

**Report on Archaeological Monitoring
St Andrew's Church, Northwold, Norfolk**

NHER ENF 134700

Prepared for Northwold PCC

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Project name	St Andrew's' Church
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District	West Norfolk
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Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during the installation of a new drainage system at St Andrew's Church, Northwold. Some masonry footings were recorded which probably represented a former buttress to the chancel. Some brick footings to the west of the north doorway might be the remains of a small structure around the door.

Pottery recovered from the site consisted mostly of Late Saxon Thetford-type ware with a few sherds of early medieval ware and a single sherd of 13th/14th century pottery. Two pieces of a medieval 'cross slab', which together formed almost a complete coffin lid, were found in a drain trench close to the south porch where there they had, presumably, been used in the path there.

At least twelve burials were recorded, mostly in a soakaway trench to the south-west of the church. Most of them were lifted and left in the care of the church for reburial as were quantities of disarticulated human bone found during the work. Three burials in a trench to the north of the church were left *in situ* as was one of those in the south-west trench.

1.0 Introduction

St Andrew's Church is situated towards the east side of the built up area of Northwold village which is located in south-west Norfolk approximately mid-way between Thetford and Downham Market (TL 7558 9700) (Fig. 1).

Building and rainwater drainage improvements were being undertaken at the church by Eastern Foundry Lead Ltd on behalf of Nicholas Warns Architect Ltd for Northwold PCC. The work involved installing drains around the nave, chancel, south porch and north-east vestry. Archaeological work involved monitoring of all groundworks associated with the new drains (Fig. 2). This work accorded to a Project Design prepared by Sarah Bates to meet the requirements of a monitoring brief set by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (NHES Generic Brief for the Monitoring of Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control). Drainage works included new drainage gullies beneath downpipes and, from these, drains running to new soakaways dug in the churchyard.

Northwold PCC funded the repairs, improvements and archaeological work with the aid of an English Heritage Repair Grant for Places of Worship in England.

The archaeological archive will, on completion of the project, be deposited with the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards. An Oasis form is included below as Appendix 1.

2.0 Geology and topography

Northwold is situated within the western part of Breckland and, accordingly, soils are mostly acidic and sandy. To its west, however, are the peat fens which were drained during the post-medieval period (Williamson 2005). Small areas of fen occur within the parish (NHER Parish Summary). The underlying solid geology in the area of the site is chalk.

St Andrew's Church is located on High Street at a height of just under 9m OD (OS bench mark on west tower 8.88m). It is set centrally within its rectangular churchyard. About 100m north of the church a tributary of the River Wissey runs east-to-west.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Northwold is named from the Old English 'north woodland' and was well established by the 11th century; the settlement was extensively detailed in Domesday Book (1086) and although the church itself is omitted it is mentioned in contemporary documents (Williamson 1993, 154) and the Domesday entry for Nortwalde states that 'St Ethedreda had the jurisdiction and the patronage' (Norris 2003). This indicates the existence of a pre-Conquest church and its link with Ely Abbey. The church was rebuilt in the 13th century and the fine workmanship may have been influenced by the patronage of Hugh of Northwold who became eighth Bishop of Ely in 1229. The church today comprises nave with north and south aisles, chancel with north vestry, west tower and south porch (Fig. 2, Plate 1).

The Norfolk Historical Environment Record (NHER) records St Andrew's Church as dating mostly to the 13th to 15th century and mentions its impressive tower and carved heads on the quoins and one on the exterior of the chancel. It also notes the existence in the church of festooned stiffleaf decoration alike that in the choir, built by Bishop Northwold, at Ely Cathedral. Such decoration is only known at one other Norfolk church, West Walton, which also had links to Ely Abbey. This might suggest that Ely masons carried out the work at Northwold. There is also a fine Easter Sepulchre (of 14th or 15th century date) on the north wall of the chancel. The NHER also mentions that human bones, found during roadworks outside the church, suggest that the road has encroached upon the churchyard.

A report written by Hugh Richmond in advance of the present repair work describes the development of the church and details the condition of the church and proposed repairs (Richmond 2013). Aspects of Richmond's report pertinent to the archaeological monitoring work are summarised in the following two paragraphs.

The three eastern bays of the nave arcades are considered to be of 13th-century date and, along with the heavily restored south doorway, represent the earliest surviving fabric. The arcade piers show that the, aisled, nave originally (in the 13th-century) extended further west. It seems that in the earlier part of the 14th century the south porch was built, new windows (now replaced by 19th-century windows) were installed in the chancel and aisles and the aisles raised in height to accommodate them. In advance of the present repair work some render was removed from the north aisle wall in an area above the north door. This showed the 13th-century aisle wall, of flint, extending up to about the level of the top of the present windows. Above that clunch blocks had been used to raise the height of the wall (and on top of that, the later crenellated brick parapet). In the later 15th century major changes included the building of the present chancel arch, tower, clerestory and nave roof. It seems that the fourth bay of the nave was demolished to enable construction of the tower and then rebuilt (it is different in style and shorter than those to its east).

A drawing of the church done by R. Ladbroke in c.1820 suggests that some significant changes to the building occurred during the 19th century (Plates 1 and 2). These include alterations to the windows in the clerestory but most notable are changes to the east end of the church. Pevsner states that the chancel was partly rebuilt in 1840 (Pevsner and Wilson 1999, 575) and the Ladbroke drawing shows three bays (compared to the two seen today) as well as a lower pitched roof and plain parapets. The drawing also shows a gabled north vestry, different from the higher parapeted one seen today in the north wall of which the north-west quoins of the former building can be seen. The 19th-century vestry was extended 1.8m to the west of these quoins and enabled a new doorway into the chancel. Richmond suggests that this might reflect the fact that former access from the chancel to the vestry had been to the east of the Easter Sepulchre and was lost due to the shortening of the chancel and rebuilding of the vestry. He also notes the absence of a piscina which may be further evidence for the chancel having been shortened. Richmond also describes a doorway in the north wall of the chancel which was blocked by the installation of the sepulchre (and also by the north south wall represented by the surviving NW quoins – see above). This suggests that an earlier compartment existed to the north of the chancel, one which pre-dated both the sepulchre and the vestry shown in the Ladbroke drawing.

Other sites and finds recorded in the NHER within a 500m radius of the church include some prehistoric struck flint and Iron Age and Roman pottery found at a site just over 300m to the south-east and Roman coins and other metal finds found from an area approximately 230m to the north-west of the church. Pottery of Middle and Late Saxon, medieval and post-medieval date also came from the former site, and a Late Saxon brooch, a harness pendant, pin and coin of medieval date, and a post-medieval mount from the latter. Other sites listed in the NHER within the search area include buildings of post-medieval date, some of them fine large houses.

The site of a medieval moated manor is about 600m to the north-west of the church and, just to the north-east of that, a rectangular earthwork, possibly a medieval moat is now built over but was previously recorded from aerial photographs.

Faden's Map of Norfolk (1797) shows the church at the east end of the village and quite close to the edge of Northwold Common. The tithe map of c. 1840 shows the former common as enclosed fields and plots and the village as more built up (Norfolk County Council 2012).

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.

Due to the presence of scaffolding the archaeological monitoring work was undertaken in two stages. The work around the west and central part of the church was carried out in July 2015 while that around the eastern end of the church occurred in October 2015.

The location of the drains and gully trenches was recorded; where relevant, gully trenches were assigned a context number for ease of recording. 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.

No deposits required sampling for environmental assessment.

Site conditions were mainly good; some heavy rain in October delayed site work slightly but water drained quickly away and recording was unaffected.

5.0 Results (Figs. 2 -8)

(Context numbers are shown in square brackets and listed in Appendix 2. Context numbers allocated as trench numbers were also used for unstratified finds from those trenches. Depths given for skeletons are measured from the surface to the top of skull/pelvis/feet).

Soakaway [1] (Figs 2, 3 and 4, Plates 3-5)

Soakaway [1] was located to the south-west of the church. It ran from roughly east to west, was 3.40m in length, 1.20m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.30m. A minimum of eight skeletons or part-skeletons were recorded all of which lay facing east and one of which was left *in situ* as it was below the level required for the soakaway. It was difficult to provide a definitive stratigraphy for the burials due to their inter-cutting nature, the similar grave fills and the presence of a large disturbance in the south-west part of the trench. Unless described, grave cuts and fills were not individually identified. The burials are described here in what is considered to be the most likely sequence. Finds from the various (unidentified) fills were collectively assigned to context [1] and include sherds of Late Saxon and early medieval pottery, part of a clay tobacco pipe of likely 16th or 17th century date, a small piece of iron slag and an oyster shell.

In the central part of the trench at a depth of 1.15m-1.20m was skeleton [28] (Fig. 3a, Plate 3). Surviving *in situ* were the left arm and parts of left ribs and pelvis, part of right arm, the upper parts of the femurs and the mandible. The cranium may have been that seen, displaced, in the region of its pelvis. The skeleton was truncated to the east and south (by grave [59] and feature [25] respectively). To the west and north no edges of a grave were discernible. Some of the bones from skeleton [28] were not fully fused; it was probably a juvenile or young adult.

At the west end of the trench were two adult burials [23] and [24] which lay close together at a depth from the surface of 1.15m- 1.25m (Fig. 3a, Plate 3). The stratigraphic

relationship between these was unclear; although an interface [60] was seen between the two skeletons it was uncertain firstly, whether this was the cut of a grave or a coffin stain and secondly, with which skeleton it was associated. Skeleton [23] was the northernmost of the two burials. Most of the skull, vertebrae and right side of the skeleton was recovered but its left side was outside the trench and was left *in situ* as was its lower right leg which was below the formation level for the soakaway. This skeleton had associated with it a heavily decayed iron coffin plate which covered much the torso area, and some coffin nails (position unrecorded). To its south skeleton [24] comprised skull and upper right part including arm. The skeleton was truncated very sharply to its south by feature [25]. The east end of [24] was missing but the cause of this was unclear; it may also have been disturbed by [25]. A coffin handle found just to the south of skeleton [24] might have been within, or disturbed by, feature [25].

In the north-east corner of the trench was a series of burials the earliest of which was probably represented by the skull and a few bones of skeleton [21] (shaded grey in Fig. 3a). Most of this skeleton to the north, outside the trench. The skull seemed quite small and might have been from a juvenile although this is uncertain. Immediately to the south of skeleton [21] was skeleton [22] the skull of which was missing and the right side of which was truncated to the south by grave [59]. Coffin nails were associated with burial [22]. Skeletons [21] and [22] were recorded at the same depth from the surface (1.05m-1.12m) but during excavation it was felt that burial [22] post-dated [21].

The north side of grave [59] was discernible in the bottom of the excavated soakaway and, within it, parts of the skull, vertebrae, pelvis and femurs of skeleton [29] were exposed at a depth of about 1.25m (Fig. 3a). They were all below the depth required for the soakaway, however, and were left *in situ* and re-covered with a layer of soil.

At a higher level in the north-east corner of the trench were two more burials. Adult skeleton [15] was within putative grave cut [61] (Fig. 3b, Plate 4). The skeleton, at a depth of 0.90m-1.05m, appeared to be truncated by another grave to the north of the trench; its right leg and, probably, its upper right part was missing. One oddity was a ?left humerus which was the same length as, and lay neatly beside, the *in situ* right humerus. It is uncertain whether it was from the same skeleton and, if so, how it became placed so neatly where it was found. It is probably more likely to have belonged to one of the underlying burials which had been disturbed by the burial of [15] - it is not uncommon to find, even articulated, 'odd' bones, which have been disturbed by later burials, seemingly quite carefully placed beside a skeleton (Rodwell 2012, 313).

Directly above skeleton [15], and within grave [9], was skeleton [10] (Fig. 3c, Plate 5). The skull, vertebrae, much of the right side and part of the left leg of the skeleton remained in place at a depth of 0.75m-0.80m. The upper left side was missing, truncated in the same way, although further southwards, as skeleton [15] below it. This supports the suggestion that another grave existed to the north and another grave was seen in section [16] (Fig. 4). It was filled with brown sandy silt [17] with occasional small flints and pieces of disarticulated bone and the corner of a decayed coffin [18] which just extended into the corner of the trench. It was probably this grave that had truncated the earlier burials.

In the south-west part of soakaway [1] a large feature [25] had truncated the burials recorded to its north (and possibly to its east) and was thought likely to be another burial feature of some kind (Fig. 3a). Its fill was a quite light brown sandy loam which was fairly loose with some voids within it. It included chalk flecks and occasional flecks of brick or

tile. The north-west side of trench (above skeleton [23]) collapsed after machining (Fig. 4) and it seemed likely that collapsed soil was the upper fill of this large feature.

Above the infilled and disturbed brown sandy silt grave fills (which were not individually recorded) was brown sandy loam topsoil [64]. A narrow band of chalk [63] seen at a depth of about 0.20m from the surface (maximum thickness of 0.10m) and running most of the length of the trench was seen during machining and represented a former path (visible in Plate 5). Above it, was the make-up and surface of the present, wider, gravelled area [62].

Soakaway [2] and filter trench [51] (Figs 2 and 5)

Soakaway [2] was located to the south-east of the chancel. It ran from roughly north to south, was 2.30m in length, 1.20m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.00m. About 0.5m to its north a circular trench [51] 0.5m in diameter was dug to a depth of 1.0m to position a filter for the drain.

The earliest deposit seen in the soakaway trench was an area of cream sandy lime mortar with chalk flecks and occasional small flints [56] (Fig. 5). This was exposed at a depth of 1.10m in a small area at the south end of the trench. Very similar material [55] was seen at a depth of 1.0m in trench [51] to the north. A small sample of the material was retained and identified as probable mortar, possibly of medieval date. It seems most likely that these deposits represent building waste which was dumped in the churchyard either during or following construction work. Deposit [56] was cut by the bottom of a grave [52]. On the south side of grave cut [52] were the *in situ* traces of a wooden coffin and an iron coffin handle (Fig. 5).

Nothing else of significance was seen in soakaway [2.] Disarticulated human bone was found (mostly at a depth of about 0.80m) including parts of at least two skulls but no other grave cuts were identified. Unstratified finds, numbered [41] from the lower part of the trench, comprise sherds of Late Saxon pottery. From the bulk of the trench finds were numbered [2] and include Late Saxon and early medieval pottery, some fragments of lava quern which may be of Saxon date, and a piece of 19th/20th-glass.. Above the mixed churchyard soils was the brown sandy loam topsoil which was about 0.35m in depth and included roots and some fragments of bone.

In trench [51] legs bones of an articulated skeleton were recorded at a depth of 0.90m (Plate 6). They were removed from the trench for reburial. Two sherds of Late Saxon pottery, a fragment of medieval roof tile and a small piece of limestone with a flat surface were found in the soil excavated beneath the bones.

Soakaway [3] (Figs. 2 and 6)

Soakaway [3] was located north of the nave towards its west end. It ran from roughly north-east to south-west, was 3.0m in length, 1.40m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.00m.

In the bottom of the trench three east-facing burials were identified although none of them were fully exposed by excavation as they lay below the depth required for the soakaway. Parts of skulls, ribs, and the pelvis of one skeleton were identified as well as the outlines of the grave cuts (Fig. 6). The burials were left *in situ* and re-covered with a layer of soil.

The grave cuts were not easily identifiable in the trench sections light brown sandy silty loam churchyard soil with occasional flints and flecks of mortar was about 0.60m in depth [8]. Overlaying it a layer of brick and mortar rubble was recorded in the west-facing section and extending about 0.40m into the trench [7]. It must have represented building debris dumped and spread here; possibly during the building work in the 19th century. Above it was grey brown sandy loam topsoil [6] up to 0.35m in depth.

Soakaway [4] (Fig. 2)

Soakaway [4] was located north of the chancel. It ran from north-east to south-west, was 2.0m in length, 1.30m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 0.90m. Nothing of interest was seen in this trench and only a small amount of disarticulated human bone was found. Churchyard soil and topsoil layers the same as those in soakaway [3] were recorded.

Soakaway [5] (Fig. 2)

A small soakaways [5] was located east of the chancel to the north. It ran from roughly north-west to south-east, was 1.20m in length, 0.75m wide and was dug to a maximum depth of 1.30m without the archaeologist being present. In the south-west-facing trench section some orangey brown sandier soil appeared to have been cut through to its west by at least one grave which contained very loose brown loamy soil. In the bottom of the section there were some collapsed or voided areas but the contractors reported that only a few disarticulated bones had been recovered. Burials might have been disturbed but, on the other hand, it had rained heavily prior to archaeological monitoring and the soft soil would have washed out from the loose areas of grave fill very easily, even without the removal of bones.

Trenches for down-pipe gullies (Figs 2, 7 and 8)

Nine gullies were installed by the contractors below down-pipes around the church. The trenches for these were dug against the walls of the building and were approximately 1.20 x 0.75m in size and their upper parts were dug to a depth of between 0.25m and 0.35m and often revealed part of the church footing. Within each trench a deeper circular hole (approximately 0.75m deep) was dug for the placing of the gully pot and sometimes exposed other deposits. Some gully trenches, where nothing of archaeological interest was seen, were not allocated context numbers.

Gully trench [11] (Figs 2 and 7a)

This downpipe gully was immediately to the east of the south porch. The church footing [12] was revealed beneath the south aisle wall. A very small area was hand-excavated by the archaeologist to reveal the top of a chalk block (Fig. 7a). Above that, and just below the bottom of the existing downpipe a change in the footing was seen. To the west roughly coursed medium to large flints with degraded lime mortar and soil between them were exposed with some slightly smaller more angular flints higher up. To the east was a single large stone block with a dressed face. The position of this block does not appear to be of significance in relation to the building. It was probably a convenient fragment, reused in, and offering a degree of structure to, the footing.

The soil removed from the trench was light brown slightly clayey sandy silt (with slightly darker more greyish brown soil beneath, and probably relating to, the existing downpipe). In the south part of the small trench was an accumulation of flint and cream brick rubble which might have been dumped here, in the corner beside the porch, during previous building work.

Gully trench 13 (Fig. 2)

Trench [13] was located towards the south-east corner of the south aisle. Part of the brick surround for the recently removed drain survived against the wall of the church and nothing of archaeological interest was exposed.

Gully trench 14 (Fig. 2)

Trench [14] was located immediately to the west of the south porch. The flint footing of the aisle was observed, it consisted of medium to large flints very similar to those in the western part of gully trench [11]. It was not recorded in detail and nothing else was of interest.

Gully trench [30] (Figs 2, 7b and 8a, Plate 7)

Trench [30] was located just to the west of the doorway in the wall of the north aisle. At a depth of 0.15m below the existing ground surface were some large chalk blocks which were neatly 'coursed' and extended downwards to a depth of 0.55m [38]. (Plate 7 shows only the upper chalk blocks while Fig. 7b shows the blocks exposed to what was almost certainly their full depth). The chalk blocks protruded very slightly from the face of the above footing and wall. On top of the chalk blocks some roughly coursed medium-sized flints [39] (some cobble-like and some more angular, within soil and degraded lime mortar) formed the upper part of the wall footing.

In the east side of this gully trench a brick feature was recorded [31] (Fig. 7b). It extended about 0.80m from the wall of the north aisle and appeared to be the north-west corner of something. The south to north length was two bricks wide but it was more substantial (although only partly revealed) at its north end where it turned at a right angle (Fig. 8a, Plate 7). The bricks were light yellow/cream coloured, but, unfortunately, a brick was not retained for dating. Beneath the coursed bricks was a slight flint footing. Although it was too close to the church wall to represent a porch it is possible that it may have supported, a simple (?timber) shelter around the doorway. The more substantial part may have supported a corner post for such a structure around the door. Alternatively the bricks may represent some other kind of structure. (The feature remained *in situ*; the gully pot was placed immediately to its west).

The soil removed from the gully trench was brown sandy silt [33] with occasional inclusions of flint and mortar. It was less disturbed closer to the church wall but not significantly different. An existing drain was revealed in the north side of the trench.

Gully trench [34] (Fig. 2)

Trench [34] was located to the east of doorway in the wall of the north aisle. The footing of the aisle was exposed to a depth of about 0.40m. The lowest part (0.15m) was of

chalk blocks (as in trench [30]) but which protruded further (about 80mm) north of the face of the wall. Their bottom was not reached. Above them roughly coursed flints were 'flush' with the church wall. The footings were not allocated separate context numbers in this trench. The soil removed from the trench was also similar to that in trench [30]. It was less disturbed near the church but contained more mortar rubble (which probably related to a previous drain gully) to the north.

Gully trench 35 (Fig. 2, Plate 8)

Trench [35] was located close to the east end of the north aisle. The wall footings revealed were very similar to those seen in trench [34]. The chalk blocks were revealed to a greater depth (0.35m) and protruded slightly further (0.12m) from the bottom of the wall and flints above them (Plate 8). The blocks were obscured to the east by an existing drain gully.

Gully trench [43] (Figs 2 and 8, Plate 9)

Trench [43] was located immediately east of the central buttress on the south side of the chancel. In the bottom of the deeper hole dug for the gully pot was a deposit of mid to light brown silty [49] in which was found a sherd of Late Saxon pottery. The deposit ran underneath the bottom of the buttress footing (at a depth of 0.70m from the bottom of the chamfer of the buttress plinth). Above this a layer of light brown silty sand with common mortar rubble [48] overlaid by brown silty sand with occasional flecks of mortar [45] was seen to the east of the buttress footing. Both deposits were fairly uncompacted and two fragments of medieval window glass came from [48]. These deposits were cut to their east by [50] which was the construction cut for a footing of some kind (Fig. 8b, Plate 9). At its west side some bricks formed a regular north to south 'wall' [46] only part of which was exposed - it probably continued northwards as far as the chancel wall. Immediately to the east of the bricks (seemingly part of the same 'structure') was a mass of very solid brick and chalk rubble in a hard whitish mortar [47] which continued to the south-east where a probable 'corner' seen in drain trench [40] appeared to represent the southern end of the feature. Part of a medieval brick came from near the bottom of 'footing' [47] and a fragment of chalk with tooling from a rounded chisel also came from the footing. Other bricks, from [46], were of medieval and probable post-medieval date. It seems likely that the bricks formed the face, and the rubble represented the core of a former buttress.

The footing of the existing chancel buttress was 0.50m deep and comprised three 'layers' of mortared flints (which became progressively more regular towards the top) above which the face of the chamfered plinth was (mostly) below the present ground level. No clear construction cut for the lower footing of the existing buttress was identified (although a deposit of mortar-rich debris [44] may have related to the construction of the buttress (see Fig. 8c and Plate 9)

After it had been archaeologically recorded, the masonry was removed by the contractors to the 0.40m depth required for the drain.

Other gully trenches (Fig. 2)

Two gully trenches on the north side of the vestry were observed but nothing of archaeological interest was seen. Both areas had been disturbed by previous drainage features which partly survived against the bottom of the church wall.

Drains (Fig. 2)

The trenches for the drains which ran from all the gully trenches to the new soakaways were 0.30m wide and between 0.30m and 0.60m deep. Little of archaeological interest was seen within them; context numbers were not usually allocated. Where they extended below the topsoil they cut into the slightly sandier underlying churchyard soils. Two areas of bricks revealed at a depth of about 0.40m in the bottom of the trench [19] to the south-east of the south aisle related to former drains (their position is in black on Fig. 2).

In trench [20] which ran in front of the south porch within the existing gravelled path area, the underlying soil was loose orangey brown silty sand with occasional rubble. Just to the south-west of the porch two large pieces of a stone slab [36] were found face downwards. They were joining parts of a medieval coffin lid with a carved cross (see below and Plate 10). Also found in the trench was a piece of building stone, possibly a large coping stone, with inscribed numbers and letters (see below and Plate 11). The pieces of stone (perhaps originally including a near-complete grave slab) were probably used in a former churchyard path.

Of less note was a small area of crushed chalky material which was seen in the sides of drain trench [40], to the south of the chancel (its position, not illustrated, was approximately opposite the easternmost window and at a depth of about 0.20m). It was about 0.15m thick and very similar to the chalk deposit [63] in soakaway [1]. Like that, it probably represented a former path.

Test holes to the south-east of the chancel (Fig. 2)

Additional to the drainage works three very small test holes were hand-dug by the contractor immediately to the south-east of the chancel. This work was carried out to investigate the possible presence of the former east wall of the church and was at the instigation of Hugh Richmond. The work was undertaken in the presence of Hugh Richmond and Sarah Bates and following agreement with Nicholas Warns Architect Ltd, Northwold PCC and NHES.

Trench [57] ran from north-east to south-west and was 1.10 x 0.50m in size. It was dug to a depth of 0.38m and probed a further 0.20m. In the lower part of the trench was soft brown sandy loam with occasional small flints and flecks of mortar. Above that was orangey brown silty sand (up to 0.18m deep) which was make up material for the existing path. A line of pantiles ran across the north-west corner of the trench at a depth of 0.18m. They were neatly laid and probably related to a former drainage gully or to other services. There was no sign in the trench, or from probing the soft soil, of a wall or footing or any evidence (rubble) to suggest that one had been removed. Two sherds of Late Saxon pottery and a piece of post-medieval window glass came from the trench.

Another smaller trench [58] was dug slightly further to the east and an even smaller one to the north-west. Soft brown sandy loam topsoil in trench [58] was revealed to a depth

of 0.35m (and probed another 0.40m). The small ‘trench’ closer to the church showed only modern disturbance relating to former services and a tomb.

6.0 The finds

by Sue Anderson

Introduction

Table 1 shows the quantities of finds collected during the work. A full quantification by context is provided in Appendix 3.

Find type	No.	Wt/g
Pottery	22	125
CBM	6	4620
Stone	8	296
Mortar?	c.20	87
Clay pipe	1	4
Glass	4	11
Slag	1	29
Shell	1	32

Table 1. Finds quantities.

Pottery

Twenty-two sherds of pottery weighing 125g were collected from six contexts. Table 2 shows the quantification by fabric, and a summary quantification by context is included in Appendix 4.

Description	Fabric	No	Wt/g	Eve	MNV
Thetford-type ware	THET	17	84	0.05	16
Early medieval ware	EMW	3	30	0.13	3
Grimston-type coarseware	GRCW	1	7		1
Grimston ware	GRIM	1	4	0.06	1

Table 2. Pottery quantification by fabric.

The majority of pottery recovered was Thetford-type ware of Late Saxon (L.9th-11th c.) date, found in all six contexts which produced pottery. These fragments were generally body sherds, but there was one small piece of a sagging base from layer [49] and a rimsherd from a large jar was found in soakaway [1]. A small sherd from soakaway [2] was decorated with rouletting.

Three pieces of handmade early medieval ware were recovered from soakaways [1] and [2]. One fragment was a simple everted jar rim, and there was a sherd from a bowl with a flat-topped everted rim. These sherds date to the 11th-13th centuries. A body sherd of Grimston-type coarseware of similar date was also found in soakaway [1].

A small rimsherd from a green-glazed Grimston ware jug with a collared rim was recovered from soakaway [1]. This type dates to the 13th/14th century.

Ceramic Building Material (CBM) and ?mortar

Six fragments (4620g) of CBM were collected from two contexts (Appendix 5). They comprised four brick fragments and two pieces of roof tile.

Three bricks were collected as samples from brick feature [46]. They were in a variety of types and sizes and it seems likely that they were re-used in this structure. All were covered in fine white or cream mortar with few visible aggregates. One fragment of ?early brick was yellow with a dark grey vesicular core and measured 110mm wide by 37mm thick. Two near-complete bricks were in white gault clay fabrics with streaks of red clay. These measured 218 x 110 x 41mm and 224 x 115 x 47mm. All four bricks were handmade and poorly finished. Another fragment, from 'footing' [47], was a pink brick in an estuarine clay fabric, showing the typical sunken margins of early bricks of medieval date (Drury 1993), and measured 120mm by 60mm. Although the brick fragments appeared to be of medieval date, the more complete white-firing gault clay bricks are more likely to be of post-medieval date.

A fragment of ?ridge tile was also collected from the brick feature [46]. It was in a fine sandy fabric with moderate ferrous inclusions and is likely to be post-medieval. The fabric and manufacturing techniques are comparable with handmade pantiles of 17th/18th-century date.

One fragment of medieval plain roof tile in a fine sandy fabric was found in Trench [51].

A sample of ?mortar (c.20 pieces, 87g) was collected from layer [56] in Trench [2]. The material comprised a loose conglomeration of coarse sand and larger rounded quartz in a pale brown matrix which may be degraded lime mortar.

Stone

Five fragments of degraded lava quern were found in soakaway [2]. One fragment had the remains of a worn surface, but the tooling type could not be discerned. Lava querns, imported from Germany, were in use in the Roman and Saxon periods; these fragments were associated with Late Saxon pottery.

Worked stone comprised a small piece of oolitic limestone (Trench [51]) with one flat surface and a burnt edge, and a fragment of a chalk block (footing [47]) with tooling from a rounded chisel on the remaining part of the original surface. A small piece of blue-grey Welsh roofing slate of 19th/20th-century date was also recovered from footing [47].

Glass

A fragment of a mould-blown bottle base in uncoloured glass, probably of 19th or early 20th-century date, was found in soakaway [2].

Pieces of window glass, probably relating to the church, were found in two contexts. Two joining fragments of medieval window glass, 3.3mm thick, were collected from layer [48], but the surfaces were degraded and it was not possible to determine whether the fragments were painted. A small fragment of post-medieval window glass, 1.9mm thick, was found in Trench [57]. It was an edge fragment from a quarry and had a clear line indicating the position of the lead came, but no trace of paint.

Clay pipe

A stem fragment from a clay tobacco pipe was found in soakaway [1]. It had a wide bore (3.1mm) which suggests an early date, perhaps late 16th or 17th century.

Metalworking waste

A fragment of undiagnostic ferrous slag (29g) was recovered from soakaway [1]. It is probably indicative of smithing somewhere in the vicinity.

Shell

A fragment of oyster shell (*Ostrea edulis*) was collected from soakaway 1.

Coffin lid and inscribed building stone (Plates 10 and 11)

by Sarah Bates

The coffin lid (in two pieces and with its bottom missing) is approximately 300mm wide at its narrowest and 400mm wide at the top (Plate 10). Its minimum length is 1200mm and it is 95mm thick at the edges, its upper face sloping very slightly up to its raised central decoration. The top edge slopes very slightly up from left to right giving the whole slab a slightly asymmetrical shape. The upper surface is decorated with a central shaft and, at the top, a cross *paté* (with wide concave-sided arms). The cross has convex ends to its arms (known as an *alésée* type) so that the whole design forms a circular motif. Another probable (?similar) cross can be seen in the lower central area (but is at the break and is damaged). The central shaft runs the entire surviving length of the slab appearing above and below the crosses. The coffin lid is of limestone which is likely to have come from the Barnack quarries (near Peterborough) and the narrow 'leaf' areas between the arms of the cross are in keeping with designs from there (Butler 1965) – (although a double omega also typically seen on the Barnack products is absent).

Such coffin lids, known also as 'cross slabs' were in use between the late 11th and 15th centuries, the design on the present example, and its location suggests that a 13th-century date is likely. Cross *paté* designs, although influenced by pre-conquest types, are the most common type known from the region during the 12th and 13th-centuries and the latter date seems more likely at Northwold due to the increasing prosperity in the area during the period (Butler 1957, 92 and 97). In the late 13th-century this cross type was abandoned by the Barnack masons (Butler 1965, 122).

Also found in trench [20] was a large block of limestone with sloping upper surfaces [37] (See Plate 11). It was 750mm long (with part of one end missing), 490mm wide, 60mm thick at the sides and a 280mm maximum thickness at the centre (with some damage to the top). Although partly illegible, one end was inscribed '..17 ES..'. The piece is probably a large coping stone and of post-medieval date.

(The pieces of coffin lid and the inscribed stone block were left in the safe-keeping of the church).

7.0 Conclusions

The earliest dateable evidence was Late Saxon pottery which comprised the largest part of the pottery assemblage from the site. Many of the sherds were of very small size and had clearly been affected by the repeated digging of graves in the churchyard. Nevertheless the pottery represents occupation during the 9th-11th centuries and supports the suggestion that a church existed in the village before the 13th.

No other archaeological features or deposits of pre-Church date were discovered during archaeological monitoring of the drainage works.

Some deposits of probable mortar seen in the bottom of soakaway 2 and the associated filter trench may be of medieval date and represent building waste dumped during work on the church during that period. Their depth beneath the modern ground surface suggests a considerable build-up of soil in the churchyard.

A carved coffin slab of probable 13th-century date was found in the drain trench close to the south porch. Such slabs are more common in areas with locally occurring stone so its presence at Northwold is of interest. Its style and location suggest it is likely to have been made at Barnack in Cambridgeshire (Butler 1965) and it may have been brought to the site via the Nene, Great Ouse and Wissey rivers. Such coffin slabs were usually used inside churches and would have covered quite shallow graves (Rodwell 2012, 312, 321). In the later in the medieval period indoor graves were often deeper and without such slabs which were often lifted and reused in the church (or other) buildings. Slabs may have sometimes been moved due to the inconvenience of their raised surface in the floor (Butler 1957). At Northwold it appears the slab may have been reused (upside-down?) in a path in the churchyard.

Approximately halfway along the south side of the chancel, and just to the east of the existing buttress, a substantial brick and rubble feature was partly exposed extending south from the church. It was interpreted as possibly being the base of a former buttress. Both medieval and post-medieval bricks came from the feature but the earlier types were fragments and they, at least, were reused pieces. The complete bricks (of post-medieval date) formed the better-defined west side of the footing. To the east the mass of irregular rubble was ill-defined and only partly exposed. On a drawing of 1820, three windows are shown in the south wall of the chancel with two buttresses (Plate 2). Due to the shortening of the chancel (to its present length) and to possible inaccuracies of scale and perspective in the early 19th-century drawing, it is difficult to know whether the excavated remains relate to either of the former buttresses.

To the west of the doorway in the north aisle a short length and apparent 'corner' of a wall or footing of brick was recorded. It is possible that it represented some kind of structure (possibly the support of a timber shelter) around the doorway. This is uncertain and feature was undated but it remains *in situ* and was virtually undamaged by the drainage works.

The church footings were recorded in some of the gully trenches. Beneath the north aisle wall several 'courses' of large chalk blocks were seen in the lowest exposed areas. These protruded forward slightly from the face of an overlying flint footing and wall providing extra load-bearing capacity. Having the footing slightly wider than the wall would have also assisted in obtaining greater precision during the layout of the walls (Rodwell 2012, 102) and this helps explain why the chalk block footings protrude from the wall by varying amounts around the church. At the south side of the south aisle a dressed limestone block was recorded, reused, in the otherwise flint footing. Its date, and that of its reuse, is unknown.

At least eight skeletons were recorded in soakaway [1]. It is not possible to closely date the burials although it is thought that they were of post-medieval date due to the presence of coffin nails, handles, and, in one case, the remains of an iron plate which would have been attached to the coffin. It was clear that the area had been repeatedly used for burials as most of the graves and skeletons were truncated. The positions of

some burials in the north-east corner of the trench, however, suggest they might have been deliberately placed on top of one another – perhaps representing the burying of family members in the same grave. A very large disturbance (probably for a burial/s feature of some kind) in the south-west part of soakaway 1 was not investigated as it extended beyond the edges and bottom of the trench.

Although the burials in soakaway 3 were only partly exposed, it may be of note that they appeared to be relatively well-spaced and, apparently, were not intercut like those seen in soakaway [1]. Of course, it might be that other burials existed (unrecorded) but, considering the ‘unexcavated’ nature of this trench, the fact that the grave cuts were actually identified in plan (unlike for most of the skeletons in soakaway [1]) might suggest that fewer burials occurred here to the north of the church.

The three burials in soakaway 3 and one of those in soakaway 1 were not excavated as they were below the depth required by the contractors but part of an *in situ* skeleton was removed from the filter trench just north of soakaway 2.

Disarticulated human bone was found in most of the soakaways and drains. This, and the excavated skeletons were bagged and labelled and left in safe storage in the church for reburial by the Rector.

No further evidence for the former east end of the chancel was recorded nor was any evidence seen for an earlier vestry to the north of the chancel – although the latter was unsurprising given the small areas exposed, the presence therein of existing drains and the possible smaller size (within the area of the 19th-century vestry) of a former compartment.

Chalk deposits recorded in soakaway [1] and about halfway along drain [40] appeared to represent make up for a former path and the remains of previous brick soakaways were seen in drain [19].

Acknowledgements

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Archaeological monitoring and recording was by Sarah Bates with assistance from Heather Wallis who also prepared the Figures included in this report. Plates 1 and 2 are reproduced from Hugh Richmond’s 2013 report.

The finds were examined and reported on by Sue Anderson with the exception of the coffin lid which is described by Sarah Bates.

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OASIS ID: sarahbat1-184064

Project details

Project name	St Andrews Church Northwold
Short description of the project	Monitoring of drainage works in churchyard. Masonry, with medieval and post-medieval bricks, possibly representing a former buttress was recorded on the south side of the chancel. Just to the west of the doorway in the north aisle some undated in situ brickwork may have been the remains of a small structure around the doorway. Some sample areas of the church footings were recorded. A minimum of eight burials were recorded in a soakaway to the south-west of the church (most were lifted for reburial) and three more were left in situ in a soakaway to the north-west of the church with evidence for burials also coming from another soakaway to the south-east. Pottery, mostly of Late Saxon date, was recovered, also medieval sherds. Two large (joining) pieces of a medieval cross slab were found, they appear to have been used in a former path.
Project dates	Start: 14-07-2014 End: 17-10-2014
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	134700 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	CHURCHYARD Medieval
Monument type	CHURCHYARD Post Medieval
Monument type	FOUNDATION Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Significant Finds	COFFIN Medieval
Significant Finds	ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENT Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK KINGS LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK NORTHWOLD St Andrews Church
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 7558 9700 52.542084686 0.589461869535 52 32 31 N 000 35 22 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Sarah Bates
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Sarah Bates
Project director/manager	Sarah Bates
Project supervisor	Sarah Bates
Type of sponsor/funding body	Parish Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Northwold PCC

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Glass"
Digital Archive recipient	Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "Glass", "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Report on Archaeological Monitoring at St Andrew's Church, Northwold, Norfolk
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Bates, S.
Other bibliographic	Report no. 14

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St Andrew's Church, Northwold: ENF 134700

Appendix 2: List of contexts

Context	Type	Area	Category	Description
1	Trench	SW	Contractors trench	Soakaway 1
2	Trench	SE	Contractors trench	Soakaway 2
3	Trench	NW	Contractors trench	Soakaway 3
4	Trench	NNE	Contractors trench	Soakaway 4
5	Trench	NE	Contractors trench	Soakaway 5
6	Deposit	N	Layer	Topsoil
7	Deposit	Tr 3	Layer	Rubble
8	Deposit	N	Layer	Churchyard soils
9	Cut	Tr 1	Grave	grave
10	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
11	Trench	South	Contractors trench	for drain gully
12	Masonry	Tr 11	Footing	stone footing
13	Trench	SE aisle	Contractors trench	for drain gully
14	Trench	W of S porch	Contractors trench	for drain gully
15	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
16	Cut	Tr 1	Grave	grave
17	Deposit	Tr 1	Grave fill	grave fill
18	Deposit	Tr 1	Grave	coffin
19	Trench	S aisle	Contractors trench	drain
20	Trench	S porch	Contractors trench	drain
21	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
22	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
23	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
24	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
25	Cut	Tr 1	Grave	? Cut for grave or burials
26	Deposit	Tr 1	Grave fill	fill of [25]
27	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	skull
28	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
29	Skeleton	Tr 1	Skeleton	burial
30	Trench	NW aisle	Construction cut	for drain gully
31	Masonry	Tr 30	Footing	brick footing
32	Deposit			not used
33	Deposit	Tr 30	Layer	churchyard soil
34	Trench	N aisle	Contractors trench	for drain gully
35	Trench	NE aisle	Contractors trench	for drain gully
36	Deposit	S porch		stone coffin lid (u/s)
37	Deposit	S porch		inscribed/worked building stone
38	Masonry	Tr 30	Footing	chalk footing
39	Masonry	Tr 30	Footing	flint footing
40	Trench	SE	Construction cut	drain
41	Deposit	Tr 2	Unstratified	lowest soil in soakaway 2
42	Skeleton	Tr 51	Skeleton	burial
43	Trench	SE chancel	Contractors trench	for drain gully
44	Deposit	Tr 43	Layer	layer of mortar
45	Deposit	Tr 43	Layer	churchyard soil
46	Masonry	S of chancel	Footing	brick ?footing within [50]
47	Masonry	S of chancel	Footing	masonry/footing within [50]
48	Deposit	Tr 43	Layer	silty sand
49	Deposit	Tr 43	Layer	silty sand
50	Cut	Tr 43	Construction cut	cut for [46] and [47]
51	Trench	S of chancel	Contractors trench	trench for inspection chamber
52	Cut	Tr 2	Grave	grave
53	Deposit	Tr 2	Grave fill	coffin remains with [53]
54	Cut	Tr 51	Grave	grave
55	Deposit	Tr 51	Layer	mortar
56	Deposit	Tr 2	Layer	mortar
57	Trench	SE of chancel	Contractors trench	small slot dug for Hugh Richmond
58	Trench	SE of chancel	Contractors trench	small slot dug for Hugh Richmond

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59	Cut	Tr 1	Grave	possible grave
60	Cut	Tr 1	Grave	possible grave
61	Cut	Tr 1	Grave	possible grave
62	Deposit	Tr 1	Layer	modern path
63	Deposit	Tr 1	Layer	former path make up

Appendix 3: Finds by context

Context	Pottery No	Pottery Wt (kg)	CBM No	CBM Wt (kg)	Clay pipe No	Clay pipe Wt (kg)	Stone No	Stone Wt (kg)	Glass No	Glass Wt (kg)	Slag No	Slag Wt (kg)	Other	Spotdate
01	6	0.076			1	0.004					1	0.029	1 oyster shell (0.032kg)	pmed
02	6	0.018					5	0.058	1	0.005				L. 19th+
41	5	0.011												L. 9th-11th c.
46			4	3.713										pmed?
47			1	0.877			2	0.188						19th/20th c.
48									2	0.005				13th-15th c.
49	1	0.008												L. 9th-11th c.
51	2	0.010	1	0.030			1	0.050						med
56													c.20 ?mortar (0.087kg)	med?
57	2	0.002							1	0.001				pmed

Appendix 4: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Rim	No	Wt/g	Spot date	Fabric date range
1	THET	AC jar	5/6	1	14	L. 10th-11th c.	10th-11th c.
1	THET			2	27		10th-11th c.
1	GRCW			1	7		11th-M. 13th c.
1	EMW	bowl	flat-topped everted	1	24		11th-13th c.
1	GRIM	jug	collared	1	4	13th/14th c.	L. 12th-14th c.
2	THET			3	11		10th-11th c.
2	THET			1	1		10th-11th c.
2	EMW			1	2		11th-13th c.
2	EMW	jar	simple everted	1	4		11th-13th c.
41	THET			5	11		10th-11th c.
49	THET			1	8		10th-11th c.
51	THET			2	10		10th-11th c.
57	THET			2	2		10th-11th c.

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Appendix 5: Ceramic building material

Context	No	Wt	L	W	T	Base (EB)	Mortar	Notes	Date
46	1	157			16		white		pmed
46	1	400		110	37	?	cream all over, some on break	yellow with dark grey vesicular core	13-15
46	1	1145	218	110	41		white patches	roughly made yellow brick, no sunken margins, not complete	pmed
46	1	2011	224	115	47		cream-white all over	roughly made yellow brick, no sunken margins, complete	pmed
47	1	877		120	60	strawed?	cream & white all over	sunken margins but pinkish red throughout	15?
51	1	30						partly reduced surface and core	med

Appendix 6: Miscellaneous finds

Context	Find type	No	Wt (g)	Notes	Date
1	slag	1	29	ferrous, undiagnostic	
1	clay pipe	1	4	stem fragment, 3.1mm bore	17?
1	shell	1	32	incomplete	
2	stone	5	58	degraded frags of lava quern, 1 worn surface	LSax?
2	glass	1	5	mould-blown base fragment, uncoloured, square bottle?	19/E20
47	stone	1	3	small flake of blue-grey roofing slate	19/20
47	stone	1	185	fragment of chalk block with roughly chiselled edge	
48	glass	2	5	medieval window glass, 3.3mm thick, frags of one quarry, v poor, surface details not visible	med
51	stone	1	50	oolitic limestone frag with one flattish surface, half reddened due to burning?	med?
56	mortar?	20	87	heavily degraded mortar sample? Coarse sand and larger quartz in dark buff-coloured clay-like matrix	med?
57	glass	1	1	window glass, 1.9mm thick, iridescent, edge of quarry	pmed

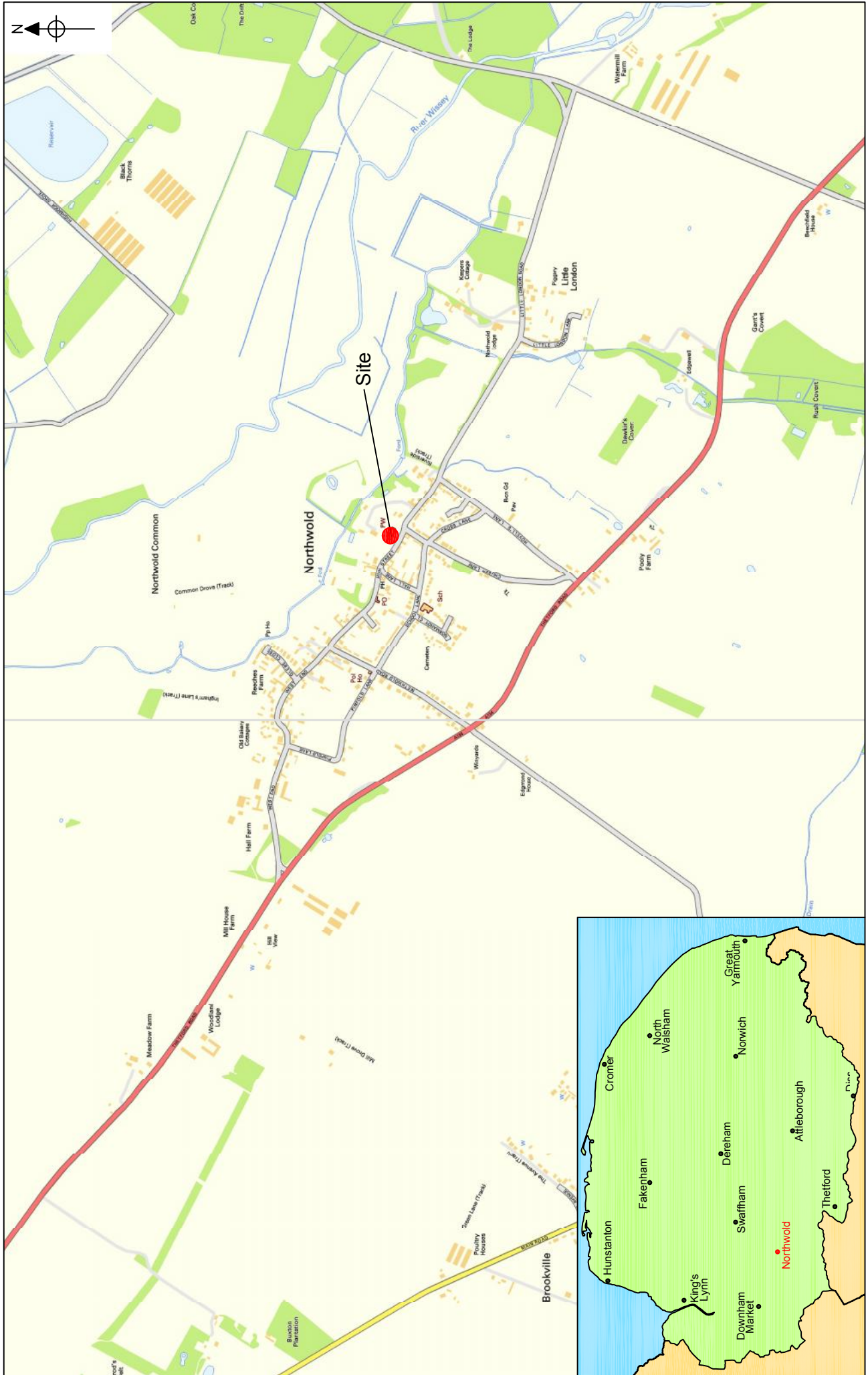


Figure 1. Site location

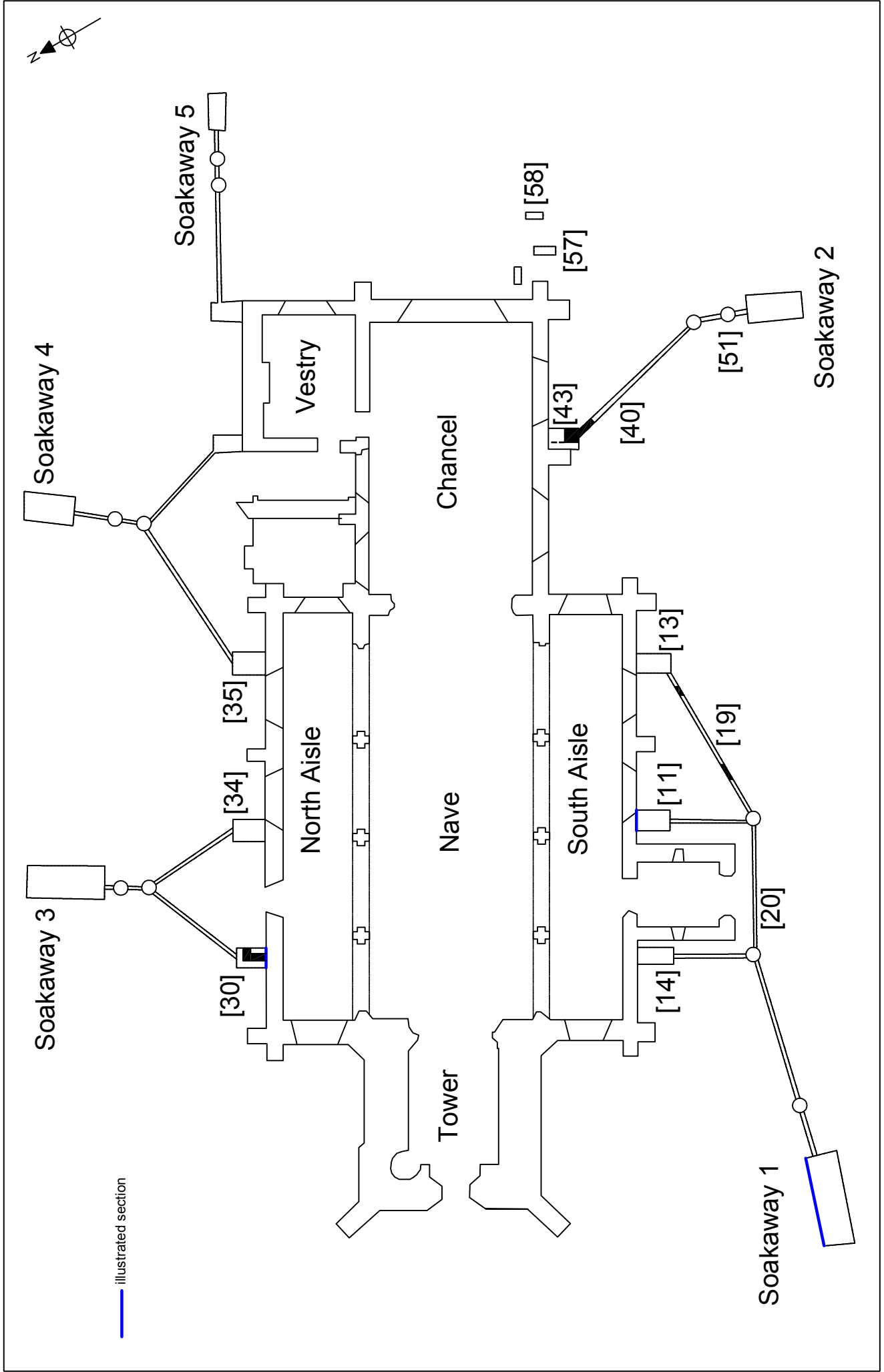


Figure 2. Plan showing location of trenches. Scale 1:200.

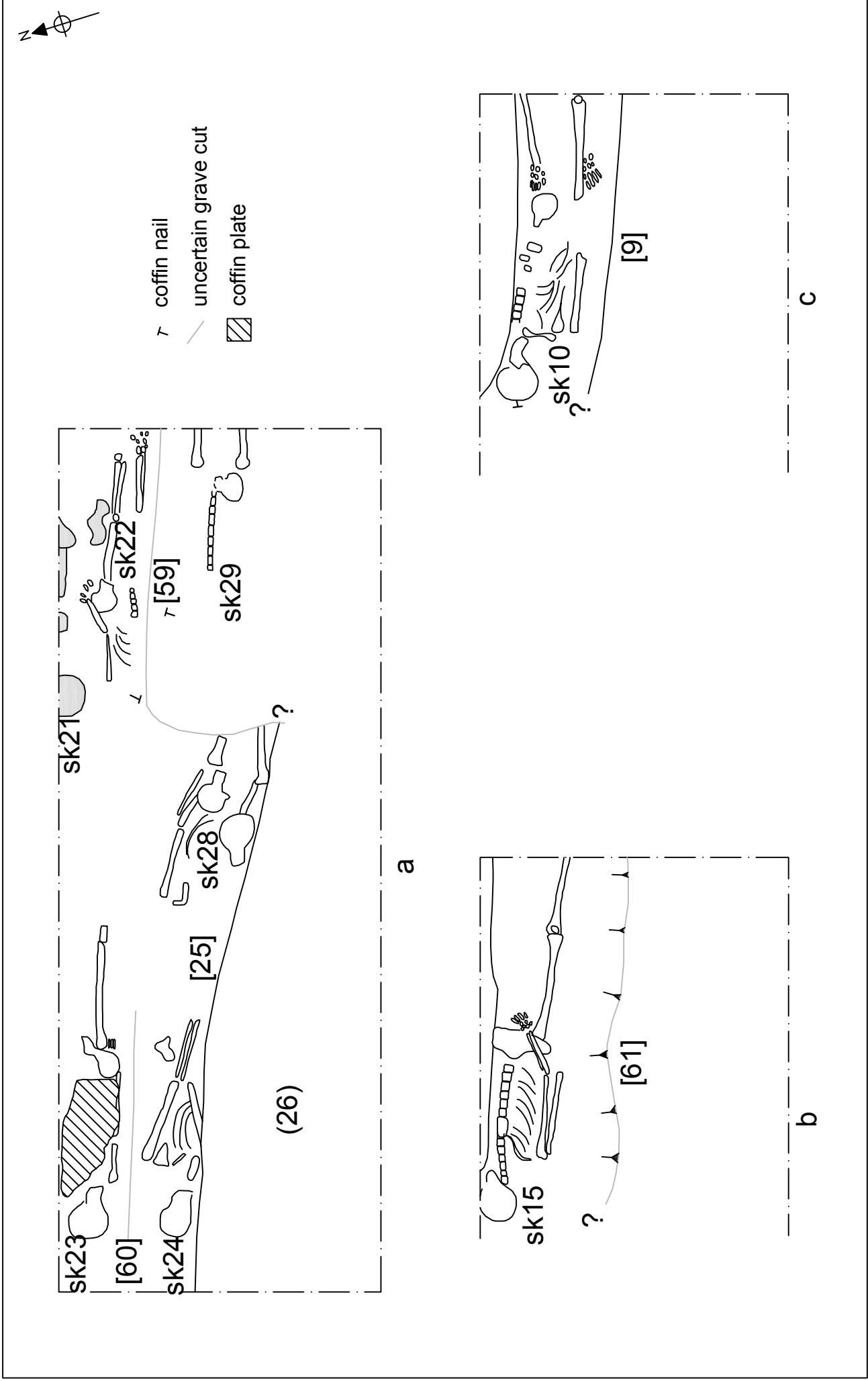


Figure 3. Soakaway 1 plans. a) Skeletons at base of trench. b) and c): Overlying skeletons.

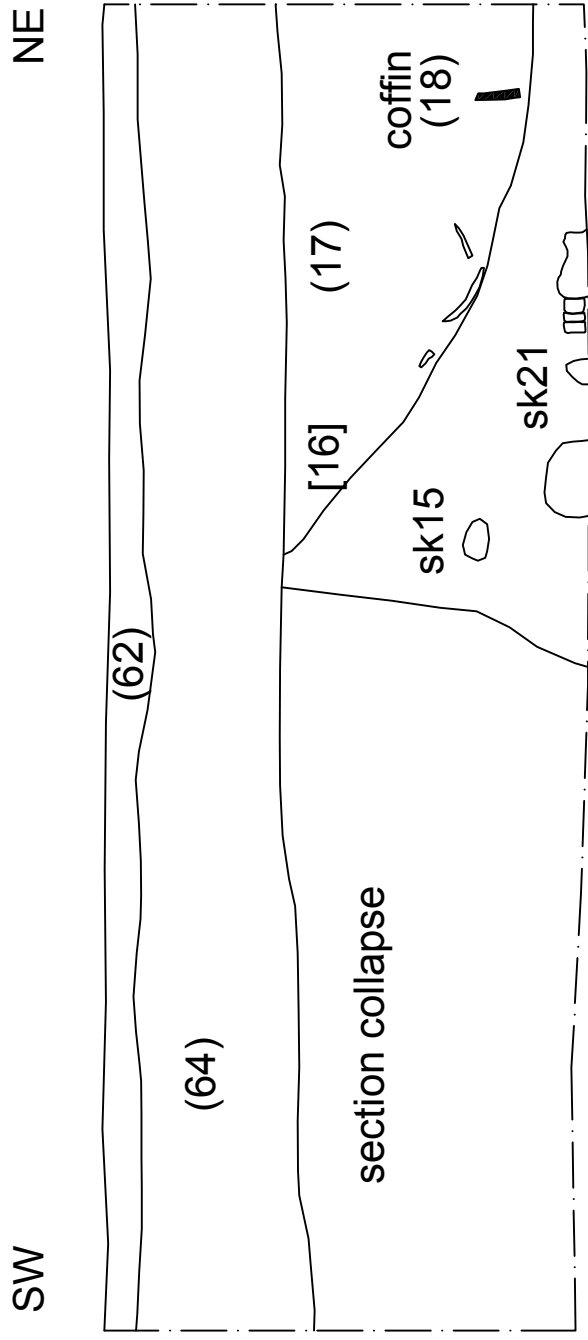


Figure 4. Soakaway 1 South-east facing section. Scale 1:20.

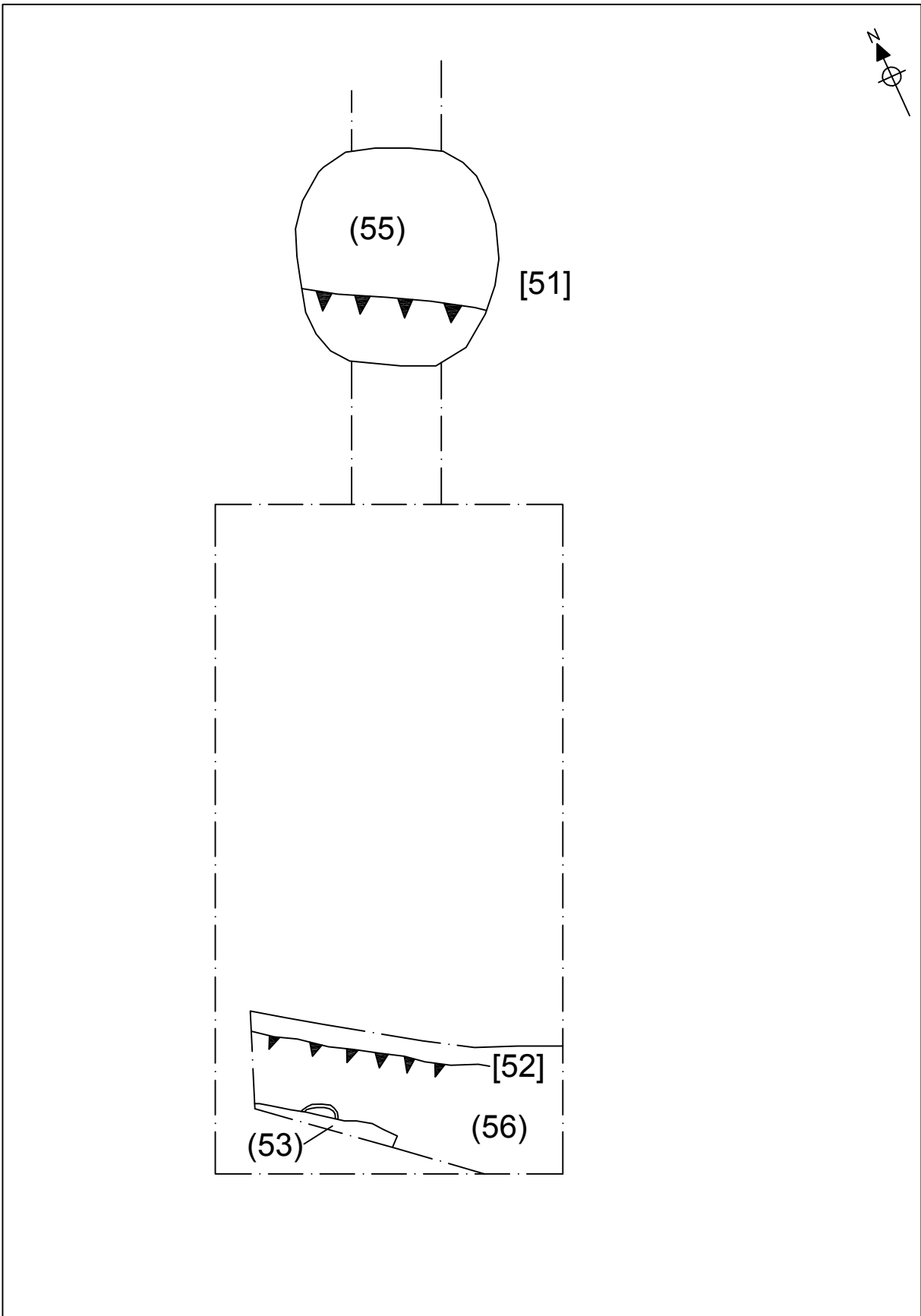


Figure 5. Plan of Soakawy 2. Scale 1:20.

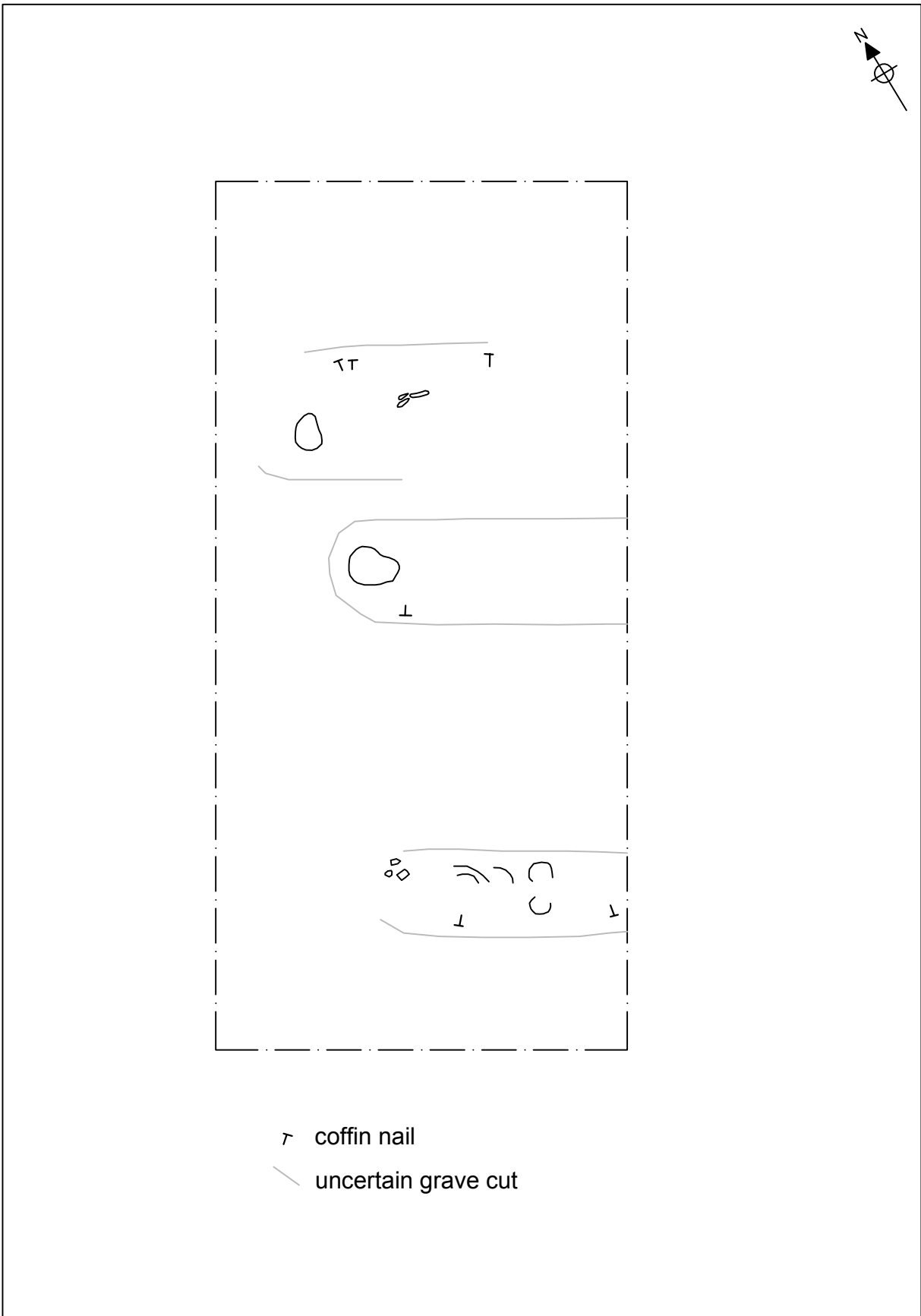


Figure 6. Plan of Soakaway 3. Scale 1:20.

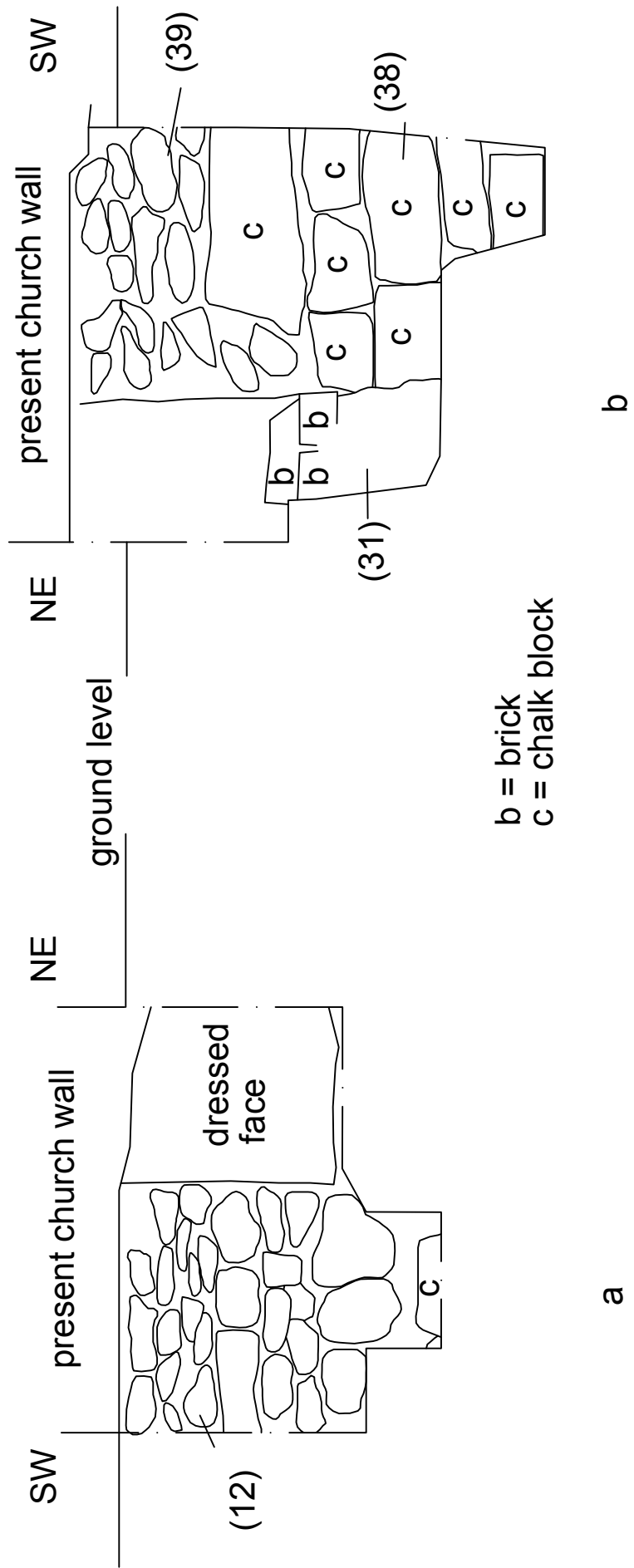


Figure 7. a) Trench 11 South-east facing section. Scale 1:20.
 b) Trench 30 North-west facing section. Scale 1:20.

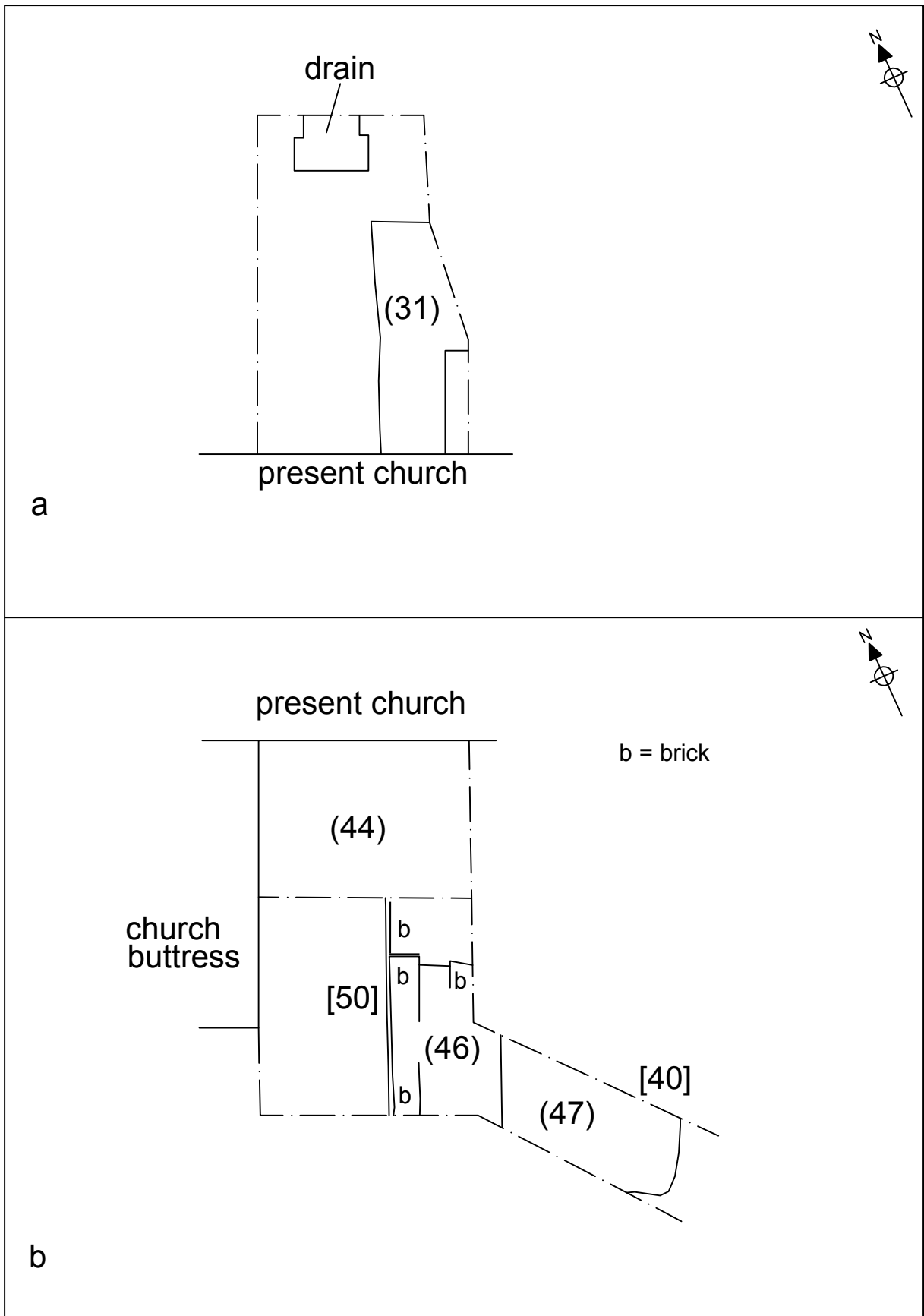


Figure 8. a) Plan of Trench 30. Scale 1:20.
 b) Plan of Trench 43. Scale 1:20.



Plates 1: Northwold Church in 2013



Plate 2: Northwold Church, drawn by R. Ladbrooke, c.1820



Plate 3: Soakaway 1, skeletons 23, 24 and 28, looking SW, 0.5m scale



Plate 4: Soakaway 1, skeleton 15, looking SW, 1m scale

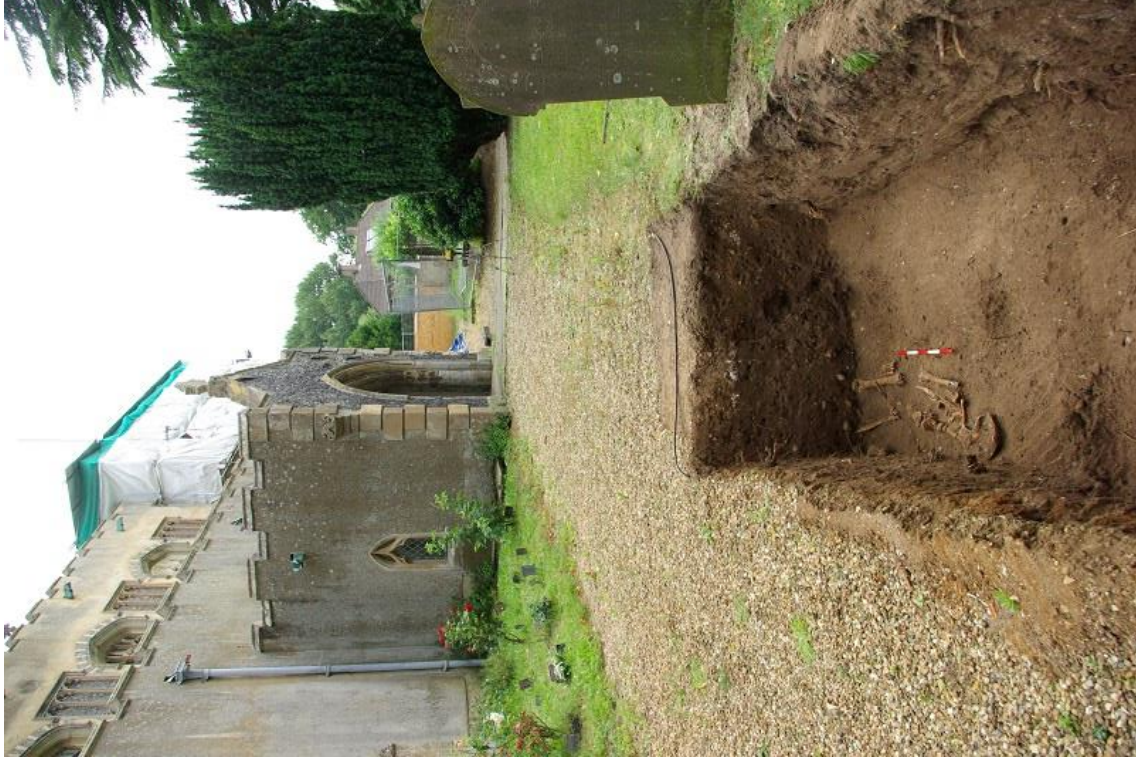


Plate 5: Soakaway 1, skeleton 10, looking NE, 0.5m scale



Plate 6: Trench 51, human remains, from above, facing S, 0.5m scale



Plate 7: Trench 30, footing [31], looking S, 0.5m scale



Plate 8: Trench 35, church footing [38], looking SSW, 0.5m scale



Plate 9: Trench 44/40, footing [46]/[47], looking NE, 0.5m scale



Plate 10: Coffin lid found in trench 20, 0.5m scale



Plate 11: Inscribed architectural fragment from trench 20, 0.5m scale