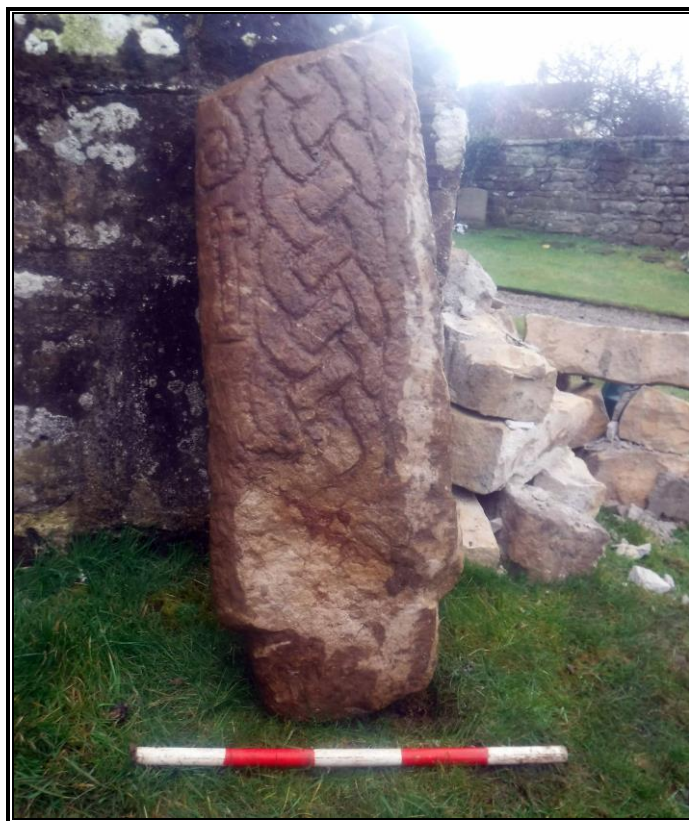

ST. MARY'S CHURCH,
WYCLIFFE, COUNTY DURHAM.

REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

OSA REPORT NO: OSA22WB03

May 2022



OSA

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Report Summary.

REPORT NO: OSA22WB03

SITE NAME: St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe

COUNTY: County Durham

NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE: NZ 11675 14335

ON BEHALF OF: The P.C.C. of St Mary's Church
Wycliffe

FIELDWORK: Berny McCluskey

TEXT & GRAPHICS: Berny McCluskey

TIMING: Fieldwork
September, November 2021,
February, March 2022
Post excavation & report preparation
March - May 2022

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Table of Contents.

Table of Contents.....	2
1.0 Abstract.....	4
2.0 Site Location and Geology.....	6
3.0 Archaeological Background.....	6
4.0 Methodology.....	8
5.0 Results.....	9
6.0 Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations.....	12
7.0 Bibliography.....	12
8.0 Appendix 1 ~ Context register.....	13
9.0 Appendix 2 ~ Archive Index.....	15
10.0 Appendix 3 ~ Assessment of pottery finds from St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, County Durham.....	16
11.0 Appendix 4 ~ Provisional identification and cataloguing of finds from St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe.....	17
12.0 Appendix 5 ~ Cross-shaft fragment, St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, Co. Durham.....	18
13.0 Appendix 6 ~ Plates.....	24
14.0 Appendix 7 ~ Figures.....	34

List of Figures.

Figure 1. Site Location (centred) NGR NZ 11675 14335.....	5
Figure 2. Site location St. Mary's Church and graveyard outlined in red.....	6
Figure 3. Trench locations.....	9
Figure 4. Trench 15 south side of church, plan possible burials and sample section.....	34
Figure 5. Trench 15 foundation (1509) sections and Trench 7 sample section.....	35
Figure 6. Trench 15 foundation (1509) plan.....	36
Figure 7. Plan locations Trenches 16, 17 and 18.....	37
Figure 8. Trench 16 and 17 sections.....	38

List of Plates.

Plate 1. Trench 11 sample section, rubble layer below topsoil looking south.....	24
Plate 2. Trench 15 south side of church looking south.....	24
Plate 3. Trench 15 south side of church location of probable inhumations looking northwest.....	25
Plate 4. Trench 15 north side of church looking east.....	25
Plate 5. Trench 15 foundation (1509) looking east.....	26
Plate 6. Trench 15 foundation (1509) looking east.....	26
Plate 7. Trench 15 foundation (1509) detail looking east.....	27
Plate 8. Trench 15 foundation (1509) looking west.....	27
Plate 9. Trench 16 looking east.....	28
Plate 10. Trench 17 looking southeast.....	28

Plate 11. Trench 17 linear [1702] and rubble layer (1703) looking southeast.	29
Plate 12. Trench 17 linear [1702] looking southwest.	29
Plate 13. Trench 18 looking southwest.	30
Plate 14. Stone cross shaft (1604).	30
Plate 15. Stone cross shaft (1604).	31
Plate 16. Stone cross shaft (1604).	32
Plate 17. Stone cross shaft (1604).	32
Plate 18. Socketed stone foundation block (1705).	33
Plate 19. Socketed stone foundation block (1705).	33

1.0 Abstract.

An archaeological investigation was carried out by On-Site-Archaeology Ltd at St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, County Durham, during groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension to house a WC to the north of the existing North Aisle. This phase of investigation followed on from an evaluation that had comprised the excavation of two trial trenches within the footprint of the new extension that identified intact inhumations at depths of 700mm and 850mm below the ground surface.

The current phase of investigation work comprised archaeological monitoring during excavation of 12 percolation trial holes, a water supply trench, raft foundation for the new extension and trench arch drain system.

The excavations on the north side of the church revealed a mortared stone foundation that is probably related to an earlier configuration of the church, possibly pre-mid 13th century in date. No inhumations were impacted upon by the work however probable grave cuts were noted on the south and west sides of the church porch, below the existing pathway.

Probably the most significant finding during the excavation was the discovery of a highly decorated lower portion of an Anglo-Scandinavian stone cross-shaft dated to between the mid-9th to 10th centuries.

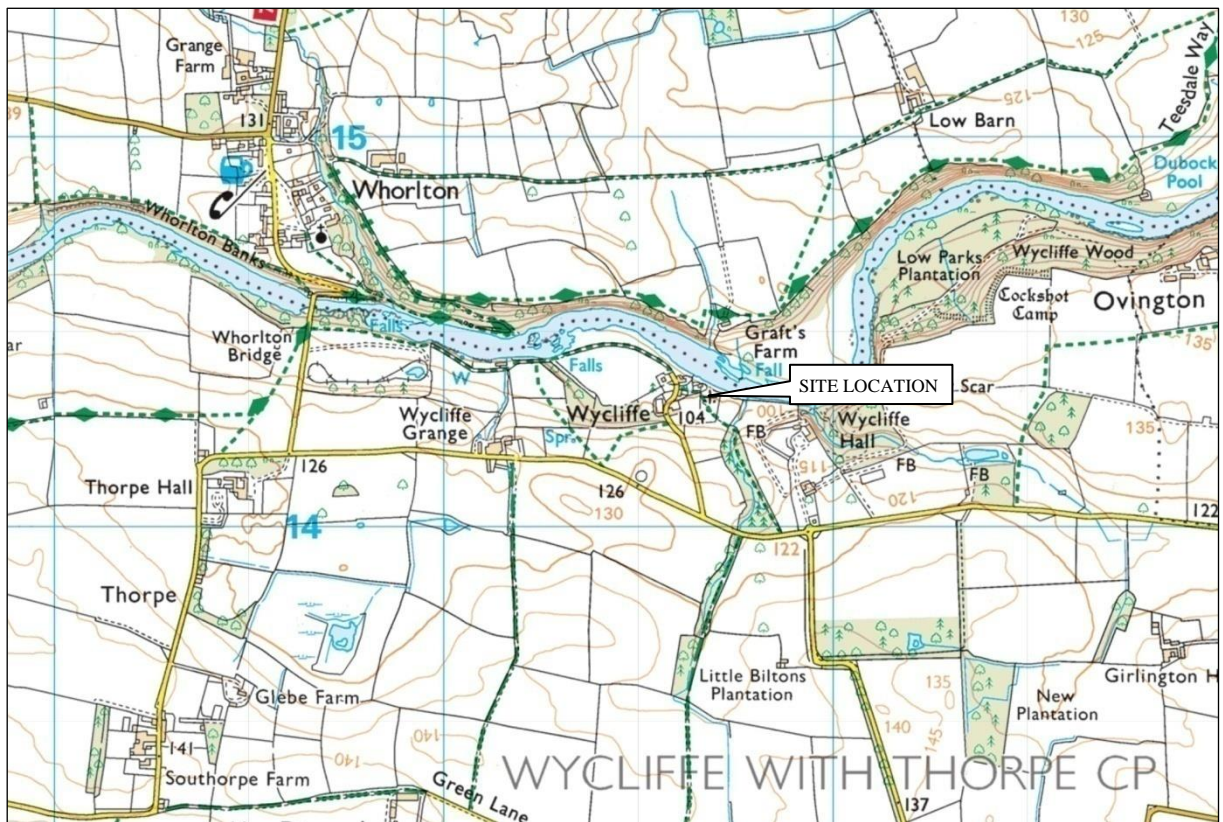


Figure 1. Site Location (centred) NGR NZ 11675 14335

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2.0 Site Location and Geology.

The village of Wycliffe is located on the south side of the River Tees, approximately 8km southeast of Barnard Castle, County Durham. St. Mary's church is positioned on the east edge of the village close to the river, centred at approximately NZ 11675 14335. The site comprises the church and its associated graveyard (Figures 1 and 2).

The groundworks required for the proposed WC extension were mainly undertaken immediately to the north of the church building, but also included a narrow service trench which extended from the new extension to the south boundary of the churchyard.

The geology is sedimentary Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone of the Stainmore Formation, with superficial river terrace deposits of Quarternary date along the river edge (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk>).

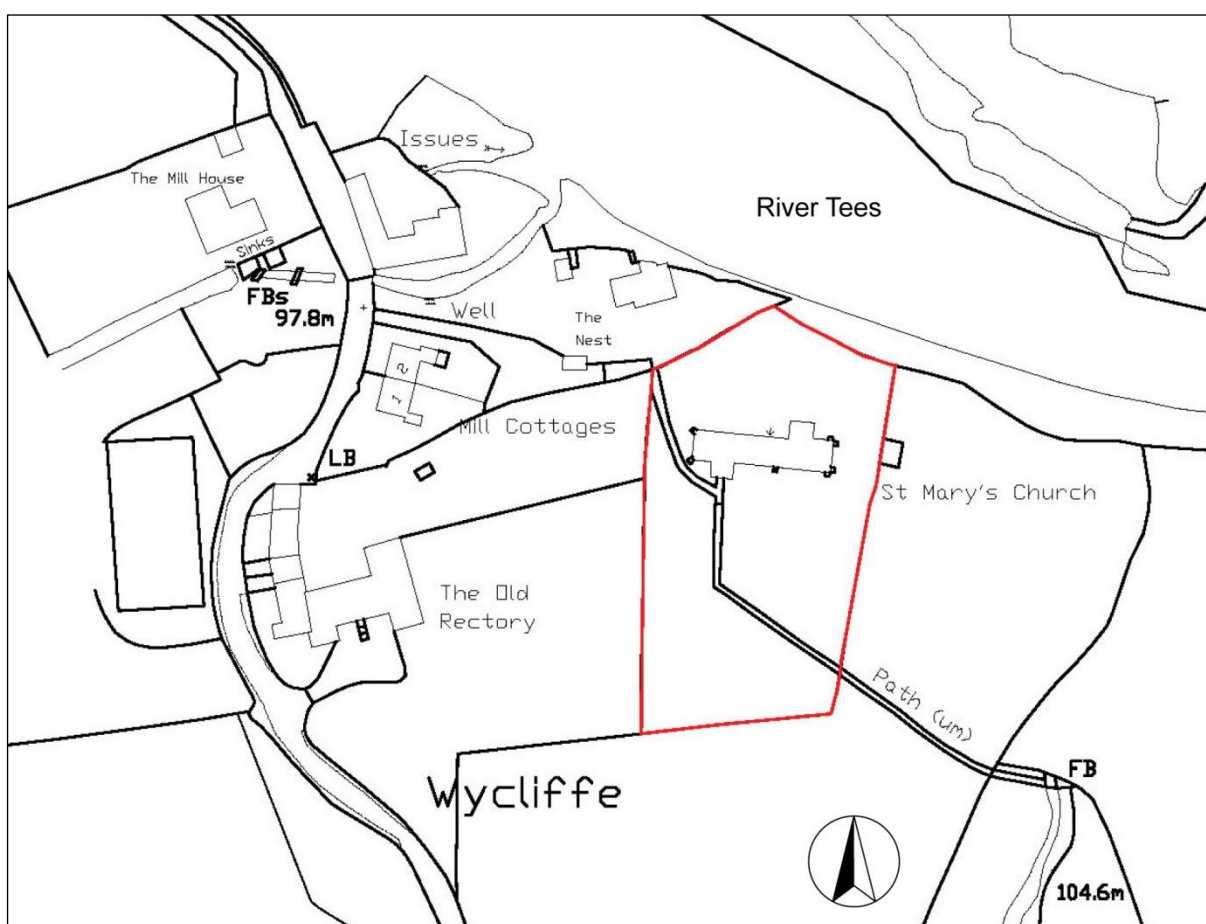


Figure 2. Site location St. Mary's Church and graveyard outlined in red.

3.0 Archaeological Background.

St. Mary's church is a Grade I listed building (List Entry Number 1322763). The following section is drawn from the listing description.

Parish Church. Mid-C13, remodelled in mid-C14, restored late C19. Rubble with re-used squared-blocks in west end and lower courses; cut dressings. Low-pitched C20 roofs not visible, except for graduated stone slates on porch and vestry. Aisleless 4-bay nave with south porch and 3-bay chancel with north vestry; axis of chancel deflected to south. Nave has

chamfered plinth except at west end; large stepped buttresses, those at west end diagonal. West window of 3 lancet lights with pierced spandrels, under hoodmould with animal-head stops; gabled bellcote with twin arches above. C14 south porch with chamfered plinth, and double-chamfered arch on semi-octagonal responds with moulded imposts; hoodmould over. Parapet has central gable with restored sundial; small chamfered window in west wall. Inside porch are restored stone benches and old studded south door in double-chamfered arch. To west of porch is a window of 3 lancet lights under a hollow-chamfered arch, to east two C14 3-light windows with flowing tracery and moulded hoods. Built into wall between the windows are 2 stone shields from a late medieval altar tomb and a fine late-C13 cross slab. North wall of nave has C19 studded door in old moulded arch, and at east end a restored C13 window of 2 lancet lights with a vesica over. Chancel has a lower chamfered plinth and stepped buttresses at angles. South C19 studded door, in old chamfered arch, and three C14 3-light windows as in nave; the 5-light east window is late C19 re-using a few medieval pieces. North C13 2-light window like that on north of nave, but unrestored. Vestry has flat-faced 2-light mullioned window of c.1700 in architrave. Parapets were heightened by c.1 metre in the late C19. Interior: Chancel colour-washed. Double-chamfered chancel arch with hoodmould to nave, on moulded imposts. Shouldered doorway to vestry. Small piscina, with broken bowl, in chancel, adjacent to sedile formed by lowered windowsill; similar piscina in nave. Medieval stone altar slab. Important C13 and C14 stained glass in nave and chancel: in north windows C13 grisaille glass with heraldry, in south windows C14 Holy Trinity, Majesty, Virgin and Child (twice). St. James the Great, St. Bartholomew and angel musicians. At west end of nave several Pre-Conquest cross fragments and an Anglo-Scandinavian hogback, also medieval cross slabs and a low-relief half-effigy. Wycliffe is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, with a very small population, and being described as waste, being held by Count Alan of Brittany. Before the Conquest Wycliffe formed part of the manor of Gilling, which had been held by Earl Edwin.

In addition to the church itself, and its associated graveyard, the following local history summary is drawn from the Keys to the Past website. "There are few early remains recorded in this area. The only prehistoric find is a Bronze Age axe found in 1908. This may have been used by an early farmer to clear trees from the land in preparation for ploughing. This area was almost certainly occupied during the Roman period; Roman forts stood at Greta Bridge to the west and Piercebridge to the east. However, no actual remains from this period have been found near Wycliffe itself. Despite this lack of evidence for occupation in the Roman period, the village was certainly in existence by the mid-Anglo-Saxon period (c.700AD). The name 'Wycliffe' comes from the Old English for 'cliff by the water', and Thorpe is the Old Norse for 'farm'. The church was also of Anglo-Saxon date. A number of carved stone crosses of this date have been found nearby. One shows a warrior on horseback holding a spear. Another, possibly originally placed by the roadside between Greta Bridge and Wycliffe, carried an Old English inscription, which in translation read 'Baeda (set this up) in memory of berehtwine, a monument in memory...'. The church also contains a Viking period hogback stone. By the medieval period there were several small settlements in this area, as well as Wycliffe itself. To the south is Gillington, the site of a deserted medieval village. Its name comes from Old English, and suggests that the village was probably of Anglo-Saxon origin. To the west is Thorpe, now just a hall and a few cottages. Although

there was an Anglo-Saxon church here, the current building was built in the mid-13th century, and restored in the 19th century. It still contains some of the original 13th century stained glass. The lords of the manor were the Wycliffe family, who lived there from the 12th century until 1611. They resided at Wycliffe Hall. Some of the medieval fortified house still survives, though it has been much altered, first in the 16th/17th century, then in the early 18th century, and most recently in the 1950s, following a fire. Since the medieval period the area has remained a quiet rural backwater - it avoided the growth of the collieries found in East Durham and the rise of lead mining found in the uplands of West Durham.”

An initial phase of archaeological evaluation was undertaken in May 2019. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches located within the footprint of the proposed extension. In-situ burials were revealed in both of the trial trenches. Within Trench 1, immediately adjacent to the church, a burial was revealed at a depth of 700mm below the modern ground surface. This burial appeared to pre-date the foundations for the north wall of the church, which stepped out for a distance of approximately 500mm from the church wall. Within Trench 2, located in the northwest corner of the proposed extension footprint, apparently in-situ burials were revealed at a depth of around 850mm below the current ground surface. Three of the burials were represented by partially articulated lower leg bones, whilst a fourth comprised a single skull. In Trench 2 the remains were found within a homogenous graveyard soil and no grave cuts could be identified. This may be the result of intensive re-cutting of graves in this area. The graveyard soil was in excess of 500mm thick extending below the basal limit of excavation. It was sealed by a 300mm thick layer of ground make-up. (OSA, 2019).

4.0 Methodology.

A document ‘Method Statement for an Archaeological Trial Trenching. St. Mary's Church, Wycliff, County Durham.’ was prepared by *On-Site Archaeology Ltd* (OSA 2020, updated August 2021). The investigation was carried out in accordance with the methodology detailed within the updated document.

The work comprised the archaeological monitoring during the excavation of 12 percolation trial holes (Trenches 3 - 14), a water supply trench (Trench 15), raft foundation for the new extension (Trench 16) and trench arch drain system (Trenches 17 and 18) (Figure 3).

The earlier two evaluation trial trenches (2019) were numbered Trench 1 and 2 and to avoid duplication the number sequencing of interventions within the works reported in this document follow on from the earlier investigation (Trenches 3 - 18).

Standard *On-Site Archaeology* techniques were followed throughout the excavation. These involved the completion of trench record sheets and context sheets as well as plans and sections drawn to scale. A photographic record of the deposits and features was also maintained.

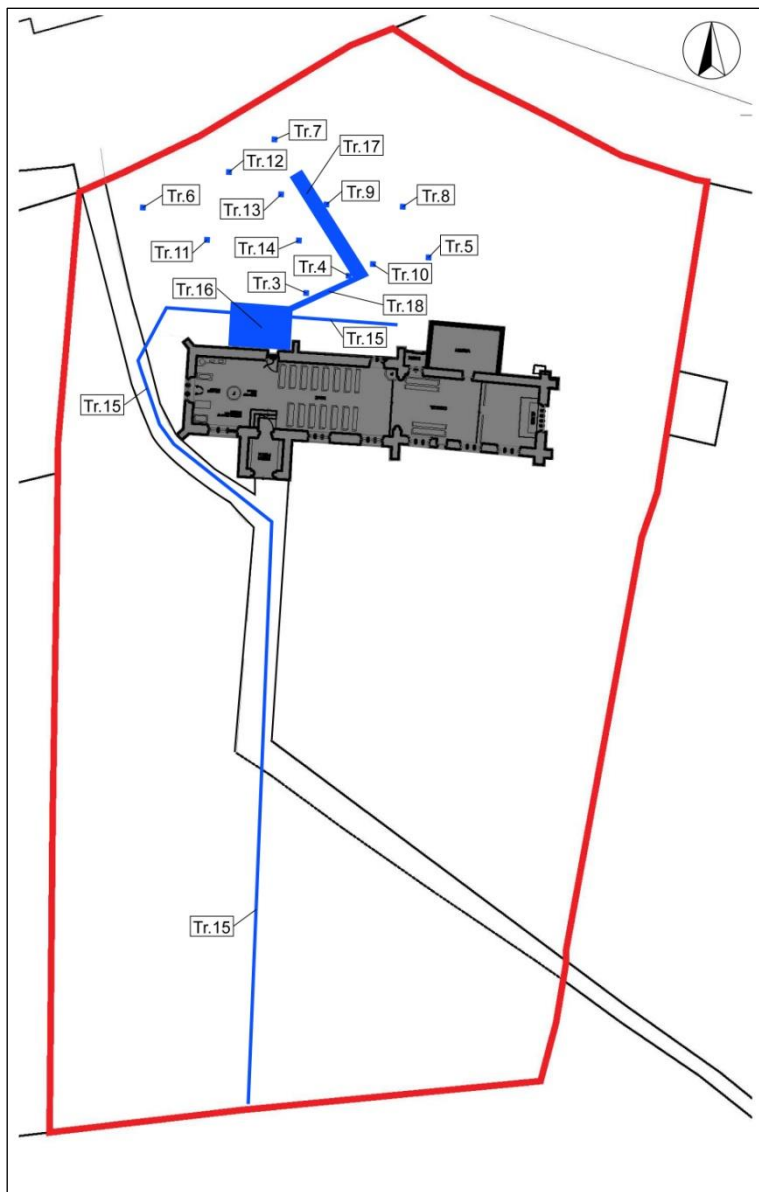


Figure 3. Trench locations.

5.0 Results.

Percolation trial holes - Trenches 3 -14 (Figures 3 and 5)

A total of 12 percolation trial holes were hand excavated, each measuring c.0.3m by c.0.3m and c.0.75m deep. Due to the small size of the trial holes only a limited interpretation of the deposits encountered could be made. A full description of deposits within the trial holes are presented within Appendix 8.1, Trenches 3 to 14. The general result of the trial holes was that no obvious burials were impacted upon. Other general observations made were that the natural bedrock was noted within Trenches 8 and 9 at 0.7m and 0.5m respectively. A stony rubble layer was encountered within Trenches 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 13 and 14 below the topsoil that appeared to represent a construction or debris deposit (Plate 1). This layer was later exposed in Trenches 15 - 18 and recorded in full. A pottery sherd dated to the 13th - 15th century was recovered from a probable graveyard soil (602) within Trench 6.

Water supply trench - Trench 15 (Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6)

Trench 15 was c.88m long and ran from the southern church boundary to the north side of the church (Plate 2). The trench was c.0.25m wide and machine excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m. This trench revealed a graveyard soil (1502) throughout, a minimum depth of 0.4m and a maximum depth of 0.75m, from which occasional fragments of disarticulated human bone were encountered. Pockets of natural deposits (1503) comprised of a yellowish brown clay were occasionally observed closer to the southern side of the church porch area where five potential east to west aligned grave cuts were encountered at c.75m deep (Plate 3).

Partly revealed within an unintentional overshoot of Trench 15 on the northern side of the church was an east to west aligned wall foundation (1509) that ran parallel with the northern side of the church (Plates 4 - 8). The foundation was exposed for a length of c.4m and depth of 0.4m with outer facing elevations to the west and north. Foundation (1509) was constructed from random coursed roughly hewn sandstone blocks and platy sandstone bonded with grey mortar that consisted of lime and charcoal fleck inclusions. Above (1509), exposed within the north facing section, was a robbing / demolition deposit (1508), comprising disturbed foundation blocks, a total of 0.26m thick. Above (1509) within the south facing section was a probable disturbed graveyard soil (1506) that was 0.37m thick. Deposit (1506) was cut into by a 19th - 20th century surface water drain (1504). A similar probable graveyard soil (1507) was butted up the west elevation of the foundation that was 0.4m thick. Sealing (1508) the upper disturbed foundation was (1505) that was a layer of probable demolition/construction debris 0.2m thick. Fragments of window glass were recovered from (1505) of a probable post-medieval or early modern date. Overlying (1505) was the topsoil (1500) that was 0.2m thick.

Raft foundation - Trench 16 (Figures 3, 7 and 8)

The raft foundation measured c.6m by c.4m and was machine excavated to maximum and minimum depths of 0.5m BGL (below ground level) and 0.3m BGL, respectively (Plate 9). Exposed along the southern limit of the trench was the extant church foundation (1603). Foundation (1603) was butted up to by deposit (1602) a probable graveyard soil exposed for a depth of c.1m and from which occasional disarticulated human bone were recovered. Partially embedded into (1602) was a large fragment of a stone cross shaft (1604) (see details below). Sealing (1602) was (1601) a layer of demolition/construction debris that was 0.28m thick.

Trench arch drain - Trench 17 (Figures 3, 7 and 8)

Trench 17 was orientated north to south and was 12.5m long and 1m wide and machine excavated to depth of 0.5m (Plate 10). Situated within the northern half of the trench was a probable graveyard soil (1704) with an excavated depth of 0.1m. Small fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from (1704). Within the southern half of the trench was demolition/construction debris (1703) that was exposed for a depth of c.0.12m. Recovered from (1703) was a large stone block with a socket hole (see details below). A pottery sherd dated to the 11th - 13th centuries was also recovered from (1703). Demarking

the interface between (1704) and (1703) was a cobblestone filled linear [1702] that was orientated roughly northeast to southwest (Plates 11 and 12). The relationship between [1702] and deposits (1704) and (1703) on either side is uncertain as the base of the cobble feature was not reached within the maximum depth of the trench. The possibilities are that [1702] either cuts or was butted up to by (1704) and (1703). The function of this linear is uncertain. It may represent a relatively recent soak away or be an earlier trench constructed foundation for a wall.

Linking trench - Trench 18 (Figure 3 and 7)

Trench 18 was a linking pipe trench between Trench 16 and 17 and was 0.3m wide and machine excavated to c.0.6m deep (Plate 13). A similar sequence of deposits was recorded as was seen in Trench 16, that included a graveyard soil (1102) exposed for a depth of c.0.1m that was sealed by a demolition/construction debris layer (1101), 0.3m thick which was overlaid by a topsoil (1100) that was 0.25m thick.

Disarticulated human bone

Fragments of disarticulated human bone were recovered from Trenches 3, 10, 11, 15, 16 and 17. These were reburied within the respective trenches during the investigation.

Stone cross shaft (1604) and Stone foundation base (1705)

Worked stone (1604) represented the lower portion of a stone cross-shaft with a rectangular section profile (Plates 13 - 18). The shaft was recovered from context (1602) a probable graveyard soil within Trench 16. An interim report on the cross-shaft was produced by Prof. Jane Hawkes and is presented in Appendix 5.

It measured c.0.87m long, 0.37m wide towards the base and tapered up 0.25m where it was broken, and was 0.15m thick. At the base was a tenon that was 0.16m long, 0.28m wide and 0.12m thick. Displayed on each side of the shaft were engraved interlacing motifs. The stone cross shaft is provisionally dated to the later Anglo-Saxon period and early indications suggest it is a potentially a unique piece of stonework of regional interest.

A large, worked sandstone block (1705) was recovered from (1703) a demolition/construction debris layer within Trench 17 (Plates 19 and 20). The block measured 0.6m wide, 0.4m wide and 0.4m deep at the surface and tapered in slightly at the base. Located within the centre of the upper surface was a rectangular socket hole 0.22m long and 0.09m wide that was worked all the way through the block with a slight stepping in towards the base. This block may represent the base for a cross or headstone and its date is unknown.

Both the stone cross shaft and stone foundation base are currently retained by the church.

6.0 Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations.

Foundation (1509) may represent an earlier church configuration possibly pre-dating the mid-13th to mid-14th century build and remodelling of the church. The investigation has highlighted the presence of a distinct layer of rubble identified in a number of trench interventions on the north and west sides of foundation (1509) and incidentally the same rubble layer was identified within the earlier 2019 evaluation within Trench 2 (OSA, 2019). It could be suggested that the rubble layer represents a mix of demolition debris of the earlier church structure and construction debris from the mid-13th century church build or the 14th century remodelling. A pottery sherd dated to the 11th - 13th century was recovered from the rubble layer within Trench 17 and this would possibly support this suggestion. The 2019 evaluation Trench 1 revealed an inhumation that pre-dated the north wall of the extant church which suggests the presence of an earlier church that was smaller than the extant church of which foundation (1509) may represent the northwestern extent of the earlier build. Potential medieval inhumations revealed on the south side of the church, close to the porch (Trench 15) presumably represents an earlier graveyard configuration either of a mid-13th to mid-14th century or earlier date. Foundation (1509) would appear to have been further disturbed by the 19th century church restoration with the installation of drainage.

The archaeological investigation has highlighted an earlier configuration of a probable pre-mid 13th century church and together with the discovery of a potentially uniquely decorated Anglo-Scandinavian stone cross-shaft has further enriched the history of the Grade I listed building of St. Mary's Church at Wycliffe.

The Anglo-Scandinavian cross shaft fragment is clearly a significant object in its own right, and despite the fact that it was recovered from a later deposit, is likely to relate to early medieval activity on the site. In addition to the report provided on the cross shaft fragment in this document, recording has been arranged by members of The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture project to publicise the discovery within the archaeological community. Any decisions regarding the need for further reporting will be made by the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.

7.0 Bibliography.

British Geological Survey 2020 <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>
(viewed July 2020)

OSA, 2019. St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, County Durham. Report on an Archaeological Evaluation. OSA Report No. OSA19EV11.

OSA, 2021. St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, County Durham. Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Mitigation.

8.0 Appendix 1 ~ Context register.

8.1 Context Register

Context no.	Description	Thickness	Extent
Trench 3 (Trench depth 0.76m)			
300	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.20m	0.3m x 0.3m
301	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.36	Tr.
302	Roughly hewn stone block.	0.14m	-
303	Dark brownish grey silt. Layer of silt.	0.06m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 4 (Trench depth 0.72m)			
400	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.20m	0.3m x 0.3m
401	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.42m	0.3m x 0.3m
402	Dark brownish grey silt. Layer of silt.	0.1m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 5 (Trench depth 0.72m)			
500	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.20m	0.3m x 0.3m
501	Mid brown sandy-silt. Occasional stone inclusions.	0.32m	0.3m x 0.3m
502	Dark brownish grey silt. Layer of silt.	0.2m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 6 (Trench depth 0.76m)			
600	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
601	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.16m	0.3m x 0.3m
602	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.4m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 7 (Trench depth 0.74m)			
700	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.32m	0.3m x 0.3m
701	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.37m	0.3m x 0.3m
702	Dark grey clayey-sandy-silt occasional stone inclusions.	0.05m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 8 (Trench depth 0.7m)			
800	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
801	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.50m	0.3m x 0.3m
802	Possible bedrock natural.	-	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 9 (Trench depth 0.56m)			
900	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
901	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate cobblestone. Stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.36m	0.3m x 0.3m
902	Possible bedrock natural.	-	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 10 (Trench depth 0.7m)			
1000	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
1001	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.21m	0.3m x 0.3m
1002	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.39m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 11 (Trench depth 0.75m)			
1100	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
1101	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.41m	0.3m x 0.3m
1102	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.14m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 12 (Trench depth 0.75m)			
1200	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
1201	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions.	0.45m	0.3m x 0.3m

	Graveyard soil.		
1202	Dark grey clayey-sandy-silt occasional stone inclusions.	0.1m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 13 (Trench depth 0.76m)			
1300	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
1301	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.16m	0.3m x 0.3m
1302	Dark grey clayey-sandy-silt occasional stone inclusions.	0.4m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 14 (Trench depth 0.73m)			
1401	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	0.3m x 0.3m
1402	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.31m	0.3m x 0.3m
1403	Mid brown sandy-silt occasional stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.22m exp.	0.3m x 0.3m
Trench 15 (Trench depth c.0.75m, length c.88m)			
1500	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	-
1501	Greyish brown clayey-silt. Occasional stone, cobblestone, stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.23m	-
1502	Dark brown clayey-silt occasional stone, cobblestone, stone. Graveyard soil.	0.36m	-
1503	Yellowish brown clay. Natural.	-	-
1504	Dark grey clayey silt. 19 th - 20 th century drain backfill.	0.4m	
1505	Greyish brown clayey-silt. Frequent mortar fragments, occasional glass inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.2m	>5m
1506	Dark brown clayey-silt occasional stone, cobblestone, stone. Graveyard soil.	0.37m	>5m
1507	Yellowish brown clayey-silt occasional stone, Graveyard/sub soil.	0.4m	>5m
1508	Greyish brown clayey-silt. Frequent mortar fragments and roughly hewn sandstone blocks, disturbed upper foundation.	0.26m exp.	2.6m exp.
1509	Masonry random coursed roughly hewn blocks and platy stone bonded with grey mortar with lime and charcoal fleck inclusions.	0.4m exp.	4m exp.
Trench 16			
1600	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.3m	-
1601	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.28	Tr.
1602	Mid reddish brown clayey sandy-silt occasional stone rubble and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.1m exp.	Tr.
1603	Extant church foundations	-	-
1604	Number allocated to stone cross shaft.	-	-
Trench 17			
1700	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	-
1701	Dark grey clay-sandy- silt frequent cobblestone inclusions. Foundation or soak away.	0.2m excavated	0.7m x 1m
1702	Cut for (1701).	0.2m excavated	0.7m x 1m
1703	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.2m	5.5m x 1m
1704	Mid reddish brown clayey-silt occasional stone. Graveyard soil.	0.2m excavated	5.8m x 1m
1705	Number allocated to stone block foundation stone.	-	-
Trench 18			
1100	Dark grey sandy-clayey silt – topsoil.	0.2m	-
1101	Greyish brown sandy-silt. Moderate stone rumble inclusions. Layer of demolition/construction debris.	0.3m	Tr.
1102	Mid reddish brown clayey sandy-silt occasional stone rubble and charcoal fleck inclusions. Graveyard soil.	0.1m exp.	Tr.

9.0 Appendix 2 ~ Archive Index

9.1 Drawing Register.

Drawing No.	Description	Scale	Date	Initials
1	North facing section Trench 3	1:10	01/09/21	BMcC
2	North facing section Trench 4	1:10	01/09/21	BMcC
3	North facing section Trench 5	1:10	01/09/21	BMcC
4	Plan location Trenches 3 - 5	1:50	01/09/21	BMcC
5	North facing section Trench 6	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
6	North facing section Trench 7	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
7	North facing section Trench 8	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
8	North facing section Trench 9	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
9	North facing section Trench 10	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
10	North facing section Trench 11	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
11	North facing section Trench 12	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
12	North facing section Trench 13	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
13	North facing section Trench 14	1:10	28/09/21	BMcC
14	Plan location Trenches 6 - 14	1:50	28/09/21	BMcC
15	Plan location Trench 15	1:100	08/11/21	BMcC
16	East facing sample section Trench 15	1:10	08/11/21	BMcC
17	East facing sample section Trench 15	1:10	08/11/21	BMcC
18	Plan location graves porch south side of church.	1:100	08/11/21	BMcC
19	Plan location foundation (1509)	1:20	09/11/21	BMcC
20	South facing section foundation (1509)	1:20	09/11/21	BMcC
21	North facing section (1509)	1:20	09/11/21	BMcC
22	West facing section (1509)	1:20	09/11/21	BMcC
23	Plan trench 16	1:50	28/02/22	BMcC
24	Plan location Trenches 16, 17 and 18	1:100	28/02/22	BMcC
25	East facing section Trench 16	1:20	28/02/22	BMcC
26	Stone shaft (1604) profiles	1:5	28/02/22	BMcC
27	NE facing section Trench 17	1:20	09/03/22	BMcC
28	Plan Trench 17	1:20	09/03/22	BMcC
29	Stone foundation (1705) profile	1:10	09/03/22	BMcC

9.2 Photographic Register.

Frame no.	Description	Initials and date
Photo download 02/09/21		
1-14	Trench 3	BMcC 01/09/21
15 - 27	Trench 4	BMcC 01/09/21
Photo download 29/09/21		
1 - 45	Trenches 6 - 14.	BMcC 28/09/21
Photo download 11/11/21		
1 - 82	Trench 15	BMcC 10/11/21
Photo download 29/02/22		
1 - 25	Trench 16 and stone cross base	BMcC 28/02/22
Photo download 03/03/22		
13 - 169	Stone cross shaft	BMcC 02/03/22
Photo download 10/03/22		
1 - 58	Trenches 17 and 18	BMcC 09/03/22

10.0 Appendix 3 ~ Assessment of pottery finds from St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, County Durham.

by Ailsa Mainman (March 2022)

Five sherds were submitted for assessment.

Context (401) a body sherd. This small fine-tempered oxidized sherd might be part of a basal angle from a jug. There is a spot of lead glaze and the general appearance would suggest a date from the 12th – 14th century but this is uncertain given the size of the fragment.

Context (602). Three rim sherds from a single open form, possibly a bowl. A fine oxidized fabric which has a few larger grits appears to be in a variant of Tees Valley ware. There is evidence of a very thin white slip on both the exterior and interior which is typical of this ware. The rim forms a slight flange which has thumbled decoration giving it a wavy profile below which is a raised ridge. It is likely to date to the 13th– 15th century.

Context (1703) a body sherd. This is from an oxidized, thin-walled vessel with some external sooting and traces of what are likely to be accidental gouges on the exterior. While dating is inconclusive, the gritty fabric and thin wall would be consistent with an 11th or 12th century date.

11.0 Appendix 4 ~ Provisional identification and cataloguing of finds from St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe.

by Berny McCluskey

On-Site Archaeology Ltd recovered an assemblage of finds during an archaeological investigation at St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, County Durham. This report details the provisional identification and cataloguing of the finds from this investigation. The finds were quantified and catalogued and are presented within Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Type	Number of sherds/fragments	Number of vessels/objects
Pottery	5	3
Glass	2	-
Animal Bone	1	-
Total	8	3

Pottery

The pottery assemblage comprised of five sherds representing three vessels. These sherds were assessed and spot dated and reported within Appendix 3. The sherds dated from the 11th to 15th centuries.

Glass

Two shards of probable church window glass were recovered from context (1505) a demolition/construction debris deposit. The window glass is most likely of a post-medieval or early modern date.

Animal Bone

Fragments of animal bone were identified within contexts (2006) and (2010). These appear to be typical domestic waste, some with butchery marks.

Retention

All finds from stratified deposits should all be retained for potential future study.

Table 2.

Context no.	Type	Common name	No. Sherds /fragments	No. Vessels /objects	Part	Comments	Date range – centuries /period
401	Pottery	Earthenware	1	1	Body sherd	See appendix 3 for details	12 th - 14 th
602	Pottery	Earthenware	3	1	Rim	See appendix 3 for details	13 th - 15 th
602	Animal bone	Tooth	1	-	-	-	-
1505	Glass	Window glass	2	-	-	2.7mm thick translucent yellowish hue window glass	post medieval-early modern
1703	Pottery	Earthenware	1	1	Body sherd	See appendix 3 for details	11 th - 12 th

12.0 Appendix 5 ~ Cross-shaft fragment, St. Mary's Church, Wycliffe, Co. Durham.

By Prof. Jane Hawkes (jane.hawkes@york.ac.uk)

Present location

Lying at the west end of the nave.

Evidence for discovery

Recovered during excavation prior to construction of addition to north-west side of church in 2022.

H. Overall 73.5 cm (28.9 in) Shaft 59.5 cm (23.4 in) Tenon 14 cm (5.5 in)

W. 30 > 27 cm (11.8 > 10.6 in)

D. 15 cm (5.9 in)

Stone type

Unavailable. Provision of this information would significantly add to our understanding of the monument and the phases of sculptural activity at the site: was it perhaps sourced from the same quarry as the stone used for the other monuments from the site? Is this the same source as was used for the two early (8th and 9th century) cross-shafts recovered from Wycliffe?

Present condition

Although broken at the top, with some damage to the surface of the lower portions of A and B and along the right-hand edge of A, the carving is in good condition on all four faces; the tenon is undecorated.

Description

The shaft and tenon are sub-rectangular with slightly rounded corners which are not demarcated by edge-mouldings.



A



B



C



D

A (*broad*). Above the damage to the lower portion of the shaft, this face is filled with a clear and well-formed wide-band regular four-strand interlace pattern of Type Ai (Cramp, 1984: xlv). Approximately two-thirds of the way up the length of the shaft on the left-hand side the outline of a small free-armed cross set in a squared base has been incised beside the interlace; above it is a circular motif filled a small circle divided diagonally down the centre to create to half-spheres. Above this motif a plain wide band extends up into the break at the top of the stone (see detail)

B (*narrow*). This face of the shaft is filled with a coherently laid-out pattern of Borrestyle ring-chain, a motif characterised by a central run of truncated triangles flanked by side loops (Kershaw, 2010: 2); here, this is bounded horizontally approximately one-third up from the base of the shaft.

C (*wide*). This face is filled by a wide band regular six-strand interlace pattern of Type Ai (Cramp, 1984: xlv). Towards the top of the shaft, on either side, are a series of curved sloping incisions that appear to create the impression of cable edge-moulding, but they do not run the

full length of the shaft. Below, on the left, is an incoherent series of motifs; these are not replicated on the right.

D (narrow). Like B, this face of the shaft is filled with a regular run of Borrestyle ring-chain.

Discussion

The tapering form of this fragment, along with the tenon leave little doubt that it once formed the lower portion of a cross-shaft, while the presence the Borre style ring-chain on the two narrow faces means that it can be fairly securely dated to between the mid-9th and 10th centuries (Kershaw, 2010, 2-3). This was an early Scandinavian motif used to decorate a wide range of media and takes its name from its appearance on a number of objects recovered from a ship-burial at Borre in Norway (Wilson, 1976: 502). It is found on a large number of artefacts recovered from across Britain, and on Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture is featured most famously on the 10th century cross at Gosforth, Cumbria (Gosforth 1, Bailey and Cramp, 1988: 100-104). It is not, however, found elsewhere in this area of Co. Durham and what was North Yorkshire (Cramp, 1984; Lang, 2001). This has interesting implications for the distribution of this distinctive feature in the Anglo-Scandinavian sculpture of the Danelaw that warrants further research. The wide band interlace pattern on both the wide faces of the shaft (A and C) also helps date the monument to this period of sculptural activity and, unlike the distribution of the Borre style ring-chain, is found elsewhere in this area (Lang, 2001: 28). Furthermore, the distinctive manner in which the patterns have been arranged across the shaft, without being set within defined panels or contained by edge-mouldings, is a feature of a shaft from Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, that has been dated to the late 9th century (Chester-le-Street 1, Cramp, 1984: 53-54) and Haxby in North Yorkshire, dated generally to the 10th century, where the wide band interlace pattern, Type Ai, also features on one of the broad faces, A (Haxby 1, Lang, 2001: 124).

Originally, the monument would probably have functioned as a funerary marker, one of a number of such monuments recovered from the site, which include fragments of other cross-shafts and hogbacks (Wycliffe 1-7, Lang, 2001: 266-273). Two of the cross-shafts have been dated to the 10th century, as have the three hogback pieces. While none of these share features with this piece, they do demonstrate the wide variety of motifs employed by the sculptors to decorate the Wycliffe monuments, of which this fragment provides further evidence.

While these patterns help to date and situate the shaft within the wider regional context of sculptural decoration, the motif of the outline cross in a base on A is without precedence in the corpus of extant Anglo-Saxon sculpture, of Anglian or Viking-age date, and is of considerable symbolic significance. Although not stepped, the base is large and recalls those that survive across the island of Ireland, and which can be found, less commonly, in Britain: at Lindisfarne on Holy Island (founded by the Columban mission from Iona), for example, or at Whitby, in North Yorkshire (founded from Lindisfarne), which have been dated to the eighth through 9th centuries (Lindisfarne 19, Cramp, 1984: 201; Whitby 55 and 56, Lang, 2001: 265-266). In most cases, the cross bases extant across the region were probably intended to be buried allowing the cross to appear as if planted in the ground (see Hawkes,

2018), but those at Lindisfarne and Whitby were clearly intended to be viewed above ground, like those in Ireland, and like the base depicted at Wycliffe, those at Whitby are squared. As far as the Irish cross-bases are concerned, and particularly those on Iona, the scholarship has postulated that they were intended to reference the True Cross, set up on Calvary to bear the body of Christ at the Crucifixion (e.g., Fisher, 2020). This is the symbolic significance of the stepped-base crosses featured in Anglo-Saxon art – as at Kirkdale, East Yorkshire (Kirkdale 7, Lang, 1991: 161-162). Both, furthermore, were also understood to reference the jewelled cross, set on the altar of the True Cross in Jerusalem by Theodosius II (408-450), which in turn was intended to call to mind the *crux gemmata* that would appear in the heavens as one of the signs of the end of time (see, e.g., Raw, 1970; Hawkes, 2002, 143; Bailey 2006, 46, 122-123; Schwitzer van Donkelaar, 2006; Hawkes, 2022: 221). These frames of reference were common-place in Anglo-Saxon England and the use of the motif of the free-armed cross like (but not exclusive to) those set up across the landscape in the pre-Viking period, may well have called to mind the cross-shafts set up at Wycliffe between the 8th and 9th centuries that may well have been visible to the Anglo-Scandinavian community that came to settle there in the later 9th and/or 10th century. The curious motif above the cross is less easily explained. While it is clearly circular, the two half-spheres are hard to parallel. They might be explained as small leaves set within a plant-scroll, but if this is the case there is no sign of the short stems that would branch out from the scroll, and the plain band that extends from this motif to the break in the stone at the upper edge argues against this being the terminal of a continuous plan-scroll running along this side of the shaft. Alternatively, the circular ring might have been intended to recall the symbol of the sun or moon, motifs that commonly accompanied the cross in images of the Crucifixion from an early date in Christian art, and survive in Anglo-Saxon art: on the c. 800 cross-shaft fragment from Repton in Derbyshire, for instance (Repton 1C, Hawkes and Sidebottom, 2017: 198-205). The bisected circular motif contained within the circle, however, does not replicate the symbols of the heavenly bodies, which were normally filled with faces of personifications of the sun and moon. This being the case, the circle could be conjectured as intended to reference the heavens, the half-spherical shapes perhaps intended to recall the sun and moon; the moon, for instance, could be illustrated as a half-sphere or crescent. In the absence of any further evidence, this explanation must remain entirely hypothetical, but presented in conjunction with the cross, set in its base, it would certainly enhance its potential to function as a contemplative device, intended to call to mind the future eschaton but also the Crucifixion of the historical past, setting the viewer in the present within the trans-historical salvation made available by Christ's sacrifice on the cross, the monumental form of which carried the incised motif.

Overall, the remains of the cross-shaft recovered at Wycliffe provide evidence of the highly varied manner in which Anglo-Scandinavian Christians in the north of England sought to commemorate their dead, both monumentally and decoratively. Here, the interlace patterns place the cross within a corpus of motifs found across the wider region, and help to date it to late 9th through 10th century. Further work on the distribution of these specific motifs might reveal much more about the immediate connections and networks within which the cross was situated and help elucidate our understanding of the site in the tenth century. The additional motif of the incised cross in its base certainly indicates that those responsible for its design and production were aware of the function of Christian art with ecclesiastical contexts: as a

means for contemplating the eternal salvation available through Christ and his Church. It further suggests that they were aware of the potential of the cross, set in a base, to recall the jewelled cross, a sign of the eschaton and a symbol of the True Cross, and in the context of the site itself, may well have used the free-armed form of the cross/es set up at the site following its foundation in the mid-9th century by the Cuthbert Community from Lindisfarne. It thus provides further evidence of the survival of the Church in the Danelaw and its ability to assimilate the Scandinavian settlers in the beliefs and devotional practices of Christianity (Abrams, 2000; Abrams, 2001; Doviak, 2020a; Doviak, 2020b; Doviak 2021).

Date: Late 9th to 10th century

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13.0 Appendix 6 ~ Plates.



Plate 1. Trench 11 sample section, rubble layer below topsoil looking south.



Plate 2. Trench 15 south side of church looking south.



Plate 3. Trench 15 south side of church location of probable inhumations looking northwest.



Plate 4. Trench 15 north side of church looking east.



Plate 5. Trench 15 foundation (1509) looking east.



Plate 6. Trench 15 foundation (1509) looking east.



Plate 7. Trench 15 foundation (1509) detail looking east.



Plate 8. Trench 15 foundation (1509) looking west.



Plate 9. Trench 16 looking east.



Plate 10. Trench 17 looking southeast.



Plate 11. Trench 17 linear [1702] and rubble layer (1703) looking southeast.



Plate 12. Trench 17 linear [1702] looking southwest.



Plate 13. Trench 18 looking southwest.



Plate 14. Stone cross shaft (1604).



Plate 15. Stone cross shaft (1604).



Plate 16. Stone cross shaft (1604).



Plate 16. Stone cross shaft (1604).



Plate 17. Stone cross shaft (1604).



Plate 18. Socketed stone foundation block (1705).



Plate 19. Socketed stone foundation block (1705).

14.0 Appendix 7 ~ Figures.

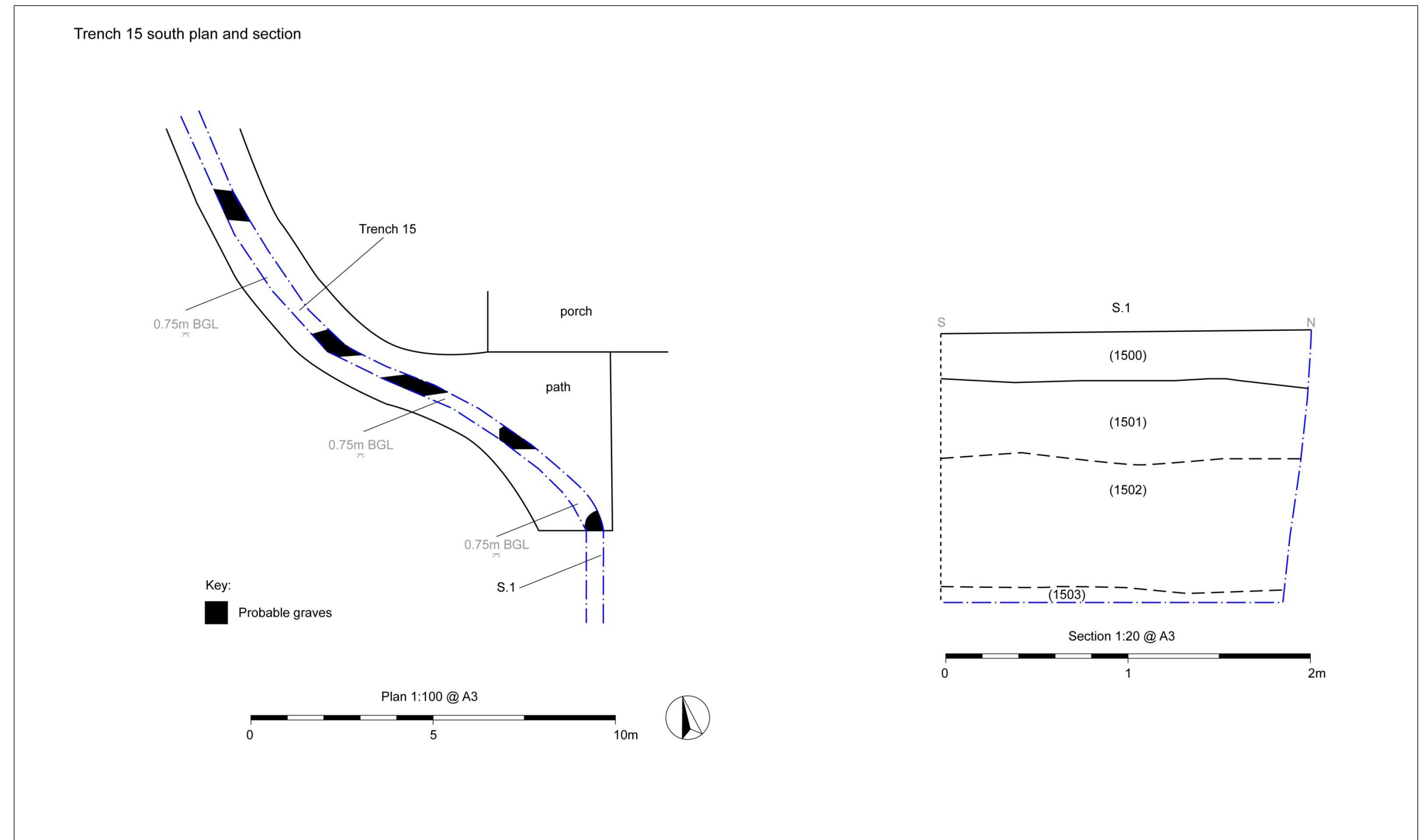


Figure 4. Trench 15 south side of church, plan possible burials and sample section.

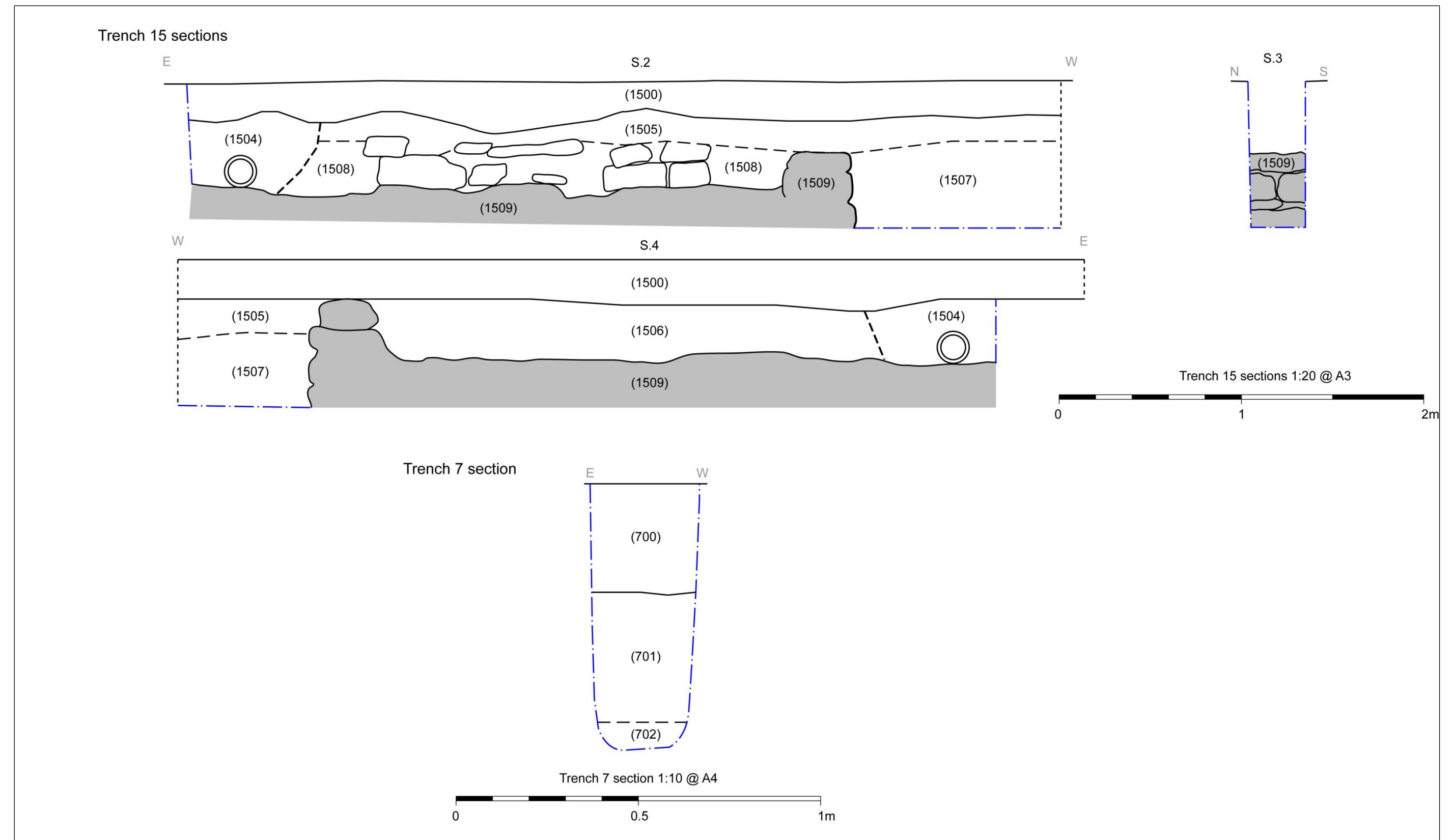


Figure 5. Trench 15 foundation (1509) sections and Trench 7 sample section.

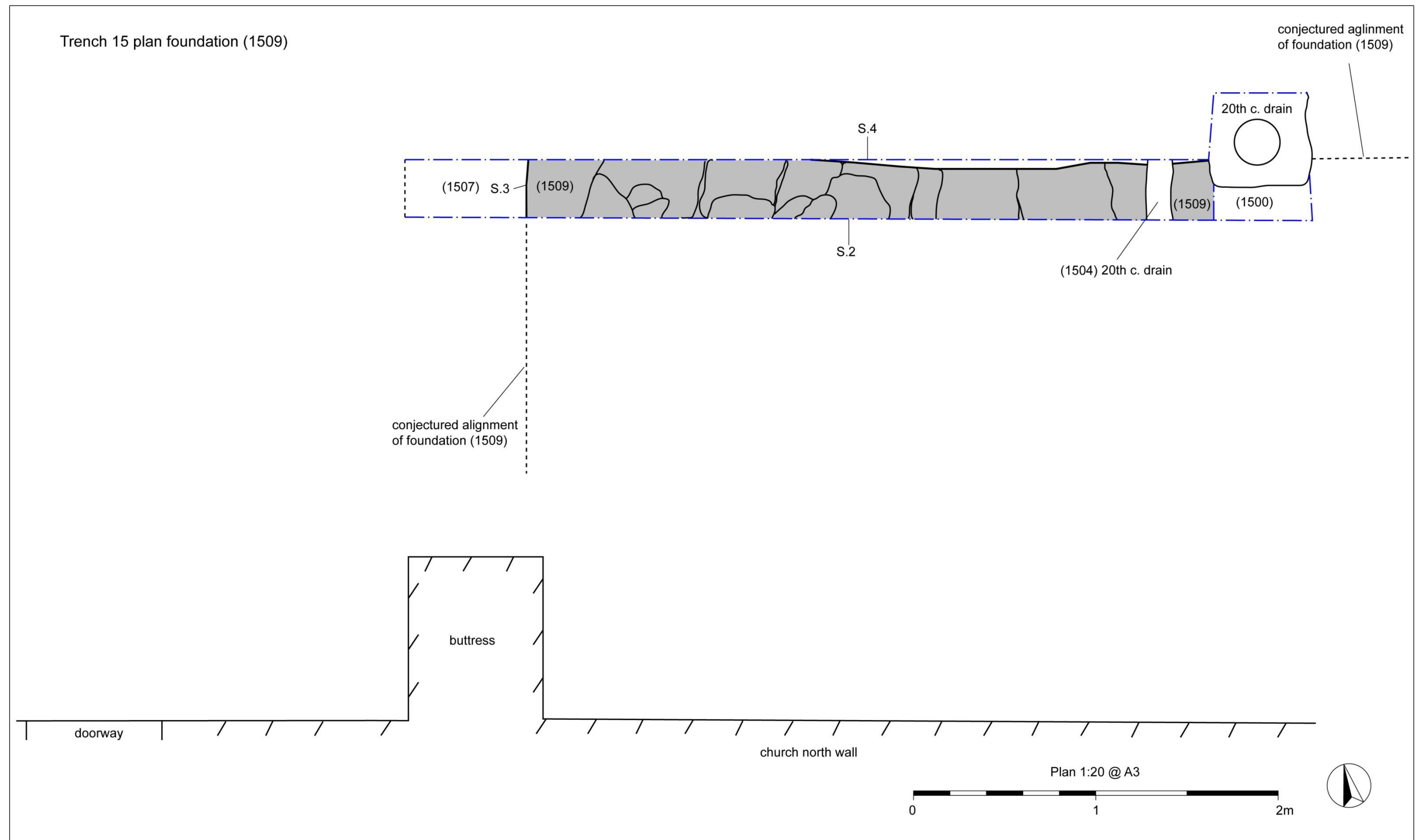


Figure 6. Trench 15 foundation (1509) plan.

Trench 16, 17 and 18 plans

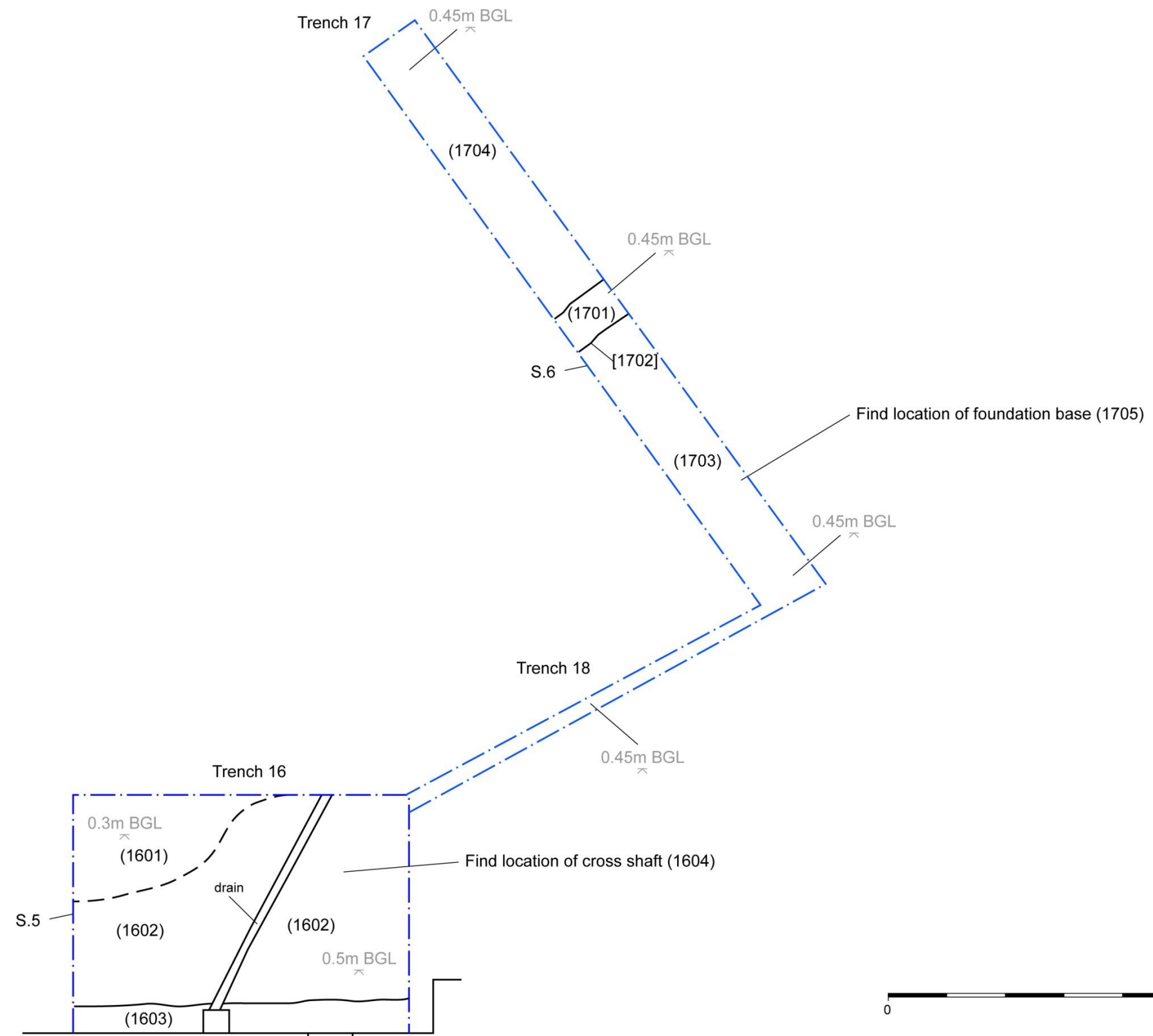


Figure 7. Plan locations Trenches 16, 17 and 18.

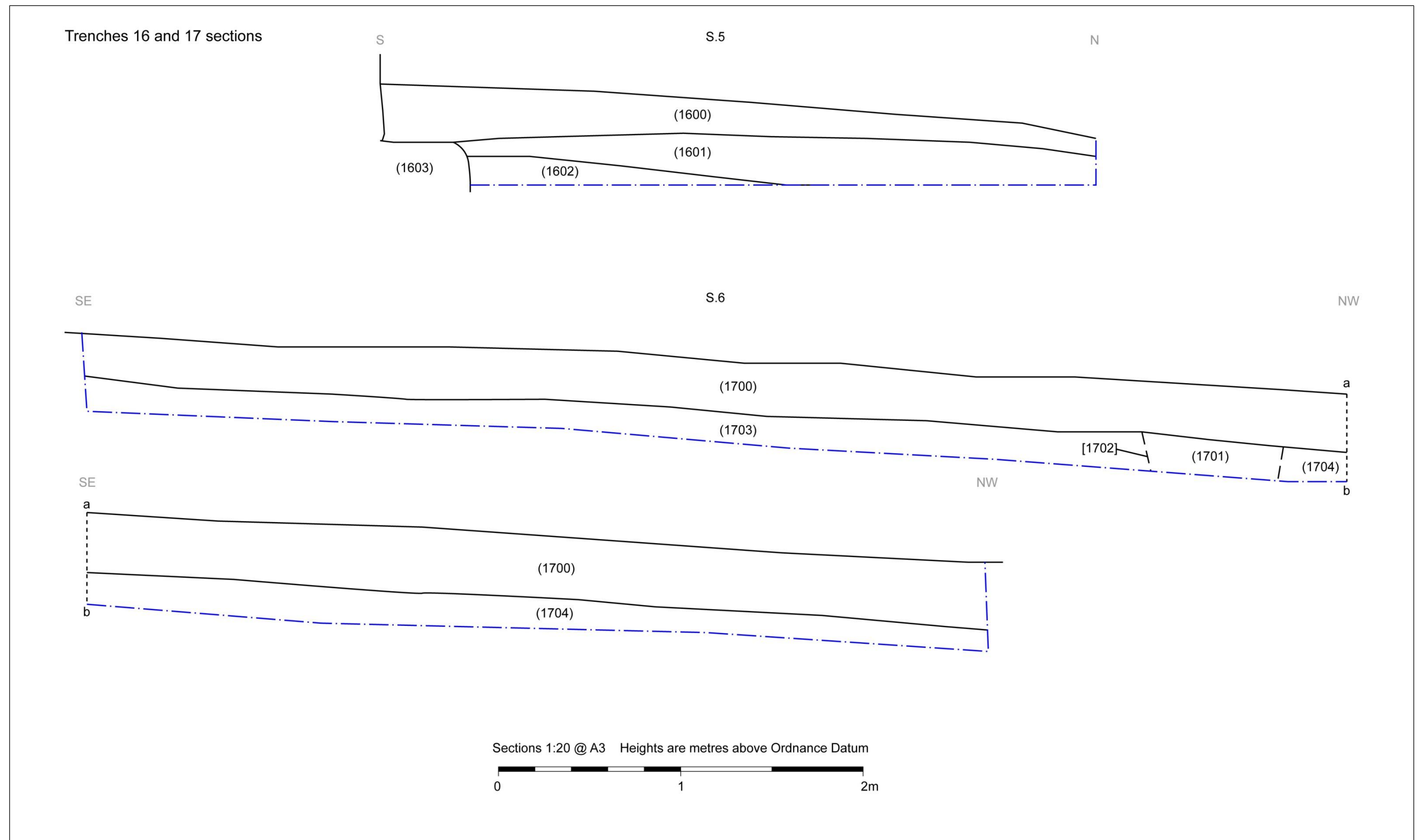


Figure 8. Trench 16 and 17 sections.