



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE ADDRESS	The Black Swan Inn, 23 Peasholme Green, York		
CLIENT NAME	The Black Swan Inn		
YAT PROJECT #	5672	YAT REPORT #	2012/60
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	n/a	GRID REFERENCE	SE 6075 5194
PLANNING REFERENCE #	11/00824/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	n/a

INTRODUCTION

On 5th and 6th December 2012 York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief during works at the rear of the Black Swan Inn, Peasholme Green, York. The objective was to record any deposits, features or buried structures exposed during a topsoil strip and the excavation of a number of foundation trenches for a new single storey extension to the property. The site lies within the City of York Central Area of Archaeological Importance and immediately adjacent to the recent Haymarket excavation. Recording was by means of written notes and measured sketches supplemented by a number of colour digital photographs. Two representative sections were recorded and are described below.

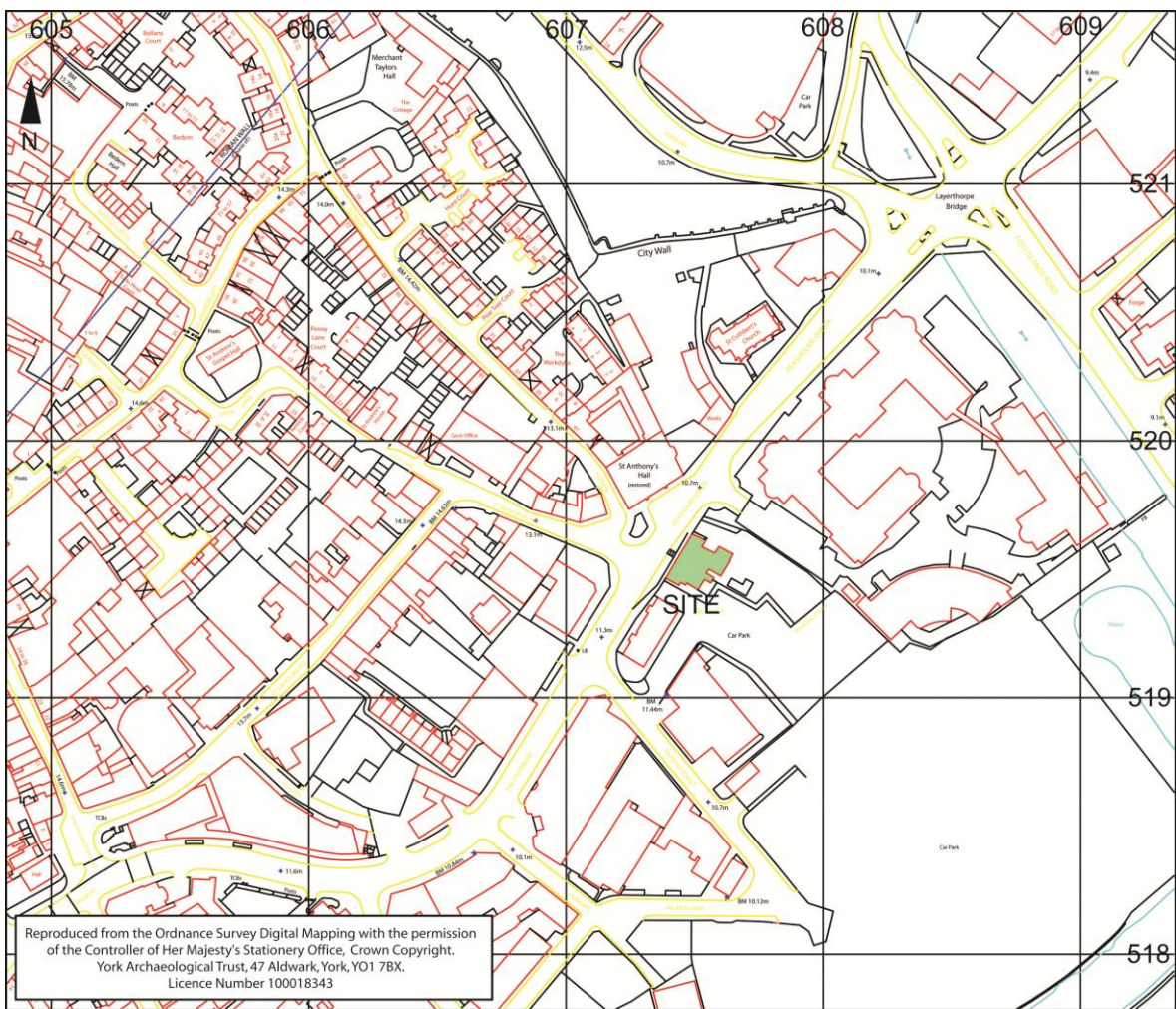


Figure 1 Location of the Black Swan Inn (highlighted in green)

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FINDS	No	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes
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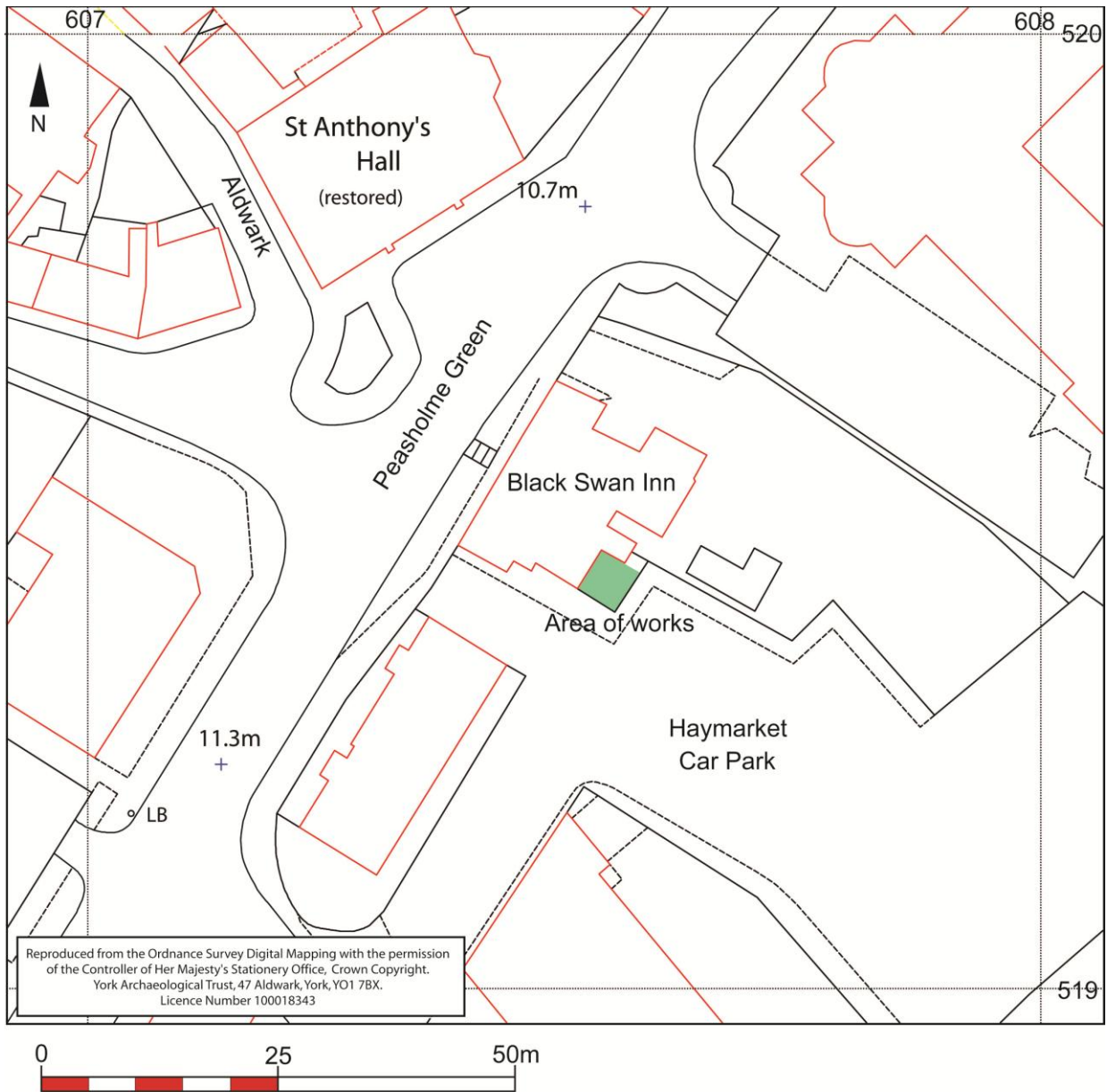


Figure 2 Location of works

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RESULTS

SECTION 1

In this section, in one of the foundation trenches and located towards the western corner of the extension footprint, the earliest deposit noted, between 0.9m below ground level and the base of the new foundation trench at 1m below ground level, was a firm, mid brown clay (1000). Overlying it was a 0.2m deep layer of dark greyish-brown very slightly clayey silt with occasional flecks of white mortar (1001) and above this was a 0.2m deep mixture of brick rubble and white / mid brown mortar (1002). This was sealed by a 0.15m deep layer of dark brown silt (1003). Overlying this was a thin, 0.05m deep, deposit of mid brown sand (1004) above which was the modern ground surface of dark brown silt with roots (1005).

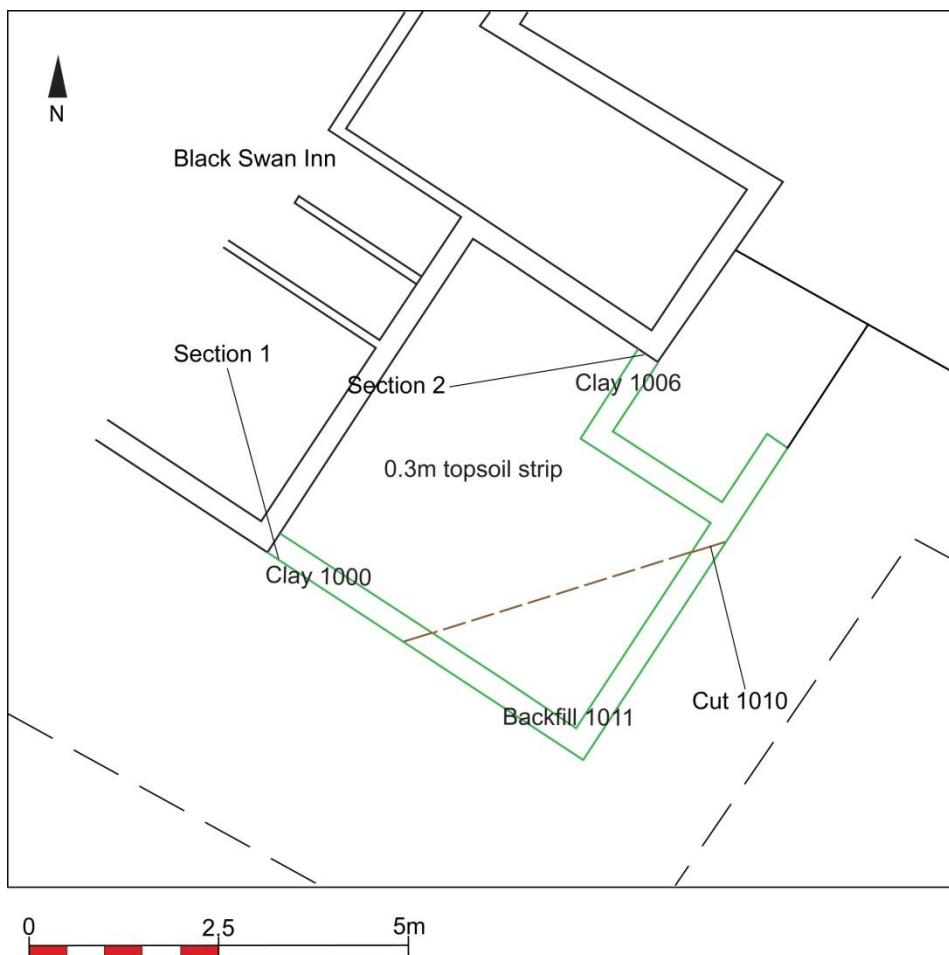


Figure 3 Location of recorded sections, new foundation trenches (green) and cut 1010 (solid brown observed - dashed brown conjectured)

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SECTION 2

This section was located approximately half way along the south-west facing side of the new building footprint. Here, the earliest deposit, between 0.5m and at least the base of the new foundation trench, was a firm, light to mid orange-brown clay (1006). Sealing this was a 0.3m deep layer of mid brown very slightly clayey silt with occasional charcoal and brick / tile (1007). Above this was a 0.1m deep deposit of very dark brown silt with occasional brick (1008). The uppermost context, forming the modern ground surface, was a concrete slab (1009).

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

The clay seen in Section 1 could be traced for c.2.5m before being truncated across the full width of the foundation trench. The clay in Section 2 could be traced to the south-west, then south-east and then again the south-west before also being truncated. If these truncations are part of part of the same feature then it would appear to be a substantial linear cut (1010). An unknown amount of it lay beyond the foundation trenches but it must have been at least c.1.75m across. Its profile is also uncertain but observations within the trenches suggested that the sides were moderately to steeply sloping. Only the uppermost backfill was seen and this was a dark greyish-brown very slightly clayey silt with occasional flecks of white mortar (1011).



Plate 1 General view of site, looking north-east

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Plate 2 Detail of south-east foundation trench showing cut 1010, looking south-east

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The clay seen in both sections (1000 and 1006) was unexpectedly shallow and although very clean may not be in-situ. It is possible that it was brought into the site as a levelling deposit to create a terrace on the slope down towards the River Foss. Such terracing has been attested in the vicinity previously and is thought to be of Roman date. So little of feature 1010 was seen it is impossible to be sure of its function. It could be a clay quarry pit or perhaps a large ditch. No finds were recovered from it so it was not possible to date it. All other contexts recorded were definitely or probably modern and since the groundworks only penetrated c.0.2m into parts of the upper backfill it is considered that little damage was done to the archaeological deposits of the immediate area.

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