ALL SAINTS CHURCH, MAIN STREET, EATON, NOTTS.

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

NGR:	SK 70129 77937
Planning Ref.:	18/00901/FUL
Faculty Ref.:	182011
PCAS job no.	2630

Prepared for

Prospect Archaeology

On behalf of Eaton & Gamston PCC

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A programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the construction of an extension on the south side of All Saints Church, Eaton, Nottinghamshire.

The church of Eaton All Saints standing in the village today was built in 1857-8, but it replaced an earlier structure that was much older. The church consists of a chancel and nave, with vestry, north porch and a bell turret containing one bell.

Monitoring of the extension foundations, the foul drain and trench arch system did not encounter any in-situ remains of the former church, however a large demolition deposit at the western end of the church indicates its presence in the vicinity, from which two fragments of tracery, likely carved in the medieval period were recovered.

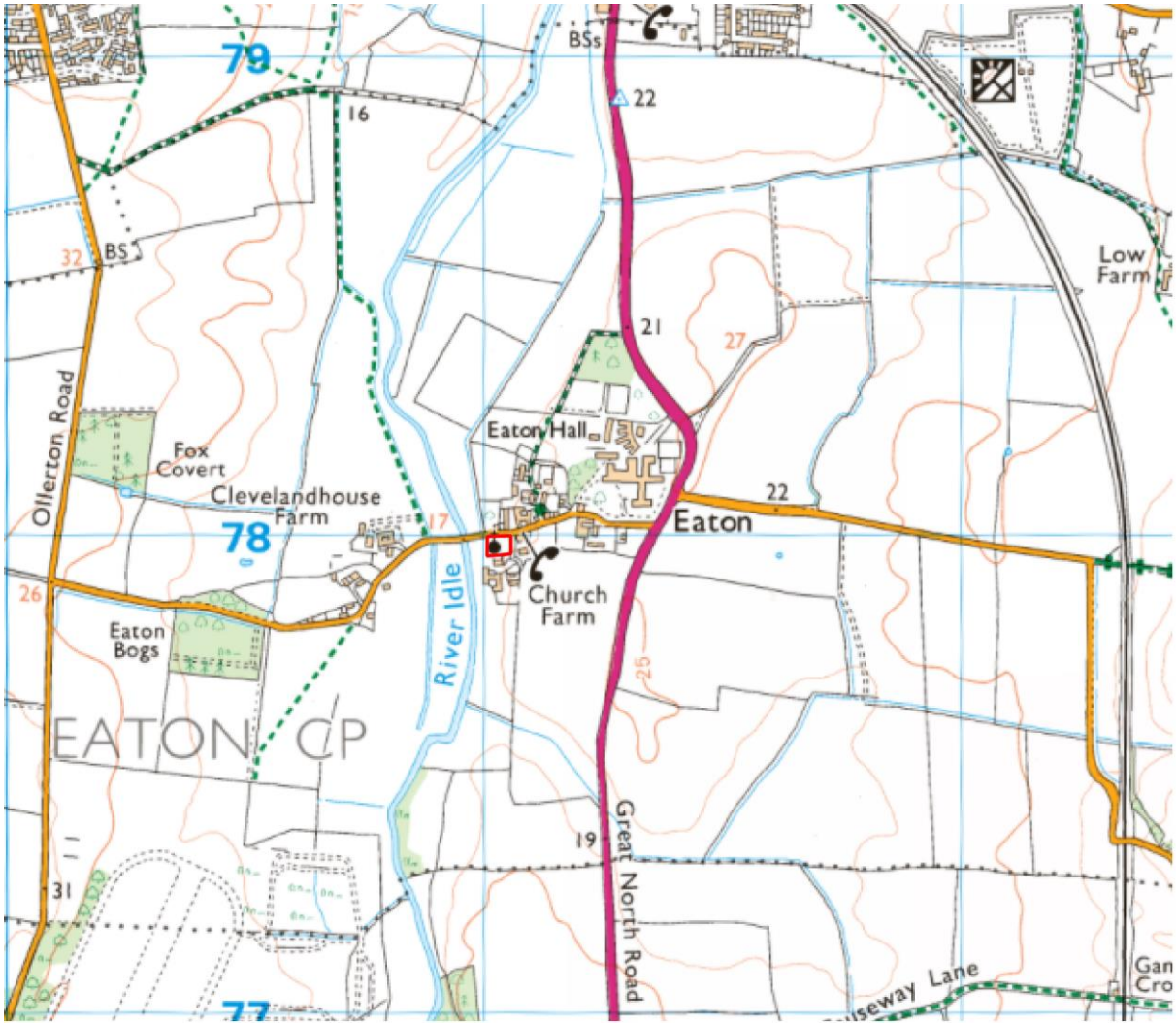

Figure 1: Location plan of the site at scale 1:25000. OS mapping. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.

1.0 Introduction

PCAS Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned Prospect Archaeology on behalf of Eaton & Gamston PCC to undertake a scheme of archaeological monitoring during the construction of an extension on the south side of All Saints Church, Eaton, Nottinghamshire.

This document and all fieldwork followed current best practice and national guidance, including:

- NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- CIFA Code of Conduct (2020a)
- CIFA Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2020b)
- The Lincolnshire Archaeology Handbook (2019)
- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)

2.0 Location and Description

Eaton is a small village situated 2 miles south of Retford and west of the A636. The parish church of All Saints sits on the banks of the river Idle on the west side of the village on a pronounced knoll.

3.0 Topography and geology

The underlying geology consists of Tarporley Siltstone Formation. This is a siltstone, mudstone and sandstone with overlying glacio-fluvial deposits of sands and gravels (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk).

The site lies at c. 68-69m aOD overlooking the river to the west, with the village to the east.

The approximate NGR is SK 70129 77937.

4.0 Planning Background

Planning permission was granted for an extension to the south side of the church in 2018 (18/00901/FUL). This did not include a condition for archaeological monitoring.

Following this, in 2019, a faculty (18211), was granted for an extension to be built on the south side of the church to provide a disabled toilet. This was to be coupled with alterations inside the church's south aisle for a tea servery. The faculty stated that;

There is to be an archaeological watching brief in accordance with recommendations by the DAC Archaeological Advisor, no work to commence without a written scheme of investigation.

5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

A detailed archaeological and historical background has already been compiled for purposes of the WSI (Prospect Archaeology 2021). This is summarised below.

The Domesday Book records two manors in Eaton. One help by the Archbishop of York in both 1066 and 1086. The second is help by ten thegns in 1066, but by Roger of Bully by 1086.

No church is mentioned in the Domesday book, and the earliest evidence for its existence is from the 13th century, when in 1228 or 1229 Thomas de Wlverthon gave the church to the conons of Radford (Worksop) in response to a claim against him. However, the transfer either was not made or was later reversed as in 1286 Robert de Wolrington was able to release the right of advowson (the right to appoint a priest) for the church (https://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/eaton/hhistory.php).

This earlier church was replaced in 1857-58. It was observed in 1854 that the church was 'a very ancient structure, having some slight remains of Norman architecture, it had become much dilapidated, and its exterior, had been from time to time repaired in the most barbarous fashion.' The current church consists of a chancel and nave, with vestry, north porch and a bell turret contained one bell. The architect was George Shaw (1810-1876). The medieval piscina in the south chancel wall is one of only two features that survive from the previous church. It is described as 'a C15 cusped, ogee arched piscina with crocketed hood mould and finial. The other item taken from the earlier church is a monument to lord of the manor John Stringer who died in 1706 and his wife Elizabeth (died 1726). The building is listed Grade II.

6.0 Methodology

The approved written scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording (Prospect Archaeology 2021) was applied to the groundworks associated with the extension foundations, drainage and trench arch.

The aims and objectives of the monitoring were

- identify all features and artefacts exposed
- determine the form and function of archaeological features encountered
- recover dating evidence from the archaeological features
- establish the sequence of archaeological deposits encountered
- retrieve environmental evidence relating to environment and economy of the site archaeology of the site and the surrounding area
- provide results for accession to the Nottinghamshire HER

Excavations were undertaken by the building contractor using a mini-excavator, with one experienced archaeologist on site to supervise the groundworks.

Where identified, archaeological features were examined sufficiently to determine their date, character and survival condition and then recorded by measured plan and section drawings at appropriate scales (1:20), incorporating Ordnance Survey datum heights.

A written record of each significant stratigraphic horizon and archaeological feature was made on standard PCAS context recording forms. These were supplemented by a narrative account in the form of a site diary. The archaeologist was to pay due attention to the landscape aspect of any exposed remains – both the cultural and the natural landscape – which required a brief assessment to be made of neighbouring conditions (e.g. visible earthworks in adjacent areas, surface observation, standing buildings, vegetation cover etc).

Disarticulated human remains were put to one side for reburial in the trench. Complete burials were to be recorded and removed in accordance with normal archaeological practice, and then put to one side for reburial, however no complete burials were identified. This was in accordance with the requirements of Civil Law and all relevant CIfA and English Heritage guidance including Historic England's 2017 Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England and English Heritage 2004 Human Bones from Archaeological Sites: Guidelines for Producing Assessment Documents and Analytical Reports

In compliance with the archaeological condition attached to the planning permission for the proposed development, a full report on the results of the project will be submitted within two months of the completion of the evaluation. An online record of the project data was initiated with the Archaeological Data Service (OASIS database) before fieldwork commenced, and completed at the end of the project, including an uploaded digital copy of the report.

Plate 1: South-west corner of church prior to excavation (looking NW)

7.0 Results

A full context summary list appears as Appendix 1 and several photographs appear throughout the text. Monitoring took place over the course of three days from 16th May to 18th May 2022 and was undertaken by Matthew Newby.

Initial excavations focussed on the footings of the extension to the south of the church. These were approximately 0.5m wide and excavated to a depth of 0.9m from original ground level. A stratigraphy of topsoil, (101), overlying a subsoil, (104), was encountered. No archaeological features were seen; however, fragments of disarticulated human bone and modern pottery were retrieved from the subsoil. Two large worked stone fragments were recovered from the topsoil, however no evidence of any earlier foundations being intact were encountered. The foundation of the current church was examined (Fig. 3b) and these don't appear to have been directly built onto the foundations of the previous structure.

Plate 2: Extension footings (looking W)

Additional groundworks consisted of a long drainage trench, running approximately north to south (see Fig. 2), which connected to the existing drain in the road. This was widened at the southern end, for a soakaway. This was 0.9m wide, 0.6m deep and 7m long. This linked to the toilet facilities via a 0.3m wide drainage channel excavated to the same depth. At the southern end of this, excavations exposed a 0.7m wide surface, (103). This was brick made and was identified immediately below the topsoil, and on top of the buried soil (104). Its route is not immediately obvious, however it's likely that it was a later addition to the grounds of the former church. Potentially as a path leading to a southern doorway.

To the immediate north of the pathway, a large deposit of probable demolition material, (105), was encountered (see plate 6). This contained frequent limestone fragments and several worked stone blocks, although none were identified as being in situ. Further to this, two pieces of carved tracery were recovered (see plate 4 and appendix 2). These were sections of window tracery made in the English Gothic style, from locaL oolitic limestone. There is evidence on the first fragment of striations to the block joints using a jadd pick or racer, which is consistent with 13th century stonework. The second fragment is near identical in style and is highly likely to be part of the same architectural feature.

The final leg of the trench exposed a stratigraphy of topsoil, (101), overlying the graveyard soil (102). No features were seen in this, although frequent disarticulated remains were recovered.

Plate 3: Buried brick pathway (103) (looking N)

Plate 4: Fragments of tracery seen in (105) (looking SSW)

Plate 5 (left): Drainage trench leading to road (looking N)

Plate 6 (right): Drainage trench. Deposit (105) can be seen in the foreground (looking N)

Main Road

All Saints Church

Site boundary
Limit of Excavation
Church
Masonry
Modern Feature
Possible Demolition Deposit

0 7.5 15 m

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Figure 2:
Plan (1:200) of monitored groundworks

Limit of Excavation
Church
Masonry
Modern Feature
Possible Demolition Deposit

(102)

(105)

All Saints Church

Fig. 3a

SW NE

(101)

(103)

Fig. 3b

WSW ENE

Foundation of church

(104)

0 0.5 1 m

Fig. 3b

Fig. 3a

(104)

0 1.5 3 m

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Figure 3:
Detailed plan (1:50) of groundworks and sections (1:20)

8.0 Discussion and Conclusions

Excavations at All Saints Church, Eaton for the extension foundations, the foul drain and trench arch system did not encounter any in-situ remains of the former church, however a large demolition deposit at the western end of the church indicates its presence in the area.

Direct evidence can be seen in the form of the large limestone blocks and fragments of tracery that were retrieved from the demolition layer, (105), to the west of the current church. The tracery is indicative of 13th century stone masonry and had been carved for a building of relatively high status. In addition to this, the brick-built pathway, not related to the current Victorian church, indicates that the previous building may have had a doorway on its southern side.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

Archaeological monitoring was an appropriate method for gathering information about the site's archaeological potential, whilst causing the minimum of disruption to the construction process.

10.0 Project Archive

The project archive, consisting of the site recording and this report, is currently held at the offices of PCAS Ltd. in Saxilby, Lincolnshire while being prepared for deposition. Copies of the project report will be sent to the client, the PCC, the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the Archaeological Advisor to Basset law District Council. Following deposition, the archive will be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service OASIS (Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations) database for public consultation.

11.0 Acknowledgements

PCAS Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Prospect Archaeology and Eaton & Gamston PCC for this commission.

12.0 References

CIfA 2020a Code of Conduct, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIfA 2020b Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

English Heritage 2004 Human Bones from Archaeological Sites: Guidelines for Producing Assessment Documents and Analytical Reports

Jennings, L., 2019 Archaeology Handbook Lincolnshire County Council

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context No.	**Type**	**Description**	**Finds**
101	Layer	Modern soil. Dark brown loamy topsoil. Frequent pebbles throughout. Approx. 0.25m thick.	
102	Layer	Subsoil. Mid brown sandy loam. Frequent stones and pebbles. Loose and dry. Over 0.8m thick.	
103	Surface	Brick path identified at the south western corner of the church. Seen immediately beneath the topsoil. Possible footpath. 0.7m wide.	
104	Layer	Buried soil. Dark grey black sandy silt. Beneath (101) in extension footings at south western corner of current church.	
105	Layer	Possible demolition deposit on western side of church. Seen beneath (101) to the north of path (103). Contained frequent limestone rubble, including the two fragments of tracery.	

Appendix 2: Stonework Report by C. Simpson

Evaluation of architectural stonework from excavations on land at All Saints Church, Retford, Nottinghamshire.

(site code: ASEM22)

by Charles Simpson BSc(Hons) MA.

Introduction

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out by PCAS Archaeology on land at All Saints Church, Retford, Nottinghamshire.

Archaeological monitoring and recording were carried out during works to construct an extension on the south side of the church to accommodate a disabled toilet and tea servery.

The site lies in the area previously occupied by a previous church dated to the 13th century.

Two fragments of architectural stonework from the subsoil layer were submitted for recording and analysis.

Methodology

The fragments were cleaned of surface debris and had their dimensions, material and typology recorded. Each item was examined for evidence of burning, tool marks, mortaring, finishes, mason's marks and other diagnostic indicators as suggested by Schofield and Samuel (2010).

Each fragment is described individually (or in groups where appropriate) below and a summary of the results is presented in Appendix 1.

Range of Materials

The fragments submitted for study were both comprised of the same materials – limestone.

The fragments were all fine grained oolitic limestone in typology and a very pale yellowy white colour.

The local bedrock is recorded as siltstone, mudstone and sandstone from the Tarporley Siltstone Formation with overlying glacio-fluvial deposits of sands and gravels (BGS 2022) and is not the source of the stone recovered from the excavations.

Although a local source of limestone is the Cadeby Formation, formerly known as 'Lower Magnesian Limestone', it is more likely that the base material for this stonework originated from the "Inferior Oolite Group" of the Lincolnshire limestone formations that form the north / south running scarp known as the Lincolnshire Edge.

Results

(102) Fragment No. 1 – Window Tracery

This fragment is a section of limestone window tracery in the English Gothic style. Made from relatively local fine grained oolitic limestone, this fragment is finely carved with evidence of finely chiselled surfaces to the internal facets and reveals. The external surfaces show a peck mark finish along with weathering consistent with exposure to the elements.

There is evidence of striations (for mortar keying) to the block joints using a *jadd pick* or *racer* consistent with early to late 13th century stonework (Schofield & Samuel, 2010). The base of the block, where it would rest on the mullion, has a 25mm wide groove cut into it, presumable to facilitating jointing.

The fragment was grooved for fenestration both within the individual lancet and above it. This groove having a significantly greater slope on one side (the building interior) than the other to facilitate the installation of the windows. There is also evidence of some mid greyish mortar or other material on the base and parts of the sides of this fenestration groove. Whilst this may have been some form of bedding compound (mortar?), its nature and function is unclear.

There is also a shallow hole close to the fenestration groove on the outside facet of one of the cusps. This is surrounded by mortar and would have held the saddle bar to support the stained glass panels.

The fragment showed damage to the cusps and most prominent edges and half of one side of the v shape block is missing. The fragment points to the complete piece having rounded three lobed trefoil design to the apex of each lancet.

(102) Fragment No. 2 – Window Tracery

Another fragment of window tracery recovered along with the previous fragment (No. 1). The shape and dimensions of this fragment and the previous one, show a high degree of similarity and were highly likely to be part of the same architectural feature. This fragment has identical composition and characteristics to fragment No. 1 with the exception that this fragment is less damaged, having the almost complete V shape that would have comprised the sides of the arched tops between two lancets. The groove in the base of the block is absent on this fragment. There were small amounts of residual mortar, paint and distemper present in similar location to the previous fragment.

Figure 1 – Fragment No.1 (left) and No.2 (right) from context (102).

Discussion

An analysis of the results listed above indicate the presence of an ecclesiastical building on site of a likely medieval date. The presence of these two carved stonework fragments suggest they originate in a structure of reasonable status.

There is no evidence of re-use or re-purposing of the materials submitted for analysis.

There was a mild level of surface damage and abrasion on both fragments, but the small amounts of paint and distemper present on the inner surface have remained. This could be from an earlier existing decoration scheme or present as part of the wave of church "restoration" occurring in the early to mid 19thC. With the desire to return to an earlier and plainer interior, many churches were decorated as part of restorative schemes (cf. painted over) to match an earlier aesthetic – that of the 13thC decorated style of church architecture. With the known rebuilding date of the church in 1857-8, these fragments are likely to have come from the medieval church built in the 13th century and present on this site prior to the construction of the current building.

Recommendations

The results from this site show a narrow spread of building material, likely to originate in the medieval period. Whilst no evidence was presented with the fragments to support the presence of extra intact structures, the gathered pieces provide supporting evidence of the nature and age of the previous structure and extend the knowledge of ecclesiastical features within the region.

Future excavations at this location should certainly retain any architectural fragments discovered for examination and recording.

Conservation

The stonework is all stable and in good condition and as such, has no particular conservation requirements.

Retention and disposal

All items of stonework considered here were left in the possession of PCAS Archaeology and recommendations for their retention / disposal have been made on the summary sheet below.

Archive

An electronic copy of this report has been supplied to PCAS Archaeology and a copy of the paper and electronic records pertaining to the work have been kept by Charles Simpson.

References

British Geological Survey (BGS). (2022). *Geology Viewer*. https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk

Schofield, J. & Samuel M. (2010). *Dealing with architectural fragments*. Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists - Guidance Note 3

Other Sources

Child, M. (2004). *Discovering Church Architecture*. Shire Publications.

Historic England. (2017). *Strategic Stone Study - A Building Stone Atlas of Lincolnshire*.

Historic England. (2017). *Strategic Stone Study - A Building Stone Atlas of Nottinghamshire*.

Stocker, D. (1993). Recording worked stone, in R Gilchrist and H Mytum (eds), *Advances in monastic archaeology*, 19–27

Appendix 3: OASIS

OASIS ID (UID): preconst3-507575

Project Name: Watching Brief at All Saints Church, Eaton

Activity type: Watching Brief

Project Identifier(s): All Saints Church, Eaton

Planning Id: [no data]

Reason for Investigation: Ecclesiastical consent

Organisation Responsible for work: PCAS Archaeology Ltd

Project Dates: 16-May-2022 - 18-May-2022

HER: Nottinghamshire HER

HER Identifiers: [no data]

Project Methodology: A programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the construction of an extension on the south side of All Saints Church, Eaton, Nottinghamshire. The church of Eaton All Saints standing in the village today was built in 1857-8, but it replaced an earlier structure that was much older. The church consists of a chancel and nave, with vestry, north porch and a bell turret containing one bell. Monitoring of the extension foundations, the foul drain and trench arch system did not encounter any in-situ remains of the former church, however five fragments of worked stone were recovered from the subsoil.

Project Results: Excavations at All Saints Church, Eaton exposed a simple stratigraphy of topsoil, overlying a deep subsoil. No archaeological features pre-dating the Victorian period were identified, however five worked stone fragments provided evidence of an earlier church on site. No in situ remains of this were seen.

Keywords:

Archive:

Physical Archive, Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Bassetlaw Museum;

Reports in OASIS:

Brocklehurst, L., (2022). Watching Brief at All Saints Church, Eaton. Saxilby: PCAS Archaeology Ltd.