

**St. Michael's Church, Rocester,  
Staffordshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**



St. Michael's Church, Rocester.

**ARS Ltd Report 2015/1**

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### ***Executive Summary***

*In November 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Rocester to undertake an archaeological watching brief within the churchyard of St. Michael's Church, Rocester, Staffordshire, during ground-works related to the installation of a new gas-fired heating system which entailed the excavation of a small pipeline across the churchyard.*

*Within the southernmost end of the service trench and in close proximity to the church's tower, a disturbed burial was found. The burial may represent a secondary interment within a pit. Nevertheless, the exposed skeletal remains to be affected by the proposed development were recorded, lifted and reburied within its primary area.*

*Furthermore, a brick wall with a stone foundation of at least 2 metres in length and aligned north north-west/ south south-east long was also identified projecting from the north-west corner of the church's tower. The wall was made with reused bricks and did not appear to have been built as a permanent structure. It is difficult to understand the function and date of this structural remain due to its limited investigation. No significant archaeological finds were identified.*

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 In November 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) was commissioned by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Rocester to undertake an archaeological watching brief within the churchyard of St. Michael's Church, Rocester, Staffordshire, during ground-works related to the installation of a new gas-fired heating system which entailed the excavation of a small pipeline across the churchyard. The pipeline will connect a large gas main, which lies immediately adjacent to the lychgate to the north of the church on Dove Lane, and runs by the side of the main path and the western tower before entering a new boiler space in the tower basement.

1.2 St. Michael's Church is a Grade II Listed building which lies within the Rocester Conservation Area and lies on a spur of Dove Lane (NGR 411168 339371). The remains of a Scheduled Cross (1006105) lie to the north of the church; to the south and west of the church the scheduled remains of the Roman fort and *vicus* lies approximately 200m to the north-east; and the remains of the Rocester Abbey lie approximately 100m to the south-east, both of which dominated Rocester during the Roman and medieval periods respectively. A recently completed Extensive Urban Survey for Rocester (currently in draft) placed the site within Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) 7: St. Michael's Church and Abbey Fields. This area was identified as having high evidential (archaeological), historical, aesthetic and communal value.

1.3 Bearing in mind the scale of the proposed scheme and the demonstrable archaeological potential across the churchyard and the proximity of significant Roman and medieval archaeological remains Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Historic Environment Team advised that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during all ground-works associated with the scheme. This approach accords with National Planning Policy Framework para 141 which highlights the need to 'record and understand the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part)...' (DCLG 2012), and that the results of any such work should be made publicly available.

1.4 The watching brief was conducted in accordance with a brief created by Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Historic Environment Team (Appendix II), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (revised 2013), relevant guidance including the joint English Heritage and Church of England document entitled 'Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England' (2005) and the requirements established in the English Heritage volume entitled the 'Management of Archaeological Projects' (MAP2).

1.5 The local superficial geology within the investigation area comprises alluvium, a soft to firm consolidated, compressible silty clay, potentially containing layers of silt, sand, peat and basal gravel (British Geological Association 2014).

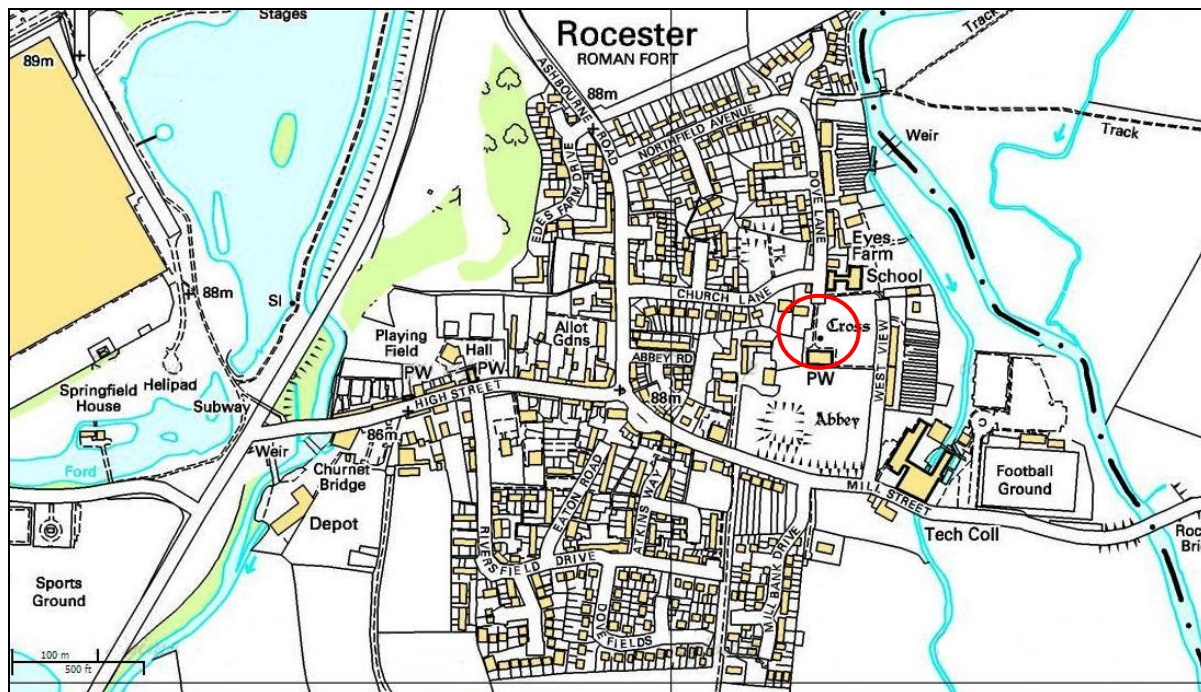


Figure 1: General site location (circled in red).

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## 2 Background

2.1 The brief prepared by Stephen Dean, SCC Principal Archaeologist, (Appendix I), includes an archaeological and historical account of Rocester which is summarised below.

2.2 The story of Rocester is most closely associated with the development of the Roman fort and civilian settlement here during the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. However, its location on a small area of high land at the confluence of the Rivers Churnet and Dove does suggest the potential for prehistoric activity in the area. Indeed, prehistoric remains have been found during excavations to the north of the church and in fields to the south of the settlement.

2.3 Three phases of fort building have been identified and St. Michael's Church lies within the heart of this complex of forts. Archaeological investigations at Abbey Farm (to the west) have uncovered evidence for the western defences, roads and domestic and industrial activity. The final phase of military activity appears to have occurred *c.*200AD after which the civilian 'town' continued to thrive – by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century it had established itself within the military defences.

2.4 Continuity is often difficult to identify within Staffordshire's Roman settlements. However, recent work within the area of the Roman settlement has also provided tantalising evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity in the area including the occasional ditch and some finds of late Saxon Stafford ware. While no structural evidence has been found to suggest the presence of a formal settlement, the remains to date do suggest that Rocester remained a place of at least local significance during the post-Roman period. There has also been some suggestion that Rocester was the location of an early medieval minster and it is recorded as an important estate at Domesday (1086).

2.5 During the 1140s an Augustinian Abbey was founded at Rocester within the area of the Roman fort. While the abbey layout is not known it is considered that the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century parish church was a key building within the religious complex. The Abbey as Lord of Manor obtained the grant of a market charter in 1238) and reaffirmed in 1440) and zealously guarded these rights up until its Dissolution in 1538. The Abbey laid out a triangular market place at the western end of the town and developed burgage plots along the High Street, Mill Lane and Ashbourne Road. The manorial mill is likely to have been located on the River Dove; a fulling mill documented during the medieval period is likely to have also been located on this site. These mills later gave way to Richard Arkwright's mill (Tutbury Mill) built during the 1780s.

2.6 Following its Dissolution, the Abbey buildings are likely to have been used as a valuable source of building stone and it is likely that, by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, most of its buildings had been completely removed from the townscape. The only structure to survive was the church itself which found a new lease of life as the settlements parish church. Architectural evidence suggests that St. Michael's was subject to some rebuilding in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was substantially remodelled during the 19<sup>th</sup> century although 13<sup>th</sup> century fabric does survive. During this period the churchyard appears to have remained reasonably constant although the church has repositioned all grave markers within the churchyard. This yard is likely to have operated as a cemetery from the medieval period onwards.

### **3 Aims and Objectives**

3.1 The overarching project aim was to ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme and the recording of any archaeological remains encountered during the ground-works.

3.2 The specific project objectives to be addressed by this watching brief were:

- To identify and record evidence for Roman activity within the churchyard.
- To identify and record the presence of archaeological remains associated with the Augustinian Abbey and its changing function as a parish church during the post-medieval period.
- To identify and record the presence of fully articulated human remains encountered within the area of works. Where these are encountered works must halt and the SCC Principal Archaeologist be consulted to determine the appropriate further response.
- To recover disarticulated human remains brought up during ground-works. These should be retained and where appropriate a 'Minimum Number of Individuals' assessment should be carried out at the assessment stage. All human remains must be sensitively reburied within St. Michael's Churchyard following discussions with the Vicar.

3.3 More generic objectives to be considered during the watching brief were:

- To identify, record and fully investigate previously unrecorded archaeological evidence across the site in order to update the HER.
- To ensure that an appropriate degree of sampling is achieved from secure deposits which will inform our understanding of the site and area. The details

of this strategy are agreed with the SCC Principal Archaeologist as and when such features are encountered.

- To secure the recording and assessment of suitable palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with archaeological features where these are encountered during ground-works.
- To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

## **4 Methodology**

4.1 A detailed project design was prepared by Stephen Dean, SCC Principal Archaeologist, which highlights in detail the methodology employed (Appendix I).

4.2 ARS Ltd provided an archaeological officer at all times during the ground-works. The on-site archaeologist was given the opportunity to stop site work in order to investigate and fully record any exposed archaeological features such as masonry or floors. Adequate time was allowed for the recording of any such features.

4.3 Where any features of potential archaeological significance were identified by the archaeologist, all further excavation was carried out by hand.

4.4 The archaeologist inspected and monitored the upcast spoil from the excavations.

4.5 A written, drawn and photographic record was maintained during the watching brief and all significant archaeological remains were recorded and/or retrieved. All excavations were recorded in accordance with normal principles of archaeological evaluation upon pro forma context sheets. All significant architectural features were photographed (with scale) *in situ* and their location recorded on a plan of the site.

4.6 Where archaeological features and/or deposits were identified during the watching brief, a sufficient quantity of the said features was investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed. All features thus investigated were recorded in plan and section and any significant archaeological finds recovered were retained for analysis. Any archaeological features identified were photographed and drawn in plan at a scale of 1:20 and in section at a scale of 1:10. The stratigraphy, where relevant and observable, was recorded.

4.7 A plan of the excavated areas was maintained, features noted and section lines recorded. All drawings were carried out at an appropriate scale and all contexts were recorded using a single context recording system. The site archive included plans and sections at an appropriate scale, a scale photographic record, and full stratigraphic records on recording forms/context sheets or their electronic equivalent. Where archaeological features were identified then the locations and height AOD of the features were accurately fixed, surveying in either the planning baselines or the features themselves.

4.8 All aspects of the archaeological work followed the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (IfA 2013) and the Code of Conduct (IfA 2014).

4.9 A risk assessment was undertaken before commencement of the work and health and safety regulations were adhered to at all times.



## 5 Results

5.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 to observe the ground-works associated with the excavation of a long service trench dug by hand along the churchyard of St Michael's Church, Rocester. The archaeological monitoring was carried out by Alvaro Mora-Ottomano (BA Hons, MSc) of ARS Ltd who is a corporate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ACIfA 5297) and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (2583AFF). The location of the excavated trench is shown on plan (Fig.2). Furthermore, a detail plan of the southern end of the trench has also been produced which depicts archaeological features (Fig. 3). The excavation consisted of a single c.60 metres long trench with an overall width and depth of 400mm. This was aligned north to south and located adjacent to the western side of the path that links the lychgate with the northern porch of the church. The southernmost section of the trench turns slightly towards the western side of the tower which led to a boiler basement room.

5.2 The excavation began from the lychgate area which contained a gas main container and exposed part of its mortar foundation although this masonry was not disturbed (Figs 4 and 5). The excavation then revealed a life electrical cable within a plastic pipe at a depth of c.400mm below the present ground level. It was ascertained that the cable was laid in recent times and that most of the present service trench was going to be laid exactly over the cable duct within a recently disturbed soil.

5.3 Nevertheless, the southernmost section of the trench produced archaeological features as this area had not been disturbed by the modern cable duct. The section measured 5.5 metres in length mostly over a tarmac path along a paved area created with reused gravestone next to the tower (Fig. 6). Beneath the tarmac path there was an overburden layer (101) composed mainly of topsoil which produced three residual fragments of fairly modern ceramic building material, including a tile roof piece, and a highly corroded fragment of an iron nail which could have originally been part of a set of coffin furniture.

5.4 Within the northern end of this trench a possible burial (103) of an adult human was uncovered at c.350mm below the present ground level yielding an overall height of 91.5 metres AOD. The exposed bones appeared to belong to a single adult inhumation of indeterminate sex although it appeared to have been very disturbed (Figs 7 and 8). Indeed, the uncovered skeletal remains consisted of the right femur, tibia and fibula which might have been flexed. These were partially laid over several ribs and fragments of skull and pelvis bones. No evidence of a coffin or grave was identified. The disturbance was apparent and thus the remains did not represent an articulated burial. Moreover, the alignment of the long bones was north to south which is inconsistent with Christian interments with the head orientated towards the west and the feet to the east. Although the possible burial was considerably disturbed, it was thought that the remains belong to a single inhumation; thus, following discussions with Stephen Dean, SCC Principal Archaeologist, it was agreed to record *in situ* the skeletal remains prior to their removal as the proposed installation of the gas duct would impact upon the burial. Subsequent treatment involved reburying the lifted bones around the duct and within the primary area.

5.5 Towards the southern side of this trench a brick wall (102) was revealed approximately at 250mm below the ground level yielding an overall height of 91.75 metres AOD. The exposed wall measured 2 metres in length and was composed of two leaves of hand-made orangey bricks (8½" x 4¼" x 2½") bonded with mid-brown clay and laid to

stretcher bond (Figs 9 and 10). This type of brick may date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. A maximum of two courses of bricks was discerned over a stone foundation which was barely exposed. The brickwork had to be removed whereas the stone foundation was retained. Of note was the fact that the brickwork must have been reused from a former structure as the brick contained remnants of primary whiteish lime mortar despite being bonded with secondary clay. This structure was orientated north north-west to south south-east butting up against the masonry of the tower. The actual orientation of wall (102) bore no symmetrical association with the church's layout or even the boundary walls. Moreover, its character and alignment are not in keeping with brick-lined graves. This structure does not appear illustrated on any Ordnance Survey maps dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century until recent times. It is difficult to understand the function and date of this structural remain due to its limited investigation. It is tempting to suggest that the wall might have been the basal remnants of an earlier structure (not necessarily relating to the church), although the brickwork was clearly reused from a former building and the typology may date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Figure 2: Plan of the Churchyard showing the location of the service trench  
Scale: 1:500 @ A3

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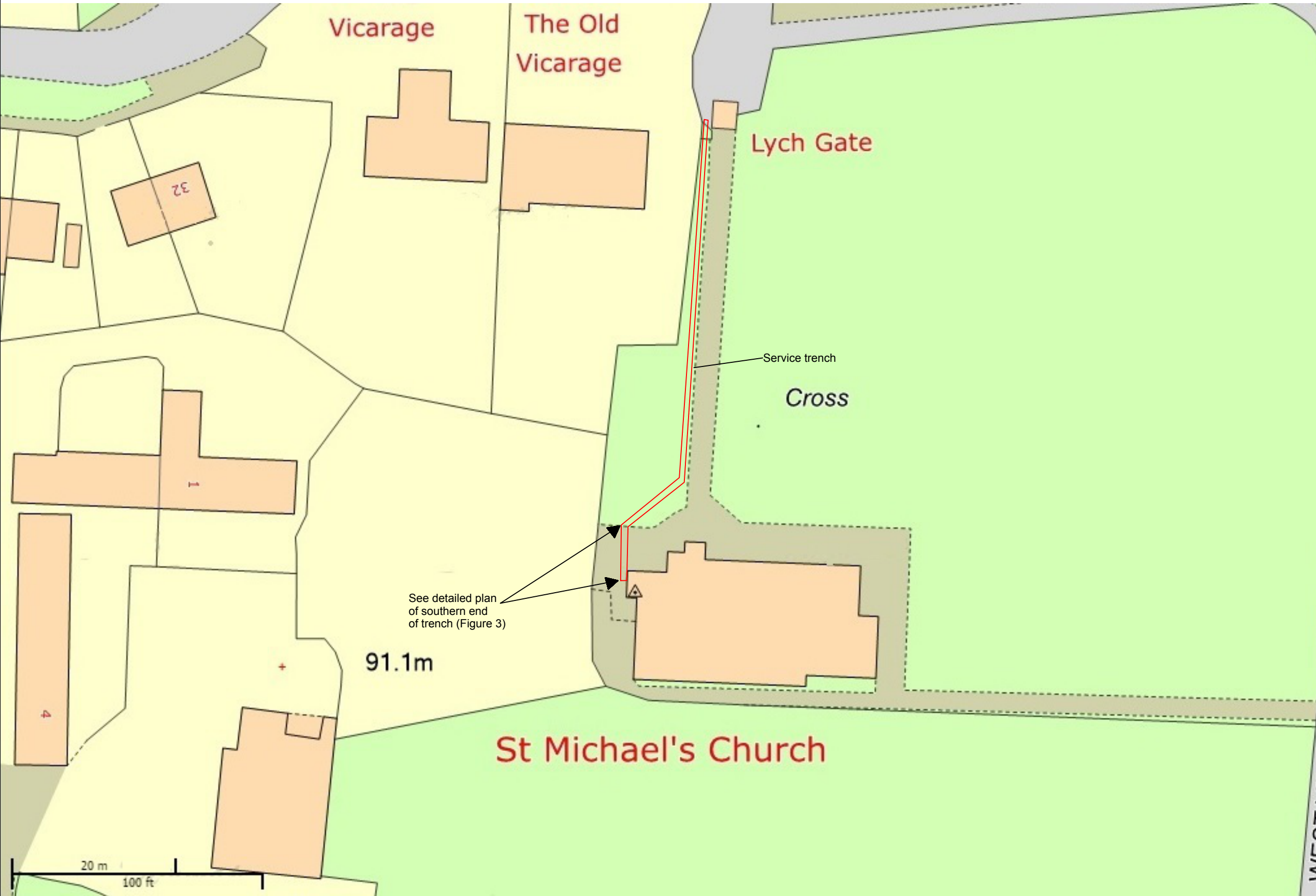
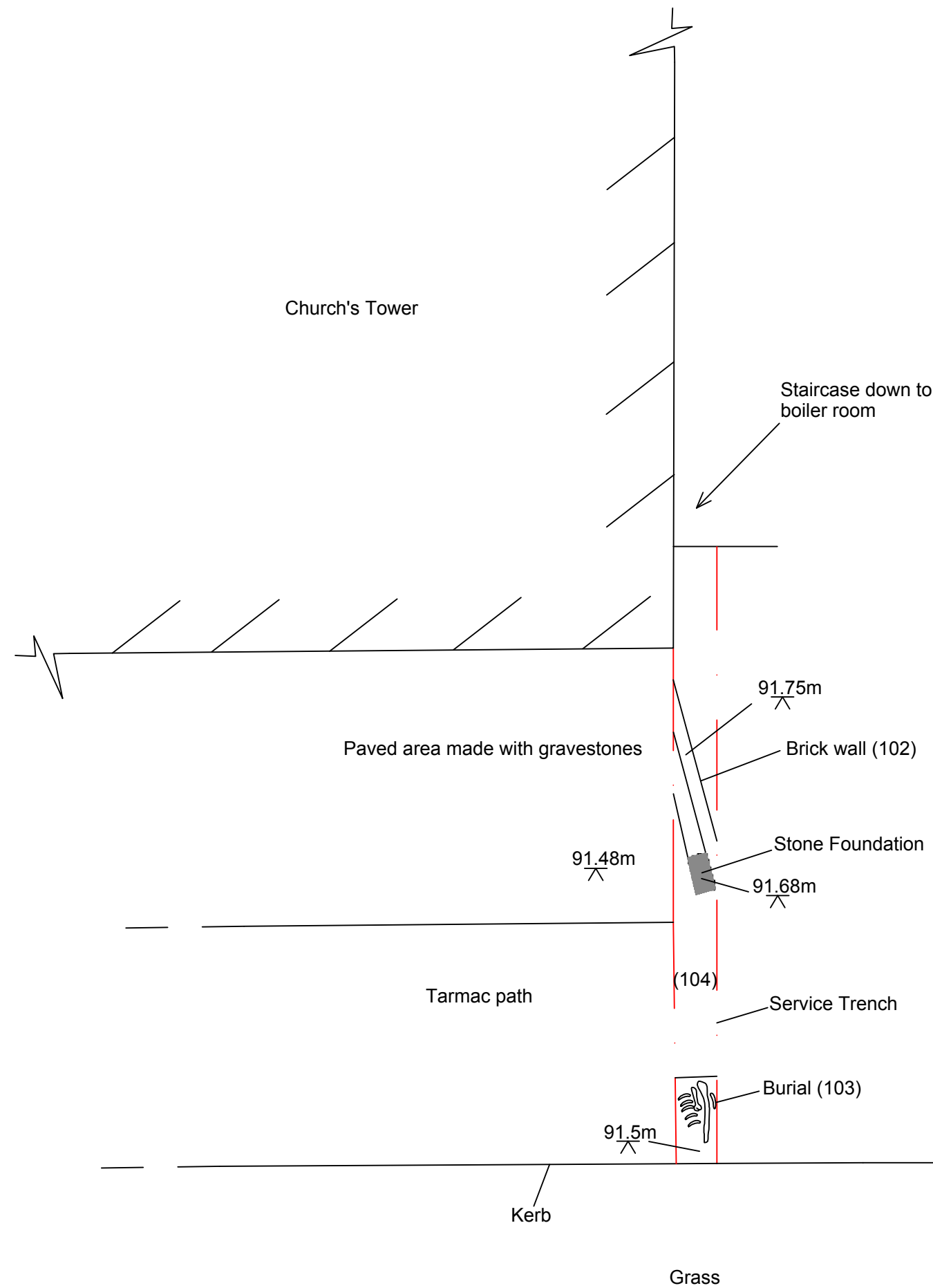
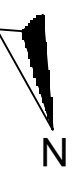


Figure 3: Plan of southern end of service trench  
Scale: 1:50 @ A3



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Figure 4: The lychgate and adjacent gas main (arrow).



Figure 5: Mortar foundation of lychgate, looking north (scale 300mm).



Figure 6: General view of the southern end of service trench, looking south-east (scale 300mm).



Figure 7: Burial (103), looking north (scale 300mm).



Figure 8: Vertical view of burial (103) (scale 300mm).



Figure 9: Brick wall (102), looking east (scale 300mm).



Figure 10: Wall (102) with three brick courses over a stone foundation, looking east (scale 300mm).

## 6 Conclusion

6.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Rocester to undertake an archaeological watching brief within the churchyard of St. Michael's Church, Rocester, Staffordshire, during ground-works related to the installation of a new gas heater which entails the excavation of a small pipeline across the churchyard. The archaeological watching brief during the ground-works relating to the development of the site was somewhat limited. The stratigraphic sequence, revealed within the excavated trench, consisted mainly of a recently disturbed overburden. Nevertheless, within the southernmost end of the service trench and in close proximity to the church's tower, a disturbed burial was found. The burial may represent a secondary interment within a pit. Nevertheless, the exposed skeletal remains to be affected by the proposed development were recorded, lifted and reburied within its primary area.

6.2 Furthermore, a brick wall with a stone foundation of at least 2 metres in length and aligned north north-west/south south-east long was also identified projecting from the north-west corner of the church's tower. The wall was made with reused bricks and did not appear to have been built as a permanent structure. It is difficult to understand the function and date of this structural remain due to its limited investigation.

6.3 No significant archaeological finds were identified.



## **7 Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright**

7.1 Any publicity will be handled by the client.

7.2 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

## **8 Statement of Indemnity**

8.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

## **9 Archive Deposition**

9.1 A digital and paper archive will be prepared by Archaeological Research Services Ltd, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data, and it is due to be deposited at The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke-on-Trent within three months of completion of fieldwork.

## **10 Acknowledgements**

10.1 ARS Ltd would like to thank all those involved with the archaeological project, especially Judith Ward, PCC secretary of St Michael's Church for commissioning the work; and Stephen Dean, Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council, for monitoring and providing advice throughout the project.

## 11 References

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## **APPENDIX I: SPECIFICATIONS AND OASIS FORM**

**SPECIFICATION FOR AN  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, ROCESTER**

**AUGUST 2014**



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 St. Michael's Church is located on the western side of the village of Rocester and lies on a spur of Dove Lane (NGR 411168 339371). The PCC have become increasingly concerned regarding rising energy bills and so have commissioned a report into the heating of the church (currently in draft for approval by the Diocesan Advisory Committee). This report has advised that gas be used to heat the building rather than electric heaters as is currently used. A large gas main lies to the north of the church on Dove Lane and it is proposed that the church link to this via small pipeline. This line would extend across the churchyard running by the side of the main path and the western tower before entering a new boiler space in the tower basement.
- 1.2 St. Michael's Church is a Grade II Listed building which lies within the Rocester Conservation Area. The remains of a Scheduled Cross (1006105) lie to the north of the church while to the south and west of the church lie the scheduled remains of the Roman fort and Benedictine Abbey which both dominated Rocester during the Roman and medieval periods respectively. A recently completed Extensive Urban Survey for Rocester (currently in draft) placed the site with Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA) 7: St. Michael's Church and Abbey Fields. This area was identified as having high evidential (archaeological), historical, aesthetic and communal value. The details of the EUS will be discussed in more detail in section 2.0 of this Specification.
- 1.3 Bearing in mind the scale of the proposed scheme and the demonstrable archaeological potential across the churchyard and the proximity of significant Roman and medieval archaeological remains it has been advised that an archaeological watching brief be maintained during all groundworks associated with the scheme. This approach accords with National Planning Policy Framework para 141 which highlights the need to 'record and understand the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part)...' and that the results of any such work should be made publicly available. The objective of this Specification therefore is to establish a framework which is acceptable to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC), acting on the advice of the Principal Archaeologist for Staffordshire County Council (as the archaeological advisor to the DAC), within which the archaeological mitigation and dissemination may be carried out.
- 1.4 The watching brief will be conducted in accordance with this specification and will be carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008). The watching brief will be conducted by an appropriately experienced archaeologist working to all relevant guidance including the joint English Heritage and Church of England document entitled '*Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England*' (2005) . All stages of the project will be carried out in accordance with the requirements established in the English Heritage volume entitled the 'Management of Archaeological Projects' (MAP2).

- 1.5 Bearing in mind the modest scale of the proposed scheme it is considered that this Specification may act as a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). Alternatively the appointed archaeological organization may choose to prepare a separate WSI based upon the content of this Specification. Any variation in working methodology in either case must be agreed in advance with the developer and the DAC through the archaeological advisor to the DAC.

## **2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The historic development of Rocester is too complex to discuss in detail within this Specification and therefore the appointed archaeological contractor is advised to contact the Staffordshire County Council Historic Environment Team to view a draft copy of the Extensive urban Survey for the settlement. However, a précis of the settlements historic development will be provided here.
- 2.2 The story of Rocester is most closely associated with the development of the Roman fort and civilian settlement here during the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. However, its location on a small area of high land at the confluence of the Rivers Churnet and Dove does suggest the potential for prehistoric activity in the area. Indeed, prehistoric remains have been found during excavations to the north of the church and in fields to the south of the settlement.
- 2.3 Three phases of fort building have been identified and St. Michael's Church lies within the heart of this complex of forts. Archaeological investigations at Abbey Farm (to the west) have uncovered evidence for the western defences, roads and domestic and industrial activity. The final phase of military activity appears to have occurred c.200AD after which the civilian 'town' continued to thrive – by the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century it had established itself within the military defences.
- 2.4 Continuity is often difficult to identify within Staffordshire's Roman settlements. However, recent work within the area of the Roman settlement has also provided tantalising evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity in the area including the occasional ditch and some finds of late Saxon Stafford ware. While no structural evidence has been found to suggest the presence of a formal settlement, the remains to date do suggest that Rocester remained a place of at least local significance during the post-Roman period. There has also been some suggestion that Rocester was the location of an early medieval minster and it is recorded as an important estate at Domesday (1086).
- 2.5 During the 1140s an Augustinian Abbey was founded at Rocester within the area of the Roman fort. While the abbey layout is not known it is considered that the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century parish church was a key building within the religious complex. The Abbey as Lord of Manor obtained the grant of a market charter in 1238) and reaffirmed in 1440) and zealously guarded these rights up until its Dissolution in 1538. The Abbey laid out a triangular market place at the western end of the town and developed burgage plots along the High Street, Mill Lane and Ashbourne Road. The manorial mill is likely to have been located on the River Dove; a fulling mill documented during the medieval period is likely to have also been located on this site. These mills later gave way to Richard Arkwright's mill (Tutbury Mill) built during the 1780s.

2.6 Following its Dissolution, the Abbey buildings are likely to have been used as a valuable source of building stone and it is likely that, by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the most of its buildings had been completely removed from the townscape. The only structure to survive was the church itself which found a new lease of life as the settlements parish church. Architectural evidence suggests that St. Michael's was subject to some rebuilding in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was substantially remodelled during the 19<sup>th</sup> century although 13<sup>th</sup> century fabric does survive. During this period the churchyard appears to have remained reasonably constant although the church has repositioned all grave markers within the churchyard. This yard is likely to have operated as a cemetery from the medieval period onwards.

### **3.0 PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The overarching project aim is to ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme and the recording of any archaeological remains encountered during the groundworks.

3.2 The specific project objectives to be addressed by this watching brief are:

- To identify and record evidence for Roman activity within the churchyard.
- To identify and record the presence of archaeological remains associated with the Augustinian Abbey and its changing function as a parish church during the post-medieval period.
- To identify and record the presence of fully articulated human remains encountered within the area of works. Where these are encountered works must halt and the SCC Principal Archaeologist be consulted to determine the appropriate further response.
- To recover disarticulated human remains brought up during groundworks. These should be retained and where appropriate a 'Minimum Number of Individuals' assessment should be carried out at the assessment stage. All human remains must be sensitively reburied within St. Michael's Churchyard following discussions with the Vicar.

3.3 More generic objectives to be considered during the watching brief are:

- To identify, record and fully investigate previously unrecorded archaeological evidence across the site in order to update the HER.
- To ensure that an appropriate degree of sampling is achieved from secure deposits which will inform our understanding of the site and area. The details of this strategy will be agreed with the SCC Principal Archaeologist as and when such features are encountered.
- To secure the recording and assessment of suitable palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with archaeological features where these are encountered during groundworks.
- To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

## 4.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 The watching brief will be conducted in accordance with this specification and will be carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (revised 2008) and with the joint English Heritage and Church of England '*Guidance for Best Practice for the Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England*' (2005).
- 4.2 The archaeological contractor may use this specification as their WSI or may choose to prepare a separate WSI detailing the recording works to be undertaken during groundworks. If the contractor chooses to prepare their own WSI this must take into account the requirements of this specification. The project should include the following as appropriate:
1. All removal of material should be carried out under archaeological supervision. Hand dig is the preferred approach but where machines are required all excavation shall be carried out using a toothless bucket;
  2. Examination of all sub-surface interventions associated with the work such as service trenches, footing trenches, pile caps etc;
  3. The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features/deposits identified within these sub-surface interventions;
  4. Examination of spoil-heaps for archaeological material including the use of a metal detector;
  5. A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving and publication.
- 4.3 A written record of the progress of the watching brief shall be maintained and supported by the production of plans and sections drawings (at appropriate scales). A Photographic record (monochrome prints and polychrome slides) will also be maintained and supported by an index and site plan of shot locations.
- 4.4 Any finds to be recovered should be recorded and their location noted on a site plan at a relevant scale. The finds should be retained, recorded and discussed within the report and recommendations made for further conservation. Where finds or features are located of a significance beyond that which might have been anticipated before the development began, development shall cease where they might be disturbed in order that provision for their adequate recording or preservation may be made in consultation with the archaeological contractor, the SCC Principal Archaeologist as archaeological advisor to the local planning authority and the developer. Contingency provisions should be made within the programme of work for this.
- 4.5 All disarticulated human remains recovered during excavations should be retained and a Minimum Number of Individuals' (MNI) assessment be made at the post-excavation stage. These disarticulated human remains must be reburied in the churchyard of St. James and St. Bartholomew, Waterfall at the earliest



opportunity. Where articulated remains are encountered please refer to s.4.13 for further details.

- 4.6 If necessary, arrangements shall be made for development to be interrupted for reasonable periods in order that satisfactory records might be made.
- 4.7 The developer shall afford access to the development site for the purposes of archaeological monitoring to officers of the LPA or personnel nominated by them at all reasonable times upon compliance with the requirements of health and safety.
- 4.8 The developer shall give the LPA or personnel nominated by them at least ten days' notice in writing of the commencement of the development. The appointed archaeological contractor shall keep the SCC Principal Archaeologist informed of the progress of the watching brief during the period in which it is carried out.
- 4.9 The project archive shall be compiled in accordance with the guidelines contained in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage* (UKIC, 1990), and *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museum and Galleries Commission, 1992)
- 4.10 The archaeological contractor should agree all on-site working practices with the developer at the earliest opportunity and identify those elements of the construction programme requiring time for recording.
- 4.11 The project should also attempt to place the project findings into their historical and geographical context through cartographic and documentary research.
- 4.12 The project should be conducted by an archaeological organisation working in accordance with the By-laws of the Institute for Archaeologists. Archaeologists working on the project should not attempt tasks outside of their areas of competence.
- 4.13 Any articulated human remains which are encountered must initially be left in situ until a licence to excavate has been granted by the Department of Justice (Tel: 02070 355532). Preservation *in situ* is the preferable solution however, where excavation is required this must be undertaken following the appropriate guidance; partial excavation of articulated human remains is generally not permitted. The provisions for analysis, assessment and reburial of any human remains encountered during groundworks should be discussed with representatives of the local planning authority and the SCC Principal Archaeologist at the earliest opportunity. A contingency for the recording and excavation of articulated human remains should also be included within any costing and agreed in advance with the developer. Similarly provision for the reburial on consecrated ground of any human remains encountered during groundworks should also be made. Contingency provisions for the recovery and assessment of articulated human remains should be made within the programme of work along with appropriate levels of reporting.

4.14 Any material recovered which would be regarded as Treasure under the terms of the Treasure Act 1996 should be reported to the coroner.

## 5. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DEPOSITION OF ARCHIVE

5.1 A report on the results obtained should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and personnel nominated by them within 8 weeks of the completion of site work. This should include consideration of:

1. non-technical summary
2. the aims and methods adopted in the course of the recording
3. the nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any archaeological and environmental material uncovered
4. the anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits and structures on the site not disturbed by development - surviving areas of archaeological potential should be indicated on the site plan
5. appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, and drawings at an appropriate scale and photographs. All plans, sections, etc., created during the watching brief will be related to Ordnance Survey datum levels and their relation to the National Grid referencing system shall be made clear.
6. summary of results
7. description of the archive and the location for its long-term deposition

5.2 If significant remains are recorded during the project, then it may be necessary to undertake a full programme of analysis and publication in accordance with the guidelines contained in English Heritage's Management of Archaeological Projects 2. If this is the case, then a timetable and programme of work for this aspect of the project will need to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for agreement.

5.3 The post excavation work shall be carried out immediately on completion of site investigations. The site archive shall be prepared in accordance with established professional guidelines.

5.4 The written and illustrated report of the watching brief shall be copied to:

- i) the client
- ii) the County Council
- iii) the National Monuments Record

5.5 The copy of the report sent to the County Council **must** be accompanied by a completed copy of the Activity and Source Submission Form (see appendix 1) and a CD Rom containing a full pdf copy of the report, supplementary documents and all drawings.

- 5.6 The archive and finds, including a copy of the watching brief report, shall be deposited at an appropriate museum, such as the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. The museum guidelines regarding the acceptance of such material should be taken into account. The recipient museum shall be informed in advance of the date when the watching brief is to commence.
- 5.7 The written report will become publicly accessible, as part of the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record, within six months of completion. The AFC shall also submit a short summary report for inclusion in the next edition of the journal *West Midlands Archaeology* within 6 months of the completion of the fieldwork.

## 6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Department for Communities and Local Government (2010) *Planning Policy Statement 5: planning for the Historic Environment*. London, Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

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Horovitz, D. (2005) *The Place Names of Staffordshire*. Privately Published.

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

Staffordshire County Council (2014). *Staffordshire Extensive Urban Survey: Rocester – Historic Character Assessment*. Stafford, Staffordshire County Council (forthcoming).

Watt, S. (ed) (2011) *The Archaeology of the West Midlands. A Framework for Research*. Oxford, Oxbow Books.

*If you wish to comment on the contents of this brief or require additional information, then please contact Stephen Dean at the address below:*

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Staffordshire County Council  
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Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH

Tel. (01785) 277290 - Fax (01785) 277364

# Appendix 1: Staffordshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record

## Activity and Source Submission Form

Submission date -
<b>Site Activity or Event</b>
Name of <b>event</b> (eg. Watching Brief at The Blue Boar, Ipstones.)
Location of <b>event</b> (eg. The Blue Boar P.H. Overton Lane, Ipstones.)
NGR
Civil Parish
Brief Description of <b>event</b> (eg. Watching brief during cellar alterations and renovation, prior to conversion to residential use.)
<p>“Activity Type(s)” (highlight as appropriate) <i>Air Photography / Evaluation-trial excavation / Field Walking / Measured survey-drawing / Geophysical survey / Archaeological excavation-full / Archaeological excavation-part / Field survey / Photogrammetric survey / Rectified photo survey / Photographic record / AP interpretation / Salvage-rescue excavation / Watching brief / Environmental sampling / Post-excavation analysis / Documentary research</i></p>
Commencement date (eg. 01-May-1978)
Completion date (eg. 02-Sept-1983)
<b>Organisation or contractor details</b> (organisation name, address, telephone, e-mail etc.)
<b>Report Details</b>
Date
Type of document (highlight as appropriate) <i>Written / Photographic / Cartographic / Drawn</i>
Title
Author(s)
Brief summary of contents
Brief description of document (eg. Written text with illustrations, bibliography and references. Appendices dealing with environmental sampling. 32 pages. etc.)
Cross references to Staffordshire SMR (if applicable please list Primary record numbers)

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: archaeol5-198884**

### Project details

Project name	St Michael's church, Rocester, Staffordshire. Archaeological watching brief
Short description of the project	watching brief within the churchyard where a services trench was dug by hand for the installation of a new gas heater. Most of the area excavated followed an existing and recently excavated trench. However, towards the church's tower a disturbed burial was identified which was partially lifted and subsequently re-interred within the same area. Moreover, a brick wall with a stone foundation was also identified. The wall's alignment did not follow the symmetry of the church complex and was composed of reused bricks which were not properly bonded. It is possible that these remains may be associated with former repair of the tower acting as a base for a scaffolding.
Project dates	Start: 20-12-2014 End: 21-12-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	CHURCH Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	STAFFORDSHIRE EAST STAFFORDSHIRE ROCESTER St Michael's church
Study area	10.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 1116 3937 52.9512795404 -1.83387763998 52 57 04 N 001 50 01 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Staffordshire County Council
Project design originator	Archaeological Research Services Ltd

Project director/manager Robin Holgate  
Project supervisor Alvaro Mora-Ottomano

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
Digital Archive Exists? No  
Paper Archive recipient Potteries Museum and Art Gallery  
Paper Contents "none"  
Paper Media available "Photograph", "Report"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
Title St Michael's Church, Rocester, Staffordshire. Archaeological watching brief  
Author(s)/Editor(s) Mora-Ottomano, A.  
Date 2015  
Issuer or publisher Archaeological Research Services Ltd.  
Place of issue or publication Bakewell  
  
Entered by Alvaro Mora-Ottomano (alvaro@archaeologicalresearchservices.com)  
Entered on 5 January 2015

## OASIS:

Please e-mail [English Heritage](#) for OASIS help and advice

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