# LAND WEST OF BRAESIDE BRANXTON NORTHUMBERLAND

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



NOVEMBER 2022

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.

# LAND WEST OF BRAESIDE BRANXTON NORTHUMBERLAND

# REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



*Frontispiece*: Stripping of topsoil at Land West of Braeside, Branxton, Northumberland.

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LAND WEST OF BRAESIDE, BRANXTON, NORTHUMBERLAND. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief *Prepared by The Archaeological Practice Ltd., November 2022* 

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**Photo 08:** The north end of the N-S pipe trench. N view.

Photo 09: E facing section within the N-S pipe trench.

# SUMMARY

The following is a report on archaeological monitoring carried out over one and a half working days at Land West of Braeside, Branxton, Northumberland. The monitoring was imposed by Northumberland County Council to mitigate the impact of groundworks upon potential archaeological remains, associated with the construction of a new dwelling.

The location of the site within the designated extent of a Registered Battlefield (Battle of Flodden, c.1513) and on the fringes of a linear settlement occupied since at least the medieval period suggested there was at least moderate potential for significant unrecorded archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development site. Such remains, if present, would be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development. In addition to monitoring, Northumberland Conversation advised that prior to fieldwork, a HER search of the Branxton area be conducted in order to establish what heritage assets exist more broadly and to extrapolate pertinent information to produce a summary of the area's historical background.

The aims of the archaeological works were to identify and record any archaeological remains as they appeared during the scheme of works without causing significant delays to the groundworks. This included the recording of negative results. The works consisted of the removal of topsoil from the entire footprint of the building, as well as minor landscaping and excavation of service runs. Excavation was carried out by a 360° excavator with toothless ditching buckets.

During the course of the watching brief, no finds or features were encountered. Natural subsoil or sterile buried soil was encountered in all areas of the footprint of the building below topsoil, while in the service trench runs, only topsoil was encountered. No further archaeological mitigation work is required in association with this scheme up to the specified depths reached. However, there is still the potential for significant archaeological remains within the village of Branxton relating to medieval and post-medieval settlement and the 1513 Battle of Flodden. It is recommended that future projects in the village of Branxton should be considered on their own merits with respect to the need for archaeological intervention.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The following is a report on archaeological monitoring carried out over one and a half working days at Land West of Braeside, Branxton, Northumberland (*NT 89638 37695*). The monitoring was imposed by Northumberland County Council to mitigate the impact of groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling. The dwelling, set back from the main east-west road through Branxton, will measure 7m in height and have a footprint of approximately 182 m<sup>2</sup>.

1.1.2 The village lies a kilometre to the south of the A697 road and approximately 6km to the southwest of Coldstream, on the Anglo-Scottish border. It lies on the northern periphery of the area of Registered Battlefield associated with the 1513 Battle of Flodden. The square parcel of land on which the dwelling will be constructed measured c. 950 m<sup>2</sup>, not including the area of the driveway linking the land to the main road. The land sloped down gently towards the road, with the field to the southeast noticeably higher than the parcel of land in surface height, suggesting that the land may have been previously landscaped to make it flatter.

### 1.2 Planning Background

1.2.1 Whilst no archaeological remains are currently recorded within the application site, the location of the site within the designated extent of the Registered Battlefield and on the fringes of a linear settlement occupied since at least the medieval period suggest there is at least a moderate potential for significant unrecorded archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development site. Such remains, if present, would be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development. The potential loss of archaeological remains could be mitigated by a programme of archaeological monitoring, secured by condition. Taking account of the significance of the archaeological resource and the impact of the proposed development on that significance, Northumberland Conservation have recommended in their consultation letter and Site Specific Document, that a programme of archaeological mitigation is undertaken in association with the proposed development. In this particular instance, a programme of archaeological monitoring during initial groundworks is considered to be an appropriate response. This work can be secured by condition consistent with the requirements and objectives paragraphs 56 and 205 of the NPPF.

1.2.2 No previous archaeological assessment or investigation has been carried out within the proposed development site. Given its location however in Branxton village, which has medieval origins and an association with the Battle of Flodden of 1513, Northumberland Conversation, acting on behalf of NCC, advised that an HER search of the Branxton area be conducted in order to establish what heritage assets exist more broadly and to extrapolate pertinent information to produce a summary of the area's historical background (*see Appendix 1, sections 1.2 and 1.3*). The watching brief will potentially address several of the research priorities identified by the *North-East Regional Research Framework* (NERRF) (Petts with Gerrard 2006), particularly within the Medieval, Post-Medieval and 20th-Century period-based agendas and the Settlement and Urbanism thematic agendas, most notably:

• **MDi**: Settlement (the origins, development and morphology of medieval villages, cf. also **EMii** – origins)



*Illus.* **01**: *Regional view, showing the location of Branxton (circled in red), near the Anglo-Scottish border in northern Northumberland.* 



*Illus.* 02: *District view, showing the location of Branxton (circled in red), in northern Northumberland.* 



*Illus.* 03: *Township view, showing the proposed location of development at the east end of Branxton (circled in red).* 



*Illus.* **04***: Village view, showing the proposed development location (highlighted in red) to the west of Braeside, at the east end of Branxton.* 



# 2. CULTURAL HERITAGE BACKGROUND

2.1 The parish of Branxton lies in north Northumberland, close to the Scottish border, within the region known as Glendale. The name Branxton derives from a personal name 'Brannoc', signifying Brannoc's 'tun' or settlement. Few notable historic events are associated with Branxton until the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The only exceptions were periodic raids by the Scots with the earliest recorded incident in 1340. Branxton is famous in British history as the scene of a battle in 1513 which is now commonly called the Battle of Flodden.

2.2 Little is known of the parish in prehistoric times until the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, when we get evidence of the first settlements. They are sub-rectangular or subcircular enclosures, located on the higher ground outside of the village, with none known within Branxton itself. These settlements would have been defined by a simple bank and ditch, with the remains of houses and yards inside. These survive as cropmarks and have been discovered through aerial photography.

2.3 Like many parts of Northumberland there are no monuments or finds from the early medieval period. It is only after the Norman Conquest that once again we can recognise remains of the past in the parish. Branxton is the only recorded medieval settlement in the parish and, despite rebuilding in the 19th century, the church still retains its medieval chancel arch.

2.4 Towards the end of the medieval period, in the 16th century, Branxton was the scene of the last and most bloody battle to be fought in Northumberland. Not only was the Scottish king, James IV, slain but so were most of the Scottish nobility. It was one of the key turning points towards the ending of Scotland as a separate nation state. A number of burial pits and cannonballs have been found at Branxton which are thought to be connected with the battle.

2.5 Although more peaceful times arrived in the post-medieval period settlement still focused around the village. The common lands and common waste were enclosed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A well at Branxton was used as a setting for Sir Walter Scott's poem Marmion. The battlefield site remains the most significant historical element of the parish and a memorial was built to the battle in 1910.



*Illus.* 06: *Extract from the 1st edition Ordnance Survey plan, 25 inch series 1862, showing the proposed development site (highlighted in red) in Branxton.* 



*Illus.* **07***: Extract from the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey plan, 25 inch series 1897, showing the proposed development site (highlighted in red) in Branxton.* 



*Illus.* **08**: *Extract from the 3rd edition Ordnance Survey plan, 25 inch series 1924, showing the proposed development site (highlighted in red) in Branxton.* 



*Illus.* **09**: *Extract from the 1968 edition Ordnance Survey plan, 25 inch series, showing the proposed development site (highlighted in red) in Branxton.* 

# 3. MONITORING PROGRAMME

3.1 The aims of the archaeological works were to identify and record any archaeological remains as they appeared during the scheme of works without causing significant delays to the groundworks. This included the recording of negative results. The monitoring was designed to apply to the following works:

- Groundworks associated with site clearance.
- Landscaping activities.
- Excavations for foundations.
- Excavations for service trenches.

3.2 In practice, this meant monitoring the removal of topsoil from the entire footprint of the building, as well as minor landscaping and excavations of service runs. Excavation was carried out by a 360° excavator with toothless ditching buckets. All excavation was supervised by staff from The Archaeological Practice Ltd.

# 4. RESULTS

## 4.1 Excavations over building footprint

4.1.1 Excavations within the footprint of the building commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022, and continued on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022 (*see Illus. 05*). Evidently limited landscaping of topsoil had taken place on the site prior to the scheme of works, as a spoil heap was present in the middle of the site area.

4.1.2 Topsoil (100) was removed in shallow spits until compact mid orange-brown clay (102) with frequent pebbles and occasional small boulders was encountered. This boulder clay was encountered at around 0.40m below ground level throughout. No features or layers other than loose dark greybrown topsoil were observed above this horizon, and no finds were recovered from the topsoil.

4.1.3 Within the natural subsoil surface, no features were observed, barring the traces of Geotech test pits that had been excavated in the year prior with a c. 0.60 m wide digger bucket.

4.1.4 Excavations in the north corner of the building's footprint revealed a sterile, mid yellow-greybrown clayey silt (101) presumed to represent a layer of buried soil. No finds or features were observed in this layer, and excavation for the building footprint reached depth within its horizons.

### 4.2 Excavation of service trenches

4.2.1 Excavation of the service trench runs were carried out on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022, to the east of the building's footprint. In this area of the site, the topsoil (100) appeared to be deeper. These excavations bottomed out in dark grey-brown topsoil for the entirety of their length, never reaching natural horizons, despite being as deep as 0.60m below ground level.

### 4.3 Interpretation

No archaeological finds or features were encountered during the works. Very little modern debris was present in the topsoil. Natural horizons were encountered in all areas of excavation, except those where buried soil was encountered at depth.

# 5. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 During the course of the watching brief on land west of Braeside, Branxton, no finds or features were encountered. Natural subsoil or sterile buried soil were encountered in all areas of the footprint of the building below topsoil, while in the service trench runs, only topsoil was encountered.

5.2 The large spoilheap present on commencement of the site very likely derived from relatively recent landscaping of the site area. Whether the higher land height of the field to the south is indicative of a build-up of ploughsoil at the field margins or of the same or further landscaping is unclear.

5.3 There is still the potential for significant archaeological remains within the village of Branxton relating to medieval and post-medieval settlement and the 1513 Battle of Flodden. Further projects in the village of Branxton should be considered on their own merits.



**Photo 01.** A strip of clay natural exposed within the building footprint. S view.



**Photo 02.** The faint outline of a cut created by the recent Geotech pits.



**Photo 03.** A strip of natural exposed within the building footprint, W of Photo 01. S view.



Photo 04. The complete building footprint stripped to natural or to height. E view.



Photo 05. The NE-SW pipe trench. NE view.



Photo 06. The south end of the N-S pipe trench. N view.



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**Photo 09.** E facing section within the N-S pipe trench.

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LAND WEST OF BRAESIDE, BRANXTON, NORTHUMBERLAND. Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief Prepared by The Archaeological Practice Ltd., November 2022

# LAND WEST OF BRAESIDE BRANXTON NORTHUMBERLAND

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared by

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.

November 2022

NCC Planning Ref: 22/00791/FUL

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*Illus. 02: District view, showing the location of Branxton (circled in red), in northern Northumberland.* 

*Illus. 03: Township view, showing the proposed location of development at the east end of Branxton (circled in red).* 

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*Illus. 05: Architect provided plan of proposed development of a single dwelling adjacent to Braeside in Branxton village.* 

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Illus. 09: Extract from the 1968 edition Ordnance Survey plan, 25 inch series, showing the proposed development site (highlighted in red) in Branxton.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 The following represents a project design for a programme of archaeological monitoring to mitigate the impact of excavations proposed during groundworks required for the construction of a detached dwelling on land west of Braeside, Branxton, Northumberland (centred upon NGR: NT 89638 37695).

1.1.2 The site is located within the Village of Branxton set back from the main road located on land that has been partially developed under an extant consent. The dwelling will measure 7m in height and have a footprint of approximately  $182m^2$ . The design of the dwelling is in the style of a typical residential dwelling with a front porch, dormer windows, solar panels and constructed from natural stone and slate. Given the proposed scale, height, design and location of the development it is considered that the proposal would assimilate into its surroundings and is in keeping with the wider aesthetic of Branxton. Having assessed the proposal against local and national planning policy and the 10 characteristics outlined in the National Design Guide it is considered that proposal would be in keeping with the character and appearance of its surroundings. It is therefore considered that the proposal would accord with the NLP, National Design Guide and Paragraphs 126 and 127 of the NPPF.

1.1.3 The village of Branxton dates from at least the medieval period, first being recorded in 1195. It was the centre of a township and a small parish, encompassing Branxton alone. It is best known, however, for its association with the Battle of Flodden (1513). The proposed development site falls within an area of the Registered Battlefield (Battle of Flodden 1513).

The Battle was fought over surrounding arable fields and is likely to have spilled into the village itself. A Scottish force of some 40,000 men under James VI was ultimately defeated by an English army of c.26,000 commanded by the Earl of Surrey. Casualties were very with up to 10,000 men thought to have died. The dead included nine earls, thirteen barons, five heirs to titles, three bishops, two abbots and James VI himself. It is not known where all the dead of the battle were buried. In the early 20th century a number of burial pits associated with the battle were uncovered within the churchyard and fields to the southwest. Given the heavy losses during the battle, there are likely to be further burial pits around Branxton, and potentially close to the church.

The linear form of the village at Branxton is reflects its medieval origins. As such, there is potential for evidence of medieval settlement and activity to occur within the area of the modern village. There is also potential for evidence of the battle to be preserved within and around the designated area of the registered battlefield, including within the village itself.

1.1.4 The application proposes the construction of a new dwelling house. The scale of development and construction footprint is greater than that proposed as part of the recent application on the site (21/01029/FUL). Whilst no archaeological remains are currently recorded within the application site, the location of the site within the designated extent of the Registered Battlefield and on the fringes of a linear settlement occupied since at least the medieval period suggest there is at least a moderate potential for significant unrecorded archaeological remains to be present within the proposed development site. Such remains, if present, would be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development. The potential loss of archaeological remains could be mitigated by a programme of archaeological monitoring, secured by condition.



*Illus.* **01**: *Regional view, showing the location of Branxton (circled in red), near the Anglo-Scottish border in northern Northumberland.* 



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The development has potential to affect the setting of the Registered Battlefield and contribution that setting makes to the significance of the Registered Battlefield as a designated heritage asset. In this case, noting that the dwelling is located within the envelope of the existing village, it is not considered that construction of the proposed dwelling would materially affect the setting of the battlefield.

1.1.5 Taking account of the significance of the archaeological resource and the impact of the proposed development on that significance, Northumberland Conservation have recommend in their consultation letter and Site Specific Document, that a programme of archaeological mitigation is undertaken in association with the proposed development.

In this particular instance, a programme of archaeological monitoring during initial groundworks is considered to be an appropriate response. This work can be secured by condition consistent with the requirements and objectives paragraphs 56 and 205 of the NPPF.

1.1.6 The watching brief will potentially address several of the research priorities identified by the *North-East Regional Research Framework* (NERRF) (Petts with Gerrard 2006), particularly within the Medieval, Post-Medieval and 20th-Century period-based agendas and the Settlement and Urbanism thematic agendas, most notably:

• **MDi**: Settlement (the origins, development and morphology of medieval villages, cf. also **EMii** – origins)

### 1.2 HER Catalogue

1.2.1 No previous archaeological assessment, investigation nor recorded sites/objects of archaeological significance have been documented within the proposed development site. Given its location however in Branxton village, which has medieval origins and associated especially with the Battle of Flodden 1513, Northumberland Conversation acting on behalf of NCC, have advised to commission a HER search of the Branxton area (see 1.2.4 below) to establish what heritage assets exist more broadly and to extrapolate pertinent information to produce a summary of the area's historical background (see 1.3 below).

1.2.2 The course of investigation outlined above identified **30** assets of known cultural heritage significance in the vicinity of the site identified from HER records and Historic England Listings. The site numbers catalogued below are keyed to Illus. 10.

1.2.3 A Cultural Heritage Asset is defined as "A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority." Cultural heritage assets listed in the following Gazetteer include man-made features included in the Northumberland County Heritage Environment Record (HER) and Historic England lists of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings. Some are upstanding, visible structures such as houses, churches, bridges and quay walls, while others are represented by the sites of such structures which appear on historic maps and may survive in physical form as foundations, while others are known only from documentary records of buildings, isolated finds or events.



*Illus.* **10***:* HER map showing the distribution of sites of known cultural heritage significance within the vicinity of the study area (highlighted in blue) - keyed to Site Catalogue, Section 4.1.

#### 1.2.4 Catalogue Listings

Cat. No. 01: Battle of Flodden Field or Branxton Moor; HER No. 726; NGR NT8958537116. Summary description: The site of the Battle of Flodden fought on 9th September 1513 over arable fields close to the village of Branxton. In response to Henry VIII's invasion of France in 1513, the French King Louis XII requested that his ally, King James IV of Scotland, create a diversion by invading England. With Henry away in France, the Earl of Surrey took command of an army of 26,000 men and faced the 35,000-40,000 strong army of James IV close to the border near the village of Branxton. In the battle that followed, Surrey defeated the Scots. James IV and a large proportion of the Scottish nobility were killed. The Scots deployed themselves on top of Flodden Hill and waited for the Earl of Surrey to attack. Surrey marched his men around to the north side of the feature forcing the Scottish King James IV to abandon his ground and march across the top of the Flodden plateau to Branxton Hill on the northern side. The Scots descended the hill in disciplined silence with the determination of the advance so shocking Edmund Howard's brigade that they promptly fled. The offensive power of the Scottish infantry lay in fifteen-foot pikes. The Scots, however, were inexperienced in the use of such weapons and failed to deliver any killing impact. The English rallied and as battle raged on in the valley below the plateau, the only Scottish commanders remaining on top of the Flodden plateau were the Earls of Lennox and Argyll, with their contingent of Highlanders and Islanders. They were subjected to an attack by a brigade led by Sir Edward Stanley who easily defeated the Scots and suddenly found himself in occupation of the top of Branxton Hill behind the main Scottish lines. James was now surrounded, with Lord Dacre on the left flank, Lord Thomas Howard on the right and the Earl of Surrey before him. At the end of the day, 9,000 Scots and 4,000 Englishmen lay dead on Flodden Field. King James himself was slain resulting in decades of political instability after his death.

#### Cat. No. 02: Branxton tower; HER No. 727; NGR NT8937.

*Summary description:* There is documentary evidence for a small pele tower, situated within the shrunken medieval village of Branxton. The tower is said to have been damaged by the Scots in 1496 and repaired by 1541. It was razed before 1596. However, no evidence remains, either on or below the ground, for this building.

**Cat. No. 03:** *Cropmark of unclassified enclosure*; HER No. 738; NGR NT 8950 3844. *Summary description:* A probable prehistoric curvilinear ditched enclosure is visible as a cropmark on air photographs. The feature is incomplete but measures 52m long.

**Cat. No. 04:** *Possible mass grave, Battle of Flodden*; HER No. 752; NGR NT89183720. *Summary description:* Two pits containing human bones, thought to be burial pits associated with the Battle of Flodden, 1513.

**Cat. No. 05:** *Possible mass grave, Battle of Flodden*; HER No. 753; NGR NT89223748. *Summary description:* Some years after c.1818 a burial pit was found in the churchyard, where also a number of medieval silver coins have come to light. The site is considered to be a mass grave associated with the Battle of Flodden.

#### Cat. No. 06: Branxton, deserted medieval village; HER No. 754; NGR NT8937.

Summary description: Branxton was a member of the barony of Muschamp. 1296: nine taxpayers. 1377 Poll Tax: 30 adults. 1541: three landlords possessed 16 husbandlands. 1580: 12 tenants. 1712: common lands enclosed. 1780: common waste enclosed. Tower site unknown. Modern village occupies site of medieval village.

#### Cat. No. 07: Church of St Paul, Branxton; HER No. 760; NGR NT89213749.

*Summary description:* Church of St Paul, **grade II listed** building. Late 12th- or early 13th-century, though largely rebuilt in 1849. Romanesque style. Nave is all of 1849 build. Chancel arch is 12th-century, rebuilt in 13th century. Altar rails 17th-century.

Cat. No. 08: Branxton House; HER No. 764; NGR NT8953237516.

*Summary description:* Branxton House. **Grade II listed** building. Early 19th century house with former Post Office attached to right, dated 1854.

#### Cat. No. 09: Battle of Flodden Memorial; HER No. 765; NGR NT88983726.

*Summary description:* **Grade II listed**. A Battlefield monument located on Pipers Hill within the boundary of Flodden battlefield. The memorial is in the form of a tall tapering cross and was erected in 1910 by the Berwickshire Naturalists club.

#### Cat. No. 10: Marmion's Well; HER No. 766; NGR NT89173753.

Summary description: **Grade II listed**. A well, attested from at least the 19th century. In 1912 plans were made to build a fountain here, to commemorate Lady Waterford's Sybil's Well on Flodden Hill. The present well dates from around 1935. Inscribed with a quotation from Scott's 'Marmion'; Scott used the original well here as a setting for 'Marmion'.

#### Cat. No. 11: Memorial drinking fountain; HER No. 767; NGR NT89433759.

*Summary description:* Memorial drinking fountain, Branxton. **Grade II listed**. 1910 by George Reavel of Alnwick. Inscribed to the memory of William Askew Robertson of Pallinsburn.

#### Cat. No. 12: The Vicarage; HER No. 768; NGR NT89543740.

*Summary description:* The Vicarage, Branxton. **Grade II listed** building. Early 19th century former vicarage, now house.

**Cat. No. 13:** *Milepost c.1/4 mile south of Pallinsburn*; HER No. 777; NGR NT89663856. *Summary description:* Milepost c.1/4 miles south of Pallinsburn. **Grade II listed**. Early 19th century.

Cat. No. 14: West Lodge; HER No. 783; NGR NT89413852. Summary description: West Lodge, Pallinsburn. Grade II listed building. c.1840.

**Cat. No. 15:** *Wall and gatepiers at West Lodge, Pallinsburn*; HER No. 784; NGR NT89423851. *Summary description:* Wall and gatepiers at West Lodge, Pallinsburn. **Grade II listed**. c.1840.

#### Cat. No. 16: Water Mill, Branxton Buildings; HER No. 797; NGR NT887379.

*Summary description:* Water Mill, Branxton Buildings, identified by the North East Mills Group. The present condition of the mill is unknown.

#### Cat. No. 17: Branx Brig; HER No. 1836; NGR NT90343835.

*Summary description:* Branx Brig, was one of only two crossing places over the vast boggy valley of Pallin's Burn, near Branxton, and was used by part of the English forces (Admiral Thomas Howard's division) enroute to the nearby battle of Flodden, 1513. No visible remains survive.

#### Cat. No. 18: Cropmarks of linear ditches; HER No. 1844; NGR NT902370.

Summary description: Three linear ditches forming incomplete rectilinear enclosures which probably represent a field system associated with the nearby settlement enclosure (see Cat No. 19, HER 1849).

**Cat. No. 19:** *Cropmarks of an enclosure and ditches*; HER No. 1849; NGR NT904372. *Summary description:* Cropmarks of a rectangular enclosure measuring c.60m x c.55m. Almost certainly related to linear ditches which appear to define parts of a field system to the south and west.

**Cat. No. 20:** *Mardon Farmhouse*; HER No. 1933; NGR NT90513760. *Summary description:* Mardon Farmhouse, Mardon. **Grade II listed** building. c.1840.

#### Cat. No. 21: Mardon Water Mill; HER No. 1937; NGR NT903375.

*Summary description:* Water Mill at Mardon, identified by the North East Mills Group. The present condition of this feature is unknown.

Cat. No. 22: Kaimknowe fort; HER No. 14104; NGR NT901385.

*Summary description:* Cropmarks of a multivallate hillfort are visible on aerial photographs taken in 2003. At least two ditches can be seen.

# **Cat. No. 23:** *Mill pond*; HER No. 19517; NGR NT8885137304. *Summary description:* Mill pond, visible on Ordnance Survey, 1st edition 1866, with no marked associated building.

#### Cat. No. 24: Mardon Saw pit; HER No. 19519; NGR NT90397637668.

Summary description: Saw pit and saw mill at Mardon, visible on Ordnance Survey, 1st edition 1866.

#### Cat. No. 25: Possible medieval pit; HER No. 20716; NGR NT8933437561.

*Summary description:* A possible medieval pit was discovered during a watching brief on land adjacent to the Village Hall at Branxton. The shallow pit was used for the disposal of domestic rubbish including animal bone and charred seeds.

# **Cat. No. 26:** *Iron Age/Roman enclosed settlement, round house, stock enclosures and ditch*; HER No. 21142; NGR NT889382.

*Summary description:* An Iron Age/ Roman enclosed settlement, round house, stock enclosures and ditch are visible as cropmarks on air photographs centred at NT 8894 3826.

#### Cat. No. 27: Crookham Westfield rectilinear enclosures; HER No. 21150; NGR NT89243832.

*Summary description:* Prehistoric/ Roman ditches of uncertain date are visible as cropmarks on air photographs, they may form part of a rectilinear enclosure.

# **Cat. No. 28:** *An Iron Age/ Roman rectilinear ditched enclosure and prehistoric/Roman ditches*; HER No. 21153; NGR NT89743838.

*Summary description:* An Iron Age/ Roman rectilinear ditched enclosure and prehistoric/ Roman ditches are visible as cropmarks on air photographs.

#### Cat. No. 29: Possible mass grave, Battle of Flodden; HER No. 24248; NGR NT8900236945.

*Summary description:* Approximate location of burials found during pipe laying, according to farmer. (1) As part of the Flodden 500 Project, a series of eight trenches and two test pits were excavated close to the reported site of the mass burial pit found during the excavated of a water pipe (Flodden Field 12). No evidence of a mass burial pit or abandoned water pipe were found and the geophysical anomalies were shown to be geological in origin.

#### Cat. No. 30: Mardon Farm; HER No. 24863; NGR NT90443759.

*Summary description:* A 19th century farmstead, recorded in RCHME Farmsteads survey (building index number 91695).

### 1.3 Cultural Heritage Background

### 1.3.1 Perhistoric/Romano-British sites in the HER

Consultation of historic maps, secondary written sources and the County Heritage Environment Record (HER) indicates that the site lies within an area of intensive late prehistoric activity, as indicated by five nearby sites listed in the Catalogue (03, 22, 26, 27, 28) amongst others in the wider vicinity. These enclosed settlement sites date to the late Iron Age or the Romano-British period, but seem to be located on the higher ground outside of the village, with no known evidence of prehistoric or Roman activity within Branxton itself.

### 1.3.2 Medieval sites in the HER

Medieval or potential medieval sites in the vicinity include Branxton Tower (02), Branxton Medieval Village (06), the Church of St. Paul (07), a midden pit (25), and several sites

potentially associated with the Battle of Flodden 1513 – including: Flodden Field (01), possible mass graves (04)(05)(29), and Branx Brig – a crossing place used by English forces enroute to the battle (17).

### 1.3.3 Post-Medieval sites in the HER

The remaining 14 sites, all date to the post-medieval or early modern period and largely comprise of farm/mill buildings, domestic structures and monuments, several of which are Grade II Listed Buildings.

### 1.3.4 Historic Summary (extracted from HER 12998)

The parish of Branxton lies in north Northumberland, close to the Scottish border, within the region known as Glendale. The name Branxton derives from a personal name `Brannoc', signifying Brannoc's *tun* or settlement. It seems to have had a very quiet history until the 16th century, lying as it does off the beaten track. The only exceptions were periodical raids by the Scots with the earliest recorded incident in 1340. Branxton is famous in British history as the scene of a battle in 1513 which is now commonly called the Battle of Flodden.

Little is known of the parish in prehistoric times until the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, when we get evidence of the first settlements. They are sub-rectangular or subcircular enclosures and would have been defined by a simple bank and ditch, with the remains of houses and yards inside. These survive as cropmarks and have been discovered through aerial photography.

Like many parts of Northumberland there are no monuments or finds from the early medieval period. It is only after the Norman Conquest that once again we can recognise remains of the past in the parish. Branxton is the only recorded medieval settlement in the parish and, despite rebuilding in the 19th century, the church still retains its medieval chancel arch.

Towards the end of the medieval period, in the 16th century, Branxton was the scene of the last and most bloody battle to be fought in Northumberland. Not only was the Scottish king, James IV, slain but so were most of the Scottish nobility. It was one of the key turning points towards the ending of Scotland as a separate nation state. A number of burial pits and cannonballs have been found at Branxton which are thought to be connected with the battle.

Although more peaceful times arrived in the post-medieval period settlement still focused around the village. The common lands and common waste were enclosed in the 18th century. A well at Branxton was used as a setting for Sir Walter Scott's poem Marmion. The battlefield site remains the most significant historical element of the parish and a memorial was built to the battle in 1910.

### 1.4 Requirements for monitoring

1.3.1 A requirement, or Condition for archaeological watching brief has been imposed by Northumberland County Council Planning Department, on the advice of Northumberland Conservation, with regards to all groundworks carried out on the site which could impact on archaeological remains. In practice, the condition will apply to the following groundworks:

- Groundworks associated with site clearance
- Landscaping activities

- Excavations for the foundations
- Excavations for service trenches

1.3.2 The watching brief will cover parts of the site where groundworks could impact on surviving archaeological remains.

1.3.3 Accordingly, the archaeological monitoring by watching brief will be undertaken during groundworks associated with further site investigation and construction work.

1.3.4 The archaeological monitoring requirement applies to the entire application site and will be carried out in accordance with the current North East Regional Research Framework (NERRF) and Northumberland County Council (NCC) Conservation Team Standards for Archaeological Mitigation Work (2018).

1.3.5 The archaeological watching brief may not be required in areas where groundworks are shallow and do not extend to depths at which they are likely to impact upon archaeological remains. Northumberland Conservation will be contacted in order to establish whether the watching brief need continue in these circumstances.

### 2. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

**2.1** The Field Investigation will be carried out by means of Archaeological Watching Brief within the area highlighted in *Illus. 05 and Appendix 1*.

**2.2** The purpose of the watching brief is to record any archaeological features as they appear, but not to cause significant delays to the groundworks operation. Thus, sufficient time will be allowed by the developer for archaeological recording where deemed necessary by the contracting archaeologist, but the level of recording will not normally be at the same level of detail expected during archaeological evaluation or mitigation excavation. Where the importance of archaeological remains is considered such that a higher level of recording is necessary, the county archaeologist will be consulted with regard to including this recording within the 30-day contingency period allowed for additional excavation beyond the normal scope of works.

**2.3** All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Chartered Institute for Archaeology (CIfA) and will follow the CIfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations.

**2.4** All staff must be suitably qualified and experienced in archaeological excavation and recording and a curriculum vitae will be supplied if requested to the Northumberland Conservation for approval prior to work commencing. Furthermore, all staff will familiarise themselves with the archaeological background of the site and with the work required, and must understand the projects aims and methodologies.

### 3 EXECUTION OF THE SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

3.1 The monitoring of groundworks will be carried wherever it is deemed that archaeological remains are likely to survive. Excavation, recording and sampling procedures will be undertaken using the strategies indicated below.

3.2 Should any remains be revealed which, in the opinion of the assistant county archaeologist merit additional time to excavate and record, a contingency of up to <u>30 days</u> must be allowed (as required by NCC).

3.3 Unstratified modern overburden will be removed by machine. Any excavation of archaeological features will be carried out by trained, archaeologically competent staff.

3.4 Although the site is private property without public access, signs will be displayed to warn of deep excavations on the site.

3.5 All excavation of archaeological horizons and trench faces will be carried out by hand and every effort will be made to leave all potentially nationally important remains *in situ*.

3.6 Specifically, preservation *in situ* of any burials uncovered will be preferred, but some excavation - with the relevant permissions in place - may be required.

3.7 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits identified will be excavated by hand through a sampling procedure to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described. Pits and postholes will normally be sampled by half-sectioning although some features may require complete excavation. Linear features will be sectioned as appropriate. No archaeological deposits will be entirely removed unless this is unavoidable.

3.8 Each context identified as important will be considered for recording by drawing and photography.

3.9 An appropriate control network for the survey of any archaeological remains revealed will be established.

3.10 The survey control network will be related to the OS grid.

3.11 The survey control network and the position of recorded structures, features and finds will be located on a map of an appropriate scale (1:2500 or 1:500)

3.12 At least one absolute height value related to aOD will be recorded for each archaeological context and for the top and bottom of trenches.

3.13 Archaeological stratigraphy revealed by excavation will be recorded by the following means:

3.13.1 Written descriptions. Each archaeological context will be recorded on a pro-forma sheet. Minimum recorded details will consist of the following: a unique identifier; an objective description which includes measurements of extent and details of colour and composition; an interpretative estimate of function, clearly identified as such; at least one absolute height value; the identifiers of related contexts and a description of the relationship with such contexts (for preference, executed as a mini Harris matrix); references to other recording media in which representations of the context are held (plans, sections, photographs).

- 3.13.2 **Measured illustrations.** Detailed plans and sectional profiles of archaeological features will be at appropriate scales (1:50, 1:20 or 1:10). Archaeological contexts will be referenced by their unique identifiers. All illustrations will be properly identified, scaled and referenced to the site survey control and, in turn, accurately tied into the National Grid and located on a 1:2500 or 1:1250 map of the area
- 3.13.3 **Photographs.** A digital photographic record of all contexts will be taken with each photograph in sharp focus, well lit and including a clearly visible 1 m or 2 m scale. A register of all photographs will be kept and the location of all photographs will be recorded on a base plan. A system will be used for identifying the archaeological features photographed. The record will include, in addition to detailed views of specific features, the context of the feature and the relationship of the feature and its context to the wider setting and, where appropriate, to other sites or viewpoints. A full archive of photographs will be maintained on the APLtd hard drive and provided to ADS, York.

3.14 All processing, storage and conservation of finds will be carried out in compliance with the relevant CIfA and UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation) guidelines.

3.15 Portable remains will be removed by hand; all artifacts encountered will be recovered.

3.16 The potential requirement for specialist analyses (see below) is an unavoidable risk in all such excavations. The scientific investigation of any features/deposits which are considered significant will be undertaken as a non-negotiable part of this programme. Any such analyses would be carried out by specialists and priced to the client on a costs only basis within the ceiling of costs established by the project brief.

### 4 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLING AND SCIENTIFIC DATING

4.1 The investigations will be undertaken in a manner consistent with Management of Research Project in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (Historic England [HE] 2015): *https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/* and with Environmental Archaeology Guidelines (English Heritage 2011): https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/environmental-archaeology-2nd/.

4.2 Don O'Meara, Historic England Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science (0191 3341137 or 07713 400387), will be consulted to confirm the following, proposed environmental sampling strategy before the excavation begins.

4.3 Deposits/fills with potential for environmental evidence will be assessed by taking up to two bulk samples of 30 litres from any context selected for analysis by the excavator from suitable (i.e., uncontaminated) deposits. Deposits/fills totalling less than 30 litres in volume will be sampled in their entirety. Should waterlogged deposits be present, smaller samples (10 litres) will be considered sufficient. Should a diverse range of deposits be present then a series of samples reflecting the range of deposits represented will be taken.

4.4 Bulk samples will be processed to extract plant remains, and the coarse residues will be sorted for the remains of artefacts, industrial residues (slag, and micro-

hammerscale), bones, mineralised remains. These bulk samples may be subsampled for insect and pollen remains if organic, waterlogged deposits are encountered

4.5 Animal bones will be collected, as assessed in line with Historic England guidelines (HE 2019: *https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/animal-bones-and-archaeology/).* Remains will be assessed for their preservation, diversity of remains, and their ability to answer site specific and regional research questions.

4.6 Waterlogged organic materials should be dealt with following the recommendations provided in Historic England guidance (HE 2018): *Waterlogged Organic Artefacts: Guidelines on their Recovery, Analysis and Conservation* (https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/waterlogged-organic-artefacts/heag260-waterlogged-organic-artefacts/).

4.7 Deposits will be assessed for their potential for radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic, Optically Stimulated Luminescence and dendrochronological dating using available HE and other guidelines (e.g., guidance on archaeomagnetic dating from the Magnetic Moments in the Past project: https://www.bradford.ac.uk/archaeomagnetism/). Dendrochronological sampling will follow *Guidelines on the recording, sampling, conservation and curation of waterlogged wood* (HE 2010: https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/ waterlogged-wood/waterlogged-wood/), currently being updated. Samples for radiocarbon dating will be extracted from the archaeobotanical material but no scientific dating will take place if other relative techniques can be employed - i.e., dating via the association with artefacts.

4.8 Information on the nature and history of the site, aims and objectives of the project, summary of archaeological results, context types and stratigraphic relationships, phase and dating information, sampling and processing methods, sample locations, preservation conditions, residuality/contamination, etc. will be provided with each sample submitted for analysis.

4.9 Laboratory processing of samples shall only be undertaken if deposits are found to be reasonably well-dated, or linked to recognisable features and from contexts the derivation of which can be understood with a degree of confidence.

4.10 Human remains will be treated with care, dignity and respect, in full compliance with the relevant legislation (essentially the Burial Act 1857 and HE 2007: *Guidance for Best Practice for the treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England* - https://www.archaeologyuk.org/apabe/pdf/APABE\_ToHREfCBG\_FINAL\_WEB.pdf) and local environmental health concerns. If found, human remains will be left in-situ, covered and protected, and the police, coroner and County Archaeologist informed. If it is agreed that removal of the remains is essential, the Archaeological Practice Ltd, will apply for a licence from the Home Office. Analysis of the osteological material will take place according to published guidelines, including Annex S4 of HE (2007): Minimum standards for post-excavation procedures.

4.11 No scientific analysis of skeletal remains will be undertaken without consultation with the client, the county archaeologist and the Historic England Science Advisor.

4.12 If anything is found which could be Treasure, under the Treasure Act 1996, it is a legal requirement to report it to the local coroner within 14 days of discovery. The

Archaeological Practice Ltd. will comply with the procedures set out in The Treasure Act 1996. Any treasure will be reported to the coroner and to The Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officer, (0191 2225076) for guidance on the Treasure Act procedures. Treasure is defined as the following:

- Any metallic object, other than a coin, provided that at least 10% by weight of metal is precious metal and that is at least 300 years old when found
- Any group of two or more metallic objects of any composition of prehistoric date that come from the same find
- All coins from the same find provided that they are at least 300 years old when found, but if the coins contain less than 10% gold or silver there must be at least ten
- Any object, whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, another object that is Treasure
- Any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. Only objects that are less than 300 years old, that are made substantially of gold or silver, that have been deliberately hidden with the intention of recovery and whose owners or heirs are unknown will come into this category

## 5 ANALYSIS AND REPORTING OF RECOVERED DATA

5.1 Following the completion of the Field Investigation and before any of the postexcavation work is commenced, an archive (the Site Archive) containing all the data gathered during fieldwork will be prepared. This material will be quantified, ordered, indexed and rendered internally consistent. It will be prepared according to the guidelines given in English Heritage's MAP 2 document, Appendix 3 (English Heritage 1991).

5.2 An interim report of no less than 200 words, containing preliminary recommendations for any further work required, will be produced within two weeks of completion of the field investigation for the commissioning client.

5.3 Following completion of the Field Investigation, an interim report will be produced within 30 days and a full report will be prepared within 3 months of the completion of fieldwork, collating and synthesizing the structural, artefactual and environmental data relating to each agreed constituent part of the evaluation works.

### 6 PRODUCTION OF FINAL REPORT

6.1 Digital copies of the report will be provided within one month of the completion of fieldwork in pdf format to the Client and Northumberland County HER. The report will be formatted with each page and heading numbered. The report will include as a minimum the following:

A summary statement of methodologies used.

A location plan of the site and any significant discoveries made.

Plans and sections of any archaeological discoveries of note.

A summary statement of results.

Conclusions

A table summarizing the deposits, features, classes and numbers of artefacts encountered and spot dating of significant finds.

6.2 The report will finish with a section detailing recommendations for further archaeological work needed to mitigate the effects of the development upon any significant deposits revealed during the evaluation or if necessary, for further evaluation.

6.3 Following completion of the analysis and publication phase of the work, an archive (the Research Archive) containing all the data derived from the work done during the analysis phase will be prepared. The archive will be prepared to the standard specified by English Heritage (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation guidelines.

6.4 Arrangements will be made to deposit the Site Archive (including Finds) and the Research Archive with the designated repository within 6 months of the end of the fieldwork. Additionally, a copy shall be offered to the National Monuments Record (NMR).

6.5 Summary reports of the project will be prepared, if necessary, for inclusion in the appropriate Notices, Annual Reviews, Reports, etc.

6.6 An entry for inclusion in the Northumberland County Heritage Environment Record will be prepared and submitted.

### 7. OASIS

7.1 The Archaeological Contractor will complete the online form for the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations Project (OASIS), following consultation with the relevant planning authority The Contractor agrees to the procedure whereby the information on the form will be placed in the public domain on the OASIS website, following submission to or incorporation of the final report into the HER.

### 8. TIMESCALE

8.1 Following the agreement of the current WSI document with the planning archaeologist, it is proposed to carry out the above tasks according to the developer's schedule in November 2022.

8.2 Environmental samples, ecofacts and artefacts will be submitted for analysis immediately following the fieldwork period and a reporting period of 1 month requested.

8.3 Structural reports on the trenches will be completed to allow submission of an interim report within 30 days of completion of the second phase of fieldwork.

8.4 The full archive report will be produced using the structural report and any commissioned specialist reports within 6 months of the completion of fieldwork.

### 9. PERSONNEL

*The Archaeological Practice Ltd.* has been operating in its present form since 2002, previous to which it was a part of the former Department of Archaeology at the university of

Newcastle. During this time is has considerable experience and expertise in producing reports based on a combination of fieldwork and documentary analysis.

The Archaeological Practice Ltd comprises Richard Carlton and Dr Alan Rushworth, both of whom are highly experience in carrying out fieldwork and documentary studies leading to the production of detailed, analytical reports; also Marc Johnstone and Adam Leigh who are principally engaged in documentary research and illustration, alongside fieldwork.

The fieldwork will be carried out by Richard Carlton or Adam Leigh.

Further details of The Archaeological Practice and its staff can be found on its web-site at: <u>http://www.archaeologicalpractice.co.uk</u>

APPENDIX 1: Proposed layout and elevation plan by Yeoman Architects

