NYCC HER	
SNY	15196
ENY	4935
CNY	
Parish	8019
Rec'd	09/1993
En an Anna Charles an Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna	I

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SAMPLE EXCAVATIONS

INTERIM REPORT

# Town Centre Development SELBY

# MAP

## Archaeological Consultancy Limited

39, Greengate, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 0EL. Telephone (0653) 697752 Fax (0653) 694747

SEPT 1993 E4935 S15196

## **Archaeological Sample Excavations**

## **Town Centre Development - Selby**

## **Interim Report**

Contents Page Abstract 2 Figure List 3 1. Introduction 4 2. Excavation methods 5 3. Summary of the excavation results: 6 Trench 1 Trench 2 Trench 3 Trench 4 4. Finds analysis 14 5. Environmental potential 15 6. Recommendations for future work 16

### Abstract

Land to the rear of Gowthorpe, Finkle Street and Micklegate in Selby has been selected as an area to be developed for a new shopping centre. A pre-planning archaeological evaluation of the site comprising of a desktop evaluation and a bore hole survey resulted in the excavation of four trenches. An interim on the results of the excavation are contained within this document.

Figure List	Page
1. Site location plan.	4
2. Trench location plan	5
3. Trench 1 – north facing section	7
4. Trench 2 – west facing section	10
5. Trench 3 – north facing section	11
6. Trench 4 – north-east facing section	13
7. Mitigation strategy	Back cover
Key	19

### Archaeological Sample Excavations

**Town Centre Development - Selby** 

### 1. Introduction

The site lies to the north of Gowthorpe and to the west of Finkle Street and Micklegate in the North Yorkshire town of Selby (NGR SE 5250 4250: Fig. 1), and covers an area of approximately 4500m2. The area is to be developed by Shop and Store Developments Ltd as a new shopping centre which will have access from Gowthorpe, Finkle Street, Millgate and Scott Road.



Figure 1. Scale 1:10000

A borehole survey had suggested the nature of deposits to be encountered on the site and to substantiate and provide more detailed information four trenches were excavated, three to the south of the Selby Dam and one to the north (Fig. 2).

All work has been funded by Shop and Store Developments Ltd.

### 2. Excavation Methods

Four trenches were excavated (Fig. 2): Trench 1 was primarily for the recovery of environmental data, therefore this trench was fully excavated using a mechanical excavator with a 1.8m untoothed bucket and supervised by a professional archaeologist and a team from the EAU (York).



Figure 2. Scale 1:1250

The overburden covering Trenches 3 and 4 was mechanically removed prior to hand excavation. In Trench 2 overburden was removed, but to a greater level than in Trenches 3 and 4 due to the occurrence of a cellar and the much greater depth of dumped material.

### 3. Summary of the excavation results

This section concentrates on the excavation results but it must be stressed that it is only a brief summary and interpretations of features may be revised when the archive has been fully prepared and the environmental analysis data is assimilated.

### Trench 1

Trench 1 was situated to the north of Selby Dam (Fig. 2: NGR SE 4954 4580), measuring 3m by 3m. It was mechanically excavated to a depth of 3.5m (0.95 O.D.).

Excavation (Fig. 3) showed that the top 0.6m of deposits represented topsoil (layer 101) and material dumped to heighten the land most probably to act as a flood barrier (layers 103, & 110).

These layers sealed a previous topsoil, 0.06m in depth (layer 104). Beneath the old topsoil was a further dump of deposits measuring 0.25m in depth, again representing flood bank makeup (layers 105 & 106).

Below the dumped deposits were water-laid deposits (EAU pers com:layers 107 & 108), measuring 0.32m in depth.

The water laid deposits sealed a thick clay deposit (layer 109), measuring 0.92m in depth this deposit appears to represent a deliberate dumping to facilitate land reclamation to the north of the Dam.

Sealed by the clay were a series of deposits which appear to represent deposits within the former fish pool. Layers 111, 112, 113, 114, 115 and 118 extended for a depth of 0.8m.

The excavation of Trench 1 ceased with the exposure of layer 116 and 117 which were felt by EAU to represent geological horizons.

Finds from the excavation were limited to a couple of 19th century sherds of pottery from the upper layer of the trench.



Figure 3

### Trench 2

Ke 📕

Trench 2 was situated to the south of Selby Dam (NGR SE 532 410: Fig. 2). The trench measured 18.5m in the first instance but was extended to 25m to test the interpretation of the excavation results and cut to a depth of 2.25m (3.87 O.D:Fig. 4).

The objective of excavation in this area of the site was to locate and provide dating evidence for the feature known as 'Kirk Dyke/Back Dyke'.

Excavation indicated modern deposits in the form of cellars and brick building foundations which had cut into and disturbed the post-medieval deposits which consisted of a number of build up layers formed by general dump deposits. The modern and post medieval deposits in this area of the site extended to a depth of 1.1-1.25m from the present ground surface.

The most notable feature of the post-medieval horizons was a well constructed brick drain which was aligned east-west and appeared to run from the general direction of Finkle Street towards the Dam. This feature had been built directly onto an earlier drainage channel (dyke), which due to the considerable amount of fills, had been deliberately backfilled in the excavated section at a date no later than 1700. The dyke which was also aligned east to west had cut into the surrounding medieval deposits therefore removing the evidence for determining the full extent of an earlier Dyke, on the same alignment as its antecedents.

The earliest watercourse in this part of the site was a substantial feature measuring approximately 18m in width. The earliest pottery from the silt deposits dates to the 12–13th century but the predominant wares date from the 13th through to the 15th century. Excavation also illustrated that attempts had been made to rationalise the course of the dyke by the use of lines of timbers, which appear to have been relatively successful.

By the 16th century the dyke had either completely silted up naturally or had been backfilled.

Trench 2 produced a good stratified assemblage of pottery exclusively medieval and post medieval in date, no earlier material was located.







0 -

### **Trench 3**

Trench 3 was situated to the rear of the properties fronting onto Gowthorpe (NGR SE 535 381), it measured 8m x 2m and was excavated down to natural deposits which were reached at a depth of 1.36m (4 96 O D Fig 5)

The upper levels of the trench consisted of a number of yard surfaces ranging from tarmac down to the earliest one composed of cobbles all of which were of modern date Beneath these surfaces were a series of build up deposits of modern date associated with general dumping of material from demolition. These layers were also affected by the construction of a brick constructed building, the foundation of which survived

Other structural activity in the trench was represented by the exposure of a clay floor with a series of postholes cut into the floor and appearing to form a building Further evidence for this was supplied by the occurrence of two features which appear to have been excavated to accommodate post pads; one of the pads was found in situ. The dating of this structure is problematic, the structure is sealed by modern deposits and it was built directly onto strata dated by pottery association to the 13th–15th century. Pottery from the clay floor is restricted to a single sherd of post medieval ware.

Excavation below the building located a substantial build up of garden soil with associated pottery ranging from the 13th through to the 15th century Therefore it appears that during this period this area of the site was given over to open land forming the backyards of the properties fronting onto Gowthorpe

The earliest features in Trench 3 were two 'ditches both aligned north to south, both date to the 12– 13th centuries and the larger of the two which was timber revetted may even be pre-conquest in date

In addition to the wide range of medieval pottery from this trench there was also recovered a background scatter of Anglian and Roman wares



----

\_\_\_\_

### **Trench 4**

Trench 4 measured 10m x 2m and was excavated down to a depth of 1.40m (4 01 O D.: Fig 6)

Excavation indicated that the upper Im of deposits in the trench were dated to the post medieval and modern period and that most of the post medieval deposits had been deliberately levelled to facilitate the modern building programmes

Below the post medieval material were accumulation deposits dating to the 15th century which sealed earlier pits of 12th to 15th century date

In addition to the pits excavation located a large ditch which is in line with a ginnel running off Gowthorpe The ditch, by pottery, association was in use in the 13th century and was then recut and went out of use in the 15th century

Excavation in Trench located a good varied range of medieval fabrics and also a background scatter of Romano-British wares



### 4. Finds Analysis

A good varied collection of finds were recovered from the site. Much of the assemblage is what one would expect from medieval urban contexts.

Animal Bone: A large assemblage of animal bone was recovered; notable was the high percentage of bovine horn cores and ovicaprid tibias and fibias. The occurrence of the latter is taken as a waste product of the tanning process. In addition to cattle and sheep, pig was represented and also a small amount of ?domesticated dog and cat. Bird bones and rodent also form a small assemblage. Fish bones appear to be surprisingly few.

Molluscs: This assemblage is dominated by oyster shells with a small percentage of mussel, cockle and a single scallop shell.

Land molluscs were also present.

**Building Materials:** As to be expected excavation located a good sample of brick types, tile fragments – one of which was glazed, and a fragment of worked stone. Structural timbers were located in the Dyke deposits along with fragments of wooden planks.

**Pottery**: Excavation located a background scatter of Roman and Anglian material, but the predominant range of wares came from the medieval period. The main fabric represented is Humber Ware with its later variant of purple glazed ware also well represented. In the early medieval period significant amounts of Gritty ware were deposited on site. Also present in lesser quantities are Orange ware, York glazed ware, and very small amounts of Brandsby and Hambleton types. In the late medieval period there are Stone wares of German origin.

**Distinctive Finds:** This class covers those types classified on site as 'small finds'. This collection included keys, knife blades, nails (timber and horseshoe), leather shoe soles, alloyed pins, glass, and worked bone.

### 5. Environmental potential

## Environmental Archaeology Unit

University of York Heslington YORK YO1 5DD (0904) 433849/51 (Fax: 433850)

Anne Finney MAP, 39 Greengate MALTON N. Yorks. YO17 0EL

28 July 1993

Dear Anne,

### Selby 1993

I write to confirm that the deposits we observed during your recent excavations behind Gowthorpe and Finkle Street in Selby have considerable potential for environmental analysis, in particular those from your Trench 1 on the Selby Dam, and the trench which apparently cut the line of the Kirk Dike. The well preserved bone assemblages from the most southwesterly trench will also be of interest.

We would be keen to see close monitoring of the construction works as they proceed, and would hope that further excavation of features likely to have well-preserved waterlogged remains (for example, the ?well in the trench nearest the street frontage) would be possible.

I trust these comments are helpful.

All best wishes,

NUQO

Allan Hall, for EAU

### **6.** Recommendations for further work

The sample excavations have shown that there is a good sequence of medieval deposits sealed below deposits of post-medieval date. This 'protective' layer seals the sensitive medieval and potentially earlier deposits which may be effected by certain elements of the development programme.

The following staged programme is suggested to enable the proper recording of archaeological deposits in those areas to be damaged or destroyed by the proposed development.

### Watching Briefs

This category covers five separate elements (Fig. 7):

1. The realignment of Selby Dam – it is proposed to undertake a watching brief and environmental assessment of this work. This project would involve the observation, monitoring and recording of the excavation of the new stream channel with the opportunity for the EAU to advise on sampling and to record their observations.

2. Existing alignment of Selby Dam – this part of the project would involve the observing, supervising and recording of a single section cut through the existing Dam to recover environmental and archaeological data.

3. Clearance of the site from existing ground level to 0.5m – it is proposed that the site will need to be reduced in height by approximately 0.5m. Whereas most of the sensitive medieval horizons will be protected by the deep deposit of post-medieval material, it is clear that areas close to the rear of Finkle Street and Gowthorpe may be seriously damaged by this depth of clearance. It is therefore proposed to undertake a watching brief whereby in the first instance deposits are only removed down to 0.4m with the additional material removed in controlled spits.

4. Clearance of the site down to 1.2m – it is proposed in only a specific area of the site (Fig. 7) to remove material from the present ground surface gradually to 1.2m. The area of the site outlined for this clearance is in a very sensitive area where a number of dykes appear to converge (Fig. 7). Equally at this proposed depth sensitive archaeological strata would be disturbed and damaged. It is therefore suggested that a strict watching brief is maintained in this area of the site.

5. Installation of services in Robert Street – this area of the site due to its close proximity to Finkle Street has a high potential for sensitive deposits, but due to the past installation of services it is felt that perhaps the damage to the strata has already occurred. Therefore it is proposed that only a watching brief is conducted in this area.

### Watching Brief -Work Programme

(a) contractors must inform the Archaeologist of the correct timing and schedule of on site works

(b) an archaeologist would observe, supervise and record the clearance of the site (i.e. the removing

of vegetation, loose stones, rubble, building debris and topsoil).

(c) clearance may be achieved by the use of a toothless bucket only.

(d) mechanical excavation should be of a controlled nature as directed by the archaeologist. Where structures, soil features and finds of archaeological interest are exposed or disturbed by machining, the archaeologist shall be provided with the opportunity to observe, clean, assess and where appropriate hand excavate, sample and record these features and finds. Machine operations shall not be commenced in the near vicinity of the archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded and the archaeologist on site has given explicit permission for machine operations to recommence at that location. Where archaeological remains are observed by the contractors or machine operators, they shall immediately notify the archaeologist.

(e) Upon completion of fieldwork all samples and finds would be processed, identified, assessed and properly stored. The archive of plans, sections and photographs would be compiled, and a report produced.

(f) The deposition of the site archive in a suitable museum or store.

### Sample Excavation

It is proposed that one trench would be excavated as shown on plan (Fig. 7). This trench would measure 30m x 1m and would be excavated down to a depth of no more than 1m. The objective of this trench is to assess and record the archaeology prior to disturbance through the installation of services.

Due to the proposed location of the trench it would be possible to use mechanical methods to remove overburden from the trench, after which all excavation would be by hand to achieve an understanding of the nature of past human activity represented in the trench, its extent, its condition and its date.

The excavation will be recorded by written, drawn, and photographic methods and all drawings will be located within the National Grid and to Ordinance Datum.

Notice will be given to the Archaeology Section NYCC so that the excavations can be monitored if desired.

### **Post excavation**

The artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation and watching briefs would be processed (i.e. cleaned, marked and packaged).

### **Environmental programme**

An environmental sampling programme for the site will be implemented. This will involve the taking of 10 litre samples for General Biological Analysis from the sample trench and any features destroyed by the clearance/infilling of the Dam and the re-alignment of the Dam, and also a number of samples for bulk sieving. The analysis of the data will be provided by the Environmental Archaeology Unit at the University of York.

Report

Due to the development schedule at the site in the first instance it is envisaged that a series of short interim reports would be submitted to the Archaeology Section of NYCC, with a report to Level III standards produced once archaeological commitment at the site has been completed.