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**Plot 2, South Wold Farm,
Duggleby
North Yorkshire**

**Archaeological Recording Brief
SE 8781 6706**

**MAP 02-11-01
February 2002**

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Summary

A Watching Brief in Duggleby on preparatory ground clearance in advance of the construction of a single dwelling revealed several archaeological features. Residual flint flakes were collected from the overburden and from the fills of later features. Three linear features, a grain dryer or oven and a single post hole of medieval date were excavated.

1. Introduction

In November 2001 an Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on preparatory site clearance and partial ground reduction of a building plot at South Wold Farm in Duggleby, within the civil parish of Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire (Figs 1 & 2 : SE 8781 6706) in preparation for the construction of a single dwelling and garage (Planning Application No. 01/01032/FUL). The site is one of a pair of building plots at South Wold Farm, adjacent to New Road and is referred to as Plot 2.

The site is within a village of medieval origin and close to the standing Round Barrow known as Duggleby Howe and a complex of cropmarks associated with the Barrow. All these features are now included within a Scheduled Ancient Monument. A written scheme of investigation prepared by North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Unit highlighted the high potential for the survival of Prehistoric and later archaeological remains within the development area (NYCC 2001).

All work was funded by Mr J Holmes.

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2. Geology

The soils on the site are of the Coombe 1 Association, well drained calcareous fine silty soils, deep in valley bottoms, shallow to chalk on valley sides in places, over a solid geology of Chalk and chalky drift (Mackney et al 1983).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Duggleby is within the civil parish of Kirby Grindalythe, North Yorkshire. The village is situated at the base of the Great Wold Valley, straddling the principle watercourse through the valley, the Gypsy race.

The site lies approximately 100m north west of Duggleby Howe, a standing Round Barrow and 50m from the crop marks of a double ditch surrounding the mound and four smaller ring ditches to the east. Duggleby Howe was probably the centre of a Neolithic ritual landscape, one of several ritual focuses in a landscape that was densely populated at this time (Steertz 1997).

Between July and August 1890 Duggleby Howe was excavated by Mortimer. The mound was found to contain ten inhumations and fifty three cremations of Later Neolithic date (Manby ed. 1988). In addition there was pottery and finds from disturbed secondary Anglo-Saxon burials.

On the flat top of Duggleby Howe Mortimer found evidence of a cross shaped trench cut into the hill which he suggests prepared it for the role as a moot hill a ceremonial and political meeting place (Mortimer 1905). It has more recently been suggested that this was in fact the base for a Post Mill (Manby ed. 1988).

Many variants of the place name Duggleby are attested in the documentary record from the Eleventh to Seventeenth century. The primary element appears to be a Scandinavian personal name Dufgall, originally derived from Old Irish *Dubhghall*, 'black foreigner' applied by the Irish to Danish Vikings. The *by* element refers to a settlement associated with the personal name. The process through which a place name of this type is attached to a location is uncertain. It may imply a personal possession of a person named *Dufgal* (Smith 1937). There is no reason for the etymological derivation of the place name to have any literal significance

in relation to a real person, although it might be argued that someone whose name is ultimately of Scandinavian origin could have Scandinavian roots. Alternatively as the name is derived essentially from an insult it might persist as a derogatory term applied by locals to Danish settlers in the area. Although *by* is also a Scandinavian element, its use in denoting a settlement does not necessarily imply that the settlement is populated by Scandinavians. Place name evidence is not really sufficient to prove the existence of an Anglo-Scandinavian community in the area.

Aerial photographic plots of Prehistoric/Romano-British field systems west of the village between Duggleby and Wharram Le Street suggest a continuous linear system of field enclosures on the valley slopes (Steertz 1997).

There are settlements of medieval origin spaced at regular intervals along the valley approximately 1800m apart between Wharram Le Street to the east and Weaverthorpe to the west, taking into account the deserted village of Mowthorpe and excepting a large gap between Kirby Grindelythe and West Lutton. The regular spacing of nucleated dwellings, now much contracted from their original peak, demonstrates that the maximum settlement density for subsistence arable farming was achieved in the medieval period. It is likely that the valley reached a peak of arable farming prior to the Black Death. Taking into account the surrounding field systems, there would have been an unbroken line of fields in agricultural production down the valley interspersed with settlements at convenient walking distance from village fields and a share of other natural resources.

It is likely that a similar settlement pattern and density would characterise the maximum extent of agricultural production in the Prehistoric and Romano-British periods and the settlement pattern would always have been constrained and shaped by the topography of the landscape.

A Watching Brief in October 2001 on the excavation of foundation trenches on a housing development at Home Farm approximately 50m north-west of the site encountered a number of undated cut features that might be vestiges of medieval occupation on that site (MAP forthcoming).

A rapid Desk Top Study of the site was carried out in 1999 by Kevin Cale, Archaeological Consultant in response to an earlier planning application on the two building plots. From the evidence of a pattern of fields recorded in the eighteenth century Cale suggested that the medieval field system was substantially intact at this time. North-west of the village, long curvi-linear strip fields indicated the survival of ridge and furrow cultivation. Although the fields south of the village appeared to have been enclosed in the medieval period some of the north-south boundaries respect the line of fields to the north. This suggests a pattern of north, south strip field cultivation on either side of the Gypsy Race. Cale also suggested that the development site may have been located at the western extent of a possible village green represented by an undeveloped triangle of land on the eastern side of the village. The contemporary eighteenth century village is irregular and clustered around the road crossing over the Gypsy Race (NYCC 2001).

4. Methodology

The site has been undeveloped for several years and some small trees were growing in low mounds of soil mixed with building rubble. The site was cleared by a JCB wheeled excavator using a non-toothed ditching bucket. The developer allowed site clearance to be carried out under the control of the supervising archaeologist.

Initially the mounds of soil and undergrowth were removed, the topsoil being stored for later use. Site clearance began at the north-eastern end where the topsoil was removed to a horizon where archaeological features might be expected. After a small area was excavated it was agreed that reduction to this level over the whole site would be too low leaving the building platform within a hollow and the level was raised. This left an area of topsoil in place above archaeological levels at the north-eastern end. This area is to be under a stone infill for a garage base and will not be disturbed by the development and any archaeological features present will be preserved under this covering.

The underlying natural deposits rose south-eastwards towards the hill where Duggleby Howe stands and topsoiling to the level of archaeological features proceeded by following the natural contour of subsoil or natural deposits. A further reduction of 0.2m - 0.3m was required, in agreement with North Yorkshire County Council this was carried out after recording and sample excavation had taken place.

Approximately 50% of the site in a diagonal from north to south showed signs of having been disturbed extensively. Two concrete bases for agricultural silos were uncovered, one within the plot and a second straddling the boundary of Plot 1 and Plot 2.

A hard standing of modern brick compacted into soil containing building rubble and other debris surrounded the silo bases. A further concrete platform, possibly a loading bay accessed from New Road, lay in front of the north-western silo base and much of the topsoil on the north-western side of the site had been formed or re-deposited since the abandonment of the structure. During the clearance of the site a number of archaeological features were observed, the site was surveyed and features located by using a Total Station EDM. The process of excavation and recording of the features was carried out over a two-day period. Plans and sections were recorded at 1:20 and 1:10 and a photographic record was made on Black and White and Colour Print film and Colour Transparency. Features were recorded using MAP's standard recording sheets.

5. Results

Three parallel linear features ran north-east to south-west across the site. These had been truncated by the disturbance to the south western half of the site and only the south eastern linear at 12m long extended over the whole width of the excavation (Fig. 3 : Pl. 1).

This feature was sectioned in two places (cuts 1011 and 1012) revealing a shallow curved cut which was 0.1m - 0.15m deep (Figs. 3 & 4 : Pls. 2 & 3). The segment at the southern end (cut 1012) showed that the feature was truncated slightly at this point by the disturbance to the western half of the site associated with the grain silos. The deposit filling this linear gully (1003) was grey silty clay easily distinguished from the natural material surrounding it. The material contained frequent fragments of naturally derived limestone and naturally derived clay mixed with humic material. A single Humber ware rod handle dating to the Fifteenth century was the only find from this deposit (Appendix 2).

To the north-east a second linear ditch 1.35m wide and 5m in length, had a more distinctive profile (cut 1010), with sloping straight sides and a slight base gully (Figs. 3 & 4 : Pl. 4) The full depth of the ditch was 0.3m with the base gully approximately 0.10m deep. Again the single fill deposit (1002) was easily distinguished from the surrounding natural material but it

did contain slightly more naturally derived chalk and limestone fragments. Finds from the ditch fill were limited to two sherds of medieval pottery of Twelfth to Fourteenth century date (Appendix 2).

The third parallel ditch was truncated to 3m in length, part of the upper deposit being removed during the initial machining. The profile of this feature showed more complexity than the two other linear cuts having been re-cut along the same line (Figs. 3 & 4 : Pl. 5). The primary cut (1009) was 0.8m wide. It had steep sloping sides breaking sharply on the south eastern edge to form a small platform before breaking again to a narrow base gully 0.1m deep. The primary fill of cut 1016 was a compact yellow brown clay, similar in colour to the clay matrix of the surrounding natural suggesting that it formed through erosion of the clay from the edges of the ditch. Above this was a 0.2m thick deposit of fine ashes in a clay matrix (1007) with occasional limestone fragments. Two sherds of medieval pottery of Twelfth to Fourteenth century date were found in this deposit (Appendix 2).

The upper part of the ashy deposit had been removed by a broad shallow re-cut (cut 1008). The re-cut had a steep side with a ledge on the north-western side breaking to a 0.5m wide base gully with a curved profile.

Context 1001, the deposit filling the re-cut ditch (cut 1008) was also a distinctive dark silty clay soil. A single residual sherd of Romano-British Grey ware was found in this deposit. A cluster of stones within the centre of 1001, immediately below the topsoil (1000) may have been a stone filled channel representing the final manifestation of the drainage function of the feature.

The truncated lower part of a grain drier or oven represented by a cut feature (1013) was located within the space defined by the two southern linear gulleys (cut 1010, cuts 1011/1012). The feature was half sectioned following discussions with the developer who agreed to preserve the remaining part in situ. The grain drier consisted of a 2m x 1.5m rounded pit, with a sloping 0.25m maximum depth, curved profile and a shallower flue 1m wide rising to a rounded terminal at the south western end (Figs. 3 & 4 : Pls. 6 & 7). A compact deposit of ash (context 1017) was present at the intersection of the flue and pit but no scorching or baking of surrounding natural clay was observed. At the base of the pit a

0.1m thick deposit of silty soil (context 1014) covered the compact soot deposit. Above this deposit context 1005 filled remainder of the pit and the flue. The fill material was friable soil containing five residual worked flints and flakes suggesting that the kiln had been backfilled with ploughsoil which already contained the Prehistoric artefacts. A single pottery sherd dating from the Twelfth to the Fourteenth century confirmed the medieval date of the feature (Appendix 2).

Only a single possible structural feature was observed on the site, a post hole situated 0.6m south-east of the northern most ditch (cuts 1008/1009). The profile of the feature (cut 1015) was very steep, tapering slightly toward the base. The bottom 0.10m of the cut formed a square socket, possibly the original seating of the post. The fill of the post hole (context 1006) was homogenous silty clay, with a few limestone fragments in the upper surface, possibly a remnant of a packing deposit. A single fragment of flint was found within this fill. No other structures were observed.

6. Discussion

All the features excavated at Plot 2 dated from the medieval period. Two of the three linear ditches were truncated and it is difficult to project their exact line but the third has an irregular curved line suggestive of the curvilinear form of ridge and furrow sellions. The profile of the segments cut through the ditch were flat shallow typical of the archaeological remains of truncated furrows.

It is not certain that the three separate ditches were part of the same regime of land division. There was a 6m gap between cut 1011/1012 and 1010 but only a 4m gap between cut 1010 and cut 1009. Ditch cuts 1010 and 1009 had more distinct profiles and narrow base gullies suggesting a channel cleaned out regularly. The ditch represented by cuts 1008/1009 showed evidence that it had been filled with the ashy material then partly cleaned. The irregular spacing and differing cleaning patterns might suggest that the ditches were not all contemporary or for the same purpose although they all broadly dated to the medieval period.

The Duggleby location has undulating topography that imposes constraints on the extent of possible development. Historically the villages built by successive societies have grown and contracted within these constraints.

It is possible that the site lies at a margin between successive limits of medieval agricultural and domestic occupation and that the ditches represent both an agricultural furrow and stronger boundaries possibly enclosing a domestic house plot containing the kiln and isolated post hole. These might represent two phases in the growth and contraction of the village, the later furrow being a replacement activity in an area that was once part of the domestic nucleus.

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