



Lancaster City Council
Regeneration & Planning Services

**Reshaping Lancaster District's Museums Offer
Report of Findings and Recommendations**

**The Archaeology of the Castle Hill Area, Lancaster
Consolidated Report**

P+P

July 2017

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Prepared for

Lancaster City Council
Regeneration & Planning Services

July 2017

by

PRINCE+PEARCE

M 4 Plantagenet Road, London EN5 5JQ
T +44 (0) 7973 691 927
E dprince@princeandpearce.co.uk
W www.princeandpearce.co.uk

Contact: Dr David Prince

in association with

Dig Ventures Limited

and

Jason Wood, Heritage Consultancy Services

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Status of Document

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1 Executive Narrative

Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow, the scope of the brief – an area of essentially undeveloped, open recreational and scrub land lying between the Priory Church to the south and River Street/St George's Quay to the north – is bounded by the main railway line to the west and the foreshore developments on the banks of the River Lune to the east. The additional area covered by the Beyond the Castle project includes the Castle, the Hillside, the Priory church and the land in between.

1.1 Significance

It is clear from the desk-based assessment by DigVentures, P+P and the work of Jason Wood and his colleagues over a number of years that the site is archaeologically highly significant at the national level and almost certainly at an international level in terms of late Roman remains.

Part of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (List Entry Number 1020668) and there could be made an argument for extending this designation over the area bounded by the white line in Figure 1, above, perhaps by deploying the concept of Historic England's Heritage Action Zone.

Excavations, field assessments, partial (trial) excavations and research sources (all examined in detail by DigVentures and Jason Wood and set out in their respective reports and summarised in this report) indicate that the site is potentially extremely rich in Roman and later remains, particularly as evidence suggests that a Late Roman Shore Fort occupied Castle Hill.

Thus, the site has significance on account of its archaeological evidence for the sequence of Roman forts and their associated extra-mural activities. The obvious geographical and strategic advantages offered by the elevated hill site and navigable river were significant reasons for the long duration of the military presence in Lancaster and especially for the establishment of a late Roman shore fort and military port or harbour.

The site also has significance due to its archaeological evidence for post-Roman activity. The survival of the late Roman shore fort combined with the site's good communications would have made Lancaster a likely location as an ecclesiastical and political 'central place' in the immediate post-Roman era. The site's Roman past was very much a visible presence in the early medieval period and its symbolism helped to legitimise religious and political authority up to and during the Norman period, influencing the location of the pre-Conquest monastery and Lancaster's first castle.

Lancaster's Roman heritage has significance in terms of its educational, interpretive and tourism value. There is a growing wealth of information about Roman Lancaster as a result of the Beyond the Castle project. This gives the place great value for National Curriculum programmes of study in that it offers the potential for a diversity of learning opportunities, and has special significance as a resource for Key Stage 2 pupils (ages 7-11).

Although situated within the urban fabric and fringed by the historic city, the site has been largely spared from later development and never fully investigated. Consequently, there is little overburden and the archaeological layers lie untouched just below the surface at a relatively shallow depth compared to other parts of the city.

The site therefore represents significant potential in terms of what archaeology can contribute to an understanding of the importance of Lancaster from Roman times through to the medieval period.

1.2 Potential

This widening potential has the ability to put Lancaster ‘on the map’ as a significant Roman heritage site offering new possibilities for Lancaster as a heritage destination, public space and place of discovery. The site represents a good strategic fit with Lancaster Square Routes and the masterplan development for the city centre, and branding and destination development for Lancaster as a ‘Heritage City’. Telling the story of the Roman archaeology, therefore, through further excavation, interpretation and display, should be seen as an essential ingredient and in the city’s tourism strategy, bringing with it significant economic benefits.

The site also has potential to give local communities persistent ownership and a sense of pride in the history and heritage of their city by delivering new ways of integrating the meaning and value of local places with the potential to reach out to global audiences, deeply engaging people in the process of discovery and in constructing aspirations for the future.

There is a huge opportunity for sustainable engagement not only with local people but also with visitors. Examples of successful Roman heritage sites such as Vindolanda attract large numbers of paying visitors and have developed successful business models to finance long-term excavations, whilst organisations like Dig Ventures now support and deliver crowdfunded and crowdsourced archaeology projects internationally.

Most importantly in this context there is the potential to refresh the city’s museums offer and organisational models to support a growing visitor economy.

There is also growing potential through links with Lancaster University, the creative industries and not-for-profit (and for profit) delivery partners to develop new technologies and products to tell and animate the history of Lancaster and to weave these alongside contemporary narratives (arts, crafts, trade and so on) into the visitor offer and civic programme.

In essence, and if managed and developed with care and with flair, the site has the potential not only to deliver to Lancaster archaeological finds of international significance but also to make a major contribution to its evolving heritage-based tourism infrastructure.

1.3 Planned Research Excavations

As part of this, consideration should be given to making the site the subject of (say) an annual research project over a number of years along the lines of Ribchester (managed by UCLAN) and Aldborough (Cambridge University, Faculty of Classics).

To facilitate this it is worth considering the creation of a Strategic Advisory Group (chaired by Lancaster City Council) and including members from the economic regeneration team supported by suitable academics from (say) Durham University, Cambridge, Oxford, University College London and the British Museum.

The remit of this group, it is suggested, should include building a credible business case to justify multi-year archaeological investigations, all anchored by an archaeological research framework capable of attracting external funds.

Hence, establishing this group (or some variant of it) is an essential first step in developing the archaeological potential of the site, particularly as until an archaeological programme has been devised it is very difficult to consider what funding will be required and from where it can be sourced.

One of the aims of the Group is, therefore, for its members to have access to, or be able to source, external funds as required.

It is also clear that funding for non-development-related (essentially research) excavations (as is the case here) will be difficult to secure, particularly as funds are being cut in many areas and current priority in terms of the deployment of archaeological resources is towards essentially rescue work on development sites.

However, a number of grant-awarding bodies does exist for such work; indeed the *Heritage Funding Directory* lists ninety-two such sources as a mix of government agencies and charitable organisations in the UK.

1.4 Supporting the Museum Service

Outside the purely archaeological considerations, the site has the potential to generate income for the museums service at a time when it is likely (if the recommendations in the main **AP+P** report are followed) that the City Museum will be closed for renovation and redevelopment, particularly by way of either crowd-funding (at which Dig Ventures are expert) or on-site donations as the archaeological work proceeds.

There is clearly an appetite locally for engaging in such work (as evidenced later in this report) and much positive PR could be generated if the archaeological work were to be seen to be both of direct community value as well as adding beneficially to the information to be exhibited in the redeveloped City Museum.

Assuming that some form of archaeological work proceeds at some point, the basement of the Customs House on St George's Quay could be used as both a site office/finds processing facility as well as providing teaching and other meeting space over the dig season.

An evolving exhibition of the finds and their significance is also a possibility. Whilst this could be seen as being a reason to retain the Customs House as a City resource in the short term, it is also possible that such facilities could be provided in temporary accommodation on Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow itself, in line with usual archaeological site practice, should the City decide to deploy the Custom House's resources in some other way.

In the longer term, and subject to the various factors noted above either being resolved or put in place, the site has the potential to support a multi-year, seasonal programme of archaeological excavations and associated activities. Indeed, this should be the aim, together with the extension of the protected (Designated) area.

Such a programme of active archaeological intervention sustained over a number of years (seasons) should prove to be a popular tourist draw from the region and elsewhere, and hence could add much to the local economy. As more is uncovered, more visitors will come to the site. The key is generate and sustain a positive PR campaign around the preservation, conservation and exhibition of this potentially highly significant archaeological resource.

Jórvík, in Coppergate, York particularly in its early days, is a good example, albeit that the site is in the heart of the city and close to the historically-significant Shambles, Clifford's Tower and the Minster. In 1976, when Jórvík was being excavated initially, a mere handful of people, the current author included, visited the site and made a modest contribution to the dig's funds. As at the end of 2016 Jórvík had received over 16 million visitors at the average rate of 650,000 a year and paying (as of today) £14.45 per adult (£44.00 for a family ticket of four) for 'the experience'. Jórvík has thus become a viable and, to all intents and purposes, a sustainable 'heritage product' in the very heart of York.

Of course, at the moment the site is not Jórvík, and it may never be in the same terms ... but with even a small proportion of Jórvík's visitors (and hence earnings) it would add considerably to the 'Lancaster offer' and, as importantly, to the wider economy of the City.

Anecdotal evidence from the historic 'Roman cities' of York, Chester, St Albans, Vindolanda, Lincoln, Colchester and Bath all suggests that visitors, particularly overnight visitors, are attracted to see 'things on the ground' and 'as they happen' and want to 'talk to the archaeologists': it's all part of the voyeuristic culture that appeals to many lay followers of archaeology.

And these lay followers tend to be middle class (primarily AB), well-educated and with disposable incomes ideally suited to support the work at Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow. They may not all 'put 50p in the bucket' but if they stay an extra night in Lancaster then their contribution to the local economy is a hundred, perhaps two hundred, times larger.

It has to be remembered that *the story is the asset* not necessary the finds on the ground, which are often simple, everyday objects or, more often, parts of objects. It is what the City makes of the story that matters.

There is much to play for here – not just at the site – but for the redeveloped museum service and the future of Lancaster as an *English Heritage City*.

2 The Site

The site comprises a mix of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, characterised predominantly by the upstanding and buried remains of the northern parts of Lancaster Roman fort and its associated militarised zone, together with the buried remains of a pre-Conquest monastery and a Benedictine priory (SAM No. 1020668). In very general terms, the whole site (including both the Designated and non-designated areas) is in excess of twelve 12 hectares.

The Scheduled Area (SAM) is confined to the top and the northern slopes of Castle Hill, extending beneath the present Priory Church of St Mary and its churchyard, and including modern and former vicarages and their gardens. St Mary's Parish Church and Priory and other associated structures are excluded from the SAM, however the ground beneath these structures also form part of the designation.

The Site is currently utilised as recreational green space, occupying three distinct parcels of land separated by tarmac pathways and woodland, bounding the northern escarpment of Lancaster Castle. This area has played a pivotal role in the historic development of the city, and recent community-based archaeological investigation has brought significant new evidence to light, in addition to underscoring the potential for expanding engagement with this relatively underutilised heritage asset.

The study area lies within the 'Historic Core' landscape character type according to the Lancashire Landscape Strategy (Lancashire County Council 2001). The bedrock comprises siltstone, mudstone and sandstone of the Roeburndale Member. Soilscape classifies the native soils as predominantly Soilscape 6: freely draining slightly acid loamy soil. The natural condition of the soils has been greatly modified over time by anthropogenic influences resulting from historic phases of construction, excavation and compaction.

Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow (centred on Grid Ref 347231 462265) is topographically fairly flat, comprising an area of urban grassland surrounded on three sides by trees and lying between Lancaster Castle and St Georges' Quay close to the River Lune. Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow is a green space within an area of mixed residential, commercial and tourism/leisure related properties. Including Vicarage Field, the Meadows forms part of the Castle Hill/St Georges' Quay area of the City of Lancaster, and is owned by Lancaster City Council. The meadow lies alongside a Scheduled Ancient Monument, an area occupied by the remains of at least three Roman forts and a Roman Bath House.

Adjacent to this, Vicarage Field East (centred on Grid Ref 347404 462047) is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and also lies within a Conservation Area. The site's topography is gently falling from the Old Vicarage/Lancaster Priory (to the north) towards the river Lune to the south. The site is fringed with trees to the north and south, with Vicarage Lane running alongside the western site boundary.

Vicarage Field West (centred on Grid Ref 47285 62033). The topography in this part of the Site gradually declines from the Old Vicarage/ Lancaster Priory (to the north) towards the river Lune to the south. It is fringed with trees to the north and south, Vicarage Lane running alongside the eastern site boundary. The site lies within the 'Historic Core' landscape character type according to the Lancashire Landscape Strategy (Lancashire County Council 2001). The bedrock comprises

siltstone, mudstone and sandstone of the Roeburndale Member. Soilscape classifies the native soils as predominately Soilscape 6: freely draining slightly acid loamy soil. The natural condition of the soils has been greatly modified over time by anthropogenic influences resulting from historic phases of construction, excavation and compaction.

Beyond the scheduled area, Roman and Medieval activity has been identified extending into Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow down towards St George's Quay, potentially associated with a military port or harbour. Sporadic (and unfortunately poorly-published) small-scale excavations have taken place across the Site since the 1920s, commencing with Droop and Newstead (1927-29), followed by excavations in Bath House Field by Sir Ian Richmond (1950-65 – See Plate 2.4), and later rescue excavations by Jones and Shotter (1970-75).

3 Wider Archaeological Context

Relatively little is known about the archaeology of Lancaster compared say to York, Chester or Carlisle. This is especially true for the Roman and medieval periods and in particular on Castle Hill and the open green space leading down to St George's Quay. On Castle Hill, limited excavations between the 1920s and 1970s revealed only tantalising glimpses of three successive Roman forts and associated structures, whereas the area behind St George's Quay had never been excavated.

A pre-Conquest monastery is known to have occupied Castle Hill and, while the medieval period is represented by the Castle itself and the Priory Church, there undoubtedly were other early and late medieval buildings in the vicinity.

Given its significance, it is surprising that the site has seen so little archaeological enquiry in the last forty years. This has now begun to be addressed.

Between 2014 and 2016, the *Beyond the Castle* project has enabled archaeological investigations of the area, making use for the first time of new digital technologies to survey and excavate the remains and experimenting with innovative ways of working to engage local people and visitors.

Topographical and geophysical surveys have started to reveal the site's complex pattern of earthworks and buried remains, while the potential for significant discoveries has been realised in three trial excavations.

To date, Lancashire County Council has led the *Beyond the Castle* project, with support from Lancaster City Council and funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Lancaster University, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Environment Fund, Coastal Communities Fund and Post Code Lottery Trust.

4 Appraisal of Previous Archaeological Work

4.1 Background

The summit of Castle Hill is occupied by the Castle itself, owned by the Duchy of Lancaster, and the Priory Church and churchyard, owned by the Church of England.

The open green space leading down to the Quay is owned in the main by the City Council and is divided into three distinct, roughly triangular parcels of land separated by tarmac paths and woodland: (a) Vicarage Fields West, (b) Vicarage Fields East (or Bathhouse Field) and (c) Quay Meadow.

The first archaeological excavations took place in the 1920s in Vicarage Field West and explored the Roman fort earthworks and some internal structures of Roman and medieval date. The discoveries, however, proved difficult to interpret.

Further investigations in the 1950s and 1960s by the eminent archaeologist Professor Sir Ian Richmond focused on the adjacent Vicarage Field East and uncovered the remains of a large Roman courtyard building, as well as other Roman structures and ditches. Sadly, Sir Ian died shortly after his last visit to Lancaster and his excavations were never fully published.

In the 1970s, the construction of Mitre House provided a new impetus for further exploration in both Vicarage Field West and East. This work established the locations of, and a chronology for, the successive Roman forts, and exposed the suite of Roman baths that can be seen today enclosed by railings behind Mitre House, but the circumstances for proper excavation were far from ideal in some cases. It was not until 2014, with the advent of the *Beyond the Castle* project, that a coherent strategy for new archaeological investigation began to emerge.

4.2 Documentary Evidence

Professor Sir Ian Richmond (1902-65) began excavating on the northern slope of Castle Hill in 1950 while at King's College Durham (now Newcastle University). He resumed his work after moving to Oxford with subsequent seasons of fieldwork in 1958 and 1965. He wrote up the 1950 excavation but his final season in 1965, which was intended to resolve questions posed by his earlier work in 1958, remain unpublished at the time of his death. However, Sir Ian's archive of notebooks, drawings and photographs relating to his work at Lancaster was deposited in the Sackler Library, Oxford and the *Beyond the Castle* project has been able to make copies of all the relevant material. Further notes and photographs were subsequently donated to the project by Alan Wilkins who assisted Sir Ian during the 1958 season. The *Beyond the Castle* project also photographed the finds from Sir Ian's 1950 season stored in Lancaster City Museum. Those from the 1958 season await photography. The finds from 1965, however, could not be located either in Lancaster or Oxford.

All relevant historic maps, earlier excavation plans, spot find and interpretative data from Lancaster's Urban Archaeological Database, LiDAR images, aerial photographs and various planning documents have been sourced and brought together at the same scale in the form of digital overlays. These overlays are intended to not only to contextualise and help interpret the results of the *Beyond the Castle* project, but will also inform future infrastructure works and research.

4.3 Topographical and Geophysical Surveys

Initial fieldwork in May 2014 resulted in the production of a close-contour map and digital terrain model of Vicarage Fields West and East, produced by Oxford Archaeology North. These areas were later re-surveyed in more detail in August 2015 and May 2016, and together were the first accurate topographical surveys undertaken of the earthworks and provided the basis for the subsequent geophysical surveys. The data were generated from numerous overlapping aerial photographs taken from a small drone. The survey revealed a variety of earthworks, mainly associated with the Roman fort and probably the medieval precinct wall of the Priory, but also later features including ridge-and-furrow plough marks and field boundaries.

Geophysical surveys were also commissioned from Oxford Archaeology North in May/June 2014. Again, this was the first time this kind of technology had been employed on any part of the site. Three different techniques were used: magnetometry (Vicarage Field West and East and Quay Meadow), resistivity (Vicarage Field West and East and a sample area in Quay Meadow), and ground penetrating radar (sample areas around the Castle and Priory Church).

Combined, the results of the geophysical surveys revealed a remarkably extensive, if bewildering, pattern of buried archaeological remains, but with the potential for significant discoveries. In 2017, more advanced geophysical surveys were carried out by the Lancaster Environment Centre at Lancaster University. Vicarage Field West was mapped using electromagnetic induction and transects across the area were surveyed using electrical resistivity tomography. Electromagnetic induction mapping and ground penetrating radar transects were also deployed on Quay Meadow.

4.4 Trial Excavations

Trial excavations in each of the three separate areas of the site were conducted in 2015 and 2016. These were designed to ‘ground truth’ the geophysics, establish the survival, nature and date of archaeological deposits and evaluate the potential for future archaeological exploration.

4.4.1 Vicarage Field West

The resistivity survey clearly showed the right-angled corner of a substantial structure, almost certainly built of masonry, at the base of the earthworks of the Roman Fort. This strong geophysical anomaly gave rise to theories about the location of Lancaster’s late Roman shore fort that invited testing through excavation. In May/June 2016, two trenches were opened across the anomaly, while a smaller trench to the south partly re-opened the ends of two earlier trenches dug in the late 1920s and early 1970s across the earlier Roman fort earthworks.

The excavations revealed promising evidence for the corner of the late Roman shore fort comprising 4m-wide walls of stone and clay construction, with metalled road surfaces either side, a stone-lined drain running through the thickness of the west wall and a stone-lined well partly within the thickness of the north wall. Two substantial post holes close to the rear of the north wall may have supported a timber staircase. Only the basal remains of the walls remained and there was evidence of systematic robbing. Dating material was lacking for the construction of the walls and associated features although a number of unstratified late Roman coins were found in the topsoil across the area.

In October 2016, further excavation across the north wall and in the area surrounding the well revealed evidence for two parallel V-shaped ditches cutting into the natural orange clay. These are of a form typical of the early Roman period and perhaps belonged to an annex or militarised zone between the Roman fort site on the hill and the probable location of a Roman port behind St Georges' Quay (see below).

Further investigation of the well provided evidence that the top 3-4 courses of the stone lining had been rebuilt in the Victorian period at the same time as a draw pipe had been sunk. (A late Victorian map shows a pump in this location.) Below the rebuild, the courses change in size and are set into the natural clay. This strongly suggests that the well is Roman in origin but its exact depth and relationship to the late Roman wall have yet to be determined due to the depth of Victorian disturbance.

4.4.2 Vicarage Field East

Despite an examination of Professor Richmond's archive, it still remains impossible to reconstruct Sir Ian's thought process and interpretation from what survives, especially as he believed at the time he was excavating inside the Roman forts, rather than, as we now know, to the north of them.

In order to help understand what he found, one of Sir Ian's 1965 slot trenches that he dug across the line of a Roman ditch and a Roman building was re-examined. The exact position of the trench was identified from the close-contour topographic survey of the area. Sir Ian's archive and later published plans by others were at variance as to the trench's precise location and dimensions. The work was carried out in October 2015 to mark the 50th anniversary of Sir Ian's death.

No excavation of undisturbed deposits was attempted: the aim was simply to remove Sir Ian's backfill (examining this for any unstratified finds) and to record in detail the trench plan and sections. In the event no sections could be recorded as the surviving Roman deposits lay just below the turf and, as it transpired, Sir Ian had simply drawn a pre-excavation plan and chosen to excavate only one feature, confusingly not on his plan. The Roman ditch he did draw had not been excavated, rather its line was projected from a neighbouring trench. The Roman building he drew could not be seen. Instead evidence was found of three phases of Roman construction, and on different alignments, dating to the early and late Roman periods.

4.4.3 Quay Meadow

There is no record of any archaeological investigations having been carried out in Quay Meadow in either the Historic Environment Record (HER) or the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD). This does not preclude the possibility of unofficial finds having been made and not reported. Remote sensing (including photogrammetry, GPR, Resistivity and Magnetometry) has revealed a complex pattern of buried remains in the area between Lancaster Castle and St Georges Quay, potentially dating to the Roman and medieval periods.

A number of enthusiastic local residents with an interest in archaeology had come together to discuss the new geophysical data as it emerged. They then formally constituted themselves as the Lancaster and District Heritage Group. The Quay Meadow excavation, directed by the *Beyond*

the Castle project and supported by *Dig Ventures*, was set up as a training dig for members of this Group and others and designed to ground truth the results of the Magnetometry.

Three trenches were opened over anomalies visible in the geophysics results (Figure 2). Two were placed over linear features (Trenches 1 and 3), and another was located over a structure that appeared to relate to the later quayside (Trench 2). Trench 1 contained a double wall and three postholes containing packing stones. One of the walls had a sizeable posthole cut into the middle, large enough to hold a substantial timber. The trench was abutted to the north by post-medieval dumping and clinker. A continuation of the wall along the same alignment outside the boundaries of the trench can be seen on the geophysics.

The structure in Trench 2 was characteristically Roman, as was the pottery that was found within its deposits. Trench 2 was placed in the area where the River Lune would have run in the Roman period, so a possible interpretation could be that this building was a waterfront warehouse located near a landing area or jetty. A substantial section of Roman road was found in Trench 3, of which the continuation can be seen on the geophysics plot running towards the east gate of the Roman fort. No road side ditches were found, which suggests that this was an ancillary road used to bring goods from the portside to the fort complex. Though this area lies beyond the boundary of the current scheduled area, it is entirely possible that these remains represent a highly significant military port or harbour facility, positioned NW of the contemporary fort and immediately downstream of the likely location of the Roman bridge. It has also been suggested that this could be the site of *Portus Setantiorum* (Port of the Setantii), one of three west coast ports recorded in the 2nd century *Geographia* of Ptolemy, though this level of documentary correspondence remains beyond the current evidence base.

Thus, one trench revealed a section through a substantial Roman, aisled building built of stone with a timber lean-to structure to one side. The present St George's Quay was built on reclaimed land in the eighteenth century. The position of the aisled building is close to the tree line and break in slope that mark the pre-18C river edge. This strongly suggests that the edge of the river in Roman times lay here and that the aisled building had, in all likelihood, a waterfront function as a warehouse or boathouse.

The construction trenches for the walls did not cut natural clay but earlier deposits so the building may prove to be late Roman. A further trench revealed another substantial Roman structure comprising a double wall with post holes. The third trench cut across another linear anomaly, this time the cambered remains (minus its metalled surface) of a Roman road heading up the slope towards the fort. There were no ditches to the sides of the road indicating it was probably an ancillary road within the suspected annex, or militarised zone, between the river and the fort.

After the excavation, further geophysical surveys were conducted in 2017. Electromagnetic induction mapping has produced evidence for a possible river inlet on the eastern side of Quay Meadow, whilst ground-penetrating radar transects across the suspected Roman riverfront indicate the presence of a possible retaining wall and hard standing. These results lend further weight to the idea of a Roman port or harbour in this area.

5 Roman Lancaster

All Roman forts with surviving archaeological potential are considered to be nationally important.

With several recognisable phases of construction, and closely associated vicus (with probable evidence for domestic buildings, residences, workshops, shops and temples, together with roads, trackways, enclosures and garden plots), the juxtaposition of fort and vicus, in addition to the capacity to determine temporal changes in the relationships between the two, makes the whole site highly significant, with the potential to contribute to national debates as well as local distinctiveness.

An initial appraisal of the new survey and excavation results, and a re-interrogation of previous published reports and unpublished archives and finds, is beginning to lead to the formulation of a revised timeline for early Roman, late Roman and post-Roman Lancaster.

This is proposed below, with the latest discoveries and ideas emerging as a direct consequence of the *Beyond the Castle* project marked in *Italics*. Inevitably these new theories will invite challenge as they reinterpret accepted opinion, but if some prove to be credible they offer a new dimension on the narrative of Roman Lancaster.

5.1 Early Roman

5.1.1 Fort 1

A 1C turf-and-timber auxiliary fort was established on Castle Hill, very probably between AD71 and 74 as part of the Roman pacification of the north. The fort, of the conventional ‘playing-card’ shape, occupied about 2.25 hectares and was draped astride the crown of the hilltop taking full advantage of the natural sloping ground.

The defences included four gates and a series of towers mounted on the ramparts, the whole perimeter surrounded by ditches. Internal structures would have included a headquarters building, commandant’s house, granaries, barrack blocks, stables and so on: in short, a typical Roman fort. The garrison was evidently a cavalry unit, the *Ala Augusta Gallorum Proculeiana*, comprising a substantial number of horsemen recruited from the tribe of the Treveri who lived around Trier in modern Germany. The horse and rider or ‘Reiter’ memorial stone to Insus, found in 2005, was from this unit and is now a prize exhibit in the City Museum.

5.1.2 Bridge and Vicus

A ford or timber bridge over the river was probably located north of the fort’s north gate or possibly further east. No remains have been found. In all likelihood, a small vicus grew up outside the fort’s east gate.

5.1.3 Fort 2

Following the 1C development there appears to have been a short period of abandonment which may have coincided with Roman military policy to develop the Stanegate Road (close to what was later to become Hadrian’s Wall) as the northern frontier of the province.

The fort was reoccupied very early in 2C and an inscription found beneath the priory church and dated to about AD 102 records building work here. The enlarged late 1C fort formed the basis for the reoccupation, and a stone revetment wall almost 2m thick was added to the front of the clay-and-turf rampart with at least one new ditch with a timber palisade on the inner lip of the ditch being located outside the wall.

Thus, a substantial late 1C/early 2C auxiliary fort was built over the site of Fort 1. This later fort appears to have been square in shape, occupying about 4 hectares and was one of the biggest of its kind in Roman Britain. Initially of turf-and-timber, it was subsequently rebuilt in stone after a short period of abandonment. It probably had a similar layout to Fort 1 but was perhaps re-orientated through 90 degrees, including many more barracks and stables and even a *basilica equestris exercitatoria* or cavalry training hall. In the second and third centuries the garrison was evidently another Gallic cavalry unit, the *Ala Gallorum Sebosiana*. Because of the large size of the fort, it could have held a double garrison – the *Ala* with perhaps a naval unit of bargemen, the *Numerus Barcariorum*.

5.1.4 Military Bathhouse

A multi-phase, stone-built military bathhouse stood outside the eastern rampart to the north of the east gate (parts were discovered during the construction of Mitre House).

5.1.5 Bridge and Militarised Zone

The bridge is likely to have been built in stone and *a militarised zone probably lay outside the fort to the north and west, perhaps undefended but demarcated by ditches*. The area between the fort and the river/bridge appears to have been occupied by an increasing number of buildings, mostly of timber, but also possibly including a shrine or holy well.

5.1.6 Courtyard Building (with baths)

On the eastern edge of this militarised zone was a substantial stone courtyard building containing a suite of baths. Approached through an impressive entrance flanked by columns, the courtyard building was probably built in the third century but on a different alignment to the fort defences. This grand and unusual structure was sited close to the edge of the slope overlooking the river/bridge and very close to fort's north-west corner, yet it appears essentially civilian in character, although Professor Sir Ian Richmond (the original excavator), thought it was the commandant's house inside the fort. What was its function and relationship to the fort? *Given its location in a militarised zone and away from the vicus further east, it is tempting to see this as a quasi-military building, perhaps a mansio or official inn for use by visiting senior military or civilian personnel, the residence of an important regional official (a tax collector has been suggested), or even the retirement home of a previous commander.*

5.1.7 Military Port or Harbour

Survey and excavations on Quay Meadow suggest that a military port or harbour was developed on the river frontage to the north west of the fort and downstream from the bridge, behind what is now St George's Quay. This may be the site of Portus Setantiorum (Port of the Setantii), one of only three ports on the west coast of Britain recorded in the Geographia of Ptolemy published in

the second century. The precise location of Portus Setantiorum has never been found and has been the subject of some debate. According to Ptolemy, the port lay between the mouth of the river Ribble and Morecambe Bay, probably slightly inland from the coastal strip between Fleetwood and Lancaster. Lancaster, at the head of the sheltered Lune estuary, must be a strong contender.

5.1.8 Vicus and Cemetery

The vicus continued to develop along what are now Church Street, Cheapside and Penny Street. Its full extent and course of its development are unknown but excavations off Church Street have revealed evidence for multi-phase timber and stone buildings.

The principal Roman cemetery lay to the south of the vicus around the southern ends of what are now Penny Street and King Street. There is some evidence that the cemetery expanded northwards suggesting it was initially well beyond the accepted edge of the civilian settlement, and certainly at some distance from the fort.

5.2 Late Roman

Coin-loss evidence suggests that the fort was abandoned and reoccupied several times from the mid-second through the mid-third century, when a building inscription indicates that the fort was again in use and occupied by a cavalry garrison, the Ala Sebosiana. An altar found a short distance up the Lune valley in the late 18th century suggests that a Numerus Barcariorum or ‘unit of boatmen’ may also have formed part of the garrison at this time (Watkin 1883; Shotter 1973).

5.2.1 Fort 3

A very large 4C shore fort was built in stone over the site of Forts 1 and 2, almost certainly re-using much of stonework from Fort 2. Based on the geophysical surveys and excavation in Vicarage Field West, this is now suspected to be square in shape with 4m-thick walls and projecting towers and occupying an area in excess of 4 hectares. The fort’s internal arrangements are unknown. The garrison (probably the sole garrison) at this period was the Numerus Barcariorum.

Lancaster, it seems, was part of a chain of late Roman shore forts built around the coast of Britain (and in northern France/Belgium). Initially these forts were sited along the east coast of Britain and on both sides of the Channel, and formed the *Litus Saxonicum* (or ‘Saxon’ Shore) from the late third century (Portchester in Hampshire is probably the best-preserved example).

During the 4C, this defensive chain was extended to the west coast of Britain, forming a hypothetical *Litus Hibernicum*. Lancaster, together with Cardiff and the much smaller Caer Gybi (Holyhead), appear to be part of this later system. *Lancaster’s Fort 3 corresponds very closely to the shore fort at Cardiff.*

Saxon Shore Forts are one of a small group of Roman military monuments which are important in representing army strategy and government policy. They are of particular significance to an understanding of the period and all examples are considered to be of national importance.

The Lancaster example is likely to offer the potential to recover well stratified river-frontage deposits, contributing substantially to national debates and local distinctiveness.

Roman Lancaster's most durable monument, the so-called Wery Wall built over the site of the courtyard building's baths, has been long thought to represent the remnants of a possible projecting tower associated with the north wall of a late Roman shore fort. The accepted consensus of opinion until now has been that this shore fort was of irregular shape, smaller than, and built on a different alignment to, Fort 2, and orientated perhaps to protect a port or harbour to the east.

A review of the published evidence casts doubt on the postulated alignments of this north wall and that of its southern counterpart. Topographically and militarily these supposed walls make no sense as they ignore the natural contours of the hilltop cutting diagonally across the line of the slope. Their eastward extension as far as the river would have caused an unreasonably large area of the vicus to have been levelled. They leave no trace in the landscape and have no effect on later property boundaries (unlike the earlier forts and vicus) and are absent from cartographic and other pictorial sources (again unlike the earlier forts). Moreover, early written accounts of the Wery Wall, particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when a greater part of it survived, describe the remains as having supposedly taken in the whole circuit of the hilltop and later served as a boundary to the north of and below the Priory Church. These descriptions do not fit well with an irregular and smaller plan. Furthermore, it is now thought that the port or harbour lay to the north west of the fort, sensibly downstream of the bridge, rather than to the east, which makes the plan even less plausible.

It is much more likely that Fort 3 simply reclaimed the site and shape of Fort 2 (albeit on a slightly expanded scale). This, however, leaves the question of explaining the surviving remnant of the Wery Wall and its position in relation to the proposed new configuration of the late Roman shore fort.

5.2.2 Military Port or Harbour

It appears that the earlier military port or harbour and adjacent militarised zone were expanded as an installation and/or supply base for the late Roman navy/army. As well as the presence of the Numerus Barcariorum naval unit in the fourth century, there is now new evidence for substantial stone buildings close to the riverfront, and set back from it, which are likely to be warehousing or possibly connected with boat-building or repair. There is also evidence for a road leading uphill from behind this area towards Fort 3 and for further late Roman structures immediately north of the shore fort.

A late Roman port or harbour at Lancaster has been identified, by some authorities, with the site of *Olenacum*, recorded in the *Notitia Dignitatum* which lists units in the Roman army and officials as they existed around the start of the fifth century. If so, then another cavalry unit, the *A/a Herculea*, must have been in garrison in the 4C. This identification, however, is now thought to be incorrect.

5.3 Post-Roman

Little is known of the history of the fort and vicus after the withdrawal of Roman forces from Britain around 410 or so until the founding of a Benedictine priory in the late 11th century – a period of some 800 years.

A number of fragments of early Christian carved stone crosses found beneath the priory church offers clear evidence of Christianity on the site and this, taken with the discovery of numerous early 9C coins from the priory's immediate environs, has led to the belief that here stood one of the numerous unnamed monasteries founded under St Wilfred between the seventh and ninth centuries. Documentary sources indicate that Lancaster Priory was founded in 1094 by Roger, Earl of Poitou, who bestowed upon the Benedictine Abbey of St Martin of Seez in Normandy the Church of St Mary of Lancaster.

The priory stood on the same site as its present-day successor but little above-ground fabric is left of the original structure due to major rebuilding work, particularly during the 15th and early 20th centuries. Buried remains, however, survive well as indicated in 1911 when re-flooring of the present chancel revealed Roman walls and the apsidal presbytery of the Norman priory church. Remains of the domestic buildings associated with the priory have not yet been located but they are expected to lie to the north of the priory in the space now occupied by the King's Own Memorial Chapel and the garden of the vicarage.

There is documentary evidence that the priory had its own precinct with a wall and gatehouse. Leland, writing in the early 16th century, mentions ruined walls of the suppressed priory being visible, and in 1928 limited excavation towards the west of Vicarage Field next to Vicarage Lane found the well-preserved remains of a room or turret. A map dated 1610 depicts a gatehouse-like building in this vicinity and this evidence, taken with the results of examination of one of a series of nearby linear earthworks in 1971 which appears to be the remains of the precinct wall or bank revetted with stone, suggests that the priory had a precinct wall and gatehouse controlling an access route from the medieval bridge across the River Lune to the north. During the 15th century the status of the priory changed gradually from a monastery to that of a parish church.

5.3.1 Pre-Conquest Monastery and Priory Precinct

Vicarage Fields West displays a well-preserved but confusing set of earthworks. Some are very likely to be early Roman relating to various ditch systems associated with the western defences of Forts 1 and 2; others appear to be post-Roman, forming a slightly obtuse corner close to an embanked track leading down the slope towards the river.

It is now thought that the north-west corners of Forts 1 and 2 lie within these earthworks; whilst the corner of Fort 3 (the suspected late Roman shore fort) lies partly outside the supposed early Roman ditches to the west and under the later earthworks to the north. The later earthworks may relate to the unnamed pre-Conquest monastic settlement thought to have occupied site of the Priory Church at some date between the seventh and ninth centuries. Alternatively, and probably more likely, they post-date the Norman invasion and are associated with remodelling of the landscape to create the Priory's precinct wall.

5.3.2 The Origins of the Castle

The presence of a large square late Roman shore fort occupying virtually the whole of Castle Hill is an intriguing hypothesis and it may also help to explain not only the location of the pre-Conquest monastery but also origins of Lancaster Castle. Lancaster's first castle, built in the late eleventh century, was almost certainly of earth-and-timber construction. The Normans sought

strategic locations on which to erect and fortify their castles. Better still if they could simply take advantage of pre-existing defences and thereby appropriate traditional places of power. Lancaster offered both a strategic hilltop and, if the theory holds, the extant remains of a square wall circuit of the late Roman shore fort. It was here then that Lancaster's first castle was built; a situation mirrored again at Cardiff and Portchester where medieval castles still survive within the walls of their square shore forts. At Cardiff and Portchester, however, the late Roman walls were retained as outer defences throughout the medieval period. At Lancaster, it appears that an outer defence was deemed unnecessary, perhaps because of the hilltop location. Once the decision was made to rebuild the castle in stone in the early twelfth century, presumably on or very close to the site of its earth-and-timber predecessor, the Roman walls would have provided a ready source of material and were consequently systematically dismantled.

Though less prevalent within the Study Area, any surviving evidence of the pre-conquest monastery is rare, and considered to significant. Questions remain over the dating of the current earthworks, and extent to which these were reworked in the Post-Roman or Medieval period (also recognisable as ridge and furrow). At the very least, the group value presented by this evidence makes a significant contribution to local distinctiveness – but perhaps less significant as individual elements. Should further excavated data come to light, a broader understanding of this period would reposition the Site as highly significant for this period of history.

The priory stood on the same site as its present-day successor but little above-ground fabric is left of the original structure due to major rebuilding work, particularly during the 15th and early 20th centuries. Buried remains, however, survive well as indicated in 1911 when re-flooring of the present chancel revealed Roman walls and the apsidal presbytery of the Norman priory church. Remains of the domestic buildings associated with the priory have not yet been located but they are expected to lie to the north of the priory in the space now occupied by the King's Own Memorial Chapel and the garden of the vicarage.

There is thus documentary evidence that the priory had its own precinct with a wall and gatehouse. Leland, writing in the early 16th century, mentions ruined walls of the suppressed priory being visible, and in 1928 limited excavation towards the west of Vicarage Field next to Vicarage Lane found the well-preserved remains of a room or turret.

A map dated 1610 depicts a gatehouse-like building in this vicinity and this evidence, taken with the results of examination of one of a series of nearby linear earthworks in 1971 which appears to be the remains of the precinct wall or bank revetted with stone, suggests that the priory had a precinct wall and gatehouse controlling an access route from the medieval bridge across the River Lune to the north.

During the 15th century the status of the priory changed gradually from a monastery to that of a parish church.

6 The Challenge of Reinterpreting Roman Lancaster

It will take time to unravel and interpret the complex archaeology, but already significant new discoveries and ideas are emerging. As well as adding to the sum of knowledge about Roman Lancaster, these latest theories are prompting some reinterpretations of previously held views.

They will also invite challenge and further questions – and there is much to resolve.

The size of the vicus appears to have been relatively small compared to the area occupied by the successive forts, militarised zone and port or harbour. Very few stone buildings have been identified as civilian in character as opposed to those with a military or quasi-military function. The basic simplicity of the cemetery and paucity of grave goods perhaps indicate a low-status civilian population.

It would seem therefore that Roman Lancaster was fundamentally a military concern rather than civilian. To judge by the longevity of Roman occupation (1C to 5C), the unusually large size of Forts 2 and 3, and the emerging evidence for a strong maritime role, Lancaster probably had a wider, regional significance to the Romans, certainly by the late Roman period if not before.

In essence, Lancaster appears to have been a garrison town and base for naval operations and supply – the Roman equivalent of say modern-day Catterick or Devonport – and presumably a very important command position between Chester and Hadrian's Wall.

The Reiter memorial stone to Insus of the *Ala Augusta* is one of the most striking of its type in Roman Britain. Although found in the vicus cemetery this is not thought to have been its original placement. This poses the question: Given the size and permanence of the garrisons at Lancaster, where was the military cemetery? Presumably closer to the site of the forts, and possibly to the south west? Perhaps the burials recorded during the construction of Westfield Memorial Village on West Road are an indicator of the military cemetery's location? Also, given that the garrisons were almost exclusively cavalry, there must have been open land for parades, manoeuvres and grazing. Where was this? Presumably on the flatter ground to the west in the Giant Axe area?

It is well known that Lancaster flourished as a trading port in the medieval and post-medieval periods. There is now growing evidence to indicate that this maritime function stretched back to Roman times and that Roman troops, visiting officials and supplies were just as likely to arrive in Lancaster by sea as by road.

If the identification with the location of *Portus Setantiorum* is correct, then the port or harbour facilities must have been of a substantial size by 2C to be mentioned by the geographer Ptolemy. The presence by 4C, if not before, of the *Numerus Barcariorum* unit of bargemen (in effect, marines), and the construction of the late Roman shore fort, are also indicative of the growing importance of coastal defence and maritime communication. Both presuppose the existence of a naval installation of some significance, with perhaps berthing facilities for warships (triremes) as well as the fast, shallow-draft sailing vessels favoured by the bargemen.

If, as now seems evident, the port lay to the north west of the fort (in the area of Quay Meadow), where were the harbour works? Under St George's Quay or Luneside East? Or perhaps further downstream concealed by the changing shoals of the Lune estuary?

7 Public Recognition and Interest

In an era of localism and distinctiveness it is essential for newly devolved city-regions to attract *both people and inward investment*.

Heritage is fundamental to the forging of local identity and conversations about a place's future, within which archaeology is one of the most tangible and visible activities that can offer involvement in this process.

As one of just thirteen places designated as 'Heritage Cities' by Visit England, Lancaster has a huge opportunity to utilise its archaeological potential for community cohesion, social outcomes and economic dividends.

There is no doubt that the site in question has played a fundamentally pivotal role in the historic development of the city and is central to Lancaster's identity, tourism offer and position as a 'Heritage City'.

Despite this, this history is poorly understood and archaeologically under-utilised as a tourism asset and focus for community engagement. Recent archaeological investigation has brought significant new evidence to light which cries out for further examination.

Initiatives such as the *Beyond the Castle* project have engaged in extensive programmes of community mobilisation, staging events and exhibitions, developing new narratives and publishing digital archives and videos that reach out to national and international audiences by growing an online community through social media, supporting citizen-led interest groups and using crowdfunding to enable new work.

From the outset, this was a project that deeply engaged local people and sought to communicate with them in real time, bringing together professional archaeologists and the public, sharing data at regular meetings and events, inviting participation in a range of activities and specifically providing training in archaeological excavation and other techniques. This work has resulted in a growing community invested in the site and made the process of archaeological discovery something anyone can participate in.

7.1 Research with the Public

To investigate the level of interest in developing the archaeological offer at the Site, DigVentures undertook an audience evaluation survey as part of the *Beyond the Castle* fieldwork on the site in September 2015. Everyone who visited the excavations on the open weekend was presented with a paper questionnaire, of which 20% of attendees responded. The results demonstrate huge potential for future community-based archaeological activity: 75% of the people who completed the questionnaire were drawn from the LA postcodes, and a significant 61% of these people had never previously visited the site. This indicates that people who live locally are not engaged with their own heritage resource, and presents a clear opportunity to mobilise this latent interest. Further important results are highlighted diagrammatically below:

There are several challenges for future archaeological works at the site. Foremost among these is the lack of a formal Archaeological Research Framework that sets out goals, methods and deliverables, linked to local economic regeneration as well as wider national and international research agendas. The first step in developing this framework must be a formal publication of

the results of all archaeological excavations on the site (both former and recent), which to date has not been completed. Additionally, there is no central repository or catalogue of accessioned archives and recovered material.



Source: DigVentures 2015

8 Ways forward

8.1 General Principles

It is clear that the site as a whole is archaeologically immensely rich, certainly at national standards, and almost certainly of international significance in terms of the late Roman material. Further, professionally-led archaeological work will, without doubt, expose remains of considerable worth.

The City needs to respond to these observations in a highly positive way by consulting with all relevant authorities, academics and so on to ensure that the site's unique, and unexplored, resources are (a) exposed properly, (b) conserved and written-up properly and (c) maintained as far as possible in situ for the benefit of both locals and tourists alike. In addition, the crucial and organic relationship with the site and the City needs to be embedded in any future interpretation and promotion of the City itself.

Recent work has shown the regenerative value of improved environmental management of the site, and the accompanying benefits of reducing antisocial use of the area and engaging local volunteers in this process. The work has removed invasive species, enhanced accessibility to the site and is gradually resulting in greater diversity in both human and wildlife use.

Whilst the site can offer much, it is also both fragile and vulnerable: vulnerable to night hawkers; fragile to neglect.

For example transitional arrangements for ongoing environmental management and maintenance to an agreed programme and budget need to be considered. In particular there are a number of discrete issues that need to be addressed in Vicarage Field East where the condition of the Wery Wall, Roman bathhouse walls and adjacent boundary walls are causes for concern.

These can be alleviated by the removal (under archaeological supervision) of some trees and vegetation and the old spoil heap from the 1970s bathhouse excavation. A major worry is the state of the northern boundary wall which is collapsing below the tree line and is in danger of exposing the remains of the Roman fort walls and earthworks at this point and therefore threatening irreversible damage to the scheduled ancient monument. This needs urgent action in collaboration with the adjacent landowner.

In particular, discussions are in train about the idea of some form of local designation and/or extension of the scheduled ancient monument boundaries to protect archaeologically sensitive parts of the site currently outside the present Historic England or local planning controls (Quay Meadow, Luneside East, Hillside, Giant Axe, Westfield Memorial Village, etc). An outline plan should be produced, taking into account the new evidence and emerging theories resulting from the Beyond the Castle project, and formally adopted to ensure an appropriate archaeological response is triggered by any future development proposals affecting the wider site.

As stated earlier, before any long-term programme of invasive archaeological investigation is progressed, an archaeological research framework and agenda for the site need to be developed and approved in order to guide future surveys and excavations and secure the necessary funding.

Research questions, like those posed above about the military cemetery and cavalry parade ground, or to test theories about the location of the late Roman shore fort leading to a previously

undiscovered Roman port or harbour, should be designed to significantly advance understanding. The framework and agenda should be embedded in the City Council's masterplan and other strategies as required.

As well as responding to agreed research questions, all requests for future archaeological surveys and excavations should be set out in a written scheme of investigation and undertaken in compliance to all necessary consents and permits.

8.2 Advisory Group

Stakeholder relationships for the archaeology of the Site should be formalised through an Advisory Group, chaired by Lancaster City Council and including members from the economic regeneration team as well as relevant consultants, professional archaeologists, subject area experts, academic contributors, funding bodies (eg HLF), and the local community. The remit of this group should include building a credible business case to justify multi-year archaeological investigations, to be anchored by a five-year Archaeological Framework and Agenda.

8.3 Partnerships

Partnerships with academic research institutions should be sought which can link the archaeological work to wider agendas and research questions, establish Lancaster's research profile and relevance on an international scale, and gain the buy-in from Historic England necessary for multi-year projects on Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Relationships with local universities and colleges that have strengths outside of archaeology, such as engineering, surveying or marketing, should also be built and leveraged for future projects. Universities are now actively seeking such partnerships in order to provide work opportunities for their students, as well as demonstrate 'impact' under the Research Excellence Framework rankings. It is worth considering that an established partnership with a local Higher Education provider could potentially lead to the opportunity of offering courses accredited on the ECTS grading scale, enabling participants to contribute course credits to the award of a university degree.

8.4 Research Framework

The immediate next step for the archaeological management of the Site should be the development of a five-year Archaeological Research Framework, to include a plan for excavations, comprehensive site interpretation and formal publication. Lancaster City Council should assert ownership of all archives from the site and require that this data is properly evaluated before any further interventions are approved.

All future excavation work will need to be underpinned by this site-specific research agenda, articulating the aims, objectives and strategies required to increase our understanding of the character of the site. The overarching aim should be to develop an extensive evidence base in order to ensure that the site can be appropriately managed and presented. This will be supported by the business case developed by the Advisory Group, articulating priorities such as developing wider understanding of the value of the historic environment; enhancing lifelong learning; encouraging support and enthusiasm for all aspects of heritage whilst contributing to quality of life.

With a potential shortfall in skilled archaeologists threatening the timely delivery of enabling works for HS2, vocational skills training for archaeology has become a major topic of concern. As part of the Archaeological Research Framework, a well-designed field skills curriculum could be a major selling point of any project at the Site, which could potentially become one of the few sites in the UK accredited by the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists to deliver NVQ-level training. Field training should be designed explicitly in line with National Occupational Standards (NOS), with participants encouraged to log their progress in a 'Skills Passport' with the potential to build this towards a CfA-accredited professional portfolio.

8.5 Community and digital engagement

Of equal importance to the archaeological aims and objectives, the Archaeological Research Agenda should be designed to engage the local community in their heritage, building skills capacity in order to contribute to the long-term sustainability of the site. Examples such as DigVentures' work in Morecambe (digventures.com/barrowed-time) show how this can be achieved by developing a digital approach alongside physical heritage assets, building awareness online (digital) which then converts into offline (physical) visitors. A well-conceived digital strategy including frequent publishing of blogs, photos, videos, and 3D models fresh from the trenches, will invite external communities (and those not usually engaged with archaeology) to take an active role. With the potential to engage a new local and global audience, this can result in a participatory reach that stretches far outside the narrow audience traditionally perceived as the beneficiaries of archaeology projects.

8.6 Crowdfunding

Participatory citizen involvement in heritage cannot emerge organically. It needs to be nurtured. This can be done by investing in staff who are tasked with maintaining communications through various media, by running events, sharing data, and building strong profiles at the centre of social networks. Lancaster City Council can play a central role in providing the platform to build this community around archaeology projects, and then converting it into financial support through the use of crowdfunding to support specific goals. A strong Archaeological Research Framework will present several opportunities for bespoke crowdfunding campaigns designed to grow the community, activate and demonstrate their engagement with the heritage offer, and assist LCC with some level of financial efficiencies.

8.7 Community Excavation

To maintain momentum during the process of establishing the Advisory Group and Archaeological Research Framework, a small community excavation programme for 2017 could be undertaken to address clear anomalies in the geophysics results for Quay Meadow. This should be viewed as an outreach and research activity contributing to the overarching Archaeological Research Framework, and bound by the same priorities and standards. Lancaster City Council should lead on this activity and maintain ownership of all archaeological results, marketing, and community engagement activities.

9 Summary

As set out in this document, and in P+P's report on the museums service as a whole in February this year, there is huge scope in both the short and medium terms to enhance the heritage value of the site (and with it, the City), to facilitate better public access, appeal to a variety of potential audiences and users, to develop new commercial opportunities and to contribute to the wider visitor economy; all of which are central to the City's plans for its future.

There is absolutely no doubt that archaeological digs attract people: as volunteers, as general visitors and as future enthusiasts and advocates. DigVentures, as a vibrant, successful commercial enterprise, exists to exploit this potential.

In context, P+P has recommended a radical approach for the future of the museums service in Lancaster District. If this approach is followed, for a number of years the primary, physical embodiment of service will, effectively, cease to exist until the Collections Centre is built and the City Museum re-opens.

All the more needed, therefore, is the on-going exposure of Lancaster's heritage by way of work on Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow and so on until such times as the City Museum reopens.

There can be no better investment in time (and money) than working on Vicarage Fields/Quay Meadow and its environs in parallel with the, essentially, behind-the-scenes work on the Collections Centre and the City Museum.

There is also a ready-made location for the 'on-site museum' in the basement of the Customs House on St George's Quay, from which all manner of interpretive methods can emanate.

It is not within the remit of this study to recommend methods of consolidation, conservation, preservation and interpretation of the expected finds from any invasive archaeological intervention. These are quite properly left for later stages in the project, save to note that such work is expensive, often of long duration and will require adequate funding to ensure a satisfactory outcome.

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11 Supporting Illustrations

Figure 1

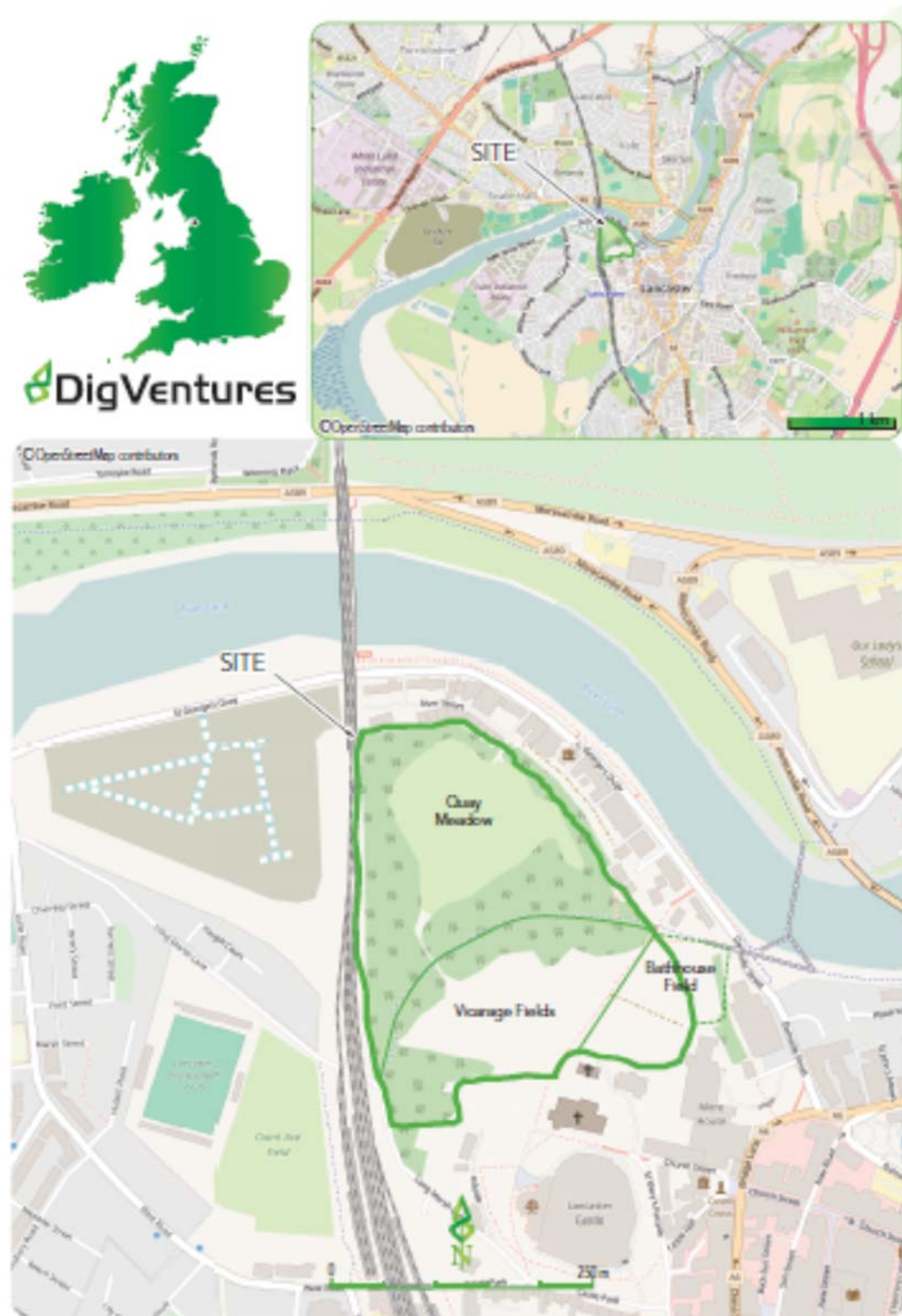


Figure 2

