



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	9-11 Tadcaster Road		
CLIENT NAME	Mr Andrew Piatt, Gateleys Plc.		
YAT PROJECT #	6020	YAT REPORT #	2018/34
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	SE 5690 4749
PLANNING REFERENCE #	16/01673/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

INTRODUCTION

An intermittent watching brief on ground works for a housing development was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Mr Andrew Piatt, Gateleys Plc. between 26th February and 19th July at 9-11 Tadcaster Road NGR SE 5690 4749 (Figure 1). The watching brief was required as a planning condition because the site lies 400m outside of the north-east boundary of the Copmanthorpe Conservation Area (no.13). The purpose of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits or structures exposed by the ground works.

METHODOLOGY

All ground works were completed by tracked machines fitted with toothless buckets. There were four stages of groundworks; a new access road connecting the development with Tadcaster Road, a topsoil strip, trenches for drainage and four soakaways. The topsoil strip, drainage works and soakaways were across the area to the rear of the current property (11 Tadcaster Road) where the four new houses have been built.

The access road measured approximately 130m long, ranged from 4.5m to 5.5m wide and 0.50m to 1.70m BGL. It was deepest at the north-western end where Tadcaster Road is considerably lower than the ground towards the south-east. The access road itself ran north-west to south-east, and then curved to the north-east. It was excavated and filled in with stone in stages. An archaeologist watched all of the excavations and took notes and digital photographs.

The intended ground works on the land to the rear of 11 Tadcaster Road consisted of a topsoil strip of the whole area followed by driven pile foundations and pile caps. The topsoil strip only went 500mm deep but was hindered by poor weather conditions which saturated the ground. Initially the topsoil strip was watched by an archaeologist but it became impossible to observe as the area started flooding. In addition to this, the strip did not go below topsoil, so this stage of the watching brief was abandoned (Plate 1).

The drainage works to the rear of the new properties consisted of drain runs to a depth of 500mm and four soakaways. Two of the four soakaways were watched; they were excavated to dimensions of 4m by 4m, and 1.50m deep. As 1.50m is beyond the YAT maximum safe depth photos and sketches were taken from the top of the soakaways only.

RESULTS

The excavation of the access road revealed nothing of significance (Plate 2). The topsoil at the

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FINDS	0	SAMPLES	0	PHOTOS	6
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north-west and north-east ends was much deeper than at the south corner, with an approximate depth range of 200-800mm. The section of the north-west stretch of the access road exposed soft, pale brownish yellow sand that lay over a firm, dark orange-brown clay, which ran to the formation depth. There were two disused land drains in this clay. To the south-east the landscaping deposit petered out and the section exposed modern intrusions including garden walls, drains and service trenches. These features were associated with demolished modern outbuildings. The natural geological deposits were not reached in this stage of work.

The topsoil strip at the back of 11 Tadcaster Road was not deep enough to expose archaeological deposits; only topsoil was excavated and this revealed heavy root disturbance (Plate 3). The watching brief for this section of groundworks was abandoned due to the shallow depth of the excavations, as well as heavy rain causing the area to be obscured as soon as it was exposed due to flooding.

The drain runs were excavated around the rear perimeter of the development area. This stage of work only disturbed topsoil (Plate 4) to a depth of 500mm so no archaeological features or natural geological deposits were encountered.

The soakaways were excavated along the rear line of the new houses. They revealed substantial modern deposits and two disused ceramic land drains. Five different deposits were encountered including the topsoil (Plate 5) and they contained large amounts of modern brick and stone rubble (Plate 6). Nothing of note was encountered in this stage of works. Despite the presence of land drains there was no obvious evidence of other agricultural activities, and the drains themselves looked to be no older than 20th Century.

CONCLUSIONS

Groundworks at this site revealed nothing of any antiquity or significance, with all the features identified appearing to be contemporary with, or later than number 11 Tadcaster Road (built c.1950, appears on OS one-inch 7th series, 1955-61). A deliberate build up of the ground level has been observed to a depth of 1.5m in the soakaways, and no archaeological remains or natural geological deposits were encountered at any stage of works. The results of this watching brief as well as observations from historic maps suggest that until the current development, the site has been unsuitable for use other than as a dumping ground.

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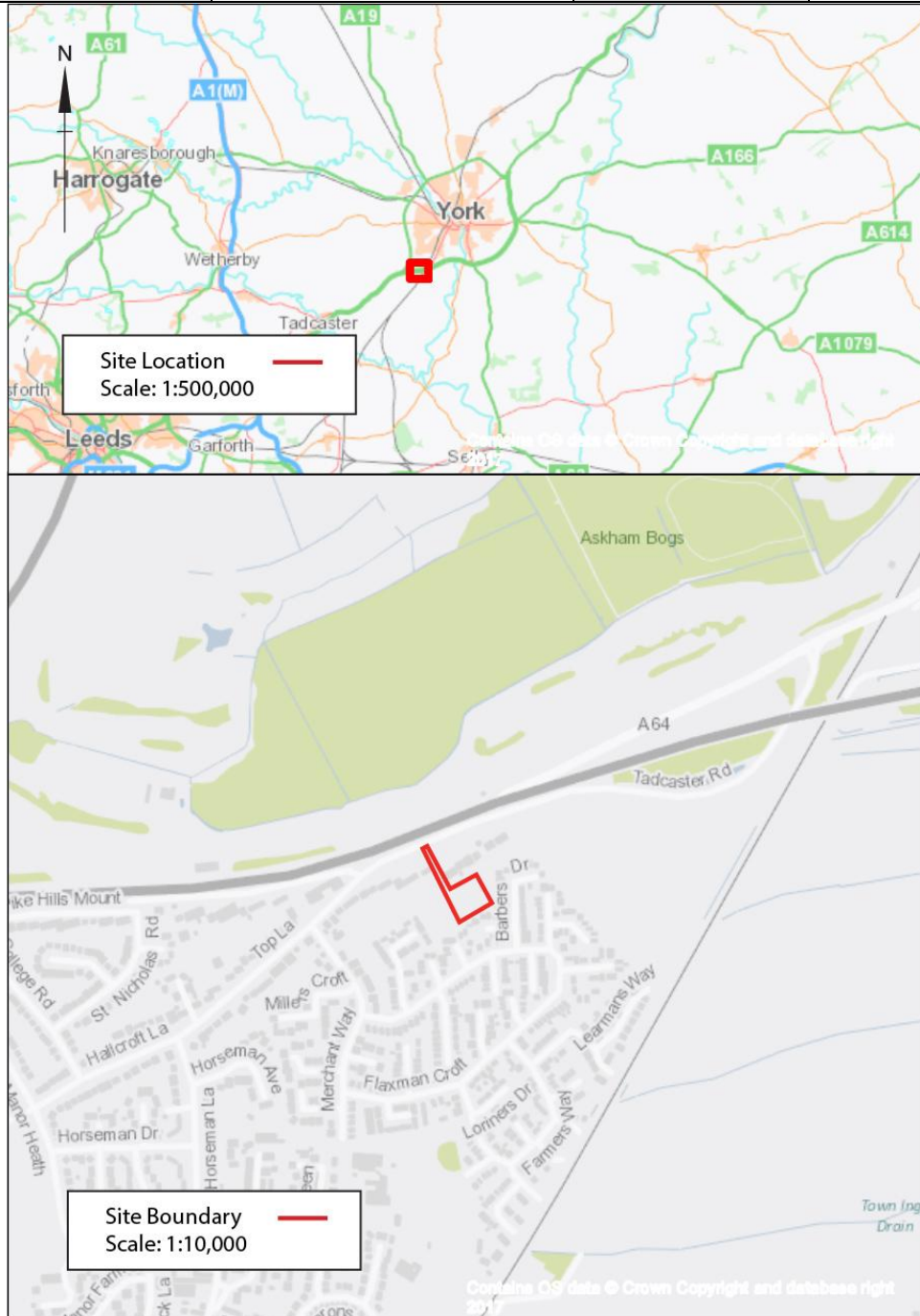


Figure 1 Site Location

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Plate 1 Showing waterlogged conditions during topsoil strip stage.

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Plate 2 South West facing section of access road excavations.

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Plate 3 Initial stage of topsoil strip before weather forced the abandonment of observations of this stage of work.

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Plate 4 South West facing section of drainage run showing topsoil.

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Plate 5 North West facing section of first soakaway showing several dumping and make up deposits.

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Plate 6 South East facing section of second soakaway showing modern brick and stone rubble dumps.

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