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KELSALL VILLA, LEEMING LANE

LEEMING BAR, NORTH YORKSHIRE

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Planning Application Number *07/02085/FUL*

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

JB Archaeological Services

On behalf of

Hampson Develop

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Summary

As the construction of a new house at Kelsall Villa, Leeming Bar (SE 2875 8980) lay close to the line of Dere Street Roman road and its potential for associated archaeological remains a condition on the planning application (07/02085/FUL) for an Archaeological Watching Brief was placed on the ground disturbance works

The ground work for the new dwelling consisted of a topsoil strip over the area of the development followed by the excavation of strip foundations. The ground works were undertaken on the 2nd April 2008

The results of the watching brief were generally negative as it appears that the ground has either been farmland or a domestic garden in the past. The only artifactual material noted was the occasional fragments of late 19th to early 20th century pottery which appear to be as a result of manuring to improve the field or domestic refuse from the late 19th/early 20th century terrace

No other archaeological finds or features were recorded during the ground works

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1 1 This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief on the ground works for a new dwelling to the rear of Kelsall Villa, Leeming Lane, Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire (SE 2875 8980) The watching brief was a condition on the planning application (07/02085/FUL) as the site lay close to the line of Dere Street Roman road
- 1 2 The watching brief was conducted by JB Archaeological Services (JBAS) for Hampson Develop, and was carried out on 2nd April 2008

2.0 BACKGROUND

Historic Background

- 2 1 Kelsall Villa lies approximately 250m to the west of the known line of Dere Street Dere Street was one of the major Roman military roads built soon after the invasion to facilitate the control of the country The Dere Street is the Saxon name for the road which is a continuation of Ermine Way running from York, via Aldborough and Catterick and on to Corbridge in Northumberland Several sections of the modern A1/A1(M) run along the line of Dere Street The early Ordnance Survey maps show the area as open fields
- 2 2 The place name for Leeming Bar is derived from the earlier settlement of Leeming just to the south and Bar which refers to the Toll Bar which would have collected tolls for the upkeep of the road which is now the A1 The name Leeming is first recorded in the 12th century as *Leming* and is named from Leeming Beck, a river name possibly of Old English origin and meaning 'bright stream' (Mills, 1998, 218)

Geology and Soils

- 2 3 The underlying solid geology of the site is of Permian and Triassic sandstones (British Geological Survey, 2001) which is overlain by a quaternary geology of glacial till (British Geological Survey 1977) The soils that have weathered from this are the East Keswick 1 association which are well drained, fine loamy soils with slight seasonal water logging (Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983)

Topography and Land-use

- 2 4 Kelsall Villa is situated on the western side of the Leeming Lane which runs from Leeming Bar to Leeming (SE 2875 8980) The house stands on the edge of the settlement adjacent to farmland at a height of c 40mOD

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3 1 The objective of the watching brief was to identify and record any features of archaeological interest revealed or damaged during the ground works for the construction of the new dwelling The specific aims were to

- archaeologically record (graphically and photographically) any archaeological features revealed by the ground works
- recover any archaeological artefacts and environmental material exposed by the ground works

4.0 METHODOLOGY

- 4 1 The topsoil was stripped using a wheeled mechanical digger with a toothless bucket under direct archaeological supervision. Once the topsoil and the top of the subsoil had been removed and the area inspected for archaeological features the subsoil was excavated to the required depths across the site.
- 4 2 During all of the ground works the exposed ground surfaces were inspected for archaeological features and the resulting topsoil stockpiles were monitored for archaeological artefacts.
- 4 3 Drawings were produced of the archaeological features encountered, and these were also recorded photographically, on 35mm colour slide and black and white print film and digitally at 5m pixel resolution. 0.5m, 1m and 2m bi-coloured poles were used as scales and a north pointer for orientation. For the detailed photography a 0.4m bi-coloured scale was used.

5.0 RESULTS

- 5 1 The watching brief was generally negative due to a combination of possible earlier ploughing, as the area seems to have been farmland up until the construction of Kelsall Villa, and the fact that the site appears to be outside the main focus of the settlement of Leeming Bar. If there are any roadside features associated with Dere Street it appears that they may be closer to the Roman road than this site.
- 5 2 A very small number of fragments of late 19th/early 20th century pottery were noted in the topsoil which appear possibly to be the result of manuring or domestic refuse from the 19th century terrace to the north of the development.
- 5 3 No archaeological features were observed during the topsoil stripping and subsequent excavation of the footings.

6.0 DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

- 6 1 As can be seen from above, the results of the watching brief were negative due to possible ploughing and location away from areas of earlier activity. No direct evidence for any archaeological features were recorded.

References

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