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**Saint Anne's Church
Catterick
North Yorkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report No. 1915

January 2009

CLIENT

The Reverend F. Wilson

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Saint Anne's Church, Catterick North Yorkshire

Watching Brief

Summary

The excavation of a drainpipe trench revealed a deep graveyard soil which contained disarticulated human bone throughout. No grave cuts were identified that might lead to the disturbance and distribution of earlier bone through the soil. Speculatively, it is possible that the graveyard has been landscaped in the past, perhaps when the current church was erected, and that these works were responsible for disturbing pre-existing graves.



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Report Information

Client: Reverend F. Wilson
Address: High Green, Catterick, North Yorkshire
Report Type: Watching Brief
Location: Catterick
County: North Yorkshire
Grid Reference: SE ~~4240 4980~~ 2397988
Period(s) of activity represented: Post-Medieval
Report Number: 1915
Project Number: 3376
Site Code: CCY.09
Planning Application No.:
Museum Accession No.:
Date of fieldwork: 8-9th and 11th of December 2008
Date of report: 27th January 2009
Project Management: Ian Roberts BSc, FSA, MIFA
Fieldwork supervisor: Phil Weston BSc, MA
Report: Phil Weston
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Photography: Phil Weston

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1 Introduction

Archaeological Services WYAS (hereafter ASWYAS) was commissioned by the Reverend F. Wilson to carry out a watching brief on drainage works within the grounds of Saint Anne's Church, Catterick. The works were undertaken in order to link a newly installed toilet within the church to the main sewer running beneath the High Green road surface 55 metres to the north-west.

Site location and topography

2397988

Saint Anne's Church and grounds are centred at SE ~~4240~~4980 and are located within the historic village of Catterick, North Yorkshire (Fig. 1). The church stands on High Green, close to the highpoint of the village at approximately 59m AOD (SE 2400 9800). The A1 bypasses the village to the west and the River Swale bounds Catterick to the north, beyond the racecourse, and to the east.

2 Archaeological and Historical Background

The modern village of Catterick sits within an archaeologically dense landscape. A cursus with associated pit alignment and ring-ditches of presumed late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date are known at Scorton to the north of the Swale (Wilson 2002). The cropmark of a possible henge of similar date has been identified immediately to the south of the racecourse.

Iron Age occupation in the area has been identified at Brough St. Giles (Cardwell and Speed 1996), at the southern edge of the racecourse (Brewster and Finney *forthcoming*) and adjacent to the possible henge (Moloney *et al.* 2003).

Roman Catterick (*Cataractonium*) was located approximately 1km to the north of the modern village and was founded in the first century AD as a fort or garrison guarding the crossing of Dere Street over the River Swale (Wilson 2002). A small town, or *vicus*, built up around the fort, which was eventually contained within a town wall. Roman utilisation of the landscape continued beyond the town walls with ribbon settlement extending north and southwards along the route of Dere Street. A possible villa has also been identified within the grounds of the RAF base immediately to the south of modern Catterick (*ibid.*).

Archaeological evidence indicates that following the abandonment of *Cataractonium*, some of the buildings were occupied on in to the 5th century and were, in part, succeeded by timber buildings (Wilson *et al.* 1996). These remains were associated with an Anglican finds assemblage and further evidence of occupation during this period has been identified in the form of *Grubenhaus* (sunken buildings) within the grounds of the RAF base and at Pallet Hill Quarry (*ibid.*).

Anglian period funerary activity was encountered during the excavation of the Iron Age settlement noted above (Moloney *et al.* 2003). The poorly preserved remains of forty-five

individual were identified, many of which were accompanied by grave goods. These items included copper alloy brooches, dress and belt fittings, glass and amber beads and iron objects. The diagnostic grave goods, supported by a radiocarbon date, indicate that the cemetery was in use from the second half of 5th century up to the end of the sixth century AD (*ibid.*).

The British poem Y Gododdin details the Battle of Catraeth (thought to be Catterick), which was fought between the British Kingdom of Rheged and the invading Saxons of the Kingdom Bernicia. Legend has it that the large tumulus (Pallet Hill) to the north of High Green is the resting place of those who fell in the battle though this remains unsubstantiated (Plate 1). It has also been suggested (Tyler 1978) that Pallet Hill is in fact a Norman motte, but again, no evidence is apparent.

There is documentary evidence for a church at Catterick from the 7th Century (www.achurchnearyou.com/catterick-st-anne/) and a church is referred to in the Domesday Book. The current church was built in 1415 by Richard of Crakehall (Plate 2) and incorporates a doorway dating to 1150 suggesting that stone may have been reused from the Anglo-Saxon precursor.

More recently, Catterick prospered as a coaching town, its proximity to the Great North Road making it a convenient stop-over point for travellers on the road. Today's Angel Inn and the George were both once coaching inns.

3 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- Record the location of any graves encountered
- Attempt to date such burials by stratigraphic means or by recovering coffin furniture and/or grave goods
- Search for evidence of any precursors to the extant church buildings

4 Methodology

All investigations were undertaken in accordance with recognised professional standards (English Heritage 1991, 2002; Institute of Field Archaeologists 2002) and ASWYAS methodologies (ASWYAS 2005).

The drainpipe trench was dug by a mini 360° excavator fitted with a 0.5m toothed bucket. The trench was 60m in length and was excavated to a depth of 0.35m adjacent to the church, which incrementally fell to a depth of 1.5m at the graveyard wall to allow the drain sufficient

fall. The trench followed the line of the extant churchyard path. Once an ASWYAS representative had been called to site all mechanical excavation were monitored.

The location of the trench was recorded on a 1:250 scale OS base map.

5 Results

Unfortunately, the first 35m of the trench, from the church wall to the manhole (Fig. 2), had been excavated and mostly backfilled prior to an ASWYAS representative being invited to site (Plate 3). Human bone had been encountered by the drainage contractors and had been collected and placed in boxes. Examination of the assemblage identified bone from all parts of the skeleton and bone derived from children and adults of both genders. The bone was reinterred in the trench at the request of Reverend Wilson following the laying of the drainpipe.

The remaining 25m of trench was dug under close archaeological supervision. Disarticulated human bone was encountered throughout the graveyard soil from just below the surface to the base of the trench (Plate 4). The exposed trench section was hand cleaned but no grave cuts were visible. Towards the northern end of the trench, it is possible that two articulated skeletons were encountered at the base of the trench some 1.30m below ground level. However, the employment of a toothed bucket to excavate the trench cause so much disturbance it was impossible to make a confident identification. Again, all the human remains were collected and reinterred.

6 Artefact Record

No coffin fragments, coffin furniture or grave goods were recovered during the excavation but a clay pipe bowl with a makers mark was recovered. The mark is located on the heel of the bowl and consists of a fleur-de-lys flanked by illegible initials all within a lozenge shaped border. The bowl is of a type typically produced during the early to mid 17th century.

7 Conclusions

The excavation of the pipe trench revealed a deep graveyard soil which contained disarticulated human bone throughout. The cutting of new graves through older unrecorded burials is often the cause for the distribution of bone through a graveyard soil but this appears unlikely in this case as no grave cuts were identified. Speculatively, it is possible that the graveyard has been landscaped in the past, perhaps when the current church was erected, and that these works were responsible for disturbing pre-existing graves.

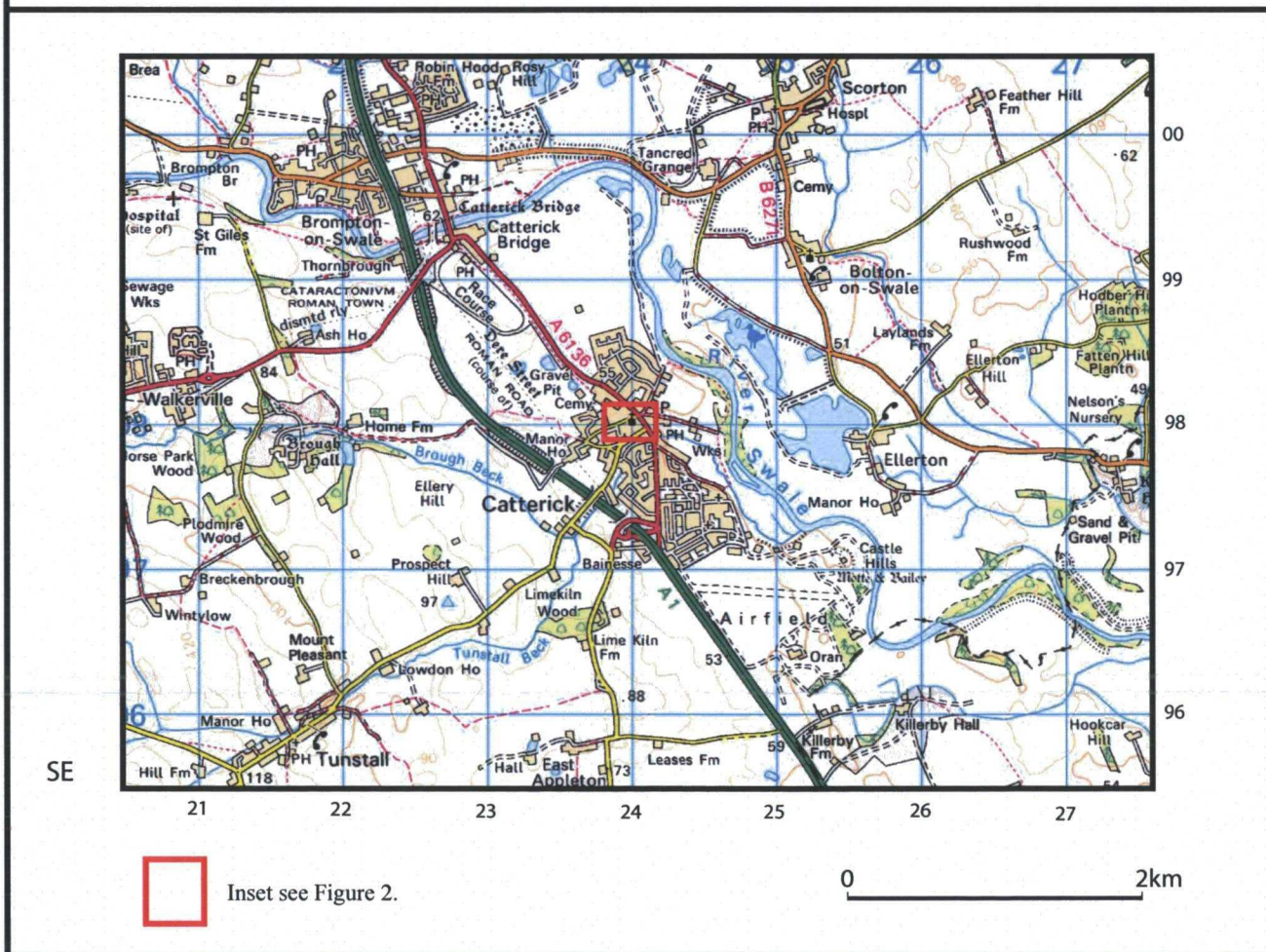
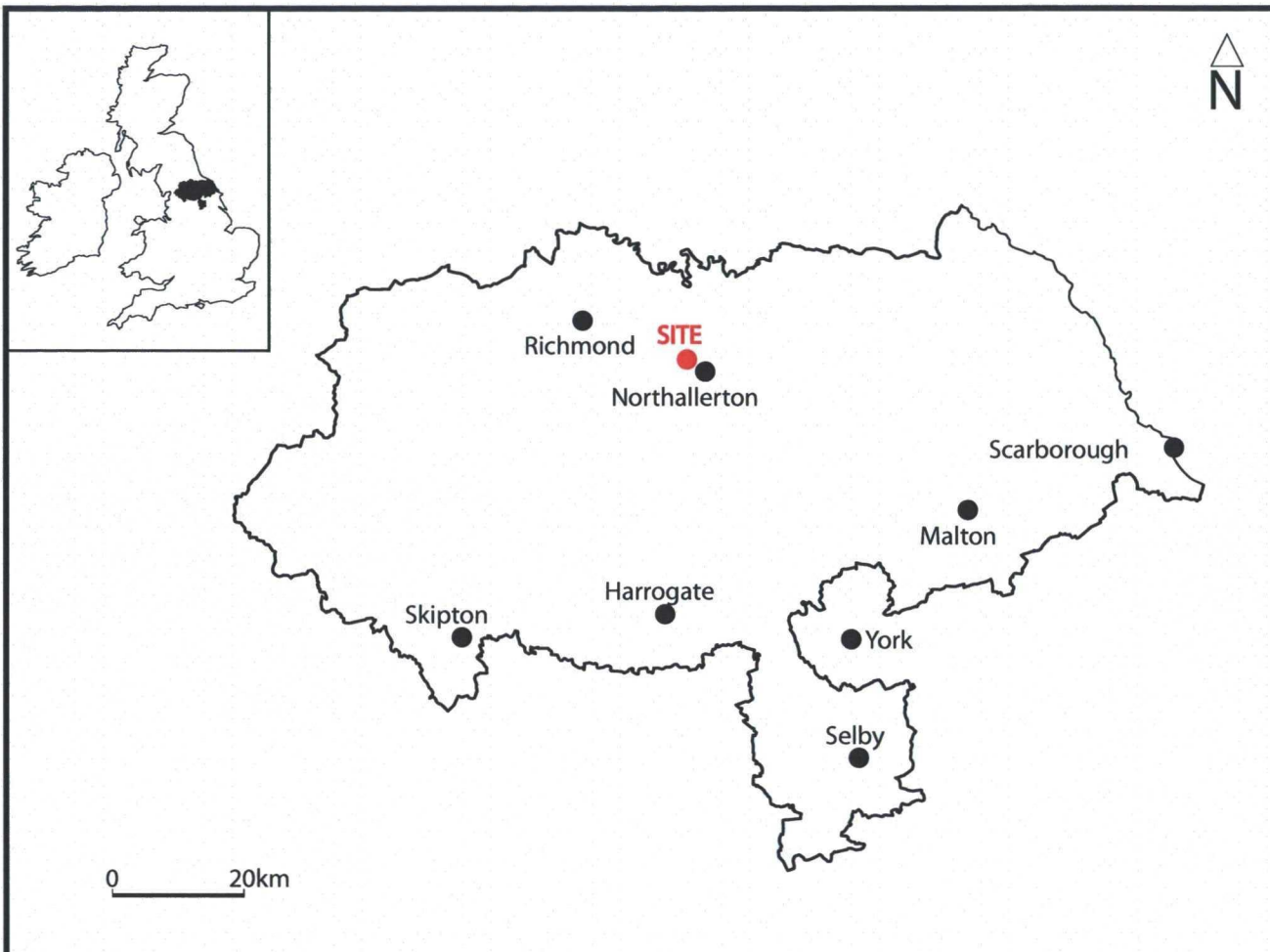


Figure 1. Site location

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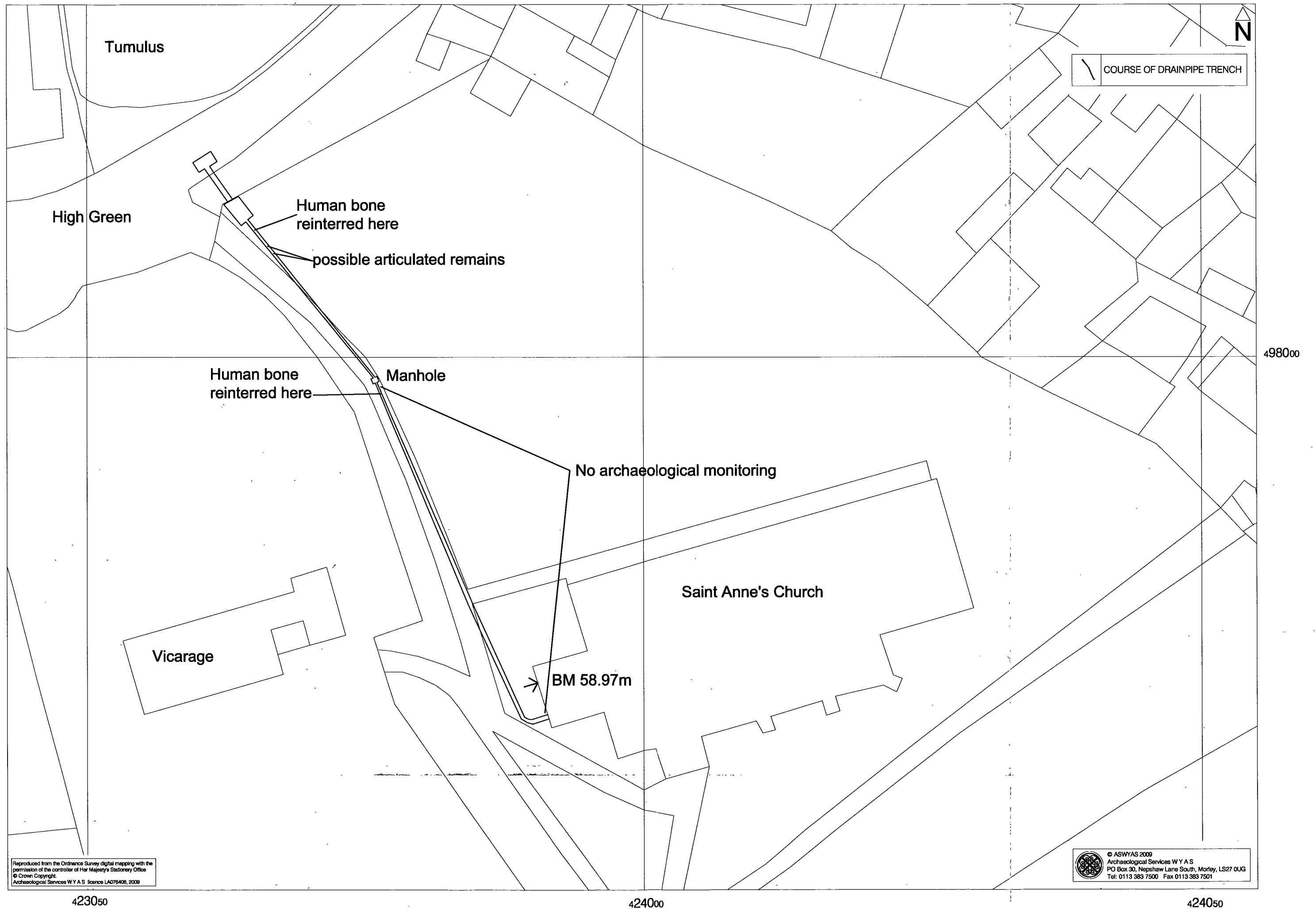


Figure 2: Trench location plan (1:300 @ A3)



Plate 1. The tumulus viewed from the churchyard



Plate 2. Saint Anne's Church viewed from the tumulus



Plate 3. The pipe trench



Plate 4. Disarticulated human remains

Appendix 1: Inventory of primary archive

Phase	File/Box No	Description	Quantity
Watch Brief	File no.1	Context register sheets	1
		Drawing register sheets	1
		Levels sheets	0
		Sample register sheets	0
		Finds register sheets	0
		Photo register sheets	2
		Colour negative strips	0
		B&W negative strips	0
		Drawing register sheets	1
		Sample register sheets	0
		Context sheets (nos. 1-2)	2

Appendix 2: Concordance of contexts yielding artefacts or environmental remains

Context	Trench	Group	Description	Artefacts and environmental samples
1000	-	-	Path surface	
1001	-	-	Graveyard soil	Clay pipe bowl

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WEB Resources

<http://www.achurchnearyou.com/catterick-st-anne/>