Mains Lane, Skippool, Poulton-le-Fylde
Lancashire

Archaeological Evaluation

Oxford Archaeology North

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SUMMARY

Information is being collated for the purpose of a planning application for a proposed development for offices across a plot of land adjacent to Mains Lane, Skippool in Poulton-le-Fylde Lancashire (NGR SD 3575 4060). Wilkinson Cary Planning requested that Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) submit proposals to undertake a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a formal brief provided by Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS). Subsequently, OA North was commissioned by Wilkinson Cary Planning to carry out the work, which was undertaken in March 2008.

The site of the proposed development has produced evidence of prehistoric activity, in the form of a number of sherds of Bronze Age pottery found during excavation of a sewage outfall in 1928. In addition, the Lytham – Skippool valley, followed by the line of the Main Drain in the Skippool area, has produced finds of scatters of flint artefacts and working debris more recently. The Skippool area is also recorded as being a river port of local importance in the early eighteenth century. Other activity around this time included extensive peat cutting across the Fylde, aided by construction of the Main Dyke which acted as a drain channelling water into the River Wyre. The dyke passes through the eastern side of the site. The damp nature of the site also suggested that there was high potential for waterlogged archaeological deposits which could possibly pertain to remains of considerable antiquity.

Five trenches, each measuring 5m long, were excavated across the site as far as possible in line with the brief required by LCAS. The trenches were excavated in order to understand the nature and development of the site and investigate its archaeological potential. No identifiable prehistoric remains were encountered during any part of the investigation, although evidence for a two-phased bank associated with the Dyke was encountered within Trench 1. Several sherds of pottery dating from at least the nineteenth century were recovered from the subsoil beneath the later phased bank, suggests that water management in controlling the flood plain was an issue during this time. The absence of any significant archaeological features on the site, however, indicated that the redevelopment of the site would have a negligible archaeological impact, and it is not envisaged that any further investigation will be required.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Julie Cary of Wilkinson Cary Planning for commissioning and supporting the project.

The evaluation was directed by Sean McPhillips, who also compiled the report. He was assisted in the field by Stuart Thomas. Marie Rowland produced the drawings. The report was edited by Emily Mercer, who was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

1.1.1 Wilkinson Cary Planning, on behalf of their client, requested that Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) undertake a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a formal brief provided by Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS), (*Appendix 1*). This was undertaken prior to a submitted planning application. The work involved evaluation trenching of a site proposed for redevelopment for the purpose of office accommodation adjacent to the A585 Mains Lane, Skippool, Poulton-le-Fylde (NGR centred SD 3575 4060), in order to establish the potential for buried archaeological remains across the site, and thereby inform any future proposals for redevelopment.

1.2 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

1.2.1 The site is currently a triangular parcel of land, marshy in parts, with flooding occurring from the nearby stream. It is exceptionally overgrown with semi-mature trees and thickets of brambles, although this was cleared for the most part prior to the evaluation.

1.2.2 The landscape around Skippool consists largely of a flat to gently rolling coastal landscape, with improved pasture and arable fields, interspersed with patches of mixed woodland (Countryside Commission 1998). The underlying geology consists of Permo-Triassic red mudstones, siltstone and sandstones, which are overlain by thick deposits of glacial and post-glacial till and boulder clays, with pockets of post-glacial peat throughout (*ibid*; Middleton *et al* 1995). These are superseded by typical brown earths (Ordnance Survey 1983).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 The scope of the required archaeological work detailed in the LCAS brief (*Appendix 1*) was specified in a project design devised by Oxford Archaeology North (*Appendix 2*). The work complied with the project design and with current legislation and accepted best practice, including the code of conduct and relevant professional standards of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA).

2.2 EVALUATION TRENCHES

2.2.1 Five trenches each measuring 5m long and 2m wide, were excavated across the site, as shown on the trench location plan (Fig 2). The trenches were excavated by machine using a toothless ditching bucket, followed by hand cleaning and recording, to determine depth and character of features and deposits.

2.3 FINDS

2.3.1 The finds' recovery and sampling programmes were carried out in accordance with best practice (following current Institute of Field Archaeologists guidelines). All artefacts recovered from the evaluation trenches were retained.

2.4 ARCHIVE

2.4.1 The results of all archaeological work carried out will form the basis for a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991). The original record archive will be deposited with the County Record Office in Preston, and the material archive with the Museum of Lancashire in Preston.

2.4.2 The Arts and Humanities Data Service (AHDS) online database *Online Access to index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) will be completed as part of the archiving phase of the project.

3. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 ***Introduction***: the following background for the site is provided in order to place the findings into their context and surroundings (OA North 2007). A summarised gazetteer of known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed development is presented in *Appendix 4*. The location of these sites is shown graphically as Figure 4.

3.1.2 ***Prehistoric Period:*** the earliest evidence for human presence in the area was the discovery of a Palaeolithic elk skeleton containing barbed arrow points, at High Furlong, to the south of the town (Middleton *et al* 1995). It appears to have dated between 13,500 and 11,500 BC. Although no Mesolithic finds have been made in the immediate area, there is evidence to the west of Lytham Moss, comprising an anthropogenically-derived burnt layer, dating to 8390 ±150 BC (*ibid*). Five other sites have been identified as dating from the late Mesolithic to early Neolithic. Three are concentrated to the south of the town of Poulton-le-Fylde, centring around Peel Island, while the remaining two are located to the edge of the Lytham-Skippool Valley. They are all in the form of dense lithic scatters (*ibid*).

3.1.3 Remains dating from the late Neolithic to early Bronze Age are more numerous, and take the form of stray finds. Again, the majority of the finds are concentrated to the south of Poulton, around Lytham Moss and Peel, and include perforated stone axes, pounders and possible axe hammers. Metal finds include a palstave and a broken sword (*ibid*). During the nineteenth century an extensive Bronze Age site was uncovered near Marton Mere, to the south-west, which produced hide-covered coracles, a skin cap or bag, and an axe. Closer to the proposed site sherds of Bronze Age pottery were recovered from Skippool Bridge, while a chert arrowhead was discovered in a back garden in the south-west area of the town (Lancashire County Council (LCC) 2005). In 1998 a human skull was recovered from peat deposits to the south-west of the town, and was dated to the Bronze Age (*ibid*).

3.1.4 By the later Bronze Age the marshland seems to have been abandoned, and no further activity has been recorded, until the Romano-British period (Middleton *et al* 1995).

3.1.5 ***Romano-British Period:*** during the nineteenth century it was postulated that a Roman road ran from the fort at Kirkham, approximately 6km to the south of Poulton, to Fleetwood at the mouth of the River Wyre, where it was suggested the fort of *Portus Setantiorum* was located (*ibid*, LCC 2005). Recent surveys have found no evidence for the road, although if it did exist is was located just to the west of Poulton. Recent excavations at Kirkham fort (*ibid*), suggest that it was probably only a staging post for troops, and was abandoned early in the second century AD.

3.1.6 Five findspots in Poulton-le-Fylde can be attributed to the Roman period, comprising three coin finds, a medal of Germanicus and a horseshoe. Two of the finds were discovered at Poulton Breck railway station, and Skippool (LCC 2005).

3.1.7 ***Medieval Period:*** from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries the land around Poulton-le-Fylde was owned by the church, with St Mary's Priory being the largest estate. After the Dissolution of the monasteries the lands passed to the Crown, before being given to the Savoy Hospital of London and subsequently, to the Hesketh family (LCC 2005). By the seventeenth century Little Poulton Hall was the main family seat, the current building dates to the 1750s (*ibid*).

3.1.8 The wetlands across the Fylde area during the majority of the medieval period, were generally left untouched (Middleton *et al* 1995), with very little land being reclaimed, although peasants and yeomen were noted as using the reeds for thatch. During the sixteenth century, however, some minor land disputes came to the fore, such as the clash between the Abbot of Whalley and the Lord of Preece in 1523 (*ibid*).

3.1.9 In the sixteenth century, the area of Skippool grew in importance with the construction of a port built on the south bank of the Wyre. The port was built primarily for the market town of Poulton-le-Fylde, significantly increasing its trade, dealing in timber from the Baltic, and tobacco, sugar and rum from the West Indies also documented (LCC 2005). Other imports included wine and guano from Africa for use as fertiliser on Fylde farms. Skippool (historically known as 'Ship Pool') was constructed as a sub-port under Lancaster with a customs house built in the early eighteenth century. In 1722–3 it was a member of the port of Chester, and its bounds at this time extended from the Ribble mouth round to the Wyre estuary (Farrer and Brownbill 1912). During this time the port retained status of considerable importance. Unfortunately, the rise of Glasson Dock in Lancaster and Fleetwood, together with the construction of the railway to Fleetwood, ended Skippool's importance as a port.

3.1.10 ***Post-Medieval Period:*** by the seventeenth century, the mosses of the Fylde were being quickly reclaimed, and used for a mixture of rough pasture grazing and peat extraction. An extensive network of ditches was also dug during this period (*ibid*). Peat digging reduced the land so much that by the middle of the century areas were beginning to flood; the Main Dyke (Site **08**) was constructed in 1731 to channel the outflow to the River Wyre (LCC 2005). This canalised the *Skippon flu*, which was recorded on both Saxton's and Speed's maps (1577 and 1610 respectively) as one of the main drainage channels in the area.

3.1.11 The opening of the railway line in 1840 from Preston to Fleetwood helped boost the economy in the area. This was short lived, however, as the 1846 line directly to Blackpool meant that the town was by-passed, and the population in the area began to tail off during the mid nineteenth century. Nevertheless, since World War II, with the expansion of Blackpool the population has grown rapidly(*ibid*).

3.2 RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACTIVITY

3.2.1 Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU) carried out an archaeological watching brief during the construction of the wastewater pumping station (1995), to the north-west of the proposed development site. They uncovered a row of preserved wooden stakes in the estuarine silts, which were subsequently dated to the later Victorian era. They may have formed a revetment for the Main Dyke.

4. RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 In total, five evaluation trenches were excavated across the site measuring 5m by 2m (Fig 2). The trenches were excavated, as far as was possible, in accordance with the project brief (*Appendix 1*). As required in the LCAS brief, Trenches 2, 3 and 5 were positioned in order to establish the presence or absence of potential waterlogged remains across the central area of the site to be impacted by the development. A further two trenches (Trenches 1 and 4) were excavated to understand the formation and development of the stratigraphy across the site in order to further understand the archaeological potential of the area.

4.2 TRENCH 1

4.2.1 The trench was aligned north/south across the southern part of the dyke bank in the north-western corner of the site (Plate 1). It was excavated to the surface of the natural geology, which was exposed at a maximum depth of 1.02m in the central part of the trench. No significant archaeological remains were encountered, although the bank was clearly formed in two defined phases (Fig 3).

Plate 1: View of the base of the trench, looking north

4.2.2 The natural geology comprised light brown sandy clay (***1***), which appeared as a natural sloping horizon beneath the bank. The clay contained few inclusions except for occasional tree roots, which perhaps provided evidence of tree planting prior to the formation of the river bank.

4.2.3 Natural clay ***1*** was diffused across the base of the trench with light brown loose clay (***2***) representing a residual component of the original bank (Plate 2). It would seem the bank was constructed from a redeposition of the natural clay, which had closely similar textural components, although the bank material was friable. Clay ***2*** survived to a maximum thickness of 0.35m-0.4m, sloping down to the south at the northern end of the trench. It was sealed with a 0.05m thick band of dark brown humic clay (***3***), a buried soil, which probably represented the vestiges of the former topsoil. No finds were recovered from the primary bank material.

Plate 2: North-west-facing section through the dyke bank

4.2.4 During the late nineteenth century the bank was modified perhaps as a response to localised flooding. This later modified bank (encompassing layers ***4***, ***5*** and ***6***) measured a maximum 0.8m in thickness at the southern end of the trench. It was formed by a deposit of mid brown friable clay (***4***) measuring 0.4m thick above clay layer ***3***, which was in turn sealed with a 0.1m thick layer of mid red sand (***5***) that followed the sloping angle of the bank, retaining traces of manganese. The presence of the manganese suggests water dilution, indicating that the sand was perhaps laid to aid drainage. The sand was in turn overlaid with mid grey-brown silty clay (***6***) forming the bank material, which contained frequent stones of varying sizes, perhaps used to improve the stability of the earthwork. Several fragments of domestic artefacts were recovered from the second phase of the bank (***6***), such as a mineral bottle and plates that dated to no earlier than the late nineteenth century (see *Section 4.7* below), thus providing evidence of the formation of the secondary phase of the bank. The bank was sealed with turfed dark brown topsoil, which was latterly planted with semi mature trees.

4.3 TRENCH 2

4.3.1 The trench was aligned north/south (Plate 3) along the base of the river bank within the site of the proposed car park (Fig 2). It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.9m at the southern end of the trench in order to test the depth of natural geology. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

Plate 3: View of the central area of the trench, looking east

4.3.2 The natural geology comprised light brown silty clay, identical in composition to clay ***1*** in Trench 1, and was exposed at a depth of 0.49m along a level horizon across the base of the trench. The surface of the clay was heavily rooted with plant remains. It was sealed with a layer of thin dark grey clay (***12***) measuring less than 0.05m in thickness representing a buried soil, which was spread across the entire trench. This was in turn overlaid with an unevenly spread of mid brown silty clay (***13***) containing occasional medium sized water worn stones. This 0.45m thick layer contained several large nails and an unidentifiable iron object of probable post-medieval date, suggesting that the clay may have been imported at a similar time as the formation of the dyke, as a response to localised flooding.

4.4 TRENCH 3

4.4.1 This east/west-aligned trench (Plate 4) was placed along the proposed northern range of the offices (Fig 2). It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m. No significant archaeological activity was encountered within the trench, although evidence of post-medieval dumping (***7***) was located across the central area of the trench.

Plate 4: View of trench, looking north

4.4.2 The natural geology within the trench comprised an undulating level of red clay, exposed at a depth of 0.5m below the modern turf level. It contained occasional patches of stones measuring no more than 0.15m long. The clay was sealed in the eastern side of the trench by a thin layer of light red-brown sticky saturated clay, which formed an interface beneath the modern dump (***7***).

4.4.3 Dump ***7*** measured 4m wide across the central area of the trench, and 0.2m in thickness. It contained large amounts of burnt material, slate, brick and clinker. Similar levels of dumping were observed within Trench 5, suggesting that the site was used as a tip during the twentieth century. Evidence of the continuation of tipping on the site was observed along the southern part of the site with debris discarded along the edge of the Mains Lane pavement. The dump was sealed with a 0.4m thick deposit of mid red clay evenly spread across the trench. The clay (***8***) was seemingly imported into the site during the late twentieth century in order to seal the tip (pers comm MJ Wilkinson Plant

Hire), perhaps on the grounds of health and safety, and as a method to raise the ground level. The clay was overlaid with dark brown humic clay.

4.5 TRENCH 4

4.5.1 The trench was aligned north-west/south-east (Plate 5; Fig 2) close to the site entrance, and was intended to evaluate archaeological activity within the north-western part of the site. The location of the trench was significantly higher than the level of the other trenches and, as such, retained little evidence of water dilution. The trench was devoid of significant archaeological features, although two postholes and traces of a stone surface representing twentieth century activity were encountered. The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.5m on to the surface of natural geology. This comprised mid red clay spread across the southern part of the trench diffused with mottled sand (***9***) across the northern part.

Plate 5: View of trench, looking north-west

4.5.2 The natural sand at the northern end of the trench was cut by two similarly sized ovular-shaped postholes (***10*** and ***11***) spaced 0.8m apart aligned east/west. Each feature was filled with stones within a dark brown-grey soil fill. No finds were recovered from the features although a fragment of a paper biscuit wrapper was located at the base of posthole ***11*** at the eastern side of the trench. The features also cut through a layer of dark brown silty clay forming the modern topsoil. This suggested that the postholes were probably associated with modern intervention.

4.5.3 The natural geology was sealed with a 0.12m thick layer of well-sorted stones/hardcore which represented levelling layers for a north/south-aligned surface or track of possible twentieth century origin. The surface was observed at a depth of 0.3m beneath the modern topsoil, and represented a former vehicle/plant access track into the field.

4.6 TRENCH 5

4.6.1 The trench was aligned north-west/south-east located along the southern part of the site, and was placed in order to test archaeological potential within the waterlogged part of the site, thought to be of some significance (Fig 2). No archaeological remains were encountered, and the stratigraphic sequence mirrored that observed within Trench 3. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.3m in order to detect the depth of the natural geology horizons.

4.6.2 The natural geology comprised diagnostic light brown clay (***14***) encountered at a depth of 0.9m beneath the modern saturated ground surface. It was overlaid with a 0.3m band of mid grey sticky grey clay (***15***) containing occasional fragments of wood debris (Plate 6). This was, in turn, sealed by a dumping layer (***16***) identical in level and composition to dump ***7*** in Trench 3. The dump was sealed with a 0.41m thick deposit of red clay (***17***), comparable to the clay horizons observed in Trenches 2 and 3.

Plate 6: North-eastern facing section, showing dumping layers

4.6.3 The clay was probably brought into the site as a response to improve flood management. The clay in the trench was sealed with 0.2m thick dark brown clay forming the modern topsoil.

4.7 FINDS

4.7.1 In total, 12 artefacts were recovered during the evaluation. These included fragments of pottery (3), a glass bottle, glazed wall tile (4) and three iron objects, all of post-medieval date. The finds were recovered from topsoil deposit and bank material within Trenches 1 and 2.

4.7.2 A small group of material was recovered from clay ***6*** from within the secondary bank ***4*** in Trench 1, which aided in the dating for the formation of the earthwork. The pottery comprised single fragments of brown glazed red earthenware bowl which could be broadly dated between seventeenth and nineteenth century, and two glazed white earthenware undecorated plate sherds of probable nineteenth or twentieth century date. Also amongst the small assemblage was an almost complete clear glass mineral water bottle with a glass marble intact bearing the trade mark Queens Brewery, Blackpool Poulton-le Fylde. Catterall & Swarbrick Brewery is listed in Barretts 1885 directory residing at Queens Brewery, Queens Square, Poulton-le Fylde, although by 1927 Catterall & Swarbrick had moved to Talbot Road, Blackpool (Pearson 1999). In light of the Blackpool mark on the bottle, it is likely that the Skippool bottle derived from this new address. The proximity to the riverbank suggests that the assemblage may have been discarded by workers who formed the dyke bank in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

4.7.3 The remainder of the material recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2 comprised two large nails and a 0.3m long heavily corroded bar that possibly derived from a small machine, such as a crank handle. It is possible that the objects derived from broken equipment associated with the formation of the bank, although their appearance in the topsoil casts doubts on their antiquity.

5. 4DISCUSSION AND IMPACT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.1.1 The archaeological evaluation did not produce any evidence for prehistoric or any other activity, except for remnants of post-medieval intervention represented by the earthwork forming the southern part of Mains Dyke during the eighteenth century, and the laying of the track and accompanying postholes during the twentieth century.

5.2 PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

5.2.1 The earliest phase of activity on the site was represented by the formation of the dyke in the eighteenth century, which involved the widening and deepening of Marton Mere waterway between 1731 and 1781 (Bulpit 1913). However, the material evidence suggested that the bank was modified in the latter part of the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. This may have coincided with the wooden stake bank revetment event in the nineteenth century (GMAU 1995).

5.2.2 The site was seemingly used as a dumping area for domestic waste during the twentieth century. This was in turn sealed with large amounts of clay that was probably imported as a response to constant flooding from tidal conditions from the nearby River Wyre. This is likely to have coincided with the construction of the concrete-lined pump in the late twentieth century, which presently occupies the central area of the site.

5.2.3 Other twentieth century intervention included the installation of the track aligned along a vague north/south alignment along the western side of the field. Traces of its levelling layers were visible within Trench 4, which sealed two postholes of contemporary construction. The track was probably installed to provide access into the field during the construction of the pump.

5.2 IMPACT

5.2.1 The archaeological evaluation has demonstrated that there is little potential for significant archaeological remains to survive on the site. It is therefore considered unlikely that any future redevelopment of the site will have a negative archaeological impact. It is not envisaged that the site will require further archaeological investigation.

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7. ILLUSTRATIONS

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Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Evaluation Trench Location Plan

Figure 3: Trench 1; north-west-facing section through the dyke bank

Figure 4: SMR site location

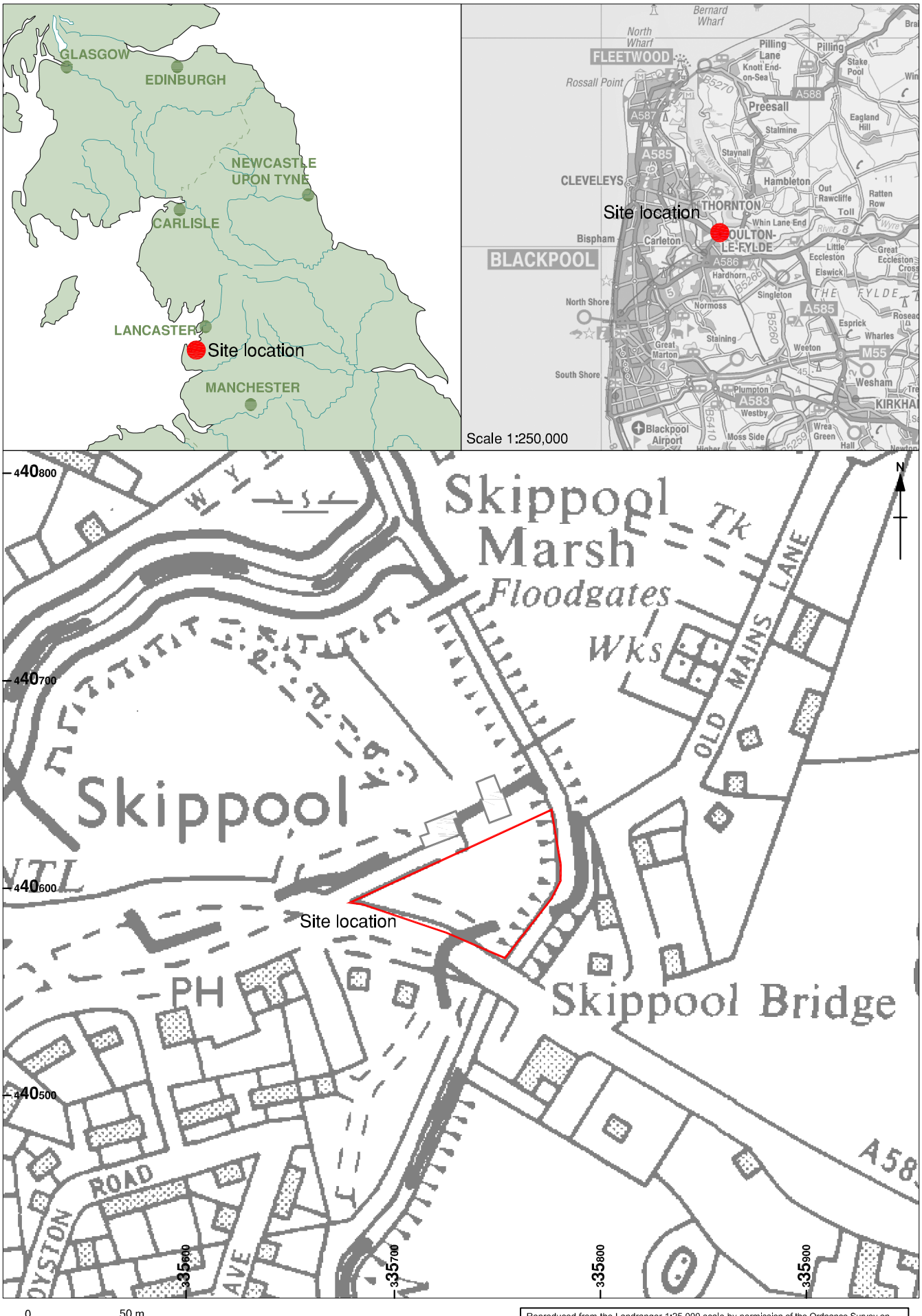

Figure 1: Site location

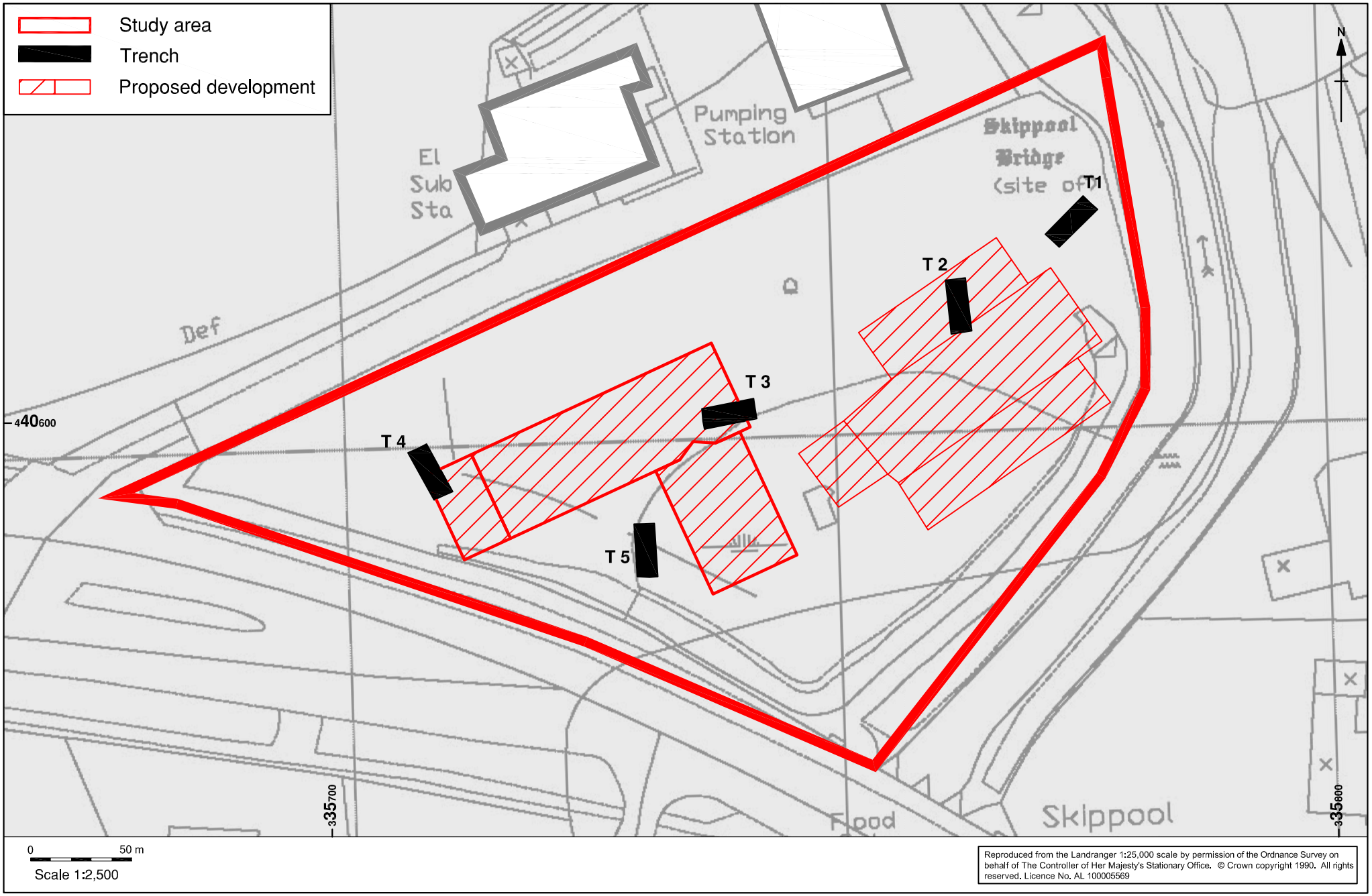

Figure 2: Trench location showing proposed development areas

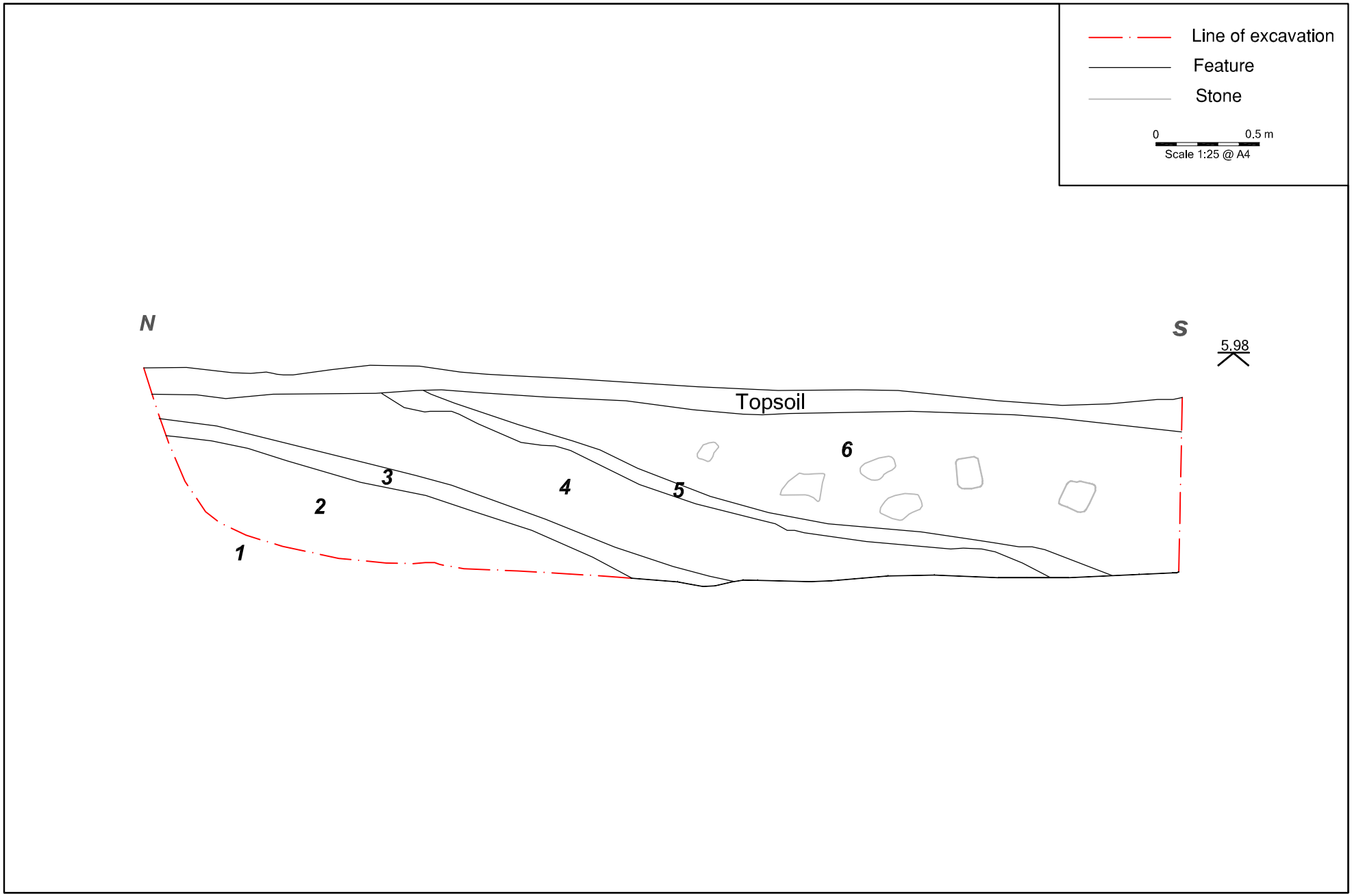

Figure 3: Trench 1. North-west-facing section through the dyke bank

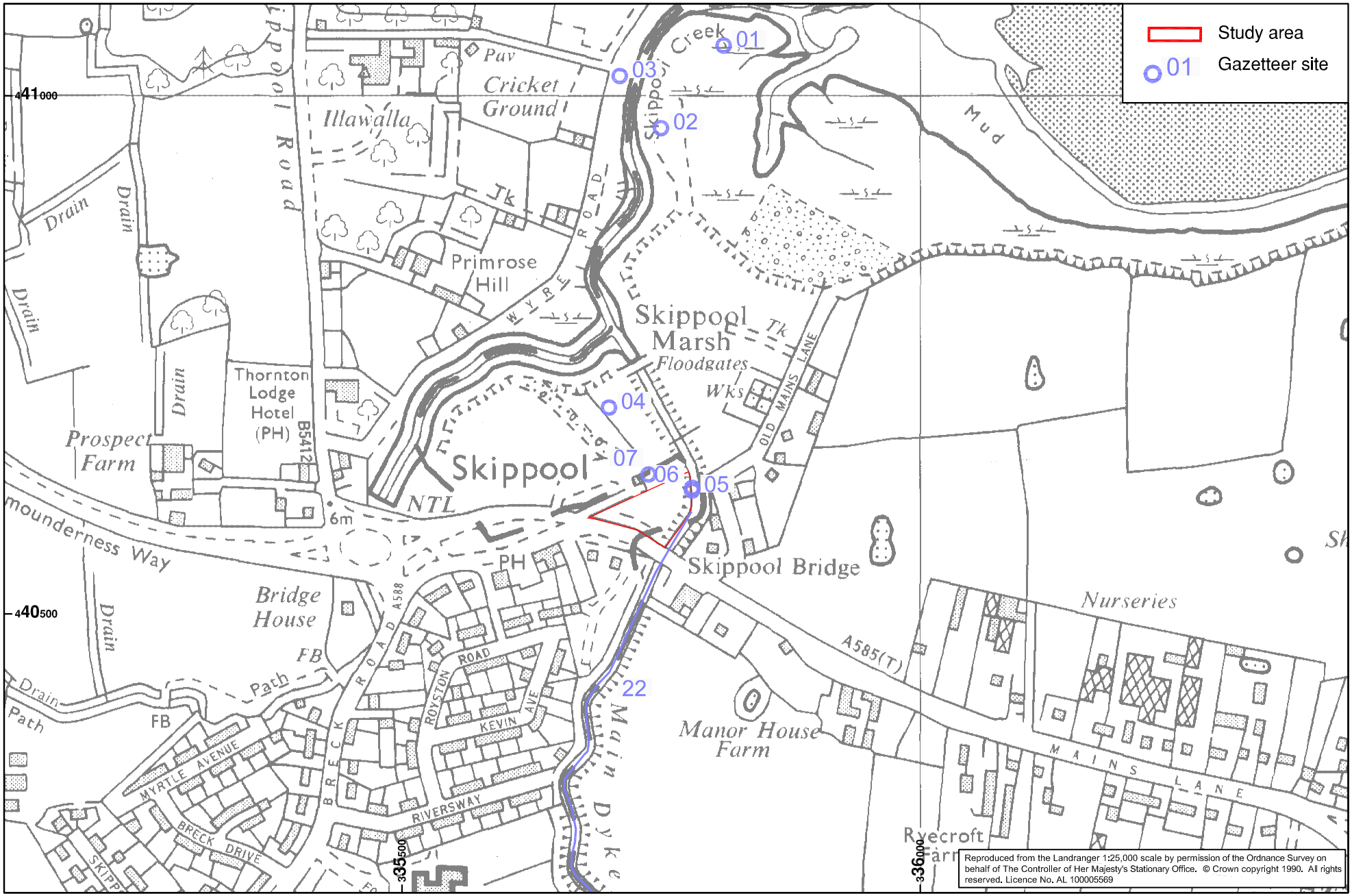

Figure 4: Gazetteer of sites

APPENDIX 1: PROJECT BRIEF

SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ON LAND AT MAINS LANE, SKIPPOOL, POULTON-LE-FYLDE

Specification prepared at the request of Julie Cary, Wilkinson Cary Planning

1. Summary

1.1 A limited amount of archaeological work consisting of trial trenching is proposed to help establish the archaeological significance of the above site. This specification has been written by Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS), the holders of the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record. Depending upon the results obtained, additional archaeological work may need to be carried out. This additional work will be governed by separate specifications.

2. Planning Background

2.1 Planning applications (2005/01200), a resubmission of (2004/01010/FULMAJ) for the erection of a nursing home with a detached laundry building and associated car parking at Mains Lane, Skippool have in the past been submitted to Wyre Borough Council, but on both occasions the applications were withdrawn.

2.2 The Local Planning Authority were advised on both occasions by LCAS that there is reason to believe that important archaeological remains may be affected by the proposed development and that a pre-determination archaeological evaluation is therefore required.

2.3 This specification has been prepared by LCAS at the request of Ms. Cary of Wilkinson Cary Planning, acting on behalf of the owners, to detail what is required for the evaluation and to allow an archaeological contractor to provide a quotation.

3. Site Location & Description (centred SD 3575 4060)

3.1 The site lies off Mains Lane (A585), immediately to the north of Skippool Bridge, occupying a triangular piece of land bounded by the A585 on the south west, Main Dyke on the east and the access road to the adjacent Electricity Substation and Pumping Station to the north. Aerial photography held by the County Council indicates the site to be wooded, overgrown and marshy in part.

4. Archaeological Interest

4.1 The site of the proposed development has produced evidence of prehistoric human activity, in the form of a number of sherds of Bronze Age pottery found during excavation of a sewage outfall (Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record PRN 1317). These were recorded by the Ordnance Survey in 1957 as 'in the possession of Poulton-le-Fylde Urban District Council at their Poulton office'. The Lytham – Skippool valley, which is followed by the line of the Main Drain in the Skippool area has produced finds of scatters of flint artefacts (LA96-98 and PRNs 51 & 4717) and working debris in the more recent past. The Skippool area is also recorded as being a river port of local importance in the early 18th century and it is likely that the creek was used as a harbour for small trading vessels for a considerable time before this record.

4.2 The site should therefore be considered as being of considerable archaeological potential, particularly as its wet nature as a riverside site could point to the potential for organic material to survive in waterlogged ground.

5. Aim of the Evaluation

5.1 The aim of the evaluation is to gather sufficient information to establish the extent, condition, character and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features and deposits within the application area. The information gained will allow the Planning Authority to make a reasonable and informed decision on the planning application with regard to whether archaeological deposits should be preserved in-situ, or may more appropriately be recorded archaeologically prior to destruction (whether this be a summary record from a salvage excavation or watching brief, or a detailed record from full open area excavation).

6. Evaluation Methodology

6.1 General Instructions

6.1.1 Health and Safety

The archaeologists on site will naturally operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations, and the contractor must ensure that all relevant requirements are met with regard both to site personnel and to members of the public. This work may require the preparation of a Risk Assessment of the site, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations prior to submission of the tender. **LCAS and its officers cannot be held responsible for any accidents that may occur to outside contractors engaged to undertake this work while attempting to conform to this specification.**

6.1.2 Confirmation of Adherence to Specification

Prior to the commencement of *any work,* the archaeological contractor must confirm adherence to this specification in writing to LCAS, 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. Unauthorised variations are made at the sole risk of the contractor (see para. 11.2, below). **Modifications presented in the form of a re-written project brief will not be considered by LCAS.**

6.1.3 Confirmation of Timetable and Contractors' Qualifications

Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor should provide LCAS **in writing** with a projected timetable for the site work, and with details regarding staff structure and numbers. The names and c*urriculum vitae* of key project members (the project manager, site supervisor, any proposed specialists *etc.*), along with details of any specialist sub-contractors, should also be supplied to LCAS (if *C.V.s* have not previously been supplied). All project staff provided by the archaeological contractor must be suitably qualified and experienced for their roles. The timetable should be adequate to allow the work to be undertaken to the appropriate professional standard, subject to the ultimate judgement of LCAS.

6.1.4 Documentary research

Prior to the commencement of *fieldwork*, the SMR should be visited by either the project manager or the site supervisor, in order to gain an overview of the archaeological/historical background of the site and environs. In addition to providing a knowledge base for the work in hand, the results of this assessment may be incorporated into the contractor's report where they are considered to contribute to that report, but any extraneous material should be omitted. Please note that the SMR makes a charge for consultations of a commercial nature. The results of this exercise should be used to inform the whole project. **Please note, however, that a formal desk-based report is not required and the results of this stage of work should be incorporated in the final report.**

7.0 Trenching Methodology

7.1 Trench Size and Placement

The work is will involve the excavation of three trenches 5m long x 2m wide which can be machine-opened. The contractor should also allow for a contingency of a further 10 square metres in order to characterise features/deposits that extend beyond the limits of the initial

trial trenching. The use of the contingency will be at the decision of LCAS, whose decision will be issued in writing, if necessary in retrospect after site discussions. **The location of the trenches is to be agreed with LCAS but is generally to be as detailed below , where site constraints allow:**

A 5m long x 3m wide trench to be located within each arm of the proposed building, as well as the proposed car parking to the east of the building.

7.2 Method of Excavation

The trial trenches may be opened and the topsoil and recent overburden removed down to the first significant archaeological horizon in successive level spits of a **maximum** 0.2m. thickness, by the use of an appropriate machine using a wide toothless ditching blade. **Under no circumstances should the machine be used to cut arbitrary trenches down to natural deposits.** Any machine work must be carried out under direct archaeological supervision and the machine halted if significant archaeological deposits are encountered. The top of the first significant archaeological horizon (pre-19th century) may be exposed by the machine, but must then be cleaned by hand and inspected for features and then dug by hand.

7.3 Method of Recording

The trenches are to be recorded according to the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation. The stratigraphy of each trial trench is to be recorded even where no archaeological deposits have been identified. No archaeological deposits should be entirely removed unless this is unavoidable in achieving the objectives of this evaluation, although generally a 50% sample of any features identified is expected to be half-sectioned and the depth of archaeological deposits must be assessed. Modern artefacts are to be noted but not retained (18th-century material and earlier should be retained.)

7.4 Use of Metal Detectors on Site

7.4.1 Spoil heaps are to be scanned for non-ferrous metal artefacts using a metal detector capable of making this discrimination, operated by an experienced metal detector user (if necessary, operating under the supervision of the contracting archaeologist). Modern artefacts are to be noted but not retained (18th-century material and earlier should be retained.)

7.4.2 If a non-professional archaeologist is to be used to carry out the metal-detecting, a formal agreement of their position as a sub-contractor working under direction must be agreed in advance of their use on site. This formal agreement will apply whether they are paid or not.

7.4.3 To avoid financial claims under the Treasure Act a suggested wording for this formal agreement with the metal detectorist is: "In the process of working on the archaeological investigation at [*location of site*] between the dates of [*insert dates*], [*name of person contributing to project*] is working under direction or permission of [*name of archaeological organisation*] and hereby waives all rights to rewards for objects discovered that could otherwise be payable under the Treasure Act 1996."

7.5 Environmental Sampling Strategy

Deposits must be sampled for retrieval and assessment of the preservation conditions and potential for analysis of all bioarchaeological remains. A sampling strategy must be agreed with a recognised bioarchaeologist, and the sampling methods should follow the procedures outlined by the English Heritage's Centre for Archaeology Guidelines, *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (2002/01).. Provision should be also be made for the specialist to visit the site and discuss the sampling strategy, if necessary.

7.6 Conservation Strategy

A conservation strategy must be developed in collaboration with a recognised laboratory. All finds must be assessed in order to recover information that will contribute to an understanding of their deterioration and hence preservation potential, as well as identifying potential for further investigation. Furthermore, all finds must be stabilised and packaged in accordance with the requirements of the receiving museum. 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, and conservation costs should also be included as a contingency.

7.7 Documentation

The actual areas of trenching and any features of possible archaeological concern noted within the trenches, should be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, summary scale drawings and written descriptions sufficient to permit the preparation of a report on the material. The site grid is to be accurately tied into the National Grid and located on the largest scale map available of the area (either 1:2500 or 1:1250).

7.8 Location of Services, etc.

The archaeological contractors will be responsible for locating any drainage pipes, service pipes, cables *etc*. which may cross any of the trench lines, and for taking the necessary measures to avoid disturbing such services.

7.9 Human Remains

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. Ethical guidance for burial grounds of non-Christian faiths should be sought from the appropriate religious authorities.

7.10 Treasure Act

The terms of the Treasure Act 1996 must be followed with regard to any finds that might fall within its purview. Any finds must be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner as required by the procedures as 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.

8. Commencement of work

8.1 Notification

The project 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 and certainly one week of the intention to start fieldwork. This notification is to be supplied in writing, and copied to the relevant Museum (see para. 10.1 below). A copy of the contractor's risk assessment should accompany notification of intention to commence work.

9. Access/Monitoring Methodology

9.1 The representative of LCAS will be afforded access to the site at any reasonable time. It is usual practice that the visit is arranged in advance, but this is not always feasible. LCAS's representative will be provided with a site tour and an overview of the site by the senior archaeologist present and should be afforded the opportunity to view all trenches, any finds made that are still on site, and any records not in immediate use. It is anticipated that the records of an exemplar context that has previously been fully recorded will be examined. Any observed deficiencies during the site visit are to be made good to the satisfaction of LCAS's representative, by the next agreed site meeting. Access is also to be afforded at any reasonable time to English Heritage's Regional Archaeological Scientific Advisor.

10. Excavation Archives Deposition.

10.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the archaeological contractor must contact the relevant museum archaeological curator 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. Agreement for deposition should be confirmed in writing by the archaeological contractor; this correspondence is to be copied to LCAS.

10.2 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 District that it serves.

10.3 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.

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

10.5 The museums officer named in 10.1 above should be notified in writing of the commencement of fieldwork at the same time as LCAS (see para. 8.1).

11. Unexpectedly Significant or Complex Discoveries

11.1 Should there be unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries made that warrant, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, more detailed recording than is appropriate within the terms of this specification, then the archaeological contractor should urgently contact LCAS with the relevant information to enable them to resolve the matter with the developer.

12. Post-Excavation Work

12.1 After Completion of Fieldwork

On completion of the fieldwork, any samples taken shall be processed and any 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, photographic negatives and a complete set of labelled photographic prints. An index to the field archive is to be deposited with LCAS (preferably as an appendix in 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 para. 10.1 above). In the absence of this agreement the field archive (less finds) is to be deposited with LCAS.

12.2 Report Format and Content

A report should be produced, which should include background information on the need for the project, a description of the methodology employed, and a full description and interpretation of results produced. 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. Location plans should be produced at a scale which enables easy site identification and which depicts the full extent of the site investigated (a scale of 1:50,000 is not regarded as appropriate unless accompanied by a more detailed plan or plans). Site plans should be at an appropriate scale showing trench layout (as dug), features located and, where possible, predicted archaeological deposits. Upon completion of each evaluation trench all sections containing archaeological features will be drawn. Section drawings (at a minimum scale of 1:20) must include heights O.D. Plans (at a minimum scale of 1:50) must include O.D. spot heights for all principal strata and any features. Where no archaeological deposits are encountered at least one long section of each trench will be drawn. Artefact

analysis is to include the production of a descriptive catalogue with finds critical for dating and interpretation illustrated. 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 as an appendix, a copy of this specification.

12.3 Publicity

If the project is to be publicised in any way (including media releases, publications etc.), then it is expected that LCAS will be given the opportunity to consider whether it wishes its collaborative role to be acknowledged, and if so, the form of words used will be at LCAS's discretion.

12.4 Consideration of Appropriate Mitigation Strategy

The report should not give a judgement on whether preservation or further investigation is considered appropriate, but should provide an interpretation of results, placing them in a local and regional, and if appropriate, national context. However, a client may wish to separately commission the contractor's view as to an appropriate treatment of the resource identified.

12.5 Report Deposition

An 'Adobe Acrobat pdf' copy of the report on CD-ROM is to be supplied to the Sites and Monuments Record held by LCAS within a period of two months following completion of fieldwork unless specialist reports are awaited. In the latter case a revised date should be agreed with LCAS. The report will be supplied on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months, unless otherwise agreed). A copy shall also be supplied to English Heritage's Regional Science Adviser at the same time (Sue Stallibrass, University of Liverpool, School of Archaeology, Classics and Oriental Studies (SACOS), William Hartley Building, Brownlow Street, Liverpool, L69 3GS, tel: 0151 794 5046, e-mail: Sue.Stallibrass@liv.ac.uk)

13. General considerations

13.1 Authorised alterations to specification by contractor

It should be noted that this specification is based upon records available in the County Sites and Monuments Record and on a brief examination of the site by LCAS. Archaeological contractors submitting tenders should 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 judgement 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, and/or
iii) any features which should be recorded, as having a bearing on the interpretation of the structure, have been omitted from the specification,

then it is expected that the archaeologist will contact LCAS as a matter of urgency. If contractors have not yet been appointed, any variations which LCAS considers to be justifiable on archaeological grounds will be incorporated into a revised specification, which will then be re-issued to the developer for redistribution to the tendering contractors. If an appointment has already been made and site work is ongoing, LCAS will resolve the matter 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 LCAS's 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 LCAS being unable to recommend determination of the planning application to the Local Planning Officer based on the archaeological information available and are therefore made solely at the risk of the contractor.

14. Technical queries

14.1 Any queries about the contents of the specification should be addressed to Lancashire County Archaeology Service, Lancashire County Council Environment Directorate, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston PPR1 8RD Tel 01772 531734, fax 01772 533423

15. Valid period of specification

15.1 This specification is valid for a period of one year from 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 October/2007
Douglas Moir
Planning Officer (Archaeology)
E-mail: Douglas.moir@env.lancscc.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2: PROJECT DESIGN

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

1.1.1 Wilkinson Cary Planning (hereafter the client), on behalf of their client, has requested that Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) submit proposals to undertake a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a formal brief provided by Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS). The work involves evaluation trenching of a site proposed for redevelopment adjacent to the A585 (drawing ref ML-LP1 attached), Mains Lane, Skippool, Poulton-le-Fylde (NGR centred SD 3575 4060) to establish the archaeological significance of suspected remains. The client is collating information for the submission of a planning application to construct offices on the site. LCAS has advised that pre-determination evaluation is required in order that the results can inform the planning decision of the Local Planning Authority, Wyre Borough Council.

1.1.2 The site is currently a triangular parcel of land, marshy in parts, with flooding occurring from the nearby stream. It is exceptionally overgrown with semi-mature trees and thickets of brambles. Located within the middle of the site are seemingly concrete blocks (See Plate 1). There is high archaeological potential with evidence from the site of prehistoric human activity and, combined with the waterlogged nature of the site, may contain organic remains. A number of fragments of Bronze Age pottery were found during excavation of a sewage outfall (PRN 1317). The Lytham – Skippool valley, followed by the line of the Main Drain in the Skippool area, has produced finds of scatters of flint artefacts (LA96-98, and PRNs 51 and 4717) and working debris more recently. The Skippool area is also known as being a river port of local importance in the early eighteenth century.

1.1.3 The following project design details the work that will be undertaken to meet the requirements of the pre-determination evaluation.

Plate 1: View across centre of site from Mains Road, looking north-east

1.2 OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY NORTH

1.2.1 OA North has extensive experience of the evaluation and excavation of sites of all periods in this area, having undertaken a great number of small and large-scale projects. These have taken place within the planning process, to fulfil the requirements of clients and planning authorities, to very rigorous timetables.

1.2.2 OA North has the professional expertise and resources to undertake the project detailed below to a high level of quality and efficiency. OA North is **an Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) registered organisation, registration number 17**, and all its members of staff operate subject to the IFA Code of Conduct (1994).

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The following programme has been designed to provide an archaeological assessment of the proposed development site and to investigate the archaeological significance of any remains. The aim is to determine the extent, nature, character, survival and date of the remains that may be threatened by the proposed development. The required stages to achieve these ends are as follows:

2.2 ***Documentary research:*** this element will aim to provide an overview of the historical and archaeological background of the site through consultation of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) prior to the fieldwork. This will provide a context for any remains recorded during the trenching.

2.3 ***Archaeological Trenching****:* three evaluation trenches will be excavated, measuring 5m x 2m, to determine the quality, extent and importance of any archaeological remains on the site (in accordance with the IFA standards (1999b)). In accordance with the LCAS brief, these will be positioned one in each arm of the L-shaped proposed building and one in the proposed car park (as per client's drawing ref ML-02/SP).

2.4 ***Report and Archive:*** the report will be produced for the client within eight weeks following completion of the fieldwork, and will be produced in a similar format to this project design. An archive will be produced to English Heritage guidelines (MAP 2 (1991)).

3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 The following work programme is submitted in line with the objectives summarised above.

3.2 DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

3.2.1 The first stage of the archaeological investigation will involve a rapid desk-based study of the site and its environs. This will involve consultation of the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) in Preston and a review of sources held in the OA North library. The information will provide the basis of archaeological and historical knowledge for the site supervisor/project officer, and will be incorporated into the final evaluation report.

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRENCHING

3.3.1 The programme of trial trenching will establish the presence or absence of any previously unsuspected archaeological deposits and, if established, will then test their date, nature, depth and quality of preservation. In this way, it will adequately sample and provide information concerning the threatened available area. An additional 10m² should also be set aside as a contingency to be used in agreement with LCAS and the client should it be necessary to extend the trenches.

3.3.2 ***Trench configuration:*** the evaluation is required to examine three trenches measuring 2m in width and 5m in length. The location of these trenches has been determined in the LCAS

brief. A trench will be positioned within each arm of the proposed L-shaped building, and one trench within the proposed car park.

3.3.3 ***Methodology:*** the topsoil will be removed by machine (fitted with a toothless ditching bucket) under archaeological supervision, and will be removed in successive spits of a maximum 0.2m thickness to the surface of the first significant archaeological deposit. This deposit will then be cleaned by hand, using either hoes, shovel scraping, and/or trowels depending on the subsoil conditions, and inspected for archaeological features.

3.3.4 All features of archaeological interest will be investigated and recorded unless otherwise agreed by the LCAS. The trenches will not be excavated deeper than 1.20m to accommodate health and safety constraints; any requirements to excavate below this depth will involve recosting.

3.3.5 All trenches will be excavated in a stratigraphical manner, whether by machine or by hand. Trenches will be located by use of GPS equipment, which is accurate to +/- 0.25m, or Total Station. Altitude information will be established with respect to Ordnance Survey Datum.

3.3.6 ***Scanning of spoil heaps:*** the spoil will be scanned by a member of the OA North field team using a metal detector for non-ferrous metal artefacts. Modern artefacts, of nineteenth century or later, will be noted but not retained.

3.3.7 Any investigation of intact archaeological deposits will be exclusively manual. Selected pits and postholes will normally only be half-sectioned, linear features will be subject to no more than a 10% sample, and extensive layers will, where possible, be sampled by partial rather than complete removal. It is hoped that in terms of the vertical stratigraphy, maximum information retrieval will be achieved through the examination of sections of cut features. All excavation, whether by machine or by hand, will be undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features, which appear worthy of preservation *in situ*.

3.3.8 ***Recording:*** all information identified in the course of the site works will be recorded stratigraphically, regardless of whether any archaeological features have been identified, using a system, adapted from that used by Centre for Archaeology Service of English Heritage, with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections, colour slides and monochrome contacts) to identify and illustrate individual features. Primary records will be available for inspection at all times.

3.3.9 Results of all field investigations will be recorded on *pro forma* context sheets. The site archive will include both a photographic record and accurate large scale plans and sections at an appropriate scale (1:50, 1:20 and 1:10). All artefacts and ecofacts will be recorded using the same system, and will be handled and stored according to standard practice (following current Institute of Field Archaeologists guidelines) in order to minimise deterioration.

3.3.10 Plans will include OD spot heights for all principal strata and any features.

3.3.11 In cases where no archaeological deposits have been identified, at least one long section of each trench will be recorded. All sections will contain heights OD.

3.3.12 ***Environmental Sampling:*** deposits will be sampled and assessed for their potential for palaeoenvironmental analysis. Environmental samples (bulk samples of 30 litres volume, to be sub-sampled at a later stage) will be collected from stratified undisturbed deposits and will particularly target negative features (gullies, pits and ditches). It may be necessary for OA North's environmental manager to attend site to discuss the sampling strategy, depending on the deposits, and request advice from English Heritage's Regional Science Advisor.

3.3.13 An assessment of the environmental potential of the site will be undertaken through the examination of suitable deposits by the in-house palaeoecological specialist, who will examine the potential for further analysis. This will be undertaken in accordance with English Heritage Guidelines (2002).

3.3.14 The assessment would include soil pollen analysis and the retrieval of charred plant macrofossils and land molluscs from former dry-land palaeosols and cut features. In addition, the samples would be assessed for plant macrofossils, insect, molluscs and pollen from waterlogged deposits. It will also consider the potential for the dating of peat deposits and requirements for any radiocarbon and archaeomagnetic dating.

3.3.15 The costs for the palaeoecological assessment are defined as a contingency and will be called into effect if suitable deposits are identified.

3.3.16 ***Faunal remains:*** if there is found to be the potential for discovery of bones of fish and small mammals a sieving programme will be carried out. These will be assessed as appropriate by OA north's specialist in faunal remains, and subject to the results, there may be a requirement for more detailed analysis. A contingency has been included for the assessment of such faunal remains for analysis.

3.3.17 ***Human Remains****:* any human remains uncovered will be left *in situ*, covered and protected. No further investigation will continue beyond that required to establish the date and character of the burial. LCAS and the local Coroner will be informed immediately. If removal is essential the exhumation of any funerary remains will require the provision of a Home Office license, under section 25 of the Burial Act of 1857. An application will be made by OA North for the study area on discovery of any such remains and the removal will be carried out with due care and sensitivity under the environmental health regulations. The cost of removal or treatment will be agreed with the client as a variation.

3.3.18 ***Treatment of finds:*** all identified finds and artefacts will be retained, although certain classes of building material can sometimes be discarded after recording if an appropriate sample is retained on advice from the recipient museum's archive curator.

3.3.19 All finds will be exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) *First Aid For Finds*, 1998 (new edition) and the recipient museum's guidelines. They will be assessed in terms of the potential for further investigation and preservation needs.

3.3.20 Only those finds that are of a quality worthy of display will be fully conserved, but metalwork and coinage from stratified contexts may be X-rayed. Any conservation requirements will be discussed with the client and costed as a variation.

3.3.21 ***Treasure:*** any gold and silver artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local Coroner according to the procedures relating to the Treasure Act, 1996. Where removal cannot take place on the same working day as discovery, suitable security will be employed to protect the finds from theft, which may require costing as a variation in discussion with the client.

3.3.22 ***Contingency plan:*** a contingency costing may also be employed for unseen delays caused by prolonged periods of bad weather, vandalism, discovery of unforeseen complex deposits and/or artefacts which require specialist removal, use of shoring to excavate important features close to the excavation sections etc. This has been included in the Costings document and would be charged in agreement with the client.

3.3.23 The evaluation will provide a predictive model of surviving archaeological remains detailing zones of relative importance against known development proposals. In this way, an impact assessment will also be provided.

3.4 REPORT

3.4.1 One bound and one unbound copy of a written synthetic report will be submitted to the client. A digital copy of the report will be supplied as a pdf on CD ROM to the SMR held by LCAS within eight weeks following the completion of the fieldwork. However, this may need to be revised in agreement with LCAS should any specialist reports be outstanding. A

copy of the report is also required by English Heritage's Regional Science Advisor. The report will include;

- a site location plan related to the national grid
- a front cover to include the planning application number and the NGR
- the dates on which the fieldwork was undertaken
- a concise, non-technical summary of the results
- an explanation to any agreed variations to the brief, including any justification for any analyses not undertaken
- a description of the methodology employed, work undertaken and results obtained
- an historical and archaeological background
- plans and sections at an appropriate scale showing the location and position of deposits and finds located
- a list of and dates for any finds recovered and a description and interpretation of the deposits identified. This artefact analysis will include illustration of finds crucial to dating and interpretation
- a description of any environmental or other specialist work undertaken and the results obtained
- a copy of this project design and the LCAS project brief, and indications of any agreed departure from the details
- the report will also include a complete bibliography of sources from which data has been derived.

3.4.2 ***Confidentiality:*** all internal reports to the client are designed as documents for the specific use of the client, for the particular purpose as defined in the project brief and project design, and should be treated as such. They are not suitable for publication as academic documents or otherwise without amendment or revision.

3.5 ARCHIVE

3.5.1 The results of all archaeological work carried out will form the basis for a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991). The project archive will include summary processing and analysis of all features, finds, or palaeoenvironmental data recovered during fieldwork, which will be catalogued by context.

3.5.2 The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is essential and archive will be provided in the English Heritage Centre for Archaeology format and a synthesis will be submitted to the Lancashire SMR (the index to the archive and a copy of the report). OA North practice is to deposit the original record archive of projects with the County Record Office, Preston.

3.5.3 All artefacts will be processed to MAP2 standards and will be assessed by our in-house finds specialists. The deposition and disposal of any artefacts recovered in the evaluation will be agreed with the legal owner and an appropriate recipient museum. LCAS will be notified of the arrangements made.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.1 OA North provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Unit Safety policy. All site procedures are in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (1997). A written risk assessment will be undertaken in advance of project commencement and copies will be made available on request to all interested parties.

4.2 ***Services/underground utilities:*** full regard will, of course, be given to all constraints (services etc) during the evaluation as well as to all Health and Safety considerations. As a matter of course the field team will use a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) prior to any excavation to test for services. However, this is only an approximate location tool. Any **information regarding services**, i.e. drawings or knowledge of live cables or services, held by the client should be made known to the OA North project manager prior to the commencement of the evaluation to ensure all risks are met and can be dealt with.

4.3 ***Contamination:*** any known contamination issues or any specific health and safety requirements on site should be made known to OA North by the client on site to ensure all procedures can be met, and that the risk is dealt with appropriately.

4.4 Should areas of previously unknown contamination be encountered on site the works will be halted and a revision of the risk assessment carried out. Any stand-down time incurred will be charged to the client. Should it be necessary to supply additional PPE or other contamination avoidance equipment this will be costed as a variation.

4.5 ***Staff provisions:*** a portable toilet with hand washing facilities, and a messing facility/laying out space will be provided and located on or adjacent to the site unless the client would prefer to arrange alternative facilities. This will be included in the cost of the evaluation.

5. OTHER MATTERS

5.1 ACCESS

5.1.1 Liaison for basic site access will be undertaken through the client, but it is assumed that access will be allowed for pedestrian and plant.

5.2 CLEARANCE/OBSTRUCTION

5.2.1 The site is currently overgrown and requires clearance prior to the commencement of the fieldwork. There is also an obstruction caused by the presence of what appear to be concrete blocks. It is assumed that the client will advise on the necessary action. Should OA North be requested to clear the site, any time and resources spent above and beyond that of the evaluation will be charged to the client.

5.3 FENCING/HOARDING REQUIREMENTS

5.3.1 It is assumed that the client will advise on the arrangements/requirements for the site to be protected from public access. Should heras fencing or similar be required to protect open trenches overnight, this will be charged as a variation.

5.4 REINSTATEMENT

5.4.1 It is understood that there will be no requirement for reinstatement of the ground beyond backfilling. The ground will be backfilled so that the topsoil is laid on the top, and the ground will be roughly graded with the machine. Where no significant remains are encountered the trenches will be backfilled the same day for reasons of public health and safety.

5.5 PROJECT MONITORING

5.5.1 Whilst the work is undertaken for the client, LCAS will be kept fully informed of the work and its results and will be notified at least a week in advance of the commencement of the fieldwork, in accordance with the LCAS brief. Any proposed changes to the project design will be agreed with LCAS in consultation with the client.

5.6 WORK TIMETABLE

5.6.1 ***Evaluation:*** the documentary research and fieldwork is expected to take between one to two weeks to complete.

5.6.2 ***Report:*** reports are normally issued within eight weeks following completion of all archaeological works.

5.6.3 OA North would require a formal written agreement at least one week before commencement in order to schedule the work as above and provide notice to LCAS.

5.7 STAFFING

5.7.1 The project will be under the direct management of **Emily Mercer BA (Hons) MSc AIFA** (OA North Senior Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

5.7.2 The evaluation will be supervised by either an OA North project officer or supervisor experienced in this type of project. Due to scheduling requirements it is not possible to provide these details at the present time. All OA North project officers and supervisors are experienced field archaeologists capable of carrying out projects of all sizes.

5.7.3 Assessment of the finds from the evaluation will be undertaken under the auspices of OA North's in-house finds specialist **Christine Howard-Davis** (OA North finds manager). Christine has extensive knowledge of finds from many periods.

5.7.4 Assessment of any palaeoenvironmental samples will be undertaken by or under the auspices of **Elizabeth Huckerby MSc** (OA North project officer). Elizabeth has extensive knowledge of the palaeoecology of the North West through her work on the English Heritage-funded North West Wetlands Survey.

5.8 INSURANCE

5.8.1 OA North has a professional indemnity cover to a value of £2,000,000; proof of which can be supplied as required.

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Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999a *Standard and guidance for archaeological Desk-Based Assessments*, unpubl

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United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC), 1990 *Guidelines for the preparation of archives for long-term storage*, London

APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT LIST

Context	Trench	Description
1	1	Natural light brown clay
2	1	Light brown silty clay, residue of the original dyke bank
3	1	Buried topsoil sealing ***2***
4	1	Mid brown friable clay layer, part of the nineteenth century modified bank
5	1	Red sand above ***4***, part of the nineteenth century modified bank
6	1	Mid brown stone clay above ***5***, part of the nineteenth century modified bank
7	3	Modern dump
8	3	Imported red clay spread across dump ***7***
9	4	Natural sand
10	4	Post hole (west)
11	4	Post hole (east)
12	2	Buried soil comprising a thin layer of dark grey clay
13	2	Silty clay spread across the upper level of the trench
14	5	Natural light brown clay along the base of the trench
15	5	Mid grey sticky grey clay (***15***) containing occasional fragments of wood debris above clay ***14***
16	5	Dump deposit identical in level and composition to dump ***7*** in Trench 3
17	5	Deposit of red clay comparable to clay horizons ***13*** and ***8*** observed in Trenches 2 and 3

APPENDIX 4: GAZETTEER OF SITES

Site number **01**
Site name **Skippool Marsh**
NGR 335810 441050
Site type Find spot – animal bone
Period Prehistoric
HER No **1627**
Sources HER
Description Animal bones and antlers found at this spot in 1928, probably associated with the Bronze Age pottery discovered during the construction of the sewerage outflow (HER Site 06)

Site number **02**
Site name **Skippool Marsh**
NGR 335750 440970
Site type Flint implement and animal bones
Period Prehistoric
HER No **51**
Sources HER
Description Animal remains and a flint implement discovered in August 1928 during the excavation of a sewerage outflow.

Site number **03**
Site name **2 Poolside Cottage, Skippool Creek**
NGR 335710 441020
Site type Submarine mine
Period Early twentieth century
HER No **27072**
Sources HER
Description Submarine mine located within the garden of 2 Poolside Cottages, written on the side was 'Mine 194(?) 1941'.

Site number **04**
Site name **Skippool Mill**
NGR 335700 440700
Site type Corn mill
Period Post-medieval
HER No **18801**
Sources HER
Description Ruins of a corn mill can still be identified

Site number **05**
Site name **Skippool Bridge**
NGR 35780 440620
Site type Bridge
Period Medieval, Post-medieval
HER No **1317**
Sources HER
Description The original Skippool Bridge crossed the confluence of the Skippon and River Wyre on the road from Poulton-le-Fylde to Thornton. In 1702 it was described as being 'very ruinous and in great decaye for want of rapaires'. The new bridge, built in the early twentieth century, now bears the name Skippool Bridge. The only

remains of the old bridge visible are a raised causeway on the western side, and a hump on the eastern.

Site number **06**
Site name **Skippool Bridge**
NGR 335780 440622
Site type Pottery findspot
Period Prehistoric, Bronze Age
HER No **1318**
Sources HER
Description Fragments of Bronze Age pottery were discovered to the north-west of Skippool Bridge during excavations for a sewerage outflow.

Site number **07**
Site name **Mains Lane Pumping Station**
NGR 335738 440636
Site type Archaeological watching brief
Period Post-medieval
HER No **25119**
Sources HER
Description Archaeological watching brief carried out in 1995 by GMAU during the construction of a wastewater pumping station. A line of preserved wooden stakes discovered in the estuary were dated to the later Victorian period, possibly a revetment for the Mains Dyke.

Site number **22**
Site name **Main Dyke**
NGR 33610 33980
Site type Dyke
Period Post-medieval
Sources OA North 2007
Description The Main Dyke runs from Skippool Marsh to Great Marton Lake, to the east of Blackpool. The dyke was constructed in 1731 to channel the outflow of water resulting from peat cutting to the River Wyre (*ibid*). This canalised the *Skippon flu*, identified on Saxton's (1577) and Speed's (1610) maps as one of the main drainage channels in the area. The levees on the southern side measure about 1m in height, although none exist on the northern bank. The actual channel itself measured approximately 1.5-2m in width, and about 2m in depth.

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