THE WORKSHOP
ROADWATER MANOR MILL
LOWER ROADWATER
EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK

Historic Building Recording

South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 170703

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES & HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING
SOUTHWEST ARCHAEOLOGY

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The Workshop, Roadwater Manor Mill, Exmoor, Somerset
Historic Building Recording

By E. Wapshott & N. Boyd
Report Version: FINAL
3rd July 2017

Work undertaken by SWARCH for Ed Burton of Ilmor Engineering

Summary

South West Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned to undertake historic building recording and archaeological monitoring and recording for the workshop at Roadwater Manor Mill, Lower Roadwater, Somerset. This work was undertaken in order to assess the fabric affected by the conversion, restoration and development of this part of the complex and set the building in its historical and archaeological context.

The workshop is a large two storey stone building, with loft, formerly serving a large historic mill in the village of Lower Roadwater. The majority of the building we see today appears to date to two phases, the 1880s and the 1890s/early 20th century.

Two trenches were dug along the line of the north elevation which showed the rubble infill of the wheelrace, the poor footings of the former walls and the depth of the wheelpit pier foundations. Further surviving footings could be seen as scars on the ground surface, but these areas were not subject to excavation as part of the current works. No other features were seen and there were no finds.

July 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

LOCATION: THE WORKSHOP, ROADWATER MANOR MILL
PARISH: OLD CLEEVE
COUNTY: SOMERSET
NGR: ST 03438 38677
PLANNING REF: 6/26/16/101; 6/26/14/112
LBC: 6/26/14/113LB
SWARCH REF: RMM16

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Ed Burton of Ilmor Engineering (The Client) to undertake building recording and archaeological monitoring and recording for the historic workshop at Roadwater Manor Mill, Lower Roadwater, Somerset. This work was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Boyd 2016) and in consultation with Shirley Blaylock (ENPA) and was undertaken in order to assess the fabric affected by the conversion, restoration and development of this building and to set it in its historical and archaeological context.

1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Roadwater Manor Mill lies at the south-eastern edge of the linear village of Lower Roadwater, which is set in a deep, wooded valley at the confluence of the Washford River, at approximately 70m AOD. Roadwater is on the edge of the Exmoor National Park, 5km south of Williton. The soils of this area are the well drained fine loamy reddish soils over rock of the Milford Association (SSEW 1993); these overlie the sedimentary bedrock of the Ilfracombe Slates Formation (BGS 2016).

1.3 HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Manor Mills is a Grade II Listed former grain and corn mill and attached kiln in Lower Roadwater. The mill building is set back 15m south of the main road through the village and fronts a courtyard flanked by a former workmen's cottage to the northwest and a dwelling in separate ownership, to the northeast (also called Manor Mills). The mill is a three storey building constructed primarily from red sandstone rubble with brick detailing. The oldest and main section of the mill dates back to the 18th century. Part of the former workshop to the south of the mill may date back to 1841, but what survives is mainly late 19th/early 20th century in date. A modern concrete block extension links the two buildings. The mill is currently on the Buildings at Risk Register. This report focuses on the workshop building to the south of the main mill.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

The assessment of the buildings was conducted by Emily Wapshott in May 2017. The work was undertaken in line with best practice and follows the guidance outlined in: CIfA's *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures* (2014) and Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Processes* (2016). The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in May 2017 and follows the guidance outlined in CIfA's *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014).

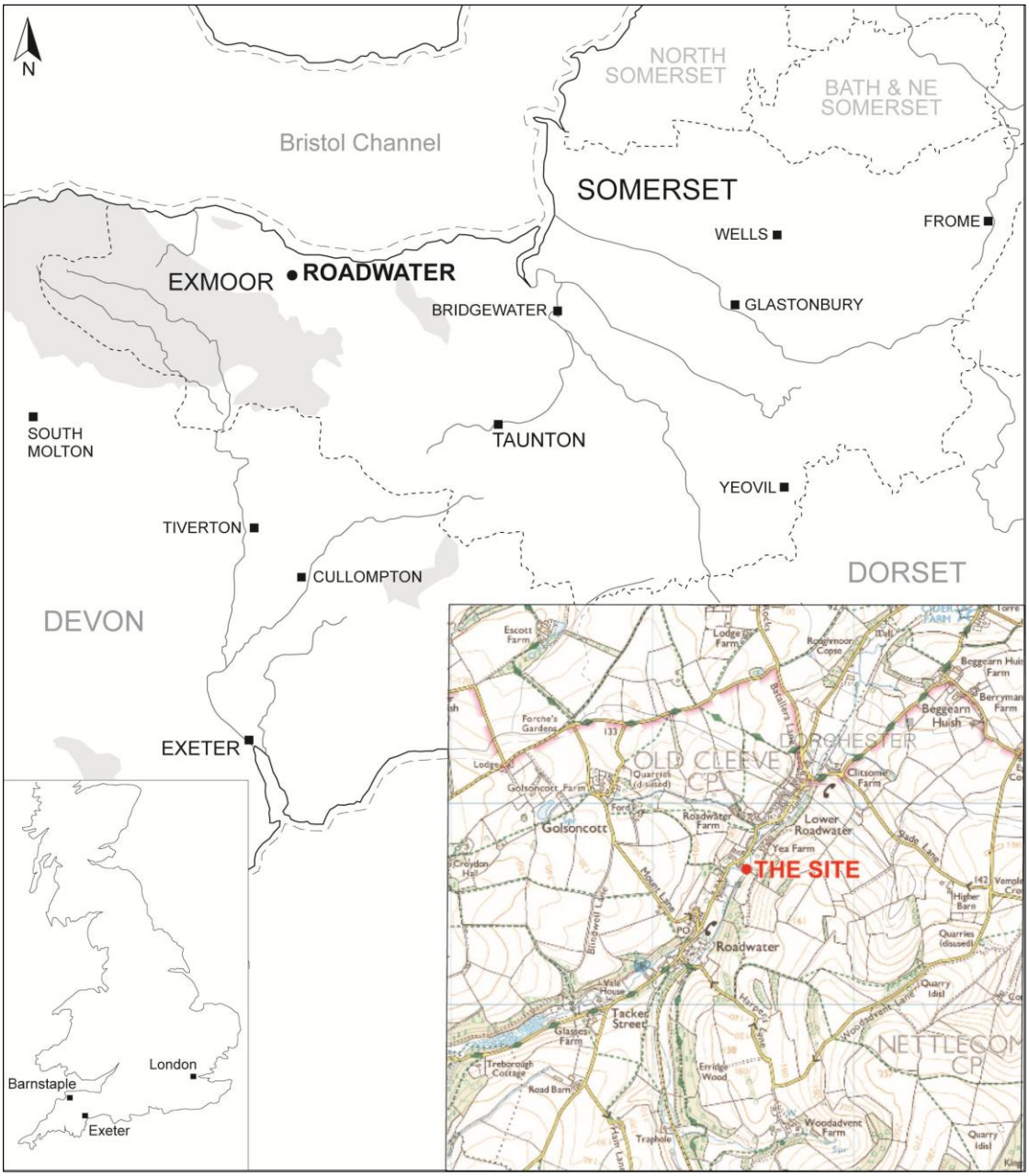


FIGURE 1: LOCATION MAP.

2.0 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is a large two storey stone workshop, with loft, serving the large historic mill in the village of Roadwater. The building stands to the south-south-east of the mill, with the infilled millrace to the west and stream to the south.

2.2 BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

The east elevation is a tall, two storey gable with loft, of rubble stone vernacular build. It has a large window opening to the loft in the apex of the gable with surviving timber window frame and incised date inscription (1886). The west elevation is also tall, with a huge forced opening, from ground floor to loft, braced by timber beams. This elevation is mostly rebuilt or heavily repaired, built over and on rubble stone walling which edged the mill race. The stonework of the west elevation is generally more irregular and of mixed style.

The north elevation is open at the east end, braced with massive timber beams to the separate stone wall of the former wheelpit, which runs away from the workshop building at an oblique angle. To the west, the elevation is of local rubble vernacular build, with doorways and loading doors on the ground and first floors, with brick segmental arches. The south elevation is a long rubble elevation, with large arched doorway to the east end on the ground floor and eight large windows, positioned in pairs along the length of the building.

2.3 HISTORIC PHASING OF THE BUILDING

2.3.1 1800-1880S

The east gable end and the north and south elevations at the east end of the building are of one phase, representing a tall rectangular outbuilding built to the south of the mill in the mid to late 19th century. This building had a through-and-through compartment to the east end, braced by a heavy internal stone partition and served by two large arched openings. The floor of this area appears to be infilled with rubble. Above there was a first floor, served by loading doors. The function of this building is unclear. The building is not represented on the 1841 Tithe Map, which shows a second leat and rough ground in this area of the site.

2.3.2 1880S

A window in the apex of the east gable has an inscription of 5.1886.JN, presumably John Nethercott, who is recorded as owning the building in the 1880s. This window is very large for so high a position in the apex of the gable and only has one row of bricks within its segmental arch, differing from the other early openings in the elevations. The stonework of the upper part of the apex is of a looser build, with a much heavier reliance on the clay/lime mortar. The timber lintels are quite heavy and of good quality. The evidence of beam sockets within the building would suggest a loft was present at some stage. The building was depicted on the 1888 25” OS map as a detached rectangular structure near the railway line. The mill site is referred to as an 'Engineering Works' on this map. The addition of the loft may represent a change of use for the outbuilding, associated with the owner John Nethercott who was a mechanical engineer.

2.3.3 1890S TO EARLY 20TH CENTURY

The building was expanded west towards the mill race, more than doubling its size. This portion of the structure was built with large windows opening onto the stream in the south elevation, part of

the north elevation being open or boarded with timber, built around the standing wheelpit structure. The open floorplan and numerous windows would indicate the functions undertaken in this space required light, possibly for precision work or machinery. The west end of this elevation was built onto/over the walls enclosing the millrace and had a large first floor opening, with quoins to the reveals.

2.3.4 20TH CENTURY

The west elevation was altered again, with the current full height opening forced from existing openings. The north-west corner was rebuilt, possibly reusing blocks from the wheelpit supporting wall piers. The south-west corner was rebuilt, probably as a repair.

Figure 2: Extract from the Old Cleeve Tithe Map (1841), showing the mill site.

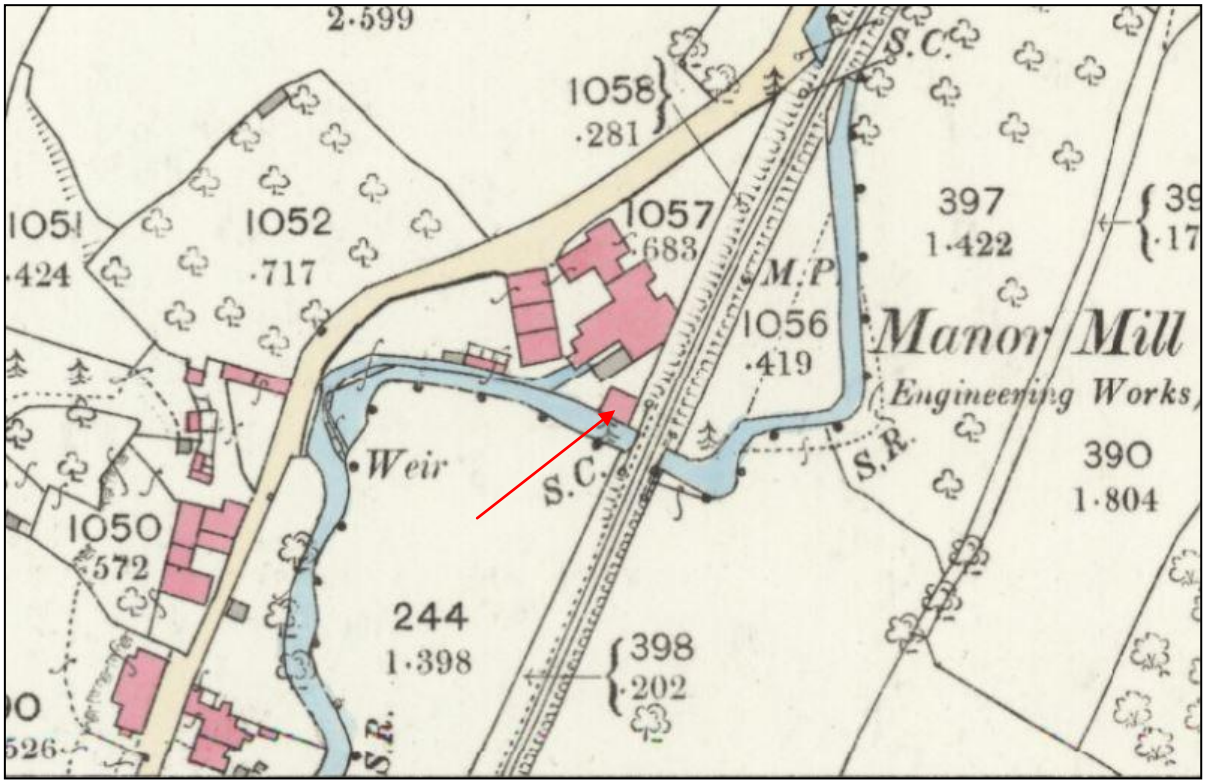


Figure 3: Extract of the First Edition OS Map 1888, 25 inch; the site is indicated (NLS).

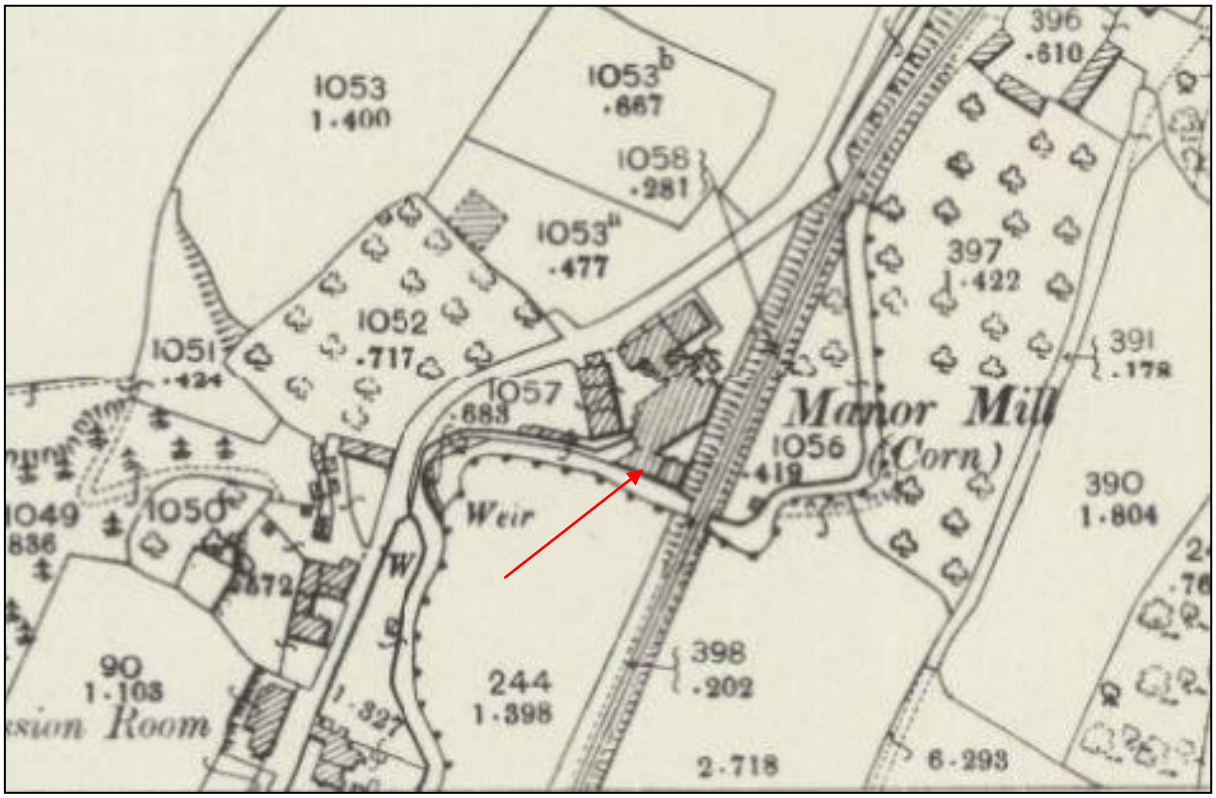


Figure 4: Extract of the 1903 Second Edition OS Map, 25 inch; the site is indicated (NLS).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

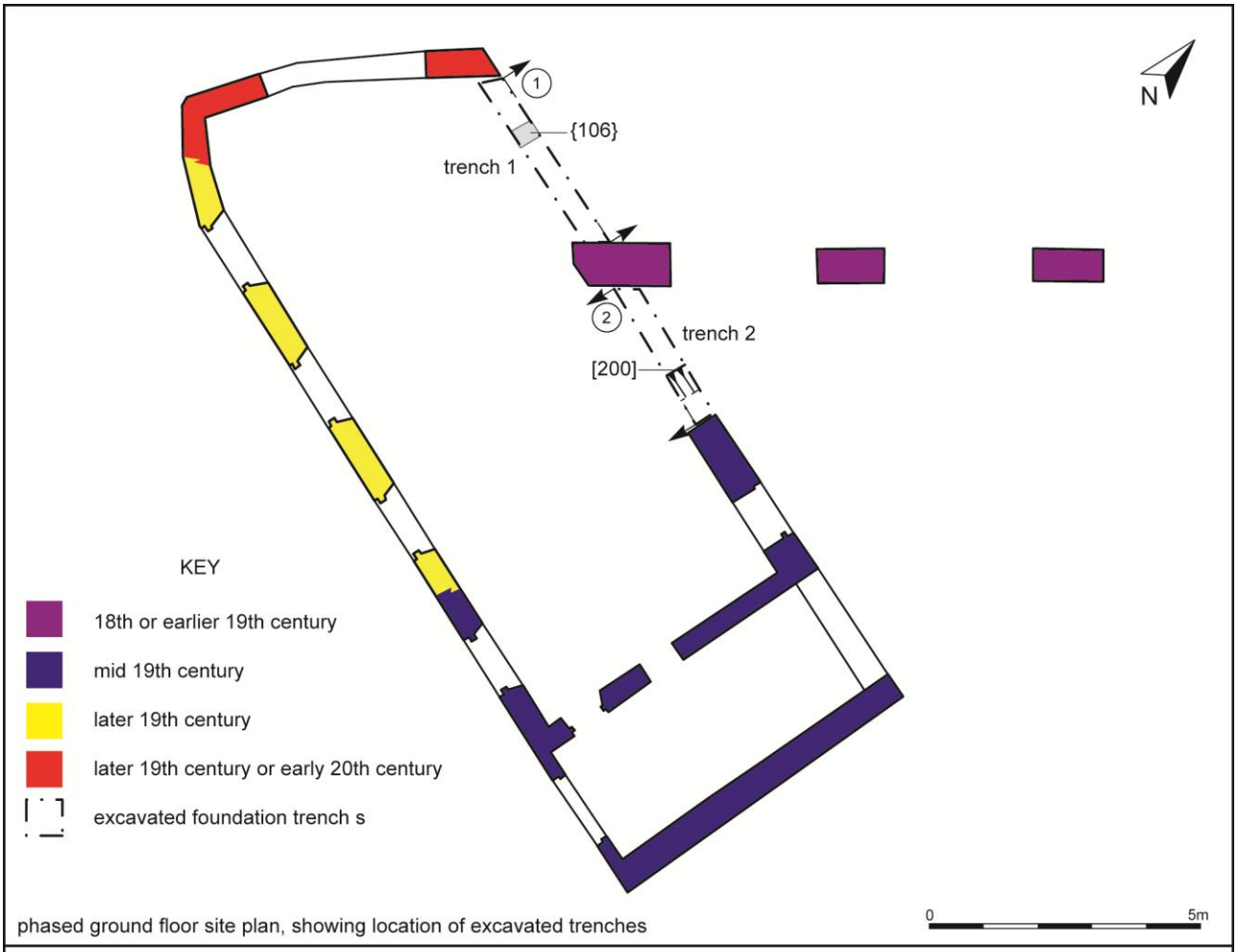
3.1 MONITORING & RECORDING

The interior had limited surviving details; except for a low lying floor surface of rough slatestone cobbles was noted in places to the east of the building, adjacent to the north wall.

Two trenches were dug to the north side of the building, where the north wall is open to the west. The western trench (Trench 1) was excavated first, dug by hand with picks as the space was limited. The excavation was monitored. The trench 1 was just less than 3m long and approximately 0.7-0.75m wide, was excavated to a depth of 0.8m, rising to 0.55m at the east end. The trench showed that the 'floor' of the interior of the building consisted of made ground of broken slate shale and soil, to a depth of approx 0.5-0.6m, below which was the natural (105), a clean, firm red-brown clay. No cobbled floor was viewed in the section of the trench on this side of the building, presumably having already been lost. The trench abutted the wheelpit structure pier to the east, showing it has foundations below current ground surface of approx 0.3m. To the west it abuts the north-west corner of the workshop, where the west wall could be seen to have very loose, poor footings, partly as it infilled the wheelrace. The footing was made up of large, irregular stone blocks to a depth of 0.5m but then rubble footings within that of 0.2m immediately under the wall. To the west end, a short projecting stub of poorly built loose rubble was observed (106), this was too poor a quality to represent a wall, and is likely a poor quality retaining structure and no doubt related to the footings of part of the wheel race systems, infilled when the workshop was extended, after the mill workings became redundant. This section of walling started 0.1m above the base of the trench and rose approx 0.45-0.5m, topped with the loose backfill and made ground of the current ground surface (101). Between this wall and the north-west corner of the workshop was infill of the former millrace system (103), yellower coloured looser clay mixed with topsoil and broken shale. This lined up with a scar at ground level indicating further footings surviving below ground.

The east trench (Trench 2) was approximately 2.75m long, 0.6m wide and 0.75-0.8m deep, rising to the west end; this time in a marked cut step to 0.5m, then 0.35m adjacent to the wheelpit pier structure. The south section of the trench showed the infill which created a level ground surface in the workshop building was much less, 0.35m deep, over the layer of red-brown clay natural. To the east end of the trench, the cut for the wall was viewed, partially demolished and truncated, with a shallow diagonal cut running south, approx 1m at the top of the section, down to 0.55m-0.6m at the base. Some large stones were still embedded in a clay/lime mix bond into the natural at the end of the trench, the remains of the original footings. The trench abutted the wheelpit structure pier to the west end, showing it has foundations below current ground surface of approx 0.25-0.3m.

No other features were seen and there were no finds. No further excavation was required for the building works.



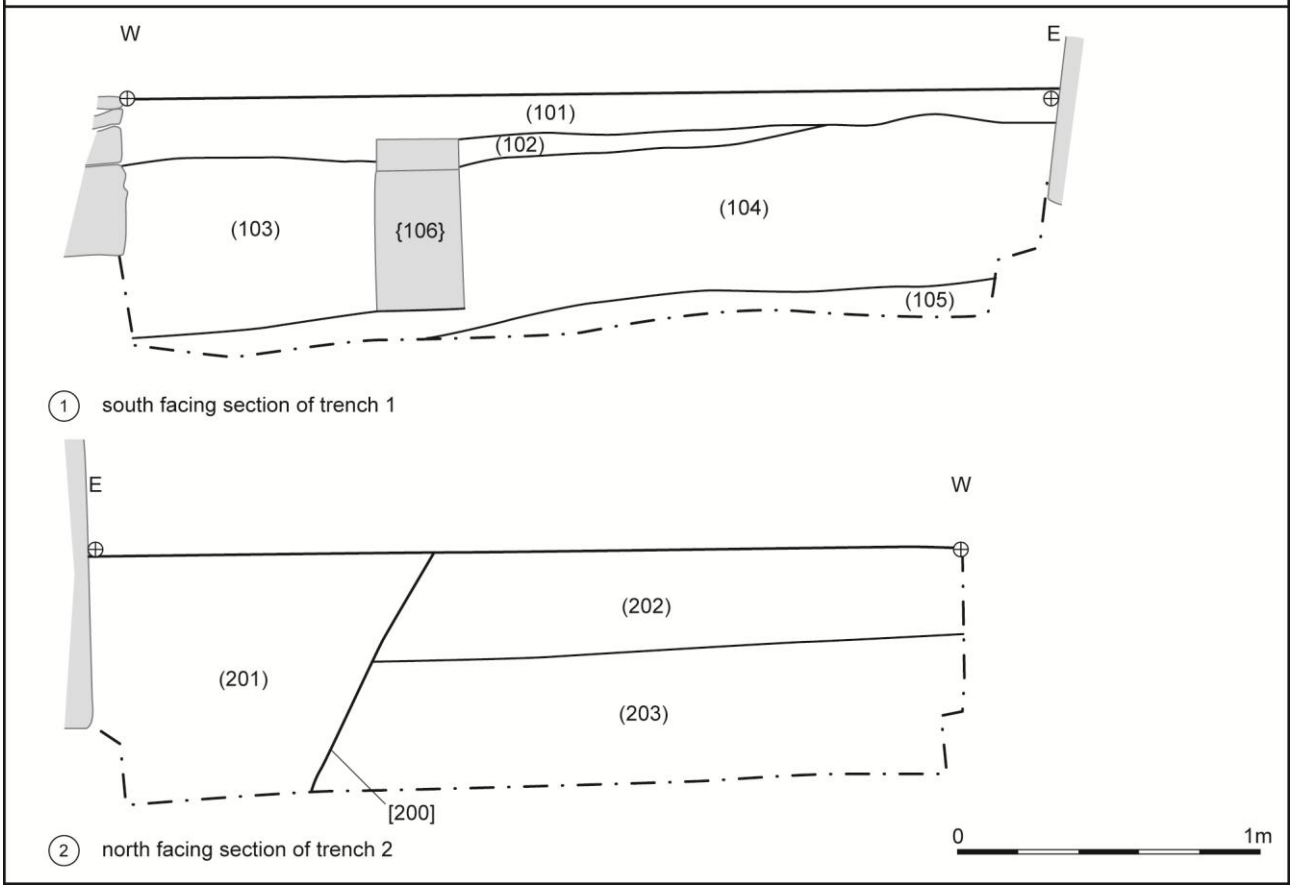


FIGURE 5: PHASED PLAN OF THE BUILDING WITH TRENCH LOCATIONS INDICATED (ABOVE) AND TRENCH SECTIONS (BELOW).

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

The workshop is a large two storey stone workshop, with loft, formerly serving a large historic mill in the village of Lower Roadwater. There is a large window opening in the apex of the gable of the east elevation with surviving timber window frame and incised date inscription. The majority of the building we see today appears to date to two phases, the 1880s and the 1890s/early 20th century.

Two trenches were dug along the line of the north elevation which showed the rubble infill of the wheelrace, the poor footings of the former walls and the depth of the wheelpit pier foundations. Further surviving footings could be seen as scars on the ground surface, but these areas were not subject to excavation as part of the current works. No other features were seen and there were no finds.

5.0 Bibliography

Published Sources:

CIfA 2014: *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures.*

CIfA 2014: *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief.*

English Heritage 2006**:** *Understanding Historic Buildings, a Guide to Good Recording Practice*.

English Heritage 2012: *Understanding Place: historic area assessments in a planning and development context***.**

Historic England 2016: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Processes*.

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales*.

Websites:

BGS British Geological Survey 2016: *Geology of Britain Viewer*. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html

Unpublished Sources:

Wisnicka, A. 2013: *Manor Mill, Roadwater: Historical Appraisal*.

Somerset Heritage Centre:

Old Cleeve Tithe Map and Apportionment (1841).

APPENDIX 1: RECORDING TABLES

BUILDING		**General Description**
Function/Summary:		Workshop/outbuilding/warehouse, serving the adjacent mill building.
Dating Evidence:		Style and form of build, date inscription on lintel and historic mapping.
Figure Numbers:		
Elevation **WEST:**		Description
Fabric Description:		Heavy rubble build to the base of the wall, densely packed. To the north and south ends above 1.5m the wall is rebuilt, looser rubble stone. To the south-east corner are dressed and faced limestone block quoins, completely different to any other stone in the building. May be part of a wall which lined the millrace. Large square opening, to the north side, with heavy slatestone sill and lintel, built into the wall, at the point where the stonework changes.
Roof Covering		Building was roofless at time of survey.
Opening – Windows:	1	Large opening forced into the elevation, stretching from ground floor to loft. At the first floor, to the north and south sides, a short section of dressed and faced stone blocks can be seen, respecting a former window opening, enlarged and forced? The forced opening is braced with a heavy timber at approximately first floor level and again at loft level.
Significant Details:		A heavy timber dragon tie braces the north and west elevation corner.
Relationships:		The west elevation at the base is cohesive with the heavy build to the north-west corner. The upper part of the elevation has been rebuilt at least twice, later than the other elevations.
Elevation **EAST:**		Description
Fabric Description:		Tall two storey and loft gable end, built of local stone rubble, with heavier stones forming quoins to the corners, roughly faced sides. Lime and clay mix mortar and bond, repointed again in patches.
Roof Covering:		Building was roofless at time of survey. Sockets at the eaves indicating purlins for a roof structure, a pair to each pitch.
Opening – Windows:	1	One large rectangular window opening, high in the apex of the gable. Brick single-row segmental arch, inner timber lintels, inscribed with "*5.1886.JN*". Very red orange bricks. Stone reveals shallow straight to exterior, inner reveals gently sloping. Timber window frame, pegged to corners, narrow vertical glazing bars, no glazing survives.
Significant Details:		S-ties to the south, ground floor level. Straight tie to the north side. The stonework of the elevation is graded, heavier to the base, becoming more lightweight as it rises.
Relationships:		The east elevation is cohesive to the north and south elevations, east ends.
Elevation **SOUTH:**		Description
Fabric Description		Long two storey elevation, of local rubble stone, of two clear phases. Stone in lime and clay mix mortar and bond, patched with hard cement mortars in places. The centre and north section of walling is a later extension. The west end of the elevation has been rebuilt, at an awkward curving angle to the rest of the elevation. It is of a more irregular build, with some brick and river pebbles, quartz and larger stone, of looser build. To the base of the wall, on the south-west corner, wrapping around to the west elevation is a much heavier build, newly repointed, as part of the works, this is similar to the bottom of the west elevation and may be part of a wall which lined the millrace. There is a small square opening in the elevation, braced with a slate slab lintel and sill, a socket possibly for a piece of machinery or similar. The south-west corner of the building, at the base, has been recently rebuilt.
Roof Covering		Building was roofless at time of survey.
Blocked Openings - Doors	1	The window on the ground floor, at the east end of the wall, at a lower level, was formed from a doorway, the blocking clear below the window opening, infilled with loose rubble.

Openings: Doors	1	One large arched double doorway, low in height, to the east end, with double brick segmental arch, with brick springers, orange bricks. Larger rough stones, roughly faced to the reveals of the opening. Iron bar brace fitted across the upper part of the arch.
Openings: Windows	8	Eight windows stretching down the length of the elevation. Two windows to the east end, one on the ground floor, set at lower level, wide and square, straight sided reveals, heavy straight lintel, cement patched sill. One on the first floor, offset slightly, rectangular patched sides. Both have narrow nailed timber frames, infilled with plastic corrugated sheeting. Three further ground floor windows, large rectangular openings, long irregular narrow timber lintels. Narrow nailed timber frames, infilled with plastic corrugated sheeting. Cement patched sills. Three first floor windows, offset slightly from those below, but roughly positioned above those on the ground floor. Narrow nailed timber frames, infilled with plastic corrugated sheeting.
Relationships		The east end of the south elevation is cohesive with the east gable end elevation and the east end of the north elevation. It is abutted by the later phase to the west. There is a clear build line between the first set of windows to the east and the rest of the elevation.
Elevation **NORTH:**		Description
Fabric Description:		Long two storey elevation, of local rubble stone, of two clear phases. Stone in lime and clay mix mortar and bond, patched with hard cement mortars in places. The west end of the elevation is open, heavy timbers bracing the earlier wheelpit wall and north-west corner.
Roof Covering		Building was roofless at time of survey.
Openings: Doors	2	One large arched double doorway, low in height, to the east end, with double brick segmental arch, with brick springers, rough stone quoins to the sides, iron bar brace fitted across the upper part of the arch. One tall narrow pedestrian door, with double brick segmental arch, with brick springers, rough stone quoins to the sides, offset to the centre of the elevation.
Openings: Loading Door	1	One large loading door above doorway at the east end of the elevation. Double brick segmental arch. The sill has been removed and the opening hacked out to the bottom, right down to the brick lintel of the archway.
Significant Details:		Where the elevation ends and becomes open the wall is ragged and internally there are heavy sockets set into the wall, indicative of where the west elevation was once demolished the building extended and reconfigured.
Relationships:		The east end of the elevation is cohesive with the east elevation and east end of the south elevation.
Building Interior:		Description
Function:		Workshop/warehouse.
Plan:		Stone partition wall to the east end, stub evidence survives to either side. The wall appeared to rise to first floor height only, forming a narrow compartment at the east end. Seemingly two open floors, lit by all the windows in the south elevation.
Walls:		Exposed stone walls, some whitewash remains and some lime plaster and whitewash.
Floor:		A part of a cobbled floor survives in the centre of the building. Rounded river pebbles.
Ceiling: Loft/Loft Floor		Elements of timber joists survive to the first floor and loft floor above. Several of these are rough, poor quality partially embarked beams, with other square sockets at eaves height for heavier timbers, probably the earlier phase of building. One heavier timber, of roughly square profile showing some shaping also survives slightly lower, probably from the earlier phase.
Roof:		Building was roofless at time of survey.
Significant Details:		One surviving window in the east gable elevation, heavy timber lintels, inscribed with "*5.1886.JN".*
Dating Evidence:		No fittings or fixtures survive within the building.

Appendix 2: SUPPORTING PHOTOGRAPHS

BUILDING RECORDING

Two squared and roughly shaped/chamfered heavy beams to the left, two lighter weight, rounded and embarked poorer quality inserted beams to the right, suggesting a loft; from the south.

The inscribed lintel in the east gable; from the west (below).

Left: The ironwork lintel bracing within the brickwork of the archway to the north wall; from the east.
Right: The north-west corner of the workshop; from the south-west (2m scale).

The heavier and earlier base of the west elevation of the workshop; south-west (2m scale).

Left: The west elevation; from the south-west (2m scale).
Right: The south-west corner; from the west (2m scale).

Socket in wall of the south-west corner; from the south (2m scale).

The south elevation; from the south-west (2m scale).

Left: Wider angle of south-west corner of the workshop building; from the south.
Right: The curving south-west wall of the workshop building; from the south-east.

Build line visible in wall of south elevation, between extension to left and original walling to right; from the south (2m scale).

The south elevation, west end; from the south-east (2m scale).

Large socket for timber, now removed, at the west ragged end of the north wall of the workshop, showing heavy iron nails in situ in the walls; from the south.

Ironwork bracing to the archway to the east of the south wall; from the north-east.

Wide view showing the workshop, infilled wheelpit and bracing piers and the older mill building; from the east (2m scale).

Left: The wide arched opening at ground floor in the north elevation, opposite that to the south; from the south-west (2m scale). Right: The west end of the workshop; from the east (2m scale).

The sockets from the former first floor and ragged stub of the heavy stone partition floor, also showing sockets in it for some timber fixings within the building; from the west (2m scale).

Wide view of the east end of the workshop, the earlier phase of the building; from the west (2m scale).

View of the east elevation, south end; from the north-west (2m scale).

The intersect between the wheel pit bracing piers and the workshops later north-west section of walling/timber bracing; from the south-east (2m scale).

The dragon tie bracing and timbers bracing the large opening at the west end; from the east.

The surviving first and loft floor beams in the workshop building; from the west (2m scale).

The intersect between the wheel pit bracing piers and the workshops later north-west section of walling/timber bracing; from the south-west (2m scale).

Piece of bracing machinery still attached to the south wall of the workshop; from the north (2m scale).

The interior face of the south wall of the workshop; from the north-east (2m scale).

Left: The north elevation of the workshop, where it is open to the former wheelpit; from the south-east (2m scale). Right: The interior face of the east gable wall of the workshop; from the west (2m scale).

The interior face of the south wall of the workshop, east end; from the north (2m scale).

The interior face of the north wall of the workshop, east end; from the south (2m scale).

View of the oblique angle where the two structures of different phases, workshop and wheel pit walls intersect; from the east (2m scale).

The adjacent wheel pit bracing walls/piers; from the east (2m scale).

The east elevation of the workshop; from the north-east (2m scale).

The large arched opening in the east of the south elevation; from the south-west (2m scale).

The east end of the south elevation and build line at the second window where the earlier building is abutted by early 20th century stonework; from the south-west (2m scale).

Left: The south-west corner of the building; from the south (2m scale).
Right: View along the south elevation of the workshop building; from the south-east (2m scale).

The east elevation of the workshop building; from the south-east (2m scale).

MONITORING & RECORDING

Small section of surviving slatestone cobbled floor to the north-east corner of the main compartment of the workshop, against the dividing stone partition wall; from the south (2m scale).

The largely stripped out and removed floors in the workshop building; from the west (2m scale).

The trench 1, showing the small section of surviving retaining walling (2m scale); from the east (2m scale).

Left: The trench 1 where it abuts the north-west corner of the workshop building; from the east (2m scale).
Right: The below ground surviving footings of the wheelpit retaining walls; from the south (2m scale).

Trench 1, at the east end and the wheelpit pier structure; from the north-west (2m scale).

Trench 1 where it abuts the wheelpit pier; from the north (2m scale).

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