

**ST MARY STRATFORD BOW,
LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER
HAMLETS**

**SUMMARY REPORT ON AN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF**

Site Code: SMB11

March 2011

PCA Report No: 11014



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY


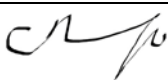
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ST MARY STRATFORD BOW, LONDON
BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

SUMMARY REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF

Quality Control

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ST MARY STRATFORD BOW, LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS
SUMMARY REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Written by: A L Pooley, Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
March 2011

Central NGR: TQ37658295

Site Code: SMB11

Project Manager: Chris Mayo, Pre-Construct Archaeology

Commissioning Client: Richard Griffiths Architects
on behalf of
St Mary Stratford Bow Parish Council

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March 2011

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is a summary report of an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of a water main trench at the church of St Mary Stratford Bow, London Borough of Tower Hamlets E3 3AR, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The watching brief was conducted on the 2nd March 2011 and commissioned by Richard Griffiths Architects on behalf of the Parish Council St Mary Stratford Bow. The site is centred at TQ37658295.
- 1.2 The site has been the subject of a previous Desk-based Assessment (Barefoot and Holden 2006) and a previous watching brief on below-ground drainage works (Pooley 2007), all by PCA.
- 1.3 The archaeological watching brief monitored the excavation by hand of a pipe trench to the northwest of the Parish Room in the north of the churchyard. This was in advance of the installing a new water main to serve the Parish Room.
- 1.4 The site is sub rectangular in shape with an area of approximately 0.30ha. The area monitored was covered with topsoil and Yorkstone paving before excavation began, and the ground level lay at approximately 9.50m.
- 1.5 The ground reduction was performed by hand. The author was in attendance throughout to examine and record any archaeological deposits exposed.
- 1.6 Site records were compiled in accordance with Museum of London standards under the site code SMB11.

2 SITE BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The license to build the church of St Mary's at Stratford Bow was granted by the Bishop of London in 1311. The land used as its site was granted by Edward III, and was stated to be part of the King's Highway. Originally it was designated an outlying chapel of ease for the parish of St Dunstan's Stepney, ministering to a community which grew up on the western side of the River Lea following the construction of Matilda's bridge in c 1110.
- 2.2 Over the following centuries the church of St Mary moved slowly away from the administrative and financial clutches of St Dunstan's. The first burials on the site are attested from 1497 and in 1730 the church was reconstituted as a parish church independent of the parish of Stepney.
- 2.3 No medieval or post-medieval buildings are known to have stood within the immediate area monitored, and so it was anticipated that, given the depth excavated, just upper graveyard deposits would be encountered with the possibility of disarticulated human bone being present.

3 SEQUENCE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The area monitored was reduced by a depth of 0.60m. The trench extended 1.70m westwards from the west wall of the Parish Room building before turning north for 1.70m until it met the northern boundary of the churchyard. It was approximately 0.35m wide. As expected, only a graveyard deposit was partially exposed.
- 3.2 This deposit [1] was exposed at a height of between 9.05m AOD and 9.30m AOD, the lower level reflecting truncation by modern features. It comprised a friable mid to dark greyish brown silt sand (30:70) with occasional clay tobacco pipe, disarticulated human bone, coal, brick and tile, flint pebbles (up to 75mm), slate and mortar. It was exposed for a maximum thickness of 0.40m and appears to be late 19th century or later in date. The disarticulated human bone was replaced in the base of the trench in the position in which it was found.
- 3.3 It was overlain and truncated by layers of modern topsoil, paving, made ground and modern drainage pipes. These were between 0.20m and 0.45m thick.



Plate 1: View looking southeast of water main trench with associated truncation and graveyard deposit visible.

4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 No significant archaeological features or deposits were exposed during this watching brief. A reworked graveyard deposit was exposed, truncated horizontally by modern activity and localised drainage trenches.
- 4.2 The small quantity of disarticulated human bone was replaced in the base of the trench in the position in which it was found.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barefoot, I. and Holden, S., 2006 'An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment of Land at Bow Church, London Borough of Tower Hamlets'. PCA Unpublished Report.

Pooley, A., 2007 'An Archaeological Watching Brief on Drainage Repairs at St Mary Stratford Bow Church, London Borough of Tower Hamlets'. PCA Unpublished Report

6 APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-96013

Project details

| | |
|--|---|
| Project name | ST MARY STRATFORD BOW, LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF |
| Short description of the project | An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the excavation of a water main trench at the church of St Mary Stratford Bow, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. The archaeological watching brief monitored the excavation by hand of a pipe trench to the northwest of the Parish Room in the north of the churchyard. This was in advance of the installing a new water main to serve the Parish Room. The ground reduction was performed by hand. Site records were compiled in accordance with Museum of London standards under the site code SMB11. No significant archaeological features or deposits were exposed during this watching brief. A reworked graveyard deposit was exposed, truncated horizontally by modern activity and localised drainage trenches. |
| Project dates | Start: 02-03-2011 End: 02-03-2011 |
| Previous/future work | Yes / Not known |
| Any associated project reference codes | SMB11 - Sitecode |
| Type of project | Recording project |
| Site status | Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) |
| Current Land use | Other 4 - Churchyard |
| Monument type | NONE None |
| Significant Finds | NONE None |
| Investigation type | 'Watching Brief' |
| Prompt | Research |

Project location

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | GREATER LONDON TOWER HAMLETS BOW ST MARY STRATFORD BOW, LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS |
| Postcode | E3 3AR |
| Study area | 0.30 Hectares |
| Site coordinates | TQ 3765 8295 51.5281617628 -0.01543021581420 51 31 41 N 000 00 55 W Point |
| Lat/Long Datum | Unknown |

Project creators

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Name of Organisation | Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. |
| Project brief originator | Self (i.e. landowner, developer, etc.) |
| Project design originator | Chris Mayo |
| Project director/manager | Chris Mayo |
| Project supervisor | Ashley Pooley |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Architectural Practice |

Name of sponsor/funding body PCC of St Mary and Holy Trinity, Bow

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient LAARC

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography', 'Images vector', 'Text'

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Plan', 'Section'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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Figure 1
Site Location
1:2,500 at A4

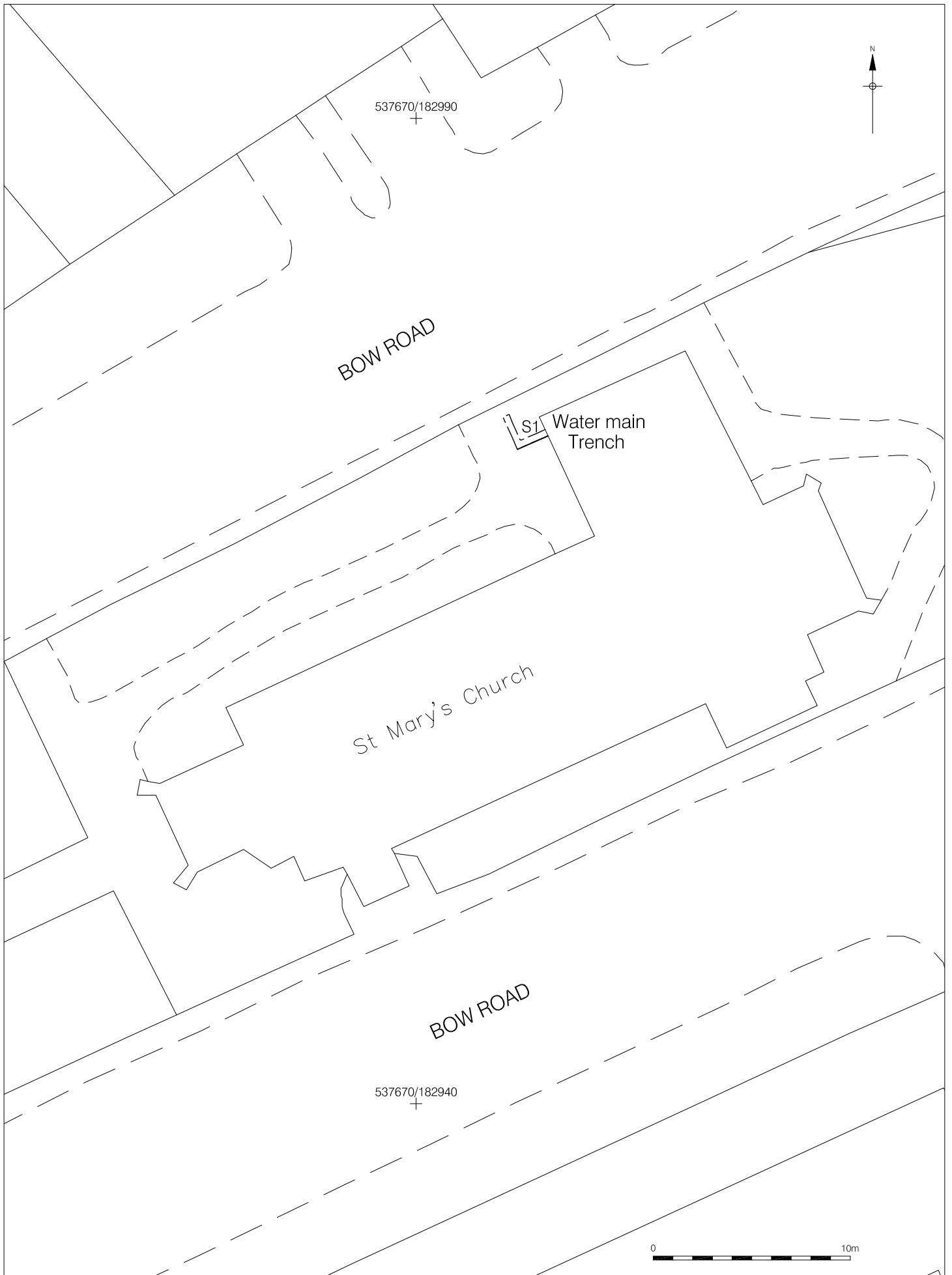


Figure 2
Location of Water main Trench
1:250 at A4

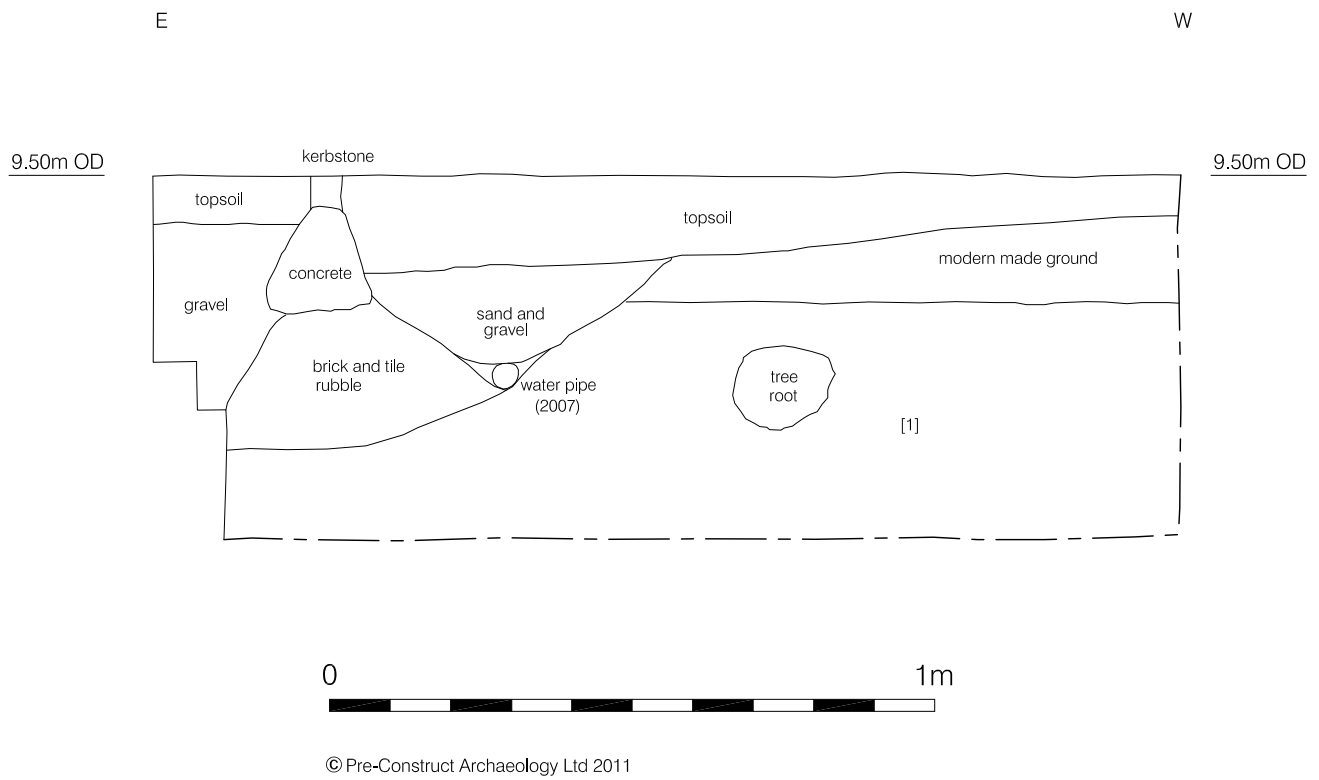


Figure 3
Section 1
1:12.5 at A4

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