



YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

SITE ADDRESS	St Mary's Church Hall, Bishophill Junior, York		
CLIENT NAME	Wendy Tunncliffe, 36 Nunthorpe Road, York		
YAT PROJECT #	5336	YAT REPORT #	2010/8
MUSEUM ACCESSION #	n/a	GRID REFERENCE	SE 5998 5146
PLANNING REFERENCE #	09/00488/FUL	AAI OPS NOTICE #	n/a

Between the 15th February and 7th May 2010, York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief at the former St Mary's Church Hall, Bishophill Junior, York (Figure 1). The objective was to record any deposits, features or buried structures exposed during the excavation of a number of foundation pits and a hole for a fireplace and chimney (Figure 2) associated with the conversion of the hall into a dwelling. Each of these was nominally 0.8m x 0.8m, the fireplace excavation was c.2m x 0.9m, and penetrated c.0.7m into the ground. This was encountered c.0.8m below the existing wooden floor of the hall which had been raised above the then existing ground surface at the time of the construction of the church hall sometime in the 19th century. This made the total depth of these pits around 1.5m deep which coupled with the fact they were inside the standing structure meant that all the digging, undertaken by Manor House Developments Ltd, was by hand. In addition to the foundation pits the excavation of a short length of new drain run to the north-east side of the church hall was observed as was a new wall foundation along the south-east face of the hall. The watching brief was deemed necessary since the hall lay immediately adjacent to St Mary's Church and possibly occupied part of the ancient graveyard associated with the church.

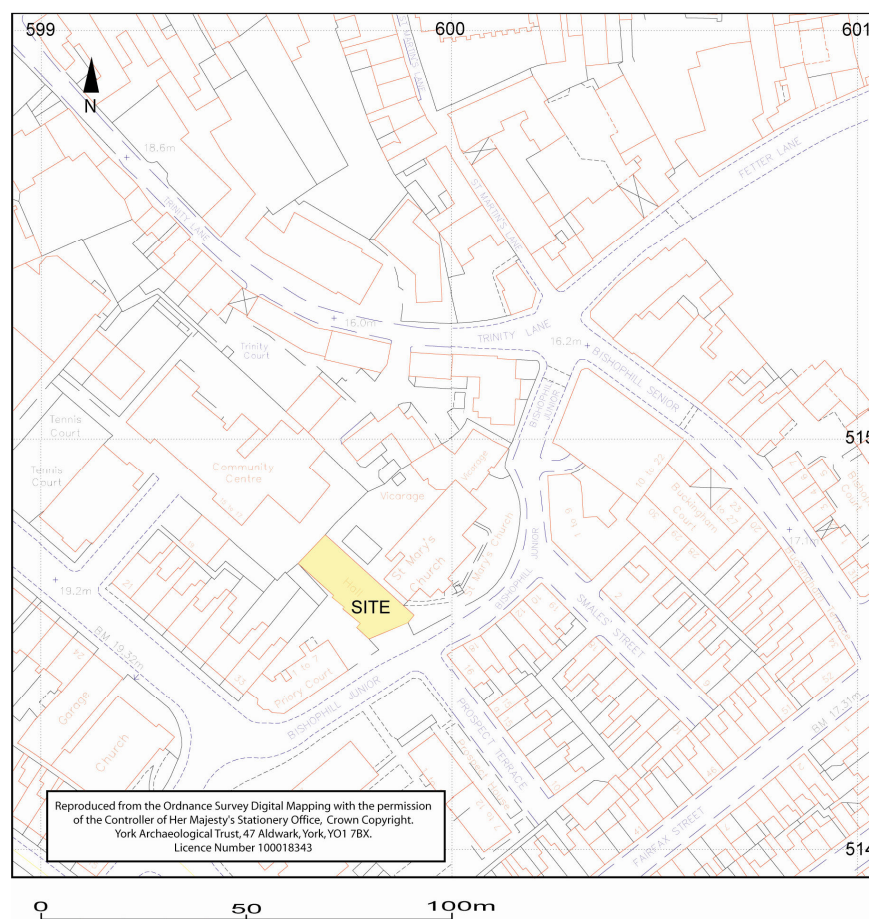


Figure 1 Site location

COMPLETED BY	D.T. Evans	CHECKED BY	M.R. Stockwell	FINISHED	30/06/10
FINDS	No	SAMPLES	No	PHOTOS	Yes
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The observed stratigraphy was uniform across the area of observations and therefore a single stratigraphic sequence, and that within Foundation Pit 13, is described here. In Foundation Pit 13 the earliest deposit noted, between 1.3 and 1.5m below the wooden floor of the hall and between c.0.5 and 0.7m below the below floor ground level, was a loose, dark brown silt with occasional limestone, flecks of white mortar, animal bone, and disarticulated human bone (1000). This deposit was overlain by a 0.3m deep layer of very dark brown very slightly clayey silt with moderate pale grey mortar and occasional brick / tile (1001). Overlying 1001 was a 0.15m deep deposit which was a mixture of brick rubble, tile and pale grey plaster (1002). This varied in thickness from foundation pit to foundation pit being up to c.0.3m deep in some of the pits. Above this was the floor void (1003), c.0.8m deep, and over that the existing wooden floor (1004).

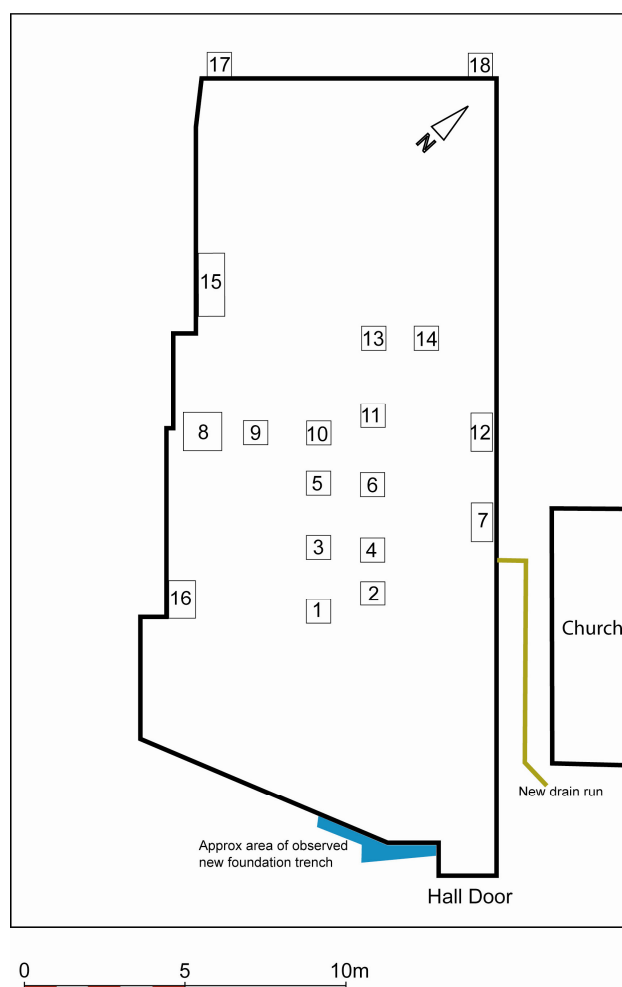


Figure 2 Hall outline with foundation pit locations and other observations

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All of the deposits encountered in the new drain run and foundation trench were clearly modern and disturbed and were not recorded in detail. No datable finds were recovered from any of the foundation pits so dating of the contexts seen remains uncertain, although Context 1002 is likely to be directly associated with the construction of the hall and thus no earlier than the 19th century. Context 1001 is probably a disturbed version of Context 1000 which appears to be a medieval / post-medieval graveyard soil containing moderate quantities of disarticulated human bone. This bone was gathered together and reburied once all the foundation pits had been dug. Overall it appears that little significant disturbance to the archaeology has taken place.



Plate 1 Foundation Pit 13, looking north-west

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Plate 2 Foundation Pits 1-6 during excavation, looking south-east



Plate 3 The south-east end of the church hall, looking north-west

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