



St Nicholas Church, Winterborne Clenston, Dorset

Observations and Recording During Construction of New Extension



Report No. 53500/3/1

August 2018

St Nicholas Church, Winterborne Clenston, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording During Construction of
New Extension, July 2018

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Table of Contents

Project Report Summary Page.....	iv
Part 1: Introduction	
1.1 Project Introduction.....	1
1.2 Planning Condition.....	1
1.3 Faculty.....	1
1.4 Site Location and Topography.....	1
1.5 Geology.....	1
1.6 Archaeological and Historical background.....	2
1.7 Aims and Objectives.....	2
1.8 Groundworks.....	2
1.9 Methods.....	2
1.10 Archive and Dissemination.....	3
Part 2: Results	
2.1 Introduction.....	3
2.2 Natural Deposits.....	3
2.3 Church Footings.....	3
2.4 Feature 111.....	3
2.5 Grave 107.....	3
2.6 Drain 103.....	4
2.7 Churchyard Soils.....	4
Part 3: Finds	
3.1 Finds Assemblage.....	4
Part 4: Discussion and Conclusions	
4.1 Discussion.....	4
4.2 Conclusions.....	4
Part 5: References	
4	
Figures	
1 Location plan.....	5
2 Plan of Archaeological Observations.....	6
Plates	
1 General view of Trench 1, looking South West.....	7
2 Feature 111 cut by Grave 107 cut by Drain 103, looking West.....	7
3 Drain 103 cutting Grave 107, looking south.....	7
4 Coffin grip plate 110 at west end of Grave 107 in situ.....	8
5 Trench 1 after excavation of new foundation trenches.....	8
6 Footings of North Transept.....	8
7 Trench 3 running from South Transept to corner of Chancel.....	9
8 Trench 3 running along East end of Chancel.....	9
9 Trench 2 looking North West.....	9
Appendix 1: Context Summary	
10	

Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
OASIS Reference	terrains1-327278		
Project Title	New Extension, St Nicholas' Church, Winterborne Clenston		
Short Description of Project	An archaeological watching was carried out by Terrain Archaeology during the groundworks for a new extension at St Nicholas' Church, Winterborne Clenston in July 2018. The observations revealed part of the foundations of the existing 1840 church. A grave of an adult coffined burial of eighteenth/nineteenth century date, which is likely to pre-date the present church was also found. It was cut by a brick and stone lined drain associated with the present church. Another feature of unknown form, date and function was also found, pre-dating the burial.		
Project Dates	Start: 16-07-2018	End: 16-07-2018	
Previous/Future Work	No/No		
Project Code	53500		
Monument Type and Period	Church (Post-medieval), Grave (Post-medieval)		
Significant Finds	Coffin Fitting (Post-medieval)		
Project Location			
County/District/Parish	Dorset/ North Dorset/Winterborne Clenston		
Site Address	St Nicholas's Church, Village Road, Winterborne Clenston, Dorset, DT11 0NY		
Site Coordinates	ST 8398 0279		
Site Area	19.5 m ²		
Height OD			
Project Creators			
Organisation	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Brief Originator	None		
Project Design Originator	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Supervisor	Peter Bellamy		
Project Manager	Peter Bellamy		
Sponsor or Funding Body	Winterborne Clenston PCC		
Project Archive			
Archive Type	Physical	Digital	Paper
Location/Accession No	None	None	None
Contents	None	None	None

St Nicholas Church, Winterborne Clenston, Dorset

Archaeological Observations and Recording During Construction of New Extension, July 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by Winterborne Clenston PCC, through their agents, Chichesters Land Agents, to undertake archaeological observations and recording during the construction of a new extension to the Grade II* listed parish church of St Nicholas, Winterborne Clenston. The archaeological work was undertaken in fulfilment of Condition 3 of Planning Application No. 2/2017/0954/FUL and Condition 4 of Faculty No, 3678.

The fieldwork was undertaken on 16th July 2018 by Peter Bellamy.

1.2 Planning Condition

Condition 3 of the granting of approval of Planning Application No. 2/2017/0954/FUL by North Dorset District Council, the Local Planning Authority, states:

No development shall take place until the applicant or their successors in title have made arrangements for archaeological observation and recording to take place during any period of ground work development. Details of those arrangements shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority at least one month before any work commences on the development site.

The observations and recording shall be carried out as approved.

Reason: To safeguard and/or record the archaeological interest on and around the site

1.3 Faculty

The works were undertaken under Faculty No. 3678, issued 30 August 2018. The faculty includes the following condition:

4. the ground-works shall be subject to archaeological monitoring in accordance with the advice of the Dorset County Council archaeology department and any disturbance of human remains shall be dealt with as part of that monitoring. In the event that human remains are disturbed, such remains shall be treated in a seemly and dignified manner, stored securely where necessary and re-interred in the churchyard in the presence of Anglican clergy as soon as reasonably practicable and at a location as close to the original interment as reasonably possible.

1.4 Site Location and Topography

St Nicholas Church lies in an isolated position in the base of the Winterborne valley on the east side of the River Winterborne, at Ordnance Survey NGR ST 8398 0279 (Figure 1). It lies on a relatively flat piece of ground at about 85 m above Ordnance Datum.

1.5 Geology

Bedrock geology is mapped as Chalk of the Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, with no superficial deposits recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.6 Archaeological and Historical Background

Little is known of the prehistoric and Roman settlement of Winterborne Clenston. In the medieval period there were a series of settlements along the River Winterborne marked by an almost continuous line of settlement-remains beside the river, which appear to represent three separate villages and manors, all now deserted. To the north, Winterborne Philipston lay around the present Clenston Farm. Winterborne Clenston was in the area of the present Manor House. Winterborne Nicholson to the south was sited near and to the south of St. Nicholas's Church (RCHME 1970). The site of the former village of Nicholson is marked by three groups earthworks on both sides of the Winterborne valley to the south and south west of the church with the remains of five house platforms and closes and a hollow way (RCHME 1970). Many of these earthworks have now been ploughed out.

The Parish Church of St. Nicholas was built in 1840 in the Gothic style to the designs of Lewis Vulliamy, replacing a smaller and plainer building, which was demolished. It has a simple cruciform plan with a tower and spire above the west porch. It has banded flint and ashlar walls with ashlar dressings and is roofed with stone-slates.

1.7 Aims and Objectives

Aims

- The principal aim of the Archaeological programme of works was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site.
- The programme of works aimed to place the archaeological results within the local, regional and national context, as appropriate, and advance understanding of the archaeology of the site and its surroundings.

Objectives

- To investigate and record all the in situ archaeological deposits and features revealed during the programme of works to an appropriate professional standard.
- To record recovered artefacts and other materials to an appropriate standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

1.8 Groundworks

The groundworks comprised the stripping of the topsoil across the whole area of the new extension, then the machine excavation of the new foundation trenches, which were about 0.75 m wide and 1.0 m deep. The east wall footing was completely excavated before archaeological recording, but machining of the northern foundation trench was halted when drain 103 was encountered. Subsequently the archaeological features were excavated by hand along the line of the northern footing, with the final part removed by machine. Trenches 2 and 3 for new services were excavated by machine.

1.9 Methods

The methodology, scope, aims and objectives of the works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Terrain Archaeology in June 2018 (Terrain Archaeology document no. 3500/0/1).

The observation and recording of the groundworks was undertaken to the standards of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIfA 2014), with an archaeologist in attendance during the topsoil stripping and the excavation of foundation trenches and service trenches.

All features and deposits, regardless of their perceived date and archaeological significance, were recorded using components of Terrain Archaeology's system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records.

A photographic record of the watching brief was maintained in digital format. This record includes specific aspects of its technical detail as well as its conduct and wider landscape setting of the project.

1.10 Archive and Dissemination

1.1.1 Paper Archive

No paper archive will be retained beyond the end of the project.

1.1.2 Artefacts

No artefacts or other materials were retained from the site.

1.1.3 Report

A copy of this report will be lodged with Dorset County Council's Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a publicly funded and accessible resource, and deposition of the report will place it, and the project results, in the public domain.

A digital summary of the archive will be placed with the OASIS project (www.oasis.ac.uk) under the reference code *terrains1-327278*. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

2. Results

2.1 Introduction

The area of the new extension was numbered Trench 1. Trench 2 was the new drain trench to connect to an existing manhole and Trench 3 was dug for an electric cable. Their locations are shown on Figure 2 and the context descriptions are presented in Appendix 1.

2.2 Natural Deposits

The natural was a decayed pale yellowish-brown chalk with flint nodules (101, 201), possibly a Head deposit or very weathered chalk bedrock.

2.3 Church Footings

The footings of the present church were exposed in Trench 1 where the foundation trenches for the new extension were dug against the church and also in Trench 3 at the east end of the Chancel (Figure 2; Plates 6 and 8). They consisted of a construction trench (113, 303) projecting about 0.4 m out from the church and 0.7 m deep. It was filled with flint nodules in a yellowish-brown mortar matrix. A single course of brick is set on top of this footing upon which the ashlar of the plinth is constructed.

2.4 Feature 111

The earliest feature encountered was a vertical-sided cut (111) into the natural, which was only partially exposed. It was aligned roughly NW-SE and was 0.75 m deep with a flat base. The SE end of this feature is probably represented by cut 202 in Trench 2 (Figure 2). This feature was filled by tips of loose chalk rubble and lenses of greyish-brown silty soil. It was cut by Grave 107. The interpretation of this feature is uncertain.

2.5 Grave 107

A single grave was exposed during the works. This grave (107) was at the northern edge of Trench 1 (Figure 2; Plates 2–4). The grave cut was rectangular in shape and was 0.7 m deep (below present ground level). Only part of this grave was exposed. It contained a supine adult skeleton (109) with the head to the west, interred in a coffin (110). The presence of this coffin was indicated by a small number of coffin nails and the presence of a tinsplate grip plate of eighteenth/nineteenth century date at the head end (Plate 4). The shape of the coffin could not be determined. The western end of the grave was disturbed by the construction of drain 103.

2.6 Drain 103

A brick and stone lined drain (102/103) running in a NNE-SSW direction was found cut through the western part of grave 107 (Figure 2; Plates 2–3). The course of the drain was not exposed except in the area of the new extension

foundation trench. The drain trench (105) was slightly curvilinear and oriented roughly NNW-SSE. It contained a channel consisting of a tabular limestone base (roof tiles?) upon which was constructed two courses of mortared red unfrosted bricks (103) forming the sides of the channel and sealed by a layer of limestone roof tiles (102) mortared in place. The backfill of the drain trench on the western side of the channel contained a large quantity of disarticulated human bone. Some or most of this is likely to be the disturbed remains of skeleton 109.

2.7 Churchyard Soils

Over Trench 1 and Trench 2 there was a 0.15 m thick layer of greyish-brown soil (100, 200), which lay directly above the natural deposits. In Trench 3, to the south of the Chancel, this soil layer (300) lay over another soil layer (301), the depth of which was not determined.

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

A small quantity of finds was noted during the fieldwork. This assemblage consisted of a small quantity of iron coffin nails from context 110 and a pressed tinplate coffin grip plate with cast iron grip of Spitalfields Type 2a (Reeve and Adams 1993, Volume 1 microfiche). This is likely to be late eighteenth to nineteenth century in date.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

The groundworks revealed some detail of the present church foundations, which consisted of a mortared flint footing. Drain 103 is likely to have been inserted to drain away water from the roof valley in the angle between the Chancel and North Transept. No dating evidence for the drain was obtained but it is likely to have been constructed at the same time or soon after the church was constructed in 1840.

The single grave encountered is earlier than Drain 103 and is of later eighteenth or nineteenth century date, judging from the surviving coffin grip plate. It is possible, or perhaps even likely, that this is a burial in the churchyard that pre-dated the construction of the church in 1840.

The earliest feature was the large, possibly rectangular, feature 111. No dating evidence was recovered from it and it is unclear, without further investigation, why this feature was dug.

No trace of the earlier church was identified.

4.2 Conclusions

The observations during the construction of the new extension to the church revealed part of the structure of the existing 1840 church foundations. It also exposed a single grave of eighteenth/nineteenth century date, which is likely to pre-date the present church.

5. References

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------|--|
| CifA | 2014 | <i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief.</i> Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. |
| Reeve, J. and Adams, M., | 1993 | <i>The Spitalfields Project Volume 1 - The Archaeology: Across The Styx.</i> CBA Research Report 85. Council for British Archaeology |
| RCHME | 1970 | <i>An Inventory of Historical Monuments in the County of Dorset. Volume Three, Central.</i> London; HMSO. |

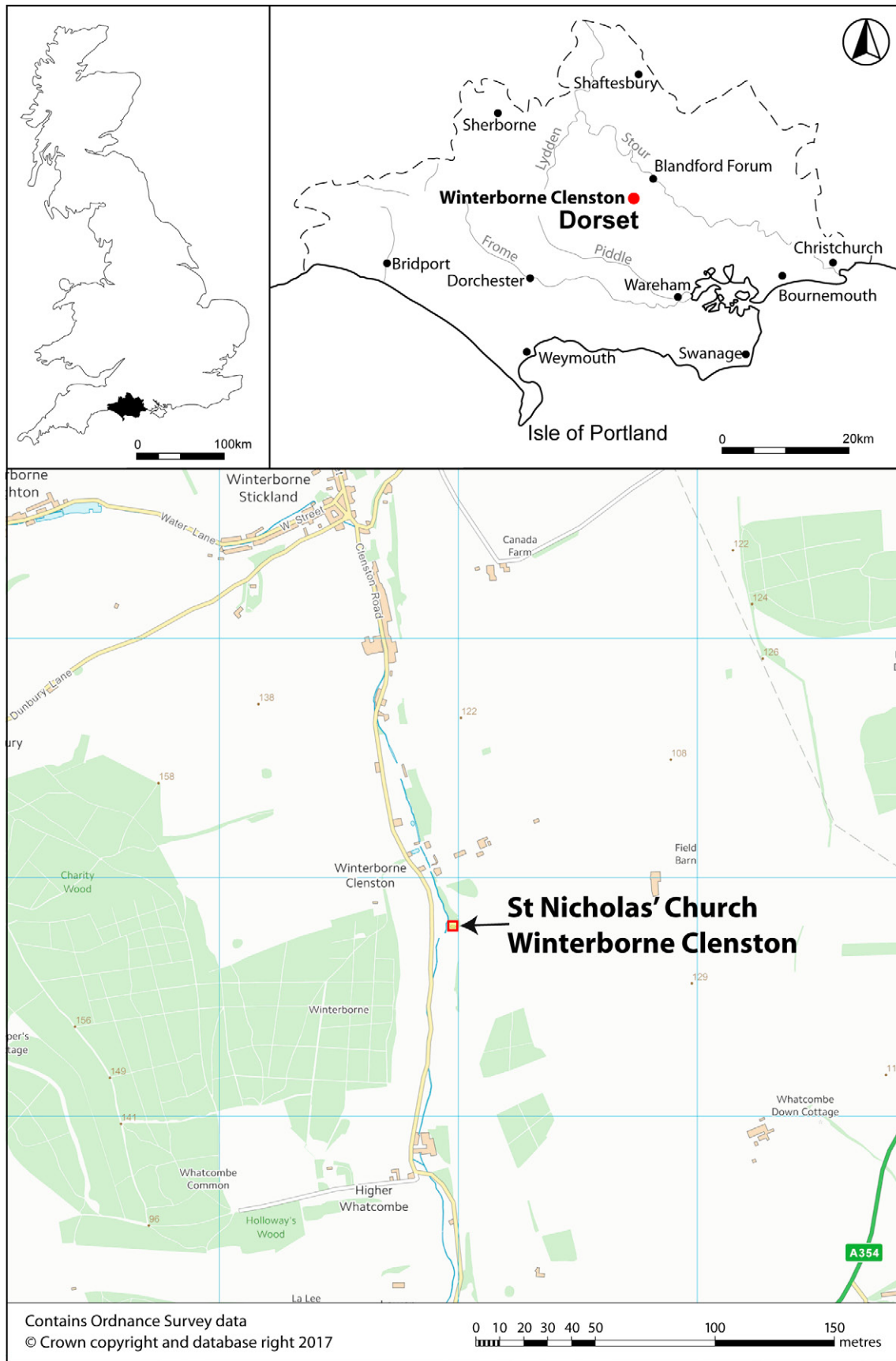


Figure 1: Location map

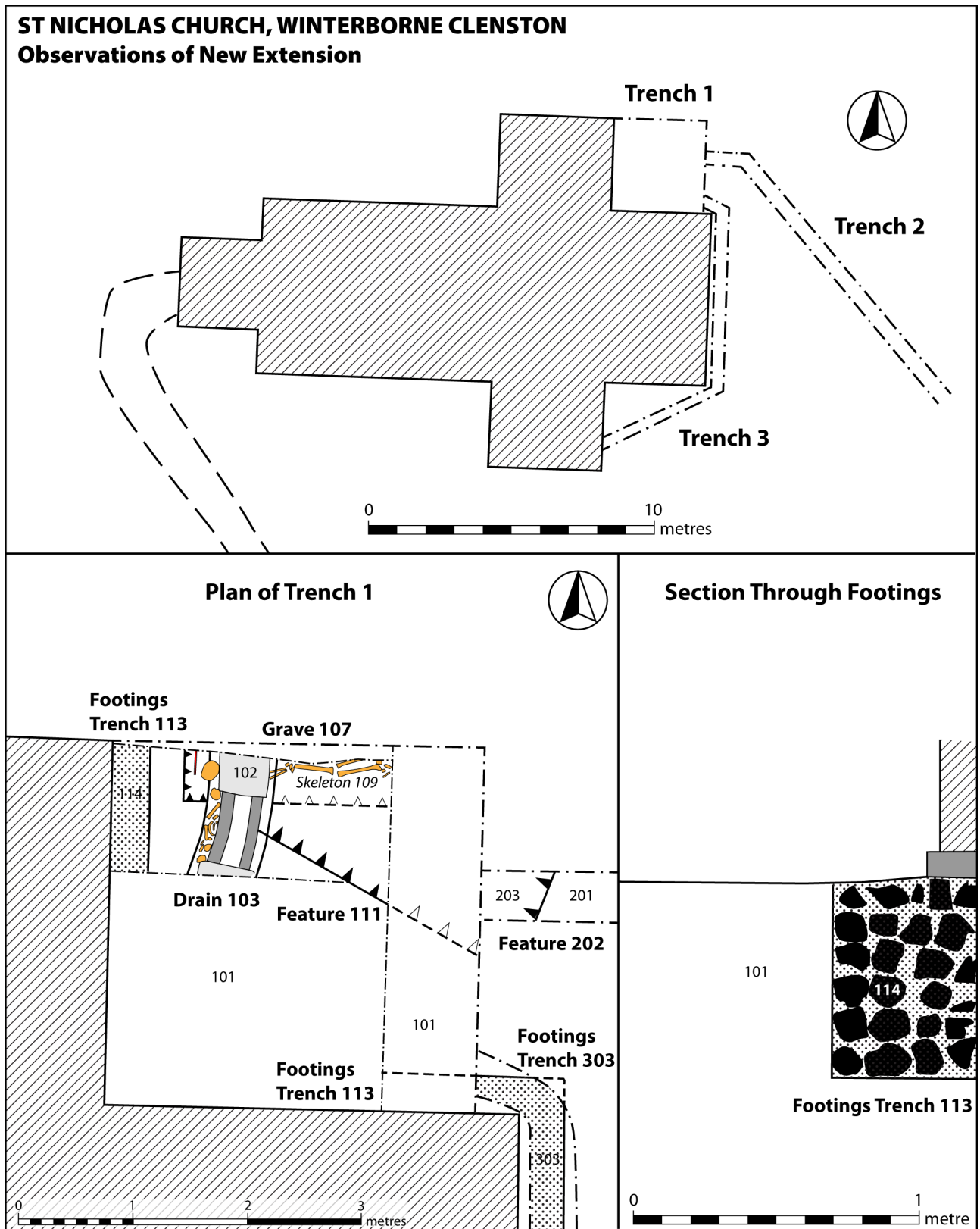


Figure 2: Plan of Archaeological Observations



Plate 1: General view of Trench 1, looking South West. 2m scale.



Plate 2: Feature 111 cut by Grave 107 cut by Drain 103, looking West. 1m & 2m scales.



Plate 3: Drain 103 cutting Grave 107, looking south. 1m & 2m scales.



Plate 4: Coffin grip plate 110 at west end of Grave 107 in situ.



Plate 5: Trench 1 after excavation of new foundation trenches.



Plate 6: Footings of North Transept. 2m scale (50cm divisions).



Plate 7: Trench 3 running from South Transept to corner of Chancel. 2m scale.



Plate 8: Trench 3 running along East end of Chancel. 2m scale.



Plate 9: Trench 2 looking North West. 2m scale.

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Trench 1

Length: 3.20 m; Width 3.15 m; Maximum Depth 1.00 m.

Context	Description and Interpretation	Depth (m) below ground level
100	Topsoil: Dark greyish-brown silty clay loam with moderate small chalk lumps and flint.	0.00 – 0.15m
101	Natural: Decayed pale yellowish-brown chalk and flint nodules. Head deposit?	0.15m+
102	Stone Capping to Drain 103: Limestone roof tiles mortared on top of brick drain structure 103.	0.35m
103	Drain: Two courses of red unfrosted bricks forming sides of drain running from corner of Chancel and North Transept. The bricks were mortared on to a base of tabular limestone. The drain channel was 0.14m wide and 0.15m deep.	0.40 – 0.60m
104	Silt in Drain 103: Dark greyish-brown/black silt infilling drain 103	0.55 – 0.60m
105	Drain Cut: Slightly curvilinear flat-bottomed, vertical-sided cut 0.56m wide and 0.5m deep, cut into natural chalk 101. Cuts Grave 107 and natural 101.	0.15 – 0.65m
106	Drain Cut Backfill: Loose dark greyish-brown clay loam with frequent small chalk lumps and contains frequent loose human bone on western side of drain.	0.15 – 0.65m
107	Grave Cut: Rectangular flat-bottomed cut aligned roughly E-W. Contains skeleton 109. Filled with 108.	0.15 – 0.70m
108	Fill of Grave 107: Mid greyish-brown clay loam with frequent small chalk lumps.	0.15 – 0.70m
109	Skeleton in Grave 107: Articulated adult supine skeleton with head to west. Only partly exposed in trench and disturbed by drain 103. Right leg and arm exposed.	0.70m
110	Coffin in Grave 107: Coffin remains comprising scattered coffin nails and a pressed tin coffin handle plate at west end.	
111	Cut for Feature: Vertical sides and flat based cut aligned roughly NW-SE. Only partially exposed.	0.15 – 0.90m
112	Fill of Feature 111: Tips of loose chalk rubble and lenses of mid greyish-brown silty clay with moderate flint nodules. Contained one iron nail and some rodent bones.	0.15 – 0.90m
113	Footings Trench for Church: Vertically-sided flat-bottomed cut for footings 114.	0.15 – 0.85m
114	Footings of Church: Flint nodules in a yellowish brown lime mortar matrix.	0.15 – 0.85m

Trench 2

Length: 12.5 m; Width 0.40 m; Depth 0.50 m.

Context	Description and Interpretation	Depth (m) below ground level
200	Topsoil: Dark greyish-brown silty clay loam with moderate small chalk lumps and flint.	0.00 – 0.15m
201	Natural: Decayed pale yellowish-brown chalk and flint nodules. Head deposit?	0.15m+
202	Cut for Feature: Vertical side. Not fully exposed. Base not reached. Probably part of Feature 111.	0.15m+
203	Fill of Feature 202: Tips of loose chalk rubble and lenses of mid greyish-brown silty clay with moderate flint nodules.	0.15m+

Trench 3

Length: 11m; Width 0.40 m; Depth 0.45 m.

Context	Description and Interpretation	Depth (m) below ground level
300	Topsoil: Dark greyish-brown silty clay loam with moderate small chalk lumps and flint.	0.00 – 0.15m
301	Churchyard Soil: Mid brown clay loam with moderate chalk and flint. Below 300.	0.15m+
302	Footings Trench for Church: Vertically-sided flat-bottomed cut for footings 303. 0.4 m wide.	0.15m+
303	Footings of Church: Flint nodules in a yellowish brown lime mortar matrix.	0.15m+