

# LAND NORTH OF OSLO AND CLAREMONT PLACE HATHERLEIGH DEVON

Results of an Archaeological Assessment



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The Staff of the West Country Studies Library  
The Staff of the North Devon Record Office

## 1.0 Introduction

**Location:** Land to the North of Oslo and Claremont Place  
**Parish:** Hatherleigh  
**County:** Devon  
**NGR:** SS54180488

South West Archaeology were asked by Kevin Shotter of Millwood Homes to prepare a historical and archaeological assessment in advance of development to be undertaken on a greenfield site north of Claremont Place, Hatherleigh, Devon. The assessment was carried out by Terry Green MA on behalf of South West Archaeology. The purpose of this assessment is to place the proposed development in its historical and archaeological context and to identify any archaeological or historical factors which may require action in the form of recording, evaluation or other mitigation prior to or during the course of construction or alteration works. In this specific case the proposal is a housing development with attendant access and environmental works.

### 1.1 Summary of Results

Although there is some indication of Romano-British industrial activity nearby, the manor of Hatherleigh is first recorded historically in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century as part of the original endowment of Tavistock Abbey. During the period of the Abbey's tenure (AD 981 to 1539), the borough of Hatherleigh was created. Probably having begun as an infield/outfield system of small extent, arable cultivation in the manor of Hatherleigh had probably already become extensive by the late 10<sup>th</sup> century and became even more so during the later medieval period. In 1086 the Abbot of Tavistock held half a hide (30 – 60 acres) of land at Hatherleigh as his demesne (land for his own use). This land, which must have had over 1,000 years of use, probably lay to the east and north of the church and included the fields currently earmarked for development. At least one of the fields in question contains slight earthworks that invite investigation.

### 1.2 Location and Geology

Historically within the Hundred of Black Torrington, now within the Borough of West Devon, Hatherleigh is situated in sight of Dartmoor just off the A386 some 14 kilometres from Okehampton and 28 kilometres from Bideford. The town lies on rising ground above the river Lew, which flows into the Torridge.

The underlying geology is the Carboniferous Crackington Formation, which in the area for development, is overlain by Pliocene alluvial deposits (Yeandle Geotechnics, 2003).

### 1.3 Methodology

The desk-based assessment was undertaken with reference to IFA guidelines on the preparation of archaeological assessments. The necessary research was conducted at the Devon County Archaeological Service (HES) Office, the Devon Record Office, the West Country Studies Library and the North Devon Record Office. The site was also externally inspected. Reference material was also kindly loaned by Deborah Laing-Trengove of Hatherleigh History Society. The site was visited on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2006.

## 2.0 Results of the Desk-Based Study

In the 10<sup>th</sup> century the manor of Hatherleigh belonged to Ordgar, Earl of Devon. During the reign of Edgar (AD 959 – 975) Ordgar determined to build a new Benedictine abbey at Tavistock. When Ordgar died in 971, his son Ordulf continued and completed the work. In the abbey's foundation charter AD 981, Ordulf and his wife Ælfwyn endowed the new foundation with lands which included the manor of Hatherleigh (Finberg 1969). Hatherleigh was a "free manor", within the Abbot's barony and here the Abbot held land in demesne, ie. for his own use. The Abbey retained its lands, including Hatherleigh, where the original demesne was progressively leased out (Finberg 1969, 256), until it was dissolved in 1539. During the Abbey's tenure – probably between 1220 and 1374 (Finberg 1969, 205) - the borough of Hatherleigh was formed and a market was granted. It was also during this time that over 400 acres of Hatherleigh Moor were granted by the Abbot to the people of Hatherleigh for grazing their stock and gathering furze. After the Dissolution of the monasteries, the manor came into private hands, descending via Arscott, Molesworth and Oldham to the family of Laing who held it from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century until the present day (Manaton 1951).

During the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries Hatherleigh was much involved in the woollen trade, but income from this source dwindled away in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Apart from a thriving cattle market, Hatherleigh today carries on its business quietly and, like many another Devon town, is increasingly home to incomers commuting to Exeter and Plymouth.

### 2.1 Historic Background

#### 2.1.1 The Hatherleigh Historic Landscape

Finds of Roman tiles and a possible kiln site on Hatherleigh Moor indicate some level of Roman industrial activity nearby. Whether there is any corresponding settlement, is debatable and awaits evidence. However, the presence of a kiln points to woodland exploitation for fuel, and depending on the extent of activity, may suggest managed woodland. The end of such industrial activity would have brought a reversion to scrub which any later settlers would want to clear.

The name Hatherleigh probably derives from Old English *Hægþornleah* or "hawthorn clearing". Field names such as "Beare" (< Old English *bearu*, "grove") and "Eastwood", both to be found in the immediate vicinity on the 1839 tithe map, very probably point to land that was cleared of scrub or woodland in the (early) medieval period. Very irregularly shaped fields not far away, especially to the north-west (see Plate 1a), also suggest formation out of cleared woodland.

When, in the 10<sup>th</sup> century Ordulf gave Hatherleigh as part of the endowment of Tavistock Abbey, we can assume that enough land had been cleared to allow arable cultivation and grazing. It certainly had to be producing enough surplus to make it a worthwhile endowment and it is possible that in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century it already had something approaching the 3 hides (up to 360 acres) under cultivation which the Domesday Book reported in 1086 (Thorn and Thorn 1982). Between initial clearance and this advanced state, there would probably have been a period in which a community of a few families cultivated an "infield" and intermittently ploughed up adjacent grazing land known as an "outfield". The infield was a core of intensively manured and cultivated land often within a boundary delineating a roughly ovoid enclosure. The adjacent outfield might also be enclosed within a boundary. In the course of time, with changes in forms of land tenure, the hamlet attached to an infield might gain status and become the centre of a manor or, with a church, become the centre of a parish. Social and economic developments would lead to the extension of arable cultivation beyond the infield, the outfield becoming permanently cultivated.

The earlier layout of the land might remain discernible only through relict boundaries and trackways within a larger pattern of fields. This was probably the stage of development at which Hatherleigh entered the historic record as part of the endowment of Tavistock Abbey. In 1086 the abbot held between 30 and 60 acres of Hatherleigh in demesne, ie. as land which he farmed himself – probably through a bailiff - as lord of the manor.

The Devon County Historic Environment Project (Landscape Characterisation) designates the historic landscape to the north, south and east of Hatherleigh “medieval enclosures based on strip fields”; that to the west is designated “post-medieval enclosures”. To the north is a relatively small area designated “park/garden”. The area of “medieval enclosures based on strip fields” is land which, in the medieval period, was cultivated in long parallel strips or “ploughlands” within an “open” or “common” field system. In the later medieval period, the communal system gave way to private ownership and the strips were enclosed either singly or in blocks (often identifiable by gently curving, parallel boundaries). The apparent extent of medieval cultivated land around Hatherleigh reflects the figures of the Exeter Domesday Book in which it is reported that the manor of Hatherleigh had 3 hides of land - up to 360 acres –tilled by 30 ploughs (Thorn and Thorn 1982). After Tavistock itself, Hatherleigh was the second most valuable of the abbey’s land holdings, being worth £10 per year. The considerable amount of land under cultivation, together with the establishment of the borough, which would take land out of arable use, may account for the setting aside of Hatherleigh Moor for grazing by the animals of the people of Hatherleigh.

### 2.1.2 Roads and Trackways

Oakfield Road (formerly the course of the A386), which divides the development area was turnpiked in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It would seem originally to have been the route between Hatherleigh and the manor of Fishleigh and onwards towards Torrington. The width and irregular course of the southernmost part of this route as represented on the tithe map suggests a stock track or drove; the narrow strips on either side of it (numbers 176 and 928 on the tithe map, Fig. 3b) may represent enclosure of the verges of the original wide track when it became a turnpike road.

Claremont Place, to the south of the site, is a recent creation. To the south of this, Church Lane to the west and Sanctuary Lane to the east run along the edge of land which in 1841 was Glebe land, ie. church land farmed by the vicar or rector. The width and irregularity of Sanctuary Lane, as recorded on the early OS maps (Fig’s 4b and 5b), strongly suggest that this route has a history of use as a stock track or drove leading from the vicinity of the church towards an area of post-medieval enclosure and “rough ground” (Devon County Historic Environment Project designation), which at one time would have been open moor.

To the south again and leading north-eastwards from Market Street is Red lane, earlier named Dark Lane. This turns sharply north to meet Sanctuary Lane. The right angle thus formed suggests that it respects the headland of a former ploughland.

Running north and east from the vicinity of the church is a footpath following the curving boundary of the field named in 1839 (tithe apportionment, see Appendix 3) “Reed Park”, the northern half of which is the western part of the area for development. The footpath forms part of the route traditionally followed from the church in the ceremony of “beating the bounds”. It is part of the borough boundary.

## 2.2 The Development Site (Refer to Fig. 3c, 4b, 5b and Plate 1b)

The site for development lies to the north of the medieval town. The area is divided by Oakfield Road. The area to the west of the road is described by the Devon County Historic Environment Project (Landscape Characterisation) as “medieval enclosure”; that to the east is described as “medieval enclosures based on strip fields”. The site comprises three existing fields labelled A, B, C in Fig. 6. All three fields were traditionally part of Hatherleigh Glebe or church land (Fig.2). Field A, to the north is named in the tithe apportionment of 1839, “Triangle” (number 927 on the tithe map). Field B (number 929 on the tithe map) was “Bowman’s Meadow” on the western edge of which was a single narrow strip numbered 928, but not listed in the tithe apportionment; this is still visible today as a roadside strip. Field C (the northern half of the field numbered 177 on the tithe map) was named “Reed Park”.

### 2.2.1 Field A “Triangle”

This oddly shaped field looks as if it ought to represent a corner cut off the large field to the west, but this raises difficult questions about the origin of Oakfield Road. Near the northern corner of the triangle is a small rectangular structure, a stock pen, which is of 20<sup>th</sup> century date. The very straight hedgeline forming the south-eastern boundary of the field gives the impression of being a late creation, though it was already present in 1839. This boundary is a quite slight earth bank with a mixed hedge on top and a ditch on its north side.

### 2.2.2 Field B “Bowman’s Meadow”

The north-western boundary of this field is part of the straight south-eastern boundary of “Triangle”. The north-eastern boundary of field B is similarly very straight and quite slightly built and also gives the impression of a late creation, though also present in 1839. On the other hand, it is the boundary of “Long Close”(930 on the tithe map), which may in fact indicate that it dates from the late medieval or early post-medieval period, when strips were enclosed. The southern boundary of the field comprises, to the west, the northern boundary of the field numbered 933 in 1839 and called “Turnpike Field”, and to the east part of the northern boundary of the field numbered 932 and named “Red Hill.” The western part of the boundary (quite possibly also the eastern part) is likely to be of medieval or early post-medieval origin, having the curvature characteristic of an enclosed “furlong” of strip fields. The western boundary of field B is represented by a narrow strip of land numbered 928 on the tithe map. The eastern boundary of this strip may represent the original field boundary adjacent to a drove.

#### *Field Observations:*

*Running from south-east to north-west through the field are two parallel linear depressions (see Plate 3). They may represent some form of drainage mechanism, but on the other hand could represent old watercourses. The north-eastern member of the pair can be seen to pass through the north-western boundary of the field and to terminate. On its south-western side, roughly in the centre of field B is a slight earthwork. Another lies on its north-eastern side towards the south-eastern “arm” of the field (See Fig. 7).*

### 2.2.3 Field C “Reed Park”

This wedge-shaped field to the west of Oakfield Road has a curving western boundary skirted by a footpath (the borough boundary). The curvature of the western boundary suggests an early enclosure, but it does not continue (visibly at least) beyond Oakfield Road. In 1839 the curving western boundary was addressed by the curving northern boundary of field number 178. The curvature of the latter boundary suggests the enclosure of medieval ploughlands, reinforcing the proposition that the western boundary of C is of earlier medieval

origin. The southern boundary of C is a 20<sup>th</sup> century creation, bounding the grounds of the house called “Oslo” (not present in 1906 – see Fig. 5b).

*Field Observations:*

*In this field there are noticeable “humps and bumps” including what appears to be a shallow ditch-like feature running from halfway along the roadside boundary westwards to the centre of the field and then turning roughly northwards to meet the curving boundary, making, with the curving boundary and the roadside boundary, two sides of a quadrilateral, each about 44 m in length. At the “corner” in the centre of the field is an ill defined earthen platform (See Fig. 7).*

### 2.3 The Development Site in Relation to the Historic Landscape

We are told by the Domesday survey that in 1038 the Abbot of Tavistock had half a hide of land (between 30 and 60 acres – the size of a hide is not entirely clear) in demesne at Hatherleigh. This means, that, as lord of the manor, he had this land for his own use. We cannot know for certain where this land lay, but the location of the church and probably of the old vicarage together with the location of Glebe land and the course of Sanctuary Lane together suggest the area to the north and east of the church. In 1839 all the Glebe land was to the north of Sanctuary Lane. Since the term “sanctuary”, or very frequently “cent(u)ry”, in field, farm and trackway names derives from Medieval Latin *sanctuarium*, the term used to describe church land, it is perfectly possible that those fields immediately to the north of the lane which, in 1839, were not Glebe land, had at an earlier date been within the glebe, but had been leased or traded away. It might also be suggested that the church or abbey land originally included the two blocks of land to the south of Sanctuary Lane/Church Lane. This total area centring on Sanctuary Lane and the church would make up a credible half hide and may represent the abbot’s demesne land. Within this area, the block of land bounded by Sanctuary Lane/Church Lane, the footpath through the churchyard, the Market Place, Market Street and Red Lane may represent an early infield, the land to the north of Sanctuary Lane/Church Lane representing the corresponding outfield. This suggestion relates to a very early period in the development of the Hatherleigh landscape, probably 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequent expansion of the intensively cultivated land would have pushed the outfield farther away.

It seems clear from the field pattern that the land immediately to the north of Sanctuary Lane/Church Lane was cultivated in strips during the medieval period. The next fields to the north, specifically those earmarked for development, *may* have been similarly cultivated, though the straight boundaries of fields A and B - which are out of character with their surroundings - deprive us of any clues. It may be significant that the fields numbered 921 and 922 on the tithe map were named “Lower Gratton” and “Higher Gratton”. “Gratton” is a common term among Devonshire field names and appears to relate to land which was formerly outfield and on which stock retained seasonal grazing rights. Together with the fields called Eastwood and Beare (see above), these fields lying to the north-east beyond a watercourse may represent outfield to an enlarged infield which would have included the fields presently in question.

The features of field C (Reed Park) – curving boundary, historically significant footpath skirting it, earthworks within it, medieval strip boundaries butting up against it, status as Glebe land – not only suggest early enclosure, but also invite speculation about the significance of this piece of ground. On maps and seen from the air, this field stands out as distinctly different, and it may be significant that its boundary is the first to be negotiated after leaving the church when beating the bounds. The slight earthworks in this field should be considered against this background.

The above argument involves a lot of conjecture. Nevertheless, there is a good probability that the three fields to be affected by development were successively:

- i. Scrub or woodland, perhaps managed woodland in the Romano-British period;
  - ii. Outfield subject to occasional cultivation in the pre-Conquest period (9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> century);
  - iii. Infield cultivated as part of the Abbot's demesne land (late 10<sup>th</sup> century up to 1539);
  - iv. Enclosures cultivated as glebe by the vicar of Hatherleigh (16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century).
- Field C may have had special status at an early period.

### 3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 The occurrence of prehistoric materials – lithics or ceramics – is always a possibility.
- 3.2 As Roman tiles and kiln-waste have been found on Hatherleigh Moor, the possibility of Roman material turning up in this area should be borne in mind.
- 3.3 As the land appears to have been in agrarian use from at least the late 10<sup>th</sup> century and probably earlier, there is a strong probability of early to late medieval and post-medieval ceramics having arrived as midden material.
- 3.4 For the same reason, the subsoil may retain the marks of early ploughing.
- 3.5 If the land was ever cultivated in strips the remains of dividing baulks may be preserved
- 3.6 The slight earthworks in field C may conceal the remains of ditches and buildings.
- 3.7 Field B may preserve palaeoenvironmental material in former drainage channels or former natural watercourses.
- 3.8 Evaluation trenches in fields B and C are recommended.

Note: The feature – two parallel earthworks - visible to the west of the development site on aerial photograph 3G/TUD/UK/159 PART IV 19 APR 46 90 SQDN: 5348 (Plate 1a) is an abandoned tennis court.

The Devon HER holds no records of features immediately relevant to the development area.

## 4.0 Bibliography/ References

### Published Sources:

- Finberg, H.P.R.** 1969: *Tavistock Abbey*, Newton Abbot.  
**Hatherleigh Millennium Committee** 1981: *The Story of Hatherleigh*.  
**Hoskins, W.G.** 1992 edition: *Devon*, Tiverton.  
**Lysons, D & Lysons S.** 1822: *Magna Britannia*, Vol.6, London.  
**Reichel, O.J.** 1935: *The Hundred of Black Torrington in Early Times*, Devonshire Association.  
**Manaton, J.** 1951: *Hatherleigh History in Brief*, the Devonshire Association.  
**Thorn, C. & Thorn, F. (eds)** 1985: *Domesday Book: Devon Parts One & Two*, Chichester.

### Unpublished Sources:

- Williams, H.F.** 1966: *Notes on the History of Hatherleigh*

### Devon Record Office:

- Hatherleigh Tithe Map (1839)  
Hatherleigh Tithe Apportionment (1841)

### Devon Historic Environment Service:

Historic Landscape Characterisation maps produced under the Devon County Historic Environment Project

### Also:

- Yeandle Geotechnical Ltd: *Claremont Place, Hatherleigh, Devon: Preliminary Pre-Purchase Geotechnical and Environmental Investigation*.



Fig. 1a: Regional location map.



Fig. 1b: Site location (outlined in red).



Fig. 2: Extract from map of the Manor of Hatherleigh situated in the Parishes of Hatherleigh and Monkokehampton, Devon. The property of the representatives of Joseph Oldham Esqr dec. By Thomas Bradley Launceston 1813. (Courtesy of D. Laing-Trengove)

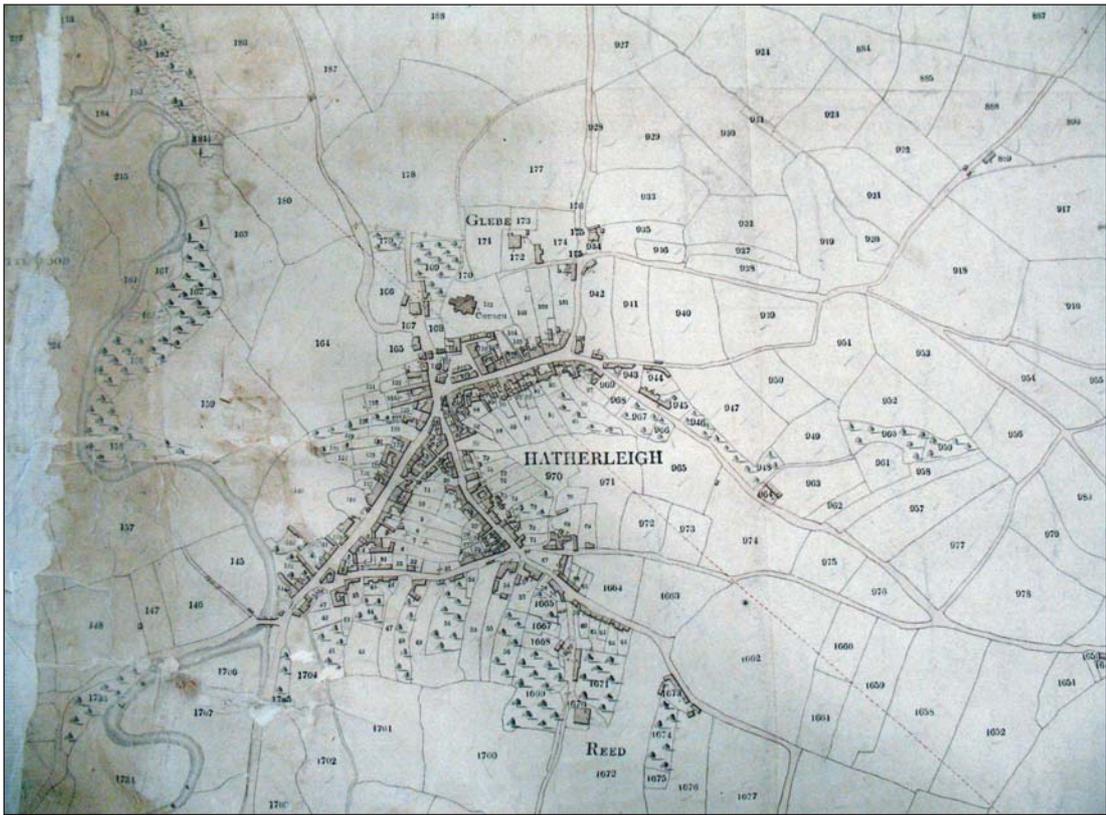


Fig. 3a: Extract from the Hatherleigh tithe map of 1839: General view of Hatherleigh in its landscape. (DRO)



Fig. 3b: Detail from the Hatherleigh tithe map of 1839, showing land to the north of the town. (DRO)

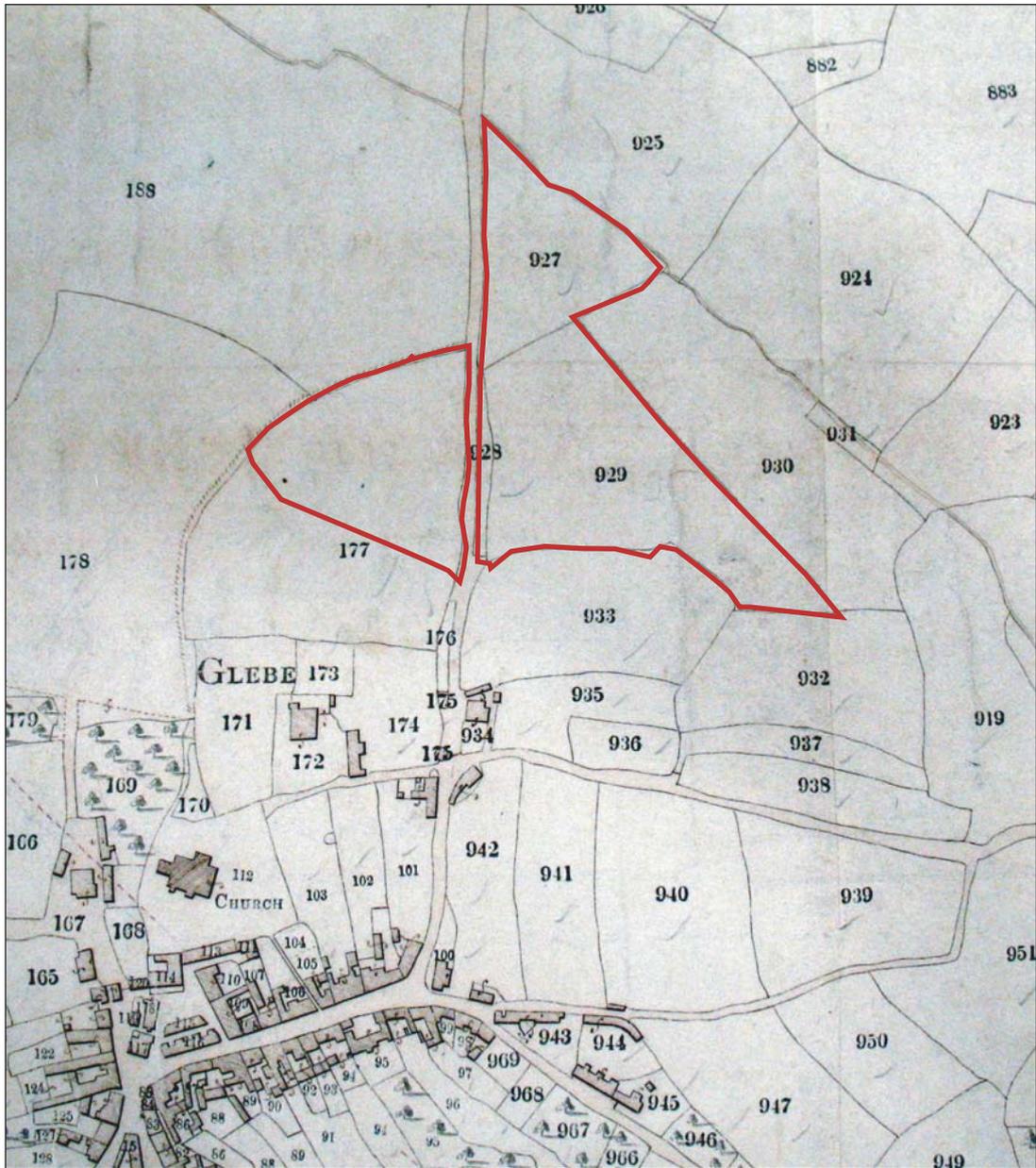


Fig. 3c: Detail from the Hatherleigh tithe map of 1839 with outline of the development site superimposed. (DRO)

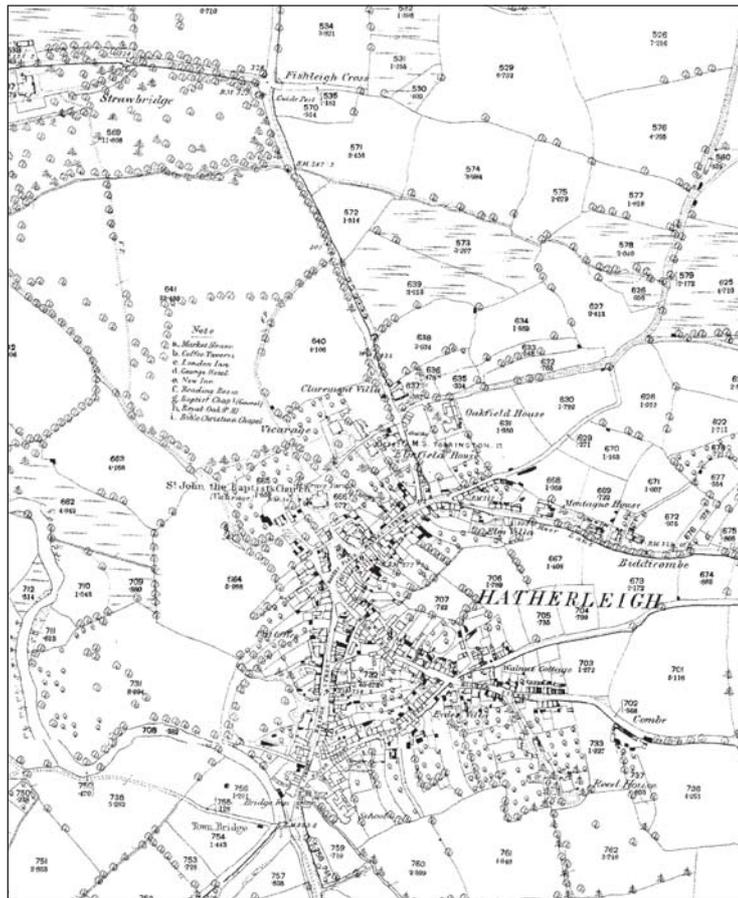


Fig. 4a: Extract from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25 inch map, published 1886: general view of Hatherleigh in its landscape.

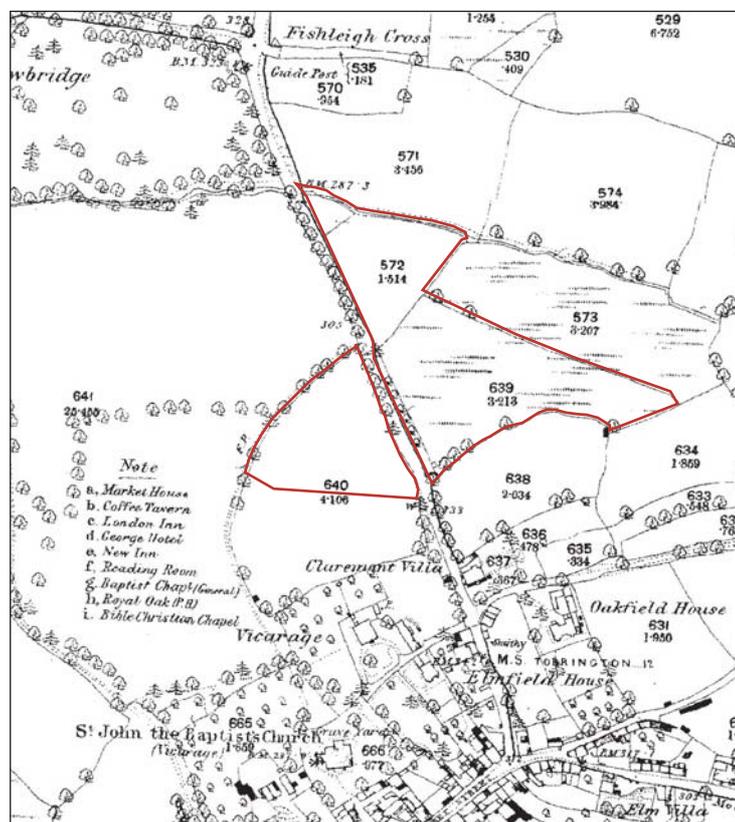


Fig. 4b: Detail from the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25 inch map, published 1886 with outline of the development site superimposed.



Fig. 5a: Extract from the Ordnance Survey Second Edition 25 inch map published 1906.

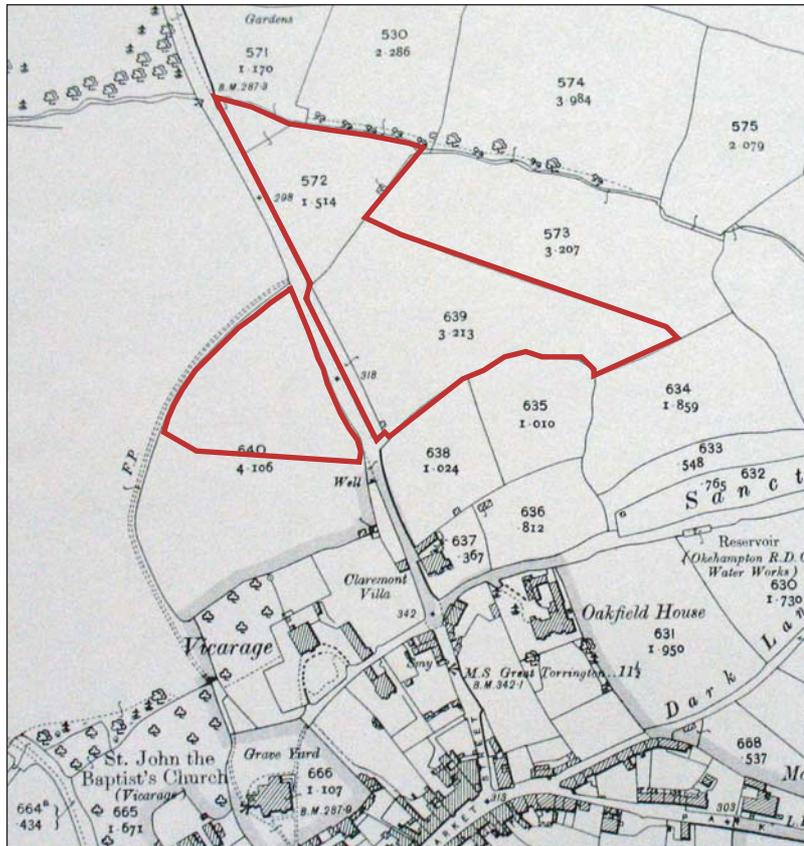


Fig. 5b: Detail from the the Ordnance Survey Second Edition 25 inch map published 1906, outline of the development site superimposed.



Fig. 6: The area proposed for development. See text for commentary on the three fields A, B, C. (Original: Millwood)



South West Archaeology Fig. 7: Suggested areas of archaeological potential.



Plate 1a: Aerial photograph of Hatherleigh in its landscape taken April 1946. (Ref: 3G/TUD/UK/159 PART IV 19 APR 46 90 SQDN: 5348 Courtesy Devon Historic Environment Service)

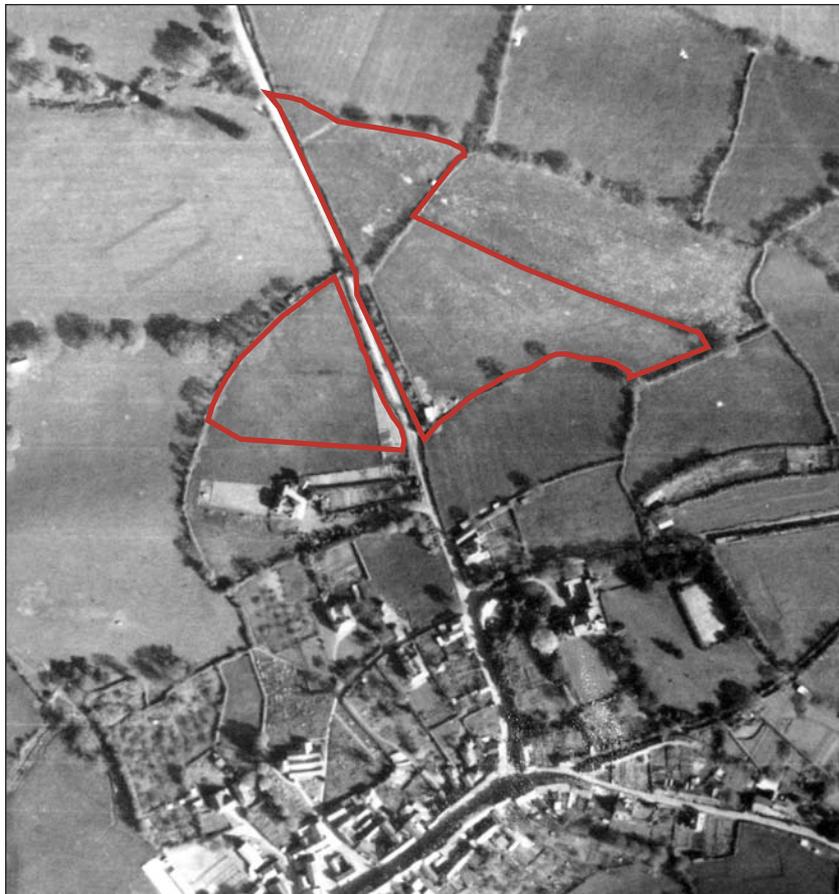


Plate 1b: Detail from the aerial photograph of 1946 with outline of the development site superimposed. Note: The feature (two parallel earthworks) in the field to the west is an abandoned tennis court.



Plate 2: Field B looking north-west. One of two linear depressions is visible running from the foreground to the hedgeline in the distance.

## Appendix 1

### DEVON COUNTY HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SERVICE

<b>H13, Land to the North of Claremont Place, Hatherleigh (8461/2006/OKE): OUTLINE BRIEF FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT</b>
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1. The archaeological assessment shall include, as a minimum, the following areas of research:

1.1 Examination of records and archive material currently held in the Devon County Historic Environment Record (Environment Directorate, County Hall, Exeter).

1.2 Examination of cartographic, printed and documentary sources available in the West Country Studies Library (Castle Street, Exeter) and in the Devon Record Office (Great Moor House, Sowton, Exeter).

1.3 Examination of aerial photographs held by the Devon County Historic Environment Record (County Hall).

1.4 Examination of the Historic Landscape Characterisation Project held by Devon County Historic Environment Record (County Hall)

1.5 Examination of any relevant material held by local historical societies or the site landowner.

1.6 Visual inspection of the proposal area including examination of any available exposures such as ditch sections.

1.7 Examination of the logs of any trial pits or other geotechnical excavations if that has already occurred.

1.8 Archaeological monitoring of any proposed geotechnical pits.

2. A report will be prepared containing the following:

2.1 A chronological summary of sites, buildings, structures or deposits of archaeological or historic interest identified within the proposal area, including any archaeological potential inferred from the hinterland of the site.

2.2 Scaled plans indicating the location and (where known) the extent of identified sites etc.

2.3 Reproduction of relevant historic maps/plans etc. and historic or current photographs where appropriate.

2.4 An assessment of the likely impact of the development on the identified archaeological or historic resource – if details of the development proposals are available.

3. In addition to the number of copies of the report required by the Client, two bound copies will be supplied to the County Archaeological Service.

CW/14/03/06

## Appendix 2

### DEVON COUNTY HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SERVICE

<b>H14, Land to the North of Oslo, Hatherleigh (8462/2006/OKE): OUTLINE BRIEF FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT</b>
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1. The archaeological assessment shall include, as a minimum, the following areas of research:

1.1 Examination of records and archive material currently held in the Devon County Historic Environment Record (Environment Directorate, County Hall, Exeter).

1.2 Examination of cartographic, printed and documentary sources available in the West Country Studies Library (Castle Street, Exeter) and in the Devon Record Office (Great Moor House, Sowton, Exeter).

1.3 Examination of aerial photographs held by the Devon County Historic Environment Record (County Hall).

1.4 Examination of the Historic Landscape Characterisation Project held by Devon County Historic Environment Record (County Hall)

1.5 Examination of any relevant material held by local historical societies or the site landowner.

1.6 Visual inspection of the proposal area including examination of any available exposures such as ditch sections.

1.7 Examination of the logs of any trial pits or other geotechnical excavations if that has already occurred.

1.8 Archaeological monitoring of any proposed geotechnical pits.

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2.4 An assessment of the likely impact of the development on the identified archaeological or historic resource – if details of the development proposals are available.

3. In addition to the number of copies of the report required by the Client, two bound copies will be supplied to the County Archaeological Service.

CW/14/03/06

## Appendix 3

### Details from the Hatherleigh Tithe Apportionment of 1841

Name of Holding	Owner	Occupier	Number	Description
Churchyard Garden	Joseph Oldham	Johanna Hockaway	170	Garden
Glebe	Rev. Samuel Fields	Himself and Others	171	Orchard and Piece of Meadow
			172	Lawn, House and Courtlage
			173	Garden
			174	Barn Park
			177	Reed Park
Hole	Joseph Oldham	William Luxton	178	
Glebe	Rev. Samuel Fields	Himself and Others	920	Nursery Plat
			921	Lower Gratton
			922	Higher Gratton
			923	Eastwood
			924	Beare
			925	Great Red Lake
			926	Litle Red Lake
			927	Triangle
??	??	??	928	??
			929	Bowmans Meadow
			930	Long Close
			931	Plat
			932	Red Hill