

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Bishops Tawton, North Devon	National Grid Reference SS 56692 30046	Number:
Subject: Archaeological evaluation trenching on land near the Gospel Hall, Bishops Tawton, Devon		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 64688	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: southwes1-284111	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: BGH17	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 19 th -20 th November 2018	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Archaeological evaluation trenching was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of a Private Client prior to groundworks associated with the development of land near the Gospel Hall, Bishops Tawton, Devon. The evaluation was carried out by P. Webb on 19th and 20th November 2018. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, situated within the historic core of the village; to the south-east of the site of the Bishop of Exeter's late medieval palace at Court Farm. The development plot is depicted on the Bishops Tawton tithe map as part of a large hay meadow; to the south-west of the former main thoroughfare through the village. The Gospel Hall was constructed in 1925. The site is located off the A377, c.135m south-east of the parish church and to the immediate west of the Gospel Hall, Bishops Tawton; and is situated on the west facing slopes of the Taw river valley at a height of between approximately 17.5m and 22.5m AOD (Figure 1). The underlying geology is the well drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983); overlying mudstone, and siltstone of the Crackington Formation with bordering superficial Taw River Terrace deposits of gravel, sand and silt (BGS 2018).</p> <p>A total of three trenches (Trench 01-03) measuring between 16m and 27m in length × 1.30m wide were excavated under archaeological supervision by machine using a toothless grading bucket to a depth of up to 0.85m, this being the depth of natural. The stratigraphy of the site comprised a compacted hardcore modern car park surface c.0.25m thick; overlying a buried topsoil of grey-brown soft friable clay-silt 0.15m-0.40m thick. At the western, lower, end of the site this overlay mid brown and grey-brown soft clays with large sub-angular stone inclusions forming made-ground layers up to 0.55m thick. Below the made-ground layers and buried topsoil was the natural, a grey-yellow clay with sub-angular stone.</p> <p>Three drains were identified, two within Trench 01, and one running across trenches 02 and 03. Drain [105] was orientated north-east to south-west, measuring 0.55m wide and 0.15m deep with moderate sloping sides and concave base. It contained a single fill: (106) grey-yellow-brown soft clay with stone inclusions. Drain [107] was orientated north-north-west to south-south-east, measuring 0.65m wide and 0.18m deep with moderate sloping sides and concave base. It contained a single fill: (108), grey-yellow-brown soft clay with stone inclusions. Drain [205] was orientated north-east to south-west, measuring 0.80m wide and 0.55m deep with steep sides and flat base. It contained a single fill: (206), grey-brown friable sand-silt, and had been heavily root disturbed. This feature continued into trench 03 as [306], measuring 0.55m wide and 0.38m deep with steep sides and flat base. Drain [306] contained a stone lined and capped drain {309} with infill (310), grey-brown clay; and had been backfilled by (307), grey-brown clay-silt.</p> <p>Finds recovered from the site included: post-medieval pottery, animal bone, ceramic building material, clay pipe (16g), glass (38g), and iron slag from drain fills (206) and (307) (287g and 1790g respectively); and post-medieval pottery from the buried soil layers. Fragments of roofing slate were identified within the made ground layers (249g from (206) and 400g from (307)), along with pantile (58g) from (206) and possible ridge tile (24g) from (307). The majority of the post medieval pottery comprised North Devon wares, including the handle of a 3E type jug, and industrial wares. 1 sherd of sgraffito, 1 sherd of Bristol-Staffs Yellow Slip and a sherd of C17th/C18th South Somerset decorative tableware were all found in (206) along with one scrap of medieval N. Devon ware (2g).</p> <p>Conclusions</p> <p>A total of three features were identified during the evaluation, all drains. Drains [105] and [107] appear associated with the made ground layers, containing very similar fills to the layers above; whilst [205]/[306] formed a more formal well constructed drain (although damaged by root disturbance within Trench 02). The drains relate to the post-medieval and modern development of Bishops Tawton. The recovery and identification of building material from the site may indicate the presence of, or demolition of a nearby, building though no structural remains appear to survive on the site itself.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>British Geological Survey 2018: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html</p> <p>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: 23.11.18	

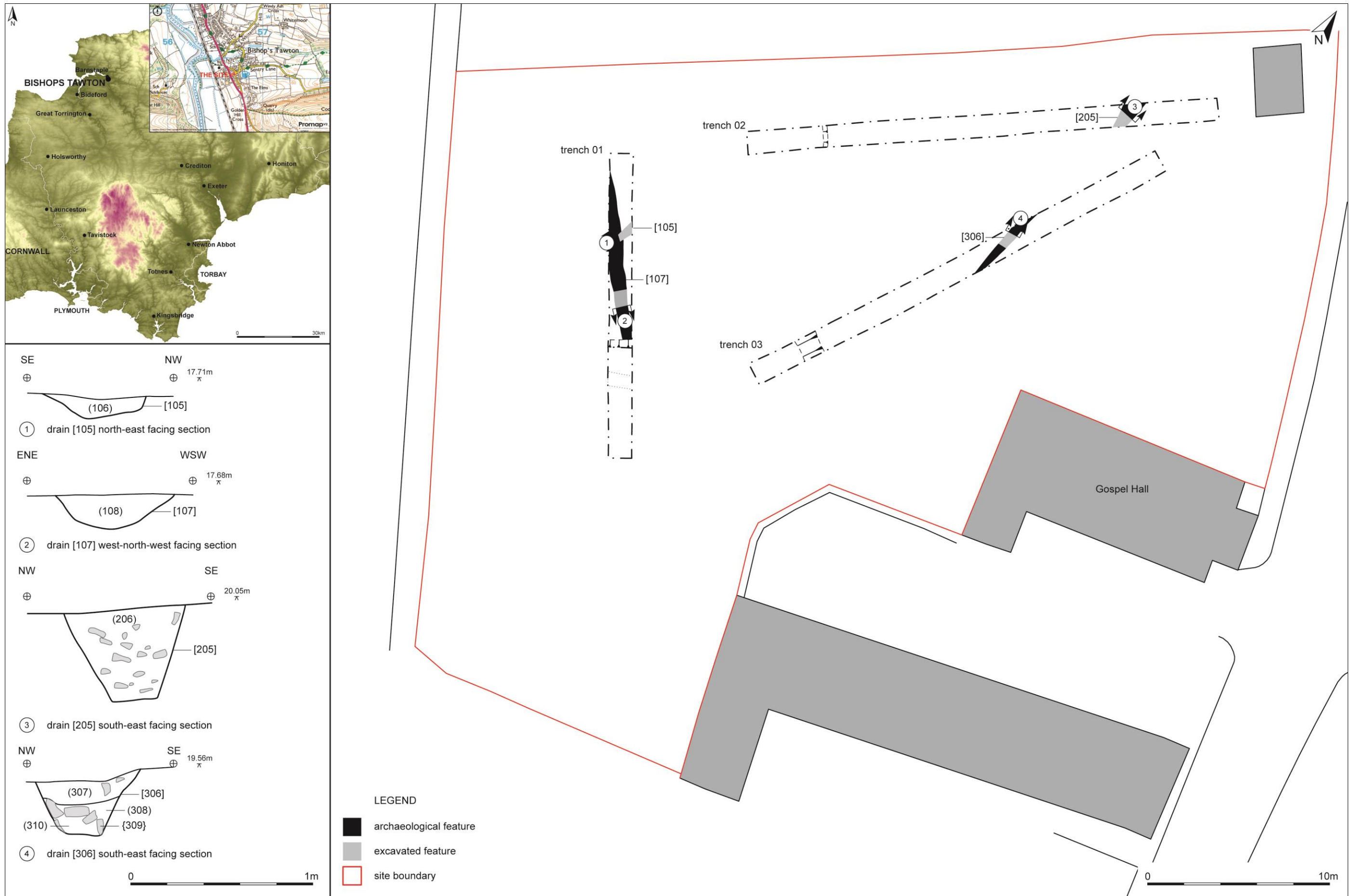


FIGURE 1: SITE PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF EXCAVATED AREAS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES. HEIGHTS AT AOD.



FIGURE 2: DRAIN [107], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (1M SCALE).



FIGURE 3: STONE LINED DRAIN [306], POST-EXCAVATION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (1M SCALE).