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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SAINT ROBERT'S CHURCH

PANNAL

NORTH YORKSHIRE

N.G.R. 43640 45170

COUNTY PARISH NO. ~~6145~~ 6079.

FOR

ST. ROBERT'S PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Plan app ref 6.79. 1137B. fvl.

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**SAINT ROBERT'S CHURCH
PANNAL**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
JULY 1999**

INTRODUCTION

The archaeological watching brief was maintained during the construction of a single storey extension to St.Robert's Church at Pannal. The proposed extension was constructed within the curtilage of the existing churchyard and it is for this reason that The Parochial Church Council (The Client) engaged the services of an Archaeologist to monitor the works in progress.

Prior to the commencement of works, it was established that the proposed development would have a direct impact on three known burials. The date of these burials was established as late 18th and early 19th century and as such, it was agreed that the exhumation and reburial of these human remains could proceed prior to the commencement of groundworks, on the 6th May 1999.

As it could not be established if the line of the proposed strip foundation trenches would intersect any unrecorded burials, archaeological deposits or structures it was recommended by The Heritage Unit, North Yorkshire County Council that an archaeological watching brief should be maintained on the groundwork's.

The archaeological watching brief, concluded on Tuesday 23rd September 1999. The following statement outlines the nature of my findings.

SITE LOCATION

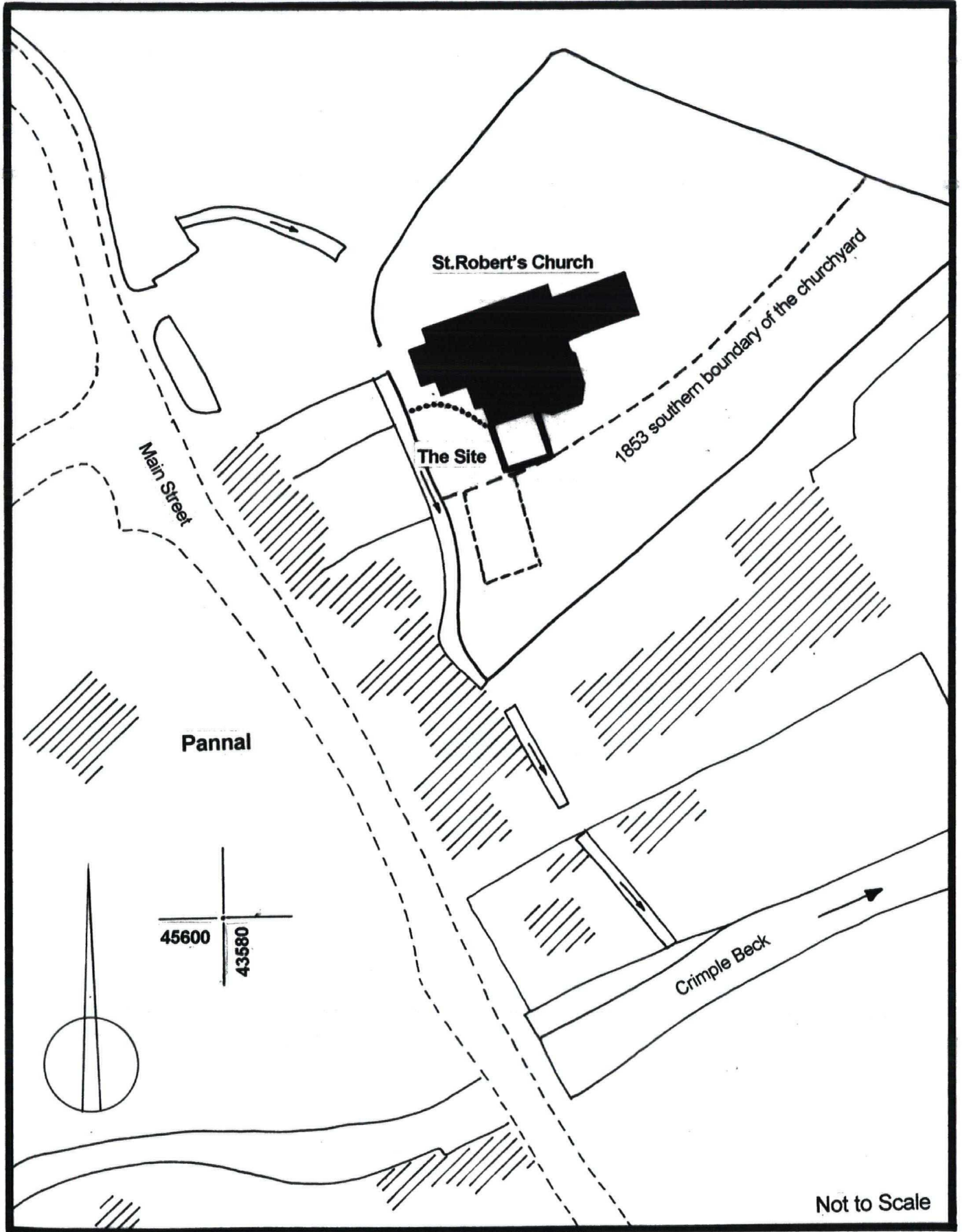
St.Robert's Church is situated in the central area of the small village of Pannal at 95 metres AOD and at N.G.R. 43640 45170. The village is located within the western extent of the Civil Parish of Harrogate Ref. No.6079 in the Harrogate District of North Yorkshire. In 1994 the village of Pannal and its immediate environs was designated a Conservation Area.

The position and dimensions of the proposed foundations had been predetermined by Peter Wilson Chartered Architects following a Ground Investigation of the site, by T.L.P.Ground Investigations, dated 01.02.1999 and detailed consultations with The Client.

The lines of the drainage trenches were positioned to avoid known burial sites.

FIGURE 1

SITE LOCATION PLAN



SITE DESCRIPTION

St. Robert's Church is situated within the centre of the village of Pannal. The church occupies an area of slightly elevated ground overlooking the flood plain of Crimble Beck.

The church is located within the centre west of the walled graveyard, the curtilage of which was extended into the fields to the south in 1853. The line of the pre 1853 boundary survives as a linear earthwork to the immediate south of the study area. The bank dissects the churchyard on a north eastern alignment and has a shallow, terraced profile with a south east facing aspect. Elsewhere within the churchyard, the ground levels reflect the relief of the surrounding terrain, rising from the south south east on a gentle gradient.

The site is situated within the south western area of the graveyard. The existing ground level falls away from the base of the tower very gently to the south. This area of the graveyard is presently occupied by a number of marked graves, the headstones of which indicate they date to the late 18th / early 19th century.

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The Village:

Place name evidence would suggest that Pannal is a medieval settlement. Varying derivations of the name have been suggested including a corruption of the surname *Pagnell*. William I following the Norman Conquest in 1066 AD awarded Ralph Pagnell large estates within the locality. Alternatively, the word Pannal may derive from the word *pen hall* meaning a mansion on the hill or a timber hall.

The Domesday fails to mention Pannal directly, although there is reference under the Manor of Rossett, this omission does not preclude the existence of the settlement as the Domesday was a record of land holdings and not a gazetteer of settlements.

By the 1170 AD the settlement is being referred to in manuscripts (Yorkshire Deeds) as *Panhal(e)*.

In 1304 the growth and economic vitality of the village is confirmed by a decree of Edward I who entitled the residents of Pannal to hold weekly markets (Tuesday) and a annual fair that could last four days around the 29th September (Close Rolls 33).

In 1318 the village was occupied by a Scottish raiding party lead by Randolph and Douglas, who commissioned the church as their headquarters, it is understood that upon the leaving the village the church was sacked and burnt.

During the later medieval period it is recorded that a number of Corn Mills were sited along the course of Crimble Beck, two such mills were sited a short distance upstream from Pannal. Also the availability of a local source of iron lead to the development of this industry close to the settlement, it is noted that that ore was extracted and smelted locally.

During the Post medieval period, it is recorded that Pannal was heavily involved with the wool industry with two wool looms within the locality.

During the Medieval period Pannal was a township of the same name within the secular administrative area known as The Forest and Honour of Knaresborough. By the mid 19th century the township had been superseded as an administrative unit by the Civil Parish. Initially it would appear that the area of the parish equated with that of the former township, extending from Crimble Beck in the south to central Harrogate in the north. However, by 1894 the northern part of the parish had been amalgamated into the Borough of Harrogate. The southern area was finally removed from the parish in 1937, leaving an area centred on Beckwithshaw remaining in the parish.

The Church:

Documentary sources (Torres Archdeaconry of York) indicate that the early church in Pannal was dedicated to St.Michael and All Saints, the earliest recorded vicar was a William de Sancto Martino who was also named as the Archdeacon of Rochester in 1260.

During the early 14th century following the sacking of the church by the Scots, the church fell into the ownership of Edmund Earl of Cornwall, who exchanged the church with the Trinitarians of St.Robert's Priory at Knaresborough for a Manor at Roecliffe. The Trinitarians ordained the renamed church of St.Robert's on 19th May 1348. The priory held the church until the Dissolution of 1539.

It would appear that there may well have been a Church in Pannal in the 12th century, the nature and form of which is not known.

The earliest fabric of the existing church is the chancel, which dates to the early 14th century.

The tower has been dated to the late 13th / early 14th century.

The nave was rebuilt in 1772.

In 1884 the Old Vestry off the chancel was demolished and the base of the tower was converted into the choir and vestry. In this same build the floor level of the chancel was raised by one metre bringing the floor in line with that of the nave.

The windows were remodelled in 1888.

The new choir / vestry and porch was built on the 19th April 1956.

In the 1970's a terrace of three cottages and a village forge situated adjacent to the church was demolished and the area landscaped to form a car park. It is understood that the stone derived from these demolition works were utilised in the in the churchyard boundary wall.

In 1977 the chapter house was built adjoining the south east elevation of the church, the extension was built to commemorate Elizabeth II silver jubilee.

Within the churchyard, the earliest tombstone dates to the 17th century. A large sandstone coffin lies within the churchyard; this stone has been interpreted as a Mortsafe, a large stone slab for lying over a recent grave to protect burials from illicit removal.

No previously recorded archaeological works have been undertaken at St.Robert's Church or in the village of Pannal.

Archaeological Finds

One polished oval macehead with hourglass perforation of Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic type, found in 1962 at N.G.R. 42669 45285.

A total of seven quern fragments have been recovered from the area, these have been dated to the Iron Age. These artefacts were found at the following sites;

One top stone of a flat beehive shape found at N.G.R. 42686 45241 once kept in the Vicarage Garden, presently located at N.G.R. 42685 45240.

Four querns including one bottom and three top stones found during quarrying near Beckwith House at N.G.R. 42792 45230.

One bottom stone of a beehive quern found at N.G.R. 42636 45257.

One upper stone of a beehive quern found in 1962 at N.G.R 42669 45284.

METHODOLOGY

Prior to the commencement of works it was anticipated that there was a low probability that archaeology survived in situ on the line of the proposed strip foundation trench. Should any archaeology survive in situ it was thought likely that this would comprise of unrecorded burials.

Every attempt was taken by the design team to select a site line that would have the least impact on known burial sites, however there remained the potential that the excavations would disturb human remains. It was anticipated that these remains would have been de-articulated due to previous disturbance.

T.L.P. Ground Investigations Report, dated 01.02.99 indicated that the anthropogenic deposits were likely to be confined to the upper 1.60 m of the trench; the remaining deposits have been attributed to undisturbed glacial drift.

It is acknowledged that the works will expose a small area of previously buried masonry and foundations of the existing choir vestry, a single storey structure that was added to the church in the 1950's.

The Aims:

The aims of the archaeological investigation are as follows:

- a. To liaise with The Client, The Contractor, The Architect, The Heritage Unit regarding recommendations to the proposed works to ensure the minimum damage to archaeological remains which have been identified at or above the maximum depth of excavation; and
- b. To record any finds, features or structures of archaeological interest and obtain information on the presence, extent, character, date and depth of these remains.

The archaeology will be recorded using professionally approved techniques, standard forms and conventions. All areas of excavation and any archaeological features will be recorded by plans, photographs, and sections where possible.

- c. to assess the importance of any remains found and interpret them in terms of their historical context and their relationship with the extant fabric of the building and churchyard.

The Excavations:

The following details were obtained from the Peter Wilson Design Specification and copy plans that detail the works to the proposed extension.

The archaeological watching brief was maintained during: -

The machine excavation of the strip foundations, the perimeter of the footprint measures 15.74 metres. The three trenches (A,B & C) will measure approximately 0.600m wide and upto 2.100m deep.

The machine excavation of the internal area (Area B) of the extension by 600mm.

PLATES 1 AND 2



General site location, facing north.



Initial phase of groundworks, exposing relocated sarcophagus plinth and foundations of in-situ funerary monument.

The machine excavation of two surface water trench's. It is anticipated that the trenches will measure in the region of 600mm deep (Trench D).

In order to satisfy the archaeological condition placed on these excavations, it was necessary for the principal archaeologist:-

To be present, on site, during the above excavations down to the required depth or to the surface of any archaeology that maybe encountered.

In the event that archaeology be exposed, it was agreed that adequate time be allowed for the archaeologist to record same. Thereafter and dependent on the nature of the archaeology the remaining depth of excavation should be hand excavated by the archaeologist.

It is was agreed that the archaeologist would be responsible for directing, assisting and closely monitoring the excavation team, offering advice in both the method, speed and the specific area of excavation.

It was agreed that in the event that de-articulated human bone fragments be identified the location of which would be recorded and would then removed.

In the event that an articulated human skeleton is identified during the excavations, it had been intended that the archaeologist expose the full extent of the burial prior to archaeologically recording and exhuming same.

This recommendation was modified in light of the findings which dictated that those human remains, encountered during the trench excavations, were accurately located and described prior exhumation. Any artefact identified in a burial context would be placed in a container for later reburial.

The burials were exhumed under The Bishops Faculty.

On the conclusion of these investigations the human remains and personal effects will be re-buried on the burial site.

SUMMARY OF WORKS

Pre Contract Exhumation:

The exhumation of a late 18th century (SK C) and two mid 19th century burials (SK.A&B) was undertaken on the 6th May 1999 prior to the commencement of the main programme of works.

The burials were located at the south west corner of the existing build of the church. The excavation was undertaken by two Sextants, on the conclusion of the exhumation the area of excavation was not backfilled, but was left open for inspection by the Engineer, Architect and Archaeologist.

The site was inspected on the afternoon of Thursday 6th May 1999 the following details concerning the stratigraphy was noted;

The sub soil interface was identified at 1.15m below the existing ground level. The surface of this coarse sand had been disturbed by the grave cuts of the three casket burials. The grave fill / disturbed ground was identified as a silty loamy clay. This deposit contained fragments of largely decayed wooden caskets, corroded iron plate together with a small quantity of nails. The layer also contained a small assemblage of 19th century pottery and bottle glass together with de-articulated fragments of human bone. The human remains were representative of most of the more robust areas of the skeleton including fragments of cranium, mandible, dentition, clavicle, vertebrae, radius and femur. These small broken fragments were found to be in poor condition, the breakages and fractures were not the result of trauma but were attributable to post mortem damage. It is likely that the excavation of the 19th century graves within the immediate area was responsible for disturbing earlier, unmarked, graves that were almost certainly representative of a more than one burial.

Within the north facing section the grave fill was sealed by what appeared to be the southerly edge of a pavement. The sandstone fragments that comprise this surface measure 0.12m deep and were identified at 0.30m below the existing ground level. These paving like slabs were bedded level and with no indication of a mortar bed or sub base. There was no indication to suggest that the surface extended any further to the south. Within the west, north and east facing sections the sandstone was replaced in the stratigraphic sequence by a layer of coarse/gritty red sand.

A dark brown loam topsoil was identified across the entire area, measuring up to 0.25m deep.

The area was surfaced in grass turf.

Groundworks for the Single Storey Extension

I was instructed to first visit site on the 14th June 1999. This initial site inspection revealed that the north western corner of the study area had been de-turfed and the topsoil had been removed (Area A). The line of the surface water drain was exposed, this salt glazed ceramic pipe discharged roof water into the adjacent beck from the 1955 extension in a west south west facing alignment. The invert of the drain was identified at 0.38m below the existing ground level. It would appear that the drain had been formed during the 1955 building works when ground levels adjacent to the southern elevation of the church were up to 0.34m below the existing level. The difference in ground levels being made up at that time with a homogenous layer of topsoil.

Stratigraphy:

The machine excavations exposed a relatively simple sequence of deposits. However, had the same area been hand excavated in an archaeological