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ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SERVICES  
WYAS

**Land off Church Hill  
Sherburn-in-Elmet  
North Yorkshire**

*Archaeological Watching Brief*

*November 2005*

*Report No. 1454*

CLIENT

**Classic Developments Ltd**

Rec 29/11/15

8058 parish  
E 2839  
C 3983

**Land off Church Hill  
Sherburn-in-Elmet  
North Yorkshire**

8/58/825A/PA  
S10011

*Archaeological Watching Brief*

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Archaeological Services WYAS (hereafter ASWYAS) were commissioned by Adrian Moore for Classic Development Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief. This was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a new bungalow located on sloping land (centred SE 490 335) to the rear of 23 and 31 Church Hill, Sherburn-in-Elmet (Figs. 1 and 2).
- 1.2 The underlying solid geology has been mapped as Permian and Triassic Magnesium Limestone (British Geological Survey 1979) and the drift geology as Aberford soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).
- 1.3 The fieldwork was carried out over the 8th and 9th of August 2005.

## **2. Archaeological Background**

- 2.1 The earliest documentary reference to a settlement at Sherburn-in-Elmet is recorded in the Domesday Book of AD 1086. Then it was called 'Scireburne' from Scandinavian meaning 'bright clear stream' (Brewster and Hayfield 1994). The Domesday Book also refers to a substantial manor that was in the demesne of the Archbishop of York (Williams and Martin 1992). The medieval settlement of Sherburn-in-Elmet went through a steady development throughout the 12th to 14th centuries by investment by minor gentry families who were probably resident at the village (Brewster and Hayfield 1994).
- 2.2 Archaeological evidence for earlier occupation of the area was revealed by excavations of a medieval manor site to the west of St. Hilda's Street and to the east of the proposed development (Brewster and Hayfield 1994). Although, this evidence is based on the recovery of pre-medieval pottery, that suggests domestic activities dating at least from the Iron Age, the structural remains uncovered by the investigations were predominantly medieval (*ibid.*).

## **3. Method**

- 3.1 North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Unit prepared a 'Standard Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Limited Archaeological Recording (Watching Brief)' for Classic Development Limited. This document was adhered to during the watching brief exercise and is presented in Appendix I.
- 3.2 An archaeologist was present on site during the excavation of the foundation footings for the proposed new bungalow. The footings were excavated using a 360° machine excavator fitted with a toothless trenching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision in level spits to the top of the first archaeological horizon or undisturbed natural.
- 3.3 A sufficient sample of features was investigated in order to understand the full stratigraphic sequence, down to the naturally occurring deposits and full written, drawn and photographic record was made following ASWYAS standard methods (ASWYAS 2005). Sections of linear and discrete features were drawn at 1:10 scale with all plans drawn at 1:20.
- 3.4 The site archive contains all the information gathered during the watching brief is indexed in Appendix II. Inventory of contexts are listed in Appendix III and the archive is currently held by ASWYAS in an appropriate and stable

environment. It is anticipated that the archive will be deposited with a recipient museum, at an appropriate time agreed with the museum.

#### **4. Results**

- 4.1 The foundation footings covered an area of approximately 162m<sup>2</sup>. Measuring approximately 0.8m in width, with an average depth of 1m, the footings were stepped at regular intervals down to the east. Removal of a dark greyish-black topsoil (100) with an average depth of 0.4m, revealed a north to south-aligned ditch (103) that was cutting a pale brown subsoil (101) (Fig. 3). Ditch 103 was 2.2m in width and 0.8m in depth with a single fill (102) of mid-brown clayey-silt containing occasional limestone fragments, coal and charcoal flecks. No finds were recovered from fill 102.
- 4.2 Ditch 103 corresponds approximately with a former field boundary that appears on the 1850 first edition Ordnance Survey map of the area.

#### **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 An archaeological watching brief undertaken during the ground disturbance for the construction of a proposed dwelling on land off Church Hill, Sherburn-in-Elmet revealed a single ditched field boundary of unknown date. No other archaeological features were identified.

## ***Bibliography***

- ASWYAS, 2005, 'West Yorkshire Archaeology Service site recording manual', Archaeological Services, WYAS, unpubl.
- Brewster, T.C.M. and Hayfield, C., 1994, Excavations at Sherburn, East Yorkshire, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol. 66 pp. 107-148
- British Geological Survey, 1987, Harrogate. England and Wales Sheet 62. Solid Edition. 1 Inch Series
- Soil Survey of England and Wales, 1983, 'Soils of Northern England' Scale 1:250,000 Map and Legend
- Williams, A. and Martin, G.H., 1992, *Domesday Book. A Complete Translation*. Penguin: London

## ***Other sources***

**Archaeological Services WYAS**

O.S. Map, 1850, First edition, 6 inch to 1 mile

## ***Acknowledgements***

### **Project management**

Ian Roberts BSc MIFA

### **Report**

Bernard McCluskey BSc

### **Graphics/illustrations**

Mark Chisnall BA

### **Fieldwork**

Bernard McCluskey

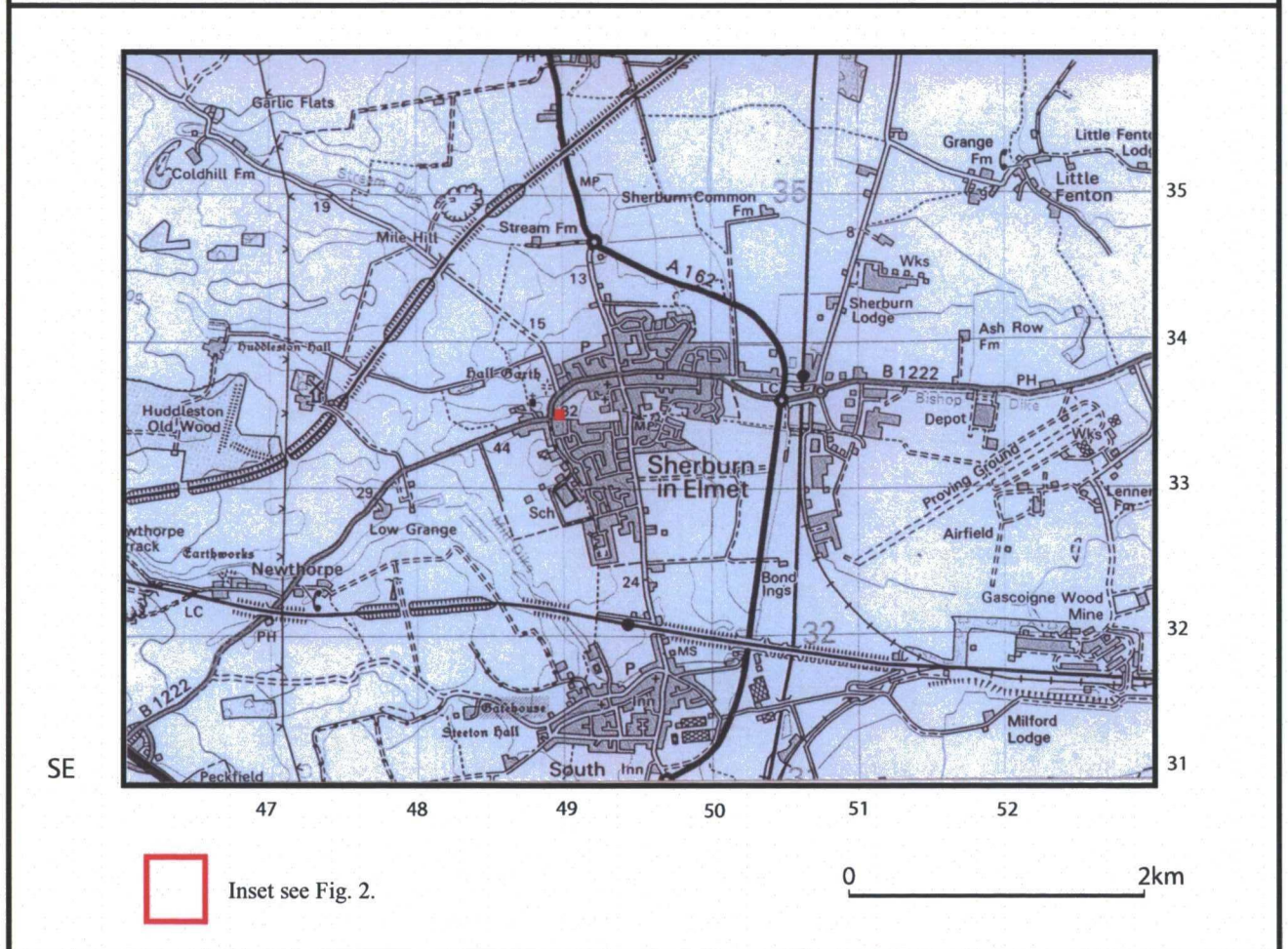
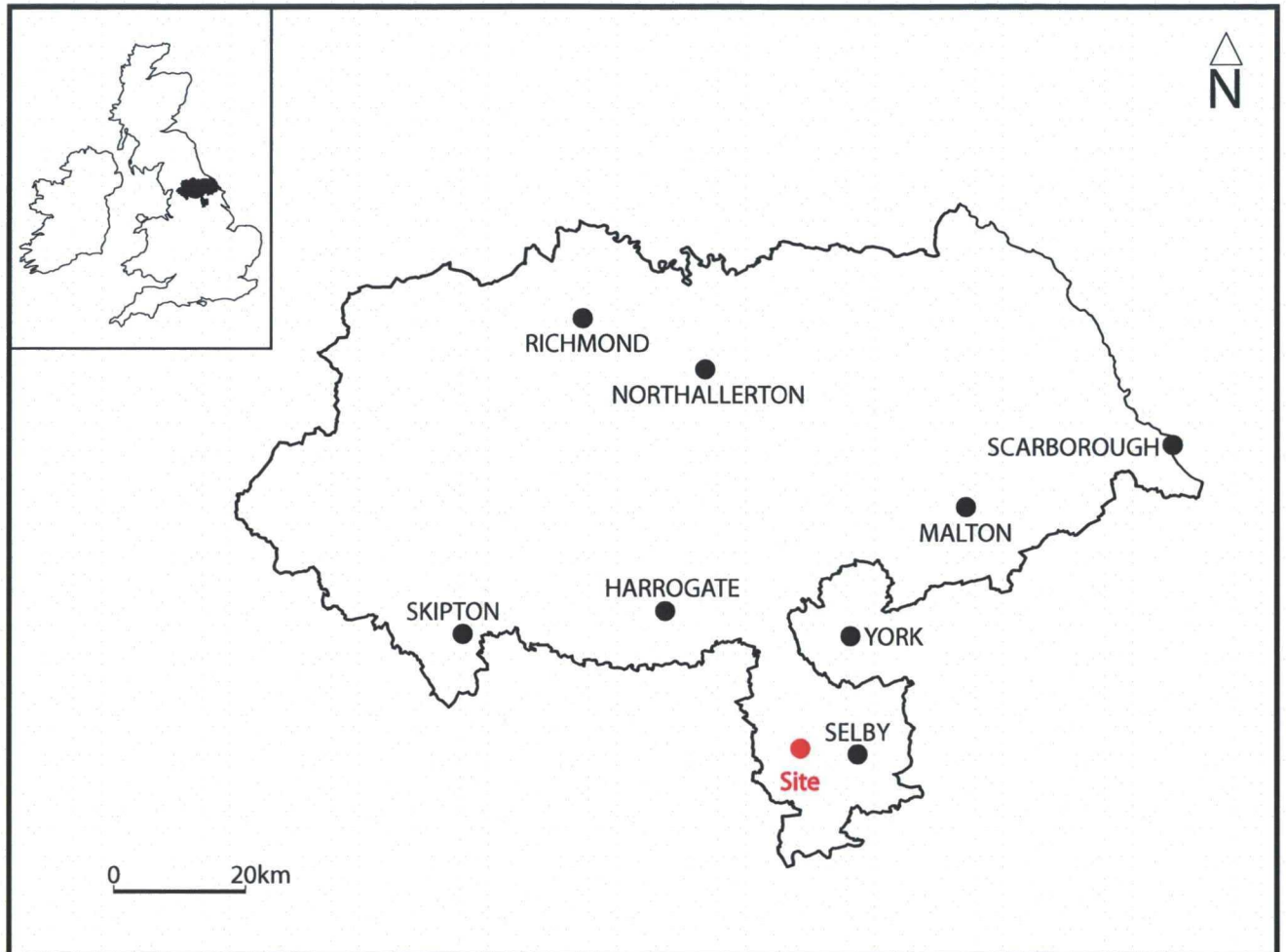





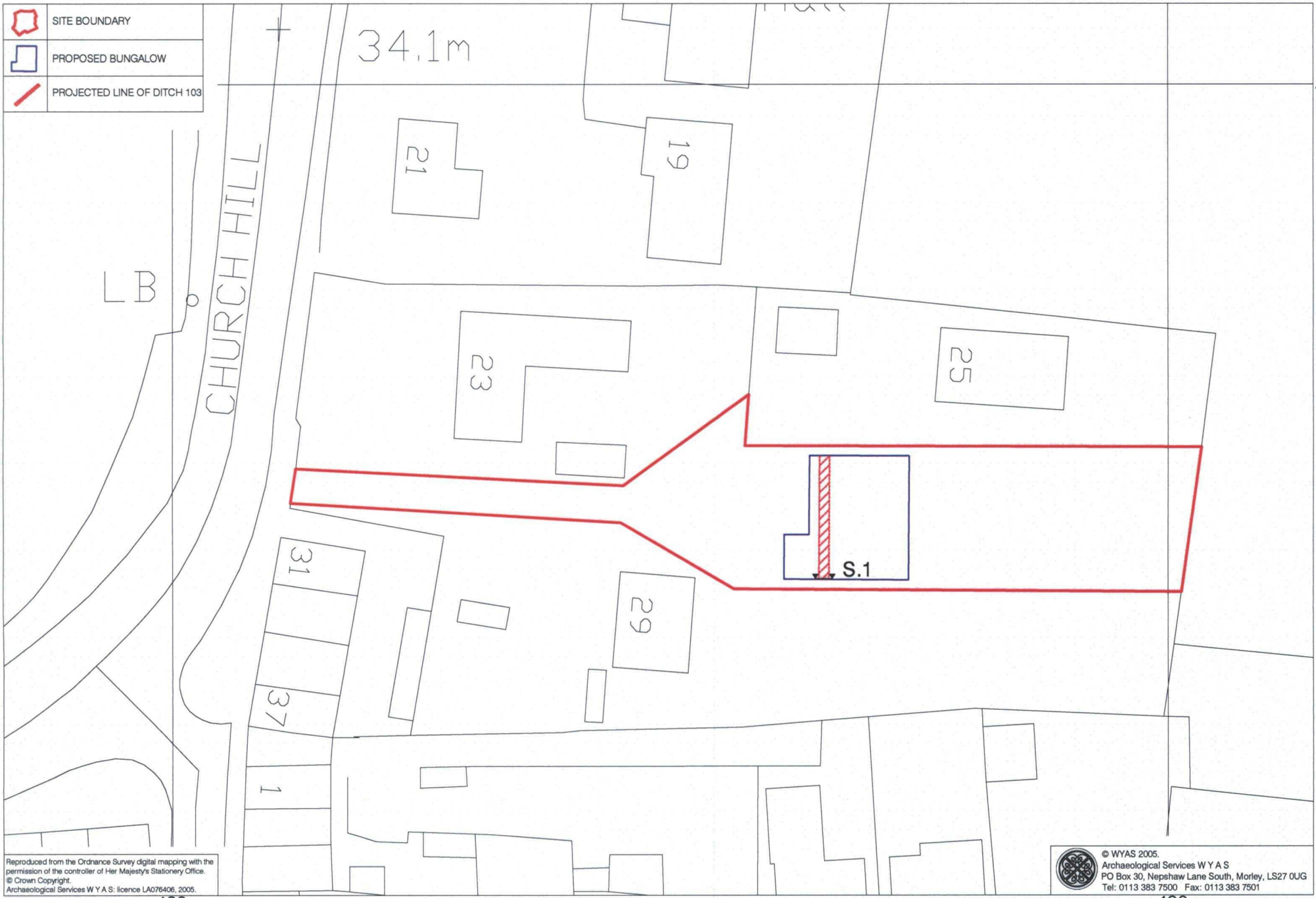
Fig. 1. Site location

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	SITE BOUNDARY
	PROPOSED BUNGALOW
	PROJECTED LINE OF DITCH 103

N  
433500



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448900  
*Fig. 2. Site location showing proposed building and Ditch 103.*

0 449000 25m

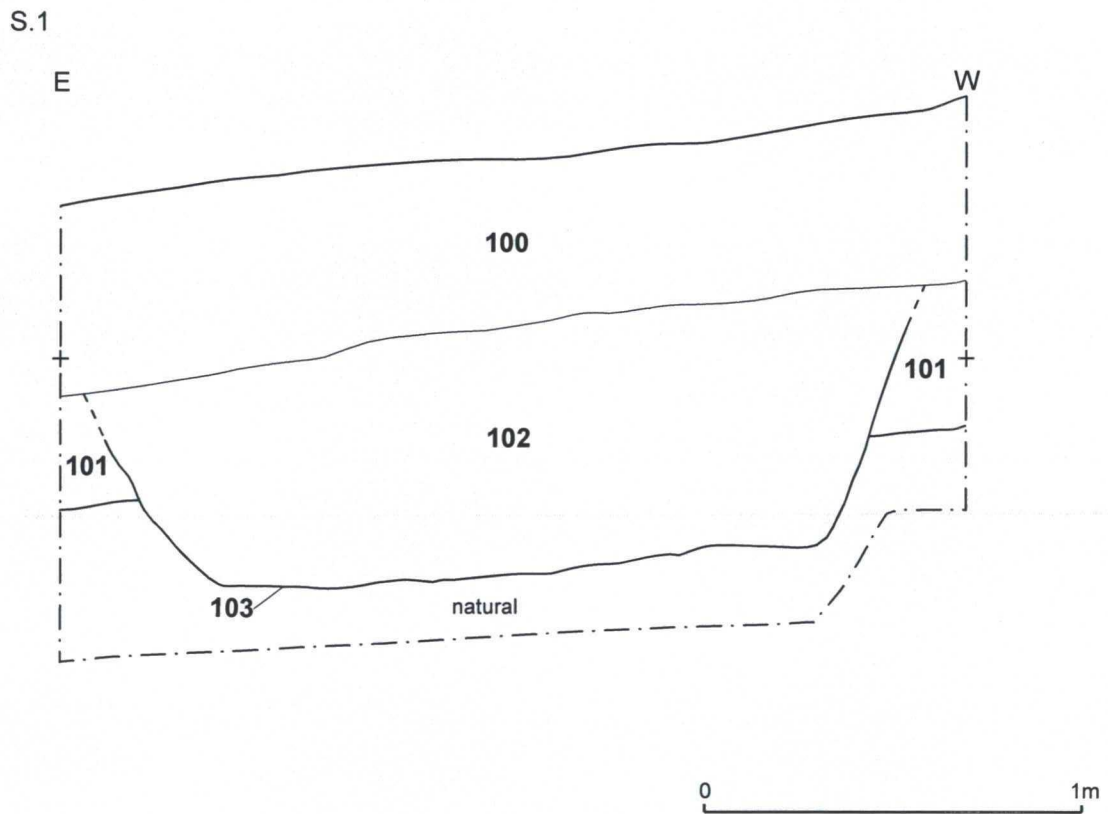


Fig. 3. Section 1

***Appendix I***

***Standard Written Scheme of Investigation***



North

Yorkshire County Council

**STANDARD WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION (WSI)  
FOR LIMITED ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING ("WATCHING BRIEF")**

- 1 The purpose of the work is to record and recover archaeological remains which are:
  - a) affected by proposed development only to a limited and clearly defined extent,
  - b) not available or susceptible to standard area excavation techniques, or
  - c) of limited importance or potential.The work should not require the construction programme or development to be held up while archaeological investigation takes place, although some developers may give such a facility.
- 2 The WSI represents a summary of the broad archaeological requirements needed to comply with an archaeological planning condition. The scheme does **not** comprise a full specification, and the County Council makes no warranty that the works are fully or exactly described. The details of implementation must be specified in a contract between the developer and the selected archaeological contractor.
- 3 The removal of overburden (that is vegetation, turf, loose stones, rubble, made ground, Tarmac, concrete, hardcore, building debris and topsoil) should be supervised by the Archaeologist contracted to carry out the WSI. The Archaeologist should be informed of the correct timing and schedule of overburden removal.
- 4 Removal of overburden by machine should be undertaken using a back-acting excavator fitted with toothless or ditching bucket only. Where materials are exceptionally difficult to lift, a toothed bucket may be used temporarily. Subsoils (B horizons) or deep, uniform fills of features may also be removed by back-acting excavator but only in areas specified by the Archaeologist on site, and only with archaeological supervision. Bulldozers or wheeled scraper buckets should not be used to remove overburden above archaeological deposits. Where reinstatement is required, topsoil should be kept separate from other soil materials.
- 5 Metal detecting within the development area, including the scanning of topsoil and spoil heaps, should only be permitted subject to archaeological supervision and recording such that metal finds are properly located, identified, and conserved. All metal detection should be carried out following the Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice.

Contd\...

- 6 Where structures, finds, soil features and layers of archaeological interest are exposed or disturbed by construction works, the Archaeologist should be provided with the opportunity to observe, clean, assess, excavate by hand where appropriate, sample and record these features and finds. If the contractors or plant operators notice archaeological remains, they should immediately tell the Archaeologist. The sampling of deposits for palaeo-environmental evidence should be a standard consideration, and arrangements should be made to ensure that specialist advice and analysis are available if appropriate.
- 7 Heavy plant should not be operated in the near vicinity of archaeological remains until they have been recorded, and the Archaeologist on site has allowed operations to recommence at that location. Sterile subsoils (C horizons) and parent materials below archaeological deposits may be removed without archaeological supervision. Where reinstatement is required, subsoils should be backfilled first and topsoil last.
- 8 Upon completion of fieldwork, samples should be processed and evaluated, and all finds cleaned, identified, assessed, spot-dated, and properly stored. A field archive should be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and photographs. The Archaeologist should arrange for either the County Archaeologist or an independent post-excavation specialist to inspect the archive before making arrangements for the transfer of the archive to an appropriate museum or records office.
- 9 A summary report should be produced following NYCC guidelines on reporting. The report should contain planning or administrative details of the project, a summary of works carried out, a description and interpretation of the findings, an assessment of the importance of the archaeology including its historical context where appropriate, and catalogues of finds, features, and primary records. All excavated areas should be accurately mapped with respect to nearby buildings, roads and field boundaries. All significant features should be illustrated with conventionally scaled plans, sections, or photographs. Where few or no finds are made, it may be acceptable to provide the report in the form of a letter with plans attached.
- 10 Copies of the summary report should be provided to the client(s), the County Heritage Unit (SMR), to the museum accepting the archive, and if the works are on or adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument, to English Heritage.
- 11 The County Archaeologist should be informed as soon as possible of the discovery of any unexpected archaeological remains, or changes in the programme of ground works on site. Any significant changes in the archaeological work should be specified in a variation to the WSI to be approved by the planning authority. If human remains are encountered, they should be exhumed subject to the conditions of a Home Office licence.

5. When seeking estimates or quotations for archaeological work, the developer should provide:
  - the brief or WSI
  - site location plan
  - plan of existing services, cellar, or other site hazards
  - details of any proposed demolition of structures
  - plan of proposed foundations and services
  - a contact name and number to arrange access to the site
  - details of any help-in-kind which can be offered
  - details of any reinstatement needed afterwards
  - time or period when the work should be undertaken
  
6. Archaeological contractors should include with their quotations the following details:
  - a note of the research potential or academic questions presented by the site
  - a strategy for the proper recording of the archaeology, including a breakdown of tasks, deployment of staff-time, recording systems to be used, the kinds of evidence to be collected, and the criteria used to evaluate the results
  - a listing of the staff and specialists to be employed, their experience or qualifications, position, and areas of responsibility
  - a breakdown of costs exclusive of VAT including (i) staff-time and costs for each of the specified works, (ii) travel expenses, (iii) equipment and plant hire costs, (iv) ancillary costs such as search fees, publicity or security, (v) overheads or on-costs, and (vi) contingent or variation fees for unexpected conditions or archaeology
  - daily, weekly or hectare rates if the work is variable or dependent on other variables
  - a period for which the quotations will remain valid
  
7. The Planning Authority and the County Archaeologist should be notified at the start of any investigations. All work should be monitored by the commissioning or County Archaeologist, to ensure that the specified work are completed and best value obtained. Should you have any questions, or wish to discuss quotations for archaeological work, please contact the Heritage Unit, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AH, telephone (01609) 780780.

**Appendix II****Inventory of primary archive**

<b>File no.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
1	Context register	1
1	Context cards (100-103)	4
1	Drawing register	1
1	Permatrace drawings	2
1	35mm black and white film sheets	1
1	Photograph record sheet	1

***Appendix III***  
***Inventory of contexts***

<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>
100	Topsoil
101	Subsoil
102	Fill of 103
103	Cut of ditch