

## **ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, TURVEY, BEDFORDSHIRE**

### **Archaeological Observation, Recording and Reporting**

Albion Archaeology Project No: AST 1309

Report No: 2007/116

Issue Date: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007

### **Introduction**

Albion Archaeology was invited by Bruce Deacon Architect Ltd to carry out archaeological observation of improvement works at All Saints' Church, Turvey, Bedfordshire (NGR: SP 9430 5245). The church stands at the north-western edge of the village of Turvey, which is located seven miles west of Bedford (Fig. 1). The attendance of an archaeologist had been requested by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor as a precaution against the discovery of archaeological remains during the improvement works.

The fieldwork was undertaken by David Ingham (Archaeological Project Officer), who also prepared this report; the illustration is by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).

### **Historical Background**

The village of Turvey is Anglo-Saxon in origin, with Turvey Manor mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. All Saints' Church is also known to predate the Conquest of 1066; part of its original nave is still extant. The church was subsequently expanded and altered on numerous occasions between the early 13th and late 16th centuries, with the last major programme of structural alteration taking place in 1852.

### **Project Methodology**

All groundworks associated with the improvement works were archaeologically monitored and recorded. Methods employed during the project complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (1999), English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991), and Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual* (2001).

A copy of this report and the project archive will be deposited with the Bedford Museum (Accession no. BEDFM 2007.654).

### **Works Description**

The improvement works comprised the installation of kitchen and toilet facilities within the base of the tower. This involved the removal of the wooden floor in the tower; the excavation of water main and sewer trenches, 0.3m wide, 0.6m deep and approximately 43m and 4m long respectively; and the excavation of a soak-away trench 1m wide, 10m long and 0.7m deep (Fig. 1). The trenches were excavated using a mechanical digger under archaeological supervision.

The floor was removed on 31st October 2007, following which the trenches were excavated between 6th and 12th November 2007.

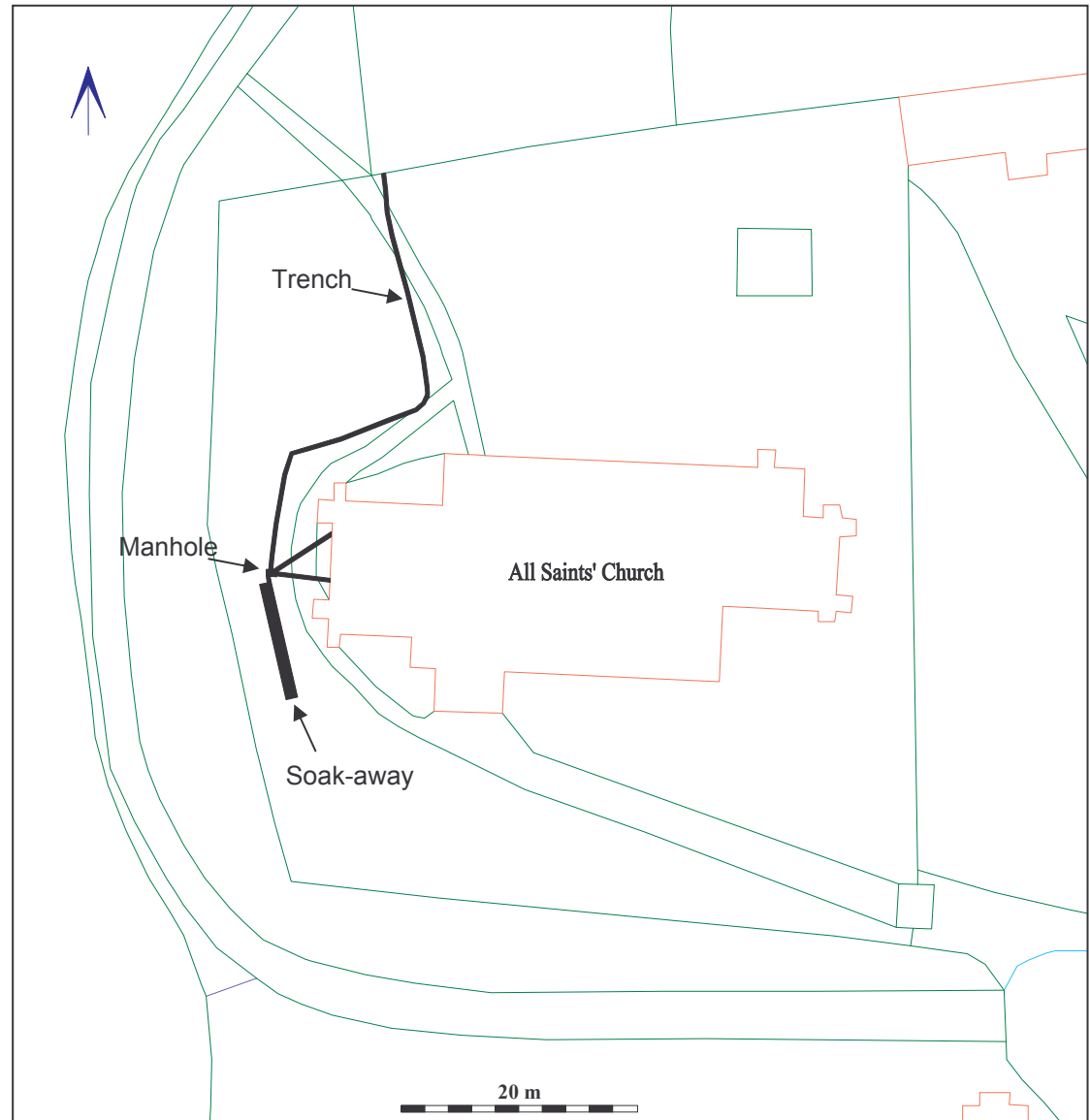
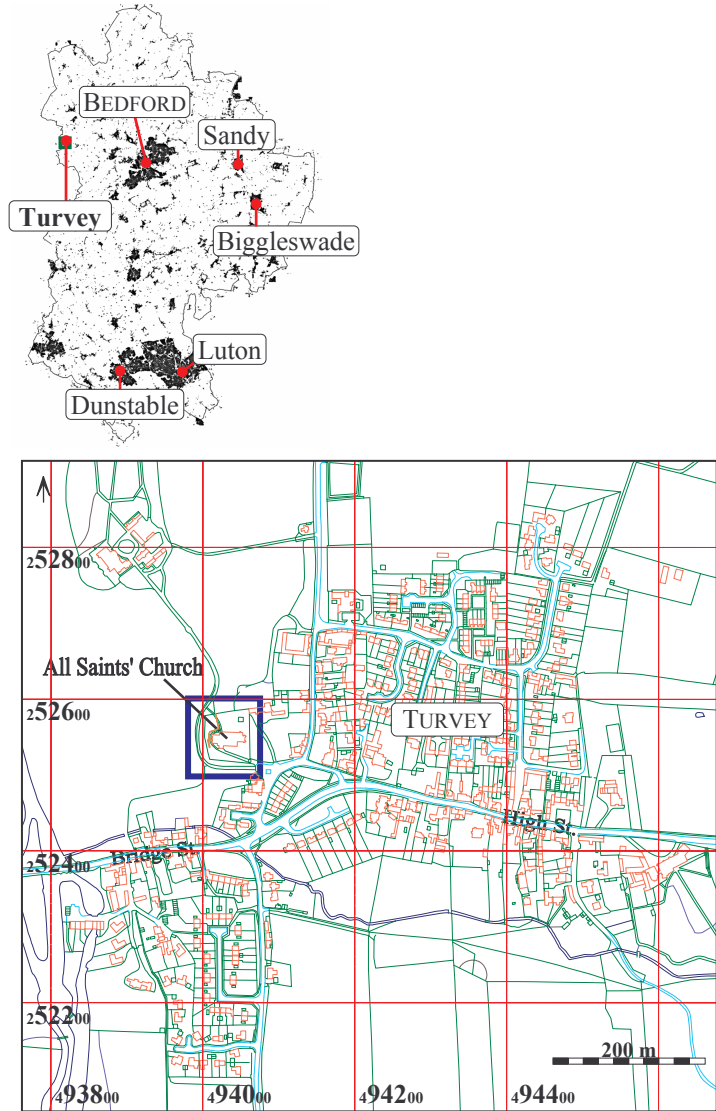
## **Results**

Removal of the wooden floor in the tower showed the ground beneath to comprise rough stone, with two shallow channels cut through it on an east–west alignment. The floor had been supported on concrete lintels (Fig. 2).

Excavation of the trenches revealed no features or deposits of archaeological significance. The soil profile comprised 0.1m of dark brown topsoil beneath the turf, overlying a layer of mid to dark brown sandy silt subsoil which extended beneath the base of the trenches. Human bone and a small amount of animal bone were encountered periodically, but no articulated skeletal remains were exposed.

## **Conclusions**

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed during the course of the improvement works. A likely reason for this is that the service trenches were not deep enough to encounter archaeological remains. The depth of soil present in the churchyard may indicate that the subsoil represents a layer of made ground.



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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Excavation of the water main trench in progress



Stone base beneath tower floor

**Figure 2:** Selected photographs