


**MAP  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRACTICE LTD**

**Blacksmiths Cottage  
Main Road  
Weaverthorpe  
North Yorkshire**

**12/00186/HOUSE**

**MAP 10.83.2012**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

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## **Blacksmiths Cottage**

### **Main Road**

### **Weaverthorpe**

### **North Yorkshire**

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## **Archaeological Watching Brief**

### ***Non-technical Summary***

*MAP Archaeological Practice carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on June 22 2012 at Blacksmiths Cottage, Main Street, Weaverthorpe, North Yorkshire prior to the erection of extensions to the side and rear of the existing dwelling. The site lies within an archaeological landscape of Iron Age/Roman and medieval date that is known from aerial photographs and previous fieldwork in the locality.*

*No archaeological deposits or finds were encountered during the Watching Brief.*

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report describes the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief that was carried out by MAP Archaeological Practice on June 22 2012 during the erection of extensions to the side and rear of Blacksmiths Cottage, Main Street, Weaverthorpe, North Yorkshire (SE 9689 7087: Fig. 1; Pls. 1 and 2).
- 1.2 The construction of the extensions to the existing dwelling had the potential to adversely affect archaeological remains associated with the Iron Age/Roman and medieval landscape that is known from aerial photographs and previous fieldwork in the immediate locality. As a result, the Historic Environment Record of North Yorkshire County Council that

the development should only take place with the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation. The programme of archaeological work took the form of an Archaeological Watching Brief.

- 1.3 The work was funded by Mr C Boyes.
- 1.4 The Ordnance Survey maps within this report are reproduced under licence from the Ordnance Survey, licence no. AL 50453A, with permission from the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (c) Crown Copyright.

## **2. Topography and Geology**

- 2.1 The site abutted the rear (north side) and east side of the brick-built 19<sup>th</sup> century Blacksmith Cottage, which is situated on the northern side of Main Road, Weaverthorpe, part of the unclassified road that leads from Duggleby towards Bridlington. This location is on the eastern side of Weaverthorpe village, which lies at the base of the valley of the Gypsy Race. The elevation of the site is c. 70m AOD.
- 2.2 The soils at the site are of the Coombe 1 Series, well-drained calcareous fine silty soils that overlay chalky drift (Mackney 1984).

## **3. Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 3.1 The Great Wold Valley, in which Weaverthorpe is situated, forms a landscape of prehistoric features that are known from aerial photographs, and to a lesser extent represented by earthworks (Stoertz 1997). One of the most notable sites in Weaverthorpe parish is a massive multiple ditch system that is believed to represent Iron Age stock-management (Riley 1990). A 'ladder settlement' of assumed Late Iron Age/Roman date follows the course of the Gypsy Race, north-eastwards from

Helperthorpe into the locale of Weaverthorpe village, at which point it becomes obscured by modern development.

- 3.2 The pre-conquest settlement at Weaverthorpe formed the centre of a large estate held by the Archbishops of York, and had a yearly value of £14. At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086) the holding was described as 'waste'. The Domesday Survey recorded Weaverthorpe as *Wifretorp*, the name meaning 'Vidfari's village', *Vidfari* being an Old Scandinavian personal name meaning 'far-traveller' (Smith 1937).
- 3.3 Weaverthorpe seems to have formed a 'street village' with regular properties aligned along the Gypsy Race. However, it is uncertain whether the site lies within the original core of the medieval settlement. Open-area excavations on a plot of land c. 50m east of the site identified five phases of archaeological activity, comprising pits, linear boundary ditches, chalk-built walls and structures and a large dew-pond (MAP 2004). The earliest phase probably related to the putative 'ladder settlement' mentioned above, with the chalk structures possibly evidence of village expansion in the 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century. An undated chalk wall, interpreted as a boundary revetment, was recorded during the development of the plot of land immediately east of Blacksmiths Cottage (MAP 2009).

#### **4. Methods**

- 4.1 The foundation trenches were 0.80m wide and c. 0.80m deep, and were dug by a 2.5 tonne 360° tracked mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket.
- 4.2 A photographic record was taken using a digital camera with twelve million pixels set on high resolution.

## **5. Results**

- 5.1 Natural deposits consisted of chalk gravel with bands of clay and sand. A 0.30m deep layer of reddish brown clay silt with chalk fragments overlay the natural deposits and in turn was overlain by a similar depth of chalk rubble and dark loam. The foundation of the 10<sup>th</sup> century boundary wall separating Blacksmiths Cottage from the adjoining property was exposed in the western foundation trench, and consisted of four courses of unfrogged mortar-bonded brick laid on top of two courses of roughly squared chalk blocks.
- 5.2 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the area of the Watching Brief.

## **6. Conclusions**

- 6.1 Although situated in a locality of known archaeological activity, no archaeological remains were revealed. The negative result of the Watching Brief is possibly due to the position of the site on what was formerly the flood plain of the Gypsy Race.

## **7. Bibliography**

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## **8. Project Team Details**

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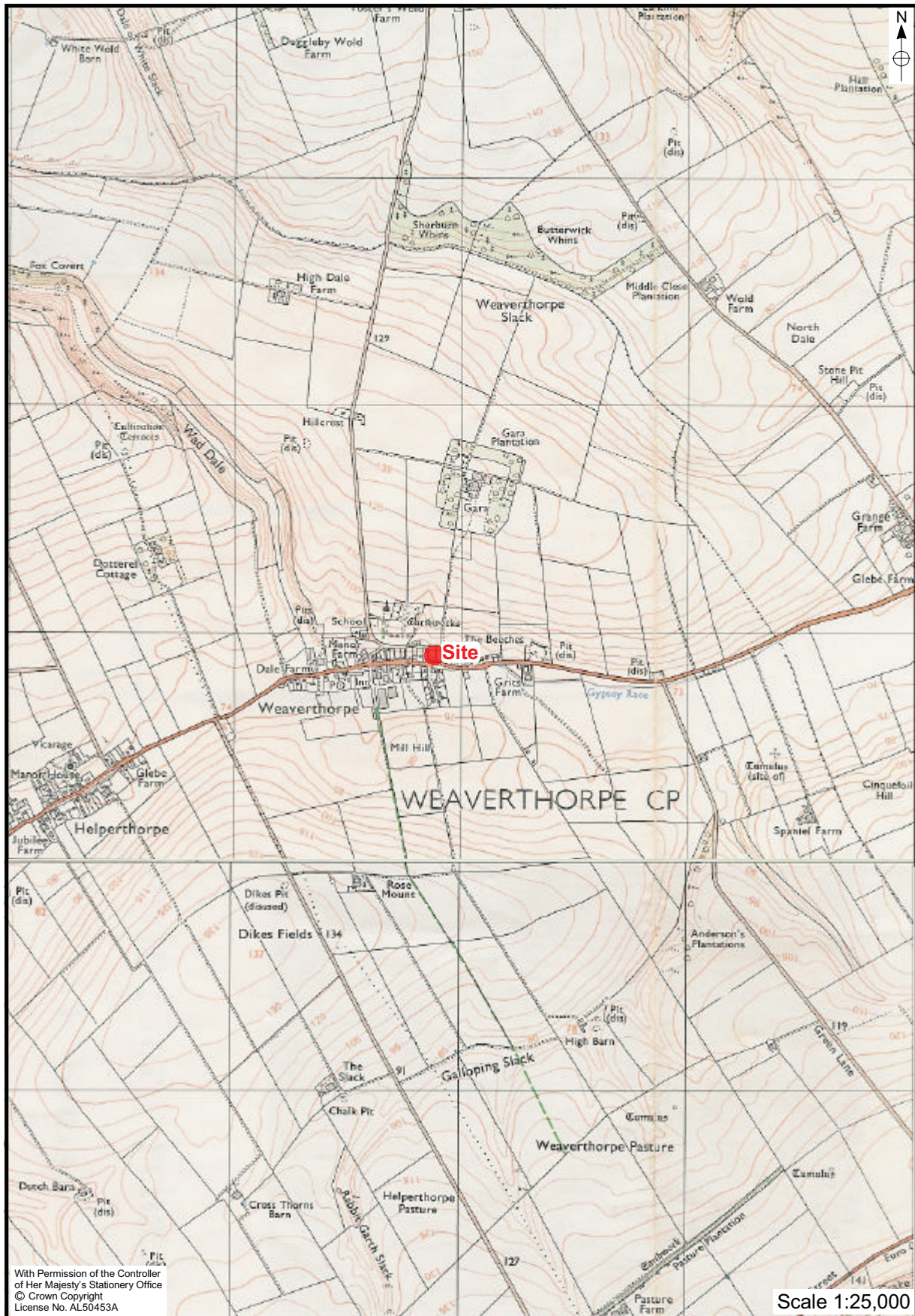


Figure 1. Site Location.



Figure 2. Development Area Location.





Plate 1. Site Pre-excavation. Facing North-west.



Plate 2. View of Western Foundation Trench showing foundation of boundary wall. Facing Northwest.





Plate 3. Northern Foundation Trench. Facing North.



Plate 4. Site Post-excavation. Facing North-west.