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ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, MIDDLETON,
NORTH YORKSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION
AND RECORDING

Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd
18 Springdale Way
Beverley
East Yorkshire
HU17 8NU

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Author: Ed Dennison

Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd
18 Springdale Way
Beverley
East Yorkshire
HU17 8NU

On behalf of

Parochial Church Council
c/o Peter Gaze Pace Architects
The Old Rectory
Scrayingham
York YO41 1JD

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING (WATCHING BRIEF),
ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, MIDDLETON, NORTH YORKSHIRE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken in the churchyard of St Andrew's Church, Middleton in North Yorkshire (NGR SE78228543) by Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS), on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, during works associated with the renewal of the external drainage system. The watching brief was made a condition of a Diocesan Faculty.

The watching brief revealed only limited archaeological information. As might be expected from excavations within a churchyard, disarticulated and disturbed human remains were recovered from several of the deposits recorded by the watching brief (eg. contexts 1001/1004 and 2001). However, two definite *in situ* burials (1008 and 1009) were also revealed, in the base of Trench 1 at a depth of c.0.6m and 1.00m below the existing ground surface. Burial (1008) is interesting as it appeared to run beneath the westernmost buttress of the north aisle, suggesting that it pre-dated it. The north wall of the north aisle is presumed to be either 13th or early 14th century in date, but the western buttresses does not appear to be contemporary with it and is thought to be associated with the later 19th century restorations. This would suggest that the burial (1008) is pre-19th century in date.

The greenish-grey sandy silts (1001/1004 and 2001) containing disarticulated human bone may be associated with the construction of the north aisle itself. However, these deposits have been disturbed several times since, for example by the existing drain running parallel to the north wall which was revealed by the current works.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In September 2003, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) were commissioned by St Andrews Parochial Church Council (PCC) to undertake a programme of archaeological observation and recording (a watching brief) during improvements to the drainage system at St Andrews Church, Middleton, in North Yorkshire (NGR SE78228543).
- 1.2 The archaeological recording work was made a condition of a Diocesan Faculty granted on 11 February 2003.

2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 St Andrews Church lies in the village of Middleton, some 1.5km to the west of Pickering, In North Yorkshire. The church lies on the north side of Main Street, close to unclassified road (NGR SE78228543) (see figure 1).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 St Andrew's church is a complex structure with 11th century origins, and is listed as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, Grade I (see Appendix 2). It has also been described by Pevsner in his 1996 book on the Buildings of England, North Yorkshire, and is recorded on the North Yorkshire County Sites and Monuments Record (site 3237).
- 3.2 In brief, the church comprises a chancel, a 3-bay aisled nave, a south porch and a west tower. It is built of coursed rubble and roughly tooled sandstone with roofs of lead and slate. The tower is 11th century in date, with long and short quoins, whereas the 13th century upper bell stage is of roughly coursed sandstone. The north and south arcades are early and late 12th century respectively, while the aisles and tower and chancel arches are either 13th or early 14th century. The clerestory and the nave roof are 15th century and the south porch, which is built of a herringbone tooled sandstone, has a 18th century date.
- 3.3 The nave was restored and the chancel largely rebuilt in 1886 by C Hodgson Fowler; the new work is characterised by tooled sandstone and sandstone ashlar; several plans of the restoration work survive in the Borthwick Institute in York (Fac. 1884/10; Fac.Bk.6, pp488-9 & Fac. 1885/16; Fac.Bk.6, pp533-4). This rebuilding work uncovered a large Saxon cross and several sculptured stones which had been built into the tower, and which are now on display inside the church. Further re-roofing of the church was carried out in 1938.

4 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The scope of the watching brief was defined by a methods statement prepared by EDAS (see Appendix 3). This document was approved by the church architect, the PCC and the local archaeological curators, the North Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record Office, in advance of the watching brief.
- 4.2 The aim of the watching brief was to monitor the groundworks associated with improvements to the drainage system, and to record and recover any information relating to any archaeological features or deposits which might be uncovered or disturbed by the works. Care had been taken by the church architect to avoid all marked graves within the churchyard, but it was possible that other, unmarked, graves would be disturbed by the excavations.

- 4.3 The new drainage works involved the replacement of an existing French drain along the north side of the north aisle, and to this end, a single east-west aligned trench was excavated along and parallel to the north wall of the church. The trench had an average width of c.0.55m and an average depth of c.0.75m. Two short projections of similar dimensions were dug from the north side of the main trench to connect with an existing drain which was found to be intact. At the west end of the main trench, a short north-west/south-east aligned projection ran to a new soakaway pit, measuring c.1.10m square in plan and excavated to a depth of 1.10m. The area of excavations are indicated on figure 2.
- 4.4 The on-site recording took place over a four day period beginning on 30th September 2003. For ease of description, the various groundworks subject to the watching brief were divided into two separate areas; Trench 1 comprised the main east-west trench on the north side of the church, while Trench 2 was formed by the soakaway pit at the west end (see figure 2). All excavations were undertaken by hand, the drainage trenches being dug by the contractors under constant archaeological supervision while the soakaway pit was dug by an archaeologist. It should be noted that all parts of the excavation were open at the same time, and so the exact relationship between similar deposits in different areas was sometimes unclear. A Home Office licence (number A4807) for the removal of human remains was also obtained as a precaution, and the local Environmental Health Officer contacted, as required by the conditions of the burial licence.
- 4.5 Each discrete stratigraphic entity (eg. a cut, fill, or layer) was assigned an individual context number and detailed information was recorded on *pro forma* context sheets. A total of 13 archaeological contexts were recorded, and these are described in the following text as three digit numbers, preceded by the trench number (eg. 1005) (see also Appendix 1). In-house recording and quality control procedures ensured that all recorded information was cross-referenced as appropriate. The positions of all excavations were marked on a general site plan (see figure 2), and more detailed plans and sections of each area were made as necessary (see figures 2 and 3). A photographic record was also maintained using 35mm colour transparencies and black and white prints, and some digital images were also taken. All sections were levelled relative to each other and given an arbitrary value of 100.00m OD.
- 4.6 No artefacts were recovered during the course of the watching brief. The disarticulated human bone that was disturbed by the excavations was recorded and then re-buried in the approximate position from whence it was removed. Parts of two articulated burials disturbed by the works were collected together and placed in a secure location inside the church, prior to subsequent reburial.
- 4.7 In accordance with the methods statement (see Appendix 3), and with the agreement of the PCC, the two-dimensional project archive, comprising written and photographic elements, has been deposited with the Scarborough Museum (site code SAM 03).

5 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

Trenches 1 and 2 (north side of the church)

- 5.1 As noted above, Trench 1 was excavated on an east-west alignment parallel and along the north side of the church, for a total distance of c.17m and to an average depth of 0.75m (see plate 1). A 1.5m long extension to the west end of the trench was then dug in a north-west direction to connect to a new soakaway pit measuring c.1.10m square and 1.10m deep (Trench 2) (see plate 2). In addition, two short

“arms” were subsequently dug from the north side of the main trench to connect it with an existing drain.

- 5.2 The earliest layer encountered in this part of the works was a presumed natural deposit of large angular fragments of a yellow sandstone (2002 – see sections 1 and 2), only partially visible in the north-west corner of the base of Trench 2. This was overlain by a layer of greenish-grey sandy silt (2001) with frequent inclusions of angular sandstone pieces and also containing much disarticulated bone. Above the sandy silt was a thin layer of dark brown clay/silt topsoil (2000) (see sections 1 and 2 on figure 3).
- 5.3 To the east, in the base of Trench 1, two articulated burials were partly exposed and recovered. The eastern of the two burials (1008 – see plan 2) comprised the left and right femur, tibia and lower pelvis of a south-west/north-east orientated skeleton, with the head lying to the south-west. Although the bones were only fragmentary, probably due to the humidity of the soil, the skeleton was seen to be that of a female, and it appeared to be a younger individual of a slight build. The skeleton lay at a depth of c.0.6m below the existing ground surface and appeared to run beneath the westernmost buttress of the church’s north aisle, suggesting that it predated it; no grave cut or coffin material was noted. Only those parts of the skeleton (legs and lower pelvis) that were to be disturbed by the works were removed from the trench for later re-burial.
- 5.4 The second burial (1009 – see plan 3) was located in the centre of the short north-west/south-east trench which ran from the end of Trench 1 into Trench 2, at a depth of 1.00m below the existing ground surface. The remains comprised the tibiae, fibulae and feet of an east-west orientated skeleton, with the head again lying towards the west. Once again, no grave cut or fill was noted in the base of the trench, and only the tibiae were removed from the excavation. Two other small but concentrated spreads of skull and bone fragments were also noted in the main body of Trench 1 (see figure 2), whilst an existing drain at the west end of the trench was found to be overlain by much disarticulated bone, suggesting that it had disturbed previous burials.
- 5.5 Both the articulated burials were contained within a deposit of greenish-grey sandy silt (1001 mixed with 1004 – see section 3 on figure 3), very similar to deposit (2001) in Trench 2 but containing significantly less disarticulated bone. Above this was a thin layer of building rubble (1002) containing a large amount of ceramic building material and sandstone fragments, overlain by a topsoil (1003) very similar to that noted in Trench 2 (2000).
- 5.6 The south side of Trench 1 (see sections 4 to 6 on figure 3) recorded features relating to the construction of the north aisle. The foundations of the aisle were represented by large pieces of angular yellow sandstone rubble (1007) set within a yellow sandy mortar. These foundations were overlain by a thin layer of small pieces of grey sandstone (1006), set at the same level as the internal floor level of the north aisle. These formed the base for the dressed coursed grey sandstone blocks (1005) which formed the base of the chamfered plinth running along the majority of the north side of the north aisle.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

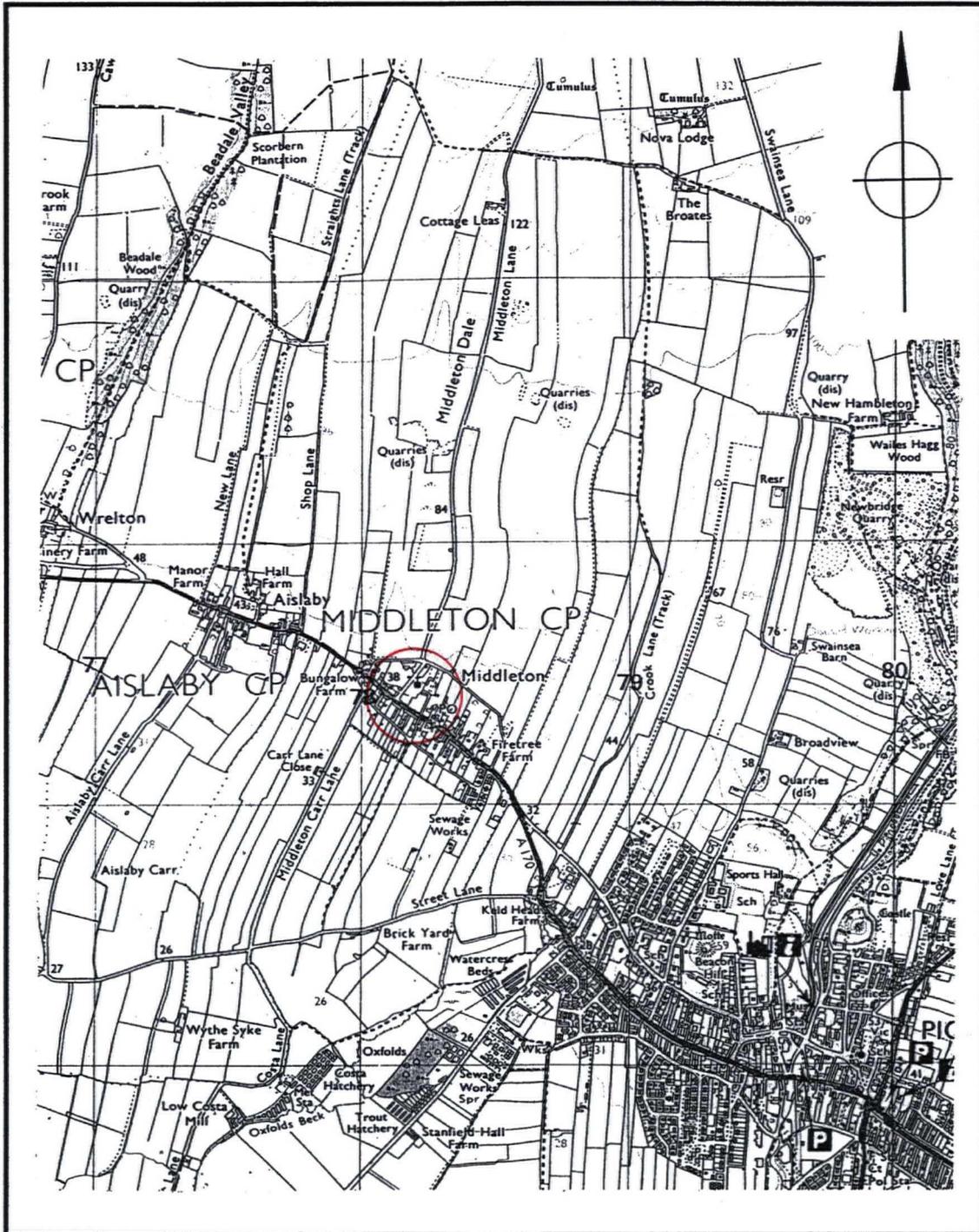
- 6.1 The watching brief revealed only limited archaeological information. As might be expected from excavations within a churchyard, disarticulated and disturbed human remains were recovered from several of the deposits recorded by the watching brief

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- 6.2 The greenish-grey sandy silts (1001/1004 and 2001) containing disarticulated human bone may be associated with the construction of the north aisle itself. However, they have been disturbed several times since, for example by the existing drain running parallel to the north wall which was revealed by the current works.

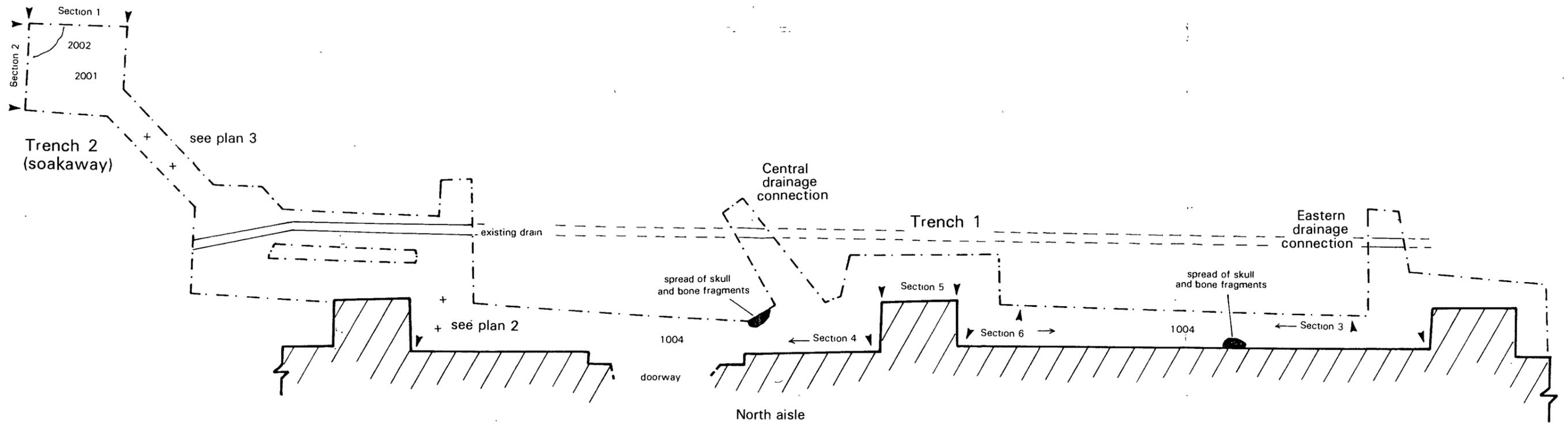
7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 7.1 The archaeological watching brief at St Andrews Church was funded by the PCC. EDAS would like to thank the PCC, the Revd. Adam Reed and Messrs John Arthur and Frank Bailey for their co-operation in carrying out the archaeological watching brief.
- 7.2 The watching brief was carried out by A Dickson and T Kausmally of On Site Archaeology, on behalf of EDAS, and they produced a draft archive and took the site photographs. The final report and other drawings were produced by Shaun Richardson and Ed Dennison, the latter retaining responsibility for any errors or inconsistencies.
- 7.3 As noted in Section 4 above, the recovered human remains were retained by the PCC and re-buried, and the rest of the two-dimensional project archive has been deposited with the Scarborough Museum (site code SAM 03).

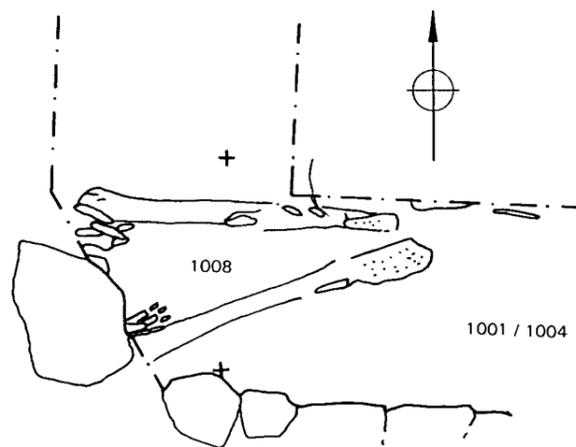


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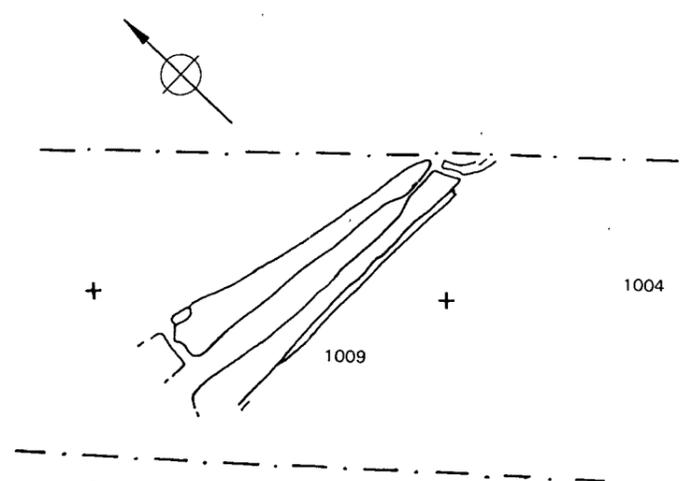
PROJECT		ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, MIDDLETON	
TITLE		GENERAL LOCATION	
SCALE	1:25,000	DATE	JUN 2004
EDAS		FIGURE	1



Plan 1: Trenches 1 and 2

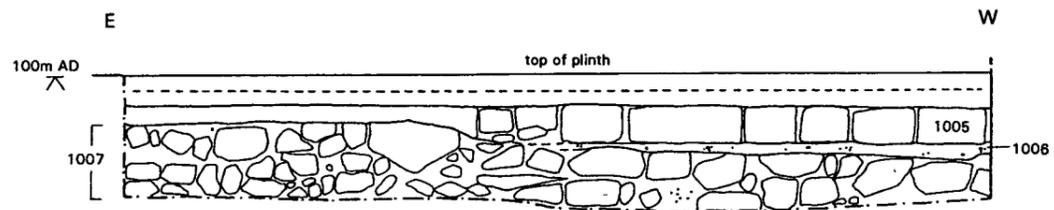


Plan 2: Skeleton 1008 (Trench 1)

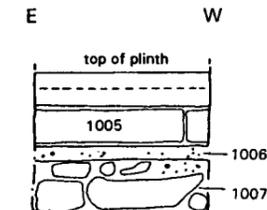


Plan 3: Skeleton 1009 (Trench 1)

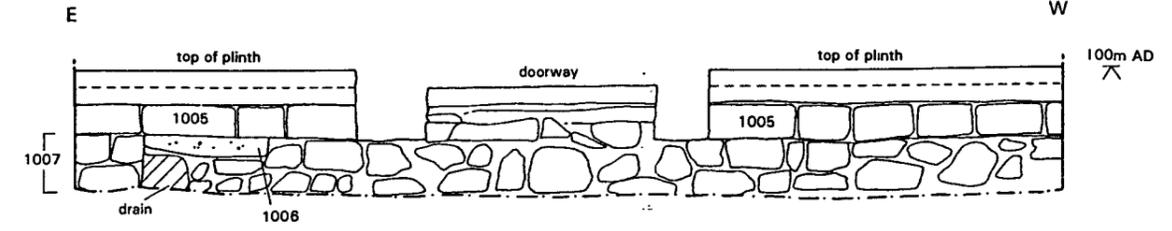
PROJECT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, MIDDLETON	
TITLE WATCHING BRIEF PLANS	
SCALE AS SHOWN	DATE JUN 2004
EDAS	FIGURE 2



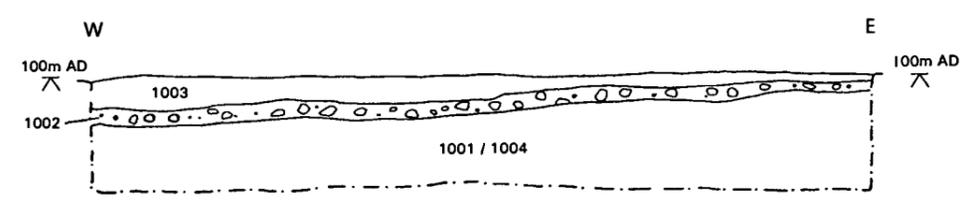
Trench 1 Section 6 (south side)



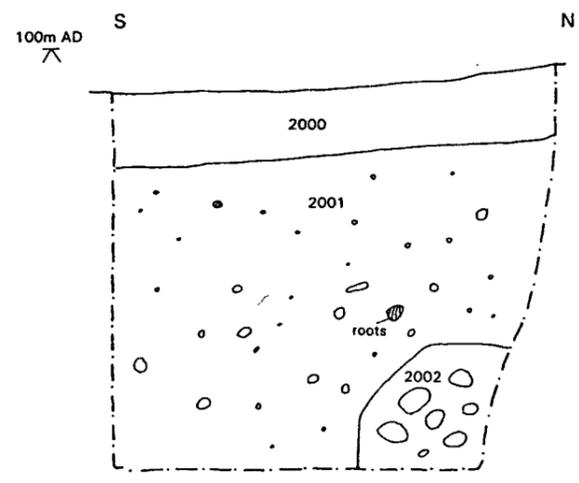
Trench 1 Section 5 (south side)



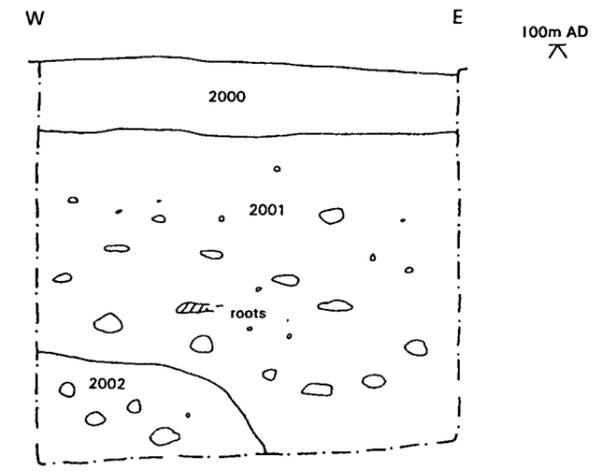
Trench 1 Section 4 (south side)



Trench 1 Section 3 (north side)



Trench 2 Section 2 (west side)



Trench 2 Section 1 (north side)



PROJECT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, MIDDLETON	
TITLE WATCHING BRIEF SECTIONS	
SCALE AS SHOWN	DATE JUN 2004
EDAS	FIGURE 3