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Ellis Patents
High Street
Rillington
North Yorkshire
SE 8560 7418

Archaeological Recording Brief

2005

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Rillington,
North Yorkshire
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Archaeological Recording Brief

Non Technical Summary

An Archaeological Recording Brief was conducted by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd on land to the south and east of Ellis Patents factory buildings, High Street, Rillington, North Yorkshire, during May, June and August 2005 (SE 8560 7418, Figs. 1 and 2). The work took place in three phases and involved monitoring groundworks associated with the creation of a new car-park and access road (Phase 1), the excavation of stanchion pits associated with a proposed extension to the factory building (Phase 2) and the laying of new piped services and an associated soak-away (Phase 3).

No archaeological features or deposits were identified during the creation of the car-park and access road (Phase 1).

A number of undated archaeological features were identified during Phases 2 and 3. These included three linear features, two pits and three postholes. Although no finds were recovered to aid dating, it is likely that these features relate to Iron Age settlement in the vicinity of the present village.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the results of an Archaeological Recording Brief that was conducted by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. on a plot of land to the south and east of the Ellis Patents factory buildings, High Street, Rillington, North Yorkshire (SE 8560 7418) during May, June and August 2005. The

recording brief was undertaken to fulfill an archaeological condition attached to planning application 04/01011/FUL (Appendix 4)

1.2 The site code for the project was MAP 03.01.05

1.3 All work was funded by Ellis Patents.

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 site is situated on the south-eastern side of Rillington village, to the south of the A64 Malton to Scarborough road, at SE 8560 7418 (Fig. 1). The site covered an area of approximately 80m x 35m and at the time of the Watching Brief consisted of open grassland immediately to the south and east of the current factory buildings (Pls. 1 and 2).

2.2 The site stands on soils of the Newport 1 Association, well-drained sandy and coarse loamy soils (Mackney et al 1983).

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

3.3 The southern edge of the Vale of Pickering formed a focus for prehistoric settlement, probably due to the easily cultivated light sandy soils that lie along the northern fringe of the chalk Wolds. The light sandy soils are also ideal for the formation of crop marks, and these have recently been plotted by the former RCHM(E) (Stoertz 1997). The later prehistoric and Roman settlement pattern revealed consisted of a 'ladder settlement,' extending along the northern edge of the Wolds on a parallel alignment to the present day A64.

3.2 Immediately to the west of Rillington the crop mark of a double-ditched track way or boundary runs immediately north of, and parallel; to the A64, disappearing under the village's western fringe.

3.3 The most spectacular crop marks in the vicinity of the proposed development area lie circa 150m to the east of the site, and consist of round and square-ditched barrows, mult-ditched boundaries, and settlement-related features, with a date range of the Neolithic through to the late Iron Age. This complex is scheduled as a nationally important ancient monument (NY 1117).

3.4 The crop marks of further ditches and barrows are located closer to the proposed development area. During 1980s the construction of housing situated 200m to the north of the current site prompted a rescue excavation, which recorded late Iron Age ditches, pits and postholes (Turnbull 1983). Burials were encountered during the erection of the housing estate to the south and east, one of which was situated some 200m to the east of the proposed development, this was later proved to be Anglian in date.

3.5 The Anglo-Saxon origins of the present village are indicated by the fact the settlement was mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086). Three separate holdings were recorded at Rillington. The medieval village was apparently of two-row form, with the church laying at the southern end of the western row. Two open fields (West Field to the west and southwest, and East Field to the east and southeast of the village) lay at either side of the beck. It was only in relatively recent times that the village spread along the Malton to Scarborough turnpike (now the A64). The properties adjacent to, and within the proposed development site, were constructed in the 20th century within the former East Field.

3.6 Analysis of the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed between 1849 and 1853) it seems to confirm that the medieval settlement at Rillington formed two rows along Sledgate, on either side of Rillington Beck.

3.7 During a Watching Brief on an extension to the factory in 1994 a group of five pits was revealed, associated calcite-gritted pottery shreds suggesting a late Iron Age date (MAP 1994).

3.8 An undated hearth was revealed during the excavation of a fishpond at land to the rear of 1-9 Sledgate (MAP 2001b).

3.9 An Archaeological Evaluation in November 2004 within the former gardens behind 30-32 Scarborough Road, Rillington revealed evidence of ancient ploughing into the top of the natural gravel along with undated archaeological activity in the shape of small pits/postholes, and a single flexed burial of a juvenile (MAP 2004).

3.10 TCM Brewster recorded calcite-gritted, Roman and medieval coarse ware pottery sherds during the construction of a new canteen for the village school near the junction of High Street and Malton Road (ERART archive).

4. Methodology

4.1 The monitored groundwork's were undertaken in three phases (Fig. 2):

Phase 1: Creation of a new car-park and access road

Phase 2: Excavation of stanchion pits associated with a proposed extension to the factory building.

Phase 3: Excavation of new services and a soak-away pit.

4.2 All excavations were undertaken by a 360° mechanical excavator, operating under close archaeological supervision.

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

4.4 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.

4.5 A photographic record of the monitored groundwork's was maintained throughout the Watching Brief on colour print film and digital camera.

5. Results

5.1 Phase 1 (Pls. 3-6)

5.1.1 Groundwork's monitored in Phase 1 covered an area of 80m x 35m. Excavations were undertaken to a mean depth of 0.35m below existing ground level.

5.1.2 The excavations revealed a subsoil deposit of silty sand (context 1002) that was sealed by a 0.24m deep deposit of sandy loam topsoil (context 1001). Naturally formed subsoil deposits were not encountered due to the limited depth of the groundwork's.

5.1.3 Deposit 1002 was truncated by modern plough-scars and development activity associated with the 2004 extension to the factory. No evidence of earlier archaeological activity was noted.

5.1.4 Finds recovered during this phase of the Watching Brief were confined to a small number of modern pottery shreds and three clay pipe-stems. This material dated to the of 18th and 19th centuries.

5.2 Phase 2 (Fig. 3)

5.2.1 The Phase 2 groundwork's were carried out during June of 2005. The excavation of twelve stanchion pits was monitored, together with the excavation of service trenches for electricity supply cables.

5.2.2 The electricity cable ducts were excavated to a mean depth of 1.27m. The stratigraphy revealed consisted of a 0.63m deep pure clean naturally formed

sandy deposit (context 2002, Fig 5) that was sealed by a 0.65m deep deposit of sandy subsoil (context 2001). Deposit 2001 was in turn sealed by a 0.19m deep topsoil deposit (context 2000). No archaeological activity and no finds were noted during the excavation of the cable trenches.

5.2.3 Prior to the excavation of the twelve stanchion pits, the footprint of the proposed extension, measuring approximately 20m x 30m, was stripped of concrete (context 3000) to expose the underlying topsoil deposit (context 3001). No archaeological features or finds were noted during this operation.

5.2.4 **Stanchion 1** measured 2.30m x 2.30m and was excavated to a depth of 0.80m. The earliest feature identified was a sandy deposit (context 3003) that was truncated by a shallow 1.60m long linear feature (context 3005). Cut 3005 was filled by a deposit of silt that was devoid of finds (context 3004), which was sealed by a 0.24m deep deposit of subsoil (context 3002). Deposit 3002 was overlain by the modern topsoil (context 3001).

5.2.5 **Stanchion 2** again measured 2.30m x 2.30m and was excavated to a depth of 0.80m. Excavation revealed a deposit of sand (context 3003) that was truncated by a 2.0m long, 0.70m wide pit cut of elongated plan (context 3007). Pit Cut was filled by a silty deposit (context 3006) that did not contain any finds. Deposit 3006 was sealed by a 0.20m deep deposit of subsoil (context 3002), which was in turn covered by modern topsoil (context 3001).

5.2.6 **Stanchion 3** was excavated to the same dimensions and depth as Stanchions 1 and 2. Excavations revealed natural deposits (context 3003) to have been truncated by a 0.70m wide ditch cut (context 3009) that was filled by a deposit of silt (context 3008). Deposit 3008 was truncated by a second 1.0m wide ditch cut (context 3011) that contained a silty fill deposit (context 3010). Neither Deposit 3008 nor Deposit 3010 contained any finds, and both were sealed by sandy subsoil (context 3002) that underlay a deposit of modern topsoil (context 3001).

5.2.7 **Stanchion 4** measured 2.30m x 2.30m and was excavated to a depth of 0.80m. Natural deposits consisted of yellowish sand (context 3003), which were truncated by large irregular shaped feature (context 3013) that was filled by a deposit of silt (context 3012). Deposit 3012 was sealed by subsoil (context 3002) and topsoil (context 3001).

5.2.8 **Stanchions 5 and 6** were of the same size and depth as Stanchions 1 to 4. Both contained a similar sequence of sandy, naturally formed deposits (context 3003) that were sealed by subsoil (context 3002) and topsoil (context 3001). No archaeological features, finds or deposits were encountered in either excavation.

5.2.9 **Stanchions 7 to 12** each measured 1m x 1.30m and were excavated to a depth of 0.80m. Each excavation revealed the same sequence of deposits (contexts 3003, 3002, 3001) that were identified in Stanchions 1 to 6. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified in any of the excavations.

5.3 Phase 3 (Figs. 4 and 5)

5.2.1 The monitored Phase 3 groundwork's encompassed the excavation of service pipe trenches and an associated soak-away pit. However, MAP was not informed of the commencement of the service trench groundwork's, with the result that these excavations were completed without archaeological supervision. The monitored Phase 3 groundwork's therefore consisted solely of the excavation of the soak-away pit.

5.3.2 The soak-away measured 5.20m x 2.80m and was excavated to a depth of 3m. The earliest deposit identified in the excavation area was a naturally formed sand (context 4009), which was partly sealed to the north by a spread of sterile silty material that was also probably of natural origin (context 4008). To the south, Deposit 4008 was truncated by a series of three postholes (contexts 4003, 4006 and 4007). The three features were of similar size and morphology and appeared to form a north-east to south-west alignment.

5.3.3 Posthole Cut 4003 was the largest of the postholes and was of sub-circular plan, with a diameter of 0.65m (Pl. 8). The feature was 0.44m deep, had a U-shaped profile and was filled by a deposit of silt that did not contain any finds (context 4002).

5.3.4 Posthole Cut 4006 was similar in shape and size to Cut 4003, with a diameter of 0.65m (Pl. 9). The feature was excavated to the same depth as Cut 4003 (0.44m) and contained a similar fill deposit that was also devoid of finds (context 4004).

5.3.5 Posthole Cut 4007 was slightly smaller than Cuts 4003 and 4006, with a diameter of 0.62m (Pl.10). Once again, the feature was excavated to a depth of 0.44m and was filled by a sterile silty deposit (context 4006).

5.3.6 Pit Fill Deposits 4002, 4004 and 4005 were sealed by a layer of silty subsoil (context 4001) that was in turn sealed by modern topsoil (context 4000).

6. Conclusions

6.1. The Watching Brief at Ellis Patents revealed a series of archaeological features that were located at a mean depth of 0.80m below existing ground level. The interpretation of these features is somewhat problematic given to both the lack of dateable finds and the limited extent of the deeper excavations, but it is likely that they relate to Iron Age settlement activity in the vicinity of the village.

6.2 In conclusion, it may be said that the Watching Brief has again highlighted the archaeological potential of the southern edge of the Vale of Pickering and future-planning proposals for Rillington should take this archaeological potential into account.

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