



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**ST CATHERINE'S GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH,**

**(CHURCH OF SAINT JAMES THE GREAT),**

**FRIERN BARNET LANE,**

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET**

**NGR TQ 27215 92946**

*On behalf of*

*St Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church*

**FEBRUARY 2013**

**REPORT FOR** St Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church  
@ St. James the Great  
Friern Barnet Lane  
London  
N20 OLP

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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services conducted a watching brief during groundworks for the construction of a new disabled toilet extension to the Greek Orthodox church of Saint Catherine, previously known as the Church of England Saint James the Great (NGR TQ 2721 9298). Little new archaeology was noted, what was uncovered was the foundation cuts of the north aisle wall and buttress, the foundation of the new build and service trenches. The ground level had probably been reduced for the 20<sup>th</sup> century construction.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The development site is Saint Catherine's Greek Orthodox Church previously known as the church of Saint James the Great, Friern Barnet Lane, Friern Barnet, London N20 0NL (NGR TQ 2721 9298). The site is located at the junction of Friern Barnet Lane and Friary Road. It is now a redundant medieval Church of England site, being reused by the Greek Orthodox denomination but the church and graveyard are still covered by Church of England faculty. Historically Friern Barnet was a parish located in the historic county of Middlesex and the hundred of Ossulstone. The site of the church from 1964 has been located in Greater London and the London Borough of Barnet.

The site lies between 75-80m OD on a southeast facing spur. The underlying geology is London Clay (BGS Sheet 51N 02W).

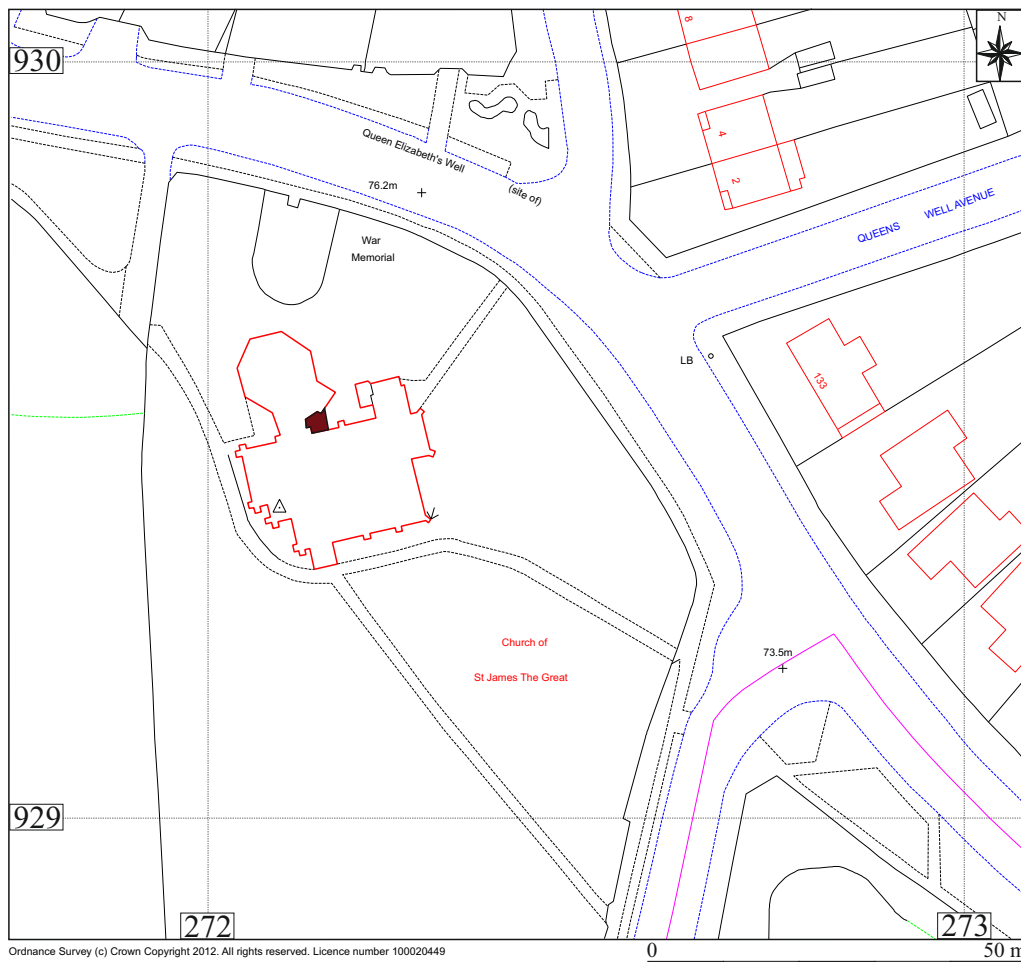
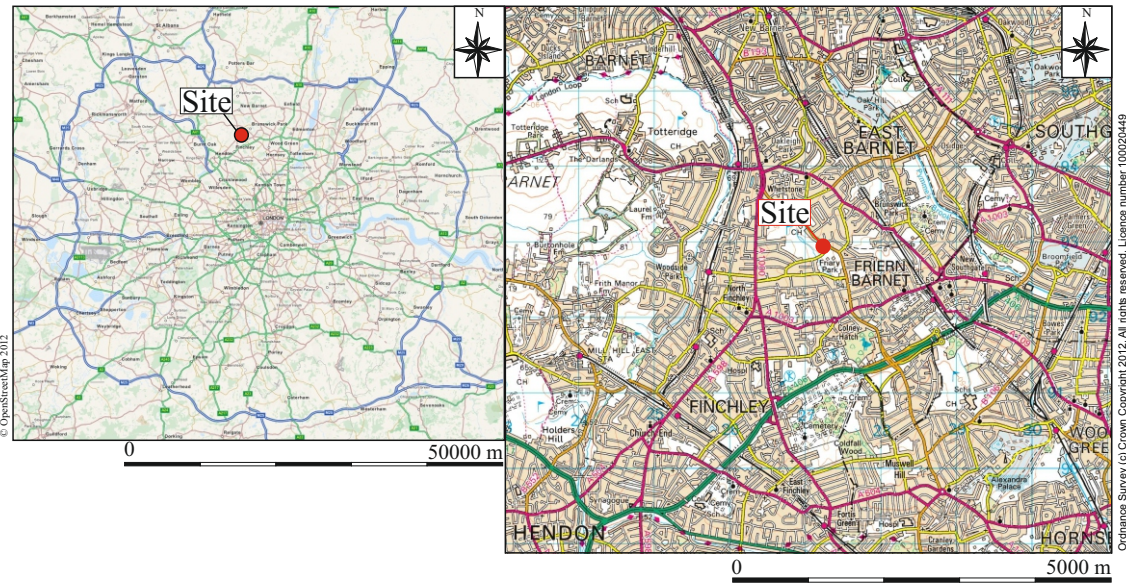
### **1.2 Planning Background**

The London Borough of Barnet granted planning permission for the erection of a single storey extension to provide further toilet facilities and alterations for kitchen facilities in the existing 20<sup>th</sup> century structure (ref. B/03149/10; Listed Building Consent B/03150/10). The watching brief was carried out under the Church of England Faculty.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

Friern Barnet is not mentioned in the Domesday Book, with church lands first mentioned at Barnet in 1197; though which Barnet is not distinguished (VCH 1980, 6-15). Historically the Barnet names have been used for settlements in Hertfordshire and Middlesex. The Barnet in Middlesex was termed little Barnet in 1237, by 1274 it was known as Freren Barnet (Gover, Mawer et al. 1942, 99-100). The name crystallised into its present form under the auspices of the Knights of the Hospital of Saint John. The etymology of Barnet is **barnet**, a place cleared by burning, with the prefix freren being a Middle English plural of **frère**, brother.

The land at Friern Barnet was probably among those between Barnet and London taken from the abbey of St. Albans by William I, who gave it to the Bishop of London



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Key  Monitored area

Figure 1. Site location

(VCH 1980, 15-17). Lands in Barnet were held in fee of the bishop in 1196, when John Picot released those to which he had a hereditary claim. John or his ancestor was the Picot the Lombard whose lands had been granted by 1199 to the Hospitallers by Bishops Gilbert Foliot (d. 1187) and Richard Fitzneal (d. 1198) and the chapter of St. Paul's. That neighbouring Finchley was part of these lands is implied by the Bishop of London's patronage of that church in 1274 (VCH 1980, 82-86).

The manor of Friern Barnet was held in 1336 by the knights of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem (VCH 1980, 15-17). In 1338 the manor was a member of the bailiwick of Gings. On the dissolution of the Hospitallers in England in 1540 it passed to the Crown and in 1544 it was granted in exchange to the chapter of St. Paul's. The chapter sold the demesne lands in 1800 and the lordship later passed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners (VCH 1980).

A church mentioned in 1187 was probably the church of St. James the Great, which was originally an appendage to the manor (VCH 1980, 29-32). Although not mentioned by name the advowson was included in the Crown's grant of the manor to the chapter of St. Paul's in 1544 and it was specifically excluded from leases of the demesne from the 16th century. Until late in the 17th century the church was often described as a chapel (implying that it was annexed to a mother church, probably Finchley). In 1519 the prior of St. John's stated that Friern Barnet lay in Finchley parish, yet the incumbent was entitled to tithes in 1535 and probably from as early as 1340. No medieval institutions were recorded but there was a parish priest in 1486. Before the Reformation the church was exempt from episcopal intervention and afterwards it was subject to the chapter of St. Paul's as ordinary. The incumbent was described as a vicar in 1544 and curate in 1545. From 1549 the church has usually been regarded as a rectory (VCH 1980, 29-32). The parish remained undivided until 1873.

The church of St. James the Great is built of flint with stone dressings and consists of a nave, chancel, south aisle and porch, north vestry, and south-west tower with shingled spire. The original structure consisted of a diminutive Norman nave and chancel, a wooden tower at the west end, and a south porch (VCH 1980, 29-32). A vestry was added north of the nave in 1807 and the tower was rebuilt on a smaller scale in 1812. West and south galleries had been added by 1705 and in 1819 a further west gallery was added for the charity children. In 1819, 1828, and 1848 attempts were made to increase the seating, but in 1853 there were pews for only 200. To provide 300 extra seats, the church was enlarged by W. G. and E. Habershon in 1853 with only the south doorway believed to have been preserved. Although materials may have been re-used, only the extensively restored Norman south doorway of the original structure was preserved. The new church was built in the Early English style, and was considered to be in the 'very best taste'. The spire fell in 1930 and was rebuilt to the same plan. An octagonal parish room adjoining the north side of the church was constructed in 1977 (VCH 1980, 29-32).

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular:

- To record any evidence of medieval activity in the area.
- To record any remains associated with the earlier church prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century building work
- To ensure any human remains are recorded and dealt with in a correct manner.

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the DAC and Greater London Authority Archaeological Services (*GLAAS*) the archaeological advisors to The London Borough of Barnet. Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994).

#### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist was present when groundwork was being carried out; the limited archaeological remains that were uncovered were recorded. No human remains were uncovered and no significant archaeology encountered.

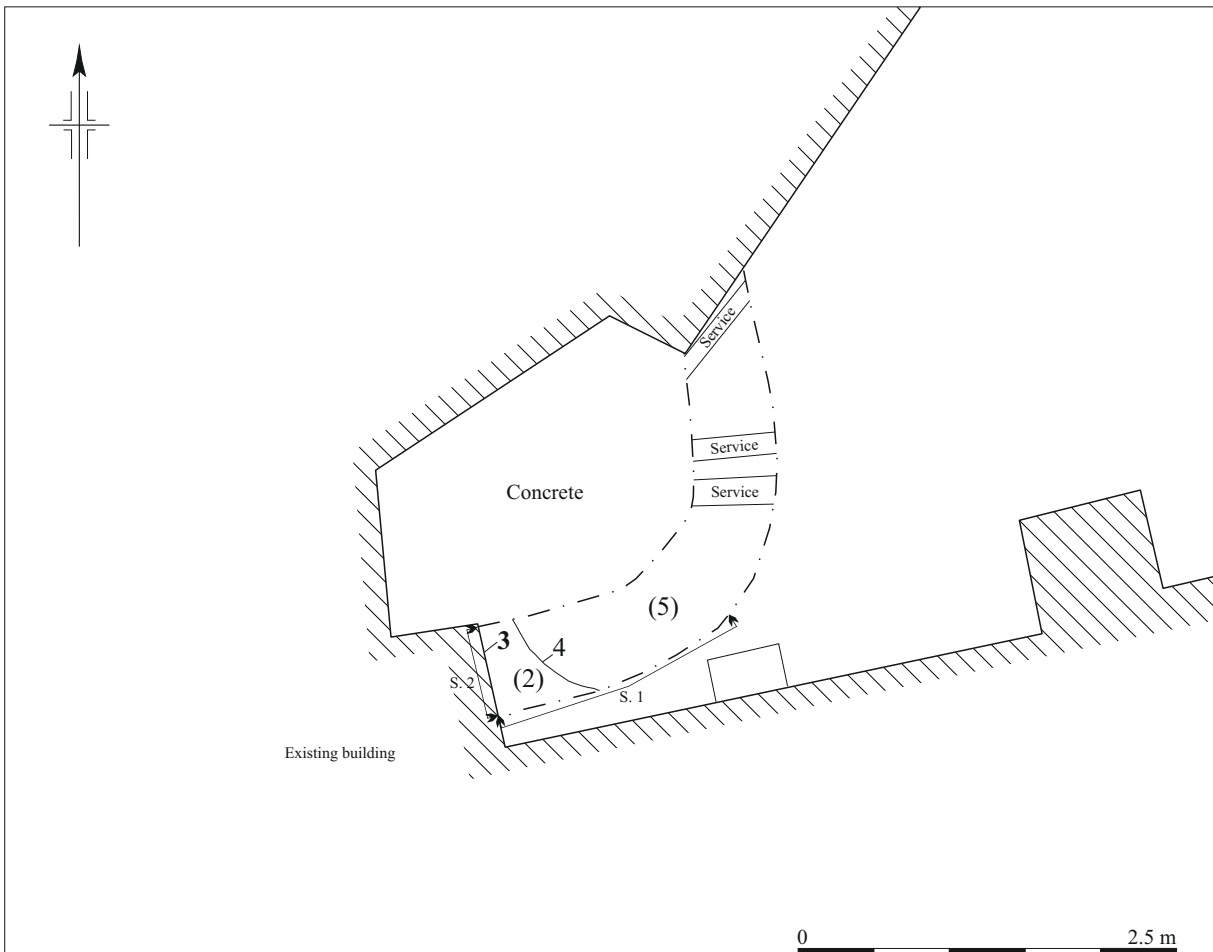
Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was also produced.

### **4 RESULTS (Figure 2)**

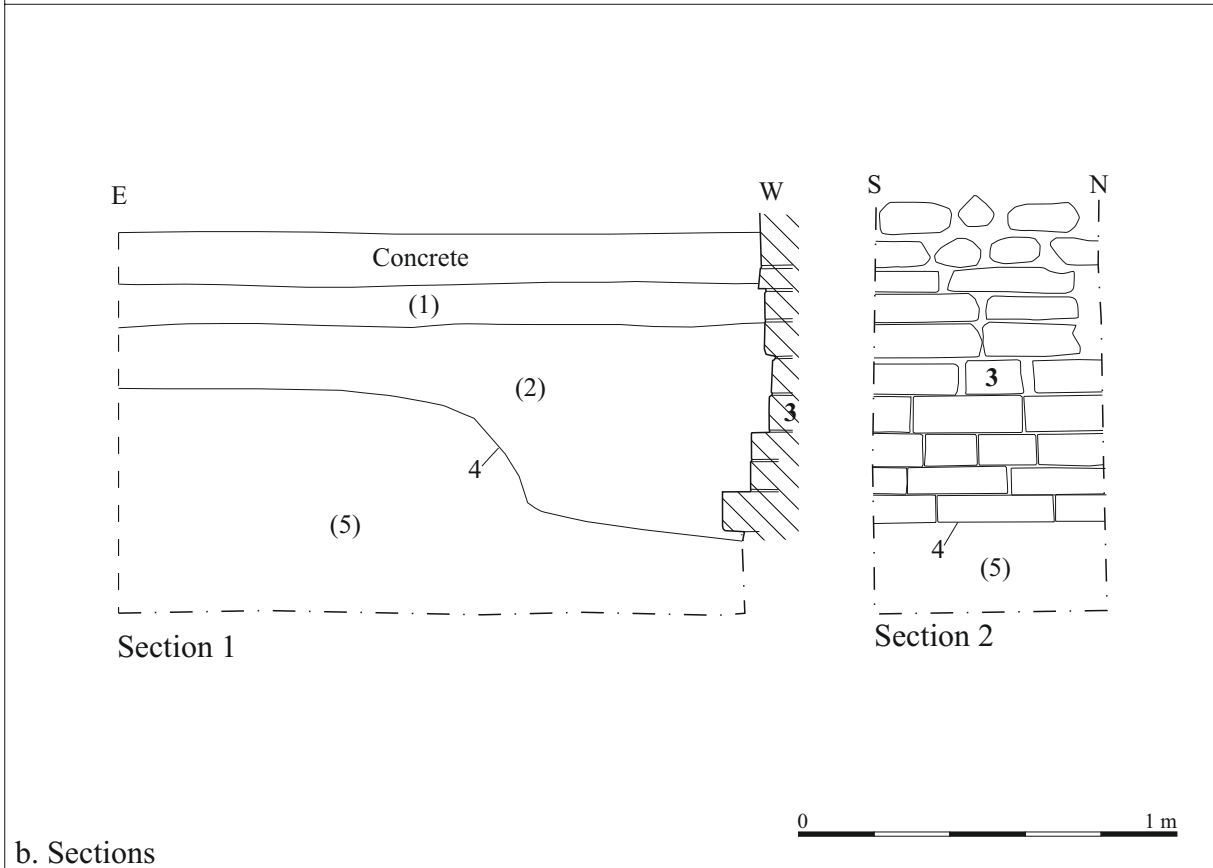
The natural layer (5) was a highly compact yellow clay with lenses of blue grey and pebble inclusions (London Clay). This deposit was truncated by cut 4.

#### **4.1 Phase 1: 1853 (Fig. 2)**

Cut 4 represents the foundation cut of the church as it was redesigned in 1853; the visible cut was 0.38m deep with steep sides and a flat base. Wall 3 contains brick foundations set in cut 4, with flint and limestone walling above, where the limestone forms the decorated architectural pieces. Backfill (2) was a compact grey green yellow clay with brick and rubble inclusions 0.54m deep, which primarily lay in the wall cut but also extended beyond it. Layer (1) was a compact dark green gray clay with brick and rubble inclusions 0.1m deep.



a. Plan



b. Sections

Figure 2. Plan and sections



## 4.2 Modern

The northern part of the exposed area had already been disturbed by an extension to the church in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This consisted of service cuts, concrete foundations and concrete surfaces, none of which were provided with numbers.

## 5 FINDS

No finds were retained. Ceramic building material that was seen on site was probably of a Victorian date and. No environmental deposits were noted.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The church historically of Saint James the Great is known to be the location of a medieval church or chapel. However, the church is known to have undergone a considerable rebuild in 1853 to increase the seating capacity. The only features noted where the foundation cuts for the walls of this rebuild.

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