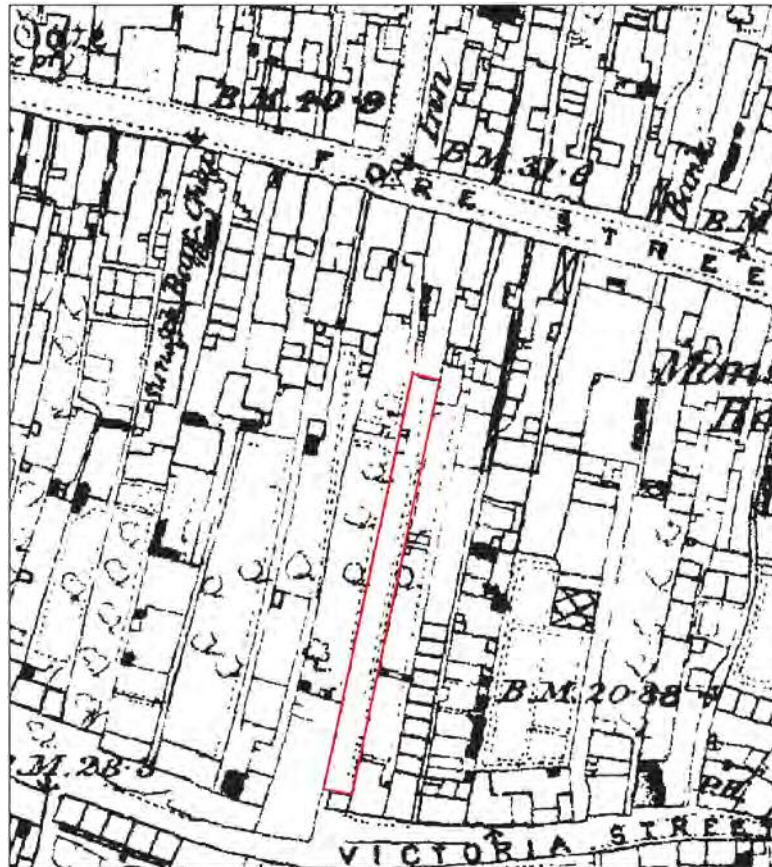


44 FORE STREET TOTNES DEVON

Results of an Archaeological Evaluation Excavation



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REPORT No. 051209

Contents	Page no.
List of Illustrations	3
List of Appendices	3
Acknowledgements	3
1.0 Introduction	4
1.1 Summary	4
1.2 Summary of Results	4
1.3 Methodology	4
2.0 Results	5
2.1 Trench 1: The North Trench	5
2.2 Trench 2: The South Trench	5
2.3 The Finds	6
3.0 Interpretation	6
4.0 Conclusions	6
5.0 Bibliography/References	6

List of Illustrations

Cover plate: Extract from the First Edition Ordnance Survey 25 inch map of 1888.

Figures:	Page No.
1a. Regional location.	7
1b. Location of site.	8
2. Plan of site showing position of trenches.	9

Plates:

1. Trench 1 viewed from the north.	10
2. Trench 2 viewed from the south.	10
3. Section of Trench 1.	11

List of Appendices:

1. Devon County Archaeological Service brief.	12
2. Written Scheme of Investigation.	16
3. List of jpegs contained on CD rom inside rear cover of report.	20

Acknowledgements:

Thanks for assistance are due to:
Mr Marston for allowing unrestricted access to the site.
Graham Tait, Devon County Archaeological Service.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Summary

Location: Rear of 44 Fore Street
Parish: Totnes
District: South Hams District Council
County: Devon
NGR: SX80386033
Planning No. 56/1244/05/F

South West Archaeology was commissioned by Mr L. Marston to carry out an archaeological evaluation of a site at Fore Street, Totnes, Devon in advance of proposed residential development. The evaluation followed a brief by the Devon County Archaeological Service (DCAS) which highlighted the possibility of the survival of medieval burgage plot boundaries and earlier Saxon remains on the site.

The excavation was undertaken on the 21st November 2005.

The site consisted of a long narrow plot orientated with its long axis running north-south. At the time of the evaluation the site was in use as the rear garden of 44 Fore Street. The garden was bounded by a wall 1.5m high on the east side, a wall 2.5m high on the west side, the premises fronting onto Fore Street to the north and to the south a wall and gate leading to the rear access area of Russel Court on Victoria Street. The highest part of the garden was its centre, and the site sloped gently down towards Russel Court to the south and Fore Street to the north. Although there was a natural fall of ground from west to east, down Fore Street, the interior of each property in the vicinity of the present site seemed to have been levelled.

1.2 Summary of Results

The parts of the site sampled during the evaluation revealed that in contrast with many sites in central Totnes there was surprisingly little archaeological material preserved. The earliest finds were sherds of Totnes type post medieval coarseware. No archaeological features were observed apart from one stone built foundation of 19th century or later date.

1.3 Methodology

The evaluation consisted of trial trenching conforming to the specification agreed with the DCAS. This amounted to a trench of approximately 17m in length in the area of the house plot at the north end of the site (Trench 1). This trench followed the proposed line of the west house wall foundation trench. Although originally intended, it was not possible to excavate a second parallel trench on the line of the eastern house wall, due to the narrow width of the site. It was also not possible to sample the full width of the site at right angles to the first trench due to the restricting nature of the boundary walls, but the southern 4m of this trench was 'dog-legged' to sample the maximum possible width of the site diagonally.

A 6m length of trench (Trench 2) was excavated in the area of the garage development close to the south end of the site. As the garage was to be a timber framed construction it was to be built on a concrete pad rather than deep foundation trenches. Therefore the trial trench in this area was only excavated to 0.5m which was the maximum depth required for that pad.

The trenching was carried out using a swing shovel type mini-digger equipped with a 1.3m wide toothless grading bucket, supervised at all times by an archaeologist. The machining was carried out to the depth where archaeological features first became apparent, or to natural undisturbed geology, or to the maximum depth required by the development, whichever was the less. In places, where appropriate, deeper sondages were carried out by machine in order to check the nature and appearance of deeper natural deposits. Where necessary, potential features identified at that stage were to be subsequently investigated by hand and recorded in accordance with the requirements of Devon County Council.

Archaeological features were to be part-excavated by hand and recorded by written context sheets and drawn to scale in plan and section. The trenches and their location within the site were plotted utilizing hand measurement to the corners and boundaries of the site. Backfilling was carried out by machine after the completion of archaeological recording.

2.0 Results of Evaluation Trenches

2.1 Trench 1: The North Trench (see plate 1 & 3)

The stratigraphy revealed was relatively simple. It consisted of a friable black, silty clay topsoil (100) overlying a dark grey silty clay subsoil (101). This overlay a very compact deposit of mid-grey dirty clay matrix containing very abundant angular stones of all sizes (102). The dirty appearance of this material did not at first suggest it was natural, however its lack of archaeological material, its compact nature and the arrangement of stones within its matrix, did. 13m from the north end of the trench this deposit graduated into what could be considered natural geological subsoil more typical for Totnes; namely an orange-grey clay matrix containing abundant banded shale, much degraded at its upper surface. This was sufficient to confirm that (102) was indeed natural and geological in origin. It overlay natural bedrock which had a variable and undulating upper surface but was encountered at a depth of between 1.3m-1.6m in some parts of the trench. Each of the layers revealed was of greatest thickness at the north end of the trench, thinning to the south. The topsoil (100) was 0.4m thick at the north end of the trench reducing to 0.2m at the south end. The subsoil (101) tapered from 0.4m to 0.2m in thickness along the same length. Thus the stony natural subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.8m at the north end, but only at 0.4m at the south end.

Only one archaeological feature was revealed in this trench. It consisted of a built structure at the south end of the north-south part of the trench (103)(Fig. 2). This structure was not fully revealed but extended beyond the trench to the west and south. It consisted of a mortar-bonded wall foundation, extending to a maximum depth of 1m below existing ground level. It was of mixed build incorporating large and medium angular stones, roof slate and 19th century brick roughly coursed. The bonding was of a variable hard, dirty, grey-white mortar. Part of this structure was sealed by a thin poured concrete slab.

2.2 Trench 2: The South Trench (see plate 2)

At the depth of 0.5m which was the maximum depth of this trench no archaeological features were apparent. The soil profile revealed consisted of 0.2m of black topsoil equivalent to (100) with the addition of the inclusion of abundant bicycle components, overlying a grey brown subsoil of 0.2m-0.3m thickness. At the maximum depth of the excavation, 0.4m-0.5m the first signs of colour change to orange, probably natural undisturbed subsoil was apparent.

2.3 The Finds

The topsoil on site (100) and the subsoil immediately below it (101) contained a typically modern range of finds including blue transfer printed china (post 1800), Machine made brick (20th century), Totnes type post-medieval coarsewares (16th -18th century), and tobacco pipe stem fragments of uncertain date.

3.0 Interpretation

No archaeological features were revealed by the evaluation apart from the stone built structure (103) within the area of the house trench.

Insufficient was seen of that feature to determine its original function. No part of the above ground structure for which (103) was the foundation remained, although quantities of rubble and roofing sheet were present in this part of the garden. In the absence of further evidence it seems likely that this structure was the foundation of an outbuilding of some sort. Although the part of foundation revealed incorporated material in its fabric clearly indicating a modern construction, that does not eliminate the possibility that other parts of the same structure could perhaps have been of earlier date.

4.0 Conclusion

In contrast with expectations for Totnes town centre this site showed remarkably little of archaeological significance beyond a few pottery sherds of 17th-18th century Totnes type coarseware. No evidence was seen of medieval structures or pits relating to its use as a burgrave plot. Although the parts of the stone foundations seen were of modern origin there is some potential that other parts of the structure of which they formed part, might be of archaeological interest or significance.

5.0 Bibliography

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| DoE. | 1990: <i>Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning. PPG 16.</i> |
| English Heritage | 1991: <i>The Management of Archaeological Projects.</i> |
| Institute of Field Archaeologists. | 1995: <i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief</i> |
| Institute of Field Archaeologists. | 1994: <i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation.</i> |

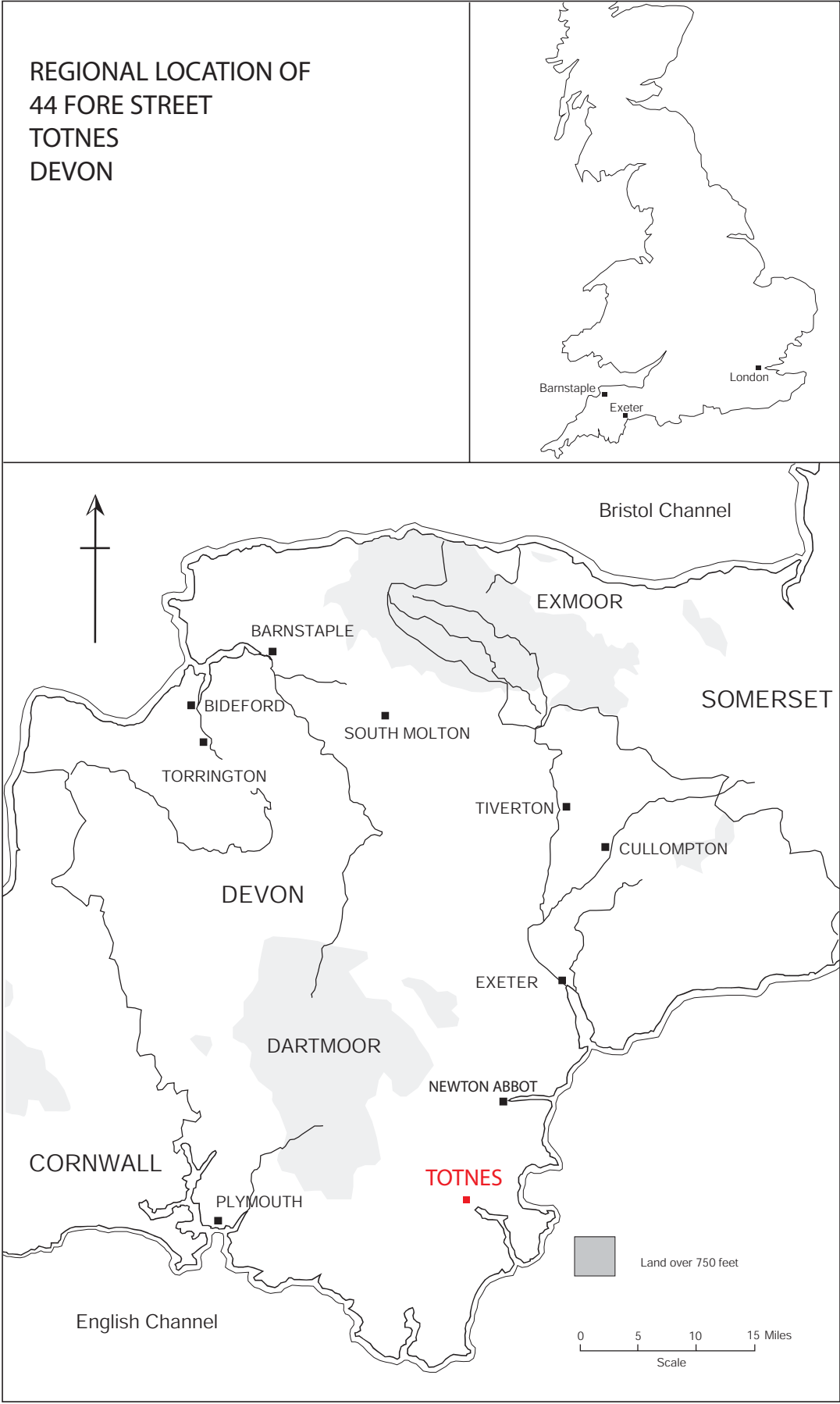


Fig. 1a: Regional location.



Fig. 1b Location of site, position of proposed development shown in red

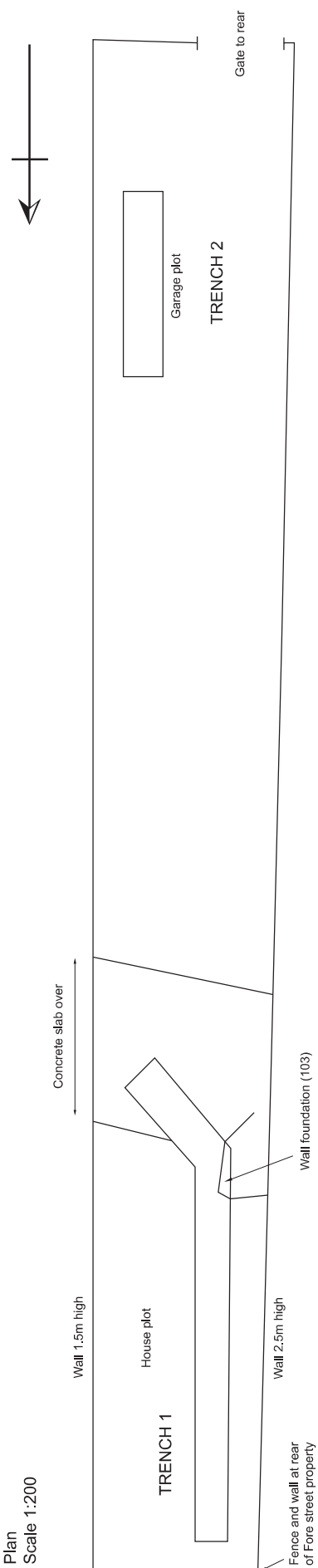


Fig. 2 Plan of site showing position of fences



Plate 1: Trench 1 viewed from north.



Plate 2: Trench 2 viewed from south.



Plate 3 Section of trench 1.

Appendix 1

Brief For Archaeological Assessment And Evaluation

Location: Rear of 44 Fore Street, Totnes, Devon. TQ9 5RP.

NGR: SX80386033

Parish: Totnes

District: South Hams

County: Devon

Proposal: Erection of two-storey cottage and detatch garage, r/o 44 Fore Street, Totnes. TQ9 5RP

Planning Application: 56/1244/05/F

1. Planning Background

A planning application (56/1244/05/F) has been submitted to South Hams District Council for a proposed erection of a two-storey cottage and detached garage at the rear of 44 Fore Street, Totnes. In accordance with PPG16 (1990) Archaeology and Planning, and South Hams Local Plan policies on archaeology, consent has been granted, conditional upon a programme of archaeological work being undertaken. This condition requires that:

No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

The principal objectives of the archaeological evaluation will be to gather sufficient information to establish the presence or absence, character, extent, state of preservation and date of any archaeological deposits within the area affected by the proposed development. The results of these investigations will inform any further archaeological work that will be required for all or part of this site. This brief forms the scope of a Written Scheme of Investigation, which will be drawn up by the archaeological contractor, and approved by the County Archaeological Service.

2. Site Location & Archaeological Background

The proposal site lies at approx. NGR SX80386033, to the rear of 44 Fore Street, Totnes. The site of this application lies just outside the medieval town walls, in an area which was established in the 14th century to accommodate the expansion of the town, and as such is within an area of archaeological significance. The back of Medieval burgage plots running north-south from Fore Street may be evident on the site. The site is also close to the eastern edge of the earlier Saxon burgh of Totnes. Although most of the development in this area is thought to be Medieval, it is possible that earlier archaeological features may be evident outside the limits of the Saxon burgh. The site, therefore has the potential to discover deposits relating to the medieval and possibly Saxon development of this part of Totnes, as well as possible later development or disturbance.

3. Stages of Work and Techniques

3.1. Rapid assessment of documentary and cartographic sources:

A rapid examination will be made of relevant cartographic and documentary sources – to include Historic Environment Records for the area, examination of historic mapping, including the Tithe Map and Apportionment as well as any other sources deemed relevant to the site. A site inspection should be undertaken in advance of any fieldwork. A summary of the results of the assessment will be made available to the County Archaeological Service to facilitate discussion and agreement on the location of the evaluative trenches.

3.2. Excavation of evaluative trenches:

A series of evaluative trenches will be excavated to target areas identified by the cartographic assessment as well as to sample 5% of the total area potentially affected by the proposed development. The location of

trenches will be agreed with the County Archaeological Service in advance of fieldwork. These may respect any foundation trenches that will be excavated as part of the development. Trenches will be excavated by machine, fitted with a toothless grading bucket, under the direct control of the site archaeologist. Excavations will be undertaken to expose the upper surface of in situ weathered subsoil or archaeological deposits, whichever is the highest. The sides and base of each trench should be cleaned for the identification of archaeological deposits. Should any such deposits be exposed then machining should cease, in that area, to allow hand cleaning and investigation. Unless exposed features are of a substantial nature, excavation of their fill should be undertaken by hand.

If archaeological features are exposed, then as a minimum:

- small discrete features will be fully excavated
- larger discrete features will be half-sectioned (50% excavated)
- long linear features will be excavated to sample 20% of their length – with investigative excavations distributed along the exposed length of any such feature.

The full depth of archaeological deposits will be assessed. This need not require excavation to in situ subsoil if it is clear that complex and deep stratigraphy will be encountered.

Should suitable deposits be exposed then consideration should be made for scientific assessment/analysis/dating techniques that could be applied to further understand their nature/date and to establish appropriate sampling procedures. The project will be organised so that specialist consultants who might be required to conserve or report on other aspects of the investigations can be called upon.

Topsoil should be examined for the recovery of artefacts.

Artefacts should be labelled and bagged on site.

All features shall be recorded in plan and section at a minimum scale of 1:20, larger where necessary.

The overall and relative position of trenches should be located in relation to the site boundary.

The County Archaeological Service shall be informed as to the commencement of and progress of the fieldwork and may wish to inspect site during the course of the investigations.

3.3. Report:

An illustrated full report on the investigation shall be prepared. The report shall include location plans of the trenches in relation to the site boundary, as well as reports of all specialist, documentary and other research, and details of trench stratigraphy, section and plan drawings, and artefacts together with their interpretation.

The report shall summarise the archaeological potential of the site and the impact upon it of the proposed development. It may make suggestions as to appropriate mitigation of the archaeological impact of the proposal, but these will be subject to review by the County Archaeological Service, who will make final recommendations to the Local Planning Authority.

A copy of the report should be deposited by the archaeological contractor, with the County Archaeological Service (Devon County Council, Environment Directorate, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QW), on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period (a maximum of 6 months after the completion of the fieldwork unless another date is agreed in writing with the County Archaeological Service).

An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991 2nd edition) upon completion of the entire project.

The archaeological contractor shall complete an online OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) form in respect of the archaeological work.

4. Further Work

The results of the assessment and evaluative trenches will inform as to the nature of any further archaeological work that will be required for all or part of this site. Any further work will require a revised Written Scheme of Investigation, which will be drawn up by the archaeological contractor, and approved by the County Archaeological Service.

5. Personnel and Monitoring

Staff must be suitably qualified and experienced for their project roles. All work should be carried out under the control of a Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, or by a person of similar standing. Health and Safety matters, including site security, are matters for the contractor. However, adherence to all relevant regulations will be required. The work shall be carried out in accordance with IFA Standards and Guidance for

Archaeological Field Evaluations (1994), as amended (1999).

6. Deposition Of Archive And Finds

An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991 2nd edition) upon completion of the entire project. This will be deposited with Plymouth City Museum in consultation with the relevant curator. The archaeological archive resulting from the work should be deposited in a format to be agreed with the museum, and within a timetable to be agreed with the County Archaeological Service. The Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for long-term Storage, published by the UK Institute for Conservation, should be adhered to. Archaeological finds resulting from the investigation (which are the property of the landowner), should be deposited with the appropriate museum. The proposed museum should be contacted at the beginning of the project. If ownership of all or any of the finds is to remain with the landowner, provision and agreement must be made for the time-limited retention of the material and its full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists.

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3rd November 2005

Devon County Council references;

Reference: Arch/DC/SH/9211

File: R:\DCH\Archaeology\GT\Planning and DC\South Hams DC (03/11/2005)

Appendix 2

WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING ON THE SITE AT 44 FORE STREET, TOTNES, DEVON

THIS IS STAGE I OF A PROCESS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SITE, THE RESULTS OF WHICH WILL ADVISE WHETHER FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERVENTION WILL BE NEEDED.

SX 8038 6035

Planning Application : 56/1244/05/F

18th November 2005

- 1.1 This document has been produced by South West Archaeology at the request of Mr. L. Marston (the Client) and sets out the methodology for the excavation and recording of archaeological evaluation trenches to be excavated prior to the start of the development of the site. The proposed application area subject to this work lies to the rear of 44, Fore Street, Totnes, Devon. It is proposed to excavate a series of evaluation trenches to investigate whether the site contains any archaeology that will be affected by the above development. Investigations will concentrate on the site of the proposed house behind the buildings that front Fore Street and the site of the proposed garage to the south of the site (see attached plan).
- 1.2 The site is in the narrow garden plot to the south of 44, Fore Street, the subdivision of a wider burgage plot.
- 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
- 2.1 This part of Totnes is contained within a large ovoid defended enclosure which may be of later Anglo-Saxon date and associated with the 10th century burh 200 metres to the west of the proposal site (Waterhouse, R. 2002: *'An Archaeological Appraisal of Totnes Conservation Area'* South Hams District Council). Archaeological deposits from this period may be expected to survive within the proposal site, lying just outside the burh, the southern boundary of which follows the line of present day Victoria Street, a short distance to the south.
- 2.2 The properties fronting Fore Street are part of a suburb of the earlier defended burh, laid out on the river side of the burh between the late 11th and early 13th century when it became part of the Borough of Totnes. Deposits of midden material, garden soil and boundary walls dating from this period are expected to survive across the proposal site.
- 2.3 Other archaeologically investigations in the immediate vicinity of the proposal site have yielded rich assemblages of imported pottery from the 16th-18th centuries and it is possible that such assemblages will be recovered from excavations within this site. This part of Totnes was occupied by its wealthiest merchants during this period.
3. AIMS
- 3.1 The aim of this work is to investigate the site to determine the character and extent of any surviving archaeological deposits within the proposed development site. The results of these investigations will be used to determine the nature and scope of any further archaeological works required as mitigation for the proposed development.
- 4.0 METHOD
- 4.1 Should earthworks be present the site will be surveyed using appropriate methods.
- 4.2 Archaeological evaluation trenches will be excavated in locations agreed with DCAS and will be positioned to enable a representative sample of the development area to be examined.
- 4.3 The position of the trenches can be moved in light of site conditions (services etc.) and in consultation with DCAS.

- 4.4 The archaeological work will be carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavation (revised 1995).
- 4.4.1 The trenches are to be excavated using a machine with a toothless, grading bucket to the surface of archaeological deposits, the surface of *in situ* weathered subsoil or to a depth that will not be affected by the development whichever is the most shallow.
- 4.4.2 Spoil will be examined for the recovery of artefacts.
- 4.4.3 The machining will be undertaken under the direct control of the site archaeologist. Upon completion of the machining to the appropriate level the trench sides and base will be examined by the site archaeologist for the identification of features and soil marks and the recovery of artefacts. Where necessary to clarify features and soil marks the base and/or sides of the trench will be cleaned by hand. The examination will be undertaken before the exposed level is affected by weathering and before plant and machinery is driven over it. Any features will then be cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded to IFA guidelines and as per paragraph 5.5 below.
- 4.4.4 If complex or extensive archaeological deposits are exposed then only the extent and character of such deposits will be determined by these investigations and the DCAS will be consulted as to the appropriate archaeological mitigation required by this development.
- 4.5 Health and Safety requirements will be observed at all times by any archaeological staff working on site, particularly when working with machinery. As a minimum: high-visibility jackets, safety helmets and protective footwear will be worn. The site archaeologist will undertake any site safety induction course provided by the Client.
- 4.6 Should the sides of trenches be deemed unstable, by virtue of depth or instability of the trench side, trenches will be adequately shored or stepped to allow safe access.
- 4.7 The Devon County Council Archaeological Service will be informed of the start of the fieldwork, will monitor the project throughout and may wish to inspect the works in progress.
- 5.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING
This will be based on IFA guidelines and those advised by DCAS and will consist of:
- 5.1 Standardised single context recording sheets, survey drawings in plan, section and profile at 1:10, 1:20, 1: 50 and 1:100 as appropriate, and B/W, colour and digital photography.
- 5.2 Survey and location of features.
- 5.3 Labelling and bagging of finds on site, post-1800 unstratified pottery may be discarded on site after a representative sample has been retained.
- 5.4 Should suitable deposits be exposed then consideration should be made for scientific assessment/analysis/dating techniques that could be applied to further understand their nature/date and to establish appropriate sampling procedures. The project will be organised so that specialist consultants who might be required to conserve or report on other aspects of the investigations can be called upon.
- 5.5 If archaeological features are exposed, then *as a minimum*:
- i) small discrete features will be fully excavated
 - ii) larger discrete features will be half-sectioned (50% excavated)
 - iii) long linear features will be excavated to sample 20% of their length - with investigative excavations distributed along the exposed length of any such feature.
- The full depth of archaeological deposits will be assessed.* This need not require excavation to *in situ* subsoil if it is clear that complex and deep stratigraphy will be encountered.

6.0 MITIGATION

6.1 This brief covers Stage I of the archaeological investigation of the site however, further archaeological intervention may be required. The need for any such further works will be determined by the results of these investigations and in consultation with the DCAS. Further mitigation work may take the form of:

6.1.1 Archaeological excavation of the whole of the development area.

6.1.2 An archaeological watching brief to be undertaken during any intrusive groundworks associated with the development work. It would be a requirement of a watching brief that sufficient time should be allowed in the construction programme for the adequate investigation and recording of archaeological features exposed.

6.2 If no archaeological deposits are exposed by the evaluation it may be decided by DCAS that no further archaeological works will be required.

6.3 The need for further works will be determined in consultation with the archaeological contractor, DCAS and the Client once the result of the evaluation is known; a separate Written Scheme of Investigation will be prepared to detail the scope of any further archaeological works required.

6.4 The development shall not proceed until the requirement for further archaeological intervention has been established by the DCAS.

7.0 ARCHIVE AND REPORT

7.1 An ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage, 1991 2nd edition) upon completion of the entire project.

This will include relevant correspondence together with context sheets, field drawings, and environmental, artefactual and photographic records. The archive and finds will be deposited with an appropriate museum.

7.2 An illustrated summary report will be produced as soon as possible following completion of fieldwork, specialist reports allowing, and submitted to Devon County Archaeology Service and the Client.

7.3 A report will be produced. This will include the following elements:

7.3.1 A location plan and overall site plan showing the location of the evaluative trenches as well as the distribution of any archaeological features;

7.3.2 Plans and sections of exposed features or deposits at a relevant scale;

7.3.3 A description of any remains and deposits identified including an interpretation of their character and significance;

7.3.4 An assessment of significant artefacts, environmental and scientific samples together with recommendations for further analysis;

7.3.5 Any specialist reports commissioned;

7.3.6 Discussion of the archaeological deposits encountered and their context.

7.4 Should they merit it; the results of these excavations will be published in an appropriate academic journal. If required, after the production of a summary report, a programme and timetable for this will be submitted to Devon County Archaeology Services and the Client for approval.

- 7.5 In the case that no further archaeological mitigation is required by this development a copy of the report detailing the results of these investigations will be submitted to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.

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The Thornes
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N. Devon
EX31 4NQ
Telephone: 01271 883000

Appendix 3

List of jpegs contained on CD rom inside rear cover of report.

Totnes, 44 Fore street TFS05			
Jpeg #	Location	Scale	From
IMG 001	Trench 2, towards fore st	2m	S
IMG 002	Trench 2, towards fore st		S
IMG 003	Trench 2, towards fore st		S
IMG 004	Trench 1, section, 6m from N end of trench bedrock revealed Layers: 100,101,102, natural subsoil bedrock		W
IMG 005			W
IMG 006			W
IMG 007			W
IMG 008	Trench 1, mod stone foundation 103 at S end, after machining	2m	N
IMG 009			N