
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON SERVICE TRENCH AT
SAINT JAMES & SAINT JOHN CHURCH,
DORRINGTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(DJJC13)**

**Work Undertaken For
PCC**

June 2014

Report Compiled by
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National Grid Reference: TF 076 533
City and County Museum Accession No: LCNCC:2013.224
Oasis ID No: archaeo11-182209
APS Report No. **65/14**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



Quality Control

Archaeological Watching Brief St James & St John Church, Dorrington, Lincolnshire (DJJC 13)

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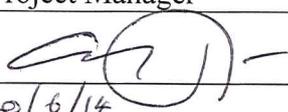
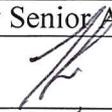
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1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at St. James and St. John Church, Dorrington, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of a service trench starting at the western end of the south porch and continuing east across the church grounds.

The church is of the medieval period (AD 1066-1540) with the earliest portions dated to the 13th century.

The watching brief revealed a sequence of undated deposits overlain by modern deposits. Undated layers included a graveyard soil and a graveyard soil containing building debris at the western side of the church porch. Modern topsoil overlay the graveyard soils and at the western side of the porch the topsoil was overlain by some brick edging and a concrete slab probably associated with former drainage works.

No finds were retrieved during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as “*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed.*” (IfA 2008).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Dorrington PCC to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a service trench at

St. James and St. John Church, Dorrington, Lincolnshire. The watching brief was carried out on the 2nd of June 2014.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Dorrington is situated 6km north of Sleaford and 22km southeast of Lincoln in the administrative district of North Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The church is situated on the B1188 approximately 0.5 miles (0.8 km) north-west from the village centre, overlooking the village. It is at the top of a slight rise at 27m OD.

Soils are of the Wickham 2 Association, mainly fine loamy over clayey typically stagnogley soils of the Wickham series, overlying Lias clay (BGS 1973).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Dorrington is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Derintone*, *Derinton*, *Deringtona* and *Dirington* the name is derived from the Old English and means ‘the farmstead or village called after or associated with Dēora’ (Cameron 1998, 39). The Domesday Survey records that the land was held by Geoffery Alselin with one plough in lordship and contained 12 carcurates of taxable land, land for 12 ploughs, 28 freeman and 8 small holders with 7 ploughs. It also records 160 acres of meadow and 50 acres of woodland (Foster and Longley 1976).

The present church of Saint James and Saint John dates from the 13th century and includes many Decorated elements, including its tall ashlar-faced tower, which originally had a spire. Of particular note is a length of a 14th century frieze of the Last Judgement, located outside and above the east window, depicting figures climbing out of their graves and the mouth of hell (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 257).

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks were recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin determined.

4. METHODS

The service trench was excavated by machine with a 0.40m wide bucket attached. The trench was dug around the southern porch of the church, continuing eastward across the grounds to a ditch marking the eastern boundary of the church.

The trench was 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 and 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation 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.

5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis two phases were identified;

Phase 1 Undated deposits
Phase 2 Modern deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets

are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Phase 1 Undated deposits

The earliest deposit identified during the investigation consisted of firm mid olive brown silty sand (002) with moderate small sub-angular limestone fragments and grit (Figs 3-4, Sections 1-3) (Plates 2-4).

This deposit was encountered on the western side of the porch (Fig 3), although here it was designated context number (004) because it contained fragments of mortar and ceramic building material (CBM) (Plate 2).

Phase 2 Modern deposits

Overlying deposit (004) around the western side of the porch was a discontinuous strip of brick edging (003) (Fig 3) with bricks measuring 235 by 115 by 75mm in size.

A concrete 'plinth' (005) measuring 0.52m in width and up to 50mm in thickness was encountered at the base of the church wall and over the the brick edging (004).

Deposit (002) was overlain by soft dark brown humic sandy silt topsoil (001), up to 0.28m thick (Fig 4, Sections 1-3) (Plates 2-4).

6. DISCUSSION

The earliest deposit identified in the base of the service trench was a mixed graveyard soil. To the west of the porch this graveyard soil contained fragments of mortar and CBM which indicates debris from possible construction or restoration.

The graveyard soil containing demolition debris was sealed by modern topsoil overlain by a discontinuous line of brick edging and a concrete slab or plinth, both of which probably relate to former drainage works in this area.

Throughout the rest of the trench the graveyard soil was overlain by the modern topsoil deposit.

7. CONCLUSION

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at St. James and St. John church, Dorrington, Lincolnshire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of a service trench starting at the western end of the south porch and continuing east across the church grounds.

The watching brief revealed a sequence of undated deposits overlain by modern deposits. Undated layers included areas of graveyard soil, one of them at the western side of the church porch containing fragments of mortar and CBM. Modern topsoil overlay the graveyard soils and at the western side of the porch the topsoil was overlain by brick edging and a concrete slab, probably associated with former drainage works.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the assistance of Susan Tong who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis on behalf of the PCC. 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 Supervisors: Chris Moulis
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Andrew Failes
 Post-excavation analysis: Andrew Failes

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Cameron, K., 1998, *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*, English Place-Name Society Popular Series Vol. **1**

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IfA, 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

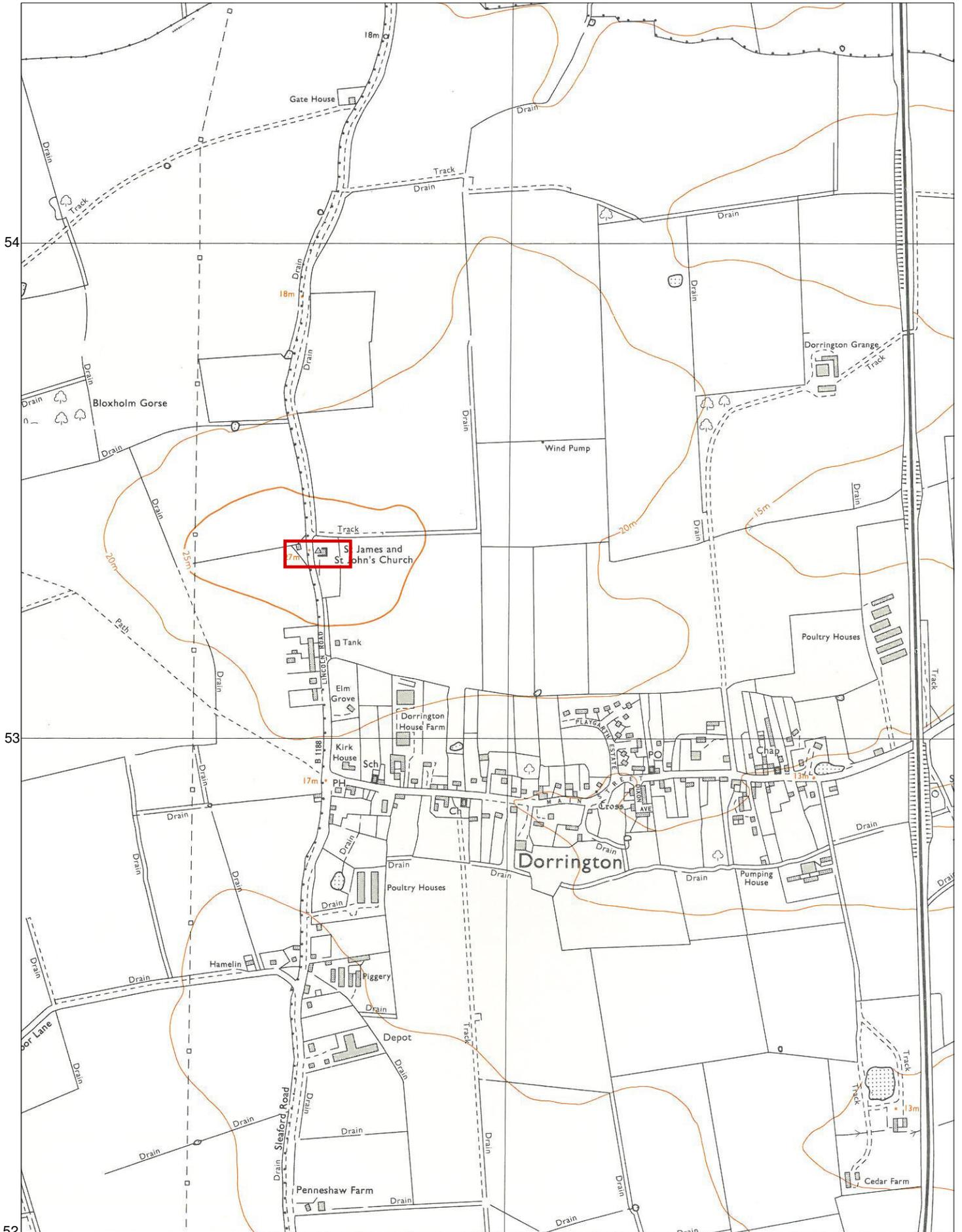
Pevsner, N. and Harris, J., 1989, *Lincolnshire*, The Buildings of England (2nd edition, revised Antram, N.)

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
 CBM Ceramic building material
 BGS Geological Survey of Great Britain
 IfA Institute for Archaeologists



Figure 1 - General location plan



TF Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:10000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright, HTL Licence No 100020146



- Site location



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Figure 2 - Site location

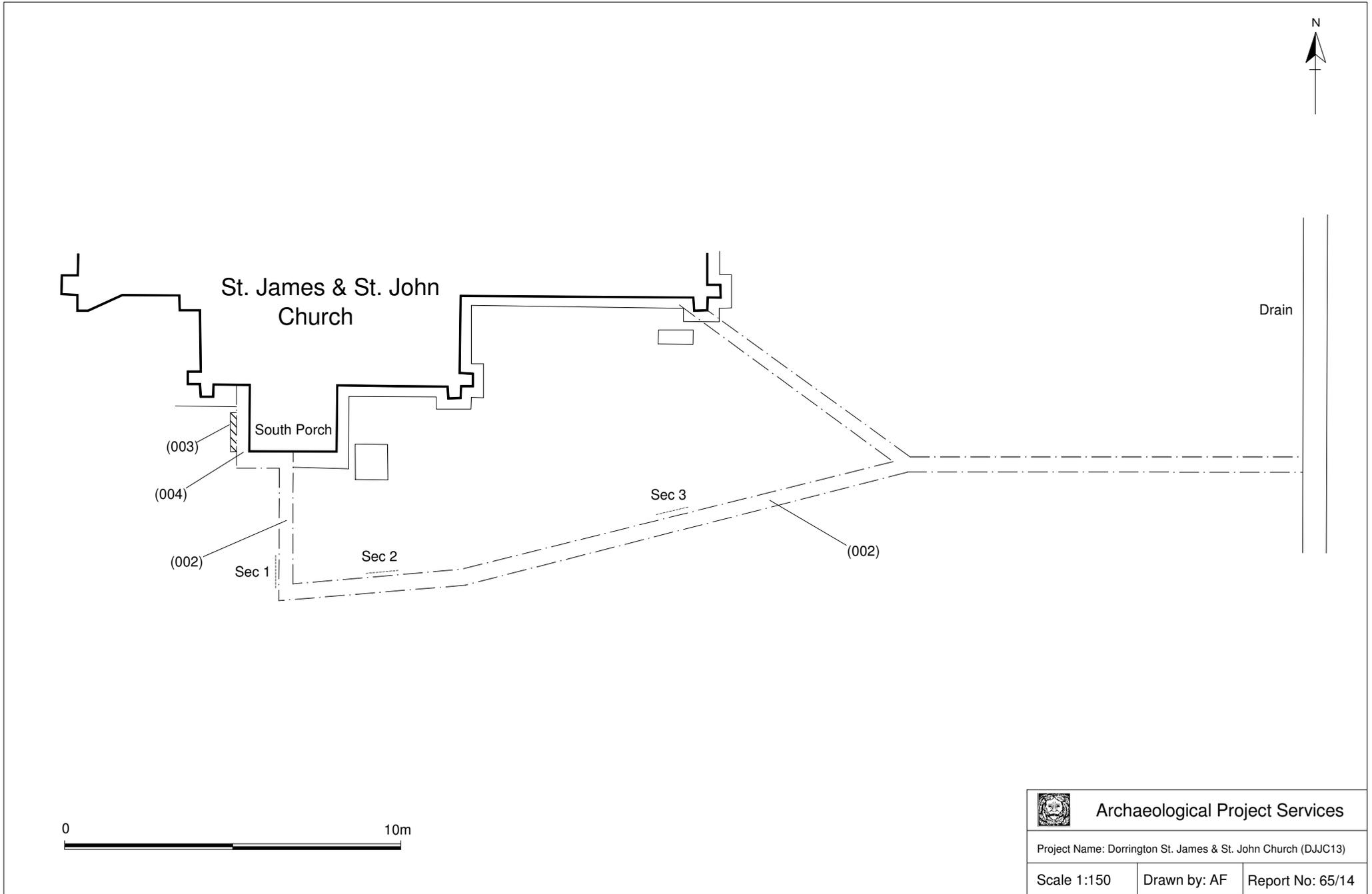
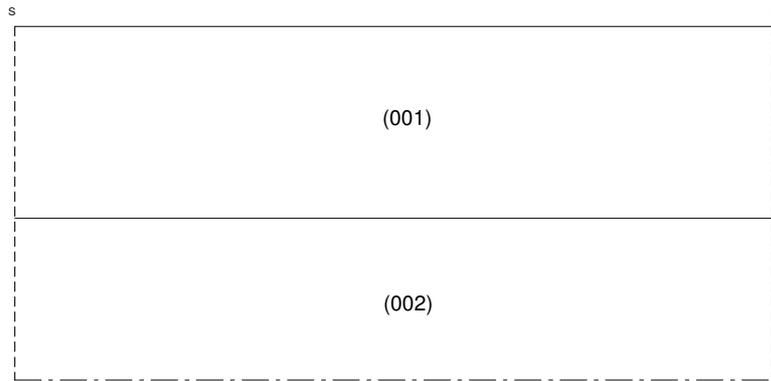
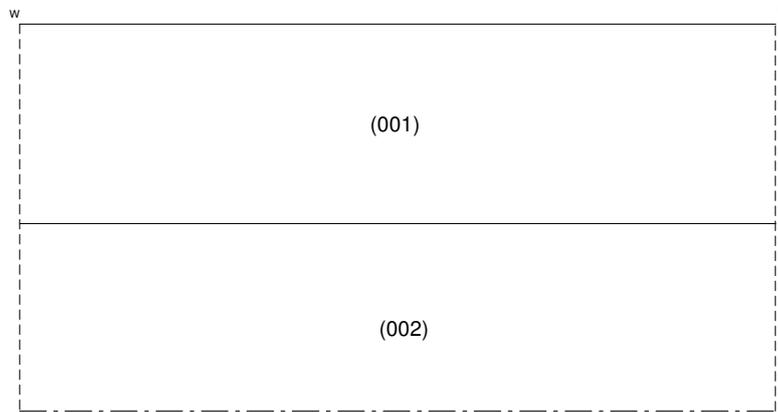


Figure 3 - Site plan and section locations

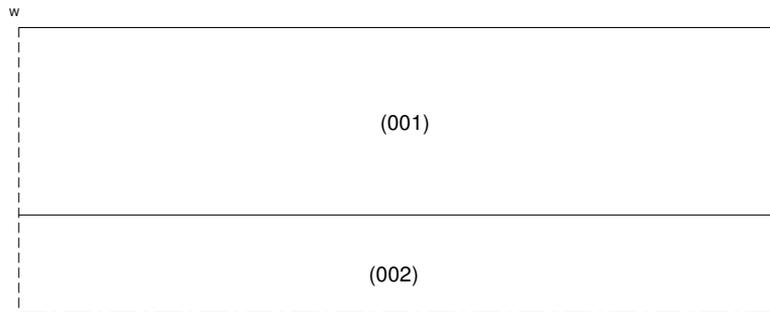
Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



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Drawn by: AF

Report No: 65/14

Figure 4 - Sections 1-3



Plate 1 – View of church and porch, looking north



Plate 2 – Service trench at western side of porch, looking south



Plate 3 – Section 1



Plate 4 – Section 2



Plate 5 – View of service trench near completion, looking west

Appendix 1

CONTEXT SUMMARY

No	Description	Interpretation
001	Soft dark brown humic sandy silt, 0.20m thick	Topsoil
002	Firm mid olive brown silty sand with moderate small sub-angular limestone fragments and grit	Subsoil/graveyard soil
003	Bricks measuring 235 x 115 x 75mm laid in a discontinuous strip as edging around the western side of the church porch	Possible edge to previous drainage works
004	Firm mid olive brown silty sand with occasional charcoal, moderate small sub-angular limestone frags and occasional mortar and CBM fragments	Subsoil/graveyard soil containing demolition debris, possibly associated with construction or restoration
005	Concrete plinth at base of church wall measuring 0.52m wide and up to 0.52m wide	Previous attempt to improve drainage

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Carucate	A unit of land, originally based on the amount that could be ploughed annually by a team of eight oxen. Generally taken to be about 120 acres.
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 interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
Decorated	Division of English Gothic architecture dating from c.1290-1350.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Old English	The language used by the Saxon (q.v.) occupants of Britain.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

5	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Section record sheet
1	Plan record sheet
1	Daily record sheet
2	Sheets of scale drawings

All primary records 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: 2013.224

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: DJJC2013

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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