

1086 parish

THE BRIGANTIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRACTICE

C 1096
S9046
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Gail Falkingham,
Heritage Unit,
North Yorkshire County Council,
County Hall,
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NYCC HER	
SNY	9046
ENY	2572
CNY	1096
Parish	1086
4 th March	2003/03/05

N.Y.C.C. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	
Recd.	- 5 MAR 2003
Pass to NC
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Plan app 1/86/26 G/full

Dear Gail,

ABBEY COTTAGE, SPENNITHORNE

This is to let you know that I went yesterday, on behalf of the owner Mr Grainger, to carry out the watching brief required as a planning condition of the redevelopment of the east end of Abbey Cottage. Excavations involved the reduction of internal floor levels (where only modern deposits were encountered) and the digging-out of foundations which followed the footprint of a ruined part of the building which had been previously demolished (so that only the previous footings of lime-mortared rubble were removed).

Although no observation of archaeological interest arose from the watching brief, an inspection of some of the buildings was of great interest. As you will know, Abbey Cottage incorporates a magnificent screens passage and other features which have survived from the substantial manorial establishment there. The present development is at the eastern end of the main range. The building is an odd mixture of patches and periods, but a fireplace and flu, which I understand are to be retained, incorporates a sandstone jamb with a stopped chamfer, which seems to be *in situ* and which may represent an internal door at first floor level. It is fairly clear that, though much altered and knocked about, this part of the building is mediaeval (and this seems to apply to the ruined part which has now been pulled down).

Immediately to the north of the development site is a building in agricultural use by the adjacent farm. This (or the southern half of it, at least) appears also to be mediaeval. On the eastern side are clear signs of the removal and blocking of a large, round-headed arch (a few of the fine sandstone dressings survive). Corresponding to this on the western side are the jambs of a similar entrance, which has been truncated and an oak lintel inserted. On the south-east corner of this building is a mass of masonry which I can explain only as the remains of a corner buttress: the overall impression (and one consistent with the position of this building in relation to the others) is of a small mediaeval gatehouse. This seems not to have been picked up by Eric Gee's survey.

Other features might repay examination: some parts of the nearby field-walls look as though they might have been buildings (one has the bottom of a blocked window), and there is a group of earthworks to the south-east. I found the whole complex very interesting.

Since the results of the watching brief itself were entirely negative, I would be grateful if you would accept this letter as discharging Mr Grainger's responsibilities under the planning condition.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Percival'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Percival Turnbull.