

# St Michael and All Angels Church, Taddington, Derbyshire: An Archaeological Watching Brief



St Michael and All Angels Church, facing north.

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**Executive Summary**

*Project Name: St Michael and All Angels Church, Taddington, Derbyshire: An Archaeological Watching Brief*

*Site Code: SMC 15*

*Planning Authority: Peak District National Park Authority*

*Location: St Michaels and All Angels Church, Taddington, Derbyshire SK17 9TU.*

*Geology: Limestone of the Low Limestone Formation*

*NGR: SK14128 71166*

*Date: July 2015*

*In July 2015 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned to monitor ground works for the installation of improved drainage at St Michaels and All Angels Church, Taddington, Derbyshire. St Michaels and All Angels Church is a 14th-century church, while the shaft and socket stone of a potentially norman cross located in the south churchyard indicates the possible presence of an earlier church building. The works were requested in order to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the excavation works, associated with the construction and installation of the new drainage system, were fully recorded and interpreted and that any finds were recovered.*

*The monitoring was carried out on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2015. A 0.4m wide, 21m trench was dug, beginning along the north side of the church and continuing to the north-east. Fragmentary, previously disturbed human remains were recovered along the north side of the church, along with a small amount of modern pottery.*

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 In July 2015 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Smith and Roper to undertake an archaeological watching brief at St Michaels and All Angels Church, Taddington, Derbyshire.

1.2 The aim of the programme of work is, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 141 (CLG 2012), to record and enhance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost during the proposed development in a manner proportionate to their importance, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publically accessible.

## **2 Location and Geology**

2.1 The site is centred at SK 14129 71157 (Figure 1). The geology of the site is Limestone of the Low Limestone Formation (BGS, 2015).

## **3 Historical and Archaeological Background**

3.1 The Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority has been consulted regarding this proposal and has reason to believe archaeological remains may be present on the site. The development is within the churchyard of St Michael and All Angels Church, the majority of which dates back to the 14th century, though part of an earlier structure can be seen in the west wall of the church. Within the churchyard itself, a shaft and socket stone of a decorated cross of possible Norman origin, which if insitu, lends support to a possible earlier, Saxon church on the site. Additionally, the site itself is within a larger area of ancient enclosure, fossilising earlier medieval strip system agriculture (Whitely 2014).

## **4 Aims and Objectives**

4.1 The objectives of the watching brief are:

- to determine through archaeological monitoring of any ground works the nature and date of any surviving below-ground remains;
- to make accessible the records of any remains produced by archaeological monitoring by producing a report and archive.

## **5 Method Statement**

5.1 A scheme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording took place during all ground works in relation to the installation of the new drainage system. This included the initial trial excavation along proposed drain runs to determine the depth of the bedrock, the excavation of new surface water drains of approximately 14m in length, and the excavation of a new soakaway at least 5m away from the current structure and clear of grave markers.

5.2 All relevant ground works were undertaken by a suitable mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket or by hand. Archaeological monitoring did not entail excavation beyond the total areas exposed by the development works. Arrangement was made to avoid any tracking of machinery across recently stripped areas until the areas were checked and cleared by a representative of ARS Ltd. A risk assessment was undertaken before commencement of the work and health and safety regulations were adhered to at all times. The Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park, Sarah Whiteley, was notified of any significant archaeological features identified, and a decision made as to the best method of proceeding.

5.3 ARS Ltd provided a suitably qualified archaeologist at all times during the ground works on the site to undertake a watching brief in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2014a) and *Code of Conduct* (2014b). The on-site archaeologist was given the opportunity to stop site work in order to investigate potential archaeological features and adequate time was allowed for recording any such features. Where archaeological features and/or deposits were identified during the watching brief, a sufficient quantity of said features were investigated by hand to allow their date, nature and degree of survival to be ascribed.

5.4 A written, drawn and photographic record was maintained of all significant archaeological remains, which were recorded and/or retrieved. All excavations were recorded in accordance with normal principles of archaeological evaluation upon pro forma context sheets. The records followed standard conventions set by the Museum of London Archaeological Services (MoLAS) (2002). All significant archaeological features were photographed (with scale) *in situ* and their location recorded on a plan of the site.

5.5 All features investigated were recorded in plan and section and significant archaeological finds recovered were retained for analysis. Any archaeological features identified were drawn in plan at 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 scales as appropriate. The stratigraphy, where relevant and apparent, was recorded. Any archaeological features identified, along with record shots of the site, the ground conditions pertaining at the time and record shots of the trenches or areas which are opened/stripped, were photographed with a digital colour camera and included a clearly visible, graduated metric scale. A register of all photographs was kept.

5.6 Discovery of human remains was reported to the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority Cultural Heritage team, the Parish County Council, Registrar, and Archdeacon. Permission was obtained to excavate the remains, which were then placed in the custody of the Church Warden for later re-interment at the site.

## 6 Results

6.1 A 0.5m wide trench, 21m in length, was dug along the north side of the church, which then turned northeast away from the church (see Appendix 1 – Site Plan). A second shorter trench, 6.4m in length, was dug from the northeast corner of the church to the main trench. Both trenches were 0.3-0.4m deep along the side of the church (Figure 1), becoming deeper further from the church with a maximum depth of 1.4m.



Figure 1. Trench depth along church wall. Scale 0.5m.

6.2 The undisturbed soil stratigraphy consisted of 0.25-0.4m of dark grey-brown silty topsoil (101) over a reddish brown clay subsoil(102). The reddish brown clay subsoil continued past the maximum depth of excavation (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Soil profile of (101) and (102). Scale 1m.

6.3 A grey silty sand fill (103) was present in the main trench (Figure 3) in association with a modern plastic water duct and a retaining wall located 0.6m from the wall of the church. The retaining wall formed a part of the previous drainage system. The grey silty sand (103) was cut into the reddish brown clay subsoil (102). It was unclear whether this cut was made as a part of the construction of the retaining wall or the installation of the water pipe. The wall foundation was not exposed during the excavation.





Figure 3. Soil profile of (101) and (103), containing modern water pipe. Scale 1m.

6.4 66 fragments of previously disturbed human remains were recovered from context (103). These remains were not in-situ, and were likely disturbed during the construction of the retaining wall or the installation of the water pipe. This is supported by find of modern pottery and iron nails in the same context.

## **7 The finds**

### *7.1 Human Remains*

7.1.1 The remains of a minimum of two individuals were recovered from context (103). The minimum of two individuals is based on the recovery of a complete mandible and two additional mandibular fragments, however it is very possible that more than two individuals are represented. The remains were highly fragmentary, and had been previously disturbed, likely by construction related to the retaining wall or water services. The remains consist primarily of rib fragments and hand and foot bones, with some axial skeletal fragments (see Table 1).

<b>Element</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Min No. Individuals</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Cranial fragments	1	1	Single mostly intact temporal bone
Madibular fragments	4	2	One complete mandible, small and gracile. Three fragments, one with a single intact molar.
Vertebrae	6	2	Four thoracic and two cervical vertebrae. Likely from two individuals based on variation in size among thoracic vertebrae
Rib	23	1	23 complete ribs or rib fragments
Femur	2	1	1 femoral head epiphysis and proximal femoral fragment
Long bone	11	Unknown	11 indeterminate long bone fragments
Metacarpal/ metatarsal	6	1	Six complete metacarpal or metatarsal bones (hands or feet)
Phalanges	5	1	Five complete phalanges (hands or feet)
Indeterminate	8	unknown	Eight unidentified fragments, three may be additional small cranial fragments

Table 1. Human remains assemblage

## 7.2 Pottery

7.2.1 Two 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century date whiteware sherds were recovered from the topsoil (101). Four 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century date whiteware sherds were recovered from context (103). All recovered pottery represents utilitarian wares from the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## 7.3 Metal

7.3.1 Three iron nails were recovered from context (103). One nail was cast-iron and 6cm in length, similar to those used in the cast-iron guttering of the church. Two additional nails were 8cm in length and of 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

## 7.4 Animal Bone

7.4.1 A single caprine (sheep/goat) metacarpal was recovered from context (102).

## **8 Discussion**

8.1 During the course of the watching brief, fragmentary and previously disturbed human remains were uncovered. In discussion with the Parish County Council, the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority Cultural Heritage team, and church wardens it was decided that the remains were to be removed to allow the drainage to be installed. The remains were likely disturbed by previous construction at the site, and therefore their removal was deemed appropriate. The remains will be re-interred on the site by a church warden at a later date. As the remains were previously disturbed, little can be said about the date or nature of the burials. The presence of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century pottery and iron nails in context (103), where the human remains were located, indicates they were disturbed sometime in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

8.2 No archaeological features were encountered in the course of archaeological monitoring. Other than the human remains, small finds consisted of a small amount of pottery and iron nails, and a single caprine metacarpal.

## **9 Publicity, Confidentiality and Copyright**

9.1 Any publicity will be handled by the client. Archaeological Research Services Ltd. will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

## **10 Statement of Indemnity**

10.1 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.

## **11 Acknowledgements**

11.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those who contributed to the outcome of this project, Smith and Roper for commissioning the work, and particularly Gill Bagshawe and Sarah Whiteley, the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority, for their generous help and advice.

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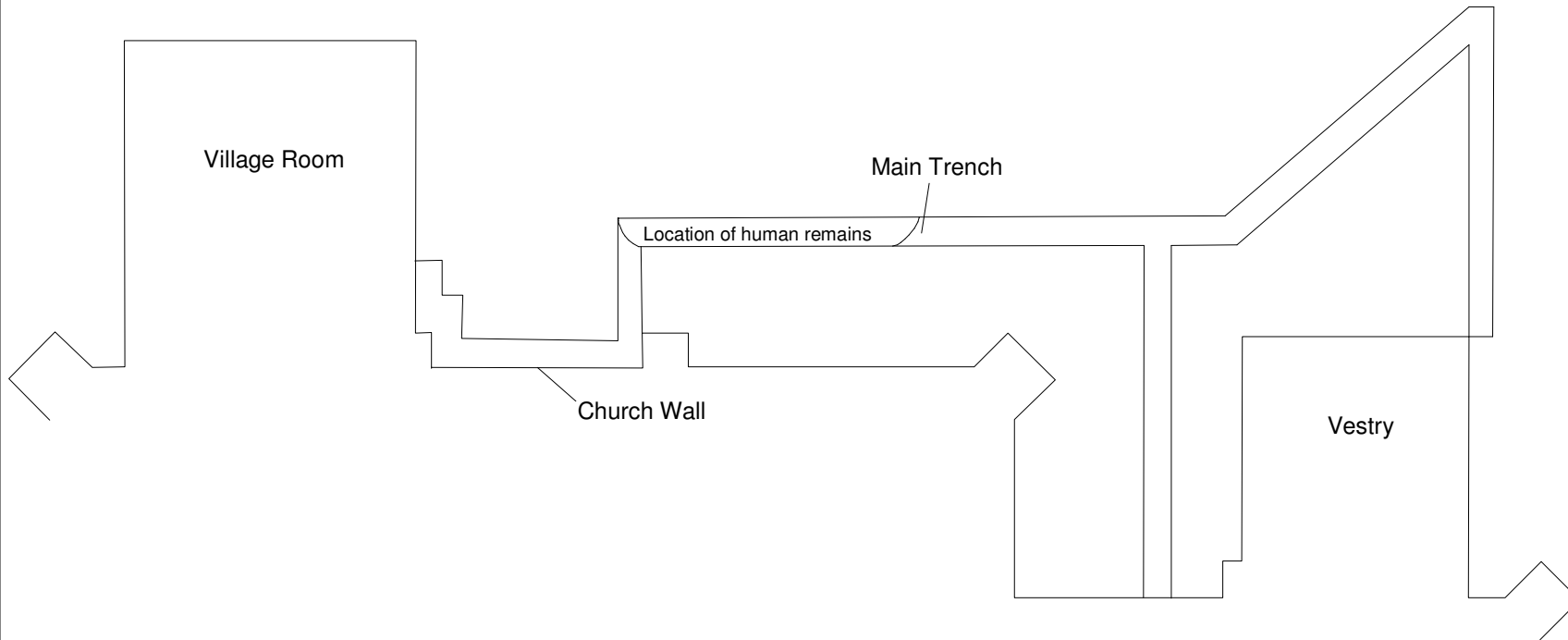
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**Appendix 2 – Photograph Register**

<b>Shot No.</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Scale</b>	<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Photo By</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	S	1m	(101)(102)	Soil profile, church wall	EM	3/8/2015
2	W	1m	(101)(103)	Soil profile, E facing	EM	3/8/2015
3	S	1m	(101)(102)	Soil profile, main trench	EM	3/8/2015
4	-	0.25m	-	Human remains, cranial and mandibular	EM	3/8/2015
5	-	0.25m	-	Human remains, hand and foot bones	EM	3/8/2015
6	-	0.25m	-	Human remains, vertebrae	EM	3/8/2015
7	-	0.25m	-	Human remains, rib fragments	EM	3/8/2015
8	-	0.25m	-	Human remains, long bones	EM	3/8/2015
9	-	0.25m	-	Human remains, small fragments	EM	3/8/2015

**Appendix 3- Context Register**

<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
101	Deposit	Top soil. Dark greyish brown silt
102	Deposit	Reddish brown clay deposit below (101)
103	Fill	Sandy fill, below (101) and cut into (102)

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**OASIS ID: archaeol5-219659**

### Project details

Project name	St Michaels and All Angels Church, Taddington, Derbyshire: An Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description of the project	Archaeological watching brief carried out on the grounds of St Michaels and All Angels Church, Taddington, during the installation of new drainage works. Trenches were dug along the north side of the church to extend the existing drainage system.
Project dates	Start: 03-08-2015 End: 06-08-2015
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	CHURCH Medieval
Significant Finds	HUMAN REMAINS Uncertain
Significant Finds	POT Modern
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	DERBYSHIRE DERBYSHIRE DALES TADDINGTON St Michael and All Angels Church
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 14128 71166 53.2370560647 -1.78829935862 53 14 13 N 001 47 17 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project brief	Archaeological Research Services Ltd

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