



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

A FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

HOLY CROSS CHURCH,

SLAPTON,

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

NGR SP 93715 20690

On behalf of

Owlsworth IJP Limited

SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT FOR Owlsworth IJP Limited
Hampstead Farm
Binfield Heath
Nr. Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire
RG9 4LG

PREPARED BY Stephen Yeates with a contribution by David Gilbert

ILLUSTRATION BY Eoin Fitzsimons and Andrej Čelovský

REPORT ISSUED 24th September 2011

FIELD WORK 15th-17th, 21st November 2011 (Watching Brief 1)
2nd September 2013 (Watching Brief 2)

ENQUIRES TO John Moore Heritage Services
Hill View
Woodperry Road
Beckley
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ

Tel/Fax 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

JMHS Project No: 2547 (Watching Brief 1), 2918 (Watching Brief 2)
Site Code SLHC 11 (Watching Brief 1),
SLHC 13 (Watching Brief 2)

CONTENTS

	Page
Summary	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	4
3 STRATEGY	5
3.1 Research Design	5
3.2 Methodology	5
4 RESULTS	5
4.1 Phase 1: Medieval 13 th -14 th centuries	5
4.2 Phase 2: Undated but pre-16 th or 17 th centuries	12
4.3 Phase 3: 17 th to early 19 th centuries	12
4.4 Phase 4: 1816	13
4.5 Phase 5: 1878-9, and 1889	13
4.6 Phase 6: 20 th century	14
5 FINDS	14
5.1 Pottery (<i>By Dave Gilbert</i>)	14
5.2 Medieval Floor Tile	14
5.3 Daub, Roof Tile and Brick	15
5.4 Human Remains	15
6 DISCUSSION	16
7 ARCHIVE	17
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	17
FIGURES AND PLATES	
Figure 1 Site Location	2
Figure 2 Plan of Church	7
Figure 3 Plan of drainage trench and soakaway 2	8
Figure 4 Plan of drainage trench and soakaway 1	9
Figure 5 Plan of electricity trench	10
Plate 1 South east buttress on the chancel	11
Plate 2 South west buttress on tower	11
Plate 3 Profile of ditch in soakaway 2	11
Plate 4 Fragment of medieval floor tile recovered from WB 2	15

Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted two watching brief at the church of the Holy Cross, Slapton, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 93715 20690), a grade II listed building. The first watching brief in 2011 observed a series of trenches around the church that uncovered a series of broader foundations, and also noted the apparent profile of a ditch through the churchyard. Surprisingly at this time no burials were noted in the graveyard, thus potentially indicating the probability of a low level of interment on the site over the years. The second watching brief in 2013 saw a small section of trench cut for the insertion of an electricity cable observed the remains of a brick foundation and a single grave cut.*

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The church of the Holy Cross is located in the village of Slapton, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 93715 20690), close to the Bedfordshire border.

The site lies between 80-85m OD.

The underlying geology of the church and the village is the Gault Formation (BGS sheet 220). This is defined as a grey mudstone. To the north and east of the church there are deposits of Till, a mixture of various deposits of clays, sand, gravels and boulders; these deposits are plotted as 100 to 200m away from the church.

1.2 Planning Background

The work, consisting of alterations to the drainage, was commissioned by the authorities of the church of the Holy Cross at Slapton through Owlsworth IJP Ltd. This was due to the archaeological and historical importance of the site and the potential for burials to be encountered in the course of groundwork operations on the site.

1.3 Archaeological Background

No prehistoric or Roman monuments are at present recognised in the parish of Slapton on the National Monuments Record.

The earliest recorded forms of the name are *Slapetone* in 1086 (Mawer and Stenton 1925, 100). The name has been interpreted as 'farm on the *slape*', first given as the farm on the slope. However, an alternative is given *slape* or *slæp*, a slippery or muddy place (Smith 1956, ii.127). It is noted that Lipscomb (1847) states that the place is frequently inundated.

In the Domesday Book Slapton is held by the church of Barking (Morris 1978, 9.1). The manor answered for 6 hides of which 1 hide was in lordship. There were 18 villagers, 4 smallholders, and 4 slaves, along with meadowland. In 1066 it is noted that the estate also belonged to the church of Barking.

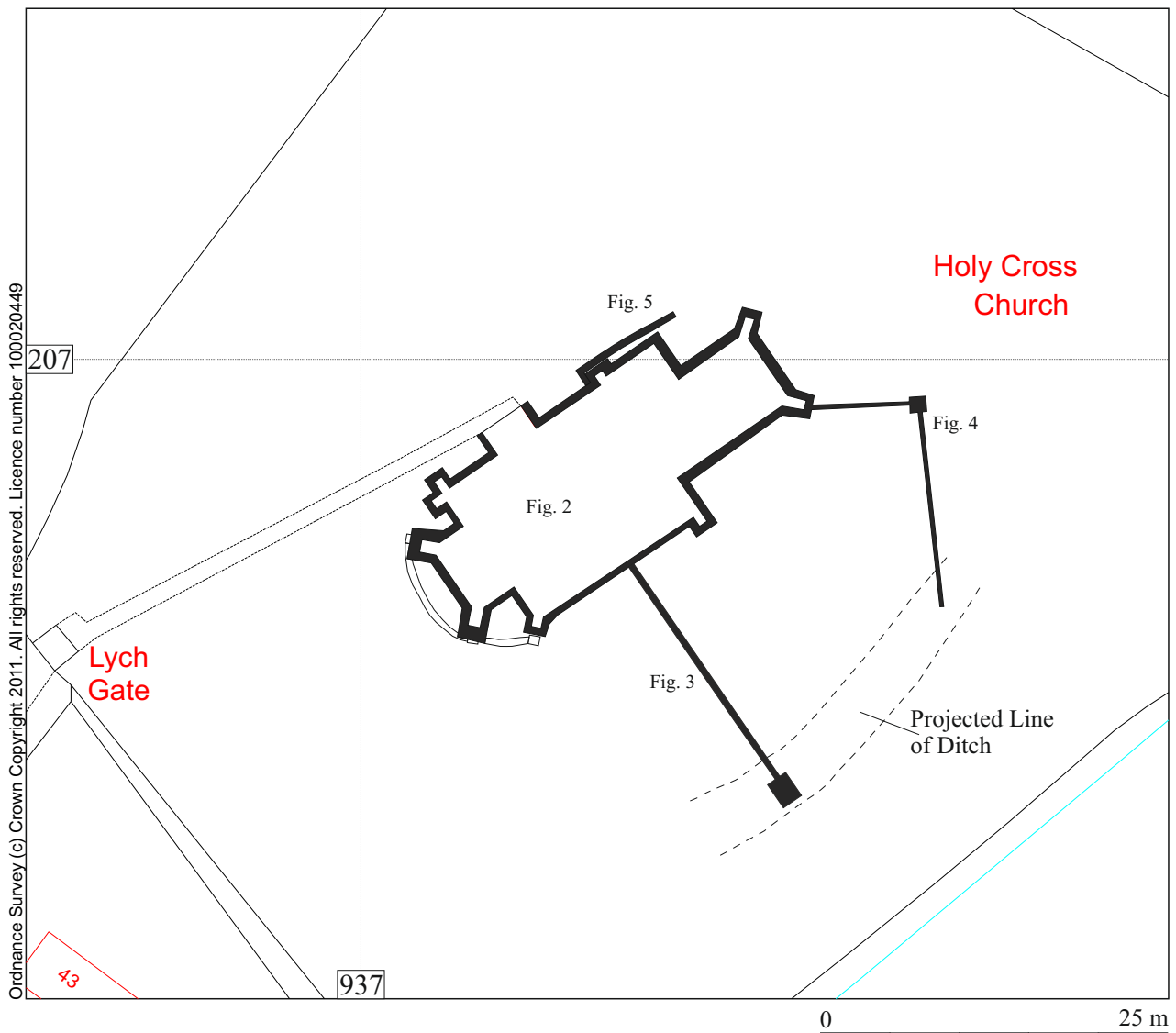
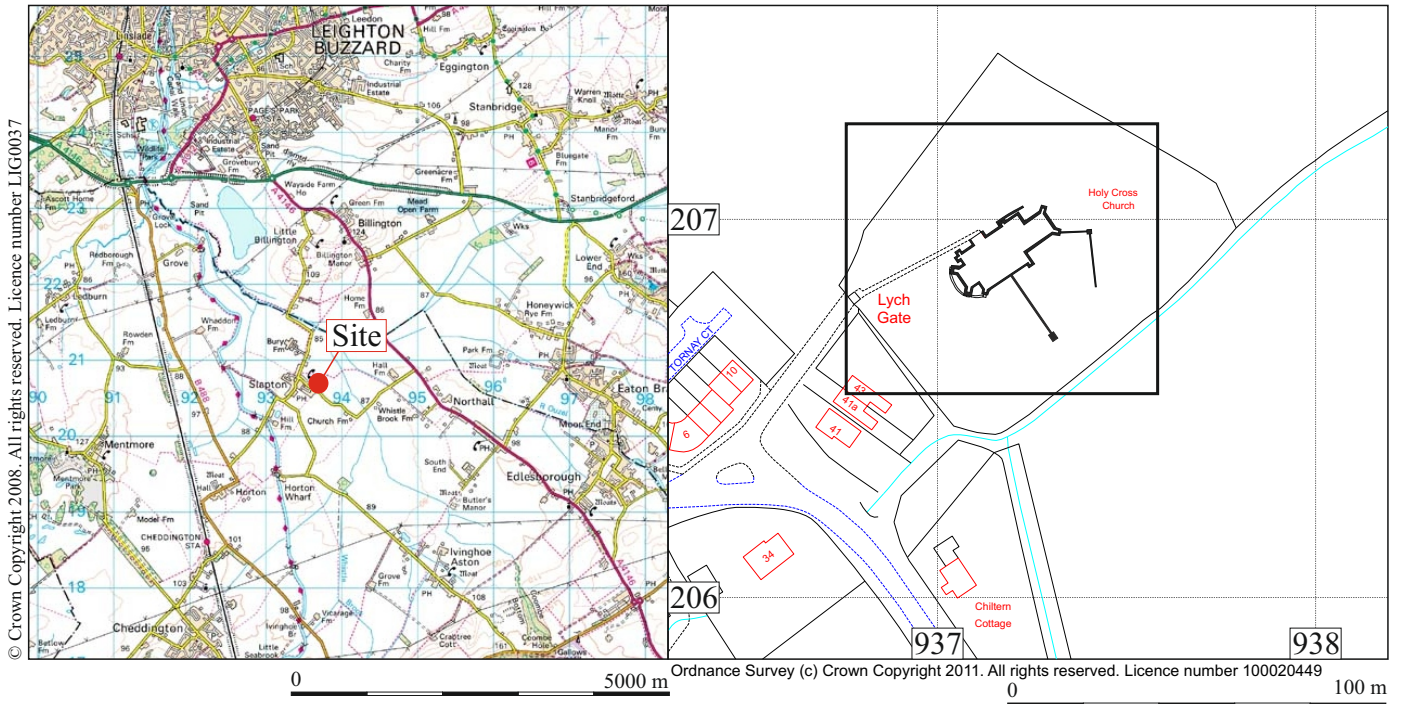


Figure 1: Site location

That the manor was held by the church at Barking has led to some suggestions that there was a church or monastery at Slapton, but the evidence as we shall, see below, is scant and it is possible to argue that the parish of Slapton once formed part of the larger neighbouring parish of Ivinghoe.

The manor remained with the church and abbess of Barking down to the dissolution of the monasteries (VCH 1925, 412-4). In 1550 King Edward VI gave the manor to his sister Princess Elizabeth (later I). In 1560 the manor was granted to Thomas Rowe and remained with that family until 1669 when it was conveyed to John Theed. In 1724 the manor was sold to Scroop, Duke of Bridgewater, and remained with the duke's family until the compilation of the VCH.

The church of Slapton village was also held by the church and abbess of Barking (VCH 1925, 412-4). The first indications of there being a church on the site are encountered in 1233 when a rector is known to have been presented by the abbess of Barking. The church is listed in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 and also the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535, the two main taxation accounts of the English church.

There are three main publications concerning the architecture of the church of Slapton. The earliest is in the RCHME (1913, 264-5). This described a chancel arch of the late 13th century, and naves and aisles with details no earlier than 1320. The tower was probably rebuilt in the 15th century and the north aisle has two 15th century windows, while the south aisle has three windows from the late 14th to 15th centuries. The second publication of the architecture is in the VCH (1925, 412-4), where a 13th century chancel arch is described. The chancel, nave, aisles and tower are described as 13th or 14th century, the arcades are described as early 14th century. In the 15th century the clearstory was added and the walls of the aisles were rebuilt or heightened. The last account is in the Building of England Series (Pevsner and Williamson 1994, 621). The church is not large but has a west tower and clerestory. The aisles are narrow and the arcades date to the early 14th century. The chancel arch is a little earlier, but the main chancel was rebuilt in 1816 and its exterior is resurfaced in brick. Further restoration work was conducted in 1878-9 and again in 1899. The lychgate dates to 1905.

The description given to the Holy Cross church (EHID 42135: SP 93715 20690) for the designation of the building is as follows:

'Parish church. Originally late C13-early C14, much altered late C15, chancel mostly rebuilt early C19, other C19 restorations. Tower is of dressed chalky stone with some flint; nave and aisles are rendered; chancel is of chequer brick with ironstone plinth. Lead roofs except for tiled chancel. Chancel, nave, aisles, W. tower, N. porch and C19 N. vestry. C15 W. tower of 2 stages has battlemented parapet, diagonal buttresses and 2-light traceried openings to bell-chamber. 3-light cusped window over W. door, both openings with 4-centred arches. Nave has plain parapet and 3-bay clerestory of 2-light cusped windows with depressed heads. Aisles extend to west, flanking part of tower, and have moulded parapets and 3-light cusped windows with flat heads, 3 to S., 2 to N. Low doorways between W. windows have chamfered 2-centred arches, that to N. in rendered porch. Chancel has C19 traceried windows in Decorated style: 2 2-light to S., one to N., and 3-light E. window with reticulated tracery. Lean-to vestry to N. Interior is of dressed chunch with plastered spandrels and aisle walls. Tower arch is double chamfered, the inner order on moulded corbels. Nave arcades are of 4 bays with double chamfered and stopped arches on octagonal piers with moulded caps, the W. arches being narrower than remainder. Both nave and aisle roofs are late C15 with

moulded beams, restored. N. aisle also has wide recess in E. wall with shallow pointed head, and niche with 4-centred arch above. Chancel arch is late C13, double chamfered on semi-octagonal piers with moulded cape. C19 aumbry and piscina. Fittings Circular font with altered moulded base, probably C13; C17 communion table, altered; C19 glass in chancel; other fittings C19. Brasses to Reginald Manser 1462, Thomas Knyghton 1522 (?), and to James Tornay 1519.'

The parish of Slapton originally lay in a hundred called Yardley (Morris 1978, 9.1). At the centre of this hundred was the later medieval parish of Ivinghoe. The tithings of this parish included the following: Ivinghoe Major, Ivinghoe Minor, Nettleden, Hencombe, Whytwey, Horton, Seabrook, Aston Castroffe, Aston Bishop and Wardhurst (VCH 1925, 379-87). These tithings indicate that the church of Ivinghoe once had a far wider parochial area. These demonstrate that Ivinghoe church took tithes from inside Pitstone parish and Nettleden chapelry, besides parts of land now in Little Gaddesden. The tithing of Horton historically is a confusing entity; as the hamlet is now in Slapton parish, but was once situated in four parishes (Lipscomb 1847, iii.312), see discussion.

The recorded sites on the National Monuments Record for the parish of Slapton are all medieval in date. This includes a number of moated manor sites including those at South Whaddon (PS 346599, NMR SP92SW9: SP 9177 2146), and Horton (PS 346389, NMR SP91NW1: SP 9233 1936), of which the latter contained a chapel, there is also a moated homestead in the parish (PS 346597, NMR SP92SW7: SP 9225 2260). There are a number of sites classed as that of a Deserted Medieval Village including that at Grove (PS 346596, SP92SW6: SP 918 225), at Great Broughton (PS 346598, NMR SP92SW8: SP 910 227), and a further site in the parish (PS 34600, SP92SW10: SP 937 212). The church listed on English Heritages pastscape is Saint Michael's at Grove (PS 526714, NMR SP92SW23: SP 921 224).

There are some 12 listed buildings in the parish of Slapton, most of these are post-medieval in date apart from the church.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation were as follows:

- To record any archaeological remains that will be impacted on by the development.

In particular:

- To record the potential for features relating to medieval burials if and when they arise.
- To record the remains of any earlier church if identified.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out both Watching Briefs in accordance with the authorities of the church of the Holy Cross at Slapton. 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 to record any archaeological feature uncovered during the cutting of the trenches. This included a drainage track running around the outer limits of the church and also two drainage runs to two soakaways (Watching Brief 1) and an trench for an electricity cable (Watching Brief 2).

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

The natural (010) was a hard and highly compact grey blue clay, presumably the Gault Formation. This deposit was noted in four specific locations; in the trenches on the north side of the tower, in two places along the line of trench to soakaway 2 and at the base of soakaway 1.

4.1 Phase 1: Medieval 13th-14th centuries

Evidence was found around the church for a number of foundation cuts, which have been grouped at present in the following manner (Fig. 2, plates 1-2). The earliest of these cuts has to be the cut 019 for the chancel and the nave, which truncated the natural (010). The church is generally classed as a structure of the 14th century on architectural grounds. However, it is possible that the chancel and nave as core components of the church could actually predate this construction. At the junction of the chancel and nave with the south aisle it was apparent that the south aisle was probably a later addition. This cut consisted of two rectangular sections, which were of a similar length, with protrusions on the east end of the chancel for the foundations of the buttresses. This ratio does not conform to known ratios observed in studies of Norman churches in Worcestershire (Bond 1988, 119-58), where there is a 2:1 ratio of the nave to the chancel. The sides of the cut were assumed to be vertical in nature, but no depth was ascertained. The base of the chancel wall 020 (Fig. 4) was constructed of blocks of chalk and also of an ironstone, the latter of which was shipped in from the Northamptonshire uplands. Some of the blocks were extremely large in size, especially the one extending out in the foundation of the southeast buttress (Plate 1).

There is no evidence remaining to provide a date for the construction of this part of the church, but it could be later 13th century or early 14th century. Indeed the north and south doorways which appear earlier than the surrounding architecture could have been reused. Medieval tiles were reused in the chancel of the church, in the Victorian refurbishment, which contained a brown background and yellow patterned glaze. These have been dated to the 14th century. The ironstone is believed to have been imported in the early medieval period, but if so it is potentially reused here from an earlier structure.

The remains of a cut 025 was also evident for the foundations of the tower (Plate 2). It is not known if this was cut at the same time as that of the nave and chancel, but if not it was undoubtedly the case that this cut was undertaken not long after and in this respect would at least be cut against the nave foundations. The cut must have consisted of three sides of a square with two protrusions for the buttresses. The sides of the cut were vertical, but the depth unknown. The masonry 026 was a foundation built of massive iron stone blocks, with fewer grey chalk blocks. In all areas it was apparent that the foundation extended outwards and the width of the walls was far larger below ground.

On the south side of the church was a further cut 023 consisting of three sides of a rectangle with two protrusions for the buttresses. The sides of the cut were vertical but the depth unknown. The foundation wall 024 contained mainly chalk blocks but the occasional large iron stone block was also visible. On the north side of the church was a further cut 021 consisting of three sides of a rectangle with protrusions for buttresses and an additional porch. The wall 022 was a foundation predominantly of chalk blocks, but there were some iron stone blocks used in the construction, but these were less noticeable here. No evidence was seen to suggest that any of the buttresses or the porch were of a later date, although the walls remained rendered and any possible butt joints remained covered. The foundation under the north aisle buttress on the north side at the west end possibly had evidence of an earlier foundation running underneath it. However, this was not conclusive and it may simply be the foundation of the buttress being built in an unusual shape.

In the run to soakaway 2, on the south side of the aisle, the remains of a large chalk block or slab 009 (Fig. 3) was observed, which was 0.7m wide and over 0.2m deep, was detected jutting some 0.2m into the run of the drain. This block sat on a raised area in the natural. The exact significance of this slab was unresolved; it could possibly have been part of an earlier foundation, though we have no real indication that this block or slab was part of a wall. More likely it may have been part of a funerary tablet.

In all of the cases it was apparent that the foundations were wider below ground level than the width of the walls above. The foundations, and presumably the cuts, and chalk slab were covered by a make-up layer (004). Deposit (004) was a compact grey brown silt clay with gravel and chalk rubble inclusions measuring 0.35m max. It was apparent on the south side of this deposit that there were a number of tip lines. This make-up layer may be a result of the construction of the church in the 14th century.

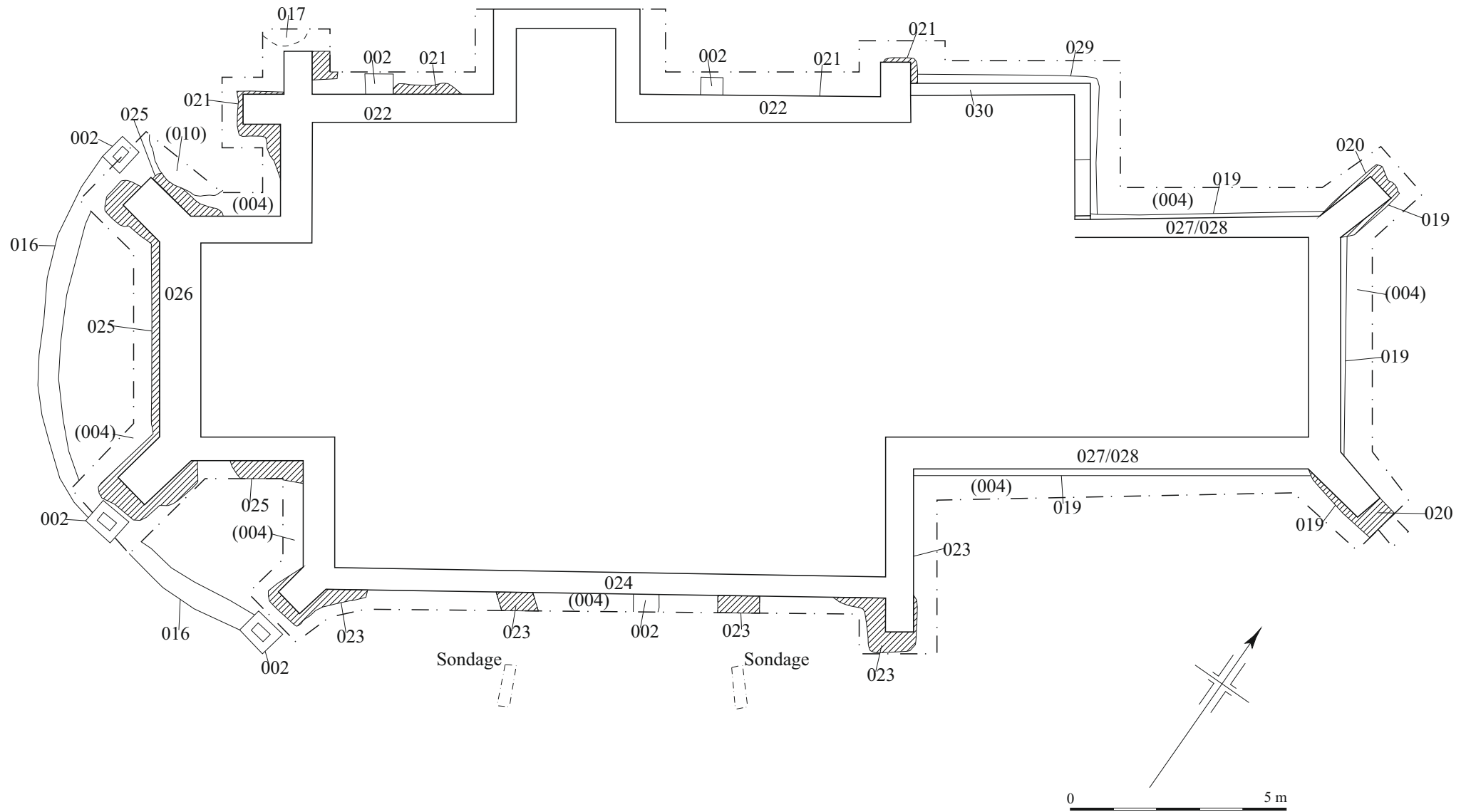


Figure 2: Plan of Church

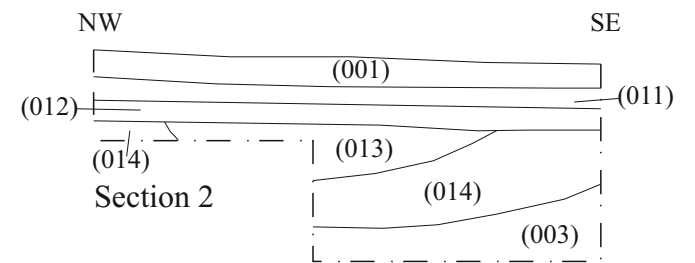
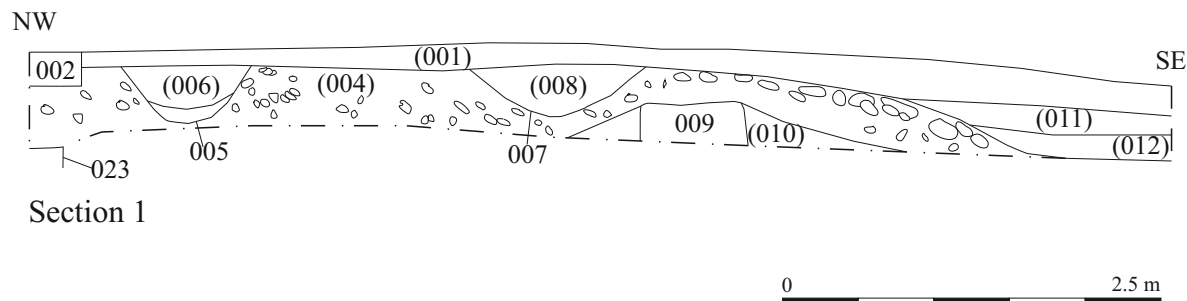
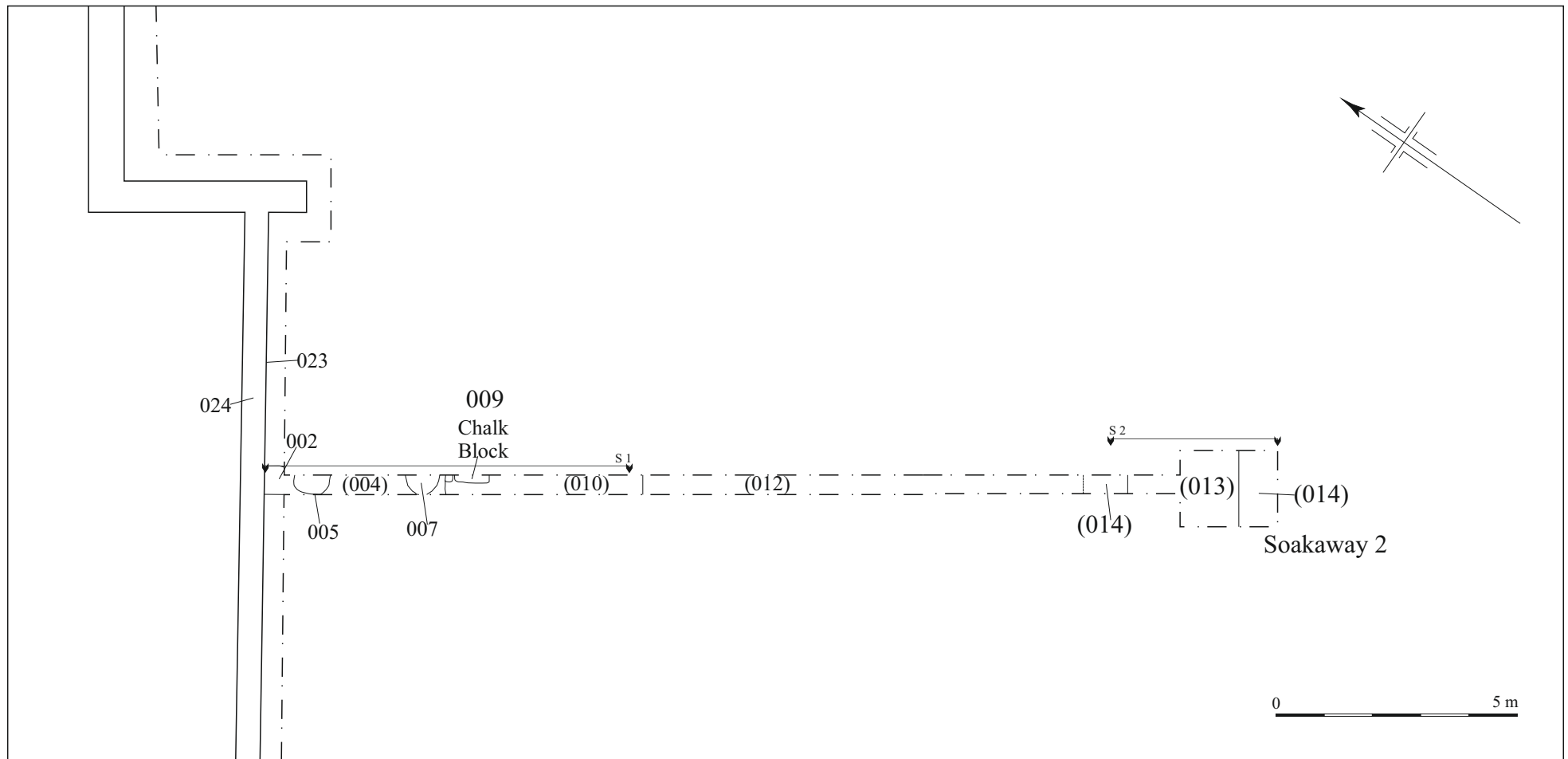


Figure 3: Plan of drainage trench and soakaway 2

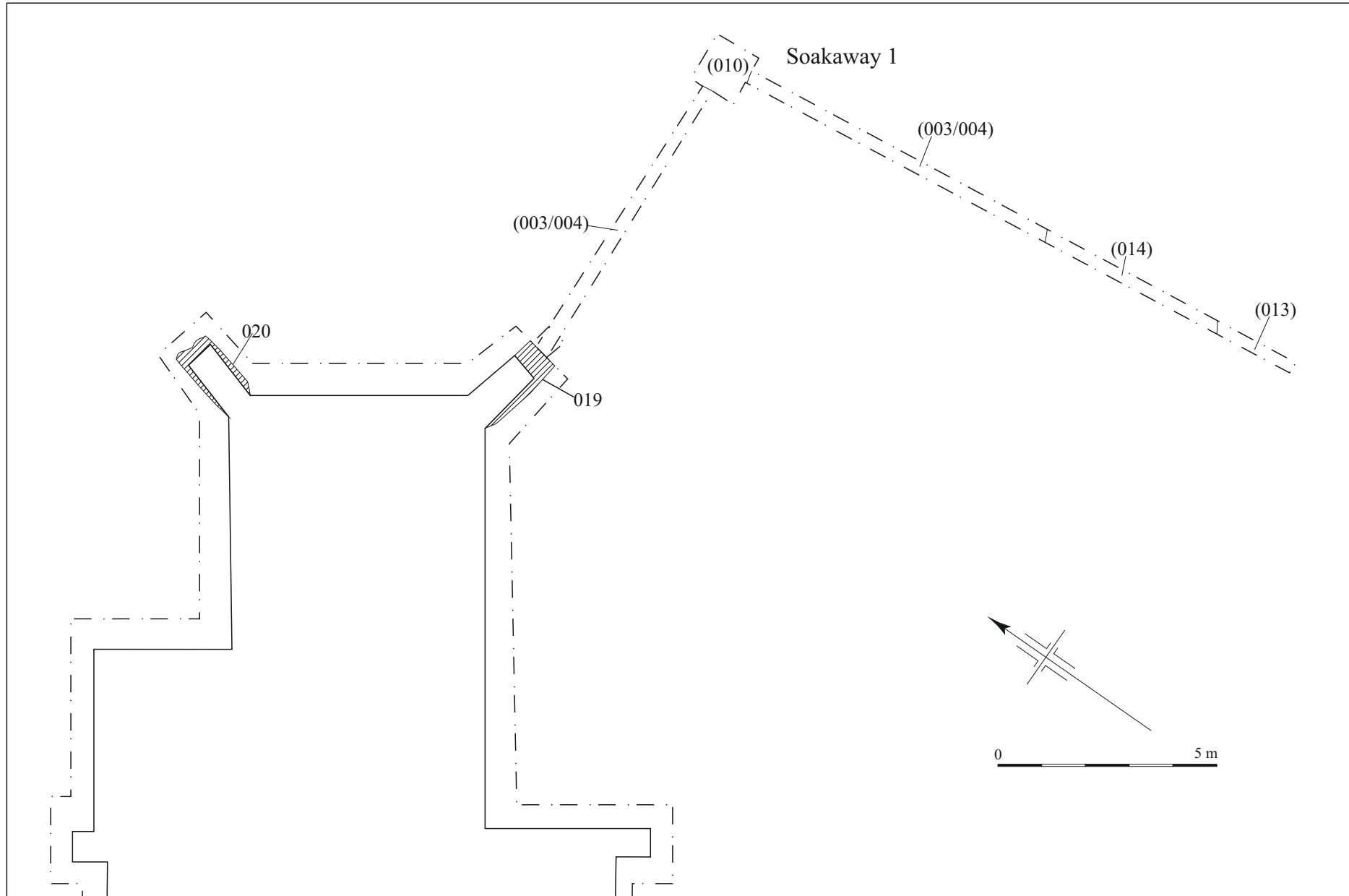
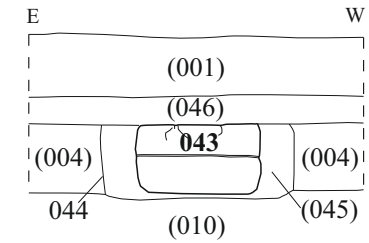
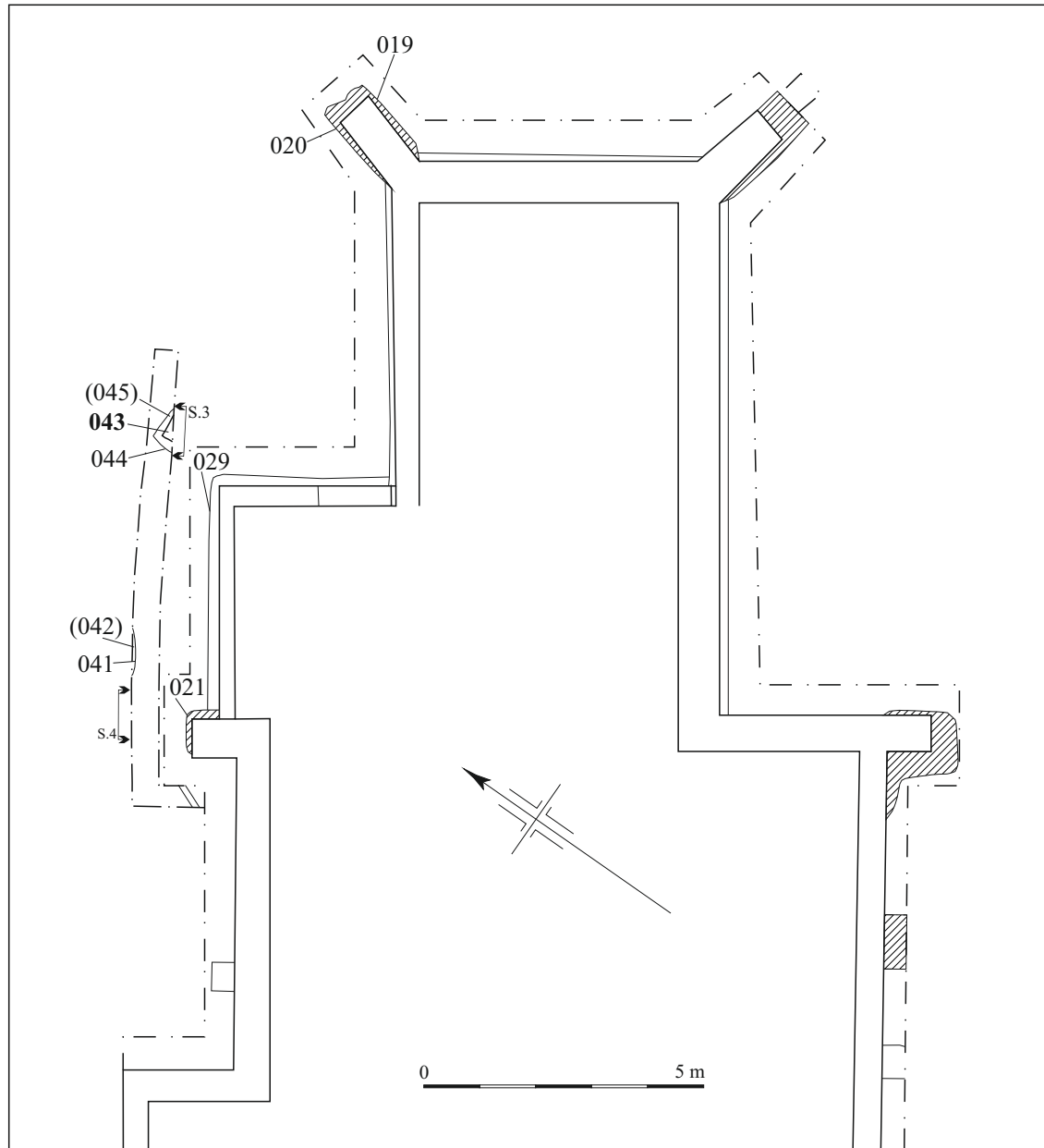
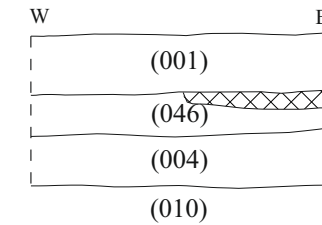


Figure 4: Plan of drainage trench and soakaway 1



Section 3



Section 4



Figure 5: Plan of electricity trench



Plate 1. South east buttress on the chancel



Plate 2. South west buttress on tower



Plate 3. Profile of ditch in soakaway 2

4.2 Phase 2: Undated but pre-16th or 17th centuries

In soakaway 2 was the apparent profile of a substantial ditch 015 (Figs. 1, 3 & 4, Plate 3). Cut 015 was probably a boundary of an enclosure or partial enclosure. The full cut was not uncovered but must have had a width of some 3m and a depth of 0.8m. The date of the cut was not adequately identified, but it is suggestive that the church once stood in a sub-circular ditched enclosure and that the limits of the graveyard had been expanded. The lower fill (014) was a highly compact green grey clay measuring up to 0.35m in depth. The upper fill (013) was a compact grey blue clay measuring up to 0.5m deep. The fill (013) was also apparent in the end of the overflow run of soakaway 2. The upper ditch fill produced the remains of a glazed floor tile with a green glaze, that was different to those surviving in the church, and would indicate that the church once had an un-patterned green glazed tile floor in either the nave, aisles or tower. A 14th century date is also likely for this tile. The tile would indicate that the ditch had silted up by the 16th or 17th centuries, presuming that the tile had been set in a church floor for a number of years.

The ditch had no evidence of re-cutting, but that does not mean that it was not cleaned out or recut and that we only have the final back fill. The ditch could be at least as old as the church site, could be significantly older, or could even be defensive for the Civil War, though the latter is probably less likely. On the current evidence we cannot ascertain a proper date, and it could even have been used at more than one of these horizons.

The fill of the ditch was sealed by layer (012) a compact grey green clay. This deposit contained lumps of flint nodules and rounded pebbles in the areas above the ditch, though these were spread out. These are the only indications that there could have been a bank on the inside of the ditch, though this was not convincing. It is more likely that the layer (012) represents a layer of alluvial clay deposited in an inundation from the wetlands of the Whistle Brook and River Ouzel. This deposit produced a sherd dated to the 17th century.

4.3 Phase 3: 17th to early 19th centuries

The subsoil (011) was a moderately compact brown silt clay with chalk and gravel inclusions. This deposit contained fragmentary amounts of red brick and tile, which are probably late 17th century and later.

Watching Brief 2 (Fig. 5) observed the remains of a grave cut 041. This was not observed in plan, but had to be a feature of this nature due to the relationship with two tombstones. It is presumed that the grave cut is rectangular or sub-rectangular in shape with unknown dimensions. From what can be seen of the sides they are vertical, the shape of the rest of the grave is unknown. It is also presumed that like other Christian burial the feature was orientated west to east. The fill (042) was a moderately compact grey silt clay with brick, tile and stone inclusions, along with some disarticulated human bone. The skeleton for which this cut was dug for was not uncovered.

4.4 Phase 4: 1816

Though not uncovered in the drainage cut it is apparent that the chancel walls 027 were rebuilt on earlier foundations. Internally it is apparent that the walls were constructed of chalk blocks, but externally the walls were constructed of brick. The brick wall was built in a Flemish bond and had a chequered design with a vitreous brick. In the south chancel wall it is apparent that the wall once contained round headed arches of a neo-classical style. Through style this could be dated to the 18th to early 19th century. Historically the rebuild is dated to 1816. The depth of the bricks were from 60mm to 62mm.

Watching Brief 2 (Fig. 5) in 2013 observed a cut 044 for a foundation, which was 0.5m across and 0.19m deep with steep sides and a flat base. In the foundation cut 044 was a brick foundation, visible to 0.32m across, for which the depth of the brick was 60mm, which matched the depth of bricks in the chancel wall. It is for this reason that the brick feature is considered to be of a similar date to the chancel rebuild. The foundation could be part of a funerary monument, however, the angle at which the feature ran into the trench was more indicative of it belonging to an angle buttress, if so it perhaps indicates that a side chapel had been planned where the later Victorian rebuild now stands.

4.5 Phase 5: 1878-9, and 1889

A plan of the church was produced for its renovation in 1878-9. This shows that very little alterations were made to the church structure at that time apart from the windows of the chancel being reset 028. The neo-classical arches were removed and the new decorated neo-gothic windows were inserted. The sizes of the windows were reduced and a red orange brick used for the infill of the earlier windows. Presumably the floor was re-laid at this time to fit with the new ideals of the church authorities and the adoption of the Oxford Movement (Yates 2008, 90-3).

The plan of 1878-9 does not show the addition of the brick structure on the north side of the chancel, presumably this was added in the second Victorian period of work in 1889. Any earlier feature in this area may also have been removed by this date or never completed. The structure was constructed using a foundation cut 029 an L-shaped feature. This was cut into the top of layer (004). The cut 029 had steep or vertical sides and a flat base. It was apparent that the new cut for the drainage went down below the level of the foundations of the wall. Inserted into this were the foundations and walls 030. The foundations were of red brick built with a splay, with each progressive layer stepping out. The base of the foundation contained rubble.

A cut 007 (Fig. 3) was noted as being cut into the top of deposit (004). This was an oval pit measuring about 1m x 0.6m x 0.35m deep. The sides were steep and the base rounded. The fill (008) was moderately compact with a brown silt clay. This deposit contained yellow ceramic debris included yellow bricks and other moulded pieces. Yellow brick was first produced in 1850 from the clay levels near Merthyr Tydfil, it is possible that a Victorian date could be assigned to this feature at the earliest. It is possible, however, that the feature could also be later.

Watching Brief 2 in 2013 (Fig. 5) identified a deposit (046) a moderately compact grey silt clay with bands of more compact rubble and lime inclusions measuring 0.1m

in depth. There were areas of iron staining in this deposit. The layer is either a deposit associated with the construction of walls 030, or is a part of a path laid to provide access the door in that structure.

4.6 Phase 6: 20th century

Covering the above deposits was the topsoil (001) a moderately compact brown grey silt clay. The remains of daub recovered from the cut for the soakaway 1. There were a number of features which must have been cut through the topsoil, although due to the nature of the topsoil and its organic process this was not always visible. The most significant activity here was the cut 016 of the previous drainage system (Fig. 2). This contained a drainage system 002 in places this was evident as a series of brick structures between which layer of salt glazed drainage pipes ran. Up against the church it was evident that there was a layer of yellow sandy mortar cement on which blue bricks were laid to form a drainage channel to carry the run off. This drainage system could be part of the Victorian system inserted in 1889, as it ran around the extension on the north side of the chancel, but equally could be later in the 20th century.

Two further pits were probably also of a late date. This included cut 005 an oval pit measuring 1m x 0.6m with a depth of 0.3m (Fig. 3). The fill (006) was a moderately compact brown silt clay, but at the base there was a lens of a richer black to black brown silt. The fill contained aluminium foil and a plastic bottle. There was a further pit 017 of an oval shape measuring 0.6m by 0.5m deep and measuring 0.25m deep (Fig. 2). The sides and base had rounded profiles. The fill (018) was a moderately compact brown silt clay, but no finds were recovered. It is assumed that this cut was of a later origin, rather than early.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery (By Dave Gilbert)

One sherd of late 17th – 18th century buff-bodied slipware (PM2) was present, recovered from deposit (012). It was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994). The sherd was not retained but left in a bag in the church for the Church authorities.

5.2 Medieval Floor Tiles

A piece of mottled undecorated brown green glazed medieval floor tile was recovered from deposit (013). The fabric was a red ceramic. The tile was not whole and survived only as a fragment approximately 70mm x 70mm and by 20mm depth. The tile is probably of a 14th century date, or there about, and one should consider that the deposit in which this context lay was probably 100 to 200 years after this date. The tile was bagged and left inside the church.

Watching Brief 2 recovered a further piece of floor tile (plate 1), which was essentially classed as unstratified but probably came from deposit (004), and measured 111mm x 79mm x 22mm. The design was simple and based on a square, which was divided diagonally. The two halves of the square were coloured in

different glazes, one a yellow glaze with a green hue and the other a green-brown glaze. The latter has become weathered and lost in places.



Plate 4 Fragment of medieval floor tile recovered from Watching Brief 2

5.3 Daub, roof tile and brick

A number of fragments of roof tile and brick were observed in a number of the contexts including the subsoil (011) and topsoil (001). The fragment of daub came from the topsoil (001) in the drainage run heading for soakaway 1 on the southeast side of the church. No samples were retained.

5.4 Human Remains

During the course of excavations a total of 6 fragments of bone were noted, predominantly in the drain runs for soakaways 1 and 2. These were redeposited in the base of the drainage trenches. These fragments on average probably measured around 20mm x 10mm. There was insufficient bone to positively identify the species, but due to the location in the cemetery it was assumed that these fragments were part of extremely disarticulated human burials.

Having noted the possible fragments of human bone in the cemetery and also from the excavations the lack of apparent grave cuts or markers encountered, except for one potential early tablet context 009, it was considered that the church and yard were not extensively used for burials. Why this should be the case is not fully understood and one can postulate three possible scenarios. The first is that the village of Slapton was never very large and that burials were infrequent. Second, that the later deposits mask earlier burial cuts. The third, is that although the Holy Cross at Slapton had the status of a church (which usually covered tithes, oblations and burial dues) that in obtaining this status some of these rights were retained by a more significant mother church in the area, to which Slapton had been annexed.

Both the antiquarians Lipscomb (1847, iii.449-52) and Sheahan (1862, 742-3) note earlier burials on the site; for example a priest who died in 1462, a burial in 1519, and a priest buried in 1529.

Watching Brief 2 added a further 3 fragments of disarticulated bone, one of which was part of a leg bone.

6 DISCUSSION

The earliest known church on the site is 1223, when the first presentation of a rector is recorded (Lipscomb 1847, iii.449-52). It is possible that the nave and chancel foundations may belong to this earlier Gothic church, although features of this church may have been reworked. The chancel arch is considered the earliest datable feature on the site and it may indicate that this church originated as a two-cell unit. There was very little evidence of an earlier church and it is apparent that this church does not conform to the general ratio of Norman churches as identified elsewhere in England (Bond 1988, 119-58). The lack of burial evidence on the site may also indicate that this church was a high medieval (1066-1400) establishment and that burial rights may have lain elsewhere before this period. Architecturally it was apparent that the church was interpreted as being of the later 13th century and early 14th century with 15th century alterations.

The only potential indication of a burial was that of the large chalk slab 009 buried in the graveyard to the south of the church. Considering the excavation of trenches around the footings and across the graveyard it seemed unusual that this should be the case. Above it was mentioned that the major church of the Yardley district was probably located at Ivinghoe as this has far more important historical features and diverse parcels of land from which it took tithes, which were scattered through the hundred of Yardley. Information about the parochial arrangement around Horton is mentioned in several places in Lipscomb (1847, iii.312), of which the first we should note is that the hamlet lay in four parishes. These four parishes are presumably Edlesborough, Slapton, Cheddington, and Ivinghoe. The Enclosure Act concerning Horton was passed by parliament in 1810 (VCH 1925, 379-87), when permission was granted to enclose the parishes of Slapton, Ivinghoe, Edlesborough and Pitstone. It is probably at this time that the isolated areas between these parishes were sorted into their present arrangement. Lipscomb (1847, iii.356) noted that the Enclosure Commission established the boundaries between Horton hamlet and Ivinghoe, Horton and Cheddington, and Horton and Mentmore. This information would imply that the manor and hamlet of Horton, now in the south of Slapton parish, was an extremely complicated area of parochial parcels of land and that there were various claims from on the hamlet from the surrounding parishes. In two occasions Lipscomb (1847, iii.336, 345) noted that Horton was a hamlet of Edlesborough, besides also calling it a hamlet of Ivinghoe (1847, iii.336). In 1325 a licence was given for John de Cheddington to found an oratory in his manor of Horton (Lipscomb 1847, iii.355), while John Theed a resident of Horton Hall in the 17th century was buried at Edlesborough (Lipscomb 1847, iii.350), and as stated above the hamlet was a tithing of the church at Ivinghoe. It is perhaps in this way that the lack of burials could be explained.

The digging of the drainage channels and soakaways identified the remains of a ditch that was broad at about 3m wide and probably 0.82m deep. Indeed the cutting of Soakaway 2 showed that the ground level had increased in the lower part of the cemeteries, by as much as 0.5m. The date of the ditch was not ascertained but the purpose and age could be debated at present without any firm conclusion: an enclosure older than the church, of which at present there is little indication, or a ditch

contemporary with the church site, of which the exact foundation date has not been properly determined, although there was a church in the village at the beginning of the 13th century. The use of the ditch has also not been determined; it could be the original boundary of the churchyard or graveyard, or even chapel yard. Alternatively it could represent a drainage ditch to take water away from the church and onto the levels of the Whistle Brook to the north and east.

It was noted, though not always through the excavations of the drainage services, that later rebuilds and other extensions had occurred at Slapton church. These accounts are in line with other discussions.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief
Written scheme of investigation
The project report
The primary site record

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the County Museums' Store.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS sheet 220 1992 Sheet 220 Leighton Buzzard

Bond, C J 1988 Church and Parish in Norman Worcestershire, In J Blair (ed) *Minster and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition from 950-1200*, 119-58, Oxford: Oxford University Committee of Archaeology

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1999 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

Lipscomb, G 1847 The History and Antiquaries of the County of Buckinghamshire, volume III, London: J and W Robins

Mawer, A and Stenton, F M 1925 The Place-names of Buckinghamshire, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Morris, J 1978 Domesday Book: Buckinghamshire, Chichester: Phillimore

Mynard, DC and Zeepvat, RJ 1992 *Great Linford* Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series 3

Pevsner, N and Williamson, E 1994 The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire, London: Penguin

- Sheahan, J J 1862 *History and Topography of Buckinghamshire*, London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts
- Smith, A H 1956 *English Place-names Elements, part II*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- VCH 1925 *A History of the County of Buckinghamshire, volume 3*, London: saint Catherine's Press
- Yates, N 2008 *Liturgical space: Christian worship and church building in Western Europe 1500-2000*, Farnham: Ashgate
- Zeevat, RJ, Roberts, JS and King, NA 1994 *Caldecotte, Milton Keynes. Excavation and Fieldwork 1966-91* Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Monograph Series **9**