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MAP Archaeological Practice



Land south of Sheffield Road
Warmsworth
South Yorkshire

MAP 5.25.22
Planning Reference-22/02834/FULM

Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching



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Non-technical Summary

An Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching was carried out by MAP Archaeological Practice Ltd., on land south of Sheffield Road, Warmsworth, South Yorkshire in June 2023. The evaluation was undertaken to inform the Archaeologist at South Yorkshire Archaeology Service, acting for Doncaster Council, of the archaeological potential of the site and to allow a reasoned decision to be made regarding the need for further archaeological work, in advance of residential development.

The work was undertaken on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Yorkshire.

The Trial Trenching, which followed a Desk Based Assessment and Geophysical Survey, which identified linear features which may be of archaeological origin.

Ten trial trenches were excavated and recorded. In Trench 2, an engineering test pit backfill was observed. In Trench 10, a segment through a silt filled, east-west aligned depression was excavated, which related to a linear geophysical anomaly. The sample from this silt was sterile. No features of archaeological origin were observed and no finds were recovered. In consultation with the Archaeologist from South Yorkshire Archaeology Service, during the site visit on the 29th June 2023 and no further archaeological mitigation is required. The trenches were backfilled on the 5th July 2023.

1. Introduction & Planning History

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching which was carried out by MAP Archaeological Practice Ltd. on land south of Sheffield Road, Warmsworth in June 2023.
- 1.2 The work, which followed a Geophysical Survey and Desk Based Assessment, was carried out in order to inform the Archaeologist at South Yorkshire Archaeology Service acting on behalf of Doncaster Council of the archaeological potential of the site, and to allow a reasoned decision to be made regarding the need for further archaeological work in advance of development.
- 1.3 The site is listed under the Doncaster Local Plan as an allocated housing site (MUA46). An application for planning permission has been made to City of Doncaster Council for the erection of 126 dwellings, open space and associated infrastructure (Planning Ref.- 22/02834/FULM). South Yorkshire Archaeology Services, archaeological advisors to Doncaster Council, recommended that Archaeological Trial Trenching be undertaken prior to the determination of the application, to further assess the potential of the site.
- 1.4 The work was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) on *'Archaeology and Planning'* and according to the Written Scheme of Investigation that was prepared by MAP Archaeological Practice Ltd and approved by the Principal Archaeologist (Appendix 8).
- 1.5 MAP adhered to the principles of both the ClfA *'Code of Conduct'* (2022) and *'Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation'* (2020) throughout the project.
- 1.6 All maps within this report have been produced with permission of the Controller of his Majesty's Stationary Office (© Crown copyright. License AL50453A). With additional mapping data derived from OpenStreetMap (<https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>).

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The site, which measures approximately 4.39 ha is located immediately south of Sheffield Road, to the west of Warmsworth, c. 4.5km south-west of Doncaster city centre (Fig. 1). The site, which sloped from north to south, currently consists of a single parcel of arable farmland, with a north to south aligned hedgerow parallel to its western boundary and an air vent connected to an underground water tunnel located south of the hedgerow. The site is bounded to the north by Sheffield Road, to
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the south by Warmsworth Halt, agricultural land to the west, and mature hedgerow and residential property to the east.

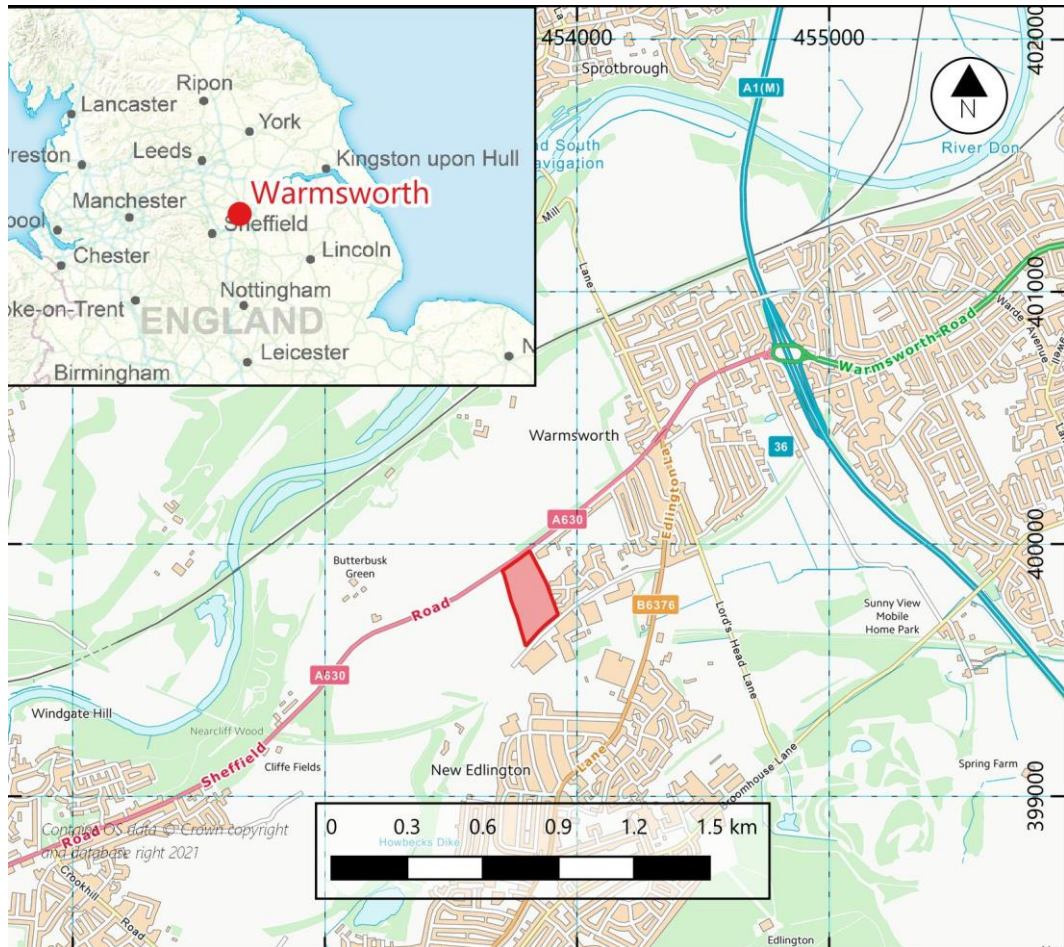


Figure 1: Site Location

- 2.2 The site consists of a single field, which was scrub of weeds and self-sown wheat, barley and oats at the time of the evaluation.
- 2.3 Bedrock geology within the site boundary consists of Cadeby Formation (sedimentary) Dolostone (BGS. 2023). The soils on the site are freely draining lime-rich loamy soils (Soilscape 5 – landis.org.uk/soilsapes).
3. **Archaeological and Historical Background**
 - 3.1 An Archaeology and Heritage Desk Based Assessment (Puntorno 2022) supports the application and as such a synopsis of information is provided within this report.

- 3.2 The Proposed Development Area lies within an area of recognised archaeological activity, dating back to the prehistoric periods. Fissures and caves have been identified in limestone deposits, to the north of the proposed development area, which have the potential to have supported early prehistoric human activity. A large complex of fissures was identified at Nearcliffe Quarry (MSY12791), to the north-west, where the complex measured 10m wide and had a maximum height of 7m (ARCUS 2005). Although no archaeological material was observed during a survey, due to operational constraints, the potential for archaeological activity to be present on the site was considered to be moderate, with a high potential for faunal remains (Ibid). The area would have been favourable when the proximity to the River Don is considered, along with the availability of natural shelter.
- 3.3 Roman activity is well documented in the area, particularly in areas close to the River Don and across the wider Magnesian Limestone Ridge. The postulated route of the Roman road which ran between Brough and Doncaster, via a fort at Templeborough (Margary 710b and 710c), bounds the northern boundary of the site. Although speculative, the route of the road is within close proximity to extensive Roman activity in the area.
- 3.4 The first edition Ordnance Survey map shows the proposed development area as being located within an area labelled as 'Beck Field'. Fields were linear in nature and on a north-west to south-east orientation. Land to the north is depicted as 'Middle Field' with a small limestone quarry on its southern boundary.
- 3.5 By 1901 the entrance to the aforementioned water tunnel is depicted within the site boundary, with four air shafts present on farmland to the west. The 1928 edition shows extensive quarrying has taken place along the southern bank of the River Don. The establishment of the Dearne Valley Railway caused significant change to land to the immediate south of the site with Warmsworth Goods Station being depicted on land to the east. Various railway junctions are shown on land between Warmsworth and New Edlington, to the south. Churches, recreational areas and residential dwellings are all depicted at New Edlington which was established to serve the workers of the Yorkshire Main Colliery which opened in 1909.
- 3.6 A geophysical Survey has been carried out across the proposed development area by Phase Site Investigations (Whittingham 2022). The results of the survey show possible linear features which may be of archaeological origin, although their relationship with agricultural activity cannot, at this stage, be ascertained. The location of the modern water tunnel is visible in the data.
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4. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The aim of the Archaeological Trial Trenching is to determine the presence/absence, nature, date, quality of survival and importance of archaeological deposits to enable an assessment of the potential and significance of archaeology to be made.

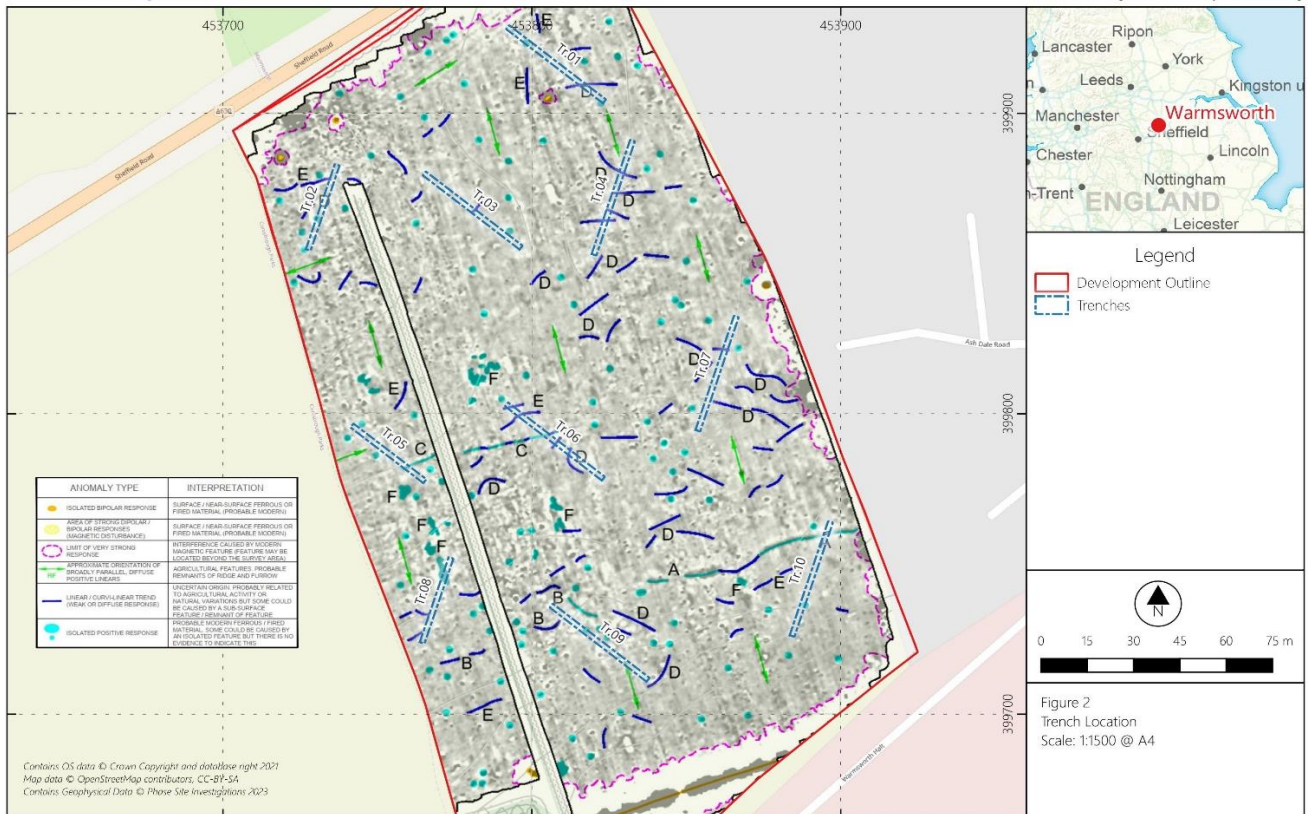


Figure 2: Trench Location

5. Methodology

- 5.1 Ten trenches were located and levelled using a Trimble GPS Rover (Fig. 2). Three trenches, located west of the hedgerow, measured 30m in length and seven trenches, east of the hedgerow measured 40m in length. The trenches were positioned in order to assess anomalies highlighted in the results of the Geophysical Survey and areas thought to be devoid of archaeological activity were also examined.
- 5.2 Once positioned the trenches were excavated using a wheeled mechanical excavator, fitted with a wide toothless bucket operating under close archaeological supervision. In each trench, soils were removed down to perceived archaeological horizon. The exposed surfaces were cleaned appropriately, and any subsequent excavation was carried out by hand.

5.3 A sufficient sample of the archaeological features and deposits were hand excavated, in order to address the aims of the Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching. All excavation and recording was carried out in line with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Appendix 4).

6. Results

6.1 Excavation of the nine trenches revealed a deposit of topsoil that consisted of a dark grey-brown loam (Appendix 1). Natural geological deposits of a red-brown clay sand with stone outcrops were identified in all trenches. The total depths of excavation, depths of the topsoil and elevations of all nine trial trenches are displayed in the below table along with their orientation within the site.

Trench	Dimensions	Orientation – Elevation	Excavation Depth	Topsoil Thickness
1	40m by 2m	South-east – 47.71m AOD North-west – 48.12m AOD	0.30m-0.36m	0.26m-0.30m
2	30m by 2m	South-west – 50.05m AOD North-east – 49.69m AOD	0.27m-0.31m	0.27m-0.30m
3	40m by 2m	North-west – 49.12m AOD South-east – 48.71m AOD	0.31m-0.37m	0.27m-0.29m
4	40m by 2m	South-west – 48.14m AOD North-east – 47.78m AOD	0.30m-0.35m	0.26m-0.30m
5	30m by 2m	North-west – 49.31m AOD South-east – 48.29m AOD	0.28m-0.32m	0.28m-0.30m
6	40m by 2m	North-west – 48.38m AOD South-east – 47.29m AOD	0.20m-0.30m	0.20m-0.28m
7	40m by 2m	North-east – 47.15m AOD South-west – 46.93m AOD	0.26m-0.35m	0.26m-0.30m
8	30m by 2m	North-east – 47.38m AOD South-west – 46.37m AOD	0.28m-0.30m	0.28m-0.30m
9	40m by 2m	North-west – 46.29m AOD South-east – 43.61m AOD	0.20m-0.28m	0.20m-0.27m
10	40m by 2m	North-east – 45.27m AOD South-west – 43.32m AOD	0.20m-0.40m	0.20m-0.27m

6.2 Trenches 1, 3 to 9 contained no archaeological finds, features or deposits (Pls. 5, 8-14).

6.3 Trench 2 contained the backfill of a recently excavated engineering test pit (Pl. 6).

6.4 There was an east-west aligned, linear feature filled with silt at the north-east end of Trench 10 (Fig. 3), which corresponded with geophysical anomaly A. The feature was filled with clean silt (fill 1003). A 1m segment was excavated, which measured 0.70m wide and 0.26-0.40m deep. The sides and base of this features was undulating, and the light brown silt fill contained no finds and was heavily

rooted. An environmental sample taken from the feature contained small specks of coal and natural stones. This feature was most likely to be a natural fissure and geological in origin.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 The Archaeological Evaluation confirmed the anomalies interpreted on the geophysical survey were geological in origin.

7.2 No archaeological features were identified and no finds were noted.

7.3 Andrew Lines, Archaeologist from South Yorkshire Archaeological Service, made a site visit and agreed no further archaeological work is necessary.

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Plates



Plate 1: General view of site. Facing east



Plate 2: General view of site. Facing south-west



Plate 3: General view of site. Facing south-east



Plate 4: General view of site. Facing south-west



Plate 5: Trench 1: 1m scale. Facing north-west



Plate 6: Trench 2: 1m scale. Facing south-west



Plate 7: Backfill of engineering test pit in Trench 2: 1m scale. Facing north



Plate 8: Trench 3: 1m scale. Facing north-west



Plate 9: Trench 4: 1m scale. Facing south-west



Plate 10: Trench 5: 1m scale. Facing south-east



Plate 11: Trench 6: 1m scale. Facing north-west



Plate 12: Trench 8: 1m scale. Facing south-west



Plate 13: Trench 8: 1m scale. Facing south-west



Plate 14: Trench 9: 1m scale. Facing north-west



Plate 15: Trench 10: 1m scale. Facing south-west



Plate 16: Fill 1003: 1m scale. Facing west



Plate 17: Linear segment 1004 (natural depression): scale 1m. Facing west