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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF THE
PARADISE ESTATE, SCARBOROUGH**
SMR no - 09101.36.000

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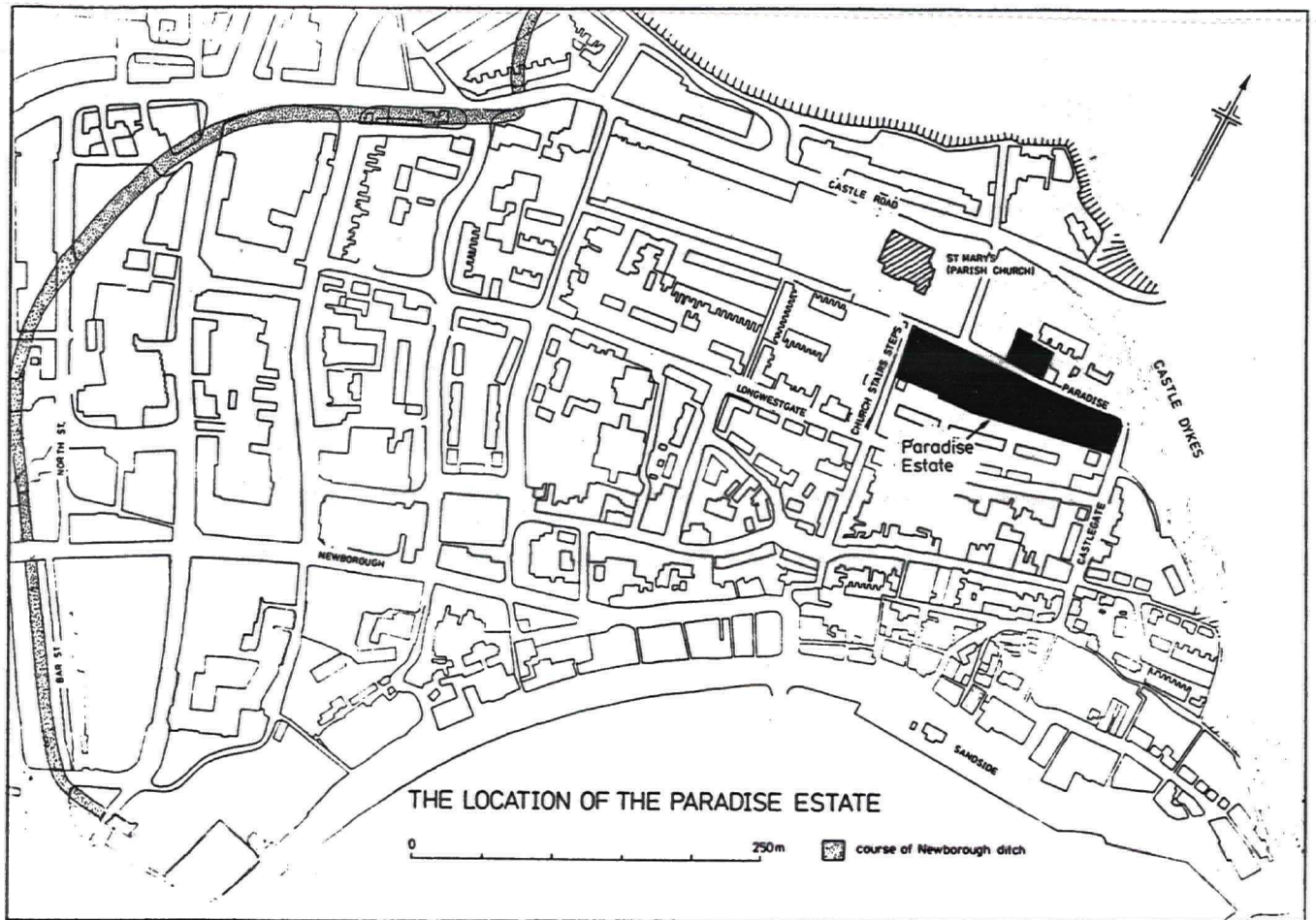


Figure One

SECTION ONE : INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Scarborough Borough Council, an assessment of the archaeological potential of this site was undertaken between March 14th and April 10th 1988 by a field team from Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit in conjunction with the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society. The work was commissioned in response to possible development of the site.

This report briefly summarises and assesses the discoveries made during the month-long excavation so as to clearly establish a framework for future decisions about the site. It is intended to publish a more detailed description of the excavation to coincide with the opening of an exhibition of some of the finds at the Rotunda Museum in June.

SECTION TWO : THE SITE (fig. 1)

The medieval town of Scarborough grew up on the peninsula between the North and South Bays and extended inland from the Castle Dykes to the Newborough ditch which ran near to modern Bar St. and North St. Despite the fact that the Paradise Estate covers some 3% of the medieval town and is close by the parish church and castle (both of 12th-century origin), past archaeological discoveries here have been negligible. An archaeological survey of the town recently published (PEARSON, 1987) records the discovery of an Early Iron Age bronze armlet in 1934 on the north side of Paradise and of a medieval pit on the east side of the house in 1987. The paucity of past discoveries is due more to the absence of modern ground disturbances to bring archaeological discoveries to light than to their actual absence. Indeed, as the survey pointed out, the Paradise Estate can be considered archaeologically important because it has been largely gardens since at least 1725, the date of the first town map. Any earlier remains are therefore likely to be better preserved than in other parts of the town where modern foundations, cellars and service trenches will have damaged or destroyed archaeological evidence.

Documents of the 15th and 16th centuries refer to houses and gardens at Paradise, and the name itself suggests the Cistercian monks who administered the revenues of the parish church may have lived in this area. One of the meanings of the name Paradise in medieval literature is an enclosed monastic garden. Furthermore the Iron Age bracelet referred to above could indicate that a prehistoric settlement awaits discovery at Paradise, contemporary with that excavated on the Castle Headland in the 1920's.

Today the estate is dominated by Paradise House, which appears from a sale notice to have been constructed around 1770, although documents dating back to the 17th century prove the existence of an earlier Paradise House. Apart from a wooden hut (used by the Sea Cadets), the only other building on the estate is on the opposite side of the road to the house. This structure is particularly interesting because it's north side comprises a substantial stone wall incorporating part of a carved 13th-century grave slab. Stone walls also exist elsewhere on the estate as boundary walls and it is possible that some could date back to medieval times or might at least preserve the alignment of medieval boundaries.

SECTION THREE : SURVEY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Archaeological evaluation was achieved by a combination of machine-dug trenches (undertaken by Gibson's Plant Hire) totalling 90 metres in length and 21 smaller hand-dug trenches, primarily in areas currently inaccessible to a J.C.B. Not surprisingly, given the size of the estate, some areas were devoid of medieval remains whilst medieval structures were discovered just below the topsoil in others. Consequently, the recommended response to future development proposals varies accordingly. The site is subdivided into the numbered areas shown on fig. 2; for convenience of discussion, beginning with parts of the estate where no further work is necessary.

LOCATION OF EXCAVATION TRENCHES AND OF AREAS ONE TO TWELVE

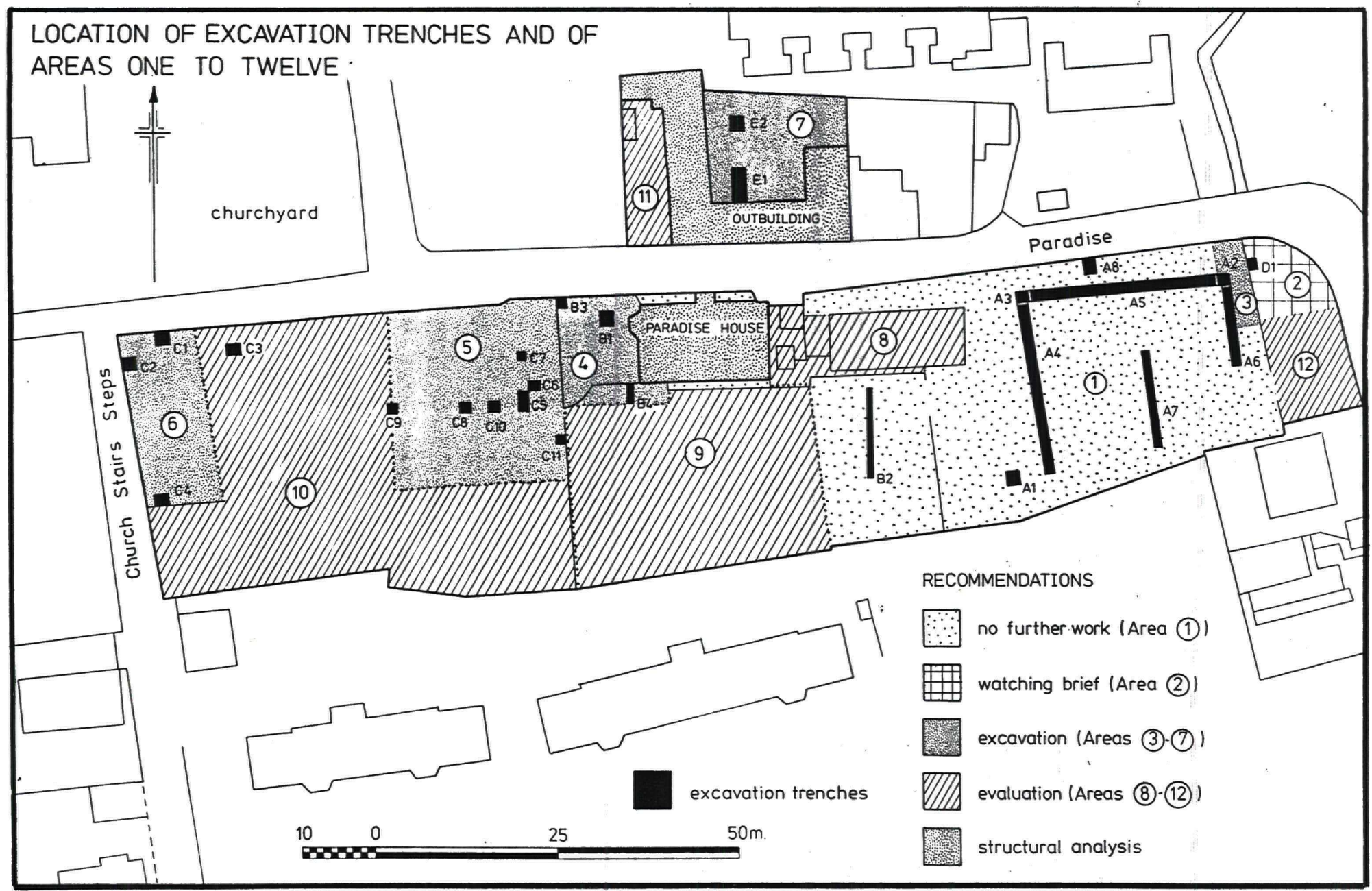








Figure Two

- RECOMMENDATIONS
-  no further work (Area ①)
 -  watching brief (Area ②)
 -  excavation (Areas ③-⑦)
 -  evaluation (Areas ⑧-⑫)
 -  excavation trenches
 -  structural analysis

3.1 AREAS REQUIRING NO FURTHER WORK

AREA ONE (Fig.2)

Preparatory to excavation about 75% of this area was surveyed for buried features by Geophysical Surveys of Bradford (GATER, 1988), and several areas of possible interest were isolated by resistivity metering. Four hand-dug trenches (A1-A3, A8) and four machine trenches (A4-A7) were then excavated to explore those areas and to expose any structures fronting Paradise St. Features A-D proved to be close to the surface and relatively recent. A and B, an east-west linear feature, proved (as the geophysical survey thought likely) to be a path shown on an estate map of 1927, whilst features C and D were probably caused by an area of clinker.

The trenches demonstrated an average one metre depth of soil above the natural clay, and apart from isolated dumps of stone and clay, the topsoil was devoid of any features. However, an array of features was observed cutting the natural clay in all four machine trenches, while trench A6, in the area of anomaly F, uncovered archaeological remains resting directly on the natural surface (see discussion of Area Three below).

Most of the features cutting the natural clay proved to be virtually the same size and shape and were approximately contemporary. They comprised a series of linear trenches averaging 1-1.2 metres wide with vertical sides and flat bottoms cut down into the natural clay to a depth of up to 1 metre. Trench A7 exposed a sequence of six cuttings aligned east-west, with only narrow baulks of natural clay separating each from its neighbours to north and south. Trench B2, closer to Paradise House, encountered a similar arrangement of five east-west aligned cuts whilst in A4 two adjoining north-south cuts 15 metres long were uncovered. Parts of two east-west cuts and the northern termination of at least six more aligned north-south were uncovered in trench A5, of which the most easterly was also explored in trench A6. At the south end of trenches A4, A6, A7 and B2 a much wider east-west cut penetrated into the natural clay. Its north-south width was undetermined but it probably stretched as far as the southern boundary wall of the estate. None of the cuts observed were intercut, narrow bands of natural clay isolating each cut from its

neighbours. As well as a uniform size and shape their backfill was a similar friable soil, little different to the overlying topsoil, which contained both medieval and post-medieval pottery. Only the easternmost of the cuts exposed in A5 and A6 had a different fill consisting of burnt soil, ash and scorched brick.

The most plausible explanation for these features is they are relics of the brickfield recorded at Paradise in 1763 and that they were dug to extract clay for brickmaking. The clay was excavated in long narrow cuttings so as not to unduly scar the appearance of the estate, since by this method only one cutting need have been open at any one time. The topsoil overburden went to fill the previous cut in the sequence and the baulk of natural clay prevented soil from tipping back into the new excavation. It was observed that a stony yellow clay which underlies the brown clay was not quarried to any great depth and that a stony area of brown clay in A5 remained untouched, supporting the hypothesis that the clay was intended for brickmaking. A stony clay was unsuitable because all clay had to be laboriously puddled to remove stones before it could be fired into bricks.

It is likely that the brickfield extended westward beyond trench B2 as far as a long-established, though no longer visible, north-south boundary wall adjacent to the east end of Paradise House. Trench A8, excavated against the northern stone boundary wall, revealed that the brown clay had been quarried right up to the base of the wall and that the wall rested on an 80cm-high foundation of 18th-century brickwork. This does not prove that the stonework is 18th-century as the brick may have been inserted to underpin the existing stone wall after the clay was quarried from around its base. Additionally, there is a small area behind the Sea Cadets' hut where the ground surface has been cut down into the natural clay, in part quite recently.

RECOMMENDATION:- These mid 18th-century quarry trenches have completely destroyed any earlier features and do not themselves warrant any further investigation. The medieval pottery they contain is residual and probably indicates that medieval remains did survive below ground in this part of

the estate prior to the clay quarrying operations. Future development therefore poses no threat to archaeology in any part of this area.

3:2 AREAS REQUIRING A WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief is designed to record the archaeological remains uncovered once development has begun by examining features exposed through contractors' groundworks. The quality of information produced is consequently poorer than that which comes from an archaeological excavation since the contractor necessarily dictates the disposition of the works and the time available for their inspection. In this report a watching brief is only considered appropriate where it is anticipated that archaeological remains have already been substantially damaged and thus do not merit a large-scale excavation.

AREA TWO (Fig. 2)

Trench D1 was dug by hand on the east side of an 18th-century boundary wall where up until the 1950s there stood two cottages fronting Paradise St. at the corner with Castlegate. A one-metre thickness of building rubble below the surface, resulting from the demolition of these cottages, rested in turn on an orange clay containing several sherds of medieval pottery. This clay was 30cm thick and rested directly on the natural surface. The depth of overburden prevented any further investigation of this building but it was concluded that the more recent phases of the cottage will have destroyed most traces of medieval occupation.

RECOMMENDATION:- Any development of this area should be monitored by a watching brief.

3:3 AREAS REQUIRING EXCAVATION

The current evaluation has succeeded in pin-pointing areas where archaeological remains survive. It has not, and was never intended to, completely investigate any one of these areas. Indeed, so as to preserve as much of the archaeology as possible, the investigation of all trenches was terminated as soon as sufficient information was recovered to date and broadly identify the remains uncovered. It is therefore recommended that more extensive excavations are mounted should any of these areas be threatened with destruction.

AREA THREE (Fig. 2)

Beyond the eastern quarry trench for clay in A6 an area of medieval stratigraphy was exposed some 80 cm from the surface. About 20cms of a mixed clay soil was excavated which was sufficient to establish its medieval date and to expose an alignment of stone running north to south, which may be the yard boundary of a house fronting Paradise St. A paved area exposed towards the north end of A6 could be the floor of this medieval house or be part of a much later brick structure as yet known only from brick demolition rubble filling the easternmost quarry trenches in A5 and A6. The medieval stratigraphy was destroyed to the south by an east-west aligned quarry trench.

RECOMMENDATION:- This area is important because it contains the most intact piece of medieval stratigraphy surviving on the eastern part of the estate, and as such is an indication of what the 18th-century brickfield has probably destroyed. Consequently total excavation of these deposits are recommended should any proposed disturbance exceed 80 cm in depth.

AREA FOUR (Fig. 2)

The three trenches excavated immediately to the west and south-west of Paradise House exposed medieval features. In B1, at a depth of 50cms from the surface, part of a north-south drystone wall ran down the eastern side of the trench and was associated with a possible clay floor and posthole to the west. Medieval pottery was associated with these features and with an overlying brown clay. Similarly in trench B4, medieval levels were

encountered just 25cm below the surface and comprised a gully and a deep quarry cut into the natural clay, the latter filled with a silty grey soil and overlain by another north-south drystone wall running down the eastern edge of the trench. Trench B3 was dug in the junction between two existing boundary walls. It encountered no medieval features apart from the foundation trench for the northern stone wall which produced a quantity of medieval pottery, indicating that the stonework is also medieval. There was no evidence that the western boundary wall was of a similar antiquity.

Several phases of medieval activity were identified in this area, beginning with the deep quarry pit in B4 and ending with the existing stone boundary wall on the north. Intermediate in the sequence is probably the structure discovered in trench B1.

RECOMMENDATIONS:- These remains will be threatened by any disturbances greater than 25cms in depth, including building work or minor landscaping. The remains here are of special importance for any light they may shed on the antiquity of Paradise House, and it is recommended that total excavation should precede any disturbance of the area.

AREA FIVE (Fig. 2)

Six trenches (C5 - C11) were dug in this area and all encountered medieval layers or features, in some cases just below the topsoil. The most substantial remains were two parallel east-west stone walls in Trench C5 and a cobbled surface in C6. Although the cobbled surface was not dated, the layers associated with the two stone walls contained medieval pottery. The walls were just 20cms below the surface whilst a stone wall in C7, also associated with medieval pottery, was one metre deep because of the rising ground level to the north. Trenches C8, C9 and C10 uncovered a hearth, two shallow trenches and a pit, respectively cutting the natural clay and all probably of medieval date and just below the topsoil. Trench C11 was excavated against the same boundary wall as B3 to the north and was found to have 40cm-deep foundations but, as was concluded in B3, is of no great antiquity. Below the wall was a clayey soil which was excavated to a depth of 1.7 metres from the surface, at which depth a second wall of just one course was exposed on the same alignment as the wall above.

Since the clayey soil contained exclusively medieval pottery, the lower wall is probably of medieval date.

It is a reasonable assumption that these remains continue westwards at least up to a long-established, though no longer extant, boundary wall and as far as a former terracing wall on the south. It was more firmly established that the remains continue northwards and eastwards to the existing boundary walls.

RECOMMENDATION:- A threat to medieval deposits here begins with removal of the topsoil, and like Area Four, gardening and landscaping will constitute as much of a threat as building work. It is likely that the area encompasses several adjoining medieval properties although the stratigraphy recorded in Trenches C8 - C10 was very shallow and suggests a good deal of damage has already been done. Better preserved remains occurred in Trenches C5 - C7 and C11. Nevertheless, as was recommended for Area Four, the opportunity should be taken to excavate as large an area as possible should this part of the estate come under threat.

AREA SIX (Fig. 2)

Trenches C1 - C4 were excavated to examine the remains of a building fronting Church Stairs Steps shown on the first town map of 1725 but which had been demolished by the time of the second town map of 1747. Building remains were encountered in Trenches C1 and C2 at just over one metre from the surface. Trench C1 revealed that the northern wall of the structure comprised a mortared stone wall surviving several courses high onto which the present northern stone boundary wall had been built following the demolition of this structure. The interior preserved a glazed tile floor set into a mortar base and resting on the natural stony yellow clay. In C2 only a small section of the mortared foundations of the western wall survived in a 30cm-deep foundation trench, whose remainder was empty of mortared stone but full of loose mortar and chippings indicating that the rest of the wall had been robbed away. The tiled floor had also been removed here except for a few displaced fragments in the backfill of the robber trench.

It is possible that the building and the tiled floor are of medieval date although only post-medieval pottery was recovered from the overlying demolition deposits. The building had been terraced so deeply into the hillside that it was almost at the level of the bedrock, and consequently any trace of earlier buildings had been destroyed.

Trench C3 uncovered a tumble of boulders on the natural surface at a depth of one metre, presumably from a drystone wall in the yard at the rear of the house. Trench C4 was excavated on the north side of a terracing wall which marks the division between the buildings demolished in the 18th century to the north, and those in the 1930's to the south. Stone rubble and soil was excavated to a depth of 1.75m with no trace of the structure encountered in C1 and C2. This must indicate a drop in original ground level between Trenches C2 and C4 and consequently any remains in C4 are at a greater depth than in the other three trenches.

RECOMMENDATION:- The provision of mortared stone walls and a floor of glazed tiles suggest the presence of a substantial, high-status building close to the parish church, but it will only be threatened by disturbances greater than one metre in depth.

Although the building was not exhaustively explored, the discovery of one floor level suggests only a single phase structure and therefore less important for the information it contains than are the several phases of medieval activity identified in other areas of the estate.

AREA SEVEN (Fig. 2)

Trenches E1 and E2 were excavated to the rear of the outbuildings on the north side of Paradise St.; E1 against the stone wall forming the north wall of the outbuilding and E2 some five metres further north. The earliest features were exposed in Trench E2 cutting the natural clay, and comprised a gully running north-south which had truncated an earlier pit partially exposed in the north-west corner of the trench. Neither was firmly dated or their purpose elucidated, and both were covered by 80cm of

medieval soil. This same layer was also encountered in Trench E1 but no underlying features were discovered. A reference to a garden in this area in 1395 explains this depth of soil accumulation, and to account for the large quantities of medieval pottery it contained there must have been a structure close by. The only possible contemporary structure discovered in the evaluation was a stone wall in E1, underneath and earlier than the present northern stone wall to the outbuilding.

A circular hearth of handmade bricks and a shallow stone-lined posthole were observed cutting the top surface of the garden soil in E1, pointing to a structure intermediate in time between the disuse of the garden and the construction of the present outbuilding. The outbuilding is shown on the first town map of 1725 and the excavation revealed that the stone wall forming its north side had 90cm-deep foundations resting on post-medieval deposits. It would appear therefore that this stone wall is contemporary with the rest of the brick walls of the outbuilding and dates from the early 18th century possibly re-using stones derived from the rebuilding of St. Marys Church after the Civil War destructions. The 13th-century carved grave slab incorporated in this wall re-inforces this suggestion.

RECOMMENDATION:- Although the evaluation primarily revealed a featureless "garden" deposit of medieval date there is a strong possibility that contemporary structures exist nearby in this area. The thick soil layer has also preserved earlier features cutting the natural clay, of which two were exposed in Trench E2. Although there is no evidence that these particular features are pre-medieval, the north side of Paradise is a slight plateau close to the parish church and has been highlighted as an area which might contain 10th- and 11th-century settlement evidence and prehistoric occupation (PEARSON, 1987 11). Consequently this area would certainly repay further excavation were it threatened by disturbances greater than one metre in depth. A lesser depth of disturbance should still be monitored by a watching brief as 18th-century documents suggest that there was a malkiln in this area.

3 : 4 AREAS REQUIRING FURTHER EVALUATION

Several parts of the estate are covered by yards and structures or were otherwise inaccessible to a mechanical excavator, and consequently these areas could not be examined for archaeological remains during the present survey. It is recommended that should any of these areas be threatened with development, time for further evaluation trenches should be negotiated with the option to excavate if necessary.

AREA EIGHT (Fig. 2)

This area is covered by small yards and outbuildings, including the Sea Scouts' hut, to the east of Paradise House. It may have been part of the 18th-century brickfield and therefore will retain little of archaeological importance, but early 18th-century documents refer to a second house on the east side of Paradise House, and the area should therefore be evaluated before any development takes place.

AREA NINE (Fig 2)

Area nine is the former sunken garden to the south of Paradise House which is now largely covered by a surfaced parade ground. Any underlying remains could already have been damaged or destroyed. However, the close proximity of archaeological remains to the north in Trench B4 makes it imperative that this area is evaluated before any development is initiated.

AREA TEN (Fig. 2)

The entire western part of the estate is currently inaccessible to a mechanical excavator and evaluation was restricted to hand excavated trenches in Areas Five and Six. Since archaeological remains were discovered here, it is important that any threat to the adjacent area is preceded by further evaluation, since archaeological remains could be encountered just below the topsoil as in Area Five. It is known that a pair of cottages stood in the south-west corner of Area Ten fronting Church Stairs Steps until the 1930's.

AREA ELEVEN (Fig. 2)

This is currently a surfaced yard on the west side of the outbuilding opposite Paradise House. Since medieval remains were encountered to the east in Area Seven they might reasonably be anticipated here also. The ground surface is at a much lower level relative to Area Seven and medieval deposits could lie just below the yard surface. Since these might include a structure fronting Paradise St. it is important that an evaluation precede any proposed disturbance of this area.

AREA TWELVE (Fig 2)

This comprises the former yard area at the rear of the demolished properties fronting Paradise St. discussed in Area Two. Because the only J.C.B. access to the estate involved a difficult manoeuvre across this area it was not expedient to disturb the ground here by excavation.

Development of this part of the site should be preceded by an evaluation trench although it is likely that a similar one metre depth of demolition rubble covers it as for Area Two to the north.

3.5 BUILDINGS REQUIRING STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS (Fig 2).

The discovery of medieval remains in areas adjacent to both Paradise House (Area Four) and the outbuilding to the north (Area Seven) has highlighted the need for more information on their structural history.

A : PARADISE HOUSE

As was stated in the introduction, the present house apparently dates from around 1770 and judging by town maps of 1725 and 1747 is on the same site as the earlier Paradise House shown on engravings by Place (1731), Settrington (1735) and Buck (1745). How much, if any, of the former structure was incorporated in the present house may only be revealed by a detailed survey of the fabric. The cellar contains stonework towards the west end which could conceivably be of medieval date and contemporary with some of the remains exposed immediately to the west in Area Four. The building should be examined and recorded both before and during alterations

B : THE OUTBUILDINGS

The 1725 town map shows this structure as a rectangular building lengthwise to the street, and subsequent plans indicate that wings were added between 1747 and 1828. The stone wall forming the north of the outbuilding is part of the original rectangular structure, and although excavation indicates it has a 17th or early 18th century date (discussed under Area Seven) there exists an earlier, possibly medieval, stone wall underneath. Furthermore, the floor level inside the building is much lower than the ground level outside and it is possible the earlier wall forms part of the northern interior wall.

Any alteration or demolition of this structure should be preceded by a structural survey, which might also bring to light further re-used funerary or architectural fragments. Consideration should be given to removing the grave slab fragment already noted and any other pieces to the museum for preservation and study.

Any subfloor disturbances during the refurbishment should be monitored by a watching brief since medieval deposits have been encountered outside and might be anticipated beneath the floor. Demolition and the erection of new buildings on this site would prove a more substantial threat and should incorporate a phase of archaeological evaluation.

SECTION 4 : CONCLUSIONS

It was outlined in Section Two that the Paradise Estate was considered archaeologically important because of the absence of modern development and a consequent expectation that medieval remains would survive over much of the estate. The evaluation demonstrated that medieval deposits apparently exist over at least 25% of the site whilst in 30% they have been destroyed. The remaining 45% could not be fully assessed during the present evaluation although medieval remains could well be encountered widely elsewhere. Above ground the evaluation has shown that several boundary walls are medieval in date or preserve medieval alignments, whilst discoveries close

to Paradise House and the outbuildings to the north have highlighted the potential antiquity of these structures.

From the detailed discussion contained in this report it is clear that the Paradise Estate offers an opportunity to reconstruct by excavation the development of a substantial part of the 'old town' from medieval, and possibly earlier times onwards. The dominant questions are when and why did the density of building decline in this part of Scarborough to the level shown on 18th-century plans and which largely persists today. Central to this theme is the origin of the estate itself and how far its creation was responsible for, or a consequence of, the relative desertion of this area. It can as yet be only speculative to suggest a medieval origin for the nucleus of the estate, but at least one of the present estate precinct walls has been dated to the middle-ages. It is therefore an intriguing possibility that the estate could have originated in the documented enclosure made in 1250 by Cistercian monks around their house and which may have given the name of Paradise to this part of Scarborough.

In addition to its factual content and recommendations this report prompts further examination of these themes and the recovery of information in the future depends upon more thorough excavation of the archaeological evidence before it is destroyed. Thorough investigation requires "open area" excavations as opposed to isolated trial trenches. The difficulty of interpreting from trial trenches has been amply demonstrated in the present report. Both the 1977 (TYLER, 1977) and 1987 (PEARSON, 1987) surveys of the town's archaeology have stressed the need for area excavations in Scarborough and the open environment of the Paradise Estate is clearly one in which they could be employed with success. This approach will maximise the value of archaeological information currently preserved within the Paradise Estate and will in turn contribute to a better understanding of Scarborough's historic development.

SECTION FIVE : BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- SECTION SIX : SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
- AREA ONE : NO FURTHER WORK - remains destroyed by an 18th-century brickfield
- AREA TWO : WATCHING BRIEF - medieval remains possibly destroyed by later cottages
- AREA THREE : EXCAVATION - sole surviving area of medieval remains on the eastern part of the site
- AREA FOUR : EXCAVATION - possible medieval buildings adjacent to Paradise House
- AREA FIVE : EXCAVATION - several adjoining medieval buildings possibly survive
- AREA SIX : EXCAVATION - possible medieval buildings adjacent to Church Stairs Steps
- AREA SEVEN : EXCAVATION - features preserved beneath a medieval garden soil
- AREA EIGHT : EVALUATION - possible house adjacent to Paradise House
- AREA NINE : EVALUATION - possible medieval remains to the south of Paradise House
- AREA TEN : EVALUATION - possible medieval remains associated with Areas Five and Six
- AREA ELEVEN : EVALUATION - possible medieval remains associated with Area Seven
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- PARADISE HOUSE : STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS - earlier phases of the house possibly incorporated in the fabric
- THE OUTBUILDINGS : STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS - medieval walls may be incorporated in the present structure