



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, CUMNOR, OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SP 46140414

On behalf of

PCC St Michael's Church Cumnor

JANUARY 2018

REPORT FOR	PCC St Michaels Church Cumnor High Street Cumnor Oxfordshire OX2 9PE
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FIELDWORK	9 th & 10 th November 2016; September -December 2017
REPORT ISSUED	29 th January 2018
ENQUIRES TO	John Moore Heritage Services Pasture Farmhouse Boarstall Aylesbury HP18 9UR Tel: 01865 358300 Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk
JMHS Project No:	3514
Site Code:	CUSMC 16
Archive Location	The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Oxfordshire County Museum Service with accession number OXCMS:2016.81.

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SUMMARY

This document represents the monitored excavations for archaeological and human remains at St Michael's Church, Cumnor, Oxfordshire (NGR SP4614 0414). During the scheme of purposed work for the existing porch to be extended to provide a new WC and improvements to the existing pathways and external lighting granted by the Vale of White Horse District Council (P15/V3024/FUL), charnel and four articulated human burials were unearthed. These four articulated burials were all found within a 10m radius from the North entrance to the church in the existing graveyard. Three burials were recorded, removed and reburied in the same location after works had completed the ground reductions in the area. A further burial was recorded but left in situ. Three burials were found at the limit of excavation but were covered over and left undisturbed. The Faculty issued by the church Diocese was adhered to at all times and all human burials were treated in accordance to their instruction therein. In addition to the human remains, one medieval floor tile was recovered in Test Pit 3 on the interior of the church. This was retained on the premises. Finally, in unmonitored works to the North Porch, the workmen found an architectural element which appears (from photographic analysis only) to be a medieval finial, possibly damaged in its carving. This too remains in the possession of the church.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

St Michael's Church is located to the southwest of Abingdon Road, Cumnor (NGR SP46140414). The geology is Upper Corallian sand and it lies at approximately 118m AOD.

1.2 Planning Background

The Vale of White Horse District Council granted planning permission for the existing porch to be extended to provide a new WC and improvements to the existing pathways and external lighting (P15/V3024/FUL). Conditions were attached to the permission that required an archaeologist be present during the period of development, working to a written scheme of investigation (WSI) that was approved in advance by the local planning authority. Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET) issued a Design Brief (OCC 2016) for the archaeological work.

1.3 Archaeological Background

St Michael's Church, Cumnor is a prominently sited, almost wholly medieval building with a number of important features and fittings. Its known history dates from the 9th century and its earliest fabric from the late 11th century. Archaeological investigation in the 1980s revealed other components, now re-buried. It is surrounded by a large churchyard, which includes two extensions to the west (1935 and c. 1960), both of which overlie the site of the medieval country house of the abbots of Abingdon, known as (Old) Cumnor Place. Part of the old churchyard has recently been re-opened for burials. The Church is a grade I Listed Building and it is within the Cumnor Conservation Area (OCC 2016).

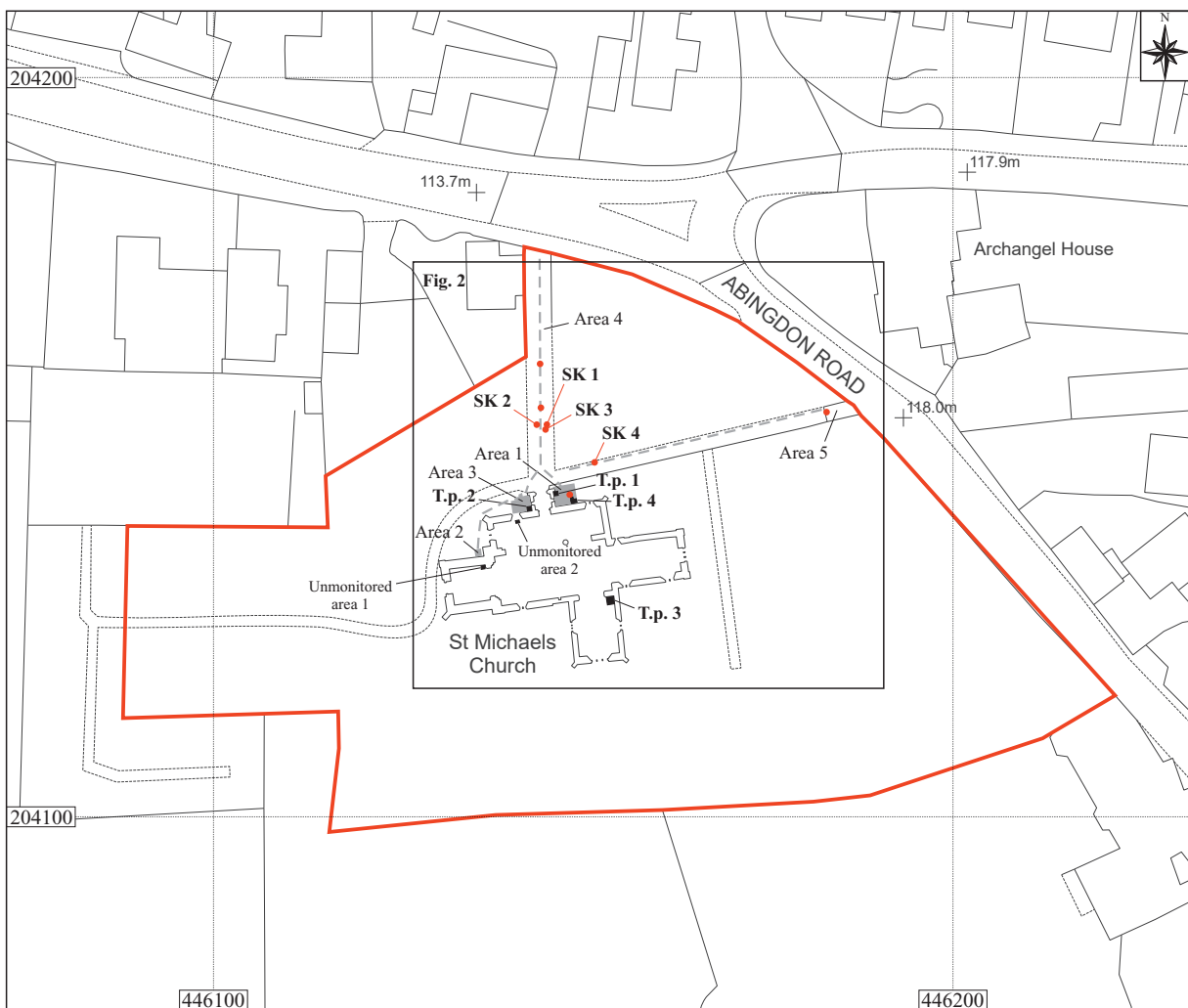
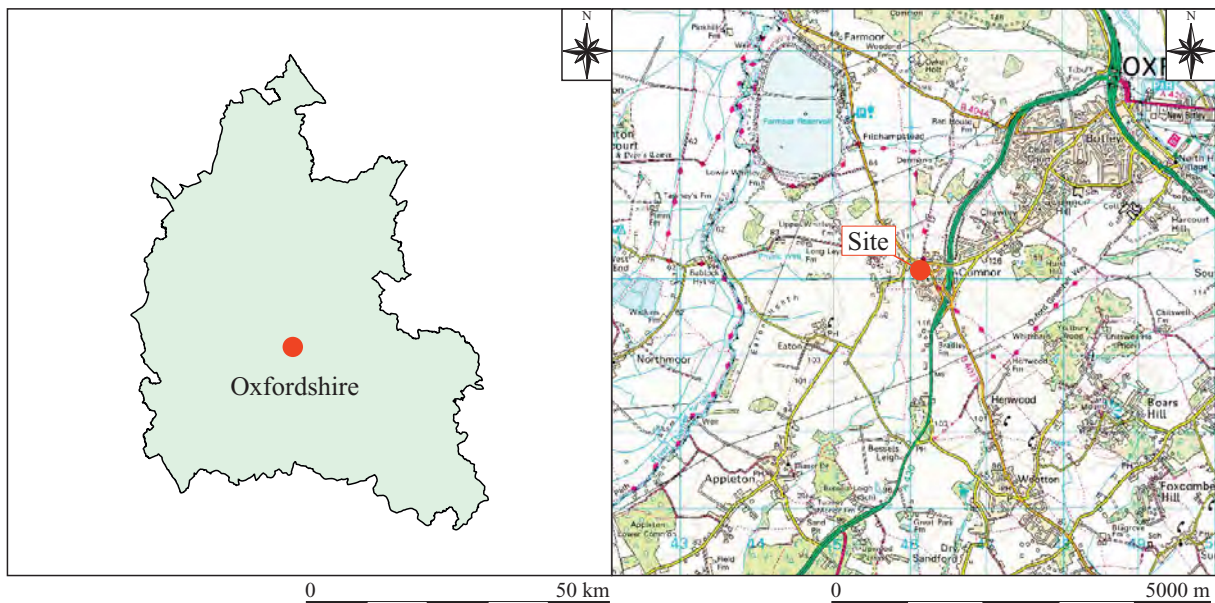
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

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

In particular

- To record and excavate any remains relating to the church.



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Key Site boundary Monitored area ● Reburial location of human remains
 Service trench

0 50 m

Figure 1: Site location

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS 2016) agreed with Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team, the archaeological advisors to the Vale of White Horse District Council.

An experienced archaeologist was to be present during all invasive works with the additional availability of an appropriate number of extra archaeologists depending on the amount of archaeological remains encountered.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

3.2 Methodology

The work was carried out in three Phases.

Phase I was conducted as a watching brief during the excavation of hand dug investigatory test pits. The aim of the investigation was to assess the depth and nature of underlying deposits and services, to assess the depth and extent of the foundations of the north wall and the porch, and to assess the potential for archaeological remains and human remains.

Phase II was a watching brief conducted during the excavations relating to exterior works involved with the west porch, work relating to the excavation of Service Trenches 1 and 2, and work in the area of the north-south path to the church and Service Trench 3.

Phase III was a watching brief conducted for the construction of new access from the Abingdon Road. This encompassed the removal of the stone steps on the eastern approach to the church yard off Abingdon Road, and the excavation of Service Trench 4.

All work involved the main contractor stripping using a toothless bucket or hand digging to the required depth under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Where significant archaeological horizon(s) or burials were encountered first, the archaeological/human remains were cleaned, investigated and recorded and removed, where necessary by the archaeologist before the main contractor continued with the ground reduction, as outlined in the Faculty approved by the governing Diocese. All human remains were collected for reburial as directed by the Faculty. All aspects of the Faculty were adhered to.

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.

The resultant spoil from the works was visually scanned, especially for finds relating to the church and disarticulated human remains.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts, numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material, while numbers in bold indicate structural features.

4.1 PHASE I *by Gavin Davis*

4.1.1 Test Pit 1 (Plate 1; Figure 2)

Test Pit 1 was excavated against the east wall of the church porch to a depth of 0.8m. The lowest layer identified was a mid-orange brown sand with frequent medium and larger angular stone inclusions (6). The layer was identified as made up ground and the stone foundations to the porch were above this layer.

Deposited above context (6) was a disturbed soil layer which was related to modern disturbance (2). This layer sat above a concrete spread in the south west corner of the test pit which was probably related to the brick storm-water catch-pit in the SE corner of the test pit. The area of the test pit was cut by a drainage pipe running from south to north from the brick catch-pit and the cut to an electric cable running from the SW to the NE. The close proximity of numerous activities had created a mixed area of cuts and fills that were indistinguishable from one another, creating a mixture of mid brown and light brown coarse sandy loam and finer sandy loam. Layer (2) contained frequent inclusions of angular stone and finer gravel, as well as larger pieces of stone some of which were roughly dressed. A number of small human bone fragments were also recovered from context 2. Overlying context (2) was a 0.3m thick layer of dark brown sandy loam topsoil (1).



Plate 1. Test pit 1. South view.

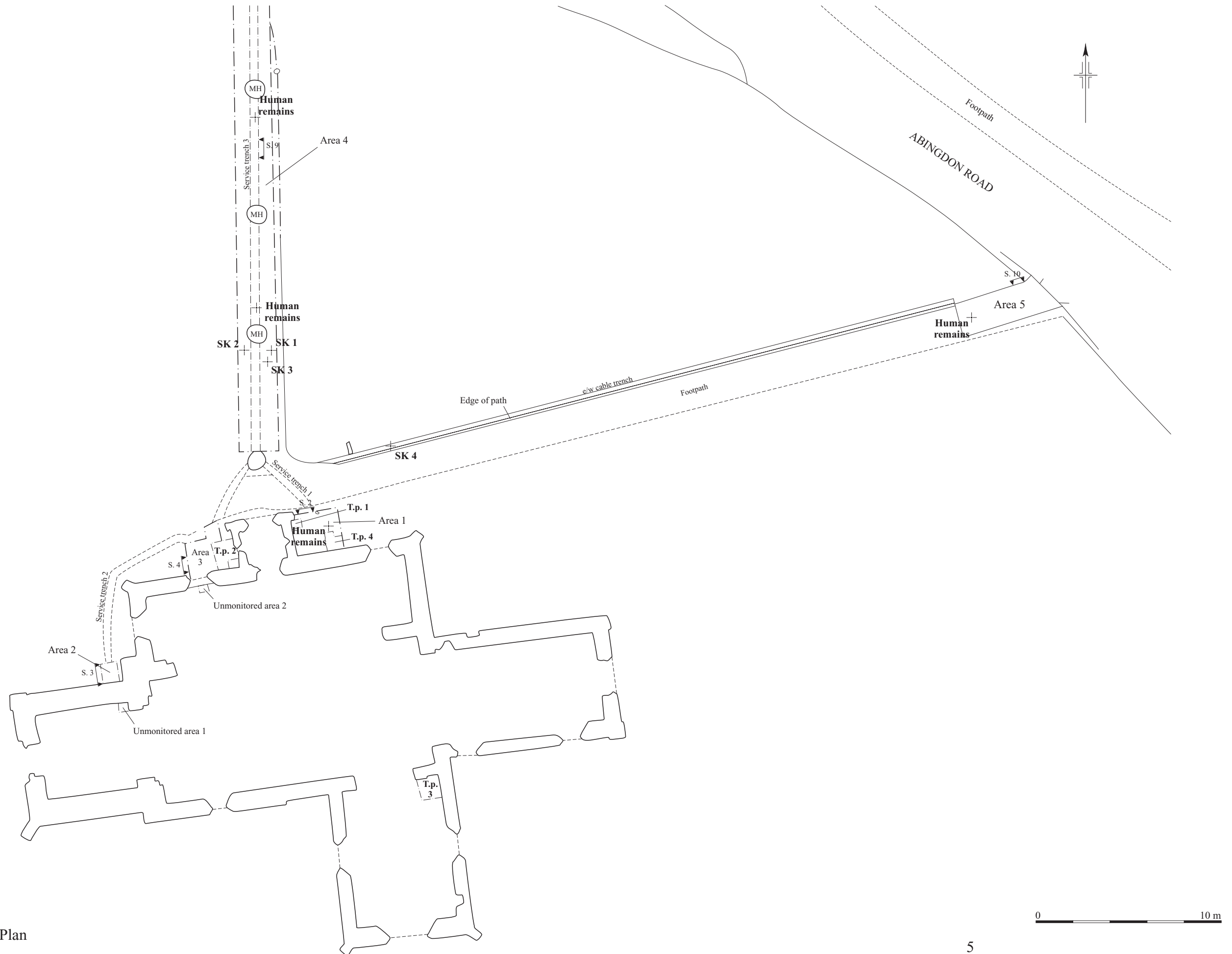


Figure 2: Site Plan

4.1.2 Test Pit 2 (Plate 2; Figure 2)

A further test pit was excavated against the west wall of the porch. There was a drainage pipe running south to north through the west side of the test pit above a brick plinth. The lowest layer excavated was a mid-orange brown, compact sand with large angular stone inclusions. The layer was greater than 0.2m thick and was identified as made up ground. The stone foundations to the church porch were constructed above this layer and it is identified as the same context as (6). Deposited above was a 0.2m thick layer of mixed orange and grey sandy loam (5). This deposit was identified as a further layer of disturbed made ground and deposited above this was a further 0.2m thick deposit of mid grey brown, coarse sandy loam (4). This layer contained a quantity of broken modern tile fragments that were not retained and was identified as a later layer of made ground. Deposited above this was a 0.1m thick deposit of dark brown sandy loam topsoil (3).



Plate 2. Test Pit 2. East View.

4.1.3 Test Pit 3 (Plates 3 and 4; Figure 2)

Test pit 3 was excavated in the north east corner of the south transept. The lowest layer identified a mid-reddish brown sandy layer that was greater than 0.15m deep (11). This layer was identified as made ground and it is possible that some of the recovered finds may have come from this layer although they were allocated to the layer above. The layer contained frequent small stone and was fairly dry and friable in texture. The deposit above was a 0.15 thick layer of rubble, sand and mortar, (10). It was light grey brown and pink in colour and consisted of sand, degraded mortar, fragments of un-diagnostic ceramic building material with fragments of stone. The layer was likely the result of demolition from earlier floor layers and it formed the levelling layer of the concrete slab above. The layer contained fragments of animal bone, some small fragments of human bone, and a fragment of medieval glazed tile. The concrete slab (9) was laid above this layer and formed the foundation for the stone slab floor. The concrete was around 0.08m thick and was overlaid by a thin layer of mortar onto which the stone slabs were laid. In the east section of Test Pit 3 were the remains of a wooden plank orientated north to south. This was probably the remains of an earlier floor and it sat above a layer of concrete which in turn was sitting above a layer of red bricks. The bricks were laid upon made up ground.



Plate 3. Test Pit 3 East section.



Plate 4. Test Pit 3. SE view.section.

4.1.4 Test Pit 4 (Plate 5; Figure 2)

Test pit 4 was excavated against the exterior of the North Wall in order to access the nature of the foundations. The lowest layer identified was a 0.1m thick layer of mid orange brown loamy sand with moderate stone (16). The foundations to the North were above this layer. The foundation of the north wall stepped out 0.5m; the stone was roughly faced. Built up against the foundations was a 0.35m thick mid-orange and brown mixed loamy sand with frequent stone inclusion (13).

There was one large flattish stone perpendicular to the foundations. Excavation northwards, to further reveal the extent of this stone, revealed it to be an outlying isolated element loose within context (13) and not part of the foundation structure. No other archaeological features or finds were identified in Test Pit 4.



Plate 5. Test Pit 4. South view.

4.2 PHASE II by Stephanie N. Duensing

4.2.1 Area 1 (Plate 6; Figure 2)

Area 1 encompassed the area to the NE of the North entrance where the new W.C. was to be constructed. The area was approximately 2m x 2m and extended down 0.7m at its maximum depth. There was a brick soakaway which had been installed in the 20th century to help with rainwater drainage (connected to the pre-existing guttering), There was evidence of previous interventions, including a gravel drain (French drain) which one of the church parishioners had helped to install in the last 40 years, and who reported finding human remains in the location at that time. The parishioner's recollections were supported by the recovery of a number of disarticulated human bones in the immediate vicinity of the gravel drain and the soakaway. These were reburied in the same location prior to the laying of the new foundation for the W.C. as directed by the Faculty.

Four contexts were encountered in Area 1. The lowest layer identified was a 0.43m thick layer of mid orange brown clayey sand with moderate stone (20). This layer was the same layer identified as context (6) during Phase 1 of the site works. Above this was cut 19 which was for drainage and electric cable interventions. This was filled with a deposit of 0.3m thick mid greyish brown mixed loamy sand with frequent stone inclusion (18). The area had clearly undergone multiple re-cutting episodes, the most recent episode was still discernible. There were disarticulated human remains in the fill of the modern service cut. Deposited above this was a 0.28m thick layer of dark



Plate 6. Area 1, Representative Section, S2. North view. (Note: Ceramic drain for soakaway seen covered in plastic - to the right of the electric cable - and gravel drain seen directly below sign-board and to the right of the ceramic drain).

greyish brown sandy loam topsoil, (17). No other archaeological features or finds were identified in Area 1.

4.2.2 Area 2 (Plate 7, 8 & 9; Figure 2)

Area 2 was the service pit which was dug at the the NE corner of the West Porch of church (near the West entrance). The area was approximately 1m x 1m and extended down 0.6m at its maximum depth.

The lowest layer excavated was a mid-orange brown, clayey sand with large angular stone inclusions and possible rubble from a prior phase of work on the church. The stones recovered from this deposit did not appear worked and were not retained. The layer was greater than 0.4m thick and was identified as made up ground. The stone foundations to the church appear to have been constructed prior to this layer as there is no evidence of a workman's trench for the stones. It was identified to be the same context as (20). Deposited above this was a 0.3m thick layer of dark greyish brown sandy loam topsoil (17). No other archaeological features or finds were identified in Area 2.



Plate 7. Area 2, Representative Section, S3. NW view.

4.2.3 Area 3 (Plate 10 & 11; Figure 2)

Area 3 was the service pit which was dug into the SW corner of the North Porch. It joined with the new drainage connecting to the W.C. in Area 1 and the services which

would ultimately run down the path. The area was approximately 1m x 1m followed by a narrow service trench that was approximately 3m x 0.4m and extended down



Plate 8 & 9. Area 2, general shot of Service Trench 2. North & west views respectively.

0.3m at its maximum depth. No archaeology was noted but building materials from a phase of the church's construction (Plate 10) and pre-existing services were encountered, which were no longer in use (Plate 11).

The lowest layer excavated (23) was mid-orange brown, clayey sand. This was cut by what may be a repair trench to work on the foundation wall of the church, 21. Cut 21 was filled by (22) a mid-yellowish brown, clayey sand which appeared to underlie the stone foundations of the church. This was exposed to a depth of 0.14m and was very similar in colour and texture to the natural encountered elsewhere on site, suggesting it had been redeposited in the cut after the work was completed. To the north of the foundation were some flat stones which did appear to be worked, however they were not removed as they formed the limit of the excavation, (24). They were lying flat, and it is possible that they represent an earlier surface. Above this was a mid-orange brown, clayey sand with large angular stone inclusions and rubble from a prior phase of work on the church. The layer was greater than 0.4m thick and was identified as made up ground. It was identified to be the same context as (20) and confirmed that the layer was from a construction or maintenance phase on the North façade of the church (though no material was recovered for diagnostic dating). Deposited above this was a 0.2m thick layer of dark greyish brown sandy loam (17) topsoil.

4.2.4 Area 4 (Plate 12, 13 & 14; Figure 2 & Figure 3; Plan 6 and 7)

Area 4 included the works to the ramp footpath running north to south from the road to the North entrance. The area was approximately 30m x 2m and extended down approximately 0.3m at its maximum depth. Down the middle of this stripped area, Service Trench 3 was excavated. This was 30m x 0.6m and was 0.7m at its maximum depth. The extant asphalt footpath was removed to reveal a previous flagstone footpath. Once the flagstone path was also removed the underlying soils were visible (Plate 12). The underlying soil at the southern 18m of the footpath, nearest the church entrance, was mid-greyish brown and had a high occurrence of charnel mixed throughout the layer. The northern 12m of the footpath was clean natural which did not contain any human remains or archaeological features.



Plate 10. Area 3, Representative Section, S4. W-NW view.



Plate 11. Area 3, general shot of Service Trench 1. W-NW view.

Approximately 8m from the north entrance of the church, a partially articulated, badly disturbed skeleton was uncovered, SK1 (Fig. 3, Plan 6; Plate 13). After obtaining instruction from Diocese, the skeleton was fully recorded and removed. During its removal two more partially articulated and also badly disturbed skeletons were uncovered immediately beneath the first, SK2 and SK3 (Fig. 3, Plan 7; Plate 14). They were so intermingled that there was no way to distinguish if they had initially been buried together or if they had each been buried at different times. No grave cut or coffin was discernible due to disturbance to the area and preservation conditions.



Plate 12. Area 4, general shot of footpath. South view.

Once the skeletons were lifted, work was able to recommence on the excavation of Service Trench 3 (Fig. 3, Section 9; Plate 15). This was managed without the need to disturb any further articulated burials and although the level of the excavation came down on at least three further articulated burials at the limit of excavation, each of these were covered over at the time of encounter and not disturbed. It should be noted that if future work is undertaken along the footpath exceeding 0.4m in depth in the first 20m from the church, articulated human remains should be expected to be encountered.



Plate 13. Area 4, Skeleton 1. South view.

Service Trench 3 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.45m below the already reduced ground level giving a maximum excavated depth of 0.7m at its deepest point

(this was towards the northern end of the foot path where natural sands were present). The final representative section (Fig. 3, Section 9; Plate 15) shows where the natural mid-yellowish sand (30) meets the disturbed charnel layer (29), a mid-greyish brown clayey sand with common stone inclusions. Above this was a layer of hardcore rubble which was laid by the builders to stabilize the soils (31). No further archaeological features were encountered.



Plate 14. Area 4, Skeleton 2 and 3. South view.

4.3 PHASE III *by Alessandro Guaggenti*

4.3.1 Area 5 (Plate 16 & 17; Figure 2 & Figure, Plan 9, Section 10)

Area 5 encompassed the stone steps on the eastern approach to the churchyard off Abingdon Road, and a Service Trench 4 which ran the length of the footpath on an East-West alignment from the stone steps to the North entrance.

The pre-existing stone steps were removed without an archaeologist present. The area was then backfilled in order to make the area more stable in order to remove the last remaining, although disturbed, stone steps. An archaeologist was present during the removal of the remaining stone steps and the area was reduced to a depth of 0.45m below the surface of Abingdon Road which bordered the site to the east. The stratigraphy of this area showed that the steps had been laid on top of a layer of subsoil (33), which contained mixed material, which in turn overlay a layer of natural sand (34) (Fig.3, Section 10, Plate 16). No archaeological features were encountered.



Plate 15. Area 4, Representative section S.9. General shot of Service Trench 3. East view.

The two retaining walls, **44** and **35**, located north and south of the steps, were recorded before being removed. Excavation of the southern wall disturbed an electrical cable running under the southern wall in an E-W direction. After the repair of the electric cable, work recommenced with the removal of the retaining walls and ground reduction in Area 5. The walls and the construction cuts that they occupied were not seen to disturb any archaeological deposits or features (Fig.3, Section 10, Plate 16).

Further west in this area, another, undocumented, electrical cable was seen to extend out of the southern section of the site. The position was around 3.5m from the road, where the ground reduction height was stepped up. The orientation of the cable was on an initial NW-SE alignment but turned west, heading under the path orientated E-W towards the church. No construction cut could be seen for the electrical cable, and as it was seen to be running directly under, and along the length of the path, it is likely that it is part of the same activity as that of the path construction. The mixed material found in this area would suggest that this area was disturbed by the construction cut of the path.

Service Trench 4 was excavated on an E-W alignment along the northern edge of the footpath leading from Abingdon Road to the church. The trench was 30cm in width, and extended to 0.45m below the topsoil north of the path. There was a difference in height between the top of the tarmac of the path and the topsoil of ca.5-10 cm. The trench skirted the visible locations of burials marked by the gravestones, within a gap of approximately 0.9m between the path and these gravestones. In order to limit the

impact to any of the burials, it was agreed to excavate within 0.1-0.2m of the construction cut of the existing path.



Plate 16. Area 5, S.10. North view.



Plate 17. Area 5, Skeleton 4. West view.

At the westerly edge of the trench, articulated human remains were identified (SK4) (Fig. 3, Plan 9; Plate 17). The remains were identified as consisting of a fragment of scapula, the right radius of an adult, fragments of pelvis at the distal end of the radius, three phalanges and a metacarpal (see Plate 17). The rest of the individual was expected to continue north of the trench, in line with the headstone. A grave cut could not be identified to the west, this was probably due to disturbance from an earlier soakaway located nearby, and the cutting back of the grass bank which had been altered where the path cut deeper into the area further west. To the east of the skeletal remains, a diffuse edge of a grave cut was present. Work was stopped immediately, as per the Faculty, so as to obtain further instruction from the Diocese. On consultation with the site manager, it was agreed that a narrow intervention at a depth of 0.45m from the topsoil, running south of the human remains (SK4) for the length of the burial, would be hand dug in order to be able to lay the cable without disturbing the burial. This was excavated by the attending archaeologist in order to identify if there were any articulated human remains below SK4. No remains or archaeological features were found, therefore work was able to continue and the electric cable was able to be laid without the need to disturb or remove the burial containing SK4.

The rest of the cable trench was dug to a depth of 0.45m without encountering any archaeological features. As the excavation continued further east, the level of the path and the ground level progressively rose, which reduced the likelihood of encountering articulated remains.

5 FINDS

5.1 HUMAN REMAINS

5.1.1 Phase I

A small collection of disarticulated human bone was gathered from Test Pits 1 and 3. This was returned to the ground below the level of excavation.

5.1.2 Phase II (Fig.3, Plan 6 & 7; Plate 13 &14)

Disarticulated human remains were recovered from Area 1 and returned to the ground below the level of excavation in the location where they were recovered.

A high amount of disarticulated and articulated human bone was gathered from Area 4, the footpath. This included the articulated human remains SK1, SK2 and SK3. All the remains were returned to the ground in the location they were recovered, below the level of excavation.

SK1 was severely disturbed by later activities; the remains were identified as juvenile, as the epiphyses of the recovered tibia and femur were found to be unfused. The partial remains, representing *ca.* 50% of the skeleton, included the complete right arm and right side of the torso, both proximal femurs and both lower legs.

SK2 inhumation was also severely disturbed, and it extended to the west beyond the limit of excavation. The visible remains consisted of the lower right arm, the complete

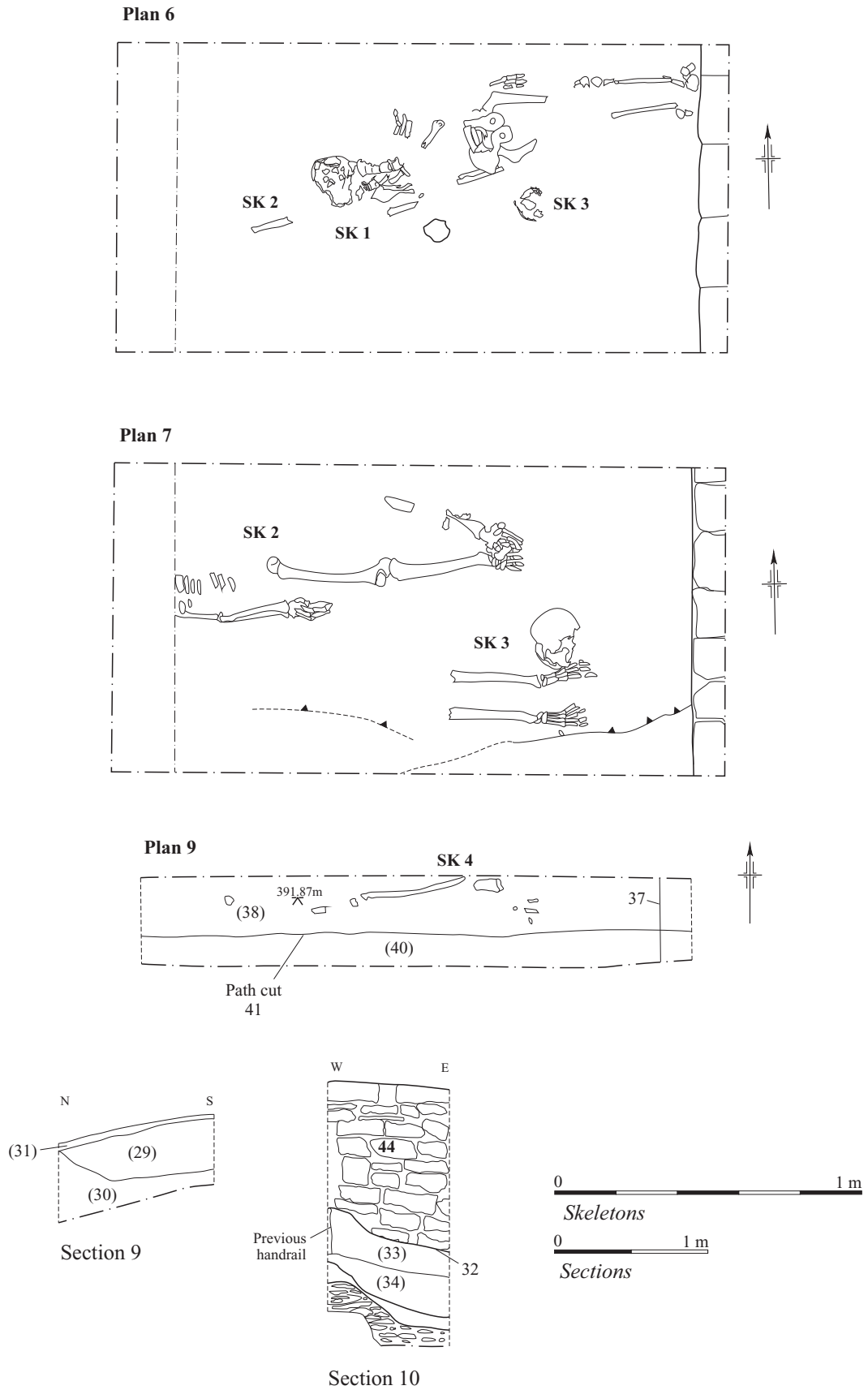


Figure 3: Plans 6, 7 & 9 and Sections 9 & 10

right leg and part of the lower left leg, representing *ca.* 40% of the skeleton. The age of the individual remains undetermined, although the unfused femoral epiphysis suggested a young age.

The only preserved remains of SK3 were the lower legs. The age of the individual remains undetermined as no epiphyses were preserved; however, the size range of the recovered bones indicated a very young age, possibly under 10 years. A partial cranium was also recovered, although its position immediately to the north of SK3's left foot suggested it was not associated with SK3.

The excavation of the footpath came down on at least three further articulated burials at the limit of excavation, each of these were covered over at the time of encounter and not disturbed further.

5.1.3 Phase III (Fig.3, Plan 9; Plate 17)

A small collection of disarticulated human bone was gathered from Area 5 and returned to the ground below the level of excavation. Articulated human remains were identified at the westerly edge of the Service Trench 4.

SK4 was only partially exposed; the visible remains consisted in the articulated metacarpals and phalanges of the right hand, and the right radius (see Plate 17). A fragment of pelvis was also recovered, although not in its original position due to later disturbance. The burial extended to the north, outside of the excavated area.

The laying of the electric cable was able to continue without the need to disturb or remove the burial containing SK4.

5.2 ANIMAL BONE

5.2.1 Phase I

A few animal bone fragments were collected but were not retained.

5.3 CERAMIC TILE

5.3.1 Phase I

One medieval glazed and decorated floor tile fragment was recovered in Test Pit 3 and was retained on the church premises.

5.4 ARCHITECTURAL STONE WORK *by Stephen Yeates*

In unmonitored works to the North Porch, the workmen found an architectural element which appears (from photographic analysis only) to be a medieval finial, possibly damaged in its carving. This remains in the possession of the church.

The worked Stone (WS1) (Plate 18):

Limestone (ragstone) fragment measuring approximately 320mm x 110mm x 90mm;

probably the remains of a finial of possibly cross form originally with both arms now missing. The base arm tapers and steps in at the base probably creating a water tablet. On the front there is a circular design with rim and central boss. The fragment is difficult to date as it is either extremely weathered or damaged and unfinished. It is difficult at face value to date precisely but it lacks the precision of high Gothic (Decorated, 1250-1360, and Perpendicular, 1360-1520) and certain decorative features that one would expect at this time such as ball flowers. The lack of such features as ball flowers, though not a definitive case, possibly points at an example of pre-Decorated or post-Perpendicular. The cruder nature of the carving could also point to something in the pre-Gothic tradition of Romanesque, although Norman architecture is often highly carved and ornate, or post-Reformation, when society lost its structure and skills.



Plate 18. Worked Stone 1.

Though difficult to date it is possible that there may be parallels to a group of cross finials that were recovered from the Old Minster at Winchester (Tweddle, Biddle et al. 1996, nos. 692, 693, 717 and 718). These appear to be finial crosses with rosettes or similar objects. A similar circular motif was found on a Yorkshire cross from Malton that is dated to the 9th century. Though further wider discussion is required on this object it may be a piece of sculpture from the 9th or 10th century, which would fit with Cumnor being a pre-Conquest foundation.

No other archaeological materials were recovered in Areas 1-5. Modern construction materials and rubble (brick, ceramic drain pipes, and rubber insulated electricity cables) associated with modern services and repairs were observed but not retained.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 PHASE I *by Gavin Davis*

Aside from the foundations to the above ground and upstanding parts of the church, no structural features of any archaeological interest were identified during the excavation of the test pits.

Made up ground in the south transept was identified and contained fragments that are likely derived from earlier floor layers. A piece of glazed medieval decorated floor tile was recovered that would have derived from an earlier floor surface. Animal bone and some fragments of human bone were also recovered but there was nothing that indicated the presence of burials in this part of the church. The presence of burials at a greater depth cannot be ruled out but the possibility of this would depend very much on the depth and nature of the made ground.

A small quantity of human bone was recovered from Test Pit 1 in the area of the proposed extension. This was in a very disturbed part of this area, in comparison no bone was recovered from Test Pit 4. Later excavations of the Area 1, where Test Pit 1 had been located, revealed evidence of previous interventions, including a gravel drain (French drain) which one of the church parishioners had helped to install in the last 40 years. The parishioner had reported finding human remains in the location at that time and it is likely that the dispersed human bone related to this activity.

6.2 PHASE II *by Stephanie Duensing*

Aside from the foundations to the above ground and upstanding parts of the church, no structural features of any archaeological interest were identified during the excavation for the foundation for the W.C. in Area 1, the service pits in Area 2 and Area 3, or the Service Trenches 1 or 2.

The N-S aligned footpath in Area 4 revealed a pre-existing flagstone footpath which had badly disturbed the churchyard below when it was installed (19th century or earlier). The area below the footpath was heavily littered with charnel from this disturbance and evidence of three partially articulated but incomplete skeletons were found. These had also been disturbed, likely by the same event of laying the flagstone path. Three further burials were encountered but were not disturbed further.

6.3 PHASE III *by Stephanie Duensing*

Aside from the existing churchyard wall which was recorded and removed, no features of archaeological interest were identified during the excavation of the stairs or Service Trench 4. The area was previously disturbed from an electric cable buried in the mid to late 20th century.

The E-W aligned footpath in Area 5 revealed evidence of one partially articulated but incomplete skeleton. This had also been disturbed by a soakaway which was placed to the west of the grave cut and headstone.

Overall, the works successfully attempted to avoid the disturbance of burials in the churchyard by working where possible on or around previously disturbed locations.

Finally, it is reiterated here that if future work is undertaken along the N-S aligned footpath exceeding 40cm in depth in the first 20m from the North entrance of the church, articulated human remains should be expected to be encountered. The same can be said for the area north of the E-W aligned footpath as well.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The primary site record

Physical record

None

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Oxfordshire County Museum Service with accession number OXCMS:2016.81.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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