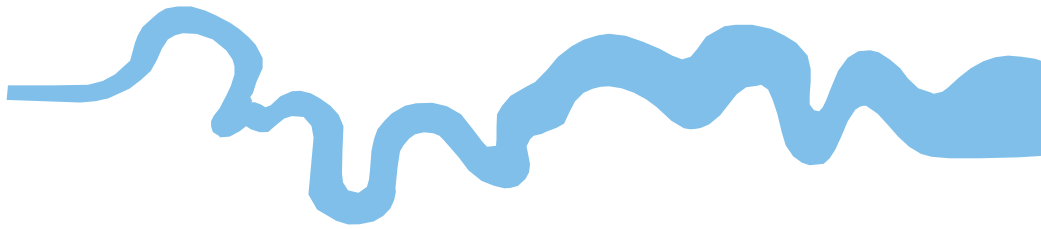


**T V A S**



**SOUTH**

**Church Hall Extension, St Peter's Church,  
Ightham, Kent**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Virginia Fuentes**

**Site Code: SPI19/119**

**(TQ 5950 5694)**

# **Church Hall Extension, St Peter's Church, Ightham, Kent**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For St Peter's Church Parochial Church Council**

by Virginia Fuentes

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code SPI 19/119

**August 2019**

## Summary

**Site name:** Church Hall Extension, St Peter's Church, Ightham, Kent

**Grid reference:** TQ 5950 5694

**Planning reference:** TM/18/02086/FL

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 25th to 29th July 2019

**Project manager:** Sean Wallis

**Site supervisor:** Virginia Fuentes

**Site code:** SPI 19/119

**Summary of results:** The watching brief successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the construction of a new extension. Only a total of eight fragments of loose bones were recovered from the spoilheaps. The bones, very fragmented and small, were likely to be human, and they were returned to the church at the end of the work for reinterment. No other finds or underground burials were recorded in the trenches as most of the footings were already disturbed by buried services, probably dating to the construction of the previous church hall.

**Location and reference of archive:** The preferred depository for the site archive is Tunbridge Wells Museum.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 30.08.2019
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Steve Preston ✓ 30.08.2019
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# Church Hall Extension, St Peter's Church, Fern Pond Road, Ightham, Kent An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Virginia Fuentes

Report 19/119

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out to the rear of the church hall, immediately north-east to St Peter's Church. The parish church is situated west of Fern Pond Road, Ightham, Kent (TQ 5950 5694) (Figs. 1 and 2). The project was commissioned by Mr Andrew Gilbert of Latitude Architects, on behalf of St Peter's Parochial Church Council.

Planning permission (TM/18/02086/FL) had been gained from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for the construction of an extension to the existing church hall, and the creation of a paved area to the south of the hall. The permission was subject to a standard planning condition (3) relating to archaeology and historic environment. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on site which may be damaged or destroyed by the planned building work, it was proposed to carry out a watching brief as set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF, 2019) and the Council's policies on archaeology and the historic environment. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the Kent County Council Officer (KKC, 2016) and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist (CIfA 2014a).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Virginia Fuentes between the 25th and 29th July 2019, and the site code is SPI 19/119. The archive is currently held at TVAS Brighton and will be deposited with a suitable depository in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

The site is located to the west of Fen Pond Road, within the historic core of Ightham, Kent. The existing church hall is situated immediately north-east of the parish church (Fig. 2). The site lies at a height between 92.3m and 87.8m above Ordnance Datum, but the site was relatively flat. According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology consists of Folkestone Beds (BGS 1997) and this was confirmed during the watching brief.

## Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site largely derives from its location in a churchyard. Although it is not listed in Domesday Book (1086), the village is first mentioned in a document dating from around 1100 as *Ehteham*,

which probably means 'homestead or village belonging to a man called Ehta'. It is likely that a late Saxon church stood on the site. The current church building, dedicated to St Peter, retains elements of 12<sup>th</sup> century date but was substantially rebuilt at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The primary aim of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed groundworks, and in particular any ground reduction in respect of the new paved areas and the footing trenches for the new extension (Fig. 3). Where archaeological deposits which may warrant preservation *in-situ* were encountered, their treatment was to be discussed in consultation with the client and the Kent County Council Archaeological Officer. Where it was not possible or practicable to preserve archaeological remains *in-situ* the features were to be excavated by hand and fully recorded, to ensure their preservation by record.

## **Results**

All the foundation trenches for the new extension were monitored during the watching brief. The trenches were 0.4m wide and up to 1.35m deep. The footings dug closer to the previous building were heavily disturbed by buried services while the footing trenches dug along the exterior wall, were undisturbed. As a result, a layer of the grave soil (50) commonly used in graveyards, survived across most of the area. This grave soil had a thickness between 0.45m and 0.60m. Lots of rubble and glass bottles were found within this layer.

The subsoil (51) varied in thickness across the site, from between 0.4m and 0.65m, and was observed directly above the underlying natural geology, which largely consisted of flint within a clayey sand matrix. No archaeological features were observed cutting into the subsoil and natural deposits. Human burials were expected to be encountered during the groundworks and a total of eight fragments of loose bones were recovered from the spoilheaps. The bones, very fragmented and small, were likely to be human, and they were returned to the church at the end of the work for reinterment. No other underground burials were found during the excavation of the trenches.

## **Conclusion**

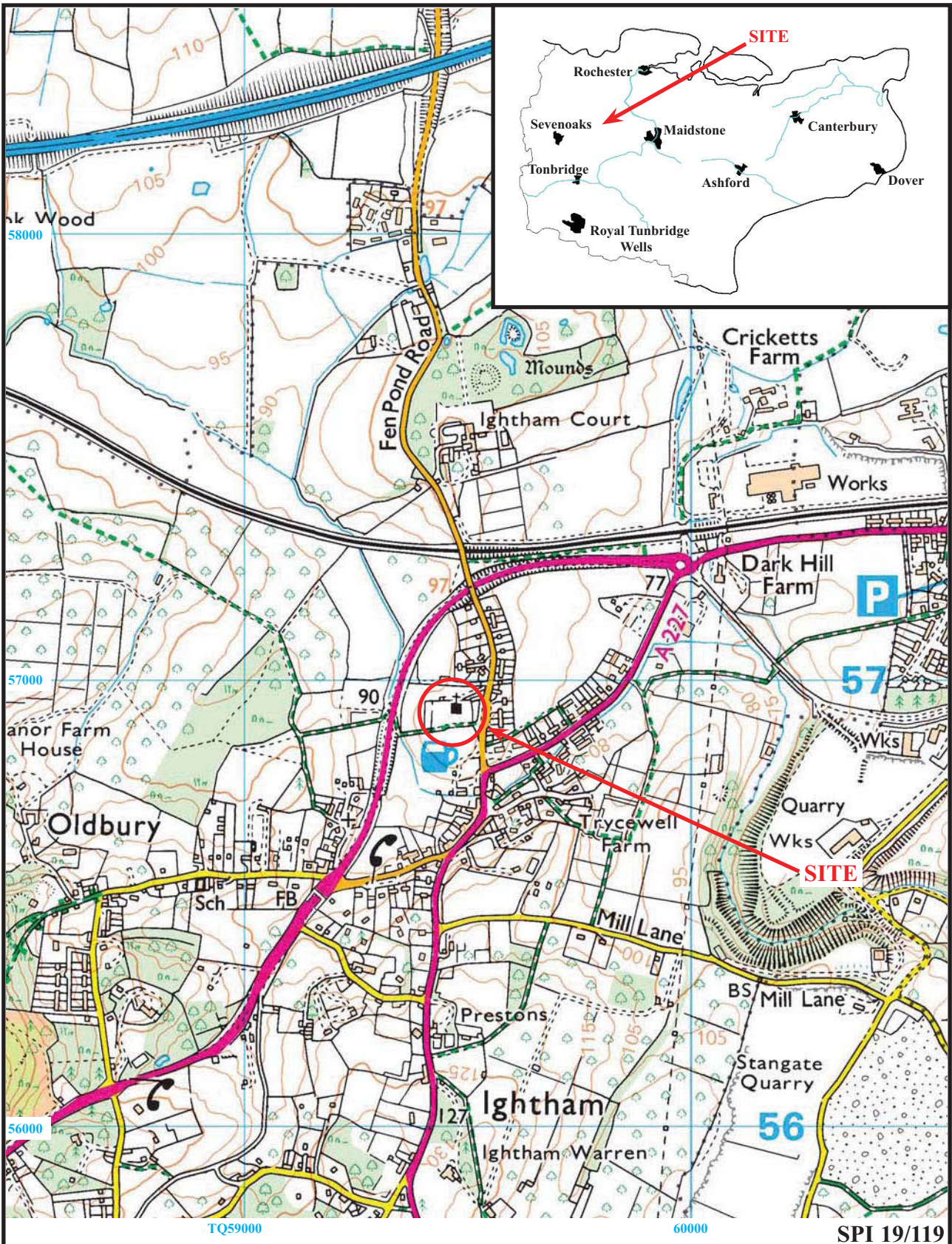
The watching brief successfully investigated those parts of the site which were to be most affected by the construction of a new extension. Given the age of the churchyard, human burials were expected to be encountered during the groundworks, but no such burials were encountered. A few fragments of loose bones were recovered from the spoilheaps which were likely to be human, and as such they were returned to the

church at the end of the work for reinterment. No other underground burials or archaeological features were found during the excavation of the trenches, It would seem that most of the new footings were in locations already disturbed by buried services and construction work relating to the building of the previous church hall (Pl. 1 to 4)

### **References**

- BGS, 1997, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet **287**, Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth.
- CIfA, 2014a, *Standards and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*, chartered Institute for Archaeologist, Reading.
- KKC 2016, Specification for an archaeological watching brief in Kent, Kent Heritage Conservation Group, Kent County Council, Maidstone.
- NPPF, 2019, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO).

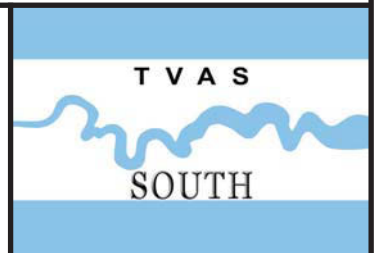


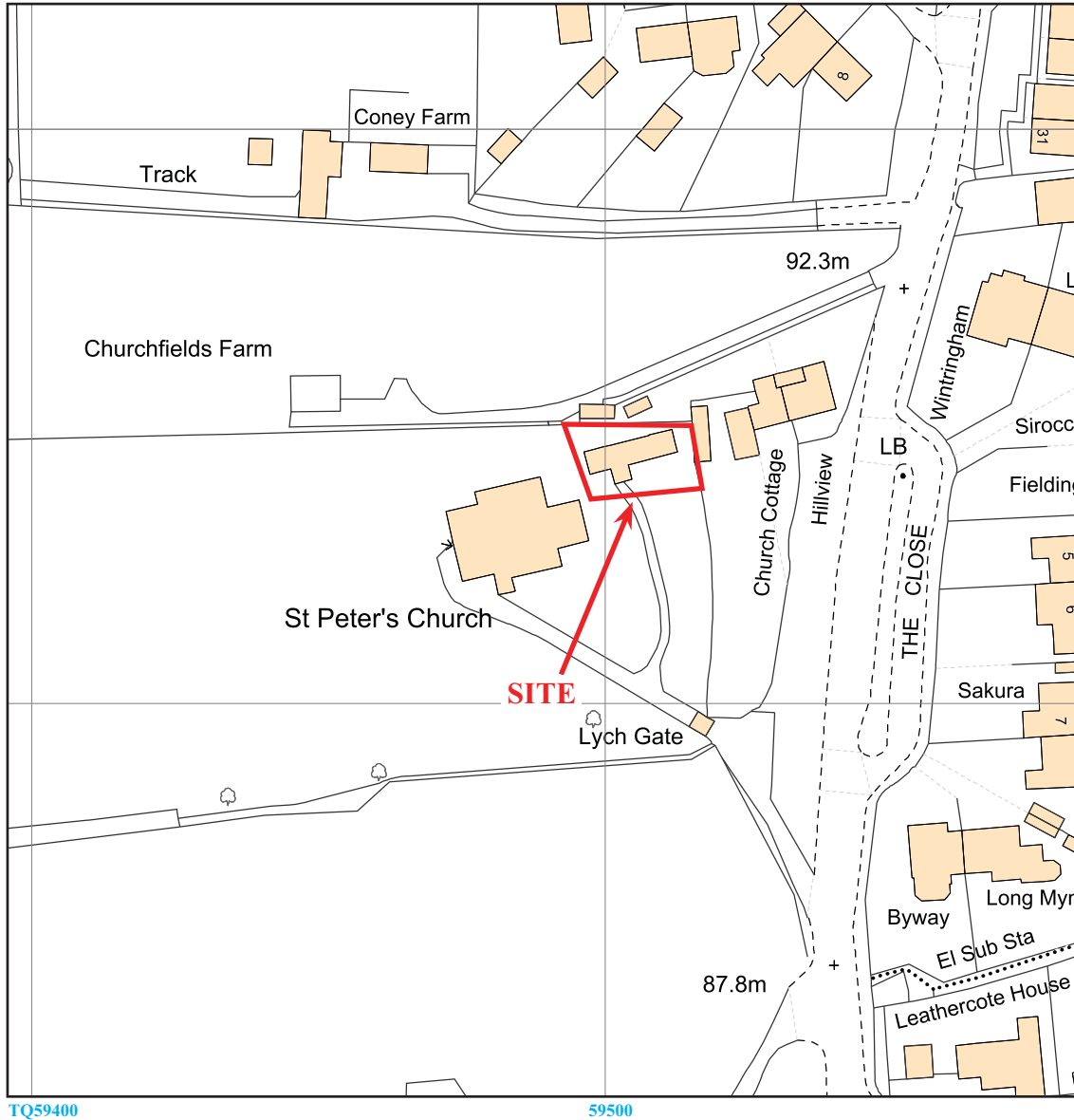


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Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 1. Location of site within Ightham and Kent.

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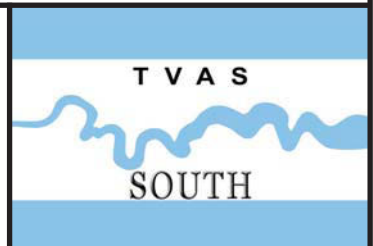




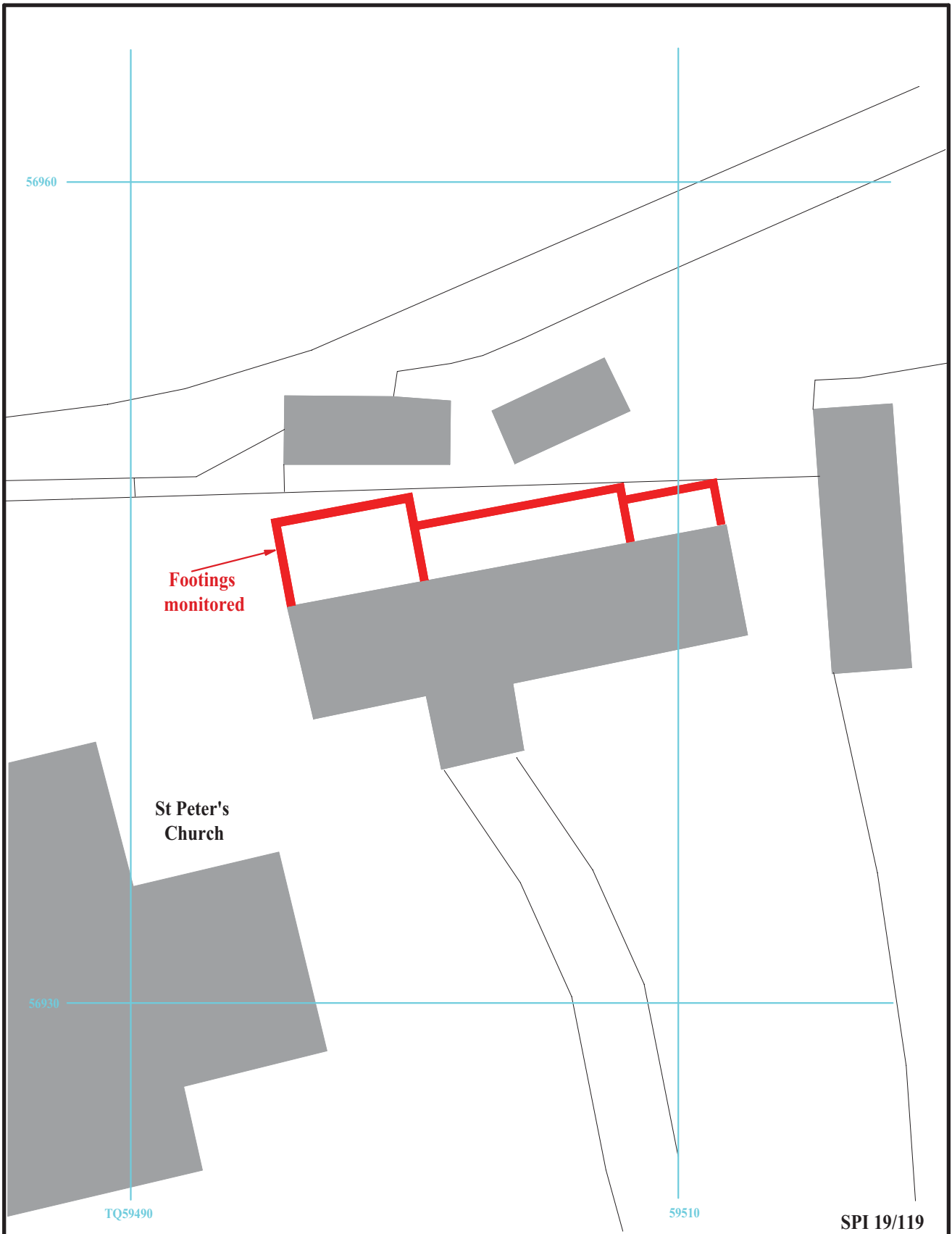
SPI 19/119

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**Archaeological Watching Brief**  
 Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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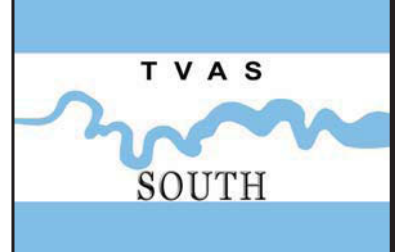






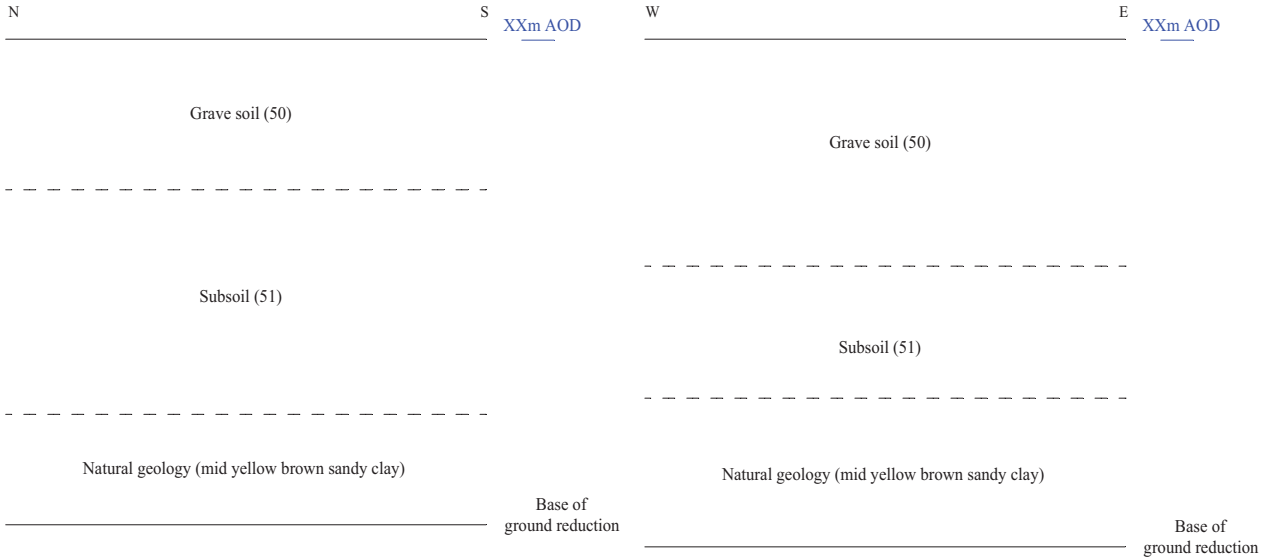
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Ightham, Kent, 2019  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 3. Site plan showing area monitored.

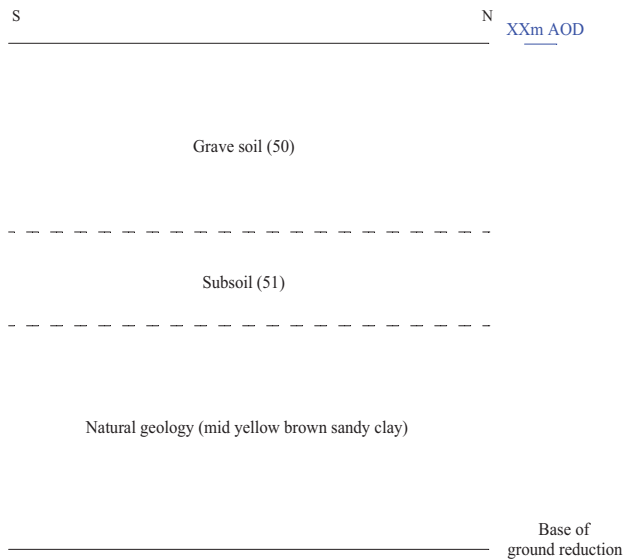


**Eastern footing stratigraphy**

**Northern footing stratigraphy**



**Western footing stratigraphy**



SPI 19/119

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Ightham, Kent, 2019  
Archaeological Watching Brief**

Figure 4. Representative sections.

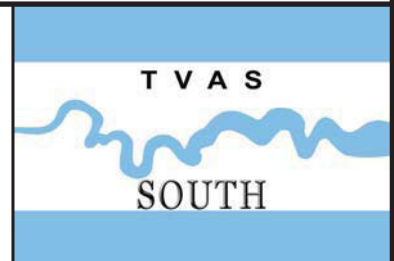




Plate 1. Detailed stratigraphy, looking East.  
Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Footing of rear extension, looking East.  
Scales: 2m and 1m.



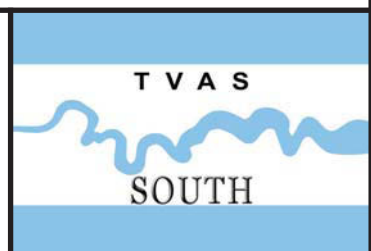
Plate 3. Detailed stratigraphy, looking North.  
Scales: 1m.



Plate 4. Footing of rear extension, looking West.  
Scales: 2m and 1m.

SPI 19/119

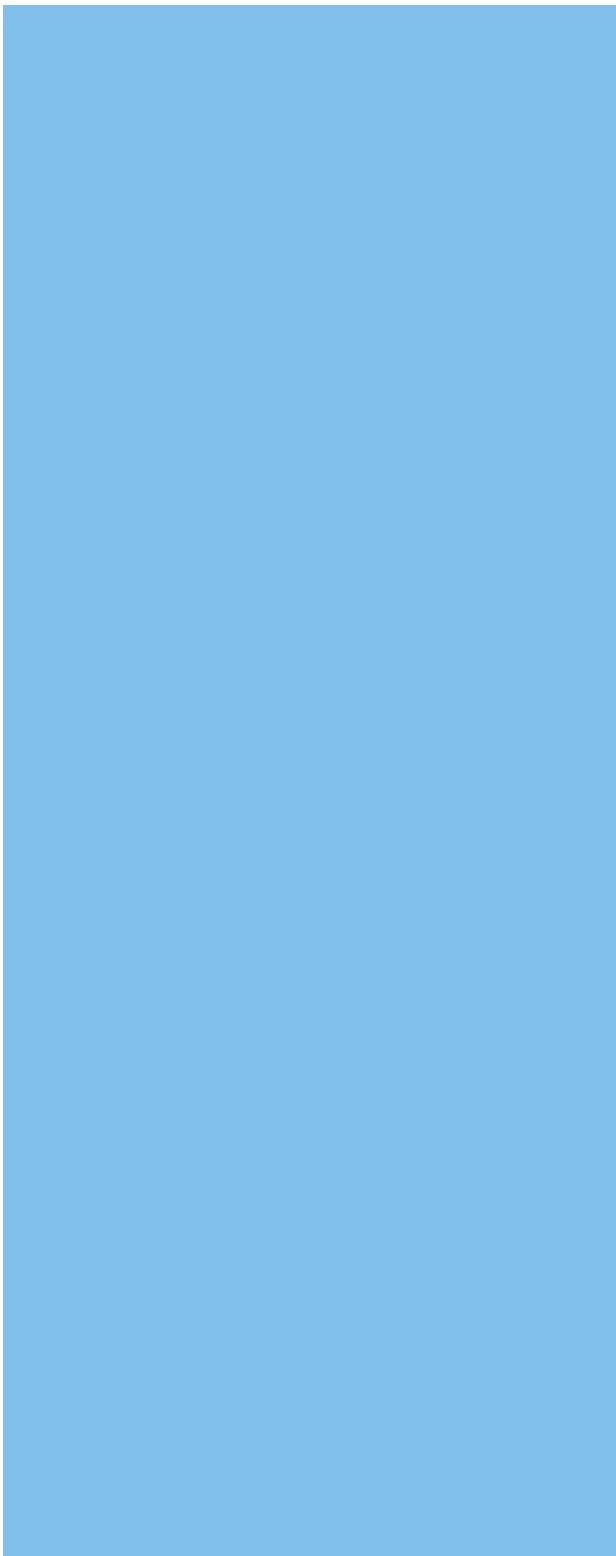
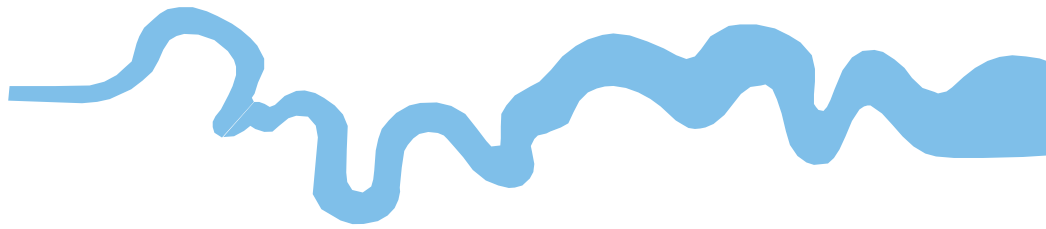
**Church Hall Extension, St Peter's Church,  
Ightham, Kent, 2019  
Archaeological Watching Brief  
Plates 1 to 4.**



## 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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