

**ST JAMES'S CHURCH**  
**JACOBSTOWE**  
**WEST DEVON**  
**DEVON**

Results of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 191217



[www.swarch.net](http://www.swarch.net)

01769 573555  
01872 223164

## ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, JACOBSTOWE, WEST DEVON, DEVON

### RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

---

By J. Bampton  
Report Version: FINAL  
Draft issued: 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019  
Finalised: 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Work undertaken by SWARCH for PCC of St. James's Church, Jacobstowe (The Client)

#### SUMMARY

---

*This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at St James's Church, Jacobstowe, Devon. The groundworks were associated with the construction of an out-building to the west of the church and related services/drainage running along the south side of the church. The current church is 12<sup>th</sup> century with 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century rebuilds and extensions. Archaeological works at the church in 2015 revealed a probable pre-conquest apsidal wall below the present nave.*

*The monitoring and recording revealed four archaeological features. A 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century gravel footpath that was probably created after 1838 and removed between 1904 and 1946, possibly during works associated with the construction of the vestry. Two stone wall foundations that possibly equate to two sides of the same structure. These walls were morphologically comparable to the probable pre-conquest apsidal wall excavated inside the nave and were ostensibly cut by the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> tower. Human bone recovered from one of these wall foundations provided a radiocarbon determination of the early 11<sup>th</sup> or late 10<sup>th</sup> century. The final feature encountered was a probable grave-cut, which was cut by one of the wall foundations and hints that the site was subject to activity, probably as a burial/holy site prior to-, or contemporary with the pre-conquest structures/apsidal church 'complex'.*

*The presence of a western apsidal, pre-conquest church at Jacobstowe is rare in-of itself and of significance. The potential expansion of this phase of activity to a complex of multiple structures increases this significance and demonstrates the potential of the site- and of similar sites at rural churches to yield significant archaeological data/resources. The nature of the groundworks means that the site potentially contains a large amount of surviving remains associated with the features identified in this trench work. In future, geophysical survey (Ground Penetrating Radar) or sampling of deeper sealed contexts on the site has the potential to greatly increase our understanding of the early ecclesiastical history of Jacobstowe.*

---



October 2020

South West Archaeology Ltd. shall retain the copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project. The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of South West Archaeology Ltd. and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information available at the time of production.

## CONTENTS

---

<i>SUMMARY</i>	2
<i>CONTENTS</i>	3
<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i>	3
<i>LIST OF APPENDICES</i>	3
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</i>	4
<i>PROJECT CREDITS</i>	4
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND	5
1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
1.4 METHODOLOGY	6
<b>2.0 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION	8
2.2 SITE INSPECTION	8
2.3 SERVICE TRENCH SOUTH OF THE NAVE AND TOWER	9
2.4 SERVICE TRENCH AND RAMPED FOOTPATH WEST OF THE TOWER	11
2.5 FINDS SUMMARY	14
<b>3.0 DISCUSSION</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 DISCUSSION	15
3.1.1 Probable Pre-Conquest Wall Foundations	15
3.1.2 Probable 19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> century Footpath	16
<b>4.0 CONCLUSION</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY &amp; REFERENCES</b>	<b>18</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

---

*Cover plate: St James's Church during groundworks; viewed from the south (no scale).*

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION.	7
FIGURE 2: AREA WEST OF TOWER, SHOWING LAYERS (105) AND (106); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.	8
FIGURE 3: FOUNDATION WALL {110}, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.	9
FIGURE 4: GRAVE-CUT [111], CONSTRUCTION CUT [109] AND WALL FOUNDATION {110}; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST	10
FIGURE 5: CONSTRUCTION CUT [113] AND FOUNDATION WALL {114}, MID-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.	11
FIGURE 6: SITE PLAN INCLUDING PHASED PLAN OF ST JAMES' CHURCH AND PLANS OF THE 2015 EXCAVATIONS WITHIN THE NAVE.	12
FIGURE 7: SECTION DRAWINGS AND PLANS OF FEATURES [109], {110} AND [111].	13
FIGURE 8: EXTRACT FROM THE JACOBSTOWE TITHE MAP, 1838; SHOWING ST JAMES' CHURCH.	20
FIGURE 9: EXTRACT FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY 1 <sup>ST</sup> EDITION, 25 INCH SERIES, PUBLISHED 1886; SHOWING ST JAMES' CHURCH.	20
FIGURE 10: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF ST JAMES' CHURCH, 1946.	21

## LIST OF APPENDICES

---

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT LIST	19
APPENDIX 2: SUPPORTING SOURCES	20
APPENDIX 3: RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATES	22
APPENDIX 4: SUPPORTING PHOTOGRAPHS	23

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) OF ST JAMES'S CHURCH, JACOBSTOWE (THE CLIENT)  
DEVON COUNTY HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT TEAM (DCHET)  
THE DIOCESAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISOR (DAA)

## PROJECT CREDITS

---

DIRECTOR: DR. SAMUEL WALLS, MCIFA  
DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT: JOE BAMPTON, MCIFA  
FIELDWORK: JOE BAMPTON, MCIFA  
REPORT: JOE BAMPTON, MCIFA  
EDITING: DR. SAMUEL WALLS, MCIFA  
GRAPHICS: JOE BAMPTON, MCIFA

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

---

<b>LOCATION:</b>	ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, JACOBSTOWE
<b>PARISH:</b>	JACOBSTOWE
<b>DISTRICT:</b>	WEST DEVON
<b>COUNTY:</b>	DEVON
<b>NGR:</b>	SS 58650 01610
<b>OASIS REC.NO.:</b>	SOUTHWES1-371538
<b>SWARCH REF.</b>	JJC19

### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by the PCC of St. James's Church, Jacobstowe (The Client) to undertake archaeological monitoring and recording at St James's Church, Jacobstowe, Devon as part of the planning requirements for a proposed external toilet and store. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) drawn up in consultation with the diocesan archaeological advisor (DAA) and Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCHET).

### 1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Jacobstowe is located c.6km north of Okehampton and c.5km south-east of Hatherleigh. It is located on a confluence of routeways, at the junction of the A3072 and B3216; on the north-east edge of the top of a ridge that rises gently to the south-west and falls away to the River Okement to the east. The church is located at the centre of the settlement at a height of c.111m AOD (Figure 1).

The soils on the site are the well-drained gritty reddish loamy soils over breccia of the Crediton Association (SSEW 1983), which overlie the sedimentary bedrock of the Bow Breccia Formation (BGS 2019).

### 1.3 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Jacobstowe is a parish and village in the hundred of Black Torrington and deanery of Oakhampton (Lysons 1822). Although there was no Domesday manor at Jacobstowe it is considered to have been part of the nearby large manor at Hatherleigh (*Adrelie*) (Thorn & Thorn 1985; Morris 1992; Lane & Blaylock 2017). Hatherleigh was a very large manor with 62 households and was owned by the abbey of Tavistock before and after the conquest (Morris 1992). It may, at some time, have fallen within the area of the nearest manor at Exbourne (*Echeburne*), c.1.6km to the east; although this is unsubstantiated. Exbourne was a relatively large manor with up to 33 households and split between two landowners; Almer and Wulfnoth before the conquest; and Roger from Baldwin the Sheriff and Alfred the Breton in 1086 (Morris 1992). At the time of the tithe apportionment in 1838 the church and rectory were owned/occupied by the Rev. John Russell as part of the Glebe. The place-name of Jacobstowe was first recorded in 1331 (*Jacopstoue*) and means 'holy place of St James', which is derived from the dedication of the church and Old English/Middle English *stow/stowe* meaning 'a place' (Watts 2004). 13<sup>th</sup> century accounts of *Stowe Sancti Jacobi* that do not refer to a parish probably refer to the Cornish village of the same name. The account of the churchyard on the Devon Historic Environment Record (HER) suggests that the churchyard of St James's may have early medieval origins (MDV41906) based on the change in some Welsh border place-names between the use of *llan* and *stow*. The discussion of *stow*-based place names representing earlier medieval graveyards and holy places has been discussed by various parties and is summarized by Lane and Blaylock (2017).

Within 1km of the site the HER lists 19 Grade II Listed structures and two Grade II\* Listed structures, including St. James's Church. Nine of the Grade II Listed structures are 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century cottages within the village proper, three are grave markers within the churchyard and the rest are farms, cottages, a bridge and a mill in the wider area. Other than St. James Church, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Broomfield Manor Park is the only Grade II\* Listed property in the area. The HER also lists five undesignated assets within 1km of the site: three possible Bronze Age round barrows (MDV122045), a circular enclosure (MDV44758), linear cropmarks (MDV122047) and a rectangular enclosure (MDV55827), all to the north of the site and identified via aerial photography in 1984 and 1992 and also subsequently identified on LiDAR imagery. A findspot within Jacobstowe was also recorded from the 1940's of a possible Bronze Age axe-hammer (MDV260). In the wider area, beyond 1km of the site, additional possible Bronze Age assets/earthworks have been identified to the south of the site (e.g. MDV125791).

The Church of St. James in Jacobstowe is Grade II\* listed (1326489), with 12<sup>th</sup> century origins and the majority of the fabric dates to the 15<sup>th</sup> century (DDV17807). The church was restored and extended in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ordnance Survey mapping indicates that the vestry was added between 1906 and 1954 and a footpath leading west from the tower was removed between the same dates.

Two previous phases of archaeological works have taken place on the site: A historic building recording in 2014 (Green); and ground works inside the church in 2015 (Lane & Blaylock 2017). Floor repairs in the nave of the church revealed evidence of an apsidal wall at the west end, dating to the late Saxon period. The foundation trenches and remaining fabric from the 12<sup>th</sup> century church was also recorded. The excavations, studies of the floor tiles and dendrochronological dating of timbers from the roof have been published by the Devon Archaeological Society. This publication includes an archaeological and historical background of St James's Church.

#### 1.4 METHODOLOGY

This work was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Boyd 2019) drawn up in consultation with the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor (DAA) and Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCHET), best practice and ClfA guidance. Any desk-based assessment aspect of this report follows the guidance as outlined in: *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (ClfA 2014) and *Understanding Place: historic area assessments in a planning and development context* (English Heritage 2017). The archaeological monitoring and recording follows the general guidance as outlined in: *Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (ClfA 2015).

Excavations were undertaken under archaeological supervision to the depth of formation or the top of archaeological features/deposits. Exposed archaeological features were excavated by hand and recorded in accordance with the above guidance and declarations of practice.

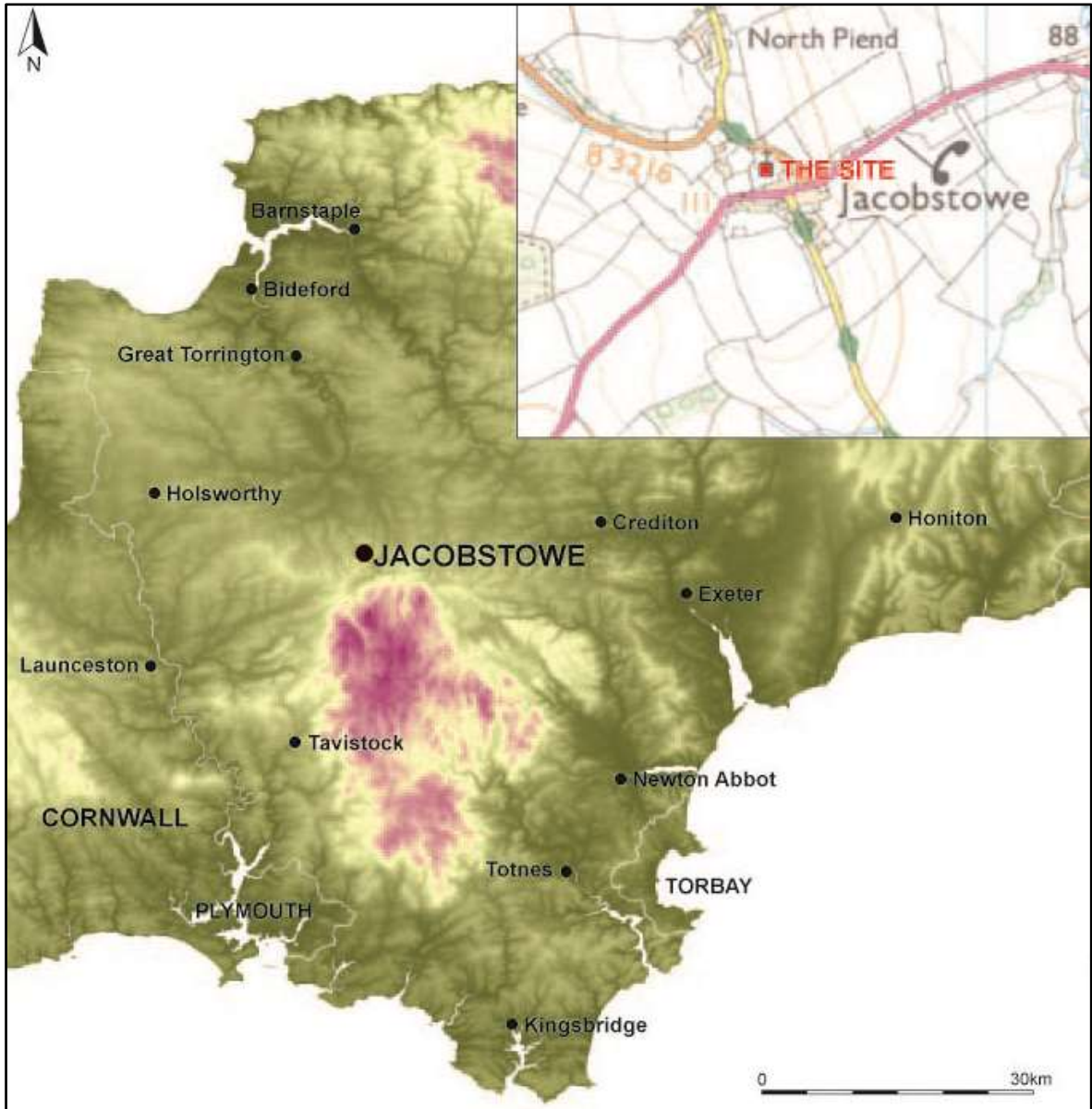


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).



## 2.0 RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The groundworks subject to monitoring and recording included two 0.30m wide service trenches; one along the footpath on the southern side of the church; adjoining another running west from the tower towards the proposed new out-building. A 1.6m wide trench was also excavated to accommodate a ramped path from the footpath beside the tower to the proposed new out-building. The service trenches were excavated to a depth of c.0.50m below finished/current ground surface and the ramped footpath to a depth of between 0.13m-0.40m.

The service trench along the southern side of the vestry and tower revealed two stony foundations, perpendicular to each other and a possible grave-cut.

To the west of the tower the service trench and ramped footpath revealed modern services and drainage against the tower and an earlier, buried gravel pathway.

Full context descriptions can be seen in Appendix 1 and supporting photographs in Appendix 4.

### 2.2 SITE INSPECTION

The groundworks on site took place on the south and west sides of the church, predominantly within existing gravelled pathways. The footpath beside the tower sloped down very gently towards the porch and chancel and gently towards the northern entrance to the churchyard. Along the outside edge of the footpath the ground was a grassy topsoil that rose up a slight bank to the graveyard; this was also the case between the south wall of the nave and the footpath. On the grass area, west of the tower, where the proposed out-building is to be built, the ground became abruptly level and even after the initial slope from the gravel path and grass path that leads west then south along the churchyard boundary toward a tool-store/shed. At the far east end of the service trench, south of the porch, was a service access for a modern extant soak-away. Supporting photographs can be seen in Appendix 4.



FIGURE 2: AREA WEST OF TOWER, SHOWING LAYERS (105) AND (106); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



### 2.3 SERVICE TRENCH SOUTH OF THE NAVE AND TOWER

The service trench along the southern side of the nave and the tower was c.0.30m wide, c.0.50m deep and c.14.60m long. It was aligned approximately north-west by south-east; and ran along the gravel path of the church between a modern soak-away and the west side of the tower, towards a proposed out-building. It contained four archaeological features: Foundation Walls {110} and {114}; Grave-cut [111]; and a small amount of a layer, Relict Gravel Path (105). No other archaeological features were present.

Relict Footpath (105) was a dark-blue-grey, loose gravel with silty humic inclusions and was 0.06-0.08m thick (Figures 2, 6 & 7). It contained no finds. It overlaid Subsoil (102) and was overlaid by Made-grounds (104) and (106).

Construction Cut [109] was a linear feature aligned approximately north-south with near vertical sides, a sharp concave break and a flat base. It cut Subsoil (102) and Grave-fill (112). Its profile was made a little irregular by its stony in-fill. It was 1.32m wide and 0.66m deep; perpendicular to Construction Cut [113]; and slightly off alignment with the current church. It contained Wall Foundation {110}; rounded and water-worn boulders and stones tightly packed into rough layers with an earth/subsoil bond. The stones varied up to c.0.28m×0.15m×0.15m across and included materials similar to those visible in the church walls (Figures 3, 4, 6 & 7). The courses, visible in the upper-most part of the footing had larger lining stones and a rubble core. It contained fragments of human bone and a scrap each of slag, struck flint and possible ceramic building material (CBM). It was overlaid by Made-ground (108).



FIGURE 3: FOUNDATION WALL {110}, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



FIGURE 4: GRAVE-CUT [111], CONSTRUCTION CUT [109] AND WALL FOUNDATION {110}; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).

Grave-cut [111] was only partially exposed; with only its northern edge seen within the limits of excavated trench (Figures 4, 6 & 7). It was aligned approximately east-west with a gentle slope and gentle concave break of slope to a flat base. It cut Natural (103) and contained Fill (112), which was identical to Subsoil (102). The relationships to Subsoil (102) were not discernible in the narrow trench and weather conditions. It was at least 0.11m deep. It contained no finds.

Construction Cut [113] was a linear feature aligned approximately east-west with near vertical sides. It was not fully excavated (Figures 5, 6 & 7). It was 1.30m wide, at least 0.40m deep and perpendicular to Cut [109]. It cut Subsoil (102). It contained Wall Foundation {114}, which was similar to Wall Foundation {110}. It was less densely packed or consolidated, particularly on the tower-side of the trench; probably having been disturbed by the construction of the tower and /or robbed out during the demolition of this structure. Furthermore, its top had ostensibly been packed and tamped-down to accommodate Path (107). It contained some mortar debris at its top.





FIGURE 5: CONSTRUCTION CUT [113] AND FOUNDATION WALL {114}, MID-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).

The stratigraphy in this area consisted of a gravel footpath, (107), which overlaid Made-ground/Redeposited Subsoil (108) across the area east of the tower. Redeposited Subsoil (108) abutted Wall Foundation {114} at the north-west end of the trench, overlaid Wall Foundation {110} near the middle of the trench and became indistinguishable from Redeposited Subsoil (101) at the south-east end of the trench. Disturbed/Redeposited Subsoil, (101), was associated with 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century drainage at the south-east end of the trench that presumably must have cut layer (108) as they include 21<sup>st</sup> century groundworks. The construction cuts [109] and [113] for Wall Foundations {110} and {114}, cut Subsoil (102). South-west and west of the tower, Footpath (107) overlaid Wall Foundation (114) and Made-ground (106). Made-ground (106) was a levelling layer over Relict Footpath (105), which overlaid Subsoil (102), which in turn overlaid Natural (103). Natural (103) was observed at the base of the trench, c.0.50m deep, across the north-west end (c.4m length) of the trench. Natural (103) was cut by Grave-cut [111], which contained Fill (112). Fill (112) and Subsoil (102) were indistinguishable in the narrow trench and their relationship was not discernible.

#### 2.4 SERVICE TRENCH AND RAMPED FOOTPATH WEST OF THE TOWER

The service trench running west from the tower was c.0.30m wide, c.0.50m and c.11m long. The area excavated for the ramped footpath was c.1.6m wide, c.7m long and between 0.13 and 0.40m in depth and it ran from the edge of the extant footpath towards the proposed out-building. The afore mentioned relict footpath, (105), was identified across the whole trench. No other archaeological features were present.

The site stratigraphy beside the tower consisted of a gravel footpath, (107), which overlaid Made-ground/levelling layer (106), which overlaid Relict Footpath (105). Relict Footpath (105) overlaid Subsoil (102), which in turn overlaid Natural (103). West of the extant footpath, in the grassed part of the churchyard Topsoil (100) overlaid Redeposited Subsoil (104), which overlaid Relict Footpath (105), which in turn overlaid Subsoil (102).

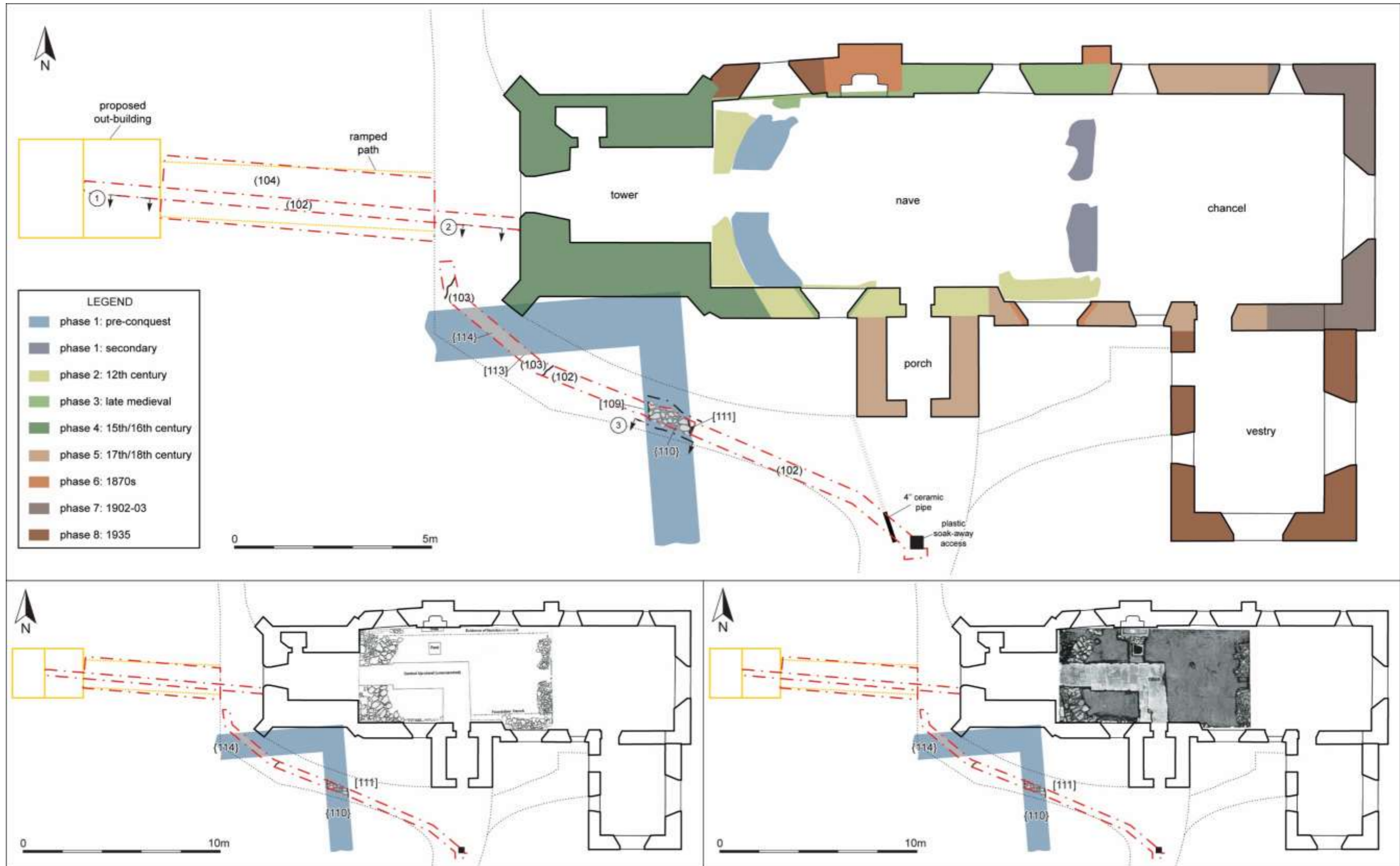


FIGURE 6: SITE PLAN INCLUDING PHASED PLAN OF ST JAMES'S CHURCH AND PLANS OF THE 2015 EXCAVATIONS WITHIN THE NAVE (LANE & BLAYLOCK 2017); SECTION NUMBERS EQUATE TO SECTION DRAWINGS IN FIGURE 7.

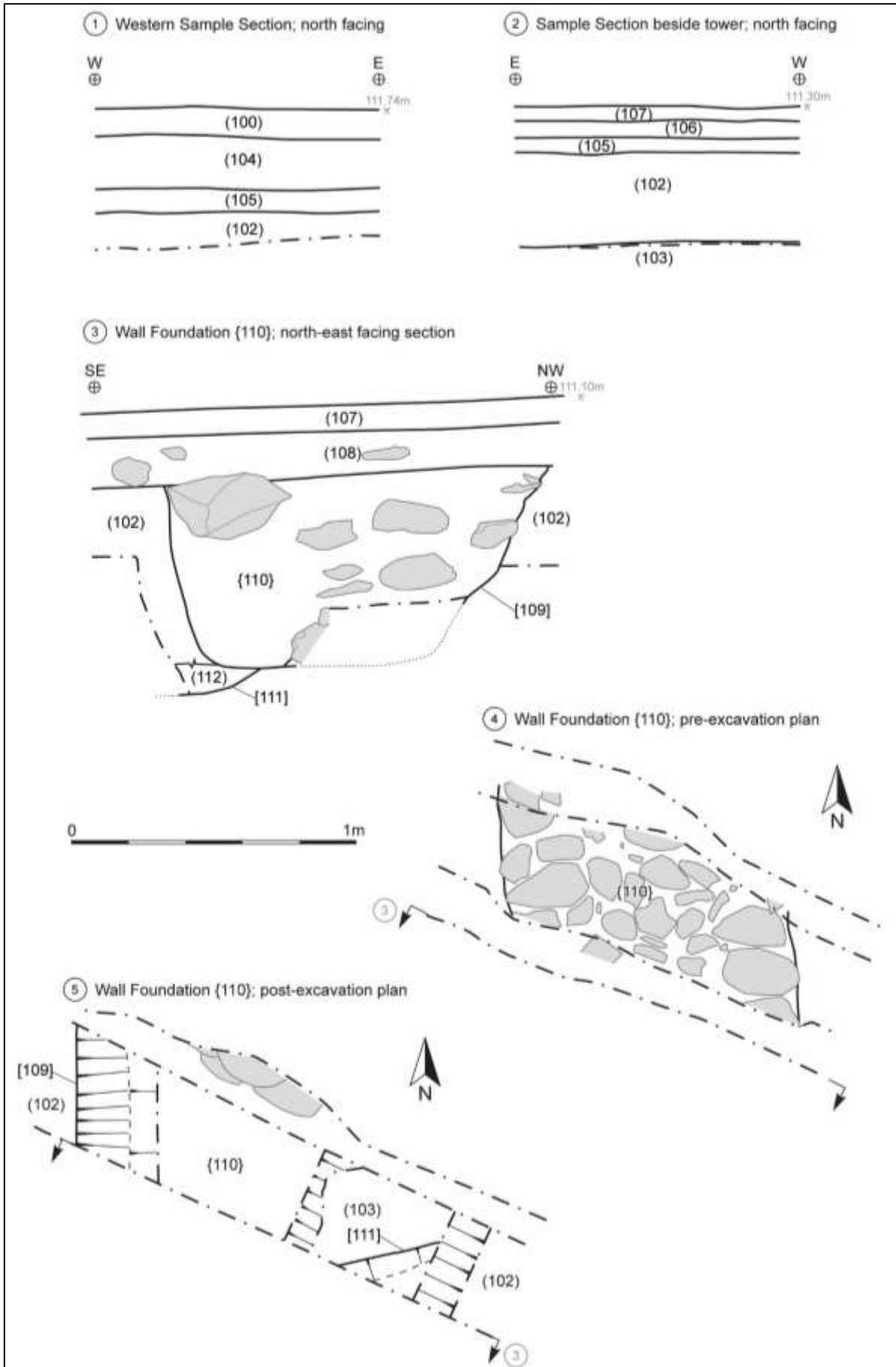


FIGURE 7: SECTION DRAWINGS AND PLANS OF FEATURES [109], {110} AND [111].



## 2.5 FINDS SUMMARY

Very few finds were encountered or recovered from the site; even charnel remains were notably sparse.

In Subsoil (102): a small amount of fragmented bone was encountered east of Wall Foundation {110} and a fragmented long-bone (possible arm) was encountered at the base of the trench c.0.53m west of Wall Foundation {110}. Two fragments of bone were also encountered in Redeposited Subsoil (104), west of the tower. These finds were re-interred onsite from where they were encountered.

Wall Foundation {110} contained ×1 fragment (4g) of iron (tap)slag, ×1 fragment (<1g) of a burnt flint flake, ×1 fragment (<1g) of CBM, and ×16 fragments (75g) of human bone comprised of fragments of a probably leg bone and a single fragment of clavicle. The bone and flint were within the core of the excavated wall foundation. The flint is an undiagnostic scrap and probably a residual find associated with Bronze Age/prehistoric activity in the wider landscape (see section 1.3). The small pieces of CBM and slag are also undiagnostic. The CBM may be intrusive as it came from the upper part of the feature.

Wall Foundation {114} contained a fragment of probable 19<sup>th</sup> century, gravelly and hard lime mortar (10g). It was recovered from the top of the feature and associated with disturbance and compaction for the extant footpath, (107); and possibly the tower and modern groundworks.



## 3.0 DISCUSSION

---

### 3.1 DISCUSSION

#### 3.1.1 PROBABLE PRE-CONQUEST WALL FOUNDATIONS

The monitoring and recording revealed a hitherto unknown structure in the grounds of the churchyard. The two identified walls were similar enough in form (size) and construction (water worn boulders with subsoil bond) to infer a connection. Their alignments were perpendicular to each other and they may well be two sides of the same structure.

During excavations within the nave in 2015 (Lane & Blaylock 2017) a western apsidal wall comprised of water worn boulders/large river cobbles. It was of a comparable width to Wall Foundations {110} and {114}. It had an earth bond construction in two courses set into the subsoil. It was cut by the 12<sup>th</sup> century southern wall of the nave and the north wall to the nave also cut it, which based on dendrochronology dating was erected before c.1393-1425. Apsidal churches are typically dated in the UK to between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries with the most probably/prolific period being the 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> centuries. The *stōw* place-name element, as mentioned in section 1.3, can also support an argument for an earlier medieval, at least pre-conquest date for a holy site at Jacobstowe. The foundations of the churches 12<sup>th</sup> century walls and later were shown to be morphologically distinct from the apsidal wall; moreover, a wall uncovered at the eastern end of the nave was also distinct from the apsidal wall. These later walls included clay bonding. The eastern wall within the nave was constructed of pitched, rounded and angular rubble (some possibly quarried) that cut the subsoil. It was considered 12<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. The church tower has been dated to the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century.

Wall Foundations {110} and {114} are ostensibly the same form of construction as the churches probable pre-conquest apsidal wall. They are on a slightly different alignment to the current church and if extrapolated to meet at right angles would run beneath the church tower. The condition of Wall Foundation {114} is indicative of having been disturbed, probably by the construction of the tower and subsequent activity. It may also have simply survived demolition less well than its counterpart, {110}.

It seems probably that Features {110} and {114} were contemporaries of the pre-conquest apsidal wall: morphologically, they are almost identical to the distinctive apsidal wall and they ostensibly pre-date the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century tower.

Fragments of human bone recovered from Wall Foundation {110} provided a radiocarbon determination of c. AD985-1160 (see Appendix 3). With the evidence of a probable burial cut and human bone, this supports the interpretation of a Late Saxon holy place existing on the site, which could be a contemporary of the apsidal church previously identified within the nave. This may indicate a rural church complex on a site that had already been being used as a burial site. Furthermore, this radiocarbon date compliments the most prolific period of apsidal churches in the UK.

Western apses are very rare in the UK with most examples belonging to monastic, collegiate or cathedral churches from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries. Such examples were typically part of large cathedral complexes, rather than rural churches (Lane & Blaylock 2017). Examples listed by Lane and Blaylock (2017) include two in Winchester, St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury, St Giles Langford in Essex, Bargham in Sussex, St Oswald's Priory in Gloucestershire and Capel Maelog Rlandrindad in Powys. The example at Capel Maelog was associated with a 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century graveyard (Lane & Blaylock 2017); and at St Oswald's a possible tower or chantry chapel was recently

discovered (BBC 2018). This feature was discovered beyond the north-west corner of what would have been the apse-end of the Saxon Oswald's Priory.

Although the interpretation of the western apsidal wall at St James's being part of a pre-conquest church is probable, the monitoring and recording of this phase of works helps to consolidate and expand that interpretation. Firstly the presence of a possible grave-cut, [111], and human bone within the construction of the wall foundation, {110}, indicates that burial practices were taking place on the site prior to-/at the time of construction of these features ({110}, {114} and the apsidal wall by association). The significance of relatively small rural churches, which has been played down by previous interested parties, such as Hoskins (see Lane & Blaylock 2017 for this discussion), can begin to be reassessed based on the discovery of multiple probable pre-conquest structures at an un-supposing site like Jacobstowe. The existence of other apsidal churches within complexes of structures may mean that even rural examples should be treated with such potential. Current absence of evidence has equated to evidence of absence. The recent discovery of a possible tower or chantry chapel at Oswald's Priory (although a priory) may give some allusions as to the nature of the probable structure at Jacobstowe.

### 3.1.2 PROBABLE 19<sup>TH</sup>-20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY FOOTPATH

Relict Footpath (105) was observed to the west of the tower. Its route could be equated to a grass path/clear route through the churchyard to the western boundary and that then ran south along the western boundary to a relatively modern shed. Historic mapping does not show a footpath that corresponds to (105) on the 1838 tithe map or before. Nor does it show a path leading from the tower to the northern entrance of the site as exists today. However, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey maps (surveyed 1885 and 1904 respectively) show a path leading from the tower end of the church both to the northern entrance and west to the boundary between the churchyard and adjacent rectory garden. Relict Footpath (105) is not visible in aerial photography from 1946. Presumably the path was removed between 1904 and 1946, potentially at the same time as the vestry was built, c.1935. Its gravel was similar to that in the extant footpath, (107). Supporting cartographic and aerial images can be seen in Appendix 2.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

---

Groundworks were subject to archaeological monitoring along the southern side of the nave and tower and to the west of the tower in St James's Churchyard, Jacobstowe in advance of the construction of a proposed out-building and its associated services. The current church is 12<sup>th</sup> century in origin with 15<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century rebuilds and extensions. Jacobstowe parish is first recorded in the 14<sup>th</sup> century; although the place name element *stōw* may allude to earlier medieval origins as a 'holy place'.

The monitoring and recording revealed four archaeological features: a 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century footpath; two probable pre-conquest wall foundations dated to the early 11<sup>th</sup> or late 10<sup>th</sup> century; and a possible grave-cut that predates at least one of the wall foundations. The 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century gravel footpath was probably instated after 1838 and removed between 1904 and 1946, possibly during works associated with the construction of the vestry. The wall foundations possibly equate to two sides of the same structure. These walls were morphologically comparable to a probable pre-conquest apsidal wall excavated inside the nave in 2015 and were ostensibly cut by the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> tower. The probable grave-cut was cut by one of the wall foundations and indicates that the site was subject to activity, probably as a burial/holy site prior to-, or contemporary with the pre-conquest structures/apsidal church 'complex'. Based on a radiocarbon determination from human bone recovered from one of the excavated foundations, this complex probably dates to the early 11<sup>th</sup> century (possible late 10<sup>th</sup> century).

The presence of a western apsidal, pre-conquest church at Jacobstowe is rare in-of itself and of significance. The potential expansion of this phase of activity to a complex or one of multiple structures compounds and increases this significance and demonstrates the potential of the site- and of similar sites at rural churches to yield more archaeological data/resources. The nature of the groundworks means that the site potentially contains a large amount of surviving remains associated with the features identified in this phase of works. In future, geophysical survey (GPR) or sampling of deeper sealed contexts on the site have the potential to greatly increase our understanding of the ecclesiastical history of Jacobstowe.

## 5.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES

---

### *Published Sources:*

- Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists** 2014 (revised 2017): *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists** 2015 (revised 2017): *Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.
- Historic England** 2017: *Understanding Place: Historic area assessments in a planning and development context*.
- Lane, R. & Blaylock, S.** 2017: 'Late Saxon and Medieval Discoveries at the Church of St. James, Jacobstowe, Devon, in 2015' In (ed. Maxfield, V.) *Devon Archaeological Society Proceedings No. 75 2017*. DAS.
- Lysons, D. & Lysons, S.** 1822: *Magna Britannia, volume 6: Devonshire*. London.
- Morris, J.** 1992: *Domesday Book*. Phillimore.
- Soil Survey of England and Wales** 1983: *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (a brief explanation of the constituent soil associations)*.
- Thorn, C. and Thorn, F.** 1985: *Domesday Book 9: Devon*. (Chichester, 1985)
- Watts, V.** 2004: *The Cambridge Dictionary to English Place Names*. Cambridge University Press.

### *Unpublished Sources:*

- Green, C.** 2014: *Church of St James, Jacobstowe, West Devon: Historic Building Recording*. Context One Archaeological Service Ltd.
- Green, T.** 2010: *Combe Farm, Jacobstowe, Devon: Results of a desk-based assessment, historical building recording and archaeological evaluation*. SWARCH Report No. 101004.

### *Websites:*

- BBC** 2018: *News* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-44417429>
- British Geological Survey** 2019: *Geology of Britain Viewer*. <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>
- Devon Council Historic Environment Record (HER)** 2019: *Devon Environment Viewer* <http://map.devon.gov.uk/dccviewer/> and <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>
- Know Your Place (KYP)** 2019: *Devon Mapping (Aerial Photography 1946)* <http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/kyp/?edition=devon>

### *The Genealogist*

Jacobstowe Tithe Apportionment, 1838  
Jacobstowe Tithe Map, 1838

### *National Library of Scotland (NLS)*

Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 25 inch map, Sheet: Devon LXIV.4, surveyed 1885, published 1886

### *Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC):*

Radiocarbon Dating Certificate 2020: Laboratory Code – SUERC-94206 (GU55371)

ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, JACOBSTOWE, WEST DEVON, DEVON

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT LIST

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION		FINDS	RELATIONSHIPS	DEPTH/ THICKNESS	SPOT DATE
(100)	<i>Topsoil</i>	Dark grey-brown, friable clay-silt. In graveyard, beyond gravel path beneath proposed out-building	-	Overlaid (104)	c.0.10m	C20
(101)	<i>Redeposited Subsoil</i>	Mid red-brown, soft clay-silt. Back-fill of modern disturbances and services; soak-away and ceramic drain south of porch and drain and electric abutting west side of the tower. Equates to redeposited subsoil	-	Overlaid (108); Overlain by (107)	<0.50m+	C19-C20 & C21
(102)	<i>Subsoil</i>	Mid red-brown, soft occasional gritty, silt-clay, across whole site, thicker at east end, ostensibly cut by all features but grave-cuts not discernible in narrow trench	Very occasional human bone fragments	Overlaid (103); Cut by [109][113]; possibly cut by [111]; Overlain by (105)	c.0.33m-0.62m?	-
(103)	<i>Natural</i>	Light pink-red, soft silt-clay, sandy and gritty. identified from approximately the tower westward	-	Overlain by (102)	Below c.0.50m+	-
(104)	<i>Redeposited Subsoil</i>	Mid red-grey (mottled) brown, soft-friable silt-clay, quite root disturbed made-ground	Very occasional human bone fragments	Overlaid (105); Overlain by (100)	c.0.18m	C20
(105)	<i>Relict Path</i>	Dark blue-grey, loose gravel (silty-gravel). C19 path buried/replaced in C20	-	Overlaid (102); Overlain by (104)	0.06-0.08m	C19-C20
(106)	<i>Levelling Layer</i>	Mid-light grey-yellow, compact sandy-gravel (& clay). Made-ground between old and new/current footpath. Possibly during instatement of current path or during repair after service put in around tower	-	Overlaid (105); Overlain by (107)	<0.06m	C20
(107)	<i>Current Path</i>	Dark-mid grey, loose gravel. Extant footpath. To be replaced/cleaned at end of groundworks with like material	-	Overlaid (101), (106), (114)	0.06-0.10m	C20
(108)	<i>Made-ground/ Redeposited Subsoil</i>	Mid red-brown, soft-friable silt-clay, occasional roots and stones (mostly rounded/worn and above/near {110}{114}. Redeposited subsoil/made-ground beneath extant footpath south of the nave	-	Overlaid {110}; Overlain by (101)	c.0.18m	Post-med to C20
[109]	<i>Construction Cut</i>	Linear aligned approx. north-south (NNNE-SSSW), near vertical sides, sharp concave break (irregularities by stone packing/in-fill), flat base, 1 fill. Cut of foundation trench. Perpendicular to [113]. Slightly off alignment with current church, 1.32m	-	Cut (102)(112); Filled by {110}	0.66m	Pre-conquest
{110}	<i>Wall Foundation</i>	Stone wall foundation within [109], aligned approx. north-south. Rounded and water worn boulders/stone tightly packed in rough layers/courses with an earth/subsoil bond. Stones c. <28x15x15cm and although rounded some were square-ish but worn. Included dark-grey (shiny when wet) and bluey-yellow stone seen in church walls, <1.32m wide (generally c.1.15m wide	×1 slag frag., ×1 CBM frag. both poss. Intrusive; ×1 flint flake probably residual; Human Bone frags.	Fill of [109]; Overlain by (108)	0.66m	Pre-conquest
[111]	<i>Grave-Cut</i>	Aligned WSW-ENE, imperceptible in Subsoil (102) (especially in narrow trench and rainy conditions), only partially observed and not fully exposed/excavated. Gentle NNW slope, probable flat base (flat where exposed), 1 fill	-	Cut (103); Possibly cut (102); Filled by (112)	0.11m (+?)	Pre-conquest
(112)	<i>Fill of Grave-Cut</i>	Mid red-brown, soft occasional gritty, silt-clay (same as (102)	-	Fill of [111]; Possibly overlain by (102); Cut by [109]	0.11m (+?)	Pre-conquest
[113]	<i>Construction Cut</i>	Linear aligned approx. east-west (WWSW-EENE), near vertical sides, cut obliquely to trench, not fully excavated (reduced to formation level), 1 fill, perpendicular to [109], 1.30m wide	-	Cut (102); Filled by {114}	0.40m+	Pre-conquest
{114}	<i>Wall Foundation</i>	Disturbed/robbed-out stone wall foundation within [113], aligned approx. east-west. Similar to {110} but less dense/consolidated with stone. More stone fill further from tower (robbed/damaged during demolition or later groundworks). Top packed in and had lime mortar frags. tamped/packed associated with ground prep for path above	Frag. of intrusive/later mortar	Fill of [113]; Overlain by (107)	0.40m+	Pre-conquest

APPENDIX 2: SUPPORTING SOURCES

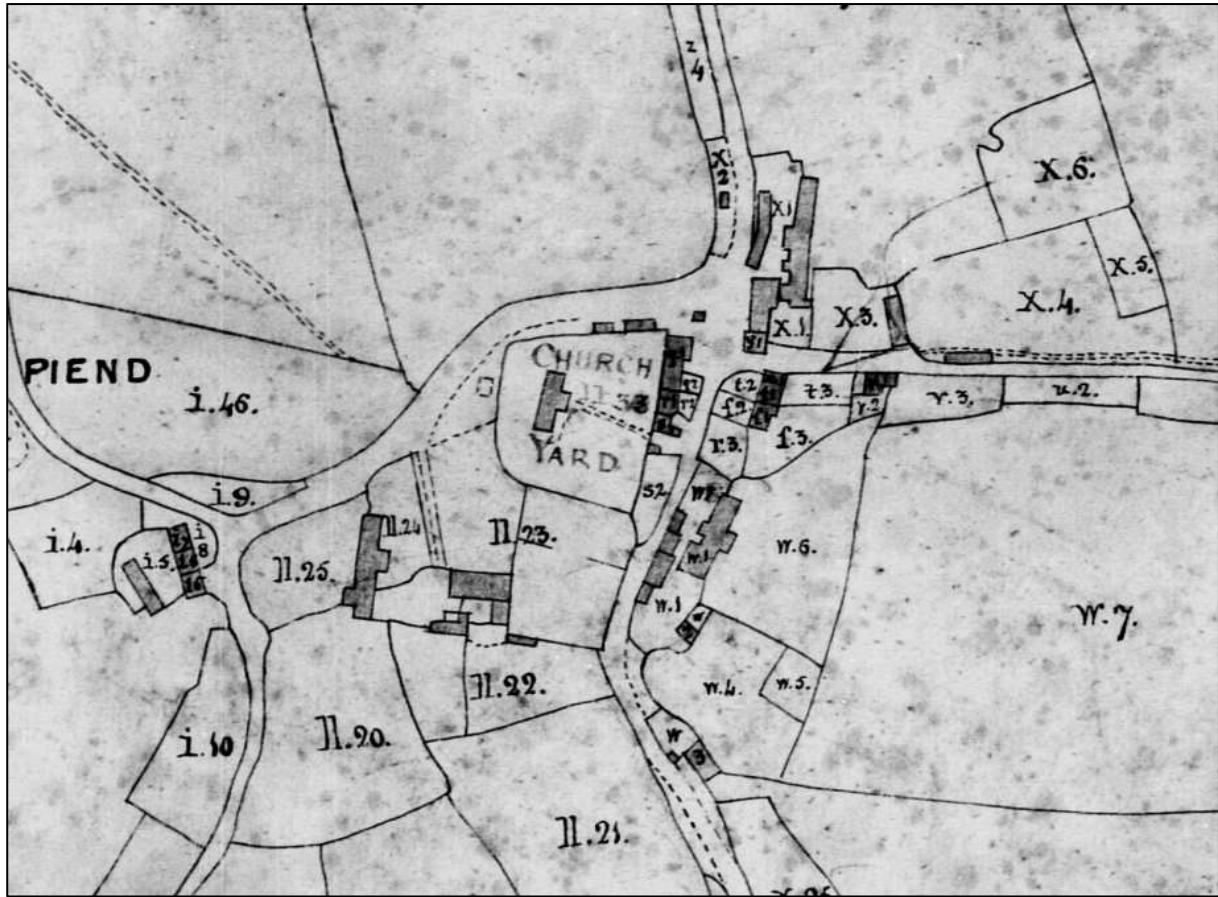


FIGURE 8: EXTRACT FROM THE JACOBSTOWE TITHE MAP, 1838; SHOWING ST JAMES'S CHURCH (THE GENEALOGIST).

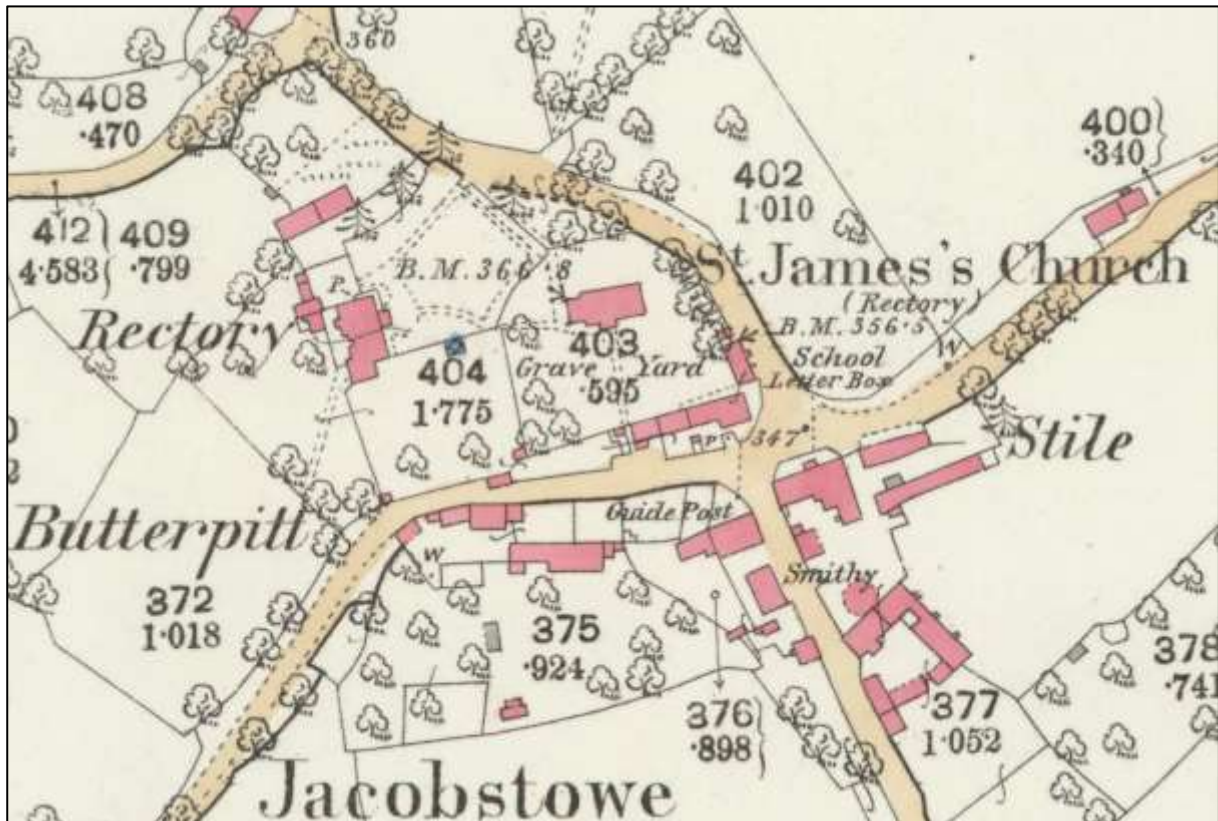


FIGURE 9: EXTRACT FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY 1<sup>ST</sup> EDITION, 25 INCH SERIES, PUBLISHED 1886; SHOWING ST JAMES'S CHURCH (NLS).





FIGURE 10: AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF ST JAMES'S CHURCH, 1946 (KYP 2019).

APPENDIX 3: RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATES  
SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH CENTRE (SUERC)



*RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE*  
16 September 2020

**Laboratory Code** SUERC-94206 (GU55371)  
**Submitter** Samuel Walls  
South West Archaeology  
The Old Dairy, Hacche Lane Business Park  
Pathfields Business Park  
South Molton  
Devon, EX36 3LH  
**Site Reference** Jacobstowe Church (JJC19)  
**Context Reference** 110  
**Sample Reference** <1>  
**Material** Bone Fragment : Human  
 **$\delta^{13}\text{C}$  relative to VPDB** -19.9 ‰  
 **$\delta^{15}\text{N}$  relative to air** 11.0 ‰  
**C/N ratio (Molar)** 3.3  
**Radiocarbon Age BP** 1031  $\pm$  24

**N.B.** The above  $^{14}\text{C}$  age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

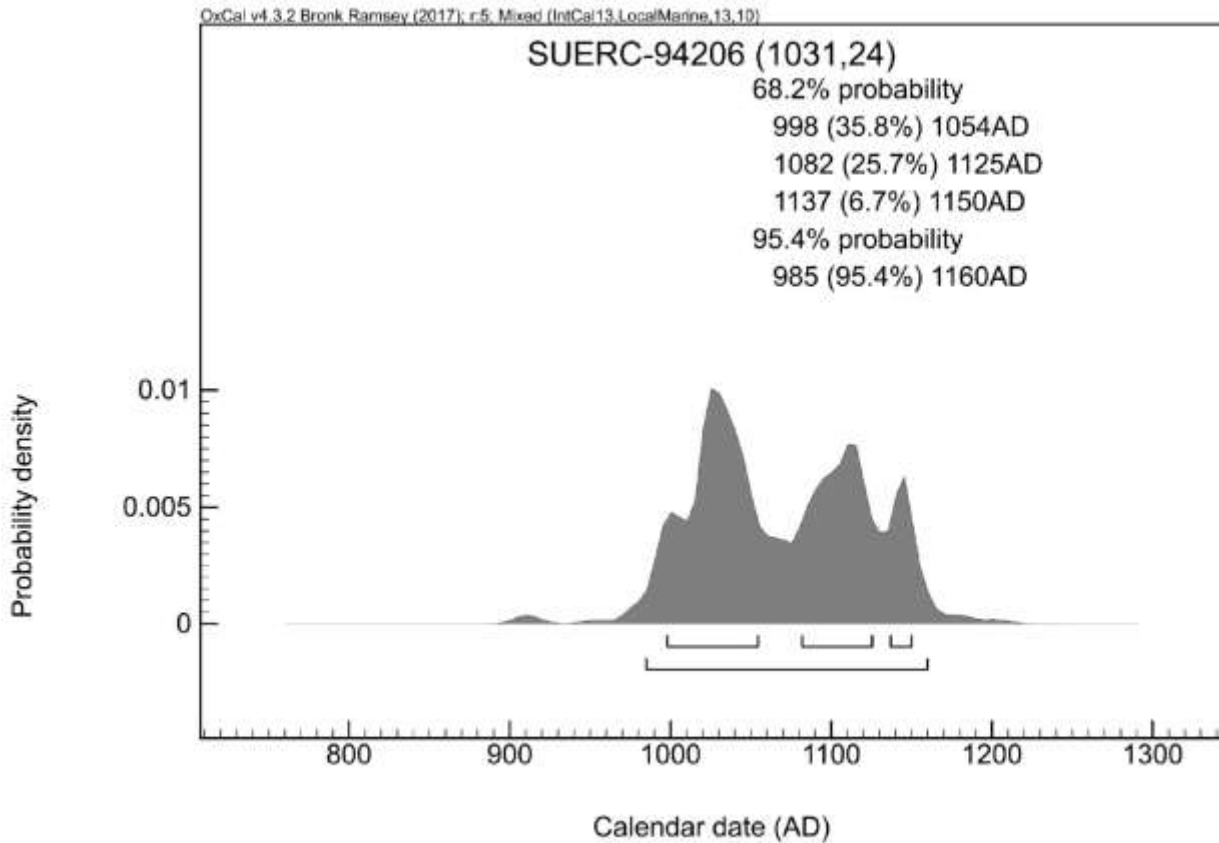
Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Laboratory and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at [suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk).

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by : E. Dunbar

Checked and signed off by : P. Nayant



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.\*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using a mix of the IntCal13 and Marine13 calibration curves. †

Human bone collagen with a  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  value above  $-20\text{‰}$ , accompanied by a raised  $\delta^{15}\text{N}$  value, is taken to indicate a marine component in the diet. The percentage contribution of this marine component is calculated using end-members of  $-21.0\text{‰}$  (fully terrestrial) and  $-12.5\text{‰}$  (fully marine) with an uncertainty of 10% applied.

The  $\delta^{13}\text{C}$  value of  $-19.9\text{‰}$  gives a 13% marine contribution ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

A regional marine offset ( $\Delta R$ ) of  $0 \pm 50$  years has been used in the calibration.

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

\* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2013) *Radiocarbon* 55(4) pp.1869-87.

#### APPENDIX 4: SUPPORTING PHOTOGRAPHS





1. EAST END OF EXCAVATED TRENCH, SOUTH OF PORCH, SHOWING MODERN SOAK-AWAY ACCESS; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



2. EXCAVATED SERVICE TRENCH, MID-EXCAVATION, SHOWING {110} IN DISTANCE; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (1M SCALE).





3. WALL FOUNDATION {110}, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM ABOVE/NORTH (1M SCALE).



4. WALL FOUNDATION {110}, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).





5. WALL FOUNDATION {110}, MID-EXCAVATION TO FORMATION LEVEL; VIEWED FROM ABOVE/NORTH (1M SCALE).



6. WALL FOUNDATION {110}, MID-EXCAVATION TO FORMATION LEVEL; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).





7. WALL FOUNDATION {110}, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (NO SCALE).



8. APPROXIMATE LINE OF WALL FOUNDATION {110}, TOWARDS TOWER; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-SOUTH-EAST (1M SCALE).





9. WALL FOUNDATION {114}, PRE-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (1M SCALE).



10. WALL FOUNDATION {114}, MID EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).





11. TOWER-SIDE SECTION OF WALL FOUNDATION {114}, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).



12. SECTION OF WALL FOUNDATION {114} FURTHER FROM TOWER, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST (1M SCALE).





13. EXCAVATED TRENCH SOUTH OF NAVE AND TOWER, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



14. SAMPLE SECTION ADJACENT TO TOWER, SHOWING LAYERS (106) AND RELICT PATH (105); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).





15. EXCAVATED AREA FOR PROPOSED RAMPED FOOTPATH; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).



16. EXCAVATED AREA AND TRENCH WEST OF TOWER; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).





17. SAMPLE SECTION AT WEST END OF SITE, SHOWING THIN LAYER OF RELICT PATH (105); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (1M SCALE).



18. AREA WEST OF TOWER, IN RAMPED PATH LOCATION, SHOWING LAYER (104) AND (105) AND ROOT DISTURBANCE; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (NO SCALE).





19. AREA WEST OF TOWER, POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (NO SCALE).



THE OLD DAIRY  
HACCHE LANE BUSINESS PARK  
PATHFIELDS BUSINESS PARK  
SOUTH MOLTON  
DEVON  
EX36 3LH

01769 573555  
01872 223164  
[MAIL@SWARCH.NET](mailto:MAIL@SWARCH.NET)