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**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**Archaeological test pit evaluation at  
St Andrew's Church, Carlton,  
Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 3964 0498 (centre)**

Andrew Hyam



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**Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation at  
S. Andrew's Church  
Carlton,  
Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 3964 0498 (centre)**

**A R Hyam**

**For: Peter Rogan & Associates Limited/Carlton PCC**

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	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No previous work		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Archaeological test pitting		
	<b>Site Status</b>	Church yard		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Church yard and active church		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	medieval		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	medieval		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	DAC/ Historic England		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>			
<b>Planning Ref.</b>	Pre-planning			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>County</b>	Leicestershire		
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	<b>Study Area</b>			
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK3964 0498		
	<b>Height OD</b>	115m aOD		
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	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
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## **Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation at St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, Leicestershire. NGR: SK3964 0498**

**Andrew Hyam**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological test pit evaluation was undertaken at St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, Leicestershire between the 9th and 12th of December 2019 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). The work took place in advance of a proposed extension attached to the south-western corner of the church.*

*There are a number of known archaeological sites within the vicinity of the church. The church is known to have been rebuilt in 1764 and further modified in 1867. Excavation of foundations for the proposed extension had the potential to expose earlier church foundations as well as other archaeological deposits from earlier periods.*

*Three test pits (approximately 1m<sup>2</sup>) were located close to the south-west corner of the church within the footprint of the proposed extension. Beneath the topsoil a mid orange-brown sandy clay disturbed deposit was observed in all three test pits. Two pits were excavated to a depth of 1m whilst the third pit was dug to a depth of 0.8m. Natural substratum was not seen in any of the pits.*

*No earlier church foundations were exposed nor were any archaeological features seen during the exercise. A small number of Swithland roof slates were recovered from the disturbed deposit which are likely to be medieval in date and may be from the pre-1764 church. A fragment of 15th century floor tile was also recovered from the same deposit.*

*The report will be archived under accession number X.A116.2019*

### **Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological test pit evaluation at St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, Leicestershire, NGR: SK3964 0498.

It is proposed to construct a single-storey extension to the church on the south side of the church tower and adjacent to the south-west corner of the nave on a spot currently occupied by a small shed and part of the grave yard. The church was rebuilt in 1764 with further alterations in 1867 but it is unclear if the new church was built on the same foundations or followed a new outline. The proposed extension therefore had the potential to expose the foundations of an earlier church and lead to a greater understanding of the development of the site.

Therefore the Diocesan Advisory Commission (DAC) recommended that three test pits should be excavated within the proposed footprint of the extension in order to fully



record any foundations or archaeological features which may be present. This work would be followed, if necessary, by a further stage of archaeological work.

## Background

The village of Carlton lies in the parish of Carlton and is approximately 20km to the west of Leicester. Market Bosworth lies around 2km to the south-east of Carlton (Fig. 1). The village is an elongated settlement sitting either side of Main Street which extends eastwards onto the road between Barton in the Beans and Market Bosworth. St. Andrew's Church is located half way along Main Street on its southern side.

The churchyard forms a roughly rectangular plot covering an area of around 2800m<sup>2</sup> and is similar in plan to other property plots facing onto Main Street (Fig. 2). The site consists of two cemeteries (the original Churchyard, which is now closed for burials, and the adjacent Parish Cemetery) within a single space. The churchyard is generally level and lies at around 115m aOD. The ground drops down slightly to the south of the church and there is a noticeable terraced step approximately 50m from the south wall of the church, marking the division between the churchyard and the current cemetery. As with most churchyards the ground is higher than the surrounding properties due to the number of burials over time.

The British Geological Survey website indicated that the underlying geology was likely to be sands and gravel overlying Gunthorpe member mudstone.

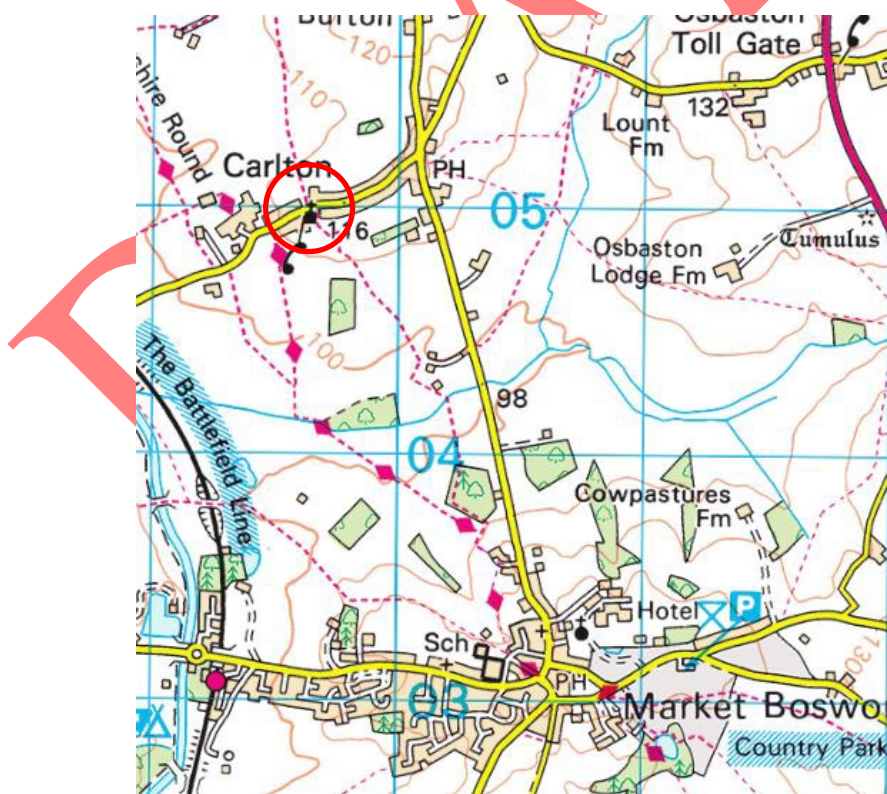


Figure 1 Site location

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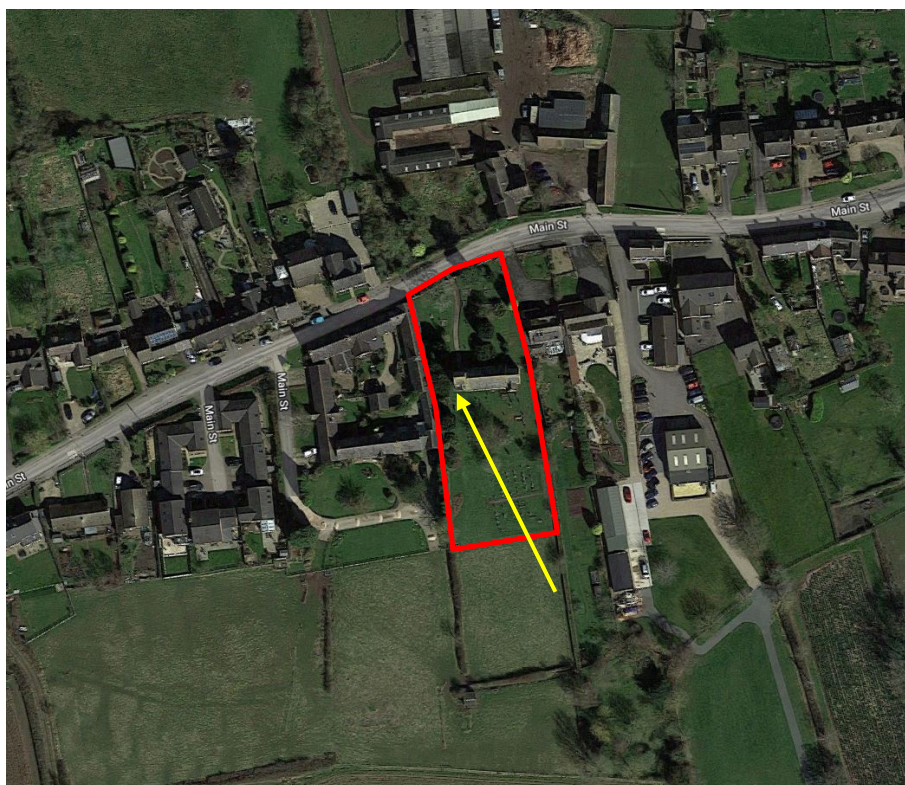


Figure 2 Site location showing outline of original Churchyard and Parish Cemetery  
Arrow points to location of proposed extension. From ULAS WSI

## Objectives

The overall objectives and research agenda are detailed in the ULAS Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for *Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation. St Andrew's Church Carlton, Leicestershire* (ULAS 2019).

The specific objectives for this programme of work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological or structural deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape and buildings.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results.
- To assess and sample any potential palaeoenvironmental remains.
- To produce an archive and report of the results.

## Methodology

The project involved the excavation of three hand-excavated test pits each covering an area of 1m<sup>2</sup>. The provisional location of the pits is shown in Figure 3 although site

constraints did allow for these to be relocated with the proviso that they still remained within the footprint of the proposed extension.

The trial trenches were hand excavated to the top of archaeological deposits or building foundations, down to a maximum depth of 1m. Trenches were examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located were planned at an appropriate scale. Should any archaeological deposits be found they would be sample-excavated as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. A photographic record of the investigations was also prepared. This record included photographs illustrating in both detail and general context the layers discovered. The photographic record included working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. The pits were then backfilled at the end of the exercise.

A site plan based was prepared showing the location of the test pits examined in relationship to the overall investigation area and OS grid. All principal contexts would be recorded by drawn plans (scale 1:20 or 1:50, or electronically using GPS) and drawn sections (scale 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate). The relative height of all principal strata and features was recorded.

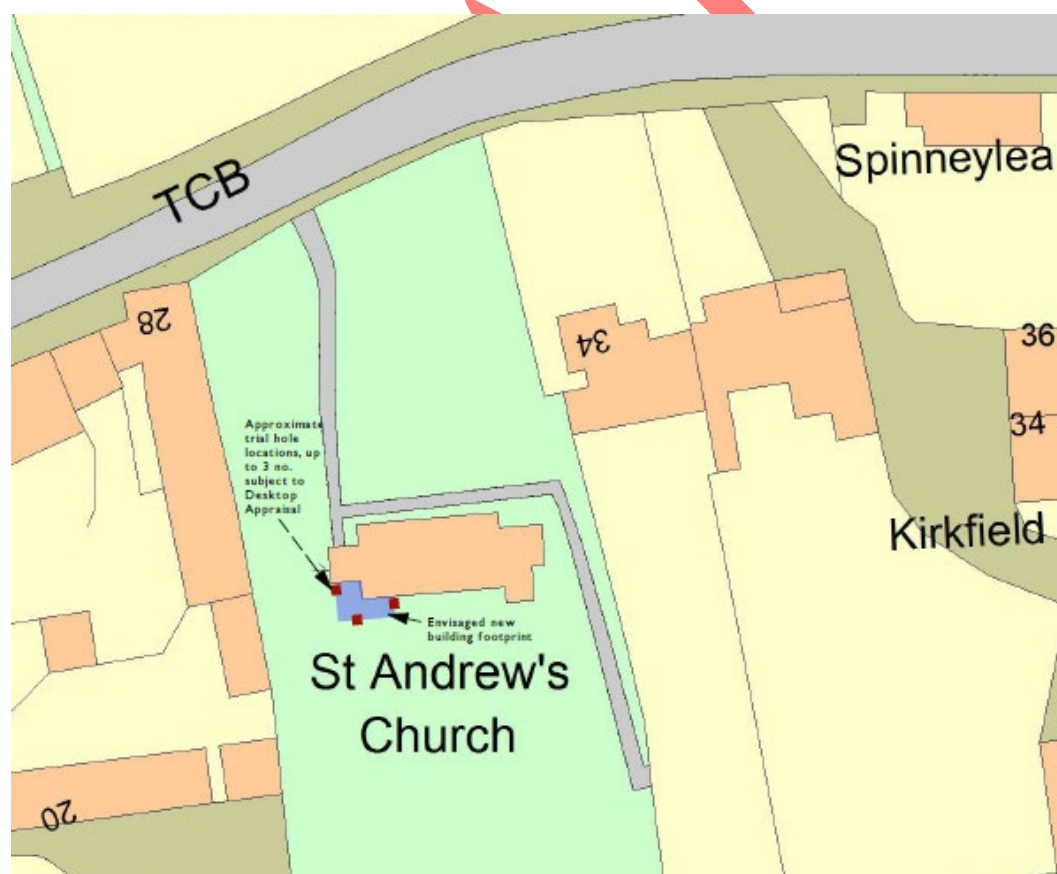


Figure 3 Provisional test pit plan  
Plan provided by client. North to top of picture



## Results

Three test pits were excavated within the footprint of the proposed extension and associated areas which will be disturbed by the building work (Fig. 4).

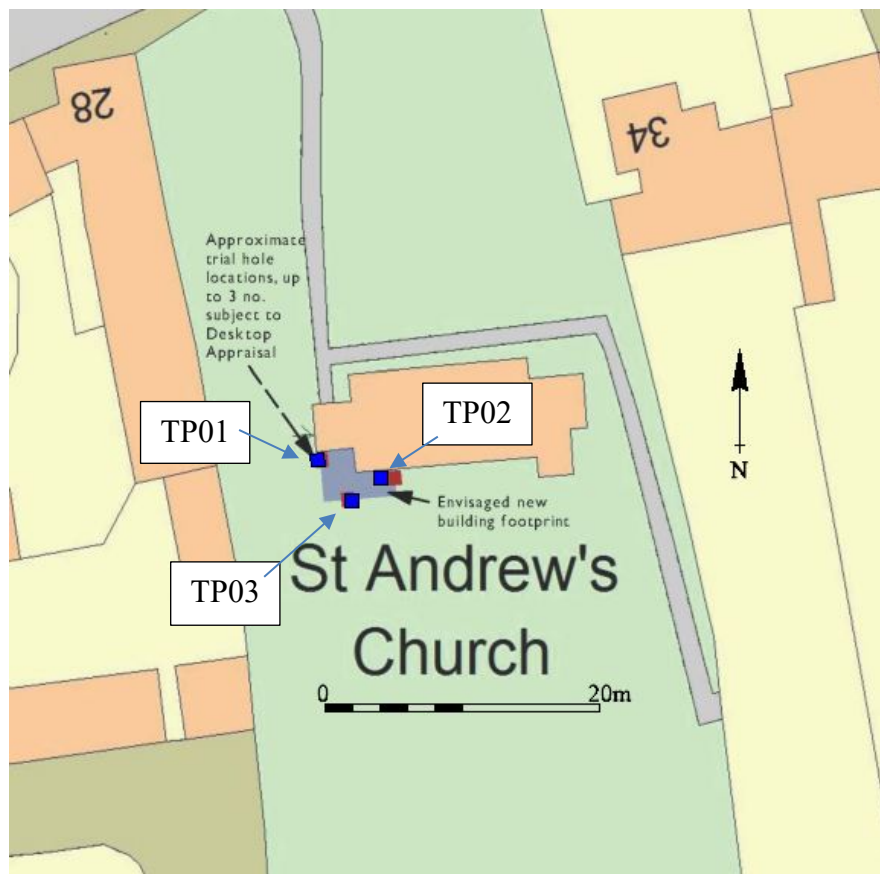


Figure 4 Location of all test pits

Blue squares show the actual location, red squares show proposed

### TP01

Test pit 1 was placed adjacent to the south-western corner of the tower. A storage shed has been built into the corner of the church and the tower which meant that the pit had to be moved slightly further west than the specified location. A concrete pathway covered the pit location but this was kindly removed by local volunteers prior to the start of the evaluation (Fig. 5). A thin (0.08m) layer of bedding material supported the concrete path.

Beneath the bedding layer was a mid-orange brown mixed sandy clay layer (01) containing fragments of plaster, broken bricks and other stony rubble. This layer was around 0.35m in thickness. Fragments of Swithland roof slates were recovered from layer (01). Their elongated shape and partially bored holes suggest a medieval or later medieval date (pers. Comm. N Finn).

A fragment of floor tile was also recovered from layer (01). The fragment, which is abraded, is 17mm (5/8") thick, with the remains of a white slip and traces of a yellowish brown and greenish glaze over the red body, which is in a coarse sandy fabric. The full

design in its entirety would have consisted of a circular band decorated with small lozenges and containing four branches of oak leaves radiating from the centre. Formal leaves fill the outer corners (a photograph of the full tile is shown in Appendix 1). This design appears to be relatively uncommon and is not recorded in the Eames Catalogue (1980), but has been found at Gaddesby Church and at Burton-on-Trent Abbey, Staffordshire and, more recently, at the lost chapel of Saint Morrell in Hallaton, Leicestershire. The tile would have formed the lower left hand side of a four-tile design (Sawday 2020). It seems likely to have originated from the church and is probably of 15th century date. A short length of clay pipe stem from the late 19th century was also recovered from (01). A similar mixed layer was exposed beneath (01) which contained the same mid-orange brown sandy clay but with very little building material within it (02). Layer (02) continued down to, and beyond, the base of the test pit at 1m below current ground level (Fig. 6).

On the south facing elevation of Test Pit 01 the church tower foundations continued down below the maximum excavated depth. The exposed wall was flush with the rest of the tower on the south side but stepped out slightly on its west face (Fig. 7). The same grey sandstone used for the base of the church wall and tower could be seen on the exposed tower foundation within the pit.

No archaeological features were observed within this test pit.



Figure 5 Test Pit 1 location

Yellow arrow points to location after removal of concrete path. Looking east



Figure 6 Fully excavated Test Pit 01  
Tower foundations continue below base of test pit

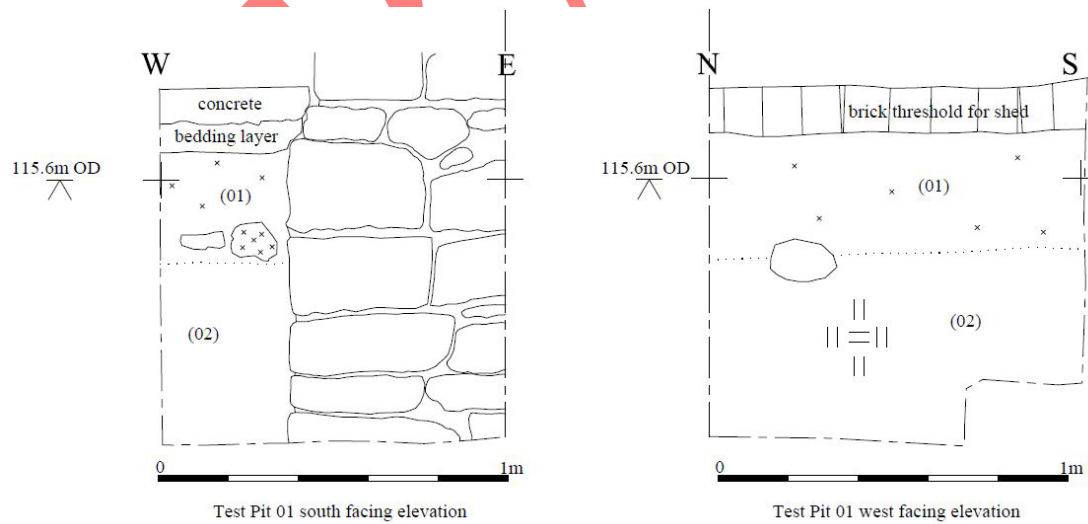


Figure 7 Test Pit 01 sections



### *TP02*

Test Pit 02 was placed alongside the church wall close to the eastern edge of the proposed extension (Fig. 8). Removal of turf and topsoil exposed a band of mid-orange brown mixed sandy clay layer containing fragments of plaster and other stony rubble as seen in Test Pit 01. This 0.12m thick layer was given the same context number (01). Beneath this layer was the same mid-orange brown sandy clay but with very little building material within it (02) as seen in Test Pit 01. Layer (02) continued down to, and beyond, the base of the test pit at 0.8m below current ground level. Close to the church wall was a cut full of heavily disturbed sandy clay (04), [05]. The cut extended down to a line of angled slates laid to deflect rainwater away from the wall towards a ceramic land drain running parallel to the church (Figs 9 and 10). The drain was left in-situ during the test pit excavation. After discussion with the architect it was decided to stop excavating at 0.8m below current ground level.

No archaeological features were observed within this test pit.



Figure 8 Test Pit 02 location





Figure 9 Test Pit 02 fully excavated  
0.4m scale is resting on the angled slates laid to deflect water towards the drain

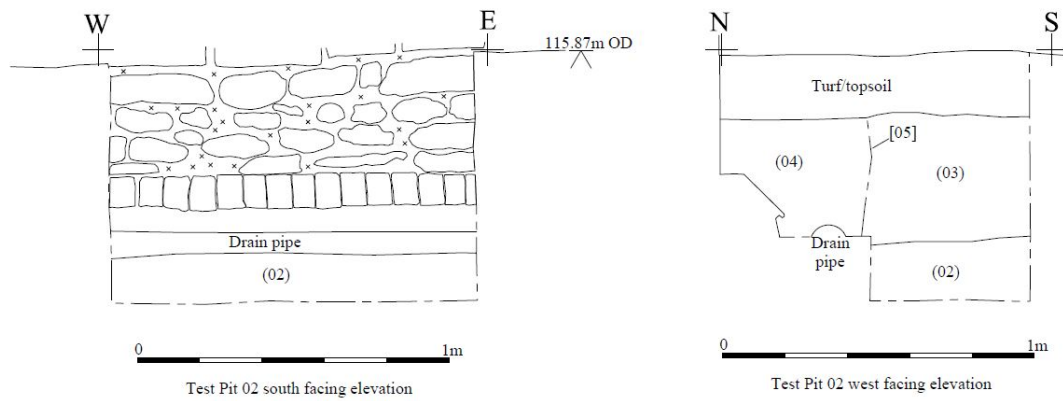


Figure 10 Test Pit 02 sections

*TP03*

Test Pit 03 was placed to cover the proposed southern wall foundation line of the extension. The location was quite close to a headstone but no grave cuts or grave contents were observed during the work. A 0.3m thick layer of turf and topsoil was removed to expose the same disturbed layers (01) and (02) seen in the first two test pits (Figs 11 and 12). Another medieval tile made of Swithland slate was recovered from layer (01). This test pit was excavated down to 0.8m below current ground level.

No archaeological features were observed within this test pit.



Figure 11 Test Pit 03 fully excavated

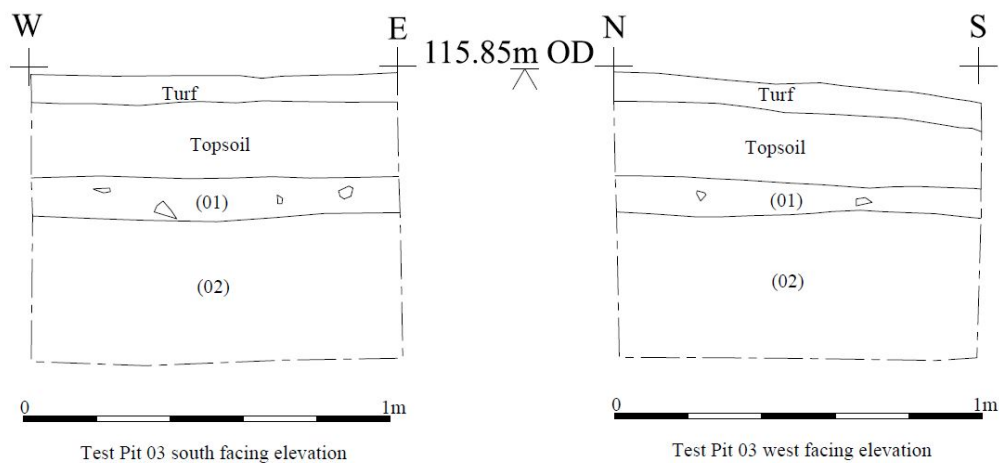


Figure 12 test Pit 03 sections

Table 1 Test pit depths

	TP01	TP02	TP03
Ground level OD	115.60m	115.87m	115.85m
Base of pit (natural not seen in any pit)	114.60m	115.07m	115.05m

### Discussion

Despite the potential for exposing foundations belonging to a possible earlier church none were seen during this exercise. It is therefore possible that the existing stone base of the building is the original part of the church and the brickwork, which sits on top of the stonework represents the rebuilding phase of either 1764 or 1867. Alternatively the outline of the earlier church may have been smaller and sat within the footprint of the present church. Either way any future construction work in this area seems unlikely to expose any church foundations.

The Swithland slates found within layer (01) appear to be of medieval date and seem likely to have come from the original church roof. The 15th century floor tile also appears to have ecclesiastical origins and was probably lifted and discarded during one of the rebuilding phases. Many later 19th century Gothicisation schemes removed large amounts of medieval material from churches across the country and St. Andrew's might be an example of this. Given the quantity of building rubble in layer (01) it is tempting to suggest that this layer may have resulted from the rebuilding. Despite the apparent lack of earlier foundations there is the potential that more building fragments from the earlier church phases might be recovered during the construction of the proposed extension.



## Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,

3 A4 pro-forma test pit recording sheets,

1 A3 drawing sheet,

2 A4 photographic contact sheets containing 62 photographs,

1 DVD with 62 photographs,

1 A4 photo record sheet.

It has been requested that the tile fragment and 4 roof slates be returned for display at St. Andrew's Church.

## Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the appropriate local archaeological and historical journal in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

## Bibliography

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ULAS. 2019. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Test Pit Evaluation, St Andrew's Church, Carlton, Leicestershire*.



## Appendix 1 Medieval floor tile fragment

Deborah Sawday

### *The Ceramic Finds*

The ceramic assemblage was made up of part of a printed (or stamp over slip) medieval floor tile from TP1, context 1. The fragment, which is abraded, is 17mm (5/8") thick, with the remains of a white slip and traces of a yellowish brown and greenish glaze over the red body, which is in a coarse sandy fabric. The tile would have formed the lower left hand side of a fifteenth century four-tile design, Whitcomb number 196 (Whitcomb 1956). Whitcomb describes the design as 'in entirety a circular band decorated with small lozenges and containing four branches of oak leaves radiating from the centre. Formal leaves fill the outer corners' (*ibid.* 1956, 111). This design appears to be relatively uncommon and is not recorded in the Eames Catalogue (1980), but has been found at Gaddesby Church and at Burton-on-Trent Abbey, Staffordshire and, more recently, at the lost chapel of Saint Morrell in Hallaton, Leicestershire (Sawday 2014). A complete and less abraded example of the same tile design, but of unknown provenance, is in the Leicestershire County Council's collections.



Example of the full tile held in the Leicestershire County Council's collections

### Bibliography

Eames, E., 1980 *Catalogue of Medieval Lead-Glazed Earthenware Tiles in the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquity in the British Museum*. London. Trustees of the British Museum

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