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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**Beckingham, All Saints Church, Lincs.
Archaeological Watching Brief**

NGR: SK ~~886 538~~ — 8758 5382

Site Code: ASCB 05

LCNCC Accession No.: 2005.213

Report for

Beckingham PCC

by

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LAS Report No. 879

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Conservation
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All Saints Church, Beckingham, Watching Brief

INTERVENTION: SLI 10360

EXCAVATION : SLI 10361

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Beckingham, All Saints Church Lincs.
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Summary

The monitoring of the drainage trenches leading to a soakaway revealed a stratigraphy of firm clay silt that contained no archaeological finds or features. Where the drainage trenches abutted the church, they revealed modern red-brick underpinning. Several small fragments of disarticulated human bone were noted, these will be re-interred during the back filling process.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Pearce Roofing Services on behalf of The Rector and churchwardens of Beckingham PCC in October 2005 to undertake an archaeological watching brief at the above site (Fig. 1). The work was carried out in accordance with the general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* published by the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council (1998). Work was carried out on November 2nd 2005.

Site Location and Archaeological Background

Beckingham lies c.9km to the south-east of Newark-upon-Trent. The village was mentioned in the Domesday Survey 1086, but at that time no mention is made of a church.

Sometime between 1120 and 1135 Thurstan, Archbishop of York created a Prebendary of Beckingham for Southwell Minster, which was suppressed in 1840. The first recorded priest at Beckingham was in 1347.

The present parish church consists of a chancel, nave with clerestory, north and south aisles, western tower and a porch at the south entrance. The north aisle arcade is made up of five bays while the south arcade is of just three. Much of the interior of the church is 13th century in date with several later enlarged or replacement windows. The clerestory was added in the late 15th century and much of the rood screen dates to the mid 16th century. By the late 19th century the church was in poor condition and a restoration was undertaken in 1892 by Ewan Christian.

The church is presently closed to the public and in a very neglected state of repair with the lead flashing missing from the roof. Internal water damage to the roof structure, wall plaster and floor tiles is extensive. The new drainage works are part of a long term full restoration of the church.

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the watching brief was to record the area of ground disturbed by the excavation of a service trench.

Method

The groundworks were monitored by an experienced archaeologist. A full written (single context) and photographic record was made of the site, including a site sketch plan.

The trench bases and sides were hand-cleaned, when appropriate, to reveal features in plan and sections to enable sufficient information about form, development date and stratigraphic relationships to be recorded.

The Watching Brief Results

Two drainage trenches were excavated leading from either side of the chancel to soakaways. They were c.6m in length and 0.30m wide. Their depth varied from 0.30m next to the chancel wall to 0.60m at the soakaway. No discernable topsoil or subsoil was noted with a single mid grey/brown clay silt continuing to a depth in excess of the developers final formation level. Where the drainage trenches abutted the church, they revealed modern red-brick underpinning. Several fragments of human bone were noted during the monitoring. The fragments were mainly small pieces of adult femur, tibia and an almost complete chondrocranium from the skull of an adult.

Discussion and Conclusion

The monitoring of the drainage trenches and soakaway failed to reveal any archaeological finds or features. The lack of any layered horizontal stratigraphy is typical in many church yards as the ground is constantly being disturbed by the excavation of graves. The small fragments of disarticulated human bone will be re-interred during the back filling process.

Richard R. Pullen
Naomi Field

Lindsey Archaeological Services

2nd November 2005

Acknowledgements

LAS would like to thank Phil Hawkins for supplying the drawing for Fig. 2. The report was written by Richard Pullen and edited by Naomi Field.

Reference

Pevsner N, Harris J and Antram N; 2002 *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire* Yale University Press

Contents of Site Archive

Context Sheet

Developer Plan

Correspondence

Photographs: LAS film Nos. 05/106

THE FIGURES

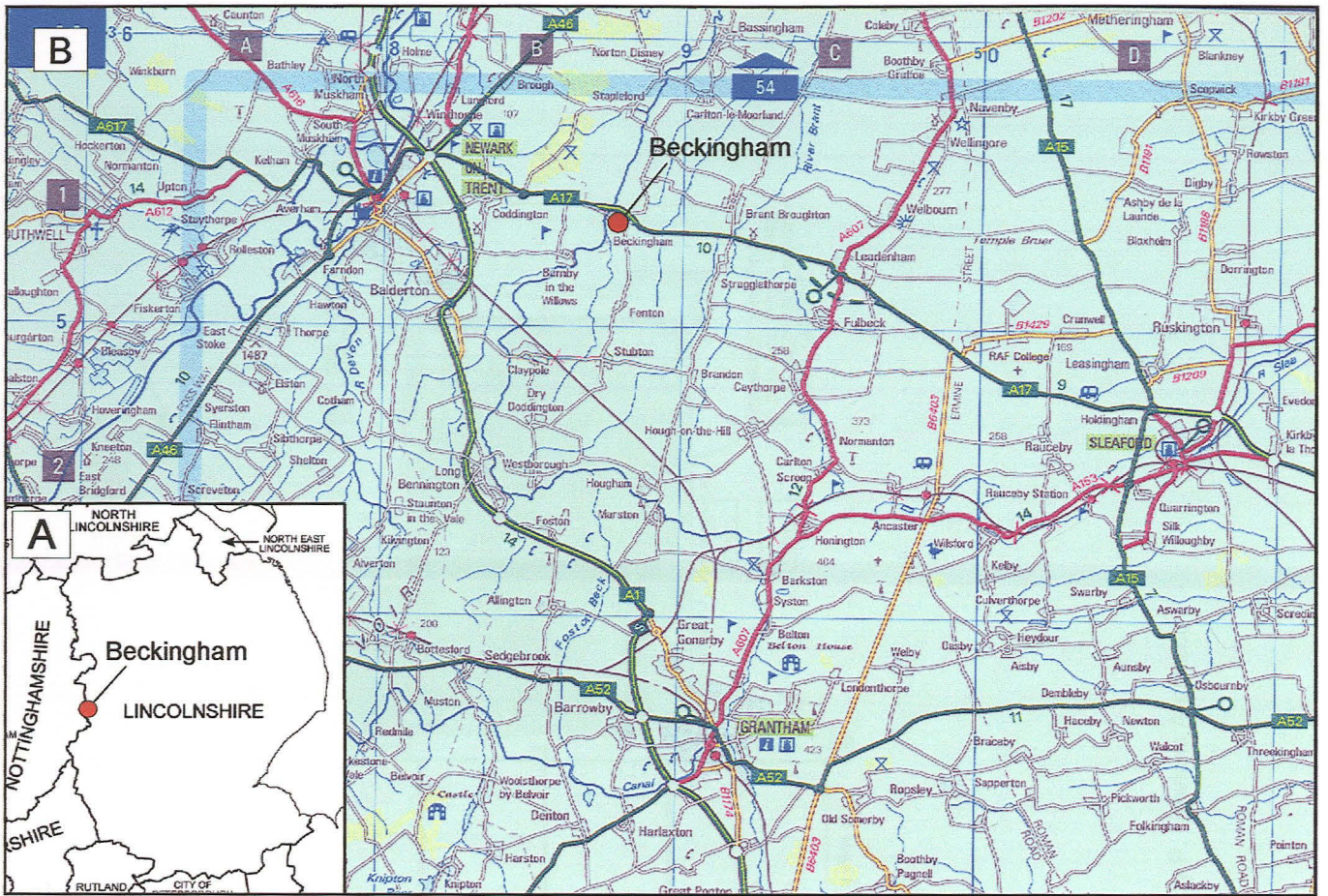


Fig. 1 Location of Beckingham © based on the Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 map Explorer 273; Crown copyright, reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO LAS licence No. AL 10002165)

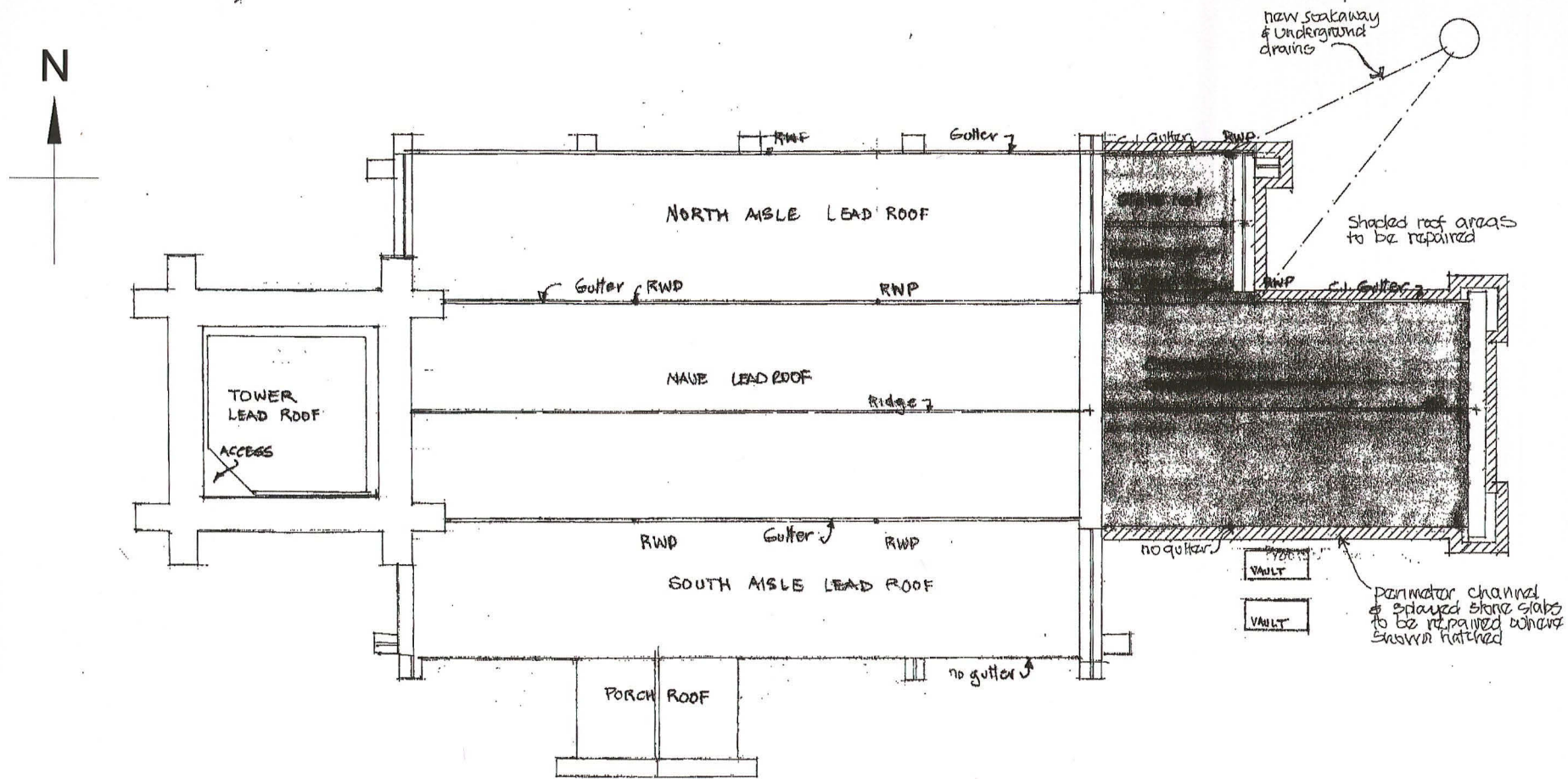


Fig 2 Location of the service trench based on a plan supplied by P. Hawkins Architect

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Pl. 2 Looking south along the excavated drainage trench on the southern side of the church



Pl. 3 Drainage trenches on the northern side of the church



Pl. 4 View looking south at a the trenching on the northern side of the church