

# Humber Field Archaeology

*Archaeological Consultants and Contractors*



Archaeological Observation  
Investigation and Recording  
at  
Mitford Street  
Filey

Planning Reference: **05/00237/FL**  
National Grid Reference: **TA 5118 4807**  
Site Code: **WB2005.047**

for

Persimmon Homes (East Yorkshire) Ltd

Watching Brief Report Number: 804  
November 2005

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D.P. Rawson, November 2005

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## Summary

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A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology during groundwork associated with the demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of a residential development comprising 18 apartments, at 26 Mitford Street, Filey, North Yorkshire.

No evidence was found on the site for Romano-British occupation. A pit recorded near the eastern boundary of the site yielded sherds of pottery dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, indicating that there was some activity to the south of the medieval settlement which was centred on what is now Queen Street.

# 1. Introduction

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology, on behalf of Persimmon Homes (East Yorkshire) Ltd, during groundwork associated with the demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of a residential development comprising 18 apartments, at 26 Mitford Street, Filey, North Yorkshire (*Figure 1, Plate 1*).

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Scarborough Museum has agreed to receive the archive

The development site is located in the centre of Filey, and is bounded to the north by the junction of Mitford Street and Reynolds Street, to the east and west by residential developments, and to the south by a police station.

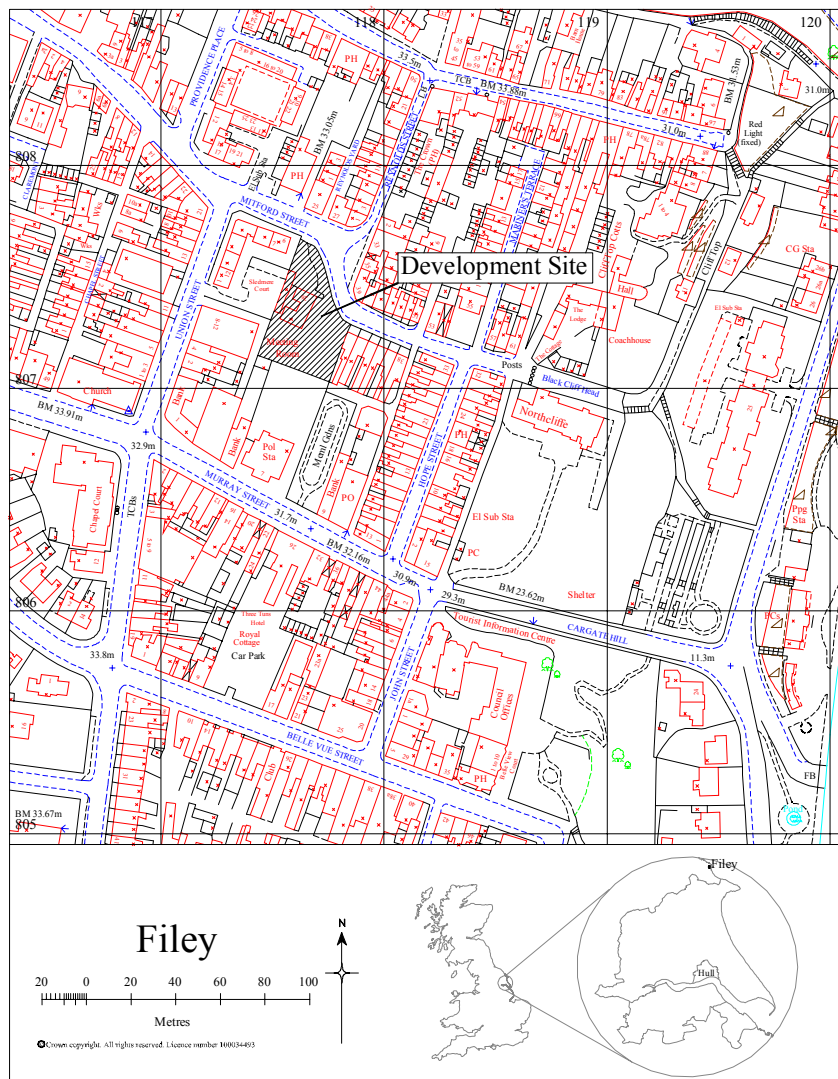


Figure 1 Site location plan

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## 2. Archaeological Background

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In the late 4<sup>th</sup> century the Romans built a signal station on Carr Naze. The station was first excavated in 1857, and then in 1993 by York Archaeological Trust and English Heritage. In 1989, excavations in front of the Church School on Mitford Road encountered a cobbled surface three feet below the line of the modern road. This was interpreted as the Roman road presumed to run to the signal station. Alternatively, it may represent a later, medieval or post-medieval surface (G. Falkingham *in litt*).

Filey's name suggests an Anglian origin. Ecclesiastical records show that as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century people from Filey were fishing as far away as Whitby and Grimsby. A dispute about tithes had to be taken to Papal arbitration. The town is known to have had a market by 1221 and a fair by 1240, and was valued at £60 in the 1334 Lay Subsidy. Until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Filey remained a fishing and farming village with dwellings clustered along what is now Queen Street.

The 1854 OS map shows a substantial building occupying approximately the same footprint of the demolished property.

The site of the development may thus preserve evidence of the Roman, medieval and later periods.

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## 3. Methodology

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The on-site work associated with this project was carried out by staff from Humber Field Archaeology, in accordance with the standard written scheme of investigation (WSI) for watching briefs prepared by the North Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record Office (May 2005) in response to a condition placed upon the planning application.

‘No development shall take place on the site until the application, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (PPG 16, para. 30; Circular 11/95, Model Clause 55)’

The scheme of works comprised the monitoring of the stripping of topsoil/subsoil and the excavation of foundations trenches for the new development. A series of six visits were made to the site between the 2<sup>nd</sup> August and the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2005 during which time it was possible to monitor the excavation of the groundworks specified. Any exposed areas of subsoil and lower stratigraphic units were examined for archaeological deposits.

The excavated dimensions of the foundation trenches were recorded, as were the depth sequences of any exposed stratigraphy. Where archaeological deposits/features were identified, context numbers were assigned, detailed descriptions and drawings made, and a photographic record maintained.

Archaeological artefacts found during the fieldwork were bagged according to their context, and returned to Humber Field Archaeology for further specialist analysis.

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## 4. Results

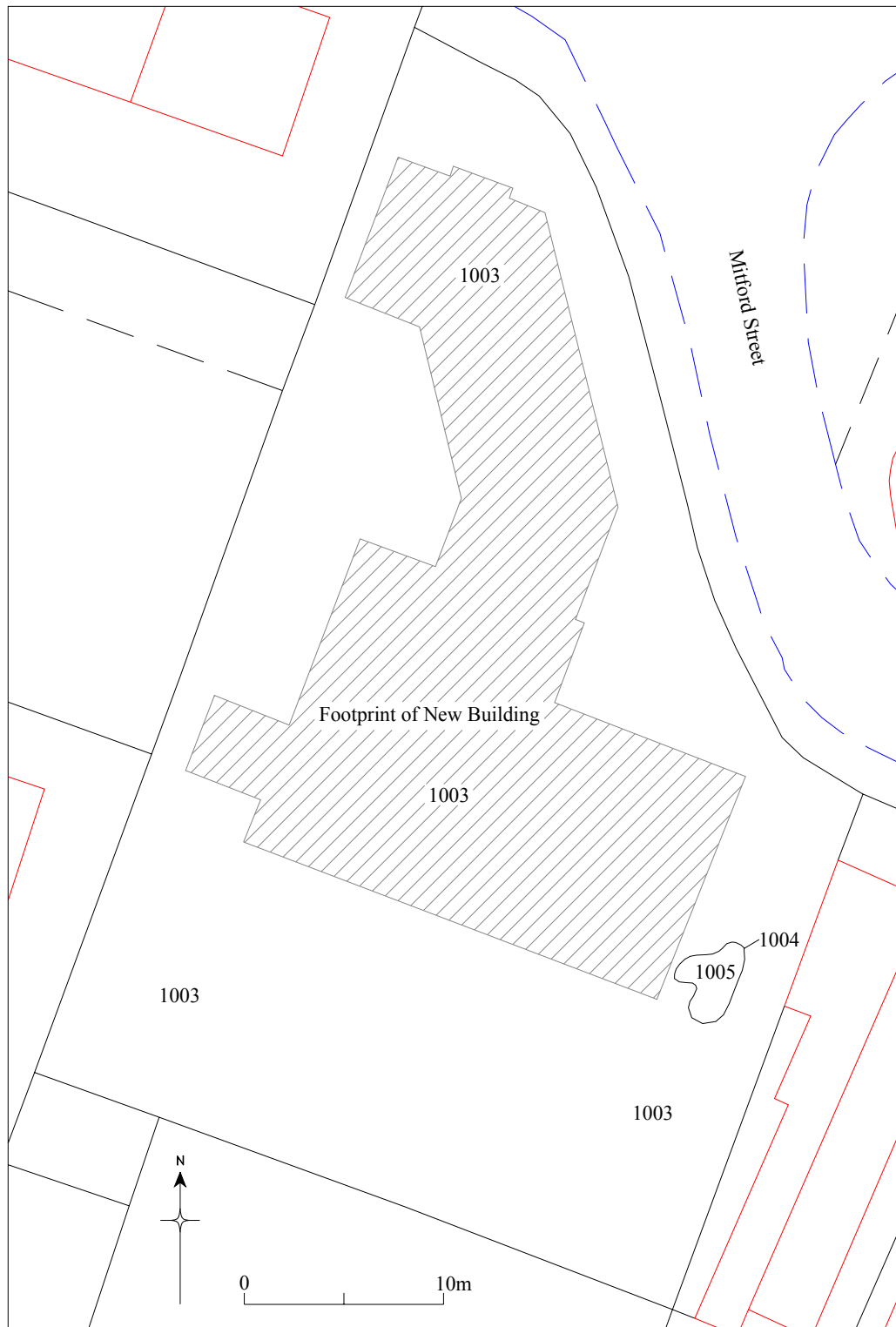
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After the existing property had been demolished (*Plate 2*), the entire site was stripped to an average depth of 0.70m. A 0.30m thick layer of very dark greyish brown topsoil (1001) was removed, together with a 0.30m thick layer of very dark reddish brown clayey silt (1002) that lay beneath it. Throughout the site a mid orange brown clay (1003) was exposed (*Plate 3*).

One feature of archaeological interest was visible following the stripping of (1001) and (1002). This lay towards the eastern edge of the site, and appeared to comprise an irregularly shaped pit (1004)/(1005) (*Figure 2, Plate 4*). The pit was a maximum 3.40m x 3.30m in size and the depth of the cut (1004) was not known. The fill of (1004) comprised a very dark greyish brown clayey silt containing frequent charcoal fragments and occasional stones (1005). A number of sherds of pottery were recovered from this fill, and these are described below (see **5.Finds**).

The foundation trenches for the new development covered much of the northern part of the site, occupying an area measuring around 35m (maximum) from north to south, by 27m (maximum) from east to west (*Figure 2, Plate 5*). The trenches were between 0.80m and 1.20m deep, the clay (1003) described above extending down for at least the depth of the trenches. No further archaeological features were observed during the excavation of these trenches.

With the completion of the monitoring of the trench excavations, the fieldwork was concluded.



*Figure 2 Plan showing the location of the archaeological features within the development site*

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## 5. The Finds

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### **The Pottery – P. Didsbury (*pers.comm*)**

#### **Context (1000)**

One sherd of late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup>-century brown kitchen stoneware

One sherd of 20<sup>th</sup>-century green glazed earthenware

Two sherds of 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century reduced greenware

One sherd of late 15<sup>th</sup> –century/post-medieval red earthenware

Two sherds of a medieval jug (Yorkshire whiteware), light firing fabric with copper glaze

Six sherds from two small jars with perforated bases. 20<sup>th</sup>-century date

Three sherds of Goss-type ware. Flower vase carrying the arms of Torquay. 20<sup>th</sup>-century souvenir

#### **Context (1005)**

Seven sherds of 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century reduced greenware

Eight sherds from two cooking pots in a sandy fabric. 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>-century date

Two sherds of a highly decorated jug with applied vertical strips (Yorkshire whiteware). 13<sup>th</sup>/early 14<sup>th</sup>-century date

One sherd of an oxidised medieval ceramic

It is recommended that the pottery be retained.

### **Ceramic Building Material – J.Tibbles (*pers.comm*)**

#### **Context (1000)**

One fragment of non-diagnostic pantile(?) of post-medieval date

Not recommended for retention.



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## 6. Discussion

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The first thing to note regarding this programme of observation, investigation and recording, is that no evidence was found for any Romano-British occupation or activity within the site.

As has been stated earlier, medieval Filey very largely consisted of buildings that would have fronted onto Queen Street, some 100m to the north of the site. It is therefore not surprising that no substantial evidence for medieval occupation was found during the works. However, the presence on the site of a pit containing medieval pottery sherds, would indicate that there was activity to the south of Queen Street in the medieval period.

In view of the above, it is the recommendation of Humber Field Archaeology that should any further development take place in the vicinity of the site, a suitable scheme of archaeological work should be implemented.

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## 7. Acknowledgements

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Thanks are accorded to Persimmon Homes (East Yorkshire) Ltd, for help and co-operation during the course of this project.

The on-site work was carried out in accordance with the standard written scheme of investigation (WSI) for watching briefs prepared by Gail Falkingham of the North Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record Office. The report was edited by D. Atkinson, and the finds were spot dated by P. Didsbury and J. Tibbles.

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## 8. References

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A Brief History of Filey. <http://www.filey.co.uk/>

Guidelines for Finds Work. The Institute of Field Archaeologists Finds Group First Draft, 1991.

Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2), English Heritage, 1991.

North Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record Office. Standard Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Watching Briefs. May 2005

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## 9. Appendices

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### Appendix 1

#### Context list

- (1000) U/S, Unstratified.
- (1001) Very dark greyish
- (1002) Very dark reddish brown clayey silt, 0.30m thick
- (1003) Mid orange brown clay, at least 1.20m thick
- (1004) Pit cut. Irregularly shaped, maximum 3.40m x 3.30m in size and depth not known
- (1005) Fill of (1004). Very dark greyish brown clayey silt containing frequent charcoal fragments and occasional stones. Depth/thickness not known

### Appendix 2

#### Archive

**Project Details:** A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording at 26 Mitford Street, Filey, North Yorkshire

**Site Code:** WB2005.047

**National Grid Reference:** TA 5118 4807

**Planning Reference Number:** 05/00237/FL

**Museum Reference or Accession Number:** To be assigned by Scarborough Museum

**Author** David Rawson **Date of fieldwork:** August-October 2005

**Report Number.** Humber Field Archaeology Watching Brief Report Number 804, November 2005.

### Quantity

- 4 x clear plastic A4 wallets contain the paper archive
- 1x half standard museum box contains the finds

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## **Index to Archive**

### **1 Background:**

- 1.1 Specification
- 1.2 Correspondence

### **2 Site Data:**

- 2.1 Site notes
- 2.2 Staff site visit log
- 2.3 Site Plans/Sections

### **3 The Photographic Record:**

- 3.1 Photographic Catalogue
- 3.2 Contact Sheets
- 3.3 Reference Prints

### **4. Digital Data:**

The digital archive is stored on CD at HFA

### **5. Miscellaneous**

- 5.1 Developer's Plans

**6. Final Report:** A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording during groundwork at 26 Mitford Street, Filey, North Yorkshire. Humber Field Archaeology Watching Brief Report Number 804



*Plate 1 General view of site prior to demolition of existing dwelling, looking south*



*Plate 2 General view of site after demolition of dwelling, looking north-west*





*Plate 3 The site looking north-east, after ground reduction. Context (1003) visible throughout*



*Plate 4 The pit (1004)(1005) looking south*





*Plate 5 The foundation trenches, looking north-east*



*Plate 6 Selected finds from context (1005)*

# Humber Field Archaeology

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Project Management • Desk-based Assessment • Field Survey • Excavation Watching Briefs  
• Finds Research • Post-excavation Analysis • Inter-tidal Work

Humber Field Archaeology is an independently-funded part of the Humber Archaeology Partnership, a partnership serving The East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Kingston upon Hull City Council