



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE	31 The Shambles, York, Watching Brief		
CLIENT NAME	Northern Power Grid		
YAT PROJECT #	5844	YAT REPORT #	
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	N/A	GRID REFERENCE	460462,451853
PLANNING REFERENCE #	N/A	AAI OPS NOTICE #	15005

INTRODUCTION

On the evening of the 21st of April 2015, York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief at 31 The Shambles, York. The objective was to record any deposits, features or buried structures exposed during works associated with the installation of a new power cable servicing a recently renovated shop (31 The Shambles). The site lies within the City of York Central Area of Archaeological Importance.

The works involved the lifting of the flagged footpath surface and removal of makeup material prior to excavating the underlying deposits and exposing the armoured power cable. A trench measuring approximately 1m square was cut in to the current Shambles footpath, within this hole two armoured cables were found at a depth of approximately 450mm, overlying a water pipe observed at a depth of 650mm. An additional area of the footpath (approximately 0.3m by 0.6m with an additional slot measuring 0.6m by 0.4m) was lifted adjacent to the shop frontage to enable the new power cable to be run through a previously existing access point. This was situated approximately 750mm beneath the footpath level, immediately outside the shop door threshold (shop owner was on site to advise on the location of this).

These works were continuously monitored with recording by means of written notes and measured sketches supplemented by a number of colour digital photographs.

RESULTS

The lifting of the current flagged foot path (Context 100), revealed a layer of compacted sandy mortar make up material (Context 101). Beneath this material was a mixed friable, greyish brown, sandy silt (Context 102) containing frequent mortar flecks with occasional brick and tile fragments and stones (ranging in size from small to large). This material was excavated up to a maximum depth of c. 650mm within the c1m square hole in the footpath. Context 102 appeared to be a mixed deposit overlying several services including the active armoured cable (overlain by ceramic tiles), a second armoured power cable, a water pipe and a broken lead gas pipe. The separate service trench cuts were not visible in section due to the homogenous, mixed nature of their backfills. Extending approximately 0.15m from kerb edge was a friable, yellowish grey clayey sand (Context 103) that appears to relate to the kerbs construction. This deposit was only excavated to a depth c450mm and not investigated further once the cables were identified.

Within the smaller trench against the shop frontage wall, the footpath (Context 100) and make up (Context 101) were removed before revealing more of the mixed service trench backfill deposit (Context 101). This was excavated to a maximum depth of c750mm immediately adjacent to the shop threshold in order to identify the previously established access point for the power cable.

A section of the trench is provided on figure 1.

DISCUSSION

The works relating to the installation of a new power supply under part of the footpath on the Shambles have only disturbed deposits that were previously disturbed by 20th century service installation. The visible elements of the shops stone foundations were not damaged by the works as the previously established access for the power cable was tunnelled beneath them from within the building.

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FINDS	N/A	SAMPLES	N/A	PHOTOS	4
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Plate 1: View of trench showing exposed armoured cables at maximum extent of excavation.

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Plate 2: Exposed stone foundation of 31 The Shambles (cable access point beneath visible stone work).

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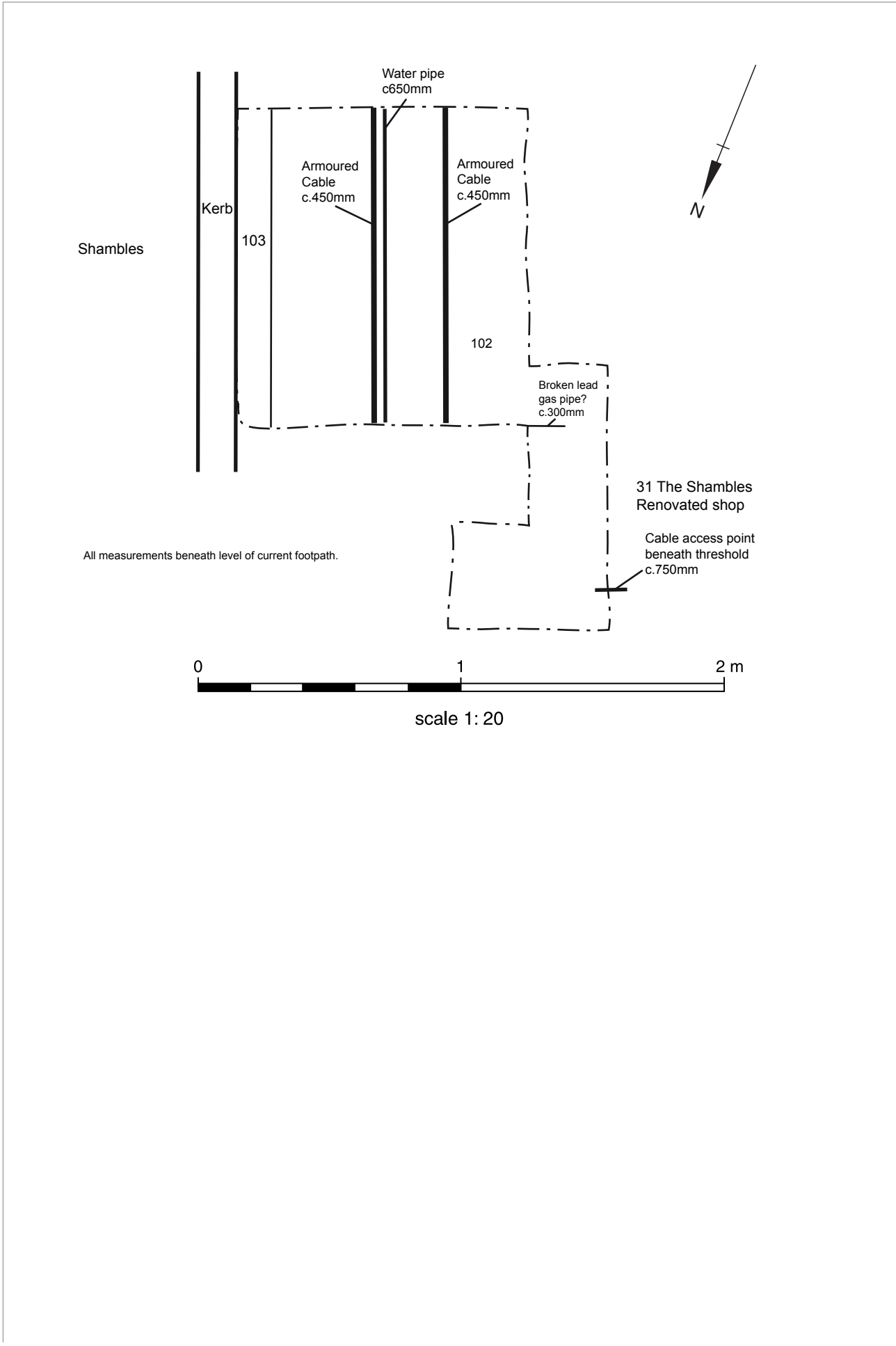


Figure 1: Trench plan