

# Archaeological Watching Brief at St Thomas' Community Hall, Kilnhurst, South Yorkshire



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Archaeological Research  
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Archaeological Research Services Ltd Report 2016/155



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*Project Name: St Thomas Community Hall*

*Site Code: STK'16*

*Location: Kilnhurst, Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham, South Yorkshire*

*Geology: Carboniferous sandstone of the Oaks Rock Formation*

*NGR: SK 46021 97460*

*Date of Fieldwork: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016*

*Date of Report: 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016*

*In September 2016 Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of test pits on the ground of St Thomas Community Hall, Kilnhurst. Archaeological monitoring was requested as the area of proposed development lies adjacent to St Thomas Church and associated cemetery and human remains may have been encountered. The project was undertaken by Elise McLellan Assistant Project Officer at Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS) and was managed by Tony Brennan, Operations Manager at ARS Ltd.*

*Three test pits were excavated to the north of St Thomas Church. A small 0.5m x 0.6m test pit was hand-excavated to a depth of 0.6m along the northern wall of the Church to determine the direction of several existing services. Two larger 1.2m x 0.6m test pits were excavated by machine to a depth of 1m adjacent to the cemetery wall to determine the depth and nature of soils and natural deposits. No significant archaeological finds, features or remains were identified.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES AND SCOPE OF WORKS**

1.1.1 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) in September 2016 during the excavation of geotechnical test pits to ascertain the nature of underlying deposits for the construction of a proposed extension to the existing church.

1.1.2 The geotechnical test pits were excavated within the grounds of the church with archaeological monitoring requested because of the possibility that human remains may be encountered.

1.1.3 Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken additionally to examine the potential presence and nature of archaeological features with the churchyard.

### **1.2 SITE LOCATION**

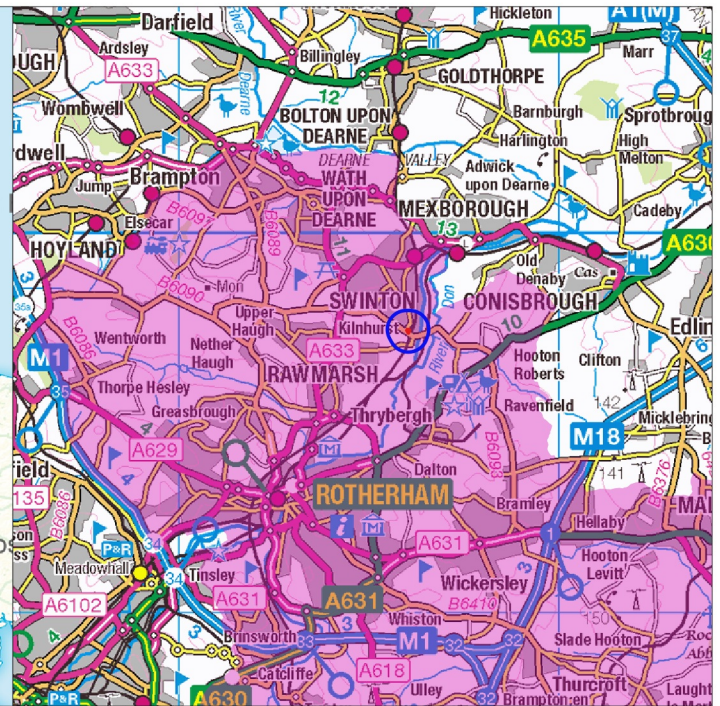
1.2.1 The site is located on Highthorn Road, Kilnhurst, South Yorkshire. The development area lies immediately to the north of and adjacent to, St Thomas Church, centred at NGR SK 46021 97460 (Figure 1). The site lies in a residential area and is bounded by residential buildings to the north, Highthorn Road to the east and Wentworth Road to the south and west.

### **1.3 LANDFORM, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

1.3.1 The site lies c.35m aOD (above Ordnance Datum) on a steep incline that slopes to the east, south and west toward adjacent roads.

1.3.2 The underlying geology of the site comprises Carboniferous sandstone of the Oaks Rock formation with no recorded superficial deposits (BGS 2016).





Site name: St Thomas Kilnhurst  
 Date: November 2016  
 Drawn by: RXT  
 Scale: Varies

This drawing: © ARS Ltd  
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**Figure 1:  
 Site location**

Site Boundary      Metropolitan Borough of Rotherham

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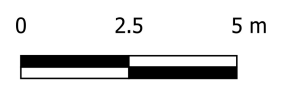


**Figure 2:  
Test Pit Location**

 Site Boundary

**Test Pit**

-  0.5m x 0.6m
-  1.2m x 0.6m
-  1.2m x 0.6m



Site name: St Thomas Kilnhurst  
 Date: November 2016  
 Drawn by: MB  
 Scale: 1:175 @A4

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## 1.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1.4.1 St Thomas Church, and the associated vicarage at Kilnhurst were built in the 1850s and 1860s when the parish of Kilnhurst was created. The vicarage north of the church was sold as a private residence in the 1970s when a garden wall was built separating church and vicarage.

## 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The objective of the watching brief was to ensure that archaeological remains or artefacts associated with the church and associated cemetery were not removed without being recorded and interpreted, and that where possible remains be preserved *in situ*.

## 3 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 The following methodology was adhered to throughout all groundworks undertaken on the site:

- Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on those areas exposed during test pit excavation.
- 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.
- All groundworks were undertaken by hand or by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.
- Machinery did not cross areas that had been stripped until said had been checked and cleared by ARS Ltd.
- Health and safety regulations were adhered to at all times.

3.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* (2014a), *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014b) and *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (2014c).

## 4 RESULTS

4.1 A total of three geotechnical test pits were excavated to assess the conditions of subsurface soils and the bedrock. All three test pits were located north of the church between the church and the garden wall separating the church and former vicarage building.

4.2 Test pit 1, which measured 0.5m x 0.6m, was located against the northern wall of the church and was hand-excavated to a depth of 0.6m BGL (below ground level). This test pit was sited specifically to locate existing electrical and water services for the church building.

4.3 An area of flagstones was removed which overlies topsoil (101). Below this topsoil service trench (103) was filled by modern service pipes overlain by sand and gravel



(102). This service trench directly truncated and overlies the natural sandstone bedrock (104).



Figure 3. Test pit 1 against the north wall of St Thomas Church

4.3 Test pit 2, was excavated by machine to a depth of 1m BGL and measured 1.2m x 0.6m. This test pit was located against the southern face of the garden wall that separates the churchyard from the grounds around the former vicarage to the north.

4.4 A black silty topsoil (201), some 0.45m thick, was encountered above subsoil (202). The line of the construction trench for garden wall (204) had also been utilised for laying services and a modern metal service pipe was encountered at a depth of 0.5m BGL. Undisturbed sandstone bedrock (203) was encountered some 0.8m-1m BGL.

4.5 Test pit 3, was also excavated by machine to a depth of 1m and measured 1.2m x 0.6m. This test pit was also sited along the south face of the garden wall separating church and vicarage, to the west of test pit 2.

4.6 A similar sequence of deposits was encountered as those in Test pit 2. A dark silty topsoil (301) overlay natural sand and sandstone gravel subsoil (302) which in turn lay above the natural sandstone (303) the latter of which was encountered between 0.8m and 1m BGL. The construction trench (304) for the garden wall was also present filled by silty sand (305) and a modern metal service pipe running parallel to the base of the garden wall.



Figure 4. Test pit 2 against the south face of the garden wall



Figure 5. Test pit 3 against southern face of the garden wall

4.7 Two glass jars were recovered from Test pits 2 and 3, within the fill of the construction trench of the garden wall (205 and 305). Jar 1 was recovered from Test pit 2 (205) and was marked only with an indistinct symbol on the base, possibly reading "MF". Jar 1 was complete, and had an unthreaded neck with a narrow lip. Jar 2 was recovered from Test pit 3 (305) and was partially damaged. Jar 2 was marked with the trademark name "HORLICKS", a popular malted drink, and had a threaded neck to receive a screw-on lid.

4.8 Both jars were recovered from the fill of the foundation trench of the garden wall but are probably residual in this context.



Figure 6. Jar 1



Figure 7. Jar 2 showing "HORLICKS" label

## **5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 No archaeological features or significant finds were encountered during the excavation of test pits. The two jars recovered in test pits 2 and 3 are modern. No remains relating to the use of the burial ground were encountered.

## **6 ARCHIVING AND PUBLICATION**

6.1 Digital and paper copies of this report will be submitted to the South Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

6.2 A copy of this report will be uploaded as part of the OASIS record.

## **7 PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT**

7.1 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).

## **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.

8.2 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 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

9.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those who contributed to the outcome of this project.

## **10 REFERENCES**

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- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). 2014c. *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.



**APPENDIX I: CONTEXT SUMMARY TABLE**

Context Number	Test Pit	Type	Description/ <i>Processual Interpretation</i>	Depth below ground level
101	1	Deposit	Black silty topsoil with sandstone gravel and ceramic building material inclusions. <i>In situ soil formation: Top soil</i>	0.45m
102	1	Fill	Yellowish grey sand with frequent sandstone gravel inclusions. Fill of a cut for a modern service pipe. <i>Modern fill.</i>	0.6m
103	1	Cut	Cut for a modern service pipe filled by (102). Cut into (104).	0.6m
104	1	Deposit	Yellowish grey sand subsoil with frequent sandstone gravel inclusions. <i>In situ soil formation: Subsoil</i>	0.6m (observed)
201	2	Deposit	Black silty topsoil with sandstone gravel and ceramic building material inclusions. <i>In situ soil formation: Top soil</i>	0.45m
202	2	Deposit	Yellowish grey silty sand subsoil with frequent sandstone gravel inclusions. <i>In situ soil formation: Subsoil</i>	0.8m
203	2	Deposit	Natural sandstone bedrock	1.0m (observed)
204	2	Cut	Cut for construction of garden wall. Filled by (205), cut into (203).	0.5m
205	2	Fill	Yellowish grey sandy fill of construction cut for garden wall (204). Contains a metal service pipe at the base of the garden wall.	0.5m
301	3	Deposit	Black silty topsoil with sandstone gravel and ceramic building material inclusions. <i>In situ soil formation: Top soil</i>	0.45m
302	3	Deposit	Yellowish grey silty sand subsoil with frequent sandstone gravel inclusions. <i>In situ soil formation: Subsoil</i>	0.8m
303	3	Deposit	Natural sandstone bedrock	1.0m (observed)
304	3	Cut	Cut for construction of garden wall. Filled by (305), cut into (303).	0.5m
305	3	Fill	Yellowish grey sandy fill of construction cut for garden wall (304). Contains a metal service pipe at the base of the garden wall.	0.5m

**APPENDIX II: PHOTOGRAPH REGISTER**

Shot No.	Direction	Scale	Context No.	Description	Photo By	Date
01	NE	-	-	St Thomas Church, Kilnhurst	EM	14/09/2016
02	S	1m	(104)	Test pit 1, post-excavation	EM	14/09/2016
03	N	1m	(205)	Test pit 2, post-excavation	EM	14/09/2016
04	N	1m	(305)	Test pit 3, post-excavation	EM	14/09/2016
05	-	10cm	-	Jar 1 (from test pit 2)	EM	14/09/2016
06	-	5cm	-	Jar 2 (from test pit 3)	EM	14/09/2016



**APPENDIX III: OASIS RECORD**

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**OASIS ID: archaeol5-267003**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological Watching Brief at St Thomas' Community Hall
Short description of the project	In September 2016 Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of test pits on the ground of St Thomas Community Hall, Kilnhurst. Archaeological monitoring of the proposed development was requested as the area of proposed development lies adjacent to St Thomas Church and within the extent of the associated cemetery. Archaeologically monitoring was requested in the event that test pits encountered human remains or other archaeological remains. The project was undertaken by Elise McLellan Assistant Project Officer at Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS) and was managed by Reuben Thorpe and Tony Brennan, Projects Manager and Operations Manager respectively at ARS Ltd. Three test pits were excavated to the north of the current St Thomas Church. A small 0.5m x 0.6m test pit was hand-excavated to a depth of 0.6m along the northern wall of the Church to determine the direction of several existing services. Two larger 1.2m x 0.6m test pits were excavated by machine to a depth of 1m along the cemetery wall to determine the depth and nature of soils and natural deposits. No significant archaeological finds, features or remains were identified.
Project dates	Start: 14-09-2016 End: 14-09-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2016/155 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	SOUTH YORKSHIRE DONCASTER MEXBOROUGH St Thomas Church, Kilnhurst
Postcode	S64 5TX
Study area	0 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 46021 97460 53.471606749809 -1.306598819917 53 28 17 N 001 18 23 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 335m Max: 335m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeological Research Services Ltd

Project brief originator none

Project design originator none

Project director/manager Tony Brennan

Project supervisor Elise McLellan

Type of sponsor/funding body developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient South Yorkshire SMR

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive recipient South Yorkshire SMR

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Report"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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