

PLATE 1



Detail of the southern boundary wall,
Wall A, facing south.

PLATE 2



Detail of the eastern boundary wall,
Wall B, facing east.

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The city of Ripon is situated within the suburban parish of Ripon, on the lower, east, facing slopes of the Pennine uplands, overlooking the Vale of York to the east. The market town is located between and equally distant from the confluences of the River's Skell and Laver and the River Skell and River Ure.

The site, is located on the eastern side of Ripon on the lower slope of a gentle gradient that falls from the market place to the flood plane of the River Skell, the site occupies a relatively level area of ground that is elevated above this flood plane at 28 metres above sea level.

The site is situated to the immediate south of the Old Police House, a large two storey, rendered, late 17th Century town house. The property is adjacent to St. Marygate with a south facing aspect overlooking the walled garden. The garden is sub rectangular in plan measuring approximately 36 metres in length and 27 metres wide and is centrally divided by a gravel drive, and is presently managed as open lawn to the west of the drive with herbaceous borders and vegetable plots to the east.

The garden is presently contained by a two metre high wall constructed out of magnesian limestone and brick, Wall A & B. The juxtaposition of fabric types and the number of blocked pedestrian doorways, within this boundary wall, would suggest that the present wall derives from ancillary buildings that have since been demolished.

METHODOLOGY

The preliminary investigation into the site conducted by Mr. N. Campling, Archaeological Officer, North Yorkshire County Council indicated that the site had a high potential for the survival of archaeological remains. There was a very real possibility that the proposed excavations would disturb archaeology associated with the early medieval settlement of Ripon.

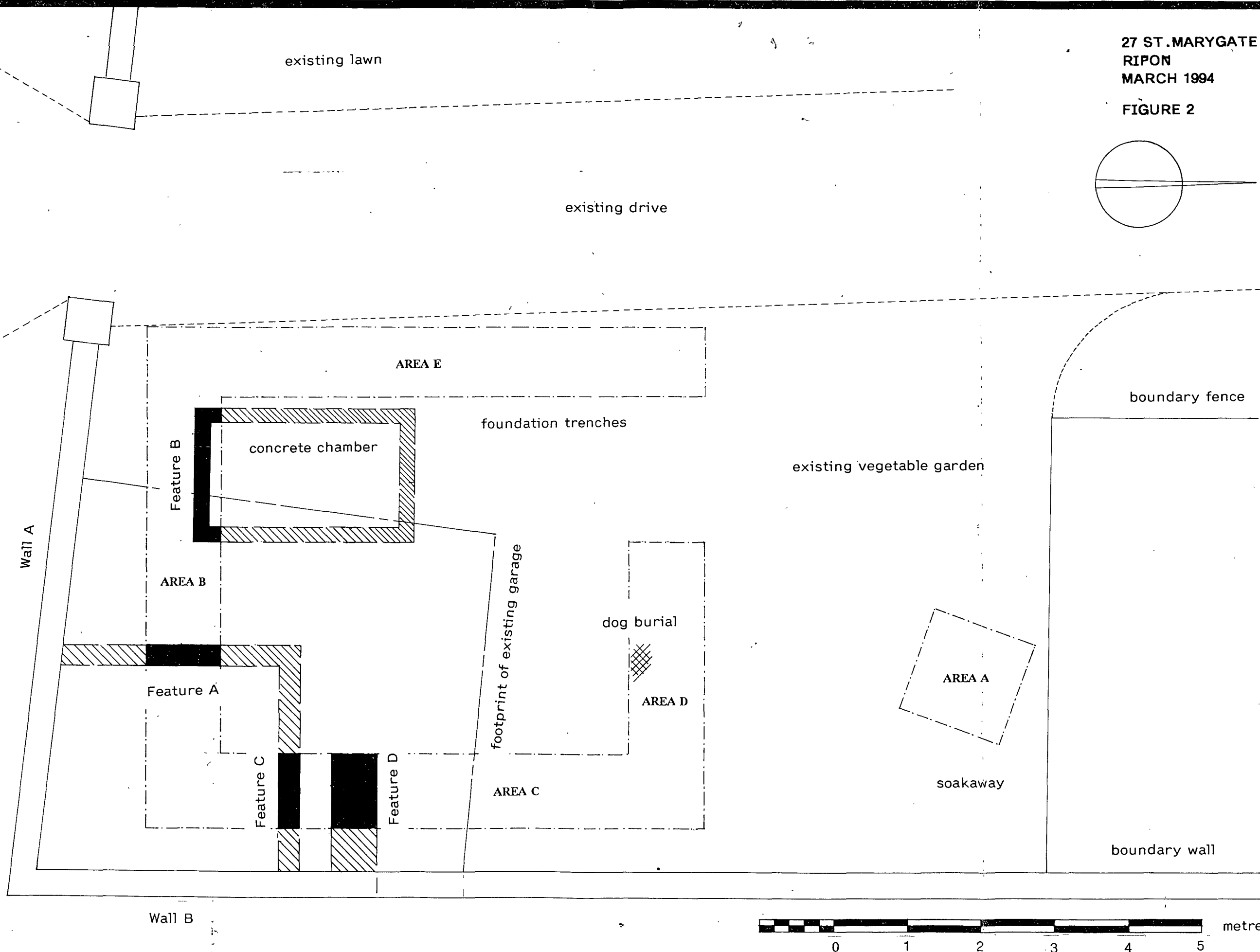
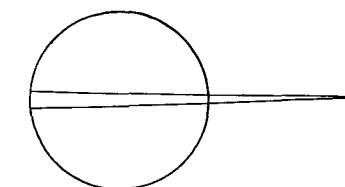
The Brief of Works

The archaeological investigation of this site was to take the form of a 'watching brief', an archaeologist would be required to be present, to monitor ground disturbance associated with the excavation of a soakaway and the foundation trench's.

The archaeological provision was designed to establish the presence or absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological features or deposits which might exist within the area affected by the proposed development. The watching brief condition makes provision for an archaeologist to be present on site, to witness the excavation of the trench, allowing the archaeologist a reasonable length of time to satisfactorily record any archaeology encountered.

27 ST. MARYGATE
RIPON
MARCH 1994

FIGURE 2



SUMMARY OF THE TRENCH EXCAVATIONS

In total twenty three meters of trench were machine excavated, for reporting purposes the excavations were divided into five sections, area a - e, with area a pertaining to the excavation of the soakaway and areas b, c, d, e relating to the foundation trenches.

From the inspection of the excavated trench sections it was noted that the northern extent of the site had been subjected to a high level of ground disturbance associated with the cultivation of the vegetable garden and from the recent tipping of household waste and ash within this area. Within the south western corner of the site modern disturbance related to the excavation of a large sub-rectangular pit in advance of the installation of subterranean fuel tank had resulted in the destruction of all stratigraphy within this area. The south eastern area of the site contained a number of relatively well preserved late 18th - early 19th Century structural features, these included the foundations of an ancillary building that would appear to have functioned as an earthen closet, and the substantial foundations of a cobble and magnesian limestone wall of a similar size and form to that of the present garden boundary wall.

A small assemblage of finds recovered from the excavations, were made up largely of modern and nineteenth century porcelain and glass, no earlier material was identified. The articulated remains of a pet burial were identified within the base of the excavations, these skeletal remains of a small dog were left in situ and not removed from the site.

AREA / TRENCH A

Type: machine excavation
Class: soakaway
NGR: SE 31574 71201

Planform: rectangular
Profile: U shape
Aligned: north east

Length: 145 cm
Width: 140 cm
Depth: 100 cm

Features: -
Fig Nos: 2
Plate No: -
Film/Frame No: 1/ 6 - 8

Comments:

the soakaway chamber was excavated adjacent to the existing garden fenceline in the north eastern corner of the vegetable garden. All levels of stratigraphy revealed during this excavation were 19th century and more recent in date, the upper levels of which had been previously disturbed during the cultivation of the gardens.

The excavation terminated at a depth of 90.990 meters above sea level on the upper surface of a layer of red-orange (5YR 5/6) sand that is suspected to be the natural geology.

The small quantity of finds recovered from this excavation, including glass and porcelain assemblages were 19th century and modern in date.

AREA / TRENCH B

Type: machine excavation
Class: foundation trench
NGR: SE 31570 71204

Planform: linear
Profile: U shape
Aligned: east/west

Length: 720 cm
Width: 100 cm
Depth: 142 cm

Features: a, b
Fig Nos: 2
Plate No: 3, 4
Film/Frame No: 1/ 12 - 16, 31

Comments:

the foundation trench was excavated from the south eastern corner of the garden in a westerly direction up to the existing driveway. All levels of stratigraphy revealed during this excavation had been heavily disturbed during the last 150 years, this ground disturbance would appear to have been associated with the construction of ancillary outbuildings and the installation of a large subterranean fuel tank. It is suspected that all phases of construction are associated with the sites former use as a yard to Ripon Prison and the more recent Police station.

The excavation terminated at a depth of 90.555 meters above sea level on the upper surface of a layer of yellow-brown (10YR 5/4) sand and gravels that is suspected to be the natural geology.

The small quantity of finds recovered from this excavation, including glass and porcelain assemblages were 19th century and modern in date.

AREA / TRENCH C

Type: machine excavation
Class: foundation trench
NGR: SE 31574 71200

Planform: linear
Profile: U shape
Aligned: north/south

Length: 650 cm
Width: 100 cm
Depth: 140 cm

Features: c, d
Fig Nos: 2
Plate No: 5
Film/Frame No: 1/ 17 - 22

Comments:

the foundation trench was excavated from the south eastern corner of the garden in a northern direction into the existing vegetable garden. This area of the site had been occupied by an earlier, prefabricated garage, this structure had been constructed on a substantial concrete raft and consequently the upper levels of stratigraphy had been disturbed. However despite this level of disturbance, structural evidence of ancillary outbuildings had survived relatively well intact, together with the cobble foundations of an earlier and more substantially sized wall. It is suspected that all phases of construction revealed during these excavations late 18th / early 19th Century in origin and are associated with the sites former use as a yard to Ripon Prison and the more recent Police station.

The excavation terminated at a depth of 90.575 meters above sea level on the upper surface of a layer of yellow-brown (10YR 5/4) sands and gravels that is suspected to be the natural geology.

The small quantity of finds recovered from this excavation, including glass and porcelain assemblages were 19th century and modern in date.

AREA / TRENCH D

Type: machine excavation
Class: foundation trench
NGR: SE 31570 71204

Planform: linear
Profile: U shape
Aligned: east/west

Length: 400 cm
Width: 100 cm
Depth: 95 cm

Features: -
Fig Nos: 2
Plate No: -
Film/Frame No: 1/ 23 - 26

Comments:

the foundation trench was excavated from the eastern garden wall in a westerly direction up to the existing driveway. All levels of stratigraphy revealed during this excavation had been heavily disturbed by the successive cultivation and the tipping and burial of domestic waste. There was no indication from the stratigraphy that the site, had at any time, been occupied by structures or surfaces associated with the yard to Ripon Prison and the more recent Police station.

The excavation terminated at a depth of 91.025 meters above sea level on the upper surface of a layer of yellow-brown (10YR 5/4) sand that is suspected to be the natural geology.

The small quantity of finds recovered from this excavation, including glass and porcelain assemblages were 19th century and modern in date. The articulated remains of a pet burial were identified within the base of the excavations, these skeletal remains of a small dog were left in situ and not removed from the site.

AREA / TRENCH E

Type: machine excavation
Class: foundation trench
NGR: SE 31568 71200

Planform: linear
Profile: U shape
Aligned: north/south

Length: 680 cm
Width: 100 cm
Depth: 130 cm

Features: -
Fig Nos: 2
Plate No: -
Film/Frame No: 1/ 27 - 28

Comments:

the foundation trench was excavated from the southern garden wall in a northerly direction into the existing vegetable garden. All levels of stratigraphy revealed during this excavation had been recently disturbed during the excavations associated with the installation of a large subterranean fuel tank. No archaeological features were identified within the sections of this trench.

The excavation terminated at a depth of 90.675 meters above sea level on the upper surface of a layer of yellow-brown (10YR 5/4) sands and gravels that is suspected to be the natural geology.

The small quantity of finds recovered from this excavation, including glass and porcelain assemblages were 19th century and modern in date.