



OAKFORD  
ARCHAEOLOGY

## Archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Mowlish Farm, Kenton, Devon



*on behalf of*  
**the client**

**Report No. 20-15**

**Project No. 1716**

**November 2020**



# OAKFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological Groundworks and Historic Buildings

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## Content

### Summary

1. Introduction	1
1.1 General Background	1
1.2 The site	1
2. Aims	1
3. Methodology	1
4. Historic and archaeological background	2
4.1 General background	2
4.2 The site	2
5. Results	3
6. Project Archives	4

### Acknowledgements

### Bibliography

## List of illustrations

- Fig. 1 Location of site.
- Fig. 2 Detail from the aerial photograph showing possible prehistoric or Romano-British enclosure immediately to the west of the site (red).
- Fig. 3 Detail from the 1840 Kenton tithe map.
- Fig. 4 Detail from the 1888 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map Devonshire Sheet CII.7.
- Fig. 5 Plan showing location of observations.
- Fig. 6 Section.

## List of plates

- Plate 1 General view of the western edge of the site showing the exposed section. 1m scales. Looking south.
- Plate 2 Section through tree throw [108]. 1m scale. Looking southwest.
- Plate 3 Section through posthole [106]. 1m scale. Looking southwest.
- Plate 4 Section through ditch [102]. 1m scale. Looking southwest.
- Plate 5 General view of site showing area of cut and fill. Looking northwest.

## Summary

*Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out by Oakford Archaeology September 2020 on land at Mowlish Farm, Kenton, Devon (SX 9518 8064), after the area subject to the planning application had already been disturbed by groundworks associated with the levelling of the land for agricultural buildings.*

*This exposed an approximately 50m long section along the western edge of the development area and subsequent cleaning uncovered the remains of three features. These consisted of a tree-throw of possible prehistoric date, a posthole that may relate to prehistoric and/or Romano-British settlement activity to the west and a large linear feature which is likely to be of post-medieval date. No finds were recovered pre-dating the 19<sup>th</sup> century.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General Background

This report has been prepared for the client and sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Oakford Archaeology (OA) in September 2020 on land at Mowlish Farm, Kenton, Devon (SX 9518 8064). The work was required under the grant of planning permission (20/01023/FUL) for the construction of a new concrete yard and associated works by Teignbridge District Council (TDC), as advised by the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).

The area subject to this planning application, approximately one hectare in size, had already been disturbed by groundworks associated with the levelling of the land for agricultural buildings. In light of this the archaeological potential of the footprint of the proposed new concrete yard was considered low. However, the work had exposed an approximately 50m long section along the western edge of the development area. Visual inspection by Stephen Reed (DCHET) on the 27-08-2020 revealed possible archaeological features extending into the development site which may have been associated with known prehistoric or Romano-British activity to the west of the site. The programme of archaeological work therefore took the form of the cleaning, recording and investigation of the archaeological features exposed in the western site section.

### 1.1 The site

The site (Fig. 1) is located at the southern edge of Kenton parish. The site lies at a height of between c.27 and 30m AOD on a gentle east facing low-lying spur overlooking a small stream. The underlying solid geology is described as Breccia, a sedimentary sandstone belonging to the Dawlish Sandstone Formation, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 299 to 252 million years ago during the Permian Period and gives rise to clayey sand soils and gravels.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. AIMS

The aims of the archaeological investigations were to determine the presence, extent, character and date of any archaeological deposits or features of historic importance that had been disturbed or removed by the works, and to disseminate the results of the investigation by appropriate reporting.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The work was undertaken in accordance with a project design prepared by Oakford Archaeology (2020), submitted to and approved by the DCHET prior to commencement on site. This document is included as Appendix 1.

The standard OA recording system was employed. Stratigraphic information was recorded on *pro-forma* context record sheets, plans and sections for each trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and a detailed colour (digital) photographic record was made. Registers were maintained for photographs, drawings and context sheets on *pro forma* sheets.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.bgs.ac.uk](http://www.bgs.ac.uk).

## 4. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

### 4.1 General background

The site lies immediately to the east of a large sub-oval enclosure identified through aerial photography (Fig. 2), in an area where only limited archaeological fieldwork has been previously undertaken. An entrance into the enclosure is clearly visible at the northeastern end, while two smaller concentric sub-square enclosures are located within the western half of the large enclosure. The exact relationship between these features is unclear and it is possible that they represent the remains of a multi-period settlement site spanning the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Evidence from the aerial photograph suggests that this activity may extend eastwards into the development area.

Little is known of the development of the southern half of the later parish of Kenton in the immediate post-Roman and early Saxon period. The manors of *Milehyuis* and *Milchewis* were recorded for the first time in the Domesday Book of 1086. The former was held by *Leofgar* prior to 1066 and during the Norman reorganisation of the land holdings following the Conquest, and the death of Harold at Hastings, the manor and its land were held by Richard, a local Norman lord, from Ralph of Pomeroy,<sup>2</sup> while the latter was retained by the local Saxon thegn *Sæwulf* following the conquest.<sup>3</sup>

The manor, variously known as *Mulehewis*, *Molehiwis*, *Moliwys*, *Moulysse*, *Moulyls juxta Kentone*, *MouliSSH juxta DouliSSH*, *MoulehywSSH* and *Mouleshywhisshe*,<sup>4</sup> derives its name from the Old English *h̄wisc* meaning household or farm and the plural of the Old English *mūl* or mule, referring perhaps to the farm where these animals were kept according to Gover.<sup>5</sup>

The two Domesday Manors were subsequently united, passing into the possession of the Lutton family in the late 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Mowlish House belonged to Mr Long, Sheriff of Devon, who also owned nearby Brickhouse and Newhouse. It was rented to a tenant farmer in September 1795 when the Revd. Swete visited and sketched it.<sup>6</sup> He described all but the main range and east wing as ‘*of the lowest order - mere modern erections for the accommodation of a Farmer*’ while his watercolour shows the main range much as it is today with a possible detached farm building at the right end.

### 4.2 The site

The site is shown for the first time on the 1840 tithe map of Kenton parish (Fig. 3). The map clearly shows two curving boundaries to the northeast and southwest of Mowlish barn defining the lower slopes of Mowlish Hill. The track at this period stopped by the barn, while the site was part of a large field occupying the northeastern half of the hill. The southwestern half was divided into two unequal fields. Nearby Mowlish House and the site was leased by George Ireland, a 42-year old farmer originally from Bovey Tracey, from Robert Newman Esq., MP for Exeter and Sheriff of Devon, then living at Mamhead.

The 1841 census shows George Ireland residing at Mowlish House with his wife Mary, aged 40, and their five children, John, Mary, George, Henry and Jane, in addition to five agricultural labourers and three servants. Ten years later George, described as a farmer of 270 acres was still residing at Mowlish with his wife Mary and their five children. Their eldest son John had

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<sup>2</sup> *Thorn and Thorn 1985, 34,13.*

<sup>3</sup> *Thorn and Thorn 1985, 52,49.*

<sup>4</sup> Gover et al. 1932, 500.

<sup>5</sup> Gover et al. 1932, 500.

<sup>6</sup> Gray et. al. 1999.

left sometime before although their youngest daughter Frances was born at Mowlish in 1844. In addition to the Ireland family the farm employed eight labourers, while six servants and one house servant are also noted in the census.

Following the death of George on 20 December 1854 the family moved to Newton Abbot, and Mowlish was leased once more. Little is known of the knew tenants until 1889 when Lee Thomas is named as farming at Mowlish.<sup>7</sup> The area was mapped by the Ordnance Survey in 1890, when the site was shown in the greatest detail thus far (Fig. 4).

By 1903 the farm was leased by James Sherwill,<sup>8</sup> with the boundaries defining the fields remaining unaltered throughout the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 5. RESULTS

The programme of archaeological work took the form of the cleaning, recording and investigation of the archaeological features exposed in the western section (Figs. 5-6, Pls. 1-5). The work exposed a simple deposit sequence across the site consisting of a compact mid red clayey sand and gravel natural subsoil (100) at a depth of 0.45m below current ground level. This was sealed underneath a compact mid to dark reddish-brown clayey sand topsoil (101). The work exposed a single approximately SW-NE aligned linear, one posthole and a possible tree-throw sealed underneath the topsoil.

Feature 102 was a linear feature aligned approximately SW-NE. This probable ditch was 2.26m wide and 0.8m deep, with gradually breaking sides and a concave base. The basal fill (103) consisted of a mid reddish-brown clayey sand with frequent redeposited gravels. This was overlain by a light greyish brown clayey sand (104) with rare gravel inclusions. The final infill (105) consisted of a mid reddish-brown clayey sand. The lack of finds from its fills and its alignment suggest that this might be an earlier field boundary, pre-dating the 1840 Kenton tithe map.

To the south feature 106 was the remains of a probable posthole, 0.22m wide and 0.55m deep, with sharply breaking sides and a concave base. No finds were recovered from its single fill (107). This consisted of a uniform mid reddish-brown clayey sand deposit and contained a single large sandstone fragment, interpreted as possible post-packing.

Finally, feature 108 was the remains of a possible tree-throw. Approximately 1.2m wide and 0.5m deep it had gradually breaking sides and an irregular base. a roughly circular feature. No finds were recovered from its single fill (109). This consisted of a uniform heavily root-disturbed light to mid-greyish brown clayey sand deposit.

Due to the extensive truncation the evidence for archaeological activity within the western edge of the site is somewhat limited, both in terms of the number and the variety of features identified. The possible alignment of the large linear correlates with the alignments of existing hedgebanks, and although no finds were recovered from its fills its general character may suggest a boundary feature of post-medieval date. The possible posthole is likely to relate to prehistoric or Romano-British settlement activity to the west while the leached nature of the tree-throw fills suggests a possible prehistoric date for this feature.

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<sup>7</sup> Kelly's directory 1889.

<sup>8</sup> Kelly's directory 1903.

## 6. PROJECT ARCHIVE

Due to the limited nature of the findings a project archive will not be produced. A summary of the investigations has been submitted to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (Online Access to the Index of archaeological InterventionS).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was commissioned by Mr Rob Cotton on behalf of the current owner. The project was managed for Oakford Archaeology by Marc Steinmetzer. The fieldwork was carried out by Marc Steinmetzer and the illustrations for the report were prepared by Michael Wootton and Marc Steinmetzer. Thanks are hereby recorded to Stephen Reed (DCHET) and Marrina Neophytou (DCHET) who provided advice throughout the project.

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*White's Devon 1850*

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*Kelly's 1870-1939*

*Ordnance Survey map 1888 Devonshire Sheet CX.14.*

*1904 Devonshire Sheet CX.14.*

Steinmetzer, MFR 2020. *Archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Mowlish Farm, Kenton, Devon*. Written Scheme of Investigation.

### **Published sources**

J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer, and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Devon*, Cambridge 1932.

Gray, t. and Rowe, M. 1999 *Travels in Georgian Devon: The Illustrated Journals of the Reverend John Swete (1789-1800)*. Vol. 3.

Thorn, C. & Thorn, F. (eds) 1985 *Domesday Book 9: Devon*





Fig. 1 Location of site.



Fig. 2 Detail from the aerial photograph showing possible prehistoric or Romano-British enclosure immediately to the west of the site (red).

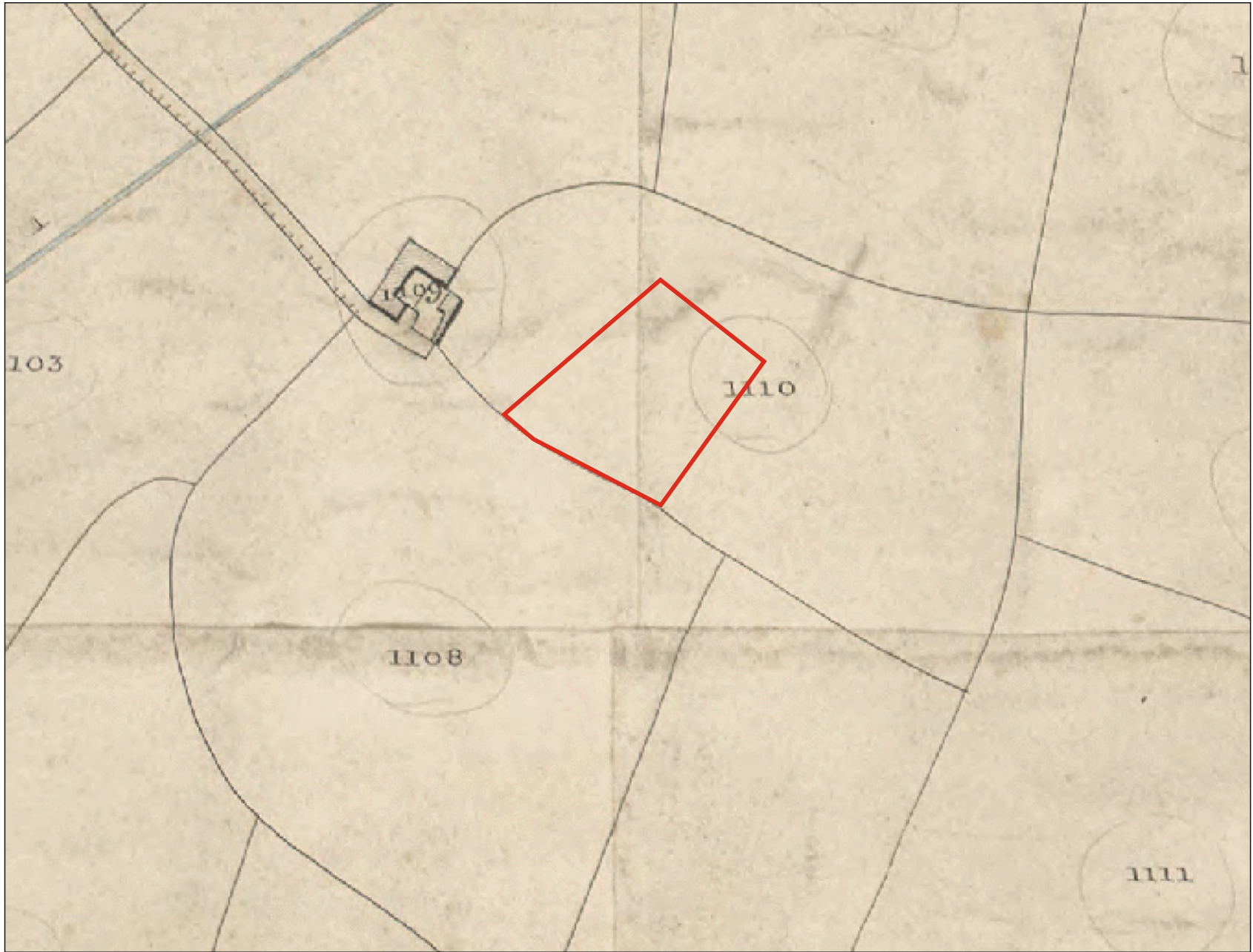


Fig. 3 Detail from the 1840 Kenton tithe map.



Fig. 4 Detail from the 1888 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map Devonshire Sheet CII.7.

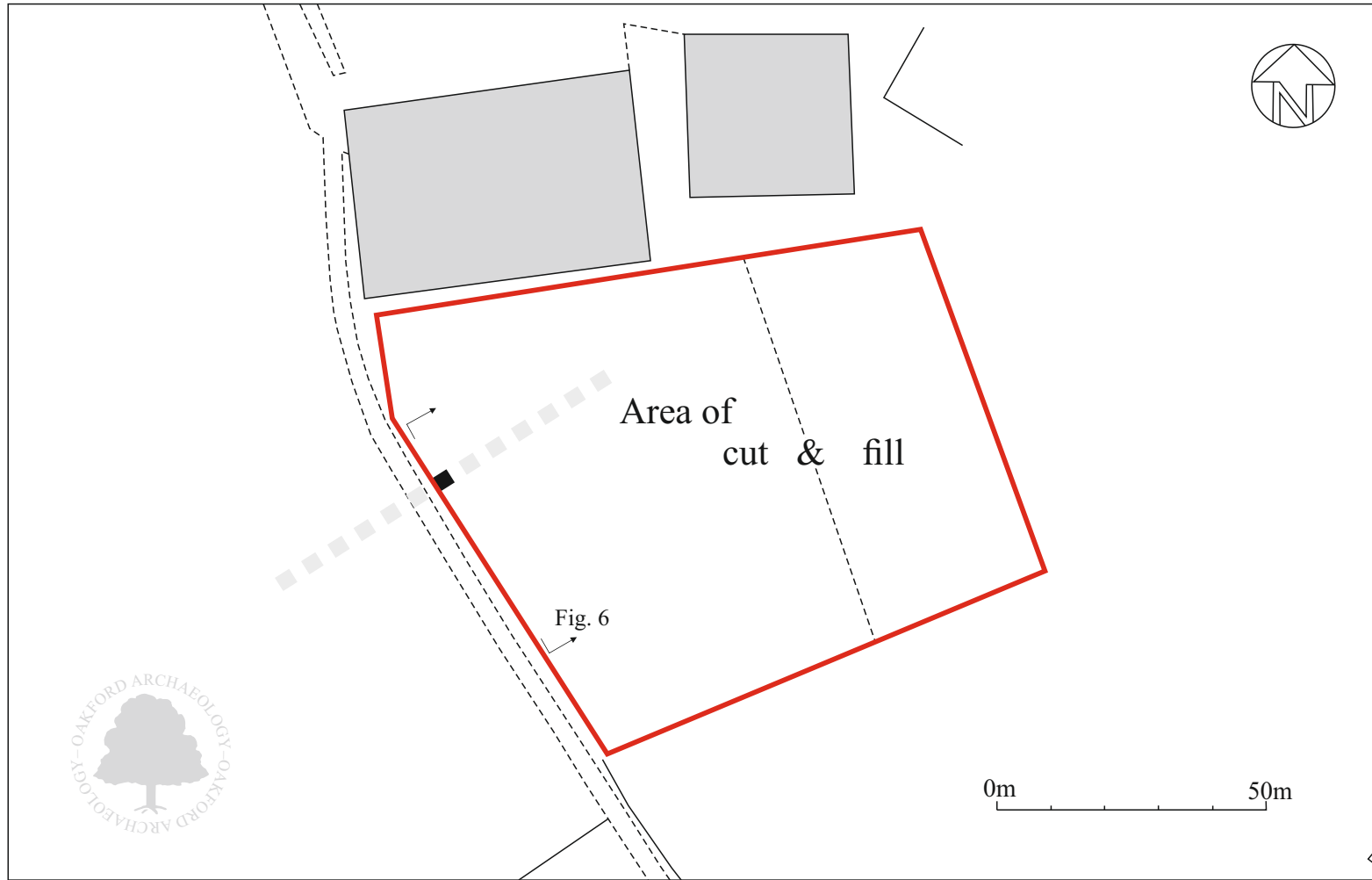


Fig. 5 Plan showing location of observations.

SE ←

(101)

(100)

(109)

[108]

(101)

(100)

(107)

[106]

(101)

(100)

(105)

(104)

(103)

[102]

→ NW



Fig. 6 Section.



Pl. 1 General view of the western edge of the site showing the exposed section. 1m scales. Looking south.



Pl. 2 Section through tree throw [108]. 1m scale. Looking southwest.



Pl. 3 Section through posthole [106]. 1m scale. Looking southwest.



Pl. 4 Section through ditch [102]. 1m scale. Looking southwest.





Pl. 5 General view of site showing area of cut and fill. Looking northwest.

Appendix 1:

Written Scheme of Investigation for  
Archaeological works

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This document has been produced by Oakford Archaeology (OA) for the client and sets out the methodology to be used during archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Mowlish Farm, Kenton, Devon (SX 9518 8064). This document represents the 'Written Scheme of Investigation' required under the grant of planning permission (20/01023/FUL) for the construction of a new concrete yard and associated works. The work is required by the local planning authority Teignbridge District Council (TDC), as advised by the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).
- 1.2 The proposed development lies in an area of high archaeological potential to the east of two ditched enclosures that have been identified through aerial photography and represent the site of a prehistoric or Romano-British settlement. The cropmark suggests that archaeological features may extend eastward into the area of the proposed development.

It is possible therefore that the proposed groundworks have the potential to expose and destroy archaeological and artefactual deposits associated with prehistoric and/or Romano-British activity in the area.

## 2. AIMS

- 2.1 The aim of the project is to establish the presence or absence, character, depth, extent and date of archaeological deposits within the site and to excavate and record them as necessary prior to and during the development; and to report the results of the project as appropriate.

## 3. METHOD

Liaison will be established with the client and their contractors prior to works commencing in order to advise on OA requirements in relation to the works outlined below. If a good working relationship is established at the outset any delays caused by archaeological recording can be kept to a minimum. However, localised delays to site operations may be caused and time should be allowed within the main contractor's programme for the adequate investigation and recording of exposed historic building fabric.

### ***Groundworks***

- 3.1 The area subject to this planning application, approximately one hectare in size, has already been disturbed by groundworks associated with the levelling of the land for agricultural buildings. In light of this the archaeological potential of the footprint of the proposed new concrete yard is low. However, the work has exposed an approximately 50m long section along the western edge of the development area. Visual inspection by Stephen Reed (DCHET) on the 27-08-2020 has revealed possible archaeological features extending into the development site which may be associated with the known prehistoric or Romano-British activity outlined above. The programme of archaeological work will therefore take the form of the cleaning,

recording and investigation of the archaeological features exposed in the western site section.

The area previously disturbed by the groundworks will be planned and cut-and-fill clearly illustrated within the final report.

### ***General project methods***

- 3.2 Environmental deposits will be assessed on site by a suitably qualified archaeologist, with advice as necessary from Allen Environmental Archaeology or the Historic England Regional Science Advisor, to determine the possible yield (if any) of environmental or microfaunal evidence, and its potential for radiocarbon dating. If deposits potential survives, these would be processed by Allen Environmental Archaeology (AEA) using the HE Guidelines for Environmental Archaeology (HE CfA Guidelines 2002/1) and Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation (Historic England, second edition, August 2011), and outside specialists (AEA) organised to undertake further assessment and analysis as appropriate.
- 3.3 Initial cleaning, conservation, packaging and any stabilisation or longer-term conservation measures will be undertaken in accordance with relevant professional guidance (specifically 'First Aid for Finds' Watkinson, D and Neal V, (London: Rescue/UKICAS 2001) and CfA 2014 'Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials') and on advice provided by A Hopper-Bishop, Specialist Services Officer, RAM Museum, Exeter.
- 3.4 Should artefacts be exposed that fall within the scope of the Treasure Act 1996, then these will be removed to a safe place and reported to the local coroner according to the procedures relating to the Act. Where removal cannot be effected on the same working day as the discovery suitable security measures will be taken to protect the finds from theft.
- 3.5 Should any articulated human remains be exposed; these will initially be left *in situ*. If removal at either this or a later stage in the archaeological works is deemed necessary, these will then be fully excavated and removed from the site subject to the compliance with the relevant Ministry of Justice Licence, which will be obtained by OA on behalf of the client. Any remains will be excavated in accordance with the CfA 'Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains' (Megan Brickley and Jacqueline I McKinley, 2004) and the CfA Standards for Recording Human Remains (Piers D Mitchell and Megan Brickley, CfA 2017). Where appropriate bulk samples will be collected.
- 3.6 The project will be organised so that specialist consultants who might be required to conserve artefacts or report on other aspects of the investigations can be called upon (see below).
- 3.7 Health and Safety requirements will be observed at all times by archaeological staff working on site, particularly when machinery is operating nearby. Personal protective equipment (safety boots, helmets and high visibility vests) will be worn by staff when plant is operating on site. A risk assessment will be prepared prior to work commencing.

3.8 DCHET require two weeks' notice from the archaeological consultant, unless a shorter period is agreed. DCHET will be informed of the start of the project and will monitor progress throughout on behalf of the planning authority. A date of completion of all archaeological site work will be confirmed with DCHET, and the timescale of the completion of items under section 5 will run from that date.

#### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

4.1 The standard OA recording system will be employed, consisting of:

- standardised single context record sheets; survey drawings, plans and sections at scales 1:10,1:20, 1:50 as appropriate;
- colour digital photography;
- survey and location of finds, deposits or archaeological features, using EDM surveying equipment and software where appropriate;
- labelling and bagging of finds on site from all excavated levels, post-1800 unstratified pottery may be discarded on site with a small sample retained for dating evidence as required.

#### 5. REPORTING AND ARCHIVING

5.1 The reporting requirements will be confirmed with DCHET on completion of the site work. If little or no significant archaeology is exposed then reporting will consist of a completed DCC HER entry, including a plan showing location of groundworks and of any significant features found. The text entry and plan will be produced in an appropriate electronic format suitable for easy incorporation into the HER and sent to the DCHET within 3 months of the date of completion of all archaeological fieldwork.

5.2 Should significant deposits be exposed the results of the archaeological work will be presented within one summary report within six months of the date of completion of all archaeological fieldwork. Any summary report will contain the following elements as appropriate:

- location plan and overall site plans showing the positions of the groundworks and the distribution of archaeological features;
- a written description of the exposed features and deposits and a discussion and interpretation of their character and significance in the context of the known history of the site;
- plans and sections at appropriate scales showing the exact location and character of significant archaeological deposits and features;
- a selection of photographs illustrating the principal features and deposits found;
- specialist assessments and reports as appropriate.

5.3 A .pdf version of the report will be produced and distributed to the Client and DCHET on completion of sitework. A copy of the .pdf version will also be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

- 5.4 An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared with reference to *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991 2nd edition) upon completion of the project.

The archive will consist of two elements, the artefactual and digital - the latter comprising all born-digital (data images, survey data, digital correspondence, site data collected digitally etc.) and digital copies of the primary site records and images, compiled in accordance with the ADS Guidelines for Depositors (2015).

The digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within 6 months of the completion of site work, while the artefactual element will be deposited with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum (*ref. number pending*). The hardcopy of the archive will be offered to the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and if not required will be disposed of by OA.

OA will notify DCHET upon the deposition of the digital archive with the ADS, and the deposition of the material (finds) archive with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

- 5.5 A .pdf copy of the updated summary report will be submitted, together with the site details, to the national OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological investigationS) database within three months of the completion of site work (oakforda1-404190).
- 5.6 A short report summarising the results of the project will be prepared for inclusion within the “round up” section of an appropriate national journal, if merited, within 12 months of the completion of site work.
- 5.7 Should particularly significant remains, finds and/or deposits be encountered, then these, owing to their importance, are likely to merit wider publication in line with government planning guidance. If such remains are encountered, the publication requirements – including any further analysis that may be necessary – will be confirmed with DCHET, in consultation with the Client. OA, on behalf of the Client, will then implement publication in accordance with a timescale agreed with the Client and DCHET. This will be within 12 months of the completion of all phases of archaeological site work unless otherwise agreed in writing.

## 6. CONFLICT WITH OTHER CONDITIONS AND STATUTORILY PROTECTED SPECIES

- 6.1 If topsoil stripping or groundworks are being undertaken under the direct control and supervision of the archaeological contractor then it is the archaeological contractor's responsibility - in consultation with the applicant or agent - to ensure that the required archaeological works do not conflict with any other conditions that have been imposed upon the consent granted and should also consider any biodiversity issues as covered by the NERC Act 2006. In particular, such conflicts may arise where archaeological investigations/excavations have the potential to have an impact upon protected species and/or natural habitats e.g. SSSIs, National Nature Reserves, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites, County Wildlife Sites etc.

## 7. COPYRIGHT

- 7.1 OA shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in this document.

## 8. PROJECT ORGANISATION

- 8.1 The project will be undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced archaeologists, in accordance with the Code of Conduct and relevant standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief, 2014, revised 2020, the Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation, 2014*). The project will be managed by Marc Steinmetzer. Oakford Archaeology is managed by a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

### ***Health & Safety***

- 8.2 All monitoring works within this scheme will be carried out in accordance with current *Safe Working Practices (The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974)*.

### ***Bibliography***

Reed, S, Bidwell, P and Allan, J, 2011, 'Excavation at Bantham, South Devon, and Post-Roman Trade in South West England', *Medieval Archaeol* 55 (1), 82–138  
Wilkes, E, 2011, Mount Folly Enclosures Project.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### *Specialists contributors and advisors*

The expertise of the following specialists can be called upon if required:

*Bone artefact analysis: Ian Riddler;*

*Bird remains: Matilda Holmes;*

*Dating techniques: Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre;*

*Charcoal identification: Dana Challinor;*

*Diatom analysis: Nigel Cameron (UCL);*

*Environmental data: AEA;*

*Faunal remains: Lorraine Higbee (Wessex);*

*Finds conservation: Alison Hopper-Bishop (Exeter Museums);*

*Fish remains: Hannah Russ, Sheila Hamilton-Dyer;*

*Human remains: Charlotte Coles, Mandy Kingdom;*

*Lithic analysis: Linda Hurcombe (Exeter University);*

*Medieval and post-medieval finds: John Allan;*

*Metallurgy: Gill Juleff (Exeter University);*

*Numismatics: Norman Shiel (Exeter);*

*Petrology/geology: Roger Taylor (RAM Museum), Imogen Morris;*  
*Plant remains: Lisa Gray;*  
*Prehistoric pottery: Henrietta Quinnell (Exeter);*  
*Roman finds: Paul Bidwell & associates (Arbeia Roman Fort, South Shields);*  
*Others: Wessex Archaeology Specialist Services Team*

**MFR Steinmetzer**  
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