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**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at the Church of St Bartholomew,
Snarestone, Leicestershire**

NGR SK 3413 0944



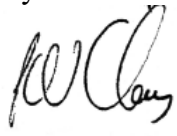
Jennifer Browning

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the
Church of St Batholomew,
Snarestone, Leicestershire (NGR SK 3413 0944)**

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at the Church of St. Bartholomew, Snarestone, Leicestershire NGR SK 3413 0944. The work follows a photographic survey (ULAS report 2012-057). No archaeologically significant finds or evidence for earlier structures were encountered during the course of the watching brief. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X. A42. 2012.

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at St. Bartholomew's Church, Snarestone in November and December 2012 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services.

St. Bartholomew's Church is a Grade II listed building (ref 187980), constructed in 1752 on the site of an earlier medieval church. Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of a brick lean-to store and the erection of a replacement extension to provide a wheel-chair accessible W.C. for the church. The Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCCHNET) advised that the works were likely to affect the historic building and possibly expose evidence of the earlier medieval church. As a result it was recommended that a photographic survey should be carried out to record the affected elevation of the listed building prior to the construction of the extension. In addition, groundworks for the foundations were to be monitored to record any exposed archaeological remains. The requirements are detailed in the *Brief For A Historic Building Photographic Survey, Archaeological Attendance. St Bartholomew's Church, Measham Road, Snarestone, Leicestershire*, (LCCHNET 23.02.2012).

The building survey was carried out in March 2012 (Clark 2012: ULAS report 2012-057) and followed the photographic section of Level 2 of English Heritage's *Understanding Historic Buildings* (2006).

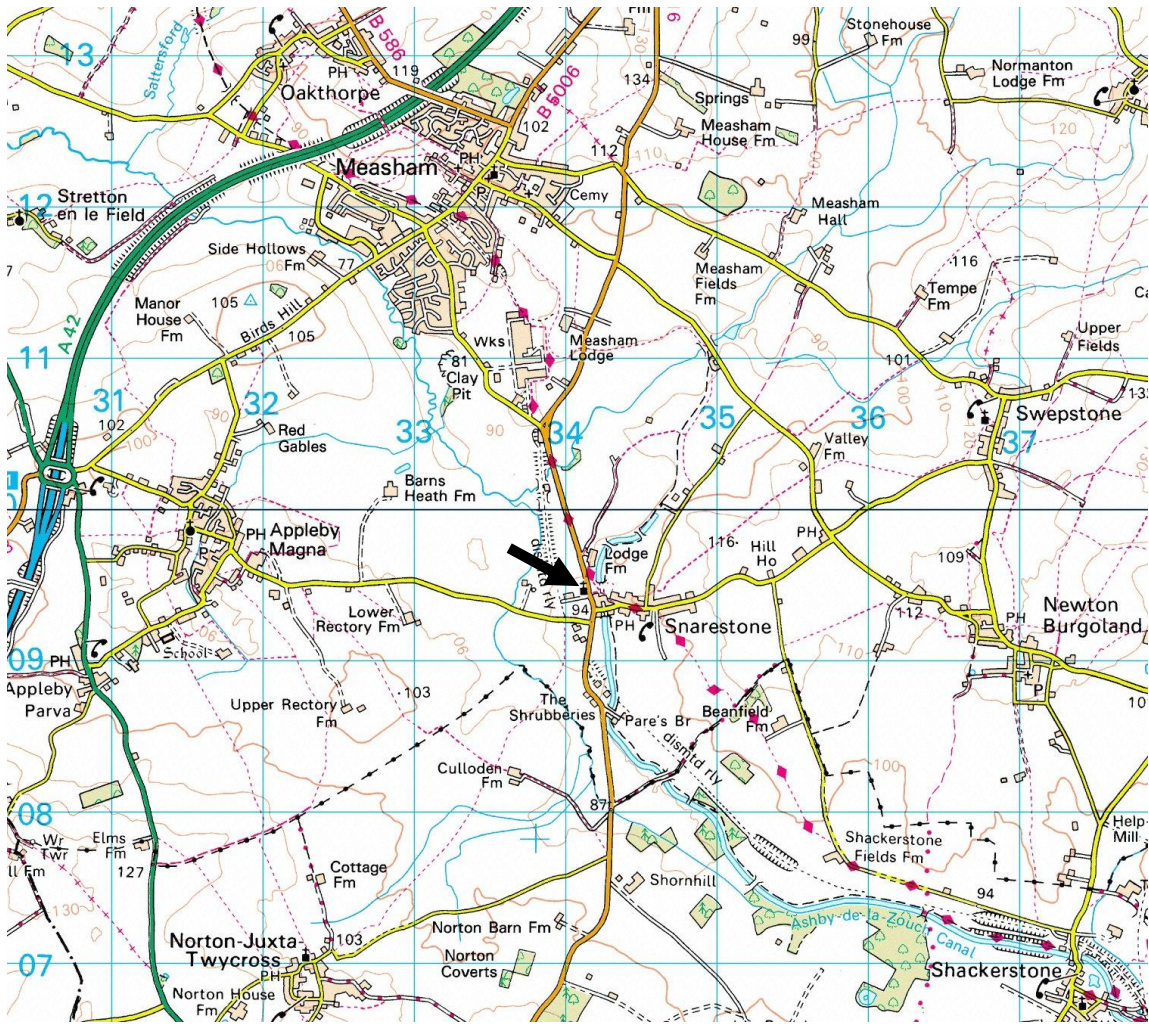


Figure 1: Location plan

Reproduced from the Explorer OS map 232 1:25 000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the underlying geology consists of mudstone and siltstone of the Tarpoley Siltstone Formation and the superficial geology consisted of Thrussington Member-diamicton.

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Snarestone was established as a settlement before 1886 and appears in the Domesday Book in the hands of Robert the Bursar as 'Snarchetone'. The present church was constructed in the mid-18th century on the site of an earlier building. Although settlement around the church seems sparse today, a number of earthworks have been recorded to the north and south of the church, suggesting that the village may once have continued further to the west (Hartley 1984).

The listing description for St. Bartholomew's Church reads as follows:

Small church of 1752 extended mid C19. Red brick with stone plinth, quoins and slate and plain tile roof with kneelers. Miniature W tower, nave and small chancel. Nave extended to N mid-C19 in similar style. Round headed rusticated stone surrounds with keystones to most openings. W tower of 3 stages, with parapet, stone bands, cornice and simple pinnacles. W door with tablet dated 1752, bull's eye window and bell-opening above. Nave with 2 windows to S, 2 larger to N and 3 small to W. Similar E window. Mid C19 truss and boarded roof of 3 bays, slate covered. Chancel has plastered roof, plain tiled with stone coped gable and cornice. Interior: plastered walls, perhaps contemporary small front, and 3 late C18 wall monuments.

4. Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the current archaeological work was:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

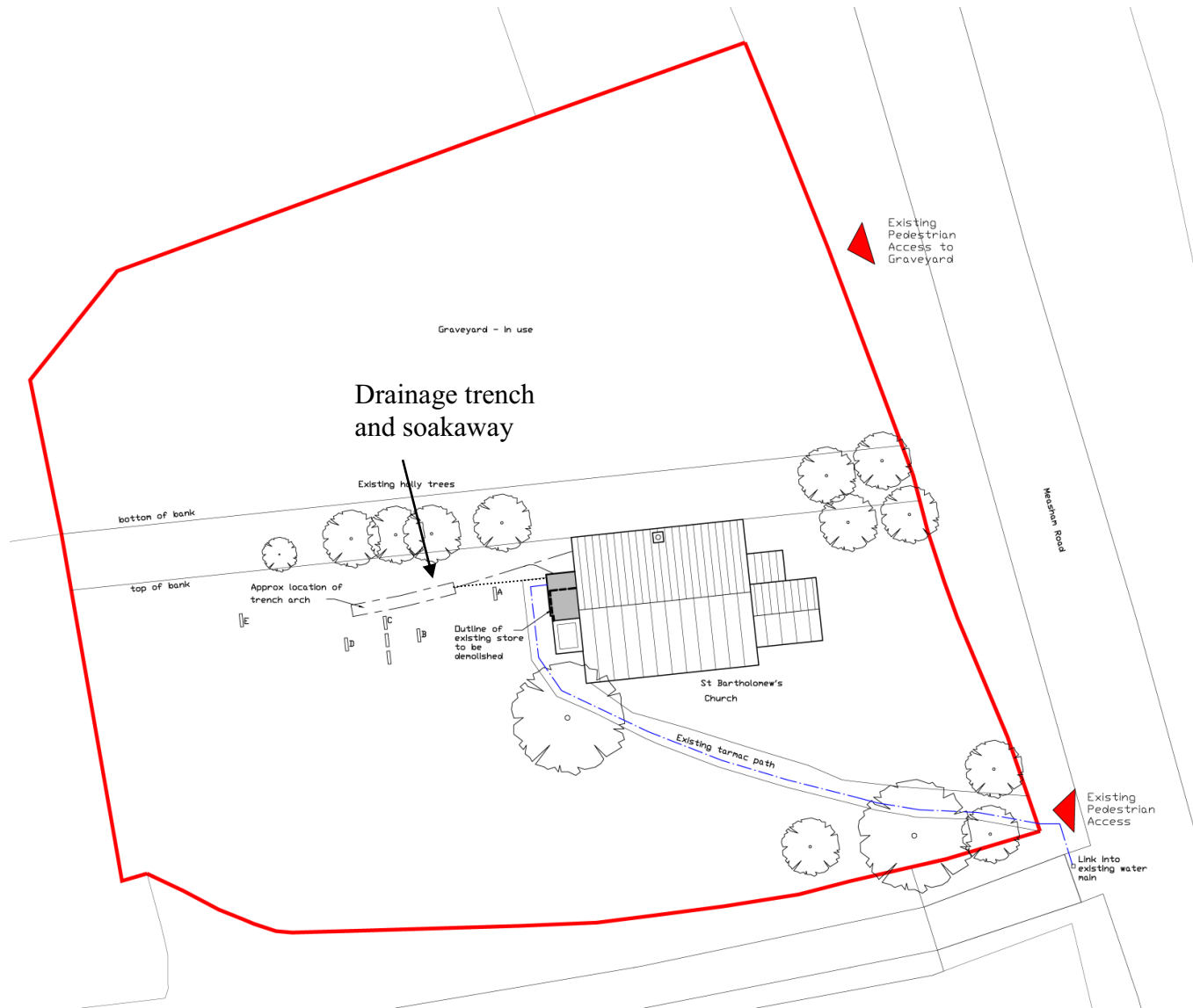


Figure 2: Plan of church showing location of trenches and archaeological features (NTS)

5. Methodology

The work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (Clay 2012) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (rev. 2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (rev. 2008).

The programme of work consisted of the removal of the existing store and excavation of the shallow foundations for the new extension and the excavation of a drainage trench from the new extension to a soakaway.

6. Results

The first visit was made on 8th November 2012 during the groundworks for the new extension. This occupied a slightly larger footprint than the extension which had been removed, measuring c3.8m x 2.5m. A steel cage for the foundations had already been installed in the excavated trench, however it was possible to see some of the sides and base. The top 0.6m consisted of dark grey brown sandy clay with frequent stones and roots, below which was a subsoil comprising dark orange brown sands and gravels. The formation depth was approximately 0.7m.

A second visit took place on the 13th December 2012. At this time, the drainage trench had been excavated and the extension was built up to the roof level. The trench extended from the west end of the chapel through to a soakaway in the centre of the graveyard (see figure 2). The narrow part of the trench from the extension had already been filled with drain pipe and gravel, so it was not possible to inspect this; however the fall into the soakaway indicated that it had a maximum depth of 0.4m, therefore only disturbing the top of the subsoil. The topsoil consisted of dark brown silty sandy loam with frequent roots and was approximately 0.2m thick. The subsoil consisted of dark reddish brown, mixed sandy clay, with frequent pebbles, sandstone fragments and gravel. Frequent root activity was observed and there were lumps of red clayey sand, presumably thrown up from the natural subsoil. Natural subsoil was not exposed by the excavation. Occasional fragments of disarticulated bone were visible in the sides of the trench. The spoil heaps were inspected; a few fragments of disarticulated bone and fragments of a fine-grained sandstone were seen. The human bones encountered by the contractors and removed from the trench during the work were examined. These consisted of a mixture of elements, evidently from various individuals and including femora (fused and unfused, suggesting different ages), humeri, ulnae, a tibia and mandibular and skull fragments.



Figure 3: View of the soakaway and drainage trench (looking east)

7. Conclusions

The work did not reveal any archaeological structures or finds. A number of disarticulated human bones were encountered during the excavation of the trench; these were collected for re-burial within the graveyard at an appropriate time following the conclusion of the work.

8. Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council HNET, with the Accession No. X. A42 2012

The archive contains site notes (watching brief pro forma sheets), digital photographs and photo index

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

9. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* and *Rutland Record* in due course. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

10. Bibliography

Clark, S. *A photographic survey of an extension to St. Bartholomew's Church, Measham Road, Snarestone, Leicestershire SK 3413 0944* ULAS Report No: 2012-057

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Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), (rev. 2008), *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was funded by Pick Everard and was carried out by Jennifer Browning for ULAS Patrick Clay managed the project. I would like to thank the contractors on site for their help and co-operation during the work.

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