



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

An archaeological watching
brief during groundworks at
All Saint's Church,
Church Street, Seagrave,
Leicestershire,
SK 62006 17601

Leon Hunt and Jamie Patrick



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**An archaeological watching brief
during groundworks at
All Saint's Church,
Church Street, Seagrave,
Leicestershire,
(SK 62006 17601)**

Leon Hunt and Jamie Patrick

For

Midland Stonemasonry Limited

Checked by Project Manager

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An archaeological watching brief during groundworks at All Saint's Church, Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire (SK 62006 17601)

Leon Hunt and Jamie Patrick

Summary

Archaeological attendance, inspection and recording (watching brief) was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at All Saint's Church, Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire. The work took place in June 2013 during the excavation of a trench around the north, east, and south side of the church to a maximum depth of 0.60m. No archaeological features were found within the trench. Disarticulated human bone was recorded on the southern side around the porch where the construction of later buttresses had disturbed a number of burials. A single articulated burial was also recorded cut in into the yellow natural clay approximately 0.80m below ground level. As this lay below the disturbance level it was left in situ and covered over.

No evidence was identified for earlier structures and it is possible that any evidence of a Saxon church has either been obliterated by the construction of the present building or else lies directly beneath the present church.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Midland Stonemasonry Limited to carry out an archaeological attendance, inspection and recording watching brief during ground-works at All Saint's Church, Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 62006 17601)

This archaeological work is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 12: Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment (DCLG 2012). The DAC certificate contains a condition for archaeological work in respect of groundworks associated with a surface water drainage scheme for the church and the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor requested a watching brief be undertaken during any groundworks associated with the works.

The church is Grade II* listed and is most likely located on the site of an Anglo-Saxon church, the remains of which may be discovered during ground-works at the site.

Location and Geology

The village of Seagrave lies in the Charnwood District of Leicestershire around 10 miles west of Melton Mowbray and 9 miles north of Leicester (Figure 1).

The church lies in the village centre of Seagrave, on the eastern side of Church Street (Figure 2).

The British Geological Survey shows the underlying Bedrock to be Scunthorpe Mudstone overlain with Oadby Member Diamictic Superficial Deposits.

The church lies within a sub-rectangular church yard and an approximate height of 77m aOD. The churchyard is around 0.2 hectares in size.

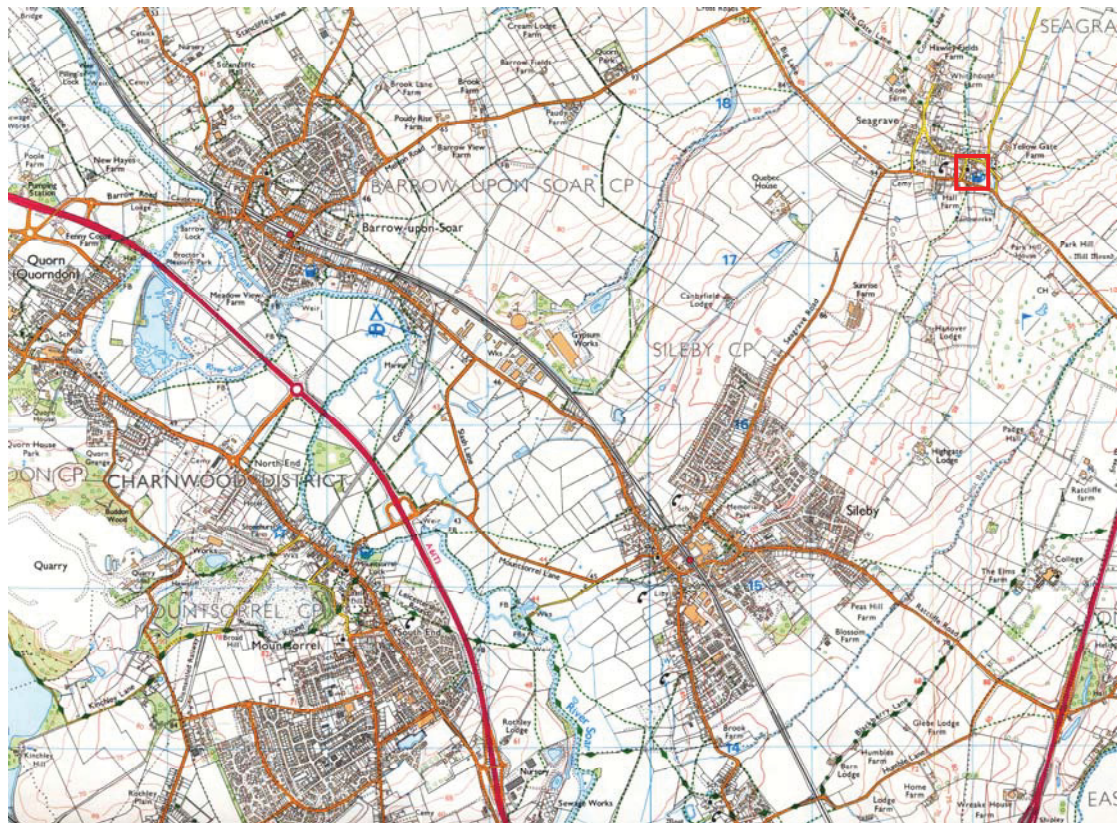


Figure 1: Site Location

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Historical and Archaeological Background

The Parish church of All Saint's is a Grade II* listed building. The church is dedicated to All Saints, which tends to be a 13th century dedication, but parts of the fabric pre-date this by some two hundred years. It is highly probable that the church occupies the site of the Saxon church which served the existing village.

The font is late Saxon / early Norman. The communion table is of special interest being a Mensa (three of the consecration crosses are still visible) though it is thought to date from much earlier than medieval times. Other items of interest are the early musical instruments and the chancel windows - the south one being of beautiful

Murano glass and its opposite in the chancel north wall contains a mistake (Parish website <http://www.scsparishchurches.org.uk/Church%20Buildings.htm>). There is therefore the possibility that buried archaeological remains may be affected by the development.



Figure 2: Location of All Saints Church. NTS. Plan provided by client.

Archaeological Objectives

The main objective of the archaeological excavation is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any significant archaeology on the site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the Watching brief are:

- 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 produce an archive and report of any results.

Methodology

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2012) and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008).

A *Design Specification for Archaeological Work* (see Appendix) was produced by ULAS prior to the archaeological work being undertaken.

The project involved the supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works.

The groundworks consisted of a soakaway being excavated and a series of trenches for drainage pipes and manholes to be excavated by hand around the northern, southern and eastern sides of the building (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Work in progress, looking south-west

Results

The site was visited initially on the 5th June 2013 followed by another visit on the 24th of June 2013 and trenches associated with the new drainage scheme were observed.

By the time of arrival onto site a large soakaway, which lay to the north-east of the building had already been excavated.

This was a rectangular hole, measuring 7.2m by 2m. It was 1.24m deep on the southern side and 1.04m deep on the northern side (due to the slope in the land from south to north).

A large electric cable had been found during the excavation and could be seen in the south facing section. The soil sequence, which was clearly visible, consisted of 0.13m of turf and topsoil over 0.20m of mixed clay, soil and rubble. Beneath this lay 0.30m of dark brown silty-clay, possibly a buried soil, over 0.36m of orangey-brown clay. At the base of the trench was a mid-grey clay (Figure 4).



Figure 4: North facing section of soakaway, looking south

The narrow drain trenches leading to the soakaway via a series of manholes and a silt trap, were 0.26m wide and the manholes measured 0.9m by 0.9m. They were initially excavated to a depth of 0.36m and then deepened in places to form the correct fall for the drainage.

The drainage trenches and manholes revealed a similar sequence of topsoil over rubble and mixed clay and soil, over more silty soil, but in some areas, particularly to the east of the church, the rubble layer was quite dense with brick and other building materials. The stratigraphy of the trenches at the northern side of the church largely consisted of dark-brown topsoil throughout the section.

The pipe trench around the southern side of the church was excavated from the east to a maximum depth of 0.60m (Figure 5). No natural geology was revealed along the pipe trench. Human charnel was found in the area around the porch. This appears to be due to the construction of later buttresses which had disturbed some of the burials. The excavation for a manhole just east of the porch did reveal part of an articulated burial at a depth of 0.80m (Figure 6). The burial was orientated east - west cutting the yellow natural clay. Only the left side of the skeleton was seen showing part of the arm, hand, pelvis, and leg bone. As the skeleton was not going to be disturbed further by the works it was left *in situ* and reburied. It is not known therefore how complete the skeleton was or if it had been disturbed by the later additions to the church.



Figure 5: Work in progress around manhole, looking west



Figure 6: Partially revealed skeleton within manhole

Apart from the burial, no archaeological features were observed. No artefacts were recovered from the observed trenches or the spoil with the exception of the human bone which was reburied.

Conclusion

With exception of the burial identified within the manhole area, no archaeological features were recorded. No evidence for earlier buildings was seen within the trenches. It is therefore possible that any earlier church structures lies entirely beneath the footprint of the present church. Alternatively any archaeology could have been destroyed by the building of the present church, and by later additions such as the buttresses. Disturbance by these later additions could also explain the disturbed human charnel around the porch of the church.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Bruce Park and his team for their help and co-operation with this project.

The project was managed by Vicki Score and the work was carried out by Leon Hunt and Jamie Patrick.

Archive

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A74.2013 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (Report No. 2013-104)
- 2 Watching brief recording sheets
- 1 Contact sheet of digital photographs
- 1 CD of digital photographs
- 1 Set B&W Contact sheets
- 1 Set B&W Negatives

References

DCLG 2012, National Planning Policy Framework, Section 12: Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment.

IfA 2012, *Code of Conduct*

IfA 2008 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Seagrave Parish website <http://www.scsparishchurches.org.uk/Church%20Buildings.htm>
(Accessed June 2012)

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Appendix: Written Scheme of Investigation

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological attendance, inspection and recording (watching brief)

All Saint's Church, Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire, LE12 7LT

NGR: SK 62006 17601

For: Midland Stonemasonry Limited

Start Date: TBC

1 Introduction

Definition and scope of the specification

- 1.1 This document is a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological attendance and monitoring at the above site. This specification provides a written scheme for an archaeological watching brief, as requested by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor, of any groundworks during demolition and construction of a new building at All Saint's Church, Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire, LE12 7LT
- 1.2 The document provides details of the following work proposed by ULAS on behalf of the client.
 - Archaeological attendance or inspection and recording during groundworks

2. Background

Context of the Project

- 2.1. The DAC certificate contains a condition for archaeological work in respect of groundworks associated with a surface water drainage scheme (Figs 1 and 2).

Archaeological and historical background (taken from Parish website

<http://www.scsparishchurches.org.uk/Church%20Buildings.htm>

- 2.2 The Parish church of All Saint's is a Grade II* listed building. The church is dedicated to All Saints, which tends to be a 13th century dedication, but parts of the fabric pre-date this by some two hundred years. It is highly probable that the church occupies the site of the Saxon church which served the existing village. The font is late Saxon / early Norman. The communion table is of especial interest being a Mensa (three of the consecration crosses are still visible) though it is thought to date from much earlier than medieval times. Other items of interest are the early musical instruments and the chancel windows - the south one being of beautiful Murano glass and its opposite in the chancel north wall contains a mistake. There is therefore the possibility that buried archaeological remains may be affected by the development.

3. Archaeological Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The purpose of the archaeological work may be summarised as follows:
 - 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.

Geological background

The British Geological Survey shows the underlying Bedrock to be Scunthorpe Mudstone overlain with Oadby Member Diamicton. Superficial Deposits.

4. Methodology

General methods

- 4.1 All work will follow the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2012) and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008).
- 4.2 Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are included below.
- 4.3 An accession number will be obtained prior to commencement of the project and used to identify all records and artefacts.

Archaeological attendance for inspection and recording

- 4.4 The project will involve a watching brief during groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist. During these groundworks, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will record areas of archaeological interest.
- 4.5 Excavation should be undertaken by a mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket for stripping in level spits. A toothed bucket may be used for removing modern overburden or rubble deposits.
- 4.6 If the initial monitoring identifies areas of no archaeological interest (e.g. modern made ground or disturbed areas), then the archaeologist may stand down monitoring of that area.
- 4.7 If significant archaeological deposits are discovered work may need to be halted in order for contingency excavation and recording to be carried out. The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.
- 4.8 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid.
- 4.9 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded using standard ULAS procedures. Sufficient of any archaeological features or deposits will be hand excavated in order to provide the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence.
- 4.10 All below ground stratigraphy will be recorded. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.
- 4.11 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.
- 4.12 Spoil will be monitored for artefacts. A representative sample of unstratified finds may be retained.
- 4.13 Any human remains encountered within the trenches will be removed with due care and consideration. These will be handed over to the parish for reburial following the fieldwork.

Preservation in situ and Contingency Provisions

- 4.14 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the archaeological investigation there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken.
- 4.15 On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the client and the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor in order for detailed discussion between all relevant parties to take place.

Recording Systems

- 4.16 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 4.17 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.
- 4.18 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a trench plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the areas investigated in relationship to the investigation area and OS grid.
- 4.19 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary. The relative height of all principal strata and features will be recorded. The stratigraphy of all trenches shall be recorded even where no archaeological features are identified.
- 4.20 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared as per the brief, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 4.21 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the excavations.

5 Finds & samples

- 5.1 The IfA Guidelines for Finds Work will be adhered to.
- 5.2 An Accession number will be obtained prior to the commencement of any on-site works that will be used to identify all records and finds from the site.
- 5.3 Any finds that may constitute 'treasure' under the Treasure Act, 1996 will be reported to the local Coroner and removed to a safe place.
- 5.4 All antiquities, valuables, objects or remains of archaeological interest, other than articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be subject to the Treasure Act, discovered in or under the Site during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination of the said Archaeological Discoveries shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to LCC for storage in perpetuity.
- 5.4 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording.
- 5.5 Although the environmental potential of the site is uncertain, if significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the following environmental sampling strategy will be adopted, following consultation with the ULAS Environmental Officer.
- i. A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
 - ii. Any buried soils or well-sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
 - iii. Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.
 - iv. Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.
- 5.6 Wet sieving with flotation will be carried out using a York Archaeological Trust sieving tank with a 0.5mm mesh and a 0.3mm flotation sieve. The small size mesh will be used initially as flotation of plant remains may be incomplete and some may remain in the residue. The residue > 0.5mm from the tank will be separated into coarse fractions of over 4mm and fine fractions of > 0.5-4mm. The coarse fractions will be sorted for finds. The fine fractions and flots will be evaluated and prioritised; only those with remains apparent will be sorted. The prioritised flots

will not be sorted until the analysis stage when phasing information is available. Flots will be scanned and plant remains from selected contexts will be identified and further sampling, sieving and sorting targeted towards higher potential deposits.

5.7 Where there is evidence for industrial activity, macroscopic technological residues (or a sample of them) may be collected. Separate samples (c. 10ml) may be collected for micro-slugs (hammer-scale and spherical droplets). All industrial samples will be undertaken with reference to the Centre for Archaeology Guideline on Archaeometallurgy (English Heritage 2001).

5.8 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context

6. Report and Archive

6.1 Arrangements will be made for the archive, consisting of record sheets, original drawings, drawn plans, photographs, notes, copies of all reports along with an index to the archive to be deposited at Leicestershire Museums in accordance with the relevant procedures.

6.3 The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent and marked with the site accession number.

6.4 The archive will be prepared in line with appropriate professional guidelines (e.g. UKIC and ADS guidelines for the preparation of archaeological archives for long term storage and *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (Brown 2007).

6.7 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within six weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be directed to the client, the Planning Authority and to the Historic Environment Record.

6.8 The report will include consideration of:

- A non-technical summary.
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the work.
- The location, date, significance and quality of the building.
- The nature, location and extent of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
- The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
- The local, regional and national context as appropriate highlighting any research priorities where applicable.
- Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
- The location and size of the archive.
- Contents of the archive

7 Publication and Dissemination of Results

7.1 A summary of the work will be submitted to the local archaeological journal. A larger report will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the evaluation warrant it.

7.2 University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed detailing the results of the project. Once the report has become a public document following its incorporation into the HER it may be placed on the web-site.

8. Copyright

- 8.1 The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

9. Timetable

- 9.1 A start date has yet to be confirmed..

10. Health and Safety

- 10.1 A Risks Assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works (see end of this document).

11 Insurance

- 11.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. Details are provided in the Health & Safety Method Statement.

12. Monitoring arrangements

- 12.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and to the Planning Authority subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. Notice will be given to the Development Control Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological survey in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.

- 12.2 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

13. Bibliography

Brown 2007 *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*

English Heritage 2001 *Centre for Archaeology Guidelines on Archaeometallurgy*

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

Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) 2012 *Code of Conduct*

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Fig. 1 Location plan.

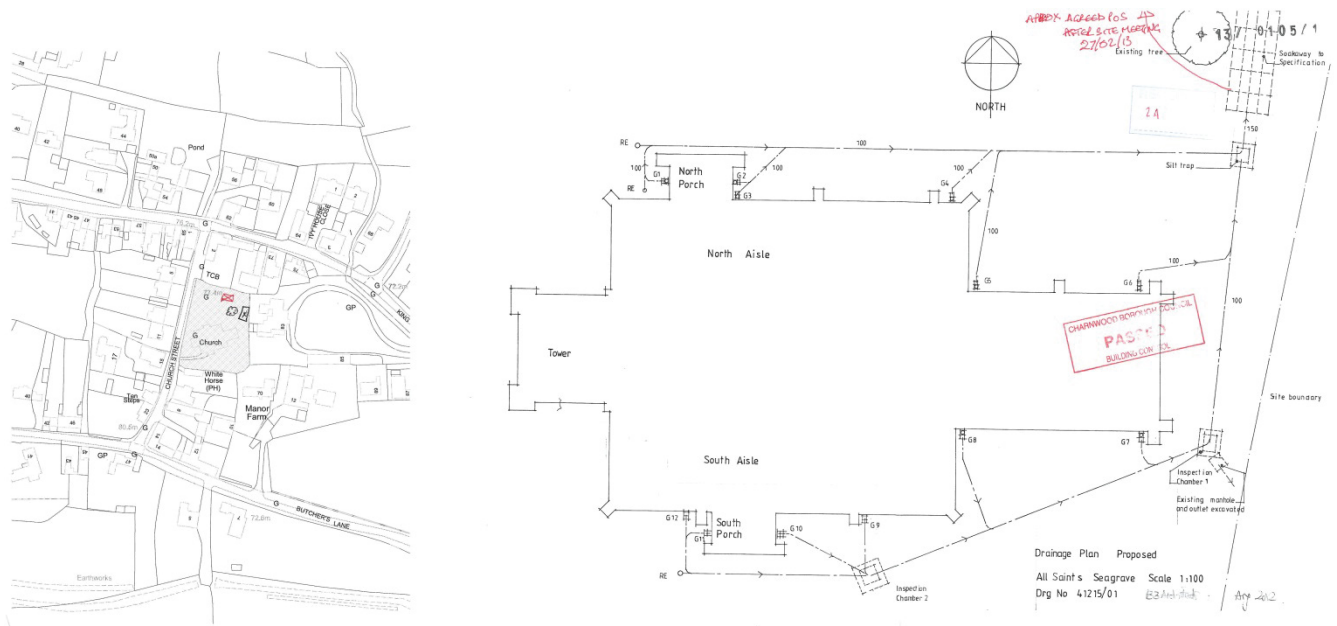


Fig. 2 Proposed site plans (provided by client).

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