
Archaeology & Built Heritage

Written Scheme of Investigation:

Archaeological Attendance during Groundwork for

Mains Water Supply, Surface and Foul Water Drainage:

Church of St John the Baptist, Cold Overton, Leicestershire

NGR: SK 8103 1014

Client: Cold Overton Parochial Church Council

Client's Agent: Mark Stewart Church Architect

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) setting out details of a programme of Archaeological Attendance for Inspection and Recording (a 'Watching Brief') that will be implemented during groundwork associated with the provision of a new mains water supply and surface and foul water drainage at the Church of St John the Baptist, Cold Overton, Leicestershire.
- 1.2 The WSI has been prepared by Neil Finn of Archaeology & Built Heritage at the request of Mark Stewart, Church Architect, acting for Cold Overton Parochial Church Council (PCC).
- 1.3 The archaeological investigation is required as a condition of a Faculty granted for repairs and improvements to the Grade I listed church, following recommendations made in a Quinquennial Inspection report undertaken in 2016 (Stuart 2016).
- 1.4 The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (CIfA 2014).

2. Location

- 2.1 Cold Overton village is within the civil parish of Knossington and Cold Overton, in the Melton District of Leicestershire.
- 2.2 The village is located approximately 6.5 miles (10.5 km) south-east of Melton Mowbray and 3 miles (5 km) west of Oakham, close to the county boundary with Rutland.
- 2.3 The Church of St John the Baptist is situated on the west side of Main Street, at National Grid Reference SK 8103 1014 (Figure 1).

3. Statutory Designation

- 3.1 The Church of St John the Baptist is included on the statutory national list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at Grade I. The listing description reads as follows:

Parish church. C13, C14, C15 and c.1800. Restored by J.T. Micklethwaite, 1889. Coursed and squared ironstone and limestone rubble and ashlar, with ashlar dressings. Lead and Swithland slate roofs. Moulded and chamfered plinths, sill band, some coved eaves. Openings mainly have hood moulds and mask stops. West tower with spire, nave with clerestory, north aisle, chancel, south aisle, south porch. Tower, C15, 2 stages, has clasping buttresses, those to west with masks on the plinth. 2 chamfered and moulded string courses and continuous hood mould. Coved eaves with masks, crenellated parapets with 4 pinnacles. Setback octagonal spire with finial and weathercock plus 2 tiers of gabled lucarnes with double lancets. First stage has, to west, blocked moulded doorway and above it, C15 double lancet with panel tracery. Second stage has 4 transomed cusped double lancets. To east, clock. Clerestory, 3 bays, has chamfered band and crenellated parapet with south-east corner and gable pinnacles. Rainwater heads to north inscribed 'J B 1804' and to south 'W S 1793'. On each side, 3 round-headed double lancets with moulded pointed openings. North aisle, 2 bays, has to north, 2 buttresses. West end has C19 chamfered single lancet. North side has to east, C15 triple lancet with moulded elliptical head. To west, chamfered C13 blocked door. East end has a restored round-headed moulded window. Chancel, 2 bays, has moulded plinth and coped gable with cross. North side has central buttress, 2 setoffs. To west, C14 double lancet with flowing tracery, and to west again, C13 single lancet low side window. East end has angle buttress to right and single buttress to left, 2 setoffs. Restored C14 reticulated triple lancet with

coved and chamfered reveal. South side has central buttress, 2 setoffs. To west, C13 foiled single lancet low side window. Above and to east, 2 restored C14 double lancets with flamboyant tracery. South aisle, 3 bays, has 2 pairs of double gabled angle buttresses with crocketed pinnacles. Chamfered and moulded plinth and sill band. Rainwater head inscribed 'J M 1795'. East end C14 double lancet with flamboyant tracery and coved reveal. South side has, to east of porch, C14 ogee-headed triple lancet with intersecting tracery. West end has late C18 untraceryed chamfered triple lancet with coved reveal. South porch has 2 diagonal buttresses and moulded coped gable incorporating restored sundial. C14 double chamfered doorway with octagonal shafts and capitals. Interior has 2 stone benches, C19 common rafter roof and re-set C16 span beam and boss. Early C13 moulded round-headed doorway with fillets, double ringed shafts with leaf capitals, and hood mould with fleurons. C17 framed and panelled door with late C18 panelled furniture. Double chamfered C13 tower arch has octagonal responds and stiff leaf and crocketed capitals, and hood mould. Early C13 north arcade, 2 bays, has round piers and responds with water holding bases and stiff leaf capitals. Moulded arches with keeled and filleted roll mouldings. Similar, plainer south arcade, mid C13, has responds with nailhead. C19 principal rafter roof with restored mask corbels. North and south aisles have C19 roofs with arch braces on re-set corbels. North aisle has blocked doorway and stained glass east window c.1920. To its right, arched moulded C19 fireplace with crest in roundel. South aisle has to east, foiled moulded piscina with damaged hood mould. Above, remains of C14 wall paintings and window with fragments of C14 stained glass. West end has re-set cross shaft in window sill. Memorial chapel at west end has 3 bay Classical wooden screen with central double doors and metal bars. Chancel has early C14 double keeled and filleted moulded arch with hood mould and octagonal responds with moulded capitals. Early C20 Perpendicular style traceried oak screen. North side has to east moulded C13 blocked doorway and to its right, small aumbry. East end has Perpendicular style altar, reredos, wall panels and candlesticks, early C20, and stained glass window, 1926. South side has damaged fillet moulded C13 piscina and similar triple sedilia, both with hood moulds. Eastern and low side windows have C15 stained glass fragments. Low pitched C19 roof with cambered tie beams, bosses and arch braces on plain corbels. Fittings include linenfold panelled oak desks, pulpit, lectern and stalls, c.1918. Plain C19 benches. Fluted font on baluster stem, 1842. C18 chest with bracket feet. Wardrobe, 1893, assembled from former roof timbers. Memorials include large pedimented Classical marble tablet by W.G. Nicholl, 1829, with brackets carrying cushion and inscribed open book. Re-set slate

tablet with painted heraldry to John Turner, 1753. Slate tablet to Selina Frewen, 1784. Corniced marble and slate tablet, 1791. 3 mid C19 marble and slate tablets to Frewen-Turner family. Marble and slate tablet, 1879. Painted slate tablets signed 'Burton' 1819 and 1832. Brass, 1866. Green stone cross, 1911.

- 3.2 The church is within Cold Overton Conservation Area, designated in March 1974.

4. Historical Background

- 4.1 A settlement at Cold Overton is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Overtone*, meaning farmstead or village on a ridge. The prefix *Cald(e)* documented from the early 13th century onwards, translates as bleak or exposed and reflects the township's high, ridge-top location (Morgan 1979, 36:1; Cox 2009, 151).
- 4.2 The Domesday Book entry includes reference to a priest indicating the existence of a church at that date, although the present church is 13th century and later; Pevsner provides a description of the building (Morgan 1979, 36:1; Pevsner and Williamson 1992, 133).
- 4.3 The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) includes an entry for the church (MLE11558), which is within the historic settlement core (MLE16233). The church entry repeats the listing description.
- 4.4 Various prehistoric, Roman and medieval finds are recorded in the vicinity of the village on the HER, including a Roman coin dug up in a garden near the rectory in 1959 (MLE8000).

5. Research Aims and Objectives

- 5.1 Regional research aims are defined in *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012), which builds on an earlier resource assessment and research agenda: *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006).
- 5.2 The archaeological investigation has the potential to contribute towards themes defined in Section 6.7 of *East Midlands Heritage...* which provides a research agenda for the High Medieval period (1066-1485), specifically aspects covered in paragraph 7.5: *Religion*; and also Section 6.8 which provides a research agenda for the post-

medieval period (1485-1750), specifically para. 8.6: *Ecclesiastical structures, estates and burials* (Knight, Vyner and Allen 2012, 94, 108).

5.3 The specific objectives of the archaeological investigation are:

- To identify the presence/absence of buried archaeological remains within the areas affected by groundwork associated with the approved plans
- To establish the character, extent and date range of any buried archaeological remains affected by the groundwork
- To record any archaeological remains affected by the groundwork
- To interpret any such remains within the context of the known current and previous use of the development site and the wider area
- To produce a report and archive of any results

6. Scope of the Work

- 6.1 Provision of a new mains water supply will involve the excavation of a trench on a roughly west-east alignment on the north side of the church, linking up with the main supply under Main Street, as shown in Figure 2.
- 6.2 Surface water drainage work will involve the excavation of trenches for drains carrying water away from rainwater downpipes to three new soakaways on the north-east, south-east and south-west sides of the church, as shown in Figure 3.
- 6.3 Foul water drainage work will involve excavation for a drainage trench and trench arch drain system located to the east of the church, serving a new WC in the north aisle, as shown in Figure 3.

7. Method Statement

- 7.1 An accession number will be requested prior to the commencement of the project.
- 7.2 Provision will be made for monitoring visits by the Diocesan Archaeological Advisor and County Planning Archaeologist on request.
- 7.3 Operations that may impact upon buried archaeological remains include excavation for the new mains water supply, soakaways, trench arch drain and drainage pipes.

- 7.4 The impact of the development on any buried archaeological remains that are affected will be mitigated through the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation, recording, interpretation and dissemination of results.

Excavation and recording

- 7.5 Archaeological Attendance will involve the continuous supervision of the ground work by an experienced professional archaeologist.
- 7.6 The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to their work programme.
- 7.7 A mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket will be used for the groundwork under archaeological supervision.
- 7.8 If any archaeological remains are present these will be investigated and recorded as follows:
- 7.9 Any archaeological remains that are encountered will be hand cleaned and planned.
- 7.10 Samples of any archaeological remains located will be hand excavated and recorded to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence, where present.
- 7.11 As a minimum, archaeological features will be sample excavated as follows: pits will be 50% excavated; structural features will be 100% excavated and linear features will be 10% excavated, in addition to which terminals and intersections will be excavated.
- 7.12 Descriptions of all archaeological strata or features excavated or exposed will be recorded. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared on drafting film at an appropriate scale, typically 1:20 or 1:50 and tied into an overall site plan related to the National Grid. This will be supplemented by a plan at an appropriate scale (typically 1:100 or 1:200) showing the location of the area(s) investigated.
- 7.13 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20, levelled and tied in to the Ordnance Survey datum where possible.
- 7.14 A photographic record of the investigations will be made illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted. The photographic record will be made using a

digital SLR camera in accordance with current guidelines for digital photography issued by Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team.

Human remains

- 7.15 Any articulated human remains that are encountered will be left *in situ* and will only be removed under the provisions of a Ministry of Justice Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations and the *Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England* second edition (2017) jointly produced by the APABE, Historic England and the Church of England. Any disarticulated human remains will be collected for reburial within the churchyard.

Finds

- 7.16 All finds recovered during the investigation are the property of the landowner. On completion of the archaeological post-excavation programme the landowner will arrange for them to be deposited with a museum or other suitable repository.
- 7.17 All finds will be exposed, carefully lifted by hand, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC) *First Aid For Finds*, 1998 (or subsequent editions) and the recipient museum's guidelines.

Treasure

- 7.18 All finds that may constitute 'treasure' under the *Treasure Act* (1996) will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner. Where removal cannot take place on the same working day as discovery, suitable security will be taken to protect the finds from theft.

Archaeological science and environmental sampling

- 7.19 Where appropriate, programmes of archaeological science and environmental sampling will be commissioned, sufficient to provide an appropriate record of the palaeo-environmental significance of the affected heritage assets. The results of this work will be presented in the final report. The following guidance will be followed as appropriate: Archaeometallurgy (2015), Environmental Archaeology (2011), Dendrochronology (1998), Geoarchaeology (2015), and X-radiography of Archaeological Metalwork (2006). All of these are available through the Historic England Guidance section of the HELM website (www.helm.org.uk).
- 7.20 Where appropriate, environmental samples will be taken from features to enable their date, nature, extent and condition to be described and analysed. Samples will be taken from the fills of features where organic materials may be preserved, such as pits, ditches and other deposits, especially if waterlogged. Sampling will follow guidelines produced by English Heritage (now Historic England) *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*, second edition (2011).

8. Preservation *in situ* and contingency provisions

- 8.1 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the archaeological investigation there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the Client and the Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council.
- 8.2 The discovery of significant archaeological deposits or substantial structural remains requiring preservation *in situ* will entail detailed discussion between all relevant parties. Where structures, features or finds appear to merit preservation *in situ*, they will be adequately protected from deterioration. Where design modification is not practically possible the developer must allow sufficient time and financial resources for the full excavation, conservation, and curation of the archaeological resource before development continues.

9. Post-excavation programme

- 9.1 Following completion of the fieldwork a programme of post-excavation analysis and reporting will be implemented. This will include the cataloguing and analysis of any finds and environmental samples, preparation of the site archive and its subsequent deposition.

10. Report and archive

- 10.1 A report on the results of the archaeological investigation will be prepared following completion the fieldwork.
- 10.2 Copies of the report will be issued to the Client and/or their Agent, the County Planning Archaeologist and the Historic Environment Record in pdf/A format.
- 10.3 The finalised report will be uploaded onto the on-line OASIS database: <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>.
- 10.4 A full and ordered archive as defined in Brown (2008) will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service in accordance with their *Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire County Council Museum Collections* (2014) normally within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn, survey and photographic records, artefacts and samples relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

11. Publication

- 11.1 A report on the results of the investigation will be submitted for publication in a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. The length and content of the report will reflect the significance of the archaeological discoveries.

12. Operational matters

- 12.1 The client's agent has indicated that appropriate resources have been allocated for the completion of the archaeological investigation and recording.
- 12.2 The proposed start date for the work is in the spring or summer of 2018.
- 12.3 The archaeological investigation will be undertaken by Neil Finn, a professional archaeologist and historic building surveyor with over 25 years' experience working in Leicestershire and the East Midlands. Identification and reporting of finds will be undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced specialists.
- 12.4 All work will be carried out in accordance with professional guidelines and standards set down by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA):
- *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (revised 2014);
 - *CIfA Code of Conduct* (revised 2014);

13. Health and safety

- 13.1 All work will be conducted in compliance with the *Health and Safety at Work etc Act* (1974). The guidance set out in *Health and Safety in Field Archaeology* (SCAUM 1997) will also be followed.
- 13.2 A risk assessment will be made prior to the commencement of work on site and will be updated as necessary during the course of the fieldwork. Safe methods of working will be employed taking due account of all potential risks and hazards.

14. Bibliography

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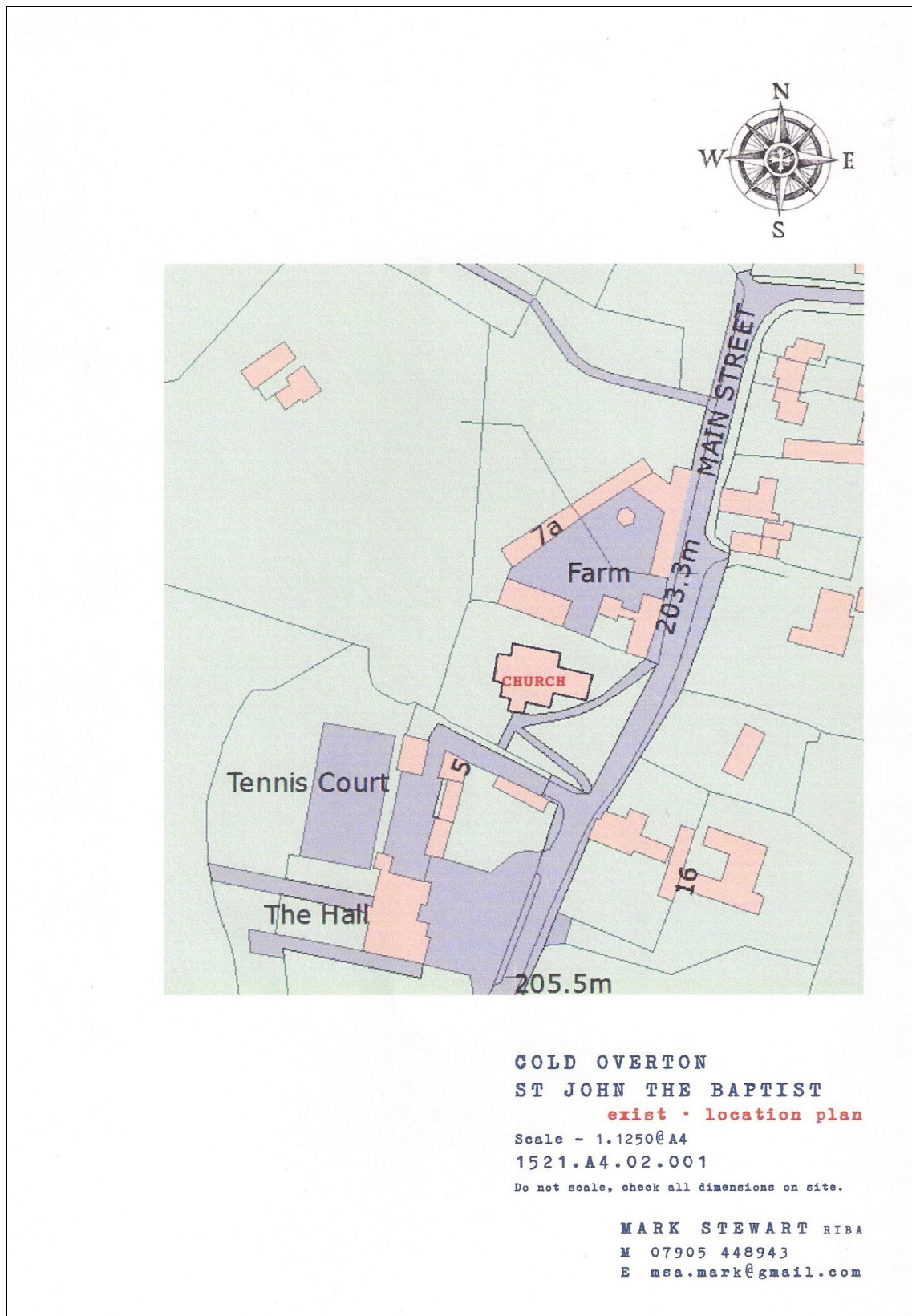


Figure 1. Location Plan (supplied by Mark Stewart).

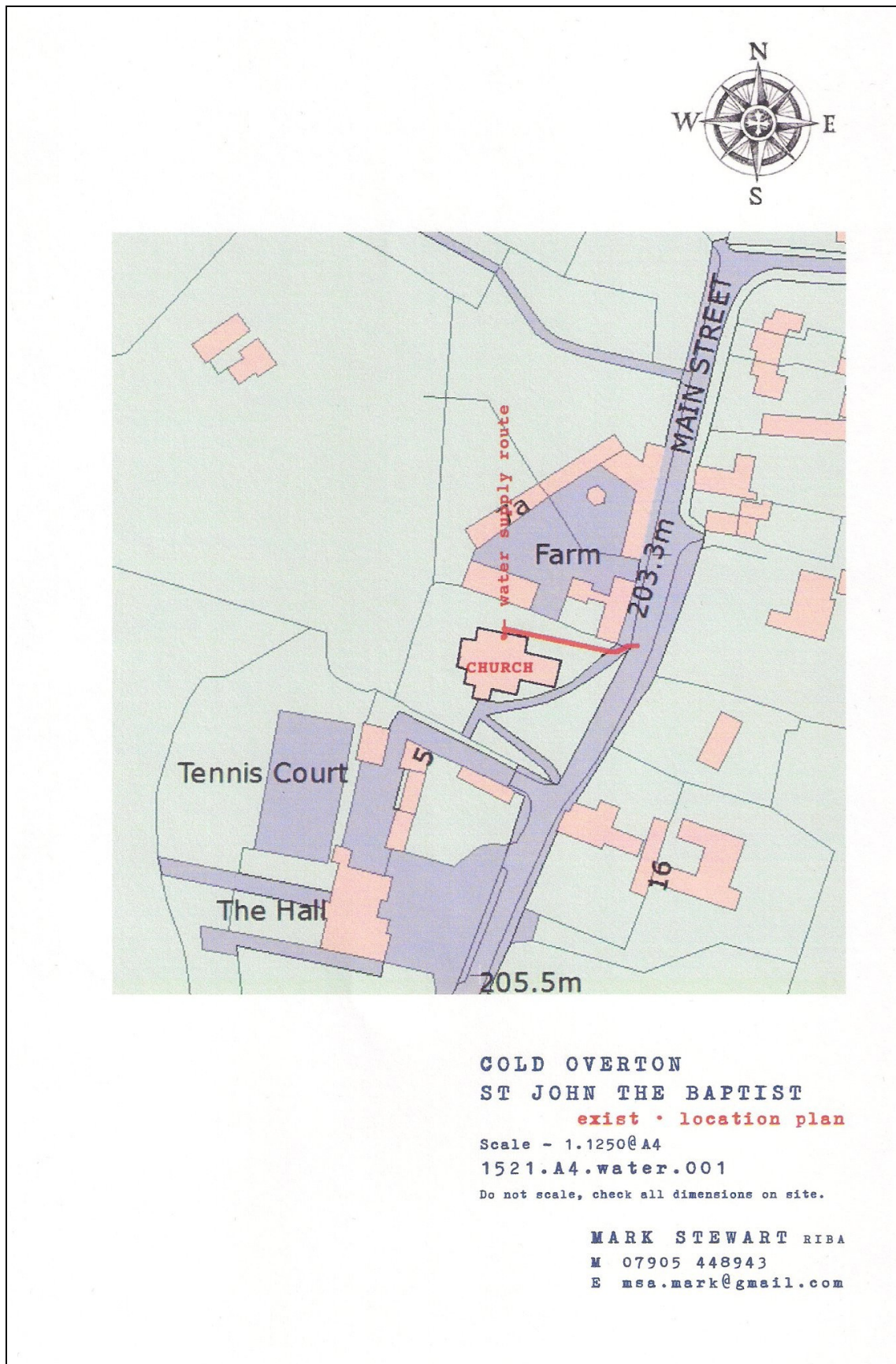


Figure 2. Plan showing proposed location of main water supply.

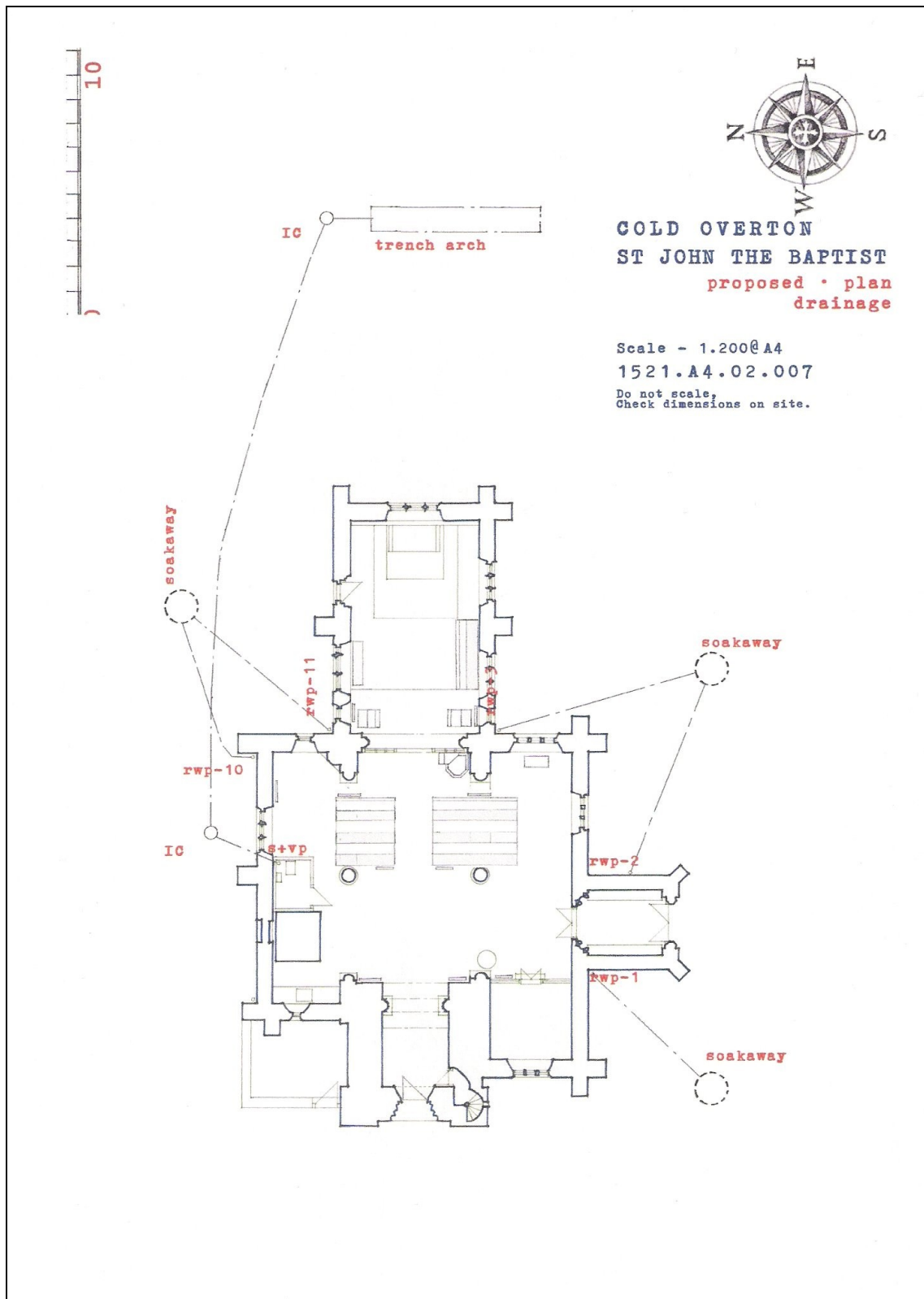


Figure 3. Plan showing proposed location of trench arch, soakaways and drains.