# ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF, AT ST EADBURGHA'S CHURCH, BURY END, BROADWAY, WORCESTERSHIRE

Elizabeth A Curran

With a contribution by Dennis Williams

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

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Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, Woodbury, University of Worcester, Henwick Grove, Worcester WR2 6AJ



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
Project 3163
Report 1685
WSM 38359

# Contents

# Part 1 Project summary

# Part 2 Detailed report

1. Background	3
1.1 Reasons for the project	
1.2 Project parameters	3
1.3 Aims	3
2. Methods	3
2.1 Documentary search	3
2.2 Fieldwork methodology	3
2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy	3
2.2.2 Structural analysis	4
2.3 Artefact methodology, by Dennis Williams	4
2.3.1 Artefact recovery policy	
2.3.2 Method of analysis	
2.4 Environmental archaeology methodology	4
2.4.1 Sampling policy	4
2.4.2 Methods in retrospect	
3. Topographical and archaeological context	4
4. Results	5
4. Results	<b>5</b>
4. Results	<b>5</b> 5
4. Results	5 5 6
4. Results 4.1 Structural analysis 4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage	5 5 6
4. Results 4.1 Structural analysis 4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage 4.2.2 The pottery	5 5 6 6
4. Results  4.1 Structural analysis  4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits  4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams  4.2.1 The artefact assemblage  4.2.2 The pottery  4.2.3 Other artefacts	5 6 6 7
4. Results  4.1 Structural analysis  4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits  4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams  4.2.1 The artefact assemblage  4.2.2 The pottery  4.2.3 Other artefacts  5. Synthesis	5 5 6 7 7
4. Results  4.1 Structural analysis  4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits  4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams  4.2.1 The artefact assemblage  4.2.2 The pottery  4.2.3 Other artefacts  5. Synthesis  5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence	
4. Results  4.1 Structural analysis  4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits  4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams  4.2.1 The artefact assemblage  4.2.2 The pottery  4.2.3 Other artefacts  5. Synthesis  5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence  5.2 Medieval	
4. Results 4.1 Structural analysis 4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage 4.2.2 The pottery 4.2.3 Other artefacts 5. Synthesis 5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence 5.2 Medieval 5.3 Post-medieval	
4. Results 4.1 Structural analysis 4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage 4.2.2 The pottery 4.2.3 Other artefacts 5. Synthesis 5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence 5.2 Medieval 5.3 Post-medieval 6. Publication Summary	
4. Results 4.1 Structural analysis 4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage 4.2.2 The pottery 4.2.3 Other artefacts 5. Synthesis 5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence 5.2 Medieval 5.3 Post-medieval 6. Publication Summary 7. Acknowledgements	
4. Results 4.1 Structural analysis 4.1.1 Phase 1 Post medieval and modern deposits 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage 4.2.2 The pottery 4.2.3 Other artefacts 5. Synthesis 5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence 5.2 Medieval 5.3 Post-medieval 6. Publication Summary	

1

# Archaeological watching brief at St Eadburgha's Church, Bury End, Broadway, Worcestershire

# **Elizabeth A Curran With contributions by Dennis Williams**

# Part 1 Project summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at St Eadburgha's Church, Bury End, Broadway, Worcestershire (NGR: SP 0970 3626). It was undertaken on behalf of Thomas Ford and Partners, who intends to excavate deposits under the floor of the Nave to establish the extent of the subsidence caused by flooding and during the repair of the burial vault and floor to mitigate against future problems. The project aimed to determine if any significant archaeological site was present and if so to indicate what its location, date and nature were.

St Eadburgha's Church is a Grade I listed building, largely in Perpendicular Gothic style. It dates back to the late 12<sup>th</sup> century and has had several later alterations including the addition of the north and south transepts in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the crossing tower in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Following a fire in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century the upper part of the tower was rebuilt and a lead roof replaced the thatched roof. The church was subject to extensive repairs in 1865-6, when the north transept was restored, the nave galleries were removed and the lead roof was replaced with Cotswold stone tiles.

The nave floor was removed and deposits excavated to a depth of 0.45m, which did not reach undisturbed natural material. A sequence of deposits containing variable medieval and post-medieval material was identified. These were considered to relate to earlier periods of renovation and alterations to the church as well as the interment of remains. While recovery of three medieval floor tiles are considered to be residual within these later layers, they provided evidence of earlier tiled floors of medieval date within the church.

In the western area of the nave, two adjacent grave slabs were revealed. While one grave slab was in poor condition with only a partially legible date of 160\*, the other grave slab had inscriptions related to William Hobday's family, with the first inscription dated to 1622. Both grave slabs were similar in size and style with incised borders, suggesting the two were broadly contemporary. However, it is unlikely these slabs are in their original position. Beneath the 160\* slab was a brick vault with a *terminus post quem* date of 1784-1850, indicating that the slab had been reused. These early 17<sup>th</sup> century grave slabs therefore appear to have been reused in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Further stone slabs were uncovered to the west of the brick vault and may possibly be grave markers. However they had no evidence of inscriptions, excavation beneath these slabs was limited and did not reveal any associated vaults or burials.

Page 1

# Part 2 Detailed report

# 1. Background

# 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at St Eadburgha's Church, Bury End Broadway, Worcestershire (NGR: SP 0970 3626; Fig 1), on behalf of Thomas Ford and Partners. The client intends to repair the floor and burial vaults situated in the nave following flooding in June and July 2007. The groundworks were required to establish the extent of the rebuild required to the William Hobday vault, the extent of work required to secure a slab to the west, and to a slab and vault dated 160\*.

# 1.2 **Project parameters**

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008b).

## 1.3 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability and documentation. The purpose of this was to establish their significance, since this would make it possible to recommend an appropriate treatment, which may then be integrated with the proposed development programme.

## 2. **Methods**

## 2.1 **Documentary search**

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

# 2.2 Fieldwork methodology

#### 2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

Observation and recording of archaeological deposits were restricted to areas of ground disturbance associated with the investigations following the progress of the construction team.

Fieldwork was undertaken on 26 September 2007, 8 November 2007, 8 July 2008 and 9 July 2008. The site reference number and site code is WSM 38359.

An area measuring 11m by 5.50m was excavated within the nave of St Eadburgha's Church. The location is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits were removed by hand under archaeological supervision and clean surfaces were inspected. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995).

Page 3

#### 2.2.2 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.

# 2.3 Artefact methodology, by Dennis Williams

#### 2.3.1 Artefact recovery policy

The artefact recovery policy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995, appendix 4).

#### 2.3.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined and a primary record was made on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. 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 *pro forma* sheets.

The pottery and ceramic building material was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992, www.worcestershireceramics.org).

# 2.4 Environmental archaeology methodology

## 2.4.1 Sampling policy

The environmental sampling strategy conformed to standard Service practice (CAS 1995; appendix 4). In the event, no deposits or horizons were identified which were considered suitable for environmental analysis, so no samples were taken.

#### 2.4.2 Methods in retrospect

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

# 3. Topographical and archaeological context

St Eadburgha's Church (WSM 01290; NGR: SP 0970 3626; Fig 1) is located 1.1km south of Broadway, at Bury End, on Snowshill Road, formerly the medieval route over the Cotswolds from Worcester to London.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century the Abbey of St Mary and St Eadburga at Pershore owned an estate at Broadway. Broadway was mentioned in Domesday Book when there was a priest (Thorn and Thorn 1982, 175). This reference suggests there was a church by this date, likely to be on the site of St Eadburgha's. The earliest settlement focus was probably around the church and the village moved to its present position in the wake of a new road being established. The church and parish of Broadway remained in the ownership of Pershore Abbey until 1539, when it passed to the Crown (VCH IV, 40-2).

St Eadburgha's Church is a Grade I listed building (ref. 400976) and the cruciform church comprises a nave, north and south aisles, north and south transepts, crossing tower and chancel. Much of the interior dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century when the church would have consisted of a simple chancel and nave. The pillars suggest the present nave was constructed around 1200 with the side aisles added later. However the external walls of the aisles have

since been rebuilt and extended to form transepts. The addition of the south transept dates to the late 14<sup>th</sup> century and remains largely unaltered. In the south wall is an original window dated to about 1300. It is possible that the north transept also dates to the same period. The church underwent extensive repairs in 1865-6, when the north transept was restored, the lead roof was replaced with Cotswold stone tiles, and a floor of plain red quarry tiles was laid.

The additional weight of the roof meant further work was necessary to strengthen the structure by 1916, when oak beams were added.

The tower was built within the eastern bay of the nave in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when it appears the walls of the aisles were rebuilt. The aisles are very similar, each having two 15<sup>th</sup> century windows with a doorway in between. These doorways have two centred heads and also date to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. After a fire in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century the upper part of the tower was rebuilt and a lead roof replaced the thatched roof (VCH IV, 40-2).

In the north wall of the north aisle is an 18<sup>th</sup> century fireplace and a blocked up a door that once led to the nave galleries. It is likely this door was blocked in when the galleries were removed in 1866.

Close to the north east corner of the chancel is a 17<sup>th</sup> century three-centred doorway, however an earlier 12<sup>th</sup> century blocked round headed door way can be seen on the west of the north wall and must have been the original entrance to the chancel. The chancel windows date from the early 15<sup>th</sup> century (Pevsner 2007, 176-177).

#### 4. Results

# 4.1 Structural analysis

The area recorded is shown in Figures 3 and 4. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

#### 4.1.1 Phase 1 Medieval deposits

No features, layers, structures, deposits or artefacts pre-dating the medieval period were identified.

A small number of residual glazed floor tiles were recovered from deposits 10003 and 10006, which contained predominantly post-medieval material (Section 4.2.3 below).

#### 4.1.2 Phase 2 Post medieval and modern deposits

Sealed by tiled floor, deposit 10001 comprised loose brown sandy loam with frequent fragments of mortar, plaster, bone and timber. This deposit was 0.07-0.13m deep below the ground surface. Deposit 10002, below, comprised loose brown loam. This layer was similar to 10001 and also had mortar, plaster and bone inclusions; it was recorded as 0.10m deep.

Deposit 10003 below 10002 was 0.30m below the ground surface and 0.10m deep. Located within 10003 to the east of nave was a circular hollow 10010 0.18m deep. No similar features were associated with 10010.

In the western area of the nave, grave slabs 10004 and 10005 were revealed 0.30m below the ground surface, sealed by 10002. They were carved from pale yellowish grey limestone, 2m long, 0.90m wide and 0.22m thick, with incised borders around the edges.

The inscription on grave slab 10004 read:

HERE WAS BVRIED THE BODY OF FRANCES WIFE OF WILLIAM HOBDAY SEN<sup>y</sup> JVNE Y<sup>e</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 1622

HERE WAS BVRIED THE BODY OF NICHOLAS HOBDAY OCT<sup>r</sup> Y<sup>e</sup>18<sup>th</sup> 1674

> .....(WIL)LIAM 1702 (or 1703?)

Unfortunately the lower portion of the inscription was almost entirely worn away and illegible.

Grave slab 10005 was in poor condition, so it was not possible to decipher much beyond occasional letters and a partial date '160..'. This slab was bedded on and formed the top of a red brick vault (10011), measuring 1.90m long, 0.76m wide and more than 0.50m deep. However the full depth was not revealed during the excavation and the interior was filled with a loose brown sandy loam (similar to 10006). It is unclear if the vault contained burials.

Further stone slabs (10008 and 10009) were uncovered to the west, 0.20m below the floor surface. It is possible these relate to the former nave floor. 10008 was 0.55m wide and 0.70m long and 1009 was 0.55m wide and 0.44m long.

Below 10004 and 10008 was a gully (10007), running east to west, with irregular undefined edges. The slumped material beneath (10006) was a brownish grey loam containing fine rubble deposits of mortar and plaster.

Located at the foot of the tower, in the eastern area of the nave were concrete slabs (10012), sealed by 10002, measuring 2m long, 1m wide and 0.12m deep. A very compact dark reddish brown loam (10014) was revealed below 10003 and truncated by 10011.

## 4.2 Artefact analysis, by Dennis Williams

# 4.2.1 The artefact assemblage

The assemblage recovered from within the church was a very limited one, but covered a range of materials, as quantified in Table 1. The standard of preservation was generally good.

Material	Finds period	Total	Weight (g)
Brick	Post-medieval	1	3422
Cinder	Undated	1	11
Clay pipe	Post-medieval	4	25
Glass	Med/post-medieval	1	8
Metal	Med/post-medieval	3	92
Plaster	Med/post-medieval	1	83
Pottery	Medieval	1	18
Pottery	Post-medieval	1	14
Stone	Post-medieval	2	755
Tile	Medieval	5	3385
Wood	Undated	1	13
	Totals:	21	7826

Table 1: Quantification of the assemblage

#### 4.2.2 The pottery

Only two sherds of pottery were recovered (Table 2). A small section from an everted and thickened rim was found in 10003. This had a local Worcester fabric (55), and was probably from a cooking pot, Deansway Type 3, mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 14<sup>th</sup> century in date (Bryant 2004).

The other pottery find, from unstratified spoil, was part of the base of a glazed, buff ware (fabric 91) tankard, dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This had a rilled form of decoration just above the base, possibly emulating the style of harder-fired stonewares also in production at that time.

Fabric	Fabric name	Total	Weight (g)
55	Worcester-type sandy unglazed ware	1	18
91	Post-medieval buff ware	1	14

Table 2: Quantification of the pottery by fabric type

## 4.2.3 Other artefacts

#### Tile

Of the remaining finds from context 10003, the most significant were three decorated and glazed medieval floor tiles. These were highly fired and slightly distorted, and had hard reddish-brown fabrics, which appeared purplish-brown when glazed. Inclusions comprised ill-sorted quartz and iron-rich material.

The first of these tiles was complete, square in plan, but slightly tapering with depth, in order to facilitate removal from a mould; its size,  $5x \, 4\%x1\%''$  (127x124x25-27mm), lay within the range measured for  $15^{th}-16^{th}$  century tiles from Broadway Priory, which were also reported to have been purplish-brown in colour (Eames 1980). The decoration on the present tile was produced using a white slip, but surface-coated rather than inlaid (Plate 1). The elements of its foliate design, which included stylised six-petal flowers, were identical to design 3004 reported by Eames for tiles from Broadway Priory. This type of decoration would have been part of a multi-tile arrangement, and has been attributed to the Malvern School. This was in its ascendancy during the mid  $15^{th}$  century. However, the site of manufacture for the tiles previously found at Broadway Priory has not been determined.

The second tile was approximately 80% complete. Its original size would have been  $5x5x1\frac{1}{8}$ " (126x127x27-28mm), i.e. similar to the one described above, and was also slightly tapered in depth. Its white slip was applied as a shallow inlay (Plate 2), using a design that featured a lion's head and mane, surrounded by curved borders and rosettes. This was practically identical to Eames' catalogued design 2928. However, it was noted that the latter, with a date range 1249-1269, was found at Meaux Abbey, in Yorkshire, and probably manufactured in that locality. Moreover, the Meaux Abbey tiles were much smaller in size (77x76x31mm) than the Broadway example. Thus, it would appear likely that the design, if not the tiles themselves, had travelled a considerable distance, and was  $13^{th}$  century, or later, in date.

The third tile was broken, but it was fair to assume that it had been square as well. It was slightly smaller than the first two, with dimensions  $4\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{8} \times 1^n$  ( $121 \times > 80 \times 25$ mm), and also differed by having its white slip inlaid. This design appeared to be a component of a multi-tile arrangement, based on foliate patterns. Examination of designs in Eames' catalogue and in Tileweb (2009) failed to locate a close match with this tile, although the fabric characteristics were consistent with a local source of clay having been used in its manufacture.

Two further medieval tiles were found (in 10003 and 10006). Their sizes (126x127x27-28mm, and 122x120x25-27mm, respectively), were very similar to those of the tiles already

discussed, but an absence of decoration (with only traces of green glaze surviving), made them otherwise undiagnostic.

#### **Brick**

A single intact brick was retrieved from context 10011. This was handmade and hard fired, with some cracking, and a substantial amount of poorly mixed lime mortar still adhering. Its size, 87/8x41/8x3" (225x105-107x75-78mm), and lack of a recessed frog indicated a probable late 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century date of manufacture.

#### Clay pipes

Four fragments of clay pipe (three from 10003, and one unstratified) included a bowl, whose form and size dated it to c 1680-1710 (Ayto 2002).

#### Glass

A small piece of greenish-blue, near-flat glass found in 10003 could have been either medieval or post-medieval in origin, but was otherwise undiagnostic.

#### Metal

Two hand-forged iron nails were recovered. One was from 10006, while the other was unstratified. An iron handle, probably from a piece of furniture (or possibly a small coffin) was also found in 10006.

#### Plaster

A sample of lime-based plaster (without any finishing coat or paint), was retrieved from 10002.

#### Stone

Two pieces of grave slabs, one bearing fragmentary, carved lettering '...he.' were found in unstratified spoil.

#### Wood

A small piece of worked elm (A Clapham, pers.comm.), 20mm thick, was retrieved from 10002.

# 5. **Synthesis**

#### 5.1 Overview of artefactual evidence

The small assemblage from beneath the floor of the church was consistent with post-medieval deposition of material. However, this included residual medieval finds (pottery and tiles) that provided evidence, albeit very limited, for nearby domestic activity, and probably for a former decorated floor structure in the church. The site dating is summarised in Table 3.

Context	Material	Fabric number	Fabric name	Period	Date range	Context terminus post quem date
10002	Plaster	-	-	-	Undated	- Undated
10002	Wood	-	-	-	Undated	
	Clay pipe	-	-	Post-medieval	c 1680 - 1710	
10003	Glass	-	-	Medieval/ post- medieval	Undated	c 1680 -
	Pottery	55	Worcester-type sandy unglazed	Medieval	c 1075 - 1350	1710
	Tile	-	-	Medieval	c 1450 - 1525	
10006	Metal	-	-	Medieval/post- medieval	Undated	c 1600
	Tile	-	-	Medieval	c 1275 - 1600	
10011	Brick	-	-	Post-medieval	c 1784 - 1850	c 1784 - 1850

Table 3: Summary of context dating based on artefacts

# 5.2 Medieval

Although the church was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, no medieval deposits, structures, layers or horizons of this date were identified. However, glazed medieval floor tiles were recovered from 10003 and 10006. As layer 10003 also contained a number of post-medieval/modern artefacts, and layer 10006 is believed to relate to subsidence associated with the recent flood, the tiles are considered to be residual.

The decorated tiles are considered to relate to earlier tiled floors of medieval date, from the 13<sup>th</sup> and later 15<sup>th</sup> century, which may have survived until the documented restorations in 1865-6.

# 5.3 **Post-medieval**

The gully (10007) is likely to relate to slumping and subsidence associated with the flood, as indicated by its irregular undefined edges and its variable profile.

The two grave slabs are similar in size and style with incised borders and are adjacent to each other, suggesting the two are broadly contemporary. While the inscription on 10005 was only partially legible, with a date sometime in the first decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century date, the first inscription on the Hobday grave slab (10004) dates to 1622.

The area within the nave has been heavily disturbed during the documented alterations to the church (detailed in Section 3 above). A *terminus post quem* date of 1784-1850 was provided for the brick vault (10011) below grave slab 10005, indicating that it is not in its original position, but had in fact been reused.

The circular hollow 10010 may also relate to subsidence although it is possible that it is a posthole relating to the to 19<sup>th</sup> century repairs.

Materials identified in the deposits appear to relate to earlier periods of renovation and alterations to the church (although not documented) as well as interments.

Stone slabs 10008 and 10009 may be grave markers. However there was no evidence of inscriptions and excavation in the area beneath these slabs was limited and did not reveal an associated vault or burials.

# 6. **Publication Summary**

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service 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.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Thomas Ford and Partners at St Eadburgha's Church, Broadway, Worcestershire (NGR 097362; SMR ref 38359). The floor within the nave of the church was lifted and the area excavated to a depth of 0.45m which did not reach natural deposits. A sequence of deposits containing variable medieval and post-medieval material was identified. These were considered to relate to earlier periods of renovation and alterations to the church as well as the interment of remains. While recovery of three medieval floor tiles are considered to be residual within these later layers, they provided evidence of earlier tiled floors of medieval date within the church.

In the western area of the nave, two adjacent grave slabs were revealed. While one grave slab was in poor condition with only a partially legible date of 160\*, the other grave slab had inscriptions related to William Hobday's family, with the first inscription dated to 1622. Both grave slabs were similar in size and style with incised borders, suggesting the two were broadly contemporary. However, it is unlikely these slabs are in their original position, as beneath the 160\* slab was a brick vault with a terminus post quem date of 1784-1850, indicating that this slab had been reused.

Further stone slabs were uncovered to the west of the brick vault and may possibly be grave markers. However they had no evidence of inscriptions and excavation beneath these slabs was limited and did not reveal an associated vault or burials.

# 7. Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, John Bailey (Thomas Ford and Partners), Reverend Terry Mason, (St Eadburgha's Church), and Malcolm Atkin (County Archaeologist, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service).

# 8. **Personnel**

The fieldwork and report preparation was led by Elizabeth A Curran. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. Fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Sworn, Justin Hughes and Elizabeth A Curran, finds analysis by Dennis Williams, and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

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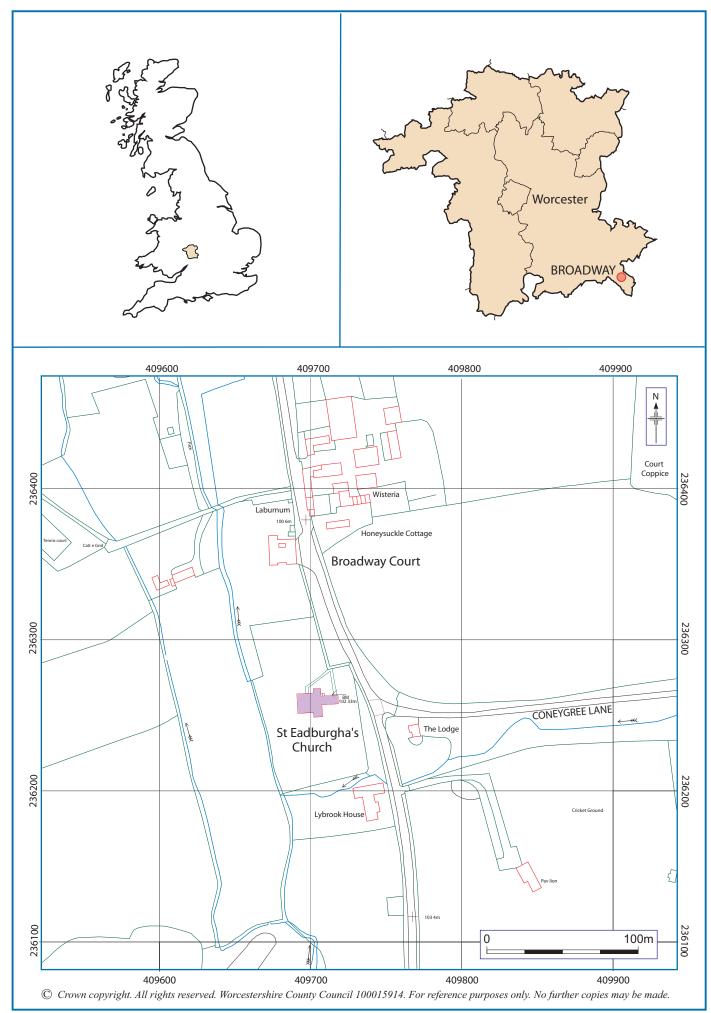
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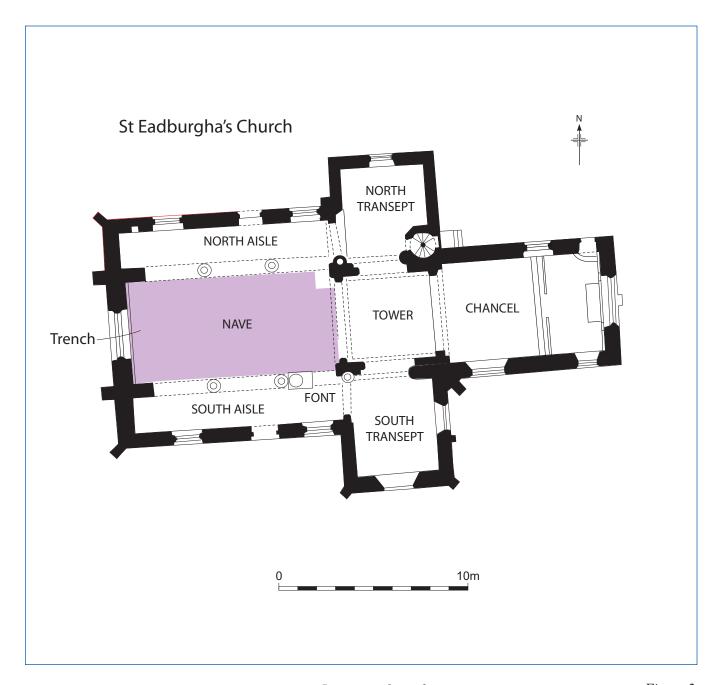
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# **Figures**



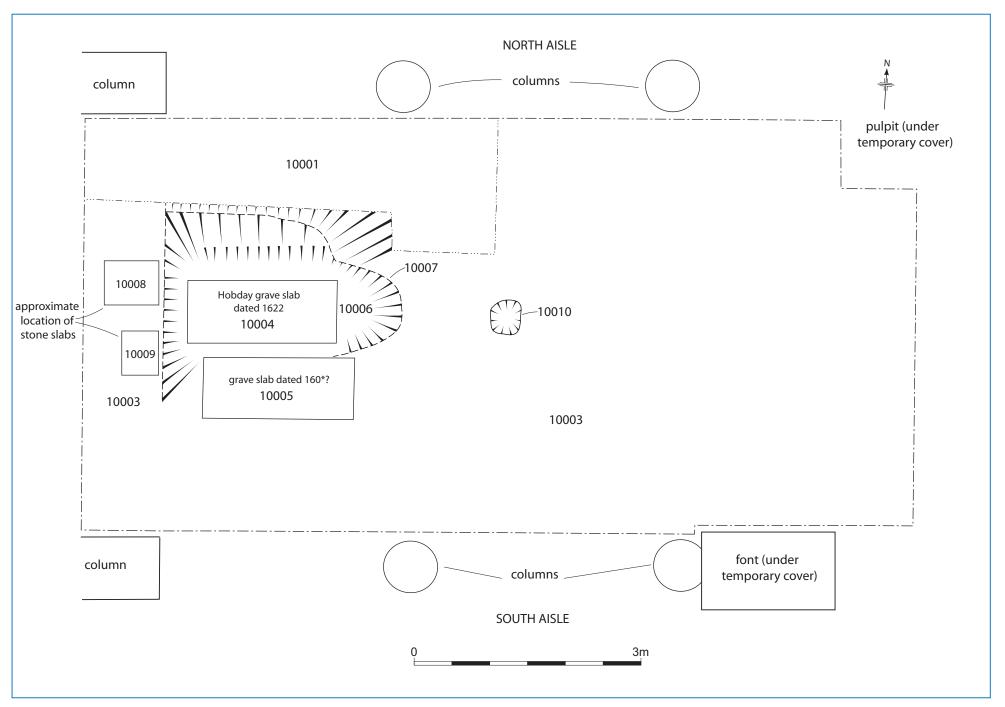
Location of the site.

Figure 1

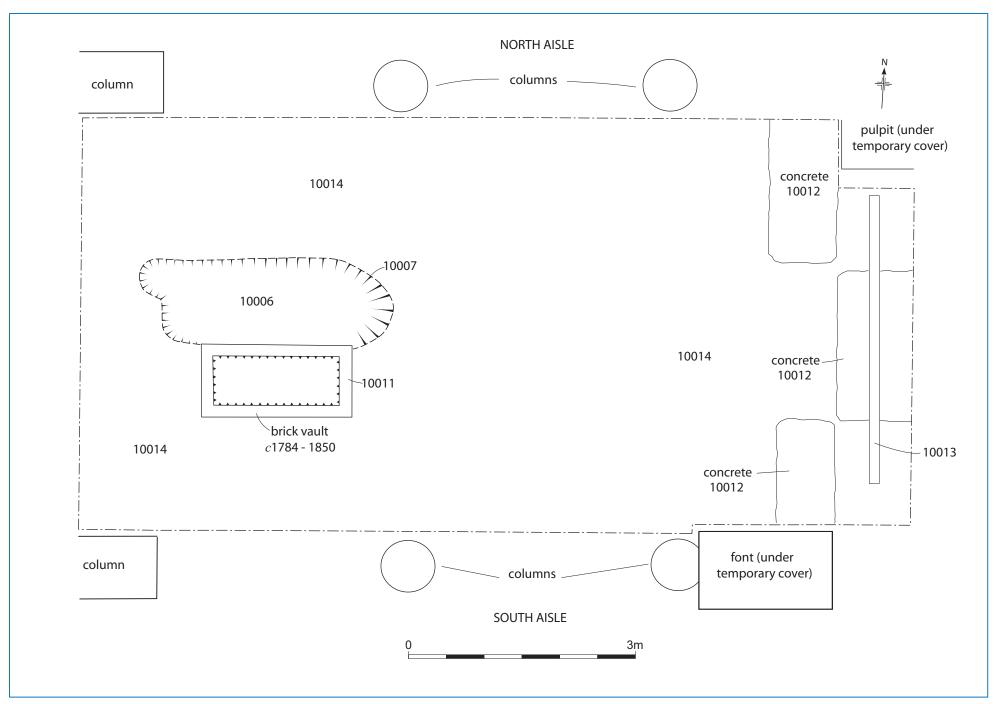


Location of trench

Figure 2



Plan 1 Figure 3



Plan 2 Figure 4

# **Plates**





Plate 1 Decorated medieval tiles (Scale 1:3)

Plate 2



Plate 3 General north view of St Eadburgha's Church



Plate 4 General view of excavations in progress, facing west, with grave slab 10004 in the background

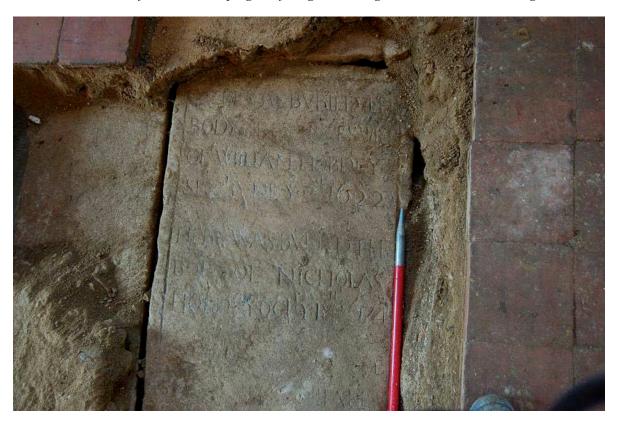


Plate 5 Hobday grave slab 10004, dated 1622, facing west



Plate 6 Hobday grave slab 10004, dated 1622, facing north



Plate 7 Grave slabs 10004 and 10005, dated 1622 and 160\*?, facing north



Plate 8 Brick vault 10011, below slab 10005, dated 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, facing west



Plate 9 Hollow 10010, facing west



Plate 10 Concrete bases 10012 and steel 10013, facing east

# Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

# Area 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 11m Width: 5.50m Depth: 0.45m

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
10001	Surface	Red quarry floor tiles instated in nave 1865-6	0-0.07m
10002	Foundation layer	Loose brown sandy loam with demolition material (mortar, plaster, bone timber)	0.07-0.20m
10003	Layer	Loose brown loam containing very frequent fragments and flecks of mortar, plaster, bone, timber.	0.20-0.40m
10004	Grave slab	2m long, 0.90m wide and 0.22m thick. Pale yellowish grey limestone.	0.30-0.52m
10005	Grave slab	2m long, 0.90m wide and 0.22m thick. Pale yellowish grey limestone.	0.30-0.52m
10006	Deposit	Loose brownish grey loam containing fine rubble deposits of mortar granules and plaster. Contained fragments of floor tiles. Deposit associated with gully 10007.	0.35-0.75
10007	Cut	Irregular sloping sides, East to west aligned towards west wall of nave, below 10004 and 10008. Gully or possible result of slumping and subsidence.	0.35-0.75
10008	Stone slab	Former nave floor slab possibly used as drain cover. With evidence of ring pull attached. 0.55m x 0.44m	0.20-0.35m
10009	Stone slab	Former nave floor slab possibly used as drain cover. Adjacent to 10008. 0.55m x 0.70m	0.20-0.35m
10010	Void	Hollow circular feature recorded with near vertical sides sloping sides.	0.20-0.38m
10011	Brick vault	Brick wall under grave slab 10005. 1.90m long 0.76m wide and 0.50m deep. Full depth of wall not explored. The bricks measured 0.22 long, 0.10m width and 0.08m deep.	0.52-1.00m+
10012	Concrete	Three concrete slabs located at east of nave, before tower. Coarse, chalky grey cement contained red brick fragments and medium to large stones. Possibly part of Early 20 <sup>th</sup> century alterations.	0.08-0.20m
10013	Steel rail	Steel rail, aligned north-south bedded in surface of concrete 10012.	0.08-0.20m
10014	Layer	Below 10003, very compact dark reddish brown loam. Not fully excavated.	0.40-0.45m+

# Appendix 2 Technical information

# The archive

The archive consists of:

- 3 Fieldwork progress records AS2
- 61 Digital photographs
- 1 Drawing number catalogues AS4
- 5 Abbreviated context records AS40
- 3 Trench record sheets AS41
- 2 Scale drawings
- 1 Box of finds
- 1 Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum

Hartlebury Castle

Hartlebury

Near Kidderminster

Worcestershire DY11 7XZ

Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416