THAMES VALLEY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

SERVICES

Proposed Churchyard Extension, St Edmund's Church, Warkton, Northamptonshire

Archaeological Recording Action

by Andy Taylor and Luis Esteves

Site Code: SEW15/158

(SP 8935 7982)

Proposed Churchyard Extension, St Edmund's Church Warkton, Northamptonshire

An Archaeological Recording Action

For St Edmunds Parochial Church Council

by Andy Taylor and Luis Esteves

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SEW 15/158

May 2016

Summary

Site name: Proposed Churchyard Extension, St Edmund's Church, Warkton, Northamptonshire

Grid reference: SP 8935 7982

Site activity: Recording Action

Date and duration of project: 4th-6th April 2016

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Luis Esteves

Site code: SEW 15/158

Area of site: *c.*250 sq m

Summary of results: Two ditches and a pit of Middle-Late Iron Age date were identified during the recording action. Pottery, animal bone and charred cereal grains were recorded for these features and suggest that they represent a small part of an occupation site.

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

Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 27.05.16
	Steve Preston✓ 27.05.16

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Proposed Churchyard Extension, St Edmunds Church, Warkton, Northamptonshire
An Archaeological Recording Action Report

by Andy Taylor and Luis Esteves

Report 15/158b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological excavation carried out at St Edmund's Church, Warkton, Northamptonshire (SP 8935 7982). The work was commissioned by Mr Edward Lamb on behalf of the Parochial Church Council.

Planning permission (KET/2015/0378) has been sought from Kettering Borough Council for an extension to the churchyard at St Edmunds Church, Warkton. Information from field evaluation had been requested to assess the archaeological potential of the site, and allow for the mitigation of the impact of the proposed development on archaeological remains, if any.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Borough County's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Advisor with Northamptonshire County Council, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Luis Esteves between 4th and 6th April 2016 and the site code is SEW 15/158. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited in a Northamptonshire archive store in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within a field to the rear (east) of the existing churchyard of St Edmund's Church, Warkton (Fig. 2). The churchyard wall forms the western boundary with fields to the north and south. Housing and a footpath lie slightly further eastwards. The underlying geology is mapped as Northampton Sand Ironstone (BGS 1976), which was observed across the site. It lies at a height of *c.*78m above Ordnance Datum.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a brief for the project prepared by Northampton-shire County Archaeology Service. In summary the potential stems from its location within the historic (Saxon/medieval) core of Warkton. Warkton itself has late Saxon origins and is documented in Domesday Book

of 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002). The parish church is usually regarded as lying close to the centre of the historic settlement. The settlement has shrunk since medieval times and various earthworks reflecting this are recorded in the county historic environment record for other locations around the village. However, evaluation on the site (Porter 2015) identified a ditch of Middle/Late Iron Age date.

Objectives and methodology

The aims of the excavation were to excavate and record all archaeological deposits and features affected by the proposed new burial ground. This would comprise the removal of overburden from the extension area.

Specific research aims of the project were:

to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
to determine any further prehistoric occupation or landscape features are present on the site; and
to determine if there are later prehistoric, Roman, Saxon or medieval deposits present on the site

Results

The stripped area measured *c.*250 sq m and had topsoil and subsoil removed using a small 360° type machine fitted with a toothless grading bucket (Pl. 1). As well as a continuation of the ditch identified in the evaluation, the excavation revealed a second ditch and a pit/terminus, all of Middle-Late Iron Age date. The excavated features are summarized in Appendix 1.

Ditch 200 was aligned approximately NW-SE and had two slots (1 and 103) dug across it to reveal it was between 1.80m and 2m wide and between 0.52m and 0.62m deep (Pl. 4). Two sherds of middle-late Iron Age pottery were recovered as well as nine pieces of animal bone and a piece of struck flint.

Ditch 201 was aligned N-S and had two slots (100 and 101) dug across it to reveal it was between 0.90m and 1.30m wide and between 0.50m and 0.60m deep (Pl. 2). Nine pieces of middle-late Iron Age pottery and 23 pieces of animal bone were recovered from its fill.

Pit 102 measured 1.60m in diameter and 1.10m deep (pl. 3) and had two fills (152 and 153). 152, the secondary fill, was a light grey brown silty sand but did not contain any finds. 153 was a light red brown silty sand that contained two sherds of middle-late Iron Age pottery and 20 pieces of animal bone.

Finds

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 11 sherds with a total weight of 529g. It is all of middle Iron Age date. The following fabric types were noted:

F1: Shell and Ironstone. Sparse to moderate shelly limestone up to 10mm, rare to sparse sub-rounded red iron ore up to 3mm. sherds, 525g.

F2: Fine Shell. Rare to sparse pounded shell up to 1mm. 2 sherds, 6g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Appendix 2. The fabrics are typical of the middle-late Iron Age pottery tradition of the region (eg. Jackson 1975).

All the sherds from context 151 are from the base of a single vessel, a large jar (base diameter = 260mm) with scored decoration. It appears typical of the Scored Ware tradition of the middle Iron Age of the east Midlands (Elsdon 1992). The two sherds from 153 are both from the rims of small jars. One of them has fingernail impressions on top of the bead, indication that it too is of middle Iron Age date.

Animal Bone by Lizzi Lewins

A small assemblage of animal bone (43 pieces), weighing a total of 251.5g was recovered during the course of the investigation. The bone was classified according to size (large mammal - cattle, horse; medium-sized mammal - sheep/goat, pig, deer; small mammal - dog, cat) and where possible by species. Although fragmented, the bone was in good condition with little to no surface abrasion and erosion present. Texts by Hillson (1992; 2005) were used to confirm identification when necessary. A full inventory of the bone can be found in Appendix 3.

Ditch 200 produced a total of twenty-three fragments of bone ranging in size from small mammal to large mammal consisting mainly of rib and long bone fragments. Two upper molars were identified as sheep/goat and a fragment of left humerus shaft (only upper portion of distal articulation survives) classified as cattle were identified to species level. Seven of the fragments (including two unidentified fragments) showed evidence for slicing and possible cutmarks were also noted on one of the pieces.

Pit 102 again contained a range from small to large consisting of ribs and long bone fragments. Of note is a left proximal tibia from a small mammal which bore at least six cutmarks, two of which were 40mm in length running from the [partial] proximal articulation down the shaft. A fragment of horncore was identified as goat. Two fragments of left mandible with the p4-m2 and canine teeth in-situ and two loose (but refitted) incisors (i3-i2) were identified as a dog. Slicing was noted on three of the fragments.

Given the lack of duplicated skeletal elements the minimum number of individuals for the site is one each of sheep/goat, cattle and dog. The assemblage is too small to provide a meaningful analysis however given the presence of taphonomy associated with butchery it is likely that some processing of carcasses took place within

the immediate area of the site. The presence of dogs and the lack of gnaw marks suggests that the bones were disposed of quickly rather than being accessible to scavenging animals.

Macrobotanical plant material and charcoal by Jo Pine

Four environmental samples were processed from the site. The flots were wet sieved to 0.25mm and air dried. The flots were examined under a low-power binocular microscope at magnifications between x10 and x40.

Charred plant macrofossils of indeterminate cereal were present in all the samples in small numbers (Appendix 4).

A small amount of charcoal was present in sample 100, 101 and 103 however this material was of a size and structure that does not allow species identification.

Conclusion

A small amount of archaeological deposits were identified in addition to the ditch previously noted in the evaluation. These were all of middle-late Iron Age date and are likely to represent a small part of an occupation site.

References

BGS, 1976, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 171, Sold and Drift Edition, Keyworth

Elsdon, SM, 1992, East Midlands Scored Ware *Trans Leicestershire Archaeology Hist Soc* **66**, 83-91

Hillson, S, 1992, *Mammal Bones and Teeth, An Introductory Guide to Methods of Identification,* Inst Archaeology, London

Hillson, S, 2005, *Teeth*, (2nd edn) Cambridge

Jackson, D, 1975, 'An Iron Age Site at Twywell, Northamptonshire', *Northamptonshire Archaeol* **10**, 31–94

NPPF, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Government, London

Porter, S, 2015, 'Proposed churchyard extension, St Edmund's Church, Warkton, Northamptonshire, an archaeological evaluation, Thames Valley Archaeological Services report **15/158**, Reading

Williams, A and Martin, G H, 2002, *Domesday Book: a complete translation*, London

APPENDIX 1: Feature Details

Group .	*Cut*	*Fill(s)*	*Type*	*Date*
201	1	52	Ditch	Middle-Late Iron Age
200	100	150	Ditch	
200	101	151	Ditch	
	102	152, 153	Pit	
201	103	154	Ditch	Middle-Late Iron Age

APPENDIX 2: Pottery Fabrics

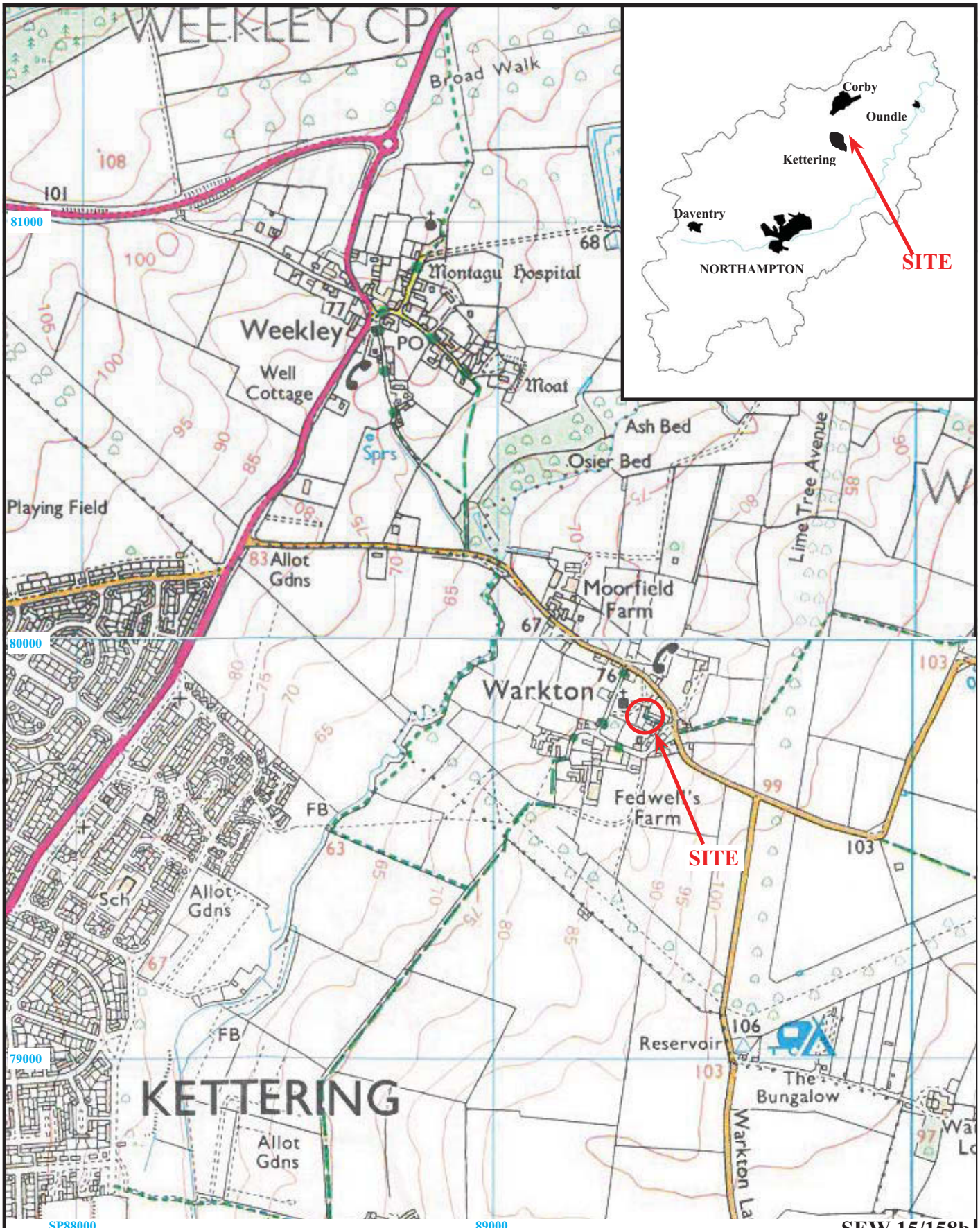
		F1		F2	
Cut	*Deposit*	*No*	*Wt (g)*	*No*	*Wt (g)*
101	151	9	525		
102	153			2	6
	Total	9	525	2	6

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of Animal Bone

Cut	*Deposit*	*Sample*	*Type*	*Group*	*No. frags*	*Wt (g)*	*Cattle*	*Sheep/ goat*	*Goat*	*Dog*	*Large Mammal*	*Medium Mammal*	*Small Mammal*	*Unid.*	*Notes*
100	150	-	Ditch	200	5	134	1				2	1		1	Slicing, possible cutmarks
100	150	10	Ditch	200	4	10.5		1						3	
101	151	-	Ditch	200	1	15						1			Slicing
101	151	11	Ditch	200	13	23		1				1	2	9	Slicing
102	153	-	Pit	-	3	32					1	1	1		Slicing, cutmarks
102	153	12	Pit	-	17	37			1	4		1	4	7	Slicing
Total					**43**	**251.5**									
MNI							**1**	**1**	**-**	**1**					

APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of Environmental Samples

Cut	*Fill*	*Sample*	*Indeterminate Cereal*
100	150	10	5
101	151	11	2
102	153	12	2
103	154	13	1



SEW 15/158b

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Figure 1. Location of site within Warkton and Northamptonshire.

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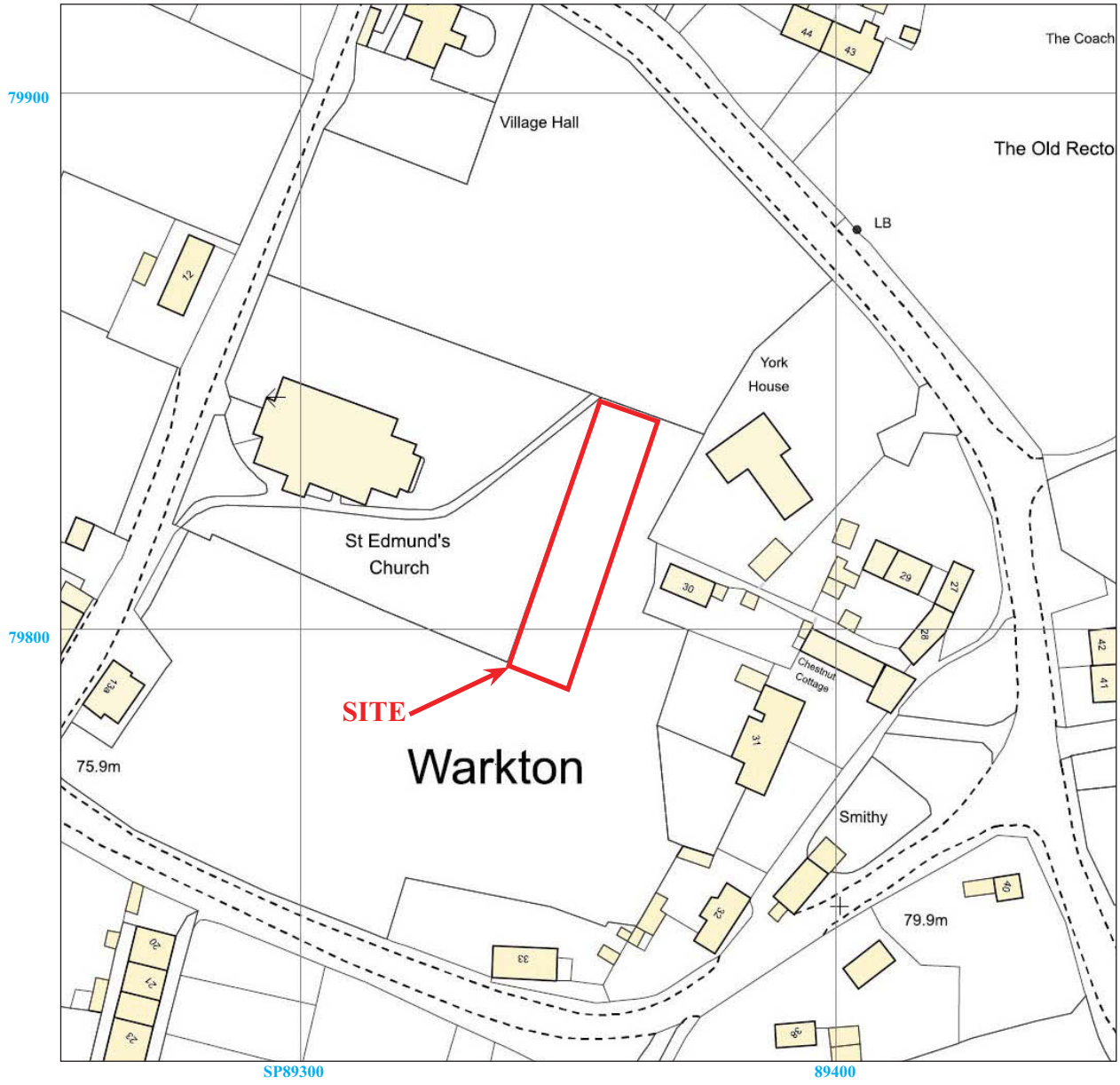

SEW 15/158b

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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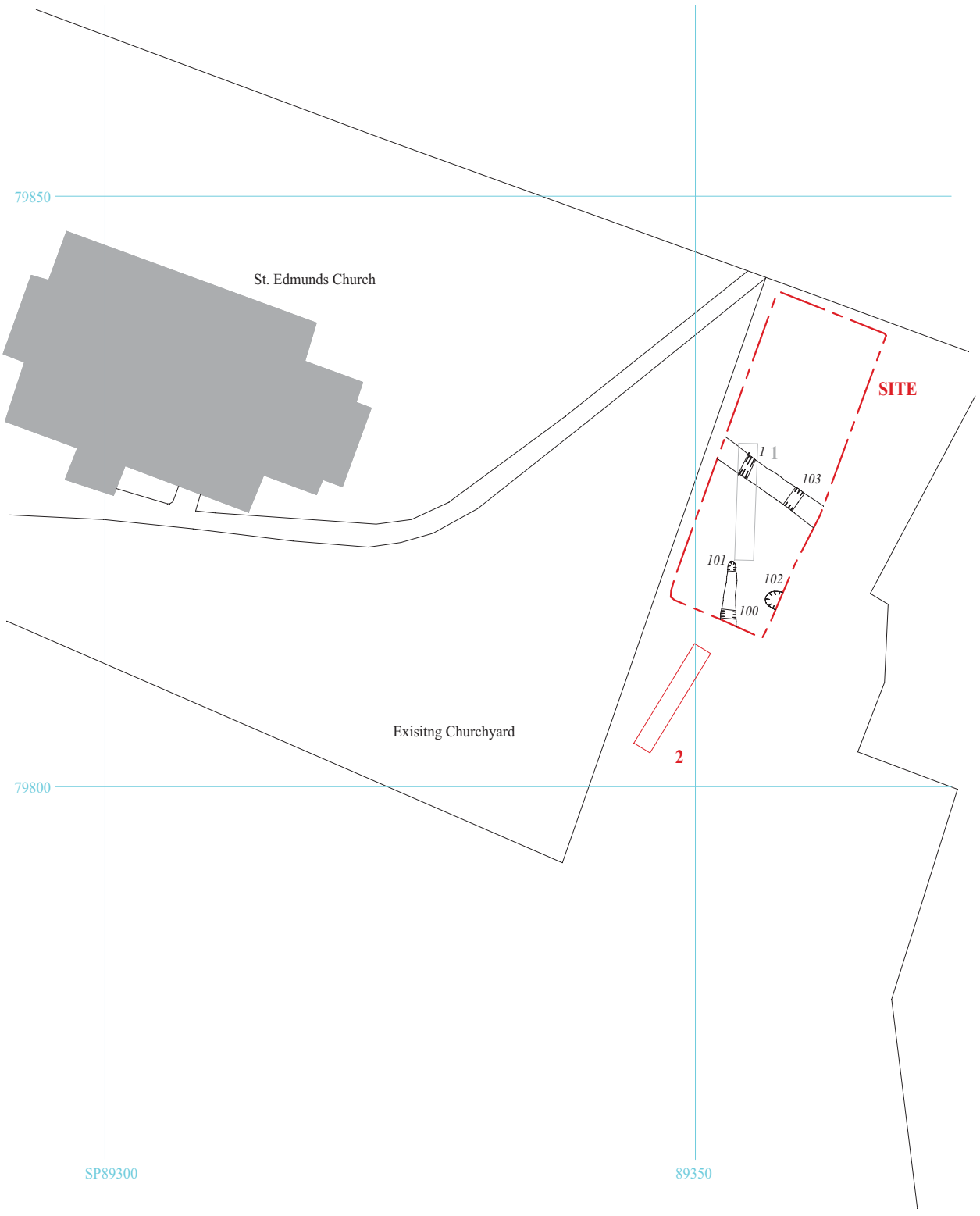

SEW 15/158b

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Figure 3. Location of stripped area in relation to previous evaluation.

0 25m

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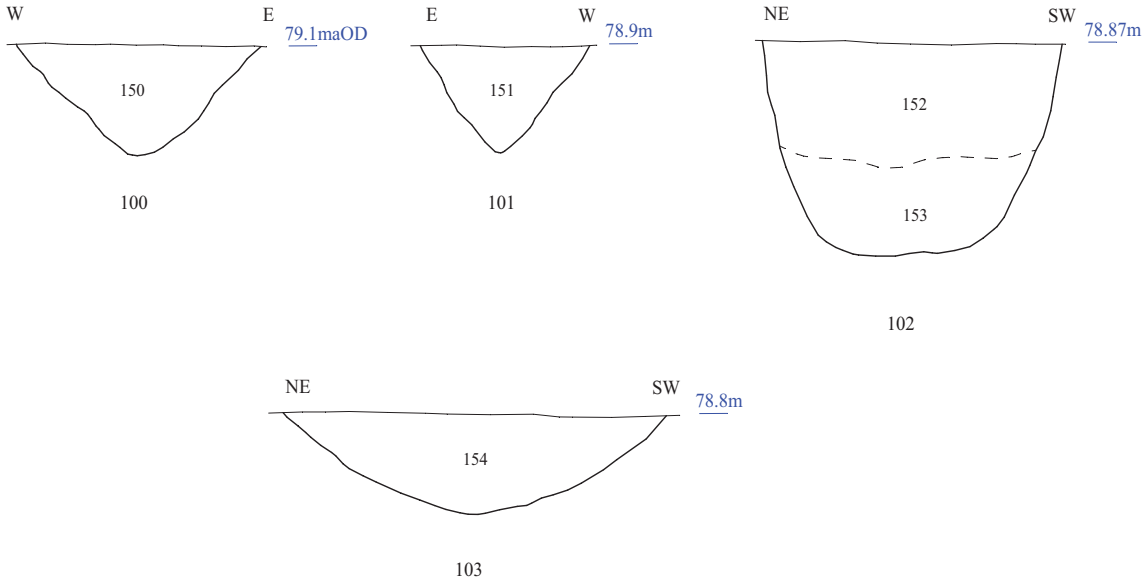

SEW 15/158b

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Figure 4. Sections.

0 1m

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Plate 1. Stripped area, looking north east.

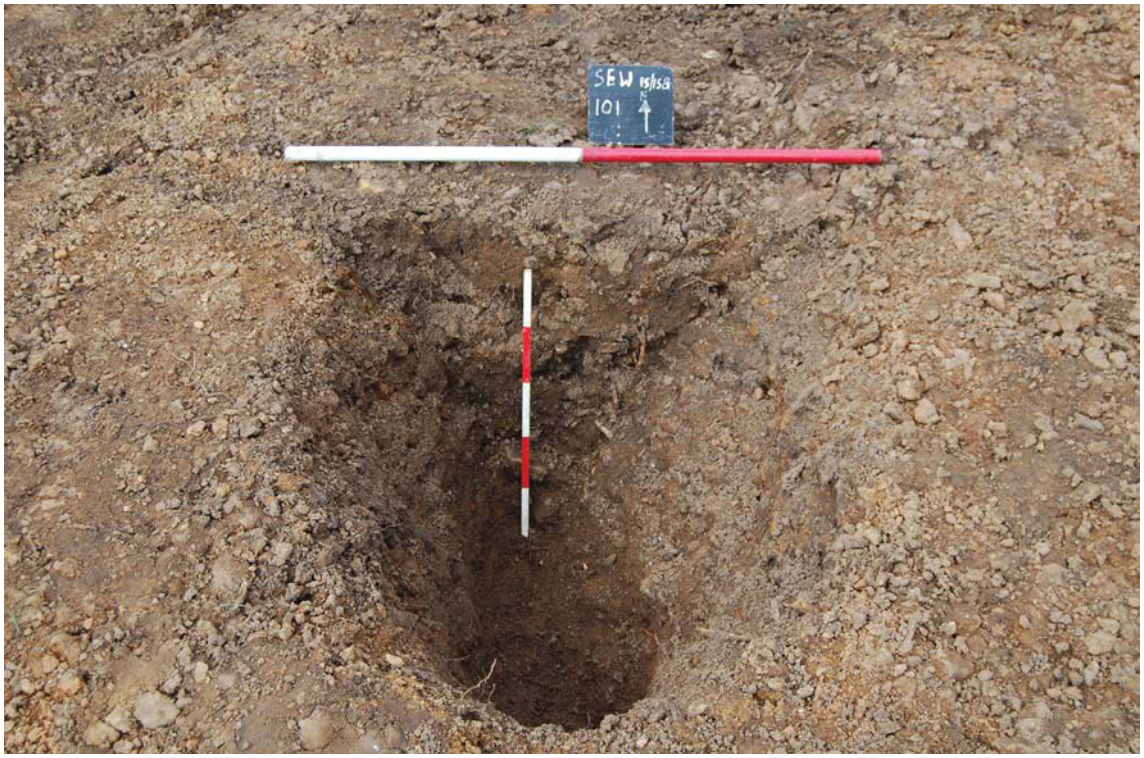

Plate 2. Terminus 101, looking south, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

SEW 15/158b

St. Edmunds Churchyard Extension, Warkton, Northamptonshire, 2016
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Plates 1 - 2.

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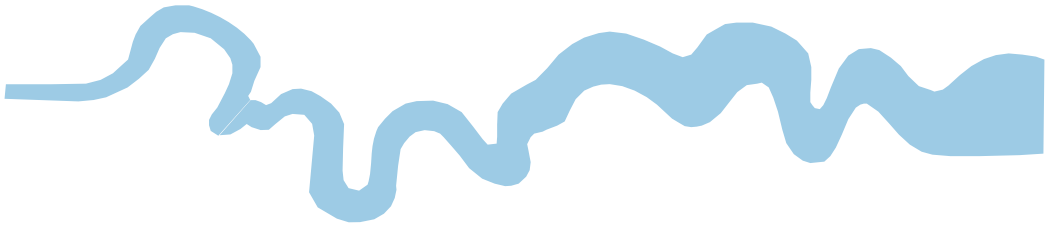
TIME CHART

	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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