

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION UNDERTAKEN IN
ADVANCE OF BUILDING WORK AT THE CHURCH OF
ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL, CHURCH LANE,
HELLINGLY, EAST SUSSEX.**

N. G. R. TQ 58065 12330

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CONTENTS.

List of illustrations.

Abstract.

1.0. INTRODUCTION.

2.0. TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

3.0. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

4.0. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.

5.0. INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY.

6.0. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH.

7.0. RESULTS OF FIELDWORK.

8.0. SUMMARY.

9.0. PROJECT ARCHIVE.

10.0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

11.0. REFERENCES.

Historical Environment Record Summary Sheet.

Illustrations.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

- Figure 1.** Site location plan
- Figure 2.** Works location plan
- Figure 3.** Surveyor's draft of Hellingly c.1805
- Figure 4.** Tithe map for the parish of Hellingly (E.S.R.O. ref: TD/E5) 1840
- Figure 5.** 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1875
- Figure 6.** 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1899
- Figure 7.** 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1910
- Figure 8.** 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56SW) 1911
- Figure 9.** 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1932
- Figure 10.** Trench plan
- Figure 11.** Sections

ABSTRACT.

An archaeological excavation was undertaken in advance of building work at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Church Lane, Hellingly, East Sussex. This project comprised the manual clearance of a c.0.60m. – wide strip of land located immediately behind a c.31.3m. - long stretch of retaining cemetery wall earmarked for replacement.

No obvious grave cuts, buried funerary monuments or in-situ human remains were discovered during the fieldwork. Furthermore, only a small number of disarticulated / fragmentary human bones were recovered from the removed graveyard soil. Nevertheless, nine cut features were revealed within the excavated trench. One of these held the brick foundations of the wall due for demolition, while two others are interpreted as tree holes. The precise size, form and ‘function’ of the remaining six features were not ascertained. However, these cuts are not considered to be of any great archaeological significance.

Six of the features found during the excavation were clearly impacted by and thus certainly earlier in origin than the soon to be replaced wall. One of the investigated cuts also yielded a modest assemblage of finds assigned to the period c.1775 – 1810 / 20.

Although the precise construction date of the wall demolished in 2009 has not been determined, the documentary and artefactual evidence suggests that the structure was built sometime after the year 1820.

The earliest artefacts recovered from the project are two flint cores of possible Mesolithic origin. These discoveries can be added to a single Mesolithic flint blade core found at the church in 2007 and are almost certainly indicative of the region’s transitory exploitation by roaming bands of hunter – gatherers during the period c.6000 – 4300 BC. However, the investigation failed to uncover any archaeological evidence for the postulated pre – Christian origin of the church.

1.0. INTRODUCTION.

- 1.1. This document presents the results of an archaeological excavation undertaken in advance of building work at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Church Lane, Hellingly, East Sussex (N. G. R. TQ 58065 12330) (Figure 1).
- 1.2. Wealden District Council received planning approval (Wealden District Council Application Number: WD/2008/3051/F) and Conservation Area Consent (Wealden District Council Application Number: WD/2008/3052/CAC) to demolish and replace the c.31.3m. – long stretch of retaining church cemetery wall highlighted in red on Figure 2. A Faculty authorising the intended works was also issued by the Consistory Court of the Diocese of Chichester (Ref: AD146/06).
- 1.3. However, in 2007 an initial phase of cemetery wall replacement at the church (wall highlighted in green on Figure 2) exposed at least seven unmarked but still *in-situ* human burials at a depth below the original ground surface of between c.0.65m. and 1.40m. (Greatorex 2007) (see Section 3.4. for further details). It was thus concluded that the proposed 2009 wall construction could expose further *in-situ* funerary remains, as well as other archaeologically significant deposits, cut features, structures and artefacts.
- 1.4. Given the potential archaeological impact of the intended building work, Greg Chuter the East Sussex County Council Assistant Archaeologist requested that the following condition was placed upon the planning approval.

'No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, including a timetable for the investigation, which has been submitted by the

applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority and the works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.'

- 1.5. In response to the planning condition outlined above, C. G. Archaeology was commissioned by Mr. Christopher Bottomley on behalf of Wealden District Council to carry – out a total archaeological excavation of that part of the cemetery due to be impacted upon by groundworks associated with the intended new wall construction. In practice, this project comprised the manual ‘clearance’ of a c.0.60m. – wide strip of land located immediately behind the length of wall earmarked for replacement (figures 2 and 10). The archaeological investigation and recording was undertaken in advance of any wall demolition / construction at the church (see Section 5.2. for details).
- 1.6. The methodology employed during the archaeological project (see Section 5.0. for details) was based upon a targeted Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Christopher Greatorex of C. G. Archaeology and agreed with Casper Johnson the East Sussex County Council Archaeologist and Vivienne Coad the Archaeological Advisor to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches (Greatorex 2009).
- 1.7. The archaeological fieldwork was carried – out by Christopher Greatorex, Annalie Seaman and Jo Seaman of C. G. Archaeology from the 24th August 2009 to the 14th September 2009. On - site assistance was also provided by the project’s main building contractors Watts Contractors (Sussex) Ltd. The collation of historic cartographic and documentary evidence (see Section 6.2.) was undertaken by David Dunkin on the 4th September 2009 and Pam Combes on the 10th and 16th September 2009.
- 1.8. All aspects of the archaeological project described within this document were funded by Wealden District Council.

2.0. TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

- 2.1. The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul today lies at the approximate centre of a c.85m. – diameter, sub-circular – shaped raised graveyard ‘bonded on three sides by a brick retaining wall and on the fourth, the north where the levels equalise, by a cluster of tile-hung period cottages’ (Syms 1994, 154).
- 2.2. The 1: 50,000 British Geological Survey (Sheet 319: Lewes) records the ‘natural’ geology at the site as Tunbridge Wells Sand (see Table 1 for further details).

3.0. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.

- 3.1. The following information regarding the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul has been extracted from “The buildings of England: Sussex” by Ian Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner. ‘The W tower must be Georgian. This appears from the Y-tracery of the bell-openings, the intersecting tracery of the W window, the mouldings and even the tooling. But the most remarkable part of the church is the chancel. Externally one sees just lancets, but inside the N windows are shafted, the shafts have a typically Latest Norman bobbin-ring, the capitals have crockets and foliage characteristic of the ending C12. Also, on both N and S sides, a fine palmette frieze runs along at their sill level. To this chancel belongs in its style the E respond of the N aisle with a main demi-column and pairs of subsidiary shafts with Late Norman capitals and even keeling. All this then is Late C12, but what does the respond represent? The answer is probably the NW carrying pier of a crossing to which belongs the N transept, now late C13. Of that date the N window with intersecting tracery and the shafting inside the E wall, provided this can be trusted. The capitals here are stiff-leaf. The four-bay arcades have octagonal piers and arches with one chamfer and one hollow chamfer – C14, it seems’ (Nairn and Pevsner 2001, 531-2).
- 3.2. Many local guidebooks (eg. Coppin 2001, 74; Syms 1994, 154; Whiteman, K. and J. 1998, 82) and indeed the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record (see Section 6.1.5.) suggest that the sub-circular – shaped mound now occupied by Hellingly church and cemetery may be of pre - Christian origin. However, it should be noted that no *in-situ* archaeological evidence for Saxon or earlier activity at the site has as yet been discovered. The church is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086.
- 3.3. In 1999 an archaeological watching brief was maintained on groundworks necessitated by the construction of a small extension to the north-west corner

of the church, adjacent the tower and north aisle. As a result of this investigation a wall foundation and floor surface / base of possible 12th century date were recorded within the area of development. However, the footprint of the new building, its associated drainage trenches and manhole / sump proved devoid of any *in-situ* skeletal remains (Sibun 1999).

- 3.4. In 2007 a programme of archaeological excavation and recording was undertaken during an initial phase of cemetery wall replacement at the church (wall highlighted in green on Figure 2) (Greatorex 2007). These works exposed at least seven unmarked but still *in-situ* human inhumations at a depth below the original ground level of between c.0.65m. and 1.40m. Two of these burials were located within the footprint of the proposed new wall and thus required full excavation. The precise date of interment, age at death, sex and pathology of the exposed human remains was not ascertained. However, the possible discovery of conjoined twins is of note. The artefacts gleaned from the removed topsoil and upper graveyard soil comprised a single Mesolithic flint blade core, 10 clay tobacco pipe stems of Post-medieval date and 16 sherds of 19th / 20th century china. However, no evidence was collated for the postulated pre - Christian origin of the church (see sections 3.2. and 6.1.5.). It should be noted that the *in-situ* inhumations discovered during this project were found either on top of, or within just the upper few centimetres of an extremely solid 'natural' deposit of iron - rich material located at a depth below the original ground surface of between c.0.65m. and 1.3m. All recovered human skeletal remains were re-interred within the cemetery.

4.0. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.

4.1. The approved Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological excavation (see Section 1.6.) defined the primary objectives of the project as follows.

- Confirm the geological formation of the excavation site.
- Establish the presence or absence of funerary remains and other cut features, structural remains, deposits, artefacts and ecofacts of archaeological significance within the area of excavation.
- Ensure that all funerary remains and other cut features, structural remains, deposits, artefacts and ecofacts discovered during the excavation are investigated, sampled and recorded to an acceptable standard.
- Ensure that all *in-situ* human remains discovered within the area of excavation are exposed, cleaned, recorded and lifted in accordance with defined professional standards.
- Determine the extent, character, condition and date of any other revealed archaeologically significant cut features, structural remains and deposits.
- Ensure that all significant discoveries of artefactual and / or ecofactual evidence made during the excavation are recorded and analysed to an acceptable standard.
- Establish the palaeoenvironmental potential of located archaeologically significant deposits and cut features.

- Assess the impact of modern activity on any located funerary remains and other cut features, structural remains and deposits of archaeological significance discovered during the excavation.
- Provide information on which to base future decisions concerning the treatment of any archaeologically significant cut features, structural remains and deposits found within the area of excavation.

5.0. INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY.

5.1. Background research.

- 5.1.1. An inspection was made of the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record (HER) (see Section 6.1.). This study was supplemented by an examination of historic cartographic and documentary sources held at the East Sussex Record Office, Lewes and West Sussex Record Office, Chichester (see Section 6.2.). Relevant published papers were also consulted.

5.2. Fieldwork.

- 5.2.1. Horizontal spits of topsoil **(1)** and graveyard soil **(2, 3)** were carefully removed from a c.31.3m. - long and c.0.60m. – wide strip of cemetery land located behind the wall earmarked for replacement (i.e. along that part of the graveyard to be impacted upon by the later construction work). This manual excavation was carried – out by C. G. Archaeology until a clean surface of ‘natural’ geology **(4, 5, 6)** or the top of the nine cut features described in sections 7.2. and 7.3. **(18, 21, 23, 25, 27, 30, 32, 36, 38)** had been exposed clearly.
- 5.2.2. Each archaeological context identified during the excavation was investigated manually by C. G. Archaeology in order to assess its archaeological character / palaeoenvironmental potential and then documented on an individual pro-forma.
- 5.2.3. Eight of the cut features revealed during the fieldwork **(18, 23, 25, 27, 30, 32, 36, 38)** were subject to complete excavation (at least within the confines of the investigated trench). Cuts 23, 25, 27, 30, 32, 36 and 38 were drawn in section and levelled with respect to Ordnance Datum. An overall ‘trench’ plan was prepared at a scale of 1: 50 and again levelled to Ordnance Datum.

- 5.2.4. The modest assemblage of finds gleaned from the fieldwork is summarised in Table 1 and Section 7.3.6. and currently retained as part of the Project Archive (see Section 9.0.). It is intended that the small collection of disarticulated human and animal bone (not differentiated, quantified or subjected to specialist osteological examination) will ultimately be re-interred within the churchyard.
- 5.2.5. A full written and photographic record was made of a single standing headstone (Gravestone 4) that for 'health and safety' reasons required removal in advance of the archaeological work. On completion of the subsequent building project this headstone was re-erected in its original position (recorded on the overall 1: 50 scale 'trench' plan). A summary record was also made of three other standing headstones located in the vicinity of the excavation (gravestones 1, 2 and 3).
- 5.2.6. A complete photographic record of the archaeological fieldwork was maintained as appropriate.

6.0. RESULTS OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH.

6.1. The Historical Environment Record.

6.1.1. The inspection of the East Sussex County Historical Environment Record (HER) produced just 6 entries of archaeological / historical / architectural significance within a c.500m. radius of Hellingly Church. These are listed in numerical order and described briefly below. Full details of the search are held within the Project Archive (see Section 9.0).

6.1.2. SMR No: TQ 51 SE2 – MES4366
Grid Ref: TQ 5821 1201
Date: Medieval

Horselunges Manor: this moated timber - framed house was built at the end of the 15th century by John Davenish who died in 1477, or by his son Sir John Davenish who died sometime before 1518. In 1925 the structure was restored to its early 16th century appearance by W. H. Godfrey. Horselunges Manor is one of the finest timber-framed buildings in the county, ranking alongside Great Dixter, Northiam and St. Mary's, Bramber. What remains is only part of one side of what was once a larger, perhaps quadrangular house. If so, the original hall has disappeared. Indeed, it may have been pulled down as soon as the early 16th century when alterations were made to the existing structure. The sub-rectangular moat measures c.100m. from north to south, by c.90m. east to west.

6.1.3. SMR No: TQ 51 SE4 – MES4368
Grid Ref: TQ 58 12
Date: Anglo-Saxon

A gold coin of Aethelred II found at Hellingly (exact location not recorded).
'Struck from the die of a penny by Leofwine, a moneyer at Lewes' (No

author cited: Sussex Archaeological Collections 1938, lxi). Currently deposited at the British Museum, although an electrotype can apparently be seen at Barbican House Museum, Lewes.

6.1.4. SMR No: TQ 51 SE6 – MES4370
Grid Ref: TQ 585 124
Date: Post-medieval

Hellingly Watermill: this early brick and timber building has been extensively restored, but almost certainly dates to the 17th or 18th century. The machinery comprises a 10ft. - wide, 6ft. - diameter iron overshot wheel driving three pairs of stones.

6.1.5. SMR No: TQ 51 SE8 – MES4372
Grid Ref: TQ 5808 1230
Date: Medieval

The parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul situated on a mound perhaps dating from pre - Christian times (see sections 2.1., and 3.0. for further information).

6.1.6. SMR No: TQ 51 SE9 – MES4373
Grid Ref: TQ 5769 1251
Date: Post-medieval

Broad Farmhouse: this fine building was constructed in 1753 by J. Calverley. Comprised of two storeys and attic, five windows and two gabled dormers.

6.1.7. SMR No: TQ 51 SE – MES4376
Grid Ref: TQ 585 120
Date: Modern

Hellingly station (now used for domestic purposes).

6.2. The cartographic and documentary evidence.

6.2.1. The following historic maps were examined at the East Sussex Record Office, Lewes.

- Surveyor's draft of Hellingly c.1805 (Figure 3)
- Tithe map and apportionment for the parish of Hellingly (E.S.R.O. ref: TD/E5) 1840 (Figure 4)
- 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1875 (Figure 5)
- 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56SW) 1899
- 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1899 (Figure 6)
- 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1910 (Figure 7)
- 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56SW) 1911 (Figure 8)
- 6" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56SW) 1932
- 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1932 (Figure 9)

6.2.2. The church building and surrounding cemetery are shown on both the c.1805 surveyor's draft of Hellingly (Figure 3) and 1840 tithe map (Figure 4). This evidence confirms that Church Lane was present on essentially its current alignment by at least the earliest part of the 19th century. The tithe apportionment describes local plot number 1000 (Figure 4) as a 'church and yard' occupied by the Rev. John Olive. Full details of the tithe apportionment form an integral part of the Project Archive (see Section 9.0.).

6.2.3. By the time of the 1875 Ordnance Survey (Figure 5) the shape / extent of the cemetery and the internal layout of its paths were practicably indistinguishable from that found today (no significant alterations to this configuration being documented on subsequent Ordnance Survey sheets (figures 6, 7, 8, and 9).

6.2.4. None of the maps listed above specifically record the presence of a cemetery boundary *wall* (as opposed to say a wooden fence: see Section 6.2.5.). Neither is any mention of such a structure made within the 1840 tithe

apportionment. The historic cartographic / documentary research has therefore failed to pinpoint the precise date of construction for the wall earmarked for replacement in 2007 / 2009.

- 6.2.5. All is not lost however, for East Sussex Record Office does hold a reference to a church tax for 'fencing the churchyard' in 1820. The exact nature of said fencing is unclear. Nevertheless, it can be suggested that the cemetery wall under current discussion was not built before this date. Indeed, it seems more than likely that the wall was a rather later structure, perhaps designed as a replacement for an earlier fence erected in 1820 (though this latter theory remains pure supposition).
- 6.2.6. It should be noted that the 1875 Ordnance Survey sheet shows a number of seemingly mature trees alongside Church Lane at the north-west corner of the cemetery. These trees are not recorded on any of the later maps and as such may have been felled or at least thinned – out between the years 1875 (Figure 5) and 1899 (Figure 6).
- 6.2.7. One further reference to the church discovered at West Sussex Record Office indicates that in 1939 an application was made to flatten unmarked grave mounds in order to facilitate mowing. However, it was stated that no standing headstones were to be moved during this exercise.

7.0. RESULTS OF FIELDWORK.

7.1. The site formation.

7.1.1. The basic stratigraphic formation of the cemetery and underlying ‘natural’ deposits tabulated below **(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)** (Table 1) is the same as that identified during the 2007 wall replacement project undertaken at the site (see sections 1.3. and 3.4.) (see Greatorrex 2007, Figure 7 for a representative section drawing). However, the following observations should be noted.

- Within the confines of the 2009 excavation trench it proved impossible to differentiate consistently between layers 2 and 3. The finds recovered from these contexts were therefore collated (placed in bags labelled as number ‘2 / 3’).
- The thickness of respective layers 2, 3 and 4 fluctuated along the 2009 excavation trench. Indeed, the boundaries observed between contexts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 all undulated considerably.
- Layer 4 petered – out c.11.25m. from the northern end of the 2009 excavation trench. Layer 5 was hereafter sandwiched between contexts 3 and 6.
- During the 2009 excavation the identified ‘natural’ deposits **(4, 5, 6)** were on occasion purposefully ‘over – cut’ in order to confirm the presence / absence of archaeological features. The overall trench plan (Figure 10) thus shows the level of final excavation as opposed to the uppermost exposed surface of basal geology.

Table 1: Site formation.

CONTEXT NUMBER (in stratigraphic order).	DESCRIPTION.	APPROXIMATE THICKNESS.
LAYER 1.	<p>Topsoil.</p> <p>A loose, dark brown sandy clay containing occasional sandstone fragments and rounded pebbles (c.5mm. – 30mm.).</p> <p>Above Layer 2 (context boundary extremely undulating).</p>	c.0.30m. (average)
LAYER 2.	<p>Upper graveyard soil.</p> <p>A loose, light brown sandy clay with c.10% flint, chalk and sandstone inclusions (c.5mm. – 50mm.). ‘Context’ 2 / 3 (see Section 7.1.1.) yielded two flint cores of possible Mesolithic origin, one large flint flake of uncertain date, 25 segments of post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stem (not subject to specialist analysis) part of an iron coffin fixing, a brass thimble, one sherd of 19th / 20th century pottery, a 1914 George V penny and a small collection of disarticulated / fragmentary animal and human bone (not differentiated, quantified or subjected to specialist osteological examination).</p> <p>Below Layer 1.</p> <p>Above Layer 3 (context boundary both diffuse and undulating).</p>	c.0.35m. – 0.55m.

LAYER 3.	<p>Lower graveyard soil.</p> <p>A friable, mid orange – brown sandy clay containing c.5% flint, chalk and sandstone pieces (c.5mm. – 30mm.). The finds recovered from ‘Context’ 2 / 3 are described above.</p> <p>Below Layer 2.</p> <p>Above Layers 4 and 5 (context boundaries undulating).</p>	c.0.35m. – 0.55m.
LAYER 4.	<p>Natural geology.</p> <p>An extremely solid deposit of seemingly iron – rich material (probably iron – panning). Archaeologically sterile.</p> <p>Below Layer 3.</p> <p>Above 5 (context boundary undulating).</p>	c.0.40m. max
LAYER 5.	<p>Natural geology.</p> <p>A variegated deposit of compact, light brown sandy clay, yellow sandy clay and solid patches of seemingly iron – rich material (as Layer 4). Archaeologically sterile.</p> <p>Below 3 and 4.</p> <p>Above 6 (context boundary extremely undulating).</p>	c.0.10m.
LAYER 6.	<p>Natural geology.</p> <p>A compact, light yellow sandy clay with grey streaks / mottles. Archaeologically sterile.</p> <p>Below 5.</p> <p>The full profile of this deposit was not revealed within the excavation trench.</p>	?

7.2. The wall foundations.

7.2.1. The excavation of layers 1, 2 and 3 revealed that the lowest courses of the wall due for demolition (i.e. the foundations) jutted – out from the ‘flat’ eastern face of the overlying brickwork by an average of c.50mm. (Figure 10) (also see Section 7.3.6.). The top of these wall foundations **(35)** was found at an average depth within the trench of c.1.05m. Context 35 was built of c.0.22m. (8¾”) – long, c.70mm. (2¾”) – thick bricks visually indistinguishable from those used in the construction of the masonry above and had been set in a clearly identifiable wall footing / slot **(21)**.

7.2.2. Context 21 comprised a c.50mm. – 0.25m. – wide cut observed within the southernmost c.25.5m. of the excavation trench. It ‘contained’ the brick foundations of the wall earmarked for replacement **(35)** (see Section 7.2.1.) and an ‘adjacent’ packing / backfill of mixed sand and sandy clay devoid of archaeologically significant artefacts / ecofacts **(22)** (Figure 10). Where found, this wall footing / slot was discerned immediately below the cemetery topsoil **(1)** and had undoubtedly been dug through / into layers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Figure 10). Perhaps more importantly, it also clearly post - dated at least four of the cut features described in Section 7.3. **(18, 23, 25, 30)**.

7.3. Additional cut features.

7.3.1. A further eight cut features were identified during the 2009 excavation at the church (**cuts 18, 23, 25, 27, 30, 32, 36, 38**). These discoveries are described in numerical order below.

7.3.2. Context 18 comprised a large ‘scoop’ located at the southern end of the trench (Figure 10). This feature of uncertain form and function was first observed on removal of the immediately overlying topsoil **(1)** and had plainly cut layers 2, 3 and 4. Context 18 had a maximum recorded ‘length’ of c.6.0m.+ and a depth of c.1.35m. It possessed at least one concave side and a flattish base. The uppermost surviving fill was a compact, light orange – grey

sandy clay containing occasional chalk and sandstone pieces (c.5mm. – 80mm.) **(19)**. The underlying primary fill comprised a very compact, mid grey - brown sandy clay with c.5% chalk and occasional sandstone inclusions (c.5mm. – 50mm.) **(20)**. No artefacts of archaeological significance were retained from the excavation of Cut 18. However, it was ascertained that the ‘scoop’ had been impacted upon by Cut 21 (see Section 7.2.) and thus pre – dated the construction of the wall due for replacement. ‘Health and safety’ considerations precluded any section drawing of the feature.

7.3.3. Context 23 was only observed on removal of overlying layers 1, 2 and 3. This c.0.90m. - ‘diameter’ and just c.0.15m. – deep ‘half oval’ – shaped feature possessed a predominant concave profile and clearly cut Layer 4 (figures 10 and 11). It contained a single homogeneous fill of friable, mid grey – brown sandy clay with occasional sandstone inclusions (c.5mm. – 80mm.) **(24)** but failed to yield a single artefact or ecofact of any description. The precise form and interpretation of Cut 23 remains a matter of conjecture. Nevertheless, it was observed that the feature was again impacted upon by Cut 21 (see Section 7.2.) and therefore pre – dated the wall earmarked for demolition.

7.3.4. Context 25 comprised a seemingly sub-circular – shaped cut with a somewhat irregular profile, maximum recorded ‘diameter’ of c.0.80m. and depth of c.0.25m. (figures 10 and 11). This feature of uncertain form and interpretation was first identified on removal of layers 1, 2 and 3 and clearly cut Layer 4. Its single extant fill **(26)** was indistinguishable visually from Layer 3 and failed to yield a single archaeological artefact or ecofact. Nonetheless, Cut 25 had plainly been impacted upon by Cut 21 (see Section 7.2.) and thus pre - dated the wall due for demolition.

7.3.5. Contexts 27 and 30 were first revealed on removal of layers 1, 2 and 3 and had clearly cut Layer 4 (Figure 10). Both of these features possessed extremely irregular / convoluted profiles (hachures too close – knit / elaborate to show on Figure 10) and are here interpreted as ‘tree holes’ of no

genuine archaeological significance. No archaeological artefacts or ecofacts were recovered from the excavation of cuts 27 and 30. However, it should be noted that the latter feature was undoubtedly impacted upon by Cut 21 (see Section 7.2.) and as such pre – dated the wall earmarked for replacement. Section drawings of both Cut 27 and Cut 30 are held within the Project Archive (see Section 9.0.).

7.3.6. Context 32 was a seemingly sub-circular – shaped ‘scoop’ located towards the northern end of the trench (Figure 10). This feature of uncertain form and interpretation was discovered immediately below the removed topsoil **(1)** and had plainly cut layers 2, 3, 5 and 6 (Layer 5 stripped from northern end of trench: see Section 7.1.1.). It possessed an essentially concave profile (Figure 11) a recorded ‘diameter’ of c.1.50m. and a depth of c.1.15m. The uppermost fill comprised a mixed / heterogeneous ‘deposit’ of friable, sandy clays **(34)** (not shown on section drawing). The underlying primary fill was a compact, dark grey – brown sandy clay with light yellow sandy clay mottles and occasional sandstone inclusions (c.5mm. – 15mm.) **(33)**. Eight brick / tile fragments, eight sherds of pottery / china, seven small fragments of glass, four clay tobacco pipe stem segments, three iron nails (from coffins?) a small collection of animal and human bone (not differentiated / subjected to specialist analysis) and a single oyster shell were retained from the excavation of contexts 33 and 34 (finds collated). This assemblage has been spot – dated to c.1775 – 1810 / 20 (Luke Barber: Research Officer, Sussex Archaeological Society *pers. comm.*). Cut 21 (see Section 7.2.) petered – out c.0.50m. south of Cut 32 (Figure 10). Nevertheless, the latter feature is believed to have pre – dated the wall due for demolition. It should be noted that the investigation of Context 32 exposed eight courses of the ‘jutting – out’ wall foundations **(35)** described in Section 7.2.1.

7.3.7. Context 36 comprised a seemingly sub-rectangular – shaped cut with an irregular profile (figures 10 and 11) maximum recorded ‘length’ of c.1.05m. and depth of c.0.35m. This feature of uncertain form and interpretation was only exposed on removal of layers 1, 2 and 3 and clearly cut layers 5 and 6

(Layer 5 stripped from northern end of trench: see Section 7.1.1.). The single surviving fill was a compact, mid grey - brown silty clay devoid of inclusions, archaeological artefacts and ecofacts **(37)**. Cut 21 (see Section 7.2.) and Cut 36 were not interlinked physically. However, it would seem reasonable to suggest that the latter feature pre – dated the wall earmarked for replacement.

7.3.8. Context 38 was a small sub-rectangular – shaped cut first observed on removal of layers 1, 2 and 3 (Figure 10). This c.0.25m. – ‘long’ and c.0.18m. – deep feature possessed almost vertical sides and a relatively flat base (Figure 11). It clearly cut both layers 5 and 6 (Layer 5 stripped from northern end of trench: see Section 7.1.1.). The single extant fill of fairly compact, mid grey – brown silty clay **(39)** failed to yield a single artefact or ecofact of any description. The precise form, date and interpretation of Cut 38 remains a matter of conjecture.

7.4. Neighbouring gravestones.

7.4.1. Four standing gravestones were sited in the immediate vicinity of the 2009 excavation trench (Figure 10).

- Gravestone 1: Daniel Ashdown died December 6th 1871. Ann Ashdown died March 28th 1873. Mary Ashdown died November 17th 1886.
- Gravestone 2: Jane Ashdown died January 14th 1878. Daniel Ashdown died 19th February 1913.
- Gravestone 3: Hannah Elizabeth Newman died December 4th 1870. James Newman died May 25th 1885.
- Gravestone 4: Margaret Ellen Allcorn died June 19th 1892. Robert Allcorn died May 11th 1897.

- 7.4.2. Gravestones 1 and 2 were positioned with their memorial inscriptions facing away from the church (an unusual but not unique occurrence in Hellingly cemetery / other Sussex burial grounds) and towards the excavation trench found c.1m. to the west. The failure of the archaeological fieldwork to uncover any evidence for associated interments (e.g. grave cuts, *in-situ* human remains) would therefore suggest that these two particular gravestones had perhaps been moved from their original location elsewhere in the cemetery, sometime after the year(s) 1886 (Gravestone 1) and / or 1913 (Gravestone 2).
- 7.4.3. Gravestones 3 and 4 were positioned with their memorial inscriptions facing away from the archaeological trench. As such it is unsurprising that no evidence for the interments presumably associated with these stones (e.g. grave cuts / *in-situ* human remains) was found during the investigation.
- 7.4.4. Full transcripts of the inscriptions found on the four gravestones under discussion here are held within the Project Archive (see Section 9.0.).

Table 2: Context Register.

CONTEXT NUMBER.	SUMMARY DESCRIPTION / VISIBLE PHYSICAL RELATIONSHIPS.	ASSOCIATED ARTEFACTS / ECOFACTS.
1.	Topsoil (see Table 1 for description). Above 2, 18, 19, 21, 22, 32, 34.	
2.	Upper graveyard soil (see Table 1 for description). Below 1. Above 3. Cut by 18, 21, 32. Uncertain relationship with 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39.	See Table 1.
3.	Lower graveyard soil (see Table 1 for description). Below 2. Above 4, 5. Cut by 18, 21, 32. Uncertain relationship with 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39.	See Table 1.
4.	Natural geology (see Table 1 for description). Below 3. Above 5. Cut by 18, 21, 23, 25, 27, 30.	
5.	Natural geology (see Table 1 for description). Below 3, 4.	

	Above 6. Cut by 21, 32, 36, 38.	
6.	Natural geology (see Table 1 for description). Below 5. Cut by 21, 32, 36, 38.	
7 - 17.	Contexts assigned during 2007 programme of archaeological fieldwork undertaken at the site (see Greatorex 2007 for description).	See Greatorex 2007
18.	Cut of large 'scoop'. Below 1. Filled by 19, 20. Cuts 2, 3, 4. Cut by 21.	
19.	Sandy clay fill of large 'scoop'. Below 1. Fill of 18. Above 20. Cut by 21.	
20.	Sandy clay fill of large 'scoop'. Below 19. Fill of 18. Cut by 21.	
21.	Cut of linear feature. Below 1. Filled by 22. Contains 35. Cuts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31.	
22.	Heterogeneous fill of linear feature. Below 1.	

	Fill of 21. 'Adjacent' 35.	
23.	Cut of 'half oval' - shaped feature. Filled by 24. Cuts 4. Cut by 21. Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.	
24.	Sandy clay fill of 'half oval' - shaped feature. Fill of 23. Cut by 21. Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.	
25.	Cut of sub-circular feature. Filled by 26. Cuts 4. Cut by 21. Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.	
26.	Sandy clay fill of sub-circular feature. Fill of 25. Cut by 21. Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.	
27.	Cut of tree hole. Filled by 28, 29. Cuts 4. Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.	
28.	Sandy clay fill of tree hole. Above 29. Fill of 27. Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.	
29.	Sandy clay fill of tree hole. Below by 28. Fill of 27.	

30.	<p>Cut of tree hole.</p> <p>Filled by 31.</p> <p>Cuts 4.</p> <p>Cut by 21.</p> <p>Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.</p>	
31.	<p>Sandy clay fill of tree hole.</p> <p>Fill of 30.</p> <p>Cut by 21.</p> <p>Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.</p>	
32.	<p>Cut of sub-circular 'scoop'.</p> <p>Below 1.</p> <p>Filled by 33, 34.</p> <p>Cuts 2, 3, 5, 6.</p> <p>Earlier than 35.</p>	
33.	<p>Sandy clay fill of sub-circular 'scoop'.</p> <p>Below 34.</p> <p>Fill of 32.</p> <p>Earlier than 35.</p>	<p>Brick / tile, pottery / china, glass, clay tobacco pipe stem, iron nails, animal / human bone, oyster shell (1775 – 1810 / 20 AD).</p>
34.	<p>Heterogeneous fill of sub-circular 'scoop'.</p> <p>Below 1.</p> <p>Above 33.</p> <p>Fill of 32.</p>	
35.	<p>Brick foundations of wall due for demolition.</p> <p>Within 21.</p> <p>'Adjacent' 22.</p> <p>Later than 32, 33, 36, 37.</p>	

36.	<p>Cut of sub-rectangular feature.</p> <p>Filled by 37.</p> <p>Cuts 5, 6.</p> <p>Earlier than 35.</p> <p>Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.</p>	
37.	<p>Silty clay fill of sub-rectangular feature.</p> <p>Fill of 36.</p> <p>Earlier than 35.</p> <p>Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.</p>	
38.	<p>Cut of sub-rectangular feature.</p> <p>Filled by 39.</p> <p>Cuts 5, 6.</p> <p>Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.</p>	
39.	<p>Silty clay fill of sub-rectangular feature.</p> <p>Fill of 38.</p> <p>Uncertain relationship with 2, 3.</p>	

8.0. SUMMARY.

- 8.1. No obvious grave cuts, buried funerary monuments or *in-situ* human remains were discovered during the latest archaeological fieldwork undertaken at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly. Furthermore, only a small number of disarticulated / fragmentary human bones were recovered from the removed graveyard soil (2, 3). It can thus be concluded that the thin strip of land investigated in 2009 had not been impacted upon by any human interments (despite the proximity of four standing headstones).
- 8.2. Nevertheless, nine cut features were exposed within the excavated trench (18, 21, 23, 25, 27, 30, 32, 36, 38). Cut 21 held the brick foundations of the wall earmarked for demolition, while cuts 27 and 30 are both interpreted as tree holes (the 1875 Ordnance Survey sheet shows a number of trees alongside Church Lane: see Section 6.2.6.). The precise size, form and ‘function’ of the remaining six features were not ascertained. However, these cuts (18, 23, 25, 32, 36, 38) are not considered to be of any great archaeological significance. No contexts of palaeoenvironmental potential were discovered.
- 8.3. A modest assemblage of ‘finds’ assigned to the period c.1775 – 1810 / 20 was gleaned from Cut 32. On the other hand, the excavation of cuts 18, 23, 25, 27, 30, 36 and 38 failed to yield a single archaeological artefact or ecofact. Attention must therefore be turned towards the evidence for the relative dating of these features. Unfortunately, it proved difficult to identify cut – lines within the disturbed / mixed graveyard soil (2, 3) (a problem which also beset the work undertaken at the church in 2007). As such, not too much stock should perhaps be taken of the fact that cuts 23, 25, 27, 30, 36 and 38 were only exposed on complete removal of layers 1, 2 and 3. Nevertheless, it can be stated with confidence that cuts 18, 23, 25, 30, 32 and 36 were impacted by and therefore certainly earlier in origin than the wall due for replacement (21, 35).

- 8.4. Although the precise construction date of the wall demolished in 2009 has not been pinpointed, documentary evidence suggests that the structure was built after the year 1820 (see Section 6.2.5.). The c.1770 – 1810 / 20 date assigned to Cut 32 (impacted upon by wall foundations 35) supports this theory.
- 8.5. The earliest artefacts recovered from the 2009 excavation comprised two flint cores of possible Mesolithic origin (**2 / 3**). These discoveries can be added to a single Mesolithic flint blade core found at the church in 2007 and are almost certainly indicative of the region's transitory exploitation by roaming bands of hunter – gatherers during the period c.6000 – 4,300 BC. However, it should be noted that the investigation considered here failed to uncover any archaeological evidence for the postulated pre – Christian origin of the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul and its associated mound / cemetery.
- 8.6. The investigative methodology employed by C. G. Archaeology is judged to have satisfied the Project Objectives set out in Section 4.0. of this report.

9.0. PROJECT ARCHIVE.

- 9.1. It is intended that the small assemblage of disarticulated / fragmentary bone recovered from this project will be returned to the Rev. Charlie Hill for eventual re-interment at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Hellingly. The full paper and digital written, drawn and photographic records arising from both the 2007 and 2009 archaeological projects undertaken at the church will be collated in accordance with '*Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage*' (UKICI 1990) and deposited with the retained artefact assemblage in a suitable local museum or similar repository approved by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor and East Sussex County Council Archaeologist.

10.0. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

- 10.1. C. G. Archaeology would like to thank Casper Johnson and Greg Chuter of East Sussex County Council, Vivienne Coad the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor, Wealden District Council (and Christopher Bottomley in particular) Roger Watts of Watts Contractors (Sussex) Ltd. and the Rev. Charlie Hill for their assistance during the project.

11.0. REFERENCES.

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HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET.

Site Code.	HEL 09					
Site identification and address.	The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Church Road, Hellingly					
County, district and / or borough.	East Sussex					
O.S. grid ref.	TQ 58065 12330					
Geology.	Tunbridge Wells Sand					
Project number.	09 / 10					
Fieldwork type.	Eval.	Excav. X	W.Brief.	Survey.	Other.	
Site type.	Rural.	Urban.	Other. Church cemetery			
Date of fieldwork.	24 th August 2009 – 14 th September 2009					
Client.	Wealden District Council					
Project manager.	Christopher Greatorex					
Project supervisor	Christopher Greatorex					
Period summary.	Palaeo.	Meso. X	Neo.	B. Age.	I. Age.	R – B.
	A. S.	Med.	P. Med	Other. modern		
<p>Project Summary.</p> <p>An archaeological excavation was undertaken in advance of building work at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Church Lane, Hellingly. This project comprised the manual clearance of a c.0.60m. – wide strip of land located immediately behind a c.31.3m . – long stretch of retaining cemetery wall earmarked for replacement. No obvious grave cuts, buried funerary monuments or <i>in-situ</i> human remains were discovered during the fieldwork. Furthermore, only a small number of disarticulated / fragmentary human bones were recovered from the removed graveyard soil. Nevertheless, nine cut features were revealed within the excavated trench. One of these held the brick foundations of the wall due for demolition, while two others are both interpreted as tree holes. The precise size, form and ‘function’ of the remaining six features were not ascertained. However, these cuts are not considered to be of any great archaeological significance. Six of the features found during the excavation were clearly impacted by and thus earlier in origin than the soon to be replaced wall. One of the investigated cuts also yielded a small assemblage of finds assigned to the period c.1775 – 1810 / 20. Although the precise construction date of the wall demolished in 2009 has not been determined, the documentary and artefactual evidence suggests that the structure was built sometime after the year 1820. The earliest artefacts recovered from the project are two flint cores of possible Mesolithic origin. These discoveries can be added to a single Mesolithic flint blade core found at the church in 2007 and are almost certainly indicative of the region’s transitory exploitation by roaming bands of hunter – gatherers during the period c.6000 – 4300 BC. However, the investigation failed to uncover any archaeological evidence for the postulated pre – Christian origin of the church.</p>						

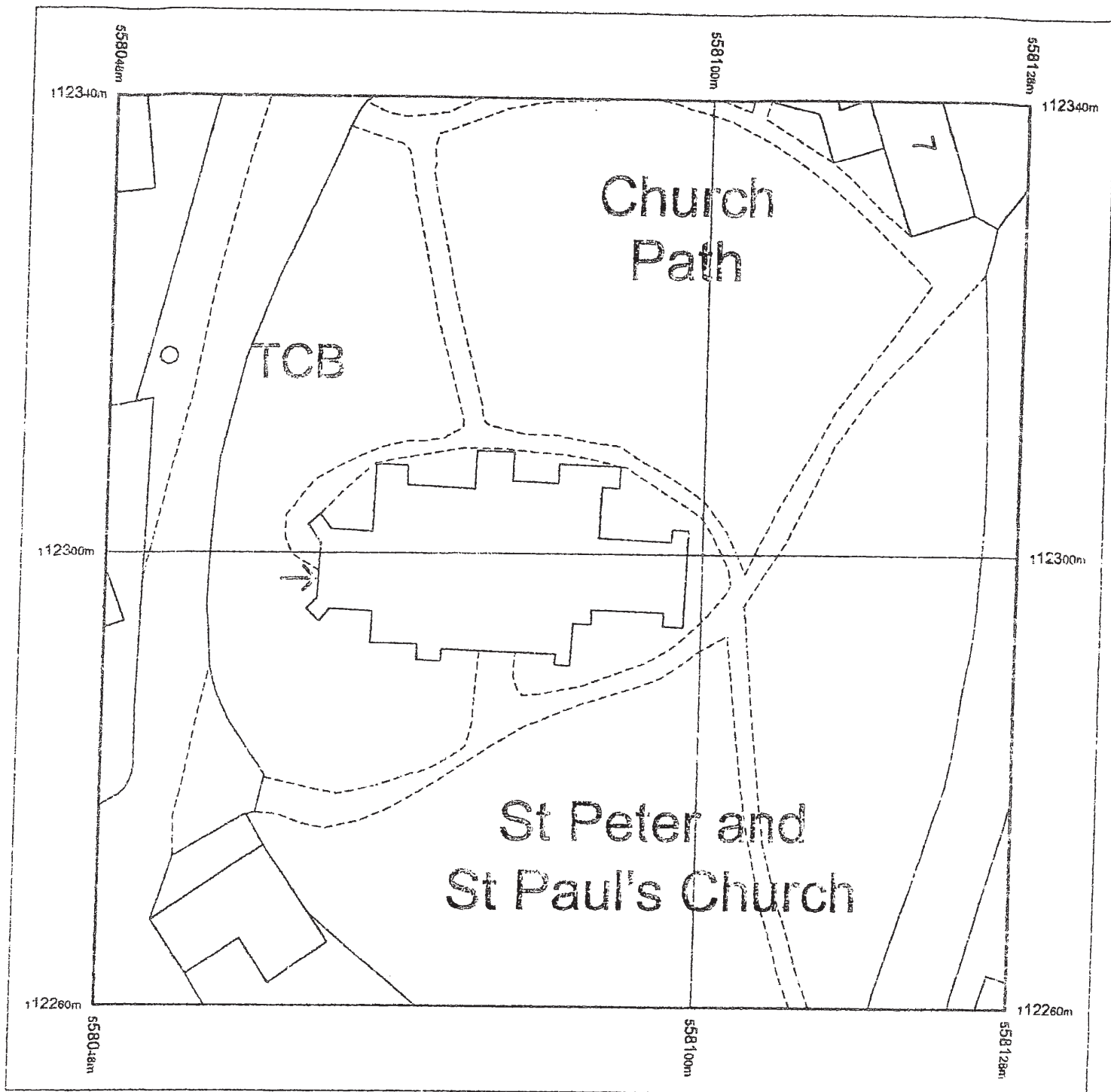


Figure 1: Site location plan
(Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL100034952)

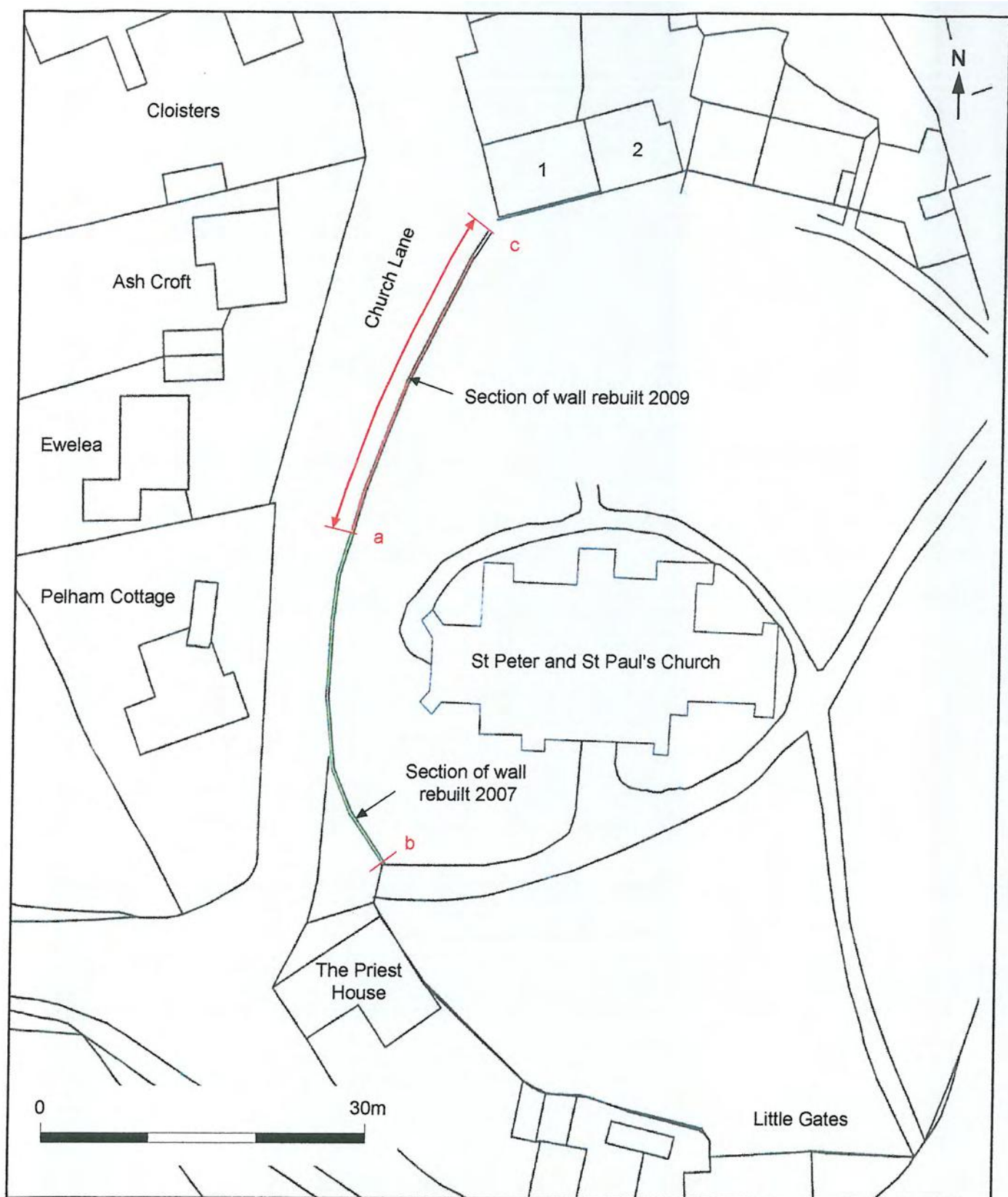


Fig. 2: Works location plan

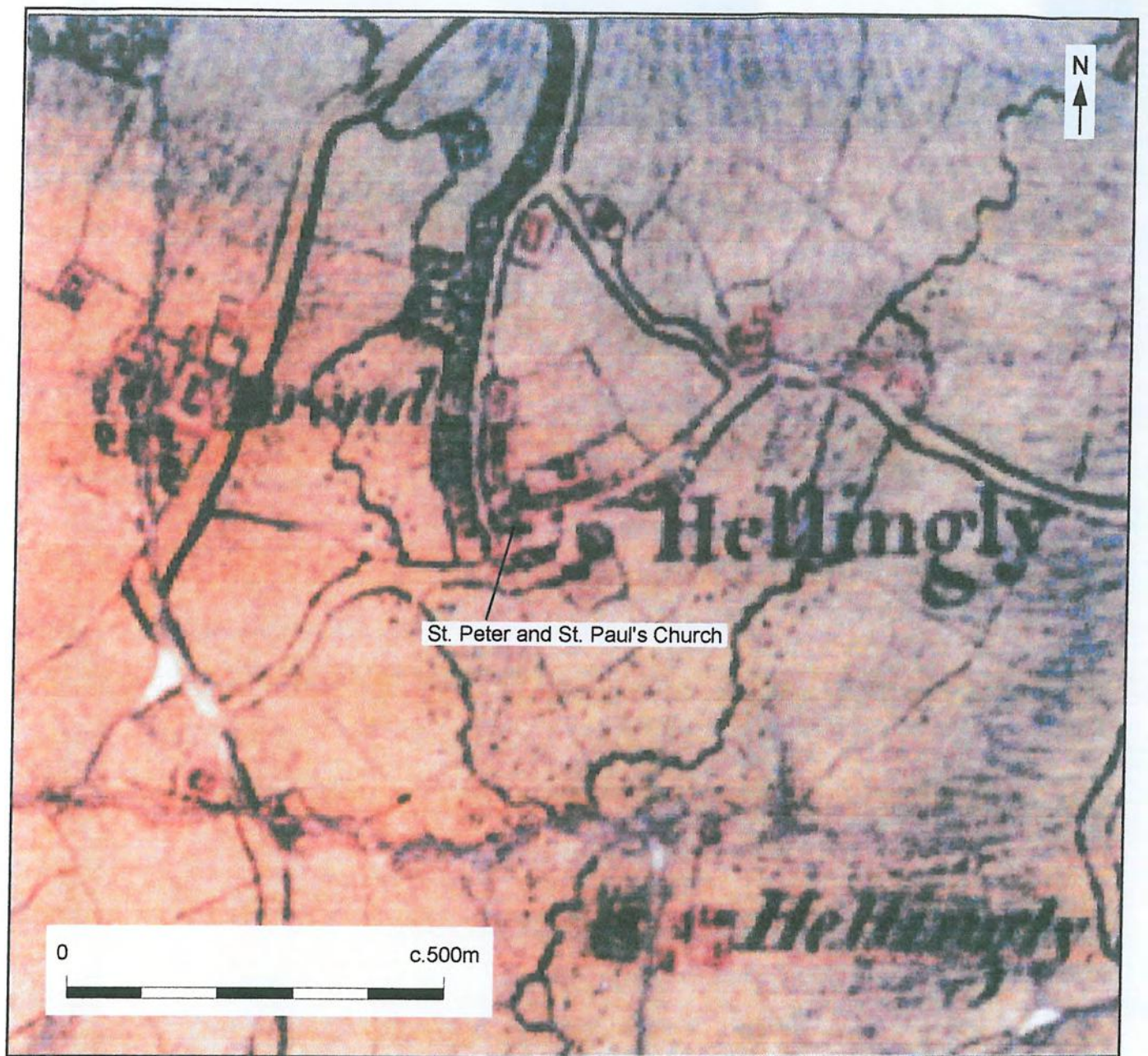


Fig. 3: Surveyor's draft of Hellingly c.1805

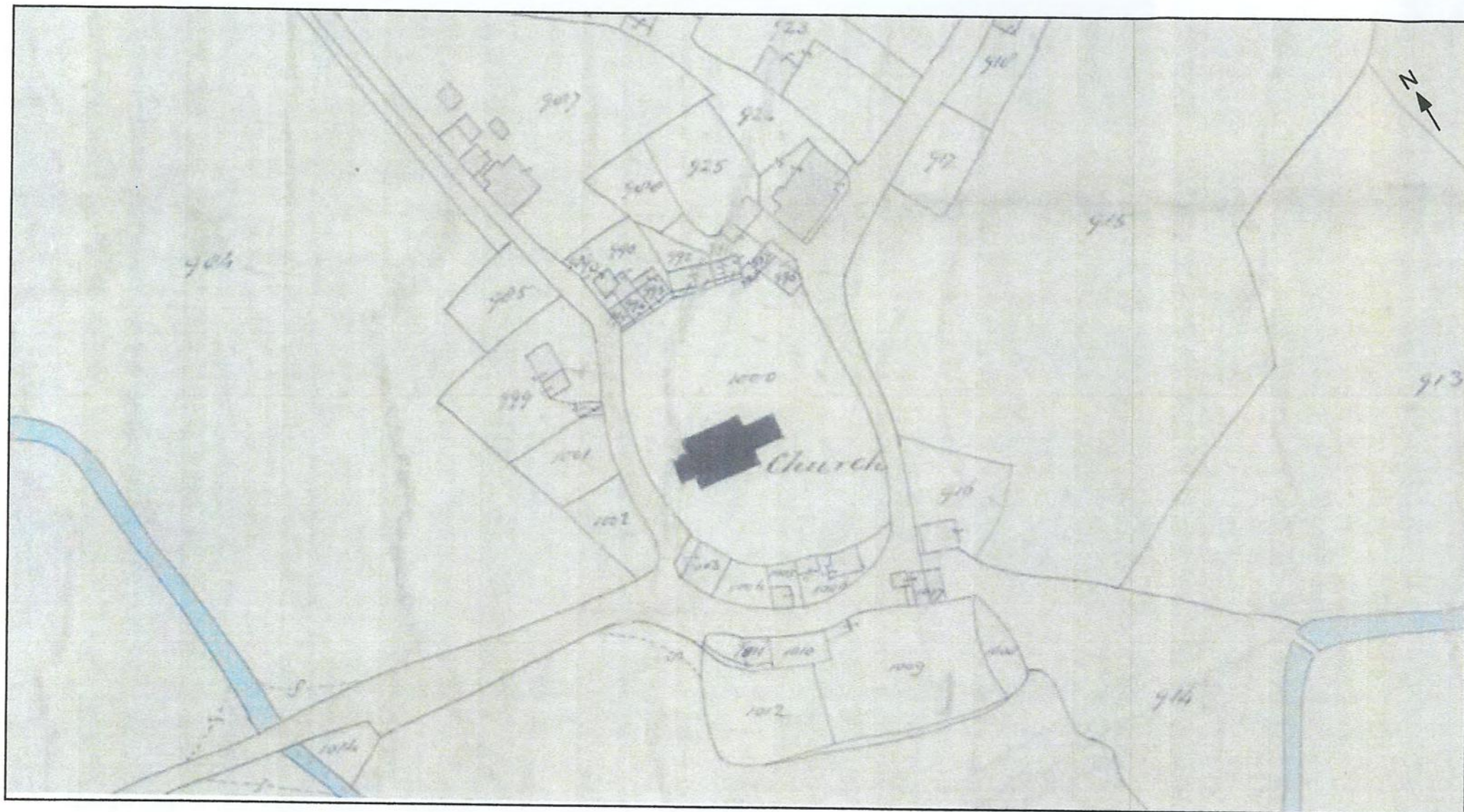


Fig. 4: Tithe map for the parish of Hellingly (E.S.R.O. ref: TD/E5) 1840

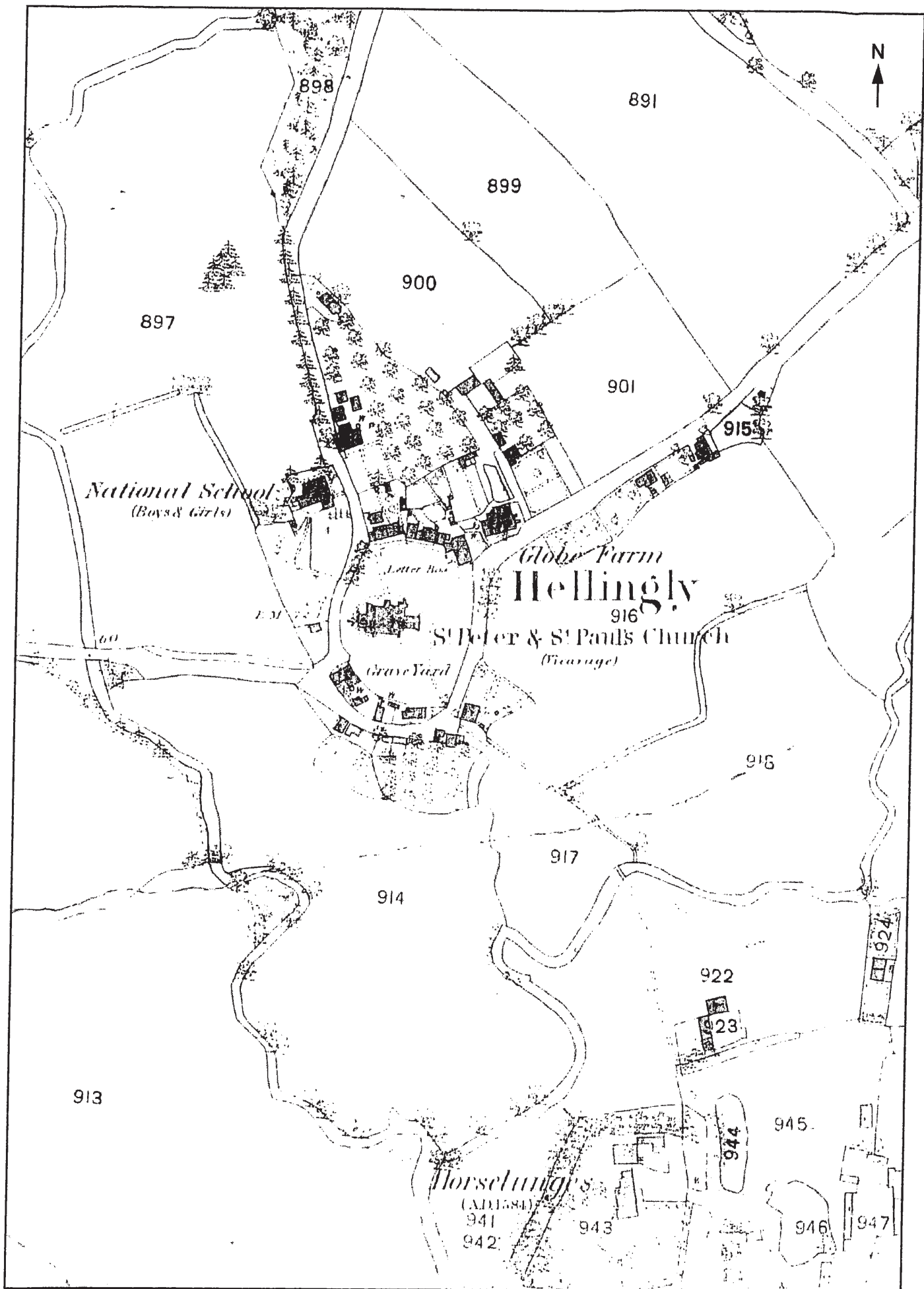


Fig. 5: 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1875

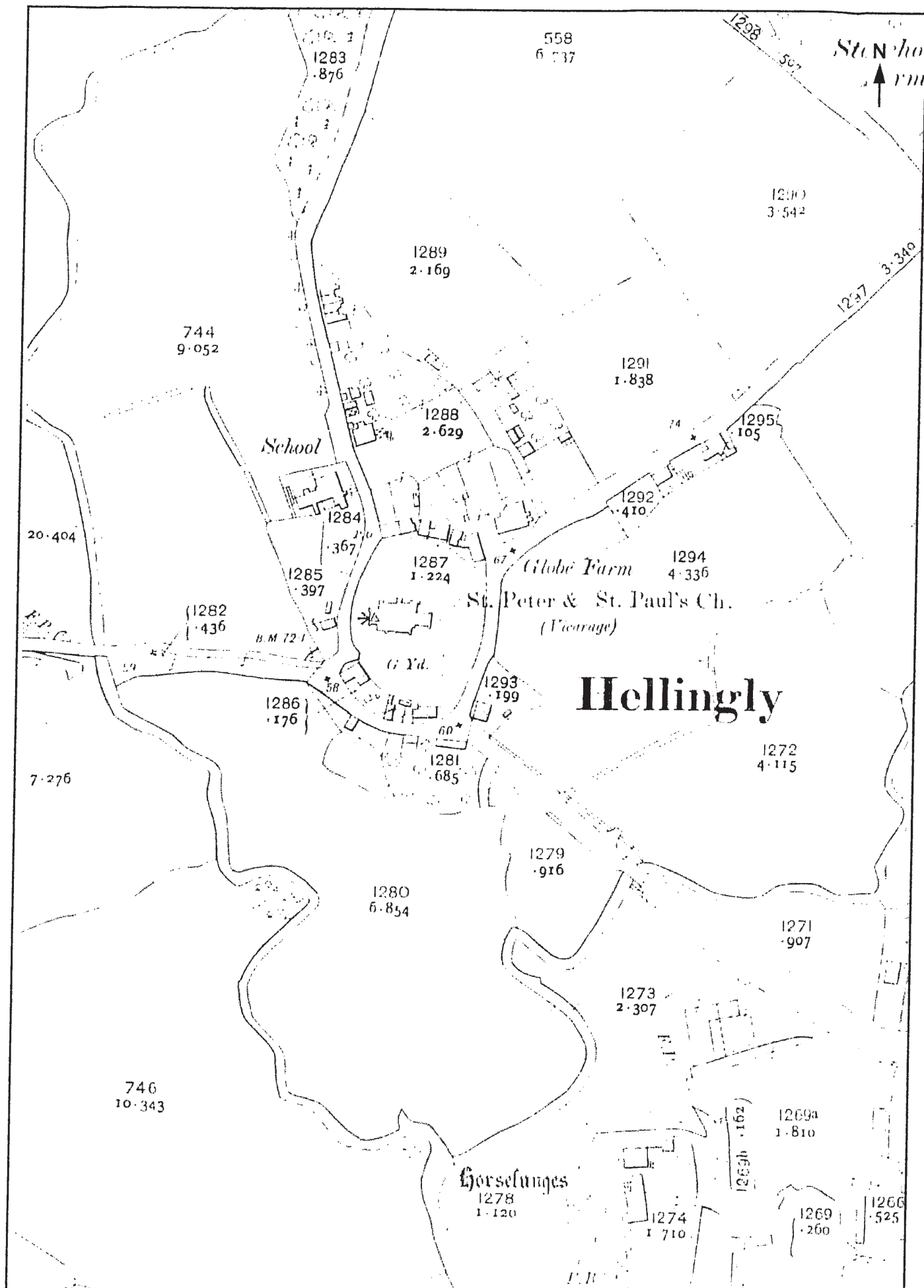


Fig. 7: 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1910

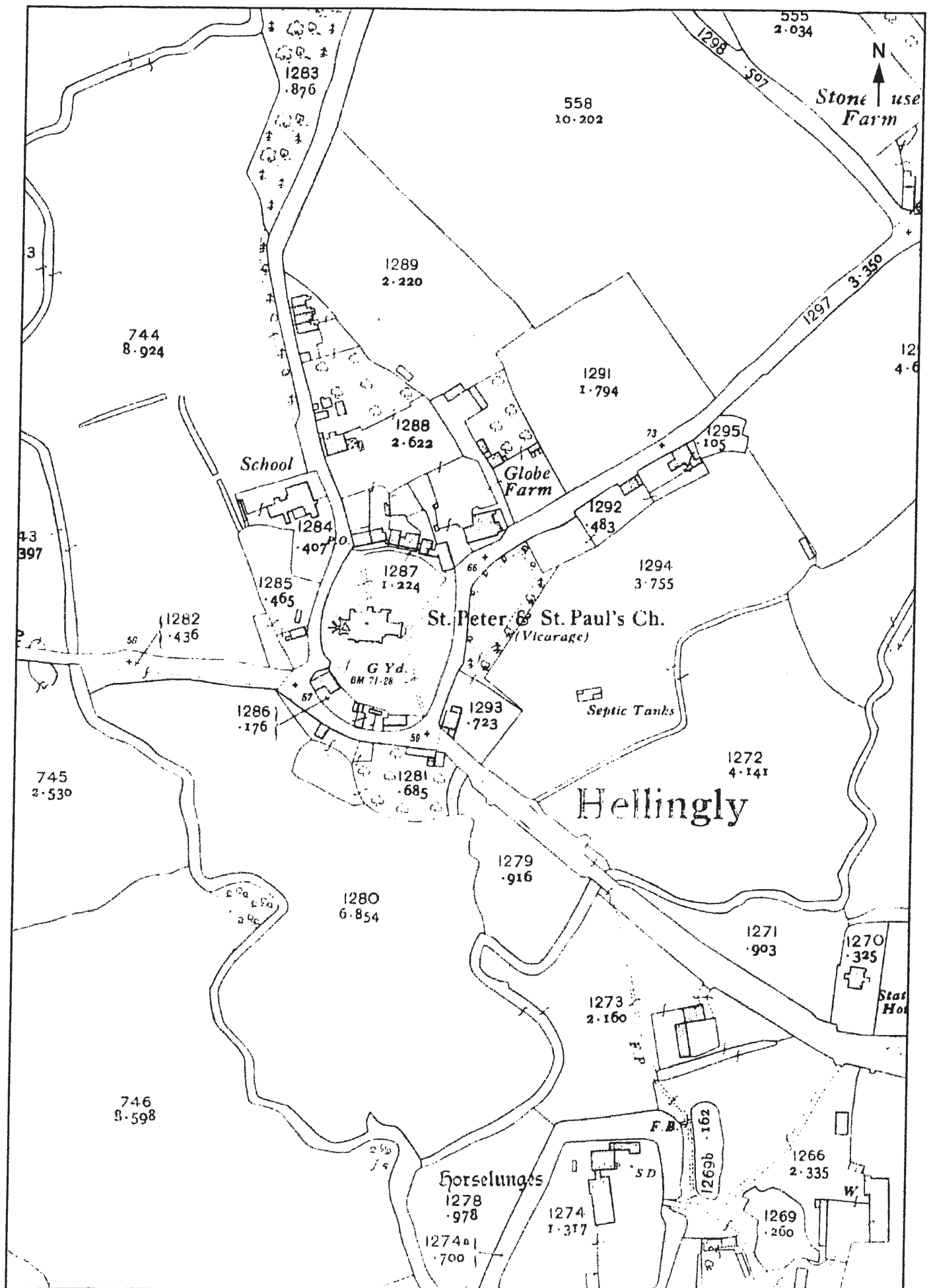


Fig. 9: 25" Ordnance Survey (Sheet 56/9) 1932

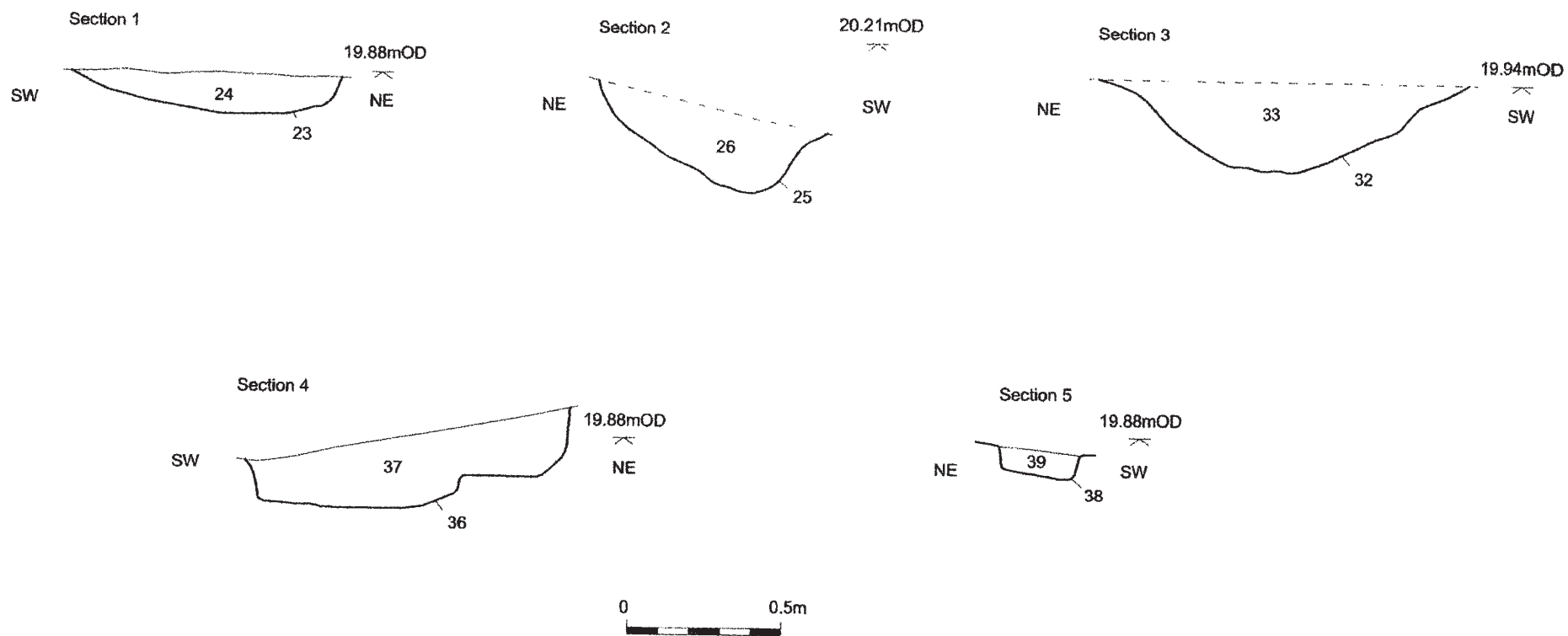


Fig. 11: Sections