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ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Church of St Mary the Virgin, Long Crendon,  
Buckinghamshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Andy Muddin**

**Site Code: LCC14/193**

**(SP 6986 0906)**

**Church of St Mary the Virgin,  
Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For St Mary the Virgin Parochial Church Council**

by Andrew Mundin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

LCC 14/193b

**July 2018**

## Summary

**Site name:** Church of St Mary the Virgin, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire

**Grid reference:** SP 6986 0906

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 19th May to 14th December 2016

**Project coordinator:** Danielle Millbank

**Site supervisor:** Michael Johnson

**Site code:** LCC 14/193

**Summary of results:** Three hand dug trenches were excavated to locate the existing blocked drainage course leading to a soakaway in the eastern graveyard. The soakaway had been located in previous works. A new pipe trench was dug. A small number of disarticulated human remains were identified beneath the topsoil but no in-situ burials nor datable artefacts were observed. The human bone was returned to the church for reburial.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service/OASiS in due course.

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	Steve Preston ✓ 12.07.18

# **Church of St Mary the Virgin, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire An Archaeological Watching Brief**

By Andrew Muddin

**Report 14/193b**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at St Mary the Virgin, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire, HP18 9AL (SP 6986 0906) (Fig. 1). This work was commissioned by Ms Zoe Sawbridge, of Acanthus Clews Architects, Acanthus House, 57 Hightown Road, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 9BE. A faculty has been gained from the Oxford Diocese for the repair of the chancel at the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Long Crendon. This mostly entailed survey of the east gable wall of the chancel for condition and structural integrity but included the need to replace existing storm water drainage for the exterior of the chancel and its outlet in the graveyard. Due to the potential of discovering and disturbing human remains during these works, an archaeological watching brief was required. Previous works to locate the existing soakaway and find the linking drainage pipe buried in the eastern graveyard were archaeologically monitored (Platt and Porter 2014).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Muddin and Michael Johnson between 19th May and 14th December 2016. The site code is LCC 14/193. This is the second report to be compiled for this project after investigation occurred locating the soakaway and leading drainage pipe in the eastern graveyard.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course. All human bone recovered was retained at the Church for reburial.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located to the east of the historic centre of Long Crendon, at the east end of the High Street known as Church End (Fig.1 and 2). The ground to the east of the church falls sharply to the east and the ground to the north rises gently to the Chearsley Road. The underlying geology is Kimmeridge Clay over Portland Limestone (BGS 1994), and site lies at c.105m above Ordnance Datum (OD).

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of Long Crendon has been detailed by Buckinghamshire County Council's Historic Town Appraisal (Beckley and Green 2009). The site lies in Church End and is considered to be the one of the oldest parts of the village, that could have origins prior to Medieval times. Church End offered one Early Medieval focus of the village, with the Church and the Giffard family residence. The Square at the junction with Bicester Road and Chearsley Road was the other (Beckley and Green 2009, 16). In the 11th century, there is mention of *Credendone* in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002, 404). A medieval manorial complex is known to the south-east of the church.

St Mary the Virgin Church is Grade I Listed (1214036) with probably 12th century origins, though it is first recorded in the 13th century. Previous archaeological work at the Church in 2007, uncovered during excavation of a new drainage run located articulated graves of fifteen individuals on the west site of the graveyard. It was thought these were of 18th-19th century date (OA 2008). The chancel initial construction is one of many parts dated to the 13th century (VCH 1927). The existing downpipes from the chancel are most likely 19th century, but the buried drainage is modern. It is thought the drainage run failed broken by the placing of a gravestone on its course to an existing soakaway,.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the ground works. This was to involve monitoring of all excavation, and the recovery of human remains in order for them to be returned to the Church for reburied. If articulated remains were to be discovered, notification of the Diocese Chancellor was necessary prior to lifting them. Disarticulated human remains were to be reverently reburied as soon as possible after discovery. No artefacts or ecofacts was to be removed from the Church or the graveyard without an order from the Archdeacon or from the Consistory Court.

## **Results**

The 2016 works aimed to locate more of the broken drainage pipe run in the eastern graveyard and lay a new pipe (Figs 3 and 4) Excavation comprised three hand-dug trenches (Trenches 2-4).

Trench 2 was aligned W-E and was 0.75m long and 0.32m wide and was dug to a depth of 0.3m. Human bone from a forearm was the only item of interest revealed.

Trench 3 was 0.75m long, 0.4m wide and c. 0.5m deep. This located the course of a drainage pipe at a depth of 0.5m on a SW-NE axis. Further disarticulated human bone was revealed at a depth of between 0.2 and 0.45m deep.

Trench 4 was initially 0.52m long and 0.43m wide and also revealed the pipe at 0.5m depth. The trench was extended to reveal the top of the stone-filled soakaway (Pl.1).

The trench for a new drainage pipe route was also observed (Fig. 3; Pl. 2). This lead from the soakaway to the eastern boundary wall. This trench was 0.6m deep, and a further small amount of unidentifiable disarticulated human bone was recovered from the excavation. No pottery or other dating evidence was identified in either of the phases of works.

## **Finds**

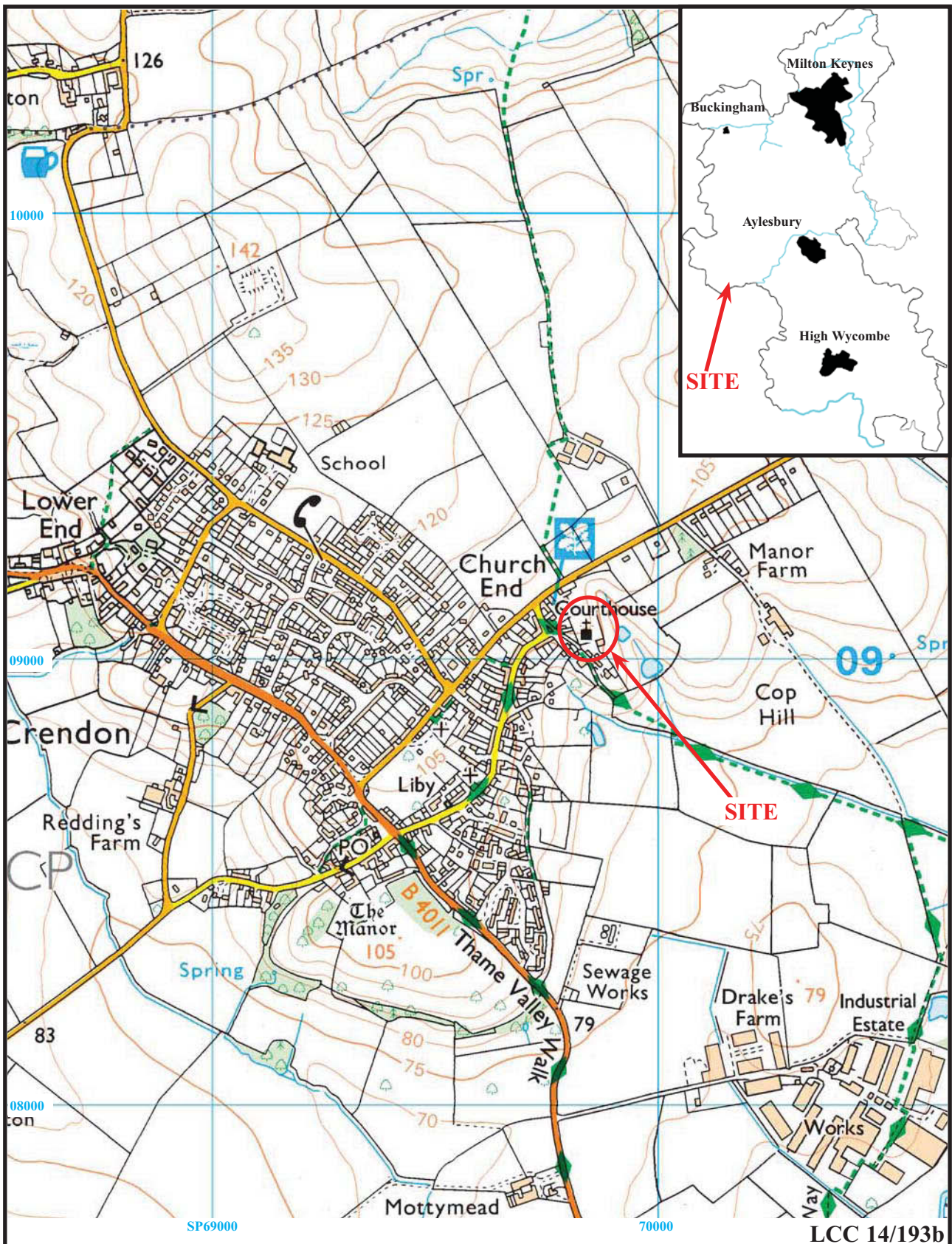
Human bone was identified in the works, but retained at the Church for reburial.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the archaeological potential of the site and the likelihood of burial in the eastern graveyard, no *in-situ* deposits of human burial were encountered, and no artefacts of archaeological interest were encountered. No graves associated with marked burials needed to be disturbed.

## **References**

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- OA, 2008, 'St. Mary the Virgin Church, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire: an archaeological watching brief report', Oxford Archaeology report **3857**, Oxford
- Platt, D and Porter, S, 2014, 'Church of St Mary the Virgin, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire: an archaeological watching brief', Thames Valley Archaeological Service rep **14/193a**, Reading
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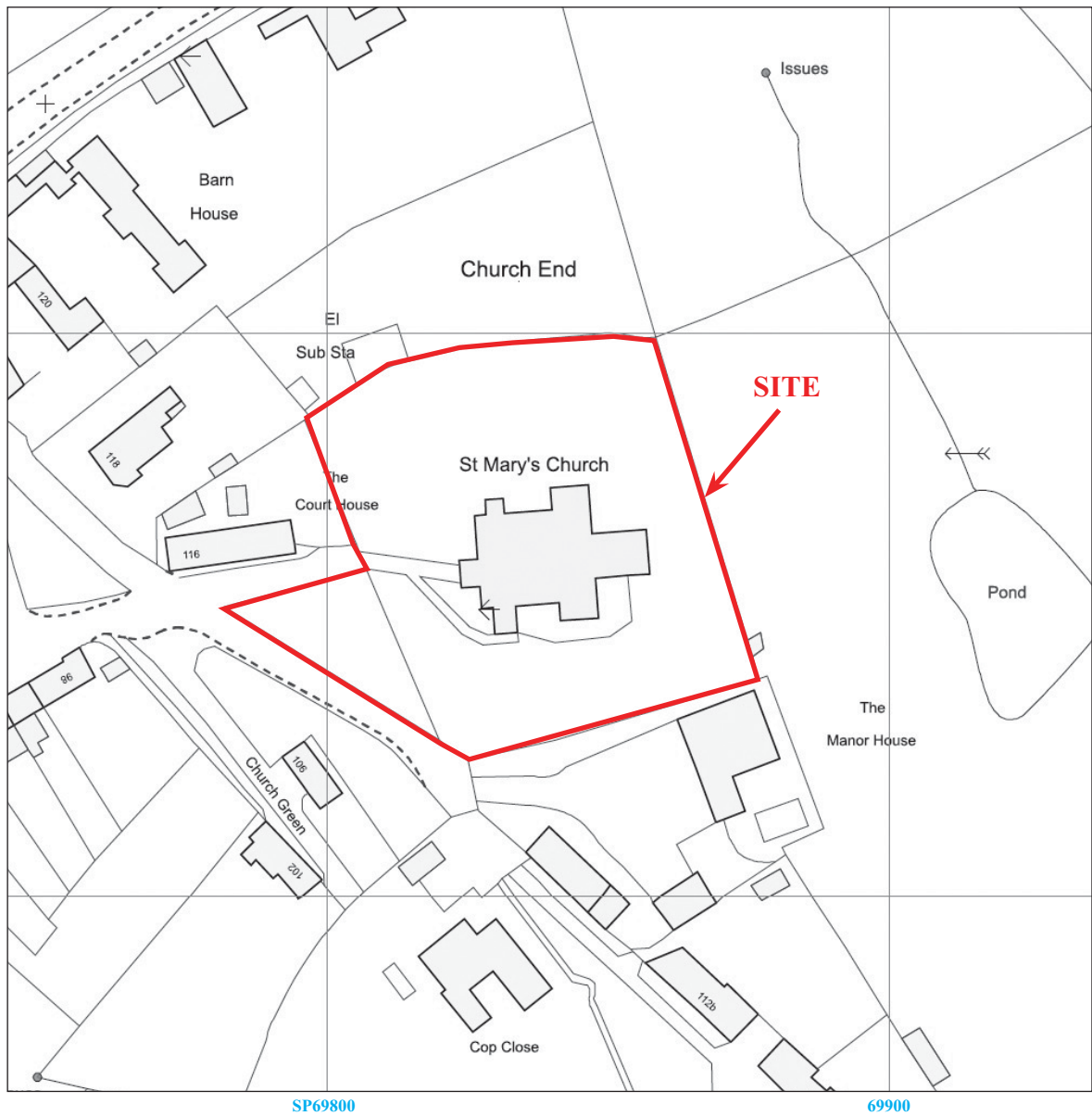
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Figure 1. Location of site within Long Crendon and Buckinghamshire.

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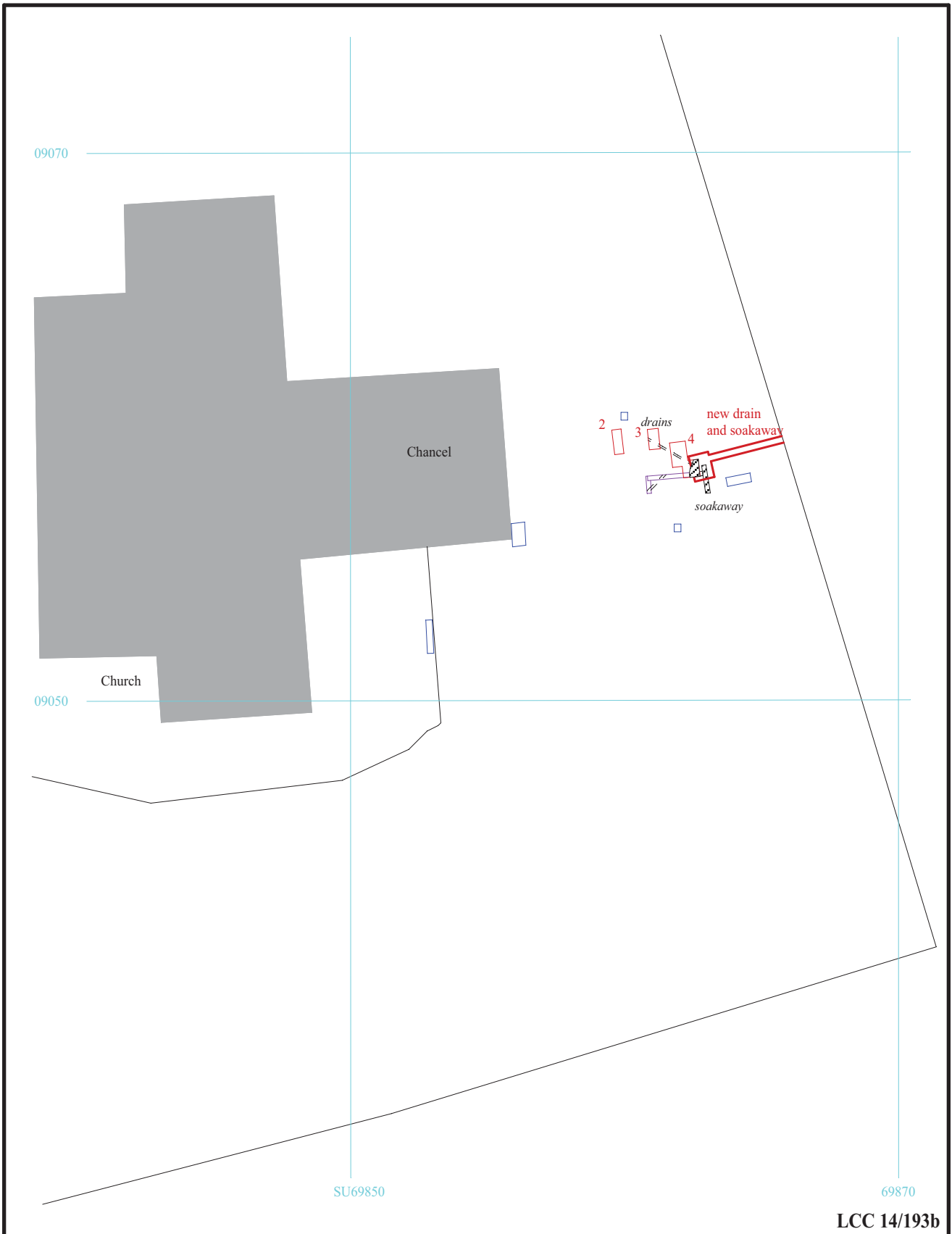


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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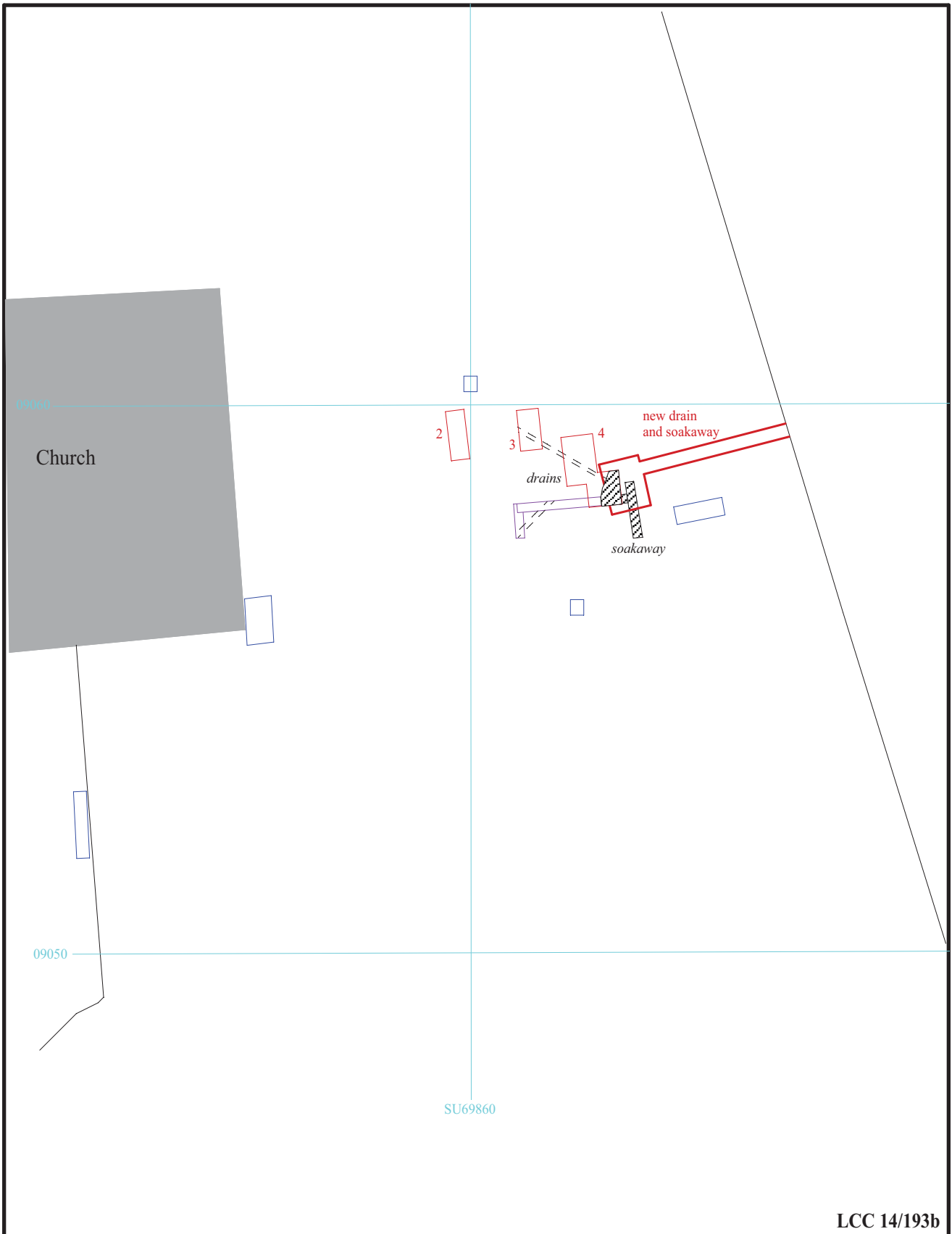
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Figure 3. Location of observed areas (red) and areas observed in 2014 (blue).



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Figure 4. Detailed plan of observed areas.



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Plate 1. Existing soakaway with pipe, looking west, Scales: 1m.



Plate 2. New drainage and soakaway, looking east, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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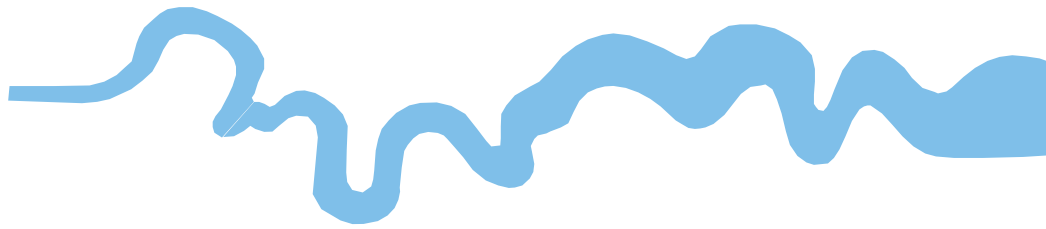
**St. Mary the Virgin Church,  
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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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 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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