



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Pendock Old Church, Worcestershire excavation of engineering test pits March 2010



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Northamptonshire
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Report 10/104
June 2010



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QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Pendock Old Church; Excavation of Engineering Test Pits	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out the excavation of two small test pits at Pendock Old Church, Worcestershire to examine the foundations of the church and the vestry. One pit only required the formalisation of a series of rabbit holes whilst the other was excavated largely within construction levels for the vestry and its later supporting buttress. No significant archaeological levels were encountered.	
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Test pit excavation	
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	Grade 1 listed	
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)		
Current Land use	Church and burial ground	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	unknown	
Monument type/ period	Church	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Worcestershire	
Site address (including postcode)	Pendock Old Church, Pendock, Worcestershire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	1sq m	
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. letters)	SO 818 339	
Height OD	30m aOD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Rodney Melville and Partners	
Project Design originator	NA	
Director/Supervisor	I Meadows	
Project Manager	I Meadows	
Sponsor or funding body	Churches Conservation Trust	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	22 March 2010	
End date	22 March 2010	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		
Digital		

Contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 METHODOLOGY**
- 3 THE WATCHING BRIEF**
 - 3.1 Pit 1**
 - 3.2 Pit 2**
- 4 CONCLUSION**
- BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Figures

Front cover: General view of Pendock Old Church

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Infill fillet between vestry and main church

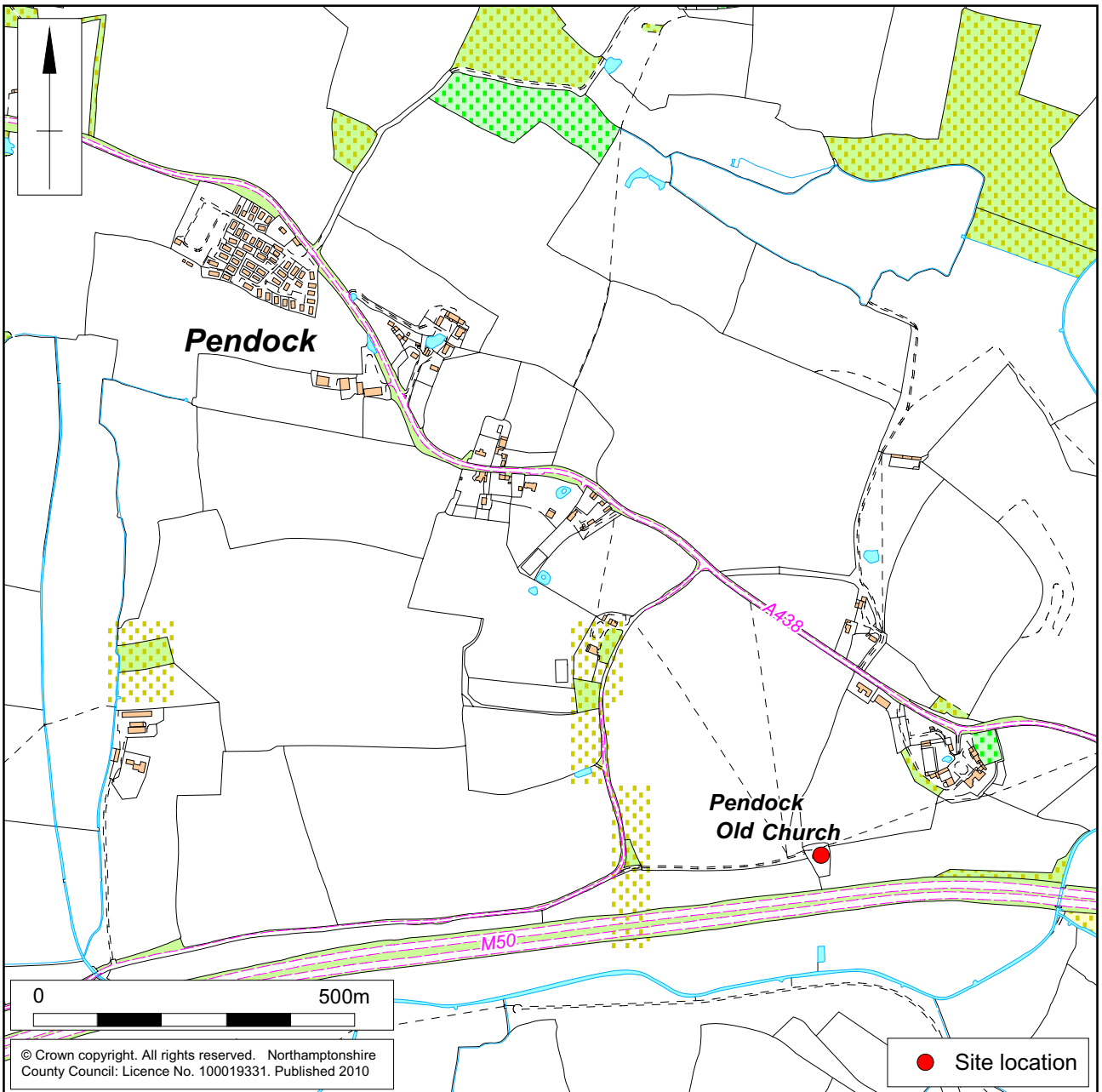
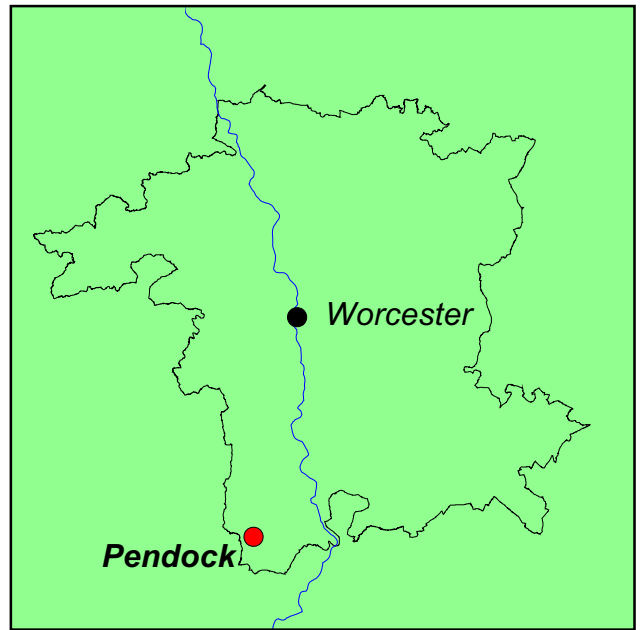
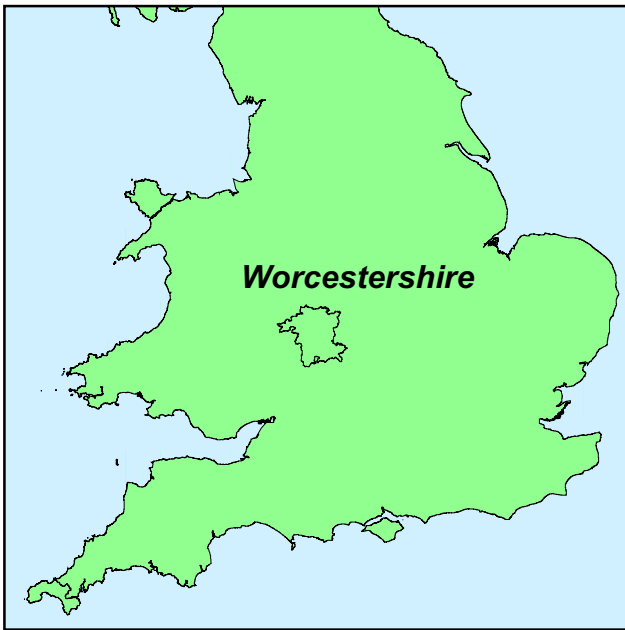
Fig 3: Plan of Pendock Old Church showing area of excavation

Fig 4: Cut for buttress foundation

Fig 5: Base of buttress foundation showing glazed brick/tile

Fig 6: Test pit 2 showing character of the east wall of the church

Back cover: General view of Pendock Old Church and vestry



Scale 1:10,000

Site Location Fig 1

PENDOCK OLD CHURCH
WORCESTERSHIRE
EXCAVATION OF ENGINEERING TEST PITS
MARCH 2010

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology excavated two small test pits at Pendock Old Church, Worcestershire, on behalf of the Churches Conservation Trust, in order to examine the foundations of the church and the vestry. One pit only required the formalisation of a series of rabbit holes whilst the other was excavated largely within construction levels for the vestry and its later supporting buttress. No significant archaeological levels were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

Pendock Old Church, Worcestershire (SO 818 339, Fig 1) is a Grade 1 listed building lying at some distance from the present village, although earthworks of a deserted village lie in the fields directly to the north of the church. The church is of mid-12th century date with 14th- and 15th-century additions. Concerns had been raised by the Churches Conservation Trust about fractures between the chancel and vestry (Fig 2). Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned to provide a watching brief by Rodney Melville and Partners, who are acting as Church Architects at Pendock Old Church for the Trust, for the excavation of two test pits to explore the character and depth of the foundations. The excavation of the test pits took place on 22 March 2010 with the Architect and Structural Engineer in attendance.

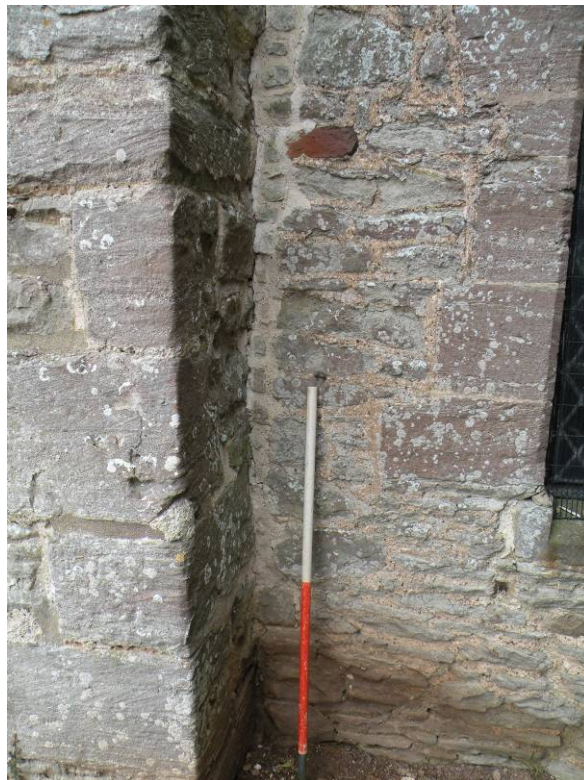
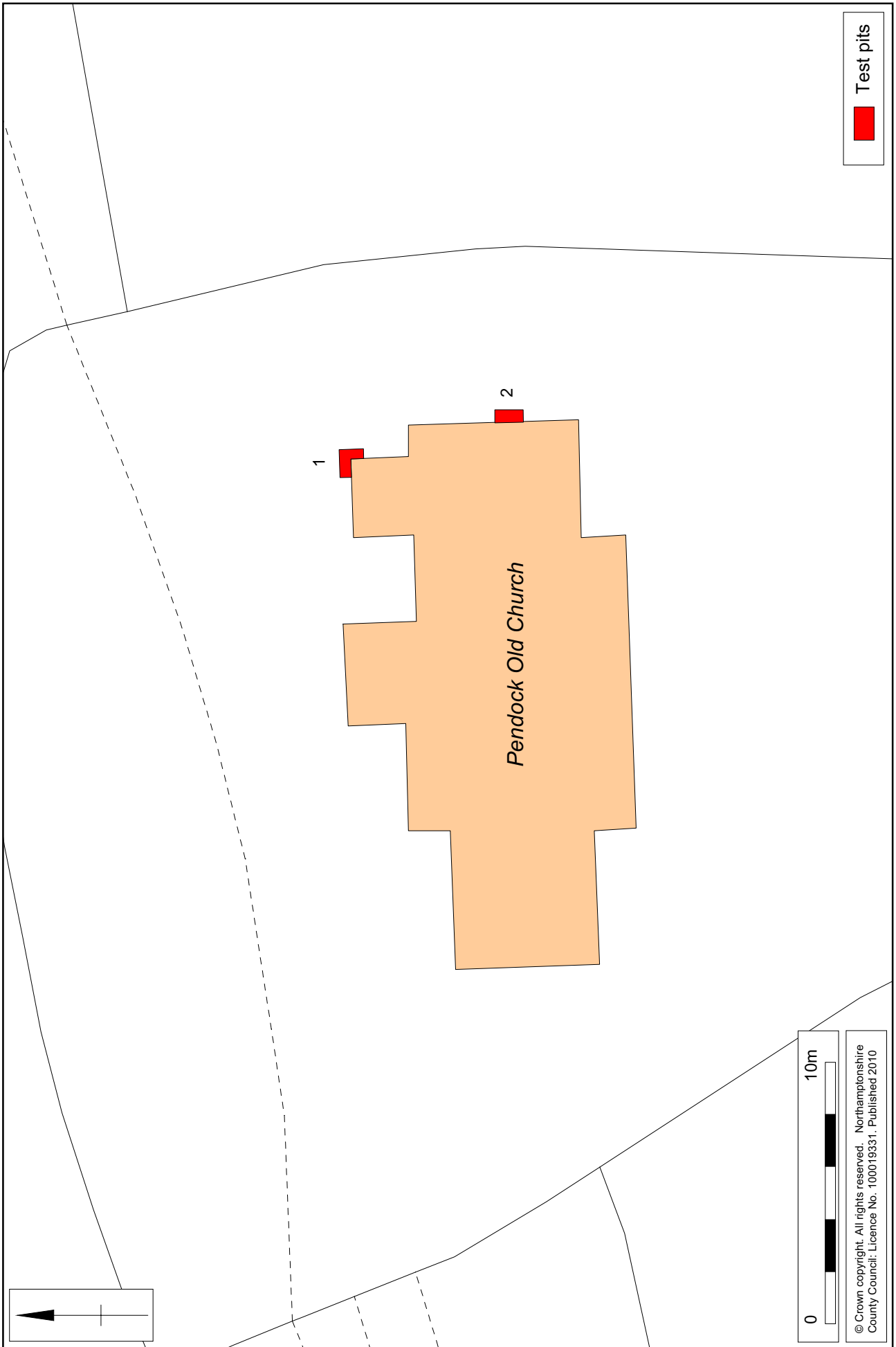


Fig 2 Infill fillet between vestry and main church



Scale 1:200

Plan of Pendock Old Church showing areas of excavation Fig 3

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2 METHODOLOGY

The structural engineer indicated two locations for the excavation of test pits; Pit 1 was at the north-east corner of the vestry and Pit 2 approximately at the mid point of the east wall of the nave (Fig 2). The former required excavation with a spade but the second simply entailed the re-excitation of a large rabbit hole.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)* and *Management of Research projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (EH 1991; 2006); and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2009) and *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (IfA 2008).

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

3.1 Pit 1

This pit was 0.35m wide and extended 0.20m along the east wall and 0.30m along the north wal. It was positioned to extend around the corner of the vestry between a small drain on the east and a buttress on the north. The thin (0.05m) topsoil was removed, this overlay a mixed deposit containing fragments of red clay roof tiles (identical to those currently on the roof) and mortar which extended to the base of the test pit (0.67m). This deposit was the infill of the foundation cut for the secondary buttress that rested against the north wall of the vestry (Fig 4).



Cut for buttress foundation Fig 4

The corner of the vestry wall was exposed to its full depth, a single course (0.20m) below the present ground surface, which sat directly upon a gravelly soil containing isolated medium sized stones. The buttress extended 0.30m below the present surface to a bed of concrete 0.10m thick which in turn overlay a rubble horizon of loosely deposited material, at least 0.15m thick, including fragments of roof tiles similar to those on the vestry roof and a cream colour glazed engineering brick/tile with distinctive 'reeding' on one face (Fig 5) other than the clay roof tiles (none of which were retained) the only other find was a short length of clay pipe stem (not retained).



Base of buttress foundation showing glazed brick/tile Fig 5

3.2 Pit 2

In the centre of the east wall a substantial amount of rabbit disturbance was evident, In order to expose the depth of the main churches foundations it was decided to formalise part of this disturbance to expose the face of the wall to its maximum depth. The test pit was located between two large grave slabs (Fig 6). Excavation of the loose rabbit disturbed soil exposed the face of the east wall to 0.60m, most of which comprised good masonry with the lowest 0.15m being less regular 'foundation' type material. The full depth of masonry could not be reached.



Test pit 2 showing character of the east wall of the church

Fig 6

4 CONCLUSION

Both pits were entirely excavated within graveyard soils and, as their purpose was to explore the footings of the building, did not extend to the underlying natural. In such small exposures, one of which was severely disturbed by rabbit burrowing activity, it is not possible to comment meaningfully about the deposits encountered. The pits did, however, demonstrate the foundation for the main body of the church extended to more than 0.60m below the present ground level whilst the vestry only reached 0.20m depth.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

EH 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects 2*, English Heritage

EH 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, English Heritage

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IfA 2009 *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists

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28 July 2010



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