AWDM/1330/17 - - West Sussex County Council planning Services, Environment and Heritage – response from Principal Archaeologist

St Julian's Church, St Julian's Lane, Shoreham by Sea

Construction of footpaths to improve disabled access

Comment

St Julian's Church is grade I listed and described in the listing description as dating to the 11th and 13th centuries. The medieval churchyard will have seen a successive process of burial over the centuries and as space grew restricted it would be common practice for new graves to be dug into ground containing earlier interments. This iterative process often results in the height of the ground outside the church itself increasing but also the upper 250-500mm of churchyard soil can be mixed and disturbed, containing bone from pervious burials.

The proposed path re-surfacing is by and large on exactly the same plan as the existing path around the church and does not appear to require disturbance greater that 130mm below present ground level (which is very shallow). It is likely that the works will have a negligible effect on the churchyard soil but I note that there are a couple of locations where widening is proposed to create safe passing places in line with DDA requirements.

It is unlikely that this work will warrant archaeological monitoring but Adur and Worthing Development Management should take account of the views of the Chichester Diocesan Advisory Committee's (DAC) Archaeological Advisor. The contractor undertaking the re-surfacing and widening should take heed of the Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England "Guidance for Best Practice for the Treatment of Human Remains Excavated from Christian Burial Grounds in England", second edition 2017, especially paragraph 173, to ensure that any remains accidentally disturbed are re-interred as close to their original location as possible and if this proves necessary that it is undertaken in consultation with the incumbent and the DAC.

M Taylor 10/10/2017