

# THE EAST BARN, SHIRCOMBE FARM, BROMPTON REGIS, EXMOOR SOMERSET

Results of a Desk Based Appraisal,  
Historic Building Assessment & Archaeological Monitoring



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# **The East Barn, Shircombe Farm Brompton Regis, Exmoor Somerset**

## **Results of a Desk Based Assessment and Historic Building Assessment**

*For*

Alex Stokes

*By*



**SWARCH project reference:** BRSF14  
**OS Map copying Licence No:** 100044808  
**National Grid Reference:** SS9350931671  
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September 2014

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## *Summary*

*The conclusion of this survey is that the East Barn, Shircombe Farm is of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century origin. The original structure appears to be a bank barn, most likely comprising a cow shed with store above. Later, mostly mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, alterations to the first floor have removed any details of the original function of the first floor. These 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in part relate to the conversion of the first floor for residential use, significantly the addition of the Somerset Dormer, which lit the possible former artist's studio. The ground floor has also had much of its internal detail removed, although the scars of the troughs and hay ricks remain.*

*During conversion works to the building, a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during the cleaning up of the cobbled floor and in the removal of the roof.*

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## Acknowledgements

Thanks for assistance are due to:

Alex Stokes for unrestricted access

Jonathan Rhind Architects

Shirley Blaylock and Nigel Pratt, Exmoor National Park Authority

The staff of the Somerset Heritage Centre (SHC)

## 1.0 Introduction

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**Location:** Shircombe Farm

**Parish:** Brompton Regis

**District:** Exmoor

**County:** Somerset

### 1.1 Project Background

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Alex Stokes to conduct an historic building appraisal of the East Barn, Shircombe Farm, Shircombe Lane, Brompton Regis, Somerset (Figure 1). This is ahead of the proposed works to the east barn to convert the ground floor to domestic use and renovate the first floor.

The work was undertaken in order to understand the date, form, function and development of the building from its origins, with the aim of understanding the impact of any proposed development on the historic elements of the building.

### 1.2 Topographical and Geological Background

The site is located at the end of Shircombe Lane to the east of Winslade Wood. It sits in a valley next to the river Exe with the ground rising up on the eastern side towards Brompton Regis and on the west side towards South Hill, at approximately 280m AOD (Figure 1). The East Barn is, unsurprisingly, located to the east of the other farm building on the site, to the south of the historic farmyard, with the farmhouse located c.10m to the north-east (Figure 2).

The underlying geology is of the Morte Slates Formation (BGS 2013); these are overlain by the fine loamy or fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983).

### 1.3 Methodology

The building survey was undertaken by Emily Wapshott in September 2014 in accordance with English Heritage and IfA guidelines on the recording of standing buildings and structures. The survey was based on an internal and external site inspection, using architect plans supplied by the client.

The desk-based appraisal was compiled by Victoria Hosegood in accordance with IfA (2008) guidelines. The research undertaken included visiting the Somerset Heritage Centre (SHC), consulting readily available online sources, and the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record (HER).

Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by Emily Wapshott with reference to the appropriate IfA and English Heritage guidelines and took place in January 2015. The monitoring was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Appendix 2) drawn up in consultation with Shirley Blaylock, Conservation Officer of Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA).

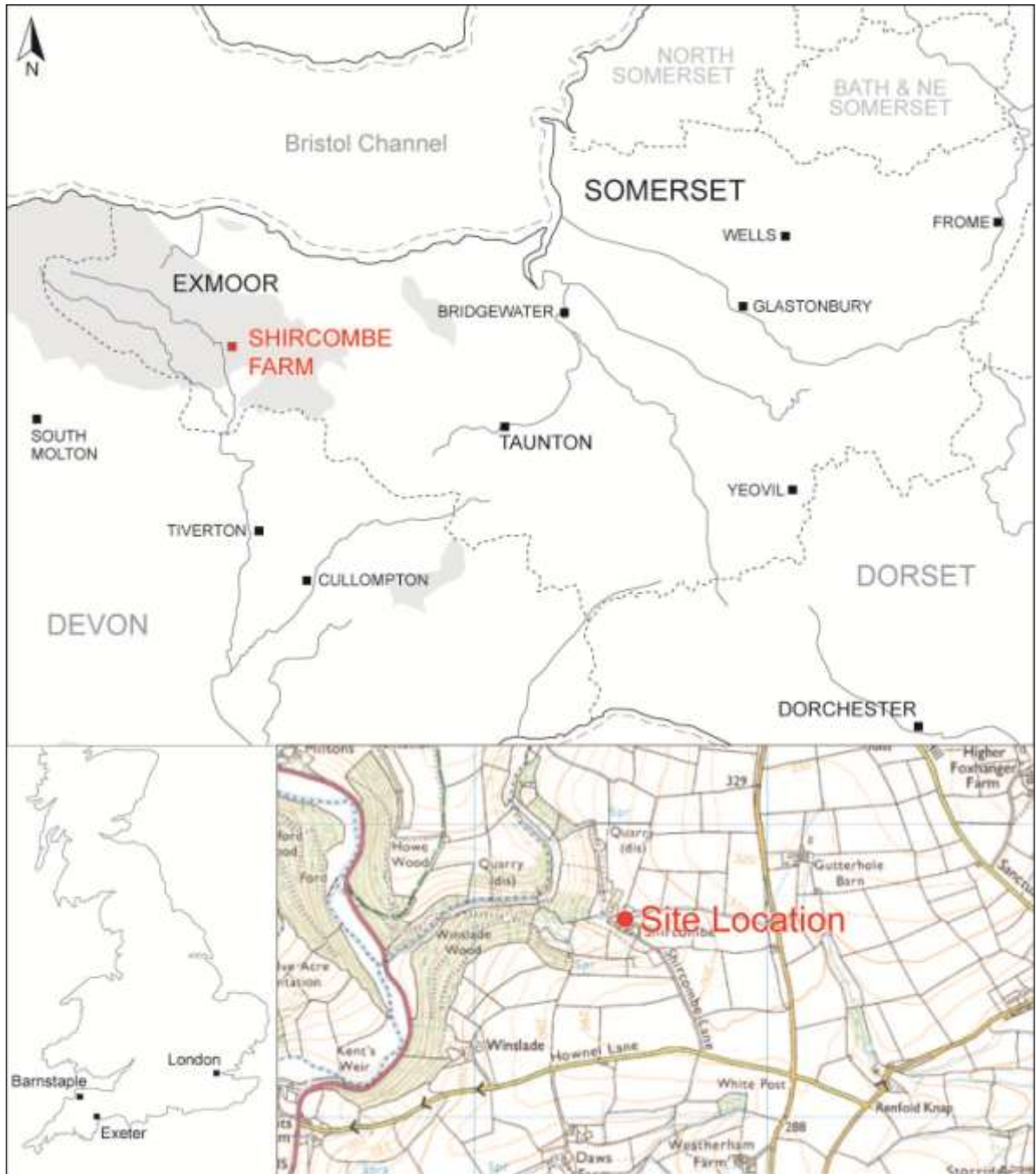


Figure 1: Location map, the site is indicated.



Figure 2: Site plan, the east barn is highlighted (based on drawings provided by J. Rhind Architects).



## 2.0 Results of a Desk-based Appraisal

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### 2.1 Historical Summary

The parish of Brompton Regis is within the hundred of Williton and Freemanners and in the Rural Deanery of Dunster. Brompton was formerly the centre of its own hundred and was an ancient market town. The pattern of settlement surrounding the village also has medieval origins. A study which assessed the historic settlement pattern in this region, based on the 1327 Lay Subsidy of West Somerset, notes that many of the medieval farmsteads and hamlets that were described, have survived through to today as farms and settlements (Aston 1983).

The village of Brompton Regis (also known as Kings Brompton) is situated approximately one kilometre from Shircombe Farm. The Domesday Book states that the king's manor of Brompton (Bruneston) was held by Gytha, wife of Earl Godwyn and mother of Harold Godwinson.

The industrial revolution, and the increase in the population which came with it, would have been partly responsible for the shaping of the landscape surrounding the site as we see it today. The farm at Shircombe is of 19th century date and may have been a direct outcome of the enclosure act. We know from the enclosure map of 1804 that it sits within a landscape which was much changed by this act and many of the farmsteads were, if not a direct result of it, affected by it. For example land at Storridge less than two kilometres south-east of the site was a vast open common before 1804, while in the tithe map of the same area, it has been divided up into smaller enclosures for cultivation. The same is true for land surrounding Redcross Farm (then called Upcott) which is situated approximately one kilometre to the south-east of Shircombe Farm.

The Listing for Shircombe Farmhouse suggests a date of c.1840 for the present house. It also makes the suggestion that there was an earlier house set to the north-west, but that it had been largely destroyed in a fire. Shircombe was formerly part of the holdings of the Baronsdown Estate, which once owned many of the farms within the surrounding landscape. The house at Baronsdown was built by the Joyce family in around 1656 and the estate was finally broken up and sold in 1919.

Bank barns were a development which came as a result of the years of agricultural improvement from the end of the eighteenth century. The Board of Agriculture's reporter in Somerset in 1794 commented that bank barns afforded 'a warm and commodious stall for oxen' and in the same building the barn floor was 'thus rendered more durable and less subject to vermin' (Billingsley, 1794: 87-8). There are a few early, high status examples, but in the Westcountry most appear to have been constructed in the 1790s or later (Lake, 2001). During this period of agricultural improvement bank barns became features in the remodelling of the Exmoor courtyard farm layouts; and the construction of the barn at a similar time to the construction or reconstruction of Shircombe Farmhouse would indicate that this farm was no exception (Lake, 2001; Riley and Wilson-North, 2001).

Although it has been suggested that Laurence Whistler, poet and glass engraver of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, converted the first floor of the East Barn for use as his studio, we could find no documentary evidence to support this. He spent periods of time in a cottage in North Devon with his first wife, Barbara (Jill) Dolignon Furse. His eldest son Simon, also an artist and a musician, was born in North Devon. But in 1950 he married his second wife, Theresa Thomasin Dolignon Furse, Jill's younger sister. They lived in Lyme Regis, Dorset together during the period when the conversion appears to have occurred (1950-60s). Subsequently Laurence Whistler moved to Alton Barnes, Wiltshire and finally Watlington, Oxfordshire. While it is clear he spent many years in the Westcountry and

undertook commissions for clients and churches all over the region, we could find no documentary reference to a period of time spent at Shircombe Farm, or for that matter on Exmoor.

## 2.2 Cartographic History

### 2.2.1 Brompton Regis Tithe map 1841

The first detailed cartographic source available for this study is the (1841) tithe map (Figures 3-4). The buildings apparent on this map display little resemblance to the buildings which are present today. In fact the present farmhouse does not appear to have existed at this date, as it should be shown within the detached (un-numbered) enclosure above the field numbered 937. The access track appears in the same location as it is today and there is a small rectangular building located at the end of this track. This building does not appear to relate to the East Barn, however which should be shown below (to the east) of this building, and follow an opposing orientation.



Figure 3: Extract from the 1839 Tithe map.



Figure 4: Detailed extract from the tithe map showing detail of the buildings at Shircombe Farm.

## 2.2.2 First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888

The First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1888 more closely resembles the buildings as they are today (Figure 5). The farmhouse and the East Barn are both depicted. It is of note that a small north-south orientated building is depicted to the south-west of the East Barn, which presumably represents the building shown on the tithe map, although it appears to have been shortened at its northern end by this date, perhaps to accommodate the construction of the East Barn.



Figure 5: Extract from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map of 1889.

### 2.2.3 Second Edition Ordnance Survey 1906

There are no major changes between the first edition OS Map of 1889 and the second edition OS Map of 1905 (Figure 6).



Figure 5: Extract from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition OS map of 1905.

### 2.2.4 Subsequent Changes

Between 1962 and 1974 the large animal shed (Shed 1) was constructed to the east of the East Barn. This resulted in the demolition of the small pre-1840 building. Many of the other large sheds were also constructed around this time (see Figure 7). There are no other notable details evident on later cartographic sources.

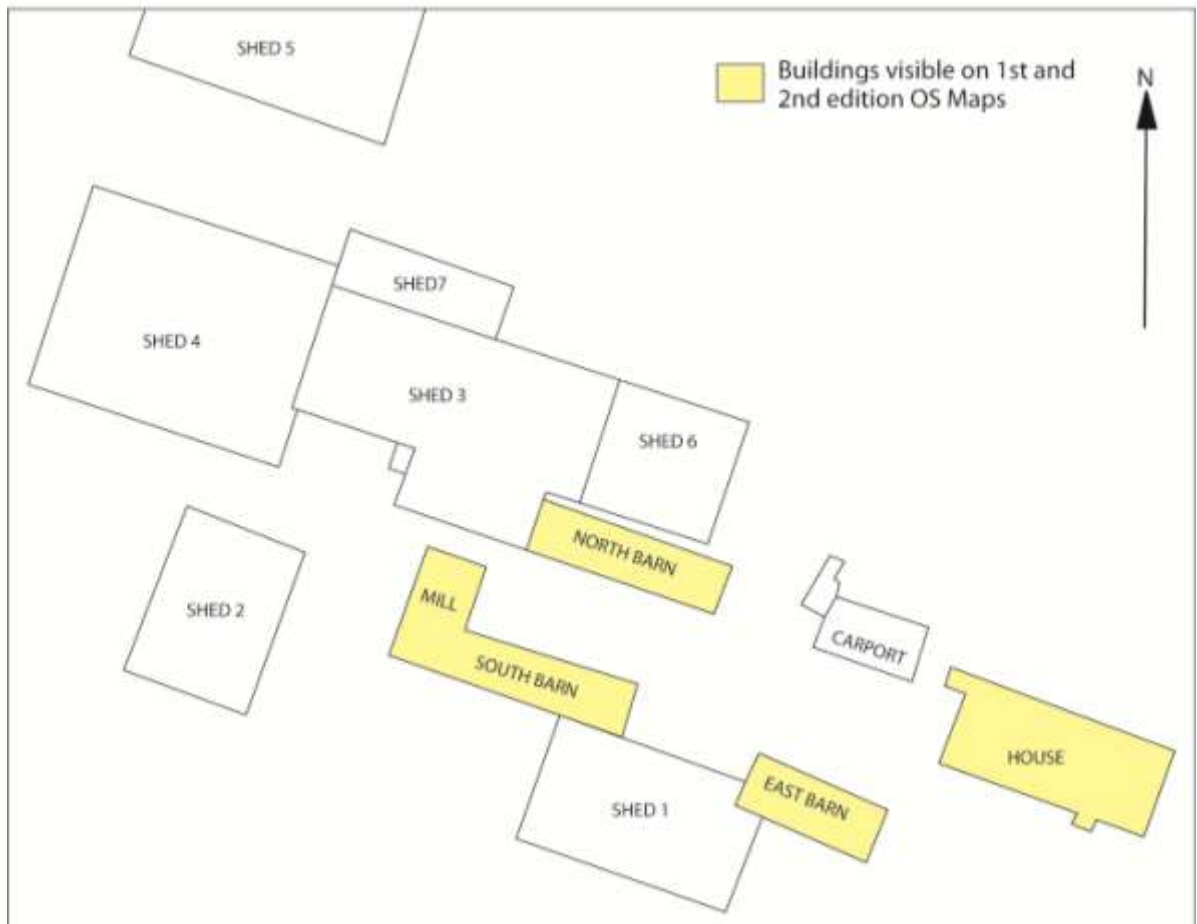


Figure 6: Modern plan of buildings with structures apparent on the first and second edition OS maps indicated in yellow.

## 3.0 Historic Building Assessment

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### 3.1 Introduction

This report is designed to provide a general overview of the historic development and surviving features of the East Barn, as well as an outline of their general significance.

### 3.2 Exterior

The East Barn is a two storey bank barn of slatestone rubble construction, under a slate roof, with glazed ridge tiles and a mixture of plastic and cast iron guttering. There is a repaired brick-built chimney stack to the west with leaded flashings and to the east, a projecting, externally mounted metal flue.

#### 3.2.1 South Elevation

The south elevation of the barn has four first floor window openings. West to east these include: one large forced opening, now boarded; a metal 'Critall' window set into a blocked central loading door; a further metal 'Critall' window set in a forced opening and to the east end of the elevation, a narrow boarded window, also set within a forced opening. Beneath these window openings are four identical arched openings, symmetrically arranged along the elevation, with segmental brick arches. Some of the arched openings have evidence of iron hinges to the reveals, suggesting these may once have been partially or wholly closed by doors. The upper part of the stonework to the west of the elevation has been patched with cement render and cement mortar. The remaining stonework is of two phases of lime pointing. To the eastern end there are remains of cast iron guttering, and a downpipe. The elevation has a severely bowed profile, suggesting there is need for some structural support.

#### 3.2.2 West Elevation

The west elevation is a gable end with new timber barge boards, using modern pine planks. The elevation has been heavily repointed to the south with cement (Figure 7). One small door opening occupies the base of the wall to the north side, providing access to the former feed passage. This has a flat segmental stone arch, supported with a steel girder and concrete internal lintels. There is patching in cement render and pointing around this reconstructed opening. This elevation is abutted by the concrete block remains of a 1960s shed which has been demolished.



Figure 7: The west elevation of the East Barn; viewed from the south-west.

### 3.2.3 North Elevation

The north elevation of the barn is of single storey height, providing access to the first floor. The elevation has three openings (Figure 8). From west to east, these include: a metal 'Critall' window set in a forced opening; to the centre, a large boarded 'Somerset' or wall dormer, which breaks the line of the eaves and which is set into a blocked double-width door opening and to the east, a narrow doorway set into a partly blocked/partly forced window opening. The doorway has a narrow timber lintel and timber threshold and frame, with a 20<sup>th</sup> century plank door, having a decorative cast iron handle. The elevation is abutted by a short section of stone and quartz walling to the west end, with brick detailing. A short section of modern guttering survives to the east. A section of surviving cobbled surface, of approximately 2m width, runs almost the length of the elevation from the western end and stone built steps lead to the 20<sup>th</sup> century doorway to the east.



Figure 8: Shot along the north elevation; viewed from the north-west.

### 3.2.4 East Elevation

The east elevation is a gable end with a mixture of modern pine and some older (pine?) boarding to the eaves. A projecting exterior metal flue is fixed with brackets to the elevation. There is one window opening, possibly a widening of an original opening, heavily repointed and patched with lime and cement, with a timber pegged frame. This window opening is now blocked to the exterior with wood and corrugated plastic.

## 3.3 Interior

### 3.3.1 Ground Floor

The ground floor is comprised of a single large open space. The remnants of a demolished cattle feed passage against the north wall, with brick and stone built troughs and timber hayricks, serving the open area to the south, which is accessed via the arched openings in the south elevation.

The first floor above can be seen to be supported on two main phases of (replacement) joists, set in the much larger square-built sockets of the original beams. The joists in places are merely resting on loose bricks, stacks of broken slate or shards of concrete block and similar. The joists to the west are of modern form, narrow and fine, but closely positioned for support. Unusually narrow floorboards lie directly on the back of these joists. The joists to the east are set on edge and are very deep, but narrow, possibly having been reused from another structure. These have a further set of joists laying on their backs, of large flat pine beams, some retaining bark, set on their sides. Modern even width planks overlay these joists, forming the floor to the first floor.





Figure 9: The ground floor interior of the East Barn; viewed from the east.

The walls are of whitewashed exposed stone, with surviving patches of lime render in places. The large square sockets of the original first floor can be seen the full length of the south wall and for most of the eastern and central section of the northern wall. These sockets have been built into the stone walls, often with stone slab lintels or exhibiting the use of larger stones around the socket. The south wall has many areas of significant disturbance around the sockets, at first floor level, and some sections of the wall have fallen out, patched internally with modern brick and cement.

A section of surviving timber framing forms a division to the west. This encloses the concrete block support structure for the inserted brick chimney stack above. The floor of this section is of poured concrete. An inserted round stone pillar also supports a timber in the first floor, to the west. The brick and stone troughs and timber hay ricks have all been demolished. The floor of the open area to the south is of surviving cobble stones. At the time of the initial site visit the cobbles were masked by a thick layer of dried, compacted animal faeces. A lead water feeder survives to the south-east corner of the ground floor.



Figure 10: The doorway through the north elevation, which provides access to the first floor; from the south.

### 3.3.2 First Floor

The first floor is accessed via the doorway in the north elevation of the ground floor (Figure 10). This leads into a hallway area, boarded out to the collars of the roof trusses with chipboard. The entire first floor space is divided into three further main rooms, accessed via a corridor to the south, with a small bathroom in the south-east corner. All of the divisions are of light timber framing and chipboard. All rooms are open to the collars of the trusses, also boarded with chipboard. Plain plank doors, with decorative cast iron latches open onto the corridor. The floor height changes slightly between the hallway and the rest of the first floor; there are some wider even width, slightly older floorboards laid in the hallway, with a plastic covered chipboard layer, raising it higher.

A wide opening to the west wall of the hallway leads directly into a large room, lit by the 'Somerset' dormer. This was apparently used as an artist's studio in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century by Laurence Whistler. This room has moulded deep skirting boards and a decorative picture rail but no other features survive. The corridor also has moulded skirting boards to the south wall. To the west of the studio is a small bedroom, accessed via the corridor. To the west end of the first floor is a large living room, occupying the entire width of the barn. This has had a brick and stone-clad chimney stack built within the western gable end. This is of 'rustic' style with a segmental arched fireplace and open concrete slab hearth with curb. The living room also has the same skirting and picture rail as the studio.

## 4.0 Archaeological Monitoring

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### 4.1 Roof Structure

The roof is of double pitch, with deep overhanging eaves, slated, with an inserted 20<sup>th</sup> century gable-end brick stack to the west. Significant alterations have been made to the barn in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which has affected the roof; when the first floor was converted to a small dwelling, the roof was internally boarded. The western end of the roof structure has been repaired and partly replaced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The majority of the roof structure was obscured by the chipboard ceilings on the initial site visit; however these had collapsed in places providing some view of the trusses above (see Figure 11). The roof is seven bays, with six A-frame trusses. There is a pair of purlins to each pitch which are unusually large in size and roughly chamfered, some of the purlins overlap. The majority of the purlins are set directly on the back of the truss blades, a few purlins, are shallowly set into the back of some of the truss blades. Irregular numbers of rafters frame each bay and lie on the back of the purlins. The truss blades, purlins and tie beams are in part roughly chamfered, many of the rafters are 'in the round', or partly 'embarked', some are partly chamfered. The trusses sit on a wallplate. The truss blades overlap at the single ridge pole, which is set on edge. The truss blades are pegged at the ridge pole, the tie beams bolted to the truss blades.



Figure 11: The roof structure; from the south-south-west.

The roof is seemingly contiguous with the construction of the barn in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, but heavily repaired in places. The truss blades overlap at the ridge, with spiked joints. The ridge pole is

heavy and set on edge (Figure 12). The trusses have raised collars, with bolted joints. Where rafters survive they appear to be very heavy, and some roughly cut or in the round, others have been replaced with modern timber.

The ordinary quality of the roof suggests a purely functional approach was taken by the builders to the interior details of this structure, with the focus being on the exterior appearance of the barn.

The bank barn suffered from several decades of deterioration in the later 20<sup>th</sup> century and the roof has suffered from water damage and damp ingress. The roof is of little historic interest, or architectural value, in its own right.



Figure 12: Shot of the roof following the removal of the plaster ceilings.

## 4.2 Cobbled Floor

The cobbled floor in the East Barn is to be removed as part of the conversion to a dwelling. The floor was photographed, drawn and recorded as part of the programme of archaeological monitoring on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2015 by E. Wapshott.



Figure 13: The cobbled floor following power-washing; viewed from the east.

The cobbled floor is located to the south-east side of the ground floor space of the barn. It is c.10.50m long and c.3.10m wide. The ground floor space of the barn was used for animal housing.

Rough cast concrete runs along the northern boundary of the cobbles, remains of the removed 20<sup>th</sup> century concrete troughs. A former feed passage ran along the north wall of the barn; both this area and that of the troughs has been cleared down to the natural rotted shale bedrock and soil. The southern limit of the cobbled floor is the exterior wall with three, evenly-spaced arches. The thresholds of these doorways have been concreted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The cobbled floor has been cleared since the previous visit, and is made up of rough cut and irregularly sized slatestones. The floor slopes to the south, the cobbles laid approximately north to south. The slope may aid in drainage of the floor, with no formal built drains visible.

To the western end of the barn, is an area with a concrete floor, separated from the cobbles by a concrete block wall and timber post and rails. The possible partition slot located between the central archways; suggest that this potentially equally divided the barn into two halves, with further division in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Just inside the eastern central archway is a semicircular hole (c.1.5mx1m). A large stone pillar has been inserted to support the ceiling in the north-west corner of the cobbled floor. The eastern end of the floor has been concreted over, forming a sloping area where 20<sup>th</sup> century plumbing for a water supply has been inserted. Areas of the floor also appear to have been patched with larger irregular blocks of stone. The cobbles no longer retain any of their bond material, with many being very loose.

The cobbles are of questionable craftsmanship, loosely set, of irregular size, unfaced and poorly fitted. The cobbles may represent a late 19<sup>th</sup> century replacement of an earlier floor. Smaller, dressed cobbles, scattered within the current floor may have been salvaged from a previous floor, but could as likely have come from elsewhere. The existing cobbled floor is in juxtaposition with the smart brick segmental arches which access the space. Although largely built of rubble, care has been taken, in general, with the barn, to create a statement building close to the main farmhouse. The farmhouse follows a similar pattern, in that more care was put into its exterior appearance than the quality of the interior build and layout.

The floor holds very little architectural value in itself and it is only of historic interest as part of the overall bank barn structure.

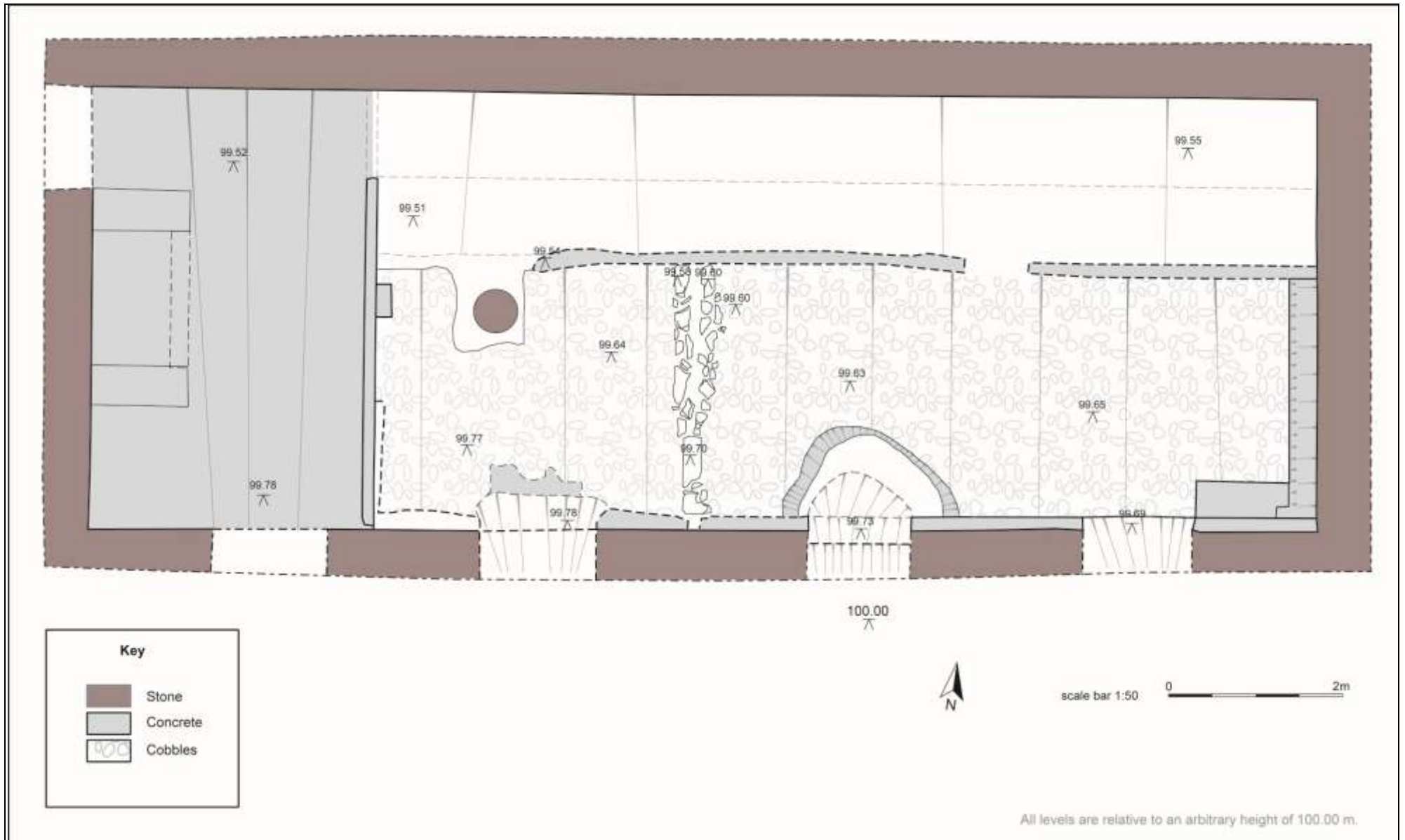


Figure 14: Plan of the ground floor of the bank barn, with cobbled floor and features indicated.



## 5.0 Summary

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### 5.1 Significance

The East Barn (bank barn) at Shircombe Farm is of local significance as a mid 19<sup>th</sup> century example of the development of the Farm that resulted from the agricultural improvement through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the incorporation of this type of structure within the courtyard farms of Exmoor. In the interior, little remains of the former agricultural function of this building, with many of the fittings and features lost and the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century first floor replacement and conversion further removing the building from its agricultural past. From the outside, the building retains the architectural aspects which allow us to read its previous, intended agricultural function. The buildings historical or social significance may be enhanced by its possible link with the 20<sup>th</sup> century glass engraver and poet, Laurence Whistler, but this could not be verified.

### 5.2 Phasing

The East Barn dates to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and is of one constructional phase, with the roof structure and stone walls being contemporary. It was designed to be partially open on the ground floor, with animal housing to the open south side and the enclosed feed passage to the north, with possible bull pen or calving pen to the west, as a separate partitioned space. Large square beams, set in the built sockets supported the first phase floor, the first floor being accessed via the large double barn doors in the centre of the north elevation. The function of this upper floor is unknown as no features survive, however the size of the sockets for the joists may suggest a storage function, for hay or feed.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the floor was lost due to damage or deterioration, and replaced at the eastern end. The new joists may have been sourced from other buildings on the farm. At a later point, in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the first floor has been further converted to provide accommodation; another section of floor being replaced in a different style, using modern pine timbers. The chimney stack and all interior walls and features date from this phase. This is when the building was supposedly used by Laurence Whistler for his studio.

## 6.0 Conclusions

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The conclusion of this survey is that the East Barn, Shircombe Farm is of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century origin. The original structure (a bank barn) appears to have comprised a cow shed with store above. Later, mostly mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, alterations to the first floor have removed any details of the original function of the first floor. These 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in part relate to the conversion of the first floor for residential use, significantly the addition of the Somerset Dormer, which lit the possible former artist's studio. Despite the suggested connection with Laurence Whistler, we could find no evidence to support this. The ground floor has also had much of its internal detail removed, although the scars of the troughs and hay ricks remain. A return visit to assess and record the cobbled floor revealed it to be of poor quality and of little architectural merit.

The retention and renovation of the building should be considered important to preserving the architectural character of the farm.

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October 2014

Appendix 1  
Historic Building Assessment: Supporting photos



View of the metal window in the blocked loading door opening, to the centre of the south elevation; from the south.



Detail of the 'Somerset' dormer; from the north-west.



Detail of the blocked window opening, formerly doors, into which the window is set; from the north-west.



View down the front, south elevation, showing the bowed profile of the wall; from the west.



Detailed view of the repaired brick stack; from the north-east.



The ground floor interior, part raised feed passage and demolished troughs; from the north-west.



The ground floor interior of the bank barn; from the south-west.



The round pillar supporting the floor to the west; from the south-east.



The large concrete block structure which supports the first floor brick chimney stack; from the north-north-east.



The cobbled floor surface in the southern, open part of the ground floor; from the south-south-west.





The joists to the west end of the barn, supporting the floor; from the south-east.



Detail of one of the joists to the east end, resting on a loose stack of rubble and a concrete block.



The rough join between the two types of flooring; from the south.



The heavy two phases of joists to the east end of the floor; from the south-west.



Detail showing the size and form of the built sockets, within the structure; from the north.



The hallway area to the east of the first floor; from the north-north-east.



The corridor to the south of the studio and bedroom, which provides access to the living room; from the east.



One of the plank doors providing access off the corridor; from the south-west.



Interior view of the 'Somerset' dormer, in the artist's studio; from the south-west.



Detail of the skirting and picture rail in the artist's studio; from the west-south-west.



The chimney stack in the living room; from the south-east.



Cobbled floor with 2m scale; from the east.



Central section of floor, with 2m scale; from the east.



Central section of floor, with 2m scale; from the west.



Shot across cobbled floor, with 2m scale, from the west.



The semicircular hole, with 2m scale; from the west.





The possible partition slot within the floor, with 2m scale; from the south.



Stone pillar, forced into the cobbled floor, with 2m scale; from the south-east.



Damaged section of floor with stone pillar inserted; from the south.



Threshold to the west of centre arch, with 2m scale; from the north.



Concrete block wall and timber partition to the west end of the cobbled floor, with 2m scale; from the east.



East of centre arch threshold, with 2m scale; from the north.



Threshold of the arch, to the eastern end of the cobbled floor, with 2m scale; from the north.



The concreted end of the cobbled floor to the east, with 2m scale; from the west.

## Appendix 2 Written Scheme of Investigation

### WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION FOR HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING AT THE EAST BARN, SHIRCOMBE FARM, SHIRCOMBE LANE, SOMERSET.

**Location:** Shircombe Farm, Shircombe Lane, Brompton Regis  
**Parish:** Exmoor National Park  
**County:** Somerset  
**NGR:** SS 92967 31220  
**Planning Application No:** 6/3/14/119 and 120LB  
**Proposal:** Proposed change of use of existing first floor apartment and ground floor shippon of the east barn into a two storey holiday cottage. As per amended plans and additional information 03.10.14.  
**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document forms a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been produced by South West Archaeology Ltd (SWARCH) at the request of Alex Stokes (the Client). It sets out the methodology for historic building recording to be undertaken ahead of and during the proposed works, specifically relating to the cobbled surface and roof timbers, and for related off-site analysis and reporting, further to the desk-based assessment and historic building recording undertaken by SWARCH in 2014. The WSI and the schedule of work it proposes were drawn up in consultation with Shirley Blaylock of Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA).

1.2 In accordance with paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012), and then Local Development Framework Policy on archaeology, planning has been granted providing the following condition has been met; as worded below based on model Condition 55 as set out in Appendix A of Circular 11/95, whereby:

*No development shall take place until the applicant (or their heir or successor in title) has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out at all times in strict accordance with the agreed scheme, or such other details as may be subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To ensure that an appropriate record is made of archaeological evidence that may be affected by the development.*

#### 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORIC BACKGROUND

2.1 Shircombe Farmhouse is Grade II Listed and dates to circa 1840. It is believed that an earlier farmhouse stood to the north-west and was largely destroyed in a fire.

To the south-west of the farmhouse the OS map of 1904 shows buildings which are believed to be a Post Medieval mill (MMO992). A former landowner of the property demolished a clay-built structure in this area, believed to be Medieval due to the recovery of Medieval pottery. The OS map also shows a pond, annotated as sluice. A nearby linear ditch is also recorded, possibly a Medieval leat, visible as earthworks on vertical aerial photographs. This linear may relate to the possible mill.

The East Barn at Shircombe, which is the subject of this monitoring exercise, is a bank barn of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century origin. The first floor of the barn was altered and converted to residential use in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, removing any historic details relating to the original function of this floor. On the ground floor, the remnants of the brick and stone cattle troughs and other functional features can be seen. A cobbled floor surface remains in situ.

#### 3.0 AIMS

3.1 To record the cobbles, roof timbers and features of the barn.  
 3.2 To analyse and report on the results of the project as appropriate.

#### 4.0 PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

4.1 Historic building recording:

A record shall be made of the historic fabric of the East Barn, specifically the cobbled floor surface, roof timbers and features of the barn. This work shall conform to an appropriate level of recording as set in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* - English Heritage 2006 (available on-line at <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/>). Previously prepared architect's plans will be used as the basis of any historic building fabric recording, provided they are of adequate scale and accuracy.

4.1.1 The Barn will be subject to a level 2 recording which will include a good photographic and drawn record of the cobbles and roof timbers, along with a description. While not a stone for stone drawing of the cobbles, the extent of the surface and the location of any features will be recorded on the architects plan and numbered to cross reference the description and the plan. The drawings in conjunction with the photographs will provide a full record.

#### 5.0 REPORTING

5.1 A report will be produced, including the following elements:

- 5.1.1 A report number, date and the OASIS record number;
- 5.1.2 A copy of this WSI;
- 5.1.3 A summary of the project's background;
- 5.1.4 A description and illustration of the buildings location;
- 5.1.5 A methodology of the works undertaken;
- 5.1.6 Plans and reports of all documentary and other research undertaken;
- 5.1.7 A summary of the project's results;
- 5.1.8 An interpretation of the results in the appropriate context;
- 5.1.9 A summary of the contents of the project archive and its location (including summary catalogues of finds and samples);
- 5.1.10 A site location plan at an appropriate scale on an Ordnance Survey, or equivalent, base-map;
- 5.1.11 A plan showing the layout of the building subject to this programme of work in relation to identifiable landscape features and other buildings;
- 5.1.12 The results of the historic building recording that shall include a written description and analysis of the historic fabric of the building, appropriately;

- 5.1.13 Photographs showing the general site layout and exposed significant features of historic or architectural significance that are referred to in the text. All photographs will contain appropriate scales, the size of which will be noted in the illustration's caption;
- 5.1.14 A consideration of evidence within its wider context;
- 5.1.15 Any specialist assessment or analysis reports that were undertaken;
- 5.2 ENPA will receive the report within three months of completion of fieldwork, dependant on the provision of specialist reports, radiocarbon dating results etc, the production of which may exceed this period. If a substantial delay is anticipated then an interim report will be produced and a revised submission date for the final report agreed with the ENPA.
- 5.3 On completion of the final report, in addition to copies required by the Client, hard copies of the report shall be supplied to the ENPA on the understanding that one of these copies will be deposited for public reference in the ENPA. In addition to the hard copies of the report, one copy shall be provided to the ENPA in digital format - in a format to be agreed in advance with the ENPA - on the understanding that it may in future be made available to researchers via a web-based version of the Historic Environment Record.
- 5.4 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 under reference southwes1-176547 within 6 months of completion of fieldwork.

## 6.0 PUBLICATION

Where the exposure of architectural or historic building fabric is limited or of little significance reporting will follow on directly from the field work - see section 5 above. Should particularly significant architectural, archaeological or palaeoenvironmental remains, finds and/or deposits be encountered, then these, because of their importance, are likely to merit wider publication in line with government planning guidance (paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012). If such remains are encountered, the publication requirements – including any further analysis that may be necessary – will be confirmed with the ENPA.

## 7.0 MONITORING

- 7.1.1 SWARCH shall agree monitoring arrangements with the ENPA and give two weeks notice, unless a shorter period is agreed, of commencement of the fieldwork. Details will be agreed of any monitoring points where decisions on options within the programme are to be made.
- 7.1.2 Monitoring will continue until the deposition of the site archive and finds, and the satisfactory completion of an OASIS report - see 8.0 below.
- 7.1.3 SWARCH will notify the ENPA upon completion of the fieldwork stage of these works.

## 8.0 ARCHIVE

- 8.1 On completion of the project an ordered and integrated site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidance prepared by ENPA and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/morphe-project-managers-guide/>). The digital element of the archive will be transferred to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) for long-term curation.

- 8.2 The archive will consist of two elements, the digital archive and the material archive.

- 8.2.1 The digital archive, including digital copies of all relevant written and drawn records and photographs, will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and in compliance with their standards and requirements.
- 8.2.2 The material archive, comprising the retained artefacts/samples and the hardcopy paper record (if requested) will be cleaned (or otherwise treated), ordered, recorded, packed and boxed in accordance with the deposition standards of the Museum of Somerset (MOS), and in a timely fashion.
- 8.2.3 If the MOS wishes to retain the hardcopy paper archive, it will be deposited with the rest of the material archive under an accession number. Should the MOS decline the hardcopy paper archive, that archive will be offered to other appropriate museum bodies or record offices. If a suitable third party cannot be found, the hardcopy paper archive will be retained by SWARCH for 3 years and then destroyed.

- 8.3 SWARCH will, on behalf of the MOS, obtain a written agreement from the landowner to transfer title to all items in the material archive to the receiving museum.

- 8.4 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.

- 8.5 SWARCH will notify the ENPA upon the completion of:

- i) deposition of the digital archive with the ADS, and  
ii) deposition of the material (finds) archive with the museum.

- 8.6 The condition placed upon this development will not be regarded as discharged until the report has been produced and submitted to the MOS and the LPA, the site archive deposited and the OASIS form completed.

- 8.7 The archive will be completed within 6 months of the completion of the final report.

## 9.0 CONFLICT WITH OTHER CONDITIONS AND STATUTORY PROTECTED SPECIES

- 9.1 Even where work is being undertaken under the direct control and supervision of SWARCH personnel, it remains the responsibility of the Client - in consultation with SWARCH, the applicant or agent - to ensure that the required archaeological works do not conflict with any other conditions that have been imposed upon the consent granted and should also consider any biodiversity issues as covered by the NERC Act 2006. In particular, such conflicts may arise where archaeological investigations/excavations have the potential to have an impact upon protected species and/or natural habitats e.g. SSSIs, National Nature Reserves, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar sites, County Wildlife Sites etc.

## 10.0 PERSONNEL & MONITORING

- 10.1 The project will be managed by Colin Humphreys; the fieldwork will be undertaken by SWARCH personnel with appropriate expertise and experience. Where necessary, appropriate specialist advice will be sought (see list of consultant specialists in Appendix 1 below).

Natalie Boyd

South West Archaeology

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### List of specialists

#### Building recording

Richard Parker 11 Toronto Road, St James, Exeter. EX4 6LE. Tel: 07763 248241

#### Conservation

Alison Hopper Bishop the Royal Albert Memorial Museum Conservation service [a.hopperbishop@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:a.hopperbishop@exeter.gov.uk)  
Richard and Helena Jaeschke 2 Bydown Cottages, Swimbridge, Barnstaple EX32 0QD [mrshjaeschke@email.msn.com](mailto:mrshjaeschke@email.msn.com)

**Curatorial**

Thomas Cadbury Curator of Antiquities Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter Tel: 01392 665356  
Alison Mills The Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon, Barnstaple Tel: 01271 346747

**Bone**

Animal Wendy Howard Department of Archaeology, University of Exeter [w.j.howard@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:w.j.howard@exeter.ac.uk)

**Lithics**

Martin Tingle Higher Brownston, Brownston, Modbury, Devon, PL21 OSQ martin@mtingle.freeseerve.co.uk

**Palaeoenvironmental/Organic**

Wood identification Dana Challinor Tel: 01869 810150 dana.challinor@tiscali.co.uk

Plant macro-fossils Julie Jones [juliedjones@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:juliedjones@blueyonder.co.uk)

Pollen analysis Ralph Fyfe Room 211, 8 Kirkby Place, Drake Circus, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 8AA

**Pottery**

Prehistoric Henrietta Quinnell 39D Polsloe Road, Exeter EX1 2DN Tel: 01392 433214

Roman Alex Croom, Arbeia Roman Fort and Museum, South Shields, Tel: (0191) 454 4093

Medieval John Allen, 22, Rivermead Road Exeter EX2 4RL Tel: 01392 256154 [john.p.allan@btinternet.com](mailto:john.p.allan@btinternet.com)

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