

2. Excavation Results

A total of 5 trenches were excavated, the largest of which measured 3.8m by 3m and the smallest 2m by 0.6m (Fig 7). Modern overburden was removed using a JCB with an untoothed ditching bucket, thereafter hand excavation was employed to assess deposits where considered appropriate.

Trench 1: this trench was located just to the east of the entrance onto High Market Place (Fig 7). Excavation showed that the area had been badly disturbed by modern construction of a manhole and 3 service pipes were noted. Natural clay/sand occurred at the relatively shallow depth of approximately 0.4m (Fig 8). No finds were recovered from this trench.

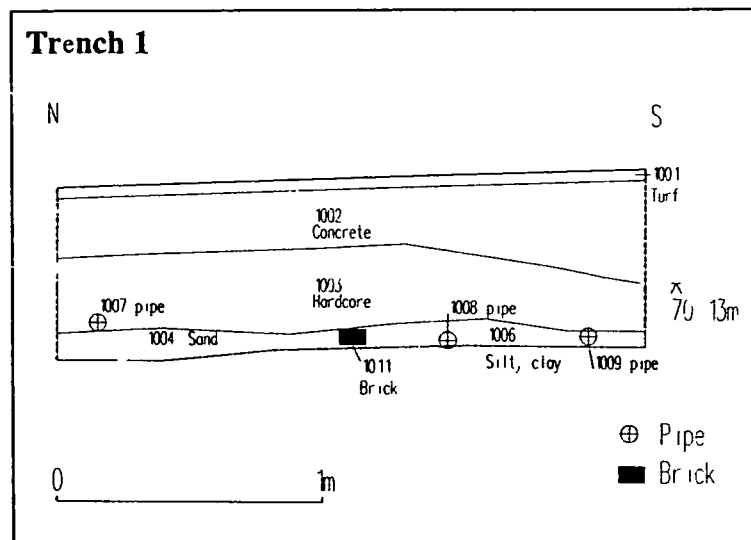


Figure 8

Trench 2: Excavation of this trench situated approximately at the mid point of the northern boundary of the site (Fig 7), showed that below the modern tarmac and hardcore was a deposit of clay and stone which may represent the base foundation of a recent wall and an extremely well preserved recent cess pit (context 2003 P12). This feature had been completely backfilled (2004) and contained finds of a single oyster shell, modern pottery and a large piece of medieval pottery (Humberware of c. 14th century in date). The pit had been cut into natural to a depth of 1m. Natural clay occurred at a very shallow depth of 0.25m from the present land surface in this area of the site (Fig 9).

The 1912 Ordnance Survey of Kirkbymoorside (Fig 5) shows that the building line across the northern boundary of the site was extended some time after 1849 (Fig 4). It would appear that the wall located in Trench 2 was part of this extension. The buildings were demolished in the early part of the 1960's when the site was redeveloped.

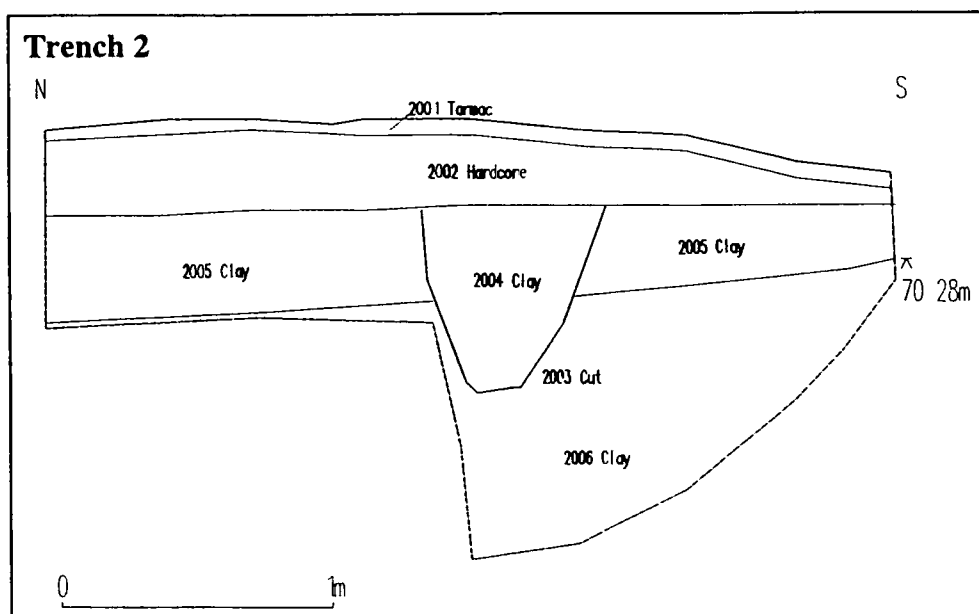


Figure 9

Trench 3: Excavation of this trench situated approximately at the mid point along the southern boundary of the site (Fig 7), located a deep deposit of modern rubble (3002) which sealed a well constructed surface of machine made bricks (3003) – possibly the floor of a farm building. Below the bedding sand (3004) for the bricks was a deposit of soil (3006) which contained no finds (Fig 9 Pl 3)

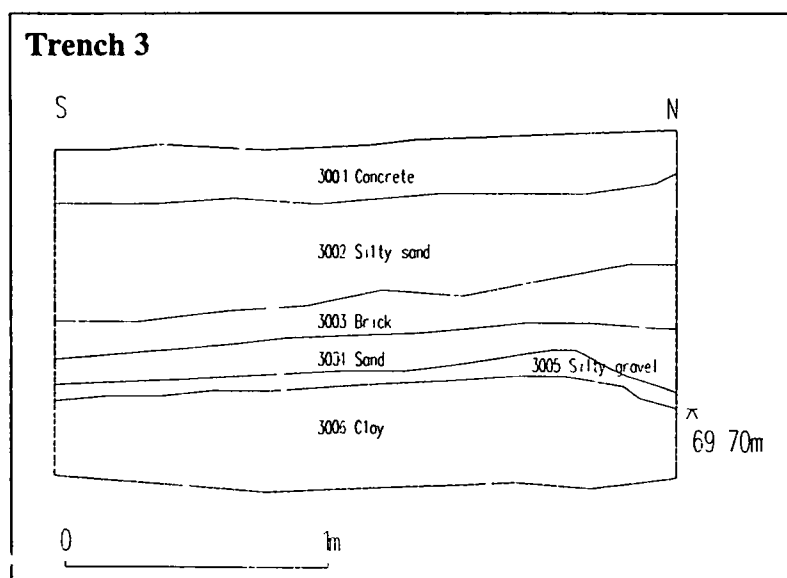


Figure 10

The earliest map of Kirkbymoorside dated 1790 (Fig 2) shows a building built in the general vicinity of the located brick floor. This building is present on the 1827 map (Fig 3) but is not depicted on the 1849 map although it does reappear on the 1912 map (Fig 5). It would appear that the brick floor located during excavation equates to the building shown on the 1912 map.

Trench 4: Located at the extreme north-east of the site (Fig 7), Trench 4 consisted in the main of deposits of land fill (4003 & 4004), with the lowest horizon a re-deposited topsoil (4005) containing modern pottery (Fig 10 Pl 4)

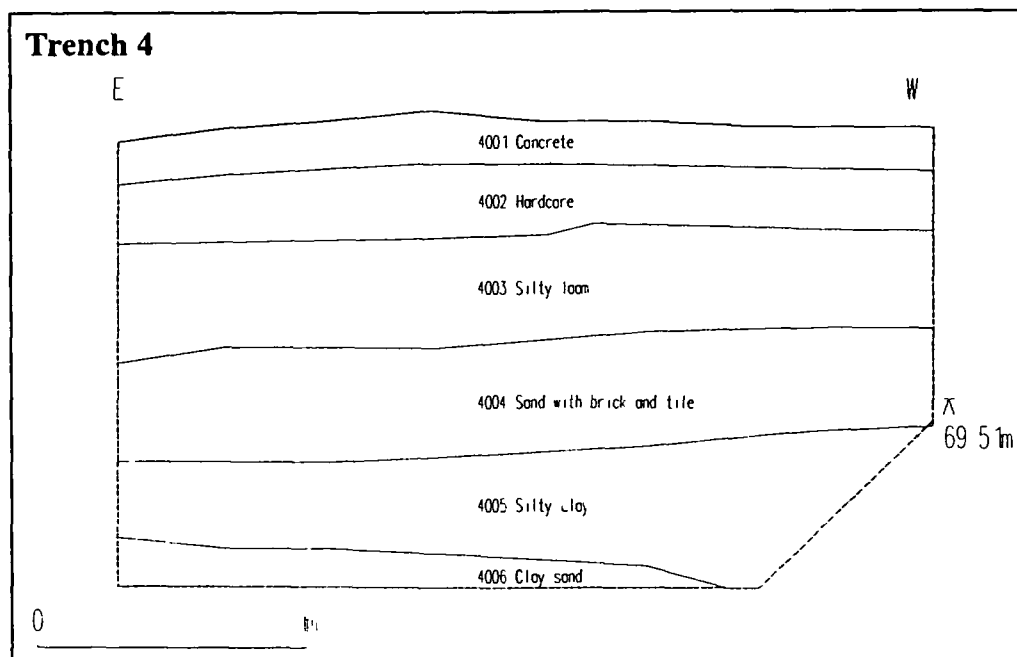


Figure 11

Trench 5: Located just to the east of Prospect House (Fig 7) excavation recorded deposits of tarmac hardcore and natural at a depth of 0.15m below the current yard surface. The trench sections were not recorded.

Summary

Excavation indicates that the present topography is the result of deep deposits of infill deposited deliberately to raise the land to a level surface conducive for use as a haulage yard. The topographic survey of the site (Figs 7 and 12) illustrates the varying land levels both within the site and just outside the site boundaries. This information coupled with the excavation results illustrates the extent to which the ground levels of the site have been altered. Excavation showed that the site appeared to have been cleared in recent times as all activity dated by associated finds were of a recent date. Apart from a single sherd of pottery from the pit in Trench 2, medieval presence on the site is minimal. Unfortunately the clearance of the site (as confirmed by J Cook, owner, pers com) may have removed valuable earlier deposits which could have provided interesting information on this area of Kirkbymoorside.

Conclusions

There was no evidence from archaeological excavation to suggest that this area of Kirkbymoorside was extensively occupied in the medieval period, although it must be stated that much of the site had

been the subject of clearance in the 1960's. The topographic variation of land levels on the site prior to the construction of the haulage yard would tend to suggest that it was not suitable for extensive building but more conducive to agricultural storage purposes, or as backyard areas in earlier times.

Recommendations

In view of the poor quality of archaeological deposits on the site, it is felt that no further work is required on the main part of the site. But as it was not possible, due to the presence of services, to evaluate the immediate area off High Market Place which constitutes the entrance to the site, it is proposed that a watching brief may be advisable in this area when development takes place.

References

Williams, R A H , 'An excavation at Neville Castle, Kirkbymoorside' YAJ 49, 87 1977