

# Archaeological test pits at St Michael the Archangel, Brantham, Suffolk, CO11 1PZ

September 2015



**by Laura Pooley**

figures by Emma Holloway and Chris Lister

**on behalf of Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich**

NGR: TM 112 341 (centre)  
CAT project ref.: 15/08b  
SCHER: BNT 023  
SCCAS code: ESF23202  
OASIS ref: colchest3-219424



**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk,  
Colchester,  
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

**CAT Report 880**

June 2016

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological test-pit evaluation was carried out in advance of the construction of an equal-access w/c and a kitchen in the choir vestry of the Church of St Michael the Archangel, Brantham. The church dates from the 14th and 15th centuries with the current choir vestry dating from the 1950s. The vestry is located on the site of a late 16th or early 17th-century porch which was demolished by the 1930s.*

*No archaeological features or finds were recorded within the test pits and no trace of the earlier porch was seen. A small trench dug alongside the north wall of the vestry did reveal a threshold stone that had been bricked over and was possibly contemporary with the porch. It has previously been speculated that the bricks seen above the threshold stone were from the porch and had been used in the wall after the porch was demolished.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological test pits at St Michael the Archangel, Brantham, Suffolk, which was carried out between 1st-4th September 2015. The work was commissioned by David Whymark and carried out on behalf of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich in advance of the construction of an equal-access w/c and a kitchen in the choir vestry. Work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

The Archaeological Advisor to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) advised the Parish that as the proposed work lies in an area of high archaeological importance, and that, in order to establish the archaeological implications of the work, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation. Recommendations included test pits through the vestry floor to identify the presence, level of preservation and form of the earlier porch building, and the implementation of a watching brief on the excavation of the trench for the new drainage through the church yard (pending).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with an *Outline Specification for Heritage Assessment* detailing the required archaeological test pits and watching brief (R.D. Carr - DAC 2015), and a CAT WSI agreed with the DAC monitor.

In addition to the Specification and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (EH 2006), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Suffolk Historic Environment Record ([heritage.suffolk.gov.uk](http://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk)) and the Outline Specification for Heritage Assessment by the DAC Archaeological Advisor:

The site lies within the footprint and graveyard of the Church of St Michael the Archangel (HER BNT 023) dating from the 14th and 15th centuries, and significantly rebuilt in 1869 by E Hakewill. The choir vestry is believed to date from the 1950's and may contain re-used brickwork from an earlier porch in the same location dating to the late 16th or 17th century. This earlier porch is depicted on an 1846 etching by Henry Davey (Suffolk Record Office 1871,0812.2941 – framed copy in church) but was demolished by the 1930's. The proposed alterations to the vestry have the potential to damage or remove

entirely traces of the earlier porch. The proposed service trench has the potential to affect or damage burials which lie within the medieval church yard and will pass within a few metres of the lich gate, a Grade II listed structure dating to c.1897 (NHLE 1285892).

#### 4 Results (Figs 2-3)

##### Test pits

The floor of the choir vestry was lifted in advance of the archaeological work. Two test pits, each measuring 1m by 1m, were dug to a depth of 400mm (totalling a depth of 600mm from the existing floor level). The test pits were dug through 400mm of post-medieval/modern accumulation or backfill (L1). No archaeological features were identified.



Photograph 1 Test pit 1



Photograph 2 Test pit 2

##### Wall section

As neither test pit located the remains of the early porch, a trench was dug along the inside of the north wall of the choir vestry to determine if any remains survived within the wall itself. The trench was 5m long and exposed the wall to a depth of 500mm below the height of the existing south nave doorway. Beneath the 20th-century doorway are three layers of long/thin brick set into cement/concrete. Beneath the bricks was a large threshold stone leading into the church that could be associated with the early porch. Either side of these doorway features is the original medieval wall of the church. No evidence of the porch structure itself was seen in the section of exposed wall.



**Photograph 3** 20th-century doorway, course of bricks and early threshold stone



**Photograph 4** Section along church wall

## 5 Finds

No archaeological finds were recovered from the test pits or wall section.

## 6 Discussion

No archaeological features or finds were recorded in the test pits and no trace of the early porch was seen. The section along the church wall did reveal a threshold stone that had been bricked over. This stone represents an earlier entrance into the church that was possibly contemporary with the porch. It has previously been speculated that the bricks seen above the threshold stone were originally part of the porch building, and had been reused here after the porch was demolished (Carr, 2015). The work carried out here could not confirm this reuse.

## 7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks David Whymark (agent) and the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (client) for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway. Figures were prepared by C Lister and E Holloway. The project was monitored for DAC by R D Carr.

## 8 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

Carr, R D	2015	<i>Outline Specification for Heritage Assessment (Archaeological advisor for the Diocese Advisory Committee)</i>
CAT	2012	<i>Policies and procedures</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the excavation of test pits and a watching brief at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Brantham, Suffolk</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, <b>14</b> , ed by D Gurney
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> , by Maria Medlycott
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology Revised: A Revised Framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 24 (EAA 24)

## 9 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Datum
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
DAC	Diocese Advisory Committee
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit

section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
SSCAS	Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 10 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none

### Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 880)

Outline Specification for Heritage Assessment. CAT WSI

Original site records (Context sheets, Trench record sheet)

Site digital photographic log. Site photographic record on CD

Attendance register. Research document

## 12 Archive deposition

The paper archive and finds are currently held by CAT at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with SCCAS under project code BNT 023.

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### Distribution list:

David Whymark

R D Carr, Archaeological Advisor to the Diocese Advisory Committee

Suffolk County Historic Environment Record



### Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House

Roman Circus Walk

Colchester

Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

checked by: Chris Lister

date: 17.11.2015

revised: 17.06.2016

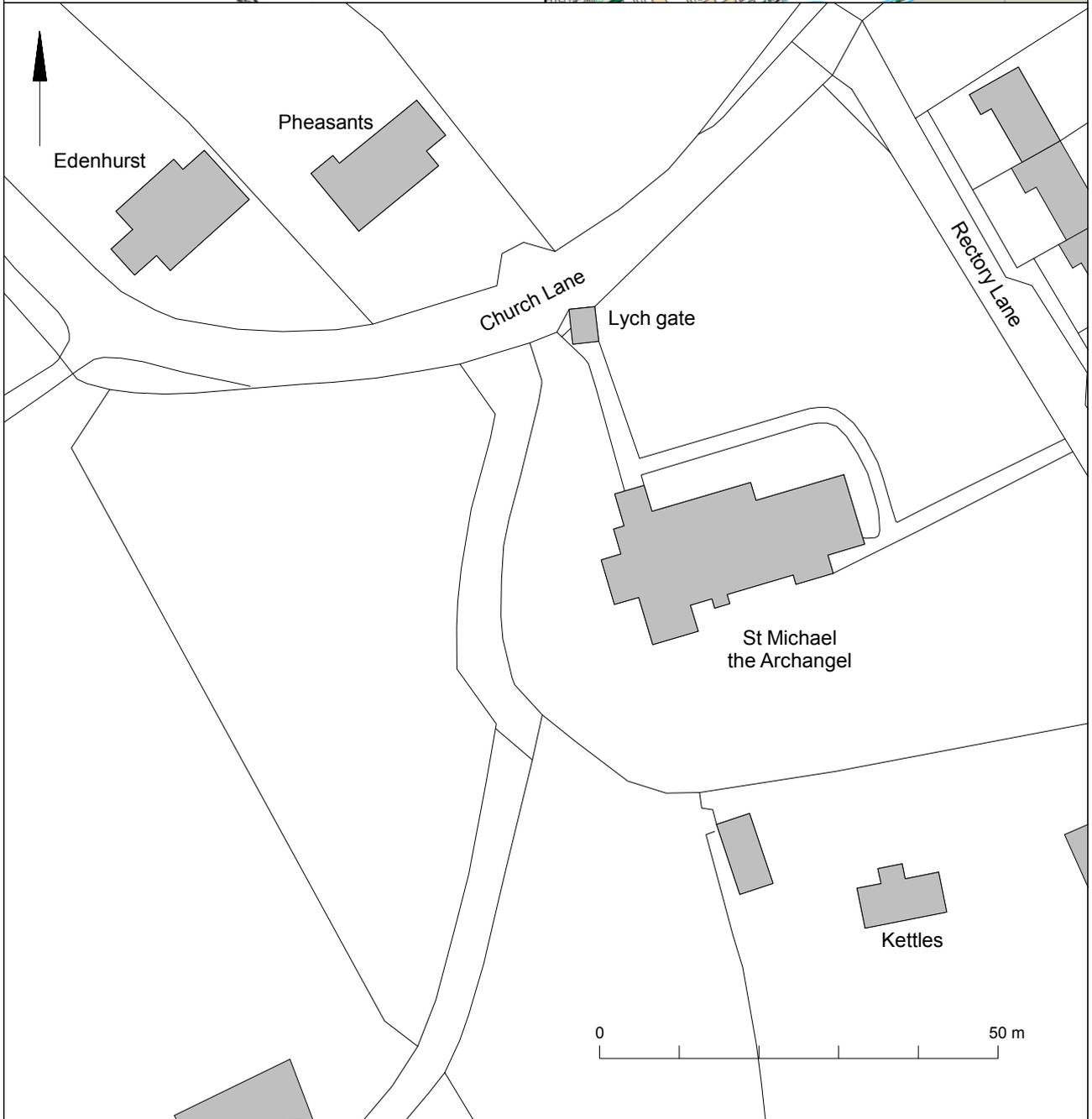
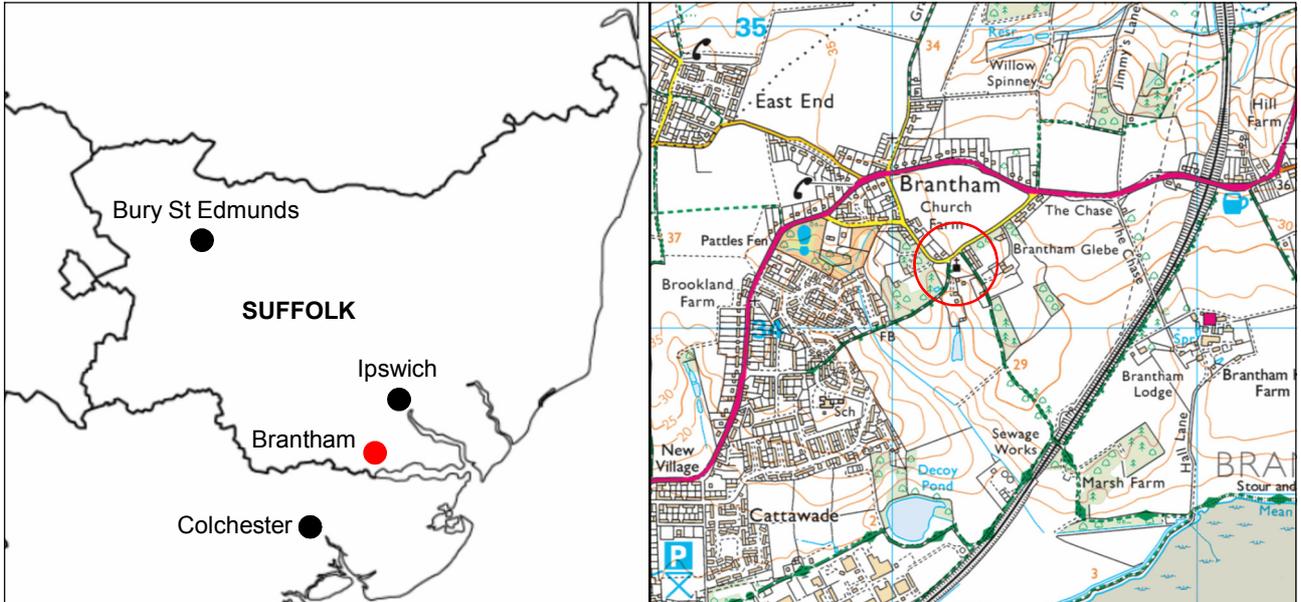


Fig 1 Site location.

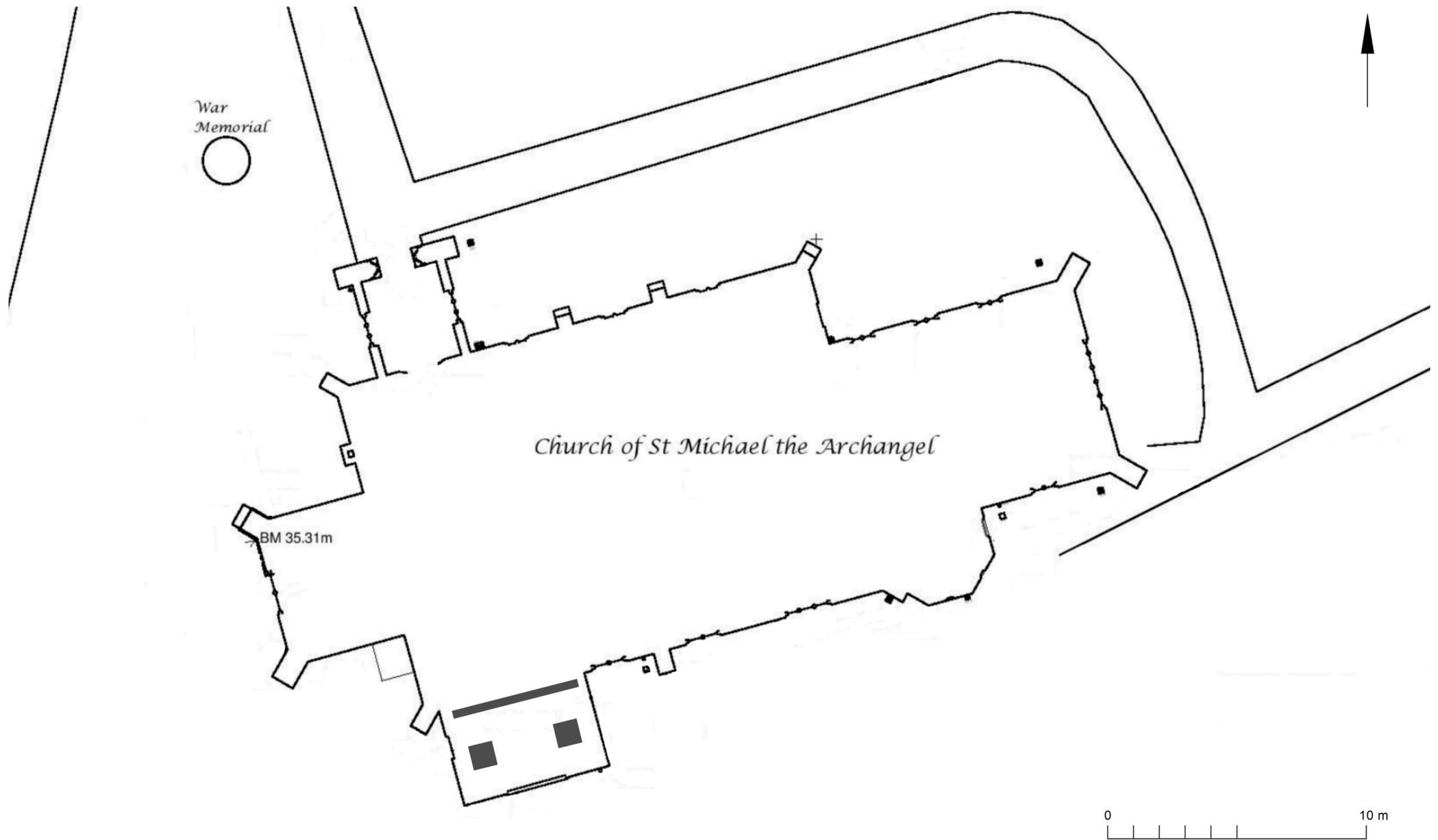


Fig 2 Test pit and trench plan

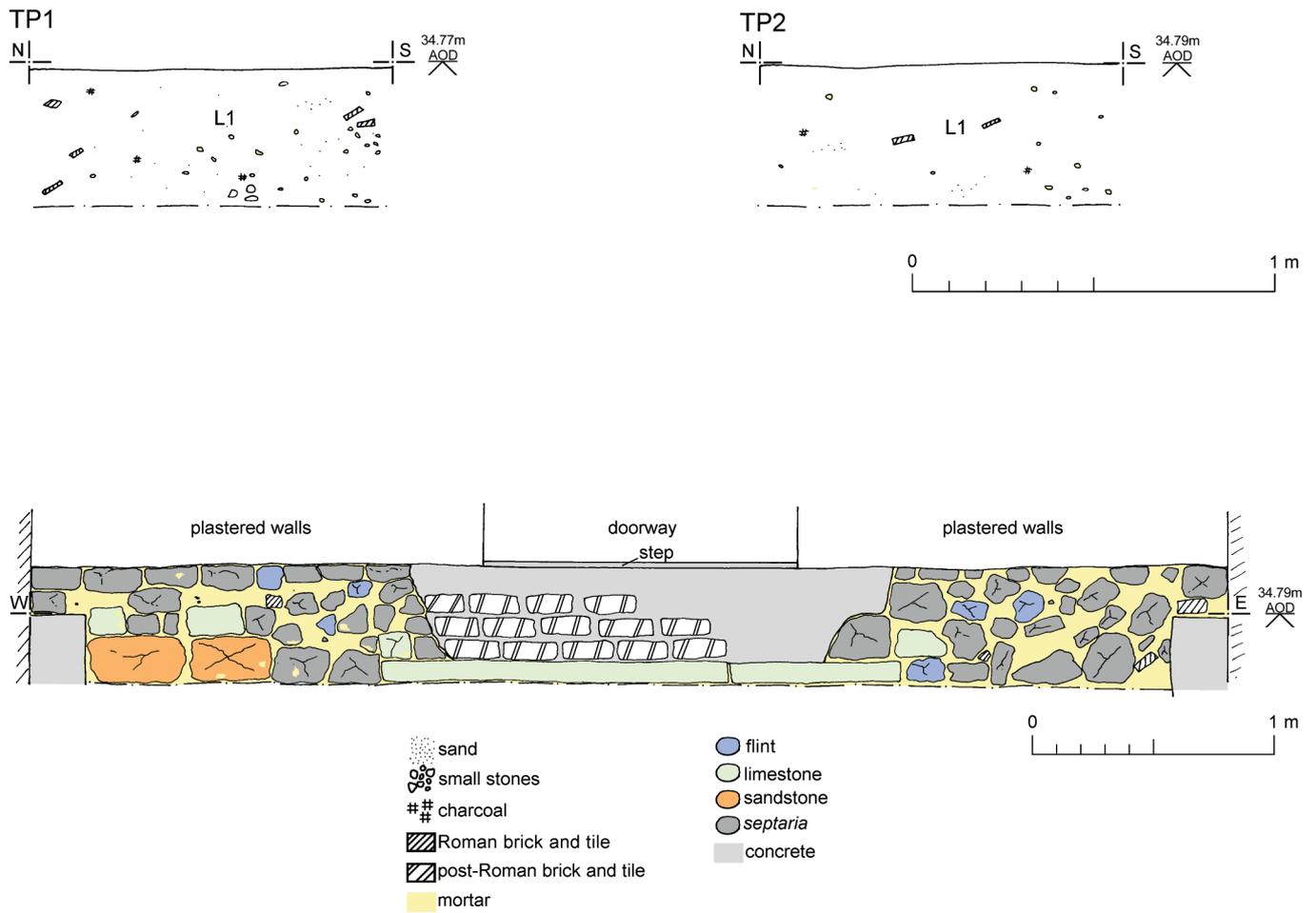


Fig 3 Sections.

# Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the excavation of test pits and a watching brief at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Brantham, Suffolk

**NGR:** TM 112 341 (centre)

**Planning references:**

**Client:** Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich

**Agent:** David Whymark

**Curating Museum:** SCCAS

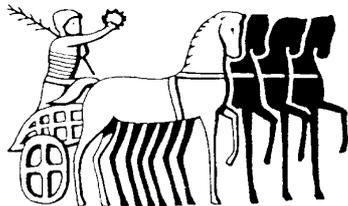
**CAT Project code:** 15/08b

**Site Manager:** Ben Holloway

**DAC Monitor:** R D Carr

**This WSI written:** 03.08.2015

Revised: 07.08.2015



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,  
Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk  
Colchester,  
Essex, C02 7GZ

*tel:* 01206 501785

*email:* [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

## **Site Location and Description**

The Church of St Michael and All Angels is located to the north-east of the centre of Brantham Village, Suffolk, off Rectory Lane CO11 1PZ (Fig 1). Site centre is NGR TM 112 341 (c). The choir vestry that forms the focus of the faculty is a single-storey structure located on the south side of the nave. The proposed drainage and services to the vestry will be brought in through the church yard from existing services in Church Lane, the new trench for this passing to the west of the lich gate and the war memorial, entering the church via the south-west entrance of the tower.

## **Proposed work**

The proposed work comprises the excavation of two test pits in the choir vestry after the existing floor surface has been removed. This work is to be carried out in advance of the adaptation of the choir vestry to be an equal-access WC and a kitchen. In addition to this a watching brief will be undertaken on the excavation of the trench for the new drainage through the church yard.

## **Archaeological Background**

The following archaeological background draws on the Suffolk Historic Environment Record ([heritage.suffolk.gov.uk](http://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk)) and the Outline Specification for Heritage Assessment by the DAC Archaeological Advisor:

The site lies wholly within the footprint and graveyard of the Church of St Michael and All Angels (HER BNT 023) dating from the 14th and 15th centuries although it was significantly rebuilt in 1869 by E Hakewill. The choir vestry is believed to date from the 1950's and may contain re-used brickwork from an earlier porch in the same location dating to the late 16th or 17th century. This earlier porch is depicted on an 1846 etching by Henry Davey (Suffolk Record Office 1871,0812.2941 – framed copy in church) but was demolished by the 1930's. The proposed alterations to the vestry have the potential to damage or remove entirely traces of the earlier porch. The proposed service trench has the potential to affect or damage burials which lie within the medieval church yard and will pass within a few metres of the lich gate, a Grade II listed structure dating to c.1897 (NHLE 1285892).

## **Planning Background**

The Diocesan Advisory Committee of the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese received a proposal to adapt the choir vestry on the south nave of the church to be an equal-access WC and a kitchen, including the introduction of services to facilitate this. Recommendations from the Archaeological Advisor to the DAC included the raising of the vestry floor to identify the presence, level of preservation and form of the medieval porch, and the implementation of a watching brief on the excavation of the trench for the new drainage through the church yard.

## **Requirement for Work**

The required archaeological work is for the hand-excavation of two test pits within the vestry after the removal of the current vestry floor and sub floor by a building contractor and a watching brief on the excavation of the trench for the new drainage through the church yard. The suggested size of each of the two test pits is 1000mm square with an overall depth of 600mm (inclusive of the depth of the modern floor make up) unless evidence of remains of the medieval porch is encountered at a higher level.

Specifically, the work will include investigation of the strata surviving below the modern floor make up in order to ascertain the presence, level of preservation and form of the medieval porch and the monitoring and recording of the service trench which has the potential to affect or damage burials within the medieval church yard.

All works are to be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

## **General Methodology**

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014b)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the HER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the finds bags and boxes, and the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

## **Staffing**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: one archaeologist.  
In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway.

## **Test pit methodology**

The two test pits, each measuring 1000mm x 1000mm will be hand excavated by an experienced CAT archaeologist after contractors have removed the existing vestry floor. Each pit will be excavated to a depth no greater than 600mm measured from the existing floor level. If remains of the medieval porch are encountered within the test pits, either foundations or floor surfaces, these will be cleaned and recorded but left *in situ* until a decision is made by the Archaeological Advisor to the DAC regarding the design of the new vestry floor. No further excavation will take place if medieval remains are encountered.

Once the test pits have been excavated a site meeting will be held with either Bob Carr or David Sherlock to agree a methodology to advance the scheme including any further archaeological work.

No backfilling of the test pits or additional excavation is to take place without the agreement of the DAC.

## **Watching Brief methodology**

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on the service trench digging and all related works, to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction, which will be done with a toothless bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc).

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used by the attending archaeologist to examine the site, spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

Material deriving from the nineteenth century or earlier coffin furniture, handles, fittings, nails etc disturbed by the groundwork will be collected and reported on. Once complete this material will be sealed in black plastic and returned to the parish authorities for re-interment.

Any articulated skeletal remains disturbed by the groundwork will be recorded in situ at appropriate scale and subsequently lifted. The skeletal material will, as with coffin furniture, be returned to the parish authorities for re-interment.

### **Site surveying**

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

### **Environmental sampling policy**

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphical and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough)

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer (Loddon) whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Val Fryer will do any processing and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF and/or the English Heritage Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking monolith samples.

### **Human remains**

Policy depends on the age of the burial. If it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner and the client will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Any human remains disturbed by the project will be presented to the parish authorities for re-interment within the churchyard.

### **Photographic record**

A 16.1 megapixel digital camera will be employed to capture both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. All groundworks will be recorded as a matter of policy. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in the site archive.

### **Finds**

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

animal bones (small groups): Adam Wightman

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Nina Crummy.

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer (Loddon)

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the SCCAS Portable Antiquity Scheme informed. The SCCAS PAS will inform the coroner in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to SCCAS/CT.

### **Results**

Notification will be given to the DAC when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the DAC and the Historic Environment Officer as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological project
- Location plan of the area in relation to the proposed development.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (EAA8, EAA14 & EAA24).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

A HER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to SCCAS/CT as an appendix to the CAT site report.

Results will be published, to at least a summary level in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series

## Archive Deposition

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to SCCAS/CT.

## Monitoring

The Archaeological Advisor to the DAC will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to the DAC one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with the DAC prior to them being carried out.

The DAC will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of the DAC will be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

## References

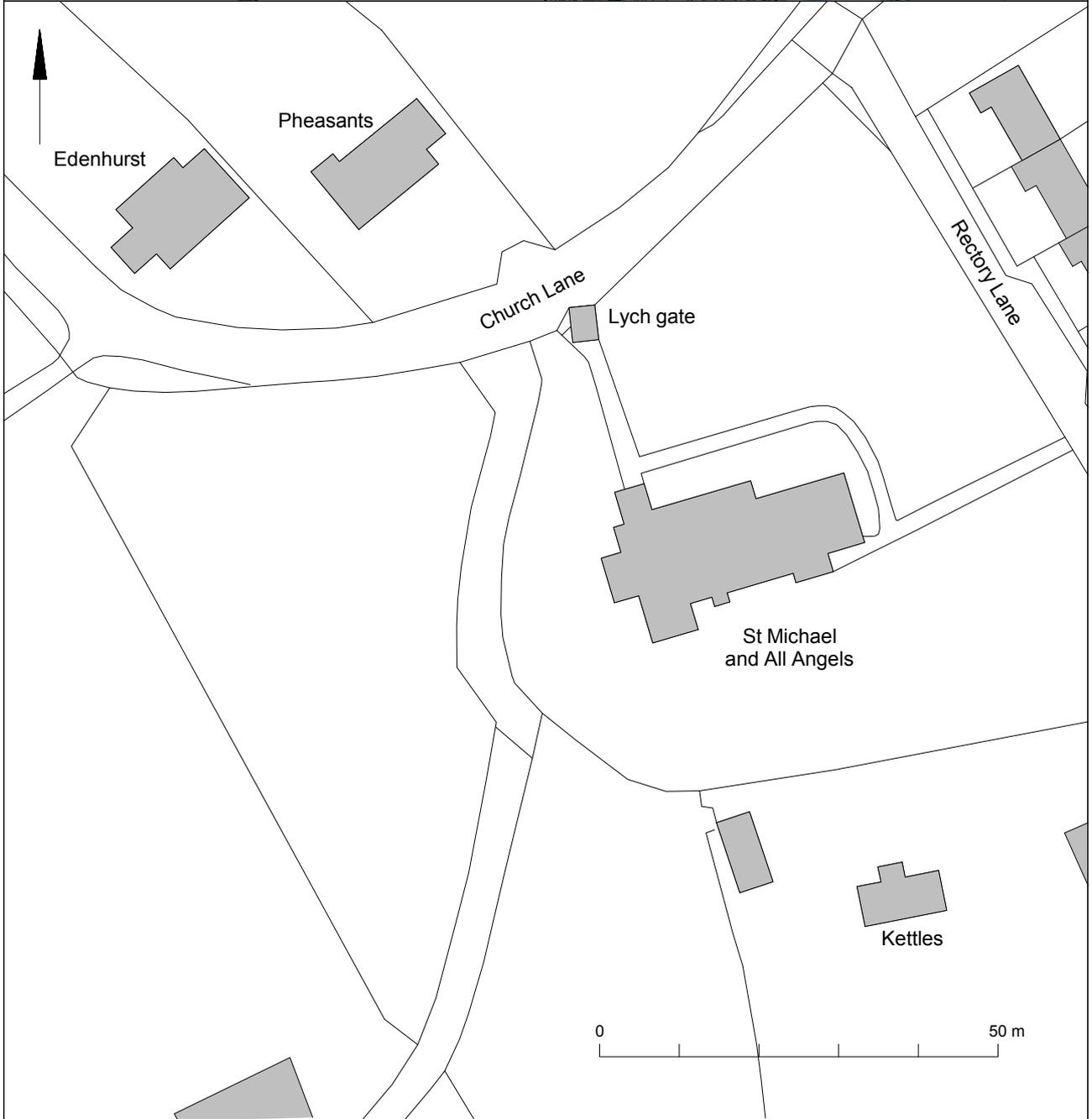
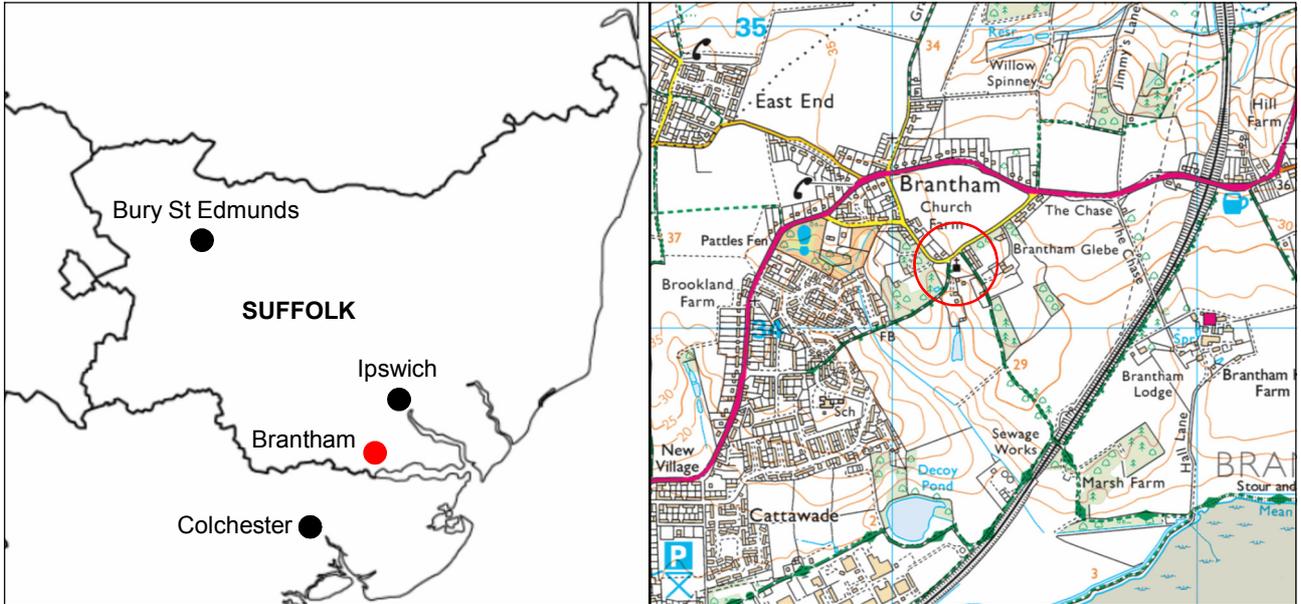
Brown, N and Glazenbrook, J.	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: a frame work for the Eastern Counties 2 Research agenda and strategy</i> , East Anglian Archaeological, occasional papers 8 (EAA8)
CAT	2014	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Code of Conduct</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)

C Lister



Colchester Archaeological Trust,  
Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk,  
Colchester,  
Essex, C02 2GZ

tel: 01206 501785:  
email: cl@catuk.org



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Fig 1 Site location.

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**OASIS ID: colchest3-219424**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological test-pits at St Michael the Archangel, Brantham, Suffolk, CO11 1PZ
Short description of the project	An archaeological test-pit evaluation was carried out in advance of the construction of an equal-access w/c and a kitchen in the choir vestry of the Church of St Michael the Archangel, Brantham. The church dates from the 14th and 15th centuries with the current choir vestry dating from the 1950s. The vestry is located on the site of a late 16th or early 17th-century porch which was demolished by the 1930s. No archaeological features or finds were recorded within the test pits and no trace of the earlier porch was seen. A small trench dug alongside the north wall of the vestry did reveal a threshold stone that had been bricked over and was possibly contemporary with the porch. It has previously been speculated that the bricks seen above the threshold stone were from the porch and had been used in the wall after the porch was demolished.
Project dates	Start: 01-09-2015 End: 04-09-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	BNT023 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	ESF23202 - Related HER No.
Any associated project reference codes	15/08b - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	CHURCH Medieval
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Test Pits"
Development type	Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

### Project location

Country England

Site location SUFFOLK BABERGH BRANTHAM St Michael the Archangel  
 Postcode CO11 1PZ  
 Study area 0 Square metres  
 Site coordinates TM 112 341 51.964653305178 1.074689516371 51 57 52 N 001 04 28 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Colchester Archaeological Trust  
 Project brief originator Diocesan Archaeologist  
 Project design originator Chris Lister  
 Project director/manager Chris Lister  
 Project supervisor Ben Holloway  
 Type of sponsor/funding body Diocese  
 Name of sponsor/funding body Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
 Digital Archive recipient Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service  
 Digital Archive ID BNT023  
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"  
 Paper Archive recipient Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service  
 Paper Archive ID BNT023  
 Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
 Title Archaeological test pits at St Michael the Archangel, Brantham, Suffolk, CO11 1PZ: September 2015  
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Pooley, L.  
 Other bibliographic details CAT Report 880  
 Date 2016  
 Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust  
 Place of issue or publication Colchester  
 Description A4 ringbound loose leaf  
 URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html>

Entered by Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)

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