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**ALDWARK MANOR GOLF CLUB,
ALDWARK,
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

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**REPORT ON AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**



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ABSTRACT

On 4th – 5th November 1998 York Archaeological Trust excavated a series of six small trenches as part of an archaeological evaluation of a proposed minor development to the south of the village of Aldwark, North Yorkshire. The site lies immediately south of what is likely to be a medieval manorial complex, the location of which was traced cartographically.

Features of probable medieval date were found in two trenches. Trench 1 provided evidence of a metallised surface that may subsequently have been cut through by a large feature with an associated possible channel. These later elements may have related to the control of water. In Trench 2 a substantial metallised surface was revealed. All of the trenches provided evidence of a considerable build-up of deposits above the level of the drift geology, overlaying relict topsoils. Elements of these may be of medieval origin.

1. INTRODUCTION

On the 4th and 5th November 1998 York Archaeological Trust carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at the northern end of Aldwark Manor golf course, Aldwark, North Yorkshire, NGR SE 4688 6331, (Figure 1, Site Location Plan). The evaluation was prompted by proposals to build a greenkeeper's store and an associated surface water drain on the site. The site lies on ground that undulates slightly and is presently covered by a mixture of nettles, young trees, grass and leaf compost and a small area of rubbish. The drift geology of the site is of silt and clay with adjacent areas of sands and gravel, sandy till, and alluvium close to the river, (Geological Survey, 1987). The solid geology is of Bunter and Keuper sandstones, (Geological Survey, 1957).

The aims of the investigation were to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological remains within the area to be developed and to determine the location, extent, date character and quality of any such deposits that may be threatened by the proposed development.

The excavation followed a rapid desk-top study of the old maps of the village and was carried out to a specification that was verbally agreed between the Senior Archaeologist at the Heritage Unit of North Yorkshire County Council and York Archaeological Trust.

All works were carried out on behalf of Aldwark Manor Golf Hotel through their agent, Peter Roth of Enviropig Building Systems.

2. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The development site lies at the extreme south-eastern end of the village of Aldwark, some 200m north-east of the river Ure. The village is first recorded in the Domesday Survey of c.1086 though the place-name (O.E. "old work") may imply remains, if not an origin, of a much earlier date, (E. P. Soc., 1928). Local tradition maintains that a Roman road and possibly a Roman fort were situated in the village. The source of these traditions may lie in the writings of Francis Drake, later propounded by C. Whellan, (Drake, 1736), (Whellan, 1859). To date no firm evidence has been presented to demonstrate the presence of a Roman fort, nor does Margary list a road in the immediate vicinity of the village, (Margary, 1973).

A manor is recorded in Domesday as belonging to Ligulf and was subsequently owned by the Count of Mortain, (VCH, 1928). It is not certainly known where the earliest manor house in the village was located. The last vestiges of a moated site lie some 40m to the north of the development site. Maps of 1856 and 1909 (Figure 9 and 10) show that until comparatively recent times large parts of the moat survived as an upstanding site. Although Le Patourel states that a house stood on the island (possibly the medieval manor house) it is not certain what the source of this information is, or indeed if the house was the manor house, (Le Patourel, 1973). A possible alternative site for the manor house is a location under the modern house named Ings View just south-west of the moat. The grounds for this argument are that the 1856 map shows a small area of raised ground with text beside it stating "site of Aldwark Hall". The 1909 map also shows the site of "Aldwark Hall" in this same position. It is possible that during the medieval period the location of the manor house could have changed. South-east of the possible manor site a bowling green is recorded on the 1856 map and south of this a field known as chapel garth that is reputed to have been the site of a domestic chapel, (O.S. card NYCC SMR). Also shown on the 1909 map is a north-west to south-east aligned ditch that runs across the area of the development site.

Of the features described above few remain today as upstanding monuments. Little is left of the moat and the bowling green cannot now be traced. A slight rise is evident on the south-western side of the plot occupied by Ings View and this may represent part of the location described as the site of Aldwark Hall. The north-west to south-east aligned ditch is just visible in a few remaining places but otherwise has been lost as an upstanding monument. It is clear that the ground surface has been altered in recent times, certainly during the 20th century. Information supplied by the greenkeeper indicates that land in the area of the development site has been cleared by machine in recent years and that some infilling has taken place of the partially visible linear feature.

There is no record of previous archaeological work in the immediate vicinity of the site.

3. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation consisted of the excavation of six trenches each measuring approximately 1.70m x 1.50m in surface area, (Figure 2, Trench Location Plan). The position of the trenches was determined by the plan of the proposed building, five of the trenches being located close to corners of this. The sixth trench was located in a walled garden some 35m to the south of the proposed building on the proposed drain run for the development.

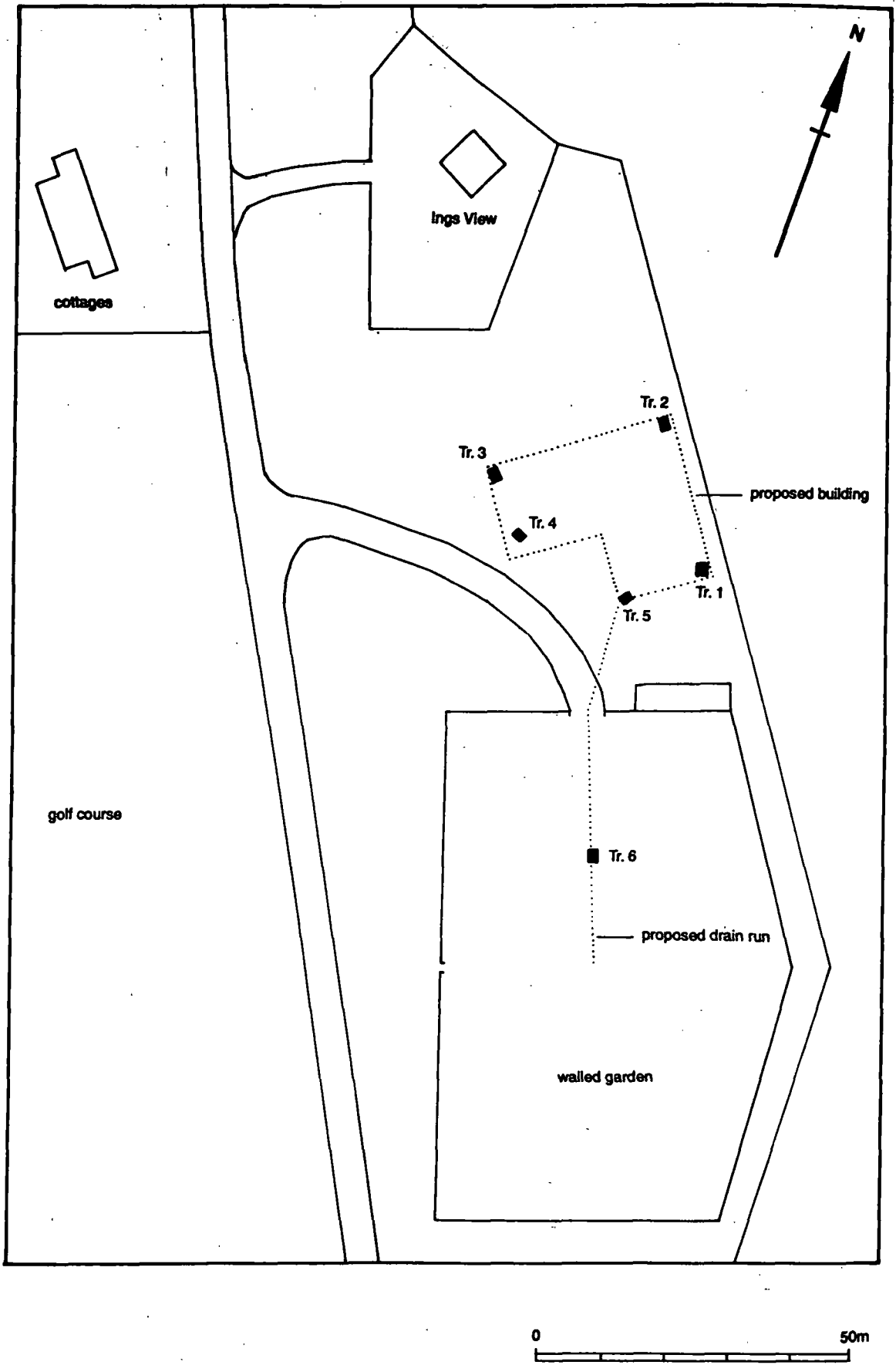


Figure 2 Trench Location Plan

A JCB excavator equipped with a toothless bucket was used to mechanically strip topsoil and overburden down to significant deposits, under constant archaeological supervision. Archaeological deposits were thereafter manually cleaned and examined or excavated.

Each context encountered was recorded on a separate pro-forma record sheet, plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20, sections at 1:10 and a series of colour print photographs were taken of each trench.

All finds and site records are currently stored by York Archaeological Trmst under the accession code YORAT: 1998.15.

4. THE EXCAVATIONS

4.1 Trench 1 (Figure 3)

Natural drift deposits in the form of orangish and orangish yellow sandy clay, context 1009, were located at a depth of some 0.77m BGL (Below Ground Level)(16.20m AOD(Above Ordnance Datum)). Sealing this material, in the southern part of the trench, was a spread of stones of a size 0.01m – 0.06m and up to 0.10m thick. This deposit was interpreted as a metalled surface.

Immediately north of this surface was part of a large cut feature, context 1008. The full shape of cut 1008 is not known but what may be a channel or gully (rather than an integral part of 1008) some 0.60m wide and aligned approximately east – west was seen to lead to or from this feature. A segment was cut across 1008 and this showed the feature to display sheer vertical sides. The base of the feature was not reached despite excavation to a depth of 0.30m (1.10m BGL). The lowest excavated fill in cut 1008 was context 1006, an orange brown, stiff, silty clay with some reddish brown mottling, that contained pockets of clayey silt and occasional flecks of charcoal. A single sherd of 11th century gritty ware was recovered from this fill. It was noted that 1006 lay stratigraphically above context 1007, a brownish orange clayey silt that occupied the east-west aligned channel and was not excavated. Sealing 1006 was context 1005, a charcoal rich, brown clayey silt containing occasional cobbles. The function of cut 1008 is not known. The perfectly vertical sides of the feature may suggest that it was once lined, perhaps with wood that has since decayed. The presence of the related channel make it likely that something was either fed to or from the large cut. An industrial use, or perhaps the control of water are possible interpretations. It is not known if 1008 cut through the adjacent metalled surface 1004 or if both features are associated and contemporary.

Sealing 1008 and the remnants of the metalled surface 1004, was context 1003, a layer of pale grey, slightly sandy silt containing the occasional small stone and fleck of charcoal and whose upper profile rose up to the west. It is possible that 1003 developed as a soil above the redundant features below. Quite why 1003 should rise up to the west is uncertain though it could conceivably relate to subsequent incorporation into a ridge and furrow field system.

Directly over 1003 lay context 1002 a light brownish yellow silty sand. Although no finds were recovered from this material it clearly represents human deposition. Above 1002 lay context 1010, a pale greyish brown sandy silt that forms the present topsoil and was in turn sealed by context 1001 an accumulation of leaf mould and compost.

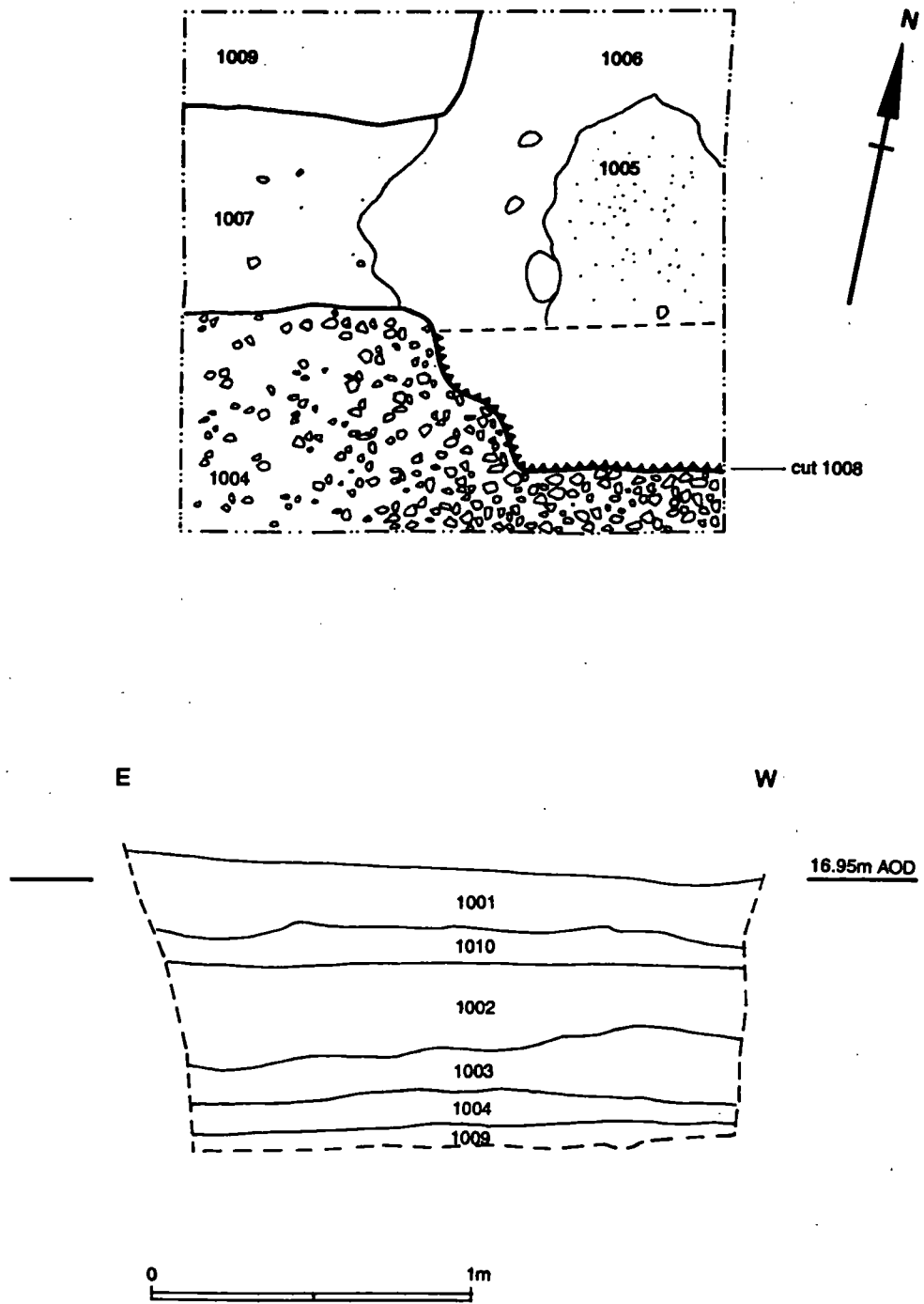


Figure 3 Trench 1, Plan and North facing section

4.2 Trench 2 (Figure 4)

The earliest deposit encountered in Trench 2 was a dense spread of cobbles of a size 0.06m – 0.14m that contained tile fragments throughout its matrix, context 2006, and occurred at a depth of 0.70m BGL (16.48m AOD). This spread was seen in places to be up to three stones deep and clearly represents a metalled surface, perhaps of a track or yard. Tile from this surface appears to be of a 13th + century date. Lying directly over this surface was a deposit of light yellowish brown silty sand, context 2005. This material contained a few fragments of brick and tile of a 14th + century date. Context 2005 bore similarities in terms of texture to context 1002 in Trench 1, although by what process this material was deposited is uncertain. A layer of pale, brownish grey sandy silt, context 2004, overlay 2005. No finds were recovered from this material and although its origin is not certain it may be that it represents a zone of mixing between the present topsoil and context 2005, it being noted that the interface with both the topsoil and 2005 was very blurred and indistinct. Parts of a pit were seen to cut through 2004 in the north-west part of the trench, context 2003. This pit displayed steep sides and a base that rose slightly to the north. The single fill of the pit, context 2002, was a mid greyish brown sandy silt that contained cockle shells, fragments of possible medieval tile, some decayed bone and part of a plant pot. It is clear that this pit is of 19th or 20th century origin and was probably cut for the disposal of domestic refuse. The pit was not seen to (though may well have) cut through the extant topsoil, context 2001, a greyish brown sandy silt.

4.3 Trench 3 (Figure 5)

Brown, slightly sandy clay overlain by pinkish brown sandy clay formed the banded natural drift deposit in Trench 3, context 3004, and was located at a depth of 0.70m BGL (16.59m AOD). This was overlain by context 3003 a thin deposit of yellowish brown, slightly clayey silty sand that contained 13th + century tile fragments and occasional charcoal flecks. The density of tile within this context suggests that it was formed by a spread of demolition type debris, though whether as merely a dump or as a cmde surfacing is not known. Overlying 3002 was context 3002 a compact, yellowish brown silty sand that contained charcoal flecks and fragments of 13th + century tile. The origin of this material is uncertain. A thick deposit of mixed material, context 3001, that included modern building rubble, wood, a refrigerator and concrete formed the uppermost deposit in Trench 3. This context clearly derived from dumping in recent years.

4.4 Trench 4 (Figure 6)

Natural drift deposits occurred at 0.77m BGL (16.43m AOD), context 4004 in Trench 4. This material proved to be banded. The lower part was composed of palish brown, slightly sandy clay. The upper part was a yellowish orange, compact, pure sand. It was initially thought that the upper sand element may have been of human deposition, but the absence of finds and the clean, pure nature of the material lends weight to the notion that it is likely to form a part of the drift. Context 4003, a deposit of light yellowish brown, fairly compact, slightly silty sand, sealed the drift deposits. It was noted that parts of the lower zone of 4003 were slightly darker and siltier than the upper. Although these darker components were in no way continuous they were allocated a separate context number, context 4005. The only finds apparent in contexts 4005 and 4003 were very small flecks of brick or tile that proved to be too small to be of any diagnostic value in terms of dating. It is considered that context 4005 may once have formed part of a

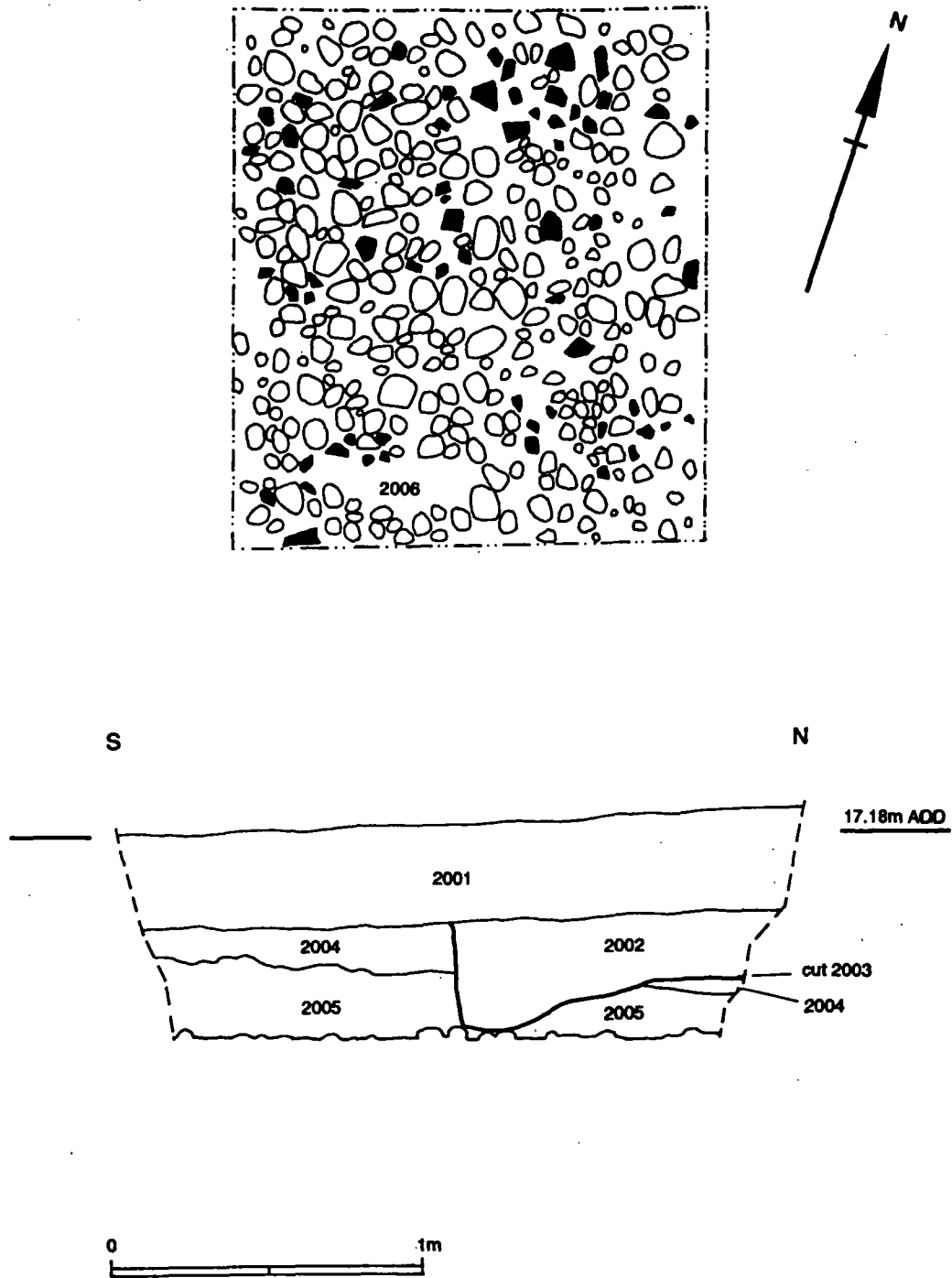


Figure 4 Trench 2, Plan and East facing section

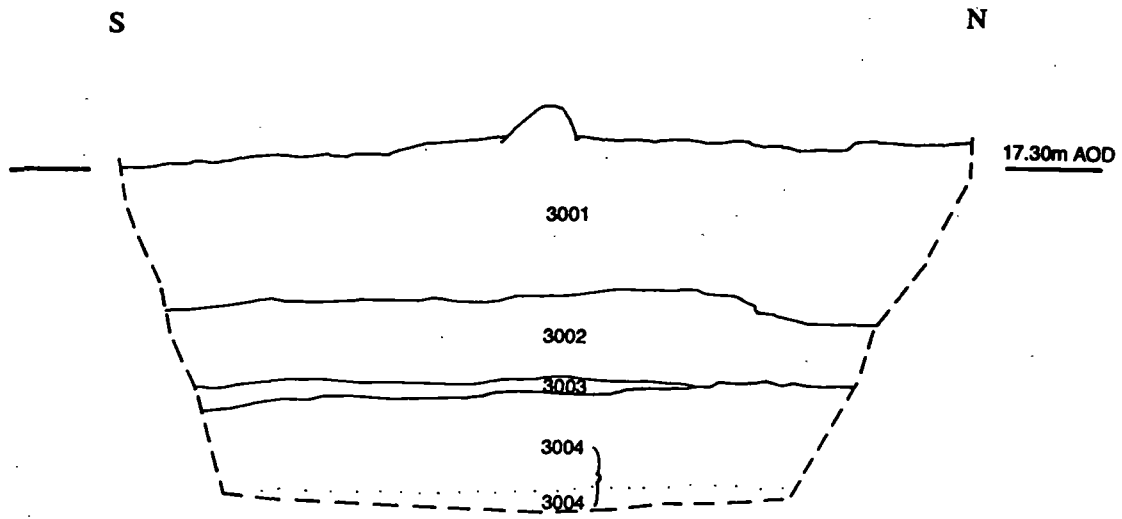


Figure 5 Trench 3, East facing section

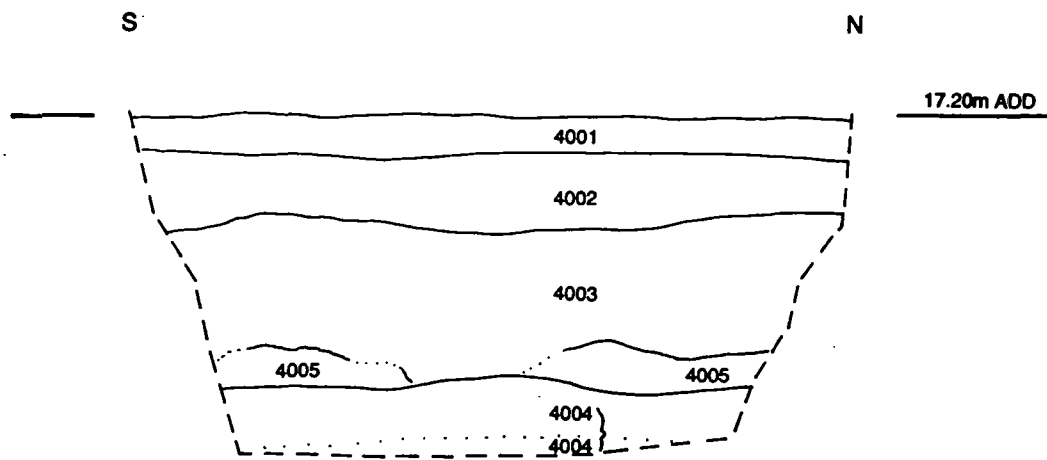
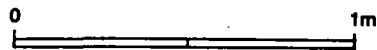


Figure 6 Trench 4, East facing section



Figures 5 & 6 Trenches 3 & 4 sections

disturbed relict topsoil whilst context 4003 represents human deposition, of an unknown purpose, above this. The existing topsoil in Trench 4 was of two parts. The lower of these was a dry, compact, mid greyish brown sandy silt, context 4002, the upper, later part, was a soft damp dark greyish brown silt, context 4001, largely derived from compost and leaf mould.

4.5 Trench 5 (Figure 7)

At a depth of 0.85m BGL (16.41m AOD) a stiff, brownish yellow clay forming the upper part of the drift was located, context 5005. This material was sealed by context 5004, a layer of slightly clayey mid yellowish brown silty sand, possibly an old topsoil horizon. Context 5003, a light brownish yellow, slightly silty sand that contained the occasional charcoal fleck and small fragments of 13th + century tile together with a small quantity of flecks of burnt clay, sealed context 5004. Whilst probably of human origin the function of deposit 5003 is uncertain. A layer of light greyish brown sandy silt, context 5002 lay over 5003 and represents a topsoil. This material was in turn overlain by context 5001, a recent deposit of compost.

4.6 Trench 6 (Figure 8)

Trench 6 was excavated along the projected course of a proposed surface water drain and was located within a walled garden some distance to the south of the other trenches. A yellow, stiff clay, of the drift, context 6004, occurred at a depth of 0.54m BGL (16.72m AOD). This material was overlain by context 6003, a mid brown sandy silt. Context 6003 is likely to have formed a topsoil prior to the construction of the walled garden and the raising of ground levels therein. That 6003 was darker and softer than other relict topsoils in Trenches 1, 4 and 5 is likely to be due to its having been an active topsoil/horticultural soil until the later 19th century when the walled garden was built. A very mixed deposit, context 6002, overlay 6003. This was composed of two principal elements that both occurred at the same horizon. One of these was a buff coloured clay, the other a dark brown sandy silt. This material is interpreted as deposition to raise the ground level, in which the clay element may be derived from redeposited "natural" of the drift. Sealing context 6002 was the deep, well dug over topsoil, context 6001, that until recent years was used for horticultural purposes.

5. THE FINDS

5.1 Pottery

Only two sherds of pottery were recovered. One of these from context 1006 was a sherd of 12th century gritty ware. Three fragments of daub were also found in the same context. The second sherd was a large fragment of plant pot of 19th or 20th century date.

5.2 Ceramic Building Materials

5.2.1 Medieval/Post medieval material

The sample comprises plain and peg roofing tile, and a few fragments of brick. The dating of the plain or peg tile is problematic since there has been no previous study of ceramic building materials in this area, and the fact that plain tile was used well into the post medieval period. The only diagnostic factors can be how refined the clay is, the method of manufacture, and the

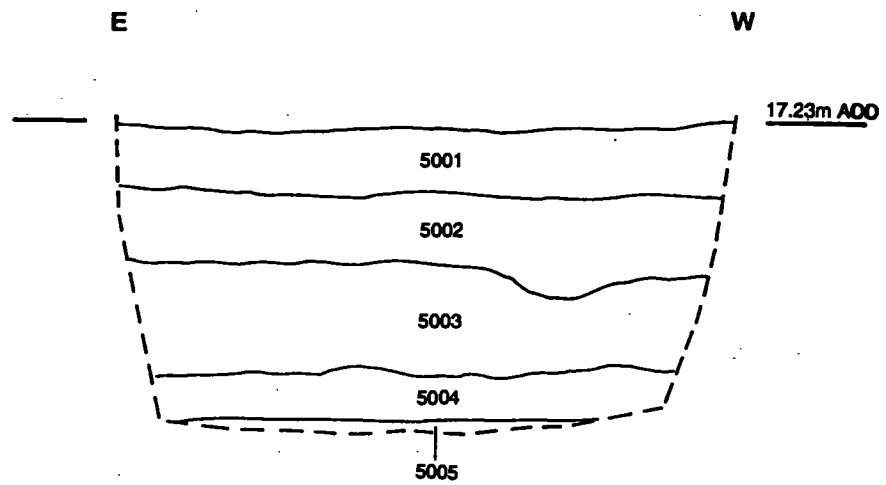


Figure 7 Trench 5, North facing section

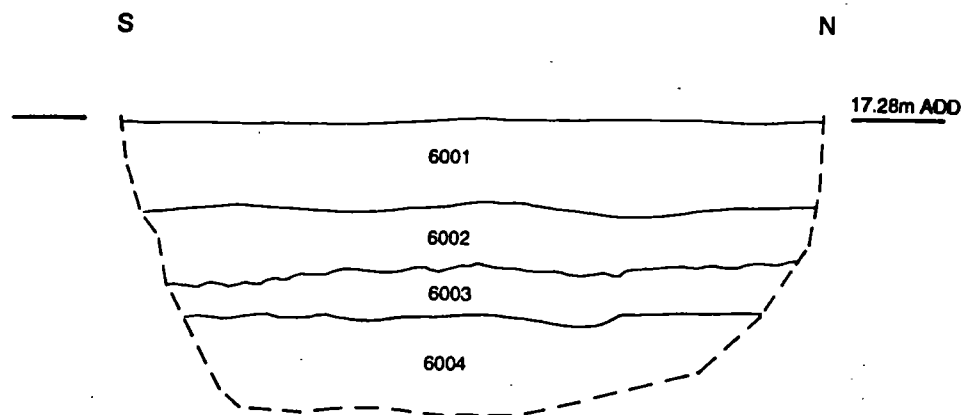


Figure 8 Trench 6, East facing section



Figures 7 & 8 Trenches 5 & 6 sections

fineness of the sanding. In this case, the tiles appear to be entirely hand-made, and the fabric is not particularly refined. On balance, the material is probably medieval in date

The brick is very fragmentary, so no useful measurements can be taken. Brick did not become common until the 14th century in nearby York, so it would be reasonable to think this is the same for Aldwark.

5.2.2 Recommendations

The sample is small and fragmentary, however there are at least three different plain tile fabrics present. This may indicate different sources for the plain tile found at Aldwark. It is recommended that this sample is kept for further study, and that scientific analysis of the fabrics takes place to add to the study of ceramic building materials in Yorkshire.

5.2.3 Context List

Context	Form/s	Date	Spot date
2002	Peg (square peghole, T16)	13 th +	Medieval
	Plain (T12)	13 th	
2005	Brick	14 th +	14-19th
	Plain (T14)	13th+	
2006	Plain (T12, T13, T12, T15, T19)	13th+	Medieval
3002	Plain (T14, T15)	13th+	Medieval
3003	Plain (T13, T14, T16, T17)	13th+	Medieval
5003	Plain	13th+	Medieval

6. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological features were located in two of the excavated trenches, Trenches 1 and 2. The large cut feature with an associated channel in Trench 1 that had cut through an earlier metalled surface was almost certainly of medieval date and may have been related to the control of water. The metalled surface in Trench 2 also appears to be of medieval date. All of these features are likely to relate to activity associated with the probable manorial complex that research suggests lay immediately to the north. All of the trenches demonstrated a build-up of deposits above the level of the drift geology to that of the present ground surface and this was seldom of a depth of less than 0.60m. Certain of these deposits display considerable similarity from trench to trench, in particular contexts 1003, 4005 and 5004 which appear to represent relict topsoils of some antiquity. In Trenches 4 and 5 these lay directly over the drift whereas in Trench 1 this had formed over features of medieval date. The only other relict topsoil was 6003 in Trench 6 which was not sealed until the later 19th century. Other contexts for which correlation (again on the grounds of similarities in texture, consistency, finds and stratigraphic positions) can reasonably be made are 1002, 2005, possibly 3002, 4003 and 5003. All of these contexts were pale silty sands that contained occasional charcoal flecks and small fragments of what is probably 13th + century tile and collectively extend over a substantial part of the site. The origin of these contexts is probably through later medieval or post medieval deposition and they appear to effectively seal, in places at least, underlying medieval features.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation has demonstrated the presence of archaeological features at the site. Where located, however, these lay at depths in excess of 0.65m BGL i.e. below the level of the proposed works. The presence of the extensive sealing deposit, noted above, at or below the level of proposed building works suggests that archaeological features will be protected from disturbance.

Note was made in section 2 of traces still apparent of the north-west to south-east aligned ditch that was recorded on the 1909 O.S. map. Whilst the date of this ditch is not known for certain it may be of some antiquity. It is recommended that if construction works are to impinge on this feature below the level of the topsoil then attempts be made to raise ground level rather than reduce it.

The surface water drain (to run from the south of the building to a well in the centre of the walled garden) is due to cut more deeply into the ground than other proposed works associated with this development. It is thus suggested that the excavation of this be archaeologically observed in the stretch from the new building to the edge of the walled garden.

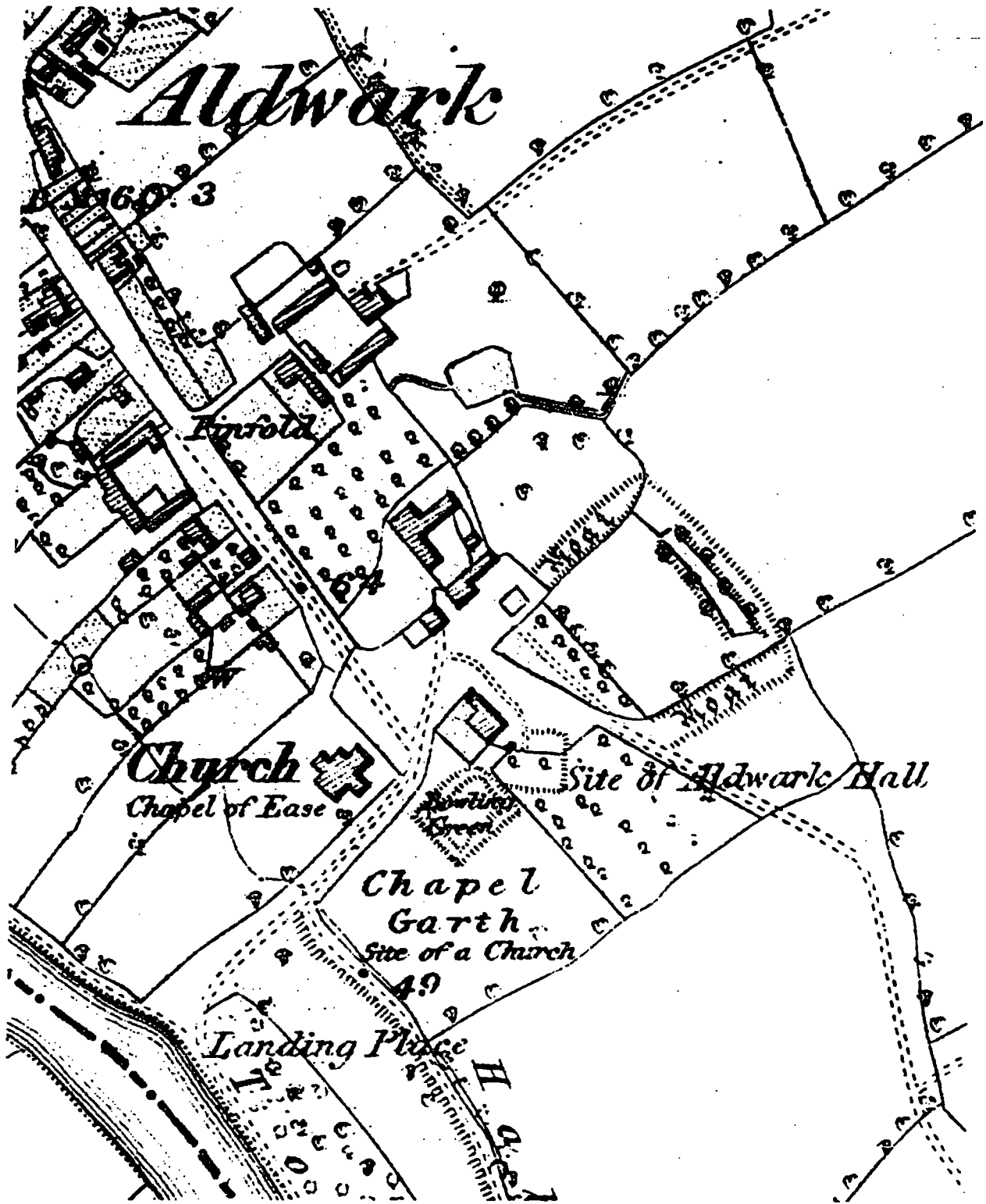


Figure 9 Extract from 1856 1st edition Ordnance Survey map

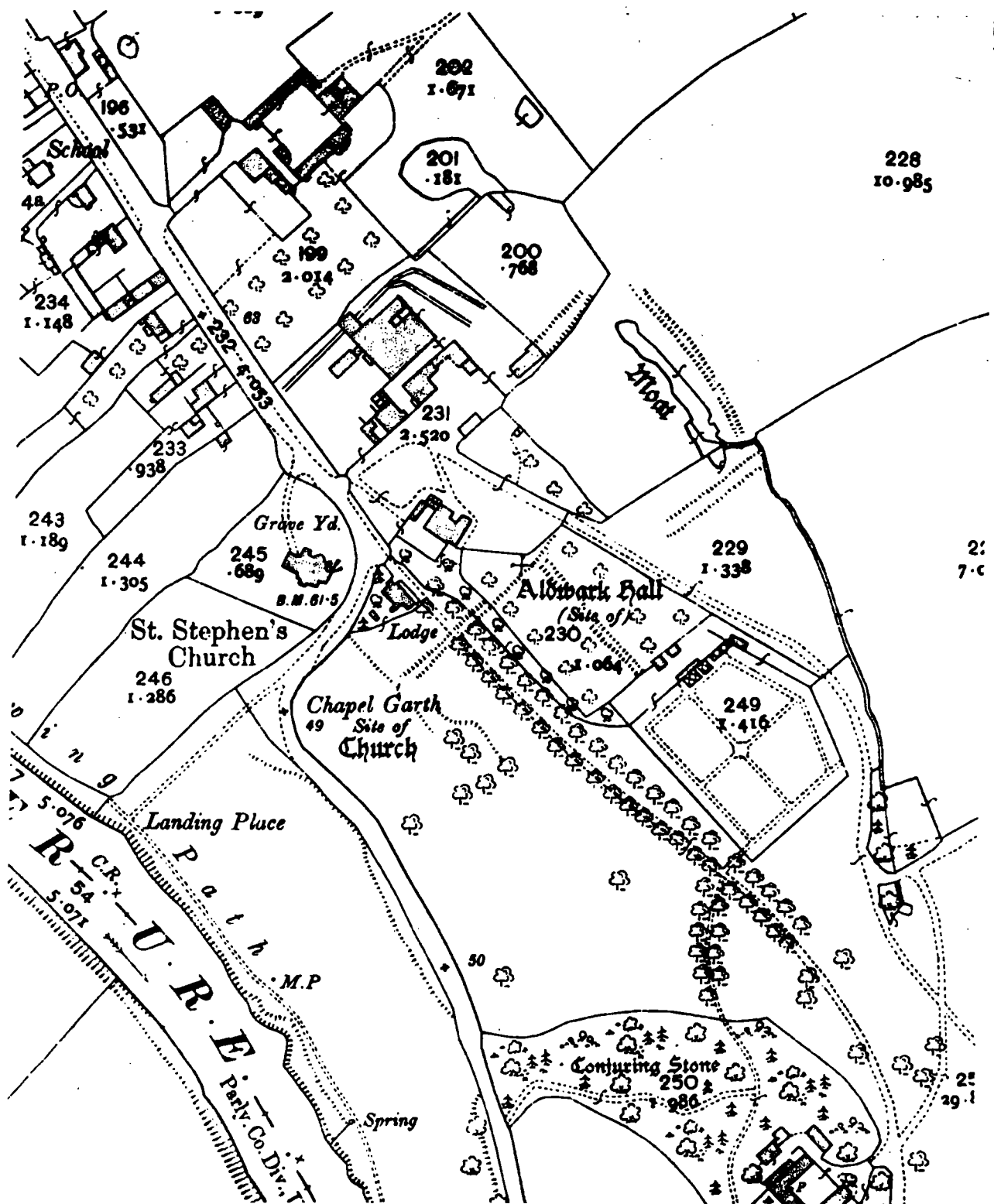


Figure 10 Extract from 1909 Ordnance Survey map

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9. LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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IMPLICATIONS ON THE CONSTRUCTION
OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AT HOME FARM,
ALDWARK, NORTH YORKSHIRE SE 469 630

Stephen J Sherlock February 2007.

IMPLICATIONS ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING AT HOME FARM, ALDWARK, NORTH YORKSHIRE SE 469 630

1 Introduction

This report represents an assessment of a site at Home Farm, Aldwark, Hambleton, North Yorkshire SE469 630. The site was subject to a planning condition in relation to an application No: 2/04/005/0046B, requesting an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during the development. This was requested by the Heritage Section of the Planning and Countryside Service, North Yorkshire County Council who advise Hambleton District Council on matters relating to the Heritage Environment. The request for the work was made owing to location of the development within the village, adjacent to the site of a medieval moated manor house and opposite the church.

2 The Site

The development is at Home Farm, Aldwark, a village mentioned in the Domesday Book, here the Count of Mortain held eight carucates of land (DB 2003, 872). The site was noted as a moated manor of class A2b with fishponds in a survey of moated sites in Yorkshire (Le Patourel 1973, 118) and is recorded on the Heritage Environment Record MNY 18390. The development was to the NW of the area marked moat on the map accompanying this report (fig. 1).

3 The Development

- 3.1 The development took place in the Summer of 2006 with the barn being constructed upon the site of an existing building (Brian Proudley pers. comm.).
- 3.2 The ground surface was raised and the barn built upon a platform of aggregate, and therefore the floor surface of the building is 0.80m above the level of the field. (pl. 1, 2 and 3).
- 3.3 The development has not occurred within the area of the earthworks of the moat, but was in the farmyard. In this respect the site has not been disturbed.
- 3.4 There are no further works or services proposed for this development.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 The barn at Home Farm is now completed and in use. There will be no disturbance of the ground for services or drains relating to the building and therefore no opportunity to examine beneath the ground at this site.
- 4.2 The construction method of building the barn on a raft or platform is the course of action that would minimise damage to archaeological sites and so this building would have a minimum impact upon any below ground archaeological features.
- 4.3 In considering that the work on site is now complete and following a site visit by the author to record the development, it is recommended that no further archaeological work could be undertaken.

4.4 This report and the site photographs will be deposited with the Heritage Section of North Yorkshire County Council as a response to the planning condition.

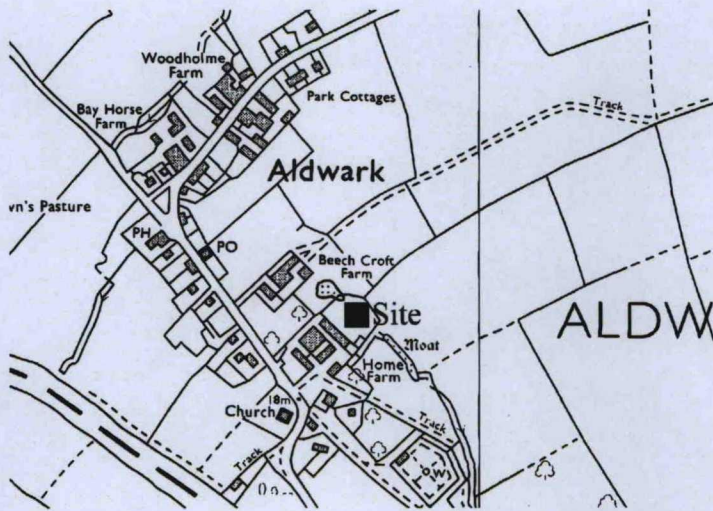


Fig. 1 To show the location of the development at Home Farm, Aldwark

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Pl.1 To show the new barn from the SE.



Pl. 2 To show the stone foundation upon which the barn was built, looking NW



Pl.3 To show the barn upon a stone foundation, looking SE towards the moat

