

Church of St Mary the Virgin, Nevill Holt, Leicestershire

HN1261

Report No. 1040

Site name and address:	Church of St Mary the Virgin, Nevill Holt, Leics. LE16 8EG		
County:	Leicestershire	District:	Harborough District Council
Village/town:	Nevill Holt	Parish:	Nevill Holt
Planning reference:	n/a	NGR:	SP 81643 93692
Client name and address:	Messenger Construction Ltd, The Messenger Centre, Crown Lane, Tinwell, Stamford, PE9 3UF		
Nature of work:	Rainwater drainage	Present land use:	Church graveyard
Site Status:	Grade I listed building	Reason for investigation:	Ministry of Justice Dispensing Order
Position in planning process:	n/a	Project brief originator:	n/a
Size of affected area:	15m ²	Size of area investigated:	15m ²
Site Code:	HN1261	Other reference:	n/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Project type, methods etc.	Observation and Recording	Archive Recipient:	ADS/OASIS
Start of work	22/08/2016	Finish of work	25/08/2016
Related HER Nos:	MLE16885	Periods represented:	None
Oasis UID:	heritage1-271155	Significant finds:	None
Monument types:	Church		
Physical archive:	None		
Previous summaries/reports:	None		

Narrative**Background**

St Mary's Church is a 'closed church' and is currently in private ownership. As such, the church, churchyard, and the burials associated with them, are protected by covenants enacted by the Church Commissioners under the *Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011*. An *Amending Dispensing Order* under S.78(4) of the above Measure was granted by the Ministry of Justice, allowing the temporary relaxation of the covenants governing the churchyard, and allowing drainage works to be carried out, having due regard to the risk of encountering human remains and ensuring provision for their re-interment. Directions for the re-interment of such remains in the churchyard were obtained from the Bishop of Leicester.

The Heritage Network was commissioned by the contractors, Messenger Construction, to undertake an archaeological watching brief over the works to ensure that the provisions of the *Amending Dispensing Order* were met. A full specification for this archaeological monitoring is contained in the Heritage Network's approved *Project Design* dated April 2016.

The church and churchyard, centred at NGR SP 81643 93692, lie immediately to the north-east of Nevill Holt Hall, which has medieval origins (Figure 1, Plate 1). The stable courtyard for the hall adjoins the south-eastern corner of the churchyard.

Results

The works involved the monitoring of the excavation of a drainage trench and a soakaway on the north side of the church (Figure 2, Plate 2). A further trench on the southern side of the church, which was also to have been monitored, was excavated and backfilled by sub-contractors prior to the arrival on the site of the monitoring archaeologist. A proposal to re-open the trench, in order to meet the provisions set out in the approved *Project Design*, was turned down by the main contractors.

Northern drainage trench

This trench ran along the northern elevation of the church (Figure 2). At the western end, between the north-west corner of the nave and the north-west corner of the north transept, the trench followed the church wall and measured 0.45m in width. It stepped out from the north elevation of the north transept by approximately 0.50m, at which point it also narrowed to 0.25m in width. It then followed the eastern side of the transept to meet the north wall of the chancel.

The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.30m and revealed a mid-yellowish brown sandy silt, containing moderate stone and old mortar fragments derived from the earlier repointing of the walls (Plate 3). No grave cuts were encountered and no human bone, either articulated or disarticulated, was observed.

The footings to the north wall of the nave and the west wall of the north transept were exposed, revealing coursed sandstone above larger stone blocks (Plate 4). These blocks were observed at the base of the trench only and were not fully exposed.

Soakaway

A soakaway, measuring 1.90m in length, 1.30m in width and 1.35m in depth, was located approximately 1.60m to the north-east of the north transept. The exposed sections revealed a brown silty sandy clay topsoil layer, approximately 0.25m in depth, above a reddish yellow silty sandy clay cemetery soil, approximately 1.10m in depth, which contained frequent large fragments of sandstone (Plate 5). The natural substrate was not encountered in the soakaway.

Some fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from the cemetery soil, which were placed in the care of the sub-contractors for delivery to the Rector of the parish of Six Churches Circa Holt for re-interment. No other finds were recovered and no significant archaeological features or deposits were observed.

The soakaway was served by a trench running south for approximately 1.50m before turning west for approximately 2m to join the trench excavated along the eastern side of the north transept. The trench, which measured 0.30m in width and 0.30m in depth, revealed only the topsoil layer (Plate 6). No finds were recovered and no significant archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Conclusions

St Mary's Church is a Grade I listed building (NHLE ref. 191007) dating to between the 13th and 15th centuries. The North Transept is of late 13th century date and the west tower was added in the 14th century.

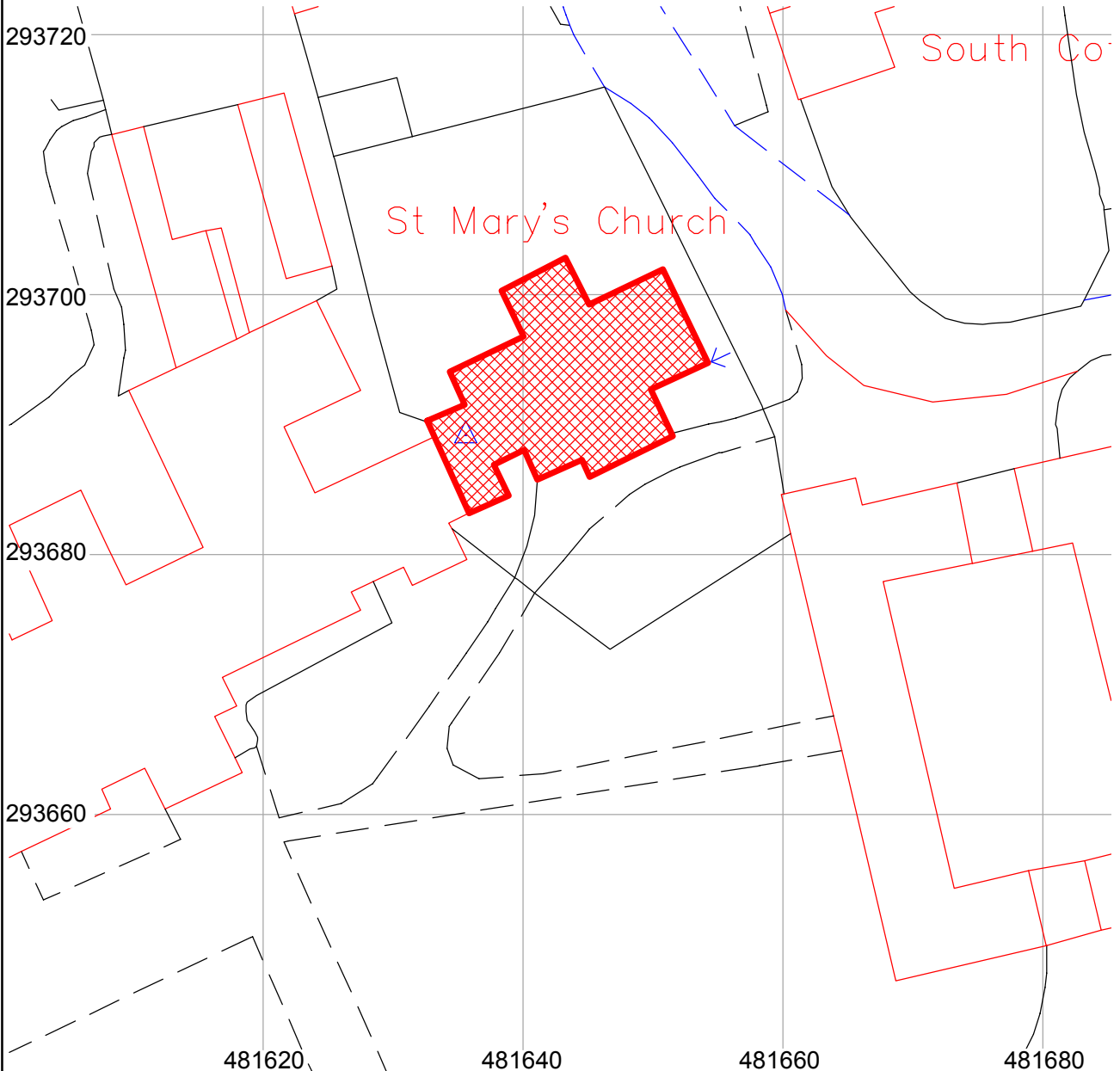
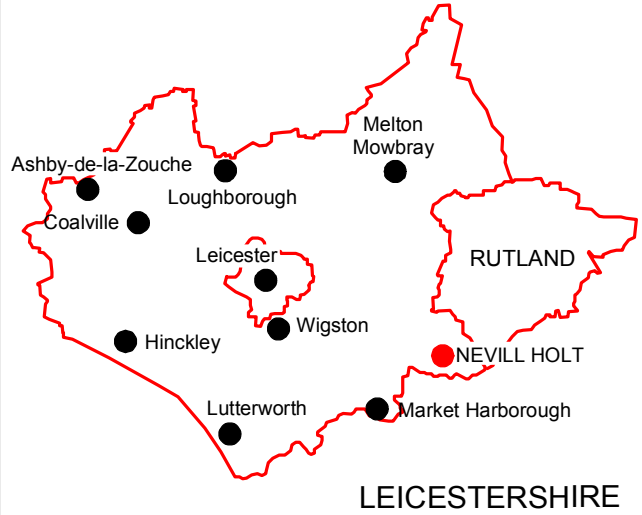
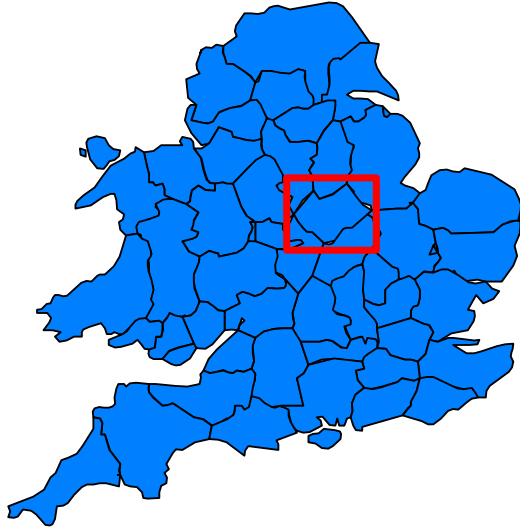
The present project involved monitoring the groundworks for new drainage, though only the works on the north side of the church were seen. These works revealed the foundations for the north wall of the nave, which consisted of roughly coursed sandstone, which appeared to sit on larger stone blocks. The observed stratigraphy consisted of a layer of topsoil sealing a cemetery soil over 1m in depth, but no grave cuts or other significant features were encountered. The works to the south of the church were carried out by the sub-contractors without the benefit of archaeological monitoring.

A small quantity of disarticulated human bone was recovered during the course of the monitored groundworks. This was collected and placed in the care of the sub-contractors for delivery to the Rector of the parish of Six Churches Circa Holt for re-interment.

Illustrations

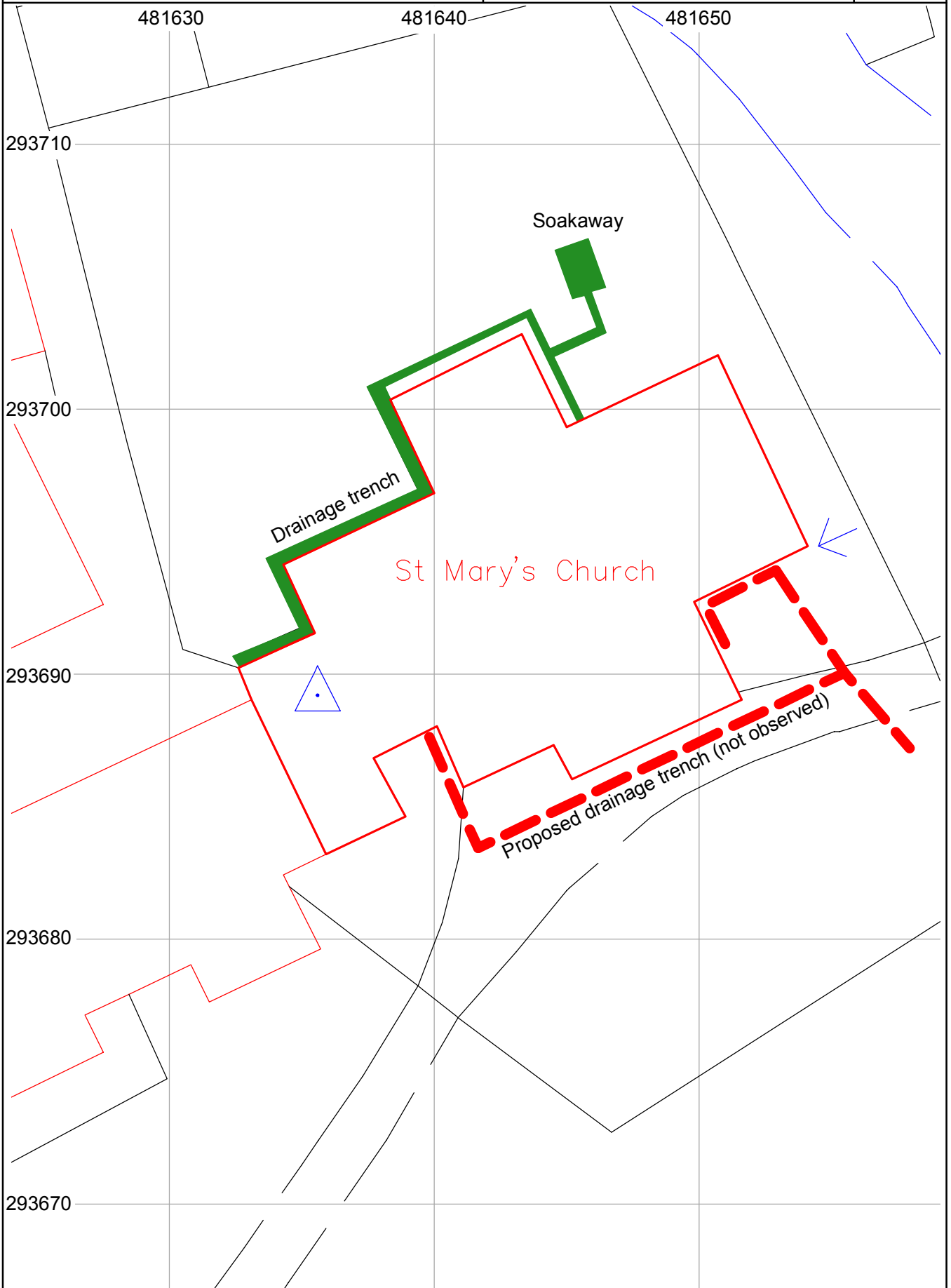
Figure 1	Site Location
Figure 2	Site Layout
Plate 1	St Mary's Church and the Hall, looking S
Plate 2	St Mary's Church, N elevation
Plate 3	Trench along E side of N Transept, looking N
Plate 4	Footings to N wall of church, looking S
Plate 5	Soakaway, looking W
Plate 6	Soakaway feeder trench, indicative section

Helen Ashworth BA (Hons) AIFA
January 2017



Site Location

Scale 1:1250



Site layout

Scale 1:200

HN1261: St Mary's Church, Nevill Holt, Leicestershire



Plate 01 - St Mary's Church and the Hall, looking NE



Plate 02 - St Mary's Church, N elevation
(c) The Heritage Network Ltd.

HN1261: St Mary's Church, Nevill Holt, Leicestershire



Plate 03 - Trench along E side of North Transept, looking N



Plate 04 - Footings to N wall of church, looking S
(c) The Heritage Network Ltd.



Plate 05 - Soakaway, looking W



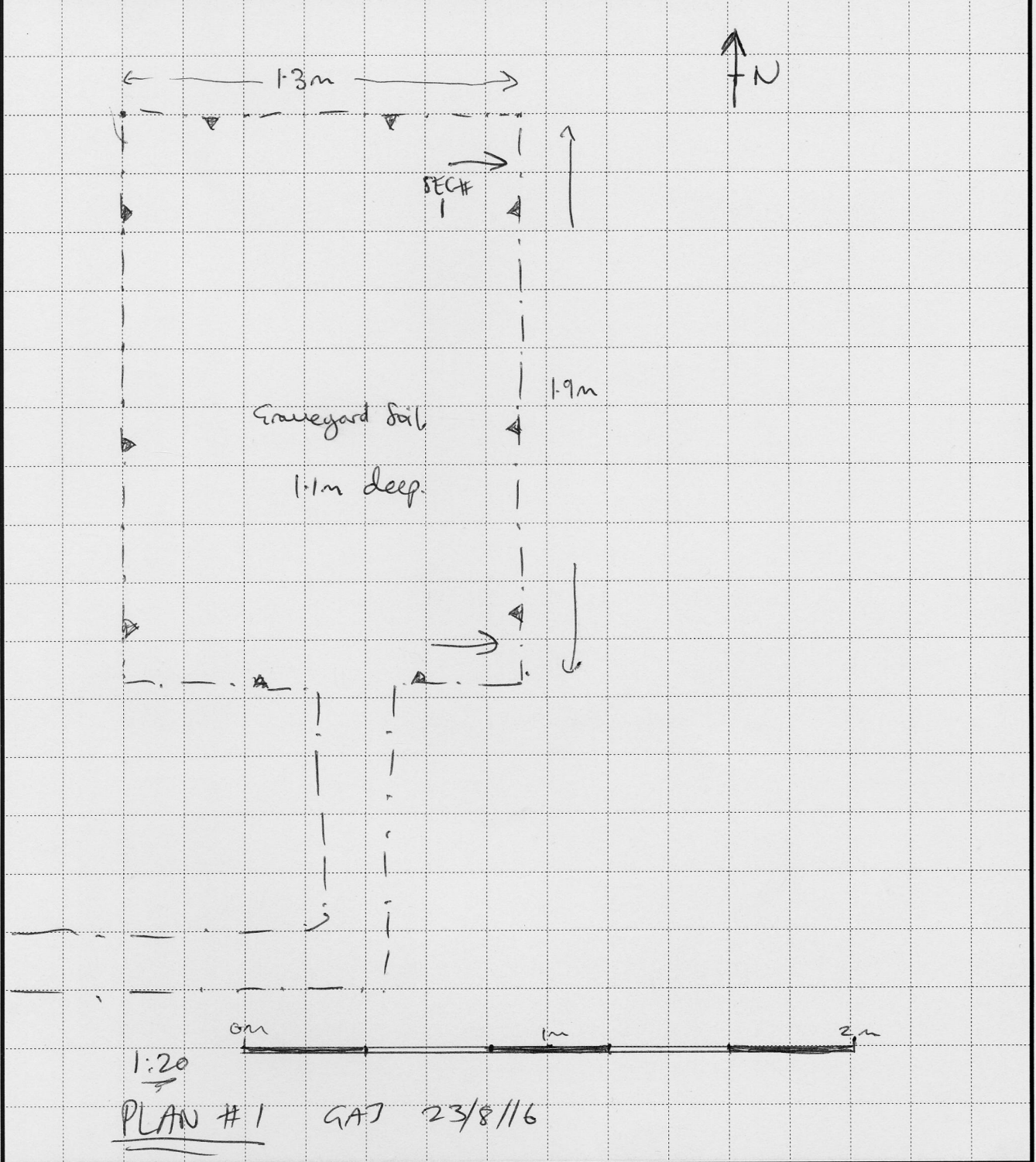
Plate 06 - Soakaway feeder trench, indicative section
(c) The Heritage Network Ltd.

Site Name / Code		Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Newell Holt, Leicester site				
HN1261		Pt of 4.				
Site	Shot Number	Details	View	Date	Time	Initials
HN1261	1	General shot	LSE	23/8/16	-	GAT
	2	Cover shot	LS		-	
	3	w/ General shot of N. Sockaway	LSE		-	
	4		LS		-	
	5		LS		-	
	6		LSE		-	
	7		LS		-	
	8		CS		-	
	9		LE		-	
	10		LS		-	
	11		LS		-	
	12		LS		-	
	13		LSE		-	
	14		LSE		-	
	15		LS		-	
	16		LS		-	
	17		LSE		-	
	18		CSE		-	
	19		LSE		-	
	20	Strat. Scaled. Sockaway	LE		-	
	21		LE		-	
	22		LE		-	
	23		LN		-	
	24		LW		-	
	25		LS		-	
	26	DISARTICULATED BONE	N/A		-	
	27		w/A		-	
	28	Drain Run	LS		-	
	29		LN		-	
	30	CIP-MONITORED FINISHED WORK	L NE	25/8/16	-	DR
	31		C. N		-	
	32		L N		-	
	33		L E		-	
	34		L NE		-	
	35		L N		-	
	36		L N		-	
	37		L NN		-	
	38		L E		-	

Site Name / Code						
Site	Shot Number	Details	View	Date	Time	Initials
	39	GENERAL SITE SHOTS	L.S	25/11/16	-	SP
	40		L.S		-	
	41		L.NE		-	
	42		NE		-	
	43		L.S		-	

SITE CODE HN/261	Site Name St. Mary's Church Nevill Holt, Leic.	Sub-division Soakaway	CONTEXT N/A
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Sketch Plan and Section (include all dimensions, north arrow and levels; remember to annotate)

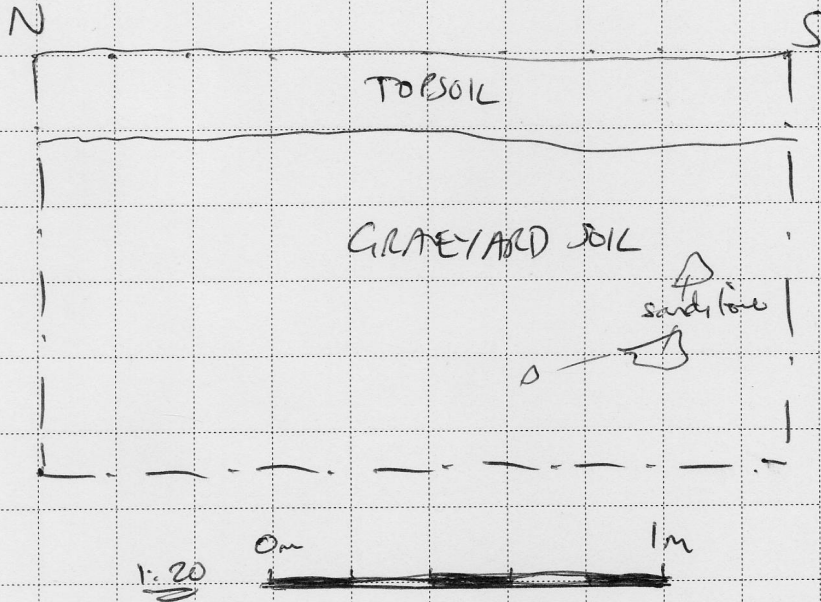


Discussion and interpretation

Plan of Soakaway. No archaeology other than scrap of human bone (disarticulated + abraded).		Scale	1:20
		Signature	GAJ
		Date	23/8/16
Sheet	2	of	4
		Checked	

SITE CODE HN1261	Site Name St. Marys, Merrill Hall, Leics.	Sub-division Soakaway	CONTEXT N/A
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Sketch Plan and Section (include all dimensions, north arrow and levels; remember to annotate)



SECTION #1

GAT 1:20 23/8/16

Discussion and interpretation

section of soakaway.

Scale	1:20
Signature	GAT
Date	23/8/16
Checked	

Sheet 3 of 4

Site Name:	Strolans, Nesill Holt	HN ref:	1261
		Site Code:	

Recorder(s):	DJH	Arrive time:	12.20	Return travel:	4hrs
Date:	22/8/2016	Depart time:	13.20	Total hours:	5hrs

Reported to:	Fain Milne, Messenge Contr.	Position:	
Purpose of visit:	Preliminary meeting		

Photograph film no	Digital only
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Staff on site:	DJH only
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Observations: Trench follows ~~Southern~~ ^{Northern} elevation of churon against the wall as far as ^N transept (c. 450mm wide) then steps away from ^{North} ~~South~~ elevation of ^N transept by 500mm, the trench reducing to 250mm wide. Trench steps out along E elevation of ^N transept then follows the transept wall to the corner of the chancel. Spur to soakaway runs ^{east} between graves of Thomas Burton and George Haynes, then turns south. Trench extends to 300mm in depth. Soil scanned visually, but no obvious disarticulated human bone observed.

Soil is a ~~be~~ ^{fragment} red yellowish brown sandy silt with moderate stones and fragments of old mortar. The south transept has been recently repaired.

Uneven levels in graveyard signify unmarked burial plots. Groundworks team will collect disarticulated bone and will call us if any articulated remains are found.

Next site visit tomorrow (23/8/16) c. midday - unless phone call to the contrary from Fain Milne. Groundworks to ^N side likely to be completed today. Groundworks to ^S side to be completed tomorrow. Wednesday for finishing off. Call us to discuss reburial, if required.

	Sheet		of	
	Additional records:			
	Text sheet(s)			
	Sketch sheet(s)			
	Context form(s)			
	A4 Scale dwng(s)			
	A3 Scale dwng(s)			
Weather:		Photographs		

Site Name:	Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Nevill Hall, Leicestershire	HN ref:	1261
		Site Code:	

Recorder(s):	GAJ	Arrive time:	12:45 pm	Return travel:	3.75 hrs
Date:	23/8/16	Depart time:	15:00 pm	Total hours:	6.5 hrs

Reported to:	-	Position:	Foreman
Purpose of visit:	OR on soakaway		

Photograph film no																																	
Staff on site:	GAJ																																
Observations:	<p>Arrived on site at 12:30 pm but couldn't find the entrance, after asking some other builders I finally found it. On site ready at 12:45 pm. DJH had expected all groundworks to be completed by the time I arrived. However, only backfilling of yesterday's trenches had been undertaken today. The plan though was to excavate the north-east corner soakaway this afternoon. I telephoned DJH and explained the situation and he said monitor this work and take it from there.</p> <p><u>Soakaway</u> Stratigraphy :- Topsoil - 7.5YR 5/2 'Brown' Silty sandy clay, c0.25m deep.</p> <p>over :- Graveyard soil - 7.5YR 6/8 'Reddish > 1m deep. Silty sandy clay with ^{grey} chunks of sandstone, mixed.</p> <p>Only very occ. small, abraded, disarticulated human bone, photographed, left on site to be re-buried.</p>																																
Weather:	HOT, DAY, SUNNY																																
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Sheet</td> <td>1</td> <td>of</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">Additional records:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Text sheet(s)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sketch sheet(s)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Context form(s)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A4 Scale dwng(s)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A3 Scale dwng(s)</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Photographs</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> </tr> </table>		Sheet	1	of	4	Additional records:				Text sheet(s)				Sketch sheet(s)			2	Context form(s)				A4 Scale dwng(s)				A3 Scale dwng(s)				Photographs			1
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A3 Scale dwng(s)																																	
Photographs			1																														
Trench drain run to soakaway, strat the same. No finds. Checked spoil $\frac{1}{2}$ heaps, again no finds.																																	

Site Name:	CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, NEVILLE HOLT, LEICESTERSHIRE	HN ref:	1261
		Site Code:	

Recorder(s):	DRP	Arrive time:	12.15	Return travel:	4 hrs
Date:	25/08/16	Depart time:	14.00	Total hours:	6 hrs

Reported to:	NWF	Position:	Site Crowswood
Purpose of visit:	O/R on SOMERLEY		

Photograph film no															
Staff on site:	DRP														
Observations:	<p>ARRIVED ON SITE AT 12.15 TO CONTINUE MONITORING OF CROWSWOOD AT CHURCH, AT NEVILLE HOLT</p> <p>PLAN WAS INSPECTION OF DRAINAGE DITCH AT SOUTH SIDE OF SITE & MONITORING OF SOMERLEY AT SOUTH SIDE.</p> <p>DRP ARRIVED TO FIND ALL WORK HAD BEEN COMPLETE DRAINAGE TRENCH HAD BEEN EXCAVATED, PIPED AND RE-INSTATED (BACKFILLED) - INSPECTION NOT POSSIBLE!</p> <p>SOMERLEY WAS NOT REQUIRED DUE TO DISCOVERY OF A GRASSY DRAIN WHICH DRAINAGE COULD FEED INTO.</p> <p>DRP SPoke WITH FLEMING WHO CAN SAID THAT CTS ON LAST VISIT HAD REQUESTED THE DRAINAGE TRENCH BE LEFT OPEN FOR INSPECTION ON 25/8/16 IN THE AFTERNOON. SAID THEY COULD NOT WAIT AS THEY NEEDED TO GET FINISHED ROAD.</p> <p>DRP CALLED CTS TO CONFIRM ARRANGEMENT, ISBEAT CALLED HN OFFICE TO EXPLAIN SITUATION.</p>														
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DRP ON INFORMATION FROM HN OFFICE INFORMED SUB-CONTRACTORS THAT AS WE WERE NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO INSPECT/MONITOR THE EXCAVATION, WE COULD NOT SIGN OFF THE SITE. THE SUB-CONTRACTOR UNDERSTOOD THIS	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Additional records:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Text sheet(s)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sketch sheet(s)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Context form(s)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A4 Scale dwng(s)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A3 Scale dwng(s)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Photographs</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </table>	Additional records:		Text sheet(s)		Sketch sheet(s)		Context form(s)		A4 Scale dwng(s)		A3 Scale dwng(s)		Photographs	✓
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Photographs	✓														
Weather:	SUNNY														

Site Name / Code						
HN1261 Newill Holt, St Mary's Church						
Site	Shot Number	Details	View	Date	Time	Initials
	1	Drain trench, N transept, N elev.	W	22/8 2016		DJT
	2	" " " " " "	E			
	3	" " " " W elev.	S			
	4	" " nave, N elev.	E			
	5	Nave, N elev, W end	S			
	6	" " " E end	S			
	7	Drain trench west of tower , tower, N elev	E			
	8	N elev, view	S			
	9	Drain trench, W transept, E elev.	S			
	10	Drain run to Szakaway, N side	W			
	11	S. elev, view	N			
	12	S transept, view	NE			
	13	Chancel, s. elev, view	N			
	14	S. elev. view (overshot)	N			
	15	S elev. view	N			
	16	Chancel + N. transept, view	SW			