

Hemyock Motors Workshop site, Culmstock Road, Hemyock

NGR ST 13623 13302

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation and watching
brief

Prepared by
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On behalf of
Perry Brothers Developments Ltd

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AC archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Hemyock, Mid Devon	National Grid Reference ST 13623 13302	Number:
Subject: Hemyock Motors Workshop site, Culmstock Road, Hemyock: Results of an archaeological trench evaluation and watching brief		Photo attached: Plates 1-4
Planning Application no: 10/01873/FUL	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter	
OASIS ID: 111775	Museum temporary reference no: RAMM: 11/48	
Contractor's site code: ACD207	Date fieldwork undertaken: 20 th September and 6 th December 2011	

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring during demolition, trench evaluation and a subsequent watching brief were undertaken as part of a development involving the demolition of a garage workshop and construction of two houses. The work was undertaken on behalf of the site owners, Perry Brothers Developments Ltd.

The site is located within the historic core of the village, immediately opposite the parish church of St Mary's. Previous investigations adjacent to the site established the presence of two pits, one of which contained late 16th or early 17th-century pottery, while the other was dated to the 18th century. These features were sealed by an infilling layer which contained pottery ranging in date from the late 16th to the early 19th century. Within this group were some waster sgraffito dishes dating to between 1580-1620, with their decoration of a type not previously identified in the South West.

Results

Attendance during the removal of the concrete slab within the former workshop was carried out (Plate 1). This established that the extent of modern disturbance was far greater than previously thought (see Fig. 2). A large main sewer trench cut through the centre of the site and there were also other areas of deep disturbance. On the west side, where an evaluation trench was proposed, there were modern soils present which were contaminated with hydrocarbons from the site's former use. It was therefore only possible to excavate a single 5.5m long and 2m wide trench on the east side of the site (Fig. 1). Following this, monitoring was maintained during construction within the area of least disturbance (Plate 3).

Trench 1 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m partly into a buried soil layer similar to that identified during earlier investigations (Fig. 3 & Plate 2), with natural subsoil not reached due to flooding in the trench by heavily contaminated groundwater. At the northeast end of the trench there was deep disturbance caused by a former vehicle inspection pit.

Footings trenches monitored during the subsequent watching brief measured 0.8m wide and between 1.3m and 1.65m deep (Fig. 2 and Plate 4). Throughout the footprint, undisturbed areas had a consistent sequence of layers as recorded in the evaluation trench. No archaeological features were exposed.

The recorded layer sequence combined from the evaluation and watching brief is described in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of layer sequence

Context	Depth below ground (mm)	Description	Interpretation
100	0-250	Fragmented concrete, brick, stone and soil	Recently deposited demolition rubble
101	250-400	Dark grey to black coarse clayey sand containing frequent brick fragments and clinker	Made-up ground associated with levelling for the initial construction of the workshop
102	400-950	Dark grey coarse sandy clay containing occasional clinker fragments and charcoal flecks	Buried former (modern) topsoil
103	950-1250	Dark brown friable silty clay with occasional natural chert	Buried soil
104	1250+	Light yellow clay with common river gravels	Natural subsoil

The watching brief produced a small artefact assemblage, including two post-medieval pottery sherds, a piece of ceramic floor tile, a clay pipe fragment and a piece of burnt animal bone. The finds are summarised in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Summary of finds by context (weights in grams)

Context	Post-medieval pottery		CBM		Clay pipe		Burnt bone	
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
102					1	5	1	7
103	2	137	1	81				
Totals	2	137	1	81	1	5	1	7

Post-medieval pottery

Two sherds (137g) of early post-medieval pottery were recovered from context 103. Both are rim sherds. One is from a large internally glazed jar and the other is from an externally glazed jug or cistern with overlapping thumbed decoration below the rim. The jar sherd is a waster, having been over-fired. The fabric is a reduced mid-dark grey throughout, which is typical for Hemyock products, while the glaze has pooled and bubbled on the top of the rim. 16th and 17th century wasters have been found at other sites in Hemyock including Churchill's Farm and previously at Hemyock Motors, in 2009.

Ceramic building material

A single fragment (81g) of glazed tile was recovered from context 103. This is the corner of a square inlaid floor tile with a maximum thickness of 21mm. It has slightly bevelled edges and a knife scoop on the reverse, a few millimetres in from the corner. The design has been formed using inlaid white slip. Only the very edge of the design can be discerned and it is not clear what the complete scheme would have been. The tile is likely to be an Exeter Series 1 inlaid floor tile dating from the late 13th or early 14th centuries. Such tiles are often a feature of ecclesiastical buildings.

Clay pipe

A clay pipe stem fragment (5g) was recovered from context 102. This cannot be closely dated.

Burnt bone

A fragment of burnt animal bone (7g) was recovered from context 102. This is from a long bone but the fragment is otherwise too small to provide further information.

Comments

The evaluation and watching brief was limited in extent due to the presence of frequent modern disturbance and heavily contaminated soils. The work established only localised surviving soil profiles broadly comprising cultivation soils overlaying the natural clay subsoil.

Recorder: Paul Jones and Simon Hughes (AC archaeology)

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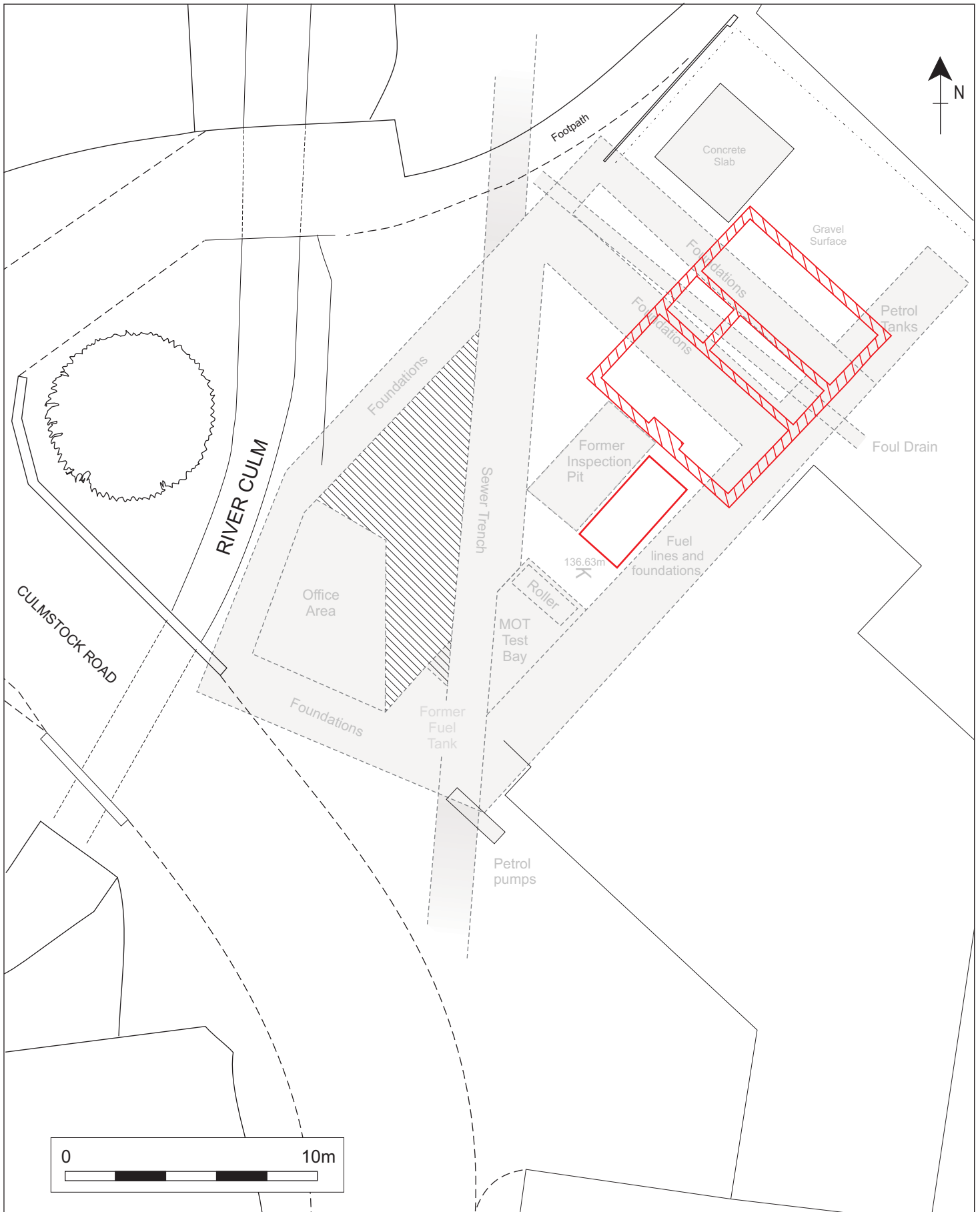






PROJECT
Hemyock Motors, workshop site

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site





-  Evaluation trench
-  Any archaeological remains likely to have been removed
-  Area of contaminated ground
-  Foundation trenches

PROJECT

Hemyock Motors, workshop site

TITLE

Fig. 2: Location of evaluation and foundation trenches





Plate 1: Removal of concrete slab, view to northeast



Plate 2: General view of Trench 1, view to west. Scale 1m



Plate 3: Excavation of foundation trenches during watching brief, looking northeast

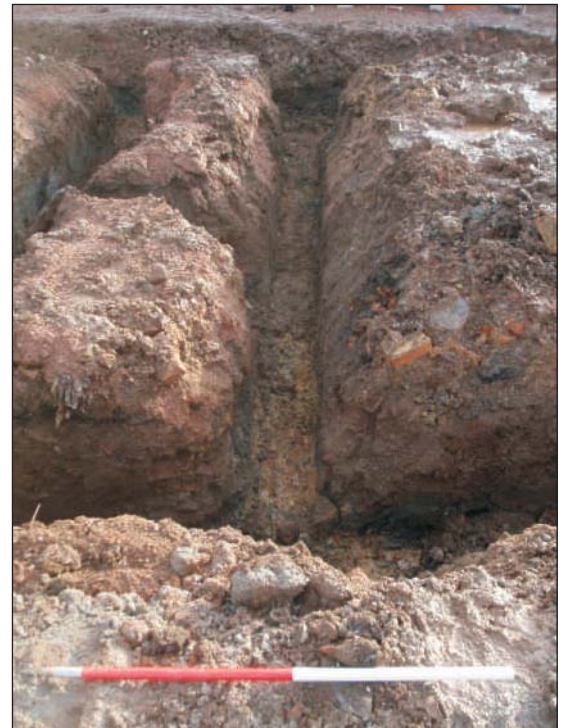


Plate 4: View of trench footings, looking northwest. Scale 1m

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