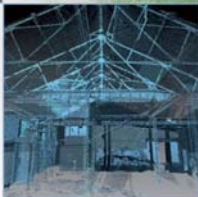


Currie Kirk Extension: Monitored Topsoil Strip Data Structure Report

AOC Project 21973

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-112721

27th October 2011



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Group

ARCHAEOLOGY

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Currie Kirk Extension Topsoil Strip: Data Structure Report

On Behalf of:	Tod & Taylor Architects 43 Manor Place Edinburgh EH3 7EB
For	Currie Kirk Gibson Craig Hall 156 Lanark Road West Currie EH14 5 NY
National Grid Reference (NGR):	NT 18301 67655
AOC Project No:	21973
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Date of Fieldwork:	18th October 2011
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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeologically monitored topsoil strip undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the site of a proposed extension to Currie Kirk.

The topsoil stripping unearthed at least three burials, and the remains of a large wall probably associated with an earlier church.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by Tod and Taylor Architects to undertake an archaeologically monitored topsoil strip on ground subject to development at Currie Kirk, Currie, Edinburgh. The development consists of an extension on the north side of the church between the main church building and session room. The site lies within the administrative area of the City of Edinburgh Council, which is advised on archaeological matters by the City of Edinburgh Council Archaeology Service (CECAS). A Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2011) outlining the programme of archaeological works was agreed with CECAS in advance of the work being undertaken. The archaeological works were conducted in accordance with the principals set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government) and *Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011) and in accord with City of Edinburgh Council requirements as advised by CECAS.

1.2 Location

1.2.1 The proposed development area is centred on NGR: NT 18301 67655 (Figure 1) located on the Kirkgate, Currie, City of Edinburgh, within the grounds of Currie Church.

1.3 Archaeological background

1.3.1 Currie, originally Kineleith, parish church (NMRS NT16NE 18.00), which was dedicated to St Kentigern (St Mungo) is first mentioned in 1296. The present church was built in 1785; the choir of its predecessor stood some yards to the east. It has been used as a burial place and parish school. Repairs have obliterated nearly all traces of ancient work, but the exterior of the southern wall had a door and window built up, but showing pre-15th century details. Underneath the pathway west of the choir were traces of masonry, showing that the northern and southern walls are continued in that direction, indicative of transepts (RCAHMS 1929, Cowan 1967; Hay 1957). The remains of the old church were incorporated in the David Stewart Memorial Session House of Currie Kirk, built around 1950. Practically all trace of antiquity has been obliterated but the original stonework can be seen in the lower courses of the new building, particularly in the western wall.

1.3.2 A silver ring, now in the National Museum of Scotland (NMS), apparently either part of the stalk of a crucifix or of an altar candlestick, was found when digging the foundations of the present church. It is inscribed "Jesu Fili Dei miserere mei" in Saxon lettering. Two 13th century calvary cross-slabs, found in 1898 close to the old church are preserved in the northern wall of the interior of the present church. A 13th century gravestone found at the same time now forms a window sill in the session house.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objectives of the archaeological topsoil strip were:

- i) to safeguard the archaeological resource from any adverse impacts created by ground works associated with the development
- ii) to liaise with CECAS and the client in the event of significant archaeological features and /or small finds being unearthed as to the most appropriate response in safeguarding these features either by preservation *in situ*, if at all feasible, or by archaeological recording;
- iii) to report on the results of the monitored topsoil strip.

3 METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 A single trench measuring 3.7 m by 4.25 m was excavated within the footprint of the proposed extension (Figure 2). The southern baulk of trench was kept away from the existing building in allowing access to the church. The presence of a large gravestone on the eastern limit of the proposed trench, and a drain on the western side, meant that the width of the exposure was reduced from that originally planned.
- 3.2 The topsoil strip was undertaken using a mini-excavator (JCB type) equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. Excavation was carried out in shallow spits until the first significant archaeological horizon or natural subsoil was reached. All machine excavation was supervised by an experienced field archaeologist and undertaken according to AOC Archaeology Group's standard operating procedures. Prior to backfilling the trench a layer of geotextile was laid over the archaeological features. The trench was then backfilled.

4 RESULTS

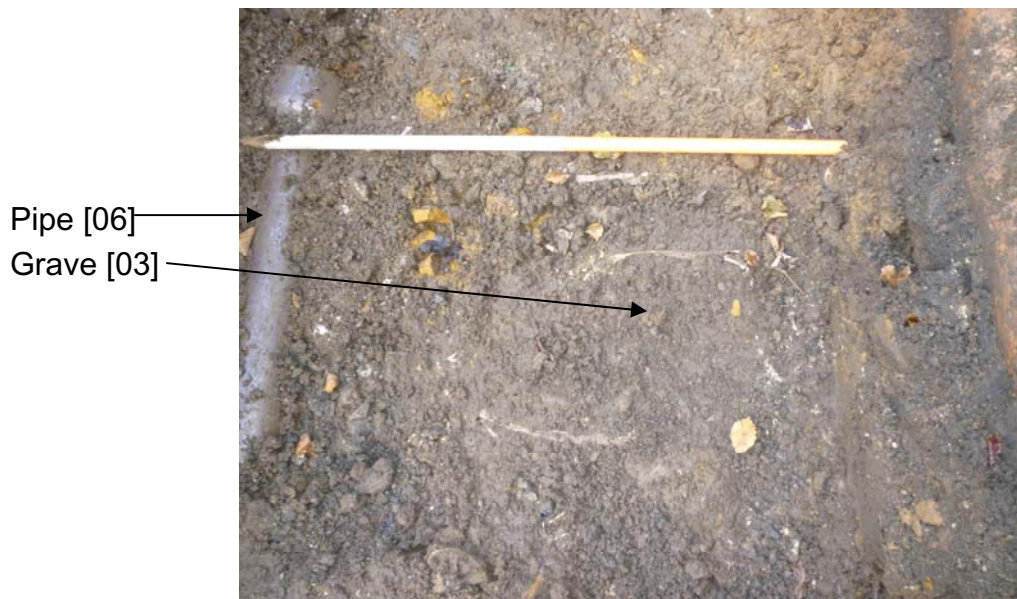
- 4.1 The topsoil strip was undertaken on 18th October 2011. Overall, the weather conditions were good and good archaeological visibility was present throughout the evaluation. The various data gathered from the evaluation are presented as a series of appendices
- i) Appendix 1 contains the Context register
 - ii) Appendix 2 contains the photographic register
 - iii) Appendix 3 contains the drawing register
 - iv) Appendix 4 contains the finds register
 - v) Appendix 5 reproduces the *Discovery and Excavation in Scotland* entry
- 4.2 The proposed development area was covered by a combination of materials, comprising a tarmac path aligned across two areas of turf and gravel. The tarmac path directly overlay an earlier crazy paving path leading to the main entrance of the church. This path and the gravel lay directly above a disturbed soil [01] consisting of a loose to moderately compact dark brown silty clay containing frequent small to medium sized angular stones and occasional fragments of human bone. This deposit had been cut by two utility services. Firstly, on the extreme western edge was a loosely fitted

red ceramic drain (Figure 3) aligned north to south and a second ceramic pipe seen at a depth of 0.6 m crossed the centre of the trench also running north to south [06]. Below deposit [01] significant archaeological features were encountered (Figures 2 and 3; Plate 1).



Plate 1; Area of excavation from the NW

- 4.3 To the immediate west of drain [06], the faint trace of the two graves ([03] and [08]) was identified. The graves underlay between 0.60 m and 0.70 m of deposit [01]. The graves were subject to cursory excavation to reveal that they were both human burials containing articulated human skeletons. Grave [03] comprised an east to west aligned linear cut measuring 0.6 m in width containing the remains of a possible juvenile skeleton [05]. The skeleton was laid in a supine position with the east to west alignment typical of a Christian burial (Figures 2 and 3; Plate 2). The full length of this grave could not be defined as the east end had been truncated by pipe [06] and the western end continued below the baulk. Grave [08] consisted of a badly damaged adult skull but no grave cut could be discerned.



Pipe [06]

Grave [03]

Plate 2: Gravel [03]

(Scale bar represents 1.0 m)

- 4.4 To the east of drain [06] and almost directly abutting the pipe were the remains of a large stone-built wall [07]. The top of the wall was encountered at a depth of 0.4 m from the present surface and was aligned north to south. It was constructed from large semi-faced angular blocks of sandstone, on average individually measuring 0.4 m by 0.4 m by 0.4 m. Although the full dimensions of the wall were not revealed it is clear that at least two courses survive forming a wall with a width of 1.2 m (Plate 3).



Plate 3; Wall [07] from South

- 4.5 To the east of the wall [07] and below the turf was a moderately compact dark brown clay silt [02] containing small to medium sized angular stones. This deposit, a possible undisturbed graveyard soil, was excavated to a depth of 0.5 m to reveal a third grave [09] (Figure 2; Plate 3). Like the previous graves this was only partially excavated in order to confirm that it contained articulated remains. The partial excavation of the grave showed it to be in a supine position, aligned east to west, and in a poor state of preservation.

*Plate 4; Grave (09) from west*

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The monitored topsoil strip has demonstrated that significant archaeological remains in the form of human burials and a wall, most probably an element of an earlier phase of the church, are present within the footprint of the proposed extension. The graves are typically Christian and were encountered at a depth of between 0.5 m in the east and 0.6 m in the west. Although no dating evidence was recovered from the graves their presence at either side of the wall [07] may indicate that they are of an earlier date. Likewise the wall also remains undated. Thirteenth century wall remains can be seen at the northern end of the church (Figure 4) but these show a different

construction being made from smaller more rounded stones as opposed to the larger more angular blocks seen in the excavated remains. It is possible that the wall/foundation found during the excavation represent the 14th century development of the original church (J Lawson per's com).

- 5.2 Any removal of the large memorial/grave stone (Plates 5 & 6) on the eastern edge of the extension may entail disturbance of yet further undiscovered graves, built features or significant soil deposits.



Plate 5; Gravel memorial stone from east



Plate 6; Gravel memorial stone from north

Eastern limit
of proposed
extension

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

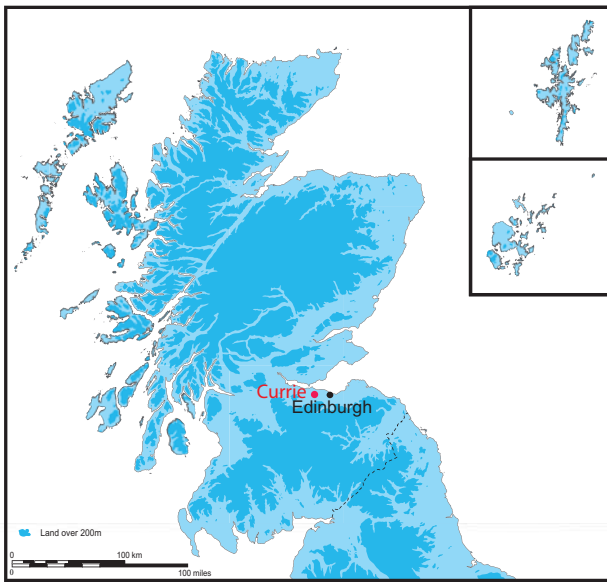
- 6.1 The archaeological works have identified significant archaeological remains within the proposed development area. The remains are currently at risk of being destroyed by the construction of the extension. Given the development proposals two options remain open as per the guidelines principals set out in *Scottish Planning Policy* (Scottish Government) and *Planning & Archaeology* (Scottish Government 2011). Either the archaeological features are preserved *in situ*, and remain unexcavated, or they need to be *preserved by record* – that is to say fully excavated and subsequently subjected to post-excavation analyses/publication.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

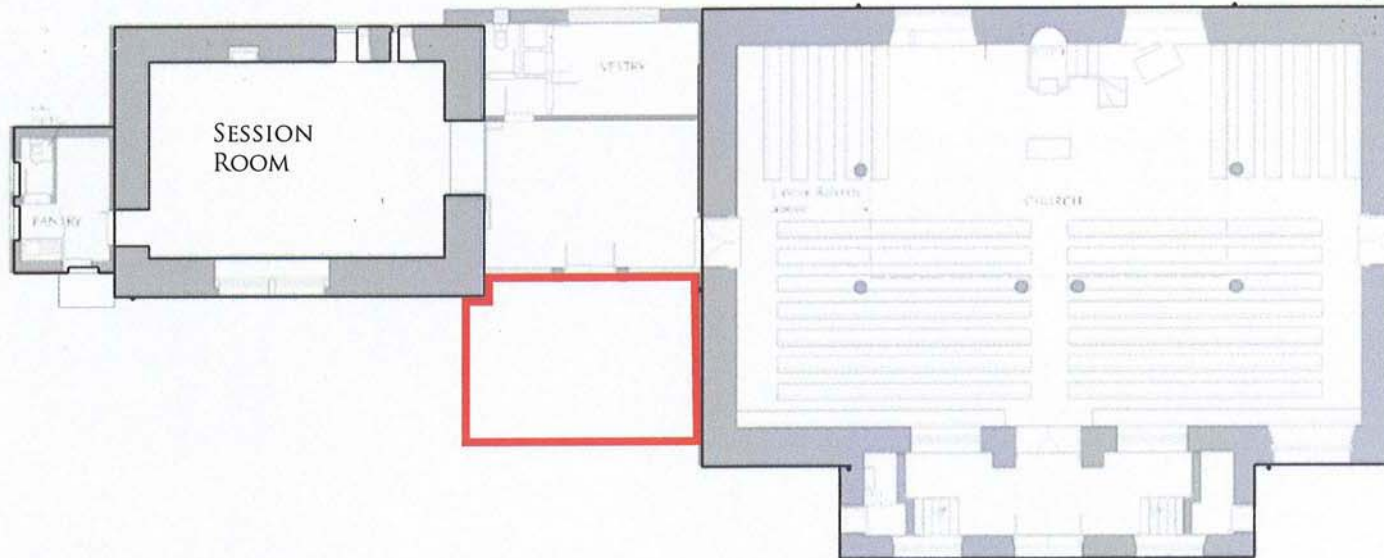
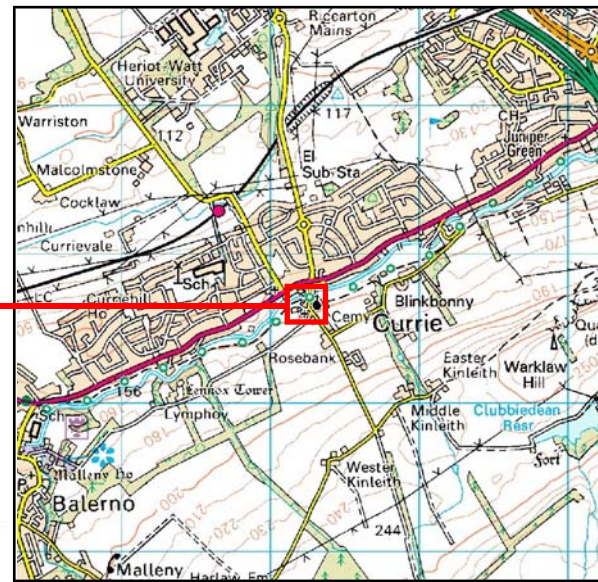
AOC 2011 *Currie Kirk Extension: Monitored topsoil strip: Written Scheme of Investigation (22nd September 2011)*. Unpublished AOC Project Design.

Scottish Government 2010 *Scottish Planning Policy*. (February 2010)

Scottish Government 2011 *PAN 2/2011 Planning & Archaeology*



Site Area

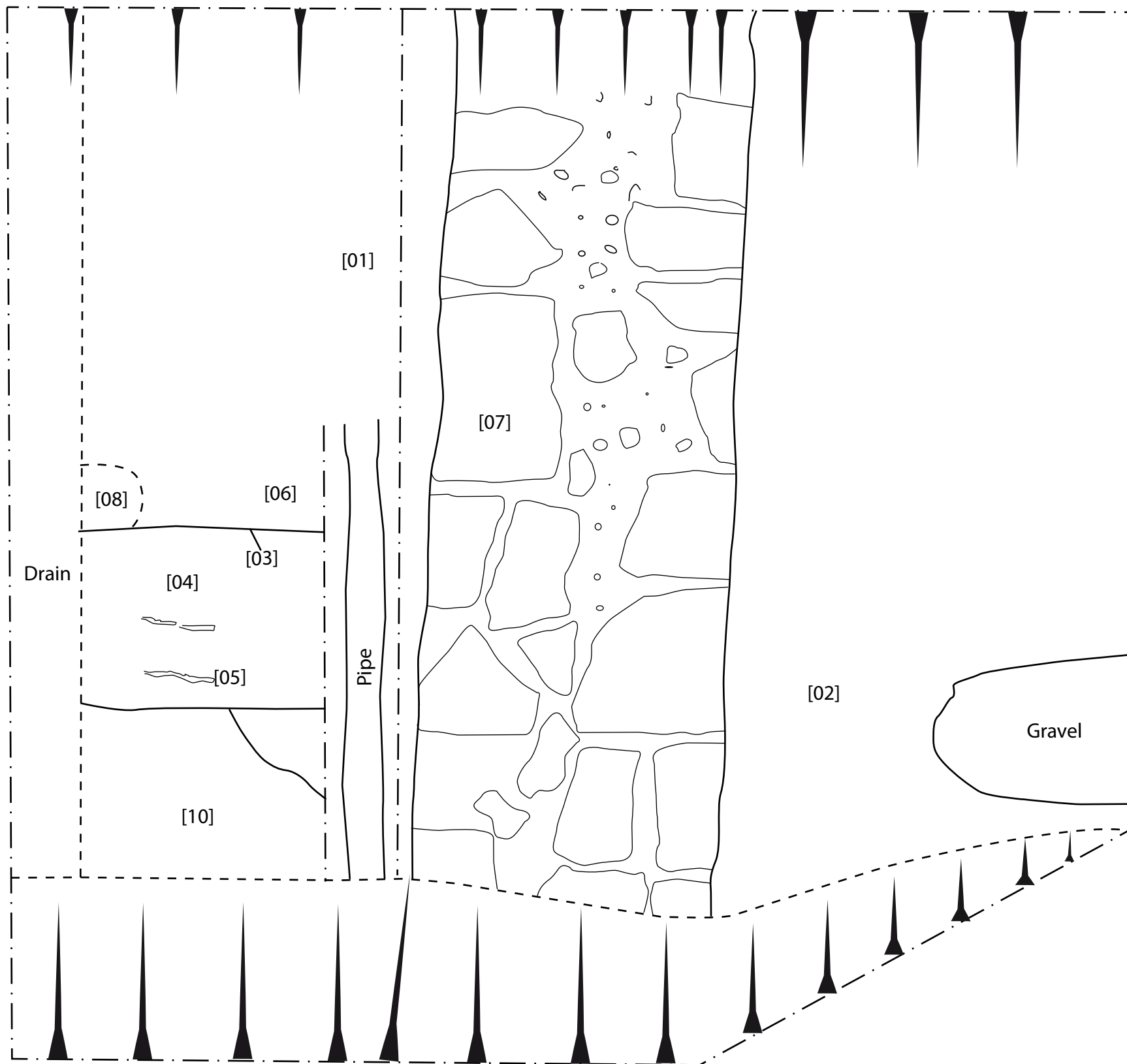


PLAN 1:200



 Outline of New Link

Figure 1: Site Location



Outline of existing Church



50 cm 0 50 cm

Figure 2: Area of excavation

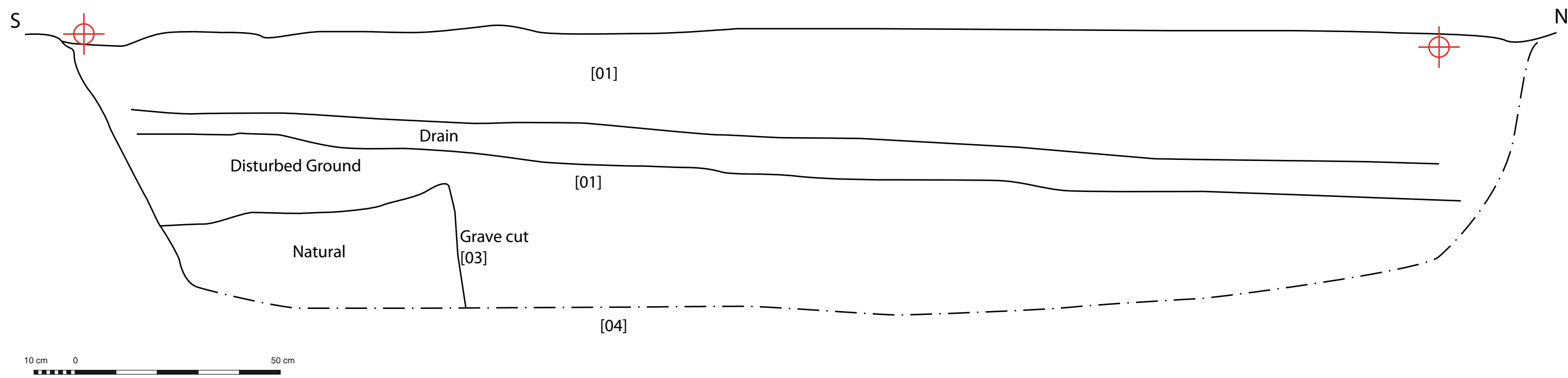


Figure 3: East facing section of trench

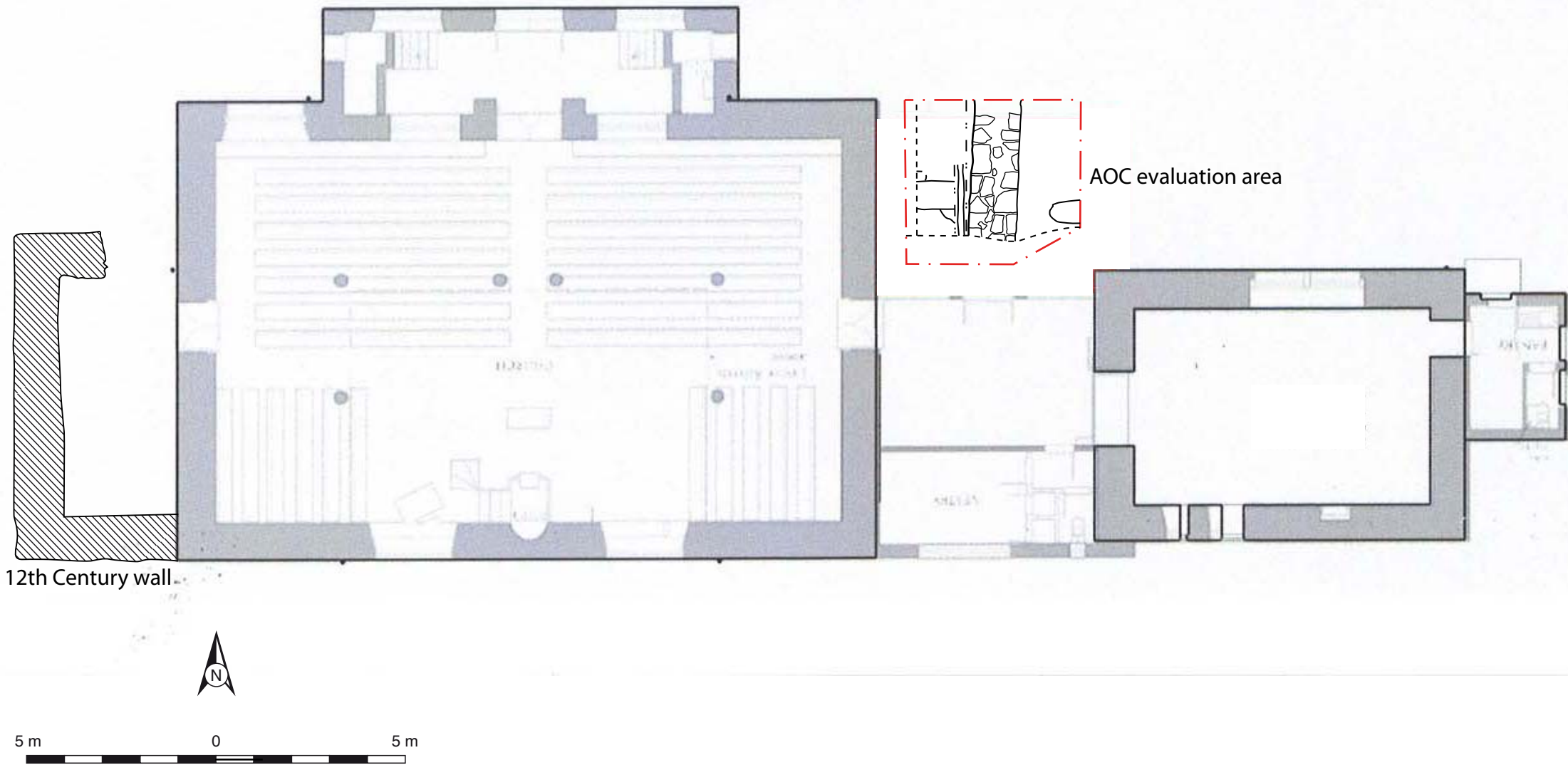


Figure 4: Plan of Currie Kirk, showing wall in relation to existing church and 12th century remains

Currie Kirk, Topsoil Strip: Data Structure Report

Section 2: Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Context Register

Context	Interpretation	Description	Stratigraphic relationship		Dimensions (M) as seen		
			Below	Above	Length	Width	Depth
00	Present surface	Tarmac path and gravel area		06	4.5 N/S	3.0 E/W	0.05
01	Disturbed ground	Loose/moderately compact dark brown clay silt. Frequent inclusions of small to medium sized angular stones. Occasional human bone fragments.	06	04, 08	4.5 N/S	3.0 E/W	0.4-0.7
02	Grave yard soil	Moderately compact dark/mid brown clay silt. Moderately frequent inclusions of angular stones.		09	3.6 N/S	1.6 E/W	>0.5
03	Cut of grave	Linear cut, containing grave fill (04) and skeleton (05). Cut by modern pipe (06) at east end. Unexcavated	05	10	1.0 E/W	0.7 N/S	?
04	Fill of grave cut (03)	Moderately compact dark brown clay silt. Unexcavated but seen to contain skeleton (05)	01	04	1.0 E/W	0.7 N/S	?
05	Articulated Skeleton within grave (03)	Remains only partially exposed. Remains lay in supine position and aligned E/W. East end truncated by pipe (06). Bone badly preserved and left in situ	04	03	N/A	N/A	N/A
06	Modern pipe/drain. Cut and fill	Linear cut filled by moderately compact dark brown/black clay silt. Frequent inclusions of small to medium sized angular stones. Contains large ceramic pipe. Cuts deposit (01).	00	01	3.4	0.2	>0.6
07	Wall	Constructed from un-bonded stone blocks. Size of stone varies with average size 0.4 m by 0.4 m by 0.4 m. Up to 2 courses survive. No construction cut seen.	01	?	>3.4	1.2	0.4
08	Skeleton	Only partial exposed and only skull seen. Bones badly damaged and left <i>in situ</i> .	01	?	N/A	N/A	N/A
09	Grave	Only partial exposed. No grave cut seen but articulated bones of skeleton exposed. Remains in supine position and aligned E/W	02	?	N/A	N/A	N/A

Context	Interpretation	Description	Stratigraphic relationship		Dimensions (M) as seen		
			Below	Above	Length	Width	Depth
10	Natural geology	Compact orange sandy clay. Only seen in SW corner.	03	N/A			0.45

APPENDIX 2: Photographic Record

Black and white images

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration shot	-
2	Crazy paving	N
3	General shot	NW
4	General shot	NW
5	Wall (07)	S
6	Wall (07)	S
7	Wall (07)	N
8	Wall (07)	N
9	Skeleton (05)	E
10	Skeleton (05)	E
11	Skeleton (09)	W
12	Skeleton (09)	W
13	Skeleton (05)	E
14	Skeleton (05)	E
15	Skeleton (05)	N
16	Skeleton (05)	N

Digital images

Frame	Description	From
1	Registration shot	-
2	Crazy paving	N
3	General shot	NW
4	General shot	NW
5	Wall (07)	S
6	Wall (07)	S
7	Wall (07)	N
8	Wall (07)	N
9	Skeleton (05)	E
10	Skeleton (05)	E
11	Skeleton (09)	W
12	Skeleton (09)	W
13	Skeleton (05)	E
14	Skeleton (05)	E
15	Skeleton (05)	N
16	Skeleton (05)	N

APPENDIX 3: Drawing Register

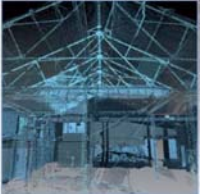
No.	Description	Scale
1	Plan of excavated area	1:20
2	East facing section of excavated area	1:10
3	Plan of west end of church showing 12 century remains	1:10

APPENDIX 4: Finds Register

No.	Description
1	Human Bone; Charnel

APPENDIX 5: 'Discovery and Excavation in Scotland' Report

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	City of Edinburgh Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME	Currie Kirk Extension
PROJECT CODE:	AOC 21973
PARISH:	Currie
NAME OF CONTRIBUTOR:	Erlend Hindmarch
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	AOC Archaeology Group
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Topsoil strip
NMRS NO(S)	NT16NE 18.00
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	Church and graveyard
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	Burials and a wall
NGR (2 letters, 6 figures)	NT 18301 67655
START DATE (this season)	18 th October 2011
END DATE (this season)	18 th October 2011
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. DES ref.)	None
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	<p>A monitored topsoil strip was undertaken on the site of a proposed extension to Currie Kirk.</p> <p>The topsoil stripping found at three burials (<i>left in situ</i>), and the remains of a large wall probably associated with an earlier phase of the church.</p>
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	To be confirmed
CAPTION(S) FOR ILLUSTRS:	---
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Currie Kirk
ADDRESS OF MAIN CONTRIBUTOR:	Edgefield Road Industrial Estate, Loanhead, Midlothian, EH20 9SY
EMAIL ADDRESS:	admin@aocarchaeology.com
ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended/deposited)	Archive to be deposited in NMRS



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