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**Eldmire Ings**  
**Sessay**  
**North Yorkshire**

Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

Report no. 2342

May 2012



Client: Mr Mike Wilkinson



**Eldmire Ings  
Sessay  
North Yorkshire**

**Archaeological Desk-based Assessment**

*Summary*

*An archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken on land at Eldmire Ings, Sessay. The proposed development site contains no recorded heritage assets, although slight remains of medieval ridge and furrow survive as earthworks within the site. It is also located close to a Scheduled medieval moated site to the north-west. The site was probably in use as pasture throughout the post-medieval period and modern periods. The development will not impact upon the setting of any heritage assets within 1km of the site, either directly or visually, although there is potential for direct impacts on any unrecorded sub-surface features or deposits.*



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Our ref: 3901 EIS

Your ref.:

Project No.: Contact: M.Pollington Date: 04.05.12

Louisa Matthews  
Heritage and Environment Section  
Business and Environmental Services  
North Yorkshire County Council  
County Hall  
Northallerton  
North Yorkshire



Dear Louisa,

**Eldmire Ings – Archaeological Desk-based Assessment report**

Please find enclosed a hard copy of the archaeological desk-based assessment report for the proposed chicken sheds at Eldmire Ings, Sessay, North Yorkshire (Planning Application ref. 12/00112/FUL) for submission into the HER.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,

Mitchell Pollington  
Project Manager  
Tel: 0113 393 3749  
mpollington@aswyas.com



Cert. No. 125

PO BOX 30, NEPSHAW LANE SOUTH  
MORLEY, LEEDS, LS27 0UG

Tel: 0113 383 7500

Fax: 0113 383 7501

email: admin@aswyas.com

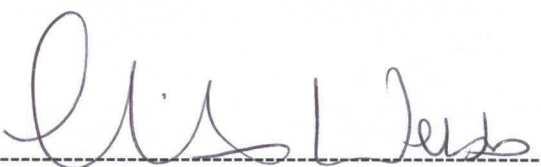

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**Report Information**

Client: Mike Wilkinson  
Address: Eldmire Ings, Sessay, Thirsk, YO7 3NT  
Report Type: Archaeological desk-based assessment  
Location: Eldmire Ings  
County: North Yorkshire  
Grid Reference: SE 4247 7435  
Planning Application no: 12/00112/FUL  
Report Number: 2342  
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Project Management: Mitchell Pollington BA MA  
Report Writing: Alexandra Grassam BA MSc and Mitchell Pollington  
Editing: Mitchell Pollington  
Illustrations: Mitchell Pollington and Alexandra Grassam  
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Research: Alexandra Grassam

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PO Box 30, Nepshaw Lane South, Morley, Leeds LS27 0UG  
Telephone: 0113 383 7500.  
Email: admin@aswyas.com



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## **1 Introduction**

Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) was commissioned by Mike Wilkinson to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment of land at Eldmire Ings farm, Sessay, North Yorkshire. The assessment was undertaken in advance of a proposal to construct a new free range egg unit (planning application ref. 12/00112/FUL).

An assessment of the significance of any recorded heritage assets within 1km of the proposed development site has been undertaken, in line with the requirements of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; Chapter 12: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', paragraph 128).

The proposed development site is located adjacent to a medieval moated site and associated field system which comprise a designated Scheduled Monument (National Heritage List of England no. 1015419; former Scheduled Monument no. 28292; see Appendix 2). An assessment of the potential for (visual) impacts on the setting of this monument has been undertaken (see Section 5).

The study area comprises all land within 1km of the boundary of the proposed development site.

### **Site location and topography**

Eldmire Ings farm is located in the Vale of Mowbray, approximately 6km to the south of Thirsk, and 750m to the south of the Dalton Industrial Estate which occupies the site of a former airfield. The proposed development site is situated to the immediate north of existing barns and agricultural buildings (centred at SE 4247 7435; see Figs 1 and 2). It lies on a low ridge above the flood plain of the river Swale, which runs southwards to the west, at a height of about 15m above Ordnance Datum.

The proposed development site is currently in use as permanent pasture, within a field defined by a hedgerow along its eastern edge, tree lines and modern fences. The lower ground to the west, towards the river, has been extensively drained since at least the 19th century, and a prominent 'L' shaped earthwork adjacent to the proposed development site marks the line of a post-medieval drainage channel.

### **Geology and soils**

The solid geology underlying the proposed development site comprises Sherwood Sandstone. This is overlaid by alluvial deposits consisting of clays, silts and gravels along the river valley (BGS 2012).

The soils are classified in the Sessay association, described as fine and coarse loamy permeable soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

## **2 Information Sources**

The following sources of information have been consulted in order to meet the requirements of the desk-based assessment and are in line with guidelines laid down by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2011).

Where sites listed in the catalogue (Appendix 1) are mentioned in the text, the relevant catalogue numbers are given in bold-type.

### **Archaeological archives and databases**

Information on recorded heritage assets and archaeological investigations within a 1km radius of the proposed development site was obtained from the North Yorkshire County Historic Environment Record (HER) and the English Heritage National Monuments Record (NMR).

The North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton, was consulted for historic maps and plans, antiquarian histories and other relevant documentary sources.

### **Designated heritage assets**

The North Yorkshire County HER and the English Heritage NMR were consulted for information on all designated Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, registered Parks and Gardens, registered Battlefields, Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites within the study area.

### **Aerial photographs**

The North Yorkshire County HER was consulted for historical aerial photographic coverage.

### **Published and unpublished sources**

A range of published and unpublished material has been researched and consulted. This includes academic articles together with general sources on the area and its wider archaeological and historical background. These are listed in the bibliography.

### **Geological and soil surveys**

Information on the underlying geology and soils within the study area was taken from data collected by the British Geological Survey (BGS 2012) and the Soil Survey of England and Wales (1983).

### **Site visit**

A site visit was undertaken on the 12th April 2012 to assess the survival of previously recorded heritage assets, to identify any further archaeological remains visible on the surface and to determine the potential for any further archaeological investigations.



### 3 Assessment Criteria

An assessment of the significance of any recorded heritage assets within 1km of the proposed development site has been undertaken, in line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; Chapter 12: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment', paragraph 128). Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and II\* Listed Buildings, registered Parks and Gardens, registered Battlefields and World Heritage Sites are assessed to be of *high significance*, in line with paragraph 132 of the NPPF.

The significance of other heritage assets has been determined based on the following criteria, and broadly follows levels of national designation.

Significance	Type of Heritage Asset
High	Scheduled Monuments Listed Buildings (Grade I and II*) Registered Parks and Gardens Registered Battlefields World Heritage Sites
Medium	Listed Buildings (Grade II) Conservation Areas Heritage Assets identified as being of regional or local importance on the HER Sites identified within this assessment considered to be of regional or local importance
Low	Non-designated Heritage Assets recorded on the HER Previously unrecorded sites identified in this assessment and not considered to be significant
None	Previously recorded heritage assets or sites recorded in documentary sources now destroyed
Unknown	Potential but previously unrecorded sub-surface archaeological remains Historical sites or features identified through documentary evidence as part of this assessment

The assessed significance of each individual heritage asset identified as part of this assessment has been listed in the catalogue in Appendix 1. Where it is considered that there is potential for an impact on a heritage asset, this impact is discussed in Section 4.

## 4 Archaeological Baseline

Where heritage assets listed in the catalogue (Appendix 1) are mentioned in the text, the relevant catalogue number is given in bold type.

### Proposed development site

There are no previously recorded heritage assets within the proposed development site.

An area of broad medieval ridge and furrow has been identified surviving as slight earthworks, partially extending into the proposed development site (**14**).

### Study area

A total of 19 heritage assets have been identified within the study area. These are discussed below and have been listed in a catalogue in Appendix 1.

### Designated heritage assets

There is a single Scheduled Monument situated within the study area, the southern edge of which is located approximately 85m from the northern side of the proposed development site (National Heritage List of England no. 1015419; former Scheduled Monument no. 28292; see Appendix 2). The Scheduled Monument consists of the earthwork remains of a medieval moated site and associated field systems (**6** and **11**), fishponds (**3**), and a possible house platform (**2**) (see Fig. 2).

### Previous investigations

Two archaeological assessments have been undertaken within the study area in advance of proposals to install underground pipeline lines. Between 1988 and 1990, Travers Morgan prepared an archaeological assessment as part of an environmental statement for the proposed route of a pipeline between Rawcliffe and RAF Leeming, which ran through the eastern side of the study area (**19**; Travers Morgan 1990).

In 1999, Northern Archaeological Associates also undertook a desk-based assessment along the route of a pipeline between Dalton and Eldmire, in the northern part of the study area along the boundary of the former airfield (**16**; Abramson 2000).

The results of these reports were not available, and the pipelines were apparently not constructed.

### Archaeological background and heritage assets

#### *Prehistoric period (c. 4000 BC – c. 43 AD)*

The Vale of Mowbray contains a number of substantial prehistoric ritual or ceremonial monuments dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age, concentrated close to the rivers Swale and Ure, attesting to the extent of occupation across this area during these periods. These sites include Thornborough Henges, located approximately 15km to the north-west of the study area, and henges at Hutton Moor and Cana, approximately 7.5km to the west (Manby *et*

al. 2003, 93). Funerary monuments, including round barrows, were often located within view of rivers and examples are known near to the study area, including the possible 'Giants Grave' barrow, situated approximately 2km to the south-east of the proposed development site (MNY 89; Bogg 1909, 236).

A cropmark of a ring ditch has also been identified from aerial photographs 2km to the west of the proposed development site, close to Leckby (North Yorkshire County HER ref. MNY124). Evidence for prehistoric activity within the study area itself is limited to a report of a number of stone 'daggers' being found during drainage works in the early 19th century (18; Bogg 1909, 237), but the precise location of these finds is unknown.

There is no evidence for prehistoric activity within the proposed development site.

#### *Roman period (c. 43 AD – c. 410)*

During the Roman period major settlements were established at Alborough, approximately 8km to the south-west of the study area, Healam Bridge, 14km to the north-west and Thornton-le-Street, approximately 12km to the north. The study area is situated 6.5km to the east and 6.3km to the west of two major north-south Roman roads; Dere Street, which broadly follows the line of the modern A1, and the roman road which is now in part followed by the A19 (Wilson 2003).

There is no evidence for Roman activity within the proposed development site or the study area.

#### *Post-Roman and Medieval period (c. 410 – c. 1500)*

There is little evidence for occupation during the post-Roman and early medieval periods in rural contexts in the Vale of Mowbray, or North Yorkshire as a whole, and there is no evidence for activity dating to these periods in the study area.

A settlement is first recorded at Eldmire in a document of 1236, and the 1301 Lay Subsidy records it together with Crakehill (Brown 1897, 81; Beresford 1954, 298), but it is likely to have earlier origins. The village is now deserted, replaced by a pattern of dispersed farmsteads. The remains of the village today include a well preserved rectangular moated site (6), fishponds (3) and a possible house platform (2), together with the site of the chantry chapel of St Giles (8), which was established in 1338 (Beresford 1954, 298). The site of a further deserted medieval village is situated at Leckby, close to the western edge of the study area (1), which is now preserved as a number of farms.

The extensive remains of ridge and furrow earthworks, the result of medieval ploughing, lie to the east of the medieval moated site (11) and appear to extend southwards into the proposed development site (14). Further areas of ridge and furrow have been recorded within the study area to the north of the moated site (7), and on the southern side of the river Swale, to the south-west of the proposed development site (10).

*Post-medieval and modern period*

By the 18th century, the township of Eldmire with Crakehill, also known variously as 'Eldmire', 'Elmyre' and 'Elmer', formed part of the parish of Topcliffe. The manor was held by Viscount Downe, and in 1890 the entire township comprised of just four farms and six cottages, housing a population of 71 (Bulmer 1890).

The existing field pattern within the study area was probably enclosed during the 18th century. The earliest map showing the proposed development site dates to 1754 (Bewlay and Collingwood 1754), although it is not reproduced in this report due to its poor surviving quality. This shows that it occupies a plot of land then named as 'Holms', which had a small rectangular plot to the south marked as 'Garth'. The field pattern around the proposed development site appears to have remained unchanged by 1770, when the earlier map was reproduced (Patterson 1770; see Fig. 3).

A map of the township of Eldmire with Crakehill, dating to 1805, is the first to show the buildings to the south of the proposed development site, probably the precursor to Eldmire Ings farm (15). The plan labels the area of the proposed development site as 'Line Holms' (Map of the lordship of Eldmire and Crakehill 1805). Due to the poor quality of the existing map, this has not been reproduced here.

The 1837 Tithe Map shows clearly the layout of the fields in and around the proposed development site (Fig. 4). By this time a number of field boundaries to the north-west and west of the proposed development site appear to have been removed, most noticeably in the area around the moat, where a larger field was created. The map also shows a corner of a field boundary located in approximately the same location as the 'L' shaped earthwork still visible (13), which is likely to have been constructed to act as a drainage channel.

The accompanying Tithe Apportionment shows that the proposed development site formed part of the same lands associated with the farmstead immediately to the south (Plot no. 70), which was occupied by a Christopher Knowlin. Plot no. 75 is named as 'Line Holmes' and was under grass at this time. The surrounding plots were also used for pasture, and field names comprise 'House Park' (Plot No. 73), 'Ings' (Plot nos 72 and 74) and 'Riverside Pasture' (Plot No. 71; see Fig. 4).

The First Edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch map (Fig. 5) shows some minor alterations to the earlier field pattern in the area surrounding the proposed development site, although no changes are visible within the site itself. By 1864, the section of drainage channel marked by the 'L' shaped earthwork (13) appears to have gone out of use (see Fig. 5), although its western extension continues to be shown, as a progressively shorter boundary, through into the early 20th century (see Figs 7 and 8). Neither map shows any visible changes within the proposed development site itself. In the second half of the 20th century the earlier farmstead at Eldmire Ings was demolished (15) and replaced by the modern Eldmire Ings farm (17), located immediately to the south of the proposed development site.

## 5 Impact Assessment and Mitigation

### Recorded heritage assets

#### *Direct impacts*

The proposed development will have no direct impact upon any nationally designated heritage assets or any heritage assets recorded on the North Yorkshire County HER, at either a construction or operational stage.

The proposed development will obscure and/or destroy the previously unrecorded ridge and furrow earthworks within the area of the new chicken sheds. These earthworks are, however, assessed to be of *Low Significance*.

#### *Impact on setting*

The proposed development is situated adjacent to a Scheduled medieval moated site (SM 28290; NHL no. 1015419). The moated site itself is situated 350m to the north-west of the development site, and is surrounded by an extensive area of ridge and furrow and other related agricultural earthworks, as well as the site of an early 14th century chantry chapel to the north. The setting of the moated site is considered to be defined by its relationship with the remains of the surrounding medieval field systems and the chapel site, as well as the interrelationship between individual earthwork features, such as the possible house platform. Its setting is also defined by its location adjacent to the river Swale, providing a water source for the moat and fishponds. The existing field pattern is a result of post-medieval enclosure, and the landscape to the north of the moated site was transformed by the presence of Second World War airfield, which is now used as an industrial estate. Views towards the south-east from the moat include, at a distance of over 460m, the existing barns at Eldmire Ings farm. Views towards the proposed development site from the moated site are partially obscured by trees along a modern hedge line, and the visibility of the proposed chicken sheds will also be limited by a low maximum height to the roof ridge of 5.17m. Views towards the moated site from the south also already include the large warehouses of the Dalton Industrial Estate.

The proposed development will therefore not sever any relationships between surface features that define the setting of the monuments, and will not alter views to or from the moated site. It is therefore considered that there will be no impact on the setting of the monument.

### Potential sub-surface remains

The presence of broad ridge and furrow within the proposed development site indicates that this area has been in agricultural use from at least the later medieval period, and has subsequently been used as pasture, accounting for the survival of the earthworks. It is possible that earlier medieval sub-surface features or deposits may survive beneath this, but these are likely to be of an agricultural character.

Although evidence for Roman and prehistoric activity is limited within the study area, this may partly be due to the lack of previous archaeological investigation, and there is extensive evidence for activity dating to these periods in the wider Vale of Mowbray, especially relating to locations close to rivers. Therefore, there is some limited potential for the survival of prehistoric or Roman sub-surface features or deposits within the proposed development site, which could be impacted upon by any ground works or disturbance.

### **Further assessment and mitigation recommendations**

The slight remains of the ridge and furrow could be preserved by record via an earthwork survey and photographic record.

Due to the potential for a limited impact on previously un-recorded sub-surface remains, a geophysical survey could be undertaken of the footprint of the proposed chicken sheds to determine the form and character of any possible remains. A strategy for any further subsequent level of assessment, such as limited trial trenching, would then need to be agreed upon with the North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Section.

Following any further assessment, if required, a watching brief could be undertaken to monitor any intrusive groundwork during the construction phase of the development.

## **6 Conclusion**

The proposed development site is under permanent pasture and contains the slight remains of medieval ridge and furrow. This is of low significance, and could be preserved by record.

There is potential for prehistoric or Roman period sub-surface archaeological remains within the proposed development site, particularly due to the sites proximity to the river Swale. Any potential direct impacts can be assessed by a programme of geophysical survey, and if required, mitigated by preservation through record with limited trial trenching, as well as a watching brief.

The setting of the Scheduled medieval moated site will not be impacted by the construction of the new chicken sheds, as views from the site towards the development will be obscured by tree lines and the low height of the new buildings, as well as the distance between the monument and the proposed development site.