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ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SERVICES
WYAS

**Manor Farm
Church Fenton
North Yorkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

March 2004

Report No. 1233

**N.Y.C.C.
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

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ACJ Developments

**Manor Farm
Church Fenton
North Yorkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for the construction of four town houses and associated garages At Manor Farm, Station Road, Church Fenton. With the exception of the north and east sections of plot 4 all the trenches exhibited natural layers of stratigraphy. The north and east sections of plot 4 revealed layers of silt, most likely episodes of silting associated with the nearby moat. Monitoring of the excavation of a single service trench was also undertaken. This service trench partially encroached on to the street frontage but no evidence of any earlier street structures was uncovered.

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Archaeological Services WYAS

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Archaeological Services WYAS were commissioned by ACJ Developments, to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the construction of four town houses immediately adjacent to Manor Farm, Church Fenton. The development area (Planning Application 8/62/57E/PA) is centred on NGR 514 370. Watching Briefs were undertaken on 27th and 28th January 2003 and further visits were made on June 12th 2003 and October 27th 2003.
- 1.2 The site lies within the historic core of Church Fenton and is immediately adjacent to a medieval moated site. This moated site is defined around Manor Farm and Kirk Fenton School. The western portion of this moat survives as an earthwork feature to the north east of the application site but does not appear to be directly related to it. However, due to the close proximity to the development the application area was deemed to have the potential to preserve below ground evidence for the construction of the moated site and for occupation and activity which had taken place nearby in the medieval and post-medieval periods (Falkingham 2002). The moated site is clearly shown on the O.S. first edition map of 1849 (Fig. 2).

2. Methodology

- 2.1 Four visits were made by Archaeologists from Archaeological Services WYAS to monitor all ground disturbances caused by the excavation of house foundation trenches and also to monitor the excavation of a single service trench. The building plots were numbered 1 to 4 running in an east to west direction. The proposed housing plots also incorporated double garages located to the south of plots 1 and 3. The excavation of a single service trench was also monitored. This trench was located to the south of Plot 2 and partially encroached on to the street frontage. The location of the plots and all other ground disturbance is shown on Figure 3.
- 2.2 In all cases the watching briefs monitored the excavation of the trenches using a JCB with a 1m wide toothless ditching bucket with each layer being removed under direct archaeological supervision.
- 2.3 A specification for the works was supplied by Gail Falkingham of North Yorkshire County Council SMR (Appendix II).

3. Results

Plots 1 and 2

- 3.1 The monitoring of the excavation of foundation trenches for plots 1 and 2 and the associated double garage was carried out on 12th June 2003. No archaeology was observed during the excavations and all horizons removed were of natural origin. The depositional sequence of the foundation was a thin layer of topsoil (0.15m thick) below which a layer of orangey brown sandy clay (0.70m thick). Below this layer was a mid brown silty clay horizon (0.8m thick) which continued to the base of the trenches.

Plots 3 and 4

- 3.1 Monitoring of the excavation of foundation trenches on plots 3 and 4 was undertaken on January 27th and 28th 2003. The south and west facing sections of Plot 4 provided evidence for episodes of silting most likely relating to the overflowing of the medieval moat to the north east. In this area a thin layer of topsoil (0.14m thick) below which a levelling layer of bricks, concrete and large pieces of sandstone (0.40m thick). Sitting below this levelling course was a layer of silt (0.58m thick) most likely related to episodes of silting and overflowing of the nearby moated site. Artefactual remains within this silt layer included later 19th/early 20th century pottery and tile fragments. Below this silt layer was a natural clay silt horizon.
- 3.2 Observation of the excavation of foundation trenches for Plot 3 and the associated garages yielded no archaeological remains or any finds of particular significance. The sections of these trenches cut through a thin layer of topsoil (0.13m thick) below which a sandy orangey brown clay was observed (0.70m thick). This layer was succeeded by a mid-brown silty clay (0.80m), which continued to the base of the trenches.

Service Trench

- 3.3 Observation of the excavation of a single service trench, which partially encroached onto the street frontage, was carried out on 22nd October 2003. The service trench, approximately 1 m in width was excavated over a distance of 14m. No archaeology was clearly visible within this trench although a number of modern services were observed running east to west along the present street frontage (Station Road).

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 With the exception of the deposits of Plot 4 all horizons removed during the excavation of house foundation trenches were of natural origin and illustrated an almost homogenous development across the site. The south and west facing sections of the foundation trench of Plot 4 illustrated evidence for a period of silting most likely as a consequence of the drainage regime resulting from the presence of the former medieval moated site, which lies immediately to the north east of the development area. Artefactual evidence from this horizon suggests that this silting was still occurring in the 19th or 20th centuries. The excavation of the service trench, which encroached onto the street frontage, failed to uncover any evidence for former street frontages or occupation during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Acknowledgements

Project Management

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Report

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Illustrations

Jason Dodds

Fieldwork

Jason Dodds

Gareth Dean B.A. M.A.

Bibliography

Falkingham, G., 2002, 'Standard Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Limited Archaeological Recording' North Yorkshire County Council SMR.

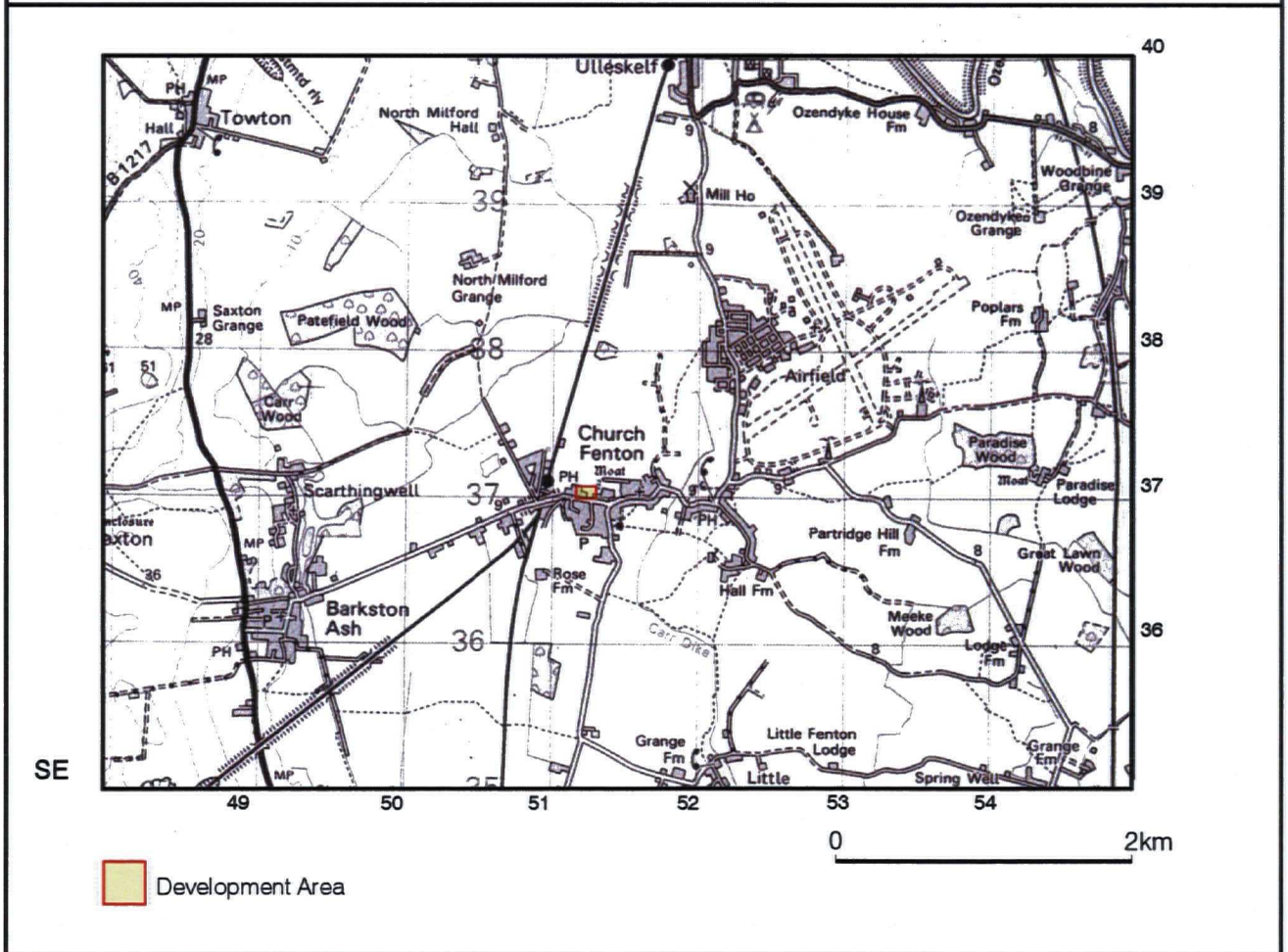
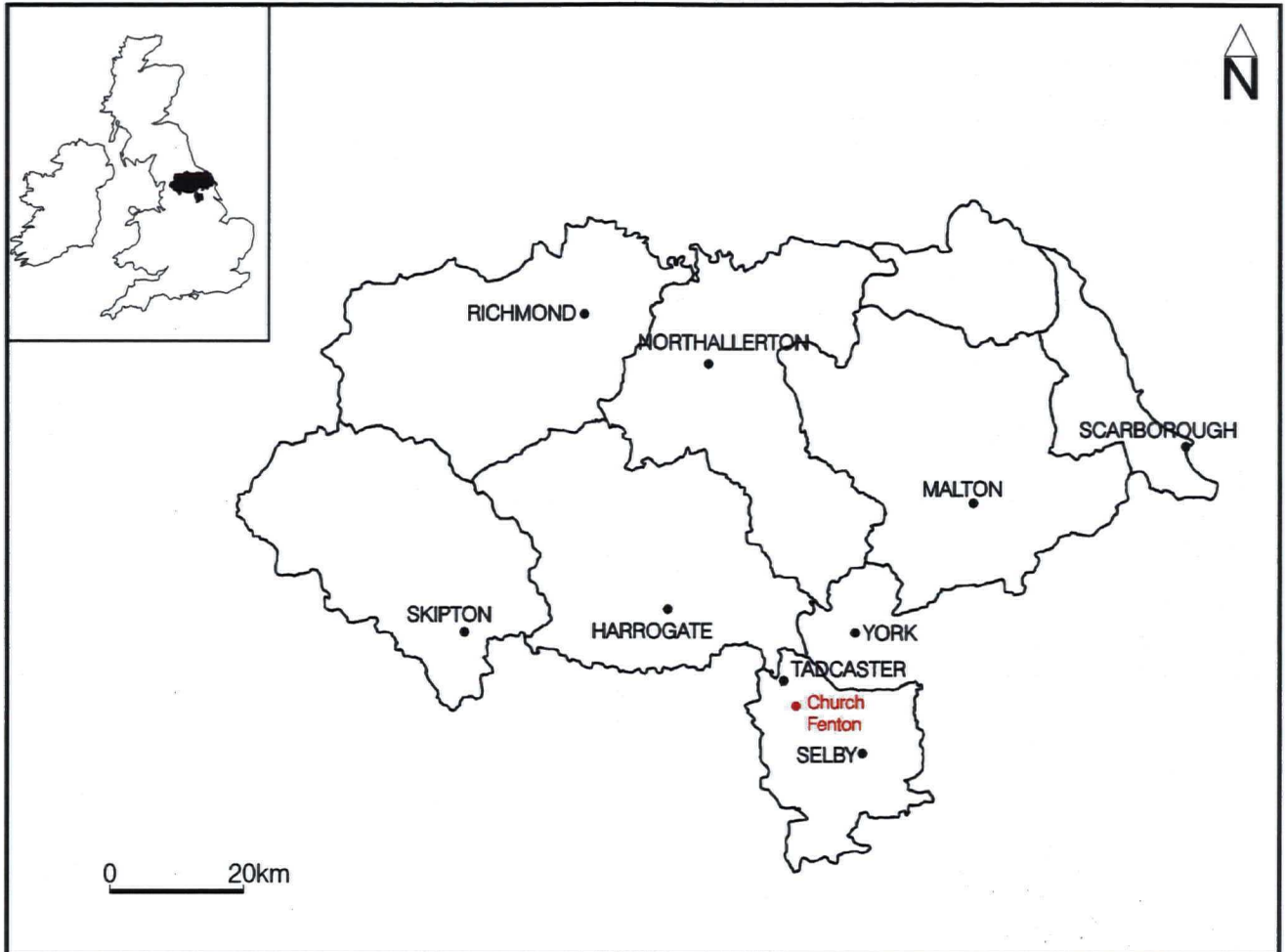
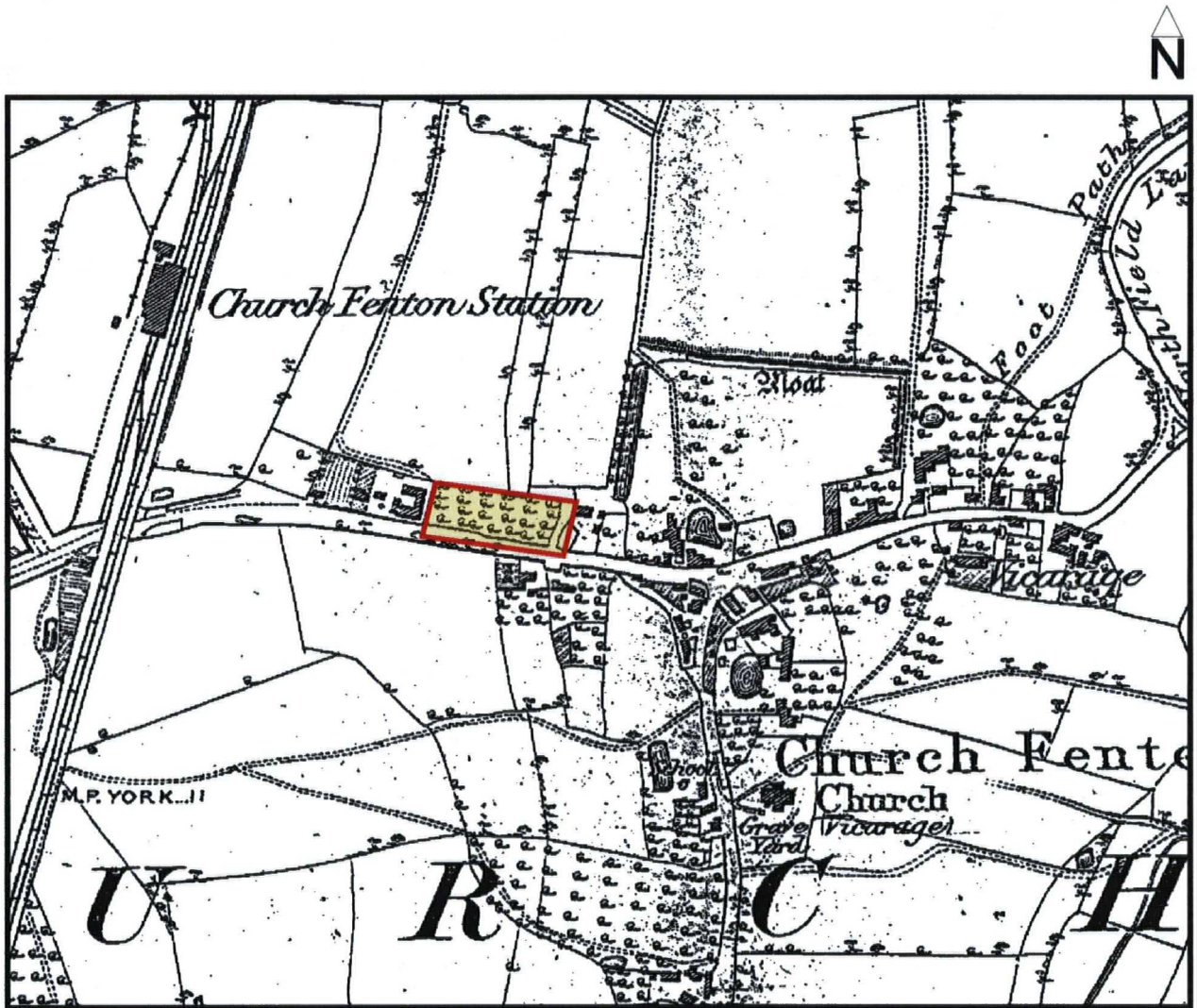


Fig. 1. Site Location

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 Area of development

Fig. 2. An extract from the O.S. Map of 1849, first edition, 6 inch to 1 mile (100% enlargement)

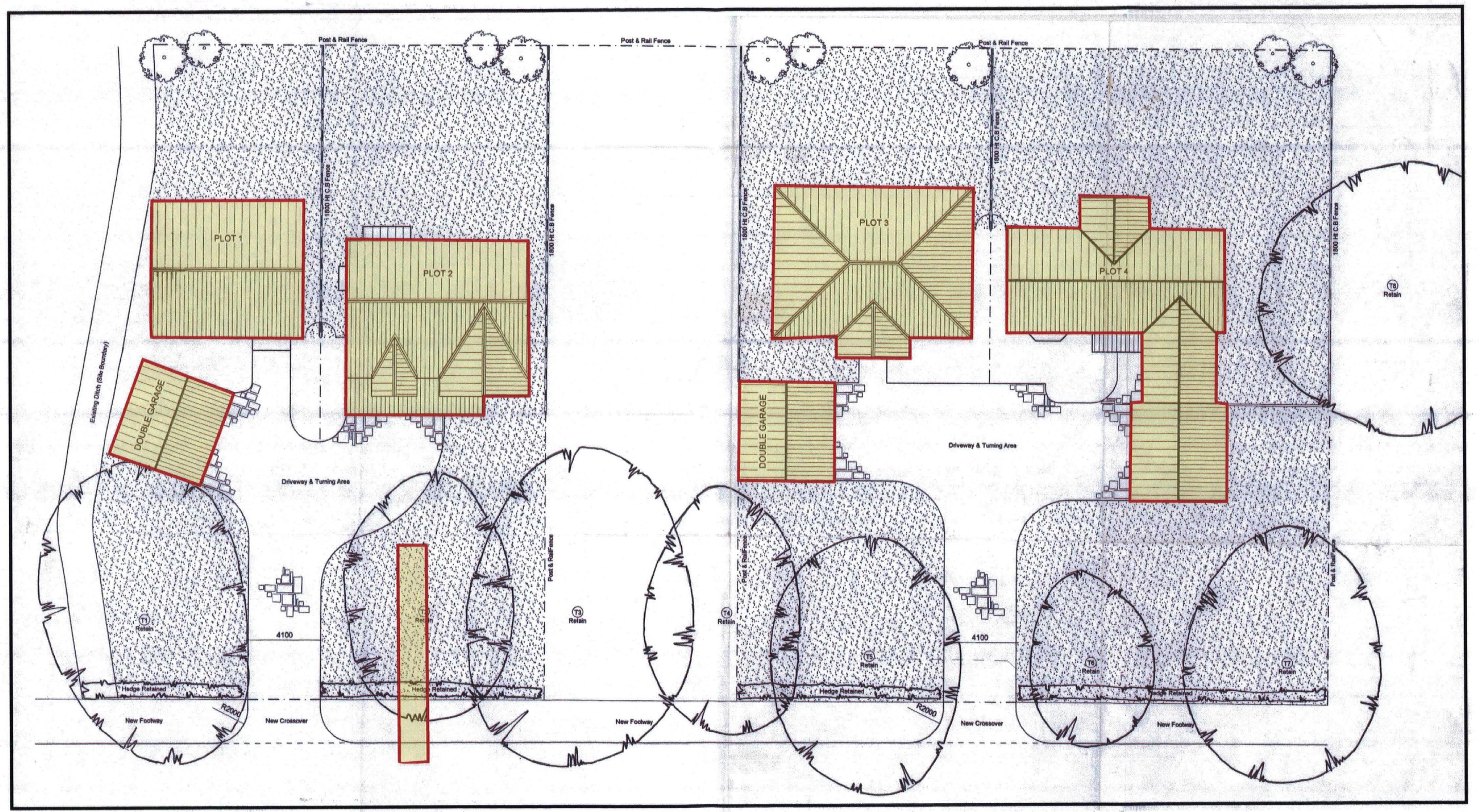


Fig. 3. Plot locations

 Area of Ground Disturbance; Scale approximately 1:200

Appendix I

Inventory of Primary Archive

File No.	Contents	Quantity (A4)
File 1	Site notebook	9
File 1	Photograph registers	3
File 1	Monochrome contact sheet	2
File 1	Colour Negatives	2
File 1	Black and White Negatives	2

Appendix II

**Specification for Archaeological Watching Brief supplied by the North
Yorkshire County Council SMR**

STANDARD WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION (WSI)
FOR LIMITED ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING ("WATCHING BRIEF")

- 1 The purpose of the work is to record and recover archaeological remains which are:
 - a) affected by proposed development only to a limited and clearly defined extent,
 - b) not available or susceptible to standard area excavation techniques, or
 - c) of limited importance or potential.The work should not require the construction programme or development to be held up while archaeological investigation takes place, although some developers may give such a facility.
- 2 The WSI represents a summary of the broad archaeological requirements needed to comply with an archaeological planning condition. The scheme does **not** comprise a full specification, and the County Council makes no warranty that the works are fully or exactly described. The details of implementation must be specified in a contract between the developer and the selected archaeological contractor.
- 3 The removal of overburden (that is vegetation, turf, loose stones, rubble, made ground, Tarmac, concrete, hardcore, building debris and topsoil) should be supervised by the Archaeologist contracted to carry out the WSI. The Archaeologist should be informed of the correct timing and schedule of overburden removal.
- 4 Removal of overburden by machine should be undertaken using a back-acting excavator fitted with toothless or ditching bucket only. Where materials are exceptionally difficult to lift, a toothed bucket may be used temporarily. Subsoils (B horizons) or deep, uniform fills of features may also be removed by back-acting excavator but only in areas specified by the Archaeologist on site, and only with archaeological supervision. Bulldozers or wheeled scraper buckets should not be used to remove overburden above archaeological deposits. Where reinstatement is required, topsoil should be kept separate from other soil materials.
- 5 Metal detecting within the development area, including the scanning of topsoil and spoil heaps, should only be permitted subject to archaeological supervision and recording such that metal finds are properly located, identified, and conserved. All metal detection should be carried out following the Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice.
- 6 Where structures, finds, soil features and layers of archaeological interest are exposed or disturbed by construction works, the Archaeologist should be provided with the opportunity to observe, clean, assess, excavate by hand where appropriate, sample and record these features and finds. If the contractors or plant operators notice archaeological remains, they should immediately tell the Archaeologist. The sampling of deposits for palaeo-environmental evidence should be a standard consideration, and arrangements should be made to ensure that specialist advice and analysis are available if appropriate.

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- 7 Heavy plant should not be operated in the near vicinity of archaeological remains until they have been recorded, and the Archaeologist on site has allowed operations to recommence at that location. Sterile subsoils (C horizons) and parent materials below archaeological deposits may be removed without archaeological supervision. Where reinstatement is required, subsoils should be backfilled first and topsoil last.
- 8 Upon completion of fieldwork, samples should be processed and evaluated, and all finds cleaned, identified, assessed, spot-dated, and properly stored. A field archive should be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and photographs. The Archaeologist should arrange for either the County Archaeologist or an independent post-excavation specialist to inspect the archive before making arrangements for the transfer of the archive to an appropriate museum or records office.
- 9 A summary report should be produced following NYCC guidelines on reporting. The report should contain planning or administrative details of the project, a summary of works carried out, a description and interpretation of the findings, an assessment of the importance of the archaeology including its historical context where appropriate, and catalogues of finds, features, and primary records. All excavated areas should be accurately mapped with respect to nearby buildings, roads and field boundaries. All significant features should be illustrated with conventionally scaled plans, sections, or photographs. Where few or no finds are made, it may be acceptable to provide the report in the form of a letter with plans attached.
- 10 Copies of the summary report should be provided to the client(s), the County Heritage Unit (SMR), to the museum accepting the archive, and if the works are on or adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument, to English Heritage.
- 11 The County Archaeologist should be informed as soon as possible of the discovery of any unexpected archaeological remains, or changes in the programme of ground works on site. Any significant changes in the archaeological work should be specified in a variation to the WSI to be approved by the planning authority. If human remains are encountered, they should be exhumed subject to the conditions of a Home Office licence.