

ST MARY'S CHURCH
Church Road
Hanwell
W7 3BJ

London Borough of Ealing

An archaeological watching brief report
Site code: SYZ10

February 2010

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Site code: SYZ10
National Grid Reference: 514781 180725

Project Manager: Jo Lyon
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Summary (non-technical)

This report has been commissioned by St Mary's Church, Hanwell, in order to record and assess the results of a watching brief carried out in the churchyard of St Mary's Church, Hanwell.

The excavation of a test pit for the investigation of the chancel foundations was monitored on the 1st of February 2010. The work entailed raising a late 18th/early 19th-century stone ledger of the Carr family, which had apparently been relocated since no evidence for burials or for a brick-lined grave was seen beneath. Originally the ledger may have marked a burial plot on the east side of the 1841 church, and it was probably moved when the chancel was built in 1897.

The test pit revealed substantial footings of the south wall of the chancel, which were made of dark red brick and were stepped towards the bottom. Its construction trench was filled with firm brown clay, with occasional pebbles, fragments of slate, red brick and yellow brick and roots. What was interpreted as natural ground was observed at 21.34m OD.

No evidence for burials or significant archaeological remains was observed.

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8.1 OASIS ID: molas1-724128

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1 Introduction

1.1 Site background

The watching brief took place in the churchyard of St Mary's Church, Hanwell, W7, hereafter called 'the site'. The site is located at the west end of Church road, on the north side of the road (see Fig 1). The centre of the site is at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference 514781 180725. Modern ground level immediately adjacent to the site is 22.3m OD. The site code is SYZ10.

The site lies within an 'Archaeological Interest Area' as defined by the local authority (LBE 2004, map 9), and the Victorian parish church, designed by Gilbert Scott, is a Grade II* listed building. The churchyard was closed for burial in 1885 (Matthew Grayshon, pers comm).

The watching brief was undertaken to monitor the excavation of a test pit against the south side of the chancel. The test pit was dug to investigate the foundations of the chancel following the development of a vertical crack in the south wall.

1.2 Planning background

The excavation of the test pit was undertaken with the permission of the Diocesan Registrar.

1.3 Origin and scope of the report

This report was commissioned by St Mary's Church, Hanwell, and produced by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA). The report has been prepared within the terms of the relevant Standard specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA 2001).

The purpose of the watching brief was to determine whether archaeological remains or features were present on the site and, if so, to record the nature and extent of such remains.

1.4 Aims and objectives

No site specific research aims and objectives were established beyond the generic ones listed below:

- What is the nature and significance of the surviving archaeological remains?
- What are the levels of natural deposits and how do these compare to adjacent sites?

All research is undertaken within the priorities established in the Museum of London's *A research framework for London Archaeology*, 2002.

2 Topographical and historical background

2.1 Topography

The site lies on London Clay, which is capped immediately to the south by Taplow Gravel (British Geological Survey 1993). The site is on a spur of high ground overlooking the valley of the River Brent. The river is c 100m to the west.

2.2 Saxon

The site fell within the manor (estate) or Hanwell. This probably originally included New Brentford, and formed a strip of land along the eastern side of the River Brent, extending down to its confluence with the River Thames (VCH Middlesex iii, 224–225). The name is probably derived from a spring close to the church (*ibid*), or from the Old English *hana* (cock) and *wielle* (stream) (Mills 2001, 102).

In 1886, several Saxon graves of the late 5th or 6th century were found at the site of Oaklands School, c 1.5km to the south-east of the site, together with other finds nearby (VCH Middlesex iii, 220–4; GLSMR ref. 052620). The settlement to which they belonged may have been connected with the Uxbridge Road or with a track running north from Brentford. Uxbridge Road is likely to be the *via publica* recorded in a charter dated to AD 716–57 (Gelling 1979, no. 198). According to a charter dated c AD 1100, land at Hanwell with 8 dwellings was granted to Westminster Abbey by Archbishop Dunstan in the 10th century (VCH Middlesex iii, 224–5).

2.3 Medieval

Hanwell manorial estate is mentioned in Domesday Book (1086), when it had a population of seventeen (this probably included a settlement at New Brentford, which was included in the entry), along with a mill. The people of the village would have been largely occupied in subsistence arable farming, and wheat may have been a principal crop (VCH Middlesex, 226–8).

A church was established on the site by the 12th century, which formed the focus for the later medieval settlement. There is a picture of the medieval church in the rector's vestry (Grayshon 2008, 1).

2.4 Post-medieval

The medieval church was replaced in 1782 by a rectangular brick church. A pen and wash picture (1795) and an engraving (1809) of the second church, both by anonymous artists, were published by Lysons (Guildhall Library Print Room cat. nos. k1248854, k1249090).

The present church, designed by Gilbert Scott, was built in 1841. Its exterior walls are mainly constructed of flint and mortar, with stone and brick dressings. A lithograph by Thomas Pickens shows the newly built church with three lancet windows at its east end (Guildhall Library Print Room cat. no. k1249210).

The chancel was built in 1897. Its walls are made of similar materials to the 1841 church, but the flints are not quite so closely spaced.

3 The watching brief

3.1 Methodology

All archaeological excavation and recording during the watching brief was done in accordance with the *Method Statement* set out in an email (Jo Lyon, 28 January 2010) and the *Archaeological Site Manual* (Museum of London 1994).

A ledger (see Section 3.2) partially overlying the site of the proposed test pit was recorded in situ. It was then raised 0.64m and suspended above the ground on a scaffold frame. The test pit was then excavated against the south wall of the chancel with a mini-excavator and by hand with mattock and shovel by the contractor. The author closely monitored the excavation and assisted with the hand digging.

The location of the test pit was recorded by the author by offsetting from the south wall of the chancel and its corner buttress. Following the watching brief this information was digitally plotted by best fit onto the Ordnance Survey grid.

The heights of observations were recorded relative to Ordnance Datum by measuring down from the base of a limestone offset course (value 22.64m OD) in the adjacent chancel wall. This course extended along the south side of the church (at the same level) to the south-west porch, where an Ordnance Survey benchmark (value 22.53m OD) was located 0.11m below it.

Where relevant, plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and numbered contexts were allocated where appropriate.

The site has produced: 1 test pit location plan; 1 context register, 1 trench record sheet, 4 context records; 2 1:20 scale plans; 1 digital photograph.

The site records can be found under the site code SYZ10 in the MOL archive.

3.2 Results of the watching brief

The test pit was excavated by a contractor to investigate the foundations of the south wall of the chancel. There follows a brief description of the deposits as recorded. For the test pit location see Fig 2

<i>Watching Brief Test Pit 1</i>	
Location	Against the outer face of the south wall of the chancel and its south-east corner buttress.
Dimensions	2.20m east–west by 0.75m north–south, excavated to a maximum depth of 1.20m
Modern ground level/top of slab	22.30m OD
Base of topsoil	c 22.10m OD
Depth of archaeological deposits seen	No significant archaeological deposits seen
Level of base of deposits observed	N/A
Natural (London Clay) observed	21.34m OD

A rectangular stone ledger [1] with slightly bevelled upper edges partly overlay the site of the proposed test pit. Most of its upper surface was at ground level, although

its south-east corner was overlaid by a path. The surface of the slightly obscured by lichen and moss, but the inscription it bore was still mainly decipherable. The inscription was also noted in a record of monuments kept in the church vestry:

‘Thomas Carr son of William and Ann Carr of Bond Street who died December 22nd 1790 aged 1 month and 3 days. Also the body of William Carr son of the said William and Anne Carr died June 18th 1801 aged 19 years and 4 months An amiable youth who lived beloved and died regretted by all who knew him’.

The ledger was aligned west–east. It was 1.97m long, 0.95m wide and 140–150mm thick. Apparently it had been moved from its original, for when the ledger was raised there was no evidence for burials or for a brick-lined grave beneath it. It seems likely that this occurred during the construction of the chancel in 1897. A number of 19th-century headstones next to the path on the east side of the church also appear to have been relocated. Originally the ledger and the headstones probably marked burials on the east side of the 1841 church.

The earliest deposit revealed by the test pit consisted of firm brown clay [4], probably London Clay, which contained occasional fine flint pebbles, rootlets and small fragments/ flecks of red brick. The latter may have been introduced by root disturbance, although it is possible that the clay was redeposited. The truncated upper surface of the clay was at 21.34m OD. The clay was excavated to a depth of 0.26m.

A construction trench for the south wall chancel wall cut the clay. The wall footings [3] were founded directly on top of the clay [4]. They were made of dark red brick (100–104 x 58–64 x 220–222mm) bonded with yellow sandy mortar and laid in English bond. Towards the bottom the footings were stepped. The brickwork was 0.96m high. The overlying superstructure mainly comprises pieces of dark grey/black flint (40–100mm in diameter) bonded with grey mortar containing frequent fine pebbles.

The construction cut was filled with firm brown clay [2] (redeposited London Clay), which contained occasional flint pebbles, fragments of slate, red brick, yellow (London Stock) brick and roots.

No evidence for burials or significant archaeological remains was observed.

4 Potential of archaeology

4.1 Original research aims

See results (Section 3.2).

4.2 Significance of the data

No significant archaeological remains were seen.

5 Publication and archiving

Information on the results of the excavation will be made publicly available by means of a database in digital form, to permit inclusion of the site data in any future academic researches into the development of London.

The site archive containing original records will be stored with the Museum of London within two months of the end of the watching brief.

In view of the extremely limited potential of the material (Sections 4) and significance of the data (Section 4.2) it is suggested that a short note on the results of the watching brief should appear in the annual round up of the *London Archaeologist*.

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6 Acknowledgements

The watching brief was commissioned by the Reverend Matthew Grayshon, rector of St Mary's Church, Hanwell.

The author would like to thank the following for their contributions and help in producing this report: Revd Matthew Grayshon and Dave Sebuyira (contractor) for their assistance during the fieldwork, Jo Lyon for project management and Catherine Drew for the preparation of digital plans.

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8 NMR OASIS archaeological report form

8.1 OASIS ID: molas1-72412

Project details

Project name	St Mary's Church, Church Road, Hanwell, W7 3BJ
Short description of the project	A test pit for the investigation of the chancel foundations revealed London Clay and stepped brick footings of the south wall. A late 18th/early 19th-century stone ledger of the Carr family partially overlay the test pit. It had apparently been relocated since no evidence for burials or brick grave was seen beneath. Originally it may have marked a burial plot on the east side of the 1841 church, and was probably moved when the chancel was built in 1897.
Project dates	Start: 01-02-2010 End: 01-02-2010
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	SYZ10 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	CHURCH Post Medieval
Monument type	GRAVESTONE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	'Watching Brief'
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction

Project location

Country	England
Site location	GREATER LONDON EALING HANWELL St Mary's Church, Church Road, Hanwell, W7 3BJ
Postcode	W7 3BJ
Study area	3.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 14781 80725 51.5132845335 -0.345706644951 51 30 47 N 000 20 44 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 21.34m Max: 21.34m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	MOL Archaeology
Project brief originator	Self (i.e. landowner, developer, etc.)
Project design originator	MOL Archaeology
Project director/manager	Jo Lyon
Project supervisor	Robert Cowie
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Name of sponsor/funding body	St Mary's Church

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	LAARC

Digital Archive ID SYZ10

Paper Archive recipient LAARC

Paper Archive ID SYZ10

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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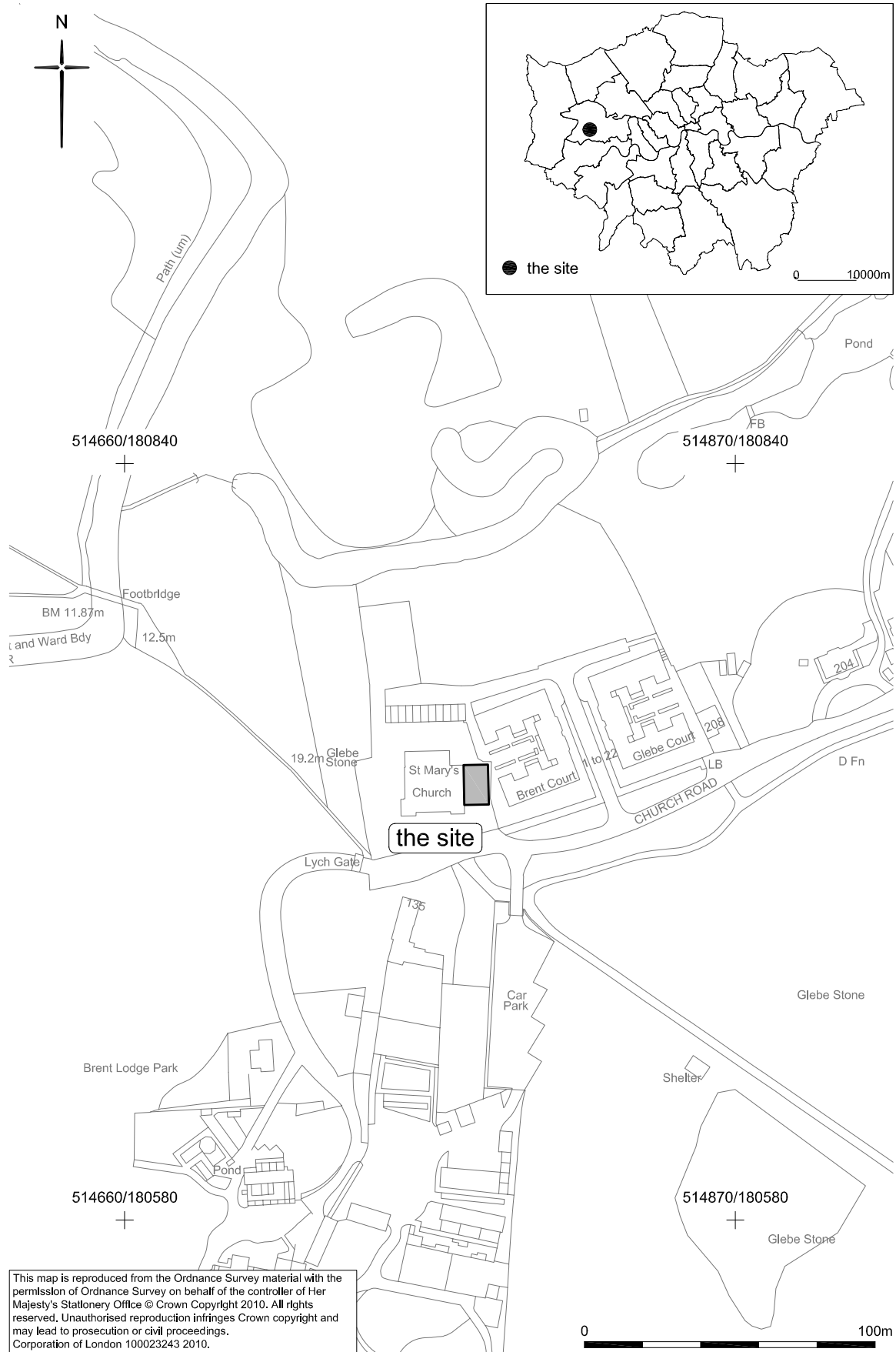
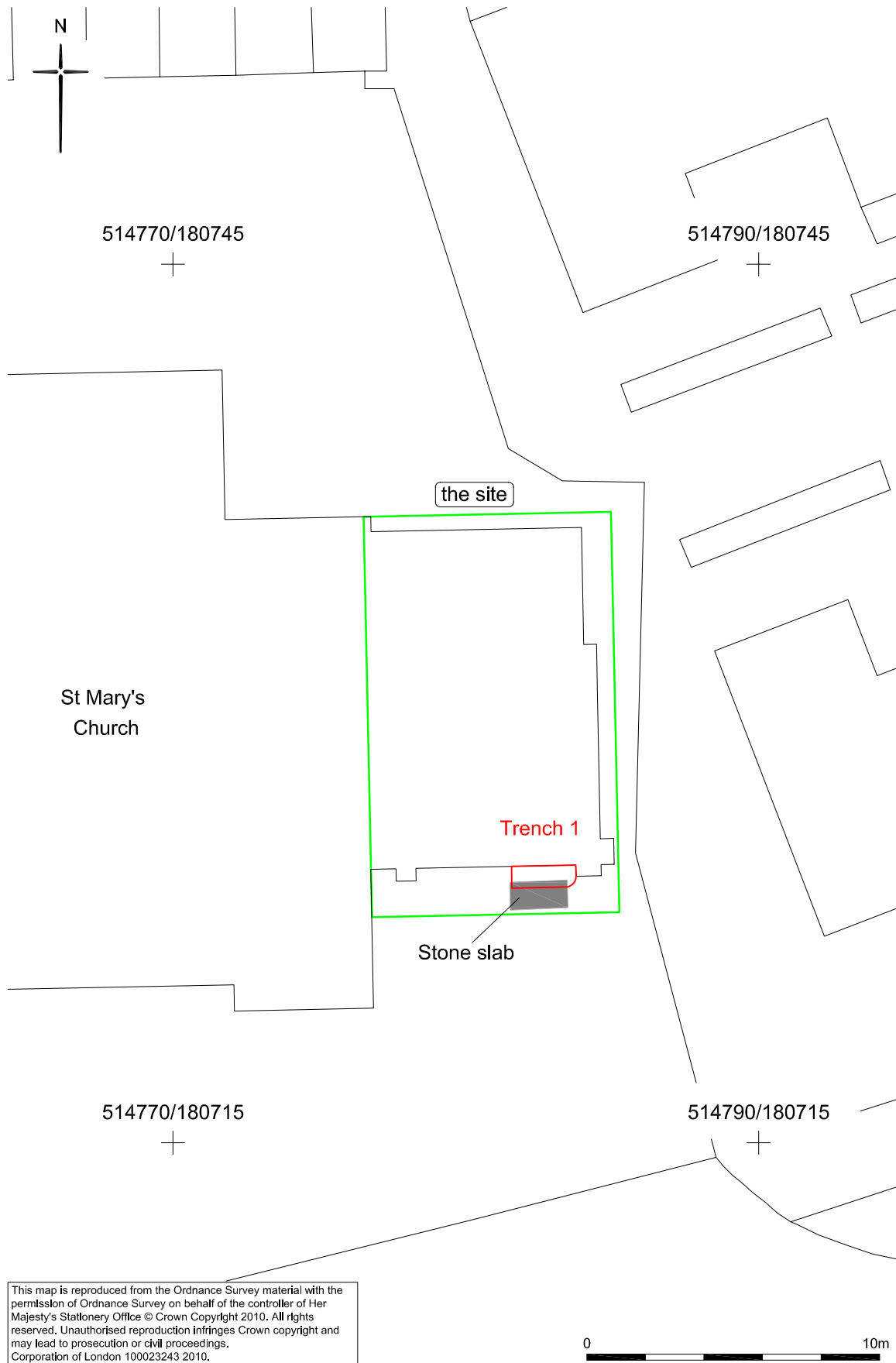


Fig 1 Site location



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Fig 2 Trench location