



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



46–50 PICCADILLY, YORK

Ben Reeves

DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT REPORT

Report Number 2016/85 November 2016



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



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CONTENTS

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY.....	III
KEY PROJECT INFORMATION	III
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2 METHODOLOGY.....	1
3. PLANNING AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT	1
4 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY	2
5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	2
6 DEPOSIT SEQUENCE BASED ON 1992 SITE INVESTIGATION (YORYM:1992.10) ..	7
6.1 Summary of YAT Report 1992/14 Archaeological Evaluation at 50 Piccadilly	7
7 WALKOVER SURVEY SUMMARY.....	9
8 UNDERGROUND TANKS.....	10
9 STATE OF PRESERVATION SUMMARY	10
FIGURES	14
PLATES	26
LIST OF SOURCES.....	28
BIBLIOGRAPHY	28
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	30
APPENDIX 1 – YAT GAZETTEER SITES FOR PICCADILLY, YORK [UP TO 1997]	31
APPENDIX 2 – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD GAZZETEER.....	33
APPENDIX 3 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR 1955 MOTOR GARAGE (CYC PLANNING DPT)	35

Figures

Figure 1 Site location

Figure 2 HER data plan

Figure 3 Roman York c.200 AD with site outline

Figure 4 Anglian York, 6th–9th centuries, with site outline

Figure 5 Anglo-Scandinavian York 900–1066 with site location

Figure 6 Norman York c. 1100

Figure 7 Speed 1610 with approximate site location

Figure 8 Richards 1685 with approximate site location

Figure 9 Chassereau 1750 with approximate site location

Figure 10 Hargrove 1818 with approximate site location

Figure 11 Ordnance Survey 1852 with site outline

Figure 12 Sites in the vicinity of 50 Piccadilly up to 1992

Figure 13 postulated extent of King's Fishpool based on excavated evidence

Figure 14 North-facing section through 1992 trench

Plates

Cover: View of site

Plate 1 NCP Car Park entrance office

Plate 2 Entrance to Car Park

Plate 3 Roof structure with circular portal sky-lights

Plate 4 Fixtures relating to former garage

Plate 5 River Foss frontage showing river wall

Abbreviations

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

The development site, 46—50 Piccadilly, lies within an area of considerable archaeological importance for understanding the morphology of the River Foss river regime and associated occupation and interactions of past local populations. An small excavation carried out by York Archaeological Trust in 1992 provides a guide indicating that well-preserved waterlogged deposits of the Roman, Anglo-Scandinavian, and medieval periods are overlain by post-medieval and modern, non-waterlogged deposits which form in total around 8m of deposition below the present ground level.

KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name	46—50 Piccadilly, York
YAT Project No.	5934
Document Number	2016/85
Type of Project	Desk-Based Assessment
Client	Northminster Ltd.
Planning Application No.	N/A
NGR	SE 606 515
Museum Accession No.	N/A
OASIS Identifier	yorkarch1-269798

REPORT INFORMATION

Version	Produced by		Edited by		Approved by	
	Initials	Date	Initials	Date	Initials	Date
1	BR	25/11/16	IM	25/11/16	IM	25/11/16

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1 INTRODUCTION

The development site, 46–50 Piccadilly, is located on land on the south-eastern bank of the River Foss. The site is within the York Area of Archaeological Interest (AAI) and the east bank of the River Foss is an area recognised as of potential high archaeological importance in the 1988 YAT publication *The Waterfronts of York: Prospects for Archaeological Research*.

Waterlogged remains were identified on the site by excavation in 1992 and were shown to be of potential significance for understanding: the morphology of the river regime throughout all periods of York's history; potential Roman river wharves; Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian settlement; the extent of flooding caused by the creation of the Norman period fishpool and later dumping and land reclamation. The upper layers of deposition, although not waterlogged, may hold potential evidence for post-medieval land reclamation and horticulture and the development of housing and the streetscape in the modern period.

2 METHODOLOGY

This report aims to provide a conceptual baseline model of below-ground conditions at the site based on excavations in the immediate vicinity and other documentary sources. The following sources of evidence were consulted in the preparation of this document:

- The City of York Sites and Monuments Record
- YAT York Archaeological Gazetteer
- Excavation records and reports of York Archaeological Trust
- Historic maps and Ordnance Survey maps
- Secondary sources as listed at the end of the report
- A site visit on 02.11.2016

3. PLANNING AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

This section summarises the legislative and government planning policy context for the proposed development at 46–50 Piccadilly.

The site is situated within the York Area of Archaeological Importance (CYC LocalView for planning website) and is therefore protected by part 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 which makes '...provision for the investigation, preservation and recording of matters of archaeological and historical interest, and for the regulation of operations or activities affecting such matters...'

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the development site, however, its proximity to Clifford's Tower, directly opposite the site between the Rivers Ouse and Foss and the stretch of city walls between Fishergate Postern and Walmgate Bar may have implications in relation to the impacts of any re-development of the site on the historic environment.

There are no listed buildings within the development site however the site lies within the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area (CYC website) and is therefore under the protection of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The site must also be

considered under the auspices of Government policy on the historic environment as recently set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraphs 126 to 141).

4 LOCATION, GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The site lies on the east bank of the River Foss approximately 0.6km north of its confluence with the River Ouse. The underlying solid geology of the site is sandstone of the Sherwood Sandstone Group with superficial deposits of alluvial silt, clay, sand and gravel (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

The site occupies land which has been altered by human agency since the Roman period, the ground level having been built up by around 8m from that of the underlying glacial moraine. The site lies on the edge of an area that was submerged after the Conquest by the damming of the river Foss to feed the Norman castle, known today as Clifford's Tower, which is situated on the opposite bank of the river. Present ground level (PGL) is at around 10m OD with a gentle slope of around 1m towards the river on the west side of the site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Piccadilly area has been subject to numerous archaeological interventions since the 1980s. In this section a brief overview is given of the current knowledge based on various sources to provide context for the 46–50 Piccadilly site.

5.1 The topography and regime of the River Foss

The importance of York's waterfronts and their potential to provide information about areas of the city once the focus for trade and commerce has long been recognised. The work of York Archaeological Trust since 1972 has shown that excavation of waterfront sites can reveal evidence for 'the economic basis of the city's life throughout its history' (Addyman et. al. 1988, 1). During the extensive 1981–2 watching brief on the area now occupied by the Coppergate Centre on the west bank of the River Foss the ancient course of the river was found along with revetments, installations, ship fragments, and traces of the water defences of York Castle. Further excavations at the site of the former ABC Cinema, 22 Piccadilly, defined an earlier river channel and associated 11th-century riverside revetments (Addyman et. al. 1988, 8).

The 46-50 Piccadilly site is situated on ground at the confluence of the Rivers Ouse and Foss close to the point where these rivers penetrate the York Moraine. The historic fluvial morphology of the lower River Foss is not well understood. What little information there is comes from bore-hole records and excavations carried out along the south-west side of Piccadilly, Coppergate and more recently the Hungate area: all of which demonstrate a complex landscape morphology which is the product of both natural geological processes and large-scale alterations caused by human agency throughout historic periods.

Evidence from the Walmgate and Piccadilly areas, largely derived from small-scale keyhole excavations carried out by YAT in the early 1990s, has provided valuable evidence about the topographical development of the River Foss and its waterfront areas.

Walmgate occupies a ridge of high ground leading to the crossing point of the Foss at Foss Bridge. The top of natural glacial deposits identified at 31 Walmgate on the street frontage was at depths between 9.92m OD to 9.60m OD (Robinson 2013, 6–7, 15).

To the east of this ridge the archaeological evidence from the proposal site and adjacent sites shows that the ground level on the eastern Foss bank has been increased considerably since the Roman period through land reclamation. At 17–21 Piccadilly, approximately 25m north of the proposal site, the natural slope towards the Foss was identified between 4.5m BPGL (approximately 5.5m OD) at the south end of the site to 7.6m BPGL (Approximately 2.4m OD) at the northern end (Lilley 1991, 2). At 50 Piccadilly natural was identified at 1.2m OD and a borehole watching brief at 38 Piccadilly identified natural at approximately 9m BPGL –a depth of approximately 1.65m OD. The slope across the same area today is only around 1.6m (YAT Gazetteer 613; Gajos 2013, 7).

5.2 Prehistoric

Prehistoric remains from York are scarce, amounting to a small number of casual finds since the 19th century, mainly from the south-west of the River Ouse and a small number of undated but possibly pre-Roman features (Wellbeloved 1862, 61–3; Radley 1974, 10–4; Hall 1996, 25). However, evidence is increasingly being found for Bronze Age and Iron Age activity focused on the York Moraine, particularly to the east of the city. Closest of these discoveries, found at 25 Lawrence Street some 0.6km to the east of Piccadilly, was a Bronze Age cremation urn discovered in 2007 (Reeves forthcoming) and an assemblage of Neolithic flint tools consistent with occupation recovered from recent excavations at Hungate (Kendall 2009, 175) some 0.35km to the north of the site both within the lower Foss. Considerable evidence for late Neolithic and Bronze Age occupation comes from further east on the moraine such as the recent discoveries in the Heslington area, approximately 3.5km to the east of the city, made during the expansion of the University of York (Antoni, Johnson and McComish 2009).

Prehistoric water levels at the site of 46–50 Piccadilly would have fluctuated in tandem with those of the tidal Ouse (Briden 1997, 170; Duckham 1967, 17). The resulting complex marshland ecosystem was likely a place of significance and a valuable subsistence resource to local populations (Whyman and Howard 2005, 14). Although it is unlikely, there may be evidence for prehistoric activity preserved at 46–50 Piccadilly, its location and the waterlogged nature of the buried deposits in the area could hold potential for valuable information about fluvial landscape morphology and environment during this period.

5.3 Roman

The site is approximately 450m south-east of the south-east corner of the Roman fortress founded in AD 71. Although the archaeological evidence for Roman activity in the area to the south-east of the River Foss is relatively sparse compared to the fortress area the area seems to have been utilised throughout the Roman period (McComish 2007).

Roman Road 1a, leading to *Eboracum* from *Throlam* near Holme-on-Spalding-Moor is thought to have converged with the Road 1b, a minor road from the south, some 150m to the south east of the 46-50 Piccadilly site. Roads 1a and 2, from *Petuaria* (Brough-on-Humber) are thought to have converged approximately 30m north of 46–50 Piccadilly (RCHMY I, 2; Ottaway 2004, 12; Ottaway 2015, 9; HTAY 2015, Sheet F). Roman burials were discovered sometime before 2007 by Malton Archaeological Partnership immediately south of Dixon Lane (McComish 2007). A Roman Altar dedicated to the native god Arciaco was found at St Denys Church on Walmgate and two other coffined Roman burials were found nearby (RCHMY I, 69–70, 118; HTAY 2015, Sheet F).

Evidence for Roman use of the Foss as a navigation comes from 1951–52 excavations for the construction of the Telephone Exchange building in Garden Place, Hungate, where walls and piles interpreted as a Roman wharf and the buried former course of the river were discovered (RCHMY I, 64). In the Piccadilly area, evidence for riverbank activity on the east bank of the Foss comes from excavations at numbers 38, 40 and 50 Piccadilly (Appendix 2). A line of stone pillars beneath the Tax Offices on Piccadilly was interpreted as possible evidence for a Roman riverside jetty (Ottaway 1993, 69).

Furthermore, excavations at 38 and 50 Piccadilly suggest there was significant occupation and river front land use during the late 2nd–3rd centuries in the vicinity of the site comprising evidence for management of the riverside, dumped occupation material including domestic pottery and evidence of possible industrial activity.

5.4 Anglian

Evidence for Anglian period York is generally elusive and what has been recovered to date is sparsely distributed across the city. Excavated sites and the distribution of find spots suggests that settlement at York was polyfocal with distinct nuclei spread out across the former Roman fortress and colonia, interspersed with cultivated or waste areas (AY 7/2, 298; Palliser 2014, 37). As yet, no evidence has been found for wharves or intensive occupation, however, evidence from sites along the course of the River Foss suggests occupation and other activity along the river bank. A number of Anglian pot sherds have been recovered from Hungate (AY 7/2, 196; YAT forthcoming) and the Haymarket excavations (Reeves forthcoming), at 22 Piccadilly Anglian pottery, probably of early–mid 9th century date was recovered from two trenches, one of which was associated with a wicker fence running parallel to the river. Silt accumulations above these levels indicate the area was prone to flooding. Further evidence came from 38 Piccadilly where a sherd of Badorf ware was recovered from some 8m below modern street level beneath a substantial accumulation of probable 11th-century alluvial silt. At 17–21 Piccadilly a 9th century relief-band amphora fragment was recovered from around 5m below the modern street level at around 5.7m OD (AY 7/2, 196–197; Appendix 2)

The site, 46–50 Piccadilly, is close to one of the most important Anglian period sites so far excavated in York, 46–54 Fishergate (AY 7/1). The majority of the evidence for Anglian activity elsewhere in the city comes from artefacts which may be the result of casual losses through transient activity and may not necessarily be convincing evidence of occupation. However, evidence from the 1985–6 excavation at the former Redfearn National Glass works, 46–54 Fishergate, some 0.4km to the south of 46–50 Piccadilly, provides evidence of an important production and trading centre, or *wic*, occupying an area of around 2,500m² sited on the lower east bank of the River Foss, directly opposite the point of confluence with the River Ouse (AY 7/1). This 7th–late 9th century settlement apparently began as a well organised, probably planned, settlement rather than one that developed organically to exploit the natural communications provided by the rivers and the east–west land route of the York Moraine.

More recent excavations at the former Mecca Bingo and Blue Bridge Lane area a little further south from Fishergate have produced further evidence of Anglian period pit groups and occupation (Spall and Toop 2011, 7). Excavation carried out at the junction of Dixon's Lane/George Street in 2006 discovered further evidence for activity possibly associated with the *wic* approximately 100m to the east of 46–50 Piccadilly (AYW 9, McComish 2007). Based

on current archaeological evidence the 46–50 Piccadilly site lies just to the north-west of the possible Anglian settlement (Figure 4; Palliser 2014, 24).

5.5 Anglo-Scandinavian

The site lies within an extensive area of Anglo-Scandinavian activity to the south-east of the former Roman fortress. It has been suggested that the Anglian period *wic* at Fishergate was in decline by the 860s–870s and was replaced at around this time by occupation around the Ousegate/Coppergate area (AY 8/4, 299–304). However, evidence found in 2007 for craft and trade activity at Dixon Lane/George Street, located midway between the Fishergate and Coppergate/Ousegate areas, suggests a wider spatial continuity between the Anglian *wic* and the Anglo-Scandinavian settlement in the late 9th–10th centuries (AYW 8). Evidence for Anglo-Scandinavian activity from YAT excavations at 118–126, 76–82 and 104–112 Walmgate suggests that Walmgate became an important thoroughfare in the burgeoning 9th and 10th - century town and a substantial suburb developed in the area. The nearby churches of St Stephen, Fishergate and St Denys, Walmgate are thought likely of pre-Conquest origins. A number of sites along Piccadilly have revealed traces of Anglo-Scandinavian activity such as bone working evidence from excavations at 38, 50, and 84 Piccadilly (AY 8/4, 469–472).

5.6 Medieval

The landscape of the River Foss was drastically altered by the damming of the southern end of the river at Castle Mills by William the Conqueror to exploit its waters to feed the moat of the Norman castle at York (VCHY 1961, 509–510; Figure 6). The resulting body of water was called the *Stagnum Regis*, the King's pool. The dam of the Fishpool of the Foss probably provided a causeway across the Foss at the site of the modern Castle Mills Bridge. The first documentary evidence for a bridge at Castle Mills is not until 1585 and the structure was destroyed during the Siege of 1644 (VCHY 1966, 519–520; Raine 1955, 196). Cartographic evidence, as well as evidence from the excavations at 38 and 84 Piccadilly show that the area which now forms the west side of Piccadilly was largely flooded by the creation of the Fishpool and remained so for much of the late medieval period, during which time the King's Fishpool gradually silted up and some of the land formerly flooded reclaimed. The series of maps reproduced in Figures 6 and 13 and historic maps Figures 7–9 show the areas flooded based on archaeological and cartographic sources and the gradual change in area taken up by the King's Pool during the early modern period.

The Walmgate sector of the city was enclosed with defences in the late 12th century (Figure 6; RCHMY 2, 11; HTAY 2015, 31). Fishergate Postern, 0.2km to the south was built sometime in the 14th century (Raine 1955, 20).

Cartographic evidence suggests that 46–50 Piccadilly was at the riverside edge of gardens to the rear of properties fronting onto Walmgate during this period and the archaeological evidence discussed further in Section 6 of this report indicates that waste was dumped along the riverside where there were perhaps jetties or revetments designed to consolidate and reclaim land from the river.

5.7 Post-medieval

Canalisation of the River Foss began in the late 18th century, the first stretch from Castle Mills to Monk Bridge being opened in 1794. It was continued to Sheriff Hutton in 1801. Factories and Warehouses at Hungate were still accessible via the Foss Navigation until the 1960s even though its use as a navigation was in decline. In recent decades the remaining light industry has relocated, making way for largely residential development (VCHY 1961, 475; Fife and Walls 1981, 23–25; YAT forthcoming).

The modern street named Piccadilly runs from Pavement across the River Foss and along its east bank to the east end of Castle Mills Bridge. A lane or open space existed at the south end by 1610 and was widened and re-named Piccadilly after the London Street c. 1840. It was extended north to Pavement in 1912 (RCHMY 5, 199).

Much of the street is built over land that was formerly covered by the Kings Pool of the River Foss. The gradual development of the post-medieval landscape can be traced through the historic maps of which there is a sequence available dating from the 17th century (Figures 7–11). On Speed's map of 1610 the site is depicted as open ground

Richards' map of 1685 (Figure 8) which is largely a copy of an earlier map by Captain James Archer (surveyed 1673 and published 1682; not reproduced), shows open ground, presumably used for commercial horticulture with property boundaries and a path or street leading from Walmgate to the east bank of the River Foss. The distinction between streets built-up with houses, and lesser pathways without on these early maps is unclear. Their exact location and orientation in relation to the modern landscape is also difficult to determine with complete accuracy but it seems there has, for a considerable time, been some form of access to the east bank of the Foss from Walmgate and the north side of St Denys' church yard.

By 1750, the publication date of Chassereau's map, the area around St Denys' church is largely built-up, the path leading to the east bank of the Foss is no longer shown and a new path or street leading south towards the Castle Mills Bridge area is indicated, forming the predecessor to the modern southern end of Piccadilly.

5.8 Modern

Hargrove's map of 1818 appears to differentiate between probable horticultural land to the north-west and west of St Denys' church and what appears to be open ground to the south-west (Figure 10). The line of the path running south towards Fishergate Postern from the west end of the churchyard is in Hargrove's map delineated with a dashed line, possibly indicating it was of lesser status than other lanes shown further to the east. The 1852 Ordnance Survey map shows the path widened and formalised after the creation of Piccadilly (Figure 11).

By 1852 St Denys' Street had been extended along a line to the south-west with a slight dog-leg and is shown as a built-up street of terraced houses. The properties on the north side of the street appear to be small houses with yards and those on the south appear to be back-to-back houses. Walmgate was a notorious area in the 19th century associated with poverty, crime and prostitution. A block of terraced dwellings, immediately south-west of St Denys' Church, were known as Plow's Rectory Buildings. Finnegan describes these as an unwholesome terrace amongst which there were a small number of 'houses of ill fame' such

as ‘Todds’ and ‘Mrs Varley’s’. Several diseased and destitute prostitutes entered the work house from this address (Finnegan 1979, 54–55).

In the 19th-century the terraced houses of St Denys’ Street ran from Walmgate to the south-west across the 46–50 Piccadilly site almost towards the bank of the River Foss (Figure 11). A search of City of York Council ‘Imagine York’ images archive returned only 1, relatively uninformative, photograph of the east corner of St Denys Street at its junction with Walmgate taken in c. 1933. The eastern end of the street appears to follow a property boundary or thoroughfare running south-west from Walmgate along the north side of St Denys’ church, a route that can be traced in the historic maps as far back as Speed’s map of 1610 (Figures 7–11).

The buildings on Piccadilly are predominantly of 20th century date consisting of a number of former garages, warehouses, offices and retail shops with some residential flats and a large hotel at the Castle Mills end of the street. A terrace of four small houses (numbers 41, 43, 45) built shortly before 1850 is recorded by the Royal Commission as having been demolished before 1961 and the former White Swan Hotel (now Pavement Vaults and residential flats) at the northernmost end of the street incorporates partial remains of a three-storey mid-18th - century house (RCHMY 5, 199).

Number 46–50 Piccadilly was built as a motor garage in 1955 (Appendix 3) and evidence of this former use is present in both the internal layout of the building and surviving fixtures and fittings (Plates 1–5). An assessment of the architectural merit of these buildings and their historic landscape setting is beyond the remit of this report, however, the building is unusual and as there are few examples of such buildings remaining in York, many others having been destroyed without record investigation and recording of the buildings may be informative.

6 DEPOSIT SEQUENCE BASED ON 1992 SITE INVESTIGATION (YORYM:1992.10)

6.1 Summary of YAT Report 1992/14 Archaeological Evaluation at 50 Piccadilly

An evaluation excavation was carried out by York Archaeological Trust at 50 Piccadilly, York over 8 weeks in 1992 on behalf of the Polar Motor Company (York) Ltd. The excavation was directed by Rhona Finlayson who subsequently wrote the evaluation report on which the following summary is based (YAT Report 1992/14).

A single 3m x 3m trench 8 metres deep was excavated down to a height of 2m OD at which level natural glacial deposition was identified. This small evaluation excavation is the principal source for understanding the archaeological potential of 46–50 Piccadilly.

6.1.1 *Natural*

Glacial deposition consisting of a compact grey-blue sandy clay and friable light brown sandy clay with occasional iron-panning and small pieces of plant matter was encountered at 2.6m OD.

6.1.2 *Roman*

The Roman activity identified during the 1991 excavation at 46–50 Piccadilly begins in the late-2nd century when two small parallel drainage ditches aligned north-south 0.3m apart were dug into natural deposits. Environmental evidence from samples suggested they intermittently carried water and that the surrounding landscape may have been rough grazing or weedy

waste ground. Deposits above the backfilled ditches showed that the ground surface was subsequently raised with an isolated post being the only suggestion of structural activity: All being subsequently sealed by burnt material suggesting possible industry in the vicinity, into which another linear feature of uncertain function was dug. This was followed by a sequence of dumped domestic refuse and a line of stakes in the 3rd century. These deposits were overlain by a rough cobble surface followed by an organic build-up, again, all of 3rd century date.

6.1.3 *Probable Anglo-Scandinavian*

The Roman ditches were overlain by a series of levelling or dumped deposits interspersed with occasional cut features including a post-hole and a ditch. Deposits included burnt residues, possible burning in situ, domestic midden material tipping west towards the river overlain by remnants of a cobble surface at a height of 4.35m OD.

6.1.4 *Medieval*

Above the level of the cobble surface remnants was a build-up of humic silty clays containing pottery dated to the 11th–12th centuries. Thin lenses of organic material with vivianite inclusions suggested alternating waterlogged and dry conditions and an increasingly pronounced slope to the west was noted as these deposits had accumulated.

A large dump of irregularly-shaped tree-trunk timbers, found at approximately 4.6m OD, was interpreted as a possible boundary or perhaps discarded material, dumped at the margins of a timber yard to consolidate the ground surface.

These levels were followed by 14th century build-up with evidence for sporadic water-logging and organic material with copious domestic waste and hay and straw remnants probably representing discarded bedding or feed from animal keeping. A domestic cat skeleton was also recovered from these deposits, which tended towards sloping westwards indicating continued riverside waste tipping.

A row of substantial vertical posts, circular in profile, and various horizontal timbers, some of which had been nailed to the posts were discovered at around 5.2m OD and interpreted as revetments for ground consolidation and the possible creation of a terrace of higher ground. The excavator stressed the inherent interpretive limitations due to the small window of excavation.

14th century activity consisted of a series of dumped organic material and a large dump of large tile fragments all tipping steeply towards the river. Deposits to the west of the revetment already discussed consisted of dumped and built-up material, formed in still/slow moving water according to evidence from environmental sample analysis.

Compact clay and a series of horizontal planks found at 6.05m OD ranging in length from 0.47m–2m, had later been used to consolidate the earlier timber revetment and was overlain by a further series of dumps and levelling material dated to the 15th century by pottery.

6.1.5 *Post-medieval*

Above the late medieval deposition was a series of dumps and levelling deposits including demolition material and 17th century pottery. This activity was shown to have continued into the 18th century when a further 0.5m build-up of dumped material was deposited.

6.1.6 *Modern*

Above these deposits was a series of linear features, evidence for 18th–19th century horticultural use of the land shown on Todd's Map of 1829.

The uppermost 0.3–0.5m layers of hand-dug deposition contained human bone and demolition material presumed to have originated from St Denys' Church yard. It was suggested by the excavator that this material was probably re-deposited when Plow's Rectory Buildings, shown on the 1852 OS map (Figure 11), were constructed during which parts of the churchyard may have been disturbed, or possibly when the tax office on the site opposite was built.

The uppermost deposition was removed by mechanical digger and it was found that the foundations of the building present at the time of excavation intruded to a maximum of 1.5m and therefore had not impacted on significant archaeological deposits.

6.1.7 *Existing Borehole*

A single borehole was put in on the site (York HER EY 04063; Figure 2) as part of the works for the Coppergate II proposals, but as the scheme never went ahead, no monitoring work was carried out (John Oxley CYC pers. comm.).

7 **WALKOVER SURVEY SUMMARY**

The site is currently used as car park (Plate 1) operated by NCP with a shop premises occupying the street frontage which is used as a motorbike showroom with offices above running the full length of the building. The Piccadilly frontage has 8 narrow concrete columns in-filled with glass with entranceways at the north and south ends, the southernmost of which appears to be redundant. The north entrance provides access to the NCP car park which occupies the rear of the premises (Plate 2).

The car park has concrete floors throughout with concrete pillars supporting a barrel-vaulted concrete roof through which natural light is provided by unusual regularly-spaced, circular portal roof lights (Plate 3). Tall roof-height textured glass windows on the west frontage provide natural light to the former garage. A number of internal fixtures and fittings reflecting the former garage use remain such as pumps for fuel and lubricants (Plate 4).

Along the River Foss frontage there is a strip of overgrown, unused land which could not be accessed at the time of the walk-over. The river frontage is of brick and concrete with high level glass windows along full length of building, little else could be seen from across the river at the Clifford's Tower car park due to the overgrowth on this side (Plate 5).

An enquiry to CYC Planning Enquiries yielded no information specifically relating to the installation of the existing river wall although documents apparently mention the clearance of the site in the 1930s (reference TT2916A; Planning Enquiries pers. comm.) and certainly the visual appearance of the structure suggests it was built after this date.

8 UNDERGROUND TANKS

In 1955 at the time the application was made for planning permission to develop the site as a garage, plans were submitted for the installation of four 2,000 gallon underground petrol tanks. The plans for these, obtained from City of York Council, show their proposed locations and it is assumed all four were installed in the locations shown in Appendix 3, pages 37–39.

The installation of these tanks will have had a localised impact on the archaeological remains in each location of around 4m x 2m to a depth of 3m. Contamination may have resulted from leakage during the decades since they were created.

Below-ground structures such as these have the potential to act as barriers to hydrological flow and may have impacted on the preservation of surrounding below-ground archaeological deposits (EH 2016, 22–23).

An enquiry was made to the Principal Building Control Officer at City of York Council requesting records of the construction of the 1955 building but no records relating to the building were found.

9 STATE OF PRESERVATION SUMMARY

The recently published Historic England guidelines document '*Preserving Archaeological Remains*' states that 'to be able to consider the potential harm of any proposed change, it is necessary to understand the current state of preservation of remains and that of the deposits in which they are buried.' (EH 2016, 10). This section aims to summarise the significance and state of preservation at 46-50 Piccadilly as currently understood in order to understand the potential impacts of development on the site.

9.1 Characterisation:

Natural glacial deposition was identified at a height of 2.6m OD, approximately 8m below the present ground level.

Cut into the natural were two Roman drainage ditches dating to the 2nd and 3rd century above which 2m of subsequent deposition indicated Roman river bank which included a cobble surface, possibly some kind of hard standing or a landing at the river's edge.

Evidence for Anglo-Scandinavian occupation comprises a sequence of deposits making up 0.2–0.3m in depth between around 4.2m OD–4.8m OD overlaying the Roman material. The deposition comprised thin lenses of organic material with vivianite inclusions suggesting the deposition occurred during periodical waterlogging interspersed with drier conditions. These deposits were dated by two sherds of 11th/12th century pottery. Above these layers was a dump of large timbers which the excavator likened to a similar 11th century, Anglo-Scandinavian, deposition found at 21 Piccadilly however the deposits built up around and over these timbers was medieval (Finlayson 1992, 41)

Extensive medieval timber structures representing multi-phase medieval land-use. These more extensive than anywhere else on the east bank of the Foss around 2m of deposition in total between 4.8m OD and 6.8m OD. The 1992 excavation contributed considerably to knowledge

of the extent of the medieval Fishpool and has potential to increase this knowledge through further boreholes (Figure 13)

Post-medieval layers comprising around 0.7m of deposition between 6.8m OD–7.7m OD. Including 16th and 17th century layers with demolition rubble overlain by 18th century horticultural soils.

The uppermost layers comprised probable re-deposited material including some human bone derived from disturbance of St Denys' church yard for road and house building. What survives of the 18th–19th century back to back houses is uncertain.

9.2 State of preservation:

The investigations carried since the early 1990s along the east bank of the Foss/Piccadilly areas discussed above have demonstrate the presence of complex, multi-period remains at 46–50 Piccadilly. The small group of evaluations focused on in this report show that archaeological deposition along the east bank of the River Foss is of additional importance because of the waterlogged anoxic conditions in which there is an increased preservation of delicate artefact types such as wood and leather, and ecofacts such as plant and insect remains.

The 1992 excavation at 50 Piccadilly provides a guide to possible condition of the deposition at this site. The hypothesis made by Kenward and Hall (2000) that at least the superficial deposits in York may be undergoing irreversible decay (AY8/4,424–425) may be tested by investigation and monitoring at 46–50 Piccadilly. Comparison of the results of new investigation and monitoring with observations made during the evaluation excavation undertaken in 1992 may be problematic however as the conditions of preservation may have changed in the two decades since the excavation was carried out. It is also possible that the archaeological evaluation of the site may have impacted upon preservation by breaching underlying deposits. Concrete and Asphalt used in surfacing of the site since the redevelopment of the area in the 1950s may also have affected the ground water conditions.

The maximum impact of 1950s foundations according to the excavator of the 1992 investigation is approximately 8.5m OD or 1.5m below present ground level (Finlayson 1992, Figure 2). No further information could be found regarding the nature and depth of the 1955 building foundations. It is assumed therefore that the building foundation was not piled and that intrusions into the deposits below are presently minimal.

The upper level of waterlogging was not defined in the 1992 evaluation report but preserved timbers, the presence of which is usually a good indicator of waterlogged conditions, survived to a height of around 6m OD (approximately 4m below present ground level). Furthermore, it may be inferred from the statement 'all deposits of archaeological interest are undisturbed, waterlogged, well preserved and overlain by at least 3m of post-medieval deposits' that waterlogged deposits were extant up to, a height of around 6.8m OD the top of Context 2009, the uppermost layer of the medieval deposition (Finlayson 1992, 40). A detailed examination of the original excavation records may elucidate further information in this regard.

A thorough knowledge of the site hydrology is essential to understanding the full impacts of piling on waterlogged deposits. Mitigation must consider the potential impacts of: physical damage through puncturing important remains; chemical damage caused by pile concrete; the

puncturing of impermeable layers that contribute to deposit preservation through perched water tables; impacts of temporary water ingress control measures such as cofferdams during construction (HE 2007, 36).

It is not possible to determine the extent of each of the deposit types/deposition periods on the site from the limited area investigated in 1992. It is therefore difficult to assess the potential physical impacts any proposed piling strategy may have. The creation of a series of boreholes along the north–south and east–west axes of the site and the use of piezometers to monitor anoxic conditions is recommended as a measure to understand the current state of ground water levels.

9.3 Assessment of Significance:

The significance of the site is recognised by its inclusion within the Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) and is designated under the Ancient Monuments Act of 1979.

The potential of waterfront archaeology for deep waterlogged deposits presenting rich and well-preserved evidence is the primary importance of the site. This potential at the former Polar Motor Company's premises and adjacent properties along the banks of the River Foss was recognised in the 1988 York Archaeological Trust publication *'The Waterfronts of York: Prospects for Archaeological Research'* where it was stated: 'the present day topography is very different from the pre-19th century layout, and little is known archaeologically of the area. If the Foss was crossed by bridges at Foss Bridge and near the castle in Roman times, it would be surprising if this area was not utilised both then and perhaps in the Anglian period. If, as has been suggested, the Foss acted as something of an inland port in the Viking Age, the area would again have been heavily used. In the Middle Ages it seems to have been less important.' (YAT 1988, 33)

The 1992 evaluation excavation, although it afforded only a narrow window through the deposition, did provide a full sequence down to natural which demonstrated the presence of waterlogged strata and the potential to provide high-quality evidence for understanding changes in the river regime and the use and development of the riverside over time from the Roman period onwards.

The very small size of the 1992 trench (3m x 3m) provides only a small window into the nature of the extant archaeological deposits and therefore prevents any definitive assessment of the exact nature and extent of the activity during each of the periods concerned but evidence for the Roman, Anglian or Anglo-Scandinavian periods are likely to be of considerable importance.

Summary

Evidence for the natural river regime (height of 2.6m OD) has moderate significance to understanding the local topography.

The 2nd and 3rd century Roman cobble surface suggests the possibility of riverside structures which would be of great significance to understanding the Roman use of the River Foss.

Evidence for Anglo-Scandinavian occupation between 4.2m OD–4.8m OD is likely to hold significant information about the Anglo-Scandinavian use of the riverside and the nature of nearby occupation.

The discovery of a dry-land archaeological sequence at this site in 1992 with extensive multi-phase medieval timber structures between 4.8m OD and 6.8m OD suggests there was more extensive activity here than anywhere else on the east bank of the Foss. The 1992 excavation also altered the interpretation of the extent of the medieval Fishpool (Figure 13). Although perhaps of lesser importance than the earlier phases of activity the site undoubtedly holds potential for furthering our understanding of the medieval land use and the morphology of the medieval Fishpool.

The post-medieval deposits, which lay between 6.8m OD–7.7m OD, were considered of little archaeological value in 1992. This is likely to be the case for much of the re-deposited material, although the presence of human bone derived from disturbance of St Denys' church yard must be considered. The recovery of human remains requires appropriate measures to be undertaken for lifting and handling and may require a Ministry of Justice license granting authority to excavate human remains for archaeological purposes. However, the uncertain provenance and age of re-deposited human remains means that they are generally of little archaeological importance.

What survives of the 18th–19th century back to back houses that area known to have occupied the site in the 19th century is uncertain, however, the excavation of sites such as the Hungate Regeneration Project (YAT forthcoming) have demonstrated the potential of investigating post-medieval archaeology. This report has highlighted the presence of evidence for both horticultural land use and 18th/19th century back-to-back housing on the site. Despite the relatively recent nature of such archaeological deposits they may hold potential for enhancing our understanding of 18th/19th century horticultural practices and housing and poverty in 19th century York. Depending on the condition and extent of these remains, about which we currently have very little information, consideration of this potential and of the impacts of any development upon these resources should be considered as part of the archaeological mitigation strategy.

FIGURES



Figure 1 Site location

Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database rights 2016

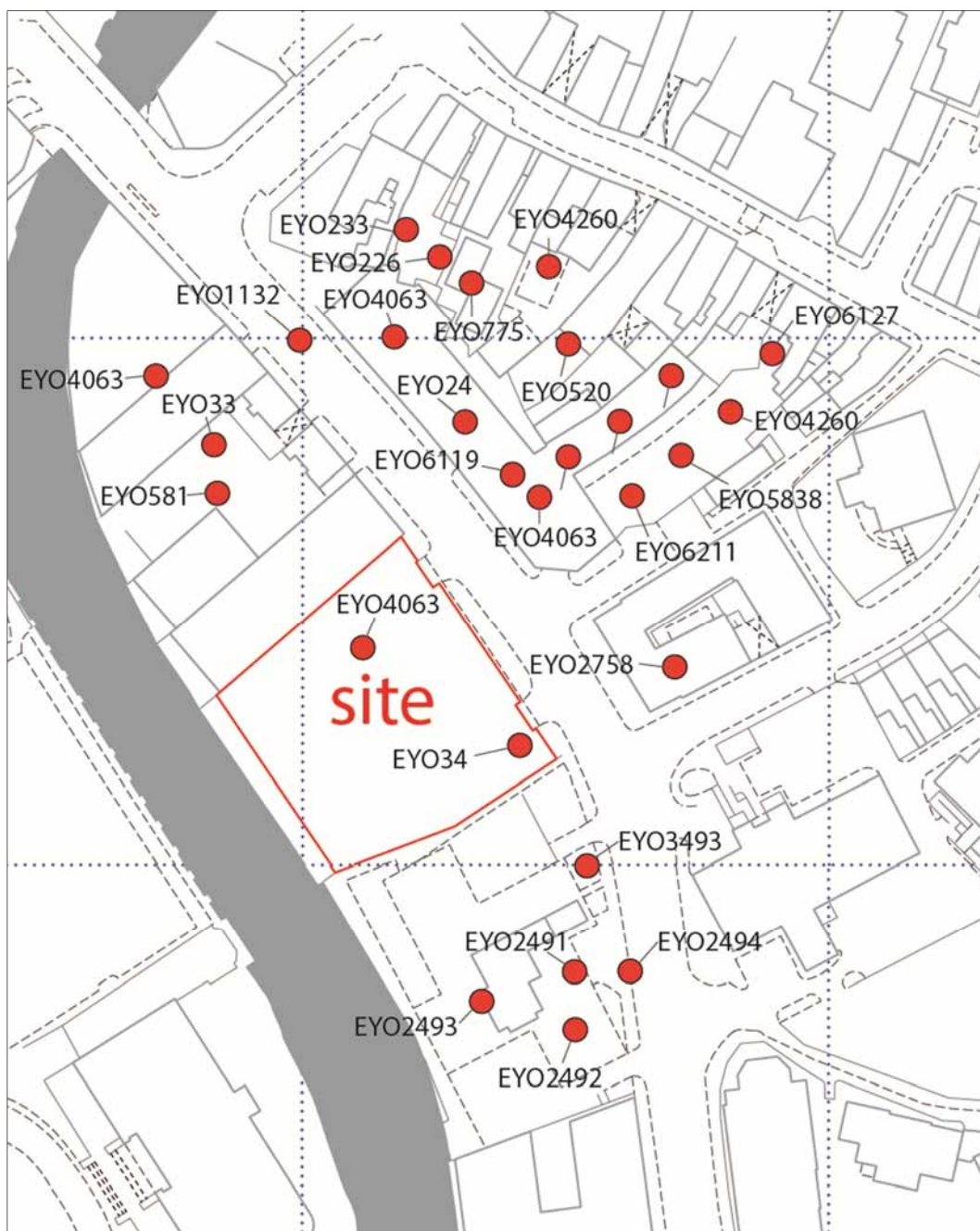


Figure 2 HER data plan

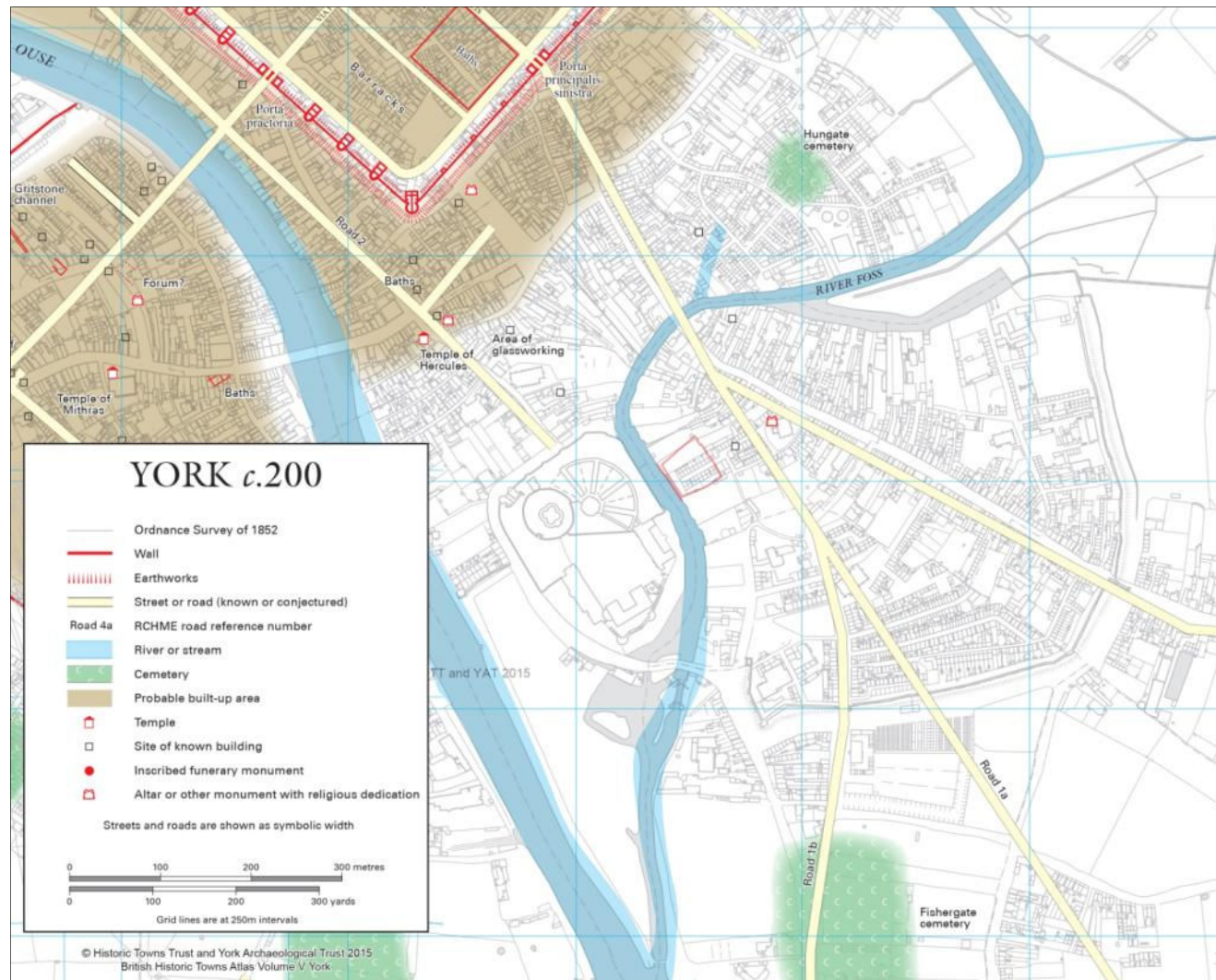


Figure 3 Roman York c.200 AD with site outline

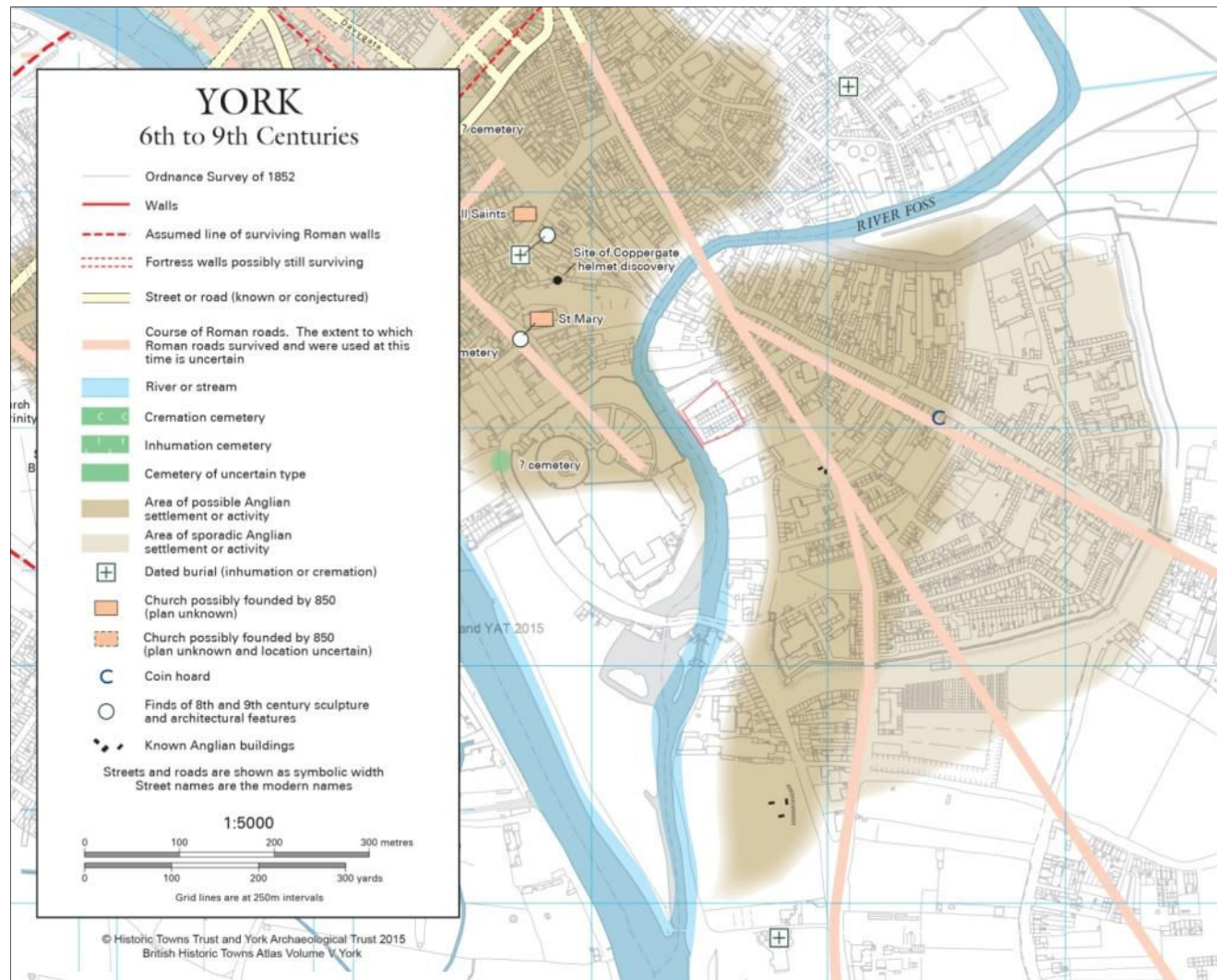


Figure 4 Anglian York, 6th–9th centuries, with site outline

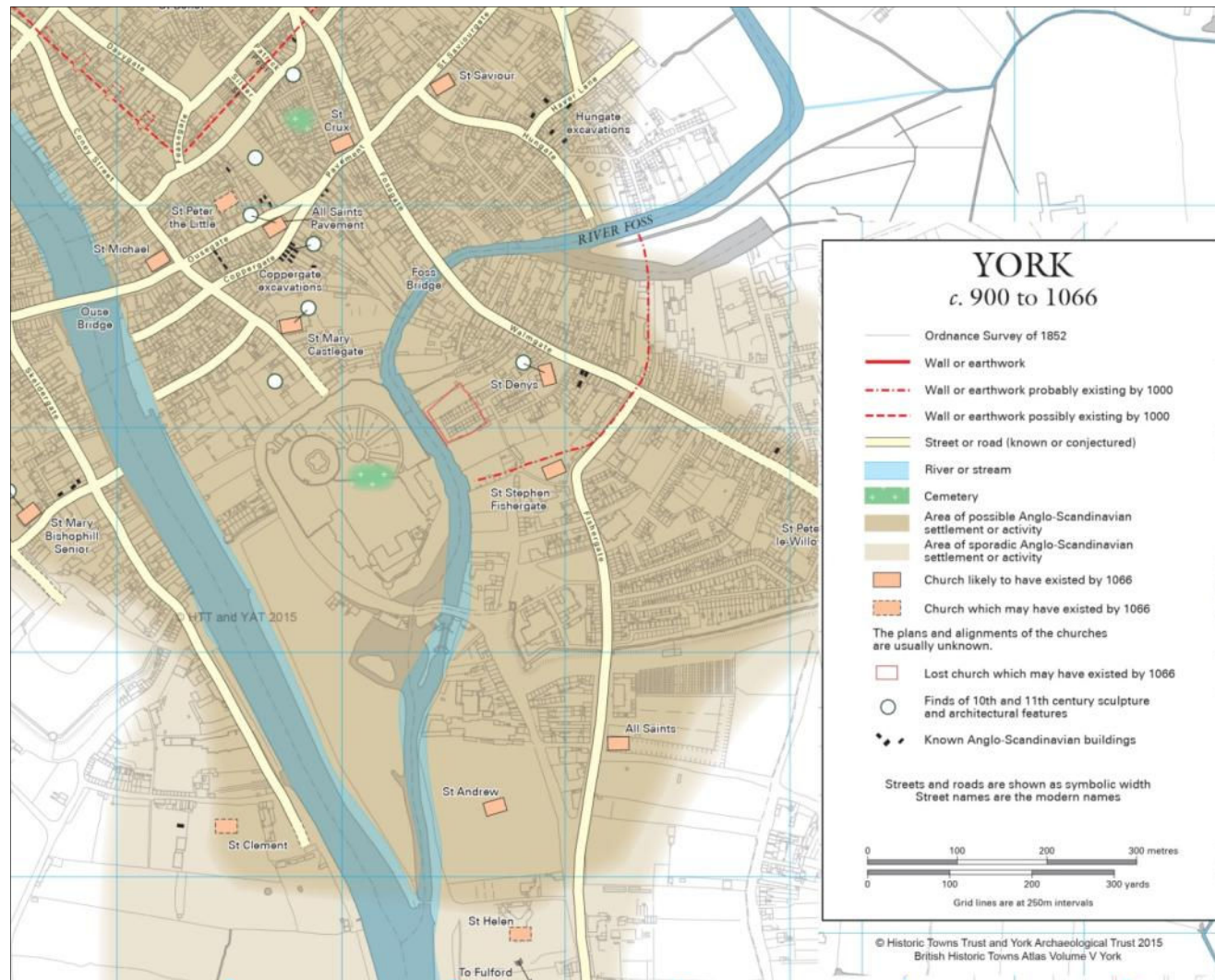


Figure 5 Anglo-Scandinavian York 900–1066 with site location

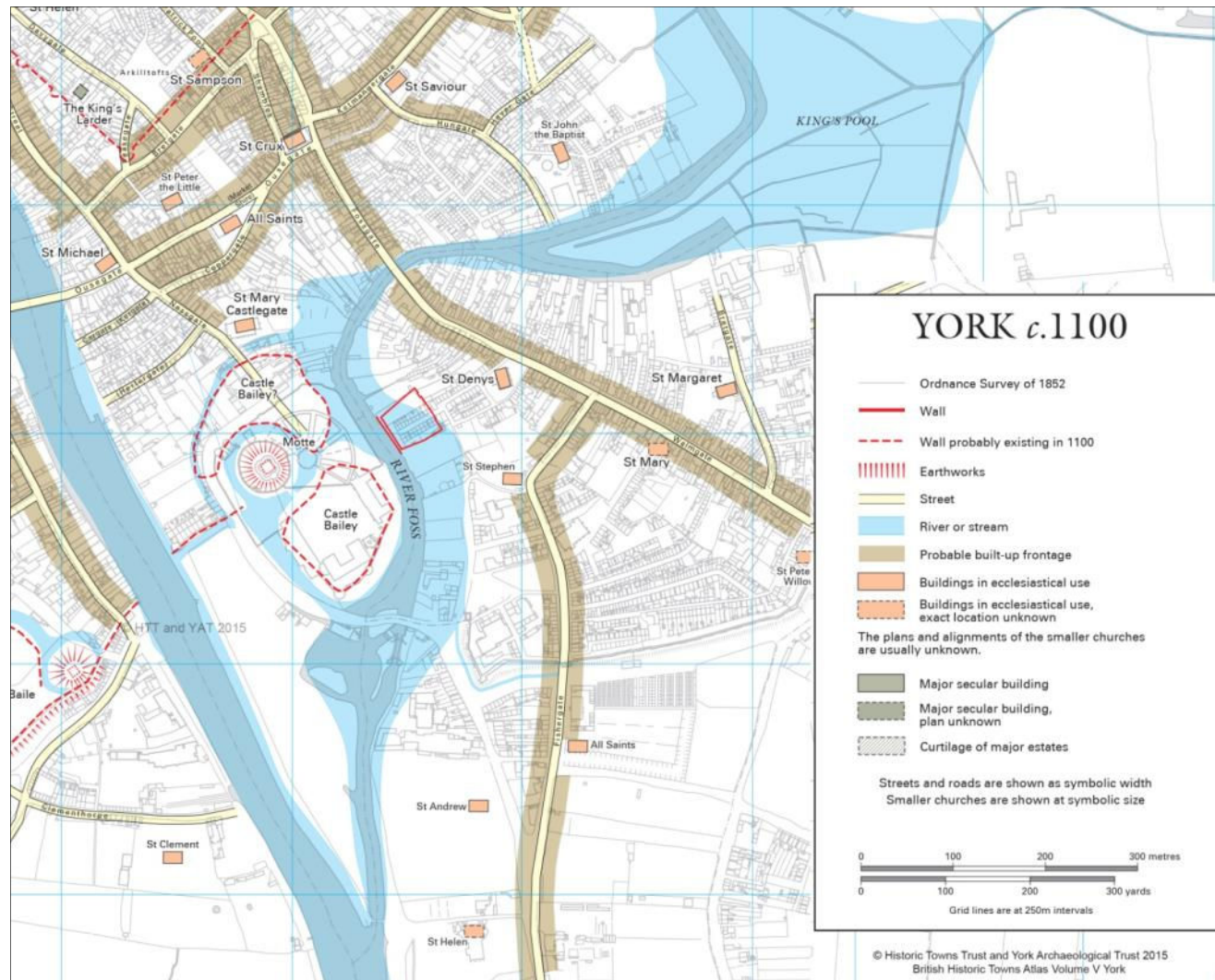


Figure 6 Norman York c. 1100

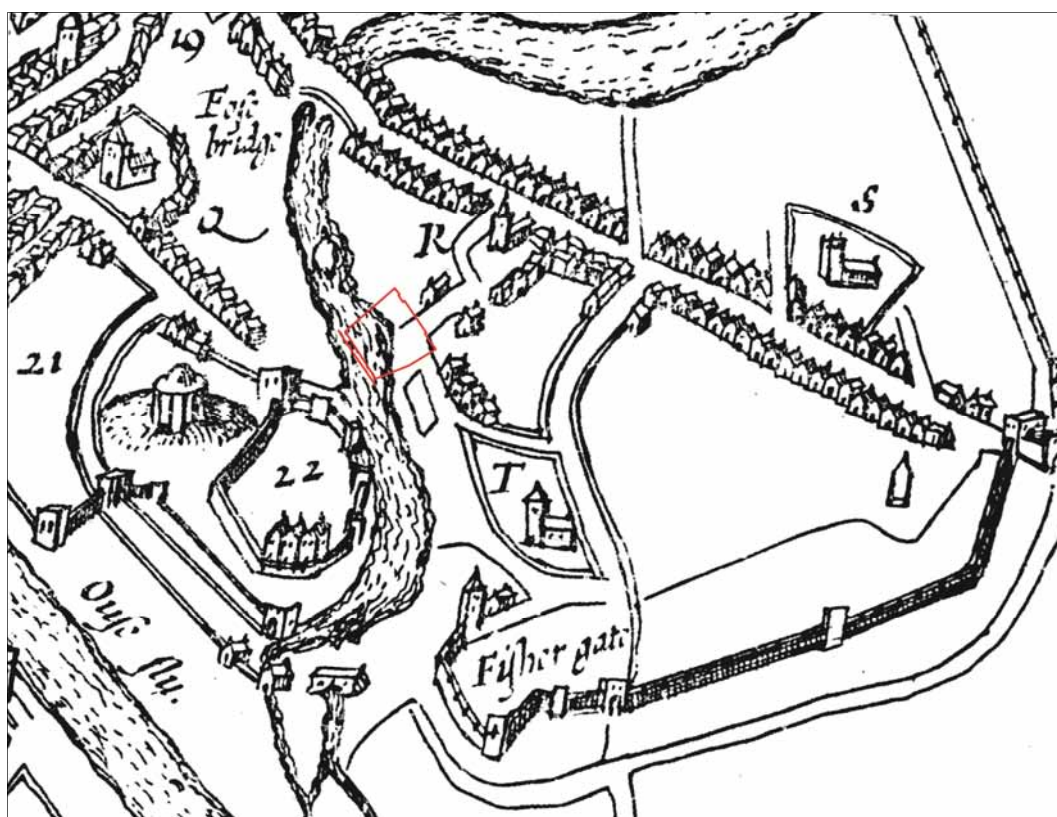


Figure 7 Speed 1610 with approximate site location



Figure 8 Richards 1685 with approximate site location

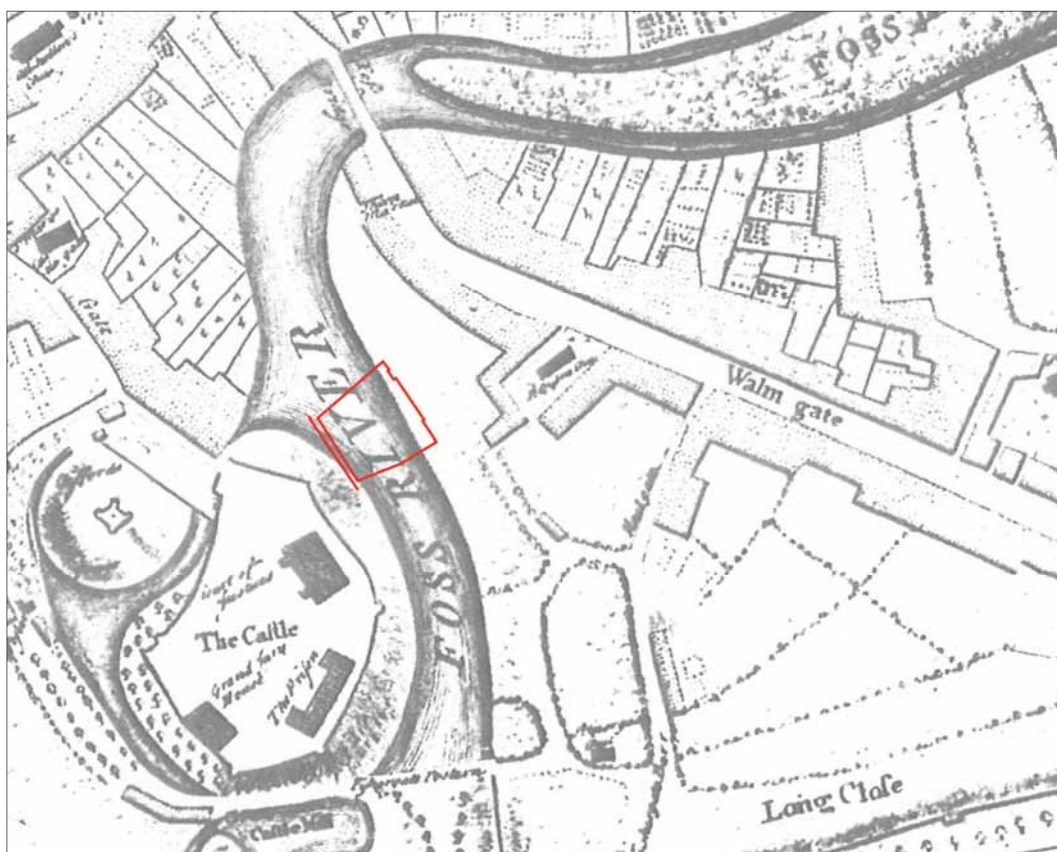


Figure 9 Chassereau 1750 with approximate site location

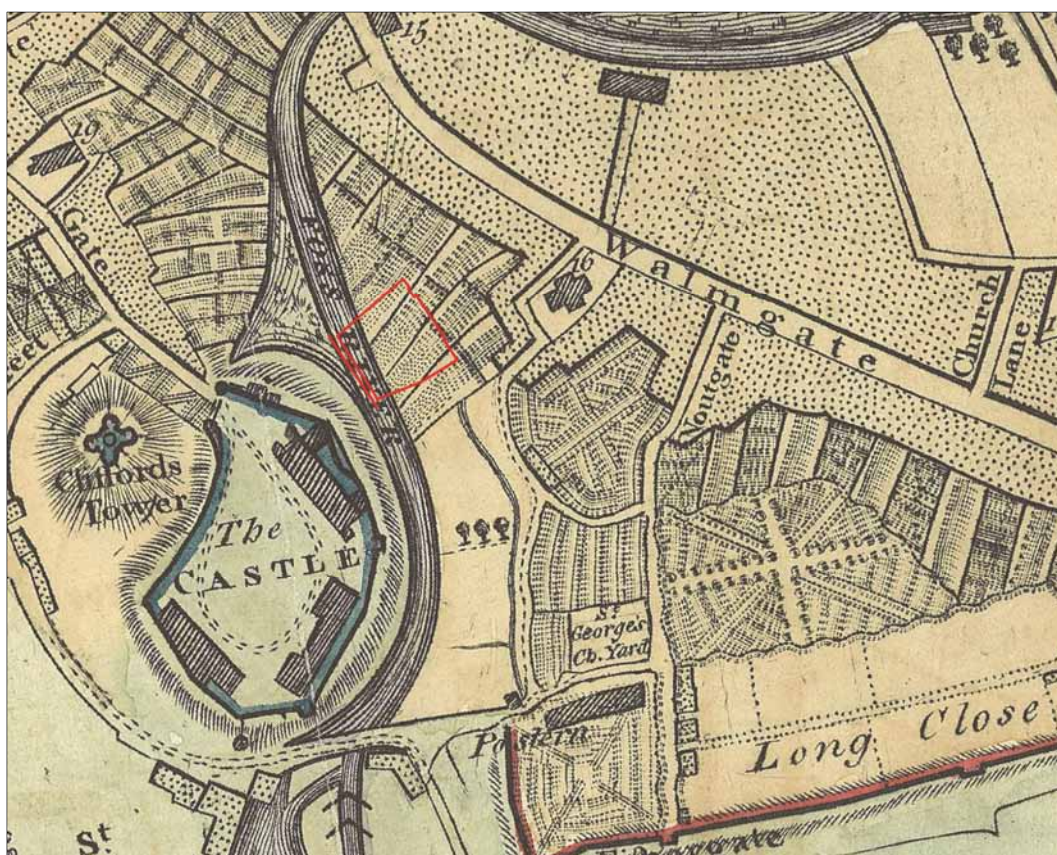


Figure 10 Hargrove 1818 with approximate site location

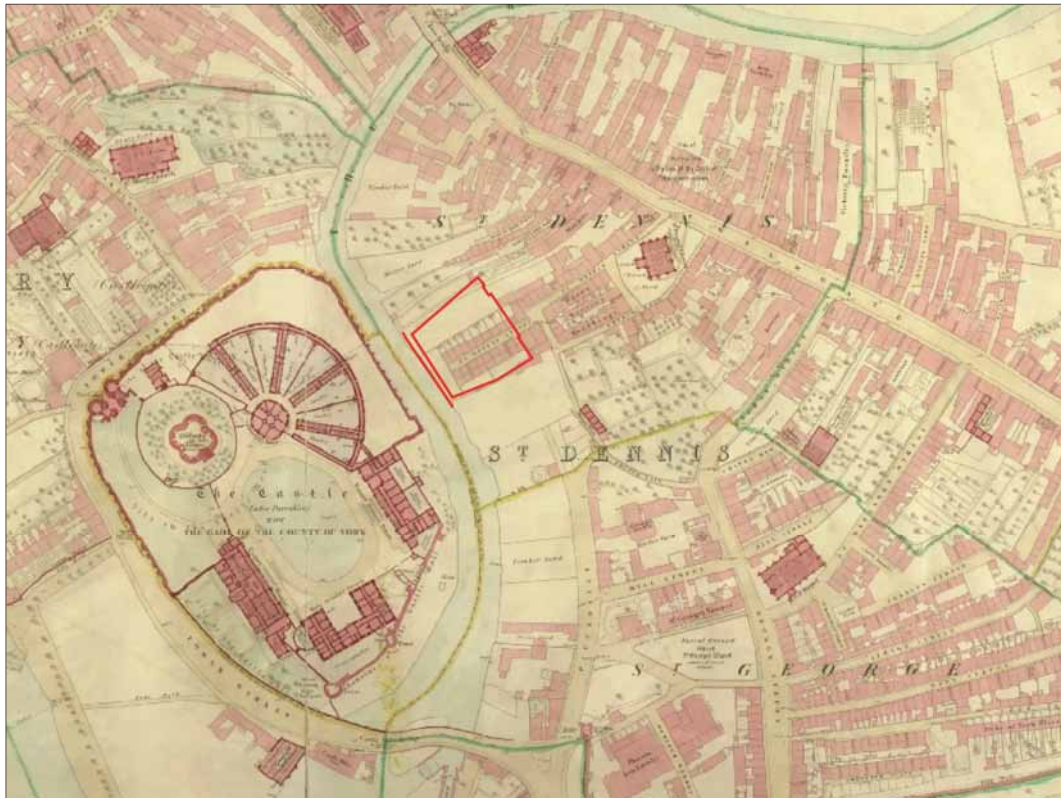


Figure 11 Ordnance Survey 1852 with site outline

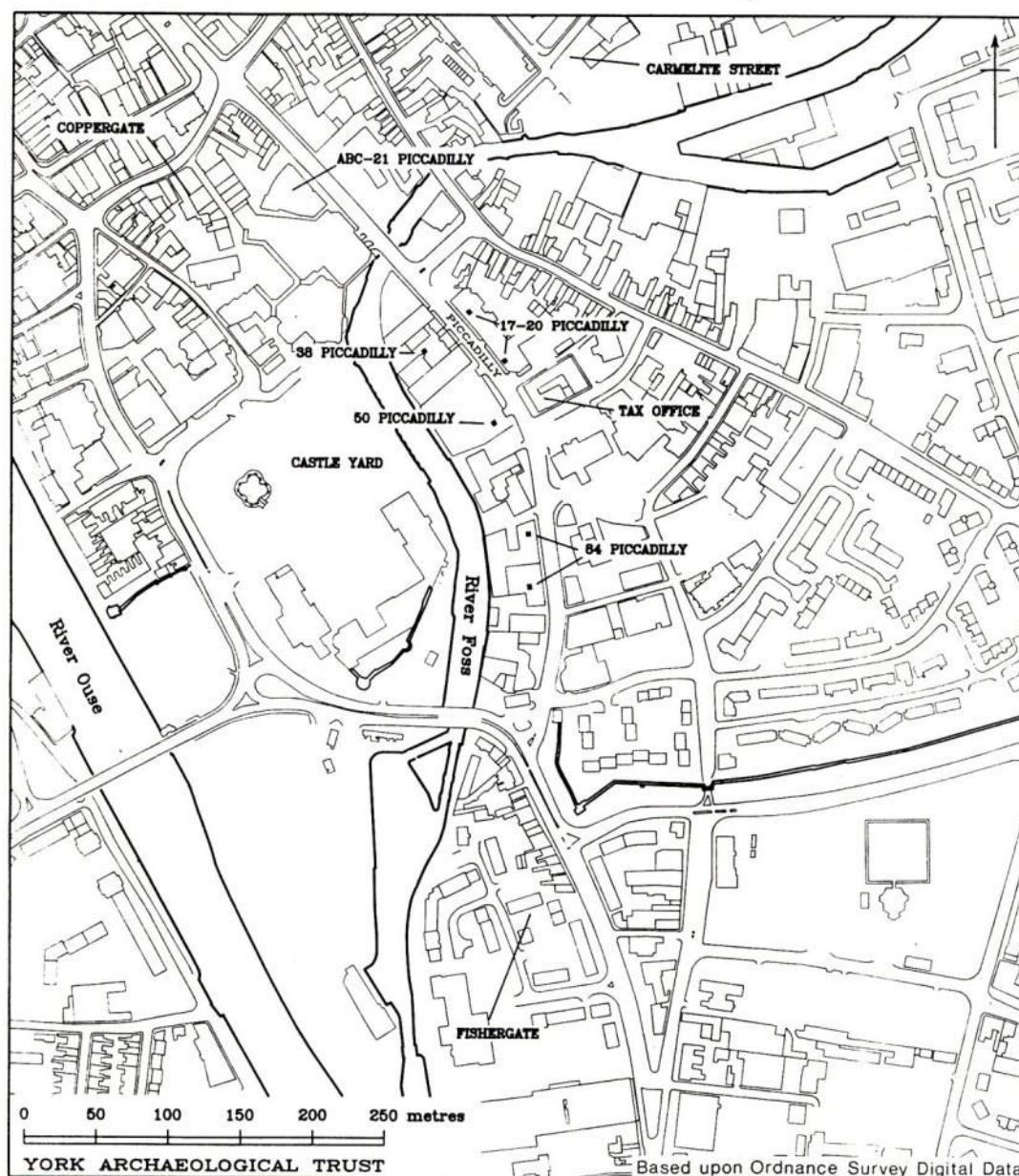


Figure 12 Sites in the vicinity of 50 Piccadilly up to 1992 (reproduced from YORYM: 1992.10; YAT Report 1992/14)

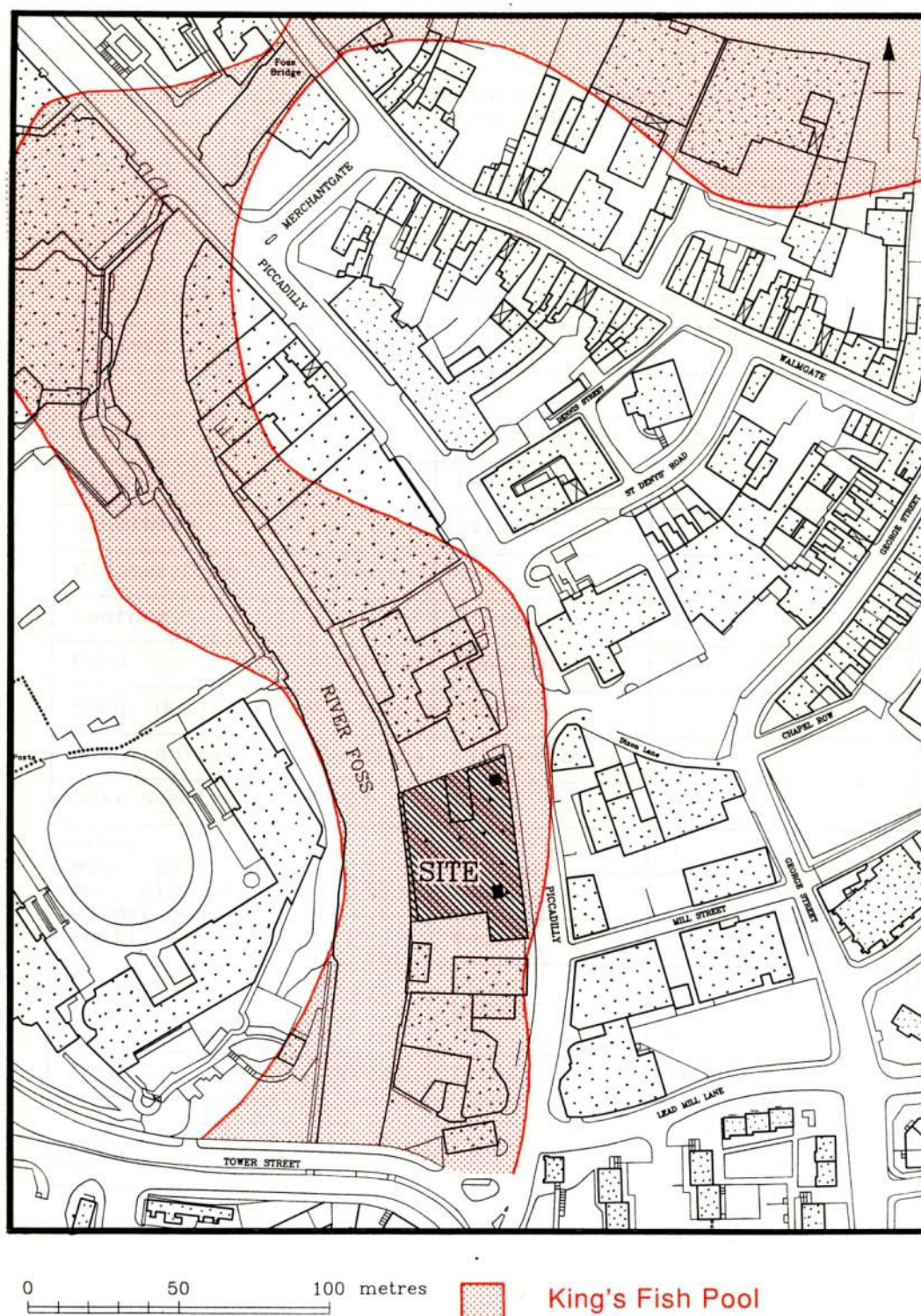


Figure 13 postulated extent of King's Fishpool based on excavated evidence (reproduced from YAT Evaluation report for YORYM:1991.16). Note: area labelled 'site' is that of 86 Piccadilly

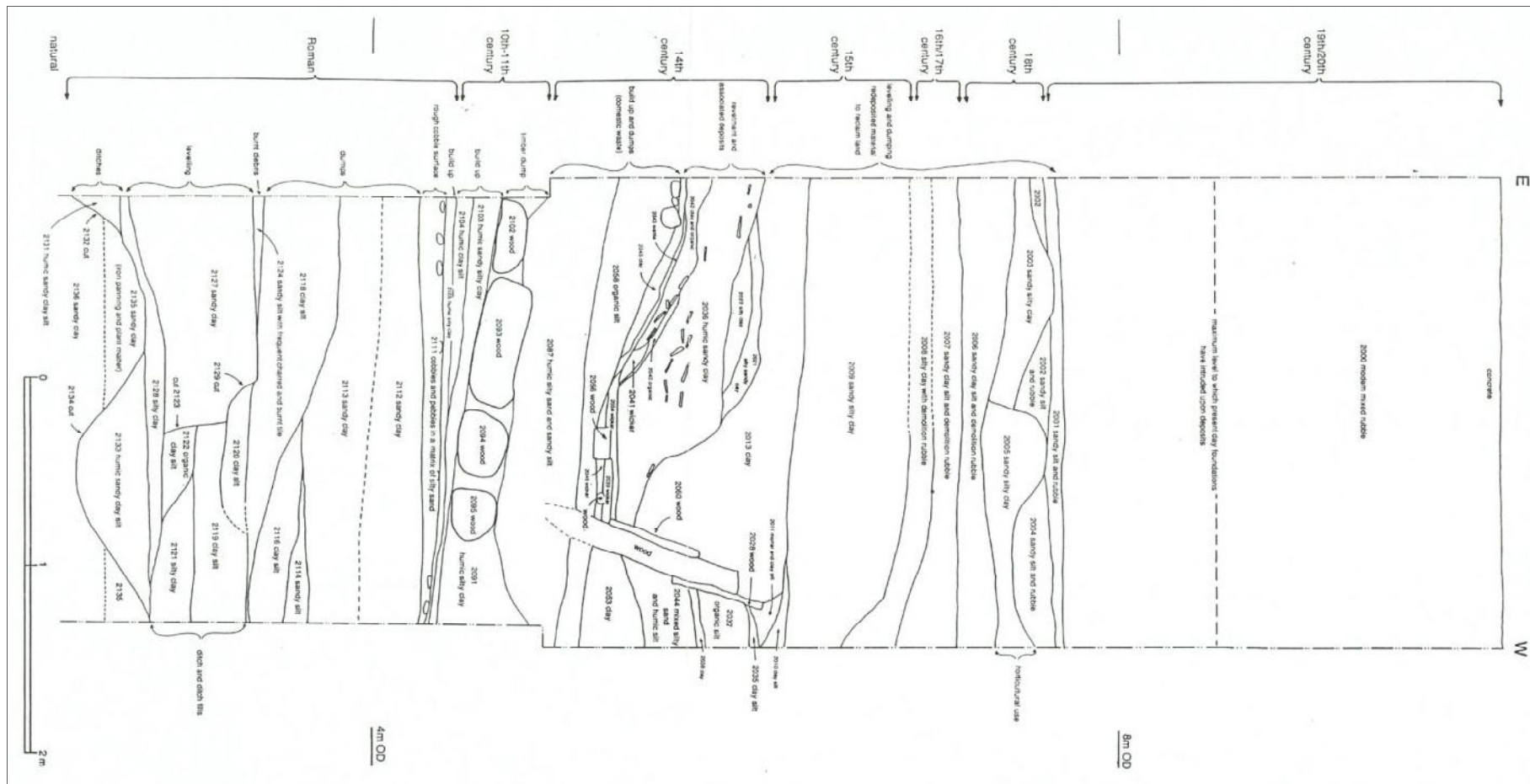


Figure 14 North-facing section through 1992 trench (reproduced from YORYM: 1992.10; YAT Report 1992/14)

PLATES



Plate 1 NCP Car Park entrance office



Plate 2 Entrance to Car Park



Plate 3 Roof structure with circular portal sky-lights



Plate 4 Fixtures relating to former garage



Plate 5 River Foss frontage showing river wall

LIST OF SOURCES

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<http://maps.york.gov.uk/LocalViewExternal/sites/EnvPlanPlanning/?layers=layer3:6>

<https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/3514/ca1mappdf>

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https://cyc.sdp.sirsidynix.net.uk/client/en_GB/yorkimages/search/results?qu=st+denys+street&te=ASSET

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

YAT wish to acknowledge the assistance of our client, Northminster Ltd, and officials at City of York Council in preparing this Desk Based Assessment.

APPENDIX 1 – YAT GAZETTEER SITES FOR PICCADILLY, YORK [UP TO 1997]

Site Address	Site name	Site accession code	Periods and site type keywords
22 Piccally	Sewer flue repair 1	1990.27	Anglo-Scandinavian organic deposits
Piccadilly-Stonebow-Davygate	Telecom trench	1989.26	Medieval building, build-up
11–15 Piccadilly, 44–46 Fossgate		1989–1990.19	Medieval road, build-up
22 Piccadilly	ABC Cinema Site	1987.21	Roman river bank, ditch, dump; Anglian fence, dump; Anglo-Scandinavian fence, dump, build-up, alluvial, river bank revetment; Medieval levelling, build-up, fence, alluvial, river bank revetment, dumps, well; Post-medieval dumping; modern cinema building
Piccadilly	Piccadilly Car Park	1980.1008	Natural ; Undated organic build-up
17–21 Piccadilly	Reynard's Garage	1991.29	Natural ; medieval alluvial, land reclamation, garden, rubbish pit, building, boundary wall; Post-medieval dumping; Modern demolition
38 Piccadilly	Simpson's Yard	1992.4	Roman alluvial, cobble surface; Anglo-Scandinavian dump, build-up; Medieval alluvial, dump, build-up, land reclamation, river bank revetment; post-medieval dump; Modern drainage, drain, yard, building
38 Piccadilly		1997.4	Natural ; Anglo-Scandinavian dump; Medieval alluvial, dump; Post-medieval land reclamation; Modern dump.
50 Piccadilly	Polar Motors	1992.10	Natural ; Roman ditch, timber post, dump, cobble surface, build-up; Anglo-Scandinavian build-up, dump; Medieval rubbish dump, river bank revetment; Post-medieval agriculture and subsistence, dump
68 Piccadilly	Rydale Building	1988.1042	No records
Piccadilly York	United House	1980.1001	Anglo-Scandinavian build-up; Post-medieval dump; Modern dump
41 Piccadilly	Piccadilly Pipe Trench	1973.3	Medieval inhumations
Piccadilly	GPO Trench, Jewsons	1979.1012	Medieval/Post-medieval inhumation, dumps
84	Fiat Garage	1991.16	Natural ; Anglian alluvial, agriculture and subsistence; Anglo-Scandinavian rubbish dump; Medieval alluvial, land reclamation;

			Post-medieval land reclamation; Modern drain, warehouse
41	Jewson's	1992.18	Roman building, pit; Anglo-Scandinavian dump, pit; Medieval rubbish pit; Modern garden, cellar, yard
Piccadilly/George Street	Jewson's Warehouse	1980.1017	Post-medieval pottery
55 Piccadilly		1988.1009	No record
52 Piccadilly	Foss Bridge, Piccadilly Service Station	1983.34	Medieval pile; Modern industrial building, levelling

APPENDIX 2 – HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD GAZZETEER

HER Number	Name & Description	Location
EYO24	Reynards Garage, 17–21 Piccadilly, City of York	SE 606 515
EYO29	York Castle Car Park, City of York Arch intervention/excavation - 1992	SE 605 515
EYO33	38 Piccadilly, City of York Arch intervention/excavation – 1992	SE 605 515
EYO34	50 Piccadilly, City of York Arch intervention/excavation Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole - 1992	SE 606 515
EYO233	11 Walmgate, City of York Archive interpretation/Evaluation	SE 606 516
EYO226	Rear 11 Walmgate, City of York Method Statement - 2003	SE 606 516
EYO520	Ellerkers 25 Walmgate, City of York Arch intervention/excavation, Arch intervention/watching brief	SE 606 516
EYO775	15/17 Walmgate, City of York Arch intervention/watching brief – 2005	SE 606 516
EYO1132	North end of Walmgate/Foss Area, North Yorkshire Remote sensing survey/aerial photography	SE 606 516
EYO2491	58 Piccadilly, City of York Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole	SE 606 514
EYO2492	58 Piccadilly, City of York Archaeological Interpretation/Deposit Model Record, Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole	SE 606 514
EYO2493	58 Piccadilly, City of York Archaeological Interpretation/Deposit Model Record,	SE 606 514

	Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole	
EYO2494	58 Piccadilly, City of York Archaeological Interpretation/Deposit Model Record, Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole	SE 606 514
EYO2758		SE 606 515
EYO3493	Ryedale Building 58 Piccadilly, City of York Arch intervention/watching brief	SE 606 514
EYO4063	Groundwater monitoring Environmental intervention/sample/core	SE 605 517
EYO4260	Mawsons Court, City of York Arch intervention/watching brief	SE 606 516
EYO4942	58 Piccadilly, City of York Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole	SE 606 514
EYO4948	River Ouse, City of York Non arch intervention/subsoil survey/borehole	SE 600 515
EYO4901	16–22 Coppergate, City of York Arch intervention/excavation	SE 604 516
EYO5481	36–44 Piccadilly, York Archaeological Desk-based Assessment	SE 605 515

APPENDIX 3 – PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR 1955 MOTOR GARAGE (CYC PLANNING DPT)

YORK COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL.
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, 1947.
TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT) ORDER, 1950.

<p>To Messrs. Unwins (York) Ltd., per Messrs. Hunter, Stoker & Mellor, 5, Minster Yard, YORK.</p>	<p>Decision No. C/ 393</p> <p>Application No. 2916</p>
--	--

Permission for development subject to conditions.

The Council as Local Planning Authority **Hereby Permit**

the erection of a garage and service depot

at **Piccadilly, York**

as proposed in the above-numbered application, subject to the conditions specified hereunder :—

1. Particulars of the type of facing brick to be used on the front elevation shall be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority.
2. The lettering on the face of the building shall be in Roman or modern block type, in a size proportionate to the background, and details of this lettering shall be submitted for the approval of the Local Planning Authority.

The reasons for the Council's decision to grant permission for the development, subject to compliance with the conditions hereinbefore specified are :—

So that the most satisfactory treatment of the elevation may be obtained, having regard to the prominent position which this building will occupy.

Dated the **15th** day of **March** 19**55**.


City Planning Officer.

NOTES.

(1) This permission only authorises development under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, and does not relieve the applicant of the responsibility of obtaining any permission or approval that may be required under the byelaws or general statutory provisions in force in the district.

BOARD OF TRADE

2/62/55

Form IDC/3
(Revised 8/55)

I & L.6 Division

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATE

Given by the Board of Trade pursuant to Section 14(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947.

Whereas Unwins (York) Ltd.,
of Piccadilly, York,
has/have notified the Board of Trade of an intention to make an application to the
York Corporation
for permission to develop land within York C.B.

by the erection thereon of an industrial building or buildings of the class and size specified in the Schedule hereto.

Now therefore the Board of Trade, pursuant to Section 14(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, hereby certify that the development in question can be carried out consistently with the proper distribution of industry; provided that this certificate shall be valid only if the said application is made not later than the
Thirty-first day of March 19 56

Dated this Eighteenth day of March 19 55

[Signature]
Regional Controller, 1

Authorised by the President of the Board of Trade
in that behalf

SCHEDULE (Class and Size of Building)

An industrial building for the servicing and sale of motor vehicles.
Twenty nine thousand nine hundred square feet.

- NOTES
1. Attention is drawn to the Town and Country Planning (Erection of Industrial Buildings) Regulations 1949, S.I. 1949 No. 1025 which prescribe the classes of industrial buildings in respect of which an Industrial Development Certificate is required.
 2. The application to the local planning authority must be accompanied by this certificate and is of no effect without it. The decision whether or not to permit the development described in the application to that authority will rest with them.
 3. This certificate carries with it no commitment that any authority or licence to carry out the work, which may be required under Regulation 56A, of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, will be granted.

FS 5013/2/4640 Em 11/53 DL

