

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, GREAT GLEMHAM (HER Ref. GLG 003)

A REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS ASSOCIATED
WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TEA POINT, TOILET CUBICLE
& EXTERNAL SERVICE TRENCHES

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2008/148
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Summary

Great Glemham, All Saints Church (TM 3398 6164) Re-ordering works included the insertion of a new tea-point and toilet cubicle in to the base of the tower and the external excavation of service trenches and the insertion of a Trench Arch Drain. Archaeological monitoring of the excavation works was undertaken by Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service Field Projects Team.

The excavation within the tower revealed a large fragment from a stone grave slab or paving slab set vertically in the ground in line with the north door splay of the tower's west doorway. To the north of the slab, against the tower north wall, the fill was unconsolidated and included fragments of coal. While the function of this feature was not positively ascertained it was thought to be relatively recent in date and in some way associated with the Victorian heating system.

The drainage and service trenches external to the tower were not deep enough to disturb intact burials and further structural remains were not uncovered.

(Stuart Boulter for S.C.C.A.S. & Great Glemham Parochial Church Council; SCCAS report no. 2008/148)



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Fig. 1 1:10,000 scale OS map extract showing the location of the site

1. Introduction

All Saints Church lies to the south of the village of Great Glemham (TM 3398 6164) on a spur of land, at a height of 25 metres OD, overlooking a shallow valley to the north which itself drains eastwards into the River Alde some 1.3 kilometres to the east of the church (Fig. 1).

The standing building is essentially medieval, but there were major re-orderings, particularly during the 19th century.

Faculty consent on proposals for a re-ordering, that included the insertion of a new tea-point and toilet cubicle in to the base of the tower with external excavations including the insertion of a Trench Arch Drain, were conditional on the provision for a programme of archaeological recording. Diocesan Archaeological Advisor (Robert Carr) considered that monitoring of groundworks would enable an adequate record of any exposed archaeological deposits to be made.

Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service Field Team were subsequently commissioned by the project Architect (Mark Cleveland of The Whitworth Co-Partnership) on behalf of their client (Great Glemham Parochial Church Council) to undertake the specified archaeological recording.

2. Methodology

Three site visits were made while excavations were open. Observations were recorded in note form and on site plans. A full photographic record was made (digital and monochrome prints).

3. Results

Three site visits were made on the 8th, 10th and 11th of April during which time the majority of the groundwork excavations were open and available for examination by the archaeologist.

Figure 2 is an overall plan showing the location of the excavated drain trenches.

At the time of the initial visit, a trench had been excavated underneath the existing threshold of the tower's west doorway (Plate 1), revealing that the wall footing was not continuous for the west side of the tower. Below the tower threshold and continuing into the body of the building, the



Plate 1 Trench under tower threshold



Plate 2 Vertical grave slab fragment

removal of the existing tile floor and bedding had revealed a clayey/silty sand soil with occasional inclusions of human bone fragments. These were collected by the contractors for reburial. However, in the angle formed by the tower's north and west walls the underlying fill was considerably different, comprising unconsolidated grey/brown ashy sand with common inclusions of black cokey material and lime mortar. A vertically placed slab of stone, probably a re-used gravestone fragment, aligned with the north door splay and formed the boundary between the soft sand fill to the north and clay/sand to the south (Fig. 2 & Plate 2).

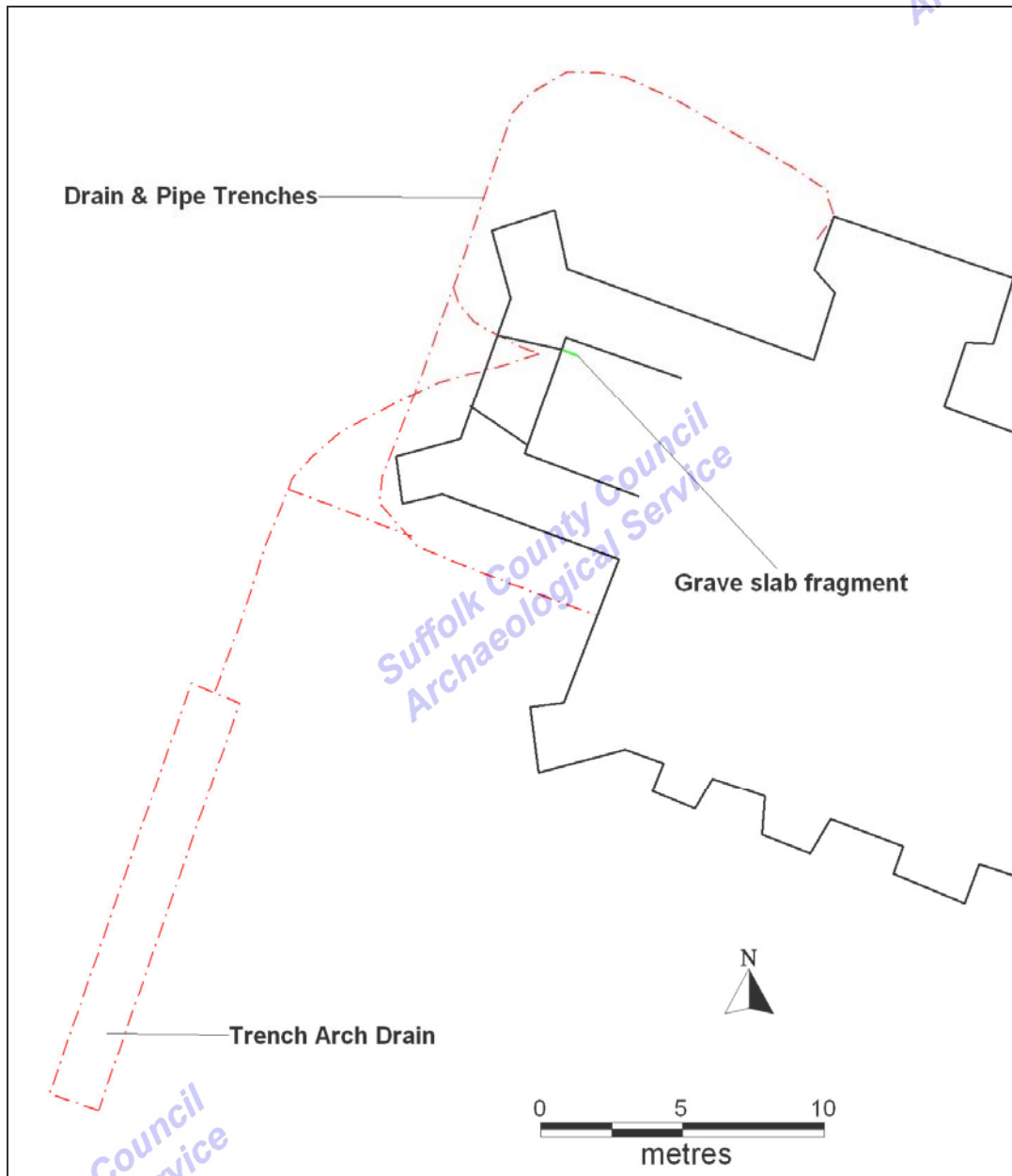


Fig. 2 1:500 scale OS map extract; location of the excavated trenches

Subsequently the stone was removed by the contractors and was found to measure approximately 0.60 x 0.50 by 0.06 metres (Plate 3). There was no evidence for an inscription on the stone. While this does not preclude the fact that it was part of a grave slab, it could also have been a reused stone paving slab.

The second and third site visits were made in order to monitor the external excavations. Two skulls were encountered in the external trenches, both at a depth of approximately 0.7 metres

and were left in place, as they were almost on the base of the trench. The Trench Arch Drain (Plate 4) was excavated to a depth in excess of 1.0 metre, but no bodies were encountered, although a number of vertical grave cuts were visible in the side of the trench (Plate 5).

One other feature, the accumulated gravel and pebble layers making up the pathway around the church were seen opposite the tower doorway (Plate 6).



Plate 3 Stone slab after removal



Plate 4 Trench Arch Drain



Plate 5 Grave cuts in side of trench



Plate 6 Accumulated layers of path

4. Conclusion

Other than the path gravels and grave cuts, no features of archaeological interest were recorded external to the church. It was impossible to tell within the confines of the trench whether the two skulls were *in-situ* or re-deposited from disturbed graves. The internal feature comprising the vertical stone slab with the unconsolidated fill to the north was considered to be late in date, probably relating to the Victorian re-orderings, probably associated with the insertion of the heating system which included an underground boiler.

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