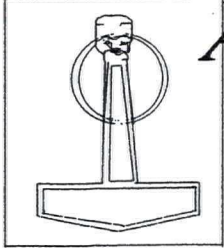


ATTN:- GAC FALWINGHAM



**Alison Clarke M.A., A.I.F.A.**  
*Archaeological Consultant*

15, Winton Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 1QQ  
Tel/Fax : 01609 776501 Mobile: 07808 626483  
e-mail: alison@maryclarke.fsnet.co.uk

NYCC HER	
SNY	503
ENY	62
CNY	742
Parish	2152
Rec'd	11/04/2000

**33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK,**

**NORTH YORKSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

**(DESK BASED)**

**FOR**

**P. TATE**

**ALISON CLARKE** **APRIL 2000**

Copies of photos  
ref. to WSI  
OS maps of former yard bldgs.  
Plan app ref.

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## 33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK – ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

### INTRODUCTION

33 Market Place, Thirsk (SE4284 8205), is situated at the north-west corner of the Market Place in Thirsk (fig 1). It has been unoccupied for a number of years and development is now proposed to provide offices with houses in the yard behind. The area of the yard is part of a scheduled ancient monument (Monument No. 20454), which is the remaining areas of the motte and bailey castle centred in Castle Garth to the west.

This report is designed to provide evidence of the history of the site prior to development, and to appraise the significance of the standing buildings.

### THE SITE

The site fronts onto the Market Place just north of the end of Baker's Alley, though at times in the past it has been reckoned as part of Kirkgate. The long narrow plot resembles a burgage plot but in common with other plots around the Market Place it is not. The front of the plot is occupied by a three storey building, at present unoccupied, with a covered passage through to the rear yard. The ground at the rear of the plot rises in a series of rough and irregular terraces to the west and shows signs of the buildings that formerly occupied it (plate 1). The westernmost third of the site has not been built on and presents a fairly level platform. Some twenty-five metres beyond the western boundary, the ground drops steeply to a ditch running north-north-west to south-south-east.

The recent (1993) revision of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Castle Garth, which includes the rear of 33 Market Place, interprets this raised area as part of the motte of the motte and bailey castle, with its surrounding ditch. The bailey is represented by the open area containing low earthworks lying to the west of the ditch and to the east of a bank running down the centre of Castle Garth. This bank and its attendant filled-in ditch beyond is interpreted as the outer rampart of the bailey.

### HISTORY

The history of Thirsk has recently been extended back to the 6<sup>th</sup> century with the discovery in 1994 of a number of burials only 70 metres south-south-west of the rear of the site (fig 2). Seven burials and three disinterred graves, together with grave goods and some disarticulated bones, were excavated on the site of the electricity sub-station in the south-east corner of Castle Garth. They have been dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> century. There was also evidence of some use of the site subsequent to this period, before the Norman Conquest. There is a local tradition that King Edgar built a castle at Thirsk, completing it in 979, but there is as yet no clear evidence for this.

Before the Norman Conquest, Thirsk was divided into two manors, one to the west possibly around the church, and a smaller one to the east. The eastern manor was held by the king in 1086, and the western one was held by Robert de Stuteville. It was probably he who built a castle at Thirsk in 1092, on the site of Castle Garth. The surviving monument includes the western rampart, part of the bailey and the motte of the Norman castle.

After Robert de Stuteville's rebellion, the western manor was confiscated by the crown and subsequently granted to Neil Daubenay before 1130. Roger de Mowbray, who succeeded Neil Daubenay, may have been responsible for the development of New Thirsk in the area of the current Market Place. This remained a manorial vill distinct from the borough around St James Green east of Cod Beck.

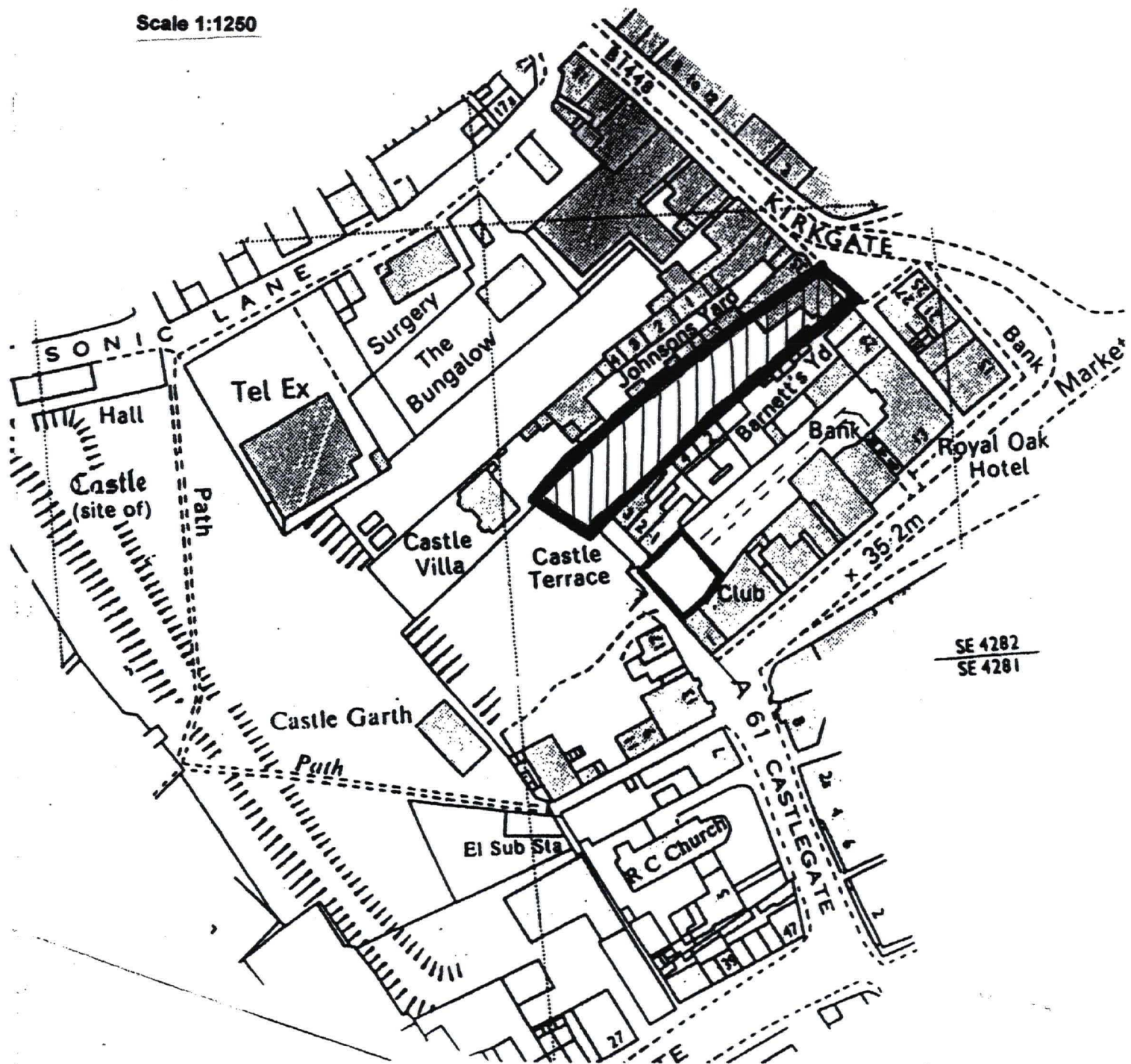
Roger de Mowbray in turn rebelled against the king, Henry II, who besieged the castle in 1174. It fell in 1175 and Henry ordered its destruction in 1176, since when no trace has remained apart from the surviving earthworks. It seems probable that the castle formerly extended over the area bounded by Westgate, Castlegate, Kirkgate and Masonic Lane, and



33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK  
Fig 1 Location



Scale 1:1250



SE 4282  
SE 4281



may have extended as far as the western side of the Market Place. The de Mowbray family continued to hold a manor there in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries but it was not their main seat. Castle Garth is recorded as a garden in 1376, and by the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century it was laid to grass. A map of 1796 (fig 3) shows Castle Garth divided into two along the line of the bank, with a small building in the centre of the boundary. There is also the suggestion of a pond to the south of this building and this may reflect the position of part of the ditch. The west side of Market Place is built up with plots reaching back in an uneven line into Castle Garth, but buildings on the north side of Westgate have little land at the rear and are backed by a single boundary line on the south side of Castle Garth.

The 1843 tithe map (fig 4) confirms the information of the earlier map with few alterations except a greater build up of buildings in the back of plots all round the Market Place. The pond in the middle of Castle Garth is clear, and another pond is marked further north-east near Masonic Lane in the vicinity of the telephone exchange. This is roughly in line with the deep ditch noted beyond the rear of 33 Market Place and could represent the remains of the motte ditch.

The earliest evidence relating to 33 Market Place itself comes in 1763. In this year, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, Mrs Wafs or Wass bought the freehold of the property from Ralph Bell, the local squire, having previously rented from him. It was by this time already an inn or public house called the Kings Arms. The map of 1796 (fig 3) shows a building across the entire frontage with an wing extending rearwards on the north side of the yard. The number 213 attaches to the plot, but unfortunately the relevant list or index has not survived.

The 1841 Census records William Colley as the landlord of the Kings Arms, and puts it at the beginning of Kirkgate rather than in Market Place. The tithe map (fig 4) and apportionment of 1843 shows a building covering the same area as in 1796, with additional buildings along both sides of the yard for approximately half its length. At this time the Kings Arms was owned and run by James Garbutt, but by 1849 it is listed in Slater's Directory as run by Frances McNally. In 1851 the Census shows it, still under Kirkgate, as held by George Weldon, and six years later the Post Office Directory lists Henry Dickinson as the owner.

This run of rapid change-overs comes to an end with Dickinson, who held the Kings Arms until at least the 1880's. An old name for the yard is Dickin's Yard, presumably derived from this landlord. Some time between 1881 and 1891 the inn was passed to Mrs Grace Maria Wain who owned it until the 1920's. It was inherited by her daughter Mrs Ada Linton who was the last licensee of the Kings Arms and ran it until World War II. The plot then passed to the Snelling family who owned it until recently and in whose ownership much of the main building has remained unchanged.

## ARCHAEOLOGY

A survey of Castle Garth in 1859 recorded that the area was occupied by gardens and no trace of any buildings was visible. A drain dug in the area did uncover a 'brooch or toga pin', the whereabouts of which is not known. A small excavation of the bank in the 1960's recorded a cobbled surface beneath the bank. The location of this is insecure but may have been in the area of the electricity sub-station in the south-east corner of Castle Garth (fig 2, a).

In 1981 a watching brief was conducted by P Hatch in the back yard of 11 Kirkgate, to the north of 33 Market Place (fig 2, b). A section of sandy embankment was noted cutting into a layer of pebbles set in a clay core, and both of these were above a sandy layer containing a 'crop mark' in its top surface. This could be interpreted as a buried ground surface beneath the pebble or cobble layer. Another watching brief in 1991 by A Clarke in the rear of 15 Westgate (fig 2, c) recorded a gravel and sand bank, but excavations did not extend to the base of it.

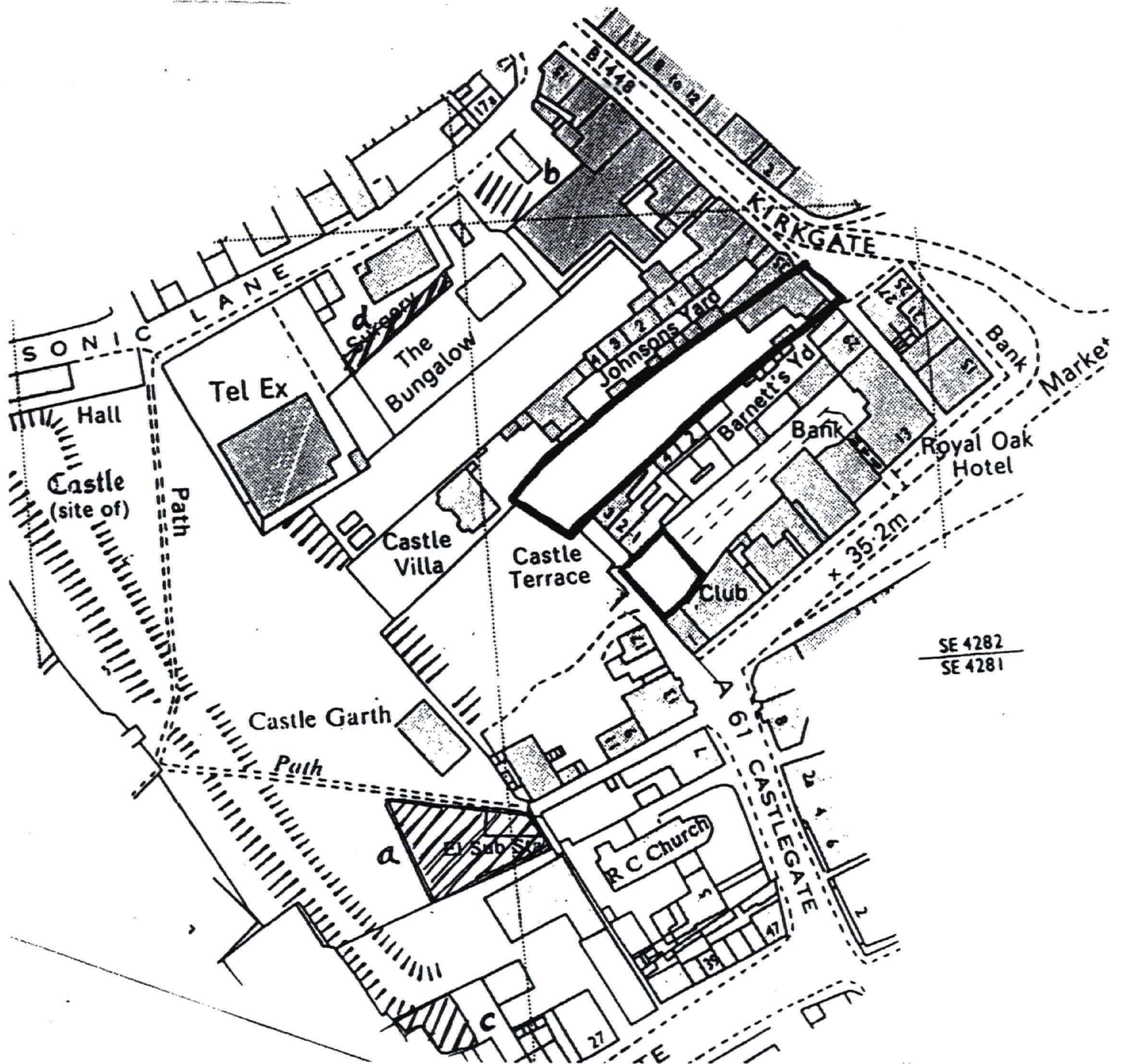
A Clarke conducted another watching brief in 1994 in the rear of the former doctor's surgery in Masonic Lane (fig 2, d), not far to the west of 11 Kirkgate. This revealed the sand and gravel bank noted elsewhere, with a clay capping layer and different phases of construction.



33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK  
Fig 2 Archaeological work in the vicinity



Scale 1:1250



ENLARGED SKETCH



near to the enlarged sketch  
 the ground plan being in a well copy  
 and to the west of the market  
 more to the west of the market

33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK  
 Fig 3 Plan of Thirsk 1796 (part)



Various features were also noted pre-dating the bank, including a buried ground surface and a layer of sand.

At the same time A Finney was conducting a watching brief and excavation at the site of the electricity sub-station in Castle Garth and its vicinity (fig 2,a). It was this work that produced evidence of 6<sup>th</sup> century burials which were sealed by a layer of sand equivalent to that at Clarke's watching brief in Masonic Lane. There was also a cobbled surface that probably equates with that noted in both the 1960's and 1980's, and several other features indicating occupation of the area. Evidence of later use of the site included a gradual build-up of material representing the 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, with a phase when it may have been used as a pasture. This was capped by a horizon of silty sand containing finds of pre-Conquest and 11<sup>th</sup> century date. A clay bank 1.5 metres high topped these layers, and this is associated with the late 11<sup>th</sup> century motte and bailey castle. Later accumulations dated from the 12<sup>th</sup> onwards and seem to have been associated with the use of the area as gardens or other non-intensive uses. The remains of a tank wall from the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War was recorded along the line of the bank, but this had done only minimal damage to the earlier remains.

### BUILDINGS (fig 5)

The exterior of the main house is rendered at the front to resemble stone (plate 2), but it is in fact brick in the main, with a few large dressed stones showing under the two front bays (plate 3). It is a three storey building of two bays, extending back further on the north side. The roof is grey slate. Attached to the rear of the north side is a two storey brick wing under a pantile roof, parts of which are accessed from the main house and parts separately. There is a central chimney stack in the main house and further small stacks on the south side and at the rear.

The front entrance is through a passage or covered way on the south side, which leads directly to the back yard. A door on the right leads into the house. Immediately on the left are stairs to the first and second floors. A second door leads into a passage from which the principal rooms lead off. The southern front room with its bay window and wide fireplace (plate 4) was a lounge, and is separated from the passage by a thin wooden partition wall. The northern front room, another lounge, also has a bay window and fireplace, and is deeper from front to back.

To the rear of the south front room is the bar, with its door at an angle to the passage (plate 5). This has a window to the rear and a fireplace in the corner (plate 6). The fireplace has its own flue running up the exterior of the building at the back. The stairs at the entrance return above this room and there is a cupboard beneath them. A large beam crosses the room from north to south: to the west of this beam the lath and plaster ceiling has largely gone and a recent sloping roof line is visible from the window up to a brick wall that rests on the beam (plate 7). It is clear from the exterior that this is a small outshut added to the room.

Behind the northern front room is the kitchen. Stairs to the cellar beneath the north front room lead down to the right of the door, and another door in the north-east corner of the kitchen appears to lead to stairs up to the first floor, the base of which are visible above the cellar stairs (plate 8). These stairs are disused. Another set of stairs leading to the rear of the first floor used to rise at the northern side of the kitchen: the marks are visible on the wall (plate 9). A large beam runs north-south across the room at the point where the two storey building butts up to the three storey building: the window is below this beam (plate 10, 11). The fireplace is at the rear (west) of the room.

A passage leads to the first room of the two storey wing. This has a separate front door to the yard, and a window to the south. It has a fireplace with a range and an oven at the side (plate 12). From the outside a blocked window is visible between the kitchen window and that in the room to the west. This is hidden from the interior by the oven. Stairs in the north-west corner lead to another cellar which is brick vaulted with a blocked window on the south side (plate 13). There is a small uncovered well towards the southern side (plate 14). The westernmost





**THIRSK**  
1843.

33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK  
Fig 4 Tithe Map of Thirsk 1853 (part)



room of the two storey wing was not accessed, but has its own door and window to the south, a further window to the west, and recent stairs leading to the first floor (plate 15).

The two front rooms of the house have wooden floorboards, the rest are stone flagged, apart from the rear cellar which has a brick floor.

The stairs on the south side of the house lead to the first floor. There are two large rooms to the front (plate 16), above the ground floor rooms, and a kitchen also to the front which is over the passage. A bathroom with a raised floor is over the passage to the rear, and partly over the bar. The stairs formerly split at the first floor, and part of a former flight can be seen in a cupboard (plate 17). There is a window at the landing where the staircase split. There is a room over part of the kitchen which has been truncated by the replacement stairs to the second floor and by a passage to the rear of the house. An area of floorboards is missing, covered by hardboard/plywood, where the front stairs used to emerge in the passage. To the rear, in the two storey wing, is a large room which used to be a dance room, now subdivided, with recent stairs at the rear.

The second floor has been altered in more recent years to form a flat. It has a wide hallway with three rooms at the front (one a kitchen), one back room and a bathroom over the stairs.

The buildings in the rear yard of No 33 (fig 6) are visible on aerial photographs (fig 7) as well as on maps, and are clearly remembered by Mr M Snelling. On the north side of the yard, adjoining the gable end of the present two-storey rear wing of the main house, was a house, no. 5, occupied by Mr Milner. Beyond this was a stable with two loose boxes, and above was a tannery (plate 18). There is an easement of a few inches on the north side of the boundary before the wall of the adjoining property: according to Mr Snelling this was called a "dog loop" and was to allow the windows of the tannery to be opened but remain within the curtilage of the yard. Beyond the stables was a further house, no 4, occupied by Mr Turner. On the south side of the yard was a tack room which survives in a ruined condition (plate 19). Beyond this was a two storey storage building and then stalls with hayloft above and more loose boxes. In line with no 4, and with Nos 2 and 4 in Barnetts Yard, was a line of three cottages across the plot (plate 20). These, nos 1-3, were occupied by Mr Dunning, Miss Mariott and Mr Windruss. Access to the houses and stables was through the passage on the south side of No 33.

All the buildings in the rear yard were extant until the 1970's when they were demolished, but the outlines of most are still visible.

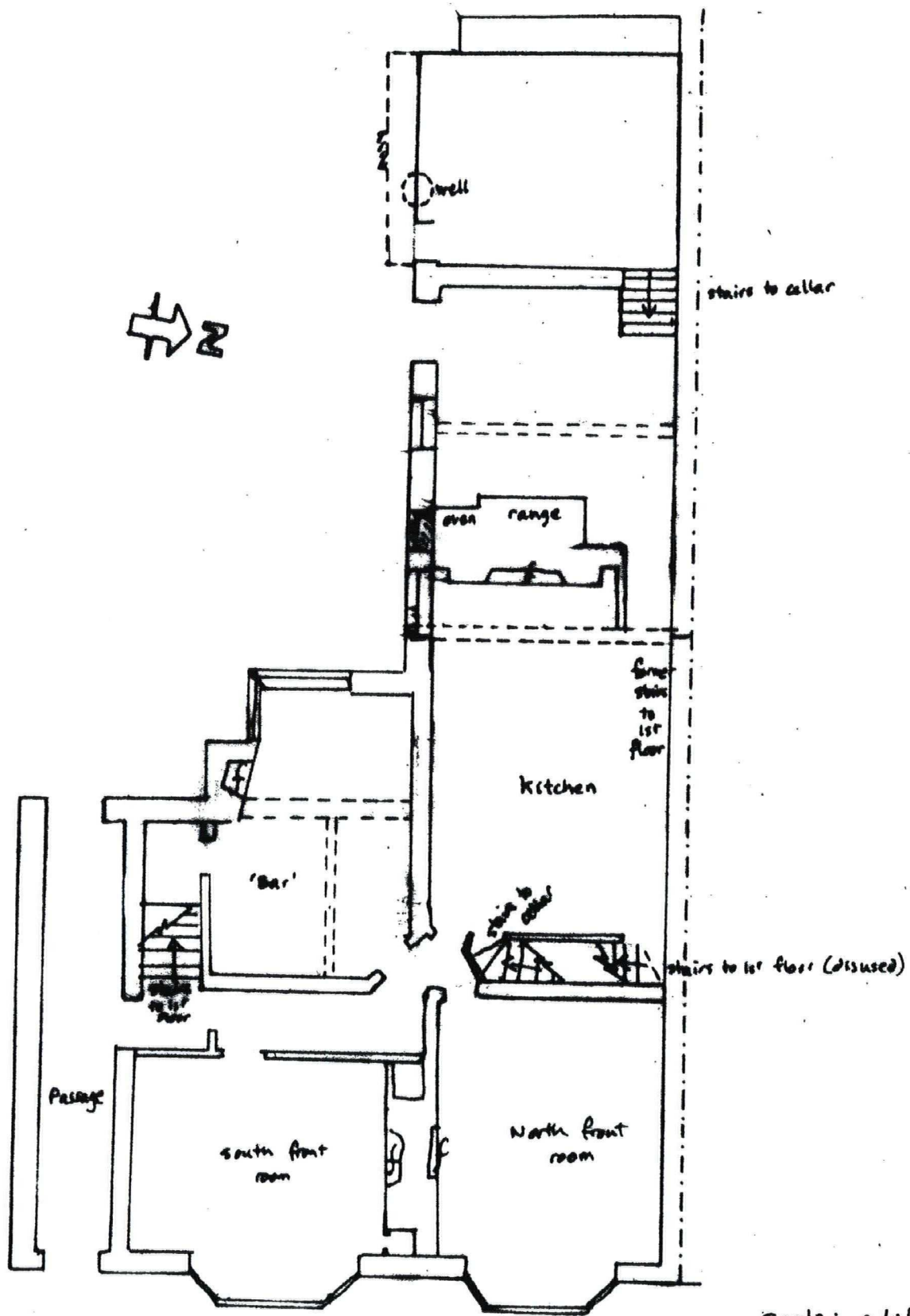
## DISCUSSION

### House

The existing house has been much altered over the years, although the first two floors remain largely unchanged since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The main structure probably dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century, though the site was almost certainly occupied prior to that, and it is possible that elements of the surviving structure are earlier. Since by the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was already an inn, the existing structure must have been built for that purpose. There must always have been a side passage for access to the rear yard which would have been used for stabling horses even when there were no dwellings in it.

The southern front room has been divided with a wooden partition to form a passage behind: it would formerly have been as deep as the adjoining front room. There is a hint of a blocked doorway in the wall adjoining the passage, but this was not clear. The existing bay window does not appear to be original, and is probably Victorian. It may be significant that the width of the room is wider than the adjoining one by about the same distance as the width of the stairs that run alongside the passage to the rear. It is possible therefore that the side passage was originally wider than it now is, and may have admitted carriages. If this was the case, the alteration must have taken place before the bay windows were inserted.





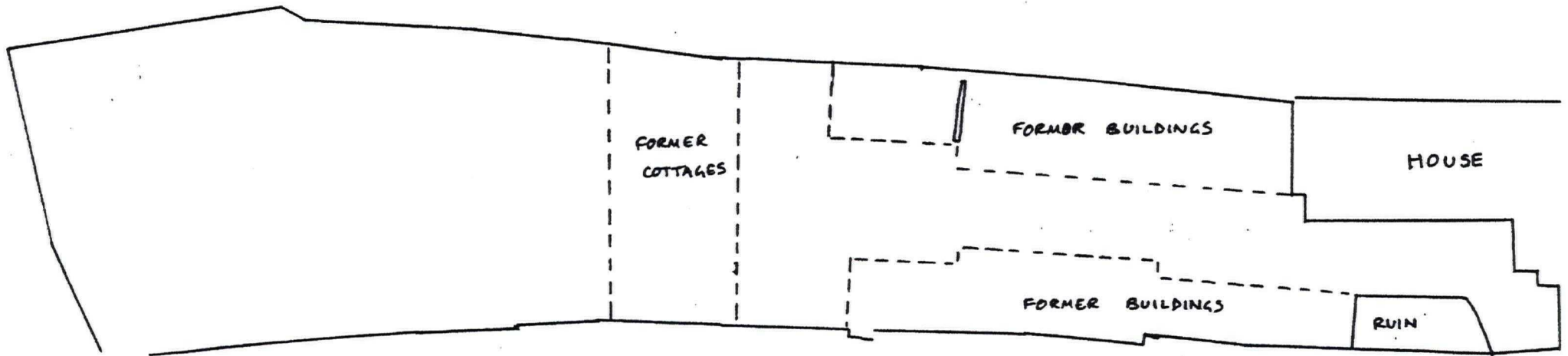
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33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK

FIG 5 PLAN OF HOUSE



Scale: 1:140



33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK

FIG 6 PLAN OF REAR YARD



The northern front room is positioned over the cellar. The bay window at the front is offset from the centre of the front wall, which supports the suggestion that the window is not original but was inserted to give the appearance of a regular frontage from the outside. The back wall of the room is continued with a beam across the passage to form the front wall of the 'bar' behind the southern front room. It is not clear where the door into this room would have been before the passage at the back of the other room was created, but there may have been a passage behind both rooms. Alternatively, the rooms may have led directly one into another.

The 'bar' behind the southern front room has been extended by means of a shallow bay at the rear with a sloping roof. The original line of the back of the room is clearly visible in a massive beam holding the rear wall above. The fireplace is in the rear corner of the room and was added when the room was extended. The style of the window frame is similar to those of the front bays, and may date to the same period.

The kitchen has also been extended to the west. The beam marks the original back of the room and the fireplace and window have been inserted after the two-storey extension was added to the main building, probably in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The former staircase leading to the rear of the building must also have been added after the two storey building was constructed, but the disused staircase above the cellar stairs may be part of the earlier arrangement and may pre-date the stairs at the south side of the building. It is not unusual for the staircase in inns to be tucked away out of sight.

The range and oven in the wing are 19<sup>th</sup> century. The oven obscures a blocked window, indicating an earlier phase of this room.

It would appear that the shape of the existing building matches that on the 1796 plan, if the two-storey wing is assumed to have been there at that time. This would make it 18<sup>th</sup> century and the main building earlier still. It is of course possible that an earlier building occupied the same area. The rear cellar, which is beneath the western half of the two storey wing, has itself been modified as shown by the blocked window. This must originally have opened onto the yard but is no longer visible. It is probable that the well was originally outside, and was incorporated into the cellar when the two storey building was constructed.

The kitchen and bar of the existing building could well be older than the rest, but the front rooms in their present form are unlikely to be earlier than late 18<sup>th</sup> century and more probably 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is possible that Mrs Wass rebuilt or modified the inn once she owned the property, creating the main building much as it is now.

The building is of interest but not of architectural significance. The modifications that it has undergone have destroyed or obscured most of the earlier features, and the building as it stands is in poor condition.

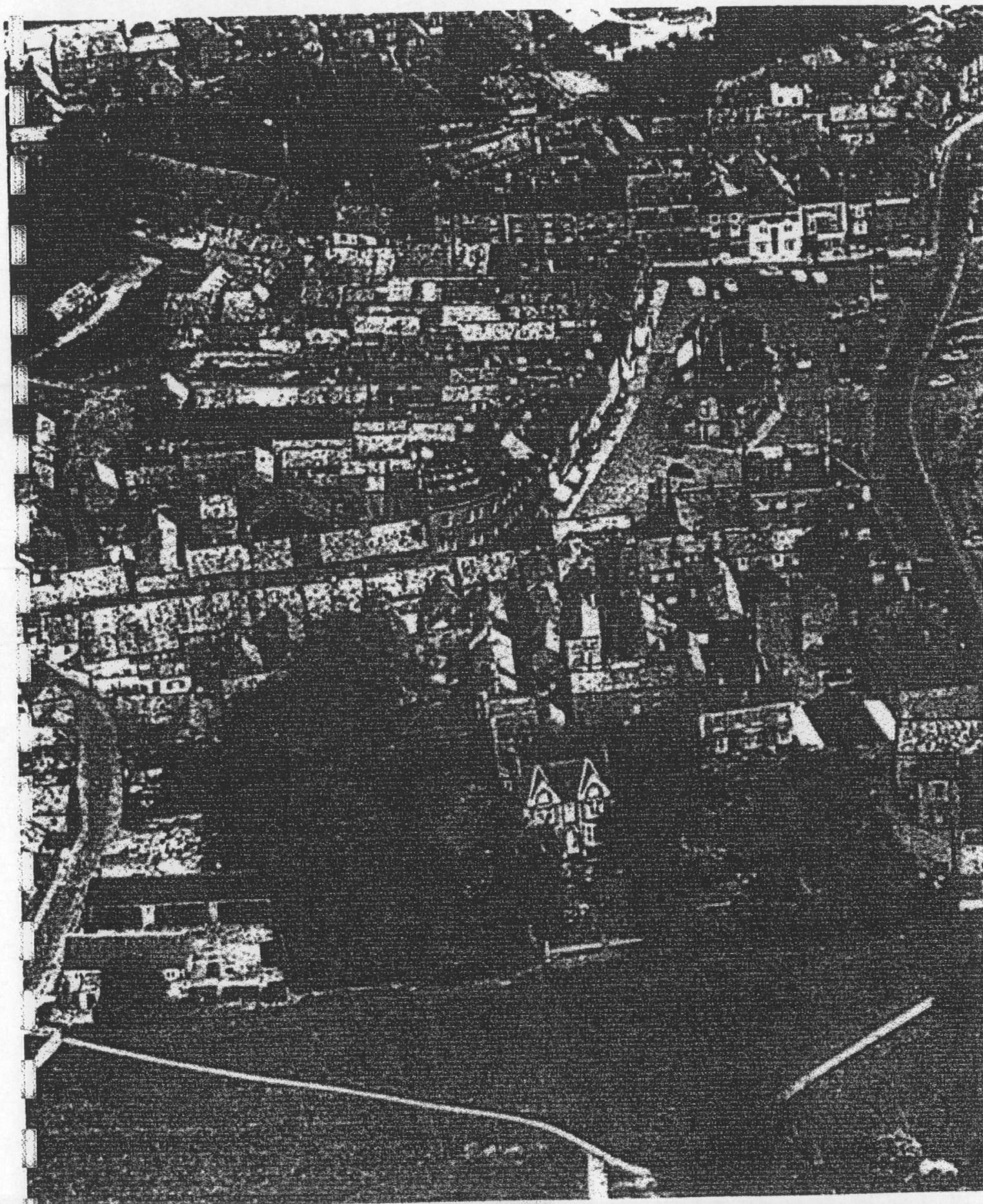
#### Yard

The importance of motte and bailey castles is emphasised in the Scheduled Monument description. If the yard of 33 Market Place is indeed the site of part of the motte, then it is of great importance.

*Nahouat*  
New Thirsk was not a borough and had no burgage plots. However, the shape of the plots around the Market Place have the appearance of having been deliberately set out, especially on the north, east and south sides. The area may have been deliberately planned by Roger de Mowbray as a new town. The block of plots on the west side is somewhat at an angle to the rest of the Market Place, and also extends up the west side of Kirkgate as far as Masonic Lane. This suggests that it was not laid out at the same time as the rest of the Market Place, and may indicate that it was originally part of the castle area.

There are problems with the interpretation of the earthworks of Castle Garth, and the suggested shape of the motte and bailey castle. All the surviving evidence gives the impression of a rectangular area, with earthworks and boundaries running in almost straight lines. This includes the area within 33 Market Place, although terracing of comparatively





33 MARKET PLACE, THIRSK  
Fig 7 Aerial Photograph of Thirsk from the West (part)

recent date could account for that. One possible suggestion is that the late 11<sup>th</sup> century castle was not built on an unused site but that earlier fortifications existed, perhaps on the lines of a burh or defended town of pre-Norman date.

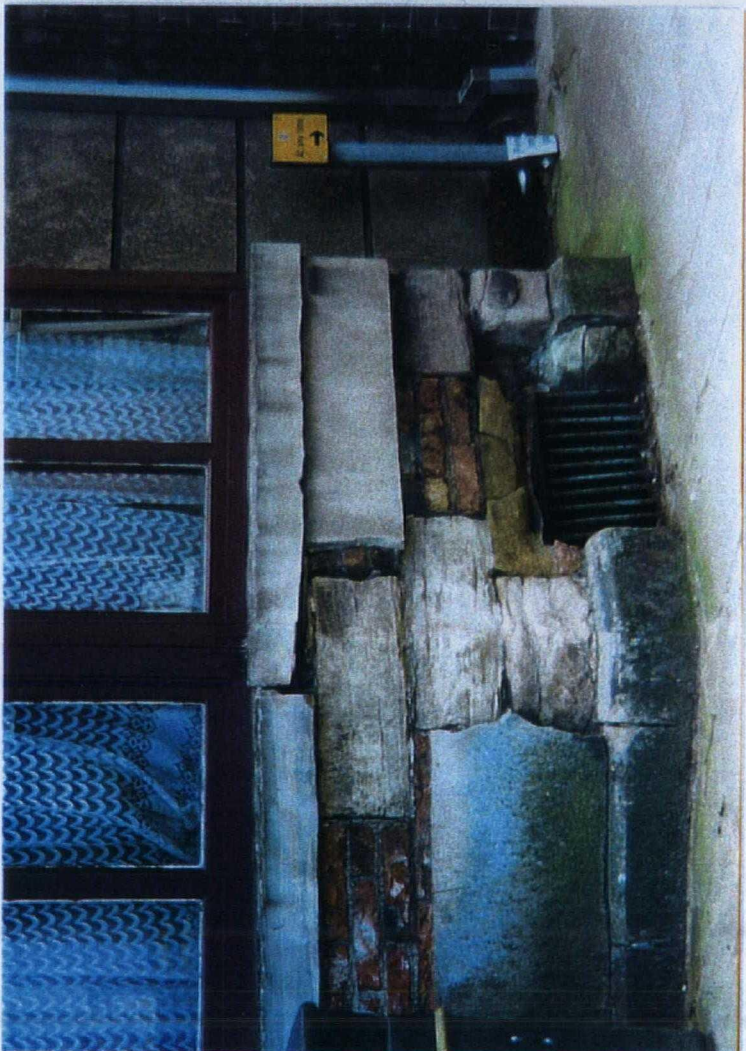
The eastern two thirds of the yard of 33 Market Place have been built on before, and archaeological deposits are likely to be disturbed in the upper layers. It is still possible that earlier deposits remain as the buildings are not likely to have had deep foundations and were not cellared. The westernmost third of the yard has not been built on and is likely to contain undisturbed archaeological deposits, potentially of great significance.

*Aileen Clarke*

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②

33 MARKET PLACE  
FRONT ELEVATION

①

33 MARKET PLACE  
REAR YARD LOOKING WEST  
TRACE OF FORMER BUILDING IN  
TERRACE

④

33 MARKET PLACE  
FIREPLACE AND  
CUPBOARD IN FRONT  
SOUTH ROOM

③

33 MARKET PLACE  
BATH WINDOW AND GRILL  
TO FRONT CELLAR







33 MARKET PLACE  
1ST FLOOR - DISUSED  
STAIRCASE FROM BELOW

(17)

(19) 33 MARKET PLACE  
REAR YARD LOOKING  
EAST SHOWING DROP  
OF LAND

(18) 33 MARKET PLACE  
REAR YARD LOOKING  
NORTH - SLOPE OF GROUND  
TO EAST, AND TRACES OF FORMER BUILDINGS

(20) 33 MARKET PLACE  
REAR YARD - POSITION OF  
COTTAGES CROSSING YARD  
LOOKING SOUTH







33 MARKET PLACE  
GROUND FLOOR PASSAGE -  
DOORS TO BAR AND  
KITCHEN

(5)

(6) 33 MARKET PLACE  
BAR - FIREPLACE, UNDER-  
STAIRS CUPBOARD AND  
END OF WINDOW

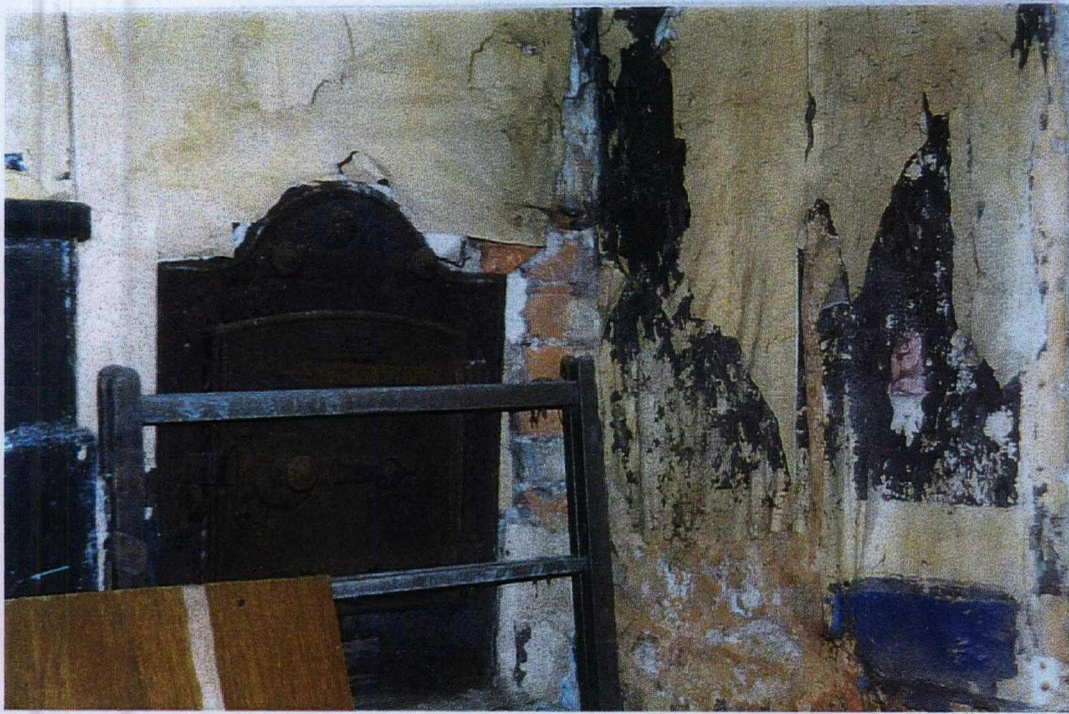
(7)

33 MARKET PLACE  
BAR - VIEW OF BEAM  
AND 1ST FLOOR WALL LOOKING  
EAST

33 MARKET PLACE  
~~1ST~~ UNDERNEATH OF  
DISUSED STAIRCASE TO 1ST  
FLOOR, FROM DOOR TO  
FRONT CELLAR

(8)







(9)

33 MARKET PLACE  
KITCHEN - MARK OF FORMER  
STAIRCASE ON NORTH  
WALL

(11)

33 MARKET PLACE  
BUTT JOINT BETWEEN TWO  
BUILDINGS AND BEAM END  
FROM SOUTH

(10)

33 MARKET PLACE  
KITCHEN WINDOW  
ON SOUTH WALL

(12)

33 MARKET PLACE  
19TH C. OVEN IN  
TWO-STOREY EXTENSION







(13)

33 MARKET PLACE

REAR CELLAR WITH  
BRICK VAULT AND  
BLOCKED WINDOW

(15)

33 MARKET PLACE  
TWO STOREY EXTENSION  
IN REAR YARD

(14)

33 MARKET PLACE

REAR CELLAR  
WITH BRICK FLOOR  
AND WELL

33 MARKET PLACE

1ST FLOOR

FRONT ROOM

(16)