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**BELL'S YARD, MAIN STREET, SEAMER,
NORTH YORKSHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

for

**Wilcon Homes Northern Ltd
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***John Samuels Archaeological Consultants
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**BELL'S YARD, MAIN STREET, SEAMER, NORTH YORKSHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by *John Samuels Archaeological Consultants* for Wilcon Homes Northern Ltd. It comprises the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out in the course of residential development at Seamer, North Yorkshire.
- 1.2 Wilcon Homes Northern Ltd submitted a planning application for residential development at Bell's Yard, Mam Street, Seamer. As a condition of granting planning consent the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Scarborough Borough Council, acting on the advice of the County Archaeologist for North Yorkshire County Council, requested an archaeological evaluation in advance of development.
- 1.3 Wilcon Homes Northern Ltd (the developer) retained *John Samuels Archaeological Consultants* (JSAC) to implement the evaluation.
- 1.4 The *Preliminary Archaeological Assessment* (JSAC December 1993) summarised existing archaeological knowledge for the immediate vicinity, and put forward detailed proposals for field evaluation by trial trenching which were agreed by the County Archaeologist and the developer.
- 1.5 The trial trenches were excavated in January 1994 and the results, set within the broader archaeological context of Seamer, were presented in *An Archaeological Evaluation* (JSAC January 1994). The report concluded that:
- a) In the southern part of the area, the earliest occupation evidence was 18th-19th century in date.
 - b) In the north-eastern part of the area adjacent to Mam Street, a stone post-pad belonging to a substantial medieval building, dated by pottery, was located.
 - c) In the north-western part of the area, no archaeological features were encountered.

- 1.6 Subsequently, on the advice of the County Archaeologist, the LPA requested that a watching brief be undertaken during construction work on the *northern* part of the area. Accordingly a *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (JSAC April 1994) was submitted, and agreed by the County Archaeologist and the developer.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The watching brief was undertaken with the specific objectives of establishing whether further archaeological remains survived on the site, and if so, identifying them and establishing their significance.
- 2.2 In practice, and in liaison with the developers, the watching brief comprised a series of site inspections between May and December 1994 to monitor each phase of constructional activity as groundworks proceeded.
- 2.3 The watching brief was based on the requirements of *Planning Policy Guidance 16* (DoE 1990), selected elements from *Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1993), *Standard Watching Brief Procedures* (North Yorkshire CC n.d.), and current best archaeological practice.

3. SITE INSPECTIONS

- 3.1** Site inspections to observe and record the successive phases of earthmoving were carried out as follows:

4th-10th May 1994

Access road

Building foundations, Plots 7-16 inclusive (east & north sectors) and Plots 22-25 inclusive (south-west sector)

13th June 1994

Service trenches

25th July 1994

Building foundations, Plots 19-21 inclusive (north-west sector)

7th December 1994

Building foundations, Plots 17-18 (middle of north sector)

- 3.2** Detailed records of the observations are provided in the Appendix, below.
- 3.3** Particular attention was paid to Plots 7 and 8 near Mam Street, where an evaluation trench in January 1994 had located part of the foundation of a medieval building. However no further archaeological features were observed either here, or in the rest of the area.
- 3.4** The sole artefact of antiquity retrieved was a small sherd from a green-glazed jug of medieval origin, unprovenanced as it was found on the spoil-heap (May 1994). The piece appeared to be contemporary with medieval pottery recovered from Plot 7 during the evaluation in January 1994.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation with the County Archaeologist for North Yorkshire was maintained before, during and after the field evaluation and watching brief.
- 4.2 The watching brief was implemented in full liaison with Wilcon Homes Northern Ltd and their contractors.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The watching brief produced no further structural evidence for the medieval building near Main Street which had been inferred from evaluation trenching in January 1994. The sole contemporary artefact found during the watching brief, a sherd from a green-glazed medieval jug, was found on the spoil-heap.
- 5.2 No other features or artefacts of archaeological significance were met with. Most of the deposits excavated were modern and of 20th century origin, particularly in the north-western sector, where the degree of disturbance was shown by the occurrence of lorry parts at 2.45m below ground level.
- 5.3 It was concluded that earthmoving for the residential development has had no observable direct impact on archaeological remains.
- 5.4 The County Archaeologist has verbally agreed these conclusions, and is satisfied that no further archaeological work is required in connection with the development.

LIST OF PLANS

1. Seamer: location plan (1 : 1250)
2. Bell's Yard: development plan (1 : 200)