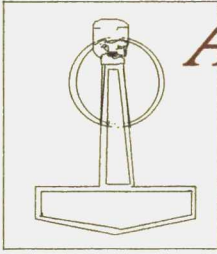


Rec'd 9.6.00.

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SNY 550



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Rec'd	09/06/2000

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

233, HIGH STREET,

NORTHALLERTON

FOR

D. H. HILL

ALISON CLARKE

JUNE 2000

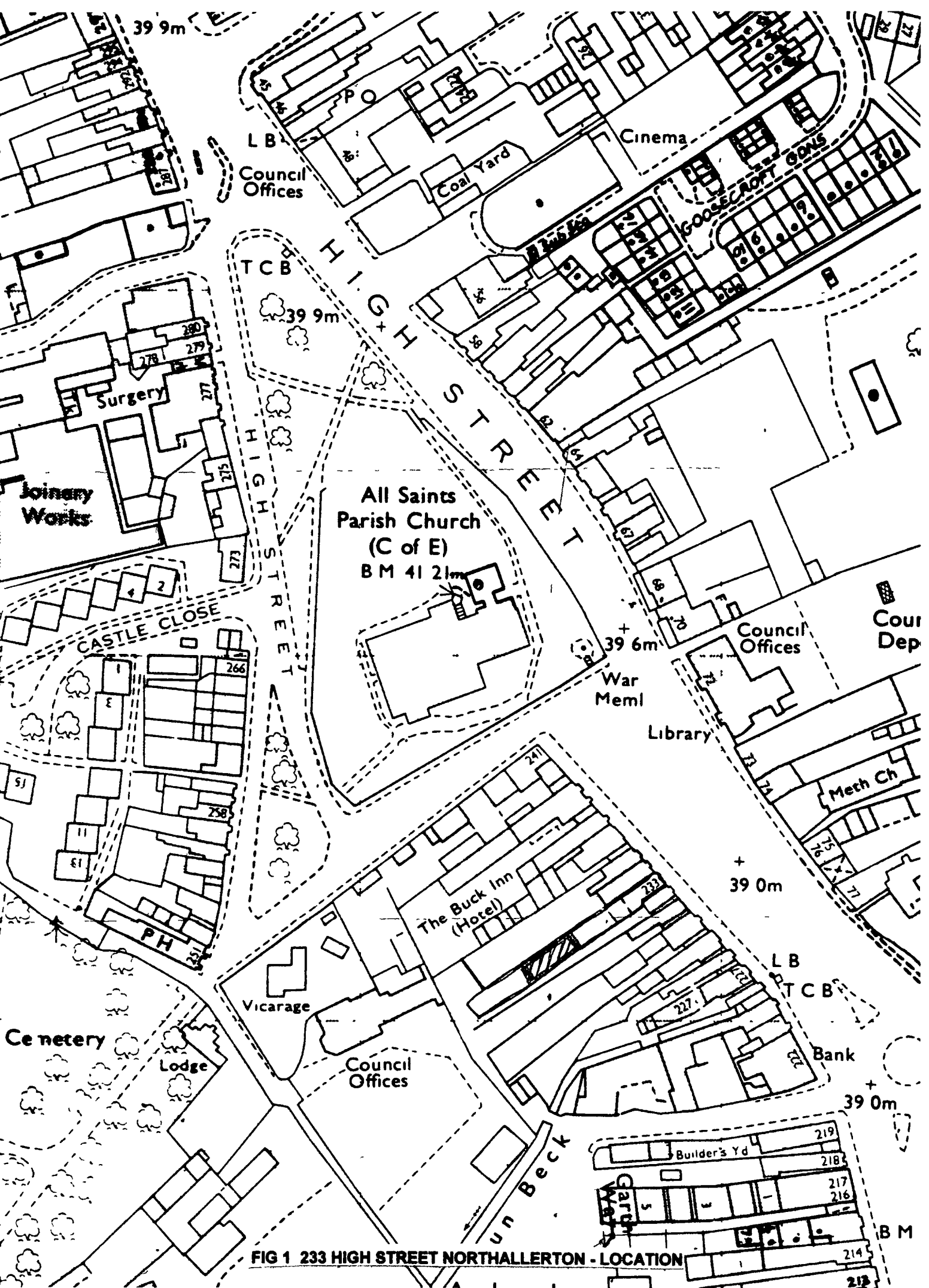


FIG 1 233 HIGH STREET NORTHALLERTON - LOCATION

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT 233 HIGH STREET NORTHALLERTON

INTRODUCTION

Development was proposed at the rear of 233 High Street, Northallerton (fig 1) consisting of a house and a bungalow extending west from the existing building along the north side of the plot. Planning permission was granted subject to an archaeological watching brief, as the site is potentially of archaeological interest.

The watching brief, observing and recording all features and items of archaeological interest, took place between 18th and 22nd May 2000.

OS coords 436754 494118

SUMMARY

Machine trenches were excavated over an area to the immediate west of the existing buildings. Traces of a modern (19th/20th century) building were observed, but no earlier structures. However, a scatter of finds from the medieval period onwards indicate low-level use of the area from at least the 13th century.

WATCHING BRIEF (fig 2)

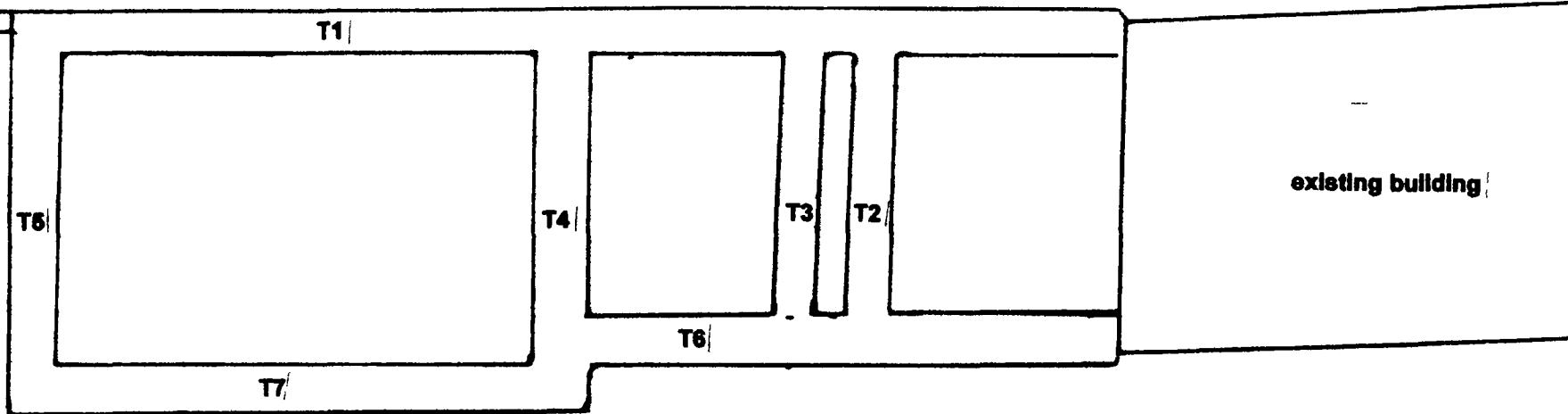
Machine trenches were excavated along the northern boundary of the site (T1) for approximately 16 metres, across the site at the western end of T1 (T5), and half way along T1 (T4) for approximately 5.5 metres. These were joined by another trench at the southern side (T6 and T7). These trenches were all approximately 75 cm wide. Two narrower trenches (T2 and T3) ran from T1 to T6 between the end of the existing building and T4, these being 65 cm wide. The depth varied between 120 cm and 150 cm below the cleared ground surface. This surface was approximately 20 cm below the concrete path alongside the northern boundary of the site. The ground surface was liberally littered with broken brick and tile, indicating that there had at one time been a building on the site.

The underlying natural subsoil was yellow-brown clay, which in places was gntty with numerous small stones. It lay between 100 and 180 cm below the cleared ground surface, with an average depth of 120 cm. Above it, on the northern half of the site, was a compacted mid-brown loam with the appearance of garden soil. This contained a mixture of brick and tile fragments, occasional animal bone fragments (mainly sheep), and pottery fragments ranging from 19th century to medieval. The loam became clayey with depth and merged with the underlying natural.

T1 followed the line of a wall that had been demolished and which continued the line of the existing building to the east. The cobble foundations of this wall extended to between 40 and 80 cm below the cleared ground surface, with occasional bricks, in a fine loose grey-brown loam matrix. Approximately 140 cm to 340 cm west of the extant building, a pit or similar feature with sloping sides and a rounded base was visible in the south facing section of the trench. It extended to 180 cm below the cleared ground surface and the cobble wall foundations rose over it. The fill of this was loose brown loam with large cobbles and boulders, the latter more frequent at the sides and base of the feature, but with a subsidiary fill of brick, coal and modern pottery, glass, animal bone etc within it near to the top. It would appear that the larger pit was dug and filled, and subsequently a small pit was inserted into the same area.

Further west, near the western end of T1, the depth of the natural clay dipped to below 130 cm, and an area of flaky grey stone in a loose brown loam matrix was visible at the base of the trench.

cobble wall



existing building



scale 1:100

FIG 2 233 HIGH STREET NORTHALLERTON - SITE PLAN

To the southern half of the site there was a considerable amount of modern disturbance. Visible in T2 and T3 was a large quantity of brick rubble with traces of coal dust, concrete and an iron circular plate. This formed a feature 85 cm by 110 cm and 140 cm deep, and probably represented a coal hole. The clay base was here at 150 cm below the cleared ground surface. Brick wall foundations ran east-west along the north side of T6, slightly north of the southern wall of the existing building, to a depth of 60 cm. Between T3 and T4, in T6, the brick wall disappeared in a large accumulation of brick and concrete extending to the clay base at approximately 120 cm below the ground surface.

A further disturbance was visible at the junction of T1 and T4, containing brick, concrete and 19th – 20th century pottery. This extended to the base of the excavation at 120 cm. The whole of T4 was heavily disturbed with mainly 19th century material among the brick and tile.

To the south-west, T7 contained a drain running at a slight angle to the trench at a depth of 60 cm. The soil around contained modern debris, and the clay was visible at approximately 100 cm. In T5 to the west of the site, the northern end contained the same brown loam as elsewhere, but extending down to at least 130 cm below the ground surface. Further south was a shallow pit near the surface containing a concentration of mussel shells with animal bone, clay pipe stem and post-medieval pottery, as well as one sherd of medieval pottery. Below this pit the soil was paler and more clayey from a depth of 90 cm, and this continued to the base of the trench at 140 cm where there were several large boulders. The undisturbed natural was not observed here.

INTERPRETATION

It would appear from the archaeological evidence that much of the site has been in use as a garden, probably from the medieval period onwards. The cartographic evidence supports this, with maps from both the 18th and 19th centuries showing no buildings beyond the current footprint at the eastern end of the plot, although the buildings shown are differently arranged (figs 3 and 4). There has however been some building apparently towards the south-eastern quarter of the current open space. Traces of a brick wall and a possible coal hole as well as widespread scatters of brick confirm the existence of a fairly modern building (19th or early 20th century), with associated pottery and other debris. The 1938 edition Ordnance Survey 25" map shows buildings extending further west than at present, though these are spread along the northern boundary (fig 5). This might indicate that the cobble wall, at present only a boundary wall, once supported the rear wall of further buildings, the front of which were indicated by the surviving brick wall foundations.

A sequence of use may therefore be outlined. There has been low-level use of the site from the medieval period onwards. Buildings occupied the eastern end of the plot from at least the 18th century, with the rest of the plot used as a garden. At some point between 1842 and 1938 the layout of the buildings was altered, and extended westwards along the northern side of the plot. The cobble wall dates from this period, though parts of it might be earlier. The westernmost part of the buildings was subsequently demolished and the whole open portion of the plot concreted.

FINDS

Finds ranged from 13th century to 19th century pottery, with clay pipe, glass, animal bone and occasional iron fragments.

The pottery included a thin scatter of medieval sherds, mainly York Glazed ware, Hambleton ware and Thirlby types. In addition there were a few post-medieval sherds, and some 18th/19th century glass fragments as well as 19th/20th century pottery. Clay pipe stems were fairly frequent, and one bowl of a late 17th century type was recovered.

The animal bone was mostly sheep, though cattle were represented and a cockspur was also found.

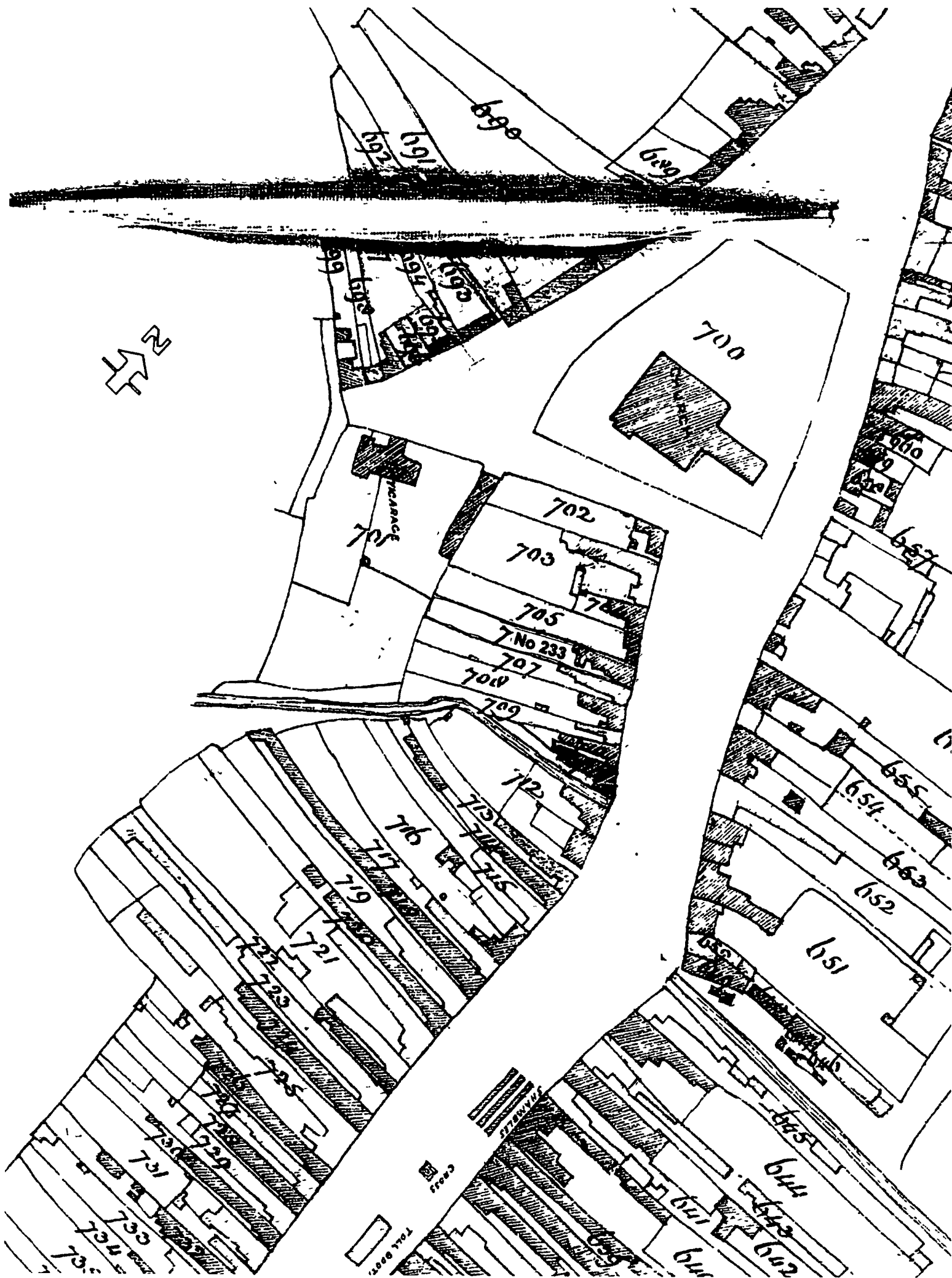


FIG 3 233 HIGH STREET NORTHALLERTON - 1793 PLAN



FIG 4 233 HIGH STREET NORTHALLERTON - 1842 TITHE PLAN



FIG 5 233 HIGH STREET NORTHALLERTON - 1938 25" OS MAP