



FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY SPECIALISTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

THE OLD VICARAGE GARDENS FINKLE STREET

HEMINGBROUGH NORTH YORKSHIRE

NYCC HER

SNY	11356
ENY	3156
CNY	3634
Parish	8018
Rec'd	22/01/2007

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document reports on a watching brief undertaken by Field Archaeology Specialists (FAS) Ltd on behalf of Mr Howard Rushworth at The Old Vicarage, Finkle Street, Hemingbrough. The watching brief was carried out on the 11th and 12th April 2006. 8/18/346/PA

1.1 LOCATION AND LAND USE

The development area was located on the north side of Finkle Street, immediately to the east of the Old Vicarage within an area of lawned garden (Figure 1; NGR SE 6747 3060). The site was bound to the south by Finkle Street, to the west by the Old Vicarage, to the east by South View and to the north by a wooden fence overlooking residential properties.

Geology

The solid geology of the Hemingbrough area comprises Triassic sandstone overlaying Magnesian limestone and coal measures, covered with a drift geology of layers of silts, clays and sands. Much of this drift geology reflects successive alluvial deposition during episodic flooding of the adjacent river Ouse. Soils in the area are predominantly of the Everingham type, consisting of fine sandy soils; clayey and loamy soils are also known in the district (British Geological Survey 1973). Consequently, the area is characterised by high quality agricultural soils.

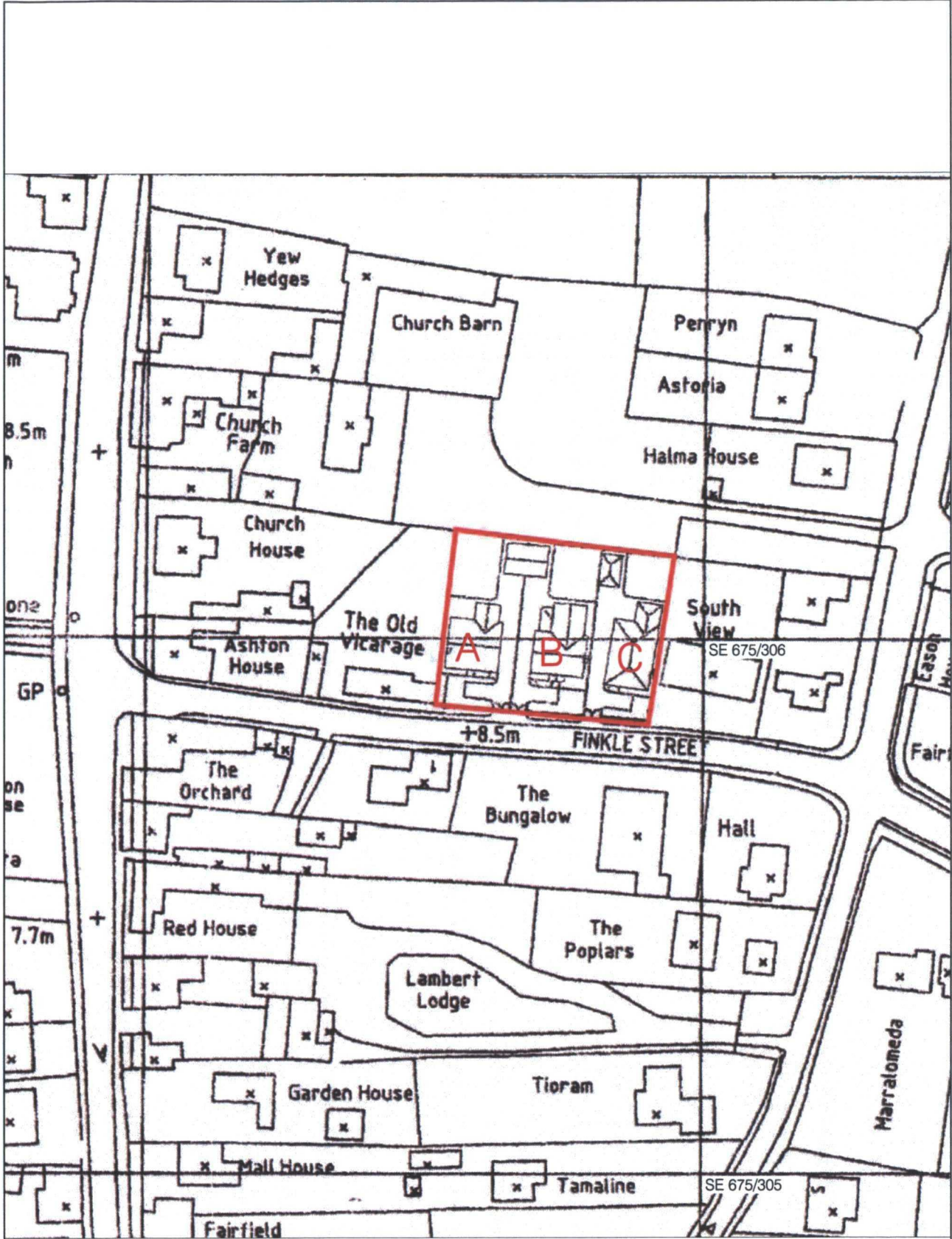
1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the watching brief was to identify, characterise and record any archaeological deposits encountered during the groundworks, which would be destroyed or disturbed by the development. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the North Yorkshire County Council Standard Written Scheme of Investigation for Limited Archaeological Recording.

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The village of Hemingbrough, located within the southern part of the wapentake of Ouse and Derwent, lies about 20km to the southeast of York and 5km to the west of Selby. There is no known prehistoric evidence from within the boundaries of the modern village, but a scattering of Roman finds, including a Roman coin of Victorinus (c.AD 268-270)(Burton 1888, 9) and sherds of Roman pottery (Farrar 1987, 5) may suggest a Roman presence in the area, but the character of such activity remains unclear. It has traditionally been assumed that there were a series of Roman forts along the River Ouse, one of which may have been situated on the slightly higher ground at Hemingbrough, a naturally defensible site. However, no proof has yet been found to substantiate this claim.





Site location

Scale 1:1000



Figure 1



Etymological studies have established early medieval origins for the settlement, and it has been suggested that the placename literally means 'Heming's fortification'. The identity of the person from whom 'Heming' is derived remains a matter of conjecture. One interpretation suggests that the name is derived from the Jómsborg Viking, Jarl Hemingr, who captained a northern detachment of the Viking army who are known to have had their headquarters close to York, perhaps at Hemingbrough. Alternatively, it has been suggested that the placename is derived from the Old English 'Hem(m)inga-burh' meaning 'stronghold of Hemma (an unidentified individual) and his people' (Burton 1888, 9; Smith 1970, 260-1; Scott 2005, 14). The extent and nature of settlement in Hemingbrough during the early medieval period is unclear and little archaeological evidence attesting to activity at this time is known from within the village.

By the beginning of the medieval period it is clear that Hemingbrough had developed as a relatively substantial settlement and parish. The village was recorded in the Domesday Book, 1086, as 'Hamiburg', where there were:

'3 caracutes to the geld, which 2 ploughs could plough. Tosti held this as 1 manor. Now the king has there 5 viallans and 3 bordars with 2 ploughs. There is a priest and a church, 7 acres of meadow [and] woodland pasture half a league long and as much broad. All together [it is] 1 league long and a half broad. TRE worth 40s; now 16s' (Williams and Martin 1992, 788).

At the time of the survey the parish was the property of King William I, but shortly afterwards he gave it to the Bishop of Durham who subsequently assigned the parish to Durham Priory (Allison 1976, 40); thereafter the ecclesiastical influence of Durham played a key role in the development of the settlement. The earliest surviving parts of the parish Church of St Mary date to the 12th century and additions and alterations followed in the 13th, 14th and 15th century. In 1426, it was designated a Collegiate church, with the provost, prebendaries and vicars holding the collective title of 'the college of the Blessed Mary of Hemingbrough' (Burton 1888, 67; Allison 1976, 42).

In the early 14th century, a chantry was established in the church by the executors of Henry de Cliffe, prebendary of York. Following its foundation, the Prior and Convent of Durham conveyed to the executors of the 'Cliffe Chantry' in August 1339 a piece of land known as 'Le Stackgarth', which Burton (1888, 90) identified as the site of what was the Old Vicarage. However, it seems that Le Stackgarth was not used by the priests attending the Cliffe Chantry since they resided in the neighbouring village of Cliffe, and in 1402-3 it was apparently being rented from Durham Priory. Following the conversion to a Collegiate Church, the provosts who assumed the role of the rectors had no use for Le Stackgarth and few tenants are recorded, suggesting it was largely uninhabited. It may, for a while, have become the Bedern or home of the parish priests, but this cannot be substantiated. After the Dissolution, little is recorded about the house until 1707 when it was conveyed to trustees for the incumbent's benefit. During the mid-18th century it was enlarged, partly rebuilt in 1794 and enlarged again in 1826. A new vicarage was built in Hemingbrough on the Howden Road in 1862, at which point the Old Vicarage became redundant (Allison 1976, 42-3). Land associated with the Old Vicarage was sold in 1854 and the house itself in 1908.

During the medieval period the village developed as an agricultural community and there were also fisheries on the River Ouse. The agricultural character of the village persisted into the post-medieval period and much of the built fabric of the village dates to the 18th and 19th century, including a number of small farmhouses on the Main Street (Pevsner 1995). At the time of the Parliamentary Enclosure of the parish in 1836, land in the parish

comprised open fields, meadow and pasture (English 1985, 68). By the mid-19th century a number of large farms, some with earlier origins, had been established within the parish. In addition, there were market gardeners and a windmill, the latter stood to the south of the village and had been demolished by 1973 (Allison 1976, 40-1). During the 20th century, the size of the village has increased marginally, with new residential housing developments to the north, east and south of the village centre.

2.0 FIELDWORK PROCEDURE

The excavation of all foundation trenches was undertaken using a wheeled, back-acting mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision. The trenches measured 0.75m wide and were spit-excavated by machine to a depth of between 0.75m and 1.00m below ground level. The watching brief was allocated Intervention 1 and the house plots allocated A, B and C respectively.

The excavation and recording system employed during fieldwork is based on a set of principles known as *Field Research Procedure* (Carver 1999), the standard operating system employed by FAS. The procedure structures excavation data in an hierarchical system. Each stratigraphic unit defined during excavation, which is considered to have been formed by a single deposition, is referred to as a 'context', and where appropriate, contexts are grouped during excavation as 'features'; a single index was created for contexts, starting at C1000, and for features, starting at F1. Each unit has a structured *pro forma* recording sheet to be completed using a series of keywords.

3.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS

A consistent thick and homogenous layer of topsoil, allocated C1000, covered the monitored development area and consisted of a dark greyish-brown sandy clay with occasional inclusions of angular gravel and mortar flecks. This layer was visible to a depth of between 0.75 and 0.85m within all foundation trenches associated with Plot A. The layer contained modern ceramic including a fragment of stoneware jar and clay tobacco pipe; two sherds of Roman ceramic, a sherd of Samian dish (Dr31) and a sherd of local burnished greyware, both of late 2nd century date onwards, were also recovered residually from this layer. Beneath C1000, a light greyish-brown sandy clay with rare inclusions of angular gravel was observed and allocated C1001. A modern field drain system (F1) was seen in section cut through C1001 to a depth of 0.70m. F1 consisted of ceramic pipes within narrow trenches backfilled with C1003, a dark greyish-brown sandy clay with occasional inclusions of angular gravel and mortar flecks.

Following the removal of C1001, a light yellowish-brown sandy clay with frequent patches of light brown clay, rare inclusions of angular gravel (C1002) was identified. This layer was visible to a limited depth of 0.05m and continued below trench depths, but was seen consistently across Plot A. C1002 has been identified tentatively as subsoil.

All foundation trenches within Plot B and Plot C were monitored revealing the same sequence of deposits as Plot A providing a clear view of strata across the entire site with no evidence of archaeological remains. Since this sequence was encountered throughout the footprint of the house plots representing the majority of the

development area, the watching brief of the garage footings was curtailed with the approval of the Heritage Section of North Yorkshire County Council.

Table 1 Summary of contexts

Context	Feature	Identity	Description
1000	-	topsoil	dark greyish-brown sandy clay with occasional inclusions of angular gravel and mortar flecks and ceramic
1001	-	layer	light greyish-brown sandy clay with rare inclusions of angular gravel
1002	-	layer	light yellowish-brown sandy clay with frequent patches of light brown clay, rare inclusions of angular gravel
1003	1	backfill	dark greyish-brown sandy clay with occasional inclusions of angular gravel and mortar flecks

Table 2 Summary of features

Feature	Contexts	Identity	Dimensions	Description
1	1003	field drain system	not seen	series of field drains running on a NW-SE and a NE-SW alignment across the site, consisting of a ceramic pipe backfilled with C1003

4.0 DISCUSSION

The deposits encountered within this series of groundworks appeared to represent the thick accumulation of a dark soil overburden overlying a possible relict buried ground surface overlying possible subsoil. This sequence was interrupted only by the construction of the drainage system. The source of the residual Roman ceramic from C1000 is not clear, but they can be grouped with the scattered Roman finds recorded from the Hemingbrough area.

5.0 ARCHIVE

A copy of this report will be deposited with the Heritage Unit, North Yorkshire County Council on behalf of the County Historic Environment Record and a copy is held by FAS.

References

Cartographic Sources

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