

Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale Road, Rudland, Fadmoor, North Yorkshire

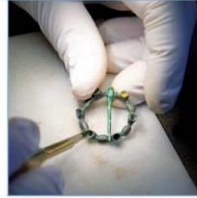
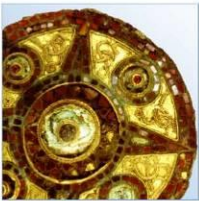
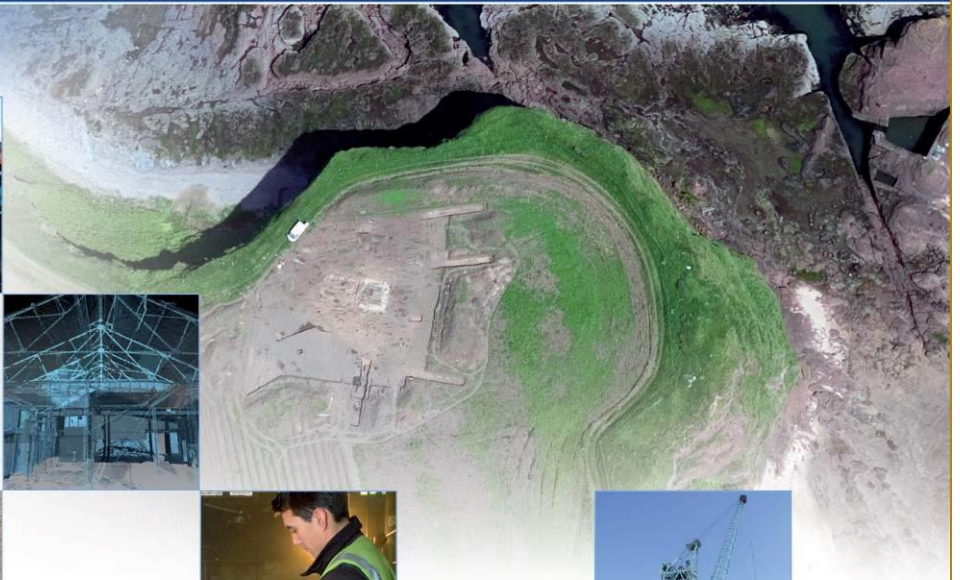
Archaeological Watching Brief Report

AOC Project No: 52051

NGR: SE 63221 94852

Planning Ref: NYM/2019/0579/LB

Date: February 2020



ARCHAEOLOGY

| HERITAGE

| CONSERVATION

Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale Road, Rudland, Fadmoor, North Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| On Behalf of: | National Trust c/o Lawrence Hannah 39 Blossom Street York YO24 1AQ |
| National Grid Reference (NGR): | SE 63221 94852 |
| AOC Project No: | 52051 |
| Fieldwork undertaken by: | Charlie Morris |
| Fieldwork undertaken: | 11 December 2019 |
| Report prepared by: | Charlie Morris and Matt Walker |
| Illustration by: | Rebecca Jarosz-Blackburn |
| Date: | February 2020 |

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Date: 27 February 2020

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Date: 27 February 2020

Document Stage: Final Draft

Date: 27 February 2020

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Non-Technical Summary

AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by the National Trust (the client) through their agents Lawrence Hannah, 39 Blossom Street, York, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale Road, Rudland, Fadmoor, North Yorkshire.

The construction work comprised the excavation of a service trench, the insertion and replacement of a soil pipe, and internal alterations within the farmhouse. Within the service trench three deposits were recorded which comprised natural geology, made ground which formed a bedding layer for an existing farm trackway, and the trackway itself. No archaeological features or artefacts were encountered during the excavations.

Within the Farmhouse, the wall between the kitchen and ground floor living room was inspected after the removal of plaster. Two wooden blocks were observed which filled rectangular holes in the masonry wall; the holes extended the full width of the wall between the two rooms. The timber blocks were not fixed and could be easily removed, possibly to allow warmth from the kitchen into the living room at a time prior to the plastering of the walls.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by the National Trust (the client) through their agents Lawrence Hannah, 39 Blossom Street, York, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale Road, Rudland, Fadmoor, North Yorkshire. The archaeological works were a requirement of Condition 3 of the grant of Listed Building Consent (Planning Ref: NYM/2019/0579/LB). The purpose of this document is to report on the results of the watching brief and thereby to satisfy the requirements of the planning condition in order to allow its discharge.
- 1.2 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that was produced by AOC Archaeology and approved by the North York Moors National Park planning authority (AOC Archaeology 2019). It was also undertaken in accordance with the professional guidance on best practice outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) publication *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (2014a).
- 1.3 The watching brief was managed in accordance with the standards laid down in Historic England's publication *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Managers Guide* (2006), and the MoRPHE *Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation* (PPN3) (2008). The project will also adhere to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; Chapter 16: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'; DCLG 2018).

2 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The development site is a small complex of farm buildings situated within Bransdale in the North York Moors National Park. It is located towards the southern end of the dale, to the west of Bransdale Road and approximately 2.5km northwest of Rudland (NGR: SE 63221 94852; Figure 1). The site comprises a farmhouse and a number of ancillary buildings.
- 2.2 The solid geology of the area consisted of sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of the Cloughton Formation which formed during the Jurassic Period; no superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2020). The local soils comprise seasonally wet, acid loamy and clayey soils (Soilscapes 2020).

3 Summary of Proposed Development Plans

- 3.1 The development at the property comprised internal alterations, the installation of replacement windows, a door and a soil pipe, the relaying of stone steps and the excavation of a service trench.

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 This brief review of the archaeological and historical background of the development site is derived from a Heritage Significance and Impact Assessment produced by the National Trust (National Trust 2019) and the National Heritage List for England.
- 4.2 There is evidence of occupation activity in Bransdale dating from the Neolithic / Early Bronze Age periods, as evidenced by localised flint scatters and a number of burial mounds, the latter all being scheduled monuments. The burial sites include a round cairn at High Plantation (List Entry 1019597), four round barrows known as the Three Howes near Toad Hole (List Entries 1019518, 1019519, 1019975), a bowl barrow at Crook Staff Hill (List Entry 1009360) and a round cairn near Rudland House (List Entry 1019598). Mesolithic flints have also been recovered as isolated finds in the broader landscape.

- 4.3 Bransdale has a long agrarian history, the landscape showing gradual development from the medieval period through to the early 19th century. In the medieval period, both secular and monastic landowners are known to have farmed (and shaped) the landscape. However, at present, occupation at Moorhouses can only be traced back to the 17th century. The earliest building on the site is a house of 17th century date which has now been converted into an agricultural building. The current farmhouse, which is a Grade II listed building, was constructed in 1802; additional ancillary structures were constructed during the 19th century.
- 4.4 It is noted in the Heritage Assessment that there is some potential for buried archaeological remains to survive at the site. These might include features that shed light on the early history of the farm complex or which illuminate earlier periods of human activity.

5 Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to gather sufficient information to establish the presence/absence, character, extent, state of preservation and date of any archaeological remains within the site that may be impacted by the development.
- 5.2 The specific aims were to:
- Locate, record and characterise any surviving sub-surface archaeological remains within the site;
 - Provide an assessment of the potential significance of any identified archaeological remains in a local, regional and (if relevant) national context;
 - Produce a comprehensive site archive and report.
- 5.3 The specific research objectives of the archaeological fieldwork were to:
- Determine whether archaeological deposits and/or features survive at the site which illuminate the early history of the farm complex;
 - Determine whether archaeological deposits and/or features survive at the site which shed light on earlier periods of human activity in Bransdale.

6 Methodology

- 6.1 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on groundworks associated with the redevelopment of Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale. The groundworks comprised the excavation of a service trench and a drainage connection. These were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.
- 6.2 Where archaeology was judged to be present, the excavated area was cleaned and the need for further work assessed. Where appropriate, any features and finds were then sampled and recorded. The sampling policy employed was as follows:
- a 100% sample was taken of all stake-holes
 - a 50% sample was taken of all post-holes, and of pits with a diameter of up to 1.5m
 - a minimum 25% sample was taken of pits with a diameter of over 1.5m; this should include a complete section across the pit to recover its full profile

- a minimum 25% sample was taken of all linear features, up to 5m in length; for features larger than this, a 10% sample was taken
- Deposits at junctions (and interruptions) in linear features were excavated to determine the relationships between the different components
- Any in situ building remains were fully recorded for the extent that they were exposed; brick and stone samples were taken if potentially diagnostic of date or function.
- Significant features were 100% excavated, if required by the National Trust's Archaeological Consultant and the development control archaeologist at NYMNP

- 6.3 A full written, drawn and photographic record was made of all features revealed during the course of the archaeological watching brief. Plans were completed at a scale of 1:50 or 1:20 (as appropriate), with section drawings at a scale of 1:10. All drawings included OD spot heights (where achievable) and were tied in with the Ordnance Survey National Grid. All recording will be undertaken to meet the standards and requirements of the *Archaeological Field Manual* (MOLAS 1994).
- 6.4 All areas of ground disturbance were recorded on a suitable base map, even if no archaeological remains were present.
- 6.5 Digital photography was employed using a camera with a resolution of at least 10 megapixels. All photographs were taken in RAW format and will be converted to uncompressed TIFF format in 8-bit depth for archiving (see *Digital Image Capture and File Storage*, Historic England 2015).
- 6.6 All identified finds and artefacts were collected and retained. Finds were bagged according to their context, and significant finds were allocated a recorded finds number and their positions surveyed individually. Finds were exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and stored in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guidelines No. 2* and the ClfA guidelines *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2014b). Where required, conservation was undertaken by approved conservators in line with the *First Aid for Finds* guidelines (Watkinson and Neal 1998).
- 6.7 The palaeoenvironmental sampling strategy would involve the removal of a bulk sample from potentially environmentally or industrially informative contexts. Bulk samples will comprise a representative 40 litre sample. However, where a context does not yield 40 litres of material, smaller samples will be taken (generally the maximum amount of material that it is practicable to collect).

7 Results (Figure 2; Plates 1-3)

- 7.1 The service trench ran on a north-east to south-west alignment for a distance of 8.8m from the north eastern corner of the farmhouse (a Grade II Listed Building) to an adjacent barn (Plates 1 and 2). The trench measured 0.60m wide and 0.65m deep. Three deposits were recorded within the service trench. The lowest comprised clean pale brown silty clay which contained small stones and occasional larger stones; this is interpreted as natural subsoil (MH003; 0.25m+ deep). This deposit was sealed by a 0.25m deep mixed brown silty clay which contained stones (MH002). This appeared to represent made ground for a farm track which overlay the deposit (Plate 2). The upper deposit comprised a 0.22m deep mixed stone and gravel layer (MH001) which formed a trackway between the farmhouse and the barn.
- 7.2 Immediately to the north-east of the farmhouse part of a paved stone surface was removed and a small trench was hand excavated to locate an existing ceramic sewer pipe which needed replacing.

The only deposit identified was a mixed deposit of topsoil and natural subsoil which represented the backfill of the existing sewer pipe trench.

- 7.3 Within the Farmhouse, the wall between the kitchen and ground floor living room was inspected after the removal of plaster. Two wooden blocks were observed which filled rectangular holes in the masonry wall; the holes extended the full width of the wall between the two rooms (Plate 3). The timber blocks were not fixed and could be easily removed, possibly to allow warmth from the kitchen into the living room at a time prior to the plastering of the walls. Both blocks measured 0.30m by 0.18m and are most likely re-used timbers that were cut to fit the gaps in the wall.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The excavations for the service trench and the sewer pipe did not encounter any archaeological features or artefacts.
- 8.2 With regard to the research objectives of the project, the results of the watching brief do not shed any further light on earlier periods of human activity at the site or on the development of the farm complex. However, the wooden blocks embedded in the Farmhouse wall are of interest and could add to our understanding of the design and use of such properties in earlier periods.

9 Archiving

- 9.1 A full site archive will be produced which will contain all the data collected during the archaeological works. The archive was quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent. It will be archived via ADS Easy.
- 9.2 The archive was assembled in line with the recommendations provided in Historic England's MoRPHE Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation (PPN3) (2008), and in accordance with the Guidelines for the preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term storage (United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, 1990) and Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections (Museums and Galleries Commission 1994).
- 9.3 An OASIS form has been completed and uploaded for this project and a copy of this is provided in Appendix 2.

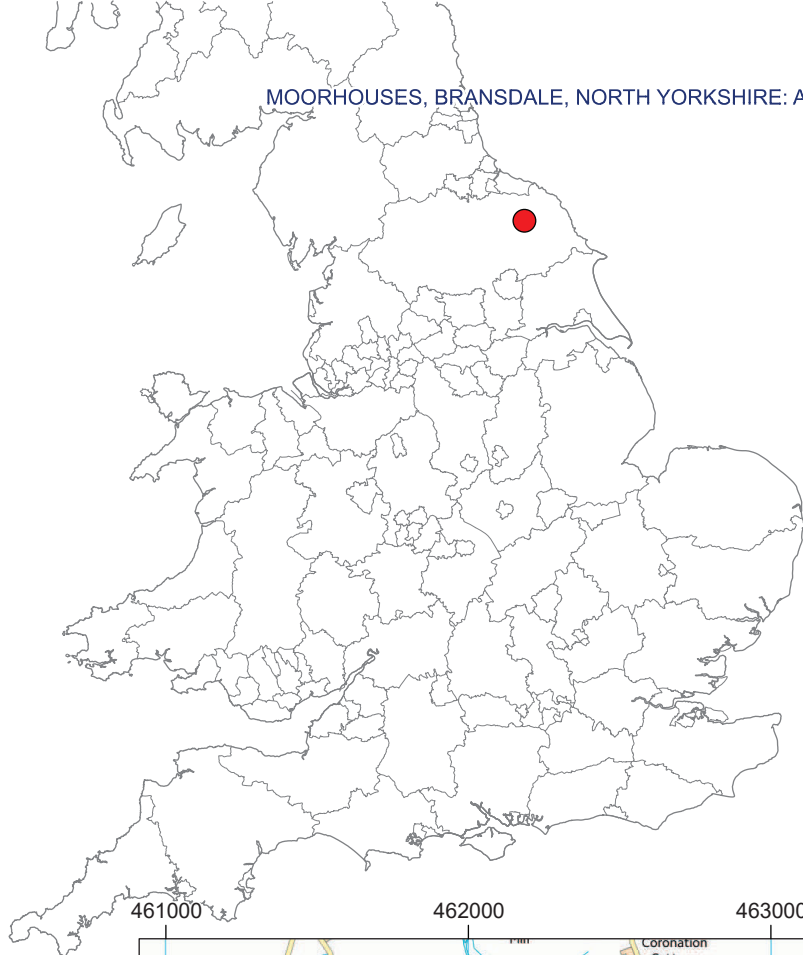
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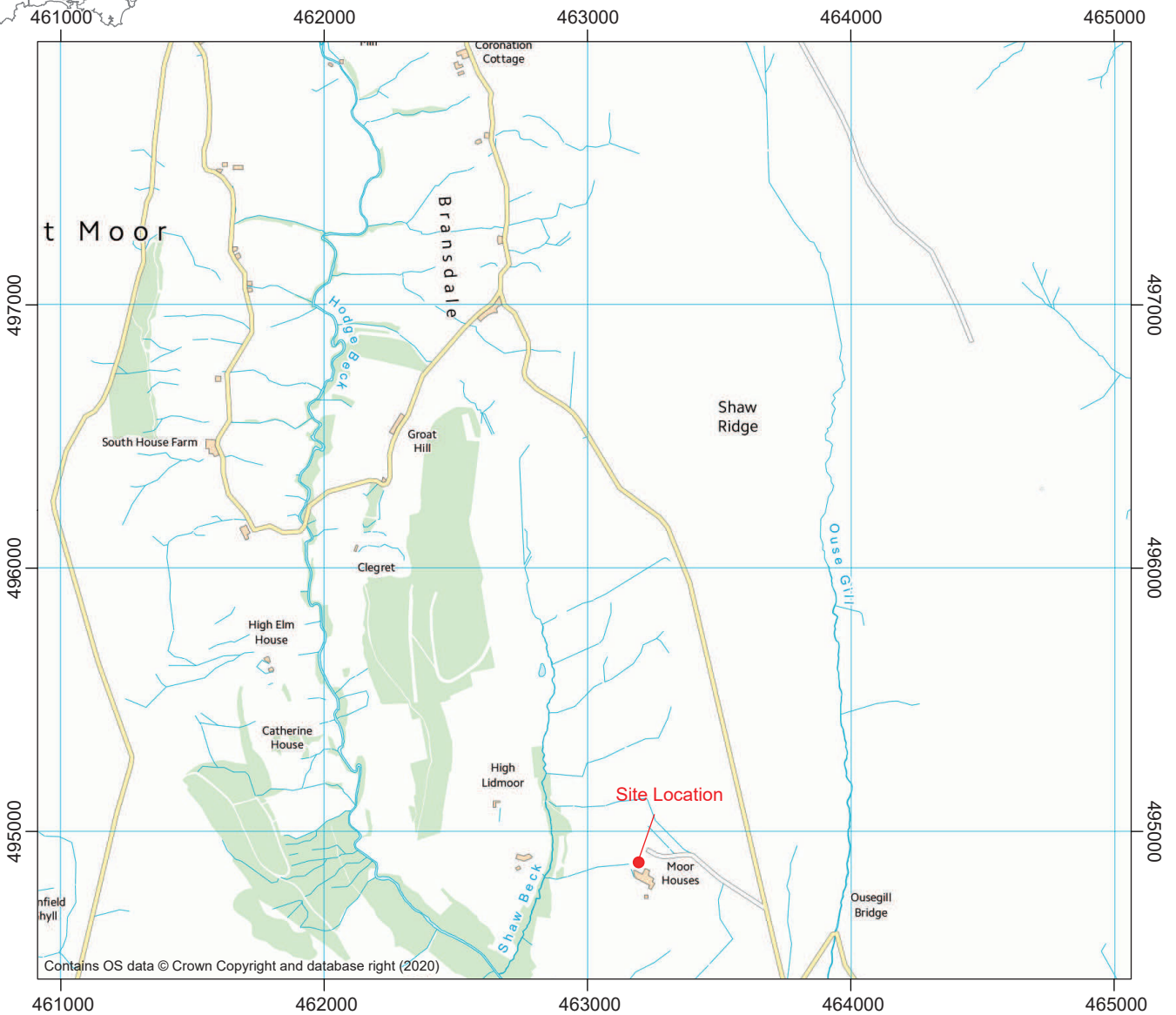
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Figures

MOORHOUSES, BRANSDALE, NORTH YORKSHIRE: ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT



| | |
|---|--|
| Figure 1 | |
| Site location | |
| | |
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| | |





Site Plan and Section

Figure
2



 Service trench location

 New oil tank


1:500 at A4





Plate 1: Overall shot of service trench. Facing north-east.



Plate 2: Section of service trench showing deposits (MH001-MH003). Facing south-east.



Plate 3: Detail of timber blocks (MH04 and MH05) within the wall between kitchen and living room. Facing north-east.

Appendix 1

| Context No | Type | Description | Length | Width | Depth |
|------------|-------------|--|--------|-------|--------|
| MH001 | Made ground | Compacted mixed stone and gravel | - | - | 0.22m |
| MH002 | Made ground | Brown silty clay with occasional stones | - | - | 0.25m |
| MH003 | Natural | Pale brown silty clay with frequent small stones and occasional large stones | - | - | 0.25m+ |

Appendix 2

OASIS Form

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

Printable version

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-386808

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | Moorhouses, Bransdale, North Yorkshire |
| Short description of the project | AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by the National Trust to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Moorhouses Farm, North Yorkshire. A service trench was monitored but no archaeological features were encountered. Within the Farmhouse, the wall between the kitchen and ground floor living room was inspected after the removal of plaster. Two wooden blocks were observed which filled rectangular holes in the masonry wall; the holes extended the full width of the wall between the two rooms. |
| Project dates | Start: 11-12-2019 End: 11-12-2019 |
| Previous/future work | Yes / No |
| Any associated project reference codes | 52051 - Contracting Unit No. |
| Type of project | Recording project |
| Site status | Listed Building |
| Current Land use | Residential 1 - General Residential |
| Monument type | NONE None |
| Significant Finds | NONE None |
| Investigation type | "Watching Brief" |
| Prompt | Listed Building Consent |

Project location

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | NORTH YORKSHIRE RYEDALE BRANSDALE Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale, North Yorkshire |
| Postcode | YO62 7JL |
| Site coordinates | SE 63221 94852 54.345139768322 -1.02735199759 54 20 42 N 001 01 38 W Point |

Project creators

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Name of Organisation | AOC Archaeology Group |
| Project brief originator | National Trust |
| Project design originator | AOC Archaeology Group |

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Project director/manager | Stephen Potten |
| Project supervisor | Charlie Morris |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Charity |
| Name of sponsor/funding body | National Trust |

Project archives

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Physical Archive Exists? | No |
| Digital Archive recipient | To be confirmed |
| Digital Contents | "other" |
| Digital Media available | "Images raster / digital photography" |
| Paper Archive recipient | To be confirmed |
| Paper Contents | "Stratigraphic","other" |
| Paper Media available | "Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section" |

Project bibliography 1

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Publication type | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript) |
| Title | Moorhouses Farm, Bransdale Road, Rdland, Fadmoor, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Morris, C. |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Walker, M. |
| Date | 2020 |
| Issuer or publisher | AOC Archaeology Group |
| Place of issue or publication | York |
| Description | A4 report |
| Entered by | Stephen Potten (stephen.potten@aocarchaeology.com) |
| Entered on | 28 February 2020 |

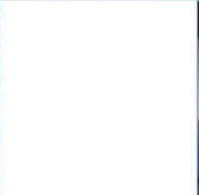
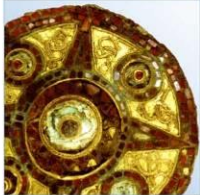
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