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**LAND BEHIND MAIN STREET, HOVINGHAM,
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

DESK BASED ASSESSMENT REPORT

by Mark Johnson

REPORT NUMBER 2007/26



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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Registered Office: 47 Aldwark, York, UK, YO1 7BX

Phone: +44 (0)1904 663000 Fax: +44 (0)1904 663024

Email: enquiries@yorkarchaeology.co.uk Internet: <http://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk>

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CONTENTS

	page
ABSTRACT	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. METHODOLOGY	1
3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	2
4. RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH	4
5. WALKOVER SURVEY	10
6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	15
7. RECOMMENDATIONS	15
8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	15
9. BIBLIOGRAPHY	16

List of Illustrations

Figures		page
1	Site location map	3
2	Extracts from 1856 and 1911 Ordnance Survey maps	9
3	Plan of development block showing surface features and adjacent listed buildings	12

Plates

1	Stone and brick walling of boundary (B), looking north	13
2	Central part of site showing hard standing (J), looking north-west. (Cart shed and other buildings lay beyond site boundaries)	13
3	Central and northern part of site, looking north-north-east	14
4	Extreme northern end of site, looking north-west	14

List of Tables

1	List of features of probable prehistoric date within the study area	4
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List of Abbreviations

YAT	York Archaeological Trust
BGS	British Geological Survey
NGR	National Grid Reference
B.A.	Bronze Age
I.A.	Iron Age
O.S.	Ordnance Survey

ABSTRACT

This study draws together the known archaeological and historical data pertaining to a block of potential development land, and its environs, off Main Street, Hovingham, North Yorkshire. The results demonstrate the archaeological significance of the area from the prehistoric periods onwards. The development block has been shown to be derived from a series of long narrow plots to the rear of properties fronting on to Main Street. The nature of the development of these plots from the mid 19th century has been established. What is less certain is the date at which these land units were first demarcated and the nature of their early development. It is clear that further archaeological work will be required if development is to take place.

1. INTRODUCTION

This desk-based archaeological and historical assessment of land off Main Street, Hovingham, has been prepared by York Archaeological Trust on the commission of Brierley Groom and Associates, architects of York, on behalf of Lindrick Homes of Wetherby. The assessment has been produced in order to ascertain the likely archaeological potential of the site and forms the starting point of an archaeological mitigation strategy for any future development of the site.

Although no formal written scheme of investigation has been issued specifically for the site by North Yorkshire County Council, this report follows the requirements normally expected for desk-based assessments by the authority.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study area consists of land lying within a 1 km radius of the site and draws together evidence from a variety of disparate sources. The evidence takes the form of archaeological records (including air photographs), geological data, Listed Buildings, published and unpublished documentary sources, historic maps and on-site ground observations. The principal sources of data consulted include:

Historic Environment Records, North Yorkshire County Council
North Yorkshire County Council record Office

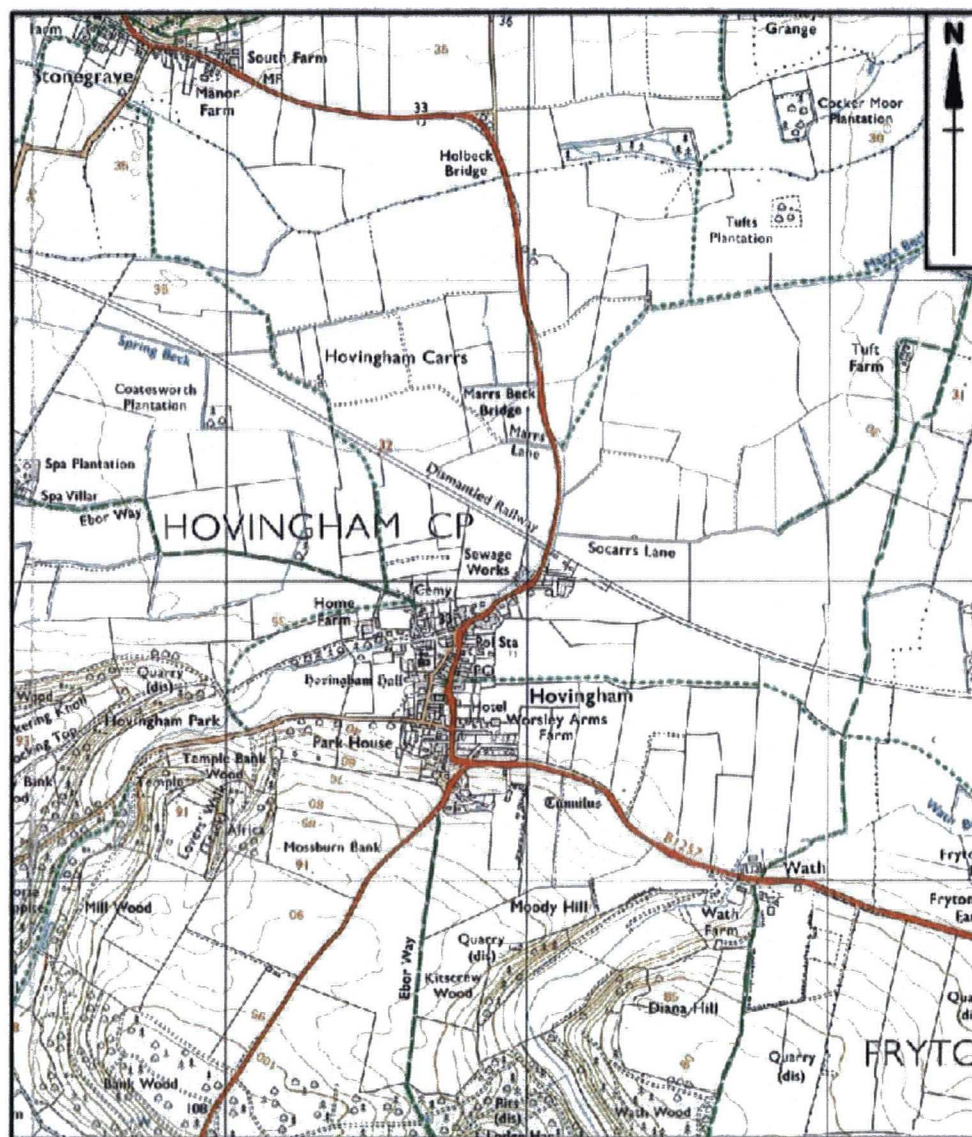
National Monuments Records, Swindon (English Heritage)
Published and unpublished historical works
British Geological Survey, Keyworth
Cambridge University collection of Air Photos

Research notes relating to this project are currently stored by York Archaeological Trust.

3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site is comprised of a series of adjoining land blocks to the rear of buildings and gardens fronting Main Street on the eastern side of the village of Hovingham, North Yorkshire (Figure 1, Site location map). Measuring approximately 134m (north to south) by between 42m and 80m (east to west) the land generally lies between 43m and 55m behind the Main street frontage. On the north side the land block is bounded by modern housing and on the west side by housing of generally older stock together with outbuildings and former agricultural buildings. The southern boundary of the site is formed by the car park of the Malt Shovel public house and open ground. The east side of the site is bounded by arable land. The plot occupies land that is fairly level, generally around 33m above Ordnance datum and is presently laid to grass with some areas of scrub. All land within the potential development block lies within a conservation area.

Hovingham lies towards the south-western end of the lowland Vale of Pickering whilst immediately south of the village the land rises to the Howardian Hills (Geological Survey 1957). The Vale is comprised principally of alluvial deposits, the Howardian Hills of limestone. There are no details of boreholes held by the British Geological Survey in the immediate vicinity of the site. The nearest borehole in the Vale lies just over 1.5km to the east, at Fryton. This borehole revealed several metres of alluvial deposition above limestone bedrock (BGS, borehole SE67NE8). Maws Beck, a tributary of the River Rye runs through the northern part of the village.



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Digital Mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. York Archaeological Trust, 47 Aldwark, York, YO17BZ. Licence Number AL 100018343

Figure 1, Site location map

4. RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The examined data pertaining to this study is presented below on a period by period basis.

Prehistoric Periods (pre 1st century AD)

Evidence for the prehistoric periods abounds in the vicinity of Hovingham with crop-mark sites being particularly evident to the south, south-east and south-west of the village. These areas coincide with elevated zones in which the limestone bedrock lies relatively close to the topsoil; a lesser density of crop-marks is apparent in the lower lying land of the Vale where extensive areas of wetland were formerly present. These crop-mark features include dykes, track-ways, ditches, ring ditches and probable burial mounds, enclosures and a possible hut circle. Certain of these appear likely to relate to the Bronze Age, many to the Iron Age whilst others could conceivably even be of Roman date – or have continued in use within the Roman period. The functions of these monuments range from land boundaries and means of communication to domestic occupation, agricultural field systems and burial of the dead. Within the 1 km study area the following features of probable prehistoric date are evident:

HER #	Grid ref.	Description	Date	Other
MNY753	SE 6723 7529	Round barrow	B.A.-Roman	S.A.M.
MNY754	SE 6733 7531	Round barrow & adjacent linear ditch	B.A.-I.A.	
MNY811	SE 6634 7490	Enclosure/field system/drove-way	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY812	SE 6638 7496	Enclosure/field system/drove-way	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY813	SE 6672 7501	Ditched enclosure	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY814	SE 6634 7490	Enclosed settlement	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY815	SE 6634 7490	?hut circle within enclosure MNY814	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY816	SE 6670 7486	Track-way/dyke of 2 parallel ditches	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY817	SE 6693 7503	Pit	B.A.?-I.A.	
MNY842	SE 6613 7576	Ring ditch/barrow	B.A.?-I.A.	

Table 1 List of features of probable prehistoric date within the study area

Additionally, occasional stray finds of prehistoric date, including a bronze Age socketed axe have been recovered from the locality of the village.

That no features of this date are known from the development block relates to later land use and the development of the village. Such features have the potential to lie beneath this later veneer.

Roman Period (1st – 5th centuries AD)

In all probability, elements of the prehistoric landscape are likely to have continued to function into the Roman period.

The most substantial Roman period remains in the Hovingham area are comprised of various structures in Hovingham Park some 300m to the west of Hovingham Hall (HER monuments MNY749-752). These remains consist of a bath-house, a cobbled yard and a building with a decorated mosaic pavement and suggest the presence of a highly Romanised farmstead or villa complex. This complex is presently a focus of study by the Landscape research Centre. The steep sided well preserved round barrow (MNY753), (S.A.M. 26975) which lies immediately south of a kink in the Hovingham – Malton road some 0.6 km south-east of the development plot, has been speculated as possibly being of the Roman period. There is as yet no conclusive evidence for this and the barrow may be of prehistoric origin. It is probable that contemporary field systems and land divisions were present in the area, though whether those of the later prehistoric period continued in use or were to some extent replaced with new systems is uncertain. A similar situation pertains to the communications infrastructure. Additionally, it has been suggested that the Hovingham – Malton road, which skirts the southern edge of this part of the Vale is of Roman origin. The principle arguments for this are based on the observations that the road is direct and runs in straight lengths from point to point and passes through two villages with 'street' name suffixes (Margary 1973, 423-4).

A number of isolated finds of the Roman period have also been made in the area with pottery recovered from SE 66186 75808 and a stone sarcophagus found in the 17th century.

Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian Periods (5th – 11th centuries AD)

The nature of earlier post-Roman activity in the area of the village is unclear. The earliest reported datable finds appear to be various finely carved pieces of Christian sculpture in the parish church of All Saints (HER monuments MNY758-60). These consist of cross, shaft and architectural fragments of probable 8th to 10th century date. Arguably the finest of these pieces of stonework is a frieze of eight arched panels containing figures that is presently housed within the church. The tower of All Saints is believed to be of 11th century date, possibly pre-conquest

(Taylor and Taylor 1965, 326-8). No other pre-conquest fabric remains in-situ within the church which was largely rebuilt in 1860 (Pevsner 1973, 193). Although the precise origins of All Saints are not understood the church forms one of a marked concentration of early churches in this part of Yorkshire. The Roman – Anglian transition is of some interest and it has been speculated that Hovingham may have formed part of an early estate, perhaps in part as inheritor of a former villa estate (David Petts, pers. com.).

No other finds or features of these periods are known within the vicinity.

Medieval Period (11th – 16th centuries AD)

Hovingham is listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 (EPS 1969, 51) and is mentioned in a number of charters throughout the medieval period. A charter granting rights to a market and fair was granted in 1252, though the settlement never became a borough and the market lapsed in the 19th century. Quarrying, rope-making and tanning are industrial activities recorded in the village during the medieval period (Tyler, HER). It is known that prior to its re-building in 1860 the parish church of All Saints contained an amount of medieval fabric. The extant church re-uses some medieval features.

Traces of the medieval ridge and furrow open field system are evident in a number of places to the north-west, north and east of the village; this including the field that bounds the development site on its eastern side. Most of this ridge and furrow, (HER monuments MNY11696, 762, 761, 11695, 11693, 11701) survives as crop-marks rather than upstanding earthworks. A watermill (HER monument MNY24949) is believed to have been present on the east side of the village to the south of the Marr Beck.

None of the secular buildings within Hovingham are known to contain in-situ medieval fabric, the housing stock being entirely post-medieval and modern in origin. Many of the core elements of the village plan however seem likely to reflect a layout that is largely that of the medieval period, if not earlier. In essence the old village plan consists of Main Street with an irregularly shaped green, now partially built on, to the west of this. The road-way on the west side of the green is roughly parallel to Main Street and is also likely to be of considerable antiquity as are the connecting links of road-way that connect the two principal elements. The 1856 and 1911 O.S. maps show a number of long narrow land plots behind some of the street frontage buildings in the village, this being most pronounced on the eastern side of Main Street – including the area of the development plot. Although none of the extant buildings or boundary fabric can be shown to

be of medieval date, these do bear close resemblance to typical medieval tenement plots and it is possible that the laying out of these boundaries within the village occurred at this time. The names 'manor' and 'hall' attached to buildings in the vicinity may indicate the former locations of high status secular buildings.

Post-medieval Period (16th – 19th centuries AD)

Much of the existing building stock of the village originates within this period, mostly during the 18th and 19th centuries, with many of these buildings being Grade II listed. The overwhelming majority of these are constructed of the local corallian limestone. Arguably the most notable of the village's secular buildings is the grade I Hovingham Hall, some 150m south-west of the site, a mid 18th century mansion of some architectural merit (Pevsner 1973, 194-5). A fine dovecote is associated with the Hall as an area of landscaped parkland west of the building. Immediately north of the hall lies All Saints Church, the body of which is of 1860 and by Rhode Hawkins (Pevsner 1973, 193-4).

The nearest listed buildings to the site are five properties that front on to Main Street. From south to north these are buildings 329075, 329076, 329077, 329078 and 329079; all are Grade II listed. Home cottage and The Malt Shovel public House (329075) are of early 19th century date, built of limestone with slate roofs, 2 storeyed, have end and ridge stacks, and are lit by 16 pane sash windows. The Post Office (329076) was formerly 2 cottages, both of the later 18th century. The Post Office is 2 storeyed, of limestone with a pantile roof, has 16 pane sash windows to the first floor and a 20th century shopfront below. Sunnyside and Wicket gate Cottage (329077) was built in the early 18th century as a single house and has subsequently been divided into 2 cottages. Both are 2 storeyed, built of limestone and have pantiled roofs and lit by replacement 16 pane sash windows. Manor Farmhouse (329078) is of mid – late 17th century date, 2 storeyed and built of limestone rubble with a pan-tile roof. The house is lobby entry, has 2 cross-wings and is lit by a combination of horizontal (Yorkshire) and vertical sash windows. Manor Farmhouse retains a number of early internal features. A former farm-building, probably a cart shed with granary over, lies to the rear of the Manor Farm complex and forms part of a projecting nib that serves to narrow the development block in its central area. The Corner House (329079), now a single dwelling, was originally 2 cottages; one late 18th century date, the other of the early 19th century. Both are 2 storeyed, built of limestone and support a pantile roof. See Figure 3 for the location of these buildings.

The commonplace use of stone as a building material in the post-medieval period must have required widespread quarrying. It is probable that many of the quarries, some with associated limekilns, in the areas surrounding Hovingham were opened up in this, as well as the early modern, period.

Modern Period (19th – 21st centuries AD)

The area of the development block is known to have undergone a series of re-modellings within the modern period. This relates primarily to the erection and subsequent demolition of a number of buildings/structures and the removal of various boundaries. These transformations are considered in greater detail in Section 5. Walkover Survey below.

The wider village has also undergone a variety of changes within the modern period which includes the erection of a number of new houses. Beyond the village, the agricultural landscape has seen new developments. Principal amongst these is a reduction in the number of working farmsteads, the grubbing up of a number of field boundaries (for example crop-marks of former field boundaries, HER monuments MNY11694, MNY11673), and a greater emphasis on arable crops. A significant impact on the wider landscape was the introduction of the Thirsk and Malton Railway in 1853. Closed to passengers in 1931 and dismantled in 1964, this line ran a short distance to the north of the village and had its own small station. The former course of this railway is still readily apparent. Of the more recent past are the ploughed out remains of a World war II searchlight battery at NGR: SE 663 7504 (NMR identifier 1024419), located just south-west of the village.

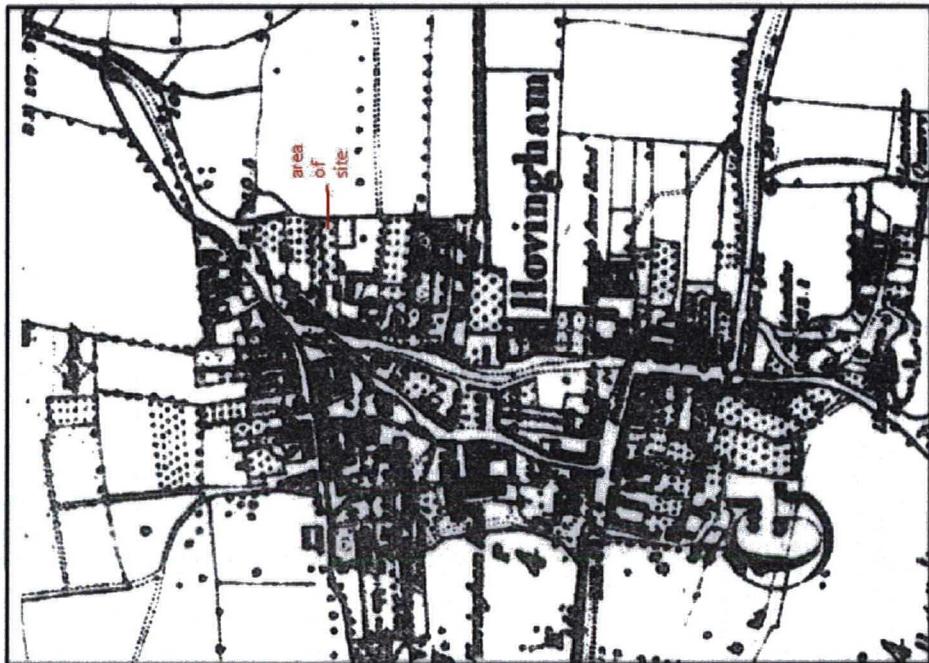
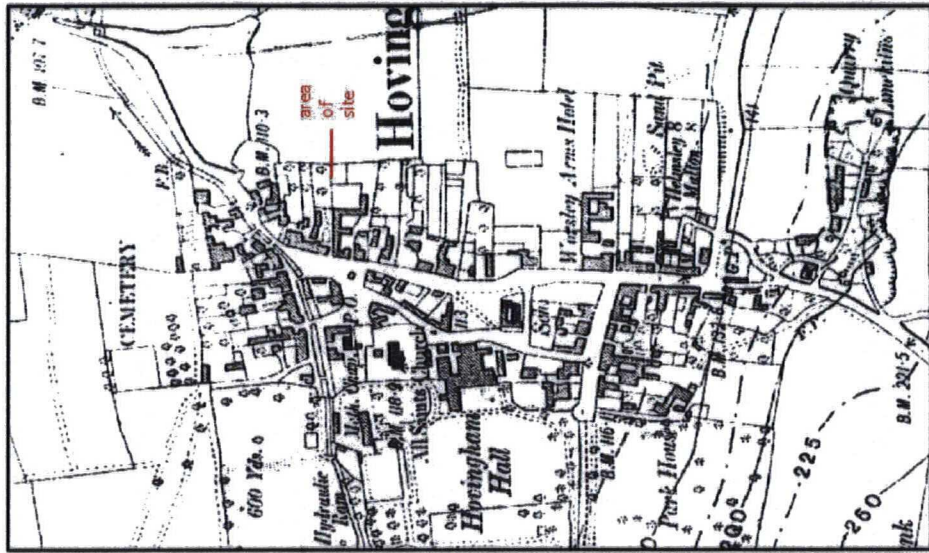


Figure 2, Extracts from 1856 (left) and 1911 (right) Ordnance Survey maps

5. WALKOVER SURVEY

At the time of the walkover survey the southern 35m of the site was predominantly occupied by scrub vegetation whilst a number of small surface mounds of soil and rubble were also present. The bulk of the remainder of the site was occupied by grassland in which a few stands of trees were present (Plates 1 – 4, Figure 3).

Land Units

A visit to the land-block was made on 8th May 2007. Inspection showed that in the past the block had consisted of several plots, the boundaries between most of the units showing only vestigial traces. The southern-most part of the land was comprised of two narrow plots bounded by stone walling in excess of 2m tall (A and B), some of this being in a ruinous state, particularly that part between the two plots. The northern-most of these walls (B), (that boundary shown on the map with a dog-leg kink), was constructed of brick upon at least four courses of well faced limestone blocks (Plate –). The dog-legged kink shown on the modern Ordnance Survey map represents a slight mapping inaccuracy of a less pronounced short section of curved walling. The brick of walling (B) appears likely to be of 18th or earlier 19th century work. A wooden post and wire fence (C), immediately north of this stone and brick wall is of very recent date. Some 65m north of the southern boundary of the site a slight ridge aligned east – west was apparent (D). This ridge follows an alignment close to that of a recent hedged and fenced boundary that extends to the west of the site. A further east – west aligned low ridge is apparent around 105m north of the southern boundary and supports a line of trees towards its eastern end (E). Again, this appears to coincide with a boundary to the west of the site. The northern-most of the internal boundaries is marked a recent post and wire fence (F).

All the features A – G can, with a considerable degree of certainty, be correlated with boundaries depicted on the 1856 and 1911 Ordnance Survey maps (Figure 2). Walls A, B, G and H in the southern part of the site are almost certainly remnants of the same features on this map. The original form of boundaries D and E is not immediately apparent from visual inspection alone. They may have been mere banks, hedges atop banks or of stone, though geophysical survey, probing or excavation could likely confirm this. The existing boundaries C and F appear to be modern replacements of older boundaries though again their original form is not certain from visual inspection alone. A further internal boundary, not apparent on the 1856 map is shown on that of 1911. This boundary was aligned north – south and extended much of the way between boundaries D and E. Surface traces of this feature were not noted during the walkover survey.

Other Features

An area of rectangular concrete hard standing (I) was present in the western part of the site between boundaries C and D. A further 'L' shaped area of hard standing (J) was also evident on the eastern side of the site between boundaries D and E. In some places brickwork was seen at the edges of the hard standings. It appears probable that these structures represent the remnants of buildings. Given that these do not appear on the 1856 or 1911 O.S. maps it is reasonable to assume that these are of post 1911, 20th century date. Immediately south of the eastern side of boundary E, parch-marks, vegetational variation and a few visible bricks, indicate the presence of what is likely to have been another rectangular building, Again absent from the earlier O.S. maps, this putative building was almost certainly of 20th century origin. At least certain of these more recent structures are represented on two undated O.S. map extracts within the North Yorkshire H.E.R.

A north – south line of three ground-set concrete blocks was noted in the immediately south of the western part of boundary E. Seemingly related to a structure of some sort, the precise function of these features is uncertain.

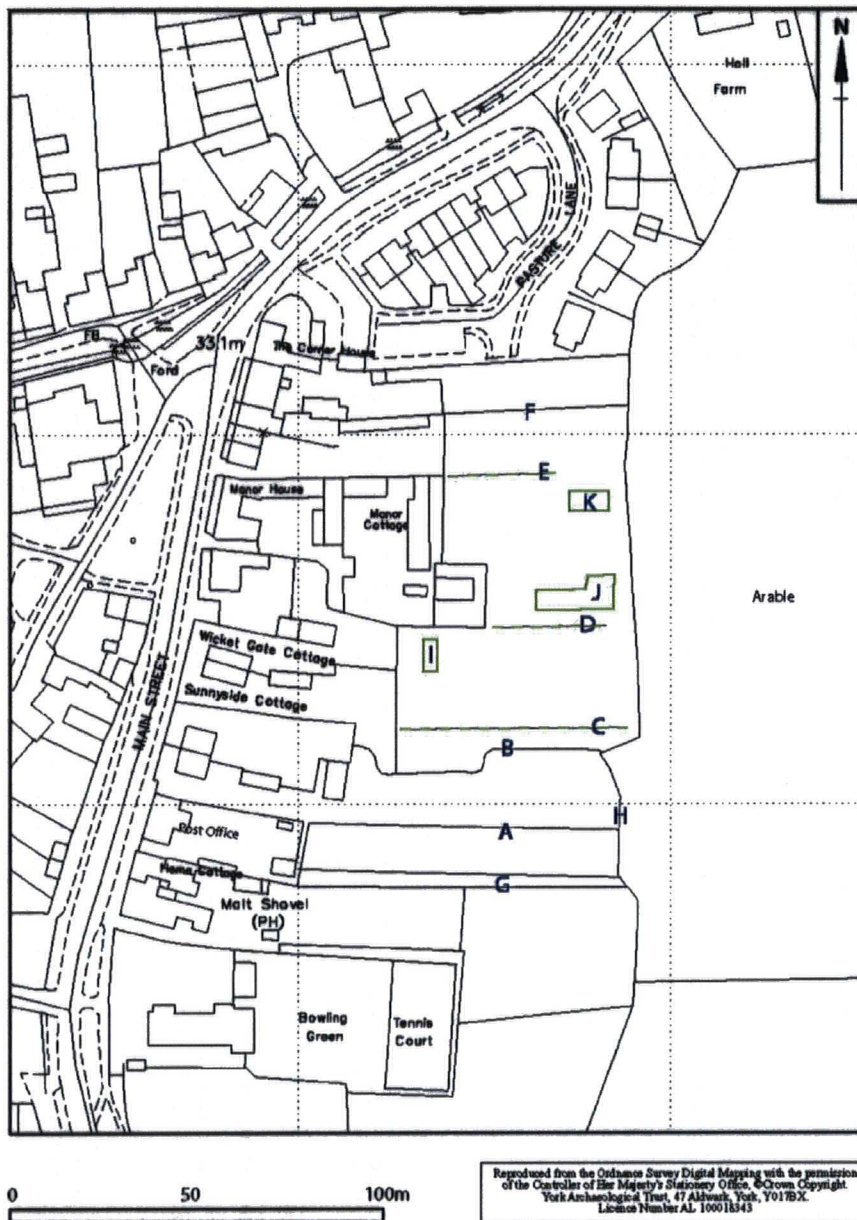


Figure 3, Plan of development block showing surface features and adjacent listed buildings



Plate 1, stone and brick walling of boundary (B), looking north



Plate 2, Central part of site showing hard standing (J), looking north-west. (Cart shed & other buildings lay beyond the site boundaries)



Plate 3, Central and northern part of site, looking north-north-east



Plate 4, Extreme northern end of site, looking north-west

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has drawn together the known archaeological and historical data pertaining to the potential development block and its environs. The results serve to emphasise the archaeological significance of the area from the prehistoric periods onwards, and the many questions relating to the origins and development of the village that still remain. Some of these uncertainties relate to a lack of question orientated archaeological investigation. With regards to the land block under consideration, developments from the 19th century onwards seem fairly clear. What is less certain is the origin and early development of the land plots in this specific area.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the archaeological significance of the area and the scale of likely development within the study block, further archaeological work may be required before development can take place. The nature and scope of any future work is an issue that will require input from local authority archaeologists; ideally prior to the submission of any planning application. However, inspection of the site suggests that the potential for geophysical survey of small selected areas exists, ideally in combination with survey of the site that would allow the principal features now present on the site to be plotted. The potential also exists for excavation to provide information regarding the origin of the individual bounded land units as well as examination of any significant features detected by remote sensing.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Photographs

Mark Johnson

Illustrations

Mark Johnson

Editor

Martin Stockwell

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