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ON

Landscape Research Centre Ltd.

Archaeological Watching Brief

Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire

18th and 19th November, 1992

COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT		
11 MAY 1993		
PASS TO	INITIALS	DATE
NRE		
LES	11/5/93	Adk.
		by phone.

JL. compiling
ditch/grave sections
from photos
~~see file for~~

LOCATION : Cranedale Centre, Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire.

GRID REFERENCE : SE 900 / 670 *SE 90406 67528 (centred)*

OWNER : Anthony Outhwaite.

ON

SUBJECT : A short report on the archaeological work carried out on the 18th and 19th of November 1992.

AUTHOR : James Lyall.

INTRODUCTION

The following is a short report resulting from a watching brief associated with the development and construction of an indoor swimming pool for the Cranedale Centre at Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the planning permission. The situation of the development was approximately 25 metres to the east of the upstanding parish church and the westernmost part of the development was just to the east of the existing Kirby Grindalyth parish church boundary wall. The development included removal and consolidation of material evidently pushed up against an artificial bank of comparatively recent date along the north side of the site. Much of this area had been levelled within the last twenty years. The development cut into the natural slope of the ground which to the north was in excess of three metres higher than the development area. The initial removal of the ground surface by machine uncovered archaeological features and these were then cleaned up (under archaeological supervision) initially by machine and then by hand.

SUMMARY

After the top part of a wall foundation base had been uncovered by machine (some damage to the wall had occurred), the archaeologists stopped the construction and first cleaned and then recorded the archaeological features. Visible on the western side of the construction trench, near to the parish church wall, were the remains of two graves. The skeletons had been bisected just above the ankles by the machine. A third grave with no apparent skeletal material was also noticed. Also visible in the side of the construction trench (effectively forming a section cut through the features and then down through bedrock) was a large ditch, apparently part of a ditch surrounding the church. Visible in the area not yet taken down to bedrock, in close proximity to the wall foundation, were three pits and a slot.

*Graves cut
EW*

*Depth of
bedrock?*

*depths of arch. deposits: 3-4 feet where levelled
∴ 6-7 ft in northern part.*

THE GRAVES AND THE DITCH

Although only two graves were seen to have skeletal material in them, a third grave cut was observed in the section exposed by the machine. Also visible in the section was the profile of a large ditch which had been bisected by the machine. It is possible that this ditch once ran around the area on which the parish church now stands, and as such would warrant further investigation. The ditch ran in an easterly direction in the western section of the construction trench and was visible in the northern section heading in a northerly direction. The ditch was approximately two metres in width and one and a half metres in depth and had a V-shaped profile in section. From the section it was clear that the graves cut through this ditch, thus the ditch predates the graves. While unable to comment on the exact nature and date of the ditch, it is possible that this is an early medieval church boundary. Local people who were interested in the archaeology informed me that when the barn to the north east of the site was constructed, more graves had been found and that these had been excavated some years ago. It is very probable that further graves, as well as other well preserved features, would be found in the area to the north of the site, and this would certainly have some archaeological significance were this area ever to be considered for future development.

THE WALL FOUNDATION

The wall was initially recognised as a line of stone blocks (some apparently with worked faces) which had an east/west orientation. The first action was a cleaning process to uncover the full extent and width of the wall. This took place on the 18th November 1992 and continued on the morning of the 19th November. The wall foundation comprised of local chalk blocks interspersed with sandstone blocks, some of which had worked faces. It is likely that the sandstone blocks were reused stone, perhaps from the priory which used to stand not far from this site to the south. This interpretation was to some extent confirmed by the discovery of part of a medieval stone window frame used in the base of the wall foundation. The spaces between the stone blocks were infilled with small local chalk pieces and sandy clay. The wall foundation had one course of stones remaining to the east and three courses of stone to the west. It is likely that there were internal divisions in the building, with perhaps at least one phase of reconstruction. This became apparent because the wall became narrower to the east at a point where it seemed likely that an internal dividing wall had butted onto the inside of the main external wall. A small internal area within the building was cleaned back and revealed one post hole and a narrow slot. Without further investigation not much more can be said other than to speculate that these features may have formed part of the internal support for the building, but time constraints prevented any clarification of this interpretation. The wall and area were planned at a 1:50 scale and colour slides and black and white photographs were taken to preserve a record of the wall. It was also noted that to the south/west of the extant wall part of the foundation trench and wall footing of the western end of the structure had been cut through by the machine and preserved in section. Finds from within the structure included medieval green glaze (13th-17th centuries AD) and some late 17th/early 18th century pottery (yet to be identified). A lead button was found, as well as two small residual flint cores. The lack of small finds indicate that this was not used

as a dwelling place and the current interpretation is that this was the wall foundation of a 17th/18th century barn.

OTHER FEATURES

There were two other types of feature noticed at the time of investigation. The first of these were three pits containing animal skeletal material. Two of the pits contained bovine remains and the third contained both bovine and ovine remains. The pits were approximately one square metre in area but were not regular in shape. It was not possible to investigate these pits further, but the third pit appeared to cut through the remaining upper fill within the borders of the structure and would thus appear to post date the use of the structure in its original form. The pits were probably dug in order to bury the carcasses of diseased animals, this being a practice which occurred up until the recent past, when legislation forbade this method of disposing of animals. The second feature was a narrow slot which was filled with a darker soil than the surrounding area. This slot cut through the eastern part of the extant wall foundation and thus post-dates the structure, but further investigation was not carried out and the function of the slot remains unknown.

CONCLUSION

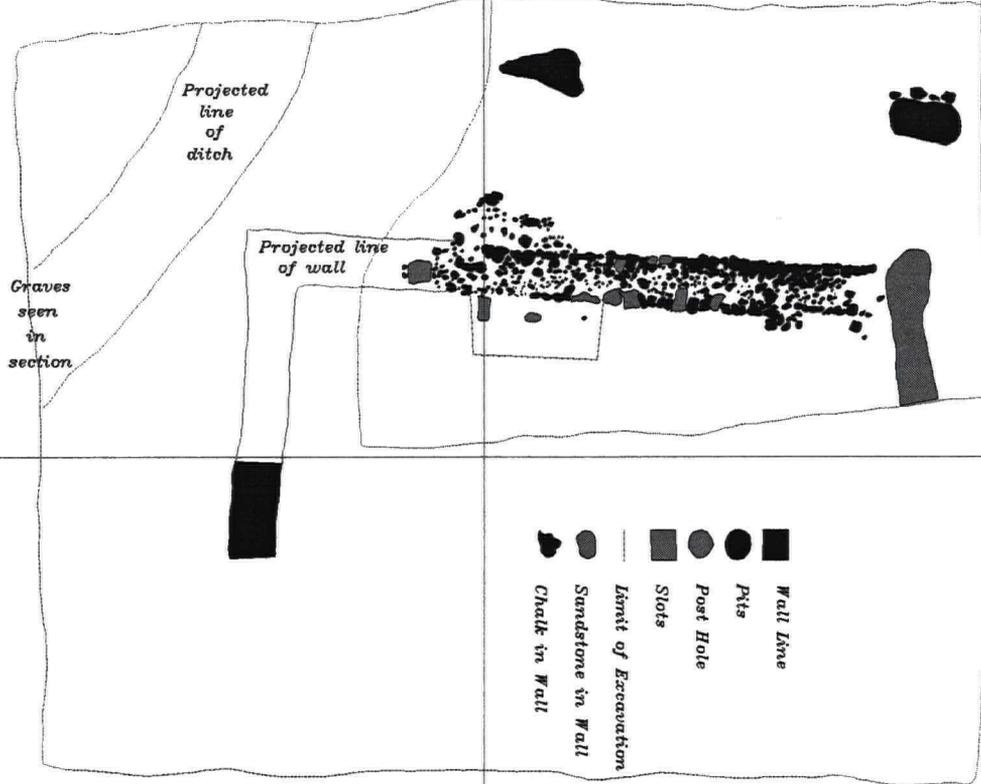
Even from the short time we had available to us, it became apparent that the potential for the survival of post-medieval remains was high. However, it is also likely that the earlier medieval archaeology is in a reasonable state of preservation, and considering the proximity of the parish church, it would be advisable to undertake archaeological investigation of any area to be considered for development in the future. This could either take the form of an initial magnetometer survey to gain an idea of the complexity of the archaeological remains, followed by a targeted archaeological excavation, or by trial trenching and test pitting. A proactive approach to this area would certainly seem to be justified by the archaeological potential, the predominantly reactive approach of the watching brief could not be justified in the light of this investigation.

I would like to thank Anthony Outhwaite for his patience and his hospitality for the time it took to carry out the archaeological work, and would hope that he would continue to show such an interest and helpfulness were any other such work to be carried out in the future.

PLAN OF KIRBY GRINDALYTHE
NORTH YORKSHIRE



Churchyard Wall



Graves
seen
in
section

Projected
line
of
ditch

Projected line
of wall

-  Wall Line
-  Pits
-  Post Hole
-  Slots
-  Limit of Excavation
-  Sandstone in Wall
-  Chalk in Wall

Limits of construction trench

Scale 1:160

PLAN OF KIRBY GRINDALYTHE NORTH YORKSHIRE



Churchyard Wall



-  Sandstone in Wall
-  Chalk in Wall
-  Limit of Excavation
-  Slats
-  Post Hole
-  Pits
-  Wall Line

Limits of construction trench

Scale 1:150

See Paim file for large coloured plan