



LS

Archaeology

Report of an Archaeological Evaluation at;
54 West Garth, Sherburn,
North Yorkshire

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February 2013

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Site: 54 West Garth, Sherburn, North Yorkshire

Site Codes: WGS 13

County: North Yorkshire

NGR: SE 495870 477080

Planning Application No: Pre application

Development: Erection of a bungalow

Date of Issue: 14/02/13

Site Dates: 12th February 2013

Project by: LS Archaeology, Sideways Terrington North Yorkshire
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Client: Landscape Research Center

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Summary

A program of archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken in advance of a planning application for the erection of a bungalow at 54 West Garth, Sherburn, North Yorkshire . The removal of topsoil revealed the presence of a thick deposit of loamy sand incorporating both large and small chalk blocks (disturbed building debris), accumulated above compacted and undisturbed wind blown sand deposits. A single large feature, possibly a ditch, was observed cutting through the wind blown sand, and filled with less compacted loamy sand incorporating charcoal flecks and red posited natural sand and chalk gravel.

Introduction

The Landscape Research Centre was commissioned, to undertake a program of archaeological observation, using a single trial trench to identify the depth to natural and isolate the nature and depth of any archaeological features, according to pre-planning advice issued by the North Yorkshire County Council dated November 2012. It complies with the guidance from Archaeology and Planning (PPS5), and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief Institute for Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001).

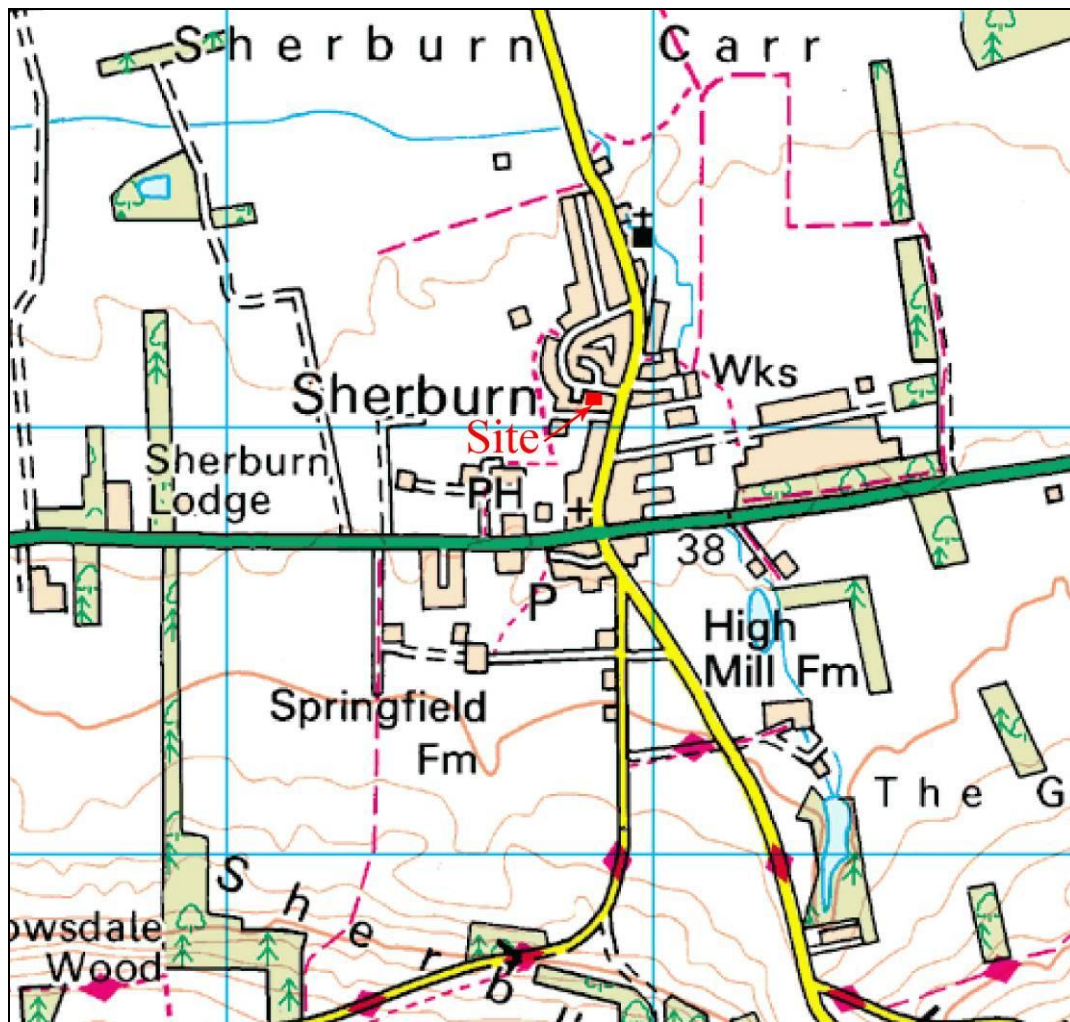


Figure 1: site location in red (copy from Streetmap.co.uk).

This report serves as a short report on the result of the excavation of a single trench excavated within the area impacted by the erection of a bungalow at 54 West Garth, Sherburn North Yorkshire.

The archaeological evaluation was carried out in order to characterize the archaeological potential of the development areas in accordance with the criteria set out within PPS5.

PPS5(Planning Policy Statement 5) states that:

"Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost..." (PPS5, HE 12.3).



Figure 2: Site location, investigated area in red (picture from Google Earth)

54 West Garth is situated to the south of West Garth and west of St Hilda's St. The site lies at approximately 35m above Ordnance Datum ([Figure 1](#)).

The geology comprises; of *Speeton Clay Formation - Mudstone*. *Sedimentary Bedrock* formed approximately 99 to 142 million years ago in the *Cretaceous Period*. Local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. Settings; these rocks were formed in shallow seas with mainly siliciclastic sediments (comprising of fragments or clasts of silicate minerals) deposited as mud, silt, sand and gravel (British Geological Survey).

Archaeological Background

The proposed development lies within an area of high archaeological potential and significance within the historic core of Sherburn village. Previous archaeological work in Sherburn has revealed Prehistoric, Roman, Anglo-Saxon activity and evidence for medieval occupation of the 12th to 15th centuries, relating to a possible manor.

Two large archaeological excavations conducted in advance of housing developments at West Garth, in 1957/58 and 1968/69, uncovered evidence for a large medieval building complex interpreted as that of the medieval manor (Brewster, *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 1994).

Medieval remains were also encountered more recently during an extension to the village hall and in the rear garden behind The Old Vicarage.

Aims and Objectives

Considering that the development lies within an area of high archaeological sensitivity, the key of the evaluation is to understand the impact that the development may have upon any archaeological remains. Specifically the evaluation sought to recover information revealing that:

- To establish the depth of topsoil and confirm the presence and depth of any layers of wind blown sand
- The presence or absence of any archaeological features

Methodology

The objectives were met by the excavation of a single trench measuring 4m by 1.5, positioned within the footprint of the proposed bungalow. The removal of top-soil and any other deposits within the trench limits were conducted using a mechanical excavator fitted with a back-actor and straight edged ditching blade/bucket under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist.

The ground surface consisted of a flat grass area, occupied by small shrubs and garden bushes.

The work was undertaken on the 12th February 2013.

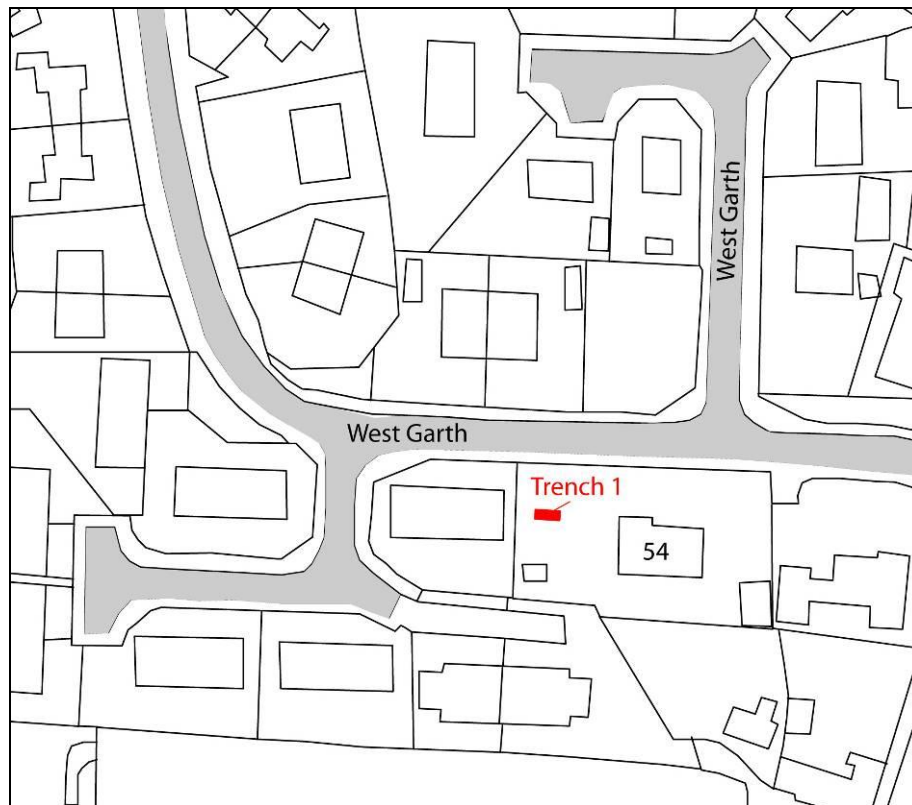


Figure 3: Plan of 54 West Garth and location of trench 1

The evaluation trench measuring 4m in length and 1.5m in width covering of a total of 6m², located towards the north-west corner of the property, and was aligned east to west, and excavated to a maximum depth of 1.50m where undisturbed natural was encountered, a large archaeological feature apparently excavated in the past was identified at the eastern end where a further .2m was removed from the upper fill ([Figure 3](#), [Figure 4](#)).

Results

The removal of topsoil (context 1), a 0.35m deep dark brown silty sand deposit, with occasional small gravel inclusions and small fragments of ceramic building material, revealed the presence of a 0.55m deep, firm dark brown sandy loam deposit (Context 2) mixed with small and medium chalk fragments. Layer 2 accumulated directly above the wind blown sand deposit (context 3), a reddish brown silty sand material measuring on average 0.60m in depth..

A large feature (context 6) which appears to run on a north-east to south-west direction, beyond the trench limits ([Figure 4](#), [Figure 5](#)), was seen cutting through the wind blown sand deposit. Its fill context 5, a dark brown sandy silt material mixed with sporadic small chalk blocks, gravel, pockets of yellow sand and occasional concentration of charcoal, has all the characteristic of a redeposit material. Two small piece of Roman pottery were recovered from the top of context 5.

Due to the restricted size and depth of the trench, feature 6 was not excavated only recorded on plan.

The natural ground deposit which consisted of undisturbed sterile yellow sand, mixed with chalk gravel and was reached at a depth of 1.50m (from ground surface).

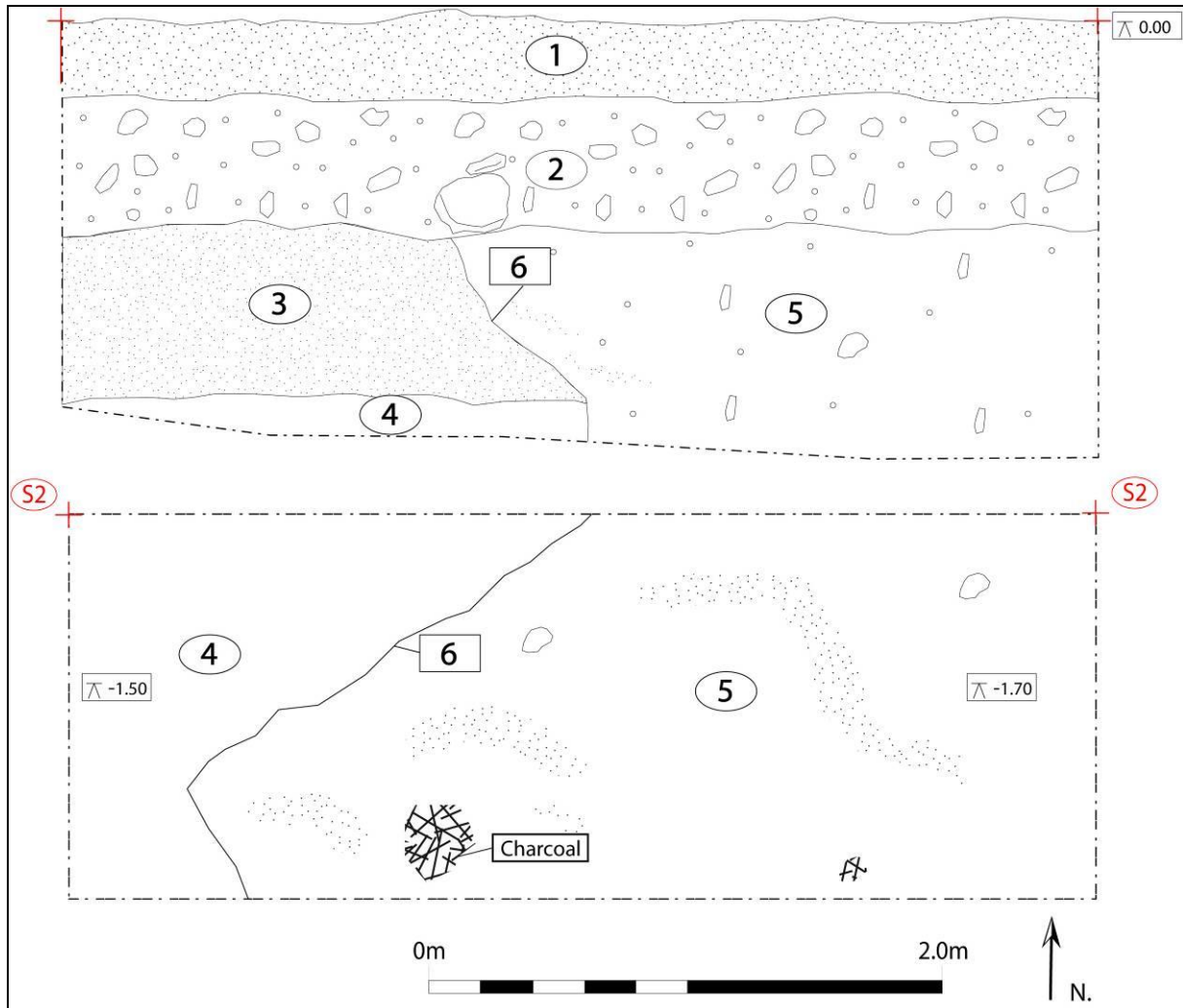


Figure 4; South facing section (top) and plan (bottom) of the trench



Figure 5; Excavated trench showing east facing section, and large feature at the base, looking west



Figure 6: South facing section, looking north**Discussion**

The location of the property 54 West Garth lies between the two large excavations conducted by Brewster in 1957/8 and 1968/9, and although the 1957/8 excavation was only less than 50m south, it is possible that feature 6 with its redeposit infill, recorded within the limits of the trench excavated at 54 West Garth, Sherburn, North Yorkshire, could have been a small unrecorded test pit excavated at that time.

Due to the high depth at which the feature was encountered within the restricted limits of the trench, it was not possible to carry out an investigation in order to determine with nature of feature 6, the above interpretation is purely based on the nature of its fill context 5.

Further more with the excavation of small trench it was possible to determine that the wind blown sand deposit is present on site at a depth of circa 0.80m from ground level.

Conclusion

The archaeological evaluation has recorded no evidence in situ of any medieval occupation on site, although context 2 seems to be a deposit that could have been accumulated at that time. More significantly the investigation has recorded that the wind blown sand which itself was .70m deep is present on site at a depth of about 0.80m from the modern ground surface.

On the basis of the results of the excavation of this single trench, it can be stated that the construction of any foundations to a depth less than 0.75m from the present ground surface are very unlikely to impact any archaeological features.

G. Signorelli
February 2013

Bibliography

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(PPS5) 2010 Planning for the Historic Environment: *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide*

Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, Volume 66, 1994. T.C.M. Brewster and C. Hayfield Excavation at Sherburn, East Yorkshire (p107).

Appendix A:

Contents of the Site Archive;

The archive consists of digital photographs and drawings.

Context No	Type	Area	Description
1	Deposit	Tr. 1	1 consisted of a very dark brown sandy silt deposit 0.40m deep, identified as topsoil
2	Deposit	Tr. 1	2 consisted of a brown sandy silt deposit mixed with small and large chalk fragments
3	Deposit	Tr. 1	3 consisted of an orange brown sandy deposit. Identified as the wind blown sand.
4	Natural	Tr. 1	4 yellow sand and chalk gravel, natural deposit
5	Fill	Tr. 1	5 consisted of a brown sandy silt material with pockets of yellow sand and sporadic concentration of charcoal. Fill of 6
6	Cut	Tr. 1	Cut of a possible test pit, Not excavated

Table 1: List of contexts