
Archaeology & Built Heritage

**Archaeological Watching Brief
on External Drainage Works at
All Saints Church, Hoby, Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 6691 1734

Undertaken at the request of

Martyn Taylor

on behalf of

The Parochial Church Council

by

Neil Finn

Archaeology & Built Heritage

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Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken during groundwork for the installation of a mains water supply and foul drain, serving a new accessible W.C. and servery within the north aisle of All Saints Church, Main Street, Hoby, Leicestershire, LE14 3DU (National Grid Reference: SK 6691 1734).

The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Martyn Taylor, on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, and was undertaken by Neil Finn of Archaeology & Built Heritage on the 31st October 2019.

The watching brief monitored the excavation of a service trench between the north-west corner of the north aisle and the gate at the north-east corner of the churchyard, at the junction of Main Street and Church Lane. For most of its length the trench followed the line of an existing footpath.

No archaeological remains were encountered in the course of the groundwork and no graves were disturbed. A few fragments of charnel were collected for reburial; no other finds were recovered.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief undertaken during groundwork for the installation of a mains water supply and foul drain, serving a new accessible W.C. and servery within the west end of the north aisle of All Saints Church, Main Street, Hoby, Leicestershire, LE14 3DU (National Grid Reference: SK 6691 1734).
- 1.2 The archaeological investigation was commissioned by Martyn Taylor, on behalf of the Parochial Church Council, and undertaken by Neil Finn of Archaeology & Built Heritage on the 31st October 2019.
- 1.3 The archaeological investigation was required as a condition of a Faculty for the improvement works, on the recommendation of the Diocesan Advisory Committee's (DAC) Archaeological Advisor. The architects for the scheme were Peter Rogan & Associates Ltd (PRA).
- 1.4 The archaeological investigation was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014).

2. Location, Topography and Geology

- 2.1 The village of Hoby, within the Civil Parish of Hoby with Rotherby, is located approximately 10 miles (16 km) north-east of Leicester and 6 miles (9.5 km) west of Melton Mowbray, in the Melton District of north-east Leicestershire (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The Parish Church of All Saints is located on the north side of Main Street, at its junction with Church Lane, at National Grid Reference SK 6691 1743 (Figure 2).
- 2.3 The village is built on a bluff overlooking the Wreake valley (Hoskins 1970, 57-8). The church is situated at approximately 73.3m above Ordnance Datum, with a benchmark c. 0.7m above ground level at the north-east corner of the chancel having a value of 74.063m.
- 2.4 The solid geology of the area is Mudstone of the Branscombe Mudstone Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 201 to 228 million years ago in the Triassic period. This is overlain by superficial deposits of Birstall Member Sand and Gravel, formed up to 2 million years ago (British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer, accessed 07.09.2020).

3. Historical Context

- 3.1 A settlement at Hoby is first documented in the *Domesday Book* of 1086, where it is named as *Hobie* (Morgan 1979, 36,2). The place-name is a combination of the Old English **hōh** meaning 'a heal; a hill-spur' and the Old Danish **bȳ** meaning 'a farmstead, a village', which translates as 'the farmstead or village at the headland' and describes the topographical position of the settlement (Cox 2004, 113).
- 3.2 John Nichols provides an account of the manorial history down to 1800 in Volume III, part I of his *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (Nichols 1800, 264-8; 388). This includes an illustration of the parish church, reproduced here as Figure 3.
- 3.3 The parish church of All Saints is included on the statutory national list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. It was listed at grade I on 01/01/1968 with the following description:

Church. C13 and C14. Clerestory added C15. Repaired 1744. Chancel rebuilt and church restored by Ewan Christian 1863-4. Ironstone ashlar with limestone dressings, Swithland slate roof to chancel, lead roofs to nave and aisles. Chancel, vestry, aisled nave and W tower. 1-bay chancel has 3-light E window with cusped intersecting tracery and 3-light window to S which has shafts to jambs and mullions with moulded and foliage capitals, and roll-moulded intersecting tracery; both have hood moulds and label stops. C19 vestry to N

has cusped 1-light E window and Caernarfon-arched door. Nave has 4-window clerestory of 3-light windows with cinquefoil-headed lights and chamfered round arch or slightly pointed surrounds of grey sandstone. Rainwater head to middle S side inscribed JOHN ALSAP / ROBERT HENTON / CHURCH WARDENS / 1744 and plain stone-coped parapets. N aisle has 3-light windows to E and W ends with cusped heads to lights and tracery to head of 3 cusped pointed arches (renewed) and 2-light windows to N with cusped Y tracery; all have hood moulds and label stops. Renewed hollow-chamfered N door with impost and hood mould. S aisle has fine set of windows of c.1300, all with slender mullions and tracery, and hood moulds with label stops. That to E end has 4 lights with ogee-arched pointed trefoil heads, larger, many-moulded central mullion dividing window in two, each half with quatrefoiled circle above two trefoils to head, and sexfoiled circle to main head. W and SE windows have 3 lights and cusped intersecting tracery. Window to right of S door has multi-foiled reticulated tracery. S door, much renewed, has 3 orders of shafts, many-moulded head and hood mould with label stops. 3-stage tower has cusped 1-light window to bottom stage W, chamfered door to S, and similar window to middle stage S. 2-light bell-chamber openings with Y tracery and hood moulds. Off-set angle buttresses, plain stone-coped parapet with ball flower ornament to base, and gargoyle to middle of sides, and recessed spire with broaches and 3 tiers of lucarnes, all near top, those at lowest level quatrefoiled.

Interior: Chancel has piscina with shafts, blank pointed trefoil head and nailhead ornament to hood mould. Nave has 4-bay arcades with four attached demi-shafts with fillets to central piers, eastern piers with four main round attached and four diagonal shafts of rectangular section, and octagonal western piers, polygonal responds, moulded shafts and double-chamfered arches. S aisle has many-moulded piscina with cusped head, sedilia and archway with continuous double sunk quadrant mouldings, and much renewed Perpendicular tie-beam roof with foliage and faces to bosses. Font: Octagonal on broach-stopped octagonal stem. Royal Arms of George III; oil on canvas. Set of C15 benches in aisles with poppyhead ends. Perpendicular-style rood screen forming part of a complete scheme of decoration of chancel carried out from c1914-1920 as a memorial to Beresford family. Screen has painted figurative decoration to base and to E side of cove in relief. Decorative scheme includes tile floors of chancel, choir seating, painted decoration and angels to roof above sanctuary, painted frieze and small Commandment and Lords Prayer boards flanking High Altar. Stain-glass E and S chancel windows of 1914 and 1916 form part of same Scheme. Another stain-glass window by same hand to NE aisle window of 1917.

Monuments: Brass of c.1480 with lower half of a knight in armour and indent for his wife. Veined white marble wall monument to Sarah Anne Standley

d.1792. Successive members of the Beresford family were rectors and patrons of the living for almost a century from mid C19.

3.4 The church is within Hoby Village Conservation Area, designated by Melton Borough Council in February 1976.

4. Research Aims and Objectives

4.1 Regional research aims are defined in *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012), which builds on an earlier resource assessment and research agenda: *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006).

4.2 The archaeological investigation was identified as having the potential to contribute towards themes defined in section 6.7 of *East Midlands Heritage*, which provides a research agenda for the High Medieval period (1066-1485), specifically aspects covered in paragraph 7.5: *Religion*. In addition, the investigation was identified as having the potential to contribute towards research themes defined in section 6.8, which provides a research agenda for the Post-Medieval period (1485-1750), specifically aspects covered in paragraph 8.6: *Ecclesiastical structures, estates and burials* (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012, 94, 108).

4.3 The specific objectives of the archaeological investigation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of buried archaeological remains within the areas affected by groundwork associated with the approved development
- To establish the character, extent and date range of any buried archaeological remains affected by the groundwork
- To record any archaeological remains affected by the groundwork
- To interpret any such remains within the context of the known current and previous use of the development site and the wider area
- To produce a report and archive of any results

5. Method Statement

5.1 The archaeological watching brief monitored groundwork within the churchyard, which involved the excavation of a single service trench to accommodate both a new mains water supply and, at a lower level, a foul drain, serving a new accessible W.C. and a servery, installed within the west end of the north aisle of the church.

- 5.2 The service trench followed the line of an existing gravel footpath between the gate at the north-east corner of the churchyard and the north doorway of the church. From this point the trench continued in a south-westerly direction to a point 1.25m west of the north doorway, adjacent to the buttress at the north-west corner of the north aisle.
- 5.3 The service trench was excavated using a tracked mini-excavator fitted with a 300mm wide bucket.
- 5.4 The groundwork was monitored by the archaeologist and written, drawn and photographic records were prepared.

6. Results (Figures 4; Photos 1-7)

- 6.1 The excavated trench was c. 29.5m long, 400mm wide and 900mm deep. The depth was consistent along its length, with the required fall for the drain being provided by the topography of the site (which falls gradually to the north).
- 6.2 The deposit sequence exposed in section was consistent along the length of the trench, except where the ground was disturbed by tree roots or old drains. The surface of the footpath consisted of coarse gravel in a dark brown soil matrix (context 1) to a depth of 200mm, beneath which was a compact orange pea gravel (context 2), representing an earlier footpath surface, to a depth of 250mm. Below this was a fairly loose orange-brown coloured sandy silt clay (context 3), the lower horizon of which exceeded the depth of the trench.
- 6.3 Beyond the south-west end of the footpath, up to the north-west corner of the north aisle, the deposit sequence consisted of 240mm of topsoil (context 4) overlying the same loose orange-brown coloured sandy silt clay (context 3).
- 6.4 Several old drains were encountered, crossing the line of the service trench in the vicinity of the north doorway, the installation of which had resulted in much ground disturbance in this area.
- 6.5 There was significant root disturbance from nearby trees and bushes, particularly in the north-eastern half of the trench.
- 6.6 No archaeological features were observed within the service trench and no graves were disturbed.
- 6.7 The only finds were a few small fragments of charnel recovered from context 3, which were collected for reburial within the churchyard.

7. Discussion

- 7.1 No significant features were encountered in the course of the archaeological watching brief and no graves were disturbed.
- 7.2 A few fragments of charnel found in the course of the groundwork were collected for reburial. Charnel is a common occurrence in old churchyards, resulting from the disturbance of earlier burials during the excavation of new graves, over the course of many centuries.

8. Project Archive and Finds

- 8.1 The project archive consists of:
- 1 x annotated A4 paper copy of architect's plan
 - 2 x A4 sheets of field notes
 - Colour digital photographs (in high resolution .jpeg format)
 - Catalogue of photographs
 - A copy of this report
- 8.2 No finds were recovered, other than charnel which was collected for reburial within the churchyard.

9. Publication

- 9.1 A summary of the findings of the project will be submitted to the editor of the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* for inclusion in their annual roundup of archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland.
- 9.2 The full report will be made available via the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website and a copy will be deposited with the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER).

10. Bibliography

CIfA, 2014. *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

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08/09/2020

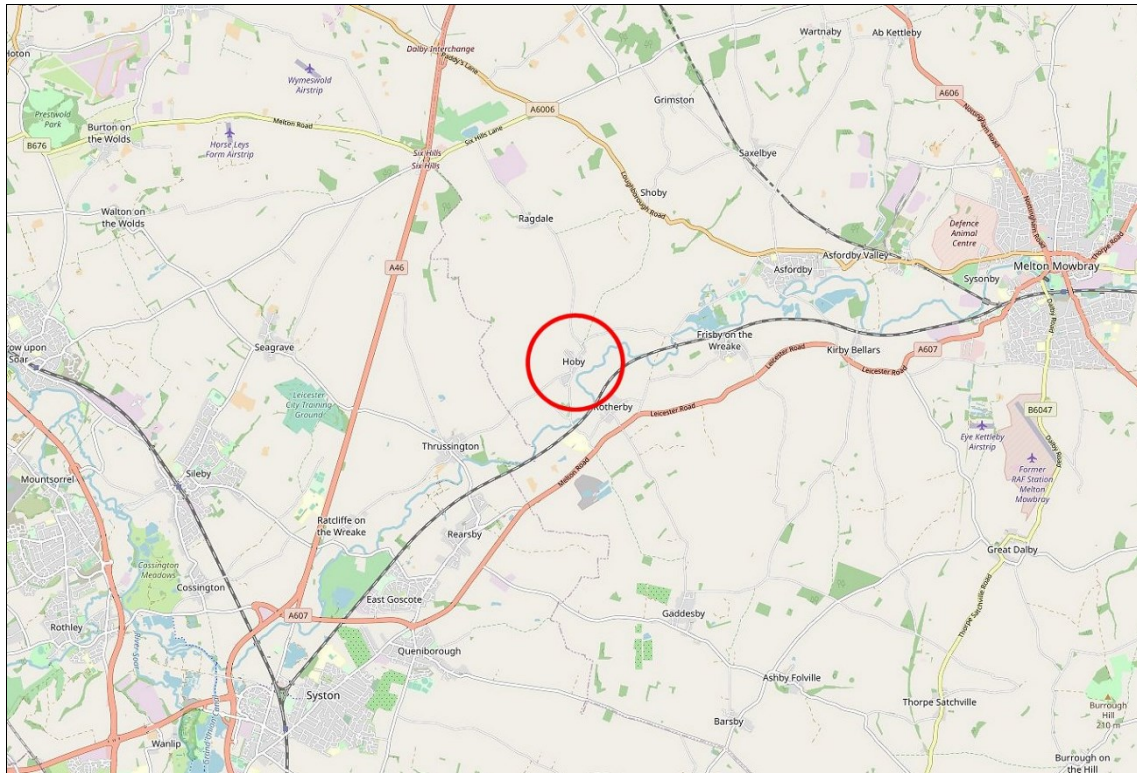


Figure 1. General Location Plan, Hoby village circled in red. © OpenStreetMap contributors.

Heritage Category:		Listing
List Entry No :		1075004
Grade:		I
County: Leicestershire		
District: Melton		
Parish: Hoby with Rotherby		

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July, 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

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List Entry NGR:	SK 66916 17348
Map Scale:	1:2500
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Name: CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS

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Historic England
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Figure 2. Site Location Plan, centred on All Saints Church. Source: Historic England.



Figure 3. Engraving of All Saints Church, Hoby from the south, published in Nichols (1800).

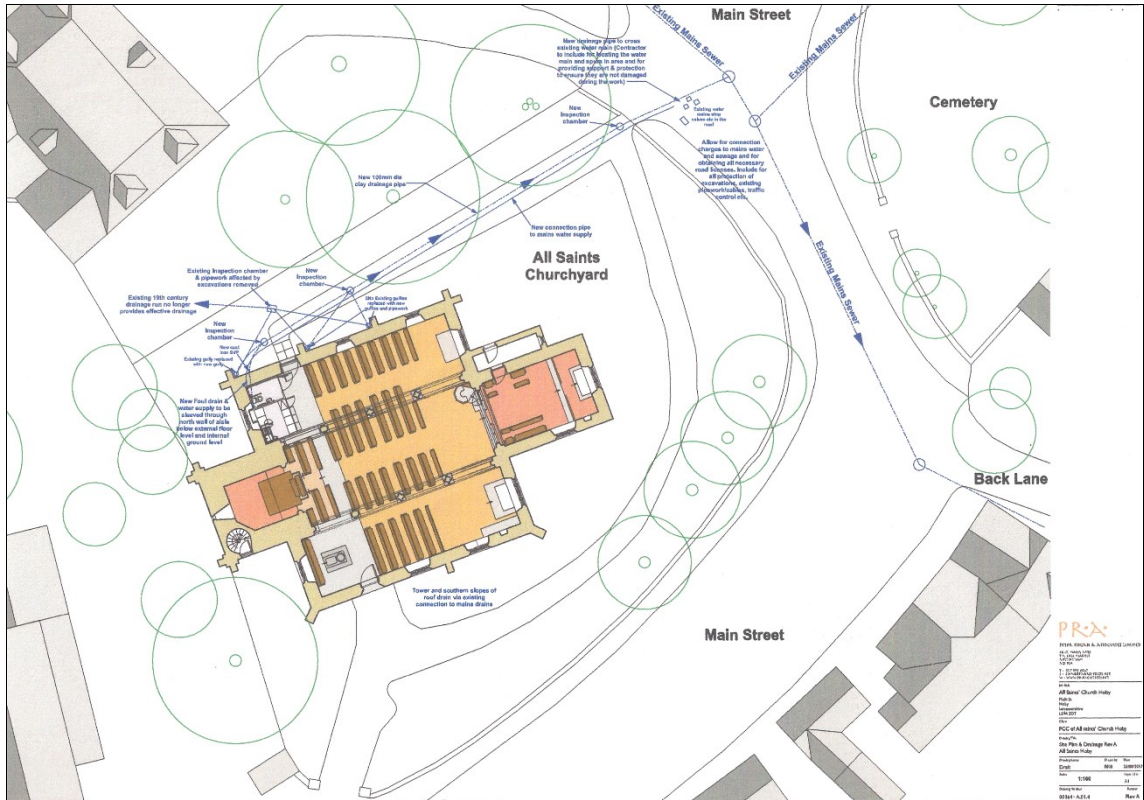


Figure 4. Site Plan showing location of service trench (in blue) following line of footpath on north side of church (PRA plan supplied by the Client).



Photo 1. All Saints Church, Hoby from Main Street, looking N (cf. Figure 3).



Photo 2. All Saints Church, Hoby from Main Street/Church Lane junction, looking SW.



Photo 3. View of excavated service trench on line of path, looking ENE towards Main Street.



Photo 4. View of excavated service trench on line of path, looking WSW towards N door.



Photo 5. Excavation of service trench adjacent to north door of church, looking WSW.



Photo 6. Detail shot showing typical deposit sequence within service trench, looking N.



Photo 7. Detail of old drains and inspection chamber outside north door, looking W.