

**RNLI Lifeboat Station  
Cowbar  
Staithes  
North Yorkshire**

**NZ 78253 18953**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

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**September 2011**

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**NYM/2011/0168/FL**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Figure List	2
Plate List	2
Non Technical Summary	3
1. Introduction	3
2. Site Description	4
3. Historical and Archaeological Background	4
4. Aims and Objectives	4
5. Methodology	4
6. Results	5
7. Conclusions	5
Appendix 1 Specification	8

## Figure List

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Site Location. Scale 1:2,500              | 7 |
| 2. | Location of Archaeological Watching Brief | 8 |

## Plate List

- |    |                                    |    |
|----|------------------------------------|----|
| 1. | View of Area behind Wall.          | 9  |
| 2. | View of Area behind Wall.          | 9  |
| 3. | Detail of made-up ground deposits. | 10 |
| 4. | Detail of made-up ground deposits. | 10 |

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***Non Technical Summary***

*An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by MAP Archaeological Practice Ltd at RNLI Lifeboat Station, Cowbar, Staithes, North Yorkshire in August 2011, in order to fulfil a condition attached to Planning Application NYM/2011/0168/FL. The work involved monitoring the demolition and groundworks associated with the realignment of the sea wall.*

*No archaeological features, deposits or finds were encountered during the Archaeological Watching Brief.*

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief that was undertaken in August 2011 by MAP Archaeological Practice Ltd at RNLI Lifeboat Station, Cowbar, Staithes, North Yorkshire : Fig. 1). The work was undertaken in accordance with written scheme of investigation approved by the Senior Archaeological Conservation Officer (SACO) of the North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNP) who holds the Historic Environment Record for the area of the National Park.
- 1.2 The Watching Brief was designed to provide an appropriate level of recording for archaeological remains, deposits or finds that might be affected by the ground works, following the archaeology policy issued

by the Secretary of State for the Environment contained in *Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)*.

- 1.3 All work was funded W A Fairhurst & Partners.
- 1.4 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright, Licence No. AL 50453A.

## **2. Site Description**

- 2.1 The proposed development site is the RNLI Lifeboat Station located on the north side of Staithes Beck in Staithes Harbour south of Cowbar, centred NZ 78253 18953.

## **3. Historical and Archaeological Background**

- 3.1 The Proposed Development Area is adjacent to a Grade II Listed Building within the Staithes Designated Conservation Area.
- 3.2 Staithes was founded as a settlement in the medieval period. The town was an important centre for the Alum Industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the port was a thriving centre for commerce and fishing.
- 3.3 Work in Staithes in 1991 uncovered Bronze Age timbers on the north side of Staithes Beck. A radiocarbon date of 1730-1440BC was taken for the mass of timbers which included alder, hazel, ash, cherry, oak, elm and willow.

## **4. Aims and Objectives**

- 4.1 The aims of the Archaeological Watching Brief were to record and recover archaeological remains, which could be affected by the works, and to prepare a report summarising the results of the work.

## **5. Methodology**

- 5.1 All the groundwork's associated with the realignment of the sea wall were monitored.
- 5.2 All excavations were undertaken using a back acting mechanical excavator using a toothed and a toothless bucket, under close archaeological supervision.
- 5.3 All work was carried out in line with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IFA 1998).
- 5.4 All deposits were recorded according to correct principles of stratigraphic excavation on MAP's *pro forma* context sheets, which are compatible with the MoLAS recording system.
- 5.5 A photographic record of the monitored groundwork's was maintained throughout the Recording Brief on a digital camera.

## **6. Results**

- 6.1 The work involved the archaeological monitoring of all groundwork's associated with the strengthening of the existing wall with two concrete piles. The deposits revealed proved to be infill deposited at the time of the construction of the wall.
- 6.2 No archaeological finds or features were uncovered during the Archaeological Watching Brief.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 Whilst all works taking place on the site were watched under archaeological supervision, no finds or features of archaeological interest were encountered.

7.2 The removal of the wall proved the deposits behind were made ground/infill from the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century.

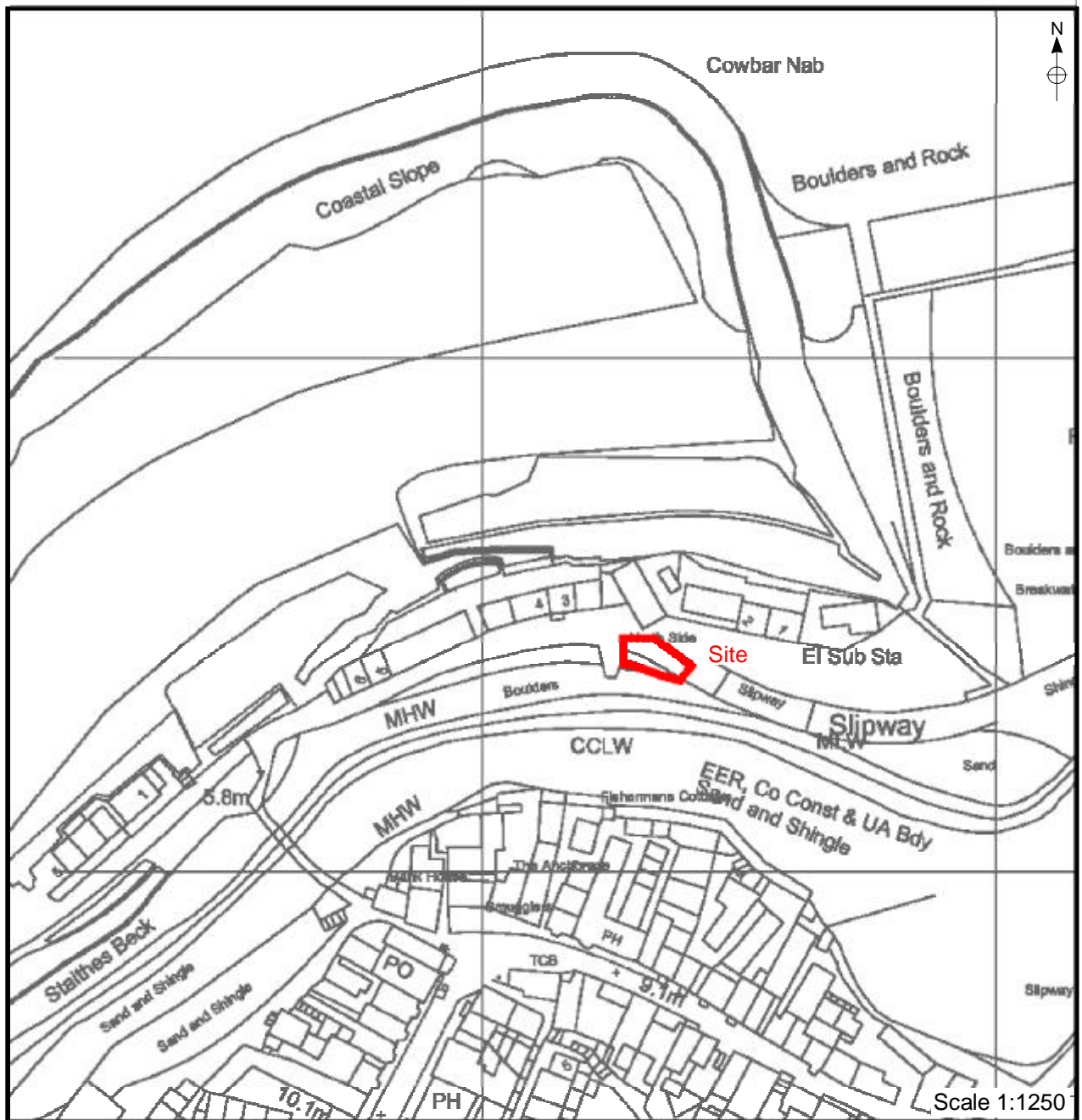


Figure 1. Site Location.



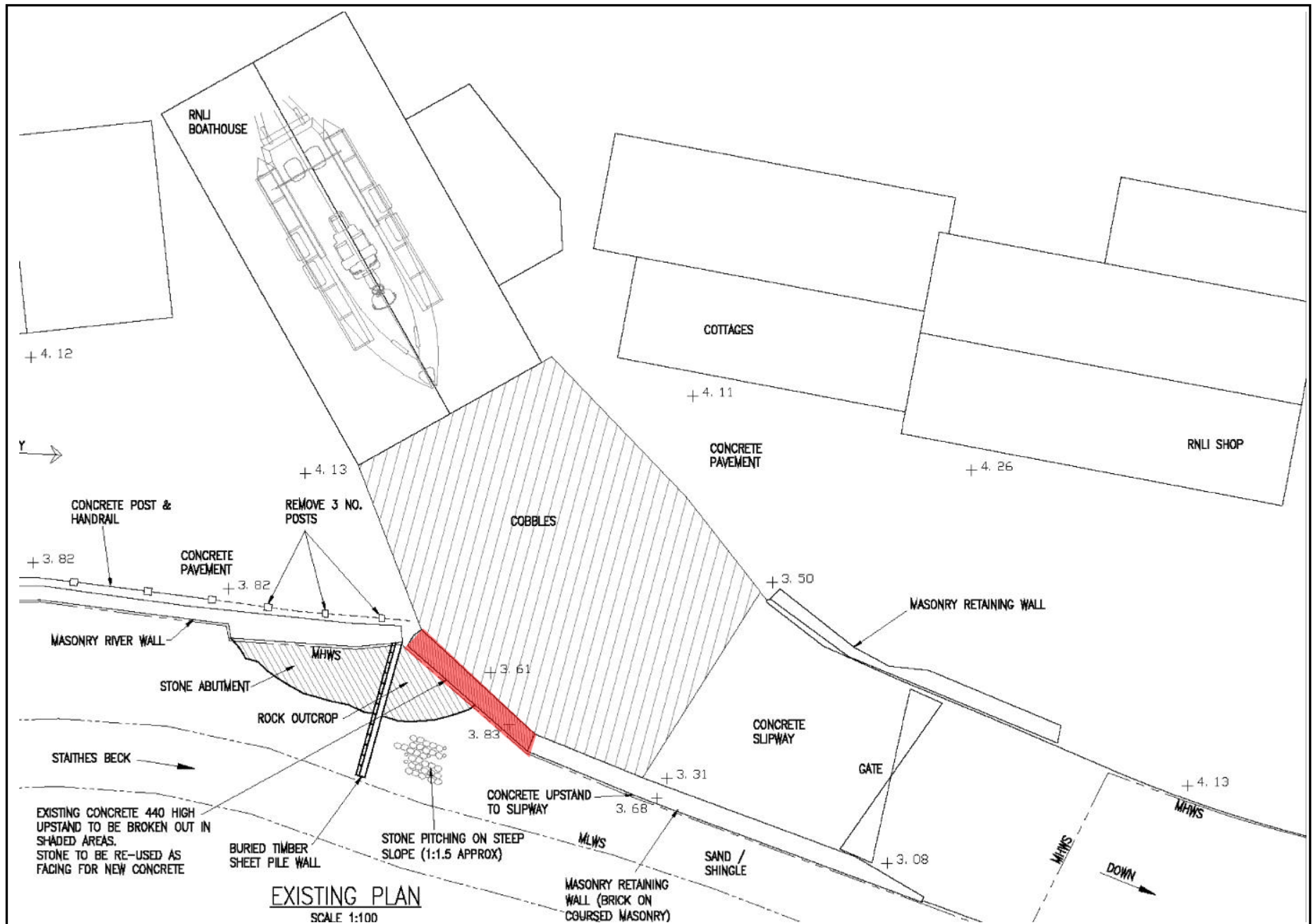


Figure 2. Location of Archaeological Watching Brief.



Plate 1. View of area behind wall.



Plate 2. View of area behind wall.



Plate 3. Detail of made-up ground deposits.



Plate 4. Detail of made-up ground deposits.

**NYM/2011/0168/FL**

**RNLI Lifeboat Station Cowbar, Staithes – SPECIFICATION FOR  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MITIGATION.**

**1.0 Summary**

**1.1** Archaeological work consisting of a recording brief level of observation and recording during the realignment of the sea wall, is required in order to mitigate the impact of development at the above.

**1.2** This specification has been prepared for the Senior Archaeological Conservation Officer (SACO) of the North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNP) who hold the Historic Environment Record for the area of the National Park. The specification is also required as part of the Marine Licence and the MMO have requested that the protocol is agreed with a Dr Andy Hammon at English Heritage (01904 601901).

**NOTE:** The requirements detailed in paragraphs 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 10.1 are to be met by the archaeological contractor **prior** to the commencement of any work.

**2.0 Site location**

**2.1** The proposed development site is the RNLI Lifeboat Station located on the north side of Staithes Beck in Staithes Harbour south of Cowbar, centred NZ 78253 18953.

**3.0 Historical and archaeological background**

**3.1** The Proposed Development Area is adjacent to a Grade II Listed Building within the Staithes Designated Conservation Area.

**3.2** Staithes was founded as a settlement in the medieval period. The town was an important centre for the Alum Industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the port was a thriving centre for commerce and fishing.

**3.3** Work in Staithes in 1991 uncovered Bronze Age timbers on the north side of Staithes Beck. A radiocarbon date of 1730-1440BC was taken for the mass of timbers which included alder, hazel, ash, cherry, oak, elm and willow.

**4.0 Purpose of the recording brief**

**4.1** The Proposed Development comprises the purpose of re-alignment of River wall at River wall to south of Lifeboat House, Staithes NYM/2011/0168/FL. There is the potential for the proposed development to expose or disturb archaeological remains relating to the historic origin of the harbour and the possibility of the uncovering of prehistoric deposits and timbers. Consequently, planning permission

is conditional on the satisfactory completion of a programme of archaeological mitigation to ensure that preservation by record is secured for all significant archaeological structures, deposits and finds encountered.

**4.2** The aim of the archaeological mitigation is to identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, character and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features and deposits which are disturbed or exposed as a result of the groundworks and other operations associated with the development (including by test pits, boreholes and services).

**4.3 *General Principles***

**4.3.1** As a general principal, in order to minimise potential archaeological disturbance, all development work should seek to keep ground disturbance to a minimum and wherever practical, *in-situ* preservation of archaeological structures and deposits encountered should be practised.

**5.0 Programme of work**

**5.1 *Archaeological Recording during Development***

A continuous presence of a professional archaeologist during development to record all ground works associated with the removal of the sea wall and associated excavation and landscaping will be required. The archaeologist should view the area as it is being dug and any sections after excavation has been completed. Provision should be made for the sample excavation of the timbers with any necessary on-site conservation, the taking of environmental samples, dendro-chronological and/or radiocarbon dating of the timbers and needs can be timetabled.

**5.2** The recording brief is not intended to cause undue delay to the work of other contractors on site, but a degree of flexibility is expected of the developer in order that the archaeologist can fulfil the terms of this specification (see also **6.6** below). Where archaeological structures, deposits and finds are exposed or disturbed by construction works, the archaeologist should be provided with the opportunity to clean, assess, excavate quickly by hand, sample and record as appropriate before they are destroyed. Specialist input may also be needed from D. Alldritt if Bronze Age timbers are uncovered (i.e. conservation, environmental sampling and dating. The archaeologist shall not excavate any area beyond those scheduled for destruction by the development. If the contractors or plant operators notice archaeological remains, they should immediately tell the archaeologist.

**5.3** Heavy plant should not be operated in conditions, or in a manner, likely to result in damage to archaeological remains or deposits until they have been recorded and the archaeologist on site has allowed

operations to recommence at that location. Heavy plant must not cause ground disturbance other than that which is expressly authorised by the conditional planning approval.

- 5.4** In the case of unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries (section **6.6**), further mitigation in terms of preservation *in situ* or preservation by record might be required, but would be dealt with by a separate specification.

## **6.0 General instructions**

### **6.1 Health and Safety**

Contractors are expected to abide by the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act and its subsequent amendments. Where archaeological work is carried out at the same time as the work of other contractors, regard should also be taken of any reasonable additional constraints that these contractors may impose. Appropriate provision of first aid, telephone and PPE as described in the SCAUM manual *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology 2002* should be followed. Each site should have a nominated safety officer. The undertaking of a risk assessment prior to the commencement of works is strongly recommended.

### **6.2 Insurance**

It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure that they have adequate public and professional insurance cover.

### **6.3 Confirmation of adherence to specification**

Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor must confirm adherence to this specification in writing to the SACO, or state (with reasons) any proposals to vary the specification (see also section **13** below). Should the contractor wish to vary the specification, then written confirmation of the agreement of the SACO to any variations is required prior to work commencing.

### **6.4 Confirmation of timetable and contractors' qualifications**

Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor must provide the SACO with a projected timetable for the site work, and the names and qualifications of key project staff (e.g. project manager, site supervisor, proposed specialists, sub-contractors). All project staff provided by the archaeological contractor must be suitably qualified and experienced for their roles; CVs may be requested by the SACO. The timetable should be adequate to allow the work to be undertaken to the appropriate professional standard, subject to the ultimate judgement of the SACO.

### **6.5 Notification**

The SACO should be provided with as much notice as possible in writing (and certainly not less than one week) of the intention to start work. A copy of the archaeological contractor's risk assessment of the site should accompany the notification. Environmental and

conservation specialists (see also section 7.5 below) should also be kept informed of the projected start date and progress so that at least one visit can be made to assess the site, and sampling and necessary on-site conservation needs can be timetabled.

#### **6.6 *Unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries***

If during the course of the recording brief there are unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries which, in the professional judgment of the archaeologist on site, warrant more detailed investigation or recording than is appropriate within the terms of this specification, then the archaeological contractor should contact the SACO immediately with the relevant information so that a suitable course of action can be determined.

### **7.0 Methods**

#### **7.1 *Machine use***

Topsoil and recent overburden may be excavated by machine under archaeological supervision down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits. The machine must use a toothless bucket and excavation by hand must take place following the identification of archaeological features or deposits.

#### **7.2 *Excavation Methods***

A sufficient sample of archaeological features and deposits revealed should be excavated in an archaeologically controlled and stratigraphic manner to ensure an adequate understanding of the remains and thereby fulfil the requirement for preservation by record. However, the complete excavation of all features is not a requirement.

If, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, the recording brief reveals below-ground conditions which indicate that potentially archaeological levels are absent, the archaeologist should contact the SACO to discuss reducing or curtailing the requirements. The work may only be curtailed with the prior agreement of the SACO.

#### **7.3 *Human remains***

Any human remains encountered must initially be left *in situ*, covered and protected, and the NPA SACO notified at the earliest opportunity. If removal is necessary the remains must be excavated archaeologically in accordance with the *Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England* published by English Heritage (2005), a valid Ministry of Justice Department of Constitutional Affairs licence and any local environmental health regulations.

#### 7.4 **Recording methods**

Archaeological recording should be to the same standard for a recording brief as for a larger evaluation or excavation. All stratigraphy should be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. A full record of all features and deposits excavated or exposed should be made, including scale drawings, photographs and written descriptions sufficient to permit the preparation of a report.

The actual areas of ground disturbance (even if no archaeological remains are present) should be recorded on a suitable base map or development plan and the depth of the excavations noted. If archaeological remains are identified, their location is to be recorded on a site plan and accurately tied into the National Grid and located on an up-to-date 1:1250 O.S. map base.

Section drawings (at a minimum scale of 1:20) must include heights O.D. and plans (at a minimum scale of 1:50) must include O.D. spot heights for all principal strata and any features. An appropriate scale should be present in all photographs. A good quality 35mm camera and lens should be used for all aspects of the photographic work to produce high quality images from which significant enlargements can be made. All photographs to be cross-referred (including position and orientation) to the site plan. **Digital photography is only acceptable in a limited supporting role due to unproven archiving qualities.** Digital imagery should use a camera with a **minimum resolution of 5 megapixels** and set to record at high resolution, similarly cross-referenced and indexed within the archive. Colour slides should be stored in inert (i.e. non-PVC) holders. [Black and white images should be taken on archivally stable conventional (silver-based) print film (NOT chromogenic) such as Ilford FP4 or HP5, or Delta 400 Pro that is replacing HP5 in certain film sizes (such as 220). Dye-based films such as Ilford XP2 and Kodak T40CN are unacceptable due to poor archiving qualities].

#### 7.5 **Environmental sampling and scientific dating**

Samples for environmental analysis and scientific dating should be taken if suitable material is encountered during the recording brief. Arrangements should be made to ensure that specialist advice and analysis are available if required. In the first instance advice should be sought from Andy Hammon, English Heritage Regional Science Advisor, 37 Tanner Row, York YO1 6WP (Tel: 01904 601901, e-mail [andy.hammon@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:andy.hammon@english-heritage.org.uk)). If contractors intend to use a different source of advice then the specialist should be named and should take account of the information and future directions identified in the regional review.

#### 7.6 Palaeoenvironmental reviews:

Hall, A.R. and Huntley, J.P. 2007. *A Review of the Evidence for Macrofossil Plant Remains from Archaeological Depoists in Northern*



*England*. Research English Heritage Department Reports Series 87/2007. <http://research.english-heritage.org.uk/report/?14598>

Kenward, H. (2009). *Invertebrates in Archaeology in the North of England*. English Heritage Research Department Report Series 12/2009. <http://research.english-heritage.org.uk/results/?&number=12&year=2009>

### **7.7 Finds**

Excavated soil should be searched as practicable for finds. All finds, except unstratified 20<sup>th</sup> century material, should be collected and retained for processing. Where possible, pottery and animal bone should be collected as bulk samples by context and significant small finds should be three dimensionally located prior to collection. It should be noted that archaeological finds remain the property of the landowner and as such should not be removed from site unless previously arranged by agreement.

### **7.8 Conservation**

Arrangements should be made to ensure that specialist conservation advice is available if required. In the first instance advice should be sought from Andy Hammon, English Heritage Regional Science Advisor, 37 Tanner Row, York YO1 6WP. If contractors intend to use a different source of advice then the specialist should be named in advance. A contingency amount should be identified for the appraisal of the conservation needs of artefactual material excavated on site and for the initial stabilising of such finds where needed so that they may be studied as part of post-excavation work for the project. As a guiding principle only artefacts of a “displayable” quality would warrant full conservation, but metalwork and coinage from stratified contexts would be expected to be X-rayed if necessary.

### **7.9 Post-excavation**

Following completion of fieldwork, all finds and samples should be processed to MAP2 standards and subject to specialist identification, spot-dating and assessment. Finds should be stabilised and properly packaged in accordance with the requirements of the recipient museum. Material suitable for scientific dating (e.g. charcoal) should be identified to species and assessed for suitability by an environmental specialist prior to submission to a dating laboratory.

A fully indexed field archive shall be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, drawings and photographs (see also section 10).

## **8.0 Monitoring arrangements**

**8.1** Field work may be monitored by the SACO or nominated representative, and during such works the SACO should be allowed access to the site at any reasonable time.

**8.2** Monitoring may be in the form of a site visit by the NPA's SACO or nominated representative. Where possible, site visits will be arranged in advance. The archaeological contractor will be notified if standards detailed in this specification are not being met and will be expected to make good any observed deficiencies. The report for the work and deposition of the archive will be monitored and standards enforced where required.

## **9.0 Reporting**

**9.1** A report should be produced, presented in an ordered state and contained within a protective cover/sleeve or bound in some fashion - loose leaf presentation is unacceptable. It should be page numbered and supplemented with sections and paragraph numbering for ease of reference. It is not envisaged that the report is likely to be published, but it should be produced with sufficient care and attention to detail to be of academic use to future researchers. Where few or no finds are made, it may be acceptable to provide the report in the form of a letter with plans attached.

**9.2** The contents of the report should include the following:

- a title page listing site/development name and reference, the name of the archaeological contractor and the developer or commissioning agent
- a site location plan with NGR
- background information on the need for the project
- a description of the methodology employed
- plans of the extent of the recording brief, and of features and deposits investigated
- tables summarising features and artefacts, and giving interpretations
- a statement indicating where the archive will be deposited.

**9.3** The report should interpret the results, placing them in a local, regional, and if appropriate, national context. It must identify any deposits which will remain *in situ* following completion of the recording brief, either on or associated with the site. It should also identify areas or themes of an archaeological or historical nature which may require further work. If considered necessary appropriate methods of further assessment may be advocated.

**9.4** Details of the style and format of the report are to be determined by the archaeological contractor, but should include a full bibliography, a quantified index to the site archive and a copy of this specification as an appendix. The introduction and summary of the report should make it clear that this work was undertaken to a specification provided by the Senior Archaeological Conservation Officer of the NYMNP.

**9.5** The report should be produced within four weeks of completion of fieldwork, unless specialist reports are awaited. In this case a revised date should be agreed with the NPA SACO. Completion of this project and a recommendation from the SACO to discharge the planning condition are dependant on receipt by the SACO of a satisfactory report which has been prepared in accordance with this specification. Any comments made by the SACO in response to the submission of an unsatisfactory report must be taken into account in finalising the report within a timescale which has been agreed with the SACO.

**9.6** Copies of the printed report should be sent separately to the client and to the NYMNPA HER. A digital version of the report should also be supplied to the HER on CD as a pdf file, including photos and illustrations, with plans and sections saved on the CD as GIS compatible digital files.

**9.7** Please note that by depositing this report, the contractor gives permission for the material presented in the document to be used by the NPA, in perpetuity, although the contractor retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as specified in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (chapter IV, section 79). The permission will allow the NPA to reproduce material, including for non-commercial use by third parties, with the copyright owner suitably acknowledged.

## **10.0 The Archive**

**10.1** Before commencing any fieldwork, the archaeological contractor must determine the requirements for the deposition of the site archive in an MGC approved institution or records office.

**10.2** The site archive should comprise all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographic negatives and a complete set of labelled photographic prints/slides, with a copy of the report. All photos should be scanned at a minimum of 150dpi and saved as jpegs or tiffs for storage on CD as part of the archive. The archive should be ordered and internally consistent and prepared to a minimum standard in accordance with NYCC Guidelines on the Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives (substituting the National Park's SACO for the County Archaeological Officer) and as defined in MAP2.

**10.3** It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to endeavour to obtain consent of the landowner, in writing, to the deposition of the finds with the recipient of the site archive. The archive should be deposited with the recipient institution within six months of completion of fieldwork.

## **11.0 Publication and dissemination**

**11.1** All mitigation work which does not progress to further excavation and research (with the relevant post-excavation and publication scheme and costs), should have a time and budget allocation identified for publication. This should be to a minimum standard to include a summary of the work, findings, dates, illustrations and photographs and references to where the archive is lodged. Editors of regional journals should be contacted for information on outline publication costs; fuller figures may be worked out on completion of the fieldwork. As the final note is largely unpredictable in advance, a contingency sum should be set aside at the outset of work in the tender.

**11.2** On completion of the work, the archaeological contractor should also make their work accessible to the wider research community by submitting digital data and copies of reports online to OASIS (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>). Submission of data to OASIS **does not** discharge the requirements (in sections **9.5** and **9.6**) for the contractor to notify the SACO of the details of the work and to provide the Historic Environment Record (HER) with a copy of the report.

## **12.0 The tender**

**12.1** Brief details of the organisation and staff (including any specialist sub-contractors) who are proposing to carry out the work, specifying qualifications and membership of any professional organisations. This should also include any relevant specialisms or experience.

**12.2** A statement concerning the organisation's Health and Safety policy and insurance cover.

**12.3** The earliest date at which the work can be commenced and the amount of notice required to begin the recording brief.

**12.4** Where appropriate, contingency sums should be set aside to cover specialist input for dating, artefact analysis, environmental sampling and conservation, and clearly indicated. Contingency sums should also be allowed for publication.

**12.5** An estimate of how long the work will take broken down by time and cost in terms of data collection, post-excavation work, archive preparation and report production. This should include a breakdown of costs attributable to staff, travelling, subsistence, printing, and administration where possible.

## **13.0 General**

### **13.1 *Authorised alterations to specification by contractor***

It should be noted that this specification is based upon records available in the North York Moors Historic Environment Record. Archaeological contractors submitting tenders are recommended to carry out an inspection of the site prior to submission. If, on first visiting the site or at any time during the course of the recording exercise, it appears in the archaeologist's professional judgment that:

i) a part or the whole of the site is not amenable to recording as detailed above, and/or

ii) an alternative approach may be more appropriate or likely to produce more informative results,

then it is expected that the archaeologist will contact the NPA's SACO as a matter of urgency in order that the matter can be resolved in liaison with the developer and the Local Planning Authority.

### 13.2 ***Unauthorised alterations to specification by contractor***

It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that they have obtained the NPA's SACO consent in writing to any variation of the specification prior to the commencement of on-site work or (where applicable) prior to the finalisation of the tender. Unauthorised variations may result in the NPA's SACO being unable to recommend that the planning condition should be discharged, and are therefore made solely at the risk of the contractor.

- 13.3 This programme of mitigation should be considered as a project in its own right and not necessarily the first stage of any further work. A copy of the report, as noted in 9.6 above, both on paper and on disc for inclusion into the National Park Authority's Archaeological Archive, should be sent to:

Senior Archaeological Conservation Officer, The Old Vicarage,  
Bondgate, Helmsley, York YO62 5BP. 01439 770657

Dated: 02/06/2011

## 14. **References**

English Heritage. 2002. *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation*. <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/environmental-archaeology/>

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<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/waterloggedorganicmaterials>