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Wetherby Health Centre
St James Street
Wetherby
West Yorkshire

Archaeological Evaluation

September 2010

Report No. 2115

CLIENT
Walter Thompson (Contractors) Ltd

**Wetherby Health Centre
St James Street
Wetherby
West Yorkshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

Summary

An archaeological evaluation comprising trial trenching was undertaken at a site adjacent to St James parish church in the centre of Wetherby prior to its redevelopment as a residential care home. The site is thought to have been quarried for sands and gravels in the late 1920s during the course of which significant Roman remains comprising ditches, pits and burials were encountered. However, the extent of the extraction was not fully documented. The evaluation has conclusively demonstrated that the gravel extraction extended across the whole of the northern part of the site with made ground deposits identified in all seven trenches in this area. The quarrying did not appear to have extended into the southern part of the site where the buried remains of a wall were identified, parallel and immediately south of, the existing boundary wall. Although no archaeological features or deposits were identified here the potential remains for the survival of archaeological features in this (southern) part of the site.



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Report Information

Client: Walter Thompson (Contractors) Ltd
Address: Construction House, High Street, Northallerton, North
Yorkshire, DL7 8ED
Report Type: Archaeological Evaluation
Location: St James Street, Wetherby
County: West Yorkshire
Grid Reference: SE 4031 4837
Period(s) of activity
represented: Post-medieval?
Report Number: 2115
Project Number: 3612
Site Code: CDW10
Planning Application No.: 10/01593/FU
Museum Accession No.: -
Date of fieldwork: August 2010
Date of report: September 2010
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Authorisation for
distribution: _____



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ISOQAR ISO 9001:2008
Cert. No. 125QM8003

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1 Introduction

Archaeological Services WYAS (ASWYAS) were commissioned by Mr Andrew Pattullo of ARP Design Ltd on behalf of Walter Thompson (Contractors) Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at Wetherby Health Centre in advance of the redevelopment of the site for a residential care home and sheltered accommodation. A total of nine trenches were excavated across the site.

Site location, topography and land use

The site, centred at SE 4031 4837, is situated in the centre of Wetherby, immediately west of St James' parish church (see Fig. 1). It forms two distinct parts separated by a dry stone wall. To the north is the Health Centre which is surrounded by tarmac parking bays and a small grassed area. South of the wall is a patch of overgrown rough pasture. As a whole the site is bounded to the east by the church graveyard, the New Inn pub car park to the south and a ginnel to the west beyond which is St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, council buildings and a car park. A small portion of the site fronts onto St James Street (see Fig. 2).

The site covers an area of approximately 3700m² and is flat at approximately 28m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

Soils and geology

The underlying solid geology of the site is recorded as Permian Cadeby Formation of Dolostone, (Magnesian Limestone) overlain by moraine deposits of stony clay and stony sandy clay with sand and gravels (British Geological Survey 2003). The soils in the area are in an unrecorded urban area.

2 Archaeological and Historical Background

Wetherby is situated within a landscape with extensive evidence of Iron Age and Roman activity as indicated by cropmarks and proven through numerous excavations. Excavation at Dalton Parlours, approximately 4km south of Wetherby, revealed ditched enclosures, roundhouses, storage pits and four-post structures, followed by a Roman villa. The excavations at Wattle Syke in 1990 and 2007 have also identified extensive Iron Age settlement followed by later Roman occupation.

The current site itself appears to have been extensively quarried during the 1920s although the precise extent is not known. An article in the Yorkshire Archaeology Journal (Kent and Clark 1934) reported that eleven articulated burials were discovered during the course of the gravel extraction between 1928 and 1930. Two of the burials were located within cists formed from stone roofing slates most likely from a late or sub-Roman building. The article also reported that several shallow ditches, gullies and pits, from which Roman pottery and

animal bones were recovered, were also present suggesting that this may have been an intensively occupied area. Four 4th century coins were also recovered.

3 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the evaluation was to gather sufficient information to establish the extent, condition, character and date (as far as circumstances permit) of any archaeological features and deposits within the development area.

Specifically the evaluation sought to verify the limits of the gravel extraction in the northern part of the site and determine whether the southern portion of the site had also been subject to quarrying.

4 Methodology

The evaluation comprised the excavation of nine trial trenches, each 10m by 2m, with a combined area of 180m². The trenches were positioned to evaluate as much of the site as possible and give as complete picture as possible of the deposits across the whole site.

Some of the trenches had to be moved slightly from the positions proposed in the Specification in order to avoid blocking access and/or to avoid creating a health and safety risk. The trench locations were then surveyed using a 5500 Geodimeter total station and tied into local permanent features and the Ordnance Survey national grid.

All work was carried out in accordance with accepted professional standards and guidelines (Institute for Archaeologists 2008) and in accordance with ASWYAS site recording manual (ASWYAS 2003) to the requirements of the Specification (see Appendix 3). The trenches were opened in a controlled manner using a mechanical excavator (JCB) fitted with a flat bladed bucket under direct archaeological supervision. All topsoil and made ground deposits were removed in level spits not exceeding 0.2m. Machining was stopped at the first identifiable archaeological horizon or at natural deposits. Sondages were excavated in several trenches in order to clarify the nature of the deposits. All excavation of archaeological deposits was undertaken manually.

All identified archaeological features were accurately recorded in plan at a scale of 1:50. Feature sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All plans and sections also include spot heights that relate to Ordnance Datum in metres.

The evaluation took place between August 3rd and August 6th 2010. An inventory of the primary archive is presented in Appendix 1, and a concordance of contexts is presented in Appendix 2. A copy of the specification is presented in Appendix 3. ASWYAS currently hold the site archive in a stable and secure location.

5 Results

Trench 1 (Fig. 2 and Plate 1)

Trench 1 was located north of the health centre building in an area of tarmac. In order to maintain access to domestic residences and a funeral directors the trench had to be moved as close as possible to the health centre. Two service pipes and a large concrete capped pipe were present preventing any excavation in excess of 0.65m below ground level although made ground was encountered at this level.

Table 1. Sample section of Trench 1.

Sample section: East end, south facing (0.00 = 28.23m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 10m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
103	0.00 – 0.15m	Tarmac surface
104	0.15 – 0.50m	Limestone hardcore bedding for 103
108	0.50 – 0.65m	Loose layer of limestone backfill also bedding for 103
105	0.65m+	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black with limestone inclusions and rubble

Trench 2 (Fig. 2 and Plate 2)

Trench 2 was located along the north-eastern side of the health centre. The trench was shortened by 2m at its eastern end due to the presence of gas and electric services. The western part of the trench also contained modern drains with a large concrete covered pipe running north to south, 3.8m from the western edge of the trench. A sondage was excavated down to a depth of 1.53m below the ground surface in the centre of the trench. This was excavated through several layers of made ground and dump deposits that are interpreted as quarry backfill. Natural deposits were not reached.

Table 2. Sample section of Trench 2.

Sample section: Central part of trench, north facing (0.00 = 28.22m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 8m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
103	0.00 – 0.08m	Tarmac surface
104	0.08 – 0.38m	Limestone hardcore bedding for 103
108	0.38 – 0.63m	Loose layer of limestone backfill also bedding for 103
105	0.63 – 1.43	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black with limestone inclusions and rubble
109	1.43 – 1.53	Thin sandy layer, dump deposit
110	1.53+	Dark purple, black industrial cinder waste

Trench 3 (Fig. 2 and Plate 3)

Trench 3 was located against the eastern boundary of the site against the graveyard boundary wall. This trench had to be shortened to allow access and car parking for adjacent businesses. The northern part of the trench was, however, excavated down to a mid brown clayey sandy

deposit 2.00m below the ground surface. This deposit has been interpreted as a natural layer although close *in situ* inspection was not possible due to the friable nature of the deposits and the restricted access.

Table 3. Sample section of Trench 3.

Sample section: North end, east facing (0.00 = 27.98m aOD)		
Orientation: N/S		Dimensions: 5m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
103	0.00 – 0.15m	Tarmac surface
104	0.15 – 0.50m	Limestone hardcore bedding for 103
105	0.50 – 1.30m	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black with limestone inclusions and rubble
115	1.30 – 2.00	Greyish brown sandy silty clay contains limestone inclusions and cobbles
102	2.00+	Mid yellowish brown sandy deposit – possibly natural?

Trench 4 (Fig. 2 and Plate 4)

Trench 4 was located immediately south of the health centre as close as possible to the building in order to reduce disruption. The trench was excavated down to a depth of 1.40m below the current ground surface along its whole length exposing made ground and dump deposits infilling the old quarry workings. No deeper excavation was possible as the upper deposits 115 contained an abundance of unconsolidated material that collapsed part of the northern section of the trench.

Table 4. Sample section of Trench 4.

Sample section: East end, North facing (0.00 = 28.34m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 10m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
103	0.00 – 0.05m	Tarmac surface
104	0.05 – 0.30m	Limestone hardcore bedding for 103
105	0.30 – 0.60m	Made ground deposit with intermittent bands of sandy material
115	0.60 – 0.75	Greyish brown sandy silty clay contains limestone inclusions and cobbles
116	0.75 – 0.95	Mid brown stony clay
117	0.95 – 1.40+	Black made ground deposit with abundant gravels

Trench 5 (Fig. 2 and Plate 5)

Trench 5 was moved from its proposed location on the tarmac area onto the grassed area to avoid blocking access for parking. The trench was also moved to confirm if the quarrying extended as far as the current boundary wall that separates the two parts of the development area.

The whole trench was excavated to 1.2m below the current ground level with a sondage excavated at the eastern end of the trench to a depth of 2.7m. A small area of possible natural material was identified at the base of the sondage, but only along the southern side. This may

indicate a stepped area or banked area along the edge of the former extraction zone. The remainder of the trench contained dumped deposits comprising limestone material overlying a mid reddish brown unconsolidated brick. These deposit were sealed by the made ground deposit 105. All deposits are interpreted as quarry backfill.

Table 5. Sample section of Trench 5.

Sample section: East end, south facing (0.00 = 28.34m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 10m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
100	0.00 – 0.30	Topsoil
113	0.30 – 0.40	Tarmac / concrete surface
105	0.40 – 2.70	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black with limestone inclusions and brick rubble
103	2.70+	Natural deposit?

Trench 6 (Fig. 2 and Plate 6)

Trench 6 was located in the grassed area to the south of the health centre. The western half was excavated to 1.30m below the current ground level with the eastern half taken down to 2.40m below the ground surface. Once again only layers of made ground were uncovered with a tarmac and concrete surface identified just below the topsoil. The remainder of the deposits are interpreted as layers of backfill material. Natural deposits were not encountered.

Table 6. Sample section of Trench 6.

Sample section: East end, South facing (0.00 = 28.34m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 10m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
100	0.00 – 0.40	Topsoil
113	0.40 – 0.60	Tarmac / concrete surface
105	0.60 – 1.70	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black with limestone inclusions and rubble
111	1.70 – 2.00	Layer of limestone material dump, sandwiched between made ground deposits
105	2.00 – 2.40	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black
112?	2.40+	Dark brown stony clay exposed but not excavated

Trench 7 (Fig. 2 and Plate 7)

Trench 7 was located on the western side of the development area immediately east of the public footpath known as *The Ginnel* and to the north of the stone boundary wall that runs east/west across the site. The trench was excavated down to a depth of 1.2m with a sondage down to 2.5m at the southern end of the trench. The sondage revealed a redeposited subsoil layer overlying a sandy deposit that may have been truncated or disturbed natural. Close investigation was not possible due to the depth of the trench.

Table 7. Sample section of Trench 7.

Sample section: East end, south facing (0.00 = 28.60m aOD)		
Orientation: N/S		Dimensions: 10m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
100	0.00 – 0.20	Topsoil
113	0.20 – 0.35	Tarmac / concrete surface
105	0.35 – 0.85	Made ground deposit. Dark grey to black with limestone inclusions and rubble
118	0.85 – 1.80	Brown sandy silt subsoil, buried soil layer
102	1.80 – 2.50+	Yellow brown medium sand, possibly natural.

Trench 8 (Figs. 2 and 3; Plates 8, 9 and 10)

Trench 8 was located in the overgrown area in the southern part of the site. The northern end of the trench butted up against the extant stone boundary wall (106). The remains of an earlier boundary wall were encountered 1m below the current ground surface immediately south of the current boundary wall. In order to ensure safe working the northern end of the trench was stepped out to the west to enable safe investigation of this feature. The wall was aligned east/west, was constructed from un-bonded limestone and is interpreted as the boundary to the former gravel extraction area. The wall was 0.90m wide and at least 1.50m deep although its full extent was not determined due to collapse during excavation of deposits on the northern side of the feature. A slight step was recorded, 0.45m from the top of the exposed wall, and appears to form a type of foundation. The lower part of the wall was also notably rougher and more coarsely constructed.

To the north of the wall a sondage was excavated to a depth of 2.8m from the current ground level. This revealed topsoil 0.60m thick beneath which was a stony subsoil 1.10m thick that contained an abundance of modern pot and animal bone. This was in turn above a deposit of large pebbles/cobbles (108) between 0.1m and 0.3m in size. About 1m of this deposit was excavated out before it collapsed, undermining part of the northern section, therefore prohibiting any further excavation.

The stratigraphy in the southern half of the trench followed a similar pattern with topsoil and subsoil overlying the natural gravels/pebbles encountered at 1.70m below the ground surface.

Table 8. Sample section of Trench 8.

Sample section: South end, west facing (0.00 = 28.13m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 10m by 2m with a stepped area 6m by 4m to allow safe access to wall 106
Context	Depth	Description
100	0.00 – 0.60	Topsoil
101	0.60 – 1.70	Subsoil deposit. Very thick deposit maybe product of stockpiling subsoil from quarried area to north
102	1.70+	Mid brown sandy gravels with thin sandy interface to subsoil 1101- natural deposits

Trench 9 (Fig. 2 and Plate 11)

Trench 9 was also located in the overgrown patch of land to the south of the development site. Only topsoil and subsoil deposits were exposed within this trench with natural gravels encountered between 1.40m and 1.65m below ground level. No archaeology was exposed within the trench.

Table 9. Sample section of Trench 9.

Sample section: South end, west facing (0.00 = 28.56m aOD)		
Orientation: E/W		Dimensions: 10m by 2m
Context	Depth	Description
100	0.00 – 0.60	Topsoil
101	0.60 – 1.65	Subsoil deposit. Very thick deposit may be product of stockpiling subsoil from quarried area to north
102	1.65+	Mid brown sandy gravels with thin sandy interface to subsoil 101

6 Artefact Record

Only modern pottery was recovered from the backfill of the quarry area.

7 Discussion and Conclusions

The nine evaluation trenches excavated around Wetherby Health Centre have confirmed that the quarrying in the 1920s was extensive covering the whole of the northern part of the development area. The stratigraphy in T1-T7 shows that there are made ground deposits in excess of 2.4m in the centre of the site in T6 and between 2.00 and 2.70m deep around the periphery of this part of the site in T3 and T5. In these latter two trenches natural sands and gravels were encountered, as they were also in T7, at depths of between 25.64m aOD in T5 and 26.80m aOD in T7. In T1, T2, T4 and T6 natural deposits were not reached.

In the southern part of the site the truncated remains of a boundary wall have been recorded immediately south of the existing wall in T8. Natural gravel deposits were encountered in both T8 and T9 at a depth of between 1.65m and 1.70m below the present ground surface (26.43m aOD and 26.91m aOD respectively) beneath deep topsoil/subsoil deposits in excess of 1m in depth.

It is concluded that the southern part of the site has not been quarried and that therefore there is still the potential to encounter archaeological features or deposits in this part of the site. However, no archaeological features (apart from the presumed 19th/20th century boundary wall) were present in the two trenches excavated in this part of the site.

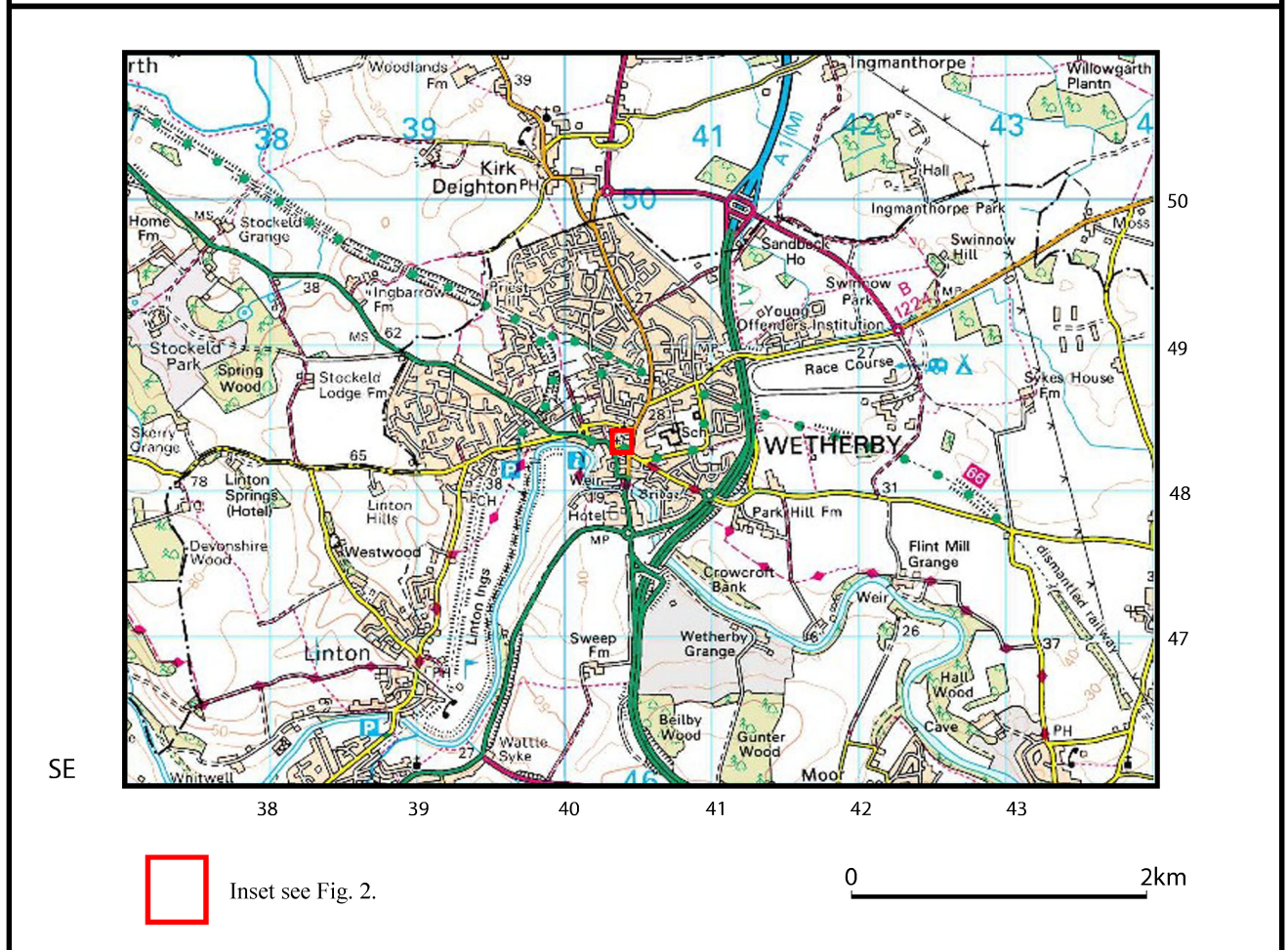
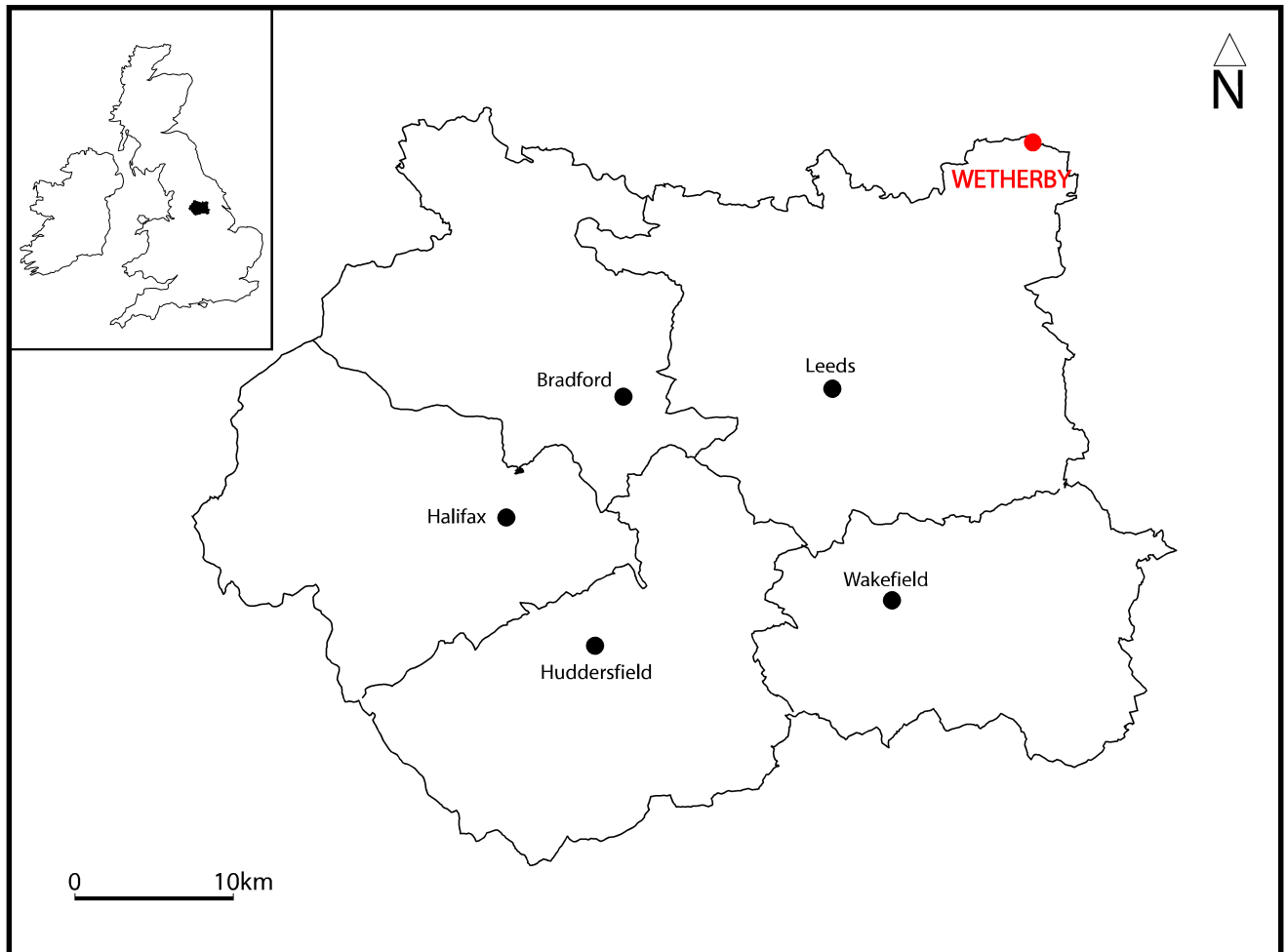


Fig. 1. Site location

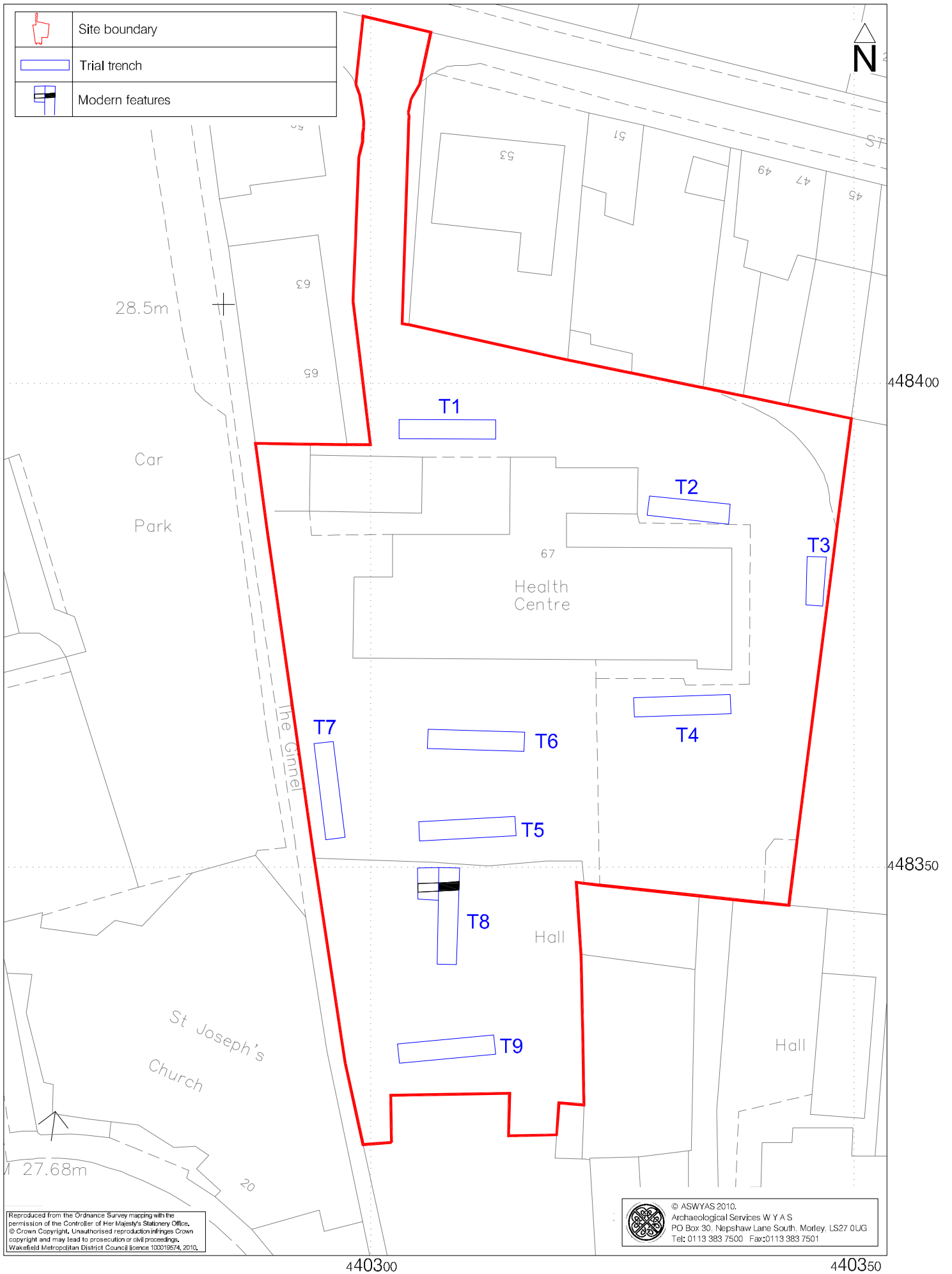
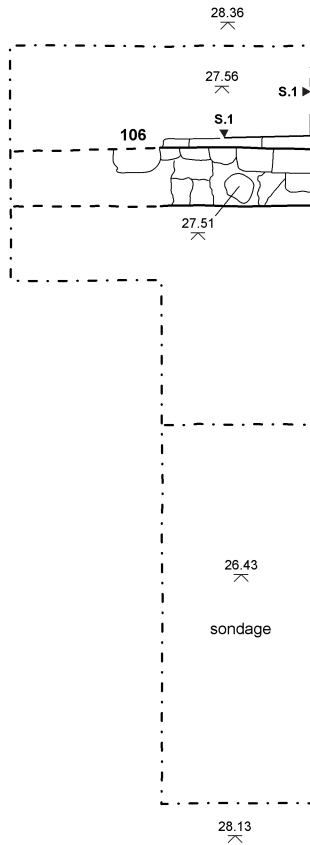
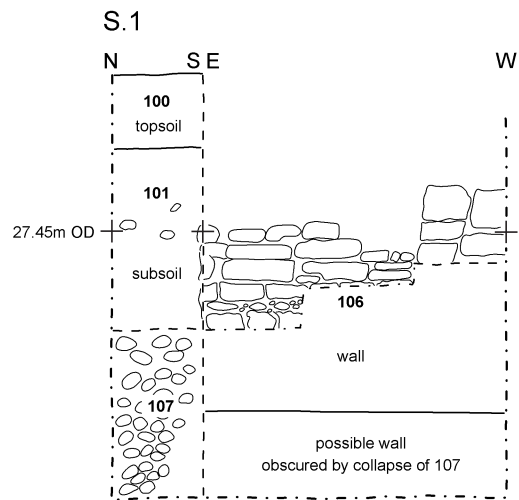


Fig. 2. Site plan showing trench location (1:500 @ A4)

Trench 8



Plan
0 5m (1:100)



Section
0 1m (1:25)

Fig. 3. Trench 8 plan and section



Plate 1. Trench 1, looking east



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking west



Plate 3. Sondage within Trench 3, looking west



Plate 4. Trench 4, looking west



Plate 5. Trench 5 with sondage at far end of trench, looking east



Plate 6. Trench 6 with sondage at far end, looking west



Plate 7. Southern section of Trench 7, looking south



Plate 8. Trench 8, looking north



Plate 9. Trench 8, showing Wall 106 with slot excavated down its north face, looking south



Plate 10. Upper part of Wall 106, looking south



Plate 11. Trench 9, looking west

Appendix 1: Inventory of primary archive

Phase	File/Box No	Description	Quantity
Evaluation	File no.1	Context register sheets	1
		Context sheets (nos. 100-118)	19
		Trench sheets	9
		Drawing register sheets	1
		Level sheets	1
		Photo register sheets (Digital, and film)	2
		Films negatives (B+W No. 8837, Col No. 8838)	2
		Permatrace sheets	1

Appendix 2: Concordance of contexts yielding artefacts or environmental remains

Context	Description	Artefacts and environmental samples
100	Topsoil	
101	Subsoil	Modern pottery, glass and animal bone
102	Natural levels	
103	Tarmac layer	
104	Hardcore layer	
105	General mixed made round deposit containing brick and general rubble.	
106	Wall with Trench 8	
107	Stony deposit to north of wall 106	
108	Limestone dump layer/ fine grained hardcore layer?	
109	Thin sandy deposit	
110	Industrial clinker waster exposed in Trench 2	
111	Dump of limestone in Trench 5	
112	Brick dump layer within Trench 5	
113	Tarmac layer on concrete, old road surface? With Trench 5, 6 and 7	
114	Brown silty sandy subsoil, redeposited/landscaping layer?	
115	Greyish brown sandy silty clay	
116	Brown stony clay	
117	Made ground / industrial waste gravels	
118	Buried subsoil layer?	

Appendix 3: Specification for an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at Wetherby Health Centre

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