

REPORTS COVERING TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL 2023

Table 1 sets out the reports filed with Archaeological Data Services at York relating to 2023. In 2023 some 13 sites in 11 parishes were the subject of reports. There was also a report on a proposed electrical cable route that crossed 6 parishes. Just two contractors undertook this work, with South West Archaeology producing all the specific site reports and SUMO Geophysics providing the report on the cable route across six parishes. The reports are then discussed in a little more detail, in alphabetical order of parish, as in Table 1. A brief synthesis of the findings of 2023 completes the document.

Table 1 Summary of reports for 2023

Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Abbotsham	Pig-on-the-Hill	SS426 282	S W Archaeology	Archaeological Evaluation Trenching	Construction of holiday lets
Bideford	Tanton's Hotel	SS454 264	S W Archaeology	Environmental Impact Assessment of flood barriers	Installation of flood barriers in Grade 2 Listed Building
Bradworthy	Lower Village	SS326 140	S W Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation and trenching	Building of 4 dwellings
Clovelly	Clovelly Cross	SS312 234	S W Archaeology	Archaeological Watching Brief	Underground electrical cable
Great Torrington	23 South Street	SS495 190	S W Archaeology	Historic Building Recording and monitoring	Modernisation, renovation and reuse
Halwill	Crosspark	SX458 976	Archaeological Research Services	Archaeological Test Excavation	Replacement of telecommunications mast
	Denelea, Chilla Rd Halwill Junction	SS444 007	S W Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring and recording	Single dwelling
High Bickington	Little Bickington	SS602 202	S W Archaeology	Heritage Statement	Housing: 40 dwelling units

	Lane				
Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Holsworthy	Industrial Estate, Trewyn Road	SS339 048	S W Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation and trenching	Future development not specified
Little Torrington	Cleave Cottage, Taddiport	SS479 185	S W Archaeology	Heritage Assessment	Proposed demolition and replacement by new dwelling
Northam	Hampton Park, Raleigh Hill	SS441 2877	S W Archaeology	Archaeological Evaluation	Building of 3 dwellings
	15 The Quay Appledore	SS465 305	S W Archaeology	Historic Building Recording	Proposed refurbishment
Thornbury	Windy Cross Farm	SS390 079	S W Archaeology	Heritage Assessment	Rebuilding of farmhouse
		SS390 079	S W Archaeology	Historic Building Recording (updated & revised)	
Multi-parish (Abbotsham, Alverdiscott, Alwington, Bideford, Huntshaw, Littleham, Weare Giffard),	180 trial sites		SUMO Geophysics	Geophysical survey	Major electrical cable

The reports from 2023

1. Abbotsham: Pig-on-the-Hill

The report was of evaluation trenching at the Pig-on-the-Hill, about 1.8 kilometres north of Abbotsham village. The planning application was for the construction of holiday lets. The site adjoins one of the medieval farmsteads of the parish. Two

trenches were excavated under supervision by machine. No archaeological features were uncovered, and no finds made.

2. Bideford: Tanton's Hotel

The report was a Heritage Assessment in the context of the proposed installation of flood barriers to windows and doors of this Grade 2 Listed Building. The building itself had been the subject of two reports in 2014, a Desk-Based Assessment and a Historic Building Record. These outlined the complex history of the building and its role as a prominent feature of the waterfront townscape to the south of Bideford Long Bridge. It was assessed that the installation of demountable flood barriers would have a neutral impact on the heritage value of the building.

3. Bradworthy: Lower Village

The report was on archaeological trial trenching on a site proposed for the construction of four dwelling houses. The site lies 100 metres north-east of Bradworthy parish church. Four trenches were excavated under supervision by machine into the subsoil. No archaeological features and no finds were made. It could be surmised that the site lay beyond the original medieval core the 'worthy' as represented by the present square and so the absence of archaeology is not unexpected.

4. Clovelly: Clovelly Cross

The report was of archaeological monitoring and recording during installation of cabling beneath the B3237 and within the boundaries of the Clovelly Dykes Scheduled Monument. Two sections of trenching were excavated under supervision by machine. These were each approximately 15 metres in length and dug to a depth of about 0.7 metres. Trench one showed only materials relating to the constriction of the road and trench two also showed road construction above the subsoil. No archaeological features were observed, and no finds were made.

5. Great Torrington: 23 South Street

The report is of an Historic Building Recording in 2018 and monitoring during 2022/3, when work was carried out to remove panelling in some of the rooms. The site is a nineteenth century amalgamation of two buildings and was reconfigured at the same time. It is on the north side of South Street, and about 100 metres south of the parish

church. It is currently a Grade II Listed Building and there are other Listed Buildings in close proximity. Building 1 may well contain some medieval material in some of its walls but appears largely to be late seventeenth century in date and quite probably one of the properties rebuilt following the destruction of much of the town centre in 1646 in the last battle of the English Civil War. Building 2 is a new construction of the late seventeenth century but fewer period features have survived than in Building 1. The panelling occurs in several rooms in Building 1 and in one room in Building 2. The panelling was probably salvaged from properties destroyed or badly damaged in 1646. This has been removed for conservation and will be returned to the building for re-installation. Downpipes and a hopper on the street frontage have the date 1832, but the reports suggests that this was after the main reconfiguration which appears to be perhaps a couple of decades earlier. Given the quantity and quality of seventeenth and early eighteenth-century fabric surviving, the reports suggests that a regrading to Grade 2* Listed status would be justified. The present work to return the building to a mixture of office, residential, and community uses is to be guided by the findings of the report.

6. Halwill: Crosspark

The report was of archaeological monitoring of a test pit at the site, prior to work to replace an existing telecommunications mast. The site is within 20 metres of Henderbarrow, a round barrow of late Neolithic/Early Bronze, and one of a cemetery complex running from Halwill Junction to Bradbury. A test pit of 5.7 x 2.0 metres was excavated under supervision by machine down to the natural substrate. It was found that the topsoil was much disturbed and contained rubble and fly-tipped material. The pit disclosed no archaeological features and no finds.

7. Halwill: Denelea, Chilla Road

The report was on archaeological monitoring of trial trenches dug at the site of a proposed single dwelling. The site lies about 700 metres north of Halwill Junction and about 250 metres from the Halwill Junction round barrow group. The trenches were excavated under supervision by machine. No archaeological features were encountered and no finds made.

8. High Bickington: Little Bickington Lane

The report was an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site ahead of a proposed housing development with 40 dwellings. It lies about 600 metres south-south-east of High Bickington church and on land that formerly was part of a Devon County Council farm. The Tithe Survey showed that the three fields were then owned by the Pincombe's Charity and then were part of the land purchase in 1922 that

created the DCC farm. Cartographic sources, LiDAR and air photography suggested that there were no obvious signs of archaeology on the site, but the report recommended geophysical survey to confirm the absence of archaeology.

9. Holsworthy: Trewyn Road Industrial Estate

The report was of archaeological evaluation by test trenching of features previously identified by geophysical survey. The site comprises two fields, approximately 750 metres north of Holsworthy. Four trenches were dug under supervision by machine. The only features found were field drain ditches. A circular anomaly suggested by geophysics proved to be a modern feature of unknown function and no finds were made within its footprint. The trenches yielded modern earthenware, a single sherd of post-medieval earthenware, although no place of production could be ascribed to it, and a single flake of unworked flint.

10. Little Torrington: Cleave Cottage, Taddiport

The report is of a Heritage Assessment of Cleave Cottage, about one kilometre west of Taddiport and adjoining Frizenham Farm. It was formerly Cleave Farm. The development proposed involves the demolition of the existing house and a new dwelling to be built a few metres to the north. The building itself is of cob with render and probably dates from the eighteenth century. It has been much altered in the intervening years but retains some of the character of a Devon farmhouse from the eighteenth century. It was purchased in 1838 by Charles Roberts, the uncle of the noted local historian and archaeologist John Roberts Chanter. Some of the nineteenth century character of the interior has survived, and the reports concludes that while the building is not of listable quality, it is nonetheless a heritage asset of local value and as such probably merits retention and sensitive restoration. Should demolition be allowed, then a full Building Recording is recommended.

11. Northam: Hampton Park, Raleigh Hill

The report was of evaluation trenching on a site where it was intended to build three dwellings. It lies in the Raleigh Hill area of Bideford, but within Northam parish. It is about 1.5 kilometres north-west of Bideford and a similar distance south of Northam parish church. Three trenches were dug under supervision by machine. The only features found were former land drains and a few sherds of white earthenware pottery of nineteenth or twentieth century date.

12. Northam: 15, The Quay, Appledore

The report is an Historic Building Recording of a house at the southern end of Appledore Quay. The house is in a fair state of repair but with some damp penetration, and the survey was to inform refurbishment. It is a Grade II Listed Building and lies within the Appledore Conservation area. It is a three story, stucco fronted building and is very much in character with the other buildings along the Quay. The exact date of the house remains uncertain, but its interior fittings are those of the nineteenth century. It is shown on all surviving mapping from the nineteenth century but identifying its occupants is problematic as the Enumerator's Book for Appledore does not give house numbers and street names. In the 1911 the house was occupied by Thomas H Fishwick, described as a sail maker and ship chandler. The Fishwicks were one of Appledore's leading maritime families. The report does not note that in the 1911 Mercantile Navy List, William Fishwick was the owner and master of one of Appledore's better known ketches, the *H F Bolt*.

13. Thornbury: Windy Cross Farm

Two reports concern this building, which was badly damaged by fire in November 2022. One is a Heritage Statement and the other is an Historic Building Record, which was started before the fire and is now revised in the light of information gleaned from the damaged building and survival of fabric. Windy Cross is a hamlet in the parish, lying about 800 metres east of Woodacott and 1 kilometre south-south-west of Thornbury church. It was a one and a half story structure before fire damage, with some outbuildings. The core is almost certainly medieval and the original hall extending the full two stories in part of the house can be identified. This is of cob. It has been altered, becoming for a period two dwellings, but with most of the surviving fixtures and fittings being nineteenth century. The hall appears to have had a first floor installed in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century and outbuildings added between the Tithe Map of 1839 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey Twenty-Five Inch to the Mile map of 1885. The Historic Building Record report notes that the proposed reconstruction and renovation is sensitive and sympathetic and entirely justified by the building's evolution from a medieval hall to a typical nineteenth century farmhouse. There can

be no question of Listing the building since its fire, but it is clearly of great local value and wider interest.

14. Linear site through Abbotsham, Alverdiscott, Alwington, Bideford, Huntshaw, Littleham, and Weare Giffard.

The report is of a geophysical survey of the route for the proposed X-Link trunk electricity cable from its landfall in Abbotsham parish, around the south of Bideford, and to its termination at the National Grid sub-station in Alverdiscott. Magnetometry was used along the full length of the route. The report refers to 180 sites, each being a field through which the route passes. The report notes that there are 24 Historic Environment Records for the route, ranging from scatters of flint artefacts to field names of interest as recorded in the Tithe Surveys of c 1840. Probable archaeology was found in 14 of the sites. Most of the anomalies appeared to be ditches and former hedge banks of fields removed in the post-medieval period. Site 70 possibly shows traces of a pre-medieval fields system. Such systems have been previously identified west of Bideford ahead of housing development. Site 41 shows an anomaly that appears to be a barrow and sites 74, 83, 88, and 94 have anomalies that appear to be ring ditches. The report solely presents the geophysical survey results and offers the minimum of interpretation and is intended to guide further archaeological work should the route be approved and before construction commences.

Discussion

There is no outstanding finding reported in the *Gey Literature* for 2023. This partly reflects the relatively small-scale nature of developments, the X-Link cable route easily being the exception. It is perhaps surprising that work on sites close to known pre-historic archaeology found very little to add to our knowledge. Two buildings perhaps do merit some comment. Windy Cross Farm in Thornbury, even before its partial destruction by fire, did not look to be a building of much interest. Work there showed that the nucleus of the structure had been a later medieval hall, which was later given a first floor. Number 23 South Street in Torrington is a Grade II Listed Building and recording of the building after its Jacobean panelling, probably recycled from houses damaged in the English Civil War, showed it to have had a complex history and retained perhaps enough original features to merit upgrading to Grade II* status. The X-Link route geophysical survey suggests that further archaeological investigation of parts of the route should show some interesting features and even trial trenching where no

anomalies were found might well produce artefacts, especially in Abbotsham parish which already has had many flint scatters found by field walking.