

REPORTS COVERING TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL 2011

Table 1 sets out the reports filed with Archaeological Data Services at York relating to 2011. 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 2011 completes the document.

Table 1 Summary of reports for 2011

Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Abbotsham	Kenwith Castle	SS 433 275	SW Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring	Small residential development
Alverdiscott	Webbery Barton	SS 508 250	Archaeological Research Services	Desk-Based Assessment and site walk-over	Wind farm
Beaford	Cowflop Cross	SS 584 150	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Geophysical survey	Solar farm
Bideford	Grenville College former playing fields	SS 439 265	Oxford Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation	Large scale residential development
Bideford	Manteo Way	SS 466 265	S W Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation	Large scale residential development
Broadwoodwidge	Church Town Farm	SX 411 892	Exeter Archaeology	Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief	Barn conversion to dwelling
Clawton	Old Church Town	SX 349 992	S W Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring and recording	Barn conversion to residential use
Frithelstock	Clinton Arms	SS 464 195	S W Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring and recording	Dwelling extension and new access
Great Torrington	New Street and Torridge View	SS48 19	S W Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring	New gas-main
Great Torrington	38 Taddipport	SS 487 186	Exeter Archaeology	Archaeological watching brief	New driveway
Hartland	Harbourcross, Meddon	SS 286 188	Cornwall Archaeological Unit	Archaeological Assessment and Watching Brief	Wind farm
Hollacombe	Foxcombe Farm	SS 382 027	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based-Assessment	Solar farm
Holsworthy	The Manor House, Chapel Street	SS 343 037	Context One	Desk-Based Appraisal and on-site evaluation	Small residential development

Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Holsworthy	Crown & Sceptre, Fore Street	SS 344 038	Allen Archaeology	Archaeological watching brief	New dwelling
Holsworthy	Livestock Centre, Under Lane	SS 344 034	AC Archaeology	Trench evaluation	New residential development
Merton	Great Potheridge	SS 514 146	Richard Parker	Historic Building Assessment	Internal alterations
West Putford	Whealers Cross	SS 347 135	AC Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation	Wind farm
Winkleigh	Hollocombe Barton	SS 630 113	Exeter Archaeology	Archaeological recording and monitoring	Small sewage treatment plant

Thus some 18 sites were examined in 14 parishes. A total of 10 commercial organisations were involved, with South West Archaeology producing 5 reports; Exeter Archaeology producing 3 reports; 2 reports came from AC Archaeology and Durham University Archaeological Services; and single reports from Allen Archaeology, Archaeological Research Services, Context One, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Oxford Archaeology and Richard Parker. The most common forms of development producing reports were renewable energy farms, both solar and wind and residential development ranging from extensions and single dwellings to some quite large scale housing projects.

Reports

1. *Abbotsham: Kenwith Castle*

The report concerned archaeological monitoring during the ground-works for a small scale residential development in the grounds. The site lies on the eastern boundary of the parish and about 1.2km north-east of the village of Abbotsham. By the nineteenth century the site had become a house in its own grounds with the enigmatic Kenwith Castle proper about 200 metres south-east of the proposed development. The report does not examine Kenwith Castle, which has been interpreted as a possible prehistoric feature, as a Saxon or possibly Norman motte, or as a much later feature in a landscape garden setting. At the site of the development ground-works exposed a number of field drains which had been packed with sherds of post-medieval North Devon coarse-ware and a few sherds of higher quality china probably from Bristol or Staffordshire. Unstratified finds in the top-soil included a small number of sherds of probable medieval pottery but not further identification was possible.

2. *Alverdiscott: Webbery Barton*

The report was a Desk-Based -Assessment and later site walk-over for a site of a proposed wind farm which straddles the parish boundary between Alverdiscott (to the north) and Huntshaw (to the south). It lies about 1.2 kilometres west of Alverdiscott

church and a similar distance south east of Webbery Barton. Webbery Barton was a Domesday manor and within two kilometres of the site lie both an Iron Age settlement and a Roman marching camp. These are acknowledged in the report which notes a relative paucity of entries in the Historic Environment Record and whilst the wind farm proposed would have no impact on known heritage assets, the report concludes that there is potential for much archaeology to be revealed as work progresses on the site.

3. *Beaford: Cowflop Cross*

The report concerns a gradiometry survey of a proposed wind farm and covered four fields and a total area of 23.5 hectares. The site lies on the eastern boundary of Beaford parish and about 3.5 kilometres east of the parish church. The survey confirmed the existence of two features known from crop-marks on air photographs dating back to 1948. One was an oval ditched enclosure about 65 metres long and 48 metres wide. The report makes no speculation as to what this feature might be. The other is what the report terms a "multi-vallate complex" with a maximum circumference of about 130 metres and a diameter of about 105 metres. The gradiometry data support the probability of there being at least three ditches. This latter feature would appear to be similar to other presumed Iron Age settlement sites in North Devon, although here the setting is less readily explicable in terms of a defensive function.

4. *Bideford: former Grenville College playing fields, Abbotsham Road*

The report is an archaeological evaluation of site preparation in advance of a large housing development to the south of Abbotsham Road, about 1.5 kilometres west of Bideford town centre. Prior to development, this had been the playing fields complex for Grenville College and once formed the landscaped park of Moreton House. A total of forty one trenches were dug across the site, uncovering old field boundaries and ditches. These and the top-soil yielded moderate quantities of post-medieval and modern pottery sherds, principally North Devon gravel-tempered ware and a few sherds of North Devon slip-ware. A few clay-pipe fragments were also found. From an unstratified context came a single piece of worked flint. The relative paucity of finds may be explained by the use of the land for agriculture until Moreton House was built in the eighteenth century and then by landscaping and earth-moving in conjunction with first the house and then for use as playing fields.

5. *Bideford: Manteo Way (land to east and west)*

The report covers archaeological evaluation of a site straddling Manteo Way, East the Water, where large scale housing development was planned. Manteo Way is a relatively modern addition to the road network and gives easier access to sites on the Alverdiscott Road industrial estate. It lies about 1 kilometre east of Bideford Long Bridge and the area has had a long history of mining for the pigment Bideford Black. Trial trenches were cut on both sides of Manteo Way. Nothing was found in a

stratified context in any of the trenches but the top soil yielded a handful of sherds of pottery, including sixteenth or seventeenth century North Devon coarse-ware, seventeenth or eighteenth century North Devon sgraffito ware and eighteenth century North Devon slip-ware.

6. *Broadwoodwidge: Church Town Farm*

The report covered Historic Building Recording and an Archaeological Watching Brief on the conversion of a barn to a dwelling house. The site lies within the historic core of Broadwoodwidge village and adjoins the parish church. The barn itself was believed to have been built in the mid nineteenth century and had extensions added sometime in the early twentieth century. The barn is built of local stone with a slate roof. It lies on a slope so that at the front of the building access is to the ground floor, which had originally been used to house animals, but at the rear, access is to the first floor which was used for threshing and grain storage. When constructed, there had been a semi-circular horse-engine shed but this had been demolished later in the twentieth century. The watching brief focused on trenches and groundwork for the conversion and no archaeology was encountered.

7. *Clawton: Old Church Town*

The report was of archaeological monitoring and recording during the conversion of a barn to residential use. The site lies in Clawton Church Town, about 100 metres north of the church, but 500 metres west of the modern village on the Holsworthy to Launceston road. The top-soil was stripped and within this, 27 sherds of North Devon gravel-tempered ware were found, roughly equal numbers of twelfth or thirteenth century date and of fourteenth or fifteenth century date. There were also 4 sherds of post-medieval North Devon gravel-tempered ware.

8. *Frithelstock: Clinton Arms*

The report was on archaeological monitoring and recording during the extension of an existing house and construction of new access at the Clinton Arms. This lies in Frithelstock village about 150 metres south of the parish church and the ruins of Frithelstock Priory, a subordinate house of the Augustinian Hartland Abbey. Two pits were dug as part of the ground-work and these yielded two sherds of eighteenth century North Devon coarse-ware. A larger area was stripped of top-soil and two small fragments of medieval North Devon gravel tempered pottery were found. The ground-works also uncovered a feature perhaps best interpreted as part of a pond and which may have been part of the priory complex.

9. *Great Torrington: New Street and Torridge View*

The report covers archaeological monitoring during the construction of a new gas-main along New Street. As the name implies, New Street lies to the north and west of the

historic core of Great Torrington and the burgage strips probably only reach New Street at its eastern end. The only archaeology recovered during operations was two eighteenth or nineteenth clay-pipe stems.

10. *Great Torrington: 38 Taddiport*

The report covers an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a new driveway. Taddiport lies at the foot of Mill Street running down from Great Torrington and was an early medieval nucleus. Nothing was found in a stratified context but a considerable quantity of post-medieval North Devon coarse-ware was recovered and a single sherd of Portuguese tin-glazed faience, probably of sixteenth century origin.

11. *Hartland: Harbourcross, Meddon*

The report was an archaeological assessment and watching brief for a wind farm about 1 kilometre north-east of Meddon hamlet, at the extreme southern end of Hartland parish. The site lay within an area of modern enclosures which probably had themselves resulted from modifications of post-medieval fields. Not a great deal appears in the Historic Environment Record for the immediate vicinity and all the trenches dug as part of the site preparation produced no archaeology. The report concluded that there was potential for archaeology to be found as work progressed and that the farm itself would have a wide field of visibility.

12. *Hollacombe: Foxcombe Farm*

The report was a desk-based assessment and site walk-over for a solar farm. Foxcombe Farm is not one of the more ancient farms within the parish and appears to have been carved from the lands of Tredown, which is one of the later medieval farmsteads. The relatively recent creation of the farm meant that it had left only limited documentary record and the Historic Environment Record showed nothing within or adjacent to the proposed development.

13. *Holsworthy: The Manor House, Chapel Street*

The report is a desk-based appraisal and on site monitoring of a small residential development site to the rear of the property and possibly at the extreme southern edge of the town's burgage plots. It lies about 350 metres south of the parish church, on the eastern side of Chapel Street. Four evaluation trenches were dug but the results were disappointing and the only finds were of post-medieval pottery sherds, more likely to be of late eighteenth century or later, which were probably dumped here as fill and/or for refuse disposal.

14. Holsworthy: Crown and Sceptre, Fore Street

The report covered an archaeological watching brief during the ground-work for a single new dwelling to the rear of the public house. The site lies about 250 metres south of the parish church and possibly within the burgage plots of the town. Monitoring of the trenches for the foundations yielded only fragments of late eighteenth and nineteenth century coarse pottery, glass, and clay-pipe stems and bowls.

15. Holsworthy: Livestock Centre, Under Lane

The report covered evaluation trenching at the former livestock market site on the south side of Under Lane, about 500 metres south of the parish church. The market was constructed piecemeal in the years after the railway arrived in Holsworthy. With the livestock market relocated, this site was sold for residential development. Five trial trenches were dug, although dense scrub and overhead power lines meant that the original sampling strategy could not be followed. None of the trenches yielded any archaeology.

16. Merton: Great Potheridge

The report is a historic building assessment of Great Potheridge, which lies about 3 kilometres north-west of Merton village. It was the site one of the Domesday manors in the parish and was the birth-place of General George Monk, a key figure in the Restoration of King Charles II. As Lord Albemarle, he had a 'grand mansion' built at Potheridge but seems either never to have lived there or only for a brief period. The direct family line died out and much of the grand mansion was demolished in the 1730s, leaving the present house, probably the southern and eastern wings of the original building. The report was occasioned by reconfiguration of the ground floor and the removal of some relatively recent stud walls. Ascertaining the relationship of the surviving house to its much larger predecessor and the original functions of the rooms have taxed architectural historians in previous assessments and this report was unable to reach any more definitive conclusions. It notes the survival of the grand seventeenth century stair-case and hall with original oak panelling and elaborate painted ceiling. It also concludes that in the nineteenth century there was further demolition and rebuilding of what was left in 1730.

17. West Putford: Wheelers Cross

The report covered evaluation and monitoring of trenches being dug for a wind farm. The site lies about 2.5 kilometres east of Bradworthy village and at the extreme south west of West Putford parish about 1.3 kilometres from its parish church. The setting was among post-medieval fields and peripheral to the medieval farms in this corner of the parish. A total of 30 trenches in two fields was monitored and most produced no archaeology. In the top-soil of a few sherds of seventeenth or eighteenth century North Devon fine-wear were recovered and a single fragment of thirteenth or

fourteenth century North Devon coarse-ware. Also found in the top-soil was a single piece of worked chert.

18. Winkleigh: Hollocombe Barton

The report concerned archaeological monitoring and recording during excavations for a small sewage treatment plant at Hollocombe Barton, about 3 kilometres north of Winkleigh. Hollocombe was a Domesday manor and is now a large hamlet within Winkleigh parish. The Grade II Listed Hollacombe Barton lies about 150 metres south west of the development site. Excavations revealed three ditches and the fill in one of these produced a few sherds of thirteenth or fourteenth century North Devon coarse-ware, principally rims from cooking pots.

Discussion

Half of the reports concerned sites in or very close to the medieval cores of towns and villages. What was found in these cases was quite limited and shed very little further light on the history and development of these settlements. In the case of the Holsworthy sites, perhaps the best interpretation is that the settlement remained little more than a large village for most of its history. Most of the work at more remote rural sites also yielded little archaeology, although as several reports hinted, this may simply have been chance and that the trenches needed for construction work simply missed what may have been there. At Beaford, geophysical survey was able to confirm presence in the ground of features known from crop-marks in air photos since the late 1940s. One of these seems to be a reasonably large multi-vallate complex, although not in a classic hilltop or hill-promontory setting. Perhaps with solar and wind farm developments accounting for a significant proportion of the reports and by their nature tending to be more remote from current settlement, it was not surprising that 2011 produced little significant new archaeological knowledge.