

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

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

Phase 13

Colin Hewat

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET (KSG 99)

Client	Kinegar Sand and Gravel Ltd
National Grid Reference	NT 7717 6947
Project Manager	Stephen Carter
Text	Colin Hewat
Illustrations	Tom Small
Fieldwork	Colin Hewat
Schedule	
Fieldwork	8-10 February 2006
Report	February 2006

Summary

Headland Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during topsoil stripping at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath, Scottish Borders. Three pits were identified and recorded in the course of the watching brief. No artefacts were recovered from any of these features.

1. INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology Ltd was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief during topsoil stripping for an extension to Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath, Scottish Borders, in order to satisfy a condition of planning consent. This report details the results of the thirteenth 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, Jones 2004 and Hewat 2006).

The work was carried out between 8 and 10 February 2006 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 7717 6947). This phase involved the stripping of a parcel of land, which lay to the east of the previous Phase 12 strip and along its northern edge. The area stripped covered approximately 7500 m². The field was under grass at the time of the 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. Phase 12 evaluated a possible cropmark enclosure adjacent to the present phase of work but revealed no evidence of an enclosure ditch. In the subsequent watching brief during the topsoil strip of this area no archaeological features were identified.

4. AIMS AND METHODS

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

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)

Three small pit features were identified and recorded during this phase of work. Pits 268 and 270 were located in a wide shallow depression in the south-facing slope, possibly exploiting some degree

of shelter. The fill of both consisted of a fine black silty sand with small fragments of charcoal and therefore it is possible these were small hearths. Neither contained any datable artefacts. Pit 272 was located at the northern edge of the stripped area on the gently sloping plateau before the sharp drop-off to the south. This pit contained no datable artefacts or indicators of function and may, in fact, be a tree pit or have some other natural origin.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The results of this phase of the watching brief are consistent with finds made during earlier phases of work at the Kinegar sand and gravel pit. The features identified here indicate a low-level prehistoric occupation of this area, with single use hearth pits being dug as and when necessary. Dating evidence from earlier phases of work dated similar features to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age, therefore it is reasonable to suggest these features may be of a similar date.

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Conolly, RJ 2001b *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 3*. Unpublished report of Headland Archaeology Ltd.
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- Hewat, C 2006 *Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief at Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit, Cockburnspath: Phase 12*. 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

Context Number	Description	Dimensions
1-267	Used in previous phases	-
268	Cut of Pit. Circular. Shallow with short moderately steep sides to a flat base.	0.38 x 0.5 x 0.04
269	Fill of Pit 268. Fine black silty sand with small fragments of charcoal and occasional small rounded stone inclusions.	0.38 x 0.5 x 0.04
270	Cut of Pit. Circular. Moderately sloping sides to a concave base	0.55 x 0.6 x 0.13
271	Fill of Pit 270. Fine black silty sand with small fragments of charcoal and occasional small rounded stone inclusions.	0.55 x 0.6 x 0.13
272	Cut of Pit. Oval. Moderately sloping sides to a concave base.	0.6 x 0.9 x 0.18
273	Fill of Pit 272. Mid brown and dark grey fine silty sand with frequent medium and small rounded stone inclusions.	0.6 x 0.9 x 0.18

Photo Register

Film numbers 1 – 28 were used in previous phases.

Film no. 29

Film Type: Colour Print and Black and White Print

Shot no.	Direction Facing	Description
1	-	ID Shot
2	W	Pre-ex plan of Pit 268/269
3	W	Pre-ex plan of Pit 268/269
4	W	Section through Pit 268/269
5	W	Pre-ex plan of Pit 270/271
6	W	Section through Pit 270/271
7	NW	General shot of stripping
8	W	General shot of stripping
9	N	General shot of stripping
10	N	General shot of stripping
11	N	General shot of stripping
12	NW	General shot of stripping
13	NW	General shot of stripping
14	S	Section through Pit 272/273

Drawing Register

Drawing Number	Description
1-120	Used in previous phases
121	Plan of Pit 268/269
122	Section through Pit 268/269
123	Plan of Pit 270/271
124	Section through Pit 270/271
125	Plan of Pit 272/273
126	Section through Pit 272/273
127	Plan of area stripped

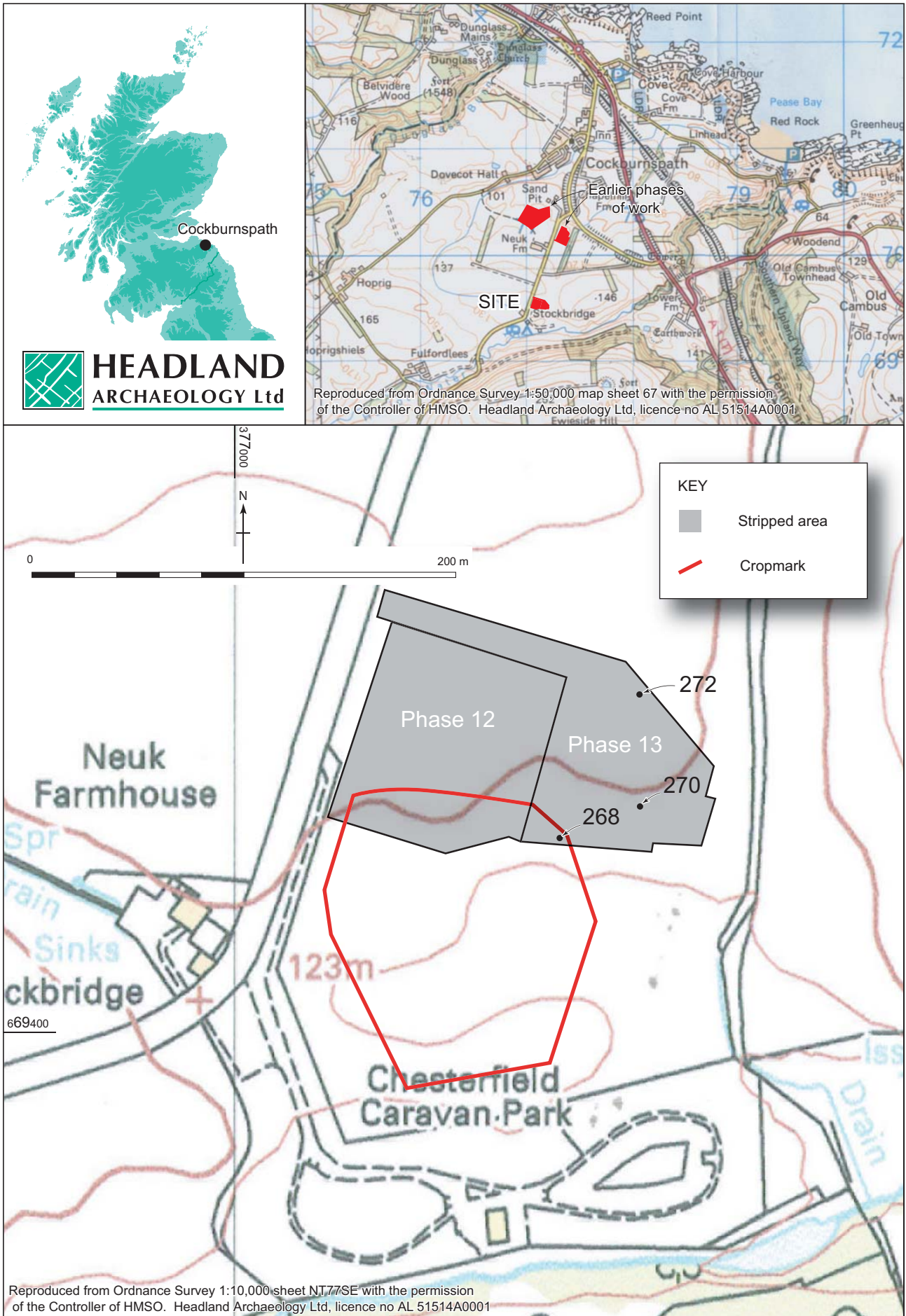


Figure 1: Kinegar Sand and Gravel Pit - Site plan showing evaluated cropmark, phase 12 and 13 stripped areas and recorded features.