

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

An examination of the available evidence indicates that there is the potential for the preservation of archaeological remains within the study area. There are significant prehistoric monuments in the locality and a significant scattering of chance finds in the vicinity of the study area signal the possibility of early settlement here. The western part of the valley, characterised by a deeply incised river valley is not conducive to settlement but early settlement could have been located in the eastern part of the study area, where the valley bottom widens out.

Immediately adjacent to the study area lies Fountains Abbey monastic complex, which has primary archaeological significance regionally and nationally. Archaeological recording here has noted the importance of the river Skell and importance of water power to the whole establishment in allowing a significant level of industrial activity to take place. Extensive water management of the Skell associated with medieval mills has been recorded but archaeological survey has not extended up-stream from the medieval mill leat and river Skell into the study area. The possibility that water management occurred up-stream, outside the boundary of the monastic complex, should, however, be considered. At the time of this study the banks of the Skell were quite overgrown and structural remains relating to water management have not been previously recorded, and are not immediately visible. Nevertheless, the meanders in the Skell could have been manipulated as part of the management of the river dating from the medieval period. The topography indicates the possibility of ponding the river and controlling the flow particularly in the section downstream from Aldfield Spa to Fountains Bridge. The proposed flood alleviation scheme falls within this section of the river and would clearly impact on any potential surviving evidence of medieval water management or remains here.

The Skell runs through the World Heritage Site, Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal. The river is an integral part of these sites, although they both lie outside the study area. The Skell is a vital part of the integrated landscape of this garden parkland and any alterations to the river would have to take account of the protected nature of the site. There is statutory protection in place on the Scheduled Monument and Scheduled Garden site of Fountains Abbey/Studley Royal Gardens and a management plan for the site was established in 2000.

The sites of the proposed embankment fall within the area of Studley Royal Park as it was extended by William Aislebie in the 18th century. The complete and partial remains of bridges constructed as a part of the landscaping, and other potential remains of this phase of landscaping would be clearly disturbed by the potential scheme for flood alleviation.

The remains of the building associated with Aldfield Spa and the stone cover to the spring at Aldfield Spa are up-stream of the proposed site for the embankment and may not be directly affected by the embankment, although the flood extent would impact. The likely access route for the construction work, along the path immediately adjacent to the Spa, could also have a strong impact on these remains.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study area lies outside land covered by the statutory protection of Scheduling. Numerous archaeological investigations have been carried out within the boundary of Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal Gardens but there has been paucity of archaeological investigation within the study area. This study has highlighted areas and periods where the existing evidence suggests a strong possibility or likelihood of surviving evidence or remains of archaeological significance. There is the potential for prehistoric settlement in the eastern part of the study area. The proposed embankment sites lie directly within the area of the river where there is a potential for medieval water management and remains relating to the post-medieval landscaping of the parkland. An archaeological survey of the area prior to disturbance might establish more precisely the location and extent of potential medieval and post-medieval remains. An archaeological watching brief is strongly recommended during any disturbance of below ground deposits.

The flood extent of the proposed scheme will be likely to have an impact on the remains at Aldfield Spa. The access route for the construction of the embankment is also likely to affect these remains which have some historical interest and significance to the locality.

There is statutory protection in place on the Scheduled Monument and Scheduled Garden site of Fountains Abbey/Studley Royal Gardens and a management plan for the whole site was established in 2000. The impact of alteration to the flow of the Skell on the downstream area where the river runs through the World Heritage Site will have to be taken into account by the proposed flood alleviation scheme.

It should be noted that no information was available designating an area where "borrow pits" might be excavated.

7. LIST OF SOURCES

English Heritage, 2000, Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal World Heritage Site Draft Management Plan Summary

Finlayson, R., 2002. *Ripon Flood Alleviation Scheme, North Yorkshire* YAT Field Report 2002/60

Fountains Abbey n.d, from the Ordnance Survey, NYRO MIC 2707/77

Fuller, M., 2001. An Archaeological and Heritage Appraisal of the River Skell, for the University Certificate in Archaeology

Lindrick with Studley Royal Fountains plan of an estate belonging to Mrs. E.S. Lawrence, by Thomas Robinson, 1831, scale 6" to 1 chain, NYRO MIC 2707/127/127-141

Lindrick with Studley Royal Fountains, 1870 Estate Map, scale 6" to 1 chain, NYRO MIC 2707/127/2-21

Lindrick with Studley Royal Fountains, water scheme, 1930 Estate Map, NYRO MIC 2707/127/83-107

Ordnance Survey 2nd edition, revised 1909, c sheet 118 1:2500 (NYRO MIC 1895)

Ordnance Survey, 1979, Geological Survey of Great Britain 1:625000

APPENDIX 1, KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SITES

The locations of known historical and archaeological sites within and close to the study area are listed below. This information is derived from the National Monument Record and the North Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record. Each site within the NMR is identified by a "unique identifier" and where applicable the equivalent record number in the SMR is also provided (these all have NYM as a prefix).

The study area is immediately adjacent to a large area which has Scheduled Monument protection, is a Listed Historic Garden which is also a part of the site with World Heritage Site status. The full area covered by this protection within the study area are mapped (see Fig. 2).

The medieval fishponds (NMR 51927) at Park House have Scheduled Monument status

The sites are all mapped see Fig. 2, the numbers in bold form an index to Fig. 2.

Prehistoric

1) NMR 52145, SE 27 70

Large sword found near to Lindrick Farm before 1846, possibly Bronze Age

1) NMR 52151, SE 27 70

A Bronze Age or Iron Age gold torc was found in 1818 in a cairn on High Lindrick Farm.

Roman

2) NMR 51888, SE 27 69

A round bronze box, possibly a Roman seal box found at Linrick, 1931.

Medieval

3) **Fountains Abbey** (NMR UI 51860, NYM21532) NGR SE 275 683 (centre point) Scheduled Monument (no. 26930).

Fountains Abbey, which includes the monastic precinct, a mill, water management works, agricultural and industrial features and an 18th century water garden.

Elements of this monument are separately recorded in the NMR. Only those elements which are judged to relate to the study area are included here and mapped separately.

4) **Abbey Mill**, (NMR 620480) SE 2726 6820, part of Scheduled Monument (no. 26930), Listed Building Grade I, National Trust.

Watermill and cornmill, was used as a working mill until 1937. Built in the 12th century, remodelled in the late 12th century and again in the early 13th century. Altered post 1539 and in the 19th century.

5) NMR 975426, SE 2736 6815, part of Scheduled Monument (no. 26930)

Storehouse at Fountains Abbey, on the south side of the river Skell, excavated in 1888 and first interpreted as a malthouse, brewhouse and bakehouse. Following an excavation in 1977-80 it was re-interpreted as a **woolhouse**, incorporating a **fulling mill** and later a **dyehouse**,

- 6) NMR 975311, SE 2734 6805, part of Scheduled Monument (no. 26930)
An earthworks survey in 1989 and 1991 identified traces of twenty two different buildings on the south side of the monastic precinct. One of these sat astride a stream and was presumably a mill. It survived as a ruin in to the 19th century.
- 7) NMR 1057352, SE 2715 6818 to SE 2795 6840, part of Scheduled Monument (no. 26930)
Medieval water management system including rerouting of the River Skell in the 1140's through stone channels, tunnels, weirs and mill race serving Abbey Mill.
- 8) NMR 1057440 SE 273 680, Earthwork remains of a group of 21, probably **medieval ancillary, industrial and agricultural buildings** associated with Fountains Abbey and lie on the south bank above the river Skell.
- 9) NMR 1345183, SE 270 682, **Infirmary** of the poor at Fountains Abbey documented in the reign of Richard I and was located by the Abbey gatehouse.
- 10) NMR 975400, SE 275 682, **Boundary wall** of the Abbey survives to its full height on the south and south west sides of the precinct.
- 11) NMR 51927, NYM 21148, SE 2668 6766, Scheduled Monument, no. 31338 **Fishponds**, six rectangular medieval fishponds which survive as earthworks next to Park House, a 17th century house, possibly a manor house.
- 12) NMR 51918, SE 2658 6947, **St Lawrence's Church**, Aldfield chapel, founded in the 13th century, the present church erected c. 1783. Grade I Listed Building.

II

Post-Medieval

- 13) **Studley Royal, GD 1376**
- 13) **Studley Royal Park**, NMR UI 51924, NGR SE 283 696
The Archbishops of York had formed a park at Ripon, and the existing park at Studley Royal is in the immediate neighbourhood and appears on Saxton's Survey of 1577. Fountains Abbey was one of the richest religious houses in England, following the Dissolution the buildings and some of the land was sold to Richard Gresham, who later sold them to Stephen Proctor. After several more changes of ownership the Abbey ruins and Fountains Hall were acquired by the Messenger family who sold them to William Aislebie. The park was landscaped by John Aislebie, but following the fire which burnt Studley Hall in 1716 a major reorganisation of the landscape was planned. Central to Aislebie's scheme was an enhancement of the River Skell. The valley sides were lowered and the bottom raised and canalised. On the east side of the canal a circular pond flanked by two crescent ponds (Moon and Crescent Ponds) were constructed.
- 14) **Studley Royal Park**, NMR 1097359, SE 262 680 centre point
Western extension of the park land up the Skell valley from 1768 onwards. Following the acquisition of the Messenger lands at Fountains Abbey in 1768, William Aislebie committed himself to a programme of land acquisition and lease to the west of the abbey, not satisfied with being able to view the ruins from the east alone. Drives and walks were constructed on both sides of the Skell, three bridges, one a fine stone bridge, giving cross-river access. The major

feature of this area is Rough House, which gives unparalleled views of the Abbey. An estate map of 1773 shows old ponds which may be medieval fish ponds. No other major works of the period have been found in this area, and it is thought that William stopped developing the area because he could not acquire the land necessary to complete his vision of it. The 1831 estate map of Studley shows Lord Grantley to be in possession of the Westward Park extension. This area is not in the possession of the National Trust, neither does it form part of the World Heritage Site of Studley Royal Park.

15) NMR 1097381 **Bridge** over the Skell, in Spring Wood. The bridge was constructed c. 1774 as one of the three across the Skell connecting paths on the north and south banks. It is made of stone, has three rounded arches with keystones and voussoirs and stands on triangular cutwaters. It is a miniature version of the bridges at Bridge Hewick and Boroughbridge (both c. 1780). The bridge has Grade II Listed Building status.

This is recorded with the grid reference SE 2660 6813, which is up-stream of Fountains Bridge, but the description is of Fountains Bridge, at SE 2706 6824.

16) NMR 1097402, SE 2664 6796, **Rough House**, in Studley Royal Park. This building was the final embellishment to the western part of the park. A pre-existing building with an unparalleled view of Fountains Abbey from the west was converted after 1774 by adding a heavy decorative shell of rough stone and giving the impression of a ruin. The pantile roof dates from the 20th century.

Grade II Listed Building Status.

17) NMR 51927, SE 2668 6766, **Park House**, a 17th century house, possibly a manor house, and possibly dating from the late 16th century. Beside the house are six rectangular medieval fishponds which survive as earthworks. The fishponds are a Scheduled Monument, no. 31338 and the house is Grade II Listed Building.

17) NYM 13835, Park wall of Park House.

17) NMR 522931, SE 267 677, **Park House Barn**, post-medieval barn at Park House

18) **Fountains Hall** (NMR 51877) SE 2714 6829, Listed Building Grade I, National Trust. Large House built 1598-1611 in the Elizabethan Renaissance style.

12) NMR 51918, SE 2658 6947, **St Lawrence's Church**, Aldfield chapel, founded in the 13th century, the present church erected c. 1783. Grade I Listed Building.

19) NMR 51897, SE 2659 6944, A house, dated 1676, opposite the chapel in Aldfield.

20) NMR 51854, SE 2557 6807, Hog Hall, Swanley, 15th century origins, probably a manor house of the Nortons, altered in the 16th and 17th century.

NYM 14434, SE 2420 6929, Grantley Hall

Appendix 2, Archaeological events (investigations)

Archaeological events (investigations) which occur within or near to the study area are listed here with their identifying numbers. The events recorded by NMR have **UI** as a prefix. Some of these events are National Trust SMR. The full excavation details of these events cannot be covered by this report, instead, reference is made to relevant archaeological remains within the period by period analysis, and all of the events are mapped see Fig. 2. The numbers in bold form an index to Fig. 2.

21) UI 621119, SE 272 687

Swanley Grange Visitor Centre, M. Newman, 1988-92

Archaeological Evaluation of the site of the new visitors centre for Fountains Abbey, fieldwalking, geophysical survey, watching briefs and trial excavations. One trench revealed the truncated end of a trackway and bank thought to be medieval in date.

22) UI 1101654, SE 2727 6840

Swanley Grange Farm, M. Newman, 1993

Excavation undertaken in advance of farm building conversion. Post-medieval building, yard and pit were identified.

22) UI 1216064, SE 272 684

Swanley Grange Farm, J. Gater, 1988

Geophysical survey of sample area of the farm indicate remains of monastic buildings and 16th century farm buildings.

23) UI 975066, SE 273 683

Fountains Abbey, Northern Approaches, RCHME, 1989

RCHME survey of the approach to the Abbey from the north side in advance of footpath construction to the Visitor Centre. A possible length of precinct wall was identified but relatively little else of archaeological interest was noted.

23) UI 1037549, SE 2715 6830

Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 1994, National Trust

Excavation was undertaken during work to establish the cause of possible subsidence. Drainage was thought to be a likely cause. The excavation concluded that the drainage system was in good condition and was unlikely to be the cause of the structural problems. A well or cistern was uncovered which was in association with a floor height some way below the current floor level. Masonry identified probably represents an earlier phase of building.

23) UI 1101659, SE 2714 6830

Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 1994

Two small trenches were excavated to examine the foundations of building. No evidence of structures pre-dating the Hall were revealed.

23) UI 1185225, SE 271 682

Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 1997

Watching brief of excavation of several water pipe and cable trenches, little archaeological interest.

- 23) UI 1309843, SE 2716 6827
Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 1998
Watching brief during cable laying to the south-east of the hall, no results are specified.
- 23) UI 1342345, SE 2714 6829
Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 1999, National Trust
Watching brief of drain repairs south-east of the hall and building works to the hall. Nothing of archaeological significance was recovered.
- 23) UI 1355917, SE 2719 6829
Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 2000, National Trust
Recording undertaken during the lifting of the flagstone floor in a room in the north-east corner of the hall. Medieval walling was encountered cut directly into glacial clays. Features encountered were thought to belong to parts of the gatehouse of the original medieval abbey. A post-medieval hearth was also recorded.
- 23) UI 1356668, SE 2712 6828
Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 2001
Watching brief during the relaying of waste water drainage. Traces of 16th and 17th century surfaces were identified.
- 24) UI 1355735, SE 2710 6830
Foal Cote Farm, K. Cale, National Trust, 1999,
Watching brief to monitor groundworks, recorded no significant archaeological deposits.
- 25) UI 1067100, SE 274 681
Fountains Abbey, Ancient Monuments Laboratory Historic Buildings and Monuments, 1978
Resistivity survey identified part of the abbey buildings.
- 26) UI 1168311, SE 2726 6820
Fountains Abbey Mill, West Yorkshire Archaeological Service, 1996
Watching brief to monitor the removal of top soil in the area to the south of the visible mill pond wall and close to the west wall of the mill building. At least two different stages in the development of water control for the mill were recorded.
- 26) UI 1168312, SE 2726 6820
Fountains Abbey Mill, West Yorkshire Archaeological Service, 1997
Evaluation, a single trench was excavated across the central room on the ground floor of the mill revealed no medieval floor levels. Post-medieval walls, drains and internal features were discovered during the evaluation of the central room on the ground floor of the mill. Despite the fact that the full stratigraphic sequence was not completed and no medieval floor layers were encountered, it was clear that the floor layers and features within the evaluation area were very complex. Earlier floor surfaces had either been buried below the unexcavated portions of the trench, or had been removed during the post-medieval development of the mill building.
- 26) UI 1342342, SE 2726 6820
Fountains Abbey Mill, Geophysical Surveys of Bradford, 1999
A radar survey was carried out in advance of the proposed opening of the mill to the public.

- 26) UI 1355919, SE 2726 6820
Fountains Mill, M. Newman, S. Harrison, 2000-2001
A range of archaeological interventions were conducted in preparation for the mill being open to the public in 2001.
- 26) UI 1355968, SE 2714 6828
Fountains Mill, M. Newman, 2000
A watching brief during the installations of lightning conductors, no specified results.
- 27) UI 1184308, SE 2709 6825
Ticket Office, West Gate, Fountains Hall, M. Newman, 1997
Hand excavation of footings and lifting of a floor during conversion of a potting shed into the ticket office revealed a cobbled surface of uncertain date and a pit which was not explored further.
- 28) UI 1223927, SE 2745 6827
Fountains Abbey, York Archaeological Trust, 1998-2001
A programme of photogrammetric recording of the Abbey and monastic buildings.
- 28) UI 1347188, SE 2745 6831
Fountains Abbey, York Archaeological Trust, 1999-2001
Architectural Survey, building recording carried out in advance of proposed repair work to the Abbey.
- 28) UI 1355971, SE 2748 6826
Huby's Tower/North Transept, Fountains Abbey, M. Newman, 2000, National Trust
Excavation in advance of resurfacing. During the excavation the removal of turf and a shallow depth of topsoil recovered almost two hundred medieval floor tiles and exposed several buried structural features including surviving patches of tiling.
- 29) UI 1364552, SE 2745 6837
Fountains Abbey Kitchen, East Wall, York Archaeological Trust, 2000
Monitoring during the partial dismantling and repair for the upper portion of this wall.

Skell Valley, National Trust

In 1991 excavations were undertaken outside the west gate of Fountains Abbey in advance of the insertion of a new septic tank. The excavations showed that the valley floor had been raised by 8-9 feet during the 19th century with dumps of material derived both from the stone quarries on either side of the valley and from the excavation of the abbey ruins. Quantities of architectural fragments and floor tiles were recovered from a number of the dump layers. The material was shown to have been dumped directly on river bed deposits, rather altering perceptions of how the western approaches to the abbey would have appeared. (Investigation undertaken by The National Trust).

The grid reference for this work is SE 27 68, which does not allow specific location of this site.



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