

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Churchstow, South Hams	<b>National Grid Reference:</b> SX 71314 45782	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Archaeological monitoring and recording on land at Little Court, Churchstow, South Hams, Devon during groundwork associated with the construction of two dwellings		<b>Photo attached?</b> YES
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 0969/18/FUL	<b>Recipient museum:</b> Plymouth City Museum	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> southwes1-343253	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> N/A	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> CLT19	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 29 <sup>th</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	
<p><b>Description of works.</b></p> <p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of a Private Client, during groundwork associated with the construction of two dwellings at Little Court, Churchstow, South Hams, Devon (Figure 3). This work was undertaken on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 in accordance with a WSI drawn up in consultation with the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team.</p> <p>Churchstow is located c.2km north-west of Kingsbridge and c.1km south of the River Avon, along the A379. The site is located on the east side of Churchstow, to the south-south-east of the church, off the A379. It is on a south facing slope at c.100AOD. The soils of the area are the well drained fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Denbigh 1 Association (SSEW 1983), overlying the slates, siltstones and sandstones of the Meadfoot Group (BGS 2020).</p> <p>Churchstow was in the hundred of Stanborough and deanery of Woodleigh. Its manor belonged to Buckfastleigh abbey until the dissolution (Lysons 1822). In 1822 it was the principle church of Kingsbridge (Lysons 1822). The historic cores of the settlement are about the Grade II* Listed 14<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Mary (MDV7076) north-north-west of the site; and the Grade II Listed 17<sup>th</sup> century Home farmhouse (MDV91154) to the south of the site. Devon's Historic Landscape Character describes the site as part of the modern settlement of Churchstow, although within a field-scape of predominantly 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century Barton fields and medieval strip fields. No previous archaeological works have taken place on the site. The 1803 surveyor's draft map depicts the site as within a large rectangular field between the church and 'Court' structures. The 1839 tithe map shows continuity with the earlier mapping: the site within plot 324; part of <i>Court</i>, which belonged to Edmund Bray, was occupied by Robert Hodge and was called <i>Dry Meadow</i> and was under pasture. By 1886 the village is expanding, but plot 324 remains unchanged, although its southern boundary is altered by 1906. According to Ordnance Survey mapping the north-west corner of plot 324 is annexed and two structures (one corresponding to part of the extant <i>Little Court</i>, the other in the western part of the site) with an access track/road have been instated by 1955. By 1964-86 <i>Meadow Court</i> in the north-west annex has been built, <i>Little Court</i> has been expanded, the structure in the western part of the site has been removed and an approximate north-south boundary dividing the site has been added. Satellite imagery shows that this dividing boundary is gone by 2002 and in the north part of the site the foundations of a walled area/structure are visible between 2002 and 2010 but are absent by 2017.</p> <p>An area (c.23m×7.50m) was excavated to the level of formation with sondages; and four trenches (totalling c.84m in length and each 1.40m wide) excavated across the areas subject to terracing and across proposed house plots (where practicable) were excavated to the depth of weathered natural (see Figure 3). Modern features and natural geological variation were encountered. No archaeological features were present.</p> <p>Topsoil (100) consisted of a turf and a mid-dark grey-brown, friable clay-silt (0.12m-0.16m in depth). Across most of the site Topsoil (100) overlaid Subsoil (101), a mid-reddish grey-brown, soft clay-silt (0.12m-0.25m thick). Subsoil (101) overlaid Subsoil (102), a mid yellow-red brown soft clay-silt (0.28-0.41m thick). Subsoil (102) overlaid Natural (103), a mid reddish-yellow, soft clay and weathered shillet rock with bands of compact rocky shillet and soft gritty shillet and clay (see Figures 2 and 3).</p> <p>Subsoil (101) was cut by various modern features: concrete pads {104} for a garden wall in the road access area; Terrace cut [105] for a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century structure/concrete and block retaining wall {106} and platform (107) (Figure 1); modern service trench [110]; concrete pad (115)' and Terrace cut [112] for the extant <i>Little Court</i> (Figure 3). Pads {104} were c.0.24m×0.39m wide and deep, pad (115) contained black gravel and was c.0.07m thick, both were overlaid by Topsoil (100). Wall {106} and platform (107) filled a terrace cut over 1m deep at its north end and over 7.20m long and they were overlaid by redeposited subsoil/made-ground (109), which was then overlaid by topsoil (100). Service trench [110] was 0.60m wide and over 0.60m deep and contained redeposited subsoil (111) and plastic 'caution' tape at a depth of 0.75m below the surface. Fill (111) was overlaid by Topsoil (100). Terrace cut [112] sloped gently to the south and was only partially exposed. It was overlaid by stony made-ground (113) then redeposited subsoil (114), which was then overlaid by topsoil (100). Terrace cut [112] aligned with a visible extent of the terrace in the access track/retaining wall to its east and the extant straight sided retaining wall to its west.</p>		

All finds recovered from the site were subsequently discarded. The topsoil finds included: ×3 sherds (13g) of White Refined Earthenware; ×1 sherd (10g) of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century red industrial ware/flowerpot; ×3 fragments (55g) of white (bathroom) tile; and ×1 fragment (3g) of modern clear panel glass.

No significant archaeological features or deposits were present.

**Recorder:** J. Bampton

**Date sent to HER:** 05/02/2020



FIGURE 1: LEFT - CONCRETE SLAB (107); VIEWED FROM THE EAST-SOUTH-EAST (2M SCALE).

FIGURE 2: RIGHT: TERRACE CUT [112]; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (1M SCALE).

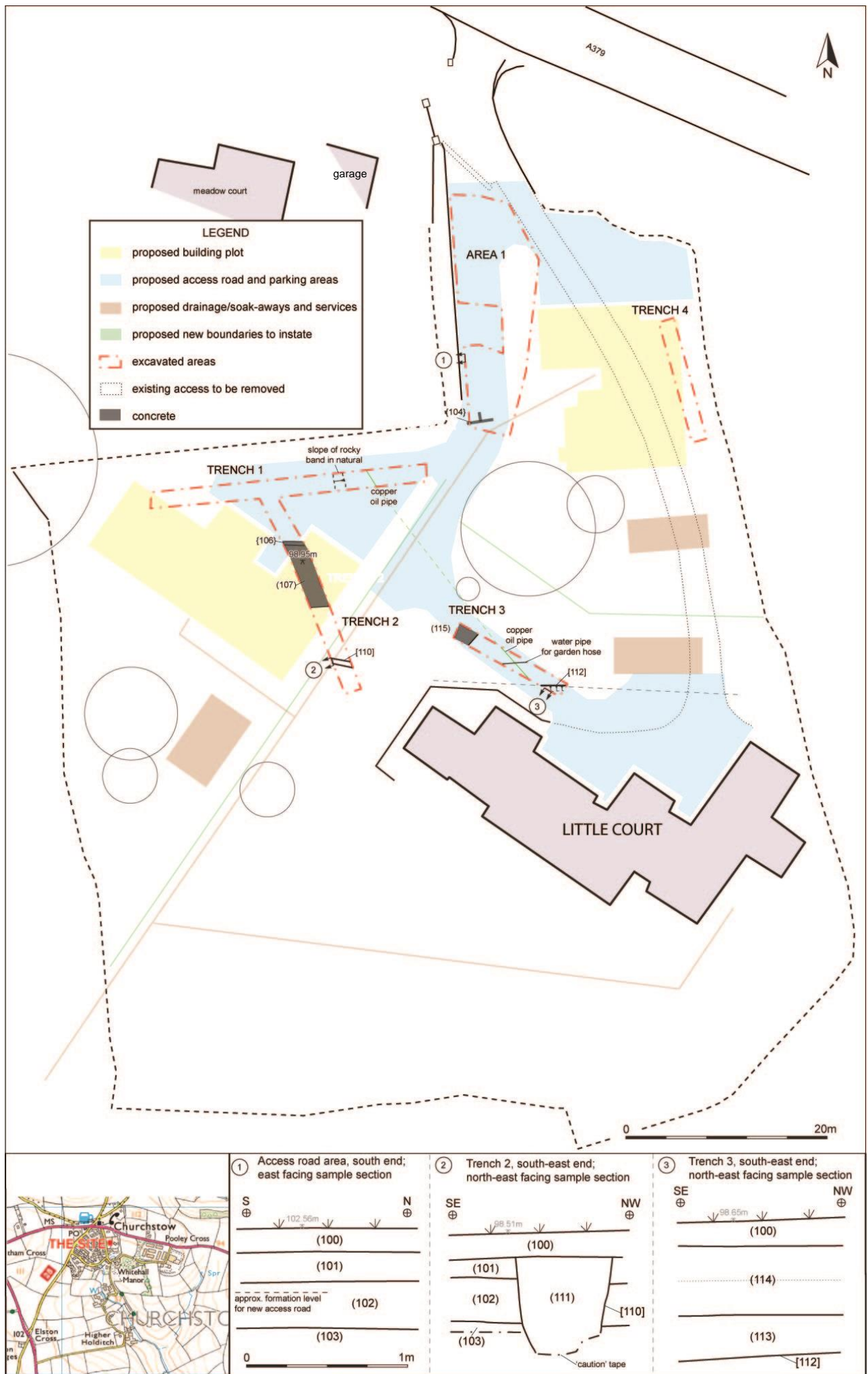


FIGURE 3: SITE PLAN AND SECTION DRAWINGS.