



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING AT
ALL SAINTS' CHURCH,
EAGLE,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(EASC 12)**

**Work Undertaken For
Tim Benton Architect**
On behalf of
Eagle Parochial Church Council

June 2012

Report Compiled by
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APS Report No. **44/12**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken at All Saints' Church, Eagle, Lincolnshire. The investigations monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new extension and an associated drainage trench.

All Saints' church dates from the 12th century although an earlier church is documented in Eagle. The church also incorporates a Late Saxon (AD 850-1100) grave cover.

The investigations revealed graveyard soils containing quantities of stone fragments which may relate to building activities at the church. A grave was also encountered along with the current topsoil.

Finds retrieved during the investigation include a quantity of medieval and/or post-medieval roofing tile as well as a stone tile and coffin furniture of probable 19th century date.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Tim Benton Architect to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with a new extension and associated drainage works at All Saints' church, Eagle, Lincolnshire. The investigations were carried out on the 3rd May 2012.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Eagle is located 11km southwest of Lincoln and 28km northeast of Sleaford, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The development site is located in the western portion of the village at National Grid Reference SK 8759 6721 (Fig. 2). The church is situated at a height of c. 26m OD with land dropping down to the west.

Eagle is located on soils of the Blackwood Association, typically sandy and coarse loamy soils (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 127). Beneath these soils is a drift geology of glacial sands and gravels which in turn overlies a solid geology of Jurassic Lower Lias clays and shales (BGS 1973).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Eagle is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Acle*, *Aclei*, *Akely* and *Aycle* the name is derived from the Old English and means 'the oak (*āc*) wood or glade (*lēah*)' (Cameron 1998, 41). The Domesday Survey records that the land was held by Roger of Poitou, Durand Malet, Odo the Arblaster and Countess Judith and contained a church with a resident priest, extensive meadows and woodlands (Foster and Longley 1976).

The present church dates from the 12th century and presumably replaced the church mentioned in the Domesday Survey (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 262). Within the church is a mid 10th - 11th century grave cover (Everson and Stocker 1999, 155). The church was restored in the 18th century and between 1903 and 1904 (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 262).

A watching brief undertaken during the construction of a new vestry in 2001 identified a single grave cut and an extensive graveyard soil (Cope-Faulkner 2001, 1).

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if

present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Foundation and drainage trenches were excavated by machine to depths required by the development. Following excavation, the sides of the trenches were then cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Following excavation finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records were also checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them and supplemented by artefact dating.

5. RESULTS

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered within the foundation trenches was a layer of disturbed graveyard soil comprising greyish brown sandy silt (105) that measured in excess of 0.84m thick (Fig. 4, Section 1; Plate 3). Two iron coffin handles of probable 19th century date were retrieved from this deposit.

This was overlain by a further graveyard soil of greyish brown sandy silt with frequent stone fragments (104). This was cut by a grave (103) that had a corresponding tombstone recording the burial of Catherine and Robert Roe in the early 20th century. The grave was backfilled with yellowish brown sandy silt with frequent stone fragments (102). The fill contained coffin furniture, a plate and stud, of 19th century date.

Sealing all deposits was the current topsoil of greyish brown sandy silt (101) that measured 0.2m thick. Roof tiles of ceramic and stone types were retrieved as unstratified material.

6. DISCUSSION

The depth of the foundation and drainage trenches precluded natural deposits from being reached. This may imply that further archaeological deposits may remain at depth.

Graveyard soils were the earliest deposits encountered. A lower soil appeared to be disturbed and may result from burials at the site or the construction of the church. The uppermost soil contains frequent stone fragments which may relate to one of the recorded restorations of the church that occurred in the 18th and 20th centuries.

Finds retrieved from the investigation include roof tiles, of medieval to post-medieval date and a small collection of metalwork relating to coffin furniture.

7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were carried out at Eagle as the site lay within the churchyard of the 12th century and later All Saints' church.

Graveyard soils and a single grave were recorded beneath the current topsoil during

the investigation. No other archaeological features were encountered, though these may lie at depth. Finds include a small quantity of 19th century coffin furniture along with ceramic and stone roof tiles of medieval to post-medieval date.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr T Benton who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Jenny Young, the North Kesteven Planning Archaeologist, kindly allowed access to the parish files and library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
 Site Supervisor: Bob Garland
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner, Mark Peachey
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

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Pevsner, N and Harris, J, 1989 *Lincolnshire*, The Buildings of England (2nd edition, revised N Antram)

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
 BGS British Geological Survey



Figure 1 - General location plan

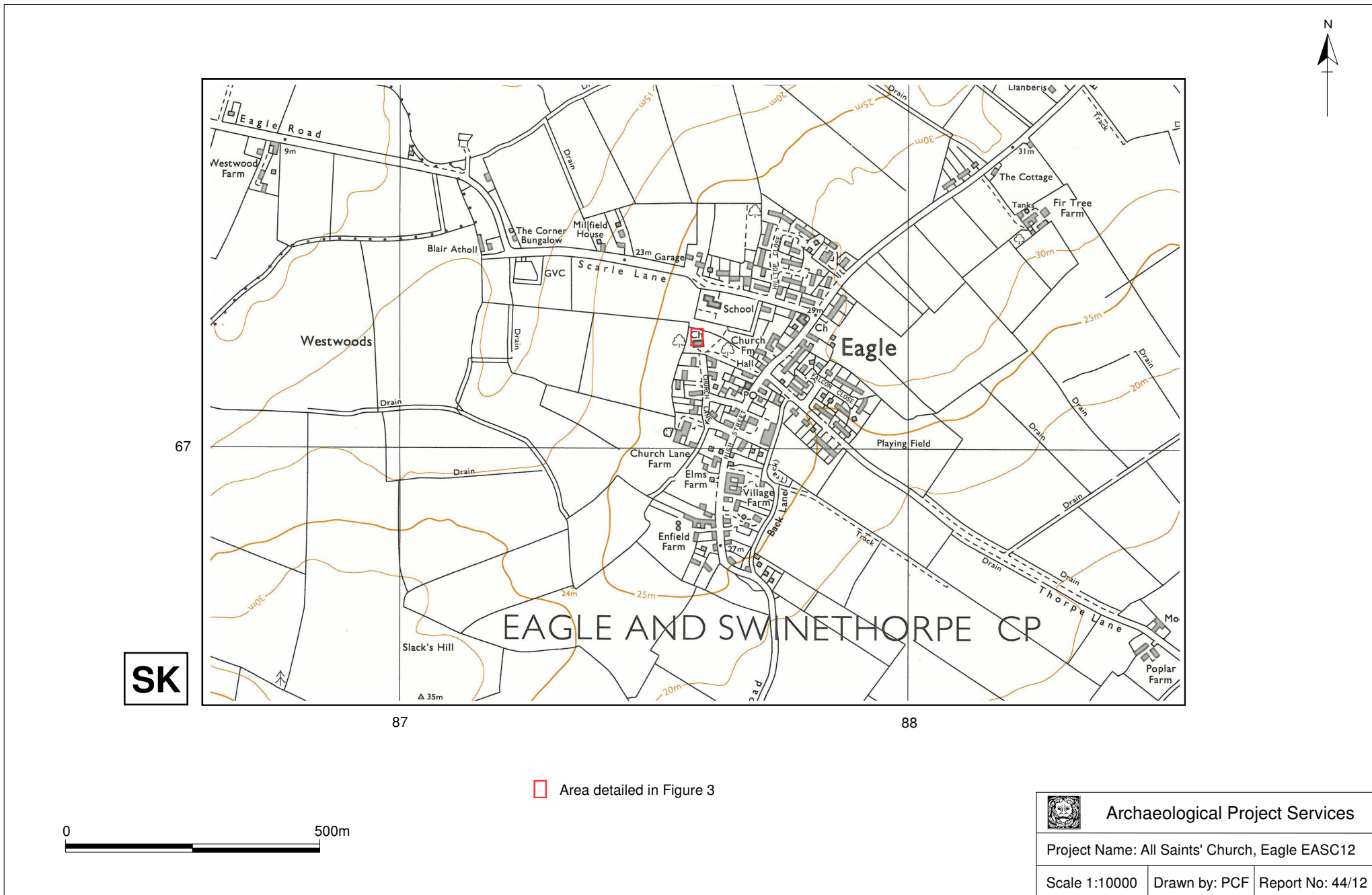


Figure 2 - Site location plan

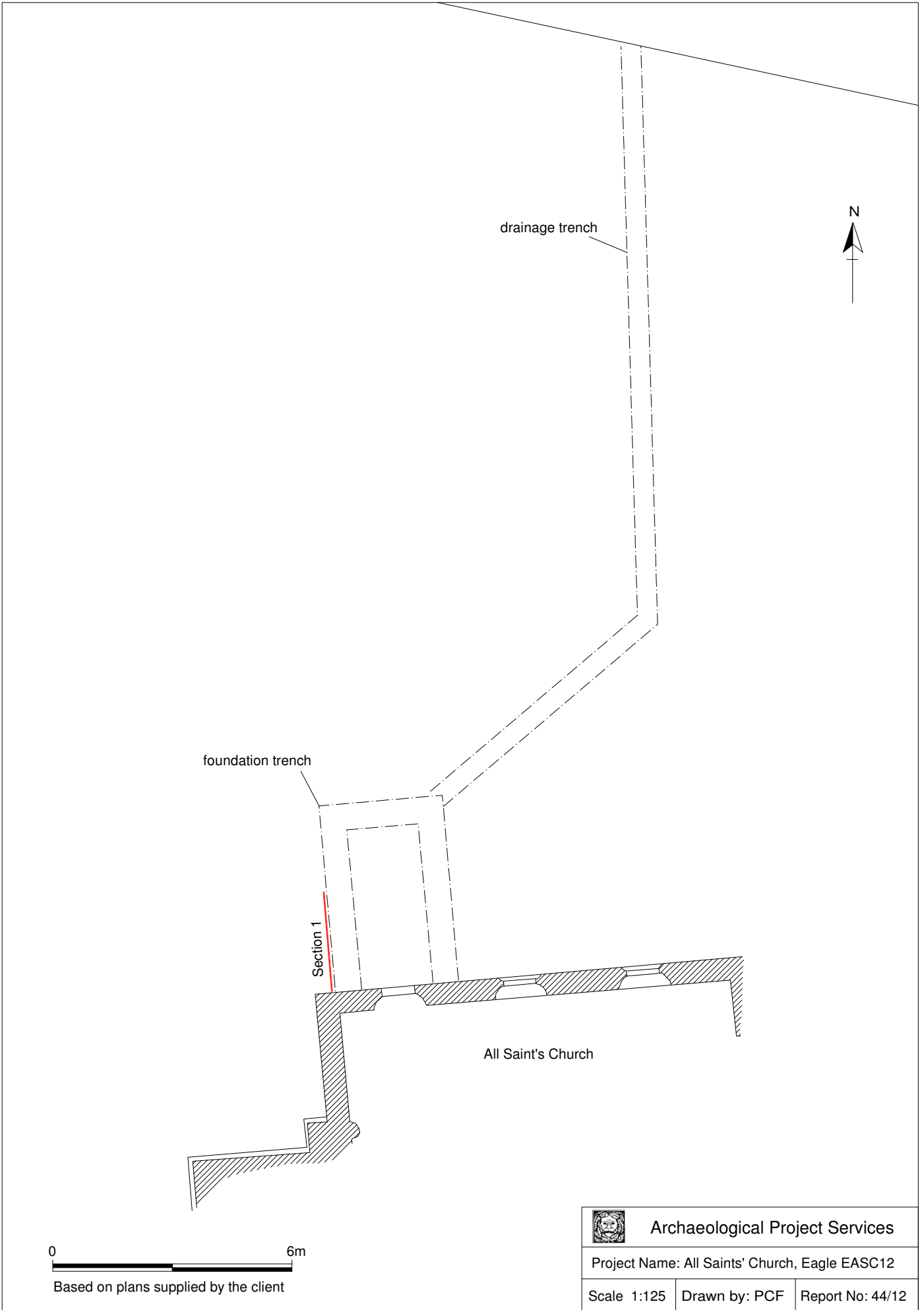
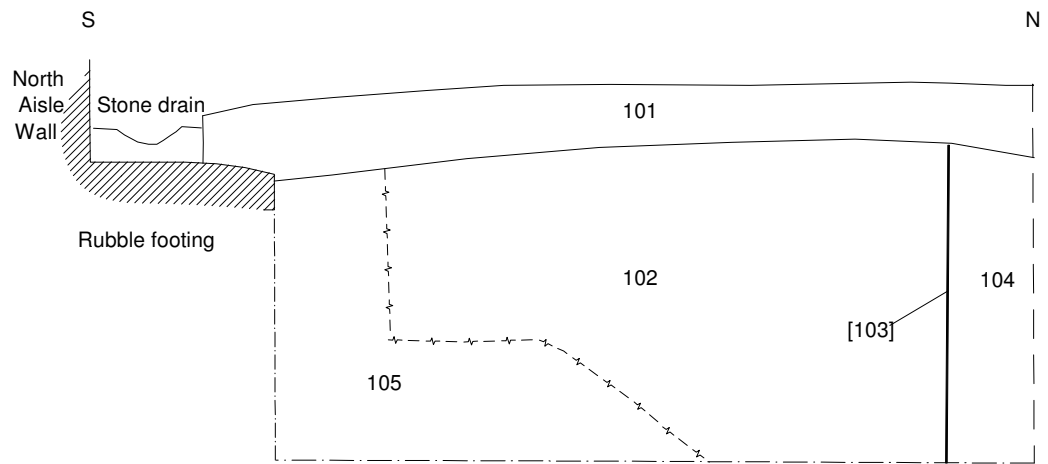


Figure 3 - Plan showing the extent of works and section location




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Scale 1:20	Drawn by: MP	Report No: 44/12

Figure 4 - Section 1



Plate 1 – View across the development area, looking southeast



Plate 2 – The excavated foundation trenches, looking southeast



Plate 3 – Section 1, looking west

Appendix 1

CONTEXT SUMMARY

No.	Description	Interpretation
100	Unstratified finds retrieval	
101	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt with moderate small angular stone fragments, up to 0.2m thick	Topsoil
102	Friable yellowish brown sandy silt with frequent stone fragments	Fill of [103]
103	Rectangular feature, east-west aligned, with vertical sides, not bottomed, at least 0.84m deep. Adjacent memorial stone says it once contained the remains of Catherine and Robert Roe	Cut of grave
104	Friable dark greyish brown sandy silt with frequent irregular stone fragments, >0.84m thick	Graveyard soil
105	Friable dark greyish brown, with yellowish brown lenses, sandy silt with moderate small stone fragments and occasional charcoal, >0.84m thick	Disturbed graveyard soil

Appendix 2

THE FINDS

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

By Alex Beeby

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the ACBMG (2001) and to conform to Lincolnshire County Council's *Archaeology Handbook*. A total of five fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 1365 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Fragments were counted and weighed within each context. The ceramic building material was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the ceramic building material is included in Table 1 below.

Condition

Two fragments have mortar adhering, including one which has the material over a broken edge. This is suggestive of reuse. One fragment is very heavily burnt and is almost entirely vitrified. This piece may have been damaged in a fire or have been used or reused in a furnace or oven.

Results

Table 1, Ceramic Building Material Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Fabric	Description	Date	NoF	W(g)
100	PANT	Pantile		Mortar adhered over broken edge	19th-E20th	1	567
100	PNR	Peg, Nib or Ridge Tile	Oxidised; medium sandy; sparse mudstone; sparse flint	Mortar adhered to edge; late type; Flatroofer	15th-18th	2	315
100	PNR	Peg, Nib or Ridge Tile		Leached - Ca?; thumbprint in upper surface; late	15th-18th	1	252
100	PNR?	Peg, Nib or Ridge Tile?	Vitrified	Heavily burnt; possibly thin FLOOR although poorly finished	13th-19th	1	231
Total						5	1365

Provenance

All of the material is unstratified (100).

Range

There is a small collection of tiles including three different types of late medieval or post medieval peg, nib or ridge flat roofing tile (PNR), and a Pantile (PANT) of early modern date.

Potential

There is no potential for further work. The ceramic building material is suitable to be discarded, although the integrity of the site archive should be maintained should any other finds from the site be considered suitable for museum deposition.

Summary

A small collection of tiles, largely, if not entirely, of post medieval or early modern date were recovered during the watching brief. All of the material is unstratified.

OTHER FINDS

By Gary Taylor

Introduction

Five other finds weighing a total of 839g were recovered.

Condition

The other finds are in moderate-good condition, though the iron objects are all corroded, one extremely so.

Results

Table 2, *Other Materials*

Cxt	Material	Description	NoF	W (g)	Date
100	Stone	Tile	1	117	Medieval??
102	Copper alloy	Coffin plate, 2 rivet holes	1	35	19 th century?
	Leaded copper alloy and iron	Coffin stud, gilded	1	29	19 th century
105	Iron	Coffin handles	2	658	Early-mid 19 th century

Provenance

The other finds were recovered as unstratified material (100), from the fill of a grave (102) and from the graveyard soil (105).

Range

Most of the recovered artefacts are of metal and comprise coffin furniture and fittings of post-medieval date. There is also a piece of stone roof tile.

Two grips (coffin handles), both with remnants of iron escutcheon plates to the rear, were recovered from (105). One of these is extremely encrusted with iron corrosion products but the two grips appear to be similar. The less encrusted example is in the form of flattened shield, somewhat similar in shape to a grip plate from a burial of 1831 at Spitalfields (Reeve and Adams 1993, fig 5.6) and is probably of comparable early-mid 19th century date.

Grave fill (102) yielded a gilded stud and a copper alloy plate. Although the head of the stud is large the nail shaft is not overly substantial. As such, it is probably mainly a decorative item rather than a corner bolt or other major coffin-fixing piece. It is likely to be 19th or possibly early 20th century in date. The copper alloy plate from the same deposit is probably a depositum, and although these generally were inscribed with biographical details of the interred this example is blank. The plate is geometrical, being lozenge-shaped with half circles on each of the four sides. In principal, lozenge-shaped breast plates were for young girls or spinsters, following the dictates of heraldry (Litten 1991, 109). However, not all coffin makers knew the patterns of heraldic devices and, lacking an inscription, it is not certain whether this depositum adorned the coffin of an unmarried female.

Potential

The other finds are of moderate potential, with the majority of them indicating the presence of decorated coffins of post-medieval date within the churchyard.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 3 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 3, *Spot dates*

Cxt	Date	Comments
100	Unstratified	
102	19 th century	Based on metal
105	19 th century	Based on metal

ABBREVIATIONS

ACBMG	Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CXT	Context
NoF	Number of Fragments
W (g)	Weight (grams)

REFERENCES

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~ 2003, *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* [internet]. Available at <http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/section.asp?catId=3155>

Litten, J, 1991 *The English Way of Death The Common Funeral since 1450*

Reeve, J and Adam, M, 1993 *The Spitalfields Project Volume 1- The Archaeology – Across The Styx* (CBA Res Rep 85)

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

6	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Daily record sheet
2	Sheets of scale drawings
1	Bag of finds

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

The Collection
Art and Archaeology in Lincolnshire
Danes Terrace
Lincoln
LN2 1LP

Accession Number: LCNCC:2012.79

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: EASC 12

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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