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Interpretation, Design & Display

**Land east of Greengate Crescent
Levens
Cumbria
Archaeological Evaluation**

Report No. Y249/16

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Commissioned by	Orion Heritage Ltd
Date issued	November 2016
Version	2.0
OASIS Reference	cfaarcha1-267052
Grid Ref.	SD 49077 86160

This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard procedures.

**Land east of Greengate Crescent
Levens
Cumbria**

Archaeological Evaluation

Report No. Y249/16

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. WORKING METHODS.....	5
3. RESULTS.....	5
4. DISCUSSION.....	8
5. CONCLUSION	9
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY	10

Appendices

- 1: Context Register
- 2: Inventory of Primary Archive

Tables

- 3.1: Trench Summaries

Figures

- Fig.1: Site location and trench layout
Figs. 2.1-2.15: Photographs
Figs. 3.1-3.2: Plans and Sections

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by CFA Archaeology on land east of Greengate Crescent, Levens, Cumbria, during October 2016. Twenty trenches were excavated across the proposed site of a new housing development in order to evaluate any potential surviving archaeological remains. The majority of the trenches contained no evidence for any surviving archaeology, with geophysical anomalies on the site proving to be geological in nature. Trench 20 contained the edge of a possible cairn-like feature that extended beyond the trench limits to the north.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) during October 2016 on land east of Greengate Crescent, Levens, Cumbria (Fig.1, NGR SD 49077 86160). The work was commissioned by Orion Heritage Ltd and was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) produced by the same (OH 2016) and agreed with the county council archaeological officer for Cumbria.

1.1 Site Location and Description

The site comprises one large field situated to the north-west of Greengate Crescent, Levens, Cumbria. At the time of the evaluation the field consisted of grass pastureland. The site is bounded to the north, south and east by further open grass pasture and to the west by existing residential properties.

The soils of the area are variable and are described as ‘very acid loamy upland type with a wet peaty surface’ (Landis 2016). The geology of the area consists of carboniferous limestone with superficial deposits of glacial till (BGS 2016).

1.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

The following are brief summaries taken from the desk-based assessment of the site produced by Greenlane Archaeology (Greenlane Archaeology 2014). Sites referred to in bold reference this assessment. For further information and background on the site see this document.

The history of the local landscape is dominated by a collection of prehistoric remains on the north side of the proposed development area on Sizergh Fell, and the two major estates of Sizergh Castle and Levens Hall, both of which are of at least medieval origin. Evidence for activity from both earlier and later periods is present in the wider area, including some locally very significant monuments, while there is potentially significant evidence for activity in the early medieval period, but this is very debateable.

Prehistoric

A stone axehead and several flints have been found in the area (Site 21). During the Bronze Age (c2,500 – 600 BC) monuments, particularly those thought to be ceremonial in nature, become more common, and it is likely that settlement sites thought to be Iron Age or Romano-British in date have their origins in this period. Sites of this date are

represented in the area around Levens by a collection of sites on Sizergh Fell. These comprise three mounded sites (Sites 3, 4 and 6) and a possible late prehistoric settlement site is also located at Sizergh Fell (Site 1), while another possible mounded site (Site 19) is also thought to date from the late prehistoric period. The tumulus at Sizergh Fell Barrow (Site 5), to the north of the proposed development area, and a cairn burial excavated nearby (Site 8) both certainly do date to the Bronze Age and a stray find of an early Bronze Age cast-flange axe head is recorded next to the River Kent to the south of the proposed development area (Site 29).

Romano-British

The area immediately around Levens has relatively minimal evidence for activity from the Roman period, the nearest known Roman forts being at Watercrock on the south side of Kendal to the north and Lancaster to the south, although Roman finds, particularly coins, are relatively well-known from the local area (Shotter 2004).

Medieval

There are relatively few sites of medieval date within the proposed development area. An area of ridge and furrow and farmsteads, which may have origins in the medieval period, is known from aerial photographs to the far south of the area (Site 23), and Causewayed Bridge (Site 28) has also probably existed for several hundred years in one form or another on the route between Sampool Bridge and Levens Park.

Post-Medieval

Several sites of post-medieval date are recorded within the local area, many of them relating to industrial activity such as stone quarrying (Sites 2, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 20 and 22) but also gravel pits (Sites 7 and 15), which probably date to the post-medieval period. Various other buildings and structures within the study area listed on the HER also date from this period, including a round bake oven of brick construction (Site 17), a limekiln (Site 27), St John's Church (Site 24), built between 1826-8, and the parsonage (Site 16), which is now lost, as well as a painted white cast iron milestone situated near Lawrence House Farm (Site 26). In addition, a subterranean structure possibly of this date has also been identified in the lawn of the Heaves Hotel (Site 1).

1.3 Previous Archaeological Work

A desk-based assessment was undertaken by Greenlane Archaeology (Greenlane Archaeology 2014) which identified six episodes of archaeological investigation in the local area, although no previous investigative work had been undertaken on the site.

A geophysical survey was undertaken during 2014 by Oxford Archaeology (North) (OAN 2014). No clear evidence for archaeological activity was identified although a number of anomalies of potential archaeological interest were identified and informed the location of the trenches in this evaluation.

1.4 Project Aims

In accordance with the written scheme of investigation the primary aim of the of the evaluation was to determine the character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality of any archaeological remains present; therefore ensuring their preservation by record.

2. WORKING METHODS

CFA Archaeology Ltd is a registered organisation (RO) with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa). CFA Archaeology follows all relevant Cifa and Historic England Standards and Guidance (Cifa 2014a-b and EH 2008).

Linear features (ditches and gullies) were sample excavated at a minimum of 20% of their length and a minimum of 1m per section at regular intervals where encountered. Intersections were investigated to establish relationships between features. Pits and post holes were sampled at a minimum of 50%.

Archaeological remains were recorded by means of photographs, drawings and written records conforming to Cifa standards (Cifa 2014a) and CFA's quality manuals. All features were planned and drawn at appropriate scales. The trenches, section lines and drawing points were surveyed using an industry standard Trimble GPS. The same equipment was used to establish levels above Ordnance Datum for the trenches.

All finds were treated in accordance with relevant guidance (CIFA 2014b). Modern finds were recorded and then discarded.

A summary of the results of archaeological works will be submitted for inclusion in OASIS. The OASIS reference is cfaarcha1-267052.

2.1 Trial Trenching

Twenty trial trenches, measuring 25m in length were excavated within the site boundary, with several trenches targeting geophysical anomalies (Fig.1). Deposits were removed in even, shallow spits by a 360 excavator equipped with a 1.80m wide smooth-bladed ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation work was carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Any further excavation required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation was carried out by hand.

3. RESULTS

A summary of all contexts from the evaluation forms Appendix 1 whilst the site archive is listed in Appendix 2. The following results should be read in conjunction with figures 1-2. Descriptions of the 20 trenches appear in the table below (Table 3.1).

Topsoil on the site consisted of dark brown, silty clay (**100**) and varied in depth across the site from 0.05-0.37m. Subsoil measuring 0.05-0.60m in thickness and consisting of mid yellow-brown sandy silt (**101**) was present in all trenches. Underlying the subsoil was a natural substrate that consisted of a mixture of pale light brown yellow silty sand along with numerous limestone stones/boulders (**102**).

No.	Description
1	<p>The trench was orientated east to west and had a slight slope downwards from west to east (Fig. 2.1).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.19-0.21m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.17-0.18m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
2	<p>The trench was orientated north-south to north-west and sloped downwards from south to north.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.19-0.30m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.15-0.30m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>One possible feature was excavated towards the northern end of the trench although this proved to be likely geological in nature. No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
3	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from south-west to north-east.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.09-0.21m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.17-0.18m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
4	<p>The trench was orientated slightly north-west to south-east and had a slight slope downwards from east to west (Fig. 2.2).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.05-0.22m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
5	<p>The trench was orientated east to west and had a slight slope downwards from west to east. The trench was moved c.5m to the west due to the presence of an existing hedge line in its original location.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.20-0.37m in depth and overlay a band of light brown-yellow silty sand 0.05m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>One potential feature was excavated (112, Fig. 2.3) although this proved to be likely of geological origin. A small quantity of animal bone was noted in the topsoil towards the centre of the trench although this proved to be unrelated to any underlying anomalies.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
6	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from south-west to north-east (Fig. 2.4).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.20-0.25m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.25m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
7	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from south-west to north-east.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.25m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>One possible archaeological feature was excavated within the north-eastern end of the trench (110) although this appeared to be of geological origin.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
8	<p>The trench was orientated roughly north to south and had a slight slope downwards from north- to south across the trench.</p>

No.	Description
	<p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.18-0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.25m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
9	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from south-west to north-east (Fig. 2.5).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.15-0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.15-0.20m in depth, with the centre of the trench featuring a marked rise in the depth of the subsoil to 0.50m. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>A modern stone built soak away/drain feature was identified and recorded towards the centre of the trench.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
10	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from north-east to south-west and north to south across the trench (Fig. 2.6).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.15-0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.10-0.50m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
11	<p>The trench was orientated east to west and was generally flat. The trench was moved c.5m to the west due to the presence of an existing hedge line in its original location.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.25-0.30m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
12	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from north-east to south-west across the trench (Fig. 2.7).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.28-0.30m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.12-0.50m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>Two possible features were excavated within the trench (106 and 108, Figs. 2.8 and 2.9) although both appeared to be geological in nature with sterile fills once tested.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
13	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from north-east to south-west and north to south across the trench.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.15-0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.10-0.50m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
14	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and had a slight slope downwards from north-east to south-west across the trench (Fig. 2.10).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.19-0.23m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.20-0.45m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
15	<p>The trench was orientated north-west to south-east and was generally flat (Fig. 2.11).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.16-0.23m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.16-0.30m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p>

No.	Description
	No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.
16	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and was generally flat (Fig. 2.12).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.16-0.26m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.24-0.26m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
17	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and sloped downwards from north-east to south-west.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.20-0.22m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.26-0.28m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
18	<p>The trench was orientated slightly north-west to south-east and sloped downwards from north-west to south-east across the trench. The trench was moved to the south due to the proximity of overhead power lines in the original location.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.19-0.20m in depth and overlay a band of mid yellow-brown sandy silt 0.05-0.16m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
19	<p>The trench was orientated north-east to south-west and sloped downwards from north-south across the trench (Fig. 2.13). The trench was moved c.5m to the south-west due to the presence of an existing hedge line in the original location.</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.05-0.10m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.10-0.15m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>No archaeological features were recorded within the trench.</p>
20	<p>The trench was orientated north to south and sloped downwards from north to south across the trench (Fig. 2.14).</p> <p>Topsoil in the trench measured 0.10m in depth and overlay a band of mid brown sandy silt 0.20-0.25m in depth. Underlying this was the natural substrate.</p> <p>The northern end of the trench featured the possible edge of a cairn, which was recorded in section (104, Fig. 2.15). The majority of the feature lay beyond the limits of the trench to the north and remained undisturbed.</p>

Table 3.1: Trench Summaries

Trench 20

Trench 20 contained the remains of a possible cairn like feature (104), identified at the northern extent of the trench (Figs. 3.1 and 3.2). Only partially excavated, the section of the possible cairn excavated measured 0.75m in depth by 2.0m in section and was constructed of a large number of small-medium sized stones of varying sizes. The feature continued beyond the extents of the trench to the north and east.

4. DISCUSSION

The geophysical anomalies tested during the evaluation largely appeared to be the result of changes in the natural geology of the area, or the result of modern activity on the site. The anomalies identified within trenches 7 and 12 proved to be natural silting up of small shallow channels, possibly representing early water channels across the area. The linear anomaly identified in Trench 9 proved to be a large, modern stone drainage

channel upon excavation. The majority of the geophysical anomalies targeted in other trenches were not identified as features once excavated, and they are likely to represent changes in the natural substrate from sand to areas of gravels.

A small quantity of animal bone was identified within the topsoil within Trench 5 during excavation. This bone was retained during excavation of the trench and the anomaly within due to the recorded presence of human remains in the local area. However, after excavation of the anomaly and its identification as a geological feature, rather than an archaeological one and the location of the bone within the topsoil, the bone was interpreted as likely being modern in date and was discarded.

The potential cairn identified at the northern end of Trench 20 lay largely outside the limits of the evaluation with only a small portion of the feature seen in section within the trench. However, the large amount of stones that were noted, along with the presence of a raised mounded earthwork immediately to the north of the section suggests the possibility of a cairn in this area of the site. Similar mounded earthworks were also noted in the surrounding area to the north of the trench and may represent a number of similar features.

5. CONCLUSION

The archaeological evaluation undertaken at land east of Greengate Crescent, Levens, Cumbria showed that it is unlikely that there are surviving archaeological remains within the development area. 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.

The two trenches excavated beyond the development area to the north lie in an area of possible earthworks, with the edge of a possible cairn identified at the northern end of Trench 20.

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APPENDICES 1-2

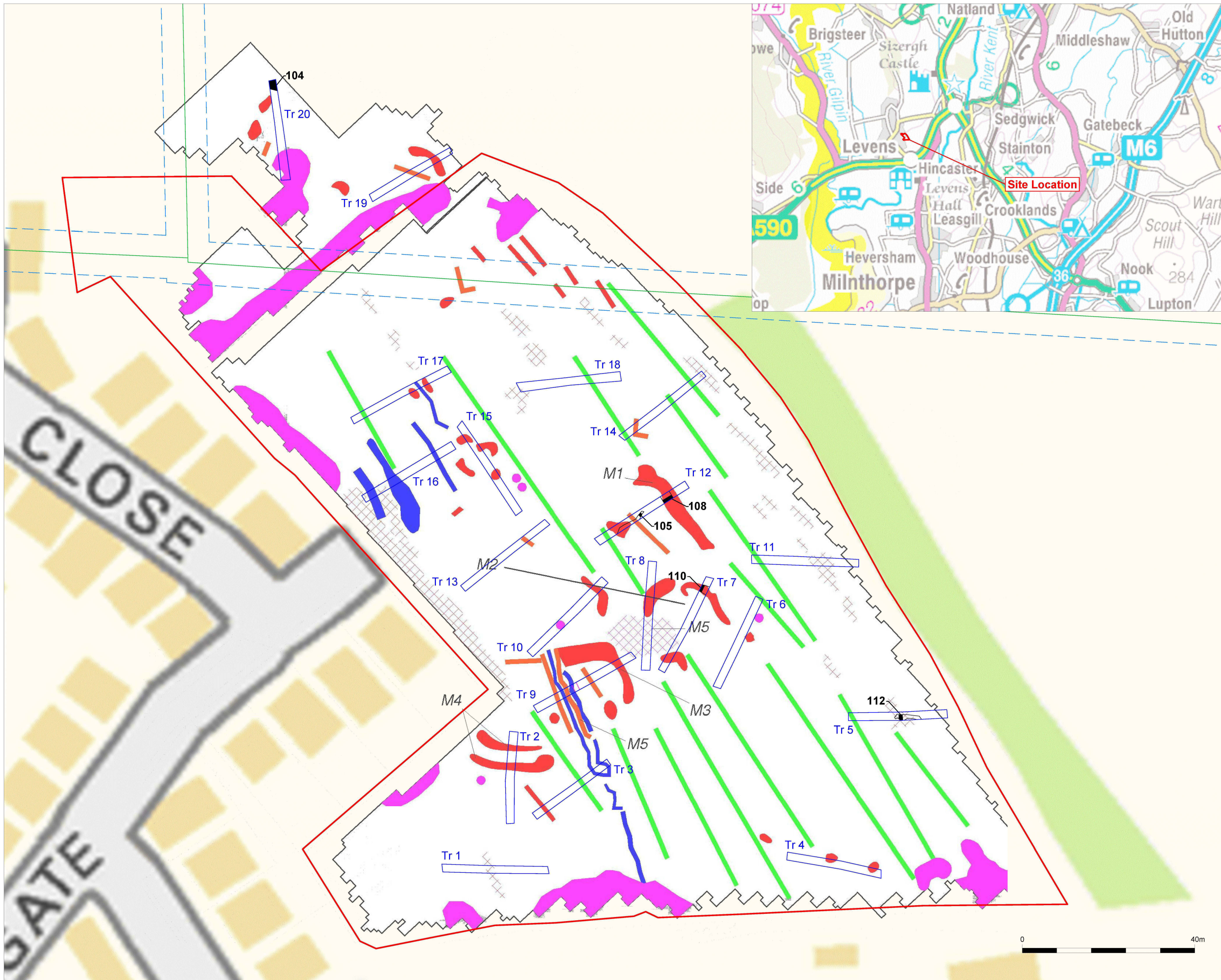
Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context no.	Trench	Type	Fill of	Width (m)	Max Depth (m)	Description
101		Layer			0.05-0.37	Topsoil for all trenches. Consisted of dark brown silty clay with some small stone inclusions.
102	All	Layer			0.05-0.60	Subsoil layer for site area. Consisted of mid yellow brown sandy silt with frequent stone inclusions.
103	All	Layer			-	Natural substrate for site area. Consisted of a mixture of pale light brown yellow silty sand and limestone boulders/stones throughout.
104	20	Cairn		2.00+	0.75	Cut for a possible cairn feature located at the northern end of Trench 20. Featured white/yellow silt along with numerous stone fragments forming a slightly raised mound, although the majority of the feature lay to the north of the trench extents.
105	12	Fill	106	0.74	0.20	Fill of a probable geological ditch located within Trench 12. Consisted of mid orange brown silty clay with occasional stone fragments.
106	12	Cut		0.74	0.20	Cut for an irregular linear feature cut through natural substrate within Trench 12. Likely a geological area of silting. Very sterile fill, no finds recovered.
107	12	Fill	108	2.70	0.24	Fill of a large, shallow ditch-like feature within Trench 12. Consisted of mid-orange brown silty clay with frequent small limestone inclusions.
108	12	Cut		2.70	0.24	Cut for a wide, shallow linear feature on a north-west to south-east alignment. Featured shallow sides with an irregular base and likely represents a silted up geological feature. Fill was very sterile and no finds were recovered.
109	7	Fill	110	1.70	0.24	Fill of a likely geological feature within Trench 7. Consisted of mid-orange brown silty clay with some small stone inclusions.
110	7	Cut		1.70	0.24	Cut for a likely geological feature within Trench 7. Featured shallow sides with a concave base.
111	5	Fill	112	0.95	0.44	Fill of a likely geological feature within Trench 5. Consisted of mid-orange brown silty clay with occasional stone inclusions.
112	5	Cut		0.95	0.44	Cut for a shallow, steep sided geological feature located within Trench 5. Feature had a concave profile and a very sterile fill from which no finds were recovered.

Appendix 2: Inventory of Primary Archive

Phase	File/Box No.	Description	Quantity
Evaluation	File no. 1	Context register sheets	1
		Context sheets	12
		Trench record sheets	20
		Digital photographic register sheets	2

FIGURES 1-3



- Key:**
- Site Boundary
 - Trench Outline
 - Archaeological Feature
 - Modern Service
 - High Voltage Cable
 - 5m Buffer
 - Strong dipolar responses - due to surface or buried metallic objects
 - Dipolar responses - possible thermo-remnant feature
 - Dipolar spike - buried ferrous object
 - Discrete areas of positive enhancement- probable archaeological origin
 - Discrete areas of positive enhancement - possible archaeological origin
 - Positive linear responses - possible archaeological origin
 - Negative linear responses - probable relict field boundary
 - Linear responses - due to modern agricultural activity



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Title:
Site Location and trenches

Project:
Land east of Greengate Crescent, Levens, Cumbria

Client:
Orion Heritage Ltd

Scale at A3:
1:800

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Report No: Y249/16	Fig. No: 1
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Fig. 2.1 - Trench 1 general shot, facing west



Fig. 2.2 - Trench 4 general shot, facing east

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Fig. 2.3 - Feature 112 west facing section, Trench 5



Fig. 2.4 - Trench 6 general shot, facing south-west

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Fig. 2.5 - Trench 9 general shot, facing north-east



Fig. 2.6 - Trench 10 general shot, facing south-west

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Fig. 2.7 - Trench 12 general shot, facing south-west



Fig. 2.8 - Feature 106 south-west facing section, Trench 12

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Fig. 2.9 - Feature 108 north-west facing section, Trench 12



Fig. 2.10 - Trench 14 general shot, facing south-west

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Fig. 2.11 - Trench 15 general shot, facing south-east



Fig. 2.12 - Trench 16 general shot, facing south-west

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Report No: Y249/16		Fig. No: 2.11-2.12



Fig. 2.13 - Trench 19 general shot, facing north-east



Fig. 2.14 - Trench 20 general shot, facing north

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Fig. 2.15 - Possible Cairn 104, Trench 20, facing east

Project:
Land east of Greengate Crescent, Levens, Cumbria




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Report No: Y249/16		Fig. No: 2.15

Key:

 Trench Outline

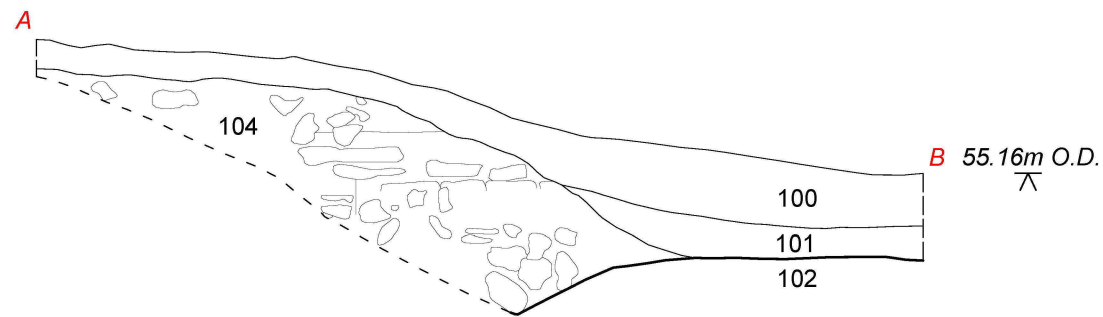


Fig. 3.1 - W-facing section of 104, Trench 20

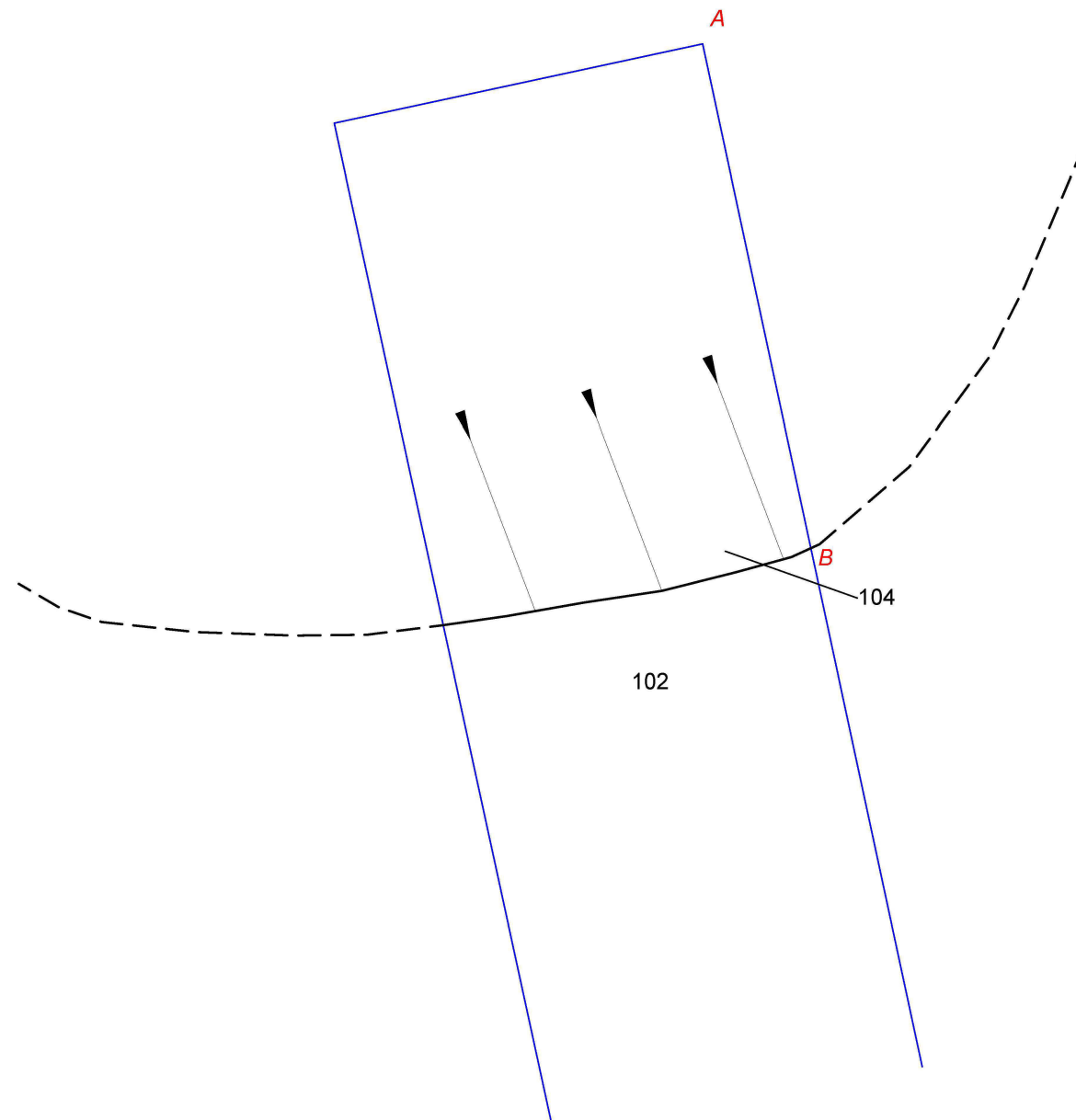


Fig. 3.2 - Plan of 104, Trench 20



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Title:
Plan and section

Project:
Land east of Greengate Crescent,
Levens, Cumbria

Client:
Orion Heritage Ltd

Scale at A3:
1:30

Drawn by: MP	Checked: TB	Date: 24/11/2016
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Report No: Y249/16	Fig. No: 3
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