


St Mary's Church, Church Walk, Ambrosden, Oxford



Archaeological Watching Brief Report

oxfordarchaeology

southsouthsouth
December 2014

**Client: PBA Designs on
behalf of the PCC**

Issue No: 1
OA Job No: 16341
NGR: SP 6030 1941

St Mary's Church, Church Walk, Ambrosden,

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

By Mark Gibson and Louise Loe

Edited by: Cynthia Poole

Illustrator: Markus Dylewski and Conan Parsons

Report Date: December 2014

Report Number: N/A

Site Name: St Mary's Church, Church Walk, Ambrosden

HER Event No:

Date of Works: September – October 2014

Client Name: PBA Designs on behalf of the Incumbent and Church Wardens of St Mary's

Client Ref: OX/16341/14

Planning Ref: 14/00274/F

Grid Ref: SP 6030 1941

Site Code: AMSMAR14

Finance Code: AMSMARWB

Receiving Body: Oxfordshire Museums

Accession No: OXCMS : 2014.211

Prepared by: Mark Gibson and Louise Loe
Position: Archaeology Supervisor / Head of Heritage Burial Services
Date: November 2014

Checked by: Cynthia Poole
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: November 2014
Signed:

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

St Mary's Church, Church Walk, Ambrosden, Oxford

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	1
1.2 Geology and topography.....	2
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	2
2 Project Aims and Methodology.....	2
2.1 Aims.....	2
2.2 Methodology.....	2
3 Results.....	3
3.1 Description of deposits.....	3
3.2 Finds.....	4
4 The human skeletons.....	5
4.1 Methodology.....	5
4.2 Results.....	6
5 Discussion And Conclusions.....	8
Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory.....	10
Appendix 2 Bibliography and references.....	13
Appendix 3 Summary of Site Details.....	14

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1 Site location
 Fig. 2 WC extension footprint and service trench location plan
 Fig. 3 Plan showing location of burials within the WC extension footprint and service trench

LIST OF PLATES

- Plate 1 Skeleton 32, looking north
 Plate 2 Skeleton 119, looking north
 Plate 3 View of service trench, looking east. Coffin 128 and skeleton 131
 Plate 4 Coffin 138
 Plate 5 Decorated grip from coffin 128
 Plate 6 Lead letter 'B' soldered to lid of coffin 138
 Plate 7 Partial decorated floor tile

SUMMARY

In September and October 2014, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Mary's Church, Church Walk, Ambrosden, Oxfordshire (NGR: SP 6030 1941). The work was commissioned by PBA Designs on behalf of the Incumbent and Church Wardens and was carried out during the installation of a wheelchair accessible disabled WC extension and the digging of service trenches in the churchyard.

Eighteen earth cut graves were revealed within the foot print of the WC extension and a further 28 were uncovered within the service trenches. From these, 44 skeletons (33 adults and 11 juveniles) were excavated. Iron coffin fittings and two lead coffins indicated that at least 21 of the burials were of post-medieval date. The remainder (25 burials) were possibly medieval. No archaeological remains of the earlier church were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Between the 15th September and 14th October 2014, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Mary's Church, Ambrosden, Oxfordshire. The work was commissioned by PBA Designs on behalf of the Incumbent and Church Wardens. D.A. Miles and Sons carried out the ground works in respect of a planning application for a new disabled WC extension on the north side of the church.
- 1.1.2 The proposed works involved the lowering of the ground level directly outside the 12th century door and the construction of a new WC extension and covered walkway within this footprint. This was in addition to the installation of a new retaining wall surrounding the WC and a service trench, with three associated inspection chambers, across the churchyard for mains water and drainage.
- 1.1.3 An archaeological brief was prepared by Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire, detailing the requirements for an archaeological watching brief and recording during these works (Oram 2014).
- 1.1.4 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how the requirements of the brief would be met (OA 2014).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The village of Ambrosden is located approximately 3 miles south of Bicester, Oxfordshire. St Mary's Church is situated on Church Walk which is on the west

side of the village (Fig. 1), north-east of the railway line and west of Birch Road. The church lies approximately 67.75m above OD and the underlying geology is Cornbrash (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet no 237).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site is located in an area of archaeological potential along the north and east walls of the grade II listed (PRN 4626) St Mary's Church. The church itself is of late 12th century origin with later additions in the 14th and 15th centuries. It was restored between 1847 and 1867. Roll-mouldings and cushion capitals in the northern doorway are original features that still remain (Sherwood and Pevsner 1974, 422). To the south-east of the church there are the remains of a 14th or 15th century cross which is a scheduled ancient monument (SM 281). Another cross is recorded on an early edition OS map to the north of the church (PRN 5024) indicating the possibility that the present church is located on the site of an earlier church.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains affected by the proposed works and allow for the preservation by record of any such remains whose presence and nature could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of the development or other potentially disruptive works.
- 2.1.2 To signal, before the destruction of the material in question, the discovery of a significant archaeological find, for which the resources allocated are not sufficient to support a treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard. All groundworks will be halted until the remains have been suitably investigated and dealt with by the attending archaeologist.
- 2.1.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features within the site and to take samples where appropriate.
- 2.1.4 To make available the results of the investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was maintained during the period of all groundworks including surface stripping, the excavation of foundations and service trenches, landscaping works and all other invasive works. The footprint for the WC extension and the associated service trenches were excavated in level spits until the archaeologically relevant layer (in this case the tops of graves) was encountered. Where possible, ground reduction was undertaken by a mini-digger fitted with a 0.6 m short-toothed bucket, operated under archaeological supervision. Restricted access due to extant gravestones and trees meant that much of the foundation trench for the WC extension was excavated by hand.

- 2.2.2 Excavation, recording and lifting of human remains was undertaken in respect of directions received from the Consistory Court and in accordance with Church of England and English Heritage guidance (2005). The methods employed followed those detailed in the *OA Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson 1992). Each grave cut, skeleton, coffin and coffin fittings (where they survived) were assigned a unique context number. Where necessary, skeletons and any remains of associated coffins and coffin fittings, were hand excavated and lifted with due care and regard to the sensitivities involved. Only skeletal remains exposed in the areas of impact were exhumed; human remains were not excavated from beyond the limits of these areas.
- 2.2.3 Each set of exhumed remains and any associated coffin fittings were carefully labelled so as to identify the grave from which they were removed. They were temporarily stored separately in the vestry. Following rapid examination (where appropriate) by a qualified osteoarchaeologist, remains were individually and reverently reinterred in the churchyard, as close as reasonably practicable to their original place of burial under the supervision of the rector.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

WC Extension Footprint and Service Trench

- 3.1.1 The footprint for the WC extension was located on the north side of the church (Fig. 2), directly adjacent to the Norman door. It extended 4.6m to the north of the church wall, was 7.4m at its widest where it passed through the retaining wall and slimmed down to 4.0m wide at its northern most extent 2.7m beyond the retaining wall. It was 1.4m below current ground level (66.01MoD) at its deepest.
- 3.1.2 The service trench extended eastwards from the footprint of the WC for some 26.5m where it turned southwards to follow the eastern wall of the churchyard for another 24m before exiting out of the main gate into Church Walk (Figure 2). The base of the service trench gradually sloped down from 66.29 MoD where it exited the footprint of the WC extension, to 66.10m where it turned southwards and ended at approximately 65 MoD where it connected to the mains services in Church Walk.
- 3.1.3 The underlying natural comprised compacted limestone fragments and slabs within an orange yellow sandy clay matrix (160), was first encountered in the area of skeleton 141 some 4m from the east end of the service trench where it formed the base of the trench (1.3m below ground level) and continued to be encountered to the east and south. As the service trench turned southwards the level of the natural rose in relation to the ground level until it was only 0.7 m BGL.

3.1.4 The natural was overlain by the graveyard soil (5), a layer of firm, mid greyish brown silty clay with fairly frequent limestone fragments (1.40 m + deep in the WC extension footprint, to just 0.7 m where the service trench exited the gate). All 28 of the graves were cut through this deposit. They were encountered in the footprint of the WC extension and in the entire west to east section of the service trench, but only along the most northern 2m of the north to south section of the service trench (Fig. 3). They were sealed by a layer of organic topsoil/turf (159), up to 0.2 m thick in places.

Earth cut graves

3.1.5 In general, the graves were filled with re-deposited graveyard soil (5) and therefore grave cuts were difficult to identify either in full or at all. This meant that the graves were usually identified by the presence of the skeleton instead of the cut.

3.1.6 Where grave cuts could be observed they were either sub-rectangular or a shouldered coffin shape. Graves were generally aligned W-E, although one grave (127), which contained coffin (128), occupied a S-N alignment. The highest observed grave, (80), was encountered at a level of 66.76m and the lowest grave (18), which contained skeleton (19), was encountered at a depth of 66.01m. The majority of graves were intercutting, or had been truncated by features (probably other graves) that were beyond the depth of impact.

3.2 Finds

3.2.1 Human skeletal remains were excavated from 44 of the 46 graves, the lead coffins were not opened and left undisturbed as this was possible. All skeletons were lying in a supine (on their back) position with their heads at the west end of the graves. Where arm positions could be observed they were generally found to be either lying by the sides (Plate 1), or with one or both hands over the pelvis. The only exception to this was juvenile skeleton 119 which had its arms flexed so the hands were on the middle of its chest (Plate 2).

3.2.2 Besides human skeletal remains, the majority of finds were coffin fittings. These were recovered from 19 graves (1, 6, 10, 14, 24, 31, 35, 39, 49, 56, 75, 81, 89, 93, 97, 101, 116, 130 and 155) and comprised iron nails, grips, grip plates, a breast plate and iron or brass upholstery studs. The wooden coffins that these fittings had once been fixed to had practically decayed leaving only small traces of wood in some places. All of the fittings indicate a post medieval date for the burials they were found with.

3.2.3 The breastplate, or name plate, found on coffin 51, was too corroded and fragmented to identify. The grips and grip plates were found on three of the coffins (16, 128 and 158). A further coffin (95) had either a grip plate at the foot end, or a foot plate (it was too poorly preserved to say which). All of the grip

plates were too badly corroded and fragmentary to identify any details of their designs, but some information could be recorded. The grips from coffins 16 and 158 were simple undecorated types, consistent with an 18th/19th century type seen at Christchurch Spitalfields, London (CCS type 2a; Reeves and Adams 1993). In addition, the grips from coffin 128 were decorated with an embossed floral design (Plate 5).

3.2.4 Two unbreached lead coffins (128 and 138) were encountered but were left *in situ* undisturbed (Plates 3 and 4). These both once had wooden outer coffins, that had decayed but were indicated by the presence of iron coffin nails, grip, grip plates and brass upholstery studs. Lead coffin 138, which was only partially exposed, had the letter 'B', in lead, soldered to its lid at the level of the shoulder break (Plate 6).

3.2.5 The only other find recovered from the excavations at St Mary's was a single piece of a decorated medieval floor tile (Plate 7), of 13th – 14th century date, which was recovered from the burial soil (5).

4 THE HUMAN SKELETONS

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 All human skeletal remains, which could not be removed from consecrated ground, were examined on site by an osteoarchaeologist in accordance with nationally accepted guidelines (Brickley and McKinley 2004).

4.1.2 Data on completeness, condition, age, sex and pathology were recorded for each skeleton (Table 1). Recording of adult sex was based on observations of the pelvis and skull (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994) and adult age was estimated by employing features of the auricular surface after Lovejoy *et al* 1985, and the public symphysis after Brooks and Suchey Brooks (1990). Subadults were aged based on epiphyseal fusion and long bone lengths (Scheuer and Black 2000) and dental development (Morrees *et al* 1963). Gross pathological lesions were recorded using standard terminology (Brickley and McKinley 2004). Post-mortem fragmentation of longbones precluded the estimation of statures.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 The skeletons comprised 33 adults and 11 juveniles. Overall, they were in a good or fair condition with minimally eroded bone surfaces, although the bones themselves were frequently fragmented. More than half (23/44) of them were less than 25% complete, because they had been previously disturbed by grave digging and/or (most often) only relatively small parts of skeletons required exhumation. Eight skeletons were over 76% complete, all but two of which were recovered from the footprint of the WC extension.

4.2.2 The sex of 21 of the adults could be estimated giving the result: 11 females and 10 males, including all possible (?) and probable (??) cases. Age at death could be estimated for eight of the adults; two were 26-35 years (prime adult), three were 36-45 years (middle adult) and three were over 45 years (mature adults). The ages of all of the juveniles could be estimated and were: neonate (one skeleton); 1-12 years (two skeletons); 6-12 years (two skeletons); 1-5 years (3 skeletons) and 13-17 years (three skeletons).

4.2.3 In terms of pathology, the assemblage was mainly characterised by evidence for joint disease, including osteoarthritis (a common disease which results in destruction of the cartilage), spondylosis deformans (degenerative changes in the end plates of the vertebrae) and osteophytosis (new bone growth on and around joints). Ante-mortem tooth loss (AMTL) was by far the most common pathology observed amongst the dentitions, although the ease of identifying AMTL over other conditions in unwashed skeletons may have biased this result. Two skeletons (87 and 90) had healed fractures and another (32) had spondylolysis of the 5th lumbar vertebra, a condition in which the inferior portion of the neural arch becomes separated from the superior portion and the vertebral body, probably as a result of trauma or a congenital weakness, or a combination of both factors.

Table 1: Osteological data recorded on site

Burial No.	Completeness (% present within trench)	Condition	Age	Sex	Observations/summary pathology
2	55	Fair	Adult	?F	AMTL, VBOP on CV, TV and LV
7	20	Good	Adult	?	Moderate marginal OP on R femoral head, slight periostitis on L + R tibia
11	30	Fair	Adult	M	AMTL, SD and VBOP on CV, slight marginal OP on left humeral head, ossified thyroid cartilage, mandibular torus
15	10	Good	Adult	??F	
19	20	Good	Prime Adult	M	
22	20	Fair	Adult	M	CO
25	60	Fair	Adult	M	AMTL, OA on L femoral head, VBOP on LV
29	100	Fair	Mature adult	F	AMTL, caries, VBOP on CV and TV, SD on CV
32	95	Good	Mature adult	M	AMTL, caries, SD on CV and LV, OA on L + R acromio-clavicular joints, spondylolysis of LV5, periostitis and lytic lesions superior to R acetabulum, ossified thyroid cartilage
36	15	Fair	Adult	?	
40	80	Fair	Older child	/	
44	30	Good	Neonate	/	
47	100	Fair	Middle adult	F	
50	45	Fair	Adult	F	AMTL, partial sacralisation of LV5
54	15	Good	Adult	?	
57	100	Fair	Mature adult	?F	AMTL, calculus, periodontitis, CO, SN on TV
61	10	Good	Adolescent	/	

64	10	Fair	Adult	?	Periostitis on L + R tibiae
67	70	Good	Middle adult	F	AMTL, VBOP on TV and LV
70	5	Good	Adult	F	Periostitis on R tibia, partuition scar on dorsal R pubis
73	40	Good	Adolescent	/	Caries, probable agenesis of mandibular and R maxillary M3
76	15	Fair	Adult	?	OA on R humeral head
80	10	Fair	Older child	/	
84	100	Good	Infant	/	
87	55	Fair	Adult	F	AMTL, caries, ankylosis of x3 TV bodies and arches, well healed Colle's fracture of the R radius, PO on R glenoid, R humeral head and L + R rib facets, slight marginal OP on proximal R ulna, considerable marginal OP on R acetabulum, OA on R femoral head
90	95	Fair	Adult	M	Complete AMTL, considerable VBOP in TV and LV, slight marginal OP on L + R distal radii, L + R proximal ulnae, R proximal and distal humerus, R glenoid, OA on L shoulder, L+R acromio-clavicular joint, well healed compression fracture of the lateral condyle of the proximal L tibia
94	20	Good	Adult	?	Slight marginal OP on distal R femur
98	45	Good	Adult	?M	Slight periostitis on R tibia, slight marginal OP on R hand, proximal and distal R ulna, distal R radius, OA on R acetabulum, considerable VBOP on TV, LV and SV1, SD on LV5, anterior vertebral wedging of LV5
102	10	Fair	Adult	?	
106	25	Fair	Adult	??M	Slight marginal OP on distal R radius
109	5	Good	Adult	?	
112	10	Fair	Adult	?	
115	25	Poor	Young child	/	
119	100	Good	Young child	/	
122	15	Fair	Adult	?	
125	10	Fair	Young child	/	
131	10	Good	Adult	?	
135	20	Fair	Adult	?F	Slight marginal OP on L acetabulum
141	55	Fair	Adult	F	VBOP in CV, TV and LV, SN in TV
144	75	Fair	Prime adult	?M	VBOP on TV and LV and SV1, SN on TV and LV, slight marginal OP on L genoid, L + R proximal ulnae, L + R acetabulum, L + R distal femora, OA on R distal radius
147	5	Good	Adolescent	/	
150	5	Good	Adult	?	
153	50	Excellent	Infant	/	
156	30	Good	Middle adult	M	VBOP on LV, slight marginal OP on L + R acetabulae, L + R metacarpal-phalangeal joints, and L + R distal radii

Key: R=right, L=left, AMTL = ante-mortem tooth loss, VBOP = vertebral body marginal osteophytes, SD = spondylosis deformans, SN = Schmorl's nodes, CV = cervical vertebrae, TV = thoracic vertebrae, LV = lumbar vertebrae, SV1 = 1st sacral vertebra, CO = cribra orbitalia, OP = osteophytes, PO = porosity, OA = osteoarthritis

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 A total of 44 skeletons and two lead lined coffins were encountered in 46 earth cut graves, many of which were intercutting. Nineteen of the skeletons (from 21 graves) and the lead coffins could be dated to the post-medieval period by their associated coffin remains. The remaining 25 skeletons (from 25 graves) were not

associated with coffin fittings or any other finds that might suggest their date. Of these, the grave cuts (where they could be defined) were found to be relatively tight against the remains of the skeletons suggesting that they had probably been buried uncoffined. This possibly suggests a medieval date for these burials. During the medieval period most people who were buried within a churchyard were wrapped in a shroud and placed directly in the ground and therefore wide, regularly shaped, well finished graves were unnecessary (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005, 111; Jupp and Gittings 1999, 104).

- 5.1.2 The burial population comprised a mixed group of juveniles and adults, males and females. Individuals of all ages were present, except for the very youngest (perinates, <37 weeks gestation) and young adults (18-25 year olds). The lack of young adults may be due to the fact that only eight adult skeletons could be assigned an age at death, the remainder (25) not having the relevant indicators available for observation. The dearth of perinates could be due to the difficulty of spotting their very small, fragile bones in a compacted, stony deposit, but it is also possible that they had been buried elsewhere in the churchyard. For example, it is not uncommon for younger juvenile burials to be clustered around porches, paths or boundary walls (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005).
- 5.1.3 Joint disease and tooth loss were common amongst the skeletons. These conditions are usually associated with advanced age, although other factors such as trauma and occupational activities may play a part to a greater or lesser degree, particularly when they involve younger individuals. Unfortunately, the inability to assign ages to many of the skeletons with these conditions from St Mary's precludes any conclusions here.
- 5.1.4 The spatial distribution of the burials is of interest, because all but two of them were located to the north of the church. Despite the extent of excavations to the east and south only two burials were found in the most northern two metres of the north-south stretch of the service trench. This may be because burial respected a path or thoroughfare, located on the east side. This is supported by the thinning of the burial soil at the east end of the west-east portion of the service trench and its continued thinning the further south the trench ran. The thinning of the soil indicates a reduced turn over of the deposit when compared to elsewhere in the trench.
- 5.1.5 The coffin remains formed a large and significant part of the assemblage from St Mary's and although their details had not been preserved, they have provided some information. Coffin fittings are the most frequently recovered coffin remains from the post-medieval period. The number and materials used for these was eloquent of the wealth and hence status of the deceased, although it is worth noting that even the more humble went to considerable pains to bury their loved ones with as many accoutrements as they could afford. Standard post-Medieval coffins comprised of a single-thickness wooden case decorated with few fittings (most commonly of iron), whilst coffins of the middle and upper classes usually

comprised a double thickness of wood; an outer wooden case and inner lead shell; a lead shell and inner wooden coffin; or a triple layer of a wood-metal-wood, most commonly lead (Litten 1991). Thus, the coffins only represented by nails and studs from St Mary's *could* represent lower status coffins and the lead coffins, wealthier burials. However, as the majority of burials were not revealed in their full extent, the assemblages of fittings found with skeletons are incomplete.

- 5.1.6 Coffin 128 was the only burial that was not on a west-east alignment and instead was south-north. This was possibly motivated by the requirement to accommodate this burial within a grave plot, with which it seemed to be associated, whilst avoiding disturbance to earlier burials or the stacking of burials.
- 5.1.7 All of the human skeletons have been reburied. No remains of an earlier church were encountered during the works.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

(Note that for each burial up to four consecutive numbers were assigned comprising one for the grave cut, one for the fill of the grave, one for the skeleton and, when present, one for the coffin)

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth (MoD)/ thickness (m)</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
2	Skeleton	66.19			Adult skeleton
3	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
4	Fill				Grave fill
5	Layer	0.5-1.2m+ thick			Burial soil
6	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
7	Skeleton	66.37			Adult skeleton
8	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
9	Fill				Grave fill
10	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
11	Skeleton	66.55			Adult skeleton
12	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
13	Fill				Grave fill
14	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
15	Skeleton	66.44			Adult skeleton
16	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
17	Fill				Grave fill
18	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
19	Skeleton	66.01			Adult skeleton
20	Fill				Grave fill
21	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
22	Skeleton	66.74			Adult skeleton
23	Fill				Grave fill
24	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
25	Skeleton	66.40			Adult skeleton
26	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
27	Fill				Grave fill
28	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
29	Skeleton	66.06			Adult skeleton
30	Fill				Grave fill
31	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
32	Skeleton	66.25			Adult skeleton
33	Fill				Grave fill
34	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
35	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
36	Skeleton	66.49			Adult skeleton
37	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
38	Fill				Grave fill
39	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
40	Skeleton	66.53			Juvenile skeleton

41	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
42	Fill				Grave fill
43	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
44	Skeleton	66.54			Juvenile skeleton
45	Fill				Grave fill
46	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
47	Skeleton	66.12			Adult skeleton
48	Fill				Grave fill
49	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
50	Skeleton	66.47			Adult skeleton
51	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
52	Fill				Grave fill
53	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
54	Skeleton	66.15			Adult skeleton
55	Fill				Grave fill
56	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
57	Skeleton	66.18			Adult skeleton
58	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
59	Fill				Grave fill
60	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
61	Skeleton	66.64			Juvenile skeleton
62	Fill				Grave fill
63	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
64	Skeleton	66.72			Adult skeleton
65	Fill				Grave fill
66	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
67	Skeleton	66.81			Adult skeleton
68	Fill				Grave fill
69	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
70	Skeleton	66.81			Adult skeleton
71	Fill				Grave fill
72	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
73	Skeleton	66.70			Juvenile skeleton
74	Fill				Grave fill
75	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
76	Skeleton	66.69			Adult skeleton
77	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
78	Fill				Grave fill
79	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
80	Skeleton	66.76			Juvenile skeleton
81	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
82	Fill				Grave fill
83	Cut		0.65	0.20	W - E aligned grave cut
84	Skeleton	66.38			Juvenile skeleton
85	Fill				Grave fill
86	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut

87	Skeleton	66.31			Adult skeleton
88	Fill				Grave fill
89	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
90	Skeleton	66.26			Adult skeleton
91	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
92	Fill				Grave fill
93	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
94	Skeleton	66.51			Adult skeleton
95	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
96	Fill				Grave fill
97	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
98	Skeleton	66.39			Adult skeleton
99	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
100	Fill				Grave fill
101	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
102	Skeleton	66.43			Adult skeleton
103	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
104	Fill				Grave fill
105	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
106	Skeleton	66.34			Adult skeleton
107	Fill				Grave fill
108	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
109	Skeleton	66.35			Adult skeleton
110	Fill				Grave fill
111	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
112	Skeleton	66.18			Adult skeleton
113	Fill				Grave fill
114	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
115	Skeleton	66.35			Juvenile skeleton
116	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
117	Fill				Grave fill
118	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
119	Skeleton	66.32			Juvenile skeleton
120	Fill				Grave fill
121	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
122	Skeleton	66.27			Adult skeleton
123	Fill				Grave fill
124	Cut				Grave cut
125	Skeleton	66.45			Juvenile skeleton
126	Fill				Grave fill
127	Cut		>0.36m	>0.73m	S - N aligned grave cut
128	Coffin	66.40	>0.30m	>0.4m	Breached lead coffin
129	Fill				Grave fill
130	Cut				Grave cut
131	Skeleton	66.42			Adult skeleton
132	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings

133	Fill				Grave fill
134	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
135	Skeleton	66.27			Adult skeleton
136	Fill				Grave fill
137	Cut		>1.54m	>0.5m	W - E aligned grave cut
138	Coffin	66.45	>1.38m	>0.38m	Unbreached lead coffin
139	Fill				Grave fill
140	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
141	Skeleton	66.20			Adult skeleton
142	Fill				Grave fill
143	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
144	Skeleton	66.24			Adult skeleton
145	Fill				Grave fill
146	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
147	Skeleton	66.24			Juvenile skeleton
148	Fill				Grave fill
149	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
150	Skeleton	66.23			Adult skeleton
151	Fill				Grave fill
152	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
153	Skeleton	67.43			Juvenile skeleton
154	Fill				Grave fill
155	Cut				W - E aligned grave cut
156	Skeleton	67.38			Adult skeleton
157	Fill				Grave fill
158	Coffin				Highly decayed wooden coffin, Fe fittings
159	Layer	0.2m thick			Topsoil
160	Layer				Natural

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Bass, W, M, 1995 (fourth edition) *Human osteology, a laboratory and field manual* Special Publication No. 2 of the Missouri Archaeological Society

Brickley, M, and McKinley, J, I, 2004 *Guidelines to the standards for recording human remains* IFA Paper No. 7

Brooks, S T, and Suchey, J M, 1990 Skeletal age determination based on the os pubis: a comparison of the Ascádi-Nemeskéri and Suchey-Brooks methods, *Human Evolution* 5, 227-238

Buikstra, J, E, and Ubelaker, D, H, 1994 *Standards for data collection from human skeletal remains* Arkansas Archaeological Survey Research Series No 44

Gilchrist, R, and Sloane, B, 2005 *Requiem, the medieval monastic cemetery in Britain* London: Museum of London Archaeology Service

Jupp, P, C, and Gittings, C, 1999 *Death in England, an illustrated history* Manchester: Manchester University Press

Litten, J, 1991 *The English way of death - the common funeral since 1450*, London

Lovejoy, C O, Meindl, R S, Pryzbeck, T R, and Mensforth, R P, 1985 Chronological metamorphosis of the auricular surface of the ilium: a new method for the determination of age at death, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* **68**, 15-28

McKinley, J, 2004 Compiling a skeletal inventory: disarticulated and co-mingled remains. In: Brickley, M, and McKinley, J, *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains* IFA Paper No 7 British Association for Biological Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology and the Institute of Field Archaeologists 14-17

Morrees, C, F, A, Fanning, E, A, and Hunt, E, E 1963 Age variation of formation stages for ten permanent teeth *Journal of Dental Research* **42**, 1490-1502

Oxford Archaeology 2014 *St Mary's Church, Ambrosden, Oxfordshire, archaeological written scheme of investigation* Oxford Archaeology, unpublished

Oram, R 2014, *St Mary's Church, Ambrosden, Oxfordshire, Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief* Oxfordshire County Council, unpublished

Scheuer, L, and Black, S, 2000 *Developmental juvenile osteology* London and California: Elsevier Academic Press

Sherwood, J, and Pevsner, N, 1974 *The buildings of Oxfordshire* Middlesex: Penguin

Reeve and Adams 1993 *The Spitalfields Project Volume 1 – The Archaeology Across the Styx*, CBA Research Report 85

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: St Mary's Church, Ambrosden, Oxfordshire

Site code: AMSMAR14

Grid reference: SP 6030 1941

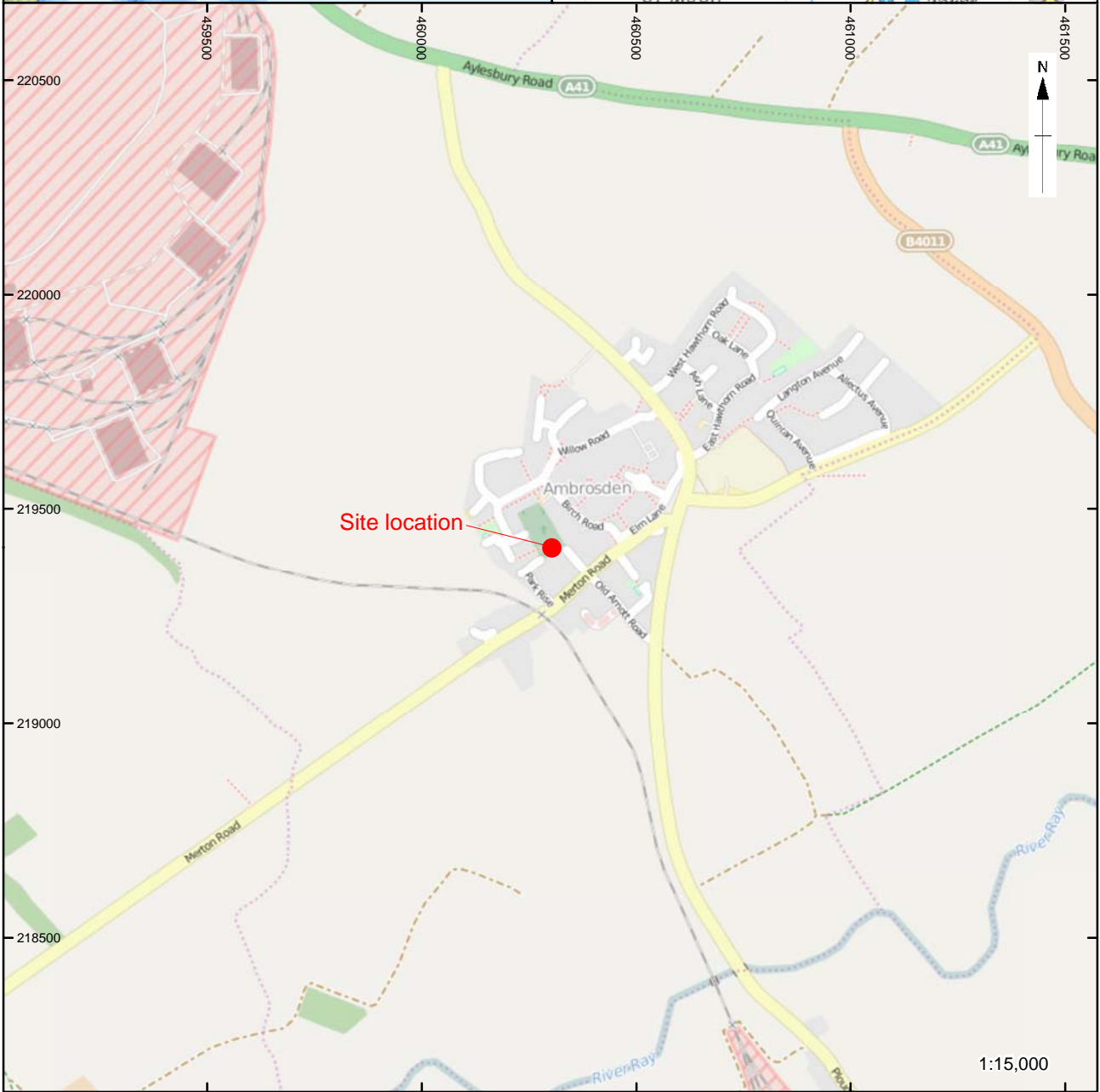
Type : Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: September - October 2014

Area of site:

Summary of results: 46 earth cut graves from which 44 skeletons (33 adults and 11 juveniles) were excavated. Of the graves 21 could be confirmed as post-medieval by the presence of iron coffin fittings and two lead coffins. The two lead coffins were not opened and were left as undisturbed as was possible.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS:2014.211



\\Server8\invoice codes a thru h\A_invoice codes\AMSMARWB\AMSMARWB_Fig_01.mxd\markus.dylewski\17/11/2014

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2014
 (c) OpenStreetMap and contributors, Creative Commons-Share Alike License (CC-BY-SA)

Figure 1: Site location

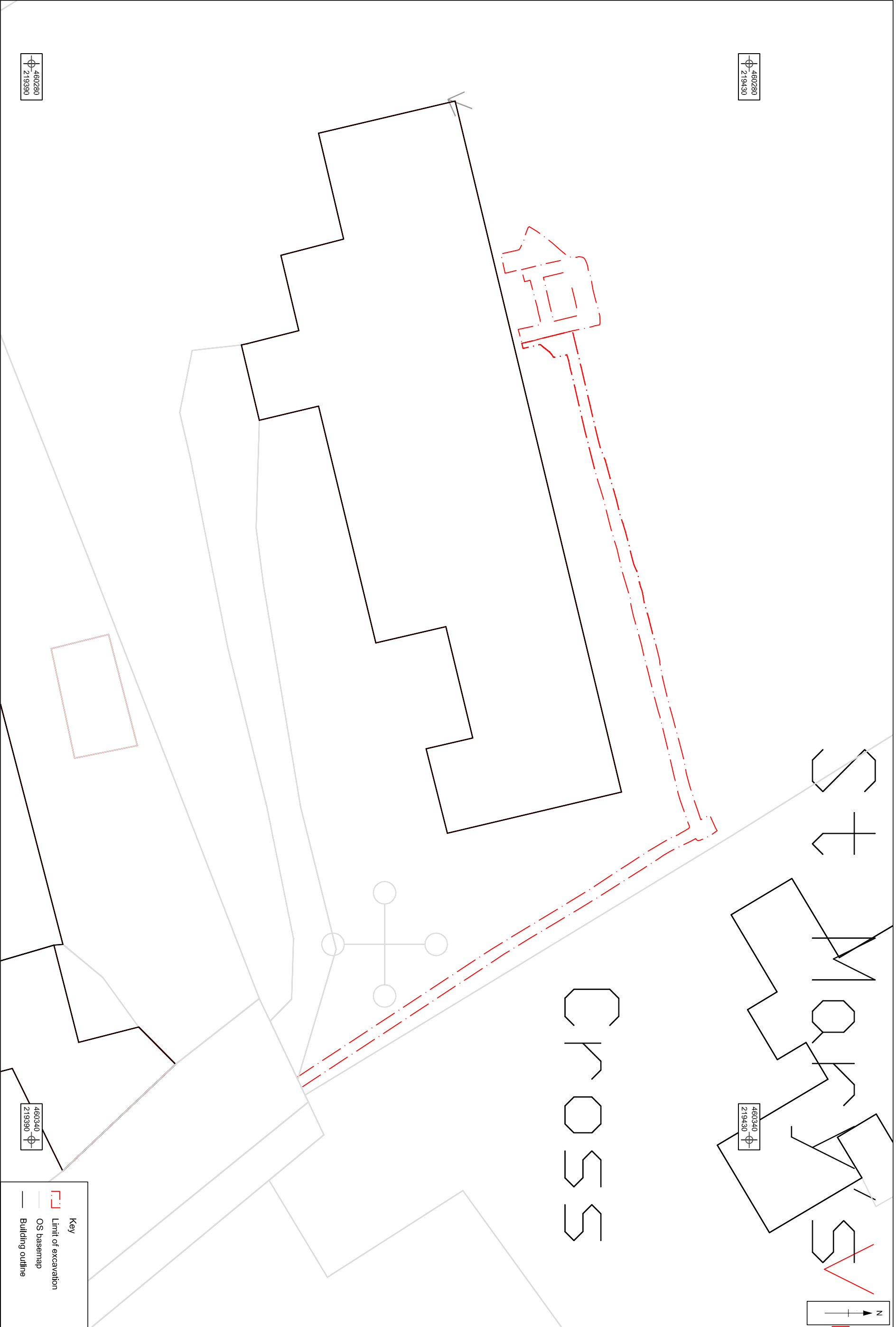


Figure 2: WC extension footprint and service trench location plan

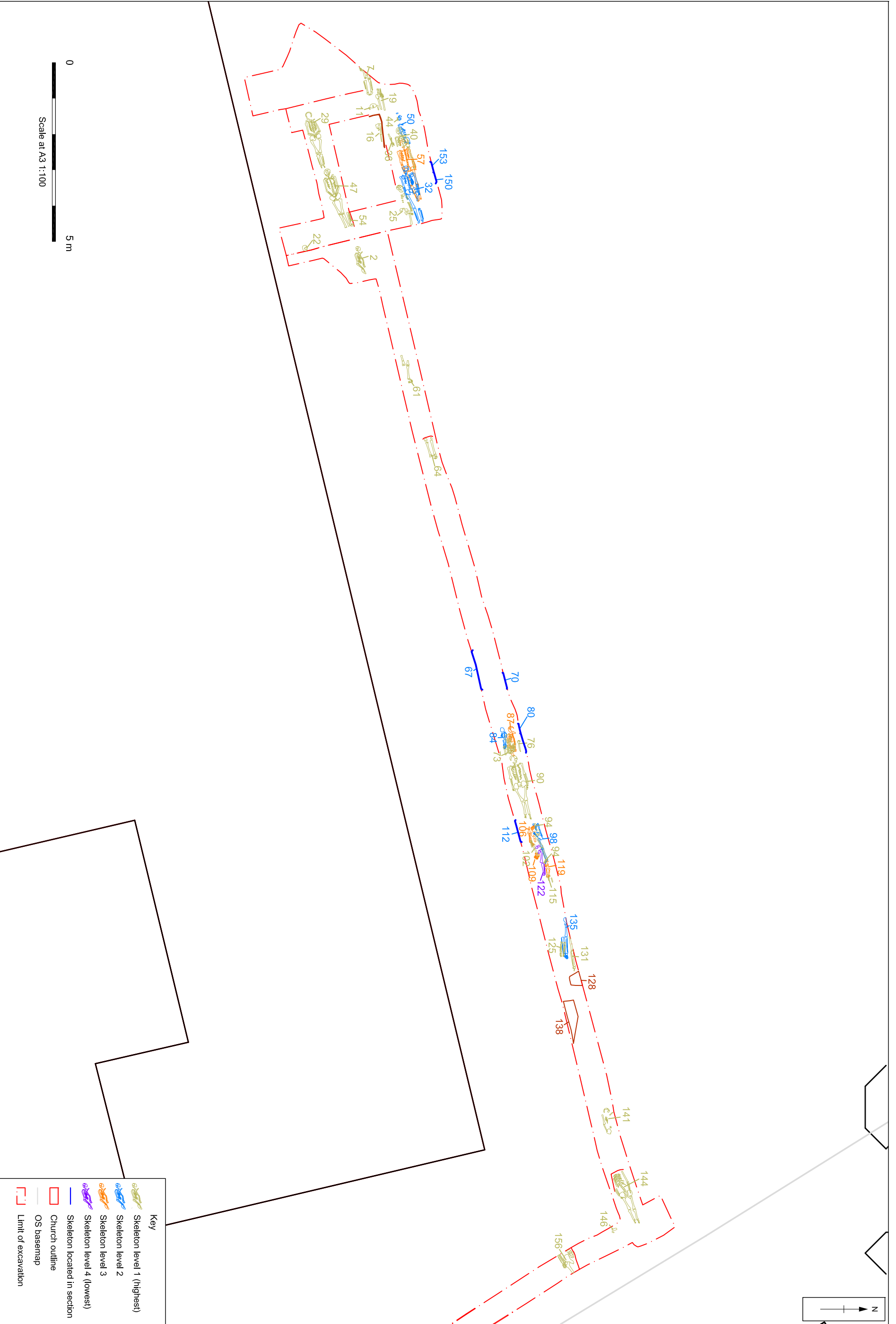


Figure 3: Plan showing location of burials within the WC extension footprint and service trench (context numbers are skeleton numbers, except 128 and 138, which are both coffin numbers)



Plate 1: Skeleton 32, looking north



Plate 2: Skeleton 119, looking north



Plate 3: View of service trench, looking east. Coffin 128 and skeleton 131



Plate 4: Coffin 138



Plate 5: Decorated grip from coffin 128



Plate 6: Lead letter B soldered to lid of coffin 138



Plate 7: Partial decorated floor tile



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MIFA
*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*