

Humber Field Archaeology

Archaeological Consultants and Contractors



Archaeological Observation
Investigation and Recording

at

59 Field Lane,
Heslington,
York

Planning Reference: **04/02432/FUL**
National Grid Reference: **SE 635 509**
Site Code: **WB2005.032**

for

Hogg the Builder

Watching Brief Report Number: 805
November 2005

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D.J. Jobling November 2005

Summary

A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology during groundwork associated with the construction of 3 dwellings at 59 Field Lane, York.

Monitoring of the groundworks did not reveal any identifiable archaeological deposits or artefacts.

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology, on behalf of Hogg the Builder, during groundwork associated with the construction of 4 dwellings at 59 Field Lane, York (*Figure 1, Plate 1*).

Site Code:	WB2005.032
National Grid Reference:	SE 635 509
Planning/SMR Reference:	04/02432/FUL
Museum Reference:	Pending from York Museums

The development site is located in the former rear gardens of properties facing onto Field Lane within the northern part of Heslington. It is bounded to the north and south by Badger Wood Walk proper, to the west by an open public grassed area and to the east by residential properties.

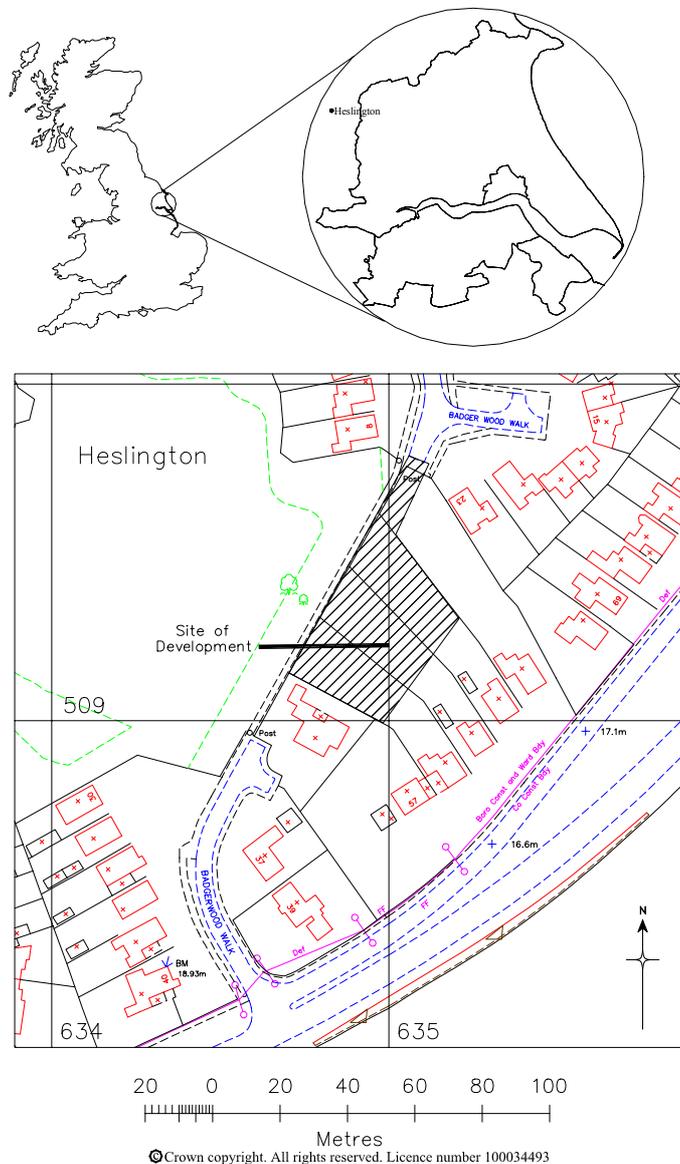


Figure 1 Site location plan.

2. Archaeological Background

The site of the development lies on the northern fringe of the historic village of Heslington. Mentioned in Domesday, there is very little recorded at that time about its economic power, however, later records demonstrate a prebendary survey and also noting that much of the southern part of the parish was given to common land. There are early examples of inclosure in this area in the mid 17th century also. The church of St. Paul is medieval in origin, being mentioned in 1299; however, it was covered by the prebendary of Ampleforth, what little belonging to York being transferred to that prebendary later on. The first mention of an educational establishment there originates in 1795, situated on the back lane (now School Lane), which runs through to the present. An apparently charitable area, the hospital erected by widow dame Julia (of Sit Thomas Hesketh) in 1608, later moving to a new area in 1795, still received the same endowment of £55 in 1974 as it did throughout the previous few hundred years. Essentially, Heslington and its environs remained largely rural in character until the 1960's, after which the development of the University of York and the ensuing housing estates to the north began to alter the area on a much larger scale.

It is likely, therefore, that any groundworks in this area would encounter archaeological deposits dating from the medieval and later periods.

3. Methodology

The on-site work associated with this project was carried out by staff from Humber Field Archaeology, in accordance with the archaeological specification produced by The City of York Council in response to a condition placed upon the planning application. Date: 25th June 2004, SMR Reference: 04/02432/FUL.

The scheme of works comprised the monitoring of the relevant groundworks on the site. A series of ten visits were made to the site between the 20th April and 20th September 2005 which time it was possible to monitor the excavation of the groundworks specified. Any exposed areas of subsoil and lower stratigraphic units were examined for archaeological deposits.

The excavated dimensions of the groundworks were recorded, as were the depth sequences of any exposed stratigraphy. Where archaeological deposits/features were identified, context numbers were assigned and detailed descriptions were made, plans and sections were drawn and a photographic record was maintained.

4. Results

The initial visits to the development site saw that the stripping of the upper layers within the area had been completed and that a very thick layer of chalk (1003) (up to 0.60m in places) had been laid down across the entirety of the area. Upon this completed surface were the foundations for the dwellings on the site, with modern percussion piling methods being used which in turn meant that no deposits below the modern chalk layer would be encountered and/or visible (*Figure 2, Plate 4*).

A single large main sewer connection was monitored running along the proposed access road area. This was up to 8m long, 1m wide and up to 1m deep (the depth was shallow given the amount of ground reduction undertaken already, and the remainder was to be built back up). The deposits exposed during this portion of the works consisted of a thin layer of dark grey brown silt (1001) up to 0.20m thick overlying a later of dark orange brown sandy clays (1002) (> than 0.80m thick) which appeared to be probably naturally occurring in origin. A manhole was excavated at the northern and southern ends of the trenches, the deposits encountered within being the same as recorded previously without variation.

A large area underlying the central part of the access road was devoted to the insertion of a large rectangular soakaway. An area measuring in total 25m long and 4m wide was cut through the modern chalk hardcore layer stopping when it hit the underlying dark silt layer (1001) (*Figure 2, Plate 3*).

A shallow sump was also excavated with the access road area – again, not demonstrating the presence of any other deposit which has not already been noted.

External site excavations also took place, most noticeably outside the south-western part of the site, where a short stretch of connecting trench was cut to the position of a pre-existing manhole area. Again, only the deposits previously encountered were identified here (*Figure 2, Plate 2*).

No further groundworks anticipated and the programme of archaeological monitoring was concluded.

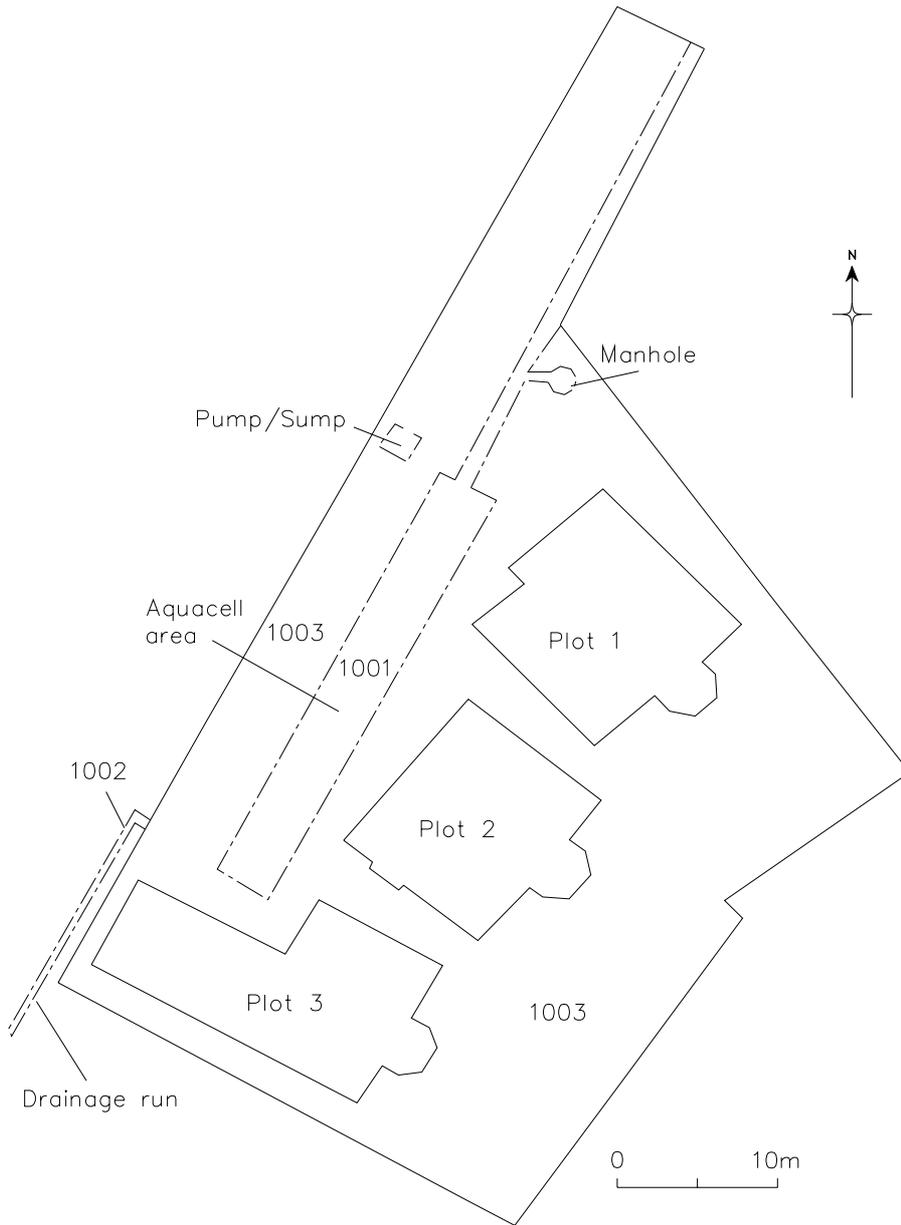


Figure 2 Plan showing the groundworks within the development.

5. Discussion

The following is solely the opinion of Humber Field Archaeology and may not reflect that of the City of York Council archaeologist, advisor to the LPA.

The application site has failed to reveal any identifiable archaeological deposits during this current programme of work. The site had already been stripped to an unknown depth and covered with chalk prior to the initial site visit, so it is unknown as to how much in the way of archaeological deposits had been removed. The piling of the house plots meant that no excavation in those areas would be required.

Of the groundworks which potentially had the ability to demonstrate the presence/absence of deposits, all failed to do so. The water retention area, sump, drainage runs, appeared to cut mainly into a layer of undated dark silts (sub-soil?) over dark orange brown sandy clays which appeared to be naturally occurring in origin. These groundworks were all undertaken in the north-western area of the site, incidentally the lowest part also, the remainder having already been generally completed.

Although no archaeological deposits were identified or recorded during this programme of work, it is still likely that archaeological deposits do exist within the area. It is therefore the recommendation of Humber Field Archaeology that a suitable scheme of archaeological work should be implemented should any other development in the area take place.

6. Acknowledgements

Thanks are accorded to Hogg the Builder for help and co-operation during the course of this project.

The on-site work was carried out in accordance with a specification prepared by the City of York Council. The report text and illustrations were edited by D. Atkinson.

7. Bibliography

'Heslington', A History of the County of York East Riding: Volume 3: Ouse and Derwent wapentake, and part of Harthill wapentake (1976), pp. 66-74.
www.british-history.ac.uk/report.asp?compid=23008&strquery=heslington.
Date accessed: 11 November 2005.

Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2), English Heritage, 1991.

Oxley, J., Archaeological Scheme of Investigation: Watching Brief. City of York Council, 2004.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1

Context list

(1000) U/S, Unstratified.

(1001) Dark grey brown silt, 0.20m thick (viewed).

(1002) Dark orange brown sandy clays, 0.80m thick (viewed).

(1003) Modern chalk layer, 0.60m thick maximum.

Appendix 2

Archive

Project Details: *An archaeological watching brief at 59 Field Lane, York.*

Site Code: WB2005.032

National Grid Reference: SE 635 509

SMR Casework Reference: 04/02432/FUL

Planning Reference Number: 04/02432/FUL

Museum Reference or Accession Number: Pending from York Museums

Author DJ Jobling **Date of fieldwork** April to September 2005

Report Number. Humber Field Archaeology Watching Brief Report Number 805

Quantity

4 x clear plastic A4 wallets contain the paper archive.

Summary of work.

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Monitoring of the groundworks did not reveal any identifiable archaeological deposits or artefacts.

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2.1 Site notes

2.2 Site Plans

2.3 Staff site visit log

3 The Photographic Record:

3.1 Photographic Catalogues

3.2 Contact Sheets

3.3 Reference Prints etc.

4. Final Report: *The full unabridged report.*



Plate 1 The entrance to the development site, looking south.



Plate 2 Service connections, looking south-west.



Plate 3 Water Storage area, underlying the access road, looking north-east.



Plate 4 Piling the house plots, looking east.

Humber Field Archaeology

Archaeological Consultants and Contractors

The Old School, Northumberland Avenue,
KINGSTON UPON HULL, HU2 0LN

Telephone (01482) 217466 Fax (01482) 581897

Email hfa@hullcc.gov.uk

www.hullcc.gov.uk/archaeology/hfaindex



Project Management • Desk-based Assessment • Field Survey • Excavation Watching Briefs
• Finds Research • Post-excavation Analysis • Inter-tidal Work

Humber Field Archaeology is an independently-funded part of the Humber Archaeology Partnership, a partnership serving The East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Kingston upon Hull City Council