

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Bittadon, Devon	National Grid Reference SS 54513 41441	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording at St Peter's Church, Bittadon, Devon		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: N/A	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: southwes1-250640	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: BSP16	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 21 st March 2016	
<p>Description of works. Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken within the graveyard of St. Peter's Church, Bittadon, Devon, during groundworks associated with the laying of new drains. This work was carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on behalf of Jonathan Rhind Architects (the Agent) acting for St Peter's PCC. The monitoring was carried out by P. Webb on 21st March 2016. This work was undertaken in accordance with ClfA best practice.</p> <p>St. Peter's Church, Bittadon, is located c.3km north-west of the village of Milltown and c.8km NNW of Barnstaple, on a south-west facing slope at a height of c.178m AOD (Figure 1). The site lies on the boundary of the well-drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 and Manod Associations (SSEW 1983), which overlie the slates of the Morte Slate Formation (BGS 2016).</p> <p>Archaeological investigation in the area has been limited; the Devon Historic Environment Record (HER) records evidence for medieval and later fieldsystems and quarries nearby, with Prehistoric activity further to the north. St. Peter's Church was largely rebuilt in the 19th century. It is assumed the site of the earlier church lay to the south, associated with Bittadon Barton manor house.</p> <p>A total of c.15m of trench was excavated. The trenches followed the western wall of the church tower and the southern wall of the nave west of the porch, then cut across the graveyard to its western hedgebank, with spurs extending along the line of that hedge. These trenches (Figure 2) were hand excavated under archaeological supervision, using spades and mattocks, to a depth of 0.2-0.5m (this being the maximum depth required). Only two layers were revealed: (100) a soft and friable dark brown silt-clay topsoil c.0.18m thick with common slate and stone inclusions. This overlay (101) a soft mid yellowish-brown silt-clay subsoil with common sub-angular stone and slate inclusions. Close to the church the trenches cut a concrete path. No artefacts were recovered during the monitoring, and other than a modern drainage pipe, no archaeological features were identified.</p> <p>Conclusion The limited extent and depth of the trenching, along with the positioning of the trenches to avoid known graves, meant that no archaeological features were identified.</p> <p>Bibliography British Geological Survey 2014: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html [accessed 26.06.2015]. 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: 04.05.16

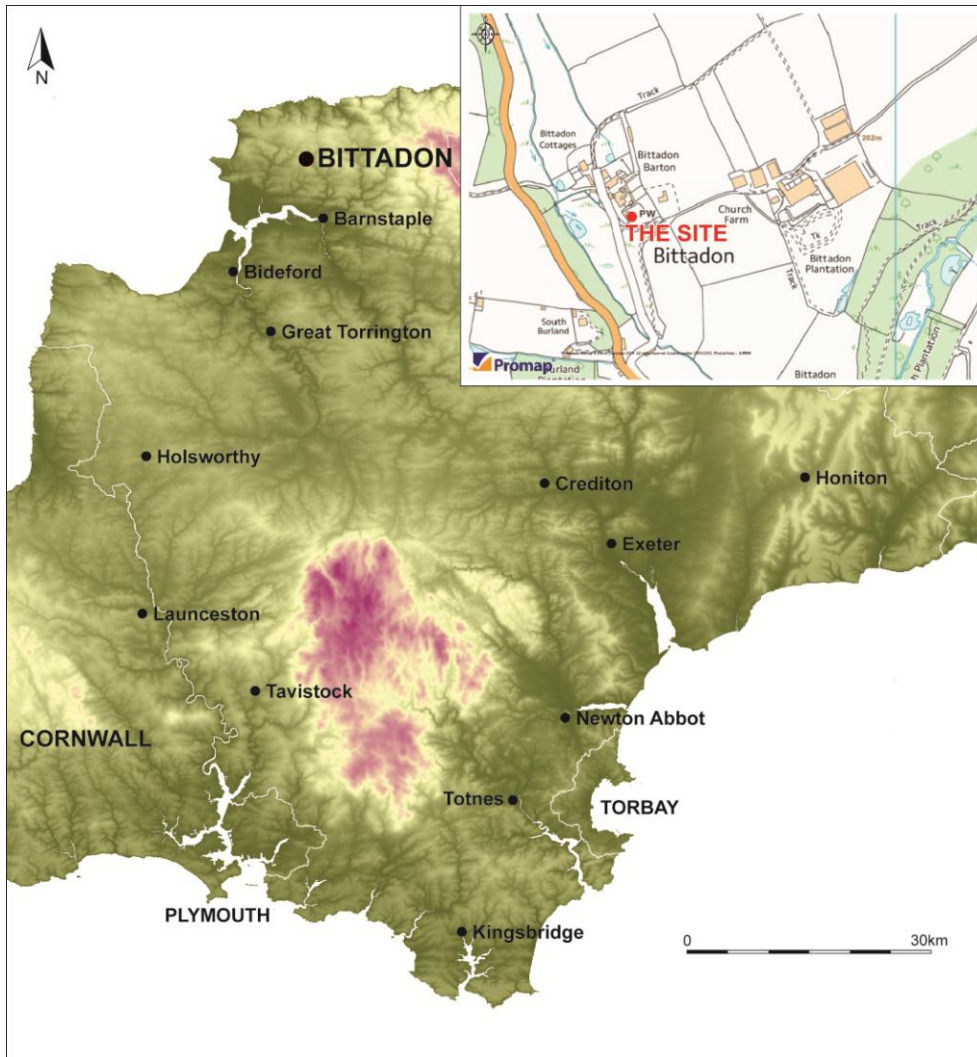


Figure 1: Site location

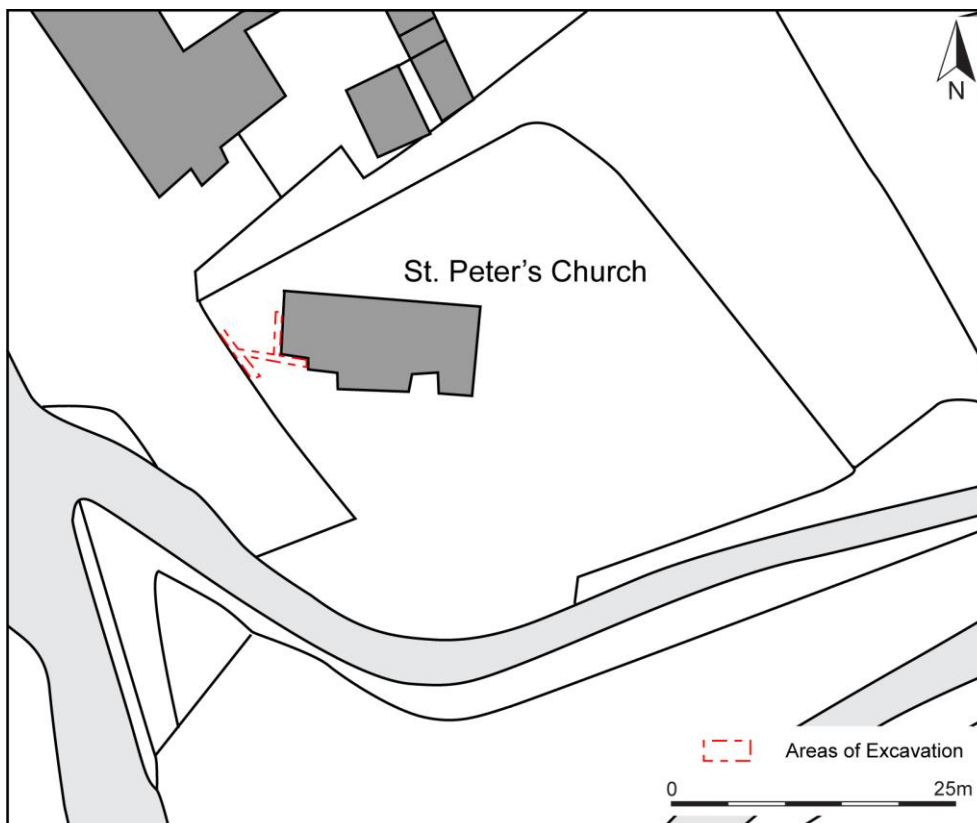


Figure 2: Site plan showing location of excavated areas.



Figure 3: The trench alongside the west wall of the tower; viewed from the north (scale 1m).



Figure 4: North-facing section of the pipe trench through the graveyard; viewed from the north (scale 1m).