



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Observation and Recording Report

Church of St Lawrence
Nettleden
Hertfordshire



Quality Check

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Summary

In October 2019 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording of the excavation of a trench for a water pipe in the yard of the Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire. The assemblage of artefacts recovered from the topsoil comprises highly fragmentary remains, predominantly CBM, with most probably dating from the extensive 19th century rebuilding and later refurbishments of the church building. The only human remains discovered were fragments that had been previously disturbed during the placement of a service trench. No *in situ* human remains were revealed by the water pipe trench.

1 Introduction

1.1 In October 2019 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording of the Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by Jane Mann on behalf of the Parochial Parish Council, and was carried out according to a Method Statement for Archaeological Watching Brief prepared by KDK (Kaye 2019), and approved by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required to fulfil the conditions of Faculty 0693 granted by the Diocese of St Albans.

1.3 *The Site*

Location & Description

The Grade II* Church of St Lawrence is situated at the centre of the village of Nettleden, in the parish of Nettleden with Potten End and the administrative district of Dacorum (Fig. 1). The church is situated at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 0199 1048.

Geology & Topography

The bedrock geology is the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation (undifferentiated), formed approximately 90 to 101 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period; no superficial deposits have been recorded (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home>). The church grounds are at an elevation of 117m AOD.

Development

The development works comprise the installation of a water pipe between the tower and Nettleden Road (Fig. 1).

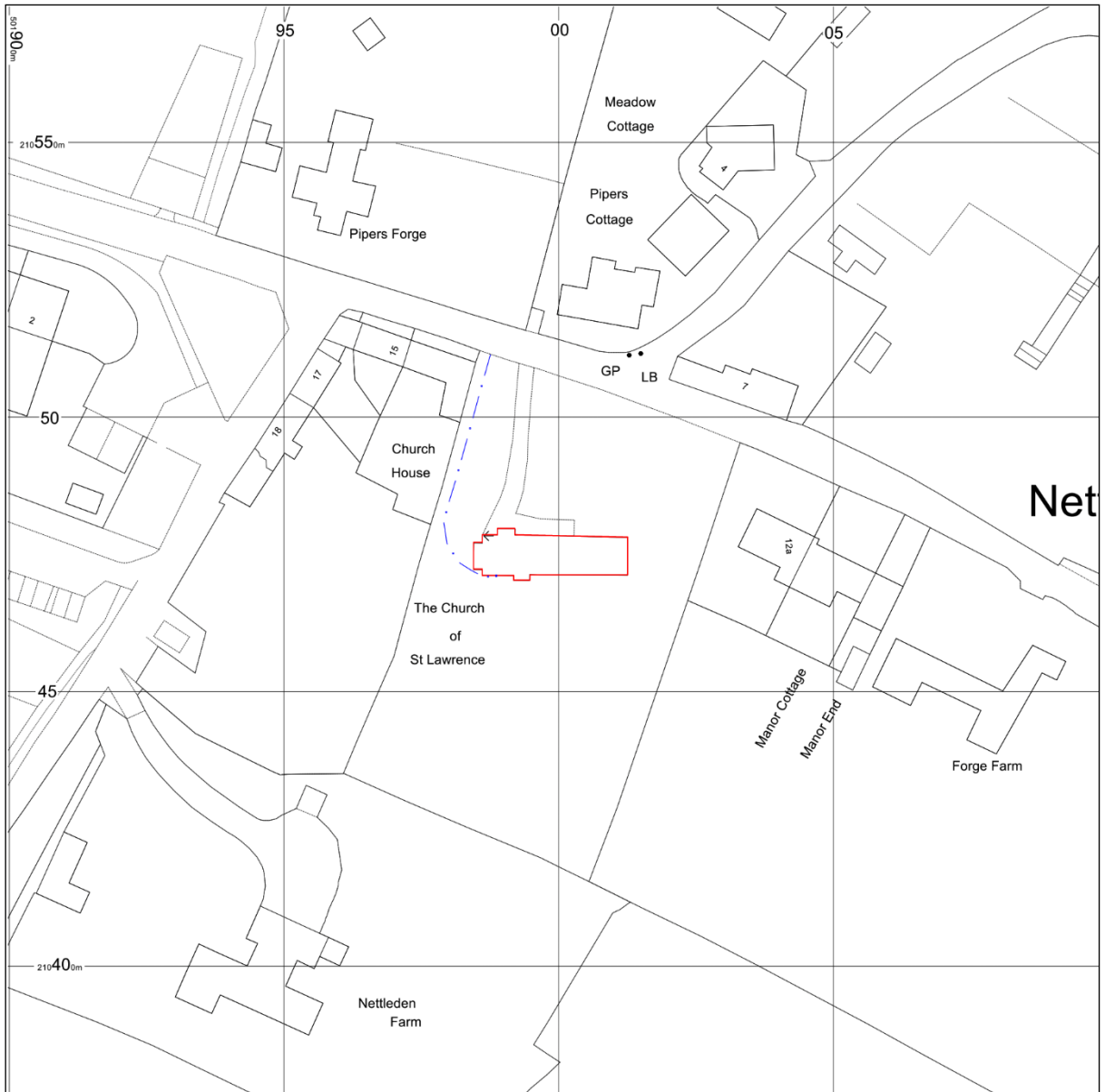


Figure 1: Site layout showing approximate location of the new water pipes



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of this project were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions

2.2 Methods

The methods used were as follows:

- All ground works likely to have an impact on archaeological deposits or remains were carried out under constant and continuous archaeological supervision.

2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The Method Statement (Kaye 2019)
- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (HE 2015, EH 2008)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)



3 Historical Background

The Historic England description of the Church of St Lawrence is as follows:

Chapel of Ease to Pitstone Church (Bucks), a Parish Church since 1895. C15 (c.1470 licence to consecrate altars), chancel and N wall of nave, rebuilt by brick in 1811 for Earl of Bridgewater, probably by James Wyatt who was then rebuilding Ashridge for the Earl. Restored 1887 (Kelly), roof reconstructed 1947-57. Flint rubble now roughcast to older fabric, plum red brick to chancel and S side of nave. Brick buttresses and embattled parapets to S side. Stone windows. Roofs low pitched and concealed. A small unaisled church of chancel, nave, W tower, and N porch. Brick buttresses with 2 offsets define 3-bays nave and lower and narrower 2-bays square ended chancel. Small rectangular brick porch with painted stone 4-centred entrance with cusped spandrels and square label. Stone copings to porch battlements. Hollow moulded head to chamfered N door with 'WW/1811' cut in RH jamb. Battened C19 oak door with reused wrought iron foliate hinge plates. N side of nave has 2 3-light tall stone Perp style windows to E of porch with traceried pointed heads, hollow-moulded jambs inside and out, and cinquefoil lower lights. Some reused C15 tracery, and windows copy 2 restored original windows in S wall. Interior has C19 encaustic tiled flooring, wooden painted dado of narrow trefoil-headed panels, 5½-bays open timber roof with wallposts and straight braces to cranked tie-beams each with diagonally striped painted roll-mouldings. Chamfered square oak pulpit on fat circular base with vigorous carving in high relief presented by Lady Marion Alford in memory of Rev G.S. Cautley (1887). C19 low wooden screen on lower chancel step with 4 painted saints. Discreet upright oval bellied wall tablet in frame to John Maccasree d.1713 and Ann his wife d.1714 on LH side of chancel arch. Fine painted alabaster Jacobean wall monument on S wall to Edmund Bressy d.1612 and Lucretia his wife d.1610 with black marble Corinthian columns, 2 kneeling figures, small figures of children below, and strapwork ornament to base corbel. 4-centred Gothick chancel arch with hollow chamfered moulded caps to half-octagonal jamb shafts similar to Wyatt's work at Ashridge. Chancel has stone floor and plastered 4-centred ribbed vault. Jambshafts and hoodmoulds to inside of the 2 windows in each wall with stained glass. Dado similar to nave. 2-light Perp style traceried windows in N and S walls with trefoil heads and quatrefoil over. 3-light traceried E window. In chancel floor the brass of a knight in armour, with shields of arms in corners of slab, to George Cotton 1545. Monument on S wall to Robert Carke d.1841, Gothic with clustered shafts framing panel with 4-centred head and cresting above, erected by Earl and Countess of Bridgewater. 3-storeys W tower with embattled parapet has diagonal W buttresses based on puddingstones, cast iron rainwater head dated '1811' on E face, belfry openings of 2 trefoil lights with 4-centred heads, square headed C16 N and S windows with low cills and 2 trefoil lights to ground stage (N window blocked and with pins for internal shutters), C19 chamfered, pointed W door inserted below 3-light C15 blocked W window with label and trefoil lights under 4-centred head. York-stone offsets to buttresses. Vestry in base of tower. C14 stone coffin without lid outside W wall of tower.



4 Results

Introduction

In October 2019 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at the Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire, during the excavation of a trench to lay a water pipe. The excavation was carried out using a 0.75 tonne tracked excavator fitted with a toothed 23cm wide ditching bucket.

Description (Fig. 1; Plates 1-4)

The trench ran from the south side of the church tower northwest to the boundary then north northeast to the Nettleden Road. The pipe trench was c. 55m metres long x c. 0.40m wide, and excavated to a depth of c. 0.70m, though this was reduced to c. 0.20m at the rear of the church tower. The trench curved around a small copse of trees adjacent to the western end of the church, and a shallow trench c. 3m long was excavated along the edge of the northern wall of the tower, where a French drain had been emplaced during previous works adjacent to the exterior southern wall.

The first 6m of the trench to be excavated, from its beginning at the churchyard boundary with Nettleden Road, produced 15 predominantly large fragments of post-medieval/modern roof tile, floor tile, a porcelain cup handle, 2 oyster bivalves, and 18 fragments of animal bone. This area was historically a midden (pers. comm. Jane Mann). The stratigraphy comprised dark brown clayey silt topsoil.

The remaining 46m of the trench, to where it connected with the church, contained 63 fragments of CBM, mostly roof tiles, a large ceramic handle, 5 brick fragments, 3 fragments of blue & white porcelain, 2 fragments of animal bone, and small metal horse shoe. All of this material appears to date from the post-medieval to modern periods. The stratigraphy within this area comprised darker brown clayey silt topsoil, though occasional glimpses of different geological strata were revealed at the base of the narrow trench.

The water pipe trench intersected with an electrical services trench near the western end of the church, where a proximal human tibia was emplaced in an upright position adjacent the electrical cable, and 2 fragments of human pelvis were found in the fill. It is evident that these elements had previously been disturbed by the excavation of the cable trench. No *in situ* human remains were encountered during this project. All of the archaeological materials were re-buried within the trench.



Plate 1: Pipe trench, facing south



Plate 2: Pipe trench, at western end of church



Plate 3: Pipe trench, rear of church tower



Plate 4: Detail of pipe trench stratigraphy



5 Conclusions

The excavation of a trench for a water pipe in the yard of the Church of St Lawrence revealed that the topsoil within the trench-cut contained a mixture of predominantly small fragmentary archaeological materials dating from the post-medieval to modern periods. However, most of the assemblage consists of roof and floor tiles, and brick fragments, and were probably heavily trampled and eventually incorporated into the topsoil, with much of the material probably dating from the extensive 19th century rebuilding and later refurbishments of the church.

The only human remains discovered were fragments that had been previously disturbed during the placement of a service trench. No *in situ* human remains were revealed by the water pipe trench.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to the Parochial Parish Council for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to Jane Mann for providing historic information, and the contractors of R & P Services who carried out the groundworks.

The fieldwork was carried out by Derek Watson PhD. The report was written by Derek Watson PhD, and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Method Statement
2. Initial report
3. Monitoring sheets
4. Site drawings
5. Client's site plans
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. Specialist reports
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Hertfordshire Archive and Local Studies.



8 References

Standards & Specifications

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- Walker K. 1990 *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage*. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section (London).
- Watkinson D. & Neal V. 1998 *First Aid for Finds*. Hertford & London: Rescue.

Books and Historical Sources

- Mills A. D. 1991 *A Dictionary of English Place Names*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Williams A. & Martin G. H. 1992 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. Penguin Group: London.



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE: 492/NSL		Site Name: Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire
Shot	View	Subject
1	S	Churchyard: general area - excavation of pipe trench
2	S	Churchyard: general area with pipe trench
3	NW	Churchyard: excavation of trench near the western end of church
4	S	Churchyard: general area with pipe trench (2 x 1m scales)
5	S	Rear of church: action shot of trench excavation at the rear of the tower
6	SE	Churchyard: pipe trench near western end of church
7	SE	Churchyard: pipe trench near western end of church (1x 1m scale)
8	NW	Rear of church: pipe trench to rear of tower (1 x 1m scale)
9	NW	Rear of church: pipe trench to rear of tower (1 x 1m scale)
10	W	Detail of trench stratigraphy (1 x 1m scale)



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire	Project Site Code	492/SNL
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-367286	Event/Accession no	N/A
OS reference	TL 0199 1048	Study area size	22 sq. m
Project Type	Observation & Recording	Height (mAOD)	117
Short Description	In October 2019 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording of the excavation of a trench for a water pipe in the yard of the Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire. The assemblage of artefacts recovered from the topsoil comprises highly fragmentary remains, predominantly CBM, with most probably dating from the extensive 19th century rebuilding and later refurbishments of the church building. The only human remains discovered were fragments that had been previously disturbed during the placement of a service trench. No in situ human remains were revealed by the water pipe trench.		
Previous work	None	Site status	Grade II* Listed
Planning proposal	The installation of water pipes from the tower to Nettleden Road.	Current land use	Ecclesiastical
Local Planning Authority	Dacorum	Planning application ref.	N/A
Monument type	Church	Monument period	Medieval, post-medieval to modern
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	N/A	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	Karin Kaye MA MCIfA	Director/Supervisor	Derek Watson PhD
Sponsor/funding body	Parochial Parish Council		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	01/10/2019	End date	01/10/2019
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Hertfordshire Archive and Local Studies	None	
Paper		Method Statement, report, site records	
Digital		CD containing all digital data	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Observation & Recording Report: Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume	492/SNL/1.1		
Author(s)	Derek Watson PhD		
Page no's	13	Date	02/10/2019



Appendix 3: Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet

Site name and address: Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire		
County: Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum	
Village/Town: Nettleden	Parish: Nettleden with Potten End	
Planning application reference: N/A		
Client's name, address, & tel. no: Nettleden Parochial Parish Council, Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire		
Nature of application: The installation of water pipes from the tower to Nettleden Road.		
Present land use: Ecclesiastical		
Size of application area: N/A	Size of area investigated: 22 sq. m	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 0199 1048	Site code: 492NSL	
Site director: David Kaye BA ACIFA	Organization: KDK Archaeology Ltd	
Type of work: Observation & Recording		
Date of Work:	Start: 01/10/2019	Finish: 01/10/2019
Curating museum: Hertfordshire Archive and Local Studies		
Related HER no's: None		Periods represented: Medieval, post-medieval to modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports: None		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: In October 2019 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording of the excavation of a trench for a water pipe in the yard of the Church of St Lawrence, Nettleden, Hertfordshire. The assemblage of artefacts recovered from the topsoil comprises highly fragmentary remains, predominantly CBM, with most probably dating from the extensive 19th century rebuilding and later refurbishments of the church building. The only human remains discovered were fragments that had been previously disturbed during the placement of a service trench. No in situ human remains were revealed by the water pipe trench.</p>		
Author: Derek Watson	Date: 02/10/2019	