



## YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST REPORT

<b>SITE ADDRESS</b>	Church of Holy Trinity (Stonegrave Minster), Stonegrave, North Yorkshire		
<b>CLIENT NAME</b>	The Parochial Church Council of the Church of Holy Trinity, Stonegrave		
<b>YAT PROJECT #</b>	5187	<b>YAT REPORT #</b>	2008/56
<b>MUSEUM ACCESSION #</b>	n/a	<b>GRID REFERENCE</b>	SE 6561 7788
<b>PLANNING REFERENCE #</b>	Consistory Court Faculty	<b>AAI OPS NOTICE #</b>	n/a
<b>ARCHIVE LOCATION</b>	YAT		
<b>DATE OF VISIT</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> December 2008		

On the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2008 York Archaeological Trust carried out a watching brief on behalf of the Parochial Church Council during groundwork's for the installation of a new boiler, oil storage tank and oil feed pipes at the Church of Holy Trinity, Stonegrave, North Yorkshire (also known as Stonegrave Minster), Figures 1 and 2.

The site of works was on the north side of the church, in the general area of the old boiler and oil tank. Due to the location of the old oil tank, related pipe work and the works carried out on the external walls during the 1860s, it was expected that much of the ground in this area would be heavily disturbed. However, the watching brief was required as a condition of the planning permission due to the possibility of burials or previous building layouts being disturbed by these works.

Initially, the concrete bases of the new oil tank and boiler were excavated by the contractors (Plate 1). The dimensions of these features can be found on Figure 3. Due to the shallow nature of these features (0.1m), only a sticky dark brown silty loam topsoil with frequent angular stone fragments was encountered. No archaeological remains were noted in these areas.

Following this, the trench was dug to accommodate the new oil feed pipe and ducting. Working from the oil tank towards the boiler, the section of new pipe marked as 1 (east to west) on Figure 3, was excavated down to a depth of 0.45m. This revealed a section through the deposits of the church yard which was made up of 0.15m of the sticky dark brown silty loam topsoil, followed by a sticky clean light yellow brown sandy clay (Plate 2). Again, section 1 revealed no archaeological features.

The northern half of Section 2 (north to south) was also excavated down to a depth of 0.45m, with the same deposits found (Plate 2). In this area (see Figure 3), a number of fragments of human remains were found around 0.30m to 0.35m below ground level. These comprised a fragment of pelvis (hip), vertebra (spine) and ulna (lower arm). Due to the differing conditions of preservation of these fragments, as well as the condition of breaks on the bone, these were disarticulated (not part of a whole skeleton), from more than one individual and were broken when placed in the ground. The large amount of angular stone within these deposits in this area suggest heavy disturbance, possibly during the Victorian renovations, and accounts for the broken fragments of bone. Due to these findings, it was decided that it was appropriate and safe to excavate the rest of the trench down to a level of 0.30m instead of 0.45m. The bone was reburied in the same area during backfilling of this trench. The remaining southern half of Section 2 of the trench revealed no further archaeological remains.

<b>COMPLETED BY</b>	Andrew Winterburn	<b>CHECKED BY</b>	M. Stockwell	<b>PREPARED</b>	19/01/2009
<b>FINDS</b>	None	<b>SAMPLES</b>	None	<b>PHOTOS</b>	Yes
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Section 3 of the trench (Figure 3) is the east to west running, eastern section of the trench up to the position of the head of the old oil pipe (approx 3m east of the north door). The trench was dug against the north wall of the church to a depth of 0.30m, and due to the restoration works during the 1860s was extremely heavily disturbed (Plate 3). The deposits were a very thin layer of accumulated stoney soil (0.02m to 0.04m thick), over rubble material consisting of medium to large angular fragments of stone, with occasional burnt material including clinker. It would appear that these stone fragments are of a very similar type to the extensions of the church and therefore possibly building waste which was used as backfill in the foundation trenches of the relatively new north aisle. No archaeological remains were noted in this area.

Finally, Section 4 (Figure 3, Plate 3 and 4) of this trench is the east to west running, western section, following the exact line of the old gas pipe into the now former boiler house. Again, it would appear that not only was this ground disturbed by re-facing works during the 1860s, but it was also disturbed by the previous installation of the gas pipe. The deposits here were similar to those at Section 3 of the trench, with the addition of several highly degraded fragments of iron work, one of which could possibly have been part of a hinge, a fragment of glass which appears to have melted from its original shape, a rodent mandible (jaw bone) as well as some stone which appears to have been burnt, and clinker. All this was within the rubbly backfill deposits of the original foundation trench which became the pipe trench. There could be some suggestion of a small fire around this general area of the north wall, due to the occasional burnt material found. In the interests of avoiding 90 degree curves in the new oil pipe, it was decided that it should follow the line of the old pipe and curve slightly into the former boiler house (Figure 3), instead of exactly following the line of walls near the north door (Plate 3 and 4).

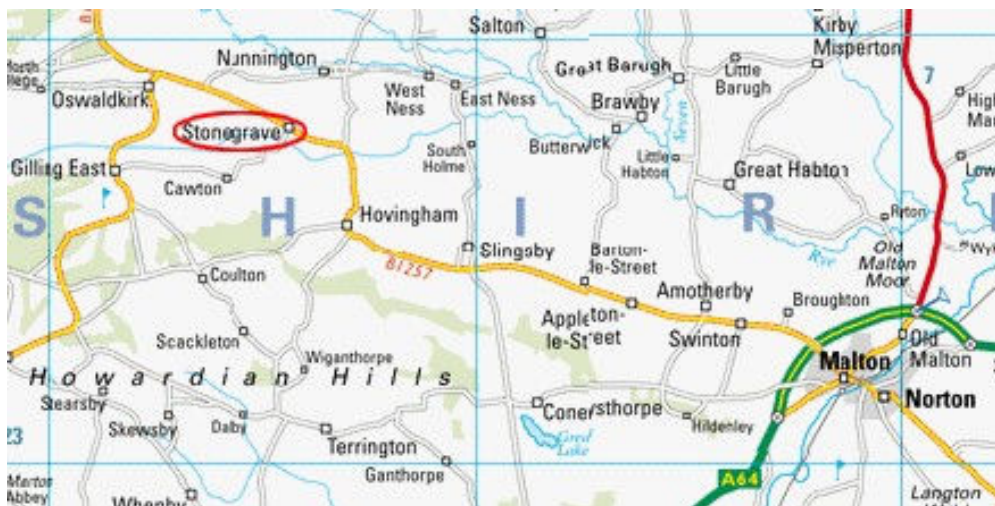
In conclusion, at this proximity to the external walls, and in an area where work has relatively recently taken place, the ground has been heavily disturbed and redeposited. No strictly in-situ archaeological features were encountered, however evidence has been collected to show the 1860s works were extensive and have altered not only the appearance on the church, but also the deposits within this area of the church yard.

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**Figure 1** Location of Stonegrave.

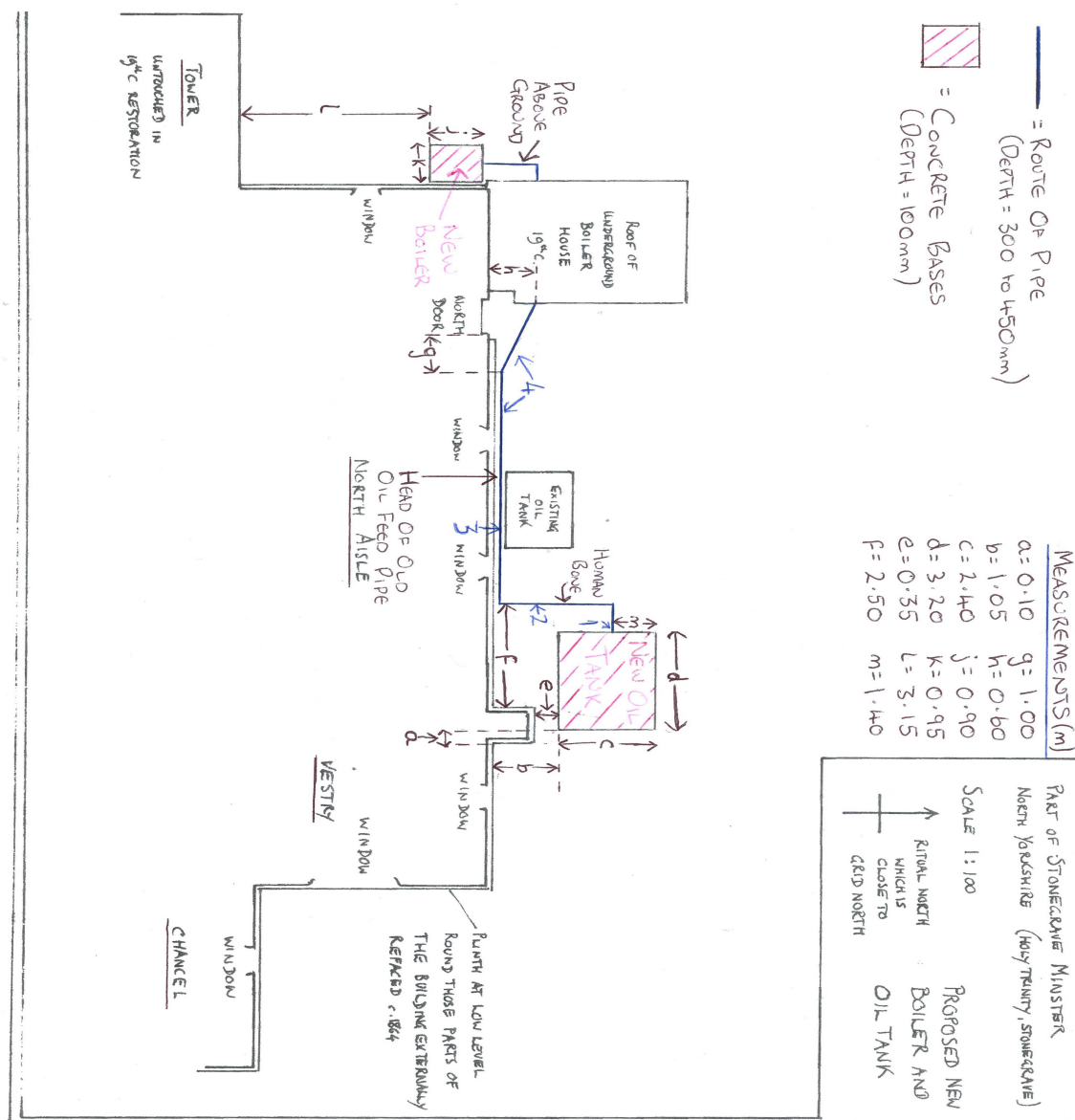


**Figure 2** Location of Stonegrave Minster

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**Figure 3** *Plan of works.*

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**Plate 1** Excavation for concrete base to oil tank.



**Plate 2** Deposits in areas 1 and 2.

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**Plate 3** East to west running trench against north wall, areas 3 and 4.

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**Plate 4** Curve of ducting following original pipe line to enter former boiler house.  
Note rubble material.

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