



Knarborough Castle Relay Knarborough, North Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



Ref: 218090.02

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Site location Knaresborough Castle, Castle Yard, Knaresborough HG5 8AS
County North Yorkshire
National grid reference (NGR) 434931, 456911 (SE 34931 56911)
Statutory designations Scheduled Monument
Planning authority Harrogate Borough Council
Planning reference N/A
Museum name Harrogate Museums & Arts
Museum accession code N/A

WA project name Knaresborough Castle Relay, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire
WA project code 218090
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Fieldwork directed by Owen Jenkins
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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Amey to undertake an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the repair of a public sewer within the grounds of Knaresborough Castle as a condition of works set by Historic England.

The watching brief was located in Castle Yard, the grounds directly north of the Knaresborough Castle ruins on the western edge of the town of Knaresborough (NGR 434931, 456911). The site was bounded to the west by the River Nidd with residential developments surrounding the site to the north, south and east. The area is now a public garden around the castle museum which has some steep undulating slopes although it generally slopes down to the river to the west. The area has various forms of vegetation and trees. A tree was growing directly over the current pipe.

Knaresborough Castle likely dates to the 14th century and was used until significant damage was sustained in the English Civil War. Its remains are a scheduled ancient monument. The grade I listed Church of Saint John the Baptist and the grade II listed Court House Museum are both also nearby.

The watching brief monitored a single trial pit (c. 1 x 1 x 1 m). The watching archaeologist monitored all excavations within the specified area. No archaeological deposits were encountered. The natural geology was not reached, and all excavation took place within the original sewer cut, with all deposits relating to that cut. No damage to the archaeological evidence of the scheduled ancient monument was noted. Further excavation work to fix the sewer pipe were not required.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Amey for commissioning the archaeological watching brief. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Sam Stein, who monitored the project for Historic England, and to Amey for their cooperation and help on site.

The fieldwork was directed by Owen Jenkins. This report was written by Otis Gilbert and edited by Patrick Daniel. The project was managed by John Winfer on behalf of Wessex Archaeology.



Knaresborough Castle Relay

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Amey to undertake an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the repair of a public sewer. The monitored works covered 1 m², centred on NGR 434931 456911, at Castle Yard, Knaresborough, HG5 8AS (Fig. 1).
- 1.1.2 The watching brief was carried out as a condition of works related to a scheduled ancient monument, granted by Historic England.
- 1.1.3 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed (Wessex Archaeology 2019). Sam Stein approved the WSI on behalf of Historic England prior to fieldwork commencing. The watching brief was undertaken on 10 April 2019.

1.2 Scope of the report

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the watching brief, to interpret the results within their local or regional context (or otherwise), and to assess their potential to address the aims outlined in the WSI, thereby making available information about the archaeological resource (a preservation by record).

1.3 Location, topography and geology

- 1.3.1 The watching brief was located in the grounds directly north of the Knaresborough Castle ruins on the western edge of the town of Knaresborough. The site was bounded to the west by the River Nidd with residential developments surrounding the site to the north, south and east. The area is now a public garden around the castle museum, which has some steep undulating slopes, although it generally slopes down to the river to the west. The area has various forms of vegetation and trees. A tree was growing directly over the current pipe.
- 1.3.2 The castle grounds sit at around 76.2 m above Ordnance Datum (OD) and rise to the east to a high point of 77.4 m OD. The land to the east drops off sharply on the approach to the River Nidd with Waterside Road situated at 40.8 m OD.
- 1.3.3 The underlying geology is mapped as Cadeby formation dolostone overlain by glaciolacustrine deposits of Devensian clay and silt (British Geological Survey online viewer).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 No desk-based assessment (DBA) was produced for these works. As such the archaeological and historic background was compiled from HER data and available online



resources using a 500 m study area (the 'Study Area') of the development. A summary of the results is presented below, with relevant entry numbers from the North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) included.

2.2 Previous investigations related to the development

2.2.1 In the site area specifically, there has been no archaeological work conducted.

2.2.2 However, in a 500 m Study Area, there have been 68 archaeological investigations conducted, both intrusive and non-intrusive. These include:

- *Desk-based assessments;*
- *Geophysical surveys;*
- *Watching briefs;*
- *Archaeological evaluations;*
- *Test pits and trial trenching;*
- *Strip, map and sample;*
- *Archaeological excavations;*
- *Conservation management plans;*
- *Built heritage appraisals; and*
- *Buildings recording.*

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

Prehistoric to Anglo-Saxon (500 000BC – AD 1066)

2.3.1 There are limited finds recorded from the prehistoric periods within the Study Area. The earliest datable find is a Neolithic axehead, approximately 105 m north-east of the Site (MNY19018). There are only two other records in the HER relating to the prehistoric period. These are a hoard (MNY19023) and some unclassified implements (MNY19024), both of which are mapped in the same location as the Neolithic axehead. The limited evidence of prehistoric activity suggests that the area was not widely settled at this time.

2.3.2 Romano-British heritage assets are also scarce within the Study Area, with only coins (MNY19019 and MNY19021 located approximately 165 m and 365 m north-east of the Site respectively) and a rampart approximately 240 m north-east of the Site (MNY19025) recorded on the HER. The rampart will likely have been part of the military defences put in place in the north of the province during this period, although there is limited information within the HER about the feature.

2.3.3 Two coins dating to the Saxon period have been identified in the Study Area, approximately 165 m north-east of the Site in the same location as one of the Roman coins (MNY19020). The market cross, approximately 295 m east of the Site (MNY18927), also dates to the Saxon period, although there is limited information on the history of the



asset. Reference to Knarborough in the Domesday Book (see Section 2.4.4) potentially indicates settlement in the area from the Saxon period.

Medieval to modern (AD 1066 to present)

- 2.3.4 Knarborough (MNY19017) was first identified in the Domesday Book as 'Chenaresburg', which could either mean 'Cenheard's [local chieftain] fortress' or could mean 'a fortress on the rock' (HER). There was no castle mentioned in Domesday, but the area is recorded as having 26 ploughlands by 1086, originating approximately 150 m north-west of the Site (Open Domesday 2019). The earliest known reference to a castle at Knarborough is from the 11th century although the current remains likely date to the 14th century (NHLE: 1020586). Over the course of the medieval period, the castle became associated with a number of significant moments in history, one of these being the place where the knights who murdered Thomas Beckett took refuge.
- 2.3.5 There are two other designated heritage assets within the Study Area dating to the medieval period. The Church of Saint John the Baptist is a Grade I listed building, approximately 285 m to the north-west of the Site (NHLE: 1293930), and has phases dating between the medieval period and the 19th century. The plan includes a 3-bay chancel with north vestry and a 4-bay nave with central tower. Court House Museum (NHLE: 1149898) also has origins dating to the early 14th century as the town courthouse and is now designated as a Grade II listed building, approximately 115 m south of the Site.
- 2.3.6 Heritage assets recorded on the HER from this period include a well (MNY23894) at the site of the current town library, approximately 110 m north-east of the Site, and an altar (MNY19022) approximately 290 m north-west of the Site. Works conducted at Knarborough Bus Station, approximately 240 m east of the Site (MNY23559), Station Public House, approximately 105 m north of the Site (MNY24073) and Crown Hotel, approximately 105 m north of the Site (MNY23737), have all identified archaeological remains dating to the medieval period.
- 2.3.7 Knarborough developed rapidly during the post-medieval period with the construction of housing and market places for the local people. Of the designated heritage assets in the Study Area, 146 have origins dating to the post-medieval period. Development will have likely started due to the demolition of the castle (NHLE: 1020586) in the 17th century. The castle was seized by the Parliamentarians in 1644, and in 1648 it was decided that the castle was to be demolished. Only part of the courthouse (NHLE: 1149898) and part of the King's Tower were left standing. The moat was also filled in meaning that the remaining parts of the castle were no longer useful for military and defensive use.
- 2.3.8 The stone from the castle was used for buildings across the town, with the majority constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries. The market-place was developed for the local people, with High Street also expanding. The town also became a popular tourist centre, benefitting from its proximity to Harrogate, as well as becoming a popular spa town in its own right from the late 16th century. The Long Walk (NHLE: 1000132) was developed in the mid-18th century as a means to access the Dropping Well, which was first recorded in 1538 and known for its healing properties. The Long Walk runs along the River Nidd in between the High and Low Bridge, coming within 80 m of the Site's eastern boundary.
- 2.3.9 A system of turnpikes was completed across the area in 1777. The High Bridge (NHLE: 1004904) was constructed as part of this.



- 2.3.10 The 19th century continued to see the development of town, with 47 of the listed buildings dating to the period. The railway station was opened in 1851 on the Leeds to Thirsk line (NHLE: 1149912, 1248970, 1277673, 1315608, 1387760, 1149911), making the town more easily accessible for tourists. The original station building is located approximately 190 m to the north-west of the Site, with the railway line running south-west to north-east through the Study Area.
- 2.3.11 The only heritage asset relating to the modern period in the Study Area are a group of three telephone kiosks opposite Yorkshire Bank (NHLE: 1248968). Designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, these lie approximately 125 m north-east of the Site.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

3.1.1 The aims of the watching brief, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019) and as defined in the ClfA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), were:

- To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of the development or other works;
- To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard; and
- To guide, not replace, any requirement for contingent excavation or preservation of possible deposits.

3.2 Objectives

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the objectives of the watching brief, also defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019), were:

- To identify any deposits or structures associated with the construction, development and demolition of the castle;
- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
- To record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
- To place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- To make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results of the watching brief.



4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methodology set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

4.2.1 The watching brief monitored a single trial pit (c. 1 x 1 x 1 m) to investigate whether or not the sewer was damaged (Fig. 1, Plate 1).

4.2.2 The watching archaeologist monitored all excavations within the specified area. No archaeological deposits were encountered.

4.2.3 Spoil derived from excavation was visually scanned for the purposes of finds retrieval.

Recording

4.2.4 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Artefactual and environmental strategies

4.3.1 Appropriate strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of artefacts were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2019). The treatment of artefacts was in general accordance with: *Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b) and *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage 2011).

4.4 Monitoring

4.4.1 Sam Stein, on behalf of Historic England, monitored the watching brief.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 No archaeological deposits were encountered. Two layers of made ground were seen alongside a layer of topsoil likely disturbed by the sewer's original installation (Plate 1).

5.2 Soil sequence and natural deposits

5.2.1 Topsoil 1001 was a dark greyish brown silty sand with crushed brick. It occurred from the surface down to 0.42 m.

5.2.2 Modern (1901 to present)

5.2.3 Made ground 1002 was a silty sand rich in sandstone.

5.2.4 Made ground 1003 was a similar deposit with the sewer pipe at its base.



- 5.2.5 Both 1002 and 1003 can be interpreted as representing backfill relating to the sewer pipe's installation.

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

- 6.1.1 The only finds recovered were six sherds of modern (19th-/20th-century) pottery, comprising stoneware, refined whiteware and unglazed redware, from made ground 1002. These have not been retained.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary

- 7.1.1 No archaeological deposits were encountered.

7.2 Discussion

- 7.2.1 No archaeological deposits were encountered. No new damage to the monument's archaeological deposits or evidence was noted.

8 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 The archive resulting from the watching brief is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield. Harrogate Museums & Arts are not currently accepting archives.

8.2 Security copy

- 8.2.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

8.3 OASIS

- 8.3.1 An OASIS online record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) has been initiated, with key fields and a .pdf version of the final report submitted. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

9 COPYRIGHT

9.1 Archive and report copyright

- 9.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification.

- 9.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.



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APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: wessexar1-349207

Project details

Project name	Knaresborough Castle Relay, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire
Short description of the project	<p>Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Amey to undertake an archaeological watching brief on groundworks associated with the repair of a public sewer within the grounds of Knaresborough Castle as a condition of works set by Historic England. The watching brief was located in Castle Yard, the grounds directly north of the Knaresborough Castle ruins on the western edge of the town of Knaresborough (NGR 434931, 456911). The site was bounded to the west by the River Nidd with residential developments surrounding the site to the north, south and east. The area is now a public garden around the castle museum which has some steep undulating slopes although it generally slopes down to the river to the west. The area has various forms of vegetation and trees. A tree was growing directly over the current pipe. Knaresborough Castle likely dates to the 14th century and was used until significant damage was sustained in the English Civil War. Its remains are a scheduled ancient monument. The grade I listed Church of Saint John the Baptist and the grade II listed Court House Museum are both also nearby. The watching brief monitored a single trial pit (c. 1 x 1 x 1 m). The watching archaeologist monitored all excavations within the specified area. No archaeological deposits were encountered. The natural geology was not reached, and all excavation took place within the original sewer cut, with all deposits relating to that cut. No damage to the archaeological evidence of the scheduled ancient monument was noted.</p>
Project dates	Start: 10-04-2019 End: 10-04-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	218090 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	CASTLE Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTH YORKSHIRE HARROGATE KNARESBOROUGH Castle Yard, Knaresborough
Postcode	HG5 8AS
Study area	1 Square metres
Site coordinates	SE 34931 56910 54.006838816565 -1.466964183237 54 00 24 N 001 28 01 W Point



Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Amey Plc
Project design originator	Wessex archaeology
Project director/manager	John Winfer
Project supervisor	None
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Amey Plc

Project archives

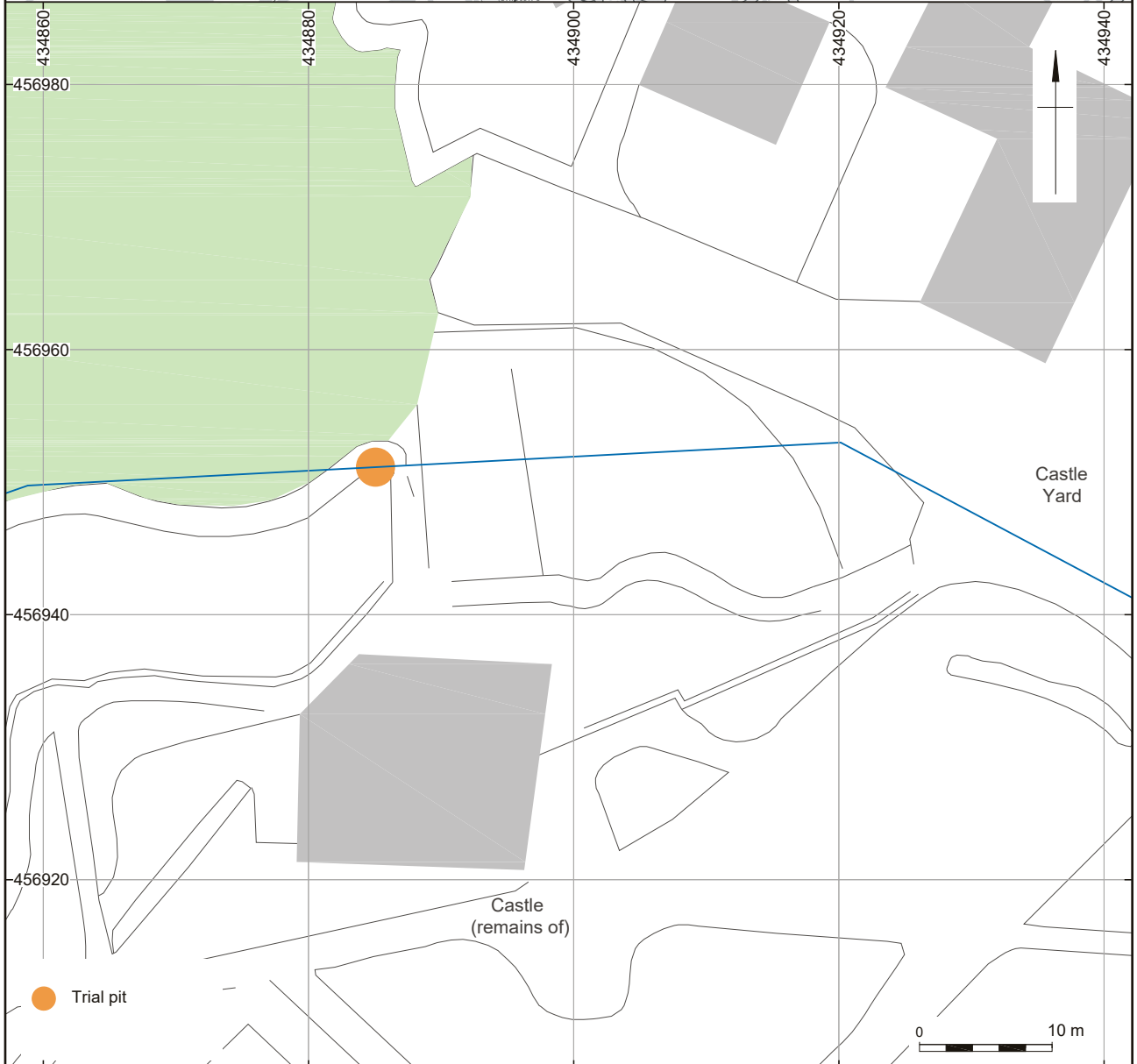
Physical Archive recipient	Harrogate Museums and Arts
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Harrogate Museums and Arts
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Harrogate Museums and Arts
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Report"


Project bibliography 1

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Site location and watching brief area

Figure 1



Plate 1: The monitored trial pit

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