

**A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION AND  
RECORDING UNDERTAKEN AT THE CHURCH OF ST. PETER  
AND ST. PAUL, HELLINGLY, EAST SUSSEX.**

**N. G. R. TQ 58057 12295**

**Project Number 06 / 10**

**November 2007**

**Christopher Greatorex BA, MIFA**

**2 OTTEHAM CLOSE, POLEGATE, EAST SUSSEX BN26 5AZ**

**TEL: 01323 488852 E-MAIL: [cagreatorex@btinternet.com](mailto:cagreatorex@btinternet.com)**

## **CONTENTS.**

List of illustrations and photographs.

Abstract.

- 1.0. INTRODUCTION.**
- 2.0. GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND.**
- 3.0. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.**
- 4.0. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.**
- 5.0. INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY.**
- 6.0. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH.**
- 7.0. RESULTS OF FIELDWORK.**
- 8.0. CONCLUSIONS.**
- 9.0. ARCHIVE.**
- 10.0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.**
- 11.0. REFERENCES.**

Historical Environment Record Summary Sheet.

Illustrations.

Photographs.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHS.

- Figure 1.** Site location plan (a).
- Figure 2.** Site location plan (b).
- Figure 3.** Location of groundworks.
- Figure 4.** Groundworks plan (Wall replacement: stage 1).
- Figure 5.** Groundworks plan (Wall replacement: stage 2).
- Figure 6.** Plan of Skeleton 1.
- Figure 7.** Section drawing showing the site formation and Skeleton 2.
- Figure 8.** Plan of skeletons 5 / 6.
- Plate 1.** In-situ inhumation exposed during Wall replacement: stage 1.
- Plate 2.** In-situ remains of Skeleton 1 exposed during Wall replacement: stage 2.
- Plate 3.** In-situ remains of skeletons 5 / 6 exposed during Wall replacement: stage 2.

***ABSTRACT.***

*A programme of archaeological excavation and recording was undertaken during the part replacement of a retaining graveyard wall and the cutting of a gas pipe trench at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly, East Sussex.*

*The described works exposed at least seven unmarked but still in-situ human inhumations at a depth below the original ground level of between 0.65m. and 1.40m. Two of these burials were located within the footprint of the proposed new wall and thus required full excavation.*

*The precise date of interment, age at death, sex and pathology of the exposed human remains was not ascertained. However, the possible discovery of conjoined twins is of note.*

*The artefacts gleaned from the removed topsoil and upper graveyard soil comprised a single Mesolithic flint blade core, 10 clay tobacco pipe stems of Post-medieval date and 16 sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> century china. However, no evidence was collated for the postulated pre-Christian origin of the church.*

*All recovered human skeletal remains are to be returned to the church for re-interment.*

## **1.0. INTRODUCTION.**

- 1.1. This document presents the results of an archaeological investigation undertaken during the part replacement of a retaining graveyard wall and the cutting of a gas pipe trench at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly, East Sussex (N. G. R. TQ 58057 12295) (figures 1, 2 and 3).
- 1.2. The proposed construction of a new c.31m. - long stretch of church boundary wall and the excavation of a pipe trench across the cemetery clearly had the potential to expose funerary remains and other buried features of archaeological significance. C. G. Archaeology was therefore invited to undertake the programme of archaeological enquiry and recording considered below.
- 1.3. A faculty authorising the intended works was issued by the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Chichester on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007 (Chichester: 11902\_1). The archaeological methodology employed during the project (see Section 5.0.) was based upon a targeted Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by C. G. Archaeology and agreed with Casper Johnson the East Sussex County Council Archaeologist and Vivienne Coad the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor.
- 1.4. The archaeological fieldwork was carried – out by Christopher Greatorex, Annalie Wood and Mike Seager Thomas of C. G. Archaeology between the 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> August 2007.
- 1.5. All aspects of the project associated with the part replacement of the churchyard wall were funded by Wealden District Council. The archaeological watching brief maintained on the excavation of the new gas pipe trench was commissioned by John D. Clarke and Partners (Chartered Architects).

## **2.0. GEOLOGICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND.**

- 2.1. The 1: 50,000 British Geological Survey (Sheet 319: Lewes) records the ‘natural’ geology at the site as Tunbridge Wells Sand.
  
- 2.2. The church of St. Peter and St. Paul today lies at the approximate centre of a c.85m. diameter, sub-circular – shaped raised graveyard ‘bounded on three sides by a brick retaining wall and on the fourth, the north where the levels equalise, by a cluster of tile-hung period cottages’ (Syms 1994, 154).

### 3.0. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

- 3.1. No detailed examination of historic documentary evidence was undertaken as part of the project under consideration here. Nevertheless, the following information regarding the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul has been extracted from “The buildings of England: Sussex” by Ian Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner.
- 3.2. ‘The W tower must be Georgian. This appears from the Y-tracery of the bell-openings, the intersecting tracery of the W window, the mouldings and even the tooling. But the most remarkable part of the church is the chancel. Externally one sees just lancets, but inside the N windows are shafted, the shafts have a typically Latest Norman bobbin-ring, the capitals have crockets and foliage characteristic of the ending C12. Also, on both N and S sides, a fine palmette frieze runs along at their sill level. To this chancel belongs in its style the E respond of the N aisle with a main demi-column and pairs of subsidiary shafts with Late Norman capitals and even keeling. All this then is Late C12, but what does the respond represent? The answer is probably the NW carrying pier of a crossing to which belongs the N transept, now late C13. Of that date the N window with intersecting tracery and the shafting inside the E wall, provided this can be trusted. The capitals here are stiff-leaf. The four-bay arcades have octagonal piers and arches with one chamfer and one hollow chamfer – C14, it seems’ (Nairn and Pevsner 2001, 531-2).
- 3.3. Many local guidebooks (eg. Coppin 2001, 74; Syms 1994, 154; Whiteman, K. and J. 1998, 82) and indeed the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record (see Section 6.2.5.) suggest that the sub-circular – shaped mound now occupied by Hellingly church and cemetery may be of pre-Christian origin. However, it should be noted that no *in-situ* archaeological evidence for Saxon or earlier activity at the site has as yet been discovered.

- 3.4. In 1999 an archaeological watching brief was maintained on groundworks necessitated by the construction of a small extension to the north-west corner of the church, adjacent the tower and north aisle. As a result of this investigation a wall foundation and floor surface / base of possible 12<sup>th</sup> century date were recorded within the area of development. However, the footprint of the new building, its associated drainage trenches and manhole / sump proved devoid of any *in-situ* skeletal remains (Sibun 1999) (see Section 7.2.6.1.).

#### **4.0. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.**

4.1. The agreed Written Scheme of Investigation for the project (see Section 1.3.) defined the primary aim of the archaeological fieldwork as follows.

- Ensure that all human remains, structural remains, grave stones, cut features, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological interest exposed and / or affected by the monitored works are recorded and interpreted to an appropriate professional standard.

## **5.0. INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY.**

### **5.1. Wall replacement: stage 1.**

5.1.1. Unmonitored building work on the part replacement of the retaining cemetery wall at St. Peter and St. Paul's Church began in March 2007. However, unforeseen excavation into the graveyard itself uncovered a possible two articulated human skeletons and a number of disarticulated human bones. On discovery of these remains, the project was immediately suspended until a new engineering solution reducing the degree of churchyard disturbance had been designed by Wealden District Council.

5.1.2. In the meantime, Wealden District Council commissioned C. G. Archaeology to undertake an initial programme of basic archaeological recording at the site. A plan of the intrusive groundworks showing the location of all exposed but apparently still *in-situ* skeletal remains was first prepared at a scale of 1:50. The seemingly undisturbed bones were left as found, levelled with respect to Ordnance Datum and carefully covered with soil. Lastly, the spoil heap derived from the unsupervised excavation was raked over and scrutinized for displaced human bones.

### **5.2. Wall replacement: stage 2.**

5.2.1. Two site meetings attended by Casper Johnson the East Sussex County Council Archaeologist, Christopher Bottomley of Wealden District Council and Christopher Grotorex of C. G. Archaeology were held in March and May 2007 to consider the recommencement of groundworks at the church. As a result of these discussions a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared (see Section 1.3.) defining the agreed programme of archaeological research, excavation and recording outlined below.

- 5.2.2. An inspection was first made of the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record. Relevant publications were also consulted for additional details concerning those entries of archaeological / historical significance identified within a c.500m. radius of the church. It should be noted that no examination of historic cartographic / documentary sources stored at the East Sussex Record Office, Lewes or by the church authorities was required as part of the current project. However, copies of a surveyor's draft of Hellingly dated 1805 and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Editions of the relevant Ordnance Survey sheet were supplied to C. G. Archaeology by Greg Chuter, the Archaeological Consultant at East Sussex County Council.
- 5.2.3. Following the required background research, a c.0.70m. to c.1.2m. – wide strip of the churchyard located immediately behind the line of the cemetery's once retaining wall (now demolished) was excavated / reduced manually by employees from both C. G. Archaeology and Wealden District Council. In this way, removal of the topsoil and underlying graveyard soil in successive spits continued under the supervision of Christopher Greatorex (C. G. Archaeology) until the uppermost surviving surface of natural geology and / or the *in-situ* skeletal remains described in Section 7.2. had been exposed.
- 5.2.4. All human remains revealed during the excavation summarised above were subject to archaeological investigation. As a general principal articulated human inhumations must be preserved *in-situ*. Where this is not achievable the *whole* skeleton should always be lifted for subsequent reburial. At Hellingly the two *in-situ* burials exposed within the footprint of the proposed new wall were thus uncovered in their entirety, cleaned with small hand tools, recorded on standard forms, planned at a scale of either 1: 2 or 1: 10, levelled with respect to Ordnance Datum and photographed. These articulated skeletons certain to be otherwise disturbed / partially destroyed during the intended construction project were then exhumed by C. G. Archaeology, bagged and stored in anticipation of re-interment. Disarticulated human bone was collected separately, but also bagged and secured for reburial.

- 5.2.5. On removal of all skeletal remains and the accordant exposure of ‘clean’ natural geology across the strip of cemetery subject to manual excavation, a new footing for the replacement wall was cut using a mechanical digger fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. This exercise was carried – out under constant archaeological supervision by Wealden District Council’s main site contractors.
- 5.2.6. Each archaeological context and human skeleton identified during the Stage 2 fieldwork was documented on an individual record sheet. A plan of the groundworks showing the location of all possible articulated human remains documented by C. G. Archaeology was prepared at a scale of 1: 50. A section drawing demonstrating the general stratigraphic formation of the cemetery was also produced at a scale of 1: 10. All site illustrations were levelled with respect to Ordnance Datum.
- 5.2.7. A complete written, drawn and photographic document was made of a single gravestone that required removal in advance of wall replacement. The Memorial Recording Form contained within Council for British Archaeology Practical Handbooks in Archaeology No.15 (Mytum 2002) was employed for this purpose. The intention is to eventually re-erect the gravestone as close to its original position as possible (recorded on the main groundworks 1: 50 plan) or as agreed with the church authorities.
- 5.3. **Gas pipe trench excavation.**
- 5.3.1. An archaeological watching brief was maintained on the cutting of a c.0.30m. – wide gas pipe trench in the location shown on Figure 3. The length of trench running across the cemetery from Church Lane to the church tower was dug by hand. However, the road excavation required the use of a pneumatic drill. These groundworks were undertaken by gas engineers under the constant supervision of C. G. Archaeology.

- 5.3.2. Each layer revealed within the gas pipe trench was investigated manually in order to assess its archaeological / palaeoenvironmental potential and then documented on an individual Context Record Sheet.
  
- 5.4. A full photographic record of all three stages of fieldwork outlined above was maintained as appropriate.

## **6.0. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH.**

### **6.1. The cartographic evidence.**

6.1.1. No detailed study of historic cartographic or documentary sources was undertaken as part of this project. Even so, copies of a surveyor's draft of Hellingly dated 1805 (very unclear) and the relevant 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey sheets have been examined (see Section 5.2.2.).

6.1.2. None of the three maps listed above record any obvious archaeologically / historically significant features or structures across the precise areas of excavation under consideration. Nevertheless, the surveyor's draft of Hellingly does appear to confirm that Church Lane was present on essentially its current alignment by at least the earliest part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **6.2. The Historical Environment Record.**

6.2.1. An inspection of the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record produced just six entries of historical / archaeological significance within a c.500m. radius of Hellingly Church. These are listed in numerical order and described briefly below. Full details of the search are held within the Project Archive (see Section 9.0).

6.2.2. SMR No: TQ 51 SE2 – MES4366  
Grid Ref: TQ 5821 1201  
Date: Medieval

Horselunges Manor: this moated timber-framed house was built at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century by John Davenish who died in 1477, or by his son Sir John Davenish who died sometime before 1518. In 1925 the structure was restored to its early 16<sup>th</sup> century appearance by W H Godfrey. Horselunges Manor is one of the finest timber-framed buildings in the county, ranking alongside

Great Dixter, Northiam and St. Mary's, Bramber. What remains is only part of one side of what was once a larger, perhaps quadrangular house. If so, the original hall has disappeared. Indeed, it may have been pulled down as soon as the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, when alterations were made to the existing structure. The sub-rectangular moat measures c.100m. from north to south, by c.90m. east to west.

- 6.2.3. SMR No: TQ 51 SE4 – MES4368  
Grid Ref: TQ 58 12  
Date: Anglo-Saxon

A gold coin of Aethelred II found at Hellingly (exact location not recorded). 'Struck from the die of a penny by Leofwine, a moneyer at Lewes' (No author cited: Sussex Archaeological Collections 1938, lxi) Currently deposited in the British Museum, although an electrotype can apparently be seen at Barbican House Museum, Lewes.

- 6.2.4. SMR No: TQ 51 SE6 – MES4370  
Grid Ref: TQ 585 124  
Date: Post-medieval

Hellingly Watermill: this early brick and timber building has been extensively restored, but almost certainly dates to the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century. The machinery comprises a 10ft. - wide, 6ft. - diameter iron overshot wheel driving three pairs of stones.

- 6.2.5. SMR No: TQ 51 SE8 – MES4372  
Grid Ref: TQ 5808 1230  
Date: Medieval

The parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul situated on a mound dating from pre-Christian times (see sections 3.2., 3.3. and 3.4. for further information).

6.2.6. SMR No: TQ 51 SE9 – MES4373  
Grid Ref: TQ 5769 1251  
Date: Post-medieval

Broad Farmhouse: this fine building was constructed in 1753 by J. Calverley.  
Comprised of two storeys and attic, five windows and two gabled dormers.

6.2.7. SMR No: TQ 51 SE – MES4376  
Grid Ref: TQ 585 120  
Date: Modern

Hellingly station (now used for domestic purposes).

## **7.0. RESULTS OF FIELDWORK.**

### **7.1. Wall replacement: stage 1.**

7.1.1. A plan of the unmonitored groundworks carried – out at the church in March 2007 (see Section 5.1.) is presented as Figure 4. The true stratigraphic formation of the cemetery (outlined in Section 7.2.2.) was only ascertained during the second stage of wall replacement described below. Nevertheless, the remains of a possible two articulated human skeletons exposed as a result of the initial unforeseen excavations into the churchyard were observed by staff from C. G. Archaeology (see sections 7.1.2. and 7.1.3.). It should be emphasised here that none of the human bones discovered and / or recorded by C. G. Archaeology have been subjected to specialist osteological analysis. No objective statements regarding the represented individuals' precise age at death, sex and pathology can therefore be made.

7.1.2. Plate 1 shows the fairly well preserved skull, neck and shoulder region of a presumably mature individual exposed at 20.41m. O.D. (c.0.90m. below original ground level) (see Figure 4 for location). Although clearly aligned in an approximate north-west to south-east direction, no evidence for any associated grave cut, fill or coffin could be discerned. Safe from the impact of the agreed Stage 2 groundworks, the photographed remains were simply covered back over with a tarpaulin weighed down by soil as a temporary protective measure before the intended reinstatement of this damaged area of the cemetery.

7.1.3. Figure 4 also records the position of two adjacent long bones whose broken ends were only visible in rough 'section' at 19.85m. O.D. (c.1.40m. below original ground level). Although no sign of any grave cut, fill or coffin was found in association with these human remains, it is possible that they represent the lower limbs of a second, this time most unfortunately truncated, inhumation.

7.1.4. A painstaking inspection of the spoil heap derived from the unsupervised groundworks yielded a number of displaced / disarticulated human bones (not subject to quantification). However, no archaeologically significant artefacts were retained from this initial stage of the project.

7.2. **Wall replacement: stage 2.**

7.2.1. A plan of the excavation work undertaken during the second stage of wall replacement at the church is presented as Figure 5. Two larger – scale plans of skeletons 1 (**S1**) and 5 / 6 (**S5 / S6**) are additionally provided (figures 6 and 8).

7.2.2. Site formation.

7.2.2.1. The basic stratigraphic formation of the cemetery and underlying ‘natural’ deposits (**layers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6**) is summarised within Table 1. A representative section drawing showing these recorded contexts and their physical relationship to Skeleton 2 (**S2**) can also be seen in this report (Figure 7). However, it should be emphasised that the thickness of respective contexts 1, 2, 3 and 5 varied quite considerably across the area of investigation (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Site formation.**

<b>CONTEXT NUMBER.</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION.</b>	<b>THICKNESS.</b>
<b>LAYER 1.</b>	<p><b>Topsoil.</b>            A loose, dark brown sandy clay containing occasional sandstone fragments and rounded pebbles (c.5mm. – 30mm.). The excavation of this deposit gleaned a single blade core of Mesolithic origin, 10 Post-medieval clay</p>	<b>0.15m. - 0.50m.</b>

	tobacco pipe stems and 11 pieces of 19 <sup>th</sup> / 20 <sup>th</sup> century china (not subject to specialist analysis). Above Layer 2 (context boundary extremely undulating).	
<b>LAYER 2.</b>	<b>Upper graveyard soil.</b> A loose, light brown sandy clay with c.10% flint, chalk and sandstone inclusions (c.5mm. – 50mm.). This context yielded five sherds of 19 <sup>th</sup> / 20 <sup>th</sup> century china (not subject to specialist analysis) and an occasional fragment of disarticulated human bone (see Section 7.2.4.). Below Layer 1. Above Layer 3 (context boundary both diffuse and undulating).	<b>0.25m. – 0.40m.</b>
<b>LAYER 3.</b>	<b>Lower graveyard soil.</b> A friable, mid orange – brown sandy clay containing c.5% flint, chalk and sandstone pieces (c.5mm. – 30mm.). A relatively high number of disarticulated human bones were recovered from this deposit (see Section 7.2.4.). Below Layer 2. Above Layer 4 (context boundary undulating).	<b>0.15m. – 0.40m.</b>
<b>LAYER 4.</b>	<b>Natural geology.</b> An extremely solid deposit of seemingly iron – rich material (probably iron – panning). Archaeologically sterile. Below Layer 3. Above 5 (context boundary undulating).	<b>c.0.20m.</b>
<b>LAYER 5.</b>	<b>Natural geology.</b> A variegated deposit of compact, light brown sandy clay, yellow sandy clay and solid patches of seemingly iron – rich material (as Layer 4). Archaeologically sterile.	<b>0.50m. – 0.80m.</b>

	Below 4. Above 6 (context boundary extremely undulating).	
<b>LAYER 6.</b>	<b>Natural geology.</b> A compact, light yellow sandy clay with grey streaks / mottles. Archaeologically sterile. Below 5. The full profile of this deposit was not revealed within the excavations.	?

### 7.2.3. In-situ inhumations.

7.2.3.1. The excavations undertaken as part of the second stage of construction work at the church revealed five apparently *in-situ* inhumations (**S1, S2, S3, S4 and S5 / S6**) (see Figure 5 for location). Skeletons 1 (**S1**) and 5 / 6 (**S5 / S6**) were exposed within the footprint of the proposed replacement wall and therefore required full excavation. (see sections 5.2.4., 7.2.3.2. and 7.2.3.6.). The remaining three skeletons (**S2, S3 and S4**) comprised skulls only observed in section. These burials were thus safe from further disturbance and left as found (see sections 7.2.3.3., 7.2.3.4. and 7.2.3.5.). It should be noted that no artefactual evidence for any of the discovered inhumations' precise date of interment was recovered.

7.2.3.2. Figure 6 and Plate 2 show the rather poorly preserved remains of Skeleton 1 (**S1**). Aligned in a north-east to south-west direction, this inhumation lay on the solid uppermost surface of the site's natural geology (**Layer 4**) at c.20m. O.D. (about 1m. below the original ground level). A short row of iron nails surely indicative of a long – since decayed wooden coffin (**Context 10**) was recorded alongside the surviving right femur of the seemingly juvenile individual (nails lifted before photograph). However, no evidence for an actual grave cut or fill (either in plan or section) was discerned during the excavation. Without the benefit of specialist osteological analysis it also

proved impossible to ascertain if the inhumation's missing right lower leg had been removed before death or 'lost' as a result of post – burial disturbance. Nevertheless, readers should be made aware that the surviving left leg of Skeleton 1 (**S1**) was located beneath the (presumably later and unrelated) headstone of a 47 year old male who died in 1878 (see Section 7.2.5.).

7.2.3.3. Skeleton 2 (**S2**) comprised just the top of a skull revealed in section only at c.20.15m. O.D. (approximately 0.65m. below the original ground level). This unexcavated cranium lay towards the base of a gently sloping, generally concave cut (**Cut 14**) that had clearly dissected both the lower graveyard soil (**Layer 3**) and the upper few centimetres of the cemetery's natural geology (**Layer 4**). A single homogenous feature fill of loose, mid grey-brown silty clay loam was also recorded (**Fill 15**) (Figure 7). Context 14 possessed a rather curious profile for a grave cut. Nevertheless, the described remains are here interpreted as one end of an essentially still *in-situ* inhumation extending into the undisturbed area of the burial ground.

7.2.3.4. Located directly upon the uppermost surviving surface of the site's natural geology (**Layer 4**) the cranium of Skeleton 3 (**S3**) was observed in section only at 19.54m. O.D. (c.1.18m. below the original ground level). No other human remains, signs of a grave cut, fill or coffin were found in association with this unexcavated discovery. Even so, it is possible to suggest the presence here of another essentially intact burial extending into the graveyard.

7.2.3.5. Skeleton 4 (**S4**) was just represented by the top of a skull visible in section only at 19.70m. O.D. (c.0.90m. beneath the original ground level). This unexcavated cranium lay on the extant surface of the site's natural geology (**Layer 4**) and is surely best interpreted as one end of another *in-situ* inhumation. However, it should be noted that no evidence for an associated grave cut, fill or coffin could be discerned.

7.2.3.6. Figure 8 and Plate 3 show a single grave cut (**Cut 16**) containing the rather poorly - preserved skeletal remains of two still-born or neonatal babies (**S5 / S6**) set within a friable, dark grey - brown silty clay loam (**Fill 17**). A number of iron nails almost certainly indicative of a now decayed casket or coffin were also recorded. Cut 16 was exposed in plan at c.19.60m. O.D. (approximately 1m. below the original ground level) and had clearly dissected the uppermost surface of the site's natural geology (**Layer 4**). However, no evidence for the presence of the burial was found during the excavation / reduction of its immediately overlying deposits (**layers 1, 2 and 3**). Without the aid of specialist osteological analysis it has proved impossible to ascertain if the bones recovered from Cut 16 represent the inhumation of two separate individuals or conjoined twins. Identification of the latter would have been of particular interest as today such conjunctions occur in only about 1 in 40,000 births. Readers should note that a formative examination of the mid 18<sup>th</sup> - late 19<sup>th</sup> century church baptisms and burials register held at the East Sussex County Record Office, Lewes failed to locate any reference to conjoined twins. However, a future comprehensive study of all available documentary sources (beyond the remit of the current investigation) may well shed some light on the matter.

#### 7.2.4. Disarticulated human bone.

7.2.4.1. The excavation of layers 2 and 3 yielded a relatively small assemblage of disarticulated human bone (not quantified) with the lower levels of Layer 3 proving the most productive. The investigation of a 20<sup>th</sup> century electricity cable trench (**Cut 12 / Fill 13**) also gleaned a number of bones (see Section 7.2.6.2.). However, it should be noted that no human remains of any description were recovered from the examined topsoil (**Layer 1**).

#### 7.2.5. Removed gravestone.

7.2.5.1. During Stage 2 of the project a single standing gravestone located just 0.50m. from the footprint of the proposed new wall was removed for 'health and

safety' reasons (see Section 5.2.7.). A full written, drawn and photographic record of the memorial, dedicated to a William Mansfield who died aged 47 in 1878, is held within the Project Archive (see Section 9.0.). However, readers should note that the stone faced towards the church and clearly did not mark the (presumably earlier) burial of the seemingly juvenile individual identified within this report as Skeleton 1 (**S1**) (see Section 7.2.3.2.). It is intended that the stone will soon be re-erected as close to its original position (Figure 4) as possible.

#### 7.2.6. Modern disturbance.

7.2.6.1. Two 20<sup>th</sup> century intrusions were exposed as a result of the groundworks (see Figure 5 for location). The first of these comprised a straight – sided cut containing broken concrete and modern brick (**Cut / Fill 7**). This feature possessed a maximum width of 1.80m. and dissected the full stratigraphic sequence recorded at the site (**layers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6**). Cut / Fill 7 represents the remnants of a ramp constructed in 1999 to facilitate the installation of a manhole / sump. An archaeological watching brief carried - out at that time (see Section 3.4.) concluded that 'no archaeological features or deposits were evident within the manhole or ramp' (Sibun 1999, 3).

7.2.6.2. The second intrusion of 20<sup>th</sup> century origin was a straight – sided electricity cable trench (**Cut 12**) that could clearly be seen to dissect at least layers 3, 4, 5 and 6. More importantly, the extremely loose, grey – brown silty clay loam fill of this cutting (**Fill 13**) contained a jumbled assemblage of displaced, disarticulated human bone (not quantified) indicative of at least one disturbed inhumation. Unfortunately, no evidence for the precise provenance of these skeletal remains was discovered.

**Table 2: Context register.**

<b>CONTEXT NUMBER.</b>	<b>CONTEXT TYPE.</b>	<b>PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS.</b>
1.	Topsoil	Above 2 Cut by 7
2.	Graveyard soil	Below 1 Above 3 Cut by 7
3.	Graveyard soil	Below 2 Above 4 Cut by 7, 12, 14
4.	Natural geology	Below 3, 10, S1, S3, S4 Above 5 Cut by 7, 12, 14, 16
5.	Natural geology	Below 4 Above 6 Cut by 7, 12
6.	Natural geology	Below 5, 9 Cut by 7, 12
7.	Cut/ Fill of modern intrusion	Cuts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
8.	Tarmac (of road)	Above 9
9.	Hardcore (of road)	Below 8 Above 6
10.	Evidence for coffin	Located on uppermost surface of 4
11.	Not allocated	
12.	Cut of electricity cable trench	Cuts 3, 4, 5, 6 Filled by 13



deposits of tarmac (**Layer 8**) and 20<sup>th</sup> century hardcore (**Layer 9**) were then removed from the length of trench that ran across Church Lane (see Figure 5) to reveal a 'clean' surface of natural sandy clay (**Layer 6**). No skeletal remains, archaeologically significant cut features, deposits or structures were discovered during the works. A small hole drilled into the wall of the church tower in order to accommodate the new gas supply also failed to provide any meaningful structural / architectural information (see Site Archive for details).

## 8.0. CONCLUSIONS.

- 8.1. A single Mesolithic flint blade core recovered from Layer 1 (see Table 1) is almost certainly indicative of the region's transitory exploitation by roaming bands of hunter – gatherers during the period c.6,000 – 4,300 BC. However, it should be stressed that the investigations considered within this report failed to uncover any archaeological evidence for the postulated pre-Christian origin of the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul and its associated mound / cemetery (see sections 3.3. and 6.2.5.). Other artefacts gleaned from the fieldwork included 10 clay tobacco pipe stems of Post-medieval date and 16 sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> century china (see Table 1). No contexts of palaeoenvironmental significance were recorded.
- 8.2. It is believed that the described groundworks exposed at least seven unmarked but still *in-situ* inhumations (a possible two during Wall replacement: stage 1, five as a result of Wall replacement: stage 2) at a depth below the original ground surface of between c.0.65m. and 1.40m. Two of these burials (**S1 and S5 / S6**) were located along the footprint of the proposed new wall and thus required full excavation (see Section 7.2.3.1.).
- 8.3. Two of the inhumations examined by C. G. Archaeology (**S2 and S5 / S6**) were contained within negative features (**cuts 14 and 16**) clearly dissecting the uppermost few centimetres of the site's natural geology (**Layer 4**). Unfortunately, it proved impossible to discern any grave cuts associated with the remaining five seemingly *in-situ* skeletons recorded at the site. The fieldwork did however confirm that the exposed bones of skeletons 1, 3 and 4 (**S1, S3 and S4**) lay directly on top of Layer 4.
- 8.4. Without the benefit of specialist osteological analysis no objective statements can be made concerning the precise age at death, sex and pathology of the exposed human remains. Nevertheless, the possible discovery of conjoined twins (**S5 / S6**) is worthy of reiteration (see Section 7.2.3.6.).

- 8.5. Iron nails indicative of coffins or caskets were found in association with skeletons 1 and 5 / 6 (**S1 and S5 / S6**). Unfortunately, the complete absence of grave goods (and of course standing headstones) means little can be said regarding the revealed inhumations' exact date of interment. However, the recorded evidence does suggest that Skeleton 1 (**S1**) was laid to rest before the year 1878 (see sections 7.2.3.2. and 7.2.5.1.).
- 8.6. A small assemblage of disarticulated human bone was recovered from the excavated graveyard soil (**layers 2 and 3**) and the modern fill of an electricity cable trench (**Cut 12 / Fill 13**) (see Section 7.2.4.1.). Yet no other archaeologically significant cut features, structures, deposits or artefacts were discovered during the investigation.
- 8.7. It is of course most regrettable that unforeseen and thus unmonitored groundworks were carried – out at the start of the project under discussion (see Section 5.1.1.). Nevertheless, the subsequent fieldwork undertaken by C. G. Archaeology is believed to have satisfied the primary objectives defined in Section 4.0.
- 8.8. A second length of retaining cemetery wall at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul is to be considered for replacement in the not too distant future. The evidence collated within this report clearly suggests that the groundworks associated with any such scheme will almost certainly impact upon both articulated and displaced human remains. Accordingly, an archaeological mitigation strategy for the preservation *in-situ* or full excavation of affected archaeologically significant contexts will need to be developed in conjunction with all relevant parties as a matter of priority.

**9.0. ARCHIVE.**

- 9.1. It is intended that the full paper, digital and photographic records arising from this project will be collated in accordance with '*Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage*' (UKICI 1990) and deposited with the retained artefact assemblage in a suitable local museum or similar repository approved by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor and East Sussex County Council Archaeologist. All recovered skeletal remains are to be returned to the Rev. Charlie Hill for re-interment at the church.

**10.0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.**

10.1. C. G. Archaeology would like to acknowledge Casper Johnson and Greg Chuter of East Sussex County Council, Vivienne Coad the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor, Wealden District Council, John D. Clarke and Partners, Steadfast Building Contractors and Property Services Ltd. and the Rev. Charlie Hill for their assistance during the project. Figures 1 and 3 are based upon plans drawn – up and supplied to C. G. Archaeology by Christopher Bottomley of Wealden District Council, to whom particular thanks are extended.

## 11.0. REFERENCES.

Coppin, P. 2001. *101 Medieval churches of East Sussex*, S. B. Publications.

Mytum, H. 2002. *Recording and analysing graveyards*, Council for British Archaeology in association with English Heritage.

Nairn, I. and Pevsner, N. 2001. *The buildings of England: Sussex*, Penguin Books.

Sibun, L. 1999. 'An archaeological watching brief at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly, East Sussex', *Unpub. Archaeology South-East Report No. 1083*.

No author cited. 1938. 'Additions to museum', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* **79**, lxi.

Syms, J. A. 1994. *East Sussex country churches*, S. B. Publications.

Whiteman, K. and Whiteman, J. 1998. *Ancient churches of Sussex*, S. B. Publications.

### SUMMARY SHEET.

<b>Site Code.</b>	HEL 07					
<b>Site identification and address.</b>	The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly					
<b>County, district and / or borough.</b>	East Sussex					
<b>O.S. grid ref.</b>	TQ 58057 12295					
<b>Geology.</b>	Tunbridge Wells Sand					
<b>Project number.</b>	06 / 10					
<b>Fieldwork type.</b>	<b>Eval.</b>	<b>Excav.</b>	<b>W.Brief.</b>	<b>Survey.</b>	<b>Other.</b>	
		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>			
<b>Site type.</b>	<b>Rural.</b>	<b>Urban.</b>	<b>Other.</b> Churchyard			
<b>Date of fieldwork.</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> March – 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2007					
<b>Client.</b>	Wealden District Council and John D. Clarke and Partners.					
<b>Project manager.</b>	Christopher Greatorex					
<b>Project supervisor</b>	Christopher Greatorex					
<b>Period summary.</b>	<b>Palaeo.</b>	<b>Meso.</b>	<b>Neo.</b>	<b>B. Age.</b>	<b>I. Age.</b>	<b>R – B.</b>
		<b>X</b>				
	<b>A. S.</b>	<b>Med.</b>	<b>P. Med</b>	<b>Other.</b>		
			<b>X</b>			
<b>Project Summary.</b>						
<p>A programme of archaeological excavation and recording was undertaken during the part replacement of a retaining graveyard wall and the cutting of a gas pipe trench at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly. The described works exposed at least seven unmarked but still <i>in-situ</i> human inhumations at a depth below the original ground level of between 0.65m. and 1.40m. Two of these burials were located within the footprint of the proposed new wall and thus required full excavation. The precise date of interment, age at death, sex and pathology of the exposed human remains was not ascertained. However, the possible discovery of conjoined twins is of note. The artefacts gleaned from the removed topsoil and upper graveyard soil comprised a single Mesolithic flint blade core, 10 clay tobacco pipe stems of Post-medieval date and 16 sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> century china. However, no evidence was collated for the postulated pre-Christian origin of the church. All recovered human skeletal remains are to be returned to the church for re-interment.</p>						