

THE BRIGANTIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL PRACTICES ^{ENY 309} _{SNY 678}

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**REDEVELOPMENT AT 6a, FINKLE STREET, RICHMOND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

A report to Randall Orchard Construction, Ltd
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→ *Yong's Jalkingham*
for info
P.T.

8,x,1999

REDEVELOPMENT AT 6a, FINKLE STREET, RICHMOND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

1 On instructions from Randall Orchard Construction, Ltd, an inspection has been made of the above premises in order to produce this Impact Statement concerning the effects of proposed redevelopment on elements of surviving historic fabric. This report has been produced by Percival Turnbull, of this Practice.

2 The premises consist of two former shops, most recently united and occupied by Visionhire, but currently empty. The main properties are two bays in depth, leading at the rear into two large warehouses, the eastern of which is a stone building of considerably greater age than the relatively modern western. The two warehouses communicate through a door, of normal dimensions, which opens through the wall between them. Redevelopment proposals are to enlarge this space by making it both higher (over 2.5 metres) and considerably wider (around 4 metres). It is this wall which appears to represent an important piece of historic fabric and with which this report is concerned.

3 The wall in question shows signs of considerable antiquity. It is around a metre in thickness, it is built of coursed stone rubble, with several areas of patching with brick and other materials. At ground floor level, the stonework is not visible, but the wall extends downwards into a low basement, approximately 1.5 metres below the floor, where the bare stonework of the eastern wall face may clearly be seen. At a height of about a metre above the ground floor level, adjacent to the existing doorway, the thickness of the wall decreases by 10 to 15 centimetres, creating an irregular ledge on the eastern face. This feature does not appear to be an original plinth, but does probably indicate more than a single period of construction.

4 No 6a, Finkle Street is a Grade II Listed Building, though in its present state much altered from the original. Like most of the older buildings in this part of Richmond it is predominantly of eighteenth-century date, but there are indications that part of the fabric might be earlier. The wall affected by the proposals forms part of the western side of the building, and in the context of the historic building may represent an early (anything from mediaeval onwards) phase of construction and development (detailed analysis of the building after the removal of plaster would be needed to elaborate this point).

5 More significantly, the wall lies on the circuit of the mediaeval Town Wall of Richmond, and is nicely in line between two known points on those much-eroded defences: the surviving fragment of Town Wall in Friars' Wynd to the north, and the site of the former Finkle Street Bar on the street frontage to the south. The line of the Town Wall, corresponding to the position of the existing wall within 6A Finkle Street, may be seen illustrated by Tyler (*Richmond an Archaeological Study*, 1976) and in the *Richmond Study Conservation Report*.

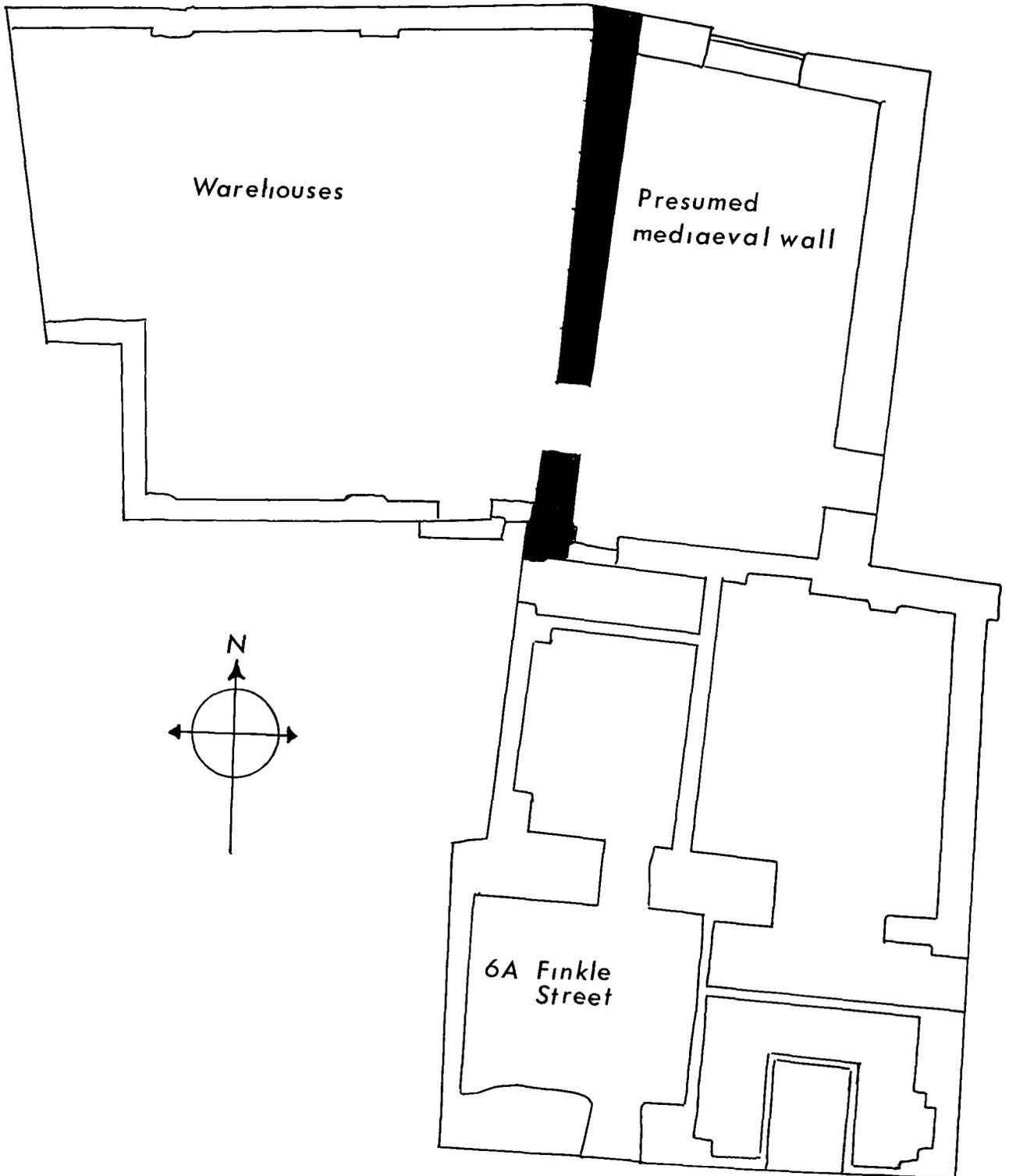
6 The first grant of murage to allow the building of a stone Town Wall at Richmond dates from 1313. It has been averred that this Wall replaced earlier defences of earth and timber, but concrete evidence for this seems to be lacking. Subsequent murage grants in 1337 and 1400 indicate the improvement or refurbishment of the stone defences. When seen by the antiquary Leyland, in the more stable political conditions of the beginning of the sixteenth century, the walls were already ruinous. Finkle Street Bar, one of the three main gates of the town, was similarly in ruins. Leyland commented *all three be downe, vestiges yet remaine*. In one form or another, a structure identifiable as Finkle Street Bar stood until final demolition in 1773. A plaque over the passage on the western side of the development site commemorates its position, and is exactly in line with the standing wall under consideration.

7 Although total certainty on the point is not possible, it must be seen as overwhelmingly probable that the wall contained within the development site is substantially a remaining part of the Richmond Town Wall (it must also be remembered that it is an important part, and apparently an early part, of the Listed Building). Very little remains of the mediaeval town defences at Richmond, and any surviving structure must be seen as of considerable historic value. Remains of town walls, especially in the case of smaller towns like Richmond, are altogether rare. I consider that, when assessed against the Department of the Environment's non-statutory criteria (as used in the Monuments Protection Programme) the remains under discussion could be classed as of national importance.

8 The development proposal involves the complete destruction of a section of wall elevation in the area of ten square metres. The total area affected will presumably be greater than the size of the eventual opening, because of the need to insert the steel beam. Although these works would not affect the wall below the level of the ground floor, the amount of destruction would be considerable. I consider that this would not be appropriate, and that the most suitable approach to these archaeological remains would be secure their *in situ* preservation.

9 Notwithstanding the above, should Listed Building Consent for the demolition of this section of wall be granted, I would consider the preparation of a full archaeological record in advance of works to be essential.

Percival Turbull
8,x,1999



The Brigantia Archaeological Practice

6A Finkle Street, Richmond

Scale approximately 1 200