

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Shebbear	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SS43990930	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Watching brief, Devonport House		<b>Photo attached?</b> N
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 1/1071/2007/FUL	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> exeterar1-52747	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> NDDMS.2008.99	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> EA6066	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 22/10/08, 23/10/08	
<p><b>Description of works.</b></p> <p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during ground reduction and foundation trenching for a new dwelling situated between Devonport House and Little Devonport (fig 1).</p> <p>The site lies at the edge of the historic core of Shebbear, which is known to have been a royal Domesday manor with probable Saxon origins. 1880s Ordnance Survey mapping shows a number of curving field boundaries, typical of the medieval period, running through the village, and depicts the site as having been divided into three plots. Three buildings shown on the mapping lie within the footprint of the development. It was anticipated that remains of the foundations of these buildings, associated deposits, and possibly evidence of earlier occupation, might have survived within the site.</p> <p>On arrival it was evident that the site had previously been levelled (raised) to form a platform that extended northwards beyond the development area. The depth of the raised ground increased northwards to counter the drop in the natural slope, reaching a maximum thickness of 1m. Contained in the central western area of the site were the remains of a modern structure consisting of a concrete surface and remains of a block wall.</p> <p>The site area (fig. 2) measured 30m by 16m and was initially reduced to a depth of 300mm using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. This was of insufficient depth to reveal natural subsoil or any surviving archaeological deposits. The ground reduction exposed topsoil, and an underlying levelling layer consisting of greyish brown clayey silt. This produced a number of 19th- and 20th-century pottery sherds, which were more common towards the centre of the site. The same deposit also produced fragments of plastic, glass and brick.</p> <p>The foundation trenches measured approximately 600mm wide by 700mm–900mm deep. Natural ground was exposed at a depth of approximately 500mm but this varied across the site, accounting for the variation in the depths of the trenches. Natural subsoil was generally overlain by an intermittent thin layer of topsoil, which was sealed by the modern made ground exposed during ground reduction. This measured up to 750mm thick to the east and north and approximately 450mm thick to the south and west. No archaeological features or significant deposits were present and no pre-19th-century pottery was found.</p>		
<p><b>A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.</b></p>		
<b>Recorder:</b> J Austin ( EA)	<b>Date sent to HER:</b>	

Please email completed form to: [archaeol@devon.gov.uk](mailto:archaeol@devon.gov.uk) or post to County Archaeology Service, Environment Directorate, Matford Lane Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

Any plans or photographs embedded within or attached to this form remain the copyright © of the recorder, and must not be reproduced in any publication without the explicit consent of the copyright holder.

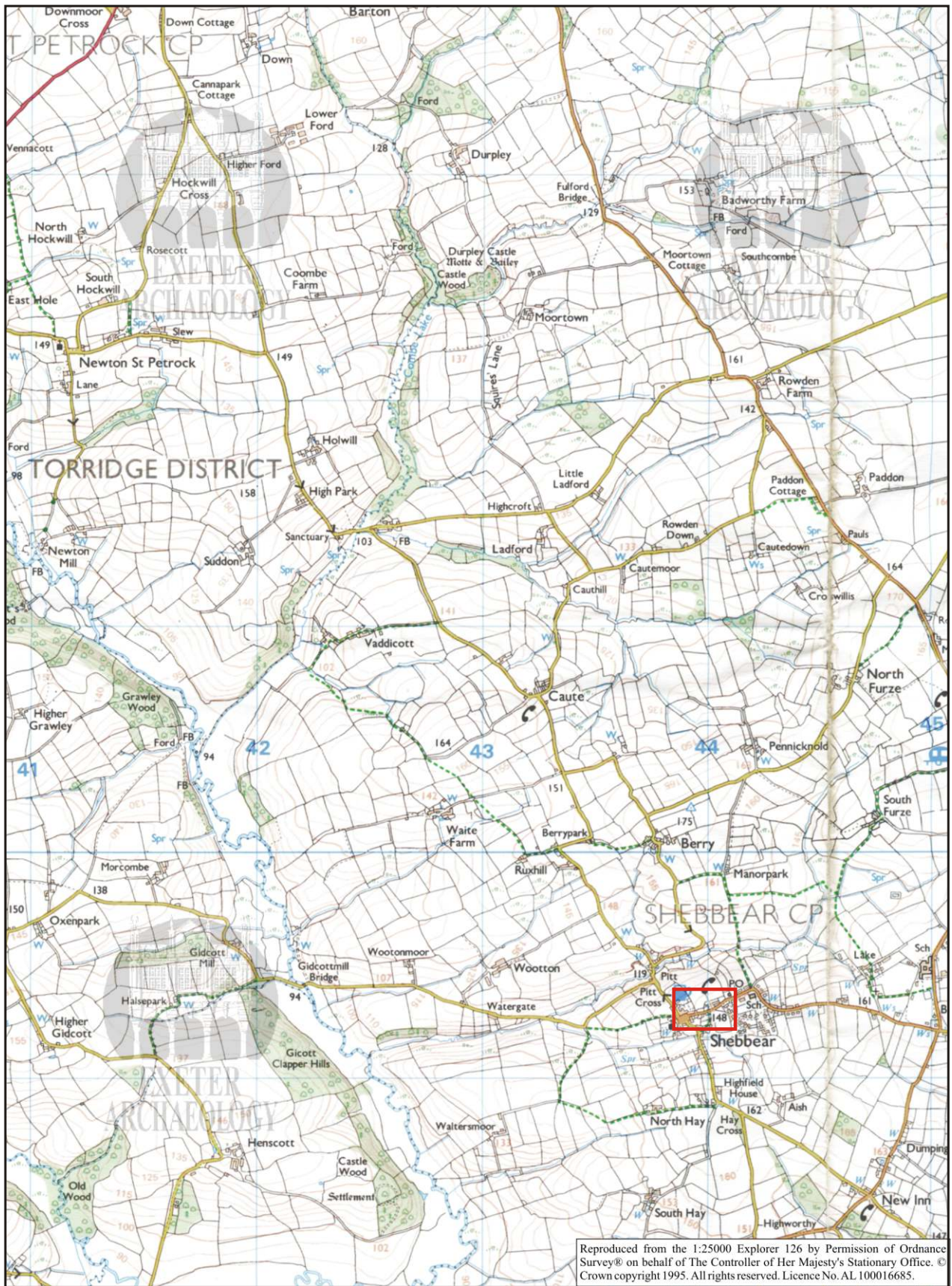


Fig. 1 Location of site. Scale 1:25000.



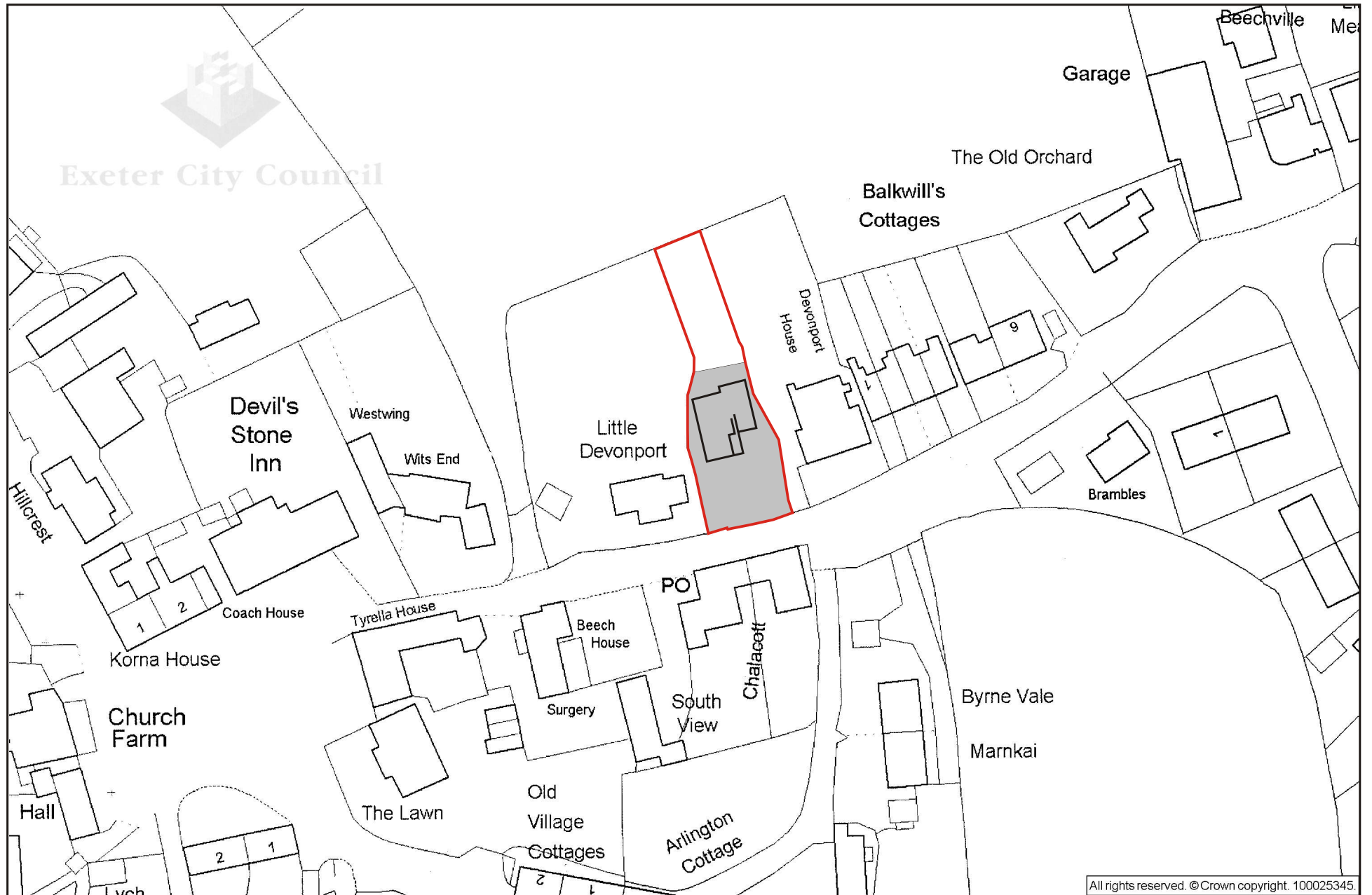


Fig. 2 Location of site indicating observed area (shaded) and position of foundation trenches. Scale 1:1000.