926-7 Cumberland 1:10,560

Ordnance Survey 1957 Cumberland 1:10, 560

Ordnance Survey 1970-1 Cumberland 1:2500

Ordnance Survey 1972 Cumberland 1:10000



## APPENDIX 1: Trench Results Summary

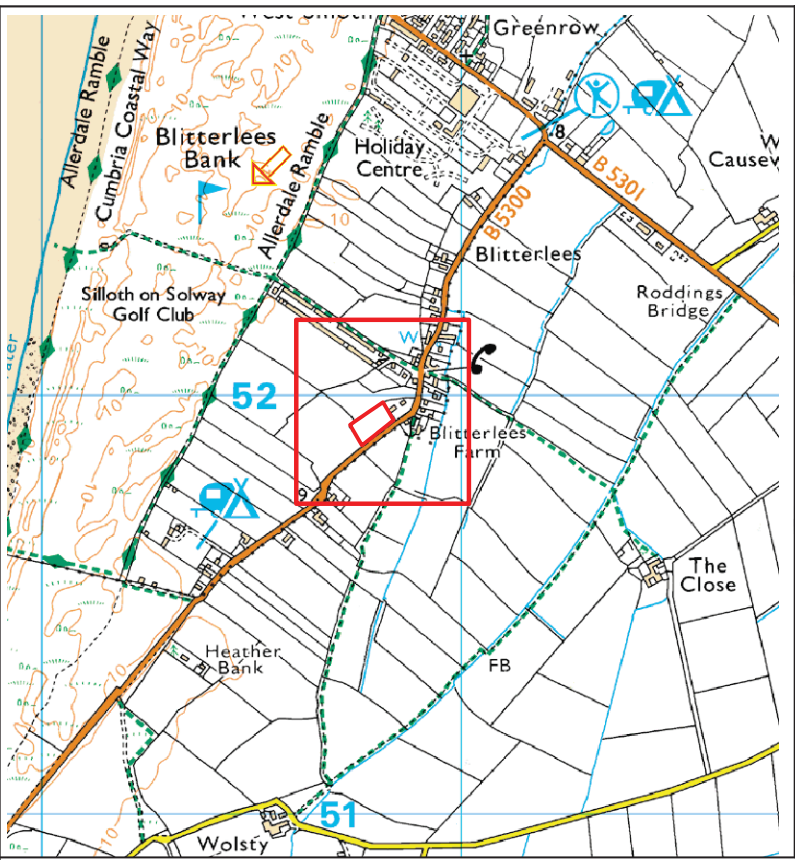
Trench No.	Length (m)	Width (m)	Total Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Features
1	25	1.6	40	None
2	30	1.6	48	None
3	25	1.6	40	None
4	30	1.6	48	None
5	30	1.6	48	None
6	25	1.6	40	None
7	30	1.6	48	None
			Overall Total: 312	

## APPENDIX 2: Black & White Film Register

Shot	Description	From	Conditions
<b>Film 1</b>			
1-2	Registration		
3-6	Pre-excavation site shots	Various	Sunny
7-8	General working shot	SE	Sunny
9-10	Trench 1	S	Sunny
11-12	Trench 2	N	Sunny
13-14	Trench 3 section	N	Sunny
15-16	Trench 4	NW	Sunny
17-18	Trench 5	S	Sunny
19-20	Trench 7	NE	Sunny
21-22	Trench 6	E	Sunny

## APPENDIX 3: Digital Photograph Register

Photo No.	Description	Taken from	Conditions
1-3	General pre-excavation views	Various	Sunny
4	General working shot, Trench 1	S	Sunny
5	Trench 1	S	Sunny
6	Trench 2	N	Sunny
7	Trench 3 section	N	Sunny
8	Trench 4	NW	Sunny
9	Trench 5	S	Sunny
10-13	General working shots, Trench 7	Various	Sunny
14	Trench 7	NE	Sunny
15	Trench 6	E	Sunny



Key:

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Fig. No: 1 Revision: A

Title:  
Trench location plan

Project:  
OS Field No 7992, Blitterlees,  
Silloth, Cumbria  
Archaeological Evaluation

Client:  
David Montgomerie

Scale:  
1:1250 A3


Drawn by: KH Checked: BG Report No: 1900





Fig. 2 - General view of Trench 1

Fig. 3 - General view of Trench 5

Key:	Fig. No:	2-3	Revision:	A	Client:	David Montgomerie					
	Title:										
Scale:	Project:										
	Blitterlees, Silloth										
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