

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Great Torrington, Torridge, Devon	National Grid Reference SS 48782 18931	Number:
Subject: Monitoring and recording of groundworks to the rear of 122 Mill Street.		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 1/0309/2015/FUL DCHET Ref: ARCH/DC.TO.23029	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon (MBND)	
OASIS ID: southwes1-79663	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: TMS18	Dates fieldwork undertaken: April - May 2018	
<p>Description of works: Building recording of a stone shed to be removed prior to groundworks; and monitoring and recording of the excavation of foundation trenching for a residential development was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Chris Saunders (the Client). The shed was recorded on the 9th and 10th April 2018, with the trenching monitored on the 1st and 2nd of May 2018. This work was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Boyd 2018) drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>The site was a rectangular plot of land located c.790m west-south-west of the historic core of Great Torrington, c.58m north-west/to the rear of No.122 Mill Street and south of Torrington Commons. The plot is accessed from its north-west end via a lane off of the B3227/Limer's Hill (Figure 3). Although within an urban fringe area, the predominant soils of the area are the well drained fine loamy or fine silty soils over rock of the Manod Association (SSEW 1983). These overlie sandstone of the Bude Formation (BGS 2018). Great Torrington was a borough by the late 12th century. The site had archaeological potential due to its location behind Mill Street, an important route linking the hilltop town of Great Torrington with the riverside community at Taddiport. Structures are shown at the north-west end of the site on historic mapping from the mid-19th century onwards and tentatively on the 1804 Hartland Surveyors Map.</p> <p>The stone shed measured c.4.5m×2.3m (Figure 2). It was a single storey building, with a shallow pitched roof of corrugated sheeting. It was externally rendered and unpainted. Its west and south walls were built of local blue-brown slatestone rubble, whitewashed internally, and probably dated to the late 19th century. The north wall, alongside the lane which divides the site from the commons, was of larger stones and had a thick cob-like bond and had been raised in cob at the eaves. The east gable wall was similar to the north wall. Both of these walls were of a more vernacular and looser build perhaps indicative of a boundary opposed to structural function and of an earlier date (e.g. early 19th or late 18th century). The west and south walls abutted this earlier build. Very lightweight A-frames of machine sawn pine, with narrow paired ridge poles, very narrow thin tie beams and nailed joints carried the roof. The roof had probably once been slate and was wholly replaced with corrugated sheeting in the mid 20th century. A concrete block garage had been attached to the west end of the building (see Figure 1), which was demolished between 2010 and 2018. The stone shed was demolished prior to proposed groundworks.</p> <p>A series of footing trenches totalling c.93.4m in length, 0.60-1m wide and between 1-1.2m deep were excavated across the footprint of the proposed building (Figures 1 and 3). In the north corner of the trenches Natural occurred at c.0.40m below the approximately level prepared ground level; at the west corner it occurred at c.0.68m below; and in the south corner it occurred below c.0.74m indicating the levelling or make-up of the ground on the site, across which the natural slope falls away to the south-west. The site stratigraphy consisted of a deep upper level of disturbed blackish-grey topsoil and rubble, showing a significant build-up of levels in the post medieval period. This sealed a soft yellow-brown clay subsoil 0.30-0.50m thick that in turn overlaid a compact yellow clay layer. This overlaid a natural blue-grey shillet. No archaeological features were present in the footing trenches and no finds were recovered from the site or present below the disturbed topsoil and rubble layer.</p> <p>Conclusions: The site showed no evidence of historic occupation beyond the 19th century stone shed, which had been built without foundations and incorporated possibly a slightly earlier wall alongside the former commons boundary. Previous to this the relatively shallow and undisturbed subsoils and deep topsoil layers would suggest the garden plots to the rear of Mill Street may have been extended quite late onto what was unoccupied common land.</p> <p>Bibliography Boyd, N. 2018: <i>122 Mill Street, Torrington, Torridge, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation.</i> British Geological Survey 2018: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer.</i> http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales.</i></p>		
Recorder: E. Wapshott	Date sent to HER: 12 th June 2018	

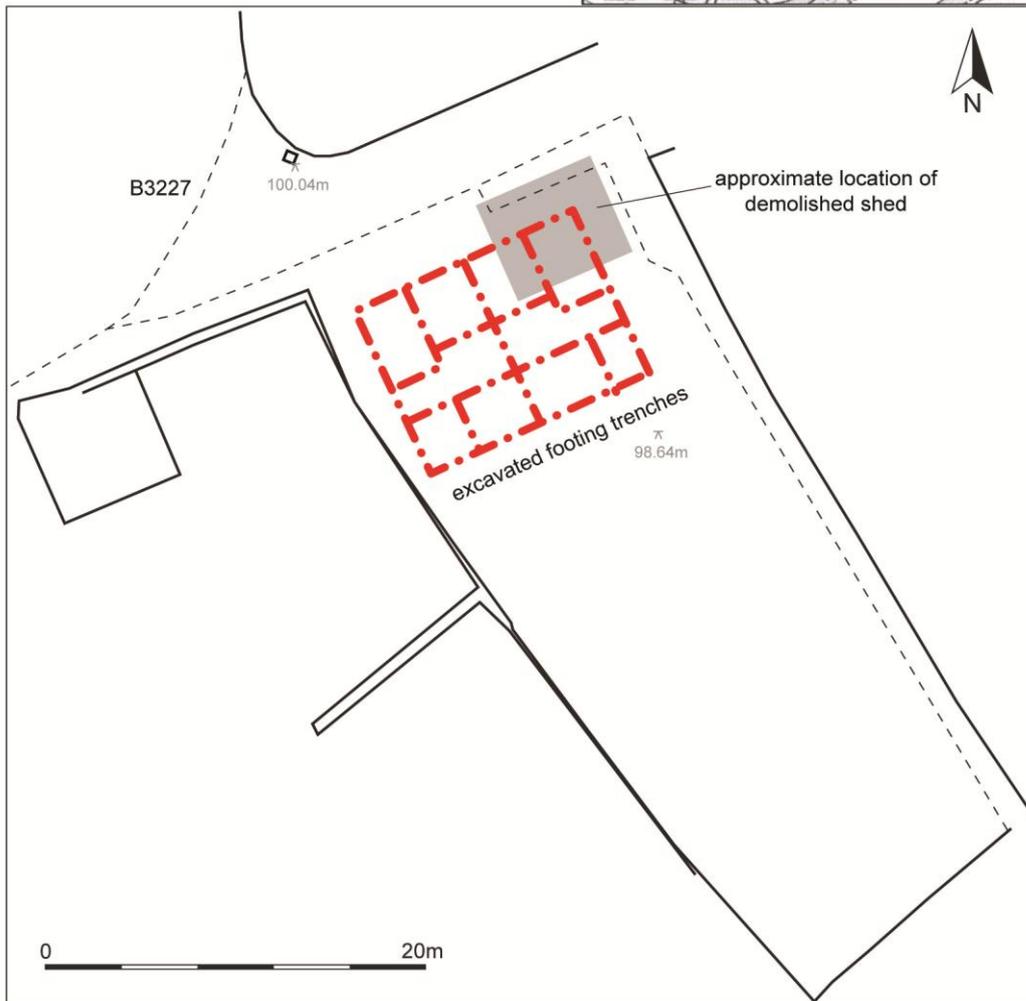
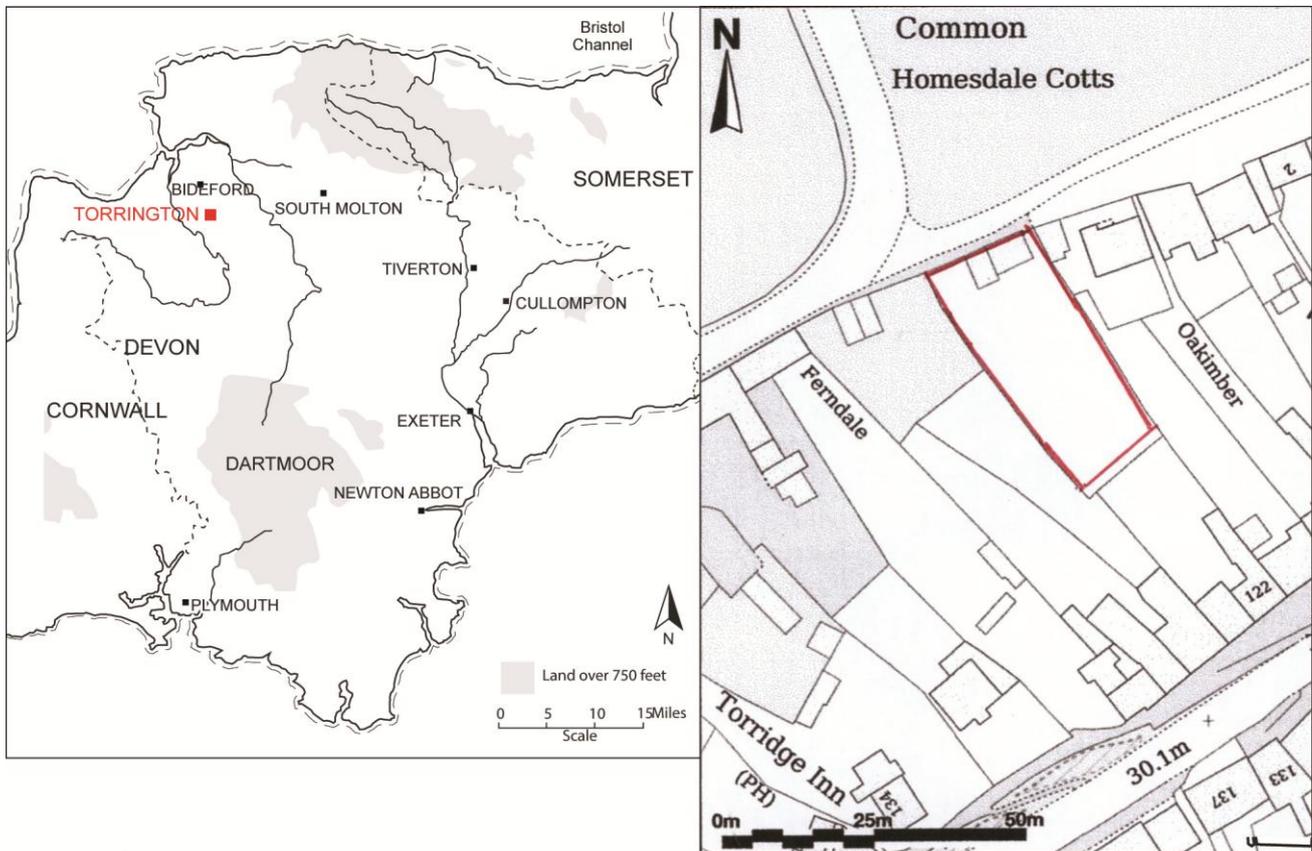


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION PLANS AND LOCATION OF EXCAVATED FOOTING TRENCHES.



FIGURE 2: SHED IN THE NORTH CORNER OF THE SITE POST REMOVAL OF GARAGE; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (2M SCALE).



FIGURE 3: EXCAVATED FOOTING TRENCHES; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-WEST (2M SCALE).