



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Historic Building Watching Brief

Minsden Chapel

Whitwell Road

Langley

Hertfordshire

Accession: LAN/MC'21

Scheduled Monument 1003543



### Quality Check

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## Summary

Between July and October 2022 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out Historic Building Watching Brief of Minsden Chapel, Langley, Hertfordshire in order to fulfil a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent for the consolidation of the ruins. The Watching Brief has followed on from Historic Building Recording (Kaye 2021), the summary for which is as follows:

Minsden Chapel, which is both a Scheduled Monument (NHLE Ref: 1003543) and a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE Ref: 1347462), dates from the 14th century and, given the mention of a priest serving Minsden in the Domesday Book, may have replaced an earlier church. Regular Divine Service appears to have ceased by the mid-17th century, but the chapel still played a significant role in the community in the early 18th century, by providing a place of worship for a large congregation of non-Conformists. The last known service was a wedding between Enoch West and Mary Horn on July 11th 1738 when a piece of masonry fell onto the service book being held by the curate. Once it was no longer being used, the building was systematically looted with the font and bells amongst the first losses. Tracery, stained glass windows and building materials were sold at auction or on the market in Hitchin in the 19th century. The chancel arch collapsed in 2008, and general decay and vandalism have left the remaining walls extremely vulnerable.

The Watching Brief allowed the thickness of the walls to be determined the brickwork in the bellcote to be dated to c.1600, and various episodes of modern repair to be identified. No evidence for an internal floor was found in the chancel, but the rendered stone revealed in the test pit excavated immediately south of the south chancel wall, could suggest that the original external ground level was c.0.40m lower at this point than it is now.

The western side of the door opening in the north nave wall was exposed during the remedial works, the base of which was also brick-built. This is quite possibly an indication that the wall was breached in the post-medieval period to install a new door.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Between July and October 2022 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out Historic Building Watching Brief of Minsden Chapel, Langley, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned on behalf of Hugh Neave, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Watson2022), and approved by Jess Tipper of Historic England.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This report forms part of a Management Plan for the consolidation of the ruins of Minsden Chapel and the management of associated trees and shrubs to protect the remains.

### 1.3 *The Site*

#### *Location*

Minsden Chapel is located on the northern edge of a patch of woodland c.1.5km east of Preston and 3.6km west of Stevenage Old Town. It lies within the civil parish of Langley and the administrative district of North Hertfordshire at National Grid Reference TL19820 24580 (Fig. 1).



*Description*

The woodland within which the ruins are located is roughly triangular and is surrounded by agricultural land (Fig. 2). Minsden Chapel is both a Scheduled Monument (NHLE Ref: 1003543) and a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE Ref: 1347462). It is described as follows:

*Ruined chapel. Probably C14, mentioned in 1450, a ruin by end of C17. Flint rubble, plastered externally, with stone dressings. Remains of red brick bellcote at W gable. A small 2-cells church with nave and narrow square ended chancel. Diagonal buttresses at E end of chancel and W end of nave, but set-back corner buttress to E end of nave suggest that the church is of one build. 2 other buttresses to each side of nave. Line of creasing of lower chancel roof on E end of nave. Central doorway and 2 holes for windows on S side of nave. N doorway in same bay but further to W. Much of S wall of nave stands to full height and W wall with put log holes at 3 levels. N wall more fragmentary. Rough opening for chancel arch in E wall. Half-metre high walls of chancel with tall SE angle pier. Line of beam sockets across E face of W wall of nave at eaves height. Inscribed stone floor slab in chancel 'IN MEMORIAM/ REGINALD L HINE/HISTORIAN/OF HITCHIN/1883-1949/REQUIESCAT IN PACE'. Hine's ashes were scattered here. The church was dedicated to St. Nicholas and served the hamlets of Preston, Langley and Minsden until church rates were levied in this area for St. Mary's Hitchin and the church here fell into ruin. Scheduled Ancient Monument (Herts No.14). (RCHM (1911)137-8: VCH (1912)18: Pevsner (1977)247-8).*

In addition, a site visit report by the Field Management Warden in 1982 provides the following description (Historic England file archive - AA040066/FMW):

*Earliest mention 1487. Ruined since C18. No parish registers, but Bishop's transcripts exist for 1609-41.*

*The site stands at the NE end of a coppice on the summit of a gently sloping hill. The ruins cover an area of approx. 25m x 10m and consist of nave and chancel divided by a chancel arch. Walls of flint stand to 6m approx at W end, S aisle, and, parts of the chancel arch, but in most places only to 2.5 – 3m or less. Remains of buttresses are visible and some tile and ashlar stone can be seen in the construction. There is some evidence of modern mortar repairs to the fabric. Interior has been cleared to reveal tomb slab of Reginald Hine – historian of Hitchin 1883-1949. Possible hollow way to N.*



Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

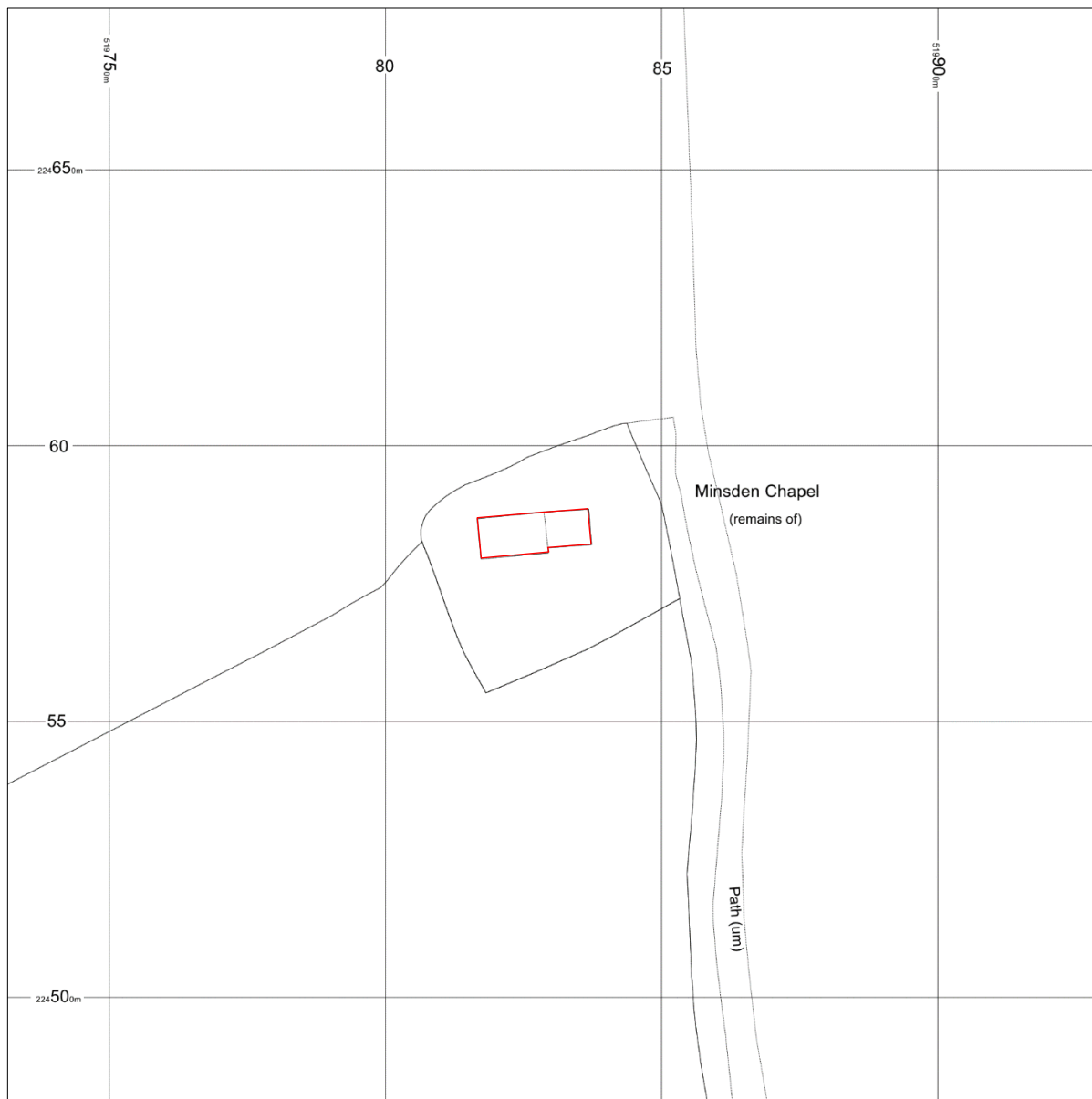


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1250)



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## 2 Aims and Methods

### 2.1 Aims

As described in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Watson 2022), the aims of the project were:

- To ensure the archaeological recording of previously unexposed historic building fabric
- To ensure the archaeological recording of all aspects of the development programme likely to have an impact on the historic fabric of the building before and during the works
- To provide a report that meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework

### 2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance for the Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (ClfA 2019)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2021)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2008, HE 2015)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)

### 2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the Written Scheme of Investigation (Section 2), which required:

- All alterations to the building that were to be impacted on the historic fabric or exposed previously hidden structural and/or architectural material were monitored and recorded by an experienced archaeologist

In addition, it was agreed that KDK Archaeology was to:

- clean back the interior and exterior of the north and south chancel wall to define the edges
- excavate a small slot beneath the opening in the south nave wall to define the outer edge of the wall, making sure to maintain the present slope once done
- excavate a narrow slot through the east chancel wall to examine wall survival
- clean back east wall as required
- excavate a small area within the chancel to determine whether any floor survives
- clean back the area around the NE and SE buttresses to define the edges
- excavate a narrow slot along the north nave wall to further investigate the moulded stones revealed by the building contractors



### 3 Historical Background

The earliest documentary evidence for Minsden chapel, which is dedicated to St Nicholas, is an agreement dated 1450 whereby all the lands and tenements held by Robert de Walso (ie from Walsworth – another hamlet in Hitchin) were handed over to his son in exchange for victuals and clothing suitable to his station and a horse on which he could ride to church at Minsden. Various wills also mention the chapel including one that shows the chapel was clearly already in poor repair in the mid-16th century as the bequest in the will of George Burwell is for as long as the chapel stands and if it were to 'go doune' the income was to go to Hitchin church (Hines 1927: 17 & 28).

Despite considerable attempts in the later 17<sup>th</sup> century to safeguard the chapel for the worshippers of Minsden, Preston and Langley it was described in a report to the archdeacon in 1690 as being 'ruinated, stripped, uncovered, decayed and dimolished' (Hines 1927: 29-30). The building was plundered to repair and improve houses in the vicinity, the font was taken to use as a kitchen sink and in 1725 the steeple bells were stolen (*ibid*:32, 36).

Nonetheless, the chapel was used by a lay preacher for his weekly sermons to a congregation of some 300 people until forced to make a public apology for his great offence to the church (*ibid*:33). Although regular services ceased to be held in the chapel, it was a popular venue for weddings until the 1738 when the Bishop of Lincoln ended the practice (*ibid*:35).

The subsequent decay is well recorded. In 1814 the nave columns and arch were still standing, as were the east window and one of the side windows and doorway on the southwest side. On the north side, near the nave, was a niche in the wall at the bottom of which was a stone figure. This was gone by the following year.

The Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England published the following information in 1910:

*(1). Minsden Chapel, ruins, on rising ground about 3 miles S. of Hitchin and ¼ mile W. of the road to Hitchin. The walls are of flint rubble with stone dressings. The chapel, consisting of Chancel and Nave, was probably built in the 14th century, but little or no detail remains by which an exact date can be assigned to it.*

*Architectural Description—The Chancel (26 ft. by 15 ft.): little remains but the four angles with fragments of the walls 12 to 15 ft. high, and the chancel arch is represented only by a rough opening. The Nave (42 ft. by 21 ft.): the N. wall still stands to a height of about 15 ft.; but the only remains, except the rough openings, of the two N. windows and the N. doorway are a few worked stones in the W. splay, and the spring of the chamfered rear arch of the westernmost window. The S. wall is pierced by two rough openings which represent a doorway and a window; at the E. end of the wall a complete break indicates the position of a second window. The W. wall is nearly intact, and at its apex is a small brick pier. There are traces of square buttresses on the N. and S. walls, and of diagonal buttresses on the W. wall.*

*Condition—Ruinous; overgrown with ivy.*

An article in the 1913 transactions of the East Herts Archaeological Society described the chapel as follows:

*The walls are principally composed of flints plastered over, and the remains are plain and solid. There are portions of buttresses at the north, west, and south-west corners, and a few pieces of*



*the original clunch stone can be seen. The thickness of the walls is about 33 inches, but there is no moulded or ornamental work of any description. The south wall contains a doorway and a window opening, but there is no stone work to either. The wall at the west end is perfect, and the gable end shows the position of the old roof, and is covered with plaster to the height of the original ceiling. The arch between the nave and chancel is in fair condition.*

The chancel arch survived until 2001, but had collapsed by 2008 (<https://www.hertsmemories.org.uk/content/herts-history/places/churches-and-places-of-worship-2/minsden-chapel-hitchin>)(Figs. 10-11).

### **Historic Building Recording**

The building survey undertaken in 2021 (Kaye 2021) showed that the chapel was initially constructed as a single building programme, although the lack of obvious building lifts means that it is difficult to gauge how many years it may have taken. The main building fabric is flint with fieldstones – materials that are still easy to pick in the surrounding fields. Clunch was brought in from Bedfordshire, and probably Cambridgeshire. It is also possible that some was locally sourced, either quarried in the vicinity of the site or salvaged from other sites, possibly even the Roman villa to the west of the chapel. The Hertfordshire puddingstone is also likely to be *spolia*, as it was popular with Roman builders and quern producers. Of interest is the Barnack stone, which was heavily utilised in the medieval period as a dressing stone, but only survives here in putlog holes and very occasional walling material. The examples found at Minsden Chapel are more finely grained with fewer shelly inclusions, which raises the question whether this is Blisworth stone, which is petrologically similar but found further south than Barnack. For a detailed photographic record and description of the fabric recording the condition of Minsden Chapel, as well as historical background on the structure, please refer to the historic building recording report undertaken in 2021 (Kaye 2021).



## 4 Results

### 4.1 General

The 2022 conservation campaign at Minsden Chapel was driven by the need to stabilise the two arched openings to the south wall that appeared structurally unsound. This was an opportunity to undertake wider conservation repairs to the entirety of the ruin in order to ensure its longevity and remove it from Historic England's At Risk Register. The remedial works to Minsden Chapel included the removal of the existing hard cement based hard capping, stabilising the wall tops in the nave and replacing the hard capping with lime mortar hard-capping, which is a more sympathetic material to protect the wall heads. The bell-cote was repaired and also provided with lime mortar hard capping. The undercut areas to the two arched openings in the south wall were stabilised with buff brick infill. The arch in the west end of the south wall was reinstated in buff clay tiles with the original arch stones remaining in the arch being retained in place. A buff clay tile drip edge was introduced with the lime mortar hard-capping over the relatively flat wall head of the south nave wall. The outlines of damaged putlog holes were made good and putlog holes that had lost their lintel had a buff clay tile reinstates as a lintel to signify this repair as part of the current conservation effort. The chancel walls and chancel buttresses were cleared back, stabilised and provided with new lime mortar hard capping. Localised remedial work to the walls was also undertaken, including replacing some of the quoins that were missing to the east end of the Nave using Clipsham Cream stone. The ground levels to the chancel were gently regraded to reveal more of the chancel walls and the ledge stone of Reginald Hine.

### 4.2 Site Meeting 27.04.2022 (Plates 1-14 below shown on Figure 6)

The opportunity was taken during an early site meeting to photograph elements of the building from the upper stages of the scaffold. The bricks used to construct the bellcote, which had been damaged by vandals in 2022 who had lit a fire within the opening were of variable quality, with some very poorly puddled and others well puddled and fine grained (Plates 1-3). They contained a small amount of spanish and stone inclusions and were set in lime mortar. The size and inclusions suggest a date of c.1600 for the bricks.



**Plate 1:** Bellcote from the east



**Plate 2:** Bellcote from the northeast



**Plate 3:** Bellcote from the west



**Plate 4:** Wall and bellcote from the north



**Plate 5:** Bellcote from the south



**Plate 6:** Wall over the south nave wall opening from the northwest



**Plate 7:** Detail of the south nave wall from the east



**Plate 8:** Upper level of south chancel upstanding wall from the west





**Plate 9:** Upper level of south chancel upstanding wall from the northwest



**Plate 10:** Upper level of south nave wall from the northeast



**Plate 11:** Upper level of south nave wall from the northeast



**Plate 12:** West side of south nave wall opening with sample brickwork from the northeast



**Plate 13:** South chancel wall from the southwest



**Plate 14:** North chancel wall from the northeast



4.3 **Site Visit 07.07.2022** (Plates 1-16 below shown on Figure 7)

An initial site visit was undertaken once the weeds had been cleared to assess the walls and to complete a photographic record. The north nave wall was cleaned back and found to be between 0.70 and 0.85m wide, and built of the same mix of flint and fieldstones in a sandy mortar as elsewhere in the chapel. Some modern disturbance was noted as what appeared to be a car wheel torque was found buried alongside the wall.



**Plate 1:** North chancel wall from the north



**Plate 2:** North chancel wall from the northwest



**Plate 3:** North chancel wall from the north



**Plate 4:** East wall from the east



**Plate 5:** North and east walls from the southeast



**Plate 6:** Southeast chancel buttress from the northwest



**Plate 7:** South chancel wall from the southeast



**Plate 8:** South chancel wall from the southwest



**Plate 9:** East end of north chancel wall from the south



**Plate 10:** East end of north chancel wall from the south



**Plate 11:** East end of north chancel wall from the north



**Plate 12:** East end of north chancel wall from the north



**Plate 13:** East end of north chancel wall from the north



**Plate 14:** East end of north chancel wall from the east



**Plate 15:** Opening in north nave wall from the west



**Plate 16:** East end of north chancel wall from the north following preliminary weed clearing

4.4 **Site Visit 26.07.2022** (Plates 1-18 below shown on Figure 8)

The north chancel wall, which was constructed of flint rubble with sandy mortar, was cleaned back to define the inner and outer edges and the upper section was reduced only until these edges were definable. It was clear from the amount of soil within the masonry and the odd finds of modern material (steel ring, broken glass and polished rose quartz) that the eastern end at



least had been heavily rebuilt at the same time as the hard capping was introduced. The wall is 0.80m deep.

A slot was excavated through the east wall, and no definable edges were found. A possible section of east-west aligned walling was observed approximately 1m from the eastern end of the north wall, but again, no definable edges were found.

The northeast buttress was cleaned back as was the walling between the buttress and the northeast corner of the chancel exposing the collapsed material. The buttress measured 0.64 x 0.85m

A section of the interior face of the south chancel wall was also cleaned back to define the extent of the wall. Whereas the north wall was 0.80m deep, the south wall is 0.76m deep.



**Plate 1:** North chancel wall from the northwest



**Plate 2:** North chancel wall from the northeast



**Plate 3:** North chancel wall and buttress from the northwest



**Plate 4:** North chancel wall and buttress from the northeast



**Plate 5:** North chancel wall and buttress from the northeast



**Plate 6:** North chancel wall from the southwest



**Plate 7:** North chancel wall from the southeast



**Plate 8:** North and east chancel walls from the southwest



**Plate 9:** North and east chancel walls from the west



**Plate 10:** North and east chancel walls from the east



**Plate 11:** North and east chancel walls from the southeast



**Plate 12:** East chancel wall and northeast buttress from the south



**Plate 13:** Northeast chancel buttress from the northeast



**Plate 14:** Northeast chancel buttress and adjacent chancel walls from the northeast



**Plate 15:** Slot to south chancel wall from the south



**Plate 16:** South chancel wall from the south



**Plate 17:** South chancel wall from the south



**Plate 18:** North and east chancel walls from the south

#### 4.5 **Site Visit 14.09.2022** (Plates 1-28 below shown on Figure 9)

The western side of the door opening was revealed when the north nave wall was being cleaned back and was seen to be of the same building materials as the eastern side that was previously exposed. The newly exposed bricks were largely covered with flint, but those that were fully exposed to the east of the opening were c.13 x 10 x 5- 6cm, poorly puddled reds, with a few stone inclusions. The wall itself was 0.95m thick and the gap between the two sections was 0.80m (Plates 1-4).

Three large moulded stone pieces were revealed to the west of the opening and c.0.30m below the top of the wall. On further investigation they were found to be of Totternhoe Stone and appeared to form part of a drip ledge. The stones were 0.74m, 0.43m and 0.55m (min) long and 0.20m deep (Fig. 4). Other worked pieces of stone were also present in the north nave wall between the gable end and the door opening, although none of the others were moulded. The varied building materials exposed in this part of the chapel included 4 courses of tiles immediately above the basal course of ashlar stone in the return wall immediately adjacent to the moulded stones (Plate 25).

An area of modern intervention was revealed in the corner of the external north nave wall and the north western buttress where a large piece of Totternhoe stone had the imprint of either mesh or a tile on it, above which was cement based mortar and a tile fragment.

The southeast chancel wall as well as the north nave wall had already been partially cleaned back, and was further cleaned for recording purposes (Plates 5-7, 21-23). The wall had a number of fairly large pieces of flat Totternhoe stone only 2-3 cm thick. Otherwise, the flint and field stone ratio is same as elsewhere.

A slot measuring 0.90m x 0.40m was excavated to a depth of 0.80m from the top of the wall along the outside of the chancel wall to ascertain the depth of the foundations (Fig. 5; Plates 19-20). The fill was made up of building debris consisting of flint, roof tiles and brick fragments. The foundations consisted of the same mix of building materials as elsewhere, including some fragments of rendered stone approximately 0.30 from the base of the pit. The rendered area was 20cm high and covered only the stones, which were c. 0.50m long, which could suggest that these have been re-used. However, it is also possible that this indicates the original ground level.





A small slot measuring 0.60m x 0.30m was excavated inside the north chancel wall in order to determine whether any evidence of flooring had survived. There was no evidence for such at a depth of 0.40m from the top of the chancel wall and the test pit was abandoned (Fig. 5).

An isolated red brick with roll moulding and hard lime mortar was found during works on the eastern side of the chapel. It was well puddled with no inclusions and measured 22 x 15 x 5.5cm. The form and fabric suggest that this dates from the 1840s (Fig. 3; Plates 27-28).



**Plate 1:** North nave wall from the northeast



**Plate 2:** North nave wall from the north



**Plate 3:** North nave wall detail from the south



**Plate 4:** North nave opening from the east



**Plate 5:** South chancel wall from the northwest



**Plate 6:** South chancel wall from the north



**Plate 7:** South chancel wall from the south



**Plate 8:** East wall from the south



**Plate 9:** East wall and northeast buttress remains from the south



**Plate 10:** North east buttress from the east



**Plate 11:** Chapel from the northeast



**Plate 12:** Western end of the nave from the northeast



**Plate 13:** South nave wall from the north



**Plate 14:** South nave wall from the northwest



**Plate 15:** North nave wall from the southwest



**Plate 16:** View towards the chancel from the west



**Plate 17:** West wall from the east



**Plate 18:** Chancel from the west



**Plate 19:** Test pit along chancel wall from the south



**Plate 20:** Test pit along chancel wall from the south



**Plate 21:** South chancel wall from the west



**Plate 22:** South chancel wall from the southwest



Plate 23: South chancel wall from the east



Plate 24: Moulded stones in the north nave wall



Plate 25: North nave wall and moulded stones from the northwest



Plate 26: Detail of moulded stones from the north in the north nave wall



Plate 27: Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century moulded brick



Plate 28: Mid 19<sup>th</sup> century moulded brick



**Figure 3:** Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century moulded brick section (scale 1:2)

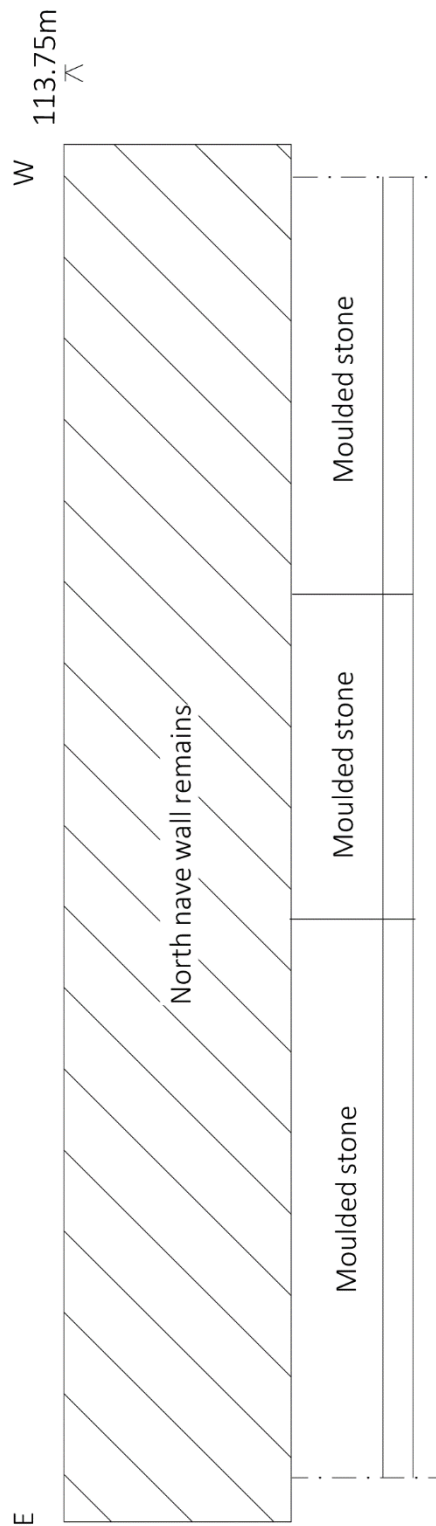
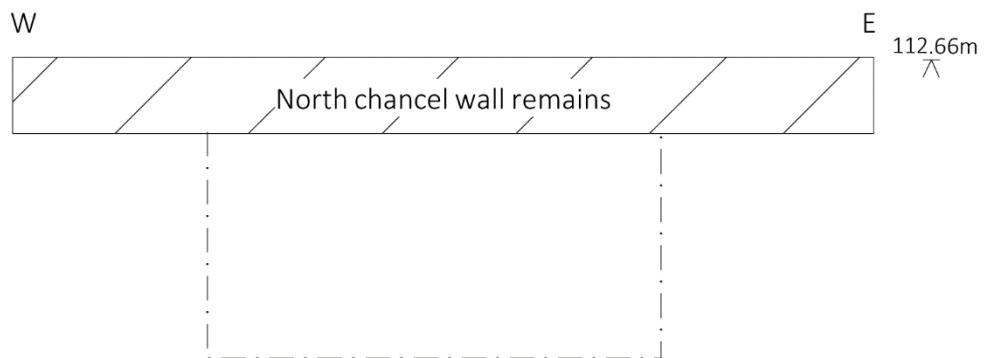
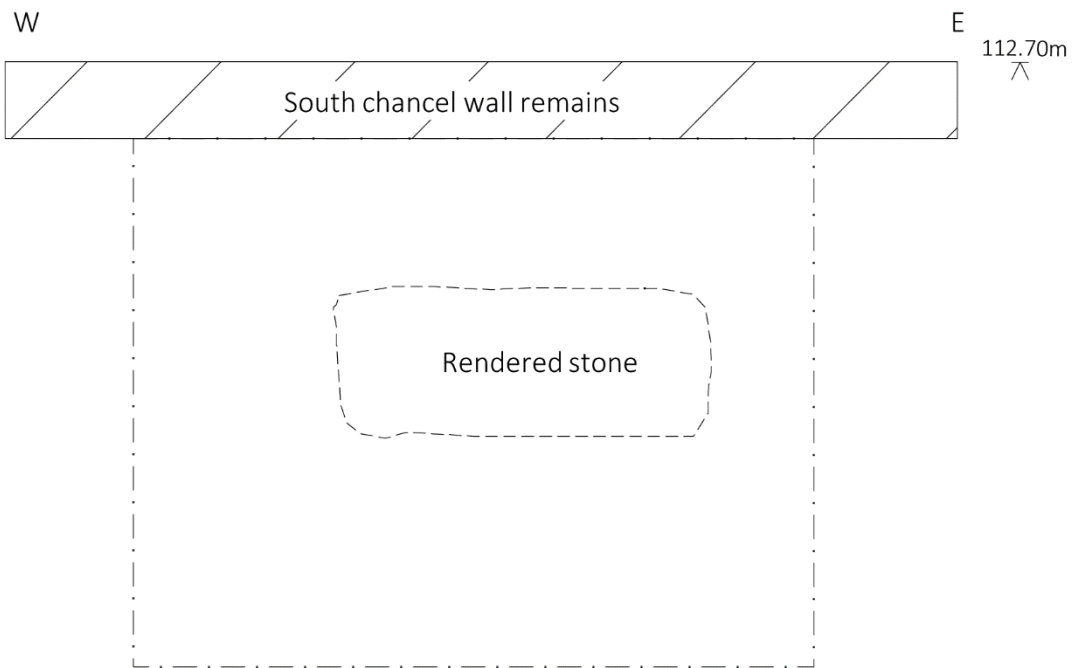


Figure 4: Nave test pit sections (scale 1:10)



**Figure 5:** Chancel test pit sections (scale 1:10)





4.6 **Site Visit 10.10.2022** (Plates 1-42 below shown on Figure 10)

A final site visit was undertaken to record the completed work.



**Plate 1:** Chapel from the northeast



**Plate 2:** Southwest corner of the nave



**Plate 3:** External face of the west wall



**Plate 4:** Northwest corner of the nave



**Plate 5:** View of the nave from the north



**Plate 6:** View of the nave from the northeast



**Plate 7:** Chancel from the north



**Plate 8:** Southeast chancel buttress from the east



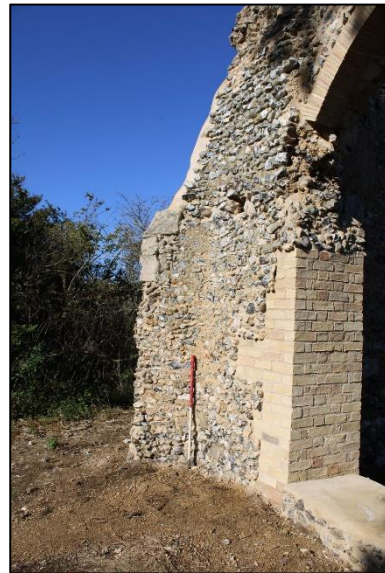
**Plate 9:** Southeast chancel buttress and south chancel wall from the south



**Plate 10:** South nave/chancel buttress detail from the south



**Plate 11:** Opening in south nave wall from the south



**Plate 12:** South nave wall and southwestern buttress



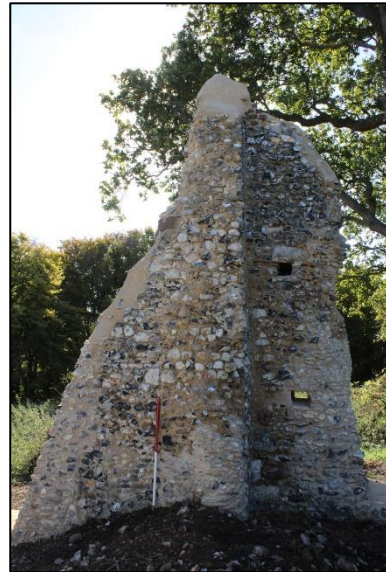
**Plate 13:** South wall from the southwest



**Plate 14:** West wall from the east



**Plate 15:** Internal view of the nave from the east



**Plate 16:** South wall at the nave/chancel interface from the north



**Plate 17:** South wall at the nave/chancel interface from the northwest



**Plate 18:** South nave wall from the northeast



**Plate 19:** South nave wall from the northeast



**Plate 20:** Opening in south nave wall from the north



**Plate 21:** Detail of south chancel/nave buttress repair



**Plate 22:** Detail of putlog hole in the west wall from the west



**Plate 23:** Bellcote and south end of west wall from the west



**Plate 24:** Detail of putlog hole in the west wall from the west



**Plate 25:** Detail of putlog hole in the west wall from the west



**Plate 26:** Bellcote and upper section of the west wall from the west



**Plate 27:** Detail of putlog hole in the west wall from the west



**Plate 28:** Detail of east side of the north nave wall opening from the southwest



**Plate 29:** Detail of west side of the north nave wall opening from the east



**Plate 30:** Memorial slab to Reginald Hine



**Plate 31:** Detail of putlog hole in the west wall from the east



**Plate 32:** Bellcote from the east



**Plate 33:** Detail of brick arch repair from the east



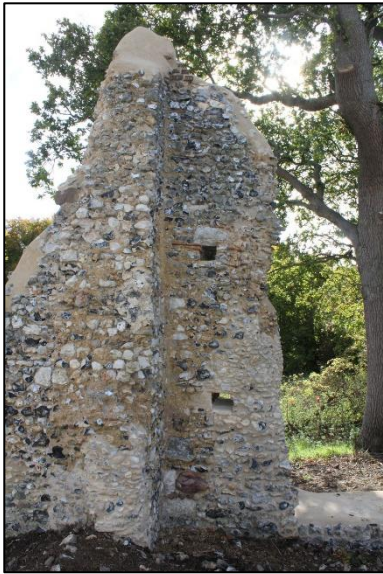
**Plate 34:** Detail of brick arch repair from the north



**Plate 35:** Detail of putlog hole in the west wall from the east



**Plate 36:** Northwest corner of the nave from the south



**Plate 37:** Detail of south nave/chancel wall interface from the north



**Plate 38:** Chancel from the west



**Plate 39:** North nave wall from the northwest



**Plate 40:** Chancel from the north



**Plate 41:** Chapel from the east



**Plate 42:** Detail of repaired opening in the west wall





**Plate 42:** Detail of repaired opening in the west wall



**Plate 41:** Chapel from the east



**Plate 41:** Chapel from the east



**Plate 41:** Chapel from the east



#### 4.7 Repair details - Bellcote (details courtesy of Nikola Yanev, Caroe Architecture)

- The condition survey of 2021 had identified the bellcote as an exposed location that would require repair and repointing.
- With scaffold in place in spring 2022 a closer inspection could be undertaken. The historic lime mortar had eroded to such an extent that the top courses of brickwork on the bellcote were found to be largely held by gravity.
- The repairs required that the brickwork be re-built to replicate the existing arrangement. Before proceeding, the bricks were carefully marked with chalk, so that they could easily be put back in the same position.
- Approximately 3 upper courses of the most exposed brickwork and the courses stepping down were partially dismantled to reach a sound base. These were re-bedded with the agreed lime mortar mix.
- A protective layer of lime mortar hard-capping, which was installed over all wall heads was also applied over the repaired brickwork bellcote to give it an additional protection from the elements. The hard-capping lime mortar was the approved mix with added horsehair.



**Plate 1:** Bellcote under repair, looking east



**Plate 2:** Detail of upper courses, looking west



**Plate 3:** Detail of southern side of west wall of the bellcote



**Plate 4:** Western side of the bellcote



**Plate 5:** Eastern side of the bellcote



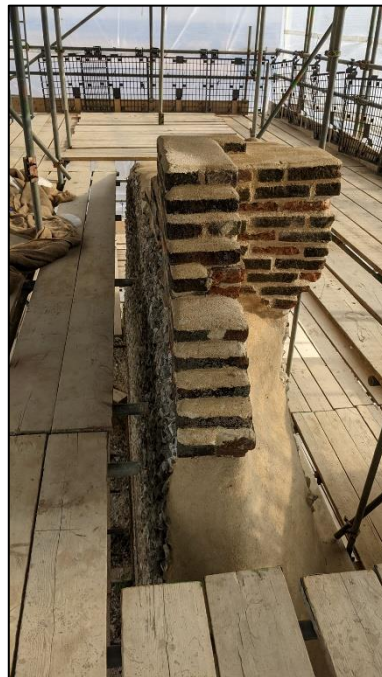
**Plate 6:** Bellcote from the southeast



**Plate 7:** Bellcote from the southeast



**Plate 8:** Bellcote from the west



**Plate 9:** Bellcote from the south

#### 4.8 Repair details - hard-capping to the south wall with a tile drip edge

- The wall heads across the ruin were identified as exposed locations in the 2021 condition survey, which allowed water to saturate the core of the walls. The repair strategy was to help protect the wall core from water ingress and help shed rainfall away.
- The head of the south wall was relatively flat, which posed the risk of small pockets of water forming in time, if only hard-capping was installed.



- The approach for this repair was to integrate a tile drip edge with the hard-capping to help shed water away from the immediate face of the walls and from its head.
- The repair commenced with removing any previous cementitious hard-capping across the ruin with hand tools only.
- The area was inspected and the loose flintwork was partially dismantled under supervision of an ecologist to reach a sound core, approximately 3-4 courses or 400mm. Much of this was already loose due to long-term weathering of the exposed wall head. All flint was cleaned and set aside for re-use. Any vegetation was carefully removed or treated prior to removal, so as not to weaken the masonry.
- The wall head was rebuilt with the approved lime mortar mix re-using the existing flints from the site.
- The new hard-capping was applied over the rebuilt wall head to help with improving rainwater run-off. The hard-capping has a camber and is of the approved mortar mix with horsehair.
- A drip edge was provided consisting of two courses of buff clay tiles to help shed the water away from the top faces of the wall and improve run-off over the relatively flat wall head.
- The camber to the hard-capping also ensures water quickly shed away. No flintwork was included across the top of the hard-capping to avoid creating any water traps.



**Plate 10:** South nave wall under repair



**Plate 11:** South nave wall under repair



**Plate 12:** Completed repairs to south nave wall

#### 4.9 Repair details – hard capping to ruin walls

- The approach, philosophy and installation of hard-capping to the rest of the walls at the ruin follow the same principles as detailed in Section 4.8 above without the inclusion of a drip edge due to the uneven geometry.



**Plate 13:** Example of hard capping in progress

#### 4.10 Repair details – hard capping to ledges

- A few ledges that were probably remnants of the historic ceiling construction were identified high up on the internal faces of the west and south walls,
- A hard-capping mortar mix was installed to help with shedding rainwater run-off away from the core of the wall, once any loose flintwork was dismantled and re-built.

#### 4.11 Repair details – arched openings

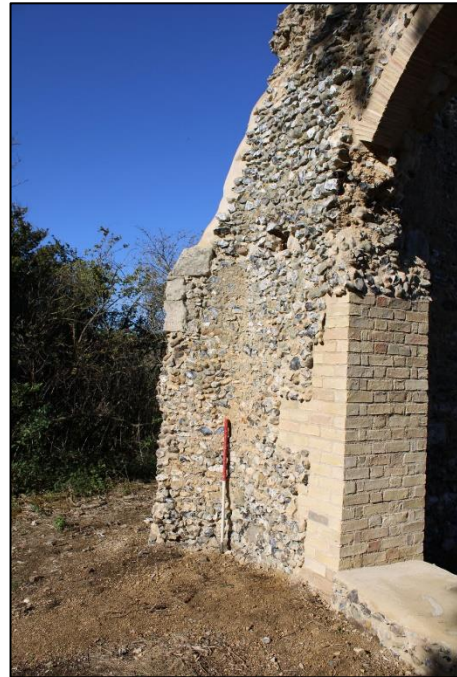
- Minsden Chapel was added to Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register in 2009 following the collapse of the chancel arch in 2008 and due to the deteriorated state of its remaining arches in the south wall. The dilapidated condition of these remaining arches was the focus of the conservation works to ensure these are preserved in time.
- The works to the arches consisted of several strands of repairs:
  - o tile arch repair to reinstate the curvature where historic voussoirs were missing to the west arch.



- o Rebuilding the undercut areas below the springing points of both arches in buff brickwork
- o Flint and mortar repair to the head of the east arch
- o Reinstating the base of the wall with flintwork and hard-capping between the brick rebuilding to the west arch
- Tile arch repair:
  - o The most significant structural element is the south nave window, close to the west gable. Part of the stone arch, with its voussoirs, survived to the west side of the window, whilst to the east side the arch had been lost leaving the rubble core of the wall above 'self-arching' over. At low level both reveals to the windows had been lost leaving undercut areas with unsupported rubble masonry above.
  - o After reviewing and discussing a number of options, the structural engineer developed a scheme to ensure long term integrity using masonry, tile and brick.
  - o With scaffolding in place, temporary support was provided to the arch prior to commencing any repairs. Tile arch repairs would replicate the existing curve of the arch, which had been formed through erosion of material and was therefore unsymmetrical. Some of the underside of the rubble core needed to be gradually and carefully removed to allow for the tiles to be inserted and a full arch to be formed that would stabilize the opening.
- Brickwork rebuilding:
  - o The cleared area was rebuilt with buff bricks to a level base and with a width matching the width of the existing walls with plumb vertical faces. Where the brick met the existing flintwork, some flintwork rebuilding was undertaken and the brick was built into the existing fabric, resulting in an overlap of brick and flint resembling a quoin pattern.
- Flint and mortar repair to the head of the east arch
  - o Loose flintwork was carefully dismantled and a lime mortar mix with reinstated flints was installed to stabilize the arch head.
- Reinstating the base of the wall with flintwork and hard-capping between the brick rebuilding to the west arch.
  - o To protect the base of the built arch opening and better define the historic window opening, flint collected from the site was used to build the opening approximately 3-4 courses and hard-capping lime mortar mix was applied for protection over.



**Plate 14:** Arched opening under repair



**Plate 15:** Brickwork and base within completed opening



**Plate 16:** Completed arch

#### 4.12 Repair details – rebuilt undercuts in flintwork

- Some areas required the rebuilding of lost flintwork to the ruin walls. There were identified during a condition survey and scheduled for repairs as part of the 2022 conservation campaign.
- The area was inspected and the loose flintwork was partially dismantled under supervision of an ecologist to reach a sound core, approximately 3-4 courses or 300mm. Much of this was already loose due to weathering of the exposed wall head over time. All flint was cleaned and set aside for re-use. Any vegetation was carefully removed or treated prior to removal, so as not to weaken the masonry. Where additional flints were necessary these have been gathered from flints scattered across the site and re-used in the rebuilding.



#### 4.13 Repair details – repairs to putlog holes

- Putlog holes at low level were subject to natural erosion and damage through human intervention. The principal was to repair the low-level putlog holes to protect them, but in a technique that ensured they remain legible as having been putlog holes.
- The exact scope of putlog holes to be repair was identified with scaffold in place when closer inspection was possible.
- Putlog holes that had lost their lintel had a new buff clay tile reinstated as a lintel, both to protect the opening and to signify that this repair type was part of the 2022 conservation campaign.
- Putlog holes with eroded edges had some of the loose flintwork gently dismantled under the supervision of an ecologist. Any flints were cleaned and set aside for re-use. The putlog edges were stabilized with rebuilt flint and the approved lime mortar mix.

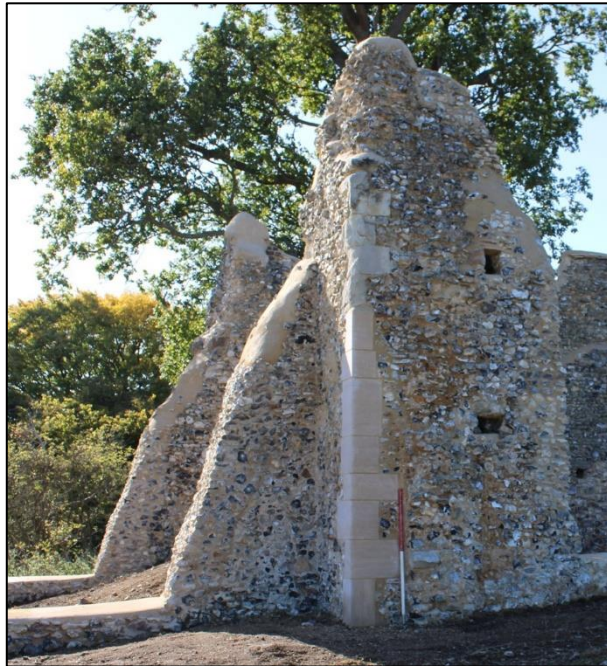


**Plate 17:** Example of a repaired putlog hole

#### 4.14 Repair details – replacement of quoins

- The northeast and southeast corner of the nave had a few clunch quoin stones remaining at high level but there were empty pockets of where lower-level quoins had been removed and sold at local markets.
- New Clipsham Cream stone was used to reinstate the missing quoins and offer protection to these exposed corners of the nave walls at the ruin. Some flintwork rebuild was needed around the quoin stones to stabilize the area and prevent pockets of water forming.





**Plate 18:** Replacement quoins in north nave wall

#### 4.15 Repair details – chancel walls

- The low-level walls to the chancel were almost subsumed in vegetation prior to the works. A section of these walls had slipped away and required rebuilding.
- The principle behind the extent of rebuilding was to make the footprint of the chancel more legible following the existing visible outlines of the walls. Archaeological research and fieldwork were key in determining the width of the wall as the vegetation and soil build-up on site had made it difficult to distinguish the exact footprint.
- The area was inspected and the loose flintwork was partially dismantled under supervision of an ecologist to reach a sound core. Any previous cementitious hard-capping was removed with hand tools only.
- The reinstatement of flintwork that had been lost in time consisted of re-using flints collected from site and the approved lime mortar to elevate the height of the existing walls approximately 300-350mm above ground level. This extended across the three chancel low walls – north, east and south, and also the northeast and southeast chancel buttress.
- Once the reinstatement was complete, a layer of hard-capping to the approved lime mortar mix with horsehair was applied across the top of the low walls to provide improved protection against rainwater ingress to the core of the stonework.



**Plate 19:** East chancel wall being rebuilt

#### 4.16 Repair details – northwest nave wall

- This section of low-level walling had an open gap at its base with a section of flintwork cantilevering above visible from inside the chapel. From the outside this was almost subsumed with vegetation and soil build-up. To remedy this and make it sound a similar approach to that with the reinstatement of flints to the chancel walls was undertaken.
- Archaeological research and fieldwork was needed to identify the width of the wall prior any rebuilding could commence. This led to the discovery of a previously unknown brick door reveal and, in a different area on the external face, a profiled section of low-level stone resembling a plinth stone.
- The area was inspected and the loose flintwork was partially dismantled under supervision of an ecologist to reach a sound core. Any previous cementitious hard-capping was removed with hand tools only.
- The reinstatement of flintwork that had been lost in time consisted of re-using flints collected from site and the approved lime mortar to elevate the height of the existing walls approximately 300-350mm above ground level.
- The newly discovered brick door reveal was better defined with red brick making the historic door opening clearly legible with both reveals now readily visible on site.
- Once the reinstatement was complete, a layer of hard-capping to the approved lime mortar mix with horsehair was applied across the top of the low walls to provide improved protection against rainwater ingress to the core of the stonework.



**Plate 20:** Door opening repaired



**Plate 21:** Door opening repaired



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#### 4.17 Repair details – materials used

As specified above, all flint and rubble used in the flint repairs were reclaimed from elsewhere on the site. Tiles were occasionally used in the flint repairs. But usually these were also salvaged from site. The imported building materials are as follows:

Bricks: Handmade Gault / Cambridge bricks

Tiles: Handmade Gault / Cambridge tiles

Quoins: Clipsham Cream, sawn

Flint: recovered on site and reused

Lime Mortar (2:1 mix NHL and sharp ginger sand with 0.5 addition of building sand for colour. Main mortar mix: NHL2; hard-capping: NHL3.5, plus untreated horse hair; foundation pad for brick infill: NHL5.)

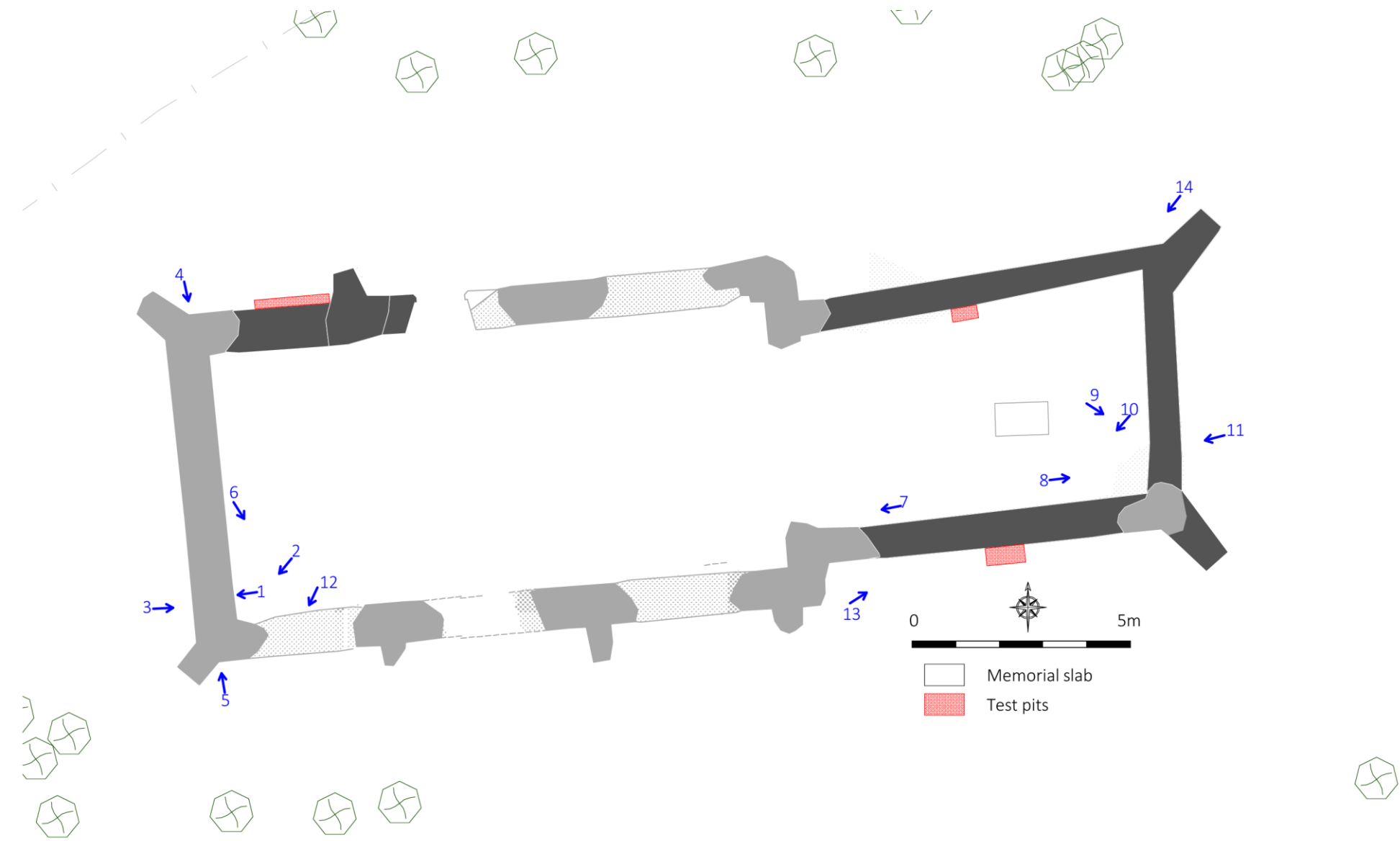


Figure 6: Photo plan 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022 (scale 1:125)

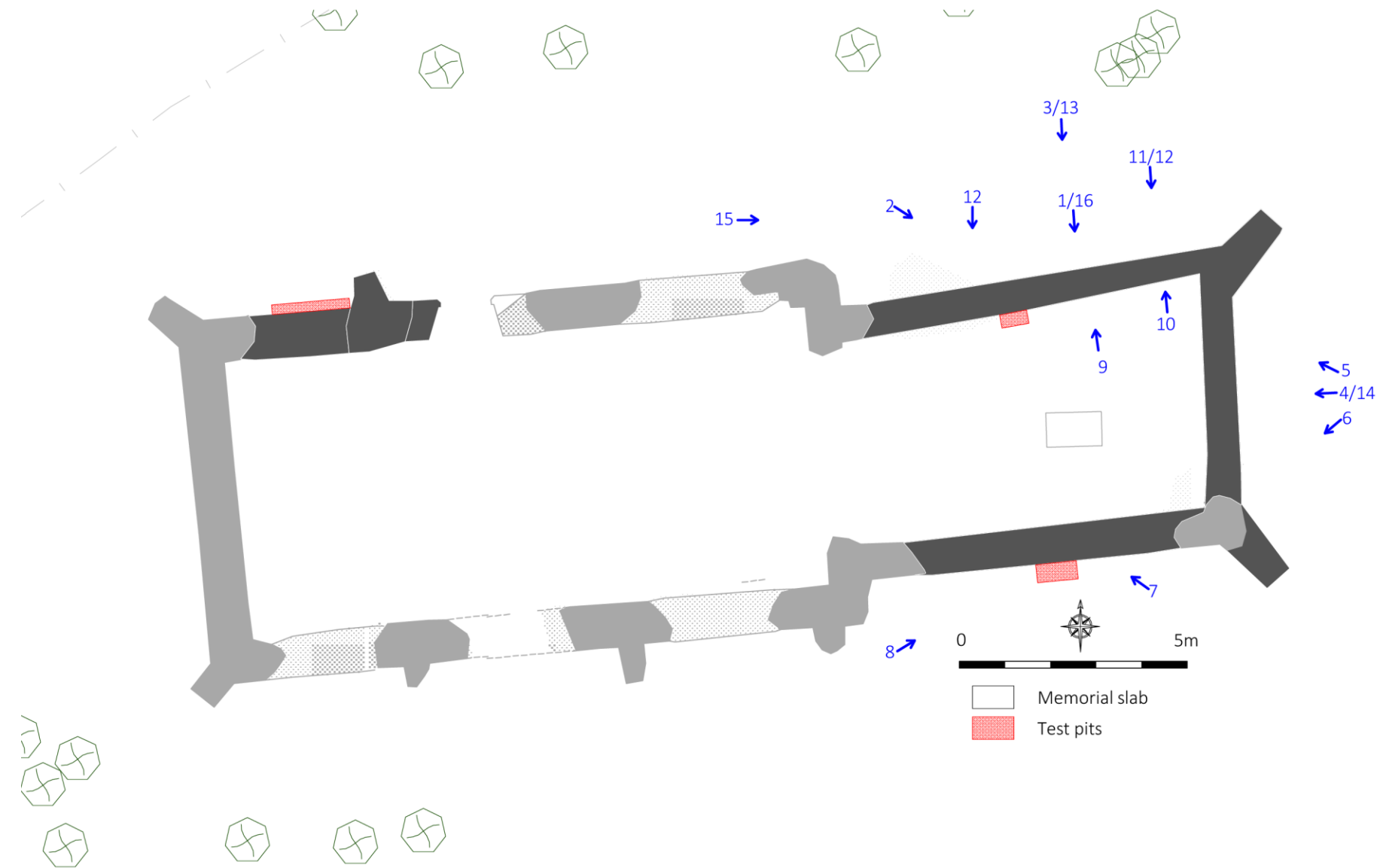


Figure 7: Photo plan 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022 (scale 1:125)

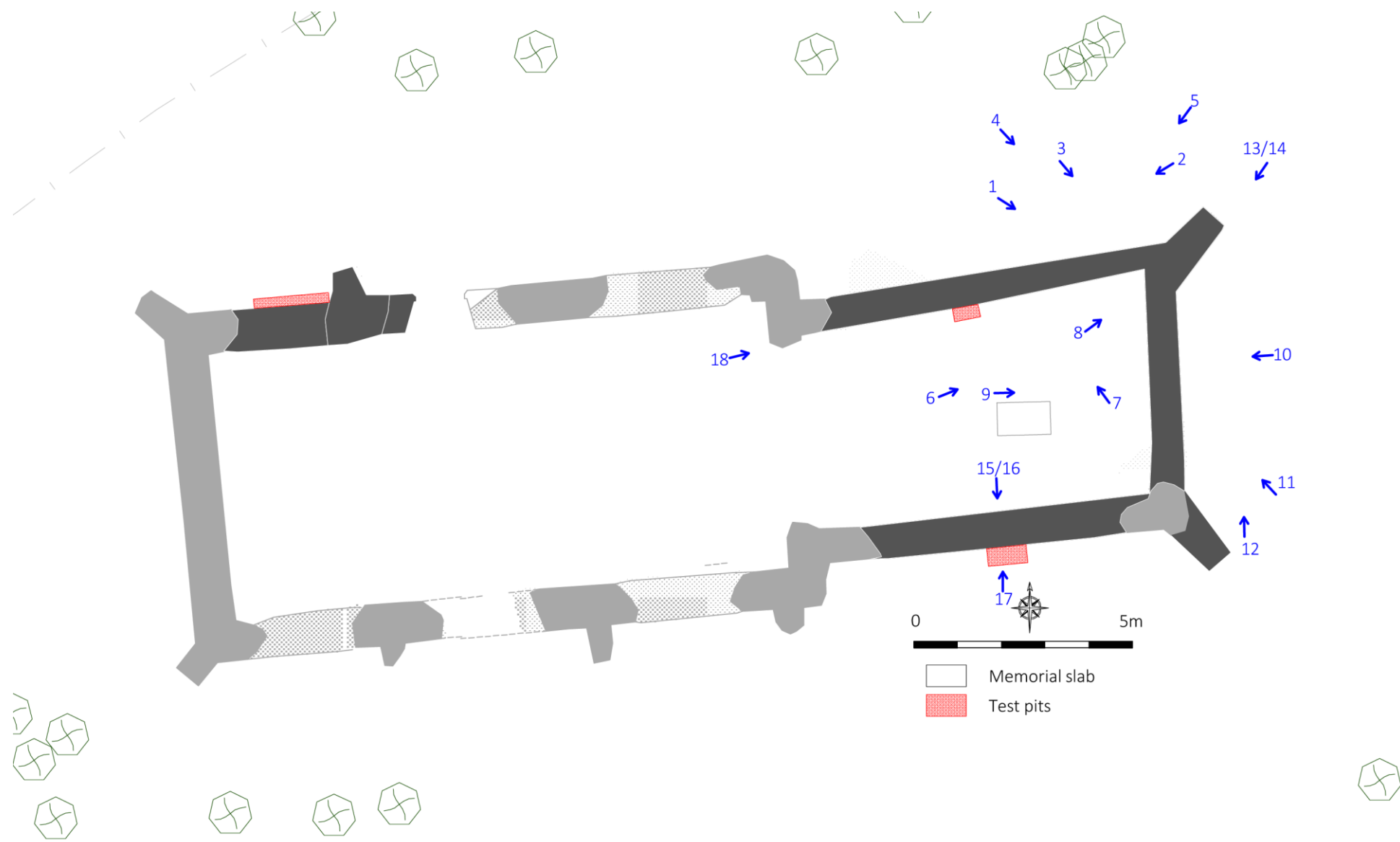


Figure 8: Photo plan 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 (scale 1:125)

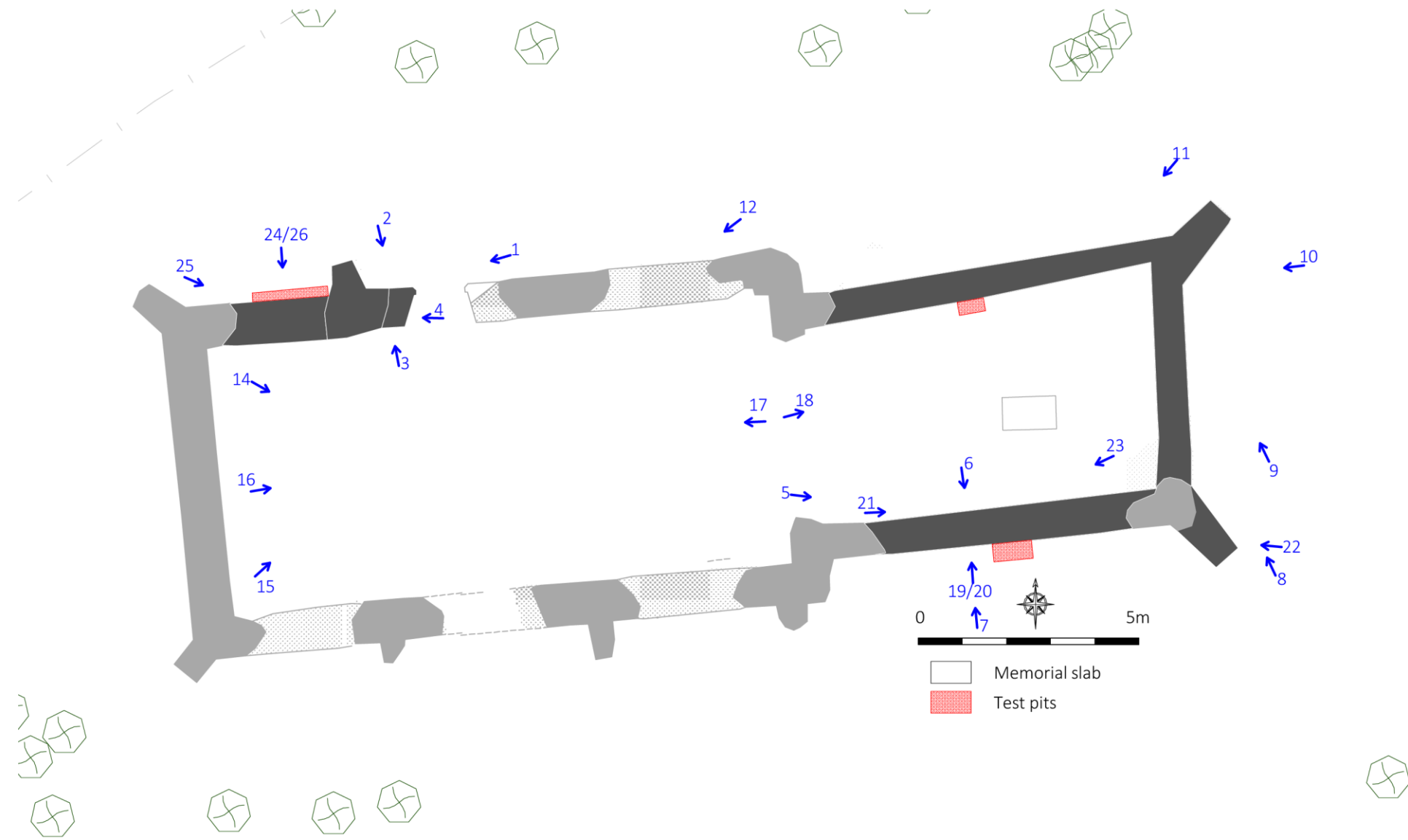


Figure 9: Photo plan 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022 (scale 1:125)

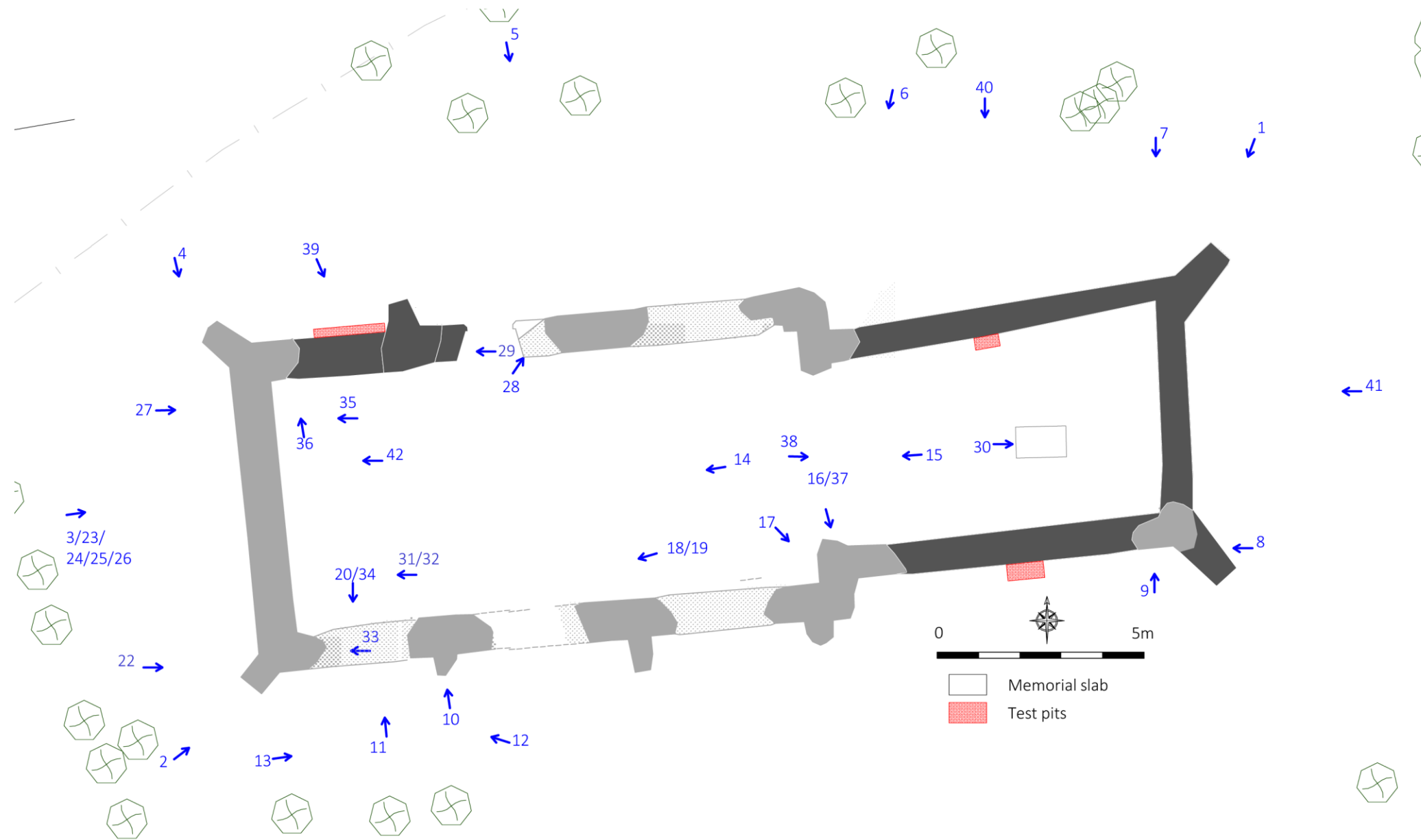


Figure 10: Photo plan 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022 (scale 1:125)



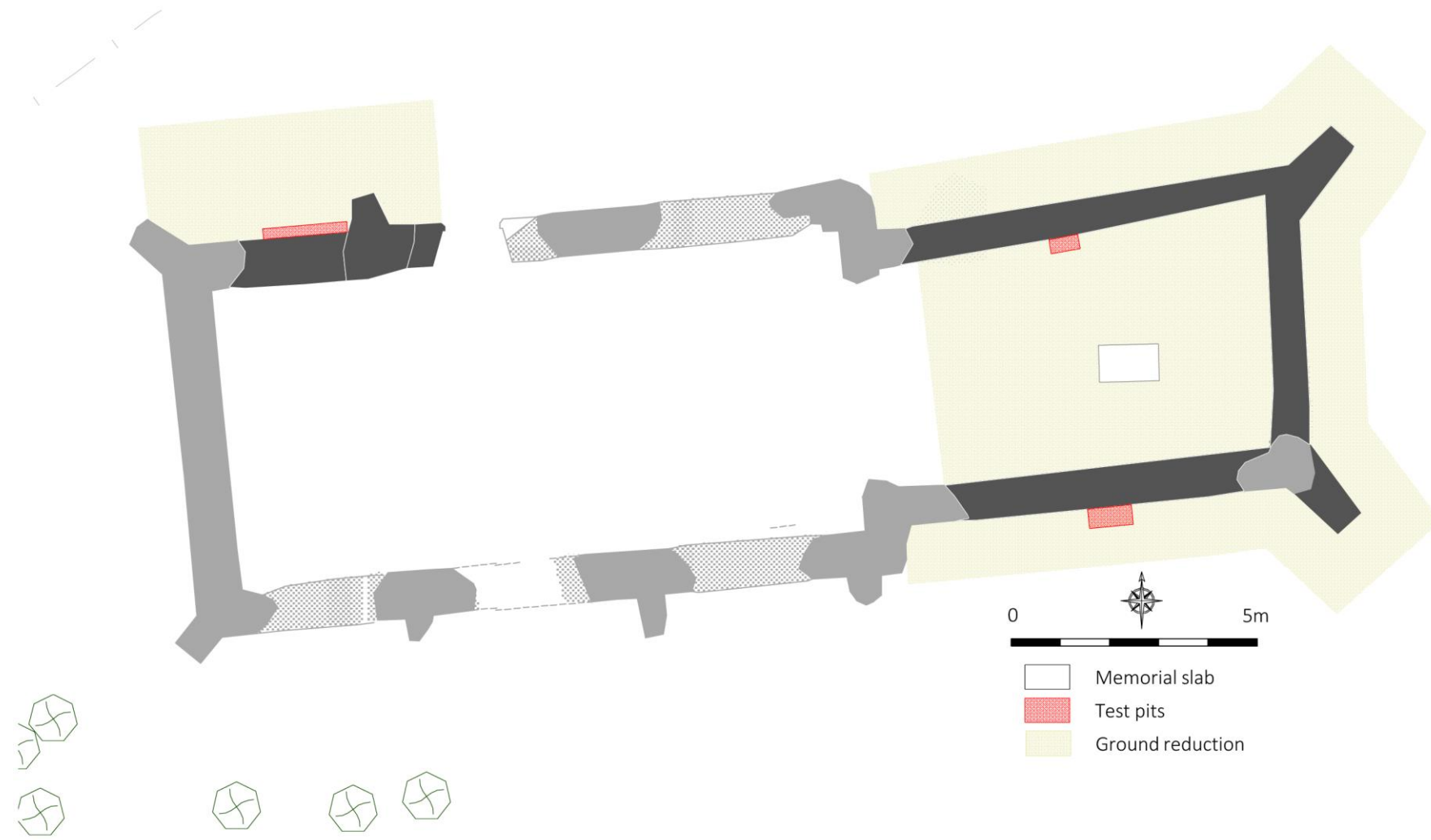


Figure 11: Areas of ground reduction and location of test pits (scale 1:125)

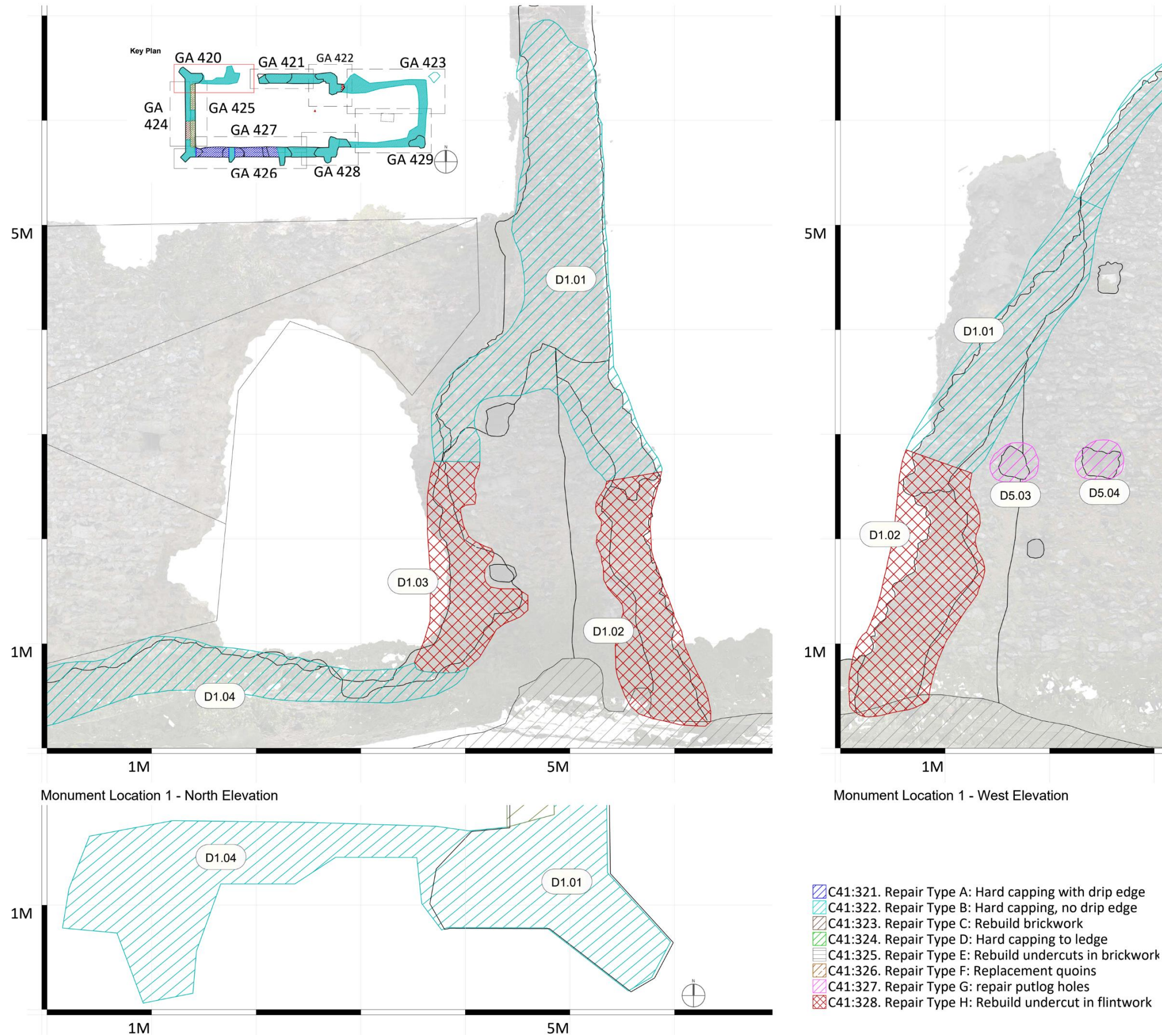


Figure 12: Works undertaken to the northwest corner (scale 1:40)

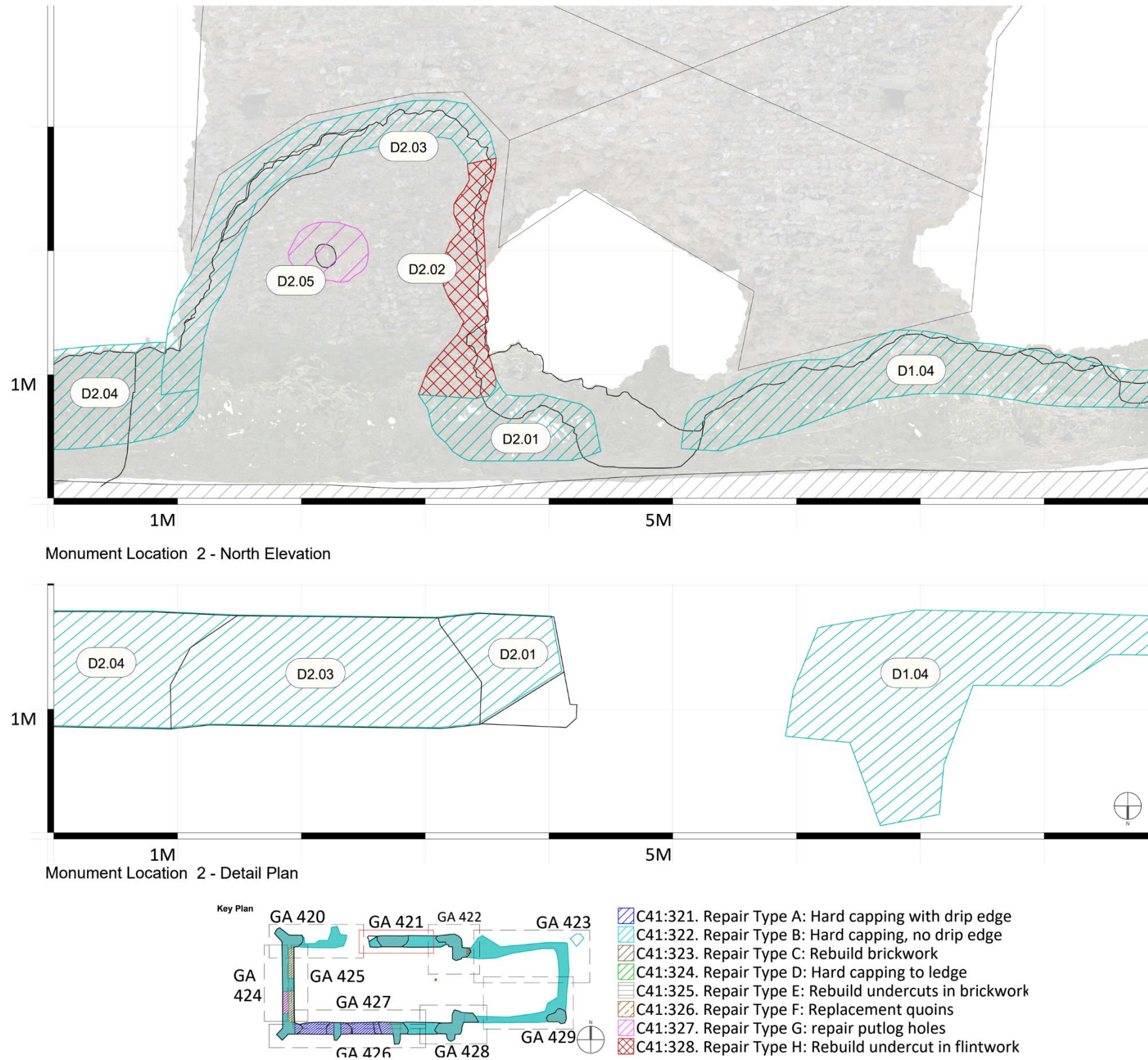


Figure 13: Works undertaken to the north nave wall (scale 1:40)

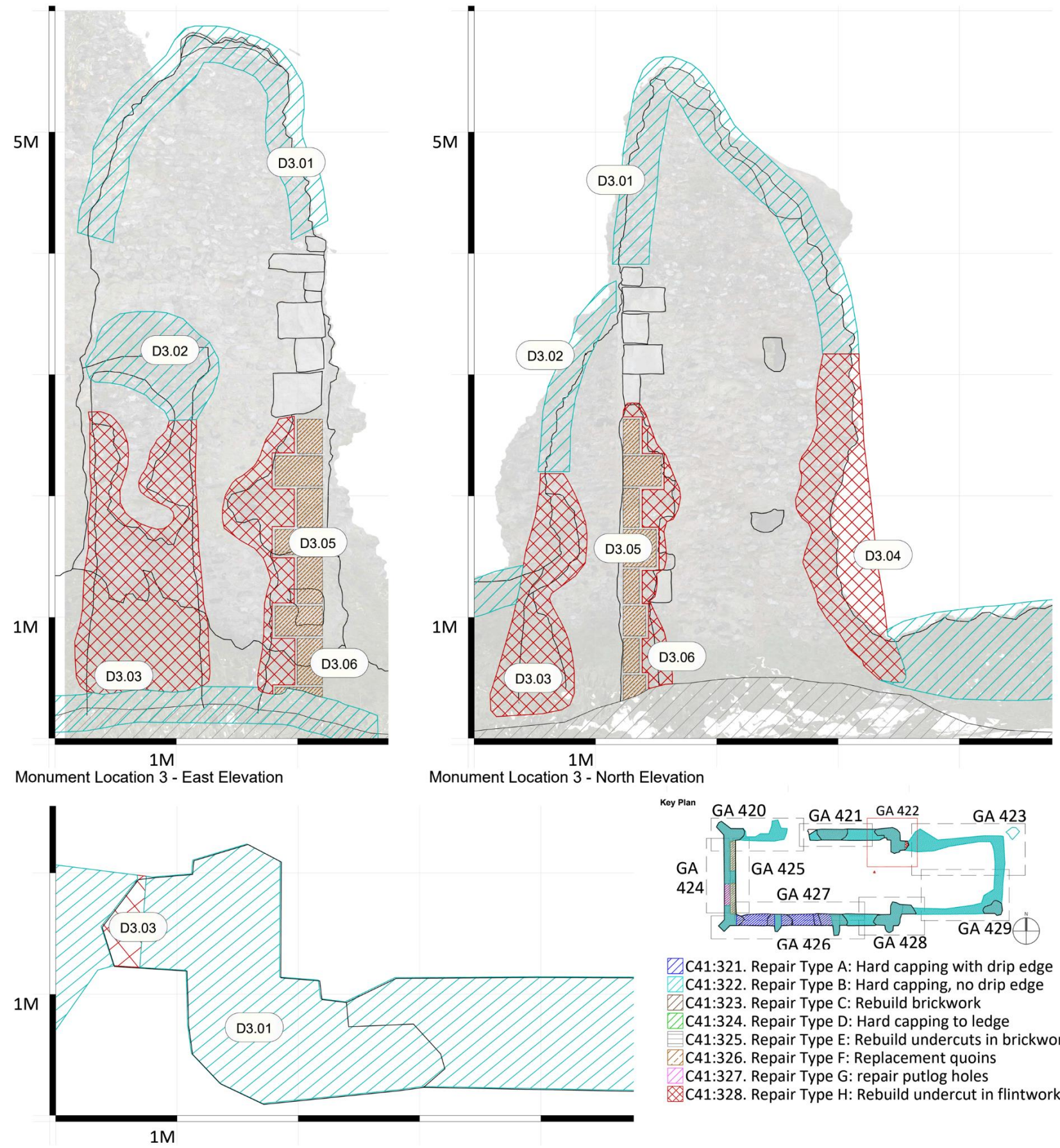


Figure 14: Works undertaken to the northeast nave corner (scale 1:40)

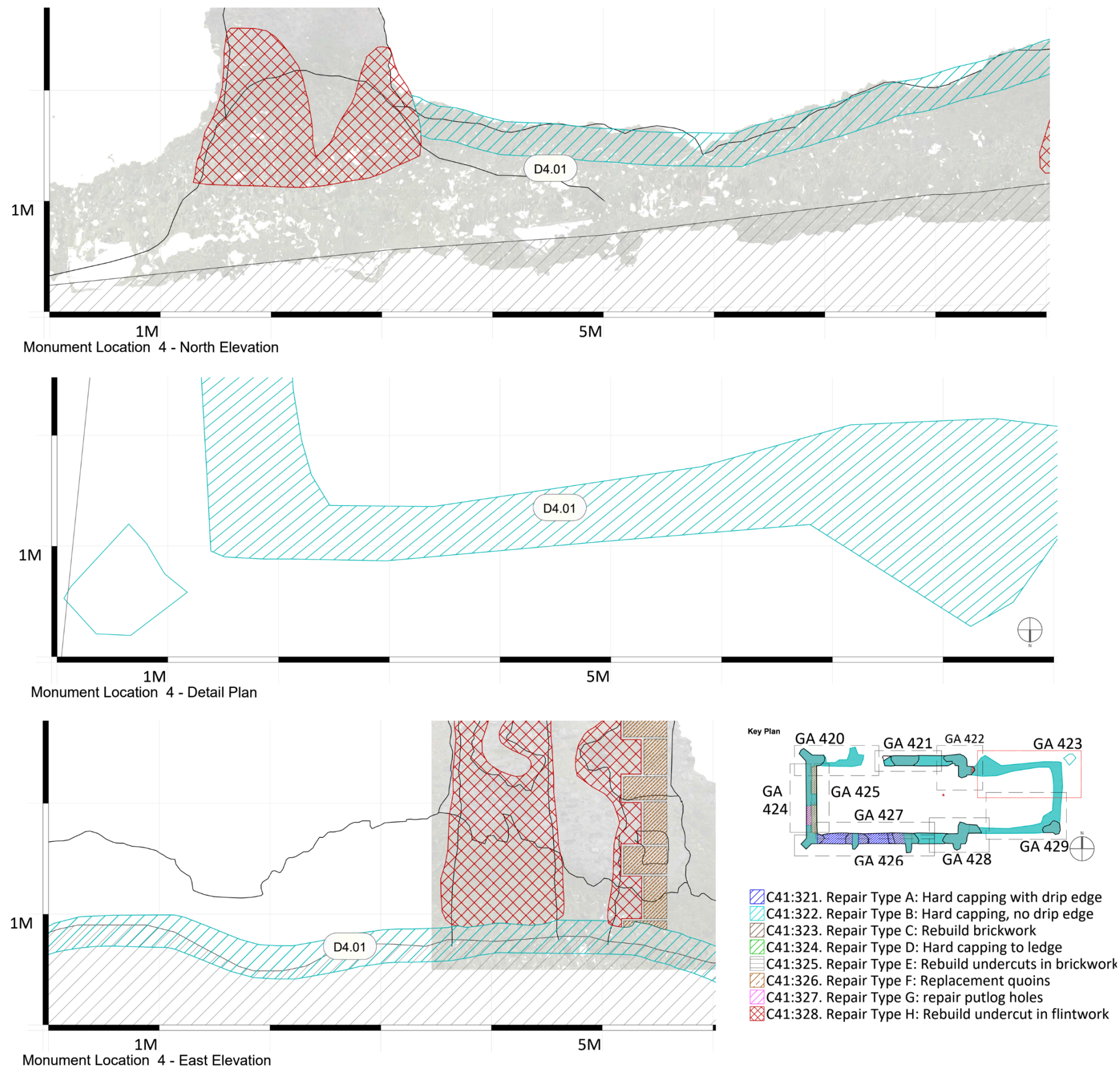


Figure 15: Works undertaken to the northeast chancel corner (scale 1:40)

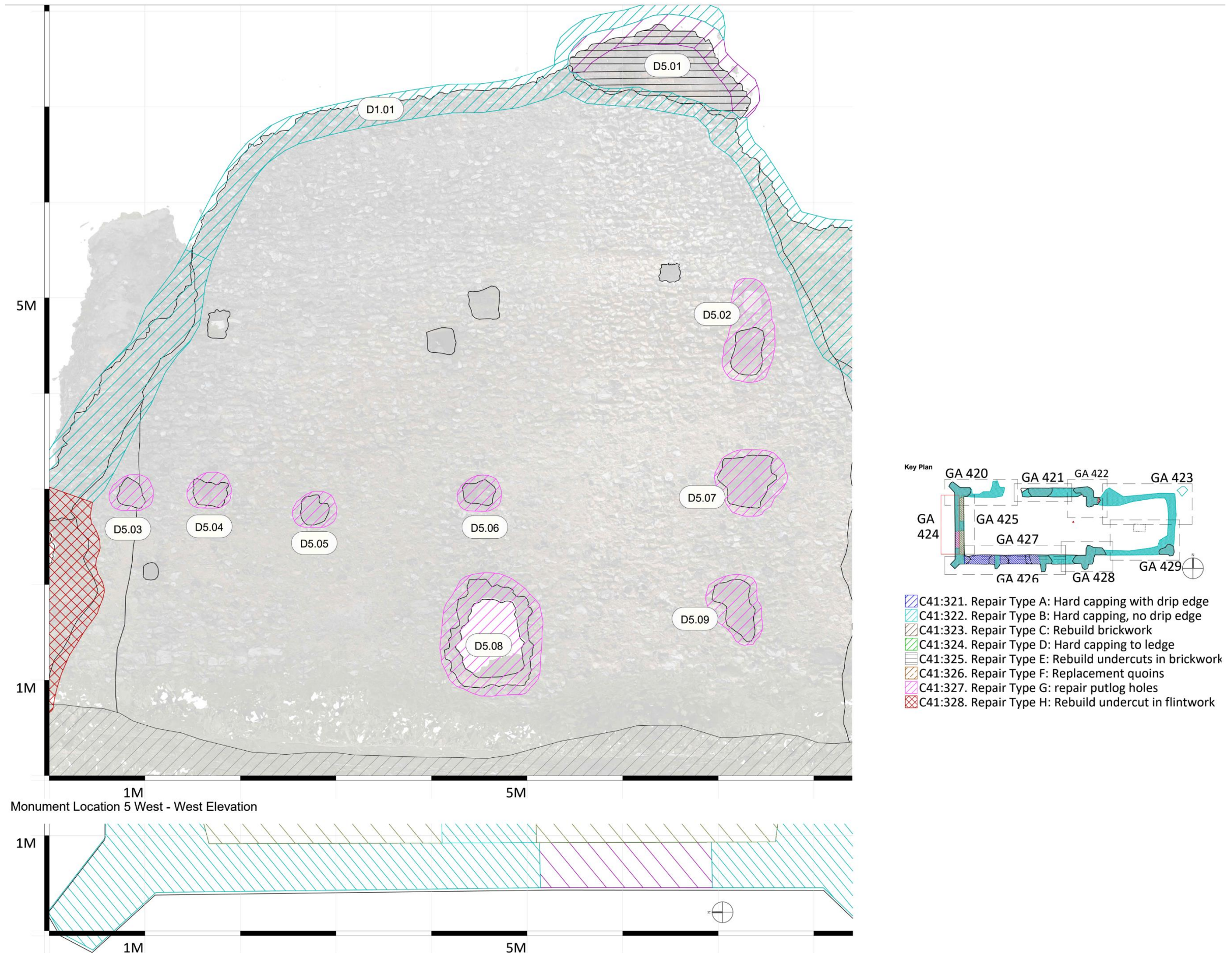


Figure 16: Works undertaken to the west elevation of the west wall (scale 1:40)

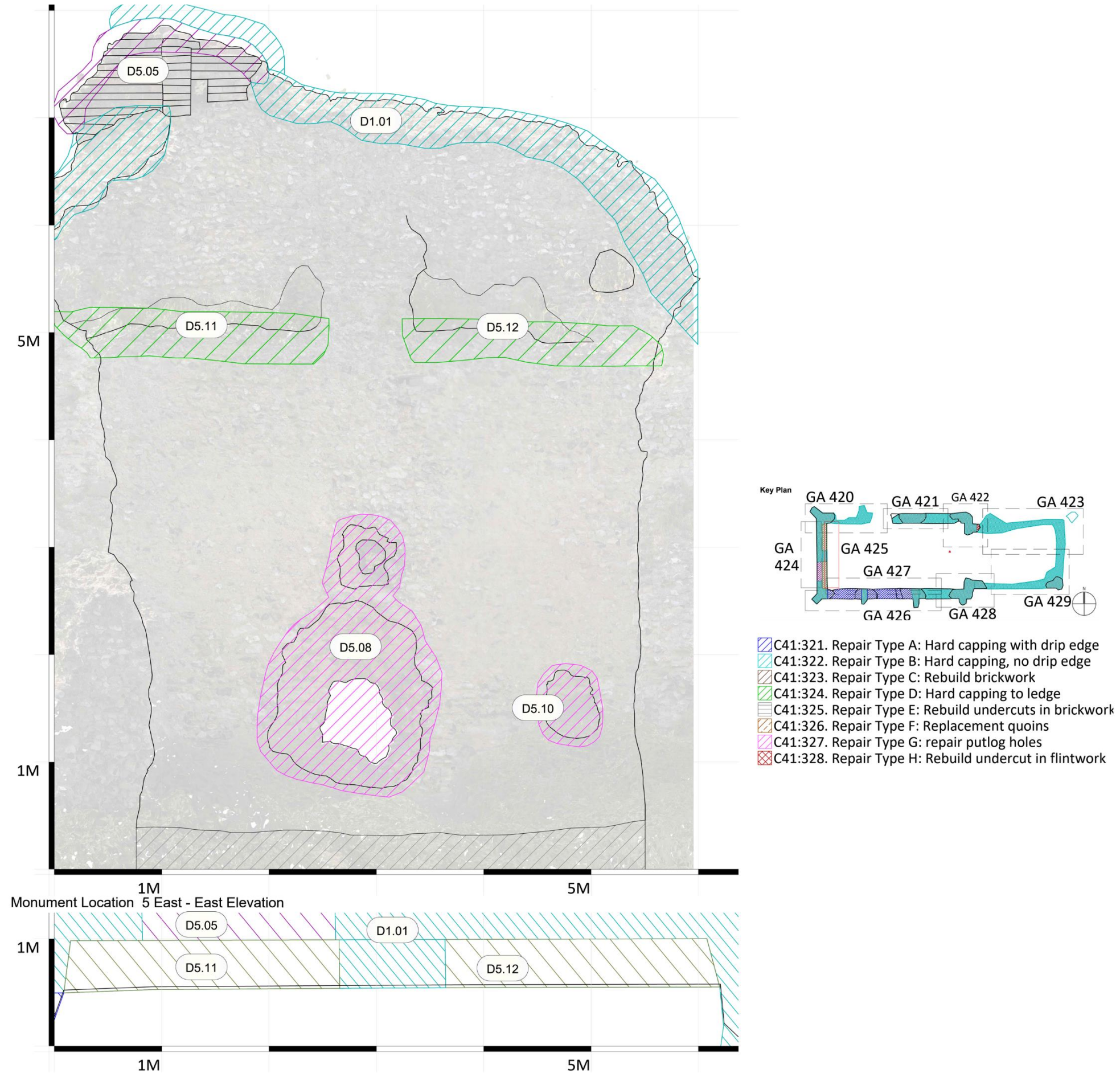


Figure 17: Works undertaken to the east elevation of the west wall (scale 1:40)

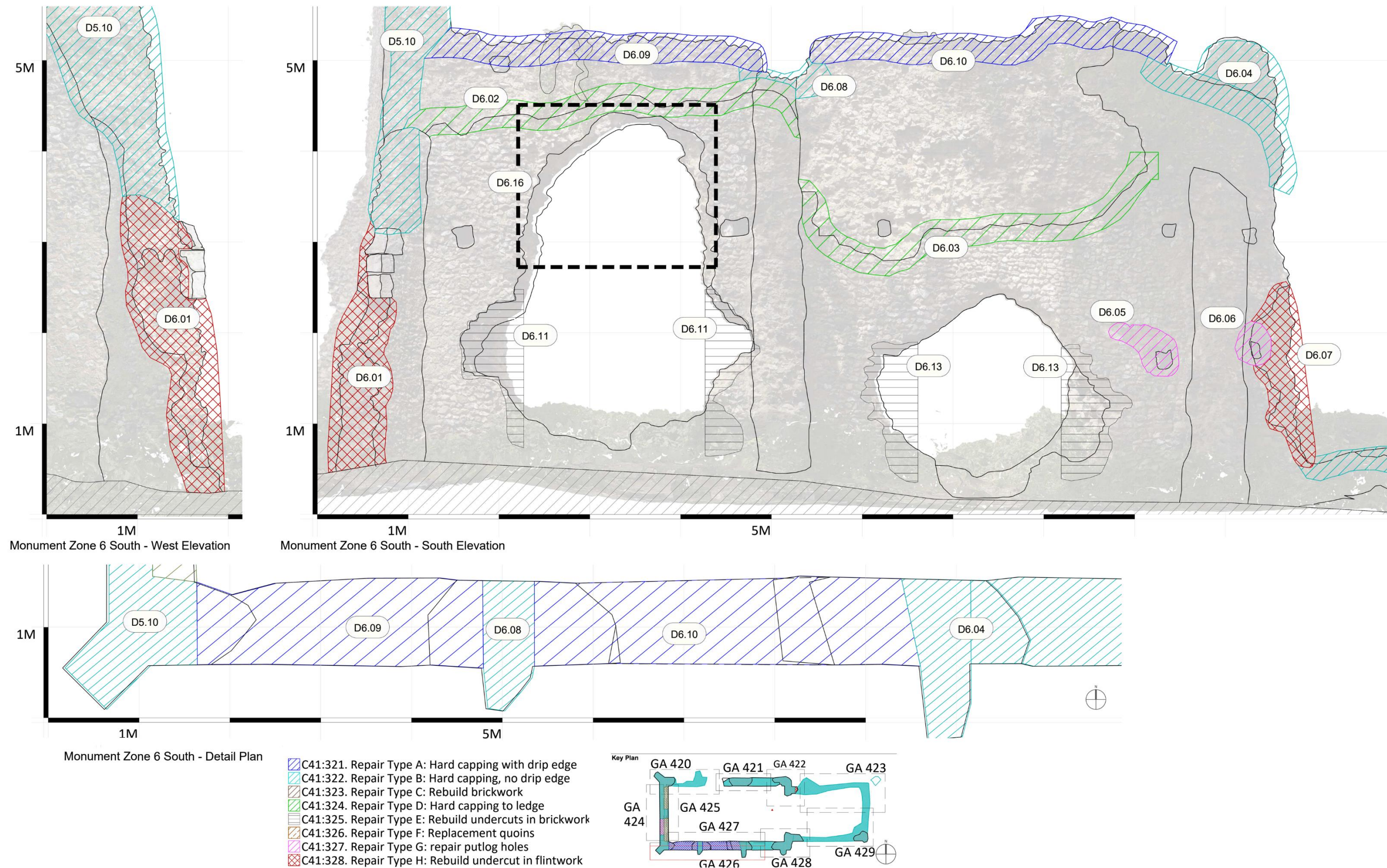
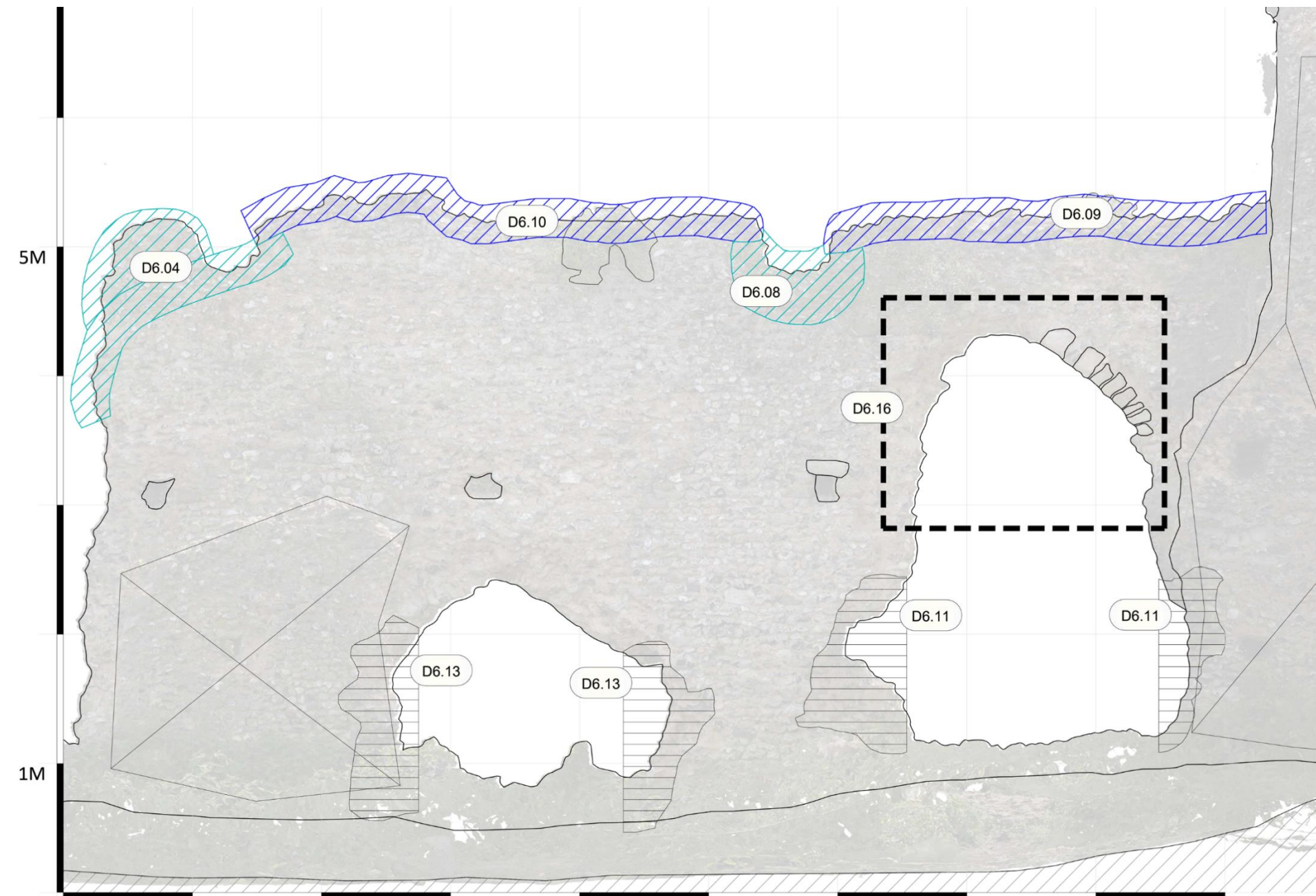
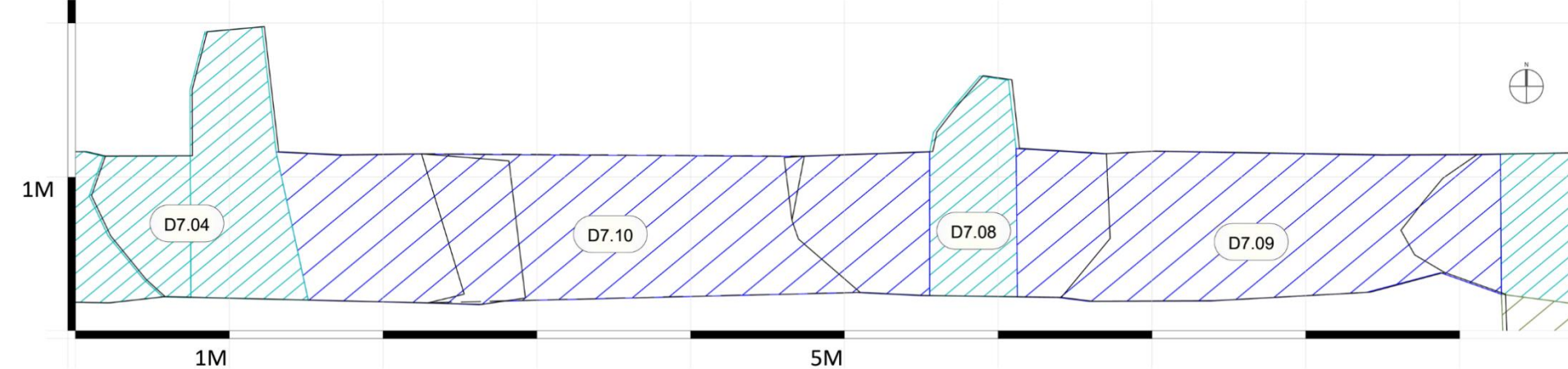


Figure 18: Works undertaken to the south elevation of the south nave wall (scale 1:40)

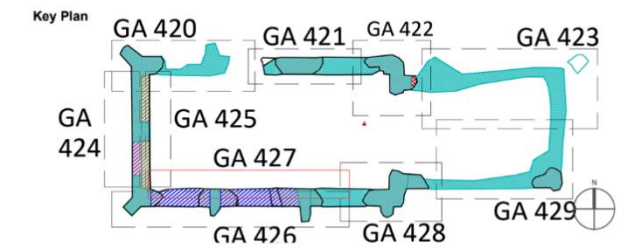




Monument Location 6 North - North Elevation



Monument Location 6 North - Detail Plan



- C41:321. Repair Type A: Hard capping with drip edge
- C41:322. Repair Type B: Hard capping, no drip edge
- C41:323. Repair Type C: Rebuild brickwork
- C41:324. Repair Type D: Hard capping to ledge
- C41:325. Repair Type E: Rebuild undercuts in brickwork
- C41:326. Repair Type F: Replacement quoins
- C41:327. Repair Type G: repair putlog holes
- C41:328. Repair Type H: Rebuild undercut in flintwork

Figure 19: Works undertaken to the north elevation of the south nave wall (scale 1:40)



Figure 20: Works undertaken to the southeast nave corner (scale 1:40)

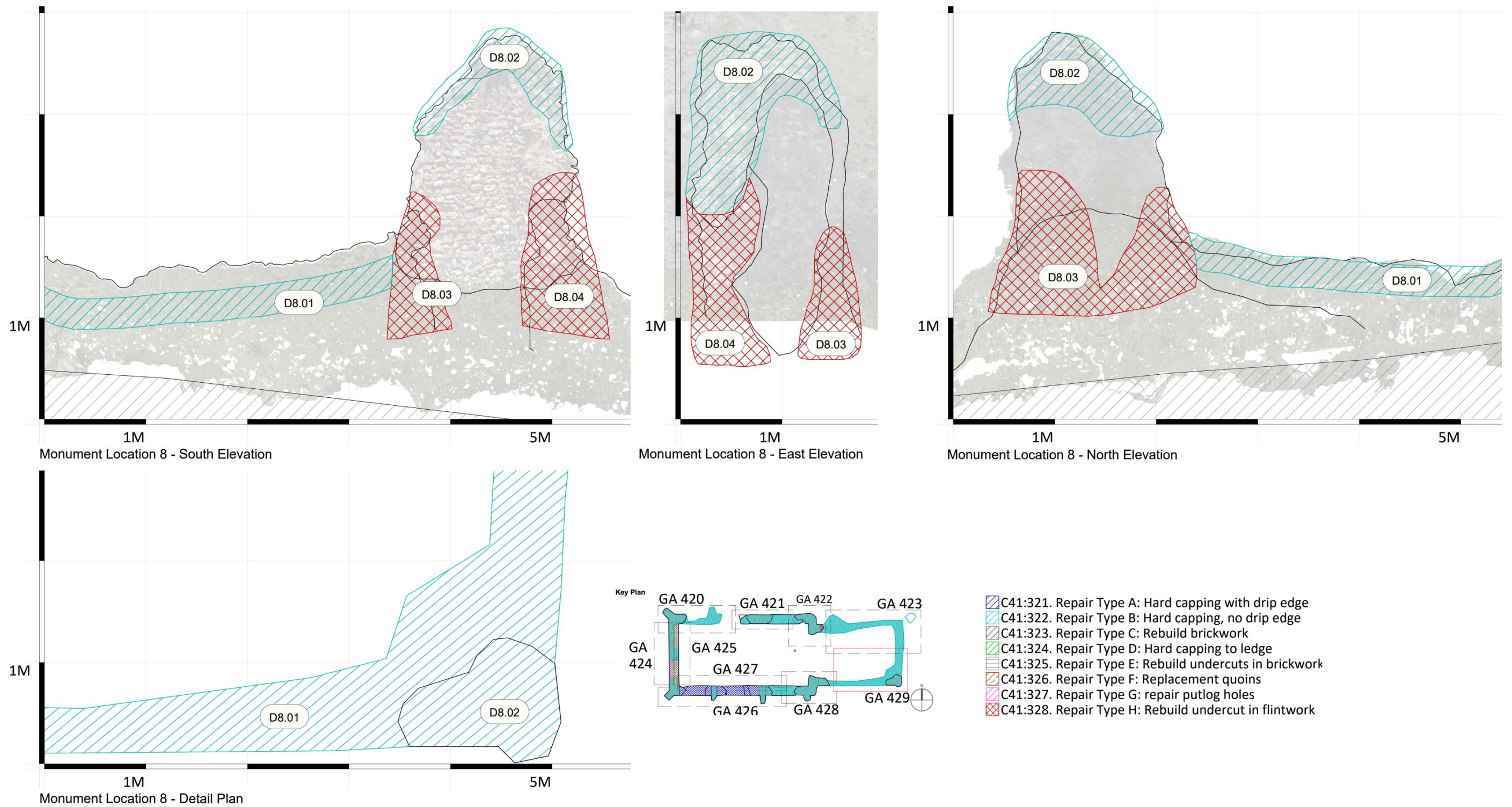


Figure 21: Works undertaken to the southeast chancel corner (scale 1:40)



Figure 22: West wall exterior(before)



Figure 23: West wall exterior (after)



Figure 24: West wall interior(before)



Figure 25: West wall interior (after)



Figure 26: South nave wall interior (before)



Figure 27: South nave wall interior (after)



Figure 28: South nave wall exterior (before)



Figure 29: South nave wall exterior(before)



Figure 30: South chancel wall exterior (before)



Figure 31: South chancel wall exterior(after)





Figure 32: South chancel wall interior(before)



Figure 33: South chancel wall interior (after)



**Figure 34:** North nave wall exterior, west end (left) and east end (right) (before)



**Figure 35:** North nave wall exterior, centre (before)



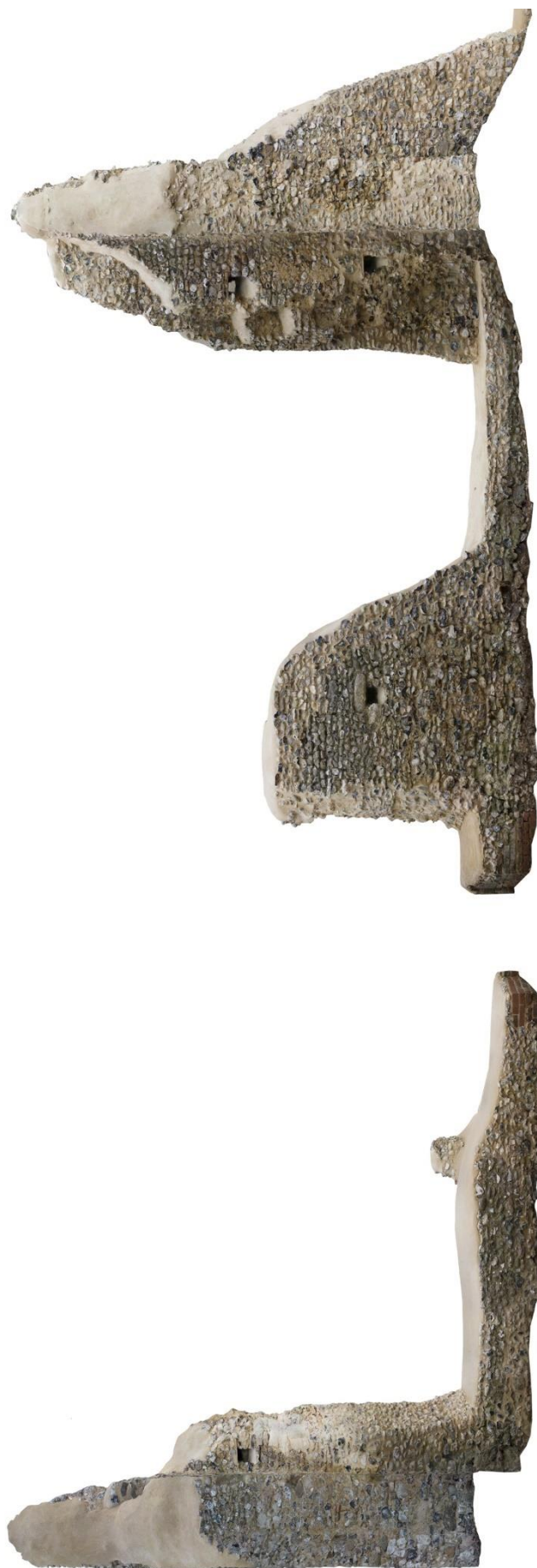
**Figure 36:** North nave wall exterior (after)



Figure 37: North nave wall interior, west (before)



Figure 38: North nave wall interior, east (before)



**Figure 39: North nave wall interior (after)**



## 5 Discussion and Conclusions

The Archaeological Watching Brief was able to determine the dimensions of the walls as well as ascertain the depth of the foundations, and confirm the overall mixture of building material used in the construction of Minsden Chapel was as indicated by the upstanding remains.

Small areas of unexpected masonry were exposed, such as the western side of the door opening in the north nave wall, and the three pieces of moulded stone that appeared to form part of a drip ledge between the door opening and the west wall of the nave. These moulded stones raised the question of whether they are simply re-used building material or an integral part of the original construction and, if the latter whether they could provide an indication of the original floor level? They were the only moulded stones found during the building works or within the test pit along the south chancel wall. Indeed, given that the land slopes down to the east, other moulded stones should still have been exposed had they existed as the top of these stones were at an approximate height of 113.45m AOD, which is above ground level from the east of the door opening onwards. It is also of interest to note that the only type of drip ledge shown on Buckler's drawing of the chapel in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century is on the buttresses (Fig. 11), and although illustrations such as these are not a hundred percent reliable source, Buckler tended to produce well detailed illustrations.



**Figure 40:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century drawing by Buckler (HALS DZ/119/8/34a)

The uneven nature of the ground level on the illustration above as well as that on the photographs taken during various stages of the project demonstrate the difficulty in assessing the original height of the chapel and that of the internal floor. Whereas the rendered stone within the test pit to the south of the chancel could indicate the original ground level of the chancel, no evidence for a floor was found. No doubt any flagstones that may have covered the floor were robbed out in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century along with many of the other architectural fittings and fixtures.

The newly exposed brickwork to the west of the north nave door opening undermines the earlier hypothesis that the eastern side of the opening had been repaired in re-used brick (Kaye 2021: 20). Instead, it seems more likely that the base of the opening was initially constructed in



brick. The fabric of the bricks suggest that they were manufactured in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although the size could indicate a possible earlier date.

On closer inspection it appeared that the bricks in the bellcote probably date from c.1600 although the tiles on which some of the walling rests could not be dated.



**Figure 41:** Minsden Chapel, the completed works  
*(Courtesy of AerialCam)*



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## 6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Hugh Neave for commissioning this report, and to Caroline Green who has been project managing the conservation works campaign on behalf of Mr Neave. Thanks are also due to Rachel Arnold, John Lloyd and the team from Between Time Ltd for their assistance during the fieldwork; to Suzi Pendlebury and Nikola Yanev of Caroe Architecture Ltd for providing CAD drawings and detailed descriptions of the repairwork; to Domenico D'Alessandro and Jess Tipper of Historic England for monitoring the project, and to Rachel Parish of Natural England without whose support and oversight the Countryside Stewardship Grant funding that facilitated these conservation repairs would not have been possible.

The fieldwork was carried out by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA, Derek Watson PhD and Florian Weber MA PCIfA. The report was prepared by Karin Kaye and Derek Watson and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.





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## 7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

- Written Scheme of Investigation
- Report
- Survey notes
- Architect's survey drawings
- List of photographs
- CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the North Herts Museum (Accession Number: LAN/MC'21) and the Archaeological Data Service.



## 8 References

### ***Standards & Specifications***

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
- ClfA 2019 *Standard & Guidance for the Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2020 *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ClfA 2021 *Code of Conduct* Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- EH 2008 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment. PPN3: Archaeological Excavation*. London: English Heritage
- HE 2015 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: the MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide*. London: Historic England
- HE 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*. London: Historic England
- SMA 1995 *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive - the Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Museums: Guidelines for Use in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales*. London: Society for Museum Archaeologists
- Walker K 1990 *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-Term Storage*. London: United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section
- Watson, D. 2022 *Historic Building Watching Brief: Minsden Chapel, Whitwell Road, Langley, Hertfordshire* KDK Archaeology Report 664/1.1

### ***Books and other Sources***

- Hines, R.L. 1929 *The History of Hitchin Vol II* London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd
- Hitchin, Ruins of Minsden Chapel, NE View (from Views of Hertfordshire, A collection of drawings by J.C. Buckler (1793 - 1894) HALS: DE/Bg/3/61
- Kaye, K. 2021 *Historic Building Recording: Minsden Chapel, Whitwell Road, Langley, Hertfordshire* KDK Archaeology Report 596/2.1

### ***Online Resources***

- British History Online: 'Langley', in An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Hertfordshire (London, 1910), pp. 137-138. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/rchme/herts/pp137-138> [accessed 2 June 2021].
- Hertsmeres Memories: <https://www.hertsmemories.org.uk/content/herts-history/places/churches-and-places-of-worship-2/minsdn-chapel-hitchin>
- Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1347462>



## Appendix 1: List of Archived Photographs Produced by KDK

NB: Not all of the photographs listed below have been used to illustrate the report.

Shot	Photo No.	Date	View	Subject	Initial
<b>Site Visit 27.04.2022</b>					
1	2836	27.04.22	W	Bellcote	KK
2	2837	27.04.22	NW	Bellcote	KK
3	2838	27.04.22	E	Bellcote	KK
4	2839	27.04.22	S	Wall & bellcote	KK
5	2840	27.04.22	N	Bellcote	KK
6	2841	27.04.22	SE	Upper layer of south wall window opening	KK
7	2842	27.04.22	W	Upper level of south wall	KK
8	2843	27.04.22	E	Upper level of south chancel upstanding wall	KK
9	2844	27.04.22	SE	Upper level of north chancel upstanding wall	KK
10	2845	27.04.22	SW	Upper level of south wall	KK
11	2846	27.04.22	SW	Upper level of south wall	KK
12	2847	27.04.22	SW	West side of window opening with sample brickwork	KK
13	2848	27.04.22	NE	South chancel wall	KK
14	2849	27.04.22	SE	North chancel wall	KK
<b>Site Visit 07.07.2022</b>					
1	3038	07.07.22	S	Collapsed north wall (detail)	KK
2	3039	07.07.22	SE	Collapsed north wall	KK
3	3040	07.07.22	S	Collapsed north wall	KK
4	3041	07.07.22	W	East wall	KK
5	3042	07.07.22	NW	East wall/north wall	KK
6	3043	07.07.22	SW	Southeast chancel corner	KK
7	3044	07.07.22	NW	South chancel wall	KK
8	3045	07.07.22	NE	South chancel wall	KK
9	3046	07.07.22	N	East end of north chancel wall	KK
10	3047	07.07.22	N	East end of north chancel wall	KK
11	3048	07.07.22	S	East wall/north wall corner	KK
12	3049	07.07.22	S	East wall/north wall corner	KK
13	3050	07.07.22	SE	Collapsed north wall	KK
14	3051	07.07.22	W	Northeast corner after cleaning	KK
15	3052	07.07.22	E	Repaired masonry in north nave wall	KK
<b>Site Visit 26.07.2022</b>					
1	3087	26.07.22	SE	North wall	KK
2	3088	26.07.22	SW	North wall	KK
3	3089	26.07.22	SE	North wall buttress	KK
4	3090	26.07.22	S	North wall and buttress	KK
5	3091	26.07.22	SW	North wall corner and buttress	KK
6	3092	26.07.22	NE	North wall interior	KK
7	3093	26.07.22	NW	North wall interior	KK



Shot	Photo No.	Date	View	Subject	Initial
8	3094	26.07.22	NE	North wall corner and interior	KK
9	3095	26.07.22	E	East wall/north wall corner	KK
10	3096	26.07.22	W	East wall/north wall corner	KK
11	3097	26.07.22	NW	East wall/north wall corner	KK
12	3098	26.07.22	N	East wall/north wall corner and buttress	KK
13	3099	26.07.22	SW	NE buttress and east wall/ north wall corner (portrait)	KK
14	3100	26.07.22	SW	NE buttress and east wall/ north wall corner (landscape)	KK
15	3101	26.07.22	S	South wall section interior	KK
16	3102	26.07.22	S	South wall section interior	KK
17	3103	26.07.22	NW	South wall section exterior	KK
18	3104	26.07.22	E	General shot of north and east walls from the scaffold	KK
19	3105	26.07.22	E	General shot of north and east walls from the scaffold	KK
<b>Site Visit 14.09.2022</b>					
1	3318	14.09.22	SW	North nave wall	KK/FW
2	3319	14.09.22	S	North nave wall	KK/FW
3	3320	14.09.22	N	North nave wall detail	KK/FW
4	3321	14.09.22	W	North nave opening	KK/FW
5	3322	14.09.22	SE	South chancel wall	KK/FW
6	3323	14.09.22	S	South chancel wall	KK/FW
7	3324	14.09.22	N	South chancel wall	KK/FW
8	3325	14.09.22	N	East wall	KK/FW
9	3326	14.09.22	N	East wall and northeast buttress remains	KK/FW
10	3327	14.09.22	W	North east buttress	KK/FW
11	3328	14.09.22	SW	Chapel	KK/FW
12	3329	14.09.22	SW	Western end of the nave	KK/FW
13	3330	14.09.22	N	South nave wall	KK/FW
14	3331	14.09.22	SE	South nave wall	KK/FW
15	3332	14.09.22	NE	North nave wall	KK/FW
16	3333	14.09.22	E	View towards the chancel	KK/FW
17	3334	14.09.22	W	West wall	KK/FW
18	3335	14.09.22	W	West wall	KK/FW
19	3336	14.09.22	E	Chancel	KK/FW
20	3337	14.09.22	N	South chancel wall: test pit	KK/FW
21	3338	14.09.22	N	South chancel wall: test pit	KK/FW
22	3339	14.09.22	N	South chancel wall: test pit	KK/FW
23	3340	14.09.22	E	South chancel wall	KK/FW
24	3341	14.09.22	E	South chancel wall	KK/FW
25	3342	14.09.22	E	South chancel wall	KK/FW
26	3343	14.09.22	NE	South chancel wall	KK/FW
27	3344	14.09.22	W	South chancel wall	KK/FW
28	3345	14.09.22	W	South chancel wall	KK/FW
29	3346	14.09.22	N	North chancel wall: test pit	KK/FW
30	3347	14.09.22	S	Moulded stones in the north nave wall	KK/FW
31	3348	14.09.22	SE	North nave wall and moulded stones	KK/FW



Shot	Photo No.	Date	View	Subject	Initial
32	3349	14.09.22	S	Detail of moulded stones	KK/FW
33	3350	14.09.22	-	Mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century moulded brick	KK/FW
34	3351	14.09.22	-	Mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century moulded brick	KK/FW
35	3352	14.09.22	-	Mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century moulded brick	KK/FW
36	3353	14.09.22	-	Mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century moulded brick	KK/FW
37	3354	14.09.22	-	Mid 19 <sup>th</sup> century moulded brick	KK/FW
<b>Site Visit 10.10.2022</b>					
1	2013	10.10.22	SW	Chapel: general shot	FW
2	2014	10.10.22	NE	Chapel: general shot	FW
3	2015	10.10.22	NW	South nave/chancel buttress	FW
4	2016	10.10.22	NE	Opening in south nave wall	FW
5	2017	10.10.22	E	West wall	FW
6	2018	10.10.22	SE	Northwest corner of the nave	FW
7	2019	10.10.22	S	Northwest corner of the nave	FW
8	2020	10.10.22	S	View of the nave	FW
9	2021	10.10.22	S	View of the nave	FW
10	2022	10.10.22	SW	View of the nave	FW
11	2023	10.10.22	S	Chancel	FW
12	2024	10.10.22	W	Southeast chancel buttress	FW
13	2025	10.10.22	N	Southeast chancel buttress and south chancel wall	FW
14	2026	10.10.22	N	South nave/chancel buttress detail	FW
15	2027	10.10.22	N	South nave wall buttress detail	FW
16	2028	10.10.22	N	South nave wall buttress detail	FW
17	2029	10.10.22	N	Opening in south nave wall	FW
18	2030	10.10.22	NE	South nave wall and southwestern buttress	FW
19	2031	10.10.22	NW	South nave wall	FW
20	2032	10.10.22	NE	South nave wall	FW
21	2033	10.10.22	W	West wall	FW
22	2034	10.10.22	N	North nave wall	FW
23	2035	10.10.22	N	North nave wall	FW
24	2036	10.10.22	NE	North nave wall: buttress detail	FW
25	2037	10.10.22	N	North nave wall: buttress detail	FW
26	2038	10.10.22	W	Internal view of the nave	FW
27	2039	10.10.22	S	South wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
28	2040	10.10.22	SE	South wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
29	2041	10.10.22	SW	South nave wall	FW
30	2042	10.10.22	SW	South nave wall	FW
31	2043	10.10.22	S	Opening in south nave wall	FW
32	2044	10.10.22	E	Nave	FW
33	2045	10.10.22	W	Graffiti on southwest buttress quoin stone	FW
34	2046	10.10.22	N	Buttress east of south nave opening	FW
35	2047	10.10.22	N	Detail of south chancel/nave buttress repair	FW
36	2048	10.10.22	N	Detail of south nave/chancel buttress repair	FW



Shot	Photo No.	Date	View	Subject	Initial
37	2049	10.10.22	N	Putlog hole in south nave/chancel buttress	FW
38	2050	10.10.22	NW	Putlog hole in south nave/chancel buttress	FW
39	2051	10.10.22	N	South nave buttress	FW
40	2052	10.10.22	W	Stonework detail	FW
41	2053	10.10.22	E	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
42	2054	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
43	2055	10.10.22	E	Bellcote and south end of west wall	FW
44	2056	10.10.22	E	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
45	2057	10.10.22	E	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
46	2058	10.10.22	E	Bellcote and upper section of the west wall	FW
47	2059	10.10.22	E	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
48	2060	10.10.22	E	Detail of north nave wall opening	FW
49	2061	10.10.22	NE	Detail of north nave wall opening	FW
50	2062	10.10.22	E	Detail of north nave wall opening	FW
51	2063	10.10.22	N	Detail of north nave wall opening	FW
52	2064	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
53	2065	10.10.22	E	Memorial slab to Reginald Hine	FW
54	2066	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
55	2067	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
56	2068	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
57	2069	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
58	2070	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
59	2071	10.10.22	W	Bellcote and west wall	FW
60	2072	10.10.22	W	Detail of putlog hole in the west wall	FW
61	2073	10.10.22	W	Detail of brick arch repair	FW
62	2074	10.10.22	W	Detail of brick arch repair	FW
63	2075	10.10.22	S	Detail of brick arch repair	FW
64	2076	10.10.22	S	Detail of putlog hole in the south wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
65	2077	10.10.22	S	Detail of putlog hole in the south wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
66	2078	10.10.22	S	Detail of putlog hole in the south wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
67	2079	10.10.22	S	Top of the south wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
68	2080	10.10.22	S	South wall at the nave/chancel interface	FW
69	2081	10.10.22	E	Internal view of the chancel	FW
70	2082	10.10.22	SE	North nave wall	FW
71	2083	10.10.22	S	Chancel	FW
72	2084	10.10.22	W	Chapel	FW
73	2085	10.10.22	N	South chancel wall	FW
74	2086	10.10.22	W	Detail of repaired opening in the west wall	FW
75	2087	10.10.22	W	Detail of the west wall	FW



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**Photographs from Between Time to be archived**

Shot	Subject
1	Bellcote under repair, looking east
2	Detail of upper courses, looking west
3	Detail of southern side of west wall of the bellcote
4	Western side of the bellcote
5	Eastern side of the bellcote
6	Bellcote from the southeast
7	Bellcote from the southeast
8	Bellcote from the west
9	Bellcote from the south
10	South nave wall under repair
11	South nave wall under repair
12	Completed repairs to south nave wall
13	Example of hard capping in progress
14	Arched opening under repair



## Appendix 2: KDK OASIS Sheet

PROJECT DETAILS			
<b>Project Name &amp; Address</b>	Minsden Chapel, Whitwell Road, Langley, Hertfordshire	<b>Project Site Code</b>	664/MMC
<b>OASIS reference</b>	kdkarcha1-504534	<b>Event/Accession no</b>	LAN/MC'21
<b>OS reference</b>	TL 19820 24580	<b>Study area size</b>	168sq m
<b>Project Type</b>	Historic Building Recording	<b>Height (mAOD)</b>	113m AOD
<b>Short Description</b>	<p>Between July and October 2022 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out Historic Building Watching Brief of Minsden Chapel, Langley, Hertfordshire in order to fulfil a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent for the consolidation of the ruins. The Watching Brief has followed on from Historic Building Recording (Kaye 2021), the summary for which is as follows:</p> <p>Minsden Chapel, which is both a Scheduled Monument (NHLE Ref: 1003543) and a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE Ref: 1347462), dates from the 14th century and, given the mention of a priest serving Minsden in the Domesday Book, may have replaced an earlier church. Regular Divine Service appears to have ceased by the mid-17th century, but the chapel still played a significant role in the community in the early 18th century, by providing a place of worship for a large congregation of non-Conformists. The last known service was a wedding between Enoch West and Mary Horn on July 11th 1738 when a piece of masonry fell onto the service book being held by the curate. The building was systematically looted with the font and bells amongst the first losses. Tracery, stained glass windows and building materials were sold at auction or on the market in Hitchin in the 19th century. The chancel arch collapsed in 2008, and general decay and vandalism have left the remaining walls extremely vulnerable.</p> <p>The Watching Brief allowed the thickness of the walls to be determined the brickwork in the bellcote to be dated to c.1600, and various episodes of modern repair to be identified. No evidence for an internal floor was found in the chancel, but the rendered stone revealed in the test pit excavated immediately south of the south chancel wall, could suggest that the original external ground level was c.0.40m lower at this point than it is now.</p> <p>The western side of the door opening in the north nave wall was exposed during the remedial works, the base of which was also brick-built. This is quite possibly an indication that the wall was breached in the post-medieval period to install a new door.</p>		
<b>Previous work</b>	Yes	<b>Site status</b>	SM (NHLE 1003543) Grade II listed (NHLE 1347462)
<b>Planning proposal</b>	Consolidation of ruins and tree management	<b>Current land use</b>	Derelict chapel
<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	North Herts	<b>Planning application ref.</b>	N/A
<b>Monument type</b>	Chapel	<b>Monument period</b>	Medieval
<b>Significant finds</b>	N/A	<b>Future work</b>	No
PROJECT CREATORS			
<b>Organisation</b>	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
<b>Project Brief originator</b>	Historic England	<b>Project Design originator</b>	KDK Archaeology Ltd
<b>Project Manager</b>	Karin Kaye MA MCifA	<b>Director/Supervisor</b>	Karin Kaye MA MCifA
<b>Sponsor/funding body</b>	Hugh Neave / Natural England		
PROJECT DATE			
<b>Start date</b>	27.04.2022	<b>End date</b>	10.10.2022
PROJECT ARCHIVES			





	Location	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	North Herts Museum	N/A	
Paper		WSI, Report	
Digital		WSI, Report, photos, fieldwork notes	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Historic Building Watching Brief: Minsden Chapel, Whitwell Road, Langley, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume	KDK Archaeology 664/2.3		
Author(s)	Karin Kaye MA MCIfA & Derek Watson PhD		
Page nos	83	Date	05.12.2022



### Appendix 3: Hertfordshire HER Summary Sheet

Site name and address: Minsden Chapel, Whitwell Road, Langley, Hertfordshire				
County:	Hertfordshire	District:	North Herts	
Village/Town:	Langley	Parish:	Langley	
Planning application reference:	N/A			
Client's name, address, & tel. no:	H. Neave c/o Promar International Alpha Buildings/London Rd, Nantwich CW5 7JW			
Nature of application:	Consolidation & woodland management			
Present land use:	Derelict chapel			
Size of application area:	168sq m	Size of area investigated:	168sq m	
NGR (to 8 figures):	TL 19820 24580	Site code:	664/MMC	
Site director:	Karin Kaye MA MCIfA	Organization:	KDK Archaeology Ltd	
Type of work:	Historic Building Watching Brief			
Date of work:	Start: 27.04.2022	Finish:	10.10.2022	
Curating museum:	North Herts Museum			
Related HER nos:	HER 37	Periods represented:	Medieval & Post medieval	
Relevant previous summaries/reports: Kaye, K. 2021 <i>Historic Building Recording: Minsden Chapel, Whitwell Road, Langley, Hertfordshire</i> . KDK Archaeology Ltd, 596/MMC/2.1				
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>Between July and October 2022 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out Historic Building Watching Brief of Minsden Chapel, Langley, Hertfordshire in order to fulfil a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent for the consolidation of the ruins. The Watching Brief has followed on from Historic Building Recording (Kaye 2021), the summary for which is as follows:</p> <p>Minsden Chapel, which is both a Scheduled Monument (NHLE Ref: 1003543) and a Grade II Listed Building (NHLE Ref: 1347462), dates from the 14th century and, given the mention of a priest serving Minsden in the Domesday Book, may have replaced an earlier church. Regular Divine Service appears to have ceased by the mid-17th century, but the chapel still played a significant role in the community in the early 18th century, by providing a place of worship for a large congregation of non-Conformists. The last known service was a wedding between Enoch West and Mary Horn on July 11th 1738 when a piece of masonry fell onto the service book being held by the curate. The building was systematically looted with the font and bells amongst the first losses. Tracery, stained glass windows and building materials were sold at auction or on the market in Hitchin in the 19th century. The chancel arch collapsed in 2008, and general decay and vandalism have left the remaining walls extremely vulnerable.</p> <p>The Watching Brief allowed the thickness of the walls to be determined the brickwork in the bellcote to be dated to c.1600, and various episodes of modern repair to be identified. No evidence for an internal floor was found in the chancel, but the rendered stone revealed in the test pit excavated immediately south of the south chancel wall, could suggest that the original external ground level was c.0.40m lower at this point than it is now.</p> <p>The western side of the door opening in the north nave wall was exposed during the remedial works, the base of which was also brick-built. This is quite possibly an indication that the wall was breached in the post-medieval period to install a new door.</p>				
Author:	Karin Kaye MA MCIfA & Derek Watson PhD		Date:	05.12.2022