

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Abbots Bickington, Torridge	National Grid Reference SS 3726 1266	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Youldon Farm, Abbots Bickington, Torridge, Devon		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 1/0637/2013/FUL	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: southwes1-245346	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: ABY16	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 16 th May-8 th June 2016	
<p>Description of works: Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken on land at Youldon Farm, Abbots Bickington, Torridge, Devon during groundworks for the installation of a single 500kW wind turbine and associated access track and service trenching. This was carried out by B. Morris and P. Webb of South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on behalf of Joe Winton of One Wind Renewables (the Client) on three dates between 16th May and 8th June 2016. The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Boyd 2016) drawn up in to conform with a brief issued by Ann Marie Dick of Devon County (DCHET) and ClfA best practice.</p> <p>The site is located 1.3km south-west of the village Abbots Bickington, and c.14km south-west of Great Torrington on a field on a south-west facing slope at a height of c.182mAOD (Figure 1). It is situated on the well drained fine loamy soils of the Neath Association (SSEW 1983), which overlies the sandstone of the Bude Formation (BGS 2016). The surrounding area is of archaeological potential: the southern site boundary forming part of the historic parish boundary between Abbots Bickington and Milton Damerel; a long barrow is recorded 1.4km north-west of the site, worked flint having been recovered in the field immediately to the east of the site. The surrounding fields are recorded on the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation as medieval enclosures based on strip fields, with the site itself recorded as modern enclosure created in the 20th century. Field name evidence indicates that the field to the south was a Post-Medieval clay quarry for brick making, whilst aerial photography shows a 'v'-shaped feature in the north-west of the field which has been interpreted as the remains of Second World War structures.</p> <p>Two areas (Area #1 measuring 37m×20m; Area #2 measuring 76m×up to 8m) were stripped of topsoil by machine with a flat bladed grading bucket, under archaeological supervision. The associated cable trench (Area #3 measuring 702m×0.6m) was excavated to a depth of up to c.1.2m with subsequent archaeological inspection and spoil examination. These revealed a stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (100); mid brown-grey friable to stiff clay-silt 0.20-0.30m thick overlying natural subsoil (101); reddish-yellow clay-silt.</p> <p>Four features were identified: possible pit [106] in Area #1; linear ditches [102] and [104], and hedgebank {110} in Area #2. Pit [106], oval in plan and measuring 0.70m×0.65m×0.18m deep had an asymmetric profile with base sloping to the south-east. It contained a single fill: (107) a firm reddish-yellow clay-silt. Linear ditch [102] measured 2m+ wide and was orientated north-north-east to south-south-west. It contained an upper fill (103) light brown-grey firm clay-silt with rubble hardcore layer (111) pressed into its western side. This feature was not excavated. Running parallel to [102] was ditch [104], measuring 2.4m wide×0.6m deep with a broadly concave profile. It contained two fills: (105) and (108) friable to stiff grey silt-clays with common sub-angular stone. Both [102] and [104] flanked hedgebank {110}, which measured c.1.6m high×2.8m wide at its base, with steep sloping sides. The build of the bank was not observed, the excavation carried through an existing (and given the ditches) forced opening. No finds were recovered.</p> <p>Conclusion The archaeological monitoring identified limited archaeological remains: a single undated small pit and a pair of ditches flanking the existing main site eastern field boundary. Inspection of the cable trenching did not identify any archaeological features or finds.</p> <p>Bibliography Boyd, N. 2016: <i>Land at Youldon, Abbots Bickington, Torridge, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation</i>. British Geological Survey 2014: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html [accessed 23.06.2015]. Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales</i>.</p>		
Recorder: P. Webb	Date sent to HER: 30.06.16	

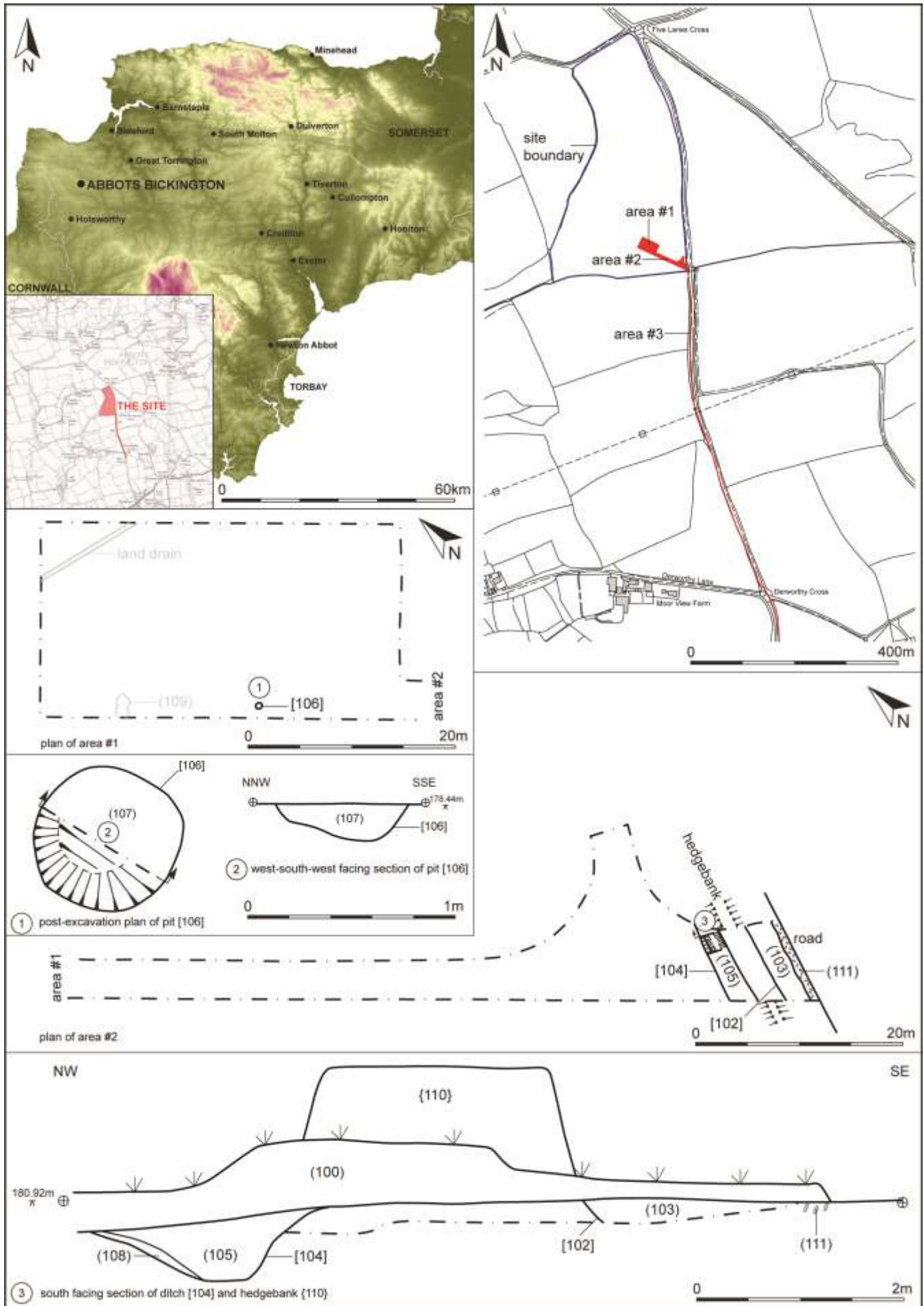


Figure 1: Site location; site plans and feature sections



Figure 2: Hedgebank {110} with flanking ditches [102] and [104]; viewed from the south (scales 2m).



Figure 3: West-south-west facing section of ditch [104]; viewed from the south (scale 2m).