EXCAVATION OF TEST PITS, ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, BISHOP BURTON, EAST YORKSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2019, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) were commissioned by Jonathon Hobson, architect, on behalf of All Saints' Church PCC, to undertake the excavation of three small test pits in advance of groundworks associated with external drainage works at All Saints' Church, Bishop Burton, East Yorkshire. This work was done to assist with water percolation tests, and to examine the archaeological potential of a proposed trench arch drain. The excavation was done on 30th April 2019.

The upper deposits exposed within all three test pits were similar, with a gravel pathway laid over a base of brick and/or chalk rubble hardcore. However, below these deposits, the nature of the pits varied significantly. Test Pit 1 contained one side of a brick structure of probable 19th or 20th century date, which was set within a cut which extended beneath the base of the pit; very little disarticulated human bone was present in the lowest recorded deposit. Test Pit 2 produced quantities of disarticulated human bone, but only from the brick/chalk rubble layer; this overlay a sandy clay which appeared to be an undisturbed natural deposit. Test Pit 3 produced disarticulated human bone from the lowest recorded deposit, and also appeared to contain the partial remains of two articulated burials at a depth of 0.50m below existing ground level.

It is recommended that further archaeological investigations are carried out, a pre-construction excavation of the trench arch drain alignment, to the depth required for construction, as well as a watching brief during other drainage connections. However, there is no faculty requirement for any such archaeological work to be carried out, and so a decision as to whether these recommendations should be accepted will need to be made by the PCC in consultation with the relevant authorities.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In April 2019, Ed Dennison Archaeological Services Ltd (EDAS) were commissioned by Jonathon Hobson, architect, on behalf of All Saints' Church Parochial Church Council (PCC), to undertake the excavation of three test pits in advance of groundworks associated with external drainage works at All Saints' Church, Bishop Burton, East Yorkshire (NGR SE9904 3973).

1.2 These external drainage works were to comprise the installation of a trench arch drainage system, which involved the excavation of a main east-west aligned trench measuring c.30m long by 1.00m wide by 0.40m deep adjacent to an existing path on the south side of the church. There would also be a number of connections to this drain from a newly created WC facility at the west end of the nave.

1.3 The test pits were excavated on 30th April 2019, to assist with water percolation tests and to examine the archaeological potential of a proposed trench arch drain.

2 DIOCESAN FACULTY

2.1 During the determination of the Diocesan Faculty, discussions between the York Diocesan Advisory Committee and their archaeological advisor suggested that the groundworks both inside and outside the church would need an appropriate level of archaeological recording. This would involve the "full archaeological excavation of the trench arch drain, as this is designed to go through what is probably the most densely buried part of the graveyard, south of the south wall. The burials may be particularly important - and even close to the surface - if the [existing] path has been there for some time, as this path would not have been there in the Middle Ages. Alternatively, there may be post-medieval burials that would have been along the path and once had memorials slabs forming a path. Given the orientation of the trench arch drain, it is likely that complete, potentially articulated, human remains will be uncovered". In addition, it was wondered "if the trench arch drain could be relocated slightly to run alongside the [existing] path, rather than be laid directly under it. An archaeological watching brief would still be necessary but hopefully not a full excavation (which would certainly be required if the drain were laid beneath the path)" (email DAC Secretary to PCC dated 5th December 2018).

2.2 In the event, a Diocesan Faculty for the drainage work was issued on 17th April 2019 (ref. 2018-027431). There was no condition requiring any archaeological investigations or subsequent reporting, simply that "the petitioners shall consult with the Humber Archaeology Partnership before embarking on excavations in relation to the Trench Arch Drainage System (condition 1).

3 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

3.1 The archaeological excavation and recording of the three test pits was defined by discussion between EDAS and Jonathan Hobson, and included general advice produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in relation to watching briefs (CIfA 2014), by English Heritage and the Church of England in relation to the treatment of human remains (EH/CoE 2005), and by the Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists in relation to work in churchyards (ADCA 2004).

3.2 The aim of the archaeological recording was to hand-excavate three small test pits that could subsequently be used for percolation tests. During the excavation of the test pits, information relating to the nature, date, depth and significance of any archaeological deposits or features, and any human remains, which might be

affected by the scheme, was recorded and recovered. All excavated material was also visually inspected for any finds. The three test pits were excavated along the line of the proposed trench arch drain, and they typically measured between 0.50m-0.60m square and 0.70m deep.

3.3 Following standard archaeological procedures, each discrete stratigraphic entity (e.g. a cut, fill or layer) was assigned an individual three digit context number. A total of 15 archaeological contexts were recorded (see Appendix 1). In-house recording and quality control procedures ensured that all recorded information was cross-referenced as appropriate. The positions of the test pits were marked on a general site plan at 1:200 scale (based on a plan provided by Jonathan Hobson), and sections/plans of each pit were produced at a scale of 1:10. All sections include spot-heights related to Ordnance Datum in metres as correct to two decimal places; the cut benchmark at the north-west corner of the church (height 52.14m AOD) was used to calculate levels. A general digital photographic record was also made. Disarticulated human bone encountered in two of the test pits was collected, bagged and then re-buried in the pits when they were backfilled. Possible articulated burials were encountered in one pit (Test Pit 3), and so excavation ceased at the level of the burials so that no disturbance took place. A small project archive was prepared (site code BBC 19).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 There is believed to have been a Saxon church in Bishop Burton early in the 8th century, founded by Earl Pugh (or Puch). It was given to the dean and chapter of York in 1194, and a vicarage was said to have been ordained in 1264 (Allison 1979, 8). All Saints' Church consists of a chancel with a vestry, a clerestoreyed nave with aisles, and a west tower. The earliest part of the surviving fabric is a gabled west doorway into the nave, possibly of the late 12th century. The squat west tower was built in the 13th century. The nave was evidently rebuilt in the earlier 14th century, and other alterations may have taken place in 1494 when money was left for 'church works'. The church was in decay in 1575, the tower was repaired in 1631, and in 1663 the tower was 'taken down and made square'. Further repairs were ordered in 1721 and 1723 (Allison 1979, 9).

4.2 The nave and aisles were taken down and rebuilt in 1820-21, presumably with little change in style, under the supervision of Appleton Bennison of Hull. In 1864-65 the chancel and vestry were rebuilt, and the nave and tower restored at the expense of Francis Watt; the chancel, in an Early English style, was the work of J L Pearson. The churchyard was said to have been extended in 1870, and enlargement made in 1882-83, and it was extended again in 1947. It contains the socket and part of the shaft of a medieval cross, The present lych-gate was erected in 1925 (Allison 1979, 9).

4.3 The church is a Grade II* Listed Building, first listed on 7th February 1968 (National Heritage List for England 1103429). The Listed Building description reads: "*Church. Early C13 west tower, early C13 nave and C14 aisles rebuilt c1821,chancel and south vestry in geometrical style by J L Pearson 1865. Ashlar, slate roofs. 3-stage west tower, 4-bay aisled nave, 3-bay chancel with south vestry. West tower: chamfered plinth. South door of 2 pointed and chamfered orders, the inner on carved corbels under hoodmould. Chamfered imposts. Chamfered string between stages. Paired lancets under round arch to belfry. Low parapet with moulded coping. West wall: projecting carved head to bottom stage, lancet to second stage, similar belfry openings. North side is identical to the south side with the addition of a clock face*

to the second stage. Nave: moulded plinth, buttresses with offsets. Three 2-light pointed windows with Decorated tracery under hoodmoulds with face stops. Pointed south door of 2 orders with nook-shafts under hoodmould. Four 2-light square-headed windows with cusped ogee tracery, all under hoodmoulds with face stops, to clerestory. Low parapet. Similar fenestration to nave north side. Chancel: chamfered plinth, buttress with offset and gablet with blank tracery. 2 easternmost pointed windows of 2 lights with geometrical tracery: the west bay is taken up by the projecting vestry. Vestry south window: pointed, of 3 lights, with geometrical tracery including a transom. Pointed priests' door to east vestry wall with carved nook-shafts all under a continuous string which forms a sill band to the chancel windows. Pointed east window of 4 lights with geometrical tracery under hoodmould. North side: 3 pointed windows of 2 lights with geometrical tracery. Stone copings with ridge cross. Interior: nave west door of 2 pointed orders, the outer square, the inner with a continuous narrow chamfer, on chamfered imposts. Triangular hoodmould. North and south nave arcades of pointed double-chamfered arches on octagonal piers. Pointed chancel arch of 2 moulded orders on nook-shafts with carved capitals and moulded bases. Rear arches of chancel windows rest on similar, smaller shafts. To south-east corner of the chancel is a C14 piscina: scalloped bowl with foliage and grinning face to sides under a cusped ogee arch with foliage sprigs to cusps. South west end of nave: a small C12 carved figure, with long, hanging sleeves, inserted into south wall. C18 font: a small moulded basin on a polygonal baluster. Fragments of 2 earlier font basins, one octagonal, lie close by. Monuments: nave west end: black marble tablet with white lettering; a long inscription in Latin to Sir Tobias Hodson, died 1664. Alabaster chest tomb to Rachel Gee, died 1684: a recumbent figure in a winding sheet with a child close by on a slab: quatrefoils and an inscription to the base. Chancel: three brasses. To the north, a chalice brass to Peter Johnson, vicar, died 1460; a lady, died C15. South side: a brass to the Ellerker family: date erased, probably early C16. 2 figures with inscription over."

5 RESULTS OF THE WATCHING BRIEF

5.1 All of the test pits were located on the south side of the church and all were aligned broadly east-west, along the line of the proposed new drainage trench. All three pits were set within a gravelled footpath area, with no grave stones or other grave markers present. The majority of the ground surface was relatively level, with an average height of 51.30m AOD. The test pits are described below, from west to east.

Test Pit 1

5.2 Test Pit 1 was located 1.70m to the south of the second buttress to the east of the church's south doorway. It measured 0.60m square, and was hand excavated to a depth of 0.70m below ground level (BGL) (50.52m AOD) (see plate 2). The uppermost deposit extended to 0.20m BGL, and was formed by a compacted gravel (001) forming the path surface, composed of angular and rounded stones up to 100mm across. In the pit's east side, the gravel overlay what appeared to be a roughly built mortared brick structure (013), which extend to at least 0.45m BGL. It appeared that the external face or side of the structure was visible in the trench section, and it may once have supported the base of a monument or grave marker, or perhaps was associated with earlier drainage works. The construction of the structure had required a cut [005] to be made, which was visible in the base of the

pit; the cut was filled with a mixture of a gritty black silt soil and gravel (006). In the pit's other three sides, the gravel (001) overlay a compacted layer of brick rubble (002), formed by handmade red bricks (average thickness 60mm) and extending to 0.35m BGL. Beneath the brick rubble, there was a level deposit of compacted sandy clay and lime mortar (003), with an average depth of 0.10m. This overlay a clean, stiff mid-brown sandy clay (004), which continued below the base of the pit. The clay (004) contained a small amount of human bone, visible at the north-west corner of the pit's base, in plan only (see plate 1).

Test Pit 2

5.3 Test Pit 2 was located 0.90m to the south of the south-east external corner of the vestry. It measured 0.60m east-west by 0.50m north-south and was hand excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m BGL (50.67m AOD) (see plate 4). The uppermost deposit was the same gravel (001) as seen in Test Pit 1. It extended to 0.15m BGL, and overlay a compacted layer of angular handmade red brick (CBM) and chalk rubble (007) containing a high proportion of disarticulated human bone, and which had an average depth of 0.10m. Beneath the compacted brick/chalk rubble (007), there was a clean, stiff, mottled orange/mid-brown sandy clay (008) which extended below the base of the pit. This sandy clay (008) contained no disarticulated human bone and appeared to be an undisturbed natural deposit (see plate 3).

Test Pit 3

5.4 Test Pit 3 was located 3.96m south of the south-east external corner of the chancel. It measured 0.50m east-west by 0.45m north-south and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m BGL (50.80m AOD) (see plate 6). The uppermost deposit was the same gravel (001) as seen in Test Pits 1 and 2. It extended to 0.15m BGL and overlay a compacted layer of angular handmade red brick and chalk rubble (009), which had an average depth of 0.10m. Beneath this, there was a stiff, light brown silty clay (010) with frequent inclusions of chalk and disarticulated human bone, which continued below the base of the pit. A possible flint tool was also recovered from the deposit; this will be the subject of further assessment. The disarticulated bone was distributed evenly throughout the silty clay (010), and at the base of the pit, two articulated burials may have been exposed. On the north side of the pit, there appeared to be an east-west aligned cut [011], running broadly parallel to the church, which contained part of an articulated leg (015), placed at c.50.80m AOD (see plate 7). The cut was not easily visible in any of the pit sections, and was backfilled with a dark brown silty clay (012). Part of a second articulated burial (014) may have been visible at c.0.55m BGL (c.50.85m AOD) in the south side of the pit. It also appeared to be aligned broadly parallel to the church, but was poorly preserved (see plate 5).

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 The upper deposits exposed within all three test pits were similar, with a gravel pathway (001) laid over a base of brick and/or chalk rubble hardcore (002, 007 and 009). However, below these deposits, the nature of the pits varied significantly. Test Pit 1 contained one side of a brick structure (013) of probable 19th or 20th century date, which was set within a cut [005] which extended beneath the base of the pit. Very little disarticulated human bone was present in the lowest recorded deposit (004). Test Pit 2 did produce disarticulated human bone, but only from the brick/chalk rubble (007). This overlay a sandy clay (008) which appeared to comprise an undisturbed natural deposit. Test Pit 3 produced disarticulated

human bone from the lowest recorded deposit (010) and also appeared to contain the partial remains of two articulated burials (014) and (015) at a relatively shallow depth, around 0.50m BGL.

6.2 The depth of the proposed trench arch drain is currently considered to be 0.40m BGL, although it is possible that an increased depth may be required depending on prevailing ground conditions and the results of the water percolation tests. If the currently proposed depth of 0.40m BGL is maintained, it is likely that those articulated burials seen in Test Pit 3 would remain undisturbed, but it should be noted that shallower in situ burials may survive along the proposed drain alignment in areas not covered by the test pits. In addition a considerable quantity of disarticulated bone was recovered at even shallow depths, and a potential brick structure was noted in Test Pit 1.

6.3 It is recommended that the line of the proposed trench arch drain is archaeologically excavated in advance of construction, to the required depth, to ensure that any human remains (both articulated and disarticulated) are properly identified, recorded and, if necessary, removed from the alignment, in accordance with standard procedures (e.g. ADCA 2004; EH/CoE 2005). It is further recommended that the excavation of associated drainage works providing a connection to the trench arch from the new WC facility, is subject to an archaeological watching brief. If accepted, these works will need to be preceded by an appropriate "Written Scheme of Investigation" which should be approved by all relevant bodies.

6.4 However, there is no faculty requirement for any such archaeological works to be carried out, and so a decision as to whether the above recommendations should be accepted will need to be made by the PCC in consultation with the relevant authorities.

7 REFERENCES

Allison, K J 1979 'Bishop Burton'. In Allison, K J (ed) *A History of the County of York: East Riding: volume IV*, 3-19

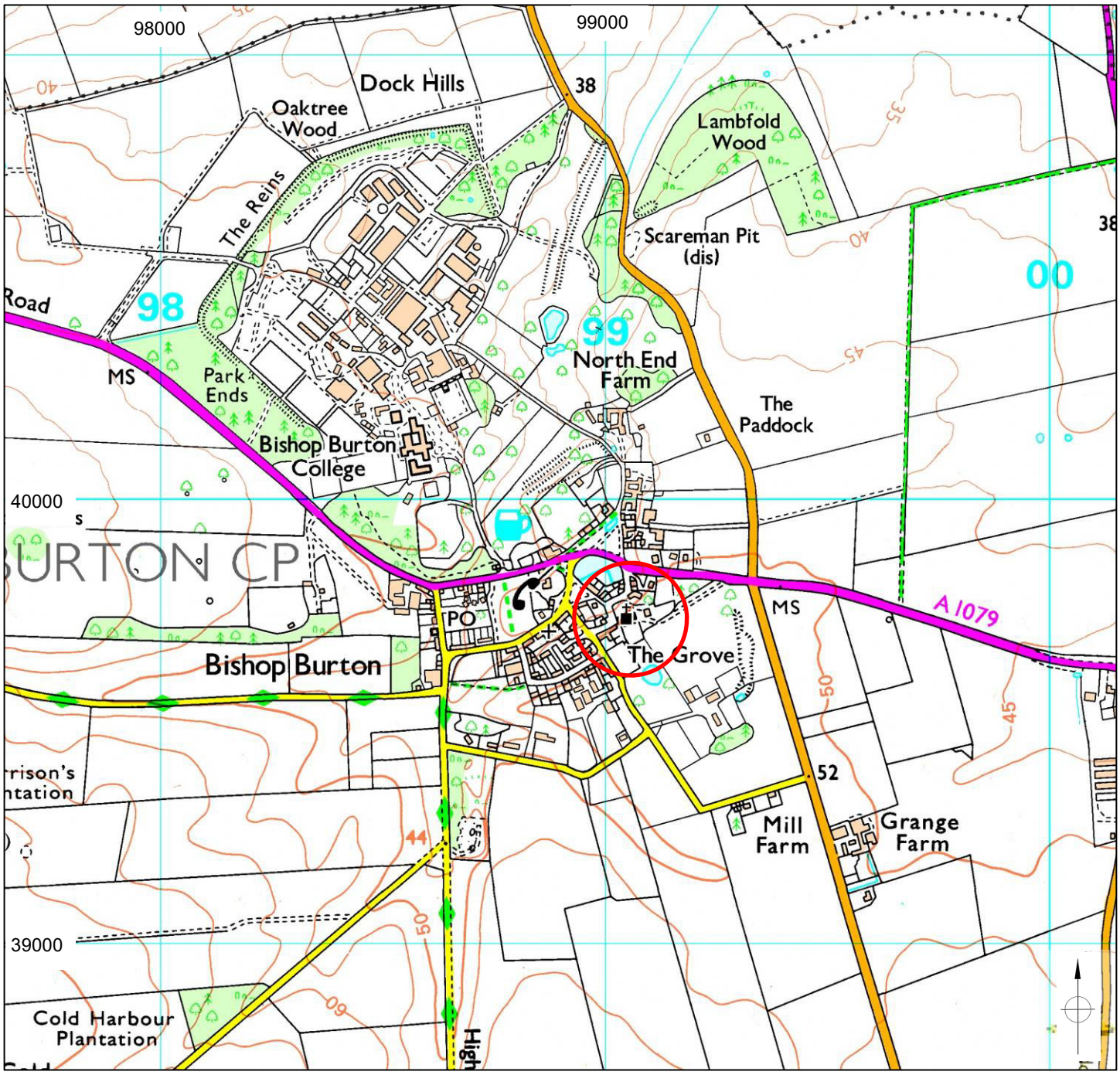
ADCA (Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists) 2004 *Guidance Note 1: Archaeological Requirements for Works on Churches and Churchyards*

CIfA (Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists) 2014 *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (and subsequent revisions)

EH/CoE (English Heritage/Church of England) 2005 *Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England*

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The archaeological excavation of the test pits was commissioned by All Saints' Church PCC (Mr Nigel Penton) and was undertaken by EDAS. The archaeological recording was undertaken by Shaun Richardson of EDAS, and the final report and other drawings were produced by Ed Dennison, who retains responsibility for any errors or inconsistencies.



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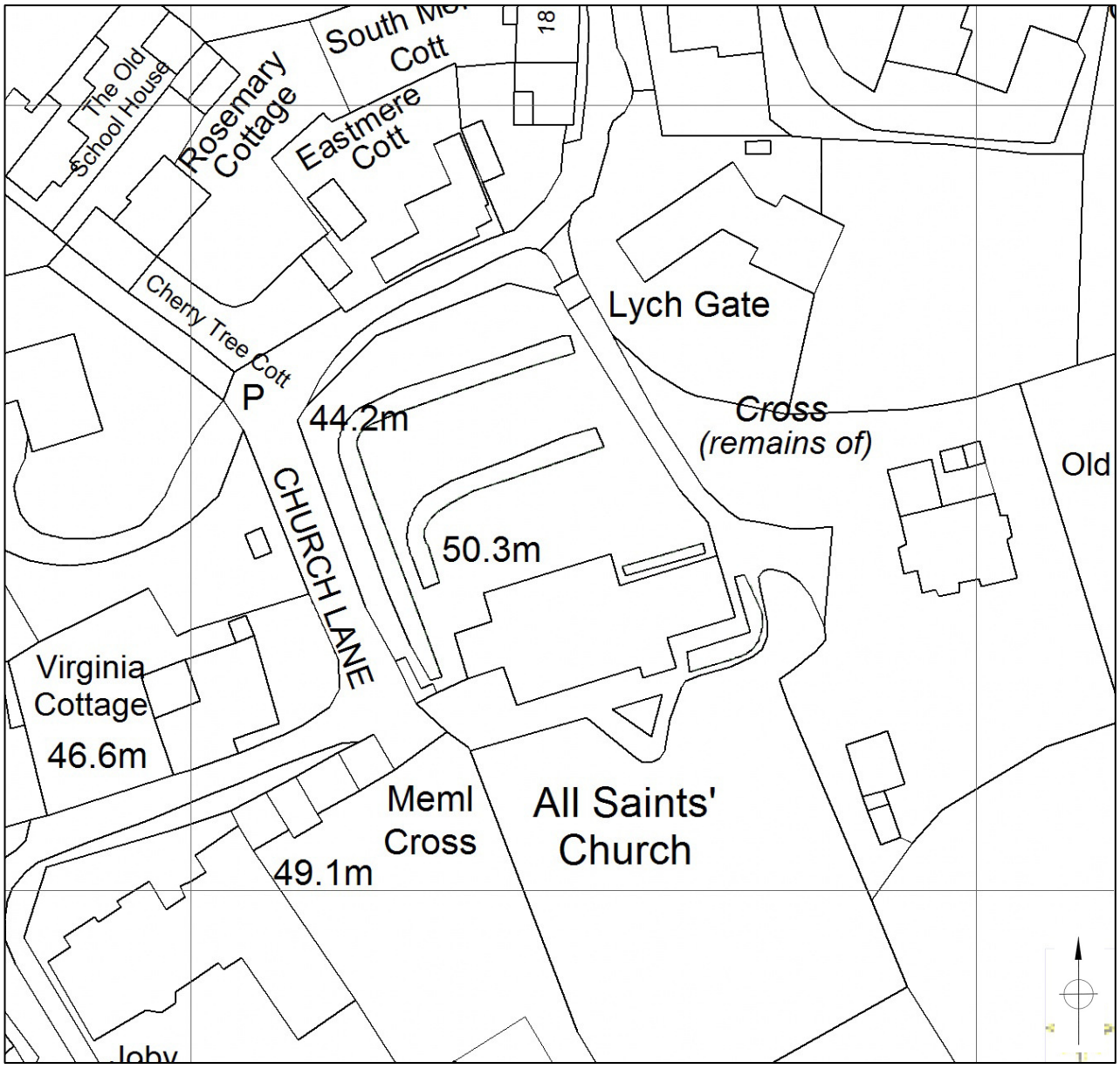
PROJECT: BISHOP BURTON CHURCH	
TITLE: GENERAL LOCATION	
SCALE: AS SHOWN	DATE: MAY 2019
EDAS	FIGURE: 1



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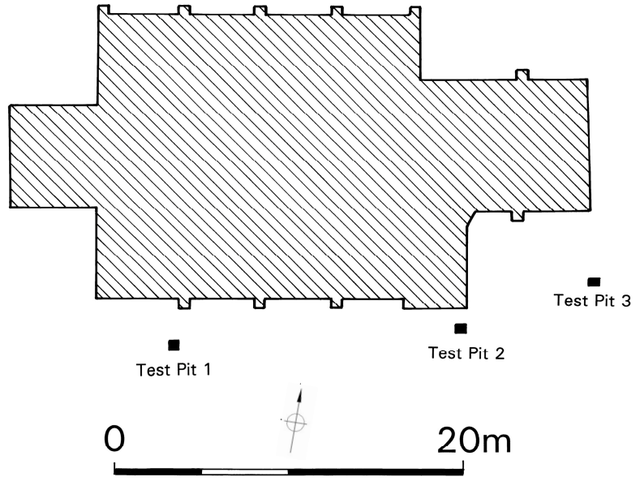
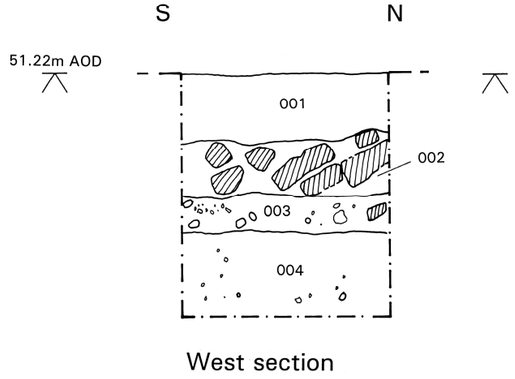
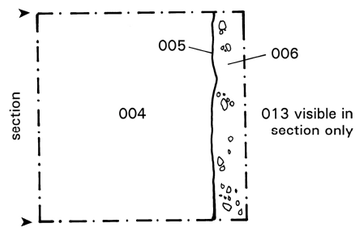
PROJECT: BISHOP BURTON CHURCH	
TITLE: DETAILED LOCATION	
SCALE: AS SHOWN	DATE: MAY 2019
EDAS	FIGURE: 2



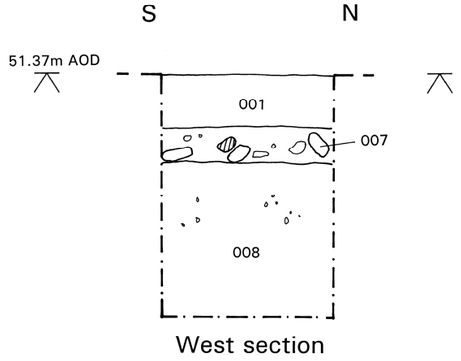


West section



Plan

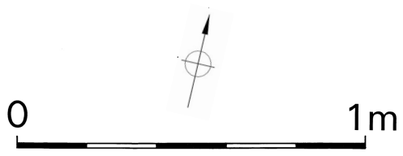
Test Pit 1

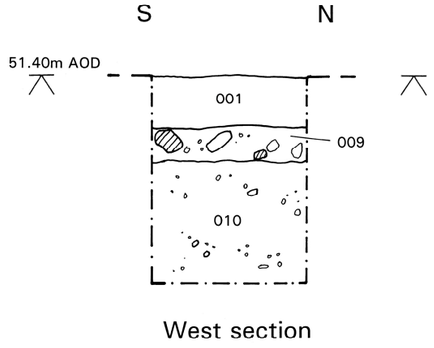


West section

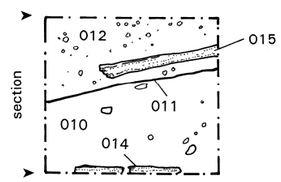
Test Pit 2

CBM





West section



Plan

Test Pit 3

PROJECT: BISHOP BURTON CHURCH	
TITLE: WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS	
SCALE: AS SHOWN	DATE: MAY 2019
EDAS	FIGURE: 3

Plate 1: Test Pit 1, west section, looking W.

Plate 2: Test Pit 1, looking E.

Plate 3: Test Pit 2, west section, looking W.

Plate 4: Test Pit 2, looking W.

Plate 5: Test Pit 3, W section, looking W.

Plate 6: Test Pit 3, looking W.

Plate 7: Test Pit 3, plan.

APPENDIX 1
LIST OF CONTEXTS

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF CONTEXTS

Context	*Description*	*Area of Site*
001	Compacted gravel forming the path surface, with average depth of 0.20m BGL.	All Test Pits
002	Compacted layer of brick rubble. Average depth 0.10m.	Test Pit 1
003	Compacted sand clay / lime mortar. Average depth 0.10m.	Test Pit 1
004	Stiff mid-brown sandy clay. At least 0.25m deep. Very small amount of disarticulated human bone.	Test Pit 1
005	Cut for brick structure (013).	Test Pit 1
006	Fill of cut [005].	Test Pit 1
007	Compacted layer of brick and chalk rubble. Average depth 0.10m.	Test Pit 2
008	Mottled orange/mid brown sandy clay. At least 0.55m deep. Natural deposit.	Test Pit 2
009	Compacted layer of brick and chalk rubble. Average depth 0.10m.	Test Pit 3
010	Stiff light-brown silty clay, with frequent inclusions of chalk and disarticulated human bone. At least 0.55m deep.	Test Pit 3
011	Possible grave cut for burial (015).	Test Pit 3
012	Fill of cut [011].	Test Pit 3
013	Brick structure visible in section only, probably 19th or 20th century - previous drainage?	Test Pit 1
014	Possible partial remains of articulated burial, not fully examined.	Test Pit 3
015	Possible partial remains of articulated burial, not fully examined.	Test Pit 3