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ENY	4402
CNY	6887
Parish	1080
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ArcheType

Kingsley House

Middleham

Archaeological Watching Brief

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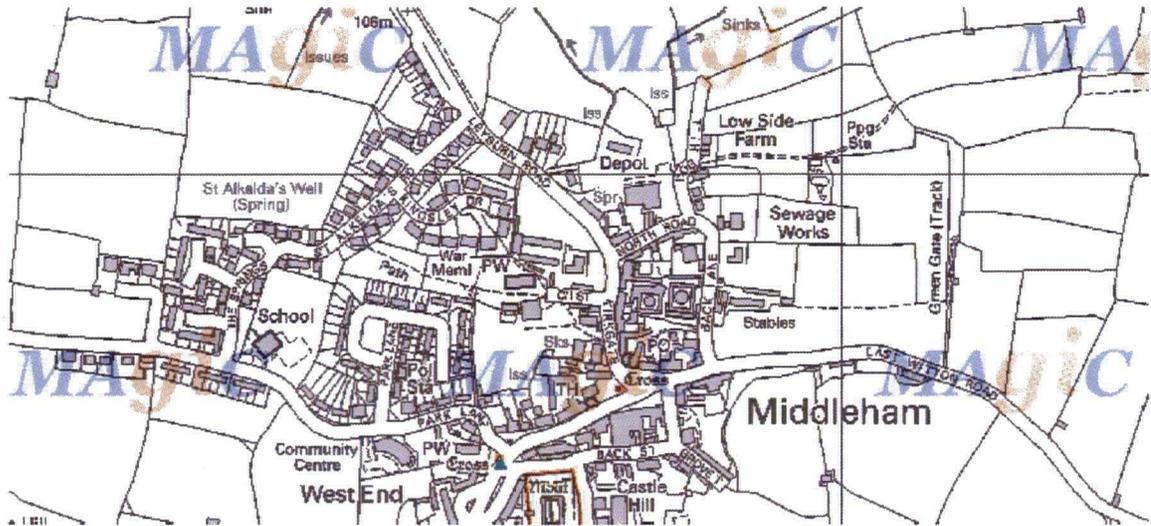


Fig 1. Kingsley House, Middleham. Location

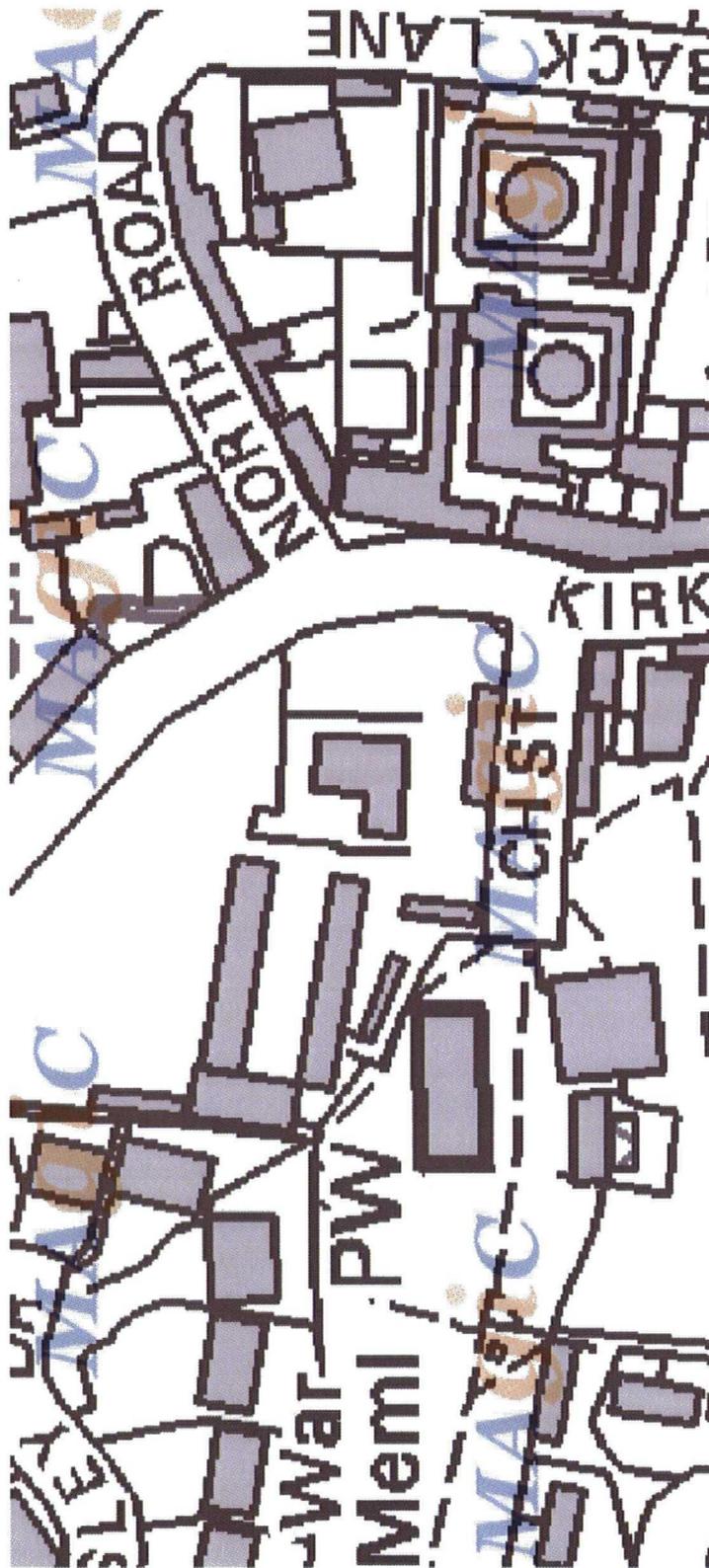


Fig 2. Kingsley House, Middleham. Site and situation

Archaeological watching brief at Kingsley House, Middleham

Introduction

In March 2008 ArcheType was asked to undertake an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Mr Mark Johnston at Kingsley House, Middleham, during work to construct an extension on the north-west side of the house.

Kingsley House is located on the west side of Kirkgate, the main approach road into the medieval town from the north (figs 1 and 2). The house is of medieval origin, and a Listed Building (Grade 2). The central range is probably of late medieval origin. The west range is probably 17th century. The east range is supposed to date from 1752 but may be older, and has 19th century additions. The house is believed to have been the medieval rectory, which became the deanery of the collegiate church of Middleham (created in 1477 by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, later Richard III). The college lapsed, but was re-established as a chapter in 1814. One of the canons was the writer Charles Kingsley, hence the present name of the house. (Information from the Images of England website © English Heritage 2007 – for reference see below.)

Kingsley House is a complex multiperiod building; construction work close to the house might be expected to reveal information about its origins and development, and for this reason Richmondshire District Council and North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Section asked that an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during any demolition work, and during the excavation for the foundations of the new building. This should be to the standards and design laid out by North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Section in their standard 'Watching Brief' specification, a copy of which can be obtained from the Heritage Section at County Hall, Northallerton.

The watching brief began in late August 2008 and continued into mid-September 2008. It included monitoring the demolition of a small porch/extension on the west side of the house, and the excavation (by mechanical excavator) of the footings for the new building.

Observations

Much of the area to the west of the house had been paved with brick pavements laid in sand at some time in the later 20th century. No topsoil survived beneath these. Garden soils lay further to the north. The subsoil over the whole area consisted of cobbles, gravels and sandy soils which appeared to be glacially derived. Disturbance by pipes and other services relating to the standing building was noted in the new foundation trenches across the site (figs 3 – 5), but there was no trace of structures or foundations relating to any earlier buildings on the area, though roof lines relating to outbuildings were noted in the revetment wall supporting the stable yard to the west (fig 4).

No finds (eg pottery, clay tobacco pipe etc) earlier in date than the 19th century were recovered from the excavations.

Conclusions

Although the presence of earlier buildings, probably outbuildings to Kingsley House, could be deduced from the presence of relict roof-lines in the revetment/retaining wall supporting the stable-yard to the west, no trace of these buildings remained at foundation level. It is likely that any foundations, which would in any case probably have been shallow, will have been removed by earlier landscaping and by the preparation layer for the 20th century pavements.

The small portion of building that was demolished to make way for the new extension had been constructed against the north side of the central (medieval) range and the west side of the 18th century house, and was probably contemporary with or later than the latter, though of rubble construction. No architectural features or closer dating evidence were noted during the demolition.

No evidence to add to the understanding of the complex of buildings at Kingsley House was recovered from this archaeological watching brief.

Reference: www.imagesofengland.org.uk/Details?Default.aspx?id=321666&mode=quick

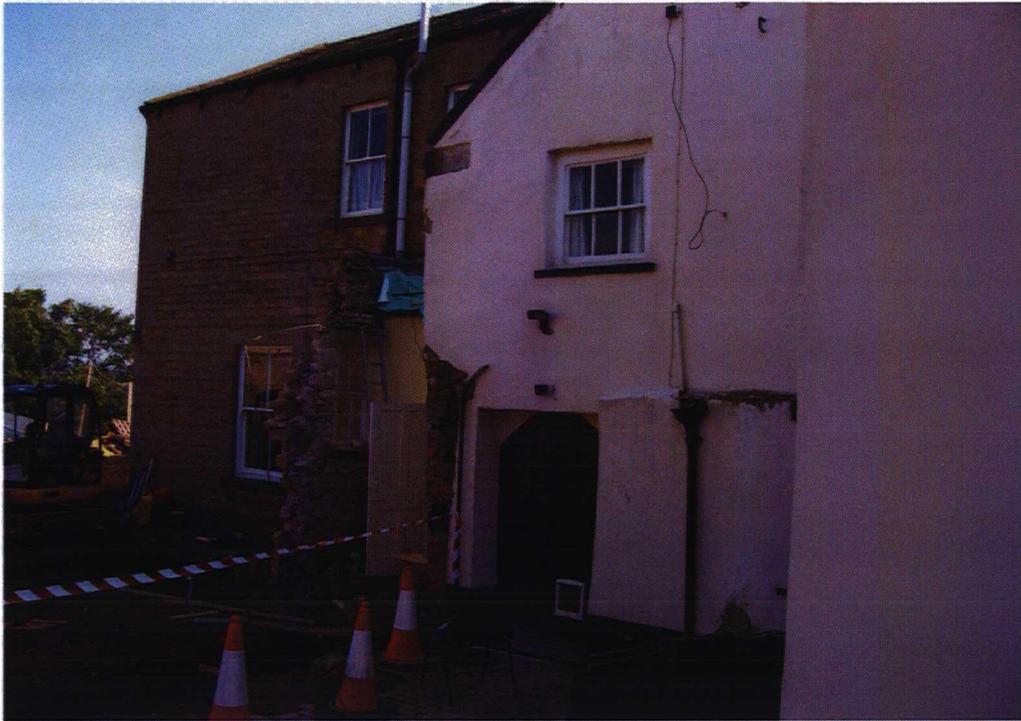


Fig 3. Kingsley House from the west, showing the 17th century (right), medieval (centre) and 18th century (stone) ranges; also the part-demolition and the area of the new foundation trenches.



Fig 4 Kingsley House looking west, showing a relict roof line surviving in the retaining wall. No other trace of the building survives.



Fig 5 & 6. Kingsley House showing foundation trenches cutting through glacially-derived deposits





Fig 7 Kingsley House showing the new foundation trench cutting through undisturbed glacially-derived deposits.