

The Landscape Research Centre

**The Landscape Research Centre Ltd
The Old Bridge Barn,
Yedingham.**

Malton

YO17 8SL

☎ 01944 728 441

Email: D.Powlesland@btinternet.com

Archaeological Report



Project Name: Sherburn Site 329

41 St Hilda's Street

Report by: James Lyall

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Summary

A watching brief was carried out on behalf of Kevin Haldenby on an extension to the west and new build to the south of the existing structure at 41 St Hilda's Street, Sherburn. The site was centered on NGS grid reference SE 95922/77116. Three features of archaeological origin were encountered; a pit and two ditches.

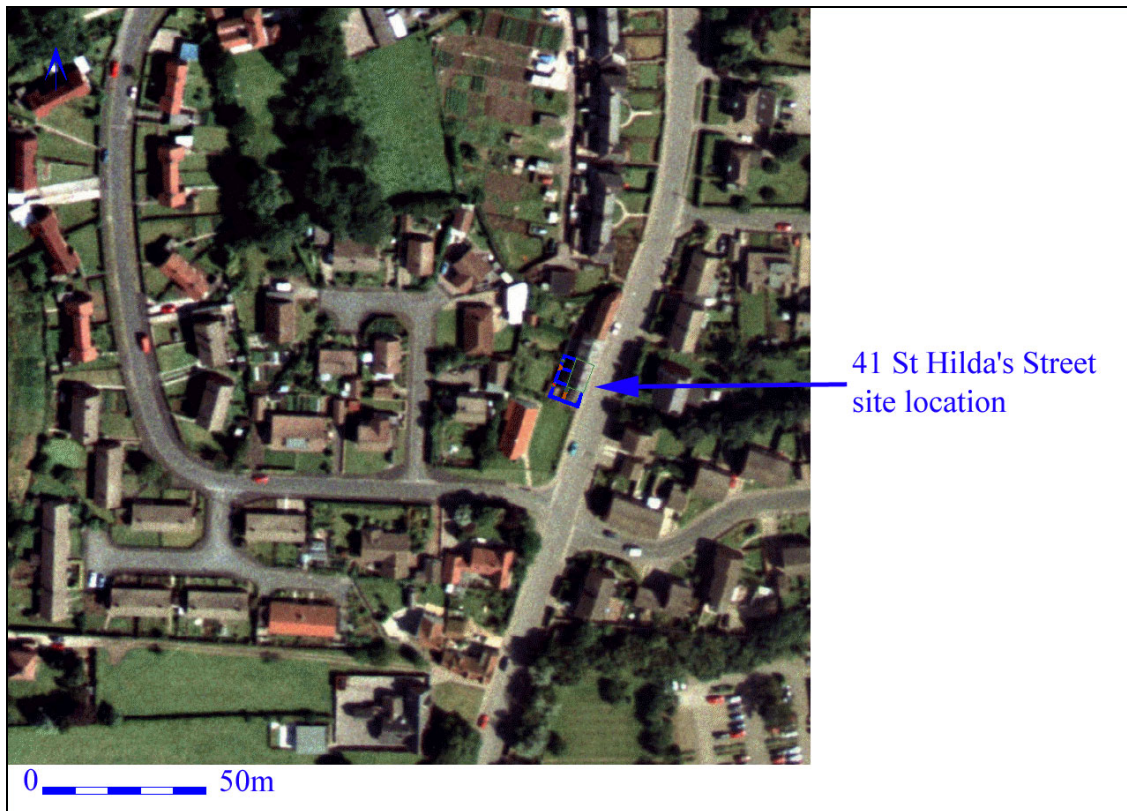


Figure 1 *Getmapping* aerial photograph taken in 2000 with location of site superimposed

Known archaeology in the area

Geophysical surveys by the Landscape Research Centre around Sherburn have indicated that the entire area round the village is archaeologically significant, with evidence of Iron Age, Romano-British and Anglian settlement.

Discussion

The watching brief was carried out on the 19th of February, 2007, and comprised archaeological supervision of the excavation the wall footings for the extension and new build (see Figure 2 for plan of investigated areas). The footings varied in depth from 90cm to 110cm, and cut through blown sand and natural sand deposits. The features encountered are indicated by the numbers 1 to 5 in Figure 2. As all of the footings were excavated into very soft yellow sand, they were prone to almost immediate collapse, making excavation difficult. As a safety measure, the areas along the top of the footings were not cleaned, to prevent further collapse of the sides.

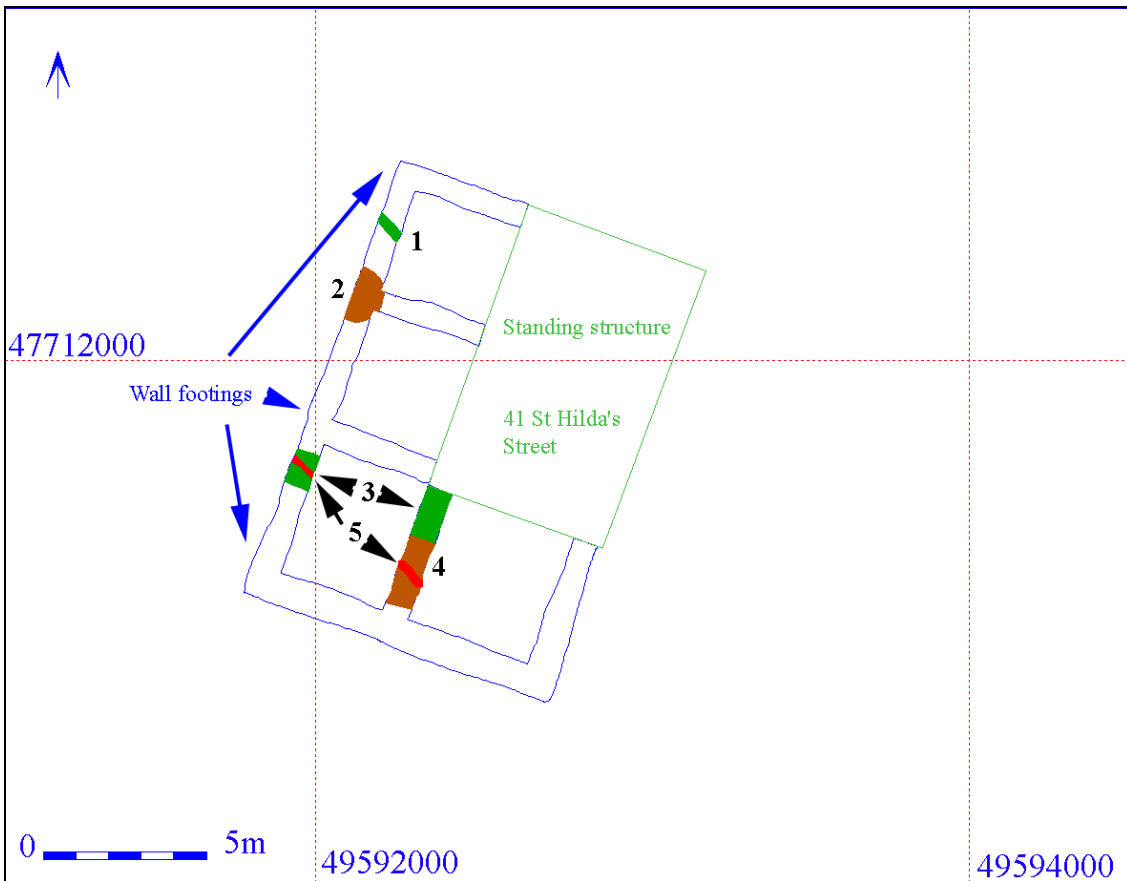


Figure 2 Plan of areas investigated



Figure 3 Showing ditch number one and the northern edge of pit number 2

The first feature encountered was ditch number one, which ran obliquely across the footing(see Figure 3). The only find was a fragment of modern brick, although this

could have been intrusive. Pit number 2 was a relatively modern feature, almost completely filled with bricks and brick rubble. Its presence at this point in the footing caused the first collapse, immediately after the photograph in Figure 3 was taken. (See Figure 4).



Figure 4 Pit number two immediately after collapse (note bricks in base of footing)

Feature number 5 was an obsolete sewage pipe, which had cut through features 3 and 4. Feature number 4 was a pit, encountered in the footing extending to the south of the standing building. The pit was filled with a virtually inclusion-free windblown sand, and no finds were recovered from this feature.

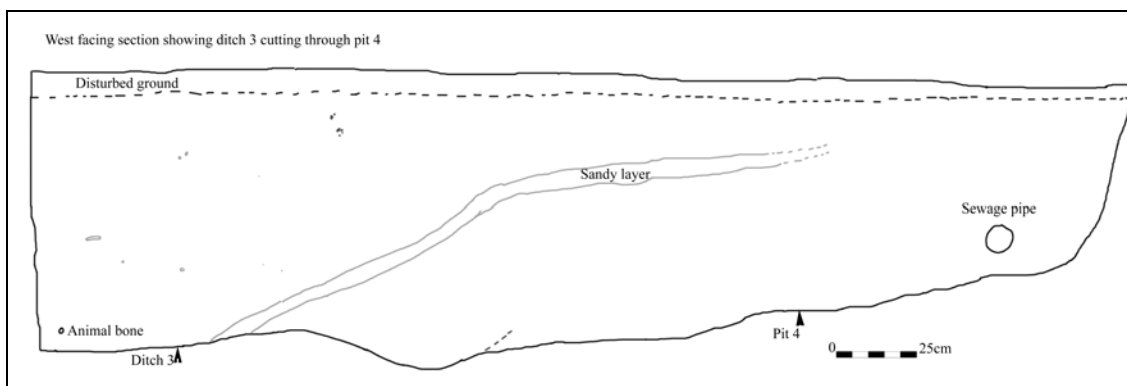


Figure 5 West facing section showing ditch 3 cutting through pit 4

Pit 4 was cut by ditch number 3, which had been recut at least once as indicated by the profile and the line of mixed yellow sand (see Figures 5 and 6). No finds were

encountered in the earlier phase, but the later (northernmost) ditch fill contained sparse animal bone fragments, 2 sherds of abraded pottery and a charcoal fragment. Both pottery sherds were non-diagnostic Medieval wheel thrown fragments, sooted on the internal wall.

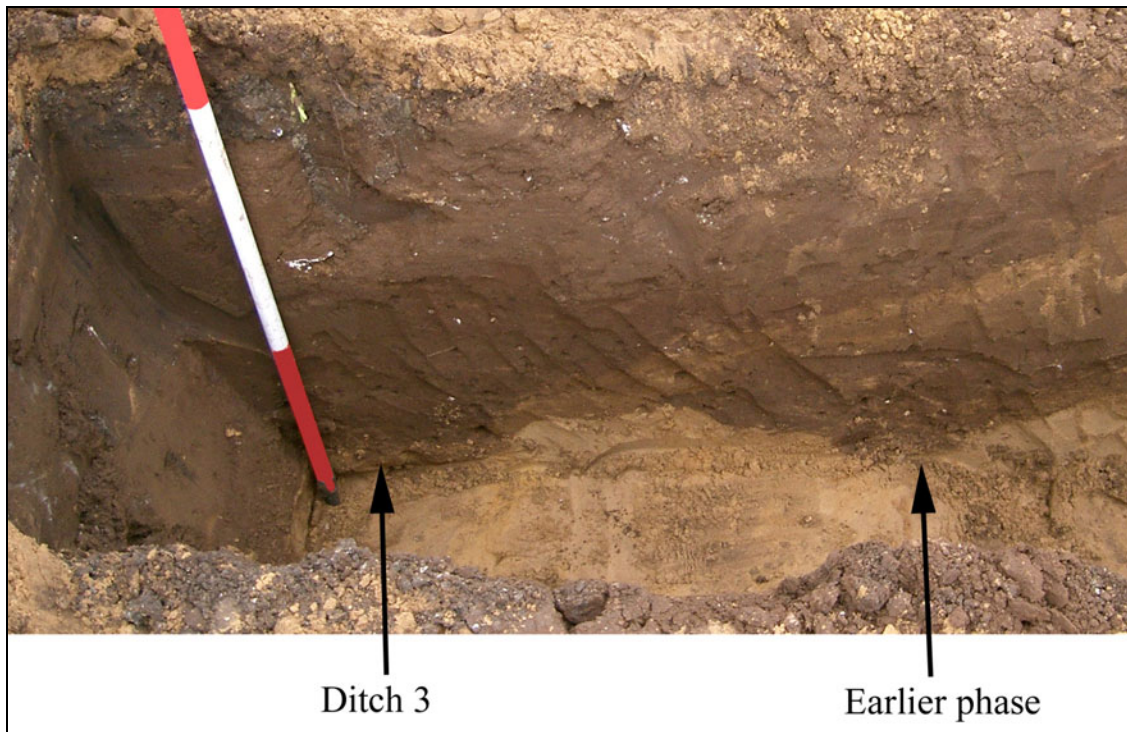


Figure 6 Showing earlier ditch phase and the recut

It was anticipated that the ditch would be encountered again in the easternmost footing, but this was not the case. Either the ditch terminates just to the east of the excavated segment, or it turns to the north under the current house at 41 St Hilda's Street (it did not occur in the southern footing).

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that although the soft sand made excavation difficult, all features of archaeological significance were noted and excavated. The features were either relatively modern (ditch 1, pit 2 and services pipe 5) or Medieval (ditch 3), with pit 4 undated, but predating ditch 3.