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NYCC HER	
SNY	11989
ENY	4195
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Parish	8073
Rec'd	1994

TADCASTER 1994

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

FOR

YORKSHIRE WATER

ALISON CLARKE

MAY 1994

PARISH 8073
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INTRODUCTION

In April 1994, Yorkshire Water undertook mains replacement work in New Street and St Joseph's Street, Tadcaster. This involved the hand digging of a number of test holes in both streets, followed by the machine excavation of a trench in St Joseph's Street and further hand dug holes in New Street. Because of the importance of Tadcaster as an historic town and Roman settlement, an archaeological watching brief was required on all ground disturbance work.

HISTORY

Little archaeological work has been undertaken in Tadcaster, and material evidence for its history is relatively scarce. There was a settlement here in the Roman period known as Calcaria, which exploited the limestone of the area, and a Roman road has been identified in the northern part of the town. Excavations in the vicinity of the castle have produced Roman material.

The castle, in the northern part of the modern town centre, survives as an earthwork, and the medieval street pattern remains largely unchanged. The town had defences which may date to pre-Norman times, and the course of these has been postulated as running between Chapel Street and St Joseph's Street on the western side of the town. This line seems to have been confirmed by the discovery of a ditch on the site of the new swimming baths to the north of Chapel Street, though no trace was found in excavations further down Chapel Street, which revealed some medieval pits but no evidence of intense occupation or of defences.

WATCHING BRIEF

Observation of the initial trial holes took place on 20 Feb. 1994, and of subsequent work between 18 April and 3 May 1994.

St Joseph Street (Plan 1)

Trial holes along the length of St Joseph Street established that the existing main ran beneath British Telecom ducted cables for much of its length, and the decision was therefore made to clear cut a new trench for the new water main.

The trench was cut by machine within the carriageway, and was between 50 and 60 cm wide, and between 85 and 100 cm deep. At intervals narrow cross trenches were cut to link in to existing water services.

The fill of the trench was fairly uniform, consisting of around 30 cm of tarmac and road base overlying a varying thickness of disturbed fill which in turn overlay interleaved bands of limestone bedrock and hard orange brown clay. The disturbed layer varied from nothing to 70 cm thick and consisted of stony brown clayey loam with limestone rubble in

places. The only dating evidence was modern pot and tile and much of it was clearly associated with service trenches crossing the trench.

No other features were discernible and no material of archaeological interest were noted.

New Street (Plan 2)

In New Street the water main was replaced in its original position by means of a number of holes dug at intervals along its length. These holes were hand dug, up to 140 cm. deep, in the carriageway close to the footpath. The line of the water main was known, so all the holes were directly onto it.

The fill of the holes was all disturbed material from the original laying of the water main or from other modern disturbances. Towards the south end of New Street especially there appeared to be a considerable build-up of material, probably to accommodate the brewery buildings on either side, as the natural slope is to the south. Within the stony grey-brown loam with limestone rubble which formed the majority of the fill of these holes were numerous evidences of modern disturbance, such as pot, tile, concrete, brick etc., including one penny dated 1929. In one or two places a cleaner sandy or clayey fill was encountered towards the bottom of the holes. Numerous pipes and ducts beneath the ground link the brewery buildings on each side of the road and add to the disturbed nature of the ground. No evidence was found of material earlier than 20th century.

CONCLUSIONS

The watching brief on New Street revealed no evidence of medieval or earlier deposits, and it is suggested that if these do exist in this area they are deeply buried beneath later deposits. In St Joseph's Street the only disturbed ground encountered contained modern debris, and it is suggested that if there was medieval or earlier occupation here it was thinly scattered. No evidence of the defences was encountered.

Swimming Pool Site

Castle Hill

**TADCASTER 1994
PLAN 1**

Westgate

Kirkgate

St Joseph's Street



Chapel Street

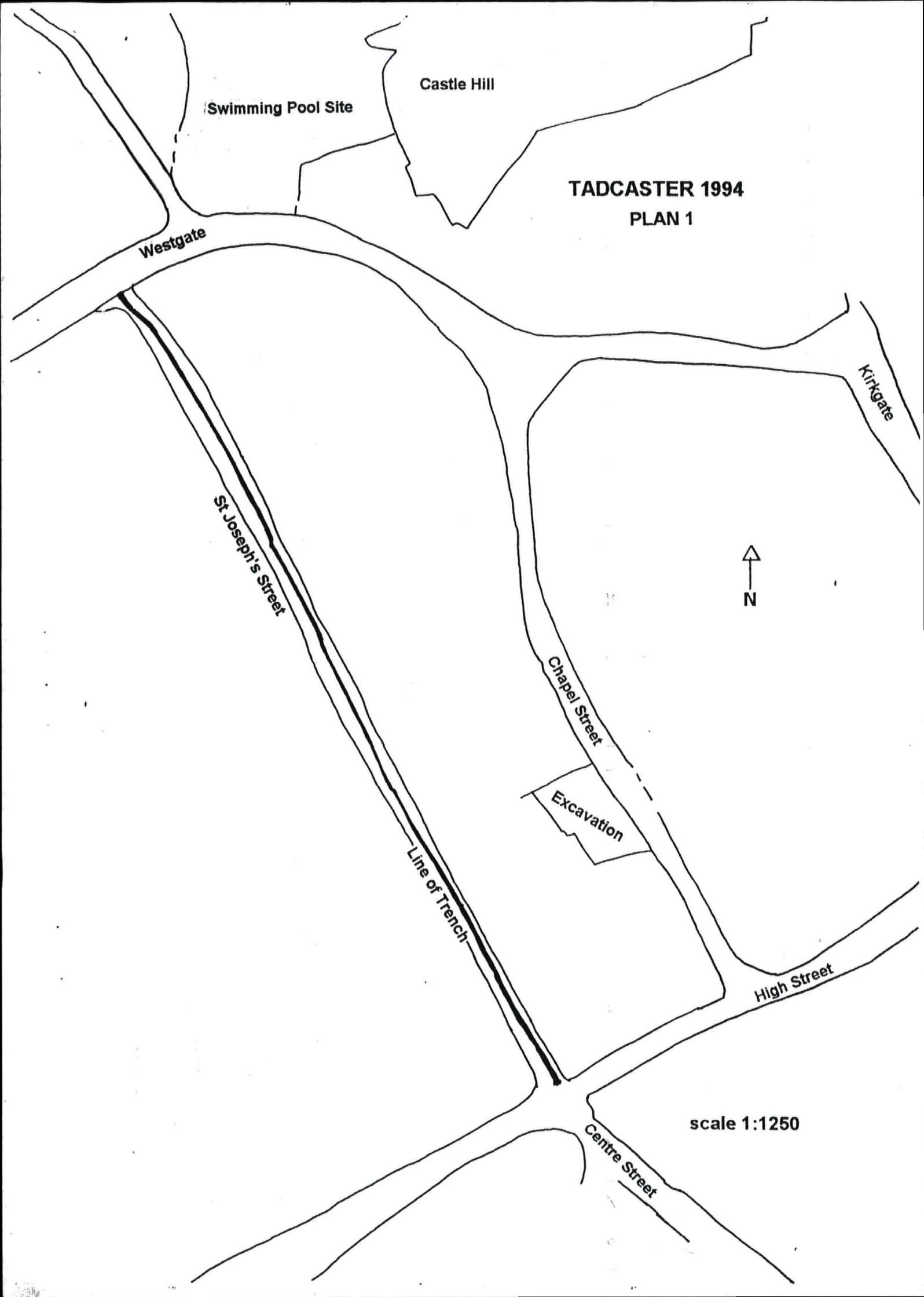
Excavation

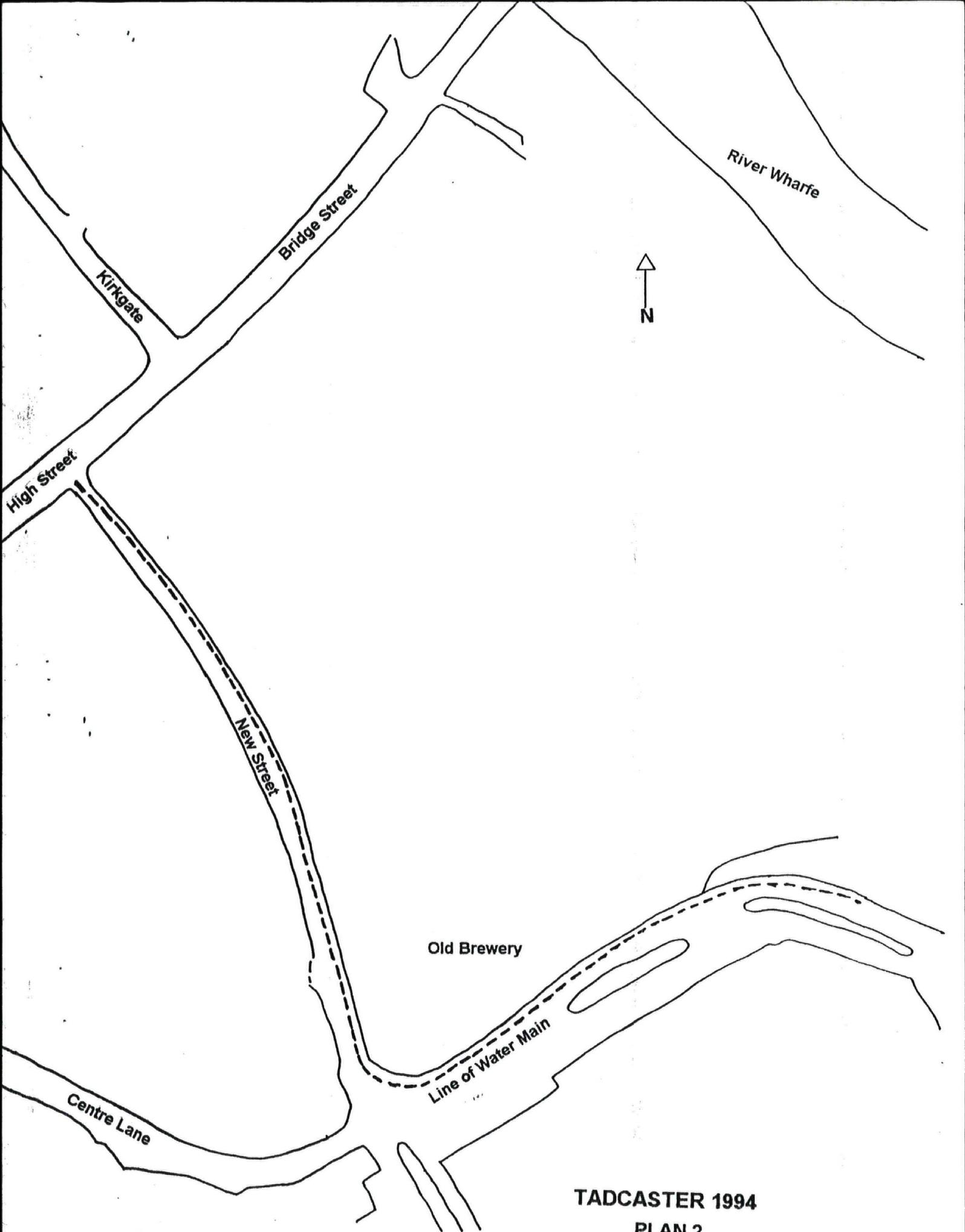
Line of Trench

High Street

scale 1:1250

Centre Street





River Wharfe



Bridge Street

Kirkgate

High Street

New Street

Old Brewery

Line of Water Main

Centre Lane

TADCASTER 1994
PLAN 2

scale 1:1250