

PRIORY CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST MICHAEL, CARTMEL, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Evaluation Project Design



Client: PCC Cartmel Priory

NGR: 337959 478815

February 2020

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Prior to the submission of proposals for an extension to the north side of the nave of the Priory Church of St Mary and St Michael, Cartmel, Cumbria in order provide improved welfare facilities (NGR 337959 478815) it was agreed in discussion with the PCC that the affected area be subject to an archaeological evaluation. This was to comprise the excavation of an area totalling up to 30 square meters, primarily investigating the area of the foundations for the proposed extension and establish the extent of any deposits, structures or finds of archaeological interest within that area. Greenlane Archaeology was appointed by the PCC Cartmel Priory (hereafter 'the client') to carry out the archaeological evaluation and this project design was produced in response.

1.1.2 The history of the priory at Cartmel has been outlined in a number of sources from the 19th century, when it was first subject to detailed investigation by architectural historians and antiquarians, culminating in the best modern study of the site by Dickinson (1991; see also Dickinson 1980; an account of the history of previous investigations into the priory and of the priory itself has recently been compiled by Marion Barter Associates (2020)). One of the most significant issues regarding the development of the priory is the conjecture that the cloister was moved from the south side of the nave to the north, probably in the 15th century. This is primarily based on evidence within the standing priory church, with a plan showing the suggested layout of the site published by Dickinson (1980, 83; Figure 1). However, subsequent archaeological work has demonstrated that any cloister on the northern side of the church evidently did not extend as far west as Priory Gardens: archaeological investigations there in 1998 revealed that, while there were buildings present aligned with the priory in this area within the site of the conjectured cloister *'little evidence of activity was recovered; either the northern cloister was never in this area, lying slightly further to the east, or it has been removed completely by subsequent activity'* (Wild and Howard-Davis 2000, 178-179). There was also considerable evidence for industrial activity, which might be more likely to be found in the outer court of a priory. More recent archaeological work revealed further evidence for iron working and also dumped deposits of domestic waste, again not something that might be expected in the inner precinct of the priory (Greenlane Archaeology 2015). Building recording at Priory close, immediately to the west of the nave of the Priory Church, in what externally appears to be a Georgian building, revealed a number of evidently medieval structures based around a very tall wall that was considered likely to be the inner precinct wall of the priory (Greenlane Archaeology 2013b). This would indicate that, assuming the cloister ever was on the northern side of the church, it was essentially contained within a small area, probably corresponding to the current churchyard.

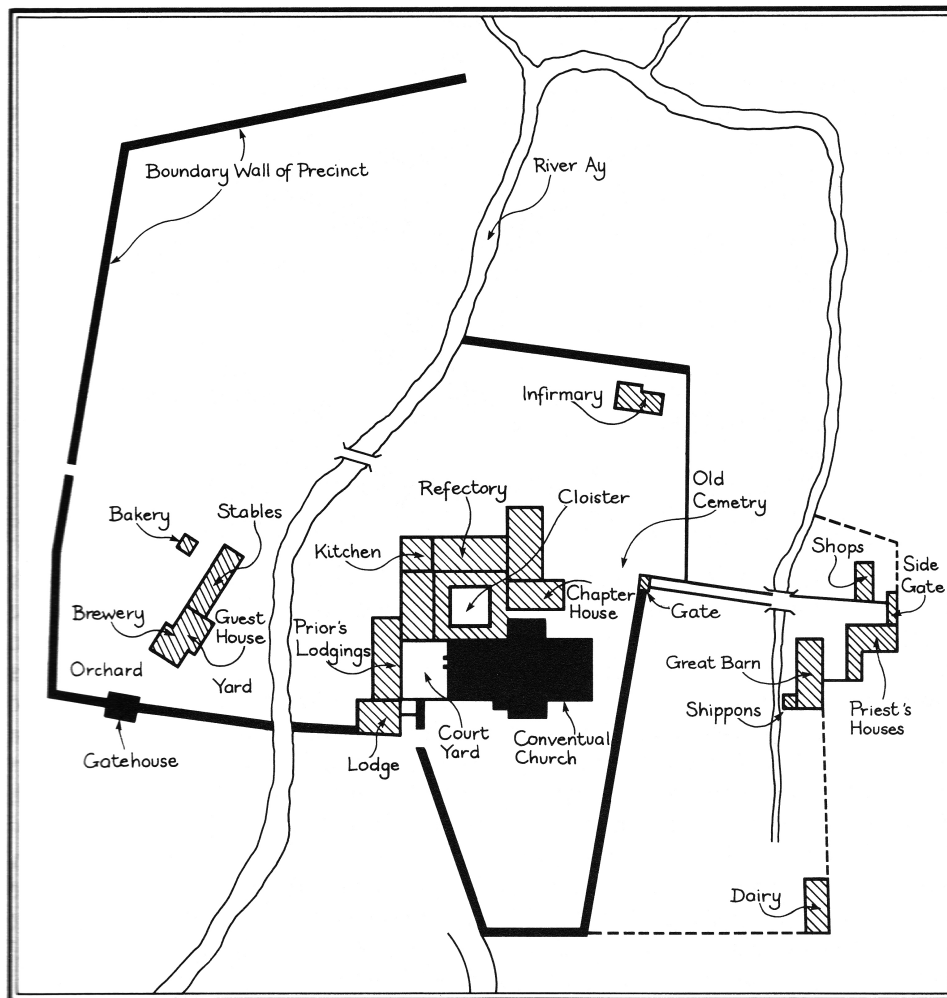


Figure 1: Conjectural diagram of the layout of the Priory of Cartmel in the 15th century (Dickinson 1980, 83; conjectural structures are shown hatched)

1.1.3 In terms of wider archaeological investigations into the site of the priory there have been only limited archaeological investigations within the Priory Church itself, comprising two phases of watching brief monitoring the excavation of utility trenches (LUAU 1992; Greenlane Archaeology 2018), which revealed evidence for the various phases of remodelling of the floor. Outside of the immediate environs of the churchyard there has been considerably more archaeological work, some of which has revealed evidence relating to the wider precinct of the medieval priory. The earliest of this comprised the monitoring of a c30m long pipe trench on the edge of 'Farmery Field' in 1983, which found various burials and other potentially structural features presumed to relate to the priory's infirmary (Wilson and Clare 1990). Subsequent to that, and as already outlined, an extensive programme of evaluation and later excavation and publication was carried out in advance of a proposed building project in land at Priory Gardens (LUAU 1998a; 1998b; Wild and Howard-Davis 1999; 2000). This discovered a range of structures thought to relate to activities carried out within the outer precinct of the priory and also revealed evidence for iron smelting. Some observations were also made shortly after at St Mary's Lodge on the edge of the churchyard in 2002, including human remains and post-medieval pottery (HER No. 2403). The medieval gatehouse, the most extant part of the priory's outer buildings, was subject to detailed recording and a Conservation Plan in 2003 (NAA 2004a; 2004b; 2004c; 2004d) and more recently part of the precinct wall was potentially recorded inside 5 Park View (Greenlane Archaeology 2013a) and medieval buildings evidently forming part of the priory precinct were recorded forming part of Priory Close (Greenlane Archaeology 2013b). More recently both the Farmery Field area and Priory Gardens have been subject to new investigations: at Farmery Field a range of evaluation trenches were excavated following on from a desk-based assessment, revealing several burials and structural remains, as well as post-medieval activity (Abacus Archaeology nd; 2012) and in Priory Gardens a watching brief followed a desk-based assessment and found further evidence for medieval iron working and the dumping of domestic rubbish including large quantities of animal bone, including fish, which undoubtedly derived from the priory (Greenlane Archaeology 2012; 2015).

1.1.4 At present a detailed understanding of the development of the inner court of the priory is limited as a result of the disjointed and infrequent archaeological work that has been carried out. However, it is apparent that there are a number of questions about the site's development that could potentially be answered by the evaluation, primarily whether the cloister was indeed moved to the north side of the church and at what date, and also how big it was. It should be noted, however, that the scope of the evaluation is relatively limited and its primary purpose is to identify what, if any, archaeological remains are present in the area of the proposed extension and what their significance is. In addition, the recent statement of significance produced by Marion Barter Associates (2020) has drawn together all of the available documentary sources relating to the history and development of the Priory Church, but also placed it in the context of the larger priory, especially with regard to the suggested move of the cloister from the south side of the nave to the north. It is hoped that the proposed evaluation will be able to feed into the results of this study and further enhance and be enhanced by the available historical information about the site.

1.2 Greenlane Archaeology

1.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology is a private limited company based in Ulverston, Cumbria, and was established in 2005 (Company No. 05580819). Its directors, Jo Dawson and Daniel Elsworth, have a combined total of over 30 years continuous professional experience working in commercial archaeology, principally in the north of England and Scotland. Greenlane Archaeology is committed to a high standard of work, and abides by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Code of Conduct. The evaluation will be carried out according to the Standards and Guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014).

1.3 Project Staffing

1.3.1 **Dan Elsworth (MA (Hons)), ACIfA** graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1998 with an honours degree in Archaeology, and began working for the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit, which became Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) in 2001. Daniel ultimately became a project officer, and for over six and a half years worked on excavations and surveys, building investigations, desk-based assessments, and conservation and management plans. These have principally taken place in the North West, and Daniel has a particular interest in the archaeology of the area. He has managed many recent projects in Cumbria and Lancashire including several archaeological evaluations.

1.3.2 **Tom Mace (BA (Hons), MA, MCIfA)** has extensive experience of working on a variety of archaeological projects, especially watching briefs, but also excavations, evaluations, and building recordings, as well as report writing and illustration production. He joined Greenlane Archaeology in 2008 having worked for several previous companies including Archaeological Solutions and Oxford Archaeology North. He currently works on a broad range of projects and is also responsible for the production of all illustrations for reports and publications as well as some post-excavation assessments. He is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

1.3.3 **Jo Dawson (MA (Hons), ACIfA)** graduated from University of Glasgow in 2000 with a joint honours degree in Archaeology and Mathematics, and since then has worked continuously in commercial archaeology. Her professional career started at Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD), following which she worked for Headland Archaeology, in Edinburgh, and then Oxford Archaeology North, in Lancaster. During this time, she has been involved in a range of different archaeological projects. She has extensive experience of both planning and pre-planning projects, and has undertaken assessments of all sizes. Since establishing Greenlane Archaeology in 2005 she has managed numerous projects in south Cumbria, including desk-based assessments and evaluations. She currently mainly carries out quality control of reports and post-excavation assessments. She is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

1.3.4 **Specialists:** Greenlane Archaeology have a range of outside specialists who are regularly engaged for finds and environmental work. Engagement is dependent upon availability, but specialists typically engaged are as follows:

Specialism	Specialist
Animal bone	Naomi Sewpaul (or Tom Mace in house for smaller assemblages)
Ceramic building material, medieval and Roman	Phil Mills
Conservation	York Archaeological Trust
Clay tobacco pipe	Peter Davey (or Tom Mace in house for smaller assemblages)
Flots	Headland Archaeology, Edinburgh
Human bone	Malin Holst, York Osteoarchaeology
Industrial residue	Gerry McDonnell
Medieval pottery	Tom Mace in house for projects in Cumbria and Lancashire or Chris Cumberpatch for assemblages from elsewhere in the North of England
Miscellaneous find types, for example Roman	Chris Howard-Davis

glass and medieval and earlier metalwork	
Prehistoric pottery	Blaise Vyner
Radiocarbon dates	Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre
Roman pottery	Ruth Leary
Samian	Gwladys Monteil
X-ray of metal finds	York Archaeological Trust

2. Objectives

2.1 Desk-Based Assessment

2.1.1 To examine relevant primary and secondary sources in order to better understand the site, and set it in its historic context. In particular details pertaining to previous archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity or of relevance to the Priory Church.

2.2 Archaeological Evaluation

2.2.1 To excavate evaluation trenches totalling 30 square meters across the site, primarily within the footprint of the proposed new extension, but also in the area that the memorials would be moved to and adjacent to the line of the path (as shown in the attached figure), in order to identify the presence of any archaeological deposits, features, and structures on the site and establish their form, function, and date where possible. These will, in particular, attempt to reveal whether there are any structural remains, which might relate to the position of a former cloister or other elements of the medieval priory, and also reveal the depth of any human burials in this area.

2.3 Report

2.3.1 To produce a report detailing the results of the evaluation, which will outline the form and date of any archaeological features encountered.

2.4 Archive

2.4.1 Produce a full archive of the results of the project.

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk-Based Assessment

3.1.1 A examination of easily available sources, particularly maps and reports on previous pieces of archaeological work, relating to the site will be carried out. The sources that will be used as part of the desk-based assessment will include:

- **Archives:** the majority of the primary and secondary sources relating to the site are deposited in the relevant Cumbria Archive Centres in Barrow (CAC(B)) and Kendal (CAC(K)). Of principal importance are early maps of the site, particularly Ordnance Survey maps but also other early maps, but other relevant primary sources will also be consulted. In addition, relevant secondary sources will also be consulted and all of this information will be utilised to better understand the historical and archaeological development of the site and set it in context. Much of this information will be extracted from the recently produced Statement of Significance (Marion Barter Associates 2020), to which Greenlane Archaeology contributed;
- **Historic Environment Record:** details of relevant previous archaeological work carried out in Cartmel, where it is not otherwise published, is held in the HER;
- **Online Resources:** where available, mapping such as Ordnance Survey maps and reports on previous pieces of archaeological work (held by the Archaeology Data Service as part of the OASIS scheme) will be consulted online;
- **Greenlane Archaeology:** a number of copies of maps and local histories are held by Greenlane Archaeology. These will be consulted in order to provide information about the site.

3.2 Archaeological Evaluation

3.2.1 It is anticipated that five evaluation trenches will be excavated, varying between 2.5m and 5m long and approximately 1m wide, depending on access. These will be located within the area of the footings of the proposed extension, in the area in which the memorials would be moved, and adjacent to the position where it is proposed the footpath will be modified, as shown in the attached figure. The evaluation methodology, which is based on Greenlane Archaeology's excavation manual (Greenlane Archaeology 2007), will be as follows:

- The trenches will be excavated with regard to the position of any known constraints, focussing on any areas of high archaeological interest or potential, and avoiding areas which are likely to have been severely damaged or truncated by later activity, unless these are considered to have a high potential;
- The overburden, which is unlikely to be of any archaeological significance, will be removed by machine under the supervision of an archaeologist until the first deposit beneath it is reached;
- All deposits below the overburden will be examined by hand in a stratigraphic manner, using shovels, mattocks, or trowels as appropriate for the scale. Deposits will only be sampled, rather than completely removed, below the first identified level of archaeological interest, with the intention of preserving as much *in situ* as possible;
- The position of any features, such as ditches, pits, burials or structures, will be recorded and where necessary these will be investigated in order to establish their full extent, date, and relationship to any other features. Negative features such as ditches or pits will be examined by sample excavation, typically half of a pit or similar feature and approximately 10% of a linear feature;
- All recording of features will include hand-drawn plans and sections, typically at a scale of 1:20 and 1:10, respectively;
- Photographs of all features of archaeological interest and general site photos at all stages of the work will be taken in colour digital JPEG and RAW file format at a size of 12meg, using a Panasonic Lumix DC-FZ82 with a sensor size of over 18 megapixels. They will be taken in accordance with the guidance produced by Historic England (2015);
- All deposits, trenches, drawings and photographs will be recorded on Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- All finds will be recovered during the evaluation for further assessment as far as is practically and safely possible. Should significant quantities of finds be encountered an appropriate sampling strategy will be devised;
- All faunal remains will also be recovered by hand during the evaluation, but where it is considered likely that there is potential for the bones of fish or small mammals to be present appropriate volumes of samples will be taken for sieving;
- Deposits that are considered likely to have, for example, preserved environmental remains, industrial residues, and/or material suitable for scientific dating will be sampled. Bulk samples of between 20 and 60 litres in volume (or 100% of smaller features), depending on the size and potential of the deposit, will be collected from stratified undisturbed deposits and will particularly target negative features (e.g. gullies, pits and ditches) and occupation deposits such as hearths and floors. An assessment of the environmental potential of the site will be undertaken through the examination of samples of suitable deposits by specialist sub-contractors (see *Section 1.3.3* above), who will examine the potential for further analysis. All samples will be processed using methods appropriate to the preservation conditions and the remains present;
- Any human bone discovered *in situ* during the evaluation, either as intact burials or within features of archaeological interest, will be left in place, and, if possible, covered. The PCC will be immediately informed; intact burials will be recorded and left in place, while human bone within other features of archaeological interest (such as pits or ditches) will be recovered, according to the terms of the faculty, and processed as finds. Any loose human bone present in the overburden will be collected during the evaluation and taken for specialist assessment, the extent of which will be agreed with the PCC, and subsequent recording within the report and will ultimately be returned to the Priory Church for reburial;
- Any objects defined as 'treasure' by the Treasure Act of 1996 (HMSO 1996) will be immediately reported to the local coroner and securely stored off-site, or covered and protected on site if immediate removal is not possible;
- The evaluation trenches will be backfilled following excavation although it is not envisaged that any further reinstatement to its original condition will be carried out.

3.2.2 Should any significant archaeological deposits be encountered during the evaluation these will immediately be brought to the attention of the client) so that the need for further work can be confirmed. Any additional work will be carried out following discussion with the client and subject to a new project design, and the ensuing costs will be agreed with the client.

3.3 Report

3.3.2 The results of the evaluation will be compiled into a report, which will provide a summary and details of any sources consulted. It will include the following sections:

- A front cover including the appropriate national grid reference (NGR);
- A concise non-technical summary of results, including the date the project was undertaken and by whom, incorporating the results of the geophysical survey and any additional background information where relevant;
- Acknowledgements;
- Project Background;
- Methodology, including a description of the work undertaken;
- The historical and archaeological background of the site, incorporating relevant information collected as part of the desk-based assessment;
- Results of the evaluation, including finds and samples;
- Discussion of the results including phasing information, taking into account any relevant information outlined in the historical and archaeological background to the site;
- Bibliography;
- Illustrations at appropriate scales including:
 - a site location plan related to the national grid;
 - a plan showing the location of the evaluation trenches in relation to nearby structures and the local landscape, and the features revealed during the geophysical survey;
 - plans and sections of any features discovered during the evaluation;
 - photographs of any features encountered during the evaluation and general shots of the evaluation trenches.

3.4 Archive

3.4.1 The archive, comprising the drawn, written, and photographic record of the evaluation trenches, formed during the project, will be stored by Greenlane Archaeology until it is completed. Upon completion it will be deposited with the Cumbria Archive Centre in Barrow-in-Furness, together with a copy of the report. The archive will be compiled according to the standards and guidelines of the ClfA (ClfA 2014b). In addition, details will be submitted to the Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS (OASIS) scheme. This is an internet-based project intended to improve the flow of information between contractors, local authority heritage managers and the general public.

3.4.2 A paper and digital copy of the report will be provided to the client and a digital copy of the report will be provided to the Cumbria Historic Environment Record. In addition, Greenlane Archaeology Ltd will retain one copy.

3.4.3 The client will be encouraged to transfer ownership of the finds to a suitable museum. Any finds recovered during the evaluation will be offered to an appropriate museum, most likely Kendal Museum, although this would depend on the date and significance of any discoveries as Kendal Museum is essentially full at present. If no suitable repository can be found the finds may have to be discarded, and in this case as full a record as possible would be made of them beforehand.

4. Work timetable

4.1 Greenlane Archaeology will be available to commence the project from **17th February 2020**, or at another date convenient to the client. It is envisaged that the elements of the project will be carried out in the following order:

- **Task 1:** desk-based assessment;
- **Task 2:** archaeological evaluation;
- **Task 3:** processing and assessment of finds and samples;

- **Task 4:** production of draft report including illustrations;
- **Task 5:** feedback on draft report, editing and production of final report;
- **Task 6:** finalisation and deposition of archive.

5. Other matters

5.1 Access and clearance

5.1.1 Access to the site will be organised through co-ordination with the client and/or their agent(s).

5.2 Health and Safety

5.2.1 Greenlane Archaeology carries out risk assessments for all of its projects and abides by its internal health and safety policy and relevant legislation. Health and safety is always the foremost consideration in any decision-making process.

5.3 Insurance

5.3.1 Greenlane Archaeology has professional indemnity insurance to the value of **£1,000,000**. Details of this can be supplied if requested.

5.4 Environmental and Ethical Policy

5.4.1 Greenlane Archaeology has a strong commitment to environmentally and ethically sound working practices. Its office is supplied with 100% renewable energy by Good Energy, uses ethical telephone and internet services supplied by the Phone Co-op. In addition, the company uses the services of The Co-operative Bank for ethical banking, Naturesave for environmentally-conscious insurance, and utilises public transport wherever possible. Greenlane Archaeology is also committed to using local businesses for services and materials, thus benefiting the local economy, reducing unnecessary transportation, and improving the sustainability of small and rural businesses.

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