
NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Client Report No. CP/366/06



**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF
AT
YORK HOUSE,
DALTON-ON-TEES,
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

NGR: NZ297079

**For
Marian Perry, York House**

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SUMMARY

In August 2006 North Pennines Archaeology Ltd undertook a watching brief on land located to the south east of York House, Dalton-on-Tees, North Yorkshire. The area of the watching brief lay within an area of Dalton-on-Tees demarcated as being of potential medieval archaeological interest. There was the strong possibility that the groundworks associated with the proposed sun room and patio would intrude on the archaeology present.

The fieldwork consisted of three days watching the stripping of topsoil/subsoil to natural followed by subsequent excavation of foundation trenches by mechanical excavator. No features of archaeological interest were uncovered within the area of the watching brief, though the presence of medieval pottery does mean that the potential for medieval archaeology in the area remains high.



Plate 1. The site, looking south, during excavation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

- 1.1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by North Pennines Archaeology Ltd on behalf of Marian Perry, York House, Dalton-on-Tees, North Yorkshire (NZ 297 079). The aim of the watching brief was to record any significant deposits uncovered during the stripping of ground and excavation of foundations for a proposed sun room and pool area extension to the rear of York House. The area of the groundworks lies in the area defined as being of medieval archaeological interest.
- 1.1.2 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document outlining the results of the archaeological recording undertaken during the watching brief.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Fieldwork

- 2.1.1 All fieldwork methodology was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), and generally accepted best practice.
- 2.1.2 All fieldwork was done in accordance with the Standard Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Limited Archaeological Recording, Version 1.3, January 2006 (North Yorkshire County Council).
- 2.1.3 All fieldwork was undertaken under the remit of North Yorkshire County Council's 'Guidance for Developers – Archaeological Work'.

2.2 Project Report and Archive

- 2.2.1 The report was produced in in accordance with the Standard Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Limited Archaeological Recording, Version 1.3, January 2006 (North Yorkshire County Council).
- 2.2.2 A full professional archive has been compiled accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (1991).

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Location

3.1.1 Dalton-on-Tees (NZ 295079) is located in the Richmondshire District of North Yorkshire just off the A167 between Darlington and Great Smeaton. York House is positioned in the eastern end of the village, as can be seen in *Figure 1*.

3.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.2.1 York House lies within the eastern edge of the historic core of the village, surrounded by evidence of medieval settlement and field systems.
- 3.2.2 The medieval settlement of Dalton upon Tees (National Monument Number 31367/02) lies immediately adjacent to the area of development.
- 3.2.3 Previous groundworks in the immediate area to York House has reported findings of worked stone and window tracery.
- 3.2.4 North of the application site lie well preserved ridge and furrow medieval field systems.
- 3.2.5 The site on which York House was built, according to the current owners, Mr and Mrs Perry, was originally a pond. The pond was excavated and the house built with a cellar added due to the depth necessary to find solid enough ground to build the house foundations. It can therefore be assumed that any archaeology within the footprint of the current house was destroyed during this process.
- 3.2.6 It is unknown if the construction of the Pool and Hot Tub foundations uncovered any archaeological structural or artefactual evidence.

4. WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

4.1 Watching Brief of Development Area Levelling



Plate 2. Northern section of site beyond pool area, showing limit of depth of excavation.



Plate 3. Site under excavation.

- 4.1.1 The fieldwork for this stage of the development took place on the 22nd and 23rd August 2006 with Tony Liddell of North Pennines Archaeology Ltd on site to watch and record the stripping of topsoil and subsoil by Richardson Construction.
- 4.1.2 The area watched can be seen in *Figure 2*.
- 4.1.3 Richardson Construction used a 360° CX50B mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket to strip the site to the required depth.
- 4.1.4 The area watched measured approximately 26m x 11m. Topsoil [100] was observed to a shallow depth of up to 5-10cm, where an indistinct subsoil [103] was observed to have a maximum depth of a further 15cm, though the majority of the subsoil merged with the topsoil with less than 5cm of distinct stratified topsoil. Both topsoil and subsoil contained innumerable modern finds, from dog toys to brick and modern glass and pottery. The subsoil also contained sherds of medieval pottery and some animal (horse) bone and post-medieval clay pipe.
- 4.1.5 At the eastern extent of the stripped area, natural clay [101] was uncovered showing no archaeological features of interest.
- 4.1.6 Immediately to the east of the house (and in the western and northern half of the stripped area), modern backfill [102] was observed beneath the subsoil, evidence of the removal and subsequent backfill of the pond that previously inhabited the site of York House.

This deposit was packed with modern items, from old metal gate hinges to dog toys, modern glass, brick, and domestic pottery.

4.1.7 No archaeological deposits or features were uncovered during the stripping of the site ready for initial stoning by Richardson Construction. However, in the area of the proposed building foundations in the northern end of the site, natural geology was not uncovered during the stripping, meaning that the area was subject to a further watching brief when the foundations were cut.

4.1.8 The following Contexts were categorised during the Watching Brief:

Context	Type	Description
100	Deposit	Topsoil and Turf. The topsoil is a dark brown clay loam (>20% clay) with frequent small stone inclusions plus modern material such as brick, field drain, modern household pottery sherds and modern domestic glass. 5-10cm thick.
101	Natural	Geological natural. Compact orange-brown clay with occasional small stone inclusions.
102	Deposit	Modern backfill associated with the construction of York House and the infill of the previous pond. Mixed clay and topsoil mix with numerous modern inclusions.
103	Deposit	Subsoil. Dark brown loam, shallow and indistinct in most places. 15cm maximum depth. Finds include medieval pottery, post-medieval clay pipe and horse bones.
104	Cut	Cut for the pond excavation containing modern refill [102]

Table 1: Context List

4.2 Watching Brief on Building Foundations



Plate 4. Foundation trench looking back west towards York House.



Plate 5. Foundation trench, looking east at curve of patio wall.

- 4.2.1 The fieldwork for this stage took place on the 30th of August 2006. The area watched included all levels where natural clay was not reached during the stripping of the site, including cuts through the present patio area.
- 4.2.2 The area of foundations watched can be seen in *Figure 2*.
- 4.2.3 The foundation trenches were cut to a depth of 0.35m into the natural underlying clay [101].
- 4.2.4 No features of archaeological interest were observed, and all finds observed during the foundation trenching were of modern origin.

4.3 Finds

- 4.3.1 The following finds of note were observed during the excavation using the mechanical excavator:

Context	Finds	Period
100	Domestic Pottery	Modern
	Domestic Glass	Modern
	Metalwork (specific eg. iron nails, gate hinge)	Modern
	Plastic (specific eg. 2 dog toys)	Modern
	Rubber (specific eg. dog pull)	Modern

	Other (specific eg. Champagne cork)	Modern
102	Brick Domestic Pottery Domestic Glass Metalwork (specific eg. iron nails, car-tow fitment) Paper/Plastic (specific eg. compost bags, bin bags)	Modern Modern Modern Modern Modern
103	Domestic Pottery (1 body sherd, 1 rim sherd, 1 handle) Animal Bones (Equine: 2 teeth, 1 rib, 1 astragalus)* Clay Pipe (2 stems) Glass (specific eg. medicine bottle) Metalwork (specific eg. iron bed spring)	Medieval Unknown Post-Medieval Modern Modern
*Animal Bones identified by Patricia Crompton B.Sc.		

Table 2: Finds list by Context



Plate 6. *During excavation through current patio.*



Plate 7. *Looking north during foundation excavation.*

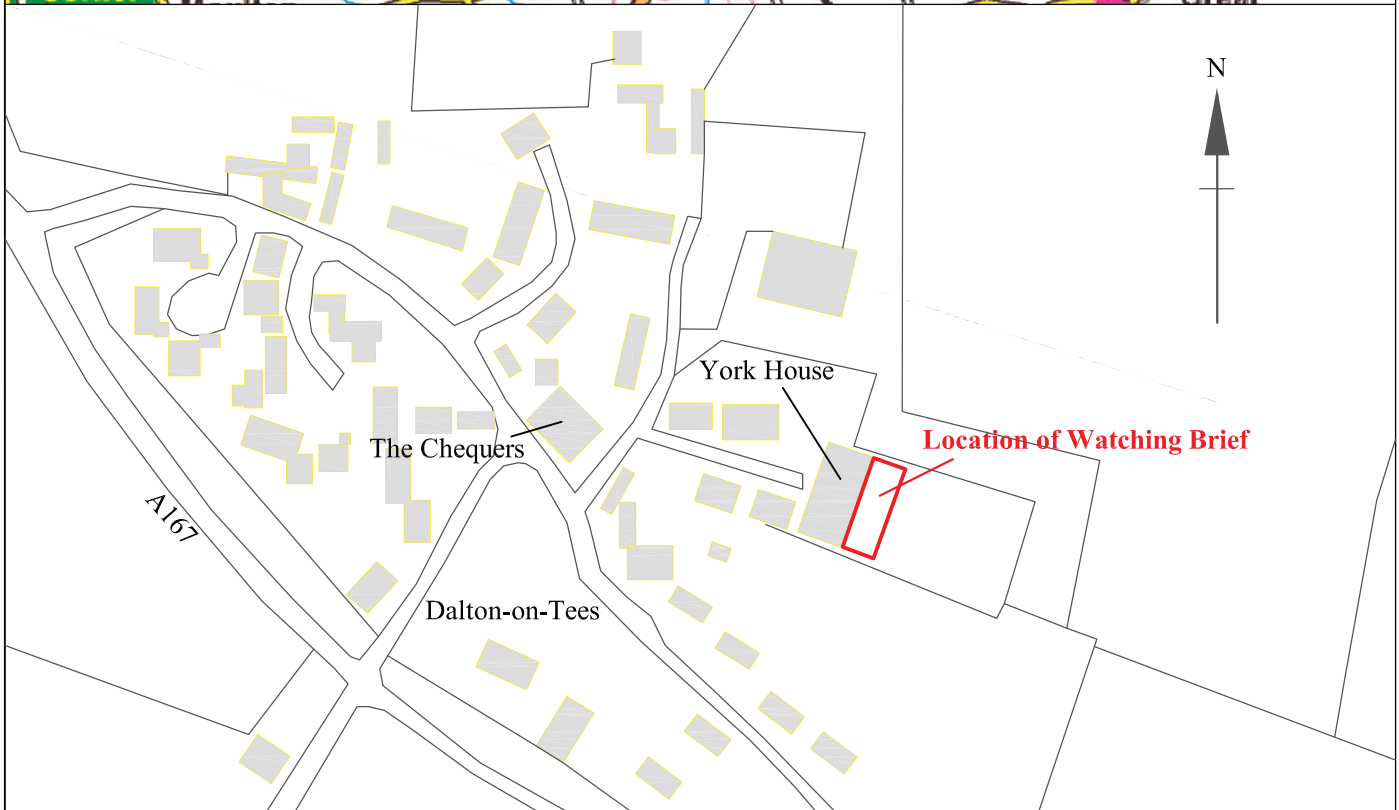
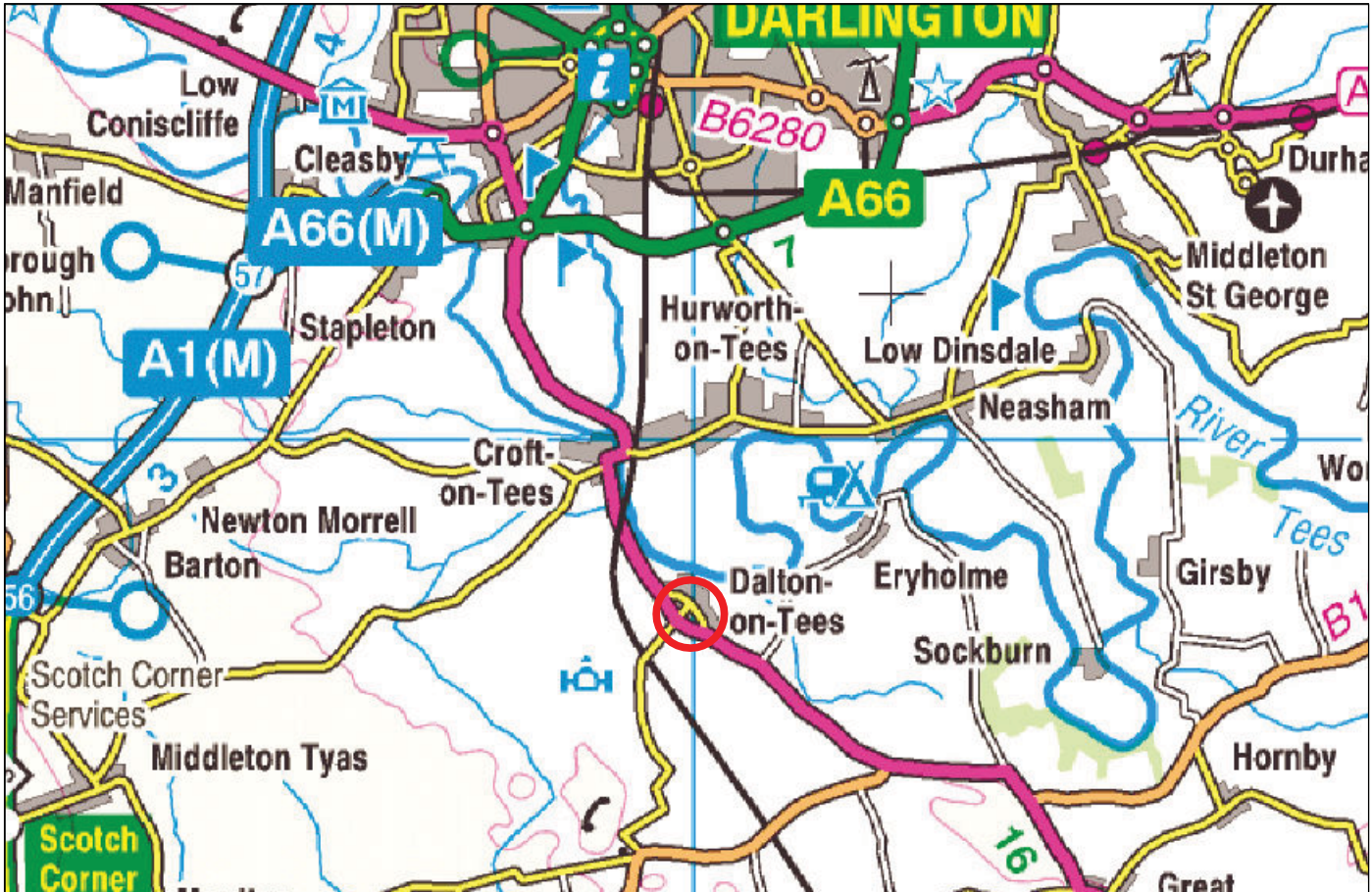
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

- 5.1.1 The watching brief encountered no features of an archaeological nature during the excavations associated with the extension to York House, with only a few archaeological finds discovered, though the pottery sherds did tie in with the medieval presence in the surrounding fields.
- 5.1.2 The archaeological potential of the surrounding area is high, and although no features of an archaeological nature were encountered during these groundworks, this can largely be explained by modern land-use of the area rather than by the lack of previous activity in the area. The potential for a medieval presence in the area remains high.

5.2 Recommendations

- 5.2.1 This watching brief was undertaken as a condition of planning permission advised by Richmondshire District Council Heritage Section. As no features of an archaeological nature were disturbed or encountered during the groundworks, no further archaeological intervention will be required.





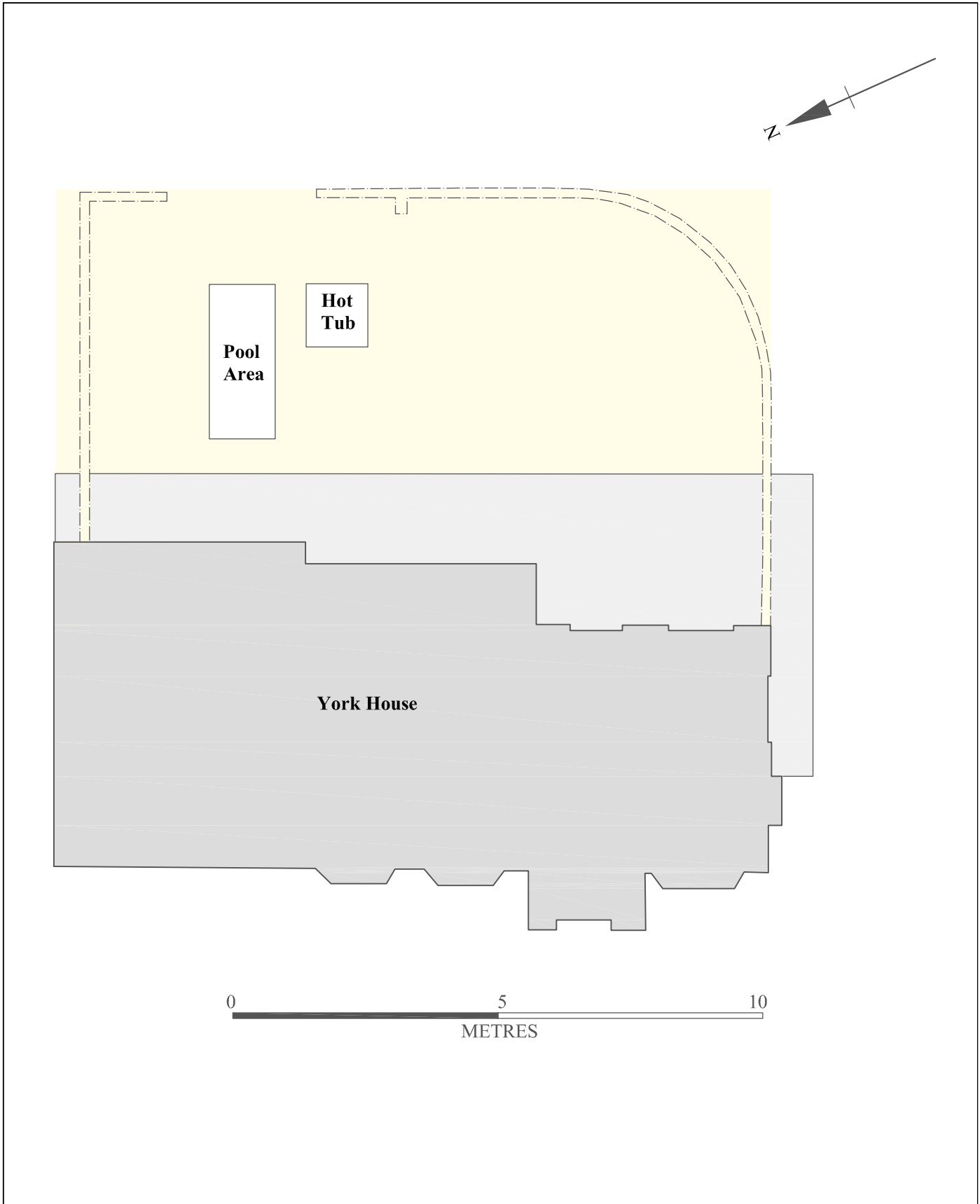
 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2006</p>	<p>PROJECT: York House Watching Brief</p> <p>SCALE: NA</p> <p>REPORT No: CP 366/06</p> <p>CLIENT: Marian Perry</p> <p>DRAWN BY: TL</p> <p>DATE: September 2006</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> Area of Watching Brief</p> <p><small>Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100014732</small></p>
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Figure 1: Location of Dalton-on-Tees and of the Watching Brief




 <p>North Pennines Archaeology Ltd 2006</p>	<p>PROJECT: York House Watching Brief</p> <p>SCALE: 1:50</p> <p>REPORT No: CP 366/06</p> <p>CLIENT: Marian Perry</p> <p>DRAWN BY: TL</p> <p>DATE: September 2006</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watching Brief Existing Patio York House <p style="font-size: small; text-align: right;">Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100014732</p>
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Figure 2 : Location of the Watching Brief at York House, Dalton-on-Tees