

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Kings Nympton, North Devon	National Grid Reference: SS 68219 19457	Number:
Subject: Monitoring the lifting of the floor in the north transept and excavation of water and waste service trench at St. James' Church Kings Nympton		Photo attached? Yes
Planning Application no: N/A	OASIS ID: southwes1-132555	
Contractor's reference number/code: KNC11 and KNC12	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 28 th February 2011 & 27 th July 2012	
<p>South West Archaeology Ltd were commissioned by Reverend David Rudman to undertake archaeological monitoring during repair works to St. James' Church, Kings Nympton in 2011 and subsequently during service trenching in 2012.</p>		
<p>2011 Works: It was observed that upon the lifting of the floor boards in the north transept (Figure 1) that the beams sat directly upon a grey-yellow gritty silt-sand loam deposit with frequent mortar fragments, brick fragments, large (up to 150mm) sub-angular and dressed stones, and several small fragments of human bone (Photo 1). A large (and known) brick lined vault with steps (connected with the Furse family) was located in the south-west corner of the transept. One of the lifted floorboards bore crude 'E W' inscribed on its reverse face, presumably to ensure its correct orientation. However, given that the floor in the transept had been orientated north-south this may suggest that the floorboards had been re-used.</p>		
<p>A series of five (1m x 0.6m) small trial pits were excavated under archaeological supervision to the required formation level (approximately 0.15m below the previous floor level) within the north transept. This revealed that the rubble deposit continued to this level and was probably of late 19th century date as it overlay a layer of bricks across most of the western part of the transept, presumably associated with the Furse family vault.</p>		
<p>No finds were recovered from these investigations, and all human remains were re-interred inside the church.</p>		
<p>2012 Works: South West Archaeology observed the excavation of a service trench (0.6m wide x c.47m long x 0.5m deep) following the line of the footpath to the front of the church round to the south-west corner of the Church (Figure 1).</p>		
<p>Outside the churchyard (<i>i.e. the eastern end of the trench</i>) (Photo 2) A 0.05m layer of concrete scree over a cobbled surface of small to medium sub-angular to sub-rounded stones (max. 0.3x0.35x0.2m; most 0.2x0.05x0.1m). This overlay a thin (0.06m thick) grey, gritty silt-clay subsoil, which overlay a clean compact grey-yellow clay with occasional shillet fragments.</p>		
<p>Located 6.1m from the eastern end of the trench was a 0.6m wide x 0.05m deep cut with vertical sides and a flat base. This cut containing a single fill of grey-brown, gritty clay-silt which produced a single sherd of post-medieval North Devon Ware. Its morphology and proximity to a partially blocked window suggest that it was perhaps a robbed out dividing/connecting wall between the buildings on either side of the passageway.</p>		
<p>Inside the Churchyard (Photo 4 & 5) A steep sloping cut at the entrance of the churchyard (Photo 3) accommodates a dark brown clay-silt topsoil fill of 0.45-0.5m of with moderate roots. This deposit overlay a grey-yellow clay with common shillet bands and fragments, which appeared to be a layer of re-deposited natural subsoil. The cut at the edge of the churchyard and the re-deposited appearance of the subsoil are presumably associated with grave digging.</p>		
<p>Two 0.5m wide pipe trenches were observed with yellow glazed sewer pipes. One 1.6m into the churchyard. The other extending out from the buttress of the aisle.</p>		
<p>The only other feature which was observed, was a cut visible at the formation level where the trench met the wall of the church, this presumably relates either to the wall itself or brick drain that skirts it (Photo 6). Its fill, a dark brown clay-silt with moderate small sub-angular stones and occasional slates contained soft white lime mortar fragments.</p>		
<p>The finds The finds were all from the topsoil and subsequently discarded. These included a small range of ceramics sherds including: 1x WRE (2g), 1x post-med North Devon gravel-tempered (22g); 1x post-med North Devon gravel-free</p>		

(27g); 2x 18th century North Devon gravel-tempered (13g); 3x bone china (15g). The non-ceramic finds included 1x 18th century clay pipe stem (5g); 1x North Devon gravel tempered tile post-med (8g); 2x Brick frags (237g); 2x 18th-19th century vessel glass (52g); 2x mortar frags (8g), and 1x plastic tube pipette for flea control(?) (1g).

Very occasional charnel fragments were found near to the tower but none were seen prior to or along the path. These were re-deposited within the churchyard.

A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.

Recorder: Joe Bampton, South West Archaeology Ltd

Date sent to HER: 21st August 2012

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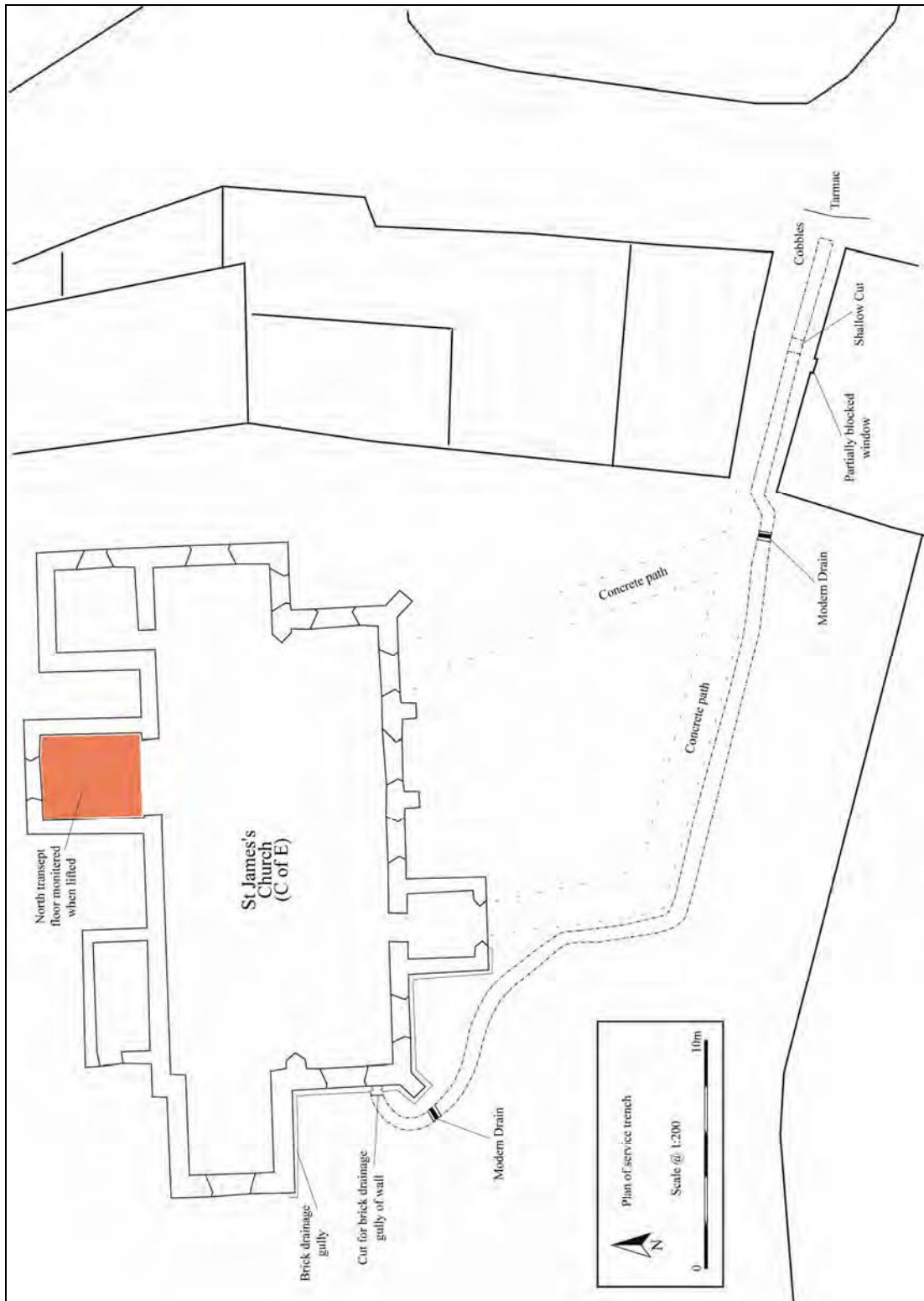


Figure 1: Location plan of monitored floor in red and excavated pipe trench.



Photo 1: beneath the plank floor in the North transept. Looking North.



Photo 2: Section at East end of trench. Looking South.



Photo 3: Section at entrance to churchyard. Looking South.



Photo 4: Churchyard trench. Looking North-East.



Photo 5: West end of trench. Looking East.



Photo 6: Brick drain at West end of church and trench. Looking North.