



Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL
CASTLE STREET
BUCKINGHAM
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

NGR: SP 6947 3377

on behalf of the Vicar and Church Wardens of St Peter and St Paul's Church



Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc AIFA

July 2012

ASC: 1515/BSP




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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	BSP	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1515
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-123563	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	AYBCM: 2012.48
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Buckingham		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Buckingham		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 6947 3377		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.8 sq. m		
<i>Present use:</i>	Town land		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Inspect south western corner of church footings for cause of the structural movements to the church walls		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	n/a		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	n/a		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	20/03/12		
<i>Client:</i>	Vicar and Churchwardens of St Peter and St Paul's Church Parish Church Office Castle Street Buckingham Buckinghamshire MK18 1BS		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Judith Bundock		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Carina Summerfield-Hill	<i>Date:</i>	23/07/12
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Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In March 2012 an archaeological watching brief was carried out at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Castle Hill, Buckingham, which stands on the grounds of a former Norman castle. The investigation was in response to the excavation of an inspection trench due to structural movements to the church walls.

The works revealed that the church is constructed on made ground associated with the clearance of the castle mound and the construction of the church. The full extent of the church footings was exposed revealing a brick and mortar foundation with a flint/pebble and mortar foundation base. No finds, features or archaeological deposits were exposed.

1. Introduction

1.1 In March 2012 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Castle Hill, Buckingham. The project was commissioned by the Vicar and Churchwardens of St Peter and St Paul, and was carried out according to the requirements set out by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor for Oxford (DAA).

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of a faculty from the Chancellor of the Diocesan of Oxford.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

ASC is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *The Site*

1.4.1 *Location & Description*

St Peter and St Paul's Church is located in the town of Buckingham, in the administrative district of Aylesbury Vale, centred on National Grid Reference SP 6947 3377 (Fig. 1).

The site is a rectangular plot of land, known as Castle Hill. In the centre of which stands St Peter and St Paul's Church which is surrounded by town land. Castle Street passes through the centre of the site providing access and parking. The periphery of the site is surrounded by residential properties (Fig. 2).

St Peter and St Paul's Church is a Grade I listed building. It was originally built in 1777-81, and completed remodelled in the 19th century. It is built of limestone ashlar, in late 13th century style. It consists of a chancel with north vestry and organ chamber, seven bay nave, north and south aisles, south porch and west tower (Page 1925, 471-489).

1.4.2 Topography & Geology

The site is situated on the top of a hill, a former Norman castle. The hill has moderately sloping sides and a flattish top, with an elevation height of c.91.6m OD. The soils are part of the *Ashley Association* described as *fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, associated with similar but wetter soils. Some calcareous and non-calcareous slowly permeable clayey soils* (Soil Survey 1983, 572q). The geology consists of the *Cornbrash* formation and is described as *limestone, grey to brown, rubbly* and is part of the *Great Oolite Group* (BGS, Sheet 219).

1.4.3 Proposed Development

In response to structural movements to the church walls, the church foundations at the south western corner of the church were exposed. This was to ascertain depth and extent of church foundations, condition of drainage and to investigate ground conditions (Fig. 3).

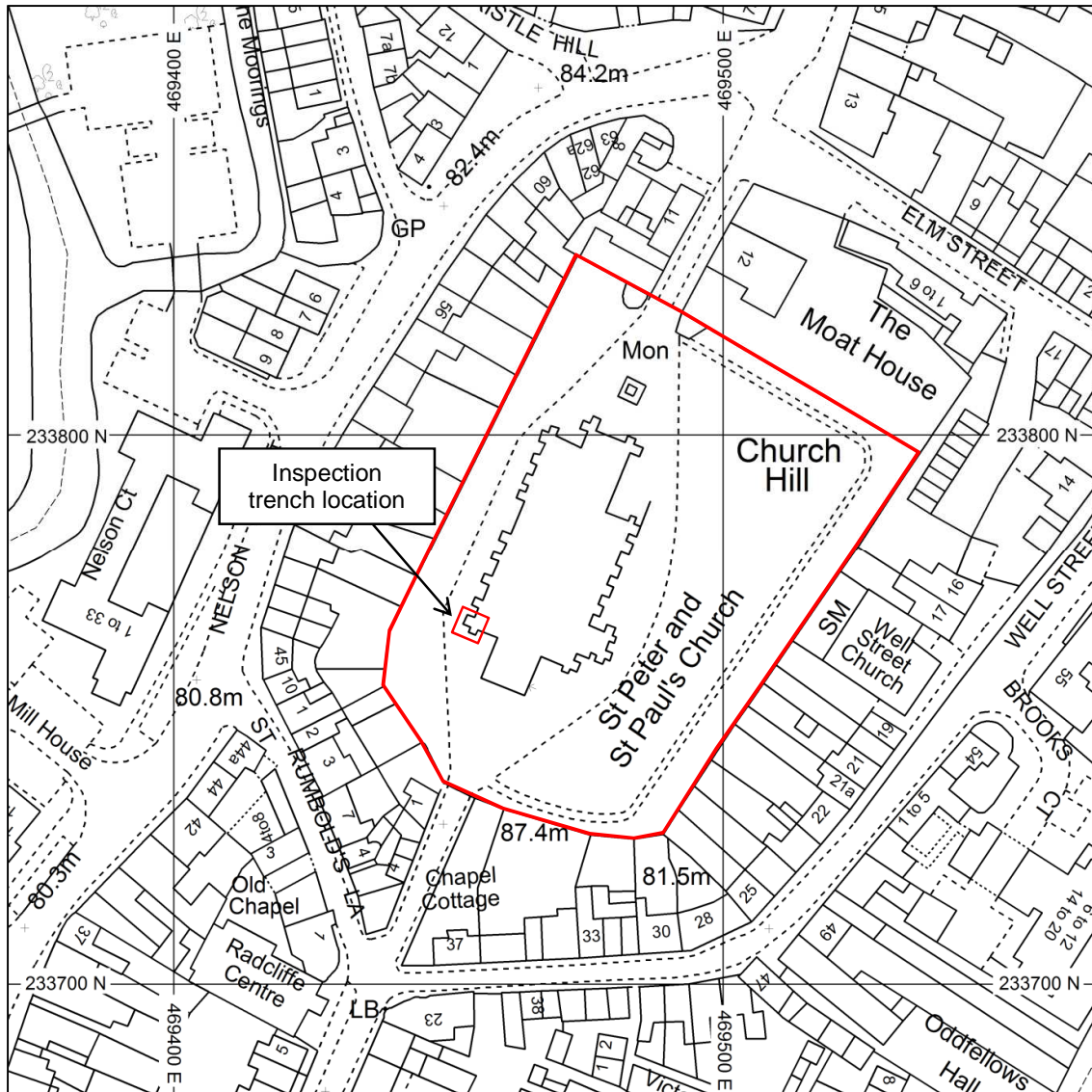


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

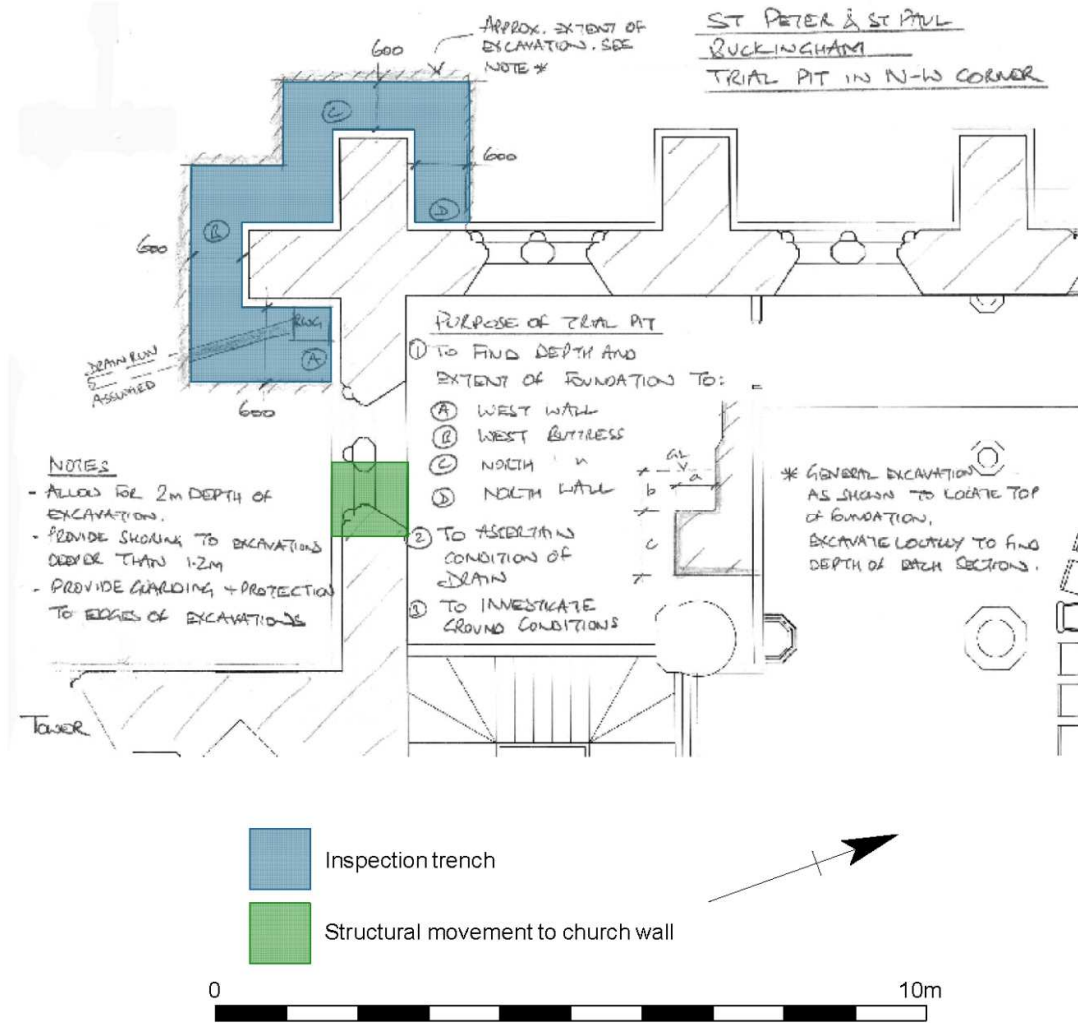


Figure 3: Location of inspection trench plan (scale 1:100)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were:

- To determine the character of the church footings
- To determine the presence of any remains of the earlier castle on the site
- To record burial vaults and graves
- To determine the extent to which human remains survive in the affected area
- To signal, before work proceeds, the discovery of an archaeological find for which further action is required
- To provide a report and ordered archive on the investigation

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IfA 2008a & b) and *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991; EH 2006), and to the relevant sections of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the requirements of the DAA, who required:

- Archaeological monitoring of groundworks

2.4 Constraints

The works were carried out in line with the requirements of the DAA, with full cooperation of the client and in good site conditions. No constraints were encountered.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available background to the church and its environs.

This section has been compiled with information from the 2008 Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC): Buckingham Historic Town Assessment Report, Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER), and ASC'S library.

- 3.2 Buckingham dates back to at least AD 914 when Edward the Elder established a double burh, a defended settlement forming part of a network of defences against the Vikings. Buckingham also has an association with the 7th century Anglo Saxon saint St. Rumbold, which may indicate an earlier settlement. By the late Anglo Saxon period Buckingham had developed significantly to have a mint and possibly a Minster church, eventually becoming the administrative centre of the county. In the 11th century, after the Conquest, a castle was constructed within the burh. During the medieval period settlement spread out along Market Hill (BCC 2008, 4).
- 3.3 The medieval parish church for Buckingham was originally located in Prebend End, c.200m southwest of the site (HER 1925). The church was originally part of the See of Dorchester, and in the reign of Edward the Confessor, was held by Bishop Wulfwig. At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086) an entry relating to Buckingham church states that *Bishop Remiguis holds the church of this borough*. Bishop Remiguis removed the diocesan seat to Lincoln that included the church at Buckingham (Williams and Martin 2003, 394; Elliott 1975, 121). In 1837 the diocesan seat for Buckingham was moved to the Diocese of Oxford.
- 3.4 The church continued on this site until the late 18th century when the spire collapsed and demolished the church (Elliot 1975). The fabric of the original church was used to construct a new church, the church of St Peter and St Paul, on the site of a Norman castle.
- 3.5 Buckingham castle was built by the Giffards in the 11th or 12th century into the existing burh (HER 1755). By the 14th century the castle had fallen into disrepair, but it did retain some of its significance. The 1307-13 Close Rolls lists it as one of the castles to be defended. By the end of the medieval period the castle is believed to have fallen into ruin (BCC 2008, 40-41; Page 1925).
- 3.6 The present church of St Peter and St Paul was constructed in 1777-81 (HER 4040), and was completely remodelled in the 19th century by Sir Gilbert G. Scott. It is built of limestone ashlar, in late 13th century style. It consists of a chancel with north vestry and organ chamber, seven bay nave, north and south aisles, south porch and west tower (Page 1925, 471-489).
- 3.7 Previous investigations on the site were first recorded in the 19th century during Gilbert Scott's restoration work to the church. Scott discovered that the church was resting upon made ground, however, no descriptions of the deposits were mentioned. In the 1870s work carried out at the edge of Castle Hill uncovered masonry fragments thought to derive from the castle (BCC 2008, 41; Page 1925). In 2002 evaluation trenches revealed post medieval made ground below which were medieval deposits of

mortar and limestone. The medieval deposits have been interpreted as the remains of a wall or embankment relating to the curtain wall of the medieval castle (HER 175504; Hindmarch 2002). A watching brief was also carried out in 2002 during test pitting inside the church at the west end, to extend the gallery, and during service trenching to the southeast of the church between the NE churchyard gate and the church porch. Make up layers, and layers of demolition and construction material were found. Such material was associated with the clearance of the top of the castle mound and the building of the church in 1777. A dark greyish clay with charcoal flecks and concentrations of gravel and brown clay was thought to be make up of the castle mound (HER 175501; Mumford 2002)

4. Results

4.1 An inspection trench was mechanically excavated with a 0.6m ditching bucket around the south west corner of the church. One site visit was made in which the church foundations and ground stratigraphy were recorded.

A plate plan is depicted in Appendix 3.

4.2 The general site stratigraphy comprised (Plate 1):

00-0.09m of tarmac

0.09+m of made-ground consisting of light brownish orange, loose silty sand with frequent small rounded stones and sub-angular flint/stones. At the northern and eastern end of the trench mixed in with the silty sand material were concentrations of mid brown grey soft clay.

4.3 **Inspection Trench** (Fig. 3 & 4; Plates 1-6)

The inspection trench measured *c.*0.73m wide with a maximum depth of *c.*1.17m. It fully exposed the church footings and revealed that the church was constructed onto made ground. The footings were constructed of red brick measuring 23 × 11 × 8 cm (9 × 4 ¼ × 3 ⅝ inches). A maximum of 11 brick courses were noted. Each course was laid width wise followed by length wise that continued in this sequence, termed English Bond. The bricks were bonded with beige/cream mortar. The brick footings were *c.*0.99m max deep, and offset two courses, to a width of *c.*0.33m. Underlying the brick footings was the foundation base constructed of small-medium flint/pebbles and mortar that measured a further *c.*0.27m max deep.

4.4 No finds, features or archaeological deposits were revealed.



Plate 1: Stratigraphy, looking NW (*scale 1m*)



Plate 2: Church footings, looking SE (*scale 1m*)



Plate 3: Church footings, looking SE (*scale 1m*)



Plate 4: Church footings, looking SE (*scale 1m*)



Plate 5: Church footings, looking NE (*scale 1m*)



Plate 6: Church footings, looking NW (scale 1m)

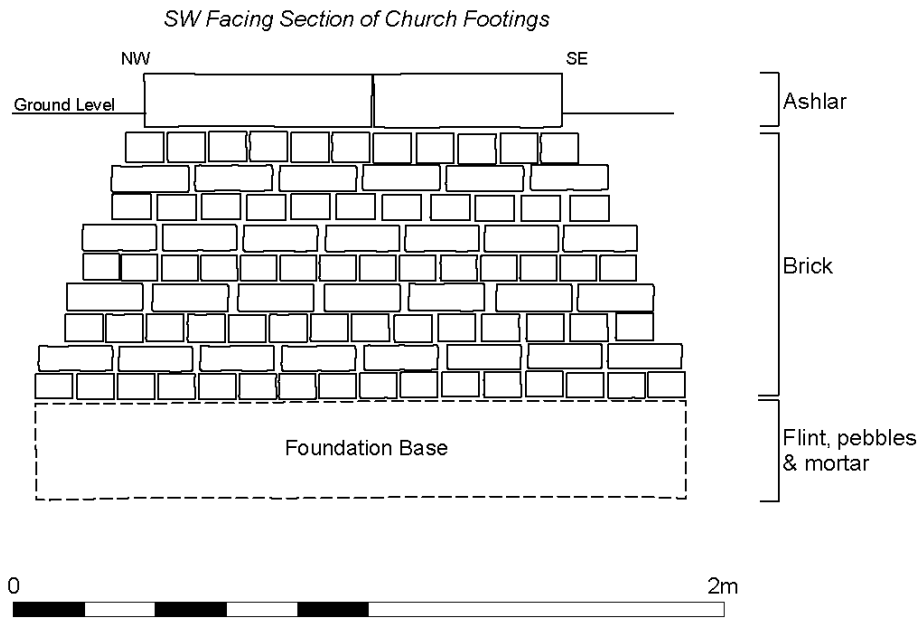


Figure 4: Section drawing of church footings (scale 1:20)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The works confirmed that the church is constructed on made ground associated with the clearance of the castle mound and the construction of the church.
- 5.2 The full extent of the church footings was exposed revealing a brick and mortar foundation with a flint/pebble and mortar foundation base. The footing extended c.0.99m below ground level.
- 5.3 No finds, features or archaeological deposits were observed within the investigation trench. This is not to say, however, that evidence of earlier periods is not present within the immediate vicinity. The investigation area was limited and has been disturbed by the construction of the church.

5.4 *Confidence Rating*

As the works were carried out in good site conditions with full cooperation of the client and site contractors, the results are given a high confidence rating.

6. Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by the Vicar and Churchwardens of St Peter and St Paul. The writer is grateful to Judith Bundock for her assistance. The project was monitored by Julian Munby, the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor for Oxford. Thanks are also due to contractors Edgar Taylor Ltd.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA AIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc PIFA. The report was prepared by Carina Summerfield-Hill and edited by Karin Semmelmann.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Initial Report
2. Clients site plans
3. Site Monitoring Sheets
4. Site record drawings
5. List of photographs
6. B/W prints & negatives
7. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with *Buckinghamshire County Museum* (AYBCM: 2012.48).

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).
- EH 2006 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2008 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA (various dates) Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance* documents (*Desk-Based Assessments 2011, Watching Briefs 2008, Evaluations 2009, Excavations 2008, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings 2008, Finds 2008, Archiving 2009*).

Secondary Sources

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) 2008 *Buckingham Historic Town Assessment Report*.
- Elliot, D. J 1975 *Buckingham the Loyal and Ancient Borough*. Chichester: Phillimore.
- Hindmarch, E 2002 *Church of St Peter and St Paul, Church Hill, Buckingham: An Archaeological Evaluation*. Thames Valley Archaeological Services. Unpublished. CAS 175504.
- Mumford, J 2002 *St Peter and St Paul's Church, Buckingham: An Archaeological Watching Brief*. Oxford Archaeology. Unpublished. CAS 175501.
- Page, W (ed) 1925 *Victoria County History: A History of Buckinghamshire* Vol 3, pp. 471-489.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Williams, A and Martin, G. H. 2003 *Domesday Book A Complete Translation*. Penguin Books.

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Buckingham			SITE NO/CODE: 1515/BSP
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		√	General site shot, looking S
2		√	General site shot, looking E
3		√	Structural movement to church wall, looking NE
4		√	Structural movement to church wall, looking NE
5		√	Excavation of trial trench, looking N
6	√	√	Church footings, looking SW (<i>scale 1m</i>)
7		√	Church footings, looking SE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
8	√	√	Church footings, looking SE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
9		√	Church footings, looking NE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
10	√	√	Church footings, looking NE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
11	√	√	Church footings, looking SE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
12	√	√	Church footings, looking NE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
13	√	√	Church footings, looking NW (<i>scale 1m</i>)
14	√	√	Church footings, looking NE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
15		√	Trial trench stratigraphy, looking N (<i>scale 1m</i>)
16		√	Trial trench stratigraphy, looking NE (<i>scale 1m</i>)
17	√	√	General shot of trial trench, looking N (<i>scale 1m</i>)

Appendix 3: Plate Plan

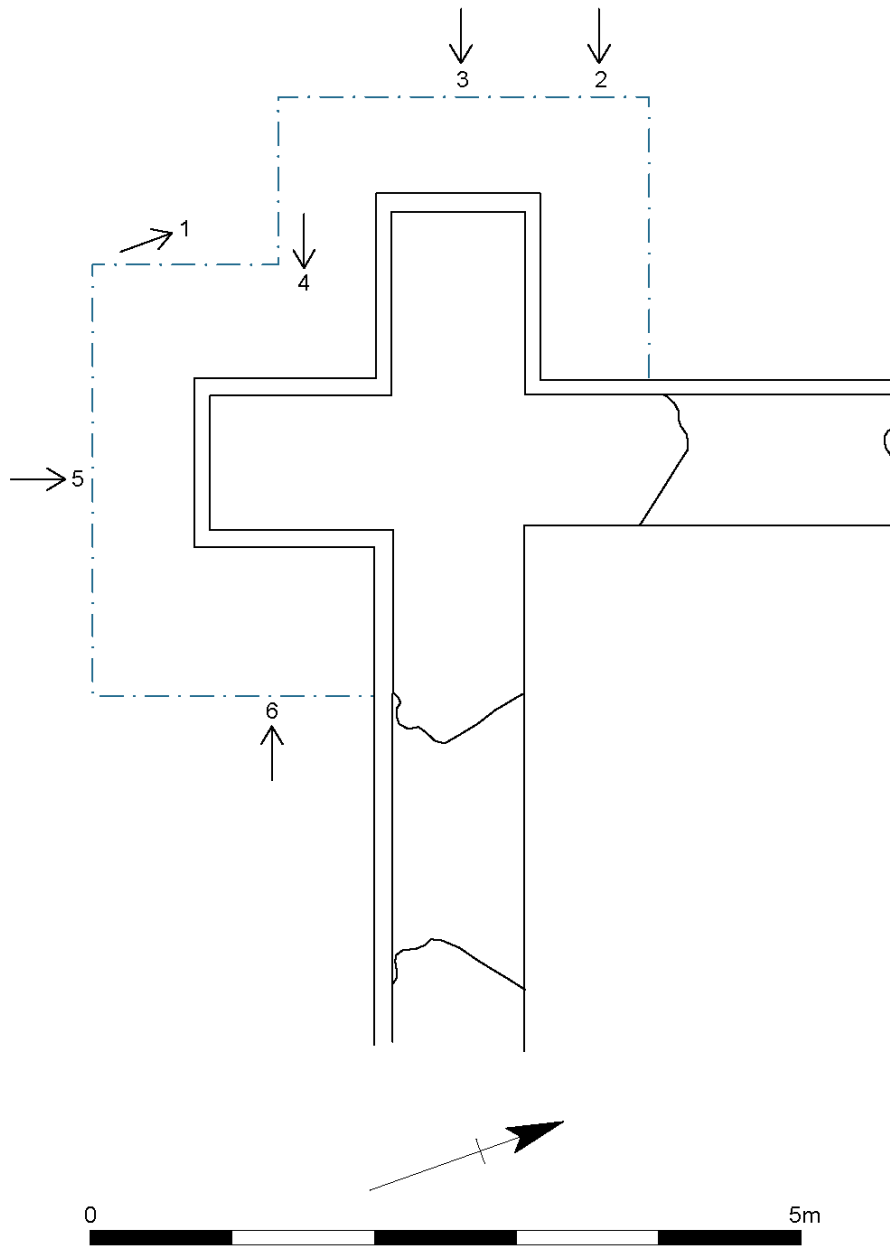


Figure 5: Plan of plates (scale 1:50)

Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Church of St Peter and St Paul	OASIS reference:	archaeol2-123563
Short Description:	<p>In March 2012 an archaeological watching brief was carried out at the Church of St Peter and St Paul, Castle Hill, Buckingham, which stands on the grounds of a former Norman castle. The investigation was in response to the excavation of an inspection trench due to structural movements to the church walls.</p> <p>The works revealed that the church is constructed on made ground associated with the clearance of the castle mound and the construction of the church. The full extent of the church footings was exposed revealing a brick and mortar foundation with a flint/pebble and mortar foundation base. No finds, features or archaeological deposits were exposed.</p>		
Project Type:	Watching brief		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	HER 1755	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	Grade I listed building
Current land use:	Town land	Future work: (yes/no/unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	Church	Monument period:	18 th century
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 6947 3377
Site address: (+ postcode if known)	Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Castle Street, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire, MK18 1BS		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	c.8 sq. m	Height OD: (metres)	c.91.6m
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Julian Munby	Project design originator:	N/A
Project Manager:	Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA	Supervisor:	Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc AIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	St Peter and St Paul's Church PCC		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	20/03/12	End date:	20/03/12
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Buckinghamshire County Museum (AYBCM: 2012.48)	None	
Paper:		Report, site records, b&w photographs and negatives	
Digital:		CD containing all digital data including digital photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Castle Street, Buckingham		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1515/BSP		
Author(s):	Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc PIFA		
Page nos	20	Date:	23/07/12