
FORMER CARE HOME, FORDLANDS ROAD,
FULFORD, YORK.

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT
OSA REPORT No: OSA17DT07 (DBA).

May 2017.

OSA

ON SITE ARCHÆOLOGY LTD

25A Milton Street • York • North Yorkshire • YO10 3EP
telephone • 01904 411673 • fax • 01904 414522 • mobile • 07767 385766

e-mail • mail@onsitearchaeology.co.uk

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Report Summary.

REPORT NO: OSA17DT07 (DBA)

SITE NAME: Former Care Home, Fordlands Road, Fulford

COUNTY: York

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 61187 48824

COMMISSIONED BY: Octopus Healthcare Development Ltd
6th Floor
Holborn House
London EC1N 2HT

RESEARCH AND TEXT: Graham Bruce

GRAPHICS: Graham Bruce and Dave Pinnock

TIMING: Research and Report preparation
May 2017

ENQUIRIES TO: Nick Pearson
On Site Archaeology
25A Milton Street
York
YO10 3EP

tel (01904) 411673

fax (01904) 414522

mobile (07767) 385766

e-mail mail@onsitearchaeology.co.uk

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1.0 Abstract.

This archaeological desktop assessment has been prepared at the request of Octopus Healthcare Development Ltd to provide information regarding the archaeological potential of the site of the Former Care Home, Fordlands Road, Fulford, York.

The site lies in an area with a potential to contain archaeological deposits although there is no definitive evidence to support the putative location of the Battle of Fulford of 1066 in the vicinity of Germany Beck and in 2007 the Government's Planning Inspector concluded that "there is no archaeological evidence to show that the application site contains the location of the Battle of Fulford". Extensive archaeological investigations have been carried out, and are ongoing, on the adjacent Germany Beck site. These have produced some archaeological evidence, especially for Iron Age and Romano-British periods. The archaeological potential of the former care home site has been principally assessed in the light of the currently available results of those investigations.

The site contains buildings of the former care home will have caused a degree of damage to any archaeology, together with areas of soft landscaping and hard surface car parks. It is currently not known to what extent the construction of the existing care home has damaged archaeological deposits within these landscaped and car park areas. Archaeological evaluation trenches placed immediately to the east of the care home site encountered evidence for a 20th century rubbish tip, which was believed to extend into the site. To ascertain if archaeological deposits are present, and assess the degree of 20th century disturbance, caused by both the rubbish tip and the care home construction, a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching would be necessary. The requirement for, and scale of, any such evaluation will need to be agreed with City of York Council Archaeologist.

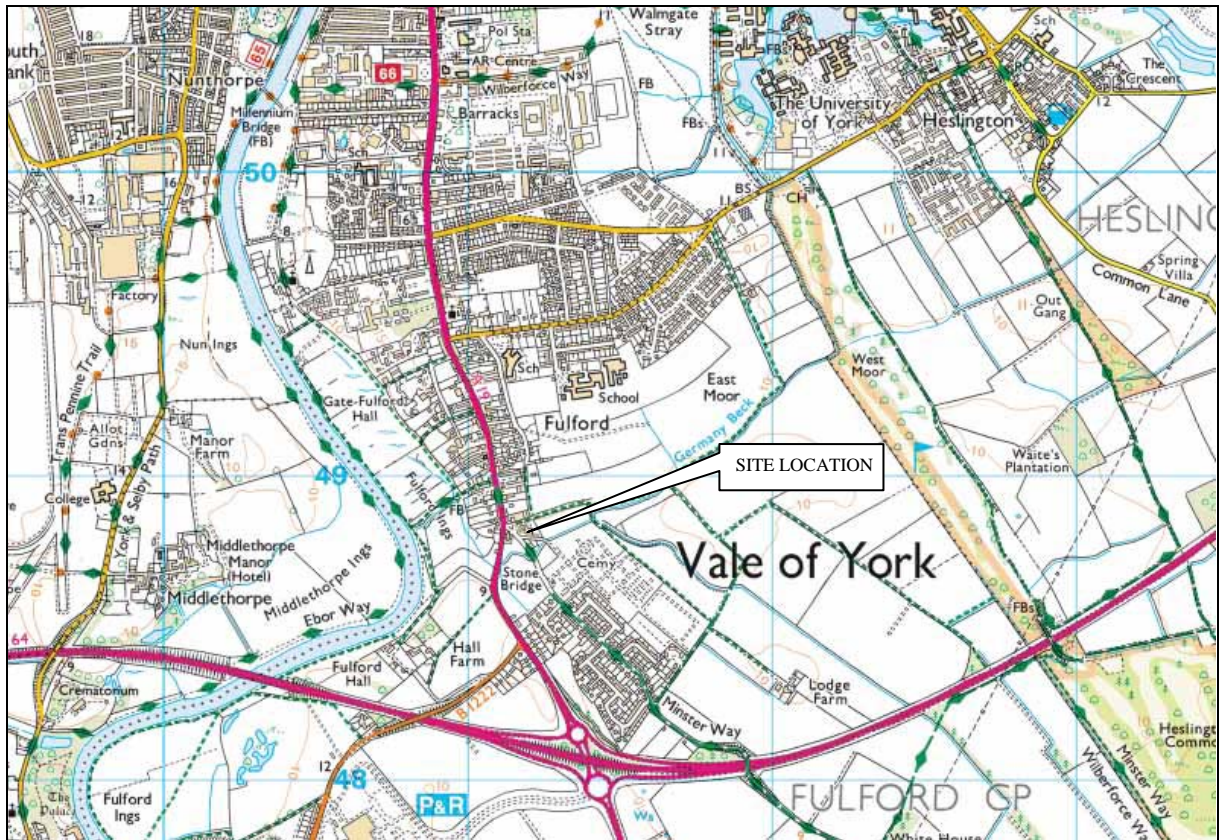


Figure 1. Site location (NGR SE 59645 52565)

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2.0 Introduction.

In May 2017 this archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken by *On Site Archaeology* on the site of a proposed new care home to replace an existing disused care home at Fordlands Road, Fulford, York. It is centred at approximately NGR SE 61187 48824 (Figure 1). The study was undertaken to provide archaeological information which may have a bearing upon potential redevelopment of the site. A separate heritage impact assessment has been prepared to analyse the potential impact of the proposed new care home on the nearby designated heritage assets. This archaeological desk-based assessment therefore does not address designated heritage assets.

3.0 Methodology.

The historical and archaeological significance of the site was assessed using a variety of sources. These include cartographic evidence, records held at the City of York Historic Environment Record (HER) office, the online archaeological catalogues held by the Archaeological Data Service, Heritage Gateway and the Historic England Archives, and published archaeological and historical reports. However, the principal source of archaeological information is provided by the ongoing archaeological investigations being carried out on the adjacent Germany Beck development site.

A site visit was undertaken to enhance the understanding of the modern landuse of the site, especially with regards to its effect upon the archaeological record. A photographic record was made of the site and the surrounding area during this site visit, a selection of these photographs are used to illustrate this report (see Plates 1-4).

Site research notes are currently stored with On-Site Archaeology.

4.0. Site Location, Landuse and Geology.

The application site is situated at the southern end of the village of Fulford, centred at National Grid Reference SE 61187 48824. The village of Fulford lies on the southern outskirts of the city of York, roughly 2-2.5 kilometres from the city centre. It is an historic village of linear plan, straddling the main A19 trunk road which enters the city from Selby and the modern A64 York by-pass. The village is bounded to the south by Germany Beck, a small tributary of the River Ouse and to the north the village is now attached to the city, so that the separate identity of the village is reduced.

The site currently comprises a series of one and two storey brick buildings, forming the former care home, together with soft landscaped garden areas and associated car parks.

The ground level is at approximately 10m AOD.

The underlying drift geology of the site comprises glacio-fluvio deposits. Beneath this the solid geology is Sherwood sandstone (bgs.ac.uk) laid down in the Triassic and Permian Periods.

5.0 Archaeological and Historical Summary.

The following section is derived from documents prepared in association with the adjacent major development site of Germany Beck (MAP 1996, MAP 2002, MAP undated), with additional information included where it may be informative.

5.1 The Prehistoric Period (to the 1st Century AD)

Chance finds of Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flints have been made in the Fulford area throughout the 20th century. These have been supplemented by an intensive programme of fieldwalking across the Germany Beck site in 1996, which found prehistoric lithics randomly distributed across the site, but with no obvious patterning or clusters. Germany Beck evaluation trench 5 excavated a circular feature with an internal diameter of 17m which was interpreted as a round barrow, of probable Bronze Age date, although no grave cut was present and doubts remain regarding this interpretation. Several trenches (trenches 30-36) excavated immediately adjacent to Germany Beck revealed peat deposits from which a single flint of Mesolithic date was recovered. Neolithic pottery and flint were also recovered from evaluation trench 11, located approximately 250m to the east of the care home site (MAP, 1996).

Additional evidence for the Mesolithic to Bronze Age in this area of York is provided by the extensive archaeological investigations carried out at Heslington East (3-4km to the northeast). For the earliest period occasional temporary hearths were revealed, one of which contained a single flint tool of potentially Mesolithic date. Neolithic evidence was limited to a small quantity of worked flint. During the Bronze Age a series of natural springs were adapted and managed, including the insertion of hollowed out log cylinders (OSA, 2012).

Geophysical survey of the site suggests a series of north south aligned ditches and possible enclosures, located within the eastern part of the Germany Beck site. Several sherds of Iron Age pottery were recovered from a ditch excavated in Trench 56 (MAP, 1996, p.41). The ditches represented through geophysics and evaluation trenching may represent field systems. Much more extensive evidence for Iron Age landuse in the area has been revealed at the Heslington East site, with settlement, including multiple roundhouses, supplementing the evidence for field systems (see for example OSA, 2012). A single sherd of Iron Age pottery was recovered from a later deposit at Connaught Court to the north of the site during an evaluation carried out by On-Site Archaeology in 2004. A single undated ditch was also recorded, which was stratigraphically early in the sequence and therefore potentially of Iron Age date. This evidence is likely to indicate field systems rather than settlement in the area (OSA, 2005).

5.2 The Roman Period (1st to the 5th centuries AD)

The site lies approximately 3km to the south of the Roman fortress. The Roman road from York (Eboracum) to Throlam runs about 1km to the east of the modern Fulford Road although its course within the city boundary has never been proved with certainty (RCHMY 1962, 1).

Geophysical survey and excavation of the Germany Beck site revealed a brick pattern of field boundaries dated by associated pottery to the 1st to 4th centuries AD. These field systems appear to have been abandoned by the 5th century as no dating evidence for this period was available. Although no certain structural remains were revealed during the evaluation the finds assemblage included large quantities of Roman building material concentrated around Trench 44. Whilst this suggests a Roman building stood in the vicinity its location has not been established.

Further evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity was revealed at Connaught Court (OSA, 2005) and at St Oswalds School, Fulford (MAP, 2005), where a sequence of boundary ditches dating from the mid 2nd to later 3rd centuries AD were excavated. Once again much more extensive archaeological information for the Roman period is provided by the Heslington East investigations. Those investigations have revealed the presence of a Roman farmstead, including a tile built hypocaust, complex water management systems, including deep stone, wattle and timber lined wells. A substantial foundation suggestive of a tower tomb, together with inhumation burials were also excavated.

5.3 *Early Medieval periods (5th to 11th centuries AD).*

There is limited evidence for occupation in Fulford during these periods. A pre-conquest cobble foundation beneath the tower of St Oswald's Church is intriguing as is the position of the church, well away from the medieval and later village. It is possible that the church was the focus for activity in this period but to date there is no conclusive evidence to demonstrate this (YAT 1981). The place name Fulford is derived from Foleford or Fuleford (1086 DB) meaning foul or muddy ford (Smith 1937) possibly referring to a ford over the stream which is now known as Germany Beck, although it has been suggested that Germany Beck is an artificial watercourse of much later date.

The Battle of Fulford, which took place on 20th September 1066, immediately before the Battle of Stamford Bridge was clearly a significant event in historical terms. The Anglo Saxon Chronicle speaks of a very great sea force with 300 ships or more under the Norwegian Viking king Harald Hardrada. They berthed their ships at Riccall on the River Ouse and Hardrada with perhaps 7-8000 warriors marched towards York and halted at Fulford. The Norwegian line stretched from the bank of the Ouse eastward along a ditch. Earl Morcar and the northern Saxon army were defeated and the Viking army moved on to Stamford Bridge.

It has been suggested that the battle of Fulford may have been fought in the vicinity of the village in 1066, although this is based on later written sources and there is no published archaeological evidence to support it. In 2007 the Inspector's report to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government regarding the application to build housing at the Germany Beck site, the inspector concluded that (para 24.143): "In my view, the historical accounts provide almost no support for locating the battle at the application site." A substantial amount of archaeological investigation has failed to locate the site of the battle in its alleged location. The investigative work from work from 1995 to 2007 was listed in the Inspector's report to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in 2007 (para 24.139). The inspector noted that: "All that effort, undertaken over more than a decade,

has identified nothing that might be associated with the Battle of Fulford. Indeed no objects and no deposits dating from the 11th century have been identified in any phase of the archaeological evaluations" (2017, para 24.140). Overall, the Inspector concluded that (para 24.147): "I consider that there is no archaeological evidence to show that the application site contains the location of the Battle of Fulford. Moreover, on the basis of the evidence adduced, I am doubtful that it is even likely that the battle was fought here. I agree with English Heritage that the available evidence is insufficient to allow the inclusion of the site on the Register of Battlefields. The site cannot, therefore, benefit from the protection that such a designation would bestow."

5.4 *The Medieval Period (11th to the mid 16th centuries AD)*

In 1086 Gate Fulford comprised a single estate of 10 carucates, held by Count Alan of Brittany, which had belonged before the Conquest to Morcar. About 1100 it was given by Count Stephen of Brittany to St. Mary's Abbey, York, along with a carucate and 3 bovates in Water Fulford. The abbey retained the manor of Gate Fulford until the Dissolution, when it was worth about £48 (VCH, 1976).

The site lies towards the periphery of the village within associated open fields. One of the evaluation trenches located to the south of the site (Trench 28 see below) encountered a probable medieval field boundary ditch containing pottery dated to the 13th to 14th century.

5.5 *The Post-Medieval to Modern Periods (mid 16th to 21st centuries)*

The predominantly agricultural landuse continued from the medieval period through the majority of the post-medieval, as indicated by the cartographic sources (see below).

Fulford played a significant role during the English Civil War, particularly during the siege of York. The besieging Parliamentary forces, under the command of Fairfax, covered the area from the River Ouse at Fulford to the Red Tower (next to Foss Islands Road), with a headquarters at Heslington Hall (Wenham, 1970, p. 13) A Parliamentary Tract described the early days of the siege as follows: "*Our guards are so many on all sides of the Citie, that not a man can goe in, or come forth without discovery, much lesse can the least provision be carried in to them.*" (Wenham, p. 14). The potential importance of Fulford during the siege would have increased in June 1644, with the construction of a bridge of boats across the Ouse, in the Fulford to the Middlethorpe area (Wenham, p. 34-35). This would have linked Fairfax forces with the Scottish army which surrounded the western part of the City. Archaeological evidence of civil war date was found during evaluation (OSA, 2003) and excavations (MAP, 2005) and St Oswald's School. This included musket balls and probably defensive slit trenches.

There is evidence that at least some parts of the site were used as a rubbish tip during the mid 20th century (see Trenches 37 and 38 below). The current former care home buildings were constructed upon the site during the 1980s.

6.0 Assessment of Germany Beck Archaeological Evaluation Trenches.

As indicated above the site lies in an area of high archaeological potential, with features dating from the Neolithic and Bronze Age through to the post-medieval period. The archaeological information is predominantly based upon the programme of archaeological investigations carried out in 1996 (MAP, 1996) and 2002 (MAP, 2002). Several of the trenches recorded during those evaluations are located in the immediate vicinity of the former care home site. The archaeological results of those trenches will therefore be considered in this section. The locations of the trenches discussed are shown of Figure 2 below, in relation to the site.

West of Fordlands Road (southwest of site).

Trench 24 (MAP, 1996, p.10). This trench revealed intermixed clays and sands sealed by modern topsoil. Only recent land drains were recorded, together with the presence of occasional sherds of modern pottery.

Trench 65 (MAP, 2002, p. 8). This trench was located immediately adjacent to Fordlands Road and measured 10m x 3m at the modern ground surface. Excavation showed that deposits had been severely affected by modern disturbance. Further excavation suggested that the deposits represented deliberate dumping of material to raise the ground levels prior to the construction of Fordlands Road in the 1930s.

Trench 66 (MAP, 2002, p. 8). This trench was located west of Trench 65 and south of Trench 24 and was excavated to a maximum depth of 2.50m from the existing ground surface. All of the deposits exposed represented recent activity associated with the construction of Fordlands Road.

East of Fordlands Road (south of site).

Trench 26 (MAP, 1996, p. 11). This trench was excavated and quickly backfilled due to the unstable nature of the deposits encountered. Immediately below the modern topsoil was a thin band of peat which was removed to reveal running sand. No archaeological features or finds were recorded, with the exception of a land drain.

Trench 27 (MAP, 1996, p. 11). This trench was located immediately to the east of Trench 26. The report refers to a land drain but not to any peat being present in this trench.

Trench 28 (MAP, 1996, p. 11 and Figure 8). This trench was located close to the east side of Fordlands Road. Natural sand was recorded at a depth of between 0.60m and 0.80m below the modern ground surface. The natural was cut by a single archaeological feature, a probable medieval boundary ditch aligned southeast to northwest. This ditch was in excess of 1.50m wide and 0.40m deep. The ditch was sealed by a layer of colluvium and then the modern topsoil. A modern drain was also recorded.

Trench 29 (MAP, 1996, p. 11). This was a large trench measuring 14m x 5m which was located immediately to the south of the former care home site. The only features recorded

were cat and dog burials, postholes forming a fence line and a land drain, all of which were considered to be of modern date. These features were revealed beneath a thin (0.10m thick) layer of topsoil. The report does not refer to natural being encountered (table on page 56).

Trench 67 (MAP, 2002, p. 9). This trench was located to the southeast of the former care home site. Natural clay sands were revealed directly beneath the modern topsoil, which was recorded as 0.46m thick. The only feature recorded was a modern pipe trench cut into the natural.

South of Germany Lane (east of site).

Trenches 37 and 38 (MAP, 1996, p.13, and table on ps. 57-58). These two trenches were located on the top of an apparent terrace which was considered to be a likely location for archaeological activity. Excavation revealed only recent activity, represented by a large sub-circular cut. This feature measured in excess of 26m east to west and was recorded as continuing under the "old peoples home" (the former care home). It was excavated to a depth of 2.50m but the base was not reached. The fill of the feature contained numerous glass bottles, jam jars ink wells and other 19th to 20th century refuse. The evaluation report states that although nothing is indicated on historic Ordnance Survey maps a source is quoted that the area was used as a rubbish tip until c.1950. Given the deposits encountered in the two trenches this appears to be a reasonable interpretation. Further to the east, beyond the limits of the large cut, removal of a thin layer of topsoil revealed natural clay but no archaeological features.

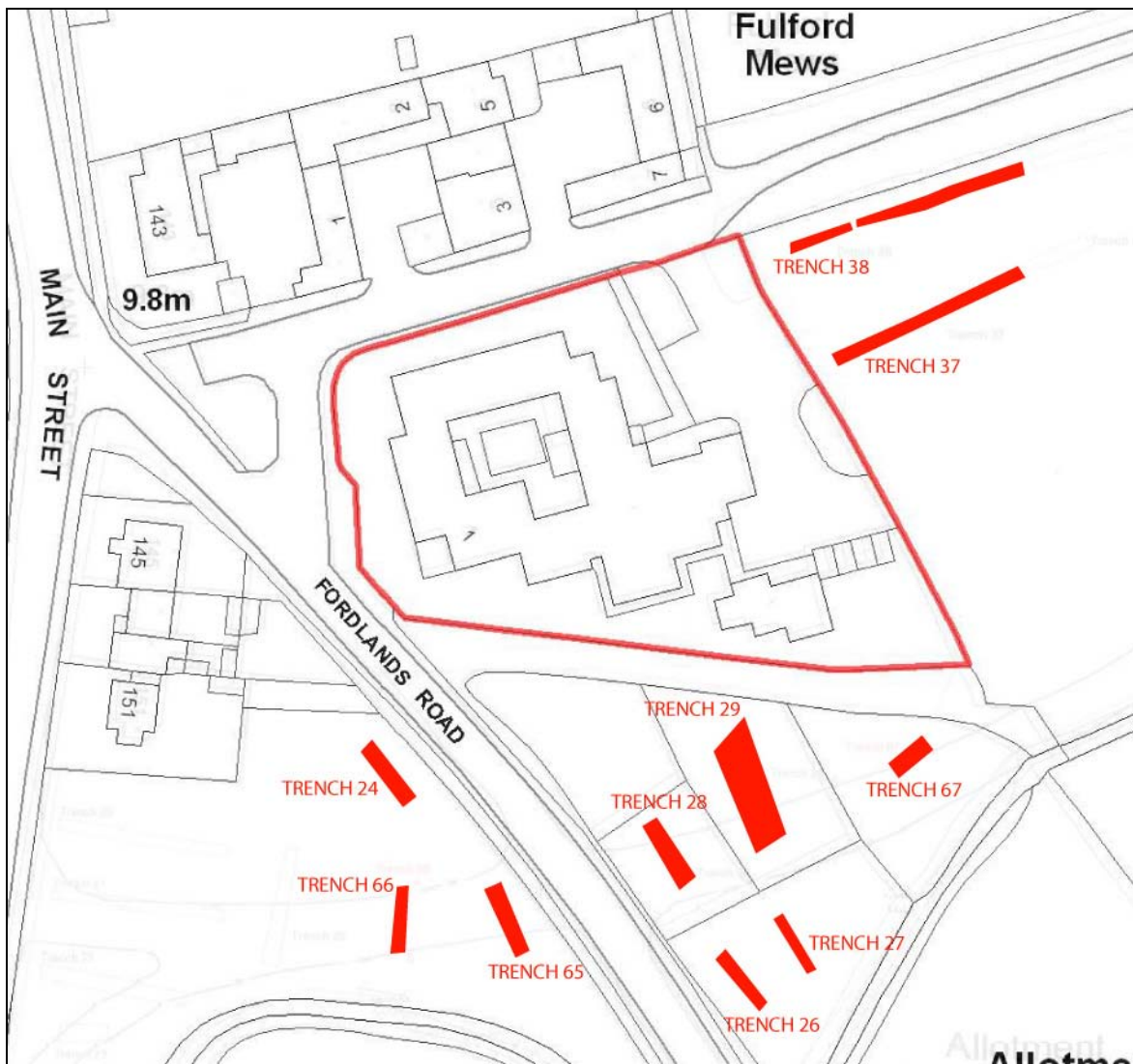


Figure 2. Location of MAP (1996 and 2002) evaluation trenches in the immediate vicinity of the site.

7.0 Cartographic Evidence.

The recent development of the site can be assessed to some extent via historic Ordnance Survey maps.

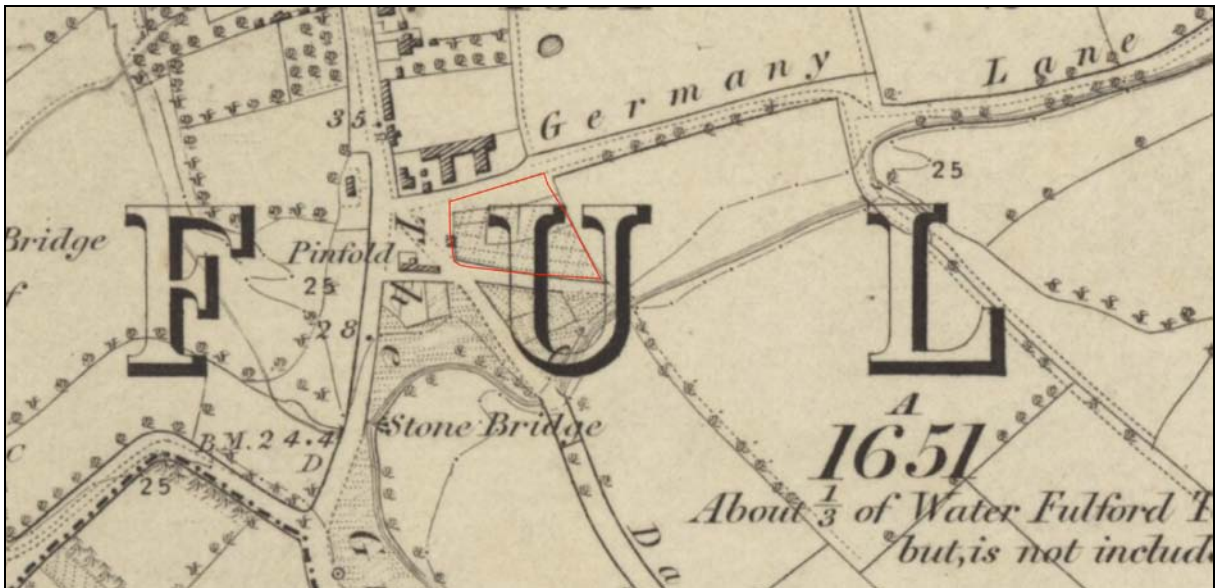


Figure 3. Extract from the 1853 Ordnance Survey.

The First Edition of the Ordnance Survey dating from 1852 (Figure 3), shows the site as an undeveloped plot on the south side of Germany Lane. Much of the site is shown cross hatched on this map, possibly indicating a specific form of agricultural activity. The fields to the south, adjacent to the beck, are shown as marshland. The 1892 edition of the Ordnance Survey (Figure 4) shows a simple layout with the site divided into three smaller fields.

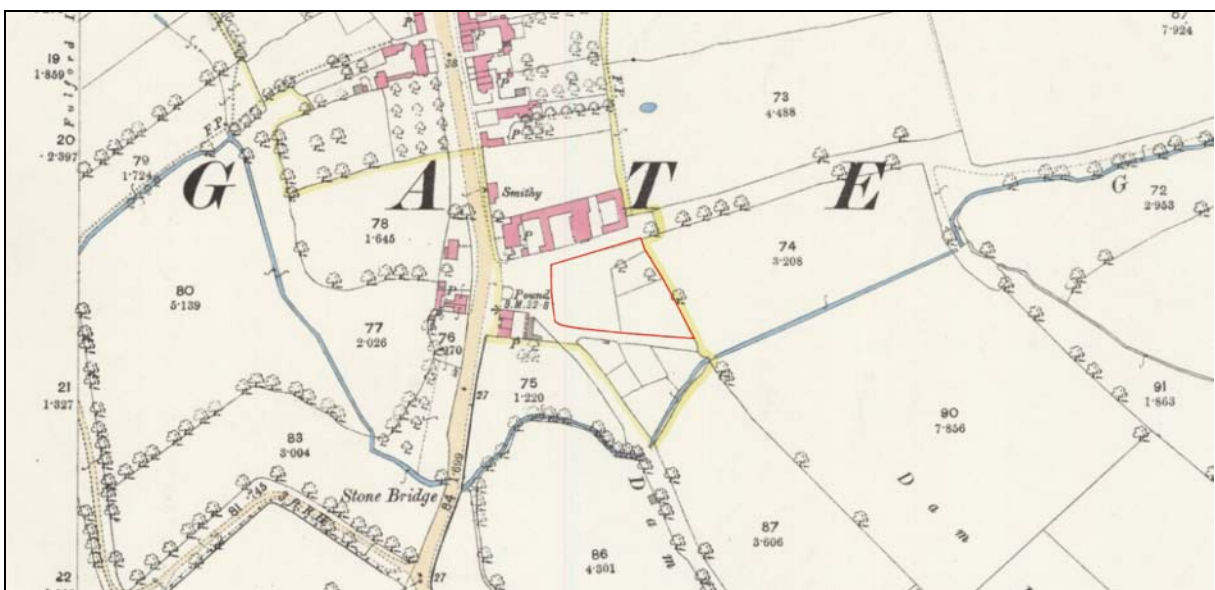


Figure 4. Extract from the 1892 Ordnance Survey.

The earliest map to show any structures on the site dates to 1909 (Figure 5). Once again this map shows the site divided into the same three fields. A single long rectangular building had been built within the westernmost field by this date. The interpretation of this building is

uncertain, but given its location an agricultural purpose would seem likely. Relatively little change had occurred by the 1931 map (Figure 6) with the exception of the construction of a second, smaller structure in the western field. The final map illustrated dates to 1953 (Figure 7) which shows the site with no changes since 1931.



Figure 5. Extract from the 1909 Ordnance Survey map.



Figure 6. Extract from the 1931 Ordnance Survey map.



Figure 7. Extract from the 1953 Ordnance Survey map.

8.0 Discussion and Archaeological Implications.

The site lies in an area with a high potential to have contained archaeological deposits. The surrounding area has been shown to contain remains dating from the prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.

However, more recent trial trenching close to the site did not reveal any deposits of archaeological significance. There is evidence from evaluation trenches located immediately to the east that at least part of the site may have been disturbed by a mid 20th century rubbish tip. Where excavated this tip has been shown to extend to a depth in excess of 2.5m below the modern ground surface. If present this would almost certainly have removed all but the very deepest archaeological features. The construction of the care home and its associated infrastructure in the 1980's is also likely to have caused a degree of damage to potential archaeological remains.

At present it is uncertain if any archaeological deposits survive on the site, or if 20th century disturbance has completely removed these. To confirm the presence/ absence of archaeology an archaeological evaluation will be required. The details of any archaeological fieldwork associated with this development will need to be agreed with City of York Council Archaeologist.

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10.0 The Plates.



Plate 1. General view of care home complex looking southeast.



Plate 2. Car home buildings and car park.



Plate 3. Car home buildings and car park.



Plate 4. . Grassed area adjacent to Germany Lane.