

TUCKERS COUNTRY STORES, CHULEY ROAD ASHBURTON, DEVON

Results of a Desk-Based Assessment
& Walkover Survey



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Report No.: 140813
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**Tuckers Country Stores, Chuley Road,
Ashburton,
Devon**

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& Walkover Survey**

For

Andrew Bennellick of GJR Architects (the Agent)

On Behalf Of

Edwin Tucker & Sons Ltd (the Client)

By



SWARCH project reference: ACR14
National Grid Reference: SX75596951
OS Map copying Licence No: 100044808
Planning application No: Pre-planning
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August 2014

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Summary

South West Archaeology Ltd. was asked to undertake a desk-based study and walkover survey on land off Chuley Road, Ashburton, Devon. The site lies just to the west of the A38 and south west of the centre of Ashburton. The site specifically occupies an area that incorporates a number railway buildings associated with the former railway station at Ashburton.

The desk-based assessment suggests that the proposal site lies on the edge of two medieval strip-field systems, with the site itself seemingly enclosed in the post-medieval period. The documentary and cartographic assessment suggests that there is low archaeological potential. In the 19th century the site was developed with a railway building (goods shed/malthouse) constructed, with further buildings (stores?) added c.1964 presumably as a result of the railway lines closure, and a change in use.

The walkover survey revealed that no significant historic fabric associated with the railway survived within the buildings and site at Tuckers Country Stores. It is expected that whilst in areas the open ground may merely have been covered with tarmac, in other places the levels have been heavily reduced possibly removing any archaeological deposits. Beneath the ranges of 20th century buildings one can expect significant disturbance, although to the east of the river there may be evidence of the railway line and associated features.

The only real element of archaeological potential and of historic interest relates to the raised area along the western boundary and the associated areas of stone walling along the west and northern boundaries. If these walls and hedgebank are to be removed or replaced during any proposed developments, it is recommended that further work to understand these features may be considered appropriate as part of the planning process.

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Acknowledgements

Thanks for assistance are due to:

Andrew Bennellick of GJR Architects (the Agent)
Edwin Tucker & Sons Ltd (the Client), for access to the site
The staff of the Devon Heritage Centre

1.0 Introduction

Location: Land off Chuley Road

Parish: Ashburton

County: Devon

1.1 Project Background

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Andrew Bennellick of GJR Architects (the Agent) on behalf of Edwin Tucker & Sons Ltd (the Client) to undertake desk-based research and a walkover survey on land off Chuley Road, Ashburton, Devon (see Figures 1-2) prior to an application for planning consent to develop the site.

1.2 Topographical and Geological Background

The proposed site lies approximately 5km south-west of Bickington and less than 4km north-east of Buckfastleigh on the south-eastern edge of Dartmoor (Figure 1). The proposed development would be located south of the conservation area of Ashburton, just to the west of the modern A38 in an area which is occupied by a number of former railway buildings which have been converted to a farm shop towards the south of the settlement (Figure 2). Ashburton lies in a valley through which the river Ashburn runs and the site sits on the western bank of this river at approximately 60m AOD.

The soils of this area are well drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 association (SSEW 1983), which overlie Igneous rock of the Foxley Tuff formation (BGS 2104).

1.3 Historical Background

The place name Ashburton contains three elements *ash* or *æsc* (ash tree), *bur* or *burna* (a stream) and *tun* (settlement or enclosure) all elements indicative of a medieval origin (Gover *et al* 1931). Ashburton (*Essebretton*) is mentioned in the Domesday Book, and the manor was held by the Bishop of Exeter and a large population comprising the families of sixty men (Williams and Martin 2002; Thorn and Thorn 1985). In the medieval period Ashburton was one of three important stannary towns in Devon and is noted in King Edward I's 1305 stannary charter.

The proposed location for the turbine is a field located in an area characterised on the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation as modern settlement. The farmland immediately to the south-east of the site is characterised as post medieval/modern adapting post-medieval fields while the farmland to the north-west of the site is characterised as medieval farmland.

1.4 Archaeological Background

Very little archaeological investigation has taken place in the immediate area, and the medieval hub of the town, where a greater proportion of work has been undertaken lies to the north-east of the site. There are a small number of prehistoric findspots and possible settlements with 1km of the site noted on the Devon Historic Environment Record. These include a Bronze Age palstave found on Pitley Road (MDV12430) and a number of possible prehistoric enclosures which are located

approximately 1km to the south of the site. There are a number of other features noted on the Devon and Dartmoor HER's but these are mostly modern or post-medieval (for more details see Appendix 1).

1.5 Methodology

The desk-based assessment was carried out by V. Hosegood and was undertaken with reference to the IfA guidelines on the preparation of archaeological desk-based assessments (IfA 2008). The necessary research was conducted at the Devon Heritage Centre, using existing SWARCH research and resources and relevant online sources. The walkover survey was carried out on 4th August 2014 by Emily Wapshott.

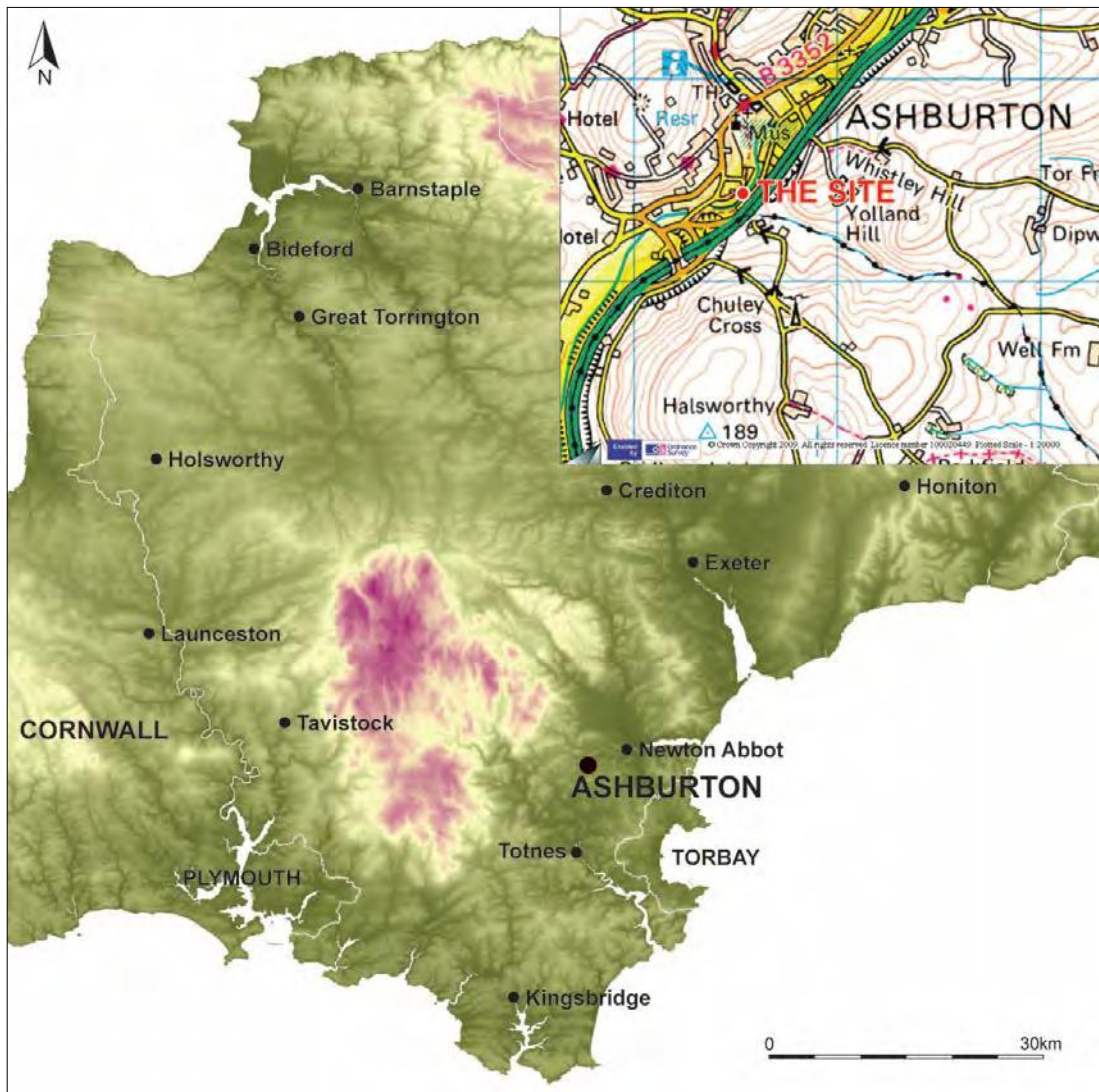


Figure 1: Site location (the proposed site is indicated).

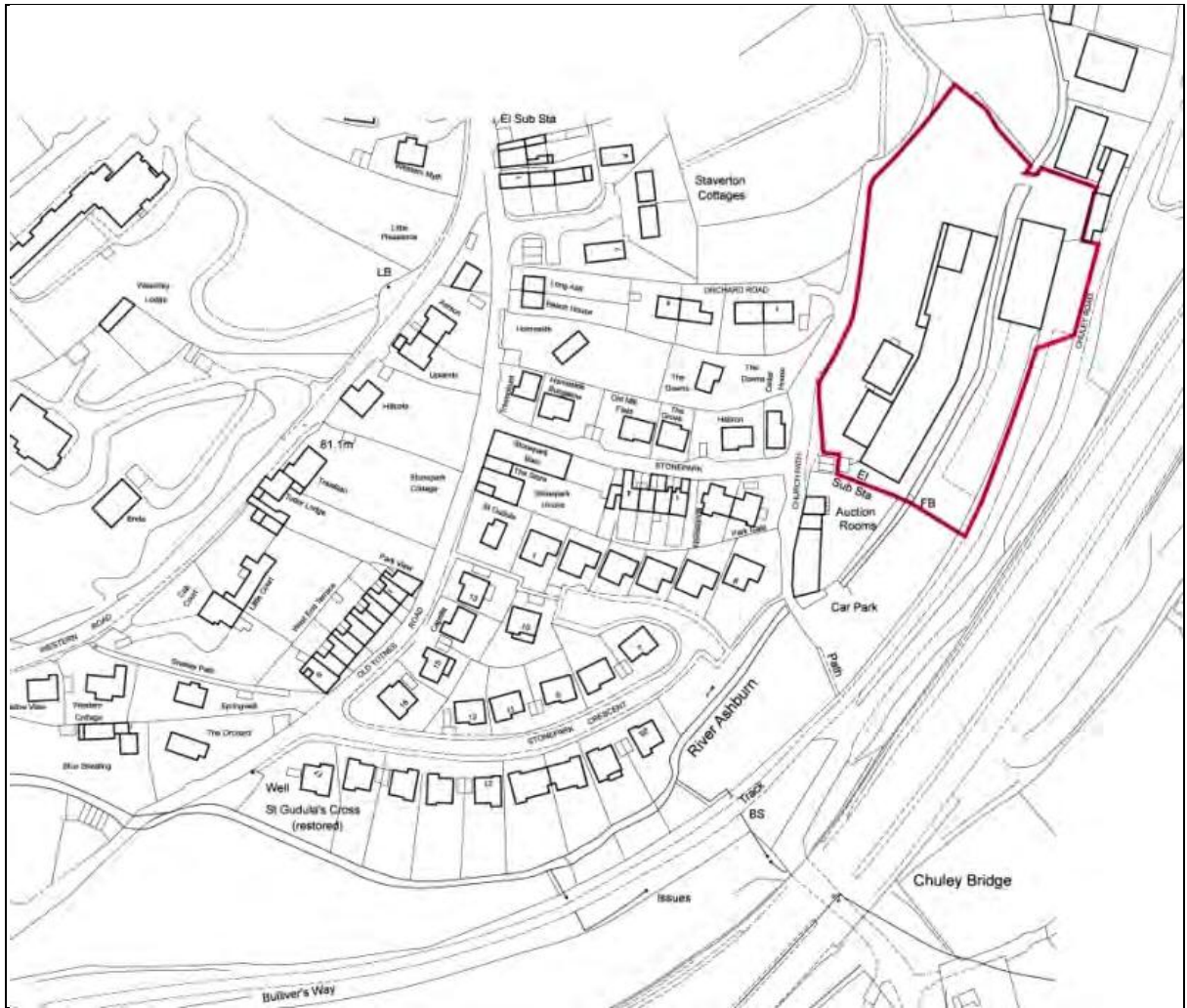


Figure 2: Detailed site plan, the site boundary is marked in red (courtesy: GJR Architects).

2.0 Results of the Desk-Based Cartographic Assessment

2.1 Summary of the Desk-Based Assessment

The small market town of Ashburton lies adjacent to the A38 trunk road between Exeter and Plymouth. It is situated close to the River Dart within Dartmoor National Park, and the upland of Dartmoor forms the physical backdrop to the town. The town's early history shows strong ecclesiastical associations, having been the possession of the bishops of Exeter until the 1540s when the manor was progressively removed from the hands of Bishop John Veysey to laymen. Ashburton was established as a borough at least as early as the 13th century, and towards the end of that century became one of Devon's three (and later four) stannary towns. Tin and wool were the foundation of several centuries of prosperity, though by the late 18th century both trades had declined in importance. At this time some prosperity accrued through Ashburton's location on the coach route between Exeter and Plymouth, but when the railway came, the town was bypassed, and further decline set in, despite the subsequent establishment of a branch line and station (After Hoskins 1992). Since the mid-20th century growth has resulted from the purchase of the town's many "picturesque" properties by retired people, commuters and second-homers.

The site here discussed lies on the fringes of the older part of the town and is surrounded by a mixture of largely 19th century and modern houses. The area proposed for development occupies the same area as a number of metal framed buildings, some of which are late 19th or early 20th century railway buildings associated with the old Buckfastleigh, Totnes and South Devon Railway, which was opened in 1872 as the terminus of the line, and closed in 1962. These buildings are now used as a farm shop and associated storage buildings.

2.2 Documentary History

The earliest explicit reference to Ashburton is in the Domesday Book of 1086, where we are told that *Essbretona* is a possession of the Bishop of Exeter, and had land for 20 ploughs, worth £20 (Thorn and Thorn 1985). This makes it a wealthy manor with an area of arable land not dissimilar in extent from that which may be identified as the Ashburton (common) field-system overlain by the historic core of the town. Unusually there are two documentary sources from before 1086 from which the existence of Ashburton or of its antecedent may be inferred. The first of these is a perambulation of a large district called *Pedingtun*. This name is now lost, but the perambulation proceeds from the "outfall of the Ashburn (into the Dart)", up the Dart to its confluence with the River Webburn and then proceeds to take in large parts of what are now neighbouring parishes as well as the whole of the parish of Ashburton. The second document is the will of Bishop Ælfweald of Crediton (1008–12) in which he bequeathed livestock "on Ashburn land". Since the name Ashburton is interpreted as "farm or estate on the Ashburn (now Yeo)" (Gover *et al* 1931), it is fair to assume that these territories are centred on the land where the town now lies; and since it appears to have been a possession of the Bishop of Crediton, we may also assume that it descended from Crediton to Exeter after 1050 when the Episcopal seat was transferred (Hanham 1962, 442).

At an unknown date, but seemingly by the 12th century, Ashburton was constituted a borough. It is often assumed that this must have taken place before 1066, but there is at present no clear evidence for this. It must be remembered that places named in Domesday are manors (ie. territories), not settlements. The fact that Ashburton was a possession of the Bishop of Exeter before 1066 does not mean that the borough existed at this time. Neither is the existence of the office of portreeve in the town any proof of a Saxon origin, as some suppose, since the office existed

and could be set up both before and after the Conquest. It does seem probable, however, that the borough of Ashburton was in existence by the end of the 12th century. The Bishop of Exeter would not have been alone among 12th and 13th century landlords in expecting to gain pecuniary advantage through turning a demesne farm into a borough designed in the typical fashion with a main street with burgage plots on either side, a market-place in the middle and a church off to one side or at the end of the street, as we find in Ashburton.

Evidence to support the existence of a borough by the 12th century includes reference to a market in the 12th century Register of Bishop Grandisson (Devon HER), and as Ashburton was represented as a borough by its own jury in 1238 (Beresford & Findberg 1976, 86). It is known that Bishop Stapledon obtained a charter for a fair in 1310 (Pilkington 1976, 23) and an early borough seal depicting (probably) the church of St Andrew is dated 1314. It was also around this date that Bishop Stapledon, who is believed to have had a palace in Ashburton, founded the guild of St Lawrence in the town, for whose purposes he gave to the portreeve and burgesses a chapel which already stood in the south-west corner of the courtyard of his own residence (Pilkington 1976, 53). This was to become the Chapel of St Lawrence, which later housed the Ashburton Grammar School and which still serves as a meeting place once a year for the courts Leet and Barton of Ashburton (Ashburton Town Council 2013).

At some point in the early history, a distinction arose between the manor and the borough of Ashburton, the borough consisting of the burgages, i.e. most of the town, together with the surrounding fields; while the manor represented the rest of the parish. Until the Reformation both portions remained in the hands of the Bishops of Exeter. In the 1540s, Bishop John Veysey was put under pressure to release the freehold to laymen, a succession of whom held it until 1608 when it was claimed by the Crown. By 1630 the Crown was heavily in debt and sold the manor and borough of Ashburton to a London based syndicate consisting of two principles, Alderman Ralph Freeman and Alderman Robert Parkhurst. For almost the next 300 years the manor and borough was split in two. That part obtained by Ralph Freeman descended via, among others, Sir Lawrence Vaughan Palk ultimately to Sir Robert Buchanan Jardine in 1905; the part acquired by Robert Parkhurst descended via, among others, the Barons Clinton to Richard Maitland Westenra Dawson also in 1905. In 1906 the lordship was reunited under Westenra Dawson and his successors and was finally sold to Ashburton Urban District Council in 1927 (after Hanham 1962).

In his survey of Devon originally written in the early 17th century, Risdon describes Ashburton as “a market town and one of the places privileged with the weighing of tin, as appeareth in their charter made by King Edward the first in the thirteenth year of his reign” (Risdon, 1811 edition, 153). This means that in 1285 Ashburton became one of the four stannary towns of Devon. Lying on the south-eastern side of the moor, Ashburton was geographically well placed for a controlling role in the flourishing Dartmoor tin trade, so that by the 15th century the tin industry was busier in Ashburton than in any other Devonshire centre. The peak of activity came in 1515 when the Ashburton stannary accounted for almost 40% of Devon’s tin production. This was followed by a steady decline, the trade finally dwindling away in the 19th century (Pilkington 1976, 26-7).

The prosperity brought by tin was complemented by that ensuing from the woollen industry. At Domesday (1086) it is calculated that between the Teign and the Dart there were more sheep than anywhere else in Devon. Perhaps partly due to the nearby Cistercian Buckfast Abbey, Ashburton became a considerable centre for the production of cloth with fulling mills strung along the Ashburn Stream (Yeo). On the borough seal is an emblem in the form of a teazel the heads of which were used to raise the nap on cloth after it had been through the fulling mill process. A wool and yarn market was established in 1672 (Lysons 1822, 12-14), and until the north of England gained

supremacy in the textiles industry in the 18th/19th century, the Ashburton district was an important centre for the manufacture of serge.

Like the tin industry, the manufacture of cloth died away in the early 19th century, but a last flush of prosperity was provided by an increase in through-traffic from 1660 onwards which led to the growth of inns and hotels and their attendant trades. This development took time, however. In 1698 Celia Fiennes commented, "This Ashburton is a poor little town – bad was the best inn." But by the mid-18th century, when the Golden Lion Hotel was built in East Street, the combination of a still flourishing woollen industry and a steady increase in the numbers of travellers probably led to the town's best days. However, the opening of the South Devon railway in 1846, bypassing the town by around six miles, took away the coach and wagon trade leading to a sharp economic decline, and the opening of a branch line from Totnes in 1872 failed to bring any real improvement (after Hoskins 1992 ed.: 320-21).

Churley or Chewley is first mentioned in 1228 as *Chiuelege*, and is described in 1299 in reference to Ashburton itself *Chiuelegh juxta Asperton*. It is suggested that the place-name refers to an unknown personal name *Cifa* and *leah* meaning wood (Gover *et al* 1931: 464). Churley is historically located on the parish boundary to Staverton, and as such is mentioned within records from both parishes.

A quick documentary search in the Devon Heritage Centre highlighted that in 1624 the Moiety of a *great close of land called Chewley Park* (valued at £135) was given as settlement between Bernard Harris and Thomas Harris the younger. They are both noted as Tanners (DHC 48/14/68/1) and a Thomas Harris (senior?) is known to have resided in Ashburton in 1599 (Amery 1896: 255). By 1634 the land (20 acres) had been passed (was recovered by) a Nicholas Harris (DHC 48/14/68/2 and 48/14/68/3), and Nicholas subsequently purchases (in 1649) the Messuage of a property in East Street, which included five closes, scattered around the town, and the "*moiety of Canne Meadowe lying on the south of a way leading from the church-yard to Chewly*" (DHC 48/14/68/5a-b). Nicholas died c.1669 and the land appears to have passed to his son, a further tanner named Thomas Harris, with a 10 acre field named as Chewley Parke, Staverton mentioned in Thomas' 1690 marriage settlement (DHC 48/14/68/8). The same field (now 11 acres) is mentioned in a 1701 mortgage in the ownership of the Wottons of Ingleborne (DHC 48/14/68/10). The Wotton estate was subsequently sold in 1745 to Sir John D'Oyly of Oxford (DHC 48/14/137/8) and re-sold in various parts in the late 18th century (Risdon 1811: 680).

2.3 Cartographic Analysis

The earliest cartographic source available for this study was a 1749 map by Thomas Kitchin (Figure 3). The map is not very detailed or accurate, but it does however give an idea of the primacy of Ashburton within the surrounding landscape at the time it was drawn. Many of the settlements surrounding Ashburton on this map are indicated by a circular mark next to the name, while a small scatter of buildings and church tower is located at Ashburton. The importance or the route way Ashburton sits along is also emphasised by this map, with the road shown in greater thickness than some of the other roads apparent on the map.

Benjamin Donn's 1765 Map is slightly more detailed and shows the main roads which run through Ashburton and the scale of the development along these roads (Figure 4). The Old Totnes Road, is shown running south-west out of Ashburton, with a minor road leading east and then south from the 'Gulwell' portion of Ashburton to cross the River Ashburn and lead onto the farm at Halsworthy, and further south. This minor road is likely to represent the present day Stone Park, part of Church Path and Chuley Hill. Chuley Road is not depicted, but St. Lawrence Lane is displayed running south

out of the town centre. There is no development depicted in the vicinity of the site, i.e. the area between Stone Park and St. Lawrence Lane.



Figure 3: Extract from the 1749 map by Thomas Kitchin.

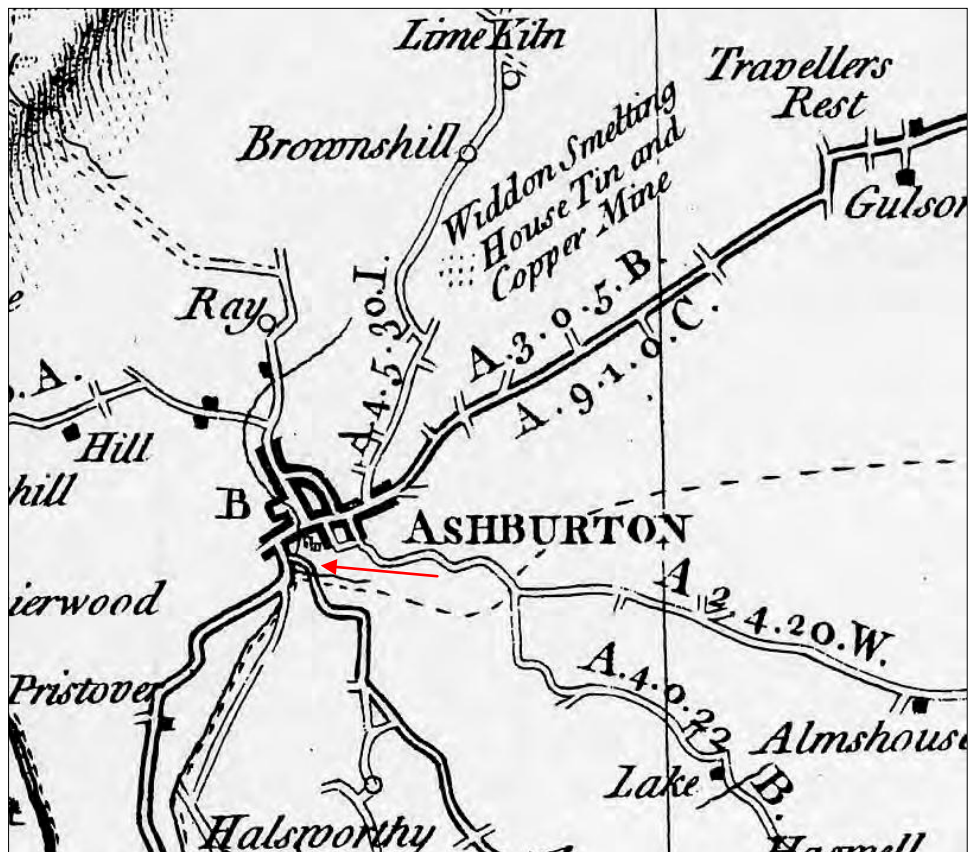


Figure 4: Extract from the 1765 map of Devon by Benjamin Donn (DHC).

The old series Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1809 (Figure 5) shows much the same information as discussed for Donn's map (figure 3). Again Old Totnes Road is shown running out of Ashburton to the south west. On this map however, a further road (Western Road) has been built or at least shown to its full extent, running parallel, and north, of the Old Totnes Road. The Old Series map does suggest that the road running east from the Old Totnes Road (i.e. Stone Park) meets a road junction (Church Path), which runs south to cross the River Ashburn (as depicted in 1765), but also extends for a short distance to the north. We should however note that a 'way' leads from the churchyard to Churley in a 1649 document (DHC 48/14/68/5a-b).

The southern end of St. Lawrence Lane is also shown to extend further south on the Old Series map, implying that the road continues, i.e. the present Chuley Road, (but is not depicted). The only development within the vicinity of the site is an L-shaped building, located opposite the junction of Church Path with Stone Park. This appears to be located to the immediate south of the proposal site (now the site of Rendells Auction Rooms). Given this building is located within a bend in the River Ashburn; it is likely to represent a mill/former mill.



Figure 5: Extract from the 'Old Series' Ordnance Survey map of 1809.

The Ashburton title map of 1840 is the first detailed map available for consultation (see Figure 6). It shows exactly how the development above discussed is set out. A number of dwellings are shown lining the southern side of the Old Totnes Road with the gardens extending to the present Church Path, which flanks the northern and eastern edges of the proposal site. These houses are

clearly located within a former field system based on medieval strip-fields, which probably originally extended north up to the road known as Bowden Hill, and perhaps onto the hill itself, although an east-west orientated strip field system is apparent on the eastern side of the hill. The remnants of this medieval field-system clearly demonstrate the inserted nature of the Western Road (B3352), whilst the Old Totnes Road appears to bisect through the centre of the former field-system. This field-system group appears to have abutted an adjacent group of similarly laid out fields, which became the basis for the planned layout of Ashburton borough (probably in the 12th century). The Church and churchyard being positioned seemingly near the point at which the two field-systems met. The proposal site appears to have fallen outside of these two field-systems, presumably as it was liable to become seasonally waterlogged, from the nearby River. The sole exception may be the field numbered 1724, which has curving boundaries; although this and the field to the south are both called Cann Meadow in the accompanying apportionment (see Table 1) suggesting that this division is post-medieval in date. A Canne Meadow in this approximate location was seemingly in existence by 1649 (DHC 48/14/68/5a-b).



Figure 6: Extract from the Ashburton tithe map of 1840 the approximate location of the site is indicated.

No.	Land owner	Occupier	Field name	Cultivation
Headboro				
1725	John Caunter	William Honeywell	Prigg Meadow	Meadow
Higher Waye				
1723	John Caunter	Martin Badcock	Glebe, garden and orchard	Orchard
Place Farm				
1647	Richard Caunter	William Mugford	Orchard	Orchard
1698			Garden	Garden
1646		William Waycott	Garden	Garden
1699			Garden	Garden
1700			House and garden	Garden
1714			Garden	Garden
Furzley				

1640	Phillippa Eales	John Pearce	Sinclairs	Pasture
1643			Pasture	
1645			Orchard	
1720	Henry Cregh	Himself	House and yard	-
1722			Orchard	Orchard
1702	Richard Eales	George Rowlands	Alms house orchard	Orchard
1704		Rev. John White	House and garden	Garden
1705			Garden	Garden
1724	George Fitze	Thomas Foaden	Cann Meadow	Garden
Pitley				
1716	George Gervis	Edward Mortimer	House and garden	Garden
1883	Richard Harris	Thomas Hext	Little Hill	Pasture
1884	William Hearne		Cann Meadow	Meadow
1885	Thomas Huxham		Long Meadow	Meadow
1887			Meadow	Meadow
1946			Yard and buildings	-
1948			Orchard	Orchard
1947	Charlotte Hext		House and garden	Garden
Caton				
1721	John Matthews	Edward Hannaford	House and garden	Garden
1729	Lawrence Palk	John Willis	Trist Meadow	Pasture
1644	Richard Cautner	Henry Creagh	Rack Park	Pasture
Lower Bodley				
1637	Robert Palk	John Elliot	Parhams orchard	Orchard
1718		William Mugford	Barn Park	Garden
1708	Benjamin Parham	. . . Dugdale	Garden	Garden
1641		John Cator	Bat Taylors	Orchard
1703		Unoccupied	House and garden	Garden
Gages				
1711	John Randell	Himself	House and garden	Garden
1712			Garden	Garden
1713		Robert Mugridge	House and garden	Garden
Glebelands				
1627	Rev. William Marsh	Himself	Lawn	Garden
1639			Bowden Hill Park	-
1642			Alms House Field	-
1648			West Cleaves	-
1701			Old mill plot and garden	Garden
1709			Yard	-
1710			Stone Park	-
1715			Old Mill Field	-
1719			Martins Field	-
1707			Garden	Garden
Wellstor				
1706	John Badcock	John Maedoual	House and Garden	Garden

Table 1: Extracts taken from the 1841 Ashburton tithe apportionment, the fields occupied by the proposal site are indicated in red.

The Ordnance Survey First Edition Map of 1887 shows the 'new' railway branch-line and terminus (built in 1872). These developments included on the eastern side of the proposal site a large rectangular building, which flanked the tracks along its eastern side (Figure 7).

The Ordnance Survey Second Edition Map of 1904 shows few notable changes (Figure 8). There is a slight change in course of the Church Path to the immediate north of the proposal site, with the track diverting slightly to run adjacent to the present site boundary in order to incorporate the churchyard extension. The building within the proposal site appears to be marked as a malthouse.



Figure 7: Extract from the first edition OS map of 1886, the site location is highlighted.

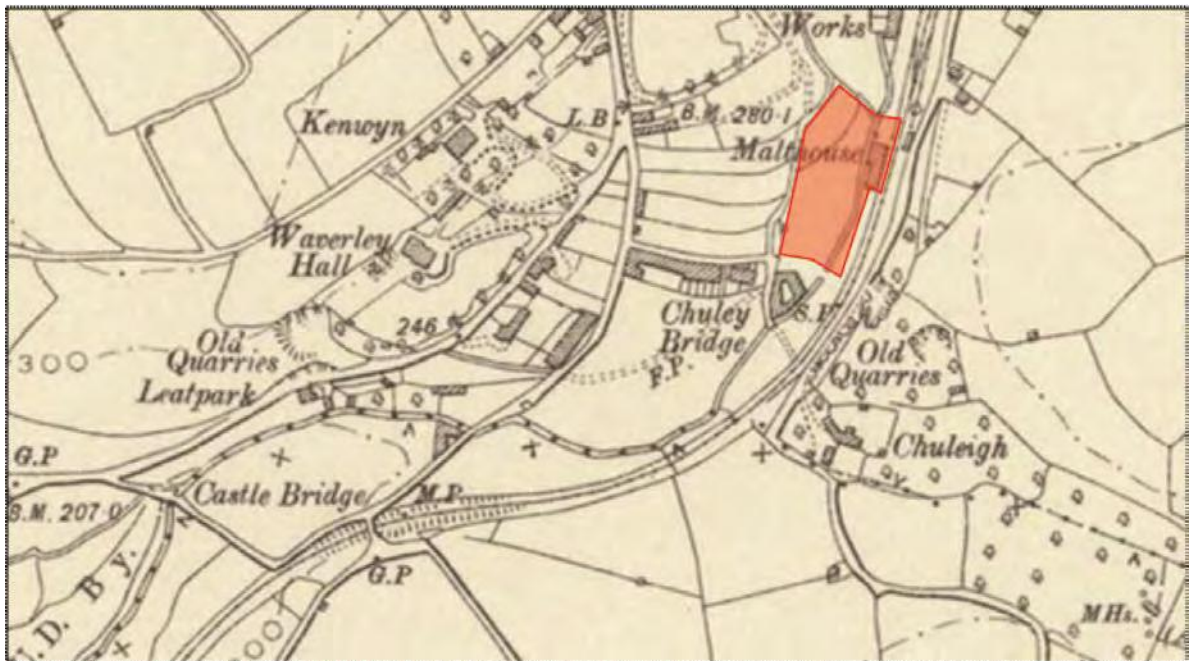


Figure 8: Extract from the second edition OS map of 1904, the site location is highlighted.

The next available source is a 1946 RAF aerial photograph, which suggests that the site, apart from the above discussed railway building, remains undeveloped (Figure 9). The area surrounding the site also remains largely unchanged.



Figure 9: An aerial photograph of Ashburton taken by the RAF in 1946 (Devon HER), the site location is highlighted.

3.0 The Walkover Survey

The site was visited in July 2014 by archaeologist Emily Wapshott, the site was walked and photographed, notes taken and the boundaries, setting and standing buildings were all described. The site lies at the base of a south-east facing slope, at the base of the River Ashburn valley, which runs through the site. The site is bounded to the south and east by the landscaped banking of the A38 road, which is heavily wooded, with shrubs and mature trees. The wider area is the historic railway station site, which was finally closed in 1972. The site itself lies to the south-west of the main surviving station complex, along Chuley Road which may have been an area of railway yards and workshops. The buildings on the site are occupied by Tuckers Country Stores, an operational business, and the walkover was conducted to initially assess the potential of the site and identify areas for further work, but was necessarily limited by the presence of current sale stock within both the yard and buildings.

The site is primarily accessed via 'Stonepark', a road leading south-east down the hill, off the Old Totnes Road. Stonepark House, 1-4 Stonepark, Homelands and Park Gate line the west side of the road; all of these houses are contained within stone boundary walls. These 19th century houses and some more modern houses on the east side of the road, shield the proposed development site from the rest of Ashburton. Another large 19th century house, The Downs, lies immediately north of the Tuckers site within a large walled garden. Early 19th century stone-built warehouses or former workshops, now used as an auction rooms, lie to the south-west, whilst a former goods shed or associated railway building lies to the east of the Tuckers site, outside of the development area, in separate ownership.

3.1 Site Boundaries

In the south-east corner the boundary is very overgrown, with scrub foliage, where a wire mesh fence crosses the river and runs up towards the buildings. The site itself is bounded to the south by a timber fence, between the Tuckers site and the auction rooms. The south-west corner is the main entrance to the site and is flanked by wire mesh fencing, with large double mesh security gates. The west side of the site is totally enclosed by modern wire mesh fencing, with galvanised metal and concrete posts. An historic stone-faced hedgebank encloses the southern end of the western boundary of the site, outside of the mesh fencing. The bank is constructed of grey-brown silt-clay, with mixed rubble stone core, truncated and exposed to the east side; its outer face is of rough blocky stone construction.

To the centre of the western boundary is a section of surviving stone walling, approximately 2.5m high and 12-15m in length. The east side is very overgrown and its interior face could not be properly examined (see Figure 10). The southern end of this wall appears to have a return running east, forming the south-west corner of a building, or an enclosed yard, instead of being merely a boundary wall (Figure 10). There is a fine 19th century double-width opening to the southern end of the wall, with a brick double-segmental arch over, with dressed granite block quoins to the reveals (Figure 11). Similar openings can be viewed on the 19th century station buildings to the south-west and east. There are at least two phases of construction apparent, with the north and south of the opening appearing to be of tighter packed stonework, using narrow flat stones with some attempt at semi-coursing, with looser packed rubble-stone above. This may reflect 19th century reuse of an earlier building, when the railway station site was developed in the early 1870s. The wall turns a corner, respecting the angled boundary of the site and the churchyard extension to the north-west. There are roughly dressed granite quoins to an opening at the northern end of the wall, blocked

with brickwork in the 20th century. The northern side of this opening and the rest of the wall have been truncated at ground level.



Figure 10: View of the steps leading up to the raised area along the western boundary and the 20th century brick-blocked opening seen in the stone wall; from the east-north-east.

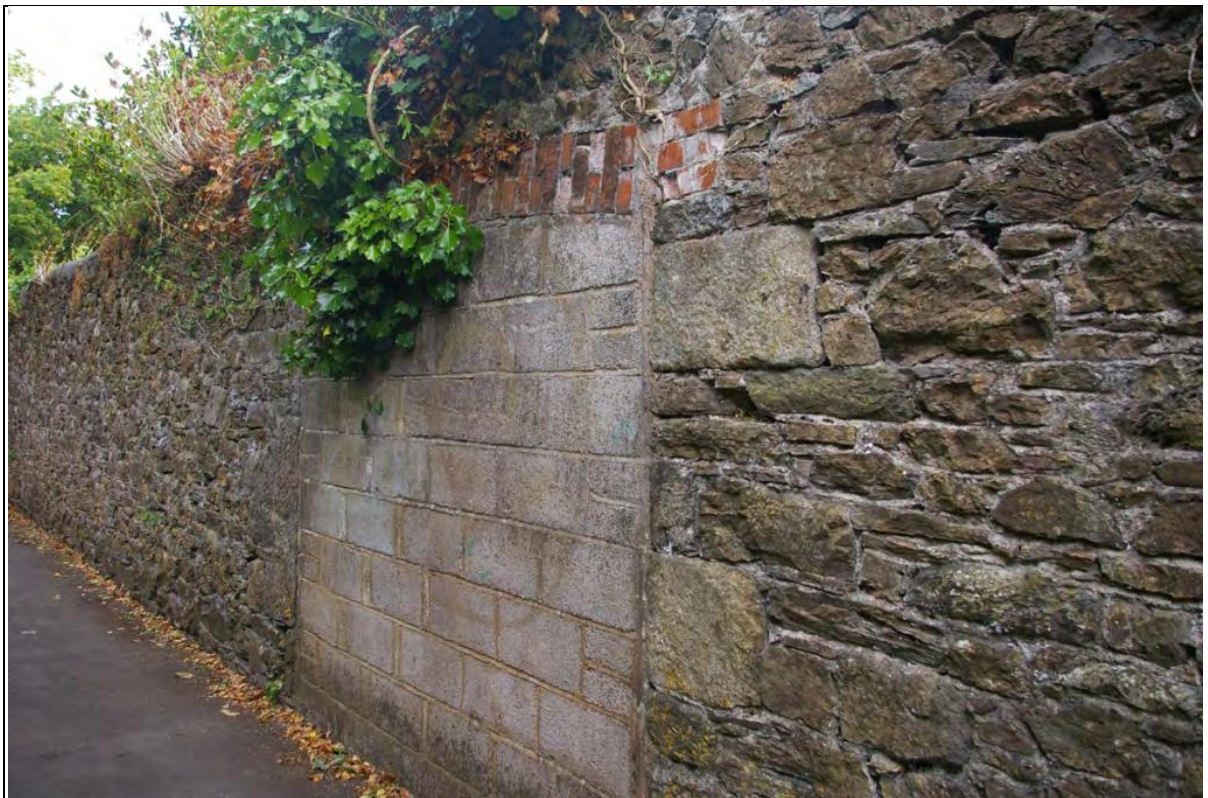


Figure 11: Shot of the blocked opening in the stone wall along Church Path; viewed from the south-west.

Another section of stone wall running down the north-eastern boundary of the site from the northern corner is contiguous with the stone wall which continues to the north enclosing the current play area and skate park, running along Church Lane. It is not clear if the boundary wall of the Tuckers site, visible only at ground level abutted or is contiguous with this section of wall. The eastern end of the boundary is wire mesh fencing, with locked metal security gates to the grassed section of play area. The fencing runs along the river bank and continues across on the other bank, up to the wall of the 19th century stone building. Metal security gates between the stone building and a modern building on the Tucker site provide the other entrance to the site, off Chuley Road, to the south-east. The southern and eastern boundary running along parallel to the banking of the A38 is also of mesh fencing with concrete posts; overgrown over the former tracks, with large mature trees and scrub.

3.2 The Site and Buildings Description

The site is almost completely covered with poured concrete slabs or tarmac, apart from a short section along the banks of the river. Along the western boundary the site is raised; this area is contained by a modern concrete block retaining wall, a set of steps leading up to the brickwork blocked opening in the historic stone wall which bounds the site. This area may have been truncated in the 20th century to allow for car parking for the Tuckers site, with a larger area of raised ground formerly in existence. The historic stone wall respects this higher area of ground, as does the historic hedgebank and this represents the only portion of the site likely to have any surviving archaeological deposits, perhaps the remains of a building.

The rest of the western banks of the river are shallow slopes, levelling near the river bank, with some steeper sloping ground leading into the buildings to the south-west, which have possibly been dug down into the ground. It is highly likely that any archaeological deposits have been lost here with the ground level being considerably altered during the 19th century railway construction and the modern development of the site in the 20th century. Along the river bank the ground is undulating, the river banks rebuilt and reinforced in concrete or stone with wire framing (Figure 12). There is evidence nearer to the edge of the river of some concrete pads of former buildings, on a different alignment to those standing. The east side of the river appears to have received less intervention with a tarmac car park to the south; concrete slab lorry turning area to the north and several grassed areas. This area may contain archaeological deposits associated with the railway, underneath the tarmac, especially near the former goods shed.



Figure 12: Shot of the reinforced banks of the River Ashburn, and the access bridge which links the two parts of the site, viewed from the south-west.

There is a long range of metal-framed buildings and sheds which form the Tucker Country Stores on the west banks of the river. Some of the sheds and stores at the southern end are marked as being 'Michael Thorne, Crediton, Devon' and are later 20th or 21st century. A 1960s or 1970s flat roofed office structure lies to the west of the building range. The buildings to the centre of the range may contain elements of similar 1960s date and have been stores or workshops, perhaps associated with the last few years of the railway; however the majority of the structure has been rebuilt of concrete and steel girders. There is no historic fabric to the buildings that could be viewed in their current state. It is expected that any surviving archaeological deposits within the footprint of these buildings will be heavily disturbed by their construction and footings. There is one modern building on the site to the east side of the river, approximately 1980s or 1990s, 'Horns of Langtree' metal framing over $\frac{1}{4}$ concrete block walls. No historic fabric was noted within this structure. It is expected the construction of this building will have heavily disturbed any potential archaeological deposits in the ground within its footprint.

4.0 Conclusions

The desk-based assessment suggests that the proposal site lies on the edge of two medieval strip-field systems, with the site itself (except perhaps the higher northern part of the site) seemingly enclosed in the post-medieval period, with Cann Meadow in existence by the 17th century. The documentary and cartographic history of the site suggests that there is low archaeological potential, although given possible ownership by a family of Tanners, there is some slight potential for a post-medieval fulling mill, although the current auction house site to the south appears the more likely candidate for the site of a former mill. In the 19th century the site was developed with a railway building (goods shed/malthouse) constructed, with further buildings (stores?) added c.1964 presumably as a result of the railway lines closure, and a change in use.

The walkover survey revealed that no significant historic fabric associated with the railway station survived within the buildings and site at Tuckers Country Stores. It is expected that whilst in areas the open ground may merely have been covered with tarmac, in other places the levels have been heavily reduced possibly removing any archaeological deposits. Beneath the ranges of 20th century buildings one can expect significant disturbance, although to the east of the river there may be evidence of the railway line and associated features.

The only real element of archaeological potential and of historic interest relates to the raised area along the western boundary and the associated areas of stone walling to the west and northern boundaries. If these walls and hedgebank are to be removed or replaced, further work to understand these features may be considered appropriate as part of the planning process.

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- The Ashburton tithe award 1841
- Documents relating to Ashburton parish including; **48/14/68/1; 48/14/68/2; 48/14/68/3; 48/14/68/5a-b; 48/14/68/8; 48/14/68/10; 48/14/137/8**

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- Promap** 2014: <http://www.promap.co.uk/>

Appendix 1
Gazetteer of sites recorded in the HER

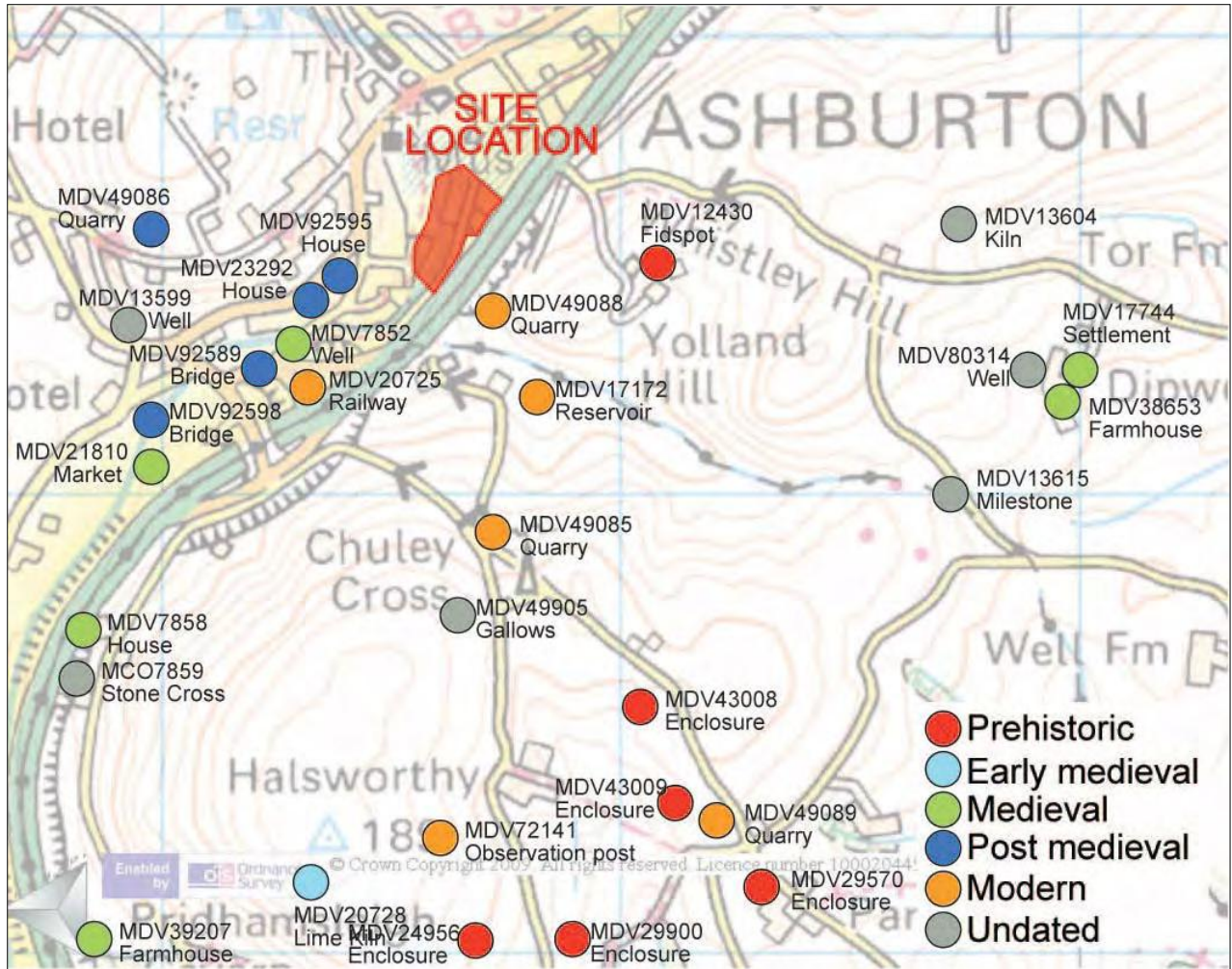


Figure 13: Map of relevant HER sites.

Mon. ID	Site Name	Record	Notes
MDV7858	Gullwell – remains of a medieval house	Extant structure	Modern house now supersedes ancient dwelling, the old house was traditionally the birthplace of Lord Ashburton
MDV7859	Gulwell – Stone cross unknown date	Extant structure	Remains of a stone cross near ashburton the shaft of the cross forms a seat by the roadside
MDV12436	Prehistoric Findspot	Findspot	A paslstave, 5.7cm long, 2.2cm wide, Y shaped moulding on blade, loop broken
MDV13604	Dipwell Farm kiln unknown date	Documentary evidence	The place name Kiln Close at Dipwel farm suggests the site of a kiln but there is no evidence of a kiln at the site
MDV13615	Milestone – unknown date	Extant structure / demolished structure	Milestone indicated on OS map of 1904 but is either hidden by overgrown hedgebanks or is no longer present
MDV17172	Chuley reservoir – modern reservoir	Documentary evidence	Chuly reservoir was built by sir Robert Jardine in 1867
MDV17744	Dipwell – medieval settlement	Documentary evidence	Dipwell has been inhabited from at least as early as 1244 when it was named Depwylle
MDV20728	Lime Kiln	Documentary evidence	Tithe map notes the field numbers 1958 and 1959 are higher and lower kiln down, reference in 1646 to a lime kiln in pridhamsleigh manor
MDV24956	Prehistoric enclosure	Cropmark	A double ditched enclosure with wide spaced ditches, three sides rectilinear, overall dimensions

Tuckers Country Stores, Chuley Road, Ashburton, Devon

			c.100 x 80m
MDV29570	Prehistoric enclosure	Cropmark	Circular ditched enclosure diameter c.70m
MDV29900	Prehistoric enclosure	Cropmark	Bulland, Staverton, part of a rectilinear enclosure, single ditched
MDV38653	Dipwell farmhouse	Extant structure	Farmhouse c16 or c17 with late c19 addition
MDV39207	Woodend farmhouse	Extant structure	Woodend farmhouse and shippon, circa C16 or earlier
MDV43008	Prehistoric enclosure	Cropmark	Part of a small rectilinear single ditched enclosure is visible as a cropmark
MDV43009	Prehistoric enclosure	Cropmark	A subrectangular single ditched enclosure 50m x 40m
MDV 49085	Modern quarry	Documentary evidence	Quarry is indicated on the OS maps of 1904 and 1963
MDV49088	Modern quarry	Documentary evidence	Old quarries indicated on OS maps of 1904 and 1963
MDV49089	Modern quarry	Documentary evidence	Old quarry is marked on the OS map of 1904 but not on the map of 1963
MDV49905	Gibbet Hill possible site of gallows unknown date	Documentary evidence	Un-published. Gallant L., Parishes checked for references of gallows 'Churley Cross' approached from NW by 'Cabbage Hill' formerly called 'Gibbet Hill'
MDV72141	Modern observation post	Documentary evidence	The cold war site of royal observer corps
MDV80314	Well unknown date	Documentary evidence	Disused well in the remains of the orchard
MDV92595	Tresilian Post medieval House	Extant structure	GII Listed C19 house on Western road
MDV23292	Tudor Lodge post medieval house	Extant structure	GII Listed C17 house on Western road
MDV7852	St. Gudulas Holy Well medieval well	Extant structure	GII Listed medieval holy well
MDV92589	Gulwell Bridge post medieval bridge	Extant structure	GII Listed C18 Bridge
MDV20725	Modern railway	Extant structure	Buckfastleigh, Totnes and south Devon railway
MVD13599	Holy well unknown date	Extant structure	Dropping well holy well of unknown date
MDV92598	Post medieval Footbridge over river ashburn	Extant structure	GII Listed footbridge over the river Ashburn C18
MDV49086	Post medieval quarry	Documentary evidence	'Old quarries' indicated on the 1904 OS map
MDV21810	Ashburton medieval market place	Documentary evidence	Ashburton market mentioned in the twelfth century in register of Bishop Grandisson

Table 2: Extracts of nearby HER's from the Devon HER and Dartmoor HER, all plotted on map above.

Appendix 2
Additional Photographs from Walkover Survey

Site and Buildings



View of sheds, stores and containers in the south-west corner of the site, near the main entrance; from the north-west.



View into the site from the main entrance; from the south-west.



View down to the southern boundary, showing the sub-station; from the north-west.



View back along the southern boundary of the site, looking to Stonepark Road which rises to the west and uphill towards Ashburton; from the east.



View along the raised western part of the site which is now retained by modern concrete block walls; from the south-east.



View as above; from the south-east.



The flat-roofed office building; from the south-west.



The office building and main range of buildings behind; from the west-south-west.



The main range of buildings from the west-south-west.



The open shed to the south of the site; from the west-north-west.



The view to the south along the riverbank between the two main groups of buildings; from the north.



View of some of the concrete pads which line the river bank behind the main range of buildings; from the north-east.



View along the river Ashburn; from the north-west.



View to the north where the two groups of buildings flank both sides of the river bank; from the south-west.



View along the back of the northern part of the main range of buildings; from the south-east.



View along the back of the building on the east side of the river bank; from the north-west.



View down the long main range of buildings; from the west-north-west.



Wide view of the site from the western boundary; from the west-north-west.



View across to the eastern part of the site, across the river; from the north-west.



View down the main range of buildings from the bridge over the river; from the north-east.



The building on the eastern bank of the river; from the north-east.



View back across the main tarmac surface of the site from the bridge over the river; from the east.

Site boundaries



View from Church Lane across the entrance to the site, towards the current auction rooms building; from the north.



The auction rooms building, formerly a 19th century building associated with the railway station; from the north.



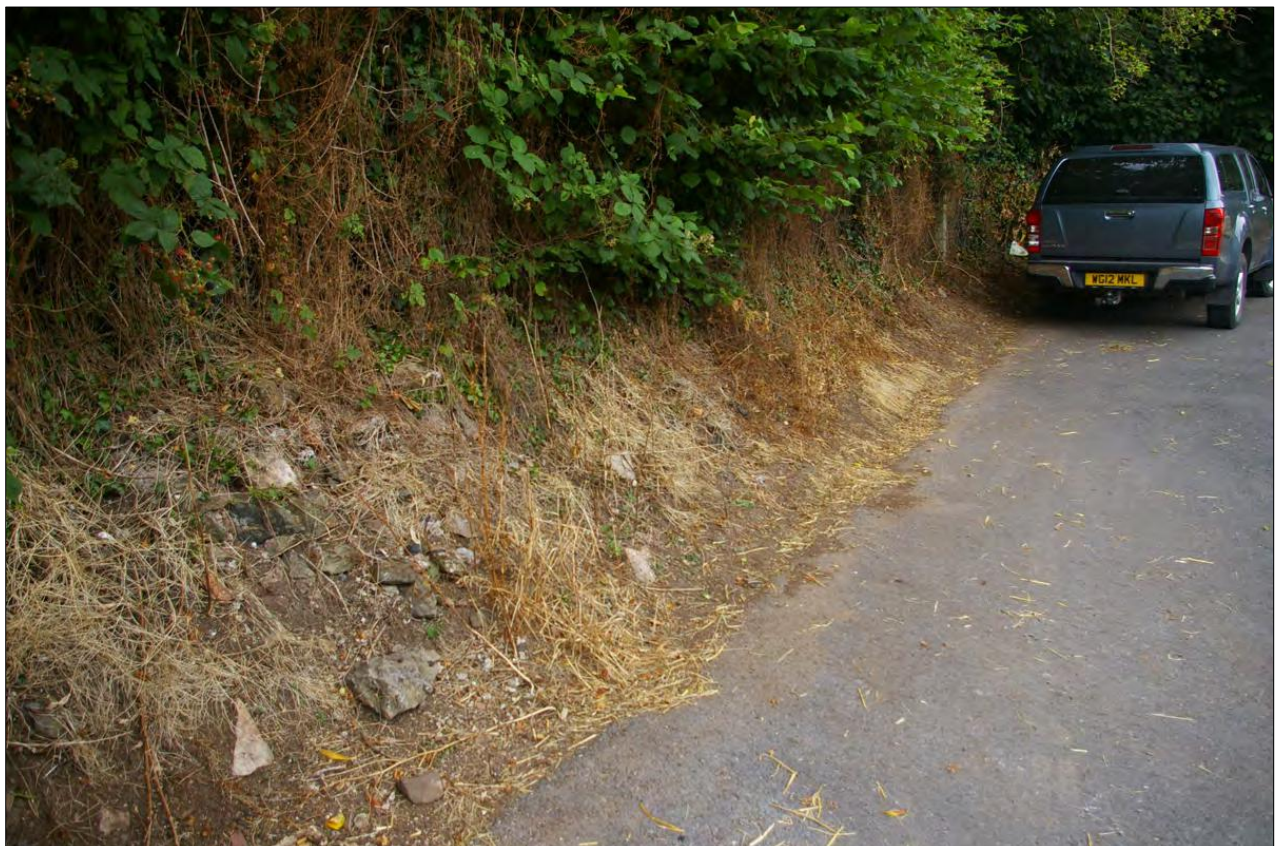
View through the entrance into the Tuckers site; from the south-west.



View down the southern timber boundary fence; from the west.



View across the entrance to the historic hedgebank boundary along Church Lane; from the south-east.



Detail of the inner face of the hedgebank boundary; from the south-east.



View of the inner face of the section of stone wall along the western boundary; from the north-east.



View of the surviving section of stone wall, reduced to ground level to the western boundary; from the south-east.



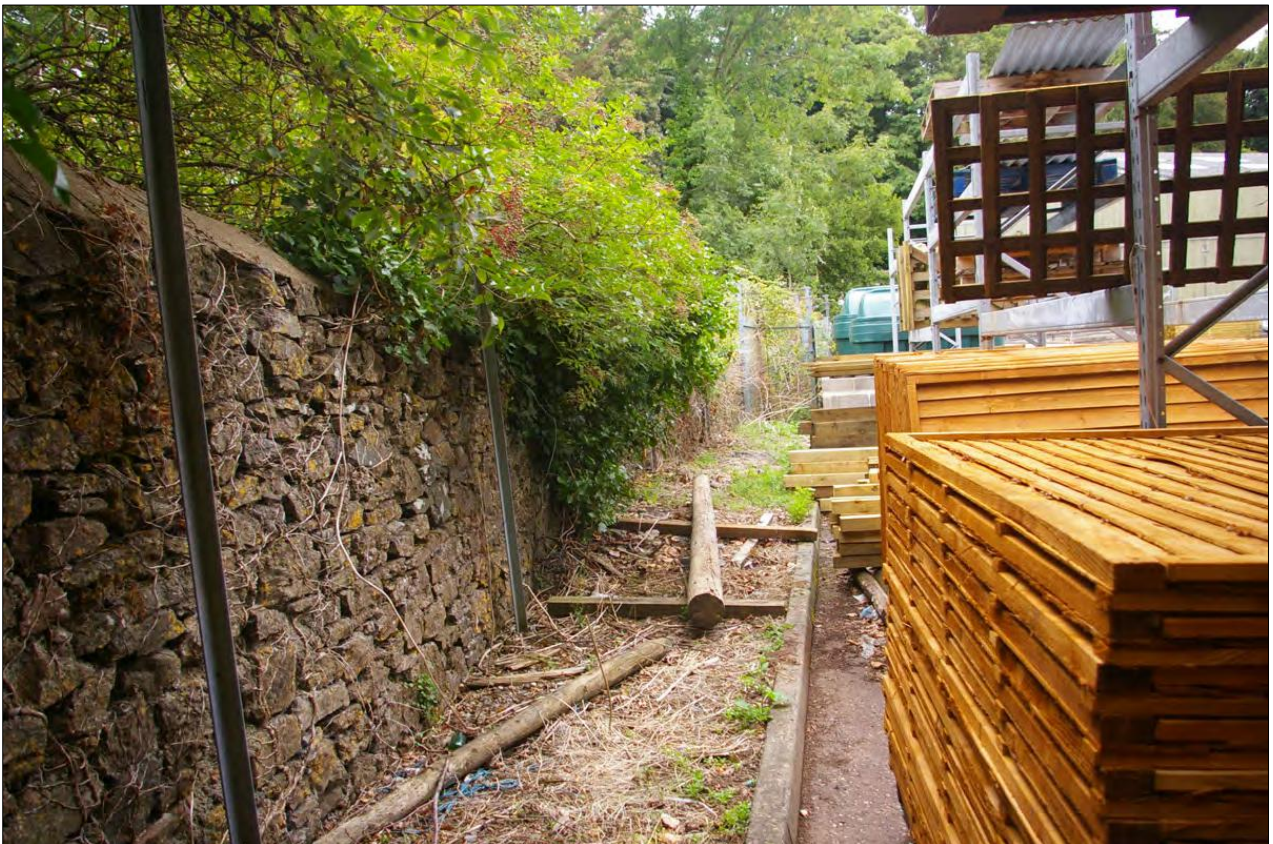
View along the surviving section of stone wall in the north-west corner of the site; from north.



The north-west corner of the site; form the south-east.



The north stone boundary wall of the site; from the south.



View down the northern boundary wall of the site; from the west-north-west.



View back along the boundary, with the mesh fencing and gate to the play area to the eastern end; form the south-east.



View along the eastern boundary, with the mesh fence and concrete posts, with the woodland and sunken former tracks to the immediate east of the current fenced boundary; form the north-west.



View along the landscaped banking for the A38 road, to the east of the site, Chuley Road; from the south-west.



The entrance to the site, off Chuley Road, adjacent to the 19th century former goods shed or associated railway station building; from the south-east.



View along Church Lane, showing the hedgebank boundary; from the south-west.



Detail of the outer face of the hedgebank; from the west-south-west.



View along Church Lane, showing historic garden walls to the west; from the south-west.



View back down Church Lane; from the north-west.



View along the outer face of the section of stone walling to the western boundary; from the south.



View down the section of stone wall in the western boundary; from the north-west.



View along the section of stone wall on the western boundary; from the south-west.



The length of the stone wall, on the western boundary; from the north.



The blocked opening, now demolished on its northern side; from the north-west.



As above, showing wider context.



The wire fence section in the north-west corner of the site; form the south-west.



View along the wire mesh fence; form the south-west.



The section of iron railings, associated with the cemetery to the west.



The late 19th century partly rebuilt boundary wall which runs away from the site to the north-west along Church Lane; from the south-east.



View of the boundary wall as it runs through the undergrowth to reach the north-west corner of the site, where it appears possibly to continue forming the northern boundary; from the north-west.



View along and down the outer face of the boundary wall which abuts or is contiguous with the northern stone walled boundary of the Tuckers site; from the north-west.



The southern end of the wall showing the roughly dressed stone quoins, where it meets the historic hedgebank; from the south-west.



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