



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE ADDRESS	15 Monk Bar Court, York		
CLIENT NAME	Dossor Group		
YAT PROJECT #	5420	YAT REPORT #	2010/75
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	n/a	GRID REFERENCE	SE 6052 5225
PLANNING REFERENCE #	n/a	AAI OPS NOTICE #	10026

INTRODUCTION

On 12th August 2010 York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief on land at 15 Monk Bar Court, York (Figures 1 - 2). The objective was to record any deposits, features or buried structures of archaeological interest encountered during the drilling of a single borehole and the digging of two, later four, small test pits (Figure 3). The borehole was sunk using a small mobile tracked percussion rig and penetrated to a depth of c.6m below the existing ground surface. The test pits, located in a semi-basement a short distance to the north-west of the borehole, were each approximately 0.3m square and up to 0.45m deep and were dug to check the foundations of the walls making up the semi-basement. Due to restrictions of space the test pits were dug by hand. The recording took the form of written notes supplemented by digital photographs.

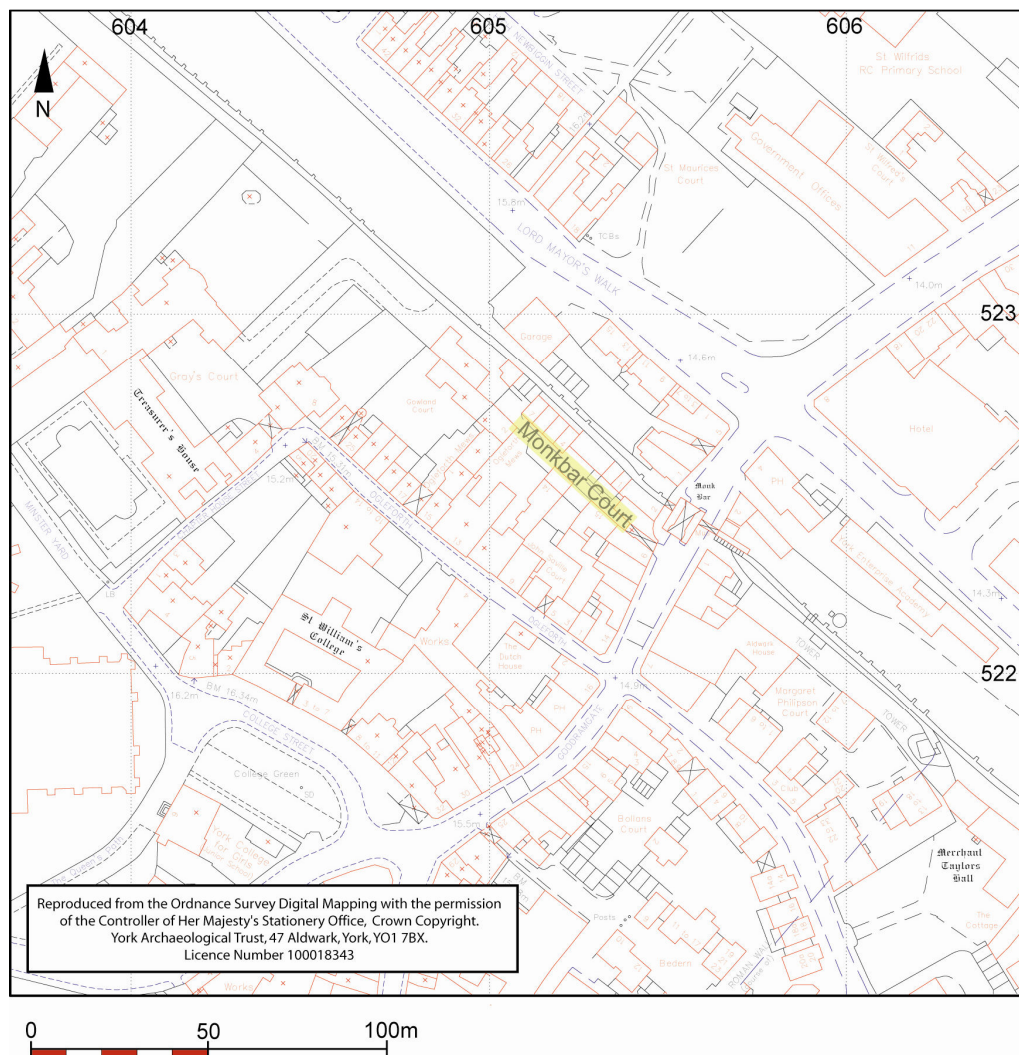


Figure 1 Location of Monk Bar Court

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FINDS	Yes	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes
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No. 509060



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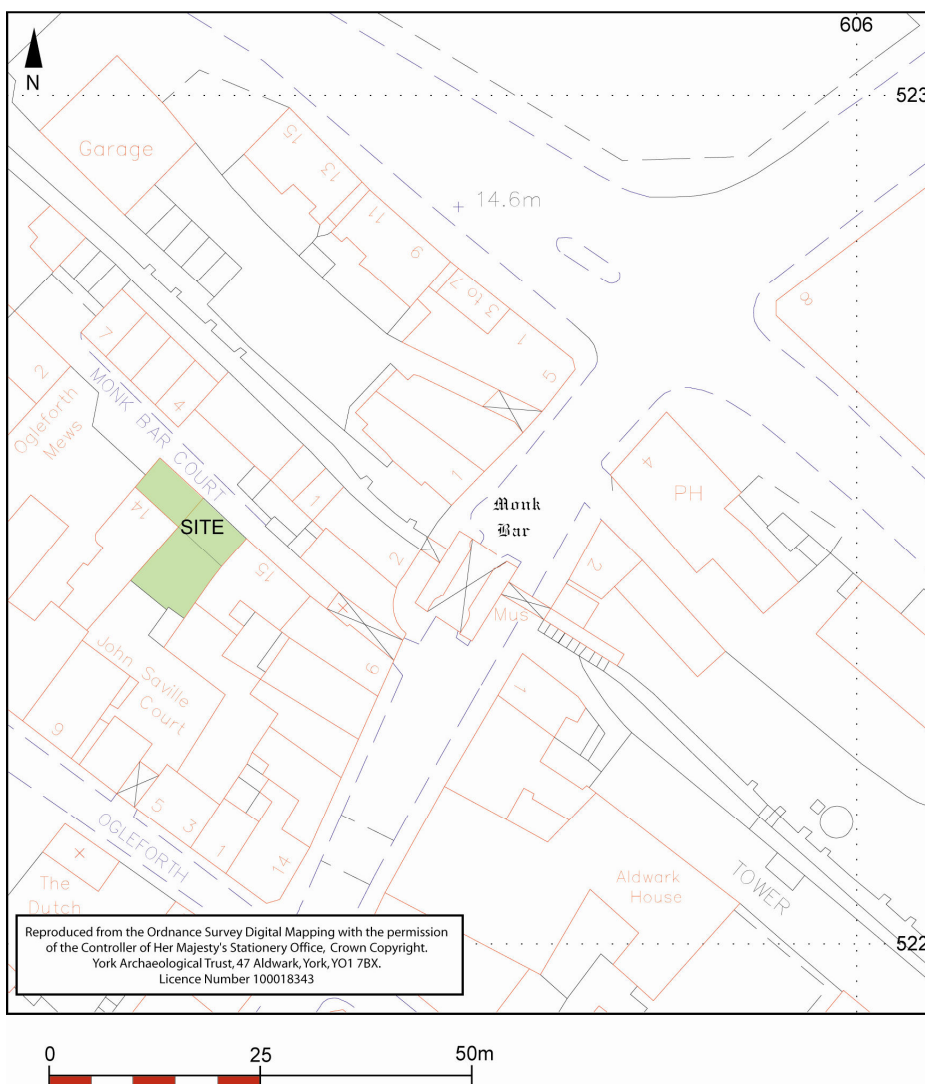


Figure 2 Location and extent of site

RESULTS

The earliest deposit recorded in the borehole, between 4.6m and 6m below ground level, was a mid orange-brown sandy clay (1000). Above this was a 0.9m deep layer of light grey, slightly greenish, clayey sand (1001). It was sealed by a 1.3m deep deposit of mid brown slightly clayey silt with occasional pale brown mortar (1002) and overlying this was a 0.4m deep layer of mid brown very slightly clayey silt with moderate mid brown mortar (1003). This was sealed by a 0.3m deep deposit of dark greyish-brown clayey silt with occasional charcoal. (1004) Above this was a 0.3m deep layer of dark brownish-grey slightly clayey silt with frequent limestone fragments, pale brown mortar and charcoal (1005). The uppermost 1.4m was a dark greyish-brown silt with frequent brick / tile and pale brown mortar (1006).

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Although there were small variations between the test pits all were broadly similar and just the sequence for Test Pit 3 is described in detail. The earliest deposit noted, between 0.3 and at least 0.35m below ground level, was a loose, white mortar (1007). It was sealed by a 0.1m deep mixture of mid brown and pale brown mortar with moderate limestone pieces (1008). Above this was the brickwork of the existing wall (1009) and butting this was the uppermost deposit, a mid brown silt with occasional brick / tile and white mortar (1010).

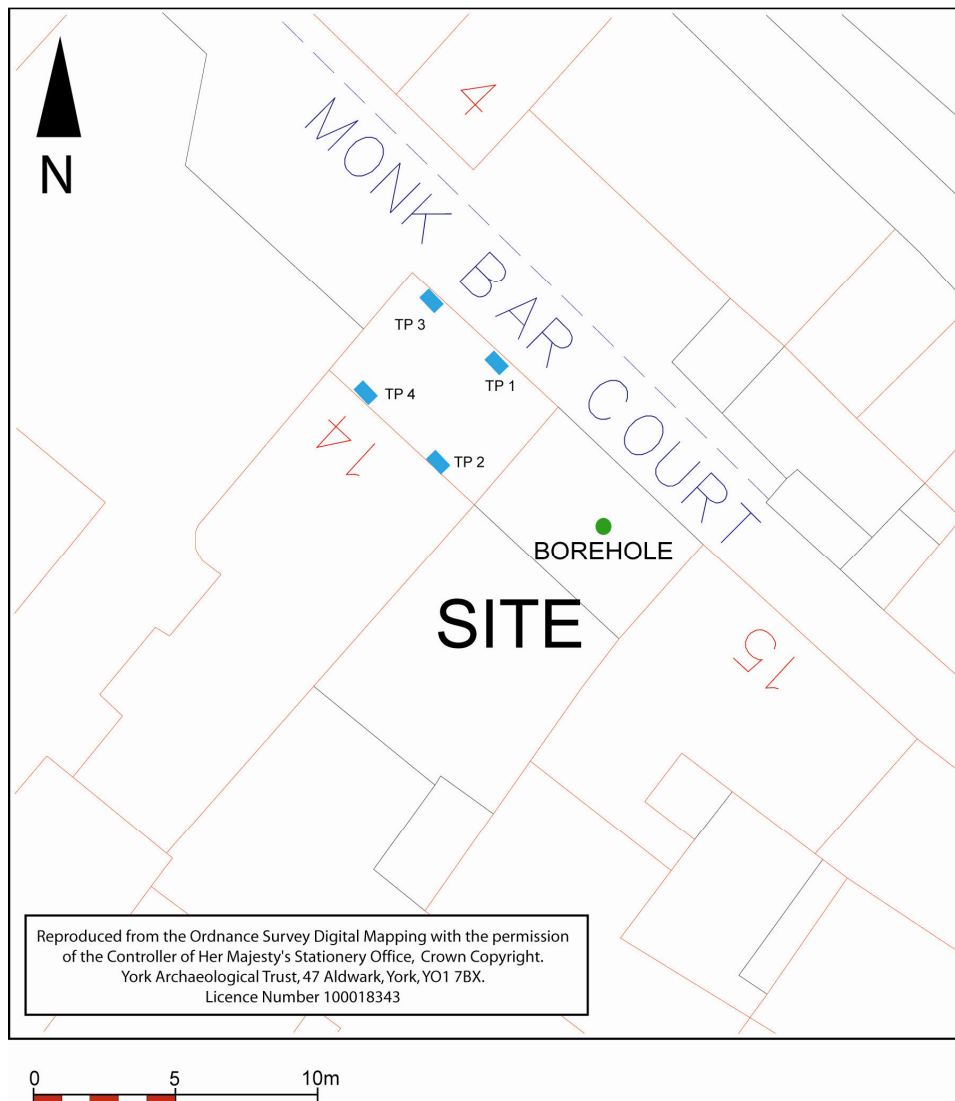


Figure 3 Location of test pits and borehole

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Plate 1 Material from drill core, looking south-east



Plate 2 Test Pit 1, looking north-east

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CONCLUSIONS

A quick inspection of the site showed that at the location of the borehole demolition material had been used to raise the ground level within a now demolished building by at least 1.4m. Below this Context 1005 may represent the remains of a floor within the demolished structure. Below this level the slightly clayey silts, Contexts 1002–4 almost certainly represent medieval build-up deposits, certainly a small fragment of 12th century gritty ware was recovered from Context 1002. The depth and nature of the clean clayey sand deposit indicates that this is almost certainly Roman stratigraphy. This directly overlay the natural clay which lay at a depth of 4.6m below the level of Monk Bar Court. The observed sequence matches quite well other sequences seen in the area and indicates that below modern and possibly post-medieval disturbance there are intact deposits of at least Roman and medieval date on the site. The observations of the test pits were less productive mainly due to their relatively shallow penetration into possibly disturbed material. It was, however, noted that the foundations of the walls being investigated were very variable in depth, those in Test Pit 2 coming to an end just 0.05m below the existing ground surface compared to 0.3m in Test Pit 4.



Plate 3 The borehole rig in action, looking south-east

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