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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
TRUST

**OLD MANOR HOUSE,
KELFIELD,
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

8/14/74/PA

**REPORT ON AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF
ON A HOUSE EXTENSION**



**1998 FIELD REPORT
NUMBER 37**

THE OLD MANOR HOUSE, KELFIELD,

NORTH YORKSHIRE

REPORT ON AN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

ON A HOUSE EXTENSION

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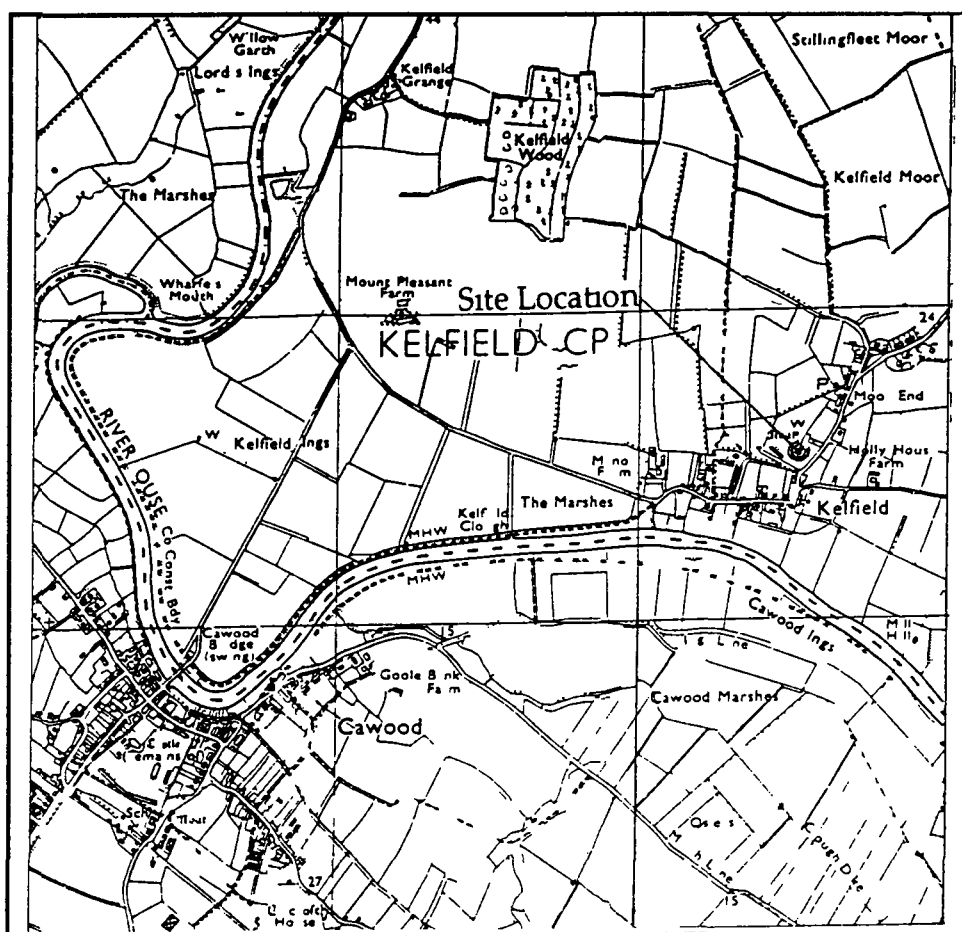
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1 INTRODUCTION

On 21st August 1998 York Archaeological Trust (YAT) undertook a watching brief at the Old Manor House, Kelfield, North Yorkshire (NGR SE 5954 3875), (Figure 1) The work was commissioned by the present owner, Mr F W Benson, in compliance with an archaeological condition imposed by North Yorkshire County Council under planning permission reference 8/14/74/PA

A brief historical and archaeological background to this site is contained in the report of an earlier watching brief carried out during the excavation of the foundations for a new farm building situated some 25 metres to the north of the Old Manor House (YAT 1998 Field Report Number 15)



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Scale 1:25,000

Figure 1 Site Location Plan

2. Methodology

The work carried out involved the observation and archaeological recording of the foundation trenches (Figure 2, Trench 1) and drains (Figure 2, Trench 2) for an extension which is to be built against the north wall of the existing 19th century farmhouse

The foul and surface water drains for the extension, with the exception of Trench 2, barely penetrated the ground surface and encountered only modern deposits. The necessary depth required to protect the drains was achieved by raising the ground level with dumps of top-soil and/or hard core after the pipes were laid.

All of the necessary ground-works were machine excavated using a tracked Kubota mini digger under archaeological supervision.

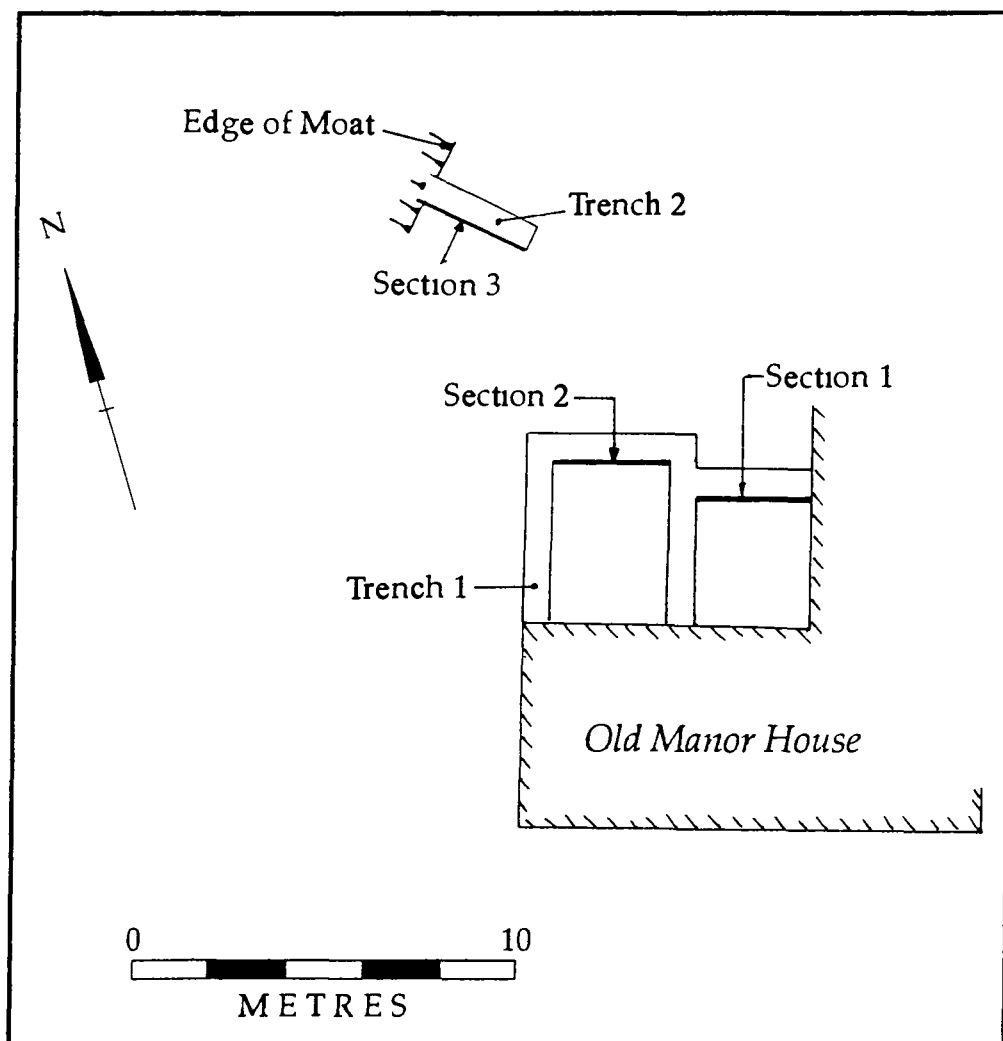


Figure 2 Trench and Section Location Plan

The deposits in both trenches were recorded as drawn sections at a scale 1:10 and described using pro-forma context recording sheets with a series of 35mm colour print photographs being taken

The site records are currently stored with York Archaeological Trust under the Yorkshire Museum accession code YORYM 1998 161

3 RESULTS OF WATCHING BRIEF

2.1 Trench 1 (Figure 3, Section 1)

This part of the trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.85m BGL (metres Below Ground Level) and was 0.70m wide. The earliest deposit reached was removed to a maximum depth of 0.50m and consisted of a moist loose pale brown silty sand with inclusions of charcoal flecks, mortar flecks, small burnt clay patches, pale grey clay patches and small pale yellow sand spotting (1008). Sealing this was a levelling deposit of fine moist mid to dark grey brown silty sand with occasional charcoal flecks, mortar flecks and burnt clay flecks (1007) up to 0.22m thick.

Directly above this was a further levelling deposit (1006) consisting of loose pale brown mottled pale yellow silty sand containing occasional charcoal flecks, small burnt clay fragments and small brick/tile fragments. This had been truncated by a shallow cut (1020) containing a fill of small to medium cobbles in a matrix of pale yellow sand with occasional charcoal flecks (1019).

The eastern edge of this feature had been completely truncated by a stepped construction cut (1010) 0.55m deep for a brick wall (1011) that forms the western elevation of an earlier extension to the eastern half of the north wall of the Old Manor House. The back-fill of the construction cut consisted of brick and mortar rubble in a matrix of mid grey silty clay sand with inclusions of charcoal flecks, small pale grey clay patches and small-medium pale yellow sand patches (1009).

The construction cut (1010) may have originally been much deeper but had been truncated by a 0.19m deep cut (1018) which was back-filled with a loose black mottled pale yellow brown silt sand with occasional small pale grey clay spotting (1001). Almost immediately to the west of cut 1018 was a further cut (1005) (also truncating levelling deposit 1006) that contained a mid to late 20th century ceramic land-drain (1021) and was back-filled with a mixed deposit consisting mostly of a yellow mottled mid grey silt sand containing inclusions of occasional small brick fragments and charcoal flecks (1004).

Both contexts 1001 and 1004 were sealed by a cobble surface (1003) 0.07m thick which lay directly beneath a modern concrete surface (1002) 0.09m thick that had been partially removed prior to the commencement of the groundworks.

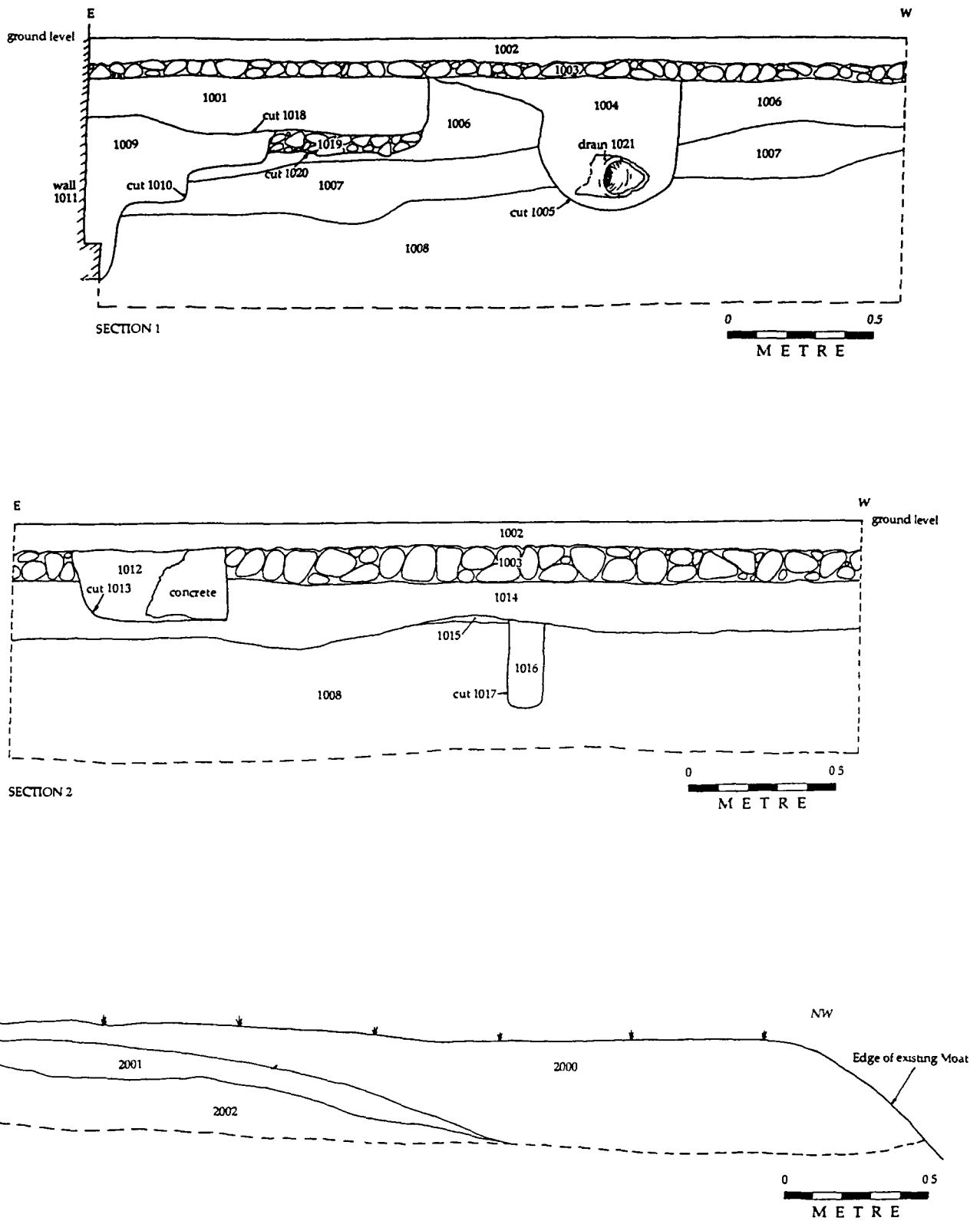


Figure 3 Sections 1 to 3

2.1.1 Figure 3, Section 2

Section 2, located 0.70m to the west of section 1, was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.82m BGL and was also 0.70m wide. The earliest deposit reached was the continuation of context 1008 which, at this point, was removed to a depth of 0.44m. Directly above this was a small isolated deposit of mortar flecks in a matrix of pale brown sand (1015) that may represent the remnant of a mortar surface or, as is more likely, a small dump of demolition derived material. This had been truncated by a post hole cut (1017) 0.29m deep x 0.12m wide containing a fill of loose pale brown sand (1016) with frequent flecks and small fragments of mortar, occasional charcoal flecks and crushed brick or tile fragments.

Directly above this was a levelling deposit of compacted loose mid brown silty sand (1014) up to 0.22m thick which contained moderate small to medium brick fragments, occasional mortar flecks, small pale yellow sand spotting and small pantile fragments. This was sealed by a cobble surface (1003) which at this point was slightly thicker than in section 1 being 0.12m thick and laid with larger cobbles providing a rougher surface.

The surface had been truncated, towards the eastern limit of the section, by a construction cut (1013) 0.23m deep containing a large fragment of concrete with brick rubble and small concrete fragments (1012) which may have been the remnants of the foundations for the garage which had recently occupied the site. Concrete floor (1002) which overlies (1012) would almost certainly have been an integral part of the same structure.

2.2 Trench 2 (Figure 3, section 3)

Trench 2 was located 4.80m to the north of Trench 1, was excavated to a depth of 0.39m BGL and was 0.70m wide.

The earliest deposit reached was a dump of brick rubble and mortar in a matrix of dark grey gritty silty sand (2003) which contained transfer printed Northern Dairies milk bottles, tin cans and scrap iron. This was 0.17m thick at the south west limit of excavation and tailed off gradually to run into the base of the excavation 2.05m to the north west. Directly above this was a further dump of demolition derived material (2002) 0.12m deep with containing electrical wire, tin cans and roofing nails with plastic fittings which also sloped gradually from the south east to the north west.

Sealing 2002 was a levelling deposit of loose mid brown silty sand topsoil (2001) under grass at the time of the observations. This raised and levelled the ground surface by 0.06m at the south east limit of the section rising to over 0.40m deep to the north west where it formed the inner edge of the moat.

3 Conclusions

Natural deposits were not encountered in any of the areas where the ground was disturbed. In Trench 1 the natural deposits were concealed beneath an extensive deposit of pale brown silt sand (1008). This probably represents the up-cast from the excavation of the surrounding moat which had been used to create the platform on which the original dwelling and ancillary buildings had been founded.

Evidence for these buildings (Figure 3, section 2) was visible in the form of the small deposit of mortar rich sand (1015) which had been truncated by a substantial post hole cut (1017) containing a mortar rich back-fill (1016). As these features were sited away from the central area of the platform, where the original Manor House is thought to have been situated, they were believed more likely to have been related to structures such as barns, cart sheds or stock pens rather than domestic dwellings. The noticeable lack of pottery or domestically derived material also suggested that the focus of habitation was located elsewhere within the moated area.

After the building(s) were demolished the area was levelled (1014) to prepare the ground for a cobble surface (1003) which remained in use until it was truncated by the construction cut (1013) and sealed beneath the concrete floor (1002) of the garage which was demolished prior to the commencement of the watching brief. In section 1 (Figure 3), the platform make up (1008) had a noticeable fall from west to east which may indicate that the section was located on, or close to, the inner edge of the original moat (the lack of any structural evidence, as seen in section 2, may also be attributable to this as the ground would have not have been level or stable enough to construct buildings upon). Considerably more material was needed to in-fill and level the moat (1007, 1006) and increase the area of the platform before any further activity took place. This was in the form of a shallow cobble filled cut (1020) which may have been a hard standing, the remnants of a foundation or even a dump of cobbles in a pit. The function of this feature is uncertain as its eastern limits had been removed by the construction cut (1010) for the wall (1011) that forms the western side of an extension on the northern side of the present farm house.

Both cuts were originally deeper than they appear in section as they had been truncated by cut 1018 which was probably caused by alterations or repairs to the standing building. Part of this work may have also included the cutting of a trench (1005) for a ceramic drain (1021) to carry rainwater away from the building. The back-fills of cuts 1018 (1001) and 1005 (1004) both appeared to be sealed by cobble surface (1003). However, it was more likely that both had truncated this surface before the cobbles were re-laid concealing the top edges of both features. The precise position was unclear because the modern concrete surface which was removed prior to the commencement of the watching brief had disturbed the upper surface of the cobbles.

The deposits in Trench 2 all proved to be modern. The present landowner reported that the moat had been partially filled to increase the area of the platform presently used as a lawn garden.

4 List of Contributors

Watching brief, report and illustrations

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Editor

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YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

York Archaeological Trust undertakes a wide range of urban and rural archaeological consultancies, surveys, evaluations, assessments and excavations for commercial, academic and charitable clients. It can manage projects, provide professional advice, and monitor archaeological works to ensure high quality, cost-effective archaeology. Its staff have a considerable depth and variety of professional experience, and an international reputation for research, development and maximising the public, educational and commercial benefits of archaeology. Based in York its services are available throughout Britain and beyond.

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