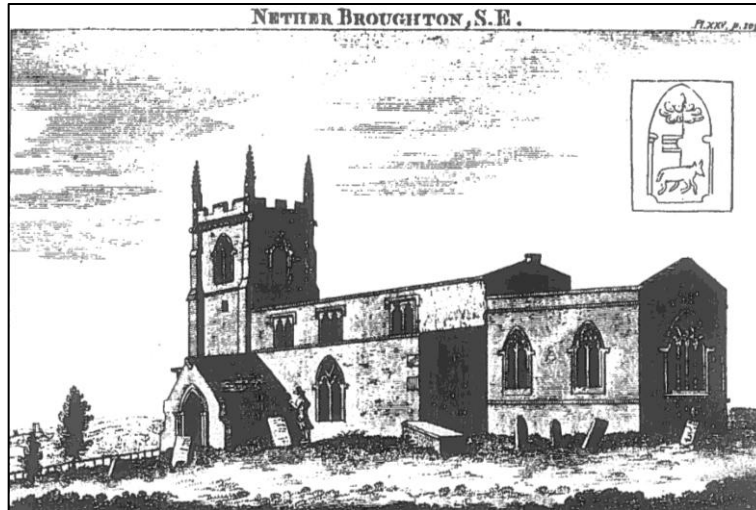


Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire.



Above: c.1791 drawing of St. Mary's church showing an earlier porch located to the South;
Below: South elevation of St. Mary's church at Nether Broughton

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Report Number: 022/2018

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Summary

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned By CEL to carry out an archaeological watching brief during new drainage works at the church of St Mary the Virgin, Nether Broughton, in Leicestershire.
- The church at Nether Broughton is a Grade II* listed building, constructed using local ironstone which dates largely to the 13th and 14th centuries.
- Records indicate the presence of an earlier South facing porch which has since been demolished. The date of the demolition is unrecorded, but is likely to have taken place during a phase of extensive c.19th century renovations.
- The intrusive ground works comprised hand excavation of 10 trenches for six drain runs and four connected soakaways.
- Within all the drain runs and soakaways a number of disarticulated human bones were recovered. These were collected and stored within the church for later re-burial by the church diocese.
- An intact burial was observed within the cut for Area 05 (soakaway). This was located at a depth of 1m, and did not produce evidence of coffin furnishings, suggesting that the burial probably dates to the medieval or early post-medieval period.
- Within the cut for Area 10, (soakaway), a grave cut was observed. Ground works did not necessitate further excavation of these remains and they were preserved *in-situ*.
- A brick lined grave vault [0404] was observed within the cut for Area 04 (drain run). Only the top three courses of brick work were revealed by the excavation. No extant burial monuments exist for this vault.
- Excavations along the South wall of the church, within Area 01 (drain run) and Area 03, (drain run) produced no indication for the demolished South porch of the church.
- Throughout the excavated areas a quantity of ironstone fragments were recorded. These were probably associated with the original construction of the church and/or subsequent repairs and renovations to the fabric of the building.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to CEL for commissioning the work. The project was managed by Ed Taylor (TPA), and supervised by Senior Project Archaeologist Laurence Platt (TPA). Illustrations compiled by Norma Oldfield (TPA).

Contents

Summary	4
Acknowledgements	5
Contents	6
List of Figures	7
List of Plates	7
1 Introduction	8
2 Topography and Geology	8
3 Historical and Archaeological Background	8
4 Aims and Objectives	9
5 Methodology	9
6 Results	10
7 Discussion and Conclusions	13
Bibliography	15
Appendix 1: Context Register	16
Appendix 2: Plates	18
Appendix 3: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition	28
Appendix 4: Figures	29

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Site Plan

Figures 3: Section drawings 1-6

Figure 4: Section drawings 7-10

Figure 5: Section drawings 11-12

List of Plates

Plate 1: South elevation of the Church of St. Mary, Nether Broughton.

Plate 2: East and South facing walls of the chancel and South aisle.

Plate 3: North facing wall of the church chancel and bell tower.

Plate 3: Hand digging in Area 01 (drain run) and Area 02 (soakaway).

Plate 4: Area 01. Foundations obscured by residual concrete from a modern drain trough.

Plate 5: Area 03. Original foundations of the South aisle wall.

Plate 6: Brick grave vault [0404] within Area 04 (drain run).

Plate 7: Brick grave vault [0404] (Area 4) after laying new drainage pipe.

Plate 8: Area 04. Original foundations for the South wall of the chancel.

Plate 10: Area 05 (soakaway) with a partially intact burial to the base.

Plate 9: Area 06. Brick underpinning of the foundation of the North wall.

Plate 12: Area 09. Brick underpinning of the Northeast corner of the chancel.

Plate 13: Area 10 (soakaway) with a grave cut to the left.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by CEL to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire; centred at SK 69584 26212. The work was undertaken to assess the propensity for *in-situ* archaeological deposits relating to the medieval footprint of the building which may otherwise be affected by intrusive groundworks to refurbish the below ground drainage.
- 1.2 The work was carried out in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and *ClfA Guidelines* (2014 a and b), utilising an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Taylor 2017).

2 Topography and Geology

- 2.1 The Church of St. Mary the Virgin is located within the outskirts of the village of Nether Broughton, Leicestershire. It is situated within a small country lane surrounded on all sides by arable fields and residential housing, which have preserved many of the natural topographic expressions.
- 2.2 The superficial and bedrock geology of the area around the Church of St. Mary the Virgin consists of Bytham Sand and Gravel set down during the early Pleistocene Epoch, which overlay Brandon sandstone bedrock set down during the Sinemurian Age. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3 Historical and Archaeological Background

- 3.1 Nether Broughton is first mentioned within the Domesday record, c.1086 as *Broctome*, a "very large" area of land with a significant number of households and resources (Palmer 2018). At this point, the separation between Nether Broughton (*Broctome*) and Upper Broughton (*Broton*) already exists, although it is unclear when, or why this separation happened.
- 3.2 The church is first mentioned in the 1220 Matriculus. The South arcade may represent the earliest footprint of the church, possibly dating to the c.13th, with the tower constructed in the later c.14th. There is a carved Anglo-Saxon stone block built into the West end of the North wall of the church, which hints at the possible presence of an earlier structure on or near the site of the current church. The church underwent significant restoration in c.1848 under the commission of the Rector which renovated many of the windows, the tower and bells, marbled floor and aisles. It is possible that the current external gargoyles were also added around this time.
- 3.3 A drawing of the church made in c.1791 shows the presence of a South porch to the West of the south aisle. Sometime after this drawing was made, the porch appears to have been removed and the entrance placed with a door to the Western tower.

4 Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 To ensure that any archaeological features or deposits present in the area of any intrusive groundwork are recorded appropriately according to the ClfA *guidelines* (ClfA 2014 *a and b*), with the results presented in a full client report. This will be done in such a way that will maintain an appropriate level of preservation by record.
- 4.2 Within the limitations of the proposed groundwork, the excavation of the soakaways will look to resolve a number of significant questions relating to the use of the church site over time, including;
- The existence of any activity pre-dating the known medieval origins of the site.
 - Identify any possible presence of archaeological deposits relating to earlier church structural remains, including a possible earlier Anglo-Saxon church footprint.
 - To clarify the chronological structural phases for the existing church fabric, as this may be evident in the exposed foundations.
 - Identify the presence of early (medieval or earlier) burials
 - Determine the presence of below ground burial monuments including stone or lead coffins and brick burial vaults etc which may relate to an earlier phase of land-use.

5 Methodology

- 5.1 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014b) and the *Code of Conduct* (2014a).
- 5.2 The client made the relevant contractors aware of the archaeological constraints on their operations.
- 5.3 The client was responsible for ensuring that service checks prior to floor surface reduction was completed, and that plans of all services were submitted from within the development area.
- 5.4 All trenches for the placement of soakaways and drain runs were hand dug under archaeological supervision.
- 5.6 Stratigraphy was recorded, photographed and interpreted, even where no archaeological finds or features were present, in accordance with ClfA *guidelines* (2014).
- 5.7 All excavations were recorded at an appropriate scale by photography. Site photography was undertaken with the use of a high resolution colour DSLR camera, which included general site shots, shots of individual features, and groups of features.
- 5.8 No human remains were excavated from the church. Disarticulated human bone was collected together and stored in the church for re-burial by the church diocese. Any intact burials that were exposed were subject to minimal disturbance. No intact burials were removed as a result of groundworks.
- 5.9 No artefacts or palaeo-environmental samples were collected.

6 Results

- 6.1 Six trenches were cut for the placement of drain runs, and a further four cut for the placement of stone lined soakaway pits. These were assigned area numbers to facilitate recording. These are listed below as follows;
- 6.2 **Area 01. Drain run. Figures 2 and 3 (Dr#01); Plates 4 & 5.**
- 6.2.1 Area 1 comprised a trench measuring 8m in length and 0.45m in depth and 0.34m in width. This was hand excavated from the South West corner of the exterior wall of the South aisle. This revealed a simple stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (0101), formed of a dark grey clayey loam to a depth of 0.1m, which sealed deposit (0102), a yellowish brown silty clay to an average depth of 0.35m.
- 6.2.2 No archaeological features or deposits were revealed as a result of the excavation in Area 01. A number of disarticulated human remains were recovered from the spoil of (0102), which were collected and stored together for re-burial by the church.
- 6.2.3 Where Area 01 abutted the south wall of the nave a sump was excavated. The below ground foundation was obscured by the residual concrete from a c.19th or early c.20th century drain trough which had been installed along the length of the South wall.
- 6.3 **Area 02. Soakaway. Figures 2 and 3 (Dr#02).**
- 6.3.1 Area 02 comprised a box measuring 1m x 1m x 1m which was hand excavated for the placement of a soakaway pit to connect with Area 01. This revealed a similarly simple stratigraphic sequence of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0201) to a depth of 0.1m, sealing deposit (0202), a yellowish brown silty clay to an average depth of 0.35m.
- 6.3.2 No archaeological features or deposits were revealed as a result of the excavation in Area 02. A number of disarticulated human remains were recovered from the spoil of (0202), which were collected and stored within the church for re-burial by the church.
- 6.4 **Area 03. Drain run. Figures 2 and 3 (Dr#03 and 04); Plate 6.**
- 6.4.1 Area 03 comprised a trench measuring 13m in length, 0.46m in depth and 0.34m in width which was hand excavated from the South wall of the church to connect with the Area 02. This revealed a similarly simple stratigraphic sequence of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0301) to a depth of 0.1m, which sealed a deposit (0302) of yellowish brown silty clay to a depth of 0.34m.
- 6.4.2 There were no archaeological features or deposits revealed as a result of the excavation of Area 03. A number of disarticulated human remains were recovered from the spoil of (0302), which were collected and stored within the church for re-burial by the church diocese.
- 6.4.3 Where Area 03 abutted the wall of the South aisle, a shallow pit was excavated for a pump to be fitted to the base of the existing drain pipe.

6.4.4 A portion of the foundation of the current South wall of the nave was exposed within this trench, [0304], which was formed of undressed ironstone blocks, with surrounding fragments used as packing. Above [0304], [0303] was recorded as the extant above ground dressed blocks, forming the South wall of the nave.

6.5 Area 04. Drain run. Figures 2, 3 (Dr#05 and 06); Figure 4 (Dr#07); Plates 7, 8 and 9.

6.5.1 Area 04 comprised a trench measuring approximately 10m in length, 0.46m in depth and 0.34m in width, which was hand excavated from the South wall of the chancel to connect with Area 05 (soakaway) discussed below. This revealed a similarly simple stratigraphic sequence of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0401), measuring 1.75m in depth, which sealed a deposit of yellowish brown silty clay (0402).

6.5.2 Approximately 1.4m south of the chancel wall, the top of a brick burial vault [0404] was uncovered. This comprised two single skin brick walls with dark brown/black 'grave earth' (0406) infill. The vault [0404] was oriented East-West alongside the orientation of the current church. [0404] was of narrow construction, measuring 0.67m in width. No above ground memorial was found associated with vault [0404], and excavation did not extend to the depth at which *in-situ* coffins may have been located. No dating evidence was found associated with [0404], although the fabric of the brick work suggests c.19th or later.

6.5.3 Only a small part of burial vault [0404] was uncovered by excavation, with full measurements unrecorded. It was not considered feasible to divert the drain run in this area for this reason, due to the position of the burial vault [0404] against the chancel wall, which connected the drain run and the extant drain pipe.

6.5.4 The top two courses of burial vault [0404] were subsequently removed, which allowed the laying of the new drain through the top of the vault. The top two courses of brick work were then reinstated over the top of this, and the internal space infilled with pea gravel.

6.5.5 The primary cut for the construction of burial vault [0404] was seen in section, which had been backfilled around the vault [0404], labelled as (0405). The fill of the construction pit (0405) contained a significant amount of mortar which may have come from the initial building of the vault.

6.5.6 Where Area 04 abutted the South wall of the chancel, a section of the current church foundations were revealed. This comprised roughly dressed ironstone blocks with infilled with ironstone packing fragments. (Plate 9).

6.6 Area 05. Soakaway. Figures 2 and 4 (Dr#08); Plate 10.

6.6.1 Area 05 comprised a soakaway pit measuring approximately 1m x 1m x 1m, which was hand excavated to connect with Area 04 (drain run). A similar stratigraphic sequence was observed in this area with dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0501) to a depth of 0.33m, which sealed deposit (0502), comprised of a yellowish brown clayey silt.

6.6.2 Within (0502), at the point in which Area 04 (drain run) connected with Area 05, a human skull was observed which was likely to be part of an *in situ* burial. This was

located towards the base of the excavation. (Plate 10). Further disturbance of the remains was not necessary, and were left *in situ*.

- 6.6.3 The burial was most likely aligned East-West. There was no evidence of a coffin or coffin furniture, suggesting a shroud burial more common of the medieval or early post-medieval. No above ground marker was present.

6.7 Area 06. Drain run. Figures 2 and 4 (Dr#09) ; Plate 11.

6.7.1 Area 06 comprised a trench measuring approximately 14m in length 0.45m in depth and 0.34m in width, which was hand excavated to connect with the Area 07 (soakaway discussed below). This revealed a similarly simple stratigraphic sequence of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0601) to a depth of 0.17m, which sealed deposit (0602), comprised of a yellowish brown clayey silt to a depth of 0.3m.

6.7.2 Where Area 06 abutted the North wall of the church, exposed brickwork was observed. This was underpinning the North wall and had either replaced the original foundation or had been inserted beneath the lowest course of stonework in order to stabilise the structure. This likely took place during a phase of church renovations during the 1890's.

6.8 Area 07 Soakaway. Figures 2 and 4 (Dr#10)

6.8.1 Area 07 comprised a soakaway pit, measuring approximately 1m x 2m x 1m, which was hand excavated to connect with Area 06 (drain run) and Area 08. This revealed a changing stratigraphy of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0701) to a depth of 0.17m, which sealed deposit (0702) comprised a yellow clay to a depth of 0.16m. This overlay (0703), a dark grey clayey loam, which sealed deposits (0704) and (0705) comprising dark grey clayey loam which contained frequent brick fragments.

6.9 Area 08 Drain run. Figure 2.

6.9.1 Area 08 comprised a trench, measuring approximately 8m in length, 0.54m in depth and 0.34m in width, which was hand excavated to connect with the Area 07 (soakaway). This revealed a simple stratigraphy of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0801) to a depth of 0.14m, which overlay deposit (0802) formed of a less compacted greyish clayey loam to a depth of 0.4m.

6.9.2 Where Area 08 abutted the North wall of the church, brick underpinning was observed. There were no further archaeological features or deposits uncovered as a result of the excavation.

6.10 Area 09 Drain run. Figures 2 and 5 (Dr#11); Plate 12.

6.10.1 Area 09 comprised a trench, measuring approximately 10m in length, 0.4m in depth and 0.34m in width, which was hand excavated to connect with Area 10 (soakaway). This revealed a relatively simple stratigraphic sequence of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (0901) to a depth of 0.1m, which sealed deposit (0902), formed of a brownish yellow clayey loam to a depth of 0.3m. To the base of this

deposit, a c.19th brick underpinning was noted [0903], as part of a phase of works to stabilise the church structure during the earlier renovations. A series of undressed ironstone blocks, (0904) were located around the brick lining [0903], which may represent an earlier foundation wall of the current chancel.

6.10.2 There were no further archaeological features or deposits uncovered as a result of the excavation.

6.11 Area 10 Soakaway. Figures 2 and 5 (Dr#12); Plate 13.

6.11.1 Area 10 represents the excavation of a soakaway pit measuring approximately 1m x 1m x 1m, which was hand excavated to connect with Area 09 (drain run). This revealed a relatively simple stratigraphic sequence of dark grey clayey loam topsoil (1001) to a depth of 0.15m, which sealed a thin banded deposit of ironstone fragments (1002). This overlay a deposit of yellowish brown clay (1003) to a depth of 0.47m. Beneath this, a deposit of grey brown loam containing several modern brick fragments was observed (1004) to a depth of 0.4m, which sealed (1005), a grey brownish loam to a depth of 0.08m. This comprised the infill of grave cut [1006], which was not excavated.

6.11.2 On the Northern side of Area 10 a grave cut [1006] was observed. The excavation of Area 10 did not go deep enough to uncover any human remains. No above ground grave marker was present.

7 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 From all of the excavated drain runs and soakaways, a large number of disarticulated human remains were recovered. Most of these comprised fragments of long bones, with a much smaller amount being made up of phalanges or cranial fragments. These disarticulated remains are remnants of earlier phases of churchyard use for burial. These remains were collected together and stored within the church for later re-burial.
- 7.2 Two of the soakaways, Area 05 and Area 10, revealed evidence for *in situ* burials. In Area 05 a human skull was partially exposed. The position and state of preservation of the skull suggest that it formed part of an *in situ* burial. The skull was observed at a depth of 1m, which was the limit of the excavation. Ground works did not necessitate further excavation of the burial, which was left *in-situ*.
- 7.3 The grave cut within Area 05 was located at a depth of 1m, and did not produce any evidence of a formal grave cut, or coffin furnishings, which suggests that the burial was part of an earlier phase of churchyard use. Whilst only a small portion of the grave was uncovered, the lack of coffin furnishings suggests it may have been a medieval or early post-medieval example of a shroud burial. No other dating evidence associated with this grave cut.
- 7.4 In Area 10 the cut of a grave was observed [1006]. Excavation in this area was not sufficiently deep to uncover any coffin or human remains, or the coffin in which they were placed. The cut of the grave appeared deeper than 1m, which suggests that it belonged to the post-medieval or early modern period.
- 7.5 A brick grave vault [0404] was also recorded with in Area 04 (drain run). The upper courses of brickwork were exposed but the excavation did not penetrate to the depth of any interment within it. No associated above ground grave marker was present.

- 7.6 Several areas along the North and South wall revealed evidence for the current church foundations. Within Area 06, Area 08 and Area 09, the fabric of the wall had been underpinned by modern brickwork, (Plate 11, Plate 12, and Figure 3). This probably took place in the later c.19th, during a programme of renovation. It was not possible to determine whether the brick work had replaced an existing stone foundation or whether there had been no foundation in the first place thus necessitating the underpinning.
- 7.7 On the wall of the South aisle of the church, original church foundations were revealed in three places, Area 01 and Area 03, and Area 04. In Area 01 the construction of the foundation was obscured by modern concrete, (Plate 4 & 5), from a drainage trough that had been laid down at some point in the c.19th or c.20th. The structure of the stone foundation in Area 03 (Figure 6) and Area 04, (Plate 9, Figure 3) were similarly organised, with large partly worked blocks of ironstone infilled with smaller loose fragments, which appear to belong to the same phase of construction, and may be associated with the original construction of the chancel in the c.14th.
- 7.8 A drawing of the church dated c. 1791 shows a porch on the South side of the church (see cover). It is unclear when this was demolished, but this may have taken place before the lengthy phase of refurbishment during the later 19th century which saw the replacement of windows and archways. The works undertaken on the south aisle during the c.1880's make no mention of its demolition and it is likely that it was removed prior to the refurbishment of the windows and the work on the bell tower. No signs of the foundation of the porch were located in the excavations of the drain runs, Area 01 and Area 03 which abutted the wall of the South aisle.
- 7.9 Across the site, the upper layers exposed in trench and soakaway sections revealed a quantity of ironstone fragments. These appeared to be relatively evenly distributed in all areas where intrusive groundwork was undertaken. These appear to reflect fragmentary remains of stone dressing used in previous phases of the church construction, repairs, or demolition material.

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Appendix 1: Context Register

Context	Area	Description
0101	01	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam
0102	01	Yellowish brown clay silt with ironstone fragments throughout
0201	02	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101
0202	02	Yellowish brown clay silt with ironstone fragments throughout, same as 0102
0301	03	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101
0302	03	Yellowish brown clay silt with ironstone fragments throughout, same as 0102
0303	03	Dressed ironstone blocks in south wall of nave
0304	03	Undressed ironstone blocks and fragments used as packing in south wall of nave
0401	04	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101
0402	04	Yellowish brown clay silt with ironstone fragments throughout, same as 0102
0403	04	Dressed ironstone blocks
0404	04	Brick sides of grave vault
0405	04	Backfill of pit excavated to build 0404
0406	04	Backfill of grave vault
0407	04	Earth that has replaced mortar and stone blocks
0408	04	Small undressed ironstone pieces used as packing between blocks 0403
0501	05	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101
0502	05	Yellowish brown clay silt with ironstone fragments throughout, same as 0102
0601	06	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101
0602	06	Yellowish brown clay silt with ironstone fragments throughout, same as 0102
0701	07	Topsoil, grey brown clay loam, same as 0101
0702	07	Blocky yellow clay
0703	07	Dark grey loam
0704	07	Ironstone lumps and fragments
0705	07	Dark grey loam wit brick fragments
0801	08	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101

Context	Area	Description
0802	08	As 0801 but less compacted
0901	09	Topsoil, grey/brown clay loam, same as 0101
0902	09	Brownish yellow clay loam with ironstone fragments
0903	09	Engineering bricks underpinning north east corner of chancel
0904	09	Undressed ironstone blocks, part of foundation for 0903
1001	10	Topsoil, grey/ brown clay loam, same as 0101
1002	10	Layer of ironstone fragments, part of grave fill
1003	10	Yellow clay with ironstone fragments, part of grave fill
1004	10	Grey brown loam with brick fragments, part of grave fill
1005	10	Brown clay loam with ironstone fragments
1006	10	Cut of grave

Appendix 2: Plates



Plate 10: South elevation of the Church of St. Mary, Nether Broughton. Looking North.



Plate 11: East and South facing walls of the chancel and South aisle. Looking Northwest.



Plate 3: North facing wall of the church chancel and bell tower. Looking South.



Plate 12: Hand digging in Area 01 (drain run) and Area 02 (soakaway). Looking Northeast.



Plate 13: Area 01. Foundations obscured by residual concrete from a modern drain trough. Looking North.



Plate 14: Area 03. Original foundations of the South aisle wall. Looking South.



Plate 15: Brick grave vault [0404] within Area 04 (drain run). Looking East.



Plate 16: Brick grave vault [0404] (Area 4) after laying new drainage pipe. Looking Southeast.



Plate17: Area 04. Original foundations for the South wall of the chancel. Looking North.



Plate10: Area 05 (soakaway) with a partially intact burial to the base. Looking Northeast.



Plate 18: Area 06. Brick underpinning of the foundation of the North wall. Looking South.



Plate 12: Area 09. Brick underpinning of the Northeast corner of the chancel. Looking West.



Plate 13: Area 10 (soakaway) with a grave cut to the left. Looking West.

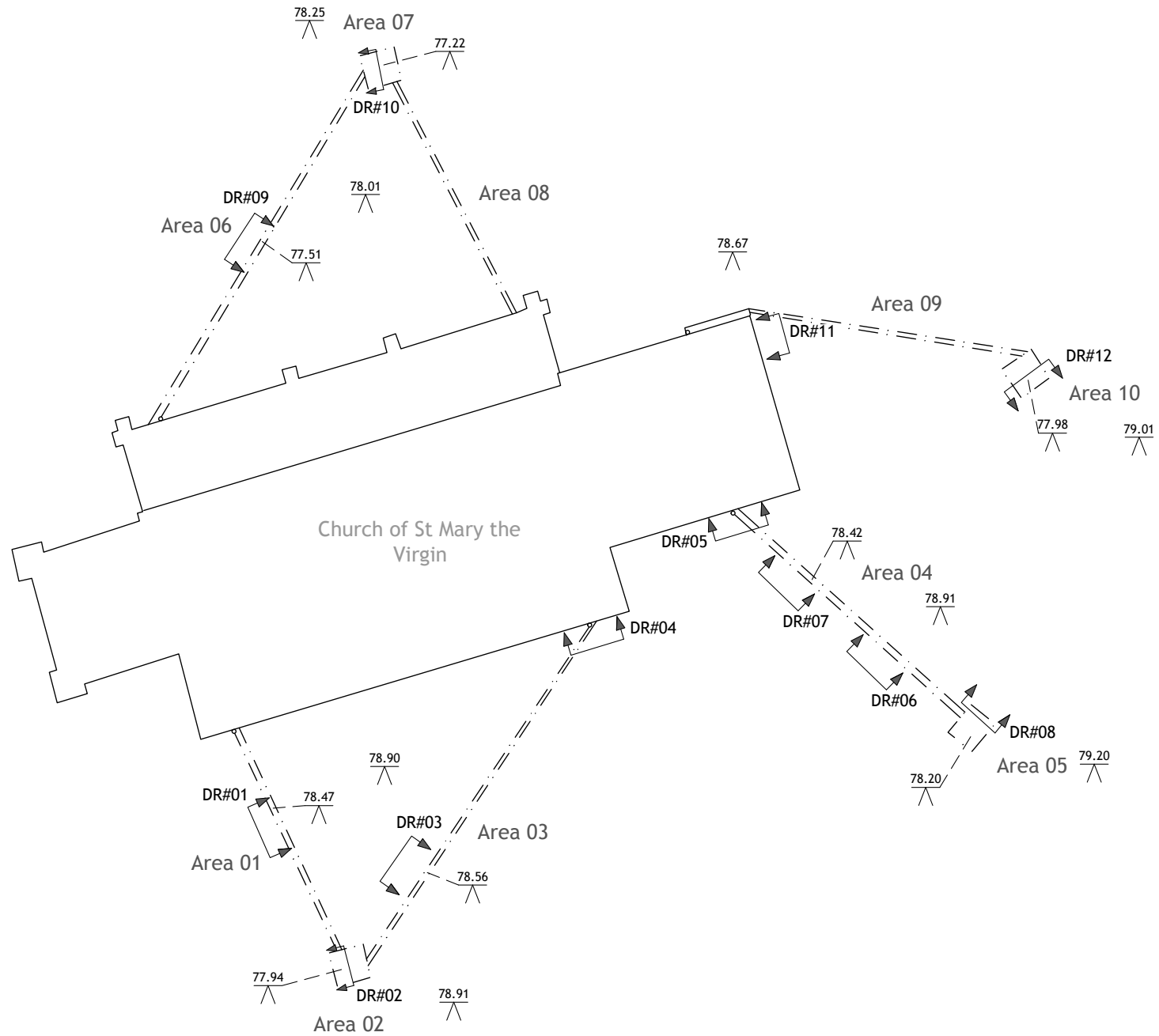
Appendix 3: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

<i>Field Records</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Watching brief record sheets	Record of visit and work carried out	3
Context register	Register of context numbers and descriptions	1
Context sheets	Record of features and deposits	37
Photo record sheet	Record of photographs taken	1
Digital photographs	All views	35
Site drawings	Plan of site	10
<i>Documents</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Written scheme of investigation	Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project.	0
Health & Safety	Safe working statement & risk assessment	1
Report to client	Report of findings of the watching brief.	1
Find	Description	Number
Nil	Nil	0

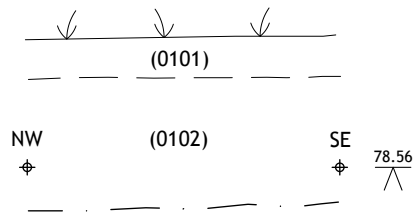
The site archive is currently held at the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1, Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 4AB. As no significant archaeological deposits or artefactual remains were recovered from the site, the archive will remain in the offices of Trent and Peak Archaeology.

Appendix 4: Figures

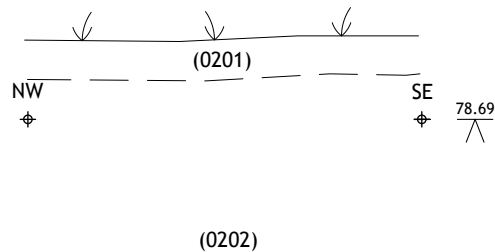




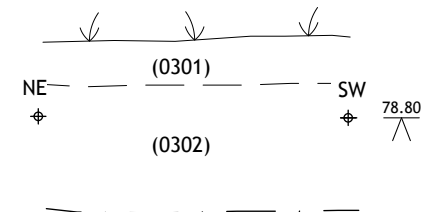
Dr#01
South West Facing Section of Area 01



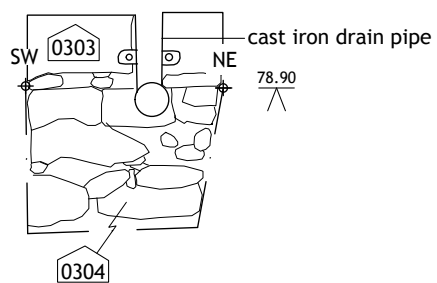
Dr#02
South West Facing Section of Area 02



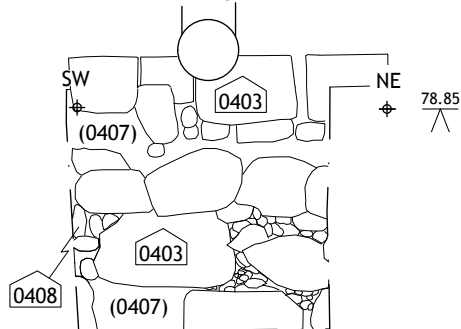
Dr#03
North West Facing Section of Area 03



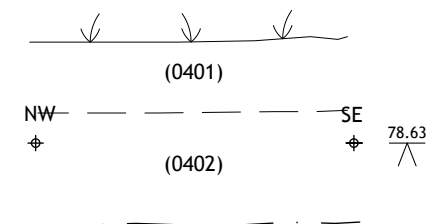
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South East Facing Section of Area 03

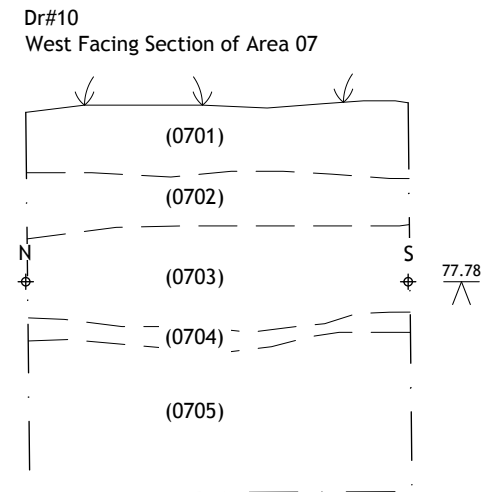
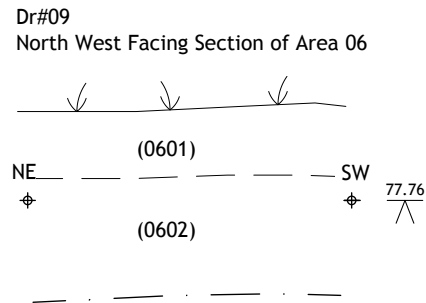
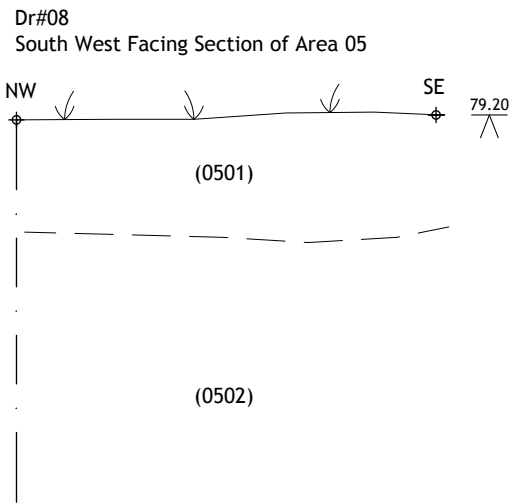
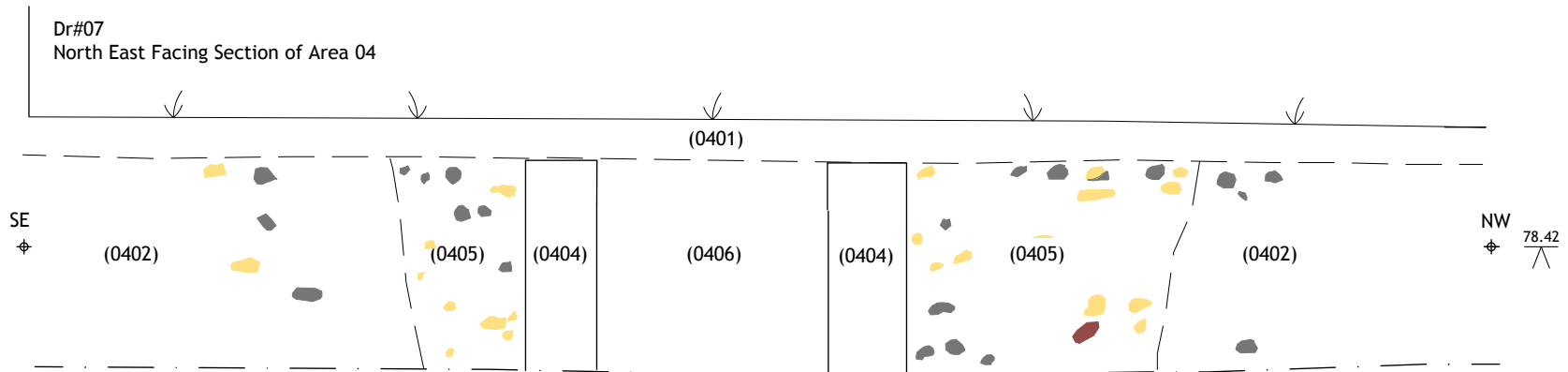


Dr#05
South East Facing Section of Area 04

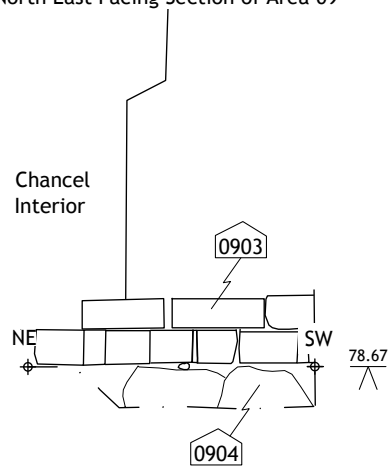


Dr#06
South West Facing Section of Area 04





Dr#11
North East Facing Section of Area 09



Dr#12
North West Facing Section of Area 10

