



Sheffield General Cemetery Sheffield

Report on Photographic Survey

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Sheffield City Council, to carry out a photographic survey of a stairwell accessing the lower level of the catacombs and an area to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel within the Sheffield General Cemetery. This survey is part of the Parks for People Project Round 1 which aims to conserve the Sheffield General Cemetery and ultimately better connect the local population with the Site and allow a coherent management plan for its future. As part of the archaeology commission for the Round 1 works, a Desk-Based Assessment and targeted Ground Penetrating Radar survey was also carried out.

The photographic survey has been successful in demonstrating that stairwell CC1 leading to the upper level of the lower catacomb structure survive as built. No evidence for any iron furniture in the form of gates, rails or banisters was found either within the stairwell, its balustrade or on the northern wall of the catacombs was identified. No recesses were cut into the stone to allow for any such structures to be inserted or subsequently removed. The square decorative niches carved in to the stone capping of the balustrade may indicate that a railing was intended above the balustrade, however, they may also be purely decorative. Given the drop of c. 3 m from the top of the lower catacomb structure to the path below it seems implausible that no safety measures were planned to either restrict access through the stairwell or to guard against falling from the edge of the lower catacomb structure once accessed from the stairs. It would seem probable that any planned iron furniture or barriers were simply never installed.

The survey to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel has successfully identified the structural remains of eastern wing of the vaults. The decorative stone capping identified at the southern limit of the exposed section of wall indicates that the entire structure survives buried beneath later made ground deposits. The position of the curved section of vault wall corresponds perfectly to the structure as drawn on historic mapping and plans of the grave plots for the cemetery. The height of the stone capping demonstrates that the top of the vaults would have been at roughly the same level as the floor level of the Non Conformist Chapel and would have extended for at least 2.5 m below the current ground levels. Historic mapping indicates that a sunken pathway was constructed to access these vaults from the rear. A number of monuments and grave markers currently sit above the position of the vaults. It would seem likely that these later structures and burials would only truncate the upper section of the buried vaults, and may have been inserted to respect and avoid the structures of the earlier vaults. Indeed, a monument erected immediately to the west of the identified stone capping seems to respect and avoid the southern external wall of the vaults.

The project archive will be deposited with Museums Sheffield in due course. Until deposition the project archive will be stored at the Sheffield office of Wessex Archaeology under project number 113880.



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This project was commissioned by Sheffield City Council, and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Amanda Cosgrove in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank South Yorkshire Archaeology Service for supplying the Sites and Monument Record data.

The photographic survey and subsequent report was written by Chris Swales. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Chris Swales.

Fieldwork was undertaken on 1st October 2016.



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Report on Photographic Survey

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Sheffield City Council, ('the Client'), to carry out a photographic survey of a stairwell accessing the lower level of the catacombs and an area to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel within the Sheffield General Cemetery, (hereafter 'the Site', **Figure 1**), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 434152, 385876.

1.1.2 This survey is part of the Parks for People Project Round 1 which aims to conserve the Sheffield General Cemetery and ultimately better connect the local population with the Site and allow a coherent management plan for its future. It is intended the Sheffield General Cemetery will become a place to visit for pleasure whilst enjoying the history and nature of the Site.

1.1.3 As part of the archaeology commission for the Round 1 works, a Desk-Based Assessment (Wessex Archaeology 2016a) and targeted Ground Penetrating Radar survey was also carried out (Wessex Archaeology 2016b).

1.2 Specific aims for the Round 1 archaeological commission

1.2.1 The specific aims for the Round 1 archaeological commission were to:

- *improve understanding of the Site heritage e.g. evidence for phasing, historical additions or alterations;*
- *provide a better understanding of underground / hidden conditions and features;*
- *inform conservation proposals for inclusion in the Round 2 project;*
- *make recommendations for conservation, protection and management;*
- *engage people with the heritage;*
- *inform the development of learning and training initiatives;*
- *identify and record historic features;*
- *provide a good understanding of the heritage significance;*
- *inform interpretation material;*
- *what was originally planned as part of the cemetery design and what was implemented?;*
- *additional research required – what don't we know?;*



- *understand the process / requirements for working around / disturbing buried remains; and*
- *define the archaeology brief for the Round 2 project.*

1.2.2 As part of the Round 1, archaeology commission, in addition to the DBA, a photographic survey was undertaken of the stairwell accessing the lower level of the catacombs and an area to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel, in addition to the DBA (**Figure 2**).

1.3 The Site

1.3.1 The Site comprises a broadly rectangular parcel of land of approximately 5.8 hectares (ha) located approximately 1.5 km to the south-west of Sheffield city centre within the Sharrow district of the city.

1.3.2 The Site corresponds with the boundaries of the Sheffield General Cemetery. The western half contains grave markers and memorials whilst the eastern half was cleared of monuments in the latter half of the 20th century. The Site is bounded to the north-west by a watercourse, the Porter Brook, to the northeast by Montague Street, to the south-east by Cemetery Road and to the south-west by Frog Walk.

1.3.3 The Site is situated on land sloping down towards the Porter Brook. The southern corner of the Site is at an elevation of approximately 115 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and falls to the north and north-west to an elevation of approximately 90 m aOD.

1.3.4 The underlying geology of the Site is mapped as sandstone, mudstone and siltstone of the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation. There are recorded superficial deposits of alluvium along the route of the Porter Brook (British Geological Survey).

1.4 Scope of document

1.4.1 This report is intended to provide a photographic and written description of the structures recorded during the photographic survey. This report should be read in conjunction with the DBA (Wessex Archaeology 2016a), in which this report will be included within the appendices. A Project Design (Wessex Archaeology 2016c), which detailed the agreed methodology and standards for the Round 1 archaeological works, was prepared on behalf of the Sheffield City Council (SCC), and approved by the South Yorkshire Archaeology Service (SYAS). All works were carried out in line with the agreed Project Design and relevant archaeological national standards and guidance (Historic England 2015; ClfA 2014a-c).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 An overview of the archaeological background to the Site is presented below. A more comprehensive description is available in the project DBA. The following section is a summary of the archaeological background from these documents. The Gazetteer of the DBA should be used for reference with regard to references prefixed 'WA'.

2.2 The establishment of the General Cemetery (1834-1845)

2.2.1 In 1834, a group of Nonconformists met in Sheffield and formed a committee with the intention of creating a General Cemetery similar to those in Manchester and Liverpool with the expectation of '...a large Annual Profit...to the Subscribers' (Woudstra 2016, 13). Shares cost £25 each and by the 28th April 1834, £27,125 had been taken and by June a

site had been identified near Sharrow-Head for the proposed location of the cemetery (ibid.). The land was purchased for £1,900 on the 17th July 1834 from the estate of the late Joseph Wilson (ibid., 14).

- 2.2.2 A competition to design the cemetery was opened to architects, landscape gardeners and others on the 21st of June 1834 with the eventual winner named as Samuel Worth, a local architect who had worked on several buildings in Sheffield (Woudstra 2016, 16; Horton 2014, 18). Woudstra (2016, 17) notes the chosen site consisted of a worked-out quarry of which Worth's designs took advantage of through infilling the excavated areas with vaults. Worth's designs also included a gatehouse to be built on a new bridge over the Porter Brook, a new carriageway that made its way up the hill over vaults to the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4) which was to sit in a prominent position in the centre of the site (ibid.). The only remaining drawing of Worth's original plans show the designs for the entranceway and drive (not reproduced). Excavations carried out in 2000 uncovered a flagstone surface at approximately 1.6 m below ground level (bgl) along the path above the catacombs which may represent the drive's original surface (ARCUS 2000).
- 2.2.3 Worth also considered the wider landscape context of the cemetery, positioning the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4) in direct line of sight with the neo-classical grand residence of The Mount, across the valley approximately 1 km to the north-west of the cemetery (Horton 2014, 18). The Mount was designed by the Sheffield architect William Flockton and constructed in 1830. By 1838 Flockton had also constructed Wesley College, now Grade II* Listed King Edward VII Upper School, close to the Mount approximately 700 m north-north-west of the Cemetery. The design of the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4), and in particular its porticos, was also made to closely match that of the Mount and, subsequently matched other high status buildings constructed in the area such as Wesley College (ibid.).
- 2.2.4 Documentary evidence frequently notes the presence of a stone quarry '...immediately behind [the] chapel...' which was to be occupied by brick graves (Taylor 2013, 31; Woudstra 2016, 17). Plans produced by Chapman and Jenkinson Surveyors show an additional catacomb structure attached to the rear of the Non Conformist chapel (WA 4) which provided a combination of brick graves and drop vaults (Taylor 2013, 11; Horton 2014, 23). However, no plans of the Site that predate the establishment of the cemetery show evidence of extensive quarrying.
- 2.2.5 The 1846 Fairbank Map shows a path running from the cemetery's main drive to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4). This path is thought to have provided the only means of access to the additional catacomb structure, as there is no evidence of an entrance beneath the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4; Taylor 2013, 21; Horton 2014, 23).
- 2.2.6 The documentary evidence indicates the catacomb structure was not completed to its initial plan whereby the quarried out area was to accommodate some one hundred brick graves (Woudstra 2016, 23). By the 2nd December 1835, problems with contractors and the sheer cost of the excavations led to the vaults behind the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4) to only be completed to the end of the brick walls that had already been constructed with soil from the excavation of a nearby dam gratefully received (ibid.). In addition, the front of the quarry was '...to be of rough walling with the edges cut', perhaps suggesting the original plan was to face the quarry edge to match the appearance of the Non Conformist Chapel (ibid.). The catacombs beneath the Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4) have been inspected with its rough floor posited as forming part of the former quarry surface while calculations carried out by Taylor (2013) in the area behind the Non

Conformist Chapel (WA 4) indicate the ground level was some 3.5 m lower than it is today (ibid., 12 & 21).

- 2.2.7 Taylor (2013) suggests the western edge of the cemetery may have been a quarry face. The sheer wall running from the southern edge is approximately 7 m high and has been reinforced with concrete which Taylor suggests may be hiding a potential stone face. He goes on to argue this hypothesis is supported by the presence of small areas of sandstone rock visible when the sheer face becomes a steep bank further to the north (ibid.).
- 2.2.8 Minutes of the General Cemetery Company note that stone from the cemetery land was used during construction noting that 'All the rougher parts of the works are built with stone excavated from the ground' and that clay for the bricks was acquired from the adjoining land not enclosed by the cemetery walls (Woudstra 2016).
- 2.2.9 The cemetery plans included a number of buildings constructed with larger, better quality blocks of Millstone Grit sourced from other quarries (Taylor 2013, 34; Horton 2014, 23). The Grade II* listed Non Conformist Chapel (WA 4) is described by Pevsner as 'Egypto-Greek' in style with the front of the Chapel formed of a Greek Doric portico beneath which lies an Egyptian style doorway (Horton 2014, 24). The Chapel was initially designed for funeral services, however, Sunday services began to be held soon after its construction (ibid., 25).
- 2.2.10 The Egyptian theme is continued at the Grade II* listed Egyptian Gate (WA 2) which provides access to the cemetery from Cemetery Road. The gate was constructed with numerous symbolic references including snakes eating their tails, an ancient sign of rebirth and immortality, and the emblem of the winged orb symbolising the triumph of day over night (Horton 2014, 25).
- 2.2.11 The Grade II* listed Gatehouse (WA 3) includes side lodges and a supporting bridge, constructed in a classic revival style, spanning the Porter Brook (Horton 2014, 20). Elaborate iron gates were installed with recesses provided for the withdrawn gates to allow the widest possible entrance into the cemetery, although these have since been removed and replaced (ibid.).
- 2.2.12 The Grade II listed catacombs (WA 36) were incorporated into one of the steep sides of the landscape and curved to form the base of the main drive from the gatehouse into the cemetery proper (Horton 2014, 22). The doorways were designed to have iron gates across the doorway after they were occupied (ibid.). Interment in the catacombs was expensive and proved to be unpopular with only ten occupied within the first ten years of the opening of the cemetery (ibid.). The catacombs ultimately proved to be unprofitable for the General Cemetery Company, partially due to the initial expense of their construction, although they were a critical structure within the cemetery as they held back the hillside (ibid.).
- 2.2.13 The Grade II listed cemetery offices, also known as Montague House (WA 17), are an example of Worth's eclectic architectural style (Horton 2014, 25). Square in shape the long sloping; simply framed windows were made to look like Egyptian tomb doorways while classical-style pillars stand on either side of the door (ibid.).
- 2.2.14 Cemetery Avenue was laid out in order to provide a formal entrance to the cemetery from Ecclesall Road, the former Manchester turnpike road (Horton 2014, 19). The entranceway was originally designed to be much more elaborate. Initial plans called for the existing

curving road to be raised on a causeway that would span the Porter Brook and existing footpath in order to provide a level approach to the cemetery (Woudstra 2016, 17). The reason behind the decision to alter the entrance is unknown, although it may have been due to the cost of the project which was already increasing. The new entranceway was lined with lime trees and had two stone obelisks where it met Ecclesall Road (*ibid.*). Immediately prior to the completion of the works the General Cemetery Company commissioned the landscape painter Thomas Hofland to paint the cemetery and for that painting to be lithographed to be used to promote the idyll of Worth's design (Woudstra 2016, 27).

- 2.2.15 Sheffield General Cemetery (WA 5) was opened in 1836 with the first burial in May of that year (Horton 2014, 25). The cost of constructing the cemetery was £13,000, approximately £1.3 million today (Bank of England 2016), and it seems the General Cemetery Company struggled with the initial unforeseen increases in cost and the effects of a global economic downturn in 1837, which particularly affected Sheffield due to its strong links with the USA (Horton 2014, 27; Woudstra 2016, 34).
- 2.2.16 It took six years to sell the first 1000 graves (Horton 2014, 27), an uptake which matches that of the catacombs noted above, which is surprising given the overcrowding of the graveyards in the city. There seems to have been '...a prevailing prejudice, in not having been consecrated according to the form of the Established Church' and the cemetery survived on contracts with the local Poor Law authorities burying paupers at five shillings per body (Horton 2014, 27; Woudstra 2016, 37). The main benefit of these burials were that numerous bodies could be interred within the same grave and, keen to make money quickly, the General Cemetery Committee had extensive graves pre-dug during construction with the largest containing some 96 bodies (*ibid.*).

2.3 The expansion of the General Cemetery after 1846

- 2.3.1 In order to combat this 'prevailing prejudice' the Company's directors voted in August 1845 to apply for consent by Parliamentary Act to authorise the consecration of land so as to offer burials to those within the Established Church (Woudstra 2016, 40). The Company purchased additional land to the east of the Cemetery which was to be used in conjunction with a portion of unused land remaining from the original purchase (Horton, 2014, 29). The Nonconformist and Anglican areas of the cemetery were separated by the original eastern wall of the Non Conformist cemetery, which became known as 'The Dissenters' Wall' (Horton 2014, 29).
- 2.3.2 Robert Marnock was appointed to design the landscape while William Flockton, architect of the Mount and Wesley College, designed the Anglican Chapel (WA 19) and produced a plan of the proposed layout of the plots (WA 19; Horton 2014, 29; Woudstra 2016, 49 & 52). Marnock was one of the foremost landscape gardeners of the 19th century who had been appointed in 1834 by the Sheffield Botanical and Horticultural Society to design and lay out the Botanical Gardens (WA 39), located approximately 160 m west of the cemetery (Sheffield Botanical Gardens Trust 2015). Marnock went on to design the Gardens of the Royal Botanic Society of London in Regent's Park in 1840 and was appointed as their curator, a post he held until 1869 (*ibid.*). Woudstra (2016, 25) suggests the original layout of the cemetery grounds were probably designed by Marnock who was at the time curating the Sheffield Botanical Gardens (1834-1840).
- 2.3.3 The Grade II listed Anglican Chapel (WA 19) is neo-Gothic in style and provides a stark juxtaposition with the neoclassical architecture of Worth's original buildings with its spire forming a prominent landmark within the city (Horton 2014, 31).

- 2.3.4 The development cost of the General Cemetery's expansion was in the region of £25,000, approximately £2.4 million today. This was noted by the General Cemetery Company as a significant outlay, however, trade quickly picked up in the 1850s and continued into the 1890s with the cemetery finally becoming a profitable business (Horton 2014, 33). The Cemetery was helped by Parliamentary Acts, including the Public Health Bill in 1848 and subsequent acts in the 1850s, which prohibited the interment of bodies in already overcrowded burial grounds within large towns (Horton 2014, Woudstra 2016, 45).
- 2.3.5 The full extent of the expanded cemetery is shown on the 1853 Ordnance Survey (OS) map. Marnock had created meandering walks through the Cemetery with the two sections linked by a new straight walk following the contours of the eastern section (Woudstra 2016, 50). However, by the mid-to-late 1850s the curving paths had been replaced with straight, regimented rows of gravestones allowing more space for graves (Horton 2014, 34).
- 2.3.6 The map also shows that the suburbs of Sheffield were extending into the Study Area with allotments depicted to the north of the Site. During the second half of the 19th century the Study Area steadily became more urbanised as the suburbs of Sheffield expanded. By the 1894 OS map terraced housing had been built adjacent to the western boundary of the Site with some semi-detached housing to the south.
- 2.3.7 The area of the catacombs behind the Non Conformist Chapel was filled in towards the end of the 19th century, potentially as cheaper public burials were more popular than those from the rich wanting catacombs (Taylor 2013, 19; Horton 2014, 24).

2.4 The General Cemetery in the 20th century

- 2.4.1 Subsequent OS maps published in 1905, 1923 and 1935 show further infilling of terraced housing within the Study Area to the north, west and south of the Site. The terraced housing along Cemetery Avenue had been built by 1905.
- 2.4.2 The cemetery continued in use during the 20th century although by the 1950s the average number of burials a year had fallen to twelve. The Site became increasingly neglected from the 1950s onwards, and an offer from the Cemetery Company to sell the Site to the City Council was rejected due to its poor financial situation. In 1963, Boden Developments Ltd purchased the majority of the shares in the Cemetery Company with the intention of using land for a housing development, however when it became apparent that such plans would be rejected by the local authorities all funding to maintain the Site was withdrawn and its neglect worsened (Horton 2014, 41).
- 2.4.3 In 1974, Sheffield City Council began to formally take over the General Cemetery Site. Following the acquisition of the Site by Sheffield City Council, a series of programmes of works occurred which included maintenance on the cemetery buildings and the clearance of 7,800 gravestones from the Anglican portion of the cemetery. The final burial within the Site occurred in 1978. In total it is estimated that 87,000 individuals were buried within Sheffield General Cemetery.
- 2.4.4 The cemetery was designated a Conservation Area by Sheffield City Council in 1986 who took on the maintenance of the cemetery in the early 1990s (Horton 2014, 45). Following a report to English Heritage (now Historic England), the cemetery was designated as a nationally important landscape in 1994 when it was added to the National Register of Parks and Gardens at Grade II, then upgraded to Grade II* in 2009 (Horton 2014, 46).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Research objectives

3.1.1 The photographic survey of the stairwell accessing the lower levels of the catacombs and the area of the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel was intended to assist in fulfilling the following key research aims for the Round 1 archaeological works:

- *improve understanding of the Site heritage e.g. evidence for phasing, historical additions or alterations;*
- *provide a better understanding of underground / hidden conditions and features;*
- *identify and record historic features;*
- *provide a good understanding of the heritage significance;*
- *inform interpretation material;*
- *what was originally planned as part of the cemetery design and what was implemented?; and*
- *understand the process / requirements for working around / disturbing buried remains.*

3.2 Specific aims

3.2.1 The specific aims of photographic survey of the stairwell accessing the lower levels of the catacombs was to:

- *assess the structural elements of the stairwell for evidence of additional cast iron furniture (i.e.gates, hand rails, banisters), which may have subsequently been removed; and*
- *assess the implications for the presence/absence of any such cast iron furniture.*

3.2.2 The specific aims of photographic survey of the area to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel was to:

- *assess the evidence for the construction of the planned vaults to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel;*
- *record any structures identified;*
- *assess how these structural remains relate to the as planned vaults; and*
- *assess the likely preservation of any structures;*

4 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

4.1 Summary

4.1.1 The area of investigation was cleared of all obstructing vegetation by hand.

4.1.2 Key structures were subsequently cleaned by hand using a shovel, trowel and brush.

4.1.3 A photographic survey was conducted using a digital camera. Photographs were taken as necessary to produce a photographic record of the structures. Features were photographed within their site context and demonstrated associations, relationships, specific qualities and depositional sequence, where appropriate.

- 4.1.4 All previously unidentified structures were hand planned. Each structure appears on at least one detailed plan at 1:50 or 1:20 scale and one section at 1:10 and co-ordinated on to the overall Site plan.
- 4.1.5 All archaeological features were recorded using an appropriate *pro forma* to ensure relevant data was collected in a standardised recording system. This written record is hierarchically based and centred on the context record. Each context record fully described the location, extent, composition and relationship of the subject and was cross-referenced to all other assigned records.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The archaeological structures recorded were assigned unique designations, which were differentiated by area. Structures were assigned the prefix 'CC' for structures identified around the catacombs and 'NCC' for structures around the Non Conformist Chapel. A table listing all identified structures is presented within Appendix 1 of this report.

5.2 The stairwell of the lower catacombs

- 5.2.1 Stairwell CC1 has previously been metrically recorded with a laser scanner as part of survey covering the entire lower catacomb (CC2) and upper catacomb structure (CC3) as well as by a topographic survey of the entire cemetery (Figure 2). Eleven stone stairs ascend from the north to the south before reaching a stone landing and turning 90 degrees to the west. A further five stone steps lead to the upper level of the lower catacomb structure CC2 (**Plates 1-8**). The upper level of CC2 is recorded at 99.79 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with the path below recorded at c. 96.21 m aOD.
- 5.2.2 The stairwell walls are constructed of regularly shaped sandstone blocks measuring 300 mm by 160 mm by 130 mm. The eastern stone wall and balustrade of the stairwell was not visible due to heavy overgrowth. The western wall and balustrade was cleared of vegetation and revealed a well dressed stone cap with square niches carved in to the surface (**Plates 3-4**). The stone niches measured 150 mm by 150 mm by 10 mm in depth. The upper limit of the staircase, where it meets the northern external wall of structure CC2, revealed a less intricately decorated stone capping (**Plate 8**).
- 5.2.3 Careful cleaning of the western stone wall, stone balustrade of the stairwell, rear southern wall of the stairwell and upper levels adjoining CC2 show no evidence for any furniture associated with gates, hand rails or banisters to secure the stairwell or upper levels of CC2 from public access. No *in situ* iron fittings were visible nor any cut marks in the stone to indicate any were ever inserted and subsequently removed. The stone niches identified on the western stone hand rail appear to have been purely decorative and not intended to house any kind of iron rail.
- 5.2.4 The only feature of interest within the stairwell was a drainage channel chiselled into the stone floor of the landing, allowing water to drain down the steps to the path below (**Plate 7**).

5.3 The rear of the Non Conformist Chapel

- 5.3.1 Structure NCC1 was identified c. 15.67 m to the east of the southeast corner of the Non Conformist Chapel (Figure 3, **Plates 8-14**). A section of curved sandstone wall measuring 5.6 m in length and 0.50 m in width was identified on a roughly north-south alignment.

- 5.3.2 The wall was recorded with an outer face of dressed stone. However, the inner face (nearest the Non Conformist Chapel) appeared to have been damaged at its northern extent (**Plates 11-13**). Along the exposed length of wall no dressed capping stone was identified. However, a small hand dug slot was excavated at the southern limit of the exposed section of the wall. This slot demonstrated that a well dressed sandstone cap is present below the still buried sections of the wall (**Plate 14**). Only a small section of the dressed capping stone was present, however, the recorded section demonstrates that the dressed capping stone is in the same style as seen within the main catacombs (Plate 2) to the north of the Non Conformist Chapel (i.e. a domed stone cap with a series of grooves along its length).
- 5.3.3 The exposed section of wall was recorded above ground level at a height of 112.30 m aOD. The ground level to the west of this wall rises steadily to c. 113.37 m aOD at the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel. Given this increase in ground levels to the west it seems likely that the wall survives to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel, buried beneath several metres of made ground.
- 5.3.4 Wall NCC1 corresponds to the position and plan of the east wing of the vaults recorded on historic mapping (Taylor 2013) and the plan of grave plots for the cemetery (**Figure 3**).

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 The photographic survey has been successful in demonstrating that stairwell CC1 leading to the upper level of the lower catacomb structure survives as built. No evidence for any iron furniture in the form of gates, rails or banisters was found either within the stairwell, its balustrade or on the northern wall of the catacombs was identified, with no recesses cut into the stone to allow for any such structures to be inserted and subsequently removed.
- 6.1.2 The square niches carved in to the stone capping of the balustrade may indicate that a railing was intended with in the stairwell, however, they may also be purely decorative.
- 6.1.3 Given the drop of c. 3 m from the top of the lower catacomb structure to the path below it seems implausible that no safety measures were planned to either restrict access through the stairwell or to guard against falling from the edge of the lower catacomb structure once accessed from the stairs. It would seem probable that any planned iron furniture or stone barriers were simply never installed.
- 6.1.4 The survey to the rear of the Non Conformist Chapel has successfully identified the structural remains of eastern wing of the vaults. The decorative stone capping identified at the southern limit of the exposed section of wall indicates that the entire structure survives buried beneath later made ground deposits. The position of the curved section of vault wall corresponds to the structure as drawn on historic mapping and plans of the grave plots for the cemetery. The height of the stone capping demonstrates that the top of the vaults would have been at roughly the same level as the floor level of the Non Conformist Chapel and would have extended for at least 2.5 m below the current ground levels. Historic mapping indicates that a sunken pathway was constructed to access these vaults from the rear.
- 6.1.5 A number of monuments and grave markers currently sit above the position of the vaults as recorded on historic mapping. It would seem likely that these later structures and burials would only truncate the upper section of the buried vaults, and may have been inserted to respect and avoid the structures of the earlier vaults. Indeed, a monument

erected immediately to the west of the identified stone capping seems to respect and avoid the southern external wall of the vaults.

7 STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

7.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Sheffield Museums. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

7.2 Archive

7.2.1 The complete archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by the receiving body, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013, UKIC 2011).

7.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the Site and accession code and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- *one file/document case of paper records & A3/A4 graphics; and*
- *one standard archive box of finds.*

7.2.3 A copy of the final report will be supplied to the SYAS and uploaded to OASIS.

7.3 Copyright

7.3.1 Wessex Archaeology retains full copyright of any report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the Client for the use of the report by the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements can be copied for planning purposes by the Local Planning Authority.

7.3.2 Wessex Archaeology will assign copyright to the Client upon written request but retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (Chapter IV, s.79).

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.

8 REFERENCES

8.1 Bibliography

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ARCUS, 2000. *Archaeological Investigations at Sheffield General Cemetery. Unpublished Report*

Brown, D.H., 2011, *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Curation.*

ClfA 2014a, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief*

ClfA 2014b, *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Archives.*

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Horton, J., 2014. *Remote and undisturbed: A brief history of the Sheffield General Cemetery.* Sheffield: Sheffield General Cemetery Trust

SMA, 1995, *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive*, Society of Museum Archaeologists.

Taylor, R., 2013. *The Under World of Sheffield's General Cemetery: Understanding General Cemetery's Subterranean Landscape.* Unpublished Masters' Dissertation

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) 2001, *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage.*

Wessex Archaeology, 2016a, Sheffield General Cemetery, Sheffield. Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment. Wessex Archaeology client report 113880.01

Wessex Archaeology, 2016a, Sheffield General Cemetery, Sheffield. Historic Environment Ground Penetrating Radar Survey. Wessex Archaeology client report 113880.02

Wessex Archaeology, 2016c, Sheffield General Cemetery Parks for People Project, Heritage Lottery Fund, Round 1. Project Design for Archaeological Field Survey, Desktop Study and Watching Brief

Woudstra, J., 2016. *The Inception of the Sheffield General Cemetery.* Unpublished Report

8.2 Online resources

<http://www.picturesheffield.com/>

<http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/index.html>

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

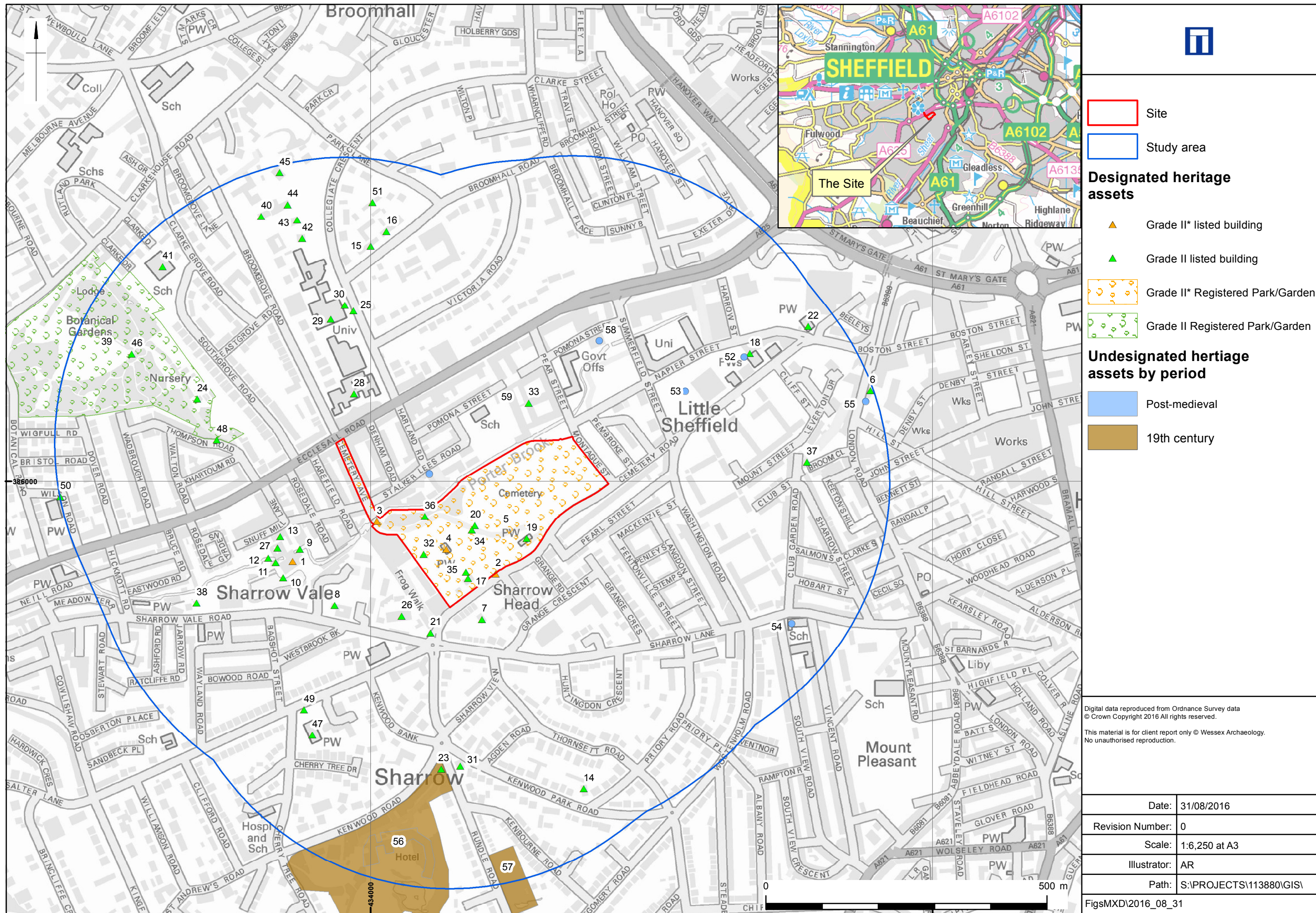


9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1: Context descriptions

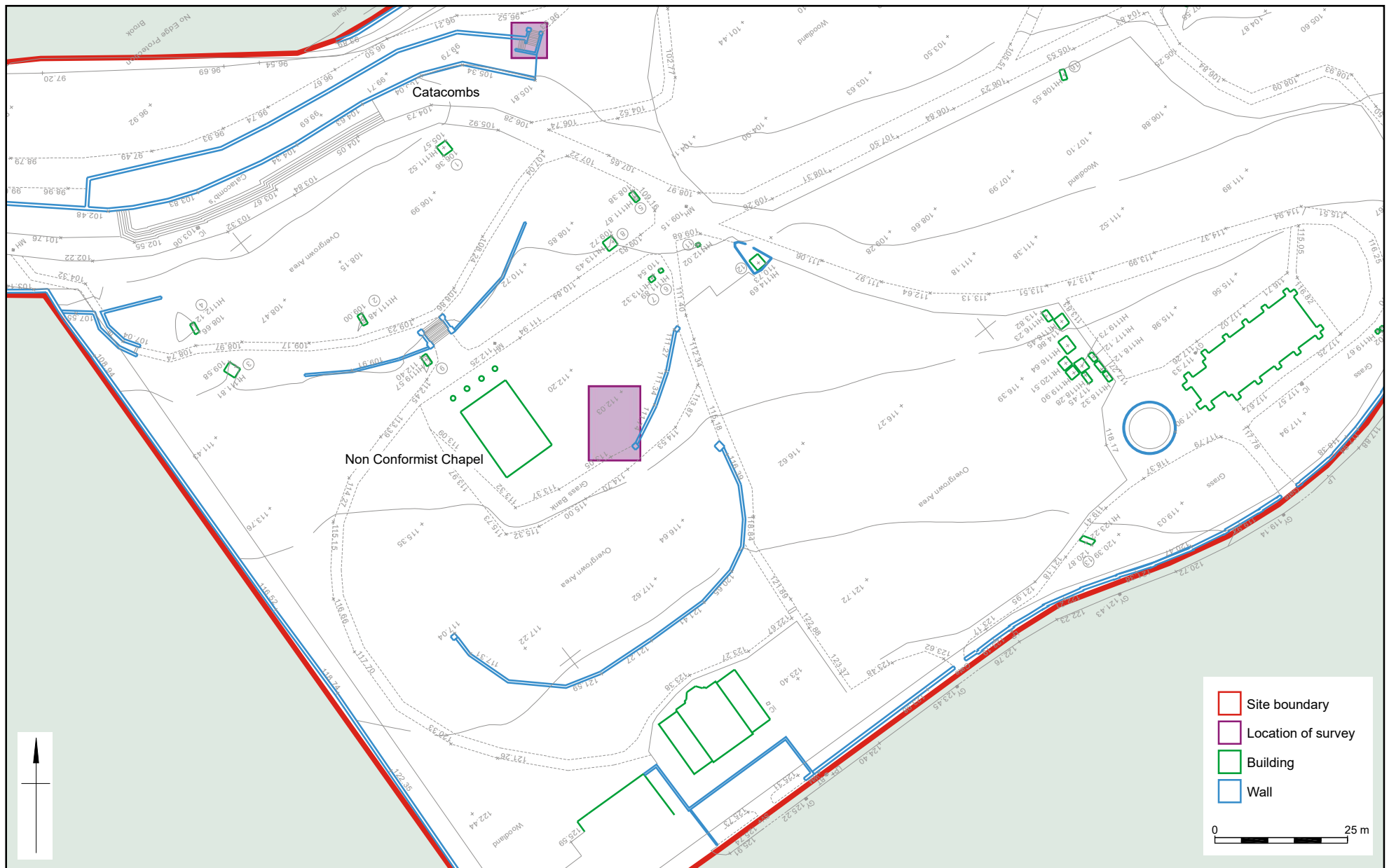
Catacombs stairwell	Description: Photographic Survey	Dimensions: 4 x 4 m
Context No.		Depth: N/A
CC1	Structure: Staircase leading to roof of CC2. Eleven stone stairs ascend from the north to the south before reaching a stone landing and turning 90 degrees to the west. A further five stone steps lead to the upper level of the lower catacomb structure CC2. The stairwell walls are constructed of regularly shaped sandstone blocks measuring 300 mm by 160 mm by 130 mm. The eastern stone wall and balustrade of the stairwell was not visible due to heavy overgrowth. The western wall and balustrade was cleared of vegetation and revealed a well dressed stone cap with square recesses carved in to the surface.	96.93m aOD to 99.79m aOD
CC2	Structure: Lower levels of catacombs	96.93m aOD to 99.79m aOD
CC3	Structure: Upper levels of catacombs	99.79m aOD to 105.81m aOD

Rear of Non Conformist Chapel	Description: Photographic Survey	Dimensions: 14 x 7 m
Context No.		Depth: N/A
NCC1	Structure: Curved vault wall measuring 5.6 m by 0.50 m wide. Stone capping seen to survive at southern limit of visible wall. Wall constructed from irregular shaped sandstone blocks.	0 – 0.20 m



Site location, Study Area and known heritage assets (based on SYSMR, Historic England and other sources)

Figure 1

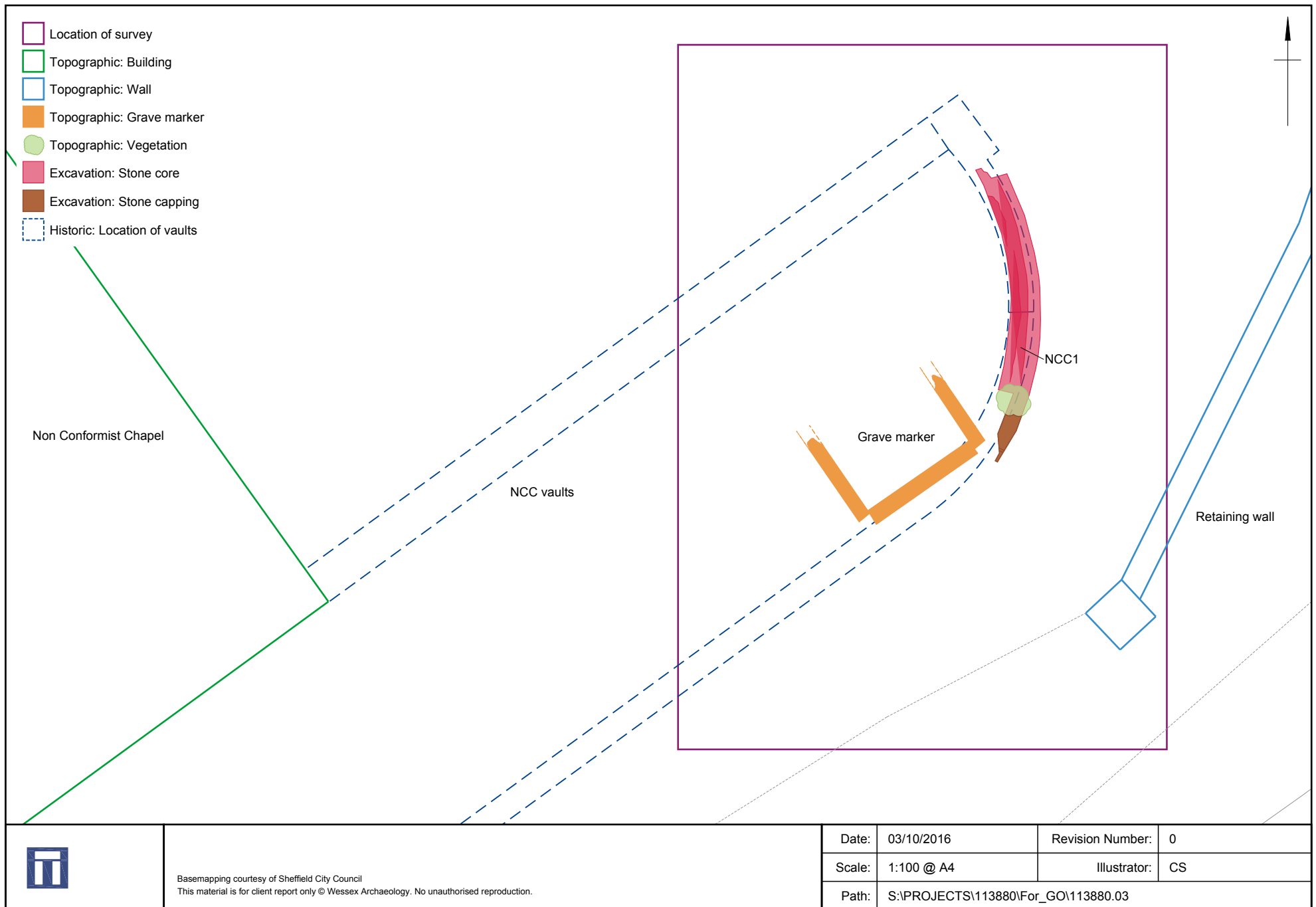


Basemapping courtesy of Sheffield City Council
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Location of photographic survey areas

Figure 2



Site plan showing vault structure NCC1

Figure 3

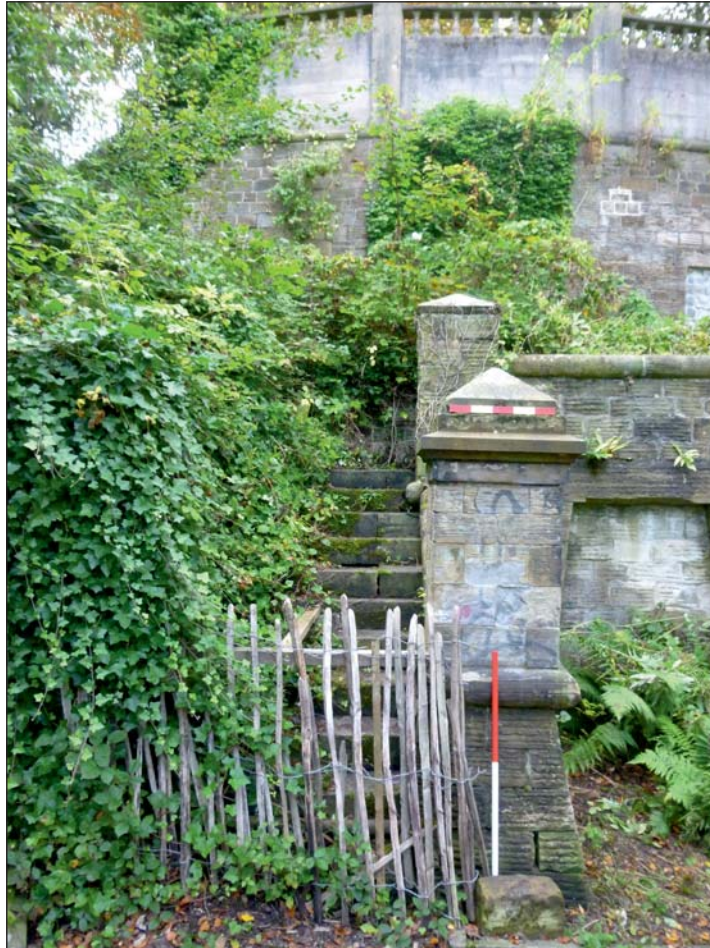


Plate 1: General shot of staircase CC1, view from north



Plate 2: General shot of staircase CC1, view from west


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Plate 3: Detail shot of balustrade carving from exterior of staircase



Plate 4: Detail shot of balustrade carving from interior of staircase


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Plate 5: Detail shot of interior stone wall of staircase, lower level



Plate 6: Detail shot of interior stone wall of staircase, central landing


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Plate 7: Detail shot of southern rear wall of staircase



Plate 8: Detail shot of upper staircase and northern wall of CC2


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Plate 9: General shot of vault wall NCC1, view from east



Plate 10: General shot of vault wall NCC1, view from north


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Plate 11: Detail shot of northern limit of wall NCC1



Plate 12: Overhead shot of wall NCC1, showing construction



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Plate 13: General shot of vault wall NCC1, view from south



Plate 14: Detail shot of stone capping on top of vault wall NCC1

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