

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Chulmleigh, North Devon	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SS68621446	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Erection of a bungalow with garage, and access		<b>Photo attached?</b> YES
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 51294, 44967	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> southwes1-111228	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> NDMS2007.62	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> COS11	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 11 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup> October 2011	

## Description of works.

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by South West Archaeology Limited (SWARCH) at the request of Mr Steve Digby (the Client) to monitor the groundworks undertaken in association with the construction of a bungalow, garage and access to a triangular piece of land (covering c.1500m<sup>2</sup>) to the rear/west of The Old Smithy, South Molton Street, Chulmleigh (Figure 1). This work was undertaken by Dr S. Walls and Dr B. Morris.

A desktop assessment was completed by SWARCH in 2007 (SWARCH report 070523) and demonstrated that The Old Smithy (a Grade II Listed structure of 17<sup>th</sup> century date), shown on an estate map of 1711, formed part of a row of cottages. The southernmost cottage in this row was demolished after 1908 but before 1947, and the access road for the proposed development passed through the footprint of this (17<sup>th</sup> century?) structure. In addition, other, 19<sup>th</sup> century structures, formerly stood behind the cottages.

The topsoil from the footprint of the access road, garage and house plot was stripped under strict archaeological supervision using a 1.2m wide toothless grading bucket. The topsoil was comprised of a soft homogenous mid grey clay-silt with occasional sub-angular stones (40-80mm), common roots, and frequent charcoal flecks. The topsoil was 0.3-0.4m thick and overlay the natural subsoil, a stiff mottled yellow clay-silt which faded to a pale yellowish white in places and contained patches of abundant angular to sub-angular stones (40-120mm). These stony patches seemed to be natural and may reflect the course of earlier natural water channels, as they were generally located in the lowest points of the site.

In the area stripped for the bungalow three linear features were exposed (see Figure 1): Linear [104] was 0.4m wide and extended southwest for c.6m from the eastern limits of excavation before disappearing beneath the northern limit of excavation. It contained a single fill (105), a mid-to-dark mottled grey clay-silt with common sub-rounded to sub-angular stones (60-120mm). Linear [102] ran north-west by south-east for 2.6m from the northern limit of excavation to join linear [104]. This linear was 0.3m wide and filled by (103), a grey clay-silt with common sub-rounded to sub-angular stones (60-120mm). The third linear [108] was 10m long and 0.3m wide and was orientated north-east by south-west c.10m south of [104]. Linear [108] was filled by (109), a buff grey-brown clay-silt with common charcoal flecks and frequent sub-angular stones (50-100mm). Linears [102] and [104] joined at the southern end of [102], while linear [108] and [104] were on a very similar alignment, suggesting that they all represent elements within a system of post-medieval field drains. This is supported by the single sherd of post-medieval North Devon ware recovered from (107). The topsoil was notably shallower across this part of the site, and it seems likely some topsoil had been removed prior to the current development.

In the area stripped for the site access and garage, c.12m of a 0.8m wide linear [110] was exposed running east-west from the eastern limit of excavation. This linear was filled with a mixed and mottled grey-buff gritty clay-silt (111) containing common sub-angular stones (50-100mm), occasional charcoal flecks, and rare brick fragments and sherds of flowerpot. This cut may have been a wall foundation trench, as its western limit was defined by a cobbled surface (112/117), but its fill was certainly of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century date. The cobbled surfaces (112) and (117) extended west from the end of [110] to hedgebank remnant {119}, which suggests that this boundary, together with the cobbles, probably relates to the garden/yard of the (17<sup>th</sup> century?) cottage demolished after 1908 (SWARCH 2007). This is supported by the close alignment of the hedgebank and end of the cobbles with the area of the walled courtyard to the north (see Figure 1). The cobbles were overlain by a layer of loose and mixed buff-yellow clay-silt (121) containing sub-angular stone rubble (200×100mm), perhaps cob derived from the demolition of a structure.

The cobbled surface (112) was made up of blocky sub-angular to sub-rounded stones (typically 200×50mm) orientated east-west and set in gritty greyish-yellow clay-silt earth packing (see Figure 2). These east-west orientated cobbles are very similar to the cobbles fronting the surviving cottages to the north. The western 1.5m of

(112), although similar, were orientated north-south and generally (particularly to the south) comprised of slightly larger, squarer stones (220×100mm). The different orientations may suggest two phases of cobbling. A post-hole [115] of 0.25m across cut through the cobbles (112) but as this survived as a void it was probably cut from higher up in the stratigraphic sequence. Two rotten timber posts were removed from this area during the topsoil strip.

The cobbled area (112/117) was bisected by what appears to have been a cobbled drain 0.4m wide, orientated north-south [116]. The cobbles, typically 200×100mm in size, were also orientated north-south. This feature [116], which was very probably a drain, nonetheless contained a very compact yellow-buff slightly gritty clay-silt fill (118) containing common sub-rounded stones (up to 70mm), somewhat similar to (121). This might reflect a secondary reuse of the drain as a wall foundation trench.

The hedgebank {119} was comprised of two distinct deposits. The modern dark grey-brown silt-clay topsoil (101) overlay a greyish buff-yellow clay-silt (120). The material that formed the core of the hedge (120) sat directly upon the natural, and it was clear that the area to the east (the former cottage and yard) had been terraced (by approximately 0.3m) into the natural.

The majority of the finds were recovered from the portion of the site east of this hedgebank. All of the finds (with the exception of the single sherd (10g) of post-med North Devon ware recovered from (107)) were recovered from the topsoil (100). These include a range of medieval and post-medieval ceramics and other finds.

The medieval finds recovered include: ×2 sherds (9g) of 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> (possibly earlier) century North Devon wares, ×5 sherds (56g) of 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century North Devon wares, ×9 sherds (106g) 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century gravel-free North Devon wares.

The post-medieval finds include: ×1 sherd (40g) 16<sup>th</sup> century gravel-tempered North Devon ware, ×7 sherds (133g) 16<sup>th</sup> century gravel-free North Devon wares, ×30 sherds (505g) of 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century gravel-tempered North Devon ware, ×9 sherds (45g) of 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century gravel-free North Devon ware, ×1 sherd (4g) 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century tin-glazed Delft-type pottery, ×3 sherds (33g) 17<sup>th</sup> century gravel-free North Devon ware with traces of yellow slip, ×2 sherds (20g) 17<sup>th</sup> century gravel-free North Devon ware with yellow slip, ×2 sherds (17g) 17<sup>th</sup> century North Devon sgraffito dish, ×8 sherds (47g) 17<sup>th</sup> century Bristol/Staffordshire yellow slipware, ×1 sherd (3g) 17<sup>th</sup> century Westerwald stoneware, ×4 sherds (18g) 18<sup>th</sup> century white salt-glazed stoneware, ×1 sherd (1g) late-18<sup>th</sup> century scratch blue stoneware, ×1 sherd (33g) 18<sup>th</sup> century gravel-free North Devon ware with yellow slip, ×7 fragments (including ×1 bowl fragment, ×1 heel and ×5 stems) clay pipe (27g), ×2 sherds (19g) 19<sup>th</sup> century English stoneware, ×1 fragment (79g) 19<sup>th</sup> century pan-tile, ×35 large body sherds of 19<sup>th</sup> century dishes (3kg), ×46 sherds (527g) 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century white refined earthenware (includes Mocha ware), and ×1 sherd (10g) modern flowerpot.

The non-ceramic finds include: ×7 animal bones (145g), ×6 glass fragments (119g) (including ×4 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century bottle glass, ×1 modern bottle glass, ×1 18<sup>th</sup> century(?) window glass), ×1 fragment of coal (7g), ×1 roof slate with nail hole (82g), and ×1 horse chestnut seed (18g).

#### **Bibliography,**

SWARCH, 2007: *Site Adjoining The Old Smithy, South Molton Road, Chulmleigh, Devon: Results of a Desk-Based Assessment*. SWARCH Report No. 070523

**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:** S. Walls

**Date sent to HER:** 20.12.11

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.

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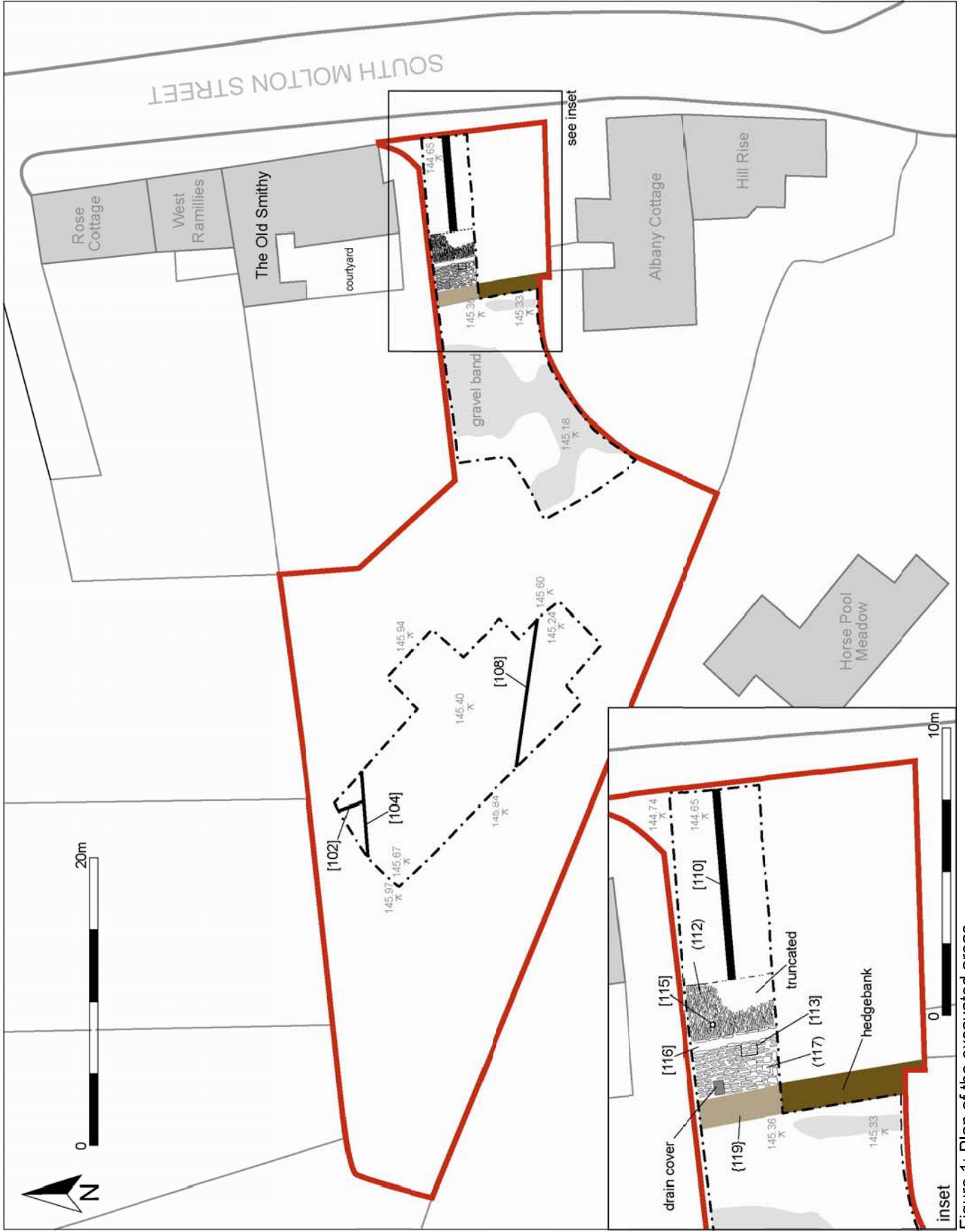


Figure 1: Plan of the excavated areas.



Figure 2: Cobbles exposed in area of access drive, viewed from the west (2m scale).