

**Date: January 2006**  
**Client: Kinegar Sand and Gravel Ltd**  
**Project Code: KSG99**

# **Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath, Scottish Borders**

**Phase 12**

Colin Hewat

## **PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (KSG 99)**

<b>Client</b>	Kinegar Sand and Gravel Ltd
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NT 773 701
<b>Project Manager</b>	Stephen Carter
<b>Project Supervisor</b>	Dan Atkinson
<b>Text</b>	Colin Hewat
<b>Illustrations</b>	Tom Small
<b>Schedule</b>	
Fieldwork	13-16 September 2005
Report	January 2006

### **Summary**

Headland Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of a cropmark site at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Quarry, Cockburnspath, Scottish Borders. Subsequently, a watching brief was undertaken during topsoil stripping. One shallow linear feature was identified during the evaluation and recorded; this was located outside the area subsequently stripped. No artefacts were recovered.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned to carry out an archaeological evaluation of a cropmark site located within a planned extension to Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath, Scottish Borders, in order to satisfy a condition of planning consent. A watching brief was also conducted during the topsoil stripping of this area. This report details the results of the twelfth phase of work at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, following on from strips monitored in 2000 (Conolly 2000) and 2001-2 (Conolly 2001 a & b and 2002a) under an earlier consent and areas monitored throughout 2002-5 under the present consent (Conolly 2002b & c, 2003a & b, 2004, 2005 and Jones 2004).

The work was carried out between 13 and 16 September 2005 in variable weather conditions.

## **2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION (FIGURE 1)**

Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit is located to the south of Cockburnspath, Scottish Borders (NT 773 701). This phase involved the excavation of 156m of trenches to evaluate the cropmark and the stripping of a rectangular parcel of land running parallel with the road and covering some c.9250 m<sup>2</sup>. The area under evaluation comprised a gently sloping plateau with a sharp drop-off to the south. The area was under grass at the time of the evaluation and watching brief. The underlying geology is sandy gravel and sand, overlying boulder clay.

## **3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

The quarry is situated in an area where several prehistoric cist burials have been discovered, including two within the quarry itself. To date, the watching brief has identified several clusters of pits, some of which have yielded pottery dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age. These features were located some distance to the north of the current site. A number of cropmark sites have been identified in the vicinity, including a possible enclosure (NMRS NT76NE 27) at the southern end of the current application area that is the focus of this phase of work.

## **4. AIMS AND METHODS**

The evaluation was intended to help identify the nature of the possible cropmark enclosure identified within the planned extension area. It was determined that machine trenching 5% of the possible enclosure site was required. As the enclosure covered c.6250 m<sup>2</sup>, 156m of trenching using a 2 m wide ditching blade was undertaken.

The watching brief was intended to ensure that any archaeologically significant deposits that would be destroyed by quarrying operations might be appropriately recorded.

The evaluation trenches and the topsoil strip were carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, operating under continuous archaeological supervision.

Any potential features identified during the evaluation and subsequent strip were hand cleaned, investigated and recorded appropriately.

## 5. RESULTS (FIGURE 1)

In total seven trenches were excavated during the evaluation. No evidence of an enclosure ditch was identified.

Trench 7 was the only trench to contain a feature. Here a wide, shallow linear feature was identified (266). The fill of this feature (267) was well sorted and may therefore suggest this is a natural feature, possibly a water channel, which used to run into the burn. It did not appear in any of the adjacent trenches. As the area stripped did not extend as far as trench 7 the full extent of this feature was not identified.

Trenches 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 all contained no features, apart from field drains, and all had an average topsoil depth of 0.5 m above the natural sands and gravels.

Trench 2, at the base of the slope, went to a depth of 1 m below the topsoil through a black silty deposit. This was identified as alluvial deposits, built up by the burn that used to run along the base of the slope and by hill wash from upslope.

No features were identified during the monitored topsoil strip.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation trenches excavated to investigate the possible cropmark enclosure revealed no evidence of an enclosure ditch. The topography of the site suggests that it would be an unlikely location for an enclosure; the majority of the area within the possible enclosure is situated on a steep slope. The topography also goes some way to explain the cropmark identified; the northern extent of the cropmark appears to follow a natural ridge. The topsoil is visibly shallower across the ridge and banding in the sands and gravels below are likely to have contributed to the appearance of this cropmark. Modern disturbance also goes some way to explaining this cropmark. The southern extent of the cropmark contains a very prominent 'L' shaped section, this, according to the local farmer, is a section of drainage. The stripped area also produced no evidence of an enclosure ditch or any evidence of human activity in the vicinity. Considering all these factors it appears that the cropmark does not represent an enclosure, but is merely a combination of natural and modern features.

The full archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record of Scotland.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Conolly, RJ 2000 *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2001a *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 2*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2001b *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 3*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2002a *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 4*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2002b *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 5*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2002c *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 6*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2003a *Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 7*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2003b *Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 8*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2004 *Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 9*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Conolly, RJ 2005 *Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 11*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

Jones, E 2004 *Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 10*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.

**APPENDIX 1: FIELD REGISTERS****Context Register**

<b>Context Number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>
1-265	Used in previous phases	-
266	Cut of wide shallow linear feature	8m x 1m
267	Dark brown sandy loam, fill of linear feature 266	8m x 1m

**Photo Register**

Film numbers 1 – 27 were used in previous phases.

**Film no. 28**

Film Type: Colour Slide and Black and White Print

<b>Shot no.</b>	<b>Direction Facing</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	-	ID shot
2	N	Trench 1
3	NE	Trench 2
4	S	Trench 3
5	SW	Trench 4
6	SW	Trench 5
7	W	Trench 6
8	NE	Trench 7
9	-	General shot of site
10	-	General shot of site
11	-	General shot of site
12	-	General shot of site
13	-	General shot of site
14	-	General shot of stripping
15	-	General shot of stripping
16	-	General shot of stripping
17	-	General shot of stripping
18	-	General shot of stripping
19	-	General shot of stripping
20	-	General shot
21	-	General shot
22	-	General shot

### Drawing Register

<b>Drawing Number</b>	<b>Description</b>
1-118	Used in previous phases
119	Northwest facing section through ditch feature 266
120	Plan of area stripped and cropmark

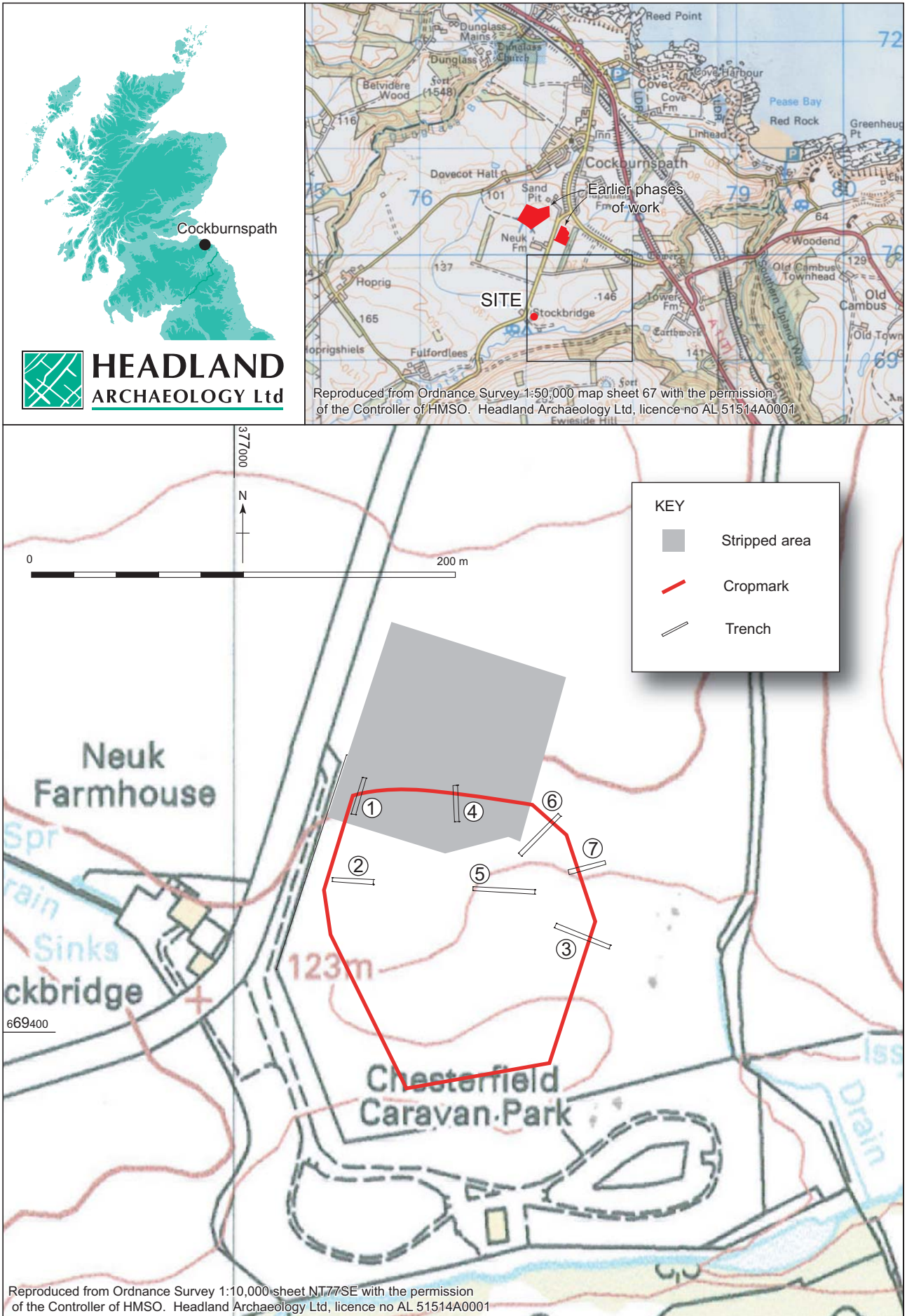


Figure 1: Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit - Site plan showing cropmark, trenches and the stripped area .