

St Lawrence's Church, Mickleton, Gloucestershire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING



understanding heritage matters

Archaeology Warwickshire Report No 1639
MAY 2016



*Working for
Warwickshire*

Project: St Lawrence's Church cemetery wall

Commissioned by: John Garton on behalf of Mickleton Parish Council

Project Report No. 1639

Site Code: GML16

Planning Reference: N/A

National Grid Reference: SP 1617 4348

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SUMMARY

Archaeological recording was carried out during the dismantling of a churchyard wall and grading down of a bank of soil at St Lawrence's Church, Mickleton, Gloucestershire. Although this wall section had been re-pointed with modern mortar the majority of the wall was bonded with lime mortar, and was of some antiquity, in contrast to the remaining walling, which had been rebuilt in the later 20th century. The small amount of human bone recovered was re-buried on site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Faculty has been granted by Gloucester DAC for the part-demolition, and rebuilding, of a length of the existing wall that surrounds the cemetery of St Lawrence's Church, Mickleton, Gloucestershire GL55 6RZ, and the excavation of a footing for a new length of wall further to the south-west, along with grading down of the slope to the rear of the present wall. It was thought possible that archaeological remains might be disturbed during the development. A condition of Faculty therefore required the applicant to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to be carried out in conjunction with the development.

1.2 A programme of fieldwork, consisting of the archaeological observation of wall dismantling, soil stripping and foundation trench excavation, was commissioned from Archaeology Warwickshire and carried out in February 2016. This report presents the results of that work. The project archive will be stored with Archaeology Warwickshire under Site Code GML16, until deposition with Gloucester Museum Service.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 The church of St Lawrence is located in the village of Mickleton, at National Grid reference SP 1617 4348. The church has been built on a spur of land which slopes down towards the graveyard wall to the south and west. The works cover an area of approximately 100 square metres.

2.2 The underlying geology of the site is Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation overlain by superficial deposits of Head – Clay Silt, Sand and Gravel (British Geological Survey 2016).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The parish church of St Lawrence dates back to the 12th century, with the nave being the earliest upstanding part of the building. The nave was extended west in the 13th/14th century and the aisles rebuilt. The west tower is of 14th-century date, while the chancel and clerestory are 15th-century. The large porch, running alongside the south aisle, was built in the 17th century. The church was restored in 1868. The church is a Grade I Listed Building (see Appendix C). The churchyard wall is believed to be at least 100 years old and its present line is the same as that shown on the First Edition Ordnance survey map of 1885 (Fig 2).

4 AIMS AND METHODS

4.1 The main aim of the work was to record any archaeological remains disturbed by the development, to collate the records in an archaeological archive and present the significant aspects of the archive in a report for dissemination.

4.2 The secondary aim was to form an understanding of the remains recorded in terms of their character and date, and to place the evidence in its local and regional context.

4.3 The objective of the work was a programme of controlled excavation to development formation levels, or the geological natural, whichever the higher.

4.4 The work undertaken involved the examination of early map evidence as well as records of archaeological remains in the area and local historical journals and other publications.

4.5 An experienced archaeologist was made available for each day of ground disturbance when notified by the client in accordance with WSI/Brief planning condition.

5 RESULTS

Wall demolition

5.1 The section of wall (1) running NW-SE had its upper stonework dismantled by hand and the facing stones removed for use in later rebuilding work. The wall was 0.50m wide and originally standing 1.50m high. The face of the wall had been repointed with modern mortar, but to the rear of this the wall was bonded with soft brown lime mortar. The wall was well built, and stones graded in size with larger stones being used in the lower stonework

and smaller, more squared stones in the upper work. Topsoil had ingressed between the stones on the rear part of the wall and considerably animal activity was evident with small burrows visible in the soil to the rear. The upper 0.90m of stonework was removed, leaving the lower 0.60m *in situ*, as this was being overlaid by the newly graded bank.

5.2 The modern, low wall (10) running alongside the southern part of the disabled access ramp had already been removed to ground level. The remaining stone was removed during the excavation of the new foundation trench by a mini-excavator. The wall was c.0.30m wide and the stonework below the level of the adjacent concrete ramp was removed to a depth of 0.30m.

5.3 The section of walling adjoining wall 1, running SW-NE had been rebuilt in the recent past (5). This was a length of wall 5.40m long and 1.40-1.50m high with breeze blocks to its rear and grey plastic pipe at a low level to facilitate drainage. These pipes are the same as those in the wall (7) alongside the disabled access ramp, suggesting the rebuilding of this section of wall may have taken place at the same time as the construction of the ramp (9). A 2.06m length of wall (5) between walls 4 and 1 was rebuilt along with wall 4, with breeze blocks at the rear. The stones in these sections of wall are smaller than in the section of wall that was dismantled. To the rear of walls 4 and 5 the soil immediately behind the walling was removed to a maximum depth of 0.60m, cutting into a layer of topsoil mixed with modern bricks, rubble, and other debris (6). This material was graded back from the standing wall.

Foundation trenches

5.4 New foundation trenches were excavated 0.30m below the level of the present concrete ramp's surface using a narrow toothless bucket.

Deposit sequence

5.5 The deposit sequence to the rear of wall 1 was as follows. Geological natural was not reached. The lowest level seen was to the rear of the junctions of walls 1 and 7 and consisted of 0.55m of charcoal-flecked, ashy, dark grey brown silty loam (8) immediately behind the dismantled wall. This was overlain by c.0.50m of grey brown sandy silt (3), in turn overlaid by 0.35m of very dark grey silty loam topsoil (2). Finds noted on the spoilheap were given the topsoil context number but were not retained. A small amount of human bone recovered was reburied on site.

5.6 In the southern part of the area part of a concrete hardstanding (13) had to be cut through for the new wall footing. A structure is shown in this area on Ordnance Survey maps of between 1885 and 1970; it was presumably demolished to allow the installation of the disabled access ramp. In between this and the standing churchyard wall was a modern, live waterpipe (12), at a depth of 0.25m. South of wall 5 and to the side of wall 10 the topsoil was mixed with fragments of brick and rubble, possibly demolition material from the structure that formerly stood in this area (11).

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The dismantled section of graveyard wall is probably the only section of the standing wall that had not been rebuilt in the relatively recent past. Although the front had modern pointing the core was bonded with lime mortar. There were no finds dating the construction of the wall although it is thought to be over a hundred years old.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology Warwickshire would like to thank John Garten for commissioning the work on behalf of the Parish Council.

REFERENCES

British Geological Survey 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer*

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed May 2016.

Ordnance Survey 1885 *First Edition 1:2500 map*, Gloucestershire sheet 7.4.

Ordnance Survey 1902 *Second Edition 1:2500 map*, Gloucestershire sheet 7.4.

Ordnance Survey 1923 *Third Edition 1:2500 map*, Gloucestershire sheet 7.4

Ordnance Survey 1970 SP 1643 1:2500 mapping.

APPENDICES

A List of contexts

<i>Context</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Comment/details</i>
1	Stone wall	Seven courses high, limestone
2	Topsoil	Dark grey silty loam
3	Layer	Grey brown sandy silt layer
4	Wall	Rebuilt length of stone wall
5	Wall	Stub of wall at right-angles to 4
6	Layer	Topsoil mixed with stone rubble etc
7	Wall	NE side of access ramp, revetting graveyard
8	Layer	Charcoal-flecked/ashy layer
9	Path	Concrete ramp
10	Wall	Low L-shaped wall (modern)
11	Layer	Topsoil mixed with brick fragments and stone
12	Water pipe	Modern
13	Concrete base	Modern concrete base

B List of Finds

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
2	Human bone	6	Metatarsals and rib, plus small broken frags*
2	Animal bone	1	Cow molar
2	Glass	1	Window glass
2	Iron	1	Grave railing
2	Pottery	4	19th-20th century
3	Clay pipe	1	Stem
6	Glass	2	Complete bottles (modern)
6	Stone	6	Broken slate gravestone fragments

- Human bone reburied directly on site
- Other finds not retained, gravestones fragments remain on site adjacent to area reduced

C Listed Building Citation

CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE

List entry Number: 1088526

County: Gloucestershire

District:Cotswold District Type:District Authority Parish:Mickleton

Grade:I

Date first listed:25-Aug-1960

UID:127001

Details

SP 1643-1743 MICKLETON CHURCH LANE (east side) 12/86 Church of St. Lawrence
25.8.60

Anglican Parish Church. C12 Nave, C13/14 nave extended west and aisles rebuilt on a larger scale, C14 west tower. C15 chancel and clerestory to nave, C17 south porch. Restored 1868 by Frederick Preedy. Nave and chancel ashlar with side and angle buttresses respectively. South aisle coursed limestone rubble with angle buttresses. All under tile roof with slightly stepped coping and upright cross finials. South porch ashlar with flat roof. W tower squared limestone with angle buttresses and ribbed, broached spire with 4 pinnacles on the broaches. Plan: Nave, with north and south aisle, the latter with south porch attached towards west. West tower and chancel. South porch: 2 storeys, South wall 3-windowed. 2-light, flat chamfered king mullioned windows, with trefoil heads. 2 and 3-light stone mullioned casements and single, round-headed window, to west wall. All windows to porch have metal casements and leaded panes, some with original glass. Continuous band over ground and first floor windows. 2 identical doorways one blocked, in south wall with round heads, keystones, imposts and carved spandrels. Flat, moulded hoods over. South aisle: two, 2-light windows in south wall one 5-light window at east end, with original decorated tracery. Chancel: two 3-light C19 windows with perpendicular style tracery in north and south walls. The windows in the south wall flank a studded, plank door in 4-centred arched surround with decorative stops. 5-light, east window with original decorated tracery. Three 3-light windows with decorated tracery in north wall of north aisle. 2 stage W tower with C19 paired arched doorway in W wall. 2-light belfry windows and lucarnes, all with limestone slate louvres. Interior: Nave with C15 clerestory and oak panelled ceiling. Organ gallery at west end c1931. 2 bays of late C12 nave with still leaf capitals and extra W bay of c1300. Aisles beyond have C19 timbered roofs with arched braces, rising to collar with King post, linked with decorative iron straps. Step up to chancel through C19 pointed arch. Furniture: C15 bound parish chest below organ gallery. C19 pews incorporating some linenfold panelling from former pews.

Carved Jacobean pulpit in north-east corner. North aisle: font at west end with C15 pedestal and octagonal bowl of c1661. C18 stone decorated wall tablet on west wall to Thomas Woodward by his grandson Edward Woodward of Campden. Late C18 decorated tablet right. 4 hatchments on north wall of north aisle, 3 C18 decorated stone tablets one large decorated with 10 paired heraldic shields by Edward Woodward. 2 C19 marble tablets all commemorating members of the Graves family. C18 memorial urn, commemorating Utrechia Smith in niche in east wall of north aisle. Another to Danvers Graves C12 stone crucifix below window. S aisle: C19 memorial tablet and C19 marble monument and tablet on E wall. 3 C19 wood plaques recording charities on S wall. Chancel N wall: C18 stone monument with barley twist columns. C17 stone tablet inset in wall, to John Bonner. 3 oval stone monuments one above the other, far right, commemorating 3 Edwards of the Fisher family. Chancel S wall. From left to right. C17 stone tablet to the Rev. Henry Hurst. One C18 and one C19 decorated wall tablet. 2 C19 marble tablets. The urn commemorating Utrechia Smith is referred to by the poet Shenstone in "Ophelia's Urn." (David Verey. *The Buildings of England: The Cotswolds*, 1979).

Listing NGR: SP1618943504



1 Graveyard wall before dismantling



2 Dismantling in progress



3 Wall dismantled



4 Grading of soil to rear of walls 4 and 5



5 Excavation of footings for new wall



6 Graded bank covering remains of wall 1

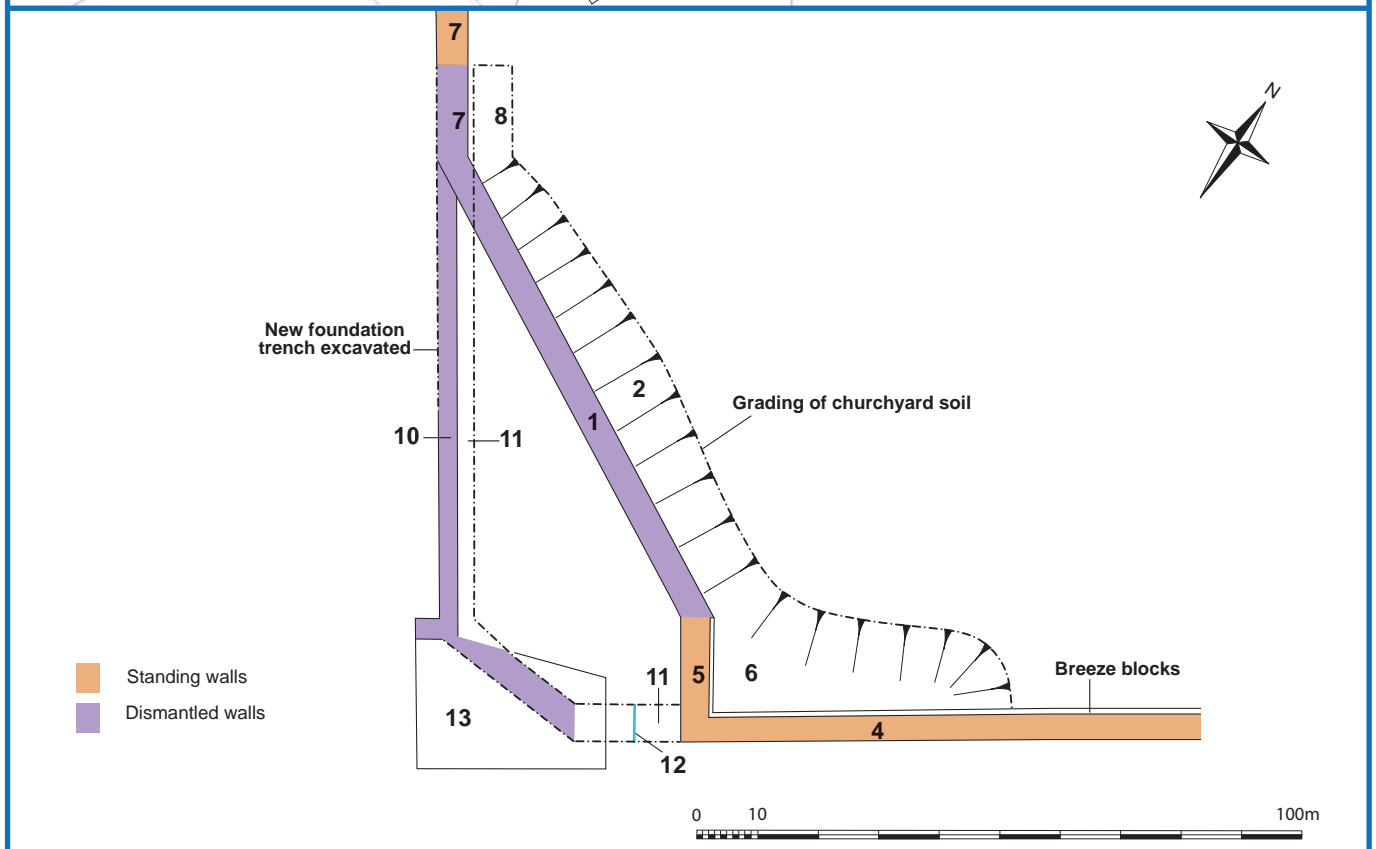
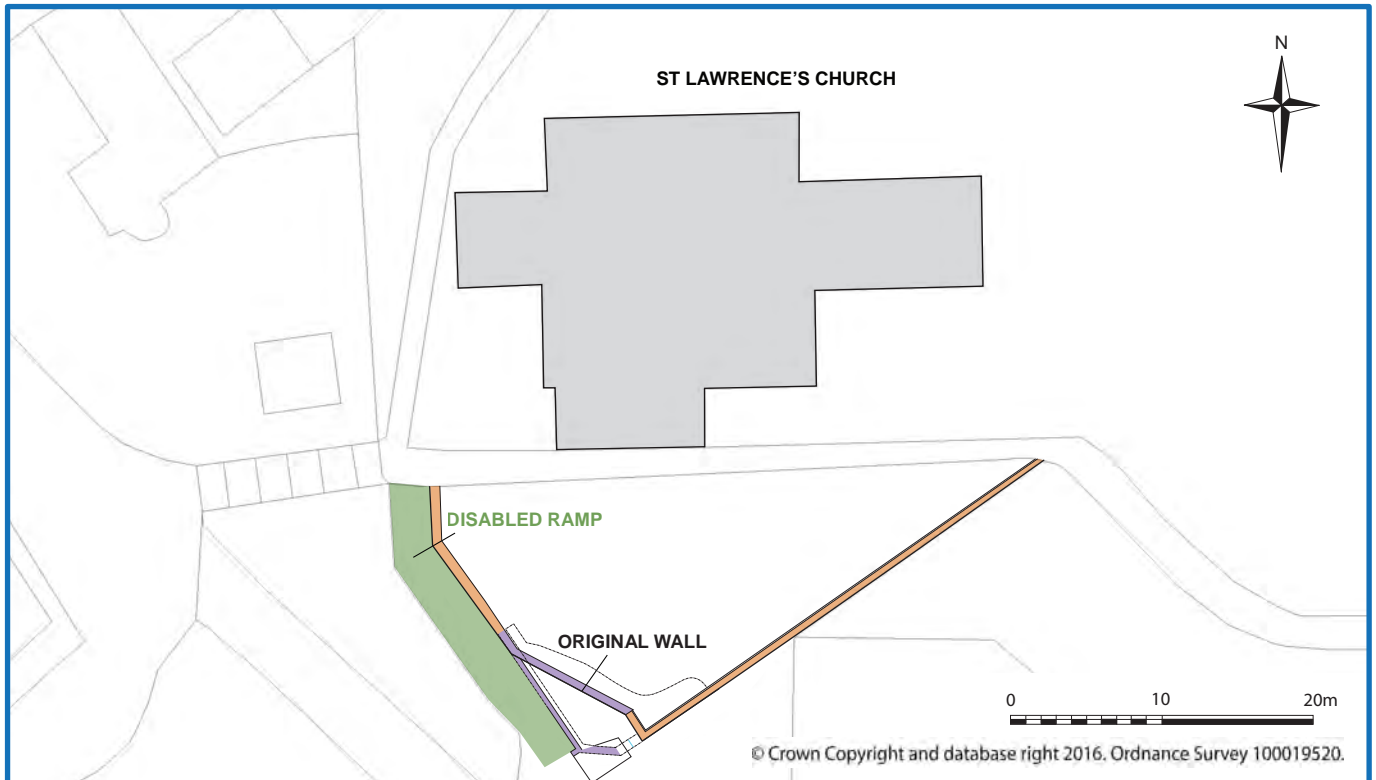


Fig 1: Site location and detail



Fig 2: Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885