

ECCH11



ELECTRIC CABLE EMERGENCY REPAIR, HEREFORD CATHEDRAL CLOSE

Watching Brief

for C. J. Bayliss on behalf of Eon

May 2011

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Project Manager

Andy Boucher

Author

Lise Brekmoe

Fieldwork

Lise Brekmoe

Graphics

Anna Sztromwasser

Approved by

Andy Boucher, Project Manager



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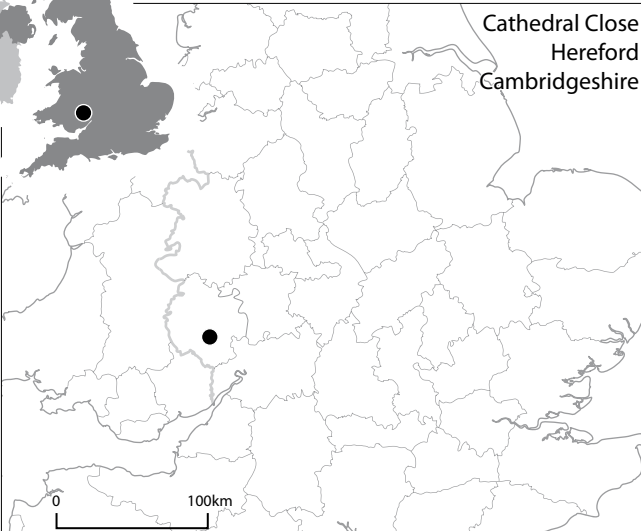
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road, Hereford HR4 9NZ
T 0143 236 4901 • F 0143 236 4900 • E hereford@headlandarchaeology.com
www.headlandarchaeology.com

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Cathedral Close
Hereford
Cambridgeshire



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Scale 1:500 @ A4



0 25m

Illus 1
Trench location

ELECTRIC CABLE EMERGENCY REPAIR, HEREFORD CATHEDRAL CLOSE

Watching Brief

An archaeological monitoring of ground works was required during an emergency rerouting of an electric cable through the north-east corner of the Cathedral Close. Three trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.6m, measuring a total of approximately 40m in length. The only feature of archaeological significance encountered was a pit in Trench 2, containing two fragments of a Malvernian tile. A 0.4m deep deposit with 19th century finds and services was exposed in all trenches and is likely to be from the 1850s landscaping of the Cathedral Close. No articulated burials were encountered, indicating a significant reduction of the ground levels in the area during the landscaping in the 1850s.

1. INTRODUCTION

Damage to an electric cable was discovered during excavations on the south end of Church Street. Due to the nature of the damage and the cable being one of the main electric cables in the city, it was decided that an emergency rerouting through the north-east corner of the Cathedral Close (SO 509 398) was needed. This required an archaeological monitoring of ground works which affected previously unexcavated areas.

The main objectives of archaeological works were:

- to record any archaeological remains threatened by the proposed development works,
- to record burials in situ and arrange for these to be reburied during the course of the work
- to report on the results of the work.

The work was covered under an existing license for the removal of Human Remains (09–0143).

1.1 Background and history

The area surrounding Hereford Cathedral has been a burial ground at least since the Saxon period as documentary evidence has showed that both the priory of St Guthlac (within what is now Castle Green) and the cathedral claimed burial rights. Evidence of the extent

of the use of the cathedral cemetery was discovered in 1993 during the excavations on the site for the new Mappa Mundi building, when a pit of charnel was discovered, containing the remains of at least 5,000 individuals. It is suggested that this charnel was disturbed during the excavations for the foundations of the Norman cathedral at the beginning of the twelfth century (Stone and Appleton-Fox, 1996, 19). With the inevitable overcrowding due to burial over an extended period, a reduced area and an increasing population, in 1790 the Chapter decided that the only persons who should be buried in the precincts were those who died there, restricting burial rights to inhabitants of St John's parish. In 1791 the city parishes acquired their own cemeteries, each of which was consecrated by Bishop Butler (Duncumb, 1804, 589) and the cathedral churchyard was effectively closed. The precinct was first referred to as the Cathedral Close as late as 1845 (Stone and Appleton-Fox, 1996, 13). In 1850–51 the whole area was landscaped, during which the level of the ground was lowered, paths were laid out and trees were planted.

The ongoing excavations by Headland Archaeology UK Ltd as part of the redevelopment of the Cathedral Close included the digging of a north-east to south-west oriented soak-away near the area being disturbed by the cable diversion. During the excavation of the soak-away, no burials were encountered above a depth of 1m below ground level.



Illus 2

Trench after excavation looking west

2.1 Recording

All recording followed IfA Standards and Guidance. A plan of excavations was maintained at a scale of 1:100 and has been tied to the National Grid. Areas of ground disturbance were photographed with graduated metric scales and included 35mm colour transparencies, black-and-white prints and digital photographs. A representative section drawing at a scale of 1:10 was produced and tied to the National Grid.

3. RESULTS

Three trenches were excavated to a depth between 0.6m and 0.7m from ground level at 56m OD. The trenches were all 0.4m wide.

3.1 Trench 1

A 30m long and 0.6m deep trench was excavated diagonally across Phase 3 of the Cathedral Close (Illus 1). The trench was 0.5m wide. Areas under tarmac south of Church Street and a 10m trench going east from Broad Street were excavated and backfilled prior to the arrival of the archaeologist as the cable was able to follow previously excavated soak-aways in these areas.

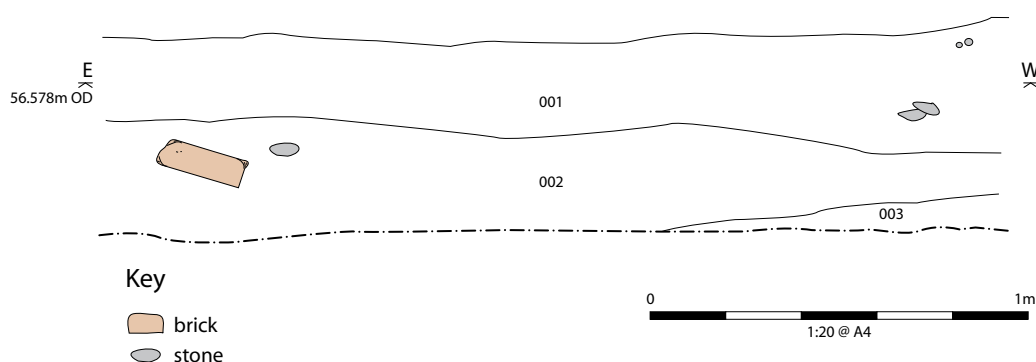
A 0.3m deep deposit of made up ground [001] from the ongoing redevelopment extended throughout the trench. This overlay a 0.2–0.3m sand loam deposit of a mid-brown colour with frequent inclusions of bricks and gravels [002]. In the easternmost 10m of the trench, this was sealed by a light brown sand deposit [004]. In the westernmost 5m of the trench, deposit [002] overlay a grayish brown loam which included occasional disarticulated human remains [003]. This deposit slopes down towards the west and was not encountered further east in the trench at the level of excavation (Illus 3). In this area [002] continued, with several 20th century drainpipes being uncovered in the easternmost 10m of the trench.

2. METHOD

- 2 The excavated areas were closely examined for any features and the spoil was examined in order to collect dating evidence. Excavation was undertaken by mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-bladed bucket.

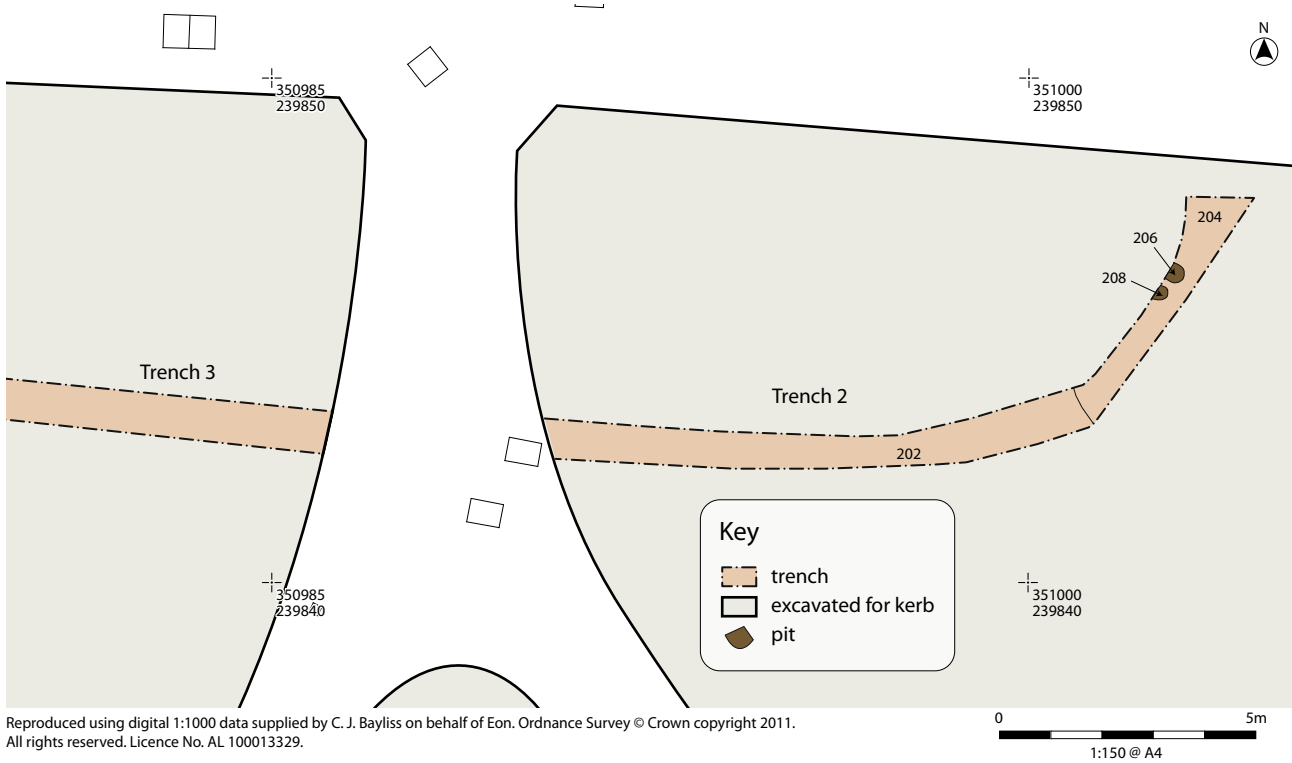
No contexts suitable for sampling were uncovered during the course of the watching brief. No *in situ* burials were encountered, but a small number of disarticulated human bones were collected from context [003] and retained for later reburial alongside human remains from the Cathedral Close project.

Small finds retained during the course of the watching brief will be processed by Headland's finds specialists.



Illus 3

North-facing section of Trench 1 showing relationship between [002] and [003]



Illus 4
Plan of Trench 2

3.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 measured 15m and was excavated to a depth of 0.7m. The trench was irregular in shape, running east-west for the first 11m and southwest-northeast for 4m. The east-west aligned part of the trench revealed archaeological stratigraphy identical to Trench 1, with modern made-up grounds consisting of a light yellow sand [200] overlying a modern deposit of soil from elsewhere on the cathedral close [201], it is likely it have been re-deposited as part of the ongoing redevelopment. This overlay a 0.3m thick

deposit of grayish brown made ground [202], most likely from the 19th century landscaping of the area.

In the north-south aligned part of the trench, deposit [202] overlay a 0.1m deep silty grey layer [203] which sealed a reddish brown clay deposit [204]. As the level of excavation was reached this deposit was not excavated, but it appears that both deposit [203] and [204] dip down to the south (Illus 4). Two pits cut into [204].

The northernmost pit [206] produced a 19th century drain pipe fragment. The southernmost pit, [208], produced two fragments of Malvernian tile possibly parts of the same tile, dating between the 13th and 14th century. Neither pits were excavated as the level of excavation was reached and it is therefore difficult to establish whether pit [208] is late medieval in date, or whether the tile has been brought in from elsewhere. It is likely that pit [205] is of a late date, possibly relating to the landscaping of the area in the 19th century.



Illus 5
North facing section of Trench 3 showing deposits [300], [301] and [304]

Trench 2 was the only trench to produce finds, including the Malvernian tile fragments, 19th century drain pipe fragment and a clay pipe stem from landscaping deposit [202].



3.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 10m in length and was excavated to a depth of 0.7m. The west end of the trench joined up with the northeastern corner of Trench 1 and the archaeological stratigraphy revealed during the excavations were identical to those revealed during excavations of Trenches 1 and 2 (Illus 5). Underlying a layer of sand was a band of re-deposited soil from elsewhere on the close, most likely deposited during the ongoing redevelopment of the Cathedral Close. This sealed a 0.3m thick grey brown deposit most likely dating to the landscaping of the close and being similar to deposits [002] and [202] and this stratigraphy was consistent throughout the trench, apart from in areas with modern services.

4. CONCLUSION

No features of archaeological significance were uncovered during the excavations of Trenches 1 and 3. The only deposit of archaeological significance was [003], containing some disarticulated human remains and bearing a strong resemblance to deposits encountered throughout the Cathedral Close excavations being general graveyard fills containing disturbed and re-deposited burials.

4 It is likely that the landscaping of the Close in the 1850s lead to a significant reduction of the ground levels in this area which can explain the low level at which the general graveyard fill [003] appears. The overlying deposits are likely to be from a later building up of this area as they contain rubble and bricks of a modern date. During this time, service trenches for drainage were put in, one of which was identified in Trench 2.

In Trench 2, a pit containing Malvernian tile fragments in the north end of the trench was revealed, being the only feature of potential archaeological importance encountered during the excavations. It is likely that the top of this feature has been removed during the reduction of ground during the 1850s landscaping. Trench 2 is in an area close to what would have been the northern boundary of the precinct as identified during the excavations of the Cathedral Barn in 2009 and 2010 (HAS 852).

It is likely that this northernmost part of the Cathedral Close was heavily truncated during the 1850s landscaping. Documentary evidence prior to the landscaping suggests people had to walk up several steps when entering the Cathedral Close from Church Street. It is likely the landscaping would have removed burials and the general grave fills to a considerable depth. This would mean that deposit [204] is what remains of the previous burial ground under the made ground deposits. This theory is supported by deposit [204] being very similar to deposit [10840] from the ongoing Cathedral Close excavations. [10840] was identified from 0.2m to a depth of at least 0.7m east and to the south of these trenches and contained a high density of burials. It is difficult to draw any further conclusions as context [204] was not excavated

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Duncumb, J, 1804, *Collections towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford*, Volume I.
Stone, R & Appleton-Fox, N, 1996, *A View from Hereford's Past*.

6. APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Trench register

Trench no.	Orientation	Description	Length	Topsoil depth
1	SW-NE	Diagonal Trench for cable diversion across from Broad Street	30m	0.2m–0.3m
2	SW-NE	Dogleg shaped trench for cable diversion	15m	0.2m
3	E-W	East-west aligned trench	10m	0.2m

Context register

Context no.	Trench no.	Description
001	1	Modern made up ground consisting of sand and grey brown silt
002	1	Made up ground consisting of gravel, bricks and a mid-brown soil
003	1	Greyish brown clay loam with disarticulated human remains
004	1	Light yellowish brown sand
200	2	Modern made up ground consisting of sand and gravel
201	2	Greyish brown made up ground
202	2	Greyish brown silty loam likely to be from 1850s landscaping of area
203	2	Grey brown silt with no inclusions
204	2	Reddish brown clay loam
205	2	Dark brown fill of pit [206]
206	2	Cut of pit containing [205]
207	2	Dark greyish brown fill of pit [208]
208	2	Cut of pit containing [207]
209	2	Fill of 19th century service trench
210	2	Cut for 19th century service trench
300	3	Modern made up ground consisting of sand and gravel
301	3	Made up ground similar to [201]
302	3	Grey gravel fill of soakaway
303	3	Cut for soakaway containing [302]
304	3	Greyish brown silty loam similar to [302] and [002]
305	3	Fill of modern, north-south aligned electricity cable
306	3	Cut of modern cable, filled with [305]



Drawing register

Drawing no.	Section	Plan	Description
1	1:10	-	N-facing representative section of Trench 1
2	-	1:100	Plan of Trench 1
3	1:10	-	S-facing section of Trench 2

Photographic register

Photo no.	Colour slide	Black & White	Digital	Direction facing	Description
1	522/1	523/1	2001	N/A	ID shots
2	2	2	2003+4	S	N facing section of trench 0–1.5m (from west to east)
3	3	3	2005+6	S	N facing section of trench 1.5–3m
4	4	4	2007+8	S	N facing section of trench 3–4.5m
5	5	5	2009+10	S	N facing section of trench 4.5–6m
6	6	6	2011+12	S	N facing section of trench 6–7.5m
7	7	7	2013	S	N facing section of trench 7.5–9m
8	8	8	2014+15	S	N facing section of trench 9m–10.5m
9	9	9	2016	S	N facing section of trench 10.5–12m
10	10	10	2017	S	N facing section of trench 12–13.5m
11	11	11	2018+19	S	N facing section of trench 13.5–15m
12	12	12	2020	S	N facing section of trench 15–16.5m
13	13	13	2021	S	N facing section of trench 16.5–18m
14	14	14	2022	S	N facing section of trench 18m–20m
15	15	15	2023	S	N facing section of trench 20–21.5m
16	16	16	2024	S	N facing section of trench 21.5–23m
17	17	17	2025	S	N facing section of trench 23m–24.5m
18	18	18	2026	S	N facing section of trench 24.5m–26m
19	19	19	2027	S	N facing section of trench 26–28m
20	20	20	2028	S	N facing section of trench 28–30m
21	N/A	N/A	2029	W	Trench after excavation
22	N/A	N/A	2030	E	Trench after excavation
23	526/1	525/1	TR2001	N/A	ID shot
24	/2	/2	TR2002	W	NE of trench showing deposits [200]–[204]
25	/3	/3	TR2003	W	Bottom of trench showing edge of pit [206]
26	/4	/4	TR2004	E	Pit [206]
27	/15	/15	TR2005	E	Pit [208]
28	-	-	TR2006	W	Pit [206]
29	-	-	TR2007	W	Pit [208]
30	-	-	TR2008	W	SE facing section in area of pits
31	/16	/16	TR2009	W	SE facing section in area of pits
32	/17	/17	TR2010	N	S facing section, middle of trench

Photo no.	Colour slide	Black & White	Digital	Direction facing	Description
33	-	-	TR2011	N	S facing section, middle of trench
34	/18	/18	TR2012	NW	SE facing section, Trench 2
35	-	-	TR2013	NW	Se facing section Trench 2
36	/19	/19	TR2014	S	N-facing section Trench 3
37	/20	/20	TR2015	S	N-facing section Trench 3
38	/21	/21	TR2016	S	N-facing section trench 3

Small finds register

Small find no.	Trench no.	Context	Description
1	2	202	Clay pipe stem
2	2	205	19th century pipe junction fragment
3	2	207	13-14th century malvernian tile fragments, most likely from same tile



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North East (HQ)
13 Jane Street, Edinburgh EH6 5HE
T 0131 467 7705 • **F** 0131 467 7706 • **E** office@headlandarchaeology.com

North West
10 Payne Street, Glasgow G4 0LF
T 0141 354 8100 • **F** 0141 332 9388 • **E** glasgowoffice@headlandarchaeology.com

Midlands & West
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road, Hereford HR4 9NZ
T 0143 236 4901 • **F** 0143 236 4900 • **E** hereford@headlandarchaeology.com

South & East
Technology Centre, Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire LU7 4QH
T 01525 850 878 • **E** leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com