

PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO COVER AN OPEN YARD AT CHURCHSTYLE FARM, FARWAY, DEVON

Heritage Impact Assessment

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**1.1 Project Background**

South West Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned to produce a heritage impact assessment as part of a planning application for the proposed agricultural umbrella building to cover an open stock yard at Churchstyle Farm, Farway, East Devon.

**1.2 Site Location**

Churchstyle Farm is located approximately 4.2km south of Honiton and the A30. The site is located immediately to the east of the main barns at Churchstyle Farm and covers the existing concrete courtyard. St Michaels and All Angels Church is present immediately to the east, with Farway primary school lying to the south of the farm. The site is located on levelled ground at an altitude of c.145m Above Ordinance Datum (AOD) and is surrounded by various farm buildings (Figure 1). The soils of this area are the well-drained coarse loamy soils of the Bearsted 2 group (SSEW 1983), which overlie the mudstone sedimentary bedrock of the Branscombe Mudstone Formation (BGS 2019); superficial deposits of clay, silt and gravel are present to the north and south.

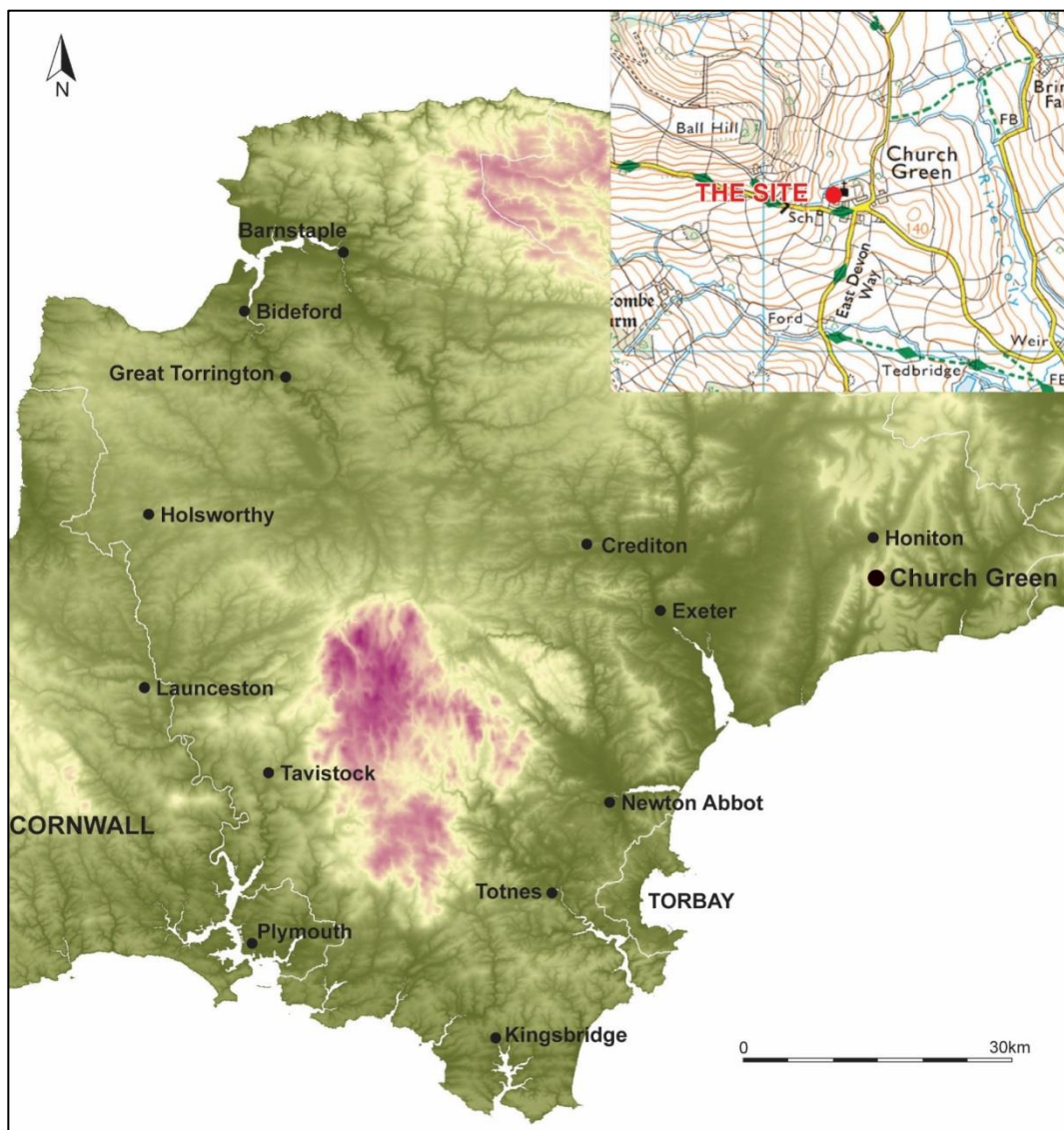


FIGURE 1: LOCATION MAP. THE SITE IS INDICATED.

### 1.3 Historical and Archaeological Background

Churchstyle Farm lies within the small settlement of Church Green, and lies within the Hundred of Colyton and the deanery of Honiton. The Devon environment viewer HLC lists the site as *historic settlement*, surrounded by medieval enclosures which are partly based on strip fields and post-medieval orchards, some retaining medieval elements to their boundaries. A sub-rounded field boundary [MDV 116218] to the east of the farm indicates a possible enclosure of medieval or earlier date. Farway was first documented in 1086 under the name *Farewei*, with various changes in name during the early medieval period, common endings being *weie* or *weye*.

### 1.4 Heritage Impact Assessment

For the purposes of this assessment, the *indirect effect* of a development is taken to be its effect on the wider historic environment. The principal focus of such an assessment falls upon identified designated heritage assets like Listed buildings or Scheduled Monuments. Depending on the nature of the heritage asset concerned, and the size, character and design of a development, its effect – and principally its visual effect – can impact on designated assets over huge distances. This will not be the case in this instance and only heritage assets within 2km have been considered as part of this assessment.

The methodology adopted in this document is based on that outlined in *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA3 Historic England 2015), with reference to ICOMOS (2011) and DoT (DMRB, WEBTAG) guidance. The assessment of effect at this stage of a development is an essentially subjective one, but one based on the experience and professional judgement of the authors.

This report follows the staged approach to proportionate decision making outlined in *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England 2015, 6). *Step one* is to identify the designated heritage assets that might be affected by the development. The first stage of that process is to determine an appropriate search radius, and this would vary according to the height, size and/or prominence of the proposed development.

The second stage in the process is to look at the heritage assets within the search radius and assign to one of three categories:

- Category #1 assets: Where proximity to the proposed development, the significance of the heritage asset concerned, or the likely magnitude of impact, demands detailed consideration.
- Category #2 assets: Assets where location and current setting would indicate that the impact of the proposed development is likely to be limited, but some uncertainty remains.
- Category #3 assets: Assets where location, current setting, significance would strongly indicate the impact would be no higher than negligible and detailed consideration both unnecessary and disproportionate. These assets are still listed in the impact summary table.

For *Step two* and *Step three*, and with an emphasis on practicality and proportionality (*Setting of Heritage Assets* p15 and p18), this assessment discusses each site individually. Each individual asset will have its baseline sensitivity, and the individual entry elaborates on local circumstance and site-specific factors. The individual assessments should be read in conjunction with the overall summary discussion, as the impact assessment is a reflection of both (See Table 1 ).

#### 1.4.1 Church of St Michael, approximately 25m from proposed site

The Grade II\* Listed church of Norman origin, with some visible 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century elements, with significant refurbishment in 1876. The porch of the church faces south, with the main route of access and the primary view directly south-east of the church.

The listing text reads as follows:

*Parish church. Norman origins with some C13, C14 and C15 work, a dated renovation of 1628 at the expense of Humphrey Hutchins, thorough renovation of 1876. Local stone and flint rubble with Beerstone*

*ashlar quoins and detail; red tile roof including bands of scalloped tiles and the aisle has fleur-de-lys crested ridge tiles. Plan and development: nave and north aisle with chapel are Norman with C13 improvements, the aisle was refurbished in 1628, C14 chancel, and C15 west tower. The whole church was refurbished in 1876. Exterior: although most of the exterior detail is C19 work the variety of styles suggests that original work was copied. The gables have C19 shaped kneelers, coping and apex crosses. Unbuttressed west tower with embattled parapet and carved gargoyle water spouts and semi-octagonal stair turret projecting from the south east corner. The 2-light belfry windows with stone grilles and 3-light west window here have Perpendicular tracery and the west doorway is a 2-centred arch with moulded surround. The south side of the nave is 3 bays. Central doorway is a 2-centred arch with moulded surround and cap to the shafts. It is behind a C19 gabled porch which has a 2-centred outer arch with moulded surround. Each side are 2-light windows with Early Decorated style tracery and hoodmoulds with carved foliage label stops. South side of the chancel has a cusped lancet and small priests door. The east chancel window has reticulated Decorated tracery. The east end of the aisle has a Perpendicular window. The north side of the chapel has 2 cusped lancets and the break between this and the aisle is marked by a C19 projecting chimneystack. The 2 north windows of the aisle have segmental pointed arches and contain Decorated style tracery and the hoodmoulds have carved foliage label stops. The east window has plate tracery. Interior: the roofs are all C19. Nave and aisle have open wagon roofs with moulded ribs and purlins and carved bosses. There is a more ornate version in the north chapel and an open arch- braced truss roof. The tall tower arch has a triple-chamfered arch ring. C19 chancel arch has a moulded surround and marble shafts; a simpler version between the aisle and chapel and even plainer version from chancel to chapel. 4-bay arcade has Norman piers. The capitals have been fashioned to accommodate the C14 or C15 arches but some of the original scallop carving of their capitals remain. Floor of C19 tiles with some encaustic tiles in the sanctuary. Plastered walls. C19 carved Beerstone reredos with marble shafts is in Gothic style with crocketed pinnacles and cusped arches and panels carved with sacred emblems. The altar is a C16 oak communion table. C18 brass chandelier in the chancel. The rest of the furniture and fittings are C19; the oak communion rail on twisted brass standards and repousse brackets, the Gothic style stalls, pine benches etc. The C19 font is Beerstone with marble corner shafts. Memorials: the best monument is that in memory of Sir Edward Prideaux (d. 1628). It is Beerstone and Renaissance in style. His life size effigy lies supine in prayer dressed in barristers robes on a chest tomb under an ornamented round arch surmounted by the family arms. At the foot of the monument a knight in armour lies on his side; it is believed to Peter, Sir Edward's grandson who erected the monument. Also in the north aisle a bust is set in the wall over the inscription "This parte was neu builte in the yere of our Lord 1628 by the Benovolence of Humphrie Hutchins of this Parish". There are other C18 and C19 marble memorials mostly to members of the Prideaux family, notably the one in the chapel in memory of Sir Peter Prideaux (d. 1705). Some C19 stained glass.*

The church sits within a wider churchtown complex, and is likely best considered in conjunction with the GII tombstones that lie within the churchyard as well as the GII listed Old Rectory. The proposed structure would be partially visible from the church, though the majority of views would likely be blocked by the standing large round metal slurry silo, positioned between the 15<sup>th</sup> century tower and the proposed site. The planned structure would also be of a similar style to the current modern agricultural barns and likely not create further disturbance to the views from the church. As wider landscape views from the church to the west are already obstructed by the current barns, the addition of a new cover over the yard would be in character with its current and historic use. With this in mind, the impact on the immediate setting of the building is **negligible**, and on the wider landscape setting **neutral**.

#### **1.4.2 Listed Gravestones and Tombs within churchyard, approximately 25m from proposed site**

Four GII listed tombs and headstones, with a further tomb having a monument record but not listed, are present within the churchyard for St Michael's church. These monuments appear to be currently well cared for and add value to the group setting of the church and churchyard. The listed monuments are all present to the south of the church, with the Wheaton chest tomb to the immediate south-west of the church, and the closest to the proposed development.

Due to both the churchyard walls and high vegetation between the churchyard and the farmyard there is no intervisibility between the tombs and the proposed site. The slurry silo also features as a heavy visual boundary between the tombs and the proposed site. With this in mind the impact of the proposal on the immediate setting of the asset is **neutral**, and on the wider landscape setting is **neutral**.

#### **1.4.3 The Old Rectory, approximately 70m from proposed site**

This Grade II listed building was the former rectory for the church, constructed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, and forms part of the central churchtown elements of the settlement in conjunction with the church and its setting.

The listing text reads as follows:

*Former rectory. Circa 1840-50. Local stone and flint rubble with some Beerstone detail; the front is plastered; stone rubble stacks with plastered brick divided chimneyshafts; slate roof. Plan: the house faces south-south-west, say south, away from the lane and church. The front block contains the 3 principal rooms. The left (west) one has a gable end stack and the other two share an axial stack serving back-to-back fireplaces. The centre and right room section is double depth. The rear section has a double roof at right angles to the front roof. This includes the entrance hall and main stair (there is no front doorway) and a service room heated by an axial stack. A 1-room plan kitchen block projects east from the rear part, its roof the same axis as the front block. It has a projecting gable-end stack. This block includes the former parish room. 2 storeys. Restrained Tudor Gothic style. Exterior: symmetrical 3-window front. The centre bay is broken forward a short distance and is gabled. It has a ground floor canted bay window and a first floor casement with hoodmould. In the gable above is an uninscribed shield-shaped plaque. Either side are ground floor casement windows with hoodmoulds and first floor gabled half dormers. Here, and around the rest of the house are mostly original mullioned windows with hoodmoulds. The ground floor windows have transoms. Most contain replacement glass but a couple of rear windows contain diamond panes of leaded glass. The roofs are gable-ended with shaped kneelers and coping. The rear elevation is less regular and includes a double gabled section. Interior: not inspected but it is said to contain a great deal of original joinery and other detail.*

The Old Rectory is situated c.70m south-east of the proposed development site, there is no intervisibility between the two, as the main historic elements of Churchstyle Farm lie between the Rectory and the proposed development site, which would completely screen any potential impact of the new structure. With this in mind, the impact on the immediate setting of the monument is **neutral**, and on the wider landscape setting **negligible**.

#### **1.4.4 Local Undesignated Assets**

The local Church of England primary school exists as a secondary asset within the context of the settlement. It has stone rubble and rusticated stonework with some Gothic detailing but has been much modernised and extended. The views of the church tower, from its position south-west of the church, may be affected by the proposed structure. However, the proposed development being of a lower profile, and mostly in keeping with the current modern agricultural structures, will likely have small noticeable impact on the view; meaning a possible slightly reduced view with little impact upon its nature.

The school forms something of a group with the church and Old Rectory and appears to have similar Victorian detailing to the Old Rectory. It is not expected to be authentic and its integrity is low, due to the alterations. It is a fairly low value asset architecturally/historically but has some communal value to the community as a surviving village school.

To the south-east clustered around the small road junction, are a series of small low lying 20<sup>th</sup> century bungalows, all within walled, fenced or tall hedge-bound garden plots. Further east are a small group of modern white rendered houses and a stone-built bungalow with raised gable which might be a converted/adapted barn.



From this we can see that the churchtown was specific in its historic form, merely church, farm, rectory and school, with modern alterations and growth from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. With this in mind the impact of the proposal on the settling of the settlement as a whole is **neutral**, and on the wider landscape setting is **neutral**.

### 1.5 Archaeological (Direct) Impact

The new plans are to provide an 'umbrella' roof structure, carried on girder posts to cover an open concrete yard to the side of existing agricultural open-span sheds; the proposed development will use the current farmyard for access and will have no serious impact upon the settlement and area during construction. There is already a great depth of concrete at the proposed development site as the yard infills a natural hollow; so, despite the proximity of the Norman church there is not expected to be an archaeological impact or considerations. This is an environment agency linked development, as it is designed to minimise water pollution run off from farmyards into local waterways. This structure will be lightweight and durable, of modern agricultural character, no significant structural intervention is required to install this, as the yard, infrastructure and drainage is all in place. In form and appearance, it will not be noticeably different in character from the existing barns that the structure will be built onto. Therefore, the direct impact of the development is expected to be neutral.

### 1.6 Summary of Impacts

Asset	Type	Distance	Value	Magnitude of Impact	Assessment	Overall Assessment
<b>Indirect Impacts</b>						
St Michael's Church, Farway	GII*	c.40m	High	Neutral	Negligible	Negligible
Wheaton Chest Tomb	GII	c.40m	Medium	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Coxson Headston	GII	c.40m	Medium	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Chest Tomb 6m south of Nave	GII	c.40m	Medium	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Wish Chest Tomb	GII	c.40m	Medium	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
The Old Rectory	GII	c.70m	Medium	Neutral	Negligible	Negligible
<b>Indirect Impacts</b>						
Historic Landscape	n/a	n/a	Medium/High	Neutral	Negligible	Negligible
Aggregate Impact	n/a	n/a				Negligible
Cumulative Impact	n/a	n/a				Negligible
<b>Direct Impacts</b>						
Unidentified archaeological features	U/D	Onsite	Negligible	Major	Slight	Negligible
<i>After mitigation</i>			Negligible	Minor	Neutral/slight	Neutral/Negligible

### 1.7 Conclusion

In terms of indirect impacts, the contribution of setting for many of the designated assets in the wider area is less important than other factors, apart from the church. The landscape context of many of these buildings is such that they would be partly or wholly insulated from the effects of the proposed development, due to a lack of visibility between the proposed site and heritage assets, and by a lack of intervisibility from other locations. In addition to this the nature of the proposed development is in keeping with the character of its immediate setting, reducing its impact. The only asset where there is likely to be an appreciable impact is the Grade II\* St Michael's Church (**negligible**) but again the existing setting minimises these effects, with the existing slurry silo blanketing most of the potential impact of the proposed development. Generally, the lack of any real intervention, adaption of an existing yard, ongoing character and function of the setting of the village and acknowledged but limited cumulative visual impact means that the proposed will have an overall **negligible** impact.

With this in mind, the overall impact of the proposed development can be assessed as **negative/negligible**. The impact of the development on any buried archaeological resource may be **permanent** and **irreversible**.

## 1.8 References

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**University of Newcastle** 2002: *Visual Assessment of Wind Farms: Best Practice*.



### 1.9 Supporting Jpegs



Figure 2: View along the west boundary of the churchyard, showing the barn and silo; from the north-north-east. [distance c.40m]  
(the site would lie behind the slurry silo).



Figure 3: View of the church, from the lane, showing it enclosed and framed by the historic barns of Churchstyle Farm; from the south-south-east. [distance c.65m]





Figure 4: View of the church from the north-east, showing glimpses to the green painted silo behind, with trees beyond.



Figure 5: View through the modern farmyard to the church tower beyond, showing the silo and barn which lie on the immediate western boundary of the churchyard; from the south-west.





Figure 6: Wider landscape view back to the farmyard and churchyard, showing the tower subsumed into the conifer trees; from the north-west.