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Appl. No. RIPO/2006/0335/FUL: Church Cottage, Main Street, Skipwith

Report on the archaeological watching brief to the rear of Church Cottage, Skipwith, North Yorkshire

Ob. sestertius of Hadrian (Scale 2:1)

October 2006

By Chris Fern BA MA

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Fern Archaeology on behalf of Mr Noel McCool in October 2006. A series of wall-foundation trenches were excavated at the rear of Church Cottage for a house extension. These revealed evidence for a substantial ditch running on a north-to-south alignment. The backfill produced medieval pottery of 11th- to 14th-century date. Given the proximity of the site to St Helen's Church, it is likely that this feature is associated with the history of this building, possible being a section of a surrounding boundary ditch (*fossa*), contemporary with late Anglo-Saxon or early Norman phases of architecture. Also found was a Roman coin from the reign of the Emperor Hadrian.

Site Location and Development

The site is located immediately to the west of St. Helen's Church, in the village of Skipwith, North Yorkshire (**Figure 1**). It is centered at National Grid Reference (NGR) SE 65697, 38495. The development comprised the demolition of an existing conservatory at the rear of Church Cottage to allow an extension to the northeast corner of the dwelling. The footprint of the extension measured approximately 56m². The ground works required an initial reduction of the existing surface in this area by *c*.0.3m, followed by the excavation of wall-foundation strip trenches, 0.6m wide by *c*.1.15m deep (**Figures 2-3**).

The prevailing topography of the village at this point is a flat expanse that stands at approximately 8m AOD (*Above Ordnance Datum*). More specifically, the height in the backgarden of Church Cottage is 8.18m AOD (**Figure 2**). This compares to the height in the adjacent churchyard of 10.14m AOD, with a benchmark on the church at 10.59m AOD. This height difference demonstrates the extent of the buildup of soils in the grave-yard, a common phenomenon of long-lived burial grounds. The brick fabric of the retaining wall between church and garden indicates a post-medieval date, though the build-up of grave-soil may suggest that the boundary is longer-lived.

The underlying geology is a largely stoneless Aeolian Sand (**C1000)** with clay lenses.

St. Helen's Church has a known history dating back to the Anglo-Saxon period, though may also have been a focus of Roman activity (SMR 326321). Hence, the proximity of the development to the west-end of the church made the disturbance of medieval burials a possibility (**Figure 5a**). Furthermore, 140m to the south are the surviving earthworks of a medieval moated manor (SMR SM28250). Therefore, in view of the potential for archaeological remains relating to these periods, as well as the village's formation, North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Section placed an archaeological watching brief condition on the development (**Appendix 5**).

The watching brief took place over two days from the 16th-17th October 2006. The weather in this period was mild and dry.

The site code allocated is **SKI' 06**.

Historical and Archaeological background

Prehistoric: Middle Bronze Age burial urns are reputed to have been recovered from Skipwith Common (Elgee & Elgee 1933, 85). In addition, the environs of the common exhibit the physical remains of a number of barrow clusters and isolated burial mounds, several of which are known as 'Danes' Hills'. Both square and round barrows are in evidence in at least one cemetery, located at SE 6452 3763, suggesting an Iron Age burial ground. Bulmer's History, published in 1892, records the opening of a number of these barrows in the 18th and 19th centuries which discovered both inhumation and cremation burials.

Roman: Cropmark evidence for South Moor Field shows square enclosures and roundhouses indicative of the late Iron Age and Roman periods. Field-walking in this field has further suggested Roman occupation (MAP Unpublished). Remains of the period were also found during the excavation of a pond at SE 6637 3870, near Little Common.

Early Medieval: The Anglo-Scandinavian carved slab built into the west tower of St. Helen's Church has been dated between the 9th-11th centuries. Its figural narrative has been interpreted as depicting Ragnarök, the Old Norse apocalyptic vision of the war of the gods (Lang 1991, 214). It may be regarded as evidence for a religious focus on the site in the period prior to the stone church. The base of the church tower dates to the mid-11th century (Ibid. 9).

Medieval: *Schiperwic* (as Skipwith was then known), meaning 'sheep town/market' is first recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, though the church is recorded two years previous as a gift from the king to the bishop of Durham (Smith 1937; VCH 1976, 89-101). The scheduled earthworks 140m south of the church are the remains of the moated manor and fishpond of the medieval Skipwith family (**Figure 1**). They inherited the demesne from the Norman Stutville lords, probably in the course of the 13th century. A manor house survived on the site until the mid-17th century (VCH 1976, 89-101).

Post-Medieval: The current Church Cottage building is most probably to be identified with the 'new vicarage' built after 1865 (VCH 1976, 89-101).

Methodology

The methodology used was that directed by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) in their Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief (**Appendix 5**). The standards laid out in *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (MAP2) (English Heritage 1991), and in *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), was adhered to throughout both the fieldwork and post-excavation phases. The archaeological contractor appointed for the project was Fern Archaeology. The supervising archaeologist for the duration was Chris Fern.

Following the removal of the shallow footings of the demolished conservatory, the entire footprint area of the new development was reduced by 0.3m under archaeological supervision, using a JCB with a toothless ditching bucket (**Figure 5b**). Subsequently encountered archaeological deposits, layers and structures were cleaned, recorded, and where possible, sampled by hand excavation to define their character and date. Full records were kept on a hand-held computer using the single context recording system and *Munsell Soil* classifications, which are summarised in **Appendix 1**. A full photographic record of the watching brief findings was made using colour digital photography (at 6 megapixel resolution) and monochrome 35mm film. Sections were recorded on *permatrace* at 1/10 scale, with plans recorded at 1/20 scale. All of the recorded plans and sections have been reproduced here in a digitised

format in **Figure 3**, with a selection of photographs shown in **Figure 5**. A record of ground levels was maintained throughout, relative to *Ordnance Datum*.

In the post-excavation phase of work all finds were cleaned and consolidated as directed in the *First Aid for Finds* manual (Watkinson and Neal 2001). Specialist assessment by Alan Vince Archaeological Consultancy (AVAC) was undertaken of the small pottery assemblage (**Appendix 3**), and Simon Holmes of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, Yorkshire Museum, was consulted regarding the Roman coin. Also, a 22lt soil-sample was taken from the humus rich layer **C1003** of ditch **C1002**. This has been sub-sampled and analysed by Palaeoecology Research Services (PRS), Durham (**Appendix 4**).

A full archive for the excavation is included in **Appendix 6** in accordance with IFA and MAP2 guidelines.

Fieldwork Results

The archaeological remains encountered during the watching brief were recorded with a separate context (C) number for each discreet layer, cut, fill and structure. The nature of the site works meant that most features were recorded in section only, illustrated in **Figure 3**. Only fills **C1003** and **C1004** of ditch **C1002** were subjected to excavation by hand. The context records are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

The topsoil, **C1001**, was a brown sandy humus, 0.28m in depth. In the backgarden of Church Cottage this layer stands at 8.18m AOD (**Figure 2**). The only find from this context was a Roman coin of Hadrian. At the rear of the cottage a brick pavement, **C1023**, was laid on chalk gravel hardcore, **C1022,** 0.2m deep, which in places replaced and abutted the topsoil.

The topsoil and hardcore layers overlay a buried soil layer, **C1007**. This was a brown silty sand, 0.38m in depth, containing occasional gravel and pebbles, which is visible in most of the recorded sections. A single fragment of red ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from it, which is of medieval or post-medieval date. This layer was cut into by a number of features of late post-medieval date: **C1008**, **C1010**, **C1012**, **C1013**, **1016** and **C1018**. **C1012** and **C1013** are the cuts of field drains of late post-medieval date, **C1016** and **C1018** are most probably shallow rubbish pits, while **C1008** and **C1010** are gullies or post-holes. All were backfilled with dark brown clayey humus sand deposits, similar in their make-up to the topsoil. Finds comprised modern pottery, brick and tile, which were not retained.

At the southern end of trench Section A-B a pit or ditch feature, cut **C1020**, was recorded. It was cut into the subsoil and had a wide U-shaped profile that measured 1.68m in width by 0.8m deep. It is unclear if this feature was sealed by the observed buried soil layer **C1007** which did not continue to this point. It was however cut by pit **C1018**, which contained modern CBM. The backfill of cut **C1020**, fill **C1021**, was a light brown silty sand with occasional pebbles and gravel inclusions. A single sherd of *Northern Gritty ware* was recovered, suggesting a possible medieval date for this feature.

The most substantial feature encountered was ditch cut **C1002**, which was sealed beneath the buried soil **C1007**. This feature was recorded in Sections B-C, C-D and D-E, as well as in plan (**Figures 2 and 3**). The oblique vertical section recorded in Section B-C reveals the substantial character of the ditch, which was in excess of the 4.8m width and 1.04m depth recorded. It also illustrates the multiple backfill sequence. The latest fill, **C1005**, comprised a dark brown silty sand containing occasional gravel and pebbles, 0.5m deep. The partial remains of a mature pig skeleton were recovered from this layer. Below this was a 0.56m thick deposit, **C1004**, of a mixed soil of brown silty sand and redeposited natural sand, again with pebble and gravel inclusions. Most of this layer was removed by machine, but a small amount, from the 'finish level' of the trench base (*c.*6.75m AOD) was excavated by hand. Five sherds of pottery were recovered from this fill: one of *Northern Gritty ware*, two of *York Gritty ware* and one of *Staxton-type ware*. One fragment of animal bone was also recovered. Sealed beneath this layer was a thin dark brown fill, **C1003**, which comprised a compacted clayey sand, with a high humus content, 0.12m deep. The full extent of this deposit below the trench base level was also sampled by hand, with 22lts of bulk soil samples taken for analysis. Nine sherds of pottery were recovered: six are from two *Staxton-type ware* vessels and two are of *Northern Gritty ware*. A fragment of animal bone was also collected. Beneath this layer was a light brown silty sand layer, **C1006**. At the upper edge of the ditch this layer was immediately above the cut of the ditch, suggesting that it is the primary fill, though this is not certainly the case. For health and safety reasons, being at an excavation depth of *c.*1.40m, it was decided not to excavate further this layer, which was also notable for its high degree of water-logging. Therefore the full depth of the ditch was not established and excavation ceased at 6.58m AOD.

From the plan of the base of ditch **C1002**, shown in **Figure 2**, it would appear at the point of excavation that it is aligned on a north-by-northeast trajectory. It is projected that it may have a surviving width at its upper limit of over 6m and a depth of at least 1.4m.

Finds

All archaeological finds were hand-collected during excavation. The animal bone, ceramic building material (CBM), glass, pottery and stone finds have been hand-washed to prepare them for expert examination and archiving. The copper-alloy (Cu), clay daub and iron (Fe) finds have been dry brushed. The finds were excavated, have been packaged, and will be marked and archived in accordance with the *First Aid for Finds* manual (Watkinson and Neal 2001). A summary of all the finds is to be found in **Appendix 2**. The specialist report for the pottery is enclosed in **Appendix 3** and that for the palaeo-environmental analysis in **Appendix 4**. Both are summarised below.

The earliest datable find recovered is a bronze coin of the Roman Emperor Hadrian (**Figure 4a; Frontispiece**). This coin, a sestertius denomination, shows on the obverse the well-executed right facing laureate bust of the young emperor. The surrounding text is in places abraded away but would originally have read IMP. CAESAR . TRAIANUS . HADRIANUS . AUG . P . M . TR . P . COS . III . The reverse shows

the deity Moneta standing holding weighing scales and a cornucopiae, within the legend MONETA . AUGUSTI . S . C . The coin was minted in Rome early in the reign of Hadrian and is dated between 119-121 AD (Mattingly and Sydenham 1926; Holmes pers.comm.).

Seventeen sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. Eight sherds, five from the vessel illustrated in **Figure 4b**, are from *Staxton-type ware* vessels of probable late 12th- or 13th-century date. These were found associated with sherds from broadly contemporary *Northern Gritty ware* and *York Gritty ware* vessels. None of the sherds are heavily abraded, and hence combined they suggest a date for the backfill sequences (**C1003-4**) of ditch **C1002** between the late 12th and late 13th centuries. Of noted significance is the vessel handle of a *Beverley-type glazed ware* (**Figure 4c**). This was found unstratified but, given the difficult circumstances of the excavation, it is thought possible by the excavator that this piece also originated from the ditch backfill. It is also thought by the specialist to be of 12th- to 13th-century date and a product of a York pottery industry using techniques of continental origin.

A single piece of post-medieval *Staffordshire slipware* was recovered unstratified. It is of early to mid 18th-century date and is thought by the specialist to come from a pie dish.

Twenty-six fragments of animal bone were recovered from the fills of ditch **C1002**. Twenty-four were recovered from fill **C1005**. They seem to represent the partially articulated remains of a pig, and include pieces of the upper and lower jaw. The teeth demonstrate considerable ware, indicating a mature or older animal.

No significant ecofacts were recovered from the palaeo-environmental soil samples taken from ditch fill **C1003** (**Appendix 4**).

Interpretation

The archaeology and artefacts excavated during the watching brief are a significant discovery for the local and regional understanding of the origins and history of the village of Skipwith.

C1007, the buried soil, is most probably a plough or garden soil. The lack of good dating evidence from this context, however, means that only a broad date across both the medieval and post-medieval periods is possible. This buried soil was cut by a number of features (**C1008-1019**) which by their content, humus soil make-up, and stratigraphic nature are of late post-medieval to modern date. The relationship between this layer and pit **C1020** was not visible in Section A-B. The medieval pottery from this feature suggests a possible medieval date, though this is uncertain and the pot, which was abraded, may have been redeposited.

The substantial ditch **C1002** is certainly of medieval date, though its earliest observed fill, **C1006**, was not excavated and its full depth was not realised. The earliest layer sampled, **C1003**, was characterised by a dark clayey humus matrix. This is interpreted as a buried layer of decayed turf. It suggests that the ditch cut had become

consolidated by vegetation at this point in time, after an initial period of backfilling. In this explanation the underlying fill **C1006**, a fine silty sand, therefore represents a windblown sand layer, naturally deposited after the initial digging of the ditch. If a sand bank had been constructed beside the ditch from the soils removed, this may have been the origin of this windblown fill. The pottery contained within **C1003** suggests a date for this phase of the ditch centred on the late 12th to 13th centuries; though the consolidated ditch might feasibly have been open for a considerable period either side of this date. In either case it is highly likely that the ditch is related to the church, which was in existence, at least in its stone built form, by the mid-11th century. Early medieval monastic and church foundations were often defined by an encircling boundary *fossa* (ditch) and *vallum* (embankment), and this may be the origin of ditch **C1002** (Blair 1992). By comparison, fill **C1004,** with its component of redeposited natural sand, may represent the deliberate backfilling of the remaining ditch at some point from the late 12th century onwards. It is possible that this episode coincided with the historically recorded founding of a vicarage at St. Helen's in the late 13th century, probably on the site of the current Church Cottage, which is the 19th-century vicarage rebuild (VCH 1976, 89-101).

The site phasing given in **Appendix 1** is based on the observations noted above, the site stratigraphy (as apparent in the recorded sections of **Figure 3**), and on the finds recovered from each context. The chronology of the phases is summarised thus:

Phase 0: medieval ditch cut **C1002** and primary fill **C1006**. Dated 11th-13th century?

Phase 1: medieval ditch backfills **C1003-C1005** and possible rubbish pit fill **C1021**. Dated 12th-13th century?

Phase 2: buried plough soil/garden soil. Dated 14th-18th century?

Phase 3: rubbish pits (**C1016-19**), drains (**C1012-15**) and other late post-medieval features (**C1008-11**). Dated 19th century?

Phase Modern: topsoil (**C1001**), turf, brick paving (**C1023**), hardcore (**C1022**)

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Appendix 1: archaeological context descriptions

Context	Identification	Interpretation	Shape	Munsell Colour	Stratigraphic Relationship	Soil/Stone Type	Inclusions	Finds	Dimensions (cm) Length – Width – Depth	Date (*period*)	Phase
1000	subsoil	natural	unseen	7.5YR5.6/6.8	cut by C1002, C1016, C1018 & C1020; under C1007	clayey sand	very occasional gravel/pebbles, clay lenses	n/a	*** – *** – 78	natural	natural
1001	layer	topsoil	unseen	10YR4.1	over C1007, C1018, C1020	sandy humus	occasional gravel/pebbles/ cobbles	Roman coin	*** – *** – 28	modern	modern
1002	cut	ditch	linear	n/a	cut into C1000; cut by C1008; under C1007; fills C1003-6	n/a	n/a	n/a	60[i] – 480 – 104[ii]	medieval	0
1003	fill	ditch	wide U-profile	7.5YR2.0	fill of C1002; over C1006; under C1004	compacted clayey sand with humic content	very occasional gravel/pebbles	animal bone, pottery	60 – 368 – 12	medieval	1
1004	fill	ditch	wide U-profile	10YR4.3, 7.5YR5.6	fill of C1002; over C1003; under C1005, C1007	silty sand with redeposited natural soils	occasional gravel/pebbles	pottery	60 – 432 – 56	medieval	1
1005	fill	ditch	wide U-profile	10YR3.2	fill of C1002; over C1004; under C1007; cut by C1008, C1012 & C1013	silty sand	occasional gravel/pebbles	animal bone	60 – 344 – 50	medieval	1
1006	fill	ditch	wide U-profile	10YR5.2	fill of C1002; over C1002; under C1003, C1004 & C1007	silty sand	none	none	60 – 480 – ***	medieval	0
1007	layer	buried plough-soil?	unseen	10YR4.3	over C1000, C1002, C1004, C1005 & C1006; under C1001, C1022; cut by C1008, C1010, C1012, C1013, C1016, C1018 & C1020	silty sand	none	CBM	*** – *** – 38	medieval – post-medieval	2
1008	cut	unseen	unseen	n/a	cut into C1005 & C1007; under C1022; fill C1009	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 36 – 26	post-medieval	3
1009	fill	unseen	U-profile	10YR3.1	fill of C1008;	clayey sand	occasional	modern	*** – 36 – 26	post-	3

					over C1008; under C1022	with humic content	gravel/pebbles	pottery (not retained)		medieval	
1010	cut	unseen	unseen	n/a	cut into C1007; under C1022; fill C1011	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 24 – 16	post-medieval	3
1011	fill	unseen	U-profile	10YR3.1	fill of C1010; over C1010; under C1022	clayey sand with humic content	occasional gravel/pebbles	none	*** – 24 – 16	post-medieval	3
1012	cut	pipe-trench	linear	n/a	cut into C1005 & C1007; under C1022; fill C1014; cut by C1013	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 28 – 38	post-medieval	3
1013	cut	pipe-trench	linear	n/a	cut into C1005, C1012 & C1014; under C1022; fill C1015	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 28 – 20	post-medieval	3
1014	fill	pipe-trench	flat-based U-profile	10YR3.1	fill of C1012; over C1012; under C1022; cut by C1013	clayey sand with humic content	ceramic pipe, occasional gravel/pebbles	none	*** – 28 – 38	post-medieval	3
1015	fill	pipe-trench	flat-based U-profile	10YR3.1	fill of C1013; over C1013; under C1022	clayey sand with humic content	ceramic pipe, occasional gravel/pebbles	none	*** – 28 – 20	post-medieval	3
1016	cut	pit?	unseen	n/a	cut into C1000 & C1007; under C1001; fill C1017	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 96 – 40	post-medieval	3
1017	fill	pit?	wide U-profile	10YR3.1	fill of C1016; over C1016; under C1001	clayey sand with humic content	occasional gravel/pebbles	modern CBM fragments (not retained)	*** – 96 – 40	post-medieval	3
1018	cut	pit	unseen	n/a	cut into C1000, C1007, C1020 & C1021; under C1001?; fill C1019	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 242 – 68	post-medieval	3
1019	fill	pit	wide U-profile	10YR3.2	fill of C1018; over C1018; under C1001?	clayey sand with humic content	occasional gravel/pebbles	modern CBM fragments (not retained)	*** – 242 – 68	post-medieval	3

1020	cut	pit	unseen	n/a	cut into C1000; under C1001?; fill C1021; cut by C1018	n/a	n/a	n/a	*** – 168 – 80	medieval	1
1021	fill	pit	wide U-profile	10YR5.3	fill of C1020; over C1020; under C1001?	silty sand	occasional gravel/pebbles	pottery	*** – 168 – 80	medieval	1
1022	layer	hardcore	unseen	n/a	over C1005, C1007 & C1008-15; under C1023	chalk gravel	none	none	*** – *** – 20	modern	modern
1023	layer	brick pavement	unseen	n/a	over C1022	ceramic brick	n/a	n/a	*** – *** – 7	modern	modern

[i] This is the length of the section excavated only. The ditch extended beyond the trench limits.
[ii] This is the depth to the base of C1003 only. The feature was not fully excavated.

Appendix 2: archaeological finds

Context	Find No.	Material	Type	Description	Date
Unstrat.	1	ceramic	1 x pot sherd – 1 x handle	1 handle sherd from a *Beverley-type ware* jug vessel of a medium sandy fabric, with a reduced grey core, oxidised to an external pink-orange hue. Partially glaze decorated, which is a yellow-brown colour. Minimal abrasion.	12th-13th century AD
Unstrat.	2	ceramic	1 x pot sherd -body	1 body sherd from a vessel of earthenware fabric. The hard fired exterior is sooted, while the interior is slip decorated in the *Staffordshire slipware* style. Very slight abrasion.	18th century AD
C1001	3	Cu	coin	A Roman sestertius of Hadrian. The obverse shows a well-executed right facing laureate bust of the young emperor. The surrounding text is in places abraded away but would originally have read IMP. CAESAR . TRAIANUS . HADRIANUS . AUG . P . M . TR . P . COS . III . The reverse shows the deity Moneta standing holding weighing scales and a cornucopiae, within the legend MONETA . AUGUSTI . S . C . The coin was minted in Rome early in the reign of Hadrian and is dated between 119-121 AD.33mm diameter.	119-21 AD
C1003	4	ceramic	9 x pot sherds – 2 x rim, 7 x body	5 sherds from a pot of a coarse sandy fabric, with a reduced grey core, oxidised to a red-brown exterior. The fabric, lipped rim and neck form suggest a *Staxton-type ware* vessel: 2 sherds of *Northern Gritty ware*, probably from the same vessel, of a hard fired grit-tempered fabric, a uniform orange in colour. The exterior is peppered with a splash glaze: 2 sherds, possibly from the same pot, of a coarse sandy fabric, with a reduced grey core, oxidised to a red-brown exterior. Again, probably from a *Staxton-type ware* vessel. Non-abraded.	12th–13th century AD
C1003	5	bone	1 x animal bone fragment	1 fragment of animal long bone.	12th–13th century AD
C1004	6	ceramic	5 x pot sherds – 1 x rim, 4 x body	1 rim sherd of *Northern Gritty ware,* of a hard grit-tempered uniform orange fabric, decorated with splash glaze. The rim is a squared-off type: 3 sherds from *York Gritty ware* vessels. Both have oxidised exteriors that are cream-beige in colour, though the thin-walled vessel has a grey reduced interior. 1 has sooting on the exterior: 1 neck sherd from a pot of a coarse sandy fabric, with a reduced grey core, oxidised to a red-brown exterior. The sooted neck form suggests a *Staxton-type Ware* vessel. Only the last-mentioned sherd is abraded.	12th–13th century AD
C1004	7	bone	1 x animal bone	1 piece of animal bone.	12th–13th century AD

C1005	8	bone	c.24 x fragments of animal skeleton	The assemblage includes long-bone fragments and jaw bone fragments from a mature pig. The fragments may be from a partially articulated skeleton.	Medieval
C1007	9	ceramic	1 x fragment of ceramic building material (CBM)	1 fragment of CBM, in a coarse sandy fabric, with a dark grey core and red-brown exterior.	Medieval–Post-Medieval?
C1021	10	ceramic	1 x pot sherd - body	1 sherd of *Northern Gritty ware*, a hard quartz-tempered fabric, uniformly orange in colour. The interior has a thin brown glaze. Moderate abrasion.	12th-14th century AD

Finds Summary

Find Type	Roman (1st-5th century AD)	Early Medieval (5th-10th century AD)	Medieval (11th-15th century AD)	Post-Medieval (16th-19th century AD)	Modern (20th- 21st century)	Total
animal bone	-	-	26	-	-	26
CBM	-	-	-	1	-	1
ceramic pot	-	-	16	1	-	17
Cu (coin)	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total	1	0	42	2	0	45
						TOTAL: 90

Appendix 3: Assessment of the Pottery from Skipwith, North Yorkshire (SKI'06). By Alan Vince and Kate Steane

A small collection of pottery from archaeological fieldwork carried out by Fern Archaeology at Skipwith, North Yorkshire, was submitted to the authors for identification and assessment.

The finds consist of medieval and post-medieval pottery, ranging in date from the late 11th/12th century through to the 18th century.

Description

The pottery is listed in **Table 1**. The codes used are explained in the text.

Medieval Pottery

Sixteen sherds of medieval pottery were recorded. All are of types known from York (Holdswort 1978; Jennings 1992).

The most common type present is a *Staxton-type ware* (STAXT), represented by eight sherds, from three different contexts and probably coming from three different jars. Staxton and Potter Brompton, in the southeast corner of the Vale of Pickering, were producing pottery from the late 12th onwards. The end-date of the *Staxton ware* tradition in the Vale of Pickering is uncertain and at Wharram Percy it has been suggested that the ware continued to be produced into the late medieval period (Le Patourel 1979). However, outside of that area the ware appears to be restricted to the late 12th to 13th centuries.

Recently, a series of analyses of *Staxton-type ware* from sites in Yorkshire and Cleveland have been undertaken (Vince 2004). These analyses have shown that *Staxton-type ware* is a widespread potting tradition and that there were production sites making wares of similar form in the Tees Valley (*Hartlepool Staxton-type ware* and *East Cleveland ware*); in the Beverley area (*Beverley Staxton-type ware*) and in the southwest part of the Yorkshire Wolds (Fabric code QC). The Skipwith examples, when examined at x20 magnification using a binocular microscope, have a silty, micaceous groundmass which is most similar to the *Beverley Staxton-type ware*, despite the proximity of the site to the southwest corner of the Wolds.

The next most common type is *Northern Gritty ware* (NGR), represented by four sherds, two from jars and two from jugs. This ware was produced at a number of sites in West Yorkshire from the late 12th to the 14th century or later (Vince 2005).

Three sherds of *York Gritty ware* were present (YG). This ware was also produced in West Yorkshire, but has a lower iron content and coarse temper than NGR. It was the major ware used in York in the late 11th century, and is found in the construction

levels of York Minster (Holdsworth 1995). The ware was probably still being made in the mid 13th century, however, and there is at present no way to distinguish early from late products.

The final sherd is a strap handle from a glazed vessel of *Beverley-type glazed ware* (BEVOT2B). At first glance, the fabric of this vessel looks like *Beverley glazed ware*, produced at Beverley from the mid 12th to the mid 13th century (e.g. Watkins 1991; Didsbury and Watkins 1992). However, under x20 magnification the fabric is seen to be more similar to vessels found in York and grouped together as *York Splashed ware*. Recently, a series of samples of these York glazed wares were analysed for York Archaeological Trust using thin section and chemical analysis (Alan Vince 2004). This analysis indicated that they were probably produced in the Vale of York, perhaps in York itself or its suburbs. The handle, however, stands out from these vessels:

a) it was produced on the wheel as a cylinder of clay which was then cut in two to form two handles. This is a method of manufacture employed in Carolingian France in the 9th century and introduced to England by the Stamford potters (Kilmurry 1977). From there (or by direct influence from the continent), the technique spread to other English industries but was replaced by other methods of handle manufacture in the 13th century. This would suggest that the Skipwith piece is of 13th century or earlier date.

b) The size and curvature of the handle suggest that it comes from a pitcher with a wide mouth, as opposed to a jug. Pitchers were produced at Stamford and rare examples are found in the late 11th/early 12th-century splashed ware industries, such as those at Nottingham and Lincoln (Young and Vince 2006). Close examination of the Skipwith handle suggests that the top of the surviving handle is close to the rim join and that a piece of added clay present at the top end was added to lute the handle to the rim.

c) The glaze does not appear to be splashed but has the glossy smooth appearance of suspension glazes. This might either indicate that the vessel is actually of late 12th/13th century date or that it was copying 12th-century *Stamford ware* vessels, some of which have a similar glossy glaze (although in those cases it is a yellow colour).

It is possible, therefore, that the handle is of early to mid 12th century date and a product of a York-based glazed ware industry.

Post-medieval Pottery

A single sherd of press-moulded *Staffordshire slipware* (STCO) was recorded. The vessel, which is of early to mid 18th-century date has soot on the underside and was probably used as a pie dish.

Assessment

Although a small collection, the Skipwith finds are of some interest. They may include material of early to mid 12th century date. The similarity of the *Staxton-type*

ware to that produced at Beverley may indicate the use of the predecessor of the A163 to Market Weighton and Beverley. They also include vessels of West Yorkshire origin (NGR) which are rare in York, suggesting that contact with West Yorkshire was direct rather than through York.

Three contexts produced pottery and these all contain late 12th-century or later types. The lack of *Humberware* from the site, given the proximity of production sites at York and Holme-upon-Spalding Moor, suggests that the site was not occupied later than the mid 14th century. However, the size of the ceramic assemblage is too small to state this dogmatically.

Retention

The finds should be retained for future study.

Further Work

The BEVOT2B handle should be drawn and photographed. One of the STAXT jar rims should also be drawn.

Table 1

Action	Context	REFNO	Cname	Description	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
	C1003	4	NGR		JAR	BS	1	1	2	
	C1003	4	NGR		JUG	BS	1	1	6	
	C1003	4	STAXT		JAR	BS	2	2	9	SOOTED EXT
DR	C1003	4	STAXT		JAR	R;BS	5	1	47	
	C1004	6	YG		JAR	BS	1	1	3	SOOTED EXT
	C1004	6	YG		JAR	BS	2	1	9	
	C1004	6	STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	11	SOOTED EXT
	C1004	6	NGR		JUG	R	1	1	12	
	C1021	10	NGR		JAR	BS	1	1	14	
	U/S	2	STCO	FEATHERED	DISH	BS	1	1	9	SOOTED EXT
DR	U/S	1	BEVOT2B	WHEELTHROWN STRAP HANDLE, DULL GLAZE	JUG	H	1	1	46	

Appendix 4: Evaluation of biological remains from a single sediment sample recovered from a watching brief on land to the rear of Church Cottage, Main Street, Skipwith, North Yorkshire (site code: SKI06). By Alexandra Schmidl, Jon Welsh and John Carrott

Palaeoecology Research Services
PRS 2007/04

Summary

A single sediment sample recovered from a probable late 12th to late 13th century fill of a substantial ditch revealed during a watching brief on land to the rear of Church Cottage, Main Street, Skipwith, North Yorkshire, was submitted for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential.

Ancient biological remains recovered from the sample were restricted to very small quantities of unidentified charcoal (and possible bone – a single tiny fragment) of no interpretative value. No material suitable for submission for radiocarbon dating was present.

No further study of the biological remains from this deposit is warranted.

KEYWORDS: LAND TO THE REAR OF CHURCH COTTAGE; SKIPWITH; NORTH YORKSHIRE; EVALUATION; ROMAN; LATE ANGLO-SAXON/EARLY NORMAN; MEDIEVAL; 11TH TO 13TH CENTURY; CHARRED PLANT REMAINS; CHARCOAL; ?VERTEBRATE REMAINS

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6 February
2007

Introduction

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Fern Archaeology on land to the rear of Church Cottage, Main Street, Skipwith, North Yorkshire (centred on NGR SE 65697 38495), during October 2006. The monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for the walls of a house extension.

Evidence of a substantial north-south aligned ditch was revealed, with backfills yielding pottery of 11th to 13th century date. It is possible that this feature represents a late Anglo-Saxon/early Norman boundary ditch associated with the nearby St Helen's Church. A Roman coin from the reign of the Emperor Hadrian (AD 117-138) was also recovered.

A single bulk sediment sample ('GBA'/'BS' *sensu* Dobney *et al*. 1992), recovered from the next to lowest encountered fill of the ditch was submitted to Palaeoecology Research Services Ltd (PRS), County Durham, for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential.

Methods

The lithology of the sample was recorded, using a standard *pro forma*, and a subsample processed, broadly following the procedures of Kenward *et al*. (1980), for the recovery of biological remains. The subsample was disaggregated in water for 24 hours or more before processing and its volume recorded in a waterlogged state.

Both the washover and the residue resulting from processing were dried. Plant remains and the general nature of the washover and the residue were recorded briefly by 'scanning', using a low-power microscope where necessary, components being listed on paper.

During recording, consideration was given to the identification of remains suitable for submission for radiocarbon dating by standard radiometric technique or accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS).

Results

Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is given in square brackets. A brief summary of the processing method and an estimate of the remaining volume of unprocessed sediment follows (in round brackets) after the sample number (derived from the context number by PRS for internal record keeping purposes).

Context 1003 [next to lowest encountered fill of Ditch C1002; probably late 12th to late 13th century] Sample 100301/T (2.9 kg/1.25 litres wet sieved to 300 microns with washover; no unprocessed sediment remains from the sample submitted but additional sediment was retained by the excavator)

Moist, mid to dark brown to mid to dark grey-brown (with some light brown patches), brittle to crumbly (working soft), slightly silty slightly clay sand. There were no obvious inclusions in the sample.

The tiny washover (~5 ml) was mostly of coal (to 4 mm), with some fine unidentified charcoal (to 2 mm) and lumps of undisaggregated sediment.

The small residue (0.11 kg) was mostly sand, with a little stone (to 6 mm), coal (to 5 mm; 1 g) and cinder (to 4 mm; 1 g) and traces of ?metal (two tiny flakes to 3 mm; <1 g), unidentified charcoal (to 5 mm; <1 g) and ?bone (a single fragment to 2 mm; <1 g).

Discussion and statement of potential

Ancient biological remains recovered from the sediment sample were restricted to small quantities of unidentified charcoal, probably fuel waste, and a tiny fragment of unidentified ?bone, and were of no interpretative value.

No suitable material for radiocarbon dating was present. Although sufficient unidentified charcoal could be recovered for submission the use of this material is not recommended. Where possible short-lived plant structures (such as cereal grains) should be selected as these are unlikely to have been stored for more than a few years, so that the date returned will most probably be close to that of the charring event. There are two possible sources of error if charcoal is used for dating. Firstly, the piece of wood may be from the centre of the trunk or a large branch of the tree ('stem wood'), and the time span between the growth of this wood (its carbon content being fixed at the point of cell formation) and the death of the tree may be several tens (sometimes hundreds, in the case of oak for example) of years. Secondly, prior to becoming burnt the wood may have been stored or formed part of a structure, also perhaps for many years. Both of these 'old wood' problems may result in a radiocarbon date significantly earlier than the charring event being returned. If charcoal is used for dating, then pieces with the waney edge (i.e. where the terminal annual ring is preserved) should be selected—this is most likely on fragments from relatively young wood such as twigs or small branches. Here neither the wood species present nor the numbers of years of growth represented could be determined for the recovered charcoal fragments.

Recommendations

No further study of the biological remains from this site is warranted.

Retention and disposal

Unless required for purposes other than the study of biological remains, any remaining sediment samples from this site may be discarded. The small quantities of remains recovered from the evaluation subsample should be retained for the present.

Archive

All material is currently stored by Palaeoecology Research Services (Unit 8, Dabble Duck Industrial Estate, Shildon, County Durham).

Appendix 5:

North Yorkshire County Council

STANDARD WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION (WSI) FOR LIMITED ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING ("WATCHING BRIEF")

1 The purpose of the work is to record and recover archaeological remains which are:
a) affected by proposed development only to a limited and clearly defined extent,
b) not available or susceptible to standard area excavation techniques, or
c) of limited importance or potential.
The work should not require the construction programme or development to be held up while archaeological investigation takes place, although some developers may give such a facility.

2 The WSI represents a summary of the broad archaeological requirements needed to comply with an archaeological planning condition or obligation. The scheme does **not** comprise a full specification or Bill of Quantities, and the County Council makes no warranty that the works are fully or exactly described. No work on site should commence until the implementation of the scheme is the subject of a standard ICE Conditions of Contract for Archaeological Investigation or similar agreement between the Developer and the Archaeologist.

3 The Archaeologist should notify by letter or e-mail the County Archaeology Service (archaeology@northyorks.gov.uk) at least 10 working days in advance of the start of work on site.

4 The removal of overburden (that is vegetation, turf, loose stones, rubble, made ground, Tarmac, concrete, hardcore, building debris and topsoil) should be supervised by the Archaeologist contracted to carry out the WSI. The Archaeologist should be informed of the correct timing and schedule of overburden removal.

5 Removal of overburden by machine should be undertaken using a back-acting excavator fitted with toothless or ditching bucket only. Where materials are exceptionally difficult to lift, a toothed bucket may be used temporarily. Subsoils (B horizons) or deep, uniform fills of features may also be removed by back-acting excavator but only in areas specified by the Archaeologist on site, and only with archaeological supervision. Bulldozers or wheeled scraper buckets should not be used to remove overburden above archaeological deposits. Where reinstatement is required, topsoil should be kept separate from other soil materials.

6 Metal detecting within the development area, including the scanning of topsoil and spoil heaps, should only be permitted subject to archaeological supervision and recording such that metal finds are properly located, identified, and conserved. All metal detection should be carried out following the Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice.

7 Where structures, finds, soil features and layers of archaeological interest are exposed or disturbed by construction works, the Archaeologist should be provided with the opportunity to observe, clean, assess, excavate by hand where appropriate, sample and record these features and finds. If the contractors or plant operators notice archaeological

remains, they should immediately tell the Archaeologist. The sampling of deposits for palaeo-environmental evidence should be a standard consideration, and arrangements should be made to ensure that specialist advice and analysis are available if appropriate.

8 Heavy plant should not be operated in the near vicinity of archaeological remains until they have been recorded, and the Archaeologist on site has allowed operations to recommence at that location. Sterile subsoils (C horizons) and parent materials below archaeological deposits may be removed without archaeological supervision. Where reinstatement is required, subsoils should be backfilled first and topsoil last.

9 Upon completion of fieldwork, samples should be processed and evaluated, and all finds identified, assessed, spot-dated, properly stored, and subject to investigative conservation as needed. A field archive should be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and photographs. The Archaeologist should arrange for either the County Archaeologist or an independent post-excavation specialist to inspect the archive before making arrangements for the transfer of the archive to an appropriate museum or records office.

10 A summary report should be produced following NYCC guidelines on reporting. The report should contain planning or administrative details of the project, a summary of works carried out, a description and interpretation of the findings, an assessment of the importance of the archaeology including its historical context where appropriate, and catalogues of finds, features, and primary records. All excavated areas should be accurately mapped with respect to nearby buildings, roads and field boundaries. All significant features should be illustrated with conventionally-scaled plans, sections, and photographs. Where few or no finds are made, it may be acceptable to provide the report in the form of a letter with plans attached.

11 Copies of the summary report should be provided to the client(s), the County Heritage Section (HER), to the museum accepting the archive, and if the works are on or adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument, to English Heritage. A licence should be granted to the accepting museum and the County Council to use the documentation arising from the work for its statutory functions and to give to third parties as an incidental to those functions.

12 Upon completion of the work, the Archaeologist should make their work accessible to the wider research community by submitting digital data and copies of reports online to OASIS (http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/). Submission of data to OASIS does not discharge the planning requirements for the Archaeologist to notify the County Archaeology Service of the details of the work and to provide the Historic Environment Record (HER) with a summary report on the work.

13 Under the Environmental Information Regulations 2005 (EIR) information submitted to the HER becomes publicly accessible, except where disclosure might lead to environmental damage, and reports cannot be embargoed as ‘confidential’ or ‘commercially sensitive’. Requests for sensitive information are subject to a public interest test, and if this is met, then the information has to be disclosed. The Archaeologist should inform the client of EIR requirements, and ensure that any information disclosure issues are resolved before completion of the work. Intellectual property rights are not affected by the EIR.

14 The County Archaeologist should be informed as soon as possible of the discovery of any unexpected archaeological remains, or changes in the programme of ground works on site. Any significant changes in the archaeological work should be specified in a variation to the WSI to be approved by the planning authority. If there is a need to remove human remains, an exhumation licence should be obtained from the Department for Constitutional Affairs (coroners@dca.gsi.gov.uk), or a faculty obtained where the remains are buried in land consecrated according to the rites of the Church of England.

Appendix 6: archive

It is hoped that the whole archaeological archive will be deposited with a suitable museum in the near future. Currently the archive resides with Fern Archaeology, where access can be facilitated on request.

Project Location:	Church Cottage, Skipwith		
Site Code:	SKI'06		
Description:	**Material**	**Size**	**Quantity**
Field drawing labeled FD1	permatrace	A3	1
monochrome photographs	matt prints	6"x 4"	9
monochrome negatives	negative film	35mm	9
colour photographs from digital	matt prints	6"x 4"	32
photographic register x2	paper	A4	2
Finds	various	details in **Appendix 2**	
NYCC Project Brief	paper	A4	4
client architectural plans	paper	A1	2
email correspondence – Gail Falkingam 27/09/2006	paper	A4	3
Letter- Selby Council SP/OPR/073/11.151106	paper	A4	1
Application for burial licence 1	paper	A4	1
Application for burial licence 2	paper	A4	1
Letter from DCA – OPR/073/11	paper	A4	1
Licence for the removal of human remains	paper	A4	1
extract from Mattingley *et al Roman Imperial Coinage*	paper	A4 & A3	3
Hadrianus coin	paper	A4	3
Ebay Roman coin	paper	A4	1
email correspondence – Simon Homes	paper	A4	1
table of heights x 2	paper	A4	2
skeleton record sheet – with various annotations	paper	A4	1
digitised sections – with annotations	paper	A4	1
Figure 2 – with annotations x 2	paper	A4	2
Figure 1 – with annotations	paper	A4	1
Figure 4	paper	A3	1
Figure 4	paper	A4	1
Appendix 1 – with annotations	paper	A4	3
AVAC Report 2006/129	paper	A4	4
PRS Report	paper	A4	4
Watching Brief Report	paper	A4	33
Archive CD x2	CD	-	2

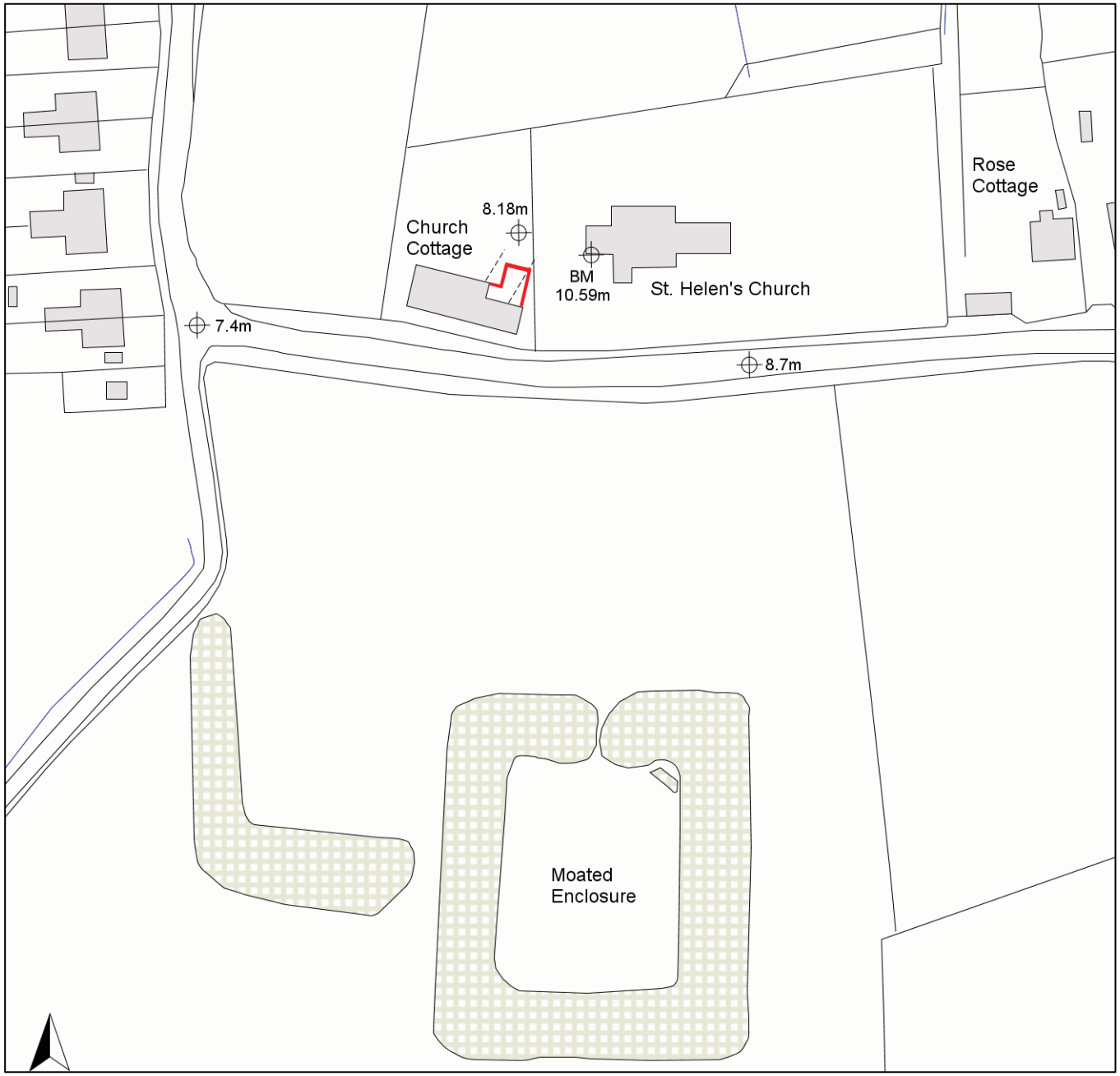


Figure 1. Site location (Scale 1:1250)

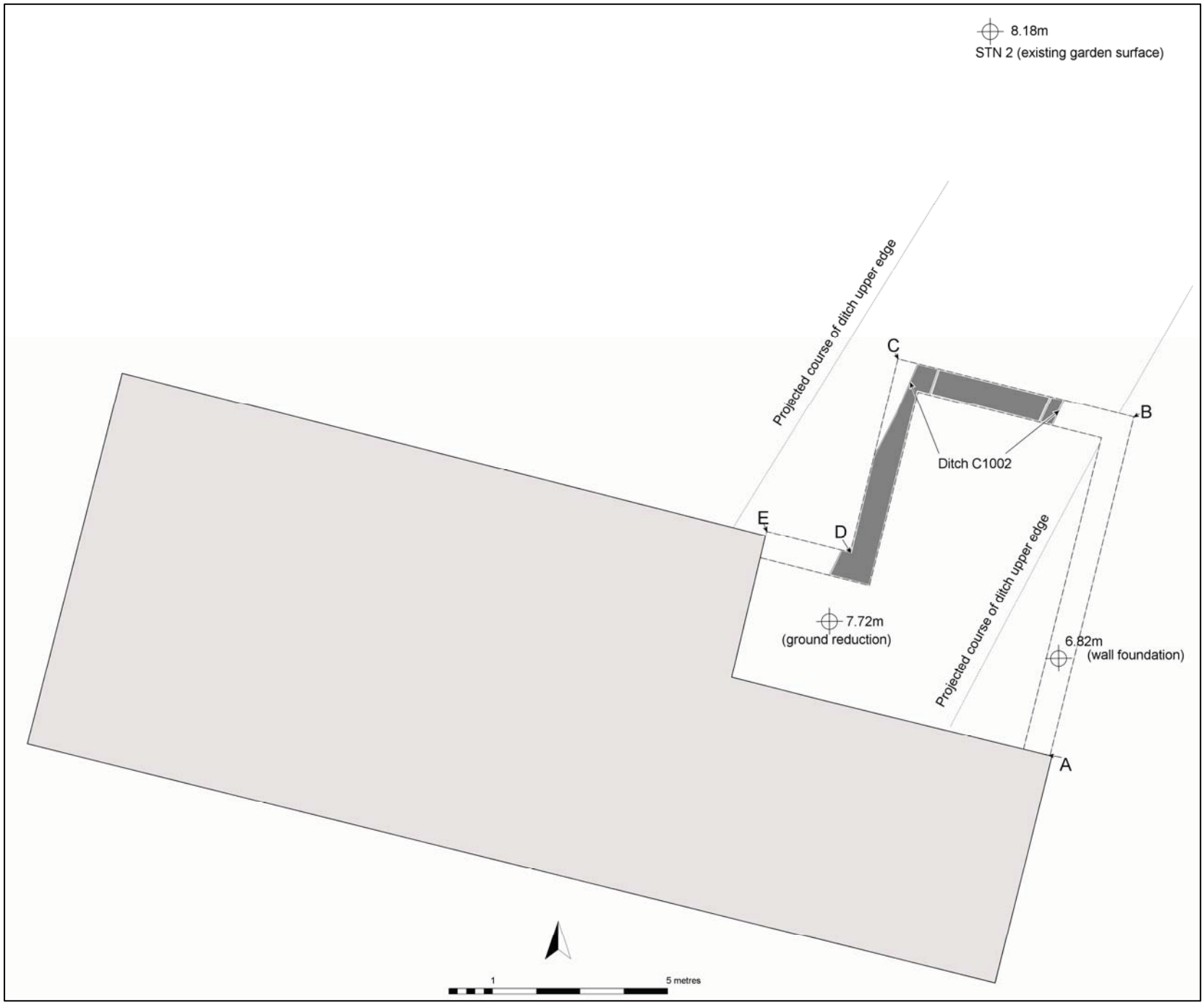


Figure 2. Trench location (Scale 1:125)

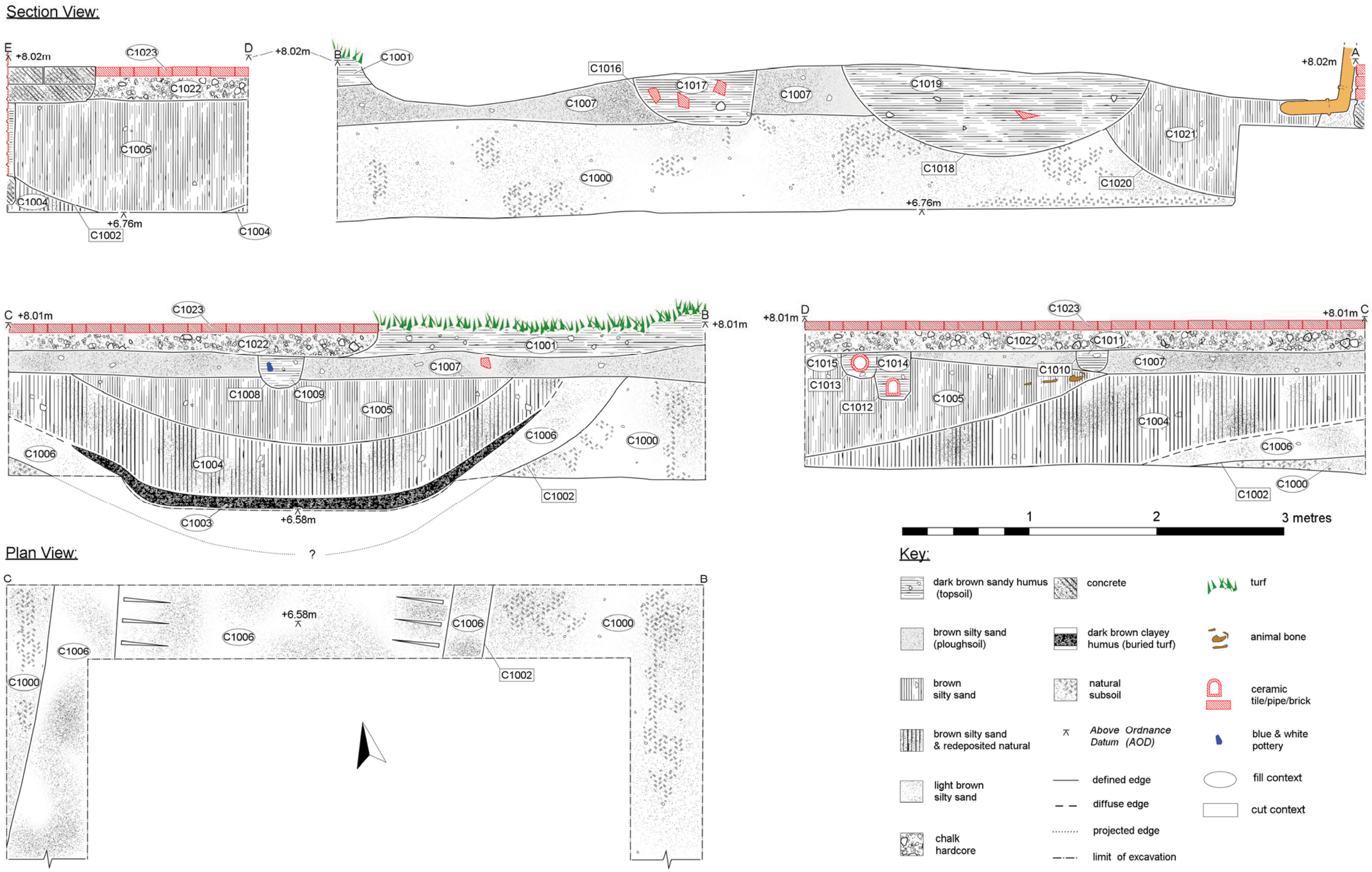
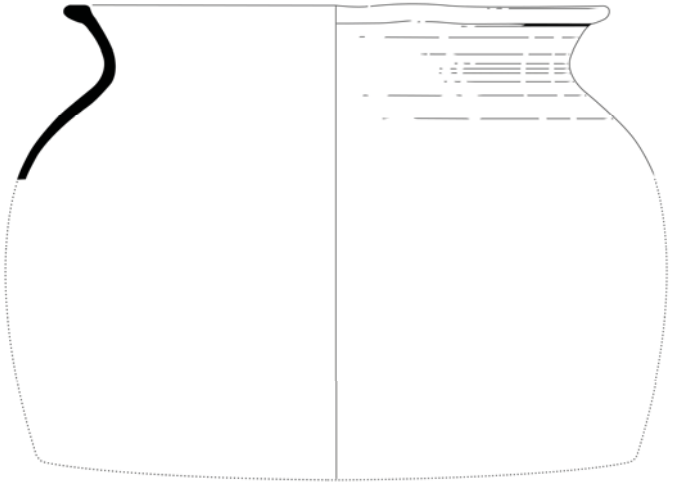
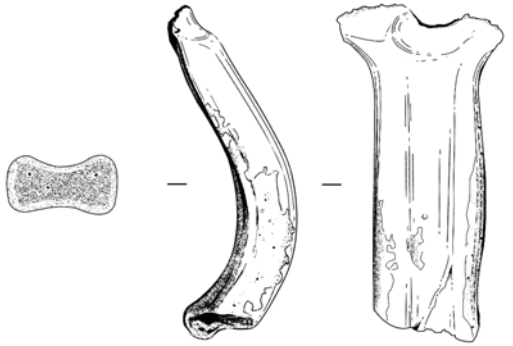


Figure 3. Archaeological sections and plan (Scale 1:30)

a.



b.



c.

Figure 4a. Roman sestertius of Hadrian, AD 119/21 **b.** *Staxton-type ware* jar **c.** *Beverley-type ware* handle (Scales a. 1/1 b. 1/3 c. 1/2)

a.

b.

c.

d.

Figure 5a. Site, looking southeast **b**. Wall-foundation trenches, looking south
c. Ditch **C1002**, looking northwest **d**. Ditch **C1002**, looking north