

8057

NYCC HER	
SNY	881
ENY	614
CNY	2008
Parish	8057
Rec'd	01/12/1999

**Low Farm
South Milford
North Yorkshire**

Desktop Study

for Barnatt York

November 1999
MAP 05 11-99

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South Milford
North Yorkshire**

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1 Introduction

1 1 This Desktop Study has been commissioned by Barratt York in advance of proposed development, and evaluates the existing Archaeological, Cartographic and Historical evidence for the land attached to Low Farm, South Milford, North Yorkshires, (SE 4964 3168, Fig 1) The site lies in the eastern part of the village, bounded by Low Street to the west, and Common Lane to the north-east, and comprised two farms, associated buildings, a triangular shaped piece of land located to the rear and measured approximately 1.5 hectares, (Fig 2)

1 2 All work was funded by Barratt York

1 3 All maps withm this report have been produced from Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationer Office, Crown Copyright License No AL 50453A

2 Geology

The geology shows that the proposed development area is on soils described as brown calcareous earths of the Aberford Soil Association overlying Magnesian Limestone and slowly permeable clayey and fine loamy over clayey stoneless soils of the Foggathorpe 2 Soil Association overlying glaciolacustrine clay, (Mackney et al 1983)

3 Historical and Archaeological Evidence

3 1 1 South Milford was founded in the Anglo-Scandinavian period, "The ford at the mill " being the origin of the place name Further evidence survives in the form of a rare pre-conquest charter South Milford is a detached portion of the Sherburn Estate, (Fig 3) recorded in the Sherburn Charter 'The Sherburn charter is a grant of twenty

hides at Sherburn made in 963 by King Edgar to a nobleman and described in the charter as the venerable AEsclac' (Long, 1993, 117) The charter is the earliest form of evidence for land divisions in the area and although not totally reliable it can depict various physical features of the landscape such as streams, tracks and trees The Sherburn Charter survives in the Registrum Magnum Album in the Minster library at York The register is a Fourteenth century document compiled from original Anglo-Scandinavian documents that were not fully comprehended and hence the question over reliability However there is little dispute that the brook mentioned in the charter running westward is the present Mill Dyke which now forms the Parish boundaries between Sherburn and South Milford

3 1 2 The next written source mentioning South Milford is the Domesday Survey of 1086, which records a mill

3 1 3 Little detail is known for South Milford itself during the Medieval period although it follows the Manor of Sherburn, which was held by the Archbishop of York The Estate came into the possession of the Crown in 1545, at the time of the Reformation The Crown proceeded to sell the estate to the Hungate family who held it until 1608, when it was confiscated by the Crown During the civil war a battle was fought in the vicinity The estate was restored to the Hungates in 1662 who continued to hold the land until 1749 when it passed to the Gascoigne Family by marriage They held it until 1938 when the estate was broken up

3 1 4 The land was enclosed by Parliamentary Enclosure Act in 1793, although the award exists in Wakefield, (Ref: DDJ/ 33/11), no plan survives

3 1 5 The Great North Road, (Low Street) went through the village, a major Drove road for cattle during the Post-Medieval period

3 2 Aerial Reconnaissance

3 2 1 South Milford lies on the eastern edge of the magnesian limestone belt in an area known to have attracted early settlement, (Fig 4) In recent years air photography has

revealed that the light, well drained soils of the magnesian limestone ridge supported intensive prehistoric agricultural activity and settlement, (Fig 4)

09399 00000	Field system, Agricultural complex
09400 00000	Field boundaries
09401 00000	Geological/natural
09402 00000	Field system, Agricultural complex
09463 00000	Enclosure
09470 00000	Enclosure, ditched?
09472 00000	Enclosure

3 2 2 To the east of South Milford is the deserted medieval village of Steeton (Fig 4 SMR 9404) and Steeton Hall Fig 4 SMR 9404 1-2, SAM 135) Within the village itself the current SMR listing only records the Church of St Mary's (Fig 4 SMR 9407 01), the Methodist Non Conformist Chapel (Fig 4 SMR 9407 02), the site of the corn mill (Fig 4 SMR 9407) and the ford (Fig 4 SMR 9407 03)

3 2 3 In 1996 two Roman stone sarcophagi were located during residential development at Garden Lane, Sherburn (MAP 1997) Evaluation excavations to the north of the village in 1997 (MAP 1998) located a series of enclosures of an Iron Age - Romano-British date This settlement is seen on aerial photographs to continue to the south and is likely that that similar activity continues along the limestone ridge towards the village of South Milford

4 Cartographic Survey

4 1 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1850 (Fig 5) shows three distinct properties in the area of proposed development Low Farm lies to the north in a triangular plot of land bounded by Low Street to the west and Common Lane to the north-east To the south a further boundary strip divided a second farm from Low Farm

4 2 The position of Low Farm at the junction of Common Lane and Low Street points to an important site in the centre of the village by the side of the Great North Road The

original triangular shaped plot of land suggests the site of a village green which would have been used for resting of cattle been driven along the Great North Road

4 3 The lower two plots conform to the general east to west alignment of land divisions to the east of Low Street Such an alignment is likely to be medieval in date

4 4 This early representation of the two groups of farm buildings bears a close similarity to the surviving structures Both farms have their principal ranges aligned on ancient boundaries with yards to the south and houses fronting on to Low Street

4 5 The 1967 Ordnance Survey 1' to 1 Mile map (Fig 6) shows that a shed or large building was erected to the rear of Low Farm in the narrow strip of land However, all three plots retain the boundaries shown on the earlier map (Fig 5)

4 5 A modern Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (Fig 2) shows Low Farm has expanded to take in the narrow middle strip, and the shed located in this plot has gone The southern boundary of this strip survives, separating the two farms However, the original plot boundaries which are likely to be medieval in date are largely retained

5 Present Condition of the Site

5 1 The proposed development area contains two farm yards, each comprising a principal range of buildings and a number of subsidiary buildings Both farms have a strong linear plan and are arranged perpendicular to Low Street Locally derived limestone is the principal construction material, and was employed in walling and roof covering Later additions and alterations have made the buildings difficult to interpret, and they are now employed in pig rearing

5 2 To the rear of the farms there is an area of open waste land

6 Conclusions

The linear arrangement of both farm buildings, property boundaries and the location of the farms in the village strongly suggests a pre-enclosure date The use of

vernacular building styles and locally derived materials may indicate a date in the early Eighteenth century for their construction

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