



ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT

Northern Archaeological Associates Ltd
Marwood House
Harmire Enterprise Park
Barnard Castle
Co. Durham
DL12 8BN
t: 01833 690800
e:pm@naaheritage.com
w: www.naaheritage.com

CARLTON TAVERN,
ACOMB ROAD, YORK

Project No.: 1378
Text: Holly Cooper
Edited by: Andrew Crowson
Illustrations: Damien Ronan

on behalf of
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		Name	Holly Cooper	Andrew Crowson	Penny Middleton

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CARLTON TAVERN, ACOMB ROAD, YORK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Summary		
1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Location, topography and geology	1
3.0	Summary archaeological and historical background	2
4.0	Aims and objectives	5
5.0	Methodology	5
6.0	Results	6
7.0	Discussion	11
References		13
Appendices		

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Carlton Tavern, Acomb Road, York: site location

Figure 2: Carlton Tavern: trench locations

Figure 3: Carlton Tavern: trench plans and sections

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 1: Front lawned area of Carlton Tavern looking north

Plate 2: 6-inch OS map of 1853 showing the site of Carlton Tavern outlined in red

Plate 3: 25-inch OS map of 1892 showing West Garth and Shelley House, and further houses constructed to the east

Plate 4: Trench 1, overview

Plate 5: Trench 1, field drain cut **06**, ceramic drain **07** and clinker backfill **08**

Plate 6: Trench 1, west-facing section showing sequence of deposits

Plate 7: Trench 2, right–left, field drain cuts **18**, **21**, **24**

Plate 8: Trench 2, south-facing section showing accumulation of deposits

CARLTON TAVERN, ACOMB ROAD, YORK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Summary

Northern Archaeological Associates was commissioned by ID Partnership on behalf of Crown Care to carry out an archaeological evaluation in the grounds of Carlton Tavern, 140 Acomb Rd, York, North Yorkshire YO24 4HA (SE 57982, 51501). Work was scheduled in advance of redevelopment of the site, which proposes the demolition of the Victorian public house and associated 6 bedroom hotel and detailed approval for construction of a three-four storey 76 bedroom care home, 22 car parking spaces, 5 cycle racks and associated landscaping.

Two c. 10m by 2m trenches were excavated on the landscaped lawn area to the front of Carlton Tavern, as this space offered the largest extent of potentially undisturbed ground. No previous archaeological works had been conducted on or in the vicinity of the site. The evaluation was, therefore, to determine the presence or absence of any potential archaeological remains associated with the site, and to ascertain the extent, condition, character and date of any such remains.

Both trenches exposed natural clay and sand geology at a depth of less than 1m, above which there was a thick accumulation of clay silt relating to agricultural use of the land up until the construction of the Carlton Tavern building in the 1880s. The only archaeological features identified were five ceramic field drains, placed within steep-edged drain cuts dug through the agricultural soil and natural clay, their backfill containing Victorian pottery and industrial waste. Upper deposits of a level, consistent orange sand layer, relate to the landscaping of agricultural fields during the construction of Carlton Tavern, then named West Garth, and its grounds during the 1880s.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document presents a report on the results of archaeological investigations carried out in the grounds of Carlton Tavern in Holgate, York (Figs 1 and 2). The work was undertaken by Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA) for ID Partnership (Northern) on behalf of Crown Care, from 7 to 8 August 2017.

1.2 The archaeological evaluation comprised two c. 10m by 2m trenches located in the lawned area to the front of the building, next to Acomb Road. The proposed work was in support of a planning application for the demolition of an existing public house and associated 6 bedroom hotel and detailed approval for construction of a three-four storey 76 bedroom care home, 22 car parking spaces, 5 cycle racks and associated landscaping (App. No 17/00476/FUL M), and was carried out to assess the archaeological potential of the site prior to development.

1.3 The archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the Heritage Statement (NAA 2017a) and Written Scheme of Investigation (NAA 2017b), which had been approved by the client and the Heritage Project Officer at City of York Council. The evaluation was completed to relevant standards and guidance published by English Heritage (2008) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014a; 2014b).

2.0 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The following is taken from the written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared in advance of works at Carlton Tavern (NAA 2017b).

2.2 The site address is 140 Acomb Road, York, YO24 4HA. It is located 2.5km west of York city centre in the suburb of Holgate, close to the boundary with Acomb. The property comprises a 0.49ha rectangular plot, orientated south-west to north-east, facing onto Acomb Road (B1224). The site is bounded to the south by Acomb Road, to the west by a police station and vacant Oakhaven Care Home, and to the north and east by modern residential apartment developments.

2.3 Carlton Tavern is a substantial late Victorian villa property, currently used as a public house. The building is set back from the road, located on a level platform with car park to the rear. In the north-east corner of the site there is a smaller building, of the same date, presently used as a six-bed hotel. To the south of the main house, the ground steps down to a lawned area, bordered by flower beds and mature trees,

screening the site on three sides. The two evaluation trenches were located in this area, which forms the only extensive area of potentially undisturbed ground (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Front lawn area of Carlton Tavern looking north (courtesy The Press http://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/15210942.Fight_continues_over_historic_pub_building/)

2.4 The solid geology of the site is composed of sandstone of the Sherwood Sandstone Group, overlain by superficial deposits of Vale of York Formation, comprising clay, sand and gravel (BGS 2017). The area of the evaluation is situated at c. 23.20m OD.

3.0 SUMMARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 A full outline of the history of the Carlton Tavern site and the surrounding areas of Acomb and Holgate has previously been documented in both the Heritage Statement (NAA 2017a) and the WSI (NAA 2017b), and therefore only information that could be directly relevant to the site will be listed here, specifically referencing sites located within a 1km radius.

3.2 The focus of archaeological interest in the area stems from the Roman period, owing to the proximity of the approach road from the fort of *Isurium Brigantum* (Aldborough) into York, a route now marked by the modern A59. An account from 1768 details the

finding of an intact Roman sepulchre containing a number of cremation urns along this route near to Severus' Hills (Burton 1778). Two Roman burials in stone sarcophagi were uncovered in nearby Holgate to the east and two further stone sarcophagi were discovered 'somewhere' in Acomb village in 1776 (RCHME 1962).

- 3.3 There has been no definitive evidence of Roman settlement found in the area to date, although a few isolated finds point to activity in the vicinity of Acomb and Holgate. A Roman mosaic was purportedly uncovered behind a house on Front Street, Acomb in the 19th century and a scatter of pottery sherds dating from the 2nd–4th centuries was recovered at Bachelor Hill to the south. A small pot containing over a hundred yellow beads was said to have been found along Beckfield Lane, Acomb in 1929 (RCHME 1962, Richardson 1963).
- 3.4 To the rear of Carlton Tavern the ground rises to the Severus Hills. Popular antiquarian theory has it that the hills were so-called to commemorate the death of the Roman Emperor Septimus Severus, who died in York in 211AD. A number of 19th-century scholars believe that the hills were the site of the Emperor's military funeral before his body was later transported to Rome¹, although no contemporary accounts or physical evidence have been found to support this notion.
- 3.5 The town of Acomb has an early medieval origin, the name deriving from the Old English *Achum* "of the oaks". References to the village in Domesday Book refer to an area of woodland along with local farms and smallholdings. This is documented archaeologically by areas of ridge and furrow, dated by pottery sherds to the 11th–14th centuries. Field systems have been recorded on the site of Oakhaven Care Home, west of Carlton Tavern, as well as in the grounds of Hob Moor Junior School to the south and around the area of Front Street and The Green in the village proper to the west (MAP 2004, OSA 2005, 2006, 2007). It is likely that Acomb Road is medieval in origin, connecting the village to the centre of York, although this is unproven.
- 3.6 By the 14th century, Acomb village was recorded as containing 70 households, but the evidence for the area around Carlton Tavern suggests that expansion was restricted to the village itself, with outlying areas retaining their agricultural character up until the mid–late 19th century. The 6-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1853 shows the area east of the village and north of Acomb Road under agricultural use (Plate 2).

¹ Baines E. (1823) History, Directory and Gazetteer of the County of York...Volume 2 p.15



Plate 2: 6-inch OS map of 1853 showing plot of Carlton Tavern outlined in red

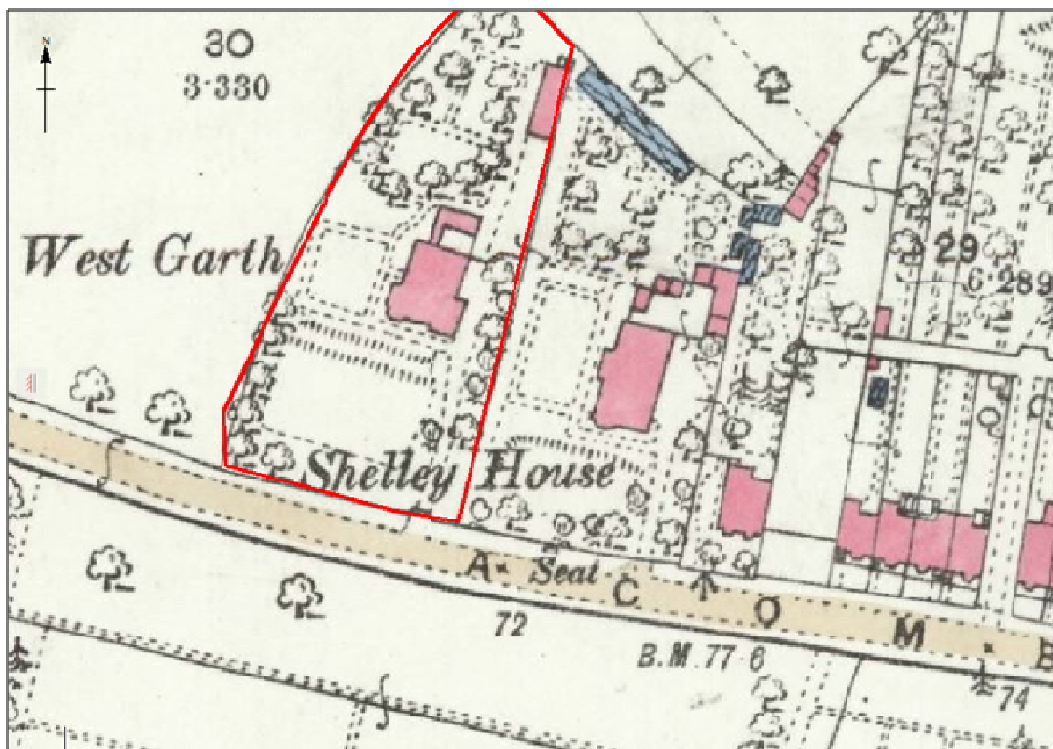


Plate 3: 25-inch OS map of 1892 showing West Garth and Shelley House, and further houses constructed to the east

3.7 The late 19th century saw an influx of the middle classes into the suburbs surrounding York city centre, and it was during this period that large manses such as that of West Garth (Carlton Tavern) and the neighbouring Shelley House were constructed. The OS map from this period shows a number of large houses fronting Acomb Road, beginning the process of urbanisation that would continue to the present day (Plate 3).

3.8 For information relating to the property of West Garth, please refer to the Heritage Statement (NAA 2017a) and WSI (NAA 2017b).

4.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 The principal objectives of the archaeological evaluation were:

- to establish the presence, nature, extent, preservation and significance of any archaeological remains within the site;
- to provide a record of any such archaeological remains;
- to recover and assess any associated structural, artefactual and environmental evidence;
- to evaluate the potential for further unrecorded significant archaeological remains to be present within the site;
- to determine whether any area within the footprint of the proposed scheme requires archaeological mitigation in advance of or during construction works; and
- to prepare an illustrated report on the results of the evaluation to be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) held by City of York Council.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The trenches were located centrally within the lawned area to the front of Carlton Tavern, to avoid damaging the root systems of the surrounding mature trees, which were to be retained. The trenches were set out by hand before being located using high accuracy GPS;

5.2 The trenches were opened using a 6-tonne tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and were dug to the level of the natural ground surface, a

maximum of 0.9m.

- 5.3 As the public house remained open during the evaluation, panels of Heras fencing were erected around the trenches to exclude public access.
- 5.4 No significant archaeological deposits or features were identified. A small number of 19th-century field drains were cleaned by hand before being digitally photographed.
- 5.5 Written descriptions of all archaeological features and deposits were recorded on pro forma sheets using the NAA single context recording system.
- 5.6 A representative section of each trench was drawn by hand at a scale of 1:10 and overall trench plans were completed at a scale of 1:20. Levels were taken using GPS and the information transferred to AutoCAD software and reproduced for incorporation within this report. All levels were tied in to Ordnance Datum.
- 5.7 A photographic record of the site was taken using a digital SLR camera at a resolution of 10 megapixels.
- 5.8 Pottery, animal bone and other categories of artefacts were collected. Finds were appropriately recorded and processed using the NAA cataloguing system and submitted for post-excavation assessment.
- 5.9 All recovered finds are appropriately packaged and stored under optimum conditions. Finds recovery and storage strategies were in accordance with published guidelines (English Heritage 1995; Watkinson and Neal 2001).

6.0 RESULTS

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

- 6.1 Trench 1 measured 8.5m x 2.2m and was orientated north to south at the west edge of the lawned area. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.83m to expose natural bands of clay and compact sand (Plate 4).
- 6.2 Dark brown natural clay **04** was recorded at a depth of 0.5m at the north end of Trench 1. Despite being only 200mm thick, it was incredibly firm and difficult to excavate. The clay lay above a horizon of equally compact and firm orange sand and

gravel 05. These deposits demonstrated the original profile of the ground surface, sloping gradually downhill from north to south towards Acomb Road.



Plate 4: Trench 1, overview

- 6.3 Above the natural horizons of clay and sand, a thick brown soil deposit 03 had accumulated. It contained moderate inclusions of charcoal and small flecks of brick or tile, but no diagnostic finds. The deposit was thickest towards the south end of Trench 1 due to the downward slope of the natural ground surface and was overall consistent in reflecting the original use of the site as agricultural land.

- 6.4 A field drain **06**, running from north-west to south-east, cut horizon **03** at the south end of Trench 1. Cut **06** was uncovered at a depth of 0.45m, measuring 0.25m wide at the top, tapering steeply to 0.19m at the base. It contained a ceramic drain **07**, made of terracotta pipes almost square in profile, with ridges running lengthways at the upper and lower edges, and an inner circular bore. Each section measured 0.4m long, 0.13m wide with an internal diameter of 0.1m (Plate 5).

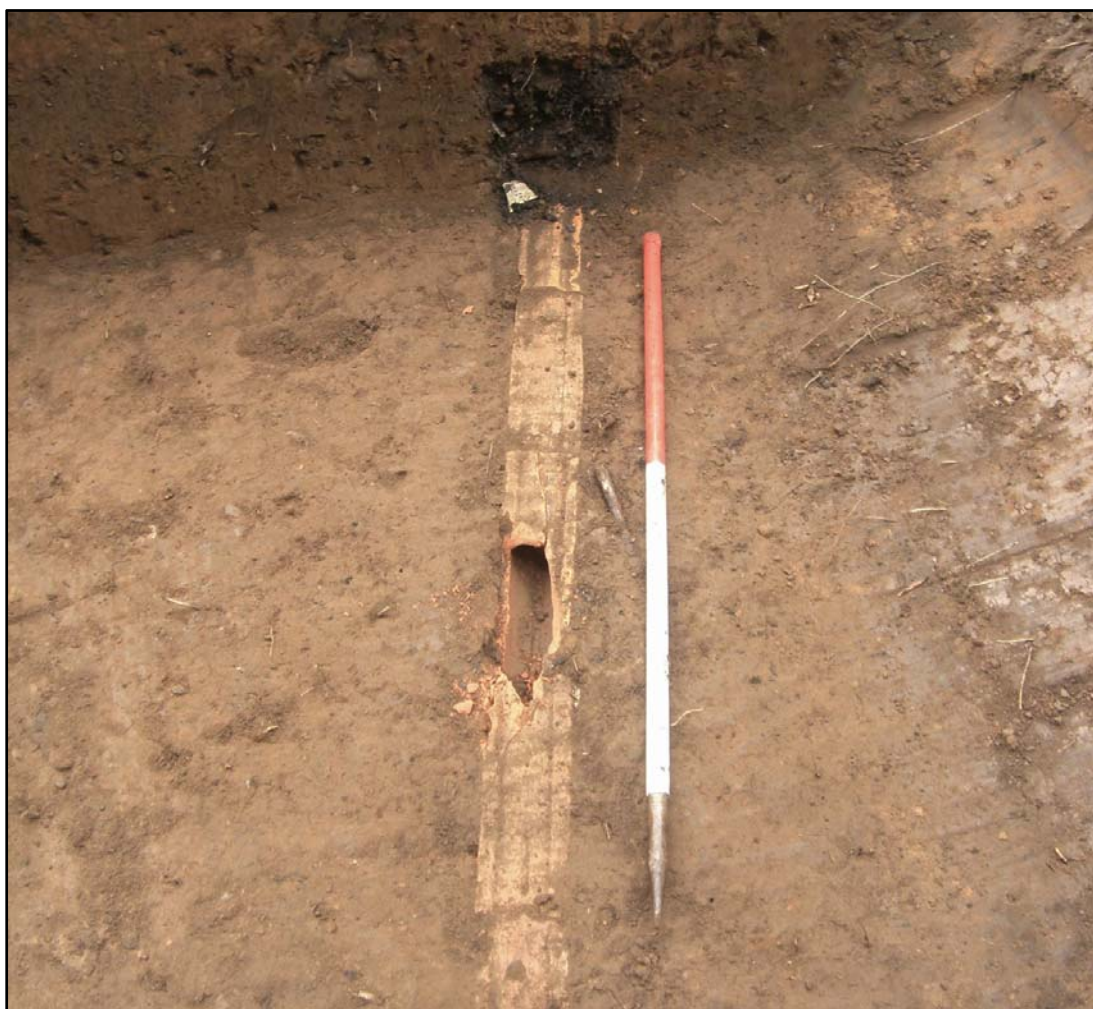


Plate 5: Trench 1, field drain cut 06, ceramic drain 07 and clinker backfill 08

- 6.5 The uniformity of the sections and their relative complexity of design points to manufacture using the extrusion method of mass production. This method was introduced in the 1840s, which places the installation of drain **07** after this point and before the construction of Carlton Tavern in the 1880s. A comparable example from Heslington can be seen in McComish's *Guide to Ceramic Building Materials* (2015, 51).

- 6.6 Drain cut **06** was backfilled with a loose black deposit of industrial waste, notably clinker, and included frequent medium–large fragments of Victorian glazed ceramics. The cut had then apparently been sealed by a horizontal deposit of dark brown soil **12**, similar in character to **03**.
- 6.7 A second drain cut **09** was seen in the west-facing section of Trench 1, 3.5m from the north edge. Like **06**, it was revealed at a depth of 0.45m below the modern ground surface and measured 0.3m at the top tapering to 0.25m at its base. From its appearance in section, **06** also appeared to be aligned north-west to south-east, although it did not extend across the trench and its course is therefore uncertain. The ceramic drain **10** and clinker backfill **11** were identical to **07** and **08** in drain cut **06** at the south end of Trench 1. Cut **09** was also sealed by dark soil layer **12** (Plate 6).



Plate 6: Trench 1, west-facing section showing sequence of deposits

- 6.8 Above the field drains, the ground had apparently been levelled and a deposit of fine pinkish orange sand **02** was deposited across the area, displaying a consistent thickness of 0.10m. Above **02**, topsoil **01** was recorded as being 0.3m thick. Both deposits **02** and **01** are representative of landscaping associated with the construction of Carlton Tavern and its grounds.

Trench 2 (Fig. 3)

- 6.9 Trench 2 measured 10m by 2.2m and was orientated east to west in the centre of the lawns. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.93m, exposing natural bands of clay **16** and sand **17**. The clay was exposed at a depth of 0.45m with a maximum visible

thickness of 0.35m, and overlay a natural deposit of compact sandy gravel. Deposits **16** and **17** were consistent with the clay **04** and sand **05** horizons seen at the base of Trench 1.

- 6.10 Three field drains were observed in Trench 2, cutting the natural clay **16**. Drain cut **18** ran north-west to south-east from the north-west corner of the trench towards a central north to south drain cut **21**. A north-east to south-west drain cut **24** was truncated by machining running towards **21** from the north-east corner of the trench (Plate 7).



Plate 7: Trench 2, right-left, field drain cuts 18, 21, 24

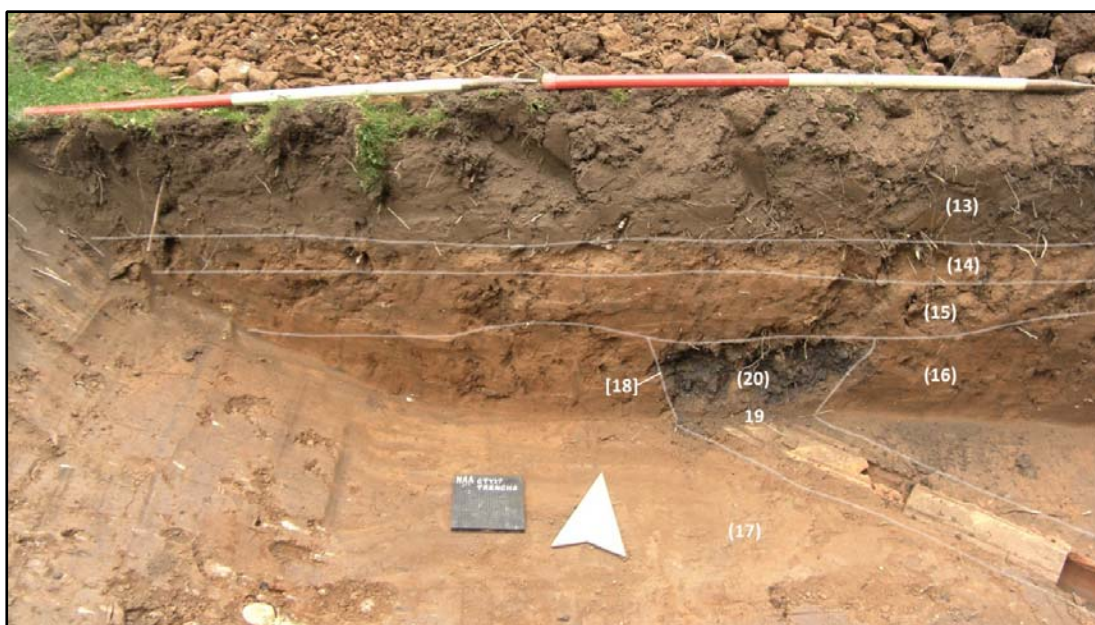


Plate 8: Trench 2, south-facing section showing accumulation of deposits

- 6.11 As in Trench 1, the cuts were steep-sided, ranging in width from 0.25–0.30m and backfilled with black silt and clinker deposits (20, 23, 26). The ceramic drains (19, 22, 25) were also identical in form and dimensions to those recorded in Trench 1.
- 6.12 Above the field drains lay a brown soil horizon 15 measuring up to 0.28m thick and containing moderate flecks of charcoal and brick or tile. The deposit was visible across Trench 2 and appeared to be equivalent to the brown soil horizons 03 and 12 seen to the west in Trench 1.
- 6.13 Above brown soil horizon 15 lay the same levelling/landscaping deposits of orange sand 14 and topsoil 13 recorded as deposits 02 and 01 in Trench 1 (Plate 8).

7.0 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The aim of the evaluation was to assess the archaeological potential of the land surrounding Carlton Tavern, outlined in the heritage statement for the site as “low to moderate” (NAA 2017a). The findings of the evaluation show that the potential for significant archaeological remains in the area of proposed development is indeed low.
- 7.2 Information gathered from the trenches serves to confirm that, up until the construction and landscaping of the area in the 1880s, the site was one of fields and agricultural land as seen in the Ordnance Survey map published in 1853 (Plate 2).
- 7.3 The natural profile of the original ground surface, seen in Trench 1, shows a gradual slope down from north to south, towards Acomb Road, in contrast to the flat lawns in the present-day garden. The build up of a thick brown soil horizon (03/15) overlying the natural clay again references a relatively pastoral environment, flecks of charcoal and brick or tile indicating occupation, but the absence of any diagnostic finds within this substantial layer indicating that there was no settlement in the immediate vicinity.
- 7.4 The presence of five identical field drains describes activity on the land at some point after the 1840s, when mass-produced extruded ceramic drains became readily available. The consistency in the form and depth of the trench cuts for the drains, the drains themselves, and the clinker material used to backfill the trenches suggests strongly that the field drains were installed in the same manner and most likely contemporaneously. Fragments of Victorian-era ceramics were present in the fills, perhaps highlighting that the drainage was installed at a time when the area of Acomb was starting to become urbanised.

- 7.5 As there is a known date for the construction of West Garth of c. 1880, it can be assumed that the upper sandy layer and topsoil used to level the lawn area relate to its construction and the landscaping of the grounds at this time. The lawn area to the front of the property has remained consistent from its creation to the present day.
- 7.6 In the light of results from Trench 1 and Trench 2, it is suggested that it is unlikely that any archaeological remains survive on the south side of the site of Carlton Tavern, the area having already been significantly disturbed by Victorian structures and extensive landscaping. It is possible that the grassed area to the rear of the property and areas under the car park have suffered less damage, in which case it could be suggested that an archaeological watching brief might be appropriate to mitigate any impact on potential archaeological deposits in the locations of foundations for any new development.

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APPENDIX A
CONTEXT CATALOGUE

Context	Interpretative description	Trench
01	Topsoil	1
02	Pinkish orange sandy silt under 01	1
03	Mid brown sandy silt under 02	1
04	Natural sandy clay under 03	1
05	Reddish orange natural sand under 04	1
06	Cut of field drain south end T1	1
07	Ceramic drain	1
08	Backfill of 06	1
09	Cut of field drain north end T1	1
10	Ceramic drain	1
11	Backfill of 09	1
12	Dark soil horizon over 06	1
13	Topsoil same as 01	2
14	Pinkish orange sand same as 02	2
15	Mid brown sandy silt as 03	2
16	Natural stiff clay as 04	2
17	Natural orange sand as 05	2
18	Cut of NW-SE field drain	2
19	Ceramic drain in 18	2
20	Backfill of 18	2
21	Cut of central N-S field drain	2
22	Ceramic drain in 21	2
23	Backfill of 21	2
24	Cut of eastern field drain	2
25	Ceramic drain in 24	2
26	Backfill of 24	2

APPENDIX 2

THE FINDS

POTTERY

Charlotte Britton

Introduction

A total of 24 sherds (1732.6g) of pottery was recovered by the evaluation at Carlton Tavern. All the pottery collected was organised by stratified deposit (context) and quantified by count and weight (Table 1). The assessment of the material was carried out in accordance with *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology* (Barclay 2016).

Context	Count	Weight (g)
8	16	1208
20	7	402.6
26	1	122
Total	24	1732.6

Table 1: Pottery sherds by count and weight

Method

The pottery was assessed by eye and sorted into wares. It was then quantified by count and weight and organised by excavation area (Trench) and context. Vessel form, decoration, and date were identified where possible.

Results

The assemblage dates to the post-medieval period (late 18th–19th century) and is characterized as solely domestic ware (Table 2). All of the pottery is typical of the period, British in origin, and was most likely produced within the local region. The wares present include Stoneware, Transferware (Asiatic Pheasant pattern), Whitewear, and Yellow Glazed Earthenware, all of which are commonly found on sites dating to the post-medieval period. The forms identified were equally typical for the period, including a single plate and the remainder constituting hollowares – primarily in the form of large storage jars.

Discussion and Recommendations

The small pottery assemblage from the Carlton Tavern evaluation was recovered in very good condition. It contained only a small quantity of post-medieval material, all heterogeneous in date (18th–19th century). All the wares and forms recovered suggest domestic use, perhaps commenting on the nature of the site.

Fragments from a single Stoneware Jar and a single Whitewear hollow vessel were found separated between contexts **08** and **20** in Trenches 1 and 2 respectively. This, therefore, would suggest contemporaneous activity between these areas and across the site as a whole.

As the pottery is highly characteristic of the time and place, it is recommended for discard.

Trench	Context	Stoneware		Transferware		Whiteware		Yellow Glazed Earthenware		Total No	Total Wt(g)
		No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt (g)	No	Wt(g)		
T 1	8	11	558.8	-	-	1	7.6	4	641.6	16	1208
T 2	20	4	240.6	-	-	1	54	2	108	7	402.6
	26	-		1	122	-	-	-	-	1	122
Total		15	799.4	1	122	2	61.6	6	749.6	24	1732.6

Table 2: Pottery by context

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Chrystal Antink

Introduction

One fragment of possible ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered by the evaluation at Carlton Tavern, from context **08**, while *in situ* ceramic field drains were recorded at the site but were not removed. Both classes appear to be post-medieval.

Results

The fabric of the retained fragment of CBM was chalky white in colour with moderate coarse rounded pebble inclusions. It appeared to have been only lightly fired with a very thin orange margin and was made in a mould sanded on edges and bottom and levelled with a strike on top. It measured 43.3mm with a slight lip at the edge from removing the mould. During firing, the sanded face and edge have become vitrified, the glassy surface coloured cream to light jade. The fabric did not appear similar to others used in the manufacture of architectural CBM and it may be that this was a fragment of kiln furniture.

The *in situ* field drains were of the mass-produced extruded type only available after 1840 and were generally square in section with a round bore. These were comparable to one from Heslington East on the east side of York, illustrated in *Guide to Ceramic Building Materials* (McComish 2015, 51).

Discussion and Recommendations

Taken together, the CBM at Carlton Tavern can be considered representative of the rapid and organised expansion of urban York during the Victorian period, when larger-scale projects could be completed rapidly. It is not necessary to retain the recovered fragment in the archive.

OTHER FINDS

Elizabeth Foulds

Introduction

Other finds from the evaluation at Carlton Tavern consisted of a single fragment of colourless window glass and three fragments of melted glass/industrial waste (Table 2).

Material	Quantity
Window glass	1
Melted glass/industrial waste	3
Total	4

Table 2: summary of finds by material

Method

All finds were recorded on 11 September 2017 in a Microsoft Access database. The finds recording and reporting was completed in accordance with national standards (English Heritage 2008, ClfA 2014).

Results

Only the single piece of window glass could be tentatively identified as modern in date.

Discussion and Recommendations

The finds do little to inform on the nature of any activity at the site prior to the building of the late Victorian villa, or any other subsequent activity at the location. No further analysis is recommended and the finds can be discarded.

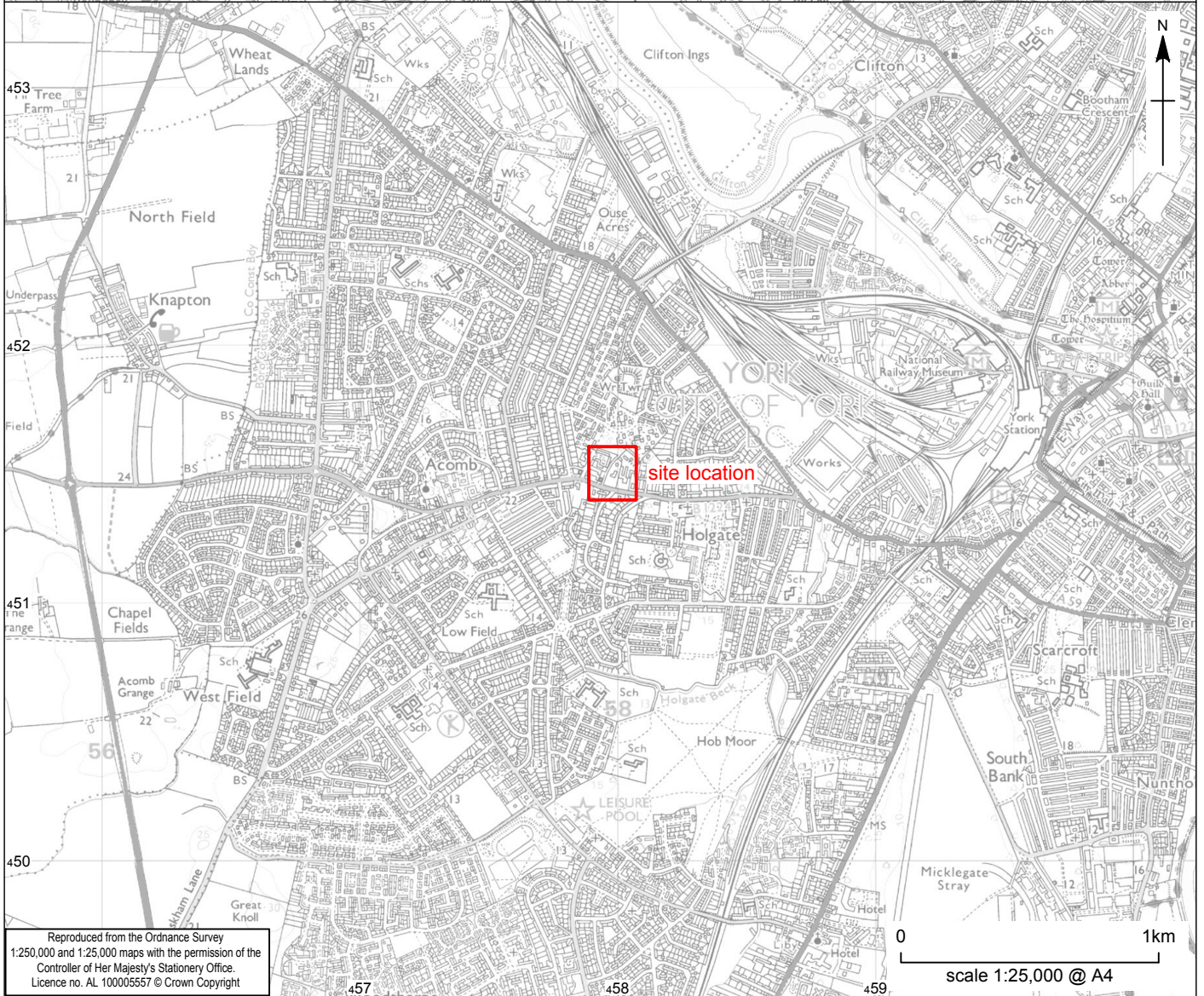
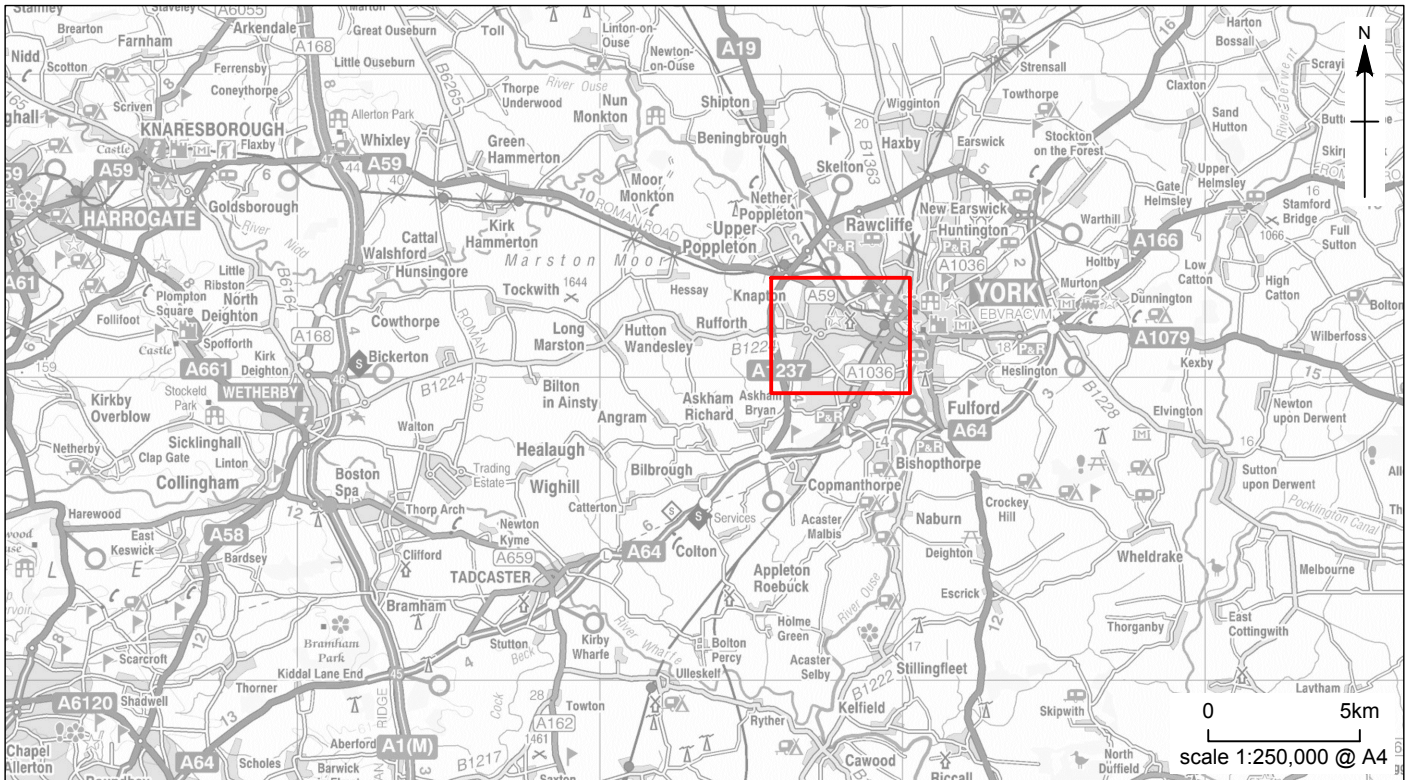
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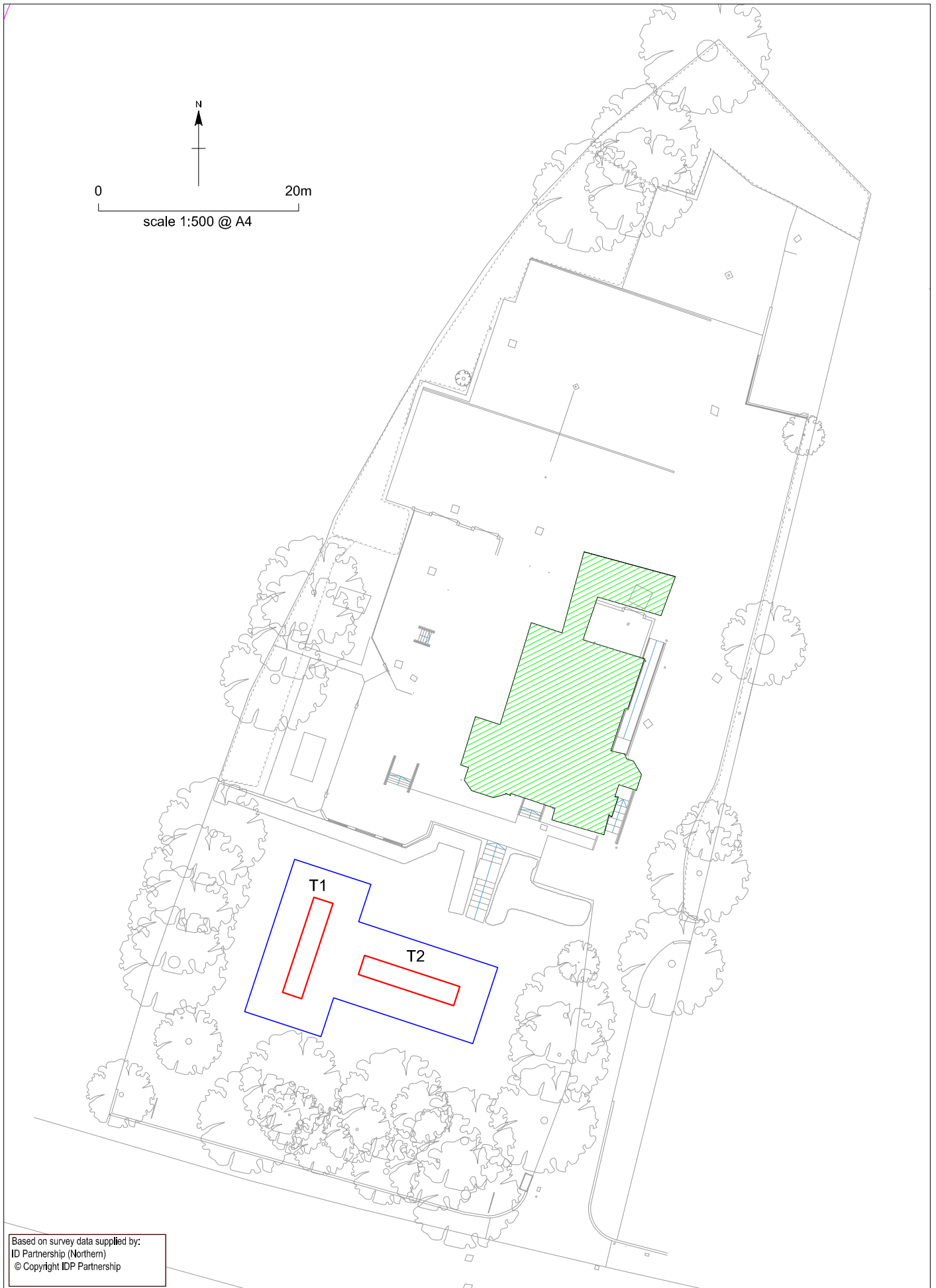


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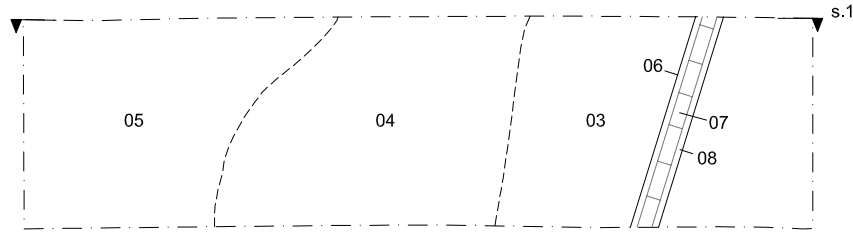
Carlton Tavern, Acomb Road, York: site location

Figure 1



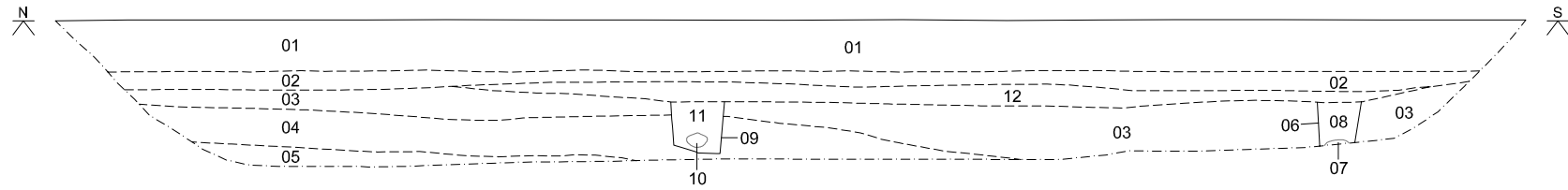
Based on survey data supplied by:
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Trench 1

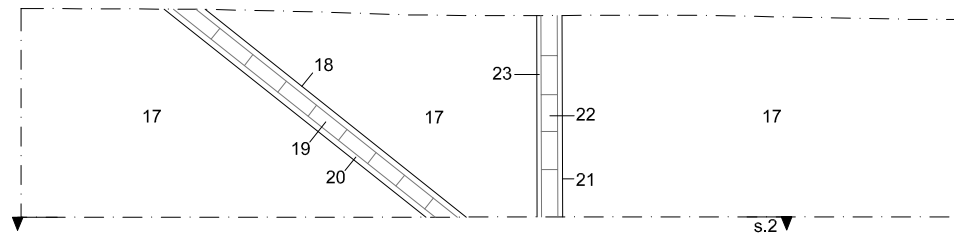


0 2m
plan scale 1:80 @ A4

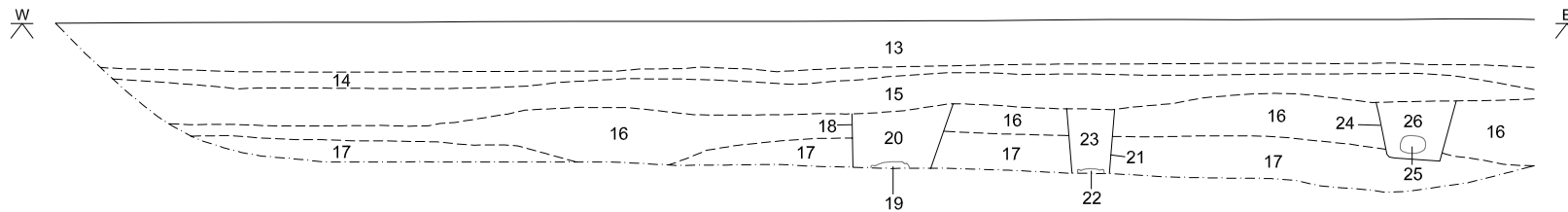
section 1



Trench 2



section 2 (mirrored to aid interpretation)



0 2m
section scale 1:40 @ A4