

05/01350 MFL

NYCC HER	
SNY	11019
ENY	3167
CNY	5087
Parish	3106
Rec'd	05/07/06

**Land West of Rillington Manor
Sands Lane
Rillington
North Yorkshire**

NGR SE 85426 74977

Archaeological Recording Brief Report

Authorised by *NA. Carrington*

Date: *14/06/06*

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June 2006

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Non-Technical Summary

An Archaeological Recording Brief was undertaken by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. at land to the west of Rillington Manor, Sands Lane, Rillington, North Yorkshire, during April and May 2005. The work was undertaken in order to fulfil a condition attached to a Planning Application Consent (Ref No: 05/01350/MFUL) and involved monitoring the groundworks associated with the erection of an equestrian centre.

The monitored groundworks covered an area of 58.60m x 34m. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the Recording Brief.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An Archaeological Recording Brief was conducted by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. at land to the west of Rillington Manor, Sands Lane, Rillington, North Yorkshire, during April and 2005. The work was undertaken in order to fulfil a condition attached to a Planning Application Consent (Ref No: Ref No: 05/01350/MFUL) and involved monitoring groundworks associated with the erection of an equestrian centre.
- 1.2 All work was undertaken in compliance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Recording* that was prepared by the Senior Archaeologist, North Yorkshire County Council, for MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd (Appendix.
- 1.3 All work was funded by Mr and Mrs. F. Newitt.

1.4 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright, Licence No. AL 50453A.

1.5 The project was assigned the MAP site code 07.03.06.

2. Site Description

2.1 The development area lies approximately 0.5km to the north of the village of Rillington and is situated to the north of Sands Lane and to the west of Rillington Manor, at SE85426 74977 (Figs. 1 and 2). The site is bounded to the north and west by pasture and to the east and south by woodland. At the time of the Recording Brief, the development area consisted of a grassed paddock (Pl.1). An area of waterlogged topsoil within the footprint of the proposed building marked the site of a large and extensive muck-heap that had been moved prior to the commencement of the Recording Brief (Fig. 3).

2.2 The site lies on soils of the Newport 1 Association, which are characterised by freely drained medium and coarse sandy soils that form over glaciofluvial or aeolian sands (Mackney, 1984).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1 The southern edge of the Vale of Pickering formed a focus for prehistoric settlement, probably due to the easily cultivated light sandy soils that lie along the northern fringe of the chalk Wolds. The light sandy soils are also ideal for the formation of cropmarks, and these have recently been plotted by the former RCHME (Stoertz 1997). The later prehistoric and Roman settlement pattern revealed consisted of a 'ladder settlement,' extending along the northern edge of the Wolds on a parallel alignment to the present day A64.

3.2 Immediately to the west of Rillington the cropmark of a double-ditched trackway or boundary runs immediately north of, and parallel to, the A64, disappearing under the village's western fringe.

- 3.3 The most spectacular cropmarks in the vicinity of the proposed development area lie c. 500m to the south-east of the site, and consist of round and square-ditched barrows, multi-ditched boundaries, and settlement-related features, with a date range of the Neolithic through to the Late Iron Age. This complex is scheduled as a nationally important ancient monument (NY 1117).
- 3.4 The cropmarks of further ditches and barrows were recorded to the south of the A64 in the central part of the village. During 1980 the construction of housing situated 200m to the east of the current site prompted a rescue excavation, which recorded late Iron Age ditches, pits and postholes (Turnbull 1983). Burials were encountered during the erection of the housing estate to the south and east, one of which was shown to be Anglian in date by the associated bronze cruciform brooches.
- 3.5 The Anglo-Saxon origins of the present village are indicated by the fact that the settlement was mentioned in the Domesday survey (1086). Three separate holdings were recorded at Rillington; *Gilli* held 2 carucates with land for one plough, worth 10s; the Count of Mortain held 2 carucates and 2 bovates (waste at the time of the survey); and the King held 2 carucates.
- 3.6 The place-name Rillington, variously spelt as *Redlinton*, *Redlinton* and *Renlinton* in the Domesday survey, means 'Redel's farmstead' (Smith 1937). Rillington was one of a chain of pre-conquest settlements that stretched in an easterly direction along the foot of the Wolds from Malton to the sea, echoing the location of the prehistoric and Roman settlements. From west to east these settlements include Scagglethorpe, Scampston, West and East Knapton, West and East Heselton, and Sherburn. The villages were located at the junction of two geomorphological zones, on sandy soils between the chalk wolds to the south, and marshland (or carrs) to the north, enabling the exploitation of different environments.
- 3.7 From analysis of the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed between 1849 and 1853) it seems that the medieval settlement at Rillington formed two rows along Sledgate, on either side of Rillington Beck. The church lay at the southern end of the western row. Two Open Fields (West Field to the west and southwest, and East Field to the east and southeast of the

village) lay at either side of the beck. It was only in relatively recent times that the village spread along the Malton to Scarborough turnpike (now the A64).

- 3.8 A number of Archaeological Watching Briefs have taken place at Rillington. A negative Watching Brief was carried out during the construction of Messrs. A & D Sturdy's new office at 26 Scarborough Road (D. Sturdy pers. comm.; Landscape Research Centre, Yedingham). Another negative Watching Brief took place during the construction of a new classroom at Rillington Primary School (MAP 2001a).
- 3.9 An undated hearth was revealed during the excavation of a fishpond at land to the rear of 1-9 Sledgate (MAP 2001b). Rather more productive was the recording carried out during the construction of an extension to the Ellis Patents Factory, situated to the east of High Street and approximately 300m south of the proposed development area (MAP 1994). A group of five pits was revealed, associated calcite-gritted pottery sherds suggesting a late Iron Age date. Undated features were also recorded during a further Watching Brief at the site that was undertaken in 2005 (MAP 2005).
- 3.10 In addition TCM Brewster recorded calcite-gritted, Roman and medieval coarseware sherds during the construction of a new canteen for the village school near the junction of High Street and Malton Road (ERART archive).
- 3.11 Three Archaeological evaluations conducted recently to the south of the A64 at 30-32, 34-38 and 44 Scarborough road, revealed features of late Iron Age to Romano-British and medieval date, along with an undated inhumation (MAP 2004, MAP 2006a and MAP 2006b).

4. Methodology

- 4.1 Extensive crop-marks relating to Iron Age/Romano-British "ladder settlement" have been identified in fields to the north and west of Rillington Manor, and for this reason a pre-determination evaluation of the site was undertaken in December 2005 in the form of an archaeological geophysical survey (LRC 2005). This identified the likely presence of archaeological features on the site and a suitable archaeological mitigation strategy was thus devised by the Senior Archaeologist, North Yorkshire County Council. As specified in the

Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Recording, the mitigation strategy consisted of two distinct elements:-

- A) The supervision of the removal of topsoil over the site of the proposed new building and access road, with provision for the full excavation and evaluation of any archaeological features or deposits thus exposed (Recording Brief).
- B) An Archaeological Watching Brief to be maintained during the excavation of service and drainage trenches.

4.2 The removal of topsoil was undertaken by a back-acting mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless bucket, operating under close archaeological supervision. Following the removal of the overburden, archaeological deposits and features were to be identified, cleaned, recorded and hand-excavated by the archaeological field team.

4.3 All work was carried out in line with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IFA 1998). All archaeological deposits were recorded according to correct principles of stratigraphic excavation on MAP's *pro forma* context sheets, which are compatible with the MoLAS recording system.

4.4 The full extent of archaeological deposits and features were recorded in plan on drawing film.

4.5 A photographic record was prepared of all the archaeological features encountered during the evaluation. This comprised 35mm colour print, slide and monochrome film (Appendix 4).

4.6 All artefacts were retained for specialist analysis. Finds were processed in accordance with English Heritage Guidelines (EH 1995). All finds were cleaned, identified, assessed, spot dated (where possible), marked (where appropriate), and properly packed and stored according to national guidelines.

5. Results

5.1 Recording Brief (Fig. 3)

5.1.1 The initial phase of the recording brief involved the stripping of topsoil to create a level platform for the proposed new building. The stripped area measured 44.0m x 27.20m in size.

Existing ground level sloped gently from south-west (29.50m AOD) to north-east (29.35m AOD), whilst the mean final level of excavation was 29.22m AOD (Pls. 2-5).

- 5.1.2 The earliest deposit revealed by the topsoil strip was a deposit of fine sandy subsoil that included occasional flint gravel (context 1002). Subsoil 1002 was sealed by a 0.20m deep deposit of silty loam topsoil (context 1001)) that contained pottery sherds of Romano-British to 19th century date (context 1001). Because the final level of excavation was relatively shallow (approximately 0.30m below existing ground level at its southern limit and 0.10m below existing ground level at its northern limit) Deposit 1001 was not fully removed and formed the final level of excavation across approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the footprint of the building. Subsoil Deposit 1002 formed the final level of excavation in the remainder of the building footprint.
- 5.1.3 Following the topsoil strip, a series of 24 foundation stanchion cuts were excavated along the line of the walls of the proposed building (Pls. 6-9). Stanchion cuts along the northern and southern sides of the building measured 1.40m x 1.40m, whilst those along the western and eastern sides measured 1.20m x 1.20m. All the excavations were conducted to a depth of 0.85m below the reduced level of the building footprint (28.37m AOD). The stanchion cuts were linked by a 0.70m wide foundation trench that ran around the perimeter of the building. The foundation trench was excavated to a depth of 0.40m below the reduced level of the building footprint (28.82m AOD).
- 5.1.4 The foundation excavations revealed a consistent stratigraphy across the site. Along the southern edge of the building, the stanchion cuts exposed naturally-formed deposits of sand and chalky gravel (context 1004). Deposit 1004 appeared to be of glaciofluvial origin and was sealed by Subsoil Deposit 1002. Deposit 1002 was shown to be 0.50m to 0.60m deep and was sealed by Topsoil Deposit 1001.
- 5.1.5 No archaeological features or deposits were identified, either in section or plan, within the stanchion and foundation cut excavations. The only feature identified during the foundation excavations was a 1.0m wide, 1.0m deep modern field drain cut that ran across the footprint of the building for approximately 15m (context 1003, Pl. 10). Drain Cut 1003 contained a

modern plastic pipe. This was set within a deposit of commercially-produced chalk hardcore (context 1005) that was sealed by plastic sheeting and builder's sand.

5.1.6 Following the completion of the foundation groundworks, the area immediately to the north of the building footings was excavated to form an access road and forecourt. The monitored groundworks covered an area of 14.60m x 34m.

5.1.7 Excavations for the road and forecourt were undertaken to a depth of 0.20m below existing ground level and so were not deep enough to allow the complete removal of Topsoil Deposit 1001. In consequence, this deposit formed much of the ground surface at the final level of excavation. No archaeological features were discerned in those areas where the underlying subsoil (context 1002) was exposed (Pls.11 and 12).

5.1.8 With the exception of a modern plastic water supply pipe, no archaeological features, deposits or finds were encountered during this part of the Recording Brief.

5.2 Watching Brief

5.2.1 Following the completion of the foundation groundworks, a Watching Brief was maintained during the excavation of four soakaway pits and connecting drain runs.

5.2.2 The four soakaway pits were located approximately 8.0m from the southern and northern sides of the building. Each soakaway measured 4.0m x 4.0m and were excavated to a mean depth of 1.60m below existing ground level (27.75m AOD, Pls. 13 and 14). The stratigraphy exposed in each soakaway was identical and consisted of naturally-formed glaciofluvial sand and gravel deposits (context 1004) that were sealed by a 0.60 to 0.70m deep deposit of subsoil (context 1002). Deposit 1002 was sealed by a 0.30m deep deposit of topsoil (context 1001).

5.2.3 No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the soakaway excavations and no finds were recovered.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the Watching Brief. However, the finds assemblage recovered from the topsoil included abraded material of Romano-British and medieval date. Whilst the medieval and later material was probably imported to the site with midden deposits or nightsoil from the nearby village, the abraded Roman material strongly suggests the presence of ploughed-out Romano-British features in the immediate vicinity of the site.

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