

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: THE WHITE SWAN HOTEL 2-16 PICCADILLY YORK

NGR: SE 6046 5172

on behalf of Crowther, Turnbull & Booth



Jonathan R. Hunn BA PhD FSA MIfA

January 2014

ASC: 1654/YWS/2



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Site Data

ASC site code:	YWS		Project no:	1654		
OASIS ref:	Archaeol2-16	5948	Event/Accession no:	tbc		
County:		York				
City:		York				
Civil Parish:		York				
NGR (to 8 figs):	2	SE 6046	5172			
Extent of watching b	orief area:	c.500sqn	1			
Present land use:]	Former h	otel			
Planning proposal:	(Change of use of existing ground floor retail units to either retail (class A1), office (class A2), restaurant/cafe (class A3) or drinking establishment (class A4) including extensions to rear; change of use of upper floors from hotel to residential accommodation (class C3) to form 18 new apartments; external alterations and associated work				
Local Planning Auth	ority:	York Cit	y Council			
Planning application	n ref:	13/02559/FULM				
Commissioned by:]	Crowther, Turnbull & Booth 41 St Paul's Street Leeds LS1 2JG				
Contact name:	:	Simon Guizzetti				

Internal Quality Check

Primary Author:	Jonathan Hunn	Date:	30 January 2014
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Revisions:		Date:	
Edited/Checked By:	Y II	Date:	30 January 2014
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CONTENTS

Su	mmary	.4
1.	Introduction	.4
2.	Aims & Methods	.6
3.	Archaeological & Historical Background	.7
4.	Results.	.9
5.	Conclusions	14
6.	Acknowledgements	15
7.	Archive	15
8.	References	16

Appendices:

1.	Monitoring Sheets	17
2.	Photo List	24
3.	ASC OASIS Form	25

Figures:

1.	General location	3
2.	Site plan	5
3.	Location of test pits	12
4.	Test pits and features	13

Plates:

Co	<i>Cover:</i> External elevation of the White Swan from the south western end of Pavement Street					
1.	Detail of TP1 looking east	11				
2.	Location of TP2 looking south	11				
3.	Detail of TP2 showing foundations of walls [17 & 18]	11				
4.	TP3 looking north west	11				
5.	Detail of TP4 view ESE	11				
6.	Detail of TP5 view WNW	11				

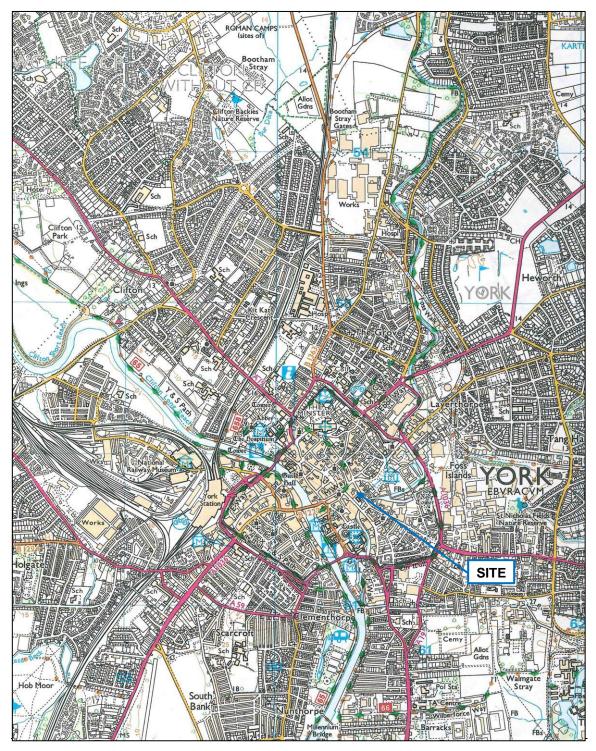


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In late January 2014 a programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken on a series of test-pits in the basement of the White Swan at 2-16 Piccadilly, York. Their primary objective was to establish the character and depth on five existing areas of foundations. None of these exceeded a depth greater than 0.75m and the remains uncovered were all of a late post-medieval period, most probably of 19th century date. The remains consisted of brick built walls, a possible sump, a possible cobble surface and a dark, semi organic horizon. Although tile, bone fragments and oyster shell were noted there was a complete absence of ceramic evidence that could be used for dating purposes.

1. Introduction

1.1 In January 2014 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief at a site at 2-16 Piccadilly, York. The project was commissioned by Crowther, Turnbull & Booth, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Rouse 2013), and approved by John Oxley, archaeological advisor (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), York City Council. The relevant planning application reference is 13/02559/FULM.

1.2 **Planning Background**

This watching brief was required under the terms of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

ASC is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *The Site*

1.4.1 Location & Description

The development site is located in the centre of the city of York, centred on NGR SE 6046 5172 (Fig. 1).

The site comprises an irregular plot of land, covered largely by a four-storey brick building. It is located on the corner of Coppergate and Piccadilly, and is bordered to the south by the Coppergate shopping centre (Fig. 2).

1.4.2 Topography & Geology

The soils of the site are recorded as urban and unsurveyed (Soil Survey 1983, U), but are likely to comprise drift alluvium, consisting of riverine deposits of clay, silt and sand, over Triassic sandstone and mudstone, and lower Jurassic mudstone (MOLA 2012).

1.4.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the change of use of the existing ground floor retail units to either retail (class A1), office (class A2), restaurant/cafe (class A3) or drinking establishment (class A4) including extensions to rear; change of use of the upper floors from hotel to residential accommodation (class C3) to form 18 new apartments; external alterations and associated works (Fig. 3).

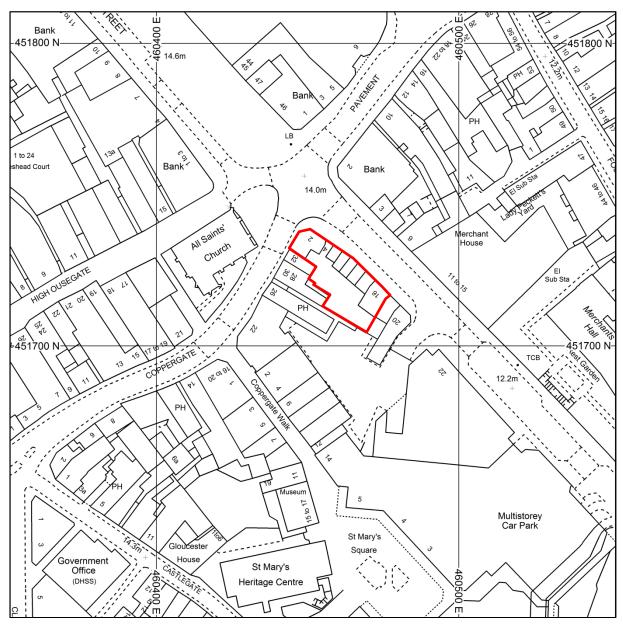


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

As described in the project design, the aims of the watching brief were:

• To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IfA 2008a & b) and *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2010), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2006), and to the relevant sections of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the project design, which described:

- Overburden stripping under archaeological supervision;
- Inspection of sub-soil for archaeological features;
- The excavation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits;
- Examination of any service and foundation trenches and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits;
- Rapid examination of spoil heaps for archaeological material;
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.

ASC's general watching brief methodology is described in detail in Sections 3.4 et seq.

2.4 *Constraints*

No constraints were experienced during the course of the implementation of the technical test pit programme.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods.

This section has been compiled with information from the Historic environment assessment (MOLA 2012) and ASC's library.

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before 600BC)

There is little evidence for Prehistoric activity within the city of York, with only a few chance finds of artefacts recorded within the vicinity of the site (MOLA 2012). However, it is known that by the Iron Age (600BC-AD43) the area was within the territory of the *Brigantes*, a tribe who favoured a more rural lifestyle, and tended to settle in small villages rather than towns.

3.4 **Roman** (AD43-c.450)

York, known as *Eburacum* during the Roman period, developed from a legionary fortress first constructed in AD71 on the order of Petilius Cerealis, the then Roman governor of Britain. The fortress was centred roughly on the same position that York Minster holds today, *c*.160m to the north west of the development site which would have fallen within the civilian settlement directly associated with the fortress (*ibid.*).

Excavations immediately to the south of the site, at 16-22 Coppergate, uncovered evidence for intense Roman activity, recording ditches, inhumations, cremations, building foundations and evidence for glass working and recycling (*ibid*.).

2.5 Saxon (c.450-866)

During the Saxon period, York was known as *Eoforwic*, with the suffix *wic* suggesting the settlement had become a trading settlement by at least the 8th and 9th centuries. Excavations suggest that activities such as metalworking, textile working and butchery took place outside of the walls of the former Roman settlement, the interior of which was reserved for high status occupation by the church and the town nobility. Parallels can be drawn here with other Saxon towns, such as London, Ipswich and Southampton.

Although the Anglian Minster church has never been accurately located, several other churches are thought to have their origins in this period, including All Saint's Church, Pavement, which is located across Coppergate, immediately to the west of the development site.

One of the most important finds dating to this period is the Coppergate helmet, found deliberately buried in a pit located approximately 40m to the south of the development site. One of the most important finds to be excavated within York, this iron helmet is covered by brass decorations, and has a Christian inscription which includes the name *Oshere*, presumably the owner of the helmet, and a possible dedication to All Saint's church. The helmet has been dated stylistically to c.AD750-780, potentially supporting the Saxon foundation date for All Saint's church.

2.6 Anglo-Scandinavian (AD866-1066)

In 866, York was attacked and captured by the Danish army, and remained under Danish control until the death of Erik Bloodaxe in 954. York was subsequently ruled by a series of earls, put in place by the kings of Wessex. The main route into the city which had been established during the Roman era was diverted during this period, so that the river crossing was in the position of the modern Ouse Bridge, c.100m to the west of the development site. The main axis through the town was subsequently formed by Micklegate, Ousegate, St Saviorgate and Pavement, placing the development site close to the main thoroughfare in this period.

The aforementioned Coppergate excavations, adjacent to the site, revealed evidence that a variety of crafts were taking place on the site, including wood, metal, leather and bone working and jewellery making. Alongside the more industrial finds were everyday objects, such as cloth fragments and gaming pieces, and timber structures, preserved in great detail by the conditions of the area. Evidence of structures was also recorded, and similar buildings have been found at Hungate, *c*.200m to the north east of the site (Yorkshire Archaeological Trust 2009).

2.7 *Medieval* (1066-1500)

Two motte and bailey castles were established in York on the east and west banks of the Ouse in 1068 by William the Conqueror, in order to suppress local uprisings. The construction of the eastern castle, *c*.150m to the south east of the development site, involved the damming of the River Foss, and caused the river to encroach towards the development site. However, the land began to be reclaimed from the 12th century onwards, following a process of land-raising and reclamation dumping. This has been documented on the 16-22 Coppergate site, and it seems likely that similar events will be encountered on the development site. The remains of buildings dating from the 11th to the 17th century were recorded on the Coppergate site, and the proximity of All Saint's church suggests that the development site was continuously utilised during the medieval period.

2.8 **Post-Medieval** (1500-1900)

As previously mentioned, buildings dating to the 17th century are known from the Coppergate site, and further buildings such as 26 Coppergate and the Merchant Adventurer's Hall have their origins in the medieval period, but were refurbished in the post medieval period. The earliest map of the site dates to the beginning of the 17th century, and shows that Picadilly had yet to be constructed, and no buildings were located behind the Coppergate frontage. The White Swan first appears on an Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1852, and has associated outbuildings, a cistern and pump to the rear. However, documentary evidence records that there was a public house on the site from the early 18th century (MOLA 2012).

2.9 *Modern* (1900-present)

The earliest 20th century OS map shows there was little change to the site from the end of the post medieval period. However, the construction of Picadilly between 1911 and 1912 heralded the demolition of the White Swan and the construction of the current building. The basement of the hotel became a night club but this is believed to have closed sometime in the late 1980's (Mick Mann *pers. comm.*)

4. **Results**

- 4.1 Five test pits were monitored during the present project. These are numbered 1 to 5 and are described in sequential order (Fig. 3):
- 4.2 **Test-pit 1**

Location: westernmost test pit against existing wall and buttress (Figs 3 & 4)

Plate: 1

Dimensions: 1.2m x 0.75m x 0.75m deep.

Contexts: [1 to 14]

Description: the northern side of this trench was defined by a buttress [1] while its eastern side was defined by a wall [2]. Overlying this was a brick-built wall [5] set at a slightly oblique angle to [1 & 2]. [5] was 0.45m wide and consisted of three courses of brick some 0.21m thick and bonded with a greyish brown, black flecked mortar; it appeared to be associated with a brick off-set [6]. On the same alignment and possibly associated, was another brick built wall [4]; this was 0.3m wide and had a smooth external 'veneer' on its western side. It is difficult to account for this as the surface of [5] did not have any kind of finished course, such as might be associated with a water culvert of some kind. Wall 4 was cut by a small pit [3] which appeared to be associated with a lightning cable. To the west of brick built walls [4-6] were a series of features which appear to be parallel to wall [2] as follows: [10] was a single row of laid bricks overlying [7, 8 & 9]; [10] was mostly removed during the course of the investigation and only a small portion was recorded on Fig. 4). [7] consisted of bricks lying on the edge of [11] with which they may have been associated. [8] was a bonded row of unshaped limestone that may also have been associated with a smooth brown silty clay [9] on its northern side. To the west of [7] was what may have been some kind of sump [11] being defined by [7 & 8]. This contained black, sticky, semiorganic clay [13]. Contexts [6-11] lay beneath a clay and broken brick matrix (12). The present concrete floor (14) 50mm thick sealed everything (see section on Fig. 4).

Dating: Although there were no finds, the brickwork suggests a possible late Victorian re-build of the White Swan Hotel.

4.3 **Test-pit 2**

Location: This was *c*.1m west of TP1, up against walls [16-18] (Fig. 4).

Plate: 2

Dimensions: 1.04 x 0.7 x 0.37m deep.

Contexts: (15) was a black, semi-organic silty deposit containing occasional limestone and building fragments.

Description: The foundations of the existing walls were *c*.0.12m thick, overlying (15).

Dating: post-medieval

4.4 **Test-pit 3**

Location: approximately 4m north of TP2, at the junction of walls [27 & 29] (Figs 3 & 4)

Plate: 4

Dimensions: 1.18 x 0.75 x 0.5m deep

Contexts: 25-31

Description: within this trench were the following contexts: [25] was a brick-built wall of which only a small portion was exposed; it was orientated NE-SW and appears to have overlain [26]; this comprised a concrete and tile foundation some 0.45m wide beyond the edge of wall [25]. To the NW of this was a band of dark brown silt in which there appeared to be cobbles [31]. Over this lay the existing wall [27] which in turn rested on a concrete foundation [28] of varying width (0.25 to 0.35m wide and 0.15m thick).[29] was a NW-SE wall 1.2m x 0.36m wide). The modern concrete floor was up to 0.2m thick and proved difficult to break.

Dating: 19th/20th century footings

4.5 **Test-pit 4**

Location: Some 4-5m NNE of TP3, within the former boiler room (Figs 3 & 4).

Plate: 5

Dimensions: 1.05 x 0.5 x 0.15m deep.

Contexts: (23)

Description: The foundations were less than 0.15m deep and extend downwards onto dark brown semi-organic clay/silt (23). This contained occasional tile fragments, bone and oyster shell, daub and limestone fragments.

Dating: post-medieval

4.6 **Test-pit 5**

Location: About 1.5m north of TP4 (Fig. 4)

Plate: 6

Dimensions: *c*.1.0 x 0.65 x 0.2m deep.

Contexts: (24)

Description: The foundations were the same as TP4. The exposed ground within the trench comprised dark brown waterlogged silt (240 similar to (23), only waterlogged.

Dating: post-medieval



Plate 1: Detail of TP1 looking east



Plate 2: Location of TP2 looking south



Plate 3: detail of TP2 showing foundations of walls [17 & 18]



Plate 5: Detail of TP4 view ESE



Plate 4: TP3 looking north west



Plate 6: detail of TP5 view WNW



Figure 3: Location of test pits (scale 1:250)

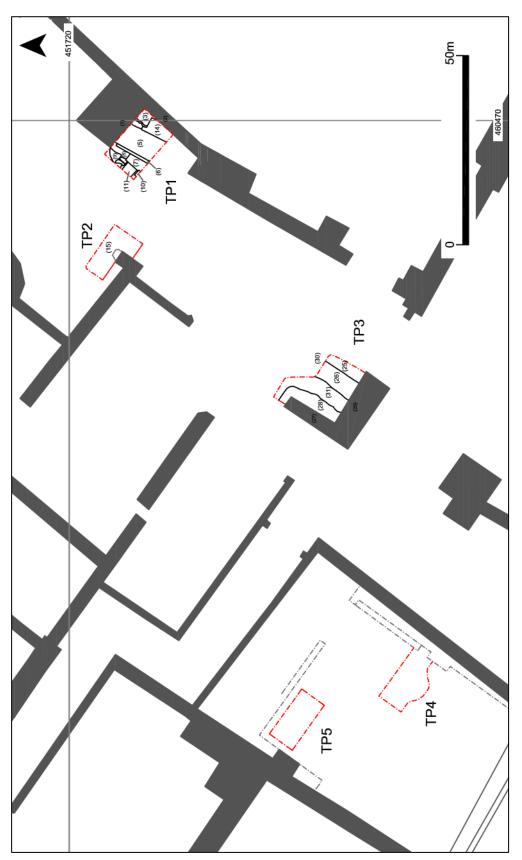


Figure 4: Test pits and features (scale 1:75)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The purpose of the five test pits was to establish the depths of the existing foundations for the purpose of determining the engineering requirements for the modern structure. In TP1 and TP3 the foundation depth was never established as these overlay existing foundations. In TP2, 4 and 5 they were no more than 0.15m deep on ground that was predominantly dark and semi waterlogged. The structural evidence exposed in TP1 and TP3 was all post-medieval and most probably belonged to the second half of the 19th century. As for the various deposits (13, 15, 23 and 24) these are likely to predate the 19th century but are most probably likely to belong to the late post-medieval period.
- 5.2 The area of the current test pits was relatively restricted so that it is not possible to interpret the small amount of information that was recorded. However, what is clear is that the current site contains a rich abundance of post-medieval urban remains.

6. Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Simon Guizzetti on behalf of Crowther, Turnbull & Booth. The project was monitored by John Oxley on behalf of the local planning authority (York City Council). Thanks are also due to Richard Clarkson (site manager) for his cooperation and assistance.

The project was managed for ASC by Jonathan Hunn BA PhD FSA MIfA. Fieldwork was carried out by the author. The report was prepared by Jonathan Hunn and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA FSA MIfA.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The project archive will comprise:
 - 1. Project Design
 - 2. Initial Report
 - 3. List of photographs
 - 4. CDROM with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with York Museum.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- IFA 2008 Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology.
- IFA 2008a Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs. Institute for Archaeologists (Reading).
- IFA 2009 Standards & Guidance for Archiving Archaeological Projects. Institute for Archaeologists (Reading)
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct.
- Rouse C 2013 The White Swan Hotel, 2-16 Piccadilly, York. Project Design for Archaeological watching brief. ASC doc ref 1654/YWS/1

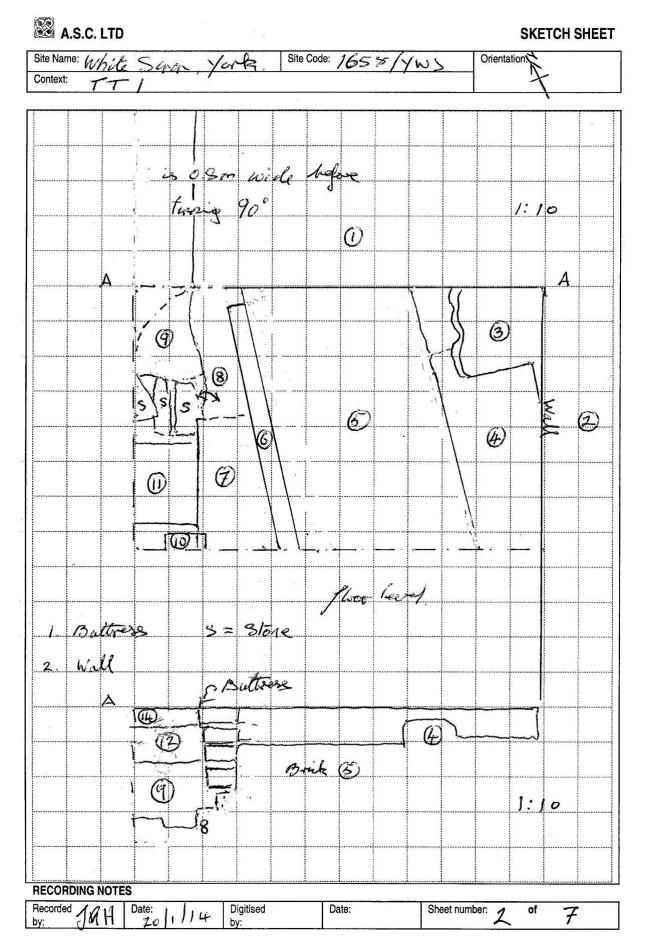
Secondary Sources

BGS British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology.

- MOLA 2012 White Swan Hotel, 2-18 Piccadilly, York YO1 9NU: Historic Environment Assessment (Museum of London Archaeology)
- Soil Survey 1983 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend (Harpenden).
- Yorkshire Archaeological Trust 2009 "The Vikings come to Hungate" in *Yorkshire Archaeology Today* **16** (Yorkshire Archaeological Trust)

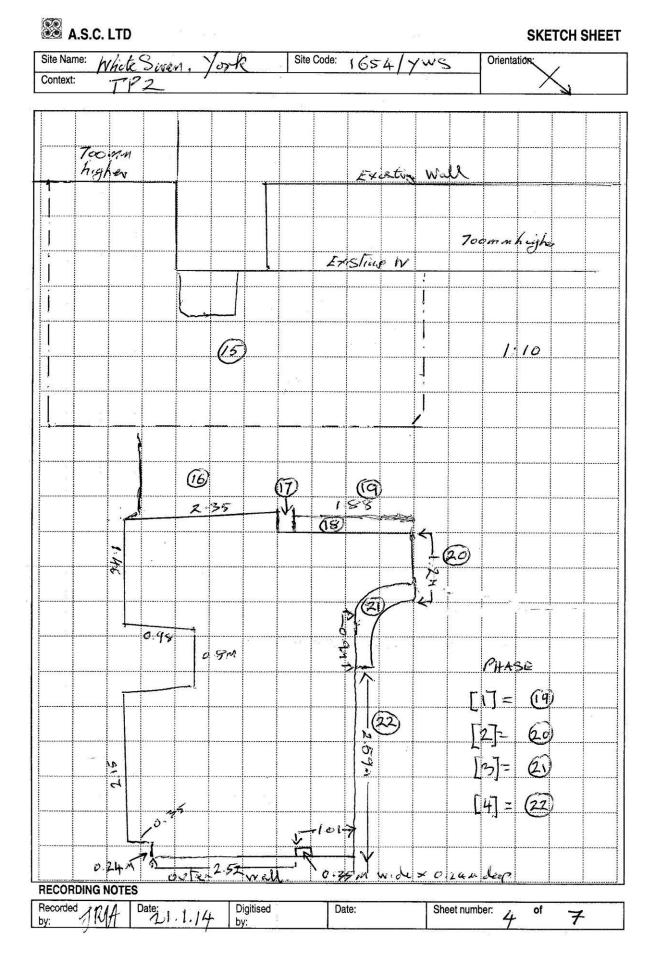
Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

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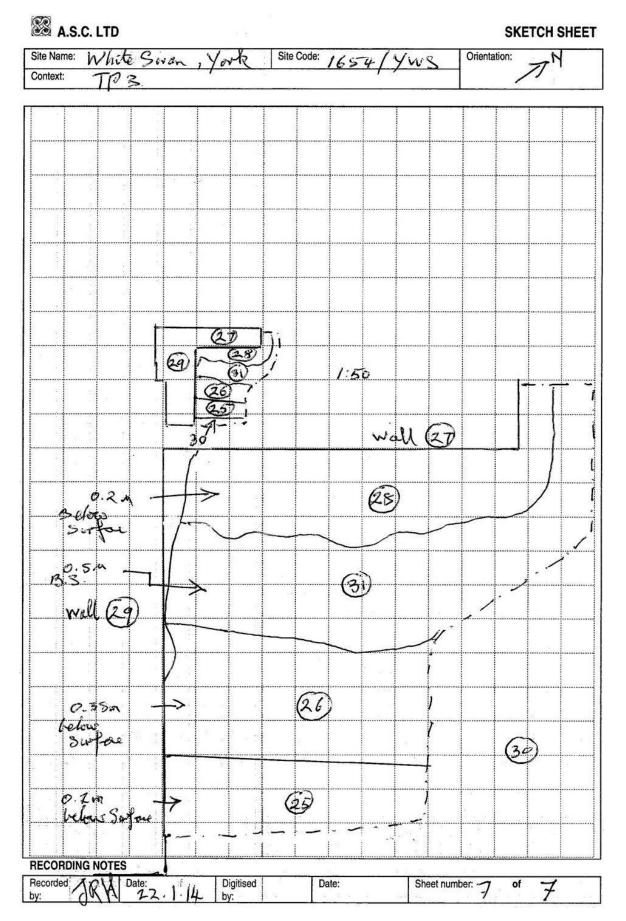
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Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAM	IE: White	Swan 2-	16 Piccadilly, York SITE NO/CODE: 1654/YWS				
Shot	B&W Digital Subject						
1		5487	TP1 looking north with brickwall [10] still in situ				
2		5490	TP1 view north with s. facing section with wall [10] removed				
3		5491	Detail of wall [5]				
4		5492	TP1 view south of N facing section with partly removed				
5		5493	TP1 view west showing possible sump [11]				
6		5494	TP1 detail of wall [4] view east				
7		5495	Location of TP2 view south (plate 2)				
8		5496	Detail of ditto, oblique view				
9		5497	Ditto, straight on				
10		5498	TP1 – overall view looking east.				
11		5499	Detail of TP1 looking east (plate 1)				
12		5500	Oblique view of TP2 (=5497)				
13		5001	Detail of TP2 showing foundations of walls [17] and [18] (Plate 3)				
14		5002	Wall elevations [17-19] view south west				
15		5003	Wall elevations [20] view NW				
16		5004	Wall elevations [21-22] view west				
17		5005	TP4 view ESE				
18		5006	Detail of TP4 view ESE (Plate 5)				
19		5007	TP5 view WNW				
20		5008	TP5 detail of WNW view				
21		5009	Detail of TP5 looking WNW (Plate 6)				
22		5011	Work underway on TP3				
23		5512	External view of existing state of White Swan looking SSE				
24		5513	TP3 looking SW				
25		5514	Detail of ditto				
26		5516	SE facing section below wall [27]				
27		5517	TP3 view NW (Plate 4)				
28		5518	TP3 view SE				
29		5519	General location of TP3 behind and to left of entrance towards TP1 & TP2				
30		5520	Detail of enlarged pier in basement				

PROJECT DETAILS									
Project Name:	White Swan, 2-16 Piccadilly, Yor	k	OASIS reference:	Archaeol2-165948					
Short Description:	In late January 2014 a programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken on a series of test-pits in the basement of the White Swan at 2-16 Piccadilly, York. Their primary objective was to establish the character and depth on five existing areas of foundations. None of these exceeded a depth greater than 0.75m and the remains uncovered were all of a late post-medieval period, most probably of 19 th century date. The remains consisted of brick built walls, a possible sump, a possible cobble surface and a dark, semi organic horizon. Although tile, bone fragments and oyster shell were noted there was a complete absence of ceramic evidence that could be used for dating purposes.								
Project Type:	Watching brief		-						
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none		Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	none					
Current land use:	Early 20th century commercial bu	ilding	Future work: (yes/no/unknown)	Watching brief phase 2					
Monument type:	Hotel		Monument period:	Edwardian					
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none								
	PROJECT								
County:	Yorkshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)		SE 6046 5172					
Site address: (+ postcode if known)	Y01 9NU								
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	3.5 sq. m.Height OD: (metres)c. 30m								
	PROJECT	CREATO	RS						
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consu	ultancy Ltd							
Project brief originator:	John Oxley	Project	design originator:	Calli Rouse					
Project Manager:	Jonathan Hunn	Director	/Supervisor:	Jonathan Hunn					
Sponsor / funding body:	Crowther, Turnbull & Booth								
		CT DATE							
Start date:	20.1.14	End dat	e:	23.1.14					
	PROJECT	ARCHIVE	ES						
	Location (Accession no.)	Content	t (eg. pottery, animal	bone, files/sheets)					
Physical:	York Museum	none							
Paper:	WSI, plans, site notes, report								
Digital: CD with all digital files									
BIBLIOGR/	APHY (Journal/monograph, publis	hed or for	thcoming, or unpublish	ned client report)					
Title:	Watching Brief: White Swan Hote	el, 2-16 Pic	ccadilly, York						
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1654/YWS/2								
Author(s):	Jonathan R. Hunn								
Page nos	25	Date: 30.January 2014							