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**Wath Quarry
Wath
North Yorkshire**

**Proposed Quarry Extension
Desktop Evaluation**

January 1998
MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.

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1. Introduction

The site of Wath Quarry is situated in the parish of Wath, North Yorkshire, to the south-east of Hovingham, on the B1257, Helmsley to Malton road (SE 6785 7447 : Fig. 1).

This report considers an area of land to the south of the present quarry of approximately 4.5 hectares (Fig. 2), which is proposed as an extension to the existing quarry. The report evaluates the known archaeological and historical background of the land unit by describing and illustrating land use, previous archaeological information and historical summaries concerning the proposed extension area. Finally the report also suggests a work programme for further evaluation.

The geology of the site (Fig. 3) shows that the present quarry and the proposed extension are on soils of the Elmton 2 Soil Association (343b). This association comprises of shallow, well drained brashy calcareous clayey soils over limestone (Jarvis et al 1983). To the south of the present quarry is a band of Rivington 1 Soil Association (541f) which consists of well drained coarse loamy soils over sandstone. To the north are Sessay (831b) and Badsey 2 Soil Associations (511i), which comprise of fine and coarse loamy, often stoneless, permeable soils over glaciolacustrine and glaciofluvial drift and well drained calcareous fine loamy soils over limestone gravel, respectively.

The desktop survey was undertaken in December 1997, by staff of MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd.

The project was funded by Redland Aggregates.

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2. The Desktop Study

2.1. Introduction

The Desktop Study examines landscape features based on the archaeological and historical evidence. Several components were undertaken for the Desktop Study including archaeological background and a consideration of the cartographic evidence, which are discussed under the following headings

archaeological background

agrarian history

and industrial history.

2.2. Archaeological Background

Information derived from aerial reconnaissance, spot finds and archaeological excavations is intrinsic to any consideration of an area's history.

Aerial Reconnaissance

Aerial photographs provide information on archaeological features which survive as earthworks or which due to ploughing, are no longer visible above ground. Under low angled sunlight earthworks become visible as well as features which only exist as soil or cropmarks.

Aerial data for the extraction area is well documented and reflects the underlying geology which is conducive to this form of data (Pls. 1 & 2 : Fig. 4). A number of features are discernible. To the east of the quarry are a series of linear features aligned north-south and which change alignment to a east-west direction just to the south of the Hovingham to Malton road. To the south of the present quarry and extending into the extension area are a series of linear features possibly part of a fieldsystem associated with the further cropmarks to the west. This grouping represents a marching camp of Roman date (see below).

Archaeological Sites

Roman Camp

Situated on Diana Hill, at approximately 80m AOD aerial reconnaissance located in 1976 a square feature enclosing 4.9ha (SE 6747 7452 : Figs 5 & 6 : 1). The lack of diagnostic features and definition of the fine cropmarks have made it impossible to interpret breaks in the line of the ditches as gates. An assessment of the monument showed that plough damage had levelled the entire perimeter of the camp with the exception of the north-west corner which lies within Wath Wood. Here a low scrap may

represent a residual rampart (Welfare & Swan 1995).

The Mill

Although the site of the early medieval mill is not recorded on Ordnance Survey maps there is in 1343 the capital messuage with a mill situated at Wath on the road to Malton (Fig. 6 : 2).

Moated site

Approximately 500m to the north-west of the proposed quarry extension was a rectangular enclosure interpreted as a moated enclosure (SE 6754 7492 : Fig. 6 : 3). The area around this feature was disturbed and the feature apparently filled in with debris from a quarry (O.S. 388.04).

Old Hall site

To the north-west of the present quarry stood the site of Wath Hall (SE 6767 7484 : Fig. 6 : 4). This building is only marked as a site of on the First Edition County Series (Fig. 7). In 1824 it was recorded that the foundations of a large hall (100 yds x 60yds) and the remains of a park wall survived on the south side enclosing between 300-400 acres (Eastmead 1824). In the 1850s the only remains of the Hall were a fragment of wall "4ft high and 4ft long and 3ft thick" (Whellan 1855). Burials found near the hall site suggest that the Hall may have possessed a chapel.

2.3. Social History

The village and parish name of Wath is derived from the Scandinavian 'vad' meaning 'ford' (Cameron 1982). Wath stands at the point where the supposed Roman road (Appleton le Street 46 supra) crosses the stream now known as Wath Beck (Smith 1979). There is also a lost 'village' nearby called Hawade (1086 DB). This settlement was probably in the township (possibly in Wath Wood) higher up the stream and means 'high ford' (ibid).

In the Domesday Survey the manor of Hovingham and 8 carucates belonged prior to the Conquest to Orm. Its berewicks, of which Wath was one, totalled 32 carucates and were in the possession of Hugh son of Baldric in 1086. All afterwards formed part of the Mowbray fee.

Early in the reign of Henry III Wath belonged to Roger de Stapleton, and in 1272 Nicholas de Stapleton obtained free warren. It was held by the Mowbrays by the service of rendering a pair of gilt spurs yearly and followed the descent of the Stapletons until 1629 when it was conveyed to Sir C. Cavendish and along with Slingsby became under the ownership of the Earl of Carlisle.

2.4. Agrarian History

A consideration of the available cartographic evidence for the immediate environs of the Quarry shows a series of land divisions which remain constant until relatively recently.

Cartographic evidence earlier than the First Edition Ordnance Survey maps has not been available for consideration. No title or enclosure maps are held at the County Records and the possibility that these maps are held by the present Hovingham Estate has failed to be confirmed.

2.5 Industrial History

The First Edition Ordnance Survey for the site environs shows a number of quarries both in use and disused (Fig. 7-10). In addition a number of lime kilns are also noted. The disused mill (Figs. 7 & 8) does not appear to equate with the reference to the earlier mill at Wath.

3. Conclusions

A consideration of the available evidence shows that a number of as yet undefined cropmark features extend into the proposed quarry extension. Their close proximity to the Roman camp on Diana Hill suggests a close association, although without sample evaluation this has to remain tentative. Later activity in the form of the mill, moat, Hall site and industrial sites fall mainly to the north of the extension and have either already been effected or are not under threat from the present extension.

4. Recommendations

Considering the information obtained for the Desktop Study, in particular the aerial photographic plots and the close proximity of the Roman marching camp (Figs. 8 & 9). It would be informative if a small number of trenches could be excavated to assess these features further in advance of a Watching Brief on the topsoil stripping.

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