

Humber Field Archaeology

Archaeological Consultants and Contractors



Archaeological Observation
Investigation and Recording
at

**2 Corner Garth
Earswick Village
Earswick**

Planning/SMR Reference: 03/03800/FUL
National Grid Reference: SE 6202 5725 (centre)
Site Code: WB2004.048

for

Hogg the Builder

Watching Brief Report Number: 745
January 2005

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Summary

A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology during groundwork associated with the construction of 6 detached dwellings and garages including garage for existing dwelling and associated infrastructure on land at 2 Corner Garth, Earswick Village, Earswick, York.

Monitoring of the site strip, access road, main services and the house plots revealed no archaeological deposits. Layers of naturally occurring build-ups were noted during the groundworks. A small quantity of artefacts comprising pottery, clay pipe and ceramic building material was recovered during the site strip dating mainly from the 19th century, but with a small residual medieval component.

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 6 detached dwellings and garages including garage for existing dwelling and associated infrastructure on land at 2 Corner Garth, Earswick Village, Earswick, York, YO32 9SL (*Figure 1, Plate 1*).

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The development site is located in the Village of Earswick. It is bounded to the north and west by residential property, to the east by Strensall Road and to the south by Earswick Village.

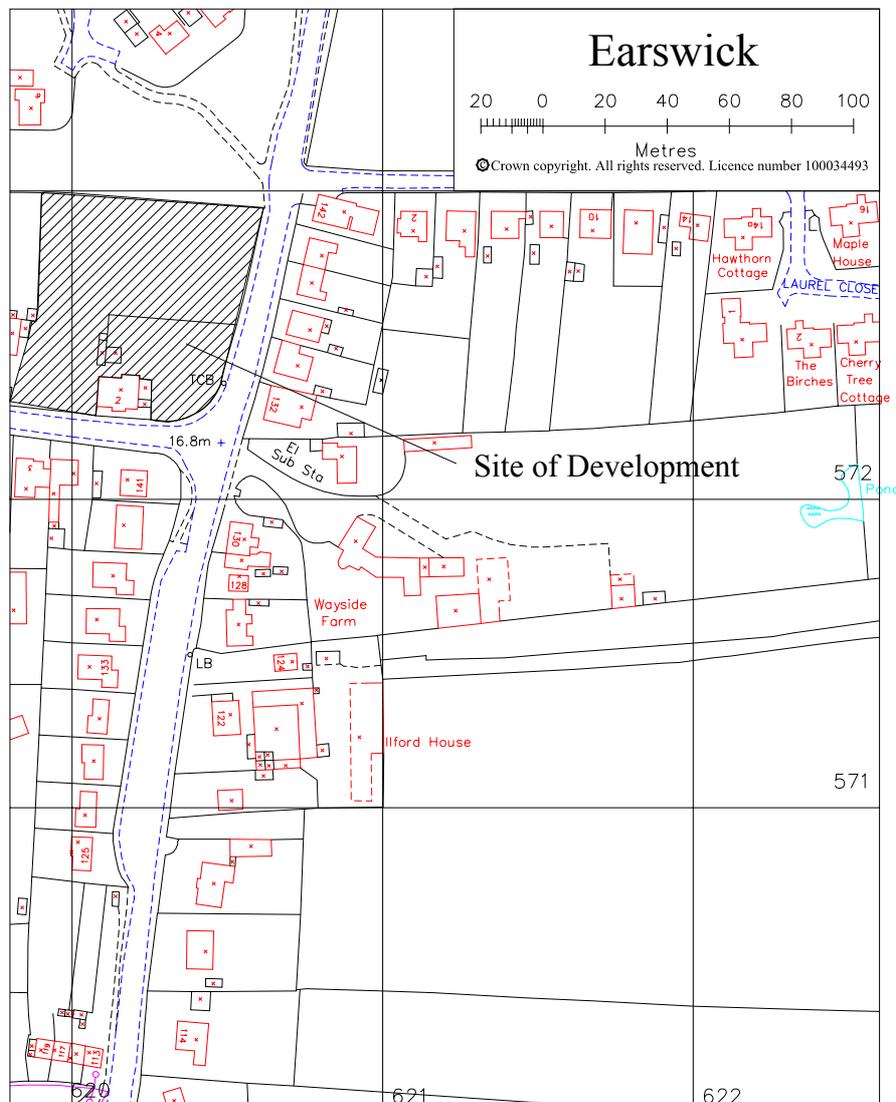


Figure 1 Site location plan.

2. Archaeological Background

The site of the proposed development lies in an area where little archaeological evidence or historical evidence has been noted prior. The majority of archaeological remains appear to lay further a field.

Evidence for prehistoric occupation is revealed in several areas: to the north-east a polished stone axe was found at SE 6761 5847; a number of Iron Age pits, postholes and other deposits which indicated an Iron Age settlement was located at Clifton Moor SE 5965 5596; to the south-east two overlying double ditch enclosures have been identified on an aerial photograph of Strensall Common, also possibly indicative of an Iron Age settlement SE 6376 5951; at SE 6133 5665 two parallel curving crop-mark features can be seen; finally at Rawcliff Moor near York excavations revealed the presence of another Iron Age settlement consisting of hut circles with a surrounding boundary ditch.

Later medieval occupation of the surrounding area appears to consist of farming related activity, namely the remains of ridge-and-furrow at these co-ordinates: SE 615 590, SE 617 590, SE 621 593, SE 622 596, SE 618 598, SE 637 562. To the north, there is also the extant remains of a moat and associated pond at Towthorpe SE 623 588.

Later post-medieval occupation of the area is testified from several sources. Langdale's Yorkshire Dictionary and Baine's Directory refer that in the early part of the 19th century, Earswick had a population of 122, although the list of professions and trades for the village in White's Directory of 1840 show very few trades listed.

Bulmer's Directory of the area in 1890 is far more comprehensive and lists numerous peoples and their occupations. Again, he describes the village as having a "...population of 148..." and characterises it as "...small...". The first edition OS map 1854, clearly shows the area of the application plot, the only major difference being that the south-east corner appears to be shortened somewhat: the current boundary at the present extends further to the south-east.

It is likely, therefore, that any ground works in this area would encounter archaeological deposits dating from the medieval and later periods with the possibility of earlier prehistoric activity present.

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 City of York County Council, Date: 20th November 2003, SMR Reference: 03/03800/FUL.

The scheme of works comprised the monitoring of the digging of foundations and service trenches on the proposed development. A series of twelve visits were made to the site between the 3rd August and the 7th October 2004 during 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 foundation trenches were noted, as were the depth sequences of the exposed stratigraphy, features identified were recorded by appropriate means: plans/sections and a photographic record, where conditions permitted.

Archaeological artefacts found during the fieldwork were bagged according to their context, and returned to Humber Field Archaeology for further specialist analysis.

4. Results

The initial visit to the site oversaw the site strip. A walkover of the stripped area was undertaken by transects at 5m intervals, several sherds of pottery dating between the 12th and 20th centuries was recovered as well as fragments of clay tobacco pipe. At this time, only the topsoil [1001] was stripped. In addition, the weather was severely wet and the site was quite heavily waterlogged, the movement of the tracked machines on the site also disturbed the surface of the application area also. No archaeological features were identified. (*Plate 2*).

The next phase of the works concerned the excavation of the main services and road. The services began at the main eastern entrance to the site along the southern boundary. Here the trenches excavated were deep, ranging between 3 and 5m deep, the width being 1m wide expanding to 4m square at the periodic manhole/inspection chambers. In all cases, due to the method of safe excavation used (by use of immediate shoring and box-trenching), it was difficult to view the deposits in section in detail. However, it was apparent that underlying the remainder of the topsoil [7001] (same as [1001]), was a 0.25m to 0.50m thick layer of light brown grey silty/sandy clays [7002] which in turn overlay a layer of light coloured sands, probably glacial in origin [7002] up to 0.50m thick again. Below this lay natural red brown clays [7003] which ran to the base of the of service trench throughout (*Plates 3, 4, 5*).

The access road was excavated to a depth of 0.50m. Only the remains of topsoil [7001] and the underlying light silty/sandy clays [7002] were noted, no other features or deposits were encountered (*Plates 6, 7*).

Two areas of groundwork footings were unfortunately missed also. This refers to plot 1 (Riseborough) and the garage to the rear of the existing property of No. 2 Corner Garth. These footings were excavated and backfilled with concrete prior to inspection.

Plot 2 (Middlethorpe) in the north-west corner of the site covered an area measuring 16m by 9m. Excavated as a raft foundation to be filled with Type 1 stone (this method was used for all the plots on this site), the deposits exposed here conformed to those viewed in the main service trench with the addition of an overlying surface layer. This surface layer [2004] consisted of the modern trample caused by the continual tracking of the machine, and was between 0.10m and 0.20m thick. This overlay the remains of the topsoil [2002] up to 0.30m thick. Below this lay a probable natural layer [2003] which consisted of mid grey very sandy clays with occasional medium to large rounded stone inclusions, up to 0.30m thick. This was over natural red brown clays [2003] visible up to 0.30m thick (*Plate 8*).

Plot 3 (Glen Heworth) exhibited a similar stratigraphic makeup to that noted in plot 2. Covering an area measuring 12m by 14m only naturally occurring deposits were encountered, namely trample [3001] 0.20m thick, over topsoil [3002] 0.20m thick over the mid grey very sandy clays [3003] 0.50m thick. Occasionally the underlying natural clays [3004] were noted in the base of the raft foundation (*Plate 9*).

In the north-eastern corner of the development, plots 4 (Studley) 12m by 14m and 5 (Glen Heworth) 12m by 14 again exhibited a slightly different series of naturally occurring deposits. Towards the top of their profiles, the same series of deposits were

noted: [4001]/[5001] trample 0.20m thick over [4002]/[5002] remains of topsoil 0.30m thick, which in turn was over [4003]/[5003] mid grey sandy clays 0.25m thick. In between these layers and the natural red brown clays [4005]/[5005], lay [4004]/[5004] – a 0.30m thick layer of light yellow orange grey medium waterlogged sands, very clean with no inclusions (*Plates 10, 11*).

Plot 6 was partially filled with concrete during the inspection visit. This did not hinder the viewing of the profile sections of the plot however. Again, similar deposits to those viewed in plots 4 and 5 were noted, namely [6001] trample, [6002] remains of topsoil over [6003] sandy clays which in turn covered a thinner layer of waterlogged sands [6004] only 0.10m thick. The basal layer here was the same viewed elsewhere on the site, that being [6005] natural red brown clays (*Plate 12*).

Following the completion of the excavation of the foundation trenches the watching brief was concluded.



Figure 2 Plan showing the location of the archaeological features in relation to the foundation trenches within the development.

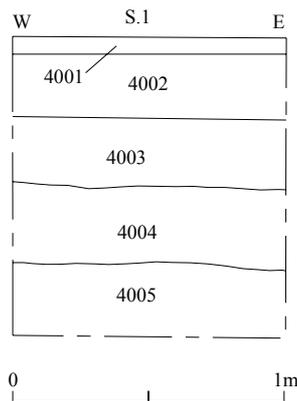


Figure 3 Sample profile section from Plot 4 to demonstrate the series of uniform natural deposits encountered across the site.

5. The Finds

A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered throughout the duration of the watching brief which consisted of several material categories: pottery, clay tobacco pipe and ceramic brick material. The pottery and clay pipe was assessed by P. Didsbury and the ceramic building material was assessed by S. Tibbles.

The Pottery and Clay Tobacco Pipe

Context [1000] – Unstratified

- 1 x complete stoneware Factory Produced White Ware (FPWW). Impressed 'MALINGS' on the base.
- 2 x sherds of Factory Produced White Ware (FPWW).
- 2 x sherds of Unglazed Red Earthenware (UGRE).
- 1 x sherd of Humber-type 1 (HUM1) 14th to 16th century.
- 3 x sherds of Humber 5 (HUM5) 16th to 18th century.
- 1 x sherd of Unattributed Gritty Ware bodysherd, 12th to 13th century.
- 1 x sherd of a Light firing sandy cookpot, c. 13th/14th century.
- 5 x stems of Clay Tobacco Pipe, late 19th to 20th century.
- 1 x bowl of Clay Tobacco Pipe, late 19th to early 20th century.

The Ceramic Building Material

The watching brief investigation produced a small ceramic building material assemblage that comprised four fragments with a combined weight of 2785g. The materials were quantified by count and weight where applicable. None were stratified.

All finds were appropriately packed for long term storage, in accordance with conservation and museum guidelines.

Context [1000] - Unstratified

One complete brick was retrieved, with a weight of 2750g. Cream/white mortar adhesions were noted on all surfaces. One bed surfaces displayed rain pitting. The brick is of a likely late 17th /early 18th century date. Dimensions: 245mm x 110mm 60mm

One non-diagnostic fragment of roof tile was recovered. With a weight of 15g, the fragment was identified as flat roof tile. All surfaces were heavily abraded. Of medieval date. The fragment was discarded after recording.

Two joining, non-diagnostic fragments of land drain, with a weight of 20g. Extrusion marks were noted on the external surface. The internal surface was heavily sanded. Dated to the 19th century. Both were discarded after recording.

Assessment of Potential

The ceramic building material assemblage is of limited potential due to its small size and unstratified nature. Overall it represents residual elements of activity during the medieval and post medieval periods within the vicinity of the watching brief investigation.

Recommendations

No further work is deemed necessary for the bulk finds assemblage. The brick is not deemed worthy of retention.

6. Discussion

It appears that the surface collection of artefacts recovered during the initial site strip may represent residual accumulation of waste disposal or other elements of activity which were not readily apparent during the excavations on the site. Certainly, the large areas reduced in ground level on the plots did not reveal any identifiable archaeological deposits which related to any period. In all instances, only evidence of natural accumulations of clays and sands was encountered. Evidence of 19th century occupation on the site was encountered only in the artefactual record, the 1856 OS map shows the presence of a property on the southern boundary (most likely the house still there at the present day) with an ?orchard to the north, west and east. What is interesting to note is that the 1854 map shows that the south-eastern corner of the site has since been extended further to the south and east since the 19th century.

Although no features or archaeological deposits were identified during this programme of work it is likely that evidence of earlier occupation does exist in the surrounding area as evidenced by the collection of artefacts during the initial site trip and the evidence of occupation from the surrounding areas. It is therefore the recommendation of Humber Field Archaeology that should any further development take place in these areas then a suitable scheme of archaeological work should be implemented.

7. 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 J. Oxley of the City of York Council. The report text and illustrations were edited by D. Atkinson. The finds assessment was undertaken by P. Didsbury (*M. Phil*) and S. Tibbles, administrative support was provided by Georgina Richardson.

8. Bibliography

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Internet references:

<http://www.genuki.org.uk>

(References to Baines Directory of the County of York (1823), Bulmer's History and Directory of North Yorkshire (1890), Langdale's Yorkshire Dictionary (1822), The National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland (1868), White's Directory (1840))

9. Appendices

Appendix 1

Context list

[1000] – Unstratified.

[1001] – Remains of topsoil, dark brown grey loam, up to 0.30m thick.

Plots:

Plot 1: Concreted

Plot 2:

[2000] – Unstratified.

[2001] – Topsoil, 0.30m thick.

[2002] – Natural mid grey very sandy clays with occasional medium to large rounded stone inclusions, 0.30m thick.

[2003] – Natural red brown clays, 0.30m thick.

[2004] – Modern machine trample, 0.10m – 0.20m thick.

Plot 3:

[3000] – Unstratified.

[3001] – Machine trample, 0.20m thick.

[3002] – Topsoil, 0.20m thick.

[3003] – Natural mid grey very sandy clays, 0.50m thick.

[3004] – Natural red brown clays in base of trench.

Plot 4:

[4000] – Unstratified.

[4001] – Machine trample, 0.20m thick.

[4002] – Topsoil, 0.30m thick.

[4003] – Natural mid grey sandy clays, 0.25m thick.

[4004] – Natural light yellow orange grey waterlogged medium sands, clean, 0.30m.

[4005] – Natural red brown clays, 0.20m thick.

Plot 5:

[5000] – Unstratified.

[5001] – Machine trample, 0.20m thick.

[5002] – Topsoil, 0.30m thick.

[5003] – Natural mid grey sandy clays, 0.25m thick.

[5004] – Natural light yellow orange grey waterlogged medium sands, clean, 0.30m.

[5005] – Natural red brown clays, 0.20m thick.

Plot 6:

[6000] – Unstratified.

- [6001] – Machine trample, up to 0.20m thick.
- [6002] – Topsoil, 0.10m thick.
- [6003] – Natural mid grey sandy clays, 0.20m thick.
- [6004] – Light yellow grey waterlogged sands, 0.10m thick.
- [6005] – Natural red brown clays, 0.10m thick.

Main service trench and access road:

- [7000] – Unstratified.
- [7001] – Topsoil, 0.30m thick.
- [7002] – light grey silty sandy clays, 0.40m thick.
- [7003] – Natural red brown clays, viewed up to 2m thick.

Appendix 2

Archive

Project Details: *An Archaeological Watching Brief at 2 Corner Garth, Earswick.*

Site Code: WB2004.008

National Grid Reference: SE 6202 5725 (centre)

SMR Casework Reference: 03/03800/FUL

Planning Reference Number: 03/03800/FUL

Author DJ Jobling **Date of fieldwork** Sept – Dec. 2004.

Report Number. Humber Field Archaeology Watching Brief Report Number 745
January 2005

Quantity

5 x A4 plastic wallets contain the paper archive

Summary of work.

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Site Code: WB2004.048

National Grid Reference: SE 6202 5725 (centre)

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Plate 1 The entrance to the site, looking north-east.



Plate 2 The stripped area, looking south-west.



Plate 3 The connection to the main road at the south, looking south.



Plate 4 Deposits exposed in section during the drainage works, looking west.



Plate 5 Deep service works, showing box-trenching safety measures.



Plate 6 The backfilled access road, looking north.



Plate 7 The access road strip at the northern end of the site, looking east.



Plate 8 Plot 2, looking south-west.



Plate 9 Deposits exposed in section in Plot 3, looking west.



Plate 10 Deposits exposed in section in Plot 4, looking south.



Plate 11 Plot 5 fully excavated, looking west.



Plate 12 Plot 6 during concreting, looking south-west.

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

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