



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

SITE	St Andrew's Old Church, Chantry Lane, Bishopthorpe YO23 2QF		
CLIENT NAME	CAPITA AECOM		
YAT PROJECT #	6112	YAT REPORT #	2019/145
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	SE 5973 4772
PLANNING REFERENCE #	Pre-planning	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

INTRODUCTION

Two test pits were carried out by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of CAPITA AECOM on the 25th September 2019 at St Andrew's Old Church, Chantry Lane, Bishopthorpe YO23 2QF, NGR SE 5973 4772 (Figure 1). The principal aims of the test pits were to assess the extent of St Andrew's Churchyard and the potential for human remains and to characterise any archaeological deposits at eastern end of Chantry Lane, Bishopthorpe on the west bank of the River Ouse, as part of the Environment Agency York Flood Alleviation Scheme work in Bishopthorpe Flood Cell – C1.

METHODOLOGY

The works comprised two 1m x 1m trenches, in the locations shown in Figure 2. These were positioned as close as possible to the locations provided by the client but had to be moved slightly to avoid obstructions on site. These were excavated by hand, using a non-conductible shovel down to a depth of 510mm and 750mm in TP1 (Test Pit 1) and TP2 (Test Pit 2) respectively.

The areas of the two trial pits were cat-scanned prior to excavation. The scan identified an electric cable on the west side of the lamp post immediately west of TP2. No utilities were identified in the locations of the test pits. However, upon excavation of TP2, there was at least one electric cable encountered approximately 300mm BGL and a possible second. The reason the cat scan may not have picked these up may have been because they are linked to the lamp post and therefore would not have been live when the lamp was switched off.

Photographs of the test pits, recorded sections and general site shots were taken using a 12 megapixel digital camera.

Upon completion of excavation, a minimum of 1.00m representative section was recorded in both test pits outlying the deposit model. These were hand drawn at a scale of 1:10. A plan of TP2 was recorded at a scale of 1:20.

Each deposit has been assigned a context number to outline individual features present within the two test pits, for example, turf at the very top of TP1 has been assigned (C1000).

The trial pit locations were accurately plotted using fixed positions from the location plan provided by the client (Figure 2).

RESULTS

Test Pit 1 (Plates 1 & 2) (Figure 2 & 3)

TP1 was located on the grass verge to the north east of the driveway leading into The Chantry property.

The earliest deposit in this test pit was a compact, light yellowish-brown sandy gravel (C1004) at

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FINDS	0	SAMPLES	0	PHOTOS	33
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0.51m BGL (Below Ground Level). This material is interpreted as naturally deposited and given the location close to the west bank of the River Ouse this material is most likely alluvial deposition. Context 1004 was overlain by a loose mid orangish-brown gravelly sand subsoil (1003) and remnants of loose dark brownish-grey sandy silt topsoil (C1002) capped by modern landscaping associated with the extant roadside grass verge (C1000 & C1001).

Test Pit 2 (Plates 3 & 4) (Figure 2, 4 & 5)

TP2 was situated on the north side of Chantry Lane immediately east of the lantern lamp post, this was the final lamp post before reaching the entrance to the public footpath surrounding the grounds of St Andrew's Old Church further east.

In this test pit the earliest deposit encountered was a firm, light orange-brown silty sand (C2006) with occasional small rounded cobbles at 610mm BGL, and like Context 1004 in Test Pit 1, this is interpreted as natural deposition. Context 2006 was overlain by a firm mid yellowish-greyish brown sandy silt subsoil (C2005). This was truncated by the cutting for a utility trench (C2004) which was, in turn, backfilled by a compacted dark brownish-grey sandy silt (C2003). There appeared to be a layer of compact, mid-brownish grey sandy silt topsoil/turf, possibly the remains of a previous grass verge which was stratigraphically later than the backfill of the utility trench (C2003/2004) which had been truncated by a later utility trench (C2002) and its subsequent backfill (C2001) which most probably supply the lantern lamp post.

From the backfills of the two utility trenches (C2003 & C2001) a large quantity of ceramic building material fragments and pot sherds were recovered. The dates of these ranged from medieval to modern and included medieval roof tile fragments and green glaze pot dating from the 13th – 16th centuries.

CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this trial pit investigation was to assess whether there was the presence of graves beyond the extant boundary of the St Andrew's Old Church cemetery. The evidence from the two trial pits confirms there were no in-situ skeletal or coffin remains and no evidence of grave cuts in this area, nor was there any evidence of disarticulated remains disturbed by later activity. Finds from the backfills of the utility trenches suggest a continued occupation in the area from at least the 13th–16th century, but the origins of these finds are unknown as they are evidently highly residual being from modern utility trench backfills.

No features of archaeological significance were discovered during the course of these works. However, this investigation demonstrates that probable alluvial deposits are at a depth of around 500–600mm below present ground level. If this material is indeed alluvial in origin, it is most likely that its deposition pre-dates the medieval church given that the current course of the river is east of the church. The church is likely to also be built upon similar deposits laid down gradually by the changing course of the river. Any future archaeological investigation in this area should aim to gain a better understanding of the geomorphology of this landscape and ascertain whether there is any evidence for prehistoric activity on this river bank that could be concealed beneath later alluvial deposition.

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Plate 1 West facing section of TP1. Scale unit 100mm



Plate 2 South-facing section of TP2. Scale unit 100mm

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Plate 3 East facing section of TP2. Scale unit 100mm



Plate 4 Working shot of Trial Pit 1

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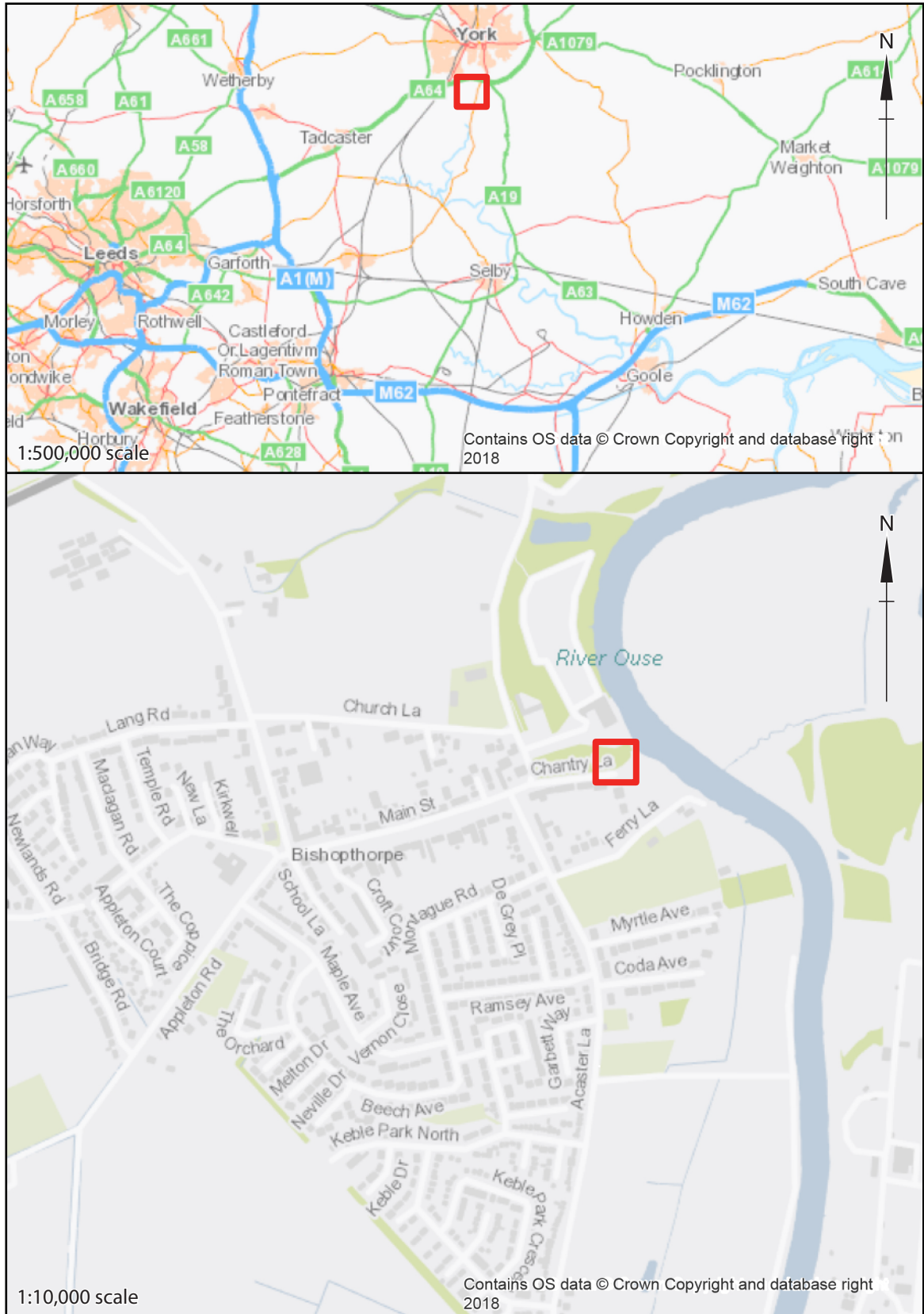


Fig. 1 Site Location



KEY:
 Trial Pit Location - 1m x 1m Approx
 Flood Cell C1

0 50 Metres

Client: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
 Project: YORK FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

Title: FIGURE 1
 INDICATIVE LOCATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL PITS,
 CHANTRY LANE, FLOOD CELL C1 BISHOPTHORPE.

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Drawn: GB	Checked: DA
Verified: DA	Approved: CL
Date: AUGUST 2019	Scale at A3: 1:650
Drawing Number: Y5YP_190816_AR_IN_C1_002_V1	A3

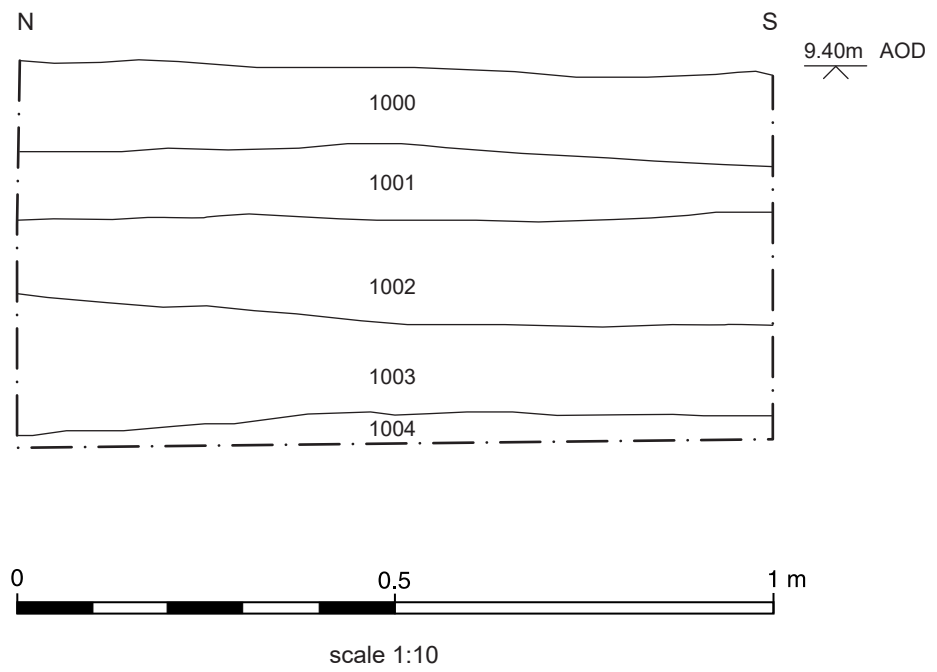


Figure 3. West Facing representative section of TP1

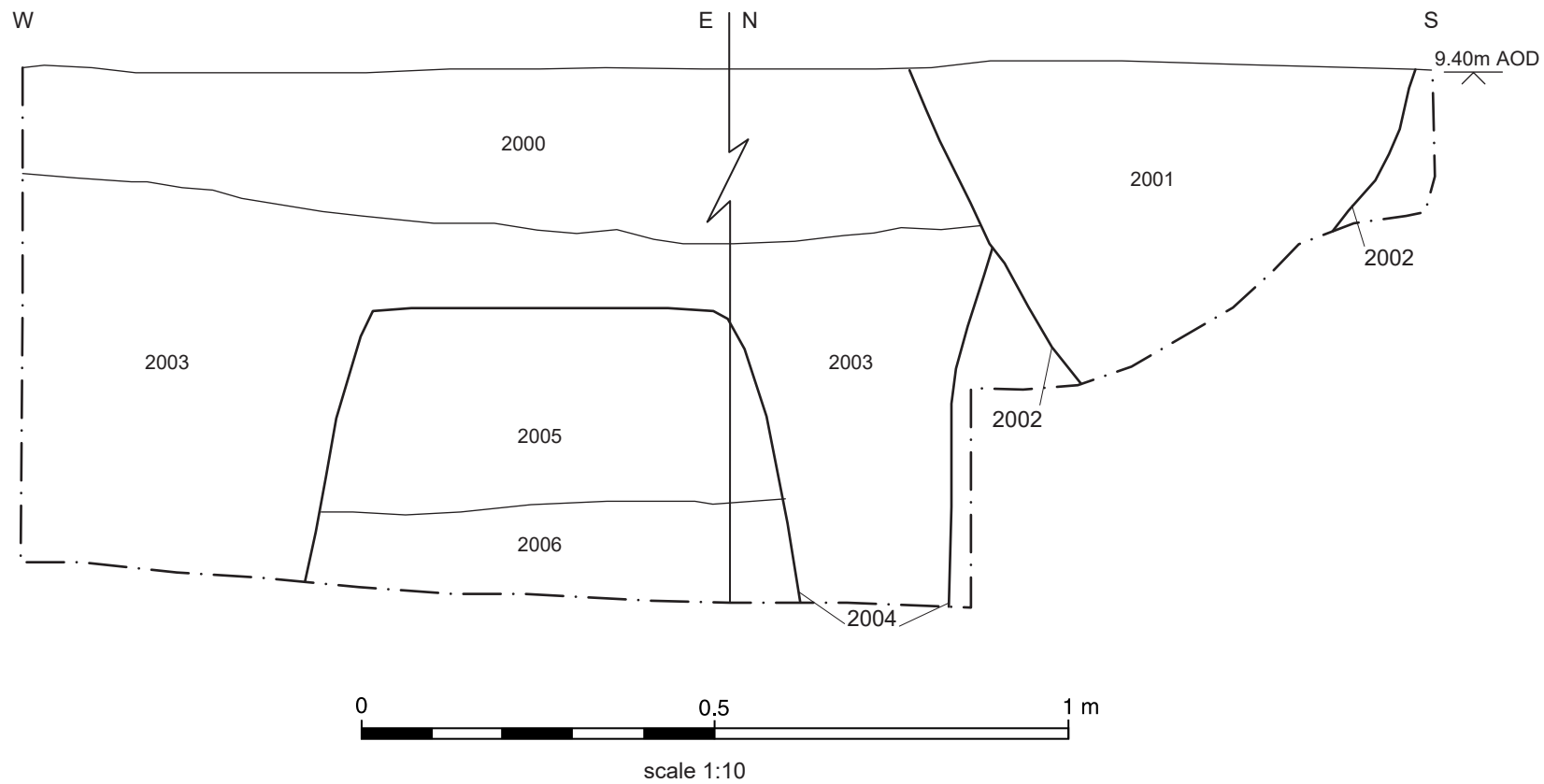


Figure 4. Representative section of TP2.

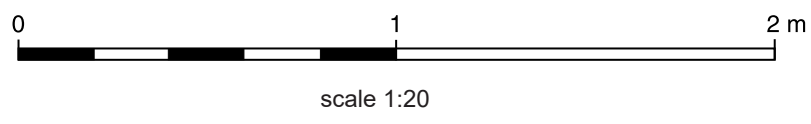
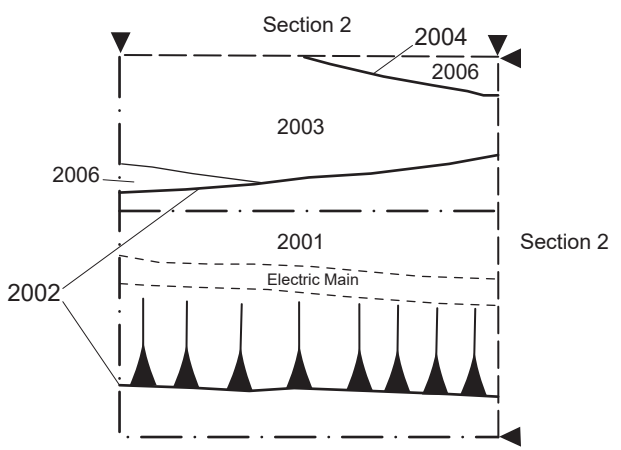


Figure 5. Plan of TP2.