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**Hawthorn Farm
Riccall
North Yorkshire**

Earthwork Survey

December 1997
MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd

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1 Introduction

During October 1997 an earthwork survey was undertaken in the parish of Riccall of an area of land measuring approximately 12000m² (1.2 hectares) to the west of Hawthorn Farm (SE 6165 3775 Fig 1) The site at the time of the survey was pasture

The site stands on soils of the Evermgham series on an Aeoban sand geology (Macknay et al 1983)

All work has been funded by Barratt (York) Ltd

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2 Historical Background

The modern spelling of Riccall evolves through Richale, Richehal(e), Rikehal, Rikinhal, Rykhale Rical, Rickale to Riccall, how it is spelt today The first element may equate to a personal name (Rica) or to stream ditch The parish of Riccall and the adjacent parishes of Skipwith and Escrick are characterised by numerous meandering drainage ditches

In 1066 Earl Tostig and Harold Hardrada landed in the vicinity of Riccall and marched on to the Battle of Fulford

Prior to the Domesday survey it is recorded that there were two carucates for the geld and two plough and that Archbishop Eldred held this for one manor In 1086 Archbishop Thomas and the canons of St Peter had on the Demesne two ploughs and twenty villeins and another four ploughs The whole manor was one league in length and one in breadth In the reign of Edward it was worth 100 shillings but at the time of the survey it was only worth 30

The earliest cartographic evidence for Riccall is Warburton's map of 1720 (Fig 2) which shows a stylised Hall near to the church with no other associated buildings apparent and the site as open land The First Edition Ordnance Survey 6" map of 1860 (Fig 3) shows the site as open land with boundaries very similar to present day The 1890 Escrick Park Estate Map (Fig 4) shows open land which appears to be part of West Field The County Series map of 1908 illustrates an identical set of boundaries (Fig 5) to that shown on the 1860 map

Survey Methods

The entire survey has been conducted from one instrument station situated roughly in the centre of the survey area The area surveyed, being open field, offered no obstructions to lines of sight from this station

The instrument station (STN 2) has been levelled from a manhole cover situated in Kelfield Road. A levelling loop was carried out using information available from a 1995 survey conducted by Roger B Scott, Surveying services. The loop resulted in a 2mm misclosure giving the STN 2 level of 7 215m AOD.

STN 2 has a site co-ordinate of E 500 00 N 500 00 and was situated such as to define the transition between the orientation of the furrows being surveyed. A transition line can be drawn from 00°00'00" to 130°00'00" through E 500 00. Furrows at E 500 (-) run north-south and at E500 (+) run east-west.

The survey was conducted in theodolite mode with co-ordinates calculated from distance angles.

Thick fog on October 18th, 1997 presented problems in taking readings at any great distance. The survey on October 25th, 1997 defined the boundaries which correspond with the original topographic survey by Scott.

The R.O. was established at the entrance to the survey area. R.O. co-ordinates, W.C.B. and distance were used to re-establish the survey. R.O. is at E 587 878, N 521 926 at $\angle 75^{\circ}59'25''$, levels calculated at standard target at the same height as instrument (IW+STN 20) - (TH -VD) = level AOD = STN 2 - VD = level AOD. C = 7 e 7 215 - VD = level AOD.

Survey Results

Introduction

At the time of the survey there was a lush growth of grass over the entire site with patches of nettles around the southern boundary. The height of the grass varied greatly depending on whether it was within the base of the furrows (where growth was at its greatest and much greener in colour) or on the top of the furrow (which was lighter in colour and less dense).

A narrow track was visible across the site, entering at the south-western corner (access from The Hawthorns residential development) it bisected the site on a south-west north-east alignment and continued through to Kelfield Road. This is not a public footpath, and is used in the main by children and dog walkers.

Further disturbance to the site occurred through recent residential development and farming activity (see below).

Topographically the site rises from the west to the east by an average of 0.74m (6.74m to 7.48m AOD).

Feature A

Feature A represents ridge and furrow which is aligned north-south in the western half of the site. The furrows are fairly uniform in width (3m) with those closest to Feature C being the most pronounced. Covering approximately 4900m² (Fig 2 Pls 00-00) there is every indication that originally the earthworks continued both to the north, west and east. This is indicated by the abruptness of the hedge which runs along boundary G. In the south along boundary F the gentle slope is the result of disturbance probably caused when the The Hawthorns residential development was in progress. In the west the furrow disappears into the hedgeline suggesting that hedgeline is probably associated with enclosure.

Feature B

Feature B represents the ridge and furrow in the eastern portion of the site. This second grouping of earthworks are aligned east to west, with a slight curvature in their alignment. Measuring on average

on average 3.5 to 3.7m in width they are larger than the group to the west. The size of the furrow is also markedly greater, up to twice the width. Covering 5625m² these earthworks have been more affected by recent activity than the western group. In the north the hedgeline (Feature D) has resulted in the earthworks being flattened, as is also the case in the south (Feature E). Both these boundaries are associated with recent residential development and in the south there has also been an encroachment of garden activity into the site.

In the south-eastern corner of the site the earthworks are impossible to trace. Although there is the suggestion that they must have continued at the time of the survey this area had been affected by a general levelling process in the past. This may be explained by the close proximity to hard standing for the agricultural buildings associated with Hawthorn Farm.

The gradual loss of definition to the north is the result of the present access into the farm yard from Kelfield Road. Here as in the west of the site it is clear that the earthworks did originally continue to the east.

Feature C

Between the variation in the orientation of the ridge and furrow (Features A and B) is a strip of flat land measuring in excess of 5m and which represents a headland caused by the turning of the plough team.

3 Conclusions

The earthwork survey showed that ridge and furrow covered a high proportion of the site and due to its size indicates a pre-enclosure date. The differences in the size and alignment may represent two phases of activity at the site with the eastern group being the earliest phase and the one which went out of use first. Unfortunately the site only preserved a small part of a much wider landscape feature and therefore any conclusions have to be speculative. The present boundaries to the site and those which appear to have existed for the past 100-150 years pre-date the earthworks suggesting that they are surviving remnants of the open fields of Riccall. The 1890's Estate Map places the site within the West Field.

A further feature of note is the headland which characterises the location where the plough team turned.

The purpose of the survey was to make a record of this category of earthworks prior to residential development of the site. Ridge and furrow, once a fairly common feature of the landscape, is increasingly being removed by the pressures on agricultural land and the need for commercial development. The survey has provided a written record.

4 Bibliography

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