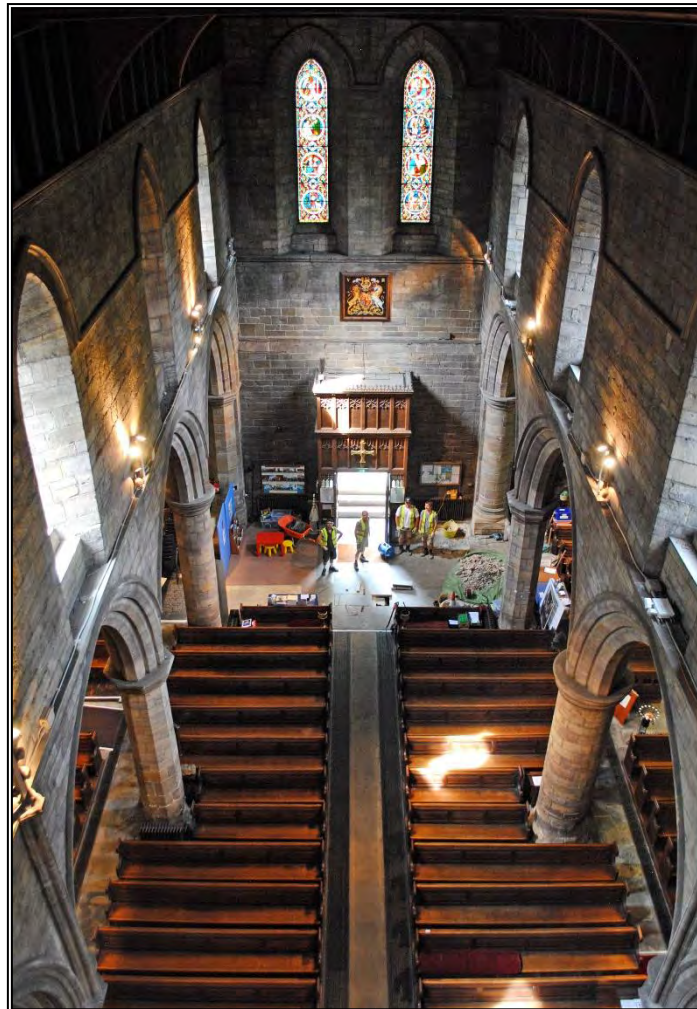

*ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH
DARLINGTON
COUNTY DURHAM*

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF



JULY 2022

*The Archaeological
Practice Ltd.*



REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH DARLINGTON COUNTY DURHAM



Frontispiece: External view looking ENE towards St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington in July 2022.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Report title: | <i>St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington. Archaeological Watching Brief.</i> |
| Stage: | <i>Final</i> |
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Prepared by The Archaeological Practice Ltd., December 2021.

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SUMMARY

This document reports on a process of archaeological monitoring conducted in July 2022, to mitigate the impact of groundworks associated with proposed reordering works within the nave of St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington (NGR: NZ 29106 14442). The watching brief was maintained during the excavation of three test-pits, located in positions most likely to be impacted by the works programme. The monitoring of these test-pits would effectively evaluate the significance and extent of any surviving sub-surface archaeological remains.

Although most of the present church structure dates to the medieval period (late 12th/early 13th century), the church displays considerable complexity in detail. Historical evidence, along with several pieces of Pre-Conquest sculpture, suggest the presence of an early-medieval church on the site. An examination of the current built fabric by Ryder (1997), suggests that earlier fabric may survive in the lower part of the west wall and the western responds of both arcades. Further evidence for the retention of earlier fabric may be implied from the irregularities in the ground plan, notably the variable length of the bays in the nave arcades.

The church underwent major re-ordering works in 1862-5 when the floors were lowered and a thick layer of concrete laid throughout (Ryder 1997, 18); major underpinning works were carried out at the west end of the nave, and around the western crossing piers, and an underfloor heating system installed. As noted by Ryder (op. cit.) these works effectively destroyed at least any post-medieval deposits, though it was thought possible that archaeological remains may survive in some parts of the church. Accordingly, the Durham Diocesan Archaeologist specified that following a written scheme of investigation, an archaeological watching brief should be maintained during the current scheme of works.

The results of test pitting concluded that no significant structural remains of medieval origin or earlier appeared to survive at the specified depths excavated. Test Pit 1, located in the crossing, was the only excavated area to contain stratified archaeological remains pre-dating the 1862-65 re-ordering works. This however, was of no great age, taking the form of a probable Georgian brick-built sleeper wall and associated concrete surface. Test Pit 2, located at the west end of the central aisle, revealed details of the Victorian services/heating duct system. Test Pit 3, located north of the west door to the nave, revealed a redundant N-S aligned Victorian services duct, infilled with cement rubble, some of which contained smashed medieval sculpted stone with cusped decoration and small quantities of disarticulated bone.

The test pits demonstrate that if any insitu medieval archaeological features survive within the specified areas, significant quantities of rubble infill associated with the 1862-65 re-ordering works would have to be removed, in excess of 0.45 m at the west end of the nave and 0.84 m at the crossing. This corroborates Pritchett's account of the historic works, where depths were reached of over 4' 6" in the crossing. There was however, no evidence for the thick layer of concrete mentioned in the 1862-65 re-ordering works within any of the test pits.

No further archaeological mitigation work is required in association with this scheme up to the specified depths reached for each area of test pitting. However, given the variable nature and uncertainty of extent in the Victorian re-ordering works, the potential for significant archaeological remains to exist within parts of the nave must be considered a moderate possibility. It is recommended therefore, that any future developments in the nave or elsewhere in St. Cuthbert's Church, should be considered on their own merits with respect to the need for archaeological intervention and ultimately deferred to the Durham Diocesan Archaeologist.

1. PURPOSE OF WATCHING BRIEF

1.1 *Introduction*

St Cuthbert's parish church in Darlington stands on the east side of the large market place of the town, bounded to the east by the River Skerne. The church is a cruciform structure in plan; its five-bay nave is aisled, with a clerestory; the transepts and chancel both have two tiers of windows in the side walls and three in the gable ends. There is a central tower and a pair of vestries on the south side of the chancel.

Knox McConnell Architects have been instructed by the Parochial Church Council of St. Cuthbert's church to plan and oversee proposed reordering works, the main objectives of which are to maintain and develop St Cuthbert's as a place of worship whilst improving the visitor welcome, expanding the use of the building and maintain, promote and interpret its heritage in an engaging way. It is proposed to achieve this by making the church accessible to all, replacing the pews for more comfortable, flexible seating - thereby providing a space for meetings - providing amenities such as WCs and a servery, and upgrading church infrastructure such as heating, lighting and audio-visual capacity.

Clearly, some of these proposed changes have the potential to impact upon the upstanding built fabric of the building and upon any surviving sub-surface remains which survived the major re-ordering works of the 1860s, noted below. Accordingly, an archaeological watching brief was maintained during the excavation of three test-pits in July 2022, located in positions most likely to be impacted by the works programme. The monitoring of these test-pits would effectively evaluate the significance and extent of any surviving sub-surface archaeological remains.

1.2 *Cultural Heritage Background*

Although largely the product of one building campaign, somewhere between Transitional and Early English in style (late 12th/early 13th century), the church displays considerable complexity in detail, as described by Ryder (1997)*. Six pieces of Pre-Conquest sculpture listed by Cramp (1984, 62-3)*, including part of a hogback dated to the second quarter of the 10th century, suggest the presence of a church on the site well before attested building works in the late 12th century, as does a reference to the transfer of secular canons from Durham to Darlington c1083.

Ryder (1997)* notes documentary evidence for the existence of the church, and possible surviving pre-12th century fabric, including a note that remains of a 'Saxon' building were seen during a major 1862-5 restoration. An examination of the current built fabric suggests that earlier fabric may survive in the lower part of the west wall and the western responds of both arcades. Further evidence for the retention of earlier fabric may be implied from the irregularities in the ground plan, notably the variable length of the individual bays of the nave

*Ryder, P F, The Church of St Cuthbert, Darlington: Archaeological Assessment June 1997. Unpub. Report.

*Cramp, R (ed) (1984) A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England, I. 62-3

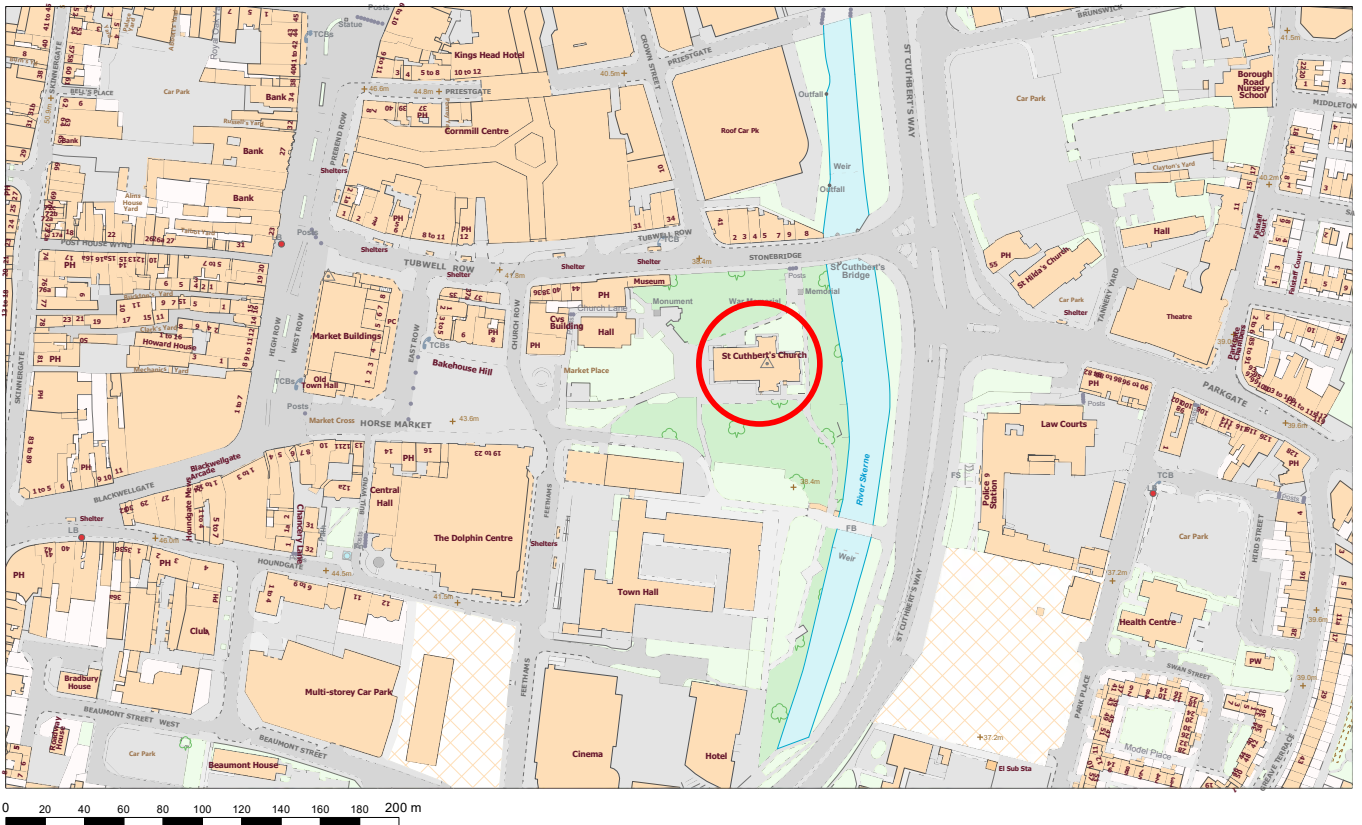
*Pevsner, N & Williamson E, (1983) County Durham (Buildings of England series, Penguin),

*Pritchett, J.P. (1887) 'St Cuthbert's, Darlington' (summary of paper read July 26th 1886). Trans British Archaeological Association XLIII, 234-5 *

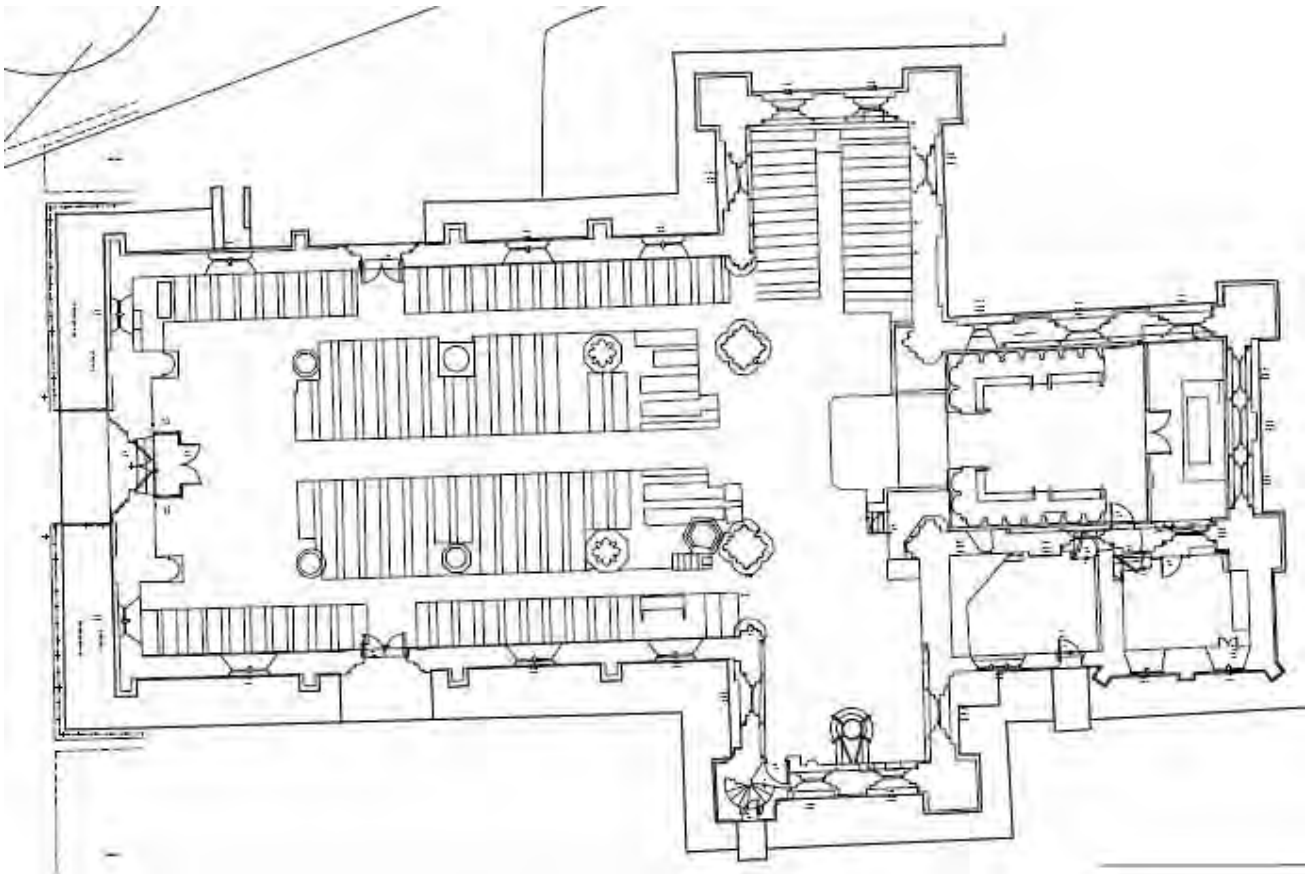
Pritchett, J.P. (1902) The Architectural History of St Cuthbert's Church. Darlington (extended text of 1886 paper). Wm Dresser & Sons, Darlington.



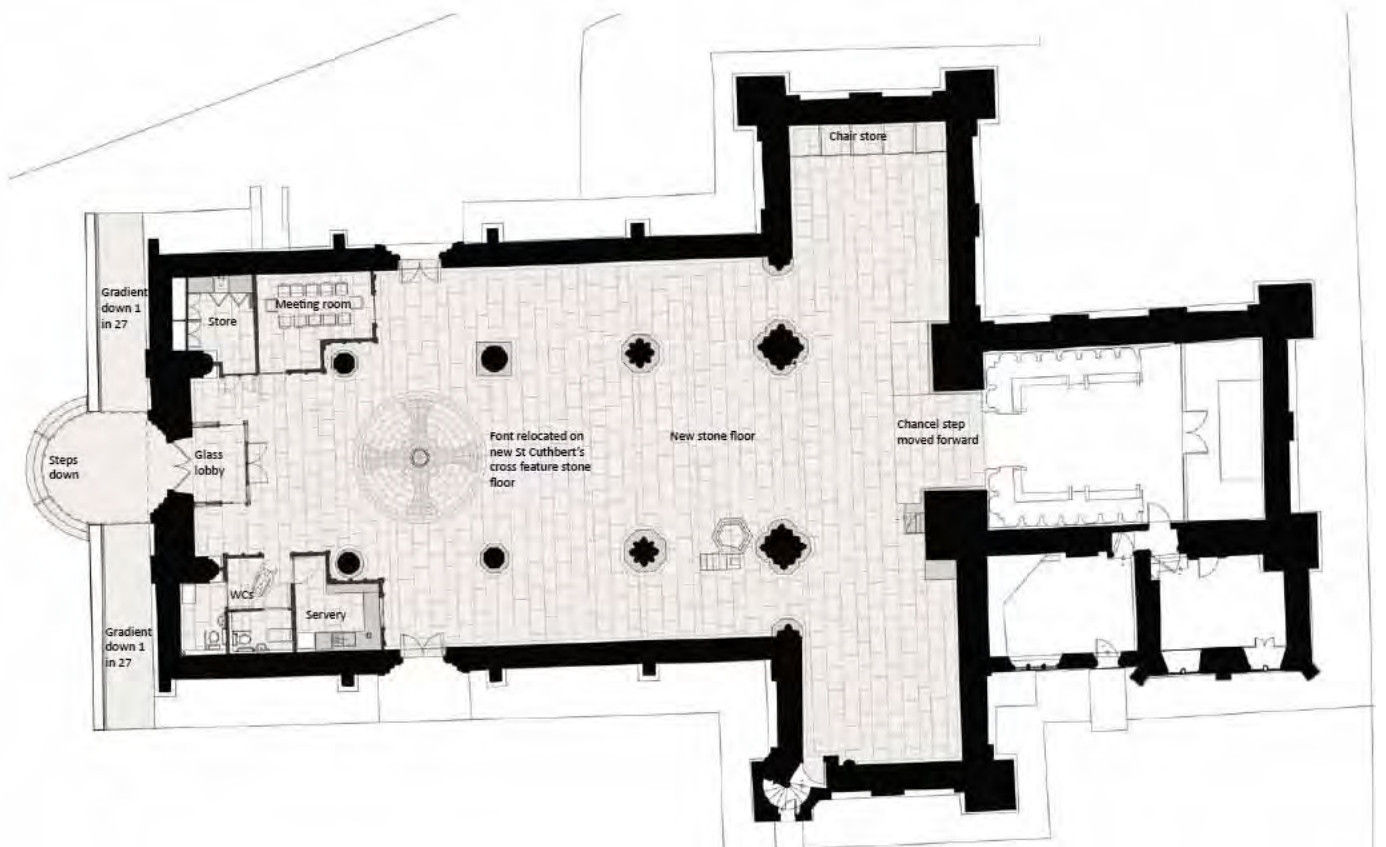
Illus. 01: The location of St. Cuthbert's Church (circled in red) in Darlington.



Illus. 02: The location of St. Cuthbert's Church (circled in red) in Darlington town centre.



Illus. 03: Plan of St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington, as existing.



Illus. 04: Plan of St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington, as provisionally proposed.

arcades. All authorities seem to agree on a pause, of up to 30 years, between the construction of the crossing and eastern parts of the church and that of the nave. Various works took place in the 14th century, when the tower was constructed, with further works in the post-Reformation period, including the addition of a porch, rebuilding of the old east end in 1748 and erection of an eastern gallery in 1756.

Other 18th and 19th century works are relatively well documented (see 'Faculties and other records of structural work' and H. D. Pritchett 1924)*, including major works in 1862-5 when the floors were lowered and a thick layer of concrete laid throughout the church (Ryder 1997, 18)*; major underpinning works were carried out at the west end of the nave, and around the western crossing piers and an underfloor heating system installed. As noted by Ryder (op. cit.) these works effectively destroyed at least any post-medieval deposits, though it is possible that archaeological remains survive in some parts of the church. Similarly, it is known that the exterior of the church has a sunk channel, c 1 m deep and 1.5 m wide, running round its perimeter, another product of the 1862-5 restoration, which will also have disturbed archaeological deposits adjacent to the wall faces. However, it is considered possible that some remains of two demolished structures, the putative early vestry on the north of the chancel, and the presumably post-medieval south porch, may survive outside it and, despite extensive disturbance and landscaping of the churchyard in recent years, it should be borne in mind that the church formed only part of an extensive complex of medieval buildings - Bishop's Palace, Tithe Barn, the former vicarage, the Deanery etc - most of which were pulled down in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

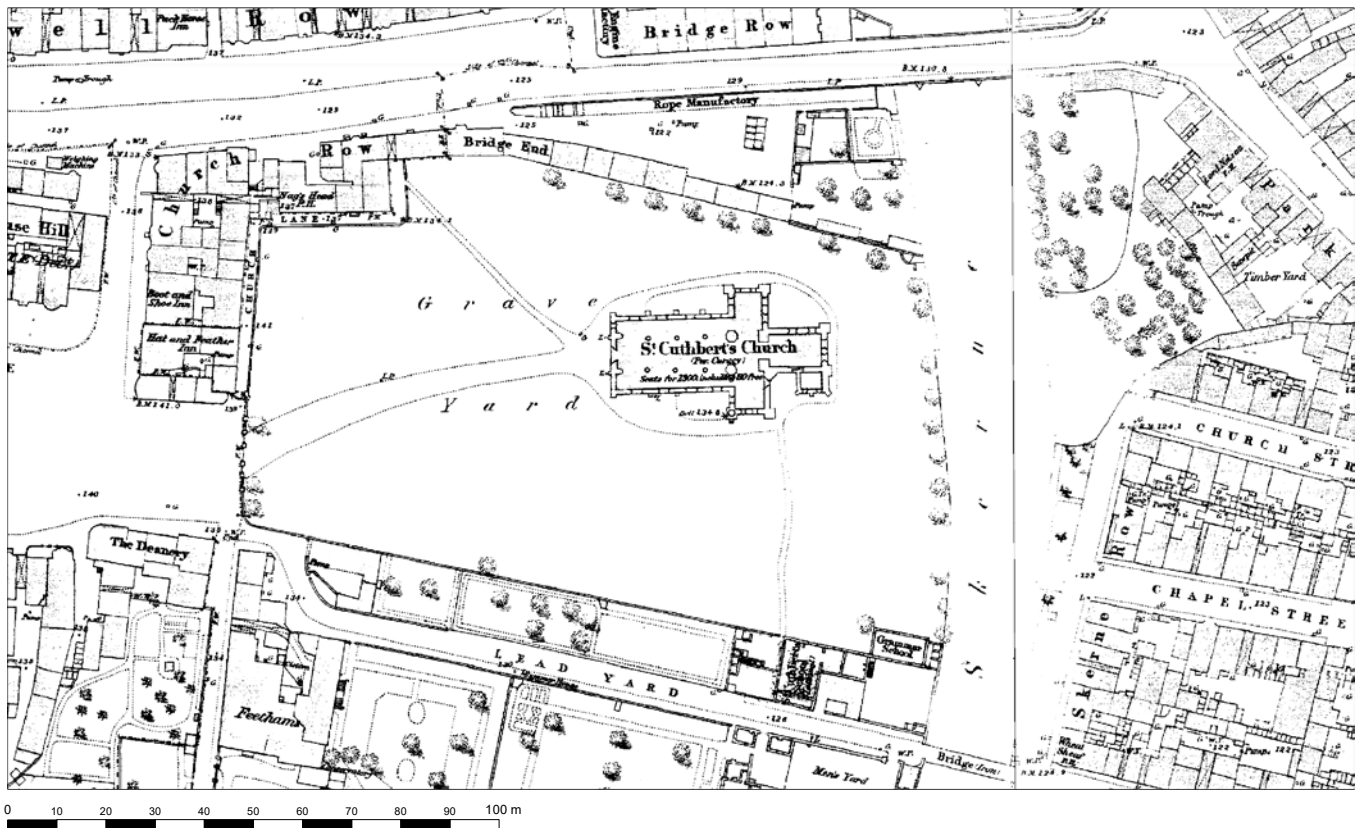
1.3 Scheme of works

The main objective of the work was to investigate below current floor levels to determine the presence or otherwise of any sub-surface remains of significance, which may include burials and other features.

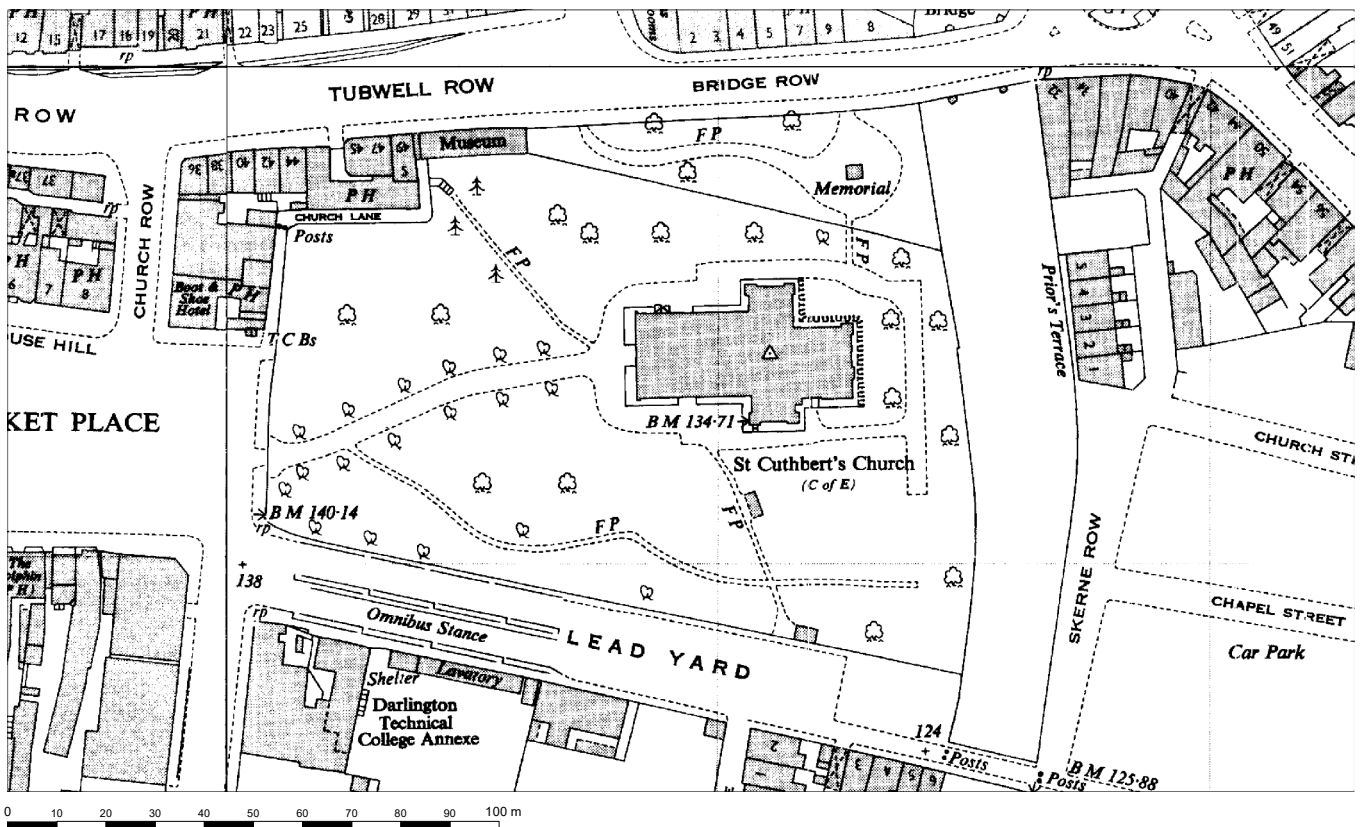
Accordingly, it was proposed to excavate three test-pits, each 1 m wide and 1 m or 2m long, in positions determined by requirements for foundations, services or ground reduction and by the known or likely presence of surviving remains based on Ryder's (1997) report and other documentation.

The work will be related to the research aims of the NERRF, which aims to place developer-led archaeological fieldwork in a context of academic understanding of the history and archaeology of the region (Petts and Gerrard 2006).¹ The NERRF research priorities of obvious relevance here are included in Chapter 19, Twentieth-century research agenda and include the Key Research Priorities of *Religion and Belief*, *Death and Burial* and *Military and Defence* (Petts and Gerrard 2006, 194-95).

* Petts, D and Gerrard, C, 2006, *Shared Visions: The North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment*'.



Illus. 05: St. Cuthbert's Church shown on the First edition Ordnance survey town plan of Darlington c.1856.



Illus. 06: St. Cuthbert's Church shown on the c.1956 edition Ordnance survey town plan of Darlington.



Illus. 07: St Cuthbert's Church, Darlington, County Durham, by [Albert Milton Drinkwater](#) 1896 [Darlington Library].

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

2.1 The proposed positions of three test-pits were firstly located from plans provided by Knox McConnell Architects, and set out by the site archaeologist.

2.2 The excavations were carried out by hand, by a conservation building team led by David France, under continuous archaeological supervision.

2.3 The recent overburden was removed in successive level spits down to the first significant archaeological remains, which was recorded before further excavation was carried out down to the next significant level, etc.

2.2 All work was carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists (CIFA) and followed the CIFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations as well as the document on Standards and Guidance for all Archaeological Work in County Durham and Darlington issued by DCC Archaeology Section.

2.3 Accordingly, all excavations were closely monitored by a suitably trained and experienced archaeologist from The Archaeological Practice Ltd., with all recording and sampling procedures undertaken using the strategies set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation for the work (*see Appendix*).

3. RESULTS

3.1 Test Pit 1 (see *Illus. 08-10; Photos 1-8*)

3.1.1 Location and Dimensions

The first test pit was located in the crossing area of the church, specifically at a distance of 0.89 m south and 0.47 m east of the pier in the north part of the crossing.

The dimensions of the test pit were as follows: 1.28 m (E-W) x 1.23 m (N-S) x 0.84 m (max depth). Due to the irregular size of flags constituting the existing floor, the test pit formed a squat L-shape in plan, rather than a conventional square (see *Illus. 09*).

3.1.2 Stratigraphy and Interpretation

Beneath the sandstone flagged floor [01] and underlying modern concrete [02], was a mixed rubble make-up layer [04] of C19+ date, observed to a depth of approx. 0.48 m below ground level across most of the test pit, but extending to 0.84 m in depth within the north-west corner.

In the north-facing section of the test pit, the C19 northern sleeper wall [03] of the central aisle was identified and recorded in section (*Illus. 10*).

In the eastern 2/3 of the test pit, an old concrete-type surface [05] was observed below the rubble make-up layer, probably of pre-Victorian origin. This appeared contiguous with a squared structural feature of hand-made bricks [06] of probable Georgian origin, observed in the south-west corner of the test pit. This brick-built feature was partially truncated on its north side as it headed toward the north pier in the crossing. The feature was recorded and left insitu, but a sondage was positioned along its truncated northern edge, in the north-west corner of the test pit, reaching a depth of 0.84 m. Both the brickwork and the rubble make-up [04] north of it, extended beyond the limits of excavation.

Although difficult to interpret due to the limitations of excavation and its partial truncation, the feature most likely represents an earlier sleeper wall or similar, pre-dating the 1862-65 re-ordering – which lowered the floor and rebuilt the aforementioned pier, underpinning it along with the aisle walls, probably resulting in the wall's truncation. A description of these works, specified by Pritchett*, indicates the Victorians excavated a great deal of material from the crossing area, reaching depths of over 4' 6" in parts. He goes on to say that 15" of soil, with all the bones etc, were taken up from inside and wheeled into the churchyard and that the Allan vault, located in the North transept was lowered by six feet and covered with two feet of concrete.

3.1.3 Context List

- [01] Existing ground floor surface of church, comprising large flat sandstone flags x4 lifted, approx. 0.05-0.06 m in depth, covering an area of approx. 1.28 m (E-W) x 1.23 m (N-S). NB, a thin cable was observed between the flags on the west side of the test pit (see *Illus. 09*). All reinstated with appropriate bond following backfilling from excavation work.
- [02] Modern concrete observed beneath flagged floor [01]. Approx. 0.10 m thick. Had been poured onto plastic sheet base, late-20th century. Pecked out within test-pit area.

*Pritchett, H.D. 1924. History of the Parish Church of St Cuthbert, Darlington.

- [03] North sleeper wall of central aisle, located in north facing section of test pit 1 but offset southwards by several centimetres from the upper flags which defined the edge of excavation in plan. Standard pressed red bricks with Portland cement bond, mid-late-19th century. Only revealed to a depth of 0.28 m below ground level (two courses deep) as it was set back, but extended downwards.
- [04] Mixed rubble make-up observed below modern concrete [02]. Comprised of smashed brick, sandstone and mortar – mid grey-brown, compact. Observed to a depth of approx. 0.48 m below ground level. Probably dates to mid-late-19th century or later.
- [05] Old concrete-type surface observed in eastern 2/3 of test pit at 0.48 m below ground level. Extending eastwards and northwards beyond edge of excavation. Contemporary and associated with brickwork [06], of probable late-18th – early 19th century origin.
- [06] Hand-made soft red bricks of probable late-18th – early-19th century date (Georgian), forming a squared structural feature in the south-west corner of the test pit, observed at a depth of 0.46 m below ground level. Soft lime-mortar bond. Partially truncated on its north side as it heads toward the easternmost pier of the north aisle. These partially smashed bricks grade down by 0.14 m in depth to the north, reaching the max depth of excavation here at 0.84 m below ground level. Associated and likely contemporary with old concrete [05] which extend eastwards from the eastern edge of the bricks. On average the bricks measured approx. 0.24 m x 0.10.5 m x 0.08 m. Difficult to interpret due to limitations of excavation and partial truncation. Most likely, the structure represents an earlier sleeper wall or similar in this area of the crossing, pre-dating the 1862-5 re-ordering – which lowered the floor and rebuilt the pier, underpinning it and the aisle walls, probably resulting in the wall's truncation. A description of the works, specified by Pritchett*, indicates the Victorians excavated a great deal from the crossing area. He goes on to say that 15" of soil, with all the bones etc, were taken up from inside and wheeled into the churchyard. Also noted was the Allan vault, located in the North transept which was lowered by six feet and covered with two feet of concrete.

3.2 Test Pit 2 (see *Illus. 08; Photos 09-16*)

3.2.1 *Location and Dimensions*

The second test pit was located approximately 3.85 m east of the door at the west end of the Church Nave, perpendicularly positioned across the service ducts beneath the central aisle.

The dimensions of the test pit were as follows: 1.44 m (N-S) x 0.50 m (E-W) x 0.56 m (depth).

3.2.2 *Stratigraphy and Interpretation*

Two sandstone flags [01] were removed to expose the service ducts beneath [02]. The ducts were formed by two sets of mid-late 19th century sleeper walls [03], built from at least five courses of pressed red brick with Portland cement bond, running parallel and upon an E-W alignment. Each duct contained three parallel pipes – the configuration mirrored on either side. Given the congestion of service pipes within the cavity, it was not possible to excavate below the recorded depth of the duct. Between the two innermost sleeper walls, modern concrete was observed at approximately the same level. No archaeological remains were observed within Test Pit 2.

3.2.3 *Context List*

- [01] Existing ground floor of church, comprising large flat sandstone flags x2 lifted, approx. 0.05-0.06 m in depth, covering an area of approx. 1.44 m (N-S) x 0.50 m (E-W). All reinstated with appropriate bond following excavation work.

- [02] Twin parallel service ducts running below the flagged floor [01], aligned east-west along the entire length of the central aisle in the Church Nave. Edges formed by mid-late 19th century brick sleeper walls [03] and cavity occupied by FE pipes x 3 in each duct, the configuration mirrored on either side. The two pipes closest to the outer edge measuring 0.05 m in width and of cast iron, the innermost pipe measuring 0.10 m in total width and appeared to be a coiled heating pipe, again of iron. Each duct cavity measured 0.43 m in width.
- [03] Brick-built sleeper walls of mid-late 19th century date, functioning to support the flagged floor [01] of the Church Nave, and forming the edges of two service ducts [02] running down the central aisle of the Church Nave. Four parallel walls in total observed within the test pit, built from at least five courses of pressed red brick with Portland cement bond, with each brick measuring approx. 0.05 m in width. The sleeper walls were observed from 0.10-0.29 m below ground level to the maximum depth of the ducts, which was 0.56 m.
- [04] Modern concrete observed below the flags [01] running down the centre of the central aisle between the innermost sleeper walls [03] that formed ducts for service pipes. Depth to the top of the concrete was at approximately the same level as brick sleeper walls [03] – approx. 0.10 m. Width of approx. 0.50 m (N-S).

3.3 Test Pit 3 (see *Illus. 08; Photos 17-24*)

3.3.1 Location and Dimensions

This test pit was positioned just to the north of the Nave West door, 0.63 m east from the Nave West wall and 0.17 m south from the first column in the north part of the west wall.

The dimensions of the test pit were as follows: 1.09 m (N-S) x 1.09 m (E-W) x 0.45 m (max depth).

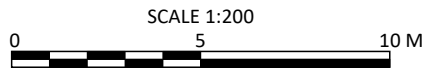
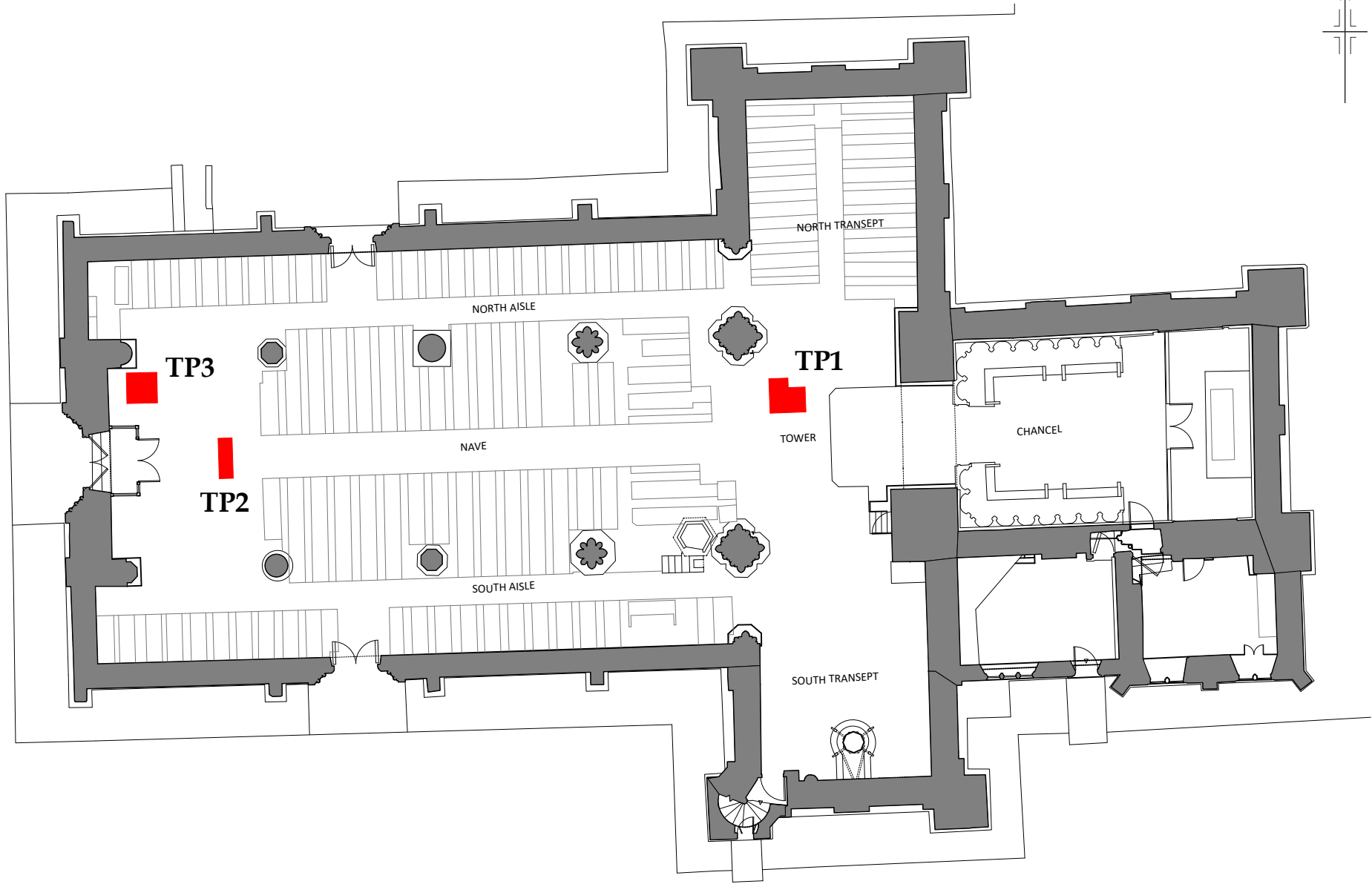
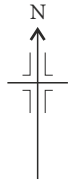
3.3.2 Stratigraphy and Interpretation

Beneath the modern parquet floor tiles [01] and modern concrete [02], was a redundant service duct [03] of probable mid-late 19th century date – built from single skinned red-brick walls, but with its cavity entirely infilled with cement rubble, some of which contained smashed fragments of medieval sculpted stone with cusped decoration (see *Photo 26*) and small quantities of disarticulated bone. Further cement rubble [04] filled the rest of the test pit, observed to the specified maximum depth of excavation. Service pipes were noted running N-S along the entire east section and running E-W in the north section.

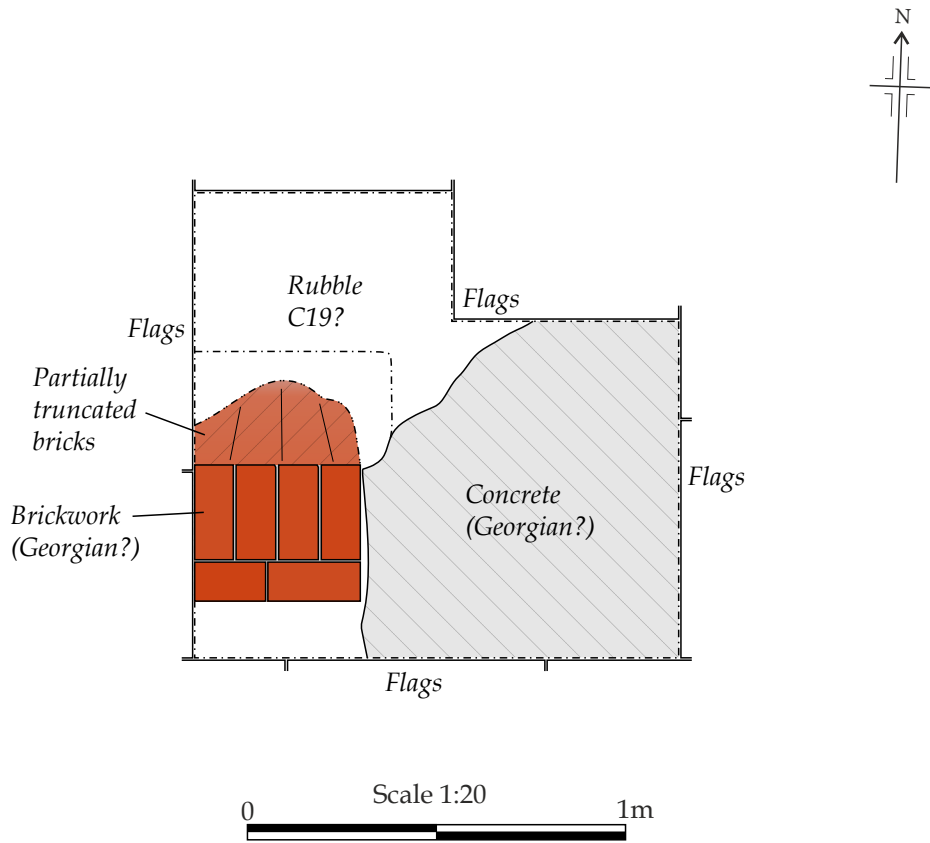
3.3.3 Context List

- [01] Existing ground floor in NW portion of Church Nave, comprising of modern parquet tiles, not to be reinstated following excavation.
- [02] Modern concrete below parquet floor tiles. Observed to depths of 0.15-0.17 m below ground level. Had been poured onto plastic sheeting.
- [03] Two single-skinned red-brick sleeper walls forming a redundant service duct measuring 0.41.5 m in width, the cavity infilled with cement-based rubble. Aligned N-S, observed 0.15 m below ground level, and extending beyond the limits of excavation. Built from at least three courses of pressed red brick with Portland cement bond, with each brick measuring approx. 0.05 m in width. Probable mid-late 19th century date. Located in eastern part of test pit, approx. 0.47 m from and parallel to the western edge. A small E-W aligned iron pipe was observed to connect perpendicularly into the duct near the NE corner of the test pit, with no exit signs on the west side.

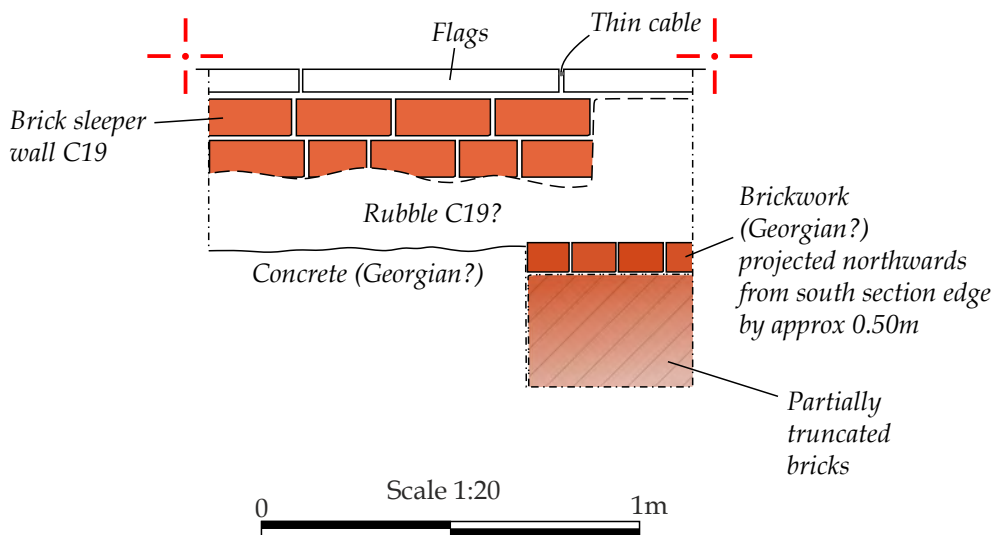
- [04] Cement rubble 'make-up' layer observed either side of redundant C19 duct [03] extending beyond the limits of excavation in every direction. Excavated to specified depth of test pit, but observed to get progressively siltier with depth. Contained a small quantity of disarticulated bone and several smashed fragments from a medieval sculpted stone, one of which had cusped decoration (*see Photo 26*).



Illus. 08: Test Pit locations within St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington. Plan 'as existing' provided by Knox McConnell Architects.



Illus. 09: Plan of archaeological features in Test Pit 1, St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington.



Illus. 10: North facing section of Test Pit 1, St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington.

4. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The results of test pitting monitored under watching brief conditions within the nave of St. Cuthbert's Church, Darlington, in July 2022, concluded that no significant structural remains of medieval origin or earlier appeared to survive at the specified depths excavated.

4.2 Test Pit 1, located near the pier in the north-west part of the crossing, was the only test pit to contain stratified archaeological remains pre-dating the 1862-65 re-ordering works. This however, was of no great age, taking the form of a probable Georgian brick-built sleeper wall and associated concrete surface, revealed to be truncated on its north side, almost certainly a consequence of Victorian excavations in this area associated with rebuilding the aforementioned pier. A sondage positioned alongside the feature reached a depth of 0.84 m, but still contained rubble make-up, extending beyond the limits of excavation.

4.3 Test Pit 2, located at the west end of the central aisle, revealed details of the Victorian services/heating duct system running east-west along the central aisle. The test pit could not excavate beyond the base of the ducts, due to physical constraints, with each duct containing three iron pipes encased within C19 sleeper walls.

4.4 Test Pit 3, located north of the west door to the nave, revealed a redundant N-S aligned Victorian services duct, infilled with cement rubble, some of which contained smashed fragments of medieval sculpted stone with cusped decoration (*see Photo 26*) and small quantities of disarticulated bone. The rubble extended beyond the specified depth of excavation.

4.5 Evidently the test pits demonstrate that if any insitu medieval or earlier archaeological features/deposits survive within the areas specified of the church nave, excavations would likely have to remove a significant quantity of rubble infill associated with the 1862-65 re-ordering works, and within the crossing this would appear to be in excess of 0.84 m. This corroborates Pritchett's account of the re-ordering works, which specifies reaching depths of over 4' 6" in the crossing.

4.6 Within the three test pits excavated, there was no evidence for the thick layer of concrete laid throughout the church in the 1862-65 re-ordering works. Whilst Test Pit 2, revealed the 1862-65 heating duct, and can consequently be discounted from the areas covered by the said Victorian concrete, the remaining test pits both revealed layers of modern 20th century concrete, poured onto plastic sheeting above rubble infill.

4.7 No further archaeological mitigation work is required in association with this scheme up to the specified depths reached for each area of test pitting. However, given the variable nature and uncertainty of extent in the Victorian re-ordering works, the potential for significant archaeological remains to exist within parts of the nave must be considered a moderate possibility. It is recommended therefore, that any future developments in the nave or elsewhere in St. Cuthbert's Church, should be considered on their own merits with respect to the need for archaeological intervention and ultimately deferred to the DCC archaeologist.

Photographic Record of Archaeological Watching Brief



Photo 01. Test Pit 1, view looking north-west during the removal of flags in the crossing.



Photo 02. Test Pit 1, view looking south-west during removal of modern concrete beneath the flags.



Photo 03. Test Pit 1, south-west view during concrete breaking.



Photo 04. Test Pit 1, south view, removal of concrete after breaking.

Photo 05. Test Pit 1, west view, showing east-facing section and partially truncated C18/19 brickwork and concrete below the floor.



Photo 06. Test Pit 1, overhead west view, showing partially truncated C18/19 brickwork and concrete below the floor.



Photo 07. Test Pit 1, south view, showing north-facing section and partially truncated C18/19 brickwork and concrete below the floor.



Photo 08. Test Pit 1, south view (with flash), showing depth of truncation in C18/19 brickwork and concrete below the floor.

Photo 09. Test Pit 2, view looking east during removal of flags.



Photo 10. Test Pit 2, broad view looking east down the central aisle after removal of flags.



Photo 11. Test Pit 2, detailed view looking east at exposed pipework, revealed after removal of flags.



Photo 12. Test Pit 2, vertical view looking east, over the test pit with flags removed to reveal underlying pipework.

Photo 13. Test Pit 2, view looking north at exposed pipework below flags.



Photo 14. Test Pit 2, view looking south-east at north-facing C19 brick sleeper wall and exposed pipework below the flags in the central aisle.



Photo 15. Test Pit 2, view looking south at north-facing C19 brick sleeper wall and exposed pipework below the flags in the central aisle.



Photo 16. Test Pit 2, view looking north at south-facing C19 brick sleeper wall and exposed pipework below the flags in the central aisle.



Photo 17. Test Pit 3, view looking NNE during the removal of flags.

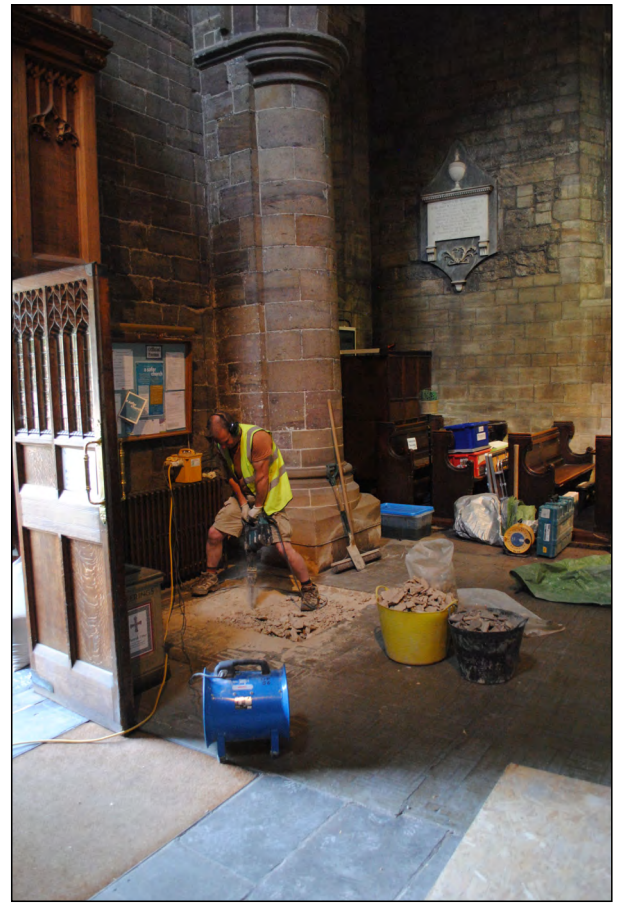


Photo 18. Test Pit 3, view looking north-west during breaking of modern concrete, revealed below the flags.



Photo 19. Test Pit 3, view looking WSW at the removal of concrete following breaking.



Photo 20. Test Pit 3, view looking west at plastic membrane, revealed beneath the concrete.



Photo 21. Test Pit 3, view looking west, following removal of plastic membrane and some rubble backfill to reveal the top of a brick wall or piping conduit.



Photo 22. Test Pit 3, view looking west, following the removal of further rubble backfill, revealing some pipework and the aforementioned brick wall/conduit.



Photo 23. Test Pit 3, view looking south at exposed pipe running perpendicularly into brick wall/conduit.



Photo 24. Test Pit 3, view looking north at exposed piping in south facing section and in NE corner of test pit running perpendicularly into brick wall/conduit.



Photo 25. Several fragments from a medieval sculpted stone, observed within the rubble backfill encasing probable C19 brick walling/conduit and piping in Test Pit 3.



Photo 26. Fragment of medieval sculpted stone with cusped decoration, observed within C19 backfill in Test Pit 3.

APPENDIX:

ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH
DARLINGTON
COUNTY DURHAM

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

Prepared by

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.

December 2021



Grid Reference: NZ 29106 14442 (centre)
Client: Darlington, St Cuthbert's PCC
Project Code: AP 21/40
Oasis Number: thearcha2-

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1. INTRODUCTION
2. FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY
3. EXECUTION OF THE SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION
4. TIMETABLE AND STAFFING

ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover: St Cuthbert's Church, Darlington, County Durham, by Albert Milton Drinkwater 1896 [Darlington Library].

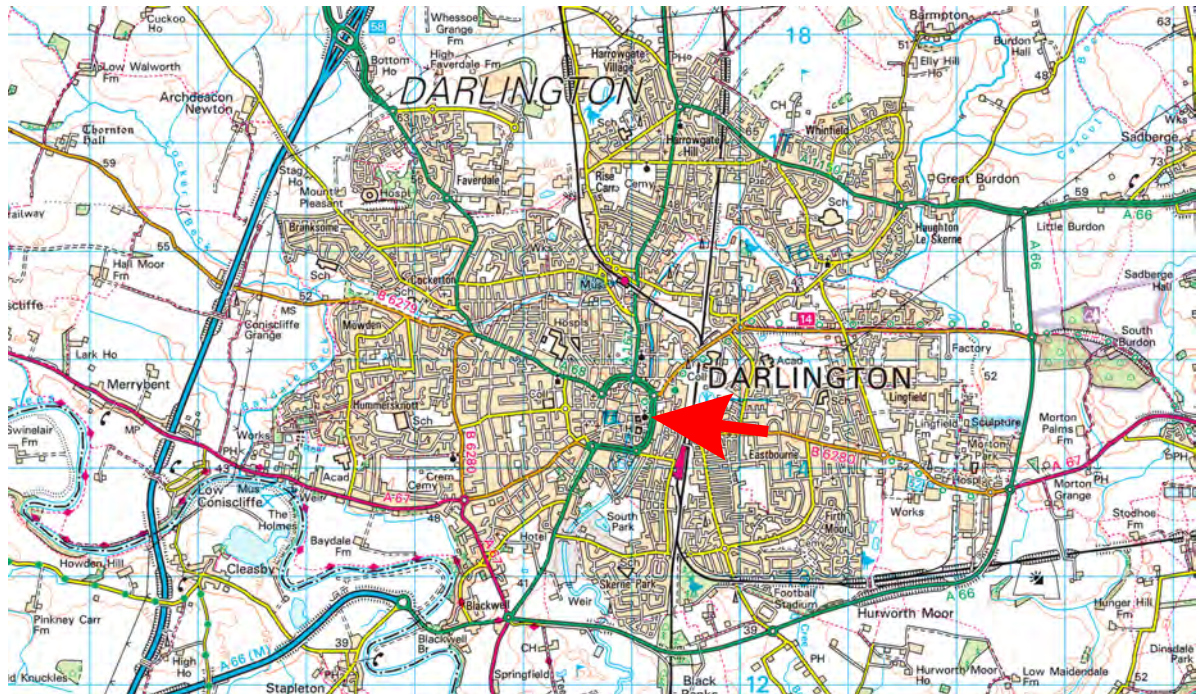
Illus. 01-02: The location of St Cuthbert's church, Darlington.

Illus. 03 & 04: Current plan of the church interior (above) and provisional proposed layout (below).

Illus. 05: St Cuthbert's church shown on the first edition Ordnance survey plan (surveyed 1850s).

Illus. 06: St Cuthbert's church shown on a 1950's edition of the Ordnance survey series.

Illus. 07: Indicative position of proposed test-pits within St Cuthbert's church, Darlington.



Illus. 01: The Location of St Cuthbert's church (arrowed) in Darlington.



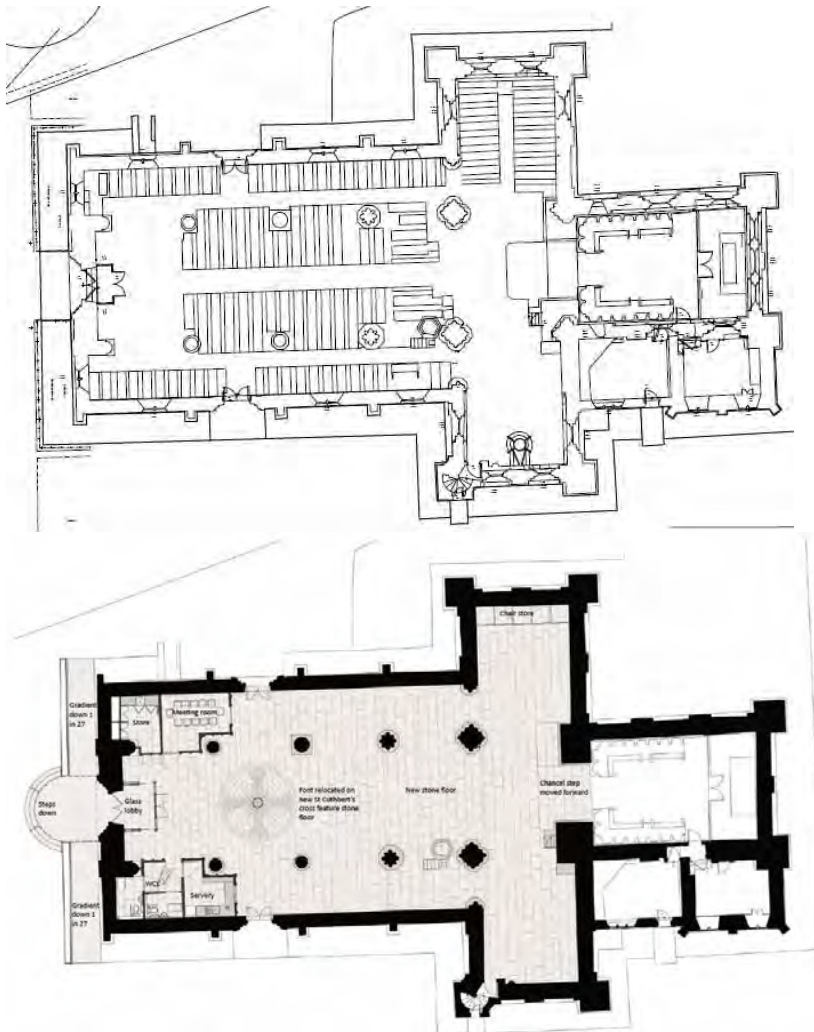
Illus. 02: The Location of St Cuthbert's church in Darlington town centre.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

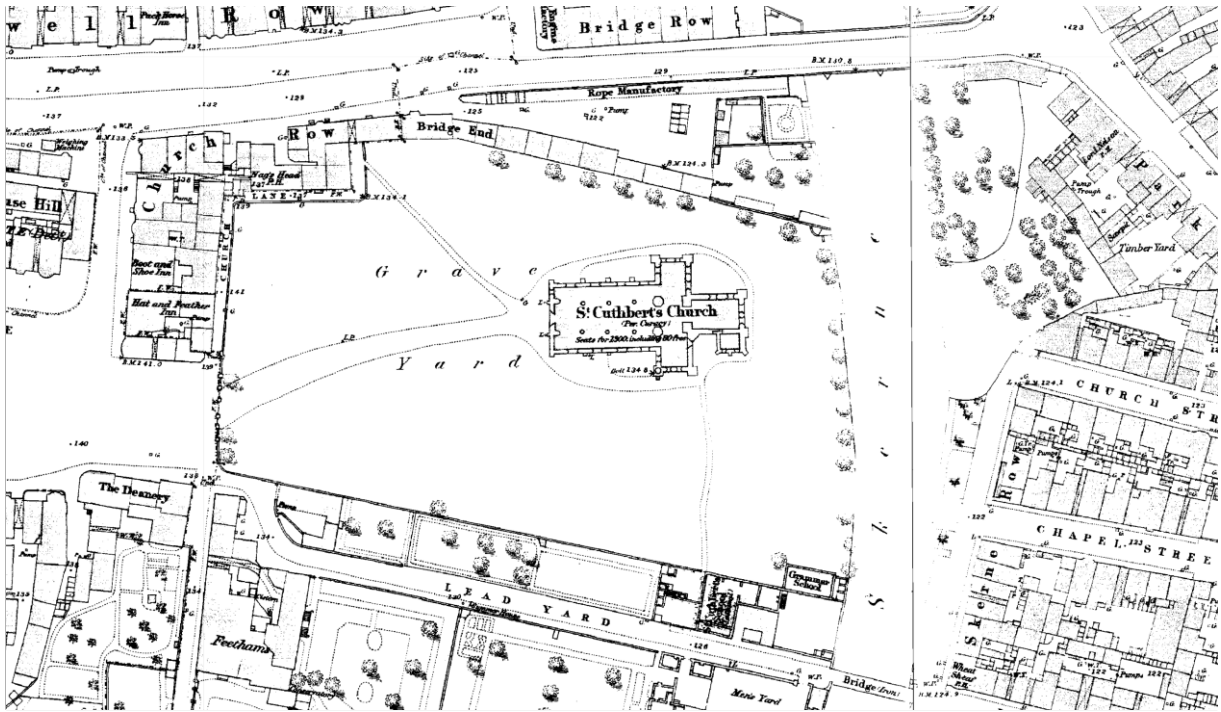
St Cuthbert's parish church in Darlington stands on the east side of the large market place of the town, bounded to the east by the River Skerne. The church is a cruciform structure in plan; its five-bay nave is aisled, with a clerestory; the transepts and chancel both have two tiers of windows in the side walls and three in the gable ends. There is a central tower and a pair of vestries on the south side of the chancel.

Knox McConnell Architects have been instructed by the Parochial Church Council of St. Cuthbert's church to plan and oversee proposed reordering works, the main objectives of which are to maintain and develop St Cuthbert's as a place of worship whilst improving the visitor welcome, expanding the use of the building and maintain, promote and interpret its heritage in an engaging way. It is proposed to achieve this by making the church accessible to all, replacing the pews for more comfortable, flexible seating - thereby providing a space for meetings - providing amenities such as WCs and a servery, and upgrading church infrastructure such as heating, lighting and audio visual capacity.

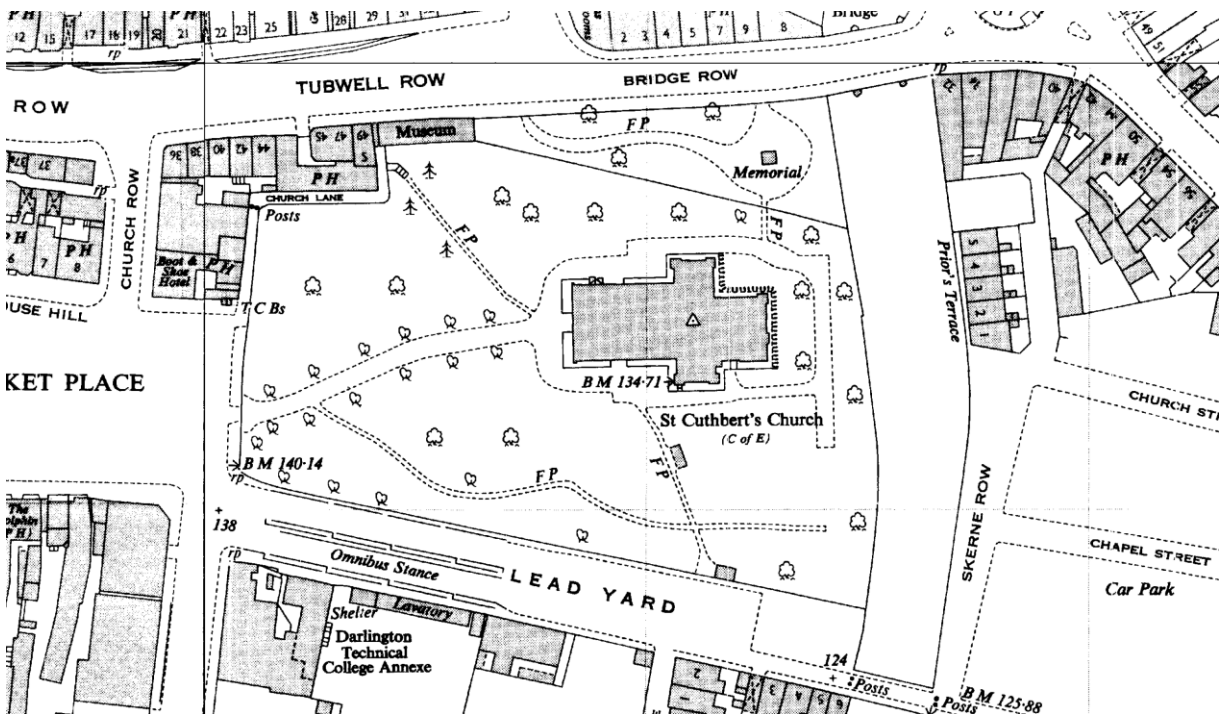


Illus. 03 & 04:

Current plan of the church interior (above) and provisional proposed layout (below).



Illus. 05: St Cuthbert's church shown on the first edition Ordnance survey plan (surveyed 1850s).



Illus. 06: St Cuthbert's church shown on a 1950's edition of the Ordnance survey series.

Clearly, some of these proposed changes have the potential to impact upon the upstanding built fabric of the building and upon any surviving sub-surface remains which survived the major works of the 1860s, noted above. It is the purpose of this document, therefore, to describe how it is proposed to evaluate the significance and extent of surviving sub-surface archaeological remains in areas likely to be impacted by the works programme.

1.2 Historic Background

Although largely the product of one building campaign, somewhere between Transitional and Early English in style (late 12th/early 13th century), the church displays considerable complexity in detail, as described by Ryder (1997)¹. Six pieces of Pre-Conquest sculpture listed by Cramp (1984, 62-3)*, including part of a hogback dated to the second quarter of the 10th century, suggest the presence of a church on the site well before attested building works in the late 12th century, as does a reference to the transfer of secular canons from Durham to Darlington c1083.

Ryder (1997)* notes documentary evidence for the existence of the church, and possible surviving pre-12th century fabric, including a note that remains of a 'Saxon' building were seen during a major 1862-5 restoration. An examination of the current built fabric suggests that earlier fabric may survive in the lower part of the west wall and the western responds of both arcades. Further evidence for the retention of earlier fabric may be implied from the irregularities in the ground plan, notably the variable length of the individual bays of the nave arcades. All authorities seem to agree on a pause, of up to 30 years, between the construction of the crossing and eastern parts of the church and that of the nave. Various works took place in the 14th century, when the tower was constructed, with further works in the post-Reformation period, including the addition of a porch, rebuilding of the old east end in 1748 and erection of an eastern gallery in 1756.

Other 18th and 19th century works are relatively well documented (see 'Faculties and other records of structural work' and H. D. Pritchett 1924)*, including major works in 1862-5 when the floors were lowered and a thick layer of concrete laid throughout the church (Ryder 1997, 18)*; major underpinning works were carried out at the west end of the nave, and around the western crossing piers and an underfloor heating system installed. As noted by Ryder (op. cit.) these works effectively destroyed at least any post-medieval deposits, though it is possible that archaeological remains survive in some parts of the church. Similarly, it is known that the exterior of the church has a sunk channel, c 1 m deep and 1.5 m wide, running round its perimeter, another product of the 1862-5 restoration, which will also have disturbed archaeological deposits adjacent to the wall faces. However, it is considered possible that some remains of two demolished structures, the putative early vestry on the north of the chancel, and the presumably post-medieval south porch, may survive outside it and, despite extensive disturbance and landscaping of the churchyard in

1 *

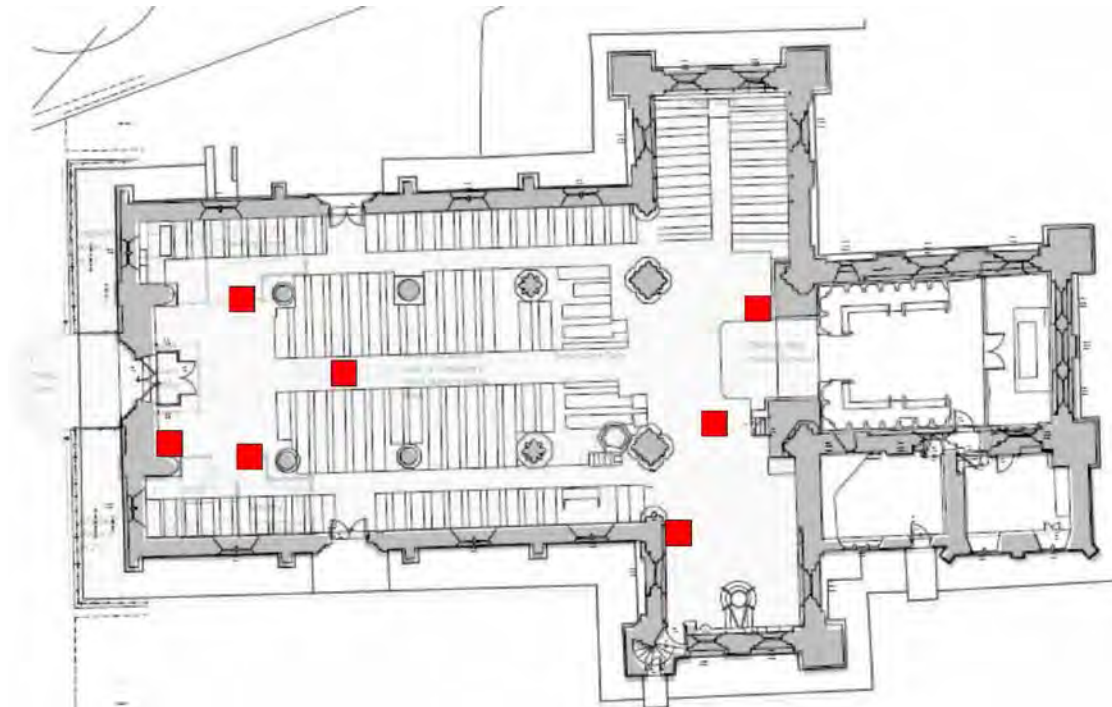
Ryder, P F, *The Church of St Cuthbert, Darlington: Archaeological Assessment June 1997*. Unpub. Report.
Cramp, R (ed) (1984) *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England*, I. 62-3
Pevsner, N &
Williamson E, (1983) *County Durham (Buildings of England series, Penguin)*,
Pritchett, J.P. (1887) 'St Cuthbert's, Darlington' (summary of paper read July 26th 1886). *Trans British Archaeological Association* XLIII, 234-5
Pritchett, J.P. (1902) *The Architectural History of St Cuthbert's Church, Darlington* (extended text of 1886 paper). Wm Dresser & Sons, Darlington.

recent years, it should be borne in mind that the church formed only part of an extensive complex of medieval buildings - Bishop's Palace, Tithe Barn, the former vicarage, the Deanery etc - most of which were pulled down in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

1.3 Scheme of evaluation

The main objective of the work is to investigate below current floor levels to determine the presence or otherwise of any sub-surface remains of significance, which may include burials and other features.

Accordingly, it is proposed to excavate a minimum of 6 no. test-pits, each 1 m wide and 1 m or 2m long, in positions to be determined by requirements for foundations, services or ground reduction and by the known or likely presence of surviving remains based on Ryder's (1997) report and other documentation.



Illus. 07: The current plan of the church interior showing provisional sites of evaluatory test-pits, with provisional proposed layout shaded.

The work will be related to the research aims of the NERRF, which aims to place developed archaeological fieldwork in a context of academic understanding of the history and archaeology of the region (Petts and Gerrard 2006).² The NERRF research priorities of obvious relevance here are included in Chapter 19, Twentieth-century research agenda and include the Key Research Priorities of *Religion and Belief*, *Death and Burial* and *Military and Defence* (Petts and Gerrard 2006, 194-95).

² Petts, D and Gerrard, C , 2006, 'Shared Visions: The North East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment'.

2. FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

2.1 General

2.1.1 The Field Investigation will be carried out by means of Archaeological excavation.

2.1.2 All work will be carried out in compliance with the codes of practice of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and will follow the CIFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations as well as the document on Standards and Guidance for all Archaeological Work in County Durham and Darlington issued by DCC Archaeology Section.

2.1.3 All archaeological staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. Before commencement of work they will have been made aware of what work is required under the specification and they will understand the aims and methodologies of the project.

2.2.2 The setting out of the trial pits will be undertaken by the contracting archaeologist.

2.2.3 The excavations will be carried out by hand, by a recognised conservation builder, under continuous archaeological supervision.

2.2.4 The recent overburden will be removed in successive level spits down to the first significant archaeological remains, which will be recorded before further excavation is carried out down to the next significant level, etc.

2.2.5 Spoil will be kept close-by and rapidly backfilled into the trench, as far as possible, at the conclusion of the work. Where additional spoil remains following the completion of backfilling (caused by requirements to resurface the testpits using new materials, for example) it will be disposed of in a way acceptable to the PCC.

2.2.6 All faces of trenches requiring examination or recording, and the top of significant archaeological horizons, will be cleaned sufficiently to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains

2.2.7 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits identified will be cleaned and recorded by hand through a sampling procedure to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described. Pits and postholes will normally be sampled by half-sectioning although some features may require complete excavation. Linear features will be sectioned as appropriate. All feature intersections will also be investigated.

The sampling procedure will typically comprise:

- 50% of every discrete feature
- 25% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a non-uniform fill
- 10% of the area of linear/curvilinear features with a uniform fill

2.3 Archaeological Recording

2.3.1 Archaeological stratigraphy revealed by excavation will be recorded by the following means:

2.3.2 Written descriptions. Each archaeological context will be recorded on a pro-forma sheet. Minimum recorded details will consist of the following: a unique identifier; an objective description which includes measurements of extent and details of colour and composition; an interpretative estimate of function, clearly identified as such; the identifiers of related contexts and a description of the relationship with such contexts (for preference, executed as a mini Harris matrix); references to other recording media in which representations of the context are held (plans, sections, photographs).

2.3.3 Measured illustrations. The drawn record from the site will include a representative selection of long sections from the excavations that clearly allow the nature and depth and any significant changes in the deposits recorded to be demonstrated. Detail plans and sectional profiles of archaeological features will be at appropriate scales (1:20 or 1:10). Archaeological contexts will be referenced by their unique identifiers. All illustrations will be properly identified, scaled and referenced to the site survey control.

2.3.4 Photographs. Digital photographs will be taken for purposes of record. A system will be used for identifying the archaeological features photographed.

2.3.5 All processing, storage and conservation of finds will be carried out in compliance with the relevant CIFA and UKIC (United Kingdom Institute of Conservation) guidelines.

2.3.6 Portable remains will be removed by hand; all artifacts encountered will be recovered.

2.3.7 The potential requirement for specialist analyses (see below) is an unavoidable risk in all such excavations. The scientific investigation of any features/deposits which are considered significant will be undertaken as a non-negotiable part of this programme. Any such analyses would be carried out by specialists and priced to the client on a costs only basis (see Contingencies in the Project Costing).

2.4 Analysis and Reporting of Recovered Data

2.4.1 Following the completion of the Field Investigation and before any of the post-excavation work is commenced, an archive (the Site Archive) containing all the data gathered during fieldwork will be prepared.

2.4.2 Following completion of the Field Investigation, a full report will be prepared collating and synthesizing the structural, artefactual and environmental data relating to each agreed constituent part of the works.

2.5 Environmental Sampling and Scientific Dating

2.5.1 The investigations will be undertaken in a manner consistent with *MoRPHE EH 2006 and PPN 3* and with "Archaeological Science at PPG16 Interventions: Best Practice for Curators and Commissioning Archaeologists", English Heritage, 2003.

2.5.2 The following strategy for environmental sampling will be confirmed with Don O'Meara, [Historic England North-East Science Advisor \(tel. 0191 269 1250\)](mailto:Don.O'Meara@HistoricEngland.org.uk) before the excavation begins.

2.5.3 Deposits/fills with potential for environmental evidence will be assessed by taking up to two bulk samples of 30 litres from any context selected for analysis by the excavator from suitable (i.e. uncontaminated) deposits. Deposits/fills totalling less than 30 litres in volume will be sampled in their entirety. Six of the collected samples which are judged to be most suitable on grounds of being derived from uncontaminated and reasonably well-dated deposits and/or recognisable features will be selected for full analysis, reporting and publication.

2.5.4 Any significant animal bone assemblages, which can be used to explore themes such as hunting and fowling, fishing, plant use and trade, seasonality, diet, age structures, farrowing areas, species ratios, local environment will be assessed by a recognised specialist.

2.5.5 Waterlogged organic materials should be dealt with following recommendations in *Guidelines for the care of waterlogged archaeological leather* (English Heritage and Archaeological Leather Group 1995).

2.5.6 Deposits will be assessed for their potential for radiocarbon, archaeomagnetic (guidance is available in the Centre for Archaeology Guideline on Archaeometallurgy 2001) and Optically Stimulated Luminescence dating. As well as providing information on construction techniques, timbers will be assessed for their potential for dendrochronology dating, in which case sampling will follow procedures in *Dendrochronology: guidelines on producing and interpreting dendrochronological dates* (Hillam 1998) and *Guidelines on the recording, sampling, conservation and curation of waterlogged wood* (R. Brunning 1996). A maximum of 5 samples of material suitable for dating by scientific means (eg: Radiocarbon, Luminescence, Remnant Magnetism, etc.) will be collected.

2.5.7 Information on the nature and history of the site, aims and objectives of the project, summary of archaeological results, context types and stratigraphic relationships, phase and dating information, sampling and processing methods, sample locations, preservation conditions, residuality/contamination, etc. will be provided with each sample submitted for analysis.

2.5.8 Laboratory processing of samples shall only be undertaken if deposits are found to be reasonably well dated, or linked to recognisable features and from contexts the derivation of which can be understood with a degree of confidence.

2.5.9 Human remains will be treated with care, dignity and respect, in full compliance with the relevant legislation (essentially the Burial Act 1857) and local environmental health concerns. If found, human remains will be left in-situ, covered and protected, and the church authorities and County Archaeologist informed. If it is agreed that if removal of the remains is essential, a Ministry of Justice Licence will be acquired beforehand and the remains will be removed and stored with appropriate care and reburied in a location to be determined with the church authorities. Any analysis of the osteological material will take place according to published guidelines, *Human Remains from Archaeological Sites, Guidelines for producing assessment documents and analytical reports* (English Heritage 2002).

2.5.10 If anything is found which could be considered 'Treasure', under the Treasure Act 1996, it is a legal requirement to report it to the local coroner within 14 days of discovery. The Archaeological Practice Ltd. will comply with the procedures set out in The Treasure Act 1996. Any treasure will be reported to the coroner and to The Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officers, Benjamin Westwood (Tel. 03000 267 011) for guidance on the Treasure Act procedures. Treasure is defined as the following:

- Any metallic object, other than a coin, provided that at least 10% by weight of metal is precious metal and that is at least 300 years old when found

- Any group of two or more metallic objects of any composition of prehistoric date that come from the same find
- All coins from the same find provided that they are at least 300 years old when found, but if the coins contain less than 10% gold or silver there must be at least ten
- Any object, whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, another object that is Treasure
- Any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. Only objects that are less than 300 years old, that are made substantially of gold or silver, that have been deliberately hidden with the intention of recovery and whose owners or heirs are unknown will come into this category

2.6 Production of Final Report

2.6.1 Following excavation of the trial pits, an interim report will be submitted to the church PCC and Diocesan Archaeological Committee (DAC) setting out the results of the trial-pitting investigation.

2.6.2 A final report will be delayed until completion of any further phases of archaeological investigation associated with the reordering scheme.

2.6.3 Copies of the report will be provided within two months of the completion of fieldwork to the Client, and the DCC Archaeology Section. An additional hard and digital copy of the report will be lodged with the Durham County HER.

2.6.4 Two bound and collated copies of the report will be provided. Each will be bound, with each page and heading numbered. Any further copies required will be produced electronically. The report will include as a minimum the following:

- Executive summary
- A site location plan to at least 1:10,000 scale with at least an 8 figure central grid reference
- OASIS reference number; unique site code; museum accession number for the site
- Planning application number
- Contractor's details including date work carried out
- Nature and extent of the proposed development, including developer/client details
- Description of the site location and geology
- A summary statement of methodologies used.
- A site plan to a suitable scale and tied into the national grid so that features can be correctly orientated
- Discussion of the results of field work
- Context & feature descriptions
- Features, number and class of artefacts, spot dating & scientific dating of significant finds presented in tabular format
- Stratigraphic matrices for the various areas examined
- Plans and section drawings of the features drawn at a suitable scale
- Initial assessment reports by specialists
- Discussion of how the work has contributed to the NERFF objectives identified in the WSI
- Recommendations regarding the need for, and scope of, any further archaeological work
- Bibliography

2.6.5 Following completion of the analysis and publication phase of the work, an archive (the Research Archive) containing all the data derived from the work done during the analysis phase will be prepared. The archive will be prepared to the standard specified by English Heritage (English Heritage 1991) and in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute of Conservation guidelines.

2.6.6 Arrangements will be made to deposit the Site Archive (including Finds) and the Research Archive with the designated repository within 6 months of the end of the fieldwork. Digital data, in particular a selection of important site photographs will be archived with ADS at the University of York.

2.6.7 Summary reports of the project will be prepared, if necessary, for inclusion in the appropriate Notices, Annual Reviews, Reports, etc.

2.6.8 OASIS

The Archaeological Contractor will complete the online form for the Online Access to Index of Archaeological Investigations Project (OASIS). The Contractor agrees to the procedure whereby the information on the form will be placed in the public domain on the OASIS website, following submission to, or incorporation of, the final report into the Durham County HER.

2.6.9 A copy of the report will be uploaded to OASIS within one week of final submission of the completed report to the DCC Archaeology Section.

3. TIMETABLE AND STAFFING

It is envisaged that the groundworks will take place in the Winter of 2021-22.

Personnel:

Archaeological Practice

Project Manager: Richard Carlton

Project Officer: Marc Johnstone

Project Archaeologists: Mike Parsons

Sub-Contractors

Dr Charlotte O'Brien, Archaeological

Services Durham University

(Environmental remains)

Peter Ryder (Built remains)

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.



Westmorland House, Elswick East Terrace,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7LJ
Tel: 0191 273 0777; Fax: 0191 273 1777
Email: info@archaeologicalpractice.co.uk
Web: www.archaeologicalpractice.co.uk