

REPORTS COVERING TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL 2010

Table 1 sets out the reports filed with Archaeological Data Services at York relating to 2010. 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 2010 completes the document.

Table 1 Summary of reports for 2010

Parish	Site	Grid reference	Report Producer	Type of report	Nature of development
Ashreigny	Mudstone Cross	SS559 124	SW Archaeology	Archaeological Monitoring	Single dwelling house
Beaford	Cowflop Cross	SS584 151	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based Assessment and walk-over	Solar farm
Beaford	Upcott Barton	SS571 156	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based Assessment and walk-over	Solar farm
Bideford	Bridge Street	SS453 265	AC Archaeology	Trench Evaluation	To inform development plans
Bradworthy	Lower Alsworthy	SS294 118	SW Archaeology	Desk-Based-Assessment and Archaeological Building Recording	Barn conversion
Bradworthy	Trentworthy	SS287 152	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based-Assessment and walk over	Solar farm
Holsworthy	Former Show Ground, Trewyn Road	SS341 045	AC Archaeology	Trench Evaluation	Large scale housing development
Merton	Great Potheridge	SS514 147	Context One	Archaeological Monitoring and Recording	General building work adjoining
Milton Damerel	Higher Gidcott	SS411 092	AC Archaeology	Trench evaluation	New agricultural shed
Northam	Hanson Park, Orchard Hill	SS452 278	SW Archaeology	Archaeological Monitoring	Housing development (12 houses)
Pyworthy	Bradford Manor	SS280 009	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based Assessment and walk-over	Solar farm
Pyworthy	Derriton	SS551 029	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based Assessment and walk-over	Solar farm

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Roborough	Middle Barlington	SS557 162	Archaeological Services, Durham University	Desk-Based Assessment and walk-over	Solar farm
Welcombe	Wittheford, Darracott	SS229 179	AC Archaeology	Archaeological Watching Brief	Barn conversion
Winkleigh	Jubilee Hall	SS631 080	ACE Archaeology Club	Archaeological Watching Brief	New pathways

Thus some 15 sites were examined in 11 parishes. A total of 4 commercial organisations were involved, with Archaeological Services of Durham University producing 6 reports, AC Archaeology produced 4 reports and South West Archaeology produced 3 reports and a single report came from Context One. One further report was produced by the non-professional sector, ACE Archaeology Club, operating in mid-Devon. Solar farm proposals generated six reports and the construction of single dwellings and barn conversions also occasioned three reports. There were two reports as part of larger scale housing development.

Reports

1. *Ashreigny: Mudstone Cross*

The report was of archaeological monitoring as part of the construction of a single dwelling. The site lies in the extreme south west of Ashreigny parish about 3.5 kilometres from Ashreigny and a similar distance from Dolton. The medieval hamlet of Cherubeer lies 500 metres to the west. Monitoring took place during the stripping of the top-soil but this revealed no features or any finds.

2. *Beaford: Cowflop Cross*

The report was a desk-based assessment and walk over for a site for a proposed solar farm. It lies some 3.5km east of the parish church, right on the boundary of the parish. The surrounding area has a few entries in the Historic Environment Record but of greatest interest are two features identified in air photos as crop marks in 1948. The report recommended geophysical work to confirm the existence of these features. It concludes that the farm will otherwise have a limited impact on the historic environment.

3. *Beaford: Upcott Barton*

The report was a desk-based assessment and walk-over for a site for a proposed solar farm about 500 metres east of Upcott Barton and almost 2 kilometres east north east

of Beaford village. It also lies within a kilometre of the proposed solar farm at Middle Barlington, Roborough, covered below. The immediate site has no entries in the Historic Environment Record, although Upcott Barton itself is of medieval age and has some good examples of nineteenth century farm buildings. The report concludes that the development will have no impact on any heritage assets and makes no recommendations for further work.

4. Bideford: Bridge Street

The report is of trench evaluations on the site of Chope's car park in Bridge Street with a view to informing redevelopment proposals for the site. This lies within 100 metres of the parish church and is known to have had a complex nineteenth century history, with both a Wesleyan chapel and a Baptist chapel occupying different parts of the site. Fourteen trenches were dug but the majority of the archaeology encountered was of nineteenth century date and, although three probable graves were located in the grounds of the former Baptist chapel, there were no human remains. A considerable quantity of post-medieval pottery fragments was found and 10 clay-pipe pieces, although none had any identifying marks. A handful of sherds of late medieval coarse-ware were found and it was presumed that the intensive use and reworking of the site in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had obliterated anything of medieval or Tudor Bideford.

5. Bradworthy: Lower Alsworthy

The report is a desk-based assessment and archaeological building record of the former chapel at Lower Alsworthy in Bradworthy parish. The chapel has been used for agricultural purposes since the Reformation and it was proposed to convert it to residential use. Lower Alsworthy lies in the south western corner of the parish at a distance of about 4 kilometres from Bradworthy itself. The hamlet of Alfardisworthy (Alsworthy) is first recorded in 1242 and the chapel is known from the fourteenth century, although the present building probably dates from a century later. It was becoming common for owners of more remote farms to have their own private chapels at this time. The surviving structure is of coarse stonework in sandstone with later repairs in cob and brick. Two of the roof trusses appear to be original. Adjacent to the building is a probable holy well, although it is not clear whether this was a location factor for the chapel or whether a convenient spring was appropriated.

6. Bradworthy: Trentworthy

The report is a desk-based assessment and walk-over for a proposed solar farm which will occupy 17.5 hectares. The site is about 4 kilometres north-west of Bradworthy and lies within a landscape of enclosure medieval strip fields. There is a prehistoric round barrow about 500 metres south-east of the site. There is little else in the Historic Environment Record but the report concludes that there is potential for archaeology

and so monitoring and recording at a minimum would be advised should the development take place.

7. *Holsworthy: Former Show Ground, Trewyn Road*

The report concerns trench evaluation of the former Show Ground site in Trewyn Road, about 1 kilometre north of the parish church. It followed on from an earlier desk-based study by Exeter Archaeology which felt that there was potential for archaeology to exist. The site had previously seen fairly modern enclosures of rough grazing and several linear features were interpreted as these former boundaries. Others were left unaccounted for, although by 2020, it was known that part of the site had been a prisoner-of-war camp in the Second World War and hut sites and paths may have survived as linear features. The top-soil produced a few sherds of post-medieval pottery.

8. *Merton: Great Potheridge*

The report concerns archaeological monitoring and recording during work to build structures within the purlieu of Great Potheridge House. Earlier work by Exeter Archaeology had started to outline the complex history of the current house, a partial survivor of the 'great mansion' built by George Monk, Duke of Albemarle at the site of his birth-place. It was hoped that features could be found beneath the ground that might help establish quite what precise floor plan the great mansion had. Stripping of the top soil in several places was monitored and a feature, possibly that of a pond, was exposed. Some footings of walls in a poor state of preservation were also encountered but lacking any diagnostics and accompanying finds, these could only be tentatively dated to the late eighteenth or nineteenth century and thus were probably modifications or new additions after the major part of the grand mansion had been demolished.

9. *Milton Damerel: Higher Gidcott*

The report was of trench evaluation carried out at Higher Gidcott, one of the Domesday manors in Milton Damerel parish. It lies on the interfluvium between the rivers Torridge and Waldon, only 1.3 kilometres north east of Thornbury church but 3.3 kilometres from Milton Damerel church. A new agricultural shed was to be built close to the existing farm house, so it was considered that there was potential for archaeology to be found. Two trenches were machine dug under supervision but nothing was found.

10. *Northam: Hanson Park, Orchard Hill*

The report is of archaeological monitoring during the ground-work for the construction of a further 12 houses at Hanson Park in Orchard Hill. The site is to the south of the new A39 Torridge Bridge road and is roughly equidistant between the historic cores of

Northam and Bideford. A break-down in communication meant that archaeologists were only able to monitor the stripping of the top soil of a small part of the site. This showed a number of linear features, all but one of which seemed to be modern. The older feature was a probable field boundary and a few sherds of North Devon yellow-glazed slipware of probable seventeenth or eighteenth century age were found in its presumed ditch.

11. *Pyworthy: Bradford Manor*

The report covers a desk-based-assessment and walk-over of a site for a proposed solar farm over 18.3 hectares at Bradford, some 3.5 kilometres south west of Pyworthy. Bradford is a Domesday manor but the Historic Environment Record is sparse for this corner of the parish. The walk-over and historic map evaluation suggested that field boundaries had been lost in the twentieth century. Although the proposal would have limited impact on historic and archaeological assets, it was recommended that archaeological monitoring be a condition imposed should development be approved.

12. *Pyworthy: Derriton*

The report is a desk-based assessment and walk-over for a proposed solar farm occupying approximately 17.7 hectares. The site lies about 500 metres south west of the hamlet of Derriton, and although within Pyworthy parish, it is within 1.5 kilometres of the centre of Holsworthy. It comprises an area of enclosed medieval strip fields. Derriton is known to be a medieval settlement and although the Historic Environment Record contains few entries relating to the site itself, the report feels that there is potential archaeology to be found and recommends further investigation.

13. *Roborough: Middle Barlington*

The report is a desk-based assessment and walk-over for a proposed solar farm covering 21 hectares at Middle Barlington, about 1.5 kilometres south west of Roborough. Barlington is one of the medieval farms of the parish. However, the Historic Environment Record has few entries for the site and its immediate surrounding area. On this basis, the report concludes that the solar farm will have limited impact on historic and archaeological assets but recommends that archaeological monitoring be a condition imposed should the development be approved.

14. *Welcombe: Withecott, Darracott*

The report covers an archaeological watching brief during ground works associated with the conversion of a barn to residential use. Witheford and Darracott within Welcombe parish are both medieval settlements. Witheford lies 500 metres south-south-west of Welcombe church. Several linear features were disclosed but one proved to be a great interest. In this were found 82 sherds of North Devon coarse-

ware dating from c 1250-1350. Such finds are extremely rare in rural north-west Devon.

15. *Winkleigh: Jubilee Hall*

The report was of archaeological monitoring during the construction of new access to the hall. This lies within the ditch area of the motte and bailey structure of Croft Castle on the south western edge of the village. Winkleigh, uniquely in northern Devon, has two motte and bailey features close by. It was thought that the probability of finding any archaeology was low but because of the setting, monitoring was nonetheless highly desirable. Work to renew the existing paths exposed several previous path surfaces but did not go any deeper and nothing was found.

Discussion

Six of the reports, all from Archaeological Services, Durham University and for the same developer, concern solar farms. These are all also initial appraisals and have not seen any investigation below the surface. The most interesting findings came from Witheford near Darracott in Welcombe where a significant quantity of medieval pottery was found, itself quite unusual and particularly so in such a remote setting, although Witheford is a known medieval farmstead site. Work close to the historic core in Bridge Street in Bideford produced results which urban archaeologists often get from such sites, with the extensive reworking of the area in the nineteenth century effectively obliterating anything of an earlier date.