



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



**GAS UTILITY TRENCH, THACKRAY LANE
& MICKLEGATE, PONTEFRACT,
WEST YORKSHIRE**

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

by J.M. McComish and M. Johnson

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Abbreviations

YAT York Archaeological Trust

AOD Above Ordnance Datum

SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust (on behalf of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions) on gas pipe utility works at Thackray Lane and Micklegate, Pontefract, West Yorkshire. The areas observed comprised heavily disturbed ground, largely the backfills of earlier utility trenches, and no deposits of archaeological interest were therefore disturbed by the groundwork, though earlier deposits were visible in some of the trench sections.

1. INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was undertaken on gas pipe utility works at Thackray Lane and Micklegate, Pontefract, West Yorkshire. The watching brief was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Balfour Beatty Utility Solutions. The works were largely within the limits of an earlier gas pipe trench, or within ground heavily disturbed by other modern utility trenches, and nothing of archaeological significance was therefore disturbed by the works. In some of the trenches (Trenches 3, 16, 28 and 29) earlier stonework was seen and in several trenches earlier deposits of varied nature were present. No artefacts were present in either the earlier stonework or the earlier deposits seen, their date is therefore impossible to determine.

2. METHODOLOGY

The works involved the replacement of an existing cast iron gas mains pipe with a new plastic pipe. For the most part the new pipe was inserted inside the cast iron pipe, though in places the cast iron pipe was replaced with a plastic one. In addition to the gas mains new plastic pipes were inserted connecting the mains to associated domestic/commercial properties. The work involved the excavation of small trenches along the line of the existing gas mains pipe at every point where a domestic supply required connection to the mains. A total of eleven trenches were excavated on Thackray Lane, two were excavated on the north-eastern side of Broad Lane, twelve on the southern side of Micklegate, and eleven on the northern side of Micklegate. The trenches were excavated using a mechanical mini-digger, combined with hand excavation in the areas immediately adjacent to the existing gas mains pipe.

M. Johnson observed the excavated trenches on Thackray Lane on 10/01/13, J.M. McComish observed the trenches on the north-eastern side of Broad Lane and the southern side of Micklegate on 17/01/13 and the trenches on the northern side of Micklegate on 25/01/13, while M. Johnson observed a further four trenches on the northern side of

Micklegate on 29/01/13. The site records are currently stored at YAT under the project code 5679.

In order to comply with safety regulations for gas-mains works the archaeological team were not allowed into the excavated trenches, and in some cases had to observe the trenches from beyond the associated safety barriers; for this reason it was not possible to accurately draw sections of any of the trenches, though measured sketches were made of as many sections as possible, and a photographic record of all the trenches was made. All depth measurements relate to depths below existing ground level (BGL).

3. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The works are centred on NGR SE 4591 2218 (Figure 1, Site location map). Pontefract sits on a ridge of Dolostone, surrounded by a ridge of sandstone, which is in turn surrounded by calcareous mudstone (British Geological Survey). Micklegate is aligned on a south-east to north-west alignment, and originally formed the access route into Pontefract Castle, which is located at the north-eastern end of the street. Micklegate slopes gently downwards from north-east to south-west. The adjoining Broad Lane is on a north-west to south-east alignment, leading towards Thackray Lane which is also in a north-west to south-east alignment. Both streets slope downwards from north-west to south-east, the slope being far more pronounced than that seen on Micklegate. Broad Lane and Thackray Lane are crossed by Southgate, which is aligned parallel to Micklegate.



Figure 1 Site location, area of observations highlighted by blue circle

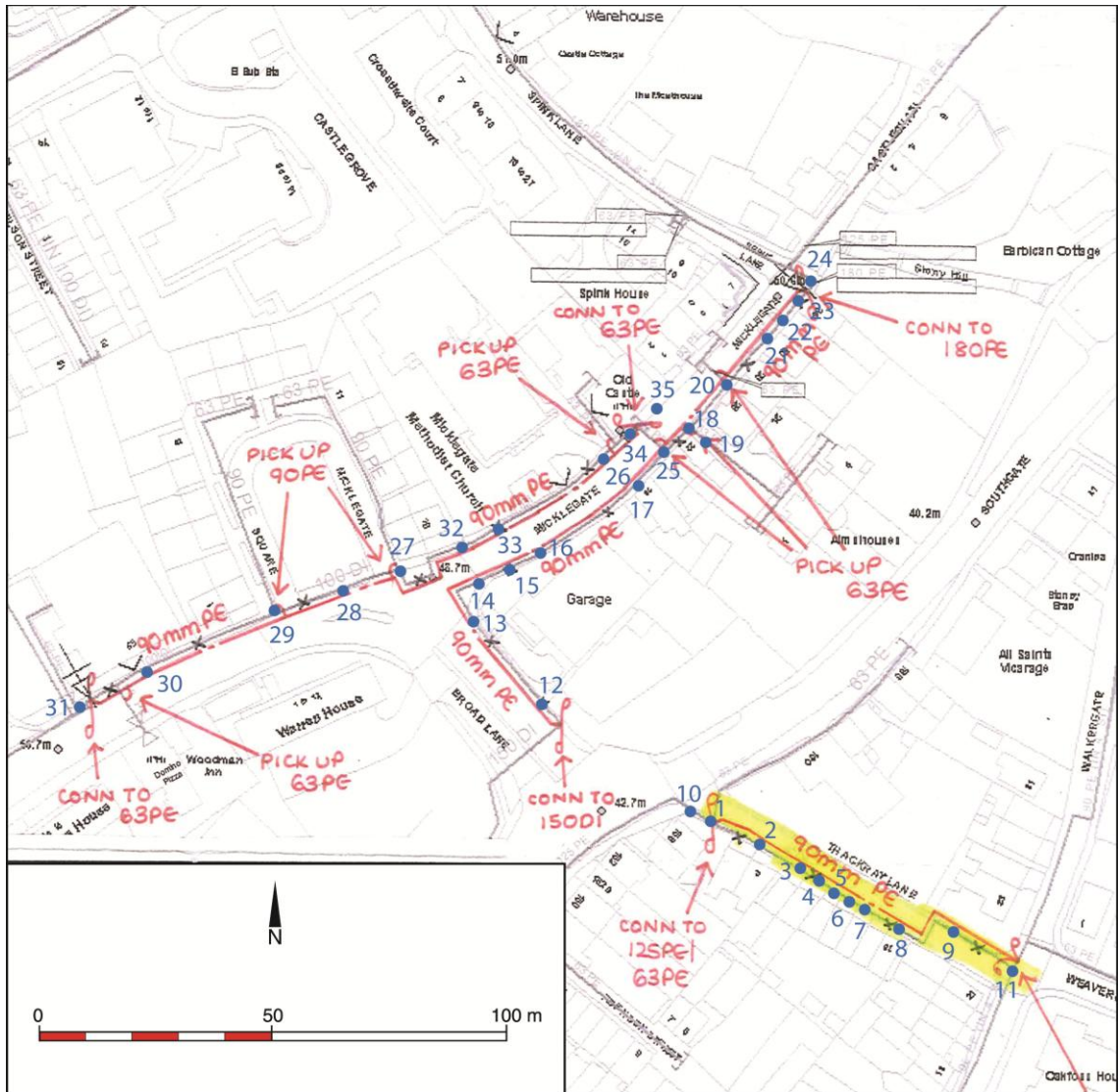


Figure 2 Trench location, trenches and trench numbers highlighted blue.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The earliest known major monument in the area is the Neolithic Ferrybridge henge (EH Pastscape monument no 54454). Features interpreted as an extension to this henge were uncovered in 2007 during the construction of new housing (Culture24.org).

A Roman milestone was discovered just south of Pontefract at NGR SE 456190 on the line of the A639, and a Roman road is thought to be located between North Featherstone and Pontefract Park race-course, but the precise location is unknown (Roman Britain.org).

The original name of the settlement was Taddenesscylf from the Old English meaning "Taedda's shelf of land" (The English Placename Society). The remains of a Saxon cemetery and two celled church were found at The Booths (beneath the bailey of the later Norman castle) and Radiocarbon-14 tests showed that the graves were of two phases, the first dating to the 7th-8th centuries and the second phase from the mid-10th to early 12th centuries; it is thought that these remains may represent the Royal vill of Tanshelf, for which a priest is recorded in the Domesday Book (EH Pastscape monument numbers 905847/1186464/1186468).

The present placename is from the Old French meaning 'broken bridge' (The English Placename Society). Pontefract Castle was built before 1086, and became the principal royal castle in the north of England (EH Pastscape monument number 5430). In the 11th century a chapel was built within the bailey which was dedicated to St Clement, and this may have represented a replacement of the earlier Saxon church (EH Pastscape monument number 5430). The castle was rebuilt in stone during the 12-13th centuries, and the last major phase of renovations was undertaken in 1618-20 (EH Pastscape monument number 5430). King Richard II died in Pontefract castle in 1400, though the precise manner of his death is uncertain (Middle Ages.org). Micklegate represented the main approach road to Pontefract castle from the town.

A Cluniac priory was founded in Pontefract in 1090 by Robert de Lacy, with the monks originally being housed at the Hospital of St Nicholas which was given to the Priory; the priory was dissolved in 1539; excavations in the 1960-70s uncovered the entire ground plan of the church and claustral complex (EH Pastscape monument number 54379). A Dominican Friary was founded in the town in 1256, which was located at the western end of Southgate, and though no trace of this survives excavations have located what was thought to be the south side of the church (EH Pastscape, NMR number 54400) and the friary precinct wall (ADS 1309553). A hospital was founded in 1385 by Sir Robert Knolles, which later became almshouses (EH Pastscape monument number 1200193).

The town has been a market town since the Middle Ages, and numerous sites in the town have yielded medieval remains including Belks Court, on Newgate (EH Pastscape, NMR number 518813). In addition medieval remains have been uncovered on excavations at Spink Lane (NMR reference 1409272), Tanner Row (EH Pastscape monument number 905853), the Arriva Bus Dept site (NMR reference 1476082), North Bailegate (NMR reference 1382011), Cockpit Lane (NMR reference 1023812), Jubilee Place on Northgate (NMR reference 1359993), Pontefract Hospital (NMR reference 1510052), Elephant Hotel on the Market Place (NMR reference 1408384). Remains of possible medieval date are also

known from Ass Hill (NMR reference 654209) and 3-7 the Woolmarket (NMR reference 1408374).

Pontefract took the royalist side in the English Civil war and as a result was besieged by Parliamentary troops. Features interpreted as Civil War siege trenches were seen in a resistivity survey on a 2.2ha site covering the site of the former Cluniac Priory (NMR reference 1172595). The castle was demolished in 1649 following the siege of Pontefract by the Parliamentary army (EH Pastscape monument number 5430).

The deep sandy soils around the town made it perfect for the cultivation of liquorice, which was initially grown for medicinal reasons. It later became a sweet, hence the famous Pontefract Cakes, and by 1885 there were ten companies producing liquorice sweets in the town (Wakefield .goc.uk). A series of liquorice cultivation trenches were uncovered on land at Jubilee Place on Northgate (NMR reference 1359993),

5. RESULTS

5.1 TRENCHES ON THACKRAY LANE

The Thackray Lane trenches (Plate 1), trench numbers 1–11, were opened prior to the commencement of the watching brief and recorded before the insertion of the new gas main. All trenches, save for 8 and 11, were excavated on the south-western side of the lane.

5.1.1 TRENCH 1

Trench 1 (Plate 2) was located towards the north-western end of the south-west side of Thackray Lane and measured some 1.2m long by 0.70m wide and had a depth of up to 0.49m. The long axis of the trench was aligned south-west/north-east, fully occupied the footpath and extended beyond the kerb into the road at a slightly shallower depth. A discontinuous layer of orange-brown clayey-silt containing occasional small pebbles was observed towards the basal part of the north-east part of the trench. The origin of this deposit is uncertain. Within the confines of the footpath, all deposits below the tarmac surface related to mixed rubble backfilling of the old gas main. To the north-east of the main, deposits were comprised of the modern kerbing with concrete haunching and the tarmac road with stoney makeup deposits below.



Plate 1 View of the works along Thackray Lane from the bottom of the lane, looking north-west



Plate 2 Trench 1 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.1.2 TRENCH 2

Trench 2 (Plate 3) extended fully across the width of the pavement to the south-western side of the lane and extended into the roadway by around 0.50m. Measuring some 1.4m in length, with a width of 1.05m this trench was up to 0.60m deep though shelved up somewhat towards its north-eastern, road, side. All deposits encountered in Trench 2 related to modern activity. Below the existing tarmac footpath, kerb plus haunching, tarmac roadway and

makeup, this was comprised of backfills relating to the original gas main and to old services (thought to be water).



Plate 3 Trench 2 facing east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.1.3 TRENCH 3

Measuring just 0.75m long by 0.60m wide Trench 3 (Plate 4) was excavated to a depth of 0.58m. The entirety of this trench lay within the width of the narrow footpath and kerb. Beneath the modern surfaces of tarmac footpath, kerb and haunching, all excavated material related to the back-filling of the original gas main trench. However, the south-western side of the original trench had clipped the north-eastern side of rough stonework of yellow-white sandstone that lay below the 20th century garden wall of number 6 Thackray Lane. It cannot be stated whether this stonework represents merely footings or a wall in its own right, nor can a date be attributed to this feature.



Plate 4 Trench 3 facing south-east, scale unit 0.1m. Note the stone in section below the modern wall.

5.1.4 TRENCH 4

Trench 4 (Plate 5) measured some 1.2m by 0.87m wide and was excavated to a depth of up to 0.51m. The long axis of the trench was aligned south-west/north-east, and whilst it straddled both the footpath and road the trench shelved upwards towards its north-eastern side. In the lower parts of the trench small areas of earlier deposits were seen to either side of the cut for the original gas main. These were mid-dark greyish brown, slightly clayey-sandy-silts containing occasional pebbles, small fragments of white sandstone up to 0.08m in size and a very small number of flecks of ceramic building material. No securely datable artefactual material was recovered from this deposit. Above this the trench exposed only modern deposits relating to the footpath, kerb, road, road makeup and backfill of the original gas main.



Plate 5 Trench 4 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.1.5 TRENCH 5

This small trench (Plate 6) measured 1m long by 0.60m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.49m. It was fully located within the width of the pavement. The majority of the deposits removed from the trench related to the tarmac footpath and backfill material from within the original trench for the gas main. A slither of earlier deposits was present to the south-western side of the trench. The lowest material within these was a mid-dark brownish grey slightly clayey-sandy-silt containing occasional pebbles, the precise origins and date of which are uncertain. The uppermost of the deposits was comprised of thin, multi-coloured mix of clayey-silt containing frequent flecks of ceramic building material, pebbles and the odd small cobble, that lay directly below the tarmac. This may represent fairly recent levelling-up material for the pavement works.



Plate 6 Trench 5 facing south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.1.6 TRENCH 6

Trench 6 (Plate 7) measured some 1.2m long by 0.75m wide, was up to 0.60m deep and straddled both footpath and the edge of the road. The north-eastern (road) side of the trench was somewhat shallower than the south-western (footpath) side. All materials in this trench were either modern, namely the surfaces and makeup to footpath, kerb and road or related to backfill deposits within the cut of the original gas main trench.



Plate 7 Trench 6 facing west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.1.7 TRENCH 7

Trench 7 (Plate 8) was of a rough 'L' shape in plan, occupied the full width of the pavement and extended nearly 0.50m into the roadway at its south-eastern end. Measuring some 1.2m long by up to 0.95m wide, this trench was up to 0.61m deep. All materials in this trench were either modern surfaces and makeup to the footpath, kerb and road, or related to mixed backfill deposits within the cut of the original gas main trench.



Plate 8 Trench 7 facing south-south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.1.8 TRENCH 8

Spanning the footpath and roadway Trench 8 (Plate 9) measured 1.15m long by 0.75m wide and was up to 0.64m in depth. Underneath the modern materials, and to the south-west side of the original trench cut, older deposits were evident and these largely mirrored those within trench 5. Beneath the pavement a fairly thin multi-coloured clayey-silt containing small fragments of brick, pebbles and one or two small cobbles, was seen. This may represent recent levelling-up material for the pavement works. This overlay mid-dark brownish grey slightly clayey-sandy-silt containing occasional pebbles. No dating evidence was recovered from this lower deposit and its origins and function are uncertain. Modern deposits were comprised of the tarmac footpath and road and associated stoney makeup, the kerb and its haunching, and the backfill of the original gas main trench.



Plate 9 Trench 8 facing south-south-west, scale unit 0.1m

5.1.9 TRENCH 9

The 'L' shaped Trench 9 (Plate 10) was located to the north-eastern side of, and fully within, the roadway of Thackray Lane. Measuring up to 1.5m by 1.5m, the south-western side of the trench was excavated to a depth of 0.64m, while the north-eastern side was fractionally under 0.5m deep. The bulk of this trench was again occupied by deposits that were predominantly of recent and modern date, namely the kerb and haunching, road surface and underlying stoney makeup deposits and the backfill of the original gas main trench. However, at the south-western side of the trench a brick-built culvert, aligned with the length of the road and with arched top was present. The culvert was no longer in use and had largely silted up. The brickwork of this feature, which may be of earlier 19th century date, was bonded with a soft lime mortar.



Plate 10 Trench 9 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m

5.1.10 TRENCH 10

Trench 10 (Plate 11) was located at the extreme south-west corner of Thackray Lane, entirely within the pavement excepting for a small extension into the roadway. Measuring 3.9m long up to 1.1m wide (plus a 0.60m projection into the roadway) the maximum depth of this trench was 0.75m. Beneath the modern surfaces the entirety of the contents from within the trench related to a series of backfills. At the south-eastern end of the trench this was the rubbly fill of the original gas main trench. For the remainder of the trench these backfills related primarily to works associated with the partial replacement of the old metal mains pipe by a newer plastic mains pipe. These more recent backfills were comprised of orange coloured sand and limestone chippings ballast.



Plate 11 Trench 10 facing west, scale unit 0.1m

5.1.11 TRENCH 11

Trench 11 (Plate 12) was a 'T' shaped trench located at the lower, south-eastern, end of Thackray Lane, fully within the roadway and towards its northern side. The head of the 'T' was some 4m long by 0.60m wide, the arm, 3m long by 0.95m wide, and both had a depth of up to 0.70m. Beneath the modern tarmac road surface and its stoney makeup, the mixed and jumbled characteristics of the deposits indicated that were related to the backfilling of both the original gas main and to that of later works which had seen some of the metal mains replaced by plastic. A number of other utility services were also seen to be present within this trench.



Plate 12 Trench 11 facing east-south-east, scale unit 0.1m

5.2 TRENCHES ON BROAD LANE AND THE SOUTH-EASTERN SIDE OF MICKELGATE

All but one of the trenches had already been opened prior to the commencement of the watching brief, and these were recorded first. The numbering of the trenches began with Trench 12 at the south-eastern end of Broad Lane continuing to Trench 25 at the north-eastern end of Micklegate. Trench 25 was the final trench to be excavated, and therefore the last to be recorded; this trench was located between Trenches 17 and 18.

5.2.1 TRENCH 12

Trench 11 (plate 13) was an L shaped trench located at the southern-eastern end of Broad Lane, 4.9m to the north of the present traffic lights. The south-west to north-east aligned portion of the trench was 4m x 0.9m in size and the north-west to south-eastern portion was 2.5m x 0.9m in are, and was aligned parallel to Broad Lane. The trench was 0.9-1m in depth. This south-west to north-east aligned portion of the trench had to be observed from behind the safety barriers and it was not possible therefore to accurately measure the depth of the features seen.

The earliest deposit seen was a mid-brown sandy-clay with occasional stones seen in the south-westernmost two metres of the south-west to north-east aligned portion trench. There was no sign of any human activity within this deposit, and its date and origin is unclear. This deposit was a maximum of 0.4m thick.



Plate 13 Trench 12 facing south-east and south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

This deposit had clearly been truncated by a large number of modern services which resulted in the uppermost 0.5m-1m of deposits in the south-west to north-east aligned portion of the trench, and all of the deposits in the north-west to south-eastern portion of the trench being of modern date. The existing cast iron gas pipes were T shaped and were located centrally within the south-west to north-east portion of the trench, but towards the north-eastern side of the north-west to south-eastern portion of the trench, and these were located at the base of the trench approximately 0.84m below the present ground level.

Parallel to, and at a slightly higher level than the gas mains were a number of other services, which were at approximately 0.69m below present ground level. The north-west to south-eastern portion of the trench contained a pipe surrounding cables, a second bundle of cables and a small cast iron pipe. Another pipe ran directly beneath the present street barrier fencing. There was also a sawn off small bore cast iron pipe parallel to and at a slightly higher level than the gas main, which was visible in the south-west to north-east aligned portion of the trench to the immediate south-east of the gas main. The services and associated disturbance were sealed by the tarmac of the present pavement, which was 0.7m thick.

5.2.2 TRENCH 13

Trench 13 (Plate 14) was located at the northern end of Broad Lane. This trench had to be observed from behind the safety barriers and it was not possible therefore to accurately measure the depth of the features seen.

The trench was rectangular and measured 2.5m x 0.84m in size and 0.84m deep, and was aligned with the long axis parallel to Micklegate. This earliest feature seen in this trench was a north-west to south-east aligned wall. The bricks within the wall were 0.70m thick suggesting a late-18th century or later date. The earliest deposit in the area to the west of the wall was a dark grey brown silty-sandy-clay with brick fragments which represented modern backfilling. At the easternmost end of the trench, visible in the section only there was a second brick wall, constructed from machine made bricks, which therefore dated to the mid-19th century at the earliest. The area between the two walls comprised a modern brick rubble backfill deposit. The uppermost deposit to the west of the wall comprised paving slabs 0.6 x 0.6 x 0.06m in size, resting on a levelling deposit of orange sand up to 0.55m thick, while to the east of the wall there was tarmac up to 0.07m thick above a bedding of orange sand up to 0.55m thick.



Plate 14 Trench 13 facing south-west and north-east.

5.2.3 TRENCH 14

Trench 14 (Plates 15-16) was located at the junction of Broad Lane and Micklegate, and was 1.4m x 1m in size and 0.9m deep, the long axis of the trench being parallel to Micklegate.



Plate 15 Trench 14 facing south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

The earliest deposit seen was a mid brown sandy-clay with frequent small stones which represented the backfill of the earlier gas mains trench. Running along the south-easternmost side of the trench at between 0.25-0.55m below ground level there were an irregular sandstone block and two bricks, but these were not bonded together, in addition they were intermittent and one of the bricks was at an angle. The stone and bricks seem therefore to represent dumped items dumped within gas pipe backfill rather than representing an *in situ* wall of any kind. The uppermost deposits seen were orange sand levelling up to 0.2m thick beneath paving slabs 0.49m x 0.60m in size and 0.06m thick.



Plate 16 Trench 14 facing south-east, scale unit 0.1m. The sandstone block and two bricks occur centrally within the photograph

5.2.4 TRENCH 15

Trench 15 (Plate 17) was 1.83m x 1.23m in size and a maximum of 0.69m deep on the south-eastern side, but 0.36m deep on the north-western side, with the long axis of the trench at right angles to Micklegate. The earliest feature was the cast iron gas main and its associated trench backfill which was a dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stones. This was beneath a levelling deposit of limestone rubble which was in turn truncated by a vertically sided modern linear cut, 0.36m deep which was backfilled with limestone hardcore. This modern trench was in turn beneath the tarmac of the present pavement which was 0.07m thick. To the immediate north-west of the trench the upper surface was of stone setts, but these were undisturbed by the excavation of the trench.



Plate 17 Trench 15 facing south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.5 TRENCH 16

Trench 16 (Plate 18) was rectangular in plan and measured 2.35m x 1.09m in size and was 0.8m deep at the north-western side, but only 0.53m deep elsewhere. The earliest context was an irregular sandstone block (truncated by a modern gas pipe). Only the uppermost surface of this block was visible, and it was therefore impossible to determine if this was part of a structure or not, furthermore, it was not possible to determine the dimensions of the block, or to determine if it was worked/dressed in any way. The block is visible in the centre of Plate 18, directly beneath the yellow gas pipe at the point where the depth of the trench increases.

To the north-west of this block was the cast iron gas main, which ran parallel to Micklegate at the north-western side of the trench. The top of the pipe was at 0.67m below ground level, and the associated pipe trench backfill was dark brown silty-sandy-clay with occasional stones. Connecting to the upperside of the pipe was a new plastic gas pipe, aligned north-west to south-east; this truncated the sandstone block. The deposits above this smaller pipe were more mixed comprising very mixed brick fragments, and sandstone fragments which was clearly modern dumping of demolition debris. These deposits were sealed by a levelling deposit of limestone chippings 0.06m thick and the associated tarmac surface of the pavement which was 0.07m thick.



Plate 18 Trench 16 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.6 TRENCH 17

Trench 17 (Plate 19) was rectangular and was 1.49m x 1.40m in size and a maximum of 0.8m deep, though the base of the trench was shallower on the north-western side. The long axis of the trench was at right angles to Micklegate. The earliest feature seen was the cast iron gas main which was aligned parallel to Micklegate. Smaller yellow plastic pipes had been connected to the main pipe. All the deposits above the cast iron gas main were mid brown sandy-clay which represented the backfill of the original gas mains trench. On the south-eastern side, the trench was adjacent to a modern brick wall which formed the tank beneath a pavement grid which was clearly of modern date. Over the south-eastern half of the trench the uppermost deposits comprised a levelling deposit of ash and clinker up to 0.25m thick, beneath a second levelling deposit of orange sand up to 0.07m thick, beneath paving stones up to 0.9m x 0.64m x 0.07m in size. The north-western side of the trench the

uppermost deposits were a layer of limestone chippings up to 0.2m thick beneath tarmac 0.07m thick.



Plate 19 Trench 17 facing south-east and north-east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.7 TRENCH 18

Trench 18 (Plate 20) was located at the junction of Micklegate and a small lane aligned north-west to south-east which gives access to a group of almshouses. The trench measures 19m x 1.2m in area, and was of variable depth, being a maximum of 0.9m deep adjacent to the gas main but 0.6m deep elsewhere. The long axis of the trench was at right angles to Micklegate. The earliest context observed was a deposit of clean brown clay which was only seen in the lowest part of the north-westernmost corner of the trench. No artefacts were present in this deposit and its date is therefore unknown. This had been truncated by the gas mains trench, and the cast iron gas main ran parallel to Micklegate. A smaller iron pipe was directly above the south-western end of the gas mains pipe, and this smaller pipe was at right angles to Micklegate. A new yellow plastic pipe had been connected to the north-eastern end of the gas mains pipe, and this pipe also ran at right angles to Micklegate. All the deposits above the pipes represented modern backfill comprising mid brown gritty sandy-clay with occasional stone fragments. The trench was sealed by a deposit of limestone chippings up to 0.1m thick which was beneath the tarmac of the present pavement which was 0.08m thick.



Plate 20 Trench 18 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.8 TRENCH 19

Trench 19 (Plate 21) was located to the south-east of Trench 18, on a small lane giving access to a group of almshouses. The trench was 1.05m x 1.08m in area with the long axis at north-west to south-east, and the trench was up to 0.6m deep. There were three modern services within the trench, a yellow plastic gas pipe at right angles to Micklegate, 0.6m below ground level, a cable running diagonally across the northern corner of the trench at 0.5m below ground level and a cast iron pipe 0.4m below ground level in the south-western half of the trench which again ran at right angles to Micklegate. Above these services was modern fill comprising mid brown sandy-clay with frequent stone and brick fragments. This was beneath tarmac 0.07m thick.



Plate 21 Trench 19 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.9 TRENCH 20

Trench 20 (Plate 22) was 1.25m x 0.87m in area and up to 0.6m deep. The long axis of the trench was parallel to Micklegate. The earliest features visible were two superimposed blue plastic pipes of modern date beneath a backfill of gritty sandy-clay with occasional stones. This was beneath a 0.17m thick levelling deposit of ash and clinker with some modern brick fragments which was clearly designed to level up the ground beneath the present paving. Along the north-eastern side of the trench this ash deposit was truncated by a construction cut for the present kerb stones which was 0.28m deep and was backfilled with a deposit of limestone hardcore. The uppermost deposit was tarmac 0.07m thick.



Plate 22 Trench 20 facing south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.10 TRENCH 21

Trench 21 was an L shaped trench. The longer arm of the trench was aligned north-west to south-east and was 2.5m by 0.8m in area and up to 0.9m deep at the south-eastern end. The shorter arm of the trench, which joined the western end of the longer arm on the north-western side, was aligned north-east to south-west, i.e. parallel to Micklegate, and was 2.15m x 1.2m in area and up to 0.9m deep at the south-western end. This trench is best described in three sections dependent upon the deposits seen.

The first portion is a band 0.6m wide aligned north-east to south-west directly beneath the present day kerb stones. The earliest deposit in this area was dark brown clay with occasional flecks of charcoal and though this deposit was of uncertain date, the charcoal implies human activity in the vicinity. This was beneath a series of alternating band of ash/clinker and yellow crushed stone (Plate 23). These banded deposits possibly represent earlier road surfaces and associated levelling, but the presence of clinker implies that they are of modern date. The banded deposits were beneath the present day kerb stones on the south-eastern side and beneath the present road surface on the north-eastern side. The vertically set kerb stones were 0.11m wide and 0.28m deep, with a line of horizontally set

stones to the immediate north-west forming a gutter. The kerb and gutter were set in a linear trench infilled with limestone chippings.



Plate 23 Trench 21 facing north-east showing the banded deposits to the immediate north-west of the present kerb stones, scale unit 0.1m.

The second zone of the trench (Plate 24) comprised the whole of the north-east to south-west aligned portion of the trench. This area comprised the trench for the cast iron gas main which truncated the south-eastern side of the banded deposits described above. The backfill of the gas mains trench was dark brown gritty sandy-clay with occasional stones. Two new yellow plastic gas pipes and been attached to the gas mains at the north-eastern and south-western ends. The backfill of the gas mains pipe was beneath a levelling deposit of ash and clinker which incorporated one fragment of a paving slab at the north-eastern end of the trench. This levelling was beneath the tarmac of the present path which was 0.07m thick.

The third portion of the trench (Plate 25) lay beneath the modern road surface. There was a vertically edged cut which extended beyond the limits of excavation on the north-western side, being in excess of 0.7m wide. This was backfilled with limestone hardcore and was clearly of modern date. The present gas pipe cuts through this deposit. The limestone hardcore was beneath a layer of tarmac up to 0.17m thick which forms the present road surface.



Plate 24 Trench 21 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.11 TRENCH 22

Trench 22 (Plate 25) was obscured by a heavy metal plate providing access across the pavement to houses. A small area of the trench was visible, and as far as could be determined the cast iron gas main ran parallel to Micklegate and a new yellow plastic pipe had been connected into the top of the mains. In the south-western section a modern black corrugated plastic drain pipe was visible, this was set vertically in a trench backfilled with limestone hardcore. The trench was sealed by tarmac up to 0.07m thick.



Plate 25 Trench 22 facing south-east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.12 TRENCH 23

Trench 23 was a rectangular trench measuring 1.03m x 0.90m in area and 0.9m deep, with the long axis parallel to Micklegate. The earliest context seen was the cast iron gas main running parallel to Micklegate. This was beneath a backfill of dark brown gritty sandy-clay with occasional stones. In the south-western corner of the trench there was a single irregular lump of sandstone (Plate 26). There was no sign of any other associated stones, so it was impossible to determine if this was a wall which had just been clipped by the trench or not. Directly above the sandstone block was a vertically sided cut containing a backfill of clean orange sand; although no dating evidence was present in the sand it was probably of modern date representing the backfill of a services trench of some kind; again, this had just been clipped by the trench. The uppermost deposits in the trench comprised a layer of ashy/clinker levelling 0.16m thick, which was in turn beneath a very levelling layer of orange sand which was just 0.02m thick, and this was in turn beneath the tarmac of the present pavement, which was 0.07m thick. On the north-western side the trench butted up against vertically set kerb stones (Plate 27).



Plate 26 Trench 23 facing south-west, showing the sandstone block in the south-western corner, scale unit 0.1m.



Plate 27 Trench 23 facing north-east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.13 TRENCH 24

Trench 24 (Plate 28) was L shaped with the longer arm being 3.6m x 1m in size, located parallel to Micklegate, and the shorter arm was 2.7m x 0.8m in area, and this was joined the north-eastern end of the longer arm.

The earliest deposit seen was mid brown clean clay the date of which is unclear. This was truncated by numerous modern services trenches. The cast iron gas main was originally L shaped and located in the base of the trench, but the north-easternmost portion of this had been replaced with a yellow plastic pipe. Above the gas main there was an iron pipe running obliquely from the north-eastern to south-eastern sections of the trench, and a second sawn off cast iron pipe was visible in the south-eastern section. The backfill above these pipes was dark brown sandy-clay with frequent stone including three larger lumps of un-worked sandstone which were clearly dumped within the backfill. Two further vertically-sided modern services cuts were visible at the northern end of the north-eastern facing section of the trench, which were aligned at right angles to Micklegate. These were 0.5m wide and 0.6m deep and 0.6m wide and 0.5m deep respectively and are visible in the left hand side of Plate 29. Beneath the present road there was a deposit of hardcore and tarmac which acted as levelling for the road surface. The uppermost surface in the path comprised a deposit of concrete up to 0.07m thick at the southern end and a deposit of tarmac which was up to 0.4m thick at the northern end with thin grass growing through it



Plate 28 Trench 24 facing north-east and north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.2.14 TRENCH 25

Trench 25 (Plate 29-30) was sub-rectangular plan, being a maximum of 2.9m x 1.9m in area and up to 0.76m deep. The gas main ran parallel to Micklegate at the south-eastern side of the trench, with a second new yellow plastic gas pipe aligned north-west-south-east directly above and this had deposit of sand acting as both bedding and capping at the south-eastern end. To the immediate north-west of the cast iron gas main there were three other services visible, a cable, a small broken cast iron pipe and a broken ceramic pipe. Distinct cuts could not be determined for each of these pipes, they were all beneath a deposit of was dark grey brown sandy-clay with occasional stones, which was clearly backfilling above services. The area beneath the kerb had a deposit of limestone levelling up to 0.4m thick beneath tarmac 0.07m thick, which was bordered on the north-western side by a vertically set kerb stone and stone gutter. The area beneath the present road surface comprised limestone chippings set in a vertically sided trench which extended the full depth of the trench. The present tarmac road surface was 0.07m thick.



Plate 29 Trench 25 facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.



Plate 30 Trench 25 facing north-east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3 TRENCHES ON THE NORTH-WESTERN SIDE OF MICKELGATE

Trenches 26-31 were observed on 25/01/13. All of the trenches had been opened prior to the commencement of the watching brief. The trenches were recorded and numbered from north-east to south-west along the north-eastern side of Micklegate.

5.3.1 TRENCH 26

Trench 26 (Plate 31) was 1.2m x 1.3m in area, with the long axis parallel to Micklegate. The trench was up to 0.7m deep, though the base was irregular, being only 0.4m deep on the northern side, and being somewhat uneven to either side of the existing gas main. The cast iron gas main ran along the southern side of the trench at approximately 0.5m below ground level, and a new yellow plastic pipe aligned north-south connected into the top of the cast iron gas main at the western end of the trench. The deposit to either side of the gas main at the base of the trench was dark brown sandy-clay with few inclusions, while the deposits above the pipe, though still dark brown sandy-clay had frequent inclusions of stone and rubble and clearly represented modern backfilling. A single stone was visible at a depth of 0.4m below ground level on the northern side of the trench (visible in Plate 31 directly below the yellow gas pipe), but this was an isolated stone and did not form part of a wall or structure, and it was presumably dumped within the modern backfill. Along the southern side of the trench the uppermost 0.3m of deposits comprised the present kerb stone and an associated construction cut backfill of compacted limestone hardcore. The uppermost 0.09m of deposits comprised the present tarmac surface.



Plate 31 Trench 26 facing west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.2 TRENCH 27

Trench 27 was L shaped with the longer arm running north-south and the shorter arm west-east, with the two arms meeting at the south-western corner. The west-east arm was 3.4m in length and 0.7-1.2m in width and up to 0.6m deep, while the north-south arm was approximately 5m in length, 0.70m in width and up to 0.7m deep. With the exception of the northern and eastern ends of the trench, it was not possible to get access to this trench to measure in the features seen.

The east-west aligned portion of the trench (Plate 32) varied in width due to the presence of a modern metal services plate and associated brick man-hole. To the immediate north of this man-hole there was a trench backfill of pure sand which seemed to represent the infilling of a trench for the adjacent garden fence. Elsewhere in this portion of the trench the deposits comprised dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stone and brick fragments, the bricks being of late-18th century or later date; this deposit represented modern backfill. The uppermost 0.12m of deposits comprised tarmac.



Plate 32 Trench 27 facing east, showing the modern man hole, scale unit 0.1m.

The western side of the north-south aligned portion of the trench butted against the kerb stones of the pavement (Plate 33 right hand image), while the eastern side butted against the garden fence and part of the property wall of 15 Micklegate (Plate 33 left hand image). The earliest deposit seen was dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stones and brick fragments. There was a small iron pipe running across the trench in an east-west direction at the southern end, and this was either capped a ceramic cover or was within a ceramic pipe, it was not possible to determine which. The new yellow plastic gas main ran north-south along the western side of the trench at 0.6m below ground level, joining into the original cast iron gas main at the southern end, and this cast iron portion had a junction with a mains pipe on the western side. In the north-easternmost corner of the trench there was a deposit of pale yellow crushed stone levelling 0.1m thick, which was beneath a 0.19m thick levelling deposit of dark grey gritty-ash. These were both clearly of modern date, and were cut on the southern side by a modern trench backfilled with limestone hard core, (visible in the centre of the right hand image in Plate 34), which ran obliquely across the northern end of the trench, being visible in both the western and eastern facing sections. The uppermost 0.3m of deposits visible in the east facing section were the kerb stones of the pavement and an

associated haunching of concrete. Elsewhere the upper most deposits were the tarmac of the present path which was up to 0.12m thick.



Plate 33 Trench 27 facing south and south-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.3 TRENCH 28

Trench 28 measured 4.10m x 0.7m in area and up to 0.7m deep, with the long axis parallel to Micklegate. The earliest deposit seen was pale yellow sandstone which was visible in the base of the south-facing section; this was up to 0.3m thick (visible in the centre left hand portion of Plate 34). This was largely obscured by the gas mains pipe and it was impossible to determine if it represented a structural wall or part of a footing/foundation. This had clearly been cut away on both the eastern and southern sides by modern features. All the remaining features in the trench were of clearly modern date (Plate 35). To the south of the sandstone there was a deposit of dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stones, which clearly represented the backfilling of not just the gas mains trench but other services trenches. Near the eastern end of the trench the sandstone was truncated by a modern brick feature, backfilled with loose rubble, only the corner of this feature had been clipped by the present trench, causing a small area of collapse within the section (right hand side of Plate 34). A sawn off metal pipe was visible in the central portion of the north-facing section. A ceramic pipe was visible in the east-facing section there was a modern ceramic pipe at 0.3m below ground level. In the extreme north-western corner of the trench there was a modern brick

wall bedded on a deposit of concrete up to 0.08m thick, the top of the wall being 0.3m below ground level. This wall lay beyond the limits of the trench. Butting up against the eastern side of this wall was a deposit of modern limestone hardcore up to 0.2m thick which was only visible in the south-facing section. This was beneath a layer of tarmac 0.1m thick. In the north-facing section of the trench there was a brick man-hole capped by a metal plate. The uppermost deposits across the trench were limestone hardcore levelling 0.08, thick which was below paving stones 0.07m thick.



Plate 34 Eastern end of Trench 28 facing north, showing the sandstone truncated by a modern brick feature, scale unit 0.1m.



Plate 35 Trench 28 facing west and east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.4 TRENCH 29

Trench 29 was 3.5m x 1.1m in area and 0.63m deep, with the long axis at right angles to Micklegate. The earliest deposit seen was of sandstone which was visible in the northernmost and central portion of the east-facing section (directly behind the metal bar in Plate 36), though the central portion was somewhat obscured by loose material. The sandstone was also visible in the central portion of the west facing section. This stonework had been so heavily truncated that it was unclear if it represented a wall or footing. In the case of the east facing section the sandstone had been truncated on an oblique angle by a modern cable trench, while in the tough facing and west facing sections the sandstone had been truncated by the trench for the cast iron gas mains.



Plate 36 The central portion of the east facing section of Trench 29 facing west, showing the sandstone visible at the base of the section, scale unit 0.1m.

All the material observed above the sandstone was the fill of modern services cuts. The main portion of the gas mains ran parallel to Micklegate, with a smaller connecting pipe aligned north-south. The connecting pipe was a new yellow plastic pipe. There was also a cable

trench in the extreme south-western corner of the trench, the fill of which had collapsed creating a slight void (see right hand image Plate 37); this cable was clearly no longer live. The third service comprised a modern cable and junction box running diagonally across the trench from north-west to south-east. The backfills of these services were indistinguishable, representing earth that has been repeatedly disturbed, which comprised dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stones and occasional brick fragments. Further modern disturbance had been caused by a construction cut for the present kerb stones which was 0.3m deep and up to 0.25m wide and ran around the eastern and southern sides of the trench. This trench was infilled with compacted limestone hardcore. The uppermost surface seen was tarmac 0.07m thick.



Plate 37 Trench 29 facing south, and the south-western corner of the trench facing east showing the void in the corner of the trench, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.5 TRENCH 30

The main portion of Trench 30 (Plate 38) was 1.75m x 1.78m in size and up to 0.9m deep, though it was only 0.34m deep for the northernmost 0.6m in width of the trench, and this was located beneath the pavement. Midway along the southern side there was a small additional extension measuring 0.9m east-west and 0.6m north-south which extended beneath the present road surface.

The entire area had been heavily disturbed by modern services including the cast iron gas main running west-east, which was 0.7m below ground level. There was a smaller connecting north-south aligned yellow plastic pipe on the southern side. To either side of the gas main there were two further pipes on an east-west alignment, the northernmost of which was of corrugated plastic. All of the material above the pipes represented soil which had been repeatedly disturbed, and comprised dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stones. In the north-westernmost corner there was a modern vertically sided cut 1m wide and 0.43m deep, which had a lump of concrete in the base and was backfilled with limestone hardcore (top left hand corner of Plate 39). The construction cut for the kerb stones was 0.3m deep and 0.2m wide, and also backfilled with limestone hardcore. The uppermost surface was paving stones up to 0.9 x 0.6 x 0.07m in size, while the road had tarmac and associated levelling up to 0.23m thick.



Plate 38 Trench 30 facing south, scale unit 0.1m.



Plate 39 Trench 30 facing east, showing the modern hardcore filled trench cut and modern services, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.6 TRENCH 31

The main portion of Trench 31 was 1.5m north-south and 1.73m east-west, with a small extension measuring 1.07m east-west and 0.7m north-south on the south-western corner. The trench was up to 0.65m deep, but only 0.5m deep on the northernmost side and in the south-eastern corner, where loose material had fallen into the trench. The trench contained a gas main running east-west with a dog-leg in the central portion of the trench (Plate 40). The portion of the gas main to the west of the dog-leg had been replaced by yellow plastic pipes. There were two further modern services visible: the first was an electricity cable running east-west to the immediate north of the gas main which was covered with orange sand; while the second was a curving cable running around the northern and eastern sides of the trench (Plate 41). The deposits visible in the section seemed to be modern backfill comprising dark brown sandy-clay with occasional stones and fragments of concrete. The construction cut for the present kerb stones up to 0.3m deep and 0.2m wide and was infilled with compacted hardcore. The uppermost deposit was paving stones up to 0.9m x 0.6m x 0.07m in size.



Plate 40 Trench 31 facing west, scale unit 0.1m.



Plate 41 Trench 31 facing east, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.7 TRENCH 32

This trench (Plate 42) was located fully in the footpath adjacent to the boundary between the almshouse complex and church car-park and measured some 1.2m (east – west) by 1.0m (north – south) with a depth of up to 0.68m. An area of intact deposits, cut by the gas main trench, survived in the lower part of the northern side of the trench. The lower of these was a buff coloured silty clay containing occasional flecks of charcoal. This was sealed by a layer comprised of fragments of whitish-yellow sandstone up to 120mm thick. No dating evidence for these deposits was recovered. Elsewhere within the trench all early deposits had been removed by the gas main trench and was occupied by its stoney backfill. Modern deposits above the gas related works were comprised of the footpath kerb and its concrete haunching and a bedding of crushed brick and stone fragments some 120mm thick that formed the bedding for the extant footpath surface of 80mm of tarmac.



Plate 42 Trench 32, facing east, scale unit 0.1m. The in-situ stoney deposit can be seen to the left.

5.3.8 TRENCH 33

Located fully within the footpath directly in front of the car-park wall of the church Trench 33 measured some 1m square and had a depth of up to 0.63m (Plate 43). Around 90% of the trench was occupied by the cut and its backfills of the gas main. However, to the north side of the trench a sequence of intact deposits could be observed. The lower of these was a pale

greenish buff coloured clayey silt containing moderate flecks of charcoal and occasional pebbles in excess of 0.30m deep. This was sealed by a layer of multi-coloured silty clay, generally around 160mm thick, containing flecks of charcoal and what appeared to be flecks of ceramic building material. The uppermost part of this sequence was a band of black coloured, charcoal rich, clayey silt some 40mm thick. The date of this deposit sequence was not clarified though they are likely to be post-medieval or earlier. All deposits above this level were modern. These were comprised of the gas main cut and backfill, the kerb and concrete haunching, together with a 100mm thick layer of crushed brick, cinder and stone fragments that formed a bedding for the existing tarmac footpath surface.



Plate 43 Trench 33, facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m. The intact deposits lie to the right.

5.3.9 TRENCH 34

Trench 34 was located immediately in front of the archway of the 'Old Castle', a former hostelry and now residential accommodation (Plate 44). This large trench measured some 2.2m (north-west/south-east) by 1m (south-west/north-east) – minus an area of some 0.7m x 0.7m to the northern corner which was occupied by a chamber relating to a water meter. The entirety of this trench was occupied by modern materials. Much of this was the cut, backfills and pipes of the gas network, but also included a number of other utility services. These utilities were sealed by modern surfaces, primarily concrete that forms the footpath surface in this area.



Plate 44 Trench 34, facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

5.3.10 TRENCH 35

Trench 35 was also located in front of the 'Old Castle', a few metres to the south-east of Trench 34. The 'bar' of this 'T' shaped trench was located in the footpath and measured some 2.8m (south-west/north-east) x 1m (north-west/south-east). The remaining part of the trench was comprised of a narrow extension some 1.6m long by 0.55m wide extending into the roadway. The depth of both parts of the trench was a fairly constant 0.60m. Modern backfills and materials occupied the entirety of the larger, footpath part, of the trench, early deposits being present only within that part in the roadway. Here, in the basal parts of the trench a dull orange – buff coloured layer of silty clay containing occasional flecks of charcoal and fragments of stone up to 60mm, was seen, the origin of which is uncertain. This material was sealed by a layer of stone bedding material for the existing tarmac road

surface. Sealing deposits over the remainder of the trench were comprised of kerb-stones set in concrete haunching and a concrete pavement surface.



Plate 45 Trench 35, facing north-west, scale unit 0.1m.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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7. WEB BASED SOURCES

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APPENDIX 1: INDEX OF FIELD ARCHIVE

x2 annotated plans showing location of trenches

x146 digital photographs of trenches

x6 digital photographs of general views

A4 watching brief notebook: 6 pages of notes

A4 watching brief notebook: 6 pages of annotated plans and sections