

ST MATTHEWS CHURCH,
MORLEY, DERBYSHIRE

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF**

Project No. 1968

12/2009

ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH, MORLEY

Erewash, Derbyshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH, MORLEY, DERBYSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief, 12/09

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY ii

1. INTRODUCTION..... 1

2. LOCATION AND GEOLOGY..... 1

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 1

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND..... 1

5. METHODOLOGY..... 2

6. RESULTS..... 2

7. FINDS..... 4

The Pottery by Emma Collins 4

Other finds by Emma Collins..... 5

8. CONCLUSIONS..... 5

9. ARCHIVE..... 6

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... 6

11. REFERENCES.....

List of Tables

Table 1: Contexts with sherd count and spot date

List of Figures

Figure 1: Route Location
Figure 2: Site Plan
Figure 3: Plans and Sections

List of Plates

Plate 1: North end of the site looking towards the southwest
Plate 2: Sandstone block demolition rubble to the north of **1026**
Plate 3: Excavation for the footpath to the south of the church
Plate 4: surface **1016** looking north
Plate 5: Feature **1026** looking north
Plate 6: Surface **1025** looking south

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Brief (Removed)
Appendix 2: WSI (Removed)
Appendix 3: Finds Summary

ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH, MORLEY

Archaeological Watching Brief, 12/2009

SUMMARY

Birmingham Archaeology was commissioned in 2009 by St. Matthew's Parochial Council, to undertake an archaeological watching brief in respect of a proposed construction of store and WC with associated service installation and path resurfacing at St Matthew's Church, Morley, Derbyshire (centred on NGR SK3966 4096). The site comprises of the grounds of St. Matthew's church (Derbyshire HER 23426). The church building itself stands in the centre of the site with a 16-17th century tithe barn to the north of this (HER 23421). The graveyard surrounds these building with footpath access running approximately north to south through this on the western side of the church and barn. The south of the site is a landscaped grassed lawn, with a gravelled car park at the southwest corner of the site. The north and west of the site is bounded by church owned farmland and the remains of the medieval Morley Manor House (HER 23419). To the east of the site is the Morley Retreat and Conference house and the site is bounded to the south by Church Lane.

The watching brief was undertaken during contractor's ground-works in December 2009. The watching brief took place on a narrow service trench, 0.4m wide and 0.9m deep. The trench was aligned from the southern extent of the site, on the boundary with Church Lane, northwards, through the car park, and along the church footpath to the northern extent of the churchyard where the foundations for the new store and WC were cut. Associated with these were excavations for an arc sewer and necessary manholes, these were up to 1m wide and 1m deep. The existing footpath within the graveyard was removed and replaced.

The watching brief revealed a narrow window on the archaeological deposits present on this historical site and therefore only limited interpretation of deposits can be made. The earliest pottery recovered from the site dated to the 13th to 15th century, it was however impossible to establish whether or not this pottery was residual. As the church is older than this, it is unsurprising that evidence for medieval activity is present on the site. Three stone built structures, possibly remains of wall foundations, and a metalled surface were located towards the northern end of the site, to the northwest of the church and tithe barn and were left in situ. These were not directly datable, however the layers sealing these dated to the 17th to 18th century, suggesting a possible date of demolition. The remainder of the excavated deposits dated to the 17th to 18th centuries and seemed to consist of subsequent build-up layers, with composition varying from re-deposited natural, to burnt coal and ash rich layers, and demolition rubble rich layers. Over the majority of the site the full extent of these deposits was not revealed. No human burials were encountered in the course of this work.

ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH, MORLEY, DERBYSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief, 12/2009

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. Birmingham Archaeology was commissioned by St. Matthew's Parochial Council to undertake an archaeological watching during the development of a new store and WC, and associated service trenches and path resurfacing at St Matthew's Church, Morley, Derbyshire (hereinafter referred to as the site, Planning Application Number ERE/1108/0036).
- 1.1.2. This report outlines the results of the watching brief carried out during December 2009, and has been prepared in accordance the brief produced by Erewash Borough Council (Appendix 1), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (Appendix 2) which was approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to implementation, in accordance with guidelines laid down in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990). The project conformed to the Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (IFA 2001).

2. LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1.1. The site is located at St Matthew's Church, Church Lane, Morley, Derbyshire, north of Derby, and is centred on NGR SK3966 4096 (Fig 1).
- 2.1.2. The site consists of the grounds of St. Matthew's church (Derbyshire HER 23426), the church building itself stands in the centre of the site with a 16-17th century tithe barn to the north of this (HER 23421). The graveyard surrounds these buildings with footpath access running approximately north to south through this on the western side of the church and barn. The south of the site is a landscaped grassed lawn, with a gravelled car park at the southwest corner of the site. The north and west of the site is bounded by church owned farmland, which includes the remains of the medieval Morley Manor House (HER 23419) to the west of the site. To the east of the site is the Morley Retreat and Conference house and the site is bounded to the south by Church Lane. The church, tithe barn and graveyard stand on a relatively flat plateau towards the top of a hill that slopes steeply downwards to the south from the southern side of the church to the boundary with Church Lane.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1.1. As stated in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Birmingham Archaeology 2009, Appendix 2.)The principal aim of the watching brief was to determine the character, extent, dated, state of preservation and the potential significance of any buried remains and to ensure that a full programme of preservation by record is in place.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1.1. Although little is recorded of early settlement in the area of the site the route of the Roman road Ryknield Street passes the vicinity of Morley and it is possible that the earliest archaeological deposits date to this period (Kelly 1891).

- 4.1.2. The site is located within the grounds of St Matthews Church. This historic building, has structural elements dating from the Norman period with regular improvement and redevelopment throughout its history and in to the 19th century (Pevsner 1978, 283). Archaeological elements relating to the church and associated burials could very well be encountered in the course of the development. Evidence for settlement predating the known medieval date of the church would be of especial interest.
- 4.1.3. Immediately adjacent to the west of the site are the remains of the manor house, there is the possibility that archaeological deposits relating to this could be recovered from the site. A 16th to 17th century tithe barn is on the site, and the development requires excavation close to this. It is possible that remains relating to this, or other associated, non ecclesiastical activity could be present on the site.

5. METHODOLOGY

- 5.1.1. Ground works comprised of the excavation of service and foundation trenches with a mini-digger fitted with a toothless bucket. This was monitored by a suitably qualified archaeologist and complemented with the salvage recording of any archaeological deposits and features revealed during works.
- 5.1.2. All stratigraphic sequences were recorded, even where no archaeology was present. Features were planned, and sections were drawn of all cut features and significant vertical stratigraphy. A comprehensive written record was maintained using a continuous numbered context system on *pro-forma* cards. Written records and scale plans were supplemented by photographs using black and white monochrome, colour slide and digital photography.
- 5.1.3. Recovered finds were cleaned, marked and remedial conservation work undertaken as necessary. Treatment of all finds conformed to guidance contained within the Birmingham Archaeology Fieldwork Manual and *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 1998).
- 5.1.4. The full site archive includes all artefactual remains recovered from the site. The site archive (accession number 2009-226) will be prepared according to guidelines set down in Appendix 3 of the Management of Archaeology Projects (English Heritage, 1991), the Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (UKIC, 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological collections (Museum and Art Galleries Commission, 1992). The paper archive will be deposited with the Derby Museum and Art Gallery subject to permission from the landowner.

6. RESULTS

- 6.1.1. The results of this archaeological watching brief were limited in their scope, as any excavation carried out as part of the development was kept, as much as possible to a minimum. The service trench on which the watching brief took place is illustrated on Figure 1 and plate 1 while the areas of specific excavation are shown in detail on Figure 2.
- 6.1.2. The natural bedrock (**1008**) was encountered at the very southern end of the service trench 0.2m below the current ground surface (not illustrated). This consisted of pink sandstone and was evident for around 15m. The bedrock was overlain in this area by the natural sub-soil (**1006**), a compact red clay with sand and gravel inclusions (not illustrated). The natural subsoil was also exposed at the northern end of the site in

the footing for the new store and WC, 0.9m below the modern ground surface (not illustrated). Between these two points the natural subsoil was not encountered.

- 6.1.3. At the southern end of the service trench a layer (**1009**) containing 13th-15th century pottery was exposed for a length of 5m. Layer **1009** was sealed by a thin deposit of undated red brown clay silt and sand (**1010**). These layers may indicate the location of surviving medieval deposits or features.
- 6.1.4. Four stone features (**1016**, **1020**, **1026** and **1025**) were recorded along the length of the service trench, their locations are shown on Figure 1 and detailed on Figure 2.
- 6.1.5. Feature **1016** (plate 4) was located close to the north-western buttress of the church tower and consisted of rough-cut pink sandstone blocks on a east-west alignment. The feature was revealed for a length of 0.2m, 0.52m in width and had a height of 0.04m. A large sandstone block was pulled from the top of this during excavation, although this may have been part of a demolition layer overlying this feature. The feature was left *in situ*.
- 6.1.6. Ten metres to the north of **1016**, between the church and the tithe barn, the upper part of a cobbled, metalled surface **1020** was identified at the base of the trench for a length of 2m (although partially visible, the narrow trench at this location inhibited illustration and photography). This was 0.6m below the ground surface, and was left *in situ*. No finds were associated with this. The pre-existing water pipe was laid on this surface to the northern end, so excavation of the service trench became shallower at this point.
- 6.1.7. A further 5.5m to the north of surface **1020** was sandstone structure **1026** (plate 5). Structure **1026** was located 3.3m to the west of the southwest corner of the tithe barn where the service trench was widened to connect to a stop-cock on the existing water main. **1026** was constructed of rough-cut pink sandstone blocks and was revealed for an area 0.7m² and a height of 0.05m.
- 6.1.8. Towards the northern extent of site, within the excavation of a manhole, was located sandstone structure **1025** (plate 6). This was exposed in an area 1m², at a depth of 0.8m below the current ground surface. The structure was probably the remains of a wall aligned north to south and comprised of rough-cut sandstone blocks on the eastern side with a rubble core to the west. The full extent of this structure (width, length or height) was not revealed within the course of the excavation.
- 6.1.9. These features and the area of the site were sealed by a series of layers. Apart from a short stretch of service trench at the very southern end of the run, where the natural subsoil was located directly below the topsoil and turf, the remainder of the pipe trench cut through at least 0.6m depth of deposits. At the very northern extent of the excavation the depth of these layers totalled 0.9m. These layers were characterised by several layers of re-deposited natural (**1003**, **1010**, **1013**, and **1024** - not illustrated). Pottery dating to the 17th to 18th century was recovered from context **1024**. Several layers of silt and soil, rich in masonry and tile rubble (**1005**, **1012** and **1022** - not illustrated), were located in the vicinity of the stone structures described above. Plate 2 shows the large amount of masonry rubble contained in these features. Pottery was recovered from all of these layers and dated to the 17th to 18th century. Also of note was the large quantities of floor tile recovered from **1012**, these all came from around the western entrance to the church, and may have originally come from the church floor itself, possibly as a result of floor refurbishment. Interspersed with these layers were several deposits rich in burnt coal and charcoal (**1004**, **1014**, **1021**, and **1023** - not illustrated). Pottery was recovered from layers **1004**, which dated to the 17th century, **1014** and **1021**,

which dated to the 17th to 18th century. There were also several soil rich layers (**1002** and **1023** - not illustrated) with pottery dating to the late-17th to early-18th century recovered from **1002**.

- 6.1.10. Sealing these layers on varying parts of the site were obviously modern deposits (not illustrated), although no artefacts were recovered from these. Plate 3 shows the modern car park and path surface on the southern side of the church. These deposits included, **1018**, a well constructed modern access road, excavated to a depth of 0.6m, **1019** chipped stone car park surface, 0.2m deep, **1015** the gravel foot path surface through the graveyard 0.1m deep. A turf and topsoil (**1007**, 0.2m deep) was located at the southern extent of the site and a turf and clay rich topsoil was located within the graveyard (**1017**), while the turf and topsoil at the very northern extent of the site (**1000**, 0.1m deep), sealed a layer of sandy sub-soil (**1001**).

7. FINDS

THE POTTERY BY EMMA COLLINS

- 7.1.1. The pottery from St Matthews Church, Morley has been quantified by sherd count and weight; the minimum numbers of vessels (m.v), bases (m.b) and handles (m.h) were recorded. The pottery was examined macroscopically for the purposes of this report.
- 7.1.2. The assemblage consisted of 25 post medieval sherds and two medieval sherds with m.v 9, m.b 5 and m.h 3. The pottery weighed a total of 1407g. The post medieval sherds accounted for 1265g of the assemblage and the medieval sherds weighed 142g.

Discussion

- 7.1.3. This small assemblage dated from the 13th century through to the 18th century. The sherd count and spot date of each context are listed in Table 1 below.

Context	Count	Spot date
1002	6	L 17th C - E 18th C
1004	9	17thC
1005	1	17thC - 18thC
<u>1009</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>13thC - 15thC</u>
1012	1	17thC - 18thC
1014	4	1720-1770
1021	1	17thC - 18thC
1022	1	17thC - 18thC
<u>1024</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>17thC - 18thC</u>

Table 1: Contexts with sherd count and spot date

- 7.1.4. As Table 1 shows, the majority of contexts dated to the 17th - 18th centuries. The exception is **1009** which contained 13th - 15th century sherds. Given the dating of the other contexts present, it is likely that these sherds were residual.
- 7.1.5. Although the sherds individually yielded some interesting information, the nature of the watching brief limited the sherds' usefulness in terms of understanding the nature of the site as a whole.

- 7.1.6. A single waster sherd was present from **1002**. This sherd was so warped and over-fired it was not possible to be definite of the ware type, although it was very similar to Coarseware. Several sherds showed signs of wear both on the base (**1009, 1012, 1021**) and on the handle exterior (**1005, 1021**) suggesting they were well used before discarding. Several of the floor tiles found also show tremendous wear.
- 7.1.7. Three sherds of salt glazed stoneware jam jars (**1014**) were present, one had its base stamped with 'P.HARTLEY LIVERP'(ool). The most elaborate ware found (**1004**) were two joining sherds of slip decorated ware 'Posset Pot' (handled bowl) with trailed and jeweled decoration very similar to slipware vessels in the collection of the Potteries Museum, Stoke-on-Trent (Barker and Crompton 2008, 50-52).
- 7.1.8. The limited scope of the watching brief means it is not possible to interpret the assemblage with reference to the site. Any further larger excavation could help to expand the picture shown by this small watching brief, and may aid interpretation of the pottery in its context.

OTHER FINDS BY EMMA COLLINS

- 7.1.9. The finds were quantified by count and weight. The majority of the assemblage consisted of tiles, along with one piece of glass and one piece of crucible.
- 7.1.10. Nineteen fragments of tile weighing 3272g were recovered from contexts **1004** and **1012**. Fifteen of these fragments were floor tiles with no decoration left on the surface due to wear, although drips of glaze remained down the sides and on the base. One tile (**1012**), which seemed to be harder fired than the others, had decoration still remaining. The decoration consisted of an arc with a small *fleur-de-lys* above but the glaze had still been worn away from the surface.
- 7.1.11. A small piece of vessel glass base, weighing 7g, was recovered from **1012**. This fragment was clear blue and conical in shape.
- 7.1.12. The base of a crucible weighing 2.4kg was recovered from **1007**. Large quantities of iron slag were noted adhering to the interior and exterior of the vessel.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1.1. The earliest artefactual evidence dates from the 13th to the 15th century suggesting activity of this date is present on or near the site. As the church pre-dates the 13th century, and there has been little significant alteration of the church grounds, it is not surprising that archaeology dating to the medieval period would survive at the site.
- 8.1.2. Several structural features were encountered and although they in themselves were not dated, they clearly pre-date the 17th to 18th century deposits which overlie them. As these were rich in demolition rubble, it is possible that the structures were demolished around this time. These structures could very well relate to out buildings associated with the church or the manor house.
- 8.1.3. The artefact assemblage is dominated by 17th to 18th century pottery, and these all seem to be from build up layers which may lie over other earlier deposits, but the scope of watching brief could not confirm this. All of this evidence points to a period of quite intense construction, or landscaping activity at this period. A 'handsome early 18th century former rectory' (Pevsner 1978, 283) is located to the east of the

site, illustrating expanding ecclesiastical development beyond the church and it seems that much development occurred in the 17th to 18th century, with little evidence for later development, beyond the laying of modern surfaces on the site.

9. ARCHIVE

- 9.1.1. The Archive is currently held by Birmingham Archaeology and consists of all the paper records, photograph, drawings and finds associated with the project. It is proposed the archive (accession number 2009-226) will be deposited at Derby Museum and Art Gallery by July 2010.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was commissioned by St. Matthew's Parochial Council. Thanks are due to Sheila Randall, Church Warden for her co-operation and assistance throughout the project. Thanks are also due to Sue Clarke of Anthony Short and Partners LLP and all the staff at Alan Brown Surfacing Ltd. Thanks also goes to Steve Baker (Development Control Archaeologist), who monitored the project on behalf of Erewash Borough Council. The assessment was undertaken by Mary Duncan, who produced the written report which was illustrated by Nigel Dodds, and edited by Sam Paul who, with Kevin Colls, monitored the project for Birmingham Archaeology.

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Appendix 3 Find Summary by Emma Collins

ctxt	Ware	Qty	wght	mv	mb	mh	dia	%	Form	glaze	dec	Comment
1002	BW	1	13	1					cup			
1002	CW	1	170							i		
1002	CW	1	116	1					large bowl	ite		
1002	CW	1	55	1					Jar	ite		
1002	YW	1	23			1				ite		Reduced YW. green coloured
1002	waster	1	144									v warped/overfired. pos CW?
1004	BW	1	23							ite		
1004	BW	1	8							ite		
1004	BW	1	13									
1004	BW	1	8									
1004	CW	1	80									
1004	SlipDec	2	56		1				Lrg cup/posset pot	ite	drk on lgt trailed & jewelled	
1004	SlipDec	1	35	1					Platter	i	lgt on drk trailed	
1004	YW	1	14	1			12	12.5	large cup/bowl?	ite	ridge	
1005	BW	1	7			1			Cup?	Covered		slight wear to handle e
1009	GrittyW	1	7							i spts		light brown/yellow glaze remaining on interior in spts
1009	GrittyW	1	135		1				Jug	e spts		Reduced apart from exterior base which is light orange. Lots of wear in base, sherd abraded with occasional spots of green glaze remaining.
1012	CW	1	74		1					i		wear on base e
1014	CW	1	63									
1014	GSG	1	36	1					Jam jar	ite	lines	
1014	WSG	1	75		1				Jam jar	ite	lines	base 'P.HARTLEY LIVERP(OOL)
1014	WSG	1	42	1					Jam jar	ite	lines	
1021	BW	1	10			1			Cup?	covered		lots of wear e
1022	CW	1	82	1			32	9.7	Pancheon	i		large bowl/pancheon
1024	CW	1	80		1					i		wear on base
1024	CW	1	38	1					Jar	i		milky' stain on glaze round rim

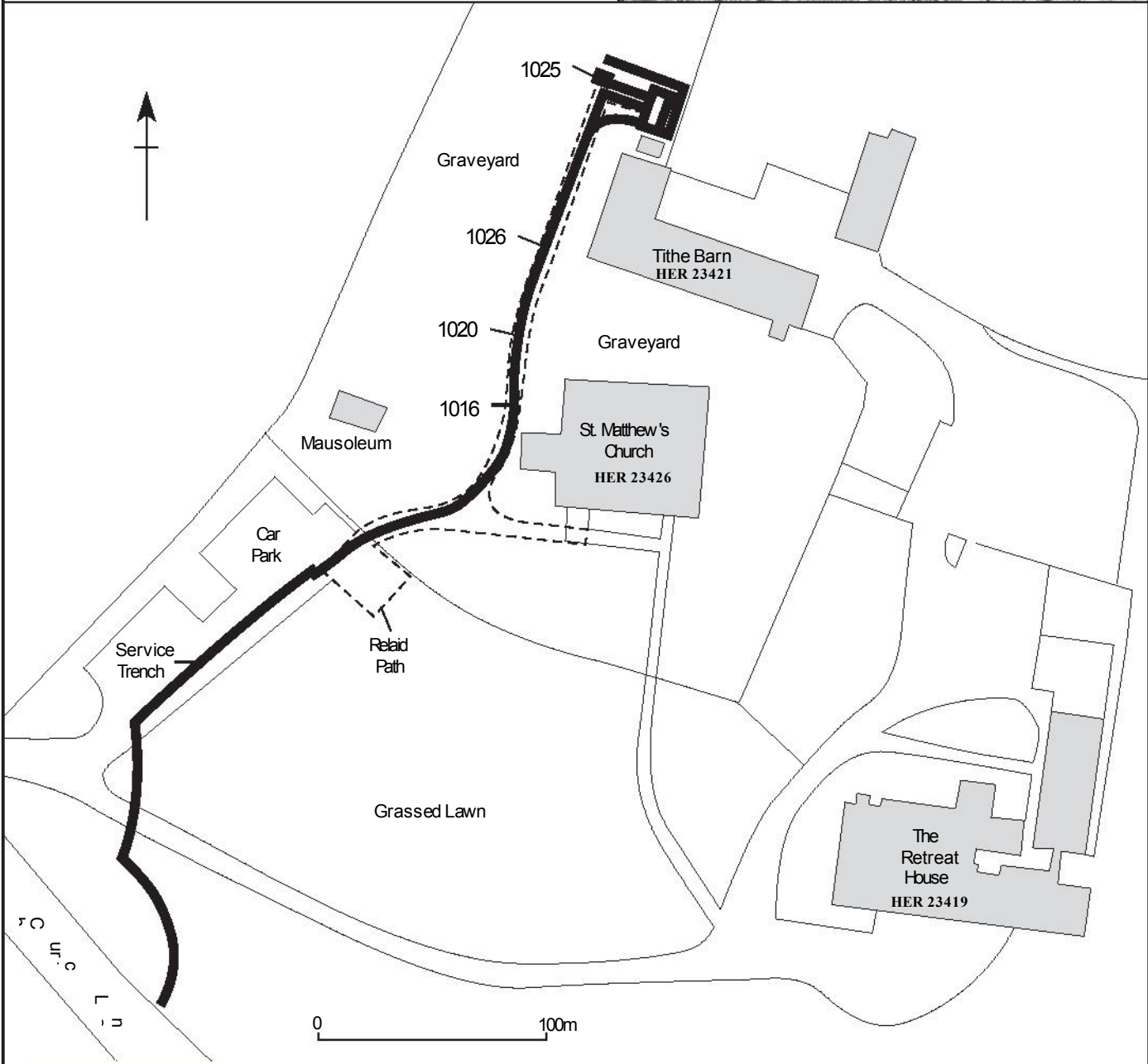
Table 2: Pottery catalogue

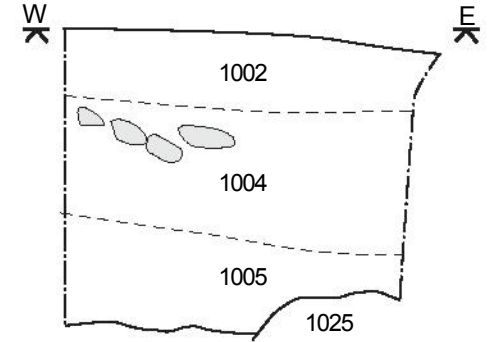
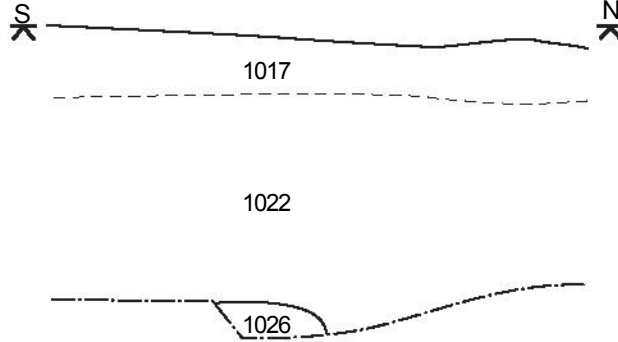
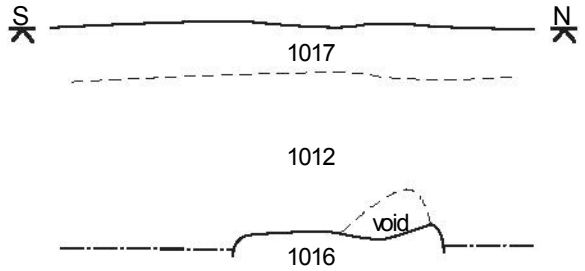
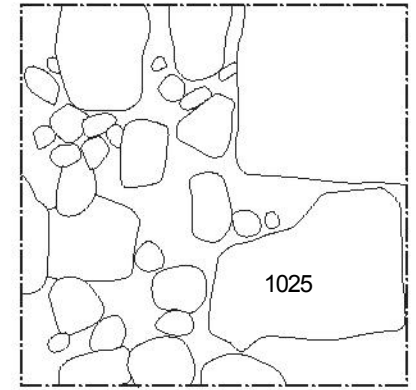
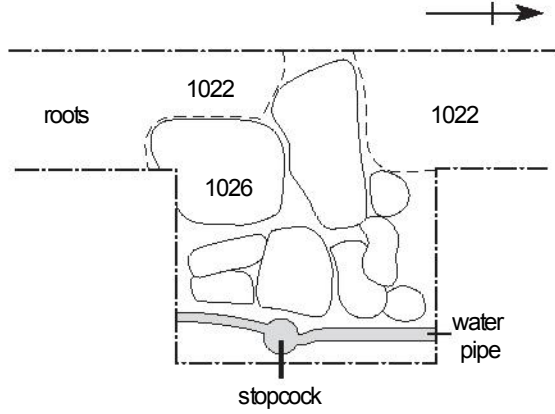
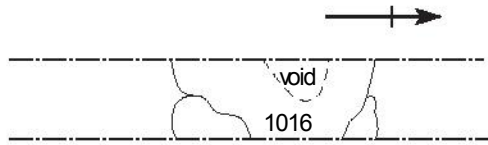
Context	GrittyW	Yellowware	Blackware	Coarseware	Slip-decorated ware	White salt-glazed stoneware	Grey salt-glazed stoneware	Waster	Earliest	Latest
1002		1	1	3				1	L 17th C - E 18th C	
1004		1	4	1	3				17thC	17thC - 18thC
1005			1						17thC - 18thC	
1009	2								13thC - 15thC	
1012				1					17thC - 18thC	
1014				1		2	1		17thC - 18thC	1720-1770
1021			1						17thC - 18thC	
1022				1					17thC - 18thC	
1024				2					17thC - 18thC	
Total	2	2	7	9	3	2	1	1		

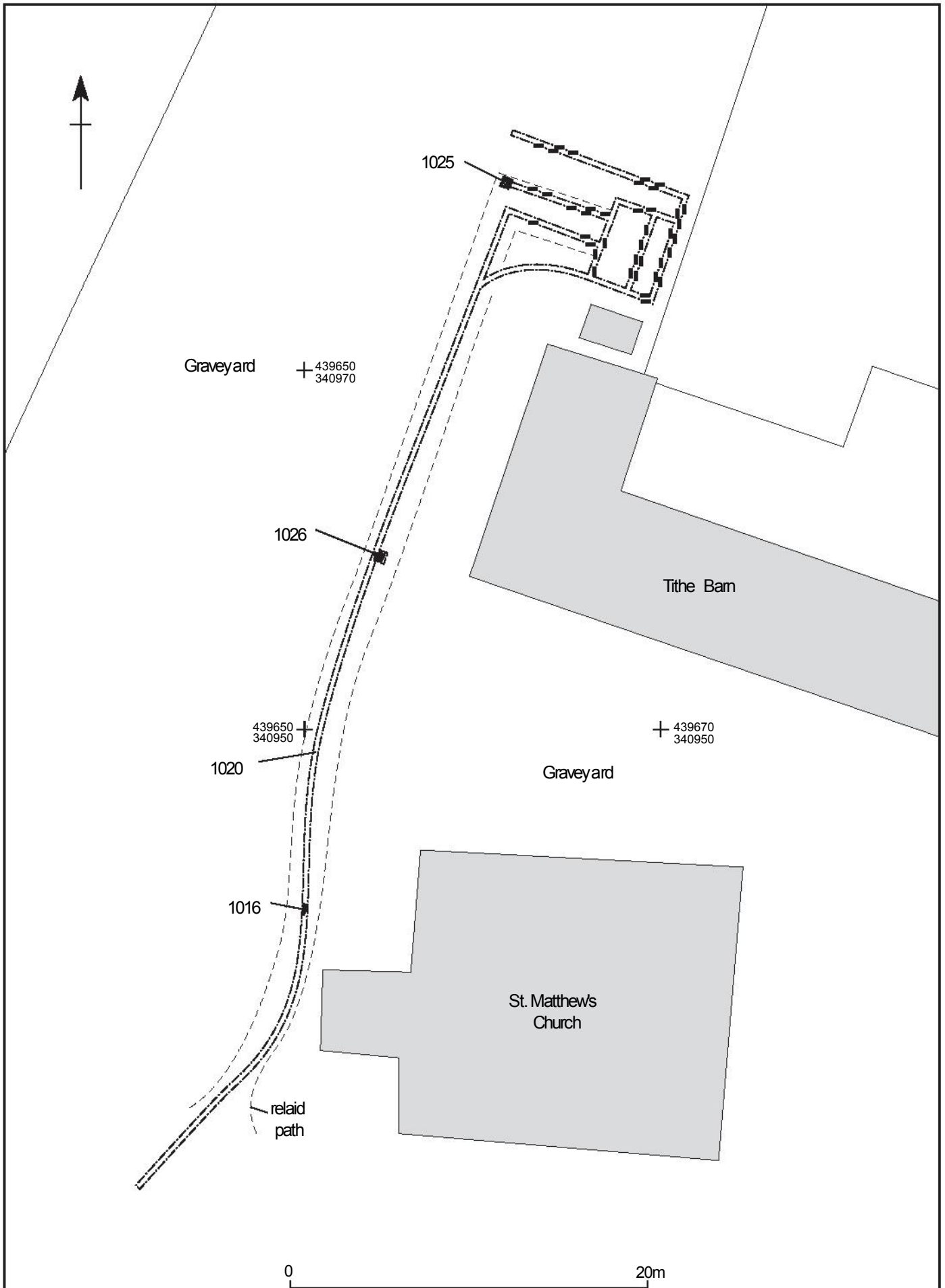
Table 3: Types and date ranges

Context	Tile		Glass		Crucible	
	Qty	Wght	Qty	Wght	Qty	Wght
1004	2	1010				
1007					1	>2kg
1012	17	2262	1	7		
Totals	19	3272	1	7	1	>2kg

Table 4: Other finds catalogue









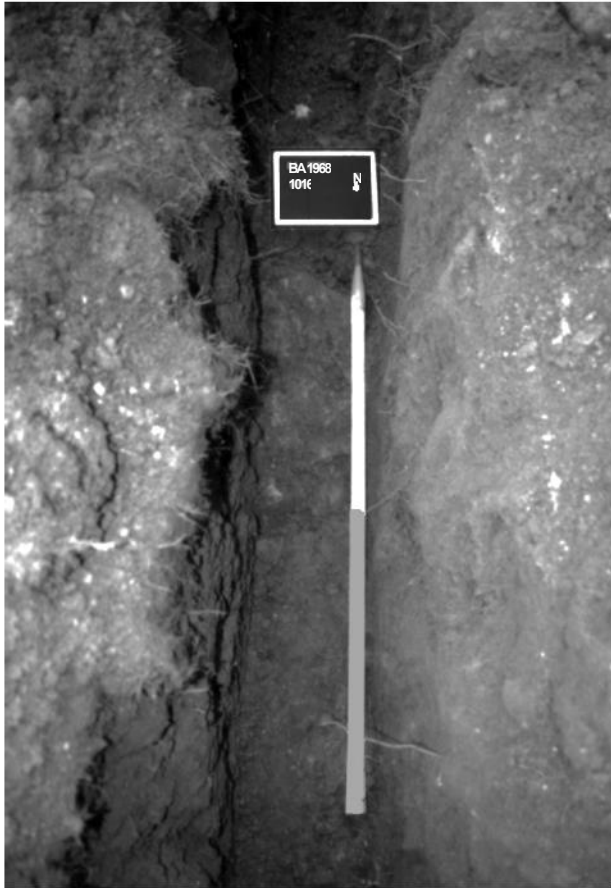
North end of site looking towards the southwest



Sandstone block demolition rubble to the north of 1026



Excavation for the footpath to the south of the church



Surface 1016 looking north



Feature 1026 looking north



Surface of 1025 looking south