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PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
WEST LODGE 2, MALTON.

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MAP Ltd, Malton.
23.7.91

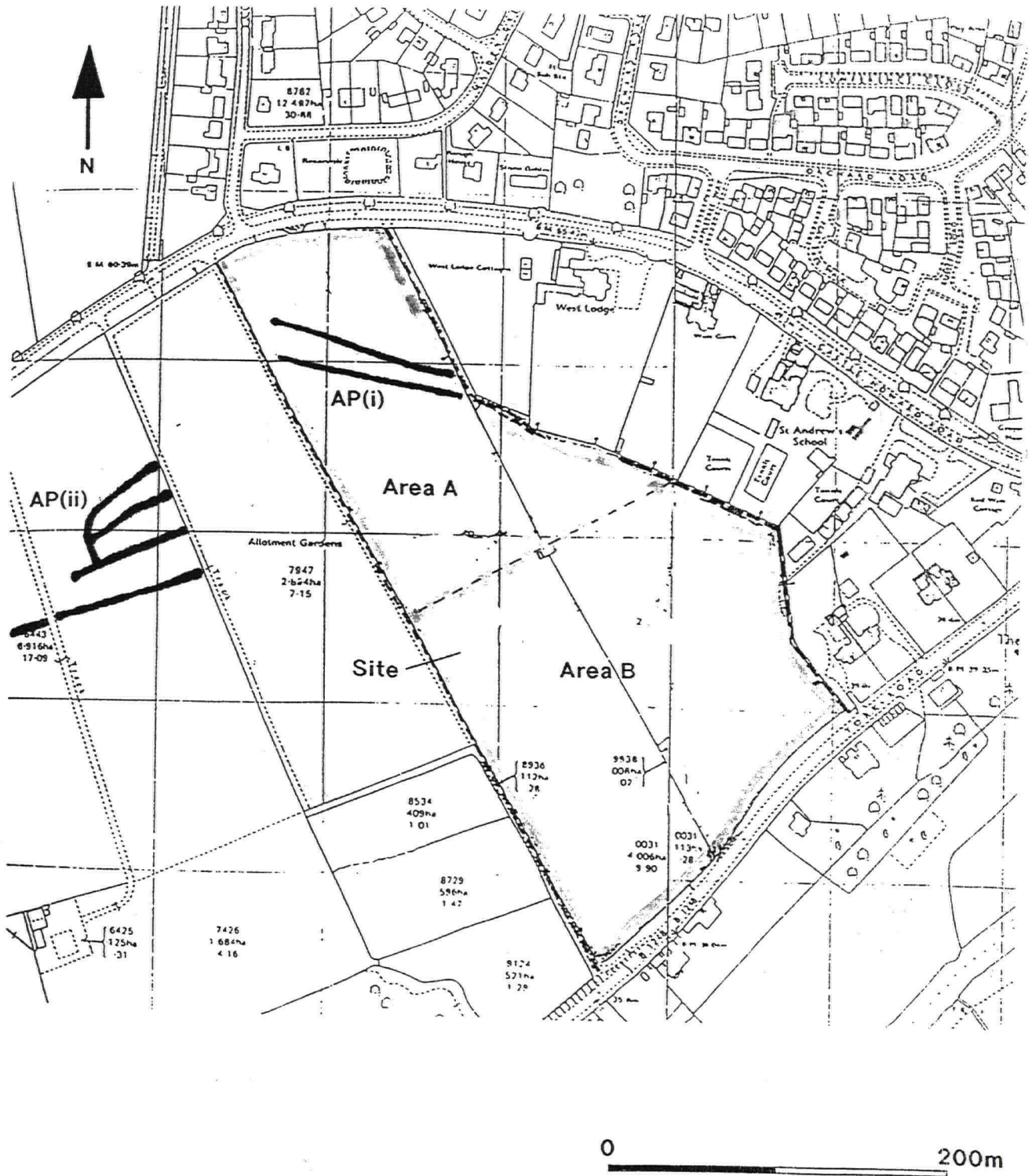


Fig. 2 Site Plan

Contents

Figure List

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Archaeological Background**
- 3. Aerial Photographic Evidence**
- 4. Recommendations**
- 5. Summary**
- 6. Bibliography**

Figure List

Fig. 1 – Site Location

Fig. 2 – Site Plan with sketch of Cropmarks from Aerial Photographs

1. Introduction

This preliminary report consists of a desktop evaluation on an area of land which is the subject of proposed development by Persimmon Homes (Yorkshire Ltd.). The main sources consulted consist of the Sites and Monument Record and the Aerial Photograph collection of the Archaeology Section, NYCC Planning Department, County Hall, Northallerton.

The site is situated to the south of Castle Howard road, on the western fringes of Malton, North Yorkshire, (centre SE: 779 714; Fig. 1).

The level of the land falls from c.60m AOD, at the north-west, adjacent to Castle Howard Road, to c. 40m AOD, at the south-west, where the site abuts York Road.

The total area of the development site is c. 16.5 acres (c. 6.7 Ha.). The maximum length of the site is 470m, from the north-west to the south-east. The width adjacent to Castle Howard Road at the north is c. 100m, with a width of c. 210m along York Road to the south. The site is divided longitudinally by a hedge, which runs on a south to south-east alignment from a disused barn at the site's centre (Fig. 2).

The site lies on the south-east-facing slope of an eastern spur of the Howardian Hills. The underlying geology consists of Coralline Oolitic limestone of the Middle Lias (OS 1960).

It is clear that the entire development area has been the subject of arable cultivation for many years, hence no earthworks were visible during a visual appraisal of the site. The northern part of the site, with an area of c. 2.2 Ha. is at present under re-seeded grass (Fig. 2, Area A). The remaining c.4.5 Ha (Fig. 2, Area B) is covered by scrub-like long grass and weeds of cultivation.

2. Archaeological Background

The extent of Prehistoric activity in the area is not clearly understood. A Beaker in the British Museum (Robinson, no. 15), was provenanced 'West Lodge', probably referring to the demolished West Lodge House (SE: 7794 7163) immediately to the north-east of the site. However, the attribution of the Beaker to the Malton West Lodge is by no means certain. Neither the Archaeological Observation of the cutting of engineering Test Pits (Finney 1991) at West Lodge House, nor a Watching Brief in the same area (Johnson 1991), provided any evidence of Beaker, or other Prehistoric activity.

During the Roman period the site was situated c. 1km west of the Roman Fort of *Derventio* (Fig. 1), with the associated *vicus*, or civil settlement. The discovery of a Roman coin of Hadrian (Robinson no. 48), in the grounds of the Talbot Hotel, 500m west of the centre of the site (SE: 7847 7156), is an indication of Roman activity west of the fort. The line of the Roman Road from Malton to Hovingham closely follows the present B1257 road, c. 700m north of the site. A possible Roman road follows the line of Yorkersgate (ibid no. 49), and York road, the southern boundary of the site, is believed to represent a continuation of the route.

Referring to possible medieval activity in the area, the development area lies outside the medieval Borough of New Malton, the western boundary of which occurs 400m to the south-east. The strip-like form of many of the present fields in the vicinity of the development area suggests that the site formed part of one of the Open Fields of Malton in pre-enclosure times.

3. Aerial Photographic Evidence

Of the aerial photographs held by the Archaeology Section at Northallerton, a single oblique print (SMR 1920 00 000, PVA 3762 055) showed the development area in sufficient detail for archaeological comment; various vertical prints were of too small a scale and apparently taken at the wrong time of year. The print in question covered the northern part of the site only. Unfortunately, the print/negative is of poor quality, but the cropmark of a double-ditched trackway or road is clearly visible (Fig. 1, AP(i), sketch only). The cropmark has a WNW-ESE alignment, and the width between the ditches is c.20m, widening towards the northwest end. The line of the cropmark is apparently continued as the rear boundaries of West Lodge House and West Garth to the southeast. The cropmark disappears under the allotments to the west of the site, where it is obscured by horticulture, to reappear c. 180m to the north-west, where other aerial photographs show it to continue for c.550m as far as Maiden Greve Baulk.

Another aerial photograph (SMR 1971 00 000, PVA 3752 057) is of relevance to the evaluation, even though it does not cover the precise area of the development. In the field to the west of the allotments, ESE-WSW linear cropmarks occur (Fig. 2, AP(ii), sketch only), which lead into, and become obscured by, the allotments. It is probable that these linear features continue into the development area.

The absence of aerial photographs showing cropmarks for the development area other than AP(i) above should not necessarily be seen as an indication that archaeological features are absent in the remainder of Areas A and B; factors including degree of crop ripeness, depth of possible overlying deposits and lack of actual coverage of the area, could be relevant in this respect.

4. Recommendations

- (a) It is recommended that a complete Magnetometry survey be carried out over the northern sector of the site (Fig. 2, Area A). The survey should provide evidence as to the exact course and form of cropmark AP(i) (Fig. 2), and also indicate the presence or absence of additional archaeological features, eg. adjoining enclosures, directly associated with it. In addition, the Geophysical Survey would be intended to verify or discount the continuation of cropmark AP(ii) (Fig. 2) into the development area, and show the presence of any additional anomalies.
- (b) The ground conditions of Area B (Fig. 2), described in Section 1 above, would at present rule out a Geophysical survey of this area, which would need to be mown and cleared of scrub in advance of a survey. Geophysical survey of Area B is clearly desirable, and it is suggested that a sample survey be carried out subsequent to the dying-back or clearance of the scrub. The exact form of the sample should be put forward based on the results of the Area A survey, which might, for instance, show the continuance of anomalies Area B. A 50% sample based on 20 or 30m wide corridors might be appropriate.
- (c) The testing by archaeological excavation, which should include environmental sampling where appropriate, of cropmark AP(i) and any additional anomalies revealed by the Geophysical Survey of Area A. A more detailed scheme will be put forward based on the results of the survey, but it is clear that an area of anomaly AP(i) should be archaeologically excavated in advance of the installation of the roads and sewers.
- (d) It is understood that the development is to be divided transversely by an area of Public Open Space and a Children's Play Area. It is therefore possible that areas of archaeological activity revealed by the Geophysical Survey, if any, could be preserved.
- (e) There is a possibility that human remains will be disturbed by the development. The Beaker mentioned in section 3 above is of a type usually associated with burials. In addition, the possible presence of a Roman road (land adjacent to such were favoured burial sites in the Roman period), raises the contingency, albeit a somewhat remote one, of the occurrence of human burials. Accordingly, the acquisition of a Home Office Burial License is recommended to the developer.

5. Summary

Information concerning the archaeology of the development area is confined to a single aerial photograph of the cropmark of a double-ditched trackway or road. Other linear cropmarks, visible c.100m to the west, possibly continue into the development area. A Geophysical Survey of the northern part of the site, Area A, is recommended to elucidate the presence of these cropmarks, followed by the sample Geophysical Survey of the southern area, Area B, which is at present ruled out by the ground conditions.

The results of the Geophysical Survey of Area A will indicate those areas which should be the subject of archaeological trial excavation. The results of trial excavations will in turn provide evidence for the necessity, or otherwise, of larger scale excavations. At the very least it is anticipated that the construction of the roads and sewers will affect part of the cropmark AP(i), and hence the opportunity must be taken to archaeologically excavate, in a proper manner, the relevant area or areas in advance of destruction.

6. Bibliography

Finney, A. E. 1991: 'West Lodge, Malton, Archaeological Test Hole Evaluation'.

Johnson, M. 1991: 'West Lodge, Castle Howard Road, Malton, Archaeological Watching Brief (Phase 1)'.

OS 1960: 'Geological Survey of England and Wales', *Sheet 53, Pickering*.

Robinson, J.F. 1978: 'The Archaeology of Malton and Norton'.

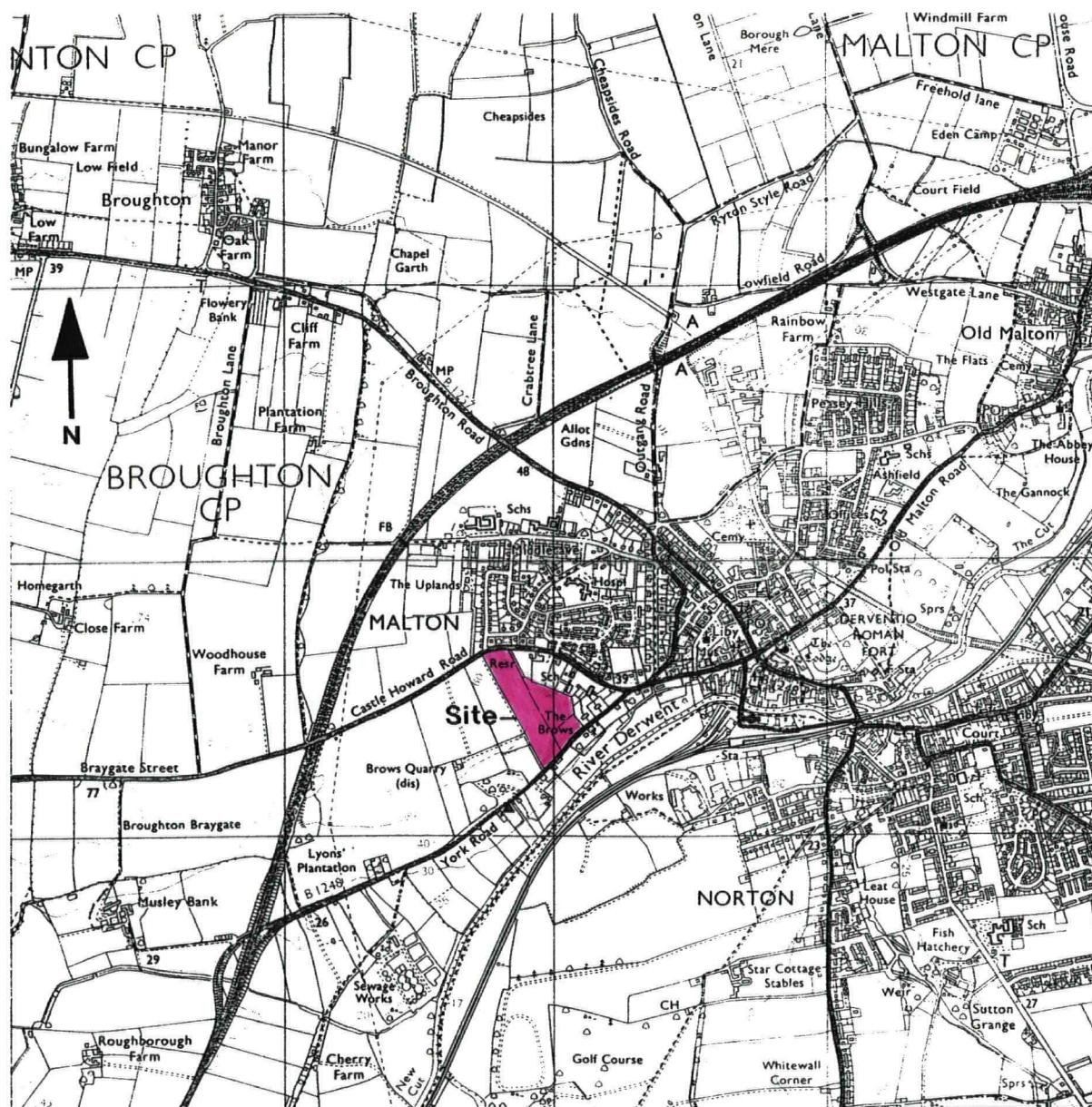


Fig. 1 Site Location

