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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**St. Germain's Church, Scothern, Lincs.**

**NGR: TF 034 774**

**Site Code: SGS 00**

**LCNCC Museum Accn. No.: 2000.66**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**Report prepared for  
Scothern Parochial Church Council**

**by N. Field**

**LAS Report No. 514**

**March 2001**

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W. H. R. ...  
London

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SOURCES LI 6549 LI 6550  
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Fig. 1 Location of Scothern. Inset C based on the 1998 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Landranger map Sheet 121. Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A.

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# St. Germain's Church, Scothern, Lincs. Archaeological Watching Brief

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief in advance of alterations within the north transept recorded detail of the structural sequence. The base of the north aisle wall had been rebuilt in brick, on stone foundations probably of its predecessor. The rebuild is believed to be shortly after 1796. In 1840 the wall was demolished and the transept built. An internal cross-wall supported raked seating above and acted as a retaining wall for an area to the north, beneath the seating, used to house the boiler. Between the retaining wall and the north aisle was part of the former external graveyard. The surface of this ground had been disturbed by three post-holes, probably from scaffolds erected during demolition or construction works in or after 1840.*

## **Introduction**

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned in March 2000 by Scothern Parochial Church Council, to undertake an archaeological watching brief in the north transept of the church.

The watching brief was required to satisfy a condition of the faculty granted by the Chancellor for the construction of kitchen toilet and storage facilities with a new gallery above (Fig. 3). The work was conducted in accordance with general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* published by the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council (1998).

## **Scope of Work**

The purpose of the archaeological work was to establish the presence, extent and quality of any archaeological remains and record any archaeological features which were exposed by the groundworks. The watching brief was conducted by Naomi Field on March 16th 2000.

## **Site Location**

The village of Scothern is 8km NE of Lincoln, approximately midway between the A158 Wragby Road and the A46 Caistor Road (Fig. 1). The parish church lies within a land block south of High Street (Pls. 1 and 2).

## **Archaeological and Historical Background**

Prehistoric artefacts and Romano-British pottery sherds have been reported from Scothern parish. The settlement at Scothern was in existence in 1086 when the Domesday Survey was

produced, and a church is recorded. The original parish extent may have been larger, and included Sudbrooke parish. At the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, the village was the centre of two manors, and its complex form is the result of development around the different focii. A distinct land block near the Manor House, in the core of the modern village, formed a grange held by Barlings Abbey after the late twelfth century.

The chancel arch pillars are surviving fabric from a late twelfth century church, but much of the present church dates from phases of rebuilding and restoration from the end of the sixteenth century. In 1796 substantial alterations were approved, including demolition of the north and south aisles and construction of a new north aisle reusing available materials. The new north aisle wall was built with initial courses of brickwork below masonry.

The construction date of the north transept is not known, but is thought to be 1840, as stated in the leaflet on the church's history. To create the transept, the north aisle wall was punctured, and a cast-iron support used at the centre of the main roof beam. External lower courses of the transept wall are of yellow brickwork, from Dunholme and Langworth. The transept was designed to hold a sloping gallery against the north wall, but part of this gallery was removed in 1876 and prior to the recent alterations there were only three pews flanking the sides of the transept. The north third of the transept had been dug out to a depth 1.2m below ground level to create a boiler house which was covered by wooden panelling with external access from a door in the east wall (White 1981; White, Manser and Kightly 1990).

### **The Watching Brief (Fig. 2)**

Context numbers were assigned by LAS for recording purposes within the transept. The context numbers used in the report are in bold; they are indicated on the plan and photographs in this report.

When the watching brief visit was made, seating, panelling, joists and floorboards had been removed from the north transept (Pl. 3). The area south of the boiler room was cleaned and features recorded.

Brickwork courses from the partly removed north aisle wall, **1**, were exposed. This wall was 0.70m wide is likely to be the wall rebuilt under the Faculty of 1796. It sat on stone foundations, **2**, probably the remains of the medieval aisle wall (Pls 4 and 5). A shallow depression running parallel to the wall foundations was probably a foundation trench, **14**, associated with construction of the brick wall **1**. On top of the demolished wall **1**, was an eight-course high brick-built square pier, the base for a cast iron column providing support for the transept roof (Pl. 5).

The west and east walls of the transept abutted the rebuilt north aisle wall. The foundation trench for the transept west wall, **11**, had, in fact, cut through the demolished north aisle wall, proving that the north aisle rebuild and the construction of the transept were two separate events (Pl. 6). Its fill, **9**, contained a single piece of stone moulding, possibly a fragment of window surround from the medieval church. No evidence for a construction trench was found for the transept east wall.

Across the centre of the transept was a mortared stone rubble retaining wall **8**, 0.36m wide (Pl. 7). This wall abutted the transept west and east walls. (Pl. 8). A single course of brickwork was seen above the stone courses during the monitoring visit but, as there was mortar on top of the brick course other brick courses had probably been removed. To the north of the wall the ground had been reduced by 1.2m, creating a cavity the full width of the transept, 7.35m x 2.65m in area, with the central heating boiler at the west end. There was (and is) external access only, via a door in the east wall of the transept, leading down four steps (Pls 2 and 3). Within this area were two brick piers which had originally supported the raked seating above.

South of the retaining wall a 1.3m wide strip of ground, north of the aisle wall, survived at the higher level. This area was covered in a mixed layer of dry soil, plaster and mortar dust, **10**, which was probably the remnants of demolition debris from the removal of the aisle wall. Removal of **10** revealed a compact layer of soil **7** which was probably the former graveyard, before being incorporated within the church footprint in 1840. Finds from this deposit included a copper alloy shroud pin (probably 18<sup>th</sup> century in date) a 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century piece of pottery and several pieces of moulded wall plaster, probably from the 1796 rebuild of the aisle.

Three post-holes were visible at this level, and are therefore most likely to date from about 1840 or later. Post-hole **17**, was against the edge of the north aisle wall construction trench **14**. Removal of its soft fill, **6**, revealed a clear circular hole where a scaffold pole had been removed. This probably marks the position of a scaffold upright associated with the 1796 rebuild of the aisle, or the later construction of the transept (Pls. 9 and 10). Finds from the fill of the posthole included two pieces of roof tile and a piece of wall plaster but they could not be closely dated.

**16** was a less well-defined feature, possibly cut by the construction trench **14** (Pl. 11). Its loose fill contained two pieces of animal bone and a single fragment of floor tile. Post-hole **15** was alongside the foundation trench for the transept west wall. Removal of the fill, **7** revealed a clearly defined scaffold post-hole, similar to the one seen in posthole **15** (Pl. 12). Its fill, **4**, contained fragments of plaster. Whether the plaster found came from the medieval aisle wall or the rebuilt wall of 1796 is not known.



## **Conclusion**

The watching brief confirmed the construction sequence of the transept from the stratigraphy, and showed that the transept was of a different build than the rebuilt north aisle wall. Although no close dating was obtained, the number of episodes of alterations tends to support the dated sequence described in the church guide, namely that the Faculty granted in 1796, relates to the rebuild of the north aisle wall and in 1840, part of the north aisle wall was demolished when the north transept was built.

## **Acknowledgements**

LAS is grateful for the assistance received from Mrs S. Leadbetter (Secretary, Scothern Parochial Church Council) and the contractors on site.

The recording was carried out by Naomi Field. Illustrations were prepared by Wendy Booth and Mick McDaid, and the report was collated and produced by Jane Frost.

Naomi Field  
Lindsey Archaeological Services  
March 19th 2001

## **References**

- White, A.J. 1981 *St. Germain's Church, Scothern: A Guide*.  
White, A.J., Manser, P. and Kightly, C. 1990 *St. Germain's Church, Scothern: A Guide*.

## **Archive Summary**

- Correspondence
- Dyeline copy of architect's plan
- Site plan
- Context sheets and notes
- Inked plan
- Photographs: colour prints, LAS film no. 00/27/2-37

## The Appendices

## Scothern Church (SGS00) Context Summary

Context No.	Type	Relationships	Description	Finds	Date
1	Wall	Below 10, above 2,	0.7m wide north wall of north aisle, partly demolished in 1796, rebuilt partly in brick, then demolished in 1840 when transept built		1796
2	Foundation	Below 1	Offset stone rubble foundation below north wall of north aisle		1796
3	Fill	fill of 14	Fill of construction trench 15 for wall 1. Firm brown soil with limestone pieces		1796
4	Post-hole fill	contained by 15	Plaster, brick and pottery in fill	plaster	1840
5	?Post-hole fill	contained by 16	Loose fill with crushed mortar, brick and tile fragments	2 pieces animal bone, 1 piece ?floor tile	?1840
6	Post-hole fill	contained by 17	Very loose fill	plaster, 2 pieces roof tile	?1840
7	Layer	Cut by 14,15,16,17	Firm brown sandy soil, possibly ground surface prior to construction of north transept	1 copper alloy shroud pin, 1 piece pottery, 1 piece roof tile, plaster	pre 1840
8	Wall	Abuts 12 and 13	East-west aligned stone retaining wall within north transept. 1.2m high, 0.36m wide. Abuts west wall of transept. Rough cut limestone blocks. Retains 7 forms limit of lower area for boiler room		1840 or later
9	fill of 11		Very loose soil and mortar	architectural fragment	1840
10	Layer	Above 7	Loose cream-coloured mortar spread with small pieces of brick and stone, found below floorboards. 0.1m thick. Extended to wall 8 and over foundation 2. Construction deposit from building north transept?		1840 or later
11	Foundation trench	cuts 1,2,14,7; contains 9	North-south aligned trench alongside west wall of north transept. Cuts through north wall of north aisle and its foundation		1840
12	Wall	Butts 1, butted by 8	West wall of north transept		1840
13	Wall	Butts 1, butted by 8	East wall of north transept		1840

## Scothern Church (SGS00) Context Summary

14	Foundation trench	contains 3	Foundation trench for rebuilt north aisle wall	1796
15	posthole	cuts 7, contains 4	Post-hole at west end of north transept. 0.49m x 0.3m, with post-pipe diameter of 0.2m at north end.	1840
16	posthole	cuts 7, contains 5	0.43m x 0.36m scoop, 0.12m deep	1840
17	posthole	cuts 7, contains 6	0.32m x 0.3m post-hole with 0.14m diameter post-pipe, over 0.35m deep. At east end of north transept, beside wall 1	1840

# Pottery Archive SGS00

*Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services*

context	cname	full name	form type	sherds	part	date
07	BL	Black-glazed wares	jar	1	BS	17th to 18th

# Tile Archive SGS00

*Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services*

context	cname	full name	frags	weight	description	date
05	PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	1	41	flat roofer	13th to 18th
06	PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	1	73	flat roofer;mortar	13th to 18th
06	PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	1	106	flat roofer;mortar	13th to 18th
07	PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	1	64	flat roofer;mortar	13th to 18th

## The Figures

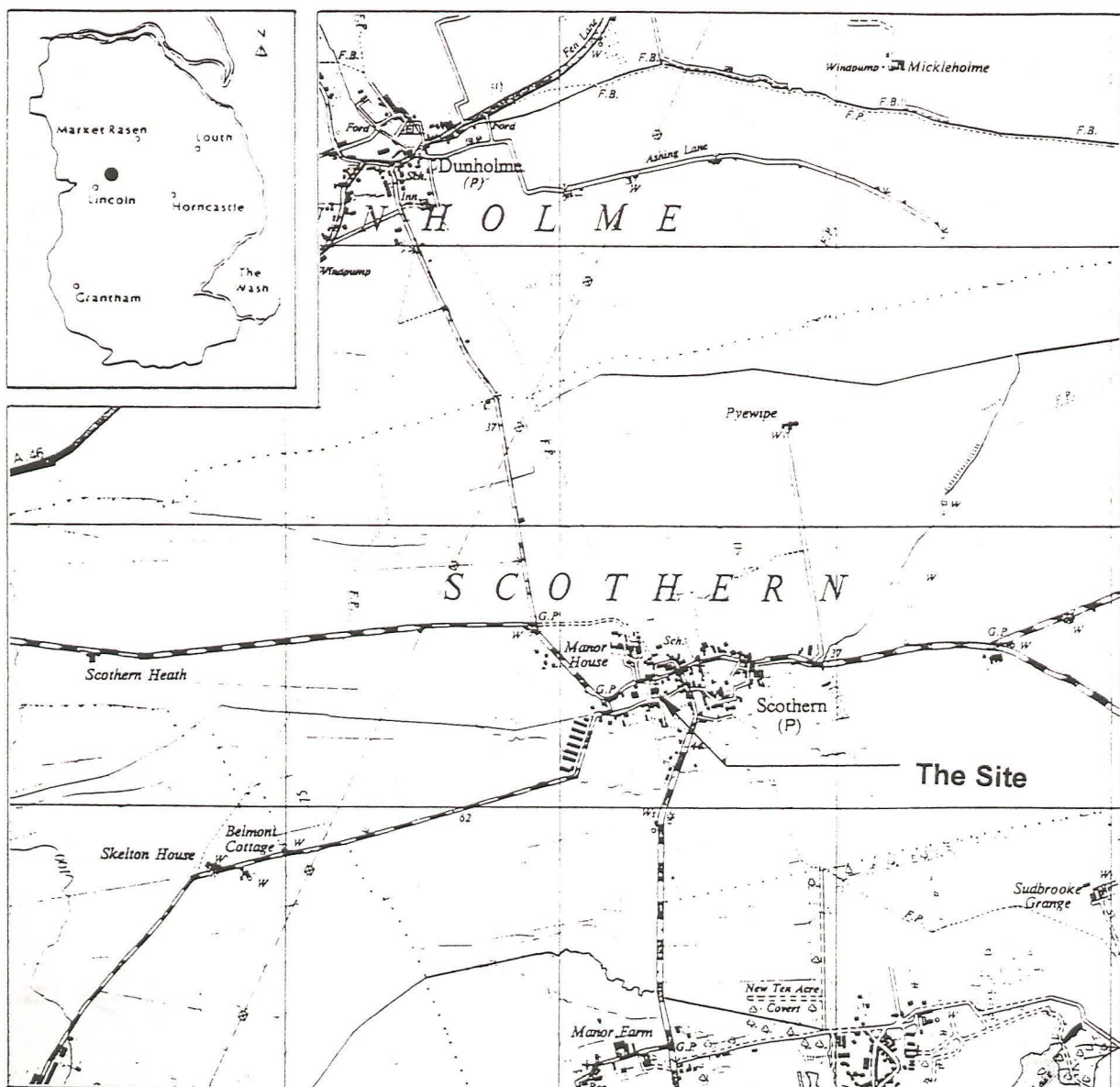
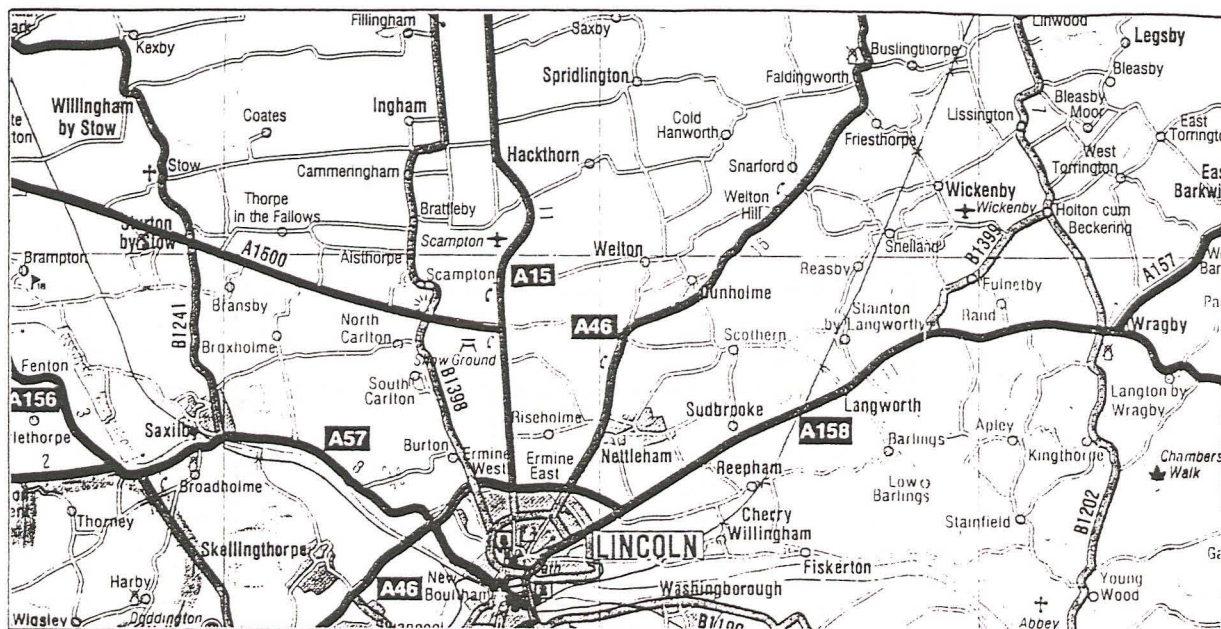


Fig. 1 Location of Scothern (C based on the 1953 Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map Sheet TF 07. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL50424A).

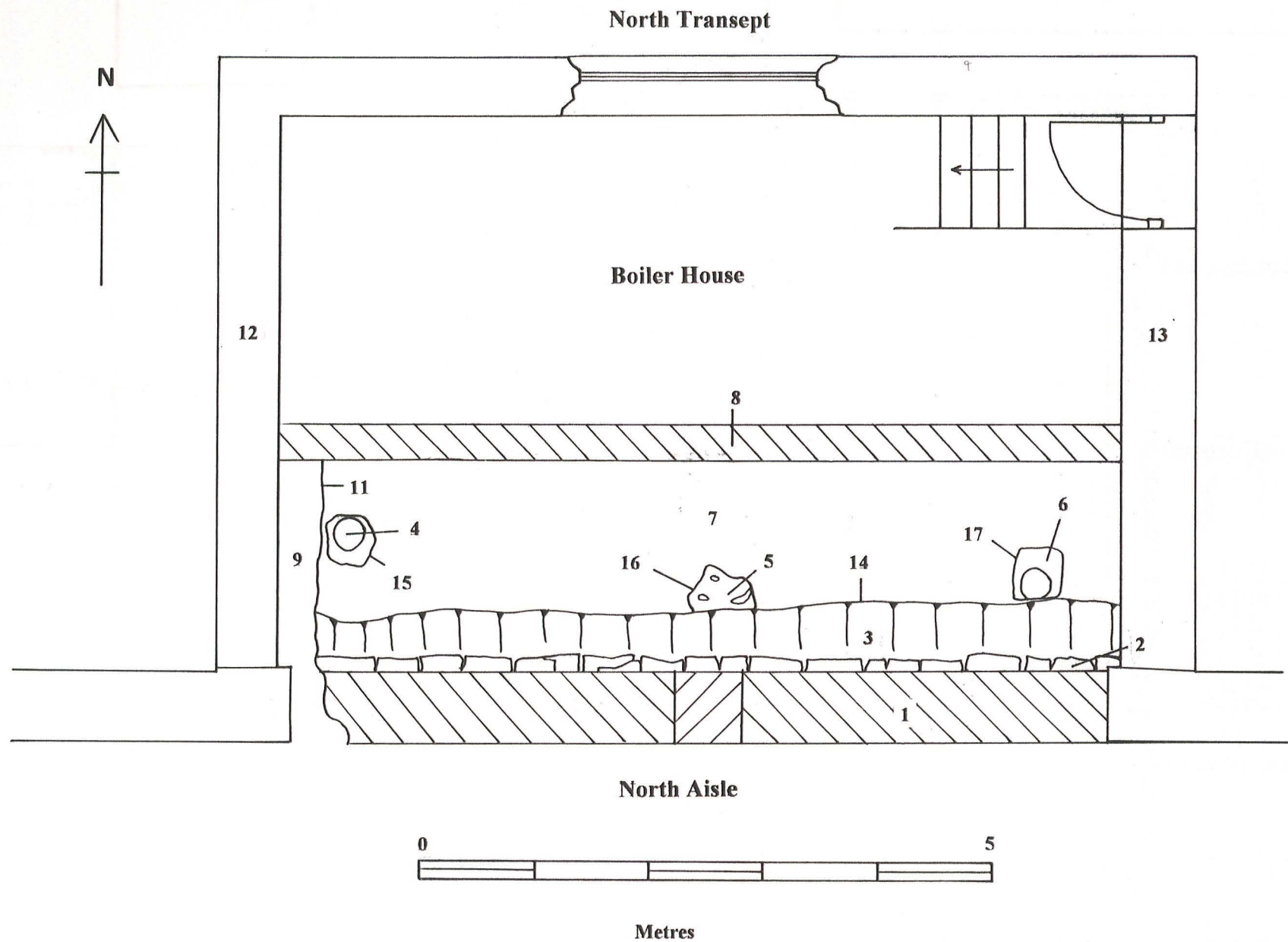


Fig. 2 Plan of the archaeological features recorded in the north transept (W. Booth, after N. Field).



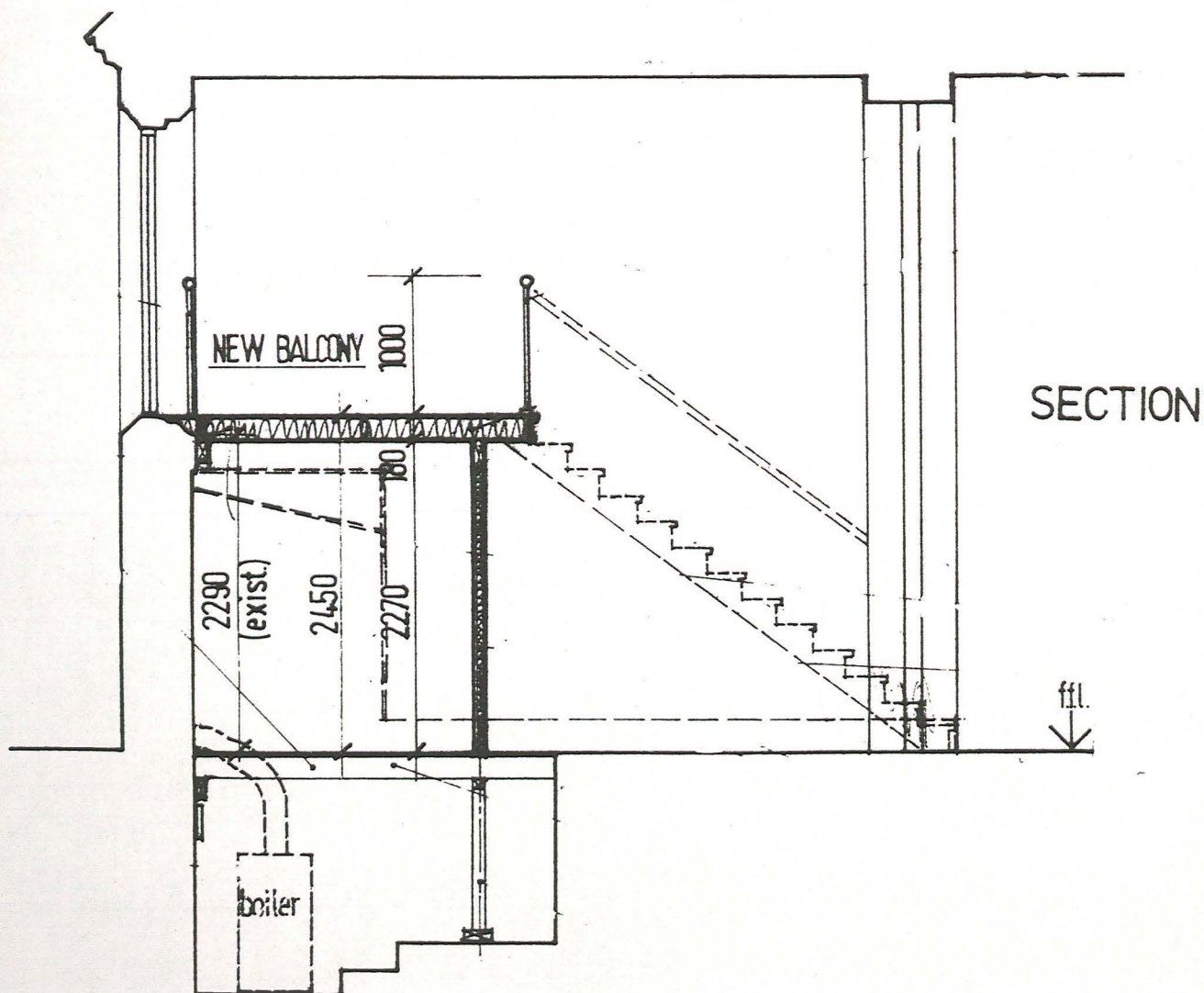
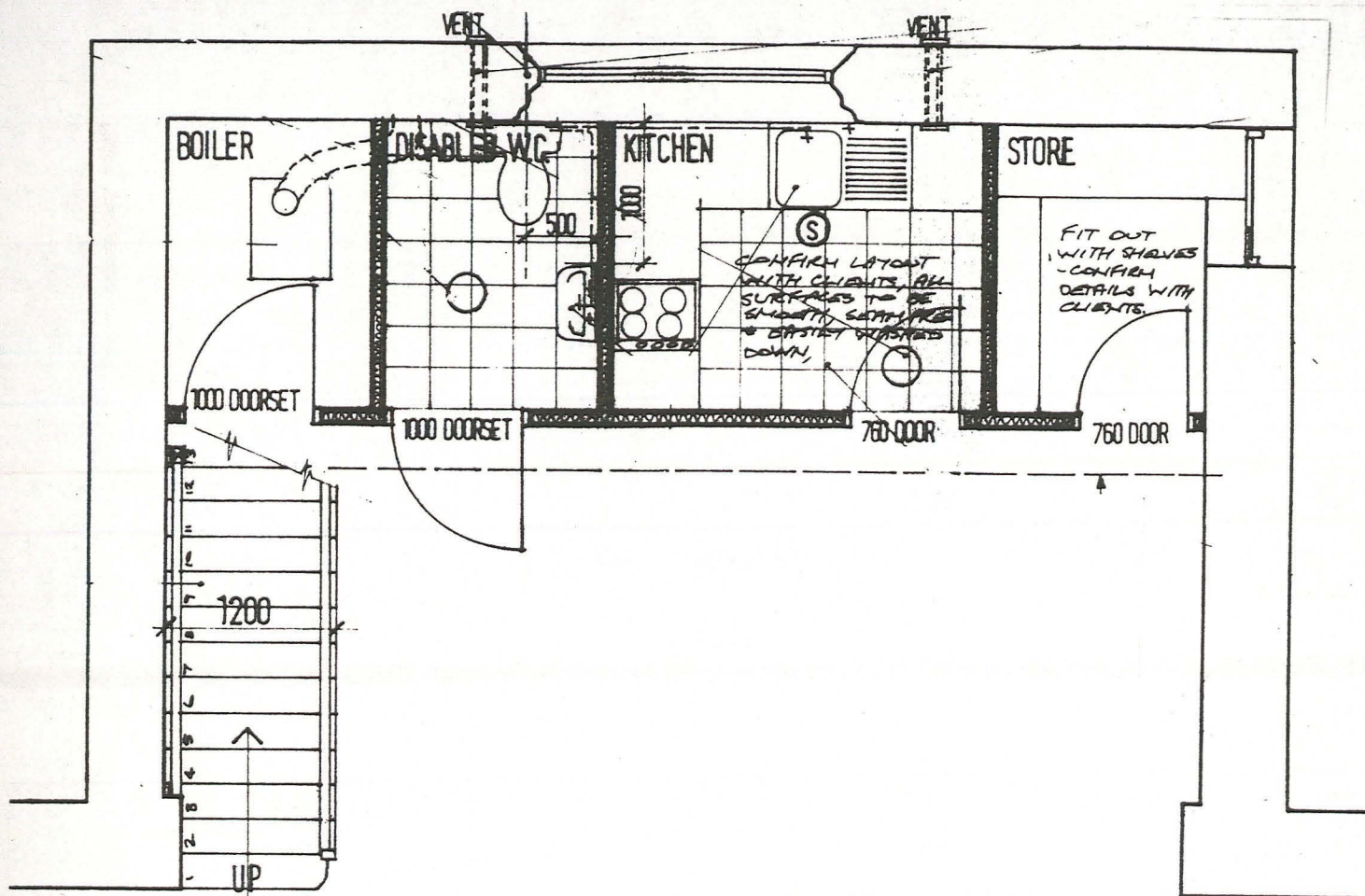


Fig. 3 Architect's drawings showing new layout in north transept (Scale 1:50).

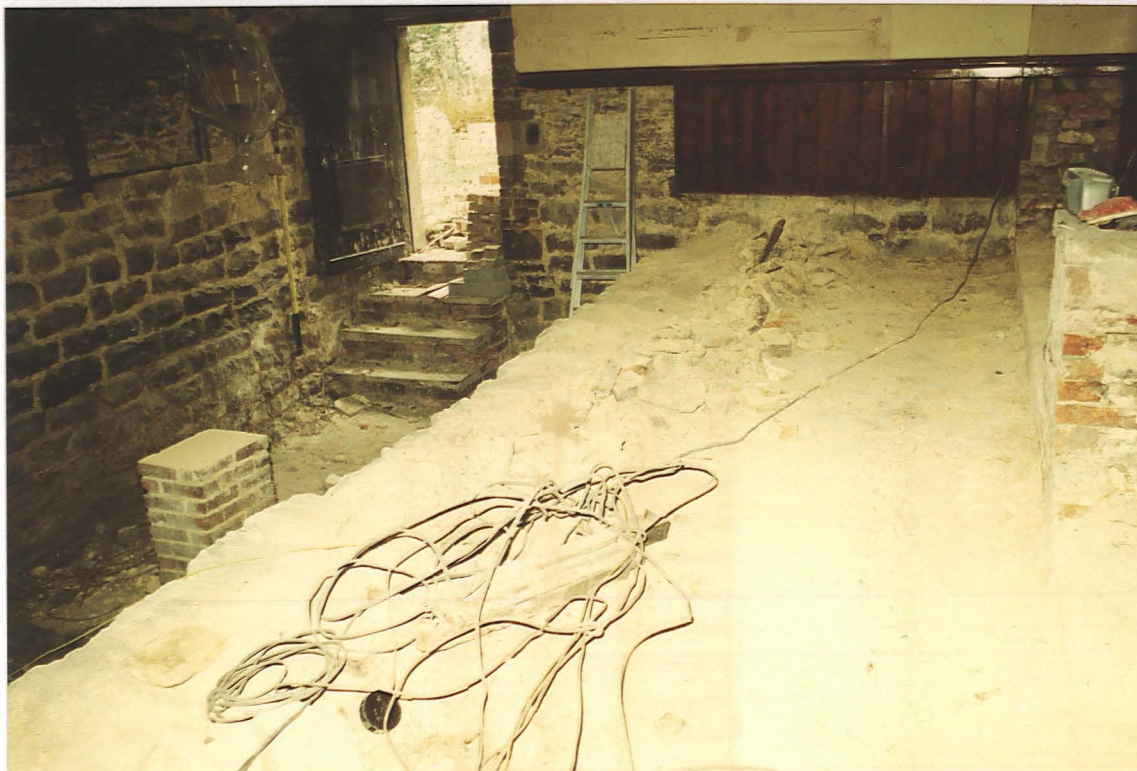
**The Plates**



**Pl. 1 Scothern Church (looking NE).**

**Pl. 2 Scothern Church, showing the north transept, with entrance to the boiler house in the east wall (looking south).**





**PI. 3** Interior of the north transept, after removal of seating, showing the boiler room (left) retaining wall 8 (centre) and the north aisle wall (right). Looking east.

**PI. 4** Foundation trench 14 along north side of north aisle wall 1, showing stone foundation 2. Looking east.





Pl. 5 Foundation trench 14 along north side of north aisle wall 1, showing stone foundation 2 . Looking west.

Pl. 6 Foundation trench 11 along north transept west wall. The trench cuts through the foundation of the demolished north aisle wall 1. Looking west.





**Pl. 7** Retaining wall 8, looking NW.

**Pl. 8** Junction of the retaining wall 8 and the west wall of the north transept.

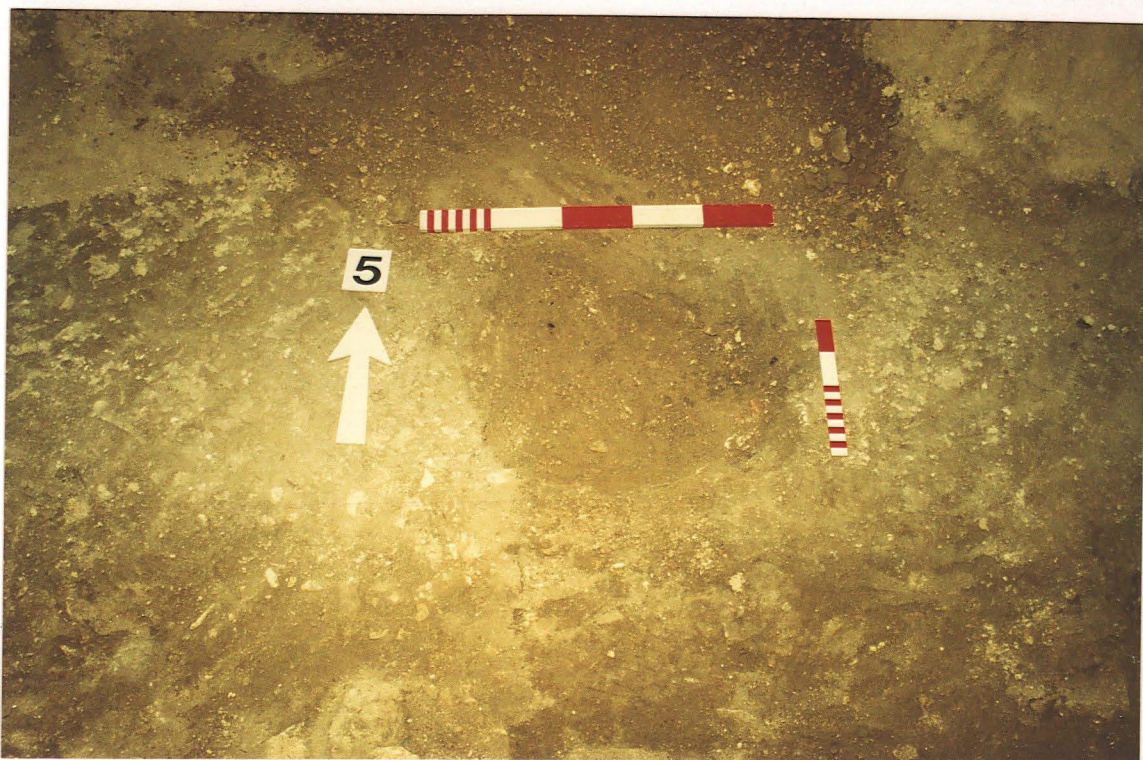




Pl. 9 Scaffold post-hole 17/6 beside foundation trench 3 for the north aisle wall, before excavation (looking west, scale 0.5m).

Pl. 10 Scaffold post-hole 17/6, after excavation (looking north, scales 0.5m and 0.2m).





Pl. 11 Possible scaffold post-hole 16/5, after excavation (looking north, scales 0.5m and 0.2m).

Pl. 12 Scaffold post-hole 15/4, after excavation (looking north, scales 0.5m and 0.2m).

