

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

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| Civil Parish & District: Ashford, North Devon | National Grid Reference: SS 5334 3535 | Number: |
| Subject: Archaeological monitoring during service trenching at Church of St Peter, Ashford, Devon | | Photo attached? YES |
| Planning Application no: 64846 Faculty Reference: 2018-019011 | Recipient museum: N/A | |
| OASIS ID: southwes1-337405 | Museum Accession no: N/A | |
| Contractor's reference number/code: APC18 | Dates fieldwork undertaken: 1 st March-8 th August 2019 | |
| <p>Description of works</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on behalf of the PCC of the parish of Pilton with Ashford (the Client) during groundworks associated with the installation of a water supply to the Church of St Peter, Ashford, Devon. The monitoring was carried out by E. Wapshott and P. Webb on 1st March and 8th August 2019. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Balmond 2018) drawn up in consultation with the diocesan archaeological advisor (DAA) and Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>Ashford is located approximately 3km north-west of Barnstaple, just north of the A361. The church is sited on steep sloping ground overlooking the River Taw at the junction of Adder Lane and Strand Lane at a height of c.71m AOD. The soils here are the well-drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983), which overlie the mudstones of the Pilton Mudstone Formation (BGS 2019). St Peter's Church is a Grade II* Listed building in the historic core of the village of Ashford, a Domesday settlement in the hundred of Braunton and deanery of Barnstaple. The church has medieval origins, though the tower was re-built in 1798 and the rest of the church in c.1815 utilising original 16th century woodwork.</p> <p>A total of six areas measuring between 0.40m and c.10m in length x 0.30m wide were excavated under archaeological supervision by hand to a depth of up to 1m, this being the maximum depth of works. An initial five test-pits (Areas 01-05) measuring 0.40m-0.80m x 0.20-0.30m wide and up to 1m deep were excavated along the line of a gravel footpath to the south-east of the church to facilitate the moling of a water pipe. The stratigraphy along this line of excavation comprised: gravelled path (100), grey-brown friable silt-clay with gravel c.0.05m thick; overlying made-ground (101), rubble rich grey-yellow-brown clay-loam-silt c.0.30m thick; and the natural weathered shillet (102). To the north a sinuous linear trench (Area 06) orientated broadly north-east to south-west joining the previously set tap to the church, measuring c.10m in length x 0.30m wide and up to 0.30m deep was excavated to lay the water pipe. The stratigraphy here comprised topsoil (601), grey-brown friable clay-silt-loam up to 0.25m thick; overlying made-ground, a possible former path surface (602), compacted yellow-white-brown friable silt with gravel c.0.20m thick; demolition deposit (604), yellow-white-brown friable clay-silt with common roof slate fragments and angular stone; and buried soil (603), grey-brown soft clay-silt c.0.12m thick.</p> <p>A single feature, wall {608} was identified at the base of excavation within Area 06. It was exposed in the corner of the trench on an approximate north to south orientation and was visible for a length of 0.75m, measuring 0.15+m wide. It was constructed of a mix of red brick and angular stone blocks with white lime mortar. Due to the limited nature of the excavations the function of this feature could not be ascertained, and it could represent part of a tomb or other structure. A modern service trench [605] was also identified, orientated east to west cutting the southern end of wall {608}.</p> <p>The Finds</p> <p>Only a small quantity of finds were recovered during the excavations, including: 2 fragments (9g) of modern glass, 2 fragments (56.5g) of modern brick, 1 fragment (14.5g) of brick/tile, 2 fragments (30g) of ceramic drain from topsoil (600); and 5 fragments (1.85kg) of roofing slate from demolition deposit (604). These were subsequently discarded.</p> <p>Conclusions</p> <p>A single archaeological feature, wall {608} was identified during the monitoring, and whilst the limited nature of the excavations make it difficult to ascertain its full form and function, the presence of demolition material, including roofing slate, may indicate the presence of a former structure in this part of the churchyard. The lower half of the site, along the line of the footpath has been largely built-up using rubble following recent wall/bank collapse.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>Balmond, F. 2018: <i>St. Peter's Church, Ashford, North Devon, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation</i>. SWARCH WSI no.: APC18</p> <p>British Geological Survey 2014: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html [accessed 26.05.2016].</p> <p>Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales</i>.</p> | | |
| Recorder: P. Webb, South West Archaeology Ltd. | | Date sent to HER: 05.09.19 |

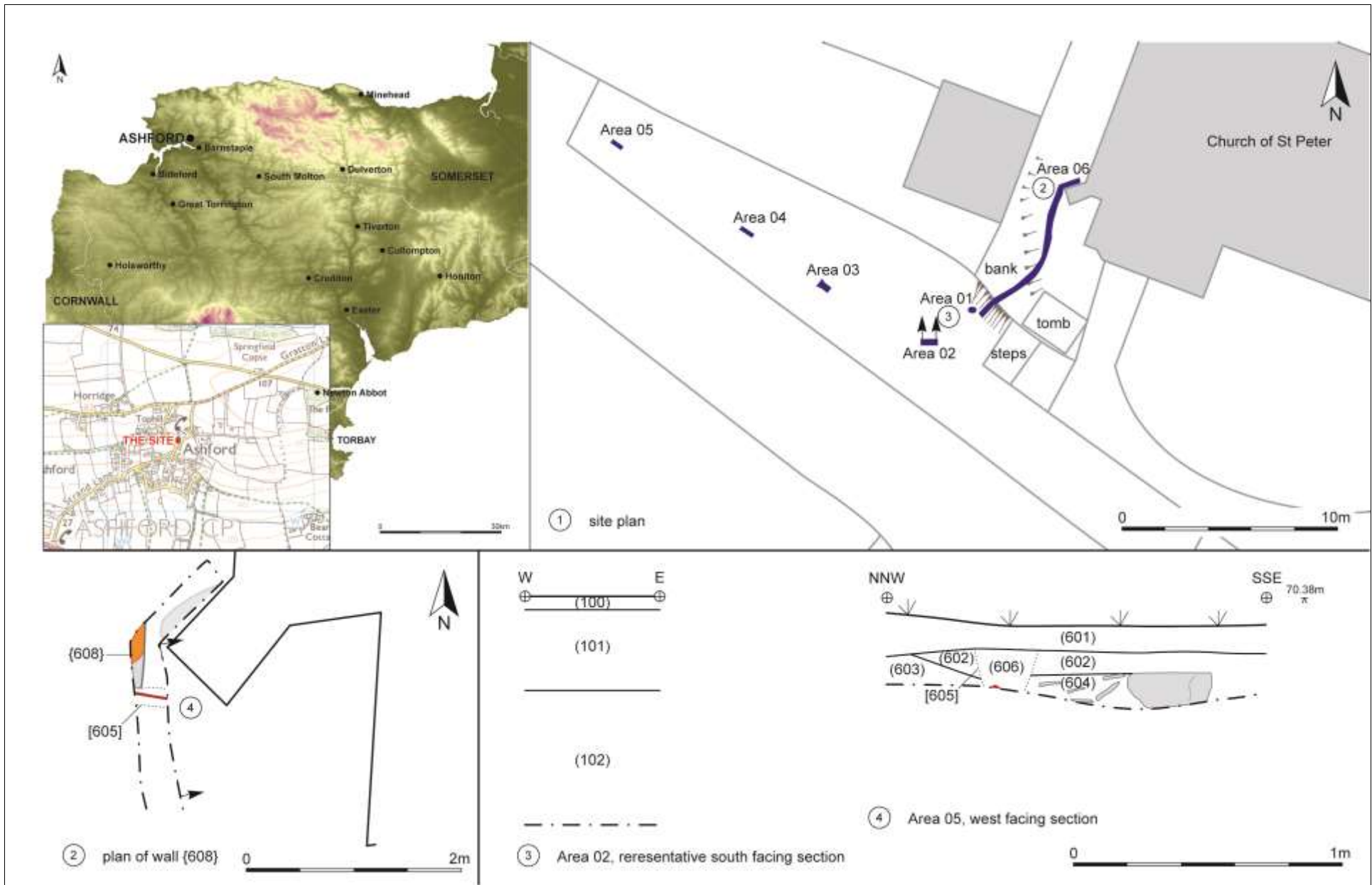


FIGURE 1: SITE PLANS AND SECTIONS.



FIGURE 2: TEST PIT 04, NORTH-EAST FACING SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



FIGURE 3: AREA 06, NORTH END SHOWING BUTTRESS FOUNDATIONS AND WALL {608} TO THE RIGHT OF THE SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).