

Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology

Project PD24-029

Report 2079

Corwen Church




Archaeological Monitoring and Recording



Archaeoleg Clwyd-Powys

Heneb

Clwyd-Powys Archaeology

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CRYNHODEB ANHECHNEGOL

Cynhaliwyd rhaglen o fonitro a chofnodi archaeolegol gan Heneb: Archaeoleg Clwyd-Powys (ACP) yn Eglwys Sant Mael a Sant Sulien, Corwen yn 2024 yn ystod aildrefnu tu mewn i'r eglwys a gwaith allanol cysylltiedig. Gwnaethpwyd y gwaith ar ran Ardal Genhadaeth Glyn y Groes yr Eglwys yng Nghymru, a chawsant eu goruchwyllo gan Gydweithwyr Geraint Roberts, gan weithredu fel Ymgynghorydd Pensaer ac Adeiladau Hanesyddol.

Ychydig o arwyddocâd archaeolegol a welwyd yn ystod y gwaith o fewn yr eglwys, dim ond nifer o furiau isel cefnogol a oedd yn gysylltiedig â chreu llawr crog yn y tu mewn ac yn ôl pob tebyg o ddyddiad y 19eg ganrif. Ym mynwent yr eglwys, nodwyd rhai o briddoedd gwreiddiol y fynwent ar ochr ddeheuol Festri'r De, lle cawsant eu torri i mewn i pan gafodd y rhan hon o'r eglwys ei hadeiladu, ond mewn mannau eraill tarfwyd ar y cloddio i gyd pan osodwyd y draen yn wreiddiol yn yr 20fed ganrif mae'n debyg. Roedd hi hefyd yn amlwg bod cofadeiliau yn y rhan o'r fynwent lle osodwyd y draen ddim yn y fan a'r lle, a'u bod wedi'u ail-leoli.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out by Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology (CPA) at St Mael's and St Sulien's Church, Corwen in 2024 during the reordering of the interior of the church and associated external works. The works were carried out on behalf of the Valle Crucis Mission Area of the Church in Wales, and were overseen by Geraint Roberts Associates, acting as the Architect and Historic Buildings Consultant.

Little of archaeological significance was observed during the works within the church, only a number of parallel sleeper walls related to the creation of a suspended floor in the interior and most probably of 19th-century date. In the churchyard, some of the original churchyard soils were identified on the south side of the South Vestry, where they had been cut into when this part of the church was constructed, but elsewhere the excavations were all in ground disturbed when the drain was originally installed, probably in the 20th century. It was also evident that monuments in the part of the graveyard traversed by the drain were not in-situ and had been repositioned.

1 Introduction

- 1.1. A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out by Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology at St Mael and St Sulien's Church, Corwen (Fig. 1, NGR SJ 0789 4341) in 2024 during the reordering of the interior of the church and associated external works. The work was carried out on behalf of the Valle Crucis Mission Area of the Church in Wales, and was overseen by Geraint Roberts Associates, acting as the Architect and Historic Buildings Consultant.

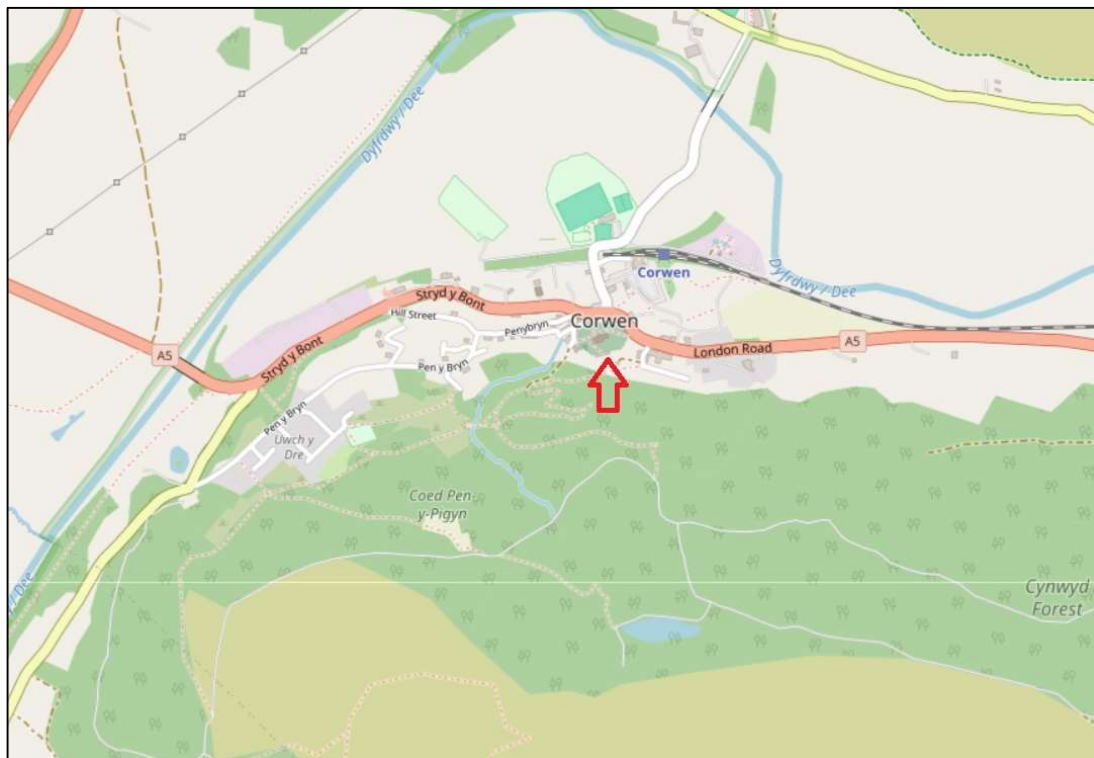


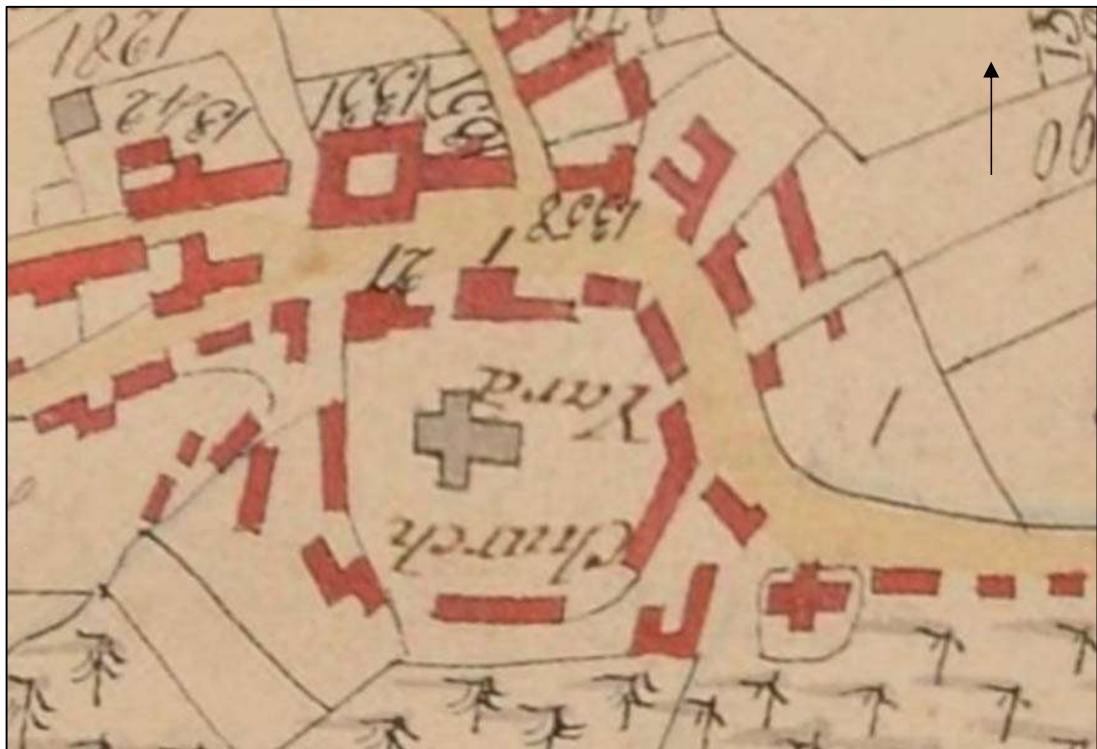
Fig. 1: St Mael and St Sulien's Church location

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- 1.2. The reordering was the subject of a Faculty granted by the Diocese of St Asaph (Online Faculty System Ref 2022-005544) which was approved by the Chancellor on 16th November 2021. The faculty is an 'ecclesiastical licence' which gives permission to make physical alterations to churches and churchyards within the jurisdiction of the Church in Wales and is their mechanism for controlling and approving works and changes to church property. This is a permission system which seeks to carefully consider proposals before changes are made and includes provision for expert advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and external consultation before the diocesan chancellor arrives at a decision. The external consultation runs in parallel and is governed by the local planning authority, in this case Denbighshire County Council, according to their principles regarding developments within their area, with expert guidance provided by their appointed advisors. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was compiled by Heneb in April 2024, designed to comply with the conditions of permission to carry out the reordering and detailing the archaeological work required to mitigate the potential impacts of the proposed works on the archaeological resource of the development area (Appendix 1).
- 1.3. The relevant works took place between July and December 2024, with this report being written in January 2025.

2 Historical Background

- 2.1. This section provides a brief summary of the history of the church, to enable the findings of the monitoring and recording to be placed in a wider context.
- 2.2. The church of Ss Mael and Sulien lies at the centre of the small town of Corwen in the valley of the Dee some 9 miles west of Llangollen. The earliest reference to a church here occurs in 1222, but it is believed to be an early medieval foundation and to have been a mother church for the surrounding area.
- 2.3. The nave and chancel of the current church appear to be the earliest parts of the fabric, and are probably 13th century in date (Cadw listing description), though there is evidence that the nave itself was built in two phases, as there is a clear straight-joint immediately east of the porch. The medieval structure had a west tower and added north and south transepts, with the present tower probably being a replacement of an earlier tower, perhaps in the 14th century. The church underwent major restoration in 1777, when new windows were installed, a plaster ceiling inserted, the north porch added and the north transept repaired. A further restoration took place in 1871, when the south transept was demolished and an aisle was built along that side of the church. The vestry to the south of the tower was added in 1898, and the tower was restored in 1907.
- 2.4. The main roof is late 17th-century in date, and significant fittings within the church include an early font, a 14th century priest's effigy and a pillar stone used as a door lintel. A monolith of putative prehistoric date is built into the porch wall.



*Fig. 2: The 1840 Tithe map of Corwen, showing the then cruciform church and the churchyard
(Reproduced with the permission of Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru – The National Library of Wales)*

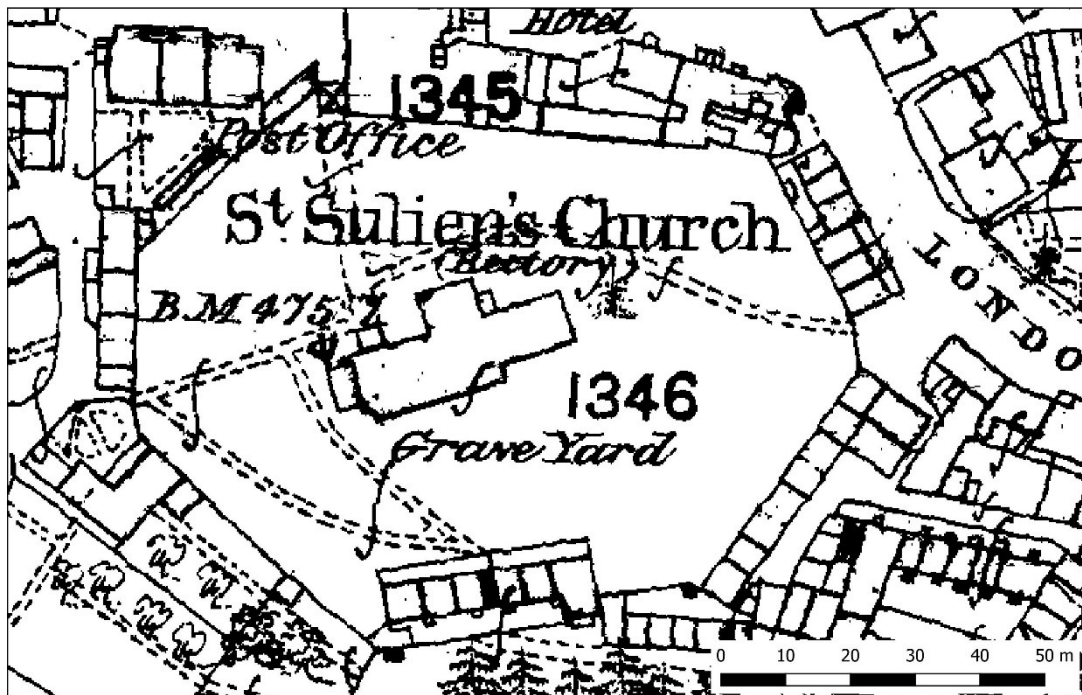


Fig. 3: The first edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1875 (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

- 2.5. In the churchyard there is the shaft of a fine 12th-century cross and a range of grave memorials, many dating back to the 18th century. Some of these have clearly been repositioned, including a significant number which form a path leading to the main entrance of the church from the east. The churchyard is surrounded by buildings and its shape has almost certainly been modified from an early sub-circular form by their encroachment over the centuries.

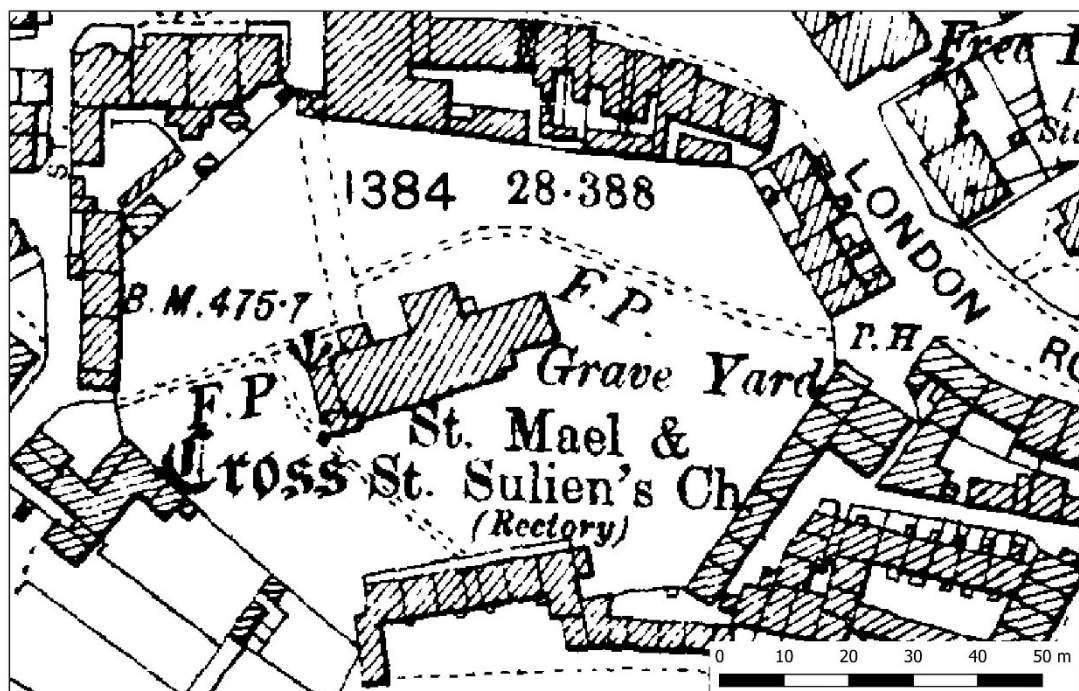


Fig. 4: The second edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map of 1901 (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

- 2.6. The earliest cartographic sources covering the area have insufficient detail to be useful, though the Tithe map of 1840 (Fig 2) shows the church as being cruciform prior to the demolition of the south transept in 1871. It is worth noting that the first edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map (Fig 3) omits the name of St Mael though it does appear on the second edition map of 1901 (Fig 4), implying that the current dedication is a relatively recent one. This is apparently supported by 17th and 18th-century sources which only mention St Sulien.
- 2.7. Memorial plaques indicate that the south aisle was built in 1871 and repositioned in 1898, at which time the south vestry was built. The tower was restored in 1907.

3 Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

- 3.1. The archaeological monitoring and recording was conducted between July and December 2024 in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2023) *Standard and Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*.
- 3.2. The monitoring in the interior took place at the south-west corner of the nave and at the west end of the south aisle, in advance of alterations to the internal layout of the church designed to improve access to the building. In part, the internal works were associated with the provision of new toilet facilities in the south vestry, the installation of which involved the modification of an existing surface water drain in the adjoining churchyard, to allow it to accept foul water. The necessary repairs to the drain led to a number of excavations in the churchyard, which were also monitored; all of these are identified on Fig. 12 at the rear of this report.
- 3.3. Within the church, the works in the south-west corner of the nave (see Fig. 7) were carried out to provide a new kitchen space, which involved the removal of the existing cemented tiled floor (see Figs 5 and 6), and its replacement by a wooden frame with plywood covering on top of which a new floor was created. In the south aisle, a section of the tiled floor was removed to allow for the construction of new timber steps and the provision of a portable, vertical platform lift, providing access to the new toilets in the south vestry.
- 3.4. Little of archaeological significance was observed during the works within the church, only three parallel sleeper walls formed of lime-mortared random local stone (see Figs 5 - 7). In the nave, the area between the two walls was partially filled with rubble, resting on top of a soil floor which appeared at a depth of 0.35m below floor level. No further excavation was required here so the soil floor was left in-situ and its nature was not investigated; no evidence of underlying layers or features was seen.
- 3.5. In the south aisle a further mortared stone sleeper wall, averaging 0.35m wide, was found at a depth of 0.2m below floor level (see Fig. 7). This was roughly faced on its north side, with the facing continuing to the east of the excavated area where a void could be seen beneath the wooden base of a suspended floor; where excavated the area to the north of the wall was filled by loose material containing stones interspersed with slate and mortar fragments. The wall was more irregular on its south side, where it appeared to have been built against a silty deposit containing slate, stone and lime mortar fragments; these being covered by a thin layer of gritty brown silt on which the tiled floor had been laid. Excavation in the south aisle was terminated at the depth required (c. 0.3m) for the construction of the pad to support the mobile lift, so the nature of these deposits was not investigated further. It seems likely that this material and the sleeper wall were related to the restoration of the church and the construction and flooring of the south aisle in 1871, before which this area fell outside the church.

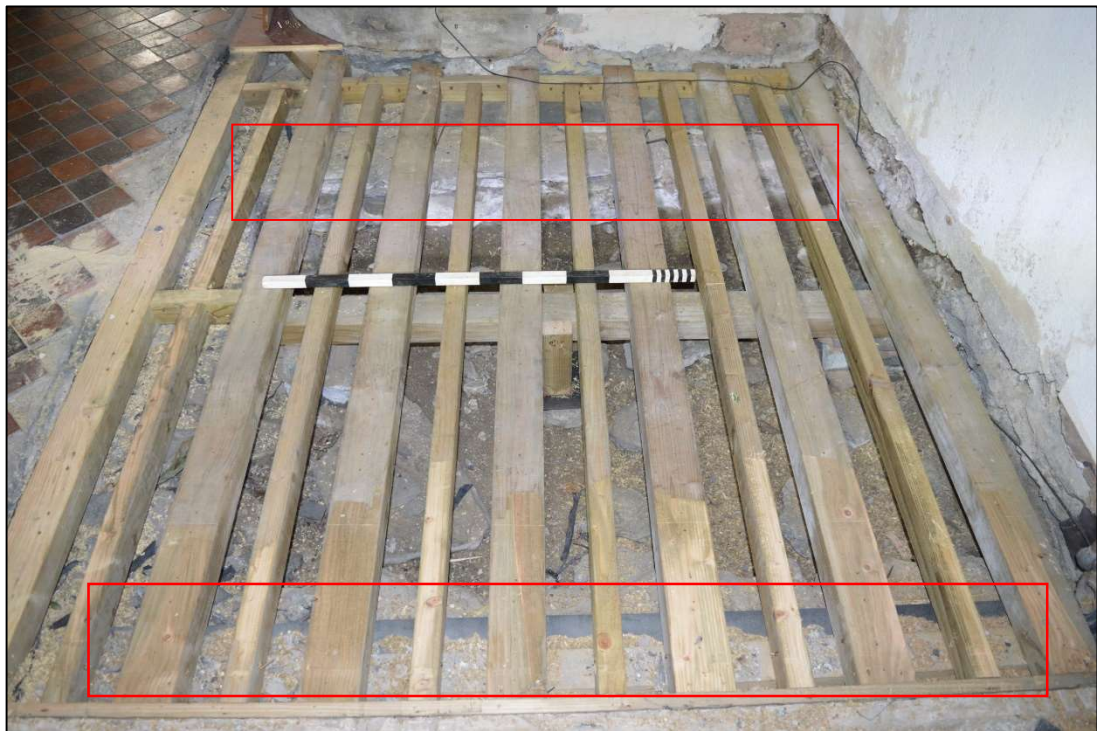


Fig. 5: Sleeper walls (highlighted in red) aligned east/west in the south-west part of the nave, beneath modern timber joists. Taken from the north (Photo: Heneb PD24-029_004)

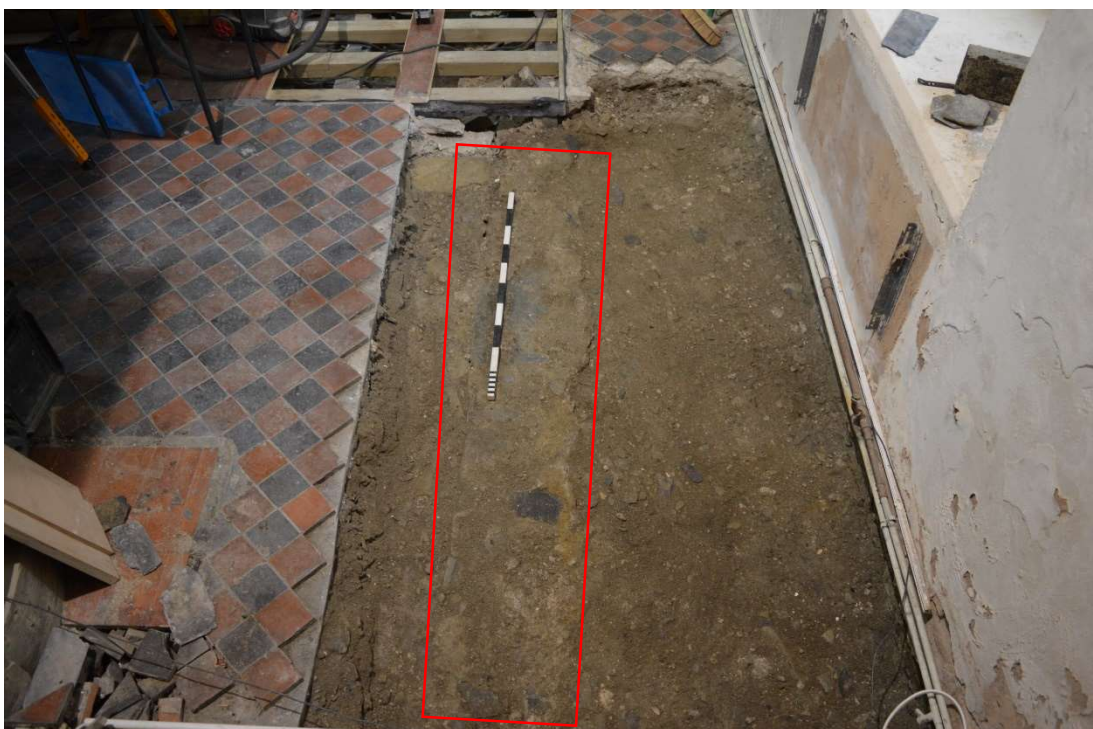


Fig. 6: The sleeper wall (highlighted in red) below the floor in the south aisle after excavation, taken from the west. The deposit to the south (right) of the wall is probably related to the 1871 restoration. (Photo: Heneb PD24-029_018)

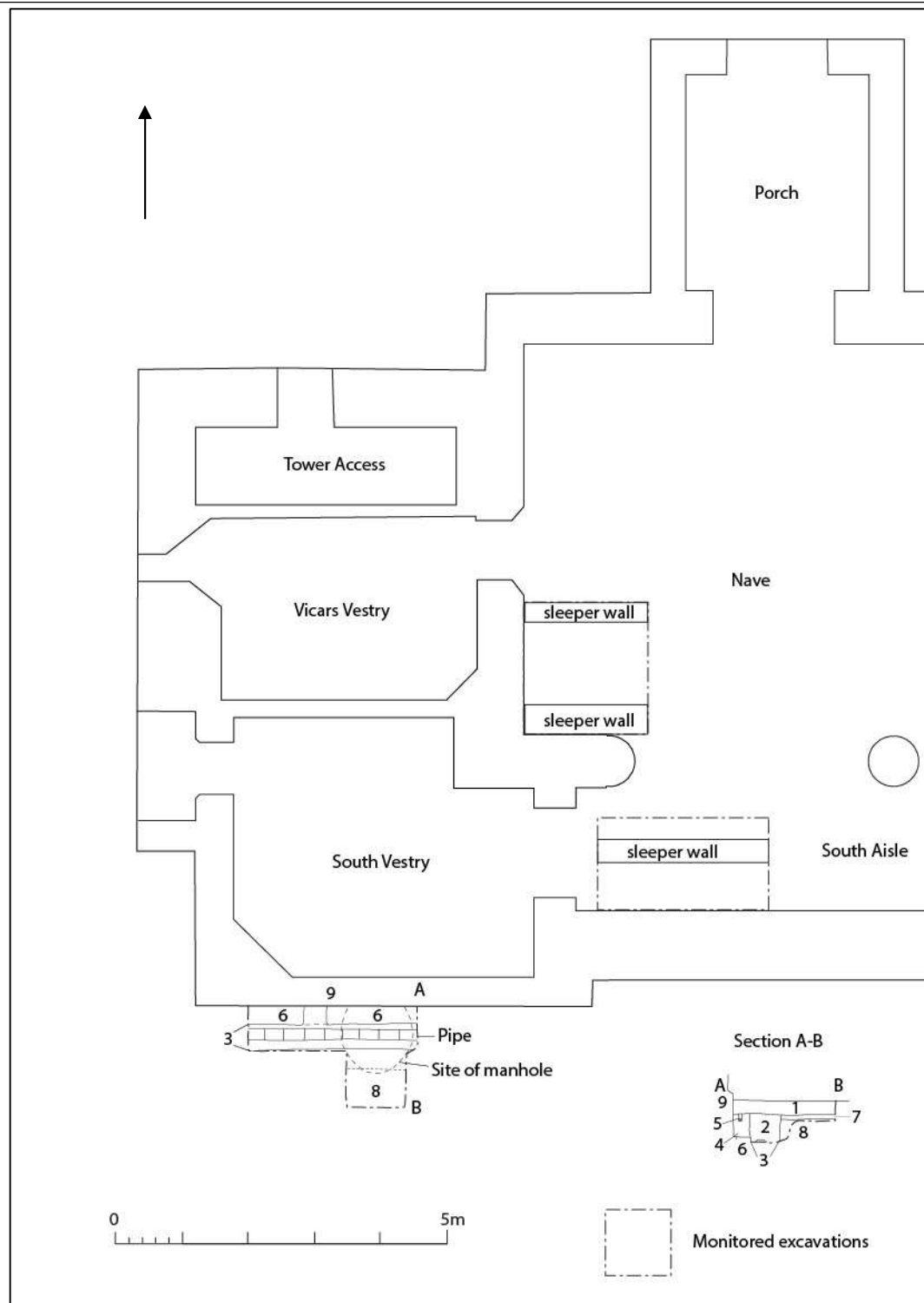


Fig. 7: Excavations monitored within the Church and outside the south vestry

- 3.6. On the outside of the church, to the south of the south vestry, a small area excavation was carried out (Figs 7 and 8), to identify the line of the drainage pipe to be converted to accept foul water from the new toilet facility and allow the pipe connections to be made by creating a manhole. Once excavated the area was cleaned and examined archaeologically, prior to recording; the earliest deposits were found adjoining the south vestry wall (9) and comprised a layer of brown clay silt (6), at a depth of 0.55m below the ground surface, that contained a small amount of bone. This no doubt represented a typical graveyard soil, a narrow strip of

which had survived later disturbance. The bone was left in-situ and covered once the excavations were completed and the pipe connections made.

- 3.7. Above layer 6 was a dark grey silt (4), 0.35m thick, through which a narrow trench (5) had been cut for a modern plastic water pipe to be laid. Both layers 4 and 6 had also been cut by a trench (3), approximately 0.5m wide, whose fill (2) contained the ceramic drain to be converted and a mixture of mid-grey stone, gravel, brick and tile. On the south side of trench 3, there was a deposit of grey-brown gravelly silt (8), at least 0.3m thick, covered by a layer of mortar (7), 0.06m thick, which probably indicates one of the phases of rebuilding. All of these deposits were covered by a layer of loose grey-brown silt (1), approximately 0.2m thick, containing modern finds.
- 3.8. The structure of the south vestry wall comprised a foundation of angular slaty shale, at least 0.5m thick, capped by a dressed stone plinth, 0.15m high. Above this, the wall of the south vestry comprised dressed slaty shale, stepped back inside the line of the foundation by about 0.1m to match the plinth. The structure was built in 1898 and it appears that local stone was used as similar material has been observed in quarries near Caer Drewyn, about 1km to the north-east.



Fig. 8: The drain on the south side of the south vestry, showing the narrow strip of in-situ deposits (6) abutting the wall (9). Taken from the south (Photo: Heneb PD24-029_007)



Fig. 9: Excavation onto the line of the drain dated 25/07/2024. Taken from the west (Photo: Heneb PD24-029_011)

- 3.9. In addition to the excavation on the south side of the south vestry, a series of three further excavations were examined in the churchyard near the eastern end of the Church (see Figs 9-11, and 12 at the rear of this report). These were designed to investigate the condition of the drain at points where blockages or breaks had been identified by a camera investigation and were hand-dug by the staff of the principal contractor.
- 3.10. In all cases, the excavations were in ground which had already been disturbed by the installation of the drain, which took a slightly meandering course through the churchyard (see Fig. 12) at an average depth of about 0.5m. What was curious about the route taken was its relationship to the monuments, most notably for the eastern excavation (Fig. 11), where it passed underneath a headstone dated 1900 and through the middle of the apparent grave. This seemed a highly improbable arrangement, given the likely 20th-century date of the drain; the only reasonable interpretation being that the monuments in this area had been repositioned during a phase of reordering in the churchyard, something which was readily apparent on the north side of the church.



Fig. 10: Excavation onto the line of the drain dated 01/11/2024. Taken from the east (Photo: Heneb PD24-029_022)



Fig. 11: Excavation onto the line of the drain dated 05/12/2024, showing the pipe passing beneath a headstone dated 1900. Taken from the north (Photo: Heneb PD24-029_022)

4 Conclusions

- 4.1. The works covered by the programme of monitoring and recording were largely limited to features and materials of 19th-century or later date. Within the church these comprised a series of parallel sleeper walls, whose function was to support a suspended floor within the nave and south aisle of the church, readily datable as the latter was only built in 1871.
- 4.2. The earliest deposits were seen in an excavation to the south of the south vestry, where a narrow strip of typical churchyard soil was seen adjoining the south vestry wall. Some human remains were seen in this material but were left in-situ after recording and subsequently covered by backfilled material once the toilet outlet had been completed.
- 4.3. With the exception of the excavations within the church and adjoining the south vestry, all of the remaining works within the churchyard involved ground which had already been disturbed by the installation of the drainage pipe, most probably during the 20th century. No significant features or finds were recovered from any of these excavations but it did seem to be apparent that the memorials on the south side of the Church, towards its east end, had been reordered in the past and were not necessarily related to sub-surface deposits.

5 Sources

Cartographic sources















1840 Tithe map for Corwen Parish


1875 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st edition Merionethshire 08.13

1901 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 2nd edition Merionethshire 08.13

6 Archive Selection Strategy

PD24-029 St Mael and St Sulien Church, Corwen (SJ 07890 43410) Archaeological Mitigation Works 09/01/2025 Selection Strategy v2.0	
Project Management	
Project Manager	Tim Malim
Project Supervisor	Richard Hankinson
Archives Manager	Sophie Edwards
Project Stakeholders	
Project Lead / Project Assurance	Bob Silvester DAC Archaeologist/Mark Walters, Development Control Archaeologist for Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology
Client / Landowner	Vicar and Wardens of St Mael and St Sulien Church Representative Body of the Church of Wales
Other	Geraint Roberts (Conservation Architect)
Collecting Institutions	
Regional HER	Clwyd-Powys
HER Enquiry Number	N/A
HER Event PRN	215642
Digital Archive Repository	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
Documentary Archive Repository	N/A
Finds Archive Repository	N/A
Museum Accession Number	N/A

Digital Project Data			
Project sub-folders	Data	Retained	Selected for Archive
 Admin			
 H&S - RAMS	Risk Assessment	Y	N
 WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation	Y	Y (as report appendix 1)
 Client Data	Planning documents/other files provided by the client.	Y	N
 Correspondence	Correspondence records relevant to the project	Y	N
 Drafting	Working site drawings/illustrations	Y	N
 Finds data	Finds catalogues/specialist reports etc	N/A	N/A
 GIS data	Survey data	N/A	N/A
 Metadata	Metadata report for all files submitted as part of the archive.	Y	Y
 Photography	28 digital photographs (.tif)	N	Y
 Report	HENEB Report 2079 (.docx/.pdf)	Y	Y
 Report Illustrations	Illustrations generated for inclusion within the project report	Y	N
 Research Data	Research data – always secondary sources and available elsewhere	Y	N
 Site data	Scanned site records 4 site visit and 1 trench recording forms 1 drawing	Y	Y

 Temporary	Temporary storage for temporary files – always deleted at project completion	N	N
Physical Project Data (Documentary)			
Not applicable (N/A)			
	Quantity	Retained by HENEB	Selected for Archive
Context register	N/A	N/A	N/A
Drawings register	N/A	N/A	N/A
Finds register	N/A	N/A	N/A
Levels register	N/A	N/A	N/A
Photo register	N/A	N/A	N/A
Context sheets	N/A	N/A	N/A
Finds/samples record	N/A	N/A	N/A
Skeleton record forms	N/A	N/A	N/A
Staffing record form	N/A	N/A	N/A
Trench record forms	N/A	N/A	N/A
Watching brief forms	N/A	N/A	N/A
A1 plans	N/A	N/A	N/A
A2 plans	N/A	N/A	N/A
A3 plans	N/A	N/A	N/A
A4 plans	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A

Physical Project Data (Materials)

Not applicable (N/A)

**Finds Deposition
Agreement obtained**
Archive Repository
Accession Number

N/A
N/A
N/A

Pottery/Ceramics

	<i>collected</i>	<i>processed</i>	<i>catalogued</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>conserved</i>	<i>discarded</i>
Prehistoric	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Roman	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Medieval	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Post-medieval	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Modern	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Undated	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
CBM	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Clay Pipe	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other (specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Stone

	<i>collected</i>	<i>processed</i>	<i>catalogued</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>conserved</i>	<i>discarded</i>
Stone Artefacts	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Roofing Tile/Slate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Building Materials	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flint/Chert	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other (specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Metalwork

	<i>collected</i>	<i>processed</i>	<i>catalogued</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>conserved</i>	<i>discarded</i>
Ironwork	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Copper Alloy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lead	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Silver	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Metalworking Residues	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other (specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Bone/Animal Remains

	<i>collected</i>	<i>processed</i>	<i>catalogued</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>conserved</i>	<i>discarded</i>
Animal Bone	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Human Skeletal Material	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Shell	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other (specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Samples

	<i>collected</i>	<i>processed</i>	<i>catalogued</i>	<i>specialist</i>	<i>conserved</i>	<i>discarded</i>
Bulk soil	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Charcoal	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other (specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Finds Catalogues**Box Catalogue**

N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A

Number of boxes

N/A

7 Appendix 1: Heneb WSI

1 Introduction

- 1.1. Heneb: Clwyd-Powys Archaeology has been instructed by the Vicar and Wardens of St Mael and St Sulien Church to submit a proposal for undertaking an archaeological mitigation during a programme of improvements to St Mael and St Sulien Church, Corwen, Denbighshire (NGR: SJ 07890 43410, Fig. 1). A detailed plan for the proposed development is shown in Fig 2.
- 1.2. The work is the subject of a Faculty (Online Faculty System Ref 2022-005544) which was approved by the Chancellor on 16th November 2021. The faculty is an 'ecclesiastical licence' which gives permission to make physical alterations to churches and churchyards within the jurisdiction of the Church in Wales and is their mechanism for controlling and approving works and changes to church property. This is a permission system which seeks to carefully consider proposals before changes are made and includes provision for expert advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and external consultation before the diocesan chancellor arrives at a decision. The latter runs in parallel and is governed by the local planning authority according to their principles regarding developments within their area, with expert guidance provided by their appointed advisors on various matters.
- 1.3. This Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been designed to comply with the conditions of approval for the planning permission and details the archaeological work that will be required to mitigate the potential impacts of the proposed works on the archaeological resource of the development area. The archaeological curator for the project, who has overseen the proposals to date is Bob Silvester, the Diocesan Archaeologist to the DAC.

Planning background

- 1.4. The archaeology condition included in the Petition for Faculty Approval states;

The church and its Architect to appoint an accredited Archaeologist in their capacity as a heritage specialist to undertake all heritage recording during the works that constitute the present programme of works, internally and externally. A detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) must be submitted by the Archaeologist to the DAC for approval, prior to the commencement of any work covered by this faculty. The person(s) actually carrying out the work detailed in the WSI should preferably be a registered member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) or at the very least be employed by a CifA-registered organisation and should be familiar with and must follow the Chartered Institute's varied Standards and Guidance. It would be preferable, too, that the Archaeologist has knowledge and experience of working with the ecclesiastical heritage. The Site Contractor must be made aware of the need to work closely with the Archaeologist during all on-site works; to this end the Contractor should expect to give the Archaeologist reasonable notice as to when they intend to start on the site. Sufficient time should be allowed during the on-site works for the Archaeologist to record any significant remains that are exposed, including buried gravestones. The Archaeologist shall also be responsible for collecting any human bone, fragmentary or complete, which is dug up during the on-site works, following the obligatory legal procedures. It is anticipated that the Architect will apply for a DoJ licence in advance of the commencement of works, although the application may be delegated to the Archaeologist. In conjunction with the incumbent, the Archaeologist should make an appropriate decision as to how any human remains, complete or fragmentary are re-buried. Upon completion of the recording work and watching brief, the Archaeologist must produce a written report on the findings, regardless of whether these are positive or negative. The report should be submitted to the secretary of the DAC for ratification and will be lodged with the diocese, the regional Historic Environment

Record and will be made publicly available on request. If there are any issues with this condition that need to be qualified at any stage during the works, the Parish or its appointed Archaeologist should contact the secretary of the DAC immediately, who may then seek clarification from the DAC's Heritage specialist."



Fig. 1: Location of St Mael and St Sulien Church, Corwen

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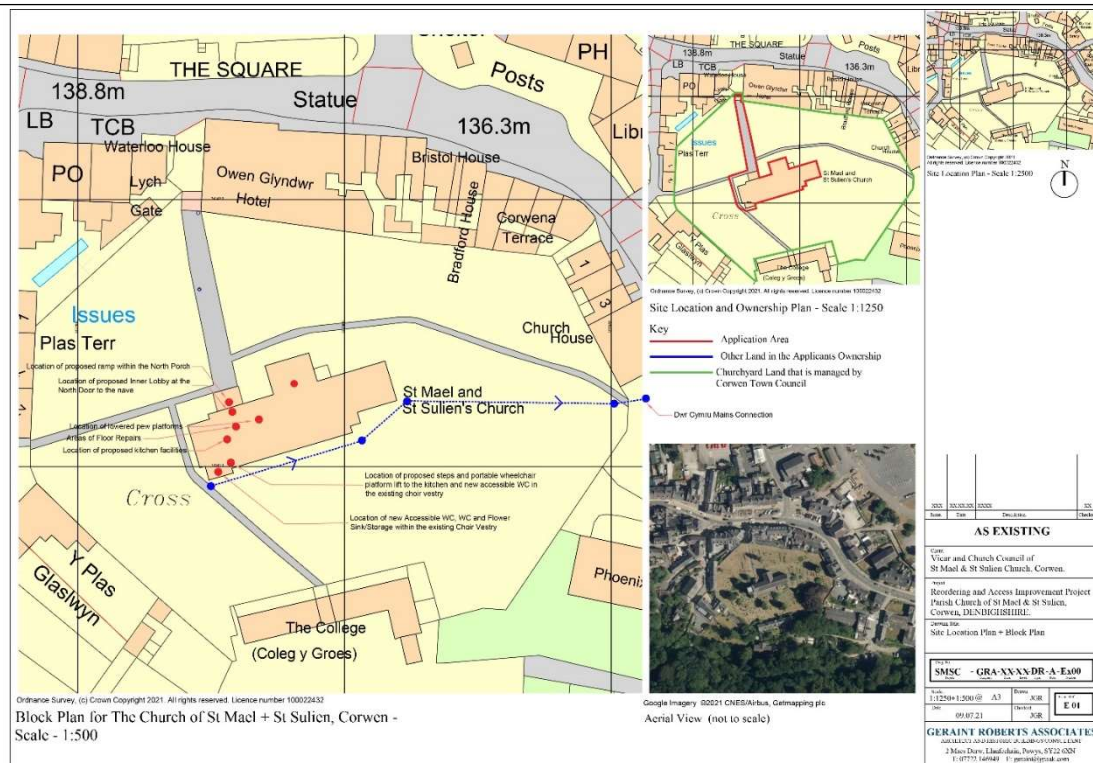


Figure 2: Plan of the development area showing the locations of the proposed alterations (courtesy Geraint Roberts Associates)

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- 1.5. This WSI presents a design for archaeological investigation which addresses the DAC's requirements, and therefore provides the written scheme of investigation for their formal approval, prior to implementation of the scheme.

2 Historic background (Reproduced from the CPAT Churches Survey for Denbighshire)

- 2.1. The church of Ss Mael and Sulien lies at the centre of the small town of Corwen in the valley of the Dee some 9 miles west of Llangollen. Without doubt it was founded in the early medieval period and became a mother church for the area. The medieval structure had a west tower and transepts but the south transept was demolished when an aisle was built in the 19th century, and both the tower and the body of the church have seen considerable reconstruction, though at least it survived a 1765 plan to erect a completely new church. The main roof is late 17th century, and significant fittings include an early font, a 14th century priest's effigy and a pillar stone used as a door lintel. A monolith of putative prehistoric date is built into the porch wall and there is the shaft of a fine 12th century cross in the churchyard. The churchyard itself is surrounded by buildings and its shape has almost certainly been modified over the centuries. It contains a good range of grave memorials, many dating back to the 18th century.
- 2.2. The original date of the tower is uncertain but claimed to be 14th century. It reveals some rebuilding at belfry level, most noticeably on the west side.

3 Methodology

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

- 3.1. The programme of mitigation will be conducted according to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) (2023) *Standard and Universal Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*.
- 3.2. This will comprise the monitoring of relevant groundworks, such that any archaeologically significant layers, structures or features which are present can be identified, assessed and appropriately recorded. Accordingly, sufficient time must be allowed for the recording, to include structural features, archaeological layers, wall materials and construction methods. The Principal Contractor should be made aware of the need to work closely with the archaeologist during the works and to this end the Principal Contractor should give the archaeologist reasonable notice as to when it is wished to carry out relevant work. Regular contact should be maintained to this end.
- 3.3. The groundworks to be monitored under this phase of works are anticipated to comprise:
 - Maintenance repairs to an existing drainage run on the south side of the church that connects with the Dwr Cymru infrastructure beyond a gate in the east boundary to the churchyard. Assumed to be excavations in two locations, 5m in length to a depth of approximately 1.5m.
 - Two sections of foul drainage trenching from the new WCs in the south vestry and the new kitchen/drinks area in the west end of the nave. This will include excavation through both areas of solid and suspended floor constructions with new holes through the south wall of the church. There will be excavations to monitor in connection with the installation of the new drainage runs and three new inspection chambers.
 - Monitor and record the lifting of the floors towards the west end of the nave and south aisle to lower the level of the pew platforms, to undertake repairs to existing areas of suspended floor and to consolidate masonry, to repair structural timbers and to prepare surfaces to receive a new tiled floor finish that matches the chequer pattern of the existing and/or to repair and rebed areas of the existing floor finish.
 - Raising the levels of the existing path adjacent to the north porch to ensure that barrier free access is possible in the future.
- 3.4. The Diocesan archaeologist will be kept informed of progress during the works in case a decision on how best to proceed is required should a potential impact on currently unknown archaeological features be identified. Any resulting mitigation would be a matter for discussion and agreement between the relevant parties and may involve an additional WSI and costing.

Artefacts and skeletal material

- 3.5. CPA will be responsible for collecting any artefacts that are disturbed and any human bone, fragmentary or complete, which is dug up during the works, following the implementation of the necessary legal procedures. In the event that human remains be revealed by the proposed development, a licence from the Ministry of Justice will be required to comply with the 1857 Burial Act (as it pertains to Wales) and it is suggested that this should be obtained by the architect as the person responsible for oversight of the development as a whole. Where at all possible intact burials should be avoided by the works, but any disturbed skeletal material

that is encountered should be stored appropriately in a secure place within the church while the development is ongoing.

- 3.6. If human remains are recovered, CPA, in conjunction with the incumbent, will make an appropriate decision as to how and where the bones or fragments are re-buried. Upon completion of the archaeological works, the archaeologist should produce a draft version of the report which will allow the archaeological curator to assess and approve its findings. A final version of the report will be lodged in an appropriate archive, with a copy being passed to the DAC.

Manual excavation, sampling and recording

- 3.7. If required, the excavation of any archaeological features or deposits will be undertaken by hand using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation:

- Where features of archaeological interest are identified during the groundworks they will be investigated by hand with sufficient work being undertaken to determine their date, character and function, if that is possible, using the conventional techniques for archaeological excavation and in accordance with ClfA Standard and Guidance.
- All features and structures will be located as accurately as possible on an overall plan of the work at an appropriate scale, showing boundaries depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping.
- Contexts will be recorded on individual record forms, using a continuous numbering system, and be drawn and photographed as appropriate.
- Plans will be drawn on permatrace to a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50, as appropriate.
- All photography will be taken using a digital SLR camera with a minimum resolution of 12 mega pixels, including a metric scale in each view, with views logged in a photographic register.
- In the event of finding any artefacts covered by the provisions of the Treasure (Designation) (Amendment) Order 2023, the appropriate procedures under this legislation will be followed.
- All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:
- All stratified finds will be collected by context. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
- All finds and samples, with the exception of any human bone which is encountered, will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance. Human bone will be kept in an appropriate place within the church until such time as the work is complete and will then be reburied within the churchyard.
- Arrangements will be made to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples, if required.
- Any artefacts recovered during the works will be deposited with an appropriate museum, subject to the permission of the owner.

Photographic Survey

- 3.8. Whilst not expressly referenced within the archaeological condition included with the original Petition for Faculty Approval, it is assumed that some photographic recording should be provided prior to the commencement of works. This work will focus on the areas specifically under development in order to provide a 'before' and 'after' record and will not comprise a full survey of the building.
- 3.9. The survey will take the form of the equivalent to a Historic England Level 1 Building Survey – (Understanding Historic Buildings, 2016, 5.2, p.25), and will include:
- External photographs, with some internal photographs if necessary to record significant details
 - Sketch drawings, if required to record any additional architectural details.
- 3.10. The photographic survey will be conducted using digital photography with a minimum resolution of 12 mega pixels to include:
- general views
 - external appearance
 - internal views (if necessary)
 - elevations and structural detail
 - overall appearance
 - fixtures, fittings, including grave markers and inscriptions
- 3.11. It is anticipated that the fieldwork will be carried out during 2024. The DAC or their representatives will be informed when the work is about to commence and an arrangement will be made for site monitoring following the completion of the groundworks.

Artefact selection strategy

- 3.12. In accordance with section 4 of *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* Archaeological Archives Forum 2007 (revised 2011) a rigorous process of selection and discard will be followed so that only those elements that are considered of significance for potential future study will be retained. Bulk items such as ceramic building materials, stonework, large quantities of undiagnostic pottery, and material that is difficult to conserve such as worked wood, may be selected for discard once appropriate recording and analysis has been undertaken, on site or in the laboratory post-excavation.
- 3.13. Selection and discard is detailed below, but in general unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest. All artefacts will be retained from stratigraphically secure contexts of 18th-century date or earlier. In the case of later or disturbed contexts, all 18th-century or earlier material will be retained, together with a sample of later finds to assist with dating and phasing, unless later deposits/artefacts are deemed to be of high archaeological value.
- 3.14. Heneb has a retention policy for artefacts which prioritises as follows:

High priority for retention

- Rare finds from stratified and unstratified contexts
- Prehistoric and early medieval assemblages
- Key stratigraphic dating assemblages crucial to the structural development of the site
- Assemblages which are not well represented in museum collections

High priority for disposal

- Unstratified material unless intrinsically dateable and unusual/rare
- Artefacts from residual/intrusive contexts unless of key stratigraphic importance
- Assemblages already well represented in museum collections
- Unprocessed environmental/soil samples

4 Post-excavation and reporting

4.1. All artefacts and environmental samples will be treated in a manner appropriate to their composition and a sampling strategy will be developed as appropriate:

- All stratified finds will be collected by context, or where appropriate, individually recorded in three dimensions. Unstratified finds will only be collected where they contribute significantly to the project objectives or are of particular intrinsic interest.
- All finds and samples will be collected, processed, sorted, quantified, recorded, labelled, packed, stored, marked, assessed, analysed and conserved in a manner appropriate to their composition and in line with appropriate guidance.
- arrangements will be made to assess and study any artefacts, assemblages and environment samples, should this be required to fulfil the objectives of the evaluation.
- Any artefacts recovered during the evaluations will be deposited with an appropriate museum, subject to the permission of the owner.

4.2. Following the on-site work an illustrated report will be prepared containing conventional sections to include:

- Non-technical summary
- Introduction
- Site location
- Archaeological Background
- Aims & objectives
- Methodology
- Evaluation results
- Conclusions
- References
- Appropriate appendices on archives and finds

4.3. If material evidence is recovered that requires specialist assessment, Heneb has a team of external specialists who advise and undertake the appropriate levels of study. For the Clwyd-Powys region these include the following:

- Lithics Pippa Bradley
- Prehistoric pottery Francis Lynch
- Roman pottery Peter Webster
- Medieval and post-medieval pottery Stephanie Ratkai or Julie Edwards, Grosvenor Museum
- Thin section analysis Chris Doherty University of Oxford
- Roman glass Hilary Cool
- Metalwork identification and conservation Phillip Parkes University of Cardiff
- Faunal remains Archaeological Services University of Durham

- Palaeoenvironment Archaeological Services University of Durham
- Pollen Fiona Grant or Lampeter University
- Metallurgy Tim Young University of Cardiff
- C14 and OSL SUERC

- 4.4. The final report and the associated photography will be submitted to the Diocesan Archaeologist for validation; followed by any revisions if necessary.
- 4.5. The report summary will be provided in English and Welsh, in accordance with the *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs) V1* (July 2018).

Site archive




- 4.6. The overall archive will conform to guidelines described in Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE), Historic England 2015, the CIfA (2020b) Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives and The National Standard and Guidance to Best Practice for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales (NPAAW, 2017).
- 4.7. The paper and digital archive will be deposited with the National Monuments Record (NMR), RCAHMS, including a copy of the final report, with the consent of the Representative Body of the Church of Wales. This archive will include all written, drawn, survey and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.
- 4.8. A digital copy of the report (and any digital photographs or other data required) will also be lodged with the Historic Environment Record, once consent has been received from the Representative Body of the Church of Wales.















5 Digital Data Management Plan (DDMP) (Version 3: October 2023)

- 5.1. Heneb is committed to managing digital records generated through our work to the highest standards. The Digital Data Management Plan (DDMP) has been designed in accordance with current guidance from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), Historic England's *Archaeological Digital Archiving Protocol* (ADAPt) (2016), The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales *RCAHMS Guidelines for Digital Archives* (2015) and the Archaeology Data Services (ADS) *Guidelines for Depositors* (2021). Heneb also employs the FAIR Principles, to ensure that all relevant data is Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable.

Data Collection

- 5.2. All digital project data will be stored within a standard folder template, utilizing digital proformas where required and following a strict file naming policy. All digital files selected for archive will be pre-fixed with the unique project code. An example of the folder structure and common data formats is provided below.

	Project Folder		
	Folder name	Contents	Files
	 Admin		
 H&S RAMS	-	Risk assessments	DOCX, PDF

	 WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation	DOCX, PDF
	 Client data	Planning documents, plans, background	JPG, PDF
	 Correspondence	Emails and letters	PDF, Outlook.msg
	 Drafting	Working drawings	AI
	 Finance	Quote, purchase order, costings	DOCX, PDF, XLSX
	 Finds data	Catalogues, specialist reports etc	DOCX, PDF, XLSX
	 GIS data	Project generated GIS including HER data, Mapping data Geophysical Survey data etc	MAP, SHP, XLSX, PRJ, DXF, TAB, SHX, QPJ, DAT, DBF, ID, DXF, DWG, BMP, JPG, ASC, QGS, XML, PMW, XCP
	 Metadata	Project specific metadata	XLS
	 Photography	Original and reduced images	NEFF, JPG, TIFF
	 Report	Project report	DOCX, PDF
	 Report Illustrations	Illustrations selected for the final report	JPG, PDF
	 Research data	Background research	DOCX, PDF, JPG
	 Site data	Site registers, recording forms, plans etc	DOCX, PDF, XLSX
	 Temporary files	Storage for temporary files to be deleted prior to archiving	N/A

- 5.3. Where projects require specialist archaeological techniques, additional datasets may be generated. These will be incorporated into the folder structure as required and re-named accordingly.

Data Storage

- 5.4. Throughout the course of the project, data will be stored securely on Heneb IT infrastructure.

Data Selection

- 5.5. Heneb works across the regions of both England and Wales in which the following guidance may apply, depending on the project location.

- CADW *Managing Change to Listed Places of Worship in Wales: Ecclesiastical Exemption* (2018)
- CIfA *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Compilation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives* (2020b).
- CIfA *Toolkit for selecting archaeological archives*.
- CIfA *Toolkit for managing digital data*.
- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The (MoRPHE Project Manager's Guide* (2015).
- *National Standard and Guidance for Collecting and Depositing Archaeological Archives in Wales* (2017).
- The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales *RCAHMMW Guidelines for Digital Archives* (2015)
- *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs) Version:2*
- Historic England's *Archaeological Digital Archiving Protocol (ADAPt)* (2016)
- Archaeology Data Services (ADS) *Guidelines for Depositors* (2021).
- *FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship* (2016)

- 5.6. While some projects will generate a standard set of data, most project archives are unique and the creation of data is fluid, requiring periodic management and review throughout the course of the project to meet the specific requirements of individual stakeholders.
- 5.7. Data generated by a relatively small-scale project is likely to comprise; the final report (.pdf/.docx), digital photographs (.tif), site records including proformas/drawings (.pdf), metadata (.xls).
- 5.8. Larger projects may include additional data sets, such as site survey data, GIS polygons, specialist reports etc, and where required, additional digital sub-folders will be generated.
- 5.9. All project data, including digital, documentary, artefactual or environmental will be recorded in the final project selection strategy, a copy of which will be included in all project reports. Data that has been selected for retention, and/or deposition with a suitable repository beyond Heneb is recorded therein.
- 5.10. Correspondence records, financial records, research data and temporary files will automatically be de-selected from the final archivable dataset, as these do not form part of the overall archaeological record and may contain sensitive data.

Metadata

- 5.11. All digital data generated by the project and selected for archive will be accompanied with appropriate metadata, where required.

Preservation

- 5.12. Digital data selected for preservation within Wales will be deposited with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales.
- 5.13. A digital PDF report, along with relevant photographs will also be deposited with the relevant Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 5.14. Associated physical archive material will be summarised within the final grey literature report/selection strategy to ensure that the physical archive is also traceable once disseminated.

Accessibility

- 5.15. Data will use standard software and formats where possible to maximise opportunities for use and reuse in the future.
- 5.16. Data submitted for long term preservation will be discoverable to interested parties through the RCAHMW and HER websites and may also be promoted by Heneb via the website or social media.

Responsibilities

- 5.17. The Project Manager will be responsible for the implementation of the DDMP throughout the course of the project.
- 5.18. The Project Manager, Project Supervisor and Head of Technology, Information and Planning will be responsible for data accumulated during the project, including its appropriate management, storage and backup.
- 5.19. Data will be checked routinely by the Project Manager as a means of quality assurance.
- 5.20. The Information and Archives Officer will be responsible for the compilation of all project specific metadata and final deposition of the digital project data and wider archive.
- 5.21. Following deposition with the relevant digital repository, data management will become the responsibility of the receiving organization.
- 5.22. A copy of relevant files generated by the project may be retained and stored securely by Heneb for future reference should it be required.

Ethics and Legal Compliance

- 5.23. Heneb has security protocols and policies in place relating to the ethical use of data which comply National Law and Industry Guidelines. Our Privacy Policy can be viewed [here](#).
- 5.24. All data, including any sensitive data is stored securely to protect against its loss, misuse and alteration.
- 5.25. Heneb will take steps to ensure that any businesses we share data with will have security protocols and policies in place to manage and record data privacy and preferences correctly and that data is stored correctly.
- 5.26. Copyright for all data belongs to Heneb. Formal permissions from external specialists and contractors will be secured upon their engagement, where appropriate.

6 Resources and programming

- 6.1. The mitigation works will be undertaken by a skilled archaeologist under the overall supervision of Tim Malim, a senior member of Heneb's staff who is also a member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). Heneb is also a CIfA Registered Organisation and as such agrees to abide by their *Code of Conduct* (2014) and the *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology* (2014).
- 6.2. All report preparation will be completed by or with the assistance of the same field archaeologist(s) who conducted the site work. Copies of the report will be deposited with the client and the regional Historic Environment Record within one month of the completion of on-site works, subject to possible delays should specialist investigation of artefacts, samples etc be necessary. If appropriate, a short report will be published in *Archaeology in Wales*.

- 6.3. The client should be aware that in the event that significant archaeological remains are revealed there may be a requirement for more detailed excavation and specialist services. Any further work over and above the original fieldwork and report would be the subject of a separate WSI and costing.

7 Appendix 1 Selection Strategy

2729-St Mael and St Sulien Church Corwen (SJ 07890 43410) Archaeological Mitigation Works 18/04/24 Selection Strategy v1.0	
Project Management	
Project Manager	Tim Malim
Project Supervisor	Will Logan
Archives Manager	Sophie Watson
Project Stakeholders	
Project Lead / Project Assurance	Bob Silvester
Client	Vicar and Wardens of St Mael and St Sulien Church
Landowner	Representative Body of the Church of Wales
Other	
Collecting Institutions	
Regional Historic Environment Record	Clwyd-Powys
Digital Archive Repository	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
Documentary Archive Repository	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
Finds Archive Repository	Denbighshire Museums Service
Other	N/A

Project Data

Digital Project Data - Management

- 7.1. Digital data generated by the project will be managed in accordance with the Heneb Digital Data Management Plan (Version 3).

In summary, digital data will be subject to regular review and management to ensure the final dataset is of suitable quality and appropriately referenced and structured, resulting in a findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable archive which has been prepared in accordance with the *CIfA Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2020b).

All digital files will be stored on Heneb infrastructure within a standard folder hierarchy and following a strict file naming policy. All digital files selected for archive will be data tagged with the unique project code. An example of the folder structure and specific files selected for archive will be recorded in the final selection strategy for the project and included within every Heneb report.

Digital project data selected for archive will be accompanied by relevant project metadata and prepared according to the RCAHMW Guidelines for Digital Archives (Version 1). Digital data will be transferred via OneDrive upon the completion of the project as agreed with Helen Rowe (Senior Archivist - RCAHMW).

A copy of the digital report and a set of digital (.jpg) images will be submitted to the Historic Environment Record via HEDDOS in accordance with the *Guidance for the Submission of Data to the Welsh Historic Environment Records (HERs)* Version 2 (2022).

Project Specific Digital Data

Digital data expected for a Level 1 building survey includes the following:

Photographs (.jpg / .tif)

Photographic Catalogue (.xls) *Microsoft Excel*

Photographic location plan (.ai / .pdf) – (*Adobe Illustrator CS6*)

Grey Literature Report (.docx / .pdf) *Microsoft Word*

Project metadata file (.xls) *Microsoft Excel*

Digital data expected for archaeological monitoring and recording/evaluation/excavation includes the following;

- Photographs (.jpg / .tif)
- Photographic Catalogue (.xls) *Microsoft Excel*
- Grey Literature Report (.docx / .pdf) *Microsoft Word*

De-Selected Digital Data

All digital data generated by the project will be recorded in the final selection strategy and selected/de-selected data will be recorded therein.

Unsuitable or surplus data, such as blurred images or duplicate files, will be deleted from the final dataset.

Sensitive digital data is stored within dedicated project folders named Client Data, Correspondence and Finance and these will be automatically de-selected due to the nature of the data within. Project data will be retained on the Heneb servers for a period of 6 years, at which point it will be reviewed and managed as required in accordance with relevant organisational policies.

Physical Project Data (Documentary)

All physical documentary data will follow standard formats and conventions with appropriate labelling and referencing, resulting in findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable data (FAIR) which has been prepared in accordance with the *CiFA Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives guidance* (2020b).

Written and drawn records will utilise Heneb proformas and use standard conventions and terminology. Documents selected for archive will be accompanied with a paper copy of the selection strategy to ensure all elements of the archive are linked and traceable at all times.

Physical documentary data expected for an archaeological monitoring and recording includes the following;

- Trench recording form
- Watching brief recording form
- Context register
- Context sheets
- Site plans
- Section drawings

Physical Project Data (Materials)

There is potential for artefactual material to be gathered during the fieldwork stage of the project.

The methodology for the treatment of materials is outlined in section 2 of the Written Scheme of Investigation. In summary, artefacts and contextual evidence that can help address specific research questions will be prioritised for retention and where appropriate, external specialist assessment may be employed to help identify the research potential of cohesive assemblages. In addition, local curators may be consulted as to whether specific local knowledge might be enhanced through study and retention of the collected archive, beyond any broader regional research questions.

In the instance that significant artefactual material is identified, a suitable repository will be identified and contacted once the nature, quantity and condition is known. The decision would be made by Heneb field services in conjunction with the relevant stakeholders, informed by the research potential and heritage significance of the archaeological evidence uncovered.

Will Logan

Senior Archaeologist

18/04/2024

Sources

Historic England., 2016. *Understanding Historic Buildings*. Historic England

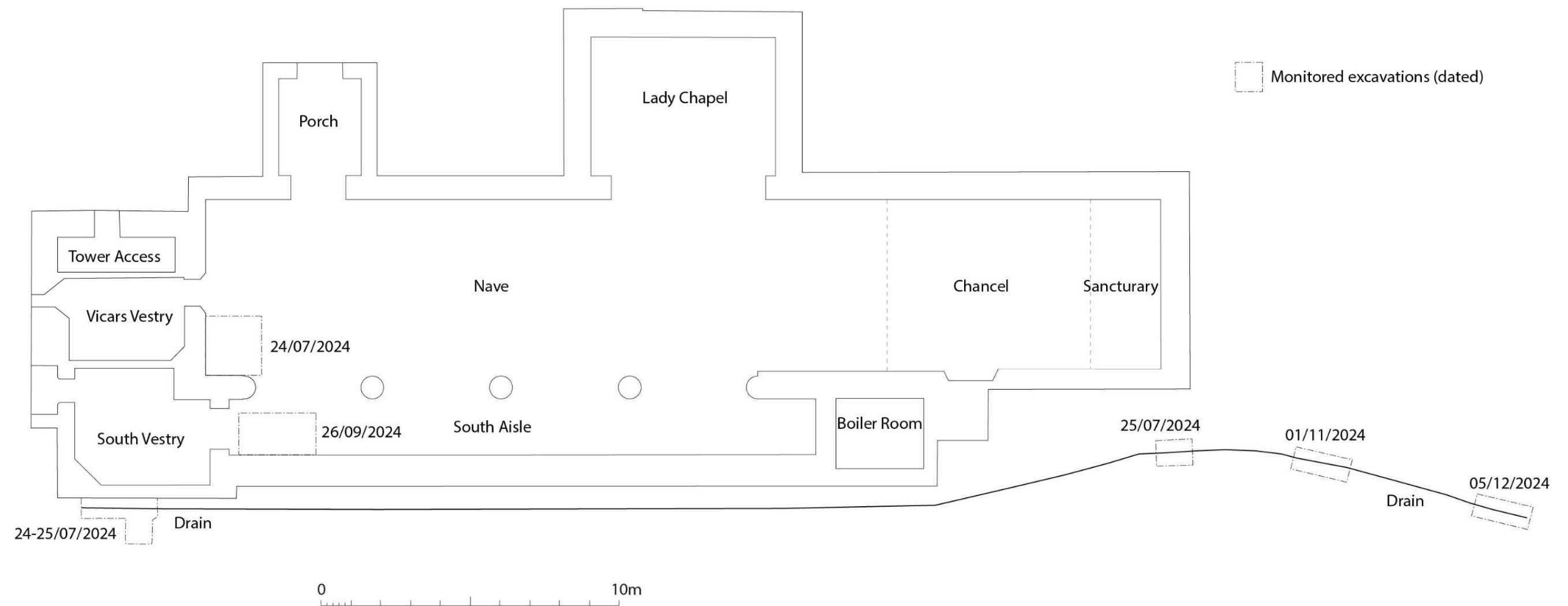


Fig. 12: Locations of monitored excavations