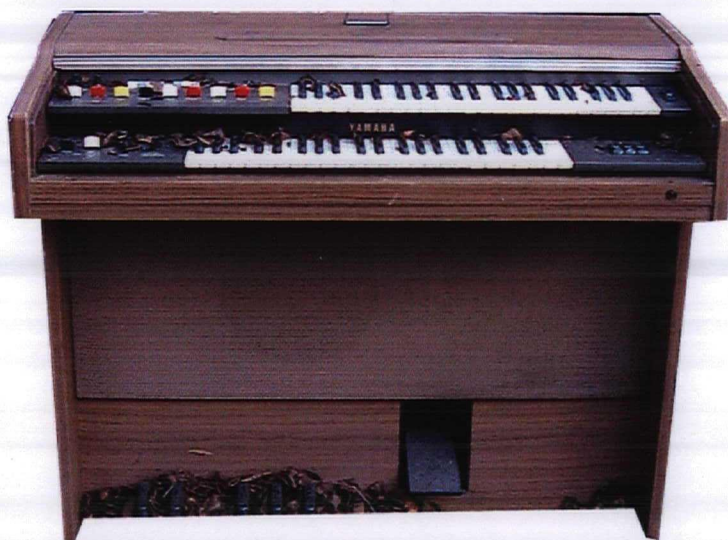


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STATION PUBLIC HOUSE, FINKLE STREET, KNARESBOROUGH.

**REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION.
OSA REPORT No: OSA04EV02.**

FEBRUARY 2004.



OSA

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Report Summary.

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REPORT NO: OSA04EV02

SITE NAME: Station P.H., Finkle Street, Knaresborough

COUNTY: North Yorkshire

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 3489 5707

PLANNING APPLICATION No: 6.100.788.G.FULMAJ (03/04779/FULMAJ)

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PERIODS REPRESENTED: Medieval, Post-Medieval, Early Modern.

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1.0 Abstract.

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by On-Site Archaeology at the Station Public House, Finkle Street, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire on behalf of Barkisland Homes. This work was conducted in order to fulfil an archaeological condition attached to the planning permission (Planning Ref.6.100.788.G.FULMAJ (03/04779/FULMAJ). A programme of archaeological work was undertaken on the proposed site of a residential development. The archaeological evaluation consisted of 4 days on site from the 20th-23rd January.

The evaluation consisted of the excavation of two trenches to determine the nature of archaeological deposits in the area. A number of archaeological features and deposits were uncovered, including pits and post-holes. Pottery, bone and assorted finds from the Medieval to Early Modern periods were recovered.



Figure 1. Site Location (NGR SE 3489 5707).

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2.0 Site Location, Geology, Topography and Land Use.

The site is located at NGR SE 3489 5707 within the historic centre of Knaresborough. It is located on land to the rear of the former Station Public House, which is on the junction of Finkle Street and Kirkgate. The evaluation area is to the southeast of the disused pub, along the Kirkgate street front, and is bounded to the northeast by residential properties and to the southeast by commercial properties. At the time of the archaeological work the site was being used as a car park.

The site occupies an area covering 0.063 hectares, and is located on a slope with a high along the northeastern boundary and a low along the southwestern Kirkgate street front. Trench 1, on the Kirkgate street front, was at a height of 73.63m OD and Trench 2, in the centre of the evaluation area, at a height of 74.40m OD. The site is situated on mixed sand and clay glacial deposits and underlying Magnesium limestone.

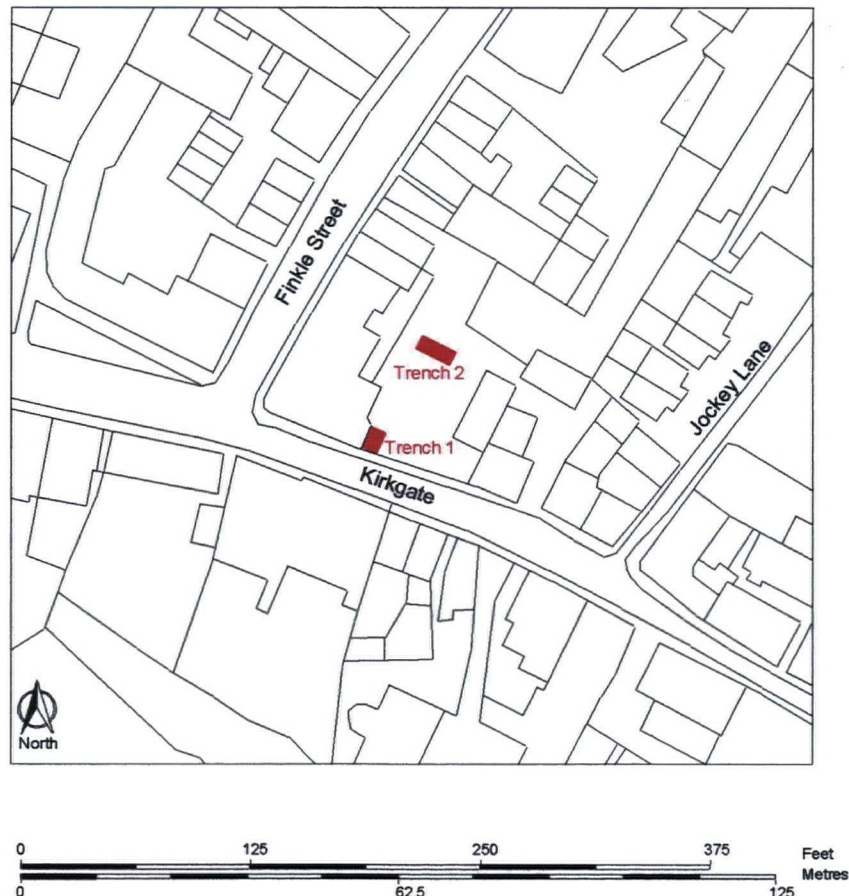


Figure 2. Detailed site location plan. (Scale 1:1250).

3.0 Archaeological Background.

Knaresborough is situated on the eastern side of the river Nidd on an outcrop of Lower Magnesian limestone. Evidence for prehistoric activity in the area consists of findings of flint and stone artefacts in the town and surrounding area. However these finds have tended to be scattered and not in such concentrations as would indicate a permanent settlement.

The main phase of historical activity in Knaresborough is during the Anglo-Saxon to Medieval periods. The earliest documentary reference is in the Domesday Book in 1086 where it is recorded as Chenarsburgh. The first part of the name appears to derive from a personal name, and the latter from burh, a fortified place or defended settlement. No evidence for such fortifications has been found, although the naturally defensible situation of the castle suggests a desirable location for such a site. The first documentary reference to the castle was in 1129-30 and the parish church was in existence by 1114 when it was granted to the Priory of Nostell. The first record of a market at Knaresborough is in 1206 by which time the town was the centre of an iron-working industry, with ironstone being mined in the Forest of Knaresborough. By the early fourteenth century both sides of Finkle Street are known to have been occupied.

In January 2002, a watching brief was conducted approximately 80m northwest of this site which found a number of features of a structural nature, which were themselves cut by a number of pits, securely dated to the late 12th to early 13th centuries (On-Site Archaeology 2002). A similar archaeological sequence was seen during archaeological work by WYAS in 2002 prior to redevelopment of the bus station on the High Street. Structural elements and pits on that site were sealed by a 'garden soil' deposit thought to have formed in the late Medieval period.

The town of Knaresborough continued to develop with a woollen industry that had declined by the seventeenth century and was replaced by linen weaving. The linen industry went into decline in the nineteenth century as Knaresborough was eclipsed by the development of nearby Harrogate.

4.0 Methodology.

Two trenches were excavated in the yard area to the rear of the former Station Public House. One trench measuring 3m by 2m was located along the edge of the site fronting Kirkgate. This trench was positioned over the proposed access road so as to avoid the footprint of the proposed buildings. The second trench, measuring 5m by 2m, was located in the centre of the yard area. The overburden was removed by a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket down to the level of the first visible archaeological horizon. The exposed surfaces were then cleaned by hand in order to detect any archaeological features revealed through textural or colour changes in the deposits. Once this had been completed, sections were hand excavated through the archaeological features that had been identified.

Standard *On-Site Archaeology* techniques were followed throughout the evaluation. This involved the completion of a context sheet for each deposit or cut encountered, along with plans and/or sections drawn to scale. Heights above Ordnance Datum (AOD) were calculated by taking levels from a Temporary Benchmark (TBM), which was then tied in with an existing Ordnance Survey benchmark. A photographic record of the deposits and features was also maintained.

5.0 Results.

5.1 Trench 1.

The natural geological deposit was seen in this trench at a depth of 0.53m or 73.09mAOD. This deposit was the natural bedrock mid yellow limestone (1013). The bedrock was cut by a number of features. An oval pit [1004] measuring 1.00m by 0.85m, with a depth of 0.12m, held fill (1003), a mid brown red silty clay. From this fill was recovered one sherd of Medieval Northern Gritty Ware. Cut [1006] measured 0.80m by 0.50m and was 0.40m deep. This held a mid brown red silt clay fill, and probably was a post-hole. Cut [1016] had a diameter of 0.30m and was only 0.05m deep, possibly as a result of truncation by later features. This feature may tentatively be interpreted as a post-hole. It held a mid brown red silt clay fill (1015). Lastly, in the northern corner of the trench was a pit [1018] measuring over 0.60m by over 0.40m and over 0.30m deep. This held fill (1017) a mid brown red clay sand with dark brown laminations.

Pit [1018] was cut by feature [1008] that measured 0.65m by 0.55m and was 0.45m deep. This was a similar size and shape as post-hole [1006] and may have been a contemporary post-hole. It held fill (1014), a mid grey brown clay sand, and fill (1007), a mid brown red silt clay.

Pit [1018] was overlain by a 0.15m thick dark brown sand silt deposit (1019). This survived in a small island of stratigraphy between modern truncations and is therefore difficult to interpret. It may be the same as deposit (2006) in trench 2. Also present in the island of surviving stratigraphy was deposit (1021), which was entirely taken up by one very large rounded limestone cobble. The top of this island of surviving stratigraphy was located immediately below the modern surfaces at a depth of 0.13m or 73.48m OD.

Many of the smaller features in the base of the trench were truncated from above by a large cut [1002]. This feature measured over 1.00m by over 2.00m, and was 0.15m deep. The cut held fill (1001), a dark grey to black clay silt. This was interpreted as a soak-away for a 19th Century cesspit, however the shallow nature of the cut may mean that the feature was massively truncated.

Truncation had occurred across the trench by both the foundation for the walls to the northwest and the southwest, and many drains serving the pub toilet block. Foundation cut [1012] served both of the adjacent walls, and was 0.40m deep. It held 0.30m of poured concrete foundation (1011). Above this was the brick foundation for late 20th Century toilet block extension and the garden wall dividing the BBQ area and the pavement (1024). Packing around foundation (1024) comprised fill (1020), a mid grey mix of concrete, sand and building rubble. The whole trench area was truncated by at least three modern drain cuts, which were assigned the group context number [1010]. The drains were dug down to the solid sandstone geology, and held a mid grey mix of concrete, sand and building rubble (1009), that was identical to the foundation fill.

The trench was sealed by 0.06m of concrete and sand (1022) overlain by a 0.07m thick laid brick surface (1023).

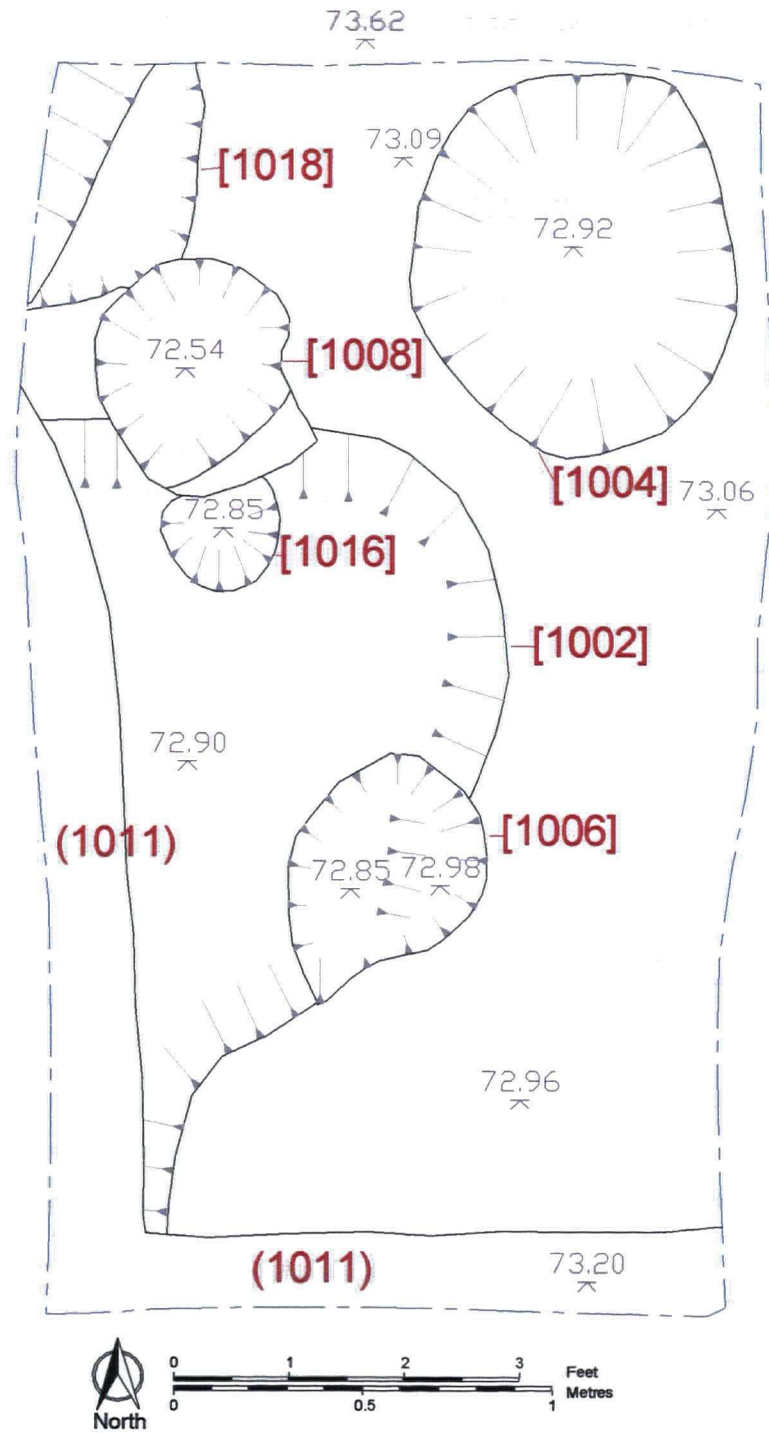


Figure 3. Post excavation plan of Trench 1. (Scale 1:20).

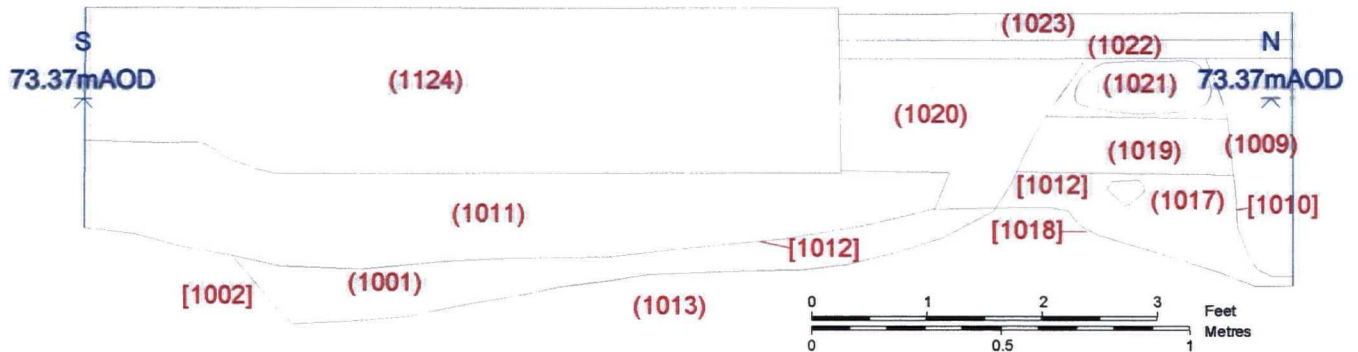


Figure 4. East facing section of Trench 1. (Scale 1:20).

5.2 Trench 2.

The geological natural was seen at a depth of 0.26m or 74.14m OD, sloping gently down to the southwest to 74.04m AOD. The natural geology was made up of very mixed deposits of pink brown sand clay, light pink brown sand, dark brown clay, and light yellow brown sand (2009). A sondage was dug through this probably glacial deposit to a depth of 1.45m to 72.95m OD.

The natural deposit was cut by an irregular shaped feature [2008] at the southeastern end of the trench. The feature measured over 0.92m by 0.36m by 0.17m deep, and was filled by a dark brown silt sand fill (2007). The irregular form of this feature suggests that it was an animal burrow of some sort.

Sealing the entire trench was a 0.15m thick dark grey brown sand clay silt deposit (2006). From this were recovered two sherds of Medieval green glazed pot and a fragment of CBM. A similar deposit was seen during archaeological work by WYAS at the bus station. That deposit was interpreted as a possible 'garden' soil of Late Medieval or Post Medieval date on plots of land fronting the High Street. A similar interpretation may be made for deposit (2006). This may be the same as deposit (1019) seen in trench one at the same position in the sequence.

The possible garden soil deposit was cut by a foundation trench [2005] that was aligned southwest to northeast. The trench measured over 0.55m in length, over 0.70m in width and over 0.20m in depth. The foundation trench held a sandstone and mortar foundation (2004) that measured over 0.45m in length by 0.53m wide by over 0.35m deep. Around the sandstone foundation was a mixed red brown and mid grey sand clay and clay sand silt packing fill (2003). This foundation is of the same type as the wall bounding the site to the northeast. Local residents said that the site was occupied by a stable block, of unknown age, that was demolished probably in the 1970's, the last remnants of which are the boundary wall and foundation (2004).

To the southwest of the foundation was a 0.10m thick crushed mortar deposit (2002). This deposit extended the full length of the trench, but lensed out before reaching foundation (2004). This may be a surface relating to the stable buildings or may be bedding for a surface.

Sealing the mortar deposit was a cobble surface, (2001). The medium and large rounded cobbles were set within a dark grey sand silt deposit, from which was recovered one sherd of Post Medieval Staffordshire Mottled Ware, probably dating to the early 18th century or later. The cobbles overlie the foundation trench (2005), but appear to respect the wall (2004). It is likely therefore that the cobbles represent the stable floor. Two distinct areas of cobbles may be present in the trench. The cobbles around the foundation have no underlying mortar bed, and are probably interior floors, while the cobbles to the southwest overlie mortar deposit (2002), and may form an open yard surface that needed to be harder wearing.

A cut feature [2011] was seen in the southwestern section, that was cutting the mortar deposit. This probably linear feature was 0.60m wide and 0.21m deep, and held a mixed pink brown sand clay, dark grey brown sand clay silt, and light tan mortar fill (2010). The size, shape and probable alignment of this feature indicate that it may be a robbed out foundation. It may be that when the stable block was demolished, some of the stone was robbed out, while other foundations like (2004) were left. A robbing episode is suggested by the two types of mortar seen in the fill. The first type, a light tan mortar, matched the mortar bedding layer (2002) through which the feature is cut. The second type, a light cream mortar, was the same as that in foundation (2004). It is likely therefore that a similar wall was robbed from [2011].

The trench was sealed by 0.04m to 0.09m thick deposit of light grey concrete. This was probably laid in the 1970's when the stable block was demolished and the area made into a car park.

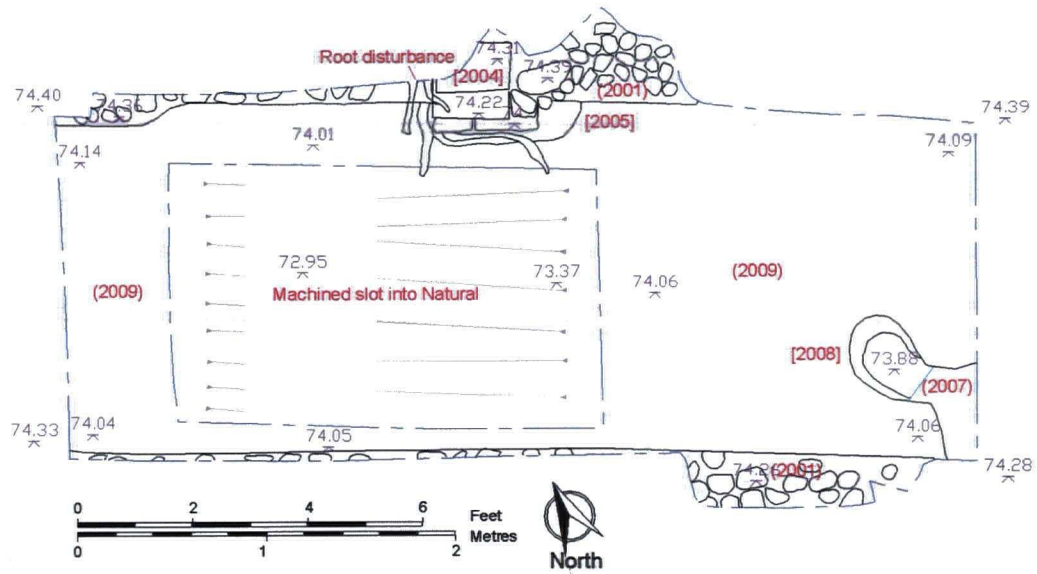


Figure 5. Post excavation plan of Trench 2. (Scale 1:40).

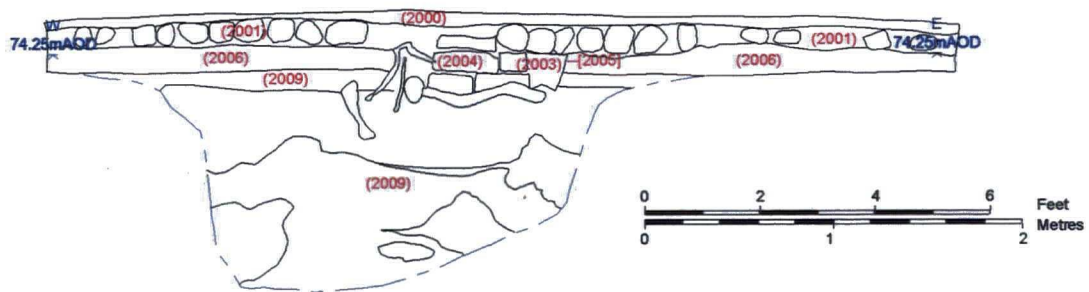


Figure 6. South facing section of Trench 2. (Scale 1:40).

6.0 Discussion & Conclusions.

Two phases of occupation are indicated by the features identified during the evaluation. The first, represented by the post-holes and pits seen in Trench 1 is almost certainly medieval, although this is based upon the single sherd of Northern Gritty Ware. Unfortunately the nature of this pottery, being an undiagnostic body sherd, does not allow close dating of this group of features. This sherd of Northern Gritty Ware may have been produced the Knaresborough Forest at almost any time during the medieval period (Dr. A. Vince *pers. comm.*).

The structural features and pitting are very similar to those identified during work on the Crown Hotel at the other end of Finkle Street (OSA, 2002). The lack of features from this period in Trench 2 may be interpreted in two ways. Either that area was open ground to the rear of the street front properties and was not intensively used, or it was built over thus protecting it from pit excavation for rubbish disposal. As no structural evidence was identified within the sizeable trench the former interpretation is more likely.

The deposit of possible garden soil that was identified in both trenches appears to be late medieval in date. It sealed the medieval features in Trench 1, in a similar archaeological sequence to that seen during the WYAS work on the bus garage site. This deposit was then cut by foundations for sandstone walls of a stable block, a survival of which is the northeastern boundary wall, which forms the second main phase of occupation identified during the evaluation. It is likely that this building is contemporary with the original pub construction. Interestingly, the building designated for demolition to the southeastern edge of the site has a gable end of identical build to the boundary wall, suggesting that it is of similar date. That building may also have been a stable block or more likely workshops.

The lack of any depth of post medieval stratigraphy may indicate that the site has been truncated at some time. This may have occurred when the pub and stable buildings were built, with the buildings perhaps terraced into the natural slope slightly. If the 'garden soil' deposit is of a late medieval date, then it would appear that the medieval features sealed by it remained relatively undisturbed by terracing of the site. The exception to this is the area around Trench 1. The siting of the trench was unfortunate in that it was within the heaviest concentration of drains on the site. Even so, the bases of the truncated, probably medieval, features were visible cutting into the natural bedrock. It is therefore possible that in areas of the site that are less disturbed by modern intrusions medieval features may survive at a higher level. An example of this was seen in an 'island' of stratigraphy surviving between the drains in Trench 1 only 0.13m below the surface.

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