
COPT HEWICK HALL, NEAR RIPON, NORTH YORKSHIRE

REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

OSA REPORT No: OSA12EV23

October 2012

OSA

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Report Summary.

REPORT NO: OSA12EV23
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COUNTY: North Yorkshire
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 3450 7175
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PERIODS REPRESENTED: Early modern.

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1.0 Abstract.

Planning permission has been granted for the construction of new gates and improved access at Copt Hewick Hall (Harrogate Borough Council Planning Reference 12/01793/FUL). A condition of the permission required that an archaeological evaluation be carried out to assess the potential for the development to impact upon archaeological remains.

The site lies close to several prehistoric monuments, including at least two henges and a number of Bronze Age round barrows. Although no such monuments are known from the site itself it is possible that they have been masked by development of the hall and its associated grounds over the past two centuries. A somewhat enigmatic reference to the discovery of a Roman tombstone and other relics on the site of Copt Hewick Hall suggests that remains of this date may also be present. During the medieval and post-medieval periods the site lay on the edges of Hutton Moor, beyond the limits of settlement and arable fields associated with the village of Copt Hewick. The Hall was constructed in the late 18th or very early 19th century and it is likely that some below ground remains relating to the layout of the associated grounds will be present.

A desk based assessment produced by On Site Archaeology earlier in 2012 recommend an evaluation programme along those new build roads that involved excavation of in-situ deposits. This programme was implemented in October 2012 following the commencement of some of the works. In the intervening period plans had changed and as a result of concerns regarding damage to tree routes the road designs had been altered. As such only four of the original trenches were required.

Two of the four evaluation trenches were dug without encountering archaeological features or deposits, a third encountered only modern features whilst a fourth revealed a well-constructed sandstone culvert associated with the standing property. No pre-modern archaeological remains were encountered. Due to the absence of archaeological remains within the evaluation trenches and the limited impact of the proposed development there should not be any need to carry out any further archaeological mitigation measures during construction works associated with this particular planning permission.

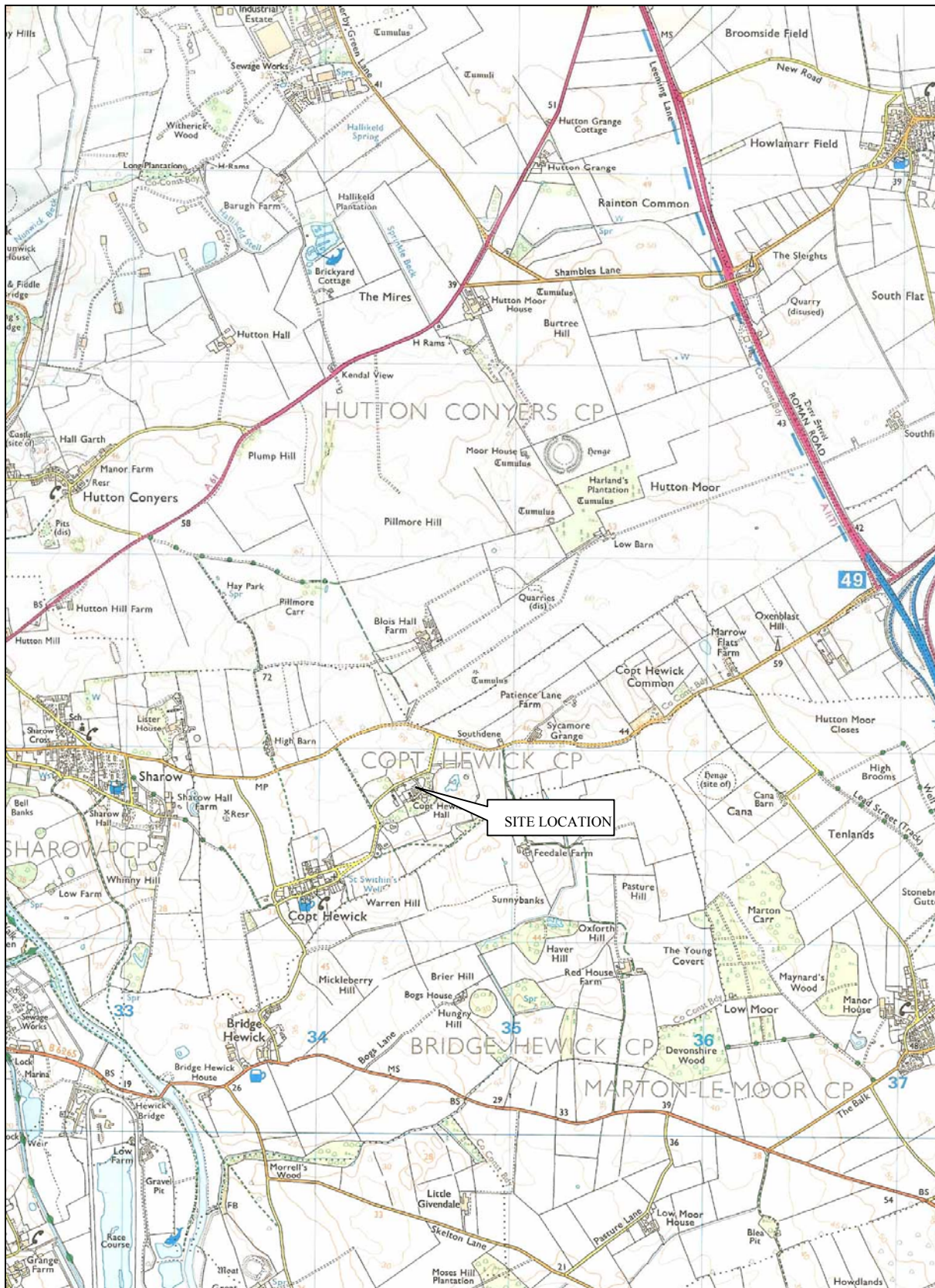


Figure 1. Site Location (NGR SE 3450 7175)

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2.0 Site Location, Geology, Topography and Land Use.

The site considered by this report is located entirely within the estate of Copt Hewick Hall, which lies approximately 3km to the east of the centre of the city of Ripon, North Yorkshire (Figure 1). The centre of the site is located at National Grid reference SE 3450 7175, and the modern ground level lies at between 53 and 56mAOD. The modern ground surface varies within those parts of the estate covered by this report, including lawned gardens, woodland, derelict conifer plantations, cobbled and gravelled yards and tarmac drives.

The bedrock geology comprises sandstone of the Sherwood Group, overlain by Devensian Till deposits of clay, sand and gravel (British Geological Survey maps accessed via bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer).

This report is specifically concerned with a proposal to erect 3 new entrance gates/pillars and formation of new vehicular access (Planning Application Reference 12/01793/FUL).

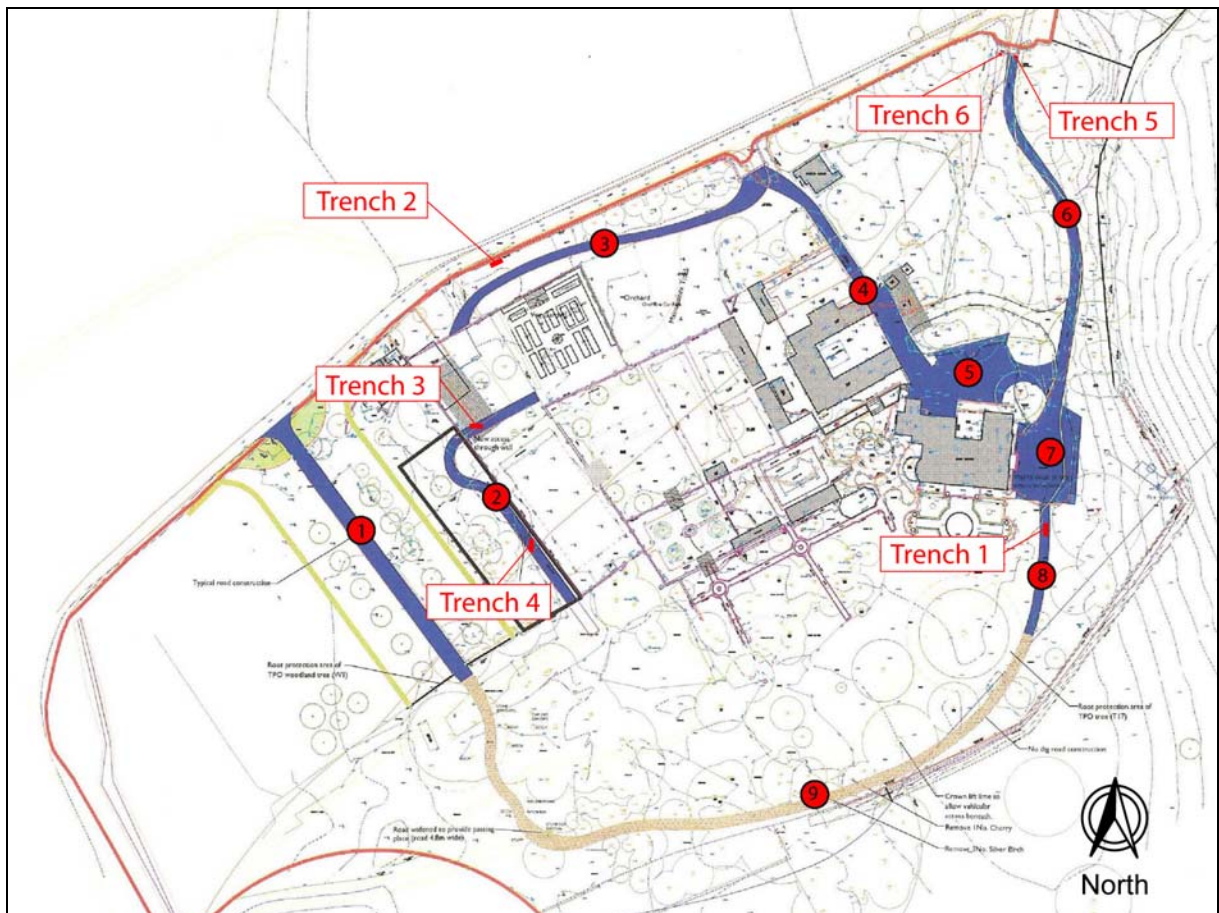


Figure 2. Trench locations and road numbers (circled).

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background.

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) has previously been prepared to assemble and assess archaeological information relevant to the development of the site (OSA 2012). The information presented below is drawn from the DBA.

The site lies within a rich historical landscape utilised extensively across multiple archaeological periods. Several find spots of Neolithic and Bronze Age lithic artefacts have been made in the vicinity, although their exact locations are often imprecise. Aerial photographs also provide evidence likely to represent monuments of prehistoric date. These include two probably ploughed out round barrows, likely to be of Bronze Age date, and a possible field system and potential settlement enclosure, which may be of Iron Age date. None of these have been tested by excavation. Another round barrow close to site is still an upstanding monument, and is scheduled. The above summary of the prehistoric period deals with the entries within a 1000m radius area centred on the site. However, a brief review of the archaeological potential of the area immediately surrounding the search area reveals several more significant monuments. These include several more Bronze Age round barrows together with henge monuments, especially to the north and east of the site.

The archaeology of the Roman period is poorly represented within the area, being limited to a single coin within a finds collection, the provenance of which is unclear, and a Roman tombstone, and other relics, supposedly found at Copt Hewick Hall. There are no details regarding the circumstances of this discovery but it appears to indicate the presence of Roman burials within the vicinity of the site. Within the wider region, the major monument of this date comprises the important Roman Road of Dere Street, the line of which is broadly followed by the modern A1(M), approximately 2.5km to the northeast of the site. This stretch of Dere Street ran between major Roman centres at Aldborough (Isurium) and Catterick (Cataractonium). Developments close to the line of the A1(M) over the past twenty years have revealed a substantial number of additional minor settlements, such as at Roecliffe, (Bishop, 1997) and Leeming Bar (USAD, 2006).

The medieval period is represented by several sites, all of which are located to the southwest of the Hall. This is unsurprising given the medieval origin of the layout of Copt Hewick village. Other entries include areas of ridge and furrow cultivation to the north and east of the village earthworks suggesting a possible moated site and gardens at the east end of the village and a possibly medieval enclosure to the southeast. There is little to suggest that the occupied or cultivated area of the medieval village extended as far to the northeast as the site of Copt Hewick Hall. The site is likely to have lain on the open moor beyond the cultivated fields, on, or close to the line of the road towards Dishforth and the great north road. Once again the influence of the major urban centre of Ripon on the locale during the medieval period is likely to have been significant.

The character of the site during the post-medieval period is clearly divided into two distinct phases. The earlier phase covers the period up to the end of the 18th century when the site formed part of the fringes of Hutton Moor, beyond the village of Copt Hewick and its

associated agricultural land. The second phase relates to the period from around the turn of the 18th/19th century, following the construction of Copt Hewick Hall. The construction of the hall clearly post-dated enclosure of 1772 and shortly afterwards the site passed into the hands of Thomas Horner of Ripon, at which time no buildings were present on the site. By 1811, when Horner disposed of the site to William Charnock, it included the recently constructed hall, together with a homestead, barns, stables and other buildings. By 1841 the property included the Hall itself together with a lawn, pleasure ground with gardens, stack-yard and plantation. This description, despite numerous alterations to the house and associated estate, is clearly recognisable as a description of the site in its current form.

4.0 Methodology.

The Written Scheme of Investigation (OSA, 2012) prepared for this evaluation had intended to excavate a total of eight trenches within the lines of those parts of the access road system that were to be deep enough to impact upon potential archaeological deposits. However, redesign of the access arrangement meant that several of the trenches were no longer necessary. This was because lengths of the roads were to be constructed with limited excavation to avoid damage to root systems. Therefore a total of four evaluation trenches were excavated along the lines of a selection of access roads. In addition two small trenches were excavated immediately to the rear of two gate pillars within the northeast corner of the site to identify any archaeological remains that may be impacted upon by the reconstruction of the entrance.

In all trenches the turf and modern horizons were removed by a 360° tracked mini-excavator fitted with a toothless bucket down to the level of the first visible archaeological horizon.

The exposed surfaces were then cleaned by hand in order to detect any archaeological features revealed through textural or colour changes in the deposits. Once this had been completed, limited sections were hand excavated through the archaeological features that had been identified. In each trench a sample section of the trench edge was cleaned and recorded in order to document the layers encountered. Following the initial machine stripping and cleaning it became apparent that some of the trenches contained a possible subsoil horizon. A second phase of machine stripping was therefore carried out in these trenches to confirm the level of natural and to enable sample excavation of any previously obscured features to take place.

Standard *On-Site Archaeology* techniques were followed throughout the evaluation. This involved the completion of a context sheet for each deposit or cut encountered, along with plans and/or sections drawn to scale. In trenches lacking archaeological features, 1:50 scale plans were drawn showing the location of the sample section. In trenches containing archaeological features, 1:50 scale plans and, where necessary, 1:20 detail plans were drawn. Sections were drawn at 1:10 scale, although long sections were drawn at 1:20 scale when appropriate. Plans were tied in to the National Grid. A photographic record of the deposits and features was also maintained. A full list of detailed context description of all deposits recorded is provided within Appendix 1 and details of the archive are listed in Appendix 2.

All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the methodologies set out in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*, and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* prepared by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), the *IFA Code of Conduct*.

5.0 Results.

Trench 1

This trench measured 5m by 1.40m and was located at the northern end of road 8 where it joined the southern end of road 7 (Figure 2; Plate 1). As a result of the fact that road 8 had, at the time of investigation, been partially installed and for the need to alter the radius of its curve in order to match the existing road to the north, the trench was excavated to the east of the road line.

The earliest deposit encountered was the natural pinkish yellow clayey sand (105) at 53.55m AOD (See Figure 3). This was present throughout the entire trench save for the centre where its surface was cut by east to west aligned linear [104]. This 0.55m wide cut ran across the full width of the trench and contained sandstone structure (103). This comprised of four large square block of sandstone averaging 0.50m by 0.55m by 0.15m in size (Figure 3 and 4; Plate 2). These had been set with flat upper surfaces and all were fairly well dressed. To the western end there remained a segment of upper coursing comprising of two smaller blocks that were chamfered to create a coping course atop the structure. This structure was initially thought to be a wall but the removal of one of the large blocks revealed a long silted culvert, with a channel formed by straddling the slabs over sides formed from a single course of cobbles. The culvert sat within a narrow cut [104] backfilled with yellow brown clay (102). The top of the culvert was present at 53.65m.

This structure was sealed by a 0.20m band of (101) dark grey subsoil that was in turn sealed by up to 0.35m of (100) topsoil.

To the north the surface of the topsoil was cut by a new build manhole [108].

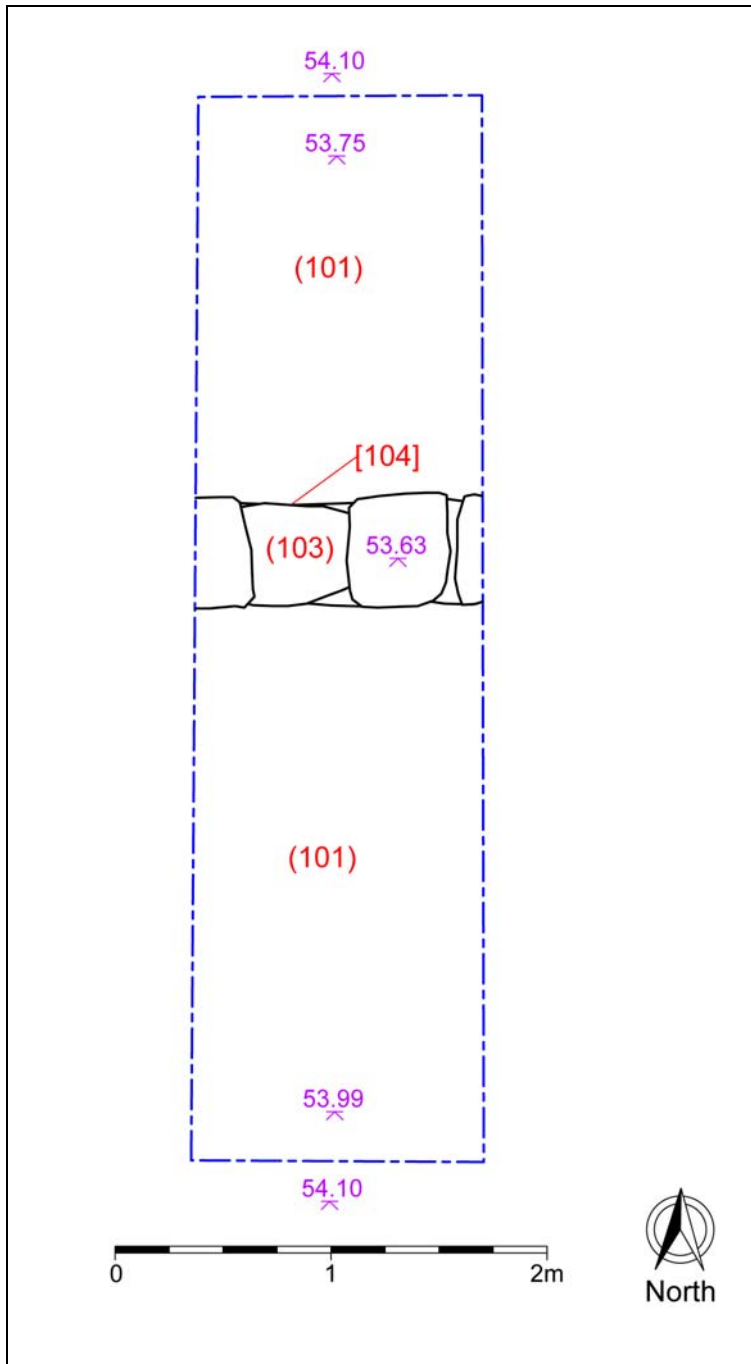


Figure 3. Plan Trench 3.

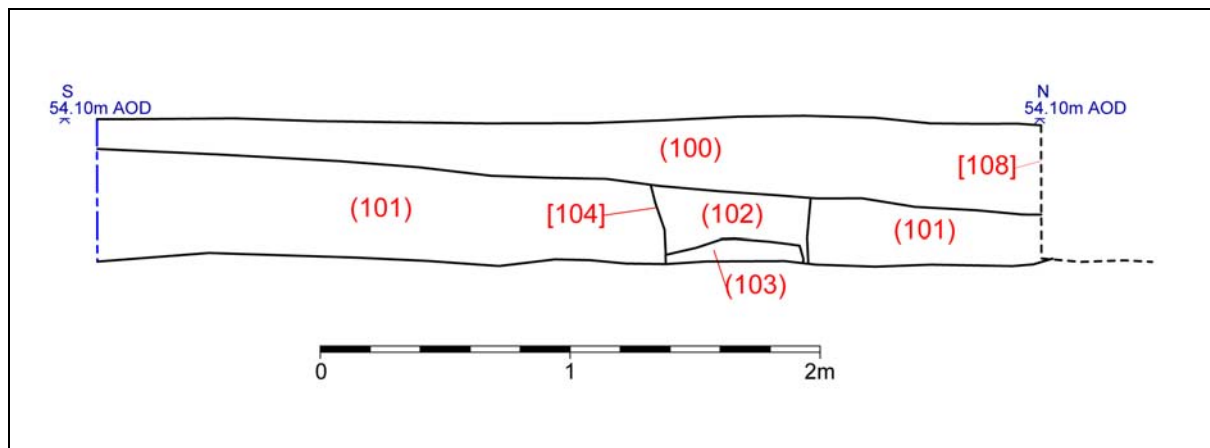


Figure 4. East facing section Trench 1.

Trench 2

This 5m by 1.30m trench was located along the route of road 3 to the north of site (Plate 3) inside the boundary wall in an area that for many years had been used to store spoil and garden waste. Excavated to a depth of just 0.20m below existing ground level (BGL) it revealed only hardcore (200) sealing a trench wide spread of natural coarse sand (201).

Trench 3

This 5m by 1.30m trench was orientated east to west and was located where road 2 crossed through a hole in the wall between the plantation and the area to the northwest of the tennis court.

It was excavated to a depth 0.60m placing the base at 53.75m. The earliest deposit exposed (Figure 5; Plate 4) was the natural (304) yellow brown sand. To the southeast corner the natural was cut by [303] steep sided cut that extended from the centre of the trench and beyond its southern and eastern limits (Figure 6). This 0.13m deep cut was filled with (302) a dark grey sandy-silt very similar to the topsoil. It was interpreted as a probable garden feature.

Toward the western most end of the trench the surface of the natural had been cut by linear service trench [307]. Excavation of the fill (306) revealed the presence of a lead water pipe.

Finally along the southernmost side of the trench a second garden feature (305) ran along the trench edge terminating before it reached [303]. It was seen to cut through modern service [307] and was not excavated.

All of the above features were cut through (301) a subsoil of mid-orange brown clayey-silt with moderate pebble throughout. The uppermost deposit was a topsoil (300) of dark grey sandy-silt.

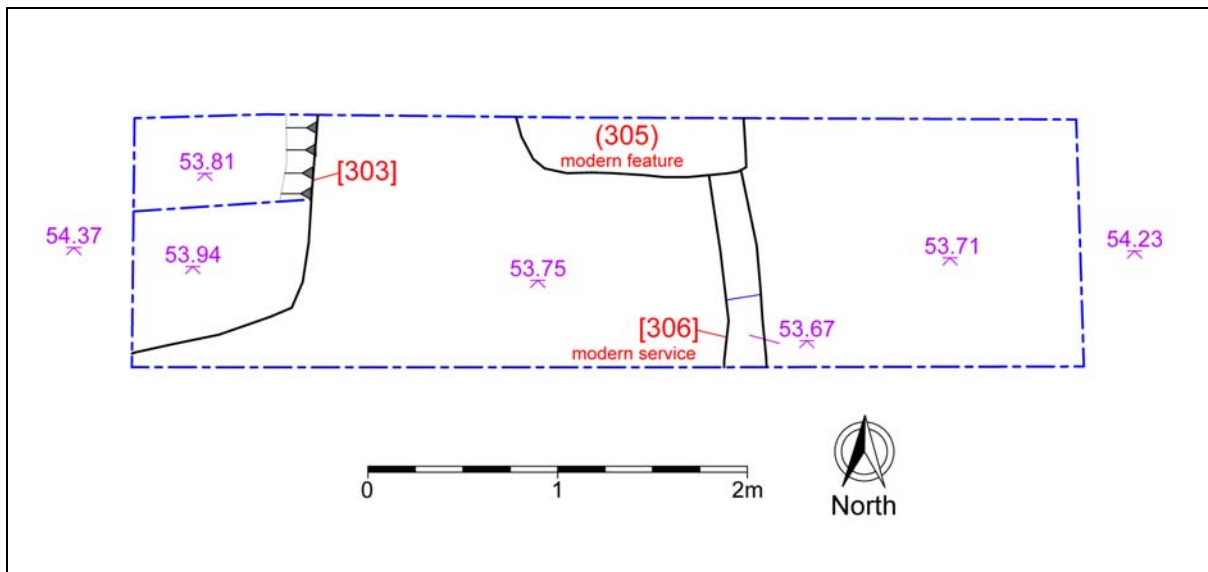


Figure 5. Plan of Trench 3.

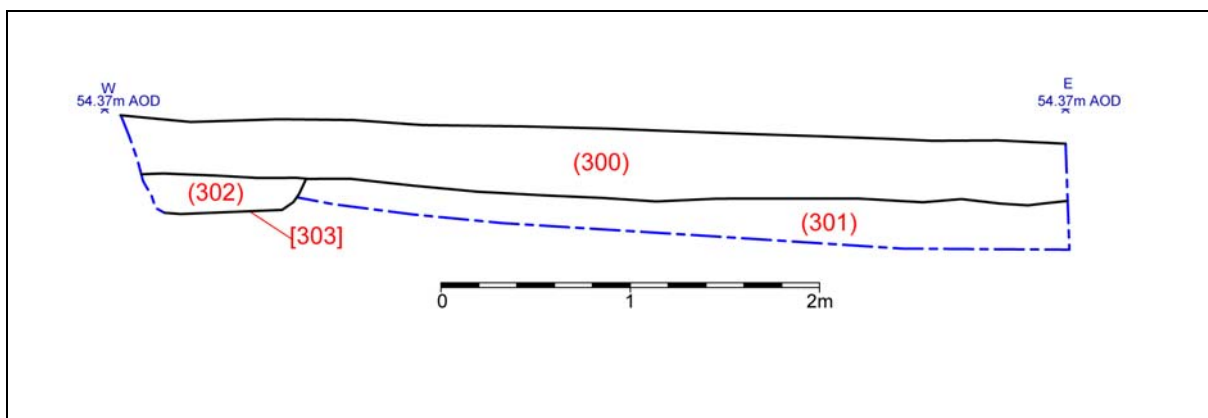


Figure 6. South facing section Trench 3.

Trench 4

This 5.30m by 1.30m trench was located along the route of road 2 within the plantation area (Figure 2; Plate 5). The overall depth of the trench was 0.40m BGL and excavation at this depth ceased as the natural sand and gravel (401) was revealed. The surface of this had been cut at the southern end by a northeast to southwest aligned land drain.

The uppermost deposit was dark grey sandy topsoil (400).

Trench 5

This 1m by 1m trench was located by the northeastern most site entrance and was positioned behind the eastern most gate pillar (Figure 2; Plate 6). It was excavated to allow for an assessment of buried deposits prior to the insertion of a new gate pillar. In all 0.55m of topsoil (500) were removed revealing clean natural (501).

Trench 6

This 1m by 1m trench was located behind the western most gate pillar across from Trench 5 (Figure 2; Plate 7). Here 0.50m of topsoil (600) were removed exposing natural (601).

6.0 Discussion

Archaeological features were recorded in two of the evaluation trenches excavated. However, none of these features are likely to pre-date the establishment of Copt Hewick Hall a little over 200 years ago. The excavated features are either garden features or services associated with the running of the estate.

The proposed development is to comprise the construction of several new estate access roads and a modification of the access gates. Several of the roads have been redesigned to limit impact upon tree roots. This has the added benefit of limiting any potential impact upon otherwise undiscovered archaeological remains.

Given the lack of any pre-modern archaeological features, or finds, and the limited impact of the development proposals, there should be no need for further archaeological mitigation to be carried out during the construction of the new access roads covered by the condition attached to planning permission 12/01793/FUL.

7.0 Bibliography

- Ancient Monuments Society (2005). Structural Perspectives. Summary of Copt Hewick Report. (Copy held by NYCC HER).
- Archaeological Services University of Durham (2006). Land South of Freemans Way, Leeming Bar, North Yorkshire. Geophysical survey. (USAD Report Number 1534).
- Bishop, M.C (1997). A New Flavian Military site at Roecliffe. Excavation Report. (NAA Report No.97/53).
- On-Site Archaeology (2012, April). Copt Hewick Hall, Near Ripon, North Yorkshire. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation. OSA Report No: OSA12DT02.

8.0 Appendix 1 ~ List of Contexts.

Context no.	Description	Thickness	Extent
<i>Trench 1</i>			
100	Dark grey sandy silt topsoil	0.38m	Tr.
101	Dark grey subsoil	0.41m	Tr.
102	Yellow brown clay backfill of [104]	Un-ex	0.55m x 1.30m
103	Sandstone and cobble culvert	Un-ex	0.55m x 1.30m
104	Culvert construction cut	Un-ex	0.55m x 1.30m
105	Natural pinkish yellow clayey sand	Un-ex	Tr.
106	New build manhole	Un-ex	1.30m x 1.30m
107	Backfill of manhole cut [108]	Un-ex	1.30m x 1.30m
108	Manhole construction cut	Un-ex	1.30m x 1.30m
<i>Trench 2</i>			
200	Hardcore	0.20m	Tr.
201	Natural coarse sand	Un-ex	Tr.
<i>Trench 3</i>			
300	Dark grey sandy silt topsoil	0.38m	Tr.
301	Mid orange brown clayey silt subsoil	0.23m	Tr.
302	Dark grey sandy silt fill of [303]	0.20m	1m x 1.28m
303	Garden feature	0.20m	1m x 1.28m
304	Natural yellow brown sand	Un-ex	Tr.
305	Dark grey sandy silt	Un-ex	1.20m x 0.30m
306	Dark yellowish brown sandy clay fill of [307]	0.20m	1.20m x 0.30m
307	Service trench.	0.20m	1.30m x 0.20m
<i>Trench 4</i>			
400	Dark grey sandy topsoil	0.40m	Tr.
401	Natural sand and gravel	Un-ex	Tr.
<i>Trench 5</i>			
500	Dark grey sandy topsoil	0.55m	Tr.
501	Natural sand and gravel	Un-ex	Tr.
<i>Trench 6</i>			
600	Dark grey sandy topsoil	0.50m	Tr.
601	Natural sand and gravel	Un-ex	Tr.

9.0 Appendix 2 ~ Archive Index.

9.1 Drawing Register.

Drawing no.	Description	Scale	Initials	Date
1	Culvert (103)	1.:50	17/10/12	TPR
2	East facing sect. Tr.1	1.20	22/10/12	TPR
3	Tr.3 Post ex	1:20	22/10/12	TPR
4	Tr.3 Northwest facing Sect.	1:20	22/10/12	KR

9.2 Photographic Register.

Image no.	Description	Scale	Date	Initis
<i>Download 23/10/12</i>				
1	ID shot	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
2	Trench 5 location	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
3	Trench 5	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
4	Trench 5	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
5	Trench 5	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
6	Trench 6	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
7	Trench 6	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
8	Trench 6	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
9	Trench 1 location	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
10	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
11	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
12	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
13	Trench 1 section	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
14	Trench 2 location	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
15	Trench 2 post ex	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
16	Trench 2 post ex	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
17	Trench 2 post ex	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
18	Trench 3 location	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
19	Trench3	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
20	Trench3	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
21	Trench3	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
22	Trench3	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
23	Trench3	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
24	Trench3	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
25	Trench 4	0.50m		TPR
26	Trench 4	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
27	Trench 4	0.50m	17/10/12	TPR
28	Trench 4 location	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
29	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
30	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
31	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
32	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
33	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
34	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
35	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
36	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
37	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
38	WW2 graffiti on Birch trees by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
39	Service trench by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR

Image no.	Description	Scale	Date	Inits
40	Service trench by NE entrance	N/A	17/10/12	TPR
41	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
42	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
43	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
44	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
45	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
46	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
47	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
48	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
49	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
50	Trench 1 Culvert (103)	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
51	Trench 1 culvert (103) interior channel	N/A	22/10/12	TPR
52	Trench 1 culvert (103) interior channel	N/A	22/10/12	TPR
53	Trench 1 culvert (103) interior channel	N/A	22/10/12	TPR
54	Trench 1 culvert (103) interior channel	N/A	22/10/12	TPR
55	Trench 3 post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
56	Trench 3 post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
57	Trench 3 post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
58	Trench 3 [307] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
59	Trench 3 [307] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
60	Trench 3 [307] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
61	Trench 3 [303] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
62	Trench 3 [303] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
63	Trench 3 [303] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
64	Trench 3 [303] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
65	Trench 3 [303] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR
66	Trench 3 [303] post ex	0.50m	22/10/12	TPR

10.0 Appendix 4 ~ Plates



Plate 1. Trench 1 looking north.



Plate 2. Trench 1 sandstone structure (103). looking north.



Plate 3. Trench 2 looking northeast.



Plate 4. Trench 3 looking east.



Plate 5. Trench 4 looking north.



Plate 6. Trench 5 looking northeast.



Plate 7. Trench 6 looking northeast.