

**Report on Archaeological Monitoring**  
**St Mary the Virgin Church, Gamlingay,**  
**Cambridgeshire**

CHER ref. ECB 4364

**Prepared for Gamlingay PCC**

Sarah Bates (Report No. 17)

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<b>Project name</b>	<b>St Mary the Virgin Church</b>
<b>Parish</b>	<b>Gamlingay</b>
<b>District</b>	<b>South Cambridgeshire</b>
<b>Grid reference</b>	<b>TL 241 522</b>
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## Summary

The installation of a new drainage system at St Mary the Virgin Church led to the remains of a wall being exposed just to the north-east of the north transept chapel. It ran from approximately north to south and appeared to relate to some rubble masonry beneath the buttress of the transept and, therefore, to an earlier structure in this area. Some footings of the existing building were recorded below the vestry and chancel walls.

A total of at least twenty-four graves were recorded in the three trenches excavated for new soakaways. Most of these were in the soakaway to the south of the church and, of particular interest here, were three relatively early burials which lay on a different orientation to the others.

The burials were removed from the ground and left in the care of the church for reburial as were quantities of disarticulated human bone found during the work.

Pottery of Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval date was found as well as roof tile fragments of Roman, medieval and post-medieval date, a fragment of late medieval floor tile, small fragments of window glass of probable medieval date and pieces of post-medieval clay tobacco pipe.

## 1.0 Introduction

St Mary the Virgin Church is situated on Church Street at the south-east side of Gamlingay village which is about ten kilometres to the south-east of St Neots, Cambridgeshire. (TL 241 522) (Fig. 1).

Building and rainwater drainage improvements were being undertaken at the church by R and J Hogg Ltd builders on behalf of Nicholas Warns Architect Ltd for Gamlingay PCC. Gamlingay PCC funded the repairs, improvements and archaeological work with the aid of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The work involved installing drains around the north and south sides of the church. Archaeological work involved monitoring of the groundworks associated with the new drains (Fig. 2). This work accorded to a Project Design prepared by Sarah Bates following consultation with the Diocesan Advisory Committee's archaeological advisor Dr Tim Reynolds.

Drainage works included new drainage gullies beneath downpipes and drains running from the gullies to three new soakaways dug in the churchyard.

The archaeological archive will, on completion of the project, be deposited with the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team, following the relevant policy on archiving standards. An Oasis form is included below as Appendix 1.

## **2.0 Geology and topography**

Gamlingay is situated on the Western Plateau of South Cambridgeshire. Bedrock consists of sandstone of the Woburn Sands Formation which formed in shallow seas from deposits of mud, silt, sand and gravel. Soils are formed from subsequent superficial deposits of glacial till which includes lumps of chalk, limestone, sandstone and flint (British Geological Survey 2015, Farewell *et al* 2011).

St Mary the Virgin Church is located at the corner of Church Street and Church Lane at approximately 50m OD (OS bench mark on north-west buttress 50.70m). It is positioned in the northern part of its surrounding churchyard the wall of which retains the slightly raised level of the ground within.

## **3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background**

Gamlingay, or *Gamelinge*, has three entries in the Domesday Book (1086). Some of its lands were probably given by Ely Abbey as part of the original endowment of St Neots Priory (which was founded c. 970). In the early 12th century Augustinian canons from the Priory of St Botolf, Colchester came to the town and led worship there so a church certainly existed. By the late 13th century the canons had been virtually excluded from the management of the church and during the early medieval period the principle manor was held by Merton College, Oxford which gained patronage of the rectory. Land in Gamlingay is still owned by the college (Gamlingay village website, 2015).

The church today comprises nave and chancel, north and south aisles, transept chapels and porches, west tower, and north vestry. It is aligned approximately from south-east to north-west (Fig. 2).

Cambridgeshire Historical Environment Record (CHER) describes the existing building as largely of 13th-century date with no part of it apparently earlier than this. Thirteenth century work includes the north and south arcades, the north aisle and probably the chancel although it is possible that the 13th-century chancel was shorter in length than that seen today. The south aisle and south transept chapel date to around 1300 and the west tower and north porch are 14th-century additions. The north transept chapel was also originally built during this period (British History Online 2014) and the chancel may have been extended to its present length during the 14th century (Gorton 2012, 12). Significant alterations in the 15th and 16th centuries affected most of the church building and included the remodelling of the north transept chapel in 1446 and the addition of the south porch. The new north chapel was consecrated in 1490 (Gorton 2012, 13, 18). It is noted that the north and east walls of the existing north transept chapel are slightly

misaligned with the rest of the church. This can be seen in the plans illustrated in the church guide (Gorton 2012) and in the RCHME inventory for Gamlingay (although not evident in Figure 1 which was based upon the plan provided by the architect for this project). The vestry dates to the 17th or 18th century. Further restoration took place in the 19th and 20th centuries. A damaged medieval stoop stands just to the south of the west door and fragments from 13th-century stone coffin lids are included in stone benches in the north porch and in a recess in the north aisle wall. Other medieval fragments (e.g. from a screen and seating) are included elsewhere in the later church furnishings. In the churchyard just to the south of the church is the base and lower part of the shaft of a stone medieval cross.

A record of the many existing memorials and gravestones found within the church and churchyard has been produced by the Friends of St Mary's (2006).

The CHER records activity from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods within a kilometre radius search area around the church. This is summarised below.

Worked flints of Mesolithic to Bronze Age date have been found, many of them concentrated in areas to the north-east and south-west of the village centre. A ring ditch of unknown date, but possibly representing a Bronze Age barrow, is known to the south-east of the village.

Evidence of Roman activity appears to be largely absent in the area with only a few Roman finds from an excavated Saxon settlement site. Here, about 500m to the south-east of the church, evidence for Early and Middle Saxon settlement and a Late Saxon cemetery were recorded in the late 1990s. Late Saxon or early medieval occupation is also known from about 700m to the west-south-west of the church.

The sites of three medieval moated manor houses lay within about 200m of the church with one of these being less than 100m to its east. The moats are now entirely, or almost entirely, filled in although some parts appear on magnetometer surveys or from mapped cropmarks. Also just to the east of the church is a 15th to 16th-century building The Emplins the location and nature of which suggests it might have related to the church in some way. It is recorded as having been a rectory (CHER). A map of 1601 shows a large building on the plot here, the corner of which adjoined the churchyard.

Magnetometer survey of an of the area of a proposed new cemetery to the south of the church in 2013 recorded anomalies many of which corresponded to features shown on medieval and post-medieval maps. Evidence for medieval buildings and their demolition was recorded by subsequent excavation.

Post-medieval almshouses and a chapel are situated about 200m to the west of the church and a tithe barn of 17th to 18th- century date existing about 100m to its south-east was probably built on the approximate site of a former such building. Other post-medieval buildings are recorded within the CHER search area but further away from the church.

## **4.0 Methodology**

Archaeological monitoring aimed to observe and record the presence or absence, location, nature and date of any surviving archaeological deposits within the areas affected by the drainage works.

The trenches were dug, mostly by mini-digger with some hand-digging, by the site contractors.

The location of the drains and trenches was recorded; where relevant, trenches were assigned a context number for ease of recording. Context numbers allocated as trench numbers were also used for unstratified finds from those trenches. Otherwise, archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro forma* context sheets in the standard way. Digital and black and white film photographs recorded the archaeological deposits and the work at the site generally.

Finds of archaeological significance were retrieved.

Articulated skeletons (or parts thereof) were hand-excavated and recorded and were carefully lifted from the ground. They were bagged individually (one skeleton per bag). Disarticulated bone was recorded and bagged by context. The human remains were left in the church to be reburied by the Vicar at the end of the excavation work.

No deposits required sampling for environmental assessment.

Site conditions were generally good for the time of year although there were some periods of rain.

## 5.0 **Results** (Figs. 2 -7, Plates 1-14)

Context numbers are shown in square brackets and listed in Appendix 2.

The depths of burials were measured from the existing ground surface at the nearest side of the trench to each skeleton. (Levels OD for the ground surface at the time of the work are included in the site archive).

Deposits which had accumulated due to the repeated digging and redeposition of material by grave-digging, and where individual grave cuts could not be distinguished, are described below as 'churchyard soil' and were predominantly brown sandy silts and silty sands. These were overlaid by the brown sandy loam topsoil.

### **Soakaway trench [1]** (Figs 2 and 3, Plates 1-3)

The trench for Soakaway [1] was located about 8m NNW of the north porch. It ran from roughly north to south, was 2.20m in length, 1.20m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.30m. Undisturbed natural deposits were encountered at a minimum depth of 0.50m. They comprised yellowish orange sand which varied from course to fine-grained and included occasional fragments of sandstone. This natural sand had been cut into, to varying depths, by grave-digging. Evidence of at least five burials was recorded within the area of the soakaway (Fig. 3). Two were revealed only in very small part so their precise orientation was uncertain but all of the graves appeared to share roughly the same approximately east to west orientation. The relationship between the graves was not always clear.

Grave [13] was of relatively early date. This just extended into the side of the trench near its south-east corner (Fig. 3A, and visible in bottom left of Plate 3). It had a slightly rounded end and its hand-excavated part was 0.25m deep (although it probably

survived a further 0.20-0.30m upwards (Fig. 3C). The grave was well defined with quite steeply sloping sides rounding to a flattish base. A skull protruded from the section at a depth of 0.80m below the surface and, along with one or two cervical vertebrae, was the only part of skeleton [15] to be exposed and removed from the trench. No coffin nails were present.

Slightly to the south of, and cutting, grave [13] was grave [5] (Fig. 3B and C, Plate 1). The sides of the grave cut were not distinguishable until skeleton [4] was reached at the very shallow depth (at skull) of only 0.45m from the surface. The remains were those of an individual of quite small stature and the long bones were unfused at their epiphyses; these factors suggested that the remains were of an older juvenile or young adult. The presence of iron nails showed that a coffin was used for this burial.

At the north end of the trench a possible grave was of relatively early date [79] (Fig. 3C). This appeared as a deeper area beneath the north side of grave [10]. No burial evidence was seen within it, however, and its nature was uncertain.

In the north-eastern part of the trench was grave [10] (Fig. 3A and C, Plates 2 and 3). It had a very well-defined almost vertical north side which represented the position of a coffin; an iron coffin handle was found *in situ* next to the left humerus. The south side of a coffin was indicated by some nails but the south side of the grave was less certain; a well-defined steep slope ran across the trench but was misaligned with the burial itself and was not fully understood; it may have been a natural slope or, perhaps have related to the deeper area recorded as [79] (see above). The likely south side of grave [10] was recorded only in section (Fig. 3C). Adult skeleton [12] lay at a minimum depth (at skull) of 0.76m. Two sherds of medieval coarseware, two fragments of probably post-medieval roof tile and a piece of 17<sup>th</sup>- or 18<sup>th</sup>-century clay pipe stem were found in the fill of grave [10].

At the west side of the trench the east end of another grave extended just into the trench [16] (Fig. 3A, Plate 3). Its south side corresponded with the slope running across the trench. The hand-excavated lower part of grave [16] was 0.30m deep. At its base was some black glassy material; the 'pitch' lining/sealant of a coffin [19] (see also Trench [2]; [22] below). The feet of skeleton [18] lay upon this and were recorded at a depth of 0.95m.

At the south end of the trench another grave remained unexcavated [78] (Fig. 3A, Plates 2 and 3). One or two thin fragments of sandstone lay on their sides against the north side of the grave; they may, perhaps, have been placed (or fallen) alongside a coffin. The trench was extended very slightly at its north end to allow the space required for the soakaway and grave [78] was undisturbed by the drainage works.

The nature of the very similar grave fills, which comprised brown silty sands with some more sandy patches and occasional fragments of sandstone, made it difficult to distinguish the individual graves from the general churchyard soils above the level of the skeletons. These deposits were overlaid by the topsoil which was up to 0.30m deep.

### **Soakaway trench [2] (Figs 2 and 4, Plates 4 and 5)**

The trench for Soakaway [2] was positioned about 10m to the north-east of the chancel. It ran from north-east to south-west, was 2.50m in length, 2.00m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.20m. Just one grave was exposed at the depth excavated for the



soakaway but the natural sand was not reached and the presence of human bones seen in the bottom of the trench indicated other burials at greater depth.

Grave [20] was orientated east to west and just over half of it was revealed in the east corner of the trench at a minimum depth (at pelvis) of 1.12m from the surface. The surviving/identified part of the grave was barely more than a very shallow scoop in the underlying deposits but within this were significant traces of a black glassy deposit which, along with several evenly spaced large nails, defined the base of a coffin [22] (Fig. 4, Plates 4 and 5). The black deposit was 'pitch' used to seal the adjoining planks of the coffin. Skeleton [23] lay upon the coffin base; its legs, part of its pelvis and left hand were exposed within the excavated area.

Nothing else of interest was seen in trench [2]. The deposits seen in the trench sections were mixed brown sandy silt churchyard soils with occasional fragments of human bone; mainly in the lower part. Grave cuts could not be distinguished. The topsoil was up to 0.30m deep.

### **Soakaway trench [3] (Figs 2, 5 and 6, Plates 6-9)**

The trench for Soakaway [3] was positioned about 20m to the south of the chancel. It ran from NE to SW, was 2.80m in length, 2.00m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.25m. Evidence for at least eighteen burials was recorded within the area of the trench. Although stratigraphic and physical relationships between the burials have been considered it is difficult to assign all of the graves to distinct phases.

The earliest burials are represented by truncated skeletal remains in three east to west orientated graves (Fig. 5 Trench 3 plan A). Grave [27] was located towards the southern end of the trench. Within it adult skeleton [29] was revealed at a depth of only 0.75m (at skull) from the surface and, as such, was the first burial encountered during excavation (Plate 6). The skeleton was truncated across its left side and leg bones by later graves ([46] [40] and [30]) and at its east end by grave [33] but most of its upper part and its feet survived. To its north-west the lower left leg and feet of adult skeleton [68] survived in the east end of grave [66] at a depth of about 1.15m. The right leg of this skeleton was truncated (probably by grave [46]). The third east to west burial [76] was recorded to the east of grave [66] and was truncated to its west and east respectively by graves [62] and [75]. Only the torso and some arm bones of skeleton [65] (again at a depth of about 1.15m) survived. The bones were small (child-sized) and unfused. No coffin nails were found with any of these three burials and no other finds were associated with them. The regular spacing of these graves as well as their shared orientation and stratigraphic position showed that they were roughly contemporary.

Burials shown in Figure 6, Trench 3 plan B represent more than one phase of deposition; as far as possible they are described here stratigraphically. In the south-east corner of the trench the well-defined north side of grave [36] was cut into the natural sand to a depth of about 0.40m. The grave was, however, truncated to its east and south by later graves and no burial evidence was recovered. Near the south-west corner of the trench (and cutting the earlier grave [27]) the right foot and lower leg bones of skeleton [48] were recorded in grave [46], no evidence for a coffin was recorded. The burial was truncated to its north by grave [40]. Grave [33] just extended into the east side of the trench (and also cut the earlier grave [27]). The skull and unfused vertebrae of a juvenile [35] were recovered from it. Again, no evidence for a coffin was recorded.

To the north, the skeleton of juvenile [61] (indicated by its size and the unfused nature of the bones) was recorded in grave [59]. No coffin nails or fittings were found with the skeleton. Grave [59] was cut to its north by grave [62] which contained adult skeleton [64] which had been buried in a coffin (evidenced by coffin nails) (Fig. 6, Trench 3 plan B) (Plate 7). The bones of this skeleton were rather degraded and had a blackish colouring to their surface. A very small fragment of medieval window glass was found in the grave fill. Another juvenile burial appeared to post-date grave [62] to its north; grave [52] was not well defined but its skeleton [53] (the small bones of which were relatively well-preserved) was at a slightly higher level than the much larger skeleton [64] (Plate 8). Clearly the relative depths are not evidence of relative date but their very close proximity suggests that, had the larger grave been dug subsequently, it would have disturbed the remains of the child. The different preservation of bone of the two skeletons and the presence of the coffin nails with skeleton [64] strongly suggests that the two were not buried together.

Graves of probable later date to those just described included [55] and [57] in the south-east corner of the trench Figure 6, Trench 3 plan B. The former extended only very slightly into the trench and no burial evidence was revealed. The latter was not fully excavated as it extended beyond the depth required for the soakaway. To the north-west was grave [40]. It truncated grave [46] and was, itself, cut by grave [30] (see below). It contained skeleton [42] which was probably buried in a coffin; although no nails or other evidence was recorded the skeleton was parallel-sided and the grave cut was square-ended (and somewhat longer than the skeleton). A small abraded sherd of Late Saxon pottery and a medieval coarseware sherd were found in the grave fill.

At the north end of the trench two more burials were recorded both of which extended outside the excavated area [72] and [69]. (These were unrelated stratigraphically with the other burials shown in Fig. 6 Trench 3 plan B but pre-dated one of those described below) The unfused, quite small, bones of juvenile skeleton [74] were found in the former and a displaced skull which was probably part of this skeleton was found within the area of the latter suggesting that the child burial had been disturbed, and thus post-dated by grave [69]. A small sherd of early medieval pottery was found in the fill of grave [69].

The latest burials in the area are shown in Figure 6 Trench 3 plan C. Graves [30] and [43] both extended beyond the east side of the trench and contained the lower parts of well-preserved skeletons ([32] (Plate 9) and [45] respectively). In both graves coffin nails indicated the method of burial (although these were not recorded in plan). A piece of probably post-medieval roof tile was found in grave [43]. Probable grave [49] extended into the extreme south-west corner of the trench; no burial evidence was revealed within it but its position suggested that it could be contemporary with the two graves to its north. In the north-east corner of the trench grave [75] was also of relatively late deposition. It probably cut grave [52] to its south and clearly overlay the child burial [74] described above.

The densely packed and intercutting graves in the area of Trench 3 made it difficult to distinguish the individual graves in section. In the central eastern part of the trench a concentration of disarticulated bone including a skull and some long bones [38] (not illustrated) probably represented the deliberate collection and reburial of bones during grave-digging. Its deposition probably related to the later phases of burial in the area. Abraded single sherds of Late Saxon and early medieval pottery and two medieval coarseware sherds were found in the disturbed soil in this area. Above the level of the excavated graves was mixed brown and orange brown silty sand churchyard soil with

some more sandy and some quite loose areas. This was overlaid by the brown sandy loam topsoil which was up to 0.30m in depth.

### **Trenches for drains and gullies (Figs 2 and 7, Plates 10-14)**

A downpipe gully was replaced in the corner between the west side of the porch and north aisle wall. The former gully had caused disturbance in the area and nothing of archaeological significance was seen. From this gully a drain ran, via inspection and filter chambers, to Soakaway [1]. The drain was a maximum depth of 0.50m and revealed only mixed churchyard soil and topsoil. Part of a possible skeleton was observed by the contractor at a depth of about a metre in the southernmost chamber but was left in place.

East of the porch, at the north side of the north aisle, part of a former drain gully was exposed in gully trench [6]. It was made of cream yellow bricks of 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>-century date [7]. It was removed by the contractors to make way for the new downpipe gully. Drain trench [8], which ran along the south side of the church, was 0.35m to 0.40m in depth, sloping down towards Soakaway [2] to the east. It exposed brown sandy silt churchyard soil beneath the topsoil.

Just to the north-east of the north transept chapel a masonry wall and footing crossed the drain trench approximately from north to south [9] (Figs 2 and 7). It was 1.37m in total maximum width and comprised stone cobbles in hard cream-coloured lime mortar. The stones in its west face were fairly large (<0.18m in size) and were coursed. The core of the wall consisted of irregularly placed smaller stones (<0.11m in size) and occasional flint fragments in mortar. The maximum depth/height of the observed wall was 0.70m with the upper 0.25m being bound ('almost faced') with mortar and, below this, the large cobbles having little mortar between them (Plates 10-12). The bottom of the footing was not reached. The putative 'faces' of the wall are shown as a heavy line in Figure 7. The wall formed a continuation northwards of some rough stone-work beneath the footings for the existing angled buttress and east wall of the north transept. This rubble masonry ran, however, on a very slightly different (NNE to SSW) orientation and was slightly to the east of the east wall of the existing transept chapel (Fig. 7).

A trench for a new gully at the west side of the vestry was observed [26]. The area had been heavily disturbed by previous work relating to the door there and nothing of archaeological significance was seen.

Trenches for new gullies to the east of the vestry and south of the chancel were observed. In both of these coursed footings were revealed to a depth of 0.30m below the existing ground level (0.60m below the top of the chamfered plinths). In trench [25] the lowest course of stone cobbles in dark cream-coloured lime mortar protruded from the wall by 80mm at a depth of 0.50m from the top of the plinth (Plate 13). Another course of cobbles was flush with the face of the bricks above. In trench [24] the lowest exposed part of the footing was of quite large blocks of chalk and sandstone the bottom of which was not seen at the depth reached (Plate 14). Above these were stone cobbles which were beneath the brick wall plinth. All of the exposed part of the footing was flush with the face of the plinth.

Unfortunately the archaeologist was not informed of the drain-digging on the south side of the church and the open trenches were not observed. It was possible to see the position of the new gullies and some of the backfilled trenches (Fig. 2) (but the trenches running south from the central part of the south aisle and from the chancel

are shown as they appeared on the architects plan and must be seen as approximate). It was reported by the contractor that no masonry remains were revealed in any of the trenches and that no *in situ* human remains were disturbed by the relatively shallow drain trenches.

## 6.0 The finds

by Sue Anderson

### Introduction

Table shows the quantities of finds collected during the fieldwork. A full quantification by context is provided in Appendix 3.

Find type	No.	Wt/g
Pottery	14	181
CBM	8	451
Glass	1	1
Clay pipe	2	9

Table 1. Finds quantities.

### Pottery

Fourteen sherds of pottery weighing 181g were collected from seven contexts. Table 2 shows the quantification by fabric, and a full quantification by context is included in Appendix 3.

Description	Fabric	No	Wt/g	MNV	Eve
St Neots Ware	STNE	2	2	2	
Early medieval ware	EMW	1	3	1	
Early medieval ware shelly	EMWS	1	2	1	
Medieval coarseware	MCW	7	114	7	
Glazed red earthenware	GRE	1	14	1	
Border ware	BORD	1	27	1	
English stoneware	ESW	1	3	1	
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>

Table 2. Pottery quantification by fabric.

Single small body sherds of Late Saxon St Neots Ware were found in each of layer [38] and grave fill [41]. Both were heavily abraded.

A small body sherd of handmade early medieval ware (11th–12th c.) in a medium sandy fabric, black externally and orange internally, was found in grave fill [69]. A shelly ware sherd of probable early medieval date was found in deposit [38].

A total of seven body and base sherds of medieval coarsewares were found unstratified in soakaways [1] and [2], in layer [38] and in grave fills [11] and [41]. Three were unprovenanced, but it seems likely that four sherds were from the Everton kilns in Bedfordshire, based on published fabric descriptions (Hassall 1976; Slowikowski 2011).

Unfortunately no identifiable forms were present to aid closer dating, but the Everton kilns are considered to be part of a late medieval tradition of reduced wares in the East Midlands, and are dated broadly to the late 14th–16th centuries.

Post-medieval wares comprised a body sherd of glazed red earthenware (16th-18th c.) with brown glaze on both surfaces from soakaway [2], a body sherd with a horizontal handle from a yellow-glazed Border Ware porringer or handled bowl (16th/17th c.) from soakaway [3], and a body sherd of English stoneware (19th c.) from soakaway [1]. All these were unstratified finds.

### **Ceramic Building Material (CBM)**

Eight fragments (451g) of CBM were collected (Appendix 4) from four contexts. They comprised fragments of one Roman tile, six plain roof tiles, and a floor tile.

The Roman tile, from soakaway [2] (unstratified), measured 29mm thick and was in a fine sandy calcareous-tempered fabric with a partly reduced core. A similar fabric had been used to make two plain roof tiles from soakaways [1] and [2] (unstratified), and these may be of medieval date. Fragments of tile recovered from fieldwalking near the Everton medieval kiln site were in a similar vesicular fabric, from which the calcareous lesions had been leached out (Slowikowski 2011, 81, tile fabric 3).

Three other roof tile fragments were collected from soakaway [1] (unstratified), and grave fills (11) and (44), all in fine sandy fabrics. One had a reduced core and may be medieval, whilst the others were fully oxidised and probably post-medieval.

A small fragment of Flemish floor tile of 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>-century date was found in soakaway [2] (unstratified). It was worn to only 15mm thick (tiles of this type are normally c.25mm thick) and had a thin deposit of glaze on the base.

### **Glass**

One small fragment of window glass was collected from grave fill [62]. It was a small triangular fragment with broken edges, 1.3mm thick, and in poor condition. It was probably of medieval date but no decoration was discernible.

### **Clay pipe**

Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem were recovered from soakaway trench [3] (unstratified) and grave fill [11]. Both had bore diameters of 2.5mm, suggesting a 17th/18th-century date.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

No archaeological features or deposits of definitely pre-Church date were discovered during archaeological monitoring of the drainage works. Fragments of a Roman tile and two sherds of Late Saxon pottery represent earlier activity in the vicinity of the church and two sherds of early medieval pottery may pre-date the earliest phase of the existing

building. All these add to the evidence already known from elsewhere around the area of the church (see above; para. 3.0).

Part of a wall and its footing were recorded immediately to the north-east of the north transept chapel. Some rough rubble masonry visible above ground at the base of the existing transept buttress can be seen to be a continuation of the excavated wall and it runs further southwards below the east wall of the transept and its footing. This rougher masonry is on a very slightly different alignment to the standing wall and the part exposed in the excavated trench emphasised this misalignment (which is, however, still reflected, to a slightly lesser degree, in the existing transept wall - see above, para.3.0). The original purpose of the excavated wall is uncertain. The north aisle, of 13th-century date, is one of the earliest parts of the existing church and the north transept chapel was built in the 14th century and 'remodelled' in the 15th century. It is thought by Gorton (2012, 13) that the consecration in 1490 of both the high altar and the north chapel may suggest that the remodelling had significantly altered the church. It seems unlikely that the excavated north to south wall related to the 13th-century north aisle; as the wall extends northwards of the north wall of the aisle itself and is slightly misaligned with it. It seems possible, however, that the excavated wall could relate to the original construction of the north transept chapel in the 14th-century.

The extent northwards of the excavated wall is unknown. It is possible that probing its line to the north might identify it. However, there is a gravestone immediately to the north of the new drain trench which might suggest that the wall does not continue (it seems unlikely that a grave would have been dug through these substantial masonry remains). Perhaps the excavated wall represents a former buttress and it and the rough masonry to the south was used as a footing for the remodelling of the chapel in the 15th-century.

A total of at least twenty-four burials were excavated from the small areas dug during the work at the church and between two and, possibly, six successive acts of burial were recorded within particular areas. None of the excavated burials were associated with gravestones (the trench being dug in a 'clear' area of the churchyard). The total number of burials within the areas of the trenches is uncertain, however, as others remained *in situ* below each of the excavated trenches. Nevertheless they demonstrate the density of burials within the churchyard. The nature of burial, which will have occurred continuously over many centuries, means that well defined 'phases' are hard to identify. Although aspects such as orientation, position in the churchyard, spacing, depth, burial type and other artefactual evidence may all be considered they do not provide incisive proof of date or contemporaneity.

Of particular note were the three burials which shared the same unusual orientation in Trench 3. Their spacing suggested that they were likely to have been buried at about the same time and, stratigraphically, they were clearly the earliest of the graves in the area. It was notable that none had any associated coffin nails or fittings although two of these burials had a fairly parallel-sided appearance which might suggest burial in a coffin. Evidence from other sites suggests that some coffins may have utilised only one or two nails or be peg-jointed (Rodwell 2012, 317, 318, fig. 310) but none of the three here were seen in full so it is difficult to interpret them more fully.

Most of the later burials in this trench, and those in the other trenches, had coffin nails associated with them suggesting that they were probably of post-medieval date (Roberts 2009, 50-51). It is noted that no nails were seen in the earliest of the graves in the north-west trench (and although only the west end of that grave was exposed it would seem likely that, had a coffin existed, nails would have been seen here). The black glassy

material seen below the skeletons in two graves was thought to represent a pitch sealant to the lower sides of the coffin. Such material was recorded in 19th-century coffins excavated elsewhere (Clough 2010) but it is unknown by this writer as to when this type of sealant was first commonly used.

The east to west orientation of the three earliest burials in the southern trench was, of all the burials excavated from any of the soakaway trenches, the least well aligned with the existing church which is not aligned on a true east to west orientation (Fig. 2). This might be significant – in terms of relating to an earlier church on the site - although it is noted that the orientation of the graves varied from trench to trench and that the coffined burial in the trench to the north-east of the chancel was on a very similar orientation to the three earlier burials to the south.

There was a greater concentration of graves in the area excavated to the south of the church and this is unsurprising, particularly as the trench was in the vicinity of both the chancel and the churchyard cross and these are usually considered to be areas popularly chosen for burial. It has been shown in some churchyards, however, that these factors may not have always been the most important affecting the choice of location of burial within churchyards (Daniell 1999, 99-102). Other locations as well as the position of family members were sometimes as (or more) important.

The apparent relative prevalence of juvenile burials in the southern trench is notable as they are often under-represented considering mortality rates during the medieval and post-medieval periods (Rodwell 2012, 316, Daniell 1999, 124). It is difficult to interpret the results from such a small excavated area but it might be that juveniles were buried in a particular area. The skeletal remains of very young children or babies were not found.

### ***Acknowledgements***

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The advice of Tim Reynolds (Diocesan Advisory Committee's archaeological advisor), Gethin Harvey (Nicholas Warns Architect Ltd) and Alec Hissett (Gamlingay PCC) is gratefully acknowledged.

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Archaeological monitoring and recording was by Sarah Bates and Simon Underdown. Heather Wallis prepared the Figures included in this report. The finds were examined and reported on by Sue Anderson.

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**OASIS ID: sarahbat1-202938**

### Project details

Project name	Gamlingay Church
Short description of the project	St Mary and All Saints' Church, Gamlingay, Cambs, monitoring drainage works in churchyard. . Part of a substantial mortared stone wall/footing was exposed in the drain trench immediately NE of the north transept. It ran roughly N to S and was seen to a be a continuation of a mass of rubble masonry at the foot of the transept's buttress and rougher stonework at the bottom of the transept's east wall. However, this rougher stonework, and the excavated wall, are slightly misaligned with the wall of the standing building. Perhaps it relates to the original 14th century transept which, documentary evidence suggests, was significantly remodelled to its present form in the 15th century. Footing of the vestry and chancel were recorded. The rest of the recorded evidence was funerary; a total of at least 24 burials were recorded in three trenches for new soakaways, most of them in a trench to the the south of the chancel. Of particular interest in that trench were three burials, clearly of earlier date, which were orientated at 45 degrees to the others. Evidence of coffins was seen in many of the graves but not in the three mentioned and neither set of graves in this trench aligned exactly with the existing church. Finds include two sherds of Late Saxon pottery and two of earlier medieval pottery. A few pieces of medieval and post-medieval pottery were collected. Ceramic building material includes part of a Roman tile, medieval and post-medieval roof tile fragments and a piece of medieval floor tile. There is also a small piece of probably medieval window glass and two pieces of clay pipe stem.
Project dates	Start: 10-02-2015 End: 28-02-2015
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ECB4364 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	WALL Medieval
Monument type	BURIAL Medieval
Monument type	BURIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval

Significant Finds	ROOF TILE Roman
Significant Finds	ROOF TILE Medieval
Significant Finds	ROOF TILE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	WINDOW GLASS Medieval
Significant Finds	CLAY TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE GAMLINGAY St Mary and All Saints' Church
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 241 522 52.1536950292 -0.185825283087 52 09 13 N 000 11 08 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Sarah Bates
Project brief originator	Diocesan Archaeologist
Project design originator	Sarah Bates
Project director/manager	Sarah Bates
Project supervisor	Sarah Bates
Type of sponsor/funding body	PCC
Name of sponsor/funding body	Gamlingay PCC

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Glass"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Glass", "Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic", "other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Miscellaneous Material", "Plan", "Section"

**Project  
bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Report on Archaeological Monitoring, St Mary the Virgin Church, Gamlingay, Cambridgeshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Bates, S.
Other bibliographic details	Report No. 17
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Sarah Bates
Place of issue or publication	Sarah Bates
Description	A4 grey literature report
Entered by	Sarah Bates (sj.bates@yahoo.co.uk)
Entered on	5 July 2015

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**Appendix 2: List of contexts**

Context	Type	Area	Category	Feature	Description
1	Trench	NW	Contractors trench		soakaway NW of church
2	Trench	NE	Contractors trench		soakaway NE of church
3	Trench	S	Contractors trench		soakaway S of church
4	Skeleton	1	Skeleton	5	in grave 5
5	Cut	1	Grave	5	grave only 0.5m from surface
6	Trench	N	Contractors trench		downpipe gully trench
7	Trench	6	Drain		former gully of cream bricks
8	Trench	N	Contractors trench		new drains N of nave and vestry
9	Masonry	8	Wall		N-S wall
10	Cut	1	Grave	10	grave
11	Deposit	1	Grave fill	10	grave fill
12	Skeleton	1	Skeleton	10	burial
13	Cut	1	Grave	13	grave
14	Deposit	1	Grave fill	13	grave fill
15	Skeleton	1	Skeleton	13	burial
16	Cut	1	Grave	16	grave
17	Deposit	1	Grave fill	16	grave fill
18	Skeleton	1	Skeleton	16	burial
19	Deposit	1	Coffin	16	pitch lining to coffin
20	Cut	2	Grave	20	grave
21	Deposit	2	Grave fill	20	grave fill
22	Deposit	2	Coffin	20	pitch lining to coffin
23	Skeleton	2	Skeleton	20	burial
24	Trench	NE	Contractors trench		downpipe gully trench NE chancel
25	Trench	NE	Contractors trench		downpipe gully trench E vestry
26	Trench	N	Contractors trench		downpipe gully trench W vestry
27	Cut	3	Grave	27	grave
28	Deposit	3	Grave fill	27	grave fill
29	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	27	burial
30	Cut	3	Grave	30	grave
31	Deposit	3	Grave fill	30	grave fill
32	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	30	burial
33	Cut	3	Grave	33	grave
34	Deposit	3	Grave fill	33	grave fill
35	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	33	burial
36	Cut	3	Grave	36	grave
37	Deposit	3	Grave fill	36	grave fill
38	Deposit	3	Layer		redeposited soil and HSR
40	Cut	3	Grave	40	grave
41	Deposit	3	Grave fill	40	grave fill
42	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	40	burial
43	Cut	3	Grave	43	grave
44	Deposit	3	Grave fill	43	grave fill
45	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	43	burial
46	Cut	3	Grave	46	grave
47	Deposit	3	Grave fill	46	grave fill
48	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	46	burial
49	Cut	3	Grave	49	probable grave
50	Deposit	3	Grave fill	49	fill of probable grave
51	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	75	burial
52	Cut	3	Grave	52	grave
53	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	52	burial
54	Deposit	3	Grave fill	52	grave fill
55	Deposit	3	Grave	55	grave
56	Deposit	3	Grave fill	55	grave fill
57	Cut	3	Grave	57	grave
58	Deposit	3	Grave fill	57	grave fill
59	Cut	3	Grave	59	grave

Context	Type	Area	Category	Feature	Description
60	Deposit	3	grave fill	59	grave fill
61	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	59	burial
62	Cut	3	Grave	62	grave
63	Deposit	3	Grave fill	62	grave fill
64	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	62	burial
65	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	76	burial
66	Cut	3	Grave	66	grave
67	Deposit	3	Grave fill	66	grave fill
68	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	66	burial
69	Cut	3	Grave	69	grave
70	Deposit	3	Grave fill	69	grave fill
71	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	69	burial
72	Cut	3	Grave	72	grave
73	Deposit	3	Grave fill	72	grave fill
74	Skeleton	3	Skeleton	72	burial
75	Cut	3	Grave	75	grave
76	Cut	3	Grave	76	grave
77	Master	3	Grave	77	grave with HSR left in situ
78	Master	1	Grave	78	unexcavated grave
79	Master	1	Grave	79	probable grave

### Appendix 3: Finds by context

Context	Pottery No.	Pottery Wt	CBM No	CBM Wt	Glass No	Glass Wt	CP No	CP Wt	Spotdate
1	2	48	2	85					19th c.
2	2	28	3	259					16th-18th c.
3	1	27					1	5	17th/18th c.
11	2	25	2	70			1	4	17th/18th c.
38	4	24							12th-14th c.
41	2	26							12th-14th c.
44			1	37					pmed?
N Side	1	3							11th-13th c.
W Side					1	1			med

### Appendix 4: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Type	No.	Wt/g	MNV	Form	Rim	Spotdate
1	MCW	U	1	29	1			12th-14th c.
1	ESW	D	1	19	1			19th c.
2	MCW	U	1	14	1			12th-14th c.
2	GRE	D	1	14	1			16th-18th c.
3	BORD	DH	1	27	1	porringer		16th-17th c.
11	MCW	B	1	19	1			12th-14th c.
11	MCW	D	1	6	1			12th-14th c.
38	STNE	U	1	1	1			9th-11th c.
38	EMWS	U	1	2	1			11th-12th c.
38	MCW	B	1	17	1			12th-14th c.
38	MCW	B	1	4	1			12th-14th c.
41	STNE	U	1	1	1			9th-11th c.
41	MCW	U	1	25	1			12th-14th c.
70	EMW	U	1	3	1			11th-13th c.

### Appendix 5: CBM

Context	Fabric	Form	No.	Wt	L	W	T	Abr	Notes	Date
1	fs	RTM	1	40					surface laminated, reduced core	med
1	fsc	RT	1	45					fine calc (leached), partial reduced core, poss RBT (see 2)	med?
2	fsc	RBT	1	178			29	+	fine calc (leached), partial reduced core	Rom
2	fsc	RT	1	56					fine calc (leached), corner frag	med?
2	fs	FFT	1	25			15+		worn, thin glaze on base	14-15
11	fsf	RT	2	70						pmed?
44	fsfe	RT	1	37					occ cq	pmed?

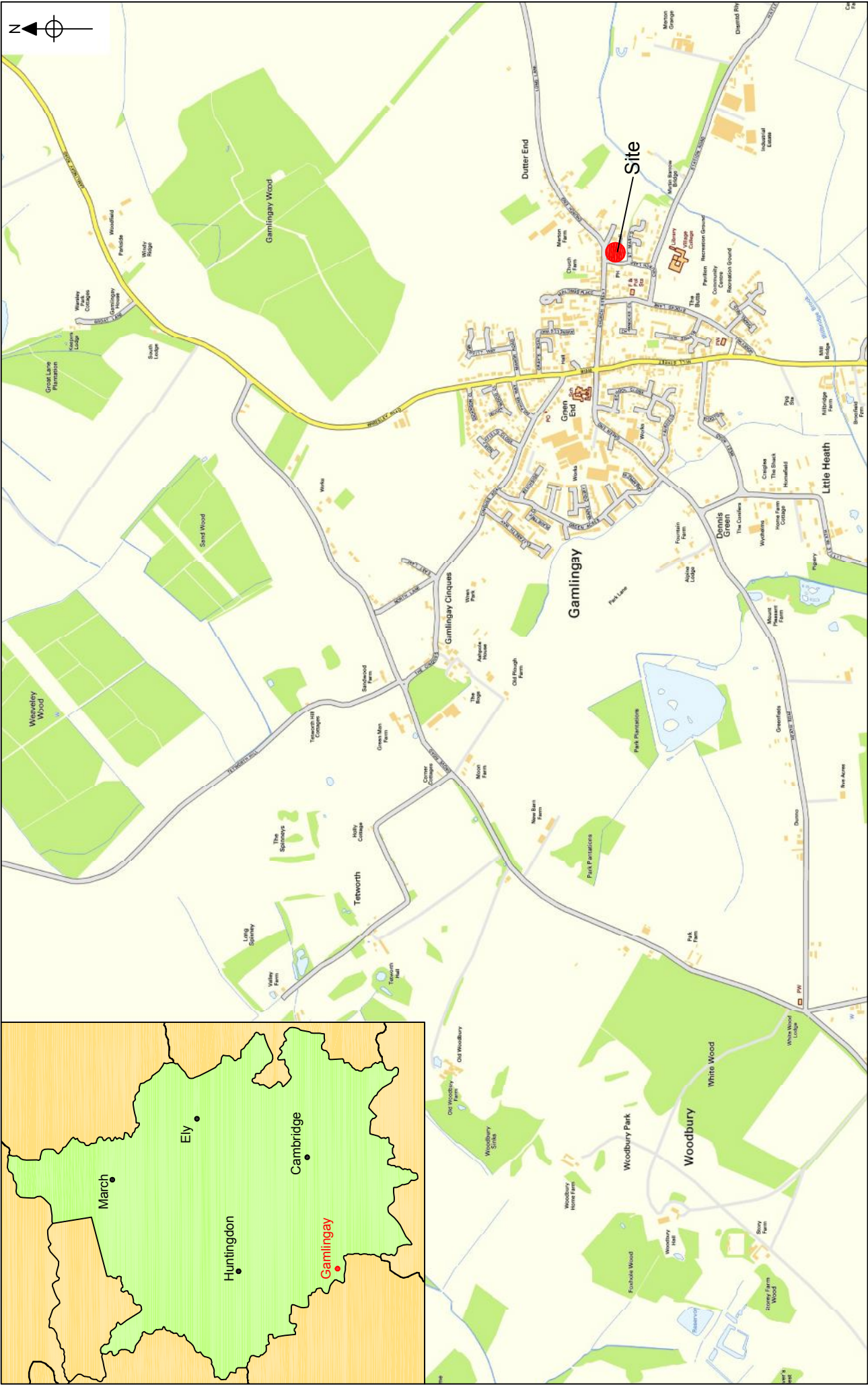


Figure 1. Site location.

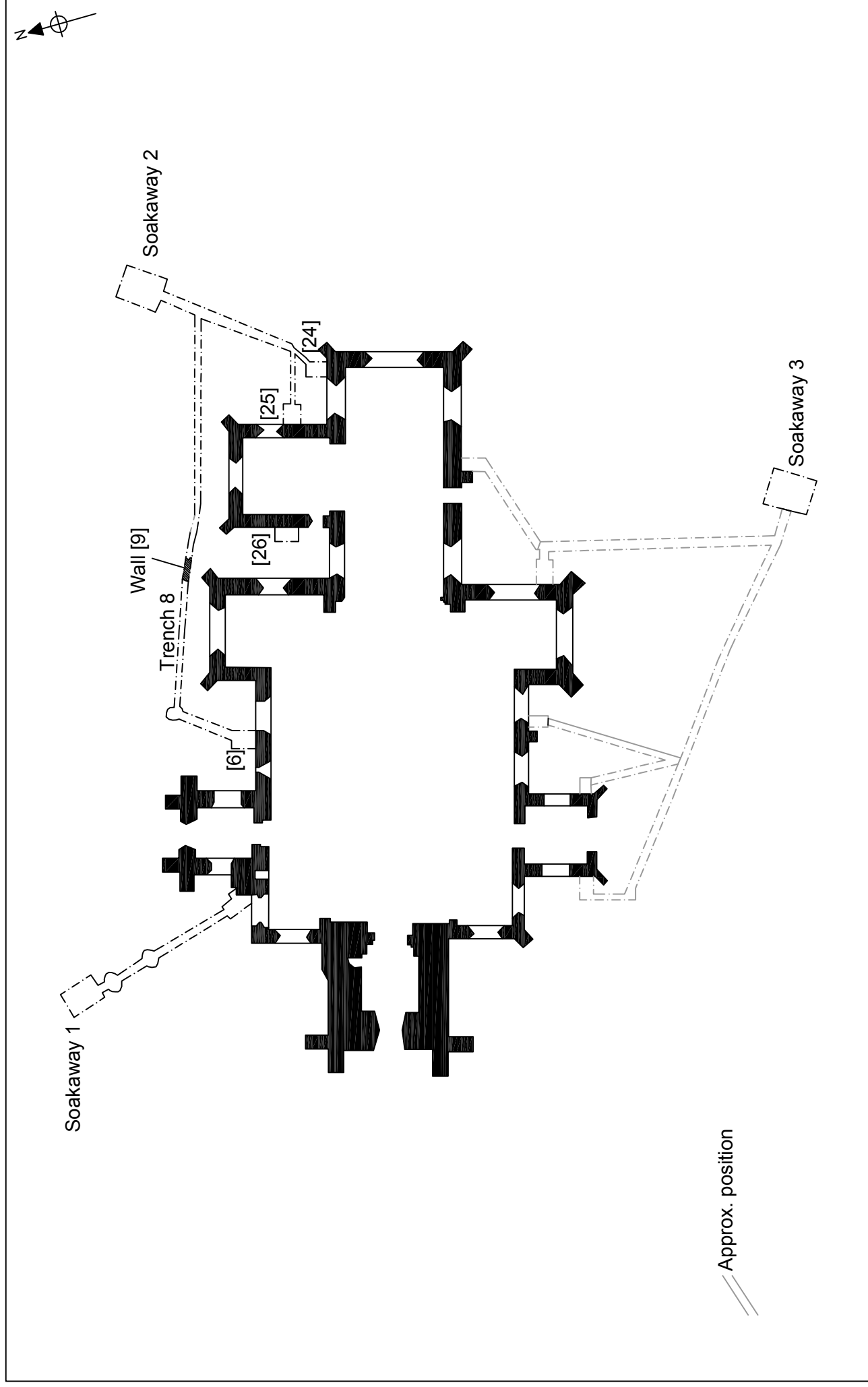


Figure 2. Plan showing gully and drain locations. Scale 1:300.



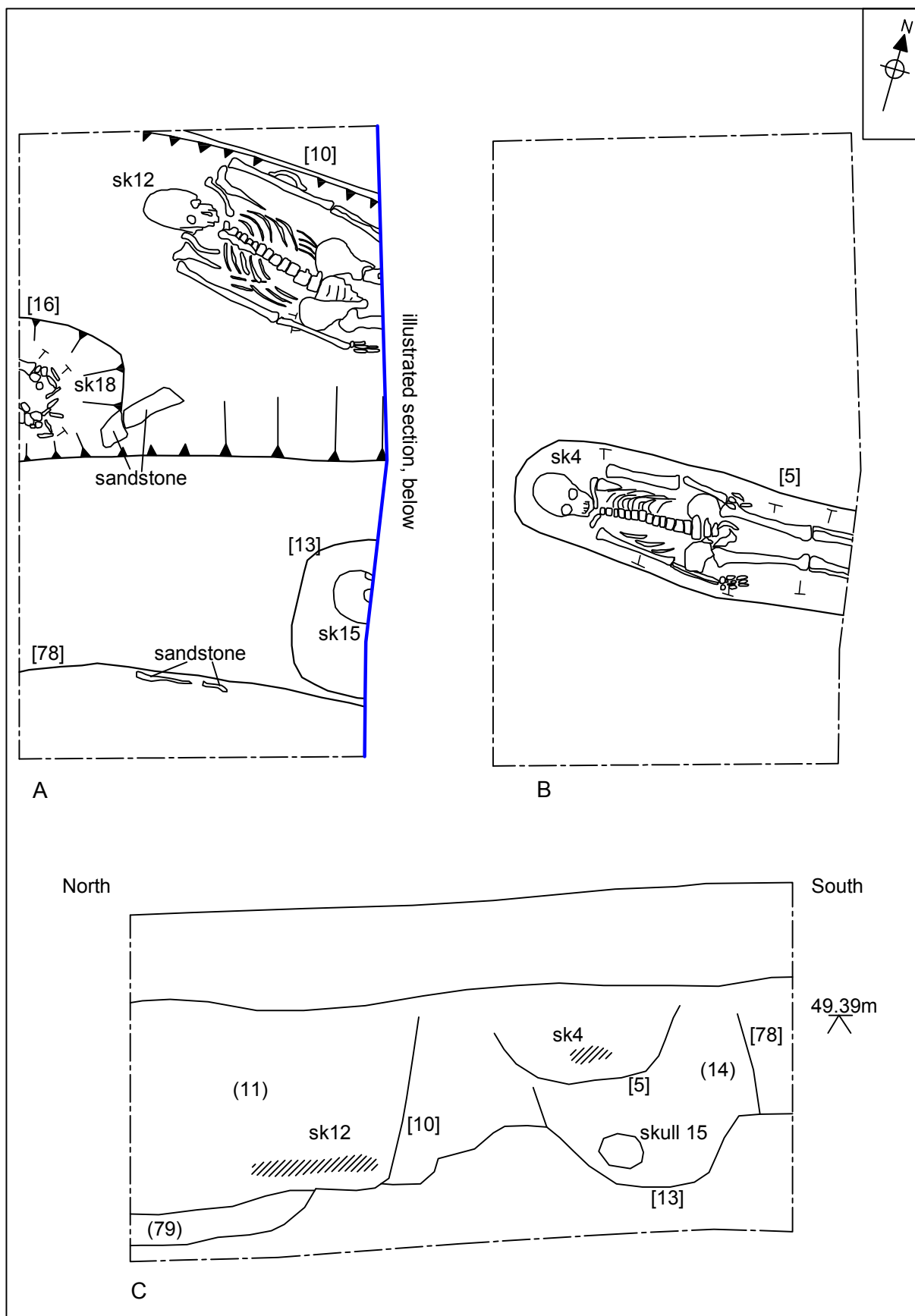


Figure 3. Trench 1; plans and west facing section. Scale 1:20.

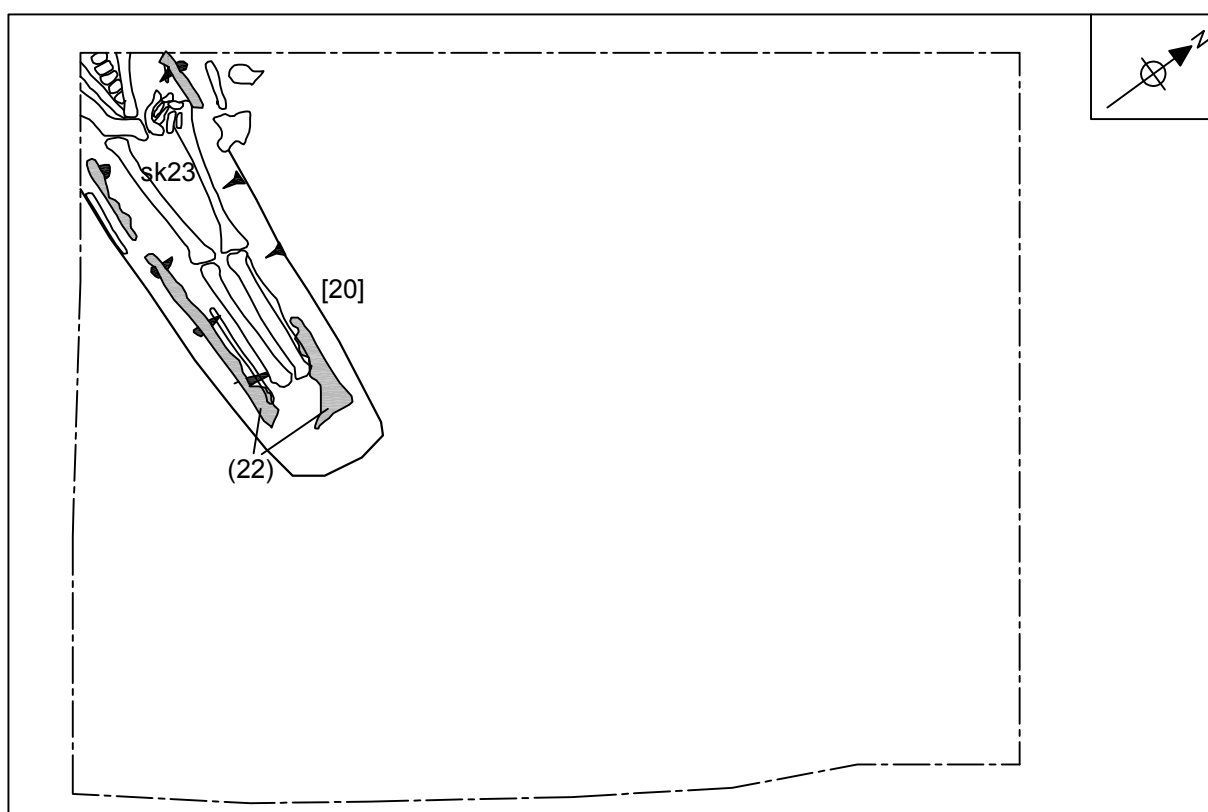


Figure 4. Trench 2 plan. Scale 1:20.

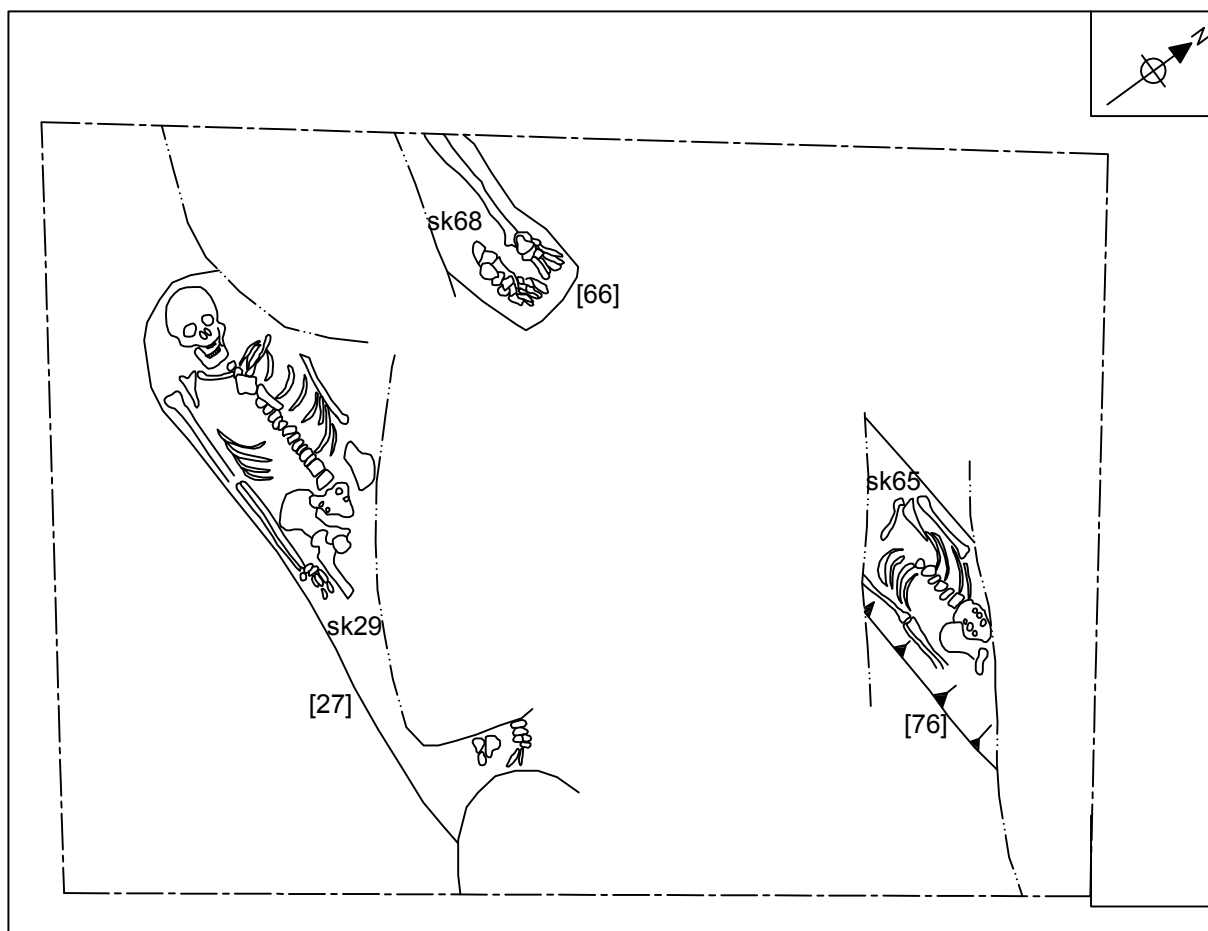


Figure 5. Trench 3 plan A. Scale 1:20.



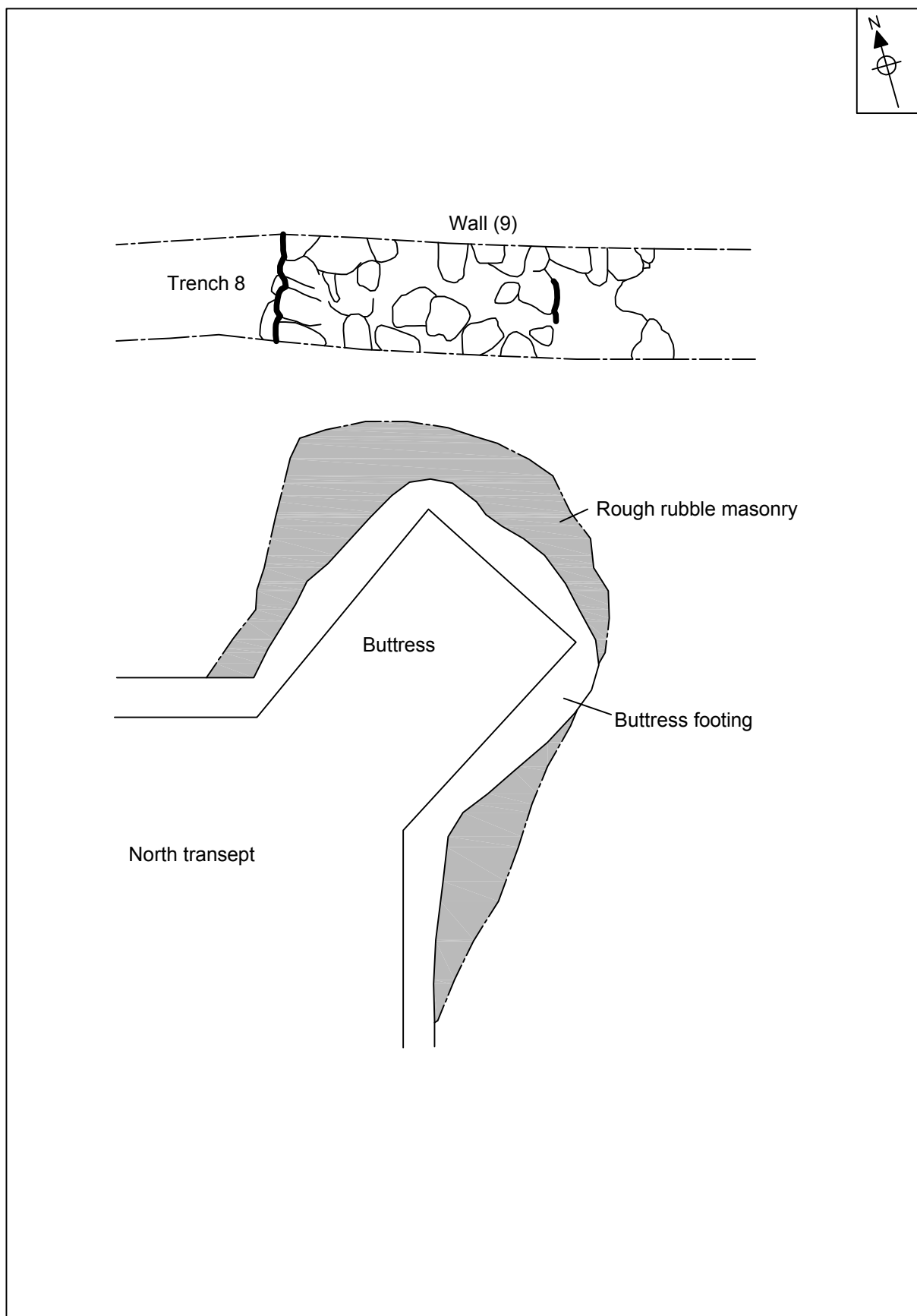


Figure 7. Plan showing wall (9) in relation to north transept. Scale 1:20.



Plate 1: Trench [1], skeleton [4], looking NW, 0.5m scale



Plate 2: Trench [1], skeleton [12], looking W, 0.5m scale



Plate 3: Trench [1], graves [13] and [10] excavated, grave [78] and skeleton [18] visible to left and rear respectively, looking W, 1m scale





Plate 4: Trench [2], skeleton [23], looking W, 1m and 0.5m scale



Plate 5: Trench [2], coffin [22], looking W, 0.5m scale



Plate 6: Trench [3], skeleton [29], looking W, 1m scale



Plate 7: Trench [3], skeletons [61] and [64], looking SW, 0.5m scale





Plate 8: Skelton [53] with (probably later) skeleton [64] partly exposed looking NE, 0.5m scale



Plate 9: Skeleton [32] looking NW, 1m scale





Plate 10: Wall [9] looking SW, 0.5m scale



Plate 11: Wall [9], from above, looking SSW, 1m scale





Plate 12: Wall [9], looking ESE, 0.5m scale



Plate 13: Gully trench [25], vestry wall footing, looking WNW, 0.5m scale

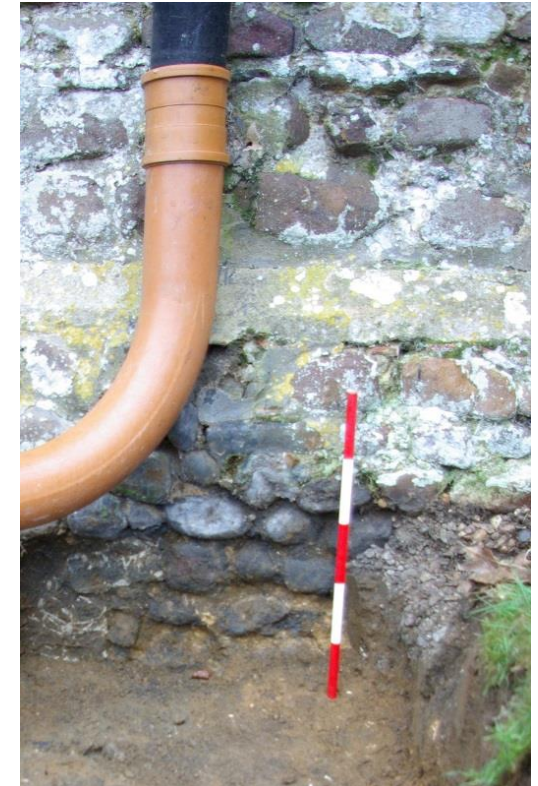


Plate 14: Gully trench [24], chancel wall footing, looking SSW, 0.5m scale