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**The Fire Station
Malton
North Yorkshire
(SE 7925 7154)**

Archaeological Watching Brief

**MAP
2004**

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SE 7925 7154**

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Non Technical Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd was undertaken during October and November 2004 at the Fire station, Malton. The work involved monitoring groundworks associated with the erection of a new training tower.

1. Introduction.

1.1 This report sets out the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief carried out by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. on a plot of land at the Fire Station, Malton, North Yorkshire (SE 7925 7154) during October and November 2004.

1.2 The site code for the project was MAP 09.03.04

1.3 All work was funded by North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

1.4 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright, Licence No. AL 50453A.

2. Site Description

2.1 The proposed development site lies to the south west of the Roman Fort and *vicus* (civilian settlement) at Malton, and to the north of Malton Bridge, on the northern side of the river *Derwent* (Figs. 1 & 2). The site covers an area of approximately 26m x 23 m and at the time of the Watching Brief accommodated the fire station car park.

2.3 The site lies on soils of the Fladbury 3 Association, which consist of clayey alluvial soils, found on the floodplains of major rivers. These overlie a geology of chalky glaciofluvial drift (Mackney, 1984, 194).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1 Malton lies on undulating ground, which falls rapidly towards the river Derwent, bounding the settlement to the south. In modern times the town has extended to the west and north, with the town of Norton forming a suburb on the east bank of the Derwent. The main road to Whitby enters Malton at Old Maltongate and Yorkersgate forms the main road to York.

3.2 Orchard Field has long been recognised as the site of a Roman fort guarding the Derwent crossing, with a civilian settlement stretching southwards from the fort to the river (Corder, 1930 and Mitchelson, 1964). The remains of the fort are known to extend westwards in to the grounds of The Lodge, and further Roman activity has recently been uncovered in this area (MAP 1997).

3.3 The name Malton derives from the Old English for middle farm (Old English *middle* or Old Norse *medal*, Old English *tun*, Field 1980). Malton is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, although this is taken to refer to the village of Old Malton. Old Malton itself is thought to have been the main settlement focus during the Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian periods.

3.4 Malton Castle was built to control the crossing over the river Derwent and is thought to have been constructed in the early 12th century (Robinson, 1978, 13). References to the destruction of Malton during a siege of the castle by Stephen's supporters in 1138 indicate that an extra-mural settlement serving the castle had been established in the Castlegate area by that time (ibid.).

3.5 The Borough of New Malton was founded in the mid-12th century, perhaps under royal patronage (ibid.). New Malton consists of the ecclesiastical parishes of St. Michael and St. Leonard. The town was once walled, the course of the walls following the parish boundary. The borough did not include the

Castlegate area, which is thought to have been under the control of the castellan, Eustace fitz John. The circuit of the walls probably determined the shape of the market place, which lies between Yorkersgate and Wheelgate.

3.6 There are 12th and 13th century references to weavers, goldsmiths, masons and mercers, and 14th century references to wool-merchants, showing that the borough achieved a degree of economic success. The market was first mentioned in 1283, and the fair in 1295 (ibid.). The Market Place can be seen as the economic centre of the borough, along with streets such as Wheelgate, placing the site in a key location for trade.

3.7 During the Civil War (1640-1660) the town suffered depredation and poverty. In 1644 Newcastle's forces were defeated in Malton by Sir William Constable.

3.8 By the 18th century Malton had become a prosperous market town and had been acquired by the Honourable Thomas Wentworth.

3.9 Cartographic evidence for the site illustrates the progressive development of the site from the mid 19th century onwards. Robert Wise's plan of Malton dated 1843 shows the infirmary buildings and workhouse on the land now occupied by the fire station.(Fig. 3).

3.10 By 1924, the Ordnance Survey records a series of buildings on the site, including the mortuary and infirmary (Fig 4).

3.11 Modern-day development of the site shows the location of the current fire station. This re-utilises a building from the former workhouse, which was partly demolished in 1951. The fire station is still operational.

4. Methodology

4.1 The foundation footprints were excavated in shallow spits by a back-acting mechanical excavator, operating under close archaeological supervision. An

area of 9m x 5.70m was excavated to a depth of 1.29m. A smaller area, measuring 4m x 3m x 0.50m deep, was excavated in the northeast corner of the trench.

4.2 All work was carried out in line with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Code of Conduct (IFA 1998).

4.3 All deposits were recorded according to correct principles of stratigraphic excavation on MAP's *pro forma* context sheets, which are compatible with the MoLAS recording system.

5. Results (Fig. 5)

5.1 The foundation consisted of 9m x 5m wide strip that was excavated to a depth of 1.29m (Pl. 2). The earliest feature identified in the excavation area was a yellowish sandy clay deposit (context 1011). This was truncated by two inter-cutting ditches (context 1009 and 1010), neither of which were excavated (Pl. 3). Deposits 1009 and 1010 were sealed by a 0.23 m thick deposit of brown silty material (context 1008). This was sealed by a dark grey silt deposit (context 1006).

5.2 Deposit 1006 was in turn partially sealed by yellow sand deposits (contexts 1007 and 1004). Along its northwestern edge, Deposit 1006 formed the bedding layer for by a stone wall that ran on an east to west alignment (context 1005). Wall 1005 was 0.60m wide and was poorly constructed of rough limestone blocks, bonded by a grey silt material (Pl. 4). The wall was not excavated and so its base and foundation cut were not located. A 2.30m length of Wall 1005 was identified, truncated at its eastern end by modern disturbance caused by the erection and subsequent demolition of the previous training tower activity. (Contexts 1000 and 1001)

Context 1005 were sealed by a layer of modern hardcore that supported the existing tarmac car park surface (Contexts 1003 and 1002).

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The Watching Brief at The Fire Station uncovered substantial archaeological evidence for the former use of the site, dating from the Romano-British period until the mid 19th century. A number of conclusions can be drawn from the archaeological evidence that have important implications in terms of the future development of the site.
- 6.2 The recovery of Romano-British pottery from Deposits 1004, 1006, 1007, 1008, 1009, and 1010 indicated that discrete archaeological deposits of that date probably survive on the site at depths greater than those reached during the current monitored groundworks.
- 6.3 In conclusion, it may be said that the Watching Brief has highlighted the archaeological potential of the site and the likely survival of a stratified sequence of deposits, dating from the Romano-British period.

7. Bibliography

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