

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Holsworthy, Devon	National Grid Reference SS 3445 0575	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Holsworthy Biogas Plant, Chilsworthy, Holsworthy, Devon prior to the erection of greenhouses and associated infrastructure		Photos attached? YES
Planning Application no: 1/0623/2014/CPZ	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: southwes1-184003	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: HBP14	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 23-25 th September 2014	
<p>Description of works. Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Steven Sherry (the Agent) on behalf of Antidigestion Ltd. (the Client), during groundworks associated with the erection of a number of greenhouses and associated buildings and infrastructure on land at Antidigestion Ltd, Chilsworthy, Holsworthy, Devon. This work was undertaken by B. Morris and P. Webb between 23rd and 25th September 2014 in accordance with a WSI drawn up in consultation with Ann Marie Dick of the Devon County Historic Environment Team.</p> <p>The site, and the field immediately to the south, contains the cropmarks of relict field boundaries and two putative sub-circular enclosures. Limited evaluation trenching in 2011 in the field to the south established shallow archaeological features were present (AC Archaeology Report in Holsworthy Agri-business Centre Environmental Statement vol.3).</p> <p>An area 200m×100m was stripped of topsoil; this was centred on the location of the putative enclosure identified from aerial photographs. The work was undertaken by a tracked mechanical excavator using a toothless grading bucket under archaeological supervision. The topsoil (100) was 0.14-0.20m thick and consisted of turf over friable largely mid-brown slightly clayey-silt with occasional small angular stones (30-50mm diameter). The colour of the topsoil varied slightly across the site, ranging from grayish-brown to the north to darker and more humic blackish-brown to the middle of the site. The natural subsoil was a firm to stiff variably-stony yellow to light grey variably-clayey silt, with a concentration of stony natural to the centre of the site.</p> <p>The putative enclosure was not located. Clear ploughmarks were observed cutting into the natural, running across the site east-to-west and north-to-south, so it may have been lost prior to works starting on site.</p> <p>Four modern land drains [103][105][107][109] were observed that cut through the topsoil into the natural across the site on various alignments. The cuts for these land drains were 0.3-1.0m wide, and the fills were a mixture of re-deposited topsoil and subsoil. Three other narrow linear features were identified, with shallow concave bases and filled with loose topsoil; these are presumed to be wheel ruts. A series of other features were observed across the site: these were all slightly-irregular curving pits with asymmetric profiles containing loose dark humic soil, almost certainly tree throws. A representative sample of these features was excavated, but no finds were observed. The dark humic fills of these features would suggest the topsoil across the site was formerly much more peaty, as suggested by the historic mapping.</p> <p>A single struck flint nodule flake with possible blade removals was recovered from the site, possibly suggesting Early Neolithic activity in the vicinity. No other finds were recovered.</p>		
Recorder: P. Webb		Date sent to HER: 27/10/2014

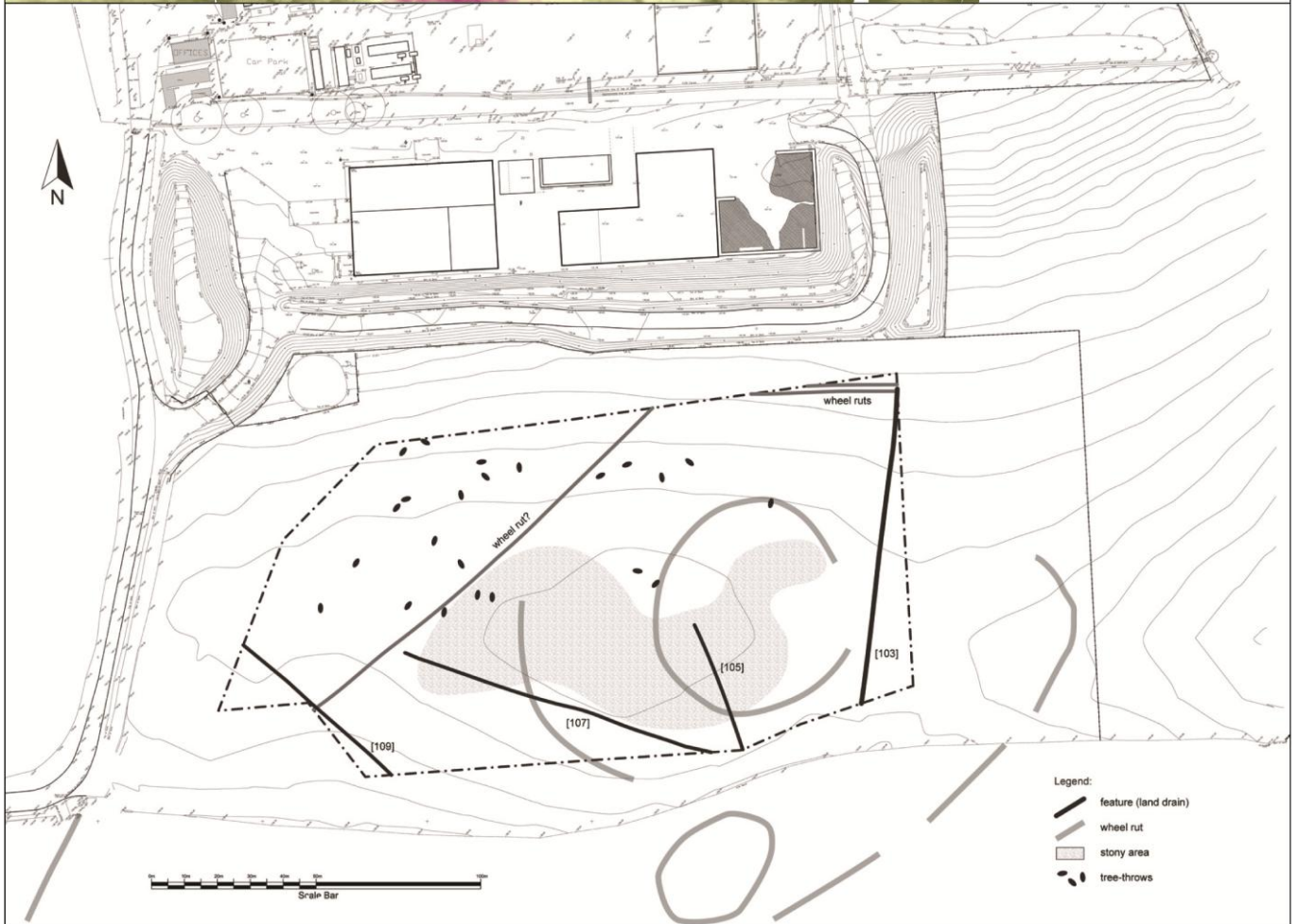
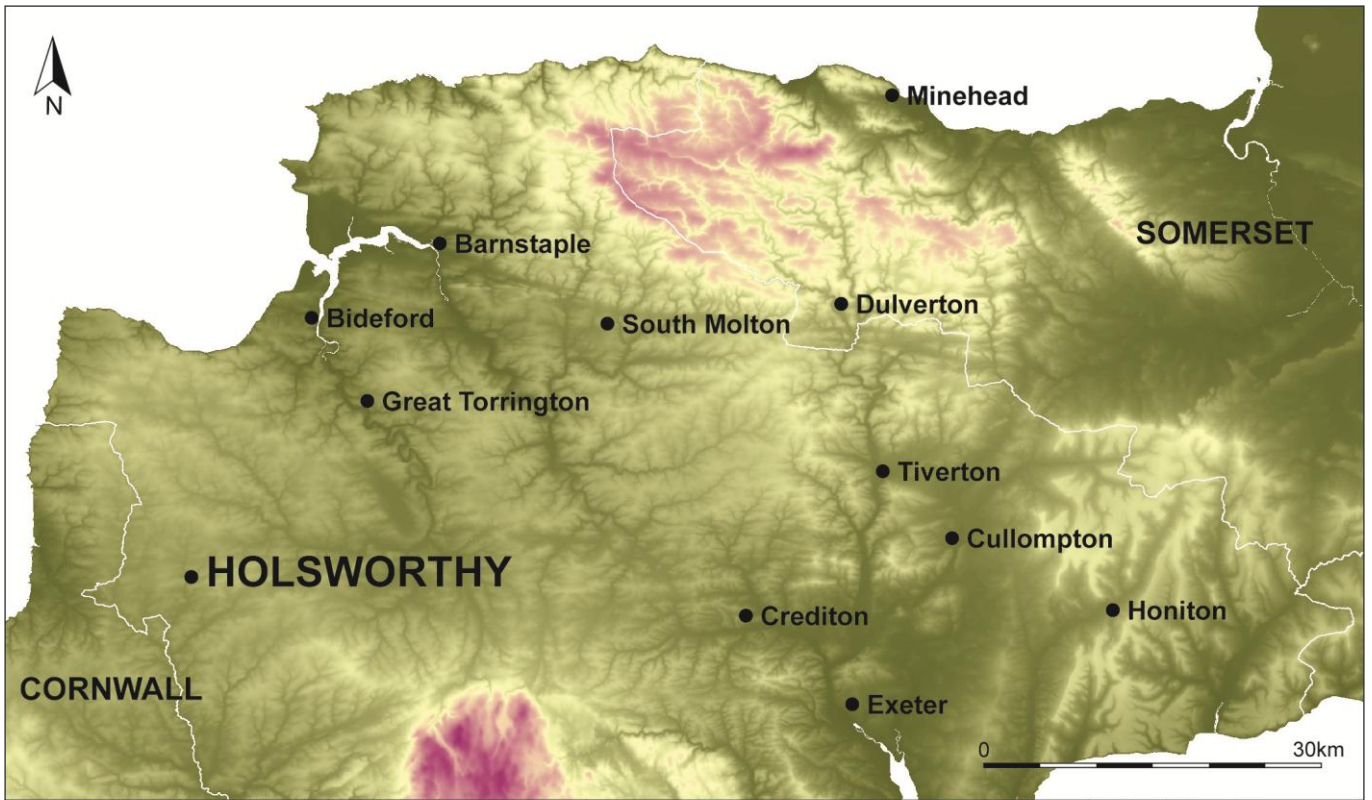


Figure 1: Location map.



Figure 2: The north-west corner of the site strip, showing the plough damage; viewed from the east (no scale).



The northern half of the site; viewed from the west (no scale).



The whole area stripped, viewed from the north-east corner (no scale).



The south-west corner of the site, showing land drain [107]; viewed from the south-south-east (scales 1m & 2m).