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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF DRAINAGE TRENCHES AT
ST. MARY THE BLESSED
VIRGIN CHURCH,
SUTTERTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SSM 06)**



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Quality Control
Church of St. Mary the Blessed Virgin
Sutterton, Lincolnshire
(SSM 06)

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OF DRAINAGE TRENCHES AT
ST. MARY THE BLESSED
VIRGIN CHURCH,
SUTTERTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(SSM 06)**

**Work Undertaken For
St Mary's PCC**

June 2006

Report Compiled by
Neville Hall BA (Hons) DipArch AIFA

National Grid Reference: TF 285 355
City and County Museum Accession No: 2006.61

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES



APS Report No. 48/06

Quality Control
Church of St. Mary The Blessed Virgin,
Sutterton, Lincolnshire
(SSM 06)

Project Coordinator	Steve Malone
Supervisors	Mary Nugent, Tom Bradley-Lovekin, Neville Hall
Illustration	Neville Hall
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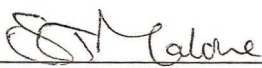
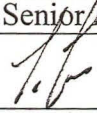
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Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Plates

1.	SUMMARY	1
2.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.1	DEFINITION OF A WATCHING BRIEF	1
2.2	PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	1
2.3	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	1
2.4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SETTING.....	1
3.	AIMS.....	2
4.	METHODS	2
5.	RESULTS	3
6.	DISCUSSION	4
7.	CONCLUSION.....	5
8.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	5
9.	PERSONNEL	5
10.	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	5
11.	ABBREVIATIONS.....	6

Appendices

1. Context descriptions
2. Glossary
3. The Archive

List of Figures

- Figure 1 General location plan
- Figure 2 Site location
- Figure 3 Location of monitored drainage trenches
- Figure 4 Burials (007), (008) and (010)
- Figure 5 Sections 1-3
- Figure 6 Sections 4-6
- Figure 7 Sections 7 and 8

List of Plates

- Plate 1 South side of church, pre-groundworks, looking northeast
- Plate 2 North side of church, pre-groundworks, looking southeast
- Plate 3 Representative Section 1, looking north
- Plate 4 Burials (007) and (008), looking north
- Plate 5 Burial (010), looking west
- Plate 6 Drainage Trench 3, looking west
- Plate 7 Section 7, looking east
- Plate 8 Drainage Trench 5, looking north
- Plate 9 Drainage Trench 2, looking southeast
- Plate 10 Displaced grave slab, Drainage Trench 2, looking east
- Plate 11 Representative Section 8, looking west

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at the church of St Mary The Blessed Virgin, Sutterton, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the mechanical and manual excavation of various drainage trenches and associated soakaways around the exterior of the church.

The church is of the early medieval period with the earliest portions being the exterior aisle doorways, which are late Norman in origin. The chancel is Early English and the nave and north and south aisles are Decorated. The church was much rebuilt in the late 18th century and again in the mid 19th century.

The watching brief revealed two make up deposits underlying the foundations of the church which may be attributable to the early medieval period. The churchyard itself was probably extensively landscaped during the later post-medieval period as this process had partially disturbed at least three earlier post-medieval burials and the landscaping deposits themselves included disturbed graveyard soils. However, the lack of dating evidence from any of these earlier burials or later landscaping deposits makes it difficult to precisely date these activities, although landscaping within the churchyard and the burials themselves may be well documented elsewhere.

The finds retrieved from these investigations comprised numerous fragments of disarticulated human bone which were collected and then bagged for later reinterment.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as "a formal programme of

observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed." (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services (APS) was commissioned by Mr Graham Cook, Architect, to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with new drainage works at the church of St. Mary The Blessed Virgin, Sutterton, Lincolnshire. The watching brief was carried out between the 16th and the 20th of March 2006.

2.3 Topography and Geology

The village of Sutterton is situated some 8km to the southeast of Boston in the administrative district of Boston, county of Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The church of St Mary The Blessed Virgin is located on the eastern frontage of Station Road in the centre of the village of Sutterton at National Grid Reference TF 285 355 (Fig. 2).

The local soils are of the Agney Association, typically alluvial gley soils that have developed on marine alluvium (Hodge *et al.* 1984).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

To date, no prehistoric archaeological features and/or deposits have been identified in Sutterton. It is likely that any such remains are buried under later alluvial deposits.

Romano-British remains have been found approximately 400m to the south of the church when an archaeological evaluation identified pits and ditches that yielded

charred grain and 3rd century pottery (Herbert 1996). Subsequent work on this site located the remains of kilns or corn driers and a possible structure. Earlier finds of Romano-British pottery have also been found along Station Road.

Undated cropmarks which may be attributable to the Romano-British period have been identified to the southeast of the church (Albone 2000).

Sutterton is not detailed in the Domesday Survey of AD1086, but the Survey does make reference to ploughlands and meadow at Dowdyke which is situated within the modern parish of Sutterton (Foster and Longley 1976).

Sutterton is first documented in AD1177 as *Suterton*. The place name is derived from the Old English words *sutere* and *tun* denoting the "shoemakers' village" (Cameron 1998).

The church of St. Mary is situated within the core of the medieval settlement. The church has late Norman style exterior aisle doorways. The chancel is Early English with the nave and aisles in the Decorated style. The remainder of the church fabric is considerably later. The spire was rebuilt in 1787 and the spire and tower together again in 1861-3 along with the walls of the aisles, the south transept and the chancel. The south porch also dates to 1861-3 (Pevsner 1989). Medieval pottery has been found throughout the village.

The site of Sutterton House, built in the early 17th century is approximately 500m to the northwest of the church (APS 1994).

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by APS in 2001 on land at the nearby Vicarage (Thomson 2002). This identified modern features that included a pond, a concrete foundation and brick-built wall footings along with pottery dating to the 16th and 19th centuries.

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The monitored trenches for the new drains and soakaways were excavated both by minidigger and by hand around the periphery of the church (Fig. 3). Representative sections of the trenches were then cleaned and rendered vertical.

Deposits identified in the drainage trench sections and at the base of the trenches were allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and plans and sections were drawn at scales of 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

The representative sections were allocated numbers from 1-8 respectively as the monitoring progressed, while the drainage trenches were also allocated separate numbers from 1-8 in order to ease their respective identification, and not necessarily in the order in which they were excavated and monitored (Fig. 3).

Following the mechanical and manual excavation any disarticulated human bones that had been displaced by these excavations were separated and bagged for reburial within the church precincts. Any disturbed burials were also recorded. Each deposit and burial was examined and a period date assigned where possible. The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the

deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis four phases were identified:

Phase 1	Early Medieval(?) Deposits
Phase 2	Disturbed Post-Medieval Inhumation Burials
Phase 3	Late(?) Post-Medieval Deposits
Phase 4	Modern Deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Natural deposits were not reached throughout the monitoring programme.

5.1 Phase 1 Early Medieval(?) Deposits

Exposed within Section 7 in Drainage Trench 4 were two make up deposits (015) and (016) that probably predated the construction of the church in the early medieval period (Figs. 3 and 7, Section 7; Plate 7).

Deposit (016) was recorded beneath the limestone block and rubble foundations for the west wall of the south transept. It comprised a soft dark brown silt with moderate charcoal and mortar flecking and fragments and a thickness of at least 0.14m.

Within the remainder of Section 7, to the southwest of (016) and west of the west wall of the south transept was a further make up deposit (015). This was a soft light grey brown silty clay with occasional mortar and charcoal flecking and a thickness greater than 0.25m.

No finds were retrieved from either of these deposits.

5.2 Phase 2 Disturbed Post-Medieval Inhumation Burials

Underlying the post-medieval landscaping and former graveyard soil deposit (004) were three inhumation burials (007), (008) and (010) (Figs. 3 and 4, Section 3; Plates 4 and 5). These were stratigraphically earlier than the Phase 5.3 deposits, but were probably partially disturbed as a result of the subsequent landscaping associated with this phase.

Burials (007) and (008) were situated at the western end of Drainage Trench 1 (Fig. 3). Burial (007) consisted of a complete adult skull exposed at the base of the drainage trench and probably extended beneath the southern trench edge (Fig. 4). Burial (008) was situated close by. This was clearly articulated and also extended into the southern trench edge (Fig. 4). It consisted of a radius/ulna, fingers, a femur and tibia/fibula. Both burials (007) and (008) were exposed at depths of 0.50m below modern ground levels.

To the east and also within Drainage Trench 1 was the third burial (010) (Fig. 3). This was also clearly articulated consisting of two femurs and tibia/fibulae partially exposed at the base of the trench (Fig. 4).

Probably associated with this phase was a sandstone slab (009), which was perhaps part of a partially exposed stone coffin. This was located at the base of Section 2 and within Drainage Trench 7 (Figs. 3 and 5). This slab measured 0.74m in length, was greater than 0.30m in width with a thickness greater than 0.05m.

5.3 Phase 3 Late(?) Post-Medieval Deposits

A series of probable post-medieval landscaping deposits and former graveyard

soils were apparent throughout the excavated areas around the church. These were identified as contexts (002) (Section 1, Drainage Trench 8); (004) and (005) (Sections 2, 3 and 4, Drainage Trenches 7 and 1); (012) (Section 5, Drainage Trench 1); (014) (Section 6, Drainage Trench 3) and (018) (Section 8, Drainage Trench 2) respectively (Figs. 3 and 5-8; Plates 3, 11).

Situated to the north of the nave and underlying the topsoil (001), deposit (002) was a firm mid brown clay silt with occasional small sub-rounded stones and a depth greater than 0.40m. Fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from this deposit.

Deposits (004) and (005) underlay topsoil (006). (004) was identified to the southwest, south and southeast of the south porch and (005) to the southwest. (004) was a friable yellow mid-brown clay silt with a thickness of 0.25m and (005), a friable dark grey brown clay silt with a depth greater than 0.05m. These deposits did not yield any finds.

Deposits (012) and (014) were identified to the southwest of the south transept and underlay topsoils (011) and (013) respectively. (012) and (014) were very similar in colour and composition comprising a soft mid grey brown clay silt with occasional small angular and rounded stones up to 2cm and thicknesses greater than 0.35m and 0.26m respectively. Fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from both of these deposits.

Deposit (018) was located to the southeast of the south transept and was a soft mid grey brown clay silt with occasional tile and mortar flecking and fragments and a depth greater than 0.72m. Fragments of disarticulated human bone were retrieved from this deposit.

Probably associated with this phase were several fragments of disarticulated human

bone including two skulls and a femur that were clearly disarticulated and exposed at the base of Drainage Trench 1 (Fig. 3). In addition two displaced fragments of stone coffin or coffin lid were also observed within Drainage Trenches 1 and 2 (Fig. 3, Plate 10). These items were clearly residual and displaced and were not assigned individual context numbers.

5.4 Phase 4 Modern Deposits

A series of topsoil deposits was identified in the various sections around the site. Within Section 1 and Drainage Trench 8, to the north of the nave, this was (001), a loose dark brown/black sandy silt up to 0.10m in depth (Figs. 3 and 5).

To the southwest of the South Porch and within Section 2 was (003) (Figs. 3 and 5). This was a loose dark grey brown clayey silt of 0.18m in thickness forming part of a flower bed. Underlying (003) was (006), which was very similar in colour and composition to (003), but yielded fragments of disarticulated human bone and had an average thickness of 0.20m (Figs. 5 and 6, Sections 2-4).

Within Sections 5, 6, and 8 the topsoil deposits comprised (011), (013) and (017) respectively (Figs. 3, 6 and 7). These deposits were all identical in colour and composition consisting of a soft dark grey brown silt with varying thicknesses of 0.16m-0.17m. All of these deposits yielded disarticulated fragments of human bone.

6. DISCUSSION

No natural deposits were encountered during these investigations.

The earliest deposits recorded during the watching brief were two make up deposits that probably predated the construction of the church in the late Norman period. However, no finds were retrieved from either of them.

Three inhumation burials that probably dated to the early post-medieval period were recorded *in situ*, though they had been partially disturbed by the subsequent phase of extensive landscaping of the churchyard that had probably taken place during the later post-medieval period. The absence of dating evidence from any of these post-medieval burial and later landscaping deposits makes it difficult to be precise concerning their phasing.

Overlying the landscaping deposits was a series of topsoils that similarly yielded no dating evidence, but did produce fragments of disarticulated human bone.

The fragments of human bone retrieved during these investigations were collected and bagged for subsequent reburial.

7. CONCLUSION

Two make up deposits were encountered that underlay the church foundations and may be attributed to the earlier medieval period.

The churchyard was probably extensively landscaped during the late post-medieval period. This process of remodelling the churchyard had partially disturbed several earlier post-medieval burials and also yielded large amounts of disarticulated human bones. The three partially disturbed burials were distinctly articulated.

The churchyard had probably been landscaped as part of clearance intended to increase capacity as the churchyard became full. If so, it is possible that this landscaping phase of activity may be well documented elsewhere.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Graham Cook for commissioning the on-site

fieldwork and the post excavation analysis. The project was co-ordinated by Steve Malone and this report was edited by Steve Malone and Tom Lane.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Steve Malone
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 Finds processing: Denise Buckley
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Neville Hall
 Post-excavation analysis: Neville Hall

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

DoE Department of the Environment

GSGB Geological Survey of Great Britain

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

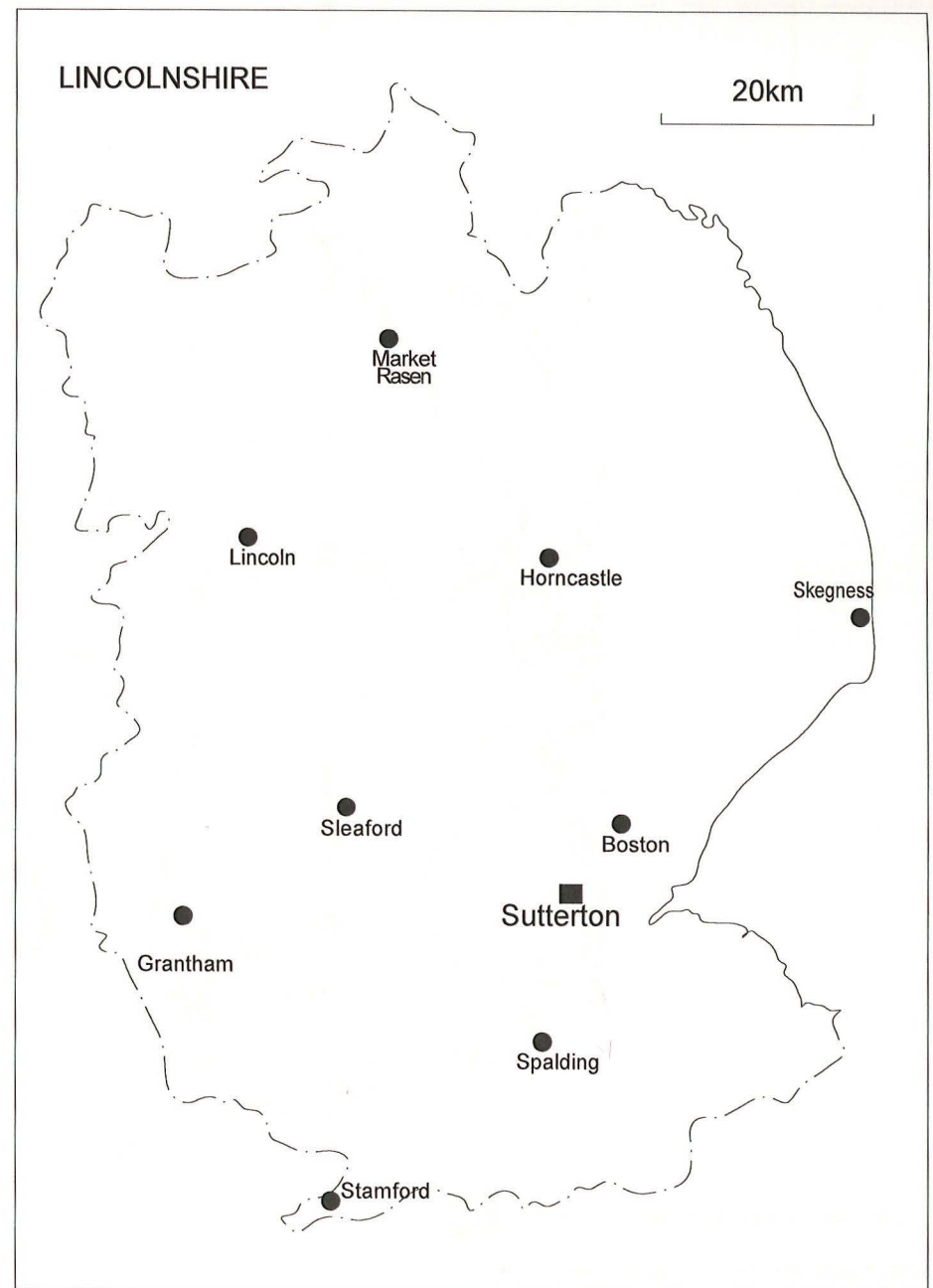


Figure 1 General Location Plan



36

TF

28

29



— Site Boundary



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Project Name: Sutterton Church of St. Mary SSM06

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Figure 2 Site Location

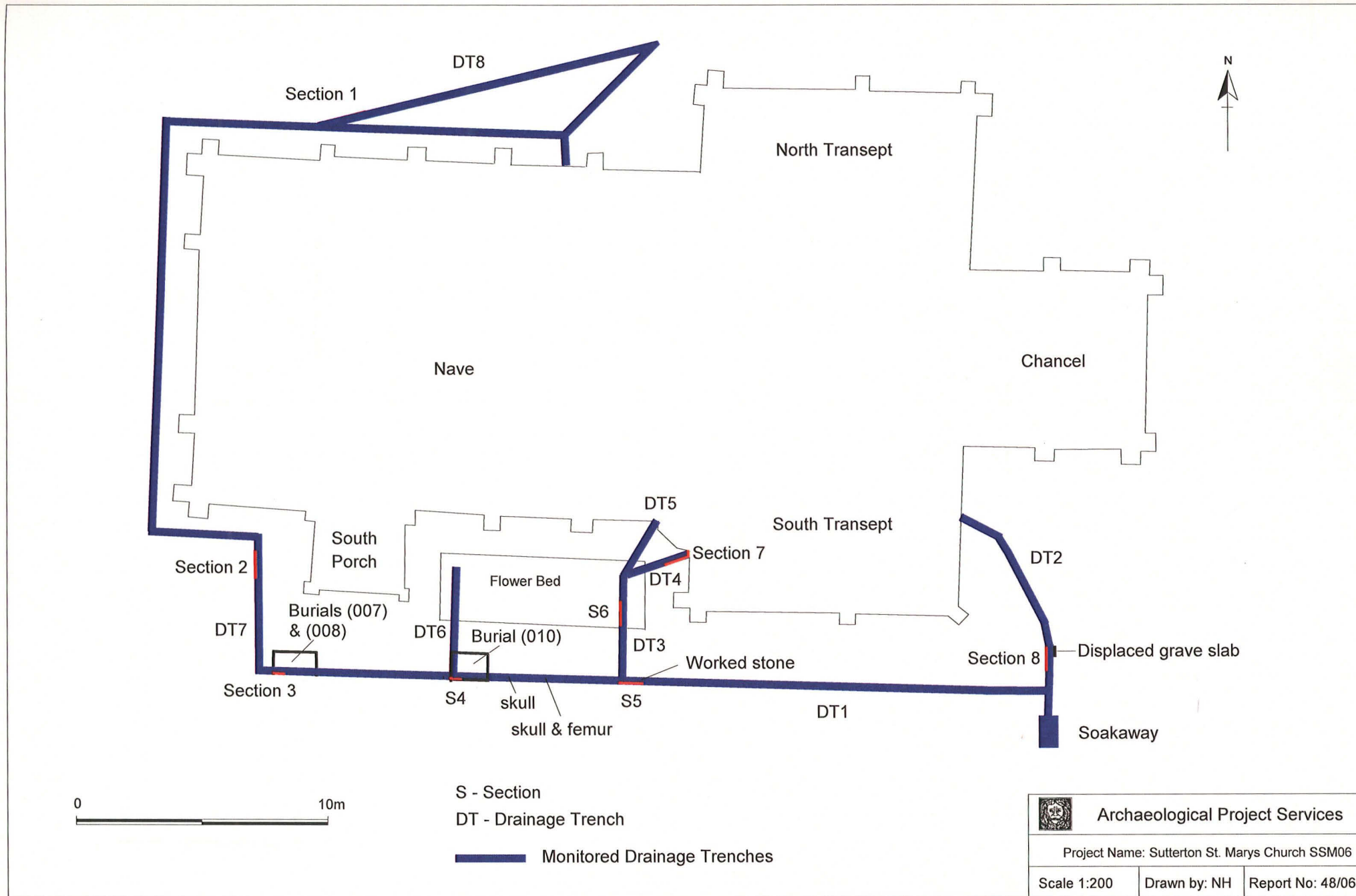
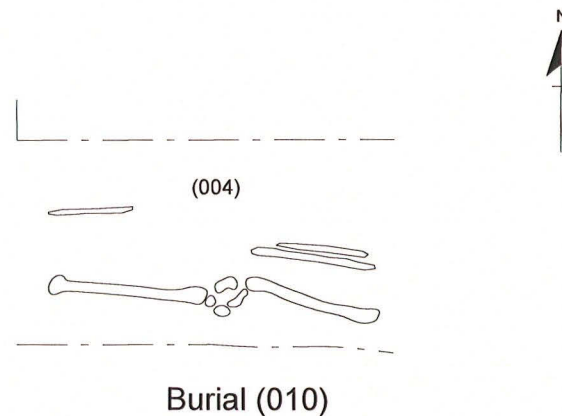
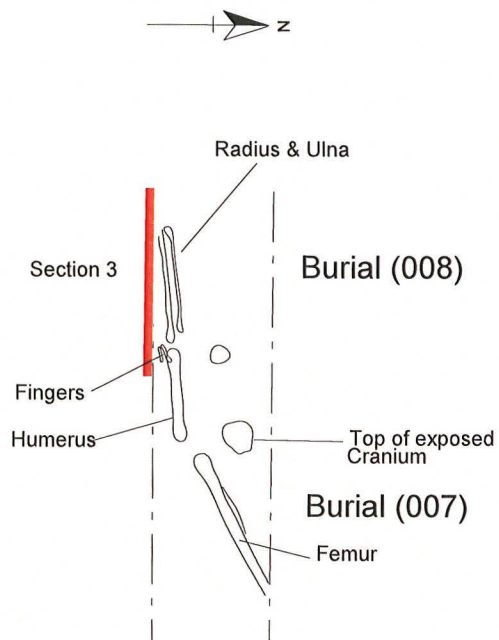


Figure 3 Location of monitored drainage trenches



0 0.5m



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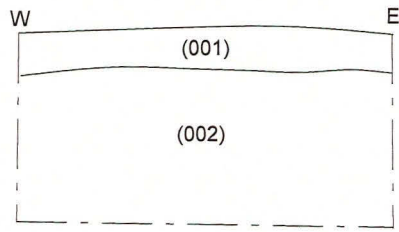
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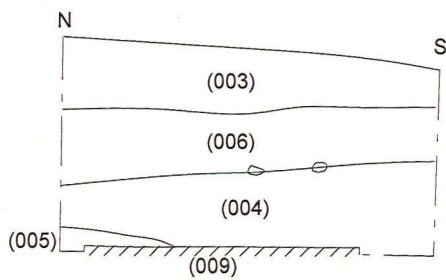
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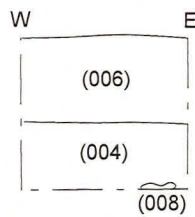
Figure 4 Burials (007), (008) and (010)



Representative Section 1



Section 2



Representative Section 3



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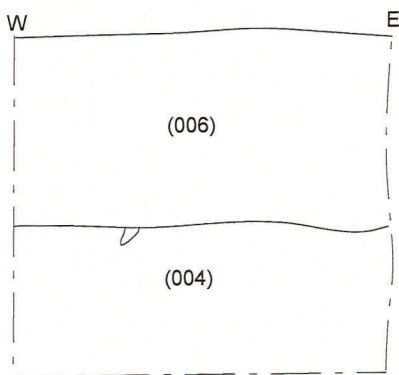
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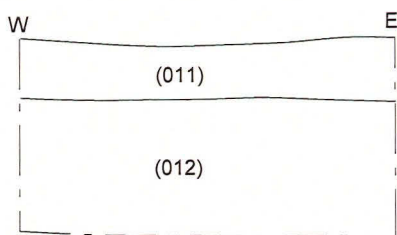
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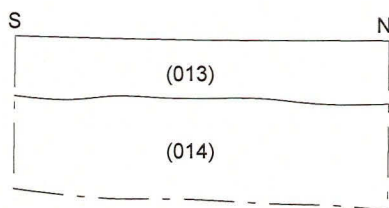
Figure 5 Sections 1-3



Representative Section 4



Representative Section 5



Representative Section 6



Archaeological Project Services

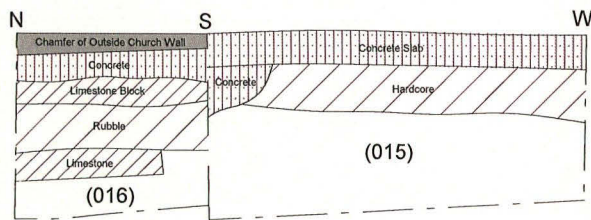
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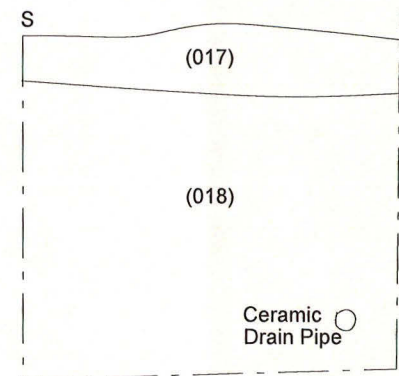
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Report No: 48/06

Figure 6 Sections 4-6



Representative Section 7



Representative Section 8



Archaeological Project Services

Project Name: Sutterton St Mary's Church SSM06

Scale 1:20

Drawn by: NH

Report No: 48/06

Figure 7 Sections 7 and 8



Plate 1: South side of church, pre-groundworks, looking northeast



Plate 2: North side of church, pre-groundworks, looking southeast



Plate 3: Representative Section 1, looking north



Plate 4: Burials (007) and (008),
looking north



Plate 5: Burial (010), looking
west



Plate 6: Drainage Trench
3, looking west



Plate 7: Section 7, looking east



Plate 8: Drainage Trench 5, looking north



Plate 9: Drainage Trench 2, looking southeast



Plate 10: Displaced grave slab,
Drainage Trench 2, looking east



Plate 11: Representative
Section 8, looking west

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Description	Dimensions	Interpretation
001	Loose bark brown/black sandy silt.	Up to 0.10m in thickness	Topsoil
002	Firm mid brown clay silt with occasional small rounded stones.	Greater than 0.40m in depth	Landscaping deposit
003	Loose dark grey brown clay silt	0.18m in thickness	Topsoil
004	Friable buff medium brown clay silt with occasional cbm fragments	0.25m in thickness	Landscaping deposit
005	Friable dark grey brown clay silt.	0.05m in thickness	Landscaping deposit
006	Friable dark grey brown clay silt.	0.20m in thickness	Topsoil
007	Partially exposed inhumation burial	0.50m below ground surface	As left
008	Partially exposed inhumation burial	0.50m below ground surface	As left
009	Sandstone slab	0.74m in length; >0.30m in width; >0.05m in thickness	Stone coffin or lid
010	Partially exposed inhumation burial.	0.50m below ground surface	As left
011	Soft dark grey brown silt.	0.17m in thickness	Topsoil
012	Soft mid grey brown clay silt with very occasional small angular stones.	>0.35m in thickness	Build up/landscape deposit
013	Soft dark grey brown silt with occasional small angular stones.	0.16m in thickness	Topsoil
014	Soft mid grey brown clay silt with occasional small angular & rounded stones.	>0.26m in thickness	Build up/landscape deposit
015	Soft light grey brown silty clay with occasional mortar & charcoal flecking.	>0.25m in thickness	Make up deposit
016	Soft dark brown silt with moderate charcoal & mortar flecking & fragments	>0.14m in thickness	Make up deposit

Context No.	Description	Dimensions	Interpretation
017	Soft dark grey brown silt with occasional small angular stones	0.16m in thickness	Topsoil
018	Soft mid grey brown clay with occasional tile & mortar flecking & fragments	>0.72m in thickness	Build up/landscaping deposit

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	Deposits laid down by water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea, and fresh water alluvium is laid down by rivers and in lakes.
Anglo-Saxon	Pertaining to the period when Britain was occupied by peoples from northern Germany, Denmark and adjacent areas. The period dates from approximately AD 450-1066.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological or geological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Decorated	Division of English Gothic architecture dating from c.1290-1350.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Early English	Division of English Gothic architecture dating from c.1190-1250.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
Old English	The language used by the Saxon (q.v.) occupants of Britain.
Perpendicular	Division of English Gothic architecture in use from c.1350 - c.1530.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 18 context records
- 8 sheets of scale drawings (including scaled drawings of plans and sections)
- 2 photographic record sheets
- 1 plan register
- 1 section register
- 1 context register
- 3 day record sheets

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

The Collection
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document entitled Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Museum Accession Number: 2006.61

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: SMCS06

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigations.

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