

**HOLY TRINITY CHURCH,
BELL LANE,
MINCHINHAMPTON,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.**

NGR: SO 8722 0082

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

July 2016
Report No. 1138



ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES

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Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 27th January 2015 at Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire (NGR: SO 8722 0082). The archaeological works were undertaken during excavations required to install new churchyard lighting. The project was commissioned by Che Polley of Anthony J Smith (Gloucester) Ltd, on behalf of Holy Trinity Church.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the excavated area.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from Prehistoric times to the Modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Post-medieval

The period from *c.* AD 1500 onwards.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43. Traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – *c.* 500,000 BC to *c.* 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – *c.* 12,000 BC to *c.* 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – *c.* 4,500 BC to *c.* 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – *c.* 2,000 BC to *c.* 800 BC; *Iron Age* – *c.* 800 BC to AD 43.

Romano-British

Term used to define the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated AD 43 to *c.* AD 410.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on the 27th January 2015 at Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire (NGR: SO 8722 0082). The archaeological works were undertaken during excavations required to install new churchyard lighting. The project was commissioned by Che Polley of Anthony J Smith (Gloucester) Ltd, on behalf of Holy Trinity Church.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2014). The WSI was produced in line with *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2014).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (S.14/2105/FUL) had been granted for the erection of churchyard lighting, which included a condition for archaeological monitoring during the groundworks.
- 2.2 The proposed works involved ground disturbance associated with the excavation of the setting for the new lighting; the associated cable runs have already been laid within an existing path.
- 2.3 The site is located within the curtilage of the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, which is a grade I listed building (ref: 1340467) and is believed to be located on or near the site of an earlier church existing in the pre-Norman period and itself rebuilt during the 12th century. A number of other elements of the churchyard are also listed. The church itself dates to the 14th century with 16th century alterations and was heavily restored in 1842.
- 2.4 The site lies within the historic core of Minchinhampton, which had a market from 1269 and the town appears to have been important as a centre of sheep-farming in the Middle Ages. The main development of the town occurred during the 17th century and it remained a market and centre of local importance until the early 19th century.
- 2.5 The underlying geology is recorded as *Athelstan Oolite Formation - Limestone, Ooidal*, with no superficial deposits (www.bgs.ac.uk).
- 2.6 The proposals therefore had the potential to impact on archaeological finds or features dating from the late Saxon and Medieval periods, predominantly in the form of burial related activity.
- 2.7 The proximity of nationally important archaeological remains indicates that further finds and features may be expected within the site area.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological recording were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
 - i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) to attempt to characterize the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 All intrusive groundworks were monitored and recorded in order to identify any archaeological finds, features or deposits. Groundworks were carried out under the constant supervision of the archaeologist. All excavations on site were carried out manually. Archaeological mitigation would be required should archaeological deposits be encountered. In the event that significant remains were discovered, work would cease and the archaeological advisor to Stroud District Council would be notified in order that an assessment of the remains and suitable provision for their recording or preservation could be made.
- 4.2 All archaeological investigation and recording was undertaken in accordance with the methodologies detailed in the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The excavation for the foundation of a new lamp-post was located 0.33m west of the footpath, which lead from the lych gate to the church and was approximately 11.5m northeast of the lych gate.
- 5.2 The hole for the new lamp-post was square in plan, measured 0.37m by 0.37m and was excavated to a depth of 0.74m. The basal layer present within the excavated area consisted of a yellow/white limestone brash, which most likely represented the natural deposits. These were present at a depth of 0.12m below the Modern ground level. The probable natural deposits were in turn sealed by a dark red brown clay silt topsoil/turf (101). No artefactual material was present within the excavated area.

- 5.3 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the excavated area.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 No archaeological features, deposits or finds were present within the excavated area.
- 6.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Stroud Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant local journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

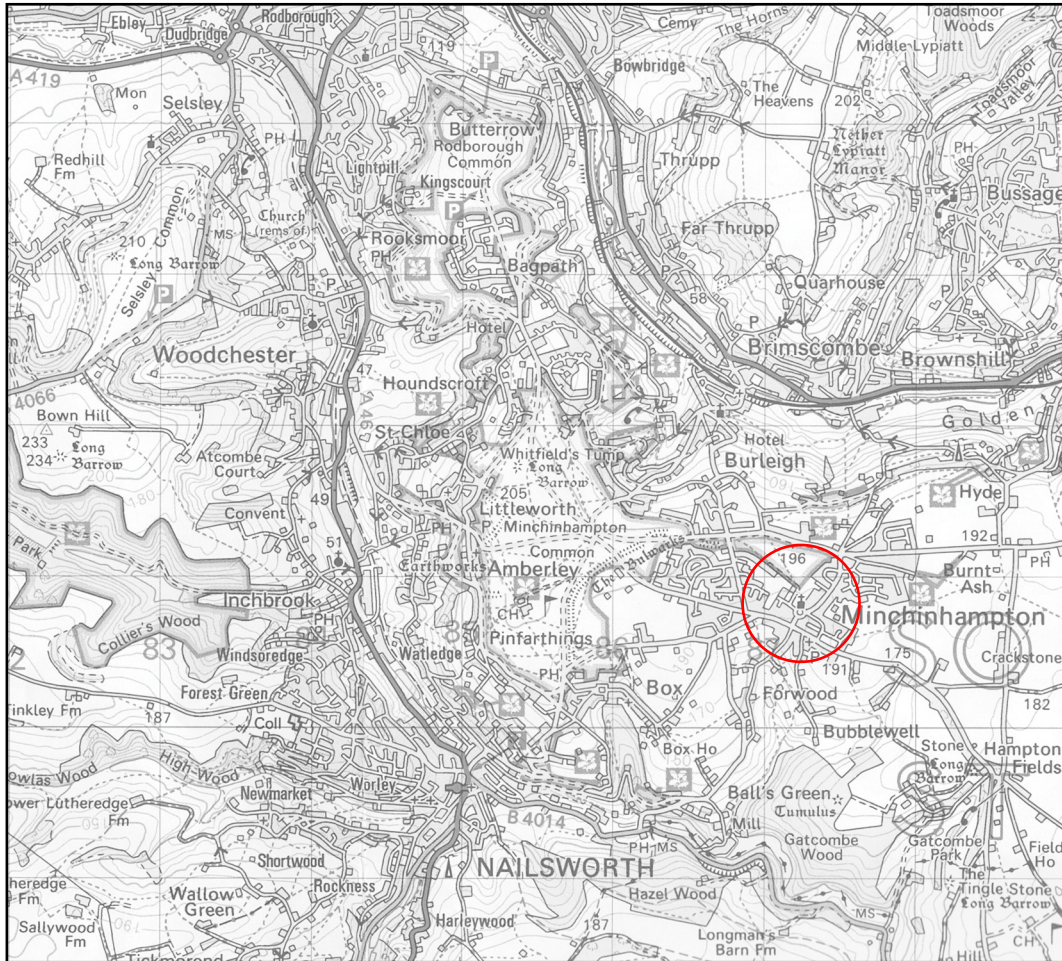
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Foundations Archaeology. 2014. *Holy Trinity Church, Bell Lane, Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire: Archaeological Watching Brief: Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpublished.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Charles Parry of Gloucestershire County Council, Che Polley of Anthony J Smith (Gloucester) Ltd and the on-site workers for their help during the course of the project.



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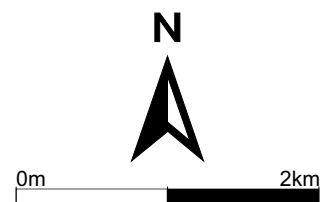
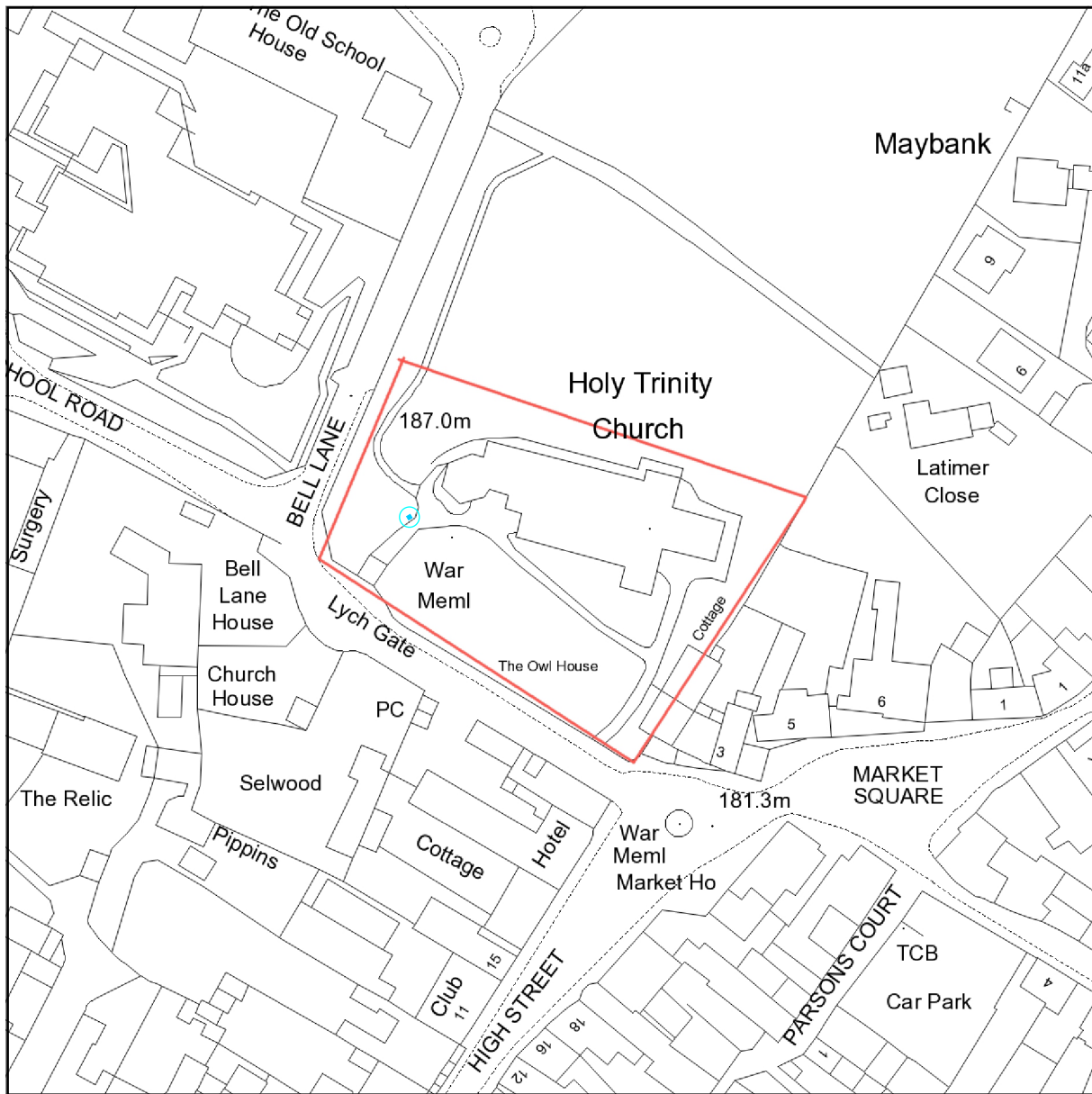




FIGURE 1: Site Location



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N


 Location of New Lamp Post



 0m 50m

FIGURE 2: Watching Brief Location