

LAND OFF WILLEYS AVENUE

EXETER

DEVON

Results of a Desk-Based Assessment & Walkover Survey



South West Archaeology Ltd. report no. 180824



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES &
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

www.swarch.net

Tel. 01769 573555

Land off Willeys Avenue, Exeter, Devon Results of a Desk-Based Assessment & Walkover Survey

By F. Balmond & B Morris
Report Version: Final
Draft issued: 18th August 2018
Finalised: 12th October 2018

Work undertaken by SWARCH for Andrew Bennellick of GJR Architects
On behalf of Riviera Equity Ltd. (the Client)

SUMMARY

This report present the results of a desk-based appraisal and walkover survey carried out by South West Archaeology Ltd. on land at St Andrews Yard, Willeys Avenue, Exeter, Devon. The site comprises a triangle of land, now known as St Andrews Yard, located south of Willeys Avenue. A Mission Church was constructed here in the early 20th century, with a probable church hall added by 1932. The church was destroyed by bombing during World War II, though internal fittings appear to have been moved to the church hall, allowing it to be used as a replacement church. During the latter half of the century the function changed, becoming a store and latterly a car dealership with a tarmac yard area. No trace of the church survives, but the surviving building does contain a range of period fixtures and fittings. The archaeological significance of the site is likely to rest on any buried palaeo-channels that might exist, and any associated palaeo-environmental deposits.



South West Archaeology Ltd. shall retain the copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project.

CONTENTS

<i>SUMMARY</i>	2
<i>CONTENTS</i>	3
<i>LIST OF FIGURES</i>	4
<i>LIST OF APPENDICES</i>	4
<i>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</i>	4
<i>PROJECT CREDITS</i>	4
1.0 INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND	5
1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	5
1.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
2.0 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT	7
2.1 DOCUMENTARY HISTORY	7
2.2 CARTOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT	7
2.3 SITE INSPECTION	10
3.0 CONCLUSION	12
4.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES	12

LIST OF FIGURES

COVER PLATE: VIEW OF THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION OF CURRENT GARAGE BUILDING, FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).	6
FIGURE 2: EXTRACT FROM THE 1801 OS SURVEYOR'S DRAFT MAP (BL); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.	7
FIGURE 3: EXTRACT FROM THE ST THOMAS TITHE MAP (TNA); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.	8
FIGURE 4: EXTRACT 1875-88 OS 25INCH MAP (DHC); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.	8
FIGURE 5: EXTRACT FROM THE 1904 OS 25INCH MAP, 1904 (DHC); THE SITE IS INDICATED.	9
FIGURE 6: EXTRACT FROM THE OS 25INCH MAP OF 1932 (DHC).	9
FIGURE 7: VIEW ALONG THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION OF B1.1 (LEFT) AND B1.2 (RIGHT); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.	10

LIST OF APPENDICIES

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE	13
----------------------------------	----

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ANDREW BENNELICK OF GJR ARCHITECTS (THE AGENT)
RIVIERA EQUITY LTD. (THE CLIENTS)
ANDY PYE EXETER CITY COUNCIL

PROJECT CREDITS

DIRECTOR: DR. SAMUEL WALLS
DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT: FAYE BALMOND
FIELDWORK: DR. BRYN MORRIS
REPORT: FAYE BALMOND; DR. BRYN MORRIS
EDITING: BRYN MORRIS
GRAPHICS: FAYE BALMOND

1.0 INTRODUCTION

LOCATION:	LAND OFF WILLEYS AVENUE
PARISH:	EXETER
COUNTY:	DEVON
NGR:	SX 91773 91599
PLANNING NO.	PRE-APPLICATION
SWARCH REF.	EWA18

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) was commissioned by Andrew Bennellick of GJR Architects (the Agent) on behalf of Rivera Equity Ltd. (the Client) to undertake a desk-based appraisal and walkover survey on land off Willeys Avenue, Exeter, Devon, as part of the preparatory works for development at the site. This work was undertaken in accordance with best practice and ClfA guidelines.

1.2 TOPOGRAPHICAL AND GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located south of Willeys Avenue, itself just off the A377 Alphington Road between the Haven Banks and Marsh Barton areas of Exeter. The site consists of a triangle of land, currently a car sales site, bounded to the south by the South Coast mainline railway, to the north by Willeys Avenue and to the east by a row of terraced houses. The site lies at an altitude of c.10m AOD (Figure 1). The soils of this area are characterised as *urban* (SSEW 1983). The bedrock of this area is the sedimentary bedrock of the Alphington Breccia Formation (BGS 2018).

1.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site is located in an area of mixed industrial and residential use that developed on open land in the later 19th and early 20th century. The South Devon Railway was built across the land to the south in the mid 1840s, but until the early 20th century the site lay within fields and, latterly, a nursery. Tan Lane to the south-east was the site of a pottery works, and Willeys Foundry relocated here in c.1894.

The Mission Church on Willeys Road was built between 1888 and 1904 on land that formerly belonged to the *South Devon Nursery*. Willeys Avenue takes its name from the engineering works that was once located on the corner of Willeys Avenue and Water Lane; the land on which the Mission Church was built was also donated by Henry Willey in 1904. The houses on the end of Isca Road were hit by a bomb in December 1942; this also collapsed the Mission Church (described as a *tin tabernacle*). Whilst the houses on Isca Road were rebuilt, the church was not.

1.4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Limited archaeological fieldwork appears to have been undertaken in the vicinity of the site in recent years. Prehistoric river channels are recorded in the wider area (EHER 1816765), and preserved timbers dating to AD650-820 were uncovered prior to the construction of the museum storage facility (the Ark) on Exton Road. An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Exeter Archaeology in 1998 at the former Smiths Meters site on Willeys Avenue (DHC 8264A/1).

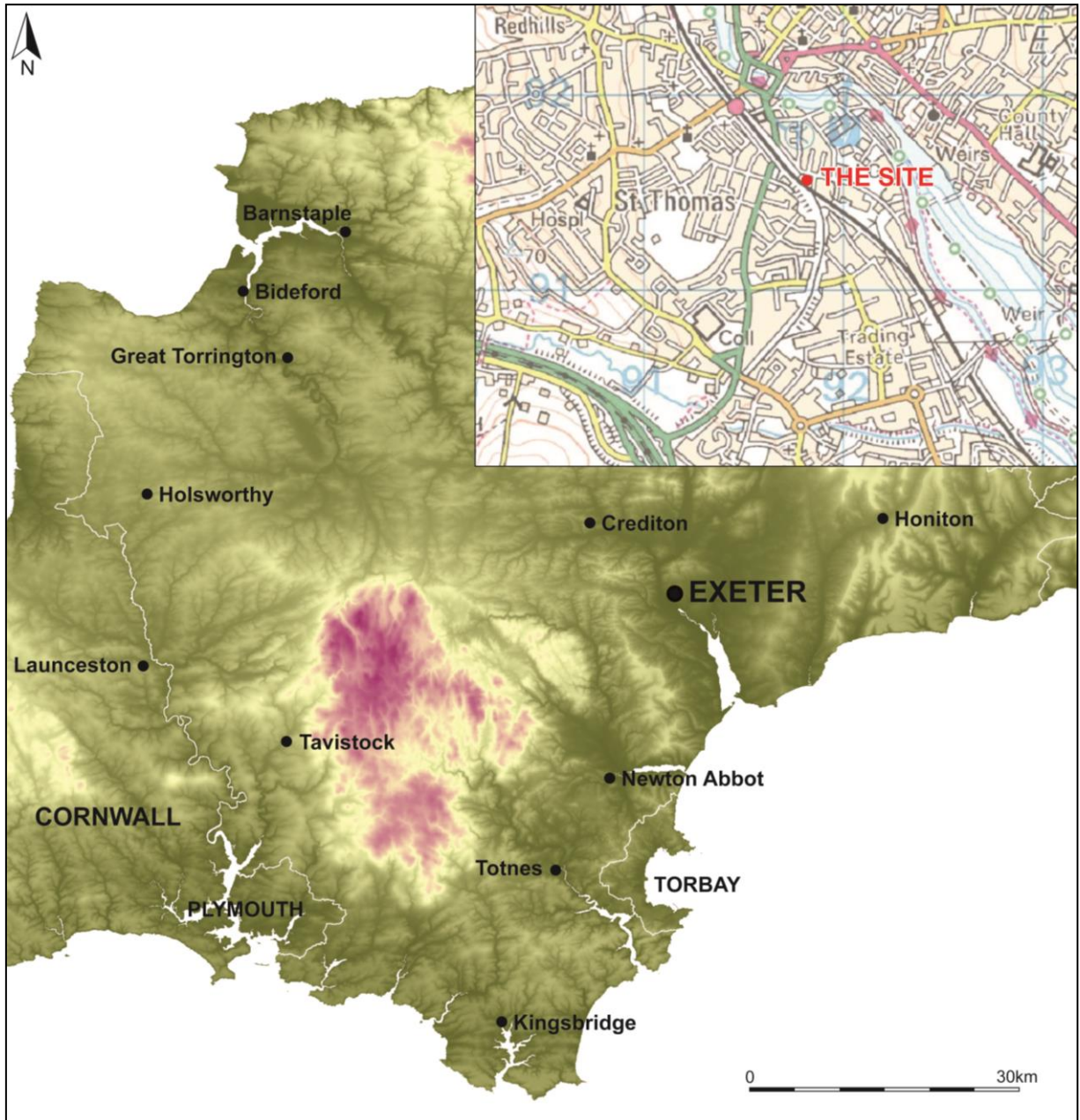


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION (THE SITE IS INDICATED).

2.0 DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

2.1 DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

The Mission Church on Willeys Road, Haven Banks, Exeter, was built between 1888 and 1904 on land that formed part of the South Devon Nursery. Willeys Avenue takes its name from the engineering works that was once located on the corner of Willeys Avenue and Water Lane (demolished 1991), which employed over a 1000 workers in 1900. The land for Isca Terrace was donated by Henry Willey and was the first council-built estate in Exeter (1904-1907); the land on which the Mission Church was built was also donated by Henry Willey in 1904, and he presumably viewed the church as a necessary part of the development for the betterment of his workers. The church also doubled as the boys section of the Comrie High School for Girls and Preparatory School for Boys; Tommy Cooper attended the school in the 1920s, and grew up on Ford Street. The houses on the end of Isca Road were hit by a bomb in December 1942; this also collapsed the Mission Church (described as a *tin tabernacle*). Whereas the houses on Isca Road were rebuilt (the first houses in Britain to be repaired by a scheme to train apprentices), the church was not.

2.2 CARTOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT

The first cartographic source available to this study is the 1801 Ordnance Survey draft map of the area, which shows the land to the east of St Thomas as agricultural fields and plantations or nurseries (Figure 2). The site itself appears to be located towards the centre of a large enclosed field.



FIGURE 2: EXTRACT FROM THE 1801 OS SURVEYOR'S DRAFT MAP (BL); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.

By the mid 19th century a gas works is shown to the east alongside the redeveloped canal basins. It shows the site as part of a garden accompanying a house owned by Francis Bickham Short and occupied by Samuel Bright (Figure 3). The map labels this area as part of the Johns Barn Estate.

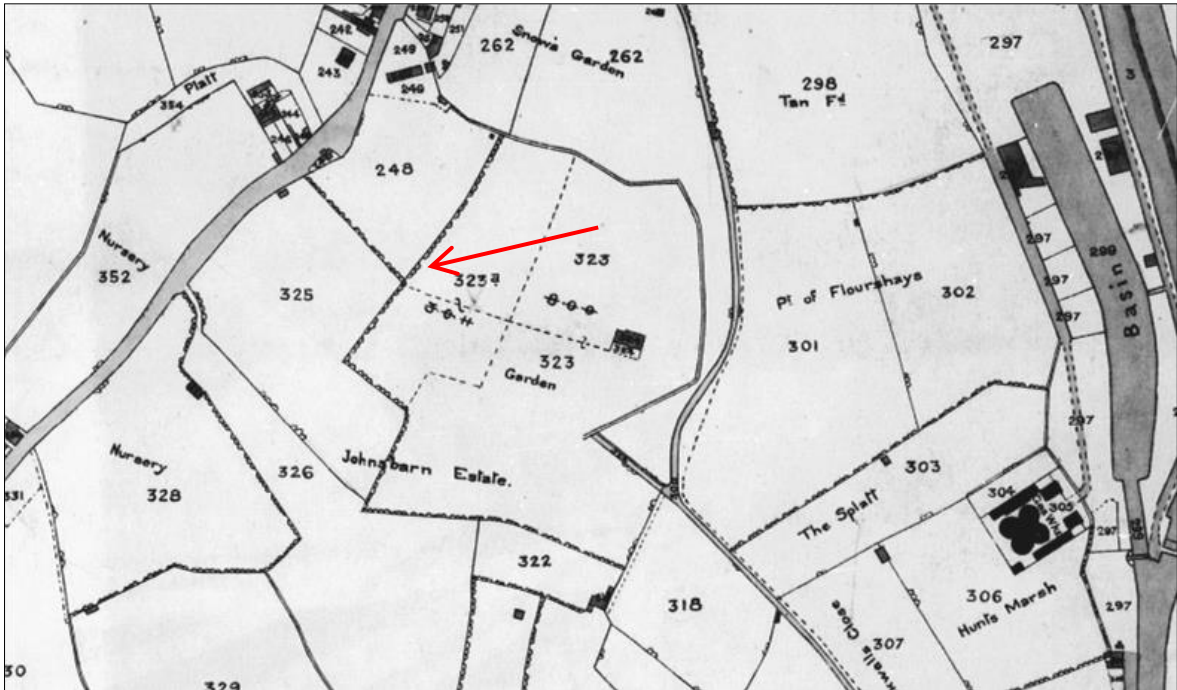


FIGURE 3: EXTRACT FROM THE ST THOMAS TITHE MAP (TNA); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.

The 1st edition OS map shows the former South Devon railway slicing through the former fields along the southern edge of the site (Figure 4). The gas works have expanded and plot no.323 on the tithe map has become the *South Devon Nursery*, with the *Well Park Brewery* to the east. A number of glasshouses are shown to the north of the proposed site.



FIGURE 4: EXTRACT 1875-88 OS 25INCH MAP (DHC); THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE IS INDICATED.

The 2nd edition OS map (Figure 5) shows the area in transition: there are numerous new buildings (including Willeys Foundry and the Pottery), and roads have been laid out across the South Devon Nursery in preparation for the construction of houses. The *Mission Church* is shown for the first time, and was presumably newly-built.

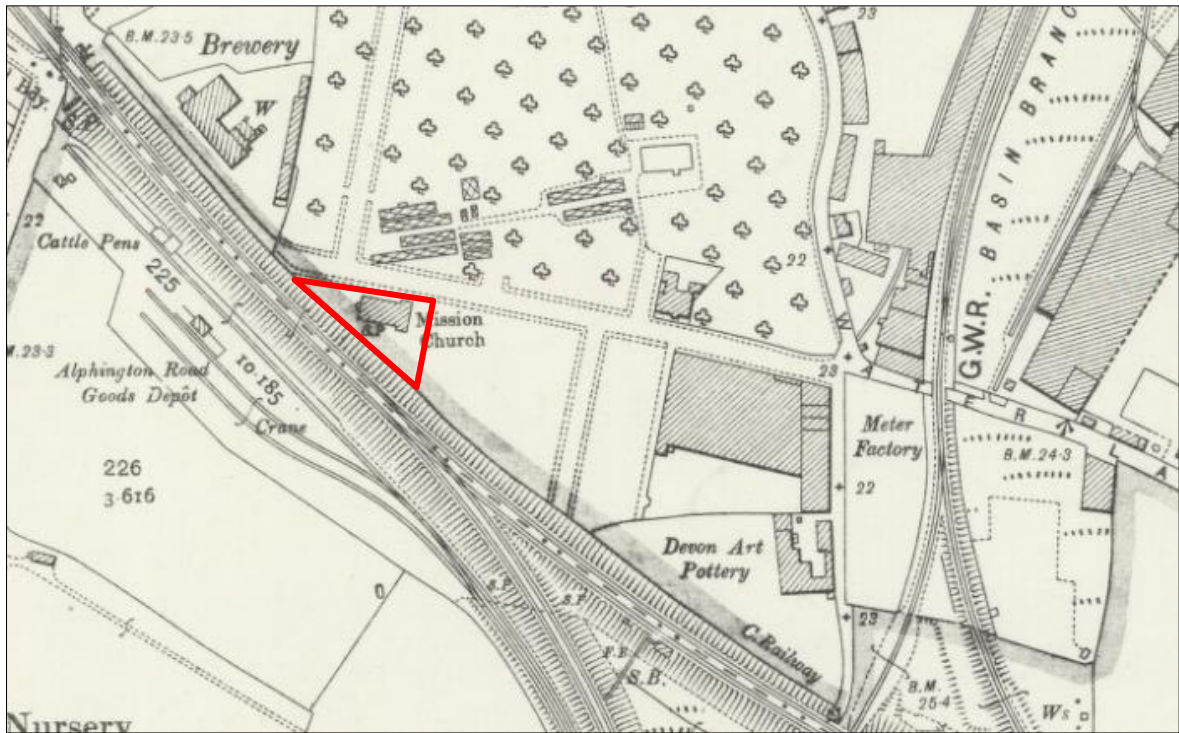


FIGURE 5: EXTRACT FROM THE 1904 OS 25INCH MAP, 1904 (DHC); THE SITE IS INDICATED.

The 1932 OS map shows the terraced houses along Willeys Avenue, Welcome Street, Isca Road, Fords Street, and Chamberlain Road, and that another structure had been built in the grounds of the Mission Church (Figure 6). Isca Road was the first council estate built in Exeter (1904-1907) on land donated by Henry Willey of Willeys Foundry. The Church (or perhaps the adjacent building?) served as the school for the boys section of the *Comrie High School for Girls and Preparatory School for Boys*. A bombing raid in December 1942 hit the end of Isca Road and collapsed the Mission Church (Exeter Memories 2018).

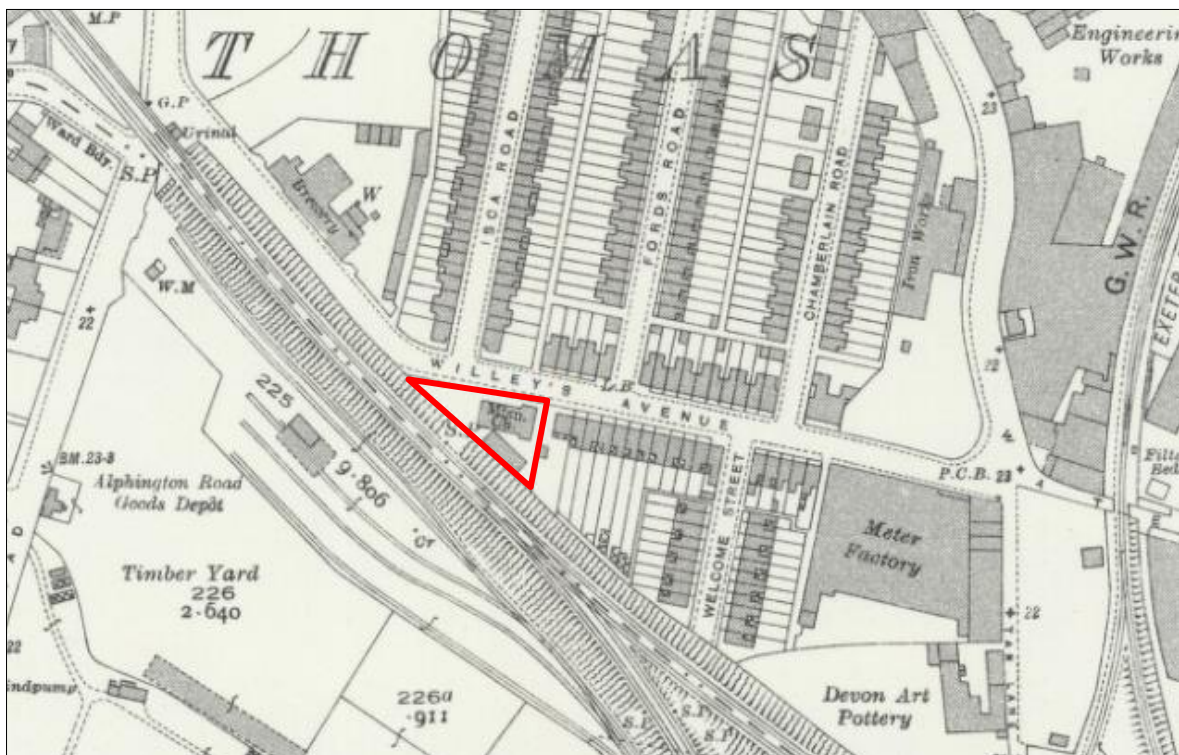


FIGURE 6: EXTRACT FROM THE OS 25INCH MAP OF 1932 (DHC).

2.3 SITE INSPECTION

The development site is located within the Haven Banks area of Exeter, on a triangular plot of land covering an area of 0.85ha in the angle between Willeys Avenue and the South Devon railway embankment. The south-west boundary of the site is formed of modern concrete posts with steel mesh fencing. The north boundary is formed of older and somewhat dilapidated concrete posts with chainlink fencing, pieced by a central gate and reinforced by later security fencing. The east boundary is formed of a series of red brick walls. The central part of the site is surfaced with tarmac; the western and eastern parts are of stone hardstanding. At the back of the site, towards the southern end, is a rectangular building measuring c.7.5×19m, with flat-roofed extensions to either end. This structure is shown on OS maps from 1932, and is labelled as *St Andrew's Hall* on the 1949×50 OS map. It is labelled as a *store* on the 1958×78 OS map. The flat-roofed extensions are shown on the post-war maps, and presumably represent the adaptation of what was a church hall as a replacement church.



FIGURE 7: VIEW ALONG THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION OF B1.1 (left) AND B1.2 (right); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

The central part (B1.1) of the building consists of a timber-framed structure clad in corrugated iron sheet, with a pitched roof of corrugated asbestos sheets with terracotta ridge tiles. This building has been extended to the east (B1.2) and west (B1.3) with the addition of single-storey extensions with flat felt roofs. The north-east elevation of B1.1 features six windows with doors to each end; to the western end there is a wide garage door formed of three tall narrow multi-panel arts and craft-type late 19th/early 20th century doors. The windows have a 4-pane hopper casement window over a larger single-pane fixed casement. Both doors were glazed with two large panes of glass; the western door has been modified to fill a wider opening. One window is visible in the south-west elevation; this is identical to the windows in the north-east elevation, save that the four-pane hopper casement sits over an eight-paned timber casement, presumably an original window. In the apex of west gable of B1.1 above B1.3 there is a four-paned awning casement window. The interior of B1.1 was divided into two unequal parts. The larger eastern end is largely taken up with lock-up units of modern chipboard; these were not accessible. The main space is boarded-out with panel and batten framing with moulded skirting boards and low dado rail. The current tenant reported that a former owner had removed the long wooden pews and a marble font; these were presumably reclaimed from the church after it had been destroyed. The floor is of even-width pine boards. The smaller western end is served by the garage door and features a concrete floor.

B1.2 features five windows: one to the north, two to the east and two to the south-west. Three of these windows are six-pane hopper casements; the two to the south-west have been modified or replaced. The interior is accessed via a single door from B1.1 and is divided into three rooms; two of the doorways are served by c.1920s four-panelled doors. These rooms are, from north to south, an office(?), a toilet, and a kitchen.

B1.3 is accessed via a door from the garage in B1.1; this opening features another late 19th century four-panel door. The extension consists of a single room (now an office) with a floor of carpet over floorboards. There is a blocked door in the angled wall, and two windows in the west wall. These both consist of paired three-pane timber casement windows, with coiled catches and bar-closers, in pegged, and thus presumably reused, frames.

2.3.1 SUMMARY

The Mission Church was built before 1904 and was destroyed in 1942. The surviving structure on the site was built before 1932 (probably in the 1920s), and appears to have been a church hall. The reported presence of pews and a marble font in the hall after 1942 would indicate that fittings from the church were recovered from the bomb site and placed in the hall, suggesting the hall was used as a replacement church/church hall. Since 1958×73 the hall has been used as a store, most recently as a series of lock-ups. The associated yard is partly metalled, and partly under tarmac. No trace of the church appears to survive.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed site was the location of a Mission Church built before 1904 but destroyed during in 1942. The surviving structure on the site was built before 1932 and may have been a church hall associated with the Mission. It is understood that pews and a marble font were removed from this building by a previous owner, which would suggest that following the destruction of the church fittings were recovered and incorporated into the hall. It is possible therefore that the hall was used as a replacement church. From the 1950s the hall has been used as a store, and most recently as a series of lock-ups and car dealership. No trace of the church building survives, and given the likely nature of its construction (i.e. timber frame and corrugated iron sheeting), no remains are anticipated. The archaeological significance of the site is likely to rest on any buried palaeo-channels that might exist, and any associated palaeo-environmental deposits.

4.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES

Published Sources:

- Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists** 2014 (Revised 2017): *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment*.
- English Heritage** 2008: *Conservation Principles: policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment*.
- English Heritage** 2011: *Seeing History in the View*.
- English Heritage** 2012: *Understanding Place: historic area assessments in a planning and development context*.
- Historic Scotland** 2010: *Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting*.
- Lysons, D. & Lysons, S.** 1814: *Magna Britannia, volume 6: Devonshire*. London.
- Soil Survey of England and Wales** 1983: *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (a brief explanation of the constituent soil associations)*.
- Watts, V.** 2004: *The Cambridge Dictionary to English Place Names*. Cambridge University Press.

Websites:

- British Geological Survey** 2018: *Geology of Britain Viewer*. www.bgs.ac.uk [accessed 05.08.2018]
- National Library of Scotland** 2018: *Ordnance Survey Maps*. www.maps.nls.uk/os/ [accessed 05.08.2018]
- Exeter Memories** 2018: [accessed 9.8.18]
The South Devon Pottery- Hart and Moist <http://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/hartmoist.php>
Isca Road <http://www.exetermemories.co.uk/em/streets/isca.php>

Unpublished Sources:

- British Library – 1801 OS surveyor's draft map

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE



VIEW OF THE FENCE ALONG THE NORTHERN SIDE OF THE SITE; VIEWED FROM THE WNW.



VIEW OF THE SITE FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



AS ABOVE, SHOWING THE SITE ENTRANCE; VIEWED FROM THE NNW.



LEFT: VIEW ALONG NORTHERN BOUNDARY; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.
RIGHT: VIEW ALONG THE NORTHERN SITE; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



VIEW TOWARDS THE NORTH-WESTERN CORNER OF THE SITE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



VIEW TOWARDS THE SOUTH-WESTERN SITE BOUNDARY WITH RAILWAY EMBANKMENT BEHIND; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



VIEW FROM THE SITE ENTRANCE TO B1.1 (LEFT) AND B1.3 (EAST); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.



VIEW ALONG THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION OF B1.1 (LEFT) AND B1.3 (RIGHT); VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



VIEW FROM THE SITE ENTRANCE TOWARDS THE EASTERN END OF THE SITE; VIEWED FROM THE WNW.



VIEW OF THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION OF B1.1; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



LEFT: DETAIL OF THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION OF B1.1, SHOWING PANELLED LATE 19TH CENTURY DOORS TO THE WESTERN END; VIEWED FROM THE WNW.

MIDDLE: DETAIL OF THE INTERNAL FACE OF ONE OF THE PANELLED 19TH CENTURY DOORS TO THE WESTERN END OF B1.1; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.

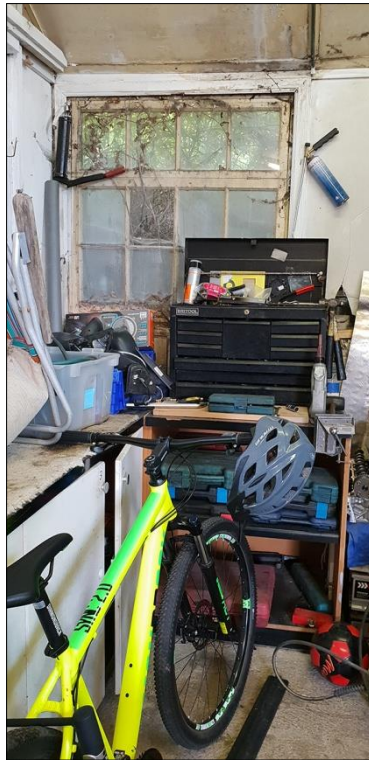
RIGHT: DETAIL OF THE INTERNAL FACE OF THE PANELLED 19TH CENTURY EXTERNAL DOORS TO THE WESTERN END OF B1.1; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



DETAIL OF THE INTERIOR OF THE WESTERN END OF B1.1 SHOWING THE PANELLED 19TH CENTURY DOORS; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.



DETAIL OF THE INTERIOR OF THE WESTERN END OF B1.1 SHOWING DETAIL OF WINDOW IN SOUTH-WEST ELEVATION; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



LEFT: DETAIL OF THE WINDOW IN THE SOUTH-WEST ELEVATION OF B1.1; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



RIGHT: DETAIL OF THE INTERNAL DOOR INTO B1.3 FROM B1.1; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



DETAIL OF THE INTERIOR OF B1.3; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST.



DETAIL OF THE INTERIOR OF B1.3 SHOWING THE WINDOWS IN THE NORTH-WEST ELEVATION; VIEWED FROM THE EAST.



LEFT: DETAIL OF THE INTERIOR OF B1.1 SHOWING WINDOWS ALONG THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION; THE TIMBER PLANK FLOOR; AND MODERN CHIPBOARD DIVISION OF THE MAIN ROOM; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

MIDDLE: DETAIL OF THE SOUTH-EASTERN END OF THE INTERIOR OF B1.1 SHOWING THE INTERNAL NORTH-EAST ELEVATION WITH AN EXAMPLE OF THE WINDOWS; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

RIGHT: DETAIL OF THE INTERIOR OF B1.1 SHOWING WINDOWS ALONG THE NORTH-EASTERN ELEVATION; THE TIMBER PLANK FLOOR; AND MODERN CHIPBOARD DIVISION OF THE MAIN ROOM; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



LEFT: DETAIL OF THE INTERNAL NORTH-EAST ELEVATION OF THE MAIN ROOM OF B1.1; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

MIDDLE: DETAIL OF THE OPENING FROM B1.1 INTO B1.2; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH.

RIGHT: DETAIL OF THE SOUTH-WESTERN OF THE INTERNAL DOORS WITHIN B1.2; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



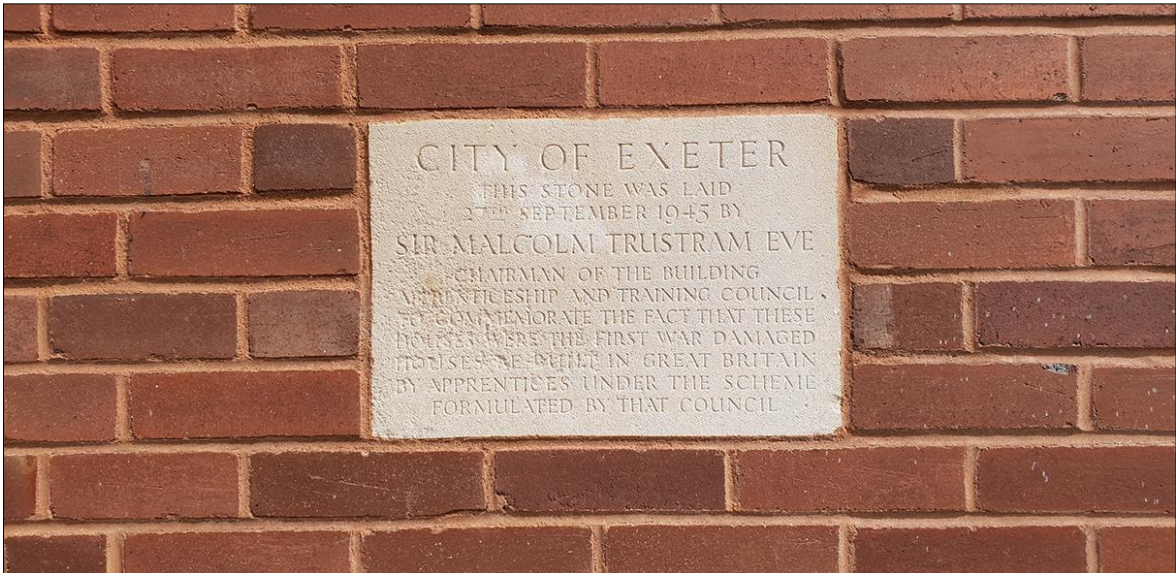
LEFT: DETAIL SOUTHERN OF THE INTERNAL DOORS WITHIN B1.2; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH.

MIDDLE: DETAIL OF THE SOUTH-EASTERN OF THE INTERNAL DOORS WITHIN B1.2; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST

RIGHT: DETAIL OF THE SOUTHERN ROOM WITHIN B1.2; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



VIEW TOWARDS THE SITE FROM ISCA ROAD, SHOWING LOCATION OF PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE BUILDING APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SCHEME; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST.



DETAIL OF THE PLAQUE COMMEMORATING THE BUILDING APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SCHEME; VIEWED FROM THE WEST.



The Old Dairy
Hacche Lane Business Park
Pathfields Business Park
South Molton
Devon
EX36 3LH

Tel: 01769 573555
Email: mail@swarch.net