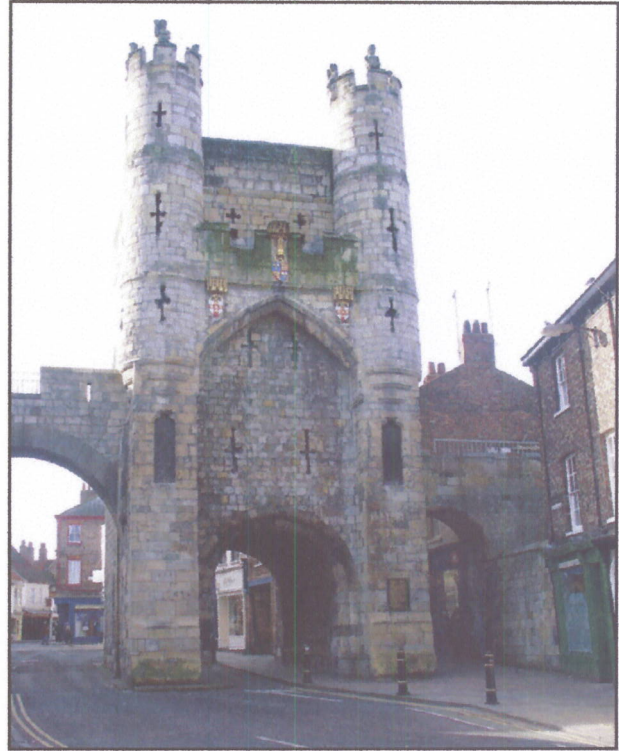


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YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST



**CABLE TRENCHES;
MONKGATE TO CHURCH STREET
AND LAYERTHORPE TO
PEASHOLME GREEN**

**Report on an
Archaeological
Watching Brief**

by Gareth Dean

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MONKGATE TO CHURCH STREET
AND LAYERTHORPE TO PEASHOLME GREEN,
YORK**

**A REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**

by
Gareth Dean MA PIFA

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*Cover illustration:
Monk Bar*

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List of Abbreviations

NGR	National Grid Reference
YORYM	York Archaeological Trust and Yorkshire Museum
BGL	Below Ground Level
1992.**	References from the York Archaeological Trust Gazetteer
RCHMY	Royal Commission of Historical Monuments York
VCHY	Victoria County History
YAT	York Archaeological Trust

ABSTRACT

Between September and November 2003, the York Archaeological Trust monitored the excavation trial holes and a trench for cables between Monk Bar and Church Street and from Layerthorpe to Peasholme Green. The only archaeological deposits encountered during was located on the corner of St Maurice's Road and Monkgate where the remains of a floor surface and demolition rubble were encountered. These deposits were associated with a building demolished during the widening of St Maurice Road. Deposits within the other sections of the trenches comprised former road surfaces bedded on a silt sand deposit heavily cut through by modern services.

1. INTRODUCTION

Between September and November 2003, York Archaeological Trust maintained an archaeological watching brief during the hand and machine excavation of cable trenches along Monkgate, Goodramgate and Church Street and Layerthorpe to Peasholme Green, York (NGR SE6052; figure 1). The trench along Goodramgate was excavated at night or on Sundays. The trench in Layerthorpe and Peasholme Green was excavated during the day and on Sundays. The client was W.S. Atkins, the excavation of the trenches was carried out by North Midland.

All site records are currently stored by York Archaeological Trust under the Trust and Yorkshire Museum accession code YORYM 2003.307.

2. METHOD STATEMENT

The watching brief entailed recording any deposits, features, or structures encountered during the excavation of the cable trench and any associated works. Monitoring was undertaken on the excavation of four trial holes excavated in Monkgate, St Maurice Road and Goodramgate prior to the excavation of the trench. These trial holes measured c. 0.8m x 0.6m and were up to 0.8m deep. The cable trench was excavated in two areas of the city. One section of trench was monitored from the junction of Monkgate and St Maurice Road along Goodramgate to Church Street. The other section of trench observed extended from the junction of Layerthorpe and Foss Islands Road to Peasholme Green. The cable trench was an average width of 0.45m with an average depth of 0.5m BGL.

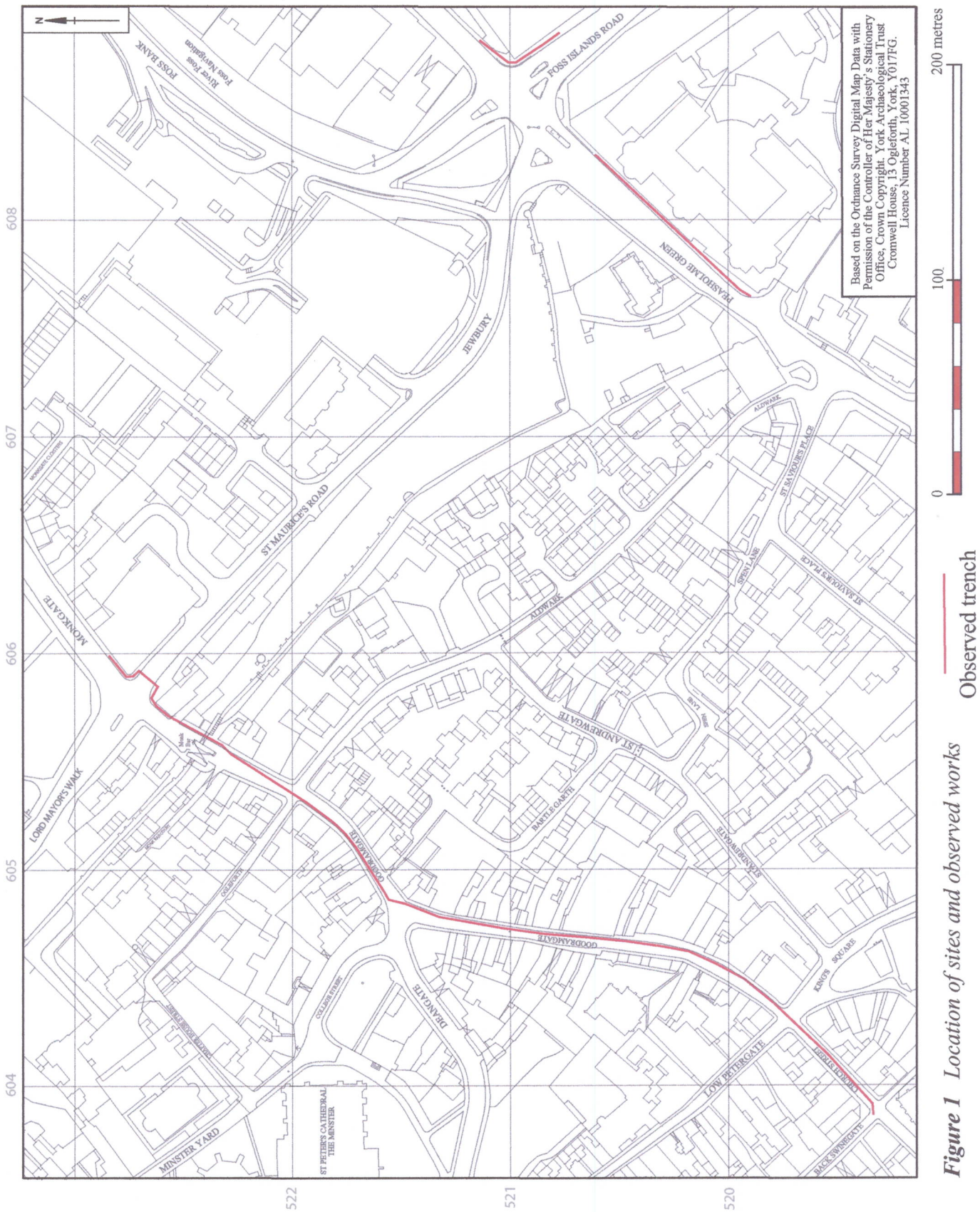


Figure 1 Location of sites and observed works

Where chambers were excavated these were of an average depth of 0.6-0.7m BGL. Due to the shallow nature of the trenches a constant monitoring was not maintained, although all sections of the work were observed. The fact that the majority of the work was done at night under artificial light will have affected the ability to differentiate deposit colours. The notes, including measured sketches, were entered into a site notebook and processed into a form where they could be used for the preparation of this report during December 2003.

3. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The reason the watching brief was undertaken was because it was thought that it might add information on some of York's medieval streets. Monkgate is the main approach to the city from the north-east and is recorded in 1080 as Muncegate (Raine 1955, 276). On the north-east side of Monkgate was the 12th century church of St Maurice, outside Monk Bar, that was pulled down in the 19th century and served the medieval suburbs (RCHMY4, 87). The church was rebuilt in 1878 and pulled down in 1967 (ibid.8). The current superstructure of Monk Bar dates from the 14th century. The bar was repaired in 1825 when the barbican was removed (VCHY, 513). The remains of the barbican were observed during a watching brief (1992.1001) and traces of a post-medieval cobbled surface (1976.1026) have also been recorded. Excavations on the corner of Monkgate and Lord Mayors Walk identified Roman and medieval deposits and burials associated with the church (1972.17).

St Maurice Road was formerly known as Barkergate and the earliest reference for it is in c.1230. Its name was changed to Barker Hill which it retained throughout the middle ages. Its name is thought to derive from the middle English word for tanners. Part of the road became known as the Jewbury and in 1492 it was referred to as Jubery Super Barkerhill (Palliser 1978, 5). Maps from the 17th century show houses on the corner of Monkgate and Barkerhill and a few houses along the street itself. The first detailed map is the 1852 Ordnance Survey which shows the buildings demolished on the corner of Monkgate and Barker Hill.

The name Goodramgate is thought to derive from the personal name Gutherun or Guthrum and is first recorded in 1177-1181. The street is thought to have originally ran north from King's Square towards the position of the north-east gate of the Roman fortress, but at its junction with College Street bends north-east to Monk Bar (RCHMY5,135). Watching briefs carried out during the repair of sewer trenches showed that deposits associated with the Roman, Anglo-Scandinavian, medieval and post-medieval periods survived in the area (1984.1006, 1996.408).

Church Street was laid out in 1835 at the same time as Parliament Street. To the south-west of St Sampson's church the street was entirely new but from Swinegate to Petergate saw the widening of the medieval Girdlergate (ibid. 117). Archaeological evidence in Church Street ranges from a Roman sewer (1972-74.22), the remains of a Roman wall, possibly associated with a bath house was identified (1972.20) and surfaces associated with a Roman road (1990.14). Some evidence has also been collected for Anglo Scandinavian and medieval activity in the area (1972.20 and 1990.14).

Layerthorpe was a small settlement located on the edge of York and was probably in existence from the late 12th century and was served by the church of St Mary (RCHMY

5, xxxviii) and perhaps developed because of its proximity to a crossing point of the River Foss into York. The first reference to a bridge here is in 1341 (VCHY, 519). The bridge saw several alterations after this until the redevelopment of the area in the 1990s and the construction of the present bridge. John Speeds map dating from the seventeenth century shows a ribbon development along the road and the church. It was not until after 1760 that the area saw considerable increase in the number of houses constructed that is reflected in the map evidence. This housing was cleared as part of redevelopment of the area over the last twenty years. Excavations on the corner of Layerthorpe and Foss Islands Road identified the remains of the church of St Mary's (1986.13).

The name Peasholme, which includes the element '*pese*' - Old or Middle English for 'peas' and '*holm*' meaning 'low lying ground by a river or stream' (Palliser 1978, 13). This area would have been close to the King's Fishpool, a stretch of water caused by damming the River Foss sometime in the 20 years prior to 1086, and was referred to as 'the marsh' from time to time. Despite these references, the church of All Saints, Peasholme Green, which stood on the southern edge of the modern street, has a documentary record from 1191/1206 until its closure in the latter half of the 16th century (RCHMY5, 179). Excavations at the site of the former Adams Hydraulics (1990-91.13) at the junction of Peasholme Green and Foss Islands Road identified a sequence of archaeological deposits ranging from the prehistoric, Roman road, Anglo-Scandinavian and medieval and post-medieval periods.

4. THE WATCHING BRIEF

4.1. Monkgate to Church Street

4.1.2 Trial Holes

Trial Holes were monitored in Monkgate, Monk Bar and in Goodramgate. Within these trial holes a deposit of dark grey brown clay silt was exposed that was cut through by modern services. Overlying this was a bedding sand for the present flagstone surface. In the trial hole on the corner of St Maurice Road and Monk Bar part of a tiled floor surface was observed c.0.6m BGL. This was overlain by a dark grey silt with occasional brick rubble and mortar inclusions sealed by the sand bedding for the modern flag surface. Buildings are shown to stand on this corner on the 1852 Ordnance Survey map and were demolished as part of the widening of St Maurice Road in the late twentieth century.

4.1.3 Cable trench Monkgate to Church Street

In Monkgate the trench was dug along the footpath c.0.5-0.6 wide, average depth 0.45m. The trench exposed modern deposits, often heavily disturbed by existing services. The earliest deposit exposed was a light grey brown sand overlain by grey brown clay silt with frequent inclusions of brick rubble and mortar. This was covered by a thin layer of bedding sand for the current paving slabs.

The section of trench across St Maurice Road was 0.73m deep. The earliest deposit encountered was a compact dark grey brown sandy silt with occasional flecks of limestone building material. This was overlain by a deposit of brick rubble 0.44m thick

that appeared to form the bedding for the 0.19m of tarmac that formed the present road surface.

Under Monk Bar, the cable trench was 0.4m deep and remained within the footpath to just within the city walls where it had to be taken into and across the road. Deposits exposed in the trench in Monk Bar consisted of a mid brown sandy clay silt with inclusions of brick rubble and mortar. This was overlain by the modern paving.

The trench along Goodramgate was excavated within the carriageway to a depth of c.0.5m. Excavation was slightly deeper for chambers with a maximum depth of c.0.6m – 0.7m. The earliest deposit located within the trench was either a mid-brown clay silt or a mid grey brown clay silt with inclusions of brick rubble. This was overlain by 0.25m of concrete or a mix of concrete and brick rubble, sealed by 0.1m of bedding for the present 0.15m thick tarmac road surface. Within the carriageway in Church Street the exposed deposits were very similar to those in Goodramgate.

4.1.4 Layerthorpe to Peasholme Green

The section of trench excavated along Layerthorpe was 0.45m deep and exposed a deposit of mid-brown silt sand with frequent inclusions of brick rubble. This deposit was overlain by the bedding and make up for the present tarmac surface. Where the trench crossed Foss Islands Road the base of the trench was located on an earlier tarmac surface 0.45m BGL.

The other section of observed trench extended from the south-west side of the Layerthorpe bridge for c.100m. This trench also exposed a brown silt sand deposit 0.45m below the modern street surface. At the south-western end of the trench near the Black Swan pub, the excavation did not go through the concrete bedding for the ornamental cobblestones.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The cable trench exposed limited archaeological deposits. The only archaeology seen was at the corner of St Maurice's Road and Monkgate where a possible floor of a demolished building associated with the widening of the road was observed. Otherwise the trenches were not deep enough to impact on archaeology and exposed deposits that were presumably associated with previous disturbances of the roads and footpaths and were often heavily disturbed by modern services.

6. LIST OF SOURCES

6.1 Published Works

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6.2 Archive

YAT 1997. The York Archaeological Trust Archive Gazetteer
<http://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/gaz/index/htm>

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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