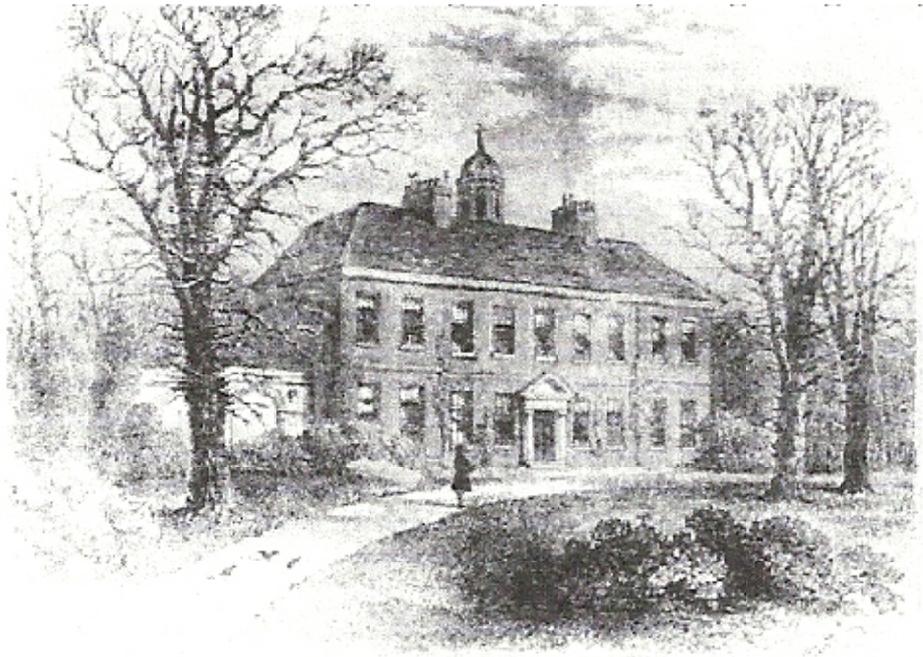


**Car Park Area to the Rear of 100 York Road, Battersea,  
Wandsworth SW11**

**(NGR 526590 175930)**

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**



**PAS Ref: 13/28**

**Planning Ref: 2012/5044**

Website: [www.archaeologypro.com](http://www.archaeologypro.com)

Email: [info@archaeologypro.com](mailto:info@archaeologypro.com)

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**Prepared by**

**Paul Riccoboni BA (Hons) Arch MIFA**

*On the request of*

**Ged Connor**

**Hurd Rolland Chartered Architects**

*On behalf of*

**Lookers Plc**

**April 2013**

**M o L site code: YKR13**

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## **Executive Summary**

*PRO Archaeology Services were commissioned by the Hurd Rolland Partnership on behalf of Lookers Plc to undertake archaeological observation and recording at the car park area to the rear of 100 York Rd, Battersea, Wandsworth SW11.*

*A total of four separate site visits were made during all ground reduction works at the site which involved ground reduction for new a concrete slab, shallow wall footing trenches and drainage and service trenches.*

*The site lies to the north of the previous Bishop of York's Mansion (front cover). During the investigations no archaeological features or deposits were encountered.*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The Site Location

The site is located in the car park area to the rear of 100 York Rd, Battersea, Wandsworth, SW11 (NGR 526590 175930) adjacent to Bridges Court (a privately owned road) and was used as open parking by nearby commercial premises, including the adjacent dealerships. The car park area is sited to the rear of the former candle factory building which fronted onto York Rd, which now house a candle shop on the ground floor (Fig. 1). The application site is predominantly flat and the roadway to the north is also at similar levels with the site forming a level entry and access. The height measures c. 4.50m AOD.

To the south and south-west of the site are new redeveloped residential buildings (known as Prices Court). To the north of the site lies Orbis Wharf a 15 storey predominantly residential development.

According to the maps of the British Geological Survey Sheet 270 (South London 1998) 1:50 000 the underlying geology River Terrace Gravels.

## 1.2 The Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological investigation are to contribute to heritage knowledge of the area through the recording of the archaeological remains exposed as a result of trench excavations in general accordance with the research frameworks set out in a *framework for London Archaeology* (Nixon *et al* 2003).

Specific aims were:

- To clarify the nature of deposits and assess the potential for prehistoric remains from the Palaeolithic to the end of the prehistoric period.
- Establish whether any Roman, Saxon, medieval or post-medieval remains survive at the development site.
- In particular any remains connected with the Bishop of York's Mansion.

## 1.3 The Methodology

The investigation comprised a continuous monitoring of the groundworks which comprised general shallow ground reduction across the footprint for the temporary car show room (25m long and 16m wide) to allow for a concrete slab.

There was a c. 0.45m wall footing reduction around the edges of this footprint (Fig.1). There was also associated service trenching with a connection to the mains foul drain in Bridges Court (Fig.1).

Where appropriate surfaces were inspected, hand cleaned, examined and recorded. Deposits were recorded on standard pro-forma context recording sheets. A digital photographic record of the work was taken and will form part of the site archive.

All recording points were accurately tied into the National Grid and located on the 1:1250 map of the area (Fig. 1).

The site archive will include all project records and will be prepared in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990). On completion of the project PRO Archaeology Services will arrange for the archive to be deposited with the Museum of London in conjunction with the general standards for archive preparation within a reasonable timeframe (usually six months of completion of the project).

Number of Contexts	8
No. of files/paper record	11
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	0
Digital Photographs	27
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

**Table 1: Quantification of site archive**

## 2 Planning background

### 2.1 National Designations

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and replaces all previous national planning policy documents, including Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (2010). The NPPF seeks to streamline the national planning policy, simplify the planning process and introduce the concept of presumption of approval for sustainable development. The NPPF sets out guidelines for Local Planning Authorities and developers alike, stating that the local authority should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the asset to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner 'proportionate to their importance and the impact' and to ensure this evidence is publicly accessible.

### 2.2 The Site Specific requirements

The site has planning permission (2012/5044) for the erection of a single storey car showroom building with associated offices for temporary period for up to six years, including external car park display area and customer parking.

The Local Planning Authority has placed the following condition on the planning consent:

*"No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme for investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority"*

*Reason: In order that archaeological remains that may exist on the site can be investigated in accordance with policy DMS2.*

The adjacent site of 100, 110 and 112 York Road: 12/1444 (previous application 11/11/2950) has been subject to a planning application. The application involved the production of an archaeological desk based assessment (AOC 2011) and Museum of London Built Heritage Assessment (MOLAS 2011). The application involves the demolition of existing buildings at 100 and 110 York Road and subsequent redevelopment of the site.

The heritage significance of all these buildings derives largely from the fact that they were built as part of the factory of Price's Patent Candles Ltd. They are the last buildings of this factory remaining in much the condition in which they were during factory use built between 1856 & 1859, although they have been altered, with new roofs and they lack factory machinery. They do not meet the criteria for their statutory listing as buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

In a letter dated 28th May 2012 Mark Stevenson (Archaeology Adviser National Planning: London) it was recommended that the archaeological interest at this site (12/1444) can be progressed by the application of a suitable programme of geoarchaeological borehole sampling survey and trial trench evaluation.

In a letter dated 19th December 2012 Mark Stevenson stated regarding the temporary car show room (planning application; 2012/5044) that

*It is recommended that the portion of the site for the temporary building and associated operational land is made available for the portion of the site wide archaeological fieldwork to be undertaken before the development and new use is introduced to this area of the site....*

After discussion with Mark Stevenson it was clarified that if the geoarchaeological boreholes taking place on the wider site can be incorporated with this temporary car show room then provision will need to be made for geoarchaeological borehole sampling beneath the temporary car showroom at this stage. After further discussions with CgMs Consulting Ltd (the consultants handling the wider site) it would seem the two programmes of work are not compatible and therefore the borehole sampling will need to be undertaken after the temporary structure is removed and a more permanent building erected.

It should be noted that Mark Stevenson's letter dated 10th December 2012 also stated that:

*A variation of the specification for the wider site will need to be submitted by the developer appointed archaeological practice and approved before its implementation that has specific reference to this portion of the site.*

The variation of the specification has not taken place yet and will be done closer to the time of expiry of the new car show room (6 years time).

In accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (Ifa) Guidance and Standards relating to archaeological watching briefs (2008), PRO Archaeology produced a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI which was agreed with the LPA's Greater London Archaeological Advisor (South East) Mark Stevenson. This scheme set out the methods and approach of an enhanced programme of archaeological *Observation and Recording* (hereafter termed 'watching brief').

### 3 The Archaeological Background

A GLHER data search detailing a 0.50km radius was obtained from the Greater London Historic Environment Record. This information detailed all archaeological events and interventions within the vicinity of the site.

The proposed development site lies within an area of archaeological potential defined by the local authority as an Archaeological Priority Zone. The adjacent site of 100 York Rd was subject to an archaeological desk based assessment, which focused on the former Prices Candle Factory. (AOC 2011). The report concluded that the site has high potential for palaeoenvironmental evidence but uncertain potential for remains dating specifically to the prehistoric period, but high potential for post-medieval remains.

#### *Prehistoric*

There have been a number of discoveries of early prehistoric material in the London Borough of Wandsworth, which indicate a general presence in the area. Numerous Lower Palaeolithic (c. 500, 000-40,000 BP) hand axes have been found in the glacial gravels throughout the Borough. Mesolithic axes, or Thames picks, have been found at the low tide mark some 60m east of Battersea Bridge, adjacent to the development site, and 400m to the north east of the site, close to Albert Bridge, slightly above the low water mark. Archaeological evidence for the landscape during prehistory indicates that woodland and marshes characterised both sides of the Thames. This type of complex landscape is known to be attractive to early human settlement, offering ready defence, an easy access to water and a full range of river resources.

The 'Battersea Shield', one of Britain's greatest archaeological treasures and a magnificent example of Iron Age decorative art, was found in the river near Battersea; it had probably been thrown into the river as a ritual offering and is now on display in the British Museum.

Archaeological investigations at 73-83 Battersea Church Road, uncovered several struck flints, one burnt flint and a redeposited flint blade found within post-medieval plough soils. These discoveries confirm the potential of the area for revealing evidence of prehistoric settlement.

#### *Roman*

There is little evidence for Roman occupation in the vicinity of the development area. This paucity of evidence is explained by the location of the Roman settlement of Londinium at the site of the modern day City of London, a considerable distance to the north-east of the proposed development area.

#### *Early medieval (Saxon)*

The earliest known reference to Battersea dates from AD 693 in an Anglo-Saxon charter when Caedwalla, King of the West Saxons, granted 'Batricesege' to Ethelburga, Abbess of Barking. The name derives from the Saxon 'Badric's Island', and indicates that the Saxon settlement was on high ground above marshland (AOC 2010).

Battersea is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and is recorded as a settlement of substantial size. It is reported to have had a church, 7 mills, 45 villagers, 16 small holders, 14 ploughs, 50 pigs and 8 slaves.

The medieval village was to the south and east of the church (now the southern part of Battersea Church Road), and eventually extended down Battersea High Street. It is thought that the original manor was replaced in the later medieval period, and largely demolished in 1778, with the exception of the south wing, which was incorporated into a mill and distillery. This building was completely demolished in the 1920s.

Medieval activity, such as wharf and jetty features, has also been recorded in several locations along the Thames foreshore by London Archaeological Research Facility (LARF).

#### *Post-medieval*

During October 1996 and April 1998 two phases of archaeological field evaluation were undertaken at Price's Candle Factory, York Rd, Battersea SW11. The site was documented to be the site of the late medieval/early post-medieval property of the Archbishops of York known as *Slyerton Bridge Court*, *York Place* and *York House* (Hawkins *et al* 2000). The two evaluations identified substantial remains of the 17th and 18th century buildings beneath the existing factory. The area around the factory, formerly occupied by the factory buildings and now redeveloped for housing, was identified as having consisted of gardens with some ancillary buildings and a pond.

During the post-medieval period the areas along Battersea foreshore were subject to land reclamation and dumping of materials. Artificial river banks were a further addition. These banks were usually formed of heaped mud and earth, reinforced by wattle hurdles, and subject to occasional repair. The Site lies to an area north of the York Place Creek as illustrated in the cartographic evidence (Fig.2) in an area of marsh land immediately adjacent to the banks of the Thames.

## 4 The Results

### 4.1 The Stratigraphic Sequence

#### *The new car show room*

The excavations for the new car room involved a shallow ground reduction over the footprint of the new build which removed the brick paving (101) (Fig.1). The excavation of the wall footing trenches reached a depth c.0.45m from the existing surface.

The stratigraphy within the wall footing trenches consisted of entirely modern made ground consisting of a 0.45m thick gritty sandy matrix containing medium to large concrete fragments, crushed building materials, fine to large flints and pink granite aggregate and metal (102).

#### *The Service Trenches*

Drainage trench 1 was 0.40m wide and 0.65m deep and all within modern made ground. The earliest deposit encountered was mid yellowish sandy ballast made ground (106). This was overlain by 0.40m thick demolition material (102). Where the trench crossed Bridges Court it became deeper (0.80m deep) in order to connect to the main drains manhole. No archaeology was observed in the trench.

The electricity connection trench was also 0.40m wide and reached a maximum depth of 0.80m in order to connect to the manhole in Bridges Court. The excavations revealed the following stratigraphic sequence. The earliest deposit was a mid grey brown natural clay with gravel patches (108). It was overlain by 0.10m thick layer of dark black waste asphalt (107). The next deposit was a 0.13m thick concrete deposit (106) which was overlain by a second 0.12m thick concrete deposit (105). The latest deposit was the 0.11m thick tarmac road surface (105).

### 4.2 Further works and mitigation

There may be a requirement for geoarchaeological sampling once the temporary car show room has been dismantled in six years' time.

## 5 Discussion and Conclusions

The archaeological watching brief did not identify any archaeological features or deposits within the limits of the excavations.

The site lies in area seen from the historic maps (Fig. 2) as once a small ploughed field. The c.1750 map shows neat strips probably representing 'ridge and furrow', but by 1838 the field had been turned to rough pasture or common land.

The temporary new car show room site is located on the north side of the 'York Place Creek' and Archbishop of York's Battersea Mansion estate grounds. The original York Place mansion (front cover) with out-buildings and garden were mostly located beneath the present Price's Candle Factory.

Close to the site of the new car show room was once a small building, seen on historic maps (Fig. 2), but no trace of it survived at the depths reached by the excavations.

Over the footprint of the new car show room, the ground reduction was shallow and entirely within modern made ground. The excavations for the wall footing trenches were no deeper than 0.45m and also within modern made ground. The natural ground was not reached in these excavations.

The service trenches, which were connected to the mains on Bridges Court, were deeper than the footing trenches at c. 0.80m in depth. The natural clay (108) was seen at the base of the electricity trench and had clearly been truncated by past levelling, as it was directly overlain by a layer of modern asphalt (107).

A confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved.



**Photo 1; General view of monitored area - NE**



**Photo 2; General view of footing trench- NE**



**Photo 4; Work in progress on drainage service trench**



**Photo 3; Work in progress on electricity trench**

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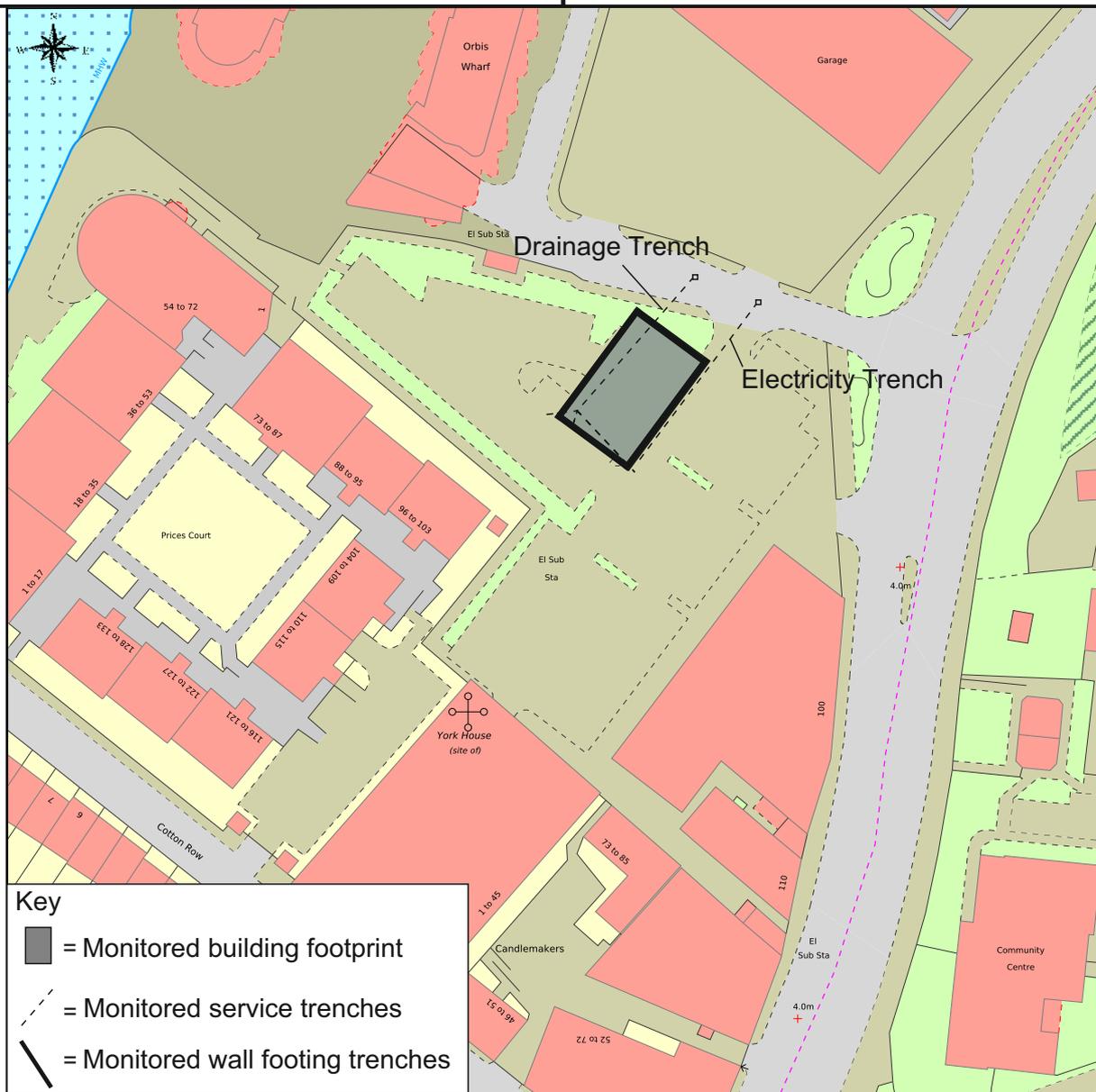
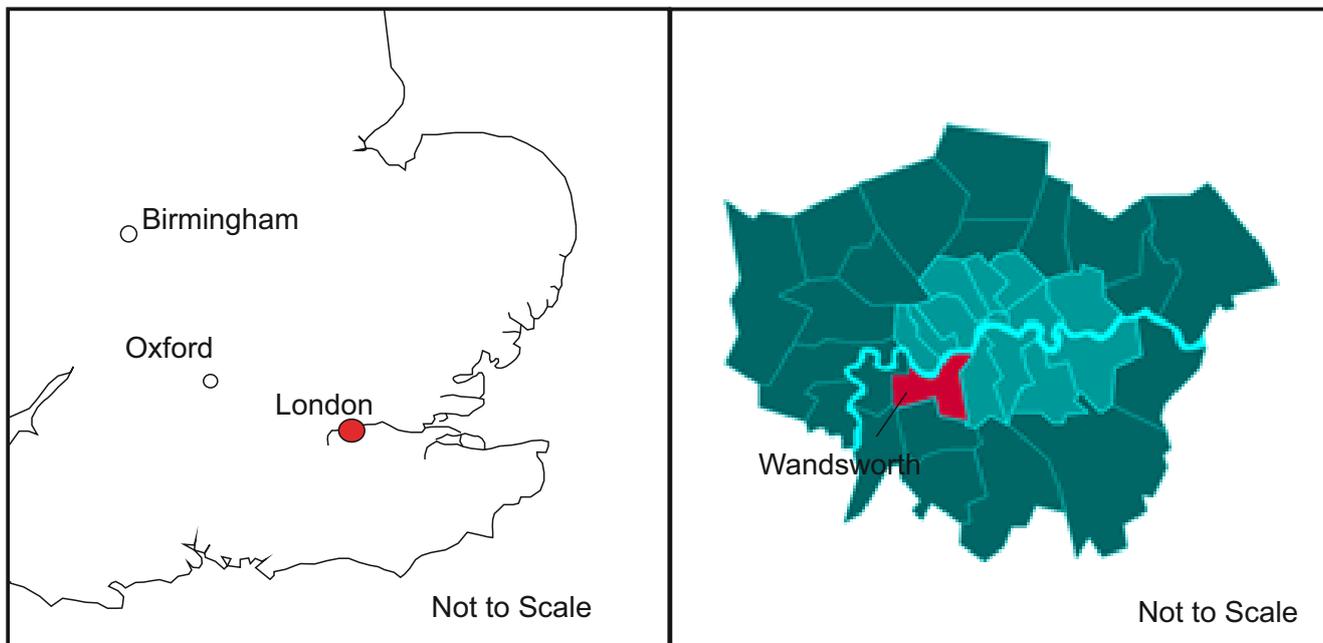
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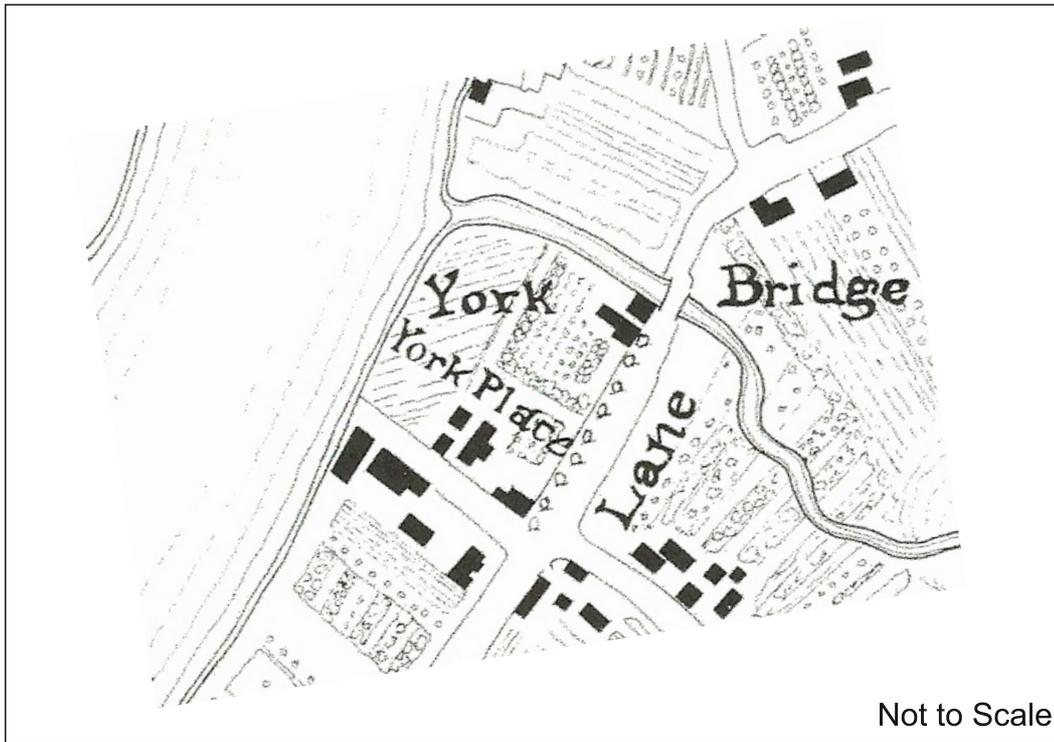
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# APPENDICES

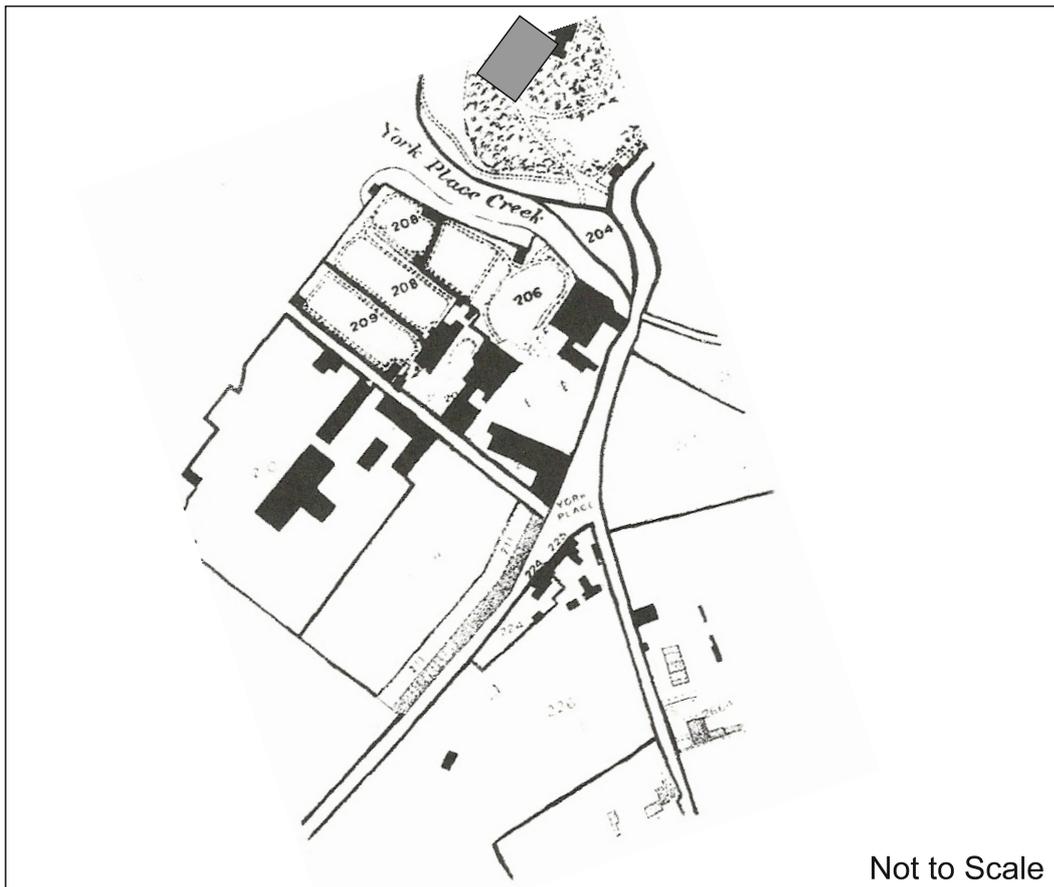
## Appendix A: Figures





Not to Scale

Rocque's Map c.1750



Not to Scale

Tithe Map 1838

■ = Temporary car show room

Figure 2: Showing site in relation to York Place