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**Land Adjacent to Becksde Cottage
Kirby Grindalythe
North Yorkshire
SE 4906 4675**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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2006

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- 4 OCT 2006
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Archaeological Watching Brief

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**Land Adjacent to Beckside Cottage
Kirby Grindalythe
North Yorkshire
SE 49064675**

Archaeological Watching Brief

Non Technical Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on land proposed for the construction of a dwelling adjacent to Beckside Cottage, Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire during April 2006. The work involved the excavation of four slip trenches in order to locate a drain. The only archaeological feature identified was a short length of wall foundation. Finds included sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on the 28th of April 2006, on land immediately to the east of Beckside Cottage Kirby Grindalythe North Yorkshire (Fig. 1) during the excavation of four slip trenches to locate a drain.
- 1.2 The site code was 01.04.06 and all work was funded by Carl Massey. 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. License No. AL 50453A.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site lies in the village of Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire, at SE 4906 4675. It consists of a rectangular plot of land measuring 36m long by 16.4m wide on land sloping downhill from north to south. The site is bounded by properties to the north, east and west, with a beck (the Gypsy Race) and a

lane to the south (Fig. 2). At the time of the work the plot was grassland, having formerly been a garden and small paddock.

- 2.2 The site stands on soils of the Coombe 1 Association, which are defined as well-drained calcareous fine silty soils in valley bottoms, shallow on valley sides, overlying chalky drift (Mackney, 1984, 194).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 Situated in an area with little reliable surface water, the Gypsy Race and the relatively fertile land on the valley slopes, have formed an attractive area for settlement from early times through to the present day. Discontinuous cropmarks illustrate settlement enclosures of assumed Iron Age/Romano-British date along the valley floor (Stoertz 1997). The cropmark of a double-ditched trackway or boundary runs parallel to the Gypsy Race immediately west of Kirby Grindalythe, whilst another example runs to the east of the village, and is associated rectangular enclosures, runs north-eastwards up the valley side.
- 3.2 The immediate origins of the present village of Kirby Grindalythe are suggested by the five fragments of 9th or 10th century carved stone crosses incorporated into the church tower. A pre-conquest origin for the village is confirmed by the Domesday Survey, which recorded the passing of the manors of Ketilbjorn and Thorfinnr to Count Robert Mortain. A smaller manor previously held by Uglubathr passed to the king. The village was recorded as *Chirchebi* in the Domesday Survey, the suffix *in Crandala* being mentioned in a charter of 1123-8, augmented as *Crendalith* by 1367. The place-name means 'church village', Grindalythe referring to an old name for the valley of the Gypsy Race meaning 'valley where cranes were seen' (Smith ed. 1937).
- 3.3 At the 1297 Lay Subsidy only four people at Kirby Grindalythe had the necessary 9s. of assets to make them liable for taxation. By the time of the 1334 Lay Subsidy, the settlement was taxed at 38s. slightly above average for

the area. The church, its income and land at Kirby Grindalythe were given to Kirkham Priory in 1311, and reverted to the crown at the 1539 dissolution.

- 3.4 The site lies within the core of the medieval village, with the church and manor house lying c. 100m to the west. Present day Kirby Grindalythe is in fact a shrunken medieval village, with an area of settlement earthworks immediately west of the church being scheduled as an ancient monument. The 1890 25" Ordnance Survey map shows further earthworks related to the medieval settlement immediately to the east of the site. These earthworks point to a decline in the importance of the medieval settlement, a process reflected by the near-total desertion of other settlements in the valley, such as Wharram Percy, Mowthorpe and Thirkleby.
- 3.5 The medieval farming system was finally ended in 1755, when the village open fields were enclosed by agreement.
- 3.6 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map shows a similar arrangement of buildings to that which exists within the development area today (Fig. 2).
- 3.7 There have been three archaeological interventions at Kirby Grindalythe prior to the commencement of the present project. A Watching Brief was carried out by Landscape Research Ltd, at the Cranedale Centre in November 1992, recording the foundations of a post-medieval chalk-walled barn and a boundary ditch (Lyall, 1992). Three graves were also present, presumably associated with the church, whose graveyard lay immediately to the west.
- 3.8 Four small trenches were excavated by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd prior to the erection of new electricity poles within the area of scheduled earthworks situated to the west of the church (MAP 1997). Walls (probably not relating to buildings), pits and ditches of 11th to 15th century date were revealed. A further trench, outside the area of earthworks, and close to the northern bank of the Gypsy Race showed approximately 1.75m of colluvial build-up with associated finds of calcite-gritted sherds and flint flakes.

- 3.9 An Archaeological Excavation was carried out on a proposed development site at Low Farm, Kirby Grindalythe North Yorkshire (SE 9052 6759) during September and October 2005 (MAP 2005). The excavation followed on from an evaluation that took place in July 2003, illustrating the archaeological potential of the site, including graves, pits and boundaries of probable Late Iron Age/Roman date.
- 3.10 The open-area Excavations revealed a major double-ditched boundary of Iron Age/Roman date that crossed the central part of the area on a north to south alignment, and which cut through earlier pits and linear features. The graves of three infants, two juveniles and an adult were excavated.
- 3.11 Later features consisted of medieval pits and ditches. The south/central part of the excavated area was badly affected by post-medieval disturbance.

4. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The aims and objectives of the Watching Brief were to record the presence or absence of archaeological remains during the groundworks to locate a drain spanning the length of the proposed development plot.

5. Methodology

- 5.1 The four slip trenches were excavated by a mini excavator to locate a drain supposedly running from north to south from the northern limit of the site to the Gypsy Race to the south. The machine stripped the trenches with an untoothed bucket under archaeological supervision until the drain was located.
- 5.2 A drawn written and photographic record was made of all deposits and features encountered and the trenches were located in relation to existing buildings and roads.

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6. Results

6.1 The investigations successfully located the drain in three of the four slip trenches (Fig. 2). The only other feature identified was part of a wall foundation within Trench 1. Medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil deposit within Trenches 1-3.

6.2 Trench 1

6.2.1 Trench 1 measured 6m by 0.75m, was aligned north to south and located 3m to the east of the western plot boundary in the supposed position of the drain (Fig. 2). The drain was not located but a short length of rough, unbonded chalk wall foundation (context 1003) was identified along with a small number of medieval pottery sherds from the surrounding subsoil deposit (context 1002). Wall 1003 measured 4m long, was aligned north to south and only partly visible within the trench (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). The surrounding subsoil deposit, (context 1002), was a brown silty clay with chalk inclusions, containing two sherds of pottery, the latest dating to the 18th or 19th century, plus a single small pantile fragment. The upper most deposit was 0.3m deep of topsoil (context 1001) from which no finds were recovered.

6.3 Trench 2

6.3.1 Trench 2 measured 6m by 0.75m, was aligned east to west and located at the north-western end of the plot (Fig 2). The drainpipe was successfully located within a cut (context 2004) backfilled with redeposited chalk natural (context 2003) making the feature clearly visible (Figs. 3 & 4; Pl. 2). The drain was cut into a stony silty clay sub-soil deposit (context 2002) from which a small number of medieval pottery sherds were recovered, identified as 12th to 14th century Staxton / Potter Brompton ware. Topsoil (context 2001) formed the uppermost deposit that measured 0.3m deep and contained no finds.

6.4 Trench 3

6.4.1 Trench 3 was located towards the southern end of the plot, aligned east to west and measured 14.4m by 0.75m (Figs 2, 3 & 4; Pl. 3). The pipe was successfully located at the base of the 0.3m deep topsoil (context 3001), which

overlay a stony subsoil (context 3002) that contained three sherds of 12th-14th century Staxton / Potter Brompton ware. No finds were noted from the Topsoil Deposit 3001.

6.4.2

6.5 Trench 4

6.5.1 Trench 4 was T-shaped and located at the southern boundary of the site with the two lengths of trench measuring 3.3m and 2.7m both 0.7m wide with a maximum of 0.5m deep (Figs 2, 3 & 4; Pl.4). The drainpipe was successfully located, but at the southern end of the trench, at the limit of the house plot, it had been smashed by a concrete posthole base. No finds were recovered from the subsoil and topsoil deposits (contexts 4001 and 4002 respectively).

7. Conclusions

7.1 The drainpipe was successfully located with minimal disturbance to the surrounding deposits and features. The presence of the wall foundation and medieval and post-medieval pottery recovered from the trenches indicated the presence of archaeological deposits, features and finds within the proposed development plot. The medieval pottery dated to the 12th to 14th century, and a single sherd of 18th to 19th century pottery also recovered. As only part of the wall foundation was identified within Trench 1 it is presumed that this forms part of a structure that extends into other parts of the plot. Further groundworks within the site may thus encounter other archaeological features and finds.

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