

**THE OLD RECTORY
CHURCH LANE, CHATTERIS
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**

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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the project specification. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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Key Terms

Throughout this report, the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CAPCA	The Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning & Countryside Advice office
CHER	Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Mr Malcolm Watson and monitored on behalf of the LPA by Kasia Gdaniec of CAPCA. The fieldwork was carried out by Christiane Meckseper (Project Officer) who also prepared this report, with figures by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).



Non-Technical Summary

The renewal of part of a boundary wall along with the removal and planting of trees was carried out during March and July 2009 at The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Chatteris.

Because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site, a condition was attached to the permission requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This programme comprised the monitoring of building works and the investigation and recording of any features of interest that were revealed.

Excavations associated with the building works comprised the removal of the old wall foundation resulting in a trench 1.60m deep, 0.80m wide at the base and up to 1.00m wide at the top. Deposits observed within the side of the trench consisted of made-up ground of garden soil, building debris and natural clay.

Smaller more shallow excavations were carried out to remove one large tree and its root bowl and to plant three saplings.

No deposits, features or finds of archaeological interest were encountered within any of the excavations carried out during the building or landscaping works.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission has been granted for the renewal of part of the boundary wall between St Peter and St Paul's Church and The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Chatteris (ref. F/YR08/0832/F).

Because of the archaeological sensitivity of the site, a condition was attached to the permission requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. In order to discharge the condition, Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the archaeological work.

The LPA's archaeological adviser, Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice office (CAPCA), issued a brief (CAPCA 2008) detailing the requirements for this work, which was to comprise archaeological monitoring, recording and investigation where required. Albion Archaeology provided a project specification for the archaeological works (Albion Archaeology 2008) that was approved by CAPCA before commencement of the fieldwork.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The Old Rectory lies in the centre of Chatteris, to the east of the Church of St Peter and St Paul, and is centred on grid reference TL39570 86070 (Figure 1).

The section of boundary wall to be replaced lay to the west of the Old Rectory and extended *c.* 25m northwards from a row of outbuildings to meet up with a wall that formed the northern boundary of the Old Rectory and the churchyard.

The geology of the area comprises Ampthill Clay, with the land surface lying at a height of around 9m OD.

1.3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

The Old Vicarage and the adjacent 14th-century parish church of St Peter and St Paul (CHER 3701) lie in the medieval core of Chatteris.

Two archaeological evaluations have taken place in the vicinity of the Church and Rectory (Figure 1). In 2000, an investigation of the land to the north of the church revealed features containing prehistoric and 1st-century AD remains (CHER CB15323). Findings from the site indicated the possible site of a Bronze Age barrow and pointed to the nearby presence of late Iron Age/Roman period settlement. Despite the site's proximity to the medieval core of Chatteris, no medieval archaeology was found.

Further to the north, another evaluation in 2006 identified significant early Iron Age remains including inhumations and extensive evidence for settlement (CHER MCB17496).



1.4 Project Objectives

The specific objectives of the fieldwork were to:

- Monitor all significant groundworks that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains.
- Record those works and investigate any archaeological deposits encountered within them.

The broader objective of the archaeological works was to add to the knowledge and understanding of archaeological activity in the area and produce a report for deposition in the appropriate archive that fully describes the archaeological work



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Standards

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were followed:

- Albion Archaeology. *Procedures Manual for Archaeological Fieldwork* (2001)
- English Heritage. *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991)
- IfA. *Code of Conduct* (1999)
- IfA. *Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (1999) and *the Analysis of Fieldwork Records* (2001)

2.2 Description of Works

The renewal of the boundary wall involved the removal of the existing brick footings of the previously demolished wall and the preparation of the resulting trench to accommodate the concrete foundations of the new wall.

A substantial tree adjacent to the boundary in The Old Rectory garden was also removed and three new sycamore trees were planted on the churchyard side of the new wall.

2.3 Archive

The archive for the site comprising original records, photographs and supporting documentation will be deposited with the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeology Store.

A copy of this report will also be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's online OASIS database.



3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

The archaeological works were undertaken between 24th March and 8th July 2009. During that time, all groundworks which required monitoring were completed.

The old brick footings of the boundary wall were broken up and removed by machine. The resulting trench was cleaned out and squared up by the building contractor and measured 1.60m deep, 0.80m wide at the base and up to 1.00m wide at the top (Figures 1 to 3).

The remains of a shallow, modern, brick wall foundation, *c.* 0.30m wide and on an east-west alignment, were observed 4m to the north of the existing outbuildings (Figure 1). It is not clear whether this wall formed part of a structure, possibly associated with the adjacent outbuildings, or part of a free standing boundary wall.

The deposits observed within the side of the trench consisted of made-up ground of garden soil and building debris. The majority of the material was possibly deposited during recent re-landscaping of The Old Rectory gardens. Natural clay was encountered at a depth of 1.50-1.60m below present ground level.

The removal of the large tree and its root bowl on the Old Rectory side of the boundary necessitated a reduction in ground level of around 0.40m in an area measuring *c.* 2.0 x 2.0m in extent.

The planting of the three saplings on the churchyard side of the boundary involved the hand excavation of three small box trenches measuring *c.* 0.55 x 0.80m in width and 0.60m in depth. Deposits observed within the trenches consisted of made-up ground and re-deposited clayey topsoil.

No deposits, features or finds of archaeological interest were encountered within any of the excavations associated with the building or landscaping works.

The lack of archaeological findings within the excavations is probably a reflection of their limited extent combined with the severely disturbed nature of the ground particularly within the foundation trench. If archaeological remains are present in the vicinity, it is unlikely that they would have been revealed within the monitored excavations.



4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2009. *The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire: Specification for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*. Document 2009/06.

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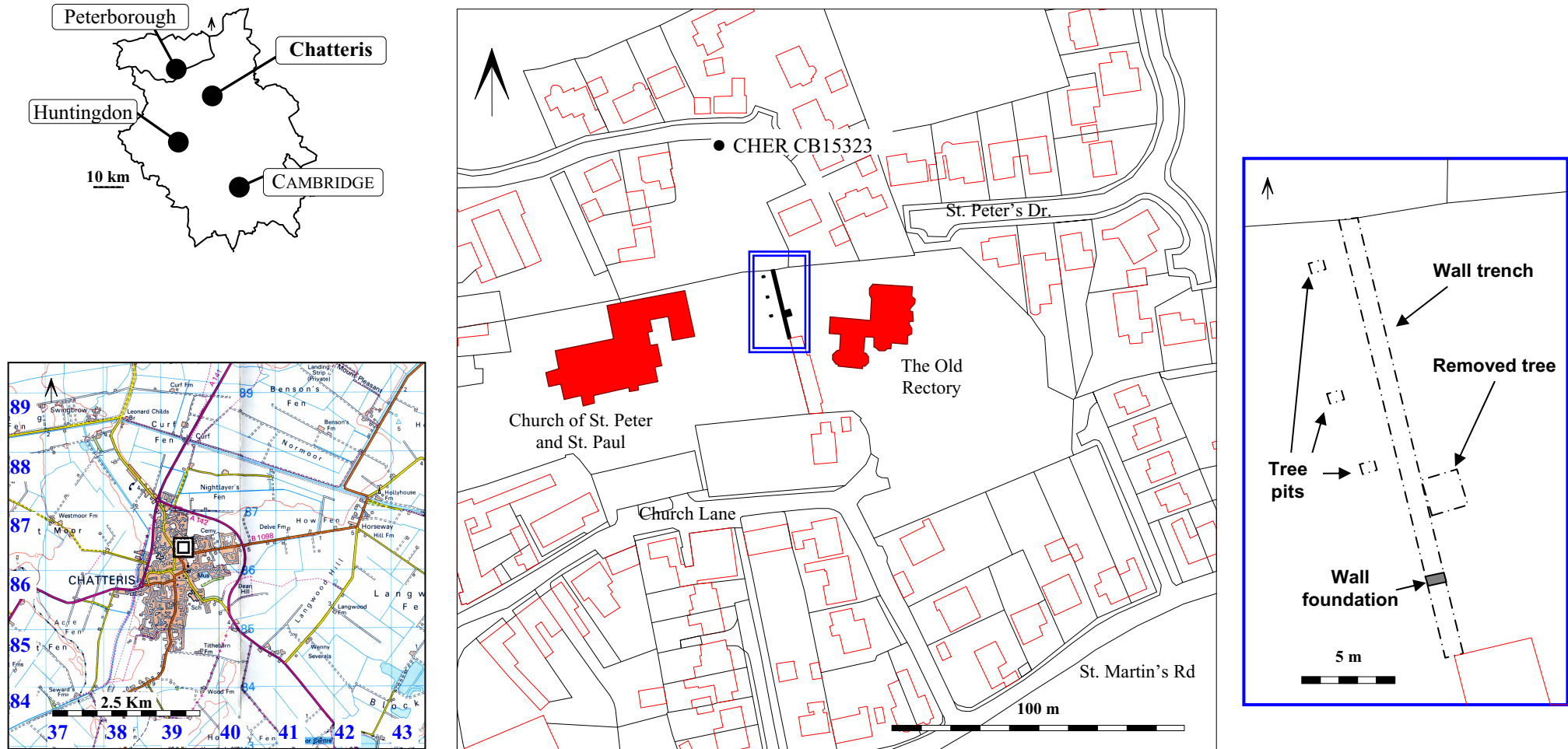


Figure 1: Site location plan

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Figure 2: Wall foundation trench looking north



Figure 3: Wall foundation trench looking south