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A Written Scheme of Investigation

for an

Archaeological Watching Brief

at:

St. Mary's Church
Burford, Shropshire
WR15 8TB

for:

The PCC and Churchwardens
St Mary's Church, Burford, Shropshire

To meet a requirement of The Church of England,
Diocese of Hereford

Report No 322/2021/05/WSI/01
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2 Introduction

Church and Site Archaeological Services have been appointed by the PCC and Churchwardens of St Mary’s Church Burford to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief during the installation of new exterior freestanding composting WC facilities with attached garden store on the north side of the Church where a portable toilet is currently situated.

2.1 Location

St Mary’s Church Burford, in the Deanery of Ludlow and Diocese of Hereford, is situated near to Burford House close to the River Teme in Shropshire approximately 0.7 miles (1km) to the west of Tenbury Wells at NGR: SO58325 68028.

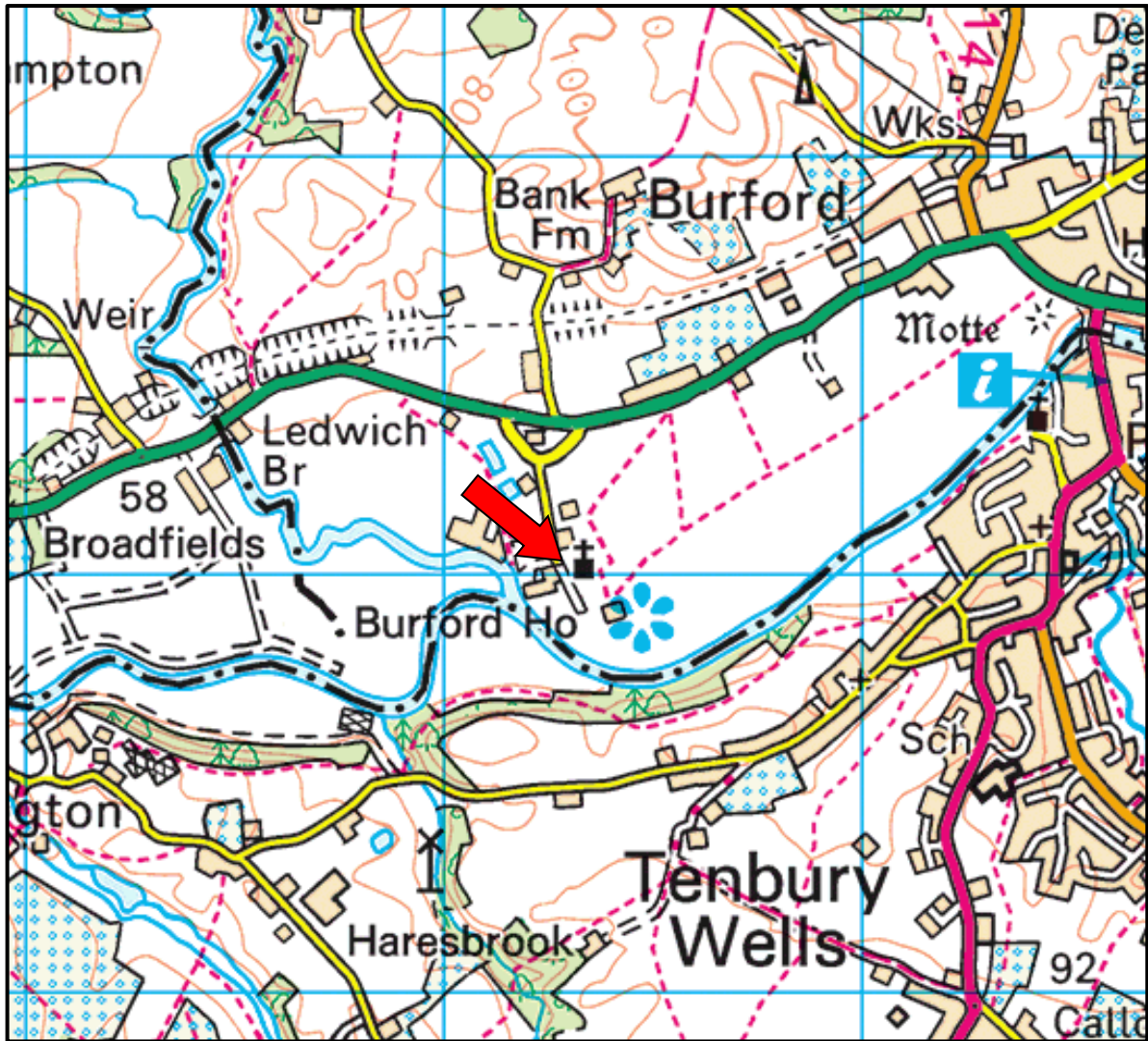


Figure 1. St Mary's Church, Burford
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2.1 History and structure

The present Church consists of a 12th century chancel, a 14th century nave and west tower, a south porch, and a north vestry. It is Grade 1 listed.

The church is constructed of stone rubble with Ashlar dressings, an Ashlar tower, it has plain-tile roofs with Ashlar-coped gables and battlemented parapets. The 1886-89 restoration resulted in much of the fabric and chancel floor being replaced, along with the demolition of a vestry located to the north of the chancel which was accessed by a now blocked-up doorway in the north chancel wall.

Although much of the interior fabric is 19th century St Mary's Church is home to a number of historic monuments dedicated to the

Cornwall family, descendants of the Plantagenet line, one of these is the final resting place of a Royal Princess (Elizabeth of Lancaster).

The oldest surviving part of the church is the 12th century chancel which contains Norman features, whilst visible within the southern part of the churchyard is the original socket stone of the medieval Churchyard Cross. The medieval steps of the cross base survive, surrounded by modern steps, whereas the upper part was restored in the mid-nineteenth century.

3 Scope of work

The proposed work entails the demolition of the existing garden shed close to the north wall and removal of the adjoining portable toilet. A freestanding timber clad building is proposed which will house a WC with an attached garden store. The building will house a proprietary composting toilet system, which has been developed by the manufacturer (NatSol) for use on remote sites and which offers full wheelchair access. The building has been set away from the fabric of the church and located to the periphery of the churchyard. This both avoids the building obscuring any of the church's architecture, and maximises access to the building by utilising the existing access paths around the building. The WC facility will be linked into the existing church path with a new path which will be built to deliver a level access into the new building.

The proposed building is compact and sized to suit the manufacturer's system, which comprises of a below ground chamber system which also acts as foundations. On this base which will be faced with a blue/black brick detail over which the building superstructure will be formed. This will be a clad with timber boards which will be untreated to weather to a silver grey colour and installed vertically to suit the scale of the adjacent church. The building size will be 3200mm x 2460mm with a maximum roof height of 2300mm. Foundation digging will be no more than 850mm.

There are no marked graves in the area to be excavated, which is approximately 4 meters north-west of a rainwater soakaway constructed in November 2019 as part of a system of French drain works carried out at St Mary's church.

All work will be carried out to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 'Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief', published December 2014 (updated June and October 2020).



Figure 2. North side of the Church looking west showing positions of the existing garden shed (left) and portable toilet (right).

4 Objectives

The purpose of an archaeological watching brief is: ***'to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits and historic masonry, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or potentially disruptive works'***^{10.1}.

The primary objective of this archaeological watching brief at St Mary's Church, Burford is to ensure that **any** previously unrecorded archaeological features, historic masonry, deposits or artefacts exposed during the ground disturbance works are adequately recorded, interpreted and reported within a specified area using appropriate methods and practices in order to satisfy the stated aims of the project, and comply with the Code of Conduct and other relevant regulations of ClfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeology).

5 Methodology and Contingencies

- 5.1 All work will be undertaken according to the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*', published December 2014 (updated June and October 2020).
- 5.2 All groundworks will be supervised by the archaeologist. As well as the specific and known groundworks listed in Chapter 3 above this should include, but not exclusively, groundworks associated with ground and turf clearance, wall foundation trenches, drainage trenches and soakaways, service trenches and inspection chambers. Care should be taken to inform the archaeologist of any ground works carried out after the main development phase.
- 5.3 The contractor should give the archaeologist reasonable notice of the timing of impending groundworks. If human remains are encountered they will be archaeologically recorded *in-situ* in accordance with current legislation (Annexe S3 of English Heritage '*Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England*').
- 5.4 If any grave cuts extend below the level of proposed work they will be investigated to determine their depth. Any remains just below the surface and unaffected by future compaction can then be considered for *in-situ* preservation.
- 5.5 The Minimal Standards for Archaeological Excavation (Annexes S3 and S5 in '*Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England*' published by English Heritage and the Church of England 2005, updated February 2017), will be followed.
- 5.6 Partial excavation of any articulated human remains visibly extending beyond the excavated trench will only be chased if the remains are deemed archaeologically important (see Annexe E5 para.187 English Heritage '*Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England*').

- 5.7 If archaeological features or burials are discovered, work will cease in the immediate area until the archaeologist has been able to fully inspect the feature and determine its importance - control being vested in the archaeologist. If, in the opinion of the archaeologist, the archaeological feature can be rapidly recorded to the required standards in accordance with the watching brief guidelines, this will be done.
- 5.8 If the archaeologist determines that the archaeological feature requires more investigation and recording than he can undertake as part of the watching brief then the Diocesan Advisory Committee of the Diocese of Hereford will be informed and an on-site meeting arranged as soon as possible. Until the meeting has taken place no work will be undertaken in the vicinity of the archaeological feature.
- 5.9 The meeting will determine what additional works are required to be undertaken to ensure that the archaeological feature is fully "preserved by record." In most cases a detailed project design for this additional work will be prepared and submitted to The Diocesan Advisory Committee of the Diocese of Hereford prior to the commencement of the agreed work. **The implication of exceptional costs and delays caused by such further archaeological investigation needs to be understood by all concerned.**
- 5.10 Appropriate procedures under the relevant legislation will be followed in the event of the discovery of artefacts covered by the Treasure Act, 1996.
- 5.11 Digging will be carried out by mechanical digger fitted with a toothed bucket. The watching and recording of the trenches and the sifting of spoil for finds will be undertaken by the archaeologist.
- 5.12 Where necessary limited hand excavation by trowel will be undertaken by the archaeologist to further investigate those features and finds that were encountered.

6 Recording

- 6.1 Recording of archaeological contexts will be undertaken using a continuous numbered context system on pro-forma

recording sheets. A catalogue by context of all finds will be prepared and included in the final report

- 6.2 Written and drawn records will be kept. Plans (other than site location) and sections will be drawn to a scale of 1:20 (detailed excavation and sections at 1:10).
- 6.3 The photographic record will consist of photographs taken throughout the project in digital format at a minimum resolution of 5 megapixels and stored on CD ROM in unaltered '.jpeg' file format.
- 6.4 All levels will be related to the Ordnance Datum where practicable and will be located with respect to buildings and boundaries published on modern Ordnance Survey maps.
- 6.5 All artefacts recovered during the project will be retained and closely related to the contexts from which they originated.
- 6.6 Any features containing deposits of environmental or technological significance will be sampled.

7 The Report

- 7.1 Report timetable:
 - a. For a largely negative report, it should be ready within 4 weeks of the site works being finished.
 - b. Where substantial archaeology has been found a new timetable will be agreed in consultation with Diocesan Advisory Committee of the Diocese of Hereford (see 5.8 and 5.9 above)
- 7.2 The report will be fully representative of information gathered even if the evidence is negative.
- 7.3 The report will contain at least one location plan showing the site in relation to local topography as well as the excavation.
- 7.4 The report will include drawn sections, plans and photographs of archaeological significance.

- 7.5 A summary report on the artefact assemblage and an assessment of potential for further study will be prepared by suitably qualified individuals and included in the report.
- 7.6 Once completed a copy of the report will be submitted to Diocesan Advisory Committee of the Diocese of Hereford. Notes of any confidentiality condition imposed by the site owner will be included.
- 7.7 A summary of the work will be submitted to an appropriate journal no later than one year after completion of the work.
- 7.8 Church and Site Archaeological Services will arrange with an appropriate museum, for the deposition of any significant finds and the completed archive. The final repository of the archive will be agreed between the Church of England and the Museum and will be confirmed in the final report.
- 7.9 The standard and organisation of the archive shall conform to '*Standards and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*' Chartered Institute for Archaeologists^{10.6 & 10.5}.

8 Health and Safety

- 8.1 All works will be carried out to the requirements of current Health and Safety regulations.
- 8.2 A risk assessment will be carried out on-site and before commencement of work.

9 The Contractors

- 9.1 The project is under the direction of Brian M. Powell, BA (Hons.) who is a Practitioner of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (PCIfA) on behalf of Church and Site Archaeological Services, and Felicity Taylor PCIfA and Colin Harris BSc. The contractors have considerable experience and a proven track record in archaeological evaluation, excavation, recording and publication work.
- 9.2 Church and Site Archaeological Services as archaeological contractors will adhere to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologist's '*Code of Conduct*', the '*Code of Approved*

Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Archaeology and the *'Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs'*.

- 9.3 The personnel involved in the watching brief will have had previous experience of this work and will be supervised by Brian M. Powell and Felicity Taylor.
- 9.4 Specialist analysis of pottery finds will be carried out by Mr Steve Clarke FSA of Monmouth Archaeology
- 9.5 Identification of animal remains will be carried out by Ms Felicity Taylor PCIfA of Church and Site Archaeological Services.
- 9.6 Any specialist analysis of human remains will be carried out by Dr Heidi Dawson of the Osteological Unit, Department of Archaeology, University of Bristol.
- 9.7 Church and Site Archaeological Services holds Public Liability Insurance, Employers Liability Insurance and Professional Indemnity Insurance through specialist insurers, Towergate Insurance, Fareham, Hampshire, under their Archaeology and Heritage Combined Insurance Policy no 000104.
- 9.8 The copyright for this and the final report shall remain with Church and Site Archaeological Services.

10 References and Bibliography

- 10.1 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: *'Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief'*, Pub December 2014 (Updated June and October 2020).
- 10.2 UK Institute of Conservation's *'Guidelines for the treatment of Finds from Archaeological Sites'*.
- 10.3 Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *'Standards and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials'*, December 2014.
- 10.4 *'Management of Archaeological Projects'*, English Heritage 1991.

- 10.5 AAF 2007 '*Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*' Archaeological Archives Forum, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2007.
- 10.6 '*Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*' Chartered Institute for Archaeologists amended December 2014
- 10.7 '*Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England - Second Edition*', Historic England and the Church of England, 2017
- 10.8 '*Technical Paper number 13: Excavation and Post Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Exhumed Human Remains*', (McKinley and Roberts), The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 1993.

11 Acknowledgements

Thanks to Richard Coutts of Hook Mason Architects for the use of their drawings.

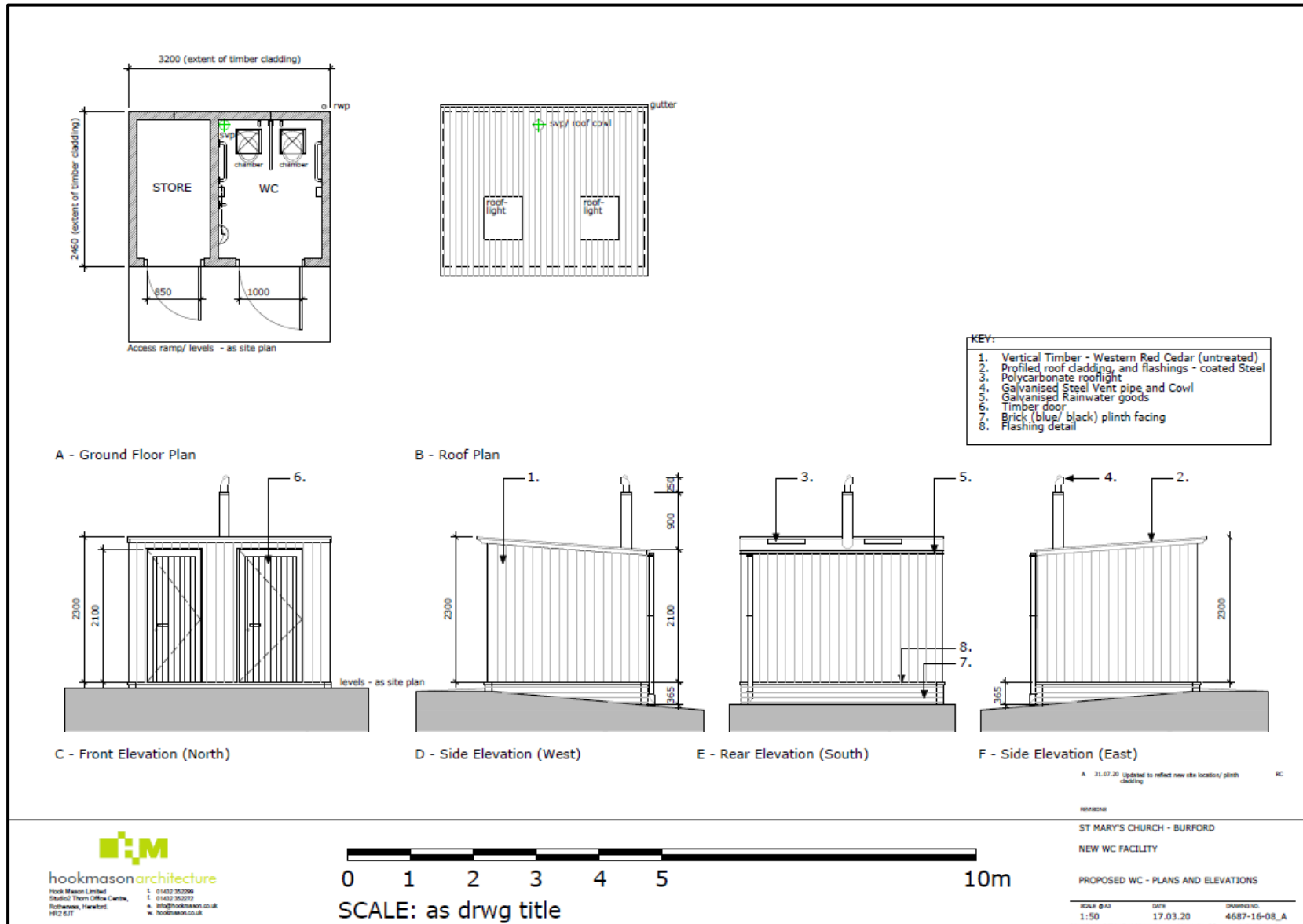


Figure 3. Proposed WC and shed layout.

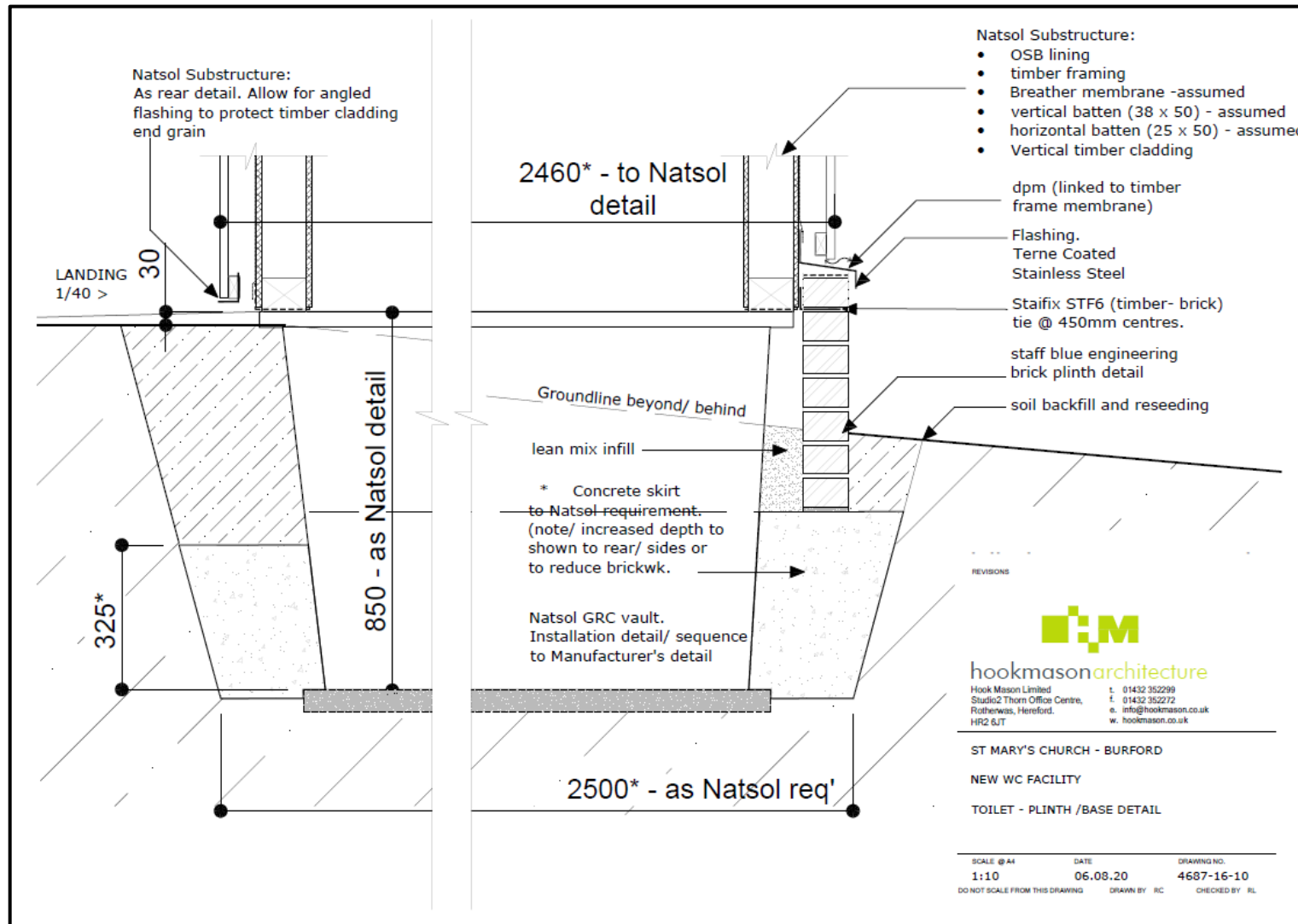


Figure 4. Proposed plinth/base detail.