

**Archaeological watching brief  
at St Andrew's Church,  
Allensmore,  
near Hereford**

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Oasis ref martinco1-308692

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# **Archaeological watching brief at St Andrew's Church, Allensmore, near Hereford**

## **Introduction**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at land at St Andrew's Church, Allensmore, near Hereford (SO 466 358; Fig 1) at the request of Mr John Goom. This work was undertaken during excavations in the graveyard for an drainage trench and soak-away, under a Faculty from The Bishop of Hereford's Registry, dated 23rd January 2017 (reference 7152/HJD/SKMB/F2016/102; Appendix 2).

The archaeological watching brief was to comprise documentary research, a watching brief on the excavation of a drainage trench and soak-away and a report.

## **Summary**

A archaeological watching brief was carried out at St Andrew's Church, Allensmore, near Hereford under a Faculty to carry out repairs to the tower and install drainage and a soak-away in the churchyard to the north. No features or human remains were encountered during the watching brief and only one find was made: a grave slab that was positioned just beneath the turf. That part of the inscription which was visible within the trench was recorded.

A summary will be published in West Midlands Archaeology.

## **The documentary material**

### **Historic mapping**

The earliest available mapping is the Allensmore tith map of 1840 (Fig 2.1). This shows the church in its current configuration (although the various buttresses are not depicted and with the exception of the vestry on the north-west corner of the chancel). The 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 (Fig 2.2) shows the vestry and buttresses on the tower but not the one in the middle of the north wall of the nave. The Ordnance Survey map of 1904 shown nothing different (Fig 2.3). The Ordnance Survey map of 1929 (Fig 2.4) shows a lean-to structure on the north side of the tower, between the north-west and north-east buttresses. This was removed during the course of the current project.

### **The Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre**

A visit was paid to the Herefordshire Archive and Records Centre on the 24th January 2018. The earliest existing part of the church is part of the wall of the chancel, which dates to the 12th century although it is believed that the founding of the church may have been earlier. The tower, adjacent to which the excavations took place, dates to the late 15th or early 16th centuries. Pevsner suggests that the tower may have been rebuilt c 1675-80 and describes it as being 'short, broad west tower, late perpendicular style with sturdy diagonal buttresses and wide battlements'.

It was listed Gd II\* on the 26th January 1967 (listing reference 1099725).

## **The fieldwork**

### **General**

Fieldwork took place on the 25th January 2018. It comprised monitoring of the excavations. These were for a drainage trench and soak-away for rainwater from the roof of the tower. A narrow trench approximately 0.3m wide and between 0.4 and 0.5m deep was excavated to the north-west from the corner of the tower, terminating in a soak-away measuring approximately 1.5m square and 1.0m deep. A full description of the contexts is given in Appendix 1. Contexts are described in summary form below.

### **Description**

The deposit sequence was simple. Within the drainage (Fig 3.2, section 1) the turf (context 001) was removed to reveal a dark grey brown clayey loam with occasional small angular stones (context 002; subsoil). Beneath the turf and lying within the subsoil a single grave slab was found (Figs 3.1 and 4). This completed the soil profile within the drainage trench. Within the soak-away (Fig 3.2, section 2), The turf (context 001) was removed to reveal a similar dark grey brown clayey loam with occasional small angular stones (context 003; subsoil). Within context 003 was a discontinuous patch of small angular stones (context 004; of unknown function). Beneath context 003 was context 005, a reddish brown clayey sand which appeared to be the natural subsoil.

### **The finds**

There were almost no finds from the excavations, including any human remains, disturbed or *in situ*. The corner of a grave slab was encountered in the drainage trench, approximately 0.1m beneath the existing ground level. That part of the inscription that was exposed was recorded:

In memory of  
Mary Hall Meredith  
who died Nov<sup>r</sup> 29  
1841  
Aged

### **Interpretation**

The deposit sequence was simple. What was odd was the complete lack of human bone encountered during the excavations, even disturbed and re-deposited bone. A possible explanation is that the work took place on the north side of the church, which is often the least popular side with regard to burials, and therefore it had not been intensively used.

### **Bibliography**

Brooks, A, and Pevsner, N, 2012 *The buildings of England: Herefordshire*

### **Acknowledgements**

The author would particularly like to thank Mr John Goom, the Reverend Hilary Morgan, Mr Steve Williams, Church Warden and Badham and Sons, construction contractors, for their help and cooperation.

### **Archive**

The digital archive consists of:

- 1 Digital copy of the report (.pdf format)  
comprising text and eight illustrations

Since the archaeological project found so little it is anticipated that deposition with the OASIS database will be sufficient.

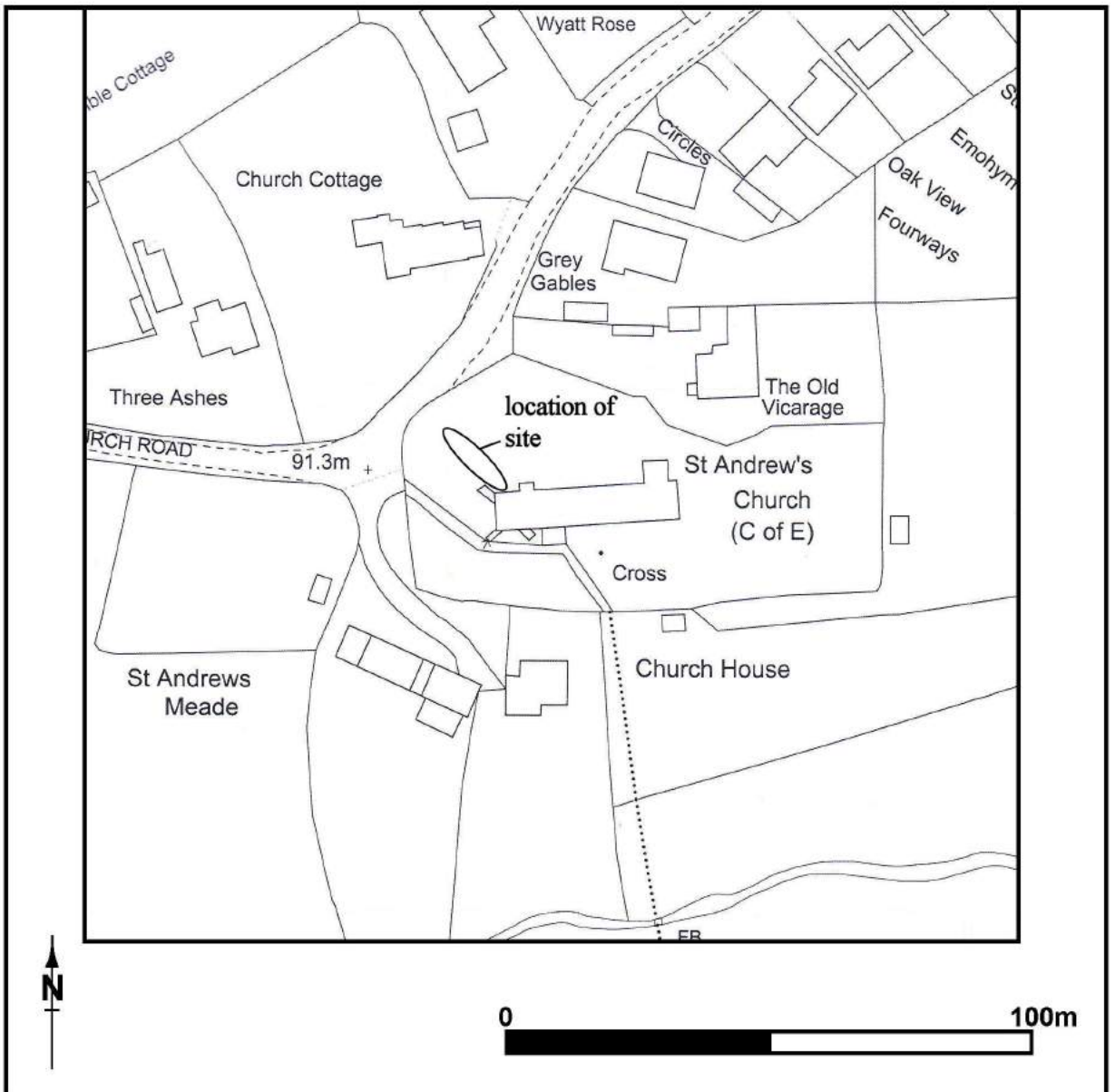
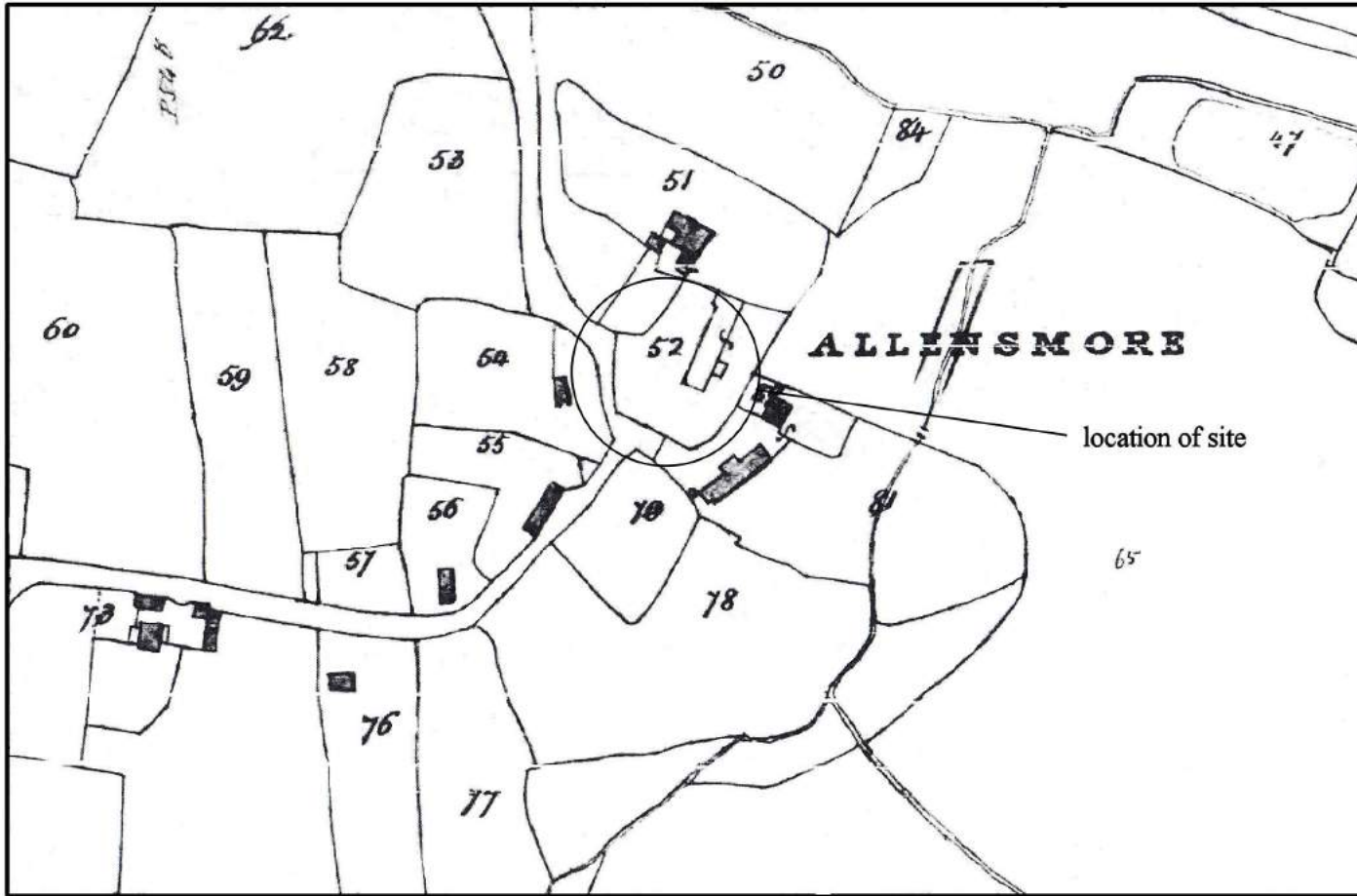


Fig 1: Location of site



not to scale



Fig 2.1: Allensmore tithe map of 1840

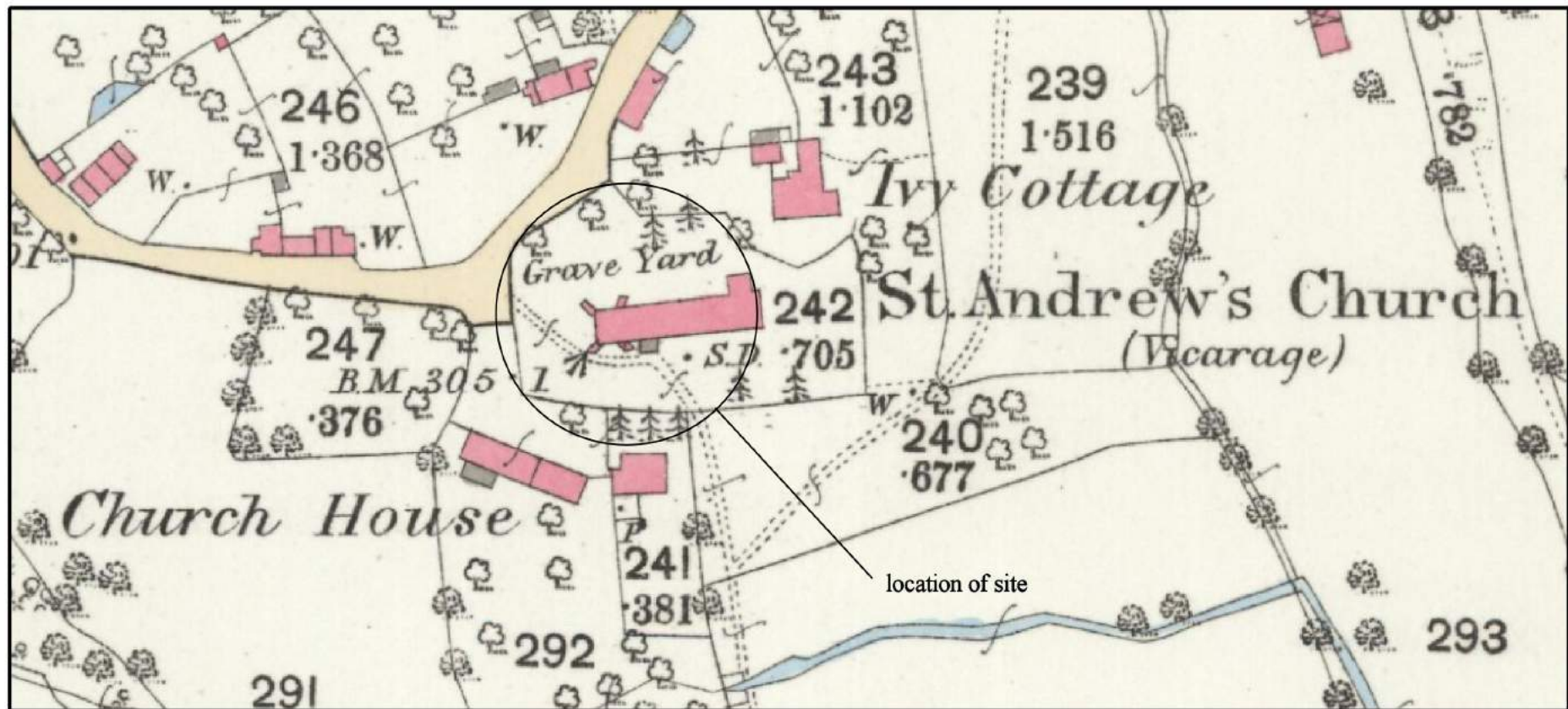


Fig 2.2: Ordnance Survey map of 1887





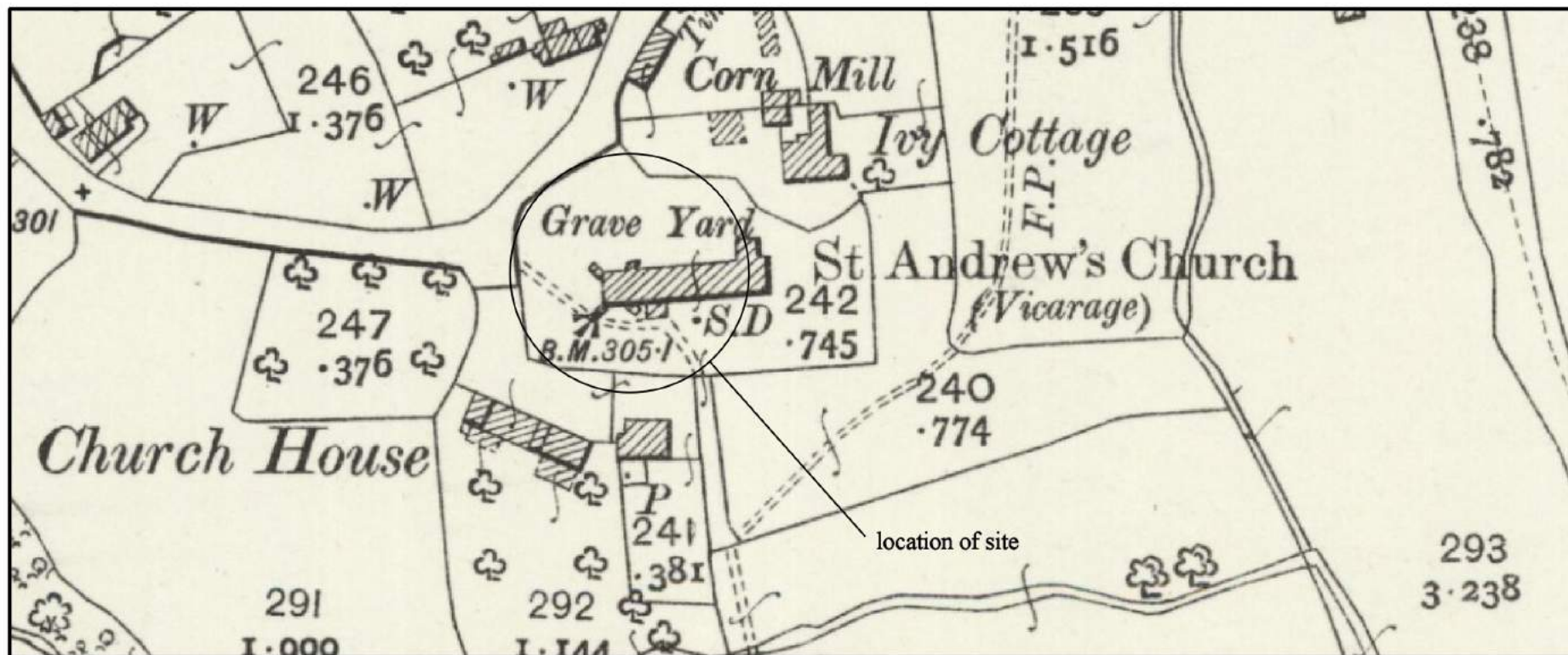


Fig 2.3: Ordnance Survey map of 1904



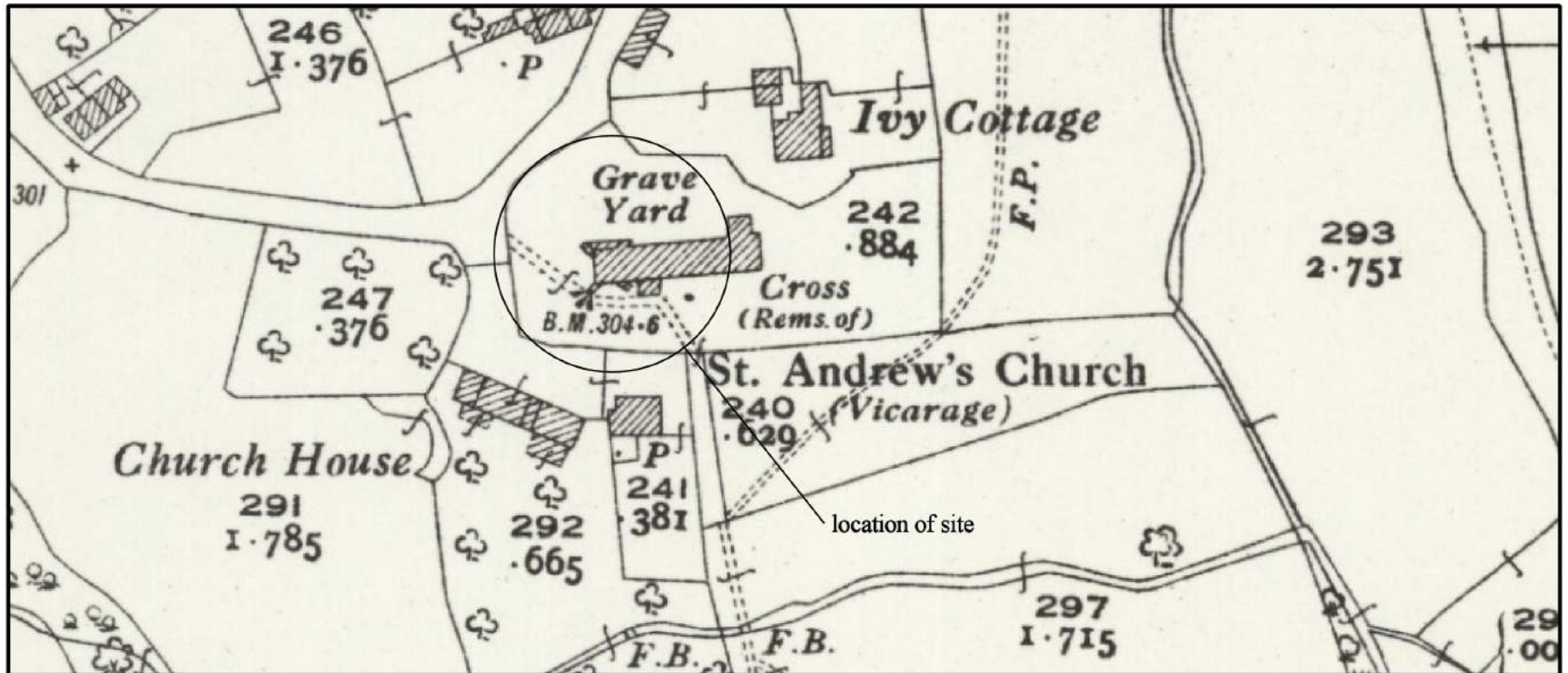


Fig 2.4: Ordnance Survey map of 1929





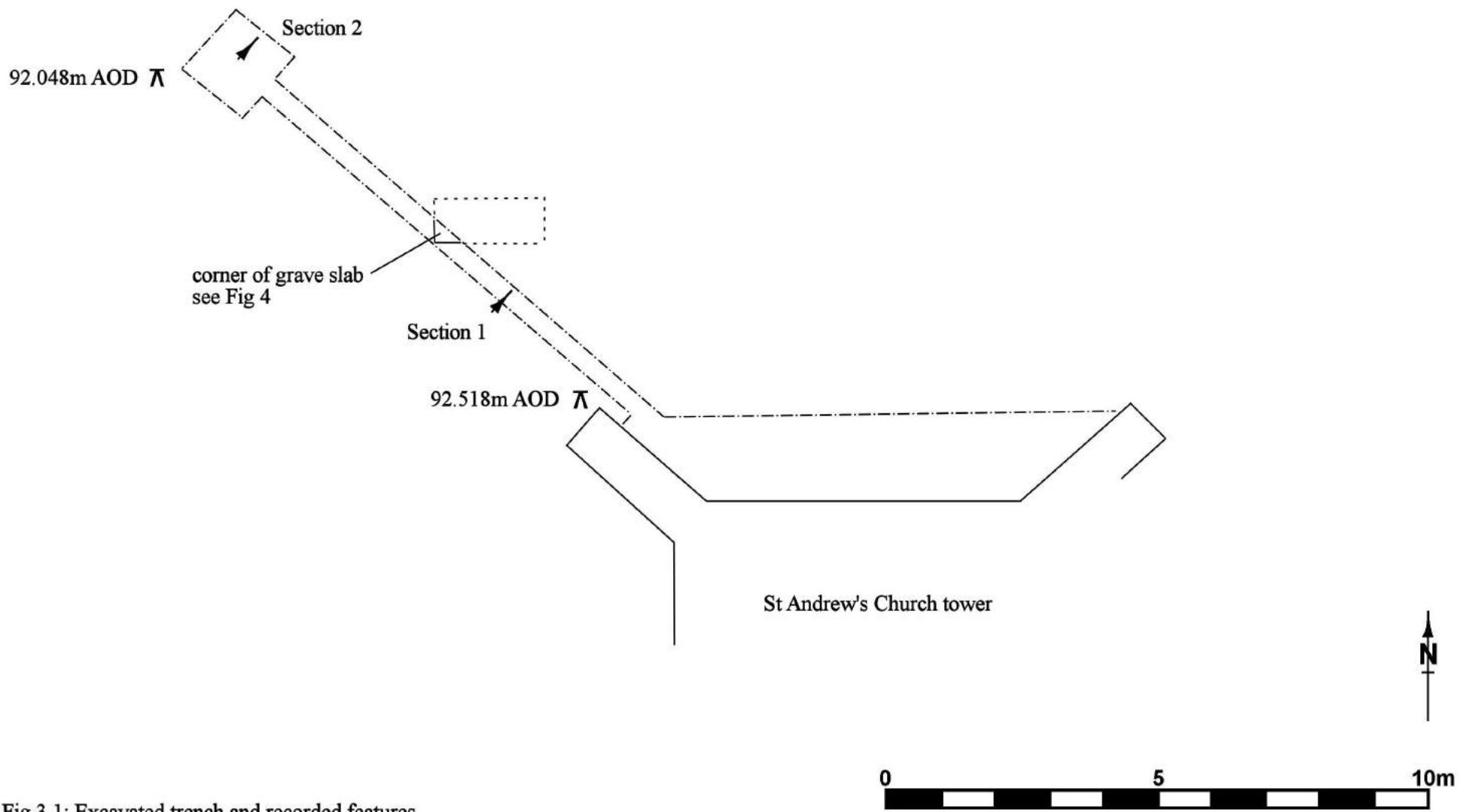


Fig 3.1: Excavated trench and recorded features

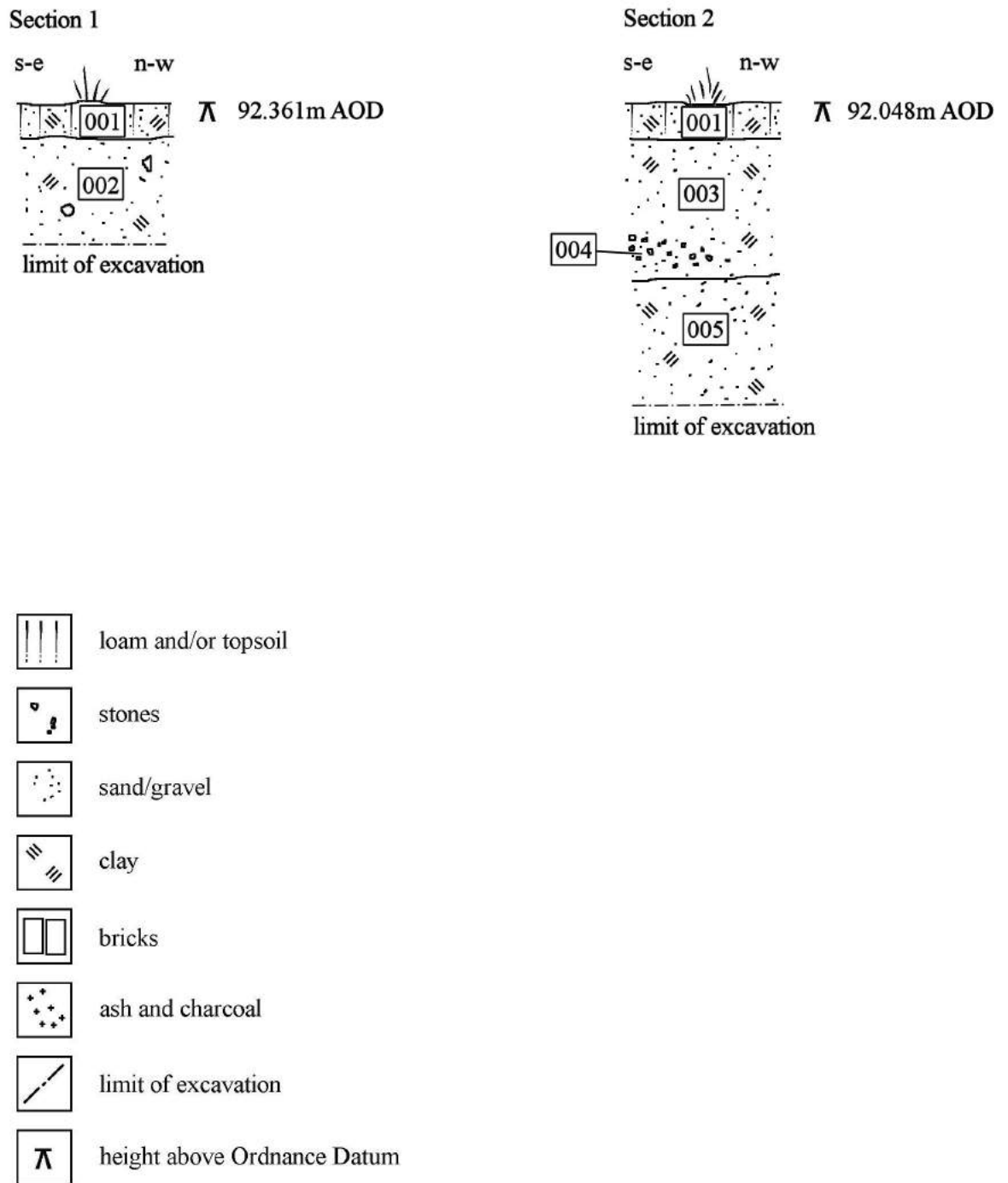


Fig 3.2: Sections





Fig 4: Part of grave slab recovered from trench (see Fig 3.1 for location)



Fig 5: General view of site looking east

## Appendix 1: List of the contexts

<b>Context number</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
001	Dark grey brown clayey loam with abundant roots	Turf and topsoil
002	Dark grey brown clayey loam with occasional small angular stones	Subsoil
003	Dark grey brown clayey loam with occasional small angular stones	Subsoil
004	Discontinuous patch of small angular stones	Deposit of unknown origin
005	Reddy brown clayey sand	Natural subsoil

## **Appendix 2: Faculty Schedule**



IN THE CONSISTORY COURT OF THE DIOCESE OF HEREFORD  
FORM 7 (RULE 7.4)  
FACULTY

Parish of Allensmore  
Church of St Andrew

THE WORSHIPFUL ROGER GODFREY KAYE  
Q.C, Chancellor of the Diocese and Official Principal  
of the Right Reverend RICHARD MICHAEL  
COKAYNE Lord Bishop of Hereford to The  
Reverend HILARY MORGAN Rector of the Parish  
of Allensmore and JANET SMITH Churchwarden  
and STEPHEN WILLIAMS member of the  
Parochial Church Council of that Parish:  
GREETING

COPY

A PETITION presented by you has been submitted to the Registry of this Court together with designs, plans, photographs or other documents requesting a Faculty authorising the works or other proposals specified in the Petition

A PUBLIC Notice was duly displayed giving an opportunity to all persons interested to object and give reasons why a Faculty should not be granted

THE PROCEEDINGS were unopposed and did not give rise to a question of law or of doctrine, ritual or ceremonial or relate to proposals that affect the legal rights of any person or body

THIS COURT now grants a Faculty authorising you to carry out the works or other proposals described in the Schedule in accordance with the designs, plans or other documents accompanying the Petition and subject to any conditions set out in the Schedule

THE WORKS must be completed within SIX months from the date below or such further period as this Court may allow and the Certificate of Practical Completion is to be sent to the Registry within the period allowed

A COPY of this Faculty is to be supplied by you to the architect or surveyor and contractors to be employed in respect of the authorised work before any work is commenced

THIS FACULTY is duly authenticated by the Seal of this Court

DATED the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of January 2017



.....  
REGISTRAR

### SCHEDULE

The alteration of the hatch access to the tower roof at the parish church and introduction of a French drain and soakaway to the north side of the tower, all in accordance with the Specification and Schedule of Works of John Goom dated October 2016 and associated drawing numbers 181A-G02/03/05 and 07, 181A-S01 and 02 dated September 2016, 181A-D01/02 and 03, 181A-G01/04 and 06 and 181A-S03 dated October 2016, emails between David Wells and John Goom dated 14<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016; displayed at the parish church and lodged in the Diocesan Registry.

### CONDITION

The requirements outlined in the bat report by Collins Environmental Consultancy Ltd and in the emails dated 14<sup>th</sup> October, 24<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 are to be observed