

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Bishops Nympton, North Devon, Devon	National Grid Reference SS 75765 23734	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording during the installation of water and waste pipes from the lychgate to the south wall of the church at St Mary's Churchyard, Bishops Nympton		Photo attached? Yes
Planning Application no: N/A	Recipient museum: N/A	
OASIS ID: Southwes1-305671	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: BNM18	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 5-8 TH February 2018	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken within the churchyard of St. Mary's Church, Bishops Nympton, North Devon, Devon, during groundworks associated with the installation of waste and water pipes. This work was carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on behalf of Rev. Alastair Forman, Bishops Nympton Church (the Client). The monitoring was carried out by S. Walls between the 5th and 8^h February 2018. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design (SWARCH no. BNM18PDv1) and ClfA best practice. The parish church of St. Mary's is located to the south-west of the village centre on the summit of a spur to the north of the Crooked Oak Stream at a height of approximately 151m AOD (Figure 1). The soils of the area are the well-drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983), which overlie the sandstones, bordering on mudstones and siltstones, of the Bude Formation (BGS 2016).</p> <p>The church is Grade I Listed; and is noted for its stately west tower. The church was subject to several phases of 19th century extension and restoration but retains 15th-16th century elements.</p> <p>A pipe trench c.0.3-0.4m wide was excavated (for c.41m) through the churchyard following the line of the tarmac path, extending north from the lych gate, towards the porch, before crossing the western tarmac path and extending to the wall of the south aisle of the church (Figure 1). The trench (Figure 2) was excavated by machine under intermittent archaeological supervision to a maximum depth of 0.55m. The stratigraphy comprised: a dark grey-brown clay-silt topsoil c.0.15-0.2m thick (001). This overlay a friable-to-soft mid yellowish-grey clay-silt subsoil c.0.25m thick (002). The undisturbed natural (003) consisted of banded hard shillet, but was not exposed for the majority of the length of the trench. The natural was exposed almost immediately below the tarmac at the southern end of the trench, outside of the churchyard, which suggests that significant terracing has occurred along this southern edge of the Churchyard, i.e. the north side of West Street.</p> <p>No archaeological features were identified, nor were any grave cuts visible within the excavated trenches. A very small quantity of disarticulated human bone fragments were noted and re-buried within the pipe trench. The majority of this was recovered from the small area adjacent to the porch, with almost no bone noted along the edge of the main path.</p> <p>Finds</p> <p>A small assemblage of material, all derived from the topsoil (001), was recovered from the site (Figure 3). The assemblage consisted of 3x sherds (9g) of white refined earthen wares; 1x sherd (12g) of 19th century industrial slip ware; 1x shard (4g) of 19th century bottle glass; 2x scarps (4g) of glazed post-medieval 17th century North Devon gravel free wares; 1 x (8g) modern brick fragment; 3x fragments (51g) of post-medieval (17th-18th century) North Devon type floor tiles. Also recovered was a miniature Iron spade/shovel (50g) either a child's toy, or more likely part of a grave marker/memorial. The finds will be returned to the Church.</p> <p>Conclusion</p> <p>The limitations of the narrow and shallow trench made the chances of recovering anything meaningful from the churchyard slim. In general the excavations were mostly still within topsoil/subsoil deposits and as such archaeological features may survive below the depth of the service trench, except at its southern end. No traces of any earlier cobbling were visible beneath the western length of the modern tarmac path in the churchyard, although a couple of sub-rounded pebbles were noted within the topsoil deposits along the edge of the southern path, suggesting that this path may have formerly been cobbled.</p> <p>References</p> <p>Boyd, N. 2018: Church of St. Mary, Bishop Nympton, North Devon: Project Design. SWARCH no. BNM18PDv1 British Geological Survey 2014: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.htm Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales</i>.</p>		
Recorder: S. Walls	Date sent to HER: 14.03.2018	



FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION AND SITE PLAN.



FIGURE 2: SHOT OF TRENCH RUNNING ALONG CHURCH PATH, VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).



FIGURE 3: SHOT OF THE SMALL FINDS ASSEMBLAGE ON 1CM GRID.