

CASTLE HILL FARM DRAX, NEAR SELBY, NORTH YORKSHIRE

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Rec'd 30/10/2006

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Matrix Archaeology

October 2005

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CASTLE HILL FARM,
DRAX, NEAR SELBY,
NORTH YORKSHIRE

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

Report No 2006-12

Client Dr Timothy Baxter

© Matrix Archaeology
Kenwood House
10 Kenwood Road
Stretford
Manchester
M32 8PT

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological desk based assessment of land at Castle Hill Farm in Drax village was undertaken by Matrix Archaeology during September 2006 on behalf of the client Dr Timothy Baxter in advance of proposed site development. The work was undertaken in accordance with PPG16 and was commissioned by Louise Dowd of the Emery Planning Partnership Ltd. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the archaeological implications of proposed residential adaptation of disused farm buildings within the moated site.
- 1.2 The study area comprised an area of *circa* 1Ha which included the farmhouse and farm buildings within the medieval moated site (site centred at NGR SE 6760 2602). The site had ceased to function as a farm at the time of the assessment whilst the farmhouse was no longer occupied.
- 1.3 A previous archaeological investigation had been undertaken at the site on the adjacent property known as The Granary (see Section 4).
- 1.4 The desk based assessment comprised consultation of a number of primary and secondary documentary sources as well as all easily available historic cartographic. This was followed by a site and buildings inspection in order to determine survival or likely survival of any above or below ground archaeological sites and features in accordance with advice from central government as outlined in *Planning Policy Guidance Notes PPG15* and *PPG16*.
- 1.5 None of the farm buildings were listed although the moated site comprised a Scheduled Ancient Monument (S A M – SM30108). The limits of the S A M are shown in **Figure 5** but **PLEASE NOTE** that this is derived from a much smaller scale plan and cannot be treated as a definitive boundary.
- 1.6 A gazetteer of features and sites has been produced this is complemented by a plan (**Figure 5**) which shows the locations of recorded sites and structures.
- 1.7 **Acknowledgements**
The following individuals and organisations are to be thanked for their assistance during the work:
Nick Boldron and Gail Falkingham of North Yorkshire County Council Archaeology Section
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2 LOCATION, GEOMORPHOLOGY, AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 Castle Hill Farm is located within open farmland on Castle Hill Lane on the southern edge of the village of Drax *circa* 8km to the south east of Selby (Figure 1) It is sited *circa* 350m to the south of St Peter and Paul's Church which forms the nucleus of the village Drax Power Station is located 1.5km to the north west of the site
- 2.2 Within the lower reaches of the Vale of York topographic variation is almost non-existent Drax lies on an interfluvium between the tidal channels of the rivers Ouse and Aire with local ground levels of between 3 and 5 metres O.D. Prior to construction of the existing flood defences much of this area must have been subjected to seasonal inundation
- 2.3 Geologically the area is underlain at depth by the Permo-Triassic Bunter Sandstones but there are no natural outcrops of this type locally as the drift overburden is considerable within this part of the Vale of York (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1972)
- 2.4 The local drift comprises largely alluvial silts deposited during flooding from the prehistoric period onwards To the north west of Drax in the Selby area are extensive spreads of the glacio-lacustrine sand known as the 25 foot drift of the Vale of York In the Drax area are smaller spreads of this deposit and one such spread extends between Castle Hill Farm and Scurff Hall to the east The site is located on the western end of this deposit (Geological Survey of Great Britain 1972 Clark *et al* 2004)
- 2.5 The derived soils within the area closely reflect the drift geology with ground water gleys developing on the alluvium and surface water gleys on the sands of the 25 foot drift

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 For the purposes of this report the periods discussed are as follows

Prehistoric	Pre AD 43
Roman/Romano British	AD 43 AD 450
Early Medieval	AD 450 AD 1066
Medieval	AD 1066 AD 1540
Early Post Medieval	AD 1540 AD 1750
Late Post Medieval	AD 1750 present

3.2 Prehistoric/Roman periods

The earliest evidence for human activity in the vicinity was recorded in 1960 when a Neolithic flint adze or axe head was found at Sand Pit Farm about 5km to the north west of Drax. In 1961-4 a small Romano British farmstead was excavated to the south east of Scurff Hall about 1.5km to the east of the site. A series of box trenches were dug which revealed a rectangular building defined by rubble footings with a partially enclosed verandah along one side. Finds included Samian ware and mortaria and most of it was dated to after *circa* AD 250 (Wilson 1966).

Wilson claimed that the old course of the River Aire ran along Hawday Lane (*circa* 400m east of the site) before turning north to swing around the site of Scurff Hall to join the Ouse at Rusholme. He claims that this old channel was probably still navigable in Roman times and that after it silted up it may have been the course along which boats were dragged overland which may account for the name of Drax (Old English *draeg* – a portage where boats were dragged overland). Apart from placename evidence (Smith 1961) he offers no supporting facts for this train of thought and there is no surviving topographic evidence in the Drax vicinity for any such abandoned palaeochannel.

3.3 **Medieval period – Drax Castle and Manor**

Historically Drax parish was located at the south east extremity of the archdeaconry of New Ainsty in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

The earliest reference to the placename Drax was in a royal charter of AD 959 when Ealdedrege (Old Drax) was granted to a member of King Edgar's household (Hunter 1987: 8-9). A fortification at Drax was evidently in the possession of Merlesuan, one-time Sheriff of Yorkshire, within the years AD 1040 – 1069. His lands at Drax, Camblesforth, Barlow and Little Airmyn all contained between the rivers Ouse and Aire were valued at 40s. Following the Conquest of 1066 he became involved in the northern rebellions which resulted in the Harrying of the North and in 1086 (Domesday Book) his former lands were valued at just 20s for taxation when they were in the possession of Ralph Paynel (or Pagnel), a Norman baron who held the land from his overlord, Ilbert de Lacy.

Pagnel based himself at Drax and his barony included the other local manors of Airmyn Camblesforth and Barlow. He also became Sheriff of Yorkshire. His son William inherited his estates and founded Drax Priory between 1128 and 1139 awarding the church at Drax the manorial mill and lands at Drax to the Prior. William's daughter Alice married Robert de Gaunt younger brother of the Earl of Lincoln.

In 1135 Henry I died and his nephew Stephen of Blois grandson of the Conqueror crossed to England and seized the crown before Henry's daughter Matilda could become queen. This triggered two decades of civil war. When Matilda's husband Geoffrey Plantagenet died in 1151 their son Henry (later Henry II) inherited his father's vast French estates. As grandson of Henry I Henry claimed the throne of England and brought an army to the English midlands where he began to reduce castles held by Stephen. An uneasy truce was called but in 1153 Henry was forced to return to Normandy which allowed Stephen to deal with rebellious pro Plantagenet nobles (Hunter 1987).

These included Alice and Robert de Gaunt and one of their knights Philip de Colville who was in control of the garrison of Drax Castle when Stephen summoned it to surrender in the summer of 1154. De Colville refused and Stephen led his army from Selby to Drax where he laid siege to the castle and when it fell Brent the Castell of Draches doune to the grounds wythoute leavyng anie porcyn thereof habitable.

This was probably the last rebel fortress which Stephen reduced as in October 1154 he died at Dover. The De Gaunt possessions were seized by the crown but on the accession of Henry II part of the Barony of Paynel was restored to them. Robert's son Maurice was given possession of Leeds sometime between 1200 and 1205 and in 1207 he granted the borough charter to the town (Hunter 1987).

Drax does not seem to have formed part of the barony recovered by the De Gaunt's as it then passed to Fulk Paynel I son of William Paynell and his first wife Fulk's son Fulk II lost Drax in 1204 and it was handed to a cousin Hugh Paynell II whose principal estate was at West Rasen in Lincolnshire. His wife Letticia had major works undertaken at Drax parish church in 1230 and their son John had a court at Drax in 1272 (Tyler A n d). His direct descendant John Poucher born in 1334 was described as of West Rasen and Drax and some of the Drax lands were still held by his descendants the Constable Maxwell family until the 19th century. The Constable family had become one of the largest landowning families in East Yorkshire by the 16th century and originated when the magnate Robert de Lacy (d 1216) took the name of his office Constable. The Constable family were resident at Everingham Park near Driffield during the late medieval and early post medieval periods and were thus absentee landlords. In 1758 they married into the Maxwell family who were powerful nobles from the border regions. In 1838 William Constable Maxwell was Lord of the Manors of Drax Long Drax and Newland.

3 4 In 1278 there was a garden on the site of the manor but in 1405 the site was worth nothing because of flooding In 1422 the site was assessed as worth 3s 4d in herbage

3 5 Late post medieval period

The Drax Tithe Plan of 1840 (Keith 1999) shows the enclosure of Castle Hill containing an L shaped building on the north end of the platform which could be assumed to represent the north and east ranges of the present farm outbuildings (Sites 2 & 3)

The 1853 O S plan (Figure 2) was the earliest large scale accurate representation of the Castle Hill Farm site The placename was shown as Castle Hills in Gothic script with the description Moat also added in the same script Although Castle Hill Lane existed by then there was a parallel footpath from the moated site which lined up on the tower of St Peter & Pauls Church The west and south limbs of the moat were shown as complete and continuous but the east limb had a causeway in its centre and the central third of the north limb had either been backfilled or was a broad causeway Part of the south and west ranges of the outbuildings had been added although the farmhouse had not been erected A small rectangular pond was shown just to the south of the east range of outbuildings

The 1907 O S plan (Figure 3) showed that the north eastern part of the moat had been infilled along with the eastern part of the south moat limb The south west quarter of the moated platform appeared to be defined on its north and east by internal ditches The existing farmhouse had been appended to the outbuildings with a front elevation looking to the church & village The southern half of The Granary had been added in the north eastern corner of the platform

3 6 Drax village and church of St Peter & St Paul

The village of Drax is believed to have originated as a planted Norman borough during the 13th century but it failed to prosper and develop as a town because of its close proximity to Little Airmyn located 5km to the east on the river Aire which was itself mentioned in Domesday (Hey 1986) For Drax a 13th century extent records 48 free tenants paying rents between 2 1/2d and 10s A slightly later extent mentions that the burgesses paid a total of £7 9s 11 1/2d with the capital messuage (ie the manor house) being worth 10s In 1796 213 people were resident in Drax village and by 1838 there were 350 people (Tyler A n d) The Domesday Book recorded a church in Drax manor in 1086 and although the location of this church is uncertain it seems likely that it was located on the site of the present church of St Peter & St Paul which was erected in the 12th century but includes additions of 13th 16th and 19th century date (NYSMR DNY 13209)

4 PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK

- 4.1 The only known previous archaeological work undertaken at the site was in July 2004 when the York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief during redevelopment of *The Granary* (Site 4) in the north east part of the moated site (Mason 2004). An extension (Site 20) was appended to the south end of the building and foundation trenches up to 2.1m were excavated (Foundation Trench B). The earliest deposit was a plastic pinkish grey micaceous clay 80mm thick. This was overlain by 0.75m of dark grey black humic clay silt with occasional inclusions of brick rubble, wood and frogged bricks. This in turn was overlain by 0.56m of crushed brick and coarse gravel with modern rubbish, then 0.5m of brick rubble and finally 0.24m of pale brown sand and turf.
- 4.2 At the same time a new garage block (Site 22) was constructed *circa* 25m to the east of the northern end of *The Granary*. The excavation of the footings (Foundation Trench A) was monitored. This revealed an earliest deposit of 0.22m of moist dark brown flecked mid grey medium grained sand clay overlain by 0.34m of stiff brown sandy clay. Overlying this was 0.14m of compact mid grey subsoil, a sandy clay.
- 4.3 No dating evidence for the deeper deposits was retrieved. In the case of the house extension it was stated that none of the deposits were of archaeological interest. In the case of the garage block the deposits were suggested as possibly being within the castle moat.

5 GAZETTEER (see Figure 5)

1 Farmhouse

The existing farmhouse comprises a double pile plan building with a central doorway in the north (front) elevation (Plate 1). The doorway was defined by stonework pilasters with Doric mouldings with a semi circular arch over and entablature over which was continued across the elevation as a string course. The ground floor windows were mullioned of eight lights each the central four being within sliding sashes. There were three sliding sash windows at first floor level all of four lights and all of the windows had stone lintels, cills and architraves. The east elevation was of particular interest. It had small central two light casement windows at ground, first floor and attic levels but the southern part of the elevation contained the ghosting of the gable of an earlier building (Plate 2). Within this gable was an infilled doorway. The lower part of the south elevation of the house was evidently earlier the level of the change in fabric being clearly coincident with the south eaves level of the contiguous ghost gable (Plate 4). The windows to the south lacked the stonework architraves present on those to the north. On the west elevation (Plate 3) was a doorway and window at ground floor level with a stair light above. At attic level was a pair of windows with semi circular brickwork arches. There was a cellar beneath the west half of the house. The building appeared to be of late Victorian date and was not shown on the O.S. plan for 1853 (Figure 2) although it was shown on the 1907 O.S. plan.

Potentially of greater interest than the farmhouse was the pair of *ex situ* stone staircase winders from a spiral staircase located to the front of the steps at the front door (Plate 1). Probably carved from magnesian limestone these were evidently from a much earlier building possibly at the site although they may have come from elsewhere and simply acquired for their ornamental value.

2 Farmhouse outbuildings

The outbuildings to the rear of the farmhouse originally formed a quadrangle with the farmhouse being located in the north western corner but the northern limb (Site 3) was demolished at some point after 1905. These buildings comprise single storied red brick structures with steeply pitched roofs covered in tile. The east and north ranges existed on the 1840 tithe plan and the windows and doorways of the east range had segmental brickwork arches (Plate 6) possibly suggesting an 18th century construction date. The south and west ranges were first shown on the 1853 O.S. plan and have flat timber lintels (Plate 3 & 5). An extension to the south west corner was shown on the 1907 O.S. plan (Figure 3). Hunter (1987: 30) writing in 1987 states that 'A few years ago when the cattle stallings at the present farm were being altered the site of the ancient castle well was discovered it has now been covered in but was examined sufficiently to establish that its upper portion was built of oak shaped like casks. The cattle stallings are assumed to be within the eastern part of the courtyard which has been roofed over and has a substantially reduced ground level. The supposed castle well may not have been of medieval date but it was a common practice to line wells with timber casks in the post medieval period if not earlier.'

- 3 **Site of demohshed outbuilding**
 The northern range of the outbuildings was demolished at some point after 1905 as it was shown on the 1907 O S plan (Figure 3) The east gable of the farmhouse shows the ghost of the roofline of this building (Plate 2) whilst the lower part of the south elevation (Plate 4) appears to comprise the south wall of the earlier range This outbuilding seems to have extended further to the west than the existing west farmhouse gable The north external wall of the courtyard comprises the original south wall of this demolished structure
- 4 **‘The Granary’**
 This narrow north south building was located against the east edge of the moat platform and the southern half of the building was erected at some point between 1849 (Figure 2) and 1905 (Figure 3) possibly being contemporary with the construction of the farmhouse It was of two storeys and the west elevation had originally been open at ground level possibly as a cart shed with a continuous cill being formed of timber beams one of which had a Baltic timber mark on the face which determined an origin in the Baltic states It is of course possible that the beams were re used but probable that they were brought in through Hull or Goole The upper floor would have been used as the granary well ventilated from beneath and not accessible to rodents The northern half of the building was added in the 20th century cutting across the northern limb of the moat The building was converted into a house in *circa* 2004 and is not within the ownership boundary of the Castle Hill Farm site
- 5 **Outbuilding**
 A large north south late 20th century single storey outbuilding
- 6 **Piggery**
 This building appears to be a piggery of mid to late 20th century construction
- 7 **Dutch Barn**
 This large Dutch Barn comprised an asbestos cement sheet roof supported upon steel I section posts It was of 20th century construction
- 8 **Dutch Barn**
 This disused building was erected just outside the south east corner of the moated site and comprises brickwork pillars with a steel framework roof It is probably of early 20th century origin but was not shown on the 1907 O S plan (Figure 3)
- 9 **Scheduled Ancient Monument (S A M) SM 30108 MNY 10099**
 The limits of the S A M are indicated approximately on Figure 5
- 10 **West limb of moat**
 The existing west moat limb is continuous with short sections of the north and south limbs and is the only substantial section of the moat which has survived to anything like the original depth at *circa* 1.5 – 2m below the internal platform level The moat is about 15m wide although without a full topographic survey it is difficult to determine where the west moat edge is located because of the contiguous (and possibly contemporary) bank (Site 19)

- 11 **Remains of infilled ditch?**
A slight 0.2m deep east west depression can be seen in the lawn to the south west of the farmhouse which appears to connect with the north south moat limb (Site 10). A broad east west depression in this location was indicated on the 1907 O.S. plan (Figure 3) apparently connecting with a north south depression which would correlate with ditch (12).
- 12 **Remains of infilled ditch?**
A broad 1m deep north south ditch was connected with the eastern end of the south limb of the moat (Site 10). This was apparently shown on the 1907 O.S. plan (Figure 3) extending all the way northwards to meet the probable eastward extension of ditch (11).
- 13 **South part of east limb of moat**
This was the only surviving visible part of the east limb of the moat. It was up to 2m deep but was badly overgrown by vegetation. It was shown as contiguous with the open south moat limb on the 1853 O.S. plan (Figure 2) with a short westward return at its northern end. It was partially water filled on the 1907 O.S. plan (Figure 3). There was a causeway between this feature and moat section (16) to the north. It is possible that this was an original feature.
- 14 **Backfilled part of north limb of moat**
To the north east of the farmhouse was a broad shallow depression with a maximum depth of circa 0.75m. The eastern part of this depression was water filled on the 1853 O.S. plan (Figure 2) and was contiguous with the northern part of the east moat limb which was infilled when The Granary was erected during the second half of the 19th century.
- 15 **Infilled Pond?**
An east west rectangular pond was located just to the south of the south east corner of the farm outbuildings (Site 2) and was shown on both the 1853 (Figure 2) and 1907 (Figure 3) O.S. plans. This may originally have been an eastward continuation of east west ditch (11). It is now backfilled.
- 16 **Infilled central part of east moat limb**
This infilled section of the moat was evidently contiguous with the eastern part of the northern limb of the moat (Site 14) as shown on the 1853 O.S. plan (Figure 2). The 1907 O.S. plan showed that only the southern part of this section of moat was open, the remainder being presumably backfilled when the earliest part of The Granary was erected.
- 17 **Northern limb of outer ditch**
This length of east west ditch defines the northern edge of the S.A.M. There is no topographical or cartographical evidence that it was related to ditch (18) which extends around the west and south sides of the site but a link between these features does seem likely. At the time of the walkover it was badly overgrown.
- 18 **Willow Row Drain**
This existing field drain demarcates the southern edge of the S.A.M. It is still wet and is in excess of 2m deep at the south east corner of the site. It appears to be continuous with the ditch located between Castle Hill Lane and the bank.

(Site 19) although the latter is presently dry. The drain runs eastwards from the site to pass Scurff Hall before then running northwards to meet the River Ouse. It is suggested that this feature formed the original outlet drain for the medieval moated site.

- 19 **Outer bank to west of moat**
The bank located to the west of the west moat limb (Site 10) is a substantial broad earthwork which rises to *circa* 1.5m above the level of Castle Hill Lane. It is covered in mature trees and forms a visual screen between the road and the site interior which may have been its original function. On the north and south sides of the moated site it extends only as far as the adjacent moat (Site 10) although it is possible that it was once continuous around the moated site.
- 20 **Extension to 'The Granary'**
The south end of 'The Granary' was extended to the east in 2004 and this work required a watching brief to be undertaken on the groundworks. The footing trenches were excavated to 2.1m deep and the deposits encountered suggest that it was on made ground which had presumably infilled part of the moat (Site 16).
- 21 **Former Pond**
To the south of the south west corner of the moated site was a shallow east west depression shown on the 1853 and 1907 O.S. plans as a pond. It is now dry.
- 22 **Site of new garage block**
A new garage block was erected for 'The Granary' in 2004. This was located outside the S.A.M. to the east of ditch (17). The construction of the block was the subject of the 2004 watching brief (Section 4). It was suggested that the footings were within the castle moat but the cartographic evidence suggested that the moat was located much further to the south west of the garage. It is possible that the footings encountered an eastward extension of ditch (17).
- 23 **Infilled section of south moat limb**
This infilled section of the south moat limb was backfilled at some point during the late 19th century as it existed in 1853 (Figure 2) but it had disappeared from the 1907 O.S. plan (Figure 3).

6 INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

6.1 Suggested summary of site development

Early medieval period

Some sort of important fortification seems to have existed at Drax before the Conquest. This may have been destroyed during the Harrying of the North as the local lord Merlesuain was in revolt against King William I. There is no evidence that it was sited at Castle Hill Farm.

Late medieval period

After 1086 Ralph Paynel was granted the barony and manor of Drax and it is perhaps significant that his son William founded Drax Priory in 1128-39 a period which coincided with the anarchy of 1135-54. During the medieval period priory establishment was frequently associated with castle building the first act granting a degree of enhanced status upon the second (Thompson 1987: 8-9). Whatever the nature of the castle at Drax it was apparently destroyed in 1154 and again there is no proof that it was located at Castle Hill Farm although this does seem probable.

Fulk Paynel I recovered the barony of Drax and he and his son (Fulk II) seem to have made Drax their principal residence which would suggest a manor house of some significance which was probably moated. In 1204 Fulk II lost the estates and they passed to a cousin with a principal residence elsewhere. The manor house at Drax may have thenceforth been retained for a steward acting in an administrative capacity. A 13th century extent valued the capital messuage at 10s and John Paynell was known to have held a court at Drax in 1273. He died two years later (Hunter 1987: 23) and perhaps significantly the manor site was occupied by a garden in 1278 and by 1405 the site had no value due to flooding. A probable late 13th century abandonment of the manorial site may not have been conducive to the growth of the newly established planted borough of Drax especially as the Lord of the Manor was resident in Lincolnshire and may have paid little interest in the affairs of his free tenants at Drax other than ensuring that rents were collected.

The likely significance of the Castle Hill Farm site as a potential manorial and baronial centre during the medieval period is clearly enhanced by its close proximity to the parish church of St Peter & St Paul.

Circa 1800

The north and eastern ranges of the existing farm outbuildings were erected within the northern party of the moated site. The central section of the northern moat limb may have been backfilled at the same time. The 1840 Drax Tithe Plan confirmed that these parts of the farmbuildings were the earliest to be constructed.

1840-49

Parts of the south and west ranges of the outbuildings were added before the O.S. 1853 plan (Figure 2) was surveyed in 1849. This resulted in a quadrangle of farmbuildings around an open courtyard.

Late C19

The existing farmhouse was erected in the north western corner of the quadrangle which required partial demolition of the western end of the north range. The southern half of The Granary was erected at the same time which required the partial infilling of that part of the open moat located to the east and north east of the outbuildings. Probably at the same time the eastern section of the south moat limb was infilled.

20th century

Most of the north range of the outbuildings (Site 3) was demolished and The Granary was extended northwards. That part of the open moat to the south east of The Granary (Site 16) was infilled as well as pond (15) the northern part of ditch (12) and the eastern part of ditch (11).

6.2 **Drax Castle and manor house**

The attribution of the post Conquest site of Drax Castle (and manor house) to this particular site at Castle Hill Farm seems to be dependent upon a long standing oral tradition only. In fact there were three other moated sites within Drax parish which might have equal claim to that status. These were at Scurff Hall Farm, Rusholme Hall and Cambleforth Grange. What cannot be ignored is the close proximity of Castle Hill Farm to the parish church and village which would strongly suggest that it was the site of the manor house, if not the castle. By the middle of the 19th century and probably much earlier a Drax Hall was located about 200m to the north east of the parish church although this may have had a late post medieval origin.

Drax Castle was destroyed in 1154 and was probably a timber structure rather than one built of stone. A 13th century extent makes reference to a capital messuage at Drax suggesting that a manor house was in existence after 1154 probably replacing the castle as the *caput* from which the Drax manorial lands were administered. The placename Castle Hill Farm possibly suggests the former existence of an earthen motte or a ringwork with a high bank both of which features would have been typical of a Norman period castle. The rectangular moat form earthwork at Castle Hill Farm did not become commonplace in England until the 13th century.

That Drax did not apparently remain as a home of the titular Lords of the Manor into the late medieval and post medieval periods is not surprising. The Paynell estate of West Rasen in Lincolnshire was 3 000 acres in extent as was the later Constable acquisition of Everingham Park near Driffield in *circa* 1500. As the Constable family also had a house in York the 1 000 acre Drax estate was probably administered by a local steward and the landholding family may have taken little interest in the relatively minor possession of the Drax estate.

Such a hypothesis might help to explain why there is no known primary documentation of any manor house at Drax after the 13th century and it may be that the Lords were absentee after 1204 when the cadet branch of the Paynel family lost the manor to the more senior branch who had no requirement for a residence at Drax.

6.3 Moated Site Form

The site could be undoubtedly described as a moated site although somewhat more complex than most. Apart from the main moat of which some sections are still obvious there were broad internal ditches which may have subdivided the platform interior into three separate areas. Such subdivision of moated platforms may imply different functions i.e. house/garden/orchard or may simply have related to a necessity for better drainage of the platform area. There was also an external ditch which survived intact to the west and south (and partially to the north) and there was also a substantial bank between moat and external ditch on the west side. This latter feature seems unusual in the context of a medieval moated site as one might expect spoil from the moat to be used for an internal bank or to raise the platform as at Wood Hall (Metcalf 2001). It is suggested that in view of the proximity of this bank to Castle Hill Lane it may have been created as a post medieval screening bank for privacy and could even be related to the construction of the existing farmhouse. Another possible consideration in such flat featureless topography could be protection against the prevailing westerly winds especially as a garden was recorded here in 1278.

The moated platform at Castle Hill Farm measured 85m north-south by 73m east-west resulting in an extent of *circa* 6 200 square metres. In Yorkshire Le Patourel found that most moat platforms were about 4 000 square metres in extent each requiring excavation of about 2 500 cubic metres weighing 3 825 tonnes (Le Patourel & Roberts 1978: 49). The moated platform at Castle Hill Farm was half as big again in area as Le Patourel's average and when the external ditch and interior ditches are considered it is possible that in excess of 5 000 cubic metres of spoil were excavated here.

Although all of the visible sections of moat at Castle Hill Farm are now dry (and have been for some years) it seems likely that the water table has been locally reduced by deeper and more efficient land drainage probably initiated during the 18th and 19th centuries.

As far as can be ascertained from available cartographic evidence in 1849 the moat was crossed by a causeway in the centre of the east limb with a broad infilled section in the centre of the north limb. Both of these infilled sections may have been of post medieval date. During the medieval period an obvious direct link to the church and village would imply an original moat crossing on the north side and this may have comprised a timber or stone bridge. Furthermore at a high status manorial (or baronial) moated site a gatehouse may have controlled access to the platform via the bridge or causeway.

7 DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

7.1 Scheduled Ancient Monument

The proposed refurbishment of the existing farm buildings will probably require considerable ground disturbance. Where new concrete slabs are to be located within the footprint of buildings, bulk excavation may be required down to a formation level suitable for bearing of the slabs. This would involve at least partial truncation of any surviving archaeological deposits upon the moat platform.

Where new utility services are required, including septic tanks/biodisks, any service trenching would potentially truncate surviving archaeological features or deposits, possibly destroying any stratigraphical links between contiguous features. Similarly, any new roads or car parking areas, and new boundary walls, would potentially have a detrimental effect upon archaeological deposits.

Additionally, it has been recommended that the north east corner of the farmhouse should be underpinned (SWF Consulting 2006: 12). This work would also have a potentially detrimental effect upon any surviving archaeology.

7.2 Standing Buildings

The existing farm buildings, although not listed structures, are of some architectural and historic interest in their own right. It may be necessary to demolish three quarters of these structures to facilitate any rebuilding work (SWF Consulting 2006: 13).

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Scheduled Ancient Monument

Any proposed development (including trial hole excavation groundworks drainage superficial landscaping tree planting or below ground service installation) which was proposed within the scheduled area of the moated site would require written Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) from the Department for Culture Media and Sport who would refer the matter to their advisers English Heritage

SMC for any redevelopment would only be considered following the production of additional information by the client regarding the extent and significance of surviving below ground archaeology. Once this information has been provided it will enable a suitable development mitigation strategy to be drawn up which would determine how the development should be implemented in such a way as to limit the potential constructional impact upon surviving archaeology.

In the first instance geophysical survey should be undertaken in the areas peripheral to the buildings which should identify the location and extent of major features which could extend into areas to be affected by any groundworks i.e. the eastward extent of ditch (11) or a section of moat between moat sections (10) and (14).

Secondly a series of archaeological trial trenches should be excavated within and around the buildings which are to be rebuilt. This would provide precise and quantifiable information on levels to top of archaeology or top of natural soil and indicate areas of past truncation of deposits. These trenches should be located to answer specific questions related to aspects of the site development and their final placement should also be dictated by the results of the geophysical survey and the need for 11 – 14 geotechnical trial holes and the underpinning of the farmhouse as recommended in the recent structural appraisal (SWF Consulting 2006 12 13).

Thirdly by extending the existing topographic survey to include all of the earthworks within the scheduled area so that the exact position and form of all visible banks and ditches is recorded. This would ensure a fuller plan context for both the geophysical survey and the trial trenching. Obviously due to the density of vegetation such a survey could not be undertaken until Winter or early Spring when the undergrowth has died away.

The mitigation strategy would determine the extents and depths to which groundworks could be carried out and would also provide for mitigation measures prior to and during the development such as additional archaeological recording watching briefs etc. The question of possible tree removal at the site has been raised. This aspect should also be covered by the mitigation strategy as well as any landscaping and forming of internal boundaries.

8.2 Buildings within Scheduled Ancient Monument

Prior to commencement of any demolition or refurbishment of the buildings on the moat platform the Local Planning Authority may request that a photographic record of the buildings should be undertaken. This should utilise as a basis the existing drawings for the redevelopment.

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DNY 13448 Cross base and shaft in churchyard of St Peter & St Paul s Church Drax grade II listed building

ENY 199 St Peter & St Paul s Church Drax Excavation of soakaway & pipe trenches by Wood Hall Archaeological Trust 2000

ENY 321 Land adjacent 92 94 Main Road Drax D B A undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS in advance of proposed housing development 1999

ENY 322 Land adjacent 92 94 Main Road Drax Trial trenching evaluation undertaken by Archaeological Services WYAS in advance of proposed housing development 1999

ENY 2134 St Peter & St Paul s Church Drax Watching Brief by EDAS in church ground in advance of a new foul drainage system 2004

ENY 2918 The Granary Castle Hill Lane Drax Watchmg brief by YAT during construction of house extension and garage block 2004

ENY 3013 New overhead electric line between Drax and Goole Watching brief by NAA 2005

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