

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Burlescombe, North Devon	<b>National Grid Reference</b> 304874 115254	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological monitoring and recording at Higher Ayshford Farm, Westleigh, Devon, during the conversion of 2 agricultural barns to a dwelling and repairs and alteration to other buildings to provide ancillary domestic accommodation		<b>Photo attached?</b> YES
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 13/00835/FULL	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon (MBND)	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> southwes1-157920	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> TBC	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> BHA13	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	
<p><b>Description of works.</b></p> <p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Catherine Baddeley (The Client), during the conversion of two agricultural barns to a dwelling and repairs and alteration to other buildings to provide ancillary domestic accommodation at Higher Ayshford Farm, Westleigh, Devon. This work was undertaken by J. Bampton on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2014 in accordance with a WSI drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of the Devon County Historic Environment Team.</p> <p>The settlement at Higher Ayshford has early origins and is mentioned in a pre-Conquest charter in the 10th century and it is recorded in Domesday in 1086. The desk-based assessment and historic building survey previously undertaken by South West Archaeology (SWARCH report No. 310128) highlighted the potential for the proposed development works to expose further historic evidence associated with the early origins on the settlement here. The courtyard of buildings east of Ayshford Court that were subject to the development included remains of 19<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century structures.</p> <p>The groundworks subject to archaeological monitoring and recording occurred within the remains of the mill, linhay and open fronted shed that comprise the south-east half of the courtyard (Figure 1). All the floors were set directly in to the natural; a reddish-yellow compact clay with occasional to moderate sub-rounded stones. The floor in the mill was reduced and no archaeological features were revealed (Figure 2). The cell between the mill and linhay proper included a concrete emplacement (0.75m dia.), most likely for grinding set into the removed floor and cutting the natural (Figure 3). The cobbled floor was removed from 15m of the linhay from its north-east end and the north-west half of the open fronted shed. These cobbles were set in to the natural. They were varied in shape, although all worn on the upper surface, and ranged in size (generally between c.0.15×0.07×0.09m and 0.10×0.04×0.04m), moderately sorted to align north-west by south-east. 11.5m of a stone apron (0.60m wide) to a cattle trough was made clear starting 1m from the north-east end of the linhay and parallel with - and 1.35m from the south-east wall of the linhay (Figure 4).</p> <p>Based on the post-medieval features revealed within the structures, at some point in the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century the cell next to the mill was used for grain storage and probably processing and the linhay was used for feeding livestock. No significant archaeological remains or deposits were encountered and no finds produced from the cobbled floor surfaces. The site appears to have been terraced to some degree for the initial construction of the courtyard buildings, which may have truncated shallow - or all earlier archaeological deposits on the site. Also, no groundworks or floor surfaces associated with earlier phases of the courtyard buildings either existed or survived.</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. Bampton	<b>Date sent to HER:</b> 31.01.2014	

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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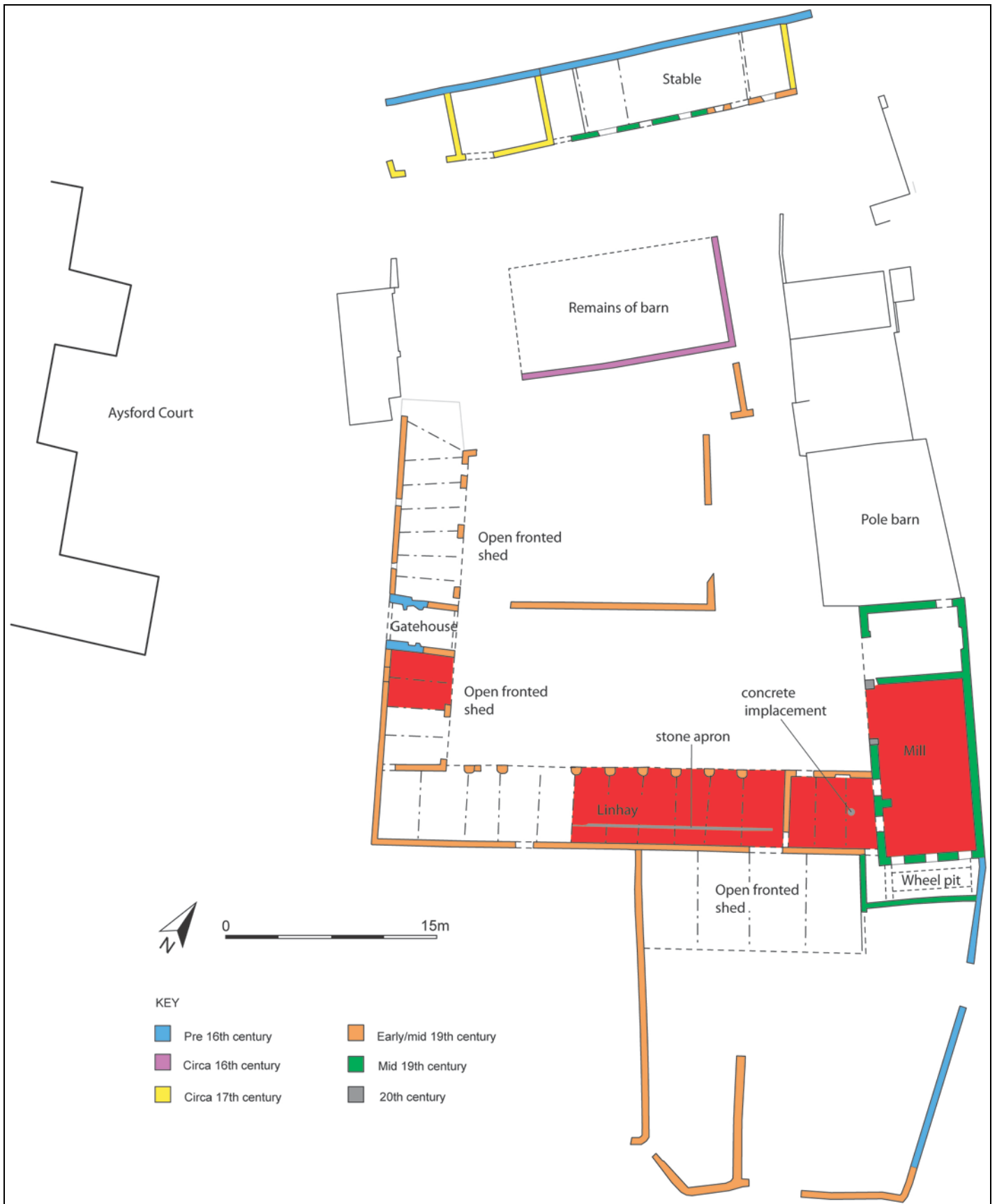


Figure 1: Plan of Higher Ayshford Farm courtyard buildings including phasing. The excavated areas are highlighted in red.



Figure 2: Mill during renovation groundworks, viewed from west (2m scale).



Figure 3: Cell between linhay and mill showing concrete emplacement, viewed from south-west (2m scale).



Figure 4: Linhay post-excitation, cattle trough apron visible on the left, viewed from south-west (2m scale).