



27 St Aubyn's Place, York
A Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief


Site	27 St Aubyn's Place, York
Site Code	27SAPY
County	North Yorkshire
Latitude/Longitude	53.95117,-1.10046
Planning Application No	18/00553/FUL
Development	Two storey side and rear extension and a single storey rear extension
Contributors	D. Signorelli & L. Signorelli
Date of Issue	06/07/18
Site Dates	07/06/18
Project by	
Client	Mrs. Judith Dodd
<p>Summary</p> <p>An extension to an existing property is proposed at 27 St Aubyn's Place, York. A two-storey side and rear extension and single storey rear extension has been granted planning permission. An archaeological condition is attached to this site due to its location within an Area of Archaeological Importance. There is potential for the development to affect important archaeological deposits that must be recorded during the construction programme.</p> <p>Although no specific archaeological features related to possible early activity were encountered, a garden/build up deposit (context 2) contained material culture in the form of fragmented 20th century terracotta plant potsherds and a 1930's rouge make up vessel base.</p> <p>Out with the concrete/brick garage patio area a deposit depth of 0.7m was reached and this revealed approximately 0.45m of buildup garden soils sealing 0.25m of horticultural soil. Natural was not encountered.</p> <p>The evidence from this watching brief concurs with other archaeological evidence derived from the immediate vicinity. Other investigations have also indicated the presence of a deep deposit of horticultural soil.</p>	

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INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out during ground reduction works associated with a development at 27 St Aubyn's Place, York. (Figure 1). This development consisted of a two-storey side and rear extension and single storey rear extension (Figure 2).

Planning Application 18/00553/FUL was granted by the City of York Council subject to a condition listed within the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

'No work shall commence on site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (a watching brief on all ground works by and approved archaeological unit) in accordance with a specification supplied by the Local Planning Authority. This programme and the archaeological unit shall be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences.'

Reason: The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Importance and the development may affect important archaeological deposits which must be recorded during the construction programme.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (L.S Archaeology, 2018) was submitted and agreed prior to the commencement of grounds works, which took place on the 7th of June 2018.

The following archaeological watching brief report has been prepared for Mrs. Judith Dodd and aims to comply with the Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (Chartered Institute for Field Archaeologists 2014).

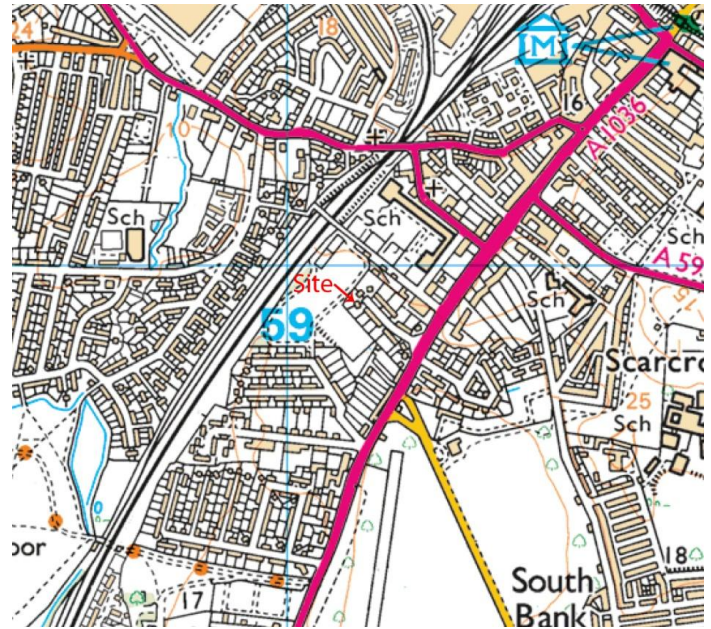


Figure 1: Site location map

SITE LOCATION



The property is located off Tadcaster road and is sited at the end of a cul-de-sac that runs parallel to Love Lane, which is located to the east.

The rear garden of 27 St Aubyn's Place bounds, to the north east, the perimeter of two sports fields; both fields are the property of the Mount School York (Plate 1).

Plate 1: The site within the physical landscape



The development involves the construction of two extensions: one to the side and one to the rear of a post war semi detached two-storey house (Figure 2).

The sites elevation is 14.9m.

The whole site area is approximately 467m² however less than 52m² shall be impacted by ground works.

Figure 2: Plan of site and extant of extensions to the existing property

GEOLOGY

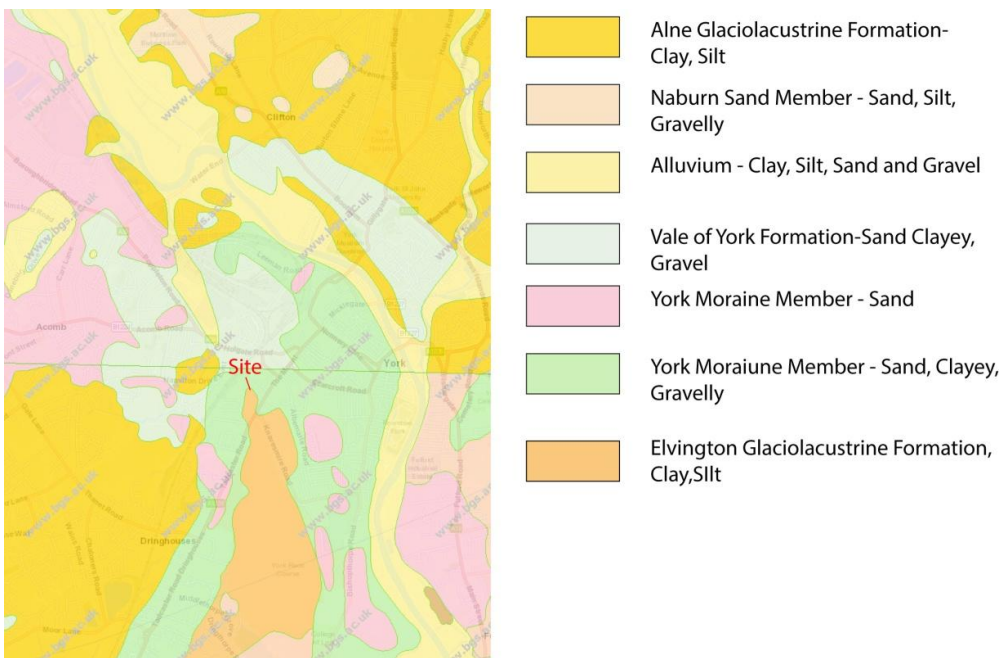


Figure 3: Geological map

The site is located on the tip of an area of Elvington clays and silt; the slightly more elevated York Moraine surrounds it to the north, east and west (Figure 3).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

There are five cities in England (Canterbury, Chester, Exeter, Hereford and York) deemed to be so rich with archaeological heritage that they have been designated 'Areas of Archaeological Importance' (AAI).

York has seven areas of Archaeological Importance:

- City centre area
- Acomb
- Dringhouses
- Middlethorpe
- The Retreat
- Heworth
- Glen Road

The site, 27 St Aubyn's Place is located within the City centre area of Archaeological Importance.

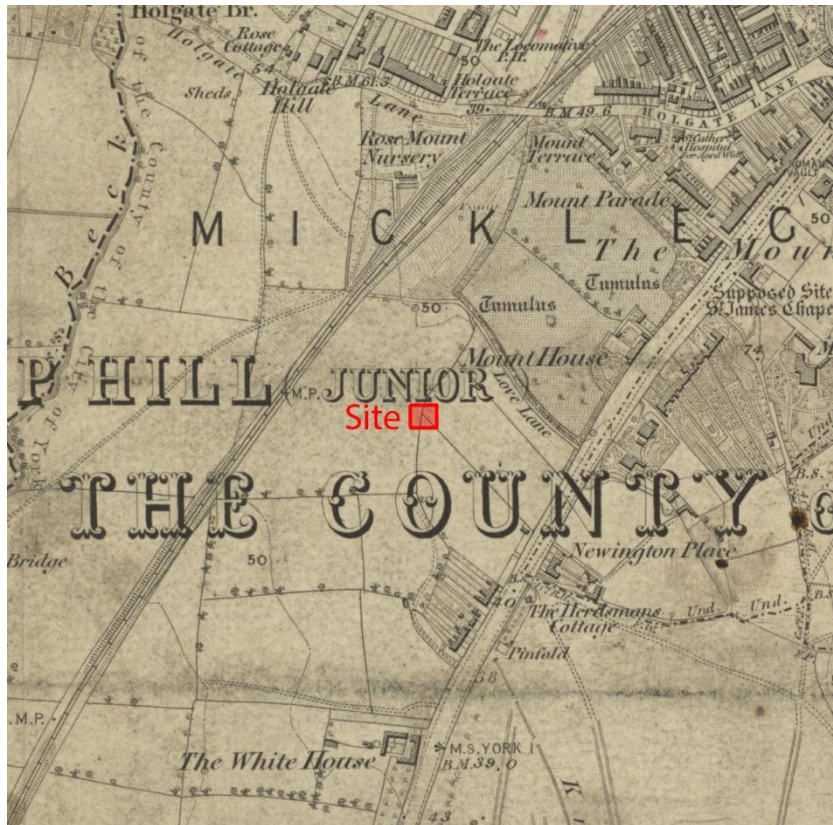


Figure 4: 1853 Ordnance Survey Map

27 St Aubyn's Place is located within Area 75 of the City York Historic Characterisation Project the area being:

A large residential suburban area containing a wide variety of architectural styles spanning the early 18th to early 21st century, including a small amount of social housing. The oldest buildings are of two to three storeys and are situated along the line of Tadcaster Road with side streets and cul-de-sac estates leading off from either side. (MacRae 2013)

The characterisation project has stated with regard to archaeological potential significance:

Archaeological investigations have identified substantial evidence for a Roman roadside settlement with associated burials and field systems. Several stray prehistoric finds are also known from the vicinity. Tadcaster Road has been clearly identified as the principal Roman route to Tadcaster and was a key prehistoric route way running along a low ridge of morainic material. In the village core medieval archaeology is likely to survive in places undisturbed by later

development. However, in other areas medieval and later ploughing and quarrying will have had a negative effect on any surviving archaeology. (MacRae 2013, Dringhouses and Tadcaster Road).

The 1853 Ordnance survey map indicates that the site was within an area of enclosed fields. The site is located at a property line where three field boundaries meet. The largest of the enclosures lies to the west, another to the north, which appears to have been incorporated into the property of the Elm Bank private estate and finally one to the south, which is now where St Aubyn's Place is located. (Figure 4).

By 1910, the site appears to partially form part of the extensive landscaped grounds of the Elm Bank private estate. Some small ancillary structures of unknown function are positioned in the enclosed fields. (Figure 5).

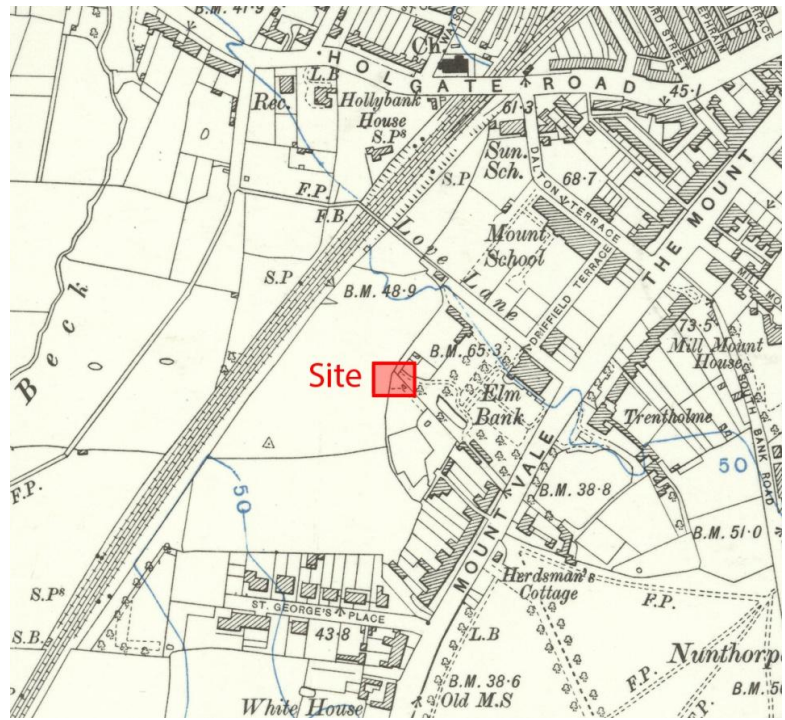


Figure 5: 1910 Ordnance Survey Map



By 1953, the site was incorporated into new private post war housing; a street of semi detached properties with gardens (Figure 6). The brick garages associated with these properties appear to be a later addition. The property bounds the Mount School Sports Ground to the west.

Figure 6: 1950 Ordnance Survey Map

Locally, other archaeological investigations, involving watching briefs, suggest that there is a reasonable build up of agricultural soils on top of any earlier deposits that may contain residual evidence of Roman-British activity such as a ditch (Elmbank). These investigations took place at the following sites:

- The Mount School (Dean, 2005)
- 196 Mount Vale (Andrews, 2003)
- 204 Mount Vale (Savine, 2016)
- 188-190 Mount Vale (Sherlock, 2003)
- 5 St Aubyn's Place (Wilson, 2017)
- Elmbank Hotel (Hopkinson & Ferguson, 1998)

Recent evaluations at 5 St Aubyn's Place suggest that there are deposits of 0.6-0.7m of brownish orangey silty sand indicative of horticultural/ agricultural soil sealed by 0.1-0.2m brown grey modern garden soil and related garage foundations (Wilson, 2017).

There was potential to find evidence pertaining to the Civil War; lead musket balls have been previously found at the Mount School sports fields (MacRae, 2013, The Mount).

METHODOLOGY

The mitigation strategy and methodology contained within the Written Scheme of Investigation, was adhered to throughout the project.

The archaeological watching brief consisted of monitoring the excavation of the foundation trenches, dug to an average depth of circa 0.70m.

A back-acting mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket was used at all times for all excavations, to assist the identification of archaeology.

A standard single context recording system was adopted to keep a record of all archaeology encountered.

All archaeological deposits and features were planned at a scale of 1:20 on drafting film (permatrace). Samples of the trench sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. All archaeological features were recorded as appropriate using a minimum of 10-megapixel digital colour camera.

The 20th finds (Glass and Ceramics) were briefly evaluated in house due to their more obvious characteristics and ease of identification.

RESULTS

The groundworks consisted of the excavation of five foundation trenches within the areas which were to be impacted by the new extension (Figure 7).

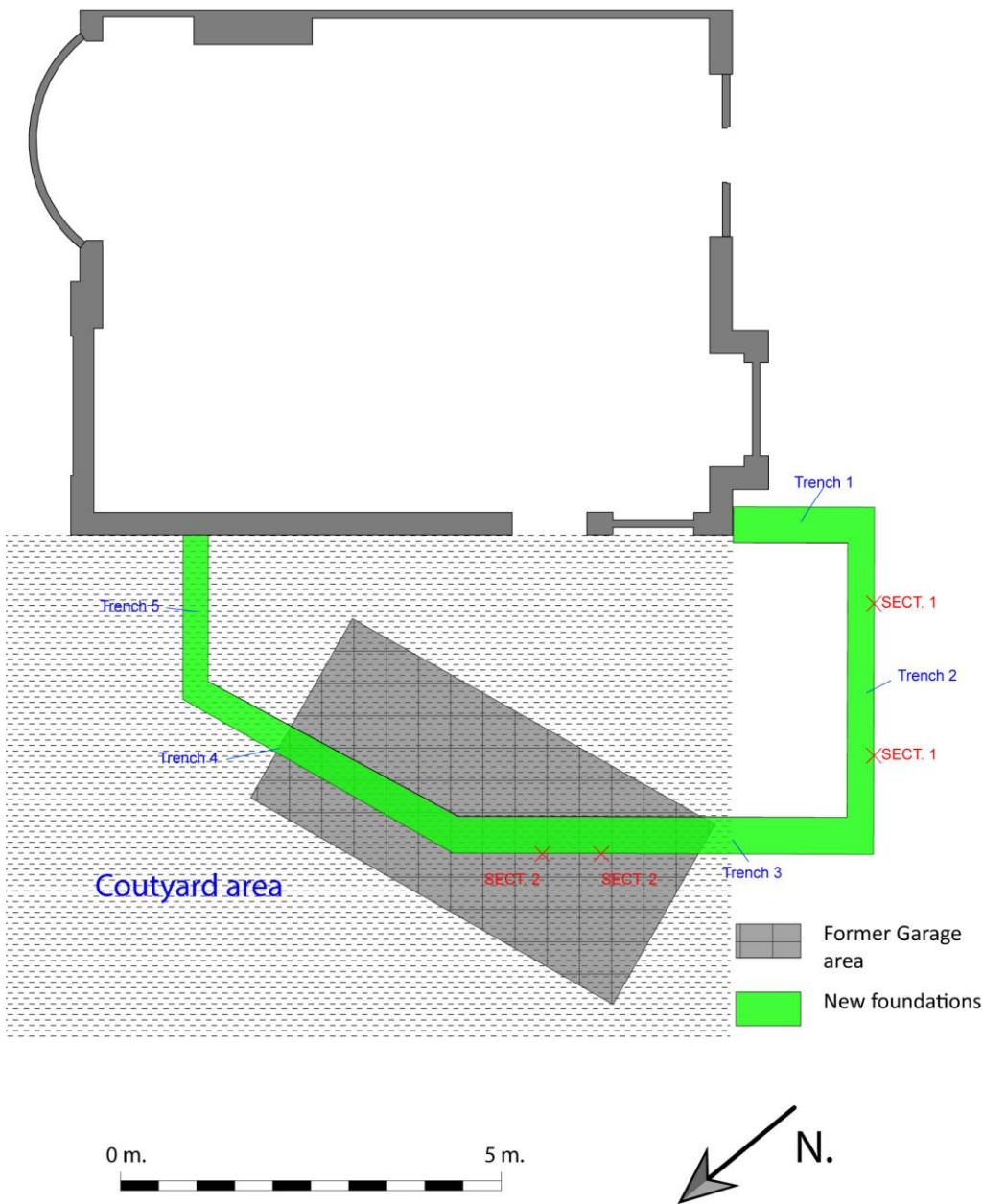


Figure 7: Foundation Trenches Plan and area monitored (in green)

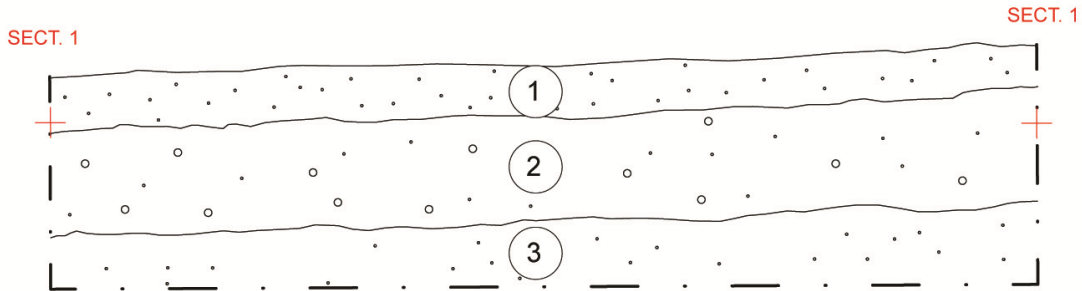
The archaeology encountered consisted of contexts (2, 4, 5, 6, 7) sealed by 20th century gardens (1) and positioned on top of a horticultural deposit (3).

A total of five foundation trenches were machine excavated. Each foundation trench measured 0.75m in width and 0.70m in depth, and respectively in length; Trench 1 - 1.8m, Trench 2 - 4.35m, Trench 3 - 5.5m, Trench 4 - 4.05, and Trench 5 - 2.0m.

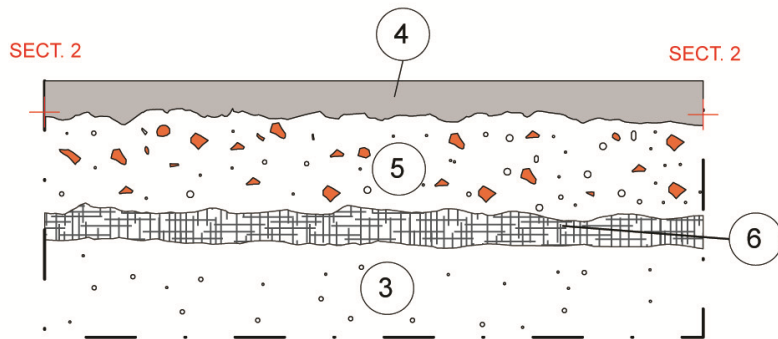
The ground surface around trench 1, 2 and part of 3, consisted of turfed grass (context 1), whereas the area impacted by trench 3, 4 and 5 was characterised by a concrete surface (context 4), and a brick floor (context 7). The concrete area marked the site occupied by the former garage (Figure 7).



Plate 2: Northeast facing section of trench 2



27SAPY North east facing section Contexts 1, 2 and 3 Drawing N. 1



27SAPY South east facing section Contexts 4, 5, 6 and 3 Drawing N. 2

Figure 8: Section drawings of Trenches 2 and 3



Stratigraphic description of Trenches 1, 2 and part of 3 (Figure 8).

The removal of context (1), which was identified as the most recent 20th century garden surface/turf, revealed a compact, very dark brown clay silty garden build up soil (Context 2), with gravel inclusions and frequent fragments of 20th century pottery and a single glass vessel base dated to the 1930's. Context 2 sealed a more substantial horticultural greyish, orange, brown, mottled silty clay deposit, (Context 3).

The above stratigraphic model was present within the area impacted by trench 1, 2 and the area of trench 3 that lay outwith the former garage area (Plate 2).

Stratigraphic description of Trenches 4, 5 and part of 3 (Figure 8)

The stratigraphy encountered within part of trench 3, the whole of trench 4 and 5, consisted of a concrete floor (context 4) measuring 0.15m in depth and a surrounding brick surface (Context 7). The concrete floor (Context 4) was the base of the former garage, and the brick area (Context 7) functioned as the access and patio area (Plate 3).

Beneath the concrete / brick layer, was a compact dark brown sandy clay deposit, measuring 0.25m in depth which contained a small percentage of gravel and fragmented 20th century ceramic building material (Context 5).

Context 5 overlay a 0.1m thick black clinker deposit (context 6) and this was positioned directly above the horticultural deposit (Context 3). On occasion, clinker layers are used to support drainage function.



Plate 3: Southeast facing section of the foundation trench 3

The stratigraphy encountered within these foundation trenches is likely to be associated with the initial construction, on agricultural land, of the house and the later installment of a garage (Appendix 1: Context Data).

FINDS ASSESSMENT

Glass

A small (3cm in diameter) circular clear glass shallow vessel was located within context 2 (Plate 6). This vessel has external threading to enable it be fixed to a lid which could have been silver plate, similar to the complete object which was designed in the art deco style common to the 1930's and is shown in Plates 4 and 5. The name 'Leichner's' is mould etched onto the vessels base. Leichner's was a cosmetic company who by the 1930's were mass producing make up products for the ever increasing market

The Leichner Company was an early pioneer in the production of makeup, originally creating non-toxic, vibrant, easily applied make up for stage theatre (grease paint). Ludwig Leichner (1836-1912) was an operatic baritone but originally trained as a pharmacist at the University of Vienna. In Berlin, during the 19th century, Leichner's pharmacy and stage experience came together and a range of lead-free, non-toxic, easily applied, stage make up products, were created.



Plate 4: Example of the original lid of vessel base



Plate 5: Example of the glass base with original lid



Plate 6: Glass base from Context 2

Overtime these stage products successfully branched into every daywear (Bennet, 2018).

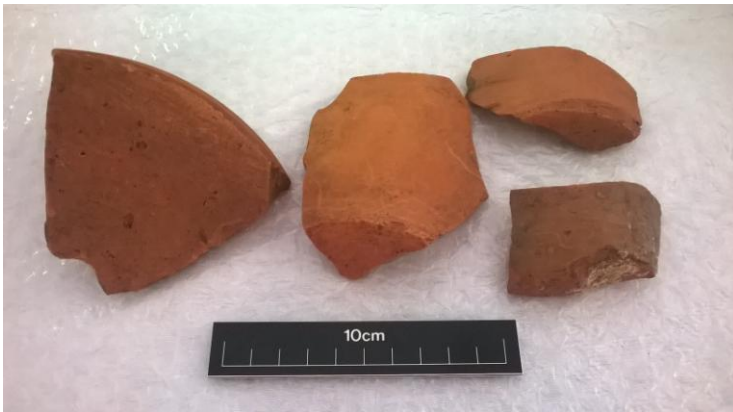
Leichner's still produce make up for stage, film and television and is mid priced rather than an exclusive luxury. This is also true of the product that was in the vessel found in Context 2. It was a quality product within a mid range price bracket; in the 1930's, rival company Boots own brand No. 7 products cost more than Leichner's. This commercial rivalry dates back to as early as 1915. During the Great War, the Boots marketing slogan was "*Theatre folk's say- no more German greasepaint. Leichner is completed superseded...Boots British greasepaint is the best we ever used!*" (Bennet, 2018).

Ceramics



Within context (2) twenty-five terracotta, pottery sherds were present and these are likely to have originated from a range of 20th century garden pots.

Plate 7: Ceramic pot rims



Eleven fragments of rim (Plate 7) comprised of nine different styles were observed of variable width, circumference and design. Four pot bases (Plate 8) of differing circumference and style were present.

Plate 8: Ceramic Pot bases

There were nine pot body sherds (Plate 9) and one particular piece has lettering indicating it was stamped. --L^{TD} BULWELL--can be partially read, however, searches did not yield any further information regarding the maker of this piece.

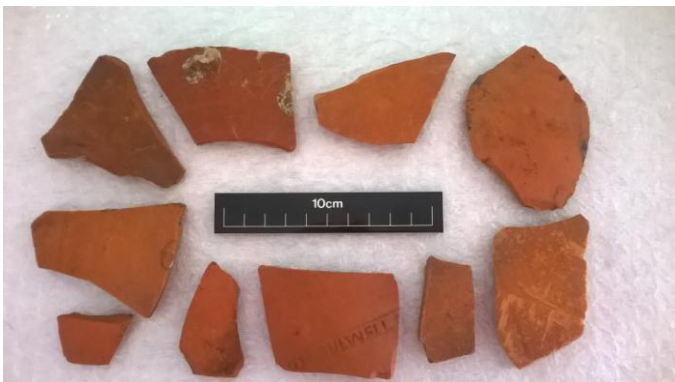


Plate 10: Ceramic pot body sherds



Plate 9: Stamped pot sherd

CONCLUSION

Although no specific archaeological features related to possible early activity were encountered, the horticultural/agricultural deposit (context 2) contained occupational evidence in the form of fragmented 20th century glass and pottery.

Out with the concrete/brick garage patio area a deposit depth of 0.7m was reached and this revealed approximately 0.45m of buildup garden soils sealing 0.25m of horticultural soil. Natural was not encountered.

The evidence from this watching brief concurs with other archaeological evidence derived from the immediate vicinity. Other investigations have also indicated the presence of a deep deposit of horticultural soil.

ARCHIVE

The site archive, including all material retrieved from site; the digital and paper record including plans and plates are to be the property of the client: Mrs. Judith Dodd, 27 St Aubyn's Place, York. LS Archaeology shall retain copyright of the Archaeological Watching Brief Report.

A copy of this report shall be uploaded to OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigation) for inclusion on the online digital archive ADS (Archaeological Data Services).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andrews, M (2003); 196 Mount Vale, York; Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief (York Archaeological Trust).

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MacRae, C (2013); *Character Area 24: The Mount*

MacRae, C (2013); *Character Area 75: Dringhouses and Tadcaster Road*

Savine, B (2016); 204 Mount Vale, York; Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief (York Archaeological Trust).

Sherlock, S.J (2003); 188-190 Mount Vale, York; An Archaeological Watching Brief.

Signorelli, D (2018); *Written Scheme of Investigation: 27 St Aubyn's Place, York.*

Wilson, B (2017); 5 St Aubyn's Place, York; Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief (York Archaeological Trust).

Online Resources

James Bennet, 2018 Stories from the history and science of cosmetic, skin care and early beauty culture

<http://www.cosmeticsandskin.com/bcb/greasepaint.php>

Hornsey, R. 2018 'The modern way to loveliness': middle class cosmetics and chain-store beauty culture in mid twentieth century Britain.

<http://www.makeupmuseum.org/home/2017/11/lm-laduree-fall-2017.html>

https://www.york.gov.uk/info/20216/archaeology/1288/historic_environment_record

APPENDIX 1

CONTEXT DATA

Feature No.	Context	Fill/Cut	Shape	Profile	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Identified As
1	1	Deposit	N/A	Layer	4.35	0.7	0.15	Dark brown/black clay silt deposit, mixed with 5% of small gravel	Garden soil/Turf
2	2	Deposit	N/A	Layer	4.35	0.7	0.3	Very dark brown clay silt deposit. Contains 5% of angular small limestone gravel and 5% of rounded gravel.	Subsoil /garden build up
3	3	Deposit	N/A	Layer	4.35	0.7	0.25	Greyish/orange/brown 98% clay silt deposit with 2% gravel inclusions.	Agricultural deposit
4	4	Deposit	N/A	Layer	5.5	0.7	0.15	This context was identified as the former garage floor that consisted of a Grey 100% concrete material.	Concrete floor
5	5	Deposit	N/A	Layer	5.5	0.7	0.25	Very dark greyish brown sandy clay silt material mixed with 5% of small gravel and 10% of small fragmented CBM (Ceramic Building Material). Identified as the built up material associated with the garage concrete floor.	Build up material
6	6	Deposit	N/A	Layer	5.5	0.7	0.1	Deposit made of a black Clinker material. Interpreted as a consolidation deposit laid over the natural (context 3) for the former garage building.	Clinker material
7	7	Deposit	Rectangular	Rectangular	0.22	0.12	0.07	Layer of bricks, court yard floor	Court yard floor