

## Land at Pyworthy, Holsworthy, Torrridge, Devon

### Walkover Survey

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#### 1.1 Project Background

South West Archaeology Ltd. was commissioned by Neo Environmental (the Client), to carry out a walkover survey for a 168ha site to the south west of Pyworthy, Devon. The walkover has been carried out as part of a proposal for a solar farm development.

#### 1.2 Site Location

The site is located across 168ha of enclosed agricultural fields, small areas of woodland and includes one farm complex to the south west of Pyworthy and south east of Bridgerule (Figure 1). It includes land around Derrill Water. One public footpath (Pyworthy footpath 7) crosses part of the north eastern area of the proposed development site and the road between Bounds Cross and Broadshell Cross runs through the approximate centre of the proposed area.

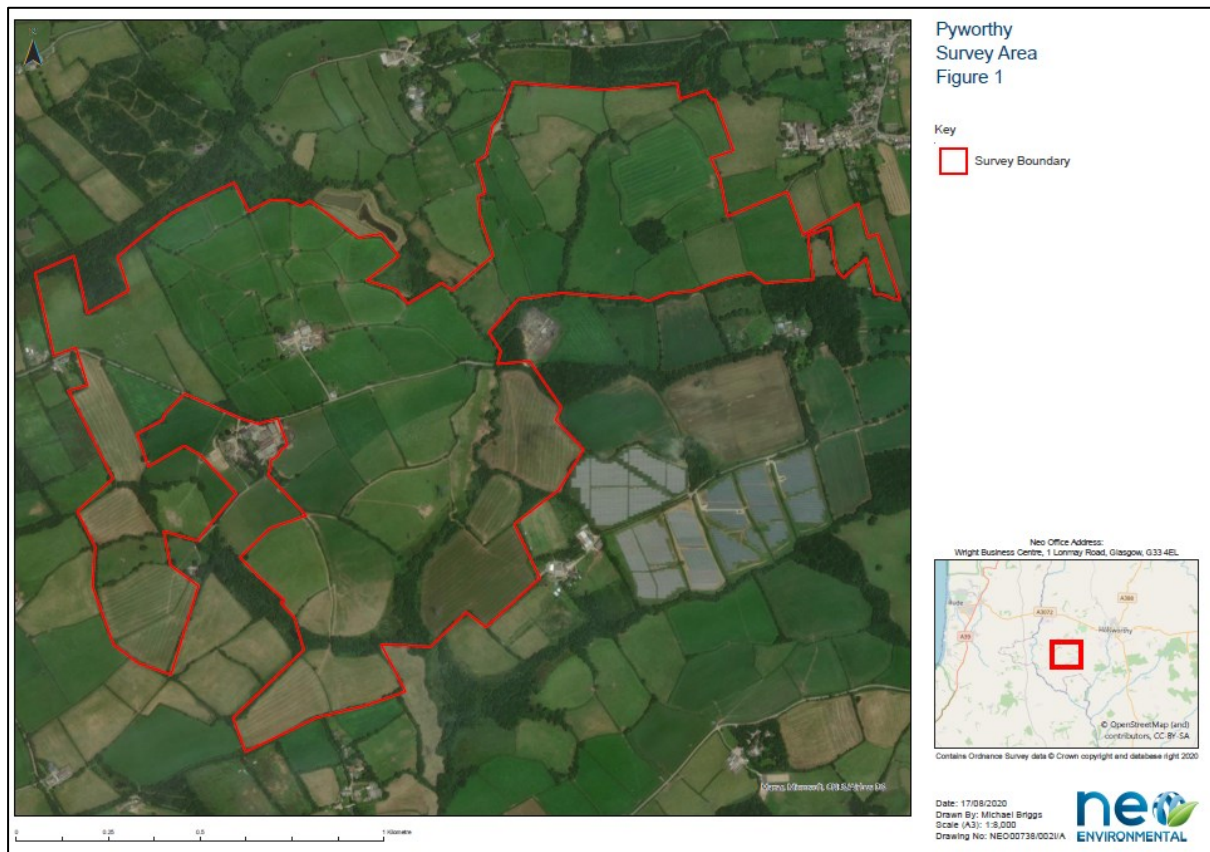


Figure 1: Site Location (plan supplied by the Client).

#### 1.4. Walkover Survey

A walkover survey was carried out by Faye Balmound MCIfA in September 2020 in accordance with the relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeology *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* January 2017. The walkover survey was carried out under conditions varying from slight mist and drizzle to occasional sunshine and clouds. The ground conditions were fair to wet, and fields where livestock had recently been grazing were quite compacted and muddy underfoot. The majority of the fields surveyed were either being utilised for cattle grazing (or had recently been), other were recently cut for silage but the grass had not been

collected or were yet to be cut so had long or very long grass. The conditions were therefore not favourable for the detection of archaeological features, particularly those with slight surface expressions.

The likely agricultural use of much of the land within the study area from at least the medieval period onward means that any prehistoric features are unlikely to survive as significant earthworks, although some remains may still exist below ground. The entire study area is characterised by the high survival of field banks and boundaries dividing the fields, with particularly large boundaries noted at the divisions between land holdings. Most field boundaries consist of an earth bank with a ditch on each side, topped by a low hedge. These are often additionally fenced with modern fencing posts and barbed wire on each side. Many fields have limited field gates or openings, some only accessible through one gate from another field or from the road. A number of small streams were also present across the study site, often forming a boundary between fields, sometimes with banks built up on either side. The results of the walkover survey are set out in the table below (Table 1). The field numbers are shown on the map in figure 2.

Table 1: Results of walkover survey by field

Number	Current Cultivation	Comments
1	Grass- just cut for silage and still lying on ground	No visible features although cut grass on ground likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present.
2	Grass- just cut for silage and still laying on ground	No visible features although cut grass on ground likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present. (Figure 3)
3	Grass	Slight linear feature running from northern boundary to tree. Possible former boundary? (Figure 4)
4	Grass	No visible features.
5	Long Grass	No visible features.
6	Grass	Cows in field, ground trampled. No obvious visible features.
7	Grass	Cows recently moved; ground quite trampled. No visible features.
8	Grass	No visible features.
9	Grass	Cows recently moved; quite trampled ground. No visible features. High boundary bank on east side marking edge of land holding. (Figure 5)
10	Grass	Large number of cows in the field. No obvious visible features, ground quite trampled (field not entered).
11	Grass	Cows recently moved; quite trampled ground. No visible features.
12	Grass	No visible features.
13	Grass	Possible slight linear running NW-SE near centre of field. Former boundary?
14	Grass	No visible features.
15	Grass	No visible features.
16	Grass	No visible features.
17	Grass	No visible features.
18	Grass	No visible features.
19	Grass	No visible features.
20	Long grass	Possible very slight traces of former boundaries or ridge and furrow ploughing oriented NW-SE on eastern side of field; could be related to more recent agricultural practices. (Figure 6)
21	Long Grass	No visible features.
22	Long Grass	No visible features.
23	Grass	No visible features.
24	Grass	Donkeys in field. Some slight indistinct earthworks visible - possible trackway?
25	Grass	Horse and donkeys present in field. Some slight earthworks visible

		but indistinct.
26	Long Grass	No visible features.
27	Very Long Grass	No visible features.
28	Long Grass	No visible features.
29	Long Grass	No visible features.
30	Long Grass	No visible features.
31	Long Grass	No visible features.
32	Long Grass	No visible features.
33	Grass	No visible features.
34	Grass	Cows in field, ground quite trampled. No obvious visible features.
35	Grass	No visible features. Large circular tank occupying significant area of field.
36	Grass	Cows in field. Ground quite trampled. No obvious visible features.
37	Grass	No visible features.
38	Grass	No visible features.
39	Grass	Rubble track leading into adjacent field along N boundary. Historic banks around stream on N side of field.
40	Grass- just cut for silage and still lying on ground	No visible features although cut grass likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present.
41	Grass	Electricity pylons located in field. Rectangular feature with banks on each side in north west corner of field - appears recent. Very deep open excavation c. 5m x 5m x 10m deep in area between pylons in centre of field surrounded by spoil heaps.
42	Grass - just cut for silage and still lying on ground	No visible features although cut grass likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present.
43	Grass- - just cut for silage and still lying on ground	No visible features although cut grass likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present.
44	Grass - just cut for silage and still lying on ground	No visible features although cut grass likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present.
45	Grass - just cut for silage and still lying on ground	No visible features although cut grass likely to be obscuring any slight earthworks present.
46	Long Grass, boggy	No visible features.
47	Long Grass	Slight cut platform into slope above and below electricity pylon, probably associated with the construction of the pylon. (Figure 7)
48	Grass	No visible features.
49	Grass	Cows in field. No obvious visible features.
50	Grass	Cows in field, ground trampled. No obvious visible features
51	Long Grass	No visible features.
52	Grass	No visible features.
53	Grass	No visible features.
54	Grass	Cows in part of field. PROW passes through southern part of field. Possible slight linear E-W across central area of field - former boundary? (Figure 8)
55	Grass	Cows in field, ground trampled. No obvious visible features
56	Wood	Wet wooded area surrounded by boundary banks. No visible features.
57	Long Grass	No visible features. Gateway with 58 constructed of reused concrete block quoins. (Figure 9)
58	Long Grass and Reeds	Boggy in places. No visible features.
59	Grass	Cows in field. No visible features. Stone quoined gateway entrance.
60	Grass	Cows recently moved out of field, ground slightly trampled. No visible features. Stone quoined gateway. (Figure 10)
61	Grass	Cows in field, ground trampled. No obvious visible features.
62	Very Long Grass	No visible features. No trace of boundary across field shown on OS

		explorer 1:25000 map.
63	Grass	Large number of cows in field (not entered). No obvious visible features.

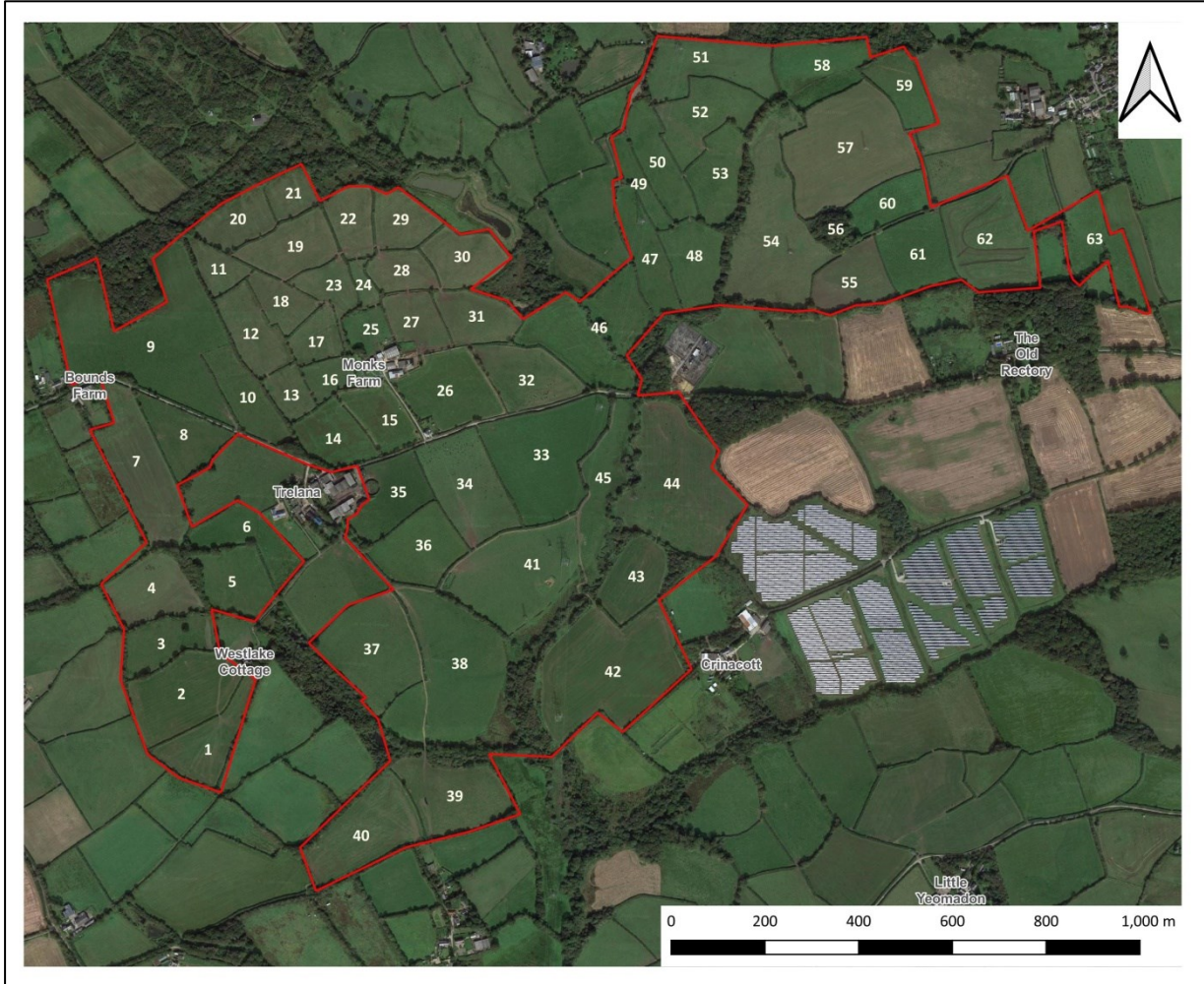


Figure 2: Map showing field numbers corresponding with Table 1.



Figure 3: Field 2 cut for silage but with grass still lying on ground. A number of the fields were in this condition at the time of the survey.



Figure 4 (Left): Slight linear feature running from northern boundary to tree in Field 3, possibly a former boundary.  
Figure 5 (Right): High boundary bank on east side marking edge of land holding between Fields 9/10 and 11/12/13.



Figure 6: Possible very slight traces of former boundaries or ridge and furrow ploughing oriented NW-SE on eastern side of Field 20.



Figure 7: Slight cut platform into slope above and below electricity pylon in Field 47, probably associated with the construction of the pylon



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Figure 8: Slight linear E-W across central area of Field 54, a possible former boundary



Figure 9: Gateway between Fields 57 and 58 constructed of reused concrete block quoins.



Figure 10: Stone quoin gateway at entrance to Field 59.

### 1.5. Views out from the site

There are a number of designated heritage assets within a 2km radius of the site which the proposed development has the potential to impact upon. These are:

- Listed Buildings within the settlement of Bridgerule: Church of St Bridget (Grade I), The Glebe House (Grade II), The Coach House and Old Stables (Grade II) and St Bridget's and St Katharine's Cottages (Grade II).
- A Bowl Barrow to the north of the proposed development (Scheduled Monument)
- A boundary stone to the north of the proposed development (Grade II)
- Listed Buildings within the settlement of Pyworthy: Church of St Swithin (Grade II\*), Monument within the graveyard of St Swithins Church (Grade II) and The Villa (Grade II).
- Listed Buildings immediately east of the proposed development: The Old Rectory (Grade II), The Coach House adjacent to The Old Rectory (Grade II).
- Bowl barrows to the south east of the proposed development (Scheduled Monuments).

Views from the site towards these monuments are included below, with the exception of the boundary stone to the north of the proposed development which is not visible from the site.

#### 1.5.1 Views towards Bridgerule

The settlement of Bridgerule is located to the north west of the proposed site. Views from the site towards Bridgerule from the north west and north east areas are included below.





Figure 11: View from north west of site (Field 9) to Bridgerule. The top of the Grade I listed church tower is just visible in the centre of the image.



Figure 12: View towards Bridgerule from the north east of the proposed site (Field 60). The Grade I listed church is visible in the centre of the image.

### 1.5.2 Views towards the Bowl Barrow north of Dux

Views towards the scheduled bowl barrow (1020082) located to the north of Dux are shown below.



Figure 13: View from Field 30, looking north towards Dux Farm.

### 1.5.3 Views towards Pyworthy

The settlement of Pyworthy is located to the north east of the proposed site. Views towards Pyworthy from the north east and north west of the proposed site are included below.



Figure 14: View from the north west of the proposed site (Field 9) towards Pyworthy. The church tower is visible in the centre-right of the image.



Figure 15: View from the north east area of the proposed site (Field 51) towards Pyworthy.



Figure 16: View from the eastern area of the proposed site (Field 62) towards Pyworthy. The Church tower is visible on the right side of the image.

#### **1.5.4 Views towards The Old Rectory and The Coach House**

The Old Rectory and The Coach House are located just to the south of the eastern area of the proposed development. Both are Grade II listed buildings. They are generally screened from the development area by an area of woodland on the sloping ground to their north. There appeared to be little visibility of these structures from within the development site (although due to the weather conditions visibility was considered moderate at the time of the survey).



Figure 17: View to south from Field 55.



Figure 18: View towards the woodland north of The Old Rectory, from just outside the eastern boundary of the proposed site.

#### **1.5.5 Views towards the Bowl Barrows south east of the proposed development site**

Several groups of scheduled bowl barrows are located within 2km to the east and south east of the proposed development site (1017972, 1017973, 1017974, 1017975, 1017976, 1004362). Views towards these barrow groups are included below.



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Figure 19: View eastwards from Field 42.



Figure 20: View east from Field 39.



Figure 21: View south east from Field 39.

### 1.8 Conclusions and Recommendations

The walkover survey identified no earthworks of archaeological significance within the proposed site area, the few that were identified are likely to be removed field boundaries or relate to medieval or post-medieval agricultural land use. However the ground and vegetation conditions under which the walkover survey was carried out were not ideal for the identification of slight earthworks. In general there are a lack of heritage assets identified on the Devon Historic Environment Record in this area, which may correspond with a lack of archaeological remains; may be a result of medieval and later agricultural activity removing evidence for earlier occupation or may derive from a lack of archaeological investigation in this area. It is recommended that either a programme of further non-invasive survey work is undertaken to verify whether the absence of archaeological remains is correct or whether any surviving features are lacking surface expression; or monitoring of any groundworks could be carried out to confirm the potential survival of buried deposits. A full historic visual impact assessment should be carried out to assess the potential impacts upon the designated heritage assets; in particular the churches which this walkover survey has demonstrated are visible from multiple locations within the proposed site.

### 1.9 References

Historic England 2015: *The Setting of Heritage Assets*.

Chartered Institute for Archaeology 2017: *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*.