



# YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

<b>SITE</b>	Wall to the rear of 10 Precentor's Court, York		
<b>CLIENT NAME</b>	CYC		
<b>YAT PROJECT #</b>	6081	<b>YAT REPORT #</b>	2019/162
<b>MUSEUM ACCESSION #</b>	N/A	<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	SE 60160 52254
<b>PLANNING REFERENCE #</b>	19/01434/FUL	<b>AAI OPS NOTICE #</b>	N/A

## INTRODUCTION

A watching brief was undertaken by York Archaeological Trust on behalf of CYC on the 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018 to the rear of 10 Precentor's Court, York, NGR SE 60160 52254 (Figure 1). The objective of the watching brief was to record the rear wall structure and any archaeological deposits exposed by the ground works.

Photographic recording of the north-east elevation of the wall prior to demolition was undertaken in July 2019 and an interim report (Johnson, A. 2019/110) was written based on these observations.

A later phase of work was undertaken between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2019. An archaeologist was present for these works and made observations throughout the excavation process. The details from the October 2019 works have been added to the July 2018 report below.

## METHODOLOGY

A square 0.5m x 0.5m trial pit was hand excavated by the City of York's Ancient Monument team, adjacent to the rear boundary wall, to a depth of 0.84m below ground level. Notes and a measured sketch of the wall were taken, and digital photographs were taken of the wall elevation and of the pit post excavation.

In the October 2019 scheme of works (Figure 3), a trench at the back (south-west face) of the wall was hand excavated into the bank to a maximum depth of 1.5m below ground level in order to facilitate the safe deconstruction and subsequent reconstruction of the wall. The trench excavated alongside the south-west face was approximately 4.65m long by 0.65m wide by 1.5m deep. The south-west face was barely visible prior to the commencement of the October 2019 phase of works. It was only possible to sketch the top two courses of masonry on the south-west face as the lower courses of stone were dismantled in conjunction with the deepest part of the trench excavation, due to safety concerns. Notes, a measured sketch and digital photographs were taken of the top courses of masonry (Plate 3) and the trench section. Above the masonry there had been multiple courses of post-medieval brickwork, however that section was dismantled prior to archaeological observations, and will match the same brickwork as was recorded on the north-east face during the July 2019 works.

## RESULTS

### 2018

Below ground level, the wall was comprised of large limestone blocks, squared and in a random course. The stones measured between 0.21m x 0.15m and 0.24m x 0.21m. A single brick was seen within the wall at the base of the trial pit, measuring 0.15m x 0.10m. The bonding material of the wall was hard to determine as the mortar had recessed or been raked out. Above ground level the rear wall had been rebuilt and strengthened, evidenced by the presence of brickwork and concrete mortar.

The excavated soft ground deposit comprised of loose dark grey-brown sandy silt, which contained numerous roots and occasional small fragments of brick.

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## 2019

The October 2019 works expanded on what was found in 2018. On the wall itself, the bonding material appeared to be a pale yellowish-grey lime-rich mortar. As evidenced in the 2018 and July 2019 observations the lower portion of the wall was made up of large blocks of masonry, some of which were reused from the medieval period or later. There was more post-medieval brick and tile infilling in places. Two architectural fragments (Plates 4 and 5) were visible in the south-west face of the wall, and one smaller worked fragment came from the infilling between the south-west and north-east courses of stonework (Plate 6).

The section of the trench revealed several layers of friable to loose dark grayish-brown sandy silt that was heavily disturbed by both rooting and burrowing (Plate 7). The soil contained moderate amounts of post-medieval – modern pottery, brick and tile fragments, and occasional fragments of animal bone. A residual piece of possible Cistercian pottery was recovered from the section but was not retained. It appeared that any earlier archaeology was beyond the limit of excavation of this scheme of work and probably heavily disturbed. No deposits associated with the walls or ramparts were encountered during the works.

## CONCLUSION

The date of the wall was unclear from the 2018 test pit; however, it is clearly shown on the 1852 OS map of York and it is likely that it dates to at least the construction of 10 Precentor's Court in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Nothing of archaeological interest was retrieved from the test pit.

Nothing of interest was found during the 2019 excavation of the trench along the south-west side of the wall. The material exposed was no earlier than 18<sup>th</sup> century in date, although it contained some residual earlier finds. Whilst the architectural fragments exposed during this stage of works were likely to be of a medieval date, they had clearly been reused when the wall was first constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These fragments were retained by the CYC stonemasons as they will be used when the wall is rebuilt.

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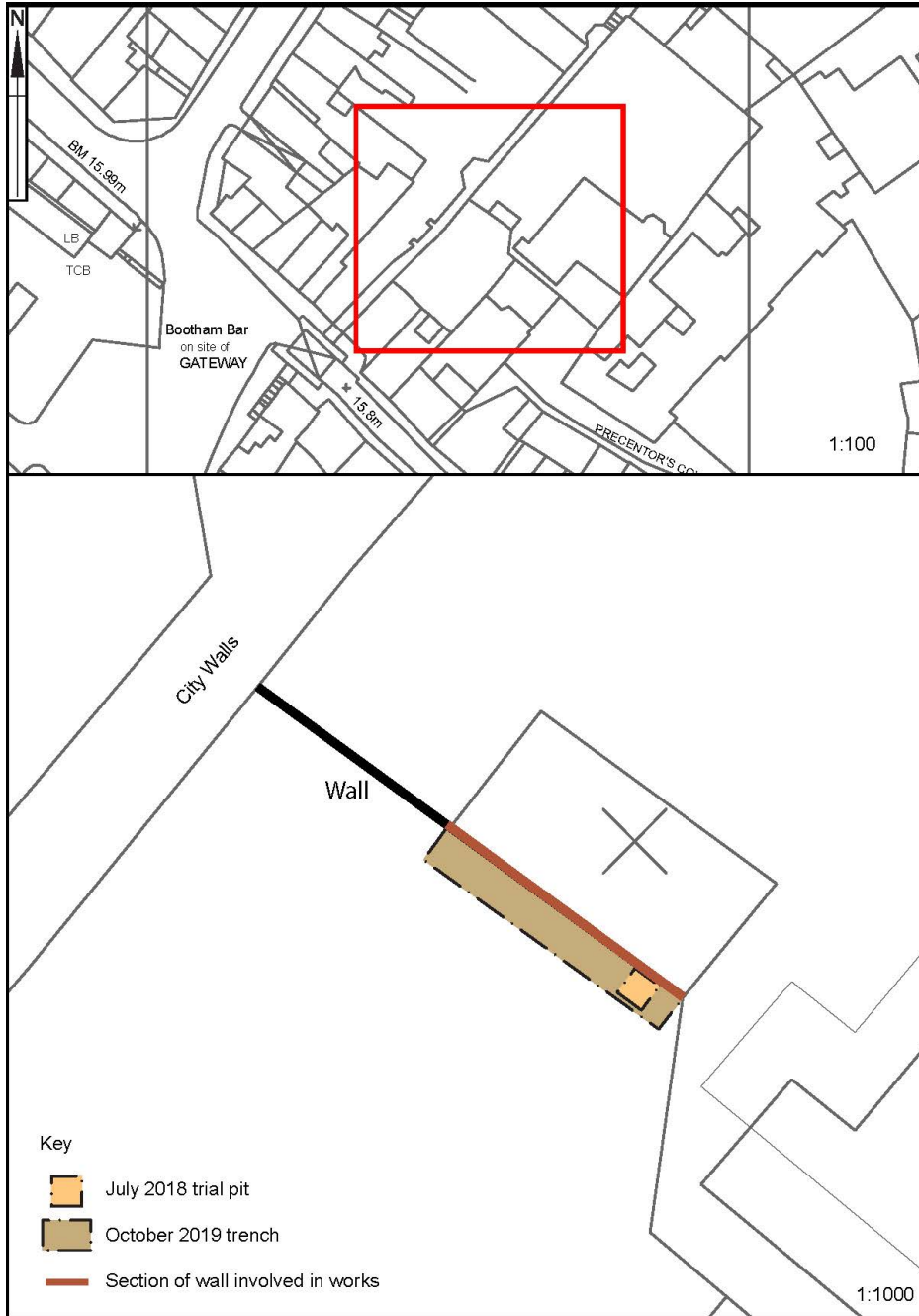


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**Figure 1** Site Location

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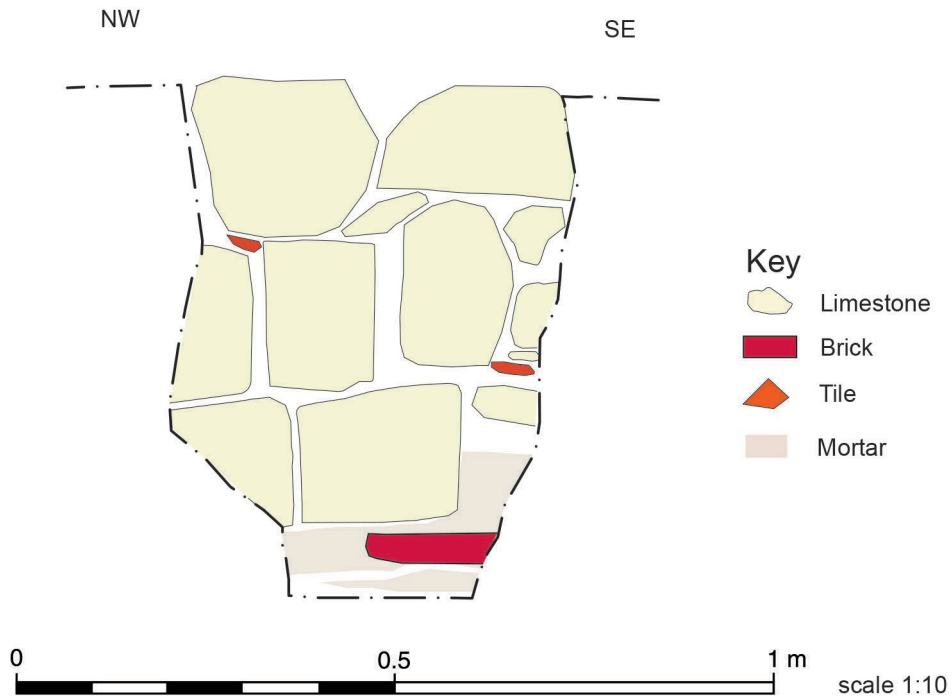


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**Figure 2** Wall elevation (July 2018)

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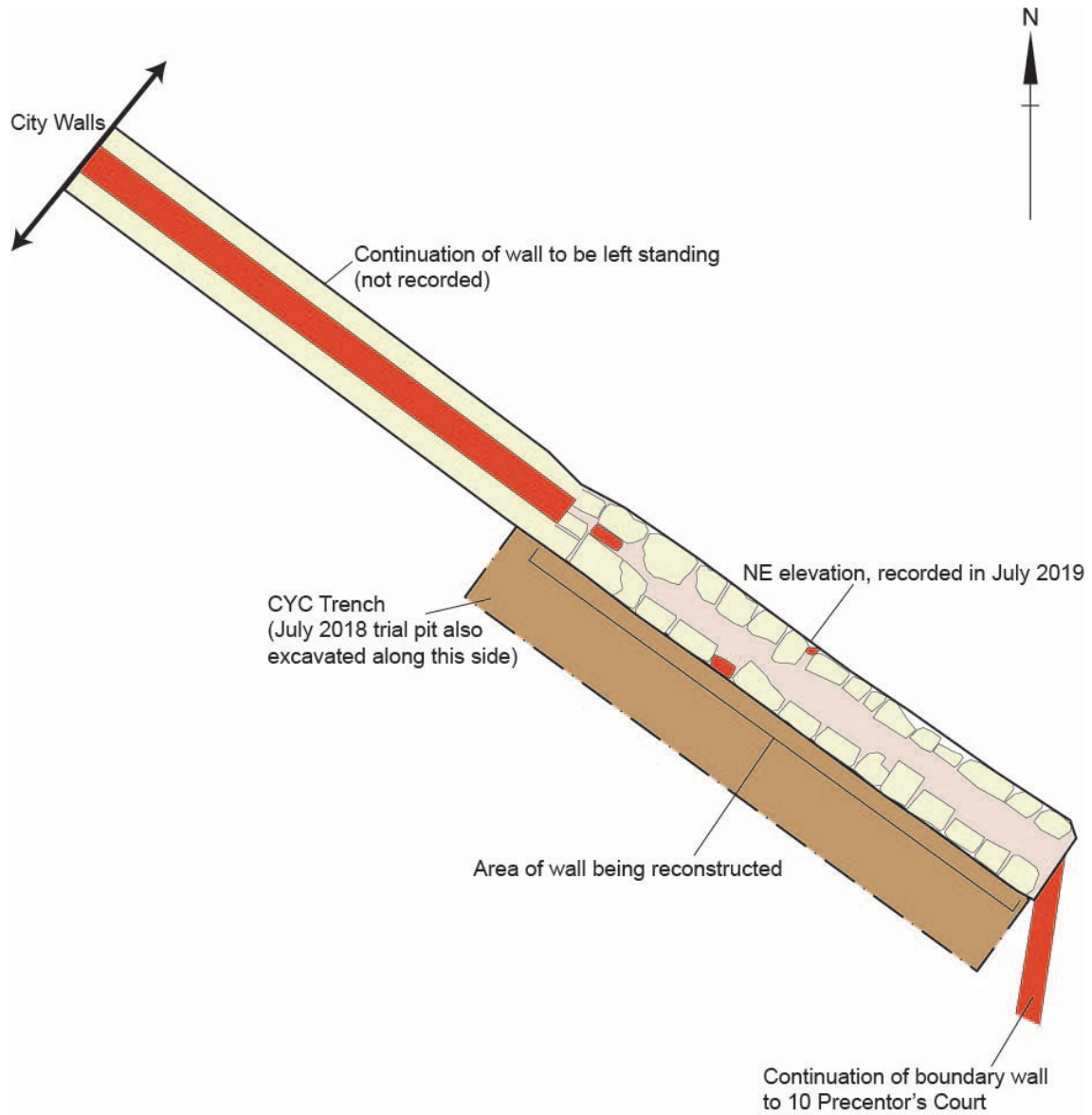


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(Not to Scale)

**Figure 3** Illustration showing October 2019 scheme of works

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**Plate 1** View of south-west facing wall (July 2018)

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**Plate 2** View north-east of later additions to the wall (July 2018)

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**Plate 3** View looking north-east across the wall. The visible wall face is the south-west facing elevation. The CYC trench runs the length of this section of wall.

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**Plate 4** One of three architectural fragments visible in the south-west face of the wall

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**Plate 5** The second of three architectural fragments (top right) visible in the south-west face of the wall

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**Plate 6** The third architectural fragment from the south-west side of the wall. This piece came from the wall core.

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**Plate 7** South-east facing section adjacent to the wall (the south-west face of the wall is visible in the right of this plate).

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