

Archaeology Open Day at the Germany Beck Housing Development, Fulford

Notes on a Site Visit by Chris Rainger. 29-7-17



Aerial view of the 1st phase of the development site looking towards Fulford and showing the archaeologists trenches. The darker coloured lines are the ridge and furrow strips.

Malton Archaeological Practice (MAP) held an open day on 29th July, to explain what has been learnt about the site and show examples of the items found during their archaeology on Persimmon's Germany Beck development.

Archaeologists, Kelly Hunter and Alistair Cross, took great trouble to explain the contextual significance of their discoveries and this short paper is my attempt to bring them to FFH members and website visitors. Any errors are mine, not Kelly's or Alistair's!

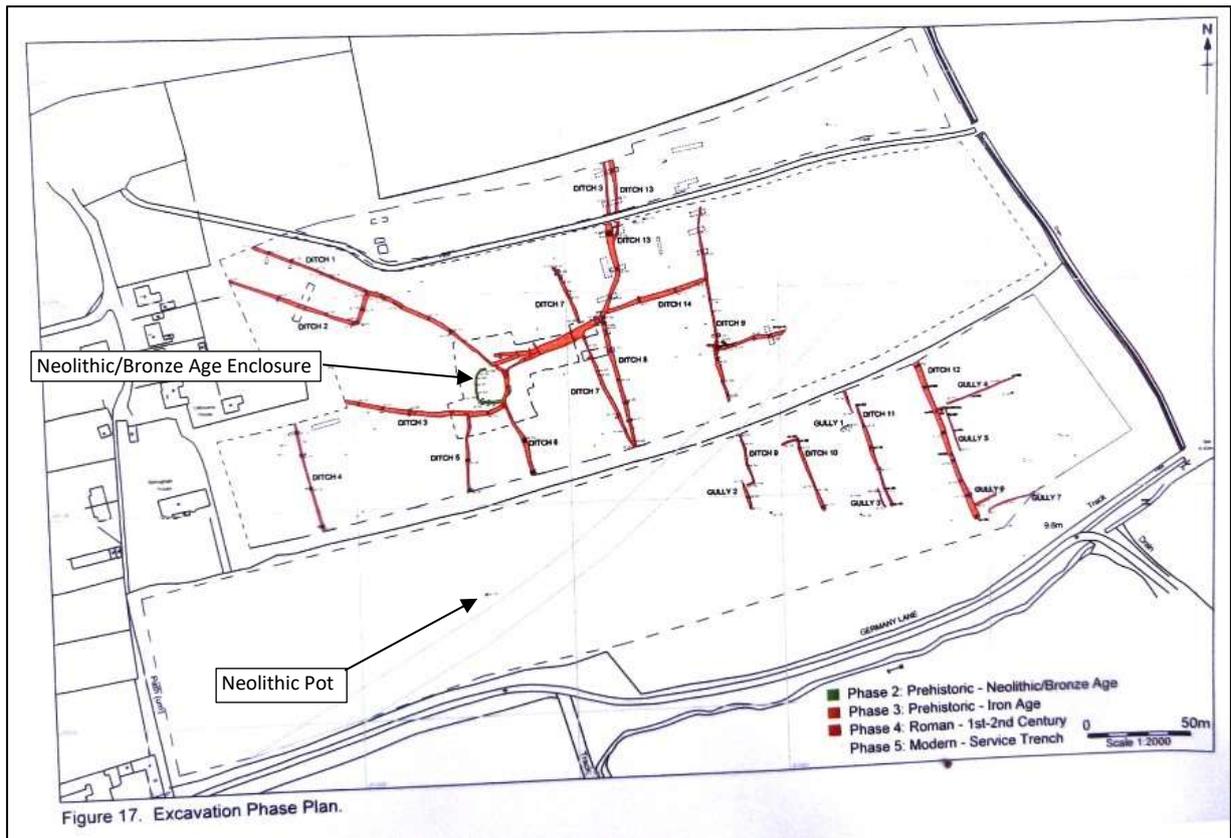
Anyone interested in the history of Fulford should read the Historic Landscape Appraisal, prepared by MAP before the development. This eloquently sets the context for these investigations and is available to read on the Fulford/Germany Beck Development page on our website: www.ffhyork.weebly.com

The excavations confirmed aerial photography and geophysical investigations which identified a pattern of small Romano-British fields in the north-western area, apparently extending from the field system discovered at the adjacent Fulford Primary School.

Some ditches were over 1m deep, but others, particularly to the eastern side, were shallower and mainly ran north-south down the shallow sloping ground towards Germany Beck.

A Neolithic/Bronze Age circle formed by shallow ditches had been previously identified and was examined in some detail. No post holes were found, suggesting it was not a domestic

dwelling, but perhaps an animal enclosure. This formation is on ground which is slightly higher than the surrounding field and seems to have been incorporated into the Romano-British ditch system. A Bronze Age flint knife was found here during field walking in 1996.



Site Plan showing 1st – 2nd century Romano-British Fields

The earliest finds were Mesolithic flakes, scrapers, a flint knife and an arrowhead, which were scattered all across the site.



Parts of a decorated Neolithic pot were found in a pit, just below the topsoil in an isolated spot at the centre of the southern area. This has been identified by Terry Manby as Peterborough Ware of the Mortlake Type and is believed to be the oldest found near York.



Drawing of the Neolithic pot with the rim shown above and photograph of some decorated fragments



Rim of a Roman Mortar (above) and a Flagon Spout (right)

Pieces of Roman building materials, including roof tile, point to there being buildings nearby, but none have been identified.

Roman era pottery finds are all of the 1st - 2nd Century and include a piece of a large amphora, the top of a flagon and sections of the rims of two mortaria.

Other pottery includes pieces of South Yorkshire Grey Ware. As none of the pottery finds relate to York, perhaps this agricultural site was operating outside the military dominance of the city, looking south down the river Ouse and the Roman road through Fulford, to Doncaster and beyond.

The Romano-British ditches contained a range of seeds; oats, barley, wheat and spelt.



One especially wonderful find is a Roman Trumpet Brooch, with its pin still in place.

