



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



## Archaeological Investigations at 115 Fulford Road, York

By Thomas Coates

YAT Evaluation Report 2018/158 January 2019



# YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



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## CONTENTS

<b>NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>III</b>
<b>KEY PROJECT INFORMATION</b> .....	<b>III</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2 METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
2.1 Evaluation Trenches .....	1
<b>3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY &amp; TOPOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>5 RESULTS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
5.1 Trench 1 (Plates 1, 2 & 3) .....	4
5.2 Trench 2 (Plates 4 & 5).....	4
<b>6 CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>LIST OF SOURCES</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1 – INDEX TO ARCHIVE</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2 – CONTEXT LIST</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3 – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>PLATES</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>FIGURES</b> .....	<b>12</b>

### Plates

Cover: View of site

Plate 1 Shot of Trench 1 looking south. Scale unit 100mm. ....	9
Plate 2 Shot of east facing section of Trench 1. Scale unit 100mm .....	9
Plate 3 Shot of brick structure within Trench 1. Scale unit 100mm .....	10
Plate 4 Shot of Trench 2 looking north. Scale unit 100mm .....	10
Plate 5 Shot of south facing section of Trench 2. Scale unit 100mm.....	11

### Tables

Table 1 Index to archive .....	6
Table 2 Context list.....	7

**Figures**

Figure 1 Site Location.....	12
Figure 2 Trench locations. Scale 1:500 (After drawing F172.01.01 18/01381/FUL provided by the client).....	13

**Abbreviations**

AOD – Ordnance Datum

BGL – Below Ground Level

CYC – City of York Council

NGR – National Grid Reference

WSI – Written Scheme of Investigation

YAT – York Archaeological Trust

## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

On the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 York Archaeological Trust conducted an evaluation at 115 Fulford Road, York YO10 4ET (SE 6092 5095).

The work was undertaken for Mr and Mrs Breene to help inform a planning application that was approved by the City of York Council (18/01381/FUL). The work was based on a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by YAT. The works involved the excavation and recording of one 2x3m trench and one 3x3m trench situated within the rear garden of the extant property to evaluate the archaeological potential within the development area.

Natural pebbly clay was encountered at 15.66m in Trench 1 and 15.95 in Trench 2. The earliest evidence of human activity encountered was most likely buried plough soil at c.400mm thick containing abraded medieval pottery and tile fragments. This is overlain by modern landscaping and introduced topsoil at c.500mm to form part of the extant garden.

## KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	115 Fulford Road, York YO10 4ET
YAT Project No.	6095
Document Number	2018/158
Type of Project	Evaluation
Client	Mr and Mrs Breene
Planning Application No.	18/01381/FUL
NGR	SE 6092 5095
Museum Accession No.	TBC
OASIS Identifier	yorkarch1-336879

## REPORT INFORMATION

Version	Produced by		Edited by		Approved by	
	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date
1	TC	07/01/18	IDM	07/01/19	IDM	07/01/19

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

On the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 YAT conducted an evaluation at 115 Fulford Road, York YO10 4ET (SE 6092 5095) (Figure 1 Site Location).

The work was undertaken for Mr and Mrs Breene to help inform a planning application that was approved by CYC (18/01381/FUL).

## 2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology followed the WSI (Appendix 3) and in reference to best practice outlined in The Institute for Archaeology *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CiFA 2014). Recording was carried out in accordance with the YAT recording manual.

### 2.1 Evaluation Trenches

A total of two trenches were excavated (Figure 2):

No.	Size (m)	Rationale
TR1	2x3m	To determine the archaeological potential
TR2	3x3m	To determine the archaeological potential

The trenches were located on the scale base map provided by the client and specifically placed within the footprint of the proposed development.

Both trenches were machine stripped down to natural with a 1.5 tonne excavator using a toothless ditching bucket, with the exception of the south end of Trench 1 where a small brick structure was encountered. As soon as natural deposits were reached the trenches were cleaned to indentify archaeological features.

For each trench, individual context numbers were assigned to topsoil, subsoil if present and natural; as well as any archaeological features if present. These were then described on proforma context cards in accordance with the YAT recording methodology.

A representative 3.00m section was recorded in each trench at a scale of 1:20 and ground levels were recorded using a Leica Viva GNSS-GS16 GPS unit, accurate to 10mm.

Photographs were recorded of each trench and representative sections using a digital Fuji Finepix XP60 at 12 megapixels.

Finds were retrieved and bagged by individual context number. These have been retained for archaeological assessment.

The excavated trenches were backfilled once recording was completed.

## 3 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The proposal site is located at 115 Fulford Road, York, YO10 4ET (Figure 1).

The proposed site is located 0.4km to the south-east of the River Ouse, 1.4km south of York city centre and 1.2km north of the village of Fulford. It is L-shaped in plan and lies between the

present street of Fulford Road to the west and Kilburn Road the south, covering an area of approximately 420 square metres centred at NGR SE 60923 50597 (Figure 2).

The British Geological Survey identifies the underlying bedrock as part of the Sherwood Sandstone Group. The site lies just off the eastern York Moraine which consists of sand, clay and gravel, some of these deposits may be encountered to the north western areas of the site. However, most of the proposed area falls within the Naburn sand band of superficial deposits. <https://www.bgs.ac.uk> - accessed 08/10/18

The site for development consists of a landscaped garden which appears generally flat. At the western extent of the site adjacent to Fulford Road the land is at 15.20m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum).

#### **4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The following text has been taken from the Written Scheme of Investigation for this evaluation located in Appendix 3.

##### *Prehistoric*

No Prehistoric deposits are known within the proposed development site.

Neolithic and Bronze Age flints have been found during excavations to the south in Fulford (Bruce 2002, 25) as well as the remains of Iron Age settlements which appear to align along the water's edge of the Germany Beck stream (MAP 1996). Occasional flint scatters are also known to have been found during excavations within the city centre of York.

##### *Roman*

No Roman deposits are known to have been found within the proposed site area.

There are limited examples of Roman period settlement outside of the main *Colonia* area of York. However, excavations on the hinterland around York have found Romano-British settlements and field systems, most notably to the east at the Heslington East campus (Antoni et al 2009), to the south at the A19/A64 road interchange where a Roman gritstone sarcophagus was found (YAT 1997, 4). Most recently, to the north-west near Acomb where evidence for Romano-British settlement is currently being investigated (Coates 2018, forthcoming).

Burial or cremation sites are commonly found along the sides of Roman roads (Casa-Hatton 1999, 68), as has been demonstrated elsewhere in York along the northern, western and eastern approach roads (Ottaway 2011), most recently along Tadcaster Road, York (Savine 2017).

In the more immediate area relating to the proposed site, at the southern extent of Fishergate road a series of excavations revealed the remains of an inhumation and cremation cemetery dating from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD (Spall and Toop, 2005a) with good preservation of both skeletal remains and grave goods (FAS 2005). Similar excavations were undertaken 0.5km to the north of the site, at The Barbican, where the continuation of the Roman cemetery along the eastern road was uncovered (Bruce 2003, 69). As well as investigations in and around The Retreat, this revealed Romano-British graves (Wessex 2014).



Excavations in the village of Fulford have also revealed the remains of grave goods and a coffin lid during excavations by the Old St Oswald's Church (Rahtz and Watt 1980; Bruce 2002) as well as a stone sarcophagus and funerary remains discovered during the A19/A64 roadworks (YAT 1997).

#### *Early Medieval*

Early medieval deposits have not yet been encountered within the proposed development site.

Excavations within the wider landscape have revealed evidence of Anglian burials at the Church of St Andrews on Fishergate (Addyman and Kinsler 1993) as well as Anglo-Scandinavian settlement activity and burials within Fulford (Rahtz and Watt 1980).

#### *Medieval*

Medieval deposits have not yet been encountered within the proposed site area.

The medieval activity on the site seems to most likely be limited to agricultural use, the main evidence for which is ridge and furrow farming from at least the early medieval period through to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This is proposed in the Walmgate Stray survey, as the landscape during this time was mainly described as 'common or waste ground' and the site is thought to have once fallen within the Low Fields common area (English Heritage 2004, 7)

The foci of medieval settlement and activity seems to be highly focused with York as medieval trading town (Raine 1955). To the north-west of the proposed development site at Fishergate, once stood the church and Priory of St Andrews. The Priory controlled a lot of the surrounding farmland from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century until the Dissolution in 1540. It is possible that the development site was once part of the Priory's land holdings (Addyman and Kinsler, 1993). Documentary sources indicate that individuals from conflicts such as the Battle of the Standard in 1138 AD are interred at the churchyard of St Andrew (Daniell 2001).

#### *Post-medieval*

The building of 115 Fulford is listed as an unusual architectural building built in the 1930s, based on southern English architectural styles and was included in the heritage list as an old post office in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (MYO4015).

There have been minor archaeological investigations to the south of the site at the Imphal Barracks parade ground, where dumped or ground make-up deposits of relatively modern material had been used to build up the ground surface (YAT 1993). An evaluation also took place on the Imphal Barracks site where modern and post-medieval remains were uncovered, including several structures relating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Infantry Barracks which were not depicted on any previous maps (WYAS 2015, 6).

#### *Modern*

The house of 115 Fulford Road has been a dwelling with associated garden c.1970.

There has also recently been a desk-based assessment produced for the development of Frederick House site which lies 50m to the south (Boast 2018).

No other archaeological investigations have been undertaken within the immediate area.

## 5 RESULTS

All Contexts are listed in Appendix 2.

All features are given their own context number within each trench. For example, topsoil in Trench 2 (TR2) is assigned the number (C2000).

The earliest deposits encountered comprised of natural gravelly clay lacustrine deposits formed within the Quaternary period.

### 5.1 Trench 1 (Plates 1, 2 & 3)

Located on the south-east side of the proposed development, natural clay (C1005) was encountered at 15.66m AOD. This was overlain by a 0.41m thickness of buried plough soil C1004. Finds from this deposit included fragments of pottery dated to the Medieval period through to the Post-Medieval period, as well as fragments of ceramic roof tile dated to between 13-16<sup>th</sup> century. This may have once been associated with land cultivation prior to the post-medieval and modern developments of the surrounding area.

This buried plough soil was marginally truncated along the south side of TR1 by a possible linear feature of unknown function (C1003). Encountered between 16.65m and 16.61m AOD, this feature may have been a drain cut leading to a possible soak away in the form of a brick platform C1006 at the southernmost side of TR1.

This has been subsequently levelled by a layer of made ground material (C1001) for the landscaping of the extant topsoil (C1000) between 16.60m and 16.66m AOD.

### 5.2 Trench 2 (Plates 4 & 5)

Located on the north-west side of the proposed development, natural clay (C2003) was encountered at 15.95m AOD. This was overlain by the buried plough soil (C2002) that was observed within TR1 (C1004).

The made ground (C1001) within TR1 was also exposed here as (C2001) as part of the levelling of the land for landscaping, overlain by garden topsoil to the rear of the extant property (C2000) between 16.59m and 16.18m AOD.

## 6 CONCLUSION

Natural clays were encountered at 15.66m AOD in TR1 and 15.95m in TR2 indicating there is a natural slope from south to north. However, the definitive natural slope is unclear as the properties on all sides of the proposed development area have been completed at different levels, masking the original topography.

This evaluation has identified that the use of the land was most likely for land cultivation within the Medieval to Post-Medieval prior to the development and landscaping of the extant residential area.

Apart from the modern brick structure that may have once served as a temporary soak away to the rear of the extant property, no finds or features of archaeological significance were discovered during the course of this evaluation.

## **LIST OF SOURCES**

British Geological Survey <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (Accessed 07/01/19)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

YAT thanks Mr and Mrs Breene and the ground workers for their cooperation throughout the evaluation.

**APPENDIX 1 – INDEX TO ARCHIVE**

Item	Number of items
Context sheets	0
Levels register	0
Photographic register	0
Sample register	0
Drawing register	0
Original drawings	3
B/W photographs (films/contact sheets)	0
Colour slides (films)	0
Digital photographs	35
Written Scheme of Investigation	1
Report	1

**Table 1 Index to archive**

**APPENDIX 2 – CONTEXT LIST**

Trench No.	Context number	Text	Text
<b>1</b>	1000	Topsoil	Friable dark blackish-grey sandy silt. Heavy root bioturbation
	1001	Modern landscaping	Firm mottled dark orangey-brown & light yellowish-brown silty clay
	1002	Backfill of linear feature	Friable light whitish-yellow lime mortar
	1003	Cut of linear	East-west, L: 3.00m+ W: 0.52m D: 0.08m. moderate break of slope at top, concave sides, flat base.
	1004	Buried plough soil	Firm dark greyish-brown clayey silt
	1005	Natural	Compact dark reddish-brown silty clay
	1006	Modern brick structure	Brick platform of unknown function. Dimensions are post-brick tax – 235mm x 120mm x 70mm
<b>2</b>	2000	Topsoil	Friable dark blackish-grey sandy silt. Heavy root bioturbation
	2001	Modern Landscaping	Firm mottled dark orangey-brown & light yellowish-brown silty clay
	2002	Buried plough soil	Firm dark greyish-brown clayey silt
	2003	Natural	Compact dark reddish-brown silty clay

**Table 2 Context list**

## **APPENDIX 3 – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION**

## PLATES



**Plate 1** Shot of Trench 1 looking south. Scale unit 100mm.



**Plate 2** Shot of east facing section of Trench 1. Scale unit 100mm



**Plate 3** Shot of brick structure within Trench 1. Scale unit 100mm



**Plate 4** Shot of Trench 2 looking north. Scale unit 100mm





**Plate 5** Shot of south facing section of Trench 2. Scale unit 100mm

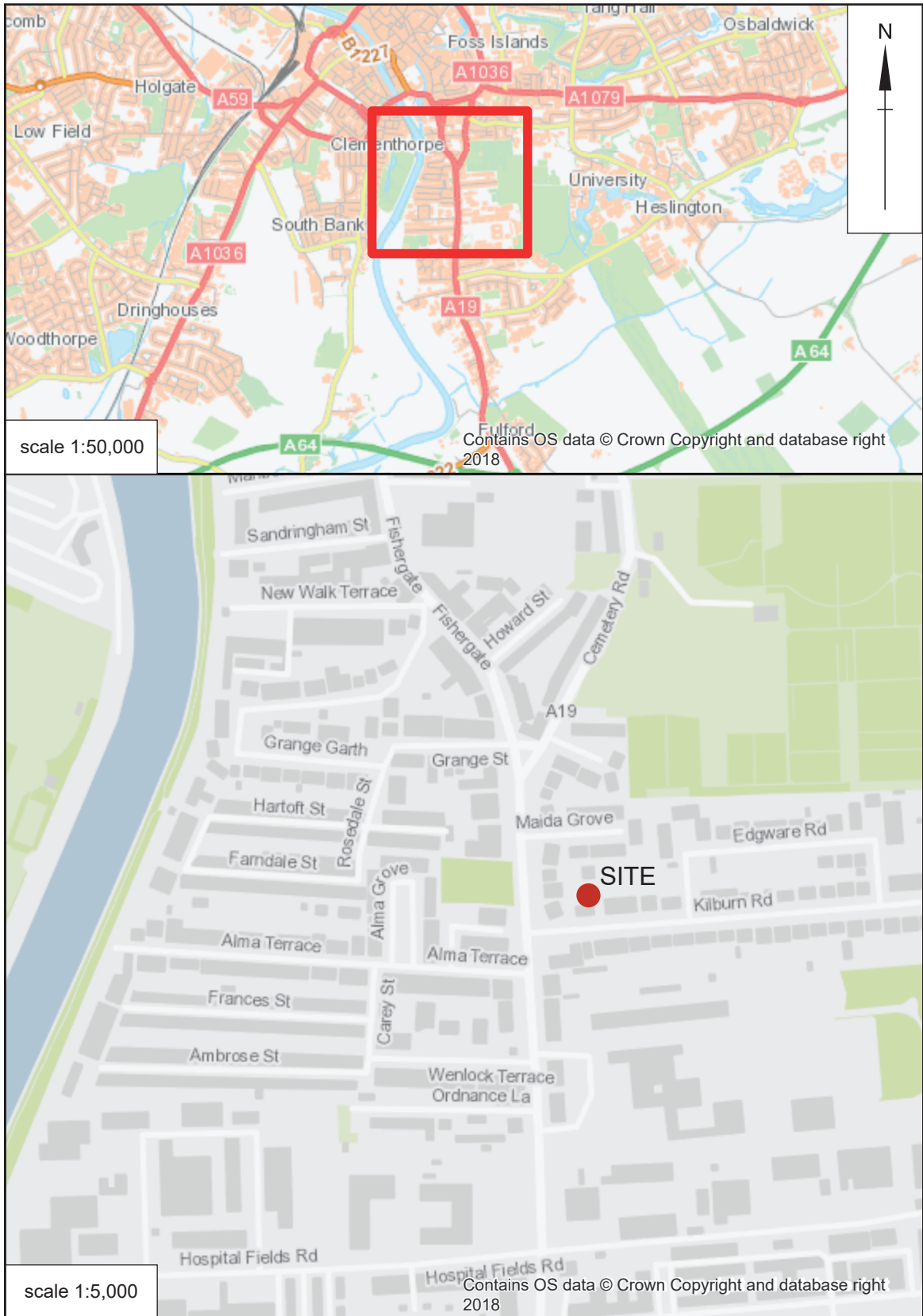
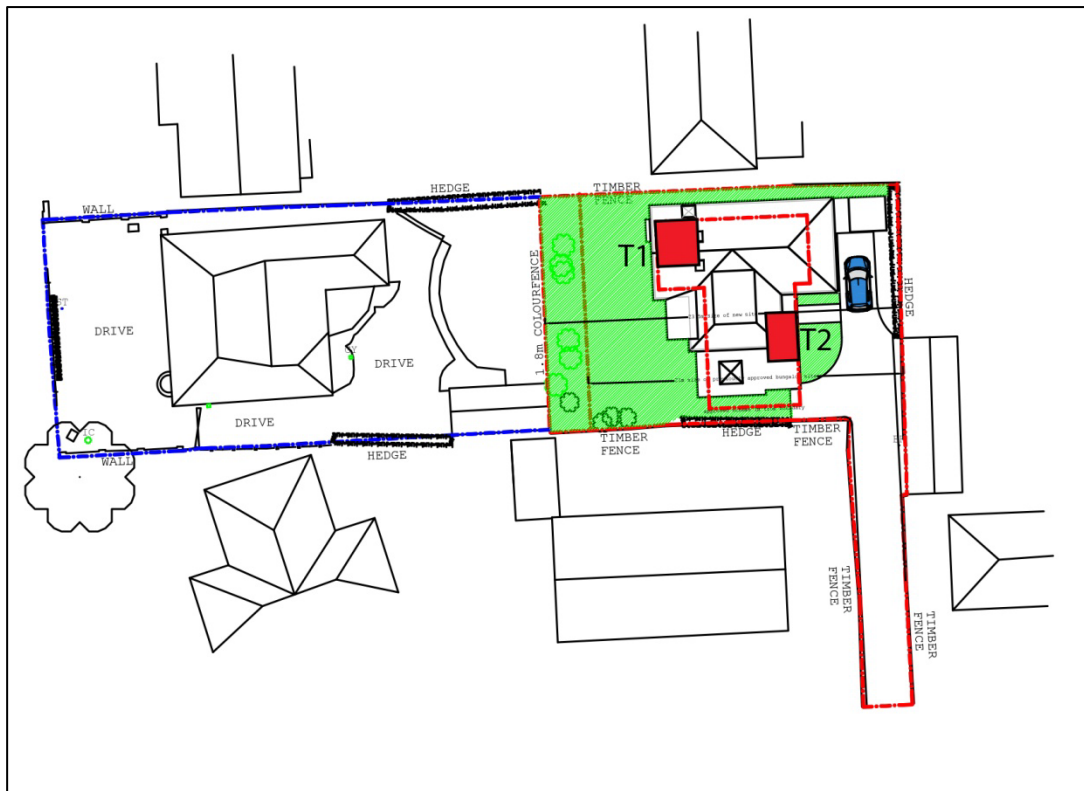


Fig. 01 Site Location



**Figure 2** Trench locations. Scale 1:500 (After drawing F172.01.01 18/01381/FUL provided by the client).



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