



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST – WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

SITE ADDRESS	Norton Primary School, Grove Street, Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire		
CLIENT NAME	Jacobs UK		
YAT PROJECT #	5129	YAT REPORT #	2008/15
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	SE 7948 7120
PLANNING REFERENCE #	N/A	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A
ARCHIVE LOCATION	York Archaeological Trust		
DATE OF VISIT	12 March 2008		

A watching brief was observed at the above address during groundworks ahead of the construction of a hygiene room.

The Grove Street area of Norton lies 0.6km south-east of the Roman auxiliary fort in Malton, usually identified as *Derventio* but thought by some to actually be *Delgovicvicia* (Dean, 2001, 26). The fort was founded by AD79 and underwent several phases of occupation before finally being abandoned by AD 400 (Dean, 2001, 18). A civilian settlement, or *vicus*, developed around the fort, crossing the River Derwent into the area now known as Norton. Nineteenth century drainage works at the junction of Grove Street and Wood Street, just 80m north of the development site, uncovered Roman burials, which were also found in association with a Roman road 100m west of Grove Street in the 1850s (Robinson, 1978, 36).

The observed ground works consisted of an 'L' shaped trench measuring 6.6m x 5.8m, within which a general ground reduction was undertaken to a depth of 0.55m BGL (see figure 2). Around the perimeter of the trench a 0.75m wide strip-footing was excavated to a depth of 0.90m BGL, with a further 0.25m being excavated beneath an extant water pipe in the north-west corner of the trench.

The earliest observed deposit was a very loose, yellow-cream coloured sandy limestone gravel, seen at a depth of 1.10m BGL in the western half of the trench and rising to 0.80m BGL at the eastern limit of excavation. This deposit was very clean and devoid of artefactual material, and was interpreted as being of natural geological origin. It is consistent with the known drift geology of the area (Robinson, 1978, 1). This was overlain by a 0.40-0.60m thick layer of mid-brown very sandy silt which contained a moderate amount of the natural gravel, and abraded fragments of animal bone, ceramic building material and small pottery fragments ranging from medieval to nineteenth century in date. This was identified as a probable former ploughsoil, and was overlain by a 0.10m thick layer of dark grey-brown sandy silt, interpreted as a possible former topsoil. This lay beneath a 0.10m layer of material identical in composition to the main plough soil, which was interpreted as a re-deposited layer of disturbed ploughsoil probably associated with the nineteenth century construction of the nearby main school building.

All subsequent deposits, from a depth of 0.40m BGL, were associated with the construction of the school, including a 0.15m thick compacted yellow-white and grey mortar levelling deposit with frequent limestone and CBM fragments, which was cut by a 0.75m deep trench for a water pipe. This was sealed by crushed hardcore, which formed the make-up deposits for the current tarmac surface of the school playground. The only other feature of note was the corner of a brick-built chamber found in the north-east corner of the trench (see plate 3). This was cut into the former topsoil and sealed by the original levelling deposit, before having been truncated by the creation of the current playground. This structure was identified by the school caretaker as the sump beneath a now demolished outside toilet block.

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FINDS	No	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes
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No further features of archaeological interest were observed. All records held by YAT.

References

Dean, G, 2001, *'Improving powers of observation': A survey of the fort and vicus at Malton*, unpublished University of York MA thesis

Robinson, JF (1978), *The Archaeology of Malton and Norton*, Leeds, The Yorkshire Archaeological Society

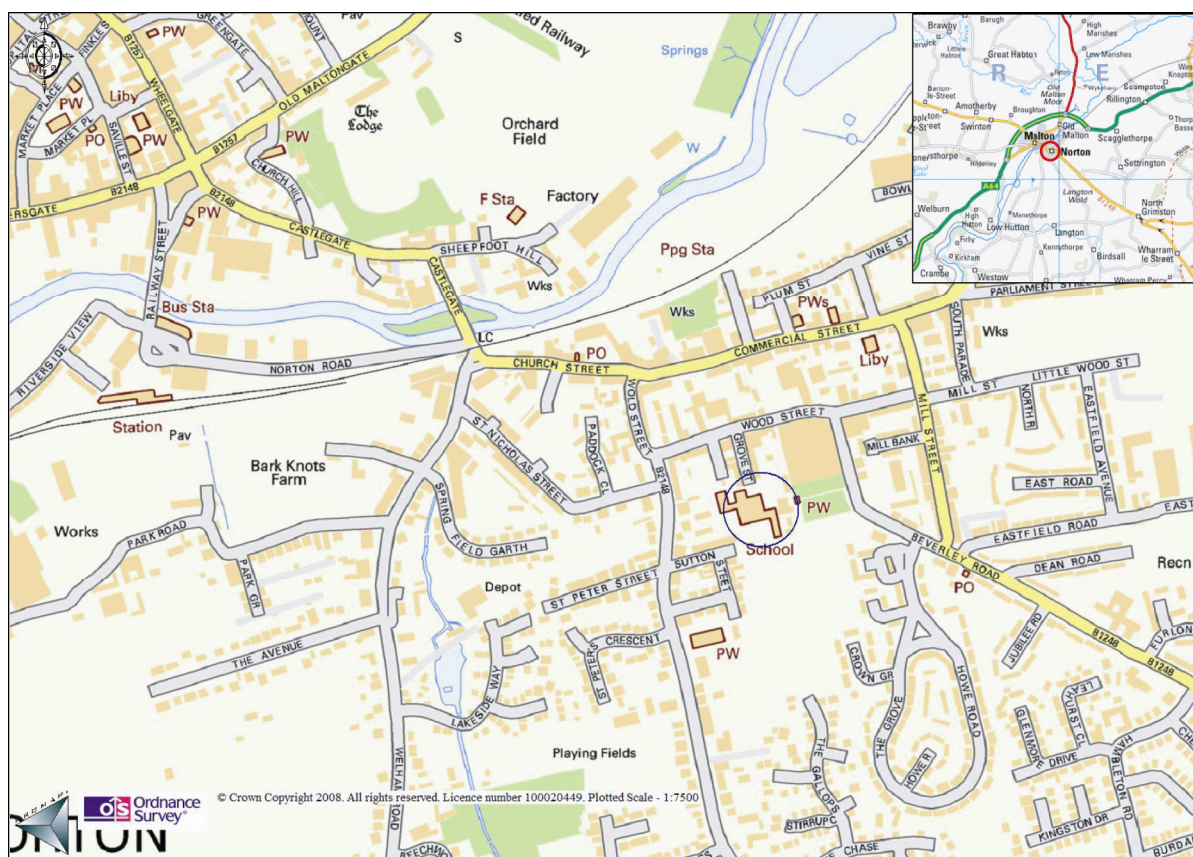


Figure 1 Location of site

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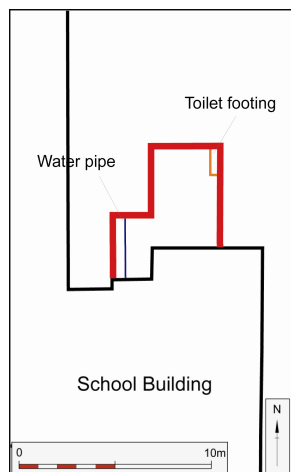


Figure 2 Location of features



Plate 1 General view, looking south-west

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Plate 2 South facing section showing whole deposit sequence



Plate 3 Remains of brick-built toilet foundation

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