



St James by the Park Shirley, Southampton

Archaeological Evaluation Report



SOU 1726
WA Ref: 117780.03
October 2017



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Document subtitle Archaeological Single Test Pit Evaluation
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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by HPS on behalf of the Diocese of Winchester to carry out an archaeological single test pit evaluation at St James' by the Park, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 5LZ, centred on NGR 440290 114291.

The archaeological test pit evaluation was designed to inform the proposals for an extension to the current church building to provide additional teaching and office space by identifying the uppermost depth at which burials were present. The test pit measured 2m by 2m and was positioned to the south of the church building targeted on two potential graves which were highlighted by a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey carried out in 2016 and cross referenced to a Victorian plan of the cemetery

Revealed within the test pit at a depth of c.30m below ground level (28.5m aOD) were the clear outlines of the two graves. Upon excavation of the larger northern grave it was shown that remains of coffin furniture were encountered at a depth of 0.90m below ground level (27.9m aOD). Excavation ceased at this point having identified the depth at which the burial was present. Excavation of the smaller southern grave ceased at a depth of 27.7m aOD and no evidence of coffin furniture or skeletal material was encountered at a depth greater than the northern grave.

The results of the archaeological test pit evaluation can provide valuable information relating to the level at which remains including multiple burials may be encountered and this can be used to aid in proposals for designing the proposed development.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank HPS, for commissioning the archaeological evaluation, in particular Sam Driscoll of HPS on behalf of the Diocese of Winchester. Dan Clark, the Vicar of St James' by the Park and Chris Lockwood are also thanked for their help and assistance. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of Ingrid Peckham, Historic Environment Record Officer at Southampton City Council.

St James' by the Park, Shirley

Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by HPS, on behalf of the Parochial Church Council ('the client'), to undertake an archaeological single test pit evaluation of St James' by the Park, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 5LZ centred on NGR 440290 114291 (**Fig. 1**).
- 1.1.2 The evaluation comprised the excavation of a single 2m by 2m test pit excavated in order to investigate at what depth in situ graves could first be identified. This work was designed to inform the proposals for an extension to the current church building to provide additional teaching and office space.
- 1.1.3 All works were undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed in order to undertake the evaluation (Wessex Archaeology 2017). Ingrid Peckham of Southampton City Council Historic Environment Team (SCC HET) approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing.
- 1.1.4 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with an Interim Faculty issued by the Diocese of Winchester to allow the archaeological investigations comprising the excavation of the test pit to be undertaken in the churchyard at St James by the Park, Shirley.
- 1.1.5 The evaluation comprising of a single 2m by 2m hand dug test pit was undertaken between the 21st and 23rd of August 2017.

1.2 Scope of the report

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed description of the results of the test pit evaluation, to interpret the results within a local, regional or wider archaeological context and assess whether the aims of the test pit evaluation have been met.
- 1.2.2 The presented results will provide further information on the archaeological resource that may be impacted by the proposed development and facilitate an informed decision with regard to the requirement for, and methods of, any further archaeological mitigation.

1.3 Location, topography and geology

- 1.3.1 The evaluation area is located adjacent to St James' by the Park, Shirley, in the north-western part of Southampton. The Site is on the junction of Bellemoor Road and St James Road with residential development to the west, north and east and part of the former churchyard forming a park to the south. The site lies at around 30m above Ordnance Datum.
- 1.3.2 The underlying geology is mapped as the sand, silt and clay of the Wittering Formation with superficial River Terrace 4, sand and gravel (British Geological Survey online viewer). At a watching brief at Ashbourne House, Wordsworth Road in 1992 (SOU 517), c.130 m to the

west of the Site, the river terrace deposits consisted of silty clay and silty loam (potential brickearths) above compact gravel.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background for the Site was assessed in a prior desk-based assessment (HPS 2016), which set out this information following consultation with and using the data provided by the Southampton City Council Historic Environment Record (SCCHER). A summary of the results is presented below, with relevant entry numbers from and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) included. Additional sources of information are referenced, as appropriate. The desk-based assessment (HPS 2016) should be consulted for the full background.

2.2 Previous investigations related to the proposed development

Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey (2016)

2.2.1 In 2016 Tigergeo conducted a GPR survey of the potential development locations on land immediately to the south-east and north-east of the church buildings. This survey indicated that burials were around 0.6m below current ground levels with some evidence of multiple occupancy.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

2.3.1 A large number of prehistoric stone and flint tools, ranging from the Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age have been recorded as being found in the vicinity of the site, including a Neolithic axe (SCC MSH139) and Bronze Age axe (SCC MSH140) potentially found within the site.

2.3.2 Roman Southampton *Claesentum*, was focused on the eastern side of the River Itchen near modern day Bitterne. However, a few Roman findspots from the Shirley area suggest some activity in this area at this time.

2.3.3 The historic village of Shirley lies some 950m to the west of the Site. Shirley is recorded in the 1086 Domesday Survey as a moderately sized settlement of 12 households with a mill and church also listed. The exact location of the church (SCC MSH596), which was probably demolished in the 17th century, is unknown.

2.3.4 Due to the small congregation numbers, the Parish of Shirley was combined with that of Millbrook in 1574. However, by the 19th century residential development in the area meant numbers had increased and the new Parish Church of St James was constructed in 1836 (NHLE 1092006). Likely due to the existing road layout the church is not orientated classically east – west but c. east north east – west south west. Historic mapping indicates the churchyard was extended to the south in the 1890s. Scattered trees are first shown on the 1954-67 Ordnance Survey edition map when the churchyard is no longer labelled as a graveyard.

2.3.5 A plan of the cemetery from the church archive of St James' by the Park indicated that the burials are on a south-west – north-east orientation and laid out in a series of 36 densely packed rows. Larger squarer burials marked are likely to indicate brick lined vaults. Individuals plots and vaults of this period may contain multiple burials.

2.3.6 Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey of the potential development locations on land immediately to the south-east and north-east of the church building (Tigergeo 2016) was

undertaken. This indicated that burials were around 0.6 m below current ground levels with some evidence of multiple occupancy. Discrepancies were observed between the cemetery plan and the graves identified by the survey, however it was not clear whether this was due to additional burials or inaccuracies in the plan. A small number of potential vaults were located. Some evidence for disturbance above 0.6 m was also visible

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General aims

3.1.1 The general aims of the evaluation, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017) and in compliance with the ClfA' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a), were:

- To provide information about the archaeological potential of the site; and
- To inform either the scope and nature of any further archaeological work that may be required; or the formation of a mitigation strategy (to offset the impact of the development on the archaeological resource); or a management strategy.

3.2 General objectives

3.2.1 In order to achieve the above aims, the general objectives of the evaluation were:

- To determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified area;
- To establish, within the constraints of the evaluation, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains;
- To place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- To make available information about the archaeological resource within the site by reporting on the results of the evaluation.

3.3 Site-specific objectives

3.3.1 Following consideration of the archaeological potential of the site and the regional research framework (REF.), site-specific objectives defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017) were to:

- To establish the depth at which the top of the 19th century burials can be clearly determined within the test pit to inform any further mitigation that will be required in regard of the proposed development.
- To establish the accuracy of the GPR survey, which indicated that burials were around 0.6m below current ground levels.

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2017) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a). The methods employed are summarised below.
- 4.1.2 As per the WSI it had initially been proposed to decide the location the test pit on site. However, a reconsideration by WA of the old cemetery plan correlated with the GPR survey allowed for a more exact proposed location to be set out to correspond with two potential graves (**Figures 2 and 3**). This was shown to bear out in the results as presented below once the test pit had been surveyed in by GPS and excavated.

4.2 Fieldwork methods

General

- 4.2.1 The test pit location was set out using GPS, in the location shown on **Figure 1**.
- 4.2.2 The test pit measured 2m by 2m and was excavated by hand. The turf which comprises the current ground surface was removed and placed to the side of the test pit. Subsequent spoil deriving from the excavation was placed on a tarpaulin in the specific sequence that they were removed.
- 4.2.3 The base of the test pit was cleaned by hand with regularity. This was done to ensure that the grave cuts were observed at the highest level, sufficient to address the aims of the evaluation.
- 4.2.4 Upon completion of the evaluation and with the consent of the consultant. The test pit was backfilled using the material excavated and then the turf was re-instated.

Recording

- 4.2.5 All exposed archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's pro forma recording system. A complete drawn record of excavated features and deposits was made including both plans and sections drawn to appropriate scales (generally 1:20 or 1:50 for plans and 1:10 for sections), and tied to the Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD: Newlyn) heights of all principal features were calculated, and levels added to plans and section drawings.
- 4.2.6 A Leica GNSS connected to Leica's SmartNet service surveyed the location of archaeological features. All survey data is recorded in OS National Grid coordinates and heights above OD (Newlyn), as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15, with a three-dimensional accuracy of at least 50 mm.
- 4.2.7 A full photographic record was made using digital cameras equipped with an image sensor of not less than 10 megapixels. Digital images have been subject to managed quality control and curation processes, which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and will ensure long term accessibility of the image set.

4.3 Artefactual and environmental strategies

- 4.3.1 Finds retention followed Southampton City Council's Standards for the creation, compilation and transfer of archaeological archives (2016). Coffin nails were not removed from Site but noted in the field and left *in situ*. Where appropriate, soil samples may have been taken and

sieved to aid in finds recovery. However, no soil samples were recovered. Any finds requiring conservation or specific storage conditions if recovered would have been dealt with immediately in line with First Aid for Finds (Watkinson and Neal 1998)

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The test pit revealed two graves cut directly into the underlying natural geology. Also, present within the test pit was another potential grave cut located on the very western edge of the test pit, and heading under the edge of excavation this however was not investigated (**Fig 1 and Plate 1**).
- 5.1.2 The natural geology (**1002**) was recorded as an upper layer of weathered light reddish brown silty clay and interpreted in the field as a possible brickearth. This weathered deposit had a depth of c. 500mm and overlay a natural deposit of brown silty clay and gravel. The natural geology was overlain directly by the topsoil (**1001**), which was c.0.30m deep.
- 5.1.3 The grave cuts were observed at a depth of c.0.30m below current ground level (BGL) (28.5 m aOD) cut directly into the natural geology. The northern grave (**1003**) measured 1.70 m in length, 0.70 m in width and extended just beyond the eastern limit of the test pit. It had straight near vertical sides but the base was not exposed.
- 5.1.4 Grave (**1003**) was filled with a mixed deposit of silty loam and gravel that was a greyish brown in colour (**1004**). This deposit was excavated to a depth of 0.90 m BGL (27.8 m aOD) where in situ coffin nails and a coffin handle were encountered (**Plate 2**). The nails and handle were left in situ and not removed from the grave. Hand Excavation ceased at this point having identified the uppermost level of an intact burial.
- 5.1.5 Grave (**1005**) was situated c.0.30m to the south of grave (**1003**). It measured 1.40m in length and was 0.60m at its widest point. It was filled with a mixed deposit (**1006**) similar in nature and consistency to (**1004**). Like grave (**1003**) the sides of grave (**1005**) were straight and near vertical.
- 5.1.6 Excavation of this deposit ceased at a depth of 1.10 m BGL (27.7 m aOD) as no evidence of a burial either skeletal or coffin furniture was encountered, at a depth greater than that indicated in grave (**1003**) (**Plate 3**).

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 The test pit evaluation carried out at St James' by the Park, Shirley showed that the graves were clearly visible cutting the underlying natural geology at a depth of c.0.30 m below current ground level (28.5 m aOD). This met the main aim of the evaluation.
- 6.1.2 Excavation of grave (1003) showed that in situ remains of a coffin comprising of 5 nails and a coffin handle were present at a depth of 0.9m below ground level (27.9 m aOD). This represented the highest level at which the interred remains are present. Again, this met one of the aims of the evaluation which was to show the depth below ground at which coffin or skeletal remains are encountered.
- 6.1.3 Excavation of grave (1005) ceased at a depth of 1.10m below ground level (27.7m aOD) this was due to not encountering any remains either skeletal or related to a coffin. It was

also down to excavation constraints having answered the remit of the project of identifying the highest level within the confines of the test pit at which human remains could be identified.

6.2 Discussion

- 6.2.1 That coffin nails and furniture were encountered within grave (1003) at a depth of 0.90m below ground level could suggest that this grave may contain more than one burial. In contrast grave (1005) was excavated to a depth of 1.10m below ground level and no remains were encountered. This could suggest that it houses a single inhumation.
- 6.2.2 The GPR survey correlated with the cemetery plan with a good deal of accuracy in aiding the positioning of the test pit in being able to be located almost directly over two graves. Whether this can be replicated across the rest of the cemetery cannot be said with certainty at this stage as the test pit represents such a small sample of the Site. The GPR report itself notes "The old burial plan does not correlate with the evidence of graves apparent in the GPR data and it is unclear whether this represents just the topology of graves but incorrect positions or a phase of burials that are no longer evident".
- 6.2.3 The GPR survey identified the potential depth of burials at 0.60m below ground level, but this could not be firmly correlated within the test pit as the grave cuts themselves were identified at 0.30m below ground level and the highest burial remains at 0.90m below ground level. The GPR survey had also suggested that the northernmost grave may be a vault. This was shown not to be the case however. As noted in the GPR report the presence of clay in the soil means that penetration by GPR is likely be less than it would be in a clay-free soil. Added to this there had been rainfall at the time of the survey, which will have affected the accuracy of the results. Ground that is electrically conductive, so clay-rich as per the natural geology identified in the evaluation or wet, will allow the electrical part of the wave induced in the ground to ebb away, preventing regeneration of the wave and hence its penetration into the ground. Dry ground (including dried-out clay) is therefore much more likely to produce useful results.
- 6.2.4 The results of the evaluation only present a keyhole view into the depth at which burials maybe present within the former cemetery. However, the results are sufficient to suggest that if burials are being encountered at a depth of 0.90m below ground level that the potential for multiple burials within a single grave is high.

7 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

- 7.1.1 The archive resulting from the evaluation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury. The Southampton City Council's Archaeology Collection will be contacted to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the Site code SOU 1726. Deposition of the archive and any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner under the terms of Faculty to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

7.2 Preparation of the archive

- 7.2.1 The archive, which currently includes paper records, graphics, and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Southampton City Council's Archaeology Collection, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

7.2.2 All archive elements are marked with 117780 / SOU1726, and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive currently comprises the following:

- 1 files/document cases of paper records and A3/A4 graphics;

7.3 Selection policy

7.3.1 Finds retention follows Southampton City Council's Standards for the creation, compilation and transfer of archaeological archives (2016). In accordance with these, and any, a process of selection and retention will be followed so that only those artefacts or ecofacts that are considered to have potential for future study will be retained. The selection policy will be agreed with the Southampton City Council's Curator of Archaeological Collections, and fully documented in the project archive. Material not selected for retention may be used for teaching or reference collections by the museum, or by Wessex Archaeology.

7.4 Security copy

7.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g., Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

7.5 OASIS

7.5.1 An OASIS online record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) has been initiated, with key fields and a .pdf version of the final report submitted. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service ArchSearch catalogue.

8 COPYRIGHT

8.1 Archive and report copyright

8.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

8.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

8.2 Third party data copyright

8.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g., Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Trench summaries

NGR coordinates and OD heights taken at centre of each trench; depth bgl = below ground level

Trench 1	2 m x 2 m		NGR 440290 114292	28.8m OD
Context	Interpretation	Fill of	Description	Depth bgl (m)
1001	Topsoil		Greyish brown silty loam topsoil, numerous gravel inclusions	0.00–0.30
1002	Natural		Weathered light reddish brown silty clay. Possible brickearth. Overlying to a depth of c.500mm a light reddish brown silty clay and gravel (30:70)	0.30+
1003	Grave Cut		Grave cut	0.30 – 0.90m+
1004	Grave Fill	1003	Mixed greyish brown silty clay, deliberate backfill of grave 1003	0.30 - 0.90+
1005	Grave Cut		Grave cut	0.30 – 1.10+
1006	Grave Fill	1005	Mixed greyish brown silty clay, deliberate backfill of grave 1005	0.30 – 1.10+
1007	Potential grave cut		Potential grave cut	0.30+
1008	Potential grave fill	1007	Unexcavated deliberate backfill of possible grave 1007	0.30+



Appendix 2 OASIS Form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-300669

Project details

Project name	St James' by the Park, Shirley, Southampton
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by HPS on behalf of the Diocese of Winchester to carry out an archaeological single test pit evaluation at St James' by the Park, Shirley, Southampton, SO15 5LZ, centred on NGR 440290 114291. The archaeological test pit evaluation was designed to inform the proposals for an extension to the current church building to provide additional teaching and office space by identifying the uppermost depth at which burials were present. The test pit measured 2m by 2m and was positioned to the south of the church building targeted on two potential graves which were highlighted by a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey carried out in 2016 and cross referenced to a Victorian plan of the cemetery.
Project dates	Start: 21-08-2017 End: 23-08-2017
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	117780 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SOU 1726 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	GRAVE Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Test-Pit Survey""
Prompt	Planning condition



Project location

Country	England
Site location	HAMPSHIRE SOUTHAMPTON SOUTHAMPTON St James' by the Park, Shirley, Southampton
Study area	4 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 40290 14291 50.926114782708 -1.426672770693 50 55 34 N 001 25 36 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	HPS Professional Archaeological Services
Project design originator	Wessex archaeology
Project director/manager	Damian de Rosa
Project supervisor	Al Zochowski
Type of sponsor/funding body	Church Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Parochial Church Council

Project archives

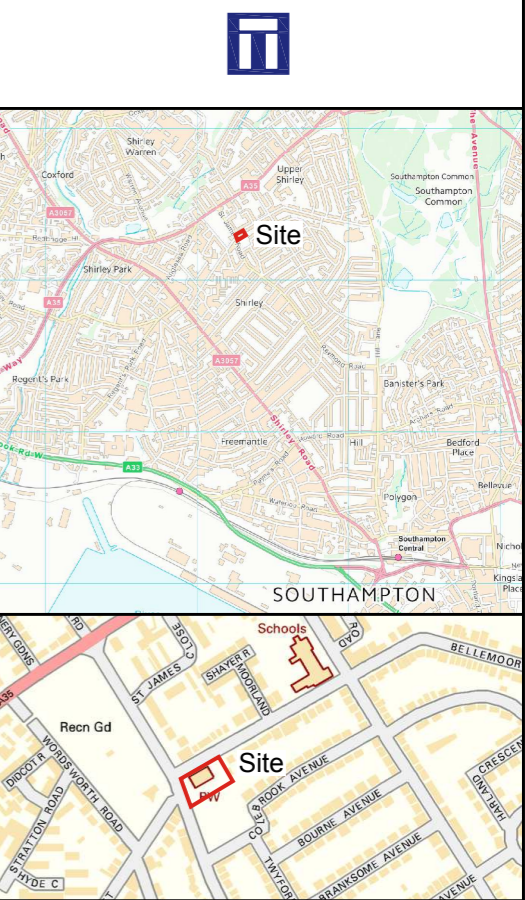
Physical Archive Exists?	No
--------------------------	----



Digital Archive recipient	Southampton City Museum Service
Digital Archive ID	SOU 1726
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Southampton City Museum Service
Paper Archive ID	SOU 1726
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Report","Survey ","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	St James by the Park, Shirley, Southampton; Archaeological Evaluation Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Zochowski, A.
Other bibliographic details	117780.03
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Salisbury
Description	Client report of 21x A4 and 3x A3 pages, including figures, table, and plates.



- Site
- Potential Development Area
- Test pit
- Archaeology
- Slot

Digital survey data supplied by the Client.
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Date:	26/09/2017
Revision Number:	0
Scale:	1:250; 1:40 at A3
Illustrator:	KL/ND
Path:	X:\PROJECTS\117780\GO\Report_figs\eval\2017_08_30\117780_Eval.dwg

Location of site and potential development areas

Figure 1



Coordinate system:
OSGB36 (OSTN15/OSGM15)

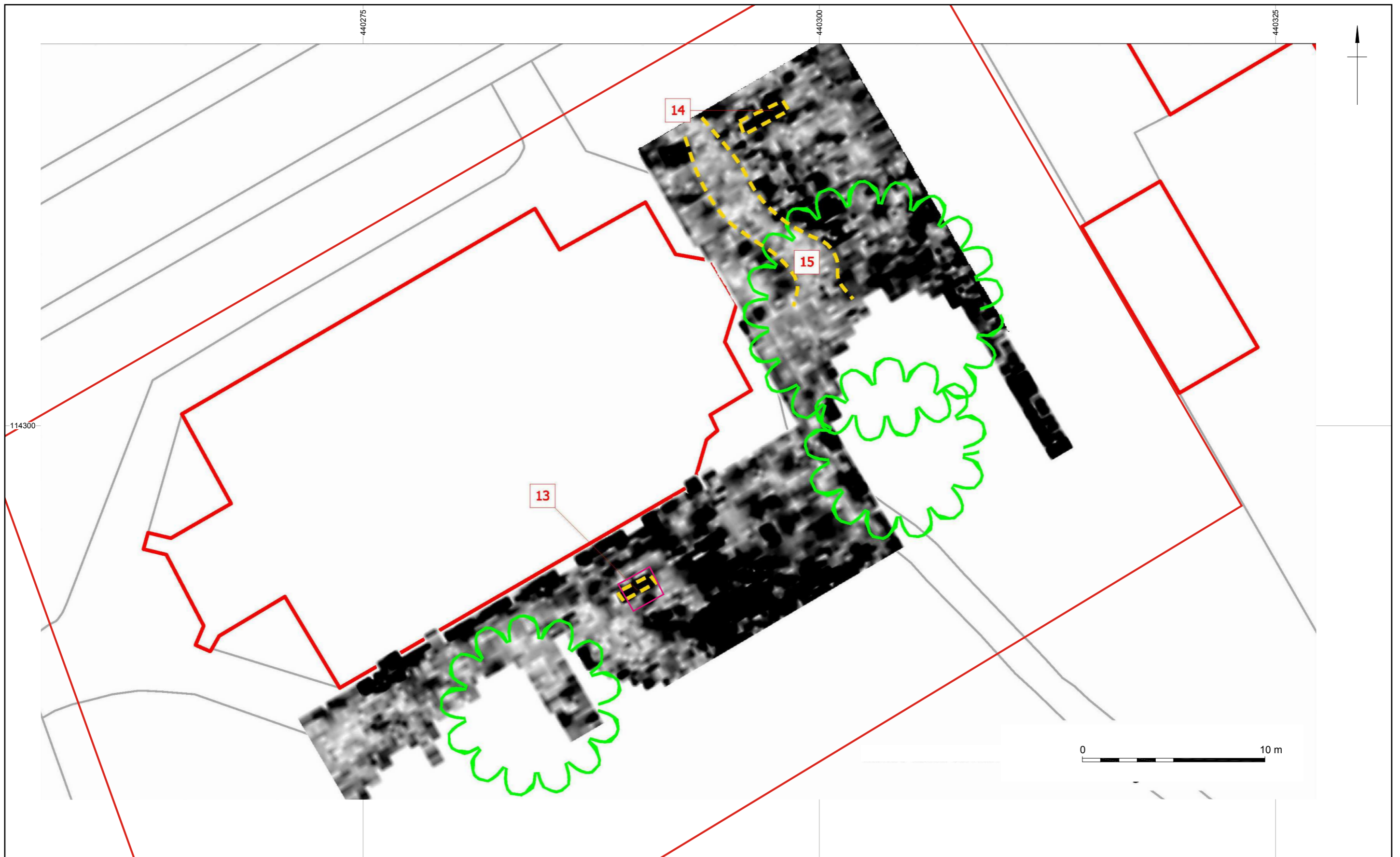
Test pit

Graveyard plan provided by the client.
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Date:	26/09/2017	Revision Number:	0
Scale:	1:200 @ A3	Illustrator:	ND
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Test pit location on plan of cemetery

Figure 2



Coordinate system:
OSGB36 (OSTN15/OSGM15)

□ Test pit

GPR plan provided by the client.
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Test pit location and GPR survey

Figure 3



Plate 1: Test pit cleaned, looking south, 1m scale



Plate 2: Grave 1003 showing coffin nails, 0.8m scale



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Plate 3: Grave 1005 showing depth, 1m scale

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