Charting Chipeling to investigate archaeology of the Kiplin Estate

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The project, Charting Chipeling, The Archaeology of the Kiplin Estate, is programmed to commence immediately, with the major part of the work being completed by autumn 2014. An exhibition, based on the work and results of the survey, is planned for the 2015 season.

The Kiplin Estate in the late 19th century covered over 5,000 acres, but land sales in the early 20th century reduced its size to 150 acres. The estate sits within an area rich in prehistoric and Roman archaeological sites. The wide sand and gravel terraces flanking the River Swale are known to host archaeological remains ranging from the Mesolithic, some 12,000 years ago, to the more recent past. Nearby Catterick was also prominent during the Anglo Saxon period and was one of the principal settlements of the Kingdom of Deira, and later, Northumbria.

The parish of Kiplin was already a settlement by the time of the Norman Conquest, and it is the 11th century name of Chipeling, recorded in the Domesday Book, which is highlighted in the title of this project.

Until the dissolution of the monasteries in the early 16th century, the Kiplin grounds were part of a monastic grange or farm tied to the nearby Premonstatentian Abbey at Easby, on the outskirts of Richmond. There is strong potential for medieval industrial or ecclesiastical remains to survive on parts of the grounds. In particular it is thought a medieval mill may have existed to the south of the hall, worked by the monks of Easby Abbey.

Tantalising insights into the historic secrets of the estate have been revealed through research into Kiplin's archive, which is housed at the North Yorkshire County Record Office in Northallerton. This has also highlighted the antiquarian pursuits of the Earl and Countess of Tyrconnel during their tenure of Kiplin Hall in the first part of the nineteenth century.

The trust will recruit a professional archaeologist to oversee Charting Chipeling. The project will include recruiting and training a team of volunteers to carry out archival research, and involve adults and schoolchildren in undertaking supervised excavations. A 3-D laser scan of the hall is also planned, which will provide insights into the building of the original house and subsequent alterations.

Kiplin Hall Curator, Dawn Webster, said: "We are delighted that HLF is supporting this very exciting project. Kiplin's estate grew to a considerable size during the 18th and 19th centuries, and research will hopefully uncover more information about the history of these local landscapes. Detailed investigation and excavation of selected sections of the surviving estate may yield further clues to the changes which took place through the centuries. We are looking forward to welcoming new volunteers to help with the project."

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "The Kiplin Estate has played a vital role in the history of North Yorkshire. This project will enable volunteers, local schools and the wider community to learn new skills to help them uncover the secrets of Kiplin Hall's past, and how this has shaped the estate to date."

Notes to editors

Kiplin Hall was built in 1620 for George Calvert, 1st Lord Baltimore and founder of Maryland, USA. Since then four families, the Calverts, Crowes, Carpenters and Talbots, all connected by blood or marriage, owned the hall until 1968 when a charitable trust was formed to protect the house and its contents.

More information can be obtained at the Kiplin Hall website.

Further information

Dawn Webster, Curator or Marcia McLuckie, Administrator on 01748 818 178 or 07740 927 608.