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**The Cottage  
Main Street  
Staxton  
North Yorkshire  
TA 0171 7912**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

**MAP  
2004**

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**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**

***Non-technical Summary***

*An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. at The Cottage, Main Street, Staxton, North Yorkshire (TA 0171 7912) during September 2004. The work involved the archaeological supervision of groundworks associated with the construction of an extension to an existing dwelling.*

*No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified during the Watching Brief. The only disturbances to the chalk bedrock were modern service trenches.*

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 An Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. at The Cottage, Main Street, Staxton, North Yorkshire (Fig. 1: TA 0171 7912), on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2004. The work involved monitoring the excavation of foundation trenches for an extension on the western side of the existing dwelling.
- 1.2 All work was funded by Mr Johnson, owner of The Cottage.
- 1.3 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright, Licence No. AL 50453A.

## 2. Site Description

- 2.1 The site lies in the historic core the village, on the southern side of Main Street, Staxton, Willerby CP, North Yorkshire (TA 0171 7912, Fig. 1). It is bounded on the southern, eastern and western sides by existing dwellings and their associated grounds, and by a wide grass verge sloping down to Main Street on the north side. The eastern part of the extension footprint was formerly occupied by a lean-to shed, with the remainder forming part of the garden.
- 2.2 The site is recorded as laying on soils of the Newport 1 Association, over glaciofluvial drift (Mackney 1984), although the excavation showed the site lay on solid chalk bedrock.

## 3. Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 Staxton lies on the northern fringe of the rich archaeological landscape of the Yorkshire Wolds, on a zone of sandy soils that attracted early settlement because they were easily cleared and cultivated.
- 3.2 Staxton was recorded in the Domesday Survey, the King having the *soke* (right of jurisdiction) over 1 *carucate* (ploughland) formerly held by Earl Morcar, and 5 *carucates* worth 40s (formerly held by Karli and Thorfinnr). The place-name means '*Stakk's farmstead*' (Smith 1937).
- 3.3 Staxton became one of the centres of the production of Staxton Ware, a form of medieval pottery widely used throughout East Yorkshire in the 12-14<sup>th</sup> centuries. TCM Brewster recorded several dumps of wasters at Staxton within possible quarry pits (Brewster and Hayfield 1992). Brewster also excavated a medieval building at the Hare and Hounds that he interpreted as a potter's workshop; this building has since been reinterpreted as being of essentially domestic character. MAP carried out an evaluation on land immediately to the west of the Hare and Hounds in 1995 and located evidence for chalk-built foundations and property boundaries, along with a large assemblage of medieval pottery (MAP 1995). Further work at the Hare and Hounds located pits and quantities of iron slag (On-site Archaeology). A recent Watching Brief at West End (c. 120m west of the site) uncovered possible quarry pits relating to the production of Staxton Ware (MAP 2004).



- 3.4 An evaluation at Staxton Farm in 2002 located probable prehistoric linear features, along with medieval and post-medieval settlement and possible industrial activity (MAP 2002).
- 3.5 Binnington and Willerby, the other two settlements in the parish, began to decline in the post-medieval period: the 1670 Hearth Tax listed 25 households in Staxton, 21 in Willerby and 19 in Binnington. Due to its main road location, Staxton benefited from the coaching trade, the former Stirrup Inn dating from 1649, and the Hare and Hounds being constructed in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 1970s Staxton was bypassed to the south, relieving the bottleneck that Main Street had become.

#### **4. Methodology**

- 4.1 The monitored groundworks consisted of an area measuring approximately 6m x 8m in size, immediately to the west of the existing building.
- 4.2 Modern topsoil and overburden were removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a broad toothless blade. The foundation trenches were dug by the same machine.
- 4.3 A photographic record was taken in digital format of the development area.

#### **5. Results**

- 5.1 The removal of topsoil and overburden revealed an expanse of frost-fractured chalk bedrock. The excavation of the foundations confirmed that the only features present related to modern services.

#### **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 No archaeological deposits or features of any kind were identified during the Watching Brief. Although within an area of much archaeological potential, the lack of evidence for medieval activity could be explained by the relatively small size of the Watching Brief area. It is also possible that the construction of the lean-to formerly occupying part of the site removed any potential archaeological deposits.

## 7. Bibliography

- Brewster, TCM & Hayfield, C 1992 The Medieval Pottery Industries at Staxton, East Yorkshire. *YAJ* 64: 49-82.
- Mackney, D. (Ed.) 1984 *Soils and their use in Northern England.*
- MAP 1995 *Hare and Hounds, Staxton, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Evaluation.*
- MAP 2002 *Staxton Farm, Main Road, Staxton, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Evaluation.*
- MAP 2004 *West End House, Main Street, Staxton, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Watching Brief.*
- Smith, P. 1937 *The Place-names of the East Riding of Yorkshire and York.*



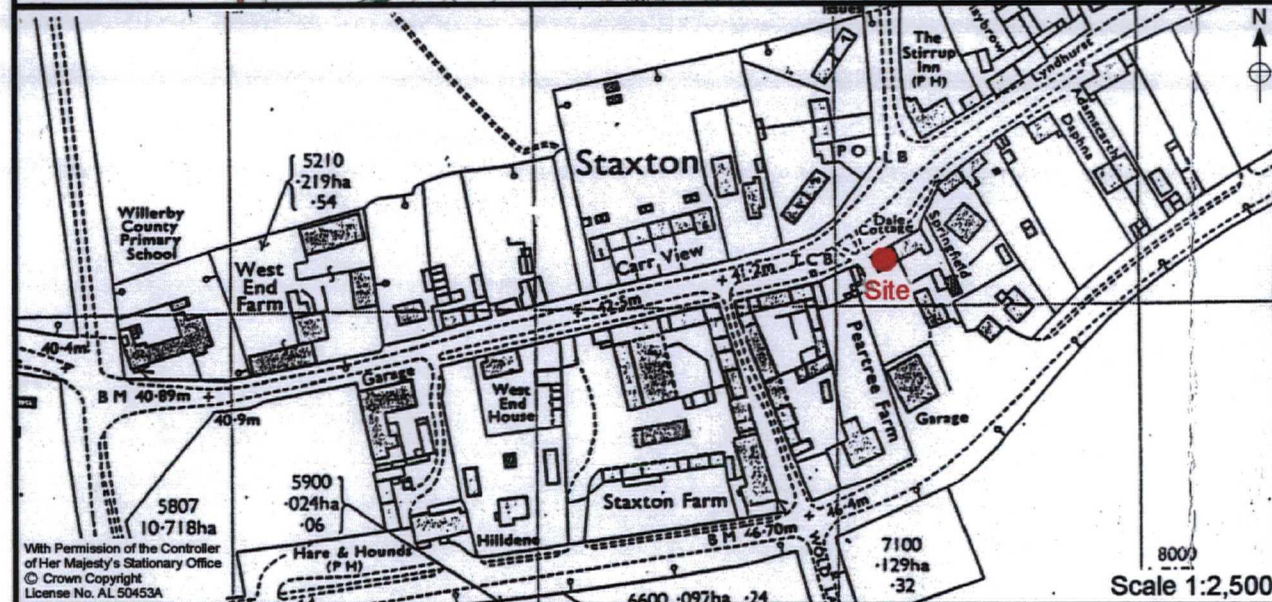


Figure 1. Site Location