

*WA Heritage*

*Wessex Archaeology*

***ST MARY'S CHURCH, ST MARY STREET,  
SOUTHAMPTON***

***Written scheme of investigation  
for archaeological works***

***Ref: 69360.01  
May 2008***

**ST MARY'S CHURCH, ST MARY STREET, SOUTHAMPTON**

**WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS**

prepared for

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## ST MARY'S CHURCH, ST MARY STREET, SOUTHAMPTON

### WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

##### 1.1. Project Background

1.1.1. WA Heritage, a division of Wessex Archaeology, has been appointed by Stephens Cox Associates to carry out an archaeological excavation and watching-brief during groundworks at St Mary's Church, St Mary Street, Southampton (hereafter the Site). The works comprise the formation of a new car parking area, a new children's play area, a quiet area, and trenching for new external lighting and CCTV surveillance around the perimeter of the Church building.

1.1.2. St Mary's Church is a Grade II listed building and the Site lies within an area of archaeological importance, as defined in Policy HE6 of the Southampton Local Plan, having been the main burial place for the town throughout the Middle Ages and up to the 1840s.

1.1.3. Planning permission was granted for the works (application 07/00932/FUL) on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008 subject to a number of conditions, including Condition 02 covering Archaeological Works. This stated that:

*No development shall take place within the site until the implementation of a programme of archaeological work has been secured in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. REASON: To ensure that the archaeology of the site is properly investigated*

1.1.4. The Archaeological Advisor for Southampton City Council, Alan Morton, provided further information on the potential threat to the archaeology, in a letter to the client dated 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007, noting that "*while much of the proposed work probably poses no threat, there are several places where archaeological involvement will or may be needed.*"

1.1.5. The archaeological mitigation will involve archaeological excavation or an archaeological watching-brief, depending on the location and nature of the groundworks. Four areas where there would be a direct threat were identified:

- The ramp up to the north car park.
- Other tombs.
- Formation levels.
- Other groundworks.

1.1.6. At this stage it is envisaged that the ramp up to the north car park will be archaeologically excavated and that the works for the laying out and construction of the car park, other functional areas and the insertion of

services for lighting and CCTV will be covered by an archaeological watching-brief. Additional areas for excavation may be required depending on construction methodology. The need for additional excavation will be determined by the archaeological advisor in discussion with the client.

## 1.2. **Project Location**

1.2.1. St Mary's Church is located on a plot of land to the north-east of the junction of St Mary Street and Chapel Road, Southampton, centred on Grid Ref. SU 4262 1165 (**Figure 1**).

1.2.2. The proposed car parking areas are situated to the north and east of the Church and the ramp into the car park is situated off the road that runs north-west from the west end of the Church. The children's play area and the quiet area are to be located in open grassed areas to the south-west and west of the church, respectively (**Figure 2**).

1.2.3. The underlying geology is brickearth overlying valley gravels over Bracklesham Beds (British Geological Survey Drift Edition, 1976, 1:50,000, Sheet).

## 1.3. **Historical background**

1.3.1. This summary is taken from the Southampton city centre parish website ([www.southamptoncitycentreparish.hampshire.org.uk](http://www.southamptoncitycentreparish.hampshire.org.uk)).

1.3.2. The present church is the sixth on the site of the Saxon town of Hamwic (Hamton). Early records are sketchy, but the first church was thought to have been built around AD 634 during the time when St Birinus arrived at the port on his evangelistic mission to this country. Documentation refers to a 'manorial church', assumed to be St Mary's, and the first recorded priest and holder of the benefice was named as Richerius (1086). The Saxon town survived many invasions and ravages by the Danes but eventually fell into decline and in the time of King Canute in the 11th century the population moved to the safety of the Norman medieval settlement to the west. However, St Mary's continued to be of importance as the Mother Church, with its claims to tithes, burial rights and privileges reflecting its status.

1.3.3. The historian Leland writes in 1546 of the rebuilding in the 12th century of the ancient church of St Mary on the instruction of Queen Matilda, on account of its poor and inadequate state. This, the second church, served for four hundred years and was the principal place of worship in spite of being outside the walled town. Around 1550 St Mary's was in ruins, or possibly could have been pulled down because the spire was considered a landmark for French invaders. Many records were destroyed by fire in later years but it is known that rubble from the building was used to make the highway from the Bargate via East Street to the Chantry. The remaining chancel continued to be repaired spasmodically and was used up to 1711 when Archdeacon Brideoak instigated the building of a new church by adding a nave, but eventually in 1723 the chancel was also replaced.

1.3.4. Although continuing to retain its status, St Mary's was still a church somewhat detached from the main town of Southampton. However, on becoming a fashionable spa, the population grew and spread to the outlying

areas by the end of the 18th century, so benefiting the church. On the arrival of Francis North, Rector, the building was enlarged and altered substantially and re-consecrated in 1833. In 1838, at the commencement of the building of the docks, there was an influx of labourers anxious to be near their place of work, so the land surrounding the church was used to build houses, resulting in a further increase in population. Meanwhile, the poor construction of the 1833 church alterations had resulted in considerable deterioration, and in the 1870's the eminent architect G.C. Street, who had been consulted by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, condemned the building.

- 1.3.5. Rebuilding commenced under the Rectorship of the Bishop's son, Canon Basil Wilberforce, and in 1878 the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) consented to lay the foundation stone. The church was then consecrated in 1879 and completed in 1884, with the exception of the tower and spire which were added in 1912-1914.
- 1.3.6. On the night of November 30th 1940 incendiary bombs destroyed the church leaving a damaged tower, bells and Baptistry. At the end of the War Canon Spencer Leeson (1946-1950) and the church council took the decision to restore the bells - "thus giving encouragement and visible witness of the determination to rebuild once again". A decision to complete the rebuilding of the entire church was not made until the early 1950's as the town was in ruins and the rebuilding was not deemed to be a priority, with worship being maintained in the Chantry Hall. The diocese also had reservations about the viability of such a large building, and money was being directed towards the construction of new churches in growing outlying areas of the town.
- 1.3.7. The tower was restored and the bells re-dedicated in 1948 and rebuilding of the sixth church was finally begun in February 1954; it was completed and consecrated in June 1956. However, by the mid sixties, changes within city centres were being considered by the Diocese. Population movements and the introduction of light industry in the St Mary's district meant that there was not sufficient need for the six churches in relatively close proximity. Re-organisation and re-assessment of the ministry of the church eventually led to the setting up of the Southampton Team Ministry and the formation of the City Centre Parish in 1973. The new Parish Council then agreed to maintain the two historic buildings, St Mary's and St Michael's, as their parish churches.

#### 1.4. **Archaeological potential**

- 1.4.1 An archaeological evaluation of the Site, comprising a desk-based assessment, the excavation of four test-pits (**Figure 2**) and a ground-penetrating radar survey (**Figure 3**) was carried out in 1998-9 in response to then proposals to build new parish and civic buildings adjacent to the Church (Gifford 1999). A burial survey of the churchyard had been carried out in 1949.
- 1.4.2 The results of the archaeological assessment indicated that the archaeological remains within the churchyard were of national importance and the radar survey suggested that there were a few discrete features, including burials, within the top 0.9m – 1.2m of soil over large areas of the

churchyard, below which were features consistent in size, shape and orientation with burials (*op cit* p3).

- 1.4.3 Two of the test-pits (TP 1 and 2) were located within the northern area earmarked for parking in the current scheme (**Figure 2**). Below the topsoil in TP1 were a number of mixed layers containing brick, tile, slate and disarticulated human remains. Underlying these layers were two more distinct soil horizons which contained cinder and glass fragments and part of a WWII German incendiary device. A brick-built tomb was observed in the west-facing section of TP1 at a depth of 0.45m below the ground surface. This tomb had been recorded on the 1949 survey (*op cit* pp. 8-9, 14-15, 17-18, 28-9, Fig. 3).
- 1.4.4 TP2 revealed five layers. Below the topsoil and sub-soil were two layers containing brick rubble, roofing tile, slate, stone and disarticulated human remains, separated by a band of dark soil. In the south-eastern corner of the lowest of these two layers a row of four iron coffin nails was observed. A single gravestone, thought to have been moved from another location, was also recorded (*op cit* pp. 9-10,15,18, 29, Fig. 4).
- 1.4.5 The Archaeological Advisor for Southampton City Council, Alan Morton, commented on the four areas where the proposed works would pose a direct threat to the archaeology of the Site, in the letter to the client dated 17<sup>th</sup> September 2007 (**Figure 2**).
- 1.4.6 The excavation of the ramp up to the north car park will disturb archaeological significant archaeological material and, on the evidence of the previous radar survey (**Figure 3**), will directly impact on two tombs. Where excavated in the past, such tombs have comprised a rectangular cut, faced with a single skin of brick and covered with a stone cap.
- 1.4.7 The burial survey and radar survey show that there are burials and a small number of tombs within the areas earmarked for car-parking and other functional areas (**Figure 3**). These may be disturbed by the works.
- 1.4.8 The present ground surface in the areas earmarked for car-parking and other functional areas undulates and it may therefore be necessary for some levelling to take place prior to their laying-out and construction. Any levelling may disturb burials and tombs, especially in the area to the east of the Church for which there is little information on archaeological stratigraphy.
- 1.4.9 The trenches required for the installation of lighting and CCTV have the potential to impact on burials and tombs.

## **2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1. Excavation**

- 2.1.1. The main aim is to locate and record any surviving archaeological deposits and features, including burials or tombs.
- 2.1.2. The main objectives are to identify and store any tomb construction materials that need to be removed and to collect disarticulated human bone for reburial.

## 2.2. **Watching-brief**

- 2.2.1 The aim of the watching-brief is to monitor groundworks, to record any surviving archaeological deposits and features that are affected, to identify any tomb construction materials that need to be removed and to collect disarticulated human bone for reburial.

## 3. **METHODS**

### 3.1. **Excavation**

- 3.1.1. The excavation will be implemented in accordance with '*Standards and Guidance for archaeological excavation*', Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001).

- 3.1.2. The proposed ramp covers an area of approximately 60 square metres. The topsoil will be removed by a machine fitted with a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision. Underlying deposits will be removed in spits by hand until the depth required for the access ramp is reached.

- 3.1.3. Archaeological deposits or features, including tombs, burials and disarticulated human bone which need to be removed will be excavated by hand.

- 3.1.4. Any tomb construction materials and gravestones that need to be removed will be stored and human bone, either from tombs, burials or disarticulated will be collected for reburial. All material and bone will be lodged at a secure location.

- 3.1.5 Any archaeological deposits and features will be recorded in plan and sections at a scale of 1:20 unless special circumstances require planning at 1:10. Each context will be allocated a separate number and single-feature planning will be undertaken if suitable remains are encountered. Excavation will include the recovery of artefacts, ecofacts and dating material in order to determine stratigraphic relationships. All features will be located using a GPS and be recorded by monochrome and colour photography, including digital, using appropriate scales.

### 3.2. **Watching-brief**

- 3.2.1. The watching-brief will be implemented in accordance with '*Standards and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs*', Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001).

- 3.2.2. The watching-brief will monitor the construction of the car park to the north and east of the Church and the other functional areas, and the service trenches for the proposed lighting and CCTV.

- 3.2.3. If archaeological remains are revealed, the client will be informed of their location and the time required for their investigation. Excavation will then progress as per 3.1.3 - 3.1.5 above.

### 3.3. Artefacts and environmental

- 3.3.1. All artefacts from excavated contexts will be retained in order to elucidate the date and/or function of a feature or deposit. Material from features or deposits of obviously modern date, or observed in upcast, will not be noted or retained unless of specific interest.
- 3.3.2. All artefacts will, as a minimum, be washed, weighed, counted and identified. Any artefacts requiring conservation or specific storage conditions will be dealt with immediately in line with *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson and Neal 1998). Ironwork from stratified contexts will be X-rayed and stored in a stable environment along with other fragile and delicate material. The X-raying of objects and other conservation needs will be undertaken by the staff of the Wiltshire Conservation Service, Chippenham, Wiltshire, unless directed otherwise. Suitable material, primarily pottery, worked flint and non-ferrous metalwork, will be scanned to assess the date range of the relevant assemblages.
- 3.3.3. It is thought unlikely that any environmental deposits worthy of sampling will be uncovered, but bulk environmental soil samples for plant macro-fossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts will be taken from appropriate sealed and well-dated/datable archaeological deposits.
- 3.3.4. The residues and sieved fractions of the bulk environmental soil samples will be recorded and retained with the project archive.
- 3.3.5. Samples for charred plant remains (charcoal and charred seeds etc) will be taken from well-dated and sealed deposits to define presence and preservation to enable comments on any further sampling strategy to be made.
- 3.3.6. It is also thought unlikely that any deposits worthy of sampling for charred material will be uncovered, but bulk samples of 20-30 litres will be taken from appropriate sealed and well-dated/datable archaeological deposits for processing by flotation (using Wessex Archaeology double tank internal weir flotation system and double processing methods).
- 3.3.7. It is not proposed to retain human bone for analysis as the intention is for it to be reburied as soon as possible at an appropriate location on the Site.

### 3.4. Post-fieldwork analysis, reporting and publication

- 3.4.1. All post-fieldwork analysis and assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the standard practice of Wessex Archaeology and the standard and guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists cited above.
- 3.4.2. Following completion of the excavation and watching-brief, an assessment report will be prepared. The report will include:
  - a non-technical summary.
  - the archaeological and planning background to the work.



- an outline description of the aims of the excavation and watching-brief.
  - a descriptive text concerning the results of the work, including finds and environmental evidence.
  - supporting figures at appropriate scales including a site location plan, a plan showing the location of the work and features/deposits found in the excavation and watching brief, section drawings of the features excavated, trench side section drawings where this demonstrates some archaeological information, and any relevant historical plans or surveys.
  - summary tables showing soil descriptions and depths for all areas/trenches, tables for all artefacts recovered and supporting data in appendices.
- 3.4.3. The assessment report will, if appropriate, conclude with a statement recommending the appropriate level of any post-excavation analysis and publication, and an estimate of costs for preparing and publishing a final report.
- 3.4.4. Copies of the reports will be lodged with the Southampton Archaeological Service.
- 3.4.5. Wessex Archaeology Limited shall retain full copyright of the report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. Excepting that it hereby provides: (1) an exclusive licence to the client for the use of the report by the client in all matters relating directly to the project as described herein; (2) that it may be freely copied by the local planning authority for the purpose of research and development control (planning) purposes.
- 3.5. **The archive**
- 3.5.1. The archive will be prepared to the standards set out in *Management of archaeological projects* (English Heritage 1991).
- 3.5.2. The site archive will be prepared for long-term storage in accordance with Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage (Walker 1990) and Standards in the museum care of archaeological collections (Museums and Galleries Commission 1994). It is proposed in principle that, subject to the wishes of the landowner, the entire archive (including the finds) will be deposited with Southampton Museums Service.
- 3.5.3. The paper records of the site archive will be security microfilmed prior to deposition.
- 3.5.4. A report on the archaeological work will be submitted to the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society for publication.

#### 4. STANDARDS

- 4.1 Wessex Archaeology is registered as an archaeological organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists. Wessex Archaeology endorses the *Code of Practice* and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 4.2 All core staff will be of a standard approved by Wessex Archaeology, be employed in line with The Institute of Field Archaeologists Codes of Practice and will belong to the Institute of Field Archaeologists or have an equivalent, appropriate and proven level of experience.
- 4.5 Wessex Archaeology operates a *Project Management System*. All projects are undertaken under the direction of the Project Manager who is responsible to the Deputy Director, who ensures the maintenance of quality standards within the organisation as a whole. The Unit Director has ultimate responsibility for all of the Unit's work.

#### 5. PERSONNEL

- 5.1 In all cases, the project will be supervised and monitored by the following staff, under the overall direction of the Project Manager:

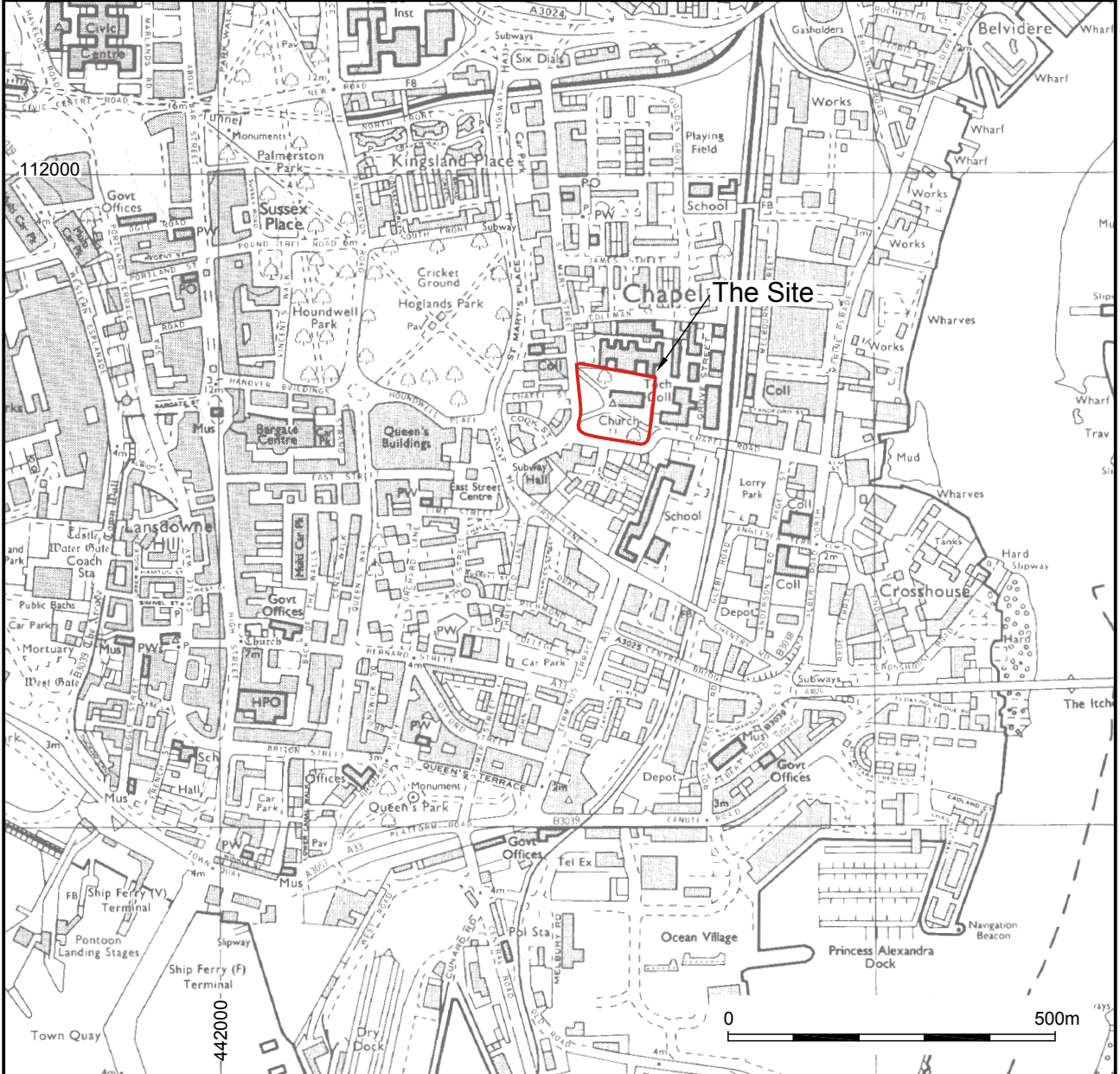
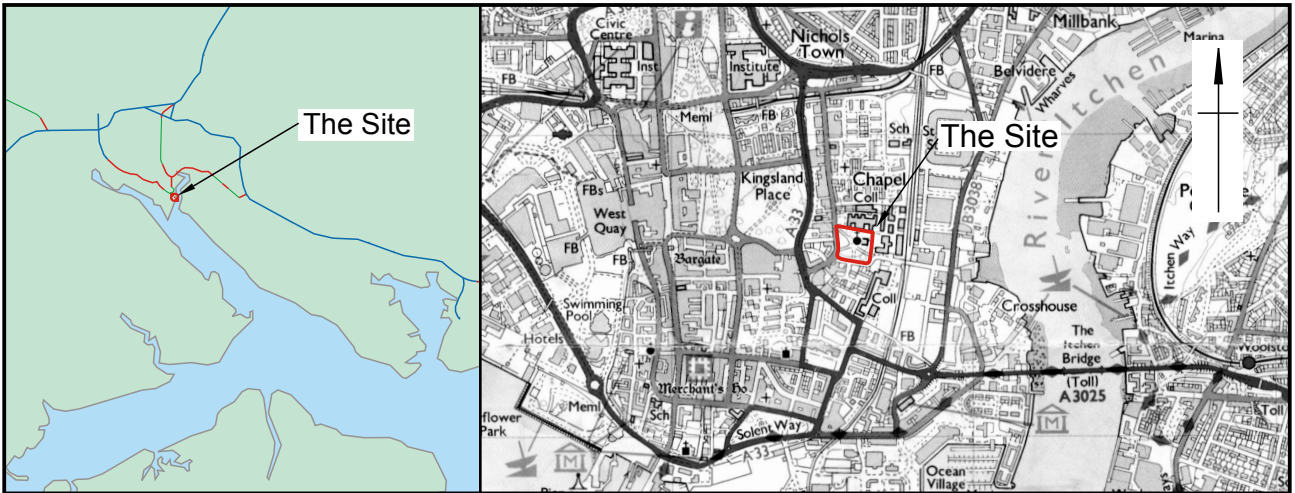
Rob Perrin, BA,MLitt, MIFA	Project Manager
Lorraine Mepham, BA, MIFA	Finds
Dr Chris Stevens, BSc, MIFA	Environmental
TBA	Project Supervisor
TBA	Project Assistant(s)

- 5.3 Wessex Archaeology reserves the right to replace members of the nominated core team at its discretion.
- 5.4 The Southampton City Archaeological Advisor will attend the site at intervals to monitor the works.

#### 6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 6.1 Wessex Archaeology will ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with its Company Health and Safety Policy, to standards defined in *The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* and *The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992*, and in accordance with the SCAUM (Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers) health and safety manual *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* (1997). A copy of Wessex Archaeology's Company Health and Safety Policy is available on request.
- 6.2 At the outset of the fieldwork stage of the project a Risk Assessment will be undertaken by the nominated Project Manager to ensure that potential

hazards have been identified and mitigation or control measures will be implemented.



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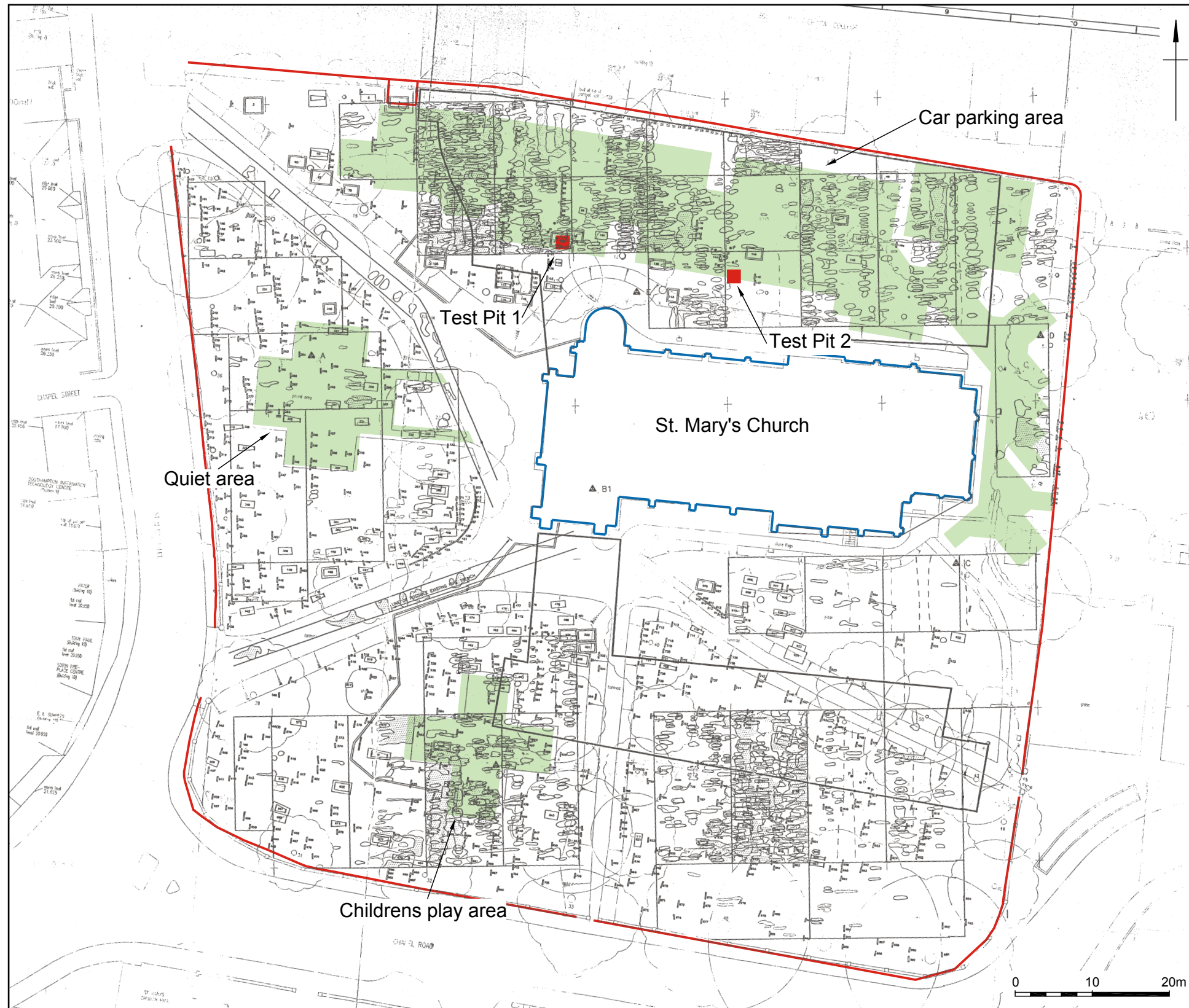
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Site Location plan

Figure 1





**Key**

- Test pits (Giffords 1999)
- Burial radar survey (Giffords 1999)

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Plan showing proposed construction areas (Car parking, Quiet areas, Children's play area) overlain by burial radar survey .

Figure 2