



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE	English Martyrs Church, Dalton Terrace, York		
CLIENT NAME	Diocese of Middlesbrough		
YAT PROJECT #	5962	YAT REPORT #	2017/71
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	tbc	GRID REFERENCE	SE 59300 51140
PLANNING REFERENCE #	13/03595/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	N/A

Introduction

On the 19th of April 2017 York Archaeological Trust excavated, monitored and recorded two trial trenches in advance of a proposed scheme of development on land adjacent to English Martyrs Church, Dalton Terrace (Figure 1). An earlier evaluation on the plot, in October 2014, had found evidence for a medieval ditch, a cobble structure and medieval horticultural soils (YAT report 2014/49).

These trial trenches were excavated to provide better archaeological coverage of the overall development area, particularly with regard to the suspected possibility of surviving Roman burials being present. This would in turn better inform the development strategy. As no human remains (disarticulated or otherwise) were encountered in either of these trial trenches, or the evaluation trench excavated in October 2014, the potential for burials was assessed as being low.

An interim watching brief report was produced (YAT document no. 2017/48) containing a recommendation that the proposed service trench excavations be monitored in order to provide an opportunity to better define the medieval/post medieval ditch and cobbled structure that were seen during the evaluation in 2014.

Staff from York Archaeological Trust returned to the site on the 10th and 11th of July 2017 in order to monitor and record the excavation of these service trenches. The medieval/post medieval deposits identified during the 2014 evaluation were not visible in the service trench sections.

This report is an amalgamation of the original interim report on the two trial trenches and the findings of the service trench monitoring. This final report includes a figure showing the exact locations of the trenches.

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FINDS	None retained	SAMPLES	None	PHOTOS	41
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Trial Trench 1

Trial trench 1 was located at the south west end of the access ramp which itself was adjacent to the south east side of the English Martyrs Church Hall (Figure 1).



Plate 1: South-west facing section of trial trench 1

Trench 1 measured 1.9m in length, 1.2m in width and 1.1m in depth (Figure 2). Modern deposits including the current ground surface (C100), a makeup deposit (C101), a gas service trench (C107 and C108) and a succession of levelling deposits (C102 and C103) formed the upper 0.45m-0.55m of the trench section. These contexts overlay a 0.2m thick deposit of horticultural soil (C104) which appeared to be very similar in character to the horticultural deposit seen during the 2014 evaluation (Context 1003).

This horticultural soil overlay a heavily disturbed (possibly by root action) orangish brown clay (C105) which itself overlay an undisturbed firm orangish brown clay (C106). Both of these deposits are thought to be naturally occurring. The disturbed natural was encountered at a depth of 0.65m to 0.75m BGL (c.whilst the undisturbed natural deposits were encountered at a depth of 0.85m to 0.9m BGL.

No finds were recovered from trial trench 1.

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Trial Trench 2

Trial trench 2 was located on one of the proposed pile locations that will form the foundation for the north eastern wall of the proposed building (Figure 1).

Trench 2 measured 1.6m in length, 1.5m in width and 1.4m in depth (Figure 2).



Plate 2: North-west facing section of trial trench 2

The concrete pad (C200) that formed part of the demolished church hall was 100mm thick. It overlay demolition rubble within most of the trench but the north eastern side was formed of a brick wall foundation (C201 and C200). The 20th century demolition deposits extended to a depth of 0.57m BGL. They overlay a 0.43m to 0.6m thick deposit of horticultural soil (C203) which appeared to be very similar in character to the horticultural deposit seen during the 2014 evaluation (Context 1003). A small quantity of animal bone, ceramic building material (including a piece of Roman Imbex) and 12th century medieval gritty pottery was recovered from Context 203. This material was assessed to be of low research value and discarded.

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This horticultural soil overlay a heavily disturbed (possibly by root action) orangish brown clay (C204) which itself overlay an undisturbed firm orangish brown clay (C205). Both of these deposits are thought to be naturally occurring. The disturbed natural was encountered at a depth of 1.00m to 1.05m BGL whilst the undisturbed natural deposits were encountered at a depth of 1.12m to 1.22m BGL.

Service trench monitoring (10th and 11th of July)

The service trenches were comprised of a main drainage channel running on a north-west to south-east alignment with four separate channels running off of it towards the south east or east (Figure 1, Plate 3).



Plate 3: Service trenches viewed from the north-east

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The trenches were excavated to a depth of between 600mm and 800mm below ground level. The archaeological deposit sequence visible in their sections was identical to those identified in the trial trenches (a 20th century demolition material which overlay a horticultural soil which overlay the natural orangish brown clay). No context numbers were assigned to these deposits and no finds were recovered.

Conclusions

No significant archaeology was identified in either of the trial trenches or within the service trench excavations. The horticultural soil identified in both of the trial trenches appears to be the same as the horticultural soil identified during the evaluation. It appears that this land was been used throughout the medieval period for agricultural purposes.

The low quantity and quality of the residual Roman finds recovered from the deposits encountered on this site do not suggest that Roman burials were being disturbed by the medieval activity. It seems possible, therefore, that there were never any Roman burials within this plot of land. The alternative explanation is that an unidentified activity, possibly the establishment of civil wall fortifications in 1640, has completely removed any burials that were present prior to the agricultural activity. In either case the potential for human remains on this site now seems negligible.

Recommendations

No significant archaeological deposits have been disturbed by the development of this site and this watching brief was concluded with the agreement of the City of York Archaeologist. No further archaeological investigation is recommended with regard to this development.

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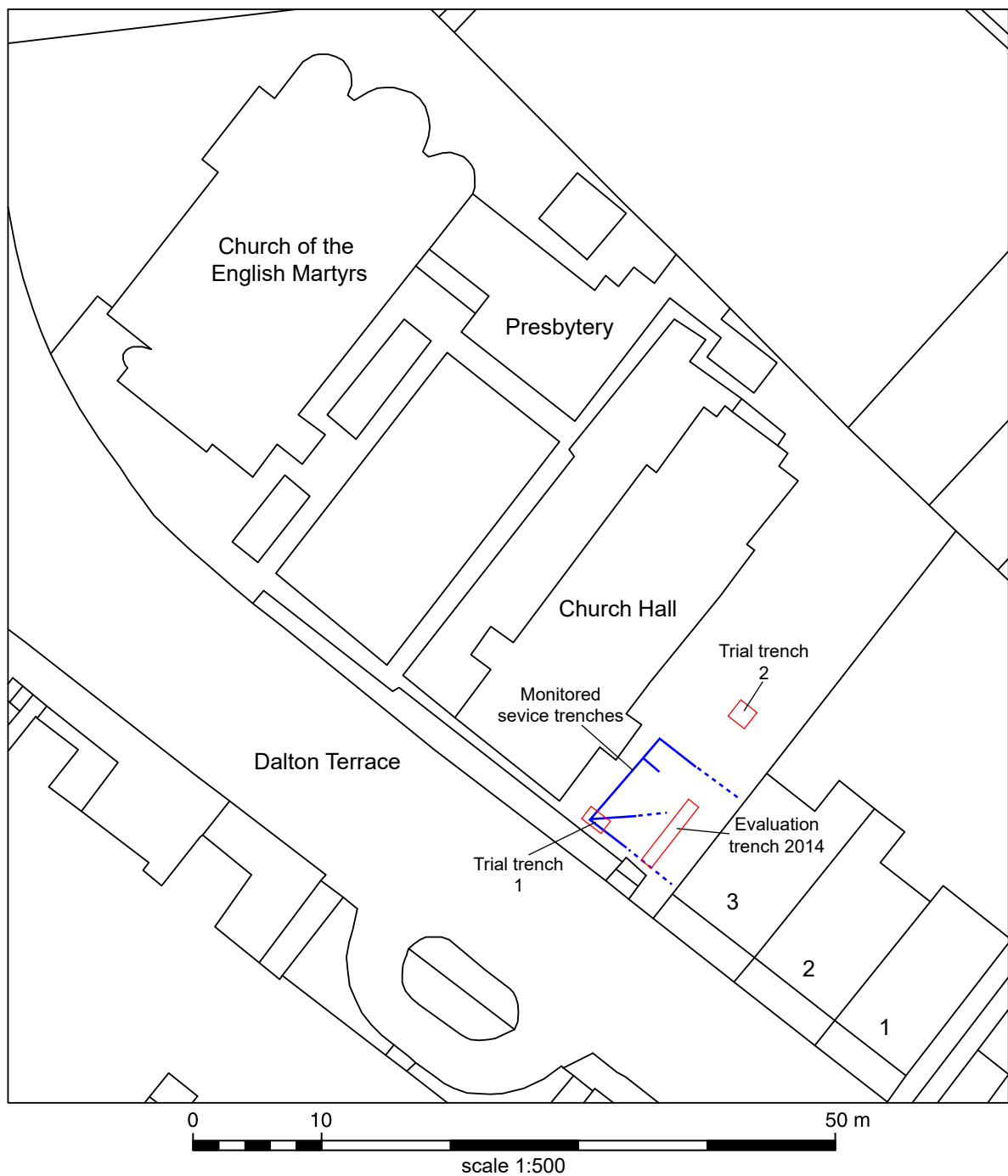
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Fig. 1 Site and trench locations

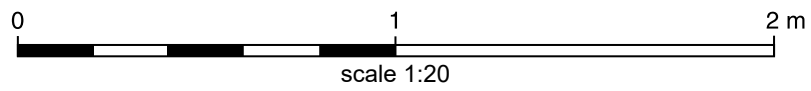
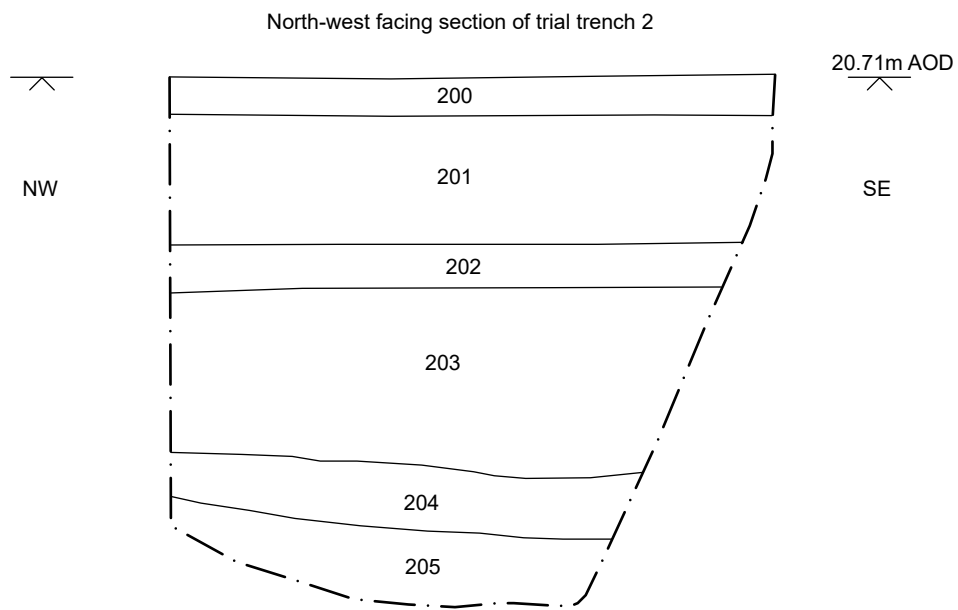
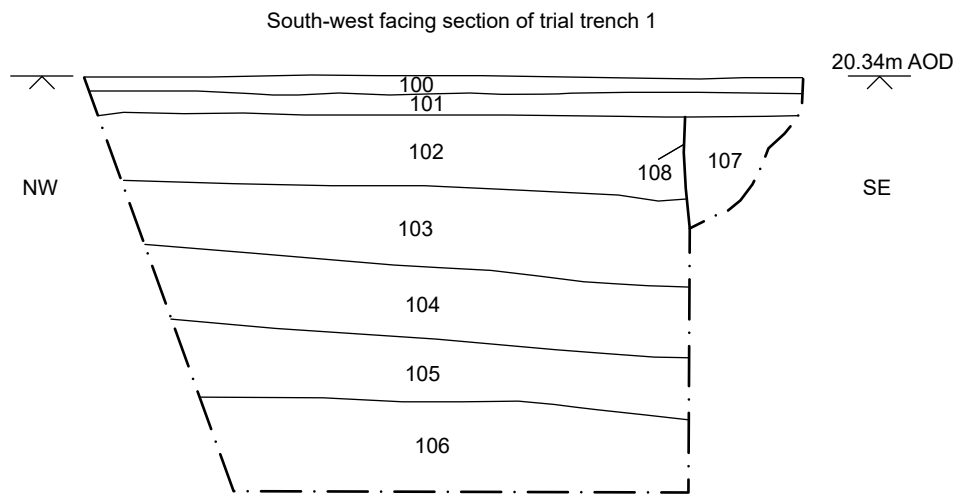


Fig. 2 Trench sections