

# Land at Evelyn Cottage, 2 School Steps, Dartmouth

(NGR SX 87757 51191)

Results of an archaeological watching brief

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Prepared by:  
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On behalf of:  
Robert Seymour & Associates Ltd

Document No: ACD325/2/0

Date: June 2013



AC archaeology

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# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

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| <b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b><br>St Saviours, Dartmouth, South Hams  | <b>National Grid Reference</b><br>SX 87757 51191      | <b>Number:</b> (Leave blank for HES to fill in) |
| <b>Subject:</b> Land at Evelyn Cottage, 2 School Steps, Dartmouth: Results of an archaeological watching brief   |   | <b>Photo attached?</b> Y                        |
| <b>Planning Application no:</b> 15/1712/10/F   | <b>Recipient museum:</b> Plymouth City Museum         |   |
| <b>OASIS ID:</b> 152835  | <b>Museum Accession no:</b> AR.2011.22                |   |
| <b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b><br><br>ACD325   | <b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b><br><br>9 June 2011 |   |
| <p><b>Description of works.</b></p> <p><b>Introduction (Fig. 1)</b><br/>         A watching brief was carried out during the excavation of geotechnical pits prior to the construction of a dwelling on land adjacent to Evelyn Cottage, 2 School Steps, Dartmouth. The site lies within a tenement plot within the historic core of the medieval town. Three buildings are depicted on historic maps, and were bombed during the Second World War. The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological features or deposits exposed, with particular reference to any evidence for the former buildings, as well as any earlier medieval settlement or industry.</p> <p><b>Results (Fig. 2)</b><br/> <i>Trial pits 1a-c.</i> These pits measured 0.60m and 0.60m<sup>2</sup> by 0.90m and were located in the southern part of the site, along the line of the original proposed trench 1. The following deposit sequence was observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 – 0.10m thick layer of modern gravel laid onto a plastic sheet,</li> <li>• 101 – 0.20m thick layer of mid grey-brown compact sandy silt with common small stones and occasional slate fragment interpreted as a post-war demolition deposit that had been laid over earlier lead and ceramic drains (present in pit 1a adjacent to the boundary wall), and</li> <li>• 102 – natural bright brown-orange compact silty clay with slates.</li> </ul> <p><i>Trial Pit 3.</i> This pit measured 0.60m by 0.55m and was located in the northeast corner of the site. The following deposit sequence was observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 300 – 0.15m thick make-up layer of dark black-brown friable sandy silt with common fragments of slate and stone,</li> <li>• 301 – 0.10m thick levelling layer of brown silt and abundant slate, brick, stone, metal and occasional oyster shell,</li> <li>• F302 – wall footings consisting of slate overlying bricks that projected 0.25m from the face of the wall, and</li> <li>• F303 – a possible surface formed from slates, three of which were partially exposed within the pit (Plate 1).</li> </ul> <p><i>Trial pit 4.</i> This pit measured 0.90m by 0.50m and was located in the northeast corner of the site adjacent to the site's eastern (fenced) boundary. The following deposit sequence was observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400 – 0.25m black brown silty loam with frequent slate and stone fragments,</li> <li>• 401 – 0.65m + levelling layer of brown silt and abundant slate, brick, stone, metal and occasional oyster shell, and</li> <li>• F402 – wall footings under the fence consisting of a mixture of bricks and slates capped with concrete.</li> </ul> <p><i>Trial pit 5.</i> This pit measured 0.60m by 0.80m and was located in the northeast corner of the site adjacent to the north boundary wall. The following deposit sequence was observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 – 0.20m black-brown silty loam with common slate and stone fragments,</li> <li>• 501 – 0.80m levelling layer of brown silt and abundant slate, brick, stone, metal and occasional oyster shell,</li> <li>• 502 – unexcavated levelling layer of dark black-brown sandy silt with occasional fragments of slate and mortar,</li> <li>• F503 – a large flat block of stone exposed under 501 and set onto or into 502, possibly structural (Plate 2), and</li> </ul> |   |   |

- F504 – an east-west aligned wall constructed of slates bonded in buff-light brown lime mortar (Plate 3). It appeared to be roughly coursed and was exposed for a depth of 0.68m. The northern boundary wall had been constructed onto layer 501.

**Comments**

No evidence for medieval or early post-medieval archaeological deposits was exposed. With the exception of the northern boundary wall, the site boundaries and internal buttresses all appear to relate to the buildings depicted on historic maps.

In the southern third of the site, natural subsoil was exposed directly underlying modern post-war levelling. In the northern third of the site these levelling deposits were generally much deeper, reflecting the creation of the present terraced garden on a steep slope. Below these deposits part of a probable slate surface, presumably an internal floor, was exposed, as well as a wall aligned parallel to the northern boundary. It may have formed the northern wall of a building depicted on historic maps but its position is some way back from the property boundary and may therefore have been an internal wall, for example defining one site of a staircase. No dating evidence was recovered for these features.

**A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.**

**Recorder:**

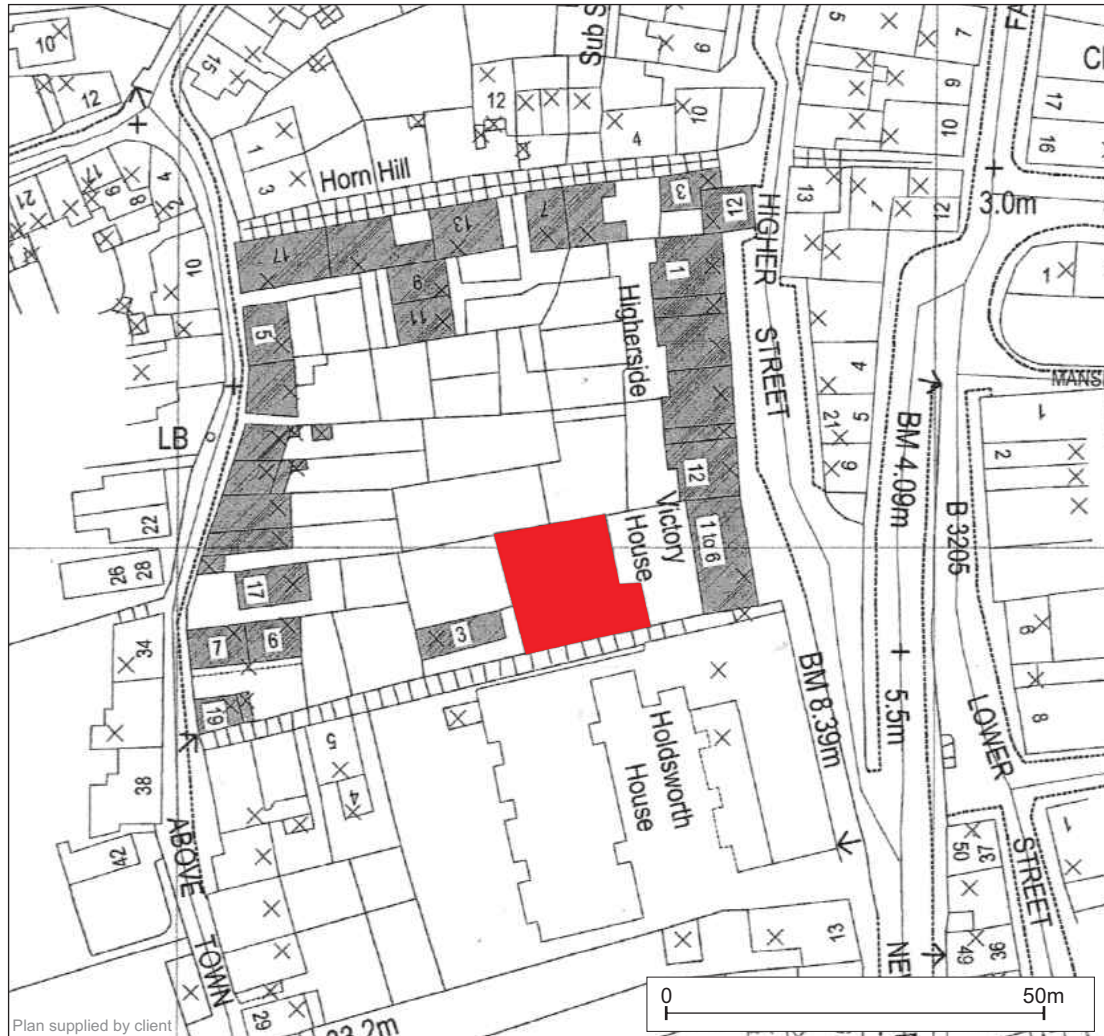
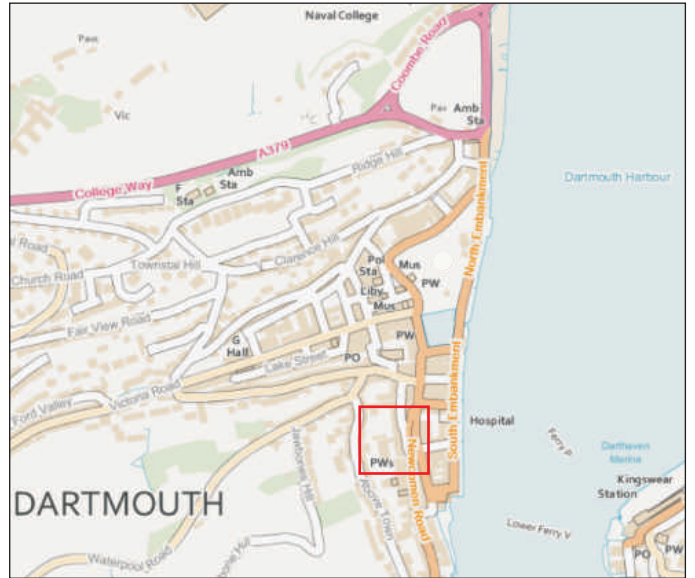
Fiona Pink, AC archaeology

**Date sent to HER:**

18 June 2013

Please email completed form to: [archaeol@devon.gov.uk](mailto:archaeol@devon.gov.uk) or post to County Archaeology Service, Environment Directorate, Matford Lane Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

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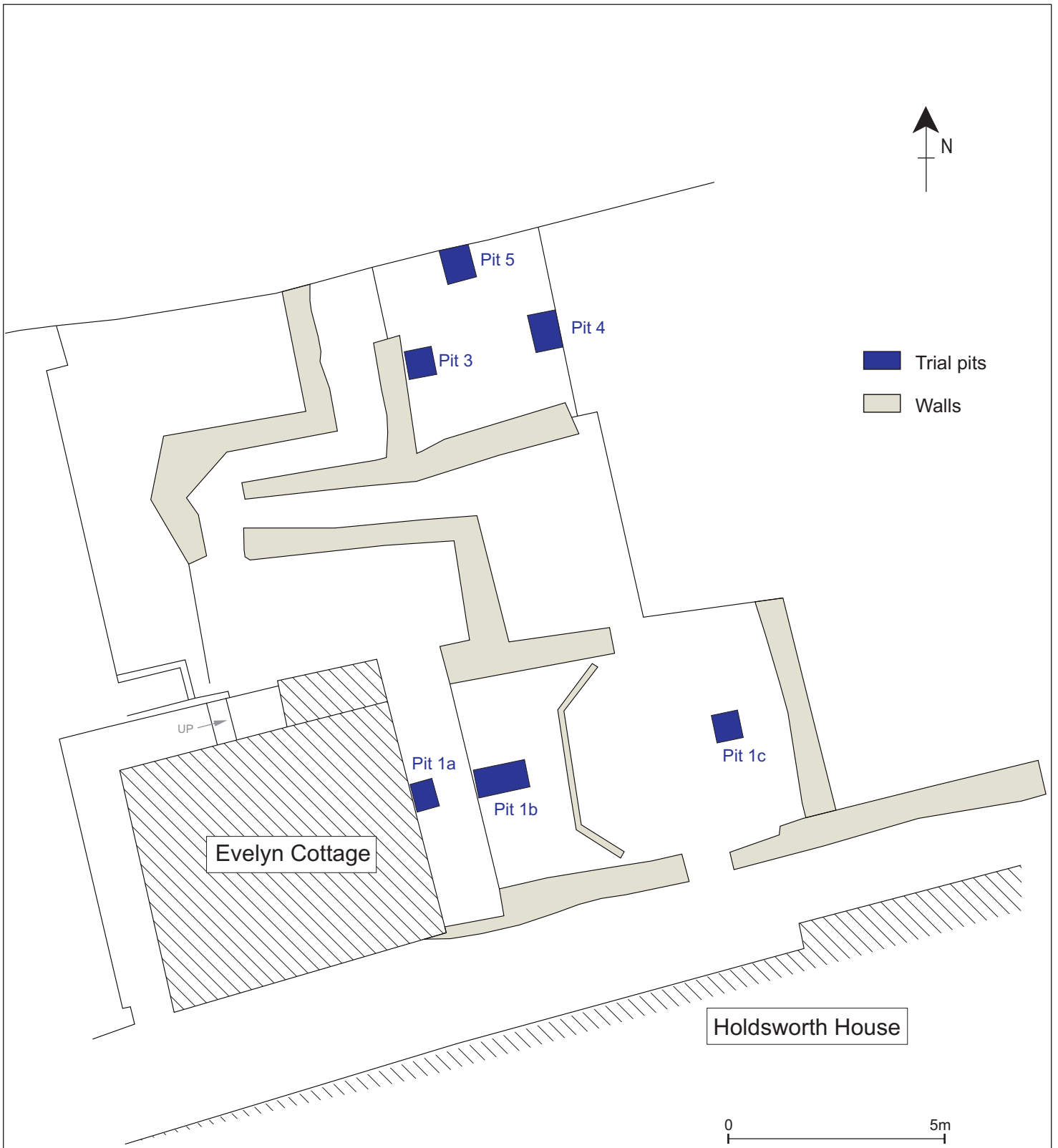
Site area

PROJECT

Land at Evelyn Cottage, 2 School Steps, Dartmouth

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site



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Dartmouth

TITLE

Fig. 2: Location of trial pits



Plate 1: Possible surface F303 in pit 3, viewed from the east. 0.30m scale



Plate 2: Stone F503 in pit 5, viewed from the east. 0.30m scale



Plate 3: Wall F504 in pit 5, viewed from the north. 0.30m scale

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