



IAN FARMER ASSOCIATES

Geotechnical & Environmental Specialists

NYCC HER	
SNY	11121
ENY	3203
CNY	5446/5427
Parish	2123
Rec'd	10/08/2006

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SPITAL HOUSE FARM, THIRSK ROAD, ROMANBY
NORTH YORKSHIRE DL6 3SA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Contract: 11003

Planning Reference: 06/00431/LBC, 06/00430/FUL

NYCC HBSMR Reference: ENY 3203

OASIS Reference: 16974

National Grid Reference: SE 37475 92649

Date: July 2006

Ian Farmer Associates (1998) Limited

Unit 1, Bamburgh Court, Team Valley Trading Estate, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE11 0TX

Tel. 0191 4828500

Fax. 0191 4828520

Intern - minus specialist reports

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

carried out at

**SPITAL HOUSE, THIRSK ROAD, ROMANBY
NORTHALLERTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE, DL6 3SA**

(NGR SE 37475 92649)

Prepared for

R.R.O'Brien
25 Harewood Lane
Romanby
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8BQ

Contract No: 11003

Date: July 2006

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Ian Farmer Associates Archaeological Services carried out an Archaeological Evaluation at Spital House, Thirsk Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 3SA between May 29th and June 21st, 2006 (North Yorkshire County Council HBSMR reference ENY 3203).

The investigation was commissioned by Mr R.R. O'Brien, an architect acting on behalf of private clients, Mrs V. Gammon and Mrs E. Bunyan and specifically related to a planning application for alterations and extensions at the aforementioned property.

The investigation consisted of the opening of six trenches in locations designated by the senior archaeologist of the heritage section of North Yorkshire County Council. The aim was to determine the quantity and quality of the medieval deposits associated with the site of the medieval hospital of St James, which was known to be in the vicinity. One key aspect of the investigation was to determine the levels of medieval deposits in relation to potential intrusive groundworks.

All six trenches, revealed medieval deposits of varying quantity and quality together with artefacts and ecofacts, nearly all of which had been either deposited or redeposited after the hospital was demolished. Trench, 1, 2 and 5 revealed fragments of a medieval cobbled surface, whilst trench 6 exposed a stretched of cobbled road which is probably medieval in date. Finally, in trenches 3 and, 4 short stretches of robber trenches for major walls aligned NE-SW indicated the site of a major medieval structure, possibly the original infirmary hall of the hospital? A late medieval (?) hearth was partially exposed in trench 3.

The archaeology of all six trenches was recorded within the contingency of the brief. The trenches were subsequently backfilled without further delay.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		
1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
2.0	DEFINITION OF A FIELD EVALUATION	3
3.0	SITE SETTING	4
4.0	GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	4
5.0	ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SETTING	5
6.0	METHODOLOGY	5
6.1	Ian Farmer Associates Archaeological Services	5
7.0	RESULTS	6
7.1	Explanatory Note	6
7.2	Trench 1 (Fig. A1.4, A.2.1, A.2.2, Plate A3.1a/b, M1)	6
7.3	Trench 2 (Fig. A1.4,A2.3,A2.4, Plate A3.2a/b, M2)	7
7.4	Trench 3 (Fig. A1.4,A2.5,A2.6,A2.7, Plate A3.3a/b, M 3)	7
7.5	Trench 4 (Fig. A1.4, A2.8, A2.9, Plate A3.5 a/b, M4)	10
7.6	Trench 5 (Fig A1.4, A2.10, A2.11, Plate A3.5a/b, M5)	10
7.7	Trench 6 (Fig.A1.4, A2.12, 2.13, Plate A3.6a/b, M6)	12
8.0	THE FINDS & SAMPLES(APPENDIX 5, 6,7 &9)	13
9.0	DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS	16
10.0	ARCHIVE	16
11.0	OASIS 17	
12.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	17
APPENDIX 1	-	LOCATION & SITE PLANS
Figure A1.1	-	Location of Northallerton NGR SE 374 926(1: 1,000,000)
Figure A1.2	-	Location of Spital House, NGR SE 3747 9264 (1: 50,000)
Figure A1.3	-	Spital House NGR SE 3747 9264 (1: 1250)
Figure A1.4	-	Trench location plan NGR 3747 9264(1: 500)
APPENDIX 2	-	PLAN & SECTION DRAWINGS
Figure A2.1	-	Trench 1 - Plan
Figure A2.2	-	Trench 1 – Section (SE facing)

Figure A2.3	-	Trench 2 - Plan
Figure A2.4	-	Trench 2 - Section
Figure A2.5	-	Trench 3 - Plan
Figure A2.6	-	Trench 3 - Section (NW facing)
Figure A2.7	-	Trench 3 - Section (SW facing)
Figure A2.8	-	Trench 4 - Plan
Figure.A2.9	-	Trench 4 - Section (SW facing)
Figure.A2.10	-	Trench 5 - Plan
Figure.A2.11	-	Trench 5 - Section (NE facing)
Figure.A2.12	-	Trench 6 - Plan
Figure.A2.13	-	Trench 6.- Section (NE facing)
APPENDIX 3	-	PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD
Plate A3.1a	-	Trench 1, context (8) looking NW [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.1b	-	Trench 1, context (3) looking NW [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.2a	-	Trench 2, looking NE [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.2b	-	Trench 2, looking SW [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.3a	-	Trench 3, contexts (4), (6), (7), (8) looking NE [Scale 0.5m]
Plate A3.3b	-	Trench 3, contexts (4), (6), (10), (12) looking NE [Scales 1m]
Plate A3.4a	-	Trench 4, contexts (7), (9) & (10) looking NE [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.4b	-	Trench 4, contexts (7), (9) & (10) looking SW [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.5a	-	Trench 5, context (5) looking SW, [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.5b	-	Trench 5, context (5) looking NE [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.6a	-	Trench 6, contexts (3) & (4) looking NE [Scale 1m]
Plate A3.6b	-	Trench 6, contexts (3) & (4) looking SW [Scale 1m]
APPENDIX 4	-	HARRIS MATRIX (M1-6)
APPENDIX 5	-	MEDIEVAL POTTERY
APPENDIX 6	-	BUILDING MATERIAL
APPENDIX 7	-	ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS
APPENDIX 8	-	CONTEXT RECORD
APPENDIX 9	-	FINDS RECORD

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Ian Farmer Associates Archaeological Services carried out an Archaeological Evaluation at Spital House, Thirsk Road, Romanby, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 3SA between May 29th and June 21st 2006 (NYCC HBSMR reference ENY 3203).
- 1.2 The investigation was commissioned by architect Mr R.R. O' Brien on behalf of private clients, the owners of the property, Mrs V. Gammon and Mrs E. Bunyan (who funded the work). The work, an archaeological evaluation comprised of the excavation of six trenches around Spital House. The predetermined trench locations were located in those areas where there was a likelihood to be intrusive groundworks
- 1.3 The requirements for the archaeological work followed the advice given by Central Government as set out in Planning Policy Guidance: Note 16 (PPG16), *Archaeology and Planning*, issued by the DoE in 1990, and the recommendations of the Senior Archaeologist Ms Gail Falkingham.
- 1.4 These recommendations largely took into account the following:

"The proposed development site lies within an area of archaeological interest, with potential for the survival of remains of St. James Medieval hospital. This hospital is believed to have been founded in the late 12th century AD and survived until the Dissolution in AD 1540. The present Spital house is listed Grade II; The listing description indicates that then house is 16th century in origin, largely rebuilt in the 18th century as a house and cottage on the site of the medieval St. James Hospital"

- 1.5 Given the above information for the environs of the site it was decided that an archaeological evaluation should take place before the granting of planning permission for the proposed works. It was therefore considered that a reasonable archaeological response to the planning application would be an archaeological prior to the consideration of the planning application. A NYCC brief was therefore issued for an archaeological evaluation to take place.
- 1.6 This report summarises the topographical, geological, archaeological and historical setting of the site, and presents the results of the archaeological evaluation together with recommendations for future work.

2.0 DEFINITION OF A FIELD EVALUATION

- 2.1 An archaeological field evaluation is defined by the Institute of Field Archaeologists
 - "... a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or

underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation determines their character, extent, quality and preservation and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.”

2.2 The purpose of a field evaluation, as defined by the IFA, is;

- “to gain information about the archaeological resource within a given area or site (including presence or absence, character, extent, date integrity, state of preservation and quality), in order to make an assessment of its merit in a appropriate context.

2.3 The results of a field evaluation are used to;

- Formulate a strategy to ensure the recording, preservation or management of the resource
- Formulate a strategy to initiate the response to a threat to the archaeological resource
- Formulate a proposal for further archaeological investigation within a programme of research.

3.0 SITE SETTING

3.1 Spital House is located within the parish of Romanby, on the outskirts and south east of the town of Northallerton, North Yorkshire, SE 37475 92649. See Appendix 1, Fig. A1.1 and A1.2.)

3.2 The site under investigation is located on the north east side of the A168 Thirsk Road. The detached farmhouse and stable is set back from and perpendicular to the main road. The current buildings are in a poor state of repair, whilst immediate area surrounding them is partly under grass and partly under orchard. This area is surrounded by timber fencing, hedgerow and trees. There is a gated driveway which runs along the south side of the farmhouse. A location plan is included in Appendix 1, Fig. A1.3.

4.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

4.1 Details of the geology underlying the site have been obtained from the British Geological Survey. Map sheet 42, ‘Northallerton’, solid and drift edition, 1:50,000, published in 1994 indicates that the site to be underlain by a mound of glacial till, (a boulder clay comprising of a sandy clay with stones and boulders). Spital House is situated on a mound of this glacial till, surrounded by alluvium. The average height of this mound is circa. 40m above sea level, with the surrounding alluvial deposits at circa 38m above sea. The general area is one of low lying relief with no outcrops of bedrock present.

4.2 The nearest bench mark is located on farm buildings on the south west side of the A168, 70m south east of the present site. The value is 40.92m above sea level.

- 4.3 There are several ponds in the immediate area but no water courses that run close to the house.

5.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SETTING

- 5.1 Spital House is a Grade II listed building, the listed building description is as follows:

'A Circa 16th century house, largely rebuilt in the 18th century as a house and a cottage. Red brick in English garden wall bond, coursed rubblestone. Pantile roof. Two storeys, 1: 2 bays, left hand bay a lower cottage. House: central board door with Circa 20th century porch; sashes with glazing bars apart from that to the ground-floor right which has 20th century casement, flat brick arches to the ground floor windows; brick coping and end stacks. Cottage; set back: board door with segmental brick arch to right; to left a 4 – pane sash with flat brick arch and a 12-pane side-sliding sash above; brick coping and stack to left end. Rear: late circa 16th century rubblestone with quoins, evidence of stone mullions in openings. On the site of the medieval St James hospital'

- 5.2 The area under investigation is located in the farmyard; land registry plot 4565. This may have been the principal location for the medieval hospital. Earthworks in the field surrounding Spital House, land registry plot 5365, indicate the location of structures probably associated with the medieval hospital. Known records from the period of the hospitals use support the idea for at least seven structures. Anecdotal evidence, yet to be confirmed, also suggests that lead coffins plus contents were recovered from this field during intrusive ground works for a water pipe in the late 1960's. The present whereabouts of these coffins remain unknown.
- 5.3 Written records from the medieval period confirm the presence and use of the hospital from the late 12th to the mid 15th century
- 5.4 The stable block at the rear of Spital House, and perpendicular to it, is late Victorian in date, as the building is not indicated on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1857. Interestingly, on the same map the suggested location of the hospital is marked as a dashed rectangular outline in the field, circa. 75m NNW of the present house. t

6.0 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Ian Farmer Associates Archaeological Services

- 6.1 The Archaeological Services followed the *Code of Conduct* (IFA) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contracted Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (IFA) throughout the investigation.
- 6.2 Excepting, a few modifications, which were agreed with the senior archaeologist of NYCC, the trench layout and methodology followed that set out in the original specifications for works.

- 6.3 A total of six trenches were excavated and with the exception of Trench 2 (3m x 2m), measured circa.2m x 2m. See Appendix 1, Figure A1.4.
- 6.4 All trenches were plotted in relation to the existing standing structures on site. A temporary bench mark was established on the stable block – this value was 42.46m above sea level. This was tied into the permanent Ordnance Survey bench mark nearby.
- 6.5 The uppermost recent deposits of the trenches were removed by a mini excavator with toothless ditching bucket. All work was carried out under archaeological supervision
- 6.6 All subsequent work was carried out by hand. This involved straightening sections and the removal of post medieval soil build up down to the latest medieval deposits. These were subsequently cleaned, photographed (black & White, colour slide film and digital photographs) and drawn at two scales; plans at 1: 20, sections at 1:10. Contexts were also recorded using pre-printed sheets. Where time allowed and if relevant, medieval deposits were sectioned and sampled.

7.0 RESULTS

7.1 Explanatory Note

- 7.1.1 The following description of the archaeological deposits is broken down as follows. Each trench is described and discussed individually from 1 to 6. The descriptions are cross referenced to the relevant drawings, photographs, matrices and tables in the appendices. An overview and discussion will follow drawing on all the information provided from the trenches.

7.2 Trench 1 (Fig. A1.4, A.2.1, A.2.2, Plate A3.1a/b, M1)

- 7.2.1 This trench measured 2m x 2m and was located on the north side of the track at the entrance to the site. The archaeological deposits comprised of the following contexts (1)-(4). The uppermost layer, (1) was recent topsoil which overlay a post medieval soil accumulation (2). This in turn overlay a remnant of hard standing/cobbled surface (3) comprising of cobble, gravel and fragments of ceramic building material (CBM). This was 0.1m thick and lay directly on top of an orange/brown clay (4), possibly a base for the cobbled surface. The deposits were extensively disturbed by roots.
- 7.2.2 Discussion: the uppermost deposits (1) and (2) are common to all trenches and represent the soil accumulation from the 16th century onwards. The remnant of hard standing or cobbled surface (3) is probably vestiges of a late medieval cobbled surface associated with the use of the hospital. The lack of other archaeological deposits in this trench suggests truncation associated with repeated reuse of the track way for Spital House. This surface was c. 0.3m below ground surface (circa 39.33m above sea level) – this appears to confirm the truncation hypothesis. The dateable finds, i.e. medieval and post medieval pottery were all residual, from uppermost soil layers.

7.3 Trench 2 (Fig. A1.4,A2.3,A2.4, Plate A3.2a/b, M2)

7.3.1 This trench measured c.3m x 2m and was located at the access area between Spital House and the late Victorian brick stables. The area available for excavation was reduced to 3m x 1m due to the presence of a plastic water pipe. Contexts (1) and (2) were represented by modern topsoil overlying a layer of redeposited building material, respectively.

7.3.2 This in turn overlay a cobbled surface (3) which was cut by a modern the water pipe trench. (Contexts (4) to (6)) This cobbled surface had been laid over grey/brown sandy clay with charcoal flecks with occasional cobble and CBM (ceramic building material) fragment. (7). This in turn directly overlay the remnants of a cobbled surface, with the largest concentration of cobbles in the NE half of the trench (8) This cobbled surface was bedded in orange brown clay (9). The cobbling (8) was cut by what is possibly a post hole (12), which contained a packing material of fragments of flagged sandstone (11). The post pipe fill, was mid brown silt (10).

7.3.3 Discussion: The medieval deposits in trench 2 were represented by the remnants of a cobble surface (8) embedded in an orange brown clay (9). This is confirmed by the fragments of medieval pottery recovered from the cobble surface (8), the cobbling had been pierced by a post hole with associated packing and post pipe fill, contexts (12), (10) and (11) respectively. Dating and function is uncertain, as there was only the one post hole and no associated finds.

7.3.4 The post hospital soil build up was represented by context (7), this also contained residual medieval pottery. This soil horizon had been compacted beneath another cobbled layer (3), which probably represented the yard associated with the 18th-19th century rebuilds of Spital House This cobbling was partly disturbed by a water pipe trench, (6) and associated fills (4) and (5).

7.3.5 A recent deposit of modern builders debris, (2) e.g. fragments of concrete block, and ceramic building material etc. This had been laid down in what appears to be an attempt to repair a worn cobbled surface, context (3). A thin layer of topsoil (1) covered the modern builder's debris. The medieval cobbling (8) in this area was circa.40.90m aOD. compared with 39.33m aOD in Trench 1, thus confirming the possible truncation of deposits in trench 1.

7.4 Trench 3 (Fig. A1.4,A2.5,A2.6,A2.7, Plate A3.3a/b, M 3)

7.4.1 Trench 3 measured 2m x 2m and was located immediately to the rear of Spital House, as close to the house as safety conditions permitted, (Figure A1.4).

7.4.2 The most recent deposits include modern topsoil (1) and a post medieval soil accumulation (2). In the south eastern half of the trench the interface between these two

contexts was marked by an additional layer of crushed ceramic building material (CBM), mixed with metal scrap and late Victorian pottery.

- 7.4.3 The next significant deposit was a layer of demolition rubble comprising of crushed mortar, stone tile fragments and cobbles mixed in with brown silt (7). Small fragments of medieval window lead and glass were recovered from this deposit. This material, context filled in a robber trench for a substantial wall and spilled over the south east edge of the robber trench. The robber trench, context (10) had steep sides and an almost flat base. It was aligned NE-SW and was approximately 1.20m wide. The north-western edge of the trench extended under the south-eastern section of the trench. The base of the robber trench was covered by a thin layer of mortar. (11).
- 7.4.4 Context (4) was a surviving fragment of wall foundation composed of heavily mortared cobbles and fragments of sandstone. This was stepped – the possible reasons for this are discussed below. The wall fragment may extend northwest under the section edge, perhaps indicating that this forms the junction with another wall aligned NW-SE. It was not possible to explore this possibility further in this instance.
- 7.4.5 Beneath context (7) on the south western side of the robber trench was a layer of sandstone fragments, ranging from gravel to cobble size grade (9) this in turn overlay a floor of orange brown clay(6) mixed with patches of burnt oxidised clay and charcoal with surviving small patches of a mortar surface. (14)
- 7.4.6 Set in this floor in the south east corner of the trench was a clay lined hearth, (12). This had been oxidised to an orange and purple colour by a source of heat, presumably charcoal. The contents of this hearth, context (8) comprised of multiple thin layers and lenses of silt grade residues of ash. These varied in colour from light grey, orange, purple and black. Mixed in with these residues was the occasional cobble and fragment of sandstone. Only part of the hearth and its associated deposits was available for sampling as the bulk of the feature extended outside the trench limits.
- 7.4.7 Discussion: The medieval phase of this trench was present in the form of a foundation fragment (4), a floor, (6) and a hearth (12) with associated residues (8).
- 7.4.8 The post medieval robber trench (10) had removed the foundation base for a substantial wall, of which only a fragment of the foundation base survived (4). It is likely that the wall foundation, which was at least 1.20m wide and aligned NE-SW, formed the base of a wall of a substantial structure associated with the medieval hospital complex. The surviving fragment of this foundation shows that this wall foundation was composed heavily mortared cobbles and sandstone fragments.
- 7.4.9 It is possible that the robber trench (9) in Trench 4 which bears a close comparison with the one in trench 3 marked the site of a similar wall associated with a structure which formed part of the medieval hospital complex. It is indeed possible that they are associated with the same structure, (See discussion below)

- 7.4.10 The surviving fragment of wall foundation in trench 3 may mark the junction between two walls, with another wall foundation aligned at right angles to this one. However as this wall fragment extended outside the trench limits it was not possible to confirm this.
- 7.4.11 Contemporary with the original wall, on the south eastern side was a floor, possibly internal, this comprised of context (6), an orange brown clay with a, now patchy, thin mortar surface (14) Set in this floor was a clay lined hearth (12) with associated residues (8). In the absence of any industrial waste, it is concluded that this is the remains of a domestic hearth. The exact date however is unclear. It was only possible to sample this hearth as most of the feature extended outside the trench limits.
- 7.4.12 Overlying the floor and hearth, was a layer of sandstone fragments and chippings (9) – which did not extend over the robber trench fill (7). This is interpreted as debris left from the demolition of the former medieval wall – though not from the removal of the foundation. Some fragments of sandstone bore traces of being cut and trimmed, suggesting the possibility that the wall was composed of facing stones dressed ashlar blocks of local sandstone with a rubble core interior?
- 7.4.13 Context (7) was the demolition debris associated with the robbing of the wall foundation, of which (4) is a surviving fragment. This represents a second phase of demolition after the removal of the wall. The debris filled the robber trench (10) and extended over the layer of sandstone chippings (9). The backfill of the robber trench contained fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem which are probably 18th century in date and contemporary with the removal of the foundation material – the second phase of robbing. This backfill also produced fragments of cut sandstone, stone roof tile and medieval window glass and lead came fragments. This gives some idea what the original structure looked like; a substantial building of dressed facing stones with rubble core on a foundation of mortared cobbles. The walls provided support for a stone tile roof – hence the width of the foundations. The window glass and lead at least indicate the presence of windows in the structure. The survival of these materials are probably remnants of the demolition and subsequent recycling of most if not all the building material.
- 7.4.14 The stepped nature of the surviving wall foundation fragment (4) was probably an attempt to create a series of temporary steps for ease of access from the robber trench whilst the material was being extracted!
- 7.4.15 Overlying the demolition spread (7) was the post medieval soil (2), this was allowed to accumulate after the robbing of the wall foundation. The layer of crushed ceramic building material, (3) which extends half way across trench 3, away from Spital House, is of similar nature to the bricks used in the Victorian extension of the house. It is concluded that this material is builder's debris remaining from the building of this extension. The extension does not appear on the Ordnance Survey 1857 map of the locale and it is concluded that this layer is late Victorian in date. This was confirmed by the late Victorian pottery recovered from this layer. The uppermost deposits were represented by modern topsoil (1). The medieval deposits in trench 3 were uncovered at circa 41.01m above sea level.

7.5 Trench 4 (Fig. A1.4, A2.8, A2.9, Plate A3.5 a/b, M4)

- 7.5.1 The trench measured, 2m x 2m and was located in front of the stable block at the rear of Spital House (Figure A1.4).
- 7.5.2 The most interesting feature was a robber trench for what would have been a substantial wall foundation, (9). This robber trench and backfill was aligned NE-SW and was at least 0.8m wide- it is possible it could have been 1.2m wide. On the base of the robber trench was surviving fragment of cobble foundation, (10). The trench had a flat base and steep sides. The robber trench backfill (8) consisted of dark brown/grey sandy material with moderate amounts of cobbles, stone fragments and stone tile fragments. Also recovered were pottery sherds, animal bone and window glass.
- 7.5.3 South east of the robber trench, the remaining area consisted of context (7) a layer of sandstone fragments in a yellow sand matrix
- 7.5.4 The post medieval soil accumulation, (2) was cut by an early Victorian land drain (5) and its associated cut (6) and backfill (4). This was aligned NW-SE and was confined to the south-western edge of trench.
- 7.5.5 Separating the modern topsoil (1) from the post medieval soil accumulation was a layer of crushed ceramic building material (3).
- 7.5.6 Discussion: The robber trench in trench 4 bears close resemblance to the robber trench in trench 3, context (10) although the exact width of the robber trench in trench 4 is unknown, it is possible that its width is similar (due to probing with a metal rod). The robber trench in trench 4 is on the same alignment as the robber trench in trench 3. The shapes are not dissimilar, i.e. flat base, steep sides and could therefore be contemporary with the robber trench (10) in trench 3. See final discussion in this report.
- 7.5.7 Context (7) the sandstone fragments in a sand matrix is provisionally interpreted as a base for a flagged floor which had been robbed out during the demolition of the hospital site. This deposit directly overlay the natural till. No other archaeological deposits appear to have been present.
- 7.5.8 The Victorian and later deposits were represented by modern topsoil (1) and a layer of crushed ceramic building material (3), similar to the brickwork used in the nearby stable block. As with the Victorian extension of Spital House, this appeared to be builder's debris left over from the construction of the stable building. As the stables do not appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1857. It is again concluded that this layer post dates 1857 and is in all likelihood contemporary with a similar deposit, context (3) in trench 3. The medieval deposits were encountered at circa 41.12m above sea level.

7.6 Trench 5 (Fig A1.4, A2.10, A2.11, Plate A3.5a/b, M5)

- 7.6.1 Trench 5 measured 2m x 2m and was located in a former hen/duck run in the southern corner of the site between the green house and the paddock. (FigureA1.4)
- 7.6.2 The uppermost deposits consisted of the usual modern topsoil (1) together in this instance with debris from the former duck and hen run. This lay above the post medieval soil accumulation (2). The deposits were noticeably thicker in this area. (See discussion below.)
- 7.6.3 Context (2) sealed a deposit of orange clay (3) which in turn overlay context (4) a brown sandy soil. These appear to have been lenses of deposits laid down in attempt to reduce the affects of subsidence in the area.
- 7.6.4 Beneath context (4) were the remnants of a cobble layer – this is confined to the area of subsidence. The base of this cobble layer, in part at least was an orange brown sandy clay (6), overlying a grey brown sandy clay(12)
- 7.6.5 The cause of the subsidence was a cut, a pit of unknown date and function (10). The deposits of this pit consisted of clayey deposits of mixed coloured clays with charcoal, contexts (7), (8) and (9), context (8) had a significant component of charcoal. No artefacts were recovered from the fills of this pit.
- 7.6.6 Due to time and limits of trench size it was only possible to section this area. There was some evidence of confusion in the deposits –probably caused by the subsidence over the earlier pit.
- 7.6.7 Discussion: The medieval deposits in this trench are represented by the remains of the cobbled surface (5). The fragment of cobbling owed its survival to the subsidence over the earlier pit and its associated fills (10), (7), (8), (9).
- 7.6.8 This earlier pit is of uncertain function and date. The charcoal sampled from the fills may afford a possible clue. One possibility exists- it is possibly the backfilled pit was left from the removal of a small tree or shrub with the charcoal representing the burning of the branches/twigs. This was thrown back into the pit with excavation backfill. If this is the case, it represents part of the site clearance prior to the construction of the hospital?
- 7.6.9 This filled in pit caused later problems, e.g. the subsidence of the cobbled surface (5) and caused some mixing of the deposits. Context (3) and (4) represent later attempts to counter the effects of the subsidence
- 7.6.10 The uppermost deposits, contexts (1) and (2) were noticeably thicker in this area and contained large quantities of 19th / 20th century pottery, animal bone, ceramic building material and scrap metal. It is likely that this area marked the site of the rubbish dump of Spital House for many years. The latest use for the area was for duck/chicken run- a small brick built duck pond was removed. The medieval deposits in this trench were exposed at circa, 41.00m above sea level.

7.7 Trench 6 (Fig.A1.4, A2.12, 2.13, Plate A3.6a/b, M6)

- 7.7.1 Trench 6 measured 2m x 2m and was located southwest of Spital House between the Paddock and the house itself (Figure A1.4)
- 7.7.2 The medieval deposits are represented by a cobbled road (3) and (4) – if it is a road and if it is medieval! The cobbled road is aligned NE-SW. The full width of the road is unknown however, with only part of the north-western edge exposed in the trench. The cobbled road is in two phases, with context (3) being the earliest and context (4) being a subsequent widening and slight realignment of the edge. This widening varies between 0.5m and 0.8m. Part of the widening is marked by a single sandstone curb – there may have been more but these have been removed
- 7.7.3 The deposits lying over and north west of the road comprised of the usual post medieval soil accumulation (2) which was in turn overlain by modern topsoil (1). The post medieval soil accumulation (2) was thicker north west of the road edge and overlay a series of soils of varying consistencies and colours, contexts (5), (6), (7) and (8) which extended at least 0.9m below the level of the road – the lowest deposit (8) contained a post medieval brick fragment. These deposits contained the occasional cobble, fragment of sandstone, stone tile fragments and ceramic building material.
- 7.7.4 The results of the excavation in trench 6 have left us with more questions than answers. For example, the road context (3) and (4), if it is one- is it medieval or post medieval. The road has two phases, context (4) being the later although no precise date can be ascertained. This cobbled road had gone out of use and not even been resurfaced, instead a post medieval soil (2) was allowed to accumulate over the top. The track way in front of Spital House may have come into use after the Georgian rebuilding and it is a possibility that the cobbled road went out of use around this time.
- 7.7.5 Another mystery connected with the use of the road is its origin and destination. The road is on the same alignment as the robbed out foundations in trenches 3 and 4 and it may therefore be contemporary with the former walls. It may have originated at the junction with the medieval Thirsk road, today's A168. The cobbled road may have terminated at the main medieval hospital complex. Another interesting possibility is that if this is a road connected with the hospital, then the junction with the Thirsk road may be marked by a gatehouse or chapel of some description, where the present paddock now stands?
- 7.7.6 The interpretation of the of the soil accumulations northwest of the cobbled road remains problematic. They appear to be late medieval or possibly post medieval in date, however due to restraints on time and the physical size of the sample section it was not possible to determine what the stratigraphic relationship between these deposits and the road. There was no evidence of occupation surfaces north west of the road. It is possible that these soils accumulations represent the fills of a ditch alongside the cobbled road. In the absence of any other information these remains the most viable interpretation. The cobbled surface was exposed at circa. 41.20m above sea level.

8.0 THE FINDS & SAMPLES (APPENDIX 5, 6, 7 & 9)

- 8.1 The finds included artefacts and ecofacts from all the trenches. A list of all finds is included in Appendix 9. The artefacts comprised of the following materials, pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), other ceramic objects, stone building materials, metalwork and glass. The ecofacts consisted of animal bones, mainly domestic with occasional wild animal represented. The other ecofacts comprised of charcoal samples recovered from trench 5. Each type of find is briefly described and discussed in turn. However a more detailed report is outside the scope of this report. It should be noted that virtually all finds were residual and not from primary contexts. Soil samples were recovered from the hearth residues (8) for future analysis if necessary.
- 8.1.1 Pottery: The bulk of the 18th-20th century pottery was stratigraphically concentrated in the uppermost deposits in the trenches, mainly in contexts (1) and (2) in trenches 1 – 6. The majority of the 19th-20th century pottery was of mass manufacture. This pottery represents part of the domestic refuse, along with animal bone etc. from the later occupancy of Spital house. Some sherds of 18th century pottery were recovered from context (7), the robber trench backfill in trench 3, again possibly contemporary with robbing of the medieval wall foundations and the rebuilding of Spital House in the 18th century.
- 8.1.2 The bulk of the medieval pottery was also residual. Stratigraphically sherds were recovered from post medieval deposits and were found mixed with later pottery. Only one context of medieval date, context (14) in trench 3 produced medieval sherds. The medieval sherds are currently undergoing analysis and drawing and will be subject of a later report. It is unlikely that the date of the pottery will not extend outside the date range of AD1140-1540, the date of the occupancy of the hospital. The source of the pottery is likely to have been in the North Yorkshire region (Appendix 5)
- 8.1.3 Ceramic Building Material: The bulk of the material recovered from the trenches is thought to post date the hospital. The brick and tile fragments bear a close resemblance to the brick and tile used in the 18th and 19th century rebuilds of Spital House. The fragments recovered were probably builder's scraps left over. Stratigraphically this material is usually confined to contexts (1) and (2) in the bulk of the trenches. In trench 1, fragments made up the hard standing (3). In trenches 3 and 4, context (3) was made up of 19th century crushed and broken CBM. The robber trench backfill (7) in trench 3 produced fragments of post medieval CBM, probably 18th century in date as did context ((8) in trench 6. Only one fragment of ceramic building material that could be considered to medieval in date, a fragment of glazed floor tile recovered from context (7), trench 2 along with fragments of post medieval ceramic building material.
- 8.1.4 Other ceramic objects: Fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem were recovered from context (7) the robber trench backfill in trench 3. These were possibly 18th century in date and possibly contemporary with the 18th century phase of Spital House. One possibility is that these fragments of pipe stem belonged to the people that robbed the wall foundation and reused the material to rebuild Spital House?
- 8.1.5 Stone Building Material: All stone building material was redeposited and not in a primary context. This material is not from the immediate locale but from further afield -

possibly from the North Yorkshire moors. . It is possible that the stone building fragments that remains is from the medieval hospital and these are the scraps left over from the demolished buildings. This material may be subject of further analysis but is beyond the scope of this evaluation report. Stone building material includes the following:

- 8.1.6 Ashlar building block fragments: a few scraps of worked sandstone, with a smooth finish, some fragments bore this finish on three sides. These would have been quality building blocks and would have been used for facing stones for walls of buildings. The core for these walls would have probably been mortared rubble and cobbles. The ashlar fragments come from the robber trench backfills, contexts (7), and (8), trenches 3 and 4 respectively. These scraps are what remained after the walls were demolished and the trenches filled back in with any rubbish remaining. Some ashlar fragments bore traces of severe heat indicating that there might have been a conflagration which led to the demolition of the structure?
- 8.1.7 Stone roofing tiles: Again fragmentary, found throughout the trenches in post medieval contexts again in robber trench backfills (see above) as previous but also in deposits overlying medieval contexts, e.g. contexts (1) and (2) in most trenches, context (7) in trench 2 etc. There are three types of material used for the roofing tiles, limestone, sandstone and a slatey mudstone, the most common type being limestone. Some of the tiles were pierced for nails or wooden dowels. Again it is possible that the stone tile fragments were from the roofs of the original medieval hospital buildings and these scraps are what was left after demolition and presumably recycling of the roofing material.
- 8.1.8 Stone floor slabs: Also small fragments were found, the material is sandstone. The fragments are thicker than sandstone roofing tiles. Again from post medieval contexts, backfills of robber trenches and post medieval soil accumulations. These fragments are again the few scraps remaining from the demolition and subsequent recycling of the material.
- 8.1.9 As a final comment on the building materials, although fragmentary, they do provide a valuable insight in the materials used in the hospital building and even a clue as to what they may have looked like. Further research may provide sources for these materials. (Appendix 6)
- 8.1.10 Metalwork: The bulk of the metalwork is 19th-20th century scrap iron recovered from post soil deposits, contexts (1) and (2) in the relevant trenches. The remainder is of interest in this report.
- 8.1.11 A fragment of pierced copper alloy sheet, from context (2) in trench 6, though immediately overlying a cobble road surface (3)
- 8.1.12 Fragments of an iron object of uncertain purpose, from a late medieval context (14) in trench 3.

- 8.1.13 Fragments of window lead or kame from context (7), robber trench backfill in trench 3. This context also produced some small fragments of medieval window glass. It is likely that the lead and the glass are from late medieval windows which may have set in the wall(s) that were subsequently robbed out.. If the interpretation offered below in the discussion is correct, then this evidence taken together with the building material from the same context provides an invaluable though limited insight into the status and wealth of the former hospital. Again the few scraps remaining can only hint at the former qualities of the structure.
- 8.1.14 Glass: The bulk of the glass recovered from the trenches is from the most recent deposits, either topsoil and post medieval soil accumulations. It comprises of 18th -20th bottle and vessel fragments.
- 8.1.15 However the robber trench backfills, contexts (7) and (8) in trenches 3 and 4 respectively produced very small fragments of window glass which could be late medieval in date. As context (7) in trench 3 also produced window lead or kame it is likely that the walls of the former building on site had leaded window(s) set in it. The glass and window glass could be subjected to analysis in the future which could reveal further information.
- 8.1.16 Animal bone: The animal bone in this report is of little value in relation to the context of the medieval hospital. Virtually all of the animal bone was recovered from post medieval contexts, i.e. not contemporary with the medieval hospital phase of the site. The principal contexts from where the animal bones were recovered are listed in Appendix x, it will be seen that contexts (1) and (2) in the relevant trenches predominate.
- 8.1.17 No articulated skeletons were found, bones were recovered singly and often were fragments or incomplete. Ribs, vertebrae skull and pelvis are represented here. Some bones bore traces of butchery marks.
- 8.1.18 A provisional interpretation suggests that the bulk of the bones were from domestic animals with ovicaprines, cattle, pig and possibly horse being represented. Some smaller bones were from domestic fowl, whilst one minute bone from context (7), trench 2 remains unidentified
- 8.1.19 The bones are from post medieval contexts. They are likely to be associated with the farm house phase of the site, i.e. Spital House. These animal bone fragments are the end result of rearing butchery, consumption and discard.
- 8.1.20 These animal bones, if it can be justified will be subject to at least basic identification for a future report on archaeological investigations at the site.
- 8.1.21 Charcoal and soil samples: Significant quantities of charcoal were found in context (8), trench 5. This deposit was sampled and may be subject to future analysis. Hopefully, this may provide a clue to the origins of context (8) and a possible function of the pit in which this deposit was found.
- 8.1.22 Soil samples were taken from residues (8) from the hearth (12) in trench 3. These may be subject to future analysis when time and resources allow. Hopefully the analysis will

afford a possible clue to the function of the hearth and if domestic, to see if anything was cooked there. (Appendix 8)

9.0 DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Medieval or early post medieval deposits were exposed in between 39.33m (Trench 1) and 41.20m above sea level. In trenches 2 and 5 the principal deposits were cobbled surfaces probably associated with the hospital buildings. The medieval deposits in trench 1 may have been truncated by the later track way.
- 9.2 Trenches 3 and 4 produced robber trenches for foundations of major walls. It is tempting to think that the former walls were part of a hall of some kind. It is known that early medieval hospital building had a principal the infirmary hall, often with a chapel attached to one end. We may have this situation here. The measurement between the two robber trenches is circa 10m and it is conceivable that the former walls may have been the north-eastern and south-western wall of such a structure. . This structure is likely to have dominated the area where the farmyard of Spital House is now situated. If Spital House is part of this hospital complex the relationship cannot be seen as yet. Limitations on the size of the trenches precluded any further attempts of adding to this interpretation.
- 9.3 The backfills of the robber trenches here indicate the wealth and status of the former structure(s). For example, fragments of dressed sandstone left over from the removal of facing stones, stone roofing tiles, possible fragments of a stone slab floor, window glass and lead all attest to this interpretation. A fragment of medieval glazed floor tile from trench 2, albeit in a residual context also hints at a prestigious building.
- 9.4 The results in trench 5 are something of a puzzle, was this road, or one of the phases contemporary with the hospital or does the road post date it. Observations on the alignment of the road suggest it is aligned on Spital house and may in fact be beneath it thereby confirming the pre Spital House date.
- 9.5 No certain interpretation can be offered for the early pit in trench 5 – perhaps a small tree once stood there and the results of its removal and perhaps burning are all that's left.
- 9.6 Typically in evaluations of this kind, questions have been answered and others have been raised. The only recommendation at this stage is that all intrusive ground works at Spital House continue to be monitored closely, so that more information can be added to the database. The observations carried out in the surrounding field of Spital House are beyond the scope of this report, however some form of non destructive survey could be considered. One final recommendation is that once all the building works associated with Spital House are completed, it is suggested a detailed report of all the results are compiled and published in the county archaeological journal.

10.0 ARCHIVE

- 10.1 The site archive is currently held at the Newcastle office of Ian Farmer Associates Archaeological Services and consists of artefacts and ecofacts, context sheets, archive index sheets etc. Arrangements will be made to deposit the archive with an appropriate local museum within 6 months following the submission of this report.
- 10.2 A copy of the evaluation report will be deposited with:

**North Yorkshire County Council
Heritage Section
Countryside Services
County Hall
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8AH**

11.0 OASIS

- 11.1 Ian Farmer Associates Archaeological Services support the Online Access to Index Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) Project. The overall aim of the OASIS Project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeologically grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large scale developer funded fieldwork.
- 11.2 The online OASIS form has been completed and is awaiting validation by Northumberland SMR thus placing the information into the public domain at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>

12. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges the assistance and support of the following people in the archaeological investigation and compilation of this report: the sponsors, Mrs V. Gamon, Mrs E. Bunyan, the commissioning architect, Mr R.R. O'Brien, site planner, Ms Frigga Kruse., and site assistant Ms Cherry Bailey.

For and on behalf of Ian Farmer Associates (1998) Limited

Dr Ian J Stewart
Geoarchaeologist