

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH,
WHITWICK,
COALVILLE,
LEICESTERSHIRE
(WSJB 07)
Planning Application No: 05/01767/FUL**

**Work Undertaken For
C.A. Underwood Limited
on behalf of
The Parochial Church Council**

March 2007

Report Compiled by
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National Grid Reference: SK 4349 1619
Accession No: X.A41.2007
OASIS Record No: archaeol1-25600

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES



APS Report No. **36/07**

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1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at St. John the Baptist church, Whitwick, Leicestershire. The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new extension to the existing church.

The church is of the medieval period (AD 1066-1540) with the earliest portion being the nave which dates from the late 13th century and the rest of the church dating up to the mid 14th century.

The watching brief revealed a sequence of natural, medieval and recent activity. Medieval deposits comprised the foundation trench and foundations for the 14th century tower. No artefacts 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 may be disturbed or destroyed.*” (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by C.A. Underwood Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a new extension to the existing building at St John the Baptist Church, Whitwick, Leicestershire. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application 05/01767/FUL. The watching brief was carried out on the 7th March

2007 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1).

2.3 Topography and Geology

Whitwick is located 9km southwest of Loughborough and 8km east of Coalville in the administrative district of North West Leicestershire (Fig. 1).

St John The Baptist Church is located towards the centre of Whitwick at National Grid Reference SK 4349 1619 (Fig. 2). The site is located on the northeast side of North Street at a height of c. 134m OD on land adjacent to a minor watercourse.

As an urban area, local soils have not been mapped. However, they are likely to be loams of the Claverley or Salop Association. These soils overlie a solid geology of Triassic Gunthorpe Association with alluvium associated with the valley of the watercourse (BGS 2001).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Whitwick is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of c. 1086. Referred to as *Witewic* the name is derived from the Old English and means the ‘dairy farm (*wīc*) belonging to *Hwīta*’ or the ‘white *wīc*’ (Ekwall 1989, 315). Domesday records that the land was held by Hugh of Grandmesnil and contained extensive tracts of woodland (Morgan 1979).

The church of St John the Baptist dates from the late 13th and 14th centuries and was extensively restored in the 19th century (Pevsner 1992, 421). Observations undertaken during reflooring of the church revealed an octagonal pier base of the former south nave that was 1.5m north of its 19th century replacement (Webster 1976, 182).

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as detailed in the specification (Appendix 1), were to locate and record archaeological deposits and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The footprint of the extension to the church was excavated by machine to depths required by the development. Following excavation, the sides of the trench 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 2. A photographic record was compiled, including views of the external elevations of the tower, and a section was drawn at a scale of 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation the records were 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 three phases were identified;

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Medieval deposits
Phase 3	Recent deposits

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

Phase 1 Natural deposits

The earliest deposit encountered was a layer of pinkish red clay (001). This measured over 0.52m thick.

Phase 2 Medieval deposits

Cut into the natural was a large foundation trench (002). This was at least 3.6m wide and up to 2.25m deep (Fig. 4, Section 1). Within the cut were the foundations for the church tower (003) which comprised random coursed stone. Backfilling the foundation trench was a deposit of pinkish red silty clay (004) which had been further disturbed by later burial activity.

Phase 3 Recent deposits

Cut into the backfill of the foundation trench was a linear drain (005). This was cut around the church and was 0.74m wide and 1.05m deep (Fig. 4, Section 1). The drain contained a ceramic pipe and was backfilled with grey and red stone with sandy silt (006). Overlying the drain cut was a layer of grey gravel (007) that was up to 0.23m thick and which had been capped by grey mortar (009).

Alongside the northern extent of the mortar was a stone retaining wall (008) which supported a tarmac path (010) located at the north of the excavated area.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits (Phase 1) of clays represent the upper weathered surface of the underlying solid geology.

Medieval deposits (Phase 2) comprise the foundation cut and foundation wall for the tower which date to the 14th century. The cut for the tower had been disturbed by later burial activity at the site.

Recent deposits comprise drainage

features and a path around the church.

No other archaeological features were encountered and no artefacts were retrieved during the investigation.

7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at St John the Baptist church, Whitwick, as the possibility existed of archaeological remains being exposed.

The groundworks exposed the medieval rubble foundations of the tower which were within a foundation trench. No other deposits of archaeological interest were encountered. No finds were recorded or recovered during the watching brief.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr C. Underwood for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis on behalf of the Parochial Church Council. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
 Site Supervisor: Bob Garland
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

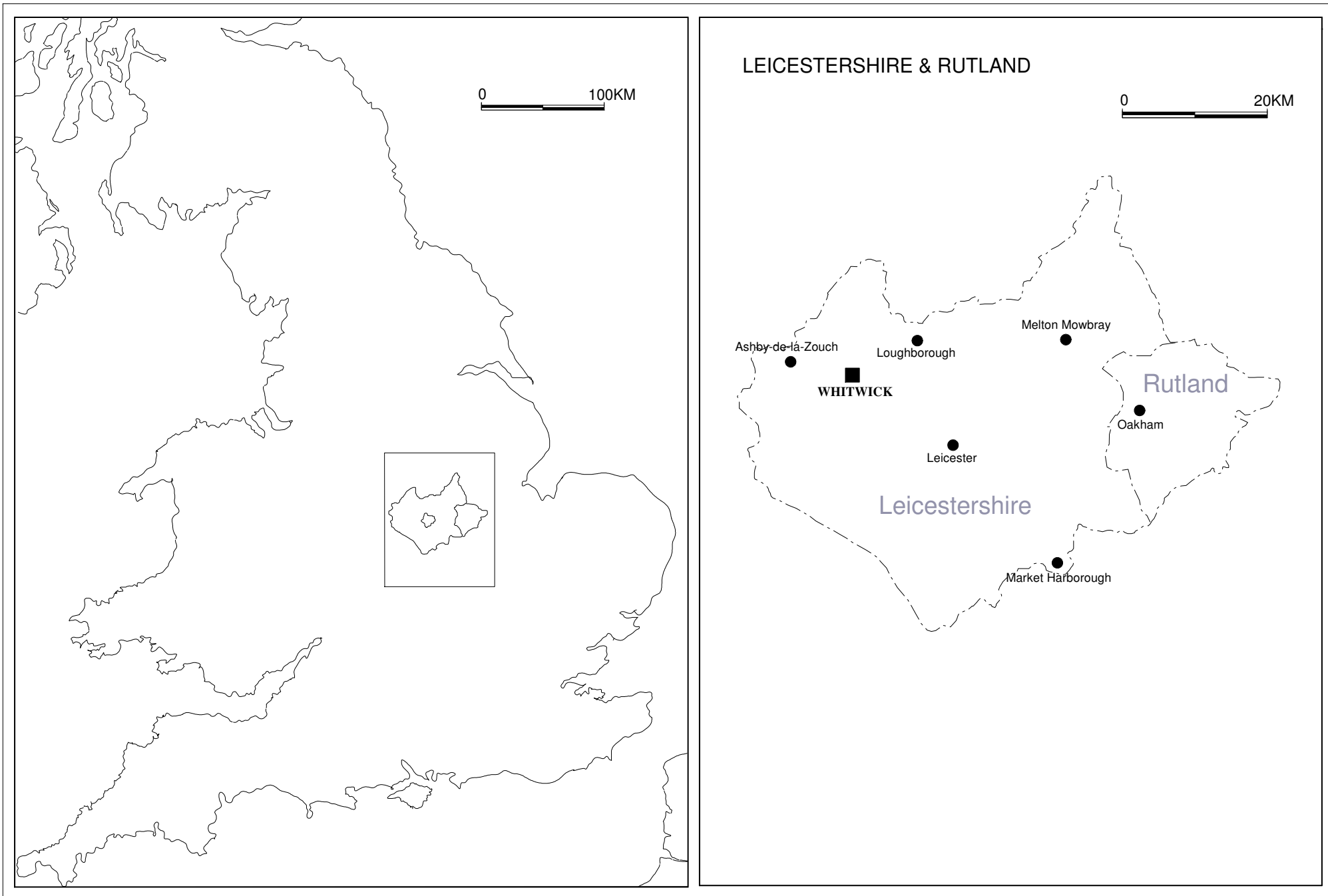
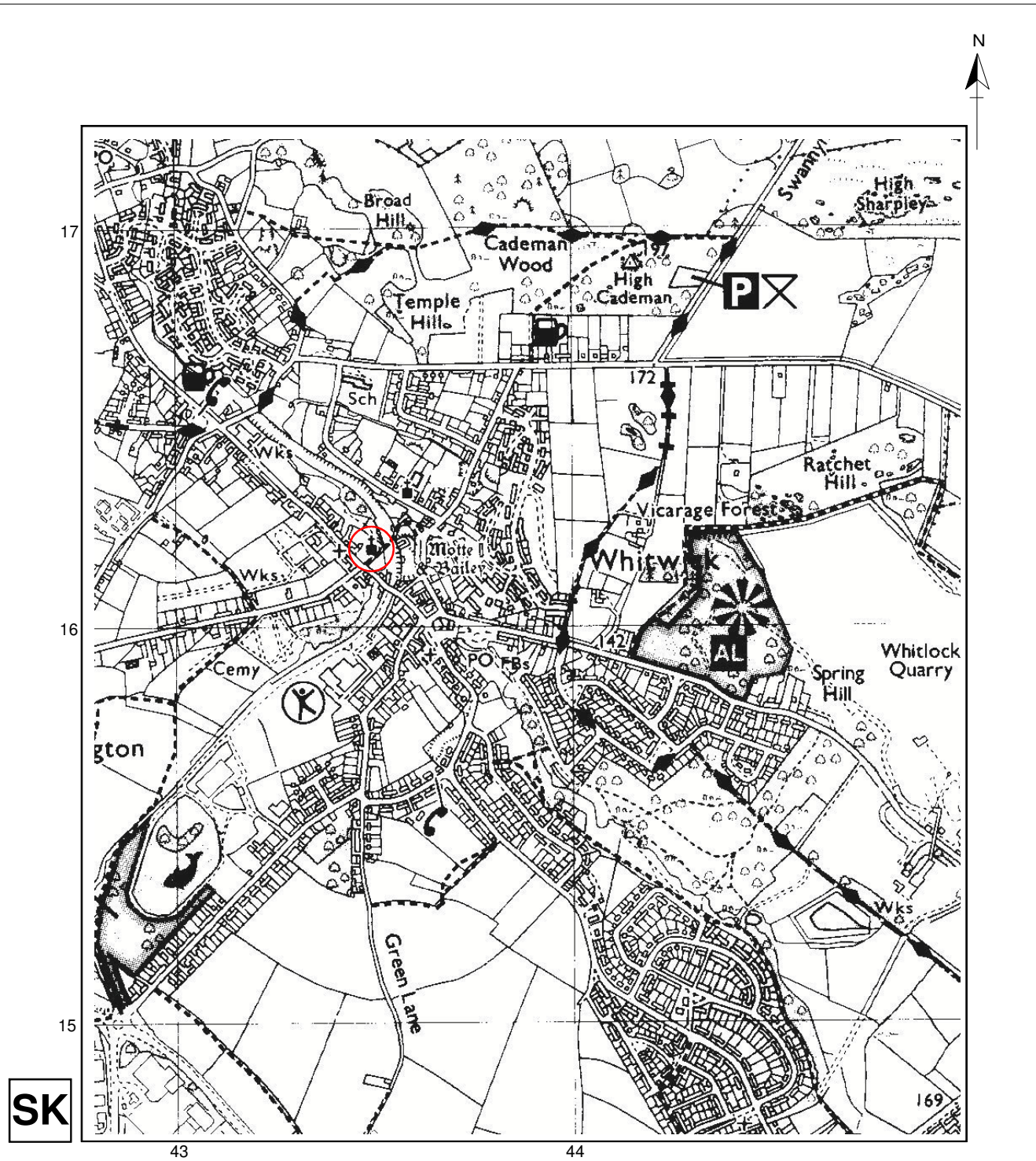


Figure 1 - General location map



SK



St John the Baptist Church

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of The Controller of her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. HTL Ltd Licence No. AL5041A0001



Archaeological Project Services

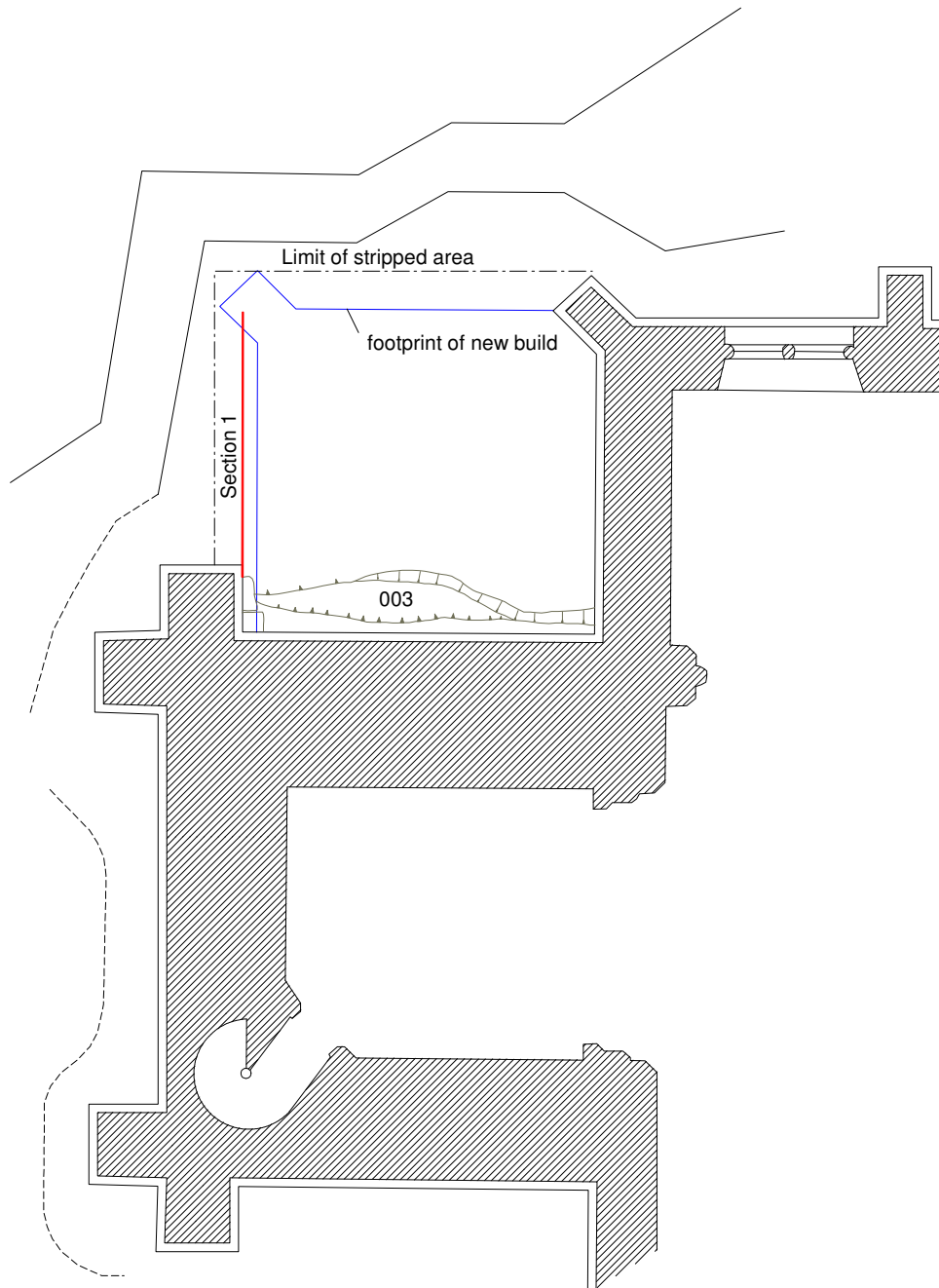
Project Name: St John's Church, Whitwick WSJB07

Scale 1:15000

Drawn by: PCF

Report No: 36/07

Figure 2 - Site location plan




	Archaeological Project Services	
Project Name: St John's Church, Whitwick WSJB07		
Scale 1:100	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 36/07

Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section location

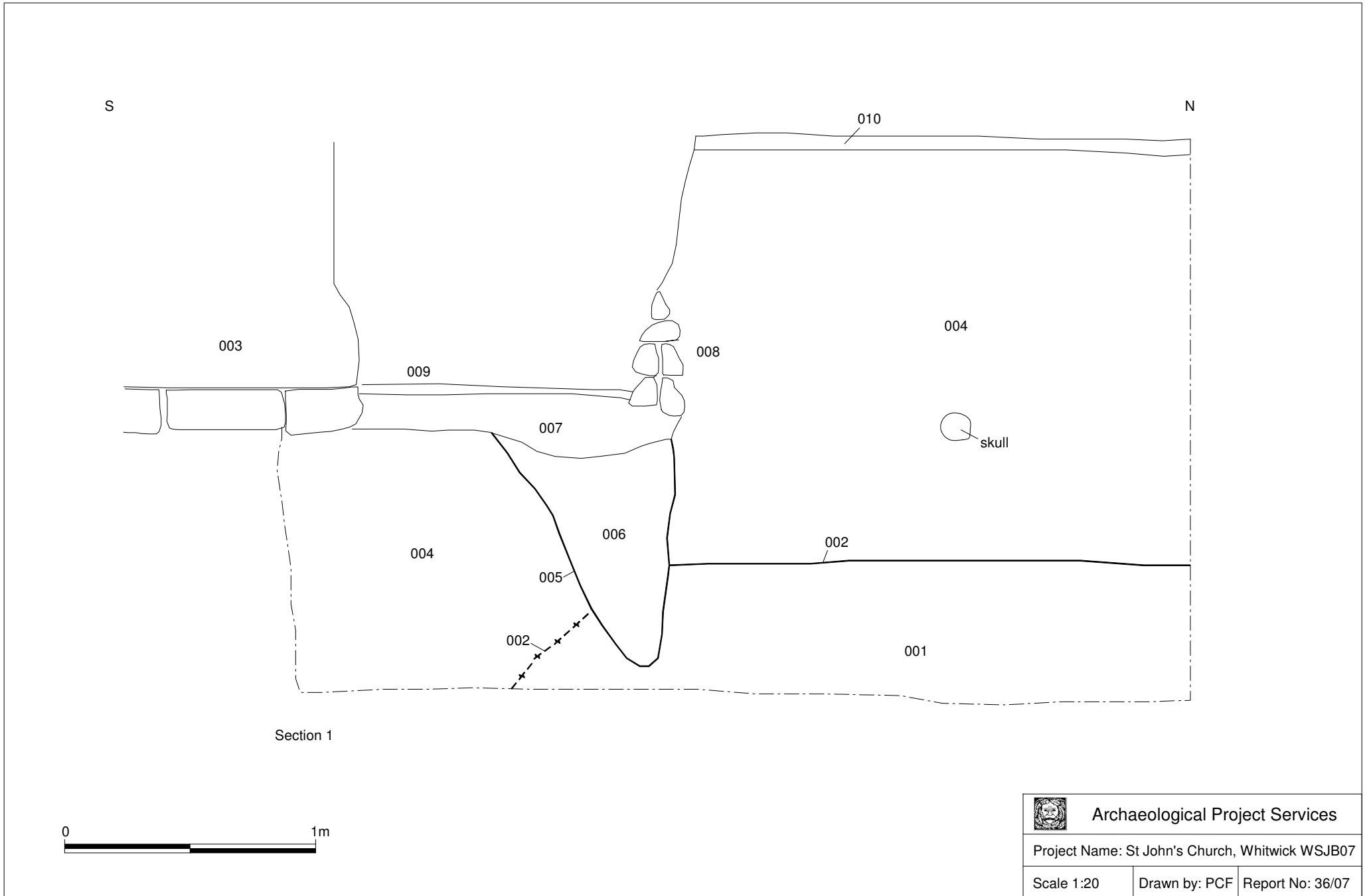


Figure 4 - Section 1



Plate 1 - General view of the development area during excavation, looking southeast

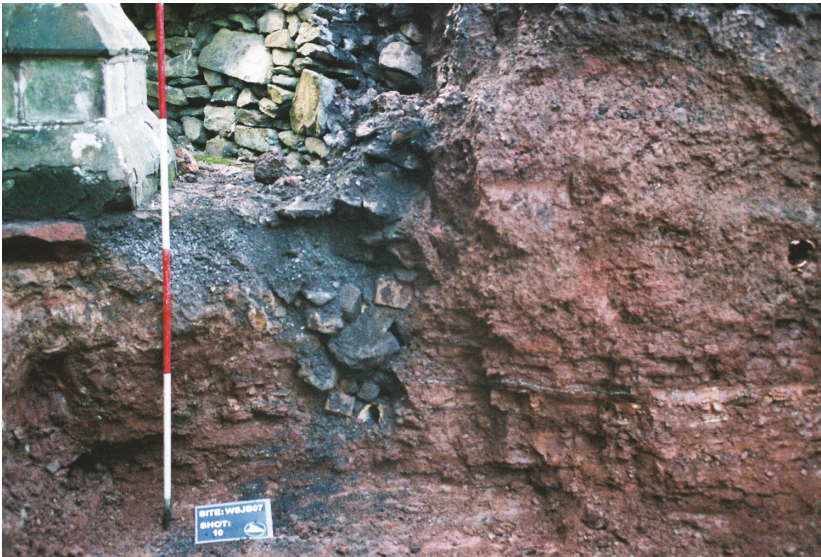


Plate 2 - Section 1, looking west



Plate 3 - General view following excavation showing the foundations to the tower, looking south



Plate 4 - West facing elevation of the north aisle, prior to excavation, looking east



Plate 5 - North facing elevation of the tower, prior to excavation, looking south

Appendix 1

LAND AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, WHITWICK, NEAR COALVILLE, LEICESTERSHIRE - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during construction of a toilet extension at St John the Baptist Church, Whitwick, near Coalville, Leicestershire.*
- 1.2 *Whitwick is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and St John the Baptist church is of 13th century origin.*
- 1.3 *The archaeological work will consist of a watching brief during development works on the site. Photographs will also be taken of the elevations to be covered by the extension.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the results of the watching brief. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for archaeological watching brief during construction of a toilet extension to St John the Baptist Church, Whitwick, near Coalville, Leicestershire.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
 - 2.2.1 Overview.
 - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
 - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
 - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project

3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Whitwick is located approximately 9km southwest of Loughborough in the administrative district of North West Leicestershire. St John the Baptist Church is in the centre of the town, on the north side of North Street, at National Grid Reference SK 434 162.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (05/01767/FUL) was submitted to North West Leicestershire District Council for the construction of a toilet extension to St John the Baptist church, Whitwick. Permission is subject to a condition requiring the undertaking of a watching brief during groundworks associated with the development.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 The church lies at about 130m OD on the west side of a stream that loops around the site. As the area is urban soils have not been mapped but on the basis of nearby deposits are likely to be Claverley or Salop loams developed on drift. Alluvium may be located in the stream valley.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.1 Whitwick is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, implying the settlement was in existence in the Late Saxon period. St John the Baptist church incorporates elements dating from the 13th century and the west tower is in the Decorated architectural style of the late 13th to mid 14th

century (Pevsner 1992).

7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:

7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.

7.1.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:

- Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
- Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
- As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
- Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

8 SITE OPERATIONS

8.1 General considerations

8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.

8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), under the management of a Member of the institute (MIFA). Archaeological Project Services is IFA registered organisation no. 21.

8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

8.2 Methodology

8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.

8.2.2 Stripped areas and trench sections will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The section drawings of the trenches will be recorded at a scale of 1:10. Should features be recorded in plan these will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.

8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.

8.2.4 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:

- the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
- groups of features where their relationship is important
- additionally, the two external elevations to be covered by the extension will be recorded photographically

8.2.5 Should human remains be located they will be left in situ if possible. Disturbed remains will be passed to the incumbent for reburial.

9 POST-EXCAVATION

9.1 Stage 1

- 9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the watching brief will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued and labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.
- 9.1.2 All finds recovered during the fieldwork will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

- 9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.
- 9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

- 9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.
- 9.3.2 This will consist of:
- A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
 - A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
 - Description of the topography of the site.
 - Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
 - A text describing the findings of the watching brief.
 - A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
 - Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
 - Sections of the trenches and archaeological features.
 - Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
 - Specialist reports on the finds from the site.
 - Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

10 REPORT DEPOSITION

- 10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the Client; North West Leicestershire District Council Planning Department; and to the County Council Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record.

11 ARCHIVE

- 11.1 The documentation and records generated during the watching brief will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to Leicestershire Museums Service. This sorting will be undertaken according to the document titled *The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service* for long-term storage and curation.

12 PUBLICATION

- 12.1 Details of the investigation will be input to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS).
- 12.2 A report on the results of the investigation will be submitted for inclusion in the journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Historical and Archaeological Society*.
- 12.3 If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date, and *Medieval Archaeology* and the *Journal of the Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date; and *Church Archaeology*.

13 CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with North West Leicestershire District Council. They will be given written notice of the commencement of the project.

14 VARIATIONS AND CONTINGENCIES

- 14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.
- 14.2 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the archaeological curator.
- 14.3 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation additional resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.
- 14.4 Any contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or post-excavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the archaeological curator and the client.

15 PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS

- 15.1 The watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction and is dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological site work.
- 15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.
- 15.3 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one person-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half person-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about four days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

16 SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT

16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Body to be undertaking the work</u>
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln
Pottery Analysis	Prehistoric - Trent & Peak Archaeological Trust Roman - B Precious, Independent Specialist Post-Roman - J Young, Independent Specialist/A Boyle, APS
Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, Independent Specialist, or G Taylor, APS
Animal Bones	J Kitch, APS
Environmental Analysis	J Rackham, Independent Specialist

17 INSURANCES

17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of £10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of £5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

18 COPYRIGHT

18.1 Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.

18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.

18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.

18.4 The author of any report or specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes or for further publication.

19 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pevsner, N., 1992 *Leicestershire and Rutland*, The Buildings of England (2nd ed)

Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Firm mid pinkish red clay, >0.52m thick	Natural deposit
002	Feature, full extent not observed	Foundation trench for (003)
003	Stone structure, 1.3m deep, rough hewn in random coursing	Tower foundation
004	Firm mid pinkish red silty clay	Backfill of (003)
005	Linear feature, cut around church, 0.74m wide and 1.05m deep, steep sides and rounded base	Drain
006	Loose mid grey and red stone with sandy silt and ceramic drain	Fill of (005)
007	Loose mid grey gravel, 0.23m thick	Fill of (005)
008	Sandstone structure, random coursing with no bonding material	Wall
009	Firm mid grey mortar, 40mm thick	Drain lining
010	Firm black tarmac, 50mm thick	Path

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	A deposit (usually clay, silts or sands) laid down in water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea and freshwater alluvium by streams, rivers or within lakes.
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.

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

10	Context records
1	Photographic record sheets
2	Sheets of scale drawings
1	Stratigraphic matrix

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:

Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services
Room 500
County Hall
Leicester Road
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8TE

Accession Number: X.A41.2007

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: WSJB 07

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.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.