

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Whitchurch, West Devon	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SX 49345 72810	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological monitoring at Little Church Park, Whitchurch, Tavistock, Devon		<b>Photo attached?</b> YES
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 3423/17/FUL	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery (PCM)	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> southwes1-307507	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> N/A	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> WLK18	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> -29 <sup>th</sup> June 2018	
<p><b>Description of works.</b></p> <p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Mr and Mrs Beveridge (the Client) during groundworks associated with the construction of a single house plot on land at Little Church Park, Church Hill, Whitchurch, Devon. The monitoring was carried out by E. Wapshott and P. Webb between 18<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> June 2018; and was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Balmond 2018) and in consultation with Bill Horner of the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>The site is located approximately 115m north-east of the parish church of St. Andrew on the eastern edge of the settlement of Whitchurch, to the south-east of Tavistock. The site is situated on the south-west facing slope of Whitchurch Down, east of the River Tavy at a height of c.122m AOD (Figure 1); on the well drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983); overlying slate of the Tavy Formation (BGS 2018).</p> <p>The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, to the north-east of the parish church, which has Norman origins, and on the edge of the historic core of Whitchurch. The surrounding landscape contains evidence of medieval field systems (including the southern site boundary) and post-medieval mining. The northern limit of the churchyard lies adjacent to the southern site boundary; although this represents 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions to the historic churchyard. Tithe records and historic aerial photography indicate that the site was formerly an area of formal garden planting, and was formerly under arable agriculture.</p> <p>An initial site strip comprising an irregular area orientated north-east to south-west and measuring up to 37m×22m was stripped of topsoil layers by machine using a toothless grading bucket to a depth of up to 0.35m. A series of foundation trenches measuring up to 0.90m wide were subsequently excavated to a depth of up to 1.10m. The stratigraphy of the site comprised a dark brown soft silt-clay-loam topsoil and dump material (100) up to 0.25m thick which overlay topsoil layer (101), mid-dark brown friable clay-silt 0.14m thick. This overlay buried topsoil (103), mid-dark brown friable silt 0.20m thick; intermittent subsoil layer (111), brown-orange friable-soft silt-clay up to 0.14m thick; and the weathered natural (104), shillet within brown-yellow soft silt-clay. Along the western edge of the site a compacted layer (102), re-deposited natural c.0.15m thick and containing clinker/slag (137g), appeared to form a drainage layer associated with the tree planting to the west. Finds recovered from these layers included 2x golf balls (92g), 8x shards of modern glass (355g), 2x fragments of terracotta roof tile (390g), 2x fragments (68g) of sanitary ware; and 7 sherds (58g) of 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century pottery including white refined earthenware's, other industrial wares, flowerpot, and a single sherd of North Devon Gravel Tempered post-medieval pottery from topsoil deposits (100) and (101). All finds were subsequently discarded.</p> <p>Two features, both stone-built drains, were identified during the works along with two probable tree-throws and three modern service pipes. Drain [108] was a linear feature orientated approximately east to west measuring 0.50m wide and 0.90m deep with near vertical sides and flat base. It was constructed with sub-angular quartzite sides with slate-stone capping and natural bedrock base standing to 0.20m high, with a central void channel. It had overlying backfill (109), re-deposited natural. Drain [118] had the same construction on a north-east to south-west alignment, though the capping had been damaged and the drainage channel filled with (121), mid-dark brown friable clay-silt. Probable tree-throws [122] and [124] were both sub-oval in plan, measuring up to 1.40m in diameter and 0.55m deep with moderate to steep sloping sides and concave bases. They contained mixed fills of stony mid yellow-brown to grey-brown friable-soft silt-clays.</p> <p><b>Conclusions</b></p> <p>A total of two archaeological features were identified during the excavations, both well-built stone drains. Neither produced dating evidence, though it is likely that they are of post-medieval origin and they reflect the moorland situation of the site, and its requirement for drainage. The quality of the drains suggests that they may be associated with the church to the south, or the vicarage to the north.</p> <p><b>Balmond, F. 2018:</b> <i>Land Adjacent to Little Church Park, Church Hill, Whitchurch, Tavistock, Devon: WSI.</i> SWARCH no WLK18WSiv1.  <b>British Geological Survey 2018:</b> <i>Geology of Britain Viewer.</i> <a href="http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html">http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html</a>  <b>Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983:</b> <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales.</i></p>		
<b>Recorder:</b> P. Webb	<b>Date sent to HER:</b> 07.08.2018	

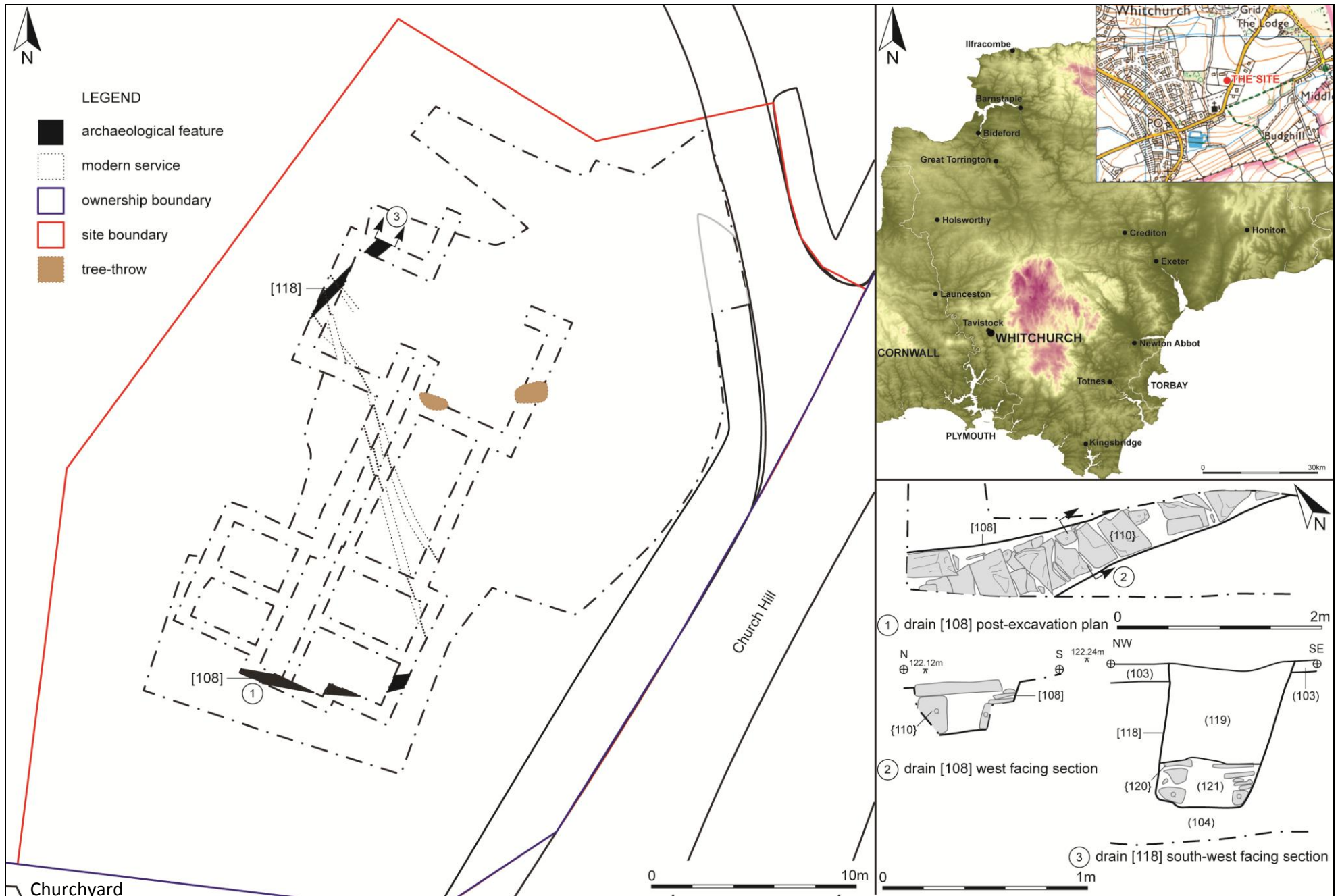


FIGURE 1: SITE PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF EXCAVATED AREAS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES. HEIGHTS AOD.



FIGURE 2: DRAIN [108]; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (2M SCALE).



FIGURE 3: DRAIN [108], WEST FACING SECTION SHOWING DRAIN CUTTING THROUGH TOPSOIL LAYERS; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (1M SCALE).