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28 MARYGATE, YORK

REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OSA REPORT No: OSA01WB31

DECEMBER 2001

OSA

ON SITE ARCHÆOLOGY

25A Milton Street • York • North Yorkshire • YO10 3EP
telephone • 01904 411673 • fax • 01904 414522 • mobile • 07767 385766
e-mail • mail@onsitearchaeology.co.uk

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Report Summary

REPORT NO: OSA01WB31
SITE NAME: 28, Marygate, York
NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: SE 58890 52260
ON BEHALF OF: Mr & Mrs Eddie Walker
TEXT: Susan Diamond
GRAPHICS: Marie-Claire Ferguson
FIELDWORK: Susan Diamond
TIMING: Fieldwork
28th - 29th November & 4th December 2001.
Post excavation & report preparation
7th December 2001 & 8th January 2002
PERIODS REPRESENTED: Medieval, Post-medieval, Victorian & Modern
ENQUIRIES TO: Nick Pearson
On Site Archaeology
25A Milton Street
York
YO10 3EP
tel (01904) 411673
fax (01904) 414522
mobile (07767) 385766
e-mail mail@onsitearchaeology.co.uk

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1.0 Abstract

A watching brief was undertaken within the rear grounds of 28 Marygate, York during the excavation of foundation trenches in advance of an extension to the existing building. This work was carried out on the 28th and 29th of November and continued on the 4th of December. Given the areas proximity to the city walls and the historical significance of its location, the watching brief was necessary in order to determine the impact of construction works on any underlying archaeological features. The archaeology identified in the course of these works possibly represents activity in the Medieval, post-Medieval, Victorian and modern periods. The narrowness of the trenches under investigation imposed limitations on placing the identified features within a broader archaeological context.

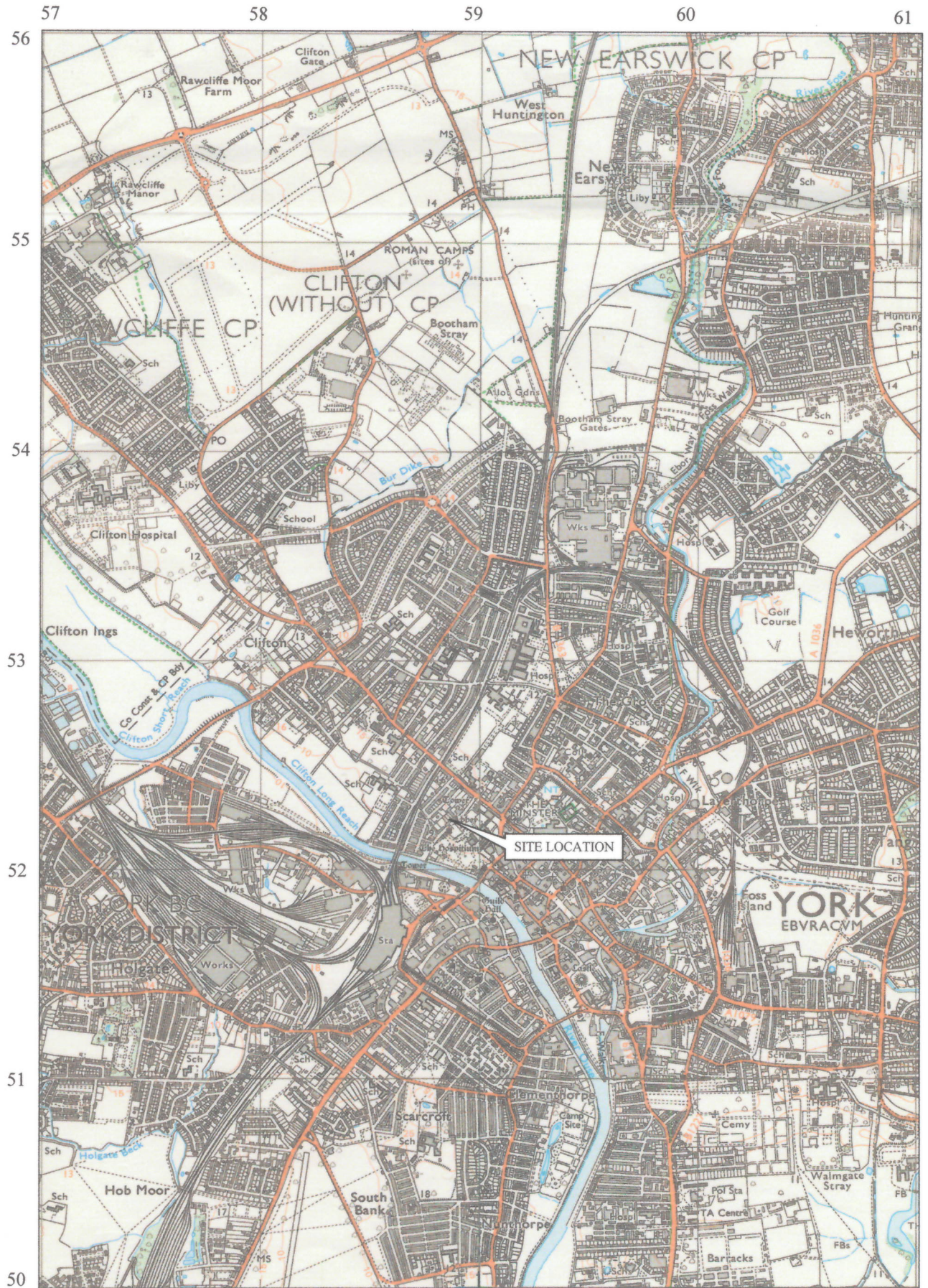


Figure 1. Site Location (NGR SE 58890 52260)

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2.0 Archaeological Background

The site under examination is situated in an area of significant archaeological importance. The area of Marygate represents what is thought to be the north-western limit of Eboracum, (Roman York) in the 4th century AD. The area between number 18 to number 52 is thought to be enclosed by two presumed Roman roads, the southerly one running on a south-east, north-west alignment around the area of numbers 52-54 Marygate. The presumed Roman road to the north runs on a similar alignment around the area of Galmanhoe Lane, and is thought to run through the Roman cemetery situated to the north-west in the area between Bootham Terrace and St. Mary's. The presumed wall of an annexe to the Roman fort is thought to run roughly along the southern side of Marygate, possibly leading from the multangular tower on a similar alignment to the Roman roads, taking a right angled turn somewhere within the vicinity of what is now St Olaves Church, running along Marygate to the tower at the corner of Bootham, (a recorded Roman road) and Marygate and returning to meet the wall of the legionary fortress at Bootham Bar.

A conjectural map of Eoforwic (Anglian York), (D.Raines, 1978. 2000 years of York, YAT) shows Marygate marking the northwestern boundary of the city around AD 800. The discovery of a single recorded Anglian find to the rear of the property of number 28, supports the theory that the area around Marygate was occupied during this period.

Marygate is also thought to represent the north-westernmost extent of the settlement area of Jorvik, (Viking York) around the period AD 1000. The residence of the earls thought to govern Jorvik is thought to be situated within the museum gardens, and is now covered by the ruins of St. Mary's Abbey. This area is referred to as *Earlsburgh* by Drake, an early 18th century historian of York, it is a name of pre-Norman form, which means "the earl's headquarters". This theory could be supported by the proximity of St. Olaves church to this area. St. Olave's is known to have been built by Earl Siward who died in 1055.

By the early 12th century the area of occupation of Norman York is thought to have extended beyond Marygate and along Bootham to around the area of what is now St. Mary's. It was around this time that St. Mary's Abbey was founded, parts of the Abbey wall still stand along the southern side of Marygate.

By the Medieval period the city of York had extended even further north-west along Bootham. The Abbey of St. Mary's by this stage was one of the largest in the country. It contained the area now given over to the Museum gardens, Kings Manor, the city art gallery as well as an area along Bootham, an area of 6 hectares in total, (YAT, 2000 years of York). St. Mary's prospered rapidly under royal patronage after 1089 and is the oldest of York's monasteries, the ruins of the church and other buildings are still visible in the museum gardens.

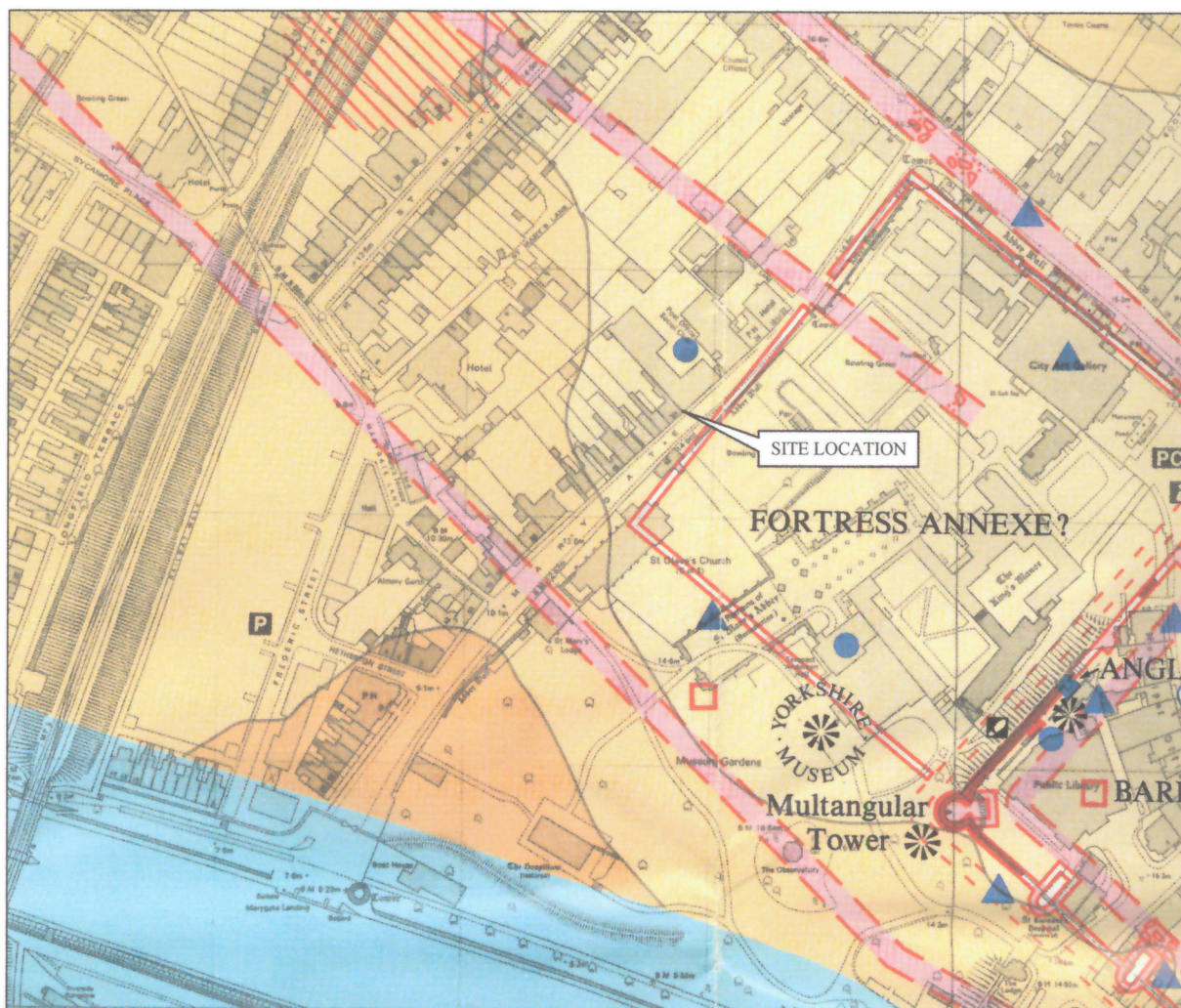
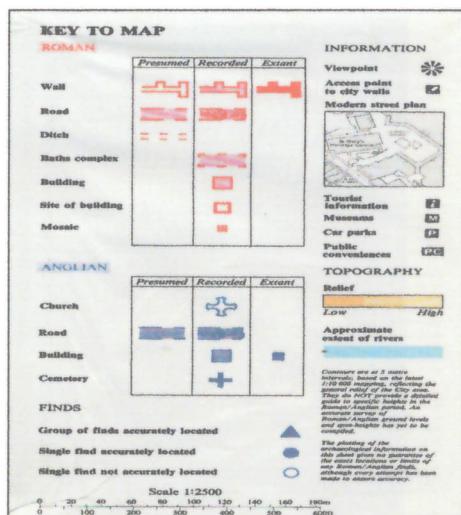


Figure 2. Map showing Roman & Anglian York.



3.0 Methodology

The foundations under consideration comprised of three linear trenches, each measuring approximately 5m in length and 0.70m wide. The total depth from the original concrete floor surface was 1.20m. These trenches were excavated with a toothed bucket.

Standard *On-Site Archaeology* techniques were followed throughout the watching brief. This involved the completion of a context sheet for each deposit or cut encountered, along with plans and sections drawn to scale. A photographic record of significant deposits and features was also maintained.

During the watching brief finds were recovered as unstratified as it was unclear from which deposit they were derived due to mixing by mechanical excavation.

4.0 Results

The earliest deposit encountered during the course of these construction works occurred at a depth of 1.10m throughout the area under consideration. This material (1010) may represent a medieval horizon and comprised firm, dark greyish brown sandy silt with brick and mortar flecks, charcoal, bone fragments and rare oyster shell. The deposit appears to be fairly extensive, occurring in two trenches separated by a distance of 3.50m and may represent a phase of dumping.

Truncating this deposit and visible in the far west of the area under consideration was a wall cut [1014]. This contained two courses of large limestone blocks (1013) and its associated infill (1015), (see Fig 4). This limestone course provides the foundation for the existing main north-west/south-east brick wall, which separates the properties of numbers 28 and 30 Marygate. It is unclear whether the existing brick wall is contemporary with the limestone wall (1013), or whether the latter represents an earlier phase of building. A further brick wall (1008) was identified, although this was only partially visible along the southeast facing section of the trench, (see Fig 4). This wall comprised two courses of red bricks measuring 0.24m by 0.08m each bonded with soft yellow white mortar. These bricks rested atop a single course of limestone blocks (1011), measuring approximately 0.20m by 0.25m. It was initially believed that this feature was contemporary with a further brick wall (1006), which was visible for a distance of 1.60m against the southeast facing section in the northeast corner of the site. On investigation it became clear that although similar in make-up to wall (1008), this wall is considerably deeper and probably later in date. No limestone is present in its construction and it had a concrete footing (1007). This wall comprised of seven courses of bricks measuring 0.24m by 0.08m, with a total depth of 0.80m. These bricks were bonded with soft, yellowish white mortar. A brick wall of similar make-up (1017) (see Fig 5) was visible throughout the trenches on a north-west/south-east alignment and this is likely to represent a return of the wall (1006), visible in the southeast facing section. Another, probably earlier brick wall (1016) was visible on a south-west/north-east alignment through

the trench. Unfortunately, only the northernmost face was exposed so the extent of this feature remains unclear, (Fig 5). This wall was made up of small red bricks, measuring 0.24m by 0.11m by 0.06m and bonded with very soft yellowish white mortar. It was uncovered to a depth of 0.90m and rested on a limestone plinth measuring 0.50m in length and 0.07m deep. This plinth rested directly atop the earliest deposit (1010). Throughout the trenches substantial infilling at a later stage had occurred. This material (1009) took the form of greyish white silty sand with a large quantity of mortar, brick and clinker.

The entirety of the area was covered with a pitched red brick floor surface (1012). This floor had been covered with a probable levelling deposit (1003), which comprised of mortar and brick rich mid brown silt. A modern, circular pit [1004] had truncated these deposits as well as cutting through the earlier brick wall (1006), at the point of its southern return (1017). This pit was circular in plan with steep sides and measuring 1.90m across. Its full depth was undetermined and it was visible in plan at the base of the trench, (see Fig 5). The fill of this pit (1005) comprised soft, light greyish brown sandy silt with an ashy component, limestone blocks, bricks and mortar as well as the wooden remnants of a barrel. A bottle retrieved from this fill suggests that this pit is of very recent origin. This pit was overlain by a thin band of mortar and silt make-up (1002), which provided a bedding for a later red brick floor (1001), which had in turn been covered by concrete (1000), representing the existing yard surface.

5.0 Conclusion

Due to limitations imposed by the location and narrowness of the trenches, it has for the most part not been possible to ascertain the extent and relationships between the walls uncovered during this watching brief. The relationship between the limestone foundation of the main existing wall and the small portion of brick wall in the southeast facing section is unclear. The latter feature lay beyond the limit of excavation and as a consequence, this relationship could not be established. Of interest through, is the small portion of brick wall (1016) partially uncovered in the easternmost trench. The make-up of the bricks and mortar suggest that this wall is the earliest standing feature and may be of 16th or 17th century origin. The pottery and bone recovered during machining was unstratified. The bone assemblage includes a standard range of species, (cow, pig, sheep/goat and chicken), as would be expected within urban deposits of medieval and post-medieval date. It appears that the earliest, undisturbed and probably medieval deposits in this location begin at a depth of approximately 1.10m from the ground surface. The presence of occasional, residual, sherds of Roman pottery is unsurprising given the sites proximity to the possible fort annexe and extra-mural occupation.

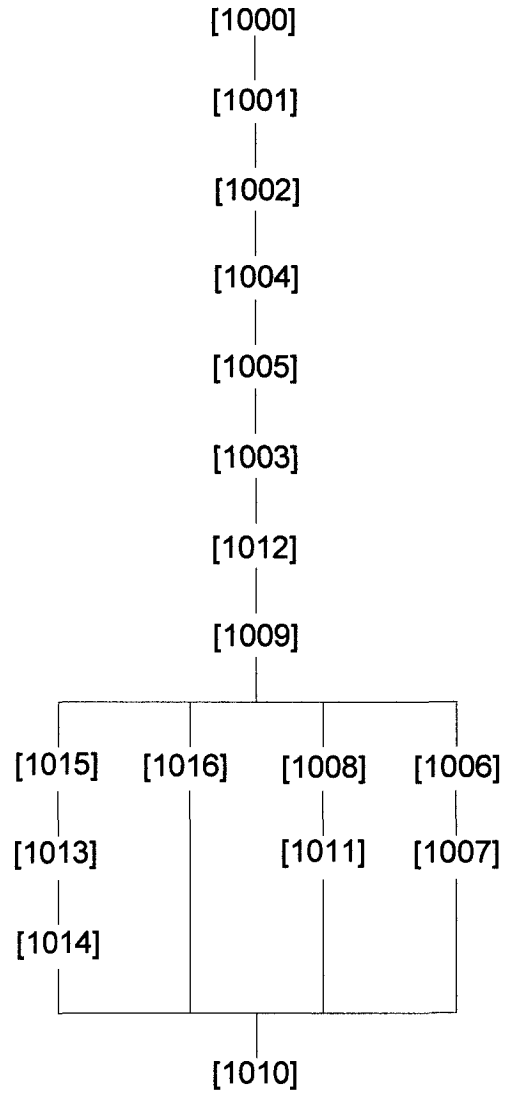


Figure 3. Site Matrix

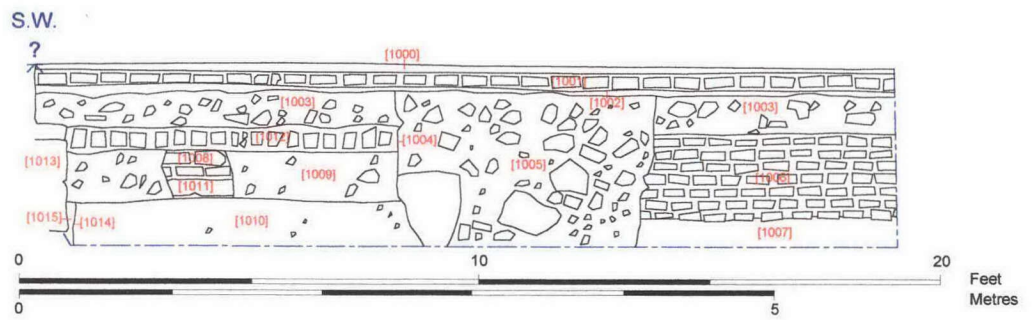


Figure 4. Southeast facing section. (Scale 1:50)

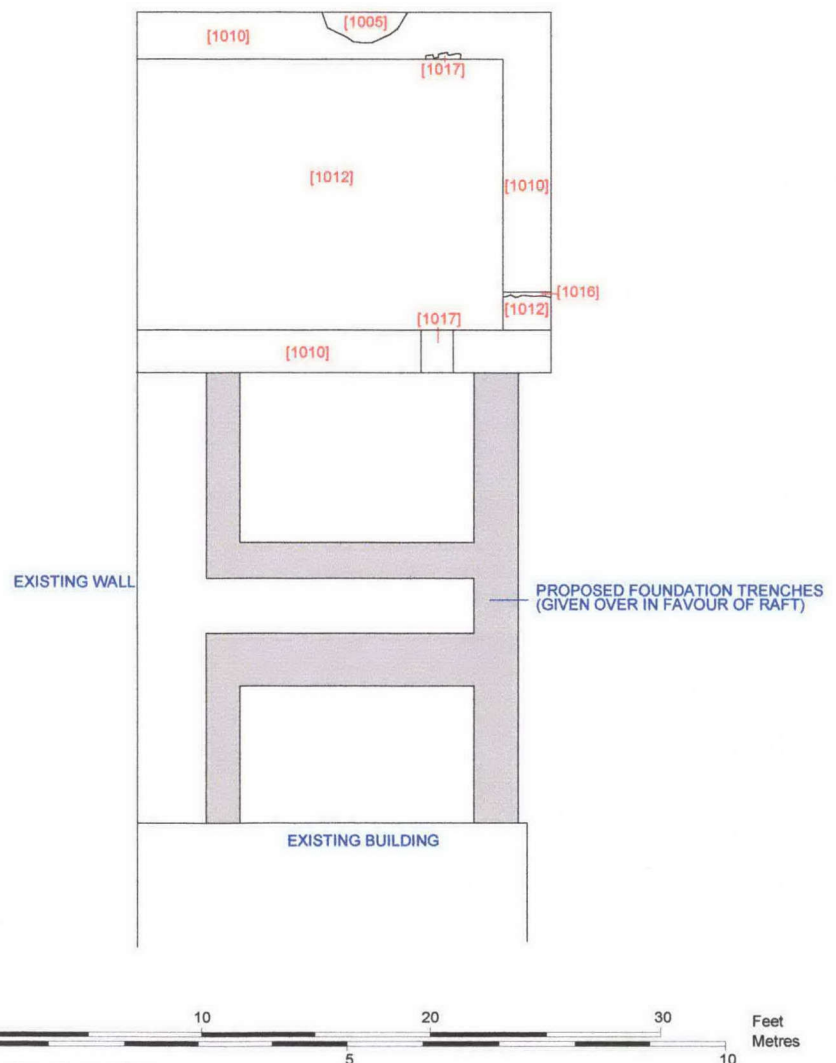


Figure 5. Ground Plan. (Scale 1:100)

6.0 Appendix 1 ~ List of Contexts

Context	Description	Extent	Depth
1000	Modern concrete surface	Throughout	0.04m
1001	Brick floor	Throughout	0.12m
1002	Make-up for brick floor	Throughout	0.05
1003	Modern make-up comprising of mid brown silt with mortar and brick fragments.	Throughout	0.20m
1004	Cut of modern pit [1005]	1.90m wide	1m excavated depth
1005	Fill of pit [1004]: Soft, mid greyish-brown silt with brick, mortar, wood and limestone blocks.	1.90m wide	1m excavated depth
1006	Brick wall	N/A	0.50m
1007	Concrete footing of wall (1006)	N/A	0.20m
1008	Brick wall	0.40m visible	0.30m visible
1009	Make-up: Soft, greyish white silt with frequent mortar, clinker and brick.	Throughout	Variable 0.30m to 0.60m
1010	Dumping: Firm, dark greyish brown sandy silt with mortar and brick flecks, charcoal and oyster shell.	Throughout	Unknown
1011	Limestone base of brick wall (1008)	Unknown	20m
1012	Brick floor.	Throughout	0.18m
1013	Limestone foundation of main existing NW-SE wall	Unknown	0.60m
1014	Cut for wall (1013)	Unknown	0.20m
1015	Infill of wall (1013): Soft mid greyish white silt with frequent mortar flecks.	0.04m	0.20m
1016	Brick wall	0.70m visible	0.90m
1017	Brick wall: Probably the same as (1006)	0.40m wide	0.60m

7.0 Appendix 2 ~ Pottery Assessment Report

Alan Vince

A small collection of pottery was submitted by *On-Site Archaeology* from a watching brief carried out at 28 Marygate, York. The pottery includes two sherds of Romano-British pottery and a collection of medieval and later pottery ranging in date from the late 11th to early 13th century through to the post-medieval period.

7.1 Roman

Two sherds of pottery were found, a Dales Ware jar rim (YATH1) and a calcite-tempered Huntcliff ware jar (YATK1). Neither sherd is particularly weathered and they might indicate settlement or rubbish dumping outside the fortress rather than agricultural activity.

7.2 Medieval

A small collection of pottery, mostly of later medieval date, was found. The earliest type was a gritty ware jar body sherd (YG) which could be as early as the late 11th century but could be as late as the 13th century. The remaining sherds are of Brandsby-type ware and Humber ware and probably of 14th/15th century date.

7.3 *Post-Medieval*

Four sherds of post-medieval pottery were present. They include a sherd from a Tudor Green ware jug of 16th-century type and a body sherd from a Ryedale ware bowl of similar date together with a glazed red earthenware bowl and a sherd of a large London stoneware jar or bottle of late 17th-century or later date. A single clay tobacco pipe stem was also present.

7.4 *Assessment*

The pottery collection indicates activity on the site in the later part of the Romano-British period and in the medieval and post-medieval periods. The condition of the pottery does not give any clue as to the nature of this activity.

Table 1

Context:	Description:	Cname:	Form:	Nosh:	NoV:	PART:
us		YATH1	JAR	1	1	BS
us		YATK1	JAR	1	1	BS
us		CTP	PIPE	1	1	BS
us	UNGLAZED NECK FRAG ID?	TUDG	JUG	1	1	BS
us		YG	JAR	1	1	BS
us		RYEDALE	BOWL	1	1	BS
us		GRE	BOWL	1	1	BS
us		LONS	BOT	1	1	BS
us		HUM	JUG/JAR	1	1	BS
us	BLACK CORE AND INT SURFACES	BRANDBY	JUG	1	1	BS
us		BRANDBY	JUG	1	1	R
us	SQUAT VESSEL WITH INTERMITTENT THUMBING	BRANDBY	JUG	1	1	B
us		BRANDBY	JUG/JAR	1	1	BS