

Report 2420



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## Archaeological Watching Brief at St Clement Church, Terrington St Clement, Norfolk

ENF126616



**Prepared for**  
St Clement Church PCC  
c/o Richard C F Waite  
34 Bridge Street  
King's Lynn  
Norfolk  
PE30 5AB



Michelle Renée Bull BA

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<b>PROJECT CHECKLIST</b>		
Project Manager	Nigel Page	
Draft Completed	Michelle Bull	26/05/2011
Graphics Completed	David Dobson	20/07/2011
Edit Completed	Jayne Bown	29/07/2011
Signed Off	Nigel Page	17/08/2011
<i>Issue 1</i>		

## **NPS Archaeology**

Scandic House  
85 Mountergate  
Norwich  
NR1 1PY

T 01603 756150

F 01603 756190

E [jayne.bown@nps.co.uk](mailto:jayne.bown@nps.co.uk)

[www.nau.org.uk](http://www.nau.org.uk)

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Location:	St Clement Church, Terrington St Clement
District:	King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Planning ref.:	07/00646/F
Grid Ref.:	TG 5518 2044
HER No.:	ENF126616
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Client:	The PCC of St Clement Church, Terrington St Clement
Dates of Fieldwork:	11-13 May 2011

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was conducted for The PCC of St Clement church ahead of the installation of a new drain and water supply through the churchyard of St Clement, Terrington St. Clement, Norfolk.*

*A narrow trench was dug alongside the path leading from Churchgate Way to the church and one very small hole was dug inside the church to connect the new supply.*

*No archaeological features or deposits were disturbed during these works. Post-medieval and modern brick and two small pieces of animal bone were noted.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Parish Church at Terrington St. Clement required a new drain which is to run from the inside of the main church building westwards along the side of the pathway to link to the main drain in Churchgate Way.

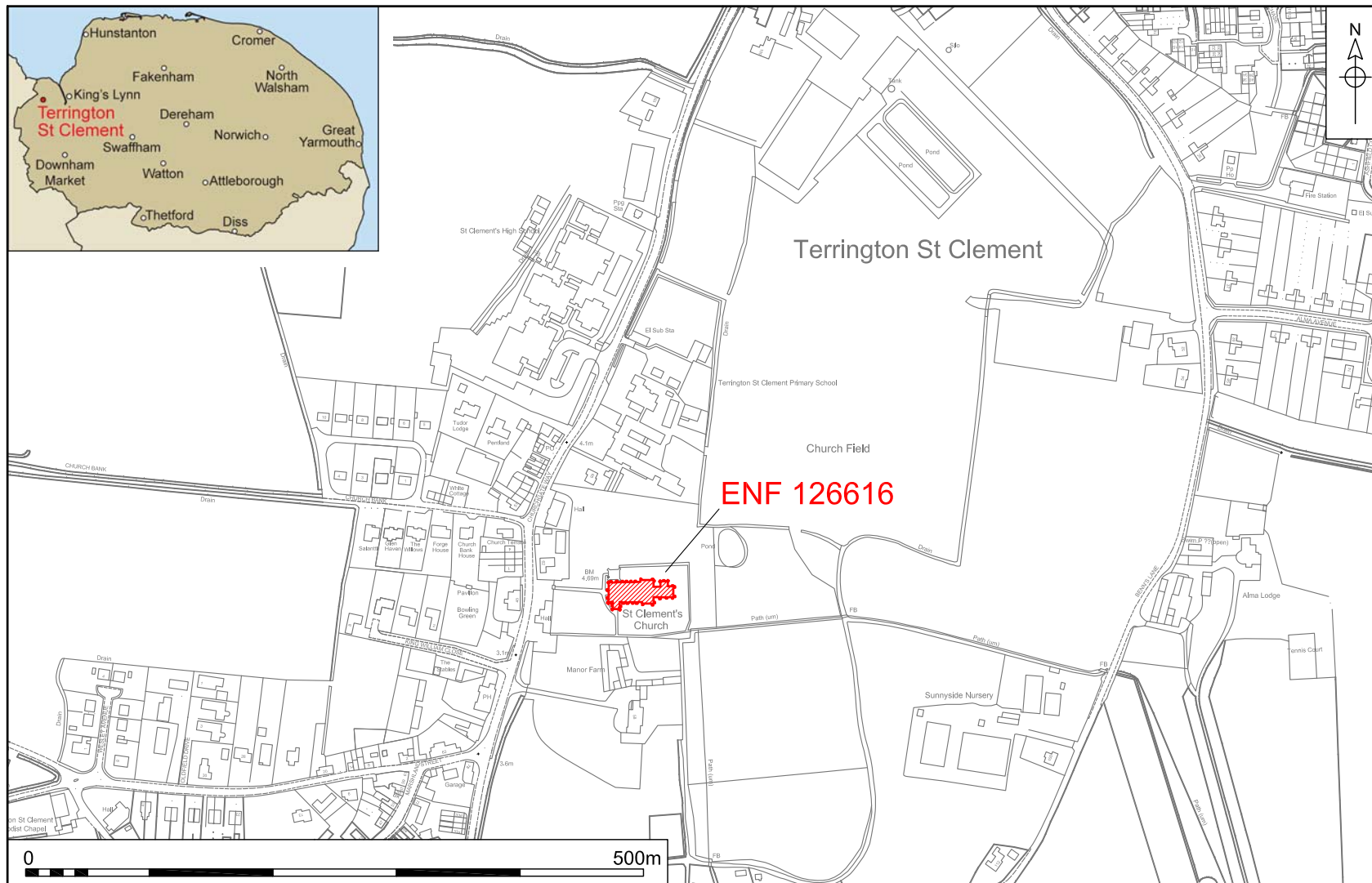
This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Kings Lynn and West Norfolk (Ref. 07/00646/F) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historical Environment Services (Ref. CNF41233). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. BAU2420). This work was commissioned by Mr. Richard C F Waite and funded by the Parochial Church Council.

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS), following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

## **2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

Terrington St. Clement is a large fenland village in the west of Norfolk in a region formerly known as Marshland. The underlying geology is bedrock of West Walton Formation, Amphill Clay Formation and Kimmeridge Clay Formations



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

(undifferentiated), with superficial deposits of Alluvium – soft to firm silty clay that can contain layers of silt, sand, peat and basal gravel ([www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk)).

The topsoil at the site is a 0.20m deep, dark-grey silty-sand with turf above. The sub-soil is 0.50m deep brown-grey, silty clay-loam with frequent angular and sub-rounded small flint stones.

The site appears to be well drained and lies around 4.69m OD.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

A search of the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) centred on the church was made and most relevant results are presented below.

#### **Roman**

The NHER shows that other than a few Roman coins found during fieldwalking no definitive evidence for Roman occupation, or indeed anything earlier, has been recovered from within the parish of Terrington St Clement. This may be because large parts of the parish are former salt marsh, only reclaimed in the last few hundred years (Silvester 1988).

#### **Saxon**

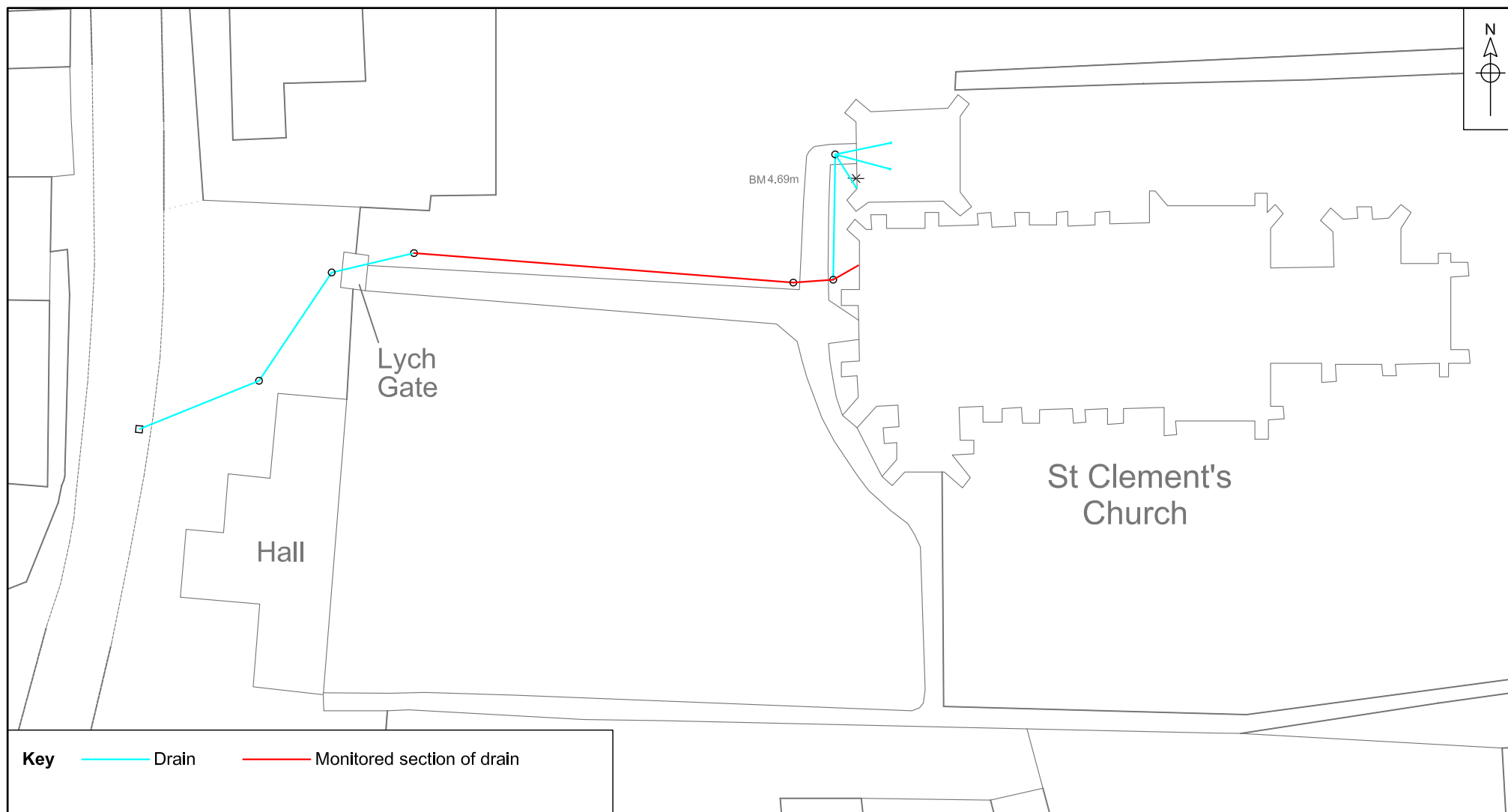
It is suggested that in AD 970 a Godric gifted part of the lands in Terrington to the monks of Ramsey Abbey. The name Terrington comes from the early Saxon 'Tun' meaning enclosure or homestead of Tir(a)s people. The settlement is referred to as Tilinghetuna in Domesday Book.

#### **Medieval**

By the medieval period the small settlement which began on raised ground on the edge of the marsh had grown substantially with the parish church being the focus. The large church is dedicated to St Clement (the first-century Pope Clement) and is sometimes referred to as the 'Cathedral of the Marshland'. It was built in the 14th century by Edmund Gonville, Rector of Terrington, who founded Gonville Hall (now Gonville and Caius College) at Cambridge University. The church is perpendicular in style with a tower thought to have been originally intended for the crossing, but eventually built outside following structural concerns (Knott 2005, [www.norfolkchurches.co.uk](http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk)).

In 2005-6 the Department of Archaeology at Cambridge University excavated a test pit within a field south of the church which contained modest quantities of Late Saxon and Early Medieval pottery (AD 900-1200) and associated animal bone assemblage. Small quantities of post-medieval pottery were also recovered from upper contexts. It has been suggested that this could reflect the remains of a moated site. The ditch which defines the northern and western sides of the field appears to be wide and relatively shallow, consistent with the profile of a moated site, the southern and eastern boundaries however are deep, sharply cut and similar to other ditches located within the area (Howard 2010).

In 2008 NAU Archaeology undertook archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to St. Clement High School some 250m north of the church on the opposite side of Churchgate Way. This work revealed refuse pits containing butchered animal bones (most notable being the remains of a cat which may have been skinned)



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Figure 2. Plan showing location of new drain. Scale 1:500



and a number of modern burials of articulated pigs. Evidence from this evaluation suggests that the site had been a medieval farm or small holding (Hobson 2008).

#### **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological remains exposed by the drainage works.

The Brief required that the excavation of all trenches for the new drain be monitored by an archaeologist. Machine excavation was carried out with a small mini-digger equipped with a 0.20m toothed bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector.

No environmental samples were taken as no suitable deposits were encountered.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour, monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.

#### **5.0 RESULTS**

The drainage trench was narrow (0.20m wide) making extensive observations difficult (Plate 1).

The sequence of turf, topsoil and subsoil (Plate 2) was the same along the whole length of the trench.

A small amount of modern and post-medieval brick and tile and two very small bone fragments were recovered from the soil upcast of the trench which were noted but not retained.

The exterior area where the new drain enters the church had previously been disturbed by services (Plate 3) as was the area where a small hole was dug inside the church to connect a new water main (Plate 4).



Plate 1. Drainage trench



Plate 2. Trench close up





Plate 3. The trench as it enters the church



Plate 4. Small hole inside the church

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

No archaeological deposits or features were encountered during these works.

One small trench for a further drain between the church and its tower is yet to be excavated.

## **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank the Terrington St Clement PCC who funded the work and the Church Wardens for being so helpful and accommodating and the contractors on site who undertook the groundworks.

I would also like to thank Nigel Page for managing the project, David Dobson for his help and work on the graphics and Jayne Bown for editing the report.

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