

An archaeological watching brief and trench evaluation on land adjacent to St Nicholas Church, Dunkeswell, Devon

NGR ST1414307809

Prepared by:

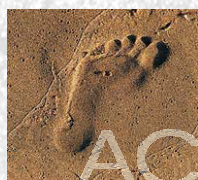
Simon Hughes

Commissioned by:
Mr C Sumpter

On behalf of:
St Nicholas Church

Document No: AC38/1/0

Date: June 2009



archaeology

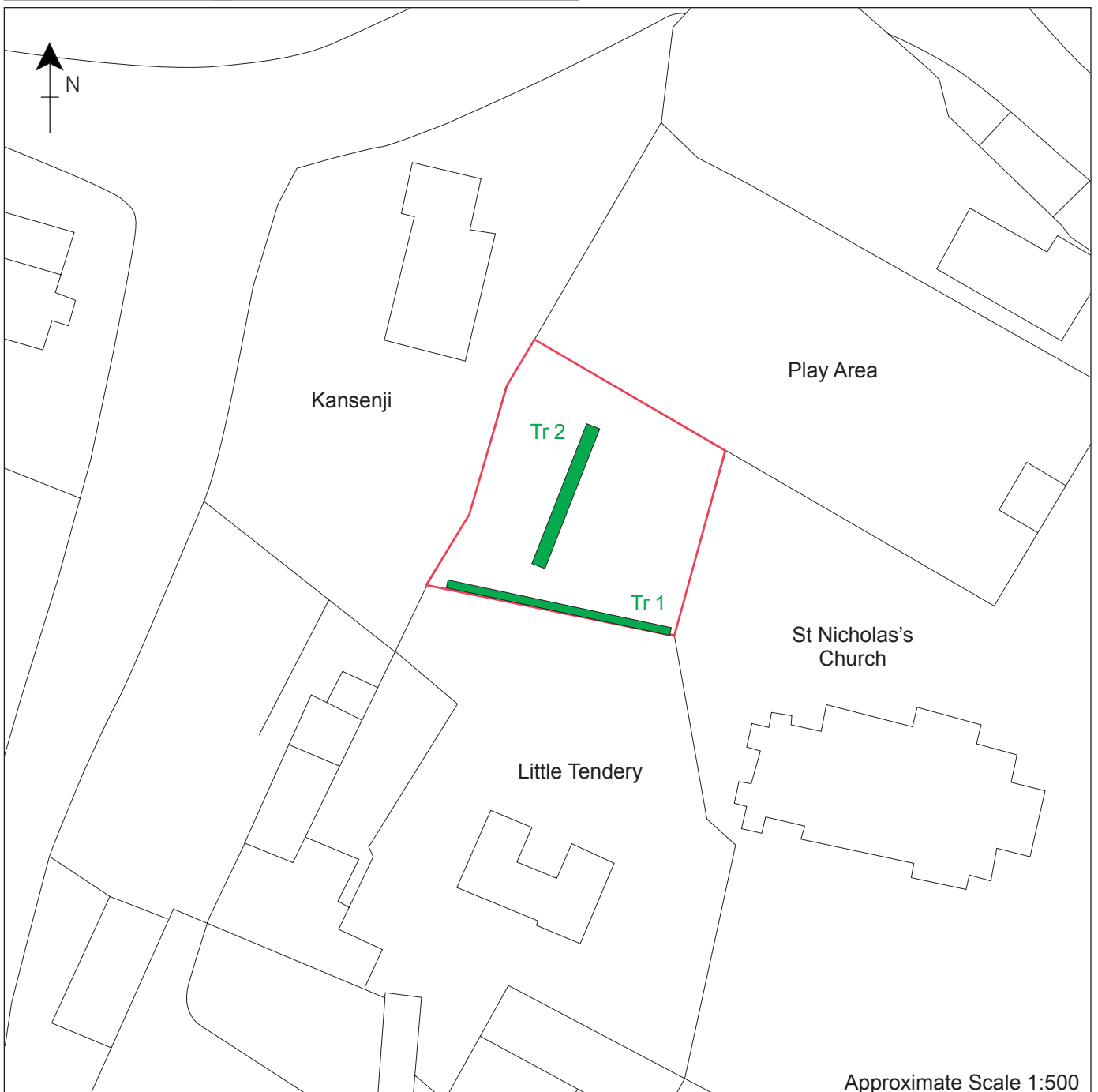
Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

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| Civil Parish & District: Dunkeswell, East Devon | National Grid Reference ST1414307809 | Number: |
| Subject: An archaeological watching brief and trench evaluation on land adjacent to St Nicholas Church, Dunkeswell, Devon | | Photo attached? Yes – Plates 1 and 2. |
| Planning Application no: 08/2053/COU Recipient | museum: RAMM, Exeter | |
| OASIS ID: 60539 | Museum Accession no: 178/2009 | |
| Contractor's reference number/code: ACD38 | Dates fieldwork undertaken: 27th - 28th May 2009 | |
| <p>Description of works</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief and trench evaluation was undertaken by AC archaeology on land to the northwest of St Nicholas Church, Dunkeswell, Devon, ahead of a proposed extension to the current graveyard (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr C. Sumpter on behalf of the parish church.</p> <p>The site lies within the historic core of the village, close to the parish church, where evidence for early settlement might be expected. It lies on generally level ground at approximately 228m OD and at the time of the work was an overgrown former garden plot, which has been partially terraced into a natural slope to the west.</p> <p>Watching brief results: Trench 1 (Plate 1)</p> <p>The watching brief comprised the machine-excavation of a footings trench for a new boundary wall along the southern edge of the site. Trench 1 was 19.7m long and 0.7m wide and for the majority of its length was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.6m. The trench intermittently exposed natural subsoil (context 102), which comprised a light brown silty clay containing frequent large angular stones. At its western end the trench cut into a bank forming the current boundary to the site. In this location the trench was excavated to 0.55m depth into natural subsoil. The general layer sequence above natural subsoil was a 0.23m thick mid brown sandy clay silt buried cultivation soil (101), sealed by a 0.37m thick layer of topsoil (100). A total of seven sherds of pottery (246 grams) was recovered from the topsoil, which include brown and yellow-glazed earthenwares, stonewares and blue and white transfer printed ware dating to the 19th and 20th centuries, while layer 101 produced seven sherds weighing 298 grams, which are all lead-glazed earthenwares of 18th to 19th-century date. No archaeological features were present.</p> <p>Evaluation results: Trench 2 (Fig. 2, Plate 2)</p> <p>Trench 2 was 12.5m long and 1.2m wide and was excavated onto natural subsoil (203), which was present at a depth of 0.78m below ground level. The overlying layer sequence comprised a 0.29m thick buried soil (202) as 101 in Trench 1, which was overlain by a 0.07m thick mid yellowish-brown sandy silt (201), below 0.42m of topsoil (200). A total of 21 sherds weighing 321 grams of 17th to 19th-century pottery was recovered from layer 202, which comprises mainly lead-glazed earthenwares, including a sherd from a yellow-glazed slip-coated sgraffito dish. Layer 201 contained a 19th or 20th-century industrial whiteware pottery sherd. Towards the northern end of the trench and cut through layer 202 was a single oval-shaped pit cut (F204). This was 0.63m long, 0.33m wide and 0.12m deep, with the profile comprising steep sides and flat base. The pit contained the remains of a partially articulated dog skeleton, within a general dark greyish-brown clay silt fill (205). An 18th to 19th-century copper alloy horse harness buckle and two sherds of 16th to 17th-century pottery were also present.</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>The deep overlying layer sequence suggests that the site has been cultivated over a long period of time, with no features or deposits present indicating early <i>in situ</i> settlement. The buried soil layer 101/202 contained a small quantity of pottery dating to the earlier post-medieval period, but these particular sherds were generally small and abraded suggesting that they may have been brought into the site as part of manuring practices. The probable dog burial within Trench 2 contained a late 18th or early 19th-century buckle within its fill, although its position in the layer sequence and the nature of its fill perhaps indicates a more recent date.</p> | | |
| Recorder: Simon Hughes, AC archaeology | | Date sent to HER: 11th June 2009 |



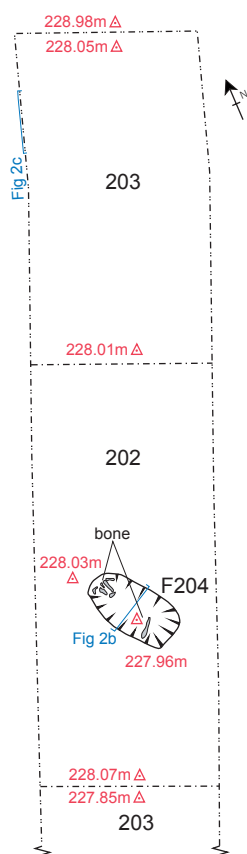
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Fig. 1: Site and trench location

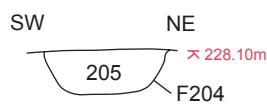


Approximate Scale 1:500

a) Plan



b) Section, F204



c) Representative section

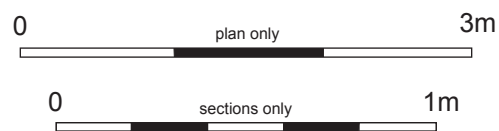
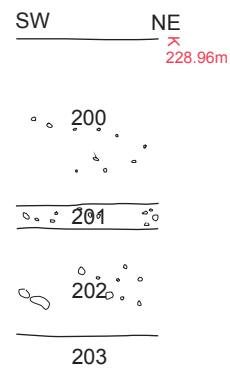


Fig. 2: Plan and sections, Trench 2



Plate 1: General view of Trench 1, looking to east (scale 1m)



Plate 2: Sample section of Trench 2, looking to SE (scale 1m)

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