



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE	9, The Avenue, Clifton, York		
CLIENT NAME	Allerthorpe Conservatories		
YAT PROJECT #	5878	YAT REPORT #	2016/14
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	NGR SE 5940 5277
PLANNING REFERENCE #	15/01866/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

On 16th February 2016, York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief at 9, The Avenue, Clifton, York. The objective was to record any archaeological deposits, features or buried structures exposed during groundworks required for the construction of a single storey rear extension (Conservatory) to the property. The site lies within the City of York Area of Archaeological Importance and the Clifton Conservation Area.

The works involved the observation of the removal of the hardcore underlying the existing concrete surface, the exposure of associated services for modification and the excavation of a foundation trench 0.6m wide and 0.9m deep for the west wall of the new structure. Removal of the concrete slab, some 80mm thick, had taken place on the day prior to the monitoring visit and this had exposed parts of the drains and the hardcore underlying the concrete proper. No archaeological deposits had been exposed. Excavation proper commenced at 9.00am and continued until 11.20am. All excavation work was undertaken by hand using pick and shovel owing to difficulties of access for earth moving machinery and the proximity of domestic drains which were to be partially exposed in the course of the works.

The surface across the whole of the footprint was reduced by these means to a depth of c. 0.2m. Backfill from the trenches cut for the ceramic drain services was removed to expose them, to identify their course and the location of joints/junctions. The line of the foundation trench for the west wall was marked out and excavated by hand across the whole width of the footprint. This work was complete by 11.20am when monitoring ceased- the remaining excavation works to be done at that stage being the removal of a 0.3m wide 'step' in the trench abutting the west wall of the adjacent property (left in situ to help support the wall until the concrete pour was imminent.) the remaining fill of the service trench and the removal of the thin concrete slab underneath the ceramic drain pipe prior to its diversion/replacement..

Such recording as required was undertaken by means of written notes, sketch plan and section and colour digital photographs. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed or affected by the works. No artefacts were recovered and no samples were taken.

RESULTS

The observed sequence was fairly uniform. Immediately underlying the 80mm thick concrete slab was a dense layer of rubble, c. 0.2m thick derived almost entirely from ceramic building material- brick and roof tile in a dark grey sandy matrix- which abutted and therefore post dated the existing property. This deposit had been cut by the trenches dug for the installation of the ceramic drain pipes leading from within the property and from its downpipes, all of which had been backfilled with loose pea gravel. These services were associated with a brick lined inspection pit with a metal manhole cover. Taken together, this accounted for approximately one quarter of the area of the footprint for the extension along its south west side. The section dug for the wall foundation exposed a sequence consisting of mixed dark grey-brown silty clay with frequent CBM and lime fragments underlying the brick rubble. This mixed clay in turn overlay clean orange yellow-brown sandy clay with frequent small to moderate sized rounded and sub angular cobbles which appeared in the base of the foundation trench across the whole width of the building footprint and whose depth lay beyond the limits of the groundworks. This deposit is assumed to be the local natural subsoil.

Other than the nineteenth century CBM and the services noted above, no artefactual material was discovered and no archaeological deposits or features were revealed. In consequence monitoring ceases on completion of the excavation works required for the wall foundation when only the removal of modern backfill around the services remained to be done before concrete pouring.

COMPLETED BY	SJ Allen		CHECKED BY	D Aspden		FINISHED	17/02/16
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DISCUSSION

The observed sequence shows undisturbed subsoil overlaid by made ground associated with the building of the existing property. At a subsequent date, an extensive deposit of CBM rubble had been laid down across the area to provide levelling and hardcore for a concrete yard surface. This in turn had been cut into for the installation of ceramic water pipes for the removal of waste water from the house and associated outbuildings. No artefactual material predating the brick rubble was identified in the ground or in the upcast, indicating that no earlier archaeological features have been disturbed by current or earlier groundworks.



Plate 1: Overview of footprint, looking SE. Scales- 1m in 0.5m divisions

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Plate 2. Trench looking ESE showing modern services and excavated foundation trench for conservatory wall. Scales- 1m in 0.5m divisions

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Plate 3. Closer view of exposed section in wall foundation trench looking SE.
Scales- 1m in 0.5m divisions

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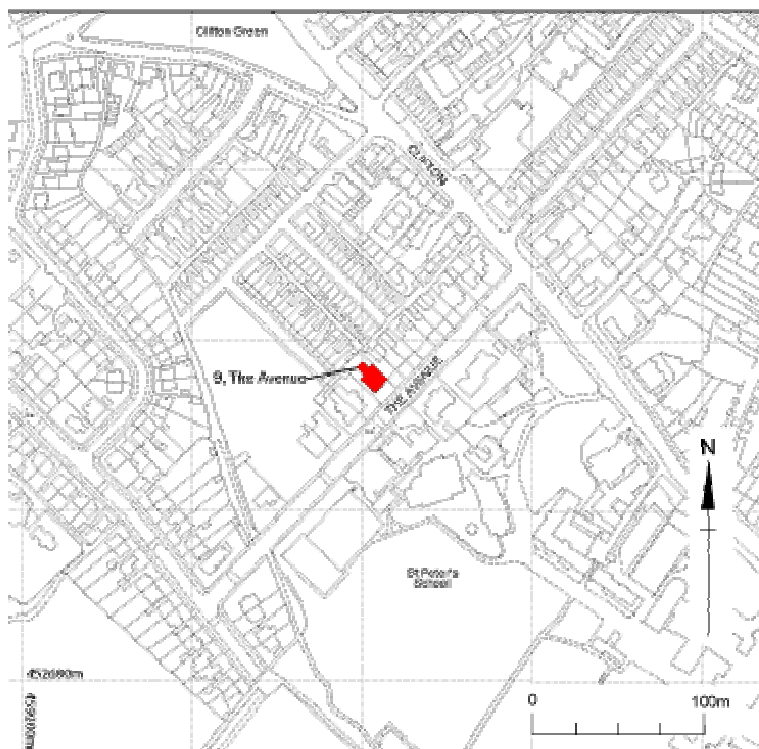


Figure 1. Location of 9, The Avenue, Clifton, Project 5878

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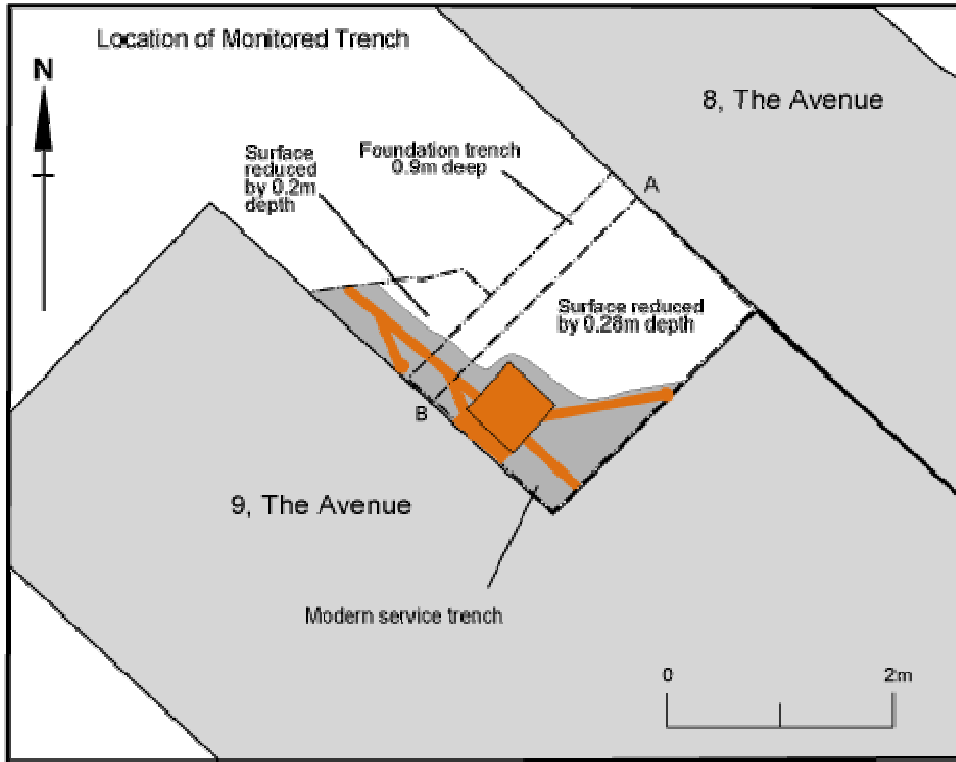


Figure 2. Location of extension, trench plan and section

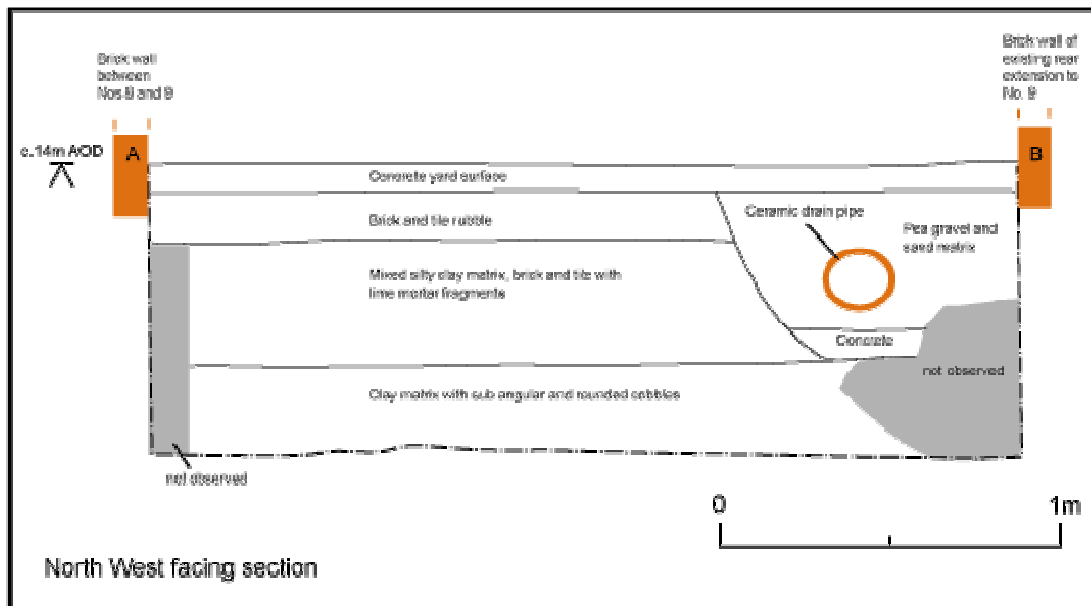


Figure 3 Section North West facing section

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