Thirsk Castle
Thirsk
North Yorkshire
SAM No. 20454

Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief

1995
MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd

Abstract

In July - October, 1994 a series of excavations and a Watching Brief were undertaken by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd on behalf of Northern Electric Plc within the scheduled portion of Castle Garth, Thirsk.

The excavation provided information on the land use of the site prior to the construction of the Castle. Excavation located a small Anglo-Saxon cemetery of 6th century date. In addition evidence on the construction of the rampart banks was recorded. The periods after the destruction of the Castle were illustrated by deposits of garden soil. No later structural activity was recorded until this century when a tank trap and the ATS building were constructed. The excavations also showed that disturbance to archaeological deposits had occurred in the 19th and 20th centuries due to the installation of services.

The earthworks on the site are in a good state of preservation and the excavation showed that away from the modern disturbances archaeological deposits also remain in situ.

Thirsk Castle - Thirsk
North Yorkshire
Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief
1994

Contents **Page**

Abstract 1

Plate list 3

Figure list 4

1. Introduction 5
2. Historical Background 7
3. Archaeological Background 9
4. Excavation Methods 10
5. Excavation Results 11
6. Watching Brief Results 21
7. Summary 23
8. Conclusions 26
9. Recommendations 27
10. Bibliography 28

Appendices

1. Context listing 29
2. Finds catalogue 36
3. Small finds report 46
4. Anglo-Saxon pottery report 50
5. Human bone 53
6. Animal bone 58
7. Environmental analysis 60

Figure list **Page**

1. Thirsk and surrounding area. Scale 1:25000 65
2. Previous archaeological work around Castle Garth. Scale 1:2500. 66
3. Trench location plan. Scale 1:2500. 67
4. Phase III. Context 1024. 68
5. Phase III. Contexts 3016 and 3017. 69
6. Phase III. Contexts 4006/3021. 70
7. Phase III. Skeletons 3020 and 4010. 71
8. Phase III. Context 4017. 72
9. Phase III. Skeleton 4023. 73
10. Phase III. Skeleton 5040 and 5041. 74
11. Phase III. Context 5065. 75
12 Phase IX. Contexts 1012, 1014, 1016, 1018, 1020. 76
13. Trench 1. South facing section. 77
14. Trench 2. South facing section. 78
15. Trench 3. West facing section. 79
16. Trench 4. South facing section. 80
17. Trench 5. West facing section. 81
18. Trench 6. East facing section. 82
19. Trench 7. East facing section. 83
20. Trench 8. North facing section. 84
21. Trench 13. South-west facing section. 85
22. Trench 15. South facing section. 86

23. Anglo-Saxon pottery 87
24. Small find 10 88
25. Small finds 6, 7, 20 and 41 89
26. Small finds 5, 44, and 46 90
27. Small finds 47-50. 91
28. Small finds 42, 43, 44, and 46. 92

Plate List **Page**

1. General view of Castle Garth. facing south. 93
2. Trench 5. Phase I features cut into natural. Facing south. 93
3. Skeleton 3020 and gravel mound 3021. Facing north. 94
4 Trench 3. Skeleton 3020. Facing west. 94
5. Trench 3. Skeleton 3020 under excavation. Facing north. 95
6. Trench 4. Skeleton 4010. Facing north-east. 95
7. Trench 4. Skeleton 4010. Facing north. 96
8. Trench 16. Skeleton 16014. Facing south. 96
9. Trench 4. Layer 4006/7 and features 4015 and 4017. 97
10. Trench 5. Skeletons 5040 and 5041. Facing east. 98
11. Trench 5. Skeleton 5040. Facing east. 98
12. Trench 16. Close up of cruciform brooch in situ. Skeleton 16014. Facing south-west. 99
13. Trench 16. Close up of disturbed bone associated with skeleton 16014. Facing south. 99
14. Trench 1. South facing section. Facing north. 100
15. Trench 1. Layer 1025 (cobbles). Facing west. 100
16. Trench 2. South facing section. Facing north. 101
17. Trench 3. West facing section. Facing east. 101
18. Trench 4. West facing section. Facing east. 102
19. Trench 13. North facing section. Facing south. 102
20. Trench 16. South facing section. Facing north. 103
21. Trench 16. West facing section. Facing east. 103
22. Trench 1. West facing section. Facing east. 104
23. Trench 5. Modern disturbances. Facing north. 104

Thirsk Castle - Thirsk
North Yorkshire
Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief
1994

Introduction

The site of Thirsk Castle stands in Castle Garth to the south of Masonic Lane (formerly Picks Lane) at SE 4275 8200 (Figs. 1 and 2). The Castle Garth is bordered on all sides by developments of both a domestic and commercial nature. The site is in the ownership of Mr J Bell of Thirsk Hall Farm, 41 Kirkgate, Thirsk, and is presently an area of open grass land which is managed through grazing by sheep and horses. Two pedestrian footpaths run through the site (Fig. 3) and there is a single information board providing limited information on the site. Earthworks are present but no attempt is made to explain their nature and function.

Castle Garth and adjacent areas of Thirsk are included in the Schedule complied and maintained by the Secretary of State under Section 1 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The monument is classed as a motte and bailey castle, National Monument Number 20454. The site was first scheduled on the 9th of November, 1964 as Scheduled Ancient Monument County Number Yorkshire 711 (Town bank at Castle Yard). This scheduling was amended on the 27th of June 1975 to take into account the 'Town bank and site of castle at Castle Yard'. The monuments inclusion in the Schedule was confirmed on the 9th of October 1981. On the 29th of January 1993 the scheduling was further revised to take in areas to the east and north-east of the site, which included properties fronting onto and leading back from Kirkgate (National Monument No. 20454 (Thirsk Castle : a motte and bailey castle).

The monument includes the western rampart, the undeveloped area of the bailey and the motte of the Norman Castle. The bailey rampart is located in Castle Garth and comprises of an earthen bank 1.5-2.5m in height by 140m in length with an outer ditch which, although infilled over the years, is estimated to be at least 10m wide and 2m deep. The western edge of the ditch is thought to lie beneath the shallow founded buildings and mettled ares in properties to the west of Castle Garth while, at the northern end, it runs beneath the grounds of the 19th century Masonic Hall; the southern end of the ditch and rampart are thought to have been destroyed in recent years by the construction of a building to the rear of 15 Westgate. To the east of the rampart is an open area measuring 140m long by 40m wide, which forms the interior of the bailey. This contains a number of low rectangular earthwork (less than 0.3m high) which indicate the layout of building plots and gardens within the enclosure. Along the eastern edge of the bailey, a 2m deep scarp plunges into a broad ditch about 20m in width and to the east of this the ground rises to a large mound, the top of which is roughly 3m above the surrounding land surface. Built up areas to the east of the motte obscure the eastern extent of the castle but, by comparison with other mottes and baileys, it is estimated that Thirsk Castle originally lay within the area bounded by Westgate, Castlegate, Kirkgate and Masonic Lane.

The site is scheduled not only because of the well preserved surviving earthworks but also because

of its national importance. Motte and bailey castles are medieval fortifications introduced into Britain by the Normans. They comprised a large conical mound of earth or rubble, the motte, surrounded by a palisade or timber tower. In a majority of examples an enbanked enclosure containing additional buildings, the bailey, adjoined the motte. Motte castles and motte and bailey castles acted as garrison forts during offensive military operations, as strongholds, and in many cases, as aristocratic residences and as centres of local or royal administration. Built in towns, village and open countryside, motte and bailey castles generally occupied strategic positions dominating their immediate locality and, as result, are the most visually impressive monuments of the early post-Conquest period surviving in the modern landscape. Over 600 motte castles or motte and bailey castles are recorded nationally. As one of a restricted range of recognised early post-Conquest monuments, they are particularly important for the study of Norman Britain and the development of the feudal system. Although many were occupied for only a short time, motte castles continued to be built and occupied from the 11th to 13th centuries, after which they were superseded by other types of castle.

Although the motte and bailey at Thirsk has become partially altered by the gradual encroachment of built up areas, appropriately 50% of the original area survives. The undeveloped areas of the bailey and the top of the motte retain conditions for the preservation of building foundations and the accumulated silts of the ditches may contain conditions to preserve artefacts and organic remains which may enable the reconstruction of the economic and domestic activities of the castle's medieval inhabitants.

Northern Electric Plc required Schedule Monument Consent (SMC) to permit the building of a new brick substation to replace the open plan equipment which stood in the south-east corner of Castle Garth (Fig. 3) in a plot of land which Northern Electric lease from the Bell Estate for a period of 60 years. The new substation would provide a less obtrusive element in the setting of the monument and associated with this rebuild new cables would be laid from the substation to relay points and existing cables were to be updated by laying new cables in existing trenches. The importance of the site both archaeologically and historically was acknowledged and SMC was applied for on behalf of Northern Electric by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. A work programme was drawn up with English Heritage and the basis agreed that this limited archaeological excavation and watching brief may provide valuable information on a site that was recognised for its importance but which had had little or no work to provide more than generalisations on the exact nature of the monument.

Scheduled Monument Consent was granted and excavations commenced on the 4th of July 1994, and were completed by mid October, 1994. During October a watching brief was also maintained at the site during the excavation and laying of the new cables. From November, 1994 an extensive post excavation programme was implemented, the result and conclusions drawn from this work form the body of this report. The project has been totally funded by Northern Electric Plc.

2. Historical Background

Tresche, Tresc, Treske, Trescke, Tresk, Thryske, are all previous spellings for Thirsk derived from "Tre" a town and "Esch" meaning water. The place-name probably derives from the settlement of Thirsk on the banks of Codbeck. Although it has also been suggested that the name derives from the derivation of the name Thor (VCH).

The information stone within Castle Garth states that the Castle was built in 975 AD (although English Heritage do not hold with this view). King Edgar reigned from 959-975. and was known as "Edgar the Peaceable".

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles record that in 959 King Eadwig passed away and Edgar his brother received the kingdoms of Wessex, Mercia and Northumberland, he was 16 years old
"In his days all things gladly grew good, and God granted that he dwelt in peace while he lived, and he did, as was necessary, work eagerly towards it. He lifted up the praise of God widely, and honoured God's law, bettered the peace of the people more than any king before him, so that kings and eorls bowed eagerly to him,and were ruled by him as he would; and without fighting he conquered all that he himself wished. He was widely honoured throughout the nations, and greatly, because he fervently honoured the name of God, and meditated on God's law often and long, lifted up the love of God far and wide, and counselled wisely often, always before God and the world, all his nation. One misdeed he did, thought, too often, and that was that he loved alien customs and heathen practises and brought harmful people to the land (Savage 1982).

Edgar made extensive preparations against invasion and maintained a body of disciplined troops, quartered in the North to repel the Scots.

In the 10th century Thirsk possessed a fortified house, the foundations of which were laid in the reign of Edgar and it is supposed to have been completed by 979, although its founders name is unknown (VCH).

By 1086 Domesday records that Thirsk (Tresc/Tresche) belonged to the King who had granted it to Hugh Fitzbaldric. William I gave the manor of Thirsk to Geoffrey Bishop of Constance who was created the Earl of Northumberland. The Earl died at the end of William's reign and all his titles and possessions were transferred in 1086 to Robert de Stuteville (later Robert de Mowbray). It is suggested that the castle at Thirsk was constructed in about 1092 when Robert de Mowbray was Governor of Northern England. In 1093 Malcolm King of Scotland invaded Northumberland. Robert de Mowbray advanced and defeated Malcolm. Robert did not receive the honours he expected from William and so he began to plot against the king. His treason was discovered and William confiscated the manor for his own use. In the reign of Henry I Thirsk manor was granted to Nigel de Albini, a cousin of the de Mowbrays. When de Albini died his son Roger was a minor and became a ward of King Stephen. He lived at Thirsk with his mother and took the name de Mowbray.

In 1138 Thursten, Archbishop of York and a group of nobles gathered at Thirsk to meet the threat from David king of Scotland, at the Battle of the Standard. In the same year Lady Gundrea, mother of Roger had housed 12 fugitive monks from Calder at Thirsk Castle.

In 1173/4 Roger was implicated in a plot against Henry II. Henry II ordered Roger to surrender the castle and ordered it to be destroyed in 1176. Later in his reign the king pardoned Roger. Rogers eldest son Nigel succeeded to his fathers estate and died in 1191. William his eldest son rebelled against King John and was present at the signing of the Magna Cater.

By the early 13th century the Mowbrays were still living in Thirsk in a manor house near the site of the castle. John de Mowbray wrote to Edward I that 'this house and its dovecotes were destroyed by the Scots in 1322'. It appears from surviving documentary evidence that this manor house was never rebuilt. In 1376 the castle garth was a garden and that it was laid down to grass by 1398-9 (VCH 1976, 60).

The manor of Thirsk remained with the Mowbray family until the late 15th century when the estates were inherited by William, Lord Berkley.

In 1722 the manor of Thirsk was sold to Ralph Bell esq. for £6300. Castle Garth was not part of this sale as the Bell family had held land in Thirsk and Castle Garth since 1658.

Reliable descriptions of the castle are few, writers in the last century have been drawn more to the fanciful depictions of Thirsk Castle as opposed to basing their writings on facts. Camden visited Thirsk in 1695 and said that nothing could be seen of the castle 'except the rampire'. The demolition of 1176 seems to have been so complete that all traces including substantial amounts of stonework were removed from the site. Or Thirsk Castle was never a stone construction but of earth and timber. The following section considers the available evidence to complement or revoke the historical record.

Archaeological Background

A survey of Thirsk in 1859 recorded that the Castle Garth was "now occupied by gardens, the soil of which bears no indication of mixture with lime and rubbish of a ruined stone building; and what is stranger still no stones, or relics of any kind have been dug up, as would certainly have been the case, had a building of masonry stood on the spot" (Grainge 1859).

In view of the 1994 excavation results the comment within this article that

" In digging a drain some years ago across that part of the castle garth now in grass, nothing remarkable was found excepting a brooch or toga pin" is of great importance. (Fig. 2.1)

In the early 1960's a small scale excavation was undertaken which recorded a section through the bank and noted an earlier cobbled surface beneath it (Aberg, unpublished). The location of this excavation is not recorded but it appears to have been an evaluation prior to the construction of the substation in 1963 (Fig. 2.2)

The photographs of the evaluation have been studied and it is clear that the cobbled surface located in 1963 was the same feature as that located and recorded in 1994.

The note on the 19th century work in the Garth and the 1963 excavation are the only excavations which have been recorded at the site. A geophysical survey of the garth was conducted in the late 1980's in response to the building of a new telephone exchange off Masonic Lane (Fig. 2.3). This survey was limited in size and results. The line of the ditch was noted but no other features which may relate to medieval or earlier activity at the site were noted.

Two watching briefs undertaken by A Clarke outside of the Garth (Fig. 2.4) have provided information on the history of the garth. The earlier of the two excavations was situated at Calverts Carpets yard which lies immediately to the south-west of the Castle Garth. A watching brief was maintained while a new brick constructed single storey unit was constructed. Unfortunately the depth of the foundation excavations stopped short of providing information on the ditch, but they were deep enough to provide information on the make up of the bank. This feature was constructed of gravels and sands. Finds were limited to animal bone and a few sherds of pottery.

The watching brief at the extension to a car park along Masonic Lane provided much more interesting information (Fig. 2.5). This work overlapped with excavations in Castle Garth and therefore provided an ideal opportunity for comparison and sharing of information. The car park extension involved the removal of a part of the bank which provided a vertical section through it. The excavation showed that the rampart bank was constructed of sands and gravels and a small clay capping layer. The section clearly showed various phases of construction and below the bank make up were a series of earlier features. A collection of cobbles were regarded as more likely to be a natural deposit rather than a continuation of the cobbled surface seen in 1963 and 1994. But there were also ditches which clearly predated the bank and a layer of sand which due to its form and nature equated to the Anglo=Saxon horizon seen in the Castle Garth excavations and which sealed the funerary activity at the site. The results of this watching brief clearly showed that the construction of the rampart bank was more complex than a single phase of construction attributed to the 11th century. Equally there was also evidence of a series of features which predated the banks construction and which covered a considerable period of time, hundreds as opposed to tens of years.

To the east of this excavation a watching brief was undertaken by P Hatch in 1981 during the extension to J B Amos & Co Ltd at 11 Kirkgate, Thirsk. (Fig. 2.6) The excavation consisted of a mechanically excavated trench measuring 24' long to a depth 2-3' deep. The excavator recorded "Within the embankment cut into by the excavation, and clearly to be seen with the naked eye, was a solid and simple rounded clay core,having its contours apparently unrelated to the shape of the castle mound. Its top was almost paved with pebbles, of a sort distributed generally through the clay and the theory has been constructed that this bank was right round the area later adopted for the castle site, and had been the Viking settlement of Threske, ...and the clay had washed out of the top layer, leaving the pebbles behind to pave it. Beneath both sets of material, the castle mound of local sand brought to the site, with clay bank inside it, was a thin level of clean sand (2-3ft) with five to six

inches of crop mark in its top surface, and beneath that clean sand.. was a layer of darker sand, which was completely even and seemed never to have been disturbed".

Hatch also recorded that 2-3ft down from the surface was a "single line of soot" which was seen throughout the entire length of the trench. He also recorded that the building foreman commented that this deposit was common in Thirsk and he had seen it during excavation work at The Royal Hotel in the Market Place (c. 30m away) and at the Doctors Surgery (c. 18m to the west of the site).

This piece of work again emphasises that the bank make up is varied and that deposits seen during this excavation are also present in the immediate vicinity. Equally the description of some of the deposits are not dissimilar to those recorded by Clarke and the 1994 excavations. The photographs of the 1981 excavation have been studied and it is clear that the bank make up is of more than one phase and that there is earlier activity. Unfortunately P Hatch did not record any finds, considering his care of the section and photographic record, one must conclude that none were recovered.

The final piece of information on the past history of the Castle through archaeological work considers a note that states "In making a drain along Kirkgate, for the sewerage of the town, in 1856, the moat of the castle was dug into, and found to have been originally sixteen feet deep, now entirely filled with fine black mould; two pieces of oak timber, perfectly sound and black as jet, were found along with a small horse shoe, of a peculiar make, and quite free from rust" (Grainge 1859, 111). If indeed the sewer trench (Fig. 2.7) did cut the rampart ditch then it would appear to be of a very significant depth. Even if this was not the ditch it is clear that water logged deposits of excellent preservation survived in the mid 19th century in this particular area of Thirsk.

Excavation Methods

As the work programme involved a number of differing types of work, various methods were employed. Trenches 1-7 and 13 were deturfed by hand and then hand excavated. Sieving was employed in the excavation of deposits which appeared to be either natural accumulations or dump deposits, this was particularly true of the excavation of Trenches 3-5. All gravefills either associated with a burial or not were sieved. The appearance of a clay bank in Trench 1 necessitated initially hand excavation of a 2m by 1m slip trench within Trench 1 to determine the depth of this deposit. As this work showed that the bank was up to 1m in depth in places, permission was sought from English Heritage to removed this deposit in spits by mechanical excavator. This was agreed and the bank was removed from Trench 1 by machine. In Trench 2 the bank material was removed by hand.

Trenches 8, 9 and 16 were part of the Watching Brief and were therefore mechanically excavated down to the top of the cable with an untoothed bucket and a banksman to prevent damage to the cable and staff. All excavations in these trenches were observed and recorded by a professional archaeologist.

Excavation in Trenches 10, 11, 12, and 14 were by Northern Electric staff with an archaeologist in attendance.

Trench 15 was excavated by a combination of hand and machine excavation.

Natural deposits were only reached in the excavation of Trenches 1-7, 13, 15 and 16. The remainder of the trenches as part of the Watching Brief programme were only required to go down to the level of the cable.

Plans and sections were drawn at 1:10 and 1:20 and a slide and print photographic archive was produced.

The excavations were visited by staff of the Environment Archaeology Unit and samples were taken based on their advise.

Excavation Results

A total of ten trenches were hand excavated (Trenches 1-7, 13, 15 and 16 : Fig. 3). The results of which are grouped into Phases I-X. Due to the consistency of the deposits it was also possible to place many of the deposits observed during the Watching Brief into this framework.

Phase I

Phase I is represented by features which were seen to cut into the natural sands and gravels.

In Trench 4 excavation located a cluster of cobbles (context 4027) set in to a stiff clay (context 4028), adjacent to this deposit was a feature (context 4029) filled with a silty sand (context 4030). Initial examination of 4029 suggested that this feature may have been a robbed out grave, but further examination and consideration of the adjacent deposits (contexts 4027 and 4028) suggested that these features were of a geological rather than an archaeological origin.

Excavation located two linear features (contexts 5076 and 5077) in the extreme west of Trench 5 North (Pl. 2). These features were filled with a silty sand (contexts 5074 and 5075 respectively) aligned north-south and measuring approximately 0.3m in width. The exact length of these features are unknown as the excavation of Trenches 4 and 5 were not far enough to the west to trace the line if the features had continued into these areas.

Excavation of the fills did not locate any finds to suggest a date but their place in the stratigraphic sequence at the site suggests an early date and one which may be in the prehistoric period.

Two pieces of worked flint (SF 27 and 28 : Appendix 3) located within the fill of grave 4021 (see below) represent underlying deposits disturbed either during the cutting of the grave or during the disinterrement.

Prehistoric activity in Thirsk has also been recorded in recent years with the discovery of a cache of bronzes dated by the British Museum to the Bronze Age from a residential housing development to the south of Station Road, Thirsk.

Phase II

Above the Phase I features and natural was a layer of sandy silt/silty sand which varied in depth from 0.07m to 0.33m (Figs. 14-17). This deposit was observed in Trenches 2-5 (contexts 2013, 3012, 3013, 4013, 4026, 5036, 5044, 5048, 5069 and 5070).

No finds were recovered from Phase II contexts.

Phase III

Phase III produced a varied group of features which included a cobble surface, seven graves with associated inhumations, three disinterred graves, and a posthole, a slot and a pit.

Cobbled surface

Excavation in Trench 1 located a cobbled surface (context 1025) measuring 5.5m in length and 2.90m in width and constructed of uniform sized river cobbles. The surface was aligned north-south and seen to continue under the baulk to the west, where it was partially traced into Trench 2 (context 2010), where it measured 2m in width giving a total width of 4.4m.

The cobble surface was cleaned and recorded (Fig. 4 : Pl. 23). Certain exploratory work was conducted to assess the construction and extent of the feature. This showed that the cobbles were of more than one thickness with no bonding agent.

The surface continued to the north as shown by the south facing section (Fig. 13), but it was impossible to assess the feature in this area as Trenches 10, 11, and 12 contained live electricity cables. Even so the survival of this surface away from Trench 1 is suggested by the 1960's excavation.

In the south the excavation showed that the surface continued into the southern baulk. Immediately behind this baulk the construction of a warehouse has probably removed the surface as a comparison of the level of 1025 with the footing of the warehouse show a reduced level of 0.5m.

The difference in levels of land to the east and west of the cobble surface suggests that the builders had deliberately utilised a natural ridge which ran north to south.

The level at which the cobble surface occurred corresponded with the base level for the concrete foundation, therefore the surface was protected with a layer of sand and plasmac and the foundation for the substation laid. The surface also survives in Trench 2 where the cables were laid directly onto the cobbles and then the trench was backfilled.

Feature 3015

To the south of pit 3022 was a linear feature, which continued into both the east and west baulks of Trench 3 (Fig. 5), aligned east to west and measuring 1.06m by 0.52m it cut into context 3012 to a depth of 0.06m. The fill, a sandy silt (context 3016) contained no finds.

Feature 3022

Excavation located a sub circular cut (context 3022) which contained a silty sand with a 50-80% percentage charcoal inclusions (context 3014). This feature which continued in to the west facing section measured 0.51m by 0.30m and was cut into deposits 3013 and 3021 to a depth of 0.11m. The fill of the feature was sampled (Appendix 7).

No finds were recovered from the excavated section of 3022.

Feature 3017

Excavation located a subcircular cut which continued into the western baulk of Trench 3. The feature measured +0.9m by 0.85m and was cut into deposit 3013 and the natural sands to a depth 0.13m. The fill, a silty sand with occasional gravel with charcoal inclusions (context 3018) contained a small fragment of bone, daub, and a glass bead (SF 17 : Appendix 3), an iron object (SF 39 : Appendix 3) and a copper brooch fragment (SF 6 : Appendix 3).

Initially this feature was regarded as possibly a shallow pit. The results of the excavation to the north which located burial 3020 (see later) suggested otherwise. Therefore the western baulk was removed and this area investigated (Trench 15) . The excavation showed that cut 3017 did extend into Trench 15 where it became much shallow decreasing to only 0.05m in depth. This feature now regarded as a grave, did not contain any deposits of bone, although excavation did locate further gravegoods in the form of an iron blade fragment (SF 41 : Appendix 3).

Feature 3021

At the extreme northern end of Trench 3 excavation located a low mound of gravel (context 1021 : Pl. 3). This feature measured approximately 2.3m in length and extended into the north, east and west baulks of Trench 3. This deposit was initially regarded as a naturally deposited.

As the feature caused a rise in the base of Trench 3 it was decided to reduce it to facilitate the easier laying of the three electricity cables which were to be placed in Trench 3. Reduction of 3021 located an adult inhumation 3020 (Pl. 3).

The Inhumations

Skeleton 3020 was interred below a low mound which had been formed by the scrapping up of the surrounding soil (context 3013) and which formed the initial covering (context 3019) and then sealed by the gravel (context 3021). The burial had not been placed in a grave but laid directly on to the land surface (context 3013).

Excavation showed that the skeleton had been placed on an east west orientation with the head to the west. The skeleton was laying on its back with the hands and arms crossed over the chest (right over left) and its legs crossed at the knees (left over right : Fig. 7 : Pl. 4). Full excavation of the skeleton showed that the lower portion of the legs below the knee were under the eastern baulk (i.e. under the substation - Trench 16).

Before the skeleton could be lifted it was damaged by vandals who smashed the skull and disturbed portions of the upper body and broke a femur. Plate 4 shows the body reconstructed how it had originally laid prior to the disturbance; Plate 5 shows the skull intact and the upper body under excavation.

Analysis of the skeleton showed that the burial represented that of an adult male of approximately 20-25 years of age at death. No cause of death could be determined, but there was evidence of an old injury to the skull which had healed (Appendix 5).

Associated with the burial was a small vessel (Fig. 23) which had been placed close to the right-hand side of the skull. No other finds were found associated with the burial.

Excavation had shown that gravel deposit 3021 continued to the west (Trench 4 - context 4006/7). Removal of this deposit revealed a sandy loam with occasional gravel (context 4013), this material appears to represent the material initially used to cover the burial.

Removal of context 4013 revealed an articulated skeleton 4010 which was only represented by the lower half of the body (Fig. 7 :Pl. 6.) The skeleton was orientated with the legs to the east and the upper body to the west. The legs were in a semi-crouched position, whereas the pelvis was laid flat.

The upper portion of the body was absent from the sacrum, apart from a few finger bones of the left hand and a small portion of the lower left arm. The articulated remains had been laid onto the land surface but to the west there was evidence of a cut (context 4011). This measured 1.2m by 0.9m and cut into the underlying deposit 4024 (a silty sand) to a depth of 0.17m. The fill (context 4012) was a sandy loam which was loose in nature. This material was sieved but no bone was recovered. As the articulated portion of skeleton 4010 was laid directly onto deposit 4024. Cut 4011 is interpreted as resulting from the removal of the upper portion of the body. To remove the upper portion of a burial, it would have had to have been in an advanced state of decomposition as the areas around the base of the vertebrae contains some of the strongest muscles in the body and they are also some of the last muscle tissue to decompose (K Dobney pers com.). This means that the body was either in an advanced state of decomposition when it was removed or had totally decomposed.

Analysis of the remains showed that skeleton 4010 was an adult male of approximately 20-30 years of age at death (Appendix 5).

Associated gravegoods were an iron blade at the base of the pelvis (Pl. 7 : SF 20 : Appendix 5). This may represent disturbed gravegoods or may have been the cause of death. Analysis of the pelvis shows no sign of weapon damage (Appendix 5). The only other finds associated with the burial were the remains of cow and sheep bones which were found at the side of the right femur and patella. This deposit may represent food offering accompanying the burial.

Immediately to the north of skeleton 4010, excavation located a third skeleton (context 4023).

This burial was represented by the articulated lower portion of a right leg and foot (Fig. 9). The burial had been placed in a grave (cut 4021) which measured 1.9m by 1m and was cut to depth of 0.10m into deposit 4024, a silty sand with occasional gravel, which lays above the natural deposits in Trench 4. This cut continued into the western baulk. The grave fill (context 4022) a silty sand with occasional gravel and small fragments of sandstone was sieved and further human bone was recovered. This included bones of the left foot, a patella and hand and rib bone fragments. In addition excavation located a strapend (SF 26 : Appendix 3).

Analysis of the remains did not determine a sex or age for this burial (Appendix 5).

Excavation in Trench 5 located two further burials (skeletons 5040 and 5041 : Fig. 10).

Skeleton 5040 was orientated east to west with the head to the east. It had been placed on its right side with the face facing north. The skeleton was not in a good state of preservation and the feet and left arm were missing (Fig. 10), as were a large number of vertebrae. Excavation showed that the left leg (tibia and fibia) had been cut through (Pls. 10 and 11), the cut marks appeared to be of some antiquity due to the eroded ends of the bone.

The burial had been placed in a shallow depression (cut 5038 : Fig. 10) which measured 1.5m by 1.2m and cut into layer 5044 (a silty sand with a high inclusion of gravel). The grave was filled with a silty sand with occasional gravel (context 5039).

Analysis of the remains showed that the burial represented a child of 10 years 6 months at death.

Finds from the gravefill (context 5039) consisted of an iron object (SF 31 : Appendix 3).

Skeleton 5041 was found immediately to the north of skeleton 5040 (Pl. 10 : Fig. 10)). The skeleton was orientated north to south with the head to the south. The body had been placed on its back with the hands over the pelvis.

The burial was within a shallow grave (cut 5042) which measured in excess of 0.60m and 0.3m. The southern extent of the grave went under the baulk between Trenches 4 and 5 and was not removed as it carried a live electricity cable. The eastern extent of the grave continued on under the eastern baulk of Trench 5 which was not removed as it was outside of the designated excavation area. The grave fill, a very silty fine sand (context 5043), was sieved and small fragments of human bone were recovered along with a few small fragments of cattle bone. These were the only finds associated with this burial.

The final inhumation located during the excavations was recorded from Trench 16. Trench 16 covered the area where a large concrete slab marked the position where electricity generating apparatus had stood prior to the installation of the open apparatus in the 1970's. This area of the site was covered by the watching brief but it is discussed here as the results provide further information

on Phase III activity at the site.

Skeleton 16014 had been disturbed but enough of the burial remained to show that it was orientated south-west/north-east with the head to the south-west. It had been laid on its back directly onto the land surface with the arms down by its side, there was no indication of a grave cut. The skull was so disturbed that it was impossible to say in what position it had originally been placed. Portions of the legs and feet remained in situ but much of the upper body had been removed.

Associated with the burial were a range of grave goods, which included an iron blade (SF 44 : Appendix 3) found to the north of the body and probably originally next to the left elbow. Four copper alloy sleeve clasps (SF 47-50 : Appendix 3) which were found one near to shoulder region, one in the region of the lower right arm and two on the chest. From underneath the skull excavation located a copper alloy cruciform brooch (SF 6 : Appendix 3 : Pl. 12). In addition excavation around the left hand side of the skull recovered a small decorated copper alloy object (SF 46: Appendix 3).

Consideration of this group of artefacts, namely on the form of the cruciform brooch suggests a date in the early 6th century (C Mortimer pers. com.).

Analysis of the skeleton suggested that this individual was male, but due to the high degree of disturbance it was not possible to determine an age at death (Appendix 5).

Accompaning skeleton 16014 was a mixed deposit of human bone arranged around and on top of the skeletons feet and lower legs (Pl. 13. This collection of bone showed clear signs of cuts and were mostly long bone fragments although some skull fragments were also observed. Due to the high degree of disturbance of 16014 and all of the other skeletons located it is possible that some of this bone belong to the excavated skeletons. Equally it is possible that this collection forms the disturbed remains of burials not located during the 1995 excavations.

In addition to the graves where inhumations were recovered, there was a number of features which may represent robbed graves.

In Trench 3 there was context 3017 which has already been described above.

In Trench 5 context 5065 a sub-rectangular feature in plan (Fig. 11) which measured 1.60m by 0.6m and cut into 5069 (a sandy silt) to a depth of 0.21m, may also represent a disinterred grave.

Context 5072 measuring in excess of 1.2m by 1.08m and filled with a silty sand (context 5051) which cut into deposit 5052 (a mixed gravel) to a depth of 0.18m may also represent a disinterred grave. The full extent of 5072 was not found as the southern edge of the cut ran under the live electricity cables. The fills of these features (contexts 5064 and 5071 respectively) when sieved did produce small fragments of bone.

Features 4015 and 4017

Sealed below the gravel mound 4006/7 excavation located a sub-circular shaped feature measuring approximately 0.7m in diameter and cut into 4013 (a sandy loam which lay directly below 4006/7) to a depth of 0.9m (Fig. 8). The feature was filled with silty sand and coarse gravel (context 4016). No finds were recovered from the fill. The fact that its fill (4016) is similar to the mound material (4006/7) may suggest that this feature represented the infilling of a natural depression just prior to the interment of burials 3020 and 4010 and the construction of 4006/7.

Feature 4017 was a sub-circular feature measuring approximately 0.45m in diameter and cut in to 4013 and natural to a depth of 0.25m. The feature was a flat bottomed V in profile and filled with a silty sand (context 4018) and a group of five cobbles (context 4019) which may represent packing.

The size of the timber which could be housed within 4017 suggests a substantial post and one that may have been used as a grave marker for burials 3020 and 4010. Cobbles were noted in the section of the mound overlying feature 4017 which may represent addition packing around the timber.

Sealing the Phase III features was a thick deposit of silty sand which represents Phase IV activity at the site.

Phase IV

Phase IV deposits represent the period between the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Thirsk Castle dated by associated finds to the early 6th century and the construction of the clay rampart bank of ?11th century date (see below). The phase has been subdivided in to three subphases as discerned from the change in the general nature of the deposits within this broad period.

Phase IVa

Following the deposition of the burials, there appears to have been a long period of inactivity, which is represented over much of the site by a gradual accumulation of silty sands (contexts 1024, 2008-2009, 3007, 4008, 5033 and 5066, 6012 7008, 13018-13019, 15005 and 15007 and 16012-16013).The depth of these deposits varied greatly depending on the trench location within Castle Garth. The greatest depth was seen in Trench 3 (context 3007 : 0.56m), 0.43m in Trench 2 (contexts 2008 and 2009), 0.31m in Trench 5 and 0.32m in Trench 16. As one moves away from the present higher ground of Castle Garth were the above trenches are situated, these deposits reduce slightly in depth in Trench 13 (context 13019). This accumulation layer was also seen in Trench 8 during the watching brief (see below). Therefore it is apparent that similar deposits covered the present southern area of Castle Garth.

Finds associated with this phase of activity included daub, slag, animal bone, shell, and pottery of 6-10th century date (Appendix 2). Excavation of context 3007 located the remains of an almost complete pot (SF 8 : Fig. 23 : Appendix 3). This vessel was dated to 6th possibly 7th century. Also found in Trench 16 (context 16013) was a fragment of a copper alloy ornament (SF 43 and two iron nail fragments; SF 42 and 51 : Appendix 3). The pot from 3007 and Small Find 43 may represent

disturbed grave goods from underlying graves.

Phase IVb

Excavation in Trenches 3, 4, 5, 13 and 15 also located a deposit stratigraphically higher than Phase IVa deposits but which was very similar in composition but more compact (contexts 2007, 3004, 4009, 5034, 5061, 6011, 7009, 13018 and 13020).

From Phase IVb finds included animal bone, and a few sherds of pottery (Appendix 2).

It is possible that the difference in the nature of these two phases of deposits reflect land management at the site. Perhaps the looser Phase IVa deposits represent cultivation of the site. It was noted that in Trench 5 the upper surface of a layer of redeposited natural (context 5070) was pitted/scarred and that a series of numerous small depressions occurred. These may have been caused by the digging over of context 5066 in antiquity with the impressions being caused by the cutting of spades. The compactness of the Phase IVb deposits may indicate a period when the site was not cultivated and laid down to pasture or ?abandoned.

Phase IVc

In Trenches 2, 5, and 16 excavation located an horizon of silty sand with inclusions of clay (contexts 2006, 5029, 5031-2, 5060 and 16012. This deposit appears to represent the final phase of accumulation deposits at the eastern end of the site prior to the construction of the rampart bank. The appearance of clay in these horizons is taken to illustrate material deposited during the construction of the bank.

Finds from this phase include animal bone, daub, and sherds of pottery of pre-Conquest and 11th century date.(Appendix 2).

Phase V

Phase V is represented by the construction of bank in the south-eastern portion of the site. The bank was constructed of clay (contexts 1008, 2004 and 16017) and was traced for 20m within the excavated trenches (1, 2 and 16). Disturbed portions were also noted in the watching of excavations within the substation area (Trenches 10-12 : see below).

The bank stood to a height of 1.5m in Trench 1 (Fig. 13 : Pls. 14 and 23) before gradually reducing in height to the west (Pl. 16).

No finds were recovered from the bank material.

In Trenches 1 and 2 the bank material (contexts 1008 and 2004) were seen to lay directly upon the earlier deposits without causing any apparent disturbance. This was not true in the area of Trench 16. Here the bank material extended down to just above the feet of skeleton 16016 and was a direct intrusion into the earlier deposits (Pls. 20 and 21). It seems likely that the collection of bone (context

16015) found at the feet of skeleton 16014 was disturbed during the construction of the bank and redeposited by the bank makers. This would therefore tend to suggest that further burials had existed to the east and north and which were disturbed by the construction of the bank.

Phase VI

Phase VI represents the period after the construction of the bank.

Excavation located a thick deposit of silty loam (contexts 2005, 3004, 4004, 5057. 6011. 7008. 8012, 13015, 15004 and 16011). These deposits appeared to have accumulate gradually over a long period of time.

Finds from Phase VI consisted of animal bone, pottery, daub, slag and a decorated bone handle (SF 1) a gaming piece (SF 2): an Edward II silver penny (SF 3), and an iron object (SF 38). Pottery from these contexts provided a date range from the 12th to 15th centuries (Appendix 2).

Phase VII

Directly above the Phase VI deposits was a deposit of silty loam (contexts 2003, 3003, 4002, 5028 and 5029, 13006 and 13007, 15002, and 16003) which appeared to have accumulated naturally (Phase VIIa)

Disturbance to these deposits had been caused in the north of Trench 5 by the extensive service trenches, whereas in Trenches 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 15 and 16 these deposits remained relatively in situ.

The degree of disturbance is illustrated by the wide range in pottery dates from these contexts (13th-20th century : Appendix 2).

Phase VIIb

Excavation in Trench 6 located a deposit of pottery, animal bone and glass in a slightly silty sand matrix. (contexts 6006 and 6009). This deposit was interpreted as a midden of post medieval date.

In Trench 3 excavation located a sub-rectangular feature (cut 3005) filled with a sandy loam (context 3006).

In Trench 4 a circular cut (context 4003) with portions of a wooden stake (context 4005) in its fill (context 4003) appear with cut 3005 and the dumped deposit in Trench 6 to be the only activity within this general period (Phase VIIb).

Phase VIII

Phase VIII represents localised activity in Trench 1 where a series of postholes were cut into context 1007 (Fig. 11). These features (contexts 1010, 1012, 1014, 1016, 1018, 1022 and associated fills 1009, 1011, 1013, 1015, 1017 and 1021 respectively) appear to represent a posthole group dug into the top of the eroded bank (context 1007). The fills of these features are clearly of a late date as finds

included glass, brick and tile fragments and some pottery (Appendix 2).

In Trench 13 excavated located a deep feature (context 3023 : Fig. 21). The cut from the base of the topsoil (context 13003) and which measured 0.60m in depth and was filled with a number of silty sands (contexts 1310, 13011, 13017, and 13022 : Fig. 21).

Phase IX

Phase IX represents modern disturbance in the excavated areas. This activity includes the construction of the substations in the 1960's and 1970's and the associated electricity cable trenches (contexts 5025 =6010=7010, 5053, 5056. Water services also bisected Trench 5 (contexts 5012 and 5059). In addition in Trench 1 a rubbish pit was observed (context 1020) and further disturbance had been achieved by the construction of an animal shelter (context 1004).

Excavation in Trench 13 located a cut feature (context 3023) which belongs to this phase and is discussed in more detail below.

Finds from this period (Appendix 2) represented a broad range of dates from the medieval through to the modern period. This is explained by the depth of the electricity service trenches which cut down to the Anglo-Saxon deposits in the centre of Trench 5 and disturbed medieval levels in the baulk

between Trenches 4 and 5.

Phase X

Phase X represents the current state of the site and is illustrated by the topsoil and turf which cover the majority of the site (contexts 1001, 2001, 3003, 4002, 5002, 6003, 7002, 13002 and 15001: a sandy loam).

Watching Brief Results

A watching brief was maintained during the excavation of Trenches 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 14 (Fig. 3).

Trench 8

Trench 8 bisected Castle Garth on a east-west alignment and continued to the south (Fig. 3). The trench followed the line of the existing electricity cable and was machine excavated to a depth of between 0.5 and 0.75m (i.e. to the top of the cable), and measured only 0.6m in width.

The fill of the trench represented material redeposited after the initial excavation of the trench (context 8010). As the trench only reached depths of 0.75m, natural deposits were not encountered anywhere along the trench and the depth of the trench was not sufficient to permit observation of the outer ditch deposits. Even so, the excavation illustrated the general sequence of deposits seen in the excavation trenches. The earliest deposit (context 8016) observed in Trench 8 represented Phase IVa, and context 8014 equated to Phase IVb deposits. The trench also cut through the outer bank material (context 8013 : a admixture of sand and gravels). On stratigraphic considerations this bank would appear to have been constructed at the same time as the Phase V bank. Context 8012, a silty fine sand equated to medieval activity at the site (Phase VI) and the later post medieval accumulation deposits of Phase VII were represented by context 8011 (a silty sandy loam).

In addition to this excavation located a low clay bank (context 8028) measuring 1.45m in width and exposed in the trench for 0.18m in depth. This deposit was observed in Trench 7 (context 7040 where it was tentatively interpreted as redeposited natural).

Phase IX modern activity was illustrated by a contexts 8020, 8022 and 8024. Context 8020 appears to have been cut for a fence post. Context 8022 measured 1.45m in width and was cut from the base of the topsoil (8002) to a depth of 0.22m. A much larger feature (context 8024) measured 1.45m in width and was cut from the base of the topsoil to 0.52m. Both these features had a gentle U shaped profile.

Conversations with local residents suggested that Features 8022 and 8024 may relate to activity on the site in the Second World War. During this period a trench was dug along the outer bank of the Castle and a wall constructed behind this trench to prevent tanks entering Castle Garth. The larger of the two features 8024 was also recorded in Trench 13. It seems likely then that Feature 8024 represents the ditch and the smaller Feature 8022 the wall trench situated behind.

Trench 9

Trench 9 was located inside the Post Office buildings car park. The trench measuring 1.5m by 1m was cut to a depth of 0.9m. The stratigraphy showed that below modern surface deposits (context 9001-3) was a deposit of silty sand (context 9004).

No finds were located within this trench and other than recent car park deposits the area appears to have been open ground for a long period of time.

Trenches 10-12

Trenches 10-12 were located with in the area of the electricity substation. All the area was badly disturbed as the result of past cable laying. However, disturbed portions of bank material were observed (context 10004).

No finds were recovered from this trench.

Trench 14

Trench 14 was situated in the alley to the east of Castle Garth which runs down to the ~~Market Place~~ Castlegate.

The trench was very badly disturbed housing at least five service cables or pipes (contexts 14013, 14014, 14015, 14016). The shallowness of the excavation meant that no meaningful deposits were encountered.

No finds were recovered from this trench.

Summary

During July-October 1994 a series of excavations and a watching brief was maintained within the site of Thirsk Castle (SE 4277 8201). This work was commissioned by Northern Electric Plc.

Thirsk Castle is a Schedule Ancient Monument (County No. 711). The monument includes the western rampart, the undeveloped area of the bailey and the motte of the Norman castle. The area excavated in 1995 concentrated within the bailey area known as Castle Garth. The Schedule Entry states that "Although it was once held that Thirsk Castle was built in AD 975, there is no substantive evidence for pre-Conquest foundation and it is now thought that the castle was erected by Robert de Stuteville in about 1092. Roger de Mowbray held the castle against Henry II in 1174, but in 1175 it was surrendered to the King who ordered its destruction in 1176. For a period from 1376 Castle Garth was used as a garden but by the end of the century it was laid to grass. Deeds record that in 1658 the land passed to R Bell. Castle Garth remains in the possession of the Bell family today.

The objectives of the project were to excavate an area (7.5m by 5m max.) to house the new brick built substation situated in the south-eastern corner of Castle Garth, adjacent to the old 'open' apparatus. In addition two trenches no more than 1m in width were to be excavated to accommodate the new high voltage cables which would feed into the existing power cables on the site.

Trench 1 (site of the new substation) was excavated to a depth of c. 1.5m. Excavation located a thick deposit of clay which formed the rampart of the castle. This deposit sealed a natural accumulated deposit which in turn sealed a well laid deposit of cobbles. This feature was seen to extend for the full width of the trench on a north-south alignment, and continued in to Trench 2. Finds from this area of the site were scarce and no material was located to determine the date of the clay rampart, accumulation deposit or cobbled surface. It was accepted based on the known history of the site that the rampart was medieval in date therefore any features below this deposit had to be pre-Conquest.

In Trench 2 the rampart bank was located and a series of well stratified accumulation deposits which had built up against the rampart and also a series of deposits sealed beneath. Again finds from these layers were scarce but in contexts stratigraphically earlier than the rampart, deposits of daub and slag were recovered.

Trench 3 produced a well stratified series of deposits which were not effected by the clay rampart. Based on associated finds it was possible to trace the history of the site from the modern, post medieval and medieval garden soils through to a series of very silty deposits which contained daub, slag and sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery. From context 3007, excavation located a complete pottery vessel of 6th century date. Excavation also located a number of features of Anglo-Saxon date, a slot, pit and what at first was believed to be a pit which in retrospect was a disinterred grave. Perhaps the most important feature located in Trench 3 and extending into Trench 4 and 16 was an adult inhumation with associated gravegoods of a complete decorated pot located adjacent to the right-hand side of the skull. The discovery of this burial totally altered the project design and further

excavation was undertaken over a much larger area.

Trench 4 situated directly to the west of Trench 3, enabled the full extent of skeleton 3020 to be determined and also located skeleton 4010. This inhumation was on a slightly different alignment to 3020 and was found to be incomplete. Associated with 4010 was a iron blade. To the north of 4010 was a third burial 4012 which although buried in a gravecut was only represented by the lower portion of the right leg. Sieving of the grave fill recovered further fragments of bone and a copper alloy and iron strap end.

Excavation in Trench 5 to the north of Trenches 3 and 4 located two further burials, one of a child with an iron buckle (5018) and an infant with no gravegoods (5020). What was interesting about these two burials was the alignment of the skeletons. Inhumation 3020 was aligned head to the west, 4010, head to the west, 5018 head to the east and 5020 head to the south. Further excavation in Trench 5 failed to locate any further articulated burials, although fragments of human bone were recovered and two disinterred graves were also excavated.

Trenches 6 and 7 were excavated to the west of the main burial area to determine the extent of the graves. The trenches adjacent to the in situ high voltage cables did not locate any further burials, but instead provided information on the stratigraphic nature of the site and topography.

Trenches 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14 were areas excavated around the live cables and were watched and recorded. Very little evidence was forthcoming from these trenches due to the disturbed nature of the fills and the shallowness of the cable trench.

Trench 13 was hand excavated in an area where a joint to the high voltage cable was to be fitted. This trench provided the opportunity to assess the outer rampart bank. Although a little further to the east would have permitted a good section through the bank, or a little further to the west would have permitted a section cut into the rampart ditch. As it was Trench 13 was sited over rampart slippage. Even so further Anglo-Saxon pottery was recovered, although no features with the exception of the modern cut for the tank obstacle wall of Second World War date was located.

Trench 15 was excavated to assess a grave found in Trench 3 (3017) and which continued into Trench 15. Excavation did not locate any burial but an iron blade was recovered from the horizon where burials had been found to occur.

Trench 16 was the final trench to be excavated at the site. This trench was situated under the concrete pad of the old substation. Fortunately the cables had just missed disturbing an inhumation. This inhumation had been buried directly onto the land surface. Associated with the burial were four sleeve clasps, a cruciform broach, an iron blade and a copper alloy object found close to the left hand side of the skull.

Assessment of the gravegoods along with the pottery assemblage suggests a date in the first half of

the 6th century. All the burials had been disturbed, some to a greater degree than others, but gravegoods remained, arguing against grave robbing in antiquity. Excavation of Trench 16 also showed that the clay rampart had interfered with the burials and that it is possible that the builders of the rampart are responsible to the disturbance of the graves and the removal of some or part of the bodies.

Conclusions

Excavations at Castle Garth in 1995 produced valuable new information on the history of Thirsk, prior to the construction of the Castle.

The earliest period are represented by two east-west slots/gullies which may indicate prehistoric activity at the site. Flints blades were recovered during the excavation suggesting a pre-historic presence close by, although this must remain tentative due to the small areas excavated at these levels. The discovery of the bronzes at Station Road, Thirsk again points to a prehistoric presence in this area.

Pre-Castle activity was represented by a small cemetery of at least ten graves, with the indication that further burials exist to the north, west and east of the areas excavated in the south-east corner of Castle Garth. The burials date to the first half of the 6th century and represent very early settlement of this area of Northern England. Finds of animal bone, daub and slag indicate domestic occupation close by, the exact location of which remains to be defined.

The clay bank constructed onto the Anglo-Saxon deposits appears to be of 11th century date in this part of Castle Garth. This compliments the historical record. But the watching brief conducted by A Clarke in 1994 suggested that the bank was of more than one phase and sealed earlier activity. The final phase of the bank construction to the north of MAP's excavations was of clay, the remainder of sands and gravels. This may suggest that the bank to the south of Castle Garth is later and the northern portion represents a remodelling in the 11th century of an already extent earthwork (the stronghold constructed by Edgar?).

In the excavated portions of Castle Garth, the medieval periods were only represented by accumulation deposits with the exception of the clay bank located in Trenches 7 and 8 which may relate to building activity within the bailey. Otherwise, there was very little structural activity seen in the excavated trenches. This would appear to complement the historical record which records that the Castle was only in use for c. 100 years. The depth of deposits corresponds well with the garden and pastoral use of the site after the Castle was destroyed in 1196.

The disturbance of the service trenches and the tank wall along with the standing buildings at the site have caused only localised destruction, it is clear that the majority of the archaeology of Castle Garth remains in situ and holds important information on the development of this land unit over a considerable period of time.

Recommendations

The excavations were able to provide information on the early history of Thirsk which had only been hinted at in the historical records.

The importance of the early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and a possible associated settlement suggests that any planning application in the areas adjacent to Castle Garth are considered with great care and accorded the level of evaluation which is deserved.

Within Castle Garth, English Heritage should be attempting to provide better presentation of the site and conducting a phased programme of further evaluation. This at the least should include geophysical and earthwork survey.

In addition if funding is ever available limited excavations of the ditches should be undertaken to provide dating evidence for their construction and that of the ramparts, especially in the northern portion of Castle Garth.

Bibliography

Clarke A	1990	A Watching Brief at Calverts Carpets
	1994	A Watching Brief at Masonic Lane, Thirsk
Hatch P	1981	A Watching Brief at Amos' Yard, Thirsk (unpublished.
Grainge J	1859	An early survey of Thirsk.
Thompson E	1947	My Book of Thirsk.
VCH	1976	A History of the North Riding of England. Volume 2

APPENDIX 1

Context listing

Trench 1

1000 - Trench 1
1001 - Turf
1002 - 5YR 3/1 sandy loam, topsoil
1003 - 5YR 3/1 sandy loam
1004 - Structure : animal shelter
1005 - Structure : animal shelter walling
1006 - 5YR 6/6 clay
1007 - 10YR 3/3 clay
1008 - 2.5YR 5/4 clay
1009 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1010
1010 - posthole cut
1011 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1012
1012 - posthole cut
1013 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1014
1014 - posthole cut
1015 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1016
1016 - posthole cut
1017 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1018
1018 - posthole cut
1019 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1020
1020 - posthole cut
1021 - 10YR 3/2 silty loam fill of 1022
1022 - posthole cut
1023 - 10YR 3/2 silty loam fill of 1028
1024 - 10YR 3/3 silty - very silty sandy loam with occassional cobbles
1025 - cobbled surface
1026 - 7.5YR 4/2 silty loam fill of 1027
1027 - posthole cut
1028 - linear cuts plough marks

Trench 2

2000 - Trench 2
2001 - Turf
2002 - 5YR 3/1 sandy loam, topsoil
2003 - 5YR 4/4 sandy loam
2004 - 5YR 5/4 clay
2005 - 5YR 3/4 sandy loam
2006 - 5YR 3/3 with 5YR 4/3 clay and charcoal and cobbles
2007 - 5YR 3/3 silty sandy loam
2008 - 5YR 3/2 silty sandy loam with clay flecks
2009 - 10YR 3/3 silty - very silty sandy loam
2010 - cobbled surface
2011 - 10YR 7/8 sand with some panning
2012 - 10YR 3/3 very silty sand with charcoal flecks
2013 - 10YR 3/3 very silty sand
2014 - ?posthole cut
2015 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand, fill of 2014

Trench 3

3000 - Trench 3

3001 - Turf
3002 - Gravel
3003 - 5YR 3/1 sandy loam, topsoil
3004 - 10YR 3/3 silty loam with limestone fragments
3005 - ?pit cut
3006 - 5YR 3/4 sandy loam, fill of 3005
3007 - 5YR 3/4 very silty sand with occassional cobble
3008 - 10YR 3/2 sandy loam, fill of 3009
3009 - posthole cut
3010 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand with occassional large limestones
3011 - 5YR 3/4 silty sand
3012 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand
3013 - 10YR 3/3 sandy silt
3014 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with high charcoal inclusions 50-80%, fill of 3022
3015 - ?slot/ditch cut
3016 - 10YR 3/3 sandy silt, fill of 3015
3017 - ?grave cut
3018 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with occassional gravel, fill of 3017
3019 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with 10-15% gravel
3020 - Inhumation
3021 - Gravel mound
3022 - grave cut for burial 3020

30000 - natural

Trench 4

4000 - Trench 4
4001 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam, topsoil
4002 - 10YR 3/3 silty sandy loam with occassional gravel and cobble
4003 - ?posthole cut
4004 - 10YR 4/3 - 3/3 silty sand, fill of 4003
4005 - square wooden fence post
4006 - gravel
4006/7 - gravel mound, grave marker
4007 - gravel
4008 - 5YR 4/4 very silty sand with occassional cobble
4009 - 10YR 3/3 silty loam with small stone inclusions
4010 - Inhumation
4011 - grave cut for 4010
4012 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam, fill of 4011
4013 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam with occassional gravel
4014 - 10YR 3/3 very silty sand with ocassional coarse gravel
4015 - ?posthole cut
4016 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with 50% coarse gravel, fill of 4015
4017 - posthole cut
4018 - 7.5 4/4 silty sand with cobbles and gravel, fill of 4017
4019 - a set of large cobbles, posthole packing
4020 - 10YR 3/6 silty fine sand with 50% gravel
4021 - grave cut for inhumation 4023
4022 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand with occassional gravel and sandstone, fill of 4021
4023 - Inhumation
4024 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand with occassional gravel
4025 - gravel
4026 - 10YR 3/6 - 3/8 sand
4027 - water laid cobbles
4028 - 10YR 3/6 clay (natural)
4029 - ? grave cut

4030 - 10YR 3/8 silty sand, fill of 4029

Trench 5

5000 - Trench 5
5001 - Turf
5002 - 10YR 6/4 loam with 90% gravel
5003 - Tarmac
5004 - Granite sets for path makeup
5005 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam with gravel and brick rubble, topsoil
5006 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam with occassional gravel, topsoil
5007 - 10YR 4/3 sand with 50% gravel, path makeup
5008 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with 95% gravel
5009 - ?service trench cut - unexcavated
5010 - 10YR 3/2 silty sandy loam, fill of 5009
5011 - 10YR 3/1 clay, fill of HV cable trench, 5012
5012 - large linear cut HV cable trench
5013 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam, fill of 5012
5014 - service trench cut
5015 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam, fill of 5014
5016 - Structure - iron inspection cover for water pipe
5017 - concrete for granite sets 5004
5018 - 10YR 5/4 sandy clay
5019 - service trench cut
5020 - 10YR 4/4 sandy clay
5021 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam with 90% gravel, topsoil
5022 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam with brick and limestone fragments
5023 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam with some brick and limestone fragments
5024 - 10YR 4/1 silty sand with crushed gravel
5025 - service trench cut - LV cable
5026 - 10YR 3/4 sandy loam, fill of 5025
5027 - 10YR 3/4 silty clay loam with 50% gravel
5028 - 10YR 3/3 silty clay sand with occassional gravel
5029 - 10YR 3/3 silty clay sand with 10YR 5/6 clay
5030 - 10YR 3/4 sandy clay with brick/tile and occassional gravel, fill of HV trench 5012
5031 - 5YR 5/3 silty sand with 5YR 3/4 clay
5032 - 5YR 3/3 silty clay sand with 5YR 5/4 clay
5033 - 5YR 3/3 silty sand
5034 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand
5035 - 10YR 4/4 silty sand with 90% gravel, gravel mound
5036 - 10YR 3/4 silty clay sand with a high inclusion of charcoal (60%)
5037 - 10YR 3/6 sand
5038 - Grave cut for burial 5040
5039 - 10YR 3/4 silty sand with occassional gravel, fill of 5038
5040 - Inhumation
5041 - Inhumation
5042 - Grave cut for 5041
5043 - 10YR 3/3 very silty fine sand, fill of 5042
5044 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand with 80% gravel
5045 - 5YR 4/6 silty sand
5046 - 10YR 3/3 silty clay sand with very occassional small pebbles
5047 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand with clay 5YR 5/4
5048 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand with occassional stone
5049 - 10YR 4/6 silty sand with occassional stone
5050 - 10YR 4/6 silty sand with gravel
5051 - 10YR 3/4 silty sand with occassiona stone
5052 - 10YR 4/4 silty sand with 90% gravel
5053 - 10YR 3/3 silty loam with occassional stone

5054 - 10YR 3/4 - 10YR 6/6 sand with gravel
5055 - 10YR 4/3 sandy silt with occassional stone
5056 - service trench cut = 5012
5057 - 10YR 4/3 slightly silty sand with gravels
5058 - 10YR 4/3 sandy silt with occassional stone
5059 - service trench cut for water pipe
5060 - 5YR 5/4 sandy silt and 10YR 4/4 clay plus occassional stone
5061 - 10YR 3/3 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with 20% clay
5062 - 10YR 4/6 clay sand with occassional stone
5063 - 10YR 4/3 sandy silt
5064 - 10YR 3/3 silty loam with occassional stone
5065 - ?Grave cut
5066 - 10YR 3/3 sandy silt with occassional stone
5067 - 10YR 3/3 silty loam with occassional stone
5068 - 10YR 5/6 silty sand with gravel and occassional stone
5069 - 10YR 3/4 silty sand with occassional stone
5070 - 10YR 3/4 silty sand, gravel and sand
5071 - 10YR 3/4 - 10YR 6/6 sand with gravel
5072 - ?Grave cut
5073 - sandy gravel with occassional stone, natural
5074 - sandy gravel with occassional stone
5075 - cut
5076 - cut

Trench 6

6000 - Trench 6
6001 - Turf
6002 - 10YR 4/2 silty loam with stone and cinder, topsoil
6003 - 10YR 3/1 asphlat, path make up
6004 - 10YR 3/3 sandy silty loam with occassional stone, fill of 6010
6005 - Granite sets for path
6006 - 10YR 5/6 slightly silty sand with occassional stone
6007 - 10YR 5/6 clay sand
6008 - 10YR 4/3 silty loam with occassional stone
6009 - 10YR 5/6 clay sand with occassional stone
6010 - Service trench cut for LV cable
6011 - 10YR 3/3 slightly sandy silty loam with occassional stone
6012 - 10YR 5/6 silty sand with occassional stone
6013 - 10YR 6/8 sand

Trench 7

7000 - Trench 7
7001 - Turf
7002 - 10YR 4/2 silty loam with occassional stone and cinder, topsoil
7003 - 10YR 3/3 clay and silty loam with occassional stone, fill of 7005
7004 - 5YR 5/4 clay
7005 - Service trench cut for LV cable
7006 - 10 YR 3/3 sandy silty loam with with occassional stone
7007 - 10YR 4/3 slightly sandy silty loam with with occassional stone
7008 - 10YR 4/3 sandy silty loam with with occassional stone
7009 - 10YR 4/4 silty sand with with occassional stone
7010 - 10YR 7/8 sand with with occassional stone
7011 - 10YR 4/4 silty loam with some clay inclusion
7012 - ?pit cut
7013 - fill of 7012

Trench 8

8000 - Trench 8 : Cable Trench
8001 - Turf
8002 - 10YR 3/4 sandy loam
8003 - 10YR 5/4 gravel
8004 - Path makeup - tarmac
8005 - path make up - limestone chippings
8006 - 10YR 5/8 sand
8007 - 10YR 4/2 silty sand
8008 - 7.5YR 5/8 sand
8009 - 10YR 5/6 sand with gravel inclusions
8010 - disturbed material in cable trench
8011 - 10YR 3/2 very silty sandy laom
8012 - 10YR 3/3 silty fine sand
8013 - gravel
8014 - 10YR 3/4 compact sand
8015 - 7.7YR 5/4 compact sand
8016 - 10YR 3/6 fine silty sand
8017 - 10YR 3/3 fine silty sand
8018 - 10YR 3/6 fine silty sand
8019 - 10YR 3/6 silty snad with gravel
8020 - cut - ?fence post
8021 - 10YR 3/2 fine sand
8022 - modern cut
8023 - 10YR 3/4 fine sand and gravel
8024 - modern cut
8025 - 10YR 4/6 silty sand
8026 - 10YR 4/4 silty sand
8027 - 10YR 3/4 silty sand and charcoal
8028 - 10YR 4/3 clay
8029 - 10YR 4/3 clay

Trench 9

9000 - Trench 9
9001 - Tarmac
9002 - 10YR 3/4 sandy loam
9003 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand and limestone chippings
9004 - 10YR 6/8 silty sand

Trench 10

10000 - Trenhc 10
10001 - concrete slab
10002 - hard core : limestone chippings
10003 - 10YR 4/3 coarse sand
10004 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam
10005 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand

Trench 11

11000 - Trench 11
11001 - Concrete slab
11002 - Hard core : limestone chippings
11003 - 10YR 4/3 coarse sand
11004 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam
11005 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand with clay inclusions

Trench 12

12000 - Trench 12
12001 - Concrete slab
12002 - Hard core : limestone chippings
12003 - 10YR 4/3 coarse sand
12004 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam
12005 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand with clay inclusions

Trench 13

13000 - Trench 13
13001 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand
13002 - 10YR 3/6 silty fine sand
13003 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand loam
13004 - 10YR 3/2 silty clay sand
13005 - silty sand
13006 - 10YR 3/4 silty sand
13007 - 10YR 2/3 silty sand
13008 - 10YR 3/4 sand
13009 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand
13010 - 10YR 5/4 silty clay sand
13011 - clay
13012 - 7.5YR silty clay sand
13013 - 10YR 3/4silty sand
13014 - 10YR 3/4 very fine silty sand
13015 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand
13016 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand
13017 - 10YR 3/4 fine silty sand
13018 - 10YR 3/6 silty clay sand
13019 - 7.5YR 3/2 silty sand
13020 - 7.5YR 4/4 clay
13021 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand
13022 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand
13023 - cut

130000 - natural

Trench 14

14000 - Trench 14
14001- Tarmac
14002 - 10YR 3/4 sandy loam
14003 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand
14004 - 10YR 6/8 fine sand
14005 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand
14004 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand
14005 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand
14006 - 10YR 3/2 silty sand
14007 - cut
14008 - 10YR 4/4 silty sand
14009 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand
14010 - GPO duct cover
14011 - 10YR 4/6 silty sand
14012 - 10YR 4/3 fine sand
14013 - 10YR 3/6 silty sand with crushed limestone flecks

14014 - 10YR 4/6 silty fine sand
14015 - 10YR 3/2 fine sand
14016 - cut for 14011
14017 - cut for 14009

Trench 15

15000 - Trench 15
15001 - turf
15002 - 10YR 3/3 sandy loam, topsoil
15003 - 10YR 3/3 silty sandy loam with occassional gravel and cobble
15004 - 5YR 3/4 sandy loam
15005 - 5YR 3/3 silty sand
15006 - 10YR 3/3 silty loam with small stone inclusions
15007 - 5YR 3/4 very silty sand with occassional cobble
15008 - as 3018, 10YR 4/3 silty sand with occassional gravel
15009 - ?grave cut
15010 - 10YR 4/3 silty sand with occassional gravel

Trench 16

16000 - Trench 16
16001 - concrete slab
16002 - hard core
16003 - 10YR 3/2 silty sandy loam
16004 - cut for conduit cable
16005 - 5YR 4/4 sandy clay and 5YR 3/2 sandy loam
16006 - 5YR 3/3 sandy loam
16007 - 5YR 3/3 sandy loam
16008 - 10YR 4/3 clay
16009 - 10YR 4/3 with broken concrete
16010 - ceramic tiles covering conduit cable
16011 - 5YR 4/4 sandy loam
16012 - 5YR 3/3silty sand with 5YR 4/3 clay
16013 - 5YR 3/3 silty sandy loam
16014 - skeleton
16015 - disturbed human bone
16016 - 10YR 3/3 silty sand
16017 - 2.5YR 5/4 solid clay

APPENDIX 2

Finds Catalogue

2a. Ceramic Catalogue

Trench 1		Date Range	Date
1003	17 sherds plant pot, (including 3 rims, 1 base)		
	4 blue + white Transferware		
	2 Manganese glazed, (including 1 rim)		
	1 Sherd yellow-glazed coarseware (base)	19-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.2 Kg		
1007	3 Sherds Brandsby-type glazed jug		
	2 Sherds Brandsby-type cook/pot jar, (including 1 rim)	13-14th	14th
	Total weight 0.05 Kg		
1021	1 Brandsby-type body sherd		
	4 Plant pot body sherds	13-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.04 Kg		

Trench 2			
2002	2 York glazed/ York White sherds (including 1 base)		
	8 Brandsby-type sherds (including 1 jug rim, 3 glazed)		
	1 ? Medieval		
	1 Staffordshihire mug/jug handle sherd; streaky brown over yellow glaze		
	10 18-19th century Coarseware		
	1 Wedgewood basaltip decorated sherd (early 19th century)		
	2 Yellow glazed sherds (19th century)		
	1 Salt glazed stoneware lid sherd (19th-20th century)		
	1 blue and white sherd (20th century)		
	1 Decorated white/green glaze (20th century)		
	52 Plant pot sherds (including, 6 bases, 11 rims)	13-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.8 Kg		
	2 Tile fragments		
	2 Stones		
2003	7 Brandsby-type body sherds		
	2 Manganese glazed Coarseware sherds (including 1 rim)		
	24 Plant pot sherds (including 9 rims, 3 base)	13-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.25 Kg		
2005	2 Gritty ware (including 1 base)		
	1 York glaze ware-type		
	4 Brandsby-type	12-14th	14th
	Total weight 0.09 Kg		
2006	2 ? pre-conquest		
	1 York-glazed type		
	1 ? Daub fragment		
	Total weight 0.05 Kg		

2007	1 Gritty ware base sherd	12-13th	13th
	Total weight 0.01 Kg		
2012	1 Brandsby-type body sherd	13-14th	13th
	Total weight 0.01 Kg		
	2/3 Baulk 1 Brandsby-type sherd		
	3 Modern glazed sherds	13-20th	13th
	Total weight 0.05 Kg		

Trench 3

3003	4 Brandsby-type sherds		
	9 Modern Stoneware sherds (including 1 rim)		
	5 Post-Medieval white/yellow glazed Coarseware (including 3 rims)		
	10 Manganese glazed Coarseware sherds (including 4 rims)		
	9 blue and white Transferware/White glazed (including 1 rim, 1 base)		
	5 Plant pot rim sherds	13-20th	
	Total weight 0.67 Kg		
	1 19th Century glazed and decorated tile fragment		
	2 Brick/Tile fragments		
3004	1 body Gritty ware		
	1 York glazed/York white		
	1 handle ? Humberware?		
	13 Brandsby-type (including 1 rim, 1 base)		
	4 Post-Medieval Coarseware green/brown glaze (including 1 rim)		
	2 modern stoneware		
	5 blue and white Transferware/White glazed ware sherds (including 1 rim, 2 base)		
	9 Plant pot sherds	12-20th	20th
	Total weight0.49 Kg		
3006	4 Modern stoneware (including 1 bottle base)		
	2 Modern White glazed	19-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.2 Kg		
3007	1 ? Pre-conquest		
	3 Brandsby-type	?9-14th	14th
	Total weight 0.04 Kg		
3021	1 Stoneware, ? modern	20th	20th
	Total weight 0.01 Kg		
3022	3 Modern White glaze	19-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.02 Kg		

Trench 4

4001	3 Post-Medieval Coarseware (including 1 manganese glaze)		
	2 Modern stoneware		
	1 19th Century Yellow glaze		
	16 blue and white Transferware/White glazed ware sherds (including 4 rims, 4 base)		

	20 Plant pot (including 8 rim)	18-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.6 Kg		
4002	1 Gritty ware		
	1 York White ware		
	4 Brandsby-type		
	3 Hambleton-type (including 2 rim)		
	16 Post-Medieval coarseware (including Manganese Green glaze)		
	2 Modern Yellow glaze		
	20 blue and white Transferware/White glaze (including 7 rim)		
	5 Plant pot (including 1 rim)	12-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.08 Kg		
4008	1 Gritty ware	11-13th	13th
	Total weight 0.01 Kg		
4010	1 Humber ware rim fragment	13-15th	?early 13th
	Total weight 0.01 Kg		
4014	2 ?Brick fragments		
	Total weight 0.01 Kg		

Trench 5

5006	1 Koln/Freschen type stoneware body sherd		
	3 Stoneware (? source)		
	1 Post-Medieval Green/Brown glazed Coarseware		
	1 modern Yellow glaze		
	1 Plant pot base	17-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.1 Kg		
5011	1 Post-Medieval Manganese- glazed Coarseware base		
	2 Modern White glaze rim	18-20th	20th
	Total weight 0.06 Kg		
5015	1 Brandsby-type body		
	8 Post-Medieval Coarseware (including 3 ryedale type,1 Manganese glaze)		
	3 blue/white Transferware	13-19th	19th
	Total weight 0.14 Kg		
5018	6 Brandsby type		
	1 Staffordshire Post-Medieval Coarseware, "Marrled ware"		
	2 Modern Tea-pot sherds	13-19th	19th
	Total weight 0.06 Kg		
5023	2 ?Medieval		
	1 Humberware		
	1 Stoneware (?source)		
	2 Post-Medieval Coarseware (including 1 Maganese glazed, 1 green)		
	4 blue and white Transferware/White glaze (including 1 base)	13-19th	19th
	Total weight 0.15 Kg		
5030	1 Staffordshire-type slipware dish sherd		
	4 sherds 18th Century Pearl ware	17-18th	18th
	Total weight 0.03 Kg		

5031	1 ? sherd Total weight 0.01 Kg	-	-
5036	1 Gritty ware Total weight 0.01 Kg	11-13th	?early 13th
5053	1 moderen Yellow glaze Total weight 0.01 Kg	19th	19th
5055	2 Post-Medieval Coarseware Total weight 0.04 Kg	17-18th	18th
5057	2 Brandsby type 2 Post-Medieval Coarseware (1 manganese glaze) Total weight 0.05 Kg	13-18th	18th
5066	? Pre-conquest 2 Brick/Daub ?	9-10th	?10th

Trench 6

6002	7 Post-Medieval red-bodied Coarseware sherds 5 modern Stoneware 35 blue and white Transferware/White glaze (including 20 rim, 6 base) 1 Plant pot base Total weight 1.7 Kg	17-20th	20th
6006	1 Post-Medieval Coarseware 2 blue and white Transferware/White glaze Total weight 0.02 Kg	17-20th	20th
6009	1 Post-Medieval Coarseware rim (18th-19th Century) 2 modern Stoneware (including 1 base) 22 blue and white Transferware/White glaze (including 8 rim) 2 Plant pot base Total weight 1.3 Kg	18-20th	20th
6010	1 ? Brick?Tile fragment Total weight 0.01 Kg	-	-

Trench 7

7002	3 modern Stoneware (including 1 rim) 21 blue and white Transferware (including 5 rim) Total weight 0.15 Kg	19-20th	20th

Trench 8

8001	1 Brandsby type 1 Post-Medieval Red bodied Coarseware 1 modern Stoneware 1 modern Yellow glaze 4 White glaze modern 1 Tile fragment	13-20th	20th

Total weight 0.1 Kg

Trench 13

13013 3 Post-Medieval Red bodied Coarseware
3 blue and white Tranwsferware/White glaze (including 1 rim) 18-19th 19th
Total weight 0.05 Kg

13017 1 ? Pre-conquest?
1 Daub fragment 9-10th ?10th
Total weight 0.02 Kg

Trench 15

15002 1 Brandby type
2 blue and white Transferware/White glaze (including 1 base)
2 Plant pot 13-20th 20th
Total weight 0.02 Kg

15003 1 Humberware cook pot rim 13-14th 14th
Total weight 0.01 Kg

15011 4 Brandsby type (including 1 base) 13-14th 14th
Total weight 0.1 Kg

15012 1 Gritty ware
1 Brandsby type 11-14th 14th
Total weight 0.01 Kg

2b. Animal Bone Catalogue

Trench 1

1021 Animal bone

Trench 2

2005 Animal bone

2007 Animal bone

2009 Animal bone

2012 Animal bone

2013 Animal bone

Trench 3

3012 Animal bone

3018 Animal bone

Trench 4

4001 Animal bone
4002 Animal bone

4006	Animal bone
4008	Animal bone
4013	Animal bone
4014	Animal bone

Trench 5

5006	Animal bone
5010	Animal bone
5011	Animal bone
5012	Animal bone
5015	Animal bone
5018	Animal bone
5023	Animal bone
5030	Animal bone
5031	Animal bone
5036	Animal bone
5037	Animal bone
5052	Animal bone
5053	Animal bone
5055	Animal bone
5057	Animal bone
5061	Animal bone
5063	Animal bone
5064	Animal bone
5066	Animal bone
5070	Animal bone
5071	Animal bone
5073	Animal bone
5075	Animal bone

Trench 6

6006 Animal bone

6010 Animal bone

6011 Animal bone

Trench 7

7002 Animal bone

7006 Animal bone

7008 Animal bone

7009 Animal bone

Trench 8

8001 Animal bone

Trench 13

13013 Animal bone

13020 Animal bone

Trench 15

15002 Animal bone

15003 Animal bone

15004 Animal bone

15005 Animal bone

15011 Animal bone

15012 Animal bone

2c. Slag

Trench 2

2002 Slag

2005 Slag

2007 Slag

2009 Slag

2012 Slag

2013 Slag

Trench 3

3012 Slag

Trench 4

4001 Slag

4002 Slag

4008 Slag

Trench 5

5031 Slag

5063 Slag

5066 Slag

Trench 6

6010 Slag

6011 Slag

Trench 7

7008 Slag

Trench 8

8001 Slag

Trench 13

13017 Slag

Trench 15

15011 Slag

15012 Slag

2d. Daub

Trench 1

1008 Daub - 0.01 Kg

Trench 2

2005 Daub - 0.14 Kg

2006 Daub - 0.03 Kg

2007 Daub - 0.01 Kg

2009 Daub - 0.15 Kg

2012 Daub - 0.26 Kg

2013 Daub - 0.01 Kg

Trench 3

3012 Daub - 0.02 Kg

3018 Daub - 0.01 Kg

Trench 4
4006 Daub - 0.01 Kg

Trench 5
5036 Daub - 0.01 Kg

5066 Daub - 0.01 Kg

Trench 8
8001 Daub - 0.01 Kg

Trench 13
15011 Daub - 0.01 Kg

2e. Clay pipe

Trench 1
1003 2 Clay Pipe stem fragments - 0.01 Kg

Trench 2
2002 7 Clay Pipe stem fragments - 0.01 Kg

Trench 3
3003 4 Clay Pipe stems - 0.01 Kg

3004 1 Clay Pipe stem fragment - 0.01 Kg

Trench 5
5010 2 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5011 9 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5015 5 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5018 6 Clay Pipe stem fragments - 0.01 Kg

5023 3 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5028 2 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5030 4 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5053 1 Clay Pipe stem - 0.01 Kg

5055 3 Clay Pipe stems, 1 clay pipe bowl - 0.01 Kg

Trench 6
6002 2 Clay Pipe stems - 0.01 Kg

Trench 8
8001 8 Clay Pipe stems -0.05 Kg

Trench 13
13013 4 Clay Pipe stems - 0.01 Kg

13015 4 Clay Pipe stems - 0.01 Kg

2f. Glass

Trench 2
2002 1 Glass marble - 0.05 Kg

Trench 4
4001 1 Glass marble - 0.04 Kg

4002 1 Glass marble - 0.05 Kg

Trench 5
5006 1 Glass bead, glass stopper 0.01 Kg

5012 2 Glass bottle sherds, 1 drinking glass sherd - 0.008 Kg

5023 1 Glass fragment - 0.001 Kg

Trench 6
6066 3 Glass bottle fragments - 0.005 Kg

Trench 7
7002 3 Glass fragments, 1 glass marble - 0.01 Kg

Trench 8
8001 2 Glass fragments - 0.001 Kg

2g. Metallic

Trench 3
3003 1 Lump of lead, 1 metal button (Cu)

Trench 4
4002 1 Button (Cu), 13 Fe fragments

Trench 5
5015 1 Sheet lead

5066 1 Fe nail

Trench 7
7002 1 Small horse shoe Fe

2h. Worked Stone

Trench 1
1007 1 Stone shot - 0.01 Kg

Trench 2
2002 1 Stone marble - 0.01 Kg

Trench 3
3003 2 Stone marbles - 0.01 Kg

APPENDIX 3

Small Finds Catalogue

Context	Small Find	Description
3004	1	Bone handle. Decorated with criss-cross incisions. Total length = 105mm
3004	2	Ceramic gaming token. No decoration. Total length = 22mm
3004	3	Edward II silver penny.
3008	4	Heavy nail with a flat rectangular head, length = 113mm.
16014	5	A cast copper alloy cruciform brooch which has wings on either side of the headplate panel. The brooch has three half rounded knobs attached to the wings and above the headplate panel. The bow is decorated with a central ridge or band. The foot of the brooch has a marked collar above the horses head which has traces of eyes, brows, and scrolled nostrils, which terminate into a shovel shaped foot. The front and the reverse of the brooch are pitted and covered in corrosion warts, which has deteriorated any signs of decoration on the surface of the brooch. On the reverse of the brooch headplate panel is a large amount of iron corrosion, which could be the remnants of an iron pin, traces of mineralised textiles were adhered to the corrosion. The catchplate survives , which is slightly broken, and has the mineralised remains of an iron pin attached to it. Total length = 109mm.
3018	6	A copper alloy sheet annular brooch fragment, only one quarter of the ring survives. The brooch is undecorated, but part of the iron pin hinge survives with mineralised textiles adhered to it. The width of the brooch band is 6mm and the approximate diameter is 36mm.
3012	7	Iron knife with a curved back and blade. The tang of the blade has bone residue on its surface. Total length = 80mm.
3007	8	Anglian pottery vessel (see Appendix 4)
3019	9	Anglian pottery vessel (see Appendix 4)
4002	10	Two fragments of a pair of medieval ?sheep

		shears, there is a break in the end of the loop Total length = 238mm.
5015	11	George III penny.
5015	12	George III penny.
5021	13	George V halfpenny.
5006	14	Elizabeth II sixpence.
5006	15	Elizabeth II penny.
4001	16	Elizabeth II penny.
3018	17	Blue glass bead. Sub-rectangular in shape with rounded ends. Single perforation. Length = 20mm.
5018	18	Fragment of an iron latchlifter from a key set. Total length = 25mm.
5018	19	Fragment of an iron belt buckle with plating to one end. Length = 15mm.
4010/4012	20	Two fragments of an iron knife with an angled back and a straight cutting edge. There are traces of mineralised organic remains on the surface of the tang. Length = 140mm.
5029	21	A pierced spherical object, possibly a fastener. External diameter = 7mm.
5018	22	Two fragments of a bent flat headed nail. Total length = 32mm.
5018	23	An heavy nail with a rectangular head. Total length = 69mm.
5031	24	Two iron nails - shank fragments Total length = 10mm Total length = 18mm
5031	25	Iron nail fragment. Rectangular shank, no head. Total length = 18mm
4022	26	Copper alloy buckle strap. with iron buckle. The iron buckle is covered in mineralised organic fibres. Total length = 45mm
4022	27	Flint blade. No secondary working. Percussion bulb. Translucent flint. L. 22mm W. 10mm Th. 1mm
4022	28	Flint blade. No secondary working. Percussion bulb. White flint. L. 22mm W. 11mm Th. 1mm
5066	29	Elizabeth II shilling.

5018	30	George VI halfpenny.
5039	31	Fragment of an iron latchlifter from a key set. Total length = 65mm
5032	32	An iron file or rasp with a tang at right angles to the working surface. Underneath there as several grooves on the blade edge. Blade length = 100mm Tang length = 30mm.
5032	33	Two flat headed nail fragments Total length = 19mm Total length = 18mm
unstratified	34	An iron stylus with a flited end. Total length = 97mm
5023	35	Victoria penny
5067	36	A copper alloy brooch fastening which is slightly twisted at on end. Total length = 35mm
7008	38	An iron annular brooch with a mall portion missing. The pin id looped around the side of the brooch. There are traces of mineralised textiles adhered to the pin and the brooch. External diameter = 35mm.
3018	39	Two iron fragments. One appears to be a blade fragment with an angled back and a curved cutting edge. Total length = 35mm Fastener. Small notch/indentation in top of object. Total length = 12mm
15006	40	A fragment of an iron horseshoe with signs of two rivet holes. Total length = 38mm
15007	41	An iron knife wilt or straight back with a curved blade. The tang is broken and has traces of bone in its surface. Total length = 89mm
16013	42	A flat headed nail with square head Total length = 7.2mm
16013	43	A copper alloy ornament, which is probably an ornamental fastener. The item is curved and has decorated terminals with rivet holes at each end. To the reverse of one rivet is an in situ rivet. The object has traces of gilding on its surface. Total length = 40mm.
16014	44	Two fragments of an iron knife, with an angled back and straight cutting edge. The tang has mineralised wood, possibly traces of a handle on its surface. Total length = 108mm
16014	45	Fragment of an iron "hinge pivot".

		Total length = 35mm
16014	46	A cast copper alloy object. Shovel shaped with a punched circle decoration around the edges. Total length = 22mm
16014	47	A hook section of a copper alloy sheet wrist clasp. The hook section has very minor damage and the attachment holes survive on the front. There is traces of solder on the front of the object. On the reverse of the parallel indentations are signs of "gilding" with a series of parallel indentations to lines running the full length of the clasp. Total length = 60mm
16014	48/49	A pair of copper alloy sheet wrist clasps. The hook section has two attachment holes. The clasp is intact with a small amount of corrosion on the reverse. The hook section has no sings of decoration and has traces of soldering adhered to it. Total length = 48mm
16014	50	An eye section of a copper alloy sheet wrist clasp. The eye is incomplete and only one attachment hole has survived. There are traces of solder on the front, above patches of silver/white metal. On the reverse is traces of "gilding" and a series of parallel striations or lines running length ways. Total length = 61mm
16013	51	Shank fragment of a flat headed nail. Total length = 25mm

APPENDIX 4

The Anglo-Saxon Pottery from Thirsk Castle

by Ailsa Mainman and Wendy Sherlock.

Two near complete vessels and eleven sherds representing another four vessels were recovered from the Anglo-Saxon burials. The complete examples had almost certainly served as accessory vessels and it is probable that the sherds are from other vessels with the same function. [The soil which filled the two complete vessels has been retained in case of further analysis is required and the interior of the vessels has been brushed rather than washed so that residue analysis can take place at a later date. It is recommended that this is attempted as there is little data of this kind available and this would be a useful addition.]

Catalogue:

1. **Trench 3 Context 3019.** Handmade accessory vessel. Height 550mm. Rim diameter 680mm. Base diameter 340mm (approx.). Wall thickness (av.) 5-6mm. This small squat vessel is about 75% complete, lacking only part of one wall and most of the very top of the rim. A tiny fragment of rim survives sufficient to show that it had a small out-turned form. The body of the vessel is decorated with small longitudinal pinched lugs or bosses; three and part of a fourth survive out of an original five. The bosses are separated by groups of four vertical lines, simply executed with a pointed stick or similar tool. There is no other form of decoration. The fabric is coarse and is both loosely and densely packed with sub-rounded and sub-angular clear and milky quartz sand grains (up to 3-4mm in size). Grains protrude through the vessel surface giving a very rough exterior. Firing conditions have produced a slightly uneven surface colour ranging from reduced to oxidised patches. The fabric can be compared with Fabric 3 from the Norton cemetery in Cleveland (Sherlock and Welch 1992).

2. **Trench 3 Context 3007.** Handmade accessory vessel. Height 940mm. Base diameter 540mm. Rim diameter 750mm. Wall thickness (av.) 9mm. This small shouldered vessel is 90% complete, lacking only part of the shoulder and rim in one place. The rim is more or less straight with a slight thickening at the very top. The vessel is undecorated although the surface has been burnished and is sooted in places. There are a few voids left by organic material incorporated with the raw materials but these are presumably accidental as the vessel is not organic tempered. the fabric is more compact than 3019, and is not as coarse or densely packed with temper; the smoothed burnishing of the surface has covered any protruding quartz sand grains. The tempering consists of mainly clear quartz sand grains (up to 2-3mm) which are most visible on the interior surface. The fabric compares best with Fabric 1 from the Norton cemetery.

3. **Trench 15 Context 15007**

a. (Smaller sherd). Small undecorated body sherd with sooted exterior. The fabric is quite compact and the matrix fine-grained with fewer quartz sand inclusions, some of which are quite large (1-2mm). Small mica plates are visible on the finished surfaces. the fabric equates closely to Fabric 2 from the Norton cemetery.

b (Larger sherd). Undecorated body sherd with burnished surfaces from a vessel with a quite large diameter. the fabric, which is like 3007, can be compared with Norton cemetery Fabric 1. Underlying the reduced burnished outer surface is an oxidised layer; the rest of the sherd is reduced.

4. **Trench 3 Context 3007.** Eleven sherds probably from two vessels.

a. Four sherds join and are from one vessel of quite wide diameter. Wall thickness (av.) 11mm. Wiping marks are visible on the exterior surface and the interior surfaces are flaking away. the fabric is similar to Norton cemetery Fabric 1. Surface colours varies from slightly oxidised to reduced

across the sherds.

b. Seven sherds of which at least four join. Wall thickness (av.) 10mm. Exterior surface is slightly rough and uneven, and is oxidised. Interior surface has flaked away. this fabric also compares best with Norton cemetery Fabric 1 but is less compact than the other sherds from Context 3007 (4a above) or the complete vessel (2 above).

Discussion

These inhumations are amongst the most westerly Anglo-Saxon burials known in the north-east of England (see Figure 3, Sherlock and Welsh 1992) and are amongst the few which pottery has been recovered or, in the case of older discoveries, where pottery survives. these small accessory vessels can best be compared with vessels from excavations at Norton in Cleveland (Sherlock and Welch 1992) and Sewerby in East Yorkshire (Hirst 1985). At Norton the burials are dated to the 6th and possibly early into the 7th century, while some of the Sewerby burials might begin in the 5th century and continue into the 7th century. In both cases grave goods included accessory pot, some of which were small vessels compared to these (eg. from Graves 39, 45, 92 and 100 at Norton and Graves 36, 38 and 54 at Sewerby). A small globular vessel from Grave 92 at Norton (Sherlock and Welch 1992, Fig. 60) has three long thin bosses arranged around the body of the vessel in a way similar to Thirsk 1 (above). Both these cemeteries also included larger vessels probably of the types which are represented by some of the sherds from Thirsk.

There is evidence for some 40-50 inhumation cemeteries in the East Riding of Yorkshire, many discovered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Hirst 1985, 5), but accessory vessels are known from only a few (Eagles 1979, 75). Further north , nearer to Thirsk, there are fewer cemeteries known and fewer inhumations with accessory vessels. Amongst these are the burials from Greenbank, Darlington recorded in 1876 where pottery was recovered but only one vessel survives (Myres 1976, 72). This decorated urn larger than the near complete Thirsk examples but has six applied long lugs or bosses around the centre in a similar manner to Thirsk 1. Myres dates the Darlington vessel to the mid 6th century on the basis of the stamped decoration, a date broadly consistent with the dating of the rest of the surviving material from the site (Miket and Pocock 1976, 73). Myres (1977) includes decorated vessels from Yarm (150, Fig. 332), Saltburn (151-3, Figs. 344, 193 and 273) and Catterick (337, Fig. 113) in his Corpus. the cremation urn from Yarm is decorated with incised horizontal and chevron decoration which incorporates a series of long thin bosses or elongated lugs around the centre of the vessel. The fragmentary vessels from the mixed cemetery at Hob Hill, Saltburn share little with the Thirsk examples while the vessel from Catterick has horizontal zones of stamped decoration above small round bosses arranged around its maximum diameter.

These vessels from Thirsk are likely to date broadly to the 6th century though the metalwork might give a more precise chronological context for the burials as a group. They are an important addition to the very small corpus of Anglian pottery in the North-east, in the area around the albeit imprecise boundary between the kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia.

[The dating of these vessels any more precisely than broadly to the 6th century on their own characteristics is impossible. When the other associated grave goods, especially the metalwork, has been studied it might be possible to refine the dating of the burials somewhat.]

Bibliography

Eagles B.N 1979 *The Anglo-Saxon settlement of Humberside.* BAR 68, Oxford.

Hirst S.M. 1985 *An Anglo-Saxon Inhumation Cemetery at Sewerby*, East Yorkshire. York University Archaeological Publications 4.

Miket R. and Pocock M. 1976 *An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Greenbank, Darlington*. Medieval Archaeology XX 62-74.

Myres J.N.L. 1976 *'The pot' P.* 72-3 in Miket and Pocock 1976.

Myres J.N.L. 1977 *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Pottery of the Pagan Period*. CUP.

Sherlock S.J. and Welch M.G. 1992 *An Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Norton, Cleveland*. CBA Research Report 82.

APPENDIX 5

Human bone

The result of the investigations are presented in skeleton context number order, with information provided by the excavator brackets.

Skeleton context 4010 [Grave cut 4011;50% of an articulated skeleton upper portion above the sacrum completely removed post-mortem, although some arm bones located in situ. Body originally placed on its back with legs in "foetal position", fully articulated-some disturbance as patella found close to pelvis. No disturbance to bones below the patella which appear to be laid on the land surface and covered by gravel mound (4006/7). Right leg crosses over left, toes pointing East. Excavation located a metal object which appeared to be stuck An adult male of twenty to thirty years of age.

Distal thirds of the left radius and ulna, two left metacarpals and a left phalanx were present. There was restricted but severe peeling of the outer bone "skin" in three areas.

Left and right halves of pelvis were present, in pieces but with nearly complete innominates. The area of contact and union between the right ischium and pubis showed some surface irregularity suggestive of minor trauma in childhood. The bone was very robust and the angle of the greater sciatic notch was acute, together indicating maleness. The pubic symphsis on the right side was half present and semi-corrugated, suggesting an age of twenty to thirty years.

Skeleton context 3020 [A ?complete skeleton located below a mound of gravel (3021), skull intact until crushed by vandals. Skeleton laid in a supine position with hand crossed over chest area (right over left) Legs continue into former [electricity] substation. Right femur broken by vandals . Dentition poor-molars ground flat. Head to West, legs to East. Early stages of the excavation located a small pot to the right hand side of the skull (?bockel urn). Excavation into baulk showed that the legs were crossed at the knees.]

This was an adult male of twenty to twenty-five years of age.

The robustness of the jaw and the size of the mastoid and supraorbital suggest that this individual was an adult male with dental attrition indicating an age of between twenty and twenty five years. In the region of the right supraorbital area was a depression, approximate 10mm square, suggesting an old healed injury. Mild hypoplastic lines were evident on the canines and premolars, but there was no marked oral pathology. The skull could be reconstructed to some extent.

Most of the vertebrae was represented (six cervical, 11 thoracics and five lumbar). Schorl's nodes were present on three lower thoracics and the sacrum was in five pieces. Severe erosion prevented the study of arthritic changes. The left and right ribs (bagged separately) were eroded and incomplete. Much of the sternum was present, with the manubrium fully united to the main body and showing a long central hole (approximately 15 mm by 10 mm), probably of congenital origin.

Scapulae and clavicles were present but severely eroded. Both humeri were present (364 mm in length) and both radii and ulnae were well preserved.

The left hand was represented by one carpal, five metacarpals and five phlanges, and the right by one carpel, four metacarpals and ten phalanges. In addition, there were seven carpals which it is not possible (because of poor preservation) to determine side.

The pelvis was represented by the most of the left and right side s was clearly made in form.

The femora were extremely large and robust (maximum length 482 mm) and show no pathology. Only one patella was present.

There was also a miscellaneous group of fragments comprising six identified pieces of skull (and many smaller pieces), two pieces of scapula, the body of the hyoid, a large ? no human rib, two further hand phalanges, a lightly eroded tarsal and sixteen unidentified pieces.

The sacrum was almost complete, represented by two main pieces and three minor fragments. The upper lumbar surface on the left side showed modest marginal lipping and irregularity. The intervertebral surface also showed some irregularity-slight asymmetry of the neural arch at the spinal region-suggestive of an inflammatory process. The last lumbar vertebra was represented by the neural arch and part of the body in the region of sacral articulation with evidence of an inflammatory process. The lumbar body also showed some marginal lipping, surface irregularity and pitting. The neutral arch was asymmetrical with some deviation from centre of neural spine. There was evidence of a weapon injury in the bones, but this may have been obscured by bone decay.

The femora were extremely robust- the femoral necks were noticeably thick, the upper contour of the femur head extending straight onto the neck without apparent narrowing. The maximum length was that of the left femur (506 mm). Some surface flaking was evident on the right bone. The left tibia and fibula were broken but complete, showing some minor erosion and an unusual peeling of bone surfaces. The left tibia shaft surface showed minor irregularity with restricted straitens and pitting suggesting an early stage inflammatory reaction. Further diagnosis was made difficult by post-mortem changes to the bone. The right tibia and fibula also showed surface peeling and minor shaft straitens together with some general erosion. The straitness may indicate an early inflammatory response partly obscured by post-mortem erosion. the maximum tibial lengthwas that of the right (412 mm). These large and robust bones again suggest a male. The left foot was represented by most of the tarsals, the five metatarsals and three phalanges. All of the left foot bones showed considerable surface erosion but this appears not to have affected the joint surfaces. A small (3 mm by 2 mm) depressed zone on the calcaneum is indicative of osteochondritis dissecans. The right foot was represented by six tarsals, five metatarsals and parts of (probably) seven phalanges. All of the bones of the right foot showed similar surface erosion to that seen on the left foot bones.

Included with the human remains was the distal articular area of a mature Bos (cow) humerus. There was also a group of miscellaneous bones comprising a patella, two carpals, a first metacarpal, four hand phalanges, parts of probably four ribs, two fragments of sacrum, a coccygeal element, four probable pelvic fragments and thirty fragments of unidentified bine. Additionally, there was a group of non-human bones-part of a sheep tooth, an immature sheep metapodial and three shaft fragments of long bones from a large mammal (?Bos).

Skeleton context 4023 [Excavation located a grave cut (grave cut 4021) but found only the remains of an articulated lower leg and foot. Further excavation to the West located a ?strap end and some disturbed vertebrae and finger bones. As with skeleton context 4010 there is no apparent disturbance from above. Some of the toe bones found in context 4013 may come from this burial.]

This somewhat mixed group of bones was composed of six tarsals (representing both feet), eight metatarsals, four foot phalanges, three hand phalanges, the right patella, right tibia and fibula (complete except for limited post-mortem erosion and trowel damage) and the distal end of the right femur. The maximum length of the tibia was 380 mm. None of the bones give any evidence of joint disease.

An additional group of bones, submitted as "miscellaneous", contained more human remains-a right temporal bone, a fragment of sphenoid, a metacarpal and two hand phalanges-together with four fragments of ?Bos (?scapula and rib) and eleven unidentified fragments.

Skeleton context 5040 [A young individual laid on its back with its head on its right side and facing North. Legs bent and lar position to 4010 but head and feet reversed). Spine appears to be bent towards the South. The skeleton had no feet and breaks to the tibia and fibula appear to be of antique date. Removal of the skull located an iron object (31).]

An incomplete skeleton of a child of, from the evidence of the teeth, ten years (6 months).

The skull was in pieces but appeared to be mostly complete. Severe cribra orbitalia was noted.

Parts of at least eleven vertabrae, including three cervicals, two lumbars and sacral segments and thirty-two rib fragments were present. Both clavicles, most of both humeri, parts of two radii, the proximal half of one ulna and another ulna missing the distal end were also recorded. The pelvis was represented by five fragments. The femora, tibiae and fibulae (with some epiphyses) of both legs were present and showed no evidence of disease or fractures, but all were highly eroded.

A further group of bones, submitted as "miscellaneous", was composed ,of an area of pelvis near the acetabulum, proximal humerus epiphysis, manubrium, the shaft of an ulna, an incomplete scapula, two ribs, a heavily eroded calcaneum and two metacarpals.

Skeleton context 5041 [A skeleton of a small individual (?child) laid in a shallow cut (3042). The position of the bones suggests that the body was laid on its back with the hand over the stomach area. The skull was in a poor condition and the jaw had fallen away from the skull. Initial excavation located no grave goods. Orientation of North-South (head South) is different to other burials. On removal of burial excavation located an arm bone and a shoulder blade above the head.]

An incomplete skeleton of a child of, from the evidence of the teeth, three-and-a-half years (6 months).

The skull was very fragmented with some surface erosion but no evidence of disease. The permanent canine crown was half-formed and the first molars were seen as crowns with little root development. No hypoplasia was evident. Three fragments of vertebrae and twenty-three fragments of rib were identified. The right scapula was nearly complete and the distal half of the right humerus and most of the radii shafts were present. The pelvis was represented by a single , much eroded fragment (?ischium). Both femora and tibiae were mostly present, but only the shaft of one fibula.

Two other bones, submitted as "miscellaneous", were non-human-a large fragment (Bos/Sus size range) and a small calcaneum.

Skeleton context 16014 [A fully extended skeleton aligned approximately South-West (head) to North-East (feet). Majority of the lower limbs present but only the right arm represented. The skeleton had been disturbed around the feet, resulting in a collection of bone concentrated just to the North-East of the skeleton has an "abundance" of grave goods (shown on plan). No cut nor apparent coffin suggested that the skeleton had been covered by a small mound of earth.]

Male of indeterminate age.

The skull was represented by fragments exhibiting varying degrees of erosion. The supraorbital, nuchal area and mastoid development suggested that this individual was male. No teeth or jaws were

noted. There were parts of three humeri, of which one was labelled right humerus, presumably from this skeleton (16014). Lower limb long-bones present were included the left femur (maximum length 393 mm) showing erosion of the articular ends, much of the right femur, the left and right tibiae (maximum length 308 mm for left) and half of the left and right fibulae. Also present were parts of the shafts of two femora and two tibiae from another individual (or other individuals). The bones submitted as "under shoulder" were the distal ends of the femur and a piece of acetabulum. The bones submitted as "left foot" included a piece of acetabulum, a talus, a patella, parts of four metatarsals and a navicular. The bones submitted as "right foot" were four tarsals,three metatarsals and part of a pelvis.

The bones submitted as "miscellaneous" were a radius, two calcanea, one first metatarsal, a patella and a hand phalanx.

There were over fifty unidentified fragments, mostly from long-bones, and a few non-human fragments-a cow incisor, two pieces of rib and a small piece of skull (both ?Bos) and three unidentified pieces of long-bone.

Discussion

The gravel mound over at least some of the bodies may have determinately influenced the preservation of the bones and only one skeleton (3020) was well represented. The condition of the bones was variable, but generally ranged from moderate to highly eroded. There was clear evidence of root action. In two instances there was unusual flaking of the outer bone surface.

The skulls were all broken and collapsed so that reconstruction would be necessary before detailed studies could be undertaken. Long-bone measurements were not possible in most cases because of erosion of the articular ends. Sexing and aging were made difficult by breakage, erosion and incompleteness of the skeletal elements.

Pathology was obscured by erosion, although cases of cribra orbitalia, Schmorl's nodes, calculus, possible early periostitis, and minor congenital abnormality of the sternum were noted. The location of some of the bones appeared to be the result of disturbance and these remains could not be associated with particular skeletons.

There was clear variation in body posture. Skeleton 3020 had been carefully positioned on the back with forearms over the chest, whereas skeleton 5040 appears to have been on its right side with angled backwards and legs bent to less than 45.

Although a metal object (possibly a spearhead) was found in association with the pelvis from context 4010, there was no visible weapon damage on the bone (although this may have been obliterated by later erosion). No clear evidence for cause of death could be determined for any of the individuals.

Statement of potential

There con be no justification in further work on the sediment samples, nor does it seem likely that useful remains will be recovered during further excavation of the same levels.

The hand collected animal bone assemblage is of little interpretive value because of its small size and the limited number of bones which can be used to obtain age-at-depth and biometrical information (four mandibles with teeth, eighteen loose teeth and only four measurable bones).

The state of preservation and degree of breakage of the human bone renders these skeletons of little interpretive value.

Recommendations

If deposits in which preservation of remains by anoxic waterlogging occurs are encountered, a programme of sampling and analysis should be undertaken, given the regional rarity and importance of material of this date.

Likewise, in the event of further excavation, the possibility of recovering an important Anglian animal bone assemblage should be considered. This period is poorly represented in the British Isles. From the Yorkshire/Humberside region, only the site of West Heslerton has yielded useful quantities of material of this date.

There is also a need for more information on Anglo-Saxon skeletal series from the Yorkshire region, so further excavation of the Thirsk castle cemetery would be extremely valuble from this point of view, too. Should further excavation occur it would be important to undertake on-site conserved and subsequent reconstruction of the bone.

KEITH
DOBNEY

APPENDIX 6

Hand collected animal bone

The assemblage was quite small, comprising a total of 389 fragments weighing 4073 g, of which 93 (49 from contexts dated to be Anglo-Saxon period) were identifiable to species (table 1 of the appendix). The remains of cattle, caprines, pigs and horse were most commonly represented, with cattle and caprines making up the bulk of the unidentified material (71 fragments). Two of the three bird bones were domestic chicken (Gallus f. domestic), the other being ?goose (Anser sp.)

Animal bone from the bulk-sieved residues

There was very little bone in any of the bulk-sieved residues (341 fragments in total weighing 20 g). The most bone recovered was very fragmented and mostly unidentifiable (297 unidentified fragments). The identified material included nine amphibian bones, almost certainly frog (cf Rana tempororia L), and one possible black rat (cf Rattus rattus (L.)) distal tibia from context 3007 (undated), a further five murine bones and 23 unidentifiable small mammal shaft fragments. A single bird phalanx was also present in context 5063 (medieval to post-medieval).

Discussion

Although the bones were much fragmented their overall preservation was recorded as fair to good, with colour being mostly fawn for material from all the periods represented. Butchery and dog gnawing were noted on a small number of fragments and fresh breakage was evident on 20-50 percent of all bones.

A single mole (Talpa europaea L.) humerus was identified from the context 3018. The difference in preservation between this fragment and the other material from this context, together with the fact that moles are burrowing animals, suggests that this is intrusive.

Also of interest was a cat mandible from context 15005 (Anglo-Saxon to medieval in date) which had a series of vertical knife marks on its lateral surface in the region of the mental foramen. These cut marks are consistent with pelt removal.

Table 1. Hand collected bone from recorded contexts

Species	T/F	T/W (g)	T/M	M/T	I/T
Cattle	50	3	3	12	
Sheep/Goat	21	1	1	5	
Pig	6	-	-	1	
Horse	9	-	-	-	
Dog	3	-	-	-	
Cat	1	-	-	-	
Domestic fowl	2	-	-	-	
Mole	1	-	-	-	
Subtotal	93	19/85	4	4	18
Unidentified bird	1	-	-	-	-
Unidentified	295	2088	-	-	-
Total	389	4073	4	4	18

Key

T/F-Total fragments
T/W-Total weight (g)
T/M-Total measureable
M/T-Mandibles with teeth
I/T-Isolated teeth

APPENDIX 7

An evaluation of biological remains

Summary

Ten samples of sediment, a small animal bone assemblage, and the bones from six badly eroded and disturbed human burials, were submitted for evaluation of their potential for bioarchaeological analysis.

The sediments contained only tiny numbers of small bone fragments and charred plant remains of no interpretive value. The animal bone assemblage was too small to be of interpretive value. The human remains were too poorly preserved to provide more than basic information. Although the bones recovered from this evaluation were of little interpretive value, possibility of recovering a regionally and nationally important Anglian bone assemblage must be considered should further excavation be undertaken in the vicinity.

Introduction and methods

Ten samples of sediment (GBA sensu Dobney et al. 1992), some human skeletal remains, and a single box of hand collected animal bone , were submitted for an evaluation of their potential for bioarcheaological analysis.All of the sediment samples were inspected in the laboratory and a description of their lithology recorded using a standard, pro forma. None of the samples were deemed likely to produce worthwhile quantities of uncharred plant or invertebrate macrofossils and so none were processed as GBAs. Instead, a 1 Kg voucher was retained from seven of the samples and all the remaining sediment was sieved to 500um (apart from sample 2, Context 2005 which was sieved to 1 mm) to recover small bones, charred plant remains and finds (the latter to be returned to the excavator). The residues were dried prior to examination and are recorded as BSXS residues in the text below.

The very small assemblage of hand collected animal bone came from a total of fifty five contexts. Of these, thirty-four were dated to between the Anglo-Saxon and post-medieval periods, eighteen being Anglo-Saxon. The remaining contexts were described by the excavator as either modern or mixed/disturbed and have been excluded from this evaluation.

The human bone assemblage represented six inhumations. The material was received in a washed condition, but without any evidence that the bones had received conservation. From site photographs and notes, provided by the excavator, the skeletons were in varying states of incompleteness. Charred plant and invertebrate remains were examined from the residues resulting from sieving

None of the samples were thought suitable to be examined for
the eggs of the parasitic nematodes.

Results

The results of the investigations are presented in context number order, with information provided by the excavator in brackets.

The BSXS samples
Context 2003 [Layer butting rampart bank for castle, therefore post-dates castle construction in 11th

century. Land unit used for gardens/pasture after destruction of castle]

Sample 1

Dry, mid to dark grey-brown, indurated to brittle (working unconsolidated), silty sand. Root voids were abundant and pot , ?mortar and small and medium sized stones (6 to 60 mm-some ?flint core were present in the sample.The residue consisted of mostly pebbles, gravel and sand, with some slag, fragments of pottery, charcoal (to 10 mm), uncharred ?modern plant remains (one A triplex sp. seed and seed fragments of Sambucus sp., probably elderberry, S. nigra L), small bone and modern roots.

The bone component of the residue comprised one mole (Talpa europaea L.) femur, one caprine phalanx (2) proximal epiphysis (unfused) and twenty nine unidentified fragments.

Context 2005

Sample 2

Dry, mild to dark brown, indurated (working crumbly, then unconsolidated), sand. Very small and small stones (2to 20 mm), ?modern brick/tile fragments, patches of whitish sediment, and modern rootlets were also present.

The residue was mostly sand with some gravel and pebbles, slag motor, pottery, charcoal (to 10 mm) a few grains and seeds (one charred barley (hordeum sp.), two charred ?oat (cf Avena sp.) and one modern un charred A triplex sp.), small bone and modern roots and grass. The bone component of the residue of one amphibian bone, one rat sized rib, one tooth enamel from a large artiodactyl and seventy unidentified fragments.

Context 2015 [Fill of feature 2014, subcircular cut]

Sample 6

Dry, mid to dark greyish brown, brittle to crumbly (working plastic), silty clay sand. Calcereous material (?very rotted mortar), worm/root channels and a modern millipede were present in the sample. The residue was mostly sand with some gravel and stones (red sand stone and pebbles). Small bone, slag, pottery, an iron concentration, charcoal (to 15 mm), wood (very rotted ?modern root), a single charred grain (Avena sp.) and ?modern roots were also noted.

The bone component of the residue comprised two long-bone shaft fragments, one vertebra of a small mammal, and twelve unidentified fragments.

Context 3007 [Layer which contained several pieces of Anglian pottery from grave 3020].

Sample 3

Just moist, mid slightly greyish-brown, just consolidated to unconsolidated (working just plastic), silty clay sand. Very small to medium sized stones (2 to 60 mm), white flecks, rotted wood (probably root), fine roots and a live centipede were present in the sample.

The residue was mostly pebbles (to 50 mm), gravel and sand with some small bone , shellfish (oyster and other, interminate, fragments (?Avenna sp.), a ?modern land snail (Discus rotundatus) and a modern centipede.

The bone components of the residue consisted of three amphibian bones, one ?black rat distal tibia and six unidentified fragments.

Context 3014 [Fill of charcoal pit or hearth]

Sample 4

Just moist, mild brown, just consolidated to unconsolidated, silty sand. Very small and small stones (2 to 20 mm) and fragments of charcoal were present in the sample.

The residue was mostly gravel and sand with some charcoal (to 30 mm). Slag, a single land snail, two fragments of oyster shell and small bone were also present.

The bone content of the residue comprised three amphibian bones, two small mammal long bone shaft fragments and twenty two unidentified fragments.

Amongst the moderately large amounts of charcoal (to 30 mm. maximum dimension), ash Fraxinus)predominated, but there was also a little oak (Quercus), and perhaps also willow/aspen/poplar (Salix/Populus).

Sample 5

Just moist, mid to dark grey-brown, just consoildated to unconcolidated, silty sand. ,Very small to medium-sized stones (2 to 60 mm), very fine charcoal, modern roots and evidence of earthworm activity (sorting of particles) were noted for this sample.

The residue was mostly pebbles (to 50 mm), gravel, sand and charcoal (to 30 mm) with slag, small bone, fragments of shellfish (oyster) and ?iron artefacts also present.

The bone component of the residue was made up of one small mammal long bone shaft and twenty unidentified fragments.

The charcoal was the same size and concentration as that from sample 4, with ash again predominating. Earthworm egg capsules were also noted from the residue.

Context 3018 [Grave fill with no skeleton in situ]

Sample 7

Moist, mild brown, just consolidated (working crumbly), slightly silty sand with very small to medium-sized stones (2-60 mm) present.

The residue was mostly sand with some gravel.Pebbles, slag, small bone (nine unidentified fragments), mortar, charcoal (to 5 mm), roots and several charred cereal grains were also present. The latter were poorly- to well-preserved Hordeum with a single ?Triticum (wheat) and a few Avena.

Context 5036 [Layer, no associated features]

Sample 8
Moist, mid greyish brown, unconsolidated to just consolidated, sandy clay silt. Land snails were

present in the sample.

The residue was mostly sand with some gravel. Slag, small bone, snails, charcoal (to 15 mm) and a few charred plant remains were also present. The latter comprised a single Hordeum and some unidentified grains, with a small Vica (vetch) seed.

The bone component of the residue consisted of two amphibian bones (probably frog), seven small mammal long bone shaft fragments and thirty eight unidentified fragments.

The land snails (single representatives of Trichia hispida and Capaea sp.) were both grassland species.

Context 5063

Sample 9

Just moist, mid to dark brown, just consolidated (working slightly plastic), sandy clay silt. The sediment had undergone bioturbation to the point of forming a soil. Very small and medium sized stones (2 to 6 and 20 to 60 mm), traces of mortar and wood charcoal, modern roots, abundant voids and burrows and land snails (including the burrowing snail) Celiodes acicula) were present in the sample.

The residue was mostly sand with some gravel. Small pebbles, slag, two iron objects and a small fragment of glass, small bone, charcoal (to 10 mm) roots and several grains and seeds were also present. The latter included several Avenna grains, one unidentified cereal and a fragment of charred hazel (Corylus avellana L.) nutshell.

The bone component of the residue comprised one 'mouse sized' rib, one 'mouse sized incisor, eight small mammal long-bone shaft fragments, one bird phalanx and fifty four unidentified fragments.

Context 5066 [Possible garden soil]

Sample 10

Dry, mid brown, brittle to unconsolidated, silty sand. Whitish flecks, roots and medium-sized stones (20 to 60 mm), including some flint) were present in the sample.

The residue was mostly sand with some gravel. Pebbles, slag, small bone , ?worked flint, charcoal (to 15 mm), roots, snails and several grains and seeds were also present. The latter included a few Avena sp. and several fragments of charred hazel nut shell (to 10 mm).

The bone component of the residue consisted of one mouse tibia, one mouse sized vertebra, four small mammal long bone shaft fragments and thirty-seven unidentified fragments.

Four species of land snail were recorded. Cochlicopa lubrica, Trichia hispida, Vallania sp. and Ceciliodes acicula (a modern burrowing snail). These snails are all associated with grassland.

Discussion

Sediment samples

Apart from a few charred cereals and a little charcoal, a few snails and small amounts of bone , very few plant and animal remains were recovered from deposits sampled at this site and some, at least, of

the fossils observed were certainly or probably of post-depositional origin. This is not surprising given the rather shallow nature of the stratigraphy.

Retention and disposal

All of the remaining sediment samples and residues from sieving can be discarded. All the bone, including the remains, should be retained for the present.

Archive

All residues, sediment vouchers, and bone from samples are currently stored in the Environmental Archaeology Unit, University of York, along with the hand collected human and non-human bones, and the paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd for making this material available and to English Heritage for allowing Allan Hall, Keith Dobney and Annie Milles to contribute to this work. EAU

References

Dobney, K., A R., Kenward, H. K. and Milles, A. (1992). A working classification of sample types for enviromental archaeology. Circaea, the Journal of the Association for Environmental Archaelogy 9 (for 1991), 24-6.