

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Instow, North Devon	National Grid Reference SS 4797 3097	Number:
Subject: A pipe trench excavation for drainage improvements and repair of the south Transept of St John's Church, Instow.		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: N/A	Recipient museum: N/A	
OASIS ID:	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: ISJ13	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 4 th & 8 th October 2013	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>An archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Jonathan Rhind, Architects Ltd. (The Agent) on behalf of the PCC of St. John (The Client), during the improvements of drainage- and repair to St John's Church, Instow, North Devon. This work was undertaken by J. Bampton on the 4th and 8th of October 2013 in accordance with a schedule of works drawn up by the client and with reference to IFA guidelines.</p> <p>The works subject to archaeological monitoring entailed the excavation of a pipe trench to provide drainage away from the west wall of the south transept and a small test-pit to enable inspection of a sufficient portion of the foundations below a structural crack in the same wall to establish its extent.</p> <p>A meter wide inspection pit was excavated below the crack in the exterior of the west wall of the south transept (see Figures 1, 2, 5). The crack was proven not to extend into the foundation, which were in-situ. Therefore the crack is the result of the wall coming away at its top as opposed to subsidence at the foundations. The crack appears to follow the line of an old repair or extension to the south end of the south transept wall, evident in the wall being slightly wider at this point, or at least not flush, particularly noticeable in the footings (Figure 2).</p> <p>The pipe trench was 0.30m wide and at least 0.30m deep along its entire length (see Figures 3, 5). The stratigraphy revealed was; Topsoil (100), 0.16m thick, a mid brown-grey, friable sandy-silt; Subsoil (101), variable depth, a mid yellow-grey brown, friable sandy-silt with frequent grit and small sub-angular to sub-rounded stones, occasional slate, charcoal and bone fragments; Natural was made up of a shillet rock seen in the field north of the church and at one point (in the south-east corner of the pipe trench) only 0.45m below present ground level.</p> <p>Two graves were revealed half way along the southern part of the pipe trench, aligned east-west (see Figures 4, 5). The earlier grave was brick lined, the bricks being 0.22×0.11×0.07m and hand-made. It was bonded with lime mortar and its interior was rendered with mortar. Its walls were straight at the head end but slightly curved along its length. These graves are generally sealed and reused. This one had been backfilled and cut by a grave of the same construction style, although with straight sides. The later grave was still sealed by slate slabs bonded with mortar, although removal of a loose slab revealed the grave to be hollow and intact. The pipe trench was diverted to skirt around the south of this grave and cut the backfill of the earlier grave. As the later grave is beneath the existing footpath about 1m of it was uncovered and reinforced lintels laid across it in case of collapse in the future. The two plans of the churchyard (from the Early 19th and Early 20th century respectively) do not show these graves, however comparable grave types such as those noted by SWARCH at Kentisbury church, Devon, were used up unto at least 1901, although the bricks and mortar would seem to indicate an 18th-19th century date.</p> <p>Finds recovered from the Topsoil (100) included; 1× engineering brick fragment (5g); 1× abraded Post-Medieval, North Devon Gravel Tempered ware (NDGT) (9g); and 1× Medieval fine sandy ware with no inclusions (2g) - retained. Finds recovered from the Subsoil (101) included; 4× coarse mortar fragments (64g); 2× clay pipe stem and heel (9g) - retained; 2× Post-Medieval NDGT ware – 1 sherd (13g) retained; 2× abraded Post-Medieval NDGT ware – 1 sherd (5g) retained; 1× Post Medieval North Devon Scrafitto ware (1g), 1x possibly late 17th century glazed redware (2g) – retained; 2× Fe nails (13g) - possibly 19th century in date. Unless stated otherwise, all finds were discarded.</p>		
<p>A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.</p>		
Recorder: J. Bampton	Date sent to HER: 16/10/2013	

Please email completed form to: archaeol@devon.gov.uk or post to County Archaeology Service, Environment Directorate, Matford Lane Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

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Figure 1: Footings immediately beneath repair, viewed from the west (1m scale).



Figure 2: South transept; showing crack, repair and pipe trench, viewed from the south-west (2m scale)



Figure 3: South part of pipe trench, viewed from the west (2m scale).



Figure 4: Graves revealed in pipe trench, viewed from the north (1m scale)

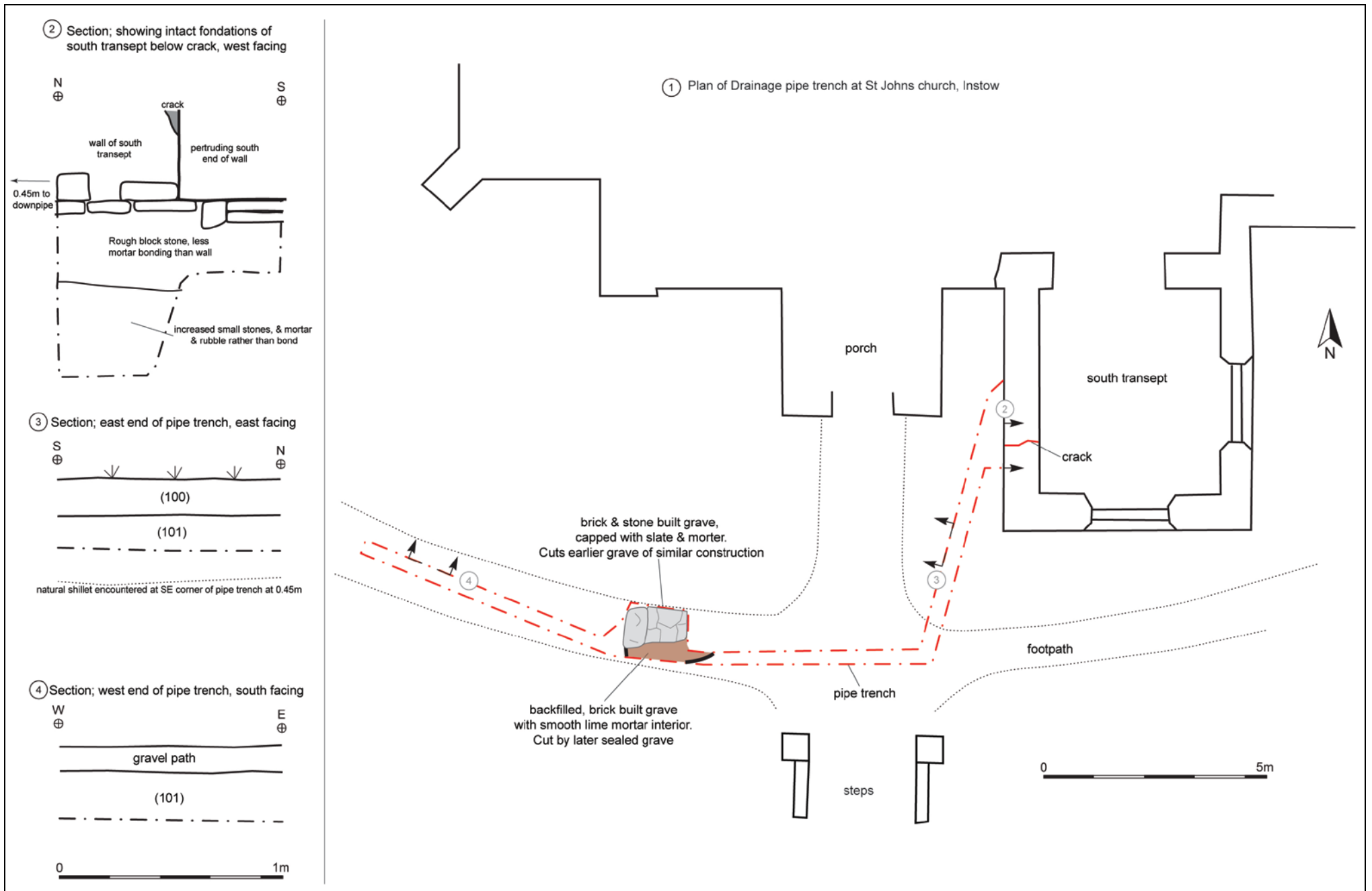


Figure 5: Site drawings; Plan and sections. Section drawing numbers (2-4) correspond to grey-scale numbers on plan (1).