
ASHFORD GRANGE, GATEFORTH.

REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF.
OSA REPORT No: OSA05WB23.

JUNE 2006.

OSA

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Report Summary.

REPORT No. OSA05WB23

SITE NAME: Ashford Grange, Gateforth

COUNTY: N. Yorkshire

PLANNING APPLICATION No: 8/32/38G/PA 2005/0478/FUL

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 5615 2855

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TIMING: Watching Brief
6th September 2005 and 25th May 2006
Post excavation & report preparation
May 2006

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PERIODS REPRESENTED: Post-Medieval.

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1.0 Introduction.

In light of a decision to construct a new stable block to the south of Ashford Grange, Gateforth, North Yorkshire (Planning number 8/32/38G/PA 2005/0478/FUL) On-Site Archaeology was commissioned to undertake a watching brief on the excavation of the footings for the new build and two soakaways.

The watching brief on the excavation of the foundation trenches took place on the 6th September 2005. On the 25th May 2006 a site visit was undertaken to monitor the excavation of two soakaways. Other than a stone drain of a probable post-medieval date no archaeological deposits were identified during the watching brief.



Figure 1. Site Location (SE 5615 2855).

Reproduced from the 2005 Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 maps with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

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2.0 Site Location, Topography and Land Use.

The site was located c. 50m to the south of Ashford Grange a private residence in the village of Gateforth, North Yorkshire. Gateforth is situated 7km to the southwest of the town of Selby and 3km to the north of the River Aire. The area of investigation lies at National Grid reference SE 5618 2845. Ashford Grange is bounded by residential premises to the north, Manor Farm to the west, Fir Tree farm to the east and open farmland to the south. The site area was located in the northeastern end of a small irregular paddock that was dissected by a small stream c. 50m to the southwest.

The ground level falls in a low continuous slope from Ashford Grange to the stream to the south.

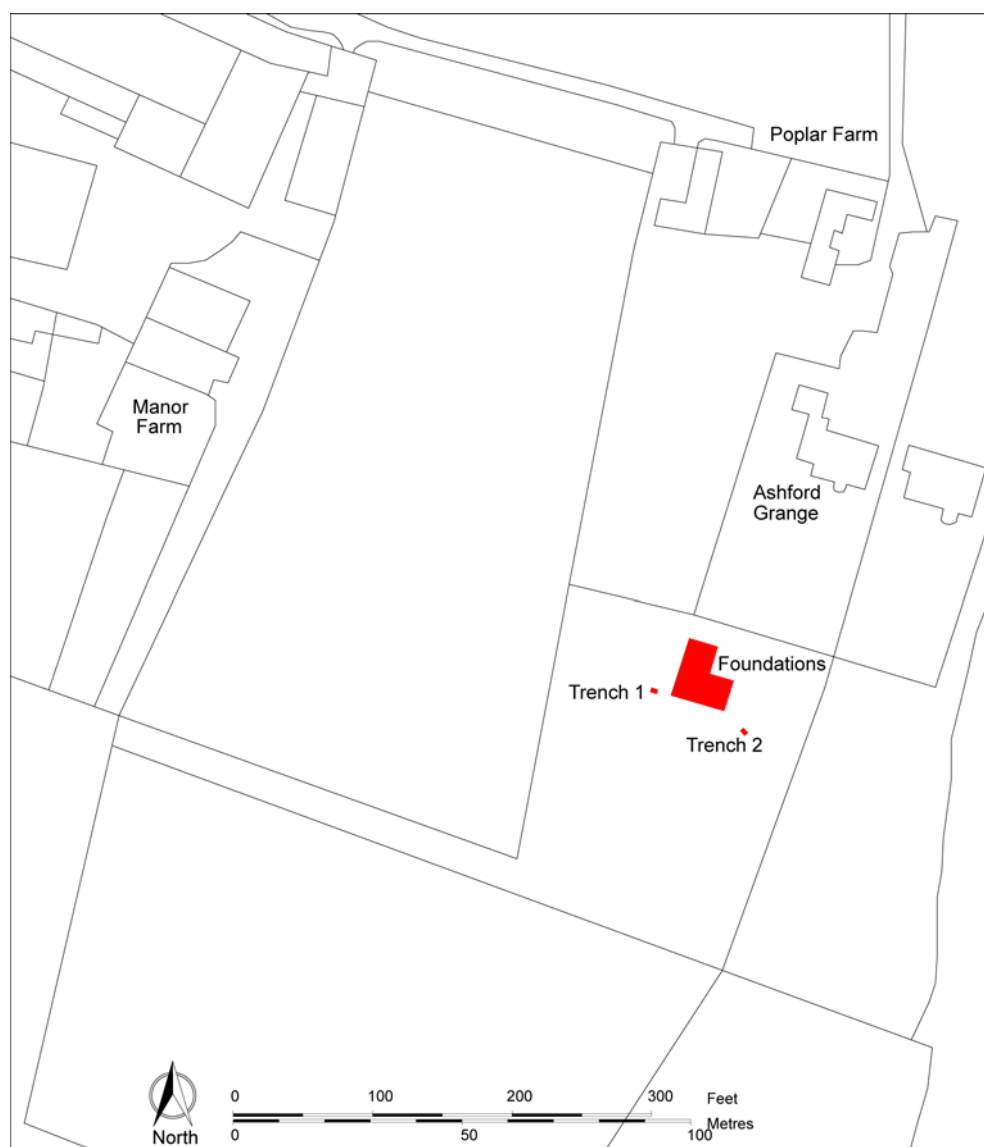


Figure 2. Trench location plan.

3.0 Archaeological Background.

The site lies within the boundary of a possible medieval moated site that has been identified from aerial photographs.

4.0 Methodology.

The excavation of foundations and the soakaways was undertaken by a 360° tracked mini digger fitted with a toothless bucket. The foundations for the new building had a maximum depth of 0.40m and were up to 0.50m wide. The soakaways were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.00m and were c. 1.50m in length and 1.00m wide. Close archaeological supervision was maintained during machining in order to identify the presence or absence of any surviving archaeological deposits. Spoil heaps were also inspected during excavation in order to recover dating evidence.

When archaeological deposits were present standard *On-Site Archaeology* recording techniques were followed. This involved the completion of a context sheet for each deposit or cut encountered, along with plans and/or sections drawn to the relevant scale. A photographic record of the deposits and features was also maintained.

5.0 Results.

5.1 *The Foundations.*

The foundations were cut to a depth of 0.40m into deposit (001). Context (001) comprised a friable dark greyish brown silty sand topsoil which contained occasional small rounded stones. No natural deposits were encountered in the foundation trenches (see Plate 1).

5.2 *The Soakaways.*

Two soakaways were excavated. One, Trench 1, lay c. 3.20m to the west of the southwestern corner of the new building (Fig.2). The second, Trench 2, was situated 5.70m from the southeastern corner of the new building (Fig.2).

5.2.1 *Trench 1.*

Natural deposits, context (106) consisting of light greyish yellow slightly clayey sands which contained rare rounded cobbles were identified in the base of the trench a c. 0.88m below existing ground level (Fig.3). Overlying the natural was a c. 0.46m thick deposit of friable light pinkish brown silty sand (105). This deposit became increasingly gleyed towards the interface with the natural indicating perhaps seasonal groundwater penetration. Context (105) was cut by a curvilinear vertical straight-sided cut with a flat base, [103] (Fig.3; Plate 2). The cut was orientated east/west in the western facing section then curved to the south where it was identified in the north facing section. The cut was up to 0.46m deep and 0.24m wide. The fill (104) comprised a loose cobble deposit at the base which was consisted of small to medium rounded and sub-rounded stones and a dark brown soil matrix. Above the cobbles

was a moderate pinkish brown silty sand representing re-deposited natural. Overlying the fill of the feature was a dark greyish brown silty sand topsoil (100) with occasional small rounded stones. The topsoil had a maximum depth of 0.40m.

The topsoil was cut by a recent drainage cut [101], which had straight vertical sides and a flat base. The cut was c. 0.30m deep and 0.35m wide and ran up to the southwestern corner of the new building. The cut contained re-deposited topsoil, context (102) and a plastic pipe.

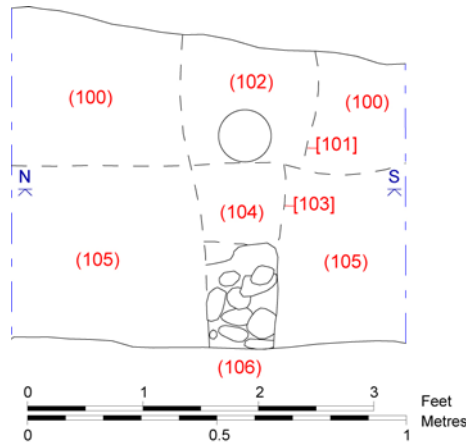


Figure 3. West facing section of Trench 1.

5.2.2 Trench 2.

Natural deposits (106) were identified in the base of the soak away. The natural was overlain by context (105), which was in turn overlain by a 0.16m thick layer of topsoil, context (100).

6.0 Discussion and Conclusions.

No archaeological features were revealed during the excavation of the foundations for the new stable block at Ashford Grange. Given the depth of topsoil deposits in this area of the application area there is a good chance that the ground level had been made up recently.

The only possible archaeological feature to be identified in any of the ground works associated with the construction of the new stable block was identified in the west and north facing sections of a soak away situated to the west of the southwestern corner of the building. The feature, context [103] was interpreted as a stone drain of a possible post-medieval date evidenced by the straight regular cut. The drain comprised a loose basal fill of cobbles and a backfill constituting re-deposited natural subsoil deposits. Given that the subsoil here had been affected by gleying the reason for drainage in this part of the site was self-evident.

7.0 Appendix 1 ~ List of Contexts.

Context	Description	Extent	Depth
001	Dark greyish brown silty sand	Tr	0.40m
100	Dark greyish brown silty sand	N/A	0.42m
101	Vertical straight edge cut with flat base: modern drainage run	c. 3.00m	0.30m
102	Topsoil backfill and plastic drain: fill of 101	c. 3.00m	0.30m
103	Curvi-linear vertical straight edge cut with flat base: stone drain cut	N/A	0.46m
104	Stone and re-deposited natural backfill: fill of 103	N/A	0.46m
105	Friable light pinkish brown silty sand	N/A	0.46m
106	Light greyish yellow slightly clay sand	N/A	N/A

10.0 Appendix 2 ~ Archive Index.

10.1 Drawing Register.

Dwg No	Description	Scale	Date	Initials
1	West facing section of western soak away: Trench 1	1:10	25/05/06	AD

10.2 Photographic Register.

Frame	Description	Scale	Date	Initials
<i>Digital</i>				
1	Main block foundation trench looking south	none	06/09/05	GB
2	Main block foundation trench looking east	none	06/09/05	GB
3	General view of main block	none	06/09/05	GB
4	Southwest facing section: Trench 2	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
5	Southwest facing section: Trench 2	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
6	Southwest facing section: Trench 2	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
7	North facing section: Trench 1	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
8	North facing section: Trench 1	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
9	West facing section: Trench 1	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
10	West facing section: Trench 1	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
11	Working shot	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
12	Overall Trench 2	0.50m	25/05/06	AD
13	Overall Trench 1	0.50m	25/05/06	AD

11.0 Appendix 3 ~ The Plates.



Plate 1. Photo showing topsoil layer in foundation trench.



Plate 2. Trench 1, soakaway, looking east. (Scale of 1m).