

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**St Faith's Church, Newton Longville,
Buckinghamshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by David Platt

Site Code: STF13/22

(SP 8477 3144)

**Church of St Faith, Whaddon Road,
Newton Longville, Bletchley, Buckinghamshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
For St Faith's Parochial Church Council**

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code STF 13/22

April 2013

Summary

Site name: Church of St Faith, Whaddon Road, Newton Longville, Bletchley, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SP 8477 3144

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 4th to 8th February 2013

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: STF 13/22

Summary of results: A total of five skeletons were recorded, three of probable 18th-19th century date and two of possibly earlier post-medieval date. Three interments within the area of the proposed tank pit were mostly removed whereas only segments of two skeletons in the pipe trench were removed. All human remains and artefacts were retained at the church for reburial.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire County Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 17.04.13

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Bletchley, Buckinghamshire
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Report 13/22

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at St Faiths Church, Whaddon Rd, Newton Longville, Buckinghamshire (SP 8477 3144) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Alan Frost, of Alan J Frost Architects, Windmill House, Wingrave, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP22 4PD on behalf of St Faiths Parochial Church Council.

A faculty has been gained from the Archdeaconry of Buckinghamshire to install a new kitchen and lavatory inside the Church. This requires an exterior excavation to be carried out along the length of a pipe trench that leads to a sunken waste tank on the northern edge of the graveyard. Due to the possibility of archaeological deposits and burials being damaged or destroyed by these works, an archaeological watching brief has been requested to be carried out during the course of the groundworks.

These works have been carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which follows the generic requirements of the Oxford Diocesan Archaeological Adviser (Mr Julian Munby). The fieldwork was undertaken by Danielle Milbank, Andrew Munding, David Platt and Kyle Beaverstock between 4th and 8th February 2013. The site code is STF 13/22.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located close to the main crossroads in Newton Longville (Fig. 1). The church stands on the southern side of Whaddon Road, which runs roughly west to east. This joins Bletchley Road, *c.*50m to the east (Fig. 2). The raised graveyard is higher than road level at the northern edge of the graveyard. The underlying geology is mapped as glacial till overlying Oxford Clay (BGS 1992). The church is at a height of *c.* 105m above Ordnance Datum (OD).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location at the parish church which is usually considered to lie at the centre of the historic core of a settlement. In this case 'Neutone' is mentioned in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002) and is likely to be of late Saxon origin. Various locations of archaeological and historic interest for the village are recorded within the Buckinghamshire historic environment record. The medieval manor house lies to the south with a number of early post-medieval listed buildings near the church. A number of finds of medieval and Roman pottery are recorded for the general environs with a small collection of Mesolithic flintwork just to the west. The earliest elements of the church date from the 12th century with a 14th century chancel and 15th century tower added before restoration in the late 19th century.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the digging of the cess pit and sewer trench, to determine the extent to which human remains survive within the area of the sewer and cess pit works and to observe the presence of graves and vaults.

Results

The pipe trench (Fig. 4; Pl. 1)

The pipe trench lay on the north side of the church and was aligned northwards, avoiding a vaulted burial before turning west to the tank pit. It was c. 21m long. Adjacent to the church it was initially 0.3m wide but then widened to 0.5m. Similarly it was just 0.5m deep at the church end but deepened to over 1m at the tank. The stratigraphy comprised c. 0.15m of turf overlying grey brown silty clay subsoil with flint and sandstone fragments (51). The natural geology was not encountered. Apart from a number of modern services, two inhumation burials were encountered.

Skeleton 2 lay across the line of the pipe trench close to the church at a depth of 0.62m. The head lay to the west beyond the pipe trench. Parts of the left forearm and left pelvis were lifted but the remainder left in-situ. There were no traces of any coffin nor coffin furniture and the grave cut was ill defined.

Skeleton 1 lay further to the north in the pipe trench and the skull was also at a depth of 0.62m. It appeared to only be partially articulated and was very degraded. The remains within the trench were lifted. There were no traces of any coffin nor coffin furniture and the grave cut ill defined.

The tank pit (Figs 4 and 5; Pls 2- 5)

The tank pit was rectangular in plan aligned east-west 4.7m long and 2.6m wide. It was eventually 2.56m deep. The stratigraphy comprised 0.15m of turf/topsoil overlying a variable thickness of subsoil (51) 0.4-0.7m thick above the natural geology. Three inhumation burials (SK3-5) were recorded within its area and were recorded before lifting as they lay above the formation level of the tank. The burials were encountered at a depth of c. 1-1.2m but with the grave cuts visible from c. 0.4m down (Fig. 5). All three burials were on the same east-west alignment with the heads to the west.

Skeleton 3 was well preserved and some 75% was exposed and lifted. The grave cut had penetrated the natural geology. The lower legs and feet remained in-situ. The burial was supine with the head turned to the right and had been buried in a coffin with several iron nails present. Some 19th century glazed earthenware was recorded from the grave fill.

Skeleton 4 was also well preserved and some 75% was exposed and lifted. The grave cut had penetrated the natural geology. The head and upper chest remained in-situ. The burial was supine and had been buried in a coffin with iron nails present.

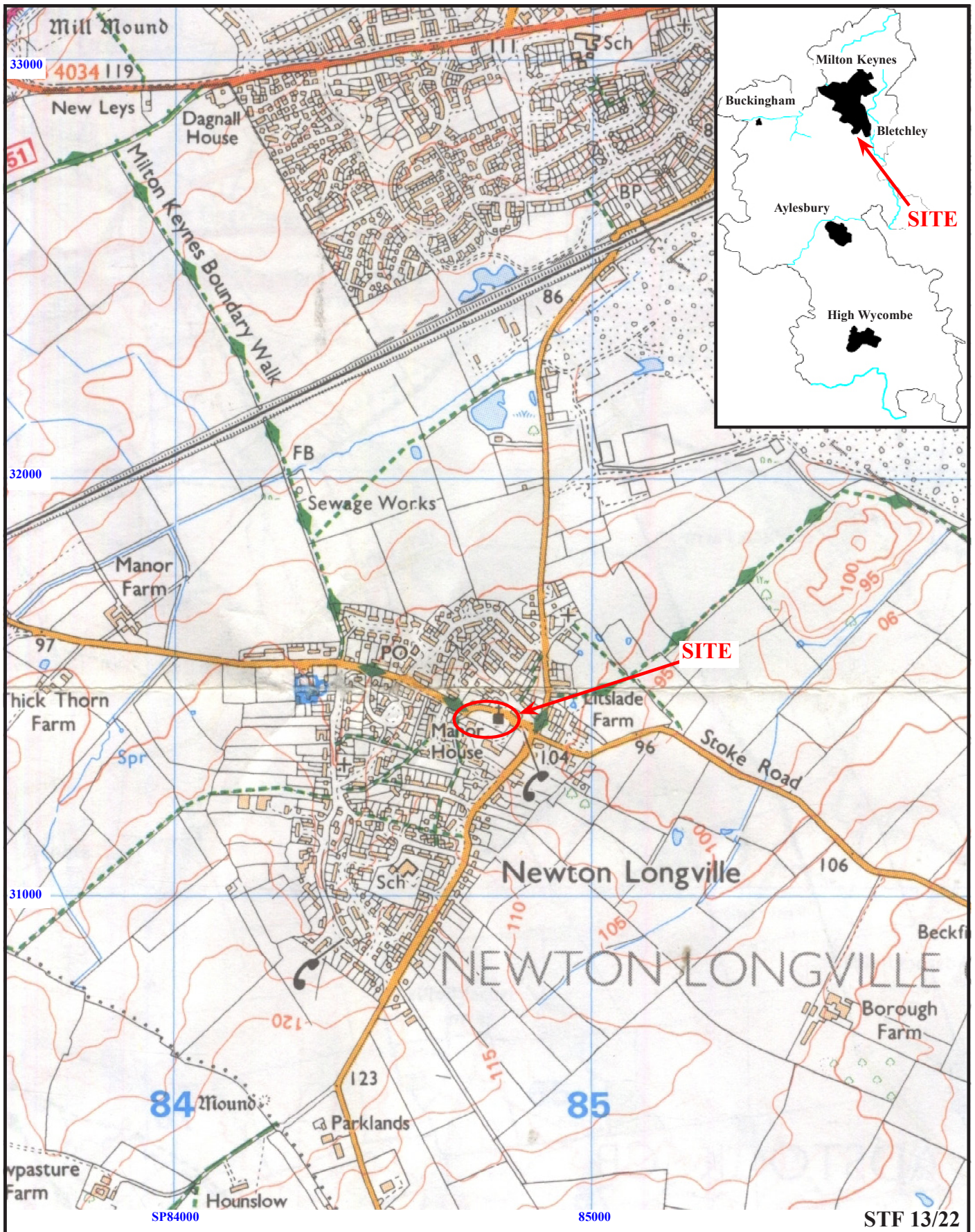
Skeleton 5 was well preserved and some 75% was exposed and lifted. The grave cut had penetrated the natural geology. The lower legs and feet remained in-situ. The burial was supine and had been buried in a coffin with several iron nails present.

Conclusion

The watching brief revealed a surprisingly small number of burials. Two were located at relatively shallow depth without obvious coffins suggesting that they might be relatively early in the development of the cemetery. The others were deeper at 1.2m but had been buried in coffins held together with iron nails. One grave contained 19th century pottery and together it is suggested these three burials are of later post-medieval date. No other deposits of archaeological interest were recorded.

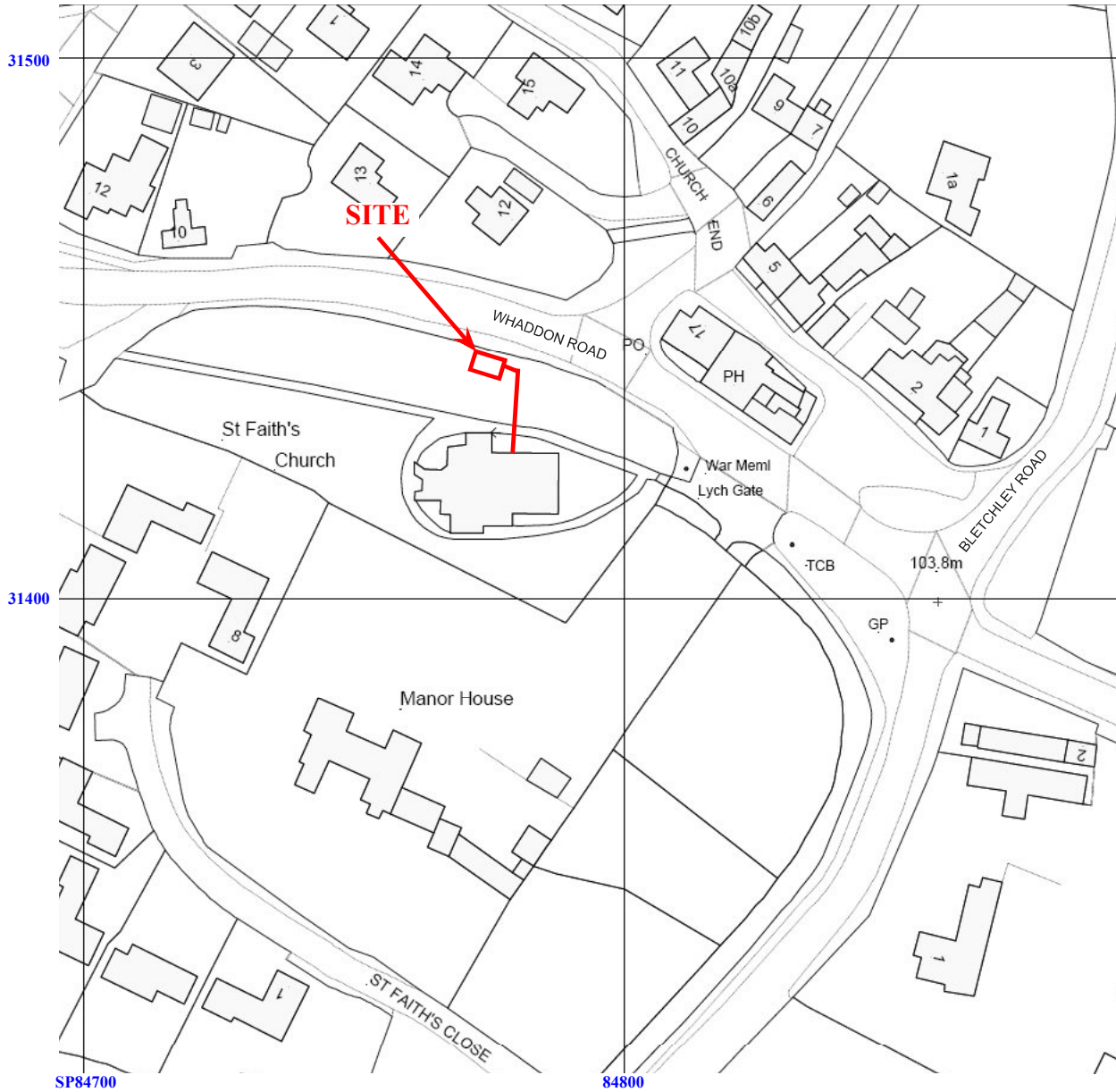
References

BGS, 1992, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 220, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book, A complete Translation*, London



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 Figure 1. Location of site within Newton Longville and
 Buckinghamshire.

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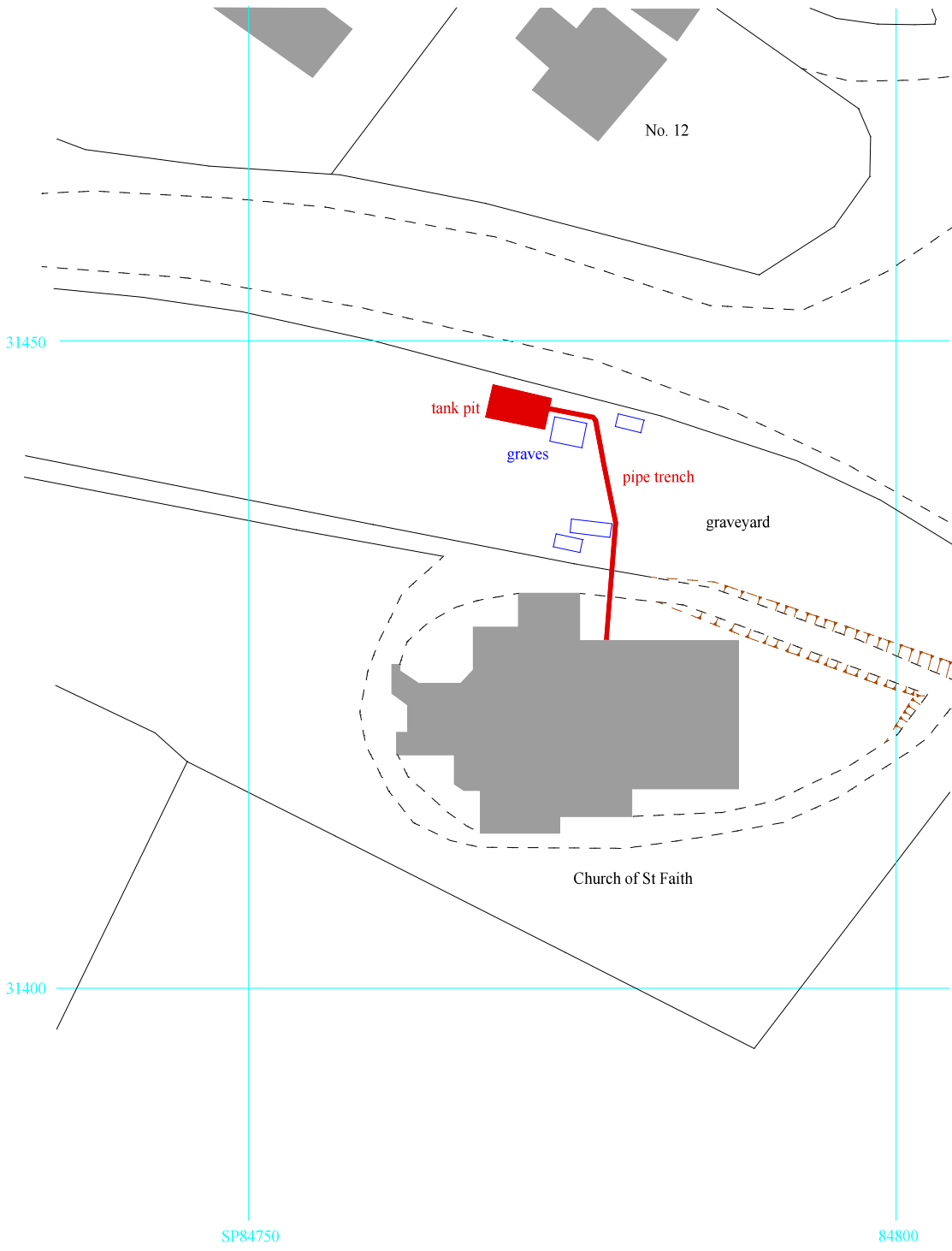


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site off Whaddon Road.

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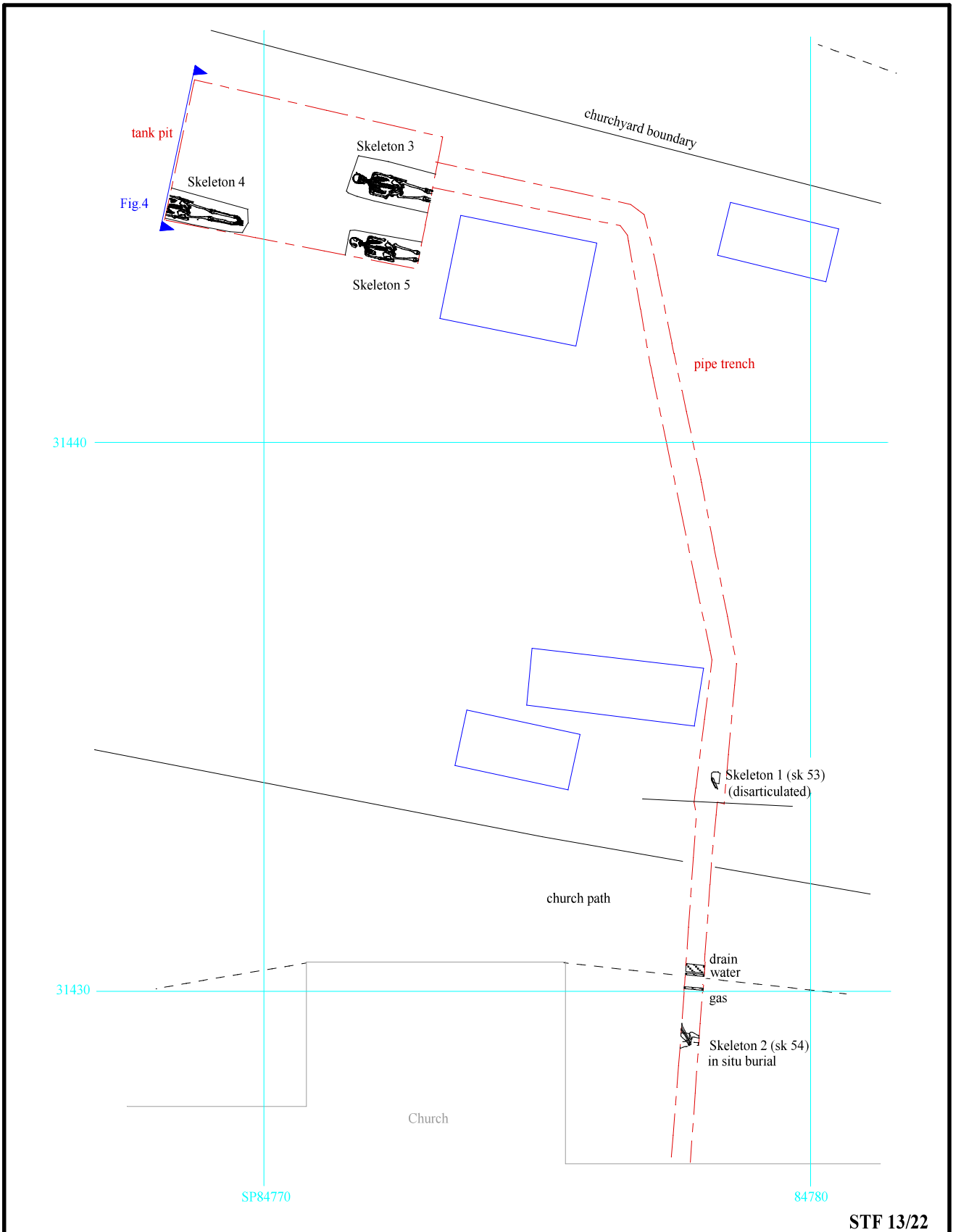
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Figure 3. Location of observed area.



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Figure 4. Detail plan of pipe trench and tank.





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Figure 5. Section of tank pit





Plate 1. Pipe trench, looking north from church towards graveyard.



Plate 2. Tank pit area section, showing grave 4, looking west, Scale: 2m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Tank pit area, skeleton 3, looking west, Scale: 1m.



Plate 4. Tank pit area, skeleton 4, looking west, Scale: 1m.

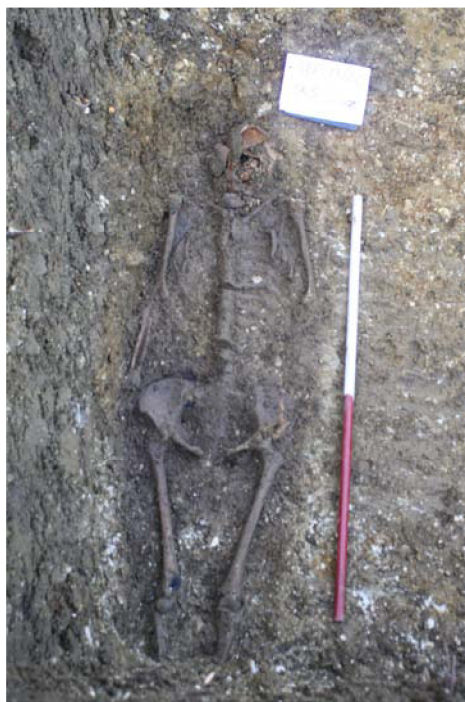


Plate 5. Tank pit area, skeleton 5, looking west, Scale: 1m.

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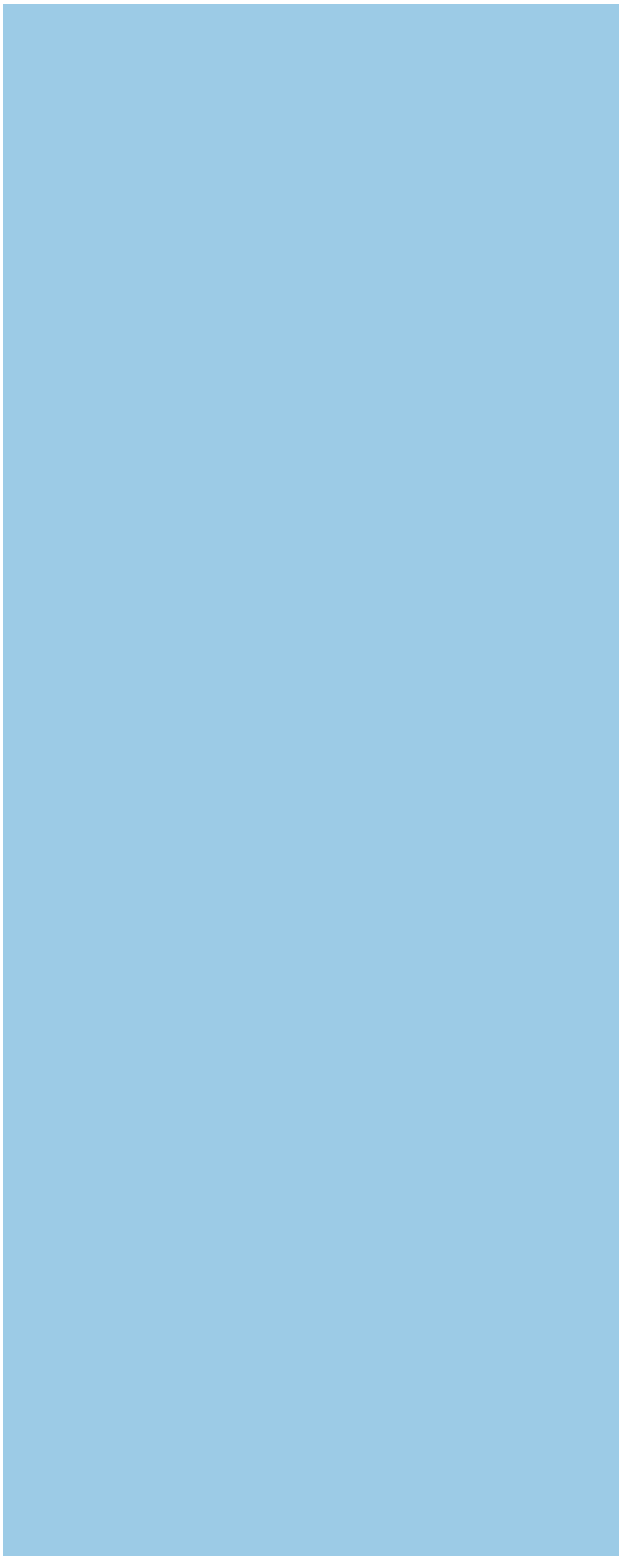
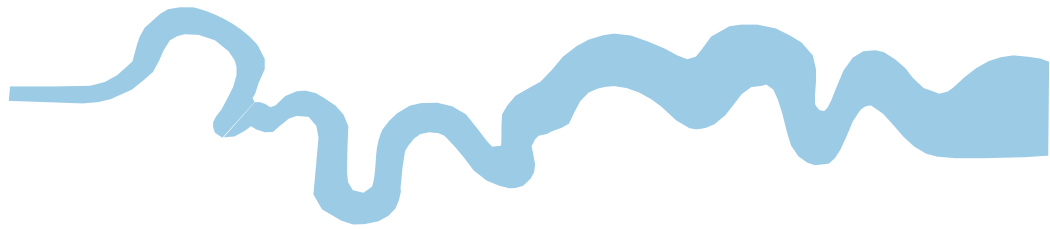
Plates 3 to 5.

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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