

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT DUNELM FARM, MAIN STREET,
RICCALL, NORTH YORKSHIRE: Project Design for A Desk-Based
Assessment**



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Planning Refs 8/15/18G/PA 2011/1048/FUL

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Proposals for a residential development on an area to the rear of Dunelm Farm, 27 Main Street, Riccall, North Yorkshire (approximate central NGR SE 6202 3773; see Figure 1) will have a potential impact on any surviving archaeological resource. Humber Field Archaeology have therefore been appointed by the client, Linden Homes North, to undertake a desk-based assessment of the archaeological potential of the proposed development area.

This archaeological desk-based assessment (DBA) will comprise the collation and evaluation of existing information, including (as appropriate): records of previous discoveries; historic map and documentary evidence; together with a site walkover survey. This is to identify the likely character, extent and relative quality of the actual and potential archaeological resource, as well as the potential or need for further archaeological fieldwork. Because of the area's urban location, aerial photography is not considered suitable, although a search of available photographs will be made.

This project design has been prepared as a scope of work to outline the approaches and methods to be used and the sources to be consulted in preparation of the DBA, following standard requirements for this type of document as normally specified by local authorities.

1.2 Definition and potential of the study area

The study area consists of the proposal area itself and an area up to *c* 100m from the boundaries, forming a 300 x 300m square. The proposal area occupies a large irregularly-shaped land block, *c* 120 x 50m at its widest points (Fig 1). It is bounded to the east by Main Street, to the south by Carr Lane, and to the west and north by existing residential developments including the vicarage to St Mary's Church. The eastern half of the site was formerly occupied mainly by farm buildings, which have now been demolished leaving extensive areas of concrete floor slabs and external yards. The western half of the site was gardens or orchards, and is now occupied by overgrown trees, shrubs and invasive weeds including Giant Hogweed.

The site is located within the historic core of the medieval village of Riccall, to the south of the 12th-century St Mary's Church. It lies within a block of properties bounded by historic streets comprising Main Road (east), Back Lane (south), Church Street (west) and Silver Street (north), bisected by Carr Lane, which passes the south side of the site.

There is clearly, therefore, high potential for archaeological remains of medieval and post-medieval date to survive across the site; the general historical and archaeological background was summarised by a letter to Selby District Council Development Control team the sent by the Historic Environment Team, archaeological advisors to North Yorkshire Council and the seven District Councils, in a dated 4th November 2011.

Chapter 4 (Environment) of the Selby District Local Plan Adoption Draft: Part One (General Policies) February 2005 states that:

4.164 Archaeological remains are a finite and non-renewable resource, in many cases highly

fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. They can contain irreplaceable information about the past and the potential for an increase in future knowledge. They are part of our sense of national identity and are valuable both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and tourism.

- 4.169 The Country Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) contains information on both scheduled and unscheduled archaeological sites of national, regional and local importance as well as areas of archaeological potential. The SMR is continually being updated as sites are reassessed and new finds are made. Developers need to be aware that archaeological remains, including fossil spoil deposits, such as peat, river wash gravels and other alluvial soils, can occur almost anywhere and that the true nature and importance of remains cannot be established without appropriate archaeological evaluation.*
- 4.170 Applications for development affecting sites of known or potential archaeological interest should be accompanied by an archaeological evaluation in order for the District Council to make a reasonable and informed decision. Such an investigation could take the form of a desk top study or a field evaluation and be carried out in accordance with detailed advice contained in Paragraphs 21 and 22 of PPG16 (Archaeology and Planning). Planning permission will not be granted without adequate assessment of the nature, extent and significance of the remains present and the degree to which the proposed development is likely to affect them.*
- 4.171 Where the Council decides that development affecting archaeological remains should proceed, and in situ preservation is not justified, the Council will wish to satisfy itself that the developer has made appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of the archaeology either through a planning condition or voluntary legal agreement. However, there may be very rare occasions when the presence of archaeological remains only becomes apparent once development has commenced. Developers may wish to insure themselves against the risk of a substantial loss while safeguarding archaeological remains unexpectedly discovered on site.*

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- (A) Where development proposals affect sites of known or possible archaeological interest, the District Council will require an archaeological assessment/evaluation to be submitted as part of the planning application.*
- (B) Where development affecting archaeological remains is acceptable in principle, the Council will require that archaeological remains are preserved in situ through careful design and layout of new development.*
- (C) Where preservation in situ is not justified, the Council will require that arrangements are made by the developer to ensure that adequate time and resources are available to allow archaeological investigation and*

recording by a competent archaeological organisation prior to or during development.

This Policy is in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, which replaced Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning, in 2010.

1.3 Site background

Geological and topographical background

The village stands at *c* 9–10m OD on a ridge overlooking the River Ouse, which passes on a meandering course to the west. The surface falls to the river to *c* 3–4m OD, although flood banks protect the lower-lying areas which were historically seasonally-flooded ‘ings’.

The subsoil below Riccall is classified by the Soil Survey of England and Wales as deep permeable sandy soil of the Blackwood soil association (821b), overlying sands deposited as glaciofluvial drift. These deposits were covered to the west of the village near the Ouse by marine alluvium of the Romney association (532b). Below this at depth is the Bunter Sandstone.

The sandy soil has encouraged the formation of heathland; the partly windblown nature of the subsoil can be seen in relic dunes to the east on Riccall and Skipwith Commons.

Archaeological and historical background

The proposal area is situated in the southern part of the historic village of Riccall in a block of land defined by long-established streets, and containing the medieval church of St Mary.

The prominent topographic location of the site suggests that it may have been attractive to early settlers. On Skipwith Common to the east, there are Bronze Age burial mounds, banks and ditches, an Iron Age enclosure, with a Romano-British enclosure and traces of cropmarks of field systems and trackways in the area. Similar features are undoubtedly present across the Riccall area as a whole.

The present village lies on the York to Selby road and has its origins in the Anglo-Saxon period, appearing as *Richale* in Domesday Book (1086). The name possibly derived from *Ricas+halh*, ‘corner of land belonging to Rica’; the ‘corner’ element (*halh*) probably refers to the prominent bend in the River Ouse below the village to the west. This is an early placename formation, possibly suggesting an early or middle Saxon settlement. Certainly light, well-drained sandy land close to rivers or watercourses seem to have attracted early Saxon settlers elsewhere in Britain, in contrast to the heavier claylands: East Heselton (North Yorkshire), Dryham Lane and Sancton (East Yorkshire), Flixborough (North Lincolnshire) and Lakenheath, West Stow and Sutton Hoo (Suffolk) are all settlements or cemeteries located on sandy subsoil. The presence of a settlement or cemetery on a ridge next to a river bend would have made the site of Riccall prominent, particularly for waterborne travellers, although it also lies on the road from Selby to York. It was probably this combination of factors which caused the Norwegian army of Harald Hardrada to land at Riccall in 1066 before marching to Fulford, York, where he was defeated by Harold II (Harold Godwinson).

At the time of Domesday, there were two estates or manors in the village, one belonging to the Archbishop of York, the other to Harold II. The former descended through various hands, and was based from at least as early as c 1295 at a moated manor house located to the west of the village; this was used from 1869 as the vicarage of St Mary's Church, and buildings still remain on the outskirts of the village, with traces of a moat. The second manor became part of the Bishop of Durham's estate after Harold was defeated at Hastings; the manor house, called Wheel Hall, remained as part of the see of Durham until 1836, eventually being sold to Lord Wenlock. Again the site of Wheel Hall remains west of the village next to the Ouse and the York Road, although occupied now by an 18th-century farmhouse, with traces of the moat.

A third holding emerged in the 16th century, based on Riccall Hall, located south of Back Lane. The Hall itself was demolished in 1951–2, and the present house of that name was converted from outbuildings and stables within the remains of the gardens.

The present layout of the village broadly represents its medieval form, with Silver Street and Main Street forming the principal framework, and Church Street, Coppergate and Station Road as subsidiary centres. Silver Street forms two sides of a triangular area which may have been an early market place next to the church, although there is only a reference to a market and fair being granted in 1350. St Mary's Church includes a 12th-century doorway and other 12th- and 13th-century elements, although the remainder of the church has been substantially rebuilt several times, including a through 19th-century reconstruction of the tower. Much of the present village is made up of 18th- to 20th-century buildings, including several farmsteads; at least one earlier timber-framed building survives, Bangram Hill Farm, north-east of the village centre.

Clearly, there is the potential for medieval and earlier post-medieval remains to be present within the proposal area. It is less certain whether the recently-demolished structures, including substantial areas of floors and hardstandings, have damaged or destroyed any potential remains. The presence of prehistoric, Romano-British and earlier medieval features should also not be ruled out.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Appraisal of existing written and graphic information

Compilation of information for the DBA will require the collation of any existing written and graphic data, with the aim of identifying the likely character, extent, quality, and local, regional and national significance of the known or potential archaeological resource within the study area.

The information will be derived from the following sources, where appropriate:

Archaeological and historical databases and collections

- i) North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record (NYHER), Northallerton – incorporates relevant entries from the National Monuments Record, Scheduled Ancient Monument lists, Listed Building lists and Ordnance Survey Record Cards.
- ii) Public and private collections, such as: Hull History Centre; Yorkshire Archaeology Society, Local Archaeological and Historical Societies.
- iii) National Monuments Record, Swindon – monuments and events record, aerial photographic archive.

- iv) Portable Antiquities Scheme website

Cartographic sources

- i) Historical and modern Ordnance Survey maps, enclosure and tithe maps, early maps, estate plans and other available cartographic material.

Geotechnical/topographical information

- i) Relevant soil and geological maps will be consulted, together with the results of a geotechnical programme already undertaken on the site, comprising trial pits and boreholes.

2.2 Aerial photographic research

In view of the urban nature of the site, aerial photographic analysis is unlikely to produce data of archaeological interest, but an NMR search will be commissioned and copies of selected photographs will be inspected where appropriate.

2.3 Field inspection

The proposal area will be subject to a walkover survey to assess how existing or previous land-use may have affected the survival of archaeological sites. A photographic record will be made where appropriate. The report on the walkover survey will include details of the area covered and a description of the procedures used, as well as any constraints on observation.

3 CONTENTS OF THE DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

The DBA will include the following:

1. Introduction
2. Background, including relevant consultative bodies, legislation and policies
3. Methodology, main sources and definitions
4. Results of the documentary survey
5. Results of the walkover survey
6. Discussion of known and likely features of the study area
7. Illustrations, including maps showing cultural heritage features in relation to the study area, copies of historic maps, and photographs
8. Significance of features on a local, regional and national scale
9. Assessment of the impact of the development
10. Mitigation strategies
11. Conclusions and recommendations
12. Gazetteer of the known archaeological and historical features
13. Lists of photographic, map, documentary and bibliographic sources

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY, INSURANCE

Health and safety will take priority over archaeological matters. Our overall policy is in line with recommendations set out in the SCAUM/FAME Manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology*, and we have also produced our own safety manual for excavations (approved by English Heritage) which is distributed to all members of staff during Health and Safety

induction at commencement of any field project. HFA staff undertaking any fieldwork connected with this assessment, such as the walkover survey, will take into account any relevant health and safety factors.

Humber Field Archaeology (part of the Humber Archaeology Partnership), as a section of Hull City Council, is covered by the Council's Employer's Liability and Public Liability Insurance Policies; the indemnities for these policies currently stand at £50 million. HFA also has £1m Professional Indemnity Insurance. Copies of the certificates can be supplied on request.

5 ARCHIVE PREPARATION AND STORAGE

Upon completion of the assessment, an archive of the various written and artefactual records will be prepared, in accordance with the recommended outlines in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).

Should further archaeological work be initiated subsequent to this, then the assessment archive will be prepared accordingly for incorporation into the final archive.

6 COPYRIGHT, DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS

Unless the client wishes to state otherwise, the copyright of any written, graphic or photographic records and reports rests with the archaeological organization (HFA) undertaking the fieldwork and research. The results of the work will remain confidential – initially being distributed only to the clients, and Humber Sites and Monuments Record office – until HFA are told otherwise by the client. Unless the client wishes to state otherwise, no attempt will be made to publicise the work.

Although highly unlikely, this survey may produce results of sufficient significance to merit publication in its own right, whether any subsequent fieldwork is initiated or not. In that instance, a short note will be prepared for publication in a local or regional archaeological journal.

7 STAFFING AND TIMETABLE

The production of the DBA is expected to take 2–3 weeks, with completion in late November/early December 2011.

The research and information gathering will be undertaken by experienced staff members, who will also undertake the field inspection. The assessment document will then be compiled and edited by the researcher in conjunction with the Project Manager. Accompanying figures will be drawn by an HFA Project Officer using AutoCAD software.

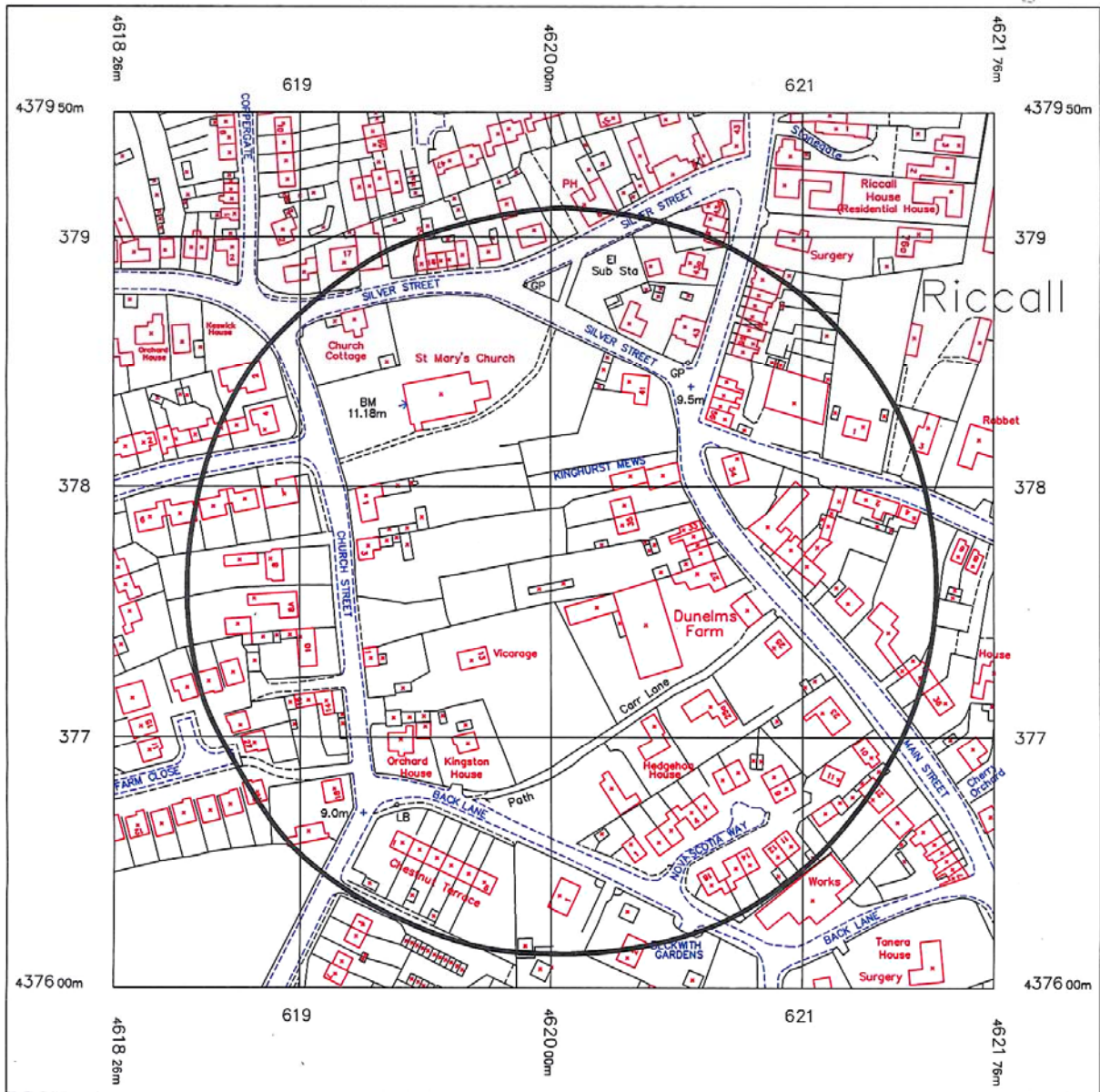


Figure 1 Boundaries of Study Area (black line)