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Historic Building Recording

Site & Landscape Survey

Geophysical Survey

**Land Adjacent to the B6263,
Wetheral, Nr Carlisle, Cumbria.
Archaeological Evaluation
Report No. 1862**

 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 | Ian Suddaby MA FSA Scot MifA |
| Illustrator | Leeanne Whitelaw BSc MAAIS |
| Editor | Bruce Glendinning BSc PgDip MifA |
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Fig. 4 Trench 2. Section through the possible feature **201**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological desk-based assessment and evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) in February 2011 at the site of a proposed community centre on land adjacent to the B6263 on the southern edge of Wetheral, Cumbria (NY 4647 5406, Figs. 1-2). The work was commissioned by Taylor & Hardy, Chartered Town Planners on behalf of Wetheral Community Association Ltd.

1.1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) dated 16 November 2010 was produced by CFA based on a Brief dated 02 November 2010 issued by the Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). This required that a desk-based assessment be completed and an invasive evaluation covering 120m² be excavated within the footprint of the proposed development. A trench plan for the evaluation was approved by CCCHES prior to the fieldwork.

1.2 Objectives

1.2.1 The objectives of the evaluation were:

- to determine the presence or absence, location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

1.3 Acknowledgement

1.3.1 We acknowledge the site visit made by Jeremy Parsons of CCCHES during the fieldwork.

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

2.1.1 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

2.2.1 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 the development area. Records held by the Council Historic Environment Record (HER) and English Heritage (EH) were consulted as appropriate.

2.2.2 A visual inspection of the site 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

2.3.1 As a result of the above inspection, the agreed trenching plan was altered in two ways. An area along the southern boundary of the site was fenced off and could not be accessed. Trenches were also positioned to avoid a wet area created by the feeding of cattle (Fig. 3).

2.3.2 The trenches were excavated by a wheeled JCB digger 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.

2.3.3 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.

2.3.4 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

- 3.1.1 The village of Wetheral lies to the east of Carlisle on the western bank of the River Eden. The development site adjacent to the east of the B6263 at the southern edge of the village. It lies within a landscape of high archaeological potential, and is just outside the designated Wetheral Conservation Area.

Cartographic

- 3.1.4 The development site straddles a field boundary shown on the Ordnance Survey (OS) First Edition (1863), one of many which generally lie at roughly 90° to the east and west of the B6263 road leading south from Wetheral. The field to the south of this boundary is shown to be of greater width than that to the north so the fenced boundary currently forming the southern edge of the site is therefore not that shown on 1863 map. The Second Edition (1901) shows the now-demolished school to the north and Wetheral in general has extended southwards. The relict field boundary that crosses the site is no longer shown. The 1926 map shows no changes from 1901. By 1957, more buildings have appeared in Wetheral to the north of the site. The most recent OS maps (1967-8, 1970-1, 1975-88, 1991 and 1992) show no significant changes.

Documentary

- 3.1.5 Cumbria HER does not hold any records of sites within the proposed development area but a number of important sites of suspected prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date lie in the immediate vicinity. Several potentially prehistoric sites have been recorded from aerial photographs and consist of cropmarks showing agricultural practices and trackways (HER Nos. 5107, 5883, 5887, and 6925). Wetheral (Benedictine) Priory (HER No. 2910) lies at the eastern side of the field containing the development. A medieval moated site (HER No. 12793) has been recorded at Harbour Wood to the south-west.
- 3.1.6 English Heritage (EH) does not hold any records of sites within the proposed development area but a number of important multi-period sites lie in the surrounding area. These range from Wetheral (Benedictine) Priory (EH No. 11505) to a cropmark enclosure at Wetheral Pasture (EH No. 927439) to a Roman quarry inscription (EH No. 11515) at Wetheral Woods. Industrial and educational buildings, for example Corby Bridge (EH No. 11534) and the now demolished school to the north of the site (EH No. 1503387) are also recorded.

3.2 Evaluation

- 3.2.1 The development site lay within pasture grass fields and was divided by an intermittent relict field boundary which was marked by lengths of bank and the stumps of very large trees (Fig. 2). Cattle have been fed within the site and deposits of deep mud and soggy hay (Fig. 3) were present.
- 3.2.2 Five trenches (Fig. 1, Appendix 1) with an area of 127m² were excavated. In the text below, contexts numbers are in bold and parentheses and are further described in Appendix 2.
- 3.2.3 The topsoil (**001**) consisted of c.0.3m of a sandy silt with occasional small stones. An agricultural subsoil (**002**) of mottled pinkish brown sandy silt, also with occasional small stones was present below this. This was around 0.15m deep. The natural subsoil (**003**) was a soft orange-pink sandy silt with frequent small rounded cobbles and infrequent angular blocks of red sandstone.
- 3.2.4 No features were present in Trenches 3-5.
- 3.2.5 Trench 1 crossed the field boundary at a point where there were no surface traces. The alignment of the feature was however marked by a shallow linear ditch (**101**, Figs. 1&3) on the northern side. This was aligned close to ENE-WSW and had been cut through the agricultural subsoil **002**. It was 1.2m wide and 0.25m deep and it was filled with a dark brown sandy silt (**102**). An irregular feature 0.3m deep filled with subsoil like material and degraded root wood was recorded on about the projected alignment of the bank. This has been interpreted as a tree bowl (not illustrated).
- 3.2.6 Trench 2 also crossed the field boundary at a point where there were no surface traces. A single possible feature (**201**, Figs. 1 & 4) was recorded just to the south of its former alignment. It was 0.4m deep and slightly irregular in plan, possibly with a slight curve to it. The fill this consisted of brownish-pink subsoil like material (**202**).

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The desk-based assessment identified no known sites within the development boundary but indicated the presence of important archaeological remains in the vicinity. A field boundary marked on the 1st Edition OS map as crossing the site still survived in places as a denuded earthwork.
- 4.2 Five evaluation trenches amounting to 127m² were excavated within the footprint of the proposed building. The justification for the changes to the agreed trench layout was explained to Jeremy Parsons of CCHES during his site visit.
- 4.3 A ditch feature was recorded to the north of the relict field boundary in Trench 1 it did not continue into Trench 2 but is probably the remains of a field boundary ditch. It is not likely to be of any great antiquity as it cuts the agricultural subsoil. An irregular feature also identified in Trench 1 was interpreted as a tree bowl. The single feature in Trench 2 is also likely to be associated with the relict field boundary and may be a boundary ditch or a small a quarry scoop, to procure material for the field boundary bank. No dating evidence was found in the excavated contexts.
- 4.4 In summary it is probable that all the features identified during this evaluation are associated with the relict field boundary that crosses the site and is shown on the 1st Edition OS mapping.
- 4.5 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 1863 - 1:2500

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

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1901 - 1:2500

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1901 - 1:10,560

Ordnance Survey Third Edition 1926 - 1:2500

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

Ordnance Survey 1938-52 – 1:10, 560

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1939 - 1:2500

Ordnance Survey 1957 – 1:10, 560

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1967-8 - 1:2500

Ordnance Survey Second Edition 1970-1 - 1:2500

Ordnance Survey Explorer Sheet 315 Carlisle (2010) 1:25,000

APPENDIX 1: Trench Results Summary

| Trench No. | Length (m) | Width (m) | Total Area (m ²) | Features |
|------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|---|
| 1 | 30 | 1.5 | 45 | Linear ditch aligned ENE-WSW; Tree Bowl |
| 2 | 20 | 1.5 | 30 | Possible quarry scoop / field boundary ditch |
| 3 | 15 | 1.5 | 22 | No archaeology |
| 4 | 10 | 1.5 | 15 | No archaeology |
| 5 | 10 | 1.5 | 15 | No archaeology |

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

| Context | Feature | Description |
|---------|--|--|
| 001 | Topsoil | Mid-brown sandy silt |
| 002 | Soil | Pinkish-Light-Brown sandy silt with occasional small stones |
| 003 | Natural subsoil | Orange-pink sandy silt with patches of sand and frequent small metamorphic cobbles. Infrequent large blocks of soft red sandstone |
| 101 | Field Boundary ditch | Linear ditch aligned ENE-WSW. 1.2m wide and 0.25m deep but only 0.1m into natural subsoil |
| 102 | Fill of 101 | Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt |
| 103 | Possible tree-bowl | Irregular deposit of mottled pinkish brown sandy silt with occasional stones. Discrete deposits of cleaner subsoil-like material. Flecks and small lumps of charcoal. Degraded and powdery wood, perhaps root wood |
| 201 | Possible quarry scoop / field boundary ditch | Irregular possible feature. Potential quarry scoop / field boundary ditch |
| 202 | Fill of 201 | Mottled brownish-pink sandy silt with occasional stones. Discrete deposits of cleaner subsoil-like material. Flecks and small lumps of charcoal. |

APPENDIX 3: Colour Slide Film Register

| Shot | Description | From | Conditions |
|-------|--|------|------------|
| 1-4 | Pre-ex views of the site | N | Overcast |
| 5-6 | Trench 1 excavated | S | Overcast |
| 7-8 | Trench 1, ditch 101, ENE facing section | ENE | Overcast |
| 9-10 | Trench 1, general view of the central area containing 101, 103 | S | Overcast |
| 11-12 | Trench 5, general view | S | Sunny |
| 13-14 | Trench 2, general view | SSW | Overcast |
| 15-16 | Trench 2, section through 201 | SW | Bright |
| 17-20 | Post-ex views of the site | N | Sunny |
| 21-22 | Trench 3, general view | S | Sunny |
| 23-24 | Trench 4, general view | S | Sunny |

APPENDIX 4: Digital Photograph Register

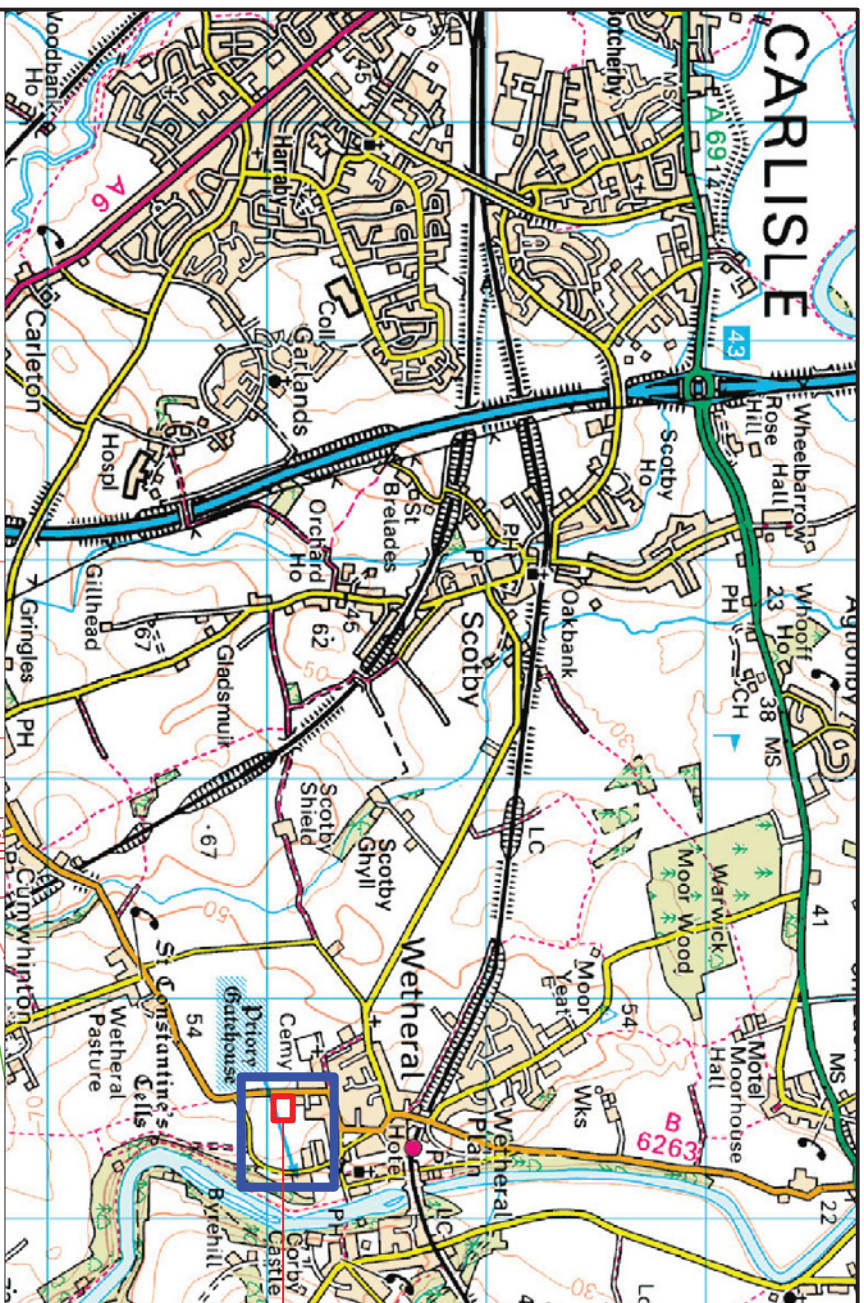
| Photo No. | Description | Taken from | Conditions |
|-----------|--|------------|------------|
| 1-7 | Pre-ex 360° panorama of the site from a cut tree stump on the field boundary | - | Overcast |
| 8-9 | Pre-ex views of the site | N | Overcast |

| Photo No. | Description | Taken from | Conditions |
|-----------|--|------------|-------------|
| 10 | Trench 1 excavated | S | Overcast |
| 11-12 | Trench 1, ditch 101, ENE facing section | ENE | Overcast |
| 13-14 | Trench 1, general view of the central area containing 101, 103 | S | Overcast |
| 15 | Trench 5, general view | S | Sunny |
| 16 | Trench 2, general view | SSW | Overcast |
| 17-18 | Trench 2, section through 201 | SW | Bright |
| 19 | Trench 2, general view of the central area containing 201 | SSW | Sunny |
| 20 | Trench 2, general view of section through 201 | SW | Sunny |
| 21 | Trench 2, plan view of excavated portion of 201 | WNW | Bright |
| 22 | Trench 2, general view | NNE | Sunny |
| 23-24 | Post-ex views of the site | N | Sunny |
| 25-26 | Trench 2, WNW facing section | WNW | Sunny |
| 27-28 | Trench 3, general view | S | Sunny |
| 29-30 | Sandstone gate post at south side of disused gate into the southern part of the site from the B6263. View from inside the field | NE | Sun / Shade |
| 31-32 | Trench 4, general view | S | Sunny |
| 33-35 | General views of the site from the west side of the B6263, NE to SE showing the existing access into the field with sandstone gate post at the NE end close to the former school | SW / NW | Sunny |
| 36 | The disused gate into the southern part of the site from the B6263. General view | W | Sunny |
| 37 | View ENE through the disused gate showing the field boundary running ENE away from the B6263 and backfilling in progress | W | Sunny |
| 38 | Sandstone gate post at south side of disused gate into the southern part of the site from the B6263 | W | Sunny |

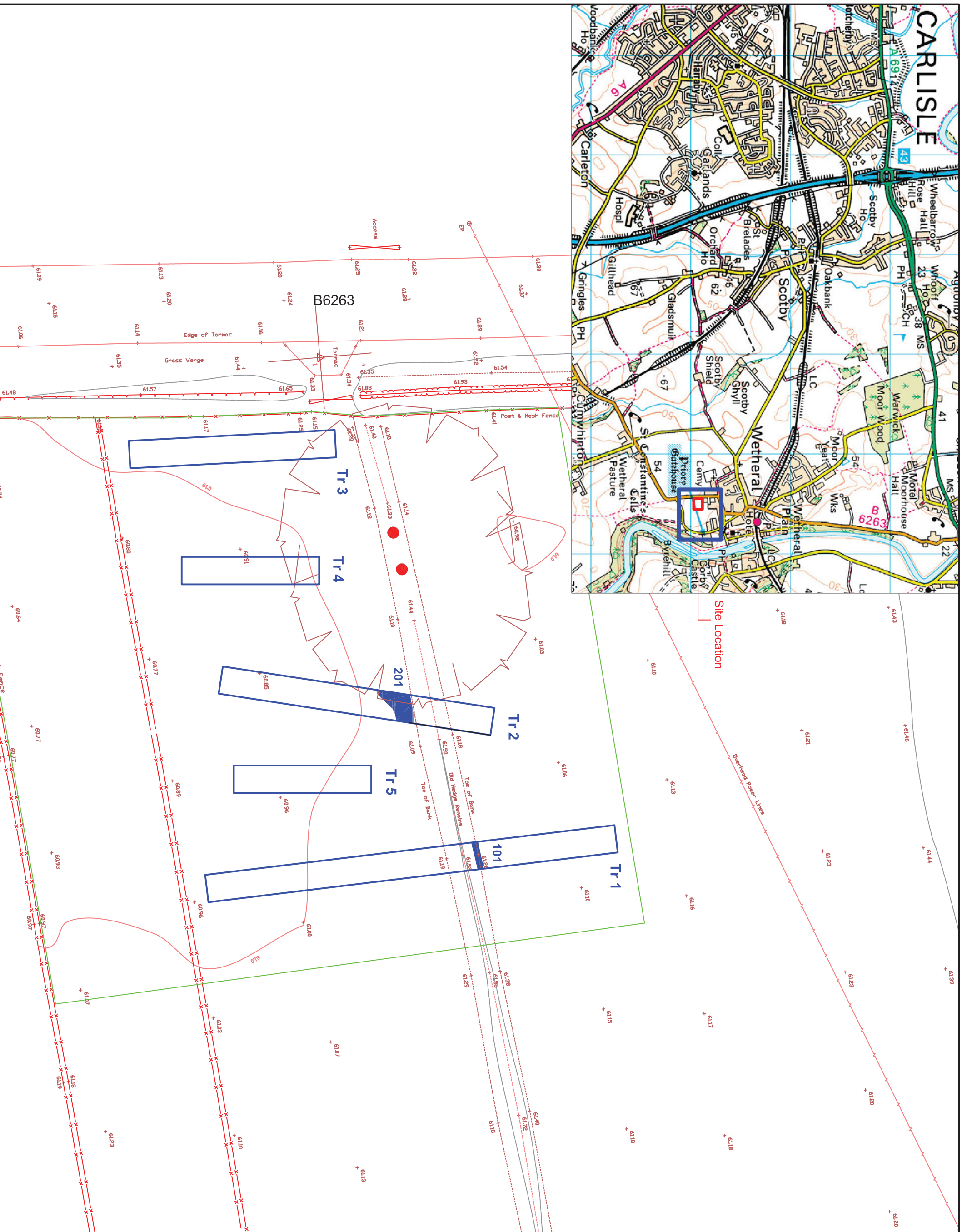
APPENDIX 5: Drawings Register

| Drawing No. | Sheet | Scale | Description |
|-------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | 1 | 1:50 | Trench 1 plan showing features and fills 101-3 |
| 2 | 1 | 1:10 | Trench 1, ENE facing section through ditch 101 and fill 102 |
| 3 | 1 | 1:50 | Trench 2 plan showing feature and fill 201-2 |
| 4 | 1 | 1:10 | Trench 2, SW facing section through 201-2 |

CARLISLE



Site Location



Key:



Development Area

CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD
 The Old Engine House
 Eskdale Park
 Macclesfield
 East Lothian, EH21 7PQ
 T: 0151 273 4390
 F: 0151 273 4381
 E: info@cfa-archaeology.co.uk
 W: www.cfa-archaeology.co.uk

Fig. No: 1 Revision: A

Title: Trench location plan

Project: Land adjacent to the B6263, Wetheral

Client: Taylor & Hardy

Scale: 1:400 A3

Drawn by: LW Checked: LW Report No: 1862

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Fig. 2 - General view of the site from the north. The large tree stumps lie on the field boundary



| | | | | | | | |
|--------|--|---|-----------|---|---------|----------------|---|
| Key: | Fig. No: | 2 | Revision: | A | Client: | Taylor & Hardy |  <p>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</p> |
| | Title: | | | | | | |
| Scale: | Project: Land adjacent to the B6263, Wetheral | | | | | | Drawn by: LW Report No: 1862 |
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Fig. 3 - Trench 1. Ditch 101 on the north side of the old field boundary



Fig. 4 - Trench 2. Section through the possible Ditch 201 on south side of the field boundary

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|---------|----------------|---|----|------------|
| Key: | Fig. No: | 3-4 | Revision: | A | Client: | Taylor & Hardy |  <p>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</p> | | |
| | Title: | | | | | | | | |
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