



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE ADDRESS	Utility trench, Micklegate – George Hudson Street, York.		
CLIENT NAME	Morgan Est Plc		
YAT PROJECT #	5278	YAT REPORT #	2009/72
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	n/a	GRID REFERENCE	SE 6001 5170
PLANNING REFERENCE #	n/a	AAI OPS NOTICE #	09023

Between 14th September and 15th October 2009 York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief on utility works between the junction of George Street / Micklegate and the junction of Tanner Row and George Street, York (Figure 1). The objective was to record any deposits, features or buried structures exposed during the replacement of a gas main along the eastern side of George Hudson Street. A total of fourteen trenches (Figure 2) were observed although not all were recorded in detail. Most of the recorded or observed trenches lay within the road although three, Trenches 12 – 14, lay within the pavement on the west side of George Hudson Street. Most trenches were roughly rectangular and measured c.1m x 1.5m although there were some substantial variations in shape and size. After cutting out the tarmac initial excavation was by mini-digger although as the gas main, or any other known service, was approached excavation was normally by hand. The numbering sequence for the trenches and sections is that of York Archaeological Trust and begins in the road at the Micklegate / George Hudson Street junction and proceeds northwards along the east side of George Hudson Street before taking in the trenches, south to north, on the west side of the street. The sections recorded in detail are described below. Recording took the form of written notes and measured sketches supplemented with a number of colour digital photographs. The works were monitored on a regular basis and usually visited at least twice a day when excavation work was in progress.

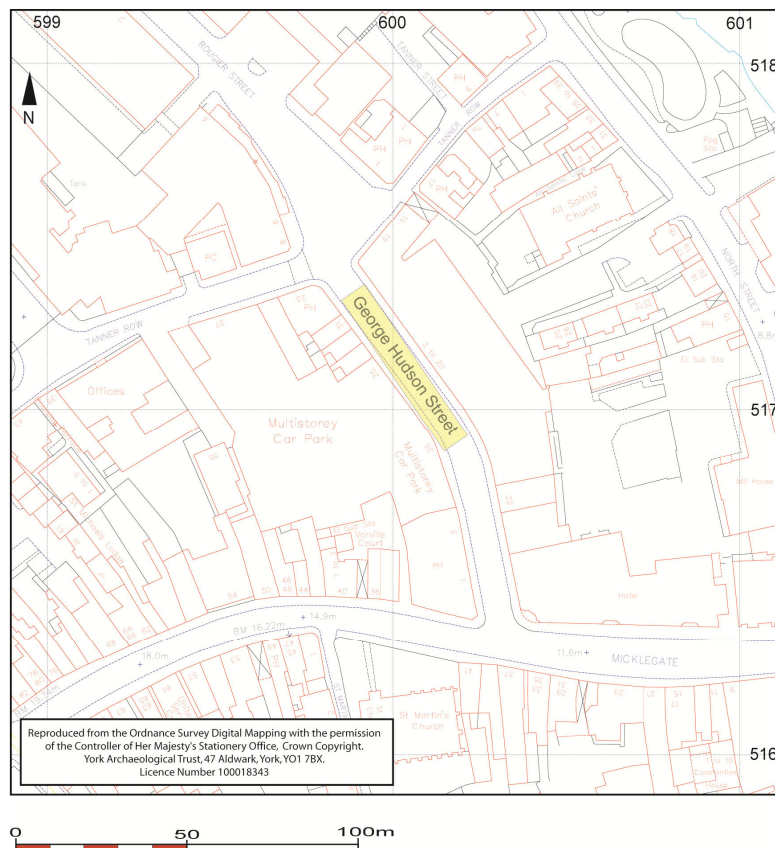


Figure 1 Location of George Hudson Street

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FINDS	No	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes
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York Archaeological Trust is a Registered Charity No. 509060



Registered Office:
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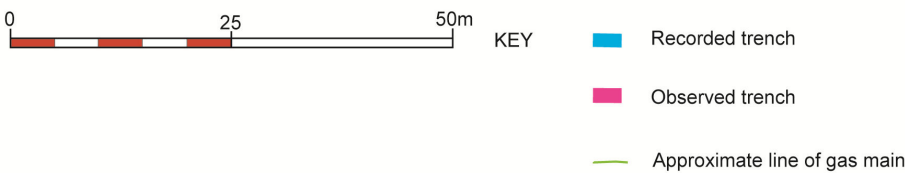
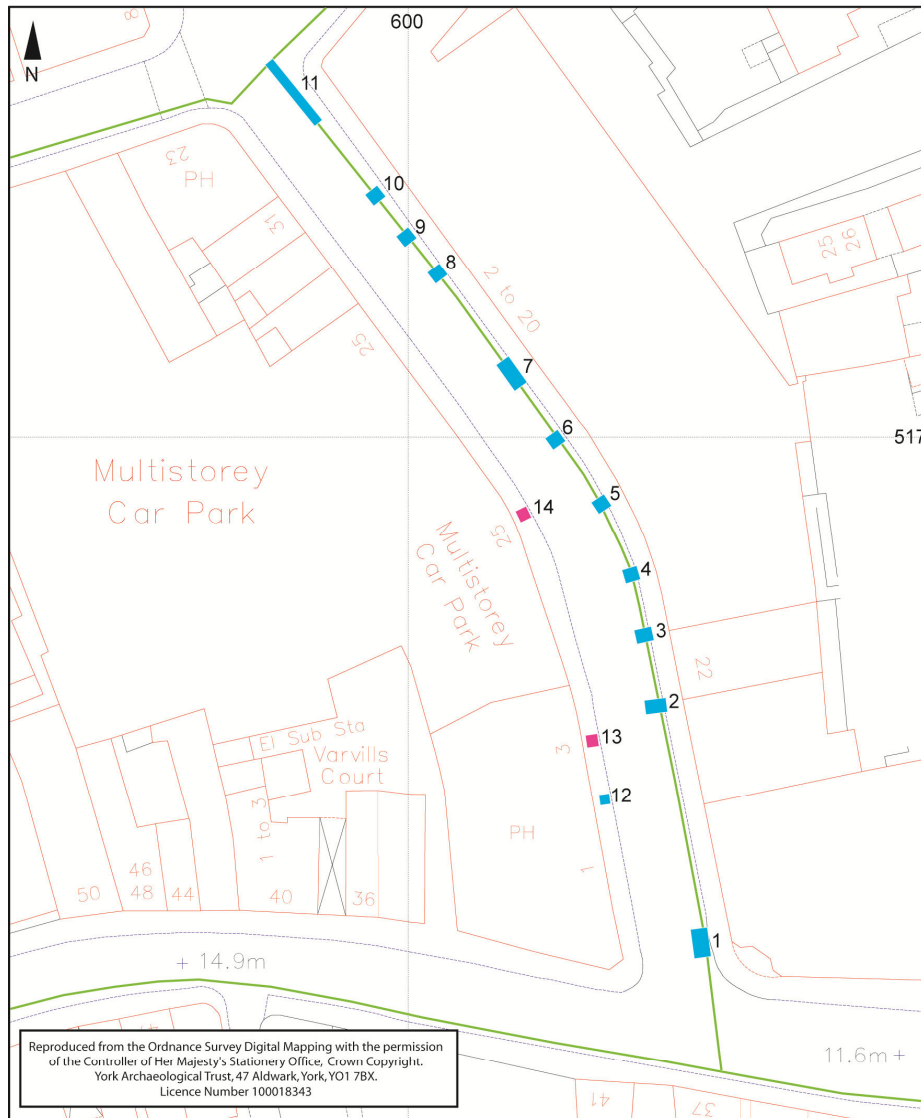


Figure 2 Location of observed and recorded trenches

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Section 1

This was recorded within Trench 1. All of the deposits (1000 – 1002) seen in this trench were believed to be modern levelling deposits below the modern road surface (1003). The earliest of these deposits (1000) was, however, notable in that it contained moderate quantities of worked, squared limestone blocks.



Plate 1 Limestone blocks in base of Trench 1, looking west

Section 2

This section was recorded along the east side of Trench 2. In the south-east corner of the trench was a stub of limestone wall (1004). The width was uncertain but the wall was at least 0.5m long and 0.8m high, the top being c.0.4m below the modern ground level. It was aligned approximately north-south, bonded with a soft brown mortar and appeared to contain no brick. Seen butting this wall, between 0.8m and at least 1.2m below ground level (BGL), was a dark greyish-brown slightly clayey silt with moderate white / pale brown mortar and occasional charcoal flecks (1005). This was sealed by a 0.4m deep layer of mid brown very slightly clayey silt with moderate flecks of brick / tile and pale brown mortar (1006). Both may have been disturbed build-up deposits. Sealing Contexts 1004 and 1006 were modern levelling deposits (1007 and 1008) and above this the modern tarmac road surface (1009).

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Plate 2 Limestone wall in Trench 2, looking east

Section 3

The south side of Trench 3 was recorded for this section. The lowest deposit, seen between 0.4m and at least 0.7m BGL, was a dark greyish-brown silt with occasional pale brown mortar (1010), a possible build-up deposit. Overlying this were modern levelling deposits (1011 and 1012) below the modern road surface (1013).

Section 4

This section was located at the south end of Trench 4. Between 0.9m and at least 1.3m BGL there was a mid to dark greyish-brown slightly clayey silt with moderate pale brown mortar (1014) and above this a 0.35m deep layer of dark brownish-grey slightly clayey silt with moderate flecks of pale brown mortar and occasional charcoal (1015). Both of these may have possible build-up deposits. Above 1015 were modern levelling deposits (1016 and 1017) and the existing road surface of tarmac (1018).

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Section 5

This section was located along the west side of Trench 5. Between 0.5m and at least 0.8m BGL there was a very dark grey very slightly clayey silt with moderate flecks of charcoal and pale brown mortar (1019) and above this a 0.35m deep layer of dark greyish-brown slightly clayey silt with moderate brick / tile and flecks of pale brown mortar and occasional limestone fragments (1020). Contexts 1019 and 1020 may have been build-up deposits. Overlying 1020 was the make-up (1021) for the tarmac of the road surface (1022).

Section 6

This section was recorded at the south end of Trench 6. The earliest deposit, a possible build-up deposit seen between 0.5m and at least 0.8m BGL, was a dark greyish-brown very slightly clayey silt with occasional charcoal flecks (1023). Above this were probable or definite modern levelling deposits (1024 and 1025) and the tarmac road surface (1026).

Section 7

This section was at the north end of Trench 7. The earliest deposit, a possible build-up deposit, seen between 0.55m and at least 1.1m BGL, was a mid brown silt with occasional limestone fragments and pale brown mortar (1027). Above this were modern levelling deposits (1028 – 1030) and the road surface of tarmac (1031).

Section 8

The north end of Trench 8 was recorded for this section. All contexts within this trench were thought to be modern and comprised probable levelling deposits (1032 – 1036) and the tarmac road surface (1037).

Section 9

This section was located at the north end of Trench 9. The lowest deposit, recorded between 0.5m and at least 0.9m BGL, was a mid greyish-brown silt with occasional brick / tile (1038) which may have been a build-up deposit. Above it was a modern levelling deposit (1039) and the tarmac road surface (1040).

Section 10

The north end of Trench 10 was recorded for this section. The earliest deposit noted, a possible build-up deposit noted between 0.3m and at least 0.6m BGL, was a very dark brown very slightly clayey silt with moderate pale brown mortar and occasional brick / tile (1041). Sealing it were modern levelling deposits (1042 and 1043) and the road surface of tarmac (1044).

Section 11

This section was located towards the southern end of Trench 11. It was thought that all contexts within this trench were of modern origin and comprised mainly levelling deposits (1045 – 1048) overlain by the tarmac road surface (1049).

Section 12

The northern side of Trench 12 was recorded for this section. All deposits seen were definitely modern and consisted of levelling deposits (1050 and 1051) lying below the concrete slab paving (1052).

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Plate 3 General view of works in progress, looking south

Conclusions

Most of the trenches produced only modern deposits or possible disturbed build-up deposits of uncertain date. However, Trench 2 did contain a stub of limestone wall and Trench 1 squared blocks of limestone. It may well be the case that the blocks and the wall are derived from a medieval structure or structures demolished in order to widen the road, a practice well attested in York. Evidence for this has come from recent observations on the gas main replacement programme in North Street and Micklegate. It is therefore possible that significant archaeological remains survive in the vicinity away from areas of modern activity. Since the wall stub was left in-situ it can be concluded that the current works have done no significant damage to the archaeology of the area.

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