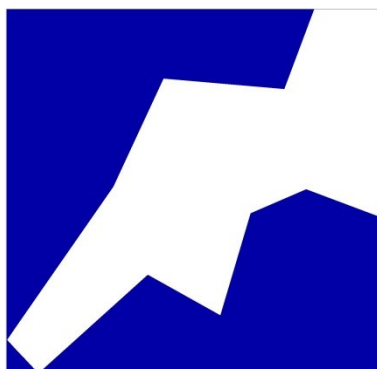


# A DEVELOPMENT AT DIPTFORD SCHOOL DIPTFORD DEVON

Results of an Archaeological  
Desk-based Assessment



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# A DEVELOPMENT AT DIPTFORD SCHOOL DIPTFORD

## DEVON

### Results of an Archaeological Desk-based Assessment

By

Alexandra Pickstone BA (Hons) AIfA

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October 2013

## **A Development at Diptford School, Diptford NGR SX 7275 5655**

### **Introduction**

Peninsula Archaeology received a brief from the Devon County Historic Environment Team (HET) specifying archaeological work at the above site in order to ensure fulfilment of a planning condition on proposed works, namely the levelling of a sloping field to create a play area (Mid Devon planning reference DCC /3402/2012). The programme of archaeological work was to include an element of desk-based appraisal in order to place any archaeological features found during the ground works in their historical and archaeological context. Such an appraisal was to be based on study of cartographic material held at the Devon Heritage Centre (The combined Records Office and West Country Studies Library) as well as examination of records and any aerial photographs held by the HET. The desk-based appraisal was carried out during October 2013 by Alexandra Pickstone.

### **Summary**

The site at Diptford School is located within the historic core of Diptford (Fig. 1). At present the site is an area of sloping rough pasture bounded by the school to east and the Church House to the north. A site visit was made on August 6th 2013.

### **Site Description and Topography**

The village of Diptford lies next to the River Avon in an area of undulating river valleys between Totnes and Ivybridge (Fig. 1). It is located on a west facing hill slope approximately 110 metres AOD. The underlying geology is composed of the Middle Devonian Slate Beds (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience/>).

The village is laid out along several interconnecting lanes with the church located at the northwest corner of the modern settlement. The site at Diptford School is located immediately south of St Mary's church.

### **Cartographic History**

The earliest cartographic representation of the area around the site is represented by the Ordnance Survey Surveyor's Draft map of Dartmoor c.1803 (Fig. 2). The location of the church is indicated together with the block of fields within which the school is now situated but no details specifically of the site are visible. The Tythe map (Fig. 3) of 1833 predates the construction of the school, but shows St. Mary's Church (175) and the Church House (173). The location of the proposed groundworks lies within an area of pasture, Cross Meadow (165) belonging to Christopher Lethbridge.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 series of 1887 shows the school buildings (HER MDV46689) located a short distance to the east of Church House. The school was built within an already established plot visible on the 1833 map. The area of pasture to the south

of the school appears to have remained undeveloped and unchanged through the first half of the 20th century (Fig. 5). Sometime before the 1962 Ordnance Survey (Fig. 6) the north-eastern corner of the field was acquired by the school to create a playground and further teaching space. A possible access road and ?water/sewage works were also constructed at a similar time and were put in place along the southern boundary of the field. The village hall, which lies directly to the west of the development area, is visible on this map.

The current (2010) Ordnance Survey map 1:25,000 shows that the original field is now further subdivided with two properties with large gardens built on the southern half of the plot. This leaves a small sub-rectangular field adjacent to the school and opposite the village hall measuring approximately 25m x 60m in which the current proposed development is planned to commence. There is no evidence from the cartographic study for any buildings or disused field boundaries directly within this area.

### **Current Archaeological Record**

A search of the Devon Historic Environment Record for archaeological and historical events and monuments within a 1km radius of the proposed development area revealed a total of 27 records. The majority of which are monuments/buildings dating from the Medieval to Modern periods. Only one archaeological event is recorded which comprises a study of the St. Mary's Church spire (HER MDV7297). None of the records are from within the development area itself.

The site of the Domesday manor of *Depeforde* (MDV15963) is located within the northeastern area of the modern village, to the west of Diptford Cross and to the east of the church. It is recorded as having 1 plough, 4 slaves, 8 villains and 7 bordars (Williams and Martin 1992).

The first documentary evidence of the church is from the 13<sup>th</sup> century with records of the first rector in 1226 (HER MDV7297). The dedication of the altar in 1336 by Bishop Grandisson is likely to have signified a rebuilding event, evidence of which is potentially backed up by the archaeological investigation into the construction of St. Mary's Church spire which concluded that the tower and spire had been built at the same time during the 14<sup>th</sup> century (HER EDV4436).

Passing both the site of medieval manor and the church to the south, is a road which runs along a northeast to southwest axis. By at least the 19<sup>th</sup> Century this road terminated to the west of Church House and Church Cottage (the study area lies to the rear of these buildings) but there is a suggestion that a path may have continued towards the south to join up with Mill Lane during medieval times (HER MDV61279, HER MDV61278). The only other feature currently dated to this period is a well located approximately 150m to the northeast of the church (HER MDV67896) discovered during the refurbishment of Broadmead house.

A number of the village's houses date from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries including Church House and Church Cottage (HER MDV7300) and Ivy Cottage (HER MDV90999), which are located centrally within the village, and Broadmead (HER MDV93362) and Moorcott (HER MDV93367) which occupy more outlying locations.

Two quarries (HER MDV46688, HER MDV46691) and a lime kiln (HER MDV62481) located on the limits of the study area were in use from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century although the records of these are sparse.

### **Archaeological Implications of the Proposed Works**

Although there are no records of activity pre-dating the Medieval period within the study area, the presence of such cannot be ruled out as there have been no archaeological investigations into sub-surface remains within the village. There is greater potential of medieval or post-medieval remains however, due to the proximity of the development area to the church and medieval manor site. Sixteenth or 17th Century remains such as rubbish pits associated with Church House and Church Cottage may also exist.

### **Bibliography and References**

Williams, A. and Martin, G. H., 1992 Domesday Book – A Complete Translation, Penguin, London

Diptford Tithe Map (DCRO)

Websites:

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience/>

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/ordsurvdraw/c/002osd000000019u00029000.html>.

<http://www.old-maps.co.uk/maps.html>

### **Thanks and Acknowledgements:**

Thanks for assistance are due to

The Staff of the Devon Heritage Centre  
The Staff of the Devon HET



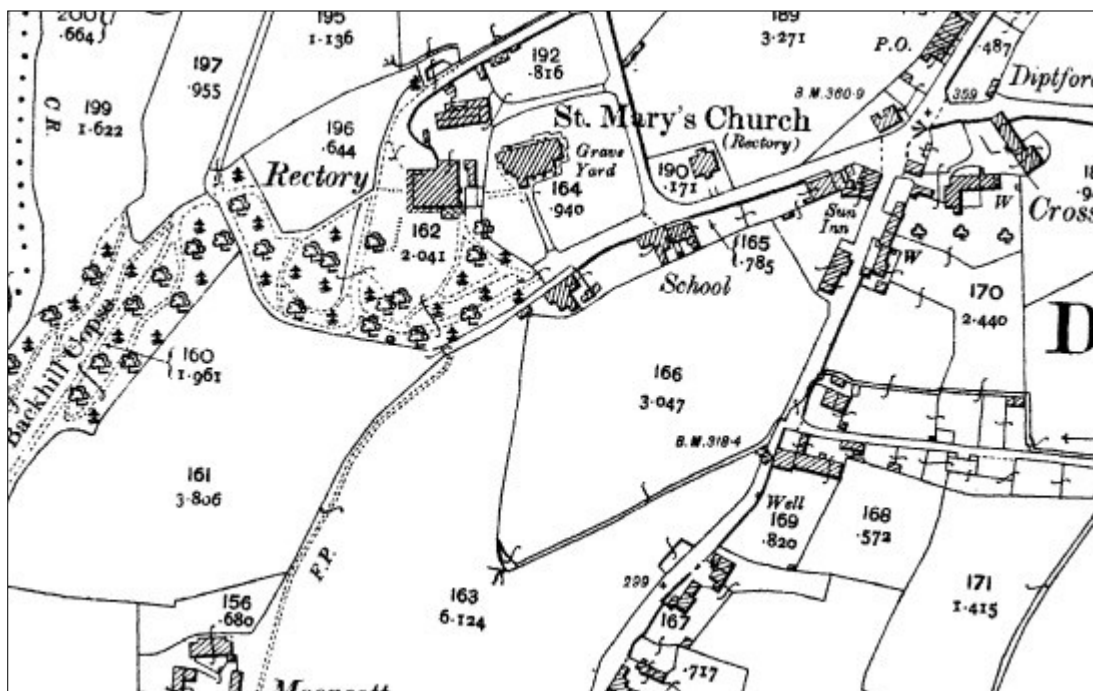
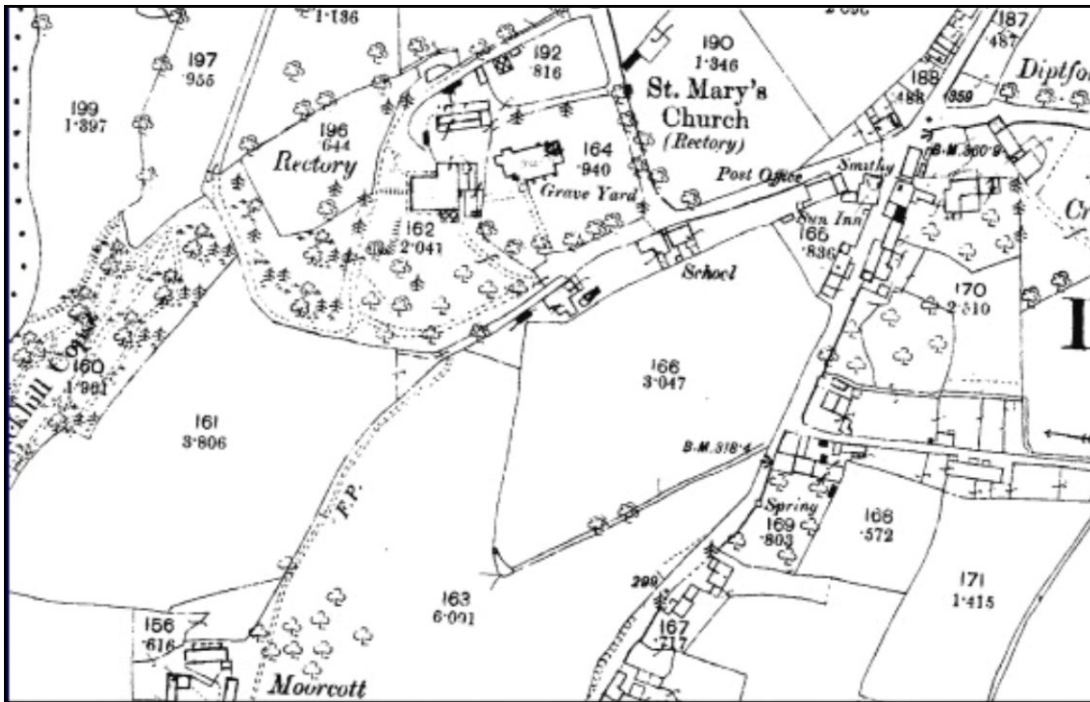
Fig 1. Location of groundworks at Diptford School. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence No. WL10895



Fig. 2 The 1804 Ordnance Survey - Surveyors Draft



Fig 3. The 1838 Diptford Tithe Map (Redrawn from the Original)



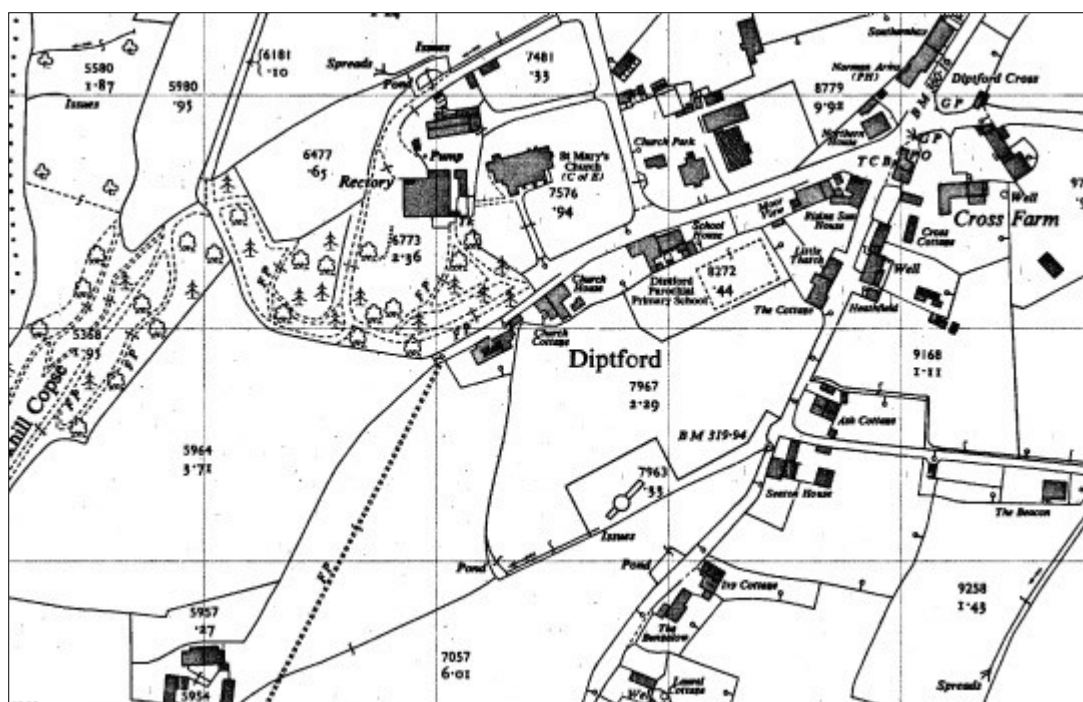


Fig 6. Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1962. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence No. WL10895

## Appendix A

### Devon Historic Environment Record (HER)

| HER ID   | Site  |
|----------|---|
| MDV7297  | St Mary's Parish Church, Diptford   |
| MDV7298  | Sundial, St Mary's Parish Church, Diptford  |
| MDV7299  | Church Plate, St Mary's Parish Church, Diptford   |
| MDV7300  | Church House and Church Cottage, Diptford   |
| MDV7301  | Cross (Unknown date)  |
| MDV7309  | Quarry (Unknown date)   |
| MDV15963 | Settlement ((Between) XI to Late Medieval - 1001 AD to 1539 AD) The site of the domesday manor <i>depeforde</i> |
| MDV46688 | Quarry (Between) Modern - 1751 AD to 2009 AD)   |
| MDV46689 | Diptford Primary School   |
| MDV46690 | Vicarage ((Between) XIX - 1801 AD to 1900 AD)   |
| MDV46691 | Quarry ((Between) Modern - 1751 AD to 2009 AD)  |
| MDV61278 | Mill Lane. May represent part of course of ancient trackway   |
| MDV61279 | Footpath leads from sw of diptford village to mill lane   |
| MDV62481 | Lime Kiln Modern - 1751 AD to 2009 AD   |
| MDV67896 | Butter Well Early Medieval to XVI - 1066 AD to 1600 AD  |
| MDV75070 | Foss Chest Tomb, St Mary's Parish Church, Diptford  |
| MDV75071 | Unidentified Chest Tomb, St Mary's Parish Church  |
| MDV75072 | Unidentified Chest Tomb, St Mary's Parish Church  |
| MDV75073 | Huxham Headstone, St Mary's Parish Church   |
| MDV75074 | 19th century gatepiers and gates at St Mary's parish church in Diptford   |
| MDV90998 | Ryes (Building)   |
| MDV90999 | Ivy Cottage (Building)  |
| MDV92459 | Diptford Court (Building)   |
| MDV93362 | Broadmead (Building)  |
| MDV93364 | Oakenham Bridge   |
| MDV93367 | Moorcott (Building)   |

## Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b><br>Diptford, South Hams   | <b>National Grid Reference</b><br>SX 7275 5655 | <b>Number:</b> (Leave blank for HES to fill in) |
| <b>Subject:</b> A development at Diptford School – Remedial work following the levelling of field to create a play ground |  | <b>Photo attached?</b> N                        |
| <b>Planning Application no:</b> DCC/3402/2012   | <b>Recipient museum:</b> Plymouth              |   |
| <b>OASIS id:</b> peninisul1   | <b>Museum Accession no:</b> 2013.22            |   |
| <b>Contractor's reference number/cod</b><br>PA/160713/GT  | <b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b><br>11.10.13 |   |

**Description of works.**

On the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013 Peninsula Archaeology carried out a site visit and recording which formed the basis of remedial work following the levelling, without archaeological supervision, of part of a field at Diptford School. The work was carried out on behalf of Diptford School and NPS Southwest Ltd.

The area of development was located to the west of the school, south of St Mary's Church, in a field of rough pasture. At the time of the site visit an area measuring approximately 22.5m from east to west and 21m from north to south of the sloping field had been graded to create a level play area. To level the field the northern portion (approximately 13m) had been excavated to a maximum of 1.2m below ground level; the area beyond this to the south had been built up using the spoil from the excavated area. The whole area had been seeded and new grass had grown, therefore no archaeological remains were visible. There were no spoil heaps but the construction team had collected a small number of modern glass bottles which are in the possession of the school.

**A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.**

**Recorder:**

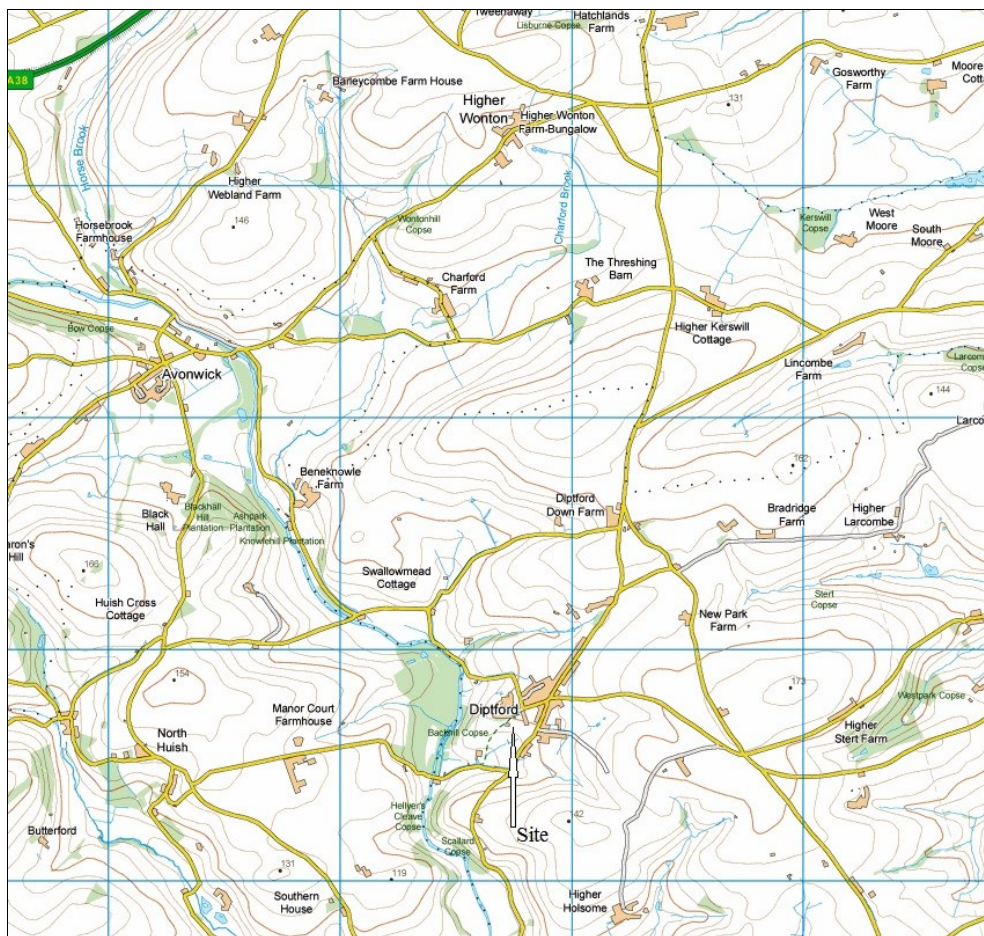
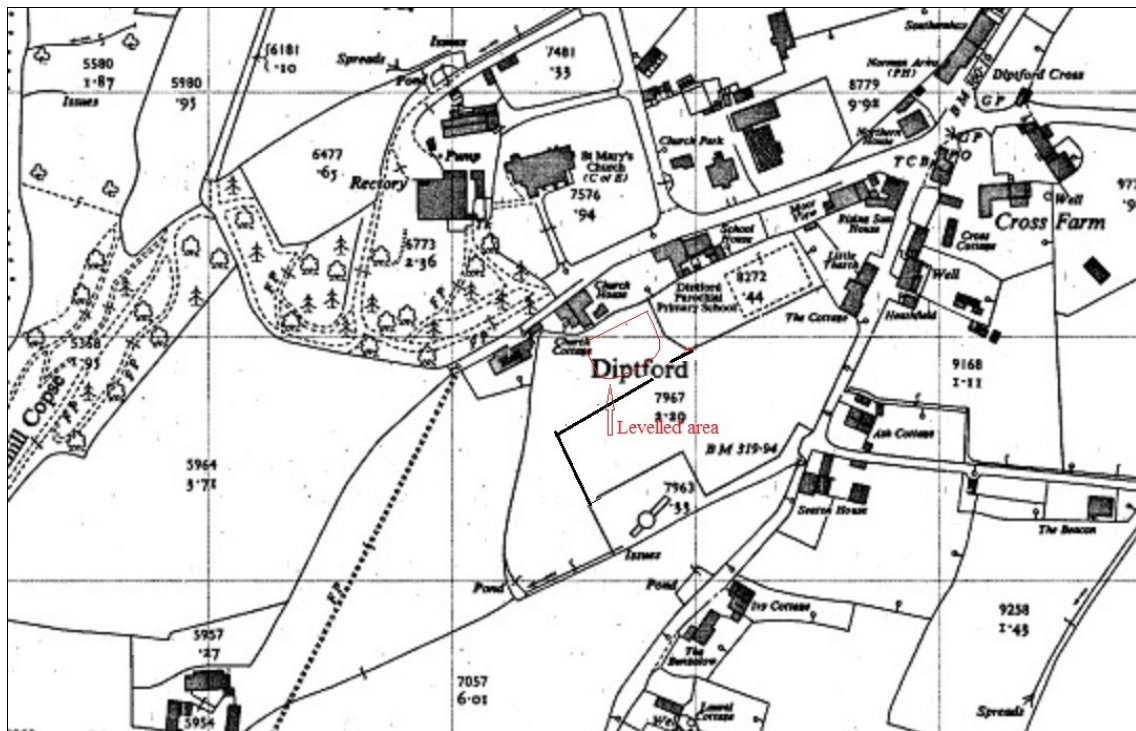
**Alexandra Pickstone, Peninsula Archaeology**

**Date sent to HER:**

**18.10.2013**

Please email completed form to: [archaeol@devon.gov.uk](mailto:archaeol@devon.gov.uk) or post to Historic Environment Service, Devon County Council, Lucombe House, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QD. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

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Location of Groundworks at Diptford School. Crown Copyright All rights Reserved Licence no. WL10895