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**Osgodby Lane
Osgodby
Scarborough
North Yorkshire**

**Archaeological Excavation
Cycle Path**

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1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd, on behalf of Persimmon Homes (Yorkshire) Ltd to fulfill a condition attached to planning consent for residential development at Osgodby Lane, Osgodby, Scarborough, North Yorkshire (TA 057 4846 : Fig. 1).

An earthwork survey of the site in December 2000 recorded the remains of a house platform in the north-western corner of the site (Pls. 1& 2). This area will not be developed for housing but the construction of a cycle path and associated landscaping were considered to be detrimental to the underlying archaeological deposits.

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2. Site Description

The site which covers an area of approximately 8 hectares is located south of Osgodby Lane, Osgodby (Fig. 2). It is bordered to the north by Osgodby Lane, residential housing built in the early 1950's and hedgerows, to the west by housing built in the 1970's and to the south by an earthen bank with associated hedgerow and in the east by hedgerows and an artificial boundary.

The site is open grassland subdivided by gorse and hawthorn hedgerows. Well preserved earthworks of Rigg and Furrow with an associated headland, a house platform and boundary bank are present on the site. The level of the ground falls

southwards from c. 79.5m AOD in the north to c. 70m AOD in the south and 67m AOD in the east.

3. Geology

The site stands on soils of the Burlingham 2 Association deep fine loamy soils, over Chalky Till (Mackney et al. 1983).

4. Historical and Archaeological Background

The name of Osgodby is thought to derive from the Old Norse meaning Asgaut's Farm. In Domesday (1086) it is called Asgozbi and by the Twelfth and Thirteenth centuries Angotby. Rievaulx and Byland Cartularies (1160 to 1170) name it Angotby and Osgotby. By the mid Thirteenth century onwards Osgodebi seems to be the name in general use from which the present name is derived (Smith 1937).

The manor at Domesday (1086) was part of the manor of Falsgrove in the hands of the king and is described as being laid waste. By the Thirteenth century it had been incorporated into the Duchy of Lancaster as a separate manor of the Forest of Pickering. The manor house (Wyvil Hall) became derelict by the early Eighteenth century when it was rebuilt as a farm house (Hall Farm).

The 1848 Tithe Award map shows the development area to be composed of three plots (Appendix 1 : Plots 115, 116 & 123 : Fig. 3). All of the land is owned by W. J. Dennison and farmed by C. Hodgeson. The names attached to the land are Little Close, Intake and Rowlands Little Garth. The map shows no buildings fronting Osgodby Lane and the field boundaries are identical to those present prior to development.

The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1854 (Fig. 4) is identical to that of the Tithe Award Map in relation to site boundaries and the absence of buildings along the street frontage. The "Old Hall" is shown to the north-west of the site along with the location of "Old Foundations" fronting the northern side of Osgodby Lane.

By 1890 (Fig. 5) the southernmost field (known in 1848 as Rowlands Little Garth) has been sub divided. This larger scale map also records a number of earthworks. These include north-south aligned banks in the northern half of the site, a possible hollow-way along the western boundary and four platforms, the largest of which is sub rectangular in shape and fronts Osgodby Lane. To the west is a much smaller square feature. To the south-west and south-east are two more features butting up to the hollow-way in the west and bank in the east. In addition earthworks noted immediately to the south of Osgodby Lane may suggest an earlier road alignment. The 1890 County Series Survey Map also records two ponds in the south-east of the site. The most southerly of these is associated with a north south aligned drain which terminates immediately to the south of the possible hollow-way. To the north of Osgodby Lane a series of house platforms and associated enclosures are clearly illustrated along with further earthworks to the west of the site which are annotated on the map as the "Site of Ancient Village".

The 1911 County Series Map (Fig. 6) shows that the boundary between OS Parcels 347 and 348 on the 1890 County Series Map (Fig. 5) had been removed creating a single large field.

By 1928 the boundary removed on the 1911 map has been reinstated (Fig. 7).

The 1950 1:10560 Ordnance Survey map of the site (Fig. 8) shows the construction of three dwellings along the southern side of Osgodby Lane.

Development to the south of Osgodby Lane increases in the period 1950 to 1968. The 1968 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 9) shows the construction of a further five properties. To the north of the site a housing development has been constructed on the site of the earthwork enclosure shown on the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth century maps (Figs. 5-7). With the exception of a single small unit of land being created immediately to the south of Osgodby Lane there are no changes in the boundaries or internal features of the site from 1991 (Fig. 10) to the present day.

As illustrated by the cartographic evidence a number of earthworks relating to the medieval village of Osgodby survive or survived prior to the housing development in the late 1950's.

The history of the medieval village of Osgodby has been extensively researched previously (Rimington 1961), so it is not proposed to go into any great detail in this document. Osgodby has been long recognised as a Shrunken Medieval Village whose houses flanked both sides of what is now Osgodby Lane.

The earliest archaeological excavations in Osgodby were undertaken by Rimington in 1956 in the front and back garden of a bungalow fronting the southern side of Osgodby Lane (Fig. 11). Excavations in the rear garden located a cobbled surface dated by associated pottery to the Seventeenth century. A series of ten trenches (Trenches A-J) recorded a wall, pits, a cobbled path and floor and a cistern interpreted as a shell fish holding tank. Pottery dated from the Thirteenth to Sixteenth century.

The crofts and tofts (house-plots) of the former village have been mostly built over, but a series of rescue excavations were carried out in advance of this destruction (Farmer 1965 & 1968 : Fig. 12). The excavations recorded Thirteenth and Fourteenth century dwellings constructed of dwarf limestone walls, a number of which were associated with floor deposits, and a Seventeenth century building. Fragments of limestone roof-tile were also recovered.

The house platform at the extreme north-west corner of the present development site is the only survivor of these formerly extensive settlement remains. The striking earthworks of the village's Rigg and Furrow field system remain over much of the site's north-western area.

An Earthwork Survey, Geophysical Survey and Trial Trenches were carried out as part of a programme of pre-planning evaluation of the site in 1998 (Fig. 13). Two evaluation trenches through the upstanding Rigg and Furrow (On-Site Archaeology 1998b) recorded no earlier archaeological features or finds.

In addition to excavation a programme of fieldwalking has been undertaken west and north of Manor Farm (Pearson 1991).

During December 2000 an earthwork survey on land to the east and south which was not included in the original 1998 survey was undertaken (MAP 2001).

5. Methodology

Topsoil and recent overburden was removed by hand to the top of the top of the first significant archaeological horizon. Thereafter hand excavation commenced. Initially the trench measuring 31.5m by 2m was excavated in two halves separated by a causeway measuring 3.5m which allowed access. Archaeological deposits were recorded (Appendix 2) using pro-forma recording sheets. All artefacts were collected and catalogued (Appendix 3). Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at a scale of 1:10 (Appendix 4). Sections through these features were placed to provide information on phasing, function and dating. Where the phasing was apparent in plan, sections concentrated on dating evidence and profiles. The deposits at the junctions of or at interruptions on linear features were totally removed over a sufficient length to determine the nature of the relationship between components. Other cut features such as postholes and pits were half-sectioned to determine and record their form, and then fully emptied to aid recovery of dateable material.

A photographic record in black and white and colour print and colour slide transparency was maintained (Appendix 5)

All work was carried out in line with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IFA 1998).

6. Results

It is possible to break down activity at the site into three main phases: medieval, Post-medieval and modern (Figs. 15 & 16). Unfortunately, the interpretation and phasing of the medieval deposits has proved difficult due to the narrowness of the

excavated area and the homogeneity of the finds assemblage. The largest component of the medieval assemblage - Staxton/Potter Brompton Ware - is also of limited use for refining the dating of the medieval features as it has a broad date range, Twelfth to Fourteenth century.

Notwithstanding these problems it is possible to provide a basic narrative of the nature and development of the early feature at Osgodby Lane, and to identify the Post-medieval and modern events.

The natural subsoil, a yellowish clay with frequent small stone inclusions (040) was observed throughout the trench at a depth of 0.45m in the south and centre, and 0.55m in the north (Fig. 16).

Medieval

The northern edge of the platform was defined by an east-west aligned steep-sided cut (073 : Pls. 3 & 4) which was partly surfaced by an east-west linear band of cobbles. The cobbles could well represent a pathway along the northern margins of the house platform. The deposit (054) that built up over the cobbles, which was overlain by layer 046, contained Thirteenth/Fourteenth century pottery sherds.

A relatively insubstantial feature (034) demarcated the platform's southern edge, this boundary being reinstated as a more substantial east-west gully (031). The uppermost fill of the gully (029) contained a number of sherds, the latest of which suggested a Fourteenth or Fifteenth century date for the latest boundary phase.

The area between the northern and southern boundaries of the platform showed clear evidence of medieval activity, represented by linear feature, possible pits and post-settings.

The earliest feature was a curvi-linear gully (068) which crossed the width of the trench on a north-west to south-east alignment (Pl. 7). This was 0.4m wide and 0.2m deep and contained a single brown silty clay fill (066) which yielded no finds. The

relatively large size of this gully and its curved alignment suggest that this had been dug for drainage purposes.

The southern end of Gully 068 was cut through by a straight gully (060) with an east-west alignment, 0.5m wide and 0.3m deep (Pl. 7). The brown silty clay fill (061) contained a small number of Staxton/Potter Brompton Ware sherds. The dimensions of this gully suggest that it too was a drainage feature.

There were indications that Gully 060 was recut along its southern edge by a minor gully (056) which had a short offshoot to the south (052). The brown silty clay fill (053) of the latter contained Staxton / Potter Brompton Ware sherds.

Also stratigraphically later than the curvilinear gully 060 was an oval posthole (063) with traces of a postpipe (064) in the centre. The yellowish brown silty clay fill (062) contained no finds.

Another post-setting (069 : Pl. 8) was identified c. 2m to the north-east of 063, and consisted of an oval cut 0.40m wide and in excess of 0.50m long (east-west), and 0.15m deep. The yellowish-brown silty clay fill (067) was packed with rounded cobbles, but yielded no finds.

A group of features (Pls. 5 & 6) was identified in the central part of the house platform, consisting of two parallel east-west linears (043 and 086), the latter with a shallower recut (082), which was in turn cut by a north-south gully (045) linking 043 to 086. These features varied from 0.6m (082) to 0.2m (043) in width, and 0.3m (045) to 0.05m (082) in depth. The fills (042, 085, 081 and 044 respectively) were brown yellowish brown silty clays, 081 and 085 containing Staxton/Potter Brompton Ware sherds.

It is possible that these features represent a structure, forming slots for the sill-beams of a rectangular building, and in this sense 082 would form the north wall, 043 the south wall and 045 a later internal subdivision. However, there are problems with that

interpretation, with the depths of 043 and 045 (0.2m and 0.3m respectively) being greater than would be expected for beam-slots. Feature 082 at 0.05m deep would be a more reasonable depth for a beam slot, but its great width (0.6m) is excessive for that interpretation. It is safest to see this group as a combination of boundary and drainage features that subdivided the interior of the house platform.

Cut 084 was a shallow pit situated immediately north of Gully 086, in close enough alignment with it to suggest that they were contemporary. The pit was 1.30m long, 0.5m wide and 0.10m deep with a yellowish brown silty clay fill (083) which contained Staxton/Potter Brompton Ware sherds.

The remaining medieval feature to be described was 035, a gully running south of and parallel to Gully 043, running westwards into the trench and butting out half-way across it. Gully 035 had a length of at least 0.5m, and was 0.35m wide and 0.10m deep. The yellowish brown silty clay fill (032) yielded no finds.

Post-medieval

During the Post-medieval period a substantial deposit of brown silty clay (025) accumulated over the southern part of the excavated area. This layer contained a large number of sherds, the latest of which dated the deposit to Sixteenth century or later.

An insubstantial wall (036) was set into the top of Deposit 025, and consisted of a single course of roughly squared sandstones, approximately 0.25m x 0.2m x 0.2m in size; no bonding material was present. The alignment was east-west, but the western end of the wall was cut away by a modern drain (020). Judging by these relatively scant remains the structure had no great substance, and was possibly even temporary.

A brown silty clay deposit (024) accumulated over the southern and central parts of the excavated area, and this contained a sherd of "Bellarmine" stoneware dating the layer to the Seventeenth century or later. The character of this layer suggested that it was formed by relatively slow accumulation (perhaps horticulture) rather than deliberate dumping.

Modern

Modern developments at the site were represented by a terracing cut at the northern end of the excavated area, a field drain, pebble surfacing, service trenches and postholes, and various minor dump deposits.

The terracing cut (072) created a steep-sided north-facing scarp in the central area of the trench; a layer of brownish silty clay (059) that built up over it contained modern sherds.

The field drain cut (071) was not originally recognised, but could be seen cutting through the earlier cobble layer (058). The field drain cut through layer 054 which had accumulated over the cobbles, and formed a vertically-sided trench containing a series of ceramic drain pipes. Along with terrace 072, the field drain apparently represents a phase of land improvement.

An area of pebble surfacing (010) formed a band running across the central part of the excavated area. Aligned with a modern gate giving access into the site, the pebble surfacing was clearly modern, a date confirmed by associated finds.

The pebble surface was cut through by a water pipe trench (fill 016, cut 017) and a sewer trench (fill 003, cut 004), which were services to a Twentieth century bungalow recently demolished to the west of the site. A small pit (fill 022, cut 023) also intruded into the pebble surface.

A number of minor deposits (021, 006, 007, 014, 048 and 055) represented recent dumping at the site. A group of recent postholes (051) related to an existing east-west fence crossing the northern part of the site.

Lastly, the recent topsoil (002) and turfsoil (001) completed the sequence, the former becoming deeper downslope to the north.

7. Discussion and Conclusions

The results presented previously, illustrate that even a small-scale excavation can significantly add to the general understanding of a site within its wider setting. On this occasion, several key components of the only surviving medieval house platform within Osgodby were observed, although no actual stone foundations or walls of a dwelling structure were located.

Firstly, it is possible to say that the true profile of this platform has been demonstrated, although its extents lay beyond the limits of this excavation. The profile was found to have been altered significantly over time, being much steeper on the northern scarp due to Nineteenth century terracing, which echoed an earlier, medieval terrace. The southern slope was demarcated by a ditch.

Also during the medieval period, the surface of the platform was cut by numerous features, mainly in the form of intersecting gullies. These features probably represent divisions of the housing plot for different purposes, and would also have acted as an effective drainage system. The preoccupation with drainage is understandable, the difficulties created by winter rainfall to movement about a site with clay subsoil being amply illustrated during the excavation.

There were also hints of structural activity in the form of two postholes, although the narrowness of the excavated area did not allow any further information to be gained about the character of the structure suggested.

Similar types of features and finds were observed during the excavation of other medieval house platforms further to the north and west of this site. Of particular relevance are Rimmington's 1956 excavations in Stubb's Field, which extended (as Trench J) into the paddock containing the 2000-1 excavation (Fig. 17). The cobbled path revealed in 1956 closely resembles 'pathway' 058 of the present excavations, albeit on a different alignment. It is apparent that the medieval features recorded in the 2000-2001 excavations are peripheral to the Thirteenth / Fourteenth century foundations uncovered by Rimmington. The description of rough walling in

Rimmington's Trench J also has a parallel with the present excavation in the Sixteenth / Seventeenth century wall 036. Taken together therefore the two excavations confirm a Thirteenth century to early Post-medieval date range for occupation at this part of Osgodby village.

8. Recommendations

From the quantity and type of medieval features observed, and also the pottery recovered, limited excavation has indicated that the location of the associated dwelling must be within the immediate vicinity. Reference to earlier excavations confirms that this lies immediately to the east of the 2000-2001 site.

Therefore, it is strongly advised that any subsequent works within the remaining eastern half of this plot be subject to archaeological excavation if they penetrate below 0.2m from the present ground surface.

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