

A30 MERRYMEET JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT ARCHAEOLOGY & CULTURAL HERITAGE: Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment

Prepared on behalf of Parsons Brinckerhoff Ltd
for the Highways Agency

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1. SUMMARY

A Stage 2 archaeological and historical appraisal of the proposed A30 Merrymeet Junction Improvement was carried out by AC archaeology between January and December 2002. The assessment included data gathered from the National Monuments Record (English Heritage), Swindon, the Devon County Sites and Monuments Record, the Devon County Records Office and the National Air Photograph Library at Swindon, as well as a walkover survey of the site. The assessment identified three archaeological sites and five historic buildings within a study area that consisted of 64 hectares, centred on the proposed Merrymeet junction. None are protected as Scheduled Monuments, one building is Listed at grade 2. Three important hedgerows maybe affected. The assessment concludes that none of the sites or buildings identified would pose an insurmountable problem to the future of the proposed scheme. It is also proposed that further archaeological work in the form of field evaluation should form a Stage 3 assessment.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report sets out an assessment of archaeological and cultural heritage issues relating to the proposed A30 Merrymeet Junction improvement.

2.2 The assessment has been prepared by AC archaeology on behalf of Parsons Brinckerhoff for the Highways Agency and is based on a Stage 2 study as defined in Chapter 8 'Stages of Archaeological Assessment' and Chapter 13 'Stages of Assessment for the Built Heritage' in Volume II Section 3 Part 2 of the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges*. The results of the assessment have been assembled and reviewed in accordance with the *DETR 'Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies'*.

2.3 The scope of the assessment has included:

- Archaeological sites, monuments and finds;
- Listed Buildings and other structures of historic interest;
- Conservation Areas;
- Parks & Gardens of Special Historic Interest;
- Battlefield sites;
- Hedgerows of Historic Importance.

2.4 A study area has been identified for the Stage 2 assessment of approximately 64 hectares conforming to the boundaries shown on Fig. 1 of this report and based on Drawing Number HH143373A/P/17 produced by Parson Brinckerhoff on behalf of the Highways Agency.

2.5 The objective of the study is to undertake sufficient assessment to identify the archaeological factors, historic buildings and sites, and the effects upon them, to be taken into account in further developing the scheme options.

3. METHODOLOGY

The following sources of information have been consulted:

- information held by the Devon County Council Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), County Hall, Exeter;
- information held by the National Monuments Record and National Buildings Record, English Heritage, Swindon ;
- information held by the Devon County Record Office and Westcountry Studies Library, Exeter;
- a walkover survey of those areas of the study area likely to be affected by the scheme.

4. RECORDS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND FINDS

4.1 A summary of information held in the County and National archaeological databases are set out on Table 1. This includes the records of buildings or other structures that no longer survive as above ground remains. A total of three sites was noted within the study area (A1 - A3 on Fig. 1 and Table 1), none of which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. These sites are discussed here by period.

4.2 Roman (AD 43 - AD 410)

The line of the A30 is generally considered to follow the course of a Roman Road, but no specific SMR entry exists for this within the study area.

4.3 Post Medieval (AD 1500 - 1799)

The sites of two former farm complexes have been identified within the study area. Daveycourt Farm (site A2) appears first on the 1809 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 3) and is recorded as a cottage and garden on the 1841 tithe map of Hittisleigh (Fig. 7). This small farm complex was no longer in existence by the 1963 OS edition (Fig. 12). A second cottage and garden (site A3) appears first on the Hittisleigh tithe map, but by the 1st edition OS 6" map of 1887 all that remains is a small agricultural building (site B5).

Table 1: Summary of Recorded Archaeological Sites and Finds

SITE NO	SMR REF.	NMR REF.	NGR	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	STATUS
A1	SX69SE 018	-	SX69809244	Field name	'Barrow Meadow'. Nothing shown on 1946 Aerial photographs	Uncertain	None
A2	SX69SE 100	-	SX69619301	Site of	Daveycourt Farm, shown on tithe map as cottage and garden. Not on 1963 OS	Post Medieval	None
A3	SX69SE 101	-	SX69329267	Site of	Cottage and garden shown on tithe map. Not on 1963 OS	Post Medieval	None

4.4 Undated

A field to the south east of the Merrymeet junction retains the field name 'Barrow Meadow' (site A1). There is no evidence on aerial photographs for a barrow or other earthwork feature on the site.

5. LISTED BUILDINGS AND OTHER SURVIVING STRUCTURES OF HISTORIC INTEREST

5.1 Information held in the County and National databases, supplemented by reference to the English Heritage Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Importance, and a site walkover, is set out on Table 2. The location of individual buildings is shown on Fig . 1.

Table 2: Summary of Surviving Historic Buildings

SITE NO	SMR REF.	NMR REF.	NGR	DESCRIPTION	DATE	STATUS
B1	SX69SE 049	-	SX690925	Former chapel and school, now ?village hall	Chapel opened 1866	None
B2	SX69SE 095	-	SX69279283	Narraway. First shown on map of 1809. Possibly on the site of a medieval building, said to be the home of Nicholas Bynortheweyc in 1333	Later 18th century?	None
B3	SX69SE 096	-	SX69429272	Merrymeet. Shown on Donn's map of 1765	?18th century	None
B4	SX69SE 138	-	SX69189277	Granite gateposts SW of Narraway farmhouse. Mid 19th century	Mid 19th century	I.BII
B5	-	-	SX69329268	small cob barn noted in walkover	?19th century	None

5.2 There are five buildings of historic interest in the study area. One of these (site B4) is Grade II listed, three have been noted as structures of historical interest by the Devon Sites and Monuments Record and one is previously unrecorded in existing databases. None of the buildings are categorised as Grade II* or higher and therefore considered to be of no more than local importance. These buildings are generally individual examples of local architectural style and reflect the dispersed nature of settlement in the locality.

5.3 Post Medieval Buildings

Merrymeet (site B3) is a small two-storey stone-built cottage some 150m to the south west of the existing Merrymeet A30 junction (Plate 2). It is first shown on Benjamin Donn's 'Map of Devon' from 1765, although there is little further evidence to indicate its original date of construction, or whether the present building is original. It is currently set back from the modern roadside and lies adjacent to an abandoned length of the former A30.

5.4 Nineteenth Century buildings

The granite gateposts of Narraway House to the north of Whiddon Down (site B4) are Grade II listed, although Narraway House itself (site B2), a modern building built on the possible site of the Medieval home of Nicholas Bynortheweyc, is unlisted. The

possibility that Narraway lies on the site of earlier settlement would enhance the archaeological potential. A mid 19th century chapel and school building in Whiddon Down (site B1) has more recently been used as a village hall.

6. HISTORIC LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Introduction

This section of the report presents evidence from historical maps relevant to the land use history of the study area. It includes a summary of the map examined and a brief commentary on the contribution that each provides in interpreting the evolution of the present landscape. Copies of relevant maps are included as Figs 2 - 12.

6.2 Late 18th - Early 19th Century Maps

The earliest map of the study area was drawn up by a Benjamin Donn as part of his 'Map of Devon', first published in 1765 (Fig. 2). Although lacking somewhat in detail, this map illustrates the basic road layout of the area and indicates that to the west, at Whiddon Down, the land was still unenclosed. Within the study area the land alongside the road was wholly enclosed at this time.

The Ordnance Survey 1" map of 1809 (Fig. 3), and the Ordnance Surveyors' drawings of 1803-04 (Fig. 4) and 1806-07 (Fig. 5), provide the earliest depiction of the dispersed pattern of local farming communities, the field systems and trackways. The patterns of field established by this date is broadly similar to the present day within much of the study area.

6.3 Tithe Map Coverage 1839 - 1841

The study area appears on the Drewsteignton tithe map of c.1839 (Fig. 6) and the Hittisleigh tithe map of 1841 (Fig. 7). The pattern of field established by the end of the eighteenth century is largely unchanged other than by some limited subdivision, but they record expansion of existing settlements, at Narraway and west of Merrymeet (site A3). Land in the vicinity of the proposed road improvements is largely arable at this date (Fig. 10).

6.4 Later 19th and 20th Century Printed Maps

The First edition Ordnance Survey 6" map published in 1888 (Fig. 11) shows little change in the field pattern of fields from the tithe maps. The settlement at Whiddon Down has extended to the north of the Exeter Road by this date and significantly the farm to the west of Merrymeet (site A3) is now only represented by one structure, presumably the barn B3. The settlement and field pattern in the era immediately preceding the modern improvements of the A30 and the petrol station / hotel development is well-depicted on the 1963 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 12). Significantly, by this date Daveycourt Farm has been removed. The modern landscape in 2002 is depicted on Fig. 1 and shows the rationalisation of fields around the new road alignment.

7. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

7.1 The collection of aerial photographs held at the National Monuments Record in Swindon, Wiltshire was consulted in January 2002. A full list of the photographs that were consulted is given in Appendix 1.

7.2 A series of rectilinear cropmarks was noted in a large rectangular field immediately to the south-east of Merrymeet junction on a vertical photograph taken by the Ordnance Survey (OS69447/34) in October 1969 (C1 on Fig. 1). These linear features appear to form a series of sub-rectangular enclosures and conform in part to a pattern of field boundaries noted on the eastern edge of the 1888 OS map (Fig. 11).

7.3 No other archaeological features were noted from these photographs.

8. SITE VISIT

8.1 Introduction

The site walkover survey was carried out on 5th January 2002. Each land unit within the study area that has been inspected has been given a plot number. These numbers are referred to throughout this section and are shown on Fig. 1. Selected photographs from the walkover survey are included.

8.2 Plot 1

A modern landscaped area adjacent to the Travelodge and petrol station. The land is grass-covered and previous land shaping indicating subsurface disturbance is evident. The north-east boundary is formed by a modern post & rail fence.

8.3 Plot 2

This is also down to grass with some gorse scrub. The north-east boundary is formed by a modern fence at the top of cutting for the A30.

8.4 Plot 3

This plot comprises the abandoned length of the former A382 and is metalled. The boundary between Plots 1/2 and 3 is formed in part by a substantial hedgebank of uncertain construction, but which survives up to a height of 1m + (Plate 1). To the north of the gate into Plot 1 (in the area to be affected by the scheme proposals) the hedgebank survives only intermittently, partly as a result of removal by a pipeline crossing. To the south of the gate a double bank survives either side of a former road ditch. To the south-west the building known as 'Merrymeet' (site B3) lies at a slightly lower level than the road (Plate 2).

8.5 Plot 4

The existing A382 road lies in a modern cutting with a steep face on the north side, less steep on the south side.

8.6 Plot 5

The former course of the minor road leading from Whiddon Down to Hittisleigh is preserved on the north-east side of the roundabout. Well-defined hedgebanks are

present on both sides of the former carriageway (Plate 3).

8.7 Plot 6

The field was under grass at the time of inspection.

8.8 Plot 7

The road and road verges on the east and south-east access to the roundabout are within modern cuttings and have been landscaped .

9. CONSERVATION AREAS OR OTHER DESIGNATIONS

9.1 The study area contains no Conservation Areas, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest included in the English Heritage Register or battlefields included in the English Heritage Register.

10. IMPORTANT HEDGEROWS

10.1 A large number of the boundaries within the study area are shown on the Drewsteignton or Hittisleigh tithe maps (1839 - 1841) and would therefore be considered to be important under criterion 5 (a) of Schedule 1 of The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, in that they:

'are recorded in a document held at the relevant date at a Record Office as an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Inclosure Acts.'

10.2 Within the scheme proposals only three hedgerows are affected that are considered to be important on historical criteria.

11. ASSESSMENT

11.1 Archaeological Sites

The majority of sites recorded in the study area are considered to be of Post-Medieval date. There is circumstantial evidence for a Roman road on the former A30 alignment, but otherwise no recorded sites are directly or indirectly affected by the scheme proposals.

The area has not been the subject of previous systematic field survey and it is reasonable to suppose that the current level of archaeological data understates the full potential for buried archaeological remains. Only in Plots 1/2 and Plot 6 is there considered to be any significant potential for the survival of subsurface remains. In Plot 1 there may have been disturbance by modern landscaping.

While none of the recorded sites is likely to be considered of national importance nor presents an overriding constraint to the road improvement, the limited potential for further archaeological finds leads to the conclusion that archaeological issues should be considered at future stages of planning and development.

11.2 Listed Buildings and other Buildings of Historic Interest

The presence of, and likely impacts on, listed and other historic buildings is a material consideration in the assessment of the scheme. The historic structures (B1- B5) are significant in a local context in recording the pattern of settlement development in the last three centuries. They are susceptible to effects on their physical preservation by noise, vibration etc. and indirectly from effects to their historic settings. The present scheme proposals, however, appear to have no discernible impacts on the built environment.

11.3 Important Hedgerows

The area contains a high proportion of hedged boundaries that are considered important, a number of which are marked by typical Devon hedge banks in varying states of preservation. There should be a presumption in favour of the retention of these landscape features, where possible, but those that will be affected have previously been disconnected from their historical settings by earlier road improvements and other developments, and cannot be considered to be of more than local significance.

Removal of hedgerows by the Highways Authority may be permitted under section 6 (1h) of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

12 STAGE 3: FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 Introduction

Following the conclusion of this archaeological assessment and consultations responses from the Archaeological officer, Devon County Council, the following programme of works is proposed for a Stage 3 assessment.

12.2 Geophysical Survey

The first stage of an archaeological programme should involve a non-intrusive survey by geophysical survey of Plots 1/ 2 and 6 within in the proposed land take areas.

12.3 Field Evaluation

Subject to the results of the geophysical survey it may be necessary to undertake a second phase of intrusive field evaluation, involving the excavation of either machine- or hand-dug trenches within the land take areas. These trenches would target any subsurface evidence of archaeological potential and as a control on 'blank' areas. The precise number and location of the trenches would be agreed following consultations with the County Archaeological Officer, Devon County Council.

12.4 Hedgerow Survey

The recording of hedgebanks to be affected will be confirmed during Stage 3 and undertaken as part of the construction mitigation works.

12.5 Stage 3 report

The results of these surveys will then be presented in an updated assessment report which will also include the results of consultations with the County Archaeologist for Devon and English Heritage. This report will also contain any proposed mitigation.

APPENDIX 1
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH COVER SEARCH

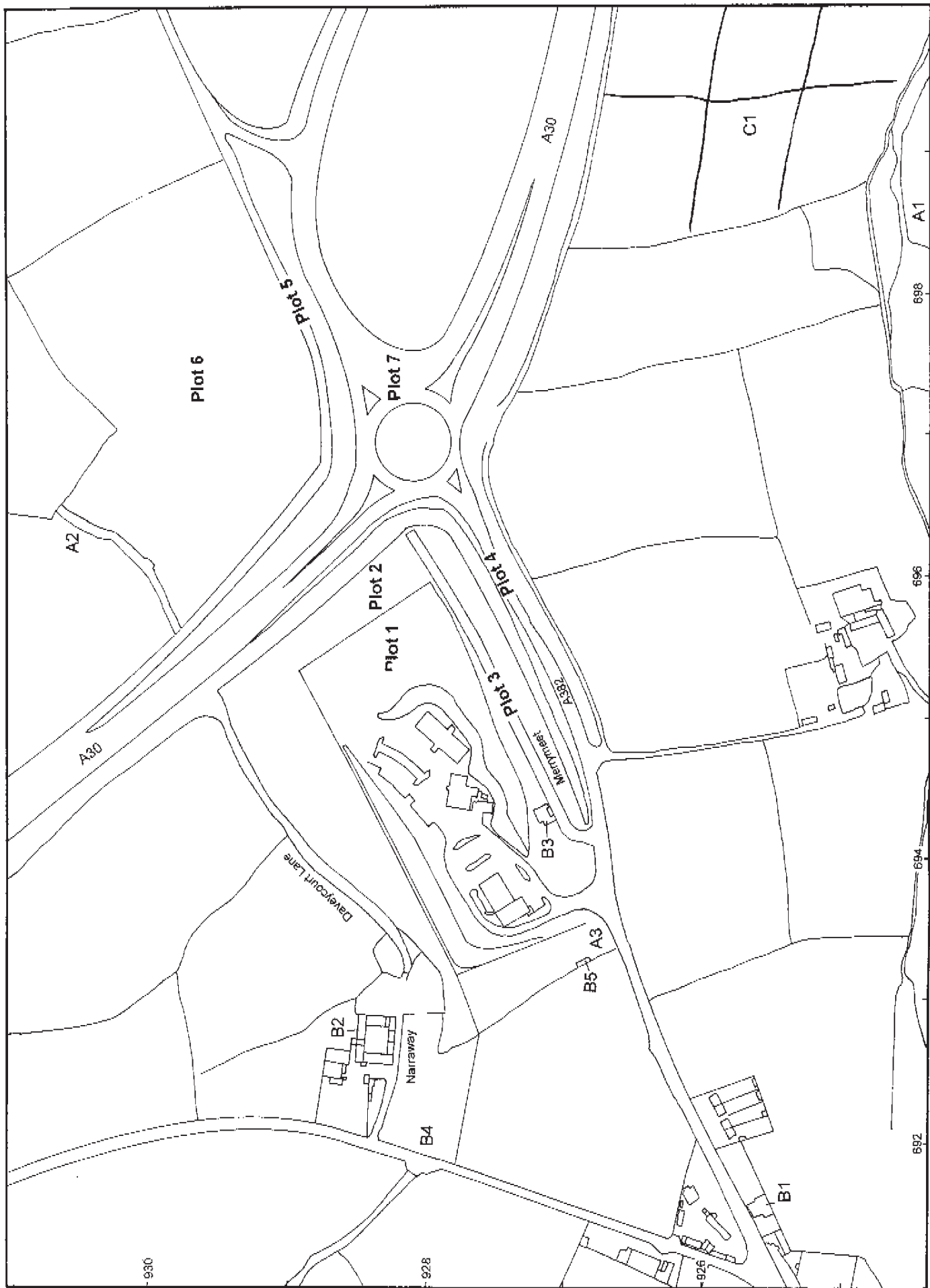


Fig 1: Site Location and Plot Numbers

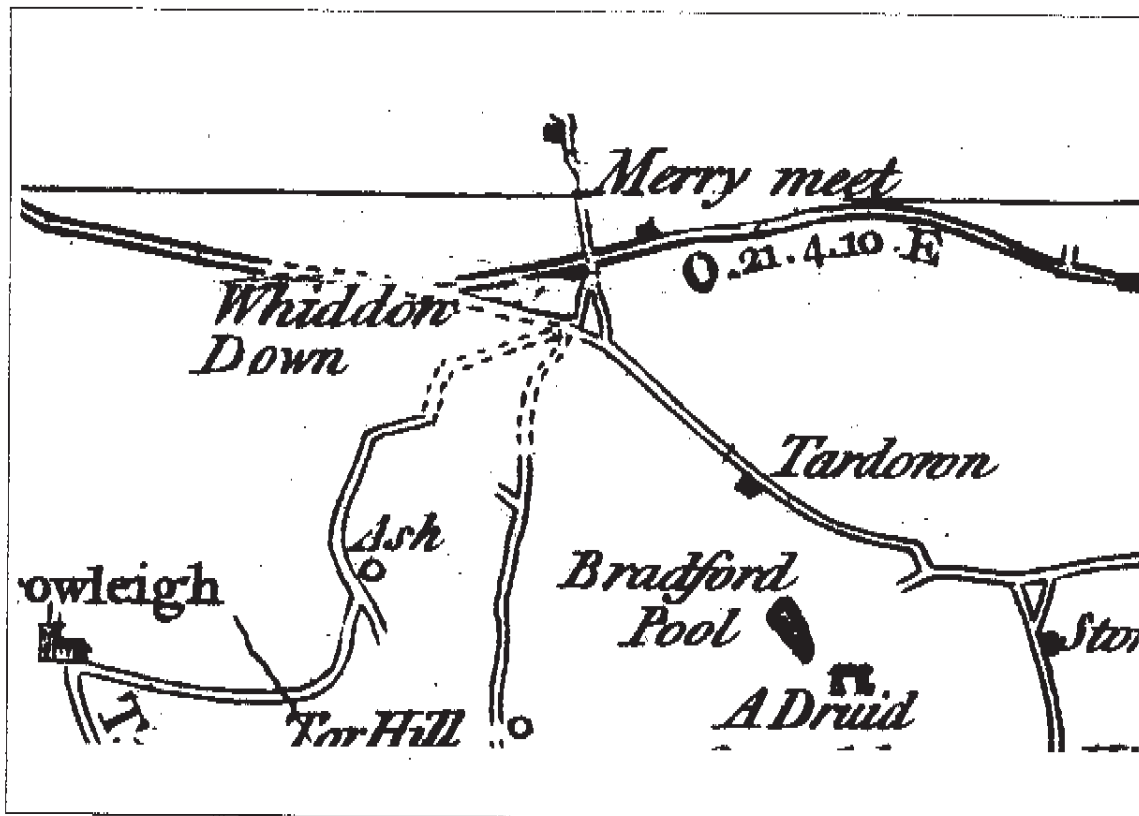


Fig. 2: Benjamin Donn, Map of Devon, 1765

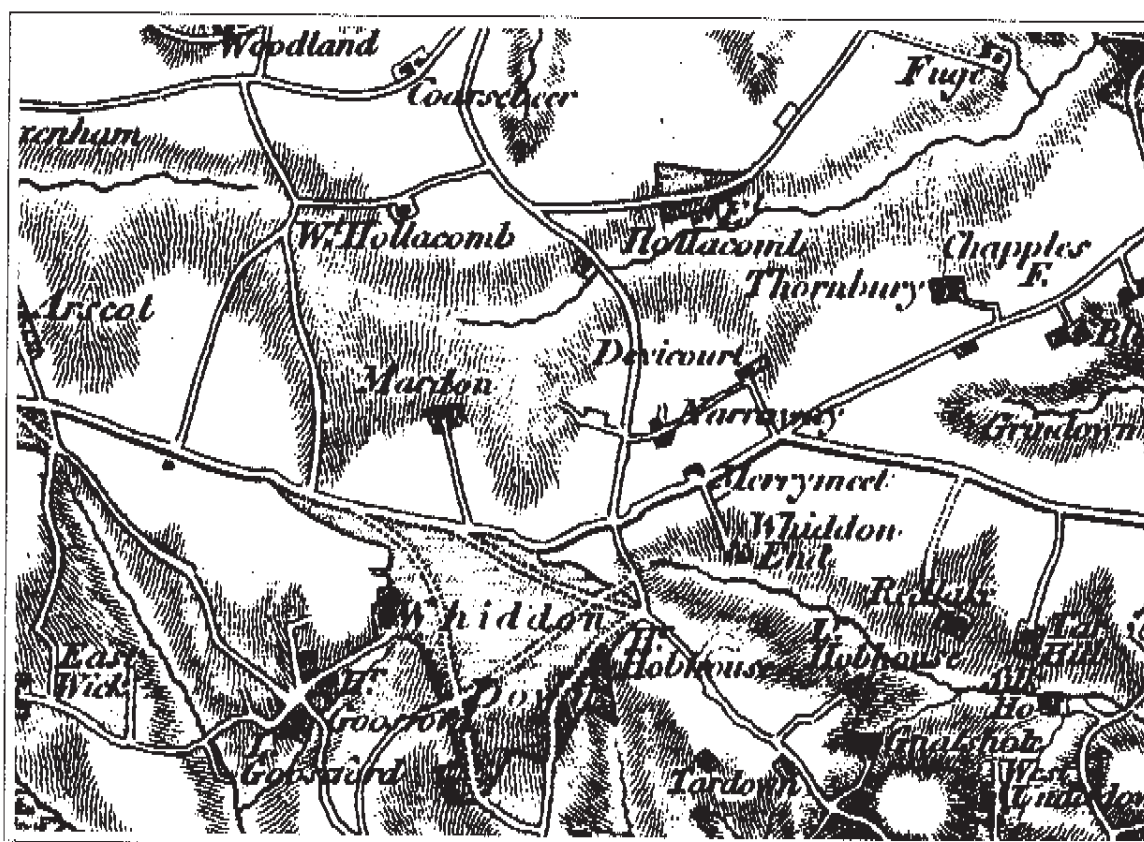


Fig. 3: Ordnance Survey 1-inch map, sheet 25, published 1809 (not to original scale)

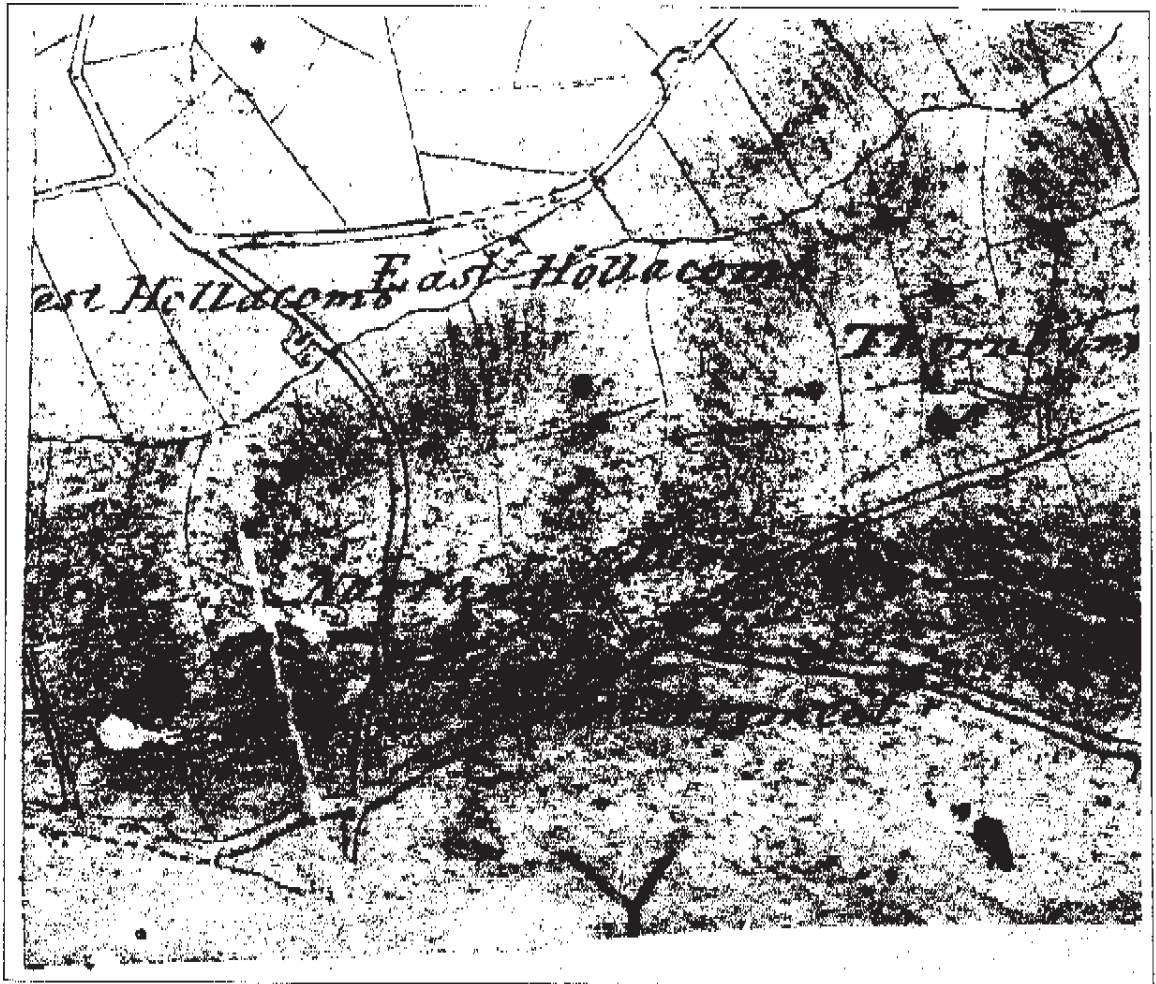


Fig. 5: Ordnance Surveyors' Drawing, sheet 36, surveyed 1806-7

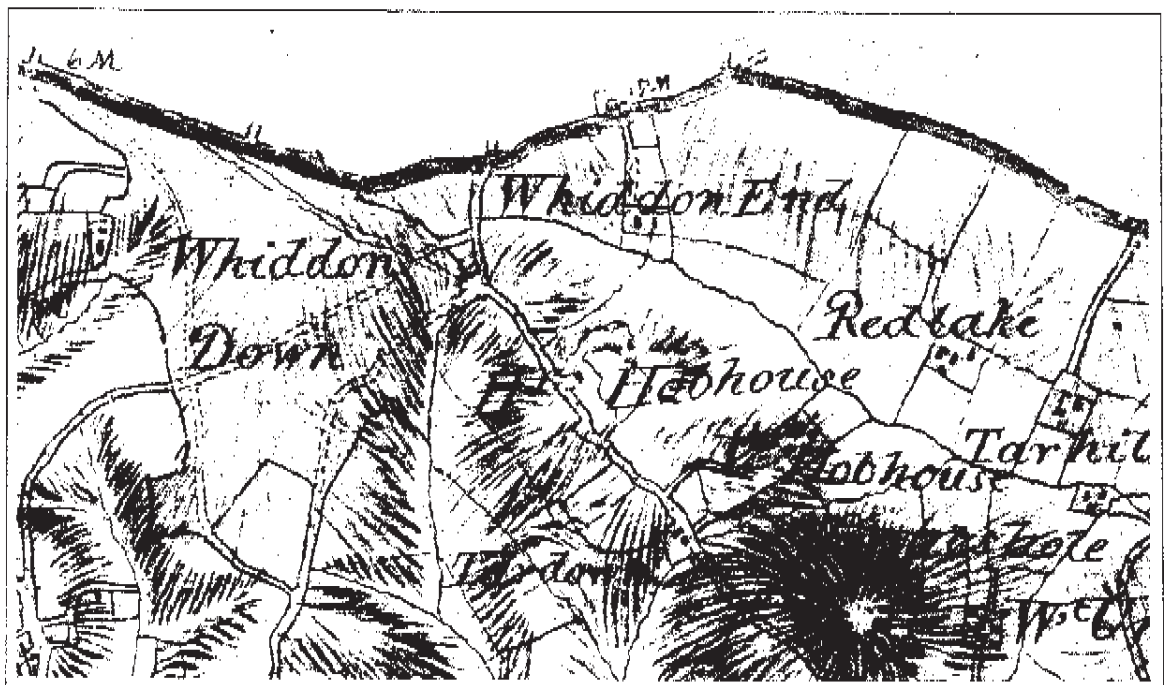


Fig. 4: Ordnance Surveyors' Drawing, Sheet 26, surveyed 1803-4

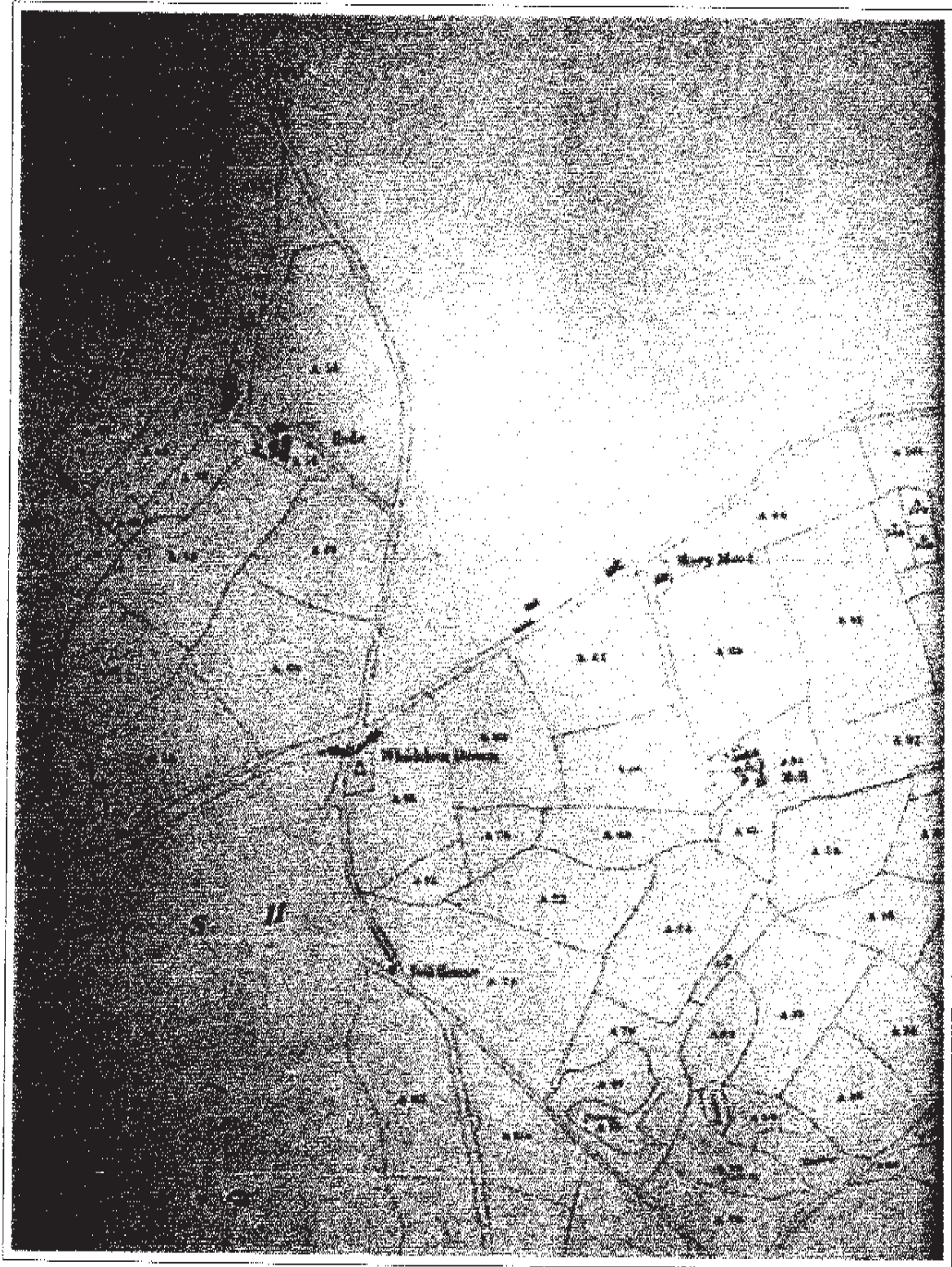


Fig. 6: Detail from Drewsteignton Tithe Map, undated (c. 1839)

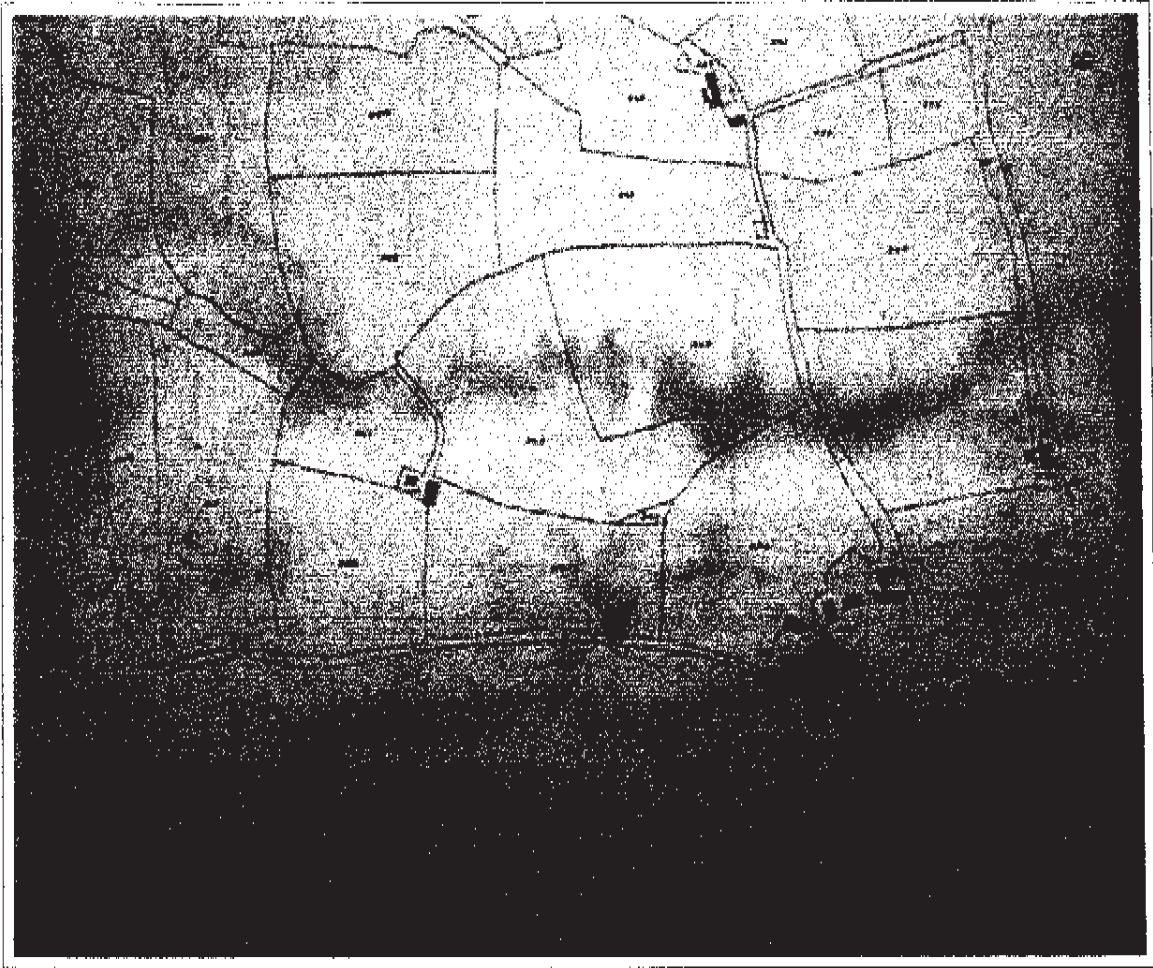


Fig. 7: Details from Hittisleigh Tithe Map, 1841 (NB East is to top of map)

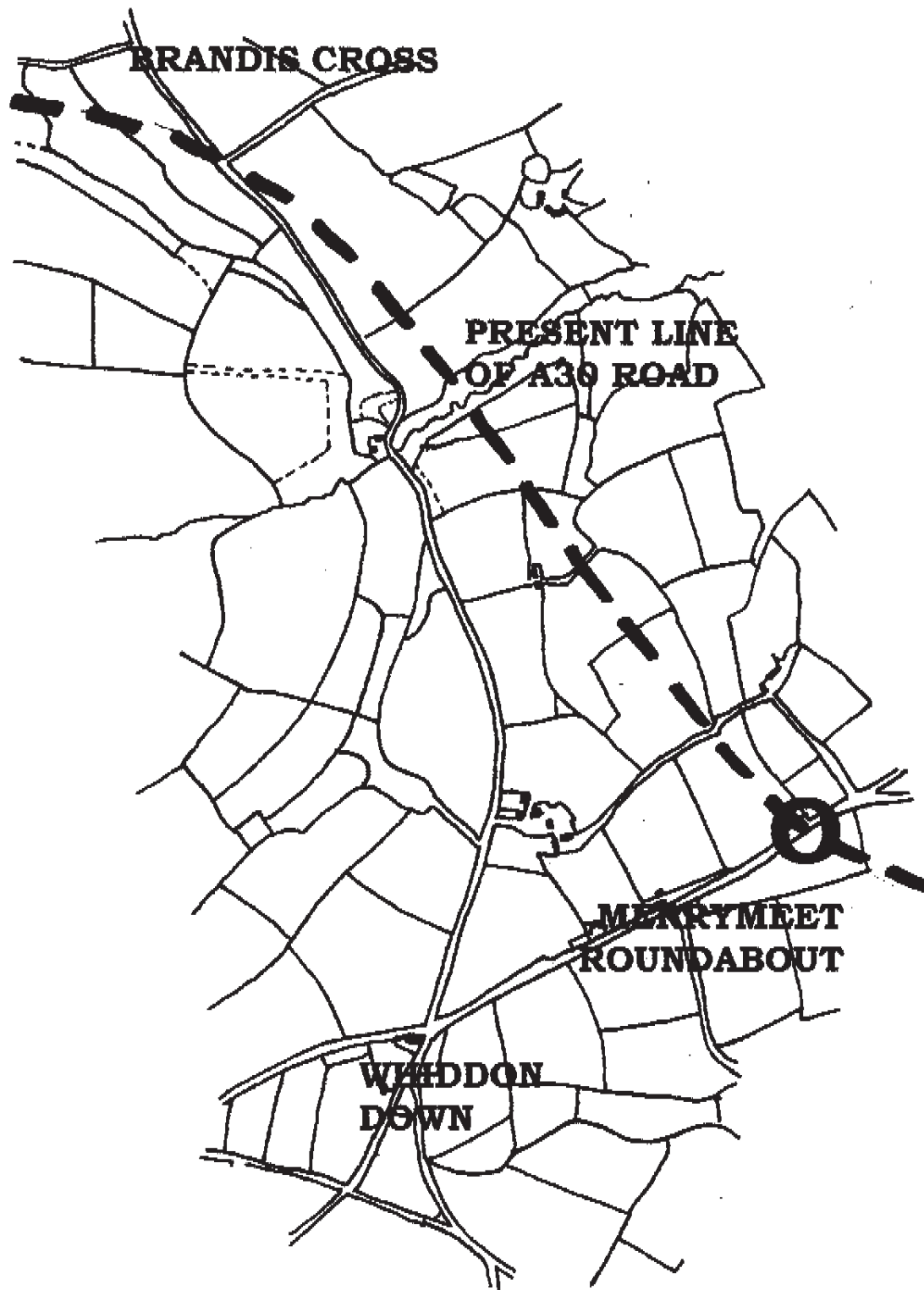


Fig. 8: Sketch derived from tithe maps (c. 1840), showing field pattern, with present A30 roadline superimposed

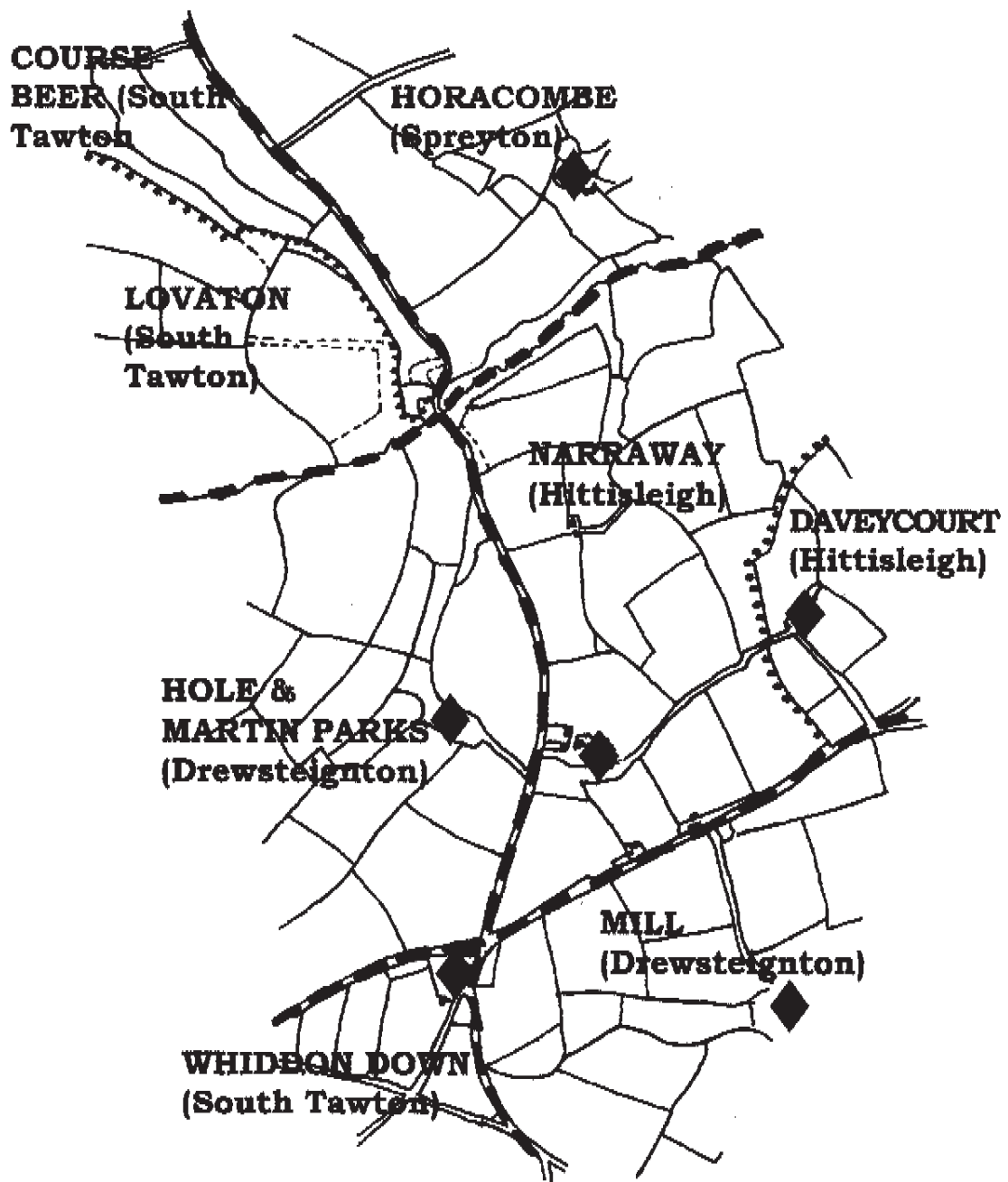


Fig. 9: Sketch derived from tithe maps (c. 1840), showing parish and estate boundaries

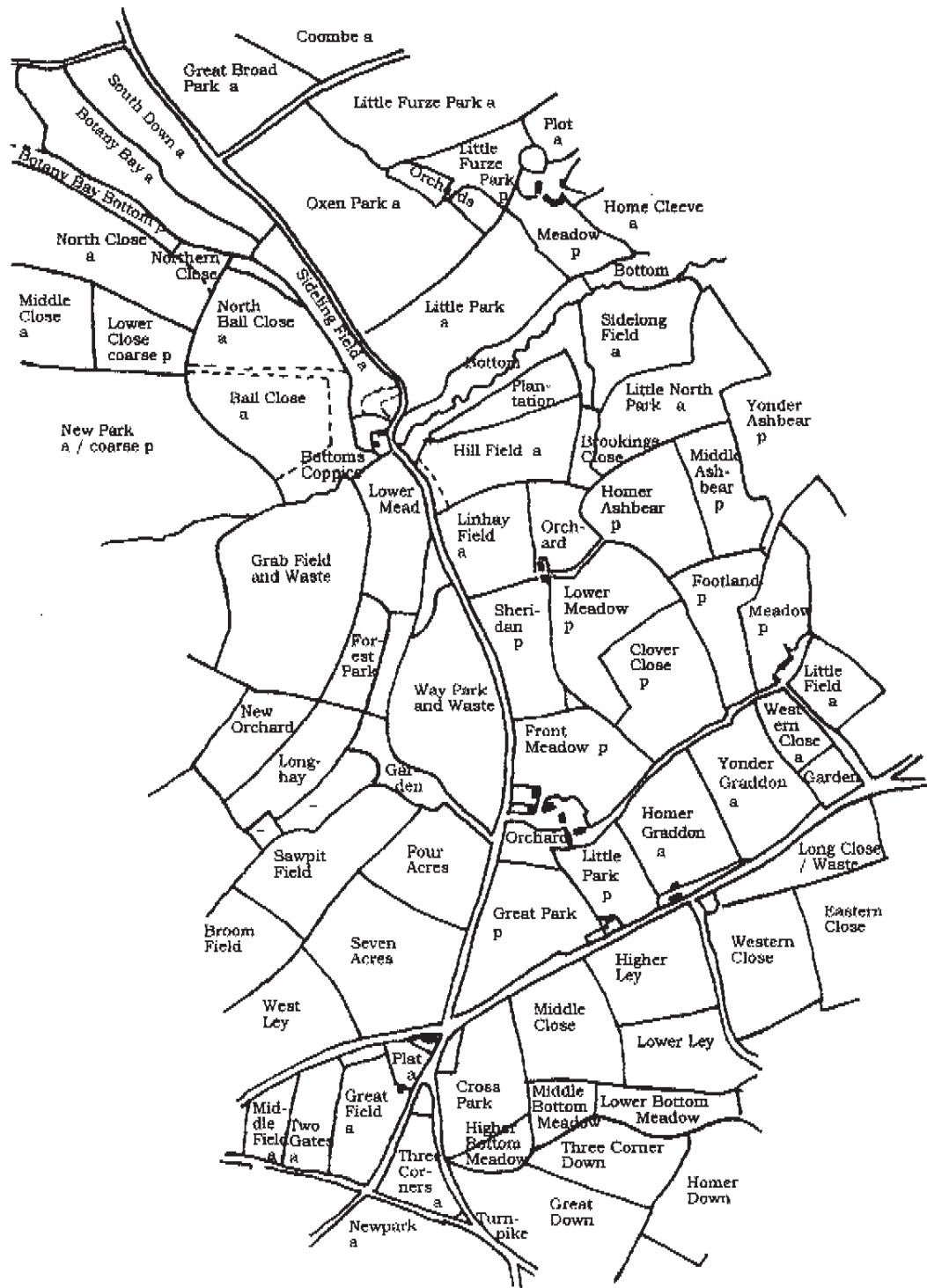


Fig. 10: Sketch derived from tithe maps (c. 1840), showing field names (a = arable; p = pasture)

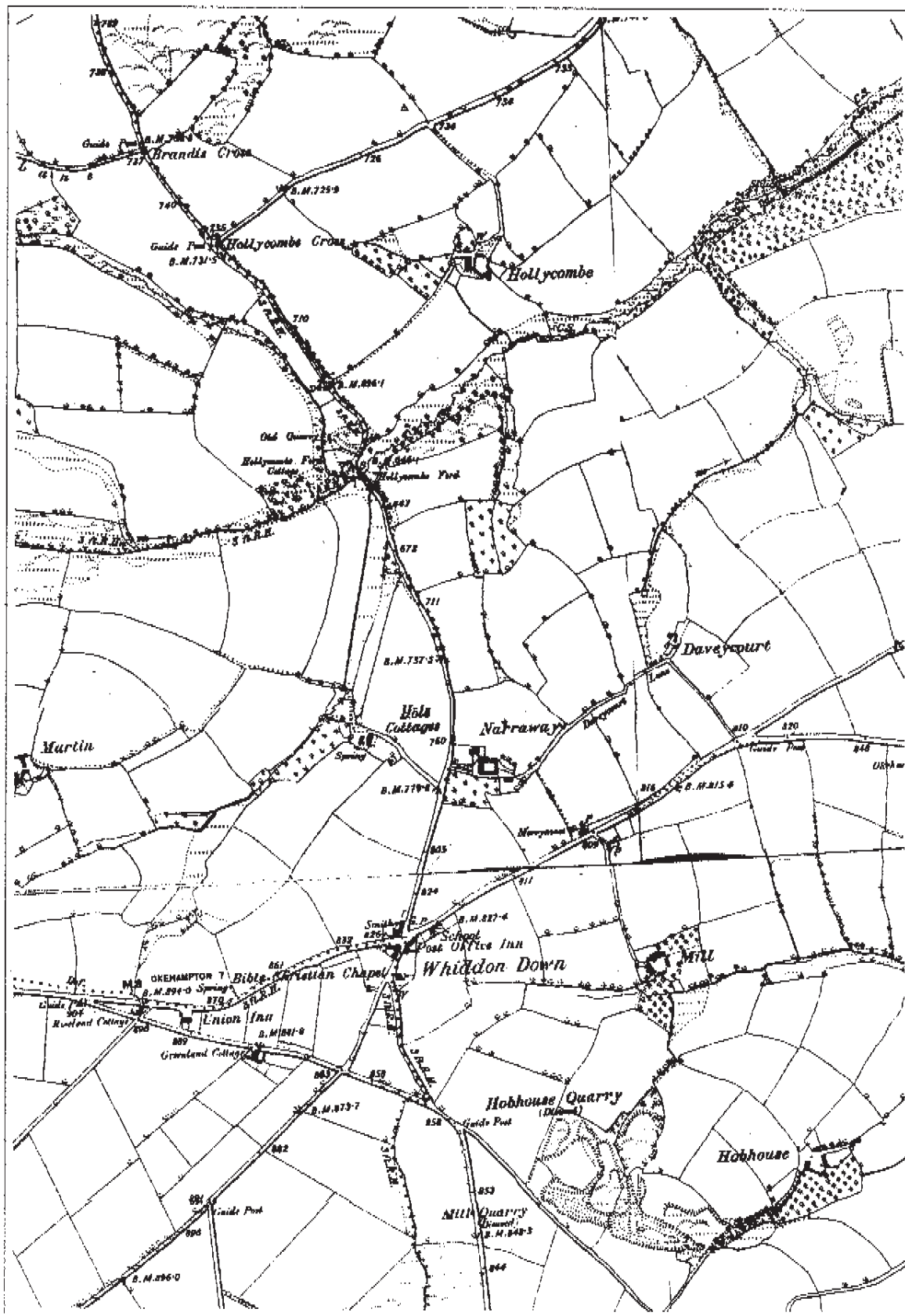


Fig. 11: Compsite map derived from Ordnance Survey 6-inch scale mapping, sheets Devon 77NE, 77SE, 78NW, 78SW, surveyed 1884-7

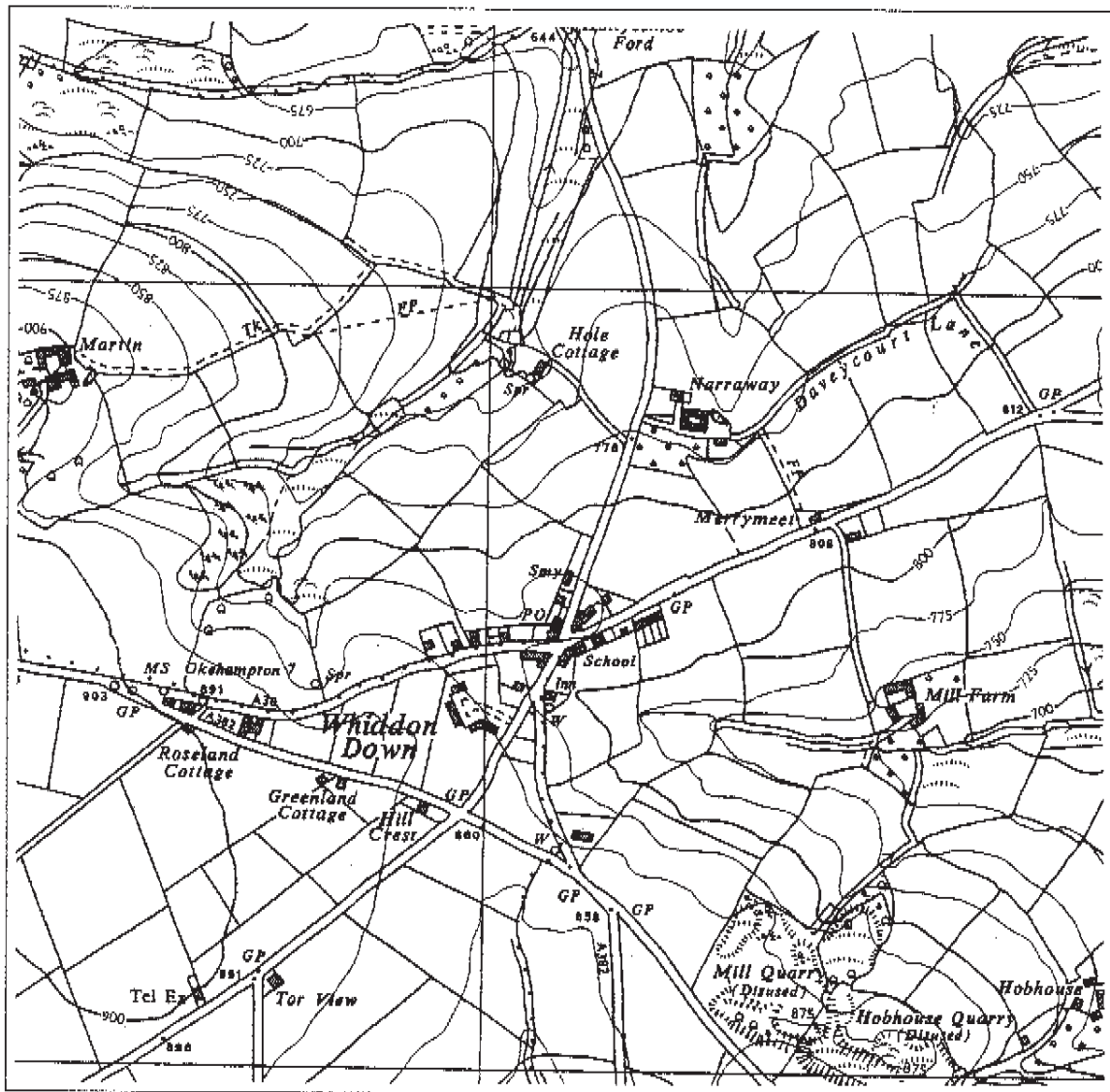


Fig. 12: Portion of Ordnance Survey 6-inch map, sheet SX69SE, revised 1953/1962, published 1963



Plate 1: Hedgebank on boundary of Plots 1/2 and 3

Plate 2: Merrymeet cottage (site B3) and surface of former road in Plot 3





Plate 3: Hedgebanks in Plot 5

APPENDIX 1
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH COVER SEARCH

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Summary report for vertical coversearch

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CPZ/UK/2082	542	RS	4436	4438	P	SX701937	SX685936	19-MAY-1947	1	A	10000	20.00	BMB7	MOC	CRW
CPE/UK/2491	755	RS	4441	4443	P	SX687931	SX705930	11-MAR-1946	1	A	20000	20.00	BMB7	MOC	CRW
58/4376	2029	F22	35	40	N	SX698911	SX697941	20-JUN-1961	1	AB	21000	20.00	BMB7	MOC	CRW
RCU/SKS/2021	9002B	V	170370	170377	N	SX702929	SX685934	01-DEC-1971	2	A	3000	6.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
RCU/SKS/2021	9002B	V	170404	170412	N	SX703924	SX684929	01-DEC-1971	2	A	3000	6.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
RCU/SKS/2024	9002E	V	170026	170032	N	SX703927	SX688930	01-DEC-1971	2	A	3000	6.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
RCU/SKS/2024	9002E	V	170038	170046	N	SX704927	SX686931	01-DEC-1971	2	A	3000	6.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
RCU/SKS/2024	9002E	V	170061	170068	N	SX69693E	SX693921	01-DEC-1971	2	A	3000	6.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
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RCU/SKS/2024	9002E	V	170226	170233	N	SX693919	SX685932	01-DEC-1971	2	A	3000	6.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
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OS/69301	9483	V	18	20	P	SX685928	SX694927	29-JUN-1969	1	A	5800	12.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
OS/69447	9487	V	32	34	P	SX705920	SX694920	09-OCT-1969	1	A	7500	12.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
OS/69457	9487	V	35	36	P	SX699931	SX705931	09-OCT-1969	1	A	7500	12.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
OS/77105	9476	V	145	148	P	SX705933	SX687935	30-JUL-1977	1	A	7900	12.00	BW99	NMR	CRW
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