

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at St Peter's Church,
Woodmancote, near Henfield, West Sussex.**

Planning Ref: DC/06/1093

NGR 523117 115000

**Project No:3406
Site Code: SPW08**

**ASE Report No. 2008159
OASIS id:archaeo16-49443**



**Sarah Porteus
With contributions by
Maggie Henderson**

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was maintained by Archaeology South-East, on behalf of Carden and Godfrey Architects during intrusive ground works and the reopening of the sealed northern archway of St Peter's Church, Woodmancote, West Sussex, between the 26th August and 1st October 2008. A brick grave marker probably of 18th century with a collapsed vault of wedge-shaped bricks was found, as well as an exceptionally small quantity of disarticulated human remains. The reopening of the northern archway revealed that it probably been sealed sometime in the 19th century. The arch style possibly dates to a known period of church alterations during 15th century.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of UCL Institute of Archaeology Centre for Applied Archaeology, were commissioned by Carden and Godfrey Architects to undertake an archaeological watching brief during works associated with the creation of an extension and improvements to existing drainage at St Peter's Church, Woodmancote, West Sussex (Figs.1 and 2; NGR 523117 115000).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies close to the junction of the Folkestone, Hythe and Sandgate beds. The church lies on relatively high ground with the land sloping moderately downwards to the north east of the site.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The work was undertaken as part of Condition 3 of the planning consent granted by Horsham District Council (ref: DC/06/1093) which requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The archaeological work was undertaken following the written scheme of investigation prepared for the works (ASE 2008) approved by Horsham District Council and the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor as stipulated under the above planning condition.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The aim of the watching brief was to ensure that any archaeological artefacts, features or ecofacts uncovered during the works were recorded to the appropriate standard and to ensure that any human remains disturbed during the works are recorded and excavated in the appropriate manner.

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report represents the results and interpretation of the watching brief undertaken between the 26th August and 1st October 2008, by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist) and Sarah Porteus (Archaeologist) and Maggie Henderson (Historic Building Surveyor).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The present church building dates to the 13th century and was extensively restored in 1868. Evidence of the medieval church survives in the form of kingposts of the nave and a piscine (Nairn and Pevsner 1965).

2.1.2 There is little evidence of activity in the vicinity of the site earlier than the medieval period. Woodmancote is believed to be the site of a deserted medieval village, though there is little firm evidence to support this theory.

2.1.3 Details of other sites and monuments within 1 kilometre of the site are given in table 1 below.

Site Name	SMR number	Site/find type	Period	Grid reference
Kentons Farm	7965-MWS8081	Listed Building/ Barn	Post medieval (1550AD-1900AD)	TQ2295 1486
Terry's Cross Parkscape	2770-MWS76	Monument/ Documentary Evidence	Post Medieval (1550AD-1900AD)	TQ23320 14700
Bramlands Parkscape	2771-MWS74	Monument/ Documentary Evidence	Post Medieval (1550AD-1900AD)	TQ23480 14100
Woodmancote Place	7169-MWS7224	Building/ Combination Barn	Post Medieval to Modern (1540AD-2050AD)	TQ 23118 15116
Woodmancote Place	7168-MWS7223	Building/ former Wain lodge/ trap house	Post Medieval to Modern (1540AD-2050AD)	TQ 23134 15192
Woodmancote Place	7167-MWS7222	Building/ Shed	Post Medieval to Modern (1540AD-2050AD)	TQ 23148 15175
Woodmancote Place	7166-MWS7221	Outbuildings/ L shaped barn	Medieval to modern (1066AD-2050AD)	TQ23115 15150
Woodmancote Place	7165-MWS7220	Building/ Manor House	Medieval to modern (1066AD-2050AD)	TQ23172 15106
Woodmancote Place	7164-MWS7219	Ditch and pit / Archaeological watching brief	Medieval (1066AD-1539AD)	TQ23143 15077
Woodmancote DMV	3752-MWS547	Deserted Settlement/ Conjectural Evidence	Medieval (1066AD-1539AD)	TQ23100 15100
Brickfield s. of Eastout	6201-MWS4861	Brickworks/ Documentary Evidence	Post Medieval (1550AD-1900AD)	TQ22600 14900
Brick Kiln, Newborn Lane	6200-MWS4860	Brickworks/ Documentary Evidence	Medieval to modern (1066AD-2050AD)	TQ22600 14700
Woodmancote Place	5082-MWS3829	Park Bank/ Earthwork	Undated	TQ23130 15280

Table 1: Table of Historic Environment Register entries from within a 1km radius of the site.

2.2 Recent Archaeological investigation

- 2.2.1 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at nearby Woodmancote Place (ASE 1999). This work identified a medieval ditch, most likely a boundary marker, and pit containing pottery, most likely from cooking pots, dating to the mid-12th to 13th centuries AD.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 All intrusive ground works were undertaken under constant archaeological supervision.
- 3.2 Where the works required the reopening of a sealed doorway for access to the church this was also took place under constant archaeological supervision in order to assess whether any evidence remained of the earlier medieval church.
- 3.3 Where archaeological contexts or features were identified, excavation by the contractors on site ceased in order to permit archaeological recording to take place.
- 3.4 A full photographic record was kept of the works.
- 3.5 Where archaeological finds or features were identified these were recorded using standard UCLFAU context recording sheets.
- 3.6 Structural elements were left *in situ* where encountered after appropriate cleaning and recording.
- 3.7 Archaeological features were levelled relative to the benchmark on the external west wall of the church.
- 3.8 Where disarticulated human remains were encountered these were collected and handed to the church for reburial.
- 3.9 The re-opening of the doorway of the north wall was monitored by a suitably qualified historic building surveyor.
- 3.10 The Diocesan Archaeological Advisor and WSCC Archaeologist were kept informed of the progress of the works.

Number of Contexts	7
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	Digital only
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 2: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS (Figs. 2 and 3)

4.1 Excavation area

4.1.1 Several areas were monitored and these comprised of a rectangular area to the north of the church, 6.3m by 2.2m excavated to a depth of 0.75m below ground level; 30m long water-pipe trench, 0.30m wide and 0.40m deep; a sewerage tank pit, 2.5m² and 3.6m deep; 20m long sewer pipe trench, 0.30m wide and up to 0.60m deep.

List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height
1	Deposit	Topsoil to north of church	Tr.	Tr.	0.10m	37.46m OD
2	Deposit	Graveyard soil to north of church	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m	37.36m OD
3	Deposit	Natural sand	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	37.06m OD
4 (same as [1])	Deposit	Topsoil to west of church	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m	37.44m OD
5 (same as [2])	Deposit	Graveyard soil to west of church	Tr.	Tr.	1.3m	37.29m OD
6 (Same as [3])	Deposit	Natural sand to west of church	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	35.99m OD
7	Masonry	Low vaulted grave marker, brick and sandstone	2.0m	0.70m	0.25m	37.24m OD

Summary

4.1.2 The general stratigraphy on site comprised of natural orange yellow sand [3] occurring at minimum depth of 0.9m below the church benchmark. Overlying this, at a minimum depth of 0.6m below the church benchmark, was a disturbed graveyard soil [2] of mid greyish brown friable sandy silt with occasional inclusions of CBM and very infrequent disarticulated human remains. Overlying this deposit was a mid brown sandy silt friable topsoil [1] containing occasional CBM with a large amount of root disturbance.

4.1.3 A low grave marker [7] was identified in the western section edge of the service pipe trench (Fig. 3) for the sewerage tank. The monument consisted of a flat slab of sandstone measuring 0.5m wide by 40mm thick, overlain by wedge shaped red bricks measuring 0.21m in length by 60mm wide by 0.1m thick. The grave marker was overlain by the topsoil deposit [5]. The grave marker was bonded by a whitish yellow sandy lime mortar in places. The bricks probably formed a vaulted above ground structure to the grave. A headstone immediately 2m to the west of the trench and apparently contemporary with the grave marker had a mostly illegible inscription but appeared to date from the 1770s. The marker was left *in situ* as it was not to be further disturbed by the works.

5.0 THE NORTHERN DOORWAY by Maggie Henderson

5.1 Results

- 5.1.1 The blocked doorway (Fig. 4) in the northern elevation of the church, now housed within a modern extension, measures 2.05m in height and 1.02m in width with the wall at 240mm wide to the inner reveals which are an additional 540mm (making the wall a total of 780mm thick). The doorway is of shaped stone blocks and has a rounded arch on the exterior and a four-centred arch on the interior (Fig. 5), wider by 112mm to the sides and 170mm to the top than the outer rounded arch opening. The masonry is rebated to the leading edge (Fig. 6), recessed 20mm from the opening and set back 32mm. No trace of fixings was observed. The reveals and arch had been lime plastered with the exception of the rebates.
- 5.1.2 Visible fabric within which the doorway was sited is mortar-rich with flint and some ironstone (Fig. 7). Some of the masonry is laid herringbone-style indicating an early medieval origin. The shape of the doorway on the exterior is consistent with such a date but the four centred interior arch is of a later medieval style, perhaps consistent with the remains of the crown post roof *in situ* within the church.
- 5.1.3 The opening up of the blocked northern door of the church revealed two skins to the infill (Fig. 8). The exterior side had been finished in flint and mortar with the random inclusion of masonry blocks, some of which showed traces of shaping and tool marks indicating re-used material. The interior skin was finished in reddish brown brick in stretcher bond. The bricks measured 215mm by 105mm by 63mm and the mortar bedding joints were 12mm thick. The bricks had sharp arrises and were frogged on one side only. The frog was rectangular in plan and shallow, but pressed rather than scraped. Horizontal skintles were visible on some bricks and the fabric was mottled with clinker-like inclusions. The style and size of the brickwork is consistent with a 19th century origin.

5.2 Discussion

- 5.2.1 The church is listed as Grade II*, described as originating in the 13th century, and substantially restored in 1869-73 by Henry Woodyer. The Victoria County History (VCH 1987) states that the north wall of the church, including the doorway, are of 11th/12th century in date with the south doorway replaced in the 15th century. This later phase work may have included a remodelling of the interior of the north door to incorporate the four-centred arch, which stylistically belongs to the later medieval period. The period within which the remodelling of the doorways occurred may also be the same as the construction of the crown post roof of which three bays (including two of the trusses) survive.
- 5.2.2 The re-modelling of the church to the designs of Henry Woodyer in the late 19th century may have included the blocking up of the northern doorway. The materials utilised in the in-fill are consistent with such a date.

6.0 DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

- 6.1 A brick grave marker probably of 18th century with a collapsed vault of wedge-shaped bricks was found. The location of the grave within and below the yew trees has led to a considerable thickening of the topsoil in the area in the subsequent years following the construction of the grave.
- 6.2 A general lack of disarticulated human remains was noted during the excavation with a relatively small amount being recovered, this was generally of poor preservation with the bone being soft and decayed. A lack of bone was also noted during the nearby evaluation (ASE 1999) and may be attributed to the acidic conditions at the site.
- 6.3 The reopening of the church revealed that it had most likely been sealed sometime in the 19th century with the arch style possibly dating to a known period of church alterations dating to the 15th century.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Nairn, I. and Pevsner, N. 1965. *The Buildings of England: Sussex*. Penguin Books: Harmondsworth.

Victoria County History Vol. 6 'Woodmancote: Church', *A History of the County of Sussex: Volume 6 Part 3: Bramber Rape (North-Eastern Part) including Crawley New Town* (1987), pp. 166-167.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The co-operation and assistance of Carden and Godfrey Architects, County Oak Construction Ltd., Vivienne Coad, Diocesan Archaeological Advisor and John Mills, Archaeologist, West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) are greatly appreciated.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	SPW08					
Identification Name and Address	St Peter's Church					
County, District &/or Borough	Woodmancote, Horsham District, West Sussex.					
OS Grid Refs.	523117 11500					
Geology	Close to the junction of the Folkestone, Hythe and Sandgate beds.					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3406					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief ✓	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban	Deep Urban	Other Churchyard		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB. 26/8/08- 1/10/08	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Carden and Godfrey Architects					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Sarah Porteus					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM ✓	Other Modern		
100 Word Summary.						
<p>An archaeological watching brief was maintained by Archaeology South-East, on behalf of Carden and Godfrey Architects during intrusive ground works and the reopening of the sealed northern archway of St Peter's Church, Woodmancote, West Sussex, between the 26th August and 1st October 2008. A brick grave marker probably of 18th century with a collapsed vault of wedge-shaped bricks was found, as well as an exceptionally small quantity of disarticulated human remains. The reopening of the northern archway revealed that it probably been sealed sometime in the 19th century. The arch style possibly dates to a known period of church alterations during 15th century.</p>						

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-49443**Project details**

Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief at St Peter's Church, Woodmancote, West Sussex.
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was maintained by Archaeology South-East on behalf of Carden and Godfrey Architects during intrusive ground works and the reopening of the sealed northern archway of St Peter's Church, Woodmancote, West Sussex, between the 26th of August and the 1st of October 2008. An exceptionally small quantity of disarticulated human remains were found in addition to the end of a low vaulted brick grave marker which most likely dates to the 18th century. The reopening of the church revealed that it had most likely been sealed sometime in the 19th century with the arch style possibly dating to a known period of church alterations dating to the 15th century.
Project dates	Start: 26-08-2008 End: 01-10-2008
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	PARISH CHURCH Medieval
Monument type	CHURCHYARD Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WEST SUSSEX HORSHAM WOODMANCOTE St Peter's Church

	Woodmancote
Postcode	BN5 9NY
Study area	50.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 523117 115000 50.8823081639 0.165463739046 50 52 56 N 000 09 55 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Neil Griffin
Project supervisor	Sarah Porteus
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Carden and Godfrey Architects Ltd

Project archives

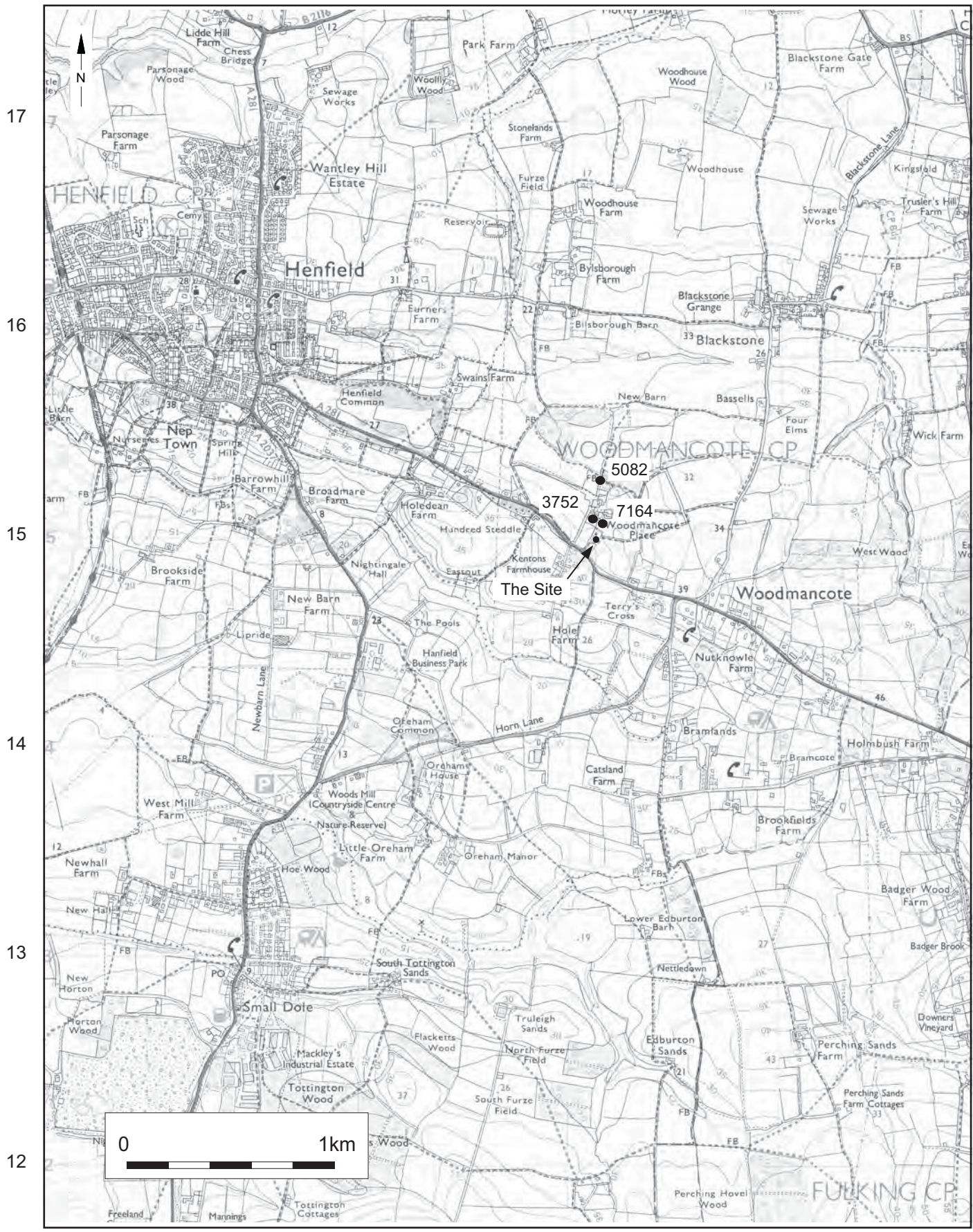
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum

Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Images raster / digital photography'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Drawing','Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes','Plan','Report','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1

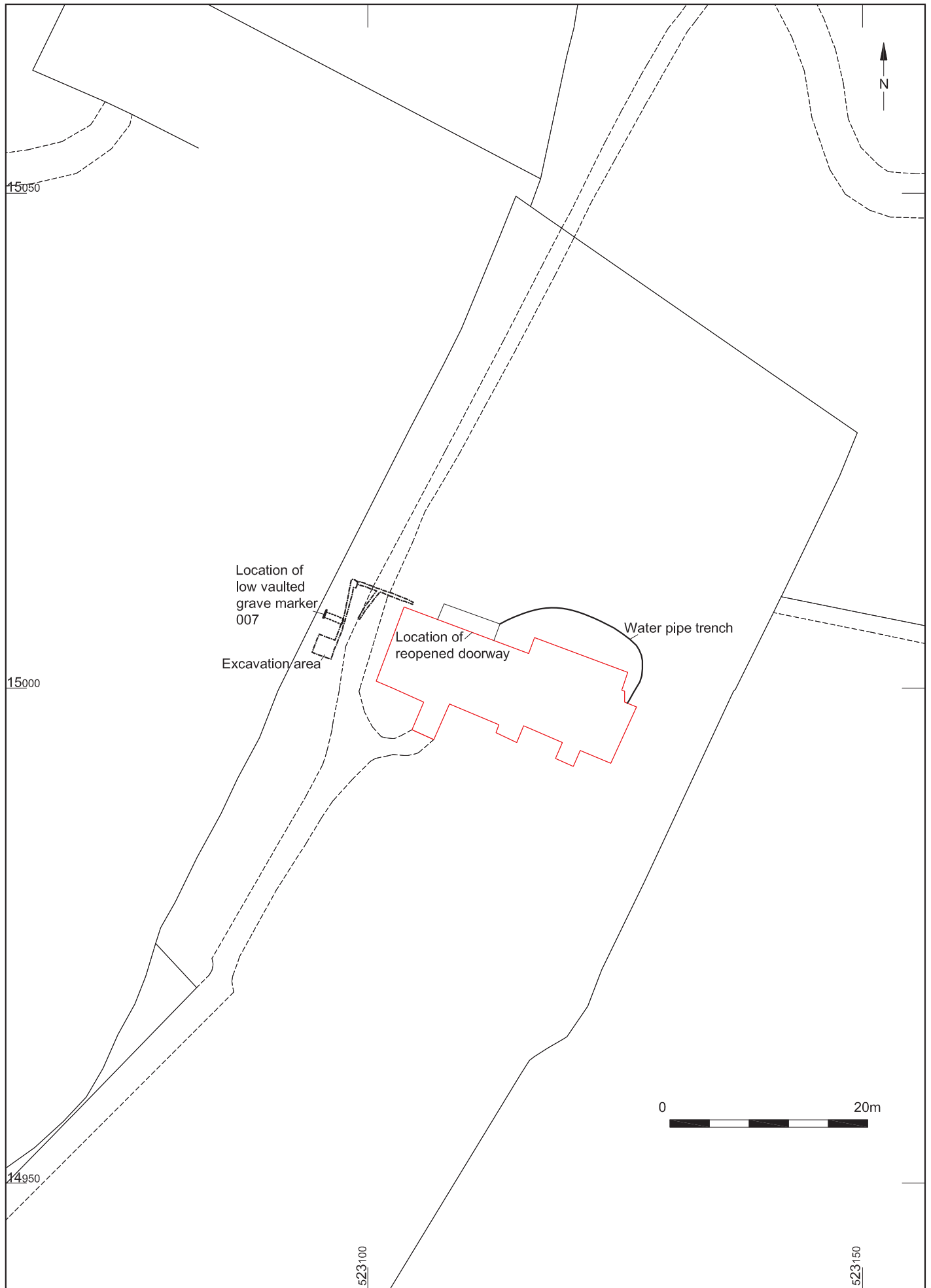
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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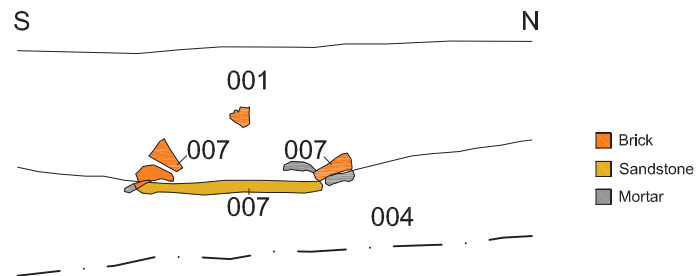


© Archaeology South-East		St Peter's Church, Woodmancote	Fig.1
Project Ref: 3406	Nov 2008	Site location plan with selected WSCC HER data	
Report Ref: 2008159	Drawn by: FG		

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© Archaeology South-East		St Peter's Church, Woodmancote		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3406	Nov 2008	Site Plan		
Report Ref: 2008159	Drawn by: HLF			



0 0.5m

© Archaeology South-East		St Peter's Church, Woodmancote	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 3406	Nov 2008	East facing section showing end of low grave marker 007	
Report Ref: 2008159	Drawn by: HLF		



Figure 4: The blocked northern doorway



Figure 5: Interior view of the doorway, protected by plastic, but with the outline of the four centred arch visible



Figure 6: The rebated eastern edge of the doorway



Figure 7: Detail of the fabric of the north wall to the east of the doorway

© Archaeology South-East		St Peter's Church, Woodmancote	Figs. 4-7
Project No. 3406	November 2008		
Project Ref. 2008159	Drawn by: mh		



Figure 8: The un-blocking in progress showing the brick skin behind the outer face of flint.

© Archaeology South-East		St Peter's Church, Woodmancote	Fig. 8
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Project Ref. 2008159	Drawn by: mh		

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