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**Land at Natland Beck Farm, Kendal,  
Cumbria**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**Report No. Y138/14**

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Cumbria**

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## Summary

An archaeological evaluation consisting of trial trenching was undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd on land at Natland Mill Beck Farm, Kendal, Cumbria during February 2014. Twenty trenches targeted on geophysical anomalies were excavated although no archaeological remains were found to be present. The geophysical anomalies were likely to be the result of variations in the natural geology.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) on behalf of Story Homes during February 2014, ahead of a proposed development on land at Natland Mill Beck Farm, Kendal, Cumbria. The proposed development plan is for residential development consisting of 74 new houses and associated infrastructure. All work was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) produced by CFA and agreed with the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). The CFA code and number for the project is NATL2/2159.

#### 1.1 Site Location and Description

The development site is on the outskirts of the village of Kendal, Cumbria (Fig.1, NGR SD 5198 9063). The site is an irregular parcel of land bounded to the south and east by open pasture land, the north by residential housing and an existing farm, and to the west by the Natland Road. The site consists of open pastureland, with areas of small woodland in places.

The ground is undulating at up to 50m above the Ordnance Datum (AOD) around the southern and central areas of the site, and slumping to around 46m AOD towards the northern boundary of the site. The land use of the site has historically been agricultural with periods of cattle farming. During the fieldwork the site was grass pastureland with areas of modern disturbance related to previous work on services passing through the area. At the time of the fieldwork the ground was heavily saturated with water.

The soils of the area are variable and are described as ‘glacio-fluvial deposits of silt and sand, loam to silty loam and clay’ (NERC 2014). The geology of the area consists of ‘Pennine Park Limestone Formation- calcarenite, with superficial deposits of Devensian-sand and gravel (BGS 2014).

#### 1.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

The background information listed is an extract from work originally compiled for a cultural heritage assessment of the site (CFA 2013).

##### *Later prehistoric*

A flint scatter including a flint blade, scraper and core of possible Neolithic date were found to the west of the proposed development site close to the River Kent at Waterbrook.

### *Roman period (71BC – 410AD)*

A Roman fort which is believed to have been founded between AD90 and AD120 is located to the west of the proposed development site. Presumably associated with this a Roman candlestick was recovered close to Watercrock Farm in 1903.

### *Post-medieval (1600 - 1850)*

The HER records the location of a number of features dating from the post-medieval period which show evidence of the expansion of the town of Kendal. The sites of a bloomery and of a watermill and snuff mill are located to the north of the proposed development site. Further to the north, an area of quarrying to obtain sand is recorded.

Natland Mill Bridge, which lies to the north of the proposed development site, was designed to cross the now drained Kendal and Lancaster canal, and is now a Grade II Listed Building.

Natland Mill Beck Farmhouse and attached cottage are located to the north of the proposed development area, and date from the 17th century with some later alterations and additions.

Associated with Helme Lodge and to the north of the proposed development area is an icehouse of mid to late 19th century date, which is built into the west bank of the former Lancaster-Kendal canal from which the ice was originally taken.

## **1.3 Previous Archaeological work**

No previous intrusive archaeological have taken place within the site boundary, though a geophysical survey was undertake as part of a cultural heritage assessment (CFA 2013) which has informed the evaluation programme.

## **1.4 Project Aims and Objectives**

In accordance with the WSI the objectives were to ‘gather sufficient information to establish the extent, condition, character and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features and deposits within the proposed development area, and to record at an appropriate level, archaeological features encountered in the excavation trenches’.

## **2. WORKING METHODS**

### **2.1 Monitoring**

The project was monitored by Jeremy Parsons of the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES), who was kept informed of developments on site and visited the site for the purpose of monitoring the fieldwork on 11 February 2014.

### **2.2 Trenching**

The trenches were targeted on geophysical anomalies and others targeted on 'blank areas' for control purposes. Areas of known modern disturbance and deep modern stratigraphy were avoided, as were areas of modern services.

Trenches were accurately surveyed using industry standard surveying equipment. All machining was undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and other overburden were removed by machine down to the top of natural subsoil or the first significant archaeological horizon, whichever was encountered first.

The topsoil and subsoil were separated during the excavation and trenches were backfilled upon completion of necessary work. Trenches were only backfilled on completion of recording and with the consent of CCCHES.

The spoil was scanned for artefacts during machine excavation, the trenches were then cleaned as necessary and the location of all features and deposits recorded at a scale of 1:50. A representative sample of linear features was excavated (typically 1m per section). Discrete features were sampled at a minimum of 50%.

All archaeological remains were recorded by means of photographs, drawings and written records conforming to IfA standards (1994) and CFA's quality manuals. All features were planned and drawn in section at an appropriate scale (normally 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50). All plans and sections were related in height to the ordnance datum. The photographic record consists of accurately recorded digital photographs.

Modern finds were recorded on site but not retained unless they were from stratigraphically significant deposits or intrinsically significant, all other finds were to be retained for post-excavation assessment.

### **2.4 Standards and Guidance**

CFA Archaeology is a registered organisation (RO) with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). All work was conducted in accordance with relevant IfA Standards and Guidance documents (IfA 1994), English Heritage Guidance (EH 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a and 2008b), CFA's standard methodology and the WSI.

### **2.5 Archiving**

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, finds, plans and reports, will be prepared to current guidelines (Brown 2011) ensuring the proper transfer of ownership. The

project report shall include an index to the site archive and all digitally generated data. The archive will be retained by CFA until being deposited at a suitable repository.

### **3. RESULTS**

A full list and description of contexts comprises Appendix 1. Tables listing all photographic records form Appendix 2. A table summarising all results by trench forms Appendix 3.

A total of 20 trenches were excavated. Trenches 1, 19 and 20 were moved from their original positions due to the presence of trees, modern services and existing farm buildings respectively. Trench 17 was shortened at the south-eastern end due to the presence of the concrete farm track in this location. Trenches 21 and 22 were not excavated due to existing farm buildings in these locations

The topsoil of the site area was dark brown silty clay, heavily waterlogged at the time of the fieldwork, and contained some fragments of modern pottery. The subsoil for the area was light-mid brown silty clay that had numerous small stone inclusions.

The majority of the geophysical anomalies targeted during the previously undertaken survey were proved to be changes in the natural geology once tested, with the natural substrate of the area frequently changing from sand and gravel to areas of large stone/boulders.

Trench 14 contained a modern drain on an east-west orientation and may indicate the presence of the geophysical anomaly in this area. The large potential ditch indentified in the geophysical survey, and targeted in trenches 7, 9, and 11, was found to be a natural formation of stone within the sand and gravels of the area.

### **4. CONCLUSION**

The archaeological evaluation undertaken at land at Natland Mill Beck Farm, Kendal showed that it is unlikely that there are surviving archaeological remains on the site. The geophysical anomalies tested in the various trenches across the site proved not to be of archaeological origin, and there were no signs of any early historical activity that could be linked to other archaeological sites in the area such as the Roman fort near Watercress Farm to the west.

The areas to the south of the site appeared to have been heavily truncated by the installation of modern gas, water and electricity services.

## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context no.	Trench/Area	Fill of	Description
100	All		Topsoil for area of evaluation. Consisted of dark brown silty clay with organic inclusions throughout. Heavily waterlogged at time of evaluation.
101	All		Subsoil for site area. Consisted of mid-light brown silty clay with small stone inclusions.
102	All		Natural substrate for site area. Consisted of a mixture of yellow-orange sand and gravel with patches of white sand and gravel in places.

## Appendix 2: Photographic Register

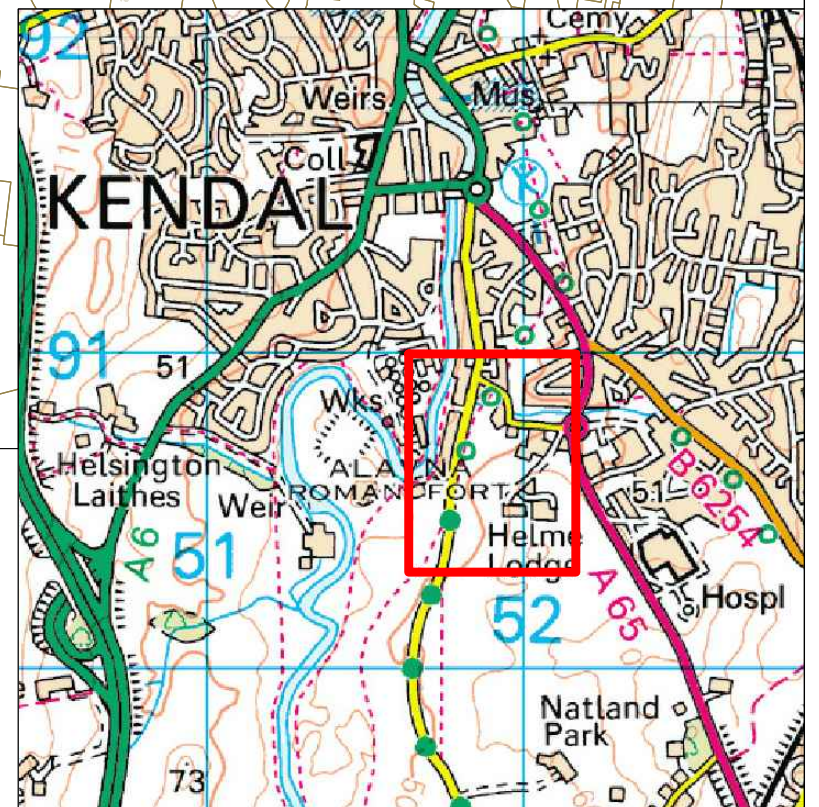
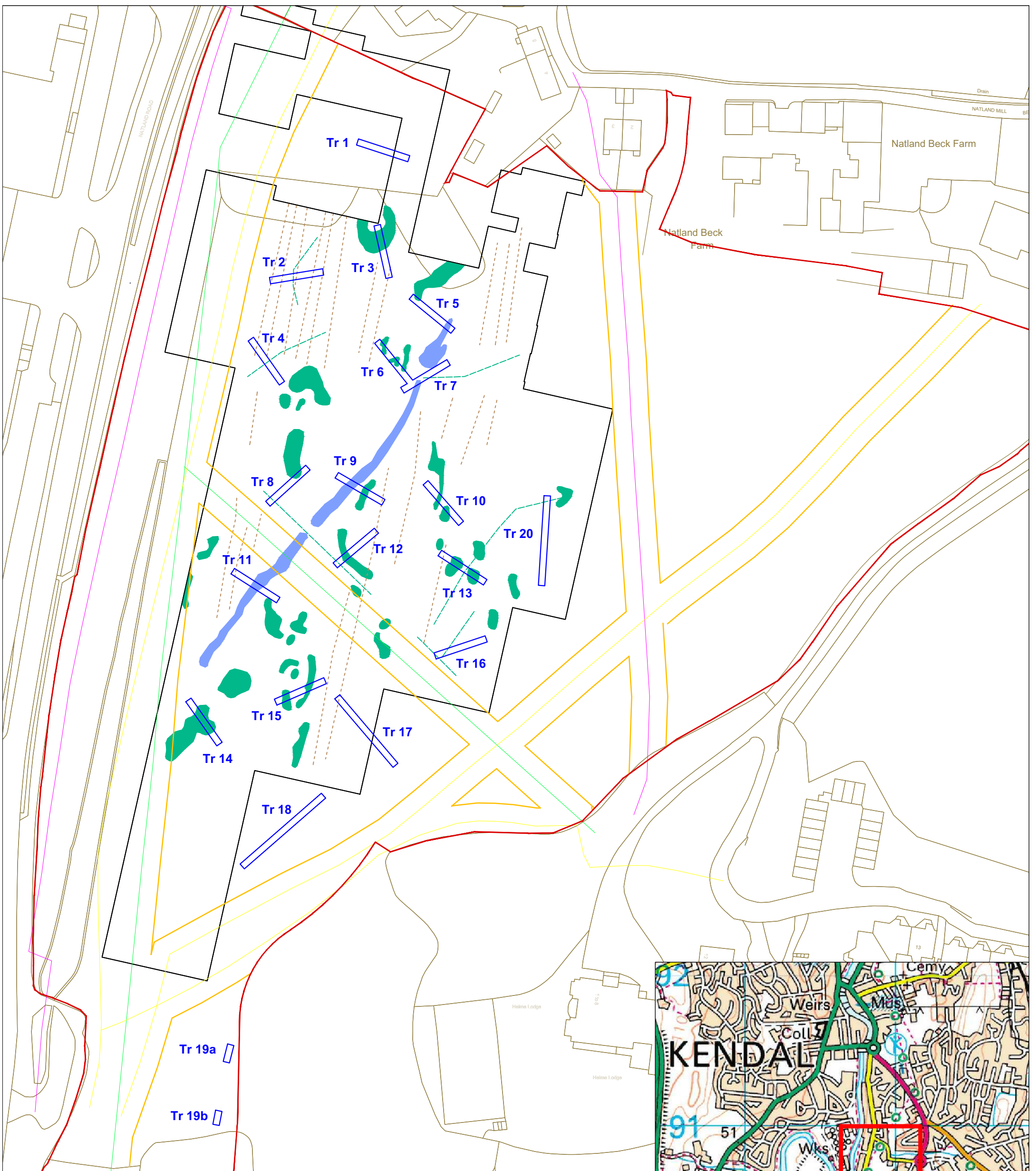
Number	Contexts/description	Facing	Conditions
1	Trench 19, shot of sondage to test depth of natural, south end of trench	South-west	Sunny
2	Trench 19, shot of sondage to test depth of natural, south end of trench	North	Sunny
3	Trench 19, shot of sondage to test depth of natural, north end of trench	South-east	Sunny
4	Trench 19, shot of sondage to test depth of natural, north end of trench	South-east	Sunny
5	Trench 18, general shot	South-west	Sunny
6	Trench 18, general shot	North-east	Sunny
7	Trench 14, general shot	North-west	Sunny
8	Trench 14, general shot	South-east	Sunny
9	Trench 15, general shot	South-west	Sunny
10	Trench 15, general shot	North-east	Sunny
11	Trench 17, general shot	North-west	Sunny
12	Trench 17, general shot	South-east	Sunny
13	Trench 16, general shot	South-east	Sunny
14	Trench 16, general shot	North-west	Sunny
15	Trench 13, general shot	South-east	Sunny
16	Trench 13, general shot	North-west	Sunny
17	Trench 12, general shot	North-east	Sunny
18	Trench 12, general shot	South-west	Sunny
19	Trench 11, general shot	South-east	Sunny
20	Trench 11, possible stone feature pre-ex	South-east	Sunny
21	Trench 11, general shot	North-west	Sunny
22	Trench 8, general shot	South-west	Overcast
23	Trench 8, general shot	North-east	Overcast
24	Trench 9, general shot	North-west	Overcast
25	Trench 9, general shot	South-east	Overcast
26	Trench 10, general shot	North-west	Overcast
27	Trench 10, general shot	South-east	Overcast
28	Trench 4, general shot	South-east	Overcast
29	Trench 4, general shot	North-west	Overcast
30	Trench 2, general shot	West	Overcast
31	Trench 2, general shot	East	Overcast
32	Trench 5, general shot	North-west	Overcast
33	Trench 5, general shot	South-east	Overcast
34	Trench 6, general shot	South-east	Overcast
35	Trench 6, general shot	North-west	Overcast
36	Trench 7, general shot	North-east	Overcast
37	Trench 7, general shot	South-west	Overcast
38	Trench 1, general shot	East	Overcast
39	Trench 1, general shot	West	Overcast
40	Trench 3, general shot	North-west	Overcast
41	Trench 3, general shot	South-east	Overcast
42	Trench 9, test sondage through natural gravels	South	Overcast
43	Trench 9, test sondage through natural gravels	North	Overcast
44	Trench 9, detailed stratigraphy shot	North	Overcast
45	Trench 20, general shot	South-east	Overcast

<b>Number</b>	<b>Contexts/description</b>	<b>Facing</b>	<b>Conditions</b>
46	Trench 20, general shot	North-west	Overcast
47	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	North-west	Overcast
48	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	South	Overcast
49	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	South	Overcast
50	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	South-west	Overcast
51	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	West	Overcast
52	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	West	Overcast
53	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	South-east	Overcast
54	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	South	Overcast
55	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	North-west	Overcast
56	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	North	Overcast
57	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	West	Overcast
58	General shots of backfilled trenches/areas	West	Overcast

### Appendix 3: Trench Summary Table

Trench No.	Trench Size (m)	Depth of Topsoil (m)	Description
1	15.3 x 1.6	0.14	Natural substrate was light orange-brown sandy gravel. Trench itself moderately sloped from south-east to north-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench. Original location of trench was changed in order to avoid large trees in the area.
2	13.7 x 1.6	0.15-0.25	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from east-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
3	14.5 x 1.6	0.25	Natural substrate as per trench 1. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
4	14.9 x 1.6	0.16	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself moderately sloped from south-east to north-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
5	14.5 x 1.6	0.15	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north-west to south-east. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
6	15 x 1.6	0.22	Natural substrate as per trench 1. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
7	15 x 1.6	0.16	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from south-west to north-east. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
8	14.4 x 1.6	0.2	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from south-west to north-east. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
9	14.9 x 1.6	0.25	Natural substrate light orange-red sandy gravel. Trench itself sloped from south-east to north-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
10	14.4 x 1.6	0.15-0.27	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from south-east to north-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
11	14.7 x 1.6	0.18-0.4	Natural substrate as per trench 1. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
12	14.9 x 1.6	0.3-0.55	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north-east to south-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
13	14.9 x 1.6	0.17-0.24	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north-west to south-east. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
14	15.2 x 1.6	0.3	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north-west to south-east. Trench contained one east to west orientated service/land drain. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
15	13.6 x 1.6	0.15-0.25	Natural substrate as per trench 1. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
16	15 x 1.6	0.23	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north-east to south-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
17	24.3 x 1.6	0.19	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from south-east to north-west. Trench shortened due to presence of farm track towards the south-east end. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
18	28.6 x 1.6	0.16-0.29	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north-east to south-west. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
19a	4 x 1.6	0.1	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Sondage through northern end of trench to test depth of natural substrate. Overlying material from modern construction present. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.
19b	4 x 1.6	0.1	Sondage through southern end of trench meant to determine depth of natural substrate. Trench stopped at 1.6m due to collapsing sides without natural substrate reached. Modern materials from recent construction present.
20	28 x 1.6	0.16	Natural substrate as per trench 1. Trench itself sloped from north- to south. Moved from original location due to presence of existing farm buildings in area. No archaeology was recorded in this trench.

**FIGURE 1**



Key		Geophysics	
	Development Area		?Archaeology (discrete anomaly)
	Trenches		Uncertain Origin (discrete anomaly / trend)
	Disturbed Areas		Magnetic Disturbance
	5m Buffer around services		?Ploughing
	Services - Gas		Pipe
	Services - Electricity		Ferrous
	Services - Combined Sewer		

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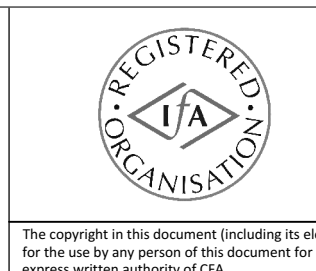


Fig. No: 1	Revision: A	Drawn by: PM	Checked: LW	Report No: Y138/14	Scale at A3: 1:1000
Title: Site location and trench layout			Project: Land at Natland Mill Beck Farm, near Kendal, Cumbria		Client: Story Homes

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**PLATES 1-4**



Plate 1: Trench 2, west facing shot



Plate 2: Trench 11, south-east facing shot

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Plate 3: Trench 15, north-east facing shot



Plate 4: Trench 16, south-east facing shot

Plate No: <b>3-4</b>	Revision: <b>A</b>	Project: <b>Land at Natland Mill Beck Farm, Kendal, Cumbria</b>	
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