

NORTHERN DEVON IN THE GREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

REPORTS COVERING NORTH DEVON DISTRICT 2018

Table 1 sets out the reports filed with ADS relating to 2018. The reports are then discussed in a little more detail, in alphabetical order of parish. A brief synthesis of the findings of 2018 completes the document.

Table 1: Summary of reports for 2018

Parish	Site	Grid Ref	Report Producer	Type of Report*	Nature of Development
Atherington	Bonds Farm	5906 2305	SWARCH	Evaluation trenching	Residential
Barnstaple	49 Boutport Street	5594 3316	SWARCH	Monitoring and recording	Residential
Barnstaple	Museum extension, The Square	5587 3297	SWARCH	Monitoring and recording	Extension to museum
Berrynarbor	East Stowford Barton	5580 4288	SWARCH	Monitoring and recording	Caravan pitches
Bishops Nympton	St Mary's Churchyard	7577 2373	SWARCH	Monitoring and recording	Laying of pipes
Bishops Tawton	Land adj. Gospel Hall	5669 3004	SWARCH (Ab)	Evaluation trenching	Residential development
Combe Martin	Spurway Gardens	5905 4610	SWARCH	Monitoring and recording	Residential development
East & West Buckland	West Buckland junction	6560 2959	Substrata Ltd	Magnetometer survey	Road junction improvement
Filleigh	Village Hall	6653 2793	SWARCH	HVIA	Residential development
Fremington	Fremington Pill	5148 3290	Wessex Archaeology	Watching brief	Construction of surface water outfall
Fremington	Mead Park, Bickington	5265 3257	AC Archaeology	Trial trench evaluation	Residential development
Fremington	Taw View Phase 2, Bickington	5256 3274	AC Archaeology	Trench evaluation	Residential development
Ilfracombe	22 Beach Road, Hele	5345 4775	SWARCH	Emergency recording work	Removal of retaining wall

Ilfracombe	Robin's Garage, Northfield Road	5163 4758	SWARCH	Evaluation trenching and recording	Residential development
Ilfracombe	Rugby Club	5303 4748	SWARCH (Ab)	HIA	Construction of new clubhouse
Landkey	Birch Road	5997 3140	SWARCH	DBA and Geophysical survey	Residential development
Landkey	Harford Cross	6046 3150	Substrata Ltd	Magnetometer survey	Road improvement
Landkey	Vicarage & Manor Roads	5916 3117	SWARCH	DBA and archaeological evaluation	Residential development
Martinhoe	Shippon and Birch Cottage	6676 4870	SWARCH (Ab)	HBR	Conversion and restoration
Newton Tracey	Land N. of Hunters Inn (2)	5280 2697	SWARCH (Ab)	Geophysical survey, Archaeological evaluation	Residential development
Newton Tracey	Thomas A Becket Church	5296 2692	SWARCH	DBA, geophysical survey and HIA	Residential development
Pilton West	Roborough House Hotel site	5679 3450	SWARCH	Archaeological and heritage assessment	Residential development
Rose Ash	West Catkill Farm	7871 2024	SWARCH	Monitoring and recording	Construction of slurry lagoon
South Molton	Norrington Yard	7145 2566	SWARCH	Archaeological investigation	Residential development
Stoke Rivers	Chapel House	6327 3542	SWARCH	DBA, HIA, Geophysical survey and trench evaluation	Residential development
Tawstock	Eastacombe Chapel	5408 2973	AC Archaeology	Heritage statement	Conversion of chapel to dwelling
West Down	Willingcott Valley Holiday	4897 4290	SWARCH	DBA	Tourism development

	Village				

*HBR/S/A - historic building recording/survey/assessment, DBA - Desk-based assessment, HVIA - Historic visual impact assessment

Twenty-eight reports were recorded in 2018, covering twenty-seven sites. Of these, seventeen were produced by SWARCH, three by AC Archaeology, two by Substrata Ltd and one by Wessex Archaeology. A further five reports produced by SWARCH were available as abstracts only on the ADS website (marked with Ab in the table above). Most were developer commissioned but three were commissioned by the public sector to shed more light on known historic landscapes and features in the context of proposed development.

1. Atherington: Bonds Farm

This report is on evaluation trenching carried out in a field between Bonds farm and the parish church, both of which are listed buildings. Most of the site appeared to have been made-up ground. The only feature found was a post-mediaeval ditch and any finds were largely 19th century.

2. Barnstaple: 49 Boutport Street

This site lies to the east of Boutport Street and abuts listed buildings. Two floors at the rear of the site were excavated to formation level for the new development. Earlier floors were uncovered, chiefly of concrete construction, although a cobbled floor was also uncovered. This was preserved in situ. Finds were mainly 19th century.

3. Barnstaple: Museum Extension, The Square

This report sets out the results of monitoring and evaluation during demolition and groundworks associated with the extension of the Museum. Its location, adjacent to the Long Bridge, the River Taw and The Square make it of potential significance in the development of the town.

A total of 48 archaeological features were identified, including a series of working and occupation floors, 41 brick and stone walls, with associated construction cuts, and a wall robber cut. A number of layers of demolition rubble and kiln wasters used as hardcore were identified. These were considered to represent five periods of activity: post-mediaeval use of the site, possibly as part of the foreshore, including lime kilns, 18th century buildings, with one wall fragment found, early nineteenth century buildings, late

19th century buildings, including the Museum Building and Bridge End House, and 20th century development, including the demolition of Bridge End House when the Long Bridge was widened in 1963. Earlier phases of development were not observed, either because the site was effectively foreshore and no structures existed or because earlier layers were not reached during the excavations.

Finds were largely of the same period as the features and were more numerous in the fill deposits than elsewhere on site.

4. Berrynarbor: East Stowford Barton

Monitoring and evaluation work was carried out during the construction of fourteen static caravan pitches. Eight features (seven ditches and one post-hole) were investigated. A single sherd of mediaeval pottery was recovered from the upper fill of a deep V-shaped ditch. This would suggest that the ditch formed part of a mediaeval strip field system, rather than anything earlier. The only other finds came from the topsoil and were post-mediaeval or modern.

5. Bishops Nympton: St Mary's Churchyard

Monitoring was undertaken while pipes were being laid along the tarmac path between the lychgate and the church. No features were observed, the pipe trench being too shallow to reach any that might underlie the graveyard. There were a few post-mediaeval finds, including fragments of 17th century North Devon gravel free wares and 18th century North Devon tiles.

6. Bishops Tawton: Land adjacent Gospel Hall

The following is the abstract from the Report on the ADS site.

Archaeological evaluation trenching was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of a Private Client prior to groundworks associated with the development of land near the Gospel Hall, Bishops Tawton, Devon. The evaluation was carried out by P. Webb on 19th and 20th November 2018. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation drawn up in consultation with the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET). The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, situated within the historic core of the village; to the south-east of the site of the Bishop of Exeter's late medieval palace at Court Farm. The development plot is depicted on the Bishops Tawton tithe map as part of a large hay meadow; to the south-west of the former main thoroughfare through the village. The Gospel Hall was constructed in 1925. The site is located off the A377, c.135m south-east of the parish church and to the immediate west

of the Gospel Hall, Bishops Tawton; and is situated on the west facing slopes of the Taw river valley at a height of between approximately 17.5m and 22.5m AOD. The underlying geology is the well-drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983); overlying mudstone, and siltstone of the Crackington Formation with bordering superficial Taw River Terrace deposits of gravel, sand and silt (BGS 2018).

The outcome of the evaluation is not included in the Abstract.

7. Combe Martin: Spurway Gardens

The site is within the settlement in an area known for both its strip field system and for mining activity. A rectangular area within a modern housing estate was stripped to the depth of the natural deposits. No significant archaeological features were identified. The evidence indicates that modern soil layers overlie a possible post-mediaeval buried soil. Finds recovered from the subsoil indicate mediaeval and post-mediaeval activity, most likely associated with agricultural use of the site as part of a strip field system.

8. East and West Buckland: West Buckland junction

A magnetometer survey was carried out in a field to the north-west of the junction, on the north side of the A361, where a road improvement is to be carried out. The differences in magnetic responses across the survey area were sufficient to be able to differentiate between anomalies representing possible buried archaeology and background magnetic responses.

Fifteen magnetic anomaly groups were characterised as representing potential archaeological deposits. Of these, three groups were likely to represent field boundaries recorded on the 1840 Tithe Map but not on later historic Ordnance Survey maps. Three groups may depict linear archaeological deposits such as ditches. They were straight and on a different orientation to surrounding extant field boundaries that have likely medieval origins. They have not been recorded on historic maps dating from 1840 onwards. Three additional groups had comparable characteristics and may represent similar buried archaeology. Two groups may indicate the presence archaeological pits although natural origins could not be ruled out. One group may represent a curvilinear deposit such as a ditch. It was not clear whether or not this group conformed to the pattern of the surrounding field boundaries but it did conform to the contours of the land within the field. Three groups may represent linear archaeological deposits of uncertain provenance.

9. Filleigh: Land adjacent Village Hall

This report represents a historic visual impact assessment of proposed residential development on land adjacent to Filleigh Village Hall. The site lies within the grounds of the Castle Hill Estate and its Registered Park. The site lies away from the main visual axis of the estate, and out of the key designed views. The overall impact of the proposed development was assessed as slight.

Nevertheless, the report pointed out that the buried archaeological potential of the site is largely unknown. It recommended that a geophysical survey is undertaken to determine the presence and significance of any buried heritage assets.

10. Fremington: Fremington Pill

A watching brief was carried out during the construction of a surface water outfall on the south west bank of Fremington Pill. No archaeologically significant artefactual material, features or deposits were encountered during the watching brief, with only a relatively undisturbed sequence of soils and natural deposits observed to overlie the bedrock geology.

11. Fremington: Land west of Mead Park, Bickington

Following an earlier geophysical survey, eight trenches were excavated in the field, which is to be developed for housing, as an extension to Mead Park. The trial trench evaluation provided largely negative results. The paucity of features and finds indicated that the area had been in agricultural use throughout historic times and there was no indication for settlement or use of the site prior to this. The single gully that was found was consistent with being a former field boundary running parallel with the lie of the extant field boundary to its north.

12. Fremington: Taw View Phase 2, Bickington

This site lies immediately to the west of the previous site. Ten trenches were opened. Most of the trenches contained negative results. However, one trench contained a single linear feature representing a field boundary ditch of post-medieval date. A small collection of finds recovered comprise sherds of pottery, a fragment of ceramic ridge tile, pieces of clay tobacco pipe and a piece of animal bone, all of post-medieval date. A group of five pottery sherds from topsoil came from a single medieval jug. The spread of finds could largely be accounted for by manuring of the fields.

13. Ilfracombe: 22 Beach Road, Hele

Emergency recording works were carried out following the collapse of a retaining wall supporting a footpath, during construction works. The site is on the west side of Hele on the slope of Hillsborough, close to but not within the scheduled ancient monument.

The only features found were the retaining wall and the footpath it supported. There were no finds. It is believed that the cutting of the footpath in the 19th century would have disturbed any earlier features.

14. Ilfracombe: Robins Garage, Northfield Road

Trench evaluation was carried out at a site in Northfield Road, prior to residential development. The site lies in the historic core of Ilfracombe. Six features were identified during the evaluation trenching, comprising: two walls associated with the most recent phase of buildings on the site, three wall robber cuts, probably to be associated with 19th century structures on the site, and a terrace. A small number of finds were also produced, including a number of sherds of a late 19th century whiteware platter.

15. Ilfracombe: Rugby Club

The following is the Abstract from the report lodged on the ADS website.

The results of a heritage impact assessment carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) for land at the Rugby Club, Ilfracombe, North Devon, Devon. This work was undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a new rugby pavilion. The site is located at the north-eastern edge of Ilfracombe, in close proximity to the scheduled Hillsborough Promontory Hillfort, but outside of the scheduled area. It lies within existing recreational ground, in an area developed during the late 19th century. A mature hedge and hedgerow run across the headland at its widest, lowest part, defining the suburban landscape from the 'naturalised' park beyond. The apparent lack of ground disturbance across the site suggests that the potential for survival of archaeological deposits is good. In terms of indirect impacts, most of the designated heritage assets in the wider area are located at such a distance to minimise the impact of the proposed development, or else the contribution of setting to overall significance is less important than other factors. The landscape, but principally the townscape, context of many of these buildings and monuments is such that they would be partly or wholly insulated from the effects of the proposed development by a combination of local blocking from trees, buildings or embankments, or that other modern intrusions have already impinged upon their settings. The only site where there is likely to be an appreciable impact is the Hillsborough Promontory Hillfort (negative/minor). With this

in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development can be assessed as negative/minor. The impact of the development on any buried archaeological resource would be permanent and irreversible.

16. Landkey: Birch Road

A geophysical survey was carried out on land on Birch Road, north of the village. It indicated that there were very few features of archaeological origin present within the area of the proposed residential development. Those features that were present related primarily to historic field boundaries that were removed in the 20th century. Nevertheless, the report contains a useful summary of the history of the village and ownership of the site.

17. Landkey: Harford Cross

A magnetometer survey was carried out on a site alongside the A361 North Devon Link Road, just to the east of Harford Cross. The differences in magnetic responses across the Survey Area were sufficient to be able to differentiate between anomalies representing possible buried archaeology and background magnetic responses. No magnetic anomaly groups represented potential archaeological deposits. Two groups were likely to represent modern deposits or ground disturbance; an area ferrous material mixed with stony deposits and an area of ferrous material possibly associated with a service. One group was likely to represent a ferrous service cable, pipe or drain.

18. Landkey: Land off Vicarage and Manor Roads

A trench evaluation was carried out on a site to the north-west of the junction of Manor Road and Vicarage Road, in the historic core of Landkey just to the east of the parish church. The evaluation identified seven features across the three trenches, all post-medieval or more probably 18th or 19th century in date. Some of these features corresponded with a building shown on the site on the 1845 tithe map, but it appeared that this structure was comprehensively demolished before c.1880. Following its demolition, a drain was dug that destroyed the western wall of the building, and a very large feature was excavated to the east; the fills of the latter feature were waterlogged, and it was likely to relate to the drainage of the site. Almost all of the material recovered from the site could be dated to the 18th and 19th century and was domestic in character.

19. Martinhoe: Shippon and Birch Cottage

The following is the Abstract from the report lodged on the ADS website.

South West Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned to undertake historic building recording for the Shippon and Birch Cottage, Town Farm, Martinhoe, Exmoor, Devon. This work was undertaken in order to determine the significance of the buildings and help inform a proposed planning submission. Birch Cottage and the Shippon form part of Town Farm at Martinhoe. The Shippon is Grade II Listed and, although Birch Cottage is not, it falls within the curtilage of the Listed building. Both appear to have been misjudged during their listing inspections and appear to form part of a medieval hall complex. The evidential value of the site is high, as many lean-tos and modern rendering treatments obscure the historic fabric of the buildings, masking information relating to their development and functions. Multiple periods of conversion, repair and a fire have all contributed to the loss of a great deal of fittings and historic fabric on the site and the disuse of the Shippon, in particular, puts it at risk of further loss. In overall terms, Birch Cottage and the Shippon have suffered badly in the 19th and 20th centuries from well-meaning but poorly-informed alteration and maintenance. On balance, any negative effect (harm) of the proposals must be set against the benefit of returning a structure in declining condition to good use; in those terms the impact of the proposals is adjudged to be neutral overall.

20. **Newton Tracey: Land north of Hunters Inn (2 reports)**

The following is the Abstract from two reports lodged by SWARCH on the ADS website.

The results of a geophysical survey and evaluation carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on land north of Hunters' Inn, Newton Tracey, Devon. The site is located just north of the historic core of the village and north-west of its 13th century church. The evaluation on Land North of Hunters Inn identified a total of 19 features, all seemingly post-medieval or modern in date and relating to agricultural activity, including historic field boundaries; land drainage; and modern services. Of these, four ditches and two banks represent a removed historic field boundary depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping; five were modern service trenches; two were probably drainage gullies; two were stone drains; one was a possible post-hole; and three were likely natural features. Few of the features produced dating evidence, but those which did contained post-medieval and later finds. The character of the fills and their association with other features and the existing field system would suggest that they are all however post-medieval or modern in date. The north-south orientated boundaries are likely to have had medieval antecedents or origins. Given the results of the archaeological evaluation and its corroboration of the geophysical survey, the overall archaeological potential for the site appears low and it is not recommended that any further archaeological investigations should be undertaken in relation to this site.

21. Newton Tracey: Field adjacent to Thomas A Becket Church

This report presents the results of a heritage impact assessment and geophysical survey carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) for land adjacent to Thomas a Becket Church, Newton Tracey, Devon.

The site is located at the western end of a field containing a possible Roman Fortlet or signal station noted on the Devon HER; in c.1840 the site of the proposed development fell within a plot of land known as the Burrows.

The survey identified several geophysical anomalies of clear archaeological interest, principally the ditches of what was likely to be a multi-vallate Late Prehistoric enclosure rather than a Roman Fortlet. Relict historic field boundaries and a series of other, undiagnostic, anomalies were also identified. Most of the significant features were not located within the footprint of the proposed site, but the long access route track crossed several linear anomalies, including the Late Prehistoric enclosure ditch. On the basis of the geophysical survey, the archaeological potential of the site appeared to be medium/high; the proposed development would have a negative/moderate impact.

In terms of indirect impacts, most of the designated heritage assets within the wider area were located at such a distance or location to minimise the impact of the proposed development, or else the contribution of setting to overall significance was less important than other factors. The proposed development was unlikely to be particularly visible within the landscape as it is located behind the brow of the hill. However, there was likely to be an appreciable and cumulative impact upon the setting of the church of St Thomas a Becket (negative/minor to moderate), with it no longer being at the eastern limit of the settlement. With this in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development could be assessed as negative/moderate. The impact of the development on any buried archaeological resource would be permanent and irreversible.

22. Pilton West: Roborough House Hotel site

This report presents the results of an archaeological and heritage assessment carried out by SWARCH for land at Roborough House Hotel, Pilton, Barnstaple, Devon, in advance of a planning application for the site.

The site is located on the footprint of the former Roborough House Hotel, a short distance north-east of the Barnstaple suburb of Pilton. Few records are available relating to the house, but some of the features of its landscaped gardens survive, including the partial remains of the Grade II Listed folly and Grade II Listed

summerhouse and terrace. The house itself was demolished following a fire in the late 20th century which left the buildings structurally unsafe. The site lies c.120m south-west of Burrige Hillfort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The former house site formed an obvious void in what remained a cohesive and well preserved, if obscured, small parkland landscape. It negatively contributed to the wider location at present, emphasising the loss of the former pocket estate. It was considered that the character of the wider site could be improved by the rebuilding of a substantial and well considered building, provided its aesthetics were carefully considered to compliment the woodland and surviving structures. Additional benefits could be in facilitating the active management of the woodland and parkland features and structures.

In terms of direct impacts, it appeared that the footings and floors of the former house likely survive to some extent, and it was recommended that a programme of archaeological recording be undertaken as part of any future development of the site. There was also potential for the survival of earlier archaeological features/deposits, although the post-medieval landscaping may have removed all/most traces for much of the site.

In terms of indirect impacts, most of the designated heritage assets in the wider area were located at such a distance to minimise the impact of the proposed development, or else the contribution of setting to overall significance was less important than other factors. The landscape context of many of these buildings and monuments was such that they would be partly or wholly insulated from the effects of the proposed development by a combination of local blocking from trees, buildings or embankments, or that other modern intrusions had already impinged upon their settings. The three assets which lay in close proximity and were considered in detail in this assessment would be unaffected by the proposed development (neutral), with minor impacts to the Historic Landscape (negligible).

With this in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development could be assessed as neutral. The impact of the development on any buried archaeological resource may be permanent and irreversible but could be mitigated through a programme of archaeological recording.

23. Rose Ash: West Catkill Farm

Monitoring and recording were carried out during groundworks for the construction of a lagoon. The site lies in an area of high archaeological potential with two scheduled bowl barrows 80m to the south-east. A single linear drainage ditch was identified running across the site, with a few finds in the fill material. Although these included a

couple of struck flints, mediaeval coarseware and 17th to 18th century glazed ware, they were considered to be residual artefacts.

24. South Molton: Norrington Yard,

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out for a site at Norrington Yard, South Molton, Devon, to inform the future use of the site. This work was preceded by a desk-based assessment, walkover survey and heritage impact assessment by SWARCH (2017).

Six trenches were excavated across the site targeting areas of higher archaeological potential: the footprint of lost historic buildings; the lines of burgage plot boundaries; and less disturbed areas. However, Norrington Yard had been thoroughly landscaped. The ground had been levelled and made up, on more than one occasion across parts of the site, during the 20th century. Extensive services including electric cables and drains criss-crossed the site and followed the line of earlier boundaries, including the posited medieval burgage plot boundaries. Apart from sporadic debris within made-ground deposits, there did not appear to be any surviving below-ground remains of the buildings depicted on historic mapping across the western part of the site. The dating evidence recovered from this debris was post-medieval to modern in date. It was likely that any archaeological deposits present across the central part of the site had been truncated by 20th century activity.

The survival of a subsoil in the grassy south-east corner of the site, and a land-drain in the northern part of the site, may indicate the potential for the survival of archaeological remains or deposits in these areas. However, even here it seemed unlikely given the archaeological deposits, finds or features in these trenches. No significant archaeological remains or deposits were identified in the evaluation. The high-potential areas identified by the desk-based assessment were found to be very disturbed, truncated or rendered inaccessible by standing structures or modern services. On the basis of this investigation the archaeological potential of the central part of the site was assessed as low to negligible; the archaeological potential of the northern and southern parts of the site was assessed as low.

25. Stoke Rivers: Chapel House

This report presents the results of a desk-based assessment, geophysical survey, heritage impact assessment and evaluation trenching carried out for land North of Chapel House, Stoke Rivers, North Devon as part of the planning submissions for the site for a residential development.

The site is located to the west of the Parish Church of St. Bartholomew, occupying part of a field shown as a single larger field from at least the early 19th century. The field was subsequently sub-divided in the 20th century.

The geophysical survey identified eleven groups of anomalies the most significant of which were probable ditch features associated with removed boundaries. Possible modern services and disturbed ground were identifiable in the southern part of the survey area. The results of the geophysical survey served to highlight areas to target during the evaluation excavations.

The evaluation trenching validated the results of the geophysical survey, and six ditches, the remnants of a hedgebank and a lead water pipe were exposed and excavated. The majority of these features dated to the post-medieval or modern era, although a small assemblage of residual late medieval material was also recovered. On the basis of the geophysical survey, evaluation trenching and desk-based assessment the archaeological potential of the site appeared to be low.

In terms of indirect impacts, most of the designated heritage assets in the wider area would not be impacted upon by the proposed development. Three assets which lay in close proximity to the site and were considered in detail in this assessment, only the high value Grade I Listed Church of St. Bartholomew's would suffer any level of impact, and this largely being caused by its high sensitivity and proximity to the site. Overall, the impact of the development would have slight to minor impacts to the Historic Landscape and heritage assets within it (negligible to negative minor), with much of this reflective of some cumulative effect.

With this in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development could be assessed as neutral to negligible. The impact of the development on the low valued buried archaeological resource may be permanent and irreversible.

26. Tawstock: Eastacombe Chapel

The former Baptist Chapel lies in a slightly isolated location between Eastacombe and Tawstock. A heritage statement was prepared in order to support a Listed Building Consent application for the conversion of the building into a single residential dwelling. The building is Grade II Listed. It was built in 1818 as a Baptist chapel, and has remained relatively unchanged. The principal later 20th-century alterations comprised the enlargement of the first-floor gallery and replacement of the associated stairs, along with the subdivision of a north extension into a kitchen and toilets.

The significance of the chapel was drawn from its historical, architectural, communal and aesthetic values, as well as its setting. The scheme would cause negligible harm

through the removal of the pews from the chapel, but overall, the heritage values contributing towards its significance remained either unchanged or very slightly altered. Therefore, no change to the significance or special interest of the building was predicted.

27. West Down: Willingcott Valley Holiday Village

Willingcott Holiday Village lies at the western edge of West Down parish, where it abuts Mortehoe parish. According to the report, the settlement at Willingcott appeared to have been focused around the western end of the development site; the eastern side appearing to be agricultural land from at least from the nineteenth century. The construction of the railway in the later 19th century led to the demolition of one farmhouse and its associated farm buildings.

The assessment suggested that the proposal site lay in an area of little-known archaeological evidence, on land which was largely agricultural fields until its conversion into a golf course and holiday complex in the later twentieth century. It was evident that the countryside around the site was utilised quite intensively for military purposes during the Second World War and the HER data suggested that Area N of the US assault training centre may have included the south western part of the site. The only archaeological features recorded on the Devon HER within 1km of the site dating prior to the medieval period in this area were a scatter of worked flints dating from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age and an earthwork, possibly an iron age enclosure or hill fort, both located to the south-west.

The archaeological potential for much this site was considered to be low to moderate, with a limited potential for encountering prehistoric archaeological remains and a moderate potential at the western end of the site to encounter medieval and post-medieval buildings and activity in the area of the extant buildings, which may have historically extended further to the south of the present settlement.

The railway line and 20th century leisure uses of the site have likely resulted in some areas of significant landscaping and truncation, but this appeared to have been relatively localised.

Conclusions

Despite the larger number of reports for North Devon lodged with the ADS in 2018, few reveal significant new finds. The three of greatest interest are probably the evaluation trenching at the site of the extension to the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon in Barnstaple, which confirmed the earlier industrial uses of the riverside

site, the historic building recording of the Shippon and Birch Cottage, Martinhoe, which revealed that the buildings were probably older and of greater historical significance than the listing would imply, and the assessment of the site north-east of the parish church at Newton Tracey. Here the geophysics survey shed more light on the Romano-British feature in the field, suggesting that it was older than the Roman fortlet that it was previously considered to represent. Indeed, there is a suggestion that the two ovoid features identified from mapping and geophysics work may have formed the origin of the early mediaeval settlement.

Of the remaining reports a few at least provided valuable desk-based assessments of their locations, even if nothing new was revealed.

7th April 2020