



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	St. Mary's Church, Castlegate, York		
CLIENT NAME	Northern Powergrid		
YAT PROJECT #	6090	YAT REPORT #	2018/138
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	Pending	GRID REFERENCE	SE 60419 51630
PLANNING REFERENCE #	N/A	AAI OPS NOTICE #	18020

INTRODUCTION

A watching brief on ground works for a the replacement of a damaged electrical cable junction was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of Northern Powergrid between September 11th and 13th at St. Mary's Church, Castlegate, York, NGR SE 60419 51630 (Figure 1). The work involved the re-opening of an existing mid-20th century service trench that had disturbed a number of intact inhumations, therefore the principle objective of the watching brief was to recover any disarticulated human remains and ensure no in-situ burials were adversely affected.

METHODOLOGY

An L-shaped trench was excavated by a tracked 1.5 ton 360° excavator equipped with a 400mm wide toothed bucket. The excavation began close to the north-west corner of the church and was cut flush to the northern boundary of the site. The cut measured between 0.80m and 1.40m in width and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.00m BGL (below ground level). The trench ran north-east/south-west along the northern site boundary for 9.00m where it met the western boundary of the church precinct. At this point, the trench continued outside the church boundary wall and cut through the present footpath of Castlegate on a north-west/south-east alignment for 7.00m (Figure 2; Plates 1-2).

RESULTS

The only contexts that were disturbed during the works were the present concrete path surface, sandstone flag paving along Castlegate and the infills of a series of modern service trenches. It is clear that these 19th and 20th century service cuts truncated numerous intact inhumations as a large amount of heavily fragmented human bone was recovered from the backfill deposits. One intact inhumation was observed at 1.00m BGL at the base of the cut, at the end closest to the church. These remains were covered over and left in-situ (Plate 1).

At the completion of the works, the human bone was re-interred at the north-west end of the trench. A small amount of additional human bone was recovered during removal of the spoil heap. This is presently being stored within the church prior to re-burial.

CONCLUSIONS

No intact archaeological deposits or features were excavated or recorded during this watching brief. The principle aim of recovering and reintering any disarticulated human remains was achieved and the location of a single *in-situ* burial was recorded.

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Plate 1. South-west facing view of the excavation. An in-situ burial was observed below the board at the bottom of the image.

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Plate 2. Working shot of the trench on Castlegate (facing south-east).

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Fig. 1 Site location

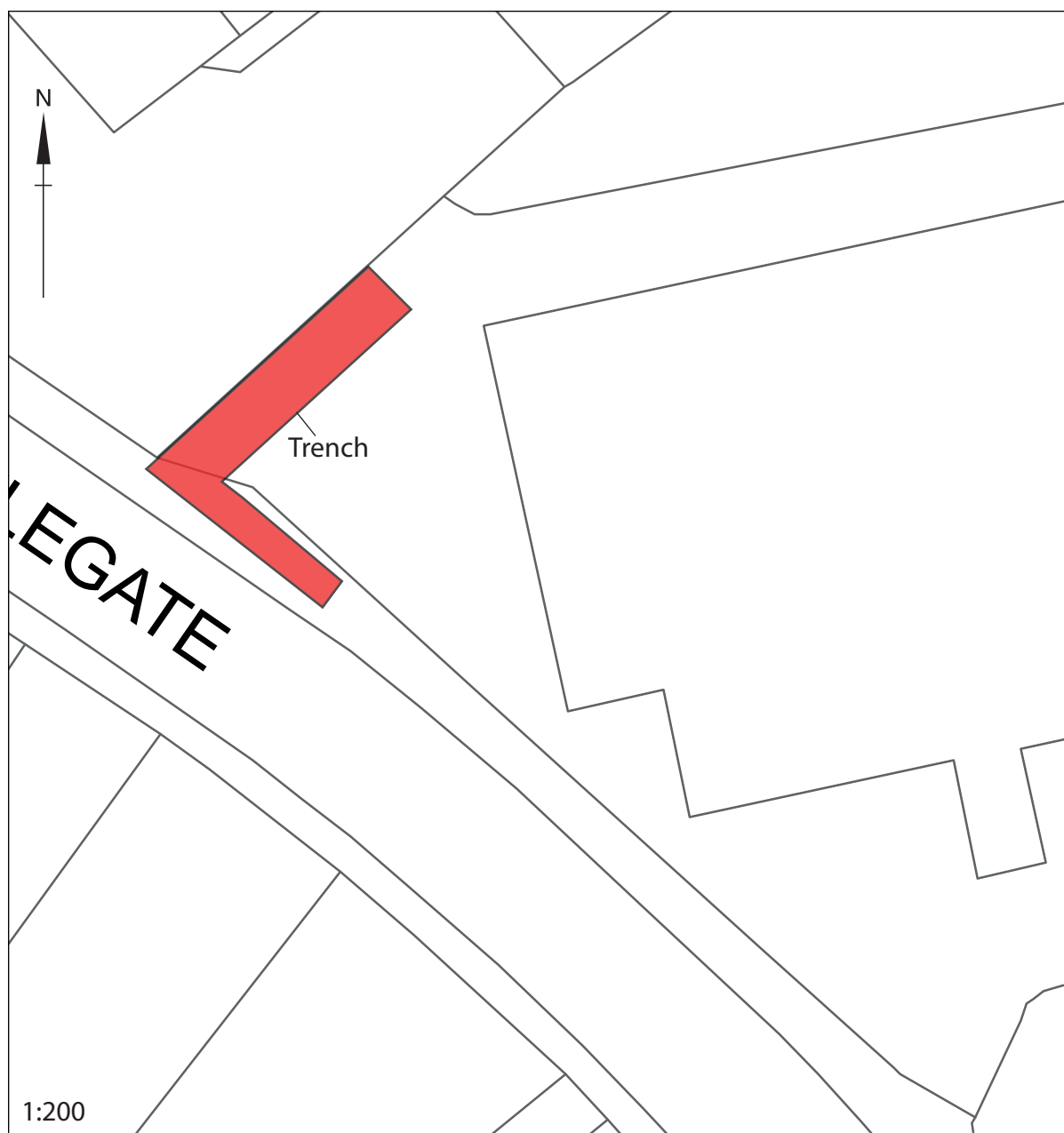


Fig. 2 Trench location