

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING**

**CABLE LAYING WORKS AT THE**  
**CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, CHRISHALL, ESSEX**

**ASE Project No: E8111**  
**Site Code: CIHT 14**

**ASE Report No: 2014078**  
**OASIS ID: 168699**



**February 2013**

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**NGR: TL 4515 3863**

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**February 2013**

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**Abstract**

*During January 2014 groundworks at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Chrishall were monitored by Archaeology South-East, the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology, University College London. The archaeological work consisted of a programme of monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with an upgrading of the electrical power supply. This upgrade work involved the laying of an underground power cable through the churchyard to replace the existing overhead cable, located along the churchyard's northern boundary.*

*Despite the proposed groundworks having the potential to impact on graves and remains relating to earlier phases of the church building, no significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site background**

- 1.1.1 Cable laying works at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Chrishall were monitored by Archaeology South-East on behalf of the Chrishall parochial church council (PCC) and their agent, Freeland Rees Roberts Architects, in January 2014. The archaeological work was required by Essex County Council Place Services in their capacity as archaeological advisor to the Chemsford Diocese and was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Archaeology South-East (ASE 2013). Archaeology South-East are the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology, University College, London.
- 1.1.2 The archaeological works were undertaken as the development area lies within the immediate vicinity of the church and therefore has archaeological potential.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological work consisted of a programme of monitoring and recording during the excavation of a series of trenches associated with an upgrading of the electrical power supply. This upgrade involved the installation of a new power cable through the churchyard to replace the existing overhead cable, located along the churchyard's northern boundary (Figure 1).

### **1.2 Location, topography and geology**

- 1.2.1 The Church of the Holy Trinity is located in the parish of Chrishall, c.10km west of Saffron Walden, (NGR TL 4515 3863). The church is located away from the modern village and is accessed via a track leading east from Church Road/Bury Lane. A metalled car park area is located at the southwest corner of the churchyard, from which an access track leads to the south porch then up to the southeast corner of the chancel. More recent burial use is restricted to the area to the north of the church. Small trees and occasional headstones occupy the remainder of the grassed area of the churchyard.
- 1.2.2 The church sits on the upper southwest slope of a hill, at c.120m AOD. It is a very prominent feature in the landscape, especially when seen from the valley to the south.
- 1.2.3 The superficial geology of the site is mapped by the British Geological Survey (BGS) as Lowestoft Formation diamicton deposits of chalky till, overlying chalk bedrock (BGS Geology of Britain Viewer; accessed 15/01/2013).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

- 1.3.1 As the site lies within the immediate vicinity of the church and therefore has some archaeological potential, Essex County Council Place Services, as archaeological advisors to the Chelmsford Diocese, recommended that a programme of archaeological works was to be undertaken in association with the development, comprising the monitoring and recording of any groundworks associated with the cable installation that have the potential to expose, damage or destroy any archaeological remains that are present.

## **1.4 Aims and Objectives**

- 1.4.1 The aim of the archaeological monitoring was to appropriately excavate, record, analyse and report on any archaeological remains exposed by the trenching, thereby achieving the *preservation by record* of those features/deposits threatened by the proposed development.
- 1.4.2 The specific objectives of the project were:
- to record any remains relating to earlier phases of the church building
  - to record evidence of grave cuts
- 1.4.3 If any significant discoveries were made the report would seek to relate these to current regional research objectives identified in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

## **1.5 Scope of Report**

- 1.5.1 This report details the results of the monitoring and excavation. The work was carried out by Adam Dyson (Archaeologist) between the 6th and 8th of January 2014. The fieldwork was managed by Adrian Scruby.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The church of the Holy Trinity is a Grade 1 listed building (LB 121520). It is a flint rubble building mainly of 15th century construction but incorporating some 12th-13th century remains in an arch at the east end of the north arcade and in the tower arch (HER 14719). The north and south aisles and the clerestory were added in the 15th century and the chancel was rebuilt. The west tower, aisles and nave are all embattled and the tower has a parapet of flint and stone chequer work. Substantial restoration work was undertaken in the Victorian period with alterations to the north porch made and the north vestry and south porch added (HER 14720).
- 2.2 Approximately 80m to the northeast of the church are the earthwork remains of a mound and circular moated enclosure (HER 18568). Cropmarks of conjoined enclosures are recorded in fields c.300m southeast of the church (HER 7269). Church Cottage, just outside the southwest corner of the churchyard and alongside the access road to the church, is a 17th century timber framed and thatched house. The former vicarage, just to the east of the churchyard, is Victorian.
- 2.3 No previous archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the vicinity of the church.

**3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD****3.1 Fieldwork Method**

- 3.1.1 The archaeological work was to encompass the monitoring of a mechanically excavated trench running from the pole outside the western boundary of the churchyard, then along the entire length of the access track across the churchyard to the western boundary behind the southeast corner of the chancel. With additional sections of hand dug trenching being monitored to the east and northeast of the chancel.
- 3.1.2 However, due to adverse weather conditions at the commencement of works, a proposal was put forward to lay the majority of the cable using an impact mole in order to reduce the amount of ground disturbance along the access route to the church. Following consultation with the ECC Place Services monitoring officer, this method was accepted and monitoring was then restricted to short sections of trenching, some of which was hand dug, and a series of pits (launch and reception pits) dug along the proposed mole-ing route across the churchyard (Figure 1)
- 3.1.3 The groundworks were undertaken by the cable laying contractors using a small tracked excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. Intermittent monitoring attendance was carried out in close liaison with the contractor to observe the open lengths of cable trench.
- 3.1.4 All identified archaeological features and deposits were recorded by means of a written record on pro-forma watching brief and context record sheets, plan and section drawings and colour digital photographs.
- 3.1.5 All finds were collected and retained for identification and analysis. No suitable deposits were identified that merited bulk sampling for environmental analysis.
- 3.1.6 Work was carried out in accordance with the IfA (Institute for Archaeologists) Code of Conduct, by-laws and guidelines (IfA 2008, 2010) and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003). Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout.

**3.2 Site Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Saffron Walden Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are summarised below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	2
No. of files/paper record	1 file
Drawing sheets (permatrace)	0
Photographs	16 digital
Bulk finds	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive



## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Trenching

4.1.1 The excavation of a length of trench along the eastern boundary of the churchyard was monitored. The trench measured 17m long, 0.25m wide and ranged in depth between 0.4 and 0.6m (Figure 2). This excavation revealed a topsoil measuring c.0.3m thick and beneath this a compact silty clay subsoil, but did not penetrate below this layer to expose the underlying undisturbed natural deposit. No archaeological remains were encountered. Hand-dug excavations were also carried out to the immediate northeast of the chancel. However, these were carried out along the route of existing cables and were therefore wholly confined to areas of recently disturbed ground; as a consequence they were only monitored during their initial stages.

4.1.2 An additional length of open trenching was monitored from the northern gatepost of the churchyard gateway to the exterior pole west of the churchyard (Figure 3). This trench measured c.13m long, 0.25m wide and also had a depth ranging from 0.4 to 0.6m. It revealed subsoil at its base, and did not expose any archaeological remains.

### 4.2 Launch and reception pits

4.2.1 A total of seven pits were monitored along the mole-ing route south-east of the chancel, along the centre of the path to the northern edge of the churchyard entrance gate.

4.2.2 The pits were located c.15m apart and did not penetrate below the subsoil. No archaeological remains were exposed. The pit locations can be seen on Figure 1 and their dimensions are given in table 2, below:

Pit number	Dimensions (m)
1	1.5 x 0.5 x 0.6 deep
2	1.8 x 0.4 x 0.8 deep
3	1.5 x 0.4 x 0.6 deep
4	1.6 x 0.4 x 0.7 deep
5 (Figure 4)	1.5 x 0.4 x 0.65 deep
6	1.5 x 0.4 x 0.6 deep
7	2 x 0.25 x 0.6 deep

*Table 2: Launch and reception pit dimensions*

### 4.3 Recorded contexts

4.3.1 Table 3, below, describes the contexts recorded during the monitored works.

Context	Type	Description	Deposit Thickness
001	Layer	Topsoil – Mid grey brown, loose, clay silt, with occasional finds of modern ceramic building material (no finds retained).	0.1-0.3m
002	Layer	Subsoil – Light-mid yellow brown compact, silty clay with occasional medium and large flint inclusions.	0.6m +

*Table 3: Context descriptions*

4.3.1 No significant archaeological artefacts were observed or collected from any of the monitored works.



## **5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 Despite the proposed groundworks having the potential to impact on graves and remains relating to earlier phases of the church building, no significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified within the monitored groundworks.
- 5.2 It is likely that the absence of archaeological remains was due, at least in part, to the peripheral location of the open trenches along the eastern of the churchyard and outside its western boundary. The relatively shallowness of all groundworks presumably avoided any graves located at greater depth. The mole-ing of the majority of the cable run further minimised disturbance, its route being along the access path. The path appears to be a long-established route between the gateway and the church, and perhaps was never encroached upon by burials.
- 5.3 The absence of activity predating the use of the site as a churchyard is suggested by the lack of medieval or earlier artefacts, even occurring residually in the topsoil and subsoil deposits. It is probable that the church was founded on a virgin site.
- 5.4 The cable undergrounding works are judgment not to have caused adverse impact on the heritage resource of this vicinity.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Archaeology South-East would like to thank the Church of the Holy Trinity Parochial Church Council for commissioning the work and Richard Havis of ECC Place Services' historic environment team for guidance and monitoring during the project. The archaeological fieldwork was carried out by Adam Dyson. Andrew Lewsey produced the figures for this report. Adrian Scruby project managed the fieldwork and Mark Atkinson project managed the post-excavation process.

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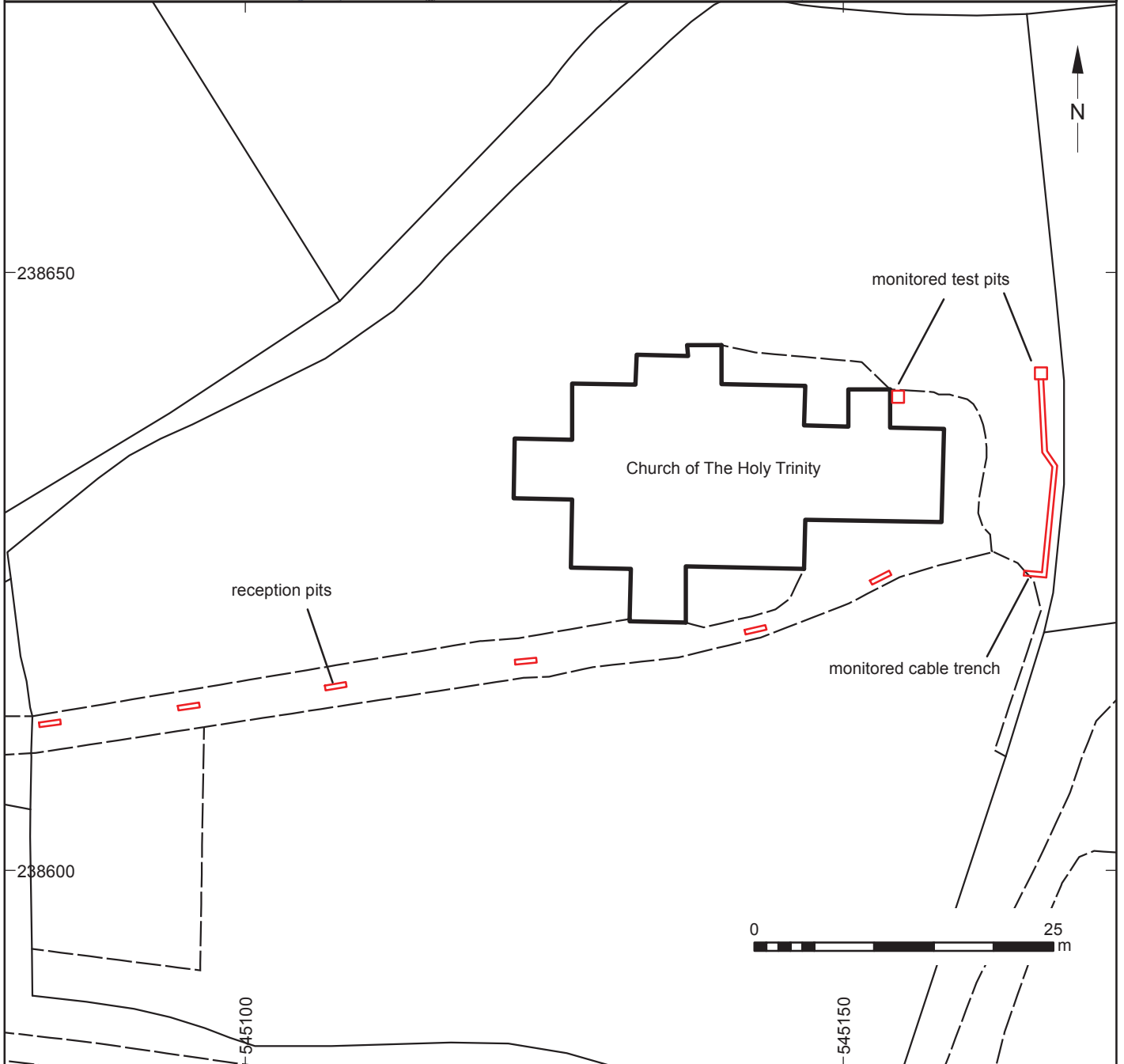
**Appendix 1: HER Summary Form**

<b>Site name/Address:</b> Church of the Holy Trinity, Chrishall, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Chrishall	<b>District:</b> Uttlesford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 4515 3863	<b>Site Code:</b> CIHT14
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological monitoring and excavation	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> A. Dyson, Archaeology South-East
<b>Date of Work:</b> 06-08 January 2014	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b>
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Saffron Walden Museum	<b>Funding source:</b> client
<b>Further Seasons Anticipated?:</b> No	<b>Related HER Nos:</b> 14719-20
<b>Final Report:</b> EAH roundup	<b>OASIS No:</b> 168699
<b>Periods Represented:</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<p><i>Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out during groundworks associated with an upgrading of the electrical power supply. This upgrade work involved the laying of an underground power cable through the churchyard to replace the existing overhead cable, located along the churchyard's northern boundary.</i></p> <p><i>Seven reception pits were monitored along the moled route that followed the path between the churchyard gate and church door. Lengths of open trenching were also observed to the east of the church and along the lane to the west, outside the churchyard.</i></p> <p><i>Despite the proposed groundworks having the potential to impact upon graves and remains relating to earlier phases of the church building, no significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified.</i></p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:</b> None	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> A. Dyson	<b>Date of Summary:</b> February 2014

**Appendix 2: OASIS Form**

<b>OASIS ID: archaeol6-168699</b>	
<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	Cable laying works at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Chrishall
Short description of the project	The archaeological work consisted of a programme of monitoring and recording during the excavation of a series of trenches associated with an upgrading of the electrical power supply. Despite the proposed groundworks having the potential to impact on human remains and remains relating to earlier phases of the church building, no significant archaeological remains were identified. It is likely that this absence was chiefly due to the locations and extent of the excavation areas. Open trenches were excavated along or beyond established boundaries and an impact mole was used for the majority of the cable laying work through the centre of the churchyard.
Project dates	Start: 06-01-2014 End: 08-01-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	CIHT 14 - Sitecode E8111 - Contracting Unit No LB 121520 - LBS No.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Churchyard
Monument type	None
Significant Finds	None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD CHRISHALL Cable laying works at the Church of the Holy Trinity
Postcode	SG8 8QY
Site coordinates	TL 4515 3863 52.0266190502 0.115908061327 52 01 35 N 000 06 57 E Point
<b>Project creators</b>	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Essex County Council Place Services

Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Adrian Scruby
Project supervisor	Adam Dyson
Name of sponsor/funding body	Chrishall parochial church council
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Notebook - Excavation', ' Research', ' General Notes", "Plan", "Report"
<b>Project bibliography</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Monitoring and Recording. Cable Laying Works at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Chrishall, Essex
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URL	www.oasis.ac.uk
Entered by	A Dyson (adam.dyson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	27 February 2014



© <b>Archaeology South-East</b>		Church of The Holy Trinity, Christall	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 8111	Feb 2014	Location of monitored cable laying works	
Report Ref: 2014078	Drawn by: APL		





Figure 2. Trench along eastern boundary, looking north



Figure 3. Trench running west from churchyard gateway, looking west



Figure 4. Launch and reception pit 5, looking west (1m scale)



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