

All Saints Church Laleham Surrey



Archaeological Evaluation Report

oxfordarchaeology



October 2008

Client: Robert Shaw Architects

Issue No: 1
OA Job No: 4124
NGR: TQ 051 688

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SUMMARY

In September 2008 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation comprising two trenches at All Saints Church, Laleham, Surrey (NGR 505129 168882), on behalf of Robert Shaw Architects, in respect of an extension on the south side of the church to add a south aisle and meeting room. Within Trench 1 five inhumation burials were revealed with associated coffin fittings pertaining to the post-medieval period. In Trench 2 a further five inhumation burials were revealed. These had no associated post-medieval coffin fittings and were thought to date to the medieval period. A linear cut feature was also revealed in Trench 2 and although no dating evidence was recovered from it, it clearly pre-dated the burials within this trench. No structural remains or floor surfaces pertaining to a south aisle, reportedly demolished in the 16th century, were revealed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In September 2008 OA carried out a field evaluation at All Saints Church, Laleham, Surrey (Figure 1), on behalf of Robert Shaw Architects, in respect of a proposal for the construction of a new south aisle and an extension to the east to form a meeting room, over the medieval and early modern graveyard and the foundations of the medieval south aisle(s).

1.1.2 An archaeological brief was set by J Schofield, the former Diocesan Archaeological Advisor (2007a) subsequent to an archaeological desk based assessment, also by J Schofield (2007b), and prior to the start of the fieldwork a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing the work to be completed, was produced by OA (OA 2008). The content of this document was agreed with Rob Whytehead, the present Diocesan Archaeological Advisor.

1.1.3 The proposed development site is situated at NGR 505129 168882 and is approximately 87.5 m sq in area.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on Langley Silt, which comprises sandy clay and silt (“Brickearth”) (British Geological Survey Sheet 169), and lies at *c* 48 m above OD. The church lies in the centre of Laleham village, formerly in Middlesex, but since 1965 within the Spelthorne division of Surrey (Spelthorne Borough) (Schofield 2007b).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background is detailed in the archaeological desk based assessment (Schofield 2007b). A summary is provided here and concentrates largely on references to the immediate vicinity of the development.
- 1.3.2 The church lies in the centre of Laleham village. It is Listed Grade I, and is in a Conservation Area.
- 1.3.3 It is possible that Laleham village and its associated church were established by AD 1000, but there is as yet no direct evidence for this. Main periods of building of the Church are summarised by Schofield (2007b, 9-10). They include construction of the nave and aisles in the 12th century, rebuilding of the north aisle in the 13th or 14th century and, in the 16th century, construction of the north chapel, demolition of the south aisle, filling in of the south arcade, the addition of a buttress to the south-west corner of the church and probably the rebuilding of the chancel. The north-west tower was added in the 18th century and, in the 19th century, the north and south sides of the church were rebuilt on previous alignments. The chancel was also rebuilt at this time (*ibid.*).
- 1.3.4 The historic churchyard lies on the north, east and south sides of the church. Its use dates from the medieval period (and possibly before) to the 19th century. As such, numerous intact and disturbed graves and skeletons within the historic aisle and outside the church are anticipated during the excavation of the footprint of the new aisle and meeting room along the south side of the church.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The project was managed by Paul Booth and Louise Loe of Oxford Archaeology. Fieldwork was undertaken by Brian Dean, Helen Webb and Benjamin McAndrew. The report was compiled by Helen Webb, with contributions by Wendy Smith.
- 1.4.2 We are indebted to the Parochial Church Council of All Saints, Laleham for funding this project.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To provide information about strata from the expected underlying previous south aisles
- To establish the nature of burials and depth of disturbed soil from churchyard management of the last 150 years
- To aid the design of the foundations for the south aisle and meeting room by showing the ground conditions
- To make available the results of the investigation by providing an illustrated report and ordered archive

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The evaluation comprised two rectangular trenches, both within the footprint of the proposed south aisle. Trench 1, 1.6 m east-west by 3m north-south, was situated in the corner of the south wall and the south porch. Trench 2, 2 m north-south by 3 m east-west, was excavated approximately 8 m to the east of Trench 1, against the south wall of the chancel. (Figure 2).

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a mini 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, until the burial horizon was reached. The trenches were then cleaned by hand and the revealed burials/features were investigated to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and, where appropriate, environmental samples. Each grave group, comprising the grave cut and fill (where observable), the skeleton, coffin and coffin fittings (where present), was assigned a unique context number, although grave cuts and fills were not usually identifiable within the homogeneous graveyard soil. Where there were substantial coffin remains, the coffin itself was given a separate number. Where necessary, skeletons and any remains of associated coffins were hand excavated and lifted with due care and regard to the sensitivities involved. Only skeletal remains exposed in the trenches were excavated, thus skeletons were not excavated beyond the limits of the trench. Minimal osteological analysis was undertaken, to estimate the approximate age and sex of the skeletons and to record any obvious, gross pathology. The condition and fragmentation of the skeletons, and burial positions were also recorded. Disarticulated human bone was not analysed.

3.2.2 Roughly half of each trench was excavated to the maximum required depth of 1.5 m, leaving the other half at the level of the highest burial horizon.

3.2.3 All archaeological features, including burials, were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A digital photographic record was also made. All excavation and recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3.2.4 Two upright grave memorial stones lay in the footprint of Trench 1 (Figure 2) and these had to be moved prior to the excavation of the trench. They were fully recorded following the guidelines set out by Mytum (2002). The results are presented in Section 4.3. Both stones were reinstated when the trench was backfilled.

3.3 Finds

3.3.1 All human skeletal remains and charnel were kept on site in the church to be reburied before backfilling. Coffin fittings were kept with their associated burials. The

skeletons and their associated coffin fittings were re-interred within the trenches from which they were excavated, in bags clearly labelled with their corresponding burial number, when the trenches were backfilled. Three sherds of pottery from graveyard soil 017 within Trench 2 were retained for spot dating, but other post-medieval material from the mixed graveyard soils was not retained.

3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 3.4.1 A sample of the thin layer of brittle, black residue of unknown substance from coffin 015 was retained for further analysis. Other than this, no deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

3.5 Presentation of results

- 3.5.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below starting with individual descriptions of each trench and the features revealed, followed by separate descriptions of the human skeletal remains and coffins. An inventory of all deposits and features recorded can be found in Appendix 1.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Description of deposits

Trench 1 (Figures 3a, 3b and 5)

- 4.1.1 Trench 1 was excavated in the corner of the south wall and the south porch, against the concrete drainage gully (023) that surrounded the entire church. Undisturbed natural subsoil was not reached in this trench as it lay below the maximum required depth of excavation (1.5 m). The earliest deposit encountered was the graveyard soil itself, a dark, slightly orange-brown, fairly compact, silty sandy clay soil (022), of which a maximum thickness of 1.30 m was revealed. This contained occasional fragments of chalk and flint, as well as ceramic building material (CBM), post-medieval pottery sherds, very occasional glass fragments, animal bone and a relatively large amount of disarticulated human bone (charnel). It was through this layer that the burials revealed (Table 1) were cut.
- 4.1.2 The graveyard soil (022) was excavated by machine to a depth of *c* 0.81 m below ground level (47.22 m OD), until the first burial (003) was reached. Burial 003 (Plate 1) was an adult male inhumation orientated west-east, situated in the mid to southern part of the trench. It was fully hand excavated and recorded before being removed. Fragments of corroded iron breast plate, upholstery studs, coffin grips and copper alloy shroud pins, as well as a small amount of decayed coffin wood, were associated with this burial. A further two adult burials, 004 and 005, were revealed in the northern half of the trench, at 1.10 m below ground level (46.93 m OD) and 1.08 m below ground level (46.95m OD), respectively. These two burials, left *in situ*, were only partially revealed by hand excavation (Plate 2), in order to locate them on plan. Coffin fittings were associated with these two burials and were also left *in situ*.

- 4.1.3 Having established the extent in plan of burials within Trench 1, after the removal of burial 003, the southern half of the trench was excavated by hand to establish the vertical extent of burials. Two further west-east aligned burials (Plate 3) were revealed in this half. The more northerly of the two, burial 011, was a neonate (less than 1 month old), and was revealed at 1.3 m below ground level (46.73 m OD). No coffin fittings were found with this burial, although green staining on the right side of the pelvis may indicate that copper alloy shroud pins had been used. Burial 012, to the south, was an older child (6-12 years), and was revealed at 1.38 m below ground level (46.65 m OD). Associated with burial 012 were the relatively substantial remains of a coffin (015). This was a single-break coffin identified by decomposed wood, and a thin layer of hardened, brittle, black residue, of unknown substance, underlying the entire skeleton. A sample of this was retained for analysis (see Section 4.5.1). One coffin grip, fixing nails and fragments of corroded iron breast plate were also present. Burials 011 and 012 were fully excavated, recorded and removed. The southern half of the trench was then deepened to the maximum required depth of 1.5 m. No further burials were revealed.
- 4.1.4 It should be noted that the actual grave cuts were not visible during excavation, due to the fact that the soil used to backfill the graves was the same as that through which they were cut (graveyard soil 022). The latest deposit encountered within this trench was the 0.2 m thick layer of topsoil (021) overlying the graveyard soil (022).

Trench 2 (Figures 4a, 4b and 6)

- 4.1.5 Trench 2 was excavated against the concrete gully wall (016) adjacent to the south wall of the chancel. As with Trench 1, the whole trench was excavated to the level of the highest burial, then part of the trench (the northern half in this case), was excavated to the maximum required depth of 1.50 m, to establish the vertical extent of the burials.
- 4.1.6 The undisturbed natural subsoil (019), a firm, light yellow, sandy clay brick earth, was revealed at 1.49 m below ground level (46.40 m OD), in the northern part of the trench. Overlying the natural (019) was deposit 018, a 0.22 m thick, very compact, orange-brown sandy clay layer. This layer appeared to be a fairly undisturbed interface layer, between the natural subsoil (019) and the overlying graveyard soil (017). A roughly north-south aligned linear feature (013) (Plates 4 and 9), 0.26 m wide, with steep sides and a shallow U-shaped base, was found to be cut through layer 018, in the eastern end of the trench. The feature only became visible in plan once layer 018 had been removed in this area of the trench. The fill (014) of the feature, a slightly orange-brown sandy clay, was clearly visible against the light yellow natural (019) through which the base of the feature had cut, but when viewed in the northern section of the trench, it was seen to cut the overlying layer (018). The maximum depth of the feature was 0.22 m. No finds were recovered from the feature, so its date and function remain unclear.

- 4.1.7 Overlying interface layer 018 was the graveyard soil (017), revealed to a maximum depth of 0.83 m). This differed dramatically from the graveyard soil (022) within Trench 1. Graveyard soil 017 was a very compact and but friable, mid greyish brown, sandy clay, with fairly frequent small chalk flecks and fragments and occasional flint fragments. Small CBM fragments occurred very occasionally. Only a very small amount of charnel was recovered from 017. The upper 0.2 m or so of the layer was slightly more disturbed and contained a slightly larger amount of CBM and stone fragments than the lower part of the deposit. This was most likely a consequence of the modern construction of the east-west section of churchyard path through which Trench 2 was cut. A total of five west-east aligned burials was revealed within the trench, but as with the burials in Trench 1, the cuts could not be defined.
- 4.1.8 The highest burial (006) (Plate 5) was revealed at 0.78 m below ground level (47.11 m OD), in the southern half of the trench. This burial, fully excavated, recorded and removed, was that of a probable adult male, the right arm, leg and skull of which were not present. These elements may have been truncated by a later grave/s, the cuts of which were not visible (but no appropriately positioned human remains were seen either). Three corroded iron coffin nails were associated with the burial, but no coffin wood or other coffin fittings were present.
- 4.1.9 To the north of burial 006, the legs of adult burial (008) (Plate 6) were revealed, protruding from the western baulk of the trench. No coffin fittings were present. The tibiae were removed in order to continue excavation of the northern half of the trench, but the femora were left *in situ* on a soil plinth, as over half their length lay beyond the baulk. Burial 008 was revealed at 0.82 m below ground level (47.07 m OD).
- 4.1.10 To the east of burial 008, elderly adult inhumation 007 (Plate 7), a probable female, was revealed at 1.01 m below ground level (46.88 m OD). Three corroded iron nails were present, but no other coffin remains were revealed. At roughly the same depth (1.00 m below ground level, 46.89 m OD), an older child burial (009) (*c* 6 years old) (Plate 8), was revealed, just to the west of burial 007. The lower half of the skeleton was largely absent, probably having been truncated by the head end of burial 007. It is possible that burial 009 had truncated the feet of skeleton 008, just to the west. Child burial 009 had no associated coffin.
- 4.1.11 After the removal of burials 007 and 009 the northern part of the trench was deepened by hand. At the very eastern end, an older child-adolescent burial (010) (*c* 11-14 years) (Plate 9) was revealed at 1.24 m below ground level (46.65 m OD). A single corroded iron nail was found next to the skeleton. The right side of the skeleton lay beyond the central baulk of the trench, and the legs lay beyond the eastern baulk of the trench. The burial was left *in situ* on a soil plinth. No further burials were revealed within the northern half of the trench. The interface layer (018) (discussed above) was revealed below the graveyard soil (017).

4.1.12 Overlying the graveyard soil (017), was a 0.23 m thick layer of topsoil (020). This had been cut by an east-west orientated stretch of path in the northern half of the trench.

4.2 The burials

The skeletal remains

4.2.1 A total of ten earth cut burials was revealed during the evaluation, five within Trench 1 and five within Trench 2. A summary of the burials is given in Table 1. Of the ten skeletons, six were adult - two males (one probable and one definite) and a probable female - and three of undetermined sex, and four were subadult - one neonate (<1 month), two older children (6-12 years) and one older child-adolescent (11-14 years).

4.2.2 The preservation of the five skeletons within Trench 1 was recorded as either good, whereby the surface of the bone showed only slight or moderate erosion, or excellent, whereby the bone showed no, or very minimal, erosion. All but one of the Trench 1 skeletons were minimally or moderately fragmented. Neonate 011 was highly fragmented. The five Trench 2 skeletons were less well preserved, with the surface preservation recorded as either good, or fair-good, whereby most of the bone surface was affected by some degree of erosion, and in places, the surface detail of the bone was masked by erosive action. Two Trench 2 skeletons had suffered limited fragmentation, whilst the other three were moderately or highly fragmented.

4.2.3 In all ten of the burials, the skeletons were laid supine (on their back) with the legs straight. Where it was possible for this to be observed, the arms were generally straight, by the sides, with the exception of the two subadult burials within Trench 2, where at least one hand lay over the pelvis.

4.2.4 Pathology was noted only in skeletons 007 and 003. In skeleton 007, degenerative disc disease, a very common form of joint disease in both modern and archaeological populations, was identified as porosity and osteophytes on the vertebral bodies. Skeleton 003, an adult male, had bilateral os acromiale, a condition whereby the acromial processes of the scapulae (shoulder blades), which should fuse to the rest of the scapulae during childhood (10-14 years), fail to do so. This may be the result of microtrauma in this area from a young age, from physical activity causing stress to the shoulder, before the acromion could have fused (Roberts and Manchester 2005, 152).

Table 1: Summary of burials revealed in Trenches 1 and 2

	Age	Sex	Condition	Fragmentation	Body position	Comments
Trench 1						

003	Adult	M	Excellent	Low	Supine, arms by sides	Pathology: bilateral os acromiale; removed and reburied when trench backfilled
004	Adult	?	Excellent	?Low	Supine	Partly revealed, left in situ
005	Adult	?	Good	Low-medium	Supine	Partly revealed, left in situ
011	Neonate (<1 month)	-	Good	High	Supine	Removed, reburied when trench backfilled
012	Older child (6-12 years)	-	Excellent	Low-medium	Supine, arms by sides	Removed, reburied when trench backfilled
Trench 2						
006	Adult	?M	Fair-good	Medium	Supine, arm by side	R side & skull truncated; removed, reburied when trench backfilled
007	Elderly adult	?F	Fair-good	Medium-high	Supine, arms by sides	Removed, reburied when trench backfilled
008	Adult	?	Good	Low	?Supine	Legs revealed only, femora left in situ, tibiae removed and reburied when trench backfilled
009	Older child (c. 6 years)	-	Fair-good	High	Supine, lower half disturbed but left hand probably over pelvis	Removed, reburied when trench backfilled
010	Older child-adolescent (c. 11-14 years)	-	Good	Low	Supine, left hand over pelvis	Left in situ

Coffins and associated fittings: Background

4.2.5 In the medieval period a large proportion of the population was buried without a coffin, laid in the grave in a simple shroud (Litten 1991). However, simple trapezoid or rectangular wooden coffins of this period are regularly discovered in churchyard excavations (Gilchrist and Sloane 2005), and hence it does appear that a small proportion of burials were coffined. Coffins of wood and/or lead became increasingly common in the post-medieval period, particularly from the early 18th century onwards. From the late 17th century onwards it became customary to cover the coffin with upholstery and to decorate the lid and side panels of coffins with studs and metal coffin fittings. By 1700-20 the funeral furnishing trade was a firmly established business, providing fittings for all classes of people and at various costs, depending on the status of the wealth of the deceased (Litten 1991). The financial investment in funerary panoply grew over the course of the 18th century, reaching its zenith in the 1840s. Even amongst the poor the importance of providing a decent burial was keenly felt (May 2000).

- 4.2.6 Single-break coffins (the modern 'coffin shape') become ubiquitous from the 1730s onwards (Litten 1991). Simple coffins comprised of a single thickness wooden case decorated with few fittings. More elaborate coffins were constructed either of a double thickness of wood; an outer wooden case and inner lead shell; a lead shell and inner wooden coffin; or a triple layer of a wood-lead-wood. Lead was the most common metal, but iron and zinc were also occasionally used for the metal shell. The outer wooden case was upholstered and decorated by elaborate patterns of upholstery studs (usually iron or brass) and metal fittings, such as escutcheons, lid motifs and *departum* plates (breastplates, footplates and headplates inscribed with the name of the deceased, their age, date of death and other particulars).
- 4.2.7 The number and materials used for the fittings was eloquent of the wealth and hence, status, of the deceased and family. Considerable variation may be observed across the classes of Georgian and Victorian society. However, it is important to note that even the more humble went to considerable pains to bury their loved ones with as many accoutrements as they could afford.

Coffins and associated fittings from All Saints, Laleham

- 4.2.8 Table 2 provides a summary of the evidence for coffins and shrouds within the ten burials. All but one of the Trench 1 burials had definite evidence for having been coffined, in the form of decomposed coffin wood, iron breast plate fragments, upholstery studs, iron grips and fixing nails. The coffin fittings recovered from the Trench 1 burials all indicate a later post-medieval date (late 17th to 19th century).
- 4.2.9 There was no evidence for a coffin in neonate burial 011, although green staining was observed on the pelvis. Such staining is often seen on the bones of individuals who were wrapped in shrouds held together by copper alloy shroud pins. Such staining was also seen on the bones of coffined skeleton 003 and four of the actual copper alloy shroud pins were also recovered. The burial of neonate 011, probably shrouded but with no evidence for a coffin, may indicate that this was either an earlier, possibly medieval burial. However, it is also possible that it was post-medieval, but afforded different burial rites to the other individuals buried in this area of the churchyard, possibly due to the young age of the individual, and/or perhaps a lower status.
- 4.2.10 Coffin grips were recovered from three of the graves in Trench 1. Those from burials 004 and 012 were fairly corroded, but a number of those from burial 003 were less corroded, which allowed their style to be identified. They were very angular in shape with a twisted rope motif. This style does not match any of the types of coffin grip found at the post-medieval burial sites of Christ Church, Spitalfields, St Luke's, Islington or Hemingford Grey, Kings Lynn, and has thus been assigned a new type code (LAL EEV1) (Figure 7). The grips from burial 003 had been coated in a black paint/laquer. Due to corrosion, it was not possible to tell whether those from burials 004 and 012 had been. Whilst colour was an important decorative factor in coffins during the post-medieval period, Litten (1991, 107) highlights the fact that black

painted tin-dipped stamped iron was an expensive variant in coffin fittings, and hence carried a cachet that poorer materials did not. It is possible that in painting the iron fittings black, mourners were attempting to disguise the fact that the grips were indeed simply of iron, the cheapest material in use. All grips, even those too corroded to identify a specific design, were of the type seen in the later post-medieval period (late 17th to 19th century), and the use of black paint is a further indicator of the later post-medieval period.

- 4.2.11 In burials 003 and 012 (coffin 015), the shapes of the coffins could be ascertained, by the coffin stain in burial 003, and by the presence of a thin, hardened layer of black material in burial 012. Both were found to be of the single-break type, indicative of a post-medieval date.
- 4.2.12 Evidence for coffins in the Trench 2 burials was far more limited. Corroded iron fixing nails were present in three of the graves, three in both graves 006 and 007, but only one in grave 010. In the absence of any other evidence for a coffin in burial 010, it would be tenuous to say that this burial had been coffined, based only upon the presence of a single nail. Burials 008 and 009 revealed no evidence for coffins. The presence of iron nails in the absence of any other coffin fittings indicates that skeletons 006 and 007, and possibly 010, may have been buried in plain or unadorned wooden coffins, possibly medieval or early post-medieval in date. It must also be considered, however, that the lack of coffin fittings recovered may equally indicate coffins of lower status burials of the post-medieval period (*ibid.*, 88). However, to reiterate the point made above (section 4.2.7), even the poorest of folk went to considerable pains to bury their loved ones with as many coffin adornments as they could afford in the post-medieval period. The presence of *undoubtedly* uncoffined burials, may lend more support to the suggestion that these burials were medieval in date.

Table 2: Summary of evidence for coffins and shrouds

Evidence for coffins and shrouds	
Trench 1	
003	Small amount of decomposed coffin wood, corroded Fe breast plate fragments, numerous corroded Fe nails, upholstery studs, 6 coffin grips (painted black), 4 Cu alloy shroud pins
004	Decomposed coffin wood, corroded Fe nails, upholstery studs, 1 coffin grip
005	Some large fragments of decomposed wood, numerous upholstery studs
011	Green staining on pelvis - possibly from Cu alloy shroud pin
012	Coffin 015 - decomposed coffin wood, 1 coffin grip, fragments of corroded iron breast plate, upholstery studs, thin layer of hardened black material underlying the skeleton - sample retained for analysis
Trench 2	
006	3 corroded Fe nails
007	3 corroded Fe nails
008	None
009	None
010	1 corroded Fe nail

4.3 Grave memorial stones 001 and 002

4.3.1 Prior to the excavation of Trench 1, two upright grave memorial stones had to be removed from the area (Figure 2). These were fully recorded following the guidelines set out by Mytum (2002).

4.3.2 Before removal, the two stones (001 and 002) were placed back to back, with the face of 001 facing west, and the face of 002 facing east. Both stones, made of a light grey sandstone, had relatively flat tops with a slightly curved central feature, similar to Mytum's type 5300 (2002, 111, 114). Whilst stone 002 was without decoration (Plate 11), the upper section of stone 001 showed two winged cherub heads (Plate 10). The cherub was the most common design motif throughout much of the 18th century, and a contrast to earlier symbols of mortality (including the skull, the hourglass and Father Time) that had lost favour (Mytum 2002, 30-32). The cherub was thought in many cases to represent a more optimistic view with an emphasis on the positive fate of the soul rather than the decaying fate of the body (ibid., 32).

4.3.3 Although very worn in places, the inscriptions were partially decipherable:

Grave memorial stone 001 inscription:

MARY ??? / ??? / MARY SCOTT / Who died ?in / 1708 Aged 28 ?years

Grave memorial stone 002 inscription:

M S / 1708

4.3.4 The inscription on stone 001, a headstone, revealed that two people, both by the name of Mary, may have been commemorated. The initials, and general brevity of the inscription on stone 002, a smaller stone than 001, indicate that it was probably a foot stone for the same grave as 001. Numerous similar grave markers, with head and

foot stones, were observed within the All Saints Church cemetery. The placing of the footstones back to back with their corresponding headstones was also frequently observed. This was probably done in order to create more space within the graveyard, or to facilitate constructional works within the graveyard; possibly, in the case of stone 002, for the construction of the path.

4.4 **Finds**

Pottery

- 4.4.1 Of the three pottery sherds retained from graveyard soil 017, only one could be firmly identified. This was a coarse border ware sherd (CBW) (14 g) dating to the 15th to early 16th century.

4.5 **Palaeo-environmental remains (by Wendy Smith)**

Residue from coffin 015

- 4.5.1 A sample of the residue from coffin 015 was examined. This was a black, brittle, non-water-soluble residue which had formed a thin layer (1-2 mm) below the skeleton of burial 012. Ridged impressions were visible on one side of the residue. It is possible that the residue represents the remains of a layer of 'glue' that had been used to stick the inner coffin fabric to the coffin itself. This would certainly account for the ridged marks on the residue, which could be the impressions of pleated fabric. It was unclear whether it was an organic or non-organic substance. For example, some pine pitches may be non-water-soluble.
- 4.5.2 Fabric linings were found in coffins from Christ Church, Spitalfields (Molleson and Cox 1993, 203). It is stated that fabric coverings on the outside of the coffins may have been stuck, rather than nailed (Cox 1996, 102), and there is no reason to suggest that inner linings may not also have been stuck with some kind of glue or pitch.
- 4.5.3 Microscopic analysis of a small fragment of the material found there to be fly pupae preserved on its surface.

5 **DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION**

5.1 **Reliability of field investigation**

- 5.1.1 The conditions during the evaluation were dry and clear, with little intrusion by modern features.
- 5.1.2 The location of the trenches and the percentage sample (*c* 12%) of the development area is believed to have given a good reflection of the overall archaeological potential of the site.

5.2 **Overall interpretation**

Summary of results

- 5.2.1 Within Trench 1 five west-east aligned inhumations were revealed, the graves having been cut through graveyard soil 022. The general material recovered from this deposit (022) - glass, pottery and CBM - was of a post-medieval date. Four of the five burials were associated with coffins, identified by iron coffin grips, breast plate fragments and upholstery studs, also indicative of the later post-medieval period (late 17th to 19th century). The only burial apparently uncoffined within Trench 1 was that of a neonate. Copper alloy staining on the bone may be representative of a shroud burial. Whilst this could have been an earlier burial, possibly of medieval date, it may have been post-medieval, having been afforded a different burial rite due to the young age and/or a lower status. No other deposits, aside from the topsoil, were observed within Trench 1, and the natural subsoil was not reached. The maximum revealed depth of the graveyard soil (022) within Trench 1 was 1.30 m.
- 5.2.2 Within Trench 2 a further five burials were revealed. The absence of coffins in two of the burials, and possible presence of plain, unadorned wooden coffins in two, possibly three burials, inferred by the presence of iron nails, is probably indicative of these burials being late medieval or early post-medieval in date. This is supported by the presence of late medieval pottery (15th-early 16th century), but no obviously post-medieval pottery, within the general graveyard soil (017) in Trench 2. It should be highlighted here that graveyard soil 017, which had a maximum depth of only 0.83 m, differed greatly in colour, compaction and inclusions from the graveyard soil (022) in Trench 1. Graveyard soil 022 was less compact, much darker in colour and contained more charnel,
- 5.2.3 The natural subsoil was reached within Trench 2, at a depth of 1.49m. An interface layer of compact sandy clay was revealed between the natural and the graveyard soil. Through this interface layer, a north-south aligned linear feature of unknown date and function was cut, but it certainly predated the deposition of the graveyard soil and the burials.

Significance

- 5.2.4 The evaluation has provided a valuable insight into the use of the graveyard on the south side of the church. It has allowed the depths of the graveyard itself to be established, in the case of the eastern part of the proposed development area, and given a minimum depth of the graveyard soil at the western end. The post-medieval burials have provided an insight into the types of coffin furnishings used, and the burials within Trench 2 have confirmed that probable earlier burials survive, at least within the east of the development area.
- 5.2.5 The difference in graveyard soils between Trenches 1 and 2 was very clear. The Trench 1 graveyard soil was much darker in colour, less compact and generally contained more inclusions, notably charnel. The difference probably in part lies with the fact that this part of the graveyard had been more heavily disturbed by later

burials, but it may also relate to the building of the south porch, some time after 1732 (Schofield 2007b, 6), which would undoubtedly have caused disturbance in this area.

- 5.2.6 A particularly surprising outcome of the evaluation was the absence of any structural remains or floor surfaces relating to the former south aisle/s, possibly demolished in the 16th century or later (Schofield 2007b, 9). With the location of the trenches against the south side of the church, and with depths up to 1.5 m, it was thought that there would be high potential to find such deposits (Schofield 2007b, 19). Even if the trenches had been situated *within* the footprint of the old south aisle, so as to miss the outline of the wall foundations, it would have been likely that floor deposits and/or demolition rubble would have been present. Their absence is perplexing, but may suggest total removal of floors at this point to allow the area to be used for burials after the demolition of the aisle.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

6.1 Periods represented

- 6.1.1 Deposits and burials relating to the post-medieval and possibly medieval period were encountered during the evaluation. A feature that predated the burials in Trench 2 may have been of medieval date, or potentially even earlier, but the absence of any dating evidence precludes any firm conclusion on this.

6.2 Character of archaeological remains

- 6.2.1 The skeletons from Trench 1, probably all post-medieval, were well preserved and displayed the potential to provide more detailed information on age and sex, and pathological conditions, should more detailed osteological analysis take place in the future. The cuts of the graves could not be defined. Evidence for associated coffins comprised metal fittings including iron grips and breast plates, upholstery studs and iron fixing nails. Iron breast plates were very corroded and fragmentary, thus no remains of inscription were present. Copper alloy shroud pins were also recovered. Heavily decomposed coffin wood fragments were present in a number of the Trench 1 graves, and a layer of material, thought possibly to be the remains of a layer of coffin fabric adhesive, was preserved beneath one of the skeletons. Post-excavation analysis found there to be microscopic fly pupae preserved on the surface of this material.
- 6.2.2 In Trench 2, the skeletons, possibly medieval in date, were less well preserved and had suffered higher levels of fragmentation. That being said, detailed osteological analysis would provide valuable information about this potentially earlier parish community. As in Trench 1, the grave cuts could not be defined. Coffins were represented only by corroded iron nails. The linear cut feature was initially only observed where the base of it had cut through the pale yellow natural, but when viewed in section, it could be seen to cut through the overlying interface layer. The fill of the feature was similar, but not identical, to that of the interface layer. This

should be borne in mind should future excavations take place to a depth below the burial horizon.

6.3 Complexity of deposits

6.3.1 The natural subsoil was not reached within Trench. The graveyard soil was the earliest deposit revealed, into which five west-east aligned graves were cut. In terms of spatial distribution, the upper level burials (003, 004 and 005) were *c* 0.65 m and 0.30 m apart, and ranged from 0.81 m below ground level (47.22 m OD) (003) and 1.10 m ground level (46.93 m OD) (004). The lower burials (011 and 012) were *c* 0.70 m apart, and ranged from 1.30 m (46.73 m OD) to 1.38 m below ground level (46.65 m OD). Burial 011 was 0.49 m directly below burial 003. Topsoil overlay the graveyard soil.

6.3.2 In Trench 2, the natural subsoil was reached at a depth of 1.49 m. Overlying this was the fairly undisturbed interface layer, cut by a linear feature of unknown date. Overlying this was the graveyard soil, through which five graves were cut. Roughly three levels of burials were present. At the lowest depth was burial 010, at 1.24 m below ground level (46.65 m OD). Burials 007 and 009 were higher, at 1.01 m below ground level (46.88 m OD) and 1.00 m below ground level (46.89 m OD) respectively. Burial 007 had truncated the lower body of 009. The highest burials were 006, at 0.78 m below ground level (47.11 m OD) and 008 at 0.82 m below ground level (47.07 m OD). In terms of spatial distribution, burials 007, 008, 009 and 010 formed a slightly staggered east-west aligned row. Burial 006 was *c* 0.30 m to the south. Topsoil overlay the graveyard soil.

6.4 Range and preservation of finds

6.4.1 Occasional post-medieval pot fragments, CBM, glass, animal bone and a fairly substantial amount of charnel were present in Trench 1 graveyard soil 022. In Trench 2, three small pottery sherds from graveyard soil 017 included one which was dated to the 15th to early 16th century. Aside from these, only very occasional CBM fragments and charnel were present. The preservation of the articulated skeletons and coffin fittings is discussed in detail above (Section 4.2).

6.5 Range and preservation of palaeo-environmental deposits

6.5.1 A sample of the brittle black substance from coffin 015, underlying skeleton 015, was retained for further analysis. Other than this no deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified.

7 IMPACT OF THE DEVELOPMENT

7.1 General

7.1.1 Depending on the type of foundations used for the new extension, the development itself is likely to impact on a number of burials. The evaluation revealed that a

number of post-medieval burials lie to the west end of the development area, whilst probable earlier burials (later medieval or early post-medieval) lie at the east end of the development area. The highest burial encountered in Trench 1 was at 0.81 m below the present ground level (47.22 m OD), and the highest encountered in Trench 2 was at 0.78 m below present ground level (47.11 m above OD). No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified above these levels in either trench. The presence of a cut feature below the burial horizon in Trench 2 demonstrates the potential for the survival of earlier archaeological features, albeit likely below the level of impact of the proposed development.

7.2 Number of burials

- 7.2.1 Based on the findings of this evaluation it is possible to estimate the number of burials that might be impacted upon by the proposed development.
- 7.2.2 A plan provided by Robert Shaw Architects shows that the footprint of the proposed extension is 17.5m east-west, by 5m north-south. For the purposes of the present exercise it is assumed the entire footprint of the proposed development will involve excavation to a maximum depth of 1.5m, or excavation of 131.3m³.
- 7.2.3 Based on the number of burials revealed within the evaluation trenches (10) and the total volume of soil excavated (12.6m³), the density of burials is estimated to be approximately 0.8 burials per every cubic metre. This therefore suggests that a maximum of 106 burials could potentially be impacted upon by the development (0.8 x 131.3m³).
- 7.2.4 This calculation assumes that burial density will be consistent throughout the graveyard. However, this is unlikely because there were differences in the organisation and spacing of burials between the two evaluation trenches.

7.3 Grave Memorials

- 7.3.1 In addition to the burials that may be affected, six grave memorial stones lie directly within the footprint of the proposed extension, which would have to be removed. This includes the two memorials stones that were reinstated after the evaluation. The architectural plan also highlights a further four memorial stones - three standing headstones and a low monument (a horizontally placed, grave-sized memorial stone) - lying just to the south of the proposed development, that would also have to be removed to accommodate the proposed new path along the southern edge of the extension.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Ctxt No.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Width (m)</i>	<i>Depth /thickness (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>
1	001	Grave memorial	-	-	-	Stone grave memorial removed from Trench 1 area	-
1	002	Grave memorial	-	-	-	Stone grave memorial removed from Trench 1 area	-
1	003	Grave group	-	-	0.81 (below GL)	Adult inhumation, coffin fittings present	-
1	004	Grave group	-	-	1.10 (below GL)	Adult inhumation, coffin fittings present, left in situ	-
1	005	Grave group	-	-	1.08 (below GL)	Adult inhumation, coffin fittings present, left in situ	-
2	006	Grave group	-	-	0.78 (below GL)	Adult inhumation, coffin nails present	-
2	007	Grave group	-	-	1.01 (below GL)	Adult inhumation, coffin nails present	-
2	008	Grave group	-	-	0.82 (below GL)	Adult inhumation, no coffin	-
2	009	Grave group	-	-	1.00 (below GL)	Subadult inhumation, no coffin	-
2	010	Grave group	-	-	1.24 (below GL)	Subadult inhumation, x1 coffin nail present	-
1	011	Grave group	-	-	1.30 (below GL)	Subadult inhumation (neonate), no coffin	-
1	012	Grave group	-	-	1.38 (below GL)	Subadult inhumation, associated with coffin 015	-
2	013	Cut	0.50 +	0.26	0.22	Linear cut feature	-
2	014	Fill	0.50 +	0.26	0.22	Fill of linear cut feature 013	-
1	015	Coffin	1.20	0.40	-	Coffin - decayed wood, grip, nails	-
2	016	Structure	3.00 +	-	0.58	Concrete gully in Trench 2	-
2	017	Deposit	3.00 +	2.00 +	0.83	Graveyard soil in Trench 2	Pot, CBM, small amount of charnel
2	018	Deposit	1.50 +	0.80 +	0.22	Interface layer between 017 and 019	-

2	019	Deposit	1.50 +	0.80 +	0.04 +	Natural in Trench 2	-
2	020	Deposit	3.00 +	1.00 +	0.23	Topsoil in Trench 2	-
1	021	Deposit	3.00 +	1.60 +	0.20	Topsoil in Trench 1	-
1	022	Deposit	3.00 +	1.60 +	1.30	Graveyard soil in Trench 1	Pot, CBM, animal bone, large amount of charnel
1	023	Structure	3.00 +	-	0.88	Concrete gully in Trench 1	-

GL = Ground level

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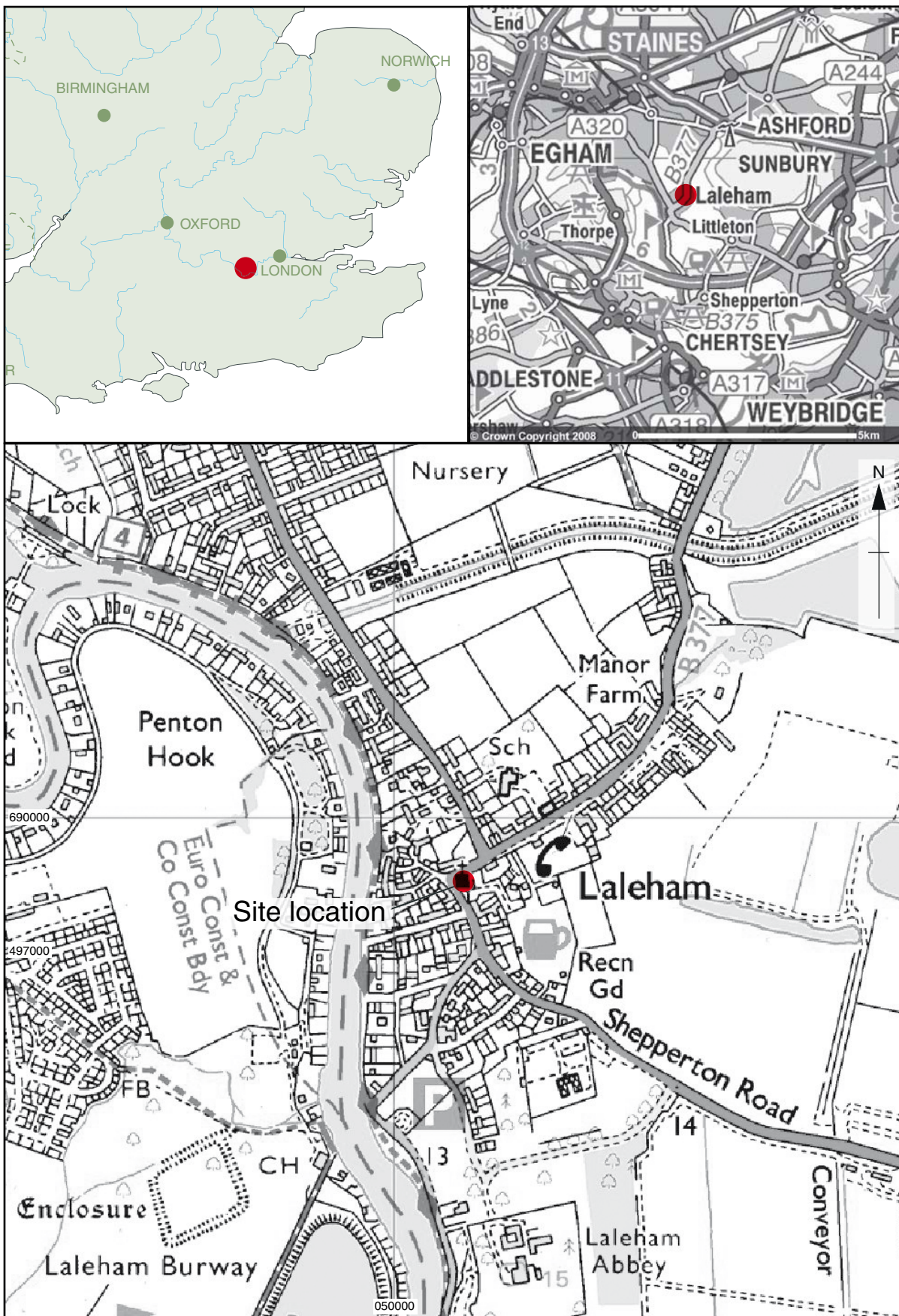
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APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**Site name:** All Saints Church, Laleham, Surrey**Site code:** LALE08**Grid reference:** NGR 505129 16882**Type of evaluation:** Recording of features (including burials) revealed within two evaluation trenches in a churchyard**Date and duration of project:** September 2008, 7 days**Area of site:** Total area of trenches:10.8m². Total volume excavated: 12.6m³**Summary of results:** A total of 10 W-E aligned inhumation burials were revealed, 5 in each of the trenches. In Trench 1, four of the five burials were coffined (post-medieval), and the other (a neonate) was possibly a shroud burial, also possibly post-medieval. In Trench 2, two, possibly three of the skeletons had been in plain, unadorned wooden coffins, and two were uncoffined. All were probably of medieval or early post-medieval in date. A N-S aligned cut feature, predating the burials, was also revealed in Trench 1. No structural remains or floor surfaces relating to a previous south aisle were revealed in either trench.**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Spelthorne Museum, Staines, in due course, the accession number to be confirmed.



Scale: 1:10,000

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Figure 1: Site location

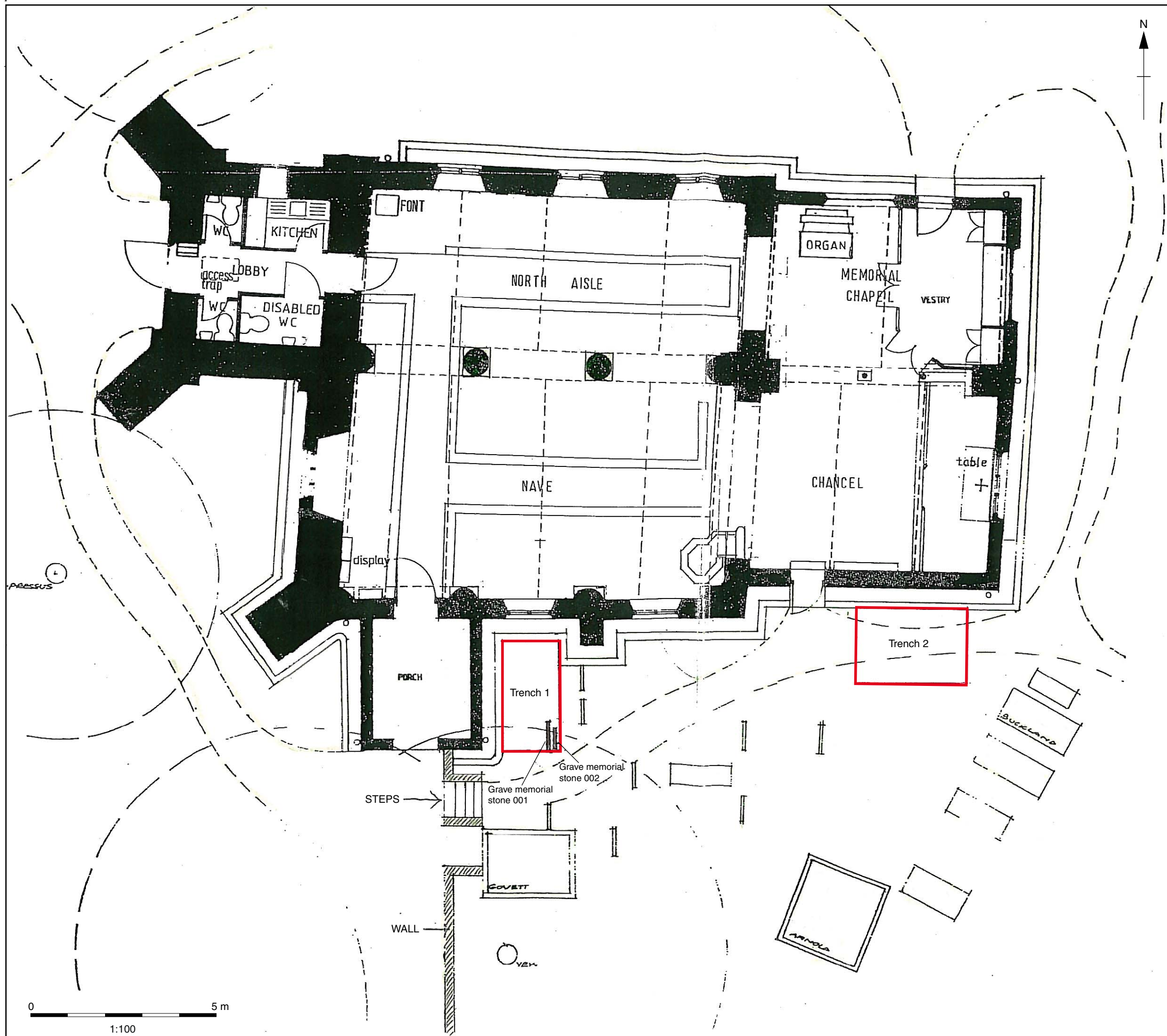


Figure 2 : Location of trenches and location of grave memorial stores 001 and 002

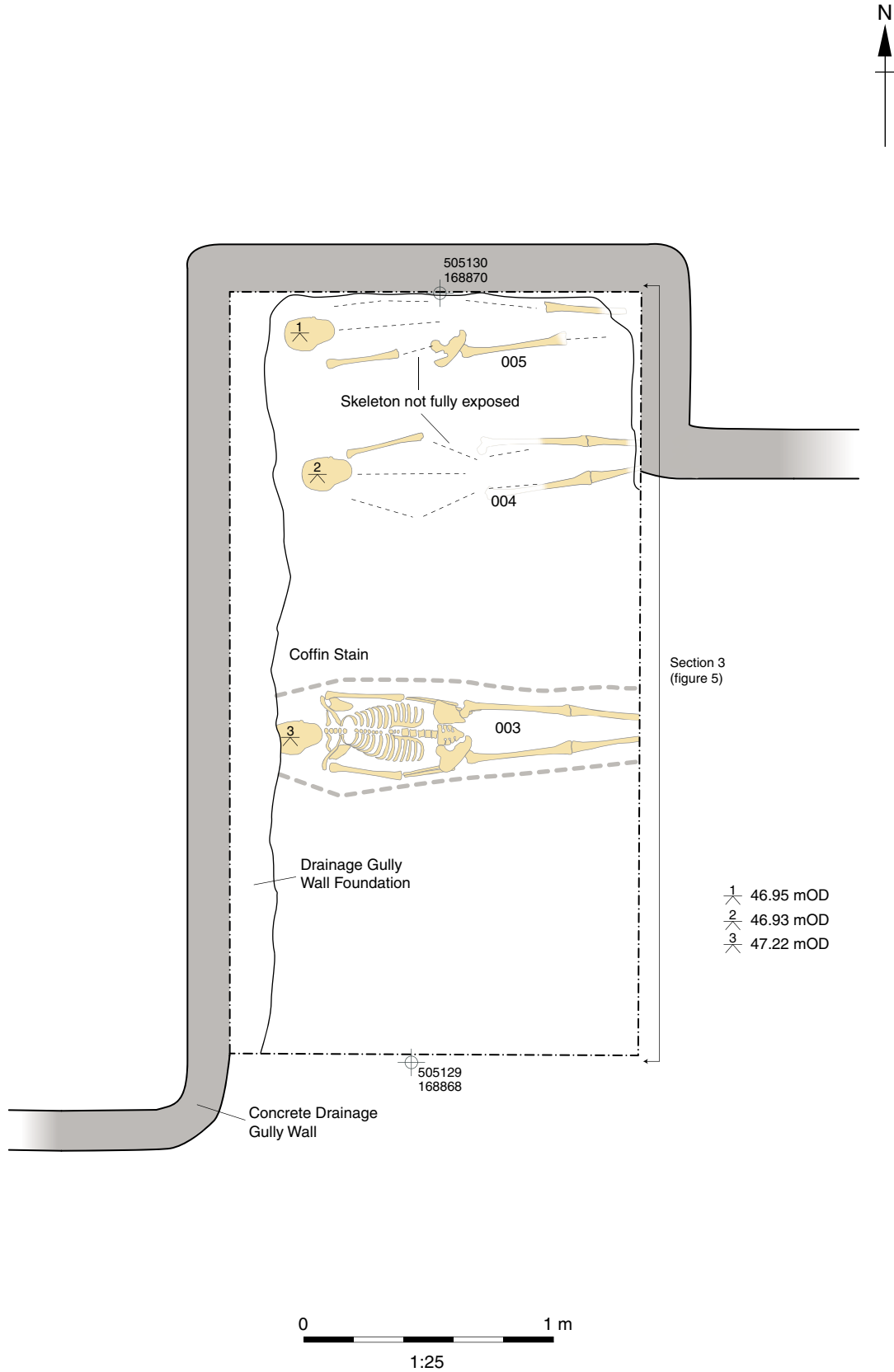


Figure 3a : Plan showing Trench 1 and the location of burials 003, 004 and 005

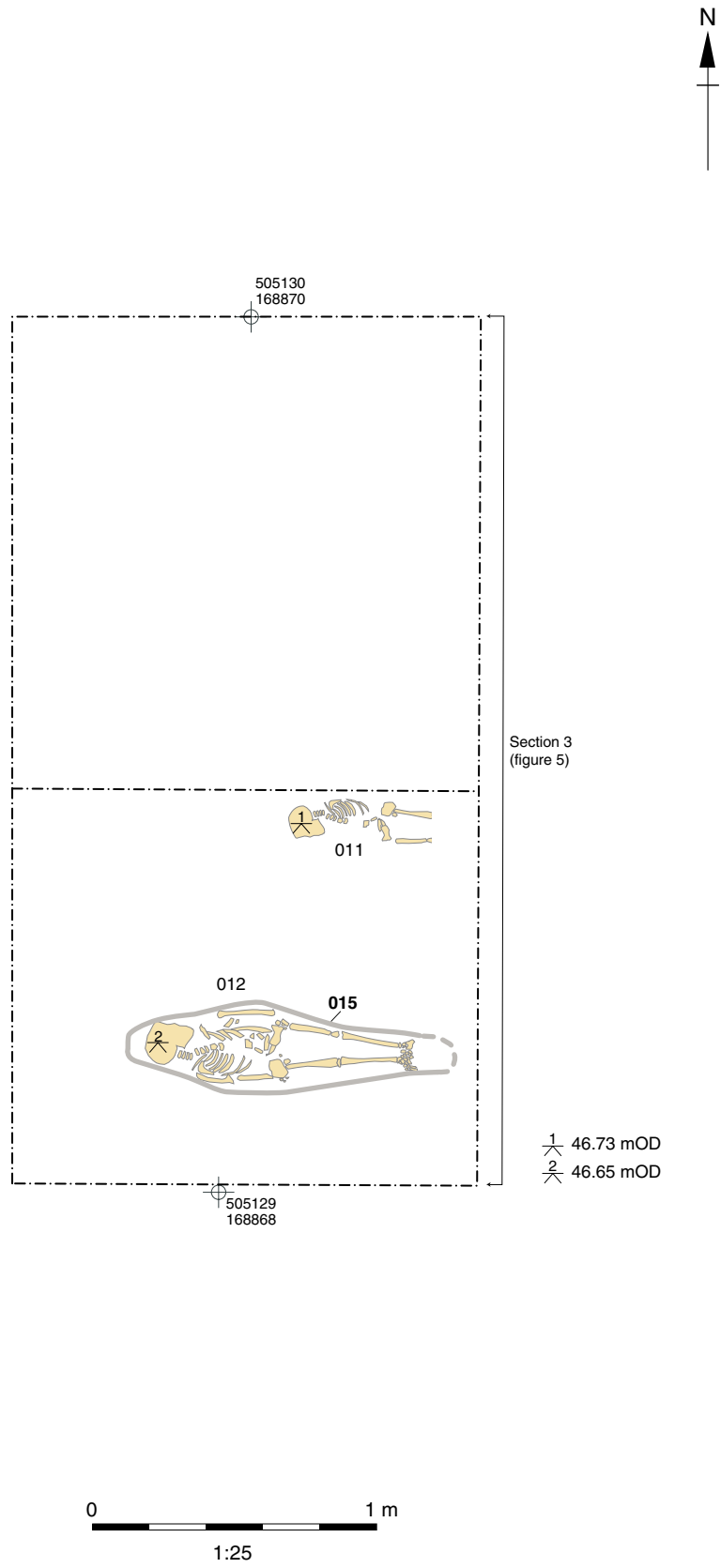


Figure 3b : Plan showing trench 1 and the location of deeper burials 011 and 012

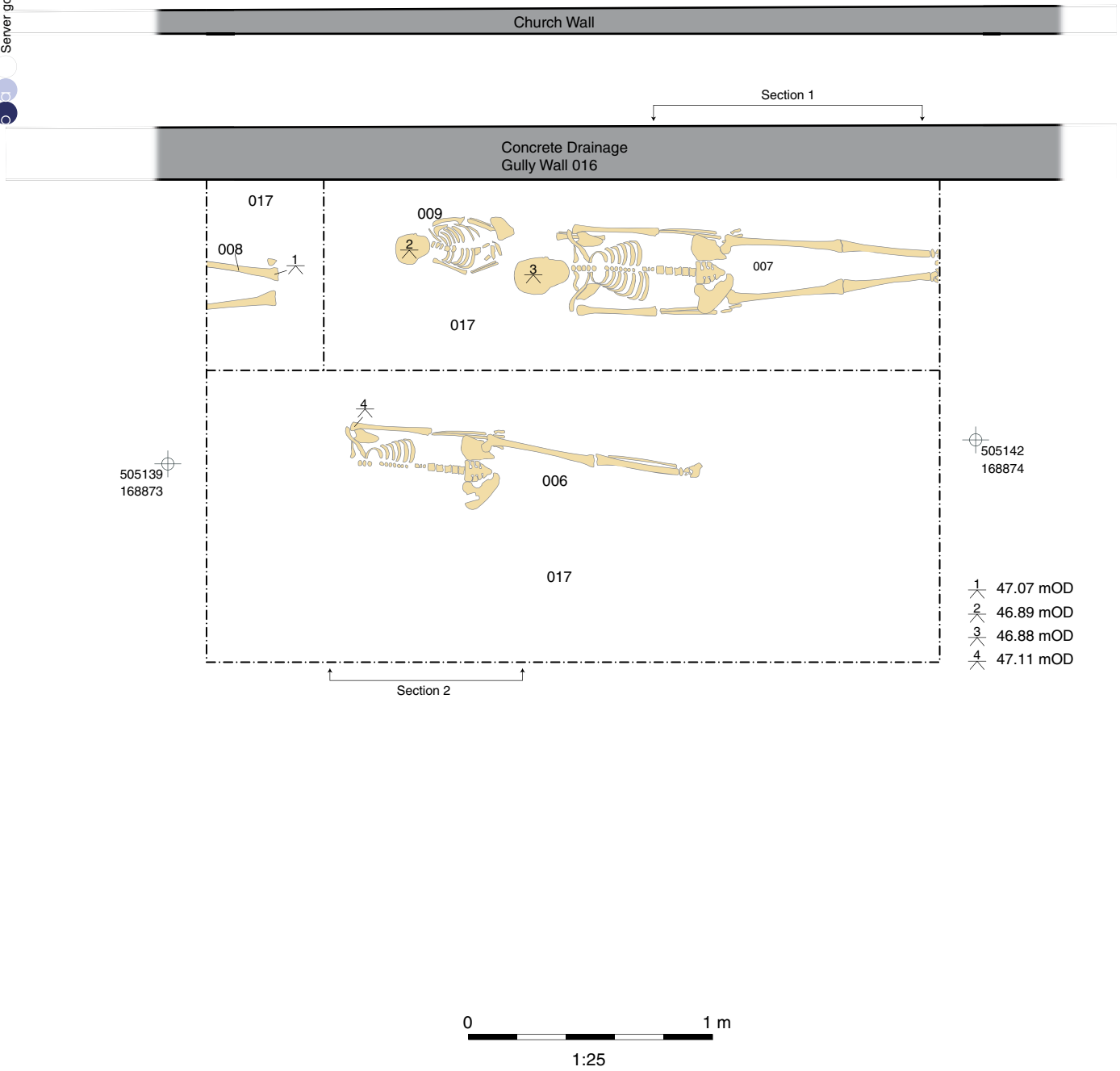


Figure 4a : Plan showing Trench 2 and the location of burials 006, 007, 008, and 009

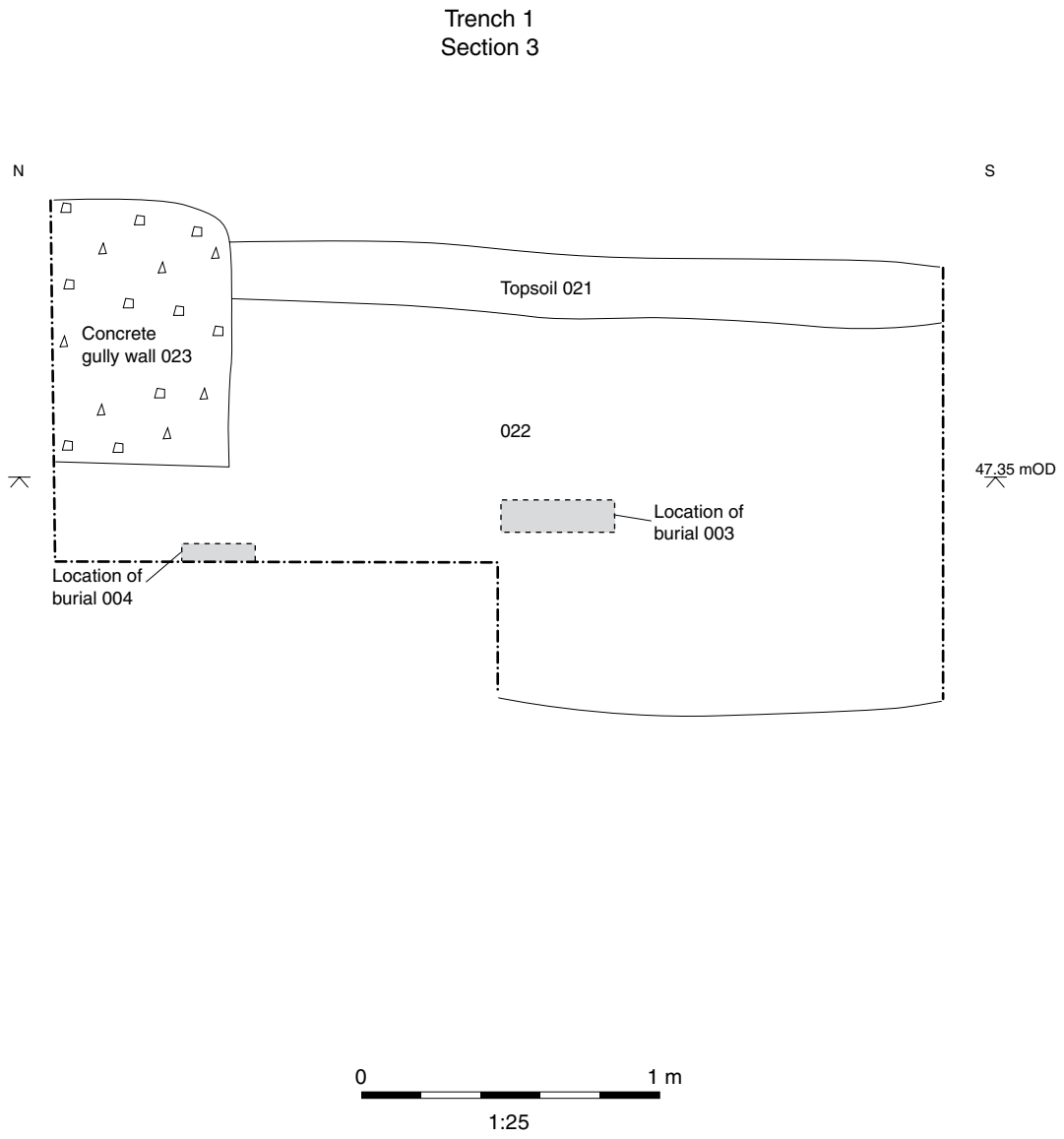
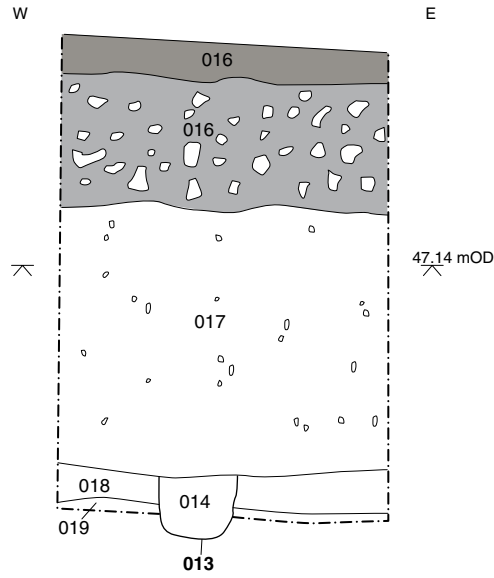
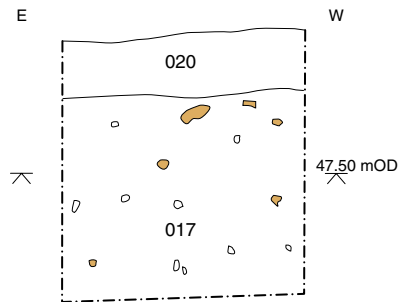


Figure 5 : Trench 1, section 3





Trench 2 Section 1



Trench 2 Section 2



Key

-  Finished concrete
-  Rough concrete
-  C B M
-  Chalk

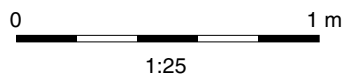
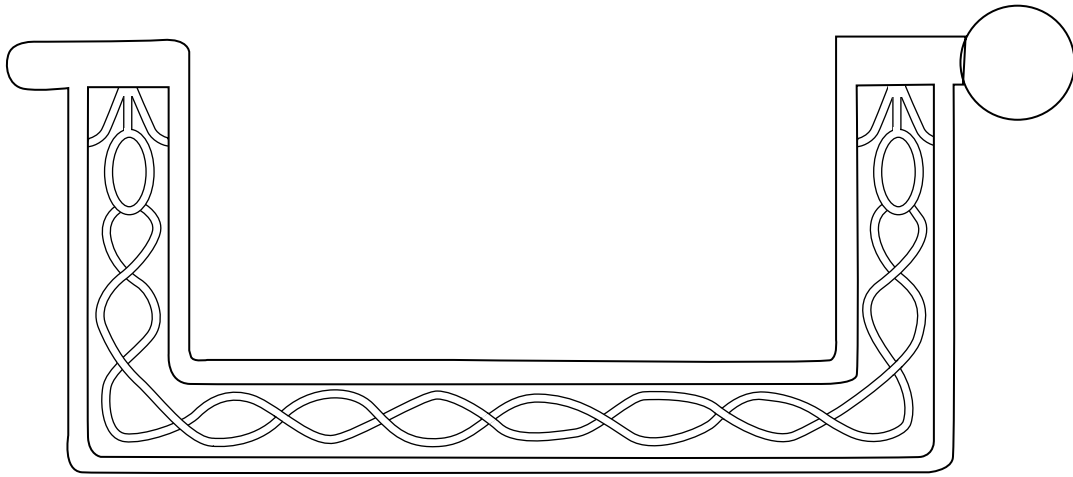


Figure 6 : Trench 2, sections 1 and 2



Scale: Approx. 1:1

Figure 7 : New coffin grip type LALEEV1



Plate 1 : Burial 003 during excavation (looking north-west)



Plate 2 : Burials 004 (left) and 005 (right), partially revealed (looking west)



Plate 3 : Burials 011 (right) and 012 (left), note the black layer underlying skeleton 012 and the coffin grip (coffin 015) overlying the chest of skeleton 012 (looking west)



Plate 4 : N-S aligned linear feature 013 (looking north)



Plate 5 : Burial 006, note the truncation of the head and right side of the body (looking west)



Plate 6 : Burial 008 after removal of the tibiae (looking west)



Plate 7 : Burial 007 (looking west)



Plate 8 : Burial 009, note the truncation of much of the lower body (by burial 007) (looking west)



Plate 9 : Burial 010 and linear feature 013 before excavation (looking west)



Plate 10 : Grave memorial 001



Plate 11 : Grave memorial 002



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