

MONITORING OF TRIAL PITS, MICKLEGATE, PONTEFRACT, WEST YORKSHIRE

Site name: Micklegate, Pontefract **Grid ref:** SE 45935 22147 **Postcode:** WF8 1QF

Administrative Authority: City of Wakefield / West Yorkshire Joint Services

Development: Test pits for water main renewal

Client: Yorkshire Water Services Ltd

Contractor: Morrison Utility Services Ltd

Monitoring archaeologist: Kevin Collins

Project manager: Oliver Cooper

Fieldwork date: 14/9/17

Report date: 9/10/17

NAA project Number: 1405

NAA report number: 17/128

Reasons for watching brief

The following is taken from a specification for the archaeological monitoring produced by West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service (see Appendix 1).

Pontefract is West Yorkshire's most significant late Saxon and medieval urban centre. There is also some evidence for Roman activity in parts of the town (further to the west than the current work). Pontefract Castle is thought to originate in the 1070s as an earth and timber castle, possibly on the site of an earlier Anglo-Saxon fortification. The castle developed into one of the most important in the North of England and was subject to two protracted sieges during the Civil Wars in the 17th century (& it is possible that siege lines may have crossed the line of the pipe trench). The Saxon town is thought to have centred on the area immediately to the east of the castle. It is first mentioned in AD 947 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Tanshelf, the site where King Eadred (of Mercia) met the *witan* of Northumbria and received their pledges of allegiance, which would suggest a centre of some importance. Micklegate is the 'great street' or *magna vico* first documented in c1190. It formed the central spine of the post Conquest planned borough and ran from the west gatehouse of the castle to "The Bridge". Originally the houses of the 12th-century borough would all have fronted onto Micklegate, with their burgage plots stretching back to Northgate and Southgate, as clearly represented on Jollage's Plan of 1742. Micklegate was originally intended as the principal commercial street, demonstrated by its gradual widening towards its western end. Almost the entire length of Micklegate, west of Broad Lane, is now called Horse Fair, a name that is first documented in 1759, but which was originally only applied to the western end of Micklegate. At the eastern end of Micklegate were situated the medieval hospitals of St. Mary the Virgin and St. Mary Magdalene, near the castle gate. There have been very few opportunities to archaeologically investigate the Micklegate frontage. Limited excavations at 22-28 Micklegate in 1987 revealed 12th and 15th century activity in an area set back from the frontage, which had been destroyed by cellaring, whilst excavations off Spink Lane in 2001 found the remains of a large stone house dating to between the 12th and 14th centuries.

Location

The work was undertaken on the north side of Pontefract, close to the castle and historic core (Figure 1). Trial pits were excavated outside no. 10 Micklegate Square (Trial Pit 1;

Figure 2), and outside no. 32 Bede House Villas, Micklegate Pontefract (Trial Pit 2). Both pits were excavated using a mini-digger and completed by hand.

Results

Trial pit 1

Trial pit 1 was excavated partly in the footpath and partly in the grass verge. The pit measured 2.5m x 0.8m x 1m deep, and was excavated through 'made ground' deposit of topsoil (Plate 1) containing pieces of sandstone bedrock, and fragments of modern brick/tile, glass and pottery (which were not retained).



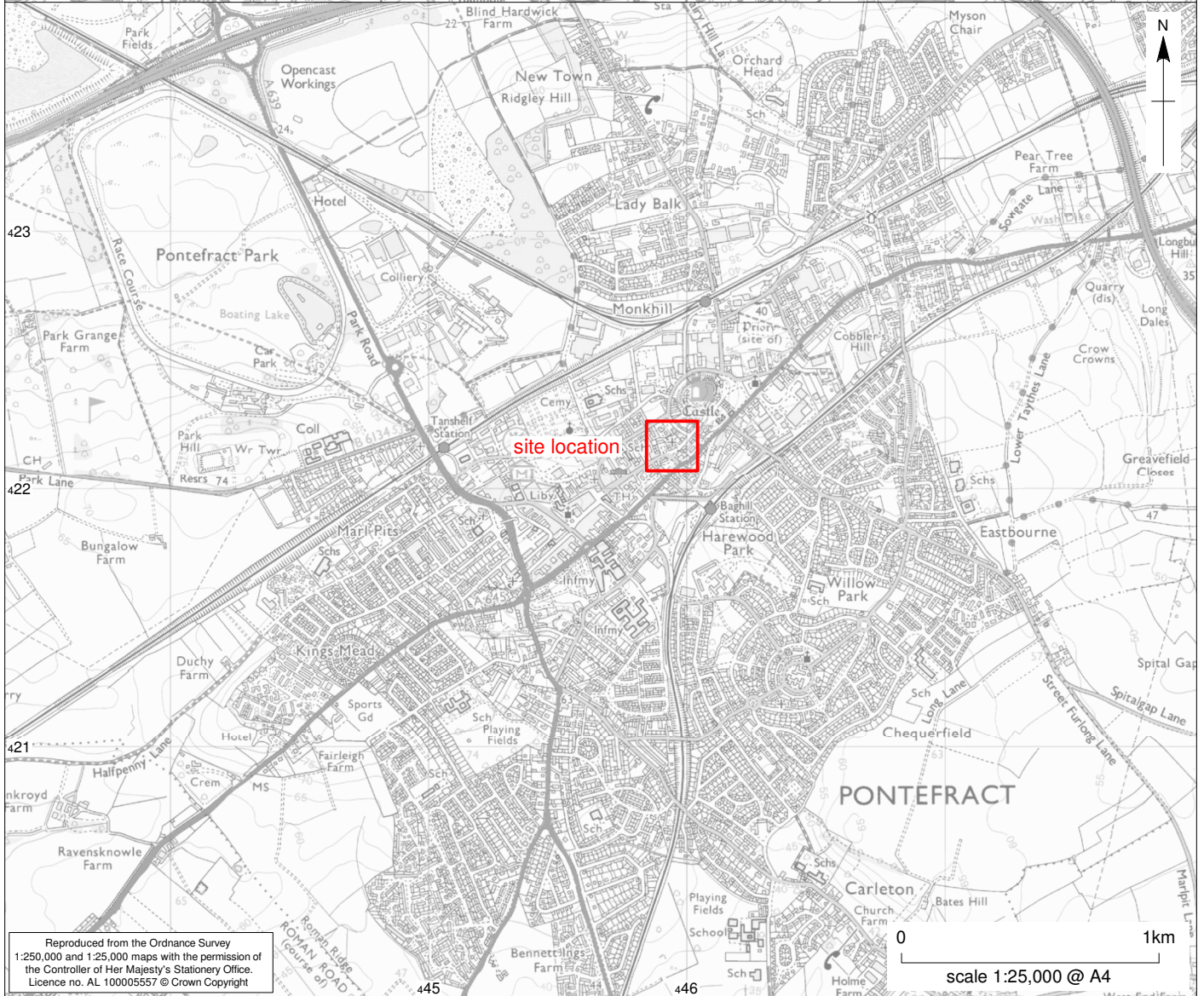
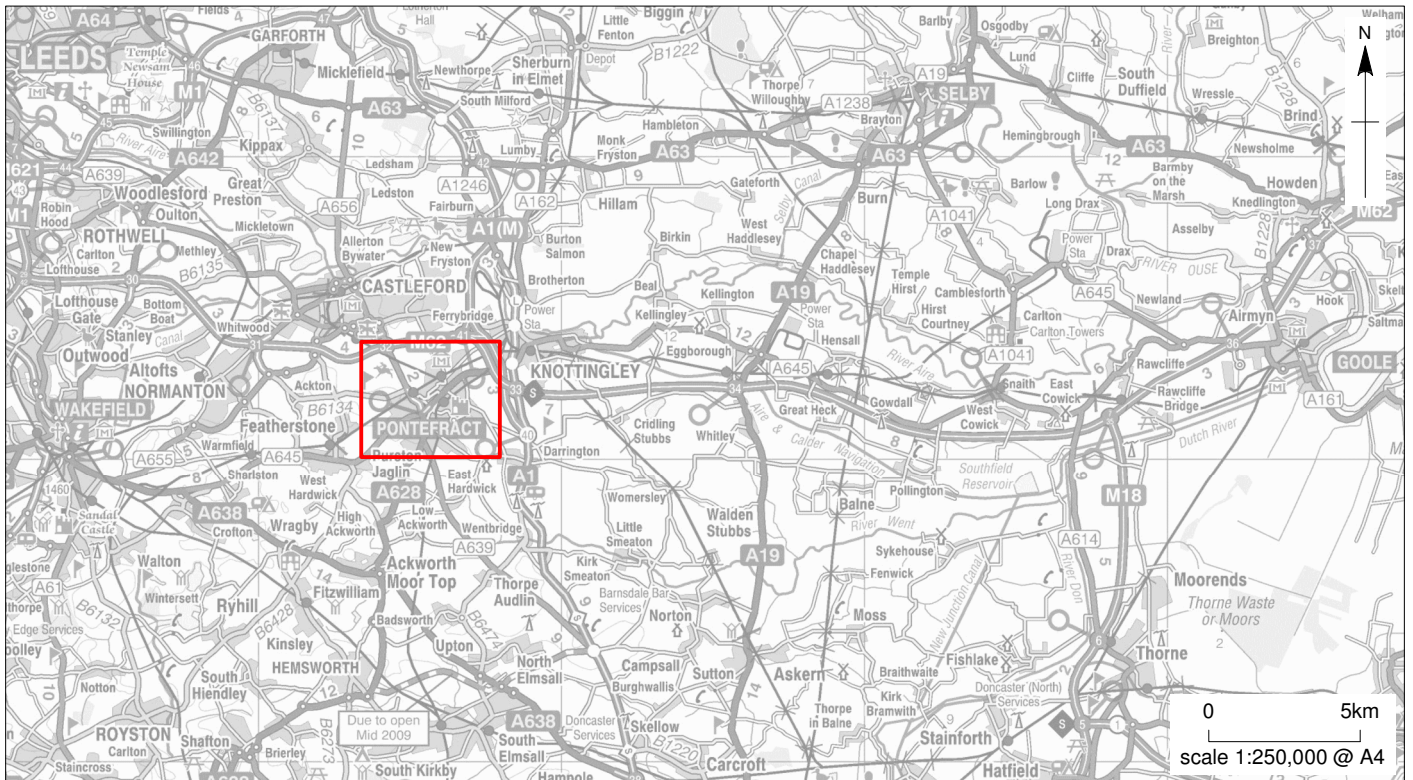
Plate 1. Trial Pit 1, 10 Micklegate Square

Trial pit 2

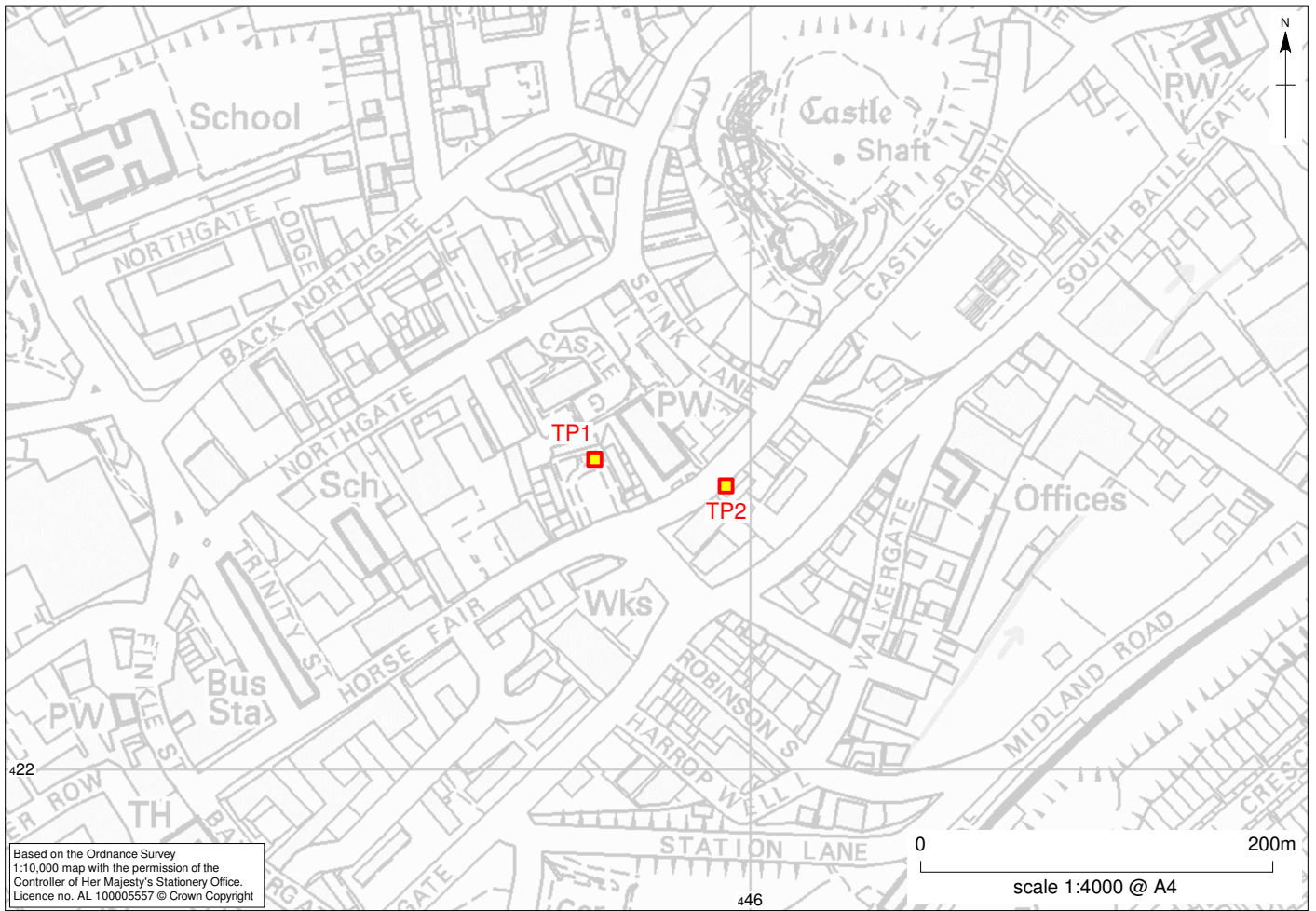
This pit was excavated within the road, and measured 2m x 1m x 1.2m deep. The fill consisted of a backfilled stoney clay deposit (Plate 2) with evidence of recent work to repair a burst water main, the fill also contained sand, fragments of modern brick/tile, and plastic packaging.



Plate 2. Trial Pit 2, 32 Bede House Villas



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Micklegate, Pontefract: Trial Pit location

Figure 2

Appendix 1
Specification (WYAAS)

**WEST YORKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY ADVISORY SERVICE:
SPECIFICATION FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF TO BE
MAINTAINED DURING WORKS FOR YORKSHIRE WATER IN THE HORSEFAIR
AREA OF PONTEFRACT**

1. Summary

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief is a limited amount of archaeological work where the presence of an appropriately qualified & experienced archaeologist is required during the course of development to identify and record/ retrieve any archaeological remains which are revealed and/or disturbed during “groundworks” on a site upon which development is currently underway.
- 1.2 Morrisons Utilities are carrying out works in the Horsefair area of Pontefract on behalf of Yorkshire Water, as per drawing AMP6 Year 4 (as part of planned work M312 Horsefair Renewal Option 2).
- 1.3 An archaeological watching brief is to be maintained during the excavation of test holes and the pipeline trenches indicated on the referenced plan. Two test holes are to be initially excavated: one outside 32 Micklegate and one outside 16 Micklegate. Both test holes will be approximately 1.5m square.

This specification has been written by the West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service (WYAAS), the holders of the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record.

NOTE: The requirements detailed in paragraphs 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 10.1 are to be carried out by the archaeological contractor **prior** to the commencement of fieldwork.

2. Archaeological Interest

The archaeological interest in the work is based on the historical & archaeological significance of Pontefract. Pontefract is West Yorkshire’s most significant late Saxon and medieval urban centre. There is also some evidence for Roman activity in parts of the town (further to the west than the current planned work). Pontefract Castle is thought to originate in the 1070s as an earth and timber castle, possibly on the site of an earlier Anglo-Saxon fortification. The castle developed into one of the most important in the North of England and was subject to two protracted sieges during the Civil Wars in the 17th century (& it is possible that siege lines may have crossed the line of the pipe trench). The Saxon town is thought to have centred on the area immediately to the east of the castle. It is first mentioned in AD 947 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as Tanshelf, the site where King Eadred (of Mercia) met the *witan* of Northumbria and received their pledges of allegiance, which would suggest a centre of some importance. Micklegate is the ‘great street’ or *magna vico* first documented in c1190. It formed the central spine of the post Conquest planned borough and ran from the west gatehouse of the castle to “The Bridge”. Originally the houses of the 12th-century borough would all have fronted onto Micklegate, with their burgage plots stretching back to Northgate and Southgate, as clearly represented on

Jollage's Plan of 1742. Micklegate was originally intended as the principal commercial street, demonstrated by its gradual widening towards its western end. Almost the entire length of Micklegate, west of Broad Lane, is now called Horse Fair, a name that is first documented in 1759, but which was originally only applied to the western end of Micklegate. At the eastern end of Micklegate were situated the medieval hospitals of St. Mary the Virgin and St. Mary Magdalene, near the castle gate. There have been very few opportunities to archaeologically investigate the Micklegate frontage. Limited excavations at 22-28 Micklegate in 1987 revealed 12th and 15th century activity in an area set back from the frontage, which had been destroyed by cellaring, whilst excavations off Spink Lane in 2001 found the remains of a large stone house dating to between the 12th and 14th centuries.

For an understanding of relevant archaeological research priorities in West Yorkshire, please see the archaeological research agendas available to download from the WYAAS website:

<http://www.wyjs.org.uk/archaeology-advisory-service/>

3. Aim of the Watching Brief

3.1 The aim of the watching brief is to identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, character and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features and deposits which are disturbed or exposed as a result of "groundworks" (including site stripping, the excavation of test holes and service trenches etc.) in the area of interest.

3.2 This work is intended to mitigate the destruction of any buried archaeological remains that may be revealed / disturbed through 'preservation by record'.

3.3 The archaeologist shall not excavate any area beyond those to be disturbed/destroyed by the development.

4. General Instructions

4.1 Health and Safety

4.1.1 The archaeologist on site will naturally operate with due regard for Health and Safety regulations. In this case, where archaeological work is carried out at the same time as the work of other contractors, regard should also be taken of any reasonable additional constraints that these contractors may impose. This work will require the preparation of a Risk Assessment of the site, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations. The West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service and its officers cannot be held responsible for any accidents or injuries that may occur to outside contractors engaged to undertake this watching brief while attempting to conform to this specification. Any Health and Safety issues which may hinder compliance with this specification should be discussed with WYAAS at the earliest possible opportunity (see section 11).

4.2 Confirmation of Adherence to Specification

4.2.1 Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor must confirm adherence to this specification in writing to WYAAS, or state (with reasons)

any proposals to vary the specification. Unauthorised variations are made at the sole risk of the contractor (see para. 11.2 below). Modifications presented in the form of a re-written specification/project design **will not** be considered by WYAAS.

4.3 Confirmation of Timetable and Contractors' Qualifications

4.3.1 Prior to the commencement of *any work*, the archaeological contractor **must** provide WYAAS **in writing** with:

- a projected timetable for the site work
- details of the staff structure and numbers
- names and CVs of key project members (the project manager, site supervisor, any proposed specialists, sub-contractors *etc.*)

4.3.2 All project staff provided by the archaeological contractor must be suitably qualified and experienced for their roles. The timetable should be adequate to allow the work to be undertaken to the appropriate professional standard, subject to the ultimate judgement of WYAAS.

4.4 Notification and Monitoring

4.4.1. WYAAS should be provided with as much notice as possible in writing (and certainly not less than one week) by the archaeological contractor of the intention to start the watching brief.

4.4.2 The relevant museums service (see section 10) should be notified in writing of the commencement of fieldwork at the same time as WYAAS by the archaeological contractor.

4.4.3 It is unlikely that the watching brief will be monitored but WYAAS reserves the right to do so. Any notable or unusual health & safety issues regarding the site should be provided to WYAAS when supplying notification of intention to commence the work.

5. Fieldwork Methodology

5.1 The intention of the archaeological watching brief is not to unduly delay the work of other contractors on site, however, a degree of flexibility is also expected of the developer in order that the archaeologist can fulfil the terms of this specification (see 7.1 below).

5.1.1 An archaeologist should be present on site **during any excavation**. The archaeologist should view the area as it is being dug and any trench sections after excavation has been completed. Where archaeology is judged to be present, the excavated area should be rapidly cleaned and the need for further work assessed. Where appropriate, any features and finds should then be quickly hand excavated, sampled if appropriate, and recorded.

5.1.2 Any features/deposits of archaeological interest should be accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, scale drawings and written descriptions sufficient to permit the preparation of a report. Section drawings (at a minimum scale

of 1:20) **must** include heights O.D. Plans (at a minimum scale of 1:50) **must** include O.D. spot heights for all principal strata and any features.

5.1.3 The actual areas of ground disturbance (even if no archaeological remains are present) should be recorded on a suitable base map/development plan and the stratigraphic sequence and the depth of the excavations will be briefly recorded. If archaeological remains are identified, their location is to be accurately tied into the National Grid and located on an up-to-date 1:1250 O.S. map base. (Also see para. 8.5 below).

5.1.4 Excavated soil should be searched as practicable for finds. All finds, except unstratified 20th&21st century material, should be collected and retained for processing.

5.1.5 All securely stratified contexts should be sampled for their potential to contribute to environmental and technological analysis and, scientific dating. Additional 'spot' samples should be taken if suitable material is encountered during the watching brief.

5.1.6 If, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, the watching brief reveals below-ground conditions which indicate that potentially archaeological deposits are absent, the archaeologist should contact WYAAS to discuss reducing or curtailing the requirements. The work may only be curtailed with the prior agreement of WYAAS and written confirmation of this agreement will be provided by WYAAS.

5.1.7 Except where otherwise requested, black and white photography using orthodox monochrome chemical development should be used. Film should be no faster than ISO400. Slower films should be used where possible as their smaller grain size yields higher definition images. Technical Pan (ISO 25), Pan-F (ISO50), FP4 (ISO125) and HP5 (ISO400) are recommended. The use of dye-based films such as Ilford XP2 and Kodak T40CN is unacceptable due to poor archiving qualities. Black and white photography should be supplemented by colour photography; this should be in transparency format (i.e. slides or digital photography as an acceptable alternative, see paragraph 5.1.8 below).

5.1.8 Digital photography: as an alternative to colour transparency photography, good quality digital photography may be supplied, using cameras with a minimum resolution of 10 megapixels. Digital photography should follow the guidance given by Historic England in Digital Image Capture and File Storage: Guidelines for Best Practice, July 2015. Note that conventional black and white print photography is still required and constitutes the permanent record. Digital images will only be acceptable as an alternative to colour slide photography if each image is supplied in both JPEG and TIFF versions. The latter as an uncompressed 8-bits per channel TIFF version 6 file of not less than 25Mbs (See section 2.3 of the Historic England guidance). The contractor must include metadata embedded in the TIFF file. The metadata must include the following: the commonly used name for the site being photographed, the relevant centred OS grid coordinates for the site to at least six figures, the relevant township name, the date of photograph, the subject of the photograph, the direction of shot and the name of the organisation taking the photograph. **Any digital images are to be supplied to WYAAS on an archive**

quality “gold” CDs by the archaeological contractor accompanying the hard copy of the report.

6.2 Use of Metal Detectors on Site

6.2.1 Spoil heaps are to be scanned for both ferrous and non-ferrous metal artefacts using a metal detector capable of making this discrimination, operated by an experienced metal detector user (if necessary, operating under the supervision of the contracting archaeologist). Modern artefacts are to be noted but not retained (19th-century material and earlier should be retained.)

6.2.2 If a non-professional archaeologist is to be used to carry out the metal-detecting, a formal agreement of their position as a sub-contractor working under direction must be agreed in advance of their use on site. This formal agreement will apply whether they are paid or not. To avoid financial claims under the Treasure Act a suggested wording for this formal agreement with the metal detectorist is: "In the process of working on the archaeological investigation at [*location of site*] between the dates of [*insert dates*], [*name of person contributing to project*] is working under direction or permission of [*name of archaeological organisation*] and hereby waives all rights to rewards for objects discovered that could otherwise be payable under the Treasure Act 1996 as amended."

7. Unexpectedly Significant or Complex Discoveries

7.1 Should there be, in the professional judgement of the archaeologist on site, unexpectedly significant or complex discoveries made that warrant more detailed recording than possible within the terms of this specification, then the archaeological contractor is to urgently contact WYAAS with the relevant information to enable the matter to be resolved with the developer.

7.2 The terms of the Treasure Act, 1996 as amended, must be followed with regard to any finds, which might fall within its purview. Any such finds must be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner as required by the procedures laid down in the 'Code of Practice'. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery, suitable security measures must be taken to protect the finds from theft.

8. Post-excavation Analysis and Reporting

8.1 On completion of the fieldwork, any samples shall be processed and all finds shall be cleaned, identified, analysed, dated (if possible), marked (if appropriate) and properly packed and stored in accordance with the requirements of national guidelines. Finds of 20th&21st century date should be quantified and summarily described, but can then be discarded if appropriate. All finds of 19th century or earlier date should be retained and archived.

8.2 A fully indexed field archive shall be compiled consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, and fully labelled photographs/slides. Standards for archive compilation and transfer should conform to those outlined in *Archaeological Archives – a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Archaeological Archives Forum, 2007). Photographic prints should be mounted in

appropriate archivally-stable sleeves. Labelling should be on the *back* of the print in pencil giving film and frame number only and on applied printed labels on the front of the appropriate photographic sleeve which should include:

- film and frame number
- date recorded and photographer's name
- name and address of site
- national grid reference
- specific subject of photograph.

A quantified index to the field archive should form an appendix to the report. The original archive is to accompany the deposition of any finds, providing the landowner agrees to the deposition of finds in a publicly accessible archive (see Section 10 below). In the absence of this agreement the field archive (less finds) is to be deposited in the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record.

8.3 A fully illustrated report should be produced, which should include background information on the need for the project, a description of the methodology employed, and a full description and interpretation of the results, placing them in a local and regional, and if appropriate, national context. It is not envisaged that the report is likely to be published, but it should be produced with sufficient care and attention to detail to be of academic use to future researchers.

8.4 Any digital prints in the report must be made on paper and with inks which are certified against fading or other deterioration for a period of 75 years or more when used in combination. If digital printing is employed, **the contractor must** supply details of the paper/inks used in writing to the WYAAS, with supporting documentation indicating their archival stability/durability.

8.5 Location plans should be produced at a scale which enables easy site identification and which depicts the full extent of the areas covered by the watching brief (a scale of 1:50,000 is not regarded as appropriate unless accompanied by a more detailed plan or plans). Plans should be at an appropriate scale showing: areas excavated and the identified (and, where possible, predicted) archaeological features/deposits. Trench and feature plans **must** include O.D. spot heights for all principal strata and any features. Section drawings **must** include O.D heights and be cross-referenced to an appropriate plan.

8.6 All artefacts and environmental material will be analysed by a qualified and experienced specialist. Artefact analysis is to include the production of a descriptive catalogue. Finds critical for dating and interpretation should be illustrated.

8.7 Details of the style and format of the report are to be determined by the archaeological contractor, but should include a full bibliography, a quantified index to the site archive, details of the current and intended location of the archive and, as an appendix, a copy of this specification.

9. Report Submission and Deposition with the HER

9.1 The archaeological contractor will supply a hard copy of the report to the client and another hard copy (plus a digital copy on a gold compact disk) directly to the WYAAS within a period of one month following completion of fieldwork, unless a revised date has been agreed in writing with WYAAS. A copy of

the final report (in .pdf format) shall also be supplied to Historic England Science Advisor (Dr Andy Hammon, e-mail address: Andy.Hammon@HistoricEngland.org.uk). Completion of this project are dependant on receipt by WYAAS of a satisfactory report which has been prepared in accordance with this specification. Any comments made by WYAAS in response to the submission of an unsatisfactory report will be taken into account and will result in the reissue of a suitably edited report to all parties, within a timescale which has been agreed with WYAAS.

9.2 The report will be supplied on the understanding that it will be added to the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record and will become publicly accessible once deposited with the WYAAS.

9.3 Copyright - Please note that by depositing this report, the contractor gives permission for the material presented within the document to be used by the WYAAS, in perpetuity, although the Contractor retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as specified in the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* (chapter IV, section 79). The permission will allow the WYAAS to reproduce material, including for use by third parties, with the copyright owner suitably acknowledged.

9.4 The West Yorkshire HER supports the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The overall aim of the OASIS project is to provide an online index to the mass of archaeological grey literature that has been produced as a result of the advent of large-scale developer funded fieldwork. The archaeological contractor must therefore complete the online OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>. Contractors are advised to contact the West Yorkshire HER officer prior to completing the form. Once a report has become a public document by submission to or incorporation into the HER, the West Yorkshire HER may place the information on a web-site. Please ensure that you and your client agree to this procedure in writing as part of the process of submitting the report to the case officer at the West Yorkshire HER.

10. Archive Deposition

10.1 Before commencing any fieldwork, the archaeological contractor must contact the relevant District museum service in writing (copied to WYAAS) to determine the museum's requirements for the deposition of an excavation archive. For contact details: **Wakefield MDC Museum & Arts**, Pontefract Museum, 5 Salter Row, Pontefract WF8 1BA Tel. 01924 305352 davidevans@wakefield.gov.uk .

10.2 It is the policy of all the West Yorkshire museum services to accept complete excavation archives, including primary site records and research archives and finds, from all excavations carried out in the District, which they serve.

10.3 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to endeavour to obtain consent of the landowner, in writing, to the deposition of finds with the relevant museum service.

10.4 It is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to meet the relevant museum services' requirements with regard to the preparation of fieldwork archives for deposition.

11. General Considerations

11.1 Authorised Alterations to Specification by Contractor

11.1.1 If, on first visiting the site or at any time during the course of the recording exercise, it appears in the archaeologist's professional judgement that:

- i) a part or the whole of the site is not amenable to recording as detailed above, and/or
- ii) an alternative approach may be more appropriate or likely to produce more informative results,

then it is expected that the archaeologist will contact WYAAS as a matter of urgency in order that the matter can be resolved in liaison with the developer and the Local Planning Authority.

11.2 Unauthorised Alterations to Specification by Contractor

11.2.1 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that they have obtained WYAAS' consent in writing to any variation of the specification prior to the commencement of on-site work or (where applicable) prior to the finalisation of the tender. Unauthorised variations may result in WYAAS being unable to recommend determination of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority based on the archaeological information available and are therefore made solely at the risk of the contractor.

11.3 Technical Queries

11.3.1 Similarly, any technical queries arising from the specification detailed above, should be addressed to WYAAS without delay.

11.4 Valid Period of Specification

11.4.1 This specification is valid unless superseded by a later version. It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that they are working to the latest current WYAAS watching brief specification. Please check the WYAAS website for the latest version.

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