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enclosed please find the records and a brief detailing of the work at Welham road, Norton, on 17.01.92.

I dont have copies of the architects plans, nor detailed plans of the area and so cannot relate the trench to its exact location. The trench forms what is to be the west wall of the building so you should be able to locate on the original plans submitted in the planning application. A sketch below shows the position of the sections in relation to the trench.

Conversation with the machine operator on site produced additional information that may be of interest to you. Namely that areas at least of the site to the east of the millpond were bulldozed in recent years. Although overgrown with vegetation the spoil heaps produced by this activity are still quite visible. Quite why this was done and to what depth the bulldozer removed material is uncertain.

Mark Johnson.

Mark Johnson



Observation of a building foundation trench, Welham road, Norton, North Yorkshire, on 17.01.92. by Mark Johnson.

The excavated trench (SE7902 7095, in Norton parish) forms the western side of a proposed building laying a short distance to the east of Welham road, and is roughly parallel to the relict millpond further to the east. This foundation trench is situated on sloping ground, the land falling away quite sharply from west to east and to a much lesser extent from south to north. The entirety of the trench was machine excavated, two sections of which were subsequently trowel cleaned, drawn and recorded. As the building contractors used a level to ensure that the base of the trench was truly horizontal the trench bottom was used as the datum from which all measurements were taken.

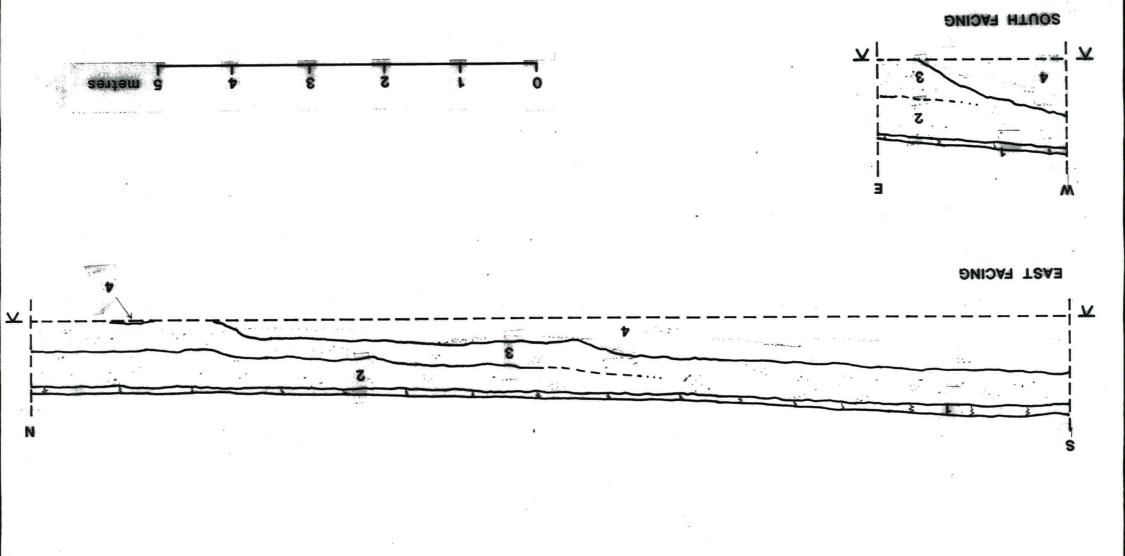
The sequence of observed layers can be described thus:

- 1) Thin, compact, dark, sandy loam topsoil containing 19th century and later finds. Some of the compaction is likely to be due to the movement of heavy machinery in the area.
- 2) Moderate to compact, darkish brown, sandy silt loam containing occasional small rounded pebbles. No finds.
- 3) Loose to moderate, dark brown, sandy silt loam containing only a very few small rounded pebbles. No finds.
- 4) Natural. 90% = medium grain sized sands in which some laminations are evident. Remainder = lenses of fine gravel. Colour variations are from yellow to orange. Believed to be of glacial origin.
- * Note: Some mixing at the interfaces of all these layers was evident. See section drawings and context records.

Brief Summary

The sequence revealed in section was a simple one although with the exception of ,1, a topsoil showing clear evidence of considerable disturbance possibly derived through use as a garden/growing soil, the interpretation of the remaining layers is somewhat uncertain. It can be seen in the profiles of the natural sand and gravel strata, 4, that the slope of this material is of a steeper gradient than that of the two layers above it ,2, and ,3,. Neither of these two layers produced any finds whatsoever and both were of a clean, undisturbed appearance in which no cuts or evidence of activity was visible. In short, no evidence could be found to prove them to be a product of direct human action. Their characteristics were by contrast, such as may be expected in a gradual accumulation of hillwash. Given the location of the trench part way down a slope such a process must be anticipated in this vicinity. However, examination of ,4, in the longer of the two sections shows two quite abrupt steps in profile. Whilst such a profile may be of natural origin, it does raise the possibility of them resulting from attempts at terracing. Against this it must be pointed out that as the major ground slope is in a west to east direction one must question whether or not the gentle south to north slope would have ever warranted terracing. Finally, attention is drawn to the fact that given the considerable west to east slope of the hillside at this part of the Welham road development site, it is likely in the past to have been of a marginal nature, particularly perhaps in terms of its usage for building purposes.

- * Note: July 1989, three metal detecting finds made by J. Halliday esq in close vicinity of trench:
- 1) Ae coin of Constantine c.330 A.D.
- 2) 2 x Ae Fibulae (distorted by heat? = cremation?).



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