



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	75 Main Street, Fulford, York		
CLIENT NAME	Mass Architecture		
YAT PROJECT #	6070	YAT REPORT #	2018/97
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	SE 61065 49176
PLANNING REFERENCE #	17/02554/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

INTRODUCTION

A watching brief on ground works for a single story, ground floor extension was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Mass Architecture between 3rd July and 6th July at 75 Main Street Fulford, York, NGR SE 61065 49176 (Figure 1). The objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits or structures exposed by the ground works.

METHODOLOGY

Groundworks were undertaken in three stages: excavation for drainage; foundation trenching; and ground reduction within the footprint of the extension (Figure 2).

Initially existing drainage runs were exposed and new drainage trenches excavated enabling connection of new and existing drains. Exposure of existing drains was achieved by hand excavation and new drain runs were excavated both by hand and the use of a 1 tonne tracked mechanical excavator utilising a 0.3m wide flat bladed ditching bucket. The new drainage trenches were excavated to depths of between 0.5m and 0.8m below ground level (BGL).

The second stage of groundworks encompassed the excavation of foundation trenches for the extension. This was achieved through a combination of hand excavation and the use of a 1 tonne tracked mechanical excavator utilising a 0.6m wide flat bladed ditching bucket. The foundation trenching was undertaken to a depth of between 0.5m and 0.7m BGL. In total an area of approximately 13.5m² was excavated for the foundations.

The final stage involved the reduction of ground level within the footprint of the extension by 0.4m, however given the absence of significant archaeological deposits and features the archaeological watching brief was curtailed before this stage of works, following monitoring of the service and foundation trench excavation.

At regular intervals sections exposed by trenching were inspected, cleaned, drawn at a scale of 1:10 and digital photographs taken. Where archaeological features were encountered these were planned at a scale of 1:20 and recorded with digital photography. In addition photographs recording work in progress were also taken.

RESULTS

The pattern of deposition across the development area exposed by the service and foundation trenches was found to be consistent.

At the top of the sequence was the existing modern yard surface. Across the south end of the site adjacent to the car port this was asphalt, while the majority of the yard area, ranging across the back of the house, the yard was made up of concrete pavers, these measured 200mm x 100mm, and 60mm deep. Both the asphalt and pavers were set on to a sub-base of compacted crushed limestone ranging from 60mm to 120mm thick.

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A layer of compacted black course sand and cinder was present across the site below the modern yard surface. That material was almost certainly an earlier yard surface. The thickness of this deposit varied from 30mm to 80mm, perhaps suggesting either an inconsistent wear pattern or leveling off prior to the laying of the current yard surface.

Below the compacted cinder yard was a relatively thick layer of soil. That material was a firm mid to dark brown silty sand containing moderate charcoal flecks, moderate firm mid red/brown clay patches and occasional brick fragments; it measured between 0.2m and 0.35m thick. It was homogenous in appearance, with no clear indications of a gradual accumulation or formation and therefore is thought most likely to have been a plough soil. A single abraded sherd of 17th/18th century slip ware was retrieved close to the top of this deposit; it was however quite small and not retained. In most places the plough soil displayed a diffuse interface with the underlying natural.

The horizon of natural material consisted of mid red/brown sandy clay extending to the base of excavation from between 0.4m and 0.6m BGL, but largely was found at 0.45m/0.5m m BGL onwards.

The single feature to have been uncovered by the groundworks was a well located at the northern edge of the site, shared with the neighboring property, 73 Main Street. The well was internally lined with unbounded brickwork, and although the bricks could not be measured they were observed to be similar in appearance to those used in the construction of the rear elevation of 75 Main Street. The bricks forming the rear wall of the house measured 215mm long and 55mm deep. The internal diameter of the well was c.0.9m. The well was observed to extend as a continuous brick lined void to a depth of 3.5m. The well itself was dry and soil and rubble were observed to be present at its base.

Capping the well was a millstone with furrows incised in a quarter dress pattern. The millstone measured 1.22m in diameter, was 0.16m thick with a 0.26m diameter aperture or 'eye' at its centre. The millstone was placed slightly to the north-east of centre of the well, by c.100mm, and was situated at a point c.0.24m below the current ground surface. The eye of the millstone was capped by a Yorkstone slab fragment measuring 0.4m x 0.3m and 35mm thick. No obvious indications of a cut for the wells construction or backfilling material around the well lining was observed, it is probable these elements were masked by the millstone.

CONCLUSIONS

The compacted cinder yard surface, almost certainly 19th or early 20th century in date, clearly relates to the current house, in addition the similarity noted between the bricks forming the internal lining of the well and bricks in the rear elevation of 75 Main Street suggest a close contemporary link to their construction.

No evidence was found for occupation predating the standing building at this location. The presence of what appears to be plough soil across the site indicates an actively exploited agricultural landscape here prior to the construction of the current house.

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Figure 1 Site location

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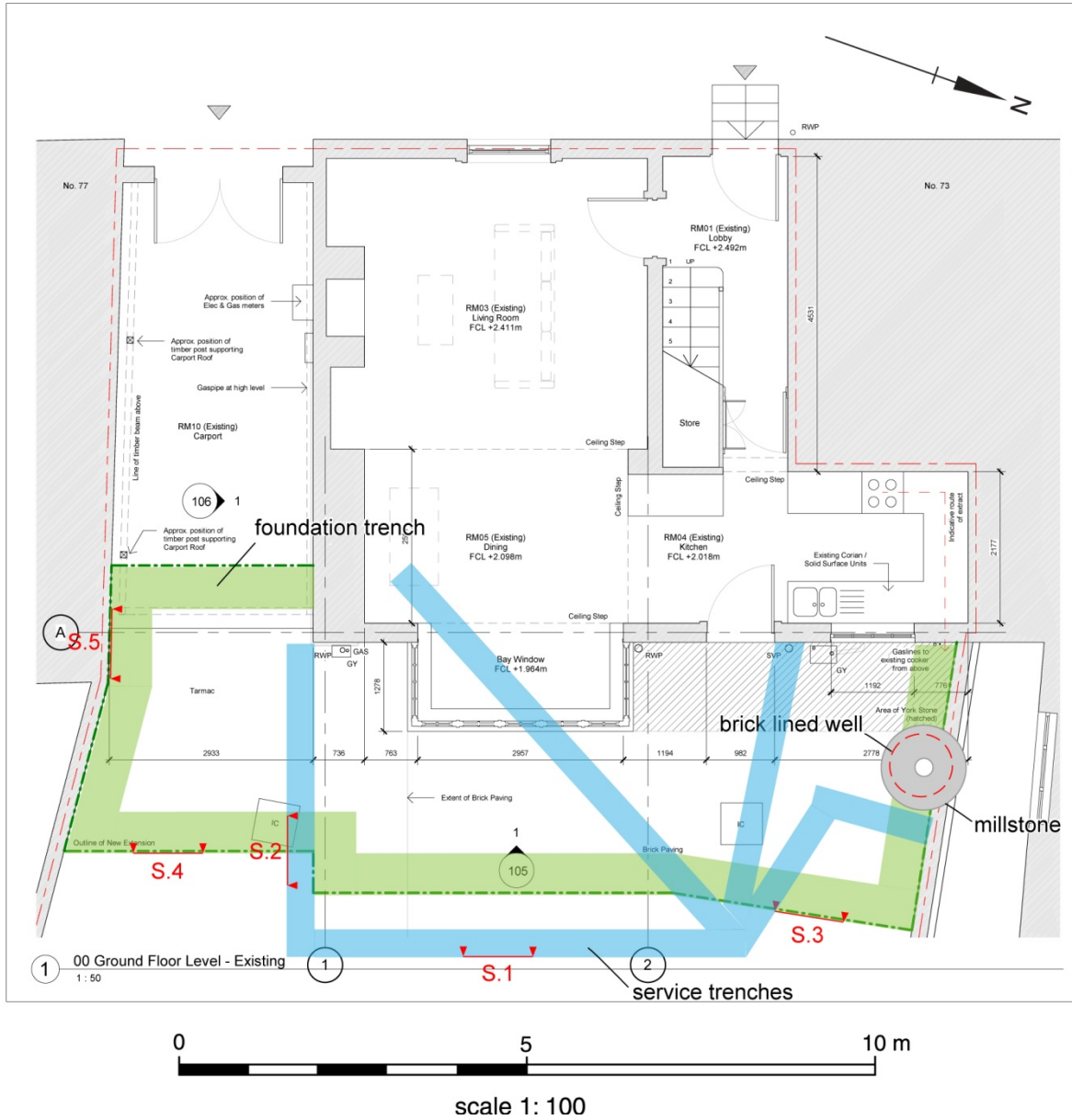


Figure 2 Works location (based on Existing Ground Floor Plan by Mass Architecture)

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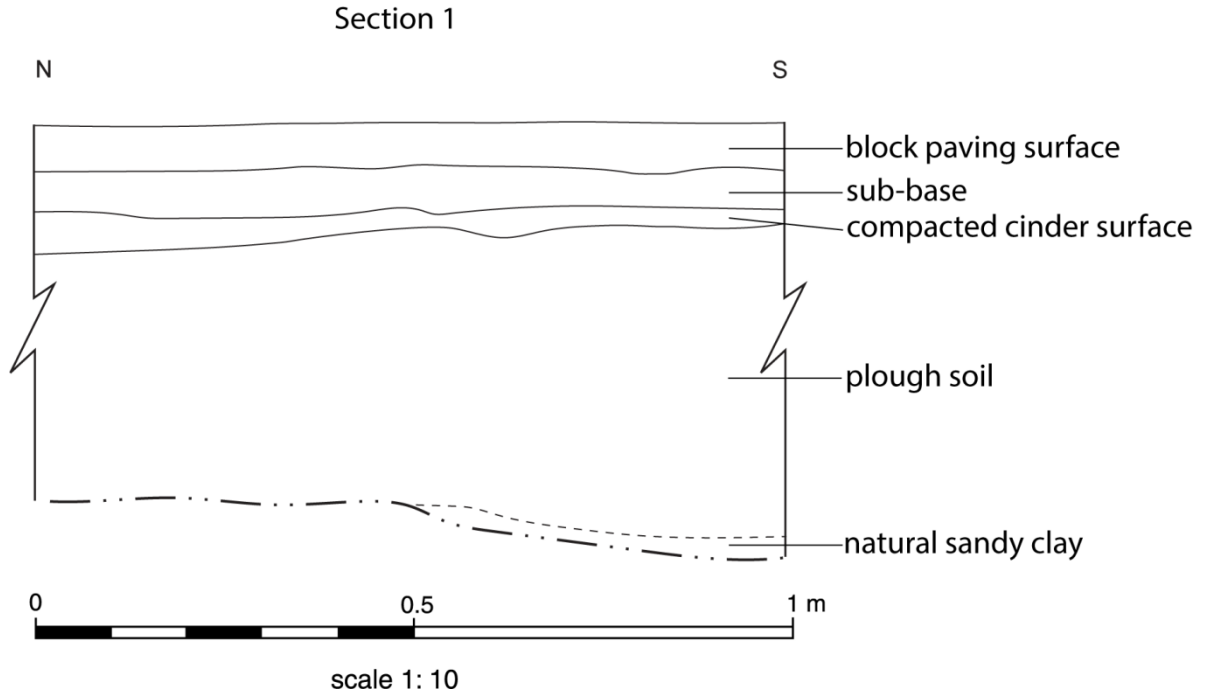


Figure 3 Section 1

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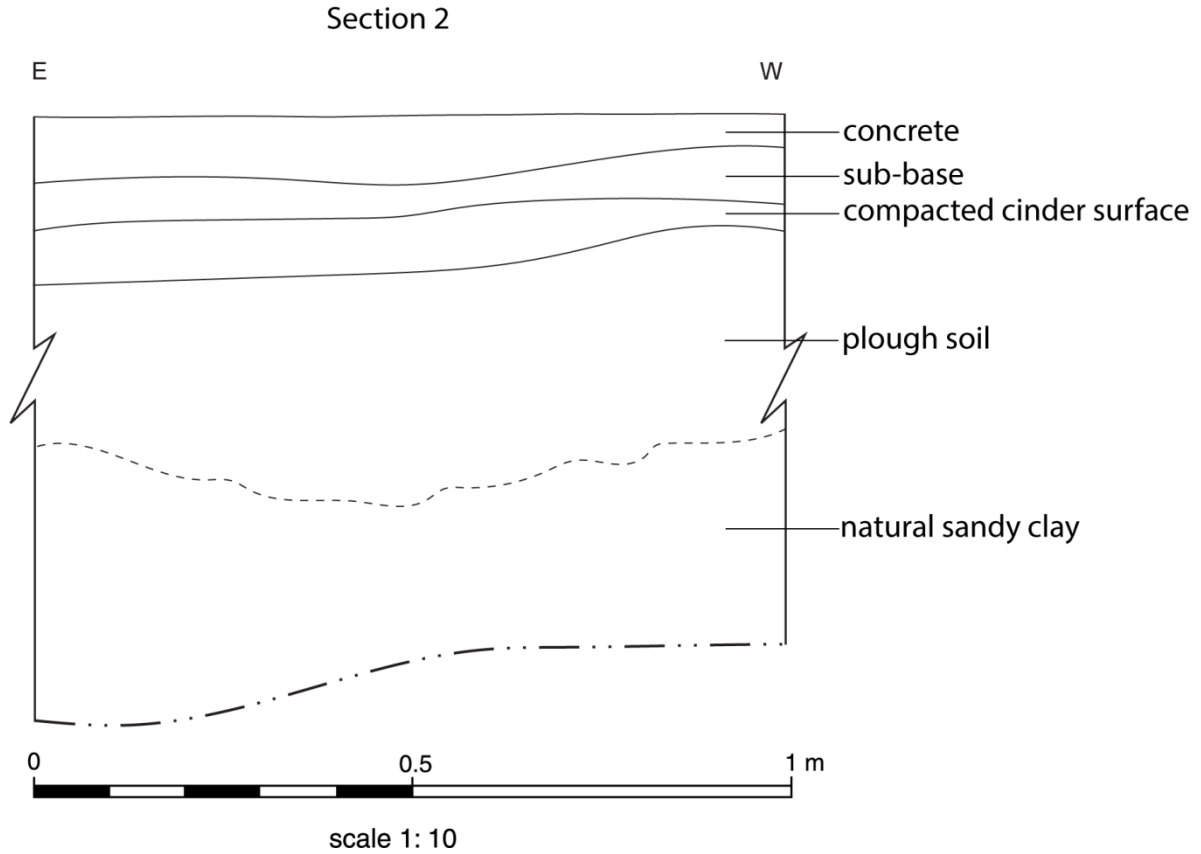


Figure 4 Section 2

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Plate 1 Drainage excavation in progress.



Plate 2 foundation trench excavation in progress.

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Plate 3 Section 1, looking east, scale units 0.1m.



Plate 4 Section 2, looking south, scale units 0.1m.

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Plate 5 Section 3, looking east, scale units 0.1m.



Plate 6 Section 5, looking east, scale units 0.1m.

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Plate 7 Section 5, looking south, scale units 0.1m.



Plate 8 Foundation trench at north end of site, looking west.

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Plate 9 Detail of millstone capping well, looking north, scale units 0.1m.



Plate 10 Well interior, note soil at base of well c.3.5m below well capping.

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