



**A Programme of Archaeological
Observation, Investigation and Recording at
St Margaret's Church, Ward End
Birmingham
May 2013 – July 2014**

Report No. 14/175

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NGR: SP 113 886

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**A Programme of Archaeological Observation,
Investigation and Recording on land at
St Margarets Church, Ward End
Birmingham
May 2013 – July 2014**

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Quality control and sign off:

Issue No.	Date approved:	Checked by:	Verified by:	Approved by:	Reason for Issue:
1		Pat Chapman	Anthony Maul	Andy Chapman	Draft review

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BIRMINGHAM, ST MARGARET'S CHURCH

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS: molanort1-190149	
Project name	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording at St Margaret's Church, Ward End, Birmingham, West Midlands		
Short description	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology), on behalf of St Margaret's PPC, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) between May 2013 and July 2014 during the excavation of exploratory test pits and groundworks associated with the installation of new services at St Margaret's Church, Ward End, Birmingham, West Midlands A disturbed stratigraphy was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological features or artefacts were present.		
Project type	A Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording		
Site status	None		
Previous work	None		
Current Land use	Ecclesiastical		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type/ period			
Significant finds			
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	West Midlands		
Site address	St Margaret's Church, Ward End, Birmingham		
Study area (sq metres)	600m		
OS Easting & Northing	SP 113 886		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology)		
Project brief originator	Diocese of Birmingham Diocesan Advisory Committee		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	David J Leigh		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull with David J Leigh		
Sponsor or funding body	St Margaret's PCC (HLF funding)		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	May 2013		
End date	July 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical			
Paper	Birmingham Museums	Watching brief forms (11) Photographic record sheets (3) Black and white photographs (19) Digital photographs (102)	
Digital		Report text and figures	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording at St Margaret's Church, Ward End, Birmingham, West Midlands		
Serial title & volume	MOLA Northampton report 14/175		
Author	David J Leigh		
Date	October 2014		

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**A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL
OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING
ON LAND AT ST MARGARET'S CHURCH
WARD END
BIRMINGHAM, WEST MIDLANDS
MAY 2013 - JULY 2014**

Abstract

A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology), on behalf of St Margaret's PPC, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, between May 2013 and July 2014 during groundworks for the excavation of exploratory test pits and groundworks associated with the installation of new services at St Margaret's Church, Ward End, Birmingham, West Midlands. A disturbed stratigraphy was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological features or artefacts were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology) between May 2013 and July 2014 during the excavation of exploratory test pits and the installation of new services at St Margaret's Church, Ward End, Birmingham, West Midlands (NGR SP 113 886; Figs 1, 2 and 3). The work was undertaken on behalf of St Margaret's PPC, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and was carried out following a request for a programme of archaeological observation, investigation as required by the Diocesan Advisory Committee Advisor as set out in a brief for archaeological work dated 7th January 2011 (DAC 2011).

It adhered to the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by MOLA (Leigh 2013) and the procedural document MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (EH 2006) along with the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

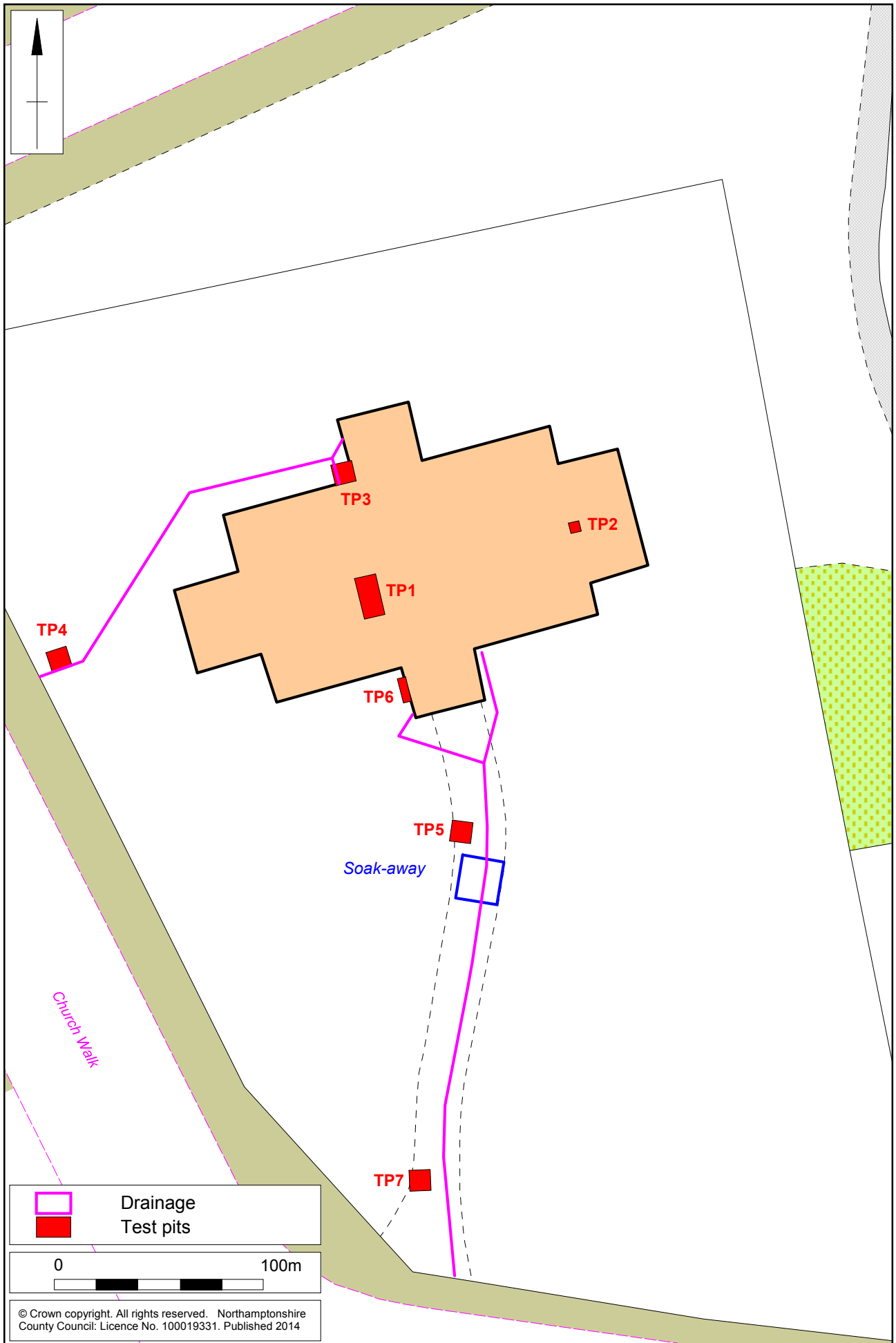
The Church of St Margaret lies within a predominantly residential area on the north-western side of Birmingham approximately 4km from the city centre

It lies on relatively level ground within the Birmingham conurbation. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising Sand and Gravels (BGS Geindex <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geindex>).



Scale 1:2500

Site Location Fig 1



Scale 1:2500

The area of archaeological observation showing drainage and test pits

Fig 2

2.2 Historical background

The present church dates from 1834, although there has been a chapel on the site from around 1517AD, the previous church recorded as having fallen into a ruinous state in 1730 and with further deterioration in the early 19th century. Elements of the earlier church may have survived in the fabric of the west tower of the present church.

No previous archaeological work is recorded as having been carried out within the grounds of the church.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the archaeological investigation were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks for the exploratory test pits and groundworks for the installation of new services and to record all archaeological deposits uncovered;
- ◆ Determine the date, character, state of preservation and depth of any archaeological deposits observed and to retrieve all datable artefacts;
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

A photographic record in both black and white negative and digital format was kept. The written record used MOLA pro-forma sheets, (MOLA 2014). The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).

The fieldwork was undertaken between May 2013 and July 2014 during the excavation of test pits and groundworks for the installation of new services. The groundworks were carried out using a mini 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a combination of toothed and toothless buckets and supplemented by hand excavation.



St Margaret's Church, looking north Fig 3

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

4.1 The test pits

A total of seven test pits were excavated within the church and churchyard (Fig 2). These were hand excavated to a maximum depth of 1m below present ground level and were positioned in order to investigate ground conditions in advance of the excavation of new service trenches.

Test pit 1:

Test pit 1 (Figs 2, 4 and 5) measured 2m x 1m and was located within the church to determine the depth at which the crown of the underlying crypt vault lay beneath the exiting floor. On lifting the present timber floorboards a void was revealed with the crown of the vault lying 0.51m below. No pre-modern archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

Test pit 2:

This pit measured 0.50m x 0.50m and was located within the church (Fig 2). The timber floorboards were lifted to reveal a void, 0.13m below which lay a stone slab, 0.07m thick, below which was another void 0.46m below which lay the brickwork of the vault. No pre-modern archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

Test pit 3:

Outside of, and adjacent to the north porch, test pit 3 measured 1m x 0.60m (Fig 2). The stratigraphic sequence comprised dark grey-black sandy loam extending for the full depth of the pit, containing numerous small fragments of off white hard mortar and small fragments of modern ceramic building material. No archaeological deposits were present.

Test pit 4:

This measured 1m x 1m and was positioned at the entrance to the western gate of the churchyard. The stratigraphic sequence comprised medium grey-brown sandy loam, containing numerous small fragments of modern ceramic building material. This extended for the full depth of the test pit. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

Test Pit 5:

Located on the main footpath into the churchyard test-pit 5 (Figs 2, 6 and 7) measured 1m by 1m deep. A mixed stratigraphy comprising grey-white sand and gravel with occasional small fragments of limestone. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

Test Pit 6:

This was located on the west side of the south porch and measured 0.4m by 1.2m deep. The natural substratum was encountered at a depth of 0.8m below present ground level and comprised grey-brown sand and gravel. This was overlain by dark grey-black sandy loam, containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and small fragments of hard grey mortar. Into this layer was cut the foundations of the south porch, which comprised a single course of brick, stepped out. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

Test Pit 7:

Located just inside the main entrance to the churchyard, test-pit 7 measured 1m by 1m deep. The natural substratum was encountered 0.40m below present ground level and comprised red-brown sand and gravel. This was overlain by grey-black coarse sandy loam containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and occasional small fragments of plastic sheeting. This in turn was sealed by stone paving slabs. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

4.2 The service trenches and soak-away

The service trenches (Figs 2, 8 and 9) were excavated using a combination of 360° mini excavator and hand tools and were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m below present ground level by 0.30m wide. A new soak-away was excavated at the front of the south porch, this measured approximately 0.90m by 1.20m, and was excavated to a maximum depth of approximately 1.90m (Figs 2 and 10).

A service trench was excavated from the south gate of the churchyard extending up to the east side of the south porch. This was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m below present ground level. A disturbed stratigraphy was recorded for the full depth of the trench, comprising sandy loam, comprising grey-brown sandy loam, with pockets of orange-red sand and gravel. This was cut by a modern gas pipe and a lead water pipe (Fig *). no archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

The new soak-away was excavated on the line of the new service trench. The natural substratum was encountered at a depth of approximately 1.45m below present ground level, and comprised pale-grey-brown sand and gravels, this was overlain by mid brown sandy loam, up to 0.25m thick. This in turn was overlain by grey-brown sandy loam, containing occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

Additional service trenches were excavated on the east side and north side of the church (Fig 2). A consistent stratigraphy was noted throughout the trenches. This comprised grey-brown sandy loam containing numerous small fragments of modern ceramic building

material extending for the full depth of the service trenches. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.



General view of test pit 1 Fig 4



The void beneath the flag floor, test pit 1 Fig 5



Test pit 5, looking south Fig 6



Test pit 5 after excavation Fig 7



General view of the excavation of the service trenches, looking north Fig 8



The stratigraphic sequence in the service trench Fig 9



The new soak-away Fig 10

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	11
Photographic record sheets	3
Black and white photographs	19
Digital photographs	102

The project archive which will be consolidated and prepared for deposition with Birmingham Museums

6 CONCLUSIONS

A disturbed stratigraphy was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological features or artefacts were present.

The archaeological investigation was carried out in favourable circumstances and the results are considered to be reliable.

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