

Rec'd 3/8/09
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YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SNY	12818
ENY	4664
CNY	7751
Parish	3102
Rec'd	3/8/09

SITE ADDRESS	Pickering Railway Station, Park Street, Pickering, North Yorkshire		
CLIENT NAME	North Yorkshire Moors Railway Enterprises Plc.		
YAT PROJECT #	5192	YAT REPORT #	2008/9
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	n/a	GRID REFERENCE	SE 7965 8420
PLANNING REFERENCE #	n/a	AAI OPS NOTICE #	n/a
ARCHIVE LOCATION	YAT		
DATE OF VISIT	24/01/09, 16/02/2009, 18/02/2009, 06-07/04/2009		

From 24th January 2009, York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief during the machine removal of overburden and digging of foundation trenches prior to the construction of the new Pickering Education / Archive Centre. The new centre (Figure 1) will be located within Pickering Railway Station, on open land between Platform 2 and Pickering Beck to the north-west. There are no buildings on the site save for a stone shed at the south which is to be incorporated into the new build. The watching brief was to monitor clearance of overburden and any ground works for foundations as part of a planning condition.

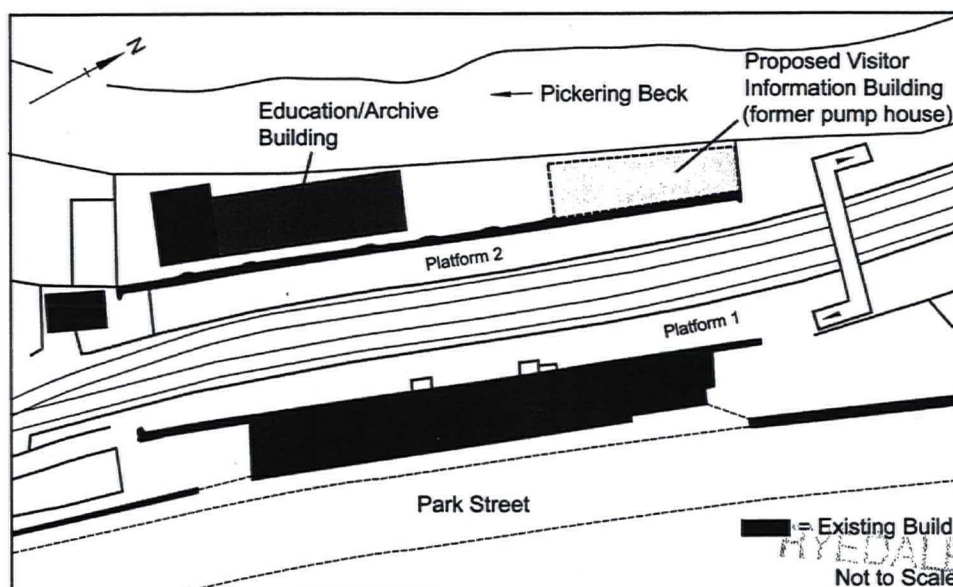


Figure 1 Location of new centre

08 JUN 2009

Historical background

Prior to the creation of The Whitby and Pickering Railway Company (W&P) by Act of Parliament in 1833 the area between Park Street and Pickering Beck was shown on a map accompanying the Act to be occupied by late 18th century buildings along the street frontage with plots to the rear extending to the beck with some buildings at the end of the plots. These beck side structures are interpreted as stores and outbuildings. The W&P erected their station to the north of the existing complex and do not appear to have had much impact on the area of the site. The W&P was bought out by the York and North Midland Railway in 1845 and new work converting the existing horse worked station to a locomotive worked station was undertaken.

COMPLETED BY		B. Antoni, H. Pritchard, A. Winterburn		CHECKED BY		H. Pritchard		PREPARED		26/05/2009	
FINDS	No	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes	PAGE	1 of 5				

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This new station which survives today was built to a design by GT Andrews and was completed around 1847. The retaining wall alongside the beck was built during this phase. Analysis of maps and documents from the mid 19th century do not show any further developments in the area of the site.

The Results

The overburden was excavated down to the top of a substantial deposit of clay and limestone rubble (track ballast) which appeared to have been brought in during the 19th century, to level the area during or after the construction of the station. Which ever the case may be, it could not be ascertained as excavation failed to penetrate it. The overburden was between 0.2 – 0.5m thick and comprised a loose to friable, dark grey brown gritty sand clay silt with moderate patches of reddish pink ash, occasional plastic wrappers, drink cans, bottles (plastic and glass) and scrap metal. The presence of the rubbish elements within the deposit suggested that the area had been used regularly for the stockpiling of sweepings and other refuse. The base of a Portmeirion pottery commemorative mug was observed (not retained). This base had a date transfer for 1978 and suggested, as it was located some 0.1m below ground level, that the immediate area was still being used as a repository for discard in the late 20th century. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were observed during the first phase of the watching brief.

Further visits were made on 16th and 18th February 2009 to monitor progress however no work was being undertaken.

On 6th and 7th April 2009, excavation work on the foundations began using two small rubber tracked 360 degree excavators, 1m toothed buckets and a 1 ton dumper. Excavation proceeded starting at the south-west corner of the site, against the station wall, according to plans (figure 2). Trenches were deepest at the points against this wall to the south-west where deep concrete footings were needed for the new building. These were 2.20m deep from the new floor level of the proposed building (1.3m from present ground level with overburden removed), yet did not go beyond the hardcore levelling material previously mentioned (plate 1). In the first (south-eastern most) footing a large disused capped off metal pipe was revealed (plate 2) which was interpreted as a steam or water pipe, possibly for pumping water from Pickering Beck for filling the boilers of the steam engines. The hardcore levelling material was not built-up around this pipe, suggesting it was inserted after this area's level was built up. The pipe was not removed due to size, and still being very securely set in the ground.

W. DALE D.C.

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As excavation moved closer to the beck wall to the north, where the wall has a bend (plate 3), the trenches had to be stepped down to provide deeper more secure foundations. In these areas, as with elsewhere, no archaeological remains were encountered. There was however a change in the lowest 0.3m of the ground make-up from the limestone hardcore to a compact pale yellow clay with very frequent large limestone fragments.

In conclusion, it has been shown that this area to the rear of platform 2 has no real archaeological remains down to a level of 2.5m below the proposed new floor of the education centre. It is likely that the building of the beck wall and platform 2 wall, and the subsequent infilling of the area in between, has removed any traces of the houses and yards which used to back onto this area.



Plate 1 Deep footings still within ground make-up deposits of hardcore

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Plate 2 Capped off steam/water pipe and associated backfill



Plate 3 Pickering Beck wall, N.B. proximity of trench to walls

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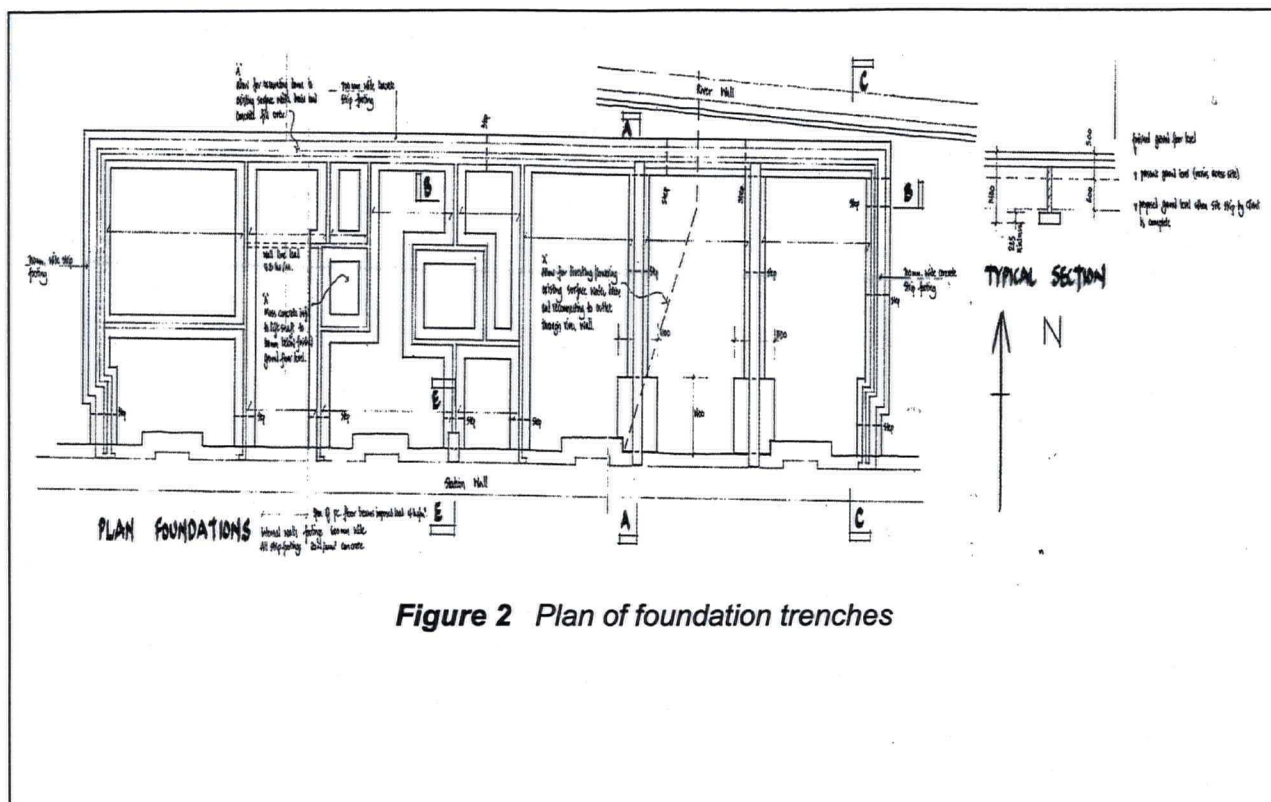


Figure 2 Plan of foundation trenches

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