

**ST PETER'S CHURCH COMMUNITY HALL  
CHURCH LANE  
NEVENDON  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**



**Essex County Council**

**Field Archaeology Unit**

**November 2005**

**ST PETER'S CHURCH COMMUNITY HALL**  
**CHURCH LANE**  
**NEVENDON**  
**ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

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*As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.*

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**ST PETER'S CHURCH COMMUNITY HALL  
CHURCH LANE, NEVENDON, ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

**Client:** Nevendon District Church Council

**NGR:** TQ 734 907

**Planning Application No:** BAS/0664/04

**Site Code:** BASP 05

**ECC FAU Project Number:** 1534

**Date of fieldwork:** 6/9/05, 15/9/05, 21/9/05, 26/9/05 and 4/11/05

**SUMMARY**

*Archaeological monitoring was carried out on the excavation of foundation trenches for a church community hall and a related service trench within the churchyard of St Peter's church, Nevenden, which dates from the 13th or 14th century. The monitoring was undertaken by the Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of the Nevendon District Church Council in response to a condition on planning consent.*

*The monitoring of the groundworks showed that the building works had only a minimal impact on any archaeological remains present within the churchyard. No human burials were disturbed, although the top of one grave cut was slightly truncated. No disturbed human bones or archaeological artefacts were found in the graveyard soil.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report contains the results of archaeological monitoring of the construction of a community hall and a service trench for a sewer pipe within the churchyard of St Peter's Church, Nevendon (Fig. 1). The monitoring was carried out by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of Nevendon District Church Council. It was undertaken in accordance with an archaeological brief produced by the Essex CC Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM 2005), who monitored the work, and a written scheme of investigation produced by the ECC FAU (2005).
- 1.2 Copies of this report will be supplied to the client, ECC HEM, and Essex County Council Historic Environment Record. The report will become part of the OASIS online record (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). The site archive will be held at Southend museum.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The village of Nevendon lies on the north-east edge of Basildon (Fig. 1), but originally lay in open farmland.
- 2.2 The church of St Peter is a grade B listed building. It was built in the 13th or 14th century, and has a 17th-century timber-framed belfry (Essex County Council Historic Environment Record 7363-4).
- 2.3 The site of the community hall lies against the western boundary wall of the graveyard, c. 5m south of the west end of the church (Fig. 1). The service trench runs inside the western boundary wall from the community hall to the lych gate on Church Lane to the north. The site of the community hall was occupied by a small wooden building until relatively recently, which was demolished before the archaeological monitoring began (Fig. 2).
- 2.4 The uppermost drift geology is firm orange brown glacial clay with no inclusions, at a depth of 0.5m, sealed beneath topsoil.

### **3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 The general aim of the archaeological monitoring of the construction of the church hall and service trench was to assess and record the nature and complexity of any surviving archaeological remains disturbed by the excavation of the foundation and service trenches. Any burials or other archaeological features disturbed by the work were to be recorded and excavated.

### **4.0 METHOD**

- 4.1 The ECC FAU monitored the excavation of nine foundation trenches for the community hall (Fig. 2, A to I) and a service trench for a sewer pipe. Trenches A and B were 0.6m deep, C to E 0.8m deep, and F to I 0.25m deep. The service trench was 0.7m wide and 0.9m deep. The trenches and service trench had vertical sides and flat bases and were excavated using a small mechanical excavator with a toothed bucket.
- 4.2 Standard ECC FAU recording methods were used, and any features recorded were plotted on the base plan of the foundation trenches provided by the client. A photographic record, consisting of black-and-white prints and colour transparencies, was maintained of work in progress. The monitoring work was carried out in accordance with regional standards in field archaeology (Gurney 2003), and the by-laws and guidelines of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

### **5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS**

- 5.1 The five east-west foundation trenches of the community hall (A, B, C, D and E) were 0.6m deep and cut down to the level of the natural clay, but the north-south foundation trenches (F, G, H and I) were only 0.25m deep and only cut into topsoil and modern overburden. Only foundation trenches A-E had the potential to disturb burials or other archaeological features. The topsoil is dark greyish brown friable silt-clay with infrequent gravel. It is approximately 0.5m deep and contains infrequent fragments of peg-tile and brick.

- 5.2 Foundation trenches A and B cut marginally into the natural clay. Foundation trench A truncated part of the cut for a grave (Fig. 1, grave cut 3). The cut had vertical sides and was more than 0.6m deep. Inside the backfill of the grave were infrequent fragments of orange-red brick and peg tile. The inhumation within the grave was not exposed and was left undisturbed.
- 5.2 Foundation trenches C, D, E and F exposed layers of concrete and hardcore to a depth of 0.8m, below the surface of the natural clay. These modern layers were clearly related to the recently demolished building on this part of the site.
- 5.3 The service trench running north from the community hall was 0.9m deep, cut into the natural clay. No graves or archaeological features were identified

## **6.0 FINDS**

- 6.1 No bone or artefacts were found, other than infrequent pieces of post-medieval/modern tile, slate, glass and brick. These were not retained.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The construction of the community hall and service trench has resulted in minimal disturbance to the graveyard.
- 7.2 The grave cut in trench A is undated, but is probably 19th/20th century. This is suggested by its depth (0.6m +) and the fragments of brick and tile in its backfill.
- 7.3 The layers of concrete and hardcore in trenches C, D, E and F are the footings of the wooden building that formerly occupied the site prior to the construction of the community hall.
- 7.4 The low number of graves disturbed by the construction work is partly due to the site of the community hall being formerly occupied by an earlier building, and by the service trench being located close to the western edge of site, away from what is likely to have been the main areas of burial.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Field Archaeology Unit would like to thank John Williams of Nevendon District Church Council, Jayanti Dar of Shenstone and Partners, and Nigel Sharp of AHP Builders Ltd for their help and co-operation. The monitoring was undertaken by Mark Germany and the project was managed by Patrick Allen. Figures 1 and 2 are by Andrew Lewsey.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- |                 |      |   |
|-----------------|------|---|
| Essex CC FAU    | 2005 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief: St Peter's Church Community Hall, Nevendon, Essex.</i><br>Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit, Fairfield Road,<br>Fairfield Road, Braintree |
| Essex CC<br>HEM | 2005 | <i>Archaeological Monitoring at St Peter's Church, Nevendon.</i><br>Essex County Council Heritage Environment Management,<br>County Hall, Chelmsford  |
| Gurney, D.      | 2003 | <i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, E.</i><br>Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper <b>14</b>   |



## APPENDIX 1: FIELDWORK DATA

Context	Category	Description	Date
1	Deposit	Dark greyish brown friable silt clay topsoil with infrequent gravel, up to 0.50m deep.	Modern
2	Deposit	Orange-brown firm natural clay with no inclusions	-
3	Cut	Rectangular grave cut, with vertical sides. Filled by 4	?19th/20th C.
4	Deposit	Topsoil and re-deposited natural. Fill of 4. Contains infrequent small fragments of orange-red brick and tile	?19th/20th C.

## APPENDIX 2: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

In one A4 folder containing:

- 2 Copies of this report
- 1 Copy of the archaeological brief
- 1 Copy of the written scheme of investigation
- 1 Context register sheet
- 4 Context record sheets
- 5 Site visit recording sheets
- 2 Plans

No site drawings

No photographic records

No finds were retained.

### APPENDIX 3: ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SHEET

<b>Site Name &amp; Address:</b> St Peter's Church Community Hall, Church Lane, Nevendon, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Nevendon	<b>District:</b> Basildon
<b>NGR:</b> TQ 734 907	<b>Site Code:</b> BASP 05
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological monitoring	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> Mark Germany, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
<b>Date of Work:</b> 6/9/05, 15/9/05, 21/9/05, 26/9/05 and 4/11/05	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> Development area: c. 110m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Southend museum	<b>Funding Source:</b> Developer
<b>Further Work Anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related HCR Nos:</b> 7363, 7364
<b>Final Report:</b> Essex Archaeology and History (Summary)	
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Modern	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b> <p>The work monitored the excavation of the groundworks for the construction of a community hall within the churchyard of St Peter's Church, Nevendon. No features or finds were identified other than the cut for a 19th/20th-century grave, south-west of the church. The inhumation was not exposed and was left undisturbed. No bones or finds or other archaeological features were found.</p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:</b> None	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> M. Germany	<b>Date of Summary:</b> November 2005



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Fig.1. Location

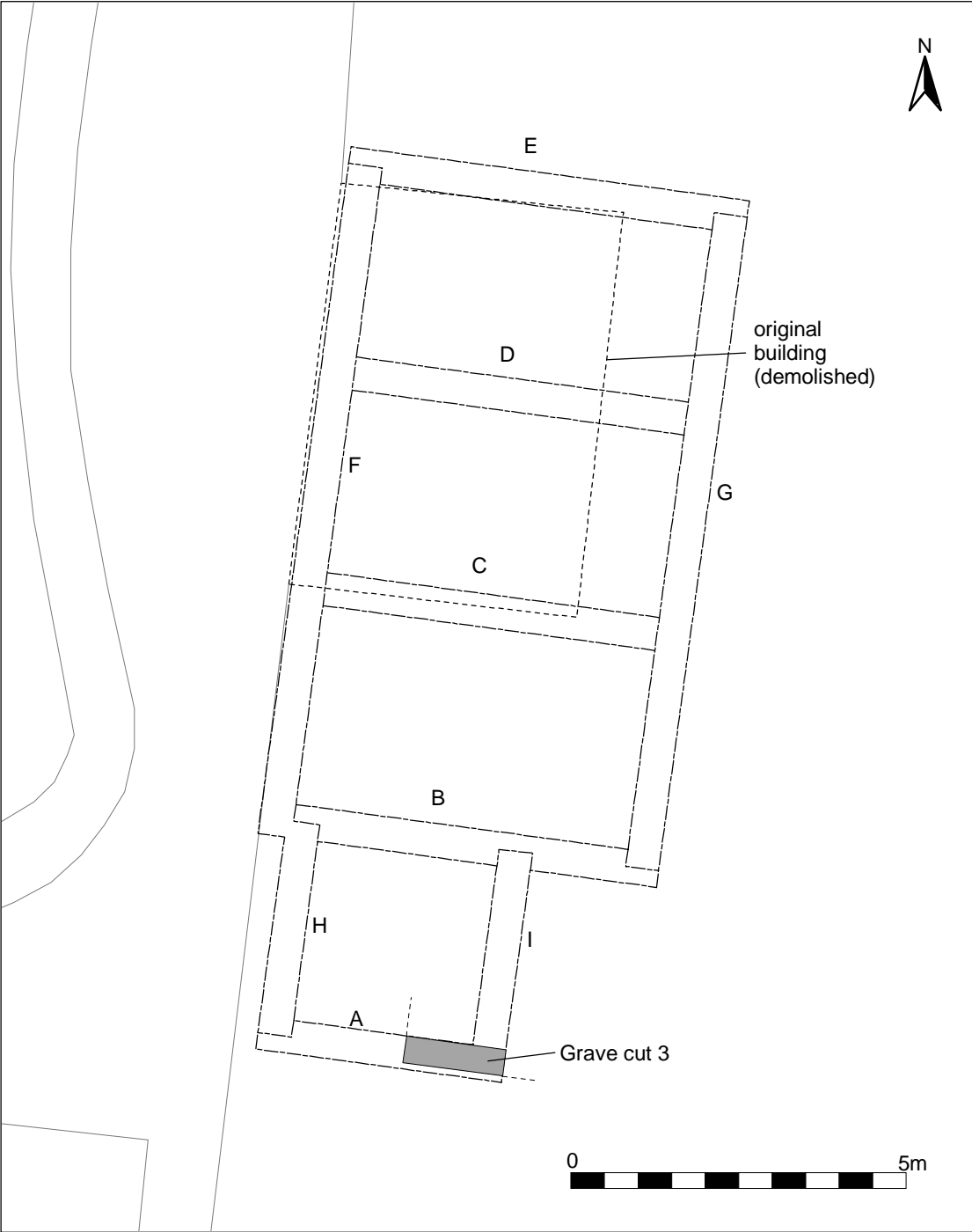


Fig.2. Layout of foundation trenches