



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE ADDRESS	Land to rear of Festival Flats, Fishergate, York		
CLIENT NAME	City of York Council		
YAT PROJECT #	5424	YAT REPORT #	2010/92
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	YORYM: 2010.785	GRID REFERENCE	SE 6073 5122
PLANNING REFERENCE #	n/a	AAI OPS NOTICE #	n/a

INTRODUCTION

On 11th / 12th October 2010 York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief on land to the rear of the Festival Flats, Fishergate, York (Figure 1). The objective was to record any deposits, features or buried structures of archaeological significance exposed during the groundworks for provision of a new car parking area for residents of the flats. Following an archaeological evaluation of the site during which a small number of Roman and medieval features were identified within the site the proposed development was modified to allow for the preservation of at least 95% of the archaeology in-situ in line with City of York Council policy. The revised proposal included an overall strip of a depth of 0.25m across the site, the replacement of a low retaining wall around part of the site and the excavation of an inclined ramp leading up into the new car parking area from the current access road. A number of general observations were made during the work and a single specimen section recorded along the deepest part of the new access ramp (Figure 2). The recording took the form of written notes and measured sketches supplemented by a number of general and detailed colour digital photographs.

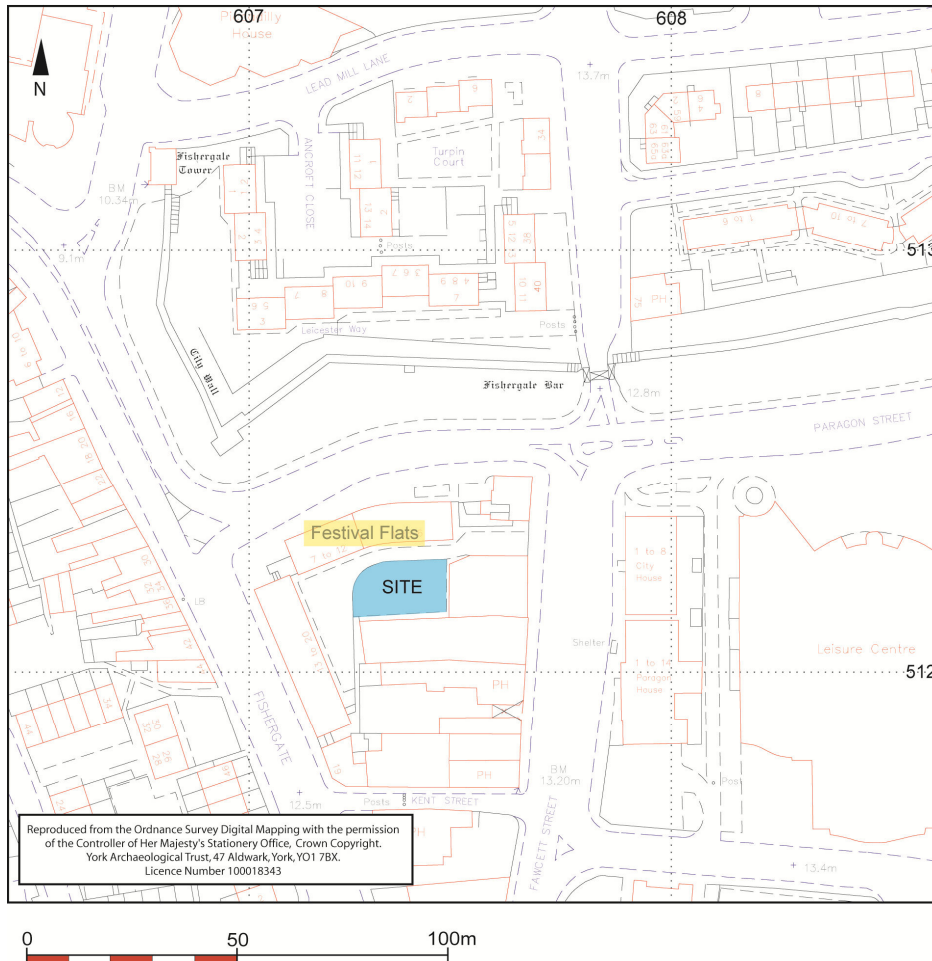


Figure 1 Location of site

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FINDS	No	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes
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RESULTS

During the general site strip (Plate 1), which involved the removal of the upper 0.25m of material, the earliest deposit seen was a very mixed dark grey slightly clayey cindery silt with frequent brick / tile and occasional mid brown sand (3000) which was broadly equivalent to Contexts 1003 and 2003 in the evaluation. Above this was a 0.15m deep layer of black cinders (3001). Over this was a 0.05m deep layer of pale grey cement (3002). Contexts 3001 and 3002 were equivalent to Contexts 1002 and 2002 in the evaluation. This formed the bedding for the modern surface of concrete slabs (3003). Context 3003 was equivalent to Contexts 1001 and 2001 in the evaluation.

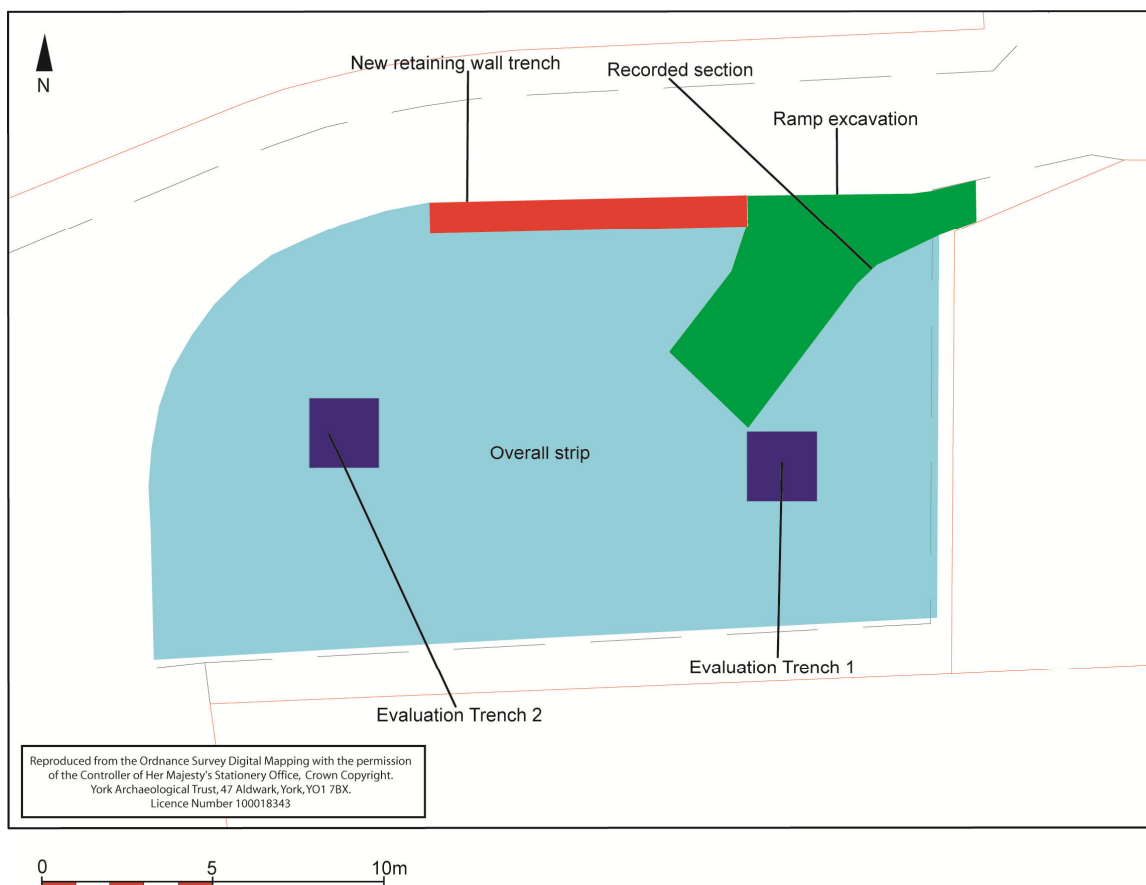


Figure 2 Location of observed areas and recorded section

During the removal of the raised area retaining wall the earliest deposit noted was a firm, mid orange-brown clay (3004) equivalent to Contexts 1014 and 2022 in the evaluation. This was only seen at the east end of the trench left by the removal of the wall. The western half of the trench base was covered with medium brick rubble (3005) which appeared to extend below the existing tarmac access road (3006) forming its make-up (Plate 2). The only other context seen during this phase of the work was the retaining wall and its foundations of reinforced concrete (3007).

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A section was recorded along the eastern end of the north-west facing part of the new access ramp. Here the earliest deposit recorded, at 0.8m and lower, was a mid orange-brown clayey sand (3008) which was believed to be natural and equivalent to Contexts 1014 and 2022 in the evaluation. Overlying it was a 0.2m deep mixture of mid brownish-grey clayey silt and mid orange slightly clayey sand (3009). This was probably equivalent to Context 2021 in the evaluation. Sealing this was a 0.25m deep layer of mid brownish-grey clayey silt (3010) probably to be equated with Contexts 1003 and 2003 in the evaluation. Overlying this was a 0.1m deep deposit of dark grey slightly clayey silt with frequent brick / tile and occasional mid brown sand also broadly equivalent to Contexts 1003 and 2003. Sealing it was a 0.15m deep deposit of cinders (3011) partly equivalent to Context 1002 and 2002). Above this was a 0.05m deep layer of pale grey cement (3012), also partly equivalent to Contexts 1002 and 2002, and this formed the bedding for the modern surface of concrete slabs (3013) seen elsewhere as Contexts 1001, 2001 and 3003.



Plate 1 Site after overall strip, looking east

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Plate 2 Base of new retaining wall trench, looking west



Plate 3 West and central parts of site after stoning up, looking west

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CONCLUSIONS

During these works no finds were recovered. Due to a redesign of the construction of the new car parking area the only area where it was considered likely that any significant archaeology might be encountered was towards the base of the new ramp but examination of this area when exposed revealed that modern drains had removed most of any archaeology that may have been present. No features were observed here or elsewhere and the overall strip did not fully penetrate clearly modern deposits. A small amount of the medieval agricultural soil was removed during the excavation of the ramp but other than this it is not believed that archaeological deposits or features of any great significance were disturbed and features such as those recorded in the evaluation remain buried below the new car park.



Plate 4 Modern drains in ramp excavation, looking south

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Plate 5 Detail of section along ramp excavation, looking south-east



General view of site prior to the works, looking west

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47 Aldwark, York YO1 7BX
Tel: 01904 663000 Fax: 01904 663024



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Plate 7 West end of site after overall strip, looking south-west

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