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Demesne Cottage, Burgh by Sands: Desk-Based Assessment and Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 1696

 0131 273 4380

 0131 273 4381

 info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk

 www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

The Old Engine House
Eskmills Business Park
Musselburgh
East Lothian
EH21 7PQ

Tel: 0131 273 4380
Fax: 0131 273 4381
email: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
web: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Author	Stuart Mitchell MA AIfA
Illustrator	Leeanne Whitelaw BSc MAAIS
Editor	Melanie Johnson MA PhD FSA Scot MIfA
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 This report presents the results of a Desk-Based Assessment and Archaeological Watching Brief carried out by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in October 2009 on the excavation of foundations for a proposed extension at Demesne Cottage, Burgh by Sands, Cumbria (NGR NY 32785 59155). The watching brief was required by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). A WSI was produced by CFA and approved by CCCHES. The work was commissioned by Hyde Harrington on behalf of David Holliday.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Demesne Cottage lies within the site of the Roman fort of Aballava which forms part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. While the proposed site is not legally protected, it lies on the conjectured line of the fortifications of the Roman fort, and much of the rest of the fort is a Scheduled Monument.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 The objectives of the programme of archaeological works were:

- to conduct an archaeological watching brief to identify, investigate and record any surviving archaeological remains revealed during the course of the development ground works.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 All work complied with the requirements of the County Archaeologist. Work was conducted with regard to the Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and Code of Conduct.

2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

- 2.2.1 A rapid 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 the development area. Records held by the Council Historic Environment Record were consulted as appropriate.

2.3 Watching Brief

- 2.3.1 The Institute for Archaeologists has produced a Standard for archaeological watching briefs. This states that watching briefs are intended to allow the preservation by record of archaeological deposits which could not be established in advance of development, and to provide an opportunity for the archaeologist to signal to all interested parties if an archaeological find is made before its destruction.
- 2.3.2 A watching brief was conducted during all topsoil stripping, ground reduction and excavation of footings.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

3.1 Desk-Based Assessment

3.1.1 There are no buildings depicted on the site on Hodkinson and Donald's map of 1774. Roofed buildings on the site of Demesne Farm Cottage are first depicted on Greenwood's map of 1823. It is again depicted but not named on the Tithe map of 1843. The buildings are depicted along with garden plots on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1865. On the Second Edition Ordnance survey map of c.1900 it is named as the Lowther Arms Public House. No name is given to the building on the 1957 Ordnance Survey map.

3.2 Watching Brief

3.2.1 The site comprised a concrete surfaced yard bounded on three sides by Demesne Cottage and its outbuildings. Two areas were excavated: the main foundation which measured 4.2m by 5.1m, and a smaller area for a step measuring 1.3m by 1.2m. Concrete was broken using a Stihl saw and a pneumatic breaker. All subsequent excavation was by hand.

3.2.2 Within the main foundation area, the concrete **(001)** was between 0.1m and 0.14m thick and set on a thin discontinuous screen of small pebbles **(002)**. A cobbled yard surface **(003)** was revealed beneath the concrete and pebble screen, set onto natural subsoil **(000)** which was reddish sandy clay. With the exception of two pits to connect drainage, the ground works did not excavate beneath the cobbles, which remain preserved *in situ*. The two drainage pits were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m to locate an existing drain. A small area of natural **(000)** was revealed in one of the pits but no archaeological deposits were identified.

3.2.3 The smaller pit excavated for the step was covered in a 0.1m thick layer of concrete **(001)**, laid onto a pebble screen **(002)** which overlay redeposited soil and modern overburden **(006)**, representing the infill of the foundation of Demesne Cottage. The pit was dug to a depth of 0.5m below site surface and revealed a blue plastic perforated drainage pipe running parallel to the cottage. No archaeological deposits were identified.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The archaeological watching brief at Demesne Cottage identified no archaeological remains; due to the nature of the excavation works, natural subsoil was not exposed or removed with the exception of a small area within a pit dug for drainage.
- 4.2 CFA recommends that no further work be done on this development; however the final decision remains with CCCHES.
- 4.3 The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Record.

5. REFERENCES

Hodkinson and Donald's Map of Cumberland 1774 (Surveyed 1770)

Greenwood's Map of Cumberland 1823

Tithe Map for Burgh by Sands 1843

Ordnance Survey First Edition Map 1865 - 6" to 1 mile

Ordnance Survey First Edition Map 1865 - 25" to 1 mile

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1900 - 25" to 1 mile

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Context Register

Context No.	Description
000	Natural Subsoil
001	Concrete Surface
002	Pebble screen
003	Cobbled yard surface
004	Infill of drainage ditch
005	Infill of drainage ditch

Appendix 2: Photograph Register

Colour Slides & B/W Prints

Photo No.	Description	From
1	Registration	
2-3	Working shot	E
4-5	Working shot	E
6-7	Working shot	W
8-9	Detail of 003	E
10-11	Detail of stone drain in NE corner	E
12-13	Detail of natural subsoil surface	W
14-15	Detail of drainage pit in SE corner	W
16-17	Working shot	N
18-19	Working shot	N
20-21	Maximum depth of step pit showing plastic pipe	N
22-23	General site shot	E
24-25	General site shot	W
26-27	General shot of step pit	N

Digital Images

Photo No.	Description	From
1	Registration	E
2	Working shot	E
3	Working shot	W
4	Working shot	E
5	Detail of 003	E
6	Detail of stone drain in NE corner	W
7	Detail of natural subsoil surface	W
8	Detail of drainage pit in SE corner	N
9	Working shot	N
10	Working shot	N
11	Maximum depth of step pit showing plastic pipe	E
12	General site shot	W
13	General site shot	N
14	General shot of step pit	E

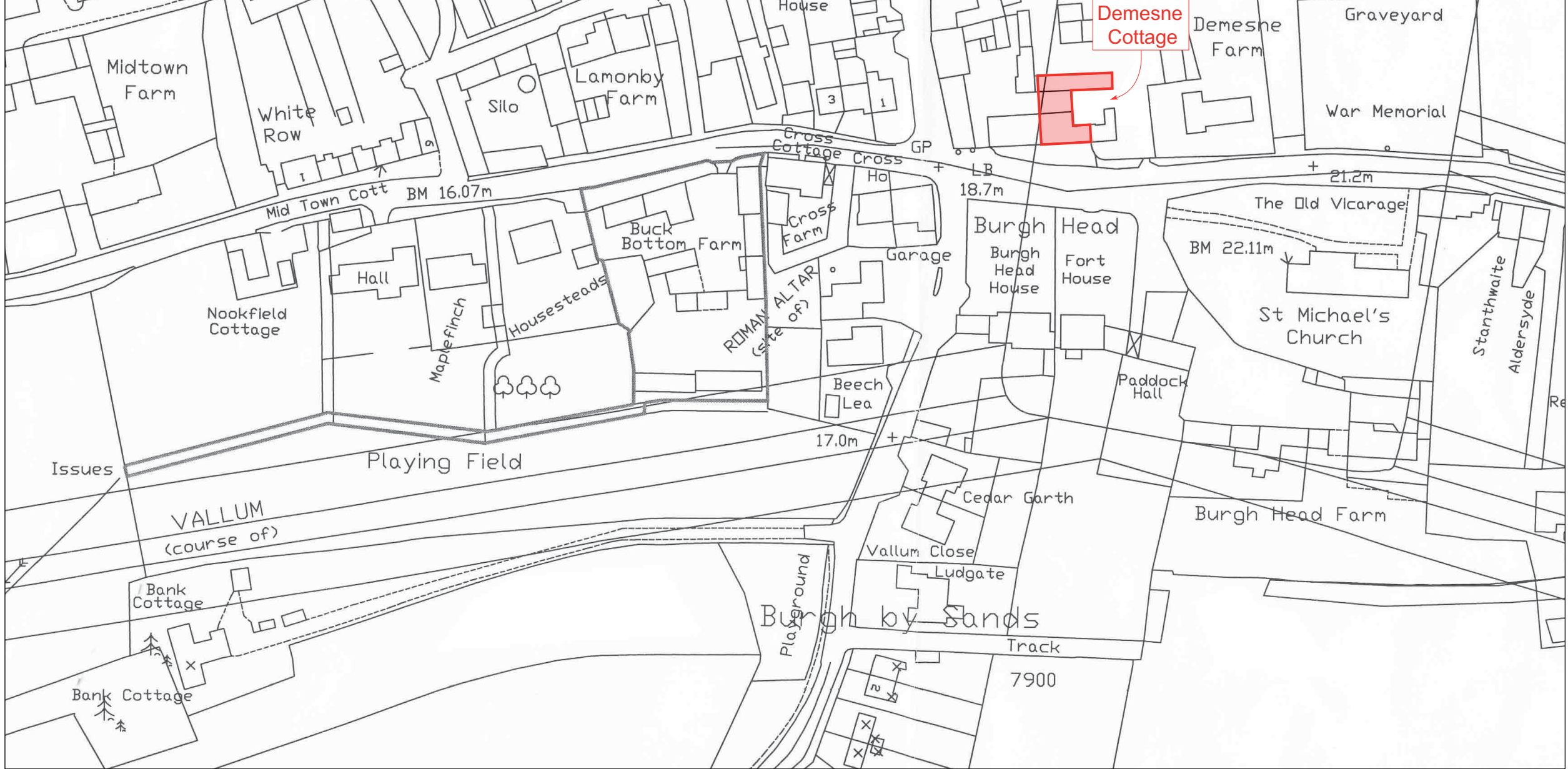
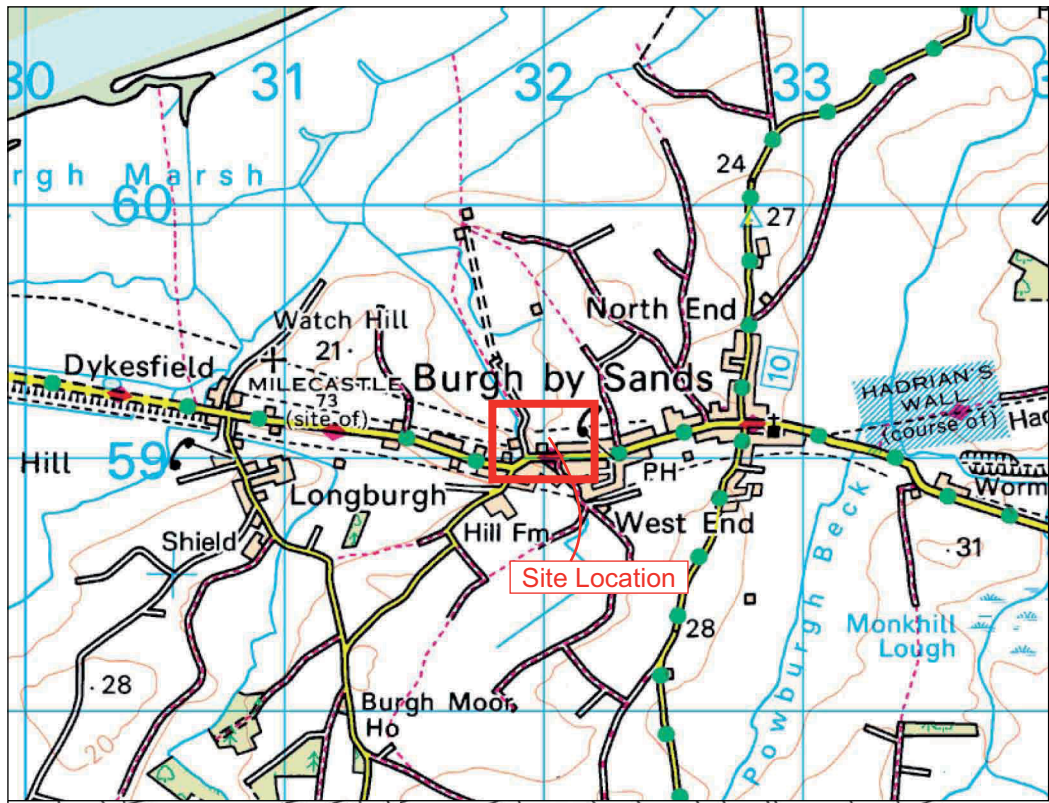
Appendix 3: Drawings Register

Drawing No.	Description	Scale
1	Site plan	1:100



Key:

Site Location



CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
 Eskmills Park
 Musselburgh
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
 t: 0131 273 4380
 f: 0131 273 4381
 e: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
 w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

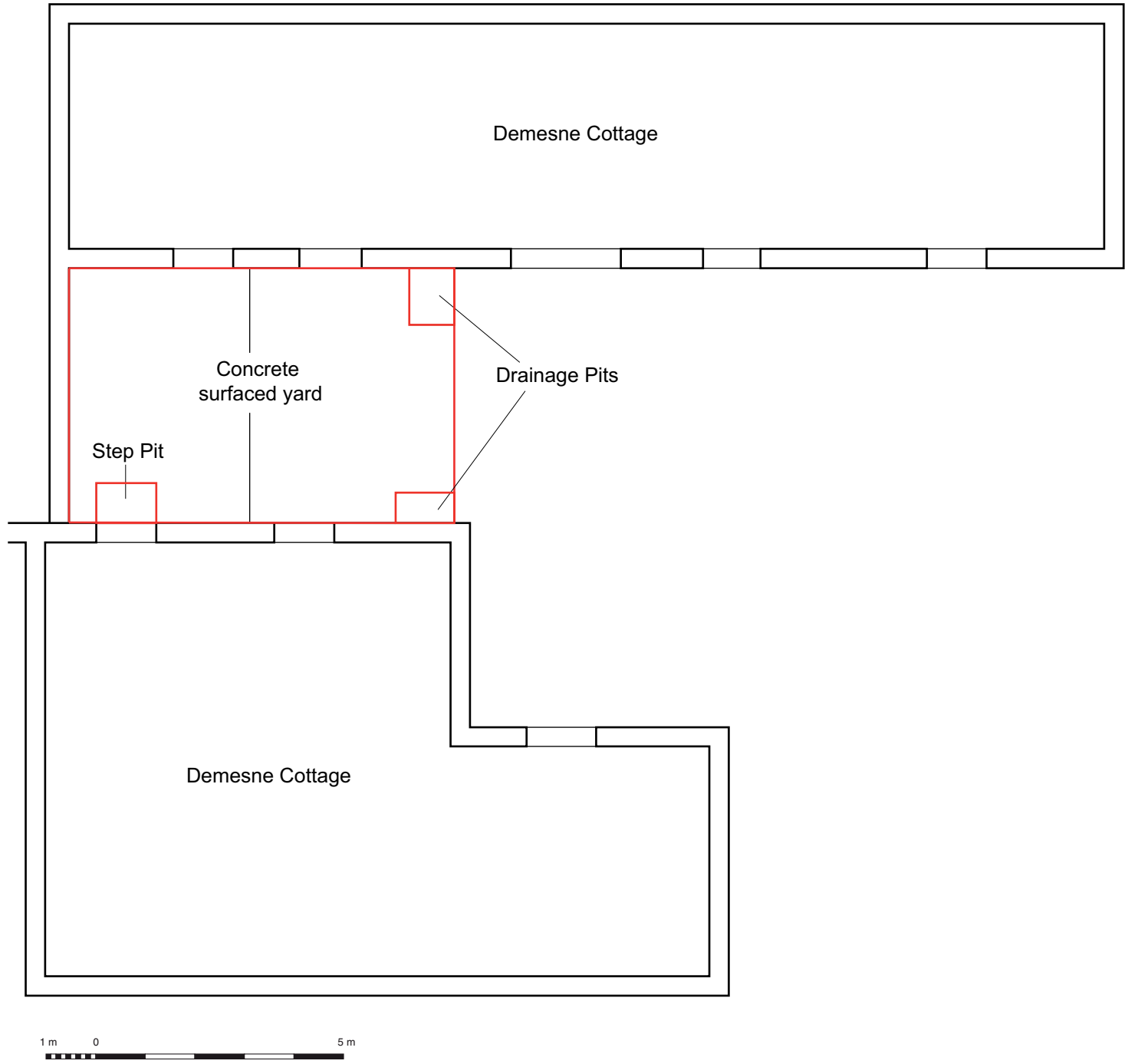
Fig. No: 1 Revision: A

Title: Location Map

Project: Demesne Cottage, Burgh by Sands: Desk-Based Assessment and Archaeological Watching Brief

Scale: 1:12,500 @ A3

Client: Hyde Harrington



Key:
 Watching Brief Areas



Fig. No:	2	Revision:	A	Client:	Hyde Harrington
Title:	Plan of Watching Brief Area				
Project:	Demesne Cottage, Burgh by Sands				



CFA
 ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
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 Musselburgh
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 w: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk