



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



Archaeological Investigations at 27 St Helens Road, Regency Mews, York, YO24 1HR

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YAT Evaluation Interim Report 2018/154 October 2018



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CONTENTS

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	3
KEY PROJECT INFORMATION	3
1 INTRODUCTION	4
2 METHODOLOGY.....	4
2.1 Test Trenches.....	4
2.2 Starter Pits.....	5
3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY	5
4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	5
5 RESULTS	8
6 DISCUSSION	10
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	11
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	11
APPENDIX 1 – INDEX TO ARCHIVE.....	112
APPENDIX 2 – CONTEXT LIST	13
APPENDIX 3 – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION.....	15
PLATES	277
FIGURES	33

Plates

Cover: View of Trench 1 excavation underway

Plate 1. Trench 1. North facing.....	27
Plate 2. Trench 1, section 1. West facing.....	28
Plate 3. Starter pit 1.....	28
Plate 4. Trench 2 (north) low pressure gas pipe.....	29
Plate 5. Trench 2 (south). Looking south west.....	29
Plate 6. Trench 2, section 2. West facing.....	30
Plate 7. Starter pit 2.....	30
Plate 8. Trench 3. Facing north east.....	31
Plate 9. Trench 3, section 4. North west facing.....	31
Plate 10. Starter pit 3.....	32

Tables

Table 1. Depths of deposits.....	9
Table 2. Index to archive.....	12
Table 3. Context list.....	14

Figures

Figure 1. Site Location.....	33
Figure 2. Trench and starter pit locations.....	34
Figure 3. Trench 1, section 1.....	35
Figure 4. Trench 2, section 2.....	36
Figure 5. Trench 3, section 3 and 4.....	37
Figure 6. Archaeological ditches encountered in evaluation.....	38
Figure 7. Starter pit profiles.....	39

Abbreviations

YAT – York Archaeological Trust

BGL – Below Ground Level

AOD – Above Ordnance Datum

CYC – City of York Council

WSI – Written Scheme of Investigation

CBM – Ceramic Building Material

Non-technical Summary

Between the 24th October 2018 and the 25th October 2018 York Archaeological Trust conducted an evaluation investigation at 27 St Helens Road, Regency Mews, York, YO24 1HR (SE 58618 49695).

The work was undertaken for Abbeyfield Society (York) Ltd to help inform a planning application that was under consideration by the City of York Council (17/01419/FULM). The work was based on a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by YAT. The works involved the excavation and recording of three trenches and three hand-dug starter pits.

Evidence was found for modern garden landscaping, as well the 1930s tennis courts at the site. Evidence was found for medieval and post-medieval levelling and probable agricultural soils. Ditches were identified in two of the trenches. The similarity of these features to those found by YAT at the east side of the site in 1989 suggests similar land use across the entire site.

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	27 St Helens Road, Regency Mews, York, YO24 1HR
YAT Project No.	6087
Document Number	2018/154
Type of Project	Evaluation
Client	Abbeyfield Society (York) Ltd
Planning Application No.	17/01419/FULM
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Museum Accession No.	tbc
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REPORT INFORMATION

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1 INTRODUCTION

Between the 24th October 2018 and the 25th October 2018 YAT conducted an evaluation excavation at 27 St Helens Road, Regency Mews, York, YO24 1HR (SE 58618 49695). (Figure 1). The work was undertaken for Abbeyfield Society (York) Ltd for two purposes related to conditions attached to planning application 17/01419/FULM; to monitor borehole starter pits in accordance with the planning condition for watching brief on all groundworks; to characterise the archaeological deposition at the site and inform the mitigation methodology for a strip, map and record. The uppermost metre of all hand-dug starter pits was recorded to characterise any archaeological deposition present and determine the depth of natural. The cable percussion boreholes which were subsequently carried out were not monitored. Three small trenches were excavated and recorded in locations intended to provide useful information about ground levels across the proposed development site. In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) excavation ceased as soon as significant archaeological deposits were revealed.

2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology followed the WSI (Appendix 3) except where variations were required due to unforeseen constraints due to the unexpected gas pipe discovered in Trench 2.

2.1 Trenches

Three trenches were excavated (Figure 2):

No.	Size (m)	Rationale
1	1.6m x 5m	To uncover any archaeological features and characterise the site.
2a	1.6m x 5m (north)	To uncover any archaeological features and characterise the site. This trench was abandoned and moved due to the discovery of a low pressure gas pipe.
2b	1.6m x 5m (south)	To uncover any archaeological features and characterise the site. In a more consistent and safe way, define stratigraphy.
3	1.6m x 5m	To uncover any archaeological features and characterise the site.

Trenches were located on the scale base map provided by the client (Figure 2).

All deposits were hand excavated and recorded as per the standard YAT single context recording system.

In Trenches 1–3 excavation ceased at 1m below ground level (BGL) and any archaeological features were recorded using the YAT pro-forma. Within trench 2 excavations ceased at 0.90m BGL when yellow hazard tape warning of a low pressure gas pipe was uncovered. To avoid the gas pipe Trench 2 was relocated directly south of the original trench. Trench 2b, was excavated to provide a section demonstrating the stratigraphy of the site.

Finds were retrieved and bagged by individual context number. These have been taken back to YAT for further assessment and used to date the features that were present. The excavated trenches have been backfilled at the client's request.

2.2 CP Borehole Starter pits

No.	Size (mm)	Depth Observed (BGL)
1	400mm x 400mm	1m
2	400mm x 400mm	1m
3	400mm x 400mm	1m

Borehole starter pits were located on the scale base map provided by the client (Figure 2). All deposits within 1m BGL were hand excavated by the ground workers onsite and recorded as per the standard YAT single context recording system.

In starter pits 1 to 3 hand-excavation ceased at 1m BGL and no archaeological features were encountered within the starter pits.

No finds were retrieved from the hand-excavated starter-pits. The starter pits were backfilled at the client request.

3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

- 3.1 The proposed site is located at 27 St Helens Road, Abbeyfield, York, YO24 1HR (Figure 1).
- 3.2 The site lies approximately 3.25km south-west of York centre. It is bounded to the north by buildings fronting onto St Helen's Road, to the east by three-storey flats fronting Calcaria Crescent and to the south by buildings fronting onto Regency Mews. At the western end of the site is Abbeyfield House.
- 3.3 There are no Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within the area of the development. The site lies just outside of the Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI). The site is approximately 100m west of the Tadcaster and Dringhouses Road Conservation Area (DYO1706).
- 3.4 The site is an approximately 3,000 meters' square area, with a central building surround by gardens and substantial deciduous trees, located around the site which are protected by the CYC.
- 3.5 The underlying solid geology is Sherwood Sandstone Group - Sandstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 237 to 272 million years ago in the Triassic and Permian Periods. The superficial geology straddles York Moraine Member - Sand, Clayey, Gravelly deposits to the south east and Alne Glaciolacustrine Formation - Clay, Silty to the north west. Both of these superficial deposits were formed 2 million year ago in the Quaternary Period, this was when the local environment was dominated by ice age conditions.
www.bgs.ac.uk (accessed 25/10/18)

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prehistory – Roman

- 4.1 The evidence for prehistoric activity in the area is limited, however five Neolithic polished stone axes have been found within the Dringhouses area and a number of pre-Roman features were identified at the Former Starting Gate public house excavation in 2003 (McComish 2003; McComish 2004). It has also been suggested that the path the Roman road that runs along on the ridge of the glacial moraine could also have been an earlier route used from the Bronze Age and through the Iron Age (Margary 1973).
- 4.2 There is extensive evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity, a civilian settlement is believed to have been located along the Roman road (Hunter-Mann 1996; McComish 2003). Assessment of the former Starting Gate Public House investigations indicate successive phases of roman activity on the site, from the earliest agricultural deposits and boundary ditches to the 2nd century buildings, which were all focused around the roman road (McComish 2004). Considering the evidence for settlement, the Roman road (RCHME Road 10), ditches/land division and a cemetery around the site there is a high likelihood of Roman deposits occurring on the site.
- 4.3 A number of Roman burials located alongside the Roman road have been discovered in the Dringhouses area. These include a small cemetery near the junction of St Helen's Road with Tadcaster Road, the full extent of which is currently unknown, a stone coffin from the yard of the Cross Keys Inn and four other stone coffins from Dringhouses which were found in the 18th and 19th centuries (RCHMY1, 107). A further Roman burial was excavated at The Fox Public House, which was renamed The Fox and Roman in its honour (Macnab 1997, 29). This burial was aligned north-east / south-west i.e. parallel to the Roman road. In addition, a pottery face vase from the St Helen's Road area may have originally been from a burial (RCHMY1, 107). A single burial of possible pre-Roman or early Roman date was identified at the former site of the Starting Gate Public House in 2003 (McComish 2003, 23). Given the number of burials formerly recovered in the vicinity of the site there is a strong possibility that human remains might be discovered at Regency Mews. As well as the roman burials, the excavations at former Fox Public house revealed archaeological deposits from 0.5m BGL which were largely roman occupational features with a small amount of medieval and post medieval features. The roman activity included ditches, agricultural plough soil and a cobble path (Macnab 1997).

4.4 *Anglian – Anglo-Scandinavian*

The evidence from the early medieval period is limited, from the derivation of the name Dringhouses could be old English '*dreng*' a free tenant holding or '*drengr*' a young man or servant (Macnab 1998). A series of possible medieval stakeholes were encountered in an evaluation trench at 26- 30 Regency Mews as well as ditch; these features may also have been post-medieval in date and were cut into the natural (Johnson 1997). There is also early documentary evidence placing Dringhouses in the detached parish of Holy Trinity, Micklegate this suggests that it could have been an early medieval settlement or even an Anglo-Scandinavian parish that was the precursor to Holy Trinity Priory.

4.5 *Post Medieval*

In the post-medieval period Dringhouses was an agricultural village with strip-holdings that were most likely made during the medieval period. Evidence of post-medieval quarrying was encountered at 26–30 Regency Mews that vastly reduced the AOD at which natural was encountered as well as truncating earlier archaeology. In undisturbed areas of the trench natural (and the archaeological horizon) was encountered at 0.3m BGL while in the quarried areas this was in excess of 1.5m BGL (Johnson 1997). On old OS maps of the area the site is labelled as Manor house meaning it may have been its own manor within the area. The OS maps also show the parish boundaries of the Holy Trinity Micklegate as well as some strips within the parish of Acomb.

4.6 *Modern*

The area along St Helens road to the west is known for the development of the Brickworks in the 1930s by the Simpson family Ltd. Clay pits are also shown on the 6-inch OS maps from 1946 and further development of more Brickworks can be seen along Tadcaster Road, with associated brick worker's cottages being built as well (Ramsbottom 2010, 76).

On aerial photographs from around 1936, the proposed site is covered in tennis courts again highlighting the development of ground levels (CYC).

4.7 **PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS**

A watching brief was carried out on groundworks for the foundations of Abbeyfields House, located directly to the west of the site in 1998 (Macnab 1998). In this watching brief a concentration of Roman period ditches in the northern end of the strip all running parallel aligned north-west by south-east. This could indicate a land boundary that was re-cut and re-established multiple times. The features extended beyond the stripped area towards the proposed site.

A major excavation was undertaken after the demolition of the former Starting Gate public house to the east of the site in 2003 (Figure 2). The Starting Gate site was first trial-trenched by YAT in 1996 (Hunter-Mann 1996), and a larger excavation was undertaken in 2003 (McComish 2003) (Figure 5). Four phases of the Roman remains were identified.

The first phase was the establishment of the Roman road (RCHME Road 10). This was followed by a phase of intensive building and use of structures, followed by a less intense occupation accompanied by agricultural activity with some possible furnace residue indicating the possibility of smithing. In the final phase were a number of scattered post-holes and pits indicating continued lower-level land use. However, no pottery dated later than the mid-3rd century was recovered from the site. A major discovery was the location of remains of Road 10 further east than previously thought, nearer the modern-day Tadcaster Road.

Other excavations in the area are less well documented, to the north-east burials and stone coffins were found in the 18th and 19th century dating to the Roman period. There was also a series of trial trenches excavated in 1995 (Finlayson 1995), these also found ditches a pit and a possible construction cut dating to the Roman period but were limited in what they could interpret from these (Figure 2). These excavations around the site show that there is a high chance of encountering Roman archaeology, this could range from ditches and agricultural features to possible structures and settlement.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1, CP starter pit 1 (Figures 3 and 7).

Trench 1 was excavated to the top of natural at 0.60m BGL (12.87m AOD). The natural was described as a firm, light yellowy brown sandy silt with grey mottling, clay with occasional pebbles (C1002) (Plate 1).

Cut directly into the natural were two ditches, both aligned east-west (C1005 and C1006). These were relatively shallow and contained Roman pot and CBM fragments, along with possible medieval pot towards the top of the fills. The backfills were a similar firm, mottled reddish brown, mid grey, slightly sandy clay (C1003 and C1004). However due to the diffuse edges in section, it was difficult to determine stratigraphic relationships between the features (Plate 2).

Medieval and post-medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil (C1001) and a modern land drain was at the northernmost end of the trench. Post-medieval pottery also came from the topsoil (C1000).

CP starter pit 1 revealed natural at 0.80m BGL (C4002), overlaid by a light grey silty subsoil (C4001) with occasional cobbles at 0.40m BGL. The topsoil was a loose, dark brown, sandy silt with evidence of roots (Plate 3).

5.2 Trench 2, CP starter pit 2 (Figure 4 and 7).

Trench 2 was excavated to 0.40m BGL at which point a low pressure gas pipe was identified. Another trench was then dug directly south and the first promptly backfilled (Plate 4).

The new Trench 2 (south) was excavated to a depth of 1.60m BGL due to the presence of deep modern deposits. A deeper stepped section was hand dug to the south south-west end of the trench (Plate 5). Natural (C2005) was encountered at 1.54m BGL (13.13m AOD) and consisted of a firm, mottled mid, orange brown, light grey and mid grey clay (Plate 6).

Above natural were a series of post-medieval–modern make-up and levelling deposits, the thickest of which was first identified at 0.72m BGL (13.99m AOD) (C2003 and C2004).

Above this was a band of noticeably darker soil consisting of a firm, dark brown, clayey silt with moderate pebble and occasional small CBM fragments, which appear to be relatively modern (C2002).

There was no subsoil present in Trench 2, but a band of hard, light yellow brown and grey, layers of compacted hard-core on top of woven plastic mat (C2001). This was then overlain by a dark topsoil deposit.

The hand-dug starter pit did not reveal the depth of natural, as the entire deposit was composed of a soft, mid brown, clayey silt (C5000) (Plate 7).

5.3 Trench 3, CP starter pit 3 (Figure 5 and 7).

Trench 3 was excavated to a depth of 0.80m BGL (13.87m AOD) and at this depth that natural was identified, consisting of firm, mottled light brown and mid grey brown, slightly clayey sand with occasional manganese flecks (C3005) (Plate 8).

Cut directly into the natural was another probable ditch, similar to the two identified in Trench 1, aligned east-west (C3004). Like those in Trench 1 this feature was relatively shallow and showed evidence of slumping on the north-west side (C3003), with a primary fill visible in the centre (C3002). No finds were recovered to date this feature (Plate 9).

The subsoil consisted of a firm, mottled mid brown and mid brownish grey, clayey sand with moderate charcoal flecks and occasional pebbles (C3001). Within the subsoil there was another modern land drain present which was to the south-eastern side of the trench.

Natural was encountered in the starter pit for CP borehole 3 at 0.80m BGL (C6002) and consisted of a firm, mottled light grey and mid orange, clayey sand. This was then overlaid by a mid-brown, silty clayey sandy subsoil (C6001) with occasional cobbles at 0.50m BGL. The topsoil was a soft, mid brown, silty sand (Plate 10).

There was quite a variation in natural and soil depths across the site, for clarification on the depths uncover BGL and AOD during this evaluation please refer to Table 1.

Area	Description	Thickness of Deposit	Top of Deposit (BGL)	Top of Deposit (AOD)
Trench 1	Turf/Topsoil	0.36m	Ground Level	13.51m
	Subsoil	0.28m	0.36m	13.15m
	Natural	- (base of trench)	0.60m	12.87m
CP1	Turf/Topsoil	0.40m	Ground Level	-
	Subsoil	0.40m	0.40m	-
	Natural	0.20m	0.80m	-
Trench 2 (south)	Turf/Topsoil	0.36m	Ground Level	14.80m
	Compacted surface	0.30m	0.28m	14.44m
	Buried soil	0.16m	0.58m	14.14m
	Modern makeup	0.86m	0.72m	13.99m
	Natural	0.10m (exposed)	1.54m	13.13m
CP2	Turf/Topsoil	1.00m	Ground Level	-
	Subsoil	-	-	-
	Natural	-	-	-
Trench 3	Turf/Topsoil	0.36m	Ground Level	14.59m
	Subsoil	0.36m	0.36m	14.23m
	Natural	-(base of trench)	0.80m	13.87m
CP3	Turf/Topsoil	0.50m	Ground Level	-
	Subsoil	0.30m	0.50m	-
	Natural	0.20m	0.80m	-

Table 1 Recorded deposit depths

5.4 Ceramic Building Material Results

A total of 263g of ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered from the site, which is listed by context below together with the dating evidence

Context 1000 1 sherd of 13–16th century plain tile and two sherds of abraded Roman brick of 1–14th century date

Context 1001 1 sherd of 13–16th century plain tile

Context 1003 1 sherd of 13–16th century plain tile

Context 2003 1 fragment of brick, no original surfaces survived to aid with dating and this could be of any date from the 14th to mid-19th century.

In addition, a fragment of daub weighing 25g was recovered from Context 1000.

None of the material was worthy of retention (J. McComish pers. com.).

6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has provided useful information about the deposit sequence and levels across the site. In Trench 2 a buried topsoil (C2002) indicates extensive landscaping was carried out before 1930 in this area for the building of the tennis courts.

Maps from before 1910 show the landscape was mainly agricultural fields. On the 1853 OS map the site is called 'Ashfield'. Deep deposits containing post-medieval and medieval pottery (such as in the subsoil of Trench 1) suggest much material was imported and that land use was predominantly for agricultural processes. It is likely that since the medieval period nightsoil and manure was imported for the enrichment of fields causing the development of significant depth of soils.

The only significant archaeological features were three east–west aligned ditches discovered in Trenches 1 and 2. These features were similar to those described by Macnab and Marwood (1998) found during the Abbeyfields excavations at the west of the site (Macnab and Marwood 1998). The 1998 ditches were dated to the late 1st–mid-3rd century AD. Macnab and Marwood suggested that the discovery of multiple close ditches on the same alignment may indicate a landscape boundary which was long-lived and sufficiently important to be reiterated over time (Macnab and Marwood 1998, 8).

Although the evaluation trenches were small and can only provide a 'window' through the underlying deposition, they were positioned to characterise the deposit sequence across as much of the proposed building footprint as possible and have successfully done so. The evaluation has revealed that the landscape has been significantly built up over a long time and that the depth of natural is variable across the site. The archaeological deposits we may find here are likely to be similar to those discovered in 1998 before the construction of the Abbeyfield building at the west of the site (Figure 6) and will provide important information about the Roman landscape. The evaluation did not find anything to suggest we might encounter the sort of complex, multiphase archaeological remains that were found to the east of the site, near Tadcaster Road, at the former Starting Gate Public House in 2003 (McComish 2004). However, it must be noted that the majority of the building footprint remains

uninvestigated and is therefore not well understood and that there are precedents for Roman burials in the area.

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APPENDIX 1 – INDEX TO ARCHIVE

Item	Number of items
Context sheets	24
Levels register	2
Photographic register	0
Sample register	0
Drawing register	0
Original drawings	4
B/W photographs (films/contact sheets)	0
Colour slides (films)	0
Digital photographs	118
Written Scheme of Investigation	1
Report	1

Table 2 Index to archive

APPENDIX 2 – CONTEXT LIST

Context Number	Description
1000	Turf and topsoil – Friable, mid brown, sandy silt. Frequent roots.
1001	Subsoil – Firm, mid greyish brown, slightly sandy silt.
1002	Natural – Firm, light yellowy brown sandy silt with grey mottling, clay. Occasional pebbles.
1003	Ditch backfill – Firm, mottled mid brown and mid grey, slightly sandy clay. Moderate charcoal flecks. Occasional pebbles. Roman and Medieval pottery fragments.
1004	Ditch backfill – Firm, mottled reddish brown, mid grey and light yellowish brown, slightly sandy clay. Moderate charcoal flecks. Occasional pebbles. Roman and Medieval pottery fragments.
1005	Ditch cut – Linear shape in plan, aligned E-W. Depth is 0.25m by 1.00m wide. Moderate break of slope at top, shallow, concave sides, gradual break of slope at base.
1006	Ditch cut – Linear shape in plan, aligned E-W. Depth is 0.32m by 1.40m wide. Gradual break of slope on south side, moderate at north, a shallow flat shelf on south side that breaks moderately to a shallow, concave base.
1007	Ditch backfill – Firm, light yellowy brown, clay. Occasional charcoal flecks, pebbles.
2000	Turf and topsoil – Loose, mid brown, silty clayey sand. Frequent roots and plastic. Moderate pebbles and wood fragments.
2001	Compacted surface – Hard, light yellow brown and grey, layers of compacted hard-core on top of woven plastic mat.
2002	Buried soil – Firm, dark brown, clayey silt. Moderate pebbles. Occasional small CBM fragments.
2003	Make-up – Friable, mid brown, clayey silt and cobbles (c.15%). Moderate CBM flecks and small fragments.
2004	Build-up – Firm, dark brown, silty clay. Occasional cobbles and pebbles, small abraded CBM fragments.
2005	Natural – Firm, mottled mid, orange brown, light grey and mid grey clay.
3000	Turf and topsoil – Soft, mid brown, silty and sandy clay. Frequent roots. Occasional small CBM fragments and pebbles.
3001	Subsoil – Firm, mottled mid brown and mid brownish grey, clayey sand. Moderate charcoal flecks. Occasional pebbles.
3002	Ditch backfill – Firm, dark brown, silty sand (diffuse interface with 3003). Moderate flecks and small fragments of manganese.
3003	Ditch backfill – Firm, mottled light grey, mid orange and mid grey, slightly sandy silt (interface with 3002 above is diffuse). Occasional flecks of manganese.
3004	Ditch cut – Linear shape in plan, aligned E-W. Depth is 0.16m by 1.00m wide. Sharp break of slope at the top, north side is moderately steep and concave, breaking gradually to a shallow, concave shelf, then breaking moderately to a moderately steep, concave profile. The south side is moderately steep and variously either flat or concave, breaking gradually to a concave base.
3005	Natural – Firm, mottled light brown and mid grey brown, slightly clayey sand. Occasional manganese flecks.
4000	Turf and topsoil – Loose, dark brown, sandy silt. Frequent roots.

Context Number	Description
4001	Subsoil – Loose, light brownish grey, sandy silt. Occasional cobbles and roots.
4002	Natural – Firm, mid orangey brown, sandy clay. Occasional roots.
5000	Turf and topsoil – Soft, mid brown, clayey silt.
6000	Turf and topsoil – Soft, mid brown, silty sand.
6001	Subsoil – Firm, mid brown, silty clayey sand. Occasional pebbles.
6002	Natural – Firm, mottled light grey and mid orange, clayey sand.

Table 3 Context list

APPENDIX 3 – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AND STRIP, MAP AND RECORD**

Site Location: 27 St Helens Road, Abbeyfield, York, YO24 1HR
NGR: SE 58618 49695
Proposal: Erection of part two/part three storey building comprising 17 extra care flats and 8 dementia care flats following demolition of 27 St Helen’s Road.
Planning ref: 17/01419/FULM
Prepared for: Abbeyfield Society (York) Ltd
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1	AS	28/08/2018	BR	29/08/2018	BR	29/08/2018
2	AS	28/08/2018	BR	30/08/2018	BR	30/08/2018
3	AS	28/08/2018	BR	27/09/2018	BR	27/09/2018
4	-	-	BS	19/10/18	IDM	19/10/18

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Abbeyfield Society (York) Ltd have received provisional planning consent for a part two/part three story building to be used as 17 care flats and 8 dementia care flats at 27 St Helens Road (SE 58618 49695; Figure 1). The scheme will include the demolition of 27 St Helens Road followed by the construction of the new building.

1.2 The following archaeological condition has been imposed:

A programme of post-determination archaeological evaluation using strip, map and record method is required on this site. The archaeological scheme comprises 3-5 stages of work. Each stage shall be completed and approved by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before it can be discharged.

A) No archaeological evaluation or development/demolition shall take place/commence until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to

and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The WSI should conform to standards set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

B) The site investigation and post investigation assessment shall be completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition will be secured. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

*C) A copy of a report on the evaluation and an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on any of the archaeological remains identified in the evaluation shall be deposited with City of York Historic Environment Record to allow public dissemination of results within **6 weeks** of completion or such other period as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.*

D) Where archaeological features and deposits are identified proposals for the preservation in-situ, or for the investigation, recording and recovery of archaeological remains and the publishing of findings shall be submitted as an amendment to the original WSI. It should be understood that there shall be presumption in favour of preservation in-situ wherever feasible.

E) No development shall take place until:

- details in D have been approved and implemented on site*
- provision has been made for analysis, dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured*
- a copy of a report on the archaeological works detailed in Part D should be deposited with City of York Historic Environment Record within [insert timescale] of completion or such other period as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.*

This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 12 of NPPF.

Reason: The site lies within an Area of Archaeological Interest. An investigation is required to identify the presence and significance of archaeological features and deposits and ensure that archaeological features and deposits are either recorded or, if of national importance, preserved in situ. A programme of post-determination archaeological mitigation specifically a watching brief is required on this site.

The archaeological scheme comprises 3 stages of work. Each stage shall be completed and approved by the Local Planning Authority before it can be discharged.

A) No demolition/development shall take place until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) for a watching brief has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI. The WSI should conform to standards set by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

B) The site investigation and post investigation assessment shall be completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition will be secured. This part of the

condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

C) A copy of a report (or publication if required) shall be deposited with City of York Historic Environment Record to allow public dissemination of results within [3 months] of completion or such other period as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. This condition is imposed in accordance with Section 12 of NPPF.

Reason: The site lies outside of the Area of Archaeological Importance but is considered to be a site of Archaeological Interest. Therefore, the development may affect important archaeological deposits which must be recorded prior to destruction.

- 1.3 This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared in response to a brief supplied by Claire MacRae, Heritage Project Officer for City of York Council. The work will be carried out in accordance with the Brief and this WSI, and according to the principles of the Institute for Archaeology (ClfA) Code of Conduct and all relevant standards and guidance.

2. SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The proposed site is located at 27 St Helens Road, Abbeyfield, York, YO24 1HR (Figure 1).

The site lies approximately 3.25km south-west of York centre. It is bounded to the north by buildings fronting onto St Helen's Road, to the east by three-storey flats fronting Calcaria Crescent and to the south by buildings fronting onto Regency Mews. At the western end of the site is Abbeyfield House.

The underlying solid geology is Sherwood Sandstone Group - Sandstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 237 to 272 million years ago in the Triassic and Permian Periods. The superficial geology straddles York Moraine Member - Sand, Clayey, Gravelly deposits to the south east and Alne Glaciolacustrine Formation - Clay, Silty to the north west (www.bgs.ac.uk – accessed 28/08/18). Both of these superficial deposits were formed 2 million year ago in the Quaternary Period, this was when the local environment was dominated by ice age conditions.

3. DESIGNATIONS & CONSTRAINTS

There are no Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within the area of the development. It also lies just outside of the Area of Archaeological Importance. The site is approximately 100m west of the Tadcaster Road Conservation Area (DYO1706).

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

There have been previous archaeological investigations within, and close to, the site (Figure 2). A watching brief was carried out on groundworks for the foundations of Abbeyfields House, located directly to the west of the site in 1998 (Macnab 1998).

In this watching brief a concentration of Roman period ditches in the northern end of the strip all running parallel aligned north-west by south-east. This could indicate a land boundary that was re-cut and re-established multiple times. The features extended beyond the stripped area towards the proposed site (Figure 2).

A major excavation was undertaken subsequent to the demolition of the former Starting Gate public house to the east of the site in 2003 (Figure 2). The Starting Gate site was first trial-trenched by YAT in 1996 (Hunter-Mann 1996), and a larger excavation was undertaken in 2003 (McComish 2003) (Figure 1). Four phases of the Roman remains were identified. The first phase was the establishment of the Roman road (RCHME Road 10). This was followed by a phase of intensive building and use of structures, followed by a less intense occupation accompanied by agricultural activity with some possible furnace residue indicating the possibility of smithing. In the final phase were a number of scattered post-holes and pits indicating continued lower-level land use. However, no pottery dated later than the mid-3rd century was recovered from the site. A major discovery was the location of remains of Road 10 further east than previously thought, nearer the modern-day Tadcaster Road.

Other excavations in the area are less well documented, to the north-east burials and stone coffins were found in the 18th and 19th century dating to the Roman period. There was also a series of trial trenches excavated in 1995 (Finlayson 1995), these also found ditches a pit and a possible construction cut dating to the Roman period but were limited in what they could interpret from these (Figure 2). These excavations around the site show that there is a high chance of encountering Roman archaeology, this could range from ditches and agricultural features to possible structures and settlement.

The evidence for prehistoric activity in the area is limited, however five Neolithic polished stone axes have been found within the Dringhouses area and a number of pre-Roman features were identified at the Former Starting Gate public house excavation in 2003 (McComish 2003; McComish 2004). It has also been suggested that the path the Roman road that runs along on the ridge of the glacial moraine could also have been an earlier route used from the Bronze Age and through the Iron Age (Margary 1973).

There is extensive evidence for Roman activity in the vicinity, a civilian settlement is believed to have been located along the Roman road (Hunter-Mann 1996; McComish 2003). Assessment of the former Starting Gate Public House investigations indicate successive phases of roman activity on the site, from the earliest agricultural deposits and boundary ditches to the 2nd century buildings, which were all focused around the roman road (McComish 2004). Considering the evidence for settlement, the Roman road (RCHME Road 10), ditches/land division and a cemetery around the site there is a high likelihood of Roman deposits occurring on the site.

A number of Roman burials located alongside the Roman road have been discovered in the Dringhouses area. These include a small cemetery near the junction of St Helen's Road with Tadcaster Road, the full extent of which is currently unknown, a stone coffin from the yard of the Cross Keys Inn and four other stone coffins from Dringhouses which were found in the 18th and 19th centuries

(RCHMY1, 107). A further Roman burial was excavated at The Fox Public House, which was renamed The Fox and Roman in its honour (Macnab 1997, 29). This burial was aligned north-east / south-west i.e. parallel to the Roman road. In addition, a pottery face vase from the St Helen's Road area may have originally been from a burial (RCHMY1, 107). A single burial of possible pre-Roman or early Roman date was identified at the former site of the Starting Gate Public House in 2003 (McComish 2003, 23). Given the number of burials formerly recovered in the vicinity of the site there is a strong possibility that human remains might be discovered at Regency Mews. As well as the roman burials, the excavations at former Fox Public house revealed archaeological deposits from 0.5m BGL which were largely roman occupational features with a small amount of medieval and post-medieval features. The roman activity included ditches, agricultural plough soil and a cobble path (Macnab 1997).

The evidence from the early medieval period is limited, from the derivation of the name Dringhouses could be old English 'dreng' a free tenant holding or 'dreng' a young man or servant (Macnab 1998). A series of possible medieval stakeholes were encountered in an evaluation trench at 26- 30 Regency Mews as well as ditch; these features may also have been post-medieval in date and were cut into the natural (Johnson 1997). There is also early documentary evidence placing Dringhouses in the detached parish of Holy Trinity, Micklegate this suggests that it could have been an early medieval settlement or even an Anglo-Scandinavian parish that was the precursor to Holy Trinity Priory.

In the post-medieval period Dringhouses was an agricultural village with strip-holdings that were most likely made during the medieval period. Evidence of post-medieval quarrying was encountered at 26-30 Regency Mews that vastly reduced the AOD at which natural was encountered as well as truncating earlier archaeology. In undisturbed areas of the trench natural (and the archaeological horizon) was encountered at 0.3m BGL while in the quarried areas this was in excess of 1.5m BGL (Johnson 1997). On old OS maps of the area the site is labelled as Manor house meaning it may have been its own manor within the area. The OS maps also show the parish boundaries of the Holy Trinity Micklegate as well as some strips within the parish of Acomb. Before the current buildings were constructed on and around the site was tennis courts until the 1970s.

5. GROUNDWORKS TO BE MONITORED

It is proposed that a small number of ground investigations scheduled to be carried out in advance of demolition works should be archaeologically monitored to inform the final foundation design and archaeological mitigation strategy. Furthermore, the excavation of three 5m x 2m evaluation trenches in the approximate positions shown in Figure 3 are proposed to better understand and characterise the deposition across the site. These will be excavated using a JCB3CX mechanical excavator under the direction of the YAT archaeologist. Digging will cease at the point where significant archaeological deposits or natural glacial deposits are identified whichever are encountered first. Recording will be undertaken as set out in Section 7 below. Archaeological features identified would be excavated but that they should be recorded in plan, the principal aim being to gain an understanding of the type of deposits present and at what depth below the present ground level they

might be encountered.

The original position suggested for the southern most of the three archaeological evaluation trenches was found to be close to the line of a low pressure gas pipe, as indicated by drawings provided by Northern Gas Network. Consequently, it has been decided to re-locate this trench c.3m to the north-west taking its extent beyond 5m to the north of the indicated line of the pipe (see revised Fig.3).

It is proposed that 27 St Helens Road will then be demolished and its footings grubbed out. A watching brief will be maintained by a YAT archaeologist on this element of the works. Recording will be undertaken as set out in Section 7 below.

The footprint of the new buildings, the area of 'strip, map and record' investigation (Figure 4), will subsequently be stripped of topsoil or overburden. The area must be stripped using a suitable machine fitted with a toothless bucket (e.g. ditching bucket) by a competent operator capable of producing a clean, flat surface for archaeological inspection. The stripping of this area will be monitored by a YAT field archaeologist at all times. Areas will be cleaned by the archaeologist(s) as necessary to allow any archaeological features to be identified. Recording will be undertaken as set out in Section 7 below.

6. DELAYS TO THE DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE

All earth-moving machinery must be operated at an appropriate speed and with sufficient finesse to allow the archaeologist to recognise, record and retrieve any archaeological deposits and material.

Archaeological monitoring should not unduly delay site works. However, the archaeologist on site must be given opportunity to observe, clean, assess and, where appropriate hand excavates, sample and record any exposed features and finds. In order to fulfil the requirements of this WSI, it may be necessary to halt the earth-moving activity to enable proper recording of the archaeology.

Plant or excavators shall not be operated in the immediate vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded and the archaeologist on site has given explicit permission for operations to recommence at that location.

7. RECORDING METHODOLOGY

STRIP, MAP AND RECORD:

The area to be subjected to 'strip, map and record' investigation will be defined by the footprint of the proposed development as shown in Figure 3. The strip, map and record investigation will cover the full footprint of the building plus an additional 1000mm from the outside edge of the outer wall of the building, within which ground level will be reduced to formation level.

Formation level and foundation design are yet to be established and will be determined following forthcoming ground investigations. A more detailed methodology will be provided for the strip, map and record investigation if

necessary once these details are agreed. However, the recording methodology for the investigation will be as specified in Section 7.3 below.

WATCHING BRIEF:

All other areas to be monitored under watching brief conditions will be determined using the final foundation design and in liaison with the client. If a plan is not available, or the watching brief work involves monitoring of long linear works, interventions which are not mapped, or large open areas, the location of the monitoring will be determined using a hand-held GPS.

RECORDING:

Unique context numbers will only be assigned if artefacts are retrieved, or stratigraphic relationships between archaeological deposits are discernible. In archaeologically 'sterile' areas, soil layers will be described, but no context numbers will be assigned. Where assigned, each context will be described in full on a pro forma context record sheet in accordance with the accepted context record conventions.

Archaeological deposits will be planned using a Leica GPS accurate to +/- 100mm, with individual/discrete features requiring greater detail being hand planned at a scale of 1:20 from a GPS baseline. Cross-sections of features will be drawn to a basic scale of 1:10 or 1:20 depending on the size of the feature. All drawings will be related to Ordnance Datum. Where it aids interpretation, structural remains will also be recorded in elevation. All drawings will be drawn on inert materials. All drawings will adhere to accepted drawing conventions

Photographs of archaeological deposits and features will be taken. This will include general views of entire features and of details such as sections as considered necessary. All site photography will adhere to accepted photographic record guidelines.

Archaeological features will be planned and excavated in a controlled stratigraphic manner. Features will be investigated using the following sampling strategies:

Linear features; a minimum of 10% of the length of the feature will be excavated (minimum 1.0m if less than 10m in length). Intersections will be excavated in such a way to show stratigraphic relationships.

Discrete features; will initially be half sectioned to provide a complete profile and at least 50% of the feature should be excavated. Full excavation of a feature may be appropriate, but will take place following consultation with John Oxley (City Archaeologist CYC).

Structures (houses, kilns, hearths); will be 50% excavated in the first instance. Full single-context excavation of features may be appropriate depending on the nature of the remains.

Areas which are inaccessible (e.g. for health and safety reasons) will be recorded as thoroughly as possible within the site constraints. In these instances, recording may be entirely photographic, with sketch drawings only.

All finds will be collected and handled following the guidance set out in the ClFA guidance for archaeological materials. Unstratified material will not be kept unless it is of exceptional intrinsic interest. Material discarded as a consequence of this policy will be described and quantified in the field. Finds of particular interest or fragility will be retrieved as Small Finds, and located on plans. Other finds, finds within the topsoil, and dense/discrete deposits of finds will be collected as Bulk Finds, from discrete contexts, bagged by material type. Any dense/discrete deposits will have their limits defined on the appropriate plan.

All artefacts and ecofacts will be appropriately packaged and stored under optimum conditions, as detailed in the RESCUE/UKIC publication First Aid for Finds, and recording systems must be compatible with the recipient museum. All finds that fall within the purview of the Treasure Act (1996) will be reported to HM Coroner according to the procedures outlined in the Act, after discussion with the client and the local authority.

A soil sampling programme will be undertaken for the recovery and identification of charred and waterlogged remains where suitable deposits are identified. The collection and processing of environmental samples will be undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidelines (Campbell, Moffatt and Straker 2011). Environmental and soil specialists will be consulted during the course of the evaluation with regard to the implementation of this sampling programme. Soil samples of approximately 30 litres for flotation (or 100% of the features if less than this volume) will be removed from selected contexts, using a combination of the judgement and systematic methodologies.

Judgement sampling will involve the removal of samples from secure contexts which appear to present either good conditions for preservation (e.g. burning or waterlogging) or which are significant in terms of archaeological interpretation or stratigraphy.

Systematic sampling will involve the sampling of all cut features and buried ground surfaces. The spatial distribution of systematic samples cannot be predetermined, given the relatively small nature of the areas available in an evaluation.

Industrial remains are unlikely within the site but if industrial activity of any scale is detected, industrial samples and process residues will also be collected. Separate samples (approximately 10ml) will be collected for micro-slags (hammer-scale and spherical droplets) (English Heritage 2001).

Other samples will be taken, as appropriate, in consultation with YAT specialists and the Historic England Regional Science Advisor, as appropriate (e.g. dendrochronology, soil micromorphology, monolith samples, C14, etc.). Samples will be taken for scientific dating where necessary for the development of subsequent mitigation strategies. Material removed from site will be stored in appropriate controlled environments.

In the event of human remains being discovered during the evaluation these will be left in-situ, covered and protected, in the first instance. The removal of human remains will only take place in compliance with environmental health regulations and following discussions with, and with the approval of, the Ministry of Justice. If human remains are identified, the Ministry of Justice and curator will be informed

immediately. An osteoarchaeologist will be available to give advice on site.

- If **disarticulated** remains are encountered, these will be identified and quantified on site. If trenches are being immediately backfilled, the remains will be left in the ground. If the excavations will remain open for any length of time, disarticulated remains will be removed and boxed, for immediate reburial by the Church.
- If **articulated** remains are encountered, these will be excavated in accordance with recognised guidelines (see 7.15) under licence and retained for assessment.
- Any grave goods or coffin furniture will be retained for further assessment.

Where a licence is issued, all human skeletal remains will be properly removed in accordance with the terms of that licence. Where a licence is not issued, the treatment of human remains will be in accordance with the requirements of Civil Law, ClfA Technical Paper 13 (1993) and Historic England guidance (2005).

8. REPORT & ARCHIVE PREPARATION

Upon completion of the groundworks, a report will be prepared to include the following:

- a) A non-technical summary of the results of the work.
- b) An introduction which will include the planning reference number, grid reference and dates when the fieldwork took place.
- c) An account of the methodology and results of the operation, describing structural data, associated finds and environmental data.
- d) A selection of photographs and drawings, including an overall plan of the site accurately identifying the areas monitored.
- e) Specialist artefact and environmental reports as necessary.
- f) Details of archive location and destination (with accession number, where known), together with a catalogue of what is contained in that archive.
- g) A copy of the key OASIS form details
- h) Copies of the Brief and WSI
- i) Additional photographic images may be supplied on a CDROM appended to the report

Copies of the report will be submitted to the commissioning body and the HER/SMR (also in PDF format).

The requirements for archive preparation and deposition will be addressed and undertaken in a manner agreed with the recipient museum. In this instance the Yorkshire Museum is recommended and an agreed allowance should be made for the curation and storage of this material.

Provision for the publication of results, as outlined in the Brief, will be made.

The owner of the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in the information and documentation arising from the work, would grant a licence to the County Council

and the museum accepting the archive to use such documentation for their statutory functions and provide copies to third parties as an incidental to such functions. Under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), such documentation is required to be made available to enquirers if it meets the test of public interest. Any information disclosure issues would be resolved between the client and the archaeological contractor before completion of the work. EIR requirements do not affect IPR.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety issues will take priority over archaeological matters and all archaeologists will comply with relevant Health and Safety Legislation.

A Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the start of site works.

10. TIMETABLE & STAFFING

The timetable will be confirmed in consultation with the client

Specialist staff available for this work are as follows:

- Human Remains - Malin Holst (York Osteoarchaeology Ltd)
- Palaeoenvironmental remains – Dr Jennifer Miller
- Head of Curatorial Services - Christine McDonnell
- Finds Researcher - Nicky Rogers
- Medieval Pottery Researcher - Anne Jenner
- Finds Officers – Nienke Van Doorne
- Archaeometallurgy & Industrial Residues – Dr Rod Mackenzie & Dr Roger Doonan
- Conservation – Ian Panter

11. MONITORING OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK

As a minimum requirement, City of York Archaeologist, John Oxley will be given a minimum of one week's notice of work commencing on site, and will be afforded the opportunity to visit the site during and prior to completion of the on-site works so that the general stratigraphy of the site can be assessed. York Archaeological Trust will notify **Error! Reference source not found.** of any discoveries of archaeological significance so that site visits can be made, as necessary. Any changes to this agreed WSI will only be made in consultation with **Error! Reference source not found.**

12. COPYRIGHT

York Archaeological Trust retain the copyright on this document. It has been prepared expressly for **Error! Reference source not found.**, and may not be passed to third parties for use or for the purpose of gathering quotations.

13. KEY REFERENCES

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For the latest Historic England guidance documents see:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/latest-guidance/>

PLATES



Plate 1 Trench 1, looking north



Plate 2 Trench 1, west-facing section 1



Plate 3 Starter pit 1



Plate 4 Trench 2 (north) showing low-pressure gas pipe



Plate 5 Trench 2 (south), looking south-west



Plate 6 Trench 2, west facing Section 2



Plate 7 Starter pit 2



Plate 8 Trench 3, looking north-east



Plate 9 Trench 3, North-west facing Section 4



Plate 10 Starter pit 3

FIGURES

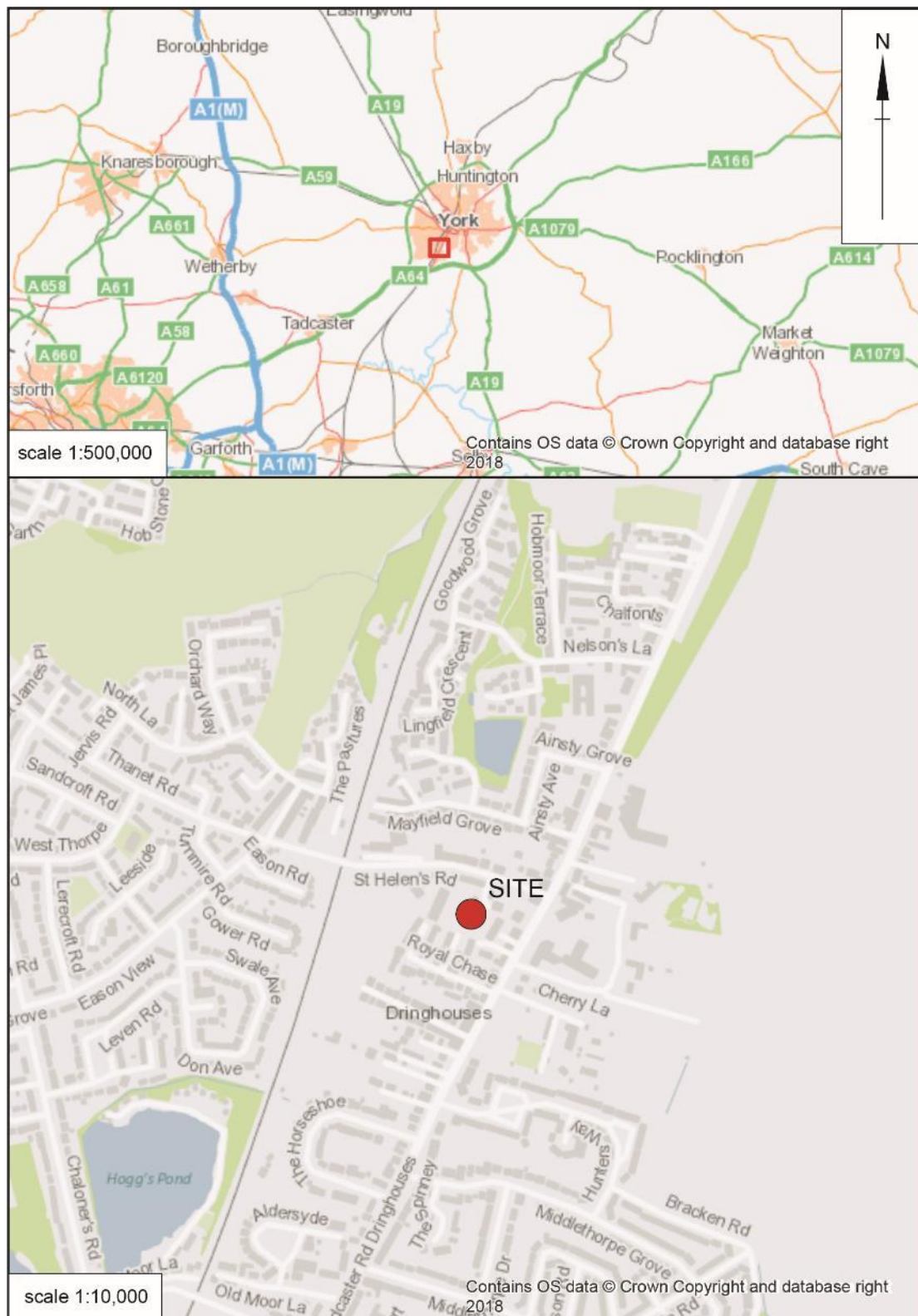
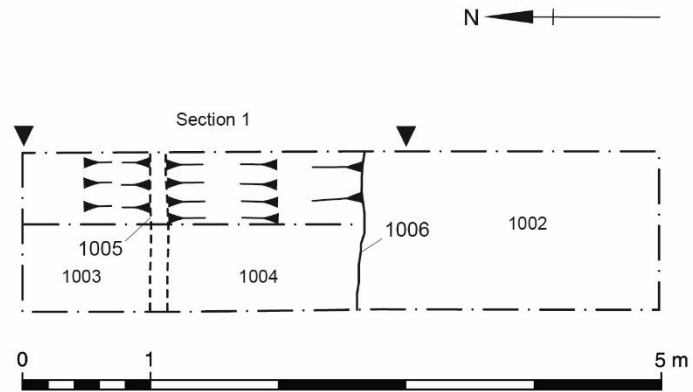


Figure 1 Site Location



Figure 2 Trench and starter pit locations

Plan of Trench 1.



Section 1.

Ditches 1005 and 1006. West facing.

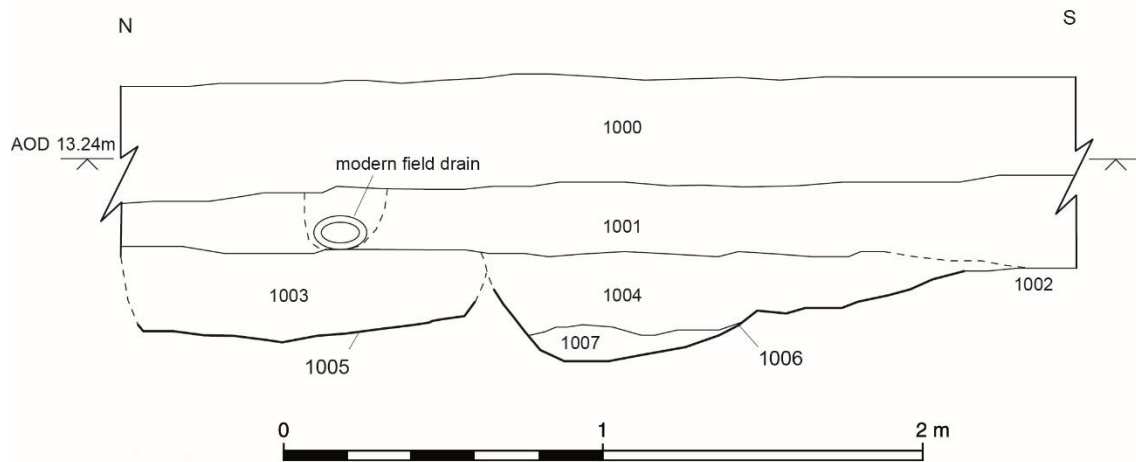
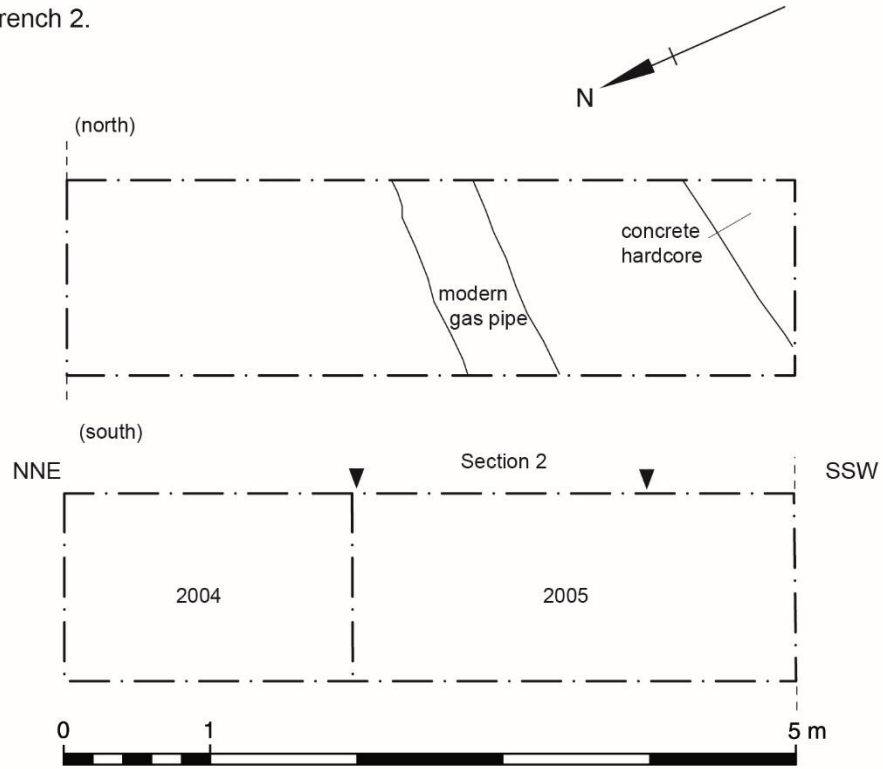


Figure 3 Trench 1, Section 1

Plan of Trench 2.



Section 2.

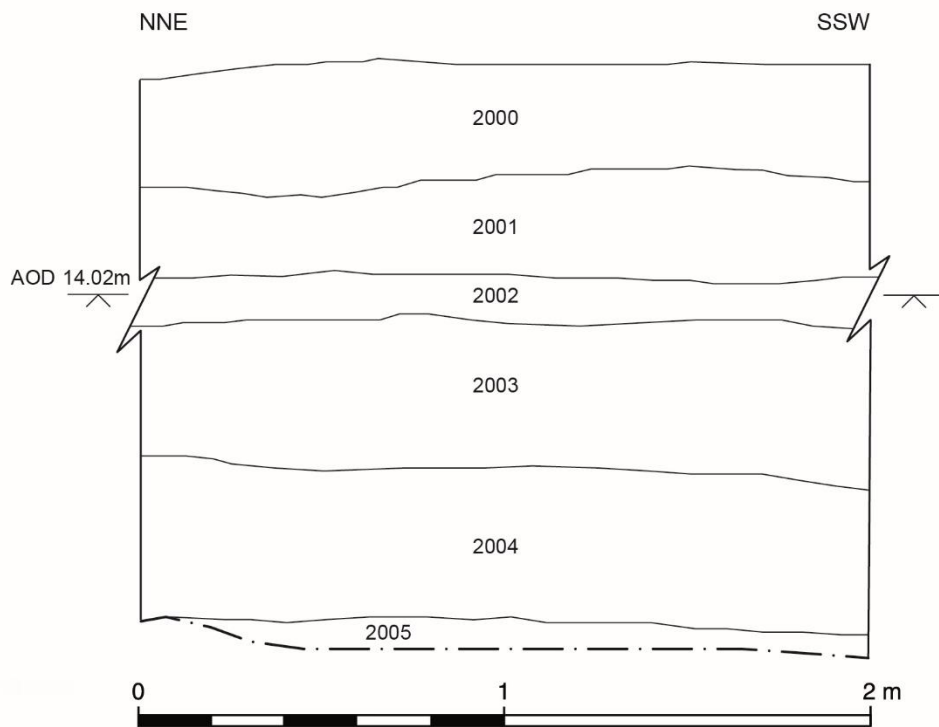
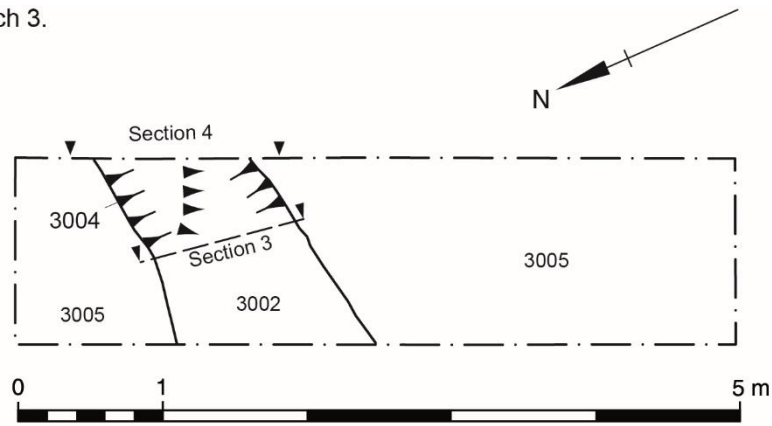


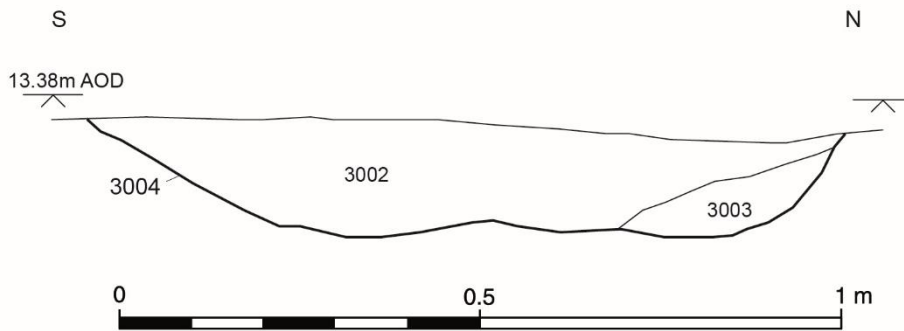
Figure 4 Trench 2, Section 2

Plan of Trench 3.



Section 3.

Ditch 3004. East facing.



Section 4.

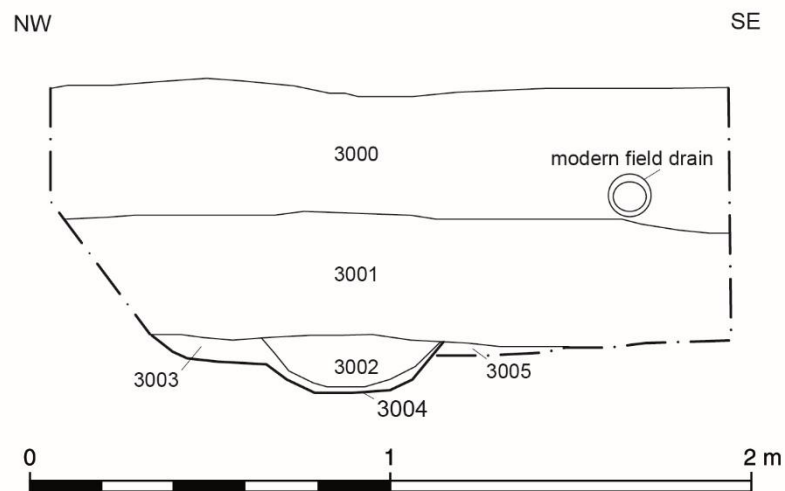


Figure 5 Trench 3, Sections 3 and 4



Figure 6 Archaeological ditches identified in evaluation trenches plotted along with those recorded in 1998 YAT excavation

Starter Pit Profiles.

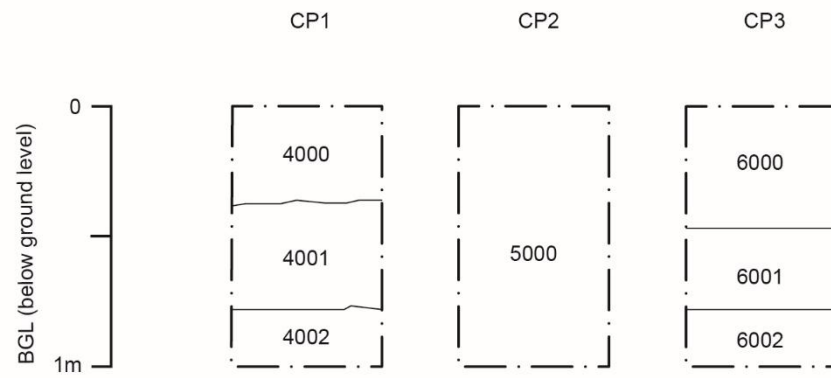


Figure 7 Starter pit profiles



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