



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	Memorial Gardens, Leeman Road, York		
CLIENT NAME	Environment Agency		
YAT PROJECT #	N/A	YAT REPORT #	2019/27
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	SE 58716 51698
PLANNING REFERENCE #	N/A	AAI OPS NOTICE #	19001

INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was undertaken on a series of trial pits on behalf of Environment Agency between 27th October and 1st November at Memorial Gardens, Leeman Road, York, NGR SE 58716 51698 (Figure 1). The objective of the watching brief was to record any archaeological deposits or structures exposed by the ground works.

METHODOLOGY

In advance of the construction of improved flood defences, the Environment Agency commissioned the excavation of fourteen trial holes to identify the locations of existing buried services and to assess the extent of tree roots (Figure 2). The trial holes were excavated to a depth of 1.20m BGL, were 0.50m wide and measured 3 to 5m in length. Excavation was carried out by a 26 ton Dino 3 Vacuum Excavation vehicle.

The excavation of two trial holes was monitored under watching brief conditions. Due to the depth of the trial holes, the sequence was recorded from the surface using photography and sketched section drawings.

RESULTS

Trial hole S1 was situated at the western end of Memorial Gardens, measured 3.00m x 0.50m in plan aligned north-west/south-east, and excavated to a depth of 1.20m (Figure 2). The uppermost deposit was a 0.50m thick layer of topsoil containing a moderate amount of active tree roots. Below the topsoil was a 0.20m thick layer of brick and mortar rubble overlaying a layer of soft-to-friable, mid-yellowish brown slightly clayey sandy silt with occasional pebbles (Plate 1). This lowest deposit was possibly re-deposited or may represent alluvial material. No finds were recovered, although 20th-century ceramics were observed in the topsoil and rubble layers. A live electric cable was present in the southern end of the trial pit.

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Plate 1 East facing view of trial hole S1 (1.00m scale)

Trial hole S6 was aligned north-east/south-west, 3.00m x 0.50m in plan and excavated to 1.20m below present ground level. The trial hole was dug several metres south-east of the entrance to Memorial Gardens where it intersected both the garden and the footpath (Figure 2). In the garden area, a heavily rooted topsoil deposit overlaid the fills of at least two modern service trenches including a live electricity cable (Plate 2). The sequence below the footpath was comprised of service trench backfills. No significant archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed.

Due to the limited width and depth of the interventions, it was not deemed necessary to archaeologically monitor the remaining trial holes.

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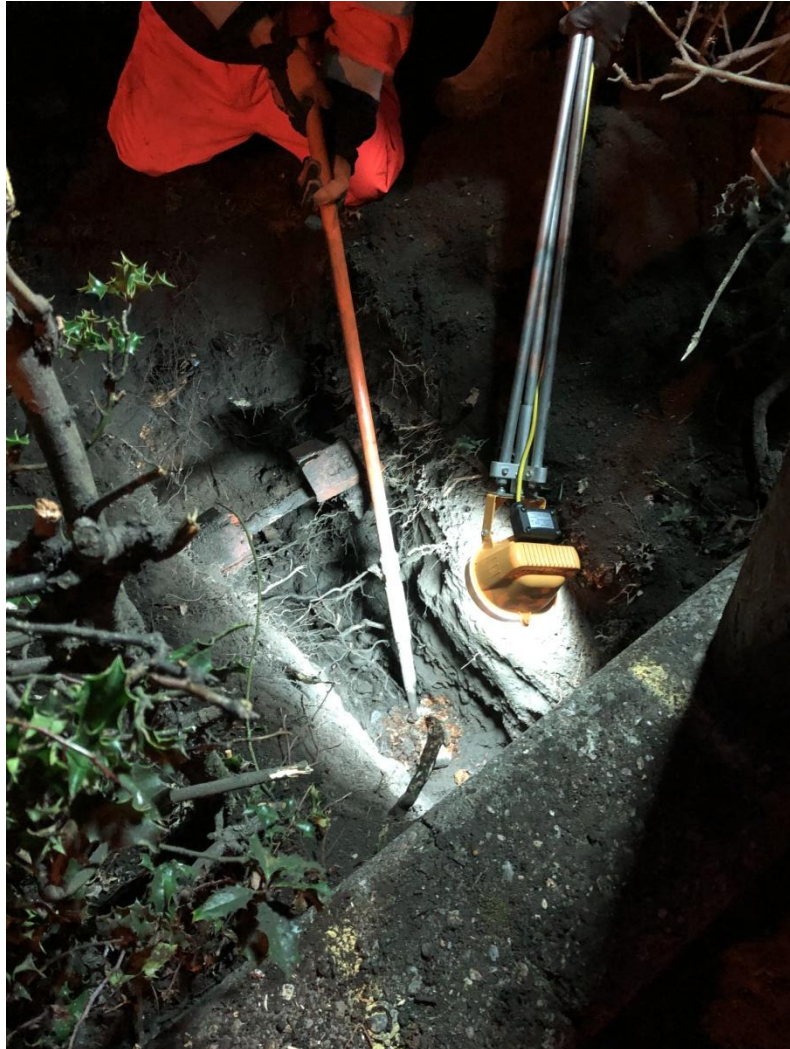


Plate 2 Working view of services and heavily rooted topsoil within trial pit S6 (facing east)

CONCLUSIONS

The monitoring of two trial holes on 18/02/19 has shown that no significant archaeological features or deposits are likely to be adversely impacted upon by the site investigation works. The principal aim of the investigations was to locate existing modern services. The observations made above suggest that any potentially archaeologically sensitive deposits are below the depth of these investigations. Evidence from previous investigations in the area suggest that the ground level was raised substantially during the construction of new railway stations in the 1840s and 1870s (Johnson

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1998, 13). The deposit of sandy silt observed in trial hole S1 may be a levelling deposit associated with this process.

Few archaeological interventions have been made in this area, so the monitoring of more intrusive works associated with the forthcoming construction phase of the project will be of potential value as they may offer a better understanding of the wider and deeper archaeological sequence of the site.

REFERENCES

Johnson, M., 1998. *Former Foxton's Garage, Leeman Road, York. A Report on an Archaeological Evaluation* YAT Report 1998/4

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