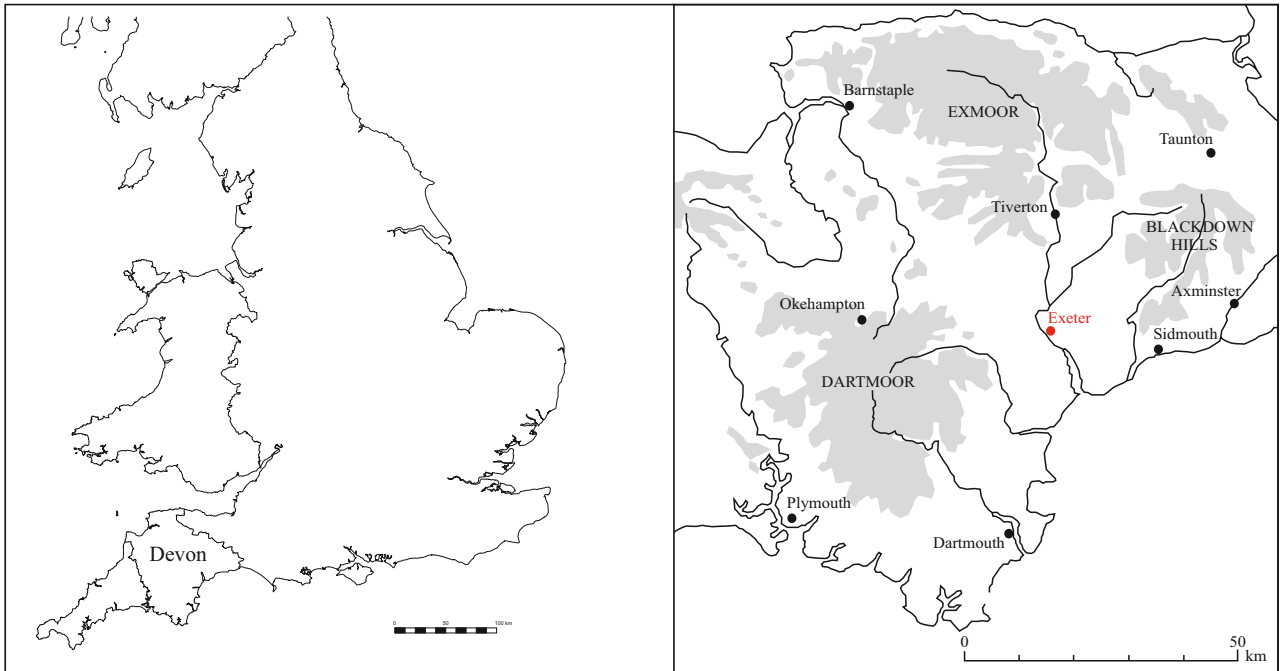


Exeter City Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Exeter	National Grid Reference: SX 9245 9307	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording at St Sidwell's, Exeter.		Photo attached: Y
Faculty no: 2020-055321	Recipient museum: n/a	
OASIS ID: oakforda1- 504114	Museum Accession no: n/a	
Contractor's reference number/code: OA1861	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 11/10, 27-28/10 and 20/12/2021	
<p>Description of works:</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Oakford Archaeology between October and December 2021 at St Sidwell's, Exeter (SX 9245 9307). The site (Fig. 1) in an area of high archaeological potential immediately outside the former East Gate of the City, astride one of the principal routes to the Roman fortress, the later Roman town and medieval city. The current church was erected in 1957 to replace its 19th century predecessor which was badly damaged during the Second World War. However, it probably stands on or around the site of the original pre-Norman church. The earliest documentary reference appears in an 11th century list of the resting places of the English saints. It was therefore considered possible that significant remains or deposits might survive within the footprint of the proposed groundworks.</p> <p>A watching brief was maintained during works associated with provision of a new bell tower base, bin store and external staircase for the adjacent YMCA (Fig. 2, Pls. 1-6).</p> <p>The foundation for the new bell tower was hexagonal with each side 1.7m long and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.4m. The deposit sequence consisted of a mid to dark brown sandy silt topsoil (100), interpreted as a post-war landscaping deposit. This contained a single sherd of North Devon gravel tempered ware (17th-19th century) and a marble wall memorial plaque (Pl. 3). This was dedicated to Arthur Hoskins, Henry John Towning and Harry Wray and would originally have been located within the church. It was presumably relocated into the graveyard following the demolition of the church.</p> <p>The excavations for the new bin store consisted of a small area excavation approximately 13.5m long, 5m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.3m. The removal of a 0.1m thick layer of mid to dark brown silty clay (101) topsoil exposed a homogeneous mid reddish brown silty clay (101) with occasional human bones and a small collection of archaeological material consisting of 11 sherds of late 18th-19th century industrial whitewares. This deposit has been interpreted as a charnel soil.</p> <p>Finally, the installation of the new stair involved the excavation of four small post pits, each 0.4m wide and excavated to a maximum depth of 0.35m. This revealed a simple deposit sequence of mid to dark reddish brown silty clay (102) with frequent white lime mortar inclusions extending the full depth of the excavations.</p> <p>Project archive and OASIS entry</p> <p>Due to the limited nature of the findings a project archive will not be produced. A summary of the investigations has been submitted to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (Online Access to the Index of archaeological InterventionS).</p>		
Recorder: MFR Steinmetzer (Oakford Archaeology)		Date sent to HER:



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Fig. 1 Location of site.

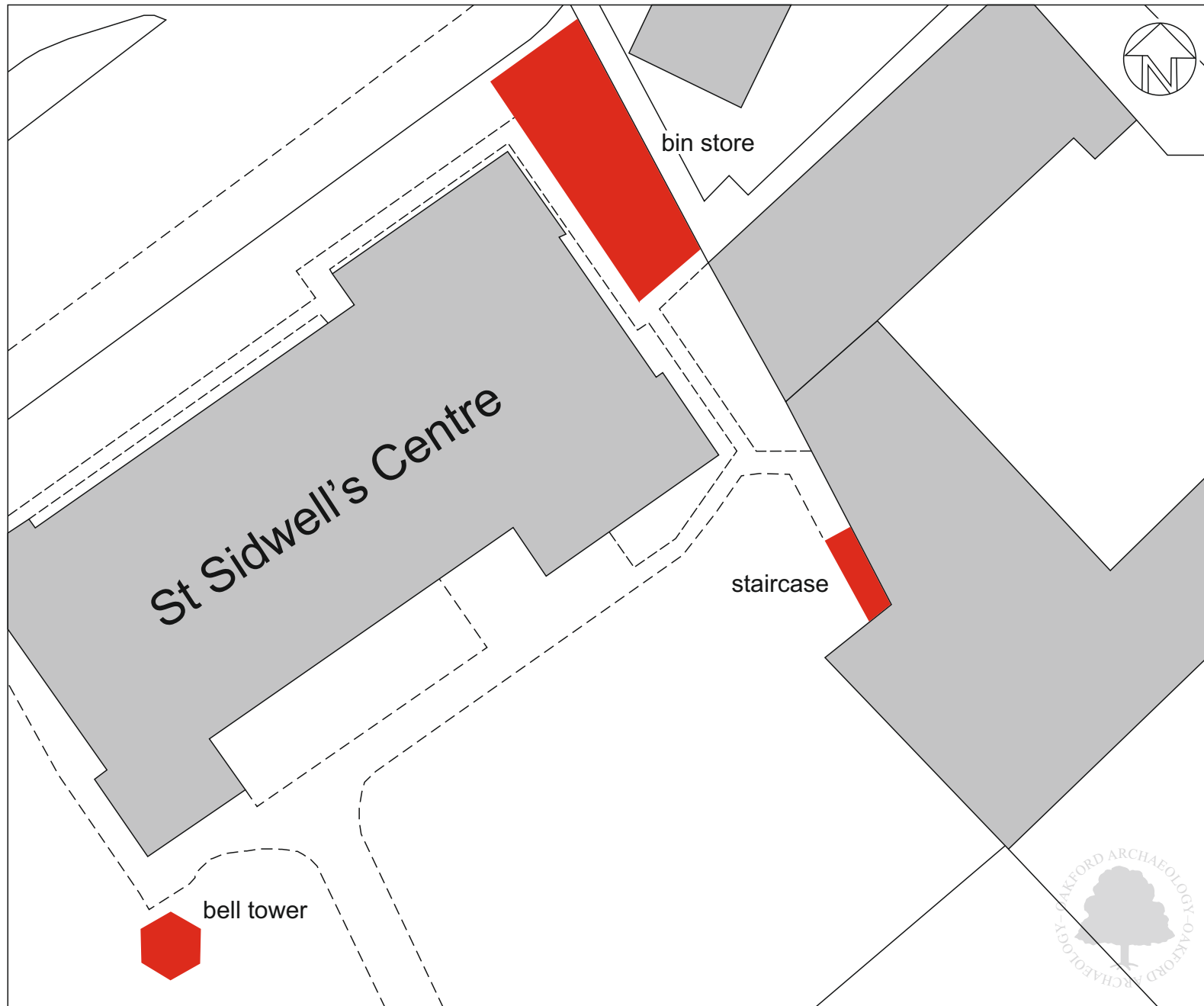


Fig. 2 Plan showing location of observations.



Pl. 1 General view of the new bell tower base with St Sidwell's in the background. Looking northeast.



Pl. 2 General view of the new bell tower base. 1m scales. Looking southwest.



Pl. 3 Close-up of memorial plate recovered during new bell tower excavations. 0.5m scale.



Pl. 4 General view of new bin store excavations. 1m scale. Looking northeast.



Pl. 5 General view of new staircase area prior to installation. 1m scale. Looking southeast.



Pl. 6 Close-up of southernmost posthole showing disturbed nature of deposit sequence. 0.5m scale. Looking northeast.