



St Thomas's Cross, Egremont

(NY 01500 99000).

Desk-based Assessment

Planning application N/A

Report 415

Carlisle

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Summary

The desk-based assessment has not identified any heritage assets that could seriously impact upon the development. An embankment located to the east represented an early 20th century mineral railway whilst a 19th century railway cutting formed the western boundary of the site.

There was no evidence for the course of a Roman road.

Previous archaeological reconnaissance has not raised any archaeological issues and the likelihood remains that the archaeological potential is probably very low.

However, the curatorial authority could advocate for a programme of archaeological evaluation in order to test this assertion, perhaps allied to a complementary geo-physical survey that may highlight surviving anomalies with a past cultural origin.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project origins

As part of a commercial development (figure 1) at land at St Thomas's Cross, Egremont, Cumbria, (NY 01500 09900) an archaeological desk-based assessment was commissioned by Louise Cleminson on behalf of the client, Thomas Graham Ltd. The report attempted to ascertain whether any sensitive past cultural features and archaeological deposits may be extant within the curtilage of the proposed commercial development, an area measuring approximately 4.59 hectares (figure 2).

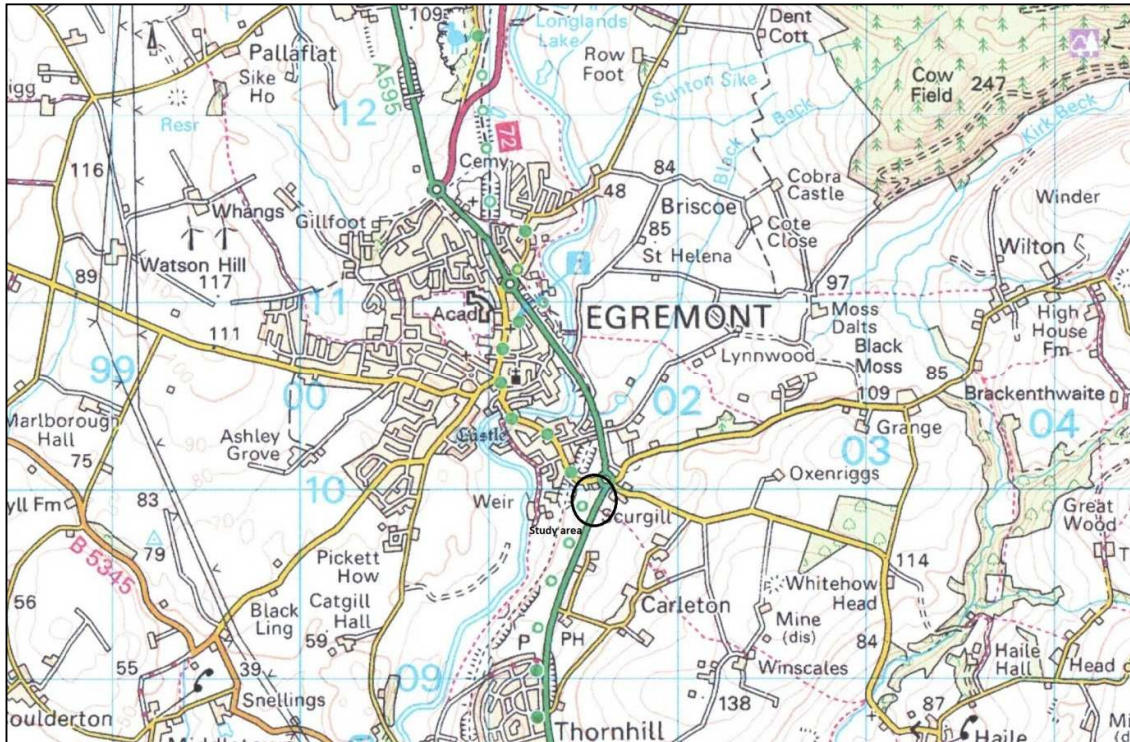


Figure 1. Location of the development. (OS Copyright, Licence no. 100044205)

The scheme will develop a polygonal block of land that has never been used for permanent settlement with the development seeking to provide a series of commercial warehouses and stores at the time the desk-based assessment report was compiled.

The following study revealed very few tangible archaeological heritage assets of any merit, the study area being quite possibly archaeologically sterile. The suggestion is therefore, that few extant archaeological remains will be encountered should future development proceed.

The Copeland Plan area contains nearly 600 listed buildings and heritage assets and part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site with a Roman fort at Moresby. There are eight conservation areas in the Borough. The Council desires that these features are conserved and enhanced where possible and that they contribute to heritage-led regeneration within the main settlements.

Policy ENV4 sets out the Council's approach to enhancing the quality of the Borough's built environment and heritage assets. It is linked to the strategic principle in Policy ST1C.

The Council's policy is to maximise the value of the Borough's heritage assets by:

- A Protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other townscape and rural features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value
- B Supporting proposals for heritage led regeneration, ensuring that any listed buildings or other heritage assets are put to an appropriate, viable and sustainable use
- C Strengthening the distinctive character of the Borough's settlements, through the application of high quality urban design and architecture that respects this character and enhances the settings of listed buildings (Copeland Borough Council 2013, 74)

Policy DM27 (Built Heritage and Archaeology) supports this policy, setting out the Council's approach to development which affects built heritage and archaeology. Its components are as follows:

- A Development proposals which protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the Borough's historic sites and their settings will be supported. This will be particularly relevant in the case of:
 - i) Scheduled Ancient Monuments
 - ii) Conservation Areas
 - iii) Listed Buildings and structures
 - iv) Non-listed buildings and structures or landscape features of local heritage and archaeological value
 - v) Surface and below ground archaeological deposits
- B Development proposals which have a significant adverse effect on a Scheduled Ancient Monument or its wider site or setting will not be permitted
- C Development within Conservation Areas will only be permitted where it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area and, where appropriate, views in and out of the area. The Council will pay particular attention to:
 - i) How new development respects the character of existing architecture and any historical associations, landscape features, open spaces, trees, walls and quality of townscape
 - ii) The impact of any proposed works to trees with regard to policy DM28
 - iii) The design of any proposals for new or altered shop fronts and / or signage, which should be an integral part of the design and avoid the use of internally illuminated signage
- D Development which affects Listed Buildings or their setting will only be permitted where it:
 - i) Respects the architectural and historic character of the building
 - ii) Avoids any substantial or total demolition, or any demolition that is not related to proposed development affecting the building

- iii) Does not have a significant adverse effect on the setting or important views of the building
- iv) Involves a change of use to all or part of the listed building which contributes to the conservation and overall economic viability of the building, and where the use can be implemented without any adverse alterations to the building
- E Any development proposal which is considered to affect an existing or potential site of archaeological importance will be required to be accompanied by an archaeological assessment. Where archaeological deposits are evident, below ground or on the surface, evidence should be recorded and where possible preserved in-situ. Proposals for development where archaeological interest has been established will not be approved until evidence has been provided that the risk of archaeological disturbance has been adequately investigated and has been minimised. Planning permission will not be granted if the impact on potential archaeology is unacceptable.

This Policy stresses the twin need to both protect assets of established heritage value and to draw upon that heritage to create places of quality and character. Not all listed structures are buildings. There are listed features such as doorways, piers, lighthouses etc. which, if well maintained, can contribute significantly to a sense of place.

There are also areas of archaeological significance that should be preserved for their potential to provide the enjoyment of discovery and the associated educational value of this, not just for ourselves but for future generations.

The main risk to our heritage assets, especially the many listed buildings is that they fall into disuse, become derelict and have to be demolished. The Council is keen to avoid situations like this and therefore will be supportive of any proposal that can bring a vacant listed building back into use, where that use is viable, sustainable and appropriate to its particular location.

In the context of managing development, the policy approach is to assess the implications of new development on features of historic value, including historic buildings, as part of the planning application process.

The policy covers not only designated heritage assets but those considered to be important by local communities but with no official designation i.e. landmark structures and landscape features. There is no official list of these assets but their existence will become apparent as development proposals are brought forward as part of the application process and local residents comment on these applications. Therefore, it is important that developers making applications are aware of any features in the vicinity of their sites which could be considered to be local landmarks and take account of the impact that their developments might have on these features and their settings. Pre-application advice should be sought on these matters where there is any uncertainty (Copeland Borough Council 2013, 169-170)

Finally, the Council concedes that all heritage assets cannot be preserved and that *preservation in situ* whilst desirable will not be a sustainable response to certain developments. The response to such a situation is that the developer must provide sufficient and adequate resources in order that a record can be assembled that fulfils the heritage protocols set by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES) and agreed before development proceeds by that curatorial body.

1.2 Project design

The subsequent report attempts to evaluate the archaeological potential in advance of development and highlight areas of potential research (figure 2).



Figure 2. Development area. Curtilage in red outline

The impact of development upon the archaeological record is poorly addressed in the Egremont area, despite an Extensive Urban Survey conducted in 2000, as there have been relatively few archaeological interventions, suggesting the deposit model is poorly understood.

All archaeological projects are carried out in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and the guidelines and recommendations issued by the former Institute of Field Archaeologists (2014) and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015).

Research and a walk-over survey took place on January 22nd 2023. Archaeological enquiry seeks to obey the heritage commitments of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021).

1.3 Desk-based assessment sources

The desk-based assessment investigated primary and secondary historical sources, maps and other literature in order to place the survey results into their past cultural, historical and topographic context.

The physical study area was within a 500m radius

The desk-based assessment required a search of four archival repositories:

- Whitehaven Library provided sources for published works including newspaper articles, archaeological and antiquarian reports and trade journals.
- Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle and Whitehaven provided the earliest enclosure and tithe maps for the parish, details of landowners and occupiers and cartographic evidence.
- The Historic Environment Record, Kendal provided the Sites and Monuments Record describing previous archaeological observations of the study area and aerial photographs relevant to the study area.
- British Newspapers Online provided newspaper articles
- Archaeological grey literature on the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

1.4 Archive

The archive has been compiled in accordance with the project design and the guidelines set out by Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991) and the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, 2007 and 2012).

The archaeological desk-based assessment will become a public document as part of the planning application on behalf of the client's application.

The archive will be deposited with an appropriate repository and a copy of the report donated to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

A copy of the report will be deposited with the online *Oasis* archaeological database.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, topography and geology

The study area NY 01500 09900 (figure 1) located at Egremont, lies to the south of the medieval settlement and exists as open grassed ground beside the A595 (figure 3). Egremont, historically a market and then later an industrial town, the town's layout was set out at the time of Richard de Lucy around 1200 with its wide Main Street fanning out into the market place established by Charter in 1267 under Henry III. The remains of the Norman castle, built in the 12th century, are situated at the southern end of Main Street near the market place.

The underlying geology comprised of Permo-Triassic rocks, mainly composed of the Steeton Bees Sandstone, with occurrences of limestones and shales.

The superficial drift geology consists of clay, silt, sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposits were formed between 118,000 years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.

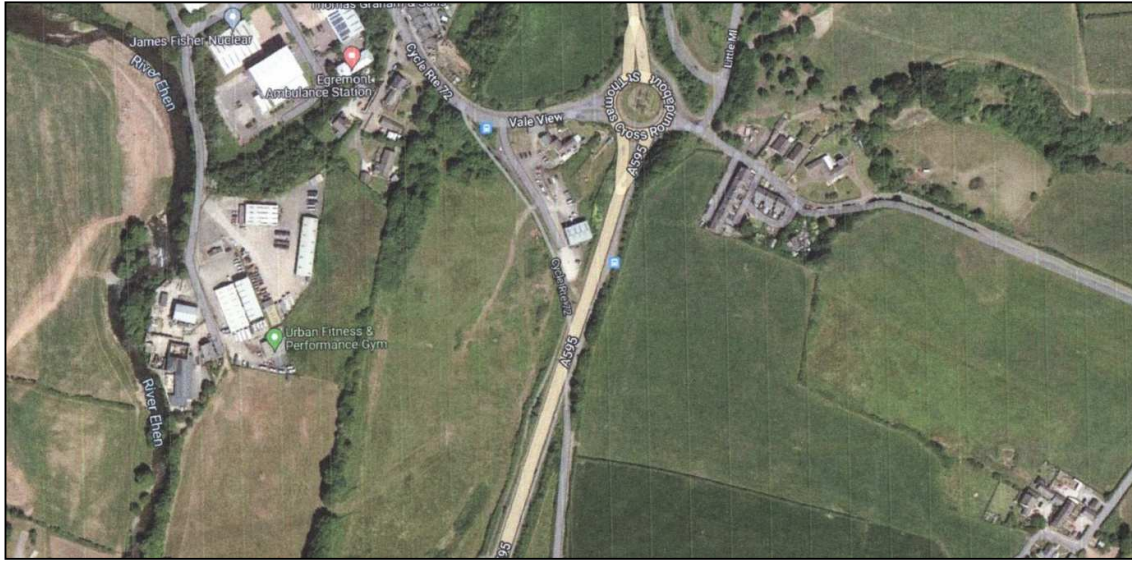


Figure 3. Aerial view of the study area

The local landscape has been categorised as follows:

47. West Cumberland Plain

The West Cumberland Plain is a coastal area, stretching from the Solway Coast AONB in the north, to Egremont in the south. It forms part of both Allerdale and Copeland Districts. It is generally low-lying and coastal in nature, with generally low, eroding cliffs forming the seaward edge. Its dominant character is urban and industrial. It includes a number of large, urban nucleations, such as Maryport, Workington, Whitehaven, Cleator Moor and Egremont. Though industrial towns, there are significant elements within them relating to their origins and early growth.

Both Workington and Egremont are medieval settlements, with Egremont being a still-definable planned borough. Although the area has a long industrial and maritime history, 71% of the settlement post-dates 1900. These developments have largely obscured the planned, medieval, nucleated settlement character that predominated until the 19th century. The industrial nature of the area is not confined to the urban settlements; the coastal strip between Workington and Maryport is dominated particularly by current and past industries.

The field pattern has been much disrupted by modern developments. These include land restorations, for which the modern field pattern bears very little relationship to the historic pattern. Where the historic field pattern can be discerned, within Allerdale District it is a mix of former common arable fields and 19th century planned enclosures.

Designed landscapes are a feature of the area, both within the towns and as part of former country estates. One of the most noticeable is Curwen Park, Workington, which originated as a deer park.

Overall, the area has relatively little woodland.

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Historical background

Palaeolithic

No early Palaeolithic material has been recovered within Cumbria. The most recent geological period, the Pleistocene, witnessed the movement of massive north-south travelling ice sheets, which successively scoured the landscape during prolonged periods of glaciation.

Pollen samples from the Windermere Interstadial suggest that winter conditions were severe with excessive surface water and vegetation establishing itself only during the summer.

Around 13,000 years BP, Late Upper Palaeolithic people returned to Britain, although evidence for this activity extending to northwest England is extremely scarce. However, the discovery of Late Upper Palaeolithic blades near Grange-over-Sands and at Aldingham, on the Furness Peninsula, does not preclude the existence of a Cumbrian Palaeolithic culture.

Penetration into the hinterland did not occur.

Mesolithic

Our understanding of the Mesolithic period is heavily influenced by the exposure of diagnostic material in particular lithic assemblages although palaeo-environmental evidence indicates repeated woodland reduction episodes. Towards the later Mesolithic period there is considerable evidence for occupation on raised beaches. This activity tends to conform to the seasonal model of hunter-gatherers exploiting natural resources but with elements of a managed landscape emerging.

In western Cumbria, late Mesolithic flint scatters have been recovered from the raised beaches of the maximum marine transgression and along cliff tops north of St Bees. It has been suggested that there is little discernible technological difference between the later Mesolithic and early Neolithic assemblage perhaps indicating considerable longevity and a distinctive west Cumbrian tradition.

There is no known Mesolithic occupation in this area.

Neolithic

The early Neolithic period represents the transition from hunter-gatherer societies to sedentary agricultural communities. As societies became established, specific cultural traits emerged; the appearance of ceremonial and funerary landscape monuments and the development of distinctive ceramic styles and lithic forms

In the Late Neolithic, social hierarchies emerge through the intensification and increasing sophistication of settlement, land use and artefact production.

Evidence for settlement in Cumbria is primarily inferred by the distribution of polished stone axes from the Langdale axe factory.

Long distance trade and contact is suggested by the frequent appearance of these axes throughout the British Isles and by the third Millennium BC, the production of these axes was part of a trans-European trading network.

A standing circle (now destroyed) existed at Ringing stones (SMR 1198), possibly the same as a tumulus and cairn of ten large stones described by Hutchinson (Jackson & Mounsey 2010, 10)

Within the immediate environs of the study area there is no direct evidence for Neolithic settlement.

Bronze Age

The Bronze Age in the north-west is noted by an increase in land clearance and the beginning of cereal cultivation from approximately 2000 BC. Despite much continuity from the Late Neolithic, the Bronze Age introduces bronze metalwork, changes in pottery styles and burial practice. However, archaeological visibility within Cumbria is poor and very few Bronze Age sites have been discovered in Cumbria, although in coastal, south-west Cumbria the earlier lithic tradition appears to continue into at least the early Bronze Age.

Cist burials appear from the beginning of the second Millennium BC and it is believed that they represent former monuments within a Bronze Age agricultural landscape. Aerial photography on the North Cumbrian Plain, suggests a number of crop-marks may represent barrows within a network of linear ditches forming a *cursus*. However, there is no current evidence to suggest that this practice may have dispersed southwards into this study area.

In north and west Cumbria, clearance of woodland occurs from the third millennium BC but was accompanied by climate deterioration before a second major phase of clearance in the latter half of the first millennium BC (McCarthy 2003, 133).

Within the immediate environs of the study area there is no direct evidence for Bronze Age settlement.

Iron Age

The Iron Age is noted for the introduction of iron tools and weapons, increasing sophistication in pottery production, long-distance trade and the development of social hierarchies from kinships societies to tribal territories based on regional centres.

In Cumbria, the early and mid-Iron Age is poorly represented suggesting a low population threshold (Brennand 2006, 51). In the late Iron Age, there is considerable forest clearance suggesting population stress probably associated with proto-regional tensions between Iron Age tribes.

Iron Age agricultural practices have been discerned at Tarraby Lane, Carlisle in 1976 as a series of field boundaries and cultivation marks (Smith 1978, 21-23) known as cord-rig cultivation but unenclosed settlement appears to leave little trace.

Hillforts and enclosed settlement are largely missing from the archaeological record.

However, at Salterbeck an Iron Age enclosure was identified. The defended settlement 490m north east of Beckstone Bridge is preserved as a crop-mark and a partial earthwork and does contain

archaeological deposits relating to its construction, use and abandonment and the environmental deposits relating to the use of the surrounding landscape.

The monument provides insight into the character of fortified settlements during the Iron Age. The monument includes the remains of a defended settlement of Iron Age date forming a protected promontory at the south west end of a ridge. The settlement, which is preserved as a crop-mark and partial earthworks, includes a sub-circular enclosure measuring 54m by 69m, surrounded by partial concentric double ditches and part of a rampart.

This form of settlement is not known in the immediate area.

Roman

The study area may have been part of the eastern fringes of a militarised zone defined as a continuation of the Cumbrian coastal defences (Mann 1989, 75) a further 45 km southwards beyond Maryport to link with the earlier fortlet measuring 0.47 hectares, the late Hadrianic fort at Ravenglass (Potter 1979, 18).

Western and northern Cumbria was a rich agricultural area during the Roman period growing wheat and barley for the nearby military centres and the coastal garrisons. This produced a landscape of rectilinear field systems bounded by ditches, tracks and hedges with intermittent farmsteads.

The typical farmstead was set inside a ditched and embanked enclosure, which varied in plan. Within the enclosure were rectangular and circular plan buildings (suggestive of both native and Roman influence), cobbled yards and some degree of drainage. These farmsteads do not appear to be materially ostentatious reflecting functional use rather than any suggestion of upward social mobility or development.

The Roman settlement at Carlisle is thought to have become the urban capital of the Carvetii, a sub-division of the Brigantian tribal group, and it has been postulated that the Solway Plain may have provided the economic platform necessary for the Carvetii to have been granted a degree of autonomy as the *civitas Carvetiorum* (Shotter 1993, 28).

There is little evidence for Roman period activity within Egremont and its environs. A Roman road from Thornhill-Blackbeck-Calder Bridge has been identified south of Egremont (SMR 1255). When tested in 2013 by evaluation no evidence was found for the road (Moore 2013, 18).

A coin of Antoninus Pius was also found to the north of the town (SMR 4620).

Medieval

Following Roman withdrawal, it is believed that West Cumbria reverted to native autonomy before the Angles began to enter eastern Cumbria during the 7th Century AD followed by Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian and Scottish incursions up to the 11th Century AD. Although little tangible evidence remains in the form of settlement, place-name evidence perpetuates these successive influences.

During the 12th century the area now known as Cumbria passed from the control of the Kingdom of Strathclyde to the Norman King Henry II. This region was sub-divided into baronies.

Egremont pre-dates the Norman Conquest. The Danes possibly established a fort on the site of Egremont Castle around the end of the first millennium AD whilst circumstantial evidence suggest some form of pre-Conquest institutions existed involving the Lords of Copeland.

When William Rufus extended Norman rule into Cumbria in around 1092, control of the area was given to Ivo Taillebois, who was married to Lucy of Bolingbroke, heiress of extensive lands in Lincolnshire. When Ivo died in 1094, this authority passed to Lucy's second husband Roger Fitz Gerold de Roumare, who survived for only two more years, then to her third husband Ranulph le Meschines.

On becoming the Earl of Chester, his estates were returned to the Crown towards paying for the earldom. Around 1120, Henry I gave the Barony of Copeland to Ranulph's son William who made his home at Egremont and began to build the castle, which took approximately 150 years to complete.

The Barony was inherited by William's son Ranulph. With Ranulph having no male heir, the Barony passed to his sister Alice, who married the Scottish prince, William Fitz Duncan. With no living male heir, William Fitz Duncan's estates passed to his three daughters Annabel, Cecily and Alice.

The estates passed down to Annabel's son Richard de Lucy. Richard's two daughters married two brothers of the de Multon family, Alice (now called de Morville) married Alan de Multon and Annabel (also now called de Morville) married Lambert de Multon. Annabel and Lambert de Multon inherited the Barony of Copeland.

When the last male Multon died in 1335, one of the co-heiresses married Thomas Lucy, grandson of Thomas Multon. Anthony, the last Lord Lucy, died in 1369, and the lands passed to his brother-in-law Henry Percy, 1st Earl of Northumberland, staying with the Percy family and its successors ever since.

Egremont was granted its royal charter by Henry III in 1267, with the right to hold a weekly market and an annual fair.

The economy of Egremont was based on the processing of animal products from nearby farms. The extent of the town was described in the Inquest Post Mortem of John de Multon, whose possessions included a "Castle, with a plot called 'Applegarth', the park below the castle, various fisheries, 194 acres of demesne land and 47.5 acres of demesne meadow ... 82 free tenants holding 138 burgages ... 6 waste places called burgages ... (a) weekly market and fair, water mill, fulling mill and 2 smithies." The reference to waste places could indicate urban decay had occurred as a result of the deterioration in climate, cross-border raids and the maintenance of retinues by the nobility and high demands from the Crown, famine and sheep murrains all of which occurred by the mid 14th century (Mounsey & Jackson 2010, 11).

By 1578, two thirds of the town had passed to the Earl of Northumberland and therefore the town is described in the survey of the Earl's estates in Cumberland commissioned in that year. The description of the town in the 1578 survey appears to coincide closely with the patterns of streets and building lines shown on the first edition OS map of the town. However, the total number of burgages in 1578 (101) is considerably smaller than that given in the 1334 Inquisition. It is possible that Egremont suffered economic decline in the 14th century (CCCAS 2000, 7).

Post-Medieval and modern

The Cumbria iron ore field lies to the south of Workington, and produced extremely high grade phosphorus-free haematite. West Cumbria had a long tradition of iron smelting, but this became particularly important with the invention by Sir Henry Bessemer of the Bessemer process in 1856, the first process for mass production of mild steel, which previously had been an expensive specialist product. For the first 25 years of the process, until Gilchrist and Thomas improved upon it, phosphorus-free haematite was required, found locally around Cleator Moor and Egremont.

With Cumbria as the world's premier source and the local coalfield providing energy for steel production, the world's first large-scale steelworks was opened in the Moss Bay area of Workington in 1872, although there are now no structural remains.

The earliest record of an iron-ore mine in Egremont dates back to the 11th century. A mine was given to the monks of Holme Cultram Abbey by William le Gros, Duke of Albemarle. Small amounts of surface iron-ore were used in local bloomeries and most likely obtained from sources near to Bigrigg at the very early part of the 11th century (Read, 1999). However, the commercial mining of iron-ore within the town boundaries did not really begin until the 1600s. During the years of the Civil War (1642-1649), iron-ore was in great demand for making weaponry. There was then a period of inactivity in the mines until the Jacobite rising in 1745 again saw the need for iron. In 1750 ore was shipped to Wales from the mine at Bigrigg. In the 18th and 19th centuries mines were sunk on the Gillfoot estate, at North Road adjacent to Woodgate Terrace, the cemetery, others alongside the river Ehen near High Mill and nearer the town, behind the Cat Inn (CCCAS 2000, 10).

Egremont grew rapidly in consequence of local iron mining in the mid-19th century. Most of the mining in this period was at Bigrigg and Moor Row, the former locality having supplied haematite to the Carron Company in the 18th century. The industry persisted at the Florence and Ullcoats mines, which closed in 1968, although there are extensive pit head remains. The housing for miners at both Bigrigg and Moor Row exemplified mid-Victorian housing of this type, with their long rows retaining a touch of the vernacular style (Marshall, 1977).

Florence mine is now a Mine Heritage site. The extracted ore was originally used in the production of pig iron that was then made into steel. As new technologies took over in the production of steel, the iron ore began to be used to extract carbon from castings, and in the manufacture of pigments for paint and cosmetics (www.btinternet.com/~lake.district/wc/florence.htm, 2000). At the beginning of the 20th century prospecting interest was spreading to the area south of Egremont with the Millom and Askam Hematite Iron Company sinking a shaft at Ullbank near Beckermest (Myers, 1993).

The Whitehaven, Cleator and Egremont Railway (WC&ER) was the first railway opening for goods traffic in 1855, two years later it received passenger traffic. The WC&ER sold out to the London and North Western Railway in 1878.

3.2 Previous archaeological research

Little archaeological reconnaissance has been undertaken in close proximity to the study area. There are no immediate excavated sites within close proximity. The town was subject to an Extensive

Urban Survey that collated all known archaeological records in 2000. This document was this on archaeological sites despite excavation of the Castle in 1983 by Richard Newman.

Later reconnaissance has been identified by watching briefs and archaeological evaluations ahead of capital schemes that has revealed a paucity of heritage assets.

3.3 Cartographic research

The First edition Ordnance Survey map of 1868 (figure 4) provides a detailed disposition of agricultural fields in the vicinity. Settlement was centred north of the River Ehen, congregating beside the Castle. Just to the west of the study area was a paper mill utilising the river and mentioned on Donald's 1770 map, whilst a road entered the town from the south. Marked by a probable cross hence St Thomas's Cross probably denoting a shrine or small chapel; the road was a junction with a limb heading eastwards and also extant on Donald's map of 1770 and Greenwood's map of 1824.

The study area was principally one large field with a beck that was wooded.

Heavy industry had not infiltrated Egremont but tanning and bleaching were undertaken within the meander of the river, distanced from the core of the town, a remnant of medieval trades that were deemed unsanitary and maintained in distinct quarters.

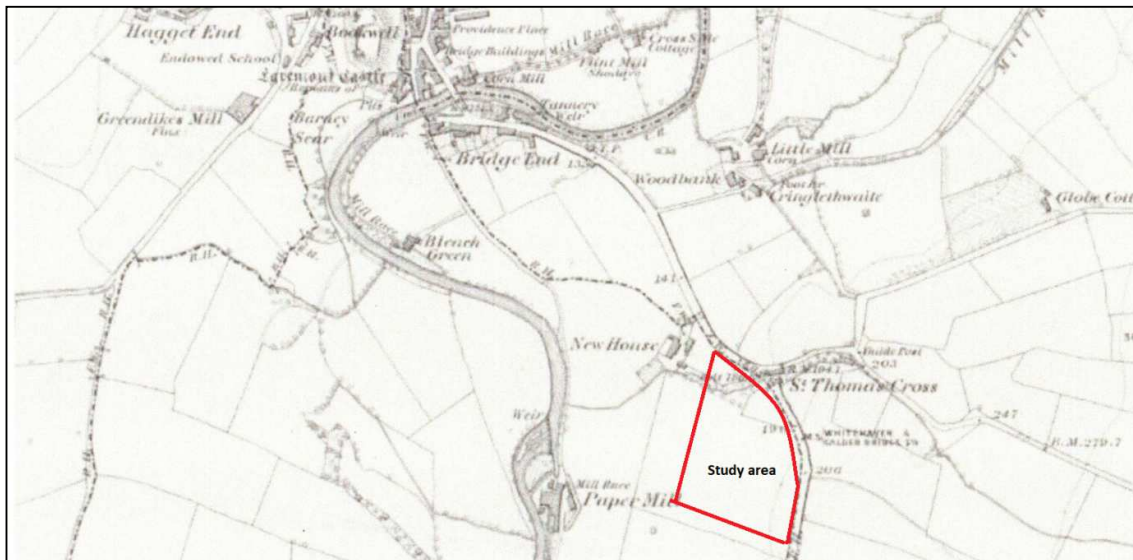


Figure 4. First Edition Ordnance Survey map 1868

The Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1900 (figure 5) announced the arrival of the Whitehaven, Cleator and Egremont Railway, a branch line assimilated by the London North Western Railway and located within a cutting.

This forms the western boundary of the study area and with the road would have formed a vacant parcel of land detached from other fields.

St Thomas's Cross is still depicted as was the wooded beck. Iron ore pits and quarries begin to emerge to the east of the study area.

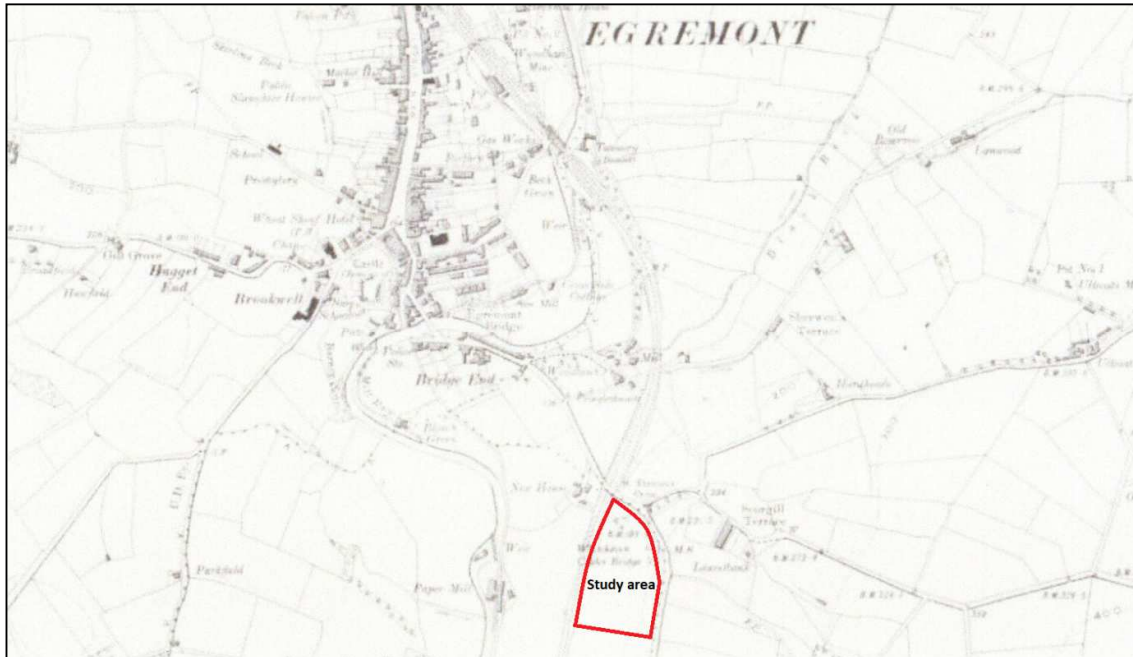


Figure 5. Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 1900

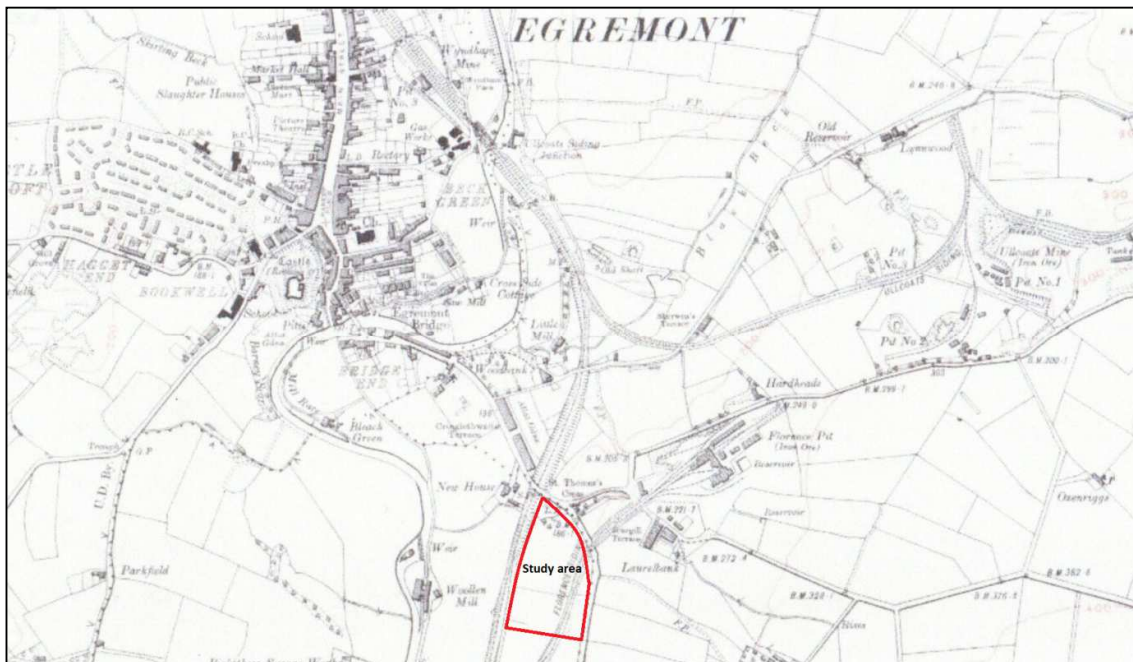


Figure 6. Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 1926

The Third edition Ordnance Survey map of 1926 (figure 6) illustrates considerable expansion of iron ore mining at Florence Pit. A siding (Florence Siding) spurred from the branch line, serving the pit. This railway track formed the eastern margin of the study area and appeared to be within a cutting. Combining the two railways, the study area still remained a vacant parcel of land, albeit isolated from adjoining fields.

St Thomas's Cross is still depicted as was the wooded beck.

The paper mill had become a woollen mill and there had been infilling of the quarter south of the core of the town.

3.4 Historic Environment Record

Ten entries are recorded in the Historic Environment Record and are of a non-designated heritage status within a 500m radius of the study area (figure 7). A Roman road (1 and 2) is posited as being in close vicinity although when tested by archaeological evaluation the intervention proved sterile.

Mills (3, 5 and 10) congregated along the banks of the River Ehen and its tributaries but only documentary sources remain.

The mineral railway to Florence Mine (4) impacts upon the study area as a railway embankment.

Industrial trades were undertaken to the west as a bleach-works (8) and a tannery (9) whilst quarrying (6) was conducted to the east.

The deer park citation (7) is based only on documentary evidence

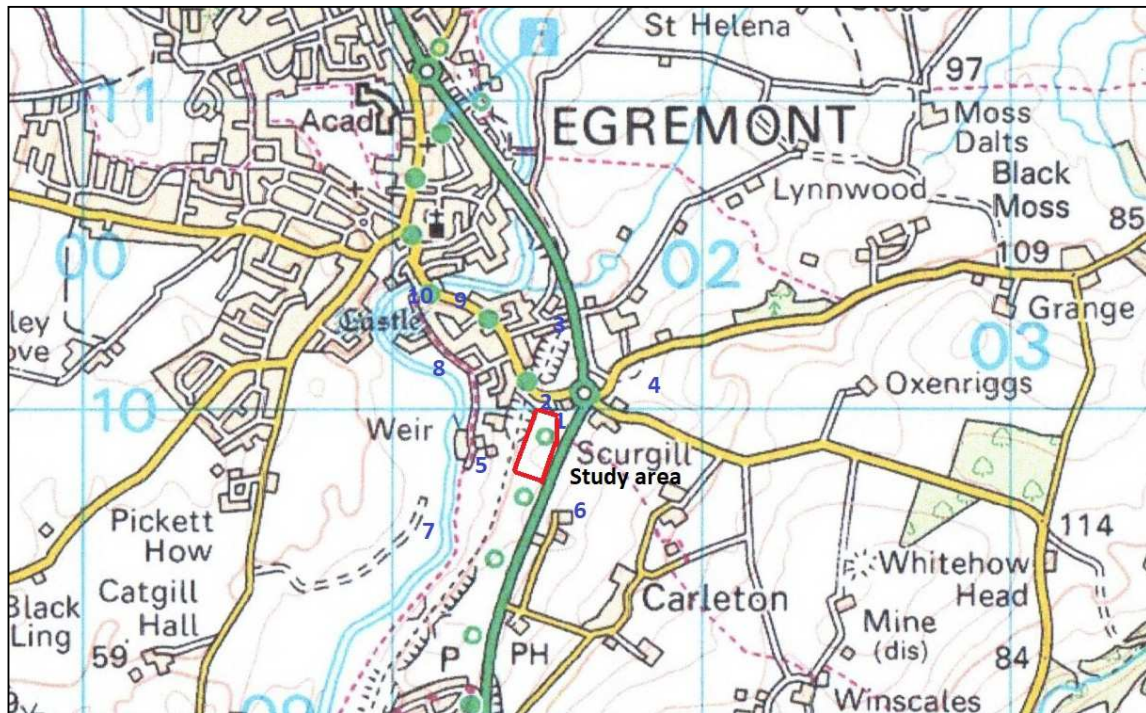


Figure 7. Location of entries in the Historic Environment Record. (OS Copyright, Licence no. 100044205)

No.	Her No.	Location	Description	Site type	Period	Status
1	1255	Thornhill-Blackbeck-Calder Hall road	Road	Documentary	Roman	None
2	1210	Lowside Quarter Road	Road	Other structure	Roman	None
3	12885	Little Mill, St John Beckermat	Watermill, Cornmill, mill house	Documentary	Post-Medieval	None
4	12339	Florence Mine, St John Beckermat	Mineral railway, ironstone mine	Documentary, roofed building	20 th Century	None
5	12177	Ennerdale Mill	Woollen, Flax,	Documentary,	Post-Medieval	None

			Paper and Textile mill	roofed building		
6	12174	Beggargill Quarry	Quarry	Documentary	Post-Medieval	None
7	43697	Egremont Park	Deer park	Documentary	Medieval	None
8	12875	Bleach Green	Bleach Works, Watermill	Documentary	Post-Medieval	None
9	12886	Bridge End Tannery	Tannery	Sub-surface deposit	Post-Medieval	None
10	12334	Egremont Great Mill	Corn Mill	Documentary	Post-Medieval	None

Table A. Heritage assets held in the Historic Environment Record

In summary, none of the historic environment entries would be considered to be influential in characterising the study area, although the Roman road may need investigation.

3.5 Lidar

Examination of the Lidar data suggested intimated a railway cutting and the course of the mineral railway line as depicted on the 1926 Ordnance Survey map.

There was no evidence for a Roman road traversing the study area.

4 FIELD SURVEY

4.1 Walkover survey

A walkover survey was undertaken on Sunday 22nd January 2023 in overcast, dry conditions. Access was unimpeded. The site NY 01500 09900 was covered with tufts of reeds and coarse grass producing rough grazing used by cattle and rather boggy. The entrance was enhanced by a gravel path whilst the topsoil appeared to lack any considerable depth.

The study area had been severely modified during the late 20th century when the transport network serving Egremont was altered. The former railway had become disused in the 1960's and its course was adopted as a road by-pass from St Thomas's Cross to the Cockermouth and Whitehaven road junction. A roundabout was installed, severing a small collection of houses from the road frontage whilst a motor garage still operates.

The roundabout on the A595 occupies the course of the former mineral railway line.

To the west was a deep ravine, a former railway cutting NY 01472 10000 that maintains the western site boundary (figure 8).

To the east of the site was a heavily damaged railway embankment NY 01530 09900 whose course petered into the study area (figure 9).

The terrain fell appreciably to the south (figure 10). There was no evidence for any former field divisions or other past cultural activity. Any Roman road would have been highlighted as a linear

crop-mark producing a probable green corridor or a slightly cambered ridge should the road be preserved. However, there was no evidence for past cultural activity or settlement in the immediate study area with only a mill appearing beside the River Ehen (figure 11).



Figure 8. Railway cutting to the west



Figure 9. Embankment to the east



Figure 10. Study area looking south



Figure 11. Mill beyond the study area

4.2 Sites identified

The earthen bank straddling the eastern margin of the study area was a remnant of an early 20th century mineral railway.

The railway cutting forming the west boundary was a former mid 19th century railway line.

No other sites were identified.

5 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT APPRAISAL

5.1 Buried archaeological potential

The proposed development based on this desk-based assessment and walk-over does not physically impact upon any known archaeological features. The study area was probably unfavourable to past settlement as the ground remains wet.

The Roman road thought to continue to Calder Hall has proved elusive. There is no obvious signature within the study area. Most probably it would have been utilised in later cultural periods and therefore exists under the present road course or a minor track to the east on slightly higher ground.

The earthen bank on the extremity of the study area was a former embankment to a mineral railway line servicing Florence Pit.

Other than this feature, there appeared to be no obvious heritage assets within the study area bearing any antiquity.

5.2 Palaeo-environmental potential

The paucity of archaeological features suggests that the recovery of any palaeo-environmental evidence of any merit is slim. However, the clay drift geology allied to wet conditions would be favourable to preservation of organic remains in an anaerobic environment.

5.3 Visual impacts

No other non-statutory buildings of local importance have settings that can be considered to be negatively impacted by the proposals.

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within close proximity.

There are no listed buildings in close proximity to the study area.

6 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

6.1 Discussion

The purpose of the desk-based assessment was to identify past cultural features and heritage assets that may require targeting during a phase of future archaeological fieldwork or a strategy of mitigation in order to preserve the integrity of any identified monument.

The desk-based reconnaissance exercise has not identified any obvious signatures for past cultural activity that could be considered significant.

The terrain appears to be marginal agricultural land subject to poor drainage. The Carlisle Patriot reports on December 5th 1890, the loss of a cottage at St Thomas's Cross due to flooding.

This survey does not preclude the possibility that sub-surface deposits of a past cultural origin may exist but based on the disposition of the terrain and known environmental conditions the site does appear to be unfavourable.

The effects of quarrying and mining for iron ore and the imposed railway infrastructure has severely truncated any putative archaeological remains nearby. The apparent presence of considerable remediation and landscaping may have some impact on archaeological potential. This does not preclude pockets of archaeological survival but based on the evidence garnered, the deposit model would be unfavourable to past cultural survival.

It is possible a programme of archaeological evaluation will be requested in order to ascertain whether the study area can be deemed archaeologically sterile and therefore provide no heritage impediment for future development.

In terms of Magnitude of Impact, this study area based on current knowledge can be designated as minor to no change.

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