

REPORTS COVERING TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL 2017

Table 1 sets out the reports filed with Archaeological Data Services at York relating to 2017. 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 2017 completes the document.

Table 1 Summary of reports for 2017

Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Beaford	Marshalls Mead	SS553 147	AC Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation	Residential development
Bridgerule	Canal Rise/Southfields	SS269 028	S W Archaeology	Desk-based assessment and archaeological evaluation	Residential development
Bridgerule	Churchtown Farm	SS288 032	AC Archaeology	Archaeological watching brief	Agricultural building
Buckland Brewer	Crossways	SS420 205	S W Archaeology	Desk-based study	Residential development
Clovelly	Clovelly Dykes	SS311 234	Substrata	Geophysical survey	None
Frithelstock	Pencleave Fram	SS464 194	SW Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring	Agricultural building
Great Torrington	Burwood Lane and Caddywell Lane	SS504 190	Archaeological Surveys Ltd	Geophysics	Residential development
			AC Archaeology	Evaluation trenching	
			Archaeological Landscape Investigation	Metal-detection survey	
Holsworthy Hamlets	Blagdonmoor Wharf Barn	SS361 058	SW Archaeology	Building recoding and archaeological recording	Conversion to residential use
High Bickington	Town Farm	SS598 206	SW Archaeology	Desk-based appraisal and geophysics	Residential development
Huntshaw	Berry Castle	SS495 223	Substrata	Geophysics	None
Langtree	Fore Street	SS446 154	S W Archaeology	Geophysical survey	Residential development
Lundy Island	Island and the Marine Conservation Zone	SS134 458 (mid-point of island)	English Heritage	Case study within general report on management principles	None
Northam	Burrough House	SS450 288	S W Archaeology	Geophysics and archaeological evaluation	Residential development

Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Parkham	Barton Road	SS387 214	S W Archaeology	Geophysical survey and impact assessment	Residential development
Pyworthy	Parsonage Wood	SS310 017	A C Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring and recording	Solar farm
Shebbear	Pitt Hill	SS437 444	S W Archaeology	Archaeological evaluation	Residential development
Welcombe	Little Hollacombe	SS267 249	S W Archaeology	Geophysics	Prospective, but unstated development

Thus some 17 sites were examined, one of which saw 3 different reports, and 16 parishes were involved. A total of 5 commercial organisations were involved and the statutory body, English Heritage. South West Archaeology produced 10 reports; AC Archaeology produced 4 reports; Substrata produced 2 reports and Archaeological Surveys and Archaeological Landscape Investigation each produced a single report. The most common forms of development generating reports in 2017 were residential development, usually on a small scale, and agricultural buildings.

Reports

1. *Beaford: Marshalls Mead*

The report concerned a trench evaluation ahead of a small scale residential development on the SW side of Beaford, and about 250 metres from the parish church. A ditch, perhaps a field drain or a sub-division, was exposed but no finds were made. Sites around the village had previously yielded flint artefacts.

2. *Bridgerule: Canal Rise/Southfields*

The site lies on the west bank of the Tamar, in the portion of Bridgerule parish formerly in Cornwall, and about 250 metres SW of Bridgerule Bridge. The Bude Canal's southern and longer branch to Druxton near Launceston passes through the site. The evaluation of the site was ahead of proposed residential development. The report notes that the work showed details of the canal's construction and was of interest in this regard. However, this was not felt to justify rejection or major change to the development proposal. As might have been expected for such a site, sherds of North Devon medieval coarse-ware pottery were recovered.

3. *Bridgerule: Chuchtown Farm*

The report was of an archaeological watching brief during the construction of an agricultural building at the site, adjacent to Bridgerule church and some 800 metres ENE of Bridgerule bridge. Nothing was found during the excavation of the foundations for the structure.

4. *Buckland Brewer: Crossways*

The site lies on the southern edge of the village, within the Conservation Area and about 500 metres SSW of the parish church, and was proposed for small-scale residential development. Desk-based study suggested that the site would contain limited archaeological interest and that the development would not significantly detract from the general character of the village, lying as it does behind the current frontage on the village street.

5. *Clovelly: Clovelly Dykes*

The site, one of the largest archaeological sites in northern Devon, lies astride the A39 at Clovelly Cross. The actual area investigated lies to the S of the main complex which is N of the A39. It is also not part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Clovelly Dykes has never been investigated archaeologically. North Devon Archaeological Society, in conjunction with the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, hopes to conduct excavations on these further ditches to the S, which were suggested by LiDAR. Earth resistance work showed there to be further ditches, as expected, and some evidence of field boundaries, previously not known and not shown on the Tithe Map.

6. *Frithelstock: Pencleave Farm*

The site lies 150 metres SSE of the parish church and the former Augustinian priory complex. A further agricultural building was to be constructed and the watching brief and monitoring took place as the site was being prepared. It was apparent that the whole site had been previously levelled and a bench cut into the hillslope for earlier buildings and that there was no surviving archaeology.

7. *Great Torrington: Burwood Lane and Caddywell Lane*

The site was the subject of three different reports. The first report concerns preliminary geophysical evaluation of three fields lying on the S edge of the current built-up area of Great Torrington on a slope running down to the Stevenstone Stream. The site is about 1 km E of the parish church. Housing development was proposed for the site. Magnetometry survey showed a number of linear features, probably associated with former field boundaries or field drains. A probable rectilinear

enclosure was also detected but nothing more could be established about the nature or origins of this feature.

The second report concerns evaluation trenching carried out on the probable enclosure and elsewhere within the site. The ditches of the enclosure were confirmed but no evidence was found in these to date the enclosure and it was concluded that it was probably of Iron Age or Roman-British age. No evidence of any structure within the enclosure was found. Across the site three pieces of worked flint were found and a few sherds of medieval and early-modern pottery were found.

As the site lies close to Great Torrington, it was considered that there may be evidence of the Civil War battles and skirmishes. To this end a third survey using metal-detectors was undertaken. Nothing of Civil War age was found and virtually nothing from before the early nineteenth century.

8. *High Bickington: Town Farm*

The report concerns a preliminary gradiometry survey and three evaluation trenches on a site about 100 metres N of High Bickington church, which was to see small scale residential development. The geophysics suggested a few linear features, presumed to be former field ditches or drains and a couple of other anomalies. The trenches were dug over these features. A few sherds of North Devon gravel-tempered and North Devon gravel-free ware and two sherds of medieval coarse ware were recovered. Such finds were not unexpected, given the site's location close to the heart of the village but were not deemed significant enough to merit further investigation.

9. *Holsworthy Hamlets: Blagdonmoor Wharf Barn*

The site lies some 3 kilometres NW of Holsworthy town and was the furthest point east reached by the Bude Canal in the early nineteenth century. There were plans to continue the canal eastwards and perhaps to reach Crediton and the river Creedy, but these were never attempted. The complex at Blagdonmoor contains a variety of buildings, with the warehouse being one of a more or less standard type on the Bude Canal. The report notes that none of the previous conversions of buildings to residential use have been particularly sympathetically done. The barn was to be converted to residential use. It was predominantly of early nineteenth century age, as are the other buildings on site, but one wall appeared to be rather earlier.

10. *Huntshaw: Berry Castle*

The voluntary group, Friends of Berry Castle, commissioned two geophysical surveys of Berry Castle as part of its aim to bring the management of the site back into a more sympathetic regime for the archaeology of this Scheduled Monument. In 2016 a gradiometer survey was carried out and this report concerns the follow-up magnetometer and earth-resistance surveys. Berry Castle is a presumed Iron Age enclosure on a hill spur running E-W about 1.3km SSW of Huntshaw church. All the geophysics confirmed that the enclosure was univallate, with an outer ditch and stone

outer-facing to the earthen rampart. The geophysics on uneven ground to the NE of the site and beyond the boundaries of the Scheduled Monument did not suggest that this was anything to do with the enclosure and probably represented recent quarrying activity.

11. *Langtree: Fore Street*

The site, mid-way along Fore Street and about 300 metres WNW of the parish church was proposed for small-scale residential development. Initial desk-based study suggested that there was unlikely to be much archaeological interest and a geophysical survey confirmed that there were no features of possible archaeological origin.

12. *Lundy Island*

This report contains a case study of Lundy Island, along with other case studies elsewhere in England. The principal aim was for English Heritage to establish its goals and principles for the management of the historic environment within Marine Conservation Zones, of which Lundy was one of the very first to be designated. A major concern was to establish the basis for the conservation of the marine environment that would be sympathetic and compatible with the historic environment. While the majority of historic sites on Lundy lie on-shore, the off-shore waters within the MCZ contain two scheduled wrecks. Given the relative isolation of Lundy and the presence on the island of resident conservation staff, the report concluded that there seems little likelihood of any conflicts between management objectives of the MCZ and those of the historic environment.

13. *Northam: Burrough House*

The report concerns a two-stage investigation of a site about 500 metres SSE of Northam church and adjacent to the existing Burrough House, which was a nineteenth century building within setting of the sixteenth century original. The site was to be developed for housing. A gradiometer survey showed both a curvilinear feature, presumed to be a relic of enclosed medieval strip fields, although not shown on any surviving maps, and a substantial bank which was visible, at the north. This was presumed to mark a boundary of the sixteenth century Burrough House. Both features were subsequently investigated by trial trenches. The bank seems to have been established against an earlier stone wall, which was subsequently robbed out and the bank strengthened by the addition of more soil. The original wall was most probably that marking the boundary of the original Burrough House and the earthen bank contained fragments of a medieval roof tile and sherds of sixteenth century North Devon ware and medieval North Devon coarse ware.

14. *Parkham: Barton Road*

The report concerns a two stage evaluation of the site in the centre of Parkham village. The first stage was a desk-based study and a geophysical survey and the second was trial trenching to investigate the anomalies previously identified. The principal of these was an enclosure with entrance that could possibly have been of Iron Age but might as likely be a medieval pound. The authors inclined to this latter interpretation as no finds could date it to the Iron Age and the name of the field in the Tithe Survey was Pound Meadow. A Holloway, or drove track was also identified and seemed to have been back-filled during the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Two of the four evaluation trenches dug yielded no finds, but the others produced sherds of post-medieval North Devon gravel-free pottery and a single sherd of medieval coarse-ware.

15. *Pyworthy: Parsonage Wood*

The report presents the findings from archaeological monitoring and recording on land west of Parsonage Wood, about 1.5km S of Pyworthy. The site has planning permission for a solar farm. Previous desk-based assessment and geophysical survey had suggested that there might be a curvilinear feature present but the monitoring of the groundworks for the solar farm found no trace of this, or of any artefacts suggestive of prehistoric activity on the site.

16. *Shebbear: Pitt Hill*

The report concerns trial trenching following on from a preliminary geophysical survey that suggested the presence of archaeological remains. The site lies at the NW corner of Shebbear Square and about 100 metres from St Michael's church. It was surmised that the site could possibly be that of the medieval demesne farm, which otherwise has not been identified. A total of 5 trenches were dug, focusing on the geophysical anomalies recorded. Nothing of a potential demesne farm was found but the top soil and all the trenches yielded sherds of medieval pottery, which would perhaps be expected, given the proximity of the site to the village. Trenches one and two cut through ditches and in these were found sherds of Romano-British pottery. While archaeologists and landscape historians have long suspected continuity at sites between Roman-British and Anglo-Saxon occupation, Shebbear is one of a handful of such sites where this has been confirmed.

17. *Welcombe: Little Hollacombe*

The report concerns geophysical survey done on land at Little Hollacombe, about 600 metres W of Welcombe Cross and about 3.3 km E of Welcombe church. It was intended to inform decisions about unstated developments on the site. The gradiometry survey showed many post-medieval field boundaries but also older archaeology in the form of a probable ring ditch and small enclosure,. It concluded

that any development in the northern part of the site should be preceded by evaluation trenching.

Discussion

The clear highlights of 2017 were at Shebbear and Clovelly Dykes. The former provided confirmation of continuity of occupation at Shebbear between the Romano-British period and the Anglo-Saxon. The work there also seems to make the church more central to the original medieval settlement than it now appears. Work at Clovelly Dykes supported the thesis that there were further ditches and banks to the south of the A39, as suspected, and raised the tantalising prospect of what might be found should intended excavation go ahead. By contrast, many of the sites covered by reports in 2017 effectively drew a blank with regard to significant archaeological interest. Most also would tend to confirm a subjective impression that Torridge District does not contain much archaeology. Berry Castle's main characteristics had already been established by previous survey work and the work of 2017 served to confirm these and to eliminate some speculations about surface features lying to the NE of the Scheduled Ancient Monument site. The predominance of reports triggered by residential and agricultural development reflects the collapse in wind farm construction.