

**Land Adjacent to Arden Court
High Street
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
SE 36802 94258**

**Archaeological Watching Brief on Engineering Test-pits and
Boreholes**

Non Technical Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out at Land adjacent to Arden Court, High Street, Northallerton, North Yorkshire during the excavation of engineering test-pits and boreholes. MAP was appointed by Billingham George and Partners on behalf of Broadacres Housing Association. One of the test-pits revealed a substantial cobble lined structure presumably an old watercourse. No finds were recovered.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at Land adjacent to Arden Court, High Street, Northallerton, North Yorkshire during the excavation of engineering test-pits and boreholes. MAP was appointed by Billingham George and Partners on behalf of Broadacres Housing Association.
- 1.2 All work was funded by Broadacres Housing Association.
- 1.3 All maps within this report have been produced from The Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. License No. AL 50453A.
- 1.4 The work was carried out on 6th October 2009

2. Historical and Archaeological Background

- 2.1 The development site lies inside an area of archaeological significance within the historic core of the town, close to All Saints Church.
- 2.2 The construction of the railway to the west of Northallerton in the late 1830s uncovered Roman pottery, coins and a votive altar in the vicinity of Castle Hills (c. 800m west of the site). Excavations in advance of the construction of the new Tesco store on East Road (c. 0.8km south of the site) by Pre-Construct Archaeology located ditches and gullies of Roman date that probably related to a field system (Riordan 2002).
- 2.3 The earliest evidence of a pre-conquest settlement at Northallerton takes the form of 8th or 9th century stone cross fragments that were discovered during the restoration of All Saints Church.
- 2.4 The Domesday Survey confirmed the presence of a pre-conquest settlement by recording that Earl Edwin held Northallerton during Edward the Confessor's reign, at which time the manor was assessed at 8 geld carucates. This holding, along with eleven dependent berewicks, was held by the King at the time of Domesday. In the late 11th century William II granted these lands to the Bishop of Durham and his successors.
- 2.5 The Domesday reference exists as the earliest instance of the place-name 'Northallerton', the name meaning '*Aelfhere's* or *Aelfred's village or farm*' (Ekwall 1936). The town was known as *North Alverton* in 1273.
- 2.6 The original core of the settlement is believed to have centred around the parish church, with a later regular, planned expansion southwards into the area of the present Market Place taking place soon after the Bishop of Durham's acquisition of the town in the late 11th century. The original settlement may have been remodelled at the same time, as the entire town as depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map

(1856) displays regular east-west aligned burgage plots extending both sides of the Northend / High Street / Market Place axis.

- 2.7 Pre-Construct Archaeology's East Road excavation traced the boundaries of a number of burgage plots along with medieval pits and wells.
- 2.8 Other important elements of the medieval town were represented by the motte and bailey castle and Bishop's Palace at the western fringe of the town, the Carmelite monastery in the north-east part of the town, and a house of the Austin Friars in the vicinity of the Market Place.
- 2.9 To the immediate south-west of the application area is the site of Porch House, 71 High Street. This Grade II Listed Building has fabric dating from the 1580s AD, indicating that there was a medieval settlement along the High Street frontage. It is likely that long narrow burgage plots would have been laid out. The areas behind the frontage properties have potential for the survival of remains of backland activities, such as craft and industrial processes, waste pits and ancillary buildings.
- 2.10 Recent archaeological interventions along High Street have indicated the presence of early Romano-British activity near the southern end of the street and a pattern of medieval occupation and craft activity within the pattern of burgage plots which is still evident in the town's layout. The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey dated 1857, clearly shows this pattern before it was significantly disrupted by modern development.
- 2.11 An archaeological excavation undertaken by MAP Archaeological Consultancy in January 2008 at Quaker Lane revealed a series of ditches and gullies of medieval date that represented the southern boundary of a property running eastwards from Northend and a later

subdivision of the plot. A sub-oval ring gully was interpreted as a probable stack base, with an oven or hearth base representing additional 'backyard' activity. A modest assemblage of medieval was recovered, along with small quantities of animal bone, slag and CBM.

- 2.12 An Evaluation was undertaken at the site in April 2006, by The Brigantia Archaeological Practice. The evaluation revealed no trace of archaeological activity other than an unexcavated presumed watercourse.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 Four engineering test-pits and boreholes were archaeologically monitored. All four test-pit dimensions were 0.45m in width by 0.75m in length and all were taken down to natural deposits.

4. Results

- 4.1 Test-pits and boreholes 1,2 and 4 all revealed a similar profile. Topsoil existed to between 0.3m and 0.6m in depth and lay above a natural clay deposit.
- 4.2 Test-pit 3 was located at the most eastern end of the site and revealed a cobble filled feature running on a north to south alignment some 0.30m below the turf. The feature only seen in section extended the full length of the excavated test-pit and was at least 0.50m deep.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Due to the unexpected and substantial size of the feature presumed to be a watercourse in test-pit 3, a watching brief is recommended on any future development.

6. References

- Ekwall, E. 1936 The Concise Dictionary of English Place-names.
- IFA 1998 Institute of Field Archaeologists Year Book.
- Mackney, D (Ed). 1984 Soils of England and Wales.
- MAP 2008 Archaeological excavation at Quaker Lane Northallerton
- Riordan, M 2002 The History of Northallerton, North Yorkshire from earliest times to the year 2000.
- Turnbull, P 2006 Archaeological Evaluation at Arden Court, Northallerton. The Brigantia Archaeological Practice



Figure 1. Site Location.

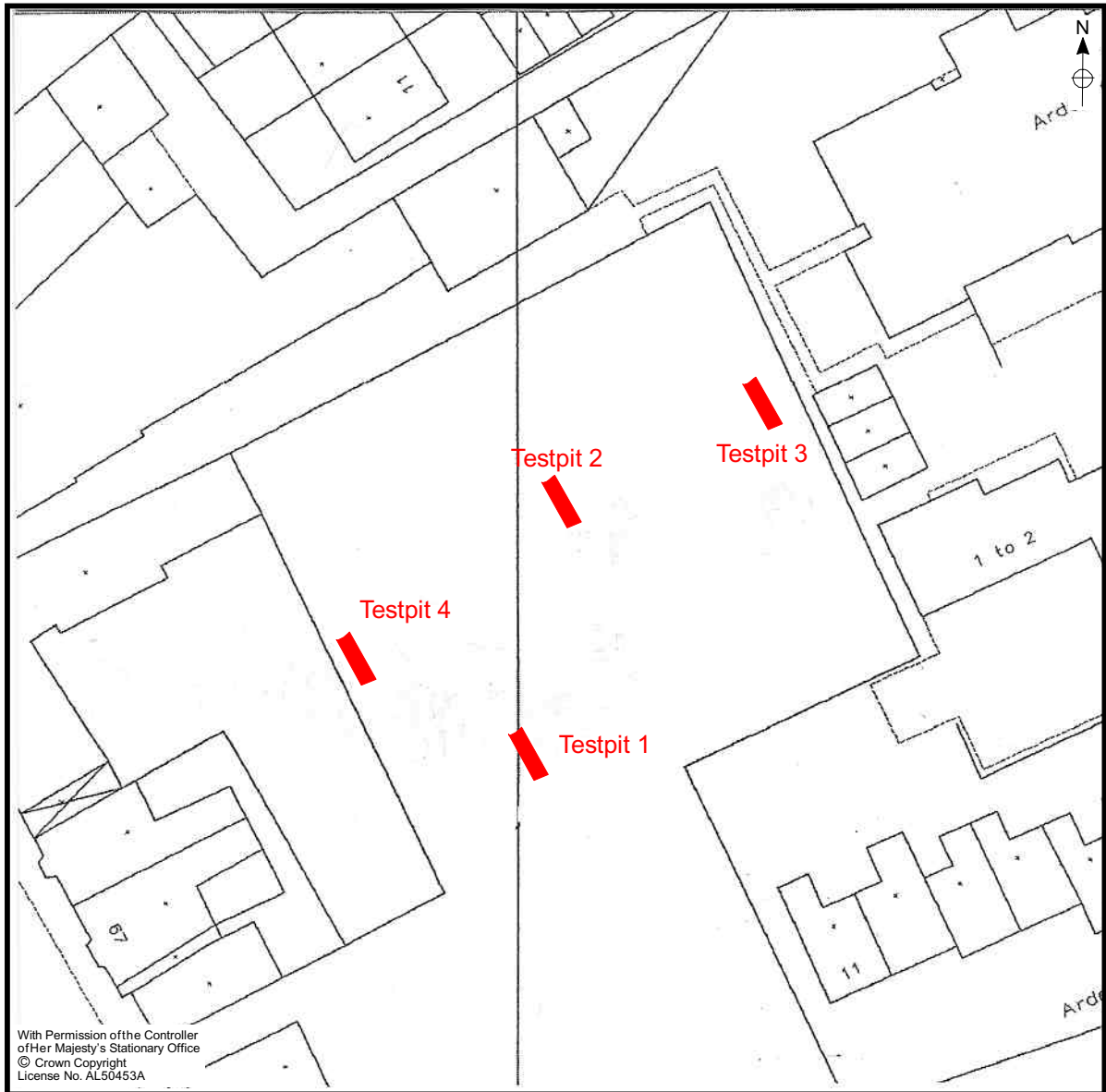


Figure 2. Testpit Location.



Plate 1. Porch House, Northallerton. Facing North-east.



Plate 2. Porch House, Northallerton. Facing South-west.



Plate 3. View of Church from site. Facing West.



Plate 4. Entrance to Site. Facing North.



Plate 5. Testpit 3.



Plate 6. Testpit 3.



Plate 7. Testpit 3.



Plate 8. Testpit 3.