

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Ilfracombe, North Devon	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SS 252141 147819	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological Watching Brief during new drainage and enhancement works at St Philips and St James Church, Ilfracombe		<b>Photo attached?</b> N
<b>Planning Application no:</b> N/A	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Barnstaple and North Devon	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> exeterar1-95708	<b>Museum Accession No:</b> NDDMS 2009.52	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b>  EA6912	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b>  26 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2011	
<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>Enhancement works and the Installation of new drainage at St Philips and St James Church, Ilfracombe required the excavation of a service trench and soakaway (Fig. 1). Exeter Archaeology was commissioned by the Parochial Church Council to undertake archaeological monitoring and recording during the course of the works. The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with a <i>Written Scheme of Investigation</i> (WSI) prepared by Exeter Archaeology (Leverett, 2010) in response to a condition attached to the grant of planning permission by North Devon District Council (Ref. 48108). The archaeological mitigation work was required by the Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES, Reed, 2009).</p> <p><b>BACKGROUND</b></p> <p>The church, which stands close to Ilfracombe harbour, was constructed in 1856 by John Hayward an architect responsible for many of the churches of the period in Devon and who is well known for his design of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter. The church is in a Geometric Decorated style and has been listed by English Heritage at Grade II* (LBS No. 390266).</p> <p><b>RESULTS</b></p> <p>Trench 1 (Fig. 1)</p> <p>A narrow service trench (approximately 300mm wide) was dug alongside the south exterior wall of the church between the church and the wall flanking Ropery Road. The trench was 500mm deep. Beneath 100mm of dark, sandy clay-loam topsoil was 400mm of mixed clay shillet with occasional bands of mortar. The natural subsoil was not exposed.</p> <p>No archaeological features were observed but ceramic material was recovered from the trench.</p> <p>Trench 2 (Fig. 1)</p> <p>Topsoil stripping took place over an area between the southern boundary wall of the church (adjacent and parallel to Lee Place) and the church path to a maximum width of 6m. The 200mm thick topsoil comprised a dark black organic soil. Following the topsoil strip a trench for a soakaway was excavated alongside the boundary wall to a maximum depth of 1.7m with a width of 1.5m.</p> <p>The observed soil sequence below the ground surface was as follows:</p> <p>0.0 – 200mm topsoil          200mm – 900mm made ground of clay shillet          900mm – 1.3m former garden soil – mixed dark clay loam          1.3m – 1.6m weathered natural clay subsoil          1.6m – 1.7m+ Soft ochre coloured natural clay.</p> <p>A mixed assemblage of pot sherds including 19th century material was recovered from the former garden soil which was covered over during the levelling process which took place as part of the mid-19th century construction of the church.</p> <p>Although no features of archaeological significance were recorded during the course of the watching brief a number of finds of imported ceramic material were recovered and these have warranted further comment (see below).</p>		

## **FINDS** (by John Allan)

### Trench 1 – Unstrat

3 animal bones (Discarded)  
1 piece of sewer pipe (Discarded)  
1 piece of pantile (Discarded)  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> boot black jar (Discarded)  
33 sherds of late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> (Discarded)  
26 pieces of Post-Medieval pottery (including one sherd of Frechen from Germany and one continental tin-glazed sherd)

### Trench 2 – Unstrat

2 clay pipe stems (Discarded)  
1 piece of pantile (Discarded)  
10 pieces of Late C18<sup>th</sup>/C19<sup>th</sup> pottery (Discarded)  
17 pieces of post-Medieval pottery (including one sherd of Portuguese Merida ware and one sherd of North Holland slipware)  
1 piece of Medieval pottery

The finds from this site mostly comprise of post-medieval and modern pottery, with one sherd of medieval handmade coarseware possibly from North Devon from Trench 2. The post-medieval pottery found was mostly North Devon Gravel Tempered and North Devon Plain Slipware. There were also three sherds of C18th Bristol/Staffordshire ware from Trench 1. Post-medieval Imports were also recovered including examples from Portugal, Holland and Germany (see above). This post-medieval pottery collection from the site is one of the few assemblages known from Ilfracombe and the presence of high class imports at the town is important to note.

## **CONCLUSION**

The imported pottery recovered from this site has been included together with other imported material of post-medieval date from North Devon in an article in preparation for a forthcoming edition of the *Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society* (John Allan, pers. comm.)

## **PROJECT ARCHIVE and OASIS ENTRY**

The site records have been compiled into a fully integrated site archive which is currently held at the offices of Exeter Archaeology under project number 6912 pending deposition at the Barnstaple and North Devon Museum. A summary of the investigations, together with this report and the previous geophysical survey has been submitted to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological InterventionS) under the number exeterar1-95708.

## **REFERENCES**

Leverett, M. 2009 Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording at St Philips and St James Church, Ilfracombe.  
Reed, S. 2009 Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording at St Philips and St James Church, St James Place, Ilfracombe.

**A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.**

### **Recorder:**

Gary Young, Exeter Archaeology  
John P. Salvatore, Exeter Archaeology

### **Date sent to HER:**

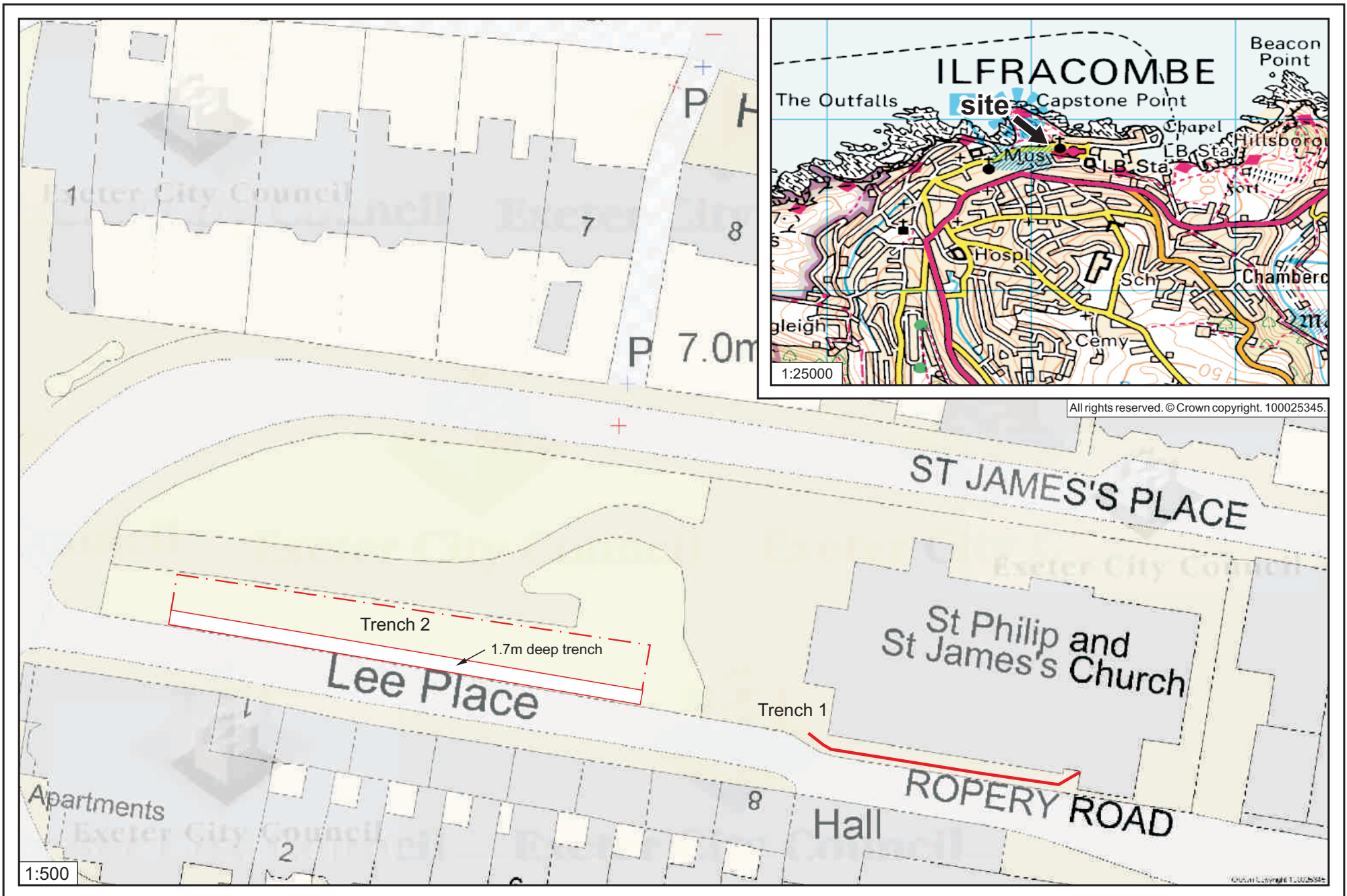


Fig. 1 Location of trenches.