

# Archaeological works at St James' Church, Church Street, Harvington, nr Evesham, Worcestershire



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## **Archaeological works at St James' Church, Church Street, Harvington, near Evesham, Worcestershire**

Jonathan Webster and Tom Vaughan

With contributions by Laura Griffin

### **Summary**

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at St James' Church, Church Street, Harvington, near Evesham, Worcestershire (centred on NGR: SP 05706 48822). It was commissioned by Ward and Dale Smith, who intends to construct new welfare and storage facilities with associated drainage and groundworks for which a planning application has been granted by Wychavon District Council.

The six trenches revealed at least 32 inhumation burials, although ten of these comprised grave cuts that descended below the limit of excavation and a further 15 were associated with disarticulated remains, 13 of which were recovered from two charnel pits. Of the seven individuals that were seen in their entirety and lifted, one was an adult female, one was an adult male, two were adults of indeterminate sex, one was a probable young adult female and two were infants. None of the remains were removed from site or osteologically assessed. They have been placed within the church for future reburial.

Well preserved in situ skeletal human remains are present within 0.4m of the present ground surface. The churchyard has been in use for a long period, based on the physical relationships of grave cuts and the sequence of at least 5 layers of burial identified within Trench 2. The recovery of medieval domestic pottery is not unexpected, given the central village location, although the size and unabraded nature of it indicates a primary place of deposition. It may further indicate a terminus post quem of the 14<sup>th</sup> century for this part of the churchyard being used for burial, such that it may have lain outside the consecrated area before this date, rather than the pottery having been incorporated within the backfill of a grave. The church lies within the heart of the historic core of the village and the proximity of houses to the present western boundary of the churchyard could help to suggest that this area had been subsumed by the graveyard at some point rather than being part of the original plot. Although the sample was small, the proportion of individuals seen appears to be consistent with other recorded post-medieval burial grounds, with a predominance of young children and females in proportion to adult males.

The presence of two charnel pits, stratigraphically of very different date within Trench 3 indicates that there was been at least two distinct clearances of unknown areas of the churchyard, the latter of which took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably in advance of further burial, or construction work. A thin layer of mortar and building rubble at a depth of 0.40m within Trench 1 is considered to be a former ground surface of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date. This may relate to the major restoration work undertaken by Frederick Preedy in 1853-5.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A series of archaeological investigation was undertaken at St James' Church, Church Street, Harvington, near Evesham, Worcestershire (centred on NGR: SP 05706 48822). It was commissioned by Ward and Dale Smith, who is managing the construction of new welfare and storage facilities with associated drainage and groundworks for which a planning application has been granted by Wychavon District Council (reference W/14/00149).

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application (HER ref WSM 28855).

The project conforms to a brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section of Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2014), and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2014).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (IfA 2008a), *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008b) and the *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

The event reference given by the Worcestershire HER for the excavation stage is WSM 58034, whilst the watching brief stage is WSM 58036.

### 2 Aims

The aims and scope of the project are given in the brief (WCC 2014; Section 4). In particular, the project will identify, excavate and analyse all burials located within the construction horizon of the areas of the development.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The project was led by Jonathan Webster, BA (hons); who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2009 and has been practising archaeology since 2001. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan, AIfA, MA, BA (hons). Finds were analysed by Laura Griffin, AIFA, PGC Hist, BA (hons). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt MIfA, BSc (hons).

#### 3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER).

#### 3.3 List of sources consulted

##### *Cartographic sources*

- 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey, 1887, Scale: 1:10,560
- 1905 OS, Scale: 1:2,500
- 1924 OS, Scale: 1:10,560
- 1927 OS, Scale: 1:2,500
- 1930 OS, Scale: 1:10,560
- 1955 OS, Scale: 1:10,560
- 1965 OS, Scale: 1:2,500
- 1973 OS, Scale: 1:2,500

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- 1978 OS, Scale:1:10,000
  - 1992 OS, Scale:1:10,000

#### *Aerial photographs*

- Google Earth (accessed 08 September 2014)
- Worcestershire County Council Online Directory SID (accessed 05 June 2014)

#### *Documentary sources*

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography (Section 9).

### **3.4 Fieldwork strategy**

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2014).

Fieldwork was undertaken intermittently between 15 September and 20 October 2014. The site reference number and site code for the excavation is WSM 58034, whilst the site code for the watching brief stage was WSM 58036.

The excavation phase (WSM 58034) comprised three trenches (Trenches 1-3) that were excavated within the churchyard to cover the footprint of a new toilet and storage building along with associated drainage and a soakaway pit. This was followed by a watching brief (WSM 58036) that comprised three further trenches (Trenches 4-6) that would serve as service routes between the aforementioned excavated areas (Figure 2).

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed under archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012).

No human remains were removed from the site. They were retained within the church for reburial within the churchyard at a later stage.

### **3.5 Structural analysis**

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

#### **3.1 Artefact methodology, by Laura Griffin**

##### **3.1.1 Recovery policy**

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard WA practice (WA 2012; appendix 2).

##### **3.1.2 Method of analysis**

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. They were identified, quantified and dated to period. A *terminus post quem* date was produced for each stratified context. The date was used for determining the broad date of phases defined for the site. All information was recorded on a *pro forma* Microsoft Access 2007 database.

Artefacts from environmental samples were examined, but none were worthy of comment, and so they not included below, nor included in the Table 1 quantification.

The pottery was examined under x20 magnification and referenced as appropriate by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by Worcestershire Archaeology (Hurst and Rees 1992 and [www.worcestershireceramics.org](http://www.worcestershireceramics.org)).

## **3.2 Environmental archaeology methodology**

### **3.2.1 Sampling policy**

Sampling was undertaken according to standard WA practice (WA 2012). In the event no deposits were identified which were considered to be suitable for environmental analysis.

### **3.3 Discard policy**

The following categories/types of material will be discarded after a period of 6 months following the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them (and subject to the collection policy of the relevant depository):

- where unstratified
- modern pottery, and;
- generally where material has been assessed as having no obvious grounds for retention.

### **3.4 Statement of confidence in the methods and results**

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

## **4 The application site**

### **4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context**

The investigation area sits on the edge of a level plateau with the ground dropping away to the south and east, The churchyard itself has a slight inclination that drops gradually to the south from the area of the church itself; the ground level being roughly 1m above that along its western boundary.

The underlying geology is mapped as being on the boundary of the Mercia Mudstone formation dating from between 251 and 200 million years ago and the Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone formations from the Triassic and Jurassic periods (183 to 204 million years old) overlain by sand and gravels associated with the Ailstone member (Warwickshire Avon) deposits of the Quaternary period roughly 3 million years ago (BGS 2014).

The area of investigation lies within the churchyard of St James' church, in the historic core of the village, with the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century Manor Farm to the south-east (WSM 05864, 53149 and 60799), with farm house, cruck house and 17<sup>th</sup> century dovecote (WSM 02838). The church (WSM 02783) is thought to have origins in the Norman period and the existing tower has elements within its construction that suggest a 12<sup>th</sup> century origin, whilst much of the remainder is thought to be 16<sup>th</sup> century. The church underwent a major restoration in 1853-5, by Frederick Preedy, when the broach spire and small south vestry were also added. The nave vestry dates from 1960 (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 369-70). The village itself (WSM 15419) is thought to have early medieval origins and is mentioned in both the Saxon charters and the Domesday book (Thorn and Thorn 1982; VCH I).

The earliest surviving legible headstone within the churchyard is dated to 1840. No inhumations have been buried within the churchyard in recent history. A separate extension to the churchyard is located adjacent, to the south-west which is in current use. This was established sometime between 1905 and 1914.

## **5 Structural analysis**

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Figures 2-5 and Plates 1-11. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

Due to the nature of the deposits and features observed, this narrative has been segregated by trench area.



### 5.1.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 lay toward the west boundary of the churchyard alongside the footpath. It was excavated to approximately 0.84m below the present ground level (44.80 m AOD) and revealed a firm mixed churchyard soil, 118, that contained a quantity of disarticulated human bone. It was truncated by at least six skeletal inhumations along with a later ditch or service trench [124] (Fig 3). This latter was orientated east to west with steep, almost vertical, sides and measured 0.48m in width. The base of the feature was not seen. It may relate to linear [204] in Trench 2 and be a modern service.

Five inhumations were revealed at or above the development impact level, which by their very shallow nature may suggest a relatively early date. One of the potentially earliest, skeleton 117 appeared to be that of a middle aged adult comprised of the upper right torso and head, the remainder either extending beyond the limit of the excavation or truncated by later grave cut [122] (Plate 7). To the immediate south-east an infant (108) of roughly 2 years of age extended from the eastern limit of excavation (Plate 4). This individual survived with the upper torso and arms intact, the lower torso and legs extending beyond the limit of excavation whilst the head had been truncated by later cut [107] for inhumation 105. Inhumation 108 lay within a defined shallow grave cut [110], 0.27m in width, within friable soil backfill 109. Skeleton 105 was a probable adult female who was mainly below the intrusive limit of the development and as such was not fully exposed. However the feet, skull and clavicles were seen. This individual had no pathology noted on the exposed areas and remained in situ. To the south of this an inhumation of an infant, 111, was revealed within a shallow grave cut [113] (Plate 5). It was of particular note as it displayed evidence of severe spina bifida with five of the vertebra showing only partial formation and the spinous and transverse processes much reduced. The spine also showed an element of being twisted at the same point. The individual was thought to be aged under 1 year of age and the right femur was noted as measuring 0.16m in length. The skull was extremely fragmented and it was impossible to ascertain the presence of any teeth.

To the east inhumation 114 was within grave cut [116] that extended into the edge of the west section (Plate 6). The individual was buried with both arms lying flexed at the elbow so that they crossed over the lower torso, the right hand being placed below the left elbow. The left femur was 0.365m in length and the left radius 0.23m in length. The bones were generally slender and there was a lack of any brow ridge on the skull, which along with the pelvic angle and fused epiphysis suggest that the individual was female, however both the femur and tibia epiphyses were unfused and the lesser trochanter was missing suggesting that the individual was a juvenile. The skull itself had suffered post-depositional damage as the weight of soils had caused a degree of collapse, otherwise it was in good state and revealed that the sagittal suture remained unfused although the other cranial bones while distinctly visible had fused.

The inhumations were laid out supine, aligned east to west and without apparent grave goods. All features were sealed by 0.42m of heavily disturbed 19<sup>th</sup> century graveyard soil, 104, that was covered in the south-west corner of the trench by a 0.02m thin band of mortar and rubble, 103, that was itself sealed by 0.17m thick subsoil, overlain by 0.23m of humic topsoil. The horizon between these latter deposits was well defined, and it was clear that they dated from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. 103 is thought to represent construction debris, and may be a former surface.

### 5.1.2 Trench 2

Located to the east of Trench 1 on the east side of the public footpath and to the immediate south of the church tower, Trench 2 measured 5m in length by 1.20m in width and was excavated to approximately 0.90m below the present ground surface level (44.41m AOD). The base of the trench comprised a continuation of the general mixed churchyard soils, 202, which had been heavily truncated by grave cuts (Fig 4; Plates 2 and 8). Soil 202 contained a moderate quantity of human bone. It was overlain by 0.24m of humic topsoil, 201.

Two partial articulated inhumations were revealed within the construction horizon and were lifted, whilst another nine graves were noted within the base of the trench, so were not fully investigated.

The two individuals recovered are thought might be relatively early given their shallow depth and truncated condition, although no dating material or coffin furniture was recovered.

Skeleton, 208, comprised the right humerus (measuring 0.29m in length), a fibula laid parallel, the partial remains of the right scapula and four ribs, the majority of the individual having been truncated by later grave cut [222]. Due to the very poor nature of survival nothing further can be said about this individual.

Extending into the west trench edge, part of individual 205 was seen, comprising the majority of both arms along with much of the upper torso. The lower body had been removed by the excavation of later grave [212] whilst the shoulders and skull extended beyond the limit of current works (Plate 8). The individual was an adult in a supine position with the upper arms lying to the sides of the torso and flexed sharply at the elbow so that the hands would have lain on the sternum, although this was not visually confirmed. The left ulna measured 0.223m in length and the left radius 0.200m. All fusing of the visible bones had been complete and the bones themselves had a distinctive slender note to them. While it was not possible to sex the individual, on the evidence observed they were over the age of c 20 years old.

Although little can be said about the other graves other than they were backfilled with the same material that they had been excavated through, it was noted that at least five separate and distinct phases of burial had taken place and that as such it suggests that this area had been used as a graveyard for a substantially long period of time, potentially 600 years plus, if we assume that the burial practices of today are roughly consistent with those of the past and that a burial plot remains 'active' in the collective memory of the populace for around 100 years before further inhumations are placed in the same area. Obviously family plots are somewhat different, but given the spatial distribution of the graves that were seen it is unclear if any were family plots.

### **5.1.3 Trench 3**

Trench 3 was 1m square, located to the south of Trench 2 on the east side of the public footpath. It was excavated to a depth of 1.20m below the present ground level (44.06m AOD). At the base of the investigation a firm layer of gravels, 307, was revealed that is thought to represent the surface of the natural substrate. However some caution has been taken with this interpretation as, due to the limit of intrusive works, it was not possible to establish the complete nature of this deposit and there is a possibility that it might be redeposited.

The gravel was cut by two pits [304] and [306], the former of which stratigraphically predated the latter (Plates 3 and 9). Pit [304] measured more than 0.43m by 0.97m and only observed low in the stratigraphy, surviving to 0.19m deep. It was filled with a single fill, 303, that was a mix of gravels and the churchyard soil with a large quantity of human bones that represented the partial remains of at least seven individuals (based on the number of skulls recovered). The majority of bone recovered appeared to be related to the skull, neck and clavicle area with the exception being the recovery of two adult femurs. This pit was sealed by a 0.85m thick layer of mixed churchyard soil that contained a small amount of disarticulated human bone within it.

Pit [306] cut pit [304]. This was more than 1m in depth and contained a large quantity of human bone in the single fill, 305, which was similar to that in the earlier pit. It is thought that this pit is probably of late 19<sup>th</sup> century and as with the earlier pit, was the result of a clearance of an area of the churchyard, ahead of further burial insertions. The pit was sealed by 0.25m of humic topsoil, 301, containing occasional modern debris.

### **5.1.4 Trench 4**

Connecting the south-east corner of Trench 1 with Trench 3 this trench was excavated to a depth of 0.70m below the present ground level (44.76m AOD). Measuring 3.10m in length by 0.50 in width it revealed at least 0.45m of mixed graveyard soils, 401, that were overlain with 0.25m of humic topsoil, 401. No significant archaeological features, deposits or horizons were identified. The trench was not deep enough to reveal the natural matrix.

### 5.1.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was placed to connect Trench 1 with the west side of Trench 2, and measuring 3.10m in width by 0.50m in width. Excavated to a depth of 0.92m (44.43m AOD), it comprised at least 0.70m of mixed graveyard soils that contained two disarticulated adult skulls, 502. Both were gracile in nature without pronounced brow ridges. No grave cut was noted and these two skulls lay within the general graveyard soil, 501 (Plate 10). This was overlain by 0.22m of highly mixed topsoil, 500, which contained several fragments of modern debris throughout. No significant archaeological features, deposits or horizons were identified. The trench was not deep enough to reveal the natural matrix.

### 5.1.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned from the eastern end of Trench 2, around the south side of the existing church to a point where it was fed into the existing services of the main church building (Plate 11). Measuring 13.80m in length by 0.30m in width it descended to 0.50m (44.96m AOD). It comprised at least 0.15m of graveyard soils, 601, overlain with 0.35m of highly mixed topsoil, 600, with occasional modern material. No significant archaeological features, deposits or horizons were identified. The trench was not deep enough to reveal the natural matrix.

## 5.2 Artefact analysis, by Laura Griffin

The artefactual assemblage recovered is summarised in Tables 1 and 3.

The assemblage consisted of 58 finds weighing 1622g and came from eight stratified contexts. The assemblage could be dated from the medieval period onwards (see Table 1). Using pottery as an index of artefact condition, this was generally good with sherds displaying low levels of abrasion.

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	Total	Weight (g)
	clinker			1	20
	glass		window	8	21
	metal	iron	object	2	210
	metal	iron	nail	5	19
medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	17	404
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	27
post-medieval	metal	lead	window came	1	3
modern	ceramic	earthenware	cbm	2	46
modern	ceramic	stoneware	pot	6	26
modern	ceramic	stoneware	roof tile(flat)	8	594
modern	ceramic	stoneware	tile	1	17
modern	glass		vessel	5	235

*Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage*

### Summary artefactual evidence by period

All material has been spot-dated and quantified. Pottery has been grouped and quantified according to fabric type (Table 2). Diagnostic sherds were dated by form type, whilst remaining sherds were datable by fabric type to their general period or production span. Where mentioned, all

specific forms are referenced to the type series within the report for Deansway, Worcester (Bryant 2004).

### Medieval

Material that could be confidently dated to the medieval period consisted of 17 sherds of pottery. The majority of these sherds were of Worcester sandy ware fabric (fabric 55), with just one small fragment being of Malvernian unglazed ware (fabric 56; grave fill 112).

Diagnostic sherds came from two cooking pot forms which could be dated to the 12<sup>th</sup>-mid 14<sup>th</sup> century (Deansway type 55.3; layer 103 and soil 118) and a straight-sided bowl of late 11<sup>th</sup>-early 12<sup>th</sup> century date (Deansway type 55.6; soil 104). Sherds from both cooking pots had sooting to the external surface, confirming use in cooking.

These sherds provided a *terminus post quem* of 14<sup>th</sup> century for a burial (grave fill 112) and two layers (soils 104 and 118). However, this leads to the question of why domestic material is being retrieved from a churchyard and therefore does this pottery actually provide a *terminus post quem* for churchyard use rather than the actual burial itself. Other finds of possible medieval date were found alongside the pottery in the first of these layers (soil 104) and included a lead window came and a small piece of highly patinated green window glass, which presumably relates to the church structure itself.

### Post-medieval and modern

Remaining finds were generally undiagnostic and from mixed deposits (see Table 3). These included iron coffin nails and other coffin furniture, fragments of coloured window glass, bottle glass and fragments of ceramic building material including modern tile, brick and drain pipe. It is possible that some of the coffin nails and the lead window comes are actually medieval in date but, in the absence of clear stratigraphy, it is not possible to confirm this. Pottery of post-medieval and modern date was all of fabric types commonly identified within domestic assemblages.

period	fabric code	fabric name	count	weight (g)
medieval	55	Worcester sandy ware	16	401
medieval	56	unglazed Malvernian ware	1	3
post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	2	27
modern	81.3	Nottingham stoneware	1	1
modern	83	porcelain	1	1
modern	84	creamware	2	11
modern	85	modern china	2	14

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric type

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ
101	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	12		20C	
101	ceramic	stoneware	roof tile(flat)	3	278	19C	20C	

101	glass		vessel	2	37		20C	20C
101	glass		window	1	3			
101	metal	iron	?coffin furniture	2	210			
103	ceramic	earthenware	pot	3	86	12C	M14C	20C
103	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	3	M18C	L18C	
103	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	1	18C	19C	
103	ceramic	earthenware	cbm	2	46			
103	ceramic	stoneware	tile	1	17			
103	glass		vessel	3	198		20C	
103	glass		window	4	12			
104	ceramic	earthenware	pot	4	22	L11C	E12C	?medieval
104	glass		window	1	1			
104	metal	iron	nail	1	10			
104	clinker			1	20			
104	metal	lead	window came	1	3			
112	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	3	13C	14C	14C
118	ceramic	earthenware	pot	9	293	12C	M14C	M14C
119	metal	iron	nail	2	4			Undated
202	metal	iron	nail	2	5			Undated
301	ceramic	stoneware	pot	3	10	M18C	20C	20C
301	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	27	L17C	18C	
301	ceramic	stoneware	roof tile(flat)	5	316	19C	20C	
301	glass		window	2	5			

*Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts*

### 5.3 Significance of the artefactual assemblage

The assemblage retrieved was as expected for a site of this type with a mixture of domestic material alongside that relating to burials and the church structure itself. The pottery in particular, has provided good dating for the stratigraphic sequence and has also indicated a medieval

*terminus post quem* date for use as a churchyard. The relatively large size and good condition of the medieval sherds within Trench 1 would suggest little post-depositional disturbance to the layers and features below the topsoil and subsoil horizons in this area.

## **6 Synthesis**

The six trenches revealed at least 32 inhumation burials, although ten of these comprised grave cuts that descended below the limit of excavation and a further 15 were associated with disarticulated remains, 13 of which were recovered from two charnel pits. Of the seven individuals that were seen in their entirety and lifted, one was an adult female, one was an adult male, two were adults of indeterminate sex, one was a probable young adult female and two were infants. None of the remains were removed from site or formally osteologically assessed. They have been placed within the church for future reburial.

Well preserved in situ skeletal human remains are present within 0.4m of the present ground surface. The churchyard has been in use for a long period, based on the physical relationships of grave cuts and the sequence of at least 5 layers of burial identified within Trench 2. The recovery of medieval domestic pottery is not unexpected, given the central village location, although the size and unabraded nature of it indicates a primary place of deposition. It may further indicate a *terminus post quem* of the 14<sup>th</sup> century for this part of the churchyard being used for burial, such that it may have lain outside the consecrated area before this date, rather than the pottery having been incorporated within the backfill of a grave. The church lies within the heart of the historic core of the village and the proximity of houses to the present western boundary of the churchyard could help to suggest that this area had been subsumed by the graveyard at some point rather than being part of the original plot. Although the sample was small, the proportion of individuals seen appears to be consistent with other recorded post-medieval burial grounds, with a predominance of young children and females in proportion to adult males.

The presence of two charnel pits, stratigraphically of very different date within Trench 3 indicates that there was been at least two distinct clearances of unknown areas of the churchyard, the latter of which took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably in advance of further burial, or construction work. A thin layer of mortar and building rubble at a depth of 0.40m within Trench 1 is considered to be a former ground surface of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date. This may relate to the major restoration work undertaken by Frederick Preedy in 1853-5 (Brooks and Pevsner 2007, 369-70).

## **7 Publication summary**

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*Archaeological investigation were undertaken at St James' Church, Church Street, Harvington, near Evesham, Worcestershire (centred on NGR: SP 05706 48822). It was commissioned by Ward and Dale Smith, who intends to construct new welfare and storage facilities with associated drainage and groundworks.*

*The six trenches revealed at least 32 inhumation burials, although ten of these comprised grave cuts that descended below the limit of excavation and a further 15 were associated with disarticulated remains, 13 of which were recovered from two charnel pits. Of the seven individuals that were seen in their entirety and lifted, one was an adult female, one was an adult male, two were adults of indeterminate sex, one was a probable young adult female and two were infants. None of the remains were removed from site or osteologically assessed. They have been placed within the church for future reburial.*

*Well preserved in situ skeletal human remains are present within 0.4m of the present ground surface. The churchyard has been in use for a long period, based on the physical relationships of grave cuts and the sequence of at least 5 layers of burial identified within Trench 2. The recovery*

of medieval domestic pottery is not unexpected, given the central village location, although the size and unabraded nature of it indicates a primary place of deposition. It may further indicate a *terminus post quem* of the 14<sup>th</sup> century for this part of the churchyard being used for burial, such that it may have lain outside the consecrated area before this date, rather than the pottery having been incorporated within the backfill of a grave. The church lies within the heart of the historic core of the village and the proximity of houses to the present western boundary of the churchyard could help to suggest that this area had been subsumed by the graveyard at some point rather than being part of the original plot. Although the sample was small, the proportion of individuals seen appears to be consistent with other recorded post-medieval burial grounds, with a predominance of young children and females in proportion to adult males.

The presence of two charnel pits, stratigraphically of very different date within Trench 3 indicates that there was been at least two distinct clearances of unknown areas of the churchyard, the latter of which took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably in advance of further burial, or construction work. A thin layer of mortar and building rubble at a depth of 0.40m within Trench 1 is considered to be a former ground surface of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century date. This may relate to the major restoration work undertaken by Frederick Preedy in 1853-5.

## 8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, John Dumelow and David Battin (St James' Church PCC), Rob Gardiner (Ward and Dale Smith), and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

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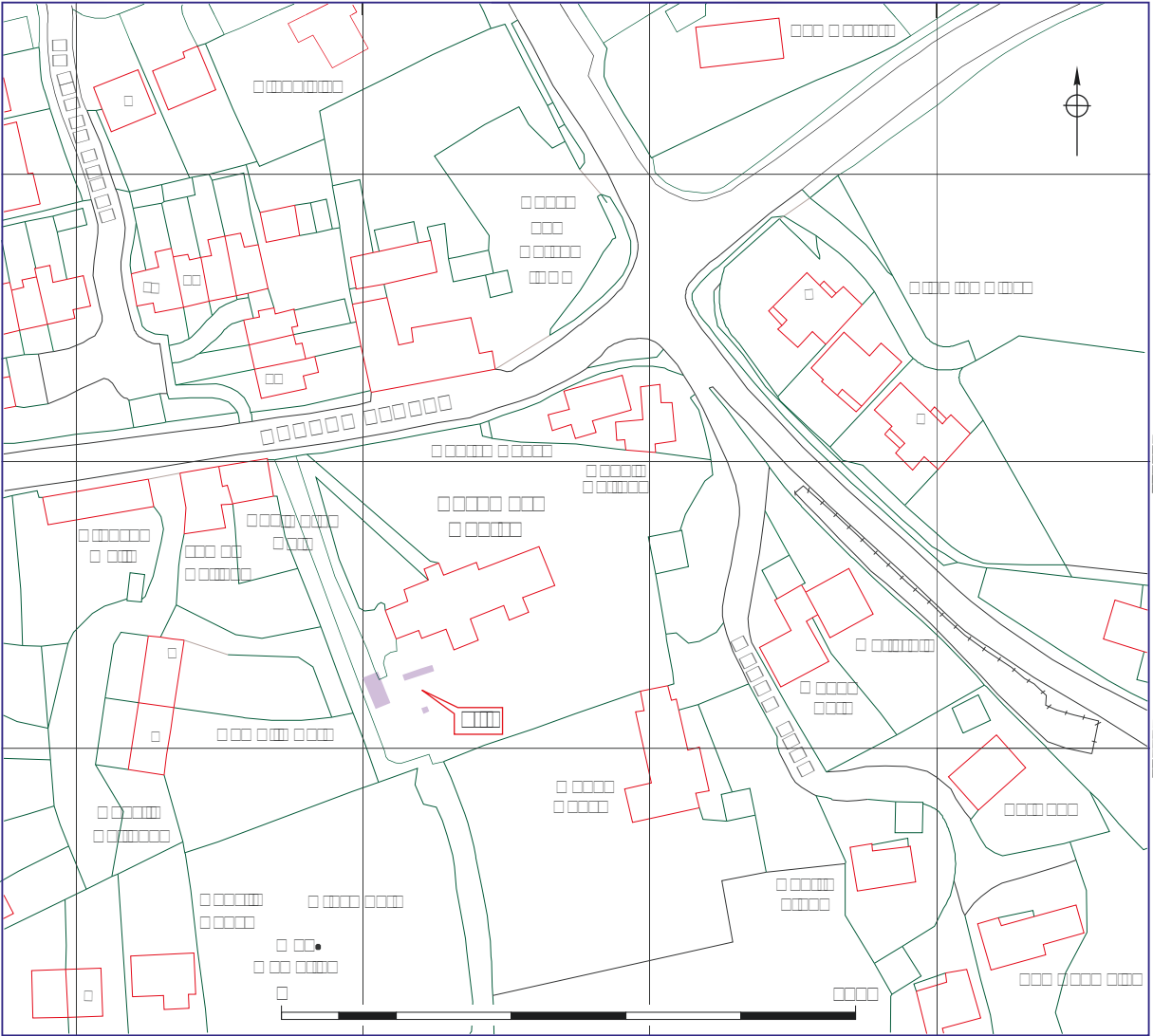
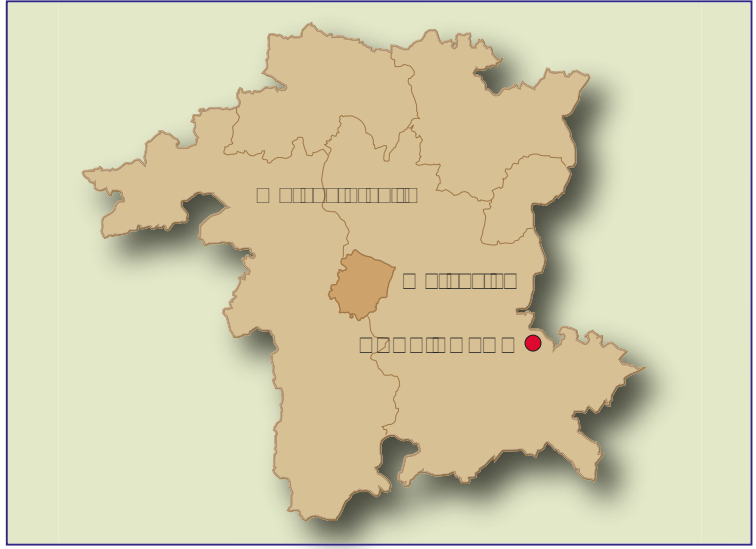
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**Figures**

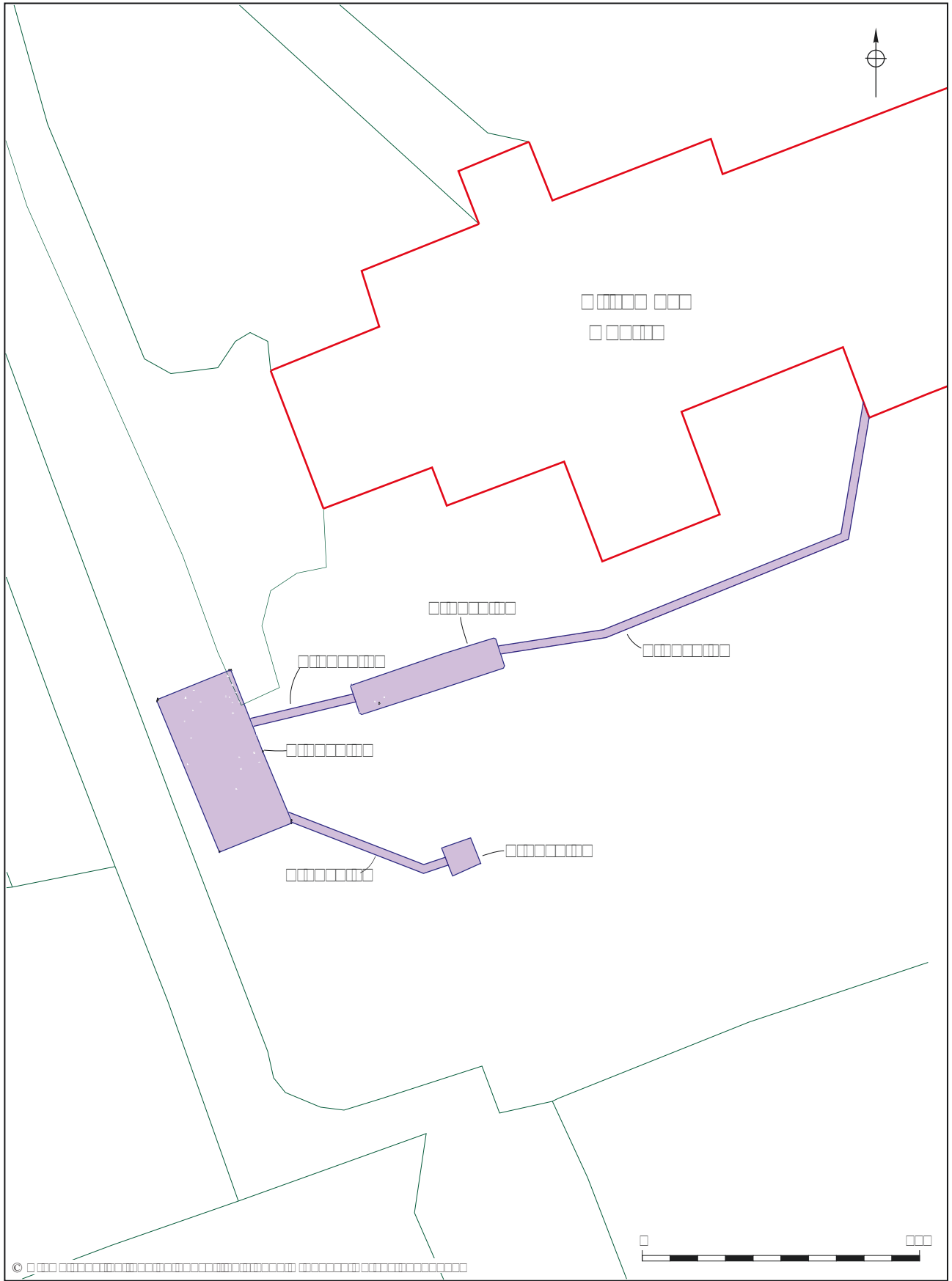




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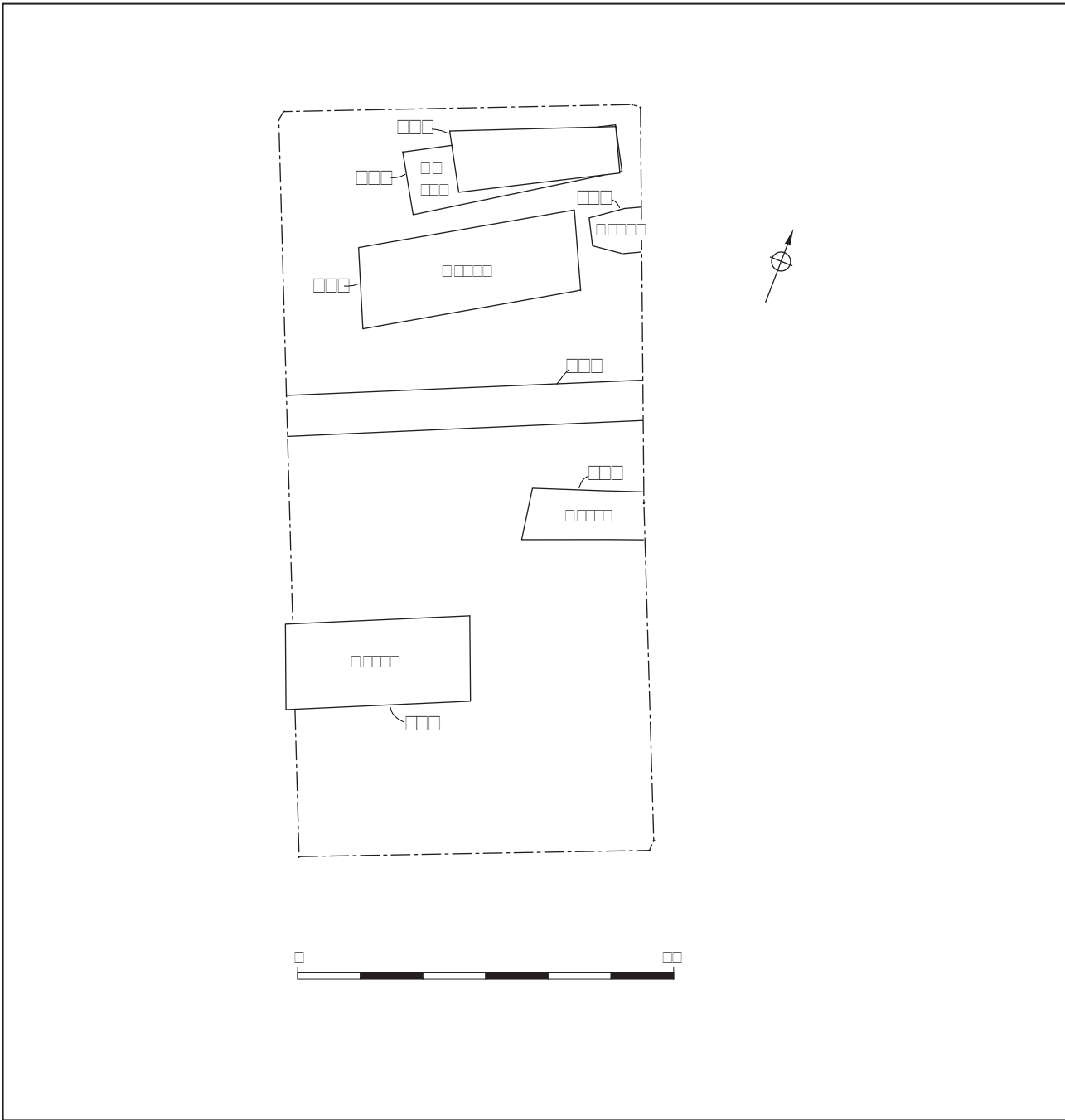
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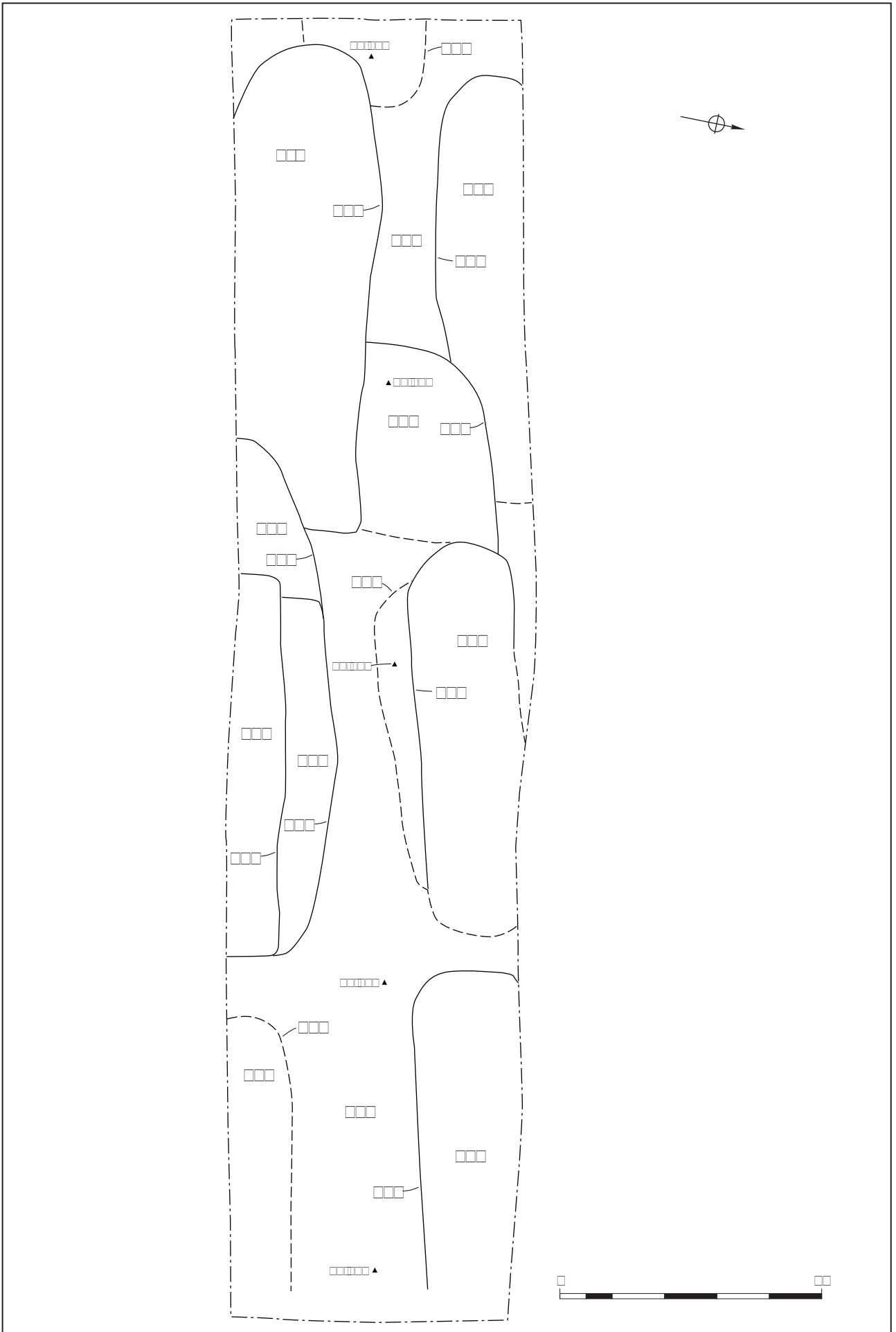
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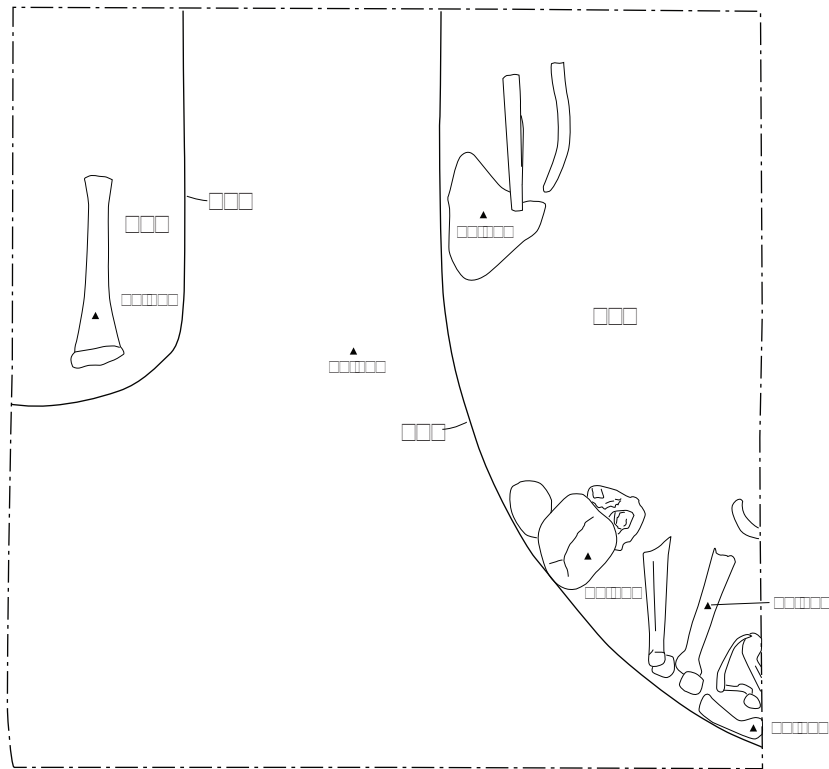
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## Plates



*Plate 1: Trench 1 general view north with inhumations visible; scales 2x 1m*

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*Plate 2: Trench 2 general view east with inhumations visible; scales 2x 1m*



*Plate 3: Trench 3 general view south with charnel pits visible; scale 1m*

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Plate 4: Trench 1, Skeleton 108; scale 0.30m



Plate 5: Trench 1, Skeleton 111; scale 0.10m





*Plate 6: Trench 1, Skeleton 114; scales 0.30m and 0.50m*



*Plate 7: Trench 1, Skeleton 117 and later truncation [122]; scale 0.30m*

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Plate 8: Trench 2, Skeleton 205; scale 0.20m



Plate 9: Trench 3, Charnel pit [304]; scale 0.20m





*Plate 10: Trench 5, disarticulated skulls 502, within soil, 501; scale 0.20m*



*Plate 11, Trench 6, general view west*

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## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Main deposit descriptions

#### Trench 1

Length: 5.50m

Width: 2.50m

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
101	Topsoil	Layer	Friable mid greyish brown sandy loam	0.23m	Highly mixed by root action and contains frequent peagrit to gravels throughout and poorly sorted rounded to subangular. Horizon clarity with 102 is sharp
102	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light greyish yellow silty sand	0.17m	Occasional subrounded to rounded gravels throughout and moderate peagrit, moderately sorted. Horizon clarity with 103 is
103	Layer	Layer	Friable light whiteish yellow sand	0.02m	Band of mortar rich sand that extends over the southwest corner of the trench 3.13m along the southern section and 1.42m+ along the western section, extending beyond the excavation limits. No other inclusions noted and horizon clarity sharp
104	Layer	Layer	Firm light brownish grey silty sand	0.42m +	Highly mixed graveyard soil of probable 19th century formation that contains moderate quantities of disarticulated human remains along with frequent peagrits to gravels, subrounded to rounded and poorly sorted.
105	skeleton	Arbitrary number			East/west aligned individual recovered at the limit of the current development impact level and as such left insitu. Only the head, clavicles and feet being revealed. Preservation of the individual was good and the jawline and skull brow both suggested a female although these indications alone are not enough to conclusively ascribe a sex. The dentition was noted as being in good condition with only slight wear being visible. This and the sutures along the skull both suggest that this individual was probably

106	Burial	Fill	Friable dark blueish brown silty sand	0.09m +	<p>relatively young and is thought at present to be late teens to early</p> <p>Grave fill associated with individual 105 that comprised redeposited graveyard soils with occasional peagriffs to gravels noted throughout to be poorly sorted. Fill of gravecut 107 this deposit was not fully excavated as it descended below the projected development impact level.</p>
107	Burial	Cut		0.09m +	<p>East/west aligned grave cut associated with individual 105 that truncates individual 108 and deposit 104. Grave cut had almost vertical sides that dropped onto an unknown base which was not seen as descended below the present impact level of the proposed development.</p>
108	Skeleton	Arbitrary number		0.08m	<p>Child inhumation thought to be under 2 years of age based on length of long bones (right humerus measuring 0.212m including the unfused head). Head removed by later truncation by [107] and lower torso and body extended beyond the limit of excavation. Individual was noted as being placed in a supine position with the arms placed to the sides of the torso and the right arm being flexed at the elbow so that the lower arm and hand lay across the chest. Orientated east/west with the upper body to the west. Despite the small and unfused nature of many of the bones the preservation was excellent. Thought to be potentially medieval on stratigraphic relationships although this cannot be proven at present.</p>
109	Burial	Fill	Friable light greyish brown silty sand	0.08m	<p>Deliberate backfill of gravecut [110] related to the inhumation of individual 108. Material comprised redeposited graveyard soils. Thought to be a relatively early inhumation based on a</p>

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					combination of its physical relationship with [107] and its shallow depth of 0.38m below the present ground surface level.
110	Burial	Cut		0.08m	Cut for inhumation of individual 108 that measured 0.27m in width by 0.27m+ in length, it extending beyond the limit of the excavation to the east and being truncated by later feature 107 to the west.
111	Skeleton	Arbitrary number		0.05m	East/west aligned supine inhumation of child with excellent preservation being seen although fragmentary to touch. Roughly 65-70% of individual remaining and legs have been lost below the knee. The right femur measuring 0.16m in length with no fusion of epiphysis being noted. It is thought that the individual may have been under 1 year in age based on the length of the long bones alone and although the skull was present it remained in a very fragmentary condition and it could not be ascertained if the individual had teeth present or not. Of particular note was the presence of severe spinabiphida in the lower thoracic vertebrae with the body of the individual vertebrae along with the spinous and transverse processes being absent leaving the spinal chord exposed and unprotected.
112	Burial	Fill	Moderately Compact light reddish brown silty sand	0.05m	Backfilled material within gravecut [113] in relation to the burial of inhumation 111. Thought to be relatively early due to its relatively shallow depth 0.64m below the current ground level. No coffin furniture was noted.
113	Burial	Cut		0.05m	East/west aligned grave cut measuring 0.49m in width by 0.96m in length with steep 70 degree sides that dropped onto a flat base via a moderately concaved bottom break of

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114	Skeleton	Arbitrary number		0.30m	<p>Possible adult inhumation orientated east/west lain in a supine position with lower body rising slightly and feet being truncated by later disturbances. Both arms were flexed at the elbow with lower arms crossed over the lower torso with left hand placed below right elbow. Left Femur measured 0.365m whilst the left radius measured 0.230m. It was noted on lifting that the proximal end of the femur was unfused as were both ends of the femur. Finally the lesser trochanter appeared to be missing. The dentition was noted to be in good condition with a relatively small quantity of wear. All of the above suggested an age range of between 14-20 years. The pelvis, jaw and brow ridge all appeared to be feminine in composition as did the general 'gracile' nature of the bone. However, due to the potentially young nature of the individual this cannot be stated with as much confidence as would otherwise be warranted.</p>
115	Burial	Fill	Soft mid yellowish brown silty sand	0.30m	<p>Deliberate backfill of grave cut [116] in relation to individual 114 that comprises redeposited graveyard soils. It is thought that due to the relatively shallow depth in relation to the present ground level that this inhumation is relatively early, this is further concluded from several fragments of clearly medieval pottery fragments that were recovered from the fill. Although a degree of caution should be noted given the redeposited nature of this deposit.</p>
116	Burial	Cut		0.30m	<p>East/west aligned grave cut with steep sides that drop onto a flat base with the east of the grave rising gradually.</p>

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117	skeleton	Arbitrary number		0.17m	Heavily truncated supine inhumation of east/west aligned individual which is thought to be potentially male based on the robust nature of long bones and pronounced browridge, however no other indicators were present to allow this conclusion to be given with complete confidence. The majority of the individual (Chest, left arm and lower torso and legs were removed by later feature [122]. It is thought that the individual was of middle age date with all fusions on humerus and skull being complete and the teeth displaying a heavily worn pattern and tartar build up being noted. Right Humerus measured 0.29m in length.
118	Layer	Layer	Firm mid greyish red silty sand	0.18m +	General graveyard soil which is thought to be potentially early in date due to its relationship with associated truncating features and their dating. Note that no dating was recovered from this deposit itself. Contained moderate quantities of disarticulated human remains.
119	Burial	Fill	Friable dark blueish brown silty sand	0.17m	Backfilled graveyard soils within grave cut [120] associated with inhumation 117 which is thought to be relatively early due to its relatively shallow depth and physical relationship with later features. Truncated to a large degree by later inhumation [122]
120	Burial	Cut		0.17m	East/west aligned gravecut measuring 0.52m in width by 0.69m+ in length although this has been heavily truncated by the later gravecut [122]. Burial is thought to be relatively early in the stratigraphic sequence and potentially medieval date. The sides were sharp almost 90 degrees vertical in profile dropping steeply onto a flat base.

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St James' Church, Church Street, Harvington, near Evesham, Worcestershire

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121	Burial	Fill	Friable light brownish red silty sand	0.20m +	Deliberately deposited fill of probable grave [122] that descends below the current impact level of the development. Thought to be of probable 18th-19th century date. Contained a quantity of disarticulated human remains that are thought to probably relate to individual 117 who was truncated by [122]
122	Burial	Cut		0.20m +	Deliberate hand cut of probable 18-19th century inhumation that measured 0.56m+ in width by 0.50m+ in length.
123	Ditch	Fill	Firm dark reddish brown silty sand	0.40m +	Fill of linear [124] that is thought at present to be an early boundary ditch, although it is believed to be relatively late in date it is not apparent on any of the historic maps seen to date and as such is thought to be 17th-18th in origin although at present there is no datable material to either confirm or deny this postulation.
124	Ditch	Cut		0.40m +	Cut of east/west aligned ditch feature that measured 0.48m in width by 2.70m+ in length and noted for having a steep almost vertical sides that descended onto an unknown base as it dropped below the proposed development impact level. Due to its physical relationships it is known to be relatively late in construction although if it does represent a former boundary then it is not present on any of the historic maps seen. Alternatively it could be associated with a former service although again this does not appear to be mapped and no signal was recorded by the cable detection tool used during the course of the investigations.

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**Trench 2**

Length: 5.05m

Width: 1m

Orientation: East to west

<b>Context</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Height/ depth</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
201	Layer	Layer	Friable mid greyish brown sandy loam	0.24m	Highly disturbed topsoil/turf with frequent peagrit to gravels throughout, rounded to sub-rounded and poorly
202	Layer	Layer	Soft mid greyish red silty	0.72m +	General mixed graveyard soils comprised of redeposited natural and topsoils mixed with very frequent peagrit to gravels, rounded to sub-angular and poorly sorted, along with a moderate quantity of disarticulated human remains. Thought to be potentially quite early given its physical relationships with a number of possible medieval inhumations
203	Ditch	Fill	Firm mid pinky brown silty sand	0.68m	Deliberate backfill of possible modern service trench, thought to be the same feature as that noted in trench 1, [124]. Contained moderate to frequent gravels, poorly sorted throughout but no other inclusions noted.
204	Ditch	Cut		0.68m	East/west aligned linear with steep almost vertical sides that drop steeply onto a flat base and measuring 0.80m in width. Thought to be a modern service run and potentially part of the same feature as linear [124].
205	Skeleton	Arbitrary number		0.60m	Heavily truncated supine inhumation of east/west aligned adult that extends beyond the limit of the current development to the west and truncated by later grave [212] to the east. From remains seen it can be ascertained that the individual had its arms placed to the sides and flexed at the elbow so that they crossed with the hands being placed onto the sternum. The Left ulna was noted as being 0.223m in length and the left radius 0.200m in length whilst the right humerus measured 0.290m. All

					bones seen were completely fused and slender in appearance, as such it is thought that this individual was an adult although no sex can be provided at the present time.
206	Burial	Fill	Soft light reddish brown silty sand	0.60m	Deliberate backfill of gravecut [207] associated with inhumation 205, potentially quite early due to relatively shallow depth although this cannot be confirmed at this time.
207	Burial	Cut		0.60m	Heavily truncated gravecut that contained the remains of individual 205. Sides of grave were steep, almost vertical and dropped steeply onto a flat base 0.52m in width and at least 0.4m+ in length
208	Skeleton	Arbitrary number		0.04m	Heavily truncated adult supine inhumation comprising right humerus and partial remains of the scapula and rib cage. Bone condition itself was good and the humerus was 0.290m in length with all fusing having been complete and substantial evidence of large muscle attachment being noted. A large fibula (again showing advanced muscle attachments) was noted as lying parallel to the humerus and it is thought at present that it might represent the same individual and that at the time of truncation the bone was moved to remain with the surviving remains. It is possible given its stratigraphic relationships and relatively shallow depth that this inhumation is relatively early, however at this stage this must remain speculative.
209	Burial	Fill	Firm mid reddish brown silty sand	0.04m	Heavily truncated remains of grave cut [210] associated with inhumation 208 that was noted as being a deliberate backfill with frequent peagriffs to gravels poorly sorted throughout.

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210	Burial	Cut	0.04m	Cut for grave associated with individual 208. Heavily truncated by later activity. Trench measured at least 0.2m+ in width by 0.4m+ in length with steep vertical sides that dropped steeply through a sharp concaved break of slope onto a flat base.
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### Trench 3

Length: 1m

Width: 1m

Orientation: N/A

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
301	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown silty sand	0.26m	Highly disturbed topsoil/turf of modern date that contained infrequent rounded to subrounded gravels poorly sorted and throughout. Horizon clarity with 302 very clear
302	Layer	Layer	Firm light reddish grey silty sand	0.85m	General graveyard soil comprised of highly mixed soils and redeposited natural substrate with a high proportion of peagrit to gravels, rounded to subrounded and poorly sorted throughout. Also contained a moderate quantity of human remains. Thought to be probably 19th century in date and associated with a general graveyard 'clearance' associated with features [304] and [306].
303	Pit	Fill	Firm light orangey red silty sand	0.19m	Deliberate backfill associated with charnal pit [304] that contained a large quantity of disarticulated human remains. Some of these remains also showed a degree of articulation that suggested that they were still connected when being redeposited. Thought to be a relatively late feature associated with a degree of clearance within the graveyard. Contained moderate peagrit to gravels, poorly sorted, rounded to subrounded throughout.
304	Pit	Cut		0.19m	Cut of charnal pit with vertical sides that dropped from a sharp but even top break of slope down

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					vertical sides to a sharp, rounded break of slope at the base onto a flat base of feature. The feature itself measured at least 0.43m+ in width by 0.97m+ in length. Thought to be probable 19th century in date and associated with a degree of graveyard clearance.
305	Pit	Fill	Firm light orangey red silty sand	1.00m +	Same as 303 and representing a charnal pit full of human remains, which, whilst mainly disarticulated did contain several fragments where articulation was still visible and demonstrated that the pieces of individual were moved before they had become purely bone. This pit is thought to be probable 19th and possibly even 20th century in origin and associated with general graveyard clearance. It is clear that it is later in date than feature [304] and the base of this pit was not seen as it descended below the limit of development impact.
306	Pit	Cut		1m+	Cut of charnal pit very similar to pit [304], orientated east/west with steep to vertical sides that dropped below the limit of the current excavations. Believed to be 19th or possibly even early 20th century in date given its stratigraphic relationships. Thought to be associated with a phase of graveyard clearance.
307	Layer	Layer	Firm light yellowish orange silty sand	0.02m +	Comprised mainly of peagrit to gravels, rounded to subrounded and moderately sorted, this material was thought on first inspection to be the natural substrate due to its sterile nature and similarity to terrace gravels however it should be noted that due to this material being seen at the limit of excavation this was not confirmed to the degree desired and that at present some hesitation is present in saying that this

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material is geology as opposed to a redeposited band of material.

#### Trench 4

Length: 5.30m

Width: 0.30m

Orientation: East to west

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/depth	Interpretation
400	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown sand	0.25m	Humeric rich sands that were highly disturbed by root action with infrequent poorly sorted rounded to sub-rounded gravels throughout. Horizon clarity with 401 clear and sharp.
401	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light reddish grey silty sand	0.45m	Frequent poorly sorted rounded to sub-rounded gravels throughout with occasional disarticulated human bone throughout. Sediment appears to be a highly mixed churchyard soil of probable 18th or 19th century date.

#### Trench 5

Length: 3.10m

Width: 0.50m

Orientation: East to west

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/depth	Interpretation
500	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown sand	0.22m	Highly disturbed humeric topsoil with infrequent poorly sorted rounded to subrounded gravels throughout.
501	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light reddish grey silty sand	0.70m	Poorly sorted frequent rounded to sub-rounded gravels throughout with occasional disarticulated human bone throughout. Deposit appears to be a general graveyard soils of probable 18th-19th century date.
502	Burial	Arbitrary number		0.70m BGS	Two disarticulated skulls noted lying together within the graveyard soil 501 with no visible cut being seen and no other associate remains noted. Both skulls were of adult age and quite gracile with no brow bridge being noted, suggestive of female, although not enough evidence was revealed to confirm this.



## Trench 6

Length: 13.80m

Width: 0.30m

Orientation: East to west

Context	Feature	Context	Description	Height/ depth	Interpretation
600	Topsoil	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown sand	0.35m	Contained poorly sorted infrequent rounded to sub-rounded gravels throughout and mixed by root action. Material was seen to be topsoil.
601	Subsoil	Layer	Firm light reddish grey silty sand	0.15m +	Graveyard soil that contains frequent poorly sorted rounded to subrounded gravels throughout along with occasional human remains throughout. Deposit is thought to be of probable 18th-19th century date.

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## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site codes: WSM 58034 and 58036)**

The archive consists of:

- 21 Context records AS1
- 5 Field progress reports AS2
- 2 Photographic records AS3
- 92 Digital photographs
- 2 Scale drawings
- 8 Skeleton records AS6
- 1 Levels records AS19
- 6 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum  
Museums Worcestershire  
Hartlebury Castle  
Hartlebury  
Near Kidderminster  
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ  
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

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## Summary of data for Worcestershire HER

period	material class	material subtype	object specific type	Total	Weight (g)
	clinker			1	20
	glass		Window	8	21
	metal	iron	Object	2	210
	metal	iron	Nail	5	19
medieval	ceramic	earthenware	Pot	17	404
post-medieval	ceramic	earthenware	Pot	2	27
post-medieval	metal	lead	window came	1	3
modern	ceramic	earthenware	Cbm	2	46
modern	ceramic	stoneware	Pot	6	26
modern	ceramic	stoneware	roof tile(flat)	8	594
modern	ceramic	stoneware	Tile	1	17
modern	glass		Vessel	5	235

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

period	fabric code	fabric name	count	weight (g)
medieval	55	Worcester sandy ware	16	401
medieval	56	unglazed Malvernian ware	1	3
post-medieval	78	Post-medieval red ware	2	27
modern	81.3	Nottingham stoneware	1	1
modern	83	Porcelain	1	1
modern	84	Creamware	2	11
modern	85	modern china	2	14

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric type

context	material class	material subtype	object specific type	count	weight(g)	start date	end date	TPQ
101	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	12		20C	20C
101	ceramic	stoneware	roof tile(flat)	3	278	19C	20C	
101	glass		vessel	2	37		20C	
101	glass		window	1	3			

101	metal	iron	?coffin furniture	2	210			
103	ceramic	earthenware	pot	3	86	12C	M14C	20C
103	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	3	M18C	L18C	
103	ceramic	stoneware	pot	1	1	18C	19C	
103	ceramic	earthenware	cbm	2	46			
103	ceramic	stoneware	tile	1	17			
103	glass		vessel	3	198		20C	
103	glass		window	4	12			
104	ceramic	earthenware	pot	4	22	L11C	E12C	
104	glass		window	1	1			
104	metal	iron	nail	1	10			
104	clinker			1	20			
104	metal	lead	window came	1	3			
112	ceramic	earthenware	pot	1	3	13C	14C	14C
118	ceramic	earthenware	pot	9	293	12C	M14C	M14C
119	metal	iron	nail	2	4			Undated
202	metal	iron	nail	2	5			Undated
301	ceramic	stoneware	pot	3	10	M18C	20C	20C
301	ceramic	earthenware	pot	2	27	L17C	18C	
301	ceramic	stoneware	roof tile(flat)	5	316	19C	20C	
301	glass		window	2	5			

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts