

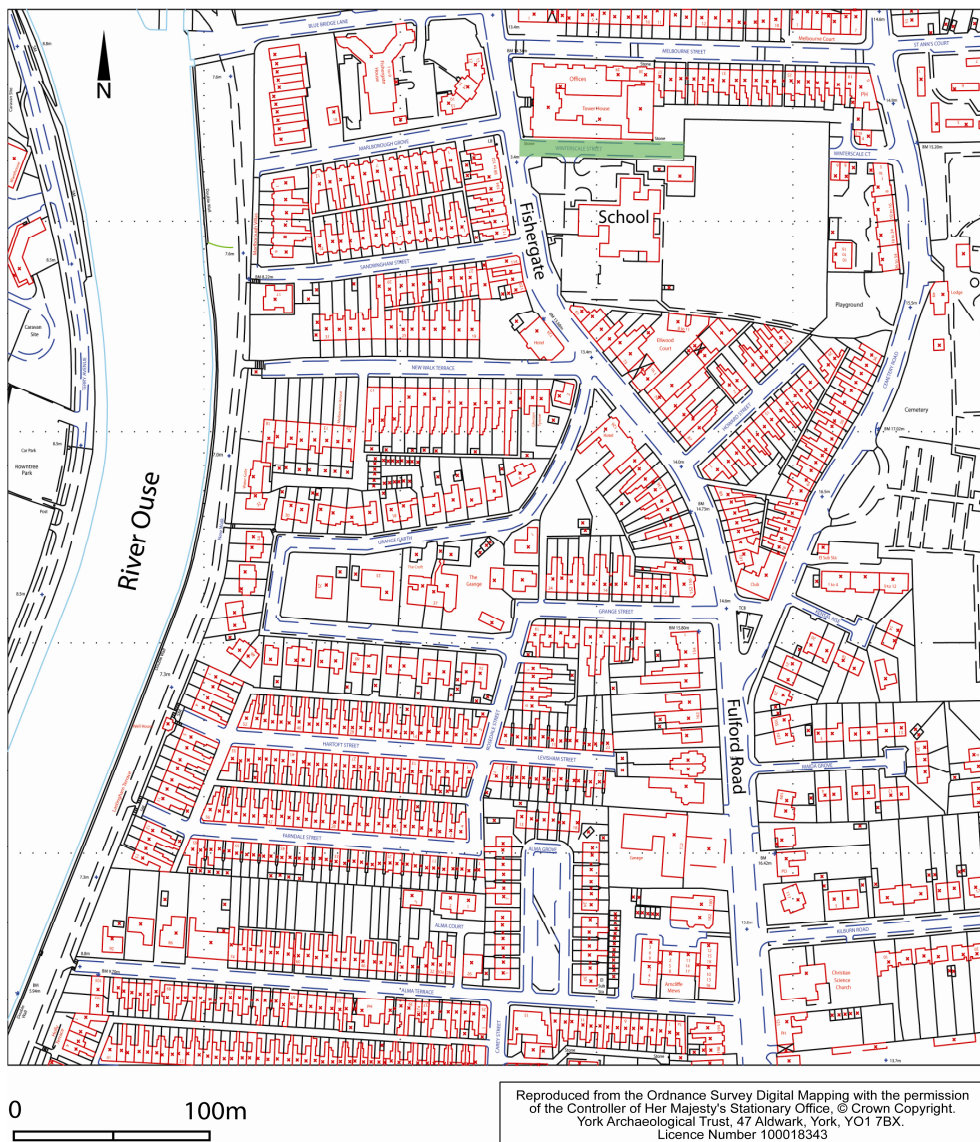


# YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

<b>SITE ADDRESS</b>	Utility trench, Winterscale Street, York		
<b>CLIENT NAME</b>	Morgan-Est		
<b>YAT PROJECT #</b>	5289	<b>YAT REPORT #</b>	2009/75
<b>MUSEUM ACCESSION #</b>	N/A	<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	SE 6080 5094
<b>PLANNING REFERENCE #</b>	N/A	<b>AAI OPS NOTICE #</b>	N/A

## Introduction

Between 29<sup>th</sup> October and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009 York Archaeological trust maintained an archaeological watching brief during the replacement of a gas main in Winterscale Street, York, (Figure 1, Site location map), (Figure 2, Works location plan). The watching brief was carried out on behalf of Morgan-Est, utility contractors. The street surface of cobbles that predates the existing tarmac was encountered in much of the trench. No other remains of archaeological significance were encountered.



**Figure 1** Site location, Winterscale Street highlighted green

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**Figure 2** Works location plan, trench highlighted green

### Methodology and nature of the works

Ground works for the new gas main were comprised of a trench, generally measuring around 0.5m wide and between 0.80m – 1.10m deep BGL (below surrounding ground level). The trench was excavated in three parts. Firstly that strip down the length of Winterscale Street and up to the school boundary, secondly, the short run of trench from the school boundary into the school grounds, and finally the extension of the trench from the west end of Winterscale Street into the middle of Fishergate. The Winterscale Street stretch of the trench was excavated entirely by machine whilst the two short stretches of trench were manually excavated.

The cutting of the trenches was archaeologically monitored. All archaeological recording was carried out in accordance with YAT standard practices, with scaled sections and detailed context descriptions being made and a series of photographs taken.

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**Plate 1** General view of trench along Winterscale Street, looking W

### Trench along Winterscale Street

A broadly similar sequence of deposits was encountered along the length of the Winterscale Street trench with relatively minor variations being noted. The lowest deposits encountered in the trench were light brown clayey sands of clean appearance and containing no material indicative of human disturbance, context 1001. This material, which is interpreted as natural drift, was seen to extend to heights of between 0.55m – 0.36m BGL. The putative natural was generally sealed by mid – dark brown, clayey silts and sandy clay silts, context 1002, this varying slightly along the length of the trench and was generally around 0.15m deep. Occasional flecks of charcoal, fragments of brick, flecks of mortar and pieces of stone were evident within this material. 1002 is does not represent a former topsoil, though it could conceivably represent a disturbed sub-soil. In places along the trench the natural deposits were sealed by a darker and slightly more clayey deposit, context 1003, that in some areas contained substantial quantities of 19<sup>th</sup> century brick rubble together with lesser quantities of stone and mortar. This made ground may represent attempts at levelling prior to the laying of a street surface. Along much of the trench contexts 1002 and 1003 were sealed by a layer of orangish yellow, compact, gravelly sand, typically in the region of 0.04 – 0.10m thick and whose upper horizon was typically around 0.25 – 0.20m BGL. The purpose of 1003 was to act as a firm levelling off of the ground surface to facilitate the laying of a layer of cobbles, generally 1 – 2 cobbles deep, set within a matrix of firm, dark brown, clayey silt, context 1004. This cobble layer formed the street surface of Winterscale Street until its replacement with a surface of tarmac. The presence of 19<sup>th</sup> century brick below this metalling indicates a fairly late date, perhaps at the time of the laying out of Winterscale Street itself. The uppermost deposit within the trench was the extant road surface of tarmac, generally around 0.08m thick.

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**Plate 2** Trench section at east end of Winterscale Street, looking E



**Plate 3** Trench section along central part of trench, looking S

### Trench extending from Winterscale Street into Fishergate.

The Fishergate part of the trench, which extended into the central part of the road to connect with the gas main, was composed of a deposit sequence that bore distinct differences from that part within Winterscale Street. At the base of the trench the upper part of the old gas main was seen to

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be an iron pipe, context 2001. Around and above this (extending to an upper height of some 0.47m BGL) was a very mixed deposit, context 2002. Seemingly comprised largely of re-deposited, brown, natural clays, this material contained quantities of stone, pebbles and brick fragments. The stratigraphic position of 2002, as well as its highly mixed characteristics, indicate this to be backfill of the trench excavated for the original gas main. Sealing this backfill was context 2003, a layer of concrete, generally around 0.35m – 0.38m deep. Context 1004 formed the bedding for the existing road surface of tarmac, context 2004, that was generally around 0.12m in thickness. The absence of a former street surface of cobbles in the Fishergate part of the trench, which stands in contrast to that in Winterscale Street, is owed to the depth of road foundation material in Fishergate, this of course being necessitated by the volume and weight of vehicles using the busy Fishergate route.



**Plate 4** Trench section along part of trench into Fishergate, looking S

### Trench in school grounds

This stretch of trench extended from the boundary wall of the school on Winterscale Street and extended some 3.5m into the school grounds and had a depth of some 1.10m BGL. This area of the grounds is laid to grass. The lowest 0.80m of deposit visible in the section of the trench was essentially a rubbly topsoil, context 3001. Being composed predominantly of a dark greyish brown, sandy clay silt, this material contained significant quantities of brick rubble, stones, pebbles, mortar flecks and some clinker. A single sherd of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery and a fragment of bottle glass were observed in the upper parts of this context. No significant layering within this material was evident. Sealing 3001 was context 3002, a dark greyish brown, sandy clay silt topsoil, generally around 0.30m deep, that supports the extant turf-line.

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**Plate 5** Southern end of the trench within the school grounds, looking W

### Conclusions

Few archaeological remains were observed during the watching brief. Along Winterscale Street the street surface of cobbles that predates the existing tarmac was encountered in much of the trench. Any topsoil at the site appears to have been stripped, and the area levelled off with various deposits prior to laying out of the road surface. In that part of the trench that extended into Fishergate all deposits had been removed by modern road surfaces and their makeup fully down to the level of natural deposits. In that part of the trench within the school grounds a considerable depth of modern materials were revealed. No other remains of archaeological significance were encountered.

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