

CHURCH OF ST JAMES, NORMANTON-ON-SOAR, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING OF GROUNDWORKS WITHIN THE CHURCHYARD

2024

M. Hurford

**Faculty Number: 2022-070002
Contractor Project Code: SJN.1
Report Number: 005/2024**



**Matt Hurford Historic Buildings and Archaeology Services
Study Lodge
Clatterway
Bonsall
Derbyshire
DE4 2AH
Email: matt@hurfordarchaeology.co.uk
Tel: 07756021295**

SUMMARY

- During 2022, Matt Hurford Historic Buildings and Archaeological Services was commissioned by Normanton-on-Soar Parochial Church Council to carry out archaeological monitoring during the excavation of groundworks at the Grade I listed (List Entry No. 1242162) Church of St James, Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire centred on National Grid Reference SK 51872 22912. The work is in response to proposals to erect a timber storage shed measuring 5.5m by 3m on the north side of the church within the churchyard.
- The objective of the archaeological work was to ensure that any archaeological information present was recorded appropriately and the results presented within a report.
- The cruciform plan church, comprising a tower with spire, transepts, nave, south porch and chancel principally dates to the thirteenth century with early elements including the two stage tower, nave and chancel. The clearstory in the nave was added in the fifteenth century and the north transept built between 1889 and 1890 by W.S. Weatherley, repaired in 1938 and restored in 1913. A number of post-medieval graves lie in the north side of the churchyard suggesting the possibility of burials being present within the footprint of the proposed shed.
- The groundworks comprised the excavation of Area 01, a single trench 6m in length, 3.5m in width and up to 0.3m in depth aligned north-east to south-west by within the churchyard by the boundary with the Rectory on the north side of the church. In the east corner of Area 01 Trial Hole 01 was excavated measuring 0.5m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.92m in depth.
- The trench had a basic stratigraphy of two deposits comprising topsoil and an alluvial deposit. In the east corner the trench for a storm drain inserted during the late 1990s was exposed.
- The complete absence of *in-situ* burials or significant archaeological remains encountered during the excavation in the churchyard is due to the limited scope of work carried out which ensured that there was no impact on any underlying archaeological deposits.

CHURCH OF ST JAMES, NORMANTON-ON-SOAR, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING OF GROUNDWORKS
WITHIN THE CHURCHYARD

2024

M. Hurford

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
CONTENTS	3
List of Figures	3
List of Plates	4
Acknowledgements	4
1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. OBJECTIVES	5
3. SITE BACKGROUND	5
4. METHODOLOGY	6
5. RESULTS	6
6. CONCLUSION	6
REFERENCES	7

Figures

Plates

Appendix 1: Context Summary

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Site location, scale 1:2500 at A4.
Figure 2: Site plan, based on a drawing provided by the client. Scale 1:100 at A3.
Figure 3: Post excavation plan of Areas 01 and Trial Hole 01. Scale 1:50 at A4.
Figure 4: South-east facing section of Trial Hole 01. Scale 1:20 at A4.

List of Plates

- Plate 1:** General view of Trial Hole 01, viewed looking north-west.
Plate 2: Area 01 post excavation, viewed looking north-east.
Plate 3: Area 01 post excavation, viewed looking east.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The project was managed, and the fieldwork undertaken, by Matt. Hurford. Monitoring was by Dr Chris Brooke, Archaeological Advisor to the Diocese of Southwell & Nottingham. Thanks are extended to St James' Church Normanton-on-Soar Parochial Church Council for commissioning the work.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. During 2022, Matt Hurford Historic Buildings and Archaeological Services was commissioned by Normanton-on-Soar Parochial Church Council to carry out archaeological monitoring during the excavation of groundworks at the Grade I listed (List Entry No. 1242162) Church of St James, Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire centred on National Grid Reference SK 51872 22912 (Figure 1). The work is in response to proposals to erect a timber storage shed measuring 5.5m by 3m on the north side of the church within the churchyard (Figure 2).

1.2. The work was carried out in accordance with faculty requirements (2022-070002) and adhered to the recommendations made by Dr Chris Brooke, the DAC Archaeological Advisor.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1. The objective of the archaeological work was:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme and the recording of any archaeological remains encountered during the groundworks and the results presented within a report (preservation by record).

2.2. The proposed work comprised:

- Area 01: the excavation of a trench 6 in length, 3.5m in width and up to 0.3m in depth aligned north-east to south-west by within the churchyard by the boundary with the Rectory on the north side of the church.
- Trial Hole 01: the excavation of a trial hole 0.5m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.92m in depth in the east corner of Area 01 to establish the location of a storm drain inserted around 25 years ago.

2.3. The groundworks were excavated by the staff of the main contractor under the observation by the archaeologist (watching brief).

2.4. The recording was to result in 'the preparation of a report and ordered archive', in line with the guidelines of the CIFA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, (Standard and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief published December 2014).

3. SITE BACKGROUND

3.1. The village of Normanton-on-Soar is centred at SK 48306 42292, just over two miles to the north-west of Loughborough. The church lies at 129.8ft OD. The British Geological Survey shows that the underlying bedrock geology is Gunthorpe Member mudstone with superficial deposits of Wanlip Member sands and gravels (British Geological Survey 2024).

3.2. History & Fabric

3.2.1. The cruciform plan church, comprising a tower with spire, transepts, nave, south porch and chancel principally dates to the thirteenth century with early elements including the two stage tower, nave and chancel. The clearstory in the nave was added in the fifteenth century and the north transept built between 1889 and 1890 by W.S. Weatherley, repaired in 1938 and restored in 1913 (Southwell & Nottingham Church History Project 2022).

3.2.2. The overall potential for the presence of below ground archaeology is considered to be high,

principally comprising post-medieval graves, a number of which lie in the immediate vicinity of the proposed location of the shed, though encountering articulated skeletons is unlikely due to the shallow depth of the excavations.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The groundwork was carried out under archaeological observation. All deposits were inspected in order to identify any archaeological remains of interest in particular those medieval or earlier in date, (including church foundations). Where possible these were cleaned by hand, examined and recorded.

4.2. Recording of all groundworks included the position and depths of the excavations and the deposits exposed, by drawing (both in section and plan where applicable) and photograph.

4.3. Prior to backfilling spoil heaps were inspected for any datable or significant archaeological artefacts.

4.4. All identifiable deposits were given unique individual four-digit context numbers e.g. 0001, 0002 etc. starting at 0001.

4.5. All saved artefacts were to be given individual three letter finds codes e.g. AAA, AAB.

4.6. Disarticulated human remains found in the confines of the work were to be recorded appropriately and left on site for reburial. Advice from the Diocese Archaeological Advisor would be sought if articulated remains were present.

5. RESULTS

5.1. The groundworks comprised the excavation of Area 01, a single trench 6m in length, 3.5m in width and up to 0.3m in depth that was aligned north-east to south-west. It was located within the churchyard by the boundary with the Rectory on the north side of the church. Trial Hole 01 was excavated in the east corner of Area 01 and measured 0.5m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.92m in depth (Figure 2).

5.2. Area 01 (Figure 3-4 and Plates 1-3)

5.2.1. The excavation of Area 01 revealed a basic stratigraphy of two deposits comprising topsoil 0001 and alluvial deposit 0006. The topsoil 0001, which had a minimum depth of 0.12m and exceeded 0.3m along the south-eastern edge, consisted of a very dark grey silty clay loam. Concentrations of river worn pebbles were present in the south and eastern part of the trench, material redeposited during the drainage works undertaken within this part of the churchyard around 25 years ago. Alluvial deposit 0006 was firm brown silty clay.

5.2.2. Within Trial Hole 01 deposit 0006 was truncated by 0005, the vertical cut of the storm drain trench inserted during the late 1990s. A concrete slab 0004 was present in the base of the feature with the backfill comprising brown silty clay 0003 and dark reddish brown firm silty clay with 35% rounded pebbles 0002.

6. CONCLUSION

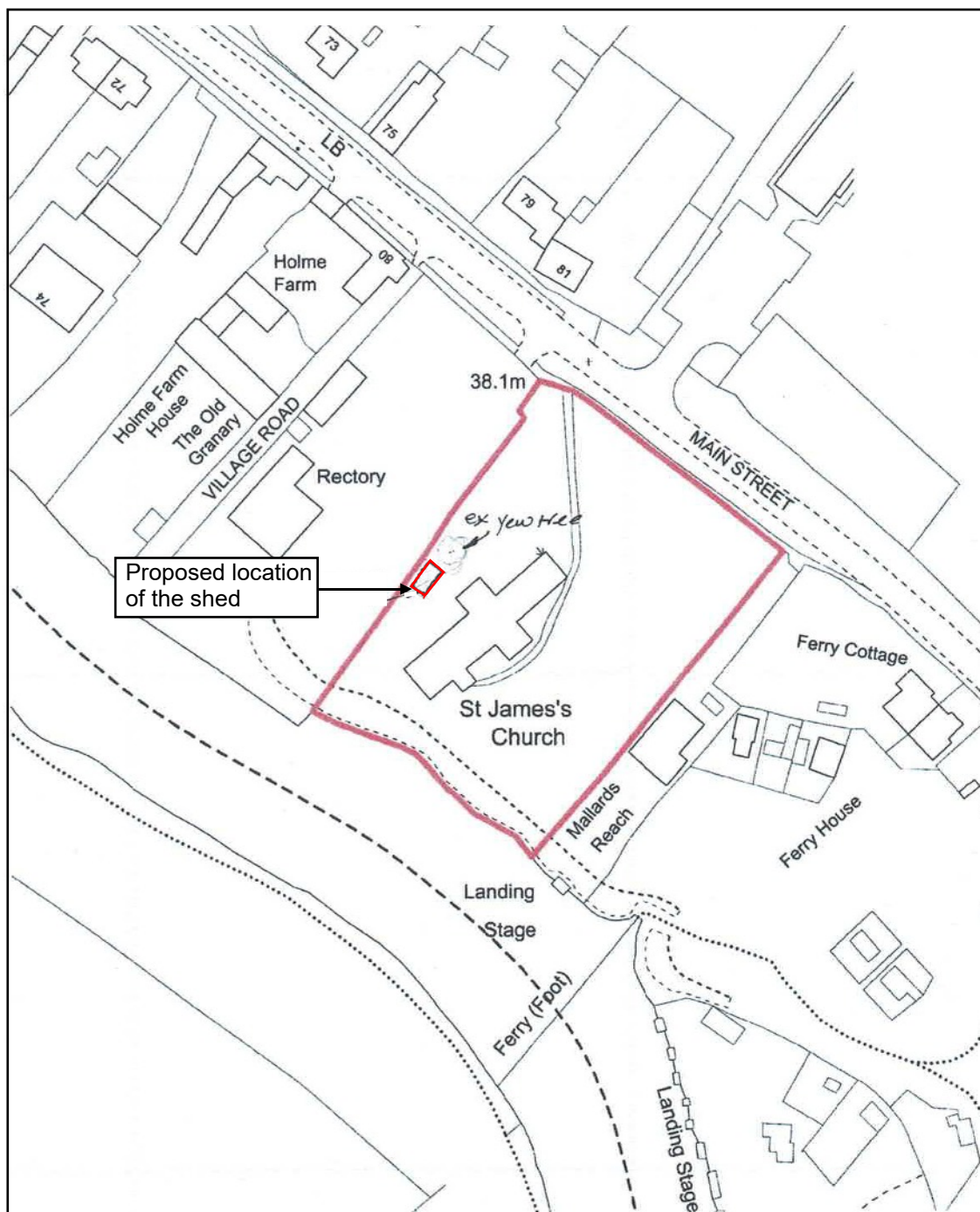
6.1 The complete absence of *in-situ* burials or significant archaeological remains encountered during the excavation in the churchyard is due to the limited scope of work carried out which ensured that there was no impact on any underlying archaeological deposits.

7. REFERENCES

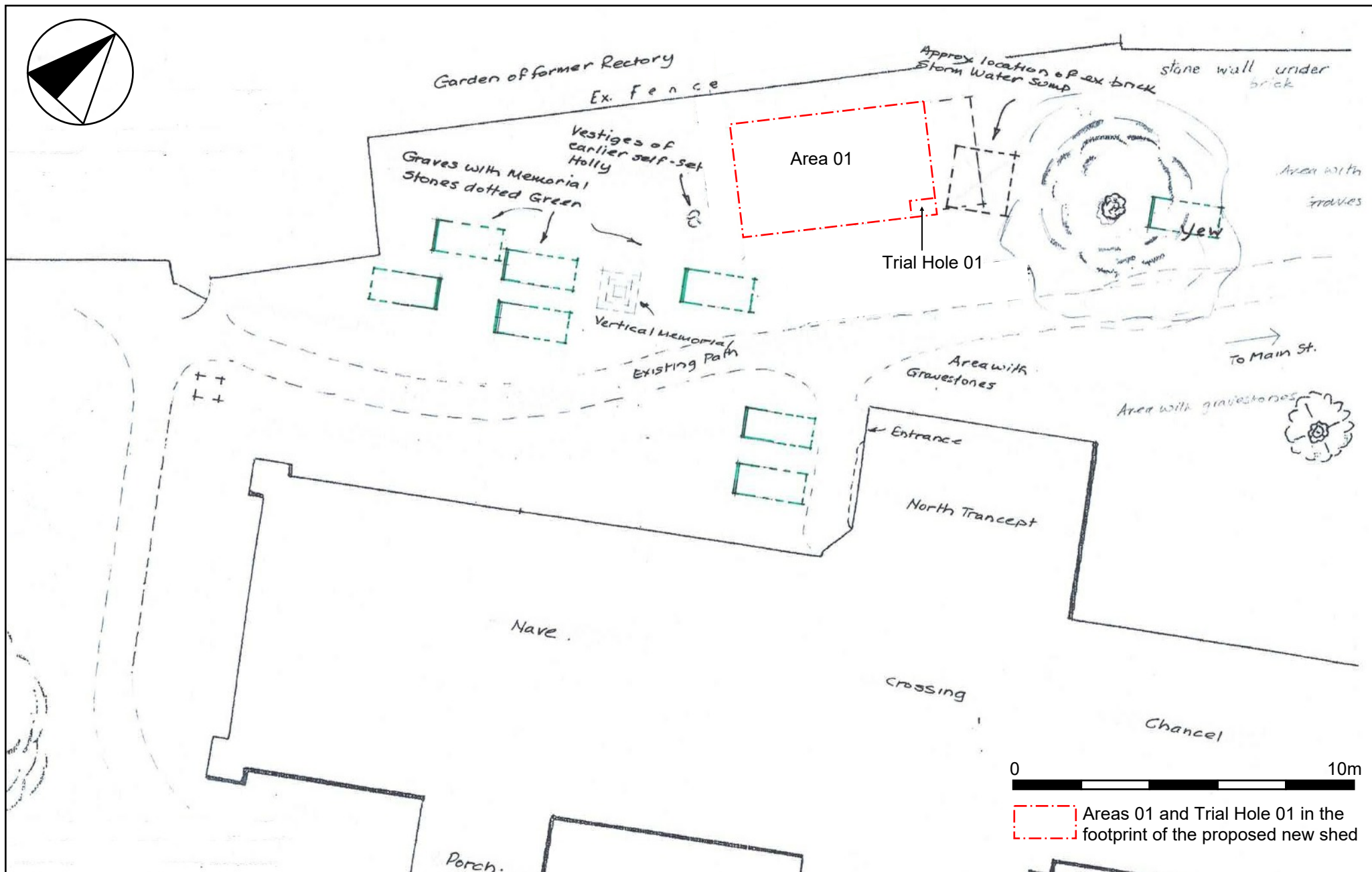
British Geological Survey 2024 Geology of Britain Viewer accessed 28/02/2024, https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/?_ga=2.32853884.338482651.1709117039-1327519874.1709117038

Southwell & Nottingham Church History Project 2022, accessed 10/08/2022
<https://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk/normanton-on-soar/hintro.php>.

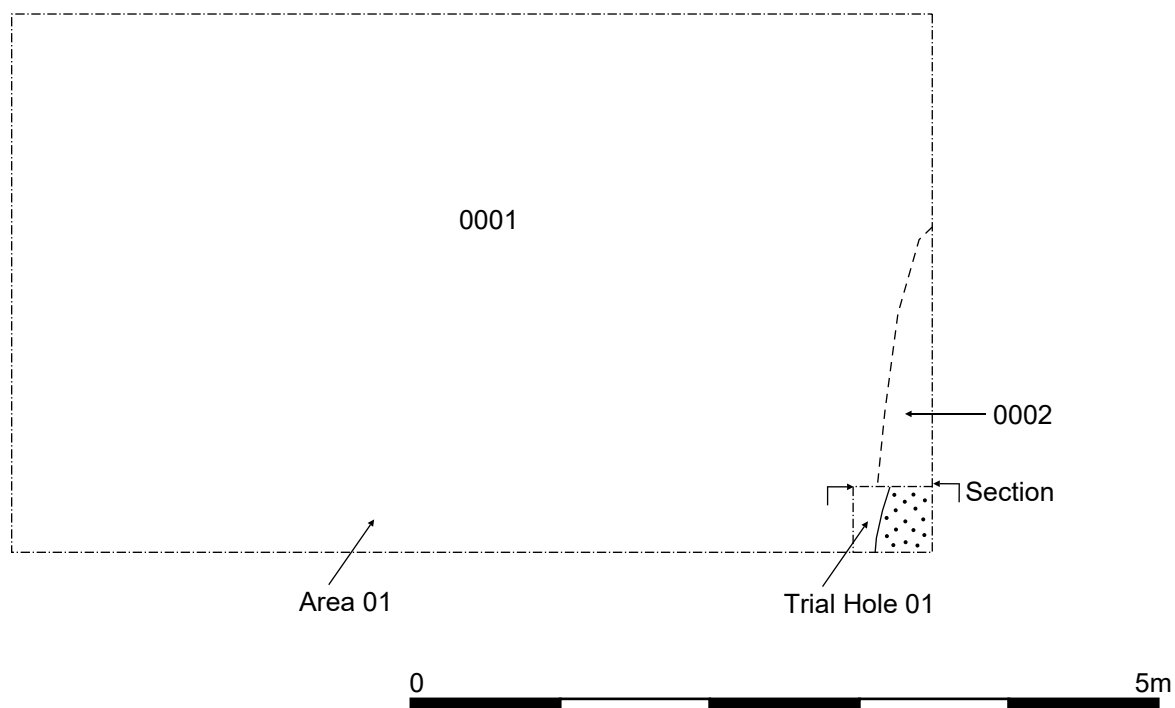
Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 *Standard and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief*.



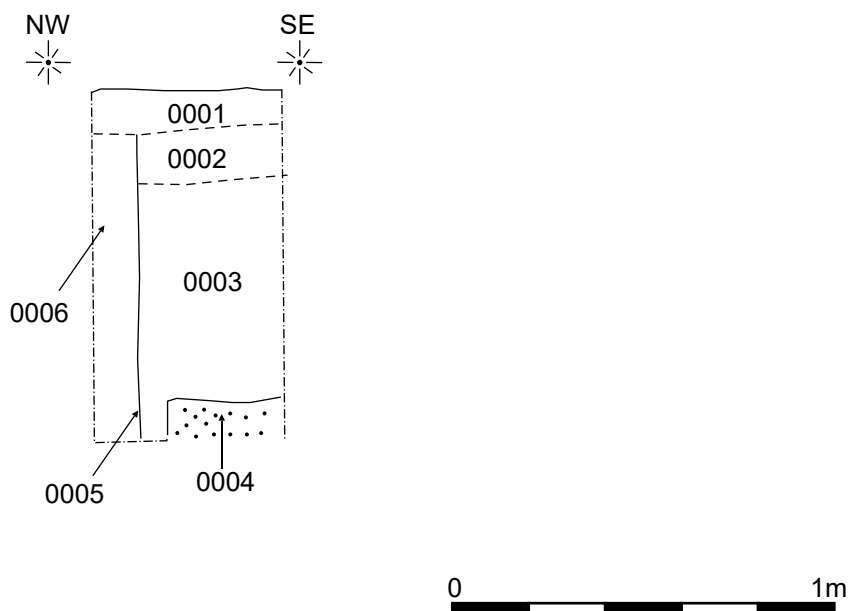
SJN.1 Church of St James, Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire.
 Figure 1: Site location, based on a map provided by the client.
 Scale 1:1250 at A4.



SJN.1 Church of St James, Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire.
 Figure 2: Site plan, based on a drawing provided by the client.
 Scale 1:100 at A3.



SJN.1 Church of St James, Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire.
Figure 3: Post excavation plan of Areas 01 and Trial Hole 01.
Scale 1:50 at A4.



SJN.1 Church of St James, Normanton-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire.
Figure 4: South-east facing section of Trial Hole 01.
Scale 1:20 at A4.



Plate 1: General view of Trial Hole 01, viewed looking north-west.

Plate 2: Area 01 post excavation, viewed looking north-east.

Plate 3: Area 01 post excavation, viewed looking east.

Appendix 1 Context Summary

Context	Area Description	Interpretation
0001	Silty clay loam 7.5YR 3/1 very dark grey. Towards the base of the deposit, in particular along the south-eastern edge, there are up to 15% concentrations of rounded pebbles, up to 85mm in size, likely river deposits that were redeposited during the drainage work that included the insertion of the modern storm water pump, the corner of which is in the east corner of Area 01. 5% roots, a number are large up to 250mm in diameter. Above 0002 and 0006	Topsoil.
0002	Firm silty clay 5YR 3/3 dark reddish brown silty clay, very compact, 35% pebbles rounded up to 90mm in size, includes angular pieces of chert up to 75mm in size. Below 0002 and within 0005	Infill of 0005, former river deposits.
0003	Silty clay 7.5YR 4/3 brown. Below 0002, above 0004, within 0005.	Infill of 0005, former river deposits.
0004	Concrete slab. Below 0003, within 0005.	Base of modern storm water pump
0005	Vertical cut truncating 0006 and below 0001.	Cut for the modern storm drain
0006	Firm silty clay 7.5YR 4/4 brown, 10% roots, <1% tiny angular stones.	Natural aluvial deposit.