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**M55 to Heyhouses Link Road
Southern Section
Lancashire**

Archaeological Strip and Record

July 2009

Report No. 1973

A. E. Yates Ltd

M55 to Heyhouses Link Road – Southern Section Lancashire

Archaeological Strip and Record

Summary

An archaeological strip and record exercise was undertaken along the southern section of the new carriageway of the M55 to Heyhouses Link Road. The stripping removed all topsoil deposits exposing the natural sand deposits with occasional patches of peat. Modern deep ploughing had heavily disturbed the natural in places. No archaeological features or deposits were present although modern pipe trenches, field boundaries and a stock enclosure were identified.




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Report Information

Client: A. E. Yates Ltd.
Address: Cranfield Road, Lostock Ind. Estate, Lostock,
Bolton, BL6 4SB.
Report Type: Archaeological Strip and Record
Location: Heyhouses
County: Lancashire
Grid Reference: SD 3455 2937
Period(s) of activity
represented: None present
Report Number: 1973
Project Number: 3428
Site Code: HEY 09
Planning Application No.: 5/01/0211
Museum Accession No.:
Date of fieldwork: May 8th – May 13th 2009
Date of report: July 2009
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Fieldwork supervisor: David Williams BA
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Authorisation for
distribution:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Williams', is written over a horizontal dashed line. The signature is fluid and cursive, extending to the right of the line.

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Certificate No. 125/93

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1 Introduction

Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) was commissioned by A. E. Yates Limited to carry out a programme of works consisting of an archaeological strip and record within the road corridor of the southern section of the M55 to Heyhouses Link Road at the junction between North Houses Lane and Blackpool Road (planning permission no 5/01/0211).

Site location and topography

The site is located on Lytham Moss, north-east of Lytham St Annes (Fig. 1) and south-east of Blackpool Airport at approximately SD 3455 2937. It is situated at between 4m and 6m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The new section of carriageway is approximately 350m in length and 7m in width extending from the north end of Lytham St Annes Way, by its junction with Moss Hall Lane, to North Houses Lane. The land is flat and until recently was under agricultural production.

Soils, geology and land-use

The soils of the area are unmapped (SSEW 1984) but borehole data records up to 0.5m of topsoil varying from dark brown silts and sands with pockets of peat in places, overlying deeper peat deposits up to 1.8m below current ground levels.

2 Archaeological and Historical Background

Although the vast majority of archaeological remains have been previously recorded in the upland areas of Lancashire, in the last decade the perception of the archaeological potential of lowland Lancashire has changed following the identification of occupation sites in situations where there was previously little or no archaeological evidence to suggest such activity. This in particular has major implications for pre-historic remains. Although no known sites are present within the road corridor, the work undertaken by Middleton *et al* (1995) has located archaeological sites in the immediate lowland region, dating from the Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age, and an assessment report produced by Lancaster University Archaeology Unit in 1999 concluded that there is potential for the existence of prehistoric material in the immediate area of the proposed road corridor.

Specifically, Palaeolithic remains consisting of an elk skeleton with barbed flint points embedded within it was discovered to the south-west of Poulton-le-Fylde approximately 9km to the north of the site. All other recorded Palaeolithic sites within Lancashire are located further north on the edge of the Lake District (Ede and Darlington 2002).

The Mesolithic activity recorded in Lancashire is similarly hard to trace, although tentative evidence of charcoal and fires indicative of occupation has been recorded at Starr Hills (3.5 km to the west of the site) and have been dated to 7597-7144 cal BC (Middleton *et al* 1995).

Environmental evidence also suggest that during the Mesolithic period small scale clearance of the native woodland in lowland Lancashire was being undertaken (Cowell 1996).

Neolithic period activity has been recorded in several places in the immediate surrounding area. These have been identified through flint scatters, with three late Mesolithic and early Neolithic flint sites on the western side of Peel, 2.5km to the north-east of the site; a further early Neolithic site was also located 3.5km to the west of the road corridor at Moss Side (Middleton *et al* 1995).

Early Bronze age flint scatter sites are located in close proximity to the site around the village of Higher Ballam 1km to the east. Lytham Moss itself has produced Bronze Age axe-hammers and axes and these finds cluster in the lowland and peat areas perhaps indicating that these areas were the favoured sites for occupation. (Middleton 1996).

Few rural sites from either the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. It has been suggested that this is a result of the increased growth of the peat lands making the land uninhabitable in this part of Lancashire (Middleton *et al* 1995). The Romano-British archaeological record mainly comprises urban and military sites within Lancashire (Ede and Darlington 2002) with the visibility of rural Romano-British sites being acknowledged as being very poor both in the immediate areas of the site and the region as a whole (Middleton *et al* 1995).

3 Aims and Objectives

The aims of the scheme of works were to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, character, extent, state of preservation and date of any archaeological remains within the proposed road corridor (see Appendix 2).

The specific aims were to:

- locate and characterise any surviving below ground archaeological remains relating to possible prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval land-use of the area;
- provide an assessment of the potential and significance of any identified archaeological remains in a local, regional and (if relevant) national context;
- provide information on which a strategy for further evaluation and/or mitigation, if required could be developed, and;
- To produce a comprehensive site archive and report.

4 Methodology

All work was undertaken to the highest professional standards and conformed to recognised published guidelines, in particular those issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008a and 2008b and 2008c), English Heritage (1991, 2005, 2006, 2008a and 2008b), the ASWYAS site recording manual (ASWYAS 2003) and the Specification (Appendix 2).

The area of the road corridor was stripped with a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil was removed in level spits under direct archaeological supervision, to either the top of the first archaeological horizon or to the undisturbed natural geological layer. This produced a clean even surface that was assessed for archaeology and then recorded. Where required the surface was cleaned by hand. The features uncovered were then drawn at an appropriate scale. The excavation of any features was determined by the quantity, importance and complexity of the exposed feature.

Linear remains such as ditches or gullies were sampled along their exposed length and if the archaeological features were suspected to be modern in date, for example drains or services, then excavation and recording was undertaken sufficient to establish a modern date.

The limit of the excavation area and modern features were surveyed using a 5500 Geodimeter total station and fixed in relation to nearby permanent structures and to the Ordnance Survey national grid (Fig. 2).

The archaeological strip and record took place between May 8th and May 13th 2009. The work was monitored through out by LCAS (Lancashire County Archaeological Service). An inventory of the primary archive is presented in Appendix 1 and as required by LCAS a copy of the specification is presented in Appendix 2. ASWYAS currently hold the site archive in a stable and secure location.

5 Results

The topsoil varied in depth from 0.58m in the southern part of the corridor to 0.20m at the northern end. The topsoil sealed the natural deposits, as there was no subsoil present within the stripped area. The natural comprised mottled, dark yellow-brown to orange, fine to medium compacted, sand (Plate 1), with occasional dark brown, peaty, inclusions. The natural was located between 3.88m and 5.00m aOD. The geological test pit and borehole logs demonstrate that the sandy natural deposit was between 0.30m and 1.30m in depth, overlying peat deposits. The removal of the natural sands was not monitored.

The sandy natural was heavily disturbed in places by ploughing and by extensive rooting; clearly defined plough scars were visible cutting into the natural. A modern stock enclosure (Plate 2) contained the remains of a chicken wire fence, on its internal edge. Several other features cut into the sand were also identified (Plate 3). Upon investigation these were

identified as either modern pipe trenches containing orange ceramic pipes or were the infilled vestiges of modern field boundaries (Plate 4).

No artefacts other than 20th century pottery and ceramic pipe were recovered during the stripping.

6 Discussion and Conclusions

Two test pits were also monitored during the course of the strip and record operation. These were excavated down through the sandy natural and the peat underlying this to blue clay. The peat varied in thickness between 0.40m and 0.50m. Along the whole road corridor the geotechnical boreholes revealed the peat to be between 0.35-2.05m in thickness.

Many of the previously identified sites in the immediate landscape date from the Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age. English Heritage (2000) have identified that all wetlands were a valuable resource and retreat for human populations in the past. It also states that a human presence of some sort should be assumed in any and all wetlands. The relatively close proximity to the site of Neolithic and Bronze Age sites, and the recovery of flint scatters and pollen date from these sites suggested that there was a moderate to high potential for there to be similar evidence in the peat or mineral soil below the peat within the road corridor.

However, the strip and record on the southern portion of the M55 Heyhouses link road did not reveal any archaeological deposit or finds. This lack of remains within the road corridor may be the consequence of one of two factors. Firstly, the sandy natural deposit was clearly damaged by ploughing with scarring visible in places; this may have caused an unknown level of truncation of any archaeological remains. Secondly, although the sandy natural was sealing a peat deposit pre-historic settlement may have favoured a much closer proximity to the lowland peat bog (Newman 1996) from which the resource could be more readily exploited. This would then place any occupational activity further into the peaty areas to the north closer to or in Lytham Moss.

In conclusion, no evidence for pre-historic activity was seen during the course of the strip and record along the road corridor. However, the possibility for evidence surviving in the peat and mineral soils below the sands cannot be discounted.

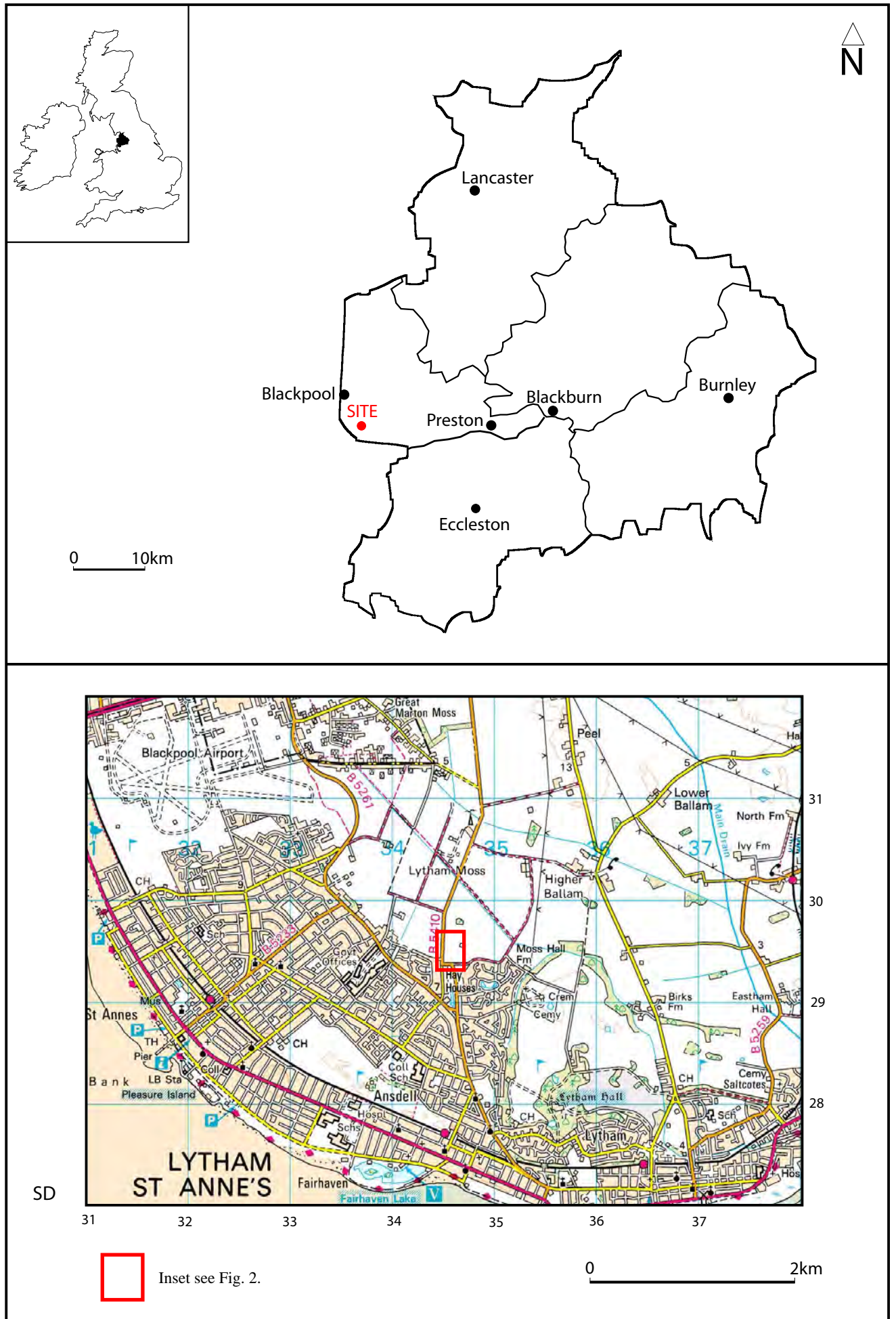


Fig. 1. Site location

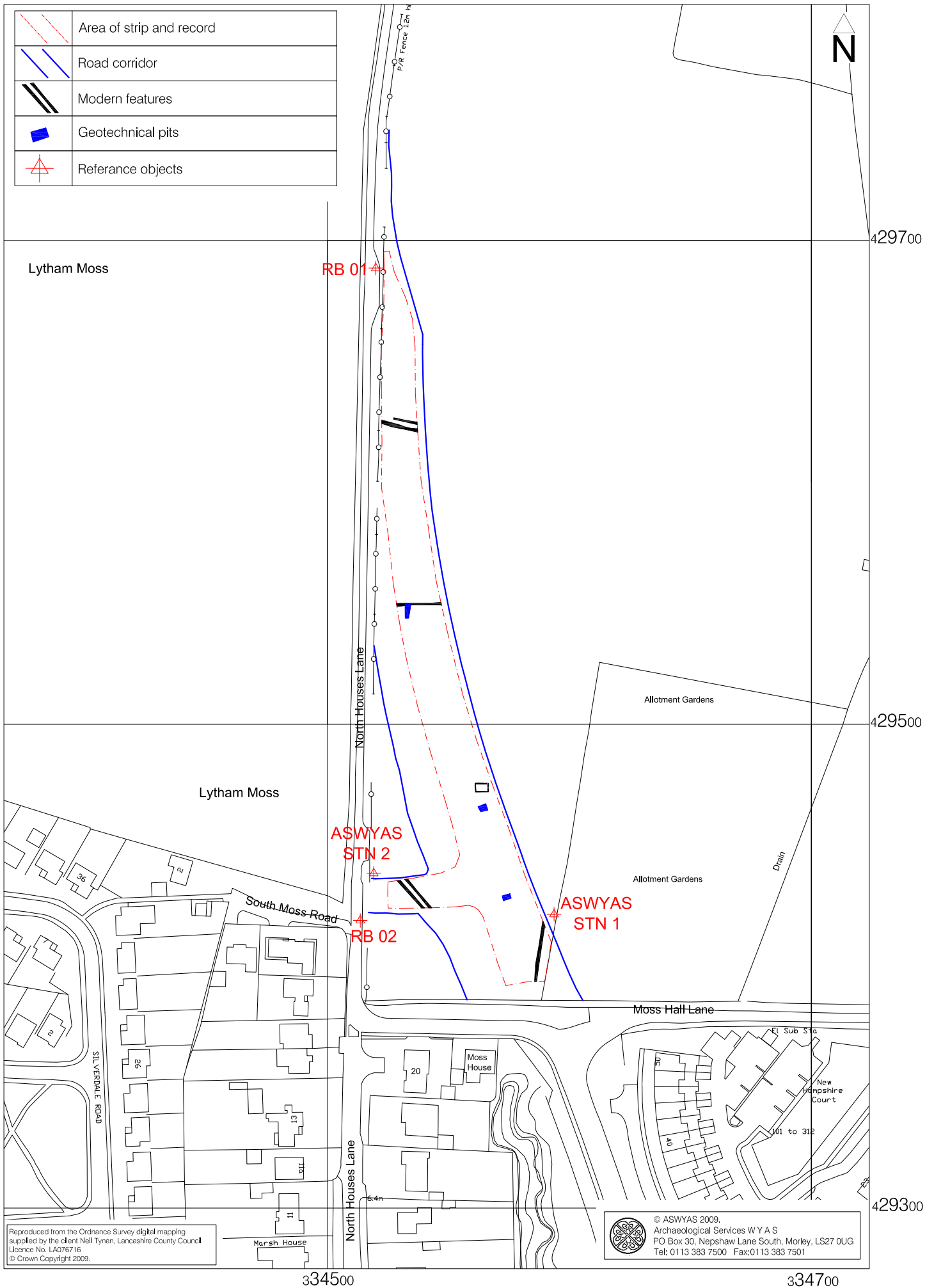


Fig. 2. Site plan showing location of stripped area within the road corridor 1:2000 @ A4



Plate 1. General site shot of stripped road corridor, looking northwest



Plate 2. General shot of modern stock pen or enclosure, looking west



Plate 3. Modern pipe trenches within the western part of the stripped area, looking southeast



Plate 4. General shot of two modern in filled ditches in the northern part of the stripped area, looking northwest

Appendix 1: Inventory of primary archive

Phase	File/Box No	Description	Quantity
Strip and Record	File no.1	Context register	1
		Context Cards for Topsoil, natural and modern deposits	4
		Drawing register	1
		Small Permatrace sheet	1
		Trench record sheet	1
		Project design	2
		Digital photo record sheets	2
		Geotechnical borehole information	1
		Site plan	1
		Daily site record sheets	4
		Risk Assessment	1

**Appendix 2: Specification for Archaeological Works at North Houses
Lane/Blackpool road, Lytham Moss.**

**Specification for Archaeological Works at
North Houses Lane/Blackpool Road, Lytham Moss
Circa SD 34552937**

Planning Permission ref, no. 5/01/0211

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted for the improvement of the road network between the M55 junction 4 and North Houses Lane, Lytham. Whilst part of this application is to be resubmitted, a section at its south end involving the reconstruction of the highway and associated works at the junction between North Houses Lane and Blackpool Road is to be undertaken. It is a condition of the planning approval that the applicants undertake a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation.
- 1.2 This specification has been prepared by Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS). All works undertaken in answer to this document should comply with the standards and guidance of the Institute for Archaeologists.

2. Archaeological Interest

- 2.1 The archaeological background to this area is set out in the archaeological assessment carried out by the Lancaster University Archaeology Unit in 1999 (LUAU September 1999, *M55 to Heyhouses Link Road (Central Section) Assessment Report*). It is not proposed to reproduce all this information here and a copy of the report can be obtained from the Lancashire County Council Archaeology Service (LCAS) if required. Of note in that assessment is that there is potential for the existence of prehistoric material in the immediate area of the proposed highway and junction works. Other reference works that may be of use to the contractor include:

Middleton, H. Wells, C. and Huckerby, E. 1995 *The Wetlands of North Lancashire* Lancaster;

Brennand, M. (ed) 2007 *Research and Archaeology in North West England, An Archaeological Research Framework for North West England: Volume 2 Research Agenda and Strategy* Manchester.

(The works by Tooley, M. referenced in Middleton *et al* are also likely to be of interest.)

- 2.2 It is notable that, since the work by LUAU was undertaken, our perception of the archaeological potential of lowland Lancashire has changed, in that it has been shown that even when surface remains are slight or absent, that there is still a significant potential for the presence of prehistoric or Romano-British settlement. The most recent example is the discovery of such a settlement off Garstang Road East, Poulton-le-Fylde, where two round huts were encountered during a strip and record exercise in advance of pipeline construction (*Pers comm.* Alastair Vannan, Oxford Archaeology North).
- 2.3 Because of this change and the recent discoveries, the recommendation for a simple watching brief on this site is now seen as inadequate, and a similar strip and record exercise is recommended here. This will involve the removal

of the topsoil within the development area by an archaeological contractor and the appropriate recording of any archaeological remains exposed. The latter may require excavation of a sample of the remains, such work to be agreed in advance with LCAS and to be appropriate and proportional to the quantity, importance and complexity of the archaeology exposed.

3. General Considerations

- 3.1 Prior to the commencement of **any work**, the archaeological contractor should confirm in writing adherence to this specification, or state (with reasons) any proposals to vary the specification. Should the contractor wish to vary the specification, then written confirmation of the agreement of LCAS to any variations is required prior to work commencing. The archaeologist carrying out the watching brief should be appropriately qualified and experienced. Any technical queries arising from the specification detailed below should be addressed to LCAS **without delay**.

4. Fieldwork Aims

- 4.1 The phase of topsoil stripping shall be designed to expose any archaeological remains and to allow their character and nature to be assessed and recorded. Initial stripping may be undertaken by appropriate mechanical removal of topsoil and other masking material under close archaeological supervision, with the intention of leaving an archaeologically clean and even surface for subsequent assessment and recording. Any datable or other diagnostic material exposed by the stripping is to be recovered and assessed.
- 4.2 The surface so produced is to be recorded using appropriate archaeological techniques, which will include the production of a detailed plan of all archaeological features and the characterisation of the archaeological resource. Where deposits are encountered that cannot be characterised by rapid and simple works, then a scheme of further investigation and recording works shall be designed and agreed with LCAS to establish the extent, date, character and significance of the archaeological remains. This scheme is to be tailored to the remains encountered, and to be appropriate and proportional to the quantity, importance and complexity of the archaeology exposed.
- 4.3 The archaeologist on site will naturally operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations. In this case, 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. This work may require the preparation of a Risk Assessment of the site, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations. **LCAS and its officers cannot be held responsible for any accidents that may occur to outside contractors engaged to undertake this survey while attempting to conform to this specification.**

5. Unexpectedly Significant or Complex Discoveries

- 5.1 Should there be, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries made that warrant more detailed recording than possible within the terms of this specification, then the archaeological contractor is to urgently contact LCAS with the relevant

information to enable the matter to be resolved with the developer. An appropriate contingency statement should therefore be included in any project design.

- 5.2 Any human remains that are discovered must initially be left in-situ, covered and protected. If removal is necessary, this must comply with the relevant legislation, any Home Office and local environmental health regulations and English Heritage's and The Church of England's *Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England* (2005) where relevant.
- 5.3 The terms of the Treasure Act, 1996 must be followed with regard to any finds, which might fall within its purview. Any such finds must be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner as required by the procedures laid down in the "Code of Practice". Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures must be taken to protect the finds from theft.

6. Monitoring

- 6.1 The recording exercise will be monitored as necessary and practicable by LCAS in its role as 'curator' of the county's archaeology. LCAS should receive **as much notice as possible in writing** (and certainly not less than one week) of the intention to start the watching brief. **A copy of the archaeological contractor's risk assessment of the site should accompany the notification.**

7. Post-Excavation/Post-Recording Work and Report Preparation

- 7.1 On completion of the fieldwork, any samples shall be processed and all finds shall be cleaned, identified, assessed, dated (if possible), marked (if appropriate) and properly packed and stored in accordance with the requirements of national guidelines. A fully indexed field archive shall be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and fully labelled photographs. Labelling should be in indelible ink on the *back* of the print and should include film and frame number; date recorded and photographer's name; name and address of site; national grid reference. Photographic prints should be mounted in appropriate archivally-stable sleeves. **A quantified index to the field archive should form an appendix to the report.** The original archive is to accompany the deposition of any finds, providing the landowner agrees to the deposition of finds in a publicly accessible archive (see Section 8.1 below).
- 7.2 A report should be produced to provide background information, a summary of the works carried out, a description and separate interpretation of any features and finds identified. Details of the report's style and format are to be determined by the archaeological contractor, but it should include a full bibliography, a quantified index to the site archive and as an appendix, a copy of this specification. The report illustrations should include, as a minimum, a location map at a reasonable scale plus any drawings and photographs.
- 7.3 If nothing of archaeological interest is identified during the course of the watching brief, then a summary report will be adequate, as long as sufficient

details are supplied for Historic Environment Record (HER) purposes. Illustrations would not be required, although it would be anticipated that black and white prints would form part of the archival record. A summary record should include: (1) details of the commissioning body; (2) the nature of the development and resultant ground disturbance; (3) the approximate position of any ground disturbance viewed with relation to adjacent existing fixed points; (4) the date(s) of fieldwork; (5) name(s) of fieldworker(s); (6) written observations on the nature and depth of deposits observed (this may include annotated sketch sections); (7) the conditions under which they were observed (for example, details of weather conditions, ease of access and views, attitude of other organisations *etc.*); (8) a quantified index to the field archive; (9) details of the archives present location and intended deposition and (10) a copy of this specification.

7.4 The report should be produced within six weeks of completion of the fieldwork, unless otherwise agreed with LCAS. Copies of the report should be supplied to the client and the Lancashire HER. The report will become publicly accessible once deposited with the Lancashire HER. The report for the HER should be supplied in digital format, preferably as a single PDF file, but with any accompanying gazetteers, images, plans, etc. in their original formats, to allow it to be easily incorporated into the digital HER.

7.5 Archaeological contractors must complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact Lancashire HER prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the HER, Lancashire HER may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer (Ken Davies) at Lancashire HER.

8. Deposition of Archive

8.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the archaeological contractor must contact the relevant District museum archaeological curator in writing (copied to LCAS) to determine the museum's requirements for the deposition of an excavation archive. In this case the contact is Edmund Southworth, Curator, Museum of Lancashire, Stanley Street, Preston, PR1 4YP; telephone 01772 534075, fax: 01772 534079.

8.2 It is the policy of the Museum of Lancashire to accept complete excavation archives, including primary site records and research archives and finds, from all excavations carried out in the County, which it serves.

8.3 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to endeavour to obtain consent of the landowner, in writing, to the deposition of finds with the Museum of Lancashire.

8.4 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to meet the Museum of Lancashire's requirements with regard to the preparation of fieldwork archives for deposition.

8.5 The museums officer named in 8.1 above should be notified in writing of the commencement of fieldwork at the same time as the Lancashire Historic Environment Record.

9. Further Details

- 9.1 Any queries about the contents of the specification should be addressed to Lancashire County Archaeology Service, Lancashire County Council, Highways & Environmental Management, PO Box 9, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston PR1 8RD Tel 01772 531550, fax 01772 533423

10. Valid period of specification

- 10.1 This specification will remain valid for up to one year from the date of issue. After that time it may need to be revised to take into account new discoveries, changes in policy or the introduction of new working practices or techniques.

Lancashire County Archaeology Service

January 2009

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Lancashire County Archaeology Service:

Archaeological Contractors

Below is a short list of archaeological contractors who could carry out the work outlined in the attached specification. The list is not exhaustive and is arranged alphabetically. It should not be taken to give or imply any approval of or recommendations concerning these contractors on behalf of Lancashire County Council.

Archaeology Services WYAS

PO Box 30, Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, Leeds, LS27 0UG, Tel: 0113 383 7500, Fax: 0113 383 7501, Email: wyas@aswyas.demon.co.uk

Oxford Archaeology North

Rachel Newman, Director, Mill 3, Moor Lane Mill, Moor Lane, Lancaster, LA1 1GF, Tel: 01524 541000, Fax: 01524 848606, Email: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

The University of Manchester Archaeology Unit

Dr Mike Nevell, Director, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, Tel: 0161 275 2314, Fax: 0161 275 2315, Email: mike.nevell@manchester.ac.uk

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- EH, 1991, *Management of Archaeological Projects* (2nd edition), English Heritage
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- EH, 2008b, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment, Development of Procedural Standards and Guidelines for the Historic Environment*, PPN 6
- IfA, 2008a, *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists
- IfA, 2008b, *Standards and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*, Institute for Archaeologists
- IfA, 2008c, *Code of Conduct*, Institute of Field Archaeologists'
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