



# FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY SPECIALISTS

## WATCHING BRIEF

27 KIRKGATE THIRSK  
NORTH YORKSHIRE

NYCC HER	
SNY	9488
ENY	1968
CNY	3282
Parish	2152
Rec'd	31/05/2005

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document reports on the results of a watching brief undertaken by Field Archaeology Specialists (FAS) Ltd on behalf of Mr Dodds during the excavation of foundation trenches for two dwellings on land to the rear of 27 Kirkgate, Thirsk (REF 2/03/152/0284D - Dwellings). The watching brief was carried out on the 17th February 2004.

### 1.1 LOCATION AND LAND USE

The development area was located in the rear garden of 27 Kirkgate, Thirsk, North Yorkshire (Figure 1) (NGR SE 4276 8215). The development area consisted of a narrow strip of land stretching south-southwest from the Kirkgate frontage and was bound to the north by the garden of 29 Kirkgate, to the south by the James Herriott Heritage Centre and to the west by modern ongoing housing developments. The immediate development area comprised an area of garden and the site of a recently demolished garage.

### 1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the watching brief was to monitor all groundworks associated with the development and to identify, characterise and record any archaeological remains that would be destroyed by the development. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the North Yorkshire County Council Standard Written Scheme of Investigation for Limited Archaeological Recording.

## 2.0 FIELDWORK PROCEDURE

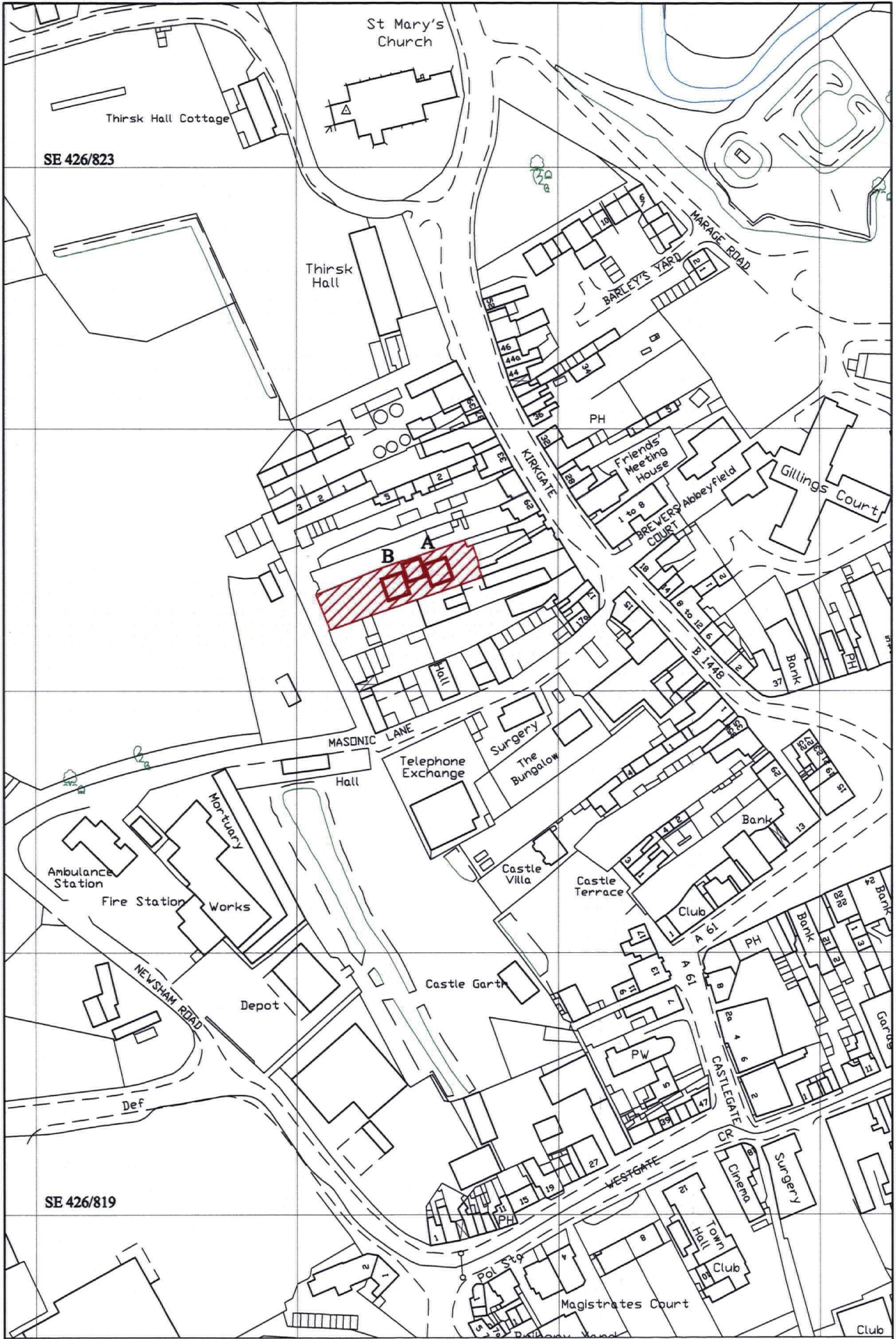
The foundations for two dwellings were excavated using a wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All trenches were spit-excavated by machine to a uniform depth of 0.80m; trench width varied from 0.50m for internal wall foundations to 0.80m for external walls. The trenches were of symmetrical plan for two dwellings joined by garages, House A to the east and House B to the west.

## 3.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS

### 3.1 HOUSE A

The development area was overlain by a thick clean sandy silt topsoil allocated C1000. To the western side of House A, a layer of tarmac and preparation (C1001) was found to abut the concrete foundations of a recently demolished garage (F1, C1002). The structural remains of the garage cut into a buried soil allocated C1003 which was a clean homogenous soil containing occasional 19th century ceramic, coal, gravel and lime mortar.





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Location of watching brief

Scale 1:2000



Figure 1



In the southeastern corner of House A, C1003 overlay a clean deposit of broken pantile, slop-moulded brick set in a matrix of brown sandy silt interpreted as a demolition deposit (C1004). Occasional 19th century black-glazed earthenware and animal bone was noted but not retained.

### 3.2 HOUSE B

In the area of the garages of House A and House B, C1003 overlay an apparently linear deposit of rounded cobbles which seemed to be deliberately set and orientated approximately east-west (F2, C1005). The feature disappeared beneath the west and east limits of the foundation trench. Further west, in the footing of House B, C1003 overlay a similar layer of homogenous sandy silt but which contained a markedly higher percentage of demolition rubble; clay tobacco pipe, black glazed earthenware and blue and white transfer printed ceramic was noted in the layer but not retained (C1007). In the southwestern trench of House B, C1007 overlay a large pit full of demolition debris including broken pantile, slop-moulded brick; blue and white transfer printed ceramic was noted but no retained (F3, C1006). The feature cut into a deposit of rounded gravel set in a matrix of light brown sandy silt, identified as subsoil which was visible only in the westernmost footings of House B at a depth of 0.80m below current ground level (C1008).

Table 1 Summary of contexts

C No	F No	Identity	Description	Date
1000	-	Topsoil	Dark brown humic soil with occasional gravel	20thC
1001	-	Tarmac and preparation	Black tarmac set on gravel preparation layer	20thC
1002	1	Make-up	Poured concrete foundation make-up	20thC
1003	-	Layer	Brown sandy silt buried soil layer containing 19th century china, coal, gravel and lime mortar flecks	19thC
1004	-	Deposit	Broken pan tile, slop-moulded brick set in a matrix of brown sandy silt, containing black glazed earthenware and animal bone	19thC
1005	2	Make-up	Rounded cobble make-up of path or surface	19thC
1006	3	Backfill	Broken pan tile, slop-moulded brick and lime mortar set in a matrix of brown sandy silt containing transfer printed ware	19thC
1007	-	Layer	Brown sandy silt containing frequent ceramic building material, lime mortar flecks, clay tobacco pipe, black glazed earthenware and transfer printed ware	19thC
1008	-	Subsoil	Mixed rounded gravel set in a matrix of light brown slightly silty clay	-

Table 2 Summary of features

FNo	Contexts	Identity	Dimensions	Description	Date
1	1002	Foundation	Not seen	Concrete foundation for garage	20thC
2	1005	Path/surface	Not seen	Area of cobble surface or path	19thC
3	1006	Pit	Not seen	Pit backfilled with demolition debris	19thC



#### **4.0 DISCUSSION**

No archaeological remains earlier than the 19th century were encountered during groundworks. It would seem that the remains of an 18th to 19th century outbuilding were encountered buried by a soil layer. Outbuildings located in the linear plots of dwellings fronting off Kirkgate, made of building materials similar to those encountered in demolition deposits, are still extant. It is likely that the small area of cobble path of surface was associated with outbuilding activity. A clean gravelly subsoil was encountered to the west of the development area and was overlain by demolition deposits and a buried soil.

#### **5.0 ARCHIVE**

Modern pottery, ceramic building material and animal bone was noted during the watching brief but not retained. A copy of this report is held by FAS and the North Yorkshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

#### **Acknowledgements**

FAS would like to thank Mr and Mrs Dodds and for their assistance during fieldwork, and Gail Falkingham of the North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Unit for her advice and assistance.

